

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

DRAFT 2025 – 2035

Macon County – Lafayette – Red Boiling Springs



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Prepared for academic credit.

Acknowledgments

This plan was made possible by the contributions of our community members, stakeholders, and outside partners. Their feedback and active participation were instrumental in shaping a vision that reflects our county's diverse needs and aspirations. Public engagement has been a cornerstone of this process, ensuring that our parks and recreation services are designed to serve and enhance the quality of life for our residents. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who participated in this collaborative effort, especially those not mentioned in the limited space below.

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[A special thanks to all of the involved citizens who contributed to this project.]

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Representatives from Macon County met with staff from the Upper Cumberland Development District and the TDEC Office of Outdoor Recreation to discuss possible grant funding for Parks and Recreation development. Participants discussed the development and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities and programs throughout Macon County. Officials learned that to be eligible for grants offered through the Office of Outdoor Recreation of TDEC, applicants **must** have a current Parks and Recreation Systemwide Plan. This plan will attempt to satisfy that requirement and serve as a guide for the community

Why was this plan created?

Shortly after learning that Macon County would need a systemwide plan to be grant-eligible, Macon County Mayor, Steve Jones, received a phone call from Lucas Johnson, a Macon County native and a student in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program at the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

During that phone call, Johnson asked that Mayor Jones assign a project that could be **completed for academic credit**, a requirement for the MPA program at UTK. Mayor Jones realized that this would be a great opportunity to 1) help a student from Macon County achieve an academic goal, and 2) take a step toward a better-prepared, grant-eligible Macon County.

All parties understood the development of the plan in the prescribed timeline would take coordination and a focused effort by all involved. Support by Lafayette, Red Boiling Springs, and Macon County leadership, staff, boards, and citizens have made the completion of this document possible. The high level of involvement by the community ensures the result is a document developed by and for the residents of Macon County.



Lucas Johnson, MPA Candidate 2025

What does this plan achieve?

This systemwide plan for Lafayette, Red Boiling Springs, and Macon County at large displays a vision for parks and recreation services as well as a framework to accomplish the identified objectives. The planning process included a strategic planning focus group, a community needs assessment survey, a facility inventory and conditions report, a list of offered programs, the identification of short-, mid-, and long-term goals, and lots of public input. These components and others contributed to a document that will be useful for the maintenance and development of recreational services in Macon County, Tennessee, for years to come.

MISSION STATEMENT

To protect and expand parks and recreational opportunities in Lafayette, Red Boiling Springs, and Macon County to promote healthy lifestyles, strengthen community bonds, support economic growth, and ensure sustainability for all residents.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES & KEY COMPONENTS

In keeping with the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) three pillars of Conservation, Health and Wellness, and Social Equity, Lafayette, Red Boiling Springs, Macon County have developed this plan that will continue to protect green space and environmental assets and provide opportunities for healthy and fun activities for all its residents. This plan provides a vision to maintain and enhance existing facilities and programs while also anticipating the future needs of a county that is expected to see tremendous growth in the coming years. Beneficial parks will be instrumental in maintaining the county's health and economic vitality.

Guiding Principles

Promote healthy lifestyles: Create accessible recreational opportunities that encourage physical activity, outdoor exploration, and mental well-being for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Expand and enhance recreational opportunities: Increase the availability and quality of parks, trails, sports facilities, and community spaces across Macon County.

Strengthen community ties: Foster a sense of unity and belonging by providing shared spaces and events that bring together residents from across the county.

Support economic development: Use parks and recreational amenities as catalysts for tourism and economic growth, attracting visitors and improving the local economy.

Ensure sustainability: Develop an environmentally responsible plan that conserves and appreciates natural resources while accommodating growth and recreational needs for future generations.

Key Components

Strategic Planning Group (S.W.O.T. Analysis): A focus group of involved stakeholders representing a cross-section of the community gathered to provide valuable insight.

Needs Assessment Survey: A survey administered to collect public input about facility and program usage, perceptions, future needs, and other important information.

Public Input Meetings: Community meetings to gather feedback to ensure the plan reflects public priorities and addresses the needs and desires of the public.

Facility Inventory and Conditions Summary: An analysis of the current parks and recreation infrastructure in Lafayette, Red Boiling Springs, and Macon County, identifying advantages, disadvantages, and opportunities for improvement.

Program Offerings: Recreational programs, leagues, and events tailored to all age groups, fostering a stronger sense of community and improving the quality of life.

Short-, Mid-, and Long-Term Goals: The identification of immediate, mid-term, and long-term goals based on public input data, focus group input, and the goals of each governing entity.



COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

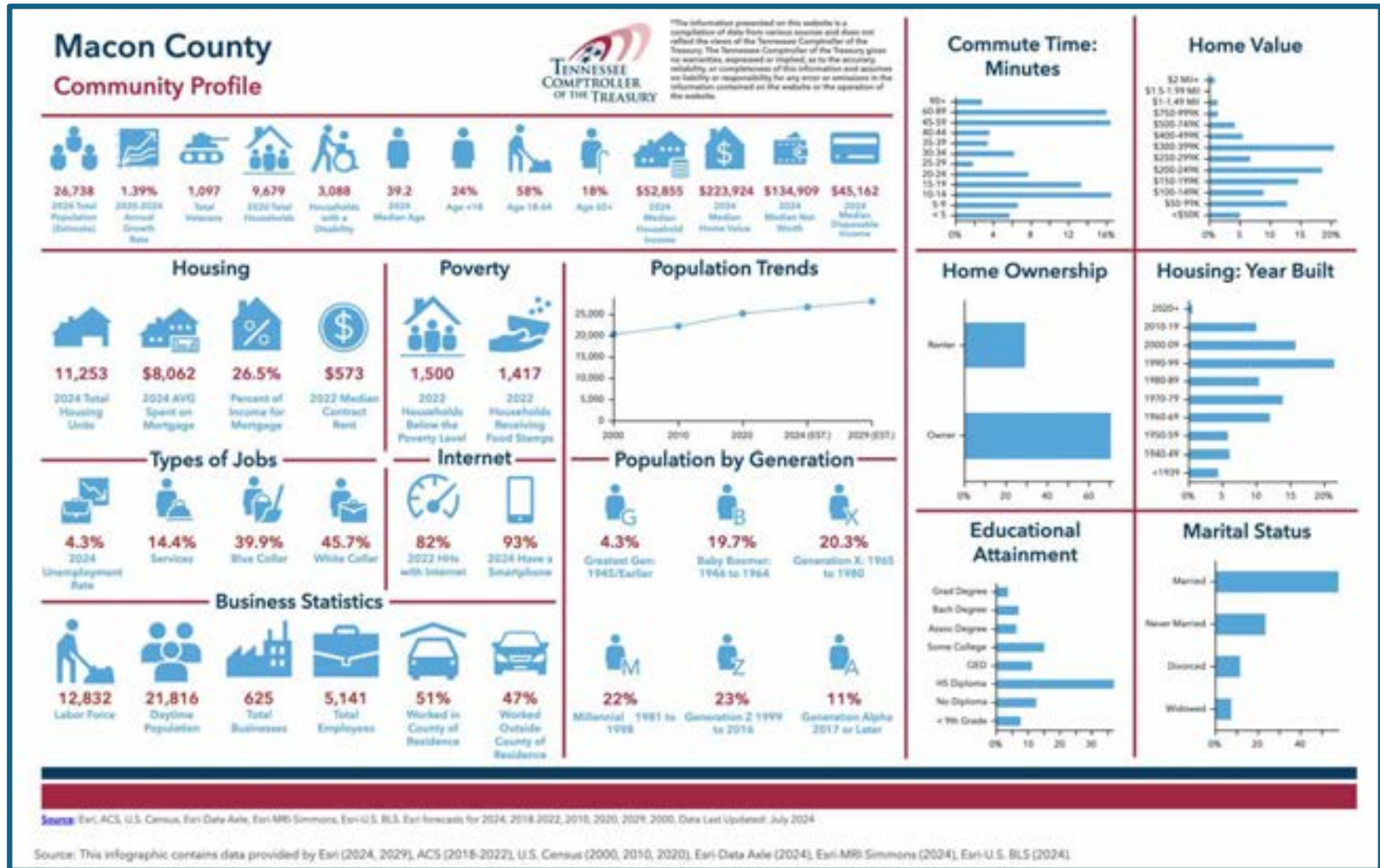


Macon County on the Map



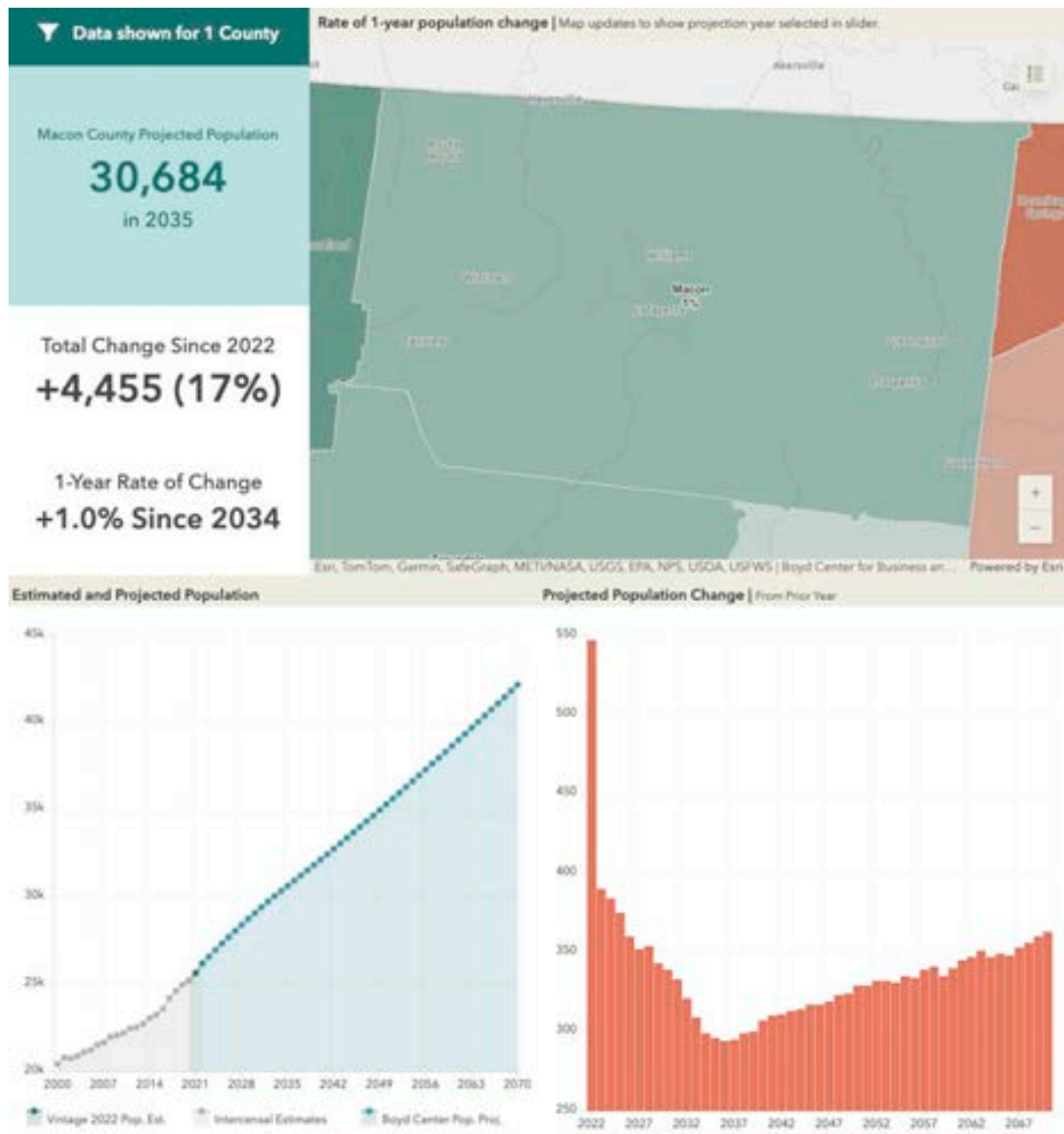
Macon County

The community profile below, created by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, provides valuable, analytical insight into the population and other trends of Macon County, Tennessee. All of these data points and others should be considered in planning for the future.



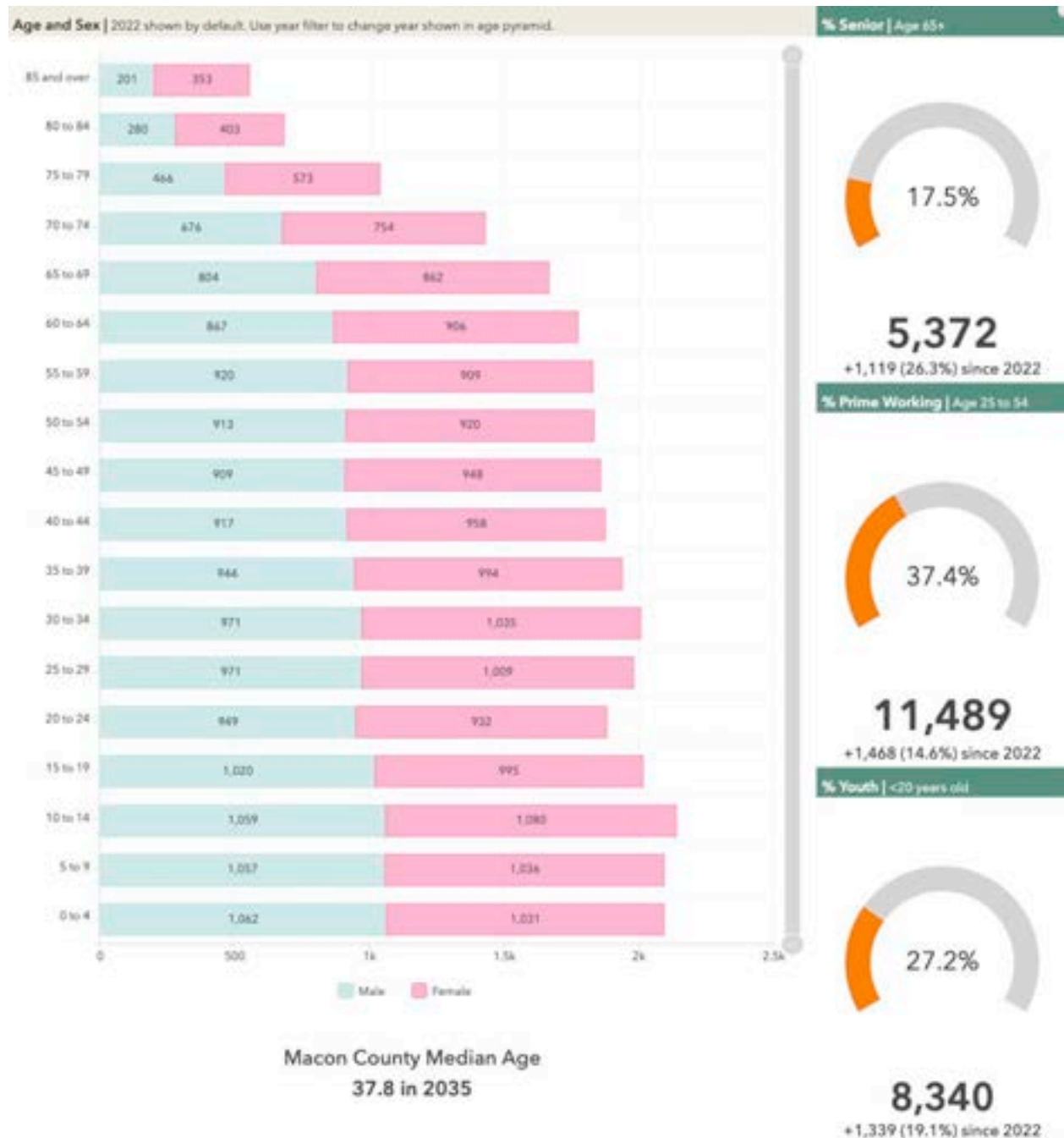
Population Trends & Projections

According to the University of Tennessee's [Boyd Center for Business & Economic Research](#), the population of Macon County is expected to grow by nearly 4,500, or 17 percent, between 2022 and 2035. Additionally, the Boyd Center projects population growth through 2070, as shown in the charts below. It is important to account for this projected growth in this plan and others. The current population is around 25,400.



Age Data & Trends

According to the University of Tennessee's [Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research](#), **the median age of Macon County citizens will be 37.8 years in 2035** which is consistent with the current median age of 37.9 years. There is a good mix of all ages, however. The county must account for all age groups in planning for the future. The county must provide safe, outdoor opportunities for recreational activities for all ages. The figures below are projections for 2035.



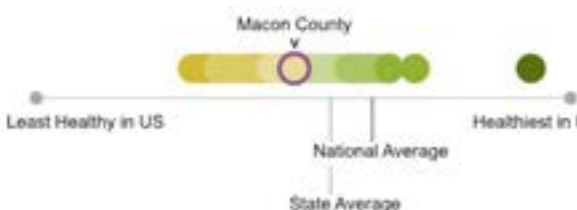
Health Data

Public parks and recreation facilities are essential to promoting physical activity and improving community health. **These spaces provide accessible locations for exercise, sports, and recreational activities, encouraging people of all ages and fitness levels to be active.** Research consistently shows that access to outdoor recreational spaces can reduce stress, enhance mental well-being, and lower risks of chronic diseases such as heart disease, obesity, and diabetes. Parks and trails also offer a safe environment for activities like walking, running, biking, and group sports, **which fosters social connections and builds a sense of community.** By prioritizing well-maintained, inclusive, and inviting outdoor facilities, the county can contribute to the physical and mental health of residents, creating a foundation for healthier, happier, and more connected communities.

According to [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#), Macon County falls below the state and national averages for health outcome and health factors. This joint city/county plan will help address these outcomes and factors through the use of parks and recreation.



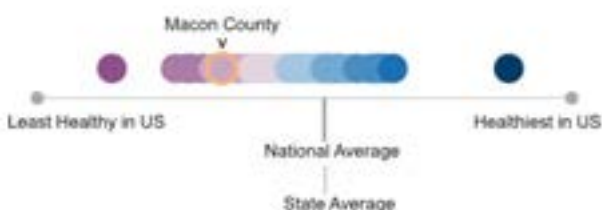
Macon County Health Outcomes - 2024



Macon County is faring worse than the average county in Tennessee for Health Outcomes, and worse than the average county in the nation.



Macon County Health Factors - 2024

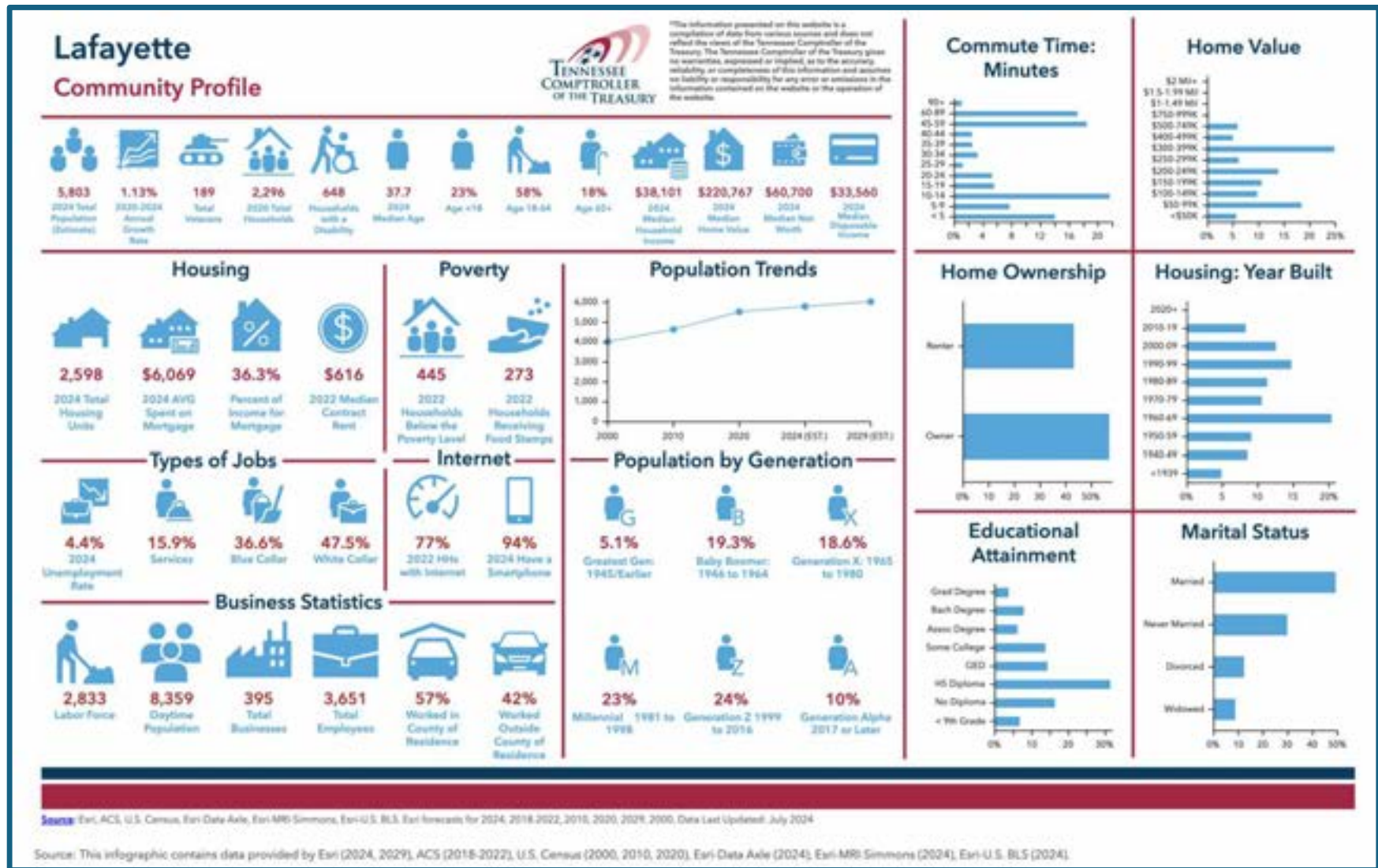


Macon County is faring worse than the average county in Tennessee for Health Factors, and worse than the average county in the nation.

Health Factors				
Health Behaviors	Macon County	Tennessee	United States	
Adult Smoking	27%	20%	15%	▼
Adult Obesity	37%	36%	34%	▼
Food Environment Index	7.1	6.5	7.7	▼
Physical Inactivity	33%	27%	23%	▼
Access to Exercise Opportunities	49%	67%	84%	▼
Excessive Drinking	15%	17%	18%	▼
Alcohol-Impaired Driving Deaths	10%	24%	26%	▼
Sexually Transmitted Infections	299.6	562.4	495.5	▼
Teen Births	39	24	17	▼

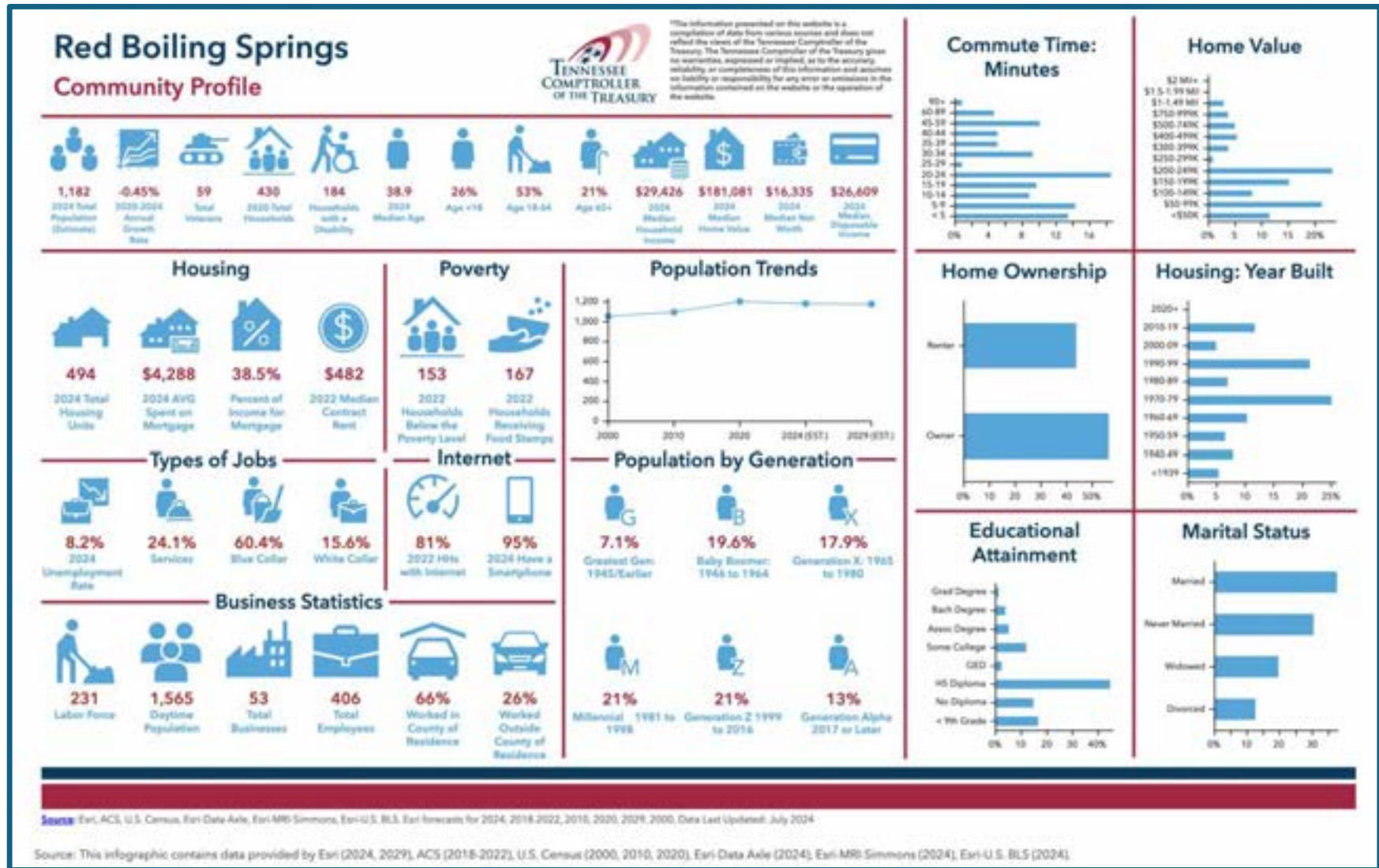
City of Lafayette

The community profile below, created by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, provides valuable, analytical insight into the population and other trends of the City of Lafayette, Tennessee. All of these data points and others should be considered in planning for the future.



City of Red Boiling Springs

The community profile below, created by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury, provides valuable, analytical insight into the population and other trends of the City of Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee. All of these data points and others should be considered in planning for the future.



Community Comparison

It is important to compare our park system with other entities of similar population size or community. Due to time constraints in the creation of this plan, an extensive comparison was not possible. Here is a glimpse at neighboring Smith County. Other nearby counties to consider are Trousdale, Jackson, and Sumner. Further comparison will prove crucial to future development.

Smith County

Crump Paris Park

- Ball fields
- Soccer Fields
- Kid Central Playground
- Walking Track
- Fitness Stations
- Pavilions
- Farmers Market
- Basketball Court
- Tennis Court
- Restrooms



Lock Seven Park

Ivy Agee Park

- Playground
- Pavilions
- Courts
- Open Grass Space
- Restrooms



Edgar Evins State Park

Smith County Soccer Complex

Carthage City Park

- Playground
- Pickleball
- Basketball
- T-Ball Field
- Walking Track
- Dog Park
- Pool (Summer)
- Restrooms



Defeated Creek Campground Point (Hiking)

Indian Creek Campground Point (Hiking)

Wildwood Resort and Marina Point (Hiking)

Regional Context

Macon County offers a rich array of natural and manmade recreational resources that serve as a strong foundation for outdoor activities and community engagement. Situated on the edge of the Highland Rim, the county's rolling hills and hollows provide ample opportunities for hiking, birdwatching, and other nature exploration. This can be explored in the Winding Stairs Park of Lafayette. The mineral waters of Red Boiling Springs add another unique element, drawing visitors with their historical significance and potential for nature walks and quilt trails.



Macon County's **neighboring counties enjoy a plethora of water access, and existing trails** in Macon County and neighboring counties present further opportunities for development, particularly through connections to broader regional networks. **Linking these trails with greenways and blueways in neighboring counties in the long term could foster interconnected recreational systems, boosting tourism and encouraging outdoor activity.** Potential partnerships around the Cumberland River and primarily its tributaries can extend the county's water-based offerings, while regional trail connections could make Macon County a destination for extended hiking and biking excursions. Macon County's blend of natural beauty, historic landmarks, and modern recreational facilities positions it as a potentially vibrant destination for outdoor activity, with strong potential for growth through regional connectivity and thoughtful expansion of its recreational assets into neighboring counties.





FACILITIES & CONDITIONS



FACILITIES & CONDITIONS

This section evaluates the parks and recreation facilities to ensure they meet current and future community needs. The assessment includes each facility's strengths, weaknesses, and conditions as well as its accessibility, safety, and ADA compatibility among other things. Natural features and land utilization are reviewed to understand how active, passive, or alternative uses of facilities may occur. Additionally, connectivity, expansion potential, and opportunities for collaboration are considered to maximize each facility's long-term value and adaptability. The following facilities were accounted for and reviewed:

Lafayette

- Winding Stairs Nature Trails & Park
- Lafayette City Park & Pool
- Babe Ruth Baseball Park
- Key Park
- Lafayette Dog Park
- Sullivan's Pond

Red Boiling Springs

- Bilbrey Park
- Old Lake Road Park
- R.B.S. City Park
- The Palace Amusement Park
- R.B.S. Civil War Park

Macon County

- Macon County Fairgrounds
- Little League Fields
- Soccer Fields
- R.B.S. Baseball Fields
- Macon Fastpitch Softball Park



Non-Public Facilities

It is important to acknowledge the importance of non-public recreational opportunities within the county. While there is not a comprehensive list of each private provider, some are included in this document. These facilities contribute substantially to the citizens living nearby.

Lafayette

Winding Stairs Nature Trails & Park

655 Nature Trail Way, Lafayette, TN 37083 | 35 Acres

Winding Stairs Nature Trails & Park is a 35-acre city park that contains over 2 miles of walking trails adjacent to the cascades. In addition to the falls and nature trails, the park features a log cabin for non-profit organization use, a covered pavilion with picnic tables, public restrooms, a stocked fishing pond, a concrete walking path, new lighting fixtures, and more!

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Nature Trails	Good	Maintenance in progress.
Log Cabin	Good	
Pavilion & Tables	Good	
Restrooms	Good	Clean, no visible damage.
Pond	Fair	Low water levels.
Concrete Path	New	
Light Fixtures	Good	Some new, others good.
ADA Accessibility	Good	Parking, sidewalks, restroom, paved overlook path



Goals

Short-Term

- BCBS HealthyPlace grant app.
- Outdoor exercise park – Health
- Splashpad/Pickleball
- Lighting/sidewalks/etc.
- Development of new phase near the new health department & pond.

Mid- to Long-Term

- New Restroom near county blds.
- Pickleball/other courts
- RV sites
- Trail expansion

Lafayette City Park

508 Days Road, Lafayette, TN 37083

Lafayette City Park is a city park that contains a large public pool, playground, two covered pavilions with picnic tables, three sets of public restrooms, various sports facilities, adequate parking and open space, alternate play structures, and more!

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Pickleball Courts (2)	New	Recently installed.
Tennis Courts (3)	Good	General age-related wear and tear.
Basketball Court (1)	Fair	General age-related wear and tear.
Pavilions (3) & Tables	Fair	Some age, but no structural concerns
Restrooms (front)	Fair	
Restrooms (back)	Good	
Restrooms (Pool)	Good	
Pool	Good	Recent install of slides & equipment
Playground Equipment	Good	
Parking	Good	Plentiful, spread out.
ADA Accessibility	Fair	Accessible parking, seating, etc. Adult swing.



Goals

Short-Term

- Completed – new pickleball courts
- Completed – rear restroom update
- Babe Ruth Park updates

Mid- to Long-Term

- Pickleball/Misc courts
- Restroom enhancements
- Play equipment update

Key Park

208 Church Street, Lafayette, TN 37083

Key Park is a city park that contains over gravel walking trails, public restrooms, a covered pavilion with picnic tables, a covered bandstand, playground equipment, a disc golf course, RV sites, and more! It is often used for community events because of its proximity to the town square and various businesses and organizations. The land for this park was bequeathed to the city by Mrs. Delia Key Jackson in 1975 for the development of a park.

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Playground Equip.	Good	Clean, operational
Log Cabin	Fair	Historic Site
Pavilion & Tables	Fair	Aging, some rotting wood, etc.
Restrooms	Fair	Clean, some damage/vandalism.
Walking Tracks	Good	Some weeds and overgrowth
Farmers Mkt	New	New pavilion
Bandstand	Poor	Aging, rotting wood, busted concrete, vandalism, etc.
Disc Golf Course	Good	Maintained privately
ADA Accessibility	Fair	Gravel paths, uneven transitions, disconnected seating



Goals

Short-Term

- Trail Maintenance
- Bandstand Refresh (roof, steps, ramp)
- ADA access improvements
- Expanding RV sites

Mid- to Long-Term

- Wooden bridge replacement with metal (walking trail)
- Lighting
- Restroom refresh
- Pavillion refresh

Babe Ruth Park

208 Church Street, Lafayette, TN 37083

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Fields	Good	maintained
Parking	Good	Adequate space, some unpaved
Concession facility	Poor	Aging (roof, windows, block structure)
ADA Accessibility	Poor	Stairs, uneven ground, minimal access



Goals

Short-Term

- Concession Stand remodel
 - Roof
 - Windows
 - Block structure

Mid- to Long-Term

- Continued updates
- Lighting – ballpark
- Parking improvements

BID NOTICE

The City of Lafayette will be accepting bids on remodeling the Babe Ruth concession stand at City Park. Specifications can be picked up at 200 E. Locust St. Lafayette, Tennessee. The City of Lafayette reserves the right to reject any and all bids. If you have any questions, contact Public Works Director Jeff Harper at 615-666-2194.

Mayor Tony Day

Public Notice from the Macon County Chronicle Nov. 5, 2024

Lafayette Dog Park

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Pavilion	New	
Picnic tables	New	
Fence & Signage	New	
Grass	Fair	Patchy grass, likely from construction
Parking	Good	Gravel, adequate space, could use more gravel
ADA Accessibility	Poor	Steep slopes, even ground, etc.



Sullivan's Pond

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Picnic tables	Good	Aging
Grass & Parking	Good	Well maintained
ADA Accessibility	Fair	Even surfaces, packed gravel



Red Boiling Springs

Old Lake Road Park

49 Old Lake Road, Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150 | 8 Acres

Old Lake Road Park is a city park that is home to the county's newest BlueCross Healthy Place Park and contains, a 1/3 mile lighted walking track, creekside views, ADA-accessible play areas, obstacle course, outdoor workout equipment, play structures, soccer goals, and covered picnic tables! This park is on track to be the most accommodating in R.B.S. with goals in place to develop it further with the addition of restrooms, a stage, and other facilities.

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Playground Equipment	NEW	
Gaga ball pit	Good	
Walking Track	Good	
Workout Equip	NEW	
Obstacle Course	NEW	
Trees, Shrubs, Grass, etc.	Good	
ADA Accessibility	Great	ADA parking, equipment, play areas



Goals

Short-Term

- Restrooms
- Bandstand/Stage
- Pavillion

Mid- to Long-Term

- Park Connectivity across town
- Track Development
- Creation of event space

R.B.S City Park

Along E. Main Street, Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150 | 3 Acres

R.B.S. City Park is a city park that contains playground equipment, a walking quilt trail, a covered pavilion with picnic tables, public restrooms, outdoor seating, basketball courts, a tennis court, and more! This park runs along E. Main Street and the Salt Lick Creek that runs through downtown R.B.S. Nearby amenities include the R.B.S. branch of the Public Library, various historic hotels, and the future home of the R.B.S. Heritage Museum.

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Playground Equipment	Good	Looks good, some aging equipment
Walking Quilt Trail/Paths	Fair	Some uneven paths, Quilt signs aging
Pavilion & Tables	Good	
Restrooms	Good	
Basketball Court(s)	Fair	Aging Pavement
Tennis Court	Fair	Aging Pavement
Other Structures	Good	Structurally sound
Lighting	Poor	Minimal Lighting
ADA Accessibility	Fair	Uneven paths



Goals

Short-Term

- Lighting updates/installs
- Quilt Trail Updates
- Walking Bridge Addition to connect the park

Mid- to Long-Term

- Gazebo to replace flowerbed
- Park Connectivity across town
- Return of spring pumps (nonfunctioning models)

Bilbrey Park

325 Main Street, Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150 | 1.5 Acres

Bilbrey Park is a city park that contains playground equipment, a covered pavilion with picnic tables, public restrooms, a basketball court, creek access, and lots of parking area for downtown events!

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Playground Equipment	Good	
Pavilion & Tables	Good	
Restrooms	Good	
Parking	Good	
Basketball Court	Fair	Aging pavement
ADA Accessibility	Fair	Difficult to access play area



Goals

Short-Term

- Restroom refresh
- General maintenance/updates

Mid- to Long-Term

- Park Connectivity across town
- Connection with Old Lake Park

The Palace Amusement Park

316 Main Street, Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150 | 1 Acre

The Palace Amusement Park is a city park that contains play equipment, a covered pavilion with picnic tables, historic items, and plenty of green space for events! It is located across the street from The Palace Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center and is conveniently located so that patients can spend time outdoors during their stay.

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Pavilion & Seating	Good	
Play Equipment	Fair	
Other Structures	Good	
ADA Accessibility	Poor	Steep, bumpy slopes & uneven ground



R.B.S. Civil War Park

Main Street, Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Primary Sign Structure	Poor	Aging, rotting wood
Alternate signage	Good	
Bench, concrete, other	Good	



Macon County

Goals

Short-Term

- Fairgrounds restroom upgrades
- Softball Park lighting updates
- ADA Accessibility – fairgrounds, ball parks, etc.
- More engagement with league needs.

Mid- to Long-Term

- New baseball field
- Consolidated ball parks
- Indoor facilities (long-term)
- Increased number of facilities for sports league programs reaching capacity

Macon County Fairgrounds

231 Russell Dr, Lafayette, TN 37083

The Macon County Fairgrounds is a large property that is home to many recreational facilities and organizations. This property includes soccer and baseball fields, livestock arena, livestock barn, and larger arena for various shows. It is also home to the Macon County Fair Office and several other bookable buildings and facilities. The county fair is hosted here alongside other events like the demolition derby, livestock shows, truck pulls, and more.

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Arena/Arena Seating	Good	
Livestock facilities	Good	
Restrooms	Poor	Dated, minimal ADA access
Misc buildings	Fair/Good	Some aging, others great
ADA Accessibility	Poor	Rolling grounds, few access points to observe events, restrooms



Lafayette Little League Fields

Learly Drive, Lafayette, TN 37083

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Lighting	Good	
Seating/Bleachers	Good	
Restrooms	Fair	
Concession Bld.	Fair	
Parking	Fair	Minimal parking, rough ground
ADA Accessibility	Poor	Minimal access to field area



Lafayette Soccer Fields

Russel Drive, Lafayette, TN 37083

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Lighting	Good	
Restrooms	Good	
Concession Bld.	Good	
Parking	Fair	Grassy, rough ground
ADA Accessibility	Fair	Minimal slopes, but rough ground



R.B.S. Baseball Fields

350 High Street, Red Boiling Springs, TN 37150

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Lighting	Fair	
Seating/Bleachers	Fair	Aging, minimal seating
Concession Bld.	Fair	
Parking	Fair	
ADA Accessibility	Poor	Rolling ground, minimal access to field



Macon Fastpitch Softball Park

909 Sycamore Street, Lafayette, TN 37083

FACILITY	CONDITION	NOTES
Lighting	Poor	Need new, LED fixtures (shadows, low light)
Seating/Bleachers	Poor	Old, decaying, warped boards, not ADA compliant
Restrooms	Fair	Aging
ADA Accessibility	Poor	Neglected handicap parking areas, no access to fields
Parking	Poor	Rolling parking spaces, minimal gravel, scattered





PROGRAM OFFERINGS



PROGRAM OFFERINGS

In this context, programs are generally defined as any organized activity facilitated within the parks and recreation system. This can include classes, camps, special events, sports leagues, or any other activity that is offered by the county, city, or a private or nonprofit organization within the community. Programs play an important role in the community, serving as athletic, recreational, historical, educational, and cultural **opportunities and activities**. They often utilize public facilities and encourage public use or private development of other community assets.

A well-rounded inventory of parks and recreation programs is crucial for understanding the scope of current offerings and identifying gaps, redundancies, or expansion opportunities. This **program list** serves as a working foundation for the planning and development of future parks and recreation programs by the cities, county, or private groups.

By cataloging the existing programs, we gain insights into community engagement, usage patterns, and the overall effectiveness of current services. This analysis allows us to make informed decisions that align with community needs and enhance the quality of life for residents. It serves as a critical tool for strengthening grant applications and fostering community engagement by demonstrating a commitment to **evidence-based planning**. Overall, current and future programs will promote community well-being, health, and social cohesion.



Athletic Leagues

The civic organizations in Macon County help provide various athletic opportunities for residents of the county and surrounding areas. Many of these groups used city- or county-owned properties for their programs. These athletic groups cater to a range of age groups and ability levels. The table below shows each program's active season(s), league name, target age group, and program growth/enrollment status.

Season	Location	League	Target Age	Enrollment Status
Spring & Fall	MC Fairgrounds & Lafayette City Park (Babe Ruth)	Lafayette Little League (baseball)	4-16 yrs	<u>Growing</u> Spring: 350 Fall: 275
Spring & Fall	High St., RBS	RBS Little League (baseball & softball)	5-12 yrs	<u>Growing</u> 100
Fall	Pat Parker Field at Lafayette Elementary	MC Youth Football & Cheer	5-13 yrs	<u>Growing</u> 100-120
Spring & Fall	MC Fairgrounds	MC Soccer League	3-18 yrs	<u>Growing</u> Spring: 360 Fall: 260
Winter	Gyms (2) at LES and CES	Jr. Pro Basketball	6-12 yrs	<u>Growing</u> 320
Spring & Fall	Macon Fastpitch Softball Park	Macon Fastpitch Softball	3-18 yrs	<u>Growing</u> Spring: 350 Fall: 200

If your group or a group that you know of has been left out, please let us know!



Other Programs & Events

In addition to athletic programs and leagues, the parks of Macon County host a number of special events or programs that allow for creative, community engagement with locals and tourists. Many of these programs have been around for decades. Others are fresh and new. However, the growing population of Macon County is continuing to support the growth of these programs and events and the establishment of new ones like them.

Program	Location	Popularity/Use
RBS Folk Medicine Festival	RBS Downtown Parks	International
RBS Fire Dept Annual Easter Egg Hunt	RBS Old Lake Road Park	Local
37150 Spring Festival	RBS Old Lake Road Park	Local
RBS Music Festival	RBS Old Lake Road Park	Regional
RBS FD Duck Day Festival	RBS Downtown Parks	Regional
RBS Walking Quilt Trail	RBS City & Old City Parks (along E. Main St.)	Regional
Cub Scout Summer Camp	Lafayette City Park & Pool	
City Pool Parties (bookable events)	Lafayette City Park & Pool	Local
Pavillion Event Reservations	Lafayette City Park, Key Park, and Winding Stairs Park	Local
Disc Golf Course	Key Park	Regional
Hillbilly Days	Key Park	Regional
RV Sites for rent	Key Park	National
Macon County Arts Council Events	Key Park	
Practice areas for local sports	Key Park	
Farmer's Market	Key Park	Local
Stocked Fishing Pond	Winding Stairs Park	Local
TWRA Events	Winding Stairs Cabin	
Police & Fire Dept Training Events	Winding Stairs Cabin	
Rotary Club Events (Warrior's Race, etc.)	Winding Stairs Cabin	
Annual Youth Fishing Rodeo	Winding Stairs Pond	
County Fair	MC Fairgrounds	Regional
Demolition Derby	MC Fairgrounds	Regional
Truck Pull Contest	MC Fairgrounds	Regional
Various reservable buildings	MC Fairgrounds	Local



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

To garner the necessary public input for this plan, several types of public engagement were utilized including forming a strategic planning group, interviewing staff and stakeholders, holding public input meetings, and conducting a community needs assessment survey.

S.W.O.T. Analysis Workshop

The team held a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) workshop on September 19, 2024, with a focus group of stakeholders. This meeting was conducted in person at Lafayette City Hall to maximize the potential input and fully capture the thoughts and views of attendees. The input provided during the SWOT workshop is integral to the strategic planning process and is used in conjunction with interviews, public input meetings, and survey data to get a range of public and stakeholder input to later use in the development of goals and priorities.

Attendees:

Ann Hall	Andrew Emberton	Sam Jones
David Denney	Jason Phelps	Steve Jones
Eric Kirby	Jeff Hughes	Steven James
Erik Hernandez	Jennifer Hardman	T.J. Roark
Ethan Flippin	Kristie Talley	Terra Soloman
George McCrary	Michael Slayton	Tony Day
Jacob McClard	Pete Groesbeck	Tony Wix
Michelle Phillips	Randy East	



S.W.O.T. Analysis Workshop

At the conclusion of the SWOT workshop, participants were asked to rank the discussed topics by placing a “1” beside their top priority, a “2” by their second, and a “3” by their third priority. The topics listed below were brought up and prioritized by the focus group:

Strengths

- ✱ Winding Stairs Park:
 - Good for tourists & locals,
 - Lots of room for additions,
 - High-quality Park.
- ✱ Diversity of facilities (choices)
- ✱ Key Park:
 - High traffic/high use,
 - Good condition,
 - Room for additions.
- ✱ Nongovernmental recreation providers (sports leagues, etc.)

Weaknesses

- ✱ Lack of sports complex, civic center, central recreation facility.
- ✱ Lack of funding.
- ✱ Lack of indoor facility & lack of winter recreation options.
- ✱ ADA compliance issues at all facilities.
- ✱ Misuse of facilities, vandalism.
- ✱ Restrooms, water stations, maintenance.

Opportunities

- ✱ Add splash pad or a playground at Winding Stairs Park.
- ✱ Multi-sport complex/civic center.
- ✱ More parks/improvements on the west side of the county. Fairgrounds
- ✱ Blue Cross Blue Shield grants for Windings stairs & Fairgrounds.
- ✱ Add cameras, signage, deterrence.
- ✱ Sullivan’s Pond creation/expansion of a park.

Threats

- ✱ Vandalism, misuse of property, destruction of property, liability concerns.
- ✱ ADA liabilities, lack of access.
- ✱ Booming population, lack of recreation growth to match it.
- ✱ Lack of lodging for tourism (specifically for Winding Stairs Park)
- ✱ Future lack of volunteers to run recreation/sports leagues.

Public Input Meetings

After the strategic focus group met for the first time, two public input meetings were held. These meetings were **advertised** via social media, television, radio stations, email and were posted in local businesses and public spaces. A meeting was conducted in each of the two cities involved to allow for more access. During these meetings, participants were invited to contribute their thoughts and ideas. The main topics of discussion were drawn from those **prioritized in the S.W.O.T. analysis workshop** mentioned above. Citizens were also invited to bring up new topics at various points throughout the meetings. Finally, the citizens were asked to submit a **comment card** sharing other thoughts relevant to the local parks system. All public input was recorded, and participants were reminded that a public input session would be held again at the presentation of the final draft.

Public Meeting 1

October 16, 2024

4:00 pm CST

R.B.S. City Hall



Public Meeting 2

October 17, 2024

5:30 pm CST

Lafayette City Hall



The consensus drawn from the public input meetings is that the current parks system is good but has room for improvement. In R.B.S., it seems that the attendees would like to see more connectivity and lighting across RBS parks. Attendees in Lafayette were more focused on Winding Stairs Park and its ability to draw tourists, identifying issues with tourist lodging.

General Comments from the Public Meetings

"Parks are very important to the community and any and every update or addition is of great benefit!"

"The park system in R.B.S. is a valuable tourism asset! Relax, restore, go for a walk!"

"I enjoy the greenways of the parks & would like additional lighting."

"I would like to see all the [RBS] parks connected..."

"I enjoy all the walking tracks in the county. I do wish more were paved."

"Parks encourage a healthier population as well as a beautiful environment. Children & adults utilize the parks for family and individual activities. Parks are conducive to a peaceful, calm environment."

Staff and Stakeholder Interviews

Meetings and phone calls with staff and project stakeholders were held at various times throughout the planning process to collect valuable insight into the existing parks and recreation system, upcoming projects, and potential future needs. Many provided positive feedback about the parks system in their locality, also detailing the struggles that often come with planning for and maintaining a recreation system for a population with varying needs. All participants understood the importance of parks and recreation to quality of life and community interaction. Given the topics discussed in these interviews, there seems to be lots of need for growth and enhancement of the parks and recreation system in the county.

Staff & Volunteers from the following organizations were asked about their thoughts on the current and future state of the parks and recreation systems:




- City of Lafayette
- Local Athletic Leagues
- City of Red Boiling Springs
- Macon County Government
- Macon County Fair Board
- Local Public and Private Schools
- And others!



Staff and stakeholder interviews are critical for developing a comprehensive and effective parks and recreation plan, as they provide expert insights and a deeper understanding of operational challenges, resources, and opportunities. Staff members who are directly involved in the day-to-day management of parks can offer valuable perspectives on current conditions, maintenance needs, and logistical constraints. Meanwhile, stakeholders such as local government officials, community organizations, and civic leaders bring a broader view of the community's goals, priorities, and potential funding sources. These interviews help ensure that the plan aligns with both the practical realities of park management and the long-term vision of the community, fostering collaboration and building support for the plan's implementation. By engaging both staff and stakeholders, we can create a plan that is both feasible and responsive to the needs of the entire community.

Community Needs Assessment Survey

One key strategy for collecting public input was a community needs survey. The survey was created and distributed by various means, including digital distribution on social media, government websites, and email. Additionally, flyers were posted in public places and at all public input and focus group meetings. This survey is a critical component of collecting public input. **Over 300 responses were received** across 42 days of the survey being open for responses. The survey was periodically reposted, shared, and refreshed over the 42 days, and social media engagement, such as comments on posts, was also noted. The survey was created using the Qualtrics platform. The results are summarized in the section below. This survey was extremely helpful in developing goals and priorities.



Macon County – Lafayette – Red Boiling Springs to Create Parks & Recreation Master Plan

The governments of Macon County, Lafayette, and Red Boiling Springs are currently seeking the public's input for the creation of a 5-Year Systemwide Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The purpose of this plan is to assist the county with maintaining and developing park and recreation system projects and renovations over the next five years. The primary goal of establishing this plan is also to satisfy state requirements to be eligible for grant funding.

The public is encouraged to complete a short [survey](#) that will provide information for what will become a master plan the county can use to build better parks, trails, fields, and other amenities. In addition to the link above, the survey can also be accessed by **scanning QR code below**. These QR codes will also be posted at various public locations around the county.

Earlier this year, Macon County was contacted by an individual seeking academic credit in exchange for a completed project that the county is in need of. Macon County, Lafayette, and R.B.S. requested that the individual assist in creating a Systemwide Master Plan for Parks and Recreation.


The information collected from the survey will be turned over to the individual, who will then provide the county and cities with feedback and a draft recommendation. Also, during this time, the individual will evaluate the county's existing parks and their conditions while also conducting a demographic analysis and other assessments. **Various public input meetings will be conducted throughout the process.**

As it stands, the county should have a completed Parks & Recreation plan by January 2025.

Counties need a master plan that is current within five years to accept some state and federal grants. A plan also helps the county from both a budgetary and development standpoint for the overall parks system. There is currently no plan on record.

SCAN HERE to complete the survey!

Contact: Lucas Johnson
Email: lucjohn@redboilingsprings.org
Cell: (919) 388-5189



IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Macon County, City of Lafayette and City of Red Boiling Springs would like to hear from you through a survey link provided below for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. For more information see flyer below.

[Survey](#)
[Informational Flyer](#)

[Read More](#)

 **LUCAS JOHNSON**
November 22 at 8:04 PM UT

MACON COUNTY, LAFAYETTE, RBS RESIDENTS!
Need your help for a project I am working on at UTK. This public input survey is about local parks and recreation in Macon County. The survey is **ANONYMOUS!**
Please only complete this if you live within or near Macon County and have some interest, connection, or use of local parks and recreation programs or facilities.
Here is a link if the QR code doesn't work:
https://vln.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_23W1ypq89P02ps



The public survey included 18 questions that were grouped into 5 categories.

Facility & Amenity Usage

1. How often do you visit local parks and recreation facilities?
2. Which parks or recreation facilities do you visit most frequently?
3. On a usual park visit, who are you typically with?
4. Why do you typically visit local parks?
5. How do you usually get to the parks?
6. How far do you typically travel to visit a park or recreation facility?

Future Facility & Amenity Usage

1. Would you support the county or cities funding additional parks and recreation improvements with help from state grants? (Why or why not?)
2. How important are parks and recreation to the quality of life in your community?
3. What improvements would make you more likely to visit the parks more regularly?
4. What types of new programs or facilities would you like to see ADDED?

General Survey Comments

1. What other questions, comments, or concerns related to parks and recreation would you like us to know?

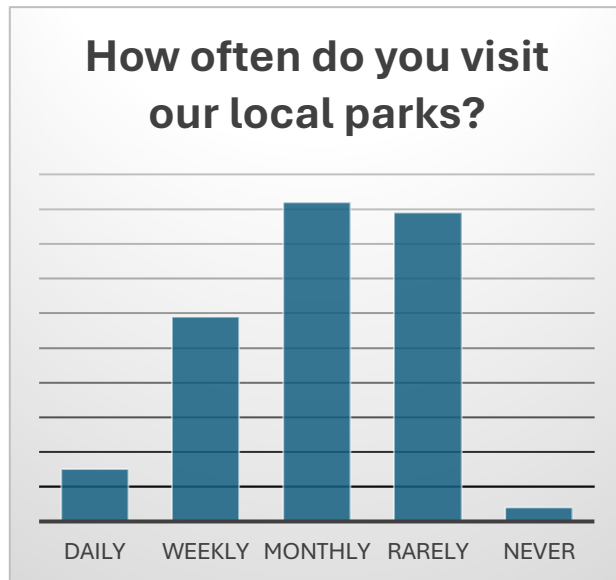
Facility & Amenity Perception

1. How would you rate the overall condition of our parks and recreation facilities?
2. How satisfied are you with each of the following qualities of our parks?
 - a. Safety
 - b. Cleanliness
 - c. Maintenance
 - d. ADA Accessibility
 - e. Programs
 - f. Restrooms
 - g. Parking
 - h. Lighting
3. Do you agree with the following statements?
 - a. Macon County has enough parks.
 - b. Macon County needs more parks.
 - c. Park facilities increase the value of nearby properties.
 - d. Park facilities contribute to a higher standard of living.

Demographics

1. Where do you live?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your household income?
4. How many people live in your household?

Survey Results: Facility & Amenity Usage

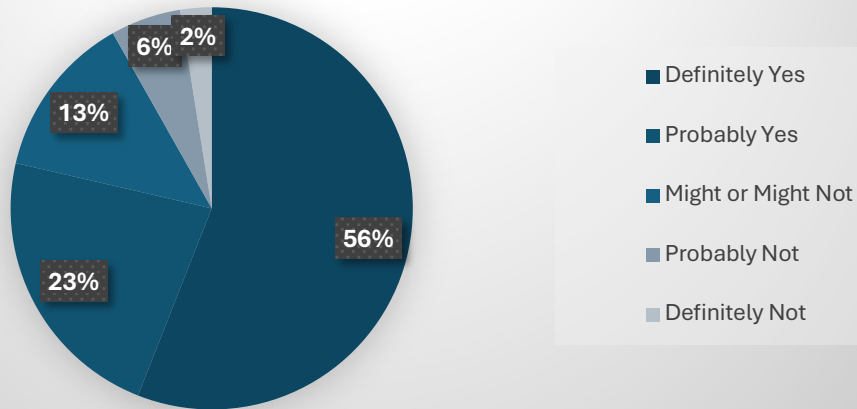


Why visit local parks?



Survey Results: Future Facility & Amenity Usage

Would you support funding parks improvement or additions with help from state grants?



What should be improved?



How important are parks and recreation to the quality of life in your community?

Importance Level	Percentage
EXTREMELY IMPORTANT	25%
VERY IMPORTANT	35%
MODERATELY IMPORTANT	20%
SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	5%
NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT	3%

[illegible]

Survey Results: Facility & Amenity Perception

Overall Condition Rating



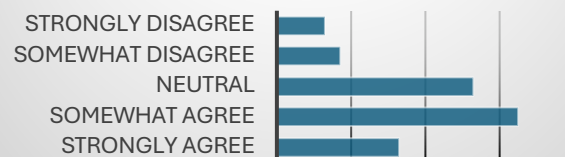
Satisfaction by Topic



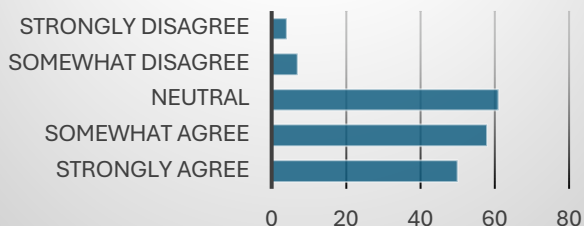
"Macon County Has Enough Parks"



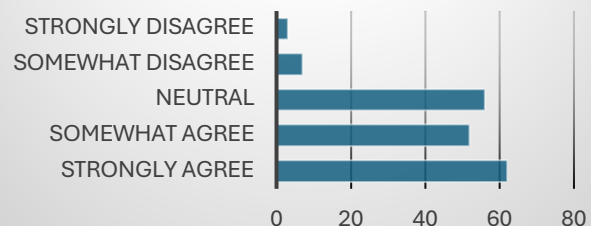
"Macon County Needs More Parks"



"Park facilities increase the value of nearby properties."

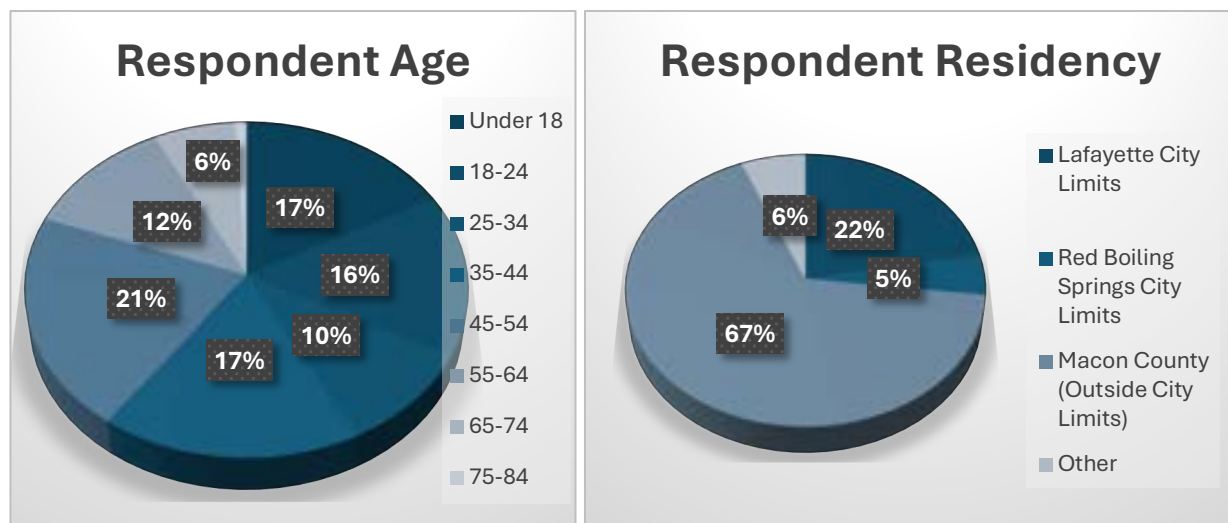


"Park facilities contribute to a higher standard of living."



Survey Results: General Comments

Responses to the General Comments section of the survey indicate a mix of positive sentiments and constructive criticism regarding parks and recreation in Macon County. Many community members appreciate the existing parks, recognizing them as well-maintained and valuable for the community's health and enjoyment. However, several respondents expressed concerns about safety, accessibility, and maintenance, particularly in specific parks. Comments also highlight a desire for increased security, cleaner facilities, and more inclusive amenities for both youth and seniors. There is also a strong demand for additional recreational options, like indoor facilities, a civic center, or spaces for diverse activities such as skateboarding, pickleball, and others. Several people advocate for improving current parks over developing new facilities and express concerns about tax dollar usage and local infrastructure priorities.



General Comments from the Public Survey:

"I think the parks are well maintained."

"The little league field needs to be handicap accessible and it's not even close!"

"We need more options of places to attend for kids to play and exercise safely. Indoor skating rinks, bowling area, workout facility with indoor/outdoor pool, etc."

"Macon County has an opportunity to have some great parks. Just need the funding."

"We desperately need something like the Gallatin Civic Center or Lebanon's Jimmy Floyd Center."

"We need more activities for preteens and teenagers such as a skateboarding park or a splash pad like Lebanon."

Below is a selection of comments that reflect common themes collected from the survey:

1. Safety and Security:

"Keeping everyone safe while enjoying the outdoors. Lots of lighting and security."

"Would love parks to have a heavier police presence."

2. Maintenance and Cleanliness:

"Bathrooms need to be updated. Winding Stairs could use a fuller pond."

"The restrooms' cleanliness and having dogs in the same areas as kids are concerns."

3. Indoor Facilities and Year-Round Recreation:

"We really need something indoors like the YMCA so you have something all year round."

"An indoor facility with an Olympic pool would provide students competitive sporting opportunities."

4. Accessibility and Inclusivity:

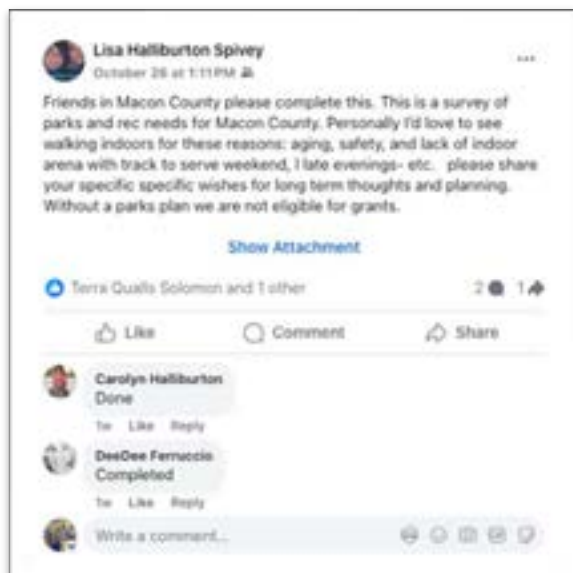
"The little league field needs to be handicap accessible, and it's not even close!"

"ADA bathrooms and adult changing tables would be helpful."

5. Expanded Amenities and Activities:

"Indoor skating rinks, bowling areas, and a workout facility with indoor/outdoor pool would get kids more involved."

"Something else for the youth to do would be nice, maybe archery or skateboarding."



6. Community Engagement and Facilities for All Ages:

"We need more options of places to attend for kids to play and exercise safely."

"The young people of this county need a place to hang out without worry. Not all kids are into sports, and those that aren't have no place to go."

7. Park Expansion and Regional Equity:

"The west side of Macon County needs a park. There are plenty of people on that side who could benefit."

"We should pay more attention to what's already here. Make the parks safer and cleaner."

8. Enhanced Walking Trails and Playgrounds:

"We have a very nice walking track, but I'd love to see something nicer that's not packed gravel."

"Better options of playground flooring for younger kids; rocks are a choking hazard."

9. Improved Community Interaction:

"Parks are great for people to catch up, exercise, and help build a healthier community, mentally and physically."

"I wish people appreciated what we have and took care of it."

10. Vandalism and Public Conduct:

"Vandals are a problem. They're the reason we can't have nice things!"

"Security needs to be stepped up somehow just because of vandals. They seem to ruin everything."

Public comments play a valuable role in shaping parks and recreation plans, as they bring forward the diverse perspectives, needs, and concerns of the community. Through these insights, we gain a clearer understanding of the priorities that matter most to residents, such as safety, inclusivity, and maintenance, as well as the desire for enhanced amenities and family-friendly spaces. Concerns about security, accessibility, and community pride reflect the community's commitment to creating safe, enjoyable, and accessible parks for all ages. By integrating public feedback, this plan can better respond to local values, helping to ensure that our parks not only meet present needs but also foster a vibrant and welcoming environment for future generations.

All responses to the General Comment section of the Community Needs Survey:

"I wish it would be safer for children to play at."

"The little league field needs to be handicap accessible and it's not even close!!!"

"Indoor basketball/pool would be great"

"No New Taxes"

"I think the parks are well maintained"

"Additional opportunities for young and old alike. Area in front of Winding Stairs I believe would hold a lot of opportunity."

"The westside of Macon County needs a park. There are plenty of people on that side that could benefit, and there is a spot of land on 52 that it could be utilized. Just down the road from Sudden Service."

"I think instead of building new houses, courthouses, a bigger jail and so on we should pay more attention to what's already here. That being the parks. Make it safer and cleaner. Make it enjoyable for the kids. City Park has had the same swings since I was a child."

"My main concern is upkeep on the walking trails, weeds are growing up in the gravel at Key Park. My husband and I walk daily, and the weeds & grass make it more difficult, as well as the trash, bottle & cans lining the park lately. There are a lot of seniors who use this park for the walking trails, but lately people are racing their bikes along the trails. Also, the new metal bridges make it difficult for seniors with walkers and canes, the older bridges were easier to use, and more appealing to the eye, as well as safer."

"I think we need a place that just is more open to kids' events as well as adults, to get people outside more and be able to have more available places to rent for events."

"Key Park's walking trail could use some major upgrades!"

"Seems like a place for people who are doing stuff they shouldn't go to sit around or whatever they do. Makes it not seem as safe as it used to."

"We should have spent money on upgrading our parks instead of building a new courthouse."

"City Park needs more lighting and patrol. More parking available for City Park baseball field. The city/county should provide parks and recreation upkeep like neighboring counties."

"The young people of this county need a place to hang out without worry. Not all kids are into sports and those that aren't have no place to go."

"Macon County has an opportunity to have some great parks. Just need the funding."

"Something else for the youth to do would be nice. Maybe something to do with archery, skateboarding, or other outdoor activities."

"I am tired of tax dollars going into parks that I either can't use or don't want to due to other less desirable people ruining it."

"I think having quality parks is beneficial to our community. Lots of people drive to surrounding bigger cities to enjoy their parks!"

"We need more options of places to attend for kids to play and exercise safely. Indoor skating rinks, bowling area, workout facility with indoor/outdoor pool, etc. This would get kids more involved and less consumed with drugs/alcohol/etc."

"Lots could be added to the Old Lake Park complex. Plenty of room for other activities."

"I believe being outside relieves stress and improves quality of life."

"My only concerns are the cleanliness of the restrooms & the dangers of having dogs in the same areas as the kids. I would like designated areas for each for safety purposes."

"Some kind of surveillance at night for anyone who wants to walk without fear."

"Bathrooms need to be updated. Winding Stairs could use a more full pond. More parks for dogs to be around. Bike trails could be beneficial to some. Skateparks could be something to look into to keep kids off public roads."

"Would love parks to have a heavier police presence." "The safety of our community."

"I think the parks need to be more closely monitored." "Winding Stairs is amazing."

"I wish the people appreciated what we have and took care of it." "Always room for improvement."

"I believe that access to nature is beneficial for all people." "They are always beautiful parks. Thanks."

"Can we please make a better community, with more food drives and better living conditions!"

"We really need something indoors like the YMCA so you have something all year round."

"I messed up on some of the questions I strongly agree with increasing property values. The more various activities for all ages would greatly improve the visitation of our parks."

"Enjoy the Lafayette parks very much." "We should take advantage of any grant money we can get."

"Need to get past the politics when setting up facilities." "Cleaner bathrooms. More security."

"We have a very nice walking track but feel like we could use something nicer that's not packed gravel, if at all possible."

"Live video for safety. Suggestions box." "Good luck getting our parks back in shape!"

"Better options of playground "flooring" for younger kids with rocks being a choking hazard."

"We desperately need something like the Gallatin Civic Center or Lebanon's Jimmy Floyd Center...."

"There is nothing for kids to do in Macon County which I feel leads to bad behavior and possible drug use."

"I wish I felt safer at some of the parks in Macon County." "Need a civic center."

"Would love to be able to have dogs on the walking trails or an area where they are welcome in the vicinity."

"We need more activities for preteens and teenagers such as a skateboarding park or a splash pad like Lebanon."

"Vendors at parks would provide a location for businesses to promote outdoor parks."

"I feel our youth and adults are missing opportunities for a more healthy lifestyle due to not having an indoor facility with an Olympic pool. Students are missing competitive sporting activities as well as scholarship opportunities in swim."

"More pickleball courts at different parks; more play equipment at different parks."

"Need more stuff to do that's family friendly." "We really want a skating rink."

"Keeping everyone safe while enjoying the outdoors. Lots of lighting and security."

"If possible, I would love to see our community add more pickleball courts. We have a daughter in college who loves to play when she is away at school. She does play some when she is home at the Lafayette City Park, but it is often difficult to get a court without a long wait. I am also a high school teacher and I know that many of my students enjoy playing pickleball. I believe this would provide more of our young adults along with older adults a fun and fairly inexpensive recreational activity in our community."

"ADA bathrooms and adult changing tables. Pavilion in Old Lake Park around Blue Cross park. Band stand in Old Lake Park. Bathrooms in Old Lake Park."

"There needs to be some kind of sort of drink and snack vending available."

"Rules should be better posted and contact for where to reserve picnic facilities."

"I have no concerns personally." "Just more things to do and inside as well."

"More activities for young people with appropriate security to ensure safety. A larger, nicer pool."

"There are several trees that have dangerously swaying limbs over play areas & parking areas. Signage about appropriate language use and behavior may help, as well as signs calling attention to the security cameras to deter destructive or negative behavior."

"I would need to know what is being proposed before I would know to support or not!"

"The RVs that are parked at Key Park negatively impact the overall park."

"Thank you for your interest and organization. Not everyone wants to a gym."

"I feel like they need something for kids and older people to do." "We need more for the elderly and the kids."

"I wouldn't build more parks with playgrounds and other activities combined. It always seems to be the place ugly things happen at. Drug usage seems to increase in these and our little ones don't need to see that stuff."

"I would like to see a volleyball and basketball court at the Old Lake Rd Park. Some people have older children that would like these, where they have younger siblings that enjoy the playground equipment, whereas a parent or grandparent can't be at two different locations at the same time."

"At this time, the City of Lafayette does NOT need more parks." "Concrete walking track with good lighting."

"Would like to see a format where we could communicate back and forth to park supervisors."

"Indoor pools supply recreation, exercise, quality for seniors, good for all ages."

"Parks are great for people to catch up with and to get outside and exercise. It helps build and hopefully make people healthier, mentally and physically."

"I would like to see our county care for all parks not just the few they favor." "Maybe more ball fields."

"Vandals are a problem. They're the reason we can't have nice things!" "Stopping the drug sales."

"Security needs to be stepped up somehow just because of vandals. They seem to ruin everything."

"We need a sports facility. Our facilities are lacking at best. We have all kinds of parks to go walk in a circle or throw a frisbee. We need something for kids that is nice and can hopefully engage other/more kids to get involved."



GOALS & PRIORITIES



GOALS & PRIORITIES

You can find specific project goals described under the evaluation of each facility or park listed above. Some grants have already been applied for and are awaiting the final decision. Other park improvement projects are already in the planning stages, and there are several mid to long-term projects that will be on the horizon soon.

The following list of goals and priorities was identified through the analysis of the vast amount of public input we received via the survey, public meetings, interviews, and elsewhere. While these are not the only goals and priorities, they are among the most important. In pursuit of **promoting healthy lifestyles, expanding and enhancing recreational opportunities, strengthening community ties, supporting economic development, and ensuring sustainability**, Macon County, Lafayette, and R.B.S. hopes to increase the overall quality of life for all who use these facilities and programs.

Increase Safety and Security

Enhance Maintenance and Cleanliness

Increase Accessibility and Inclusivity

Expand Amenities and Activities

Enhance Walking Trails and Playgrounds to Promote Healthy Lifestyles

Grow Community Engagement Opportunities for All Ages

Improve Community Interaction

Reduce Vandalism and Public Misconduct

Park Expansion and Regional Integration

Indoor Facilities and Year-Round Recreation



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The grants below are only listed to give readers an idea of the available potential funding options. They are not guaranteed funding but should be considered for future projects.

Office of Outdoor Recreation, TN Dept. of Environment and Conservation

The [Local Parks and Recreation Fund \(LPRF\)](#) provides grants to eligible local government entities for the purchase of lands for parks, natural areas, greenways, and recreation facilities. The funds may also be used for trail development and capital projects in parks, natural areas, and greenways. At least 60 percent of the funds allocated will go to municipal governments as authorized by TCA 67-4-409. All grant projects must be on publicly owned land.

Eligible Applicants: City or county governments

Eligible Projects: Land acquisition, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, trail development

The [Recreational Trails Program \(RTP\)](#) is a federal funded, state administered grant program. RTP provides grant funding for land acquisition for trails, trails maintenance and restoration/rehabilitation, trail construction, and trail head support facilities. All grant projects must be on publicly owned land.

Eligible Applicants: Local, state and federal government agencies, state-chartered non-profit agencies with 501(c)(3) status that have written agreement with a government agency for trail management.

Eligible Projects: Urban hard surface trail development and natural surface trail development (construction and maintenance), restoration of trails damaged by use, development of trailside support facilities, educational and safety trail trainings.

The [Tennessee Recreation Initiative Program \(TRIP\)](#) provides grants to those cities and counties currently without a comprehensive parks and recreation delivery system in operation due to lack of staffing and organization.

Eligible Applicants: City or county governments.

Eligible Projects: Development of a formal Parks and Recreation Department.

BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Foundation

The [BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee Foundation's Healthy Places Program](#) is an initiative designed to provide funding and support for the creation and enhancement of public spaces across Tennessee. The program aims to improve community health and well-being by developing areas that encourage physical activity, social connection, and outdoor engagement.

The Foundation makes grants available to build or upgrade spaces like parks, playgrounds, fitness trails, greenways, and other recreational amenities, focusing on accessibility, safety, and community inclusion. The initiative reflects the foundation's commitment to fostering healthier lifestyles and reducing health disparities by making it easier for communities to have safe, enjoyable places to play and exercise.

A NOTE FROM THE PREPARER

This project is the culmination of many hours of hard work and collaboration by the citizens and officials of Macon County, Lafayette, and Red Boiling Springs. I feel grateful and honored to have played a major role in the development of this plan. To all of those who contributed, thank you!

I am proud of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and I am honored to submit it as my final deliverable for the MPA Capstone Project at the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This plan reflects substantial research, community engagement, and thoughtful planning. There were many obstacles and learning moments, but nothing was too large to overcome. The biggest obstacle was time.

I want to acknowledge that there are areas where this plan could be further strengthened with more time. The plan would benefit from the addition of a comprehensive budget review, a more detailed comparison of similar park systems, and broader representation within the strategic focus group. Expanding public input opportunities and conducting additional sessions with the focus group and local stakeholders would also enhance the value of this plan. Furthermore, a more specific report on facility conditions and a more concrete plan outlining long-term development projects would provide greater depth and clarity. Overall, I am happy with this project, and I look forward to seeing it work for those who helped me create it.

Throughout this process, I have gained invaluable experience in community-focused planning, stakeholder engagement, and plan development. This journey has deepened my understanding of the complexities involved in creating meaningful, actionable plans for local government.

I am deeply grateful to my clients for trusting me with this project. Their openness, support, and collaboration have been instrumental in shaping this plan. It has been a privilege to contribute to a vision that will benefit my community for years to come. This experience has reaffirmed my passion for public service, and I am committed to applying these lessons as I continue to grow in my career.

Lucas Johnson

Lucas G. Johnson

MPA Candidate

Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs
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Systemwide Parks and Recreation Master Plan



To everyone who contributed to the creation of this plan,
Thank You!