
2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

DRAFT

Acknowledgements



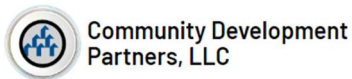
City of Norris

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Contents

1.0 Introduction.....	4
2.0 Demographics.....	7
3.0 Facility Evaluations.....	11
4.0 Revenues and Staffing.....	22
5.0 Survey and Community Engagement	25
6.0 Programming and Community Events.....	36
7.0 Regional and State Parks	41
8.0 Local Priorities.....	44
9.0 Implementation Plan	49

1.0 Introduction

The City of Norris embarks on a visionary journey with the creation of its first Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This seminal document is designed to provide a roadmap for improving and expanding the city's parks, recreational facilities, and programs over the coming years. It represents a commitment to enriching the lives of Norris residents and visitors alike, fostering a vibrant, healthy, and interconnected community. The development of this plan has been a collaborative effort, deeply rooted in community input, and reflects the collective vision of Norris residents for their public spaces and recreational activities.

Historical Context

Norris's history is as rich and distinctive as its landscapes. A product of the 1933 New Deal establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), Norris was initially constructed to house the workers involved in the building of the Norris Dam. TVA designed Norris as the first all-electric-powered planned community that integrated residential areas, public spaces, and a commitment to natural conservation and modern living. Arthur E. Morgan, who was the Chairman of the TVA Board, worked with the TVA's Division of Land Planning and Housing to develop his own plans for Norris. His plans focused on creating a community that was in harmony with the natural environment. This involved designing winding roads that followed the terrain, providing ample green spaces, and establishing a town center that served as the heart of the community.

Geography and Natural Beauty

Nestled in the verdant foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Norris is blessed with a natural beauty that offers a serene living environment and a plethora of outdoor recreational opportunities. The city's geography is characterized by rolling hills, dense woodlands, and the clear waters of Norris Lake, which borders the city to the north. This landscape not only defines the character of Norris but also provides a canvas for outdoor activities ranging from hiking and biking on scenic trails to fishing and boating on the lake.

The Vision for Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan reflects Norris's dedication to preserving its natural beauty and historical heritage while looking ahead to the future. The plan seeks to establish a comprehensive framework for operating and managing Norris's parks, recreational facilities, and green spaces that cater to the community's diverse needs. This vision is based on the principles of examination, accountability, and community engagement.

The parks and recreational plan has been developed with a significant amount of community input. This input was gathered through a series of public meetings, surveys, and workshops with residents of Norris. They have actively participated in the planning process by offering insights, expressing their recreational needs and preferences, and sharing their visions for the future of the city's parks and recreational offerings. This collaborative approach ensures that the master plan not only aligns with the city's strategic goals but also resonates with the values and aspirations of the people it serves.

The Norris Recreation Commission’s Vision

As part of the Master Plan process and implementation, the Norris Recreation Commission aims to offer a variety of recreational opportunities and well-maintained park facilities for residents of all ages and abilities in the area.

Objectives of the Master Plan

The primary objectives of the Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan include:

- To provide a strategic framework for developing, maintaining, and enhancing parks and recreational facilities.
- To ensure that parks and recreational services are accessible and inclusive, meeting the needs of all community members and guests.
- To promote the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources within recreational spaces.
- To foster a sense of community and well-being by providing diverse recreational programs and activities.
- To utilize parks and recreation as drivers for community development and improving the quality of life in Norris.

Other Significant Master Plans

Anderson County Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2022-2023

The Anderson County Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a detailed guide that outlines the development and improvement of the parks and recreational facilities in Anderson County over the next ten years. The plan takes into account the changing recreational needs and preferences of the county's population, with a focus on enhancing accessibility, diversifying recreational opportunities, and promoting environmental stewardship. The key elements of the plan include expanding and upgrading existing park facilities, building new green spaces and recreational areas, introducing innovative programs and activities for people of all ages and interests, and implementing sustainable practices to preserve the natural beauty and ecological health of the county's outdoor spaces. However, it's worth noting that while the information on the City of Norris in the plan is heavily abridged and lacks some details, it serves as a good starting point for the development of this master plan.



Norris Urban Forest Management Plan - September 2023

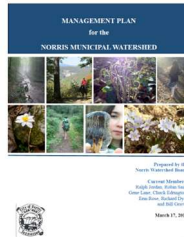
The Norris Urban Forest Management Plan is designed to guide the preservation and improvement of the urban forest within the city limits of Norris, particularly on municipal lands under the care of the Tree Commission. The main objective of this plan is to ensure that the urban forest remains healthy, diverse, and well-preserved, as it is an important asset for the

environment, economy, aesthetics, and community well-being. Currently, Norris has an impressive tree canopy coverage of 82% and approximately 2,500 trees of 90 different species on road right-of-ways, parks and commons. The plan aims to achieve three main goals: managing municipal trees effectively, coordinating efforts efficiently, and raising public awareness about the importance of the urban forest. These goals reflect the city's commitment to maintaining its urban forest, and the community's appreciation for its environmental and aesthetic value.



Management Plan of the Norris Municipal Watershed - 2016

The Norris Watershed Management Plan, which the Norris Watershed Board oversees, guides the sustainable use and preservation of the Norris Watershed. Its primary objective is to maintain a balance between ecological health, water quality, and recreational use, ensuring that the watershed remains a valuable asset. To achieve this, key components of the plan include protecting the watershed from pollution, enhancing natural habitats, and managing human activities. Collaboration with local organizations, government agencies, and the community is vital in fostering stewardship. The plan integrates research and best practices to guarantee the long-term sustainability of this resource, supporting both the community's welfare and the biodiversity of the watershed.



2.0 Demographics

This chapter provides insights into the age distribution, population growth, household composition, and socio-economic factors of Norris's population. By analyzing these demographics, parks and recreational facilities can be tailored to meet the diverse needs and interests of Norris residents, both currently and in the future.

Norris is a small city located in Anderson County, Tennessee, which was originally constructed in the 1930s to house workers from the nearby Norris Dam project. As per the latest U.S. Census data, Norris has a modest population of 1,577 residents, reflecting a close-knit community with a unique demographic profile. This chapter utilizes census data and projections to provide a comprehensive demographic analysis of Norris, with a focus on the year 2023.

Population Growth

In the last decade, Norris has seen a steady increase in its population. Currently, the town is home to 1,577 people. Norris is currently growing at a rate of 0.74% annually and its population has increased by 1.49% since the most recent Census [See Figure 2.1]. This growth is attributed to its charming small-town feel, safety, and overall high quality of life. This appeal draws in both families and retirees alike. It is important to note that this growth trend highlights the need for recreational planning that is flexible and scalable, so that it can keep up with the population growth without overextending resources.

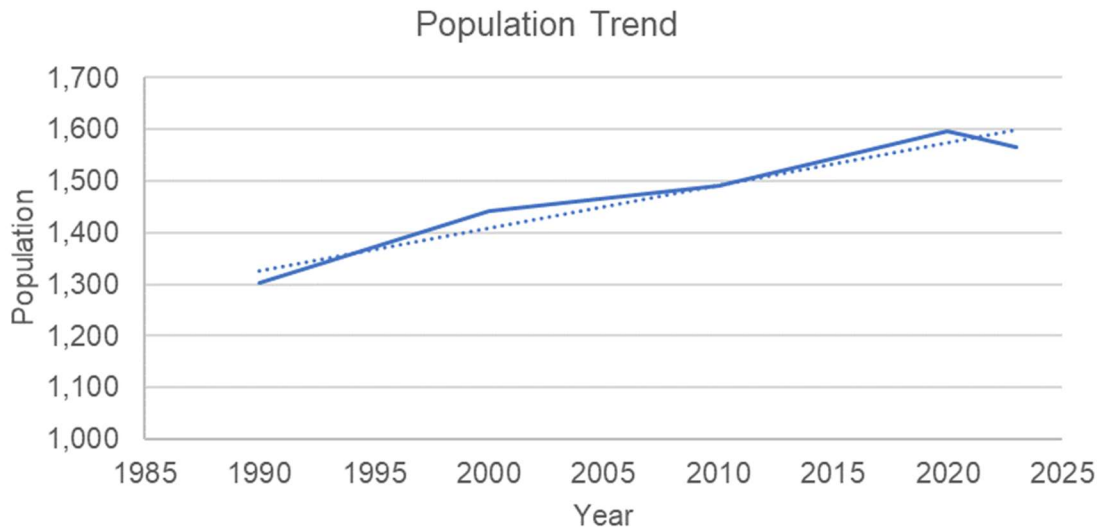


Figure 2.1

Age Distribution

The population of Norris is mainly composed of older-aged residents and retirees, indicating that the community values stability and community-oriented living. Compared to state and national

averages, the city has a higher percentage of residents over the age of 60, with the average age of males at age 62 and females at age 58. This age distribution has an impact on the types of recreational activities and facilities that are in demand. For example, there may be a higher need for walking trails, parks that are senior-friendly, and leisure activities that cater to older adults. See figure 2.2 for delineation of resident age groups; please note that ages 5 and 35 for males is missing from the graphic because there are no males within this age range currently living in Norris as per U.S. Census data. Figure 2.3 also illustrates Norris residents’ race and ethnicity.

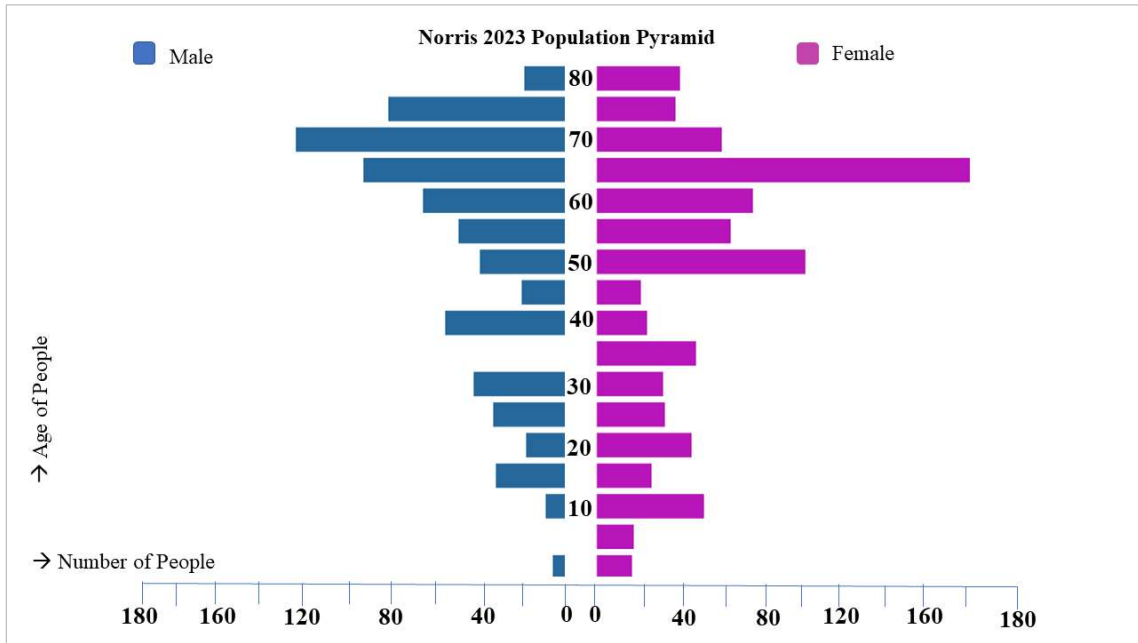


Figure 2.2

Race	Population (N=1,577)	Percentage of Total
White	1,537	97.4%
Black or African American	2	0.1%
Native American	4	0.3%
Asian	8	0.5%
Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	0	0%
Other	1	0.1%
Two or More Races	25	1.6%
Hispanic	24	1.5%

Figure 2.3

Household Composition

The makeup of households in Norris leans towards family-oriented living, with a significant percentage of family households as opposed to non-family ones [See Figure 2.4]. Additionally,

Figure 2.5 illustrates that the majority of homes are owner-occupied (79%) vs. rental properties (21%), thus indicating more permanency of residents. This emphasizes the importance of designing family-friendly parks and recreational facilities that cater to all age groups. It is essential to have facilities that offer diverse activities for both children and adults, as well as spaces that encourage family gatherings and community events.

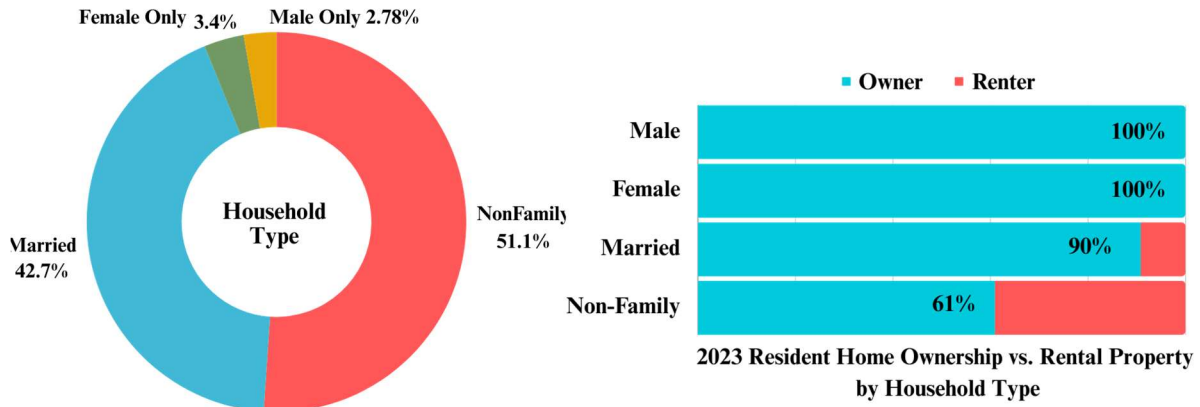


Figure 2.4 (left) and Figure 2.5 (right)

Socio-Economic Factors

Norris residents have a similar median household income to the state average, with 6.14% living below the poverty line. In 2022, the average household income for Norris was \$58,125. Moreover, more than 75% of the population has some or more college education, which indicates a highly educated community. This economic stability could lead to higher investments in recreational activities and facilities through taxes or direct spending. However, it is important to ensure that these parks and recreational opportunities are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community, regardless of their economic status.

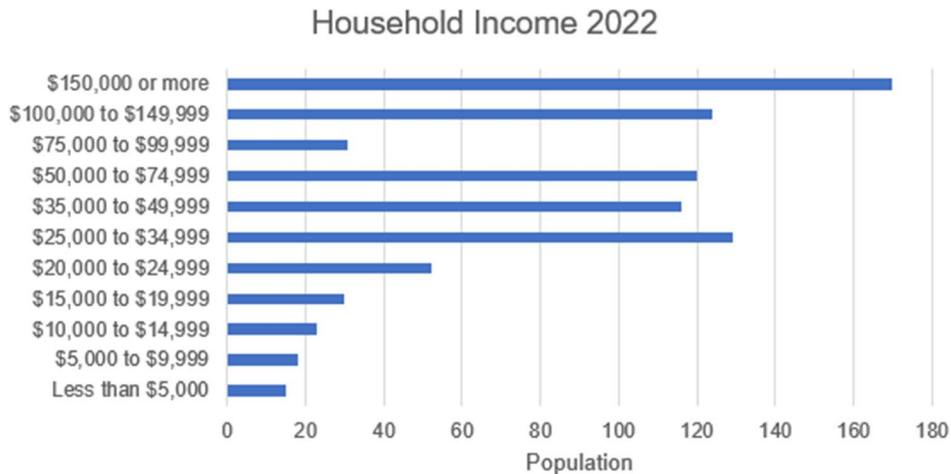


Figure 2.6

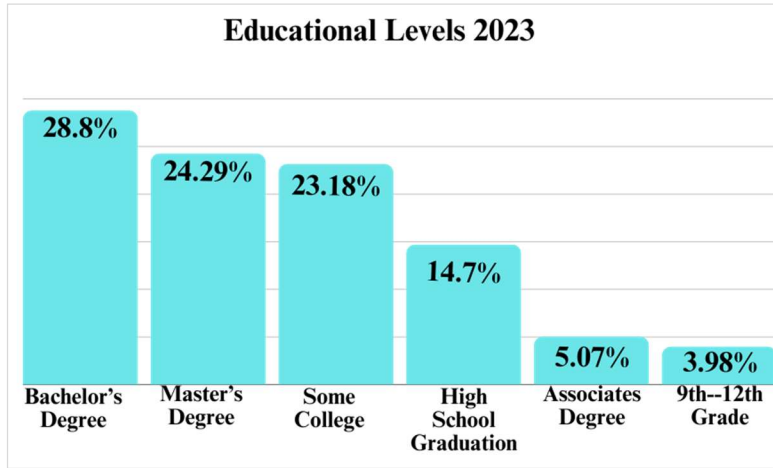


Figure 2.7

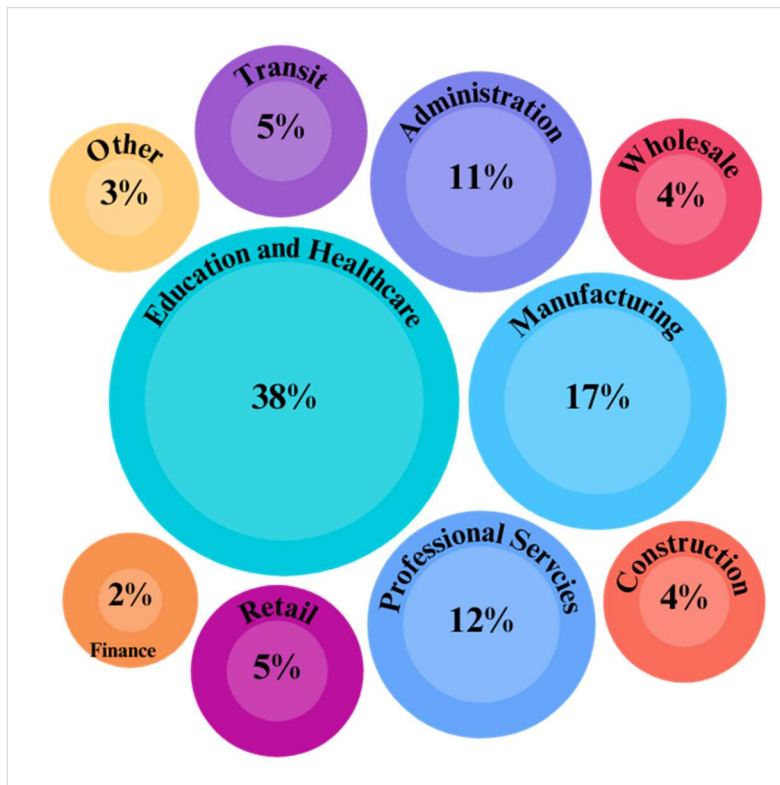


Figure 2.8

Norris has a demographic profile that indicates a need for diverse recreational facilities catering to a wide range of age groups and physical abilities. Developing multi-generational recreational spaces, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity, and community engagement are key strategies to meet these needs. By aligning the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the specific needs and preferences of the community, Norris can enrich the lives of its residents for years to come.

3.0 Facility Evaluations

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of all the elements, structures, features, facilities, and amenities available at each park that is owned and managed by Norris. The following sections offer a brief overview of each property. For more information and details, you can refer to the engineering drawings available in the Appendix.

Features & Amenities:

- Norris Commons and Arboretum
- Eric Harold Park
- Memorial Park Tennis Courts and Restroom
- Norris Disc Golf Course
- Norris Community Building Gymnasium
- Oak Road Park
- Ridgeway Park
- Norris Creamery Park
- Norris Lion's Pavilion
- Norris Watershed Park and Trails*
- Rifle Range*

**Please see notations regarding property ownership, maintenance, and/or scheduling in each of these sections.*

Norris Commons and Arboretum

Coordinates: 36.196881, -84.068085
 Address: West Circle Road
 Parcel Number: 031C B 001.00
 Calculated Acreage: 8.7

Description: The Norris Commons and Arboretum is nestled in the heart of Norris. This area is a large undeveloped park-like area in the center of Norris with a relatively flat central mowed area surrounded by a variety of trees. In June of 2018, the Norris Commons was certified as a Level 1 Arboretum by the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council. The Norris Commons Arboretum is a large open field with picnic tables bordered by 36 different species of trees.

It holds the position of being the community centerpiece that brings residents and visitors together. This park seamlessly combines natural beauty, community engagement, and a sense of belonging. Its meadows and majestic trees create a tranquil escape offering a space for relaxation and reflection. The Commons and Arboretum showcase a diverse collection of trees, inviting nature enthusiasts and learners to explore the wonders of biodiversity. Additionally, the Commons and Arboretum serves as a vibrant hub for community

events, live performances, youth soccer league, and festive gatherings, fostering connections and a shared sense of community. The Commons and Arboretum is a place where people can come together, celebrate, and appreciate the beauty of nature while cultivating a strong sense of belonging.

Observations: The park is a beautiful open space that can be used for both passive and active recreation. Aerial photographs indicate that the large green field have soccer fields marked out.

List of Amenities:

- Six picnic tables
- Restrooms located at the back of the library
- Office/storage space next to library building
- Mixed use open field are with room for multiple soccer pitches and benches

Observations:

- Lack of walking path through the Commons

Norris Community Building & Parks

Chestnut Drive, Norris TN 37828

Facilities include:

- Eric Harold Memorial Park
- Memorial Park Tennis Courts
- Disc Golf Course
- Norris Gymnasium

Coordinates: 36.197690, -84.074503
 Address: Deer Ridge Road
 Parcel Number: 031 003.01
 Deeded Acreage: 15.14

Eric Harold Park

Chestnut Dr, Norris TN 37828

Description: Eric Harold Memorial Park is a regional park with a playground, a pavilion, grills, two tennis courts, and a nine-hole Disc Golf course.

Eric Harold Park is a delightful destination that offers a multitude of enjoyable experiences for visitors. The park caters to a wide range of interests and activities with a playground, pavilion, and ADA accessible swings. Whether one seeks a family picnic or engaging in a fun playground, Eric Harold Park provides a serene and vibrant setting where individuals of all ages can find joy and relaxation.

Observations: Overall, the entire park could use some renovations. The playground equipment has some rusted metal exposed as well as chipping paint. The mulch play surface has begun to wash away.

List of Amenities:

- Parking lot
- Playground
- Pavilion with four picnic tables and one barbeque grill
- Swing set with ADA access

Observations:

- Some vandalism on picnic tables, playground, and pavilion. Maintenance needed.
- The playground has rusted sections, uneven platforms, and chipped paint. Maybe replace the playground with ADA elements and add a toddler area.
- Water fountains need to be replaced.
- No sidewalk on the property.

Memorial Park Tennis Courts and Restroom

Chestnut Dr, Norris TN 37828

Description: The Memorial Park Tennis Courts and restroom, while a popular destination for tennis enthusiasts, is in need of several improvements to enhance its overall appeal and functionality.

Observations: The court surfaces require resurfacing and repair to ensure a safe and enjoyable playing experience. Additionally, the installation of proper lighting would extend playing hours and accommodate evening matches. At the same time, amenities such as seating areas, shade structures, and updated restroom facilities would provide added comfort for players and spectators alike. Addressing these improvements would greatly elevate the tennis courts, making it a more attractive and well-equipped venue for tennis enthusiasts and future local sports programs in the community.

List of Amenities:

- Two tennis courts
- Shared parking lot and restroom building with the Gymnasium and Disc Golf park

Observations:

- Parking lot lines are not visible and extremely faded. Restriping needed.
- No allocated ADA parking.
- Some litter is scattered around the tennis courts.
- Bent fencing surrounding the courts.
- Tennis court lights do not work and will need to be fixed.
- Tennis courts are cracked with faded paint. Repaving is needed.
- Bathrooms are decommissioned and will need to be replaced.

Norris Disc Golf Course

Chestnut Drive, Norris TN 37828

Description: The Disc Golf Park is a prime example of diligent upkeep and maintenance, as it consistently provides players with a well-maintained course to enjoy. The course is well-maintained, offering a smooth and fun playing experience. The baskets are in excellent condition, providing accurate

targets for disc golfers. The park's overall attention to detail contributes to a pleasant and inviting atmosphere for all who visit.

List of Amenities:

- Nine hole Disc Golf course
- Shared the parking lot and restroom building with the Gymnasium and Disc Golf park
- Within the forest is an open hiking trail

Observations:

- Parking lot observations covered in the Memorial Park Tennis Courts section.
- Disc Golf course is in excellent condition.
- The restroom building is currently used as a storage building for Disc Golf materials.

Norris Gymnasium

20 Chestnut Drive, Norris TN 37828

Description: The Norris Community Building Gymnasium has become a bustling hub for sports and recreational activities, drawing a large number of participants from the community.

Observations: However, the high utilization has taken its toll, and the facility is now in need of some improvements and maintenance. Upgrades such as repaving the concrete flooring, updating equipment, and enhancing the programming for pickleball usage would greatly improve the overall experience for community members and spectators, ensuring a safe and comfortable environment for all. With the necessary work, the Norris Community Building Gymnasium will continue to be a vibrant and cherished space that promotes health, fitness, and overall engagement.

List of Amenities:

- Large gymnasium that is part of the Norris Community Building
- Basketball hoops
- Small storage area
- Machinery in the corner
- Accessible restrooms
- Shared parking lot and restroom building with the Gymnasium and Disc Golf park

Observations:

- The gymnasium is in good condition.
- Four ADA parking spaces in the main parking lot.
- The gym is used for basketball and other indoor sports, as well as a small stage event area. Mainly used as pickle ball courts.
- The gym has cracked and has a slippery surface. Resurfacing is recommended with something with more grip.
- HVAC unit is old.

Additional Norris Parks and Area Properties

Oak Road Park – Pocket Park

Oak Road and Garden Road, Norris TN 37828

Coordinates: 36.188535, -84.075078
Address: Oak and Garden Road
Parcel Number: 031K A 040.00
Deeded Acreage: 1.7

Description: Oak Road Park is a neighborhood park with a playground, basketball court, and shallow concrete wading pool.

Oak Road Park is a charming and delightful community destination, offering simple yet captivating features for visitors of all ages. Children enjoy the playground as it offers a variety of fun structures and play equipment, providing them with plentiful opportunities for entertainment and creating a sense of joy and wonder. The shallow concrete wading pool offers a refreshing escape from the summer heat, allowing families to cool off and create lasting memories, while the basketball court provides a space for friendly competitions and active recreation. Oak Road Park is a charming treasure that blends entertainment, tranquility, and outdoor enjoyment in a lovely and welcoming environment.

Observations: Overall, the entire park could use some renovations. The playground equipment has some rusted metal exposed as well as chipping paint.

List of Amenities:

- Pavilion shelter with three picnic tables and a barbeque grill
- Playground
- Swing set
- Shallow concrete wading pool
- Concrete basketball court

Observations:

- The park is in generally good condition.
- Small gravel parking lot and no assigned ADA parking.
- No paved paths within the park; there are, however, perimeter paved sidewalk located on Garden and Oak Road.
- Some vandalism on the pavilion and picnic tables.
- Pavilion structure had an exposed hole in the roof. Currently going under renovations to be completed sometime Spring 2024.

Ridgeway Park – Pocket Park

Ridgeway Court and Oak Road, Norris TN 37828

Coordinates: 36.190566, -84.080835
Address: Oak Road
Parcel Number: 031G A 019.00
Calculated Acreage: 0.6

Description: The recently developed playground in Ridgeway Park is a delightful addition that brings joy and excitement to the local community.

Observation: Despite its compact location, the new playground is thoughtfully designed, featuring colorful play structures, interactive elements, and age-appropriate equipment that cater to young children. It provides a safe and engaging space for kids to climb, slide, and explore, fostering creativity, physical activity, and social interaction within the park.

List of Amenities:

- Playground equipment
- A picnic table and a couple of benches
- Swing set with ADA access

Observations:

- Park in excellent condition.
- Parallel parking surrounding the park. Has very faint parking lines.
- No assigned ADA parking.
- There is a ramp to the park and a gravel path to the park.

Creamery Park

E Norris Road, Norris, TN 37828

Coordinates: 36.18692755493512, -84.06330333032031
Address: E. Norris Rd
Parcel Number: 031 080.03
Acres 1.38

Description: Creamery Park is a passive-use park that sits on the former Norris Creamery. This was the first private business to operate an all-electric milk-producing plant in the world. The site was donated to the city for public use, and it has been preserved to commemorate its historical significance.

List of Amenities:

- An ADA accessible sidewalk winding through an open grassland.

Observations:

- This is a relatively new park with no other amenities.
- Lacks a designated parking area.

Lion’s Pavilion*

Norris Square, Norris TN 37828

**Note: The City of Norris owns the pavilion structure, and it is a conjoined effort with the Lion’s Club. The structure is located on the Middle School grounds.*

Coordinates: 36.196499302467885, -84.07021440206756
 Address: Norris Square
 Parcel Number: 031F C 002.00
 Acres: N/A

Description: The Norris Lion's Pavilion serves as a dynamic facility, fostering a sense of unity and relaxation among residents. The pavilion, with its versatile design and ample seating, hosts a myriad of events, including barbeques, family parties, public and private events, and general gatherings.

List of Amenities:

- Lion’s Pavilion
- Seven picnic tables and four grills.
- Restroom building
- “Colton Zenni Eagle Scout Project” Amphitheater nearby
- Next to entrance of Norris Middle School

Observations:

- The structure is in excellent condition.
- The Pavilion’s restrooms are only open during scheduled events.
- There is no paved path to the Lion’s Pavilion.
- A good relationship between the city and the Lion’s Club.

Norris Watershed and Trails*

Red Hill Trail, Andersonville, TN 37705

**Note: The City of Norris Watershed Board oversees maintenance of watershed activities.*

Coordinates: 36.2276611906083, -84.05210706712037
 Address: Park Ln
 Parcel Number: 011 048.00
 Acres: 2,306

Description: The expansive Norris Watershed is a natural haven that offers an abundance of outdoor opportunities for nature enthusiasts and hikers alike. The park covers a wide expanse of beautiful

scenery and offers an intricate system of trails that weave through lush forests. With trails of varying lengths and difficulty levels, visitors can embark on memorable journeys, immersing themselves in the beauty of nature while exploring the diverse ecosystems and wildlife that call Norris Watershed home.

List of Amenities:

- Many signs directing to and throughout the Watershed.
- Grassy and gravel areas for parking to enter trails.
- About 42.2 miles of trails open to single-track hiking only
- Many miles of trails open to multi-use hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian use.

Observations:

- There exist numerous prospects for engaging in outdoor pursuits and recreational activities.

Rifle Range

699 Upper Clear Creek Rd, Andersonville, TN 37705

The Rifle Range is a facility open to the public for safe and structured firearms and hunter-safety training. An annual permitted membership, available through the police department, is required to use the range.

List of Amenities:

- 25-yard pistol range shelter
- 50-yard pistol range shelter
- Rifle range shelter
- Portable restrooms

Observations:

- Steep gravel drive to the range.

Benchmark

A comparative analysis, referred to as benchmark analysis, assesses the convenience of parks and recreation services within the City of Norris. By juxtaposing local statistics with similar municipalities and national data, this approach offers a snapshot of where the city excels in providing such services and where potential shortfalls may exist. This analysis presents an objective methodology for evaluating the quantity and benchmark of the services rendered.

City of Norris Benchmark Numbers (Population of 1,577)

- Residents per park: 315
 - o Total parks: 5
- Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents: 17.5 acres
 - o 27.52 acres total
- Total facility locations: 4
- Residents per playground: 526
 - o Playground structures: 3
- Total miles of trails: greater than 10 miles*
 - o *Norris Watershed Park is made up of many miles of forest trails
- Full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) per 10,000 residents: 6.3 staff
 - o There is one (1) full-time staff employee in the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department
- 2023 operating expenditures: \$31,575
 - o 2023 revenue: \$1,900

City of Norris Facilities	Number of Facilities
Playgrounds	3
Shaded Picnic Areas	3
Gymnasium	1
Disc Golf Course	1
Tennis Courts	2
Pickleball Facilities	1
Baseball Facilities	0
Soccer Facilities	1
Basketball Courts	1
Restroom Facility	2
Amphitheater	1
Dog Park	0

Similar Municipalities Comparisons – Type

Municipality	County	Population 2020 Census	Population 2023 Census	Area (sq mi)	TN Region
Norris	Anderson County	1,491	1,577	7.19 sq mi (18.6 km ²)	East
Kimball	Marion County	1,395	1,594	4.87 sq mi (12.6 km ²)	East
Vonore	Monroe County	1,474	1,701	11.93 sq mi (30.9 km ²)	East
Graysville	Rhea County	1,502	1,542	1.17 sq mi (3.0 km ²)	East
Englewood	McMinn County	1,532	1,471	1.82 sq mi (4.7 km ²)	East

Similar Municipalities Comparisons – Facilities

Municipality	Total Parks	Residents per Park	Total Non-Park Facilities	Total Park Acres	AC per 1k residents	Number of Playgrounds	Resid. Per playg.
Norris	5	315	4	27.5	17.45	3	526
Kimball	3	531	3	102	63.74	1	1,594
Vonore	1	1701	1	1,200	705.47	0	-
Graysville	1	1542	1	1.13	0.73	1	1,542
Englewood	1	1471	1	9.9	6.73	1	1,471

Similar Municipalities Comparisons – Finances

Municipality	Total miles of Trails	Full-time employees	Staff per 10k residents	2023 Operating Expenditures	2023 Capital Projects	2023 Revenue
Norris	unknown	0	0	\$31,757	\$103,000	\$1,900
Kimball	none	1	6.27	\$189,550	\$243,910	\$0
Vonore	unknown	0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Graysville	none	0	0	unknown	unknown	\$0
Englewood	4.3	0	0	unknown	unknown	\$0

National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) serves as the primary source for the latest nationwide data. This data not only informs present and future decisions but also equips local leadership with valuable insights to guide resource allocation. The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review encapsulates key findings from the NRPA park metrics. For optimal comparison, the subsequent information presents the median figures from NRPA for jurisdictions with populations under 20,000. This category represents the smallest data population group available and will be juxtaposed with the City of Norris population of 1,577.

NRPA Median Comparison by Jurisdiction in Population of Less Than 20,000

- Residents per park: 1,225
- Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents: 13.0 acres
- Residents per playground: 2,014
- Total miles of trails: 4.0 miles
- Full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) per 10,000 residents: 11.5 staff
- Annual operating expenditures: \$1,200,000

In summation, these benchmark comparisons illuminate the abundance inherent in the City of Norris' parks and recreation system, while also pinpointing areas that merit consideration for its burgeoning department. Envisioning well maintained parks and recreational landscape, the city aspires to offer an expansive array of opportunities for both residents and visitors in the current and forthcoming years. To achieve this, the city must maintain well their designated parks and recreation facilities.

4.0 Revenues and Staffing

Parks and Recreation Staff

The City of Norris has a Recreation Commission. This is a group of volunteers appointed by the council to manage the city's recreational programming and events. The Commission is passionate about serving the community and works closely with the city. They also act as liaisons between the City of Norris and external organizations or school systems.

In November 2023, the City Council passed a resolution to update the Assistant City Manager's position to include the role of Parks and Recreation Director. This change has resulted in new responsibilities for the Assistant City Manager and has formalized the roles and responsibilities of the city's administration with respect to parks and recreation activities.(remove extra period) These new duties have provided fresh opportunities that have significantly impacted the way parks and recreational services are carried out in Norris.

Excerpt: City of Norris – Resolution 20-2023- Passed on November 2023

A RESOLUTION UPDATING THE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Norris City Council amends the job descriptions for the following position by adding a section titled “Parks and Recreation Director,” as follows:

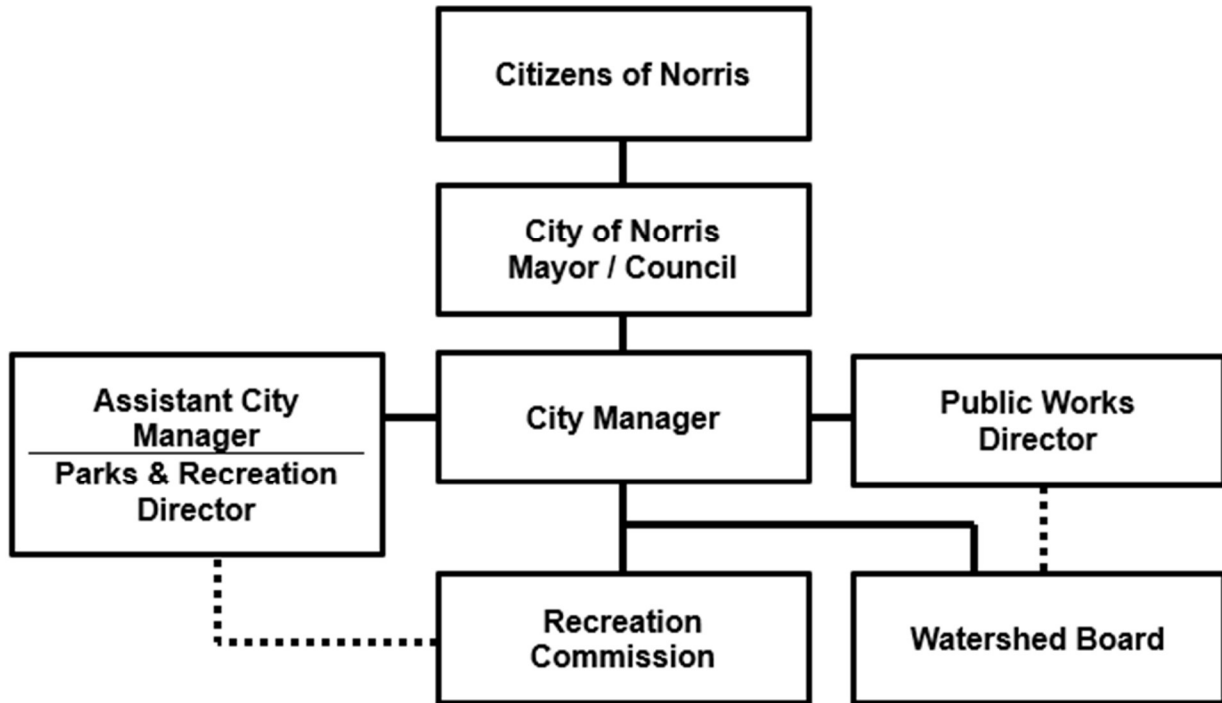
Serve as Parks and Recreation Director:

- Inspect city-owned park equipment for assurance of health and safety, and direct/oversee regular maintenance.
- Manage the procurement of new parks and recreation equipment.
- Develop and implement standardized policies and rules to be followed at city parks.
- Serve as the liaison with the insurance company for park-related claims and actions.
- Manage the Capital Improvement Plan for City Parks and Recreation activities.
- Attend Recreation Commission Meetings and assist the board with the development of the recreation program.
- Manage the hiring, supervising, and training of Summer Recreation staff.
- Implement the parks and recreation master plan.
- Manage grants for parks and recreation activities and improvements and explore/develop other revenue-generating opportunities.
- Organize and manage new park events and festivals

It is important to note that the future of Norris' park and recreation structure is still flexible. The city is small, and many staff members have multiple roles and responsibilities. The current organizational chart reflects the boards and departments relationship, not a straight hierarchy.

The realization of accountability will drive the community forward, with enthusiasm for addressing the major issues and challenges identified in this master plan. The community can now look forward to well-maintained facilities, well-run programs, and future capital projects, as well as addressing the voices of the community. The future of Norris Parks and Recreation is bright and exciting.

City of Norris Parks and Recreational Services Organizational Chart



Funding Breakdown

Municipalities, especially those with newly established department responsibilities, find it challenging to provide fully funded Parks and Recreation services. This is a problem that cities across Tennessee are familiar with. However, with careful budget planning and perseverance, the task can be accomplished. The difficulties that arise can help identify the needs and desires of the community, while long-term budgeting can guarantee the smooth operation of public services.

The Parks and Recreation services in Norris are primarily supported by the city's general fund, with additional funding coming from state and federal grants. The Norris Recreation Commission oversees a pool of funds that are to be utilized to provide recreational programming and supplies, most of which is funded through donations. The table below presents a breakdown of operating expenditures, operating revenues, and capital expenses for fiscal years 2022 and 2023.

DRAFT

2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

According to the Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports of the City of Norris, park and recreation expenditures are allocated to part-time personnel, supplies, and the organization of programs and yearly events. The primary revenue sources are donations, with some revenue generated from the rental of the Lions Pavilion.

Parks and Recreation Funding Breakdown

Year	FY 2022	FY 2023
Operating Expenditure	\$29,197	\$37,181
Operating Revenues	\$10,024	\$6,840
Capital Expenses	\$ -	\$ -

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2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

5.0 Survey and Community Engagement

Achieving profound and comprehensive community engagement is a critical, yet challenging, aspect of the planning process. To effectively accomplish this, it is crucial to establish multiple touchpoints with stakeholders and the general public to ensure diverse and insightful input is gathered. Simultaneously, such interactions must also cultivate widespread support for the proposed recommendations outlined in the plan. Our engagement strategies encompassed conducting a public survey, organizing public meetings, and conducting interviews with the city and staff. These tactics were implemented to obtain crucial information and insights from a wide range of perspectives and ensure our recommendations align with the needs and desires of the community.

Public Survey

A public survey was conducted to gather public opinions on current and future recreational programs and facilities in the City of Norris. The survey consisted of 10 main questions, including both multiple-choice and optional open-ended questions. The survey was promoted through workshops, community channels, and word-of-mouth referrals. It was open for submissions from July to December 2023 and received a total of 141 responses, representing about 8% of the city's population of approximately 1,577 residents.

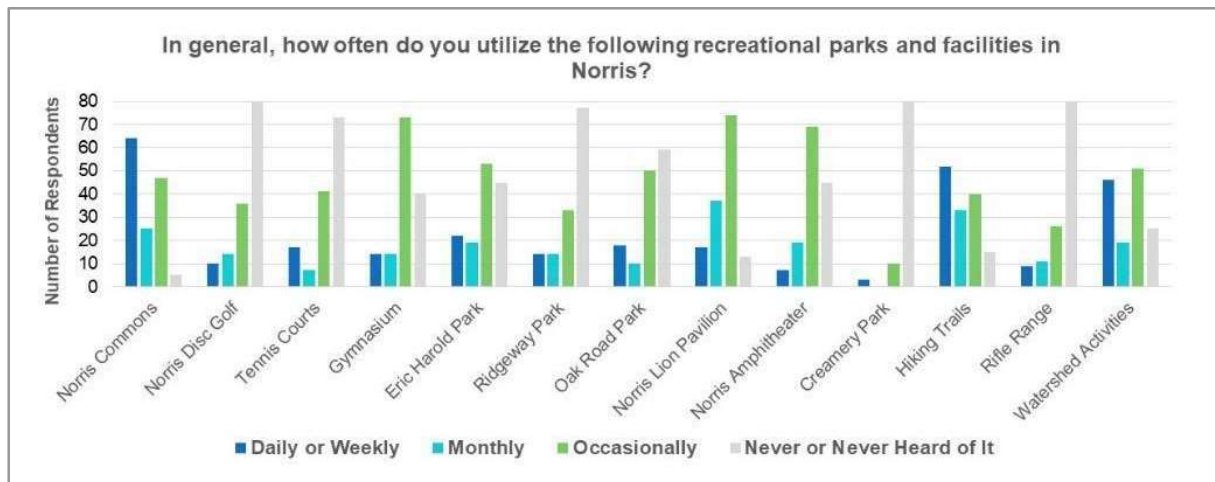
The survey covered topics such as parks, facilities, programs, and local activities. The results provide detailed insights into the opinions of the respondents.

Survey

Question 1.

“In general, how often do you utilize the following recreational parks and facilities in Norris?”

Norris Commons is the most popular park, followed by Watershed trails and park activities. Rifle Range is the least recognized facility, while Creamery Park is the least utilized park.



Question 2.

“In general, how satisfied are you with the following recreational parks and facilities in Norris? 5 = Very Satisfied, 4 = Satisfied, 3 = Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 1 = Very Dissatisfied”

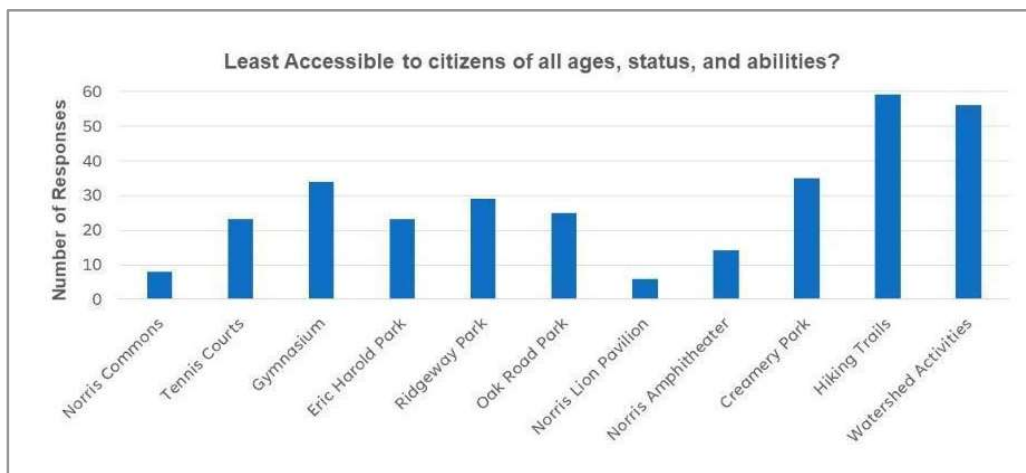
According to the ratings, Norris Commons is the highest rated park, followed by the Lions Club Pavilion and the hiking trails. On the other hand, the lowest rated park is the tennis courts, followed by the gymnasium.



Question 3.

“Please select the THREE parks that are the LEAST ACCESSIBLE in the City of Norris Parks to citizens of all ages, status, and abilities.”

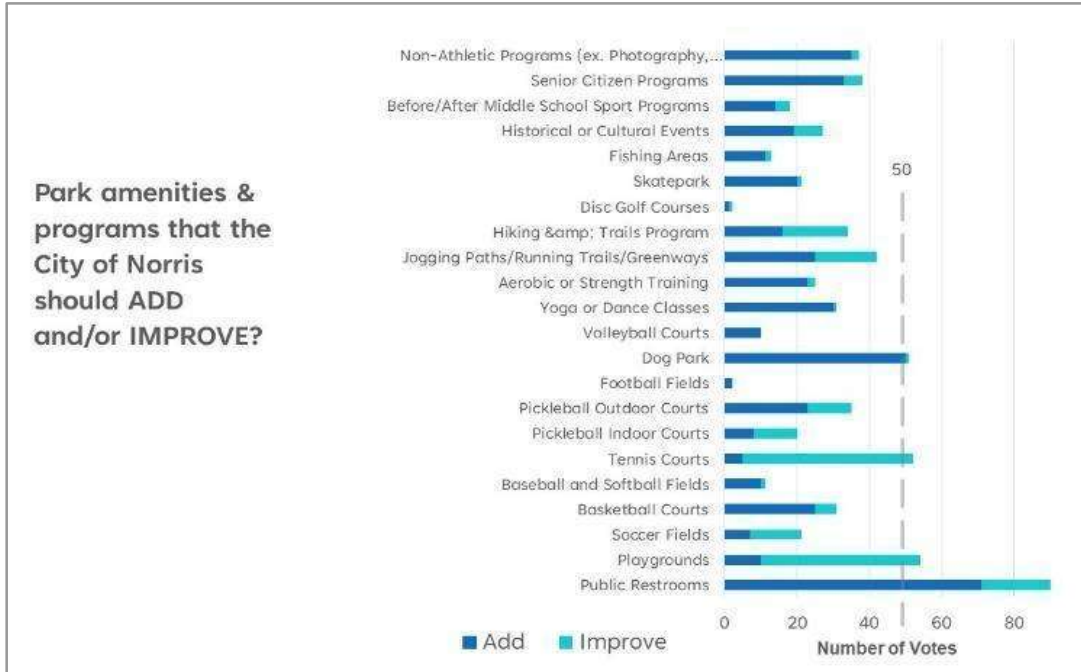
The hiking trails and gymnasium are the least accessible facilities. Some observations were noted as the main reasons for inaccessibility due to limited ADA options.



Question 5.

“Pick your TOP FIVE Park Amenities & Programs that the City of Norris should ADD and/or IMPROVE? The listed programs are feasible and possible opportunities for the City of Norris to pursue.”

According to the survey results, the most requested facility addition is public restrooms, followed by a dog park. The most requested facility improvement is the playgrounds, followed by the tennis courts.



Question 6.

“What other recreation activities does your household use outside the City of Norris (within a 30-minute drive)?”

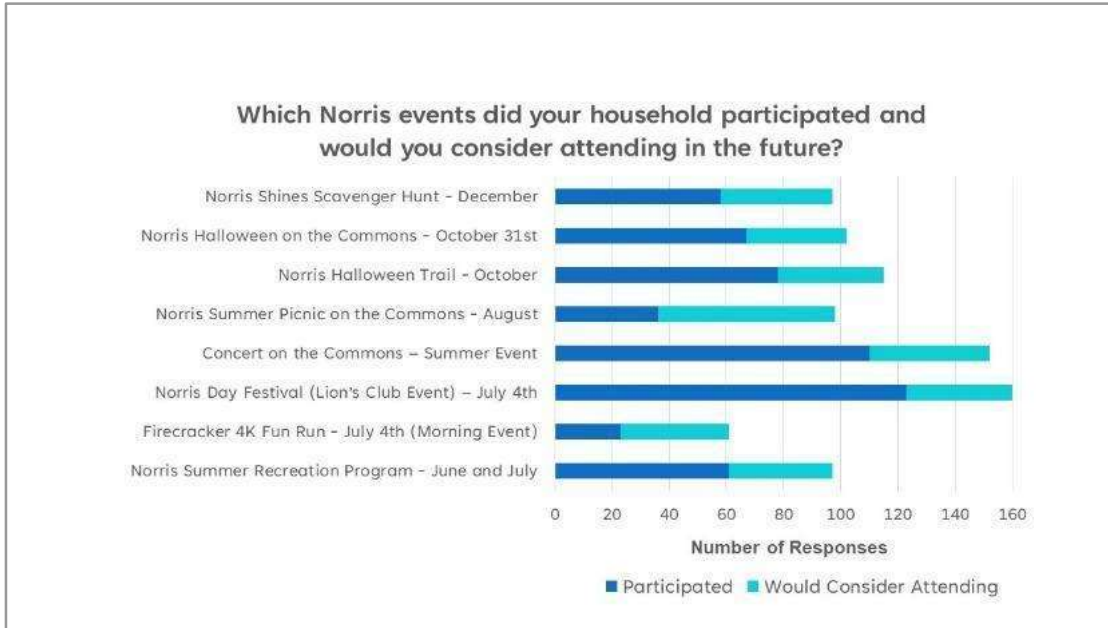
According to the survey, the most common activity done outside of Norris is swimming, followed by boating and hiking. The main locations mentioned were Norris Lake, Norris Dam State Park, and Knoxville.

Common Responses		
What other recreation activities does your household use outside the City of Norris?	Activities:	Locations:
	Swimming	Knoxville
	Boating	Norris Lake
	Hiking	Norris Dam State Park
	Kayaking	Clinton
	Tennis	Oak Ridge
	Fishing	Smoky Mountains
	Other Programs	

Question 7.

“Which Norris events did your household participate in the last year (2022), would you consider attending in the future? (Check all that apply)”

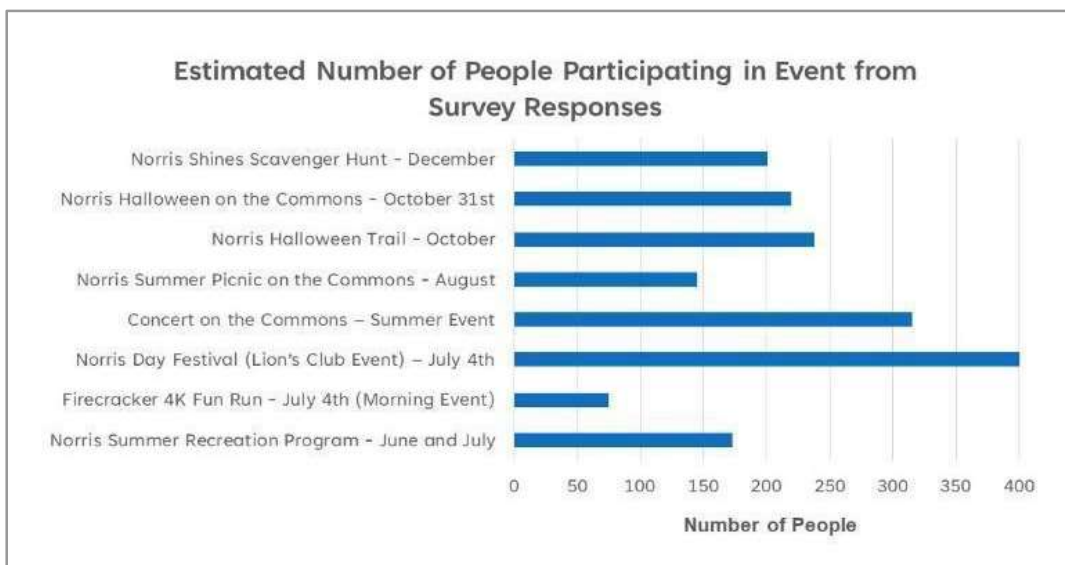
The event that received the highest response in terms of participation was the Norris Day Festival (Lions Club Event) held on July 4th. The second most participated event was the Concert on the Commons, a summer event. On the other hand, the highest considered attending event was the Norris Summer Picnic on the Commons, which took place in August. The second most considered event was the Concert on the Commons, a summer event.



Optional Question.

“(Optional) How many people in your household participated in the Event?”

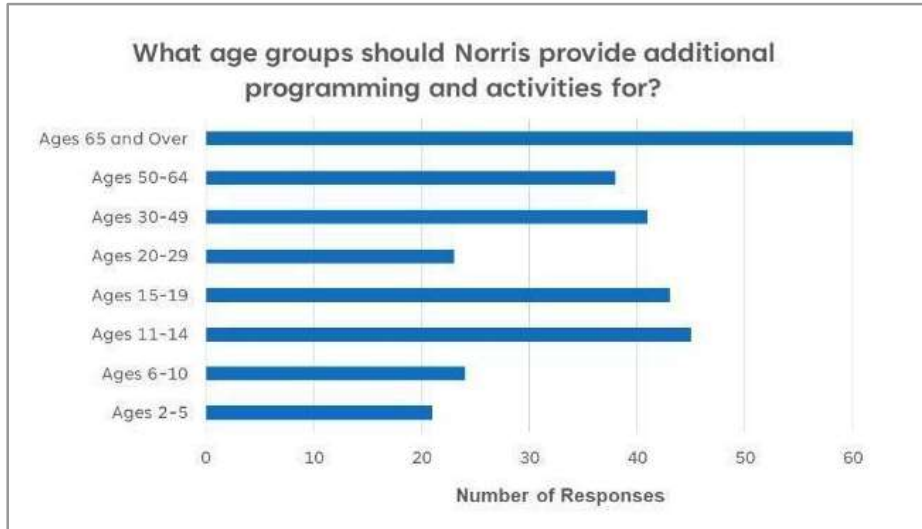
The survey asked participants to indicate the number of individuals from their household who attended the event. Results showed that the Norris Day Festival (Lions Club Event) held on July 4th had the highest attendance, followed by the Concert on the Commons, a summer event.



Question 8.

“A goal for Norris is to provide amenities and activities to all age groups. In your opinion, what age groups should Norris provide additional programming and activities for?”

According to the feedback received, the most requested age group for additional programming and activities are for people aged 65 and older, followed by the age group of 11 to 14 years old. There is a significant demand for programs catering to the oldest population group and middle and high school age groups.



Optional Question.

“(Optional) From the previous Question. Please provide an activity and/or programming example you would recommend from your selected answers. Ex: Ages 11-14, Teen Sports Summer Camp. Ages 50-64, Pickleball League”

For this optional question, the highest common request across all age groups was adding swimming and pool activities. There was great emphasis on school programming and teen sports programs for school-age children. More family-oriented activities for middle-aged groups. And great emphasis for low impact activities for older adult age groups.

DRAFT

2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Provide an activity and/or programming you would recommend per age group.
Common Responses.

Ages 2-5

- Preschool
- Splash pad
- Swimming Lessons
- Summer Programs



Ages 6-10

- Swimming & Pool Activities
- Sport Programs
- Bicycle Basics
- STEM Classes

Ages 11-14

- After School Activities
- Sport Leagues
- Camping Programs
- Teen Sport Programs
- Skate Park

Ages 15-19

- Social Activities
- Teen Sports
- Bicycle & Skateboarding
- Basketball & Pickleball Leagues
- College and Career Prep

Provide an activity and/or programming you would recommend per age group.
Common Responses.

Ages 20-29

- College and Career Support
- Concerts & Dances
- Swimming Pool



Ages 30-49

- Family Fun Days
- Movie Nights
- Fitness Classes
- Tennis League
- Swimming
- Women's Group Activities

Ages 50-60

- Club Activities
- Bingo
- Yoga & Dances
- Game Nights
- Pickleball League
- Swimming

Ages 65 and Over

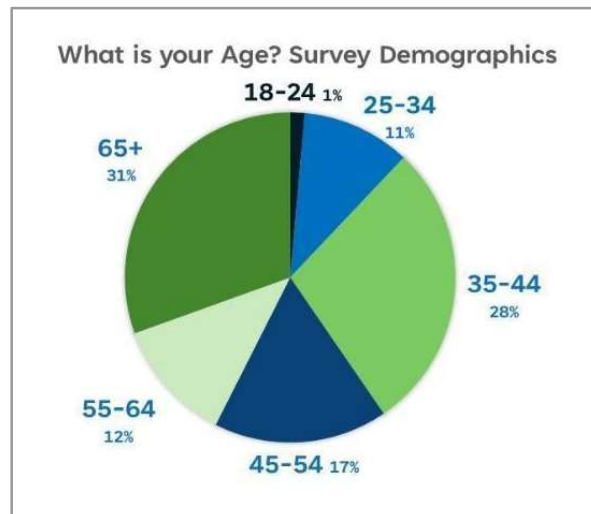
- Community Center
- Crafts
- Dancing
- Low Impact Fitness
- Senior Programs
- Swimming
- Yoga & Tai Chi



These next two questions were primarily used for gathering demographic information. There was a considerable response from various age groups, although the majority were aged 65 and above, and 35 to 44. Furthermore, more than 86% of respondents were citizens of Norris.

Question 9.

“For demographic purposes, please select the age group you are in.”

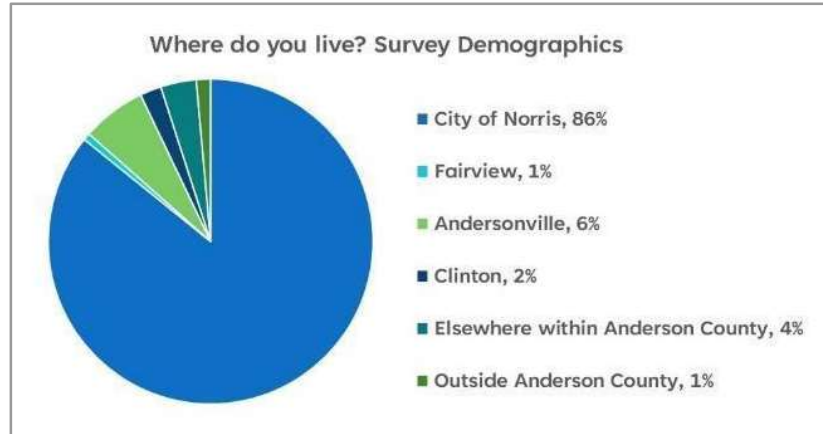


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2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Question 10.

“For demographic purposes, where do you live?”



Community Public Meetings

Two community workshops were held with the aim of informing the public about the results of a park evaluation and to collect feedback on the proposed implementations for the park facilities. The first workshop took place in August 2023, and the second one was conducted in January 2024, with a week delay due to weather. Both workshops included a presentation on the existing parks within the city and a summary of the survey responses received from the public. Participants in the workshops were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the current and future parks and amenities in the city by open floor discussion. The following is the feedback received from the workshops.

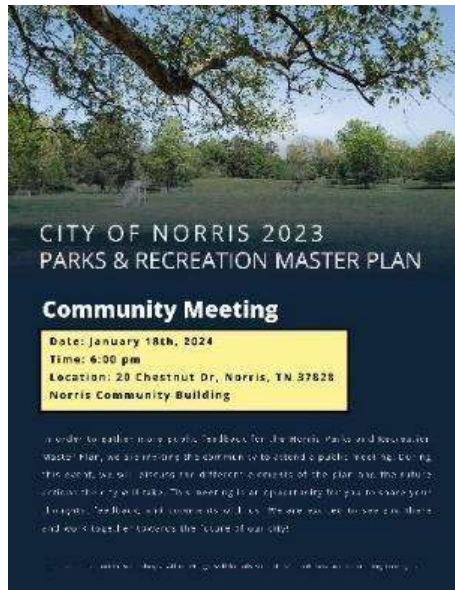
Main Community Responses

- Lack of information on the parks and park programs
- Maintenance issues of all facilities
 - Playgrounds updates – Eric Harold and Oak Road
 - Vandalism – all parks
 - Lack of restrooms – Tennis Courts and Disc Golf Course
 - Restroom building needs to be repaired and updated with storage capacity
- Tennis Courts
 - Completely rebuild tennis courts facilities
 - Add a basketball court next to the tennis courts
 - Replace one of the tennis courts and turn into two pickleball courts
- Norris Commons
 - There is not a path across the Commons and people are walking on wet grass
- Eric Harold
 - Playground needs replacement or repairs

DRAFT

2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

- Possibility for this park to become the park with ADA playground due to city centrality
- **Norris Gymnasium**
 - Concrete surface is unsafe and not a good surface to play pickleball on
 - HVAC unit needs replacement
 - Windows cause glare and blinds half the courts
- **Oak Road Park**
 - Splash pad needs to be sealed and requires a higher level of maintenance
 - Basketball concrete court surface is cracked and needs resurfacing or repair
 - Parking needs to change from gravel to surface parking
 - Playground needs upgrading
- **Ridgeway Park**
 - No comments
- **Creamery Park**
 - Needs a destination area for park activities
- **Lions Club Pavilion**
 - People a generally confused on the entity this facility belongs to and how to schedule use
 - Needs a paved path from the sidewalk to the pavilion to increase access
- **Watershed and Trail**
 - There should be better online information on the Watershed trails
- **Rifle Range**
 - People did not know that the Rifle Range existed or belonged to City
 - Better restroom facilities are needed



DRAFT

2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Interviews

During the planning process for the City of Norris's parks and recreation system, elected officials and staff were interviewed to uncover their internal opinions and goals. These interviews were structured around specific questions or thematic areas to ensure a broad range of insights. The inquiries included various topics such as the perceptions regarding specific parks, facilities, programs, expectations, and objectives. This approach ensured a holistic understanding of the city's viewpoints and laid a strong foundation for the planning endeavor.

List of Interviewees

Chris Mitchel, City of Norris Mayor
Bailey Whited, Assistant City Manager and New Parks & Recreation Director
Ralph Jordan, Watershed Board
Will Grinder, Norris Council Member

Interview Questions and Responses

The following are the interview questions that were posed to the interviewees. The responses provided by each interviewee are presented without any discernible order. It should be noted that these responses are unedited and have been transcribed faithfully to ensure their full response.

Q1) What primary outcome would you like to see from the master planning process?

- Long term investment direction
- I would like to have a document that can guide our capital spending for the next five to ten years. I want there to be little confusion about what our priorities are when it comes to parks and rec spending.
- Obtainable and well defined goals in a good timeline frame.

Q2) List the 3 most important parks or facilities that need to be immediately addressed. List them by priority.

- Eric Harold (tennis court) (2) Oak Road (3) Ridgeway
- Highest Priority: Tennis Courts (Resurfacing/conversion to multi-use facility)
- Second Priority: Oak Road Park (Modernization and ADA Compliance)
- Third Priority: Eric Harold Park
- The 2,500 acres of the Watershed

Q3) In your opinion, what facility or program should the Parks and Recreation Department add in the future?

- Programs for elderly - no additional facility may be needed for this
- A greenway that connects various parks and facilities would provide great benefits as the population of people in Norris who traverse the city via walking/biking is considerably high.
- TVA and Norris relationship
- City Council appointment to oversee watershed
 - Management plan of the Watershed

- Norris having no funding to watershed
 - Watershed is being self-funded by Rifle Range and cell phone towers
- Facilities for young kids
 - Pool or splash pad
- Find room for a dog park

Q4) Within the Parks and Recreation department, should there be any structural changes or improvements that the department should consider?

- No - we just added a Parks and Recreation Director staff position
- Develop a true, written work plan/schedule between the Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works or other departments to clear up any confusion about duties/responsibilities.
- Not visible to the public, or missing statement?
- Make into City department

Q5) What is the biggest complaint from users of the existing facilities and programming?

- General safety/maintenance issues, cracks in tennis court and lights don't work
- I hear the most complaints about the state of the gym from the surface to the temperature. Granted, that is the facility I am most commonly near since it is located in the facility where I primarily work. I also hear that standard maintenance at parks could be better.
- Watershed – vehicles have no restrictions (damaging ecology)
 - No off road vehicles, gates and barriers (locked during the winter). This implementation has saved money on damaged roads and ecology
- Watershed – people who live next to the Watershed. Buildings and garages right at the border of the property, requesting trees to be cut or trimmed with miles of boundary.

Q6) What is the biggest compliment?

- The Watershed is the facility I hear the most positive feedback about.
- Norris is the only municipality with a public Rifle Range
 - Rifle Range licensing program pays for full fundings of Watershed

Q7) What areas of town do you think are underserved? In what ways (programs, facilities, connectivity, access)?

- I don't see an underserved area
- Connectivity for “Old Norris” is low. Those areas have to drive to any facility they wish to use due to lack of sidewalks/walking trails.
- Watershed – for older citizens. No handicap accessibility
 - Carson Brewer Trail – short paved loop
 - Song Bird Trail is handicap accessible
- City sidewalks are asphalt and have root problem and bad for walking at night

Q8) What is the most important thing for the parks system to accomplish in the next year? Five years? Decade?

- Safety, replace aged equipment and facilities
- Next Year: Complete the development of the Master Plan and use it to develop a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

- Next 5 Years: Undertake major overhaul projects listed in the CIP.
- Next Decade: Fully modernize existing parks and rec facilities while being considerate of ADA compliance.
- Watershed - lacking data to learn user wants and needs

Q9) What are the short-term and long-term funding mechanisms supporting the department?

- City Taxes (>\$75k per year) and we plan to apply for grants
- Short-term: Explore various opportunities to generate revenue such as charging for summer recreation activities, equipment rental (i.e. disc golf frisbees, pickleball paddles/balls), and use of indoor facilities.

Q10) What are the greatest strengths of parks and recreation in the city?

- Locations and in general the public has a desire for them to be better
- Wide array of options from green spaces to playgrounds to nature trails to sport facilities and even a shooting range.

Q11) Do you have any additional thoughts or feedback?

- Consolidate three pocket parks with children play equipment into one
- More focus on older people

6.0 Programming and Community Events

The City of Norris is known for its vibrant community life, which is marked by a range of programming and events that bring together residents and visitors alike. This chapter outlines the diverse array of parks and recreation programming and community events that enrich the social fabric of Norris, fostering a sense of belonging and community pride.

Norris Summer Recreation Program - June and July

Running through June and July, the Norris Summer Recreation Program is a cornerstone of the community's seasonal activities. Designed to engage children and families during the summer months, this program offers a variety of recreational, educational, and creative activities. From STEAM activities, arts and crafts, hiking for nature exploration, Disc Golf, Pickleball, and shallow swimming at Oak Road Pool, the program aims to provide enriching experiences that promote physical health, creativity, and a deepened appreciation for the outdoors.



**Images are for reference only, they will be expanded in the final plan draft*

Firecracker 4K Fun Run - July 4th (Morning Event)

The Firecracker 4K Fun Run is an exhilarating morning event that takes place on July 4th, setting a lively tone for the day's celebrations and a kickoff for Norris Day. Participants of all ages gather to run or walk the scenic routes of Norris, fostering community spirit and healthy lifestyles.



Norris Day Festival (Lion’s Club Event) – July 4th

Following the Firecracker 4K Fun Run on July 4th, the Norris Day Festival, organized by the Norris Lion’s Club, is a highlight of the community calendar. This all-day event features a dog show, bicycle parade, lawn games, food, and community sponsored events during the day,

costumes, making for a magical experience that celebrates creativity and community spirit in the heart of Norris’s outdoor spaces.



On October 31st, Norris Halloween on the Commons offers a safe and festive environment for trick-or-treating, community fellowship and seasonal activities. This event is a testament to the community's commitment to providing inclusive, family-oriented celebrations, allowing children and adults alike to partake in Halloween traditions in the heart of Norris.



Norris Shines Scavenger Hunt - December

December in Norris is marked by the Norris Shines Scavenger Hunt, an event that lights up the winter season with joy and adventure. Participants embark on a quest to find hidden treasures throughout the city, guided by clues that celebrate Norris’s history, natural beauty, and community life. This event not only provides an engaging outdoor activity during the colder months but also fosters a sense of discovery and connection to the City’s landmarks and lore.



Sport Clubs & Programs

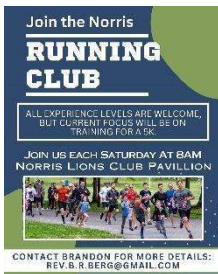
The City of Norris currently has a few sports clubs that are designed to promote active lifestyles and encourage social connections among residents. The Norris Pickleball Program is becoming increasingly popular and offers open play sessions and fun competitions for all skill levels. Not only does this program provide a fun and engaging way for residents to stay active, but it also introduces the growing sport of pickleball to the community, creating new opportunities for social and recreational engagement.



The City of Norris is home to a host of private organizations who also provide a wide array of recreational activities and offerings, including but not limited to:

- Family-oriented programming including game nights, story time, summer library challenge, and art activities (Norris Library)
- Historical and cultural information (Norris Museum, Museum of Appalachia, Lenoir Museum)
- Youth Soccer (AYSO)
- Youth Football (NAGAF)
- Youth Cheerleading (NAGAF)
- Youth Basketball (Norris Basketball Association)
- Community Gardening (Keep Norris Beautiful)
- Civic Engagement (Lion’s Club)
- Clubs and organizations (Quilt Guild, Trout Unlimited, Scouting, Norris Running Club, Norris Woman’s Club, and more)

These additional program partnerships exemplify the city's commitment to expanding its recreational offerings, ensuring that the Parks and Recreation services meet the diverse needs and interests of all Norris residents.



Through these diverse programs, events and community partnerships, Norris demonstrates a profound commitment to fostering a vibrant community life that celebrates its unique heritage,

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2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

natural beauty, and the collective spirit of its residents. The Parks and Recreation programming and community events play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life in Norris, ensuring that the city remains a place of joy, health, and community engagement for all who call it home.

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2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

7.0 Regional and State Parks

In the vicinity of Norris, there lies a wealth of natural beauty and diverse outdoor recreational opportunities. This chapter serves to offer a comprehensive directory of the local and regional parks that surround Norris, highlighting the unique features of each park and the distance from Norris. This information will be useful for both residents and visitors alike who wish to explore the great outdoors in their local region.

Local & Regional Parks

- Norris Watershed
- Norris Dam State Park
- Big Ridge State Park
- Norris Lake
- Anderson County Park
- Gibbs Ferry Park
- North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area - Royal Blue Unit
- Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area

Norris Watershed

Upper Clear Creek Rd, Norris

Summary: The Norris Watershed is a 2,300-acre, city-owned forested area that plays a crucial role in conservation efforts and serve as the primary source of drinking water in the area. . Currently, the area has around 30 miles of trails that are managed for different users. Foot traffic-only trails are open to hiking and running; multiple-use non-vehicular trails are available for hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, running, and small-game hunting (big game hunting by permit for two drawn hunts). Designated roads are open to licensed and registered vehicles for street use, but no ATVs are allowed in any part of the area. The Norris Watershed is bordered by Norris Dam State Park, TVA lands, and private property

Activities: Hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and wildlife observation.

Distance: Within Norris city limits, accessible within minutes.

Norris Dam State Park

<https://tnstateparks.com/parks/norris-dam>

125 Village Green Circle, Rocky Top, TN 37769

Summary: Norris Dam State Park is a beautiful place that surrounds Norris Dam and provides an excellent mix of history and nature. The park boasts a diverse landscape that includes woodlands, ridges, and the shores of Norris Lake. It covers over 4,000 acres of land, situated on Norris Reservoir. The park has a fully equipped marina with a boat ramp that is open to the general public. Visitors can rent various types of boats, including houseboats and pontoon boats, to make the most of their time on the lake. The park also includes covered pavilions and a historic Tea Room, which are popular venues for wedding ceremonies, receptions, holiday celebrations, company dinners, and catered events.

Activities: Hiking, picnicking, fishing, boating, camping, cabin rentals, interpretive programming, and visiting the Lenoir Museum.

Distance: Approximately 5 miles northwest of Norris.

Big Ridge State Park

<https://tnstateparks.com/parks/big-ridge>

1015 Big Ridge Park Rd, Maynardville, TN 37807

Summary: Big Ridge State Park is a beautiful destination for those who love outdoor activities. Spread over 3,687 acres in the Appalachian Ridge and Valley range. It features steep ridges, lush woodlands, and serene waters. The park offers over 15 miles of hiking trails, ranging from easy to very rugged. Additionally, it has 50 campsites, a group camp, cabins, boat rentals, and three backcountry campsites accessible only by hiking.

Activities: Hiking, canoeing, paddleboarding, swimming, camping, and historical exploration.

Distance: Roughly 10 miles southeast of Norris.

Norris Lake

Summary: Norris Lake is a popular destination for its clear waters, vast size, and picturesque scenery. It is one of the cleanest lakes in the TVA region, providing ample opportunities for water-based recreational activities. Norris Lake offers a variety of activities such as boating, fishing, and skiing, making it an ideal destination for family vacations and relaxation.

Activities: Boating, fishing, water skiing, swimming, and lakeside picnicking.

Distance: Encompasses areas immediately surrounding Norris and extends regionally.

Anderson County Park

<https://www.andersoncountypark.com/acpark/>

2191 Park Ln, Andersonville, TN 37705

Summary: This park offers well-maintained facilities and picturesque setting on Norris Lake, perfect for family outings. With 196 acres, it offers 24 short-term RV sites and 38 long-term sites. There is a group camp with covered shelter, trails, 2 boat ramps, and picnic tables. Additionally, there are ADA accessible shower/restroom facilities, dump station, security lights, playground, public swimming area, and self-guided nature trails.

Activities: Camping, fishing, boating, swimming, and picnicking.

Distance: About 9 miles north of Norris.

Gibbs Ferry Park

<https://www.andersoncountypark.com/other-parks/gibbsferry/>

1699 Oak Ridge Highway, Clinton, TN 37716

Summary: A serene and tranquil park that provides picturesque views of the Clinch River is located on Highway 61 between Clinton and Oak Ridge. This park is a favored local destination for picnics and quiet contemplation. It offers a motorboat ramp and a kayak ramp for water sports enthusiasts. The park has a covered pavilion with picnic tables, nine shoreline river view benches, a fishing pier, and four outside tables with grills.

Activities: Picnicking, fishing, and kayaking.

Distance: Approximately 12 miles south of Norris.

North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area - Royal Blue Unit

<https://www.tn.gov/twra/wildlife-management-areas/east-tennessee-r4/north-cumberland-wma.html>

609 Titus Hollow Rd, Caryville, TN 37714

Summary: The North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area covers a vast expanse of thousands of acres, offering a diverse range of wilderness ideal for outdoor enthusiasts seeking exploratory pursuits.

Activities: ATV riding, hunting, bird watching, and hiking.

Distance: Starting about 23 miles northwest of Norris, with various access points.

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

<https://www.nps.gov/biso/index.htm>

4564 Leatherwood Rd, Oneida, TN 37841

Summary: Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area is a vast 125,000-acre preserve located on the Cumberland Plateau. It's famous for its stunning gorges and sandstone bluffs. The area is home to the free-flowing Big South Fork of the Cumberland River and its tributaries. Visitors can enjoy a variety of outdoor recreational activities, thanks to the area's rich natural and historic features.

Activities: Whitewater rafting, kayaking, rock climbing, horseback riding, camping, and historical exploration.

Distance: Roughly 56 miles northwest of Norris.

Each of these parks near Norris offers unique experiences and natural beauty, catering to a wide range of interests and outdoor activities. From serene lakeside fishing and hunting retreats to rugged wilderness adventures, the parks surrounding Norris are a testament to the region's commitment to preserving natural landscapes and fostering recreational opportunities for all to enjoy.

8.0 Local Priorities

The City of Norris has identified the priorities for Parks and Recreation using a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative research, qualitative results, and secondary data. This approach helps to find common themes and priorities. In this plan, quantitative research refers to the city-wide public survey and the benchmarking analysis. Qualitative results come from the site assessments, public workshops, and interviews. Secondary data includes demographic and economic information, as well as previous planning studies. Below are the findings, visions, and goals of the community.

SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)

A SWOT analysis was conducted with input from the steering committee. The analysis was reviewed in a follow-up meeting in November 2023 to incorporate any additional feedback. Below is a summary of each component of the analysis, including its defining points:

Strengths

- Number of parks
- Range of services
- Outside visitors to events and parks
- Safety
- Green space availability
- Norris Watershed
- Kid friendly
- Walkability
- Other organizations providing services
- Volunteer Interest

Weaknesses

- Lack of funding
- Irregular maintenance
- Capacity of parks and recreation staff to manage operations, maintenance, and public programming
- Limited capital to build larger projects
- Lack of age-specific and intergenerational services
- ADA access
- Lack of restrooms

Opportunities

- Funding and grant opportunities
- Relationships
 - Schools
 - Norris Watershed Board
 - Anderson County
 - Library
 - Lions Club

- Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
- Norris Dam State Park
- Local businesses
- Website information
- Number of people using parks not from Norris

Threats

- Lack of consistent funding for facilities maintenance
- Permanent disrepair of facilities
- Lacking programs to certain age groups
- Lack of long-term plans for facilities
- No permanent parks staff

Summary of City-Wide Needs

During the planning process, certain topics, requests, and comments were frequently mentioned. To summarize the most common ones, the table below outlines the assessment of needs.

Facilities	Survey	Public Workshops	Interviews	Site Evaluations	Benchmark Research
Park maintenance	x	x	x	x	x
Updated playgrounds	x	x	x	x	x
Pickleball courts add/improve	x	x	x	x	
Kiddie pool – Oak Rd	x	x	x	x	
Greenway / trails		x	x		
Added/upgraded restrooms	x	x	x	x	x
Festivals and special events	x	x			
Children/teen programming	x	x		x	x
Dog Park	x		x	x	
Basketball add/improve	x	x	x	x	

Short-Range Vision

- Parks department’s facilities and program responsibilities
- All facilities’ maintenance schedules
- New parks director’s responsibilities
- Eric Harold Park (facility updates)
- Oak Road Park (improve access)
 - Keep concrete pad well maintained
 - Option to add portable restrooms in summer months
- Ridgeway Park (improve access)
- Tennis courts (facility update with pickleball option)
- Add new basketball court next to the Tennis courts
- More programs for senior citizens and middle school students
- Grant list for Parks and Recreation department and programs
- Volunteer base for park maintenance
- Relationship building with TVA, schools, county, state park, Lion’s Club
- Website information with Norris Parks and Recreation information

Long-Range Goals

Over the next 1-10 years, the City of Norris hopes to:

- Detail a park improvement plan, with a focus on improving or replacing aged equipment and facilities
- Define parks department’s facilities & program responsibilities
- Generate a park facilities’ maintenance schedule
- Enlist a volunteer base for park maintenance
- Expand recreation programs, with a focus on older adults and middle-school-aged youth
- Establish a website presence for parks and recreation programming and information
- Identify additional parks and recreation grant funding opportunities.
- Seek to further collaborate with TVA, Anderson County Schools, Anderson County Government, Norris Lion’s Club, and other community stakeholders

State Priorities

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

Tennessee Outdoors - Vision 2030, vision for parks, people, and landscapes is Tennessee’s statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP). This plan provides the framework for managing existing parks, meeting the public’s recreational needs, conserving recreational resources, and using recreation to benefit economic development and public health. The plan has been updated every five years since the passage of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act in 1965. The last update to the plan was in May 2022.

The SCORP includes goals and recommended actions to improve outdoor recreation across Tennessee. For each of the goals and recommended actions, the SCORP suggests implementing partners, which assist in achieving the plan’s goals. Following are the goals and recommended actions from the SCORP for which a local government such as the City of Norris is suggested as an implementing partner:

Goal: Collaboration and Partnerships for Economic Success

1. Complete mapping and inventory of recreational facilities
2. Develop an economic impact model/formula
3. Development partnerships
4. Identify communication strategies

Goal: Conservation

1. Develop direct land conservation policies and strategies that address each of the three focal areas to ensure equity and inclusion meet the diverse needs of all Tennesseans
 - Conserve lands and water for healthy ecosystems and communities.
 - Take collaborative actions that enhance local tourism and economic activity.
 - Establish priorities for funding and planning that address local/community recreation and conservation needs.
2. Develop a land acquisition and stewardship plan that lays out strategies and actions for current and future public lands for outdoor recreation
3. Develop a land acquisition and stewardship plan that lays out strategies, actions, and opportunities for improved access and use of private land for outdoor recreation

Goal: Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Access, Affordability

1. Ensure that all parks will be placed where all communities can engage with nature in positive ways
2. Encourage the creation of and support for groups promoting outdoor recreation with demographic groups currently underrepresented in park use
3. Ensure that leadership in all levels of public parks and recreation agencies will represent the diversity of Tennessee

The project team reviewed the SCORP during the planning process to determine how the findings and recommendations of this plan contribute to the goals and action areas from the SCORP listed above. The following bullets illustrate how this plan’s findings concur with the SCORP:

- **Collaboration and Partnerships for Economic Success Goal – Action #1**
This plan provides a comprehensive list of facilities and opportunities available to new and existing residents.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships for Economic Success Goal – Action #2**
One significant long-term recommendation in the Plan is to maintain the current facilities at the park.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships for Economic Success Goal – Action #3**
This plan aims to collaborate with other regional jurisdictions to improve access to outdoor recreation opportunities, such as trails for walking and fishing.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships for Economic Success Goal – Action #4**
Another benchmark component compares communication and organization practices in the city with similar communities across Tennessee, which can be found in Chapter 3. Local government officials and other key stakeholders were also engaged throughout the planning and prioritization process to ensure effective communication.
- **Conservation Goal – Action #1**
The City of Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan evaluates existing recreation facilities and the land required to meet the community’s future parks and recreation needs.
- **Conservation Goal – Action #2**
No land acquisition is necessary for the plan as the current parks and green space is sufficient for the city's population.
- **Conservation Goal – Action #3**
The plan has implemented new updates and facilities on existing land for better park access.
- **Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Access, Affordability Goal – Action #1**
The plan has evaluated the population and demographic factors, and trail access includes a mix of accessible city sidewalks and many forest trails mainly located in the Watershed.
- **Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Access, Affordability Goal – Action #2**
This plan includes an evaluation of access to exercise and physical activity and recommendations for additional programming for active recreation and programs for all abilities within the city and targets underserved and underrepresented groups.
- **Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Access, Affordability Goal – Action #3**
This plan outlines a detailed analysis of the diverse demographics of the City of Norris. It provides recommendations for parks and recreation facilities that fit the needs of a continuously diversifying population in the city. The Tennessee Outdoors – Vision 2030 Master Plan recommends implementing the annual DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, and access) training session/event for parks and recreation directors in Tennessee.

9.0 Implementation Plan

The following implementation plan is the result of all the planning, analysis, discussions, surveys, and visioning activities as described in the previous sections. Parks and Recreation planning requires a collaborative approach where community leaders, elected officials, various departments and agencies, businesses, and other stakeholders work together to prioritize recreational facilities. Regular maintenance and updates to park amenities will continue to meet the needs of residents, contribute to public health, and promote a high quality of life.

The implementation plan outlines specific goals and estimated capital improvement costs for the next ten years. The City of Norris has limited funding to address numerous needs, so the budget examples provided are not binding. They merely serve as a framework for decision-making and the allocation of funds to maximize recreational improvements.

Norris Commons & Arboretum

Norris Sq, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
Ongoing	High	Annually or as otherwise needed refurbish mulch around base of large sycamore tree
Ongoing	High	Support the implementation of the Norris Urban Forest Management
1-5	High	Improve restroom connectivity (ADA accessibility) and signage (i.e. at the back of library)
1-5	High	Create an online scheduling platform for recreation programming
1-5	Medium	Implement sport turf maintenance program for the common green due to soccer usage
5-10	Medium	Update restroom facilities
5-10	Medium	Explore adding pedestrian walkway around the Commons (e.g. concrete or dirt path)*
5-10	Medium	Explore expanding street front parking along Norris Square and improve ADA accessibility into park
5-10	Medium	Explore path lighting at the tunnel connecting NES to the Commons
10-15	Low	Explore adding street lights near the library and main sidewalk*

*Revisit this future possibility in the next 5-year plan update

Norris Community Building & Parks

Eric Harold Park

Chestnut Dr, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
1-5	High	Repair and maintain playground equipment (e.g. rust exposure, painting, and mulch replacement/alternatives)
1-5	High	Install informational kiosk/signage
1-5	Medium	Update improvement to pavilion (incl. staining/painting to remove vandalism, improving grill, repairing roof and adding new picnic tables)
1-5	Medium	Improve connecting sidewalk to the pavilion to be ADA accessible (incl. a small ramp)
5-10	Medium	Replace playground equipment and damaged furnishings
5-20	Low	Explore adding sidewalk path and streetlights connecting the nearby facilities (e.g. Norris Community Building and Eric Harold Park)*

*Revisit this future possibility in the next 5-year plan update

Memorial Park Tennis, Parking Lot, and Restroom Building

Chestnut Dr, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
1-5	High	Repaint parking lot lines and add ADA designated parking spot
1-5	High	Revegetate areas around parking area to improve stormwater drainage and appearance
1-5	High	Refurbish/replace the tennis court (incl. fencing and possible lighting)
1-5	High	Add dual use capability to tennis courts to include pickleball capacity
1-5	High	Explore building a basketball court in tandem with tennis court redevelopment
1-5	High	Refurbish bathroom building that will also include storage

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1-5	Medium	Repair/replace the water fountain
5-10	Medium	Repair/replace street lights around restroom building
5-20	Low	Explore adding path streetlights connecting the nearby facilities (e.g. Norris Community Building and Eric Harold Park)*

*Revisit this future possibility in the next 5-year plan update

Norris Disc Golf Course

Chestnut Dr, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
1-5	Low	Create an online scheduling platform for disc golf programming
5-20	Low	Explore adding path streetlights connecting the nearby facilities (i.e. Norris Community Building, Eric Harold Park & tennis courts)*

*Revisit this future possibility in the next 5-year plan update

Norris Community Building Gymnasium

20 Chestnut Dr, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
1-5	High	Resurface gym’s floor to accommodate both multi-sports & events
1-5	High	Replace/refurbish the gym HVAC unit
5-10	Medium	Add retractable window shades on the ceiling windows
5-10	Medium	Explore adding a retractable/removable stage for community events, concerts, or school presentations

Oak Road Park – Pocket Park

Oak Rd & Garden Rd, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
Underway	High	Complete replacement of pavilion building
1-5	High	Resurface and maintain kiddie pool
1-5	High	Repair and maintain playground equipment (incl. painting and rust abatement)

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2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

DRAFT

2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

1-3	High	Build concrete or asphalt parking lot with designated ADA parking space
1-5	High	Repair/replace water fountain
1-5	High	Build playground border to limit street access
1-5	Medium	Build restrooms
1-5	High	Install informational kiosk/signage
1-10	Medium	Add asphalt or concrete path to the shallow concrete wading pool and throughout park to increase ADA accessibility
5-10	Medium	Grade the greenspace to improve stormwater drainage
5-10	Medium	Replace playground equipment
5-10	Medium	Refurbish basketball court

Ridgeway Park – Pocket Park

Ridgeway Ct & Oak Rd, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
1-5	High	Repaint parking lot lines and add ADA designated parking spot
1-5	High	Install informational kiosk/signage
1-5	High	Build a paved path through the park to improve ADA accessibility
5-10	Medium	Replace wooden benches with more permanent/sustainable furnishings

Creamery Park

3305 Andersonville Hwy, Andersonville, TN 37705

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
1-5	High	Add historical monument/marker
Ongoing	High	Implement the Norris Urban Forest Management Plan
1-5	High	Add benches along the path

DRAFT

2024 Norris Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Lions Pavilion

Norris Sq, Norris TN 37828

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Recommendations
1-5	High	Create an online scheduling platform for Lion’s Pavilion and the Amphitheater events*
1-5	Medium	Pavilion structure maintenance, possibility provide a gravel ‘splash strip’ around the perimeter for rainfall and soil loss
5-10	Medium	Add accessible walkway path from street sidewalk to pavilion

*The Pavilion and Amphitheater are not the property of the City but are greatly utilized for City events

Norris Watershed

Red Hill Trail, Andersonville, TN 37705

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Recommendations for the Watershed Board
1-10	Medium	Add more information, material, and maps to an online platform
1-10	Low	Potential opportunity for local outdoor chapters

Rifle Range

699 Upper Clear Creek Rd, Andersonville, TN 37705

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Recommendations for the Watershed Board
1-5	High	Parking lot improvements (note: The Watershed management Plan gives detail on this)
1-20	Low	Add a permanent waterless restroom building

Future Facilities

Non-Determined Location

Timeline (Years)	Priority	Implementation
1-10	High	Add a fenced area for a Dog Park, dedicated area for small dogs and large dogs

Possible Park properties for consideration

- Norris Commons
- Erik Harold Park
- Near/Adjacent Norris Community Building