

CITY OF WOODSTOCK

1. ADA Accessible Canoe/Kayak Ramp
2. ADA Accessible Fishing Deck

PARKS AND RECREATION



Let's Play! Woodstock

City of Woodstock, GA
Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan

Adopted by Woodstock City Council April 25, 2022

PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

POLICY & PRACTICE

2.4 Park and Recreation System Master Plan

Standard: The agency shall have a comprehensive park and recreation system plan that provides recommendations for provision of facilities, programs, and services; parkland acquisition and development; maintenance and operations; and administration and management. The plan shall be officially adopted by the policy making body, updated periodically, and linked with a capital improvement budget and a phased development program. The system master plan shall implement policies adopted in the comprehensive plan for the jurisdiction. Interested and affected agencies, organizations, and groups shall be engaged in the planning process.

PROCEDURES

The Parks and Recreation System Master Plan is an overview of the vision developed by the City of Woodstock parks and recreation staff, city leadership, and from the residents of Woodstock through surveys, meetings, and conversations. The plan represents the potential of the parks and recreation department in serving the community. In addition, preliminary plans and budget estimates are included. No plan or idea represented in the plan is final, but a means to begin a conversation and to receive guidance in the development of properties and the organizational effectiveness of the department. Final plans go through more public input opportunities, often planned by 3rd party firms, and projects are fluid and change quickly. Ideas in the plan may spark new ideas and new projects, be broken down, may not come to fruition, but the plan does serve as a guide for the parks and recreation department in planning capital budgets, establishing priorities, and in serving the residents of the City of Woodstock, GA.

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FEASIBILITY

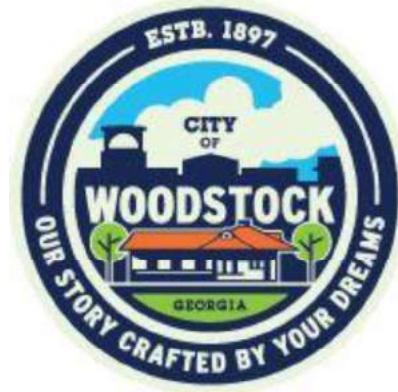
CHAPTER ONE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CITY OF WOODSTOCK MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Michael Caldwell, Mayor

Warren Johnson	Ward 1
David Potts	Ward 2
Colin Ake	Ward 3
Tracy Collins	Ward 4
Brian Wolfe	Ward 5
Rob Usher	Ward 6



Jeff Moon, City Manager

Coty Thigpen, Assistant City Manager

Rob Hogan Assistant, City Manager

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Jim Arnold, Chair (Ward 3)

Lisa Mosley, Vice Chair (Mayor)

Dennis Conway	Ward 1	Gary Slivenik	Ward 4
Leigh Easter	Ward 2	Stephen Faletra	Ward 5
Valerie Harty	Mayor	Kelly Inoue	Ward 6

PARKS AND RECREATION STAFF

Michael D. Huffstetler CPRE, Parks and Recreation Director

Parks and Recreation Leadership Team

Heather Gaddis, CPRP	Administrative Coordinator
Marybeth Stockdale, CPRP	Special Events Coordinator
Jamey Snyder, CPRP	Recreation Operations Manager
Julie Markley	Senior Center Coordinator
Jeff Armstrong	Park Operations Coordinator
Brad Baker	Parks Maintenance Crew Leader

Parks & Trails Maintenance

James Gobie
John Rencoukos
Wesley Albright
Torie Lindley
Chase King

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The City of Woodstock is geographically located in Northwest Georgia and is considered part of the Atlanta Metropolitan Area. Situated in the extreme southern part of Cherokee County, Georgia; Woodstock is about 30 miles north of Atlanta. Woodstock is bordered on the west by Lake Allatoona, to the south by Cobb County, and to the east by Fulton County. Woodstock is located in an area considered to be the southernmost point of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Woodstock is a community that offers a welcoming atmosphere, vibrant downtown, big city entertainment, and small town hospitality. And although only a little over a decade old, the City of Woodstock provides a comprehensive parks and recreation system that greatly contributes to the quality of life in Woodstock and the surrounding areas. Woodstock Parks and Recreation is responsible for maintaining public open spaces, for providing a quality system of parks and recreation facilities, as well as creating positive leisure opportunities available to all persons in the community.

Since 2013, Woodstock Parks and Recreation has been accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), which recognizes parks and recreation agencies for excellence in operation and service. CAPRA is the only accreditation of park and recreation agencies and is a valuable measure of an agency's overall quality of operation, management, and service to the community. Being CAPRA Accredited demonstrates the parks and recreation department's commitment to keeping Woodstock a great place to live by holding the department accountable to the public. Woodstock Parks and Recreation is 1 out of 172 CAPRA Accredited agencies out of over 8,000 park systems in the United States, and 1 of 9 agencies in the State of Georgia. This achievement demonstrates compliance with national best practices in over 150 measured practices.



SCOPE OF WORK

Strategic planning is an important process that yields information on where we are currently, where we would like to go, and how we are preparing to get there. The final result should be a plan of action that will direct the department in its future project/event planning and implementation processes.

The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan is based on a sound understanding of existing departmental strengths and weaknesses, utilizes public input, and includes a final action plan that is thoughtful and well planned based on lengthy and thoughtful periods of internal and external evaluation of parks and recreation services in Woodstock. With this plan in place the department can move forward with an organized plan that will meet the needs and desires of City of Woodstock residents and visitors alike.

The scope of the Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan includes guidelines for improving the City's existing parks and recreation facilities, for planning new parks and facilities, and for the development and implementation of recreation programs and special events to meet the needs of the community. This plan updates and expands upon previous planning efforts. Considerable progress has been made in the last 10 years and this plan will expand on that success and develop a fresher, more modern community supported plan that directly relates to the mission and vision of the City of Woodstock and the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan provides guidance to prioritize, fund, develop, and manage parks and recreation facilities, greenspace, trails, and programs.

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan is to offer strategies and operational policies that provide guidance in order to meet the needs of current and future Woodstock residents. The consistent theme throughout the development of this plan is Woodstock Parks and Recreation's commitment to authenticity, being organic, and in delivering high quality parks, trails, facilities, recreational opportunities, and events for all residents, while contributing to the quality of life in the City of Woodstock. The goals of this plan are to:

1. **Engage the community, leadership, and stakeholders** through innovative public input means to build a shared vision for parks, recreation, aquatics, open space, and trails for the next several years.
2. **Utilize a wide variety of data sources and best practices** including a statistically valid survey, predicting trends and patterns of use and how to address unmet needs and gaps in the service area.
3. **Determine unique Level of Service (LOS) Standards** to develop appropriate actions regarding parks, trails, open space, programs, and events that reflect the City of Woodstock's strong commitment to provide high quality recreational activities.
4. **Shape financial and operational preparedness** through innovative and "next" practices to achieve the strategic objectives and recommended actions with achievable strategies.
5. **Develop a dynamic and realistic strategic action plan** that creates a road map to ensure long-term and financial sustainability for the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Departments parks, trails, and services.

HISTORICAL STRATEGIC & MASTER PLANNING EFFORTS

In 2007, [The Greenprints Plan](#), an initiative of the Woodstock City Council and the Planning and Economic Development Department was developed. The Greenprints Plan is a comprehensive park, trail and open space initiative that established a foundation and framework for the creation of a citywide green infrastructure system. The project unites land use planning with land conservation practices to outline necessary strategies for ensuring the preservation, improvement, implementation, and maintenance of Woodstock's unique natural and recreational resources in the future.

Parks, greenways, trails, open lands, preserves, and rural landscapes are powerful amenities that improve the quality of life for residents and businesses. Collectively these amenities improve the livability of a community and facilitate economic progress. Current research finds that defined greenspaces are an enticement for communities nationwide, attracting major employment groups, residential growth, and eco-tourism within a sustainable framework.

Additional motivation for development of a sustainable greenspace approach is found in the emerging awareness of the negative impacts of sprawl, including the degradation of air quality, watershed concerns (especially storm water runoff), loss of scenic views and over-dependence on the automobile. Left unaddressed the City of Woodstock is at risk for becoming undesirable for future residents and businesses.

A conversation was initiated with residents, businesses, and landowners regarding the benefits of a network of greenspaces, trails, and parks. Guided by the Greenprints Committee comprised of representatives of the City Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Youth Advisory Board, Cherokee County and interested citizens and business owners this nine month community based, and resource based planning process involved the community through a series of meetings, surveys, and project website.

[“A sustainable greenspace and trail network that defines and enhances the City of Woodstock's community, natural, and economic resources for all generations.”](#)

2008 – 2020

There was a lot of development and new ideas that enhanced parks and recreation in the City of Woodstock after establishing the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department and hiring the City's first Parks and Recreation Director, Preston Pouser. The following is a list of accomplishments and brief background of the parks and recreation department from 2008 – 2020.

In 2008, as part of a city-wide restructuring, the City of Woodstock created the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department. The department was then divided into four divisions which include Administration, Park and Trail Maintenance, Special Events, and the William G. Long Senior Center. At this same time the Cherokee County Recreation and Parks Department completed a \$90 million recreation bond and was developing several facilities in proximity to the City of Woodstock. These facilities included multiple sports fields to accommodate soccer, lacrosse, baseball, softball, and other outdoor sports. In addition, an indoor aquatic center was built, and these services are offered to all residents of Cherokee County. For these reasons then, the department did not have any focus on athletic programming. The department for many years was

heavily focused on providing year round special events that attract over 100,000 attendees into the Downtown Corridor. The goal of these events were to have a positive impact on downtown businesses and spur economic development.

On October 7, 2013, the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department was recognized for excellence in the field of parks and recreation management by becoming one of only 125 (at the time) agencies in the country having earned national accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). This distinguished accomplishment was announced in Houston, Texas during the annual Best of the Best Awards Ceremony at the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) 2013 Congress and Exposition.

CAPRA is an extensive multi-year process and requires significant commitment from all departmental staff city wide. Accreditation requires park and recreation agencies to respond to 150+ standards representing elements of effective and efficient park and recreation operations. To earn accreditation, agencies must fully meet 37 fundamental standards and at least 108 of the remaining standards. The number of standards and required fundamentals are being updated after the 2020 season.

In 2016, the City of Woodstock celebrated the grand opening of the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater and is currently home to the Woodstock Summer Concert Series and hosts several other events annually. The Woodstock Summer Concert Series attracts approximately 10,000 people per concert and is free to attendees. The series has hosted acts such as The Charlie Daniels Band, 38 Special, BB King Blues Band, Little River Band, and many others.

The William G. Long Senior Center provides year round programs, events, trips, and other activities for the population ages 50 and over. A 2,400 sq. ft. expansion to the center was completed in 2017 with a \$250,000 CDBG (Community Development Block Grant). At its peak before the effects of Covid-19, the facility was host to more than 600 members. At the time of the Strategic Plan, the facility is still closed out of an abundance of caution and safety of the senior population. However, after a new Senior Center Coordinator was hired, there was a new focus on creativity and the reintroduction of activities in a Covid-19 environment.

The City of Woodstock is acquiring more land every year for the purpose of protecting green space and providing opportunities for future park and trailhead development. The department in 2021 manages 7 parks, nearly 5 miles of paved trail, and 14 miles of natural trail, and is in planning stages for the 100 acre Little River Park, and as part of this Strategic Plan developing plans for more parks and trails. Total land is over 420+ acres.

Woodstock is known regionally as home of the Greenprints Trail System. The Taylor Randahl Mountain Bike Trails located at Olde Rope Mill Park are very popular, and along with the increased usage of the paved Noonday Creek and Towne Lake Pass trails, providing connection and extending mileage for the 250,000+ users is more important than ever.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE

2008

- City Wide Reorganization forming the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department
- City hires first Parks and Recreation Director
- The Greenprints Plan is Completed
- City Council adopts Parks and Recreation Impact Fees

2010

- The William G. Long Senior Center opens at its current location 223 Arnold Mill Road
- The Taylor Randahl Memorial and Avalanche Bike Trail opens at Olde Rope Mill Park
- The Dupree Park Playground and Restroom Project is completed
- The Municipal Park at The Woodlands completed

2011

- Initial design of the Woodstock Amphitheater completed
- Construction of the Little River Bridge completed at Olde Rope Mill Park
- Construction of the Explorer Trail is completed at Olde Rope Mill Park
- The Woodstock Community Center's name was changed to Magnolia Hall
- The Community Garden opens in Dobbs Road Park

2012

- Dupree Park softball fields were converted into 5 acres of open green space
- The city breaks ground on Woofstock, Woodstock's first dog park

2013

- The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department is awarded CAPRA Accreditation
- Woofstock Park opens
- Magnolia Hall is completely renovated and updated

2014

- The Town to Creek and Noonday Creek Trails open
- The Family Mountain Bike Trail opens at Dupree Park
- The paving of the Dupree Park Fitness Trail is completed
- The Bridge and Boardwalk to Woofstock Park and the Noonday Creek Trail opens

2015

- Exercise station completed at Dupree Park
- Pavilions are constructed at Dupree Park
- The Prodigy Par2 Disc Golf course is completed at Dupree Park

2016

- The Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater is completed / Grand Opening
- William G. Long Senior Center plans are completed and CDBG grant awarded
- Overflow Parking Lot at Olde Rope Mill Park is completed

2017

- Dupree Park Boardwalk and Fishing Pier is completed
- William G. Long Senior Center expansion completed
- Rubes Creek Trail construction is completed

2019

- Preston Pooser accepts new position in Florida and the department operates without a Parks and Recreation Director until July
- Michael Huffstetler was hired as Parks and Recreation Director
- Recreation and Maintenance Plans were re-written

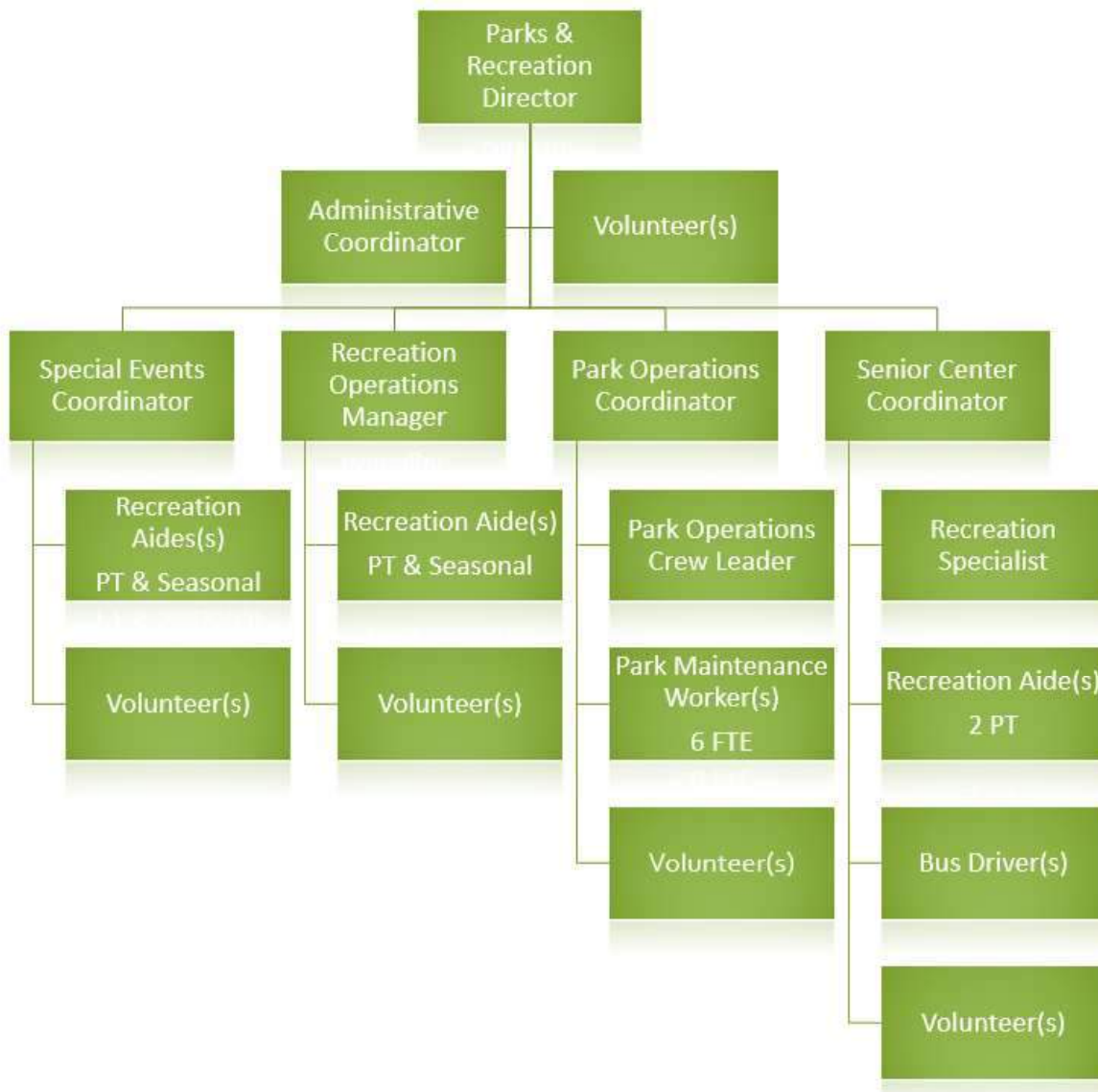
2020

- The parks and recreation department went through a re-organization and developed two divisions: Recreation and Parks & Trails
- Positions created/reclassified are Parks Operations Coordinator (Jeff Armstrong), Parks Maintenance Crew Leader (Alan Putnam), and Recreation Operations Manager (Jamey Snyder)
- Barry Martin was hired as the new Senior Center Coordinator
- The Downtown Playground and Restrooms are completed
- The Little River Park Master Plan is completed
- And....Covid-19 disrupted events, operations, and demanded new and creative operations, programming, and management of the department.

INTRODUCTION & TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Strategic Plan process began during the summer months of 2019 after a new Parks and Recreation Director was hired and was tasked with developing a plan to increase trails and recreational opportunities in Woodstock. It was also time to update the departments strategic plan according to the approval schedule adopted to keep policies and procedures to date for CAPRA Accreditation.

In looking long term at what is needed operationally to be successful in the future, the Parks and Recreation Director, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and other staff assessed where the department is currently and implemented changes that would set the department up for a successful future. In addition to planning staffing and facility needs, evaluating new operational software and updating policies and procedures, the City of Woodstock restructured the parks and recreation department to streamline communication, standards, and develop upward mobility opportunities as the agency grows. The new organizational chart is as follows:



MISSION, VISION, & GOALS

The next steps in the process started with developing new mission and vision statements, as well as establishing goals and objectives. These were developed by parks and recreation staff, reviewed, and approved by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and then approved by City Council. The mission, vision, goals, and objectives are as follows:

MISSION – WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO!

Approved by Woodstock City Council 8/26/2019

The parks and recreation department sets the standard in meeting the recreation and leisure needs of the Woodstock community. Expectations are met through extraordinary customer service, strong community partnerships, top notch facilities and trails, authentic local programming, and attractive large scale special events.

VISION – WHERE WE WANT TO BE!

Approved by Woodstock City Council 8/26/2019

Woodstock is the city of choice for healthy living and high quality of life, accessible to the best recreation, leisure, and entertainment opportunities available, all connected through an extensive network of parks, trails, and natural areas.

PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Established by Staff & Approved by P&R Advisory Board 8/5/2019

Goal #1: To manage the departments resources in a fiscally responsible manner.

- Objective #1: Evaluate personnel priorities and current work schedules to develop a staffing plan that is balanced and allows for growth.
- Objective #2: Ensure divisional managers understand the budget and meet monthly to discuss YTD and planned expenditures/revenues.
- Objective #3: Monitor and update annually the capital improvement and replacement plan, and plan accordingly in budget planning.
- Objective #4: Seek out external funding and grants to support and complement general operating expenses and new programming.

Goal#2: To provide a first-class park and trail system, accessible to all.

- Objective #1: Implement a maintenance reporting system to report, track, and monitor progress on requests and projects.
- Objective #2: Update, train staff, and delegate responsibility of maintenance program plan, and develop procedures for ongoing preventative maintenance.
- Objective #3: Coordinate with staff, community stakeholders, and leadership; the location, amenities, design, and vision for current and future parks, trails, and facilities.
- Objective #4: Seek out and document barriers that prevent access to parks, trails, facilities, and recreation in the city and develop plan to address.
- Objective #5: Work toward and apply annually for the NRPA Gold Medal Award; and continue to apply when eligible.

Goal#3: To enhance organizational capacity and create a culture of innovation.

- Objective #1: Facilitate quarterly training workshops with staff, and coordinate participation in national and statewide parks and recreation developmental courses and conferences.
- Objective #2: Support staff in earning professional certifications in parks and recreation; CPRP, CPRE, CPSI, CAPRA, etc.
- Objective #3: Delegate responsibility for CAPRA accreditation standards; to monitor, update, and work with administration to ensure standards consistently maintain compliance.
- Objective #4: Apply for annually, agency and individual awards with GRPA, NRPA, and other parks and recreation supported organizations.

Goal#4: To facilitate authentic programs and events that are uniquely Woodstock.

- Objective #1: Plan and build a marketing support system for community engagement, marketing, and advertising.
- Objective #2: Using community input, community programming inventory, and strategic partnerships, ensure current and future programs and events are unique to Woodstock and innovative.
- Objective #3: Activate play throughout the city utilizing latest recreational trends, designed to highlight park amenities, trails, and local landmarks.
- Objective #4: Stay current with industry calendars and coordinate national and state sponsored parks, recreation, and related events, programs, and advocacy campaigns.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In conjunction with the mission, vision, goals, and objectives, parks and recreation staff have developed only one overall objective for programming in the City of Woodstock. Whether it be a special event, park designed for play, senior program, or anything else that drives the city, that objective is:

To ensure that all residents and visitors to the City of Woodstock, regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, or economic and social standing; everyone has the same opportunities to enjoy themselves and have satisfying and enriching recreational experiences.

Oh yeah & have fun! – make that two objectives.

In addition, research from outside organizations is used in conjunction with park and amenity planning and maintenance procedures. These organizations are directly program related, usually for passive recreation.

- **NRPA National Recreation and Park Association:** grants, resources, standards, trends, research, professional development, advocacy, and education.
- **GRPA Georgia Recreation and Park Association:** grants, resources, standards, trends, research, professional development, advocacy, and education.
- **SORP Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals:** grants, resources, standards, trends, research, professional development, advocacy, and education.
- **IMBA International Mountain Biking Association:** trail design, trail grades, program resources, maintenance standards, and community education.
- **CPSC Consumer Product Safety Commission:** playground safety guidelines, design guidelines and considerations, program resources, and community education.
- **PDGA Professional Disc Golf Association:** course design based on skill levels, program and tournament resources, maintenance standards, and community education.
- **USTA United States Tennis Association:** facility maintenance standards, amenities, program resources, funding, and community education.
- **USPA United States Pickleball Association:** facility maintenance standards, amenities, program resources, funding, and community education.
- **US DOT Federal Highway Administration:** greenway and trail design, maintenance standards, recreational resources, and community education.
- **The Greenprints Plan:** Woodstock's own plan for greenway and trail connections, including design, maintenance standards, and park and greenspace management.

DEMOGRAPHICS & TRENDS ANALYSIS

At the time of this Strategic Plan, the Census 2020 is under-way, so all demographic information and assessment is based on the 2018 Woodstock Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as well as the 2019 - 2028 Cherokee County Recreation, Parks, Greenspace & Trails Master Plan.

The city is strategically located between two regional recreational assets: to the north of the city, the Blankets Creek Mountain Bike Trails system receives over 200,000 visitors annually and twenty miles to the south, the Silver Comet multi-use trail system has over 2 million visitors annually. Other community assets include 18 miles of riparian corridors - mainly Little River, Noonday Creek, and Rubes Creek; Sweat Mountain and its enormous view shed throughout the city; and historic downtown with buildings dating back to 1879, as well as newly developed living and dining opportunities. Yet, with population expected to at least triple by 2030 there is a need to connect these community assets via a green infrastructure network, expanding currently deficient open space/ recreational opportunities to encompass sensitive conservation areas and provide connectivity for City residents and visitors.

The U.S. Census Bureau states that the City of Woodstock has a total area of 8.8 square miles (22.9 km²) and 0.04 miles (0.1 km²) of that is water. Land in Woodstock currently designated as park land totals just over 400 acres. The city has seen a drastic increase in population over the past decade and expects further growth. As the population continues to grow there will be an increased focus on identifying and obtaining new parkland in order to provide facilities for all residents.

As of the 2010 Census, there were 23,904 people in Woodstock. This number is up from 10,050 in 2000, resulting in an effective population growth increase of 137.8%. The 2013 population estimate by the US Census Bureau placed the population at 26,890. At that time there were 10,298 households within the city. The racial makeup of the city is 79.3% White, 10.2% African American, 0.2% Native American, 4.5% Asian, 2.7% other races, and 3.1% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race totaled 9.7% of the population. The median income for a household in the city was calculated at \$61,648 in 2009, and the median family income was calculated to be \$74,758. The median per capita income for the city was. \$29,190.

As of September 2020, according to www.cleargov.com, the population of the City of Woodstock is 30,362, up 3.9% from 2017. The daytime population is estimated at 31,775 which represents persons coming into or leaving a community for work, entertainment, shopping, etc. during a typical work day. An increased daytime population puts greater demand on host community services which directly impacts operational costs.

POPULATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

The City of Woodstock and Cherokee County are experiencing tremendous growth, a trend that is expected to continue for some time in part to the quality of life and business attraction, as well as its proximity to Atlanta and the growth of the Atlanta region. The ARC is comprised of Atlanta and the ten “CORE” counties surrounding it, including Cherokee County. In recent years, the Atlanta region has been consistently ranked in the top ten among cities with the nation’s most growth and development.

A review of the population and the characteristic of its residents is important to determine the parks and recreation needs as a community’s needs are dependent on the preferences and way of life of its people. Preference and lifestyle are often dependent on age, gender, education, and socio-economic status. Demographic research and public input generate data that allows us to anticipate public desires and predict the activities that will likely become most desired as a community’s demographics profile changes over time.

In addition, comparisons to surrounding cities in the metro Atlanta region, as well as around the nation are provided to benchmark against other populations that the city may be measured. While this plan reviews the most current data available, demographic factors, such as age, are ever changing.

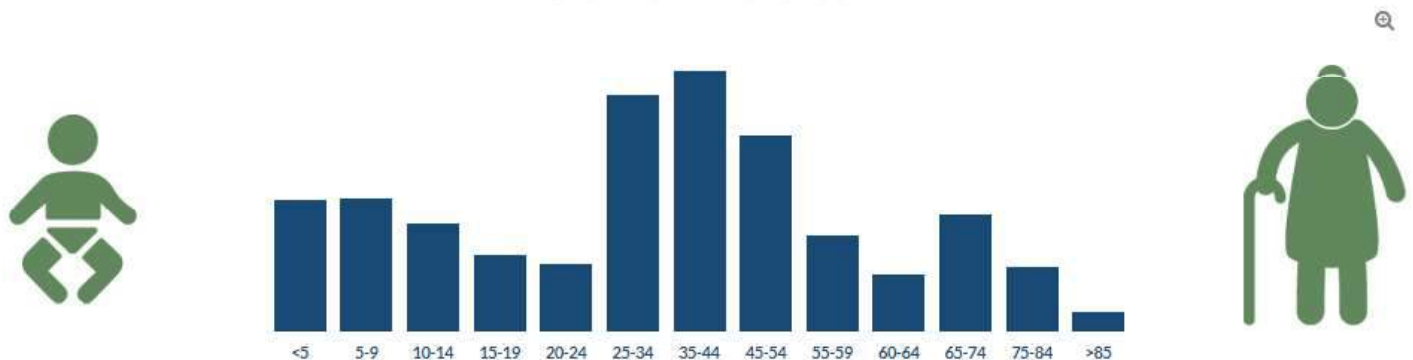
Age is likely the most influential aspect of recreation trends. For example, the child who is 10 years old when a plan is developed may be interested in team sports like softball, soccer, or lacrosse; however, by the end of the plan’s timeframe, as a young adult, their interests in recreation may change to include activities like running and cycling. Conversely, a young adult in their twenties may be a parent by the end of the plan, and household recreation needs may have shifted towards team and youth activities for their children.

POPULATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

Information in this section is comprised of demographics assessed during the 2018 update of the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Master Plan and taken directly from

www.cleargov.com/georgia/cherokee/city/woodstock/2018.demographics.

POPULATION BY AGE GROUP



Aging affects the needs and lifestyle choices of residents. Municipalities must adjust and plan services accordingly.

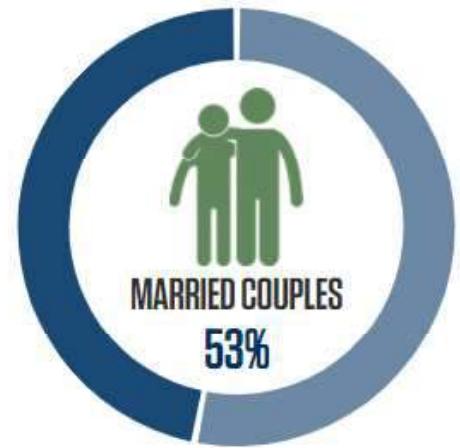
A review of the age of the community gives information into the types of activities a community may be interested in and what programs a community determines it may need to offer its residents. The above chart indicates the largest age group the 35-44 years of age group. However, the largest increases in population were in the 60 to 64 and 65 to 74 age groups, with increases of 154% and 129% across Cherokee County (statistic taken from the 2019 - 2028 Cherokee County Recreation, Parks, Greenspace & Trails Master Plan).

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
12,060

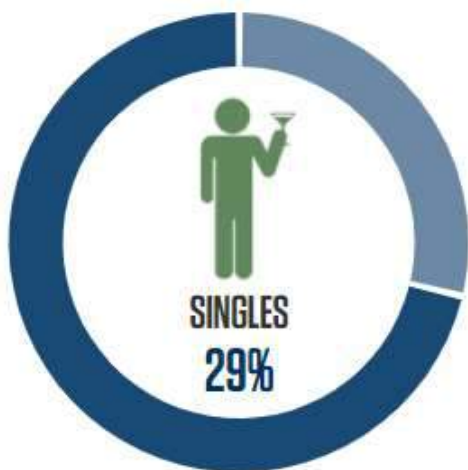
Municipalities must consider the dynamics of household types to plan for and provide services effectively. Household type also has a general correlation to income levels which affect the municipal tax base.



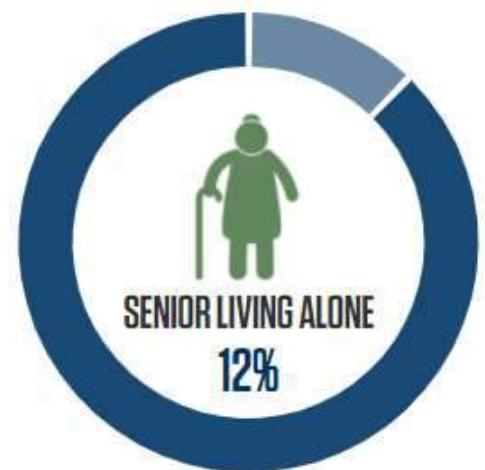
▼ **1%** LOWER THAN STATE AVERAGE



▼ **11%** LOWER THAN STATE AVERAGE



▲ **6%** HIGHER THAN STATE AVERAGE



▲ **31%** HIGHER THAN STATE AVERAGE

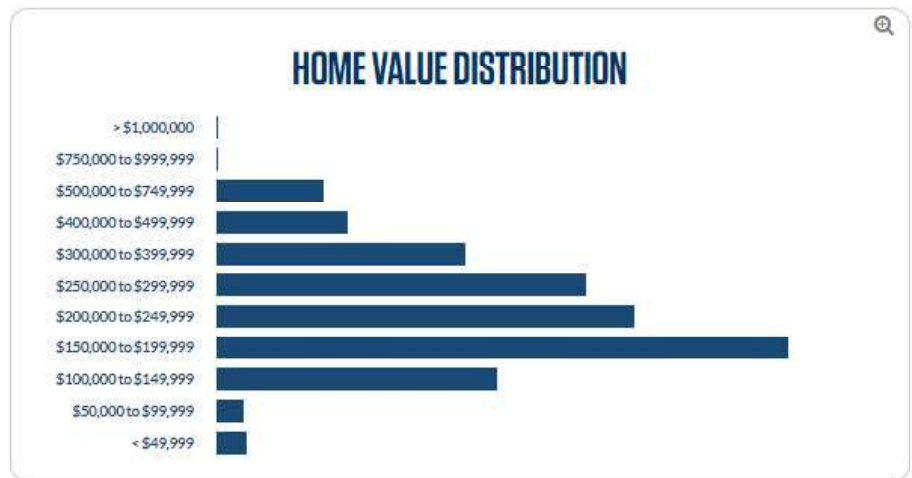
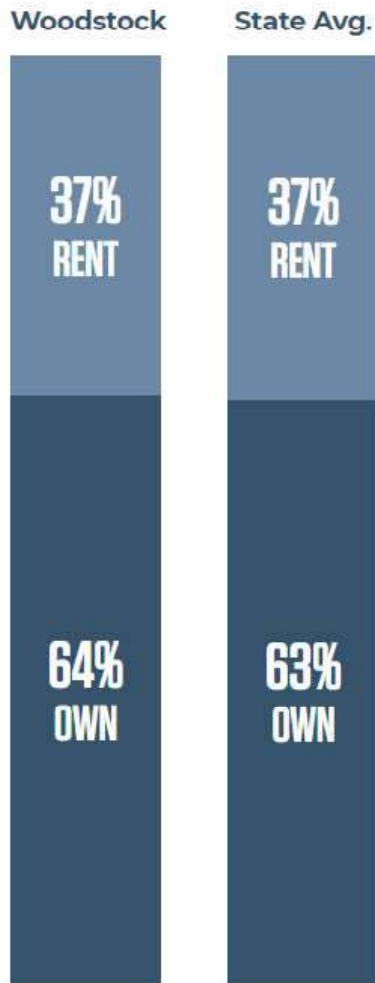
Diversity is important in planning parks and recreation programs and facilities. Planning efforts account for gender, age, race, and aims to keep all programs and access equitable regardless of income. The city and county’s population by gender is generally consistent with both the state and national makeup, with females making up slightly more than 50% of the population. The numbers are statistically significant, and it is important that the city continue to offer a balance of recreation programs for all genders. These programs should be diverse in nature to reflect the unique needs of the community.

Between 2000 and 2010, the African American population increased from 2.5% to 5.7% of the population. However, from 2010 to 2015, that population only changed from 5.7% to 5.8%. During those same periods, the Hispanic and Latino population nearly doubled from 5.5% to 9.9%. The ARC predicts that by 2040, if the trends continue, the population will consist of 71% White, 6% African American, 17% Hispanic, and 5% other. As the community continues to become more diverse, the parks and recreation department will need to plan to accommodate the needs of different ethnic groups.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME



HOME OWNERS VS RENTERS



* Data Source: 2018 US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. Home value data includes all types of owner-occupied housing.

It is important to look at the homeownership rate, and household income to gain an understanding of local economic factors. These numbers are important to compare to the state and national levels in order to understand if the city is lower or higher than average rates. The City of Woodstock homeownership rate is 1% higher than both the state and national rate with 64% of residents owning their home. The median home value is \$222,500 which is well above the State of Georgia value of \$147,900 and national median home value of \$181,200. The median household income for the City of Woodstock is \$70,997, while the State of Georgia's average household income is \$49,321. 15% of the population's household income is less than \$25,000. The income levels may indicate that households in Woodstock have additional disposable income. It should also be noted that even with higher income levels in the city, the parks and recreation department and city must balance program fees for all income levels in the community to maximize access.

HEALTH TRENDS

The following is research conducted by the Cherokee County Recreation and Parks Agency. In addition to population trends in a community, a discussion of parks and recreation should include a discussion of the community's health. Specifically, it is important to highlight the health issues related to inactivity and adult obesity rates. In general, people are less active than in the past and lead sedentary lifestyles. This inactivity has led to an obesity epidemic, which continues to grow with the most dramatic increases seen in the southern United States. This routine affects life expectancy and has economic impacts on direct medical spending. According to the Center of Disease Control (CDC), "an estimated annual medical cost of obesity in the U.S. was \$147 billion in 2008 U.S. Dollars; the medical costs for people who are obese were \$1,429 higher than those of normal weight" (CDC 2015).

According to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, a person reaches the level of obese once a Body Mass Index (BMI) level of 30 or more is achieved. BMI is calculated from height to weight ratio and is a good gauge of risks for heart and lung disease. On average, the obesity rate is higher among middle-aged adults 40-59 years old than it is for adults under 39 or above 60. Multi-use paths, trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes provide citizens with an opportunity for exercise. Physical activity not only helps maintain a healthy weight, but it also benefits mental health, according to a report by the US Department of Health and Human Services, 1996. Research also reveals that those commuters who walk or cycle more regularly have noticeable better mental health than those who commute by car. (University of East Anglia (UEA) and the Centre for Diet and Activity Research (CEDAR), 2014).

The following information is for Cherokee County as a whole, not specific to Woodstock. This information compiled from County Health Ranking and Roadmaps, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program, compares Cherokee County's adult obesity rates (percentage of adults that report a BMI of 30 or more) to a national benchmark, as well as to the state of Georgia. The national benchmark, the 90th percentile of performers in the county, is an adult obesity rate of 25% of the population. Cherokee has a higher obesity rate than the national benchmark with 26% of the adult population obese. Cherokee is below the state rate of 28% of the adult population being obese. However, over a five year period (2011-2016), the adult obesity rates in both Cherokee and Georgia have increased.

Parks, facilities, and programming that are accessible to residents and allow for active participation by people of all ages can help reduce this number. It is known that people's environment has an enormous impact on their choices. Having more parks, recreational amenities, sidewalks, bike lanes, and greenways can help to improve a community's overall health. Offering a wide variety of recreation programs for all ages is equally important. The more diverse the recreation program offerings the more people who will be attracted to the programs and this more health benefits to the community.

SUMMARY OF DEMOGRAPHICS & TRENDS

Considering Woodstock's location within the Atlanta region, population is estimated to accelerate at a rapid rate. Changing demographics will bring in a more diverse population, which in turn will necessitate the need to plan for a wide range of facilities and programs to accommodate future needs.

Woodstock is the largest municipality in Cherokee County and also has the highest population density among the other cities. Density itself is a challenge when planning parks and recreation facilities and programs and will take creativity and continuous improvements to plan successful parks and recreation amenities for the community.

Woodstock, as a whole is predominately a White/Caucasian community. Minorities, including Black/African American and Hispanic populations are continuing to grow. The population in Woodstock and Cherokee County is growing more diverse in its racial and ethnic composition.

Further, the population is aging, and the percentage of baby boomers have increased. There should be a focus on programs and facilities for active adults (50-55+) to accommodate the needs of this population. Attention should be given to some of the activities most often utilized by this age group, such as pickleball, swimming, greenways, walking, hiking, and running.

The population is also one with a higher household income. Income levels are of particular importance because they affect the community's ability to afford recreation programs and services. In communities with higher income levels, the parks and recreation department may not need to subsidize recreation programs as much as it would if income levels were lower. This may affect how the city considers programs fees and other revenues to offset programming costs.

RECREATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Recreation Trends Analysis provides an understanding of national, regional, and local recreational trends. This analysis examines participation trends, activity levels, and programming trends. It is important to note that all trends are based on current and/or historical patterns and participation rates.

NATIONAL TRENDS IN RECREATION

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2018 was utilized in evaluating the following trends:

- National Trends in Sport and Fitness Participation
- Core vs Casual Participation
- Activity by Generation

The study is based on findings from surveys carried out in 2017 and the beginning of 2018 by the Physical Activity Council, resulting in a total of 30,999 online interviews (individual and household surveys). A sample size of 30,999 completed interviews is considered by SFIA to result in a high degree of statistical accuracy. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of +/- 0.27 percentage points at a 95% confidence interval. Using weighting techniques, survey results are applied to the total U.S. population figure of 298,325,103 people (ages 6 and older). The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation across the U.S.

Core vs Casual Participation

In addition to overall participation rates, SFIA further categorizes active participants as either core or casual participants based on frequency. Core participants have higher participatory frequency than casual participants. The thresholds that define casual versus core participation may vary based on the nature of each individual activity. For instance, core participants engage in most fitness and recreational activities more than 50 times per year, while for sports, the threshold for core participation is typically 13 times per year. In a given activity, core participants are more committed and tend to be less likely to switch to other activities or become inactive (engage in no physical activity) than casual participants. This may also explain why activities with more core participants tend to experience less pattern shifts in participation rates than those with larger groups of casual participants.

In recent years, the percent of core participants has decreased in nearly every sport/activity as casual participation continues to become more common among today's generation. This is expected to be a result of several factors including time restraints, financial barriers, and the introduction of new activities. All of these factors are contributing to participants trying out new activities and casually participating in a wide variety of sports and recreation endeavors versus the former trend of dedicating all on one's time and finance to one (or two) activities.

Inactivity Rates / Activity Level Trends

SFIA also categorizes participation rates by intensity, dividing activity levels into five categories based on the caloric implication (i.e., high calorie burning, low/med calorie burning, or inactive) and the frequency of participation (i.e., 1-50 times, 50-150 times, or above) for a given activity. Participation rates are expressed as “super active” or “active to a healthy level” (high calorie burning, 151+ times), “active” (high calorie burning, 50-150 times), “casual” (high calorie burning 1-50 times), “low/med calorie burning”, and “inactive”. These participation rates are then assessed based on the total population trend over the last five years, as well as breaking down these rates by generation.

NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

The sport's most heavily participated in the United States were Golf (23.8 million in 2016) and Basketball (23.4 million), which have participation figures well in excess of the other activities within the general sports category. The popularity of golf and basketball can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number of participants. Even though golf has experienced a decrease in participation, it still continues to benefit from its wide age segment appeal and is considered a lifetime sport. Basketball's success can be attributed to the limited amount of equipment needed to participate and the limited space requirements necessary, which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at the majority of American dwellings as a drive way pickup game.

Since 2012, Rugby and other niche sports, like Boxing, Lacrosse, and Roller Hockey has seen strong growth. Rugby has emerged as the overall fastest growing sport, as it has seen participation levels rise by 82.8% over the last five years. Based on the five year trend, Boxing and Competition (42.6%), Lacrosse (35.1%), and Roller Hockey (34.2%) have also experienced significant growth. In the most recent year, the fastest growing sports were Boxing for Competition (13.1%) and Pickleball (11.3%).

During the last five years, the sports that are most rapidly declining include Ultimate Frisbee (-39.1%), Touch Football (-22.8%), Tackle Football (-16.0%), and Racquetball (-13.4%). For the most recent year, Ultimate Frisbee (-14.9%), Badminton (-12.6%), Gymnastics (-10.7%), and Volleyball-Sand/Beach (-9.9%) experienced the largest declines.

In general, the most recent year shares a similar pattern with the five year trends. This suggests that the increasing participation rates in certain activities have yet to peak in sports like Rugby, Lacrosse, Field Hockey, and Competitive Boxing. However, some sports that increased rapidly over the past five years have experienced recent decreases in participation, including Squash, Ice Hockey, Roller Hockey, and Volleyball-Sand/Beach. The reversal of the five year trends in these sports may be due to a relatively low user base (ranging from 1-5 million) and could suggest that participation in these activities may have peaked.

Core vs Casual Participation

The most popular sports, such as Basketball and Baseball, have a larger core participant base (engaged 13+ times annually) than casual participant base (engaged at least 1 time annually). Less mainstream, less organized sports such as Ultimate Frisbee, Roller Hockey, Squash, and Boxing for Competition have larger casual participation. Although these sports increased in participation over the last five years, the newcomers were mostly casual participants that may be more inclined to switch to other sports or fitness activities, resulting in the declining one year trends.

National Participatory Trends - General Sports					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Golf * (2011, 2015, and 2016 data)	25,682	24,120	23,815	-7.3%	-1.3%
Basketball	23,708	22,343	23,401	-1.3%	4.7%
Tennis	17,020	18,079	17,683	3.9%	-2.2%
Baseball	12,976	14,760	15,642	20.5%	6.0%
Soccer (Outdoor)	12,944	11,932	11,924	-7.9%	-0.1%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	7,411	7,690	7,283	-1.7%	-5.3%
Football, Flag	5,865	6,173	6,551	11.7%	6.1%
Badminton	7,278	7,354	6,430	-11.7%	-12.6%
Volleyball (Court)	6,384	6,216	6,317	-1.0%	1.6%
Football, Touch	7,295	5,686	5,629	-22.8%	-1.0%
Soccer (Indoor)	4,617	5,117	5,399	16.9%	5.5%
Football, Tackle	6,220	5,481	5,224	-16.0%	-4.7%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,505	5,489	4,947	9.8%	-9.9%
Gymnastics	5,115	5,381	4,805	-6.1%	-10.7%
Track and Field	4,257	4,116	4,161	-2.3%	1.1%
Cheerleading	3,244	4,029	3,816	17.6%	-5.3%
Racquetball	4,070	3,579	3,526	-13.4%	-1.5%
Pickleball	N/A	2,815	3,132	N/A	11.3%
Ultimate Frisbee	5,131	3,673	3,126	-39.1%	-14.9%
Ice Hockey	2,363	2,697	2,544	7.7%	-5.7%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,624	2,467	2,309	-12.0%	-6.4%
Lacrosse	1,607	2,090	2,171	35.1%	3.9%
Wrestling	1,922	1,922	1,896	-1.4%	-1.4%
Roller Hockey	1,367	1,929	1,834	34.2%	-4.9%
Rugby	887	1,550	1,621	82.8%	4.6%
Field Hockey	1,237	1,512	1,596	29.0%	5.6%
Squash	1,290	1,549	1,492	15.7%	-3.7%
Boxing for Competition	959	1,210	1,368	42.6%	13.1%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
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*2017 information not available for Golf. Information to be released by National Golf Foundation. Participation figures above reflect 2011, 2015, and 2016 data.

NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

Overall, national participatory trends in fitness have experienced strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among Americans to improve their health and enhance quality of life by engaging in an active lifestyle. These activities also have very few barriers to entry, which provides a variety of options that are relatively inexpensive to participate in and can be performed by most individuals.

The most popular fitness activity, by far is Fitness Walking, which had about 110.8 million participants in 2017, increasing 2.7% from the previous year. Other leading fitness activities based on total number of participants include Treadmill (52.9 million), Free Weights (52.2 million), Running/Jogging (50.7 million), Weight/Resistance Machines (36.2 million), and Stationary Cycling (36.0 million).

Over the last five years, the activities growing most rapidly are Non-Traditional/Off-Road Triathlons (74.7%), Trail Running (57.6%), and Aerobics (32.7%). Over the same time frame, the activities that have undergone the most decline include Boot Camps Style Cross Training (-11%), Stretching (-7.5%), and Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise (-2.6%).

In the last year, activities with the largest gains in participation were Triathlon Non-Traditional/Off Road (10.1%) Running/Jogging (7.1%), and Trail Running (6.6%). From 2016-2017, the activities that had the most decline in participation were Traditional/Road Triathlon (-8.9%), Cardio Kickboxing (-3.0%), and Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise (-2.6%).



Core vs Casual Trends in General Fitness

It should be noted that many of the activities that are rapidly growing have a relatively low user base, which allows for more drastic shifts in terms of percentage, especially for five year trends. Increasing casual participants may also explain the rapid growth in some activities. For instance, core/casual participation trends showed that over the last five years, casual participants increased drastically in Non-Traditional/Off Road (119.6%) and Tai Chi (26.9%), while the core participant base of both activities experienced significantly less growth.

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Fitness Walking	114,029	107,895	110,805	-2.8%	2.7%
Treadmill	50,839	51,872	52,966	4.2%	2.1%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	N/A	51,513	52,217	N/A	1.4%
Running/Jogging	51,450	47,384	50,770	-1.3%	7.1%
Weight/Resistant Machines	38,999	35,768	36,291	-6.9%	1.5%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	35,987	36,118	36,035	0.1%	-0.2%
Stretching	35,873	33,771	33,195	-7.5%	-1.7%
Elliptical Motion Trainer*	28,560	32,218	32,283	13.0%	0.2%
Free Weights (Barbells)	26,688	26,473	27,444	2.8%	3.7%
Yoga	23,253	26,268	27,354	17.6%	4.1%
Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise	N/A	25,110	24,454	N/A	-2.6%
Choreographed Exercise	N/A	21,839	22,616	N/A	3.6%
Aerobics (High Impact)	16,178	21,390	21,476	32.7%	0.4%
Stair Climbing Machine	12,979	15,079	14,948	15.2%	-0.9%
Cross-Training Style Workout	N/A	12,914	13,622	N/A	5.5%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	8,477	8,937	9,409	11.0%	5.3%
Trail Running	5,806	8,582	9,149	57.6%	6.6%
Pilates Training	8,519	8,893	9,047	6.2%	1.7%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,725	6,899	6,693	-0.5%	-3.0%
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	7,496	6,583	6,651	-11.3%	1.0%
Martial Arts	5,075	5,745	5,838	15.0%	1.6%
Boxing for Fitness	4,831	5,175	5,157	6.7%	-0.3%
Tai Chi	3,203	3,706	3,787	18.2%	2.2%
Barre	N/A	3,329	3,436	N/A	3.2%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	1,789	2,374	2,162	20.8%	-8.9%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,075	1,705	1,878	74.7%	10.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

*Cardio Cross Trainer is merged to Elliptical Motion Trainer

NATIONAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

Results from the SFIA report demonstrate a contrast of growth and decline in participation regarding outdoor/adventure recreation activities. Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or within a group, and are not as limited by time constraints.

In 2017, the most popular activities, in terms of total participants, from the outdoor/adventure recreation category include: Day Hiking (44.9 million), Road Bicycling (38.8 million), Freshwater Fishing (38.3 million), and Camping within ¼ mile of Vehicle/Home (26.2 million).

From 2012-2017, BMX Bicycling (83.4%), Adventure Racing (56.3%), Backpacking Overnight (38.3%), and Day Hiking (30.1%) have undergone the largest increases in participation. Similarly, in the last year, activities growing most rapidly includes BMX Bicycling (10%), Backpacking Overnight (8.1%), and Day Hiking (6.6%).

The five year trend shows activities declining most rapidly were In-line Roller Skating (-20.7%), Camping within ¼ mile of Home/Vehicle (-16.5%), and Birdwatching (-9.2%). More recently, activities experiencing the largest declines were Adventure Racing (-15.7%), Traditional Climbing (-9.4%), and In-line Roller Skating (-2.1%).

Core vs Casual Trends in Outdoor Recreation

National participation trends for outdoor activities is on the rise; however, In-line Roller Skating and Freshwater Fishing only experienced increases in casual participation over the last five years. Any decline in participation over the last five years was mainly ascribed to decreases in core participants for activities such as In-line Roller Skating (-32.6%), Skateboarding (-10.7%), Road Bicycling (-10.4%), RV Camping (-10.0%), and Archery (-3.2%).

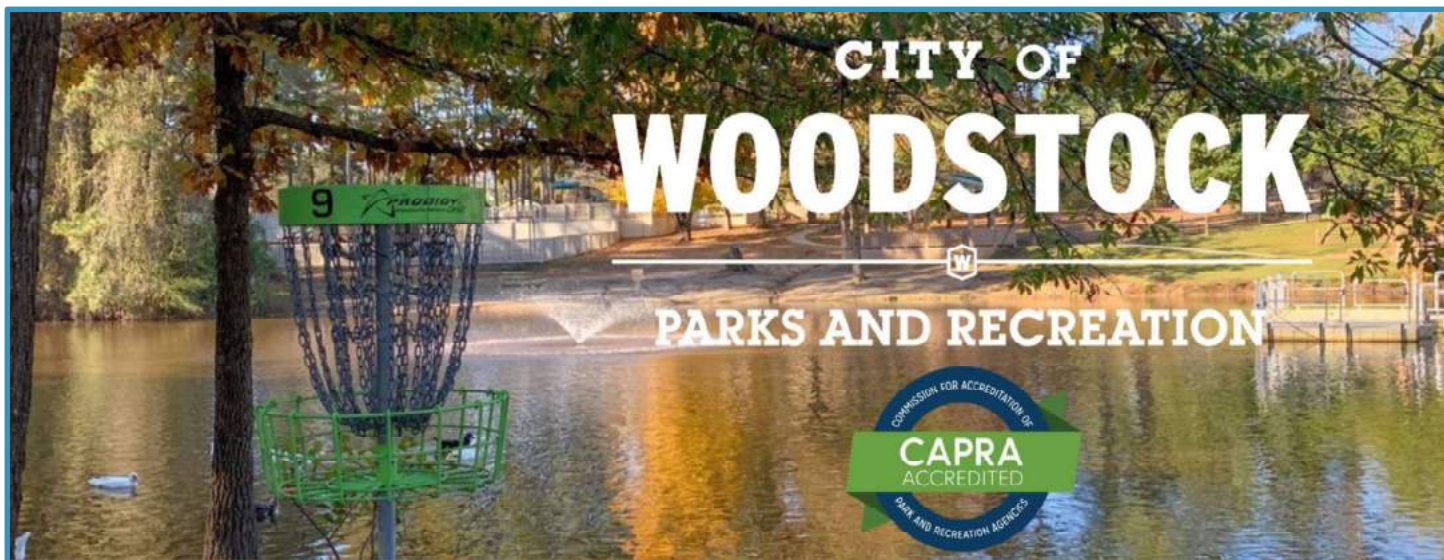


National Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation

Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Hiking (Day)	34,519	42,128	44,900	30.1%	6.6%
Bicycling (Road)	39,790	38,365	38,866	-2.3%	1.3%
Fishing (Freshwater)	39,002	38,121	38,346	-1.7%	0.6%
Camping (< 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	31,454	26,467	26,262	-16.5%	-0.8%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	15,903	15,855	16,159	1.6%	1.9%
Fishing (Saltwater)	12,000	12,266	13,062	8.9%	6.5%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	13,535	11,589	12,296	-9.2%	6.1%
Backpacking Overnight	7,933	10,151	10,975	38.3%	8.1%
Bicycling (Mountain)	7,265	8,615	8,609	18.5%	-0.1%
Archery	7,173	7,903	7,769	8.3%	-1.7%
Fishing (Fly)	5,848	6,456	6,791	16.1%	5.2%
Skateboarding	6,227	6,442	6,382	2.5%	-0.9%
Roller Skating, In-Line	6,647	5,381	5,268	-20.7%	-2.1%
Bicycling (BMX)	1,861	3,104	3,413	83.4%	10.0%
Adventure Racing	1,618	2,999	2,529	56.3%	-15.7%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,189	2,790	2,527	15.4%	-9.4%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
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PAR2

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NATIONAL TRENDS IN AQUATIC ACTIVITY

Swimming is unquestionably a lifetime sport, which is most likely why it has experienced such a strong participation growth among the American population. In 2017, Fitness Swimming is the absolute leader in overall participation (27.1 million) for aquatic activities, due in large part to its broad, multigenerational appeal. In the most recent year, Fitness Swimming reported the strongest growth (2.0%) among aquatic activities, while Aquatic Exercise and Competitive Swimming experienced decreases in participation.

Aquatic Exercise had a strong participation base of 10.4 million, however it also has recently experienced a slight decrease in participants (-1.1%). Based on previous trends, this activity could rebound in terms of participation due largely to ongoing research that demonstrates the activity's great therapeutic benefit coupled with increased life expectancies and a booming senior population. Aquatic Exercise has paved the way as a less stressful form of physical activity, while allowing similar benefits as a land based exercises, such as aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and balance. Doctors are still recommending Aquatic Exercise for injury rehabilitation, mature patients, and patients with bone or joint problems. Compared to a standard workout, Aquatic Exercise can significantly reduce stress placed on weight bearing joints, bones, and muscles, while also reducing swelling.

Core vs Casual Trends in Aquatic Activity

While all activities have undergone increases in participation over the last five years, most recently, casual participation (1-49 times) is increasing much more rapidly than core participation (50+ times). For the five year timeframe, casual participants of Competition Swimming increased by 56.2%, Aquatic Exercise by 24.8%, and Fitness Swimming by 21.0%. However, core participants of Competition Swimming decreased by -6.5% and Aquatic Exercise declined by -4.6% (from 2012-2017).

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Swimming (Fitness)	23,216	26,601	27,135	16.9%	2.0%
Aquatic Exercise	9,177	10,575	10,459	14.0%	-1.1%
Swimming (Competition)	2,502	3,369	3,007	20.2%	-10.7%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

NATIONAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS/ACTIVITIES

The most popular water sports/activities based on total participants in 2017 were Recreational Kayaking (10.5 million), Canoeing (9.2 million), and Snorkeling (8.3 million). It should be noted that water activity participation tends to vary based on regional, seasonal, and environmental factors. A region with more access to water access and a warmer climate is more likely to have a higher participation rate in water activities than a region that has long winter seasons or limited water access. Therefore, when accessing trends in water sports and activities, it is important to understand that fluctuations may be the result of environmental barriers which can greatly influence water activity participation.

Over the last five years, Stand Up Paddle Boarding (138.9%) was by far the fastest growing water activity, followed by White Water Kayaking (33.1%), Recreational Kayaking (28.7%), and Sea/Tour Kayaking (20.8%). Although the five year trends show water sport activities are getting more popular, the most recent year shows a different trend. From 2016-2017 Stand Up Paddle Boarding and Recreational Kayaking reflect much slower increases in participation (3.3% & 5.2%), while White Water Kayaking (-2.0%), Sea/Tour Kayaking (-5.4%) both show decreases in participation numbers.

From 2012 – 2017, activities declining most rapidly were Jet Skiing (-22.6%), Water Skiing (-19.4%), and Wakeboarding (-10.8%). In the most recent year, activities experiencing the greatest declines in participation included Boardsailing/Windsurfing (-9.4%), Canoeing (-8.2%), and Scuba Diving (-7.6%).



Core vs Casual Trends in Water Sports/Activities

As mentioned previously, regional, seasonal, and environmental limiting factors may influence the participation rate of water sports and activities. These factors may also explain why all water based activities have more casual participants than core participants, since frequencies of activities may be constrained by uncontrollable factors.

National Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Kayaking (Recreational)	8,187	10,017	10,533	28.7%	5.2%
Canoeing	9,813	10,046	9,220	-6.0%	-8.2%
Snorkeling	8,664	8,717	8,384	-3.2%	-3.8%
Jet Skiing	6,996	5,783	5,418	-22.6%	-6.3%
Sailing	3,841	4,095	3,974	3.5%	-3.0%
Water Skiing	4,434	3,700	3,572	-19.4%	-3.5%
Rafting	3,756	3,428	3,479	-7.4%	1.5%
Stand-Up Paddling	1,392	3,220	3,325	138.9%	3.3%
Wakeboarding	3,368	2,912	3,005	-10.8%	3.2%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	2,446	3,124	2,955	20.8%	-5.4%
Scuba Diving	2,781	3,111	2,874	3.3%	-7.6%
Surfing	2,545	2,793	2,680	5.3%	-4.0%
Kayaking (White Water)	1,878	2,552	2,500	33.1%	-2.0%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,372	1,737	1,573	14.7%	-9.4%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
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ACTIVITY BY GENERATION

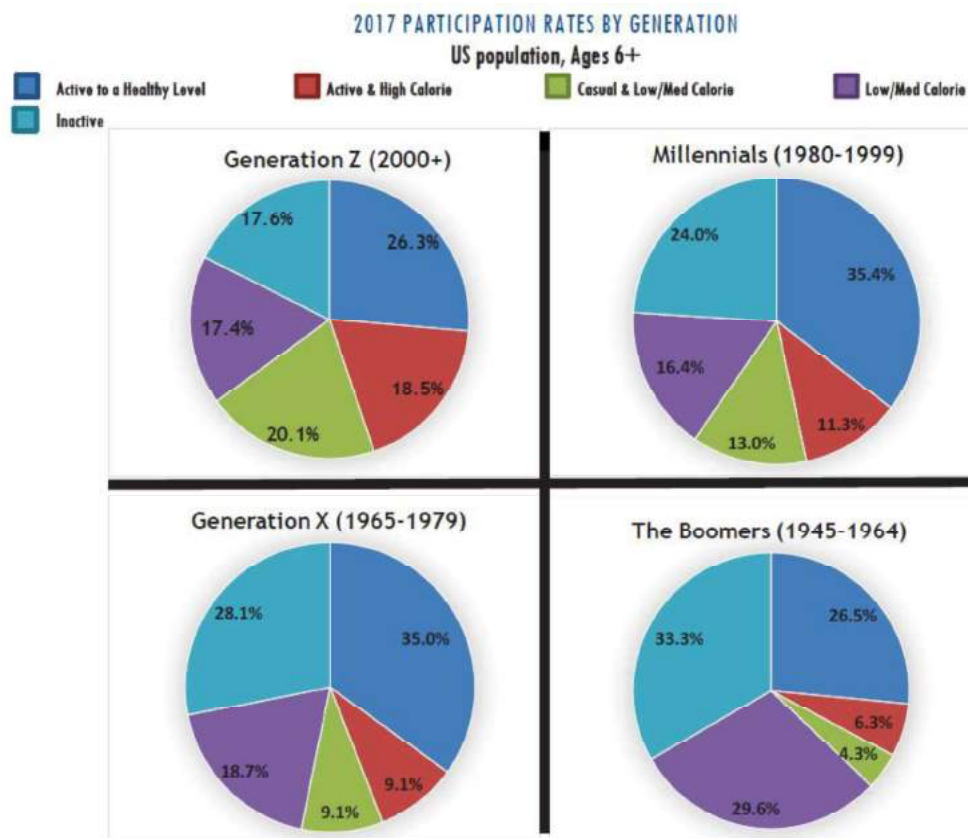
Analyzing participation by age for recreational activities reveals that fitness and outdoor sports were the most common activities across all generations. Breaking down activity level by generation shows a converse correlation between age and healthy activity rates.

Generation Z (born 2000+) were the most active, with only 17.6% identifying as inactive. Approximately 65% of individuals within the generation were active in 2017; with 26.3 % being active to a healthy level, 18.5% being active & high calorie, and 20.1% being casual active & low/med calorie.

Almost half (47.6%) of **Millennials (born 1980-1999)** were active to a healthy level (35.4%) or active & high calorie (11.3%), while 24.0% claimed they were inactive. Even though this inactive rate is much higher than Generation Z's (17.6%), it is still below the national inactive rate (28%).

Generation X (born 1965-1979) has the second highest active to a healthy level rate (35.0%) among all generations, only being 0.4% less than millennials. At the same time, they also have the second highest inactive rate, with 28.1% not active at all.

The Boomers (born 1945-1964) were the least active generation, with an inactive rate of 33.3%. This age group tends to participate in less intensive activities. Approximately 34% claimed to engage in casual & low/med calorie (4.3%) or low/med calorie (29.6%) burning activities.



*Times per year: Casual (1-50), Active (51-150), Active to Healthy Level (151+)

SOUTHERN REGION RECREATION COMPARISON

NRPA’s Agency Performance Review 2018 summarized key findings from NRPA Park Metrics, which is a benchmark tool that compares the management and planning of operating resources and capital facilities of park and recreation agencies. The report contains data from 1,069 park and recreation agencies across the U.S. as reported between 2015 and 2017.

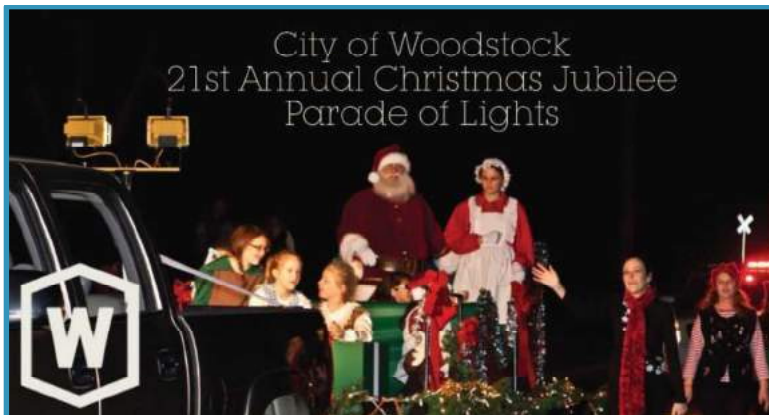
PROGRAMS OFFERED BY SOUTHERN PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES

The report shows that the typical agencies (i.e., those at the median values) offer 161 programs annually, with roughly 60% of those programs being fee based activities and events.

According to the information reported to NRPA, the top five programming activities most frequently offered by park and recreation agencies, both in the U.S. and regionally, are described in the table below. When comparing Southern agencies to the U.S. average, team sports, themed special events, social recreation events, fitness enhancement classes, and health and wellness education were all identified as top five most commonly provided program areas offered regionally and nationally.

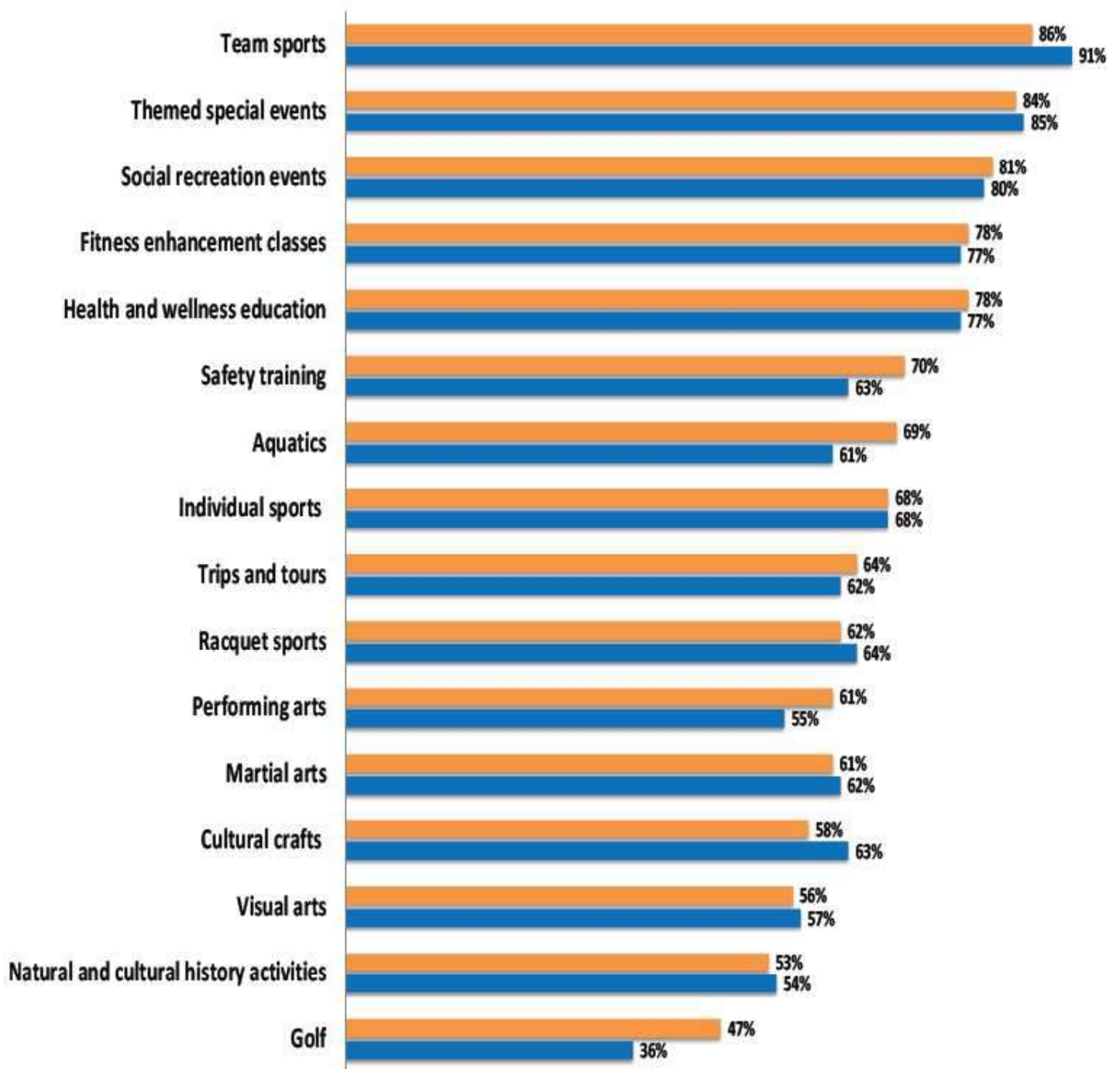
TOP 5 MOST OFFERED CORE PROGRAM AREAS (OFFERED BY PARKS AND RECREATION AGENCIES)	
U.S. (% of Agencies Offering)	Southern Region (% of Agencies Offering)
Team Sports (86%)	Team Sports (91%)
Themed Special Events (84%)	Themed Special Events (85%)
Social Recreation Events (81%)	Social Recreation Events (80%)
Fitness Enhancement Classes (78%)	Fitness Enhancement Classes (77%)
Health and Wellness Education (78%)	Health and Wellness Education (77%)

In general, programs offered by park and recreation agencies in the Southern region resemble agencies nationwide. However, based on a discrepancy threshold of 5% or more, Southern agencies are offering programs such as team sports and cultural crafts, at a higher rate than the national average. Contradictory, the agencies in the South are trailing the national average in regard to safety training, aquatics, performing arts, and golf.



Core Program Areas Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies (Percent of Agencies)

■ U.S. ■ Southern



TARGETED PROGRAM AREAS TARGETING CHILDREN, SENIORS, AND/OR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

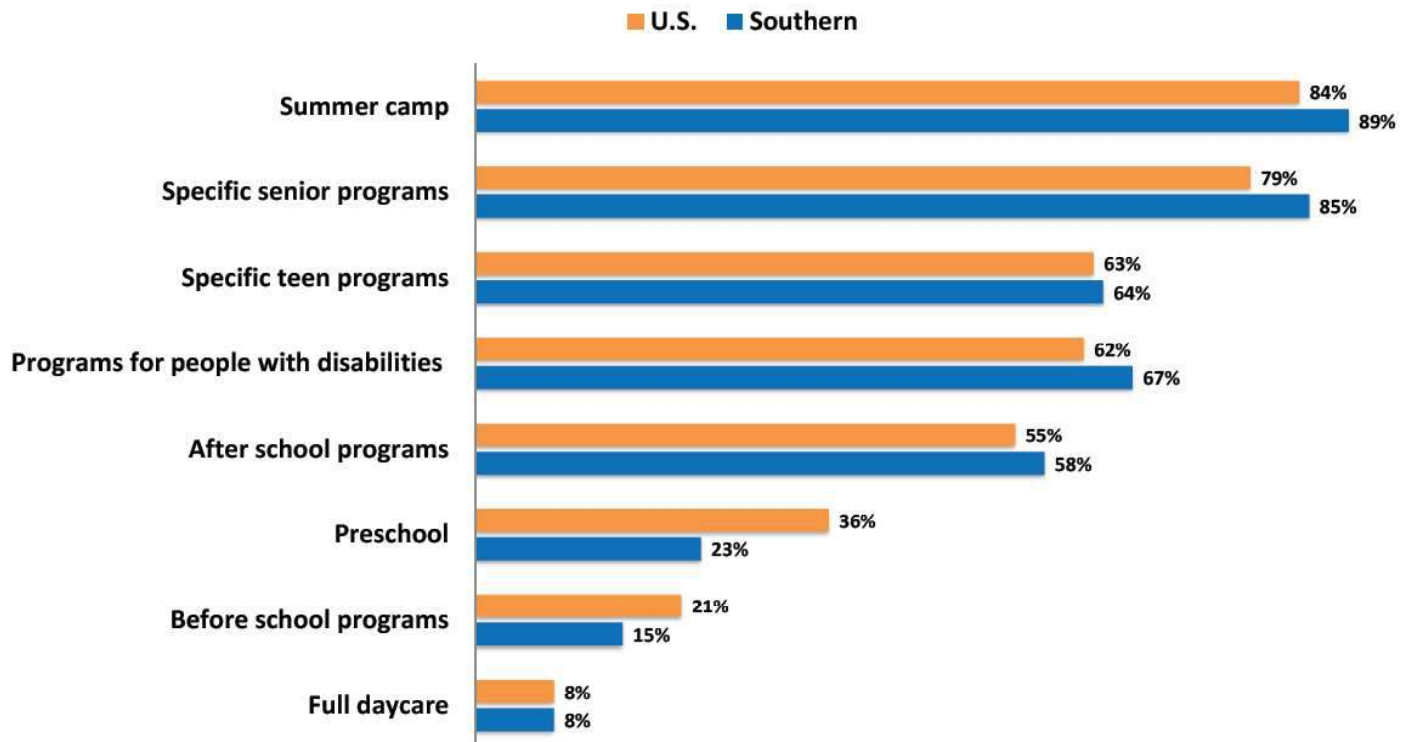
For better understanding of targeted programs by age segment, NRPA also tracks program offerings that cater specifically to children, seniors, and people with disabilities, on a national and regional basis. This allows for further analysis of these commonly targeted populations. According to the 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review, approximately 79% of agencies offer dedicated senior programming, while 62% of park and recreation agencies provide adaptive programming for individuals with disabilities.

Based on information reported to the NRPA, the top three activities that target children, seniors, and/or people with disabilities most frequently offered by park and recreation agencies are described below.

Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas (Targeting Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities)	
U.S. (% of Agencies Offering)	Southern Region (% of Agencies Offering)
Summer Camp (84%)	Summer Camp (89%)
Senior Programs (79%)	Senior Programs (85%)
Teen Programs (63%)	Programs for People with Disabilities (67%)

Agencies in the Southern Region tend to offer targeted programs at a slightly higher rate than the national average. Southern Agencies are offering summer camps, specific senior programs, and programs for people with disabilities at a significantly higher rate, while preschool and before school programs are the only targeted program in which Southern agencies are below the national rate.

Core Program Areas Targeting Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities
(Percent of Agencies)



CHAPTER ONE CONCLUSION

FROM THE PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR

Several things have to happen when planning for the future of parks and recreation in communities. Parks and recreation staff are challenged with not only taking care of their communities interests today, but also are tasked with understanding the future and how to plan and adapt as trends and interests change. There is no endpoint to the field of parks and recreation. Goals, objectives, priorities, interests, and trends change all the time. Part of the job of a parks and recreation professional is to be ahead of this change and begin introducing these new interests while also still catering to the interests of residents today.

In parks, play habits evolve, boredom eventually kicks in, rules become too restrictive, you name it, things change. Focusing on the future sometimes means sacrificing a little of what we want today. When we plant a shade tree, we must understand that it will be our grandchildren benefitting from the shade as they sit under it, not us. When we plan parks and trails, what is the end goal? Is it to attract business and tourism, preserve greenspace and places where people can unwind, or are we interested in dedicated space for an activity that is currently popular? How do we meet the demands and maintain authenticity and relevancy for the future?

The Woodstock Parks and Recreation staff is very talented and want to continuously improve all that we do, and provide the highest quality of programs, events, and facilities possible. All the staff are heavily involved in developing these plans, using findings from surveys, meetings, evaluations, trends, knowledge from other positions held, observation, and more importantly, understanding the communities needs before they do themselves. That is the challenge and that is what makes the field of parks and recreation both frustrating, and also the most fun a professional will ever have. Mistakes will be made and learned from, successes will be celebrated and then immediately adapted to meet change, and every year will be a new challenge, a new experience, and a new opportunity.

These are all things to strongly consider when Strategic Planning and the previous chapter has highlighted what is trending around the United States and also in the Southern Region. As we move forward with this plan, current interests and needs of City of Woodstock leadership and residents will be addressed. Recommendations will be made based on these conclusions, as well as adjustments for trends that are highlighted in the previous sections, as well as plans to update and maintain current programs, events, and facilities. In addition, comparisons to other similar agencies around the country, the Atlanta region, and the Cherokee County Recreation and Parks Agency (CRPA) will be made. The relationship with CRPA is very important as we have the same goals of meeting the demands of our communities, creating connectivity, and making Cherokee County be the community of choice for residents to live, work, and play.

- **Michael D. Huffstetler, CPRE**

Parks and Recreation Director, City of Woodstock