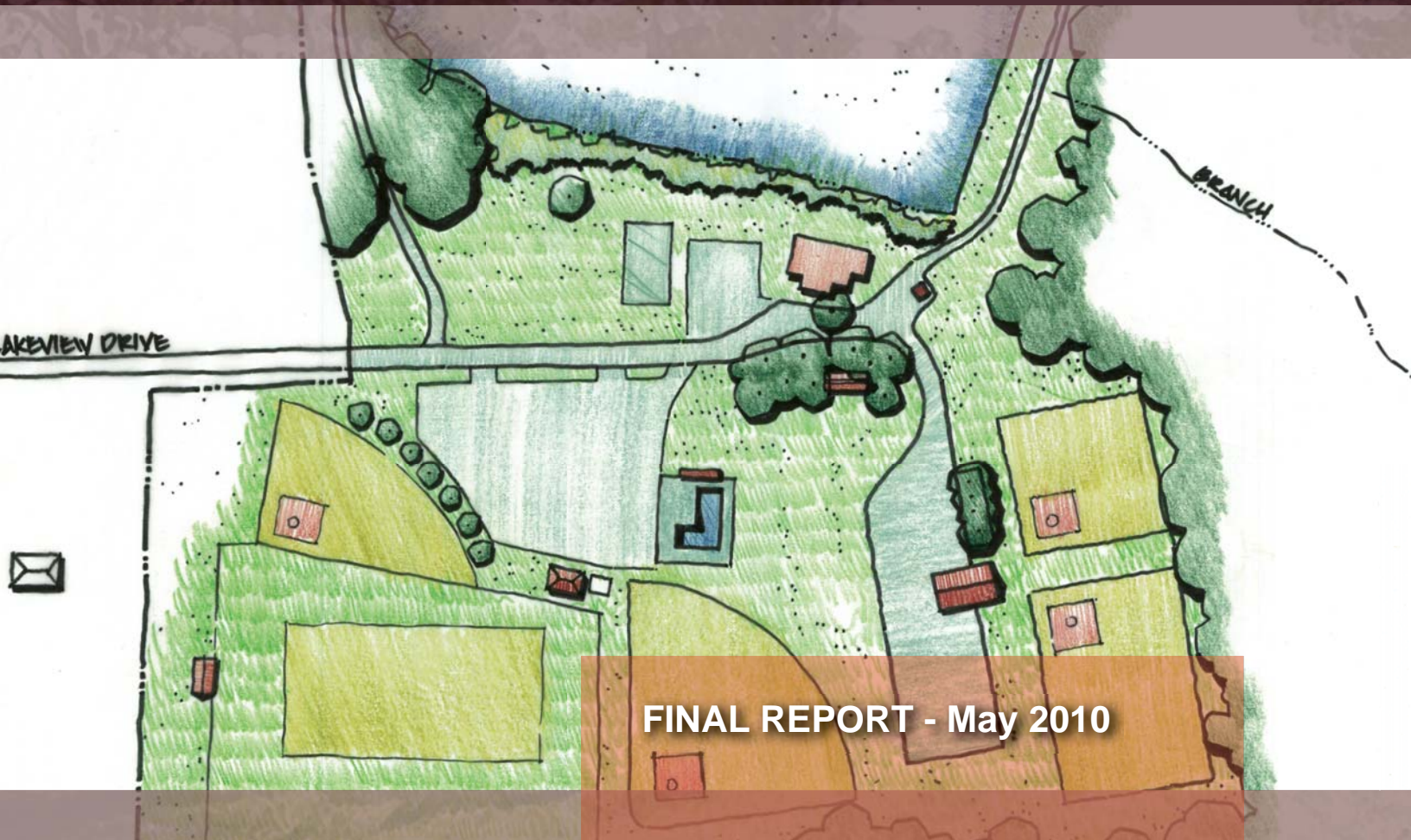


OGLETHORPE COUNTY

Parks and Recreation Plan



FINAL REPORT - May 2010

**Prepared for the
Oglethorpe County Recreation Board**

**Prepared by the
Fanning Institute
at the University of Georgia**



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OGLETHORPE COUNTY

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

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Introduction

The objective of this plan is four-fold.

The first objective is to lay the groundwork for understanding recreation in Oglethorpe County. This includes a description of recreation needs and services in the state of Georgia, analysis of the current state of recreation in Oglethorpe County, and a description of state (Georgia Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan) and national (National Recreation and Parks Authority Standards and Guidelines) standards.

Next, the report will address the current state of the recreation department in the context of planning; organization and administration; human resources; financial management; programs and services; facilities and land management; public safety, law enforcement, and security; and risk management.

Thirdly, the report will report and analyze the information gathered through the town hall meeting held in Crawford on 21 January 2010 and individual interviews held with key stakeholders in the county's recreation community.

Finally, this report will outline a series of recommendations for the Oglethorpe County Recreation Department. These recommendations will be centered on the six core areas of the Georgia Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): 1) Health and Livability, 2) Economic Vitality, 3) Conservation, 4) Commitment, 5) Education, and 6) Funding. These recommendations will better equip county leadership to move forward and provide a comprehensive approach to improving the quality of life for residents and visitors through increased numbers and improved quality of park space and recreation programs.

Scope of Work

Beginning in January 2010, the Oglethorpe County Recreation Board entered into a contract with the Fanning Institute at the University of Georgia to prepare a Recreation Plan for the county. The previous plan for the organization was prepared in 1989 by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center and spanned the period from 1989-2000.

The Fanning Institute is a unit of the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach at the University of Georgia and focuses on providing services to Georgia communities in four key areas – educating leaders, voluntary action, economic inclusion, and community solutions. Development of the recreation plan for Oglethorpe County was intended from the outset to be a community effort. The Fanning Institute’s work involved a town hall meeting in January 2010 in Crawford and a series of one-on-one interviews with community members intimately familiar with the county’s recreation. These interviews included elected officials, school district employees, county employees, former employees, board members, coaches, and parents. Finally, the questions that were posed in the town hall and individual interviews were made available through an online survey distributed by the Oglethorpe County Recreation Department.



In addition to the community input through interviews, online survey and town hall meetings, the plan’s scope of work includes a comparison of Oglethorpe County’s facilities, assets, and funding to comparable counties in the state; a comprehensive analysis of funding mechanisms and opportunities, including alternate funding sources; background information on the current state of parks and recreation in Georgia and the implications and possible responses for Oglethorpe County; and a series of recommendations for the department.

Recreation in Oglethorpe County

As a part of their research in 2000, the Sustainable Human Ecosystems Laboratory at the University of Georgia conducted a phone survey of Oglethorpe County residents assessing present values, perceived change and trends, desired development, and actions and trade-offs

The survey revealed that 67.3% of respondents wanted more recreational opportunity development, while an additional 28.9% wanted the same level of recreational development. Among those that desired more, 83.2% expressed desire for a community recreation center, 76.0% public parks, 65.4% open space and natural areas, and 59.2% a public swimming pool. It is important to note that the swimming pool located within the confines of Bryan Park was present at the time of the survey, meaning that those “members” had use of a private pool which may have had a negative impact on the desire for a public pool.

The report noted that when asking about future development of recreational programs and facilities, “non-Caucasians selected ‘more’ at a higher rate than Caucasians (87% vs. 65%).” The responses surrounding the pool also yielded an interesting finding - 79% of non-Caucasians desired a public pool while only 53% of Caucasians desired the same. Similar disparities were seen in sex (68% of women vs. 49% of men) and age (77% of 18-34 year olds vs. 54% in other age groups). Other noteworthy findings were that the 35-54 year old range desired public parks more than a community recreation center, swimming pool, or open space and that non-Caucasians were more in favor of open spaces and natural areas than their Caucasian counterparts (82% vs. 61%).¹ The disparities in race, sex, and age became increasingly apparent through public input sessions at the town hall meeting and through interviews. There were particular concerns raised regarding race at the existing membership-based pool, sex in regard to programming opportunities, and different age-group needs in both facilities and programming.

Chart 1: Oglethorpe County Population Projections: 2010-2025

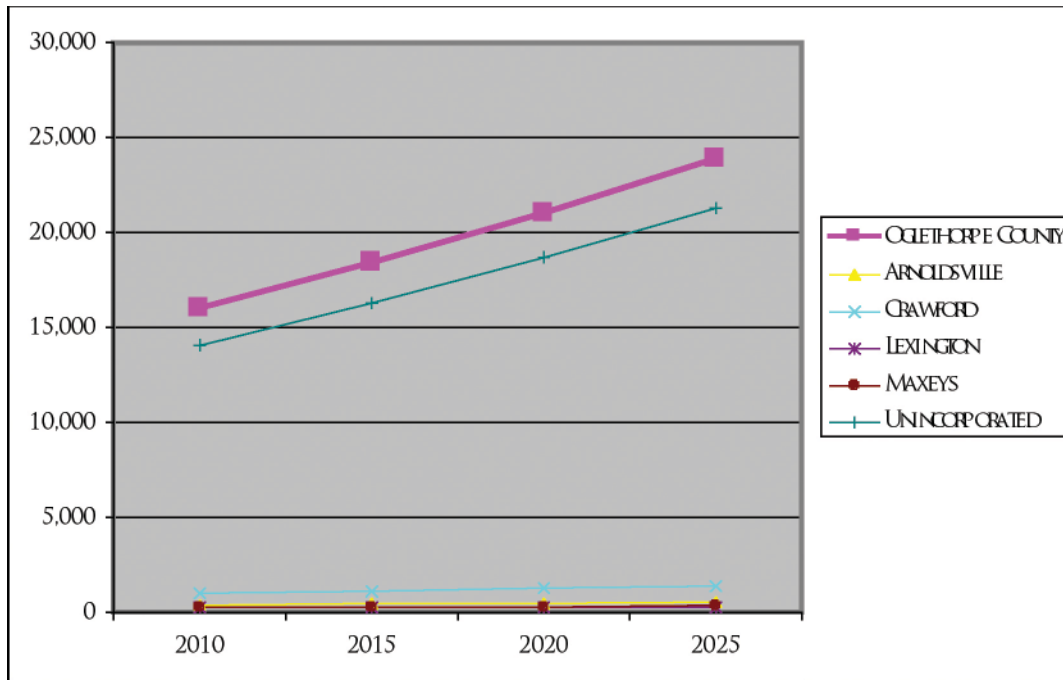


Table 1: Oglethorpe County Population Projections

Year	Oglethorpe County	Arnoldsville	Crawford	Lexington	Maxeys	Unincorporated Oglethorpe
2010	16,006	391	1,015	273	249	14,078
2015	18,429	436	1,120	280	283	16,310
2020	21,061	487	1,252	284	324	18,714
2025	23,904	543	1,383	293	373	21,312

Source: Technical Addendum, Joint City-Community Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025, p.6

Oglethorpe County’s growth rate is significantly higher than the state’s growth rate and the parks, recreation, and wellness needs of the county are likely to expand accordingly over the next 25 years. This population projection anticipates a 49.3% increase in Oglethorpe County’s population between 2010 and 2025 – an increase of nearly 8,000 residents. Statewide, the anticipated population growth is 3.36 million to 13.4 million residents over the same period,² representing a 33% increase.

Recreation in Georgia

The cornerstone of Georgia Recreation planning is the Georgia Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, a five-year plan released by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in 2008. In this statewide plan, six major areas of strategic action are identified: 1) Health and Livability; 2) Economic Vitality; 3) Conservation; 4) Commitment; 5) Education; and 6) Funding.

Generally, projects that address Economic Vitality and Education are more likely to receive funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Participation and trends in recreational activities was the subject of a 2006 report submitted to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. In it, the recreational activities that Georgians engage in were explored. Among the most common activities were walking for pleasure (81.8%), gardening (67.9%), picnicking (49.6%), swimming (44%), sightseeing and visiting nature centers (50.7%), visiting historic sites (45.3%), visiting a wildlife area (32.7%), and day-hiking (28.4%).³

It is important for the county to be aware of and utilize its historic assets. The county's historic sites have the potential to be significant in any passive recreation effort. Lexington is made up largely of the Lexington Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is one of the finest surviving examples of a typical 19th century county seat and town in Georgia. In addition to the Lexington Historic District, the county is home to the Philomath and Smithsonia Historic Districts.⁴

The county's historic assets go beyond these three districts. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs maintains a database of historical markers across the state. Oglethorpe County is home to eleven historic sites⁵:

Site	Location	Jurisdiction
Beth-Salem Presbyterian Church	Church and Meson Streets, Lexington	Lexington
Cloud's Creek Baptist Church	Cloud's Creek Road off GA 22	County
Governor Gilmer's Home	Courthouse in Lexington	Lexington
Governor Mathews' Homesite	GA 77, 1/2 mile south of Broad River, at Goose Pond community	County
Howard's Covered Bridge	Chandler Silver Rd off Cloud Creek Rd off GA 22	County
Liberty-Salem-Woodstock-Philomath	On GA 22 in Philomath	County
Meson Academy	Intersection of US 78 & Academy St, Lexington	Lexington
Oglethorpe County	Courthouse in Lexington	Lexington
Watson Mill Bridge	At bridge in Watson Mill Bridge State Park	County
William Bartram Trail Traced 1773-1777	US 78 just east of Clarke County line	County
William Harris Crawford	US 78 0.4 mile west of Crawford	County

Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Additionally, the county has a series of ten sites on the National Register of Historic Places:

Name	Date of Listing	Jurisdiction
Amis-Elder House	1978	Crawford
J.L. Bridge Home Place	1978	Lexington
Crawford Depot	1977	Crawford
Faust Houses and Outbuildings	1980	Lexington
Howard’s Covered Bridge	1975	County
Langston-Daniel House	1978	Crawford
Lexington Historic District	1977	Lexington
Philomath Historic District	1979	County
Smith-Harris House	1985	County
Smithonia	1984	County

Source: Technical Addendum, Joint City-Community Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025, p.6

In 2003, the Georgia Department of Human Resource’s Division of Public Health launched Georgia’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Initiative. The program was one of seventeen across the nation and was funded as a five year grant by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Three years into the grant (2006), the initiative produced a report with noteworthy results for both the state as a whole and Oglethorpe County specifically. When looking at geographic trends in obesity across the state, Oglethorpe and surrounding counties have been in excess of 25% obesity rates (more than one in four residents) since 1997. By comparison, counties in the northeast Georgia mountains, central Georgia, west-central Georgia, southeast Georgia, and coastal Georgia all boasted obesity rates well below that until the 2000 survey. Atlanta area counties including Fulton, Gwinnett, and Newton have stayed below the 25% threshold.⁶ For the overall health of the county, it is important to have park and recreation resources available for all age groups and addressing a variety of interests.

Among the seven strategies for encouraging physical activity among both children and adults were 1) statewide infrastructure development, 2) sustained partnerships, 3) strategic planning activities, 4) implementation of the state’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan, 5) surveillance and evaluation, 6) intervention, and 7) technical assistance from the Division of Public Health staff members.⁷

The “Live Healthy Georgia” campaign, sponsored by the Georgia Department of Human Resources identified several significant figures as recently as 2006 regarding activity among Georgia’s youth. Among them, 68% of Georgia middle school students and 59% of high school students were “vigorously active.” The proportion of students engaging in this “vigorous activity” drops steadily over the course of students’ schooling – falling from 67.8% freshman year to 48.2% by senior year. The range of activity is also more severe during this most recent year than it was a decade ago. While more students were active during their freshman year than were ten years ago (67.8% v. 66.5%), far less were active by senior year (48.2% v. 56.3%).⁸ One of the common sentiments expressed by residents of Oglethorpe County in both the town hall meeting and in interviews was the lack of programs for older youth. This growing disparity in participation rates between freshman and senior years can partially be attributed

to the loss of recreation programs for youth as they grow-up and presents an opportunity for Oglethorpe County to be proactive in encouraging and maintaining healthy lifestyles. Keeping teenagers (and adults) engaged in recreation is both important and desired and presents the county and recreation commission leadership with a significant opportunity.

National Recreation and Park Association Standards and Guidelines (NRPA)

As of February 2009, only five cities in Georgia have the accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies. Those five are Atlanta, Alpharetta, Carrollton, Gainesville, and Roswell. Preliminary applications for accreditation have been submitted by the City of Woodstock and by Dawson, Gilmer, and Lowndes Counties. Given the number of cities and counties in Georgia, this accredited number is extremely small, but many of the guidelines set forth by the commission are viable and desirable for Oglethorpe County.

NRPA sets forth guidelines that present local park and recreation departments and local officials with space standards for planning, acquisition, and development of parks, recreation facilities, and green space.

**Table 2 : NRPA Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines
Oglethorpe County Current Needs and Holdings**

Activity/Facility	Recommended Space Requirements	Number of Units per Population	Oglethorpe County Needs (14,106 Residents)	Oglethorpe County Public Holdings	Population Projection Needs (2025 - 23,904 Residents)
Basketball (Youth)	2,400-3,036 SF	1 per 5,000	3	2	5
Basketball (High School)	5,040-7,280 SF	1 per 5,000	3	1	5
Tennis	7,200 SF/court	1 per 2,000	8	0	12
Volleyball	4,000 SF	1 per 5,000	3	0	5
Baseball (Adult/Official)	3.00-3.85 A	1 per 5,000	3	0	5
Baseball (Little League)	1.2 A	1 per 5,000	3	4	5
Field Hockey	1.5 A	1 per 20,000	1	0	2
Football	1.5 A	1 per 20,000	1	1	2
Soccer	1.7-2.1 A	1 per 10,000	2	1	3
¼ Mile Running Track	4.3 A	1 per 20,000	1	0	2
Softball	1.5-2.0 A	1 per 5,000	3	0	5
Multiple Recreation Court (Basketball, Volleyball, Tennis)	9,840 SF	1 per 10,000	1	0	3
Trails	N/A	1 per Region	1	0	1
Swimming Pools	0.5-2.0 A	1 per 20,000 (Pools should accommodate 3-5% of the population.)	1	0	1

Previous and Existing Plans

Recreation has been a consideration in recent planning efforts at both the County and City levels in Oglethorpe County. In accordance with requirements set forth by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in 2005, Oglethorpe County and its four cities engaged in a comprehensive planning process.

One phase of this was an identification of a short term work program and a report of accomplishments from 2001-2005 and subsequent to 2005. For their part, the county identified the following⁹:

1. Complete renovation at Bryan Park Lake, including playground area and landscaping, which was completed in 2003 using \$30,000 from local funds, DCA funds, DNR funds, and private funds;
2. Acquisition of property near Bryan Park for future multi-purpose fields at a cost of \$100,000, which did not take place because the land was not available;
3. Construction of tennis courts on school property at a cost of \$65,000, which did not take place because of lack of funds;
4. Improve facility at Howard's Covered Bridge (historic site referenced early) with addition of picnic area and playground at a cost of \$40,000, for which the property has already been acquired;
5. Improve Shaking Rock Park facility to include new restroom facilities, walking trails, and a playground at a cost of \$130,000;
6. Construct a community youth center at Bryan Park at a cost of \$300,000;
7. Retrofit bleachers and improve lighting for the ballfields at Bryan Park at a cost of \$90,000; and
8. Conduct a scenic inventory at a cost of \$5,000.

For their part, the cities identified:

1. Conversion of railroad right of way to recreation trails, an ongoing project being funded by local and private funds in the City of Maxeys;
2. Improvements and development of Meson Academy (historic site referenced earlier) Park in the City of Lexington through city and private funds, the first phase of which has already been completed; and
3. Identification, acquisition, and development of passive recreation areas through DCA funds in the City of Arnoldsville

Budget and Finance

Revenue

Property Tax

One of the two most dominant forms of local government revenue in Georgia is the property tax. This analysis will compare Oglethorpe County's property tax characteristics to similar counties and the state as a whole to gain a better understanding of the tax base, property types, cost of service delivery, tax rates, and property tax revenue that Oglethorpe County has to fund recreation.

Twelve counties were identified for a more in depth comparison of facilities, programming, and financing of parks and recreation. These counties were selected by virtue of having similar geography, population, and other characteristics to Oglethorpe County.

Those twelve counties were Dade County in northwest Georgia; Jackson, Madison, and Greene Counties in northeast Georgia (and either adjacent to Oglethorpe County or in close proximity); Early County in southwest Georgia; and Jeff Davis, Telfair, Bleckley, Pike, Macon, Dooly, and Crawford County in south-central Georgia. Within these twelve counties, comparison of financing will focus on property tax revenue, expansion of the tax base, sales and use tax revenue, and charges for services. Comparison of expenditures will focus on per capita spending.

When compared to the twelve counties identified, Oglethorpe has the third lowest millage rates for incorporated areas and the second lowest rates for unincorporated areas (Table 3, p.14)

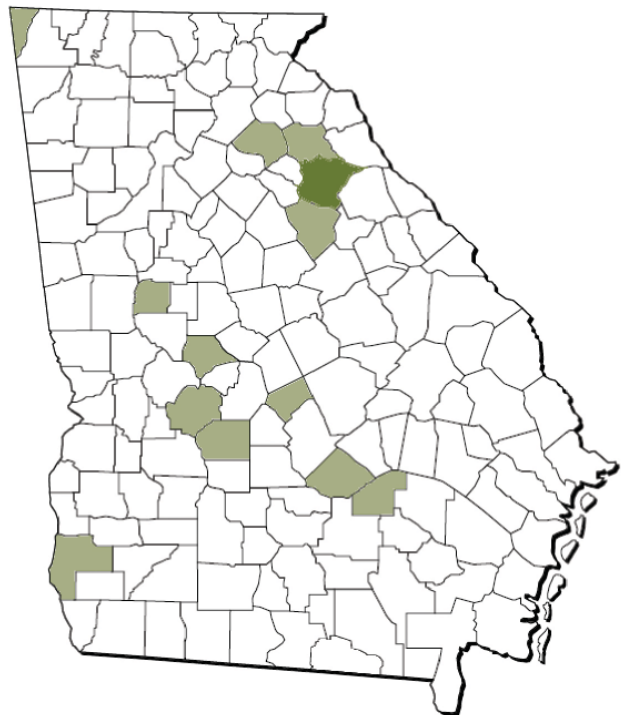


Table 3: Comparable County Information

County	2008 Population Estimate	MSA	Interstate Access
Oglethorpe	14,106	Athens	
Bleckley	12,683		
Crawford	12,510	Macon	
Dade	16,142	Chattanooga	I-57 & I-24
Dooly	11,548		I-75
Early	11,713		
Greene	15,635		I-20
Jackson	61,620		I-85
Jeff Davis	13,486		
Macon	13,520		
Madison	28,200	Athens	
Pike	17,569	Atlanta	
Telfair	13,355		

Table 4: 2009 County Government Millage Rate and Property Tax Revenue

County	Incorporated Area (City Resident) Millage Rate (2009)	Unincorporated Area (Non-City Resident) Millage Rate (2009)	Total County Property Tax Revenue (2009, \$)
Bleckley	11.1520	11.1520	\$3,128,568
Crawford	14.2760	10.7490	N/A
Dade	8.1870	8.1870	\$3,003,205
Dooly	17.8900	17.8900	\$4,187,144
Early	12.0200	11.7000	\$4,213,350
Greene	4.9290	4.9290	\$9,244,496
Jackson	9.5000	8.6100	\$23,296,488
Jeff Davis	12.8800	12.8800	N/A
Macon	11.4300	10.6500	\$3,810,869
Madison	12.1560	11.2160	\$7,010,548
Oglethorpe	9.0630	7.6790	\$3,472,347
Pike	11.4460	11.4460	\$6,087,153
Telfair	13.1990	13.1990	\$1,966,397

Source: Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Tax and Expenditure Data Center

The millage rate is the rate of taxation on property. In Georgia (with some exceptions) the norm is for assessment of real and personal property to be 40% of the full value. That 40% value is then taxed at a rate of 1 mill=\$1 tax per \$1,000 of value. A millage rate of 9 mills would indicate a tax of \$9 on every \$1,000 of property (assessed at 40% of actual value).

Many counties distinguish between incorporated and unincorporated areas in millage rate determination because of a difference of service provision from the county government. Oglethorpe is one of those counties. In Oglethorpe County, only 11% (1,590 residents) of the county's population lives in incorporated areas (the four cities), with the remainder in unincorporated areas.¹⁰ Geographically, only 5.8 square miles of the county's 442 square miles are incorporated – 1.3% of the entire county.

While having among the lowest property tax rates is not necessarily problematic, the property value and subsequent total amount of property tax revenue generated from those rates are problematic. Among the ten counties with available revenue data, Oglethorpe has the fourth lowest amount of revenue generated from property tax (Property Tax Scenarios - Appendix D).

In a 2007 study from the American Farmland Trust, 14 Georgia counties had their average cost of community services calculated for three types of properties. The findings indicated that for every \$1 in property tax paid by a residential property, an average of \$1.52 in community services were used; for every \$1 in property tax paid by commercial and industrial properties, \$.40 in community services were used; and for every \$1 in property tax paid by farmland/forest properties, \$.57 in community services were used.¹¹ These differing costs of community services highlight the importance of a diverse tax base in communities. Table 4 (p.14) indicates the breakdown of property types in Oglethorpe and the comparison counties.

Table 5: Property Tax Base

County	Residential Percentage	Commercial/Industrial Percentage	Farm/Forest Percentage	Other Percentage
Bleckley	48.71%	19.63%	30.92%	0.74%
Crawford	49.33%	12.27%	36.74%	1.67%
Dade	60.98%	20.91%	17.86%	0.26%
Dooly	26.92%	33.87%	36.96%	2.26%
Early	21.56%	35.29%	39.52%	3.63%
Greene	71.39%	12.13%	16.39%	0.08%
Jackson	50.91%	34.47%	14.60%	0.03%
Jeff Davis	37.51%	40.37%	20.12%	2.00%
Macon	21.08%	31.44%	46.38%	1.10%
Madison	48.66%	12.92%	38.06%	0.36%
Oglethorpe	42.60%	7.81%	48.72%	0.87%
Pike	61.84%	9.90%	28.26%	0.00%
Telfair	22.67%	39.04%	35.43%	2.87%
Comparable County Average	43.40%	23.85%	31.53%	1.22%
Statewide Average	58.36%	33.86%	7.54%	0.24%

Source: Georgia Department of Revenue 2008 Tax Digest

As this table demonstrates, nearly 43% of property in Oglethorpe County in 2008 was residential – property that requires \$1.52 in services for every \$1.00 in revenue generated. Those properties that demand the least amount of services for their tax dollars – Commercial and Industrial – are least prevalent in Oglethorpe County, representing just fewer than 8% of the property base.

Oglethorpe County’s property tax base presents obstacles for revenue generation for both the recreation commission and the county as a whole. Among the comparable counties, Oglethorpe has the least amount of commercial/industrial properties – those which require the least cost for community services. Among the same group of counties, however, Oglethorpe does have the highest percentage of farm/forest land. This is beneficial for the county, as the cost to provide services for these properties is still significantly lower than the revenue they generate from property taxes, but still higher than commercial/industrial properties. From a property tax revenue standpoint, the county has the most to gain by expanding commercial and industrial property usage and preserving farm/forest land in the county.

Sales and Use Tax

The second dominant form of revenue for Oglethorpe County is sales and use tax. As was identified, the tax rate and the amount of revenue generated from that rate in Oglethorpe are among the lowest of comparable counties. In many instances, low property tax revenue is offset by higher sales and use tax revenue. All of the twelve counties in this analysis have similar tax structures. In addition to the 4% state sales tax, all (including Oglethorpe) have a Local Option Sales Tax (LOST), Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), and Education Local Option Sales Tax (ELOST).

Table 6: Retail Sales and Retail Pull Factor for Selected Counties

County	Total Retail Sales (2008) ¹²	Retail Pull Factor (2008) ¹³
Bleckley	\$112,739,000	0.70
Crawford	\$28,489,000	0.15
Dade	\$208,104,000	0.93
Dooly	\$166,904,000	1.22
Early	\$114,043,000	0.89
Greene	\$173,307,000	0.83
Jackson	\$1,135,222,000	1.21
Jeff Davis	\$326,820,000	2.33
Macon	\$125,323,000	0.94
Madison	\$144,724,000	0.37
Oglethorpe	\$71,672,000	0.37
Pike	\$35,619,000	0.12
Telfair	\$125,819,000	0.90

The county's retail pull factor is 0.37.¹⁴ This is a measurement of actual retail sales to potential retail sales. A pull factor of less than 1.00 indicates that a county is losing potential retail sales, as is the case in Oglethorpe. Table 6 (p.16) indicates the distribution of sales tax revenue that took place in 2009.

Oglethorpe County's use of Sales and Use Tax (for LOST, SPLOST, or ELOST) is severely limited. Among the identified comparable counties, only Pike and Crawford counties brought in less retail sales than Oglethorpe, and lower retail sales amounts equate to lower LOST and SPLOST revenue. Among the counties with lower property tax revenue were Bleckley County, which boasts \$41M more in retail sales; Dade County, with \$137M more in retail sales; and Telfair County, with \$54M more in retail sales in 2008. Each of these three counties is at an advantage over Oglethorpe in regard to sales and use tax, however. Bleckley County is home to the I-16/GA112 Interchange between Macon and Dublin. Dade County is home to segments of both I-24 and I-57. Along I-24, Dade County has the interchange with GA299/US11. Along I-57 are three interchanges – one at the Rising Fawn community, one at GA36 that leads to Trenton (the county seat), and a third at Slygo Road leading to the community of New England. Four major US Highways run through Telfair County, including US441 as it passes from Dublin to Douglas, providing significant traffic and consumer spending.

As Table 5 (p.15) demonstrates, each of these three counties has a retail pull factor much closer to 1.0 than Oglethorpe – an indication that it is retaining much of its own consumer base's spending and yielding the sales and use tax that stems from that spending.

These three counties are offsetting their comparatively low property tax revenue with significantly higher sales and use tax revenue. Because Oglethorpe County is not currently retaining much of its consumer base (losing a great deal of spending to Clarke County), it does not have the same luxury. Low property tax rates and revenue are not being offset by higher sales and use tax revenue. Both remain low, creating a revenue situation that puts Oglethorpe County at a competitive disadvantage in providing park and recreation facilities and programs.

Table 7: 2009 Sales and Use Tax Revenue

Jurisdiction	Amount of 2009 Distributions	Tax Type	%age
City of Arnoldsville	\$19,675.65	LOST	2.47%
City of Crawford	\$50,823.35	LOST	6.38%
City of Lexington	\$15,055.01	LOST	1.89%
Oglethorpe County Board of Commissioners	\$697,830.21	LOST	87.60%
Town of Maxeys	\$13,222.74	LOST	1.66%
Oglethorpe County Board of Commissioners	\$795,571.62	SPLOST	100%
Oglethorpe County Board of Education	\$799,743.39	ELOST	100%

Source: Georgia Department of Revenue, Local Government Services Division

ELOST and SPLOST funds go to a single source, while LOST funds are divided between the county and four cities based on standing intergovernmental agreements. As the table indicates, the overwhelming majority of LOST revenue goes to the Board of Commissioners, which in turn funds the recreation department. Increasing the number of commercial establishments will improve revenue generated for all sales tax-funded expenditures for all jurisdictions.

Further, commuters leaving the county for work also negatively impacts sales tax revenue. Based on the 2000 Census, county-to-county workflow takes significant portions of the population out of the county on a daily basis. Nearly 60% of the population (56.7%) commute to Clarke County for work, with others travelling to Oconee (3.4%), Wilkes (1.2%), Jackson (1.3%), Elbert (2.8%), and Madison (4.3%) Counties. Only 21.8% of Oglethorpe’s workforce commutes within the county. With the loss of this daytime population, there is a loss of any sales tax revenue that may be garnered during the workday.¹⁵ In fact, of the ten largest employers of the Oglethorpe County workforce, none are located in Oglethorpe County. The seven largest are in Clarke, with one each in Elbert, Greene, and Oconee Counties.¹⁶

The county’s retail sales and retail pull factor corroborate this belief. In 2009, the county’s total retail sales amounted to \$71,672,000. Oglethorpe County has all three local option sales taxes in place (LOST, SPLOST, and ELOST), but collectively this yields \$2.39M (just shy of \$800,000 to each of the three funds).

The county’s current five-year SPLOST, adopted in 2006, is divided among four primary sources as follows:

Table 8: 2006-2011 SPLOST

Expenditure	Amount	Total
Road and Bridges	\$4,655,000	\$4,655,000
Public Safety	\$2,045,000	\$2,045,000
Police Car (3 per year)	\$330,000	
Ambulance	\$165,000	
EMS/Rescue Building	\$750,000	
Emergency Service	\$600,000	
911 Update	\$200,000	
Infrastructure	\$1,050,000	\$1,050,000
Water Reservoir	\$500,000	
Courthouse Repair	\$250,000	
Sewage-Startup	\$200,000	
Computer Update	\$100,000	
Recreation	\$250,000	\$250,000
		\$8,000,000

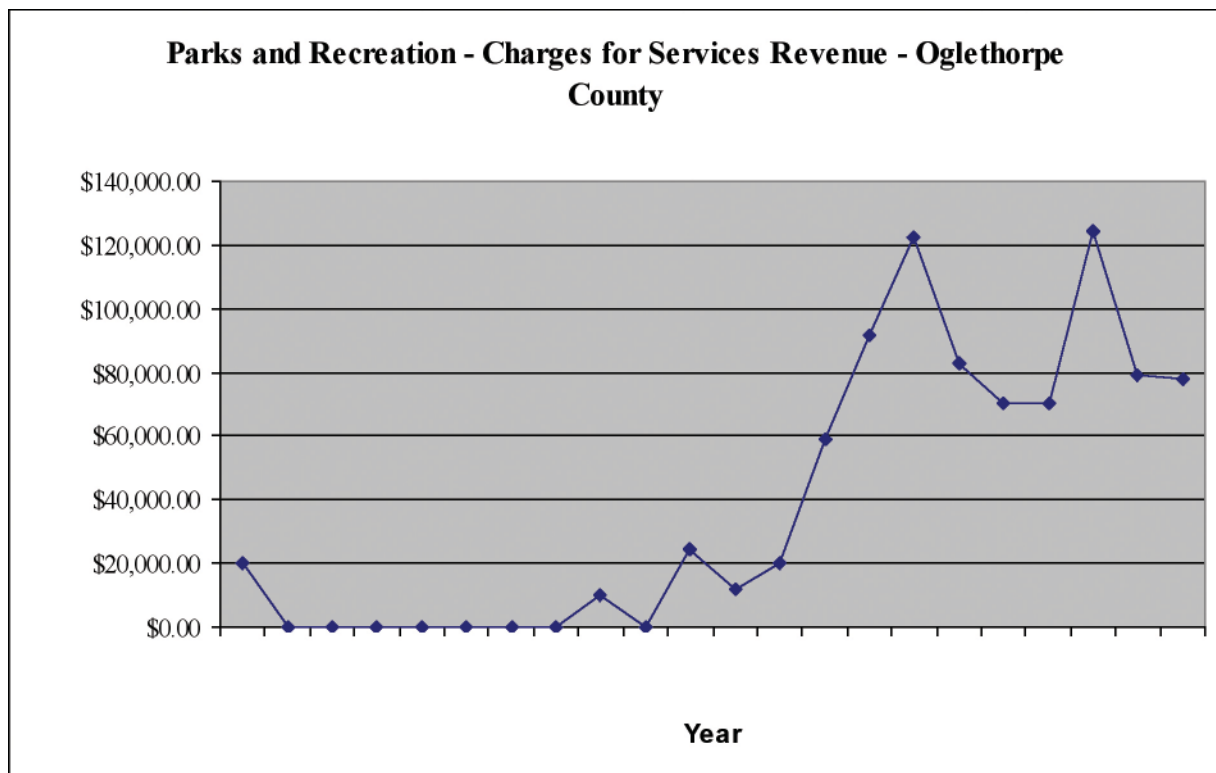
These indicators serve to illustrate that the county cannot currently look to sales and use tax revenue as a viable option for acquiring, improving, or developing new facilities or programs. Instead, alternative forms of funding must be identified and obtained.

Charges for Services

Assessing charges for recreation programs is very prevalent in Oglethorpe County. Oglethorpe collected \$4.50 on a per capita basis during the most recent year. While this is still nearly \$1 below the statewide average of \$5.36, these charges represent over 1/3 of the total expenditures on recreation (35.54) which is over three times the statewide average (11.58%), indicative of a much higher dependence on fees to fund facilities and programming. While this is not inherently negative, there is a limit on what residents are able or are willing to pay, which must be recognized and considered in future decision making.

Utilizing charges for services as a method of financing recreation in the county was a trend that began in the mid-1990's and has continued since, with revenue from 1999 to the present ranging from approximately \$80,000-\$120,000.

Chart 2: Parks and Recreation Charges For Services History



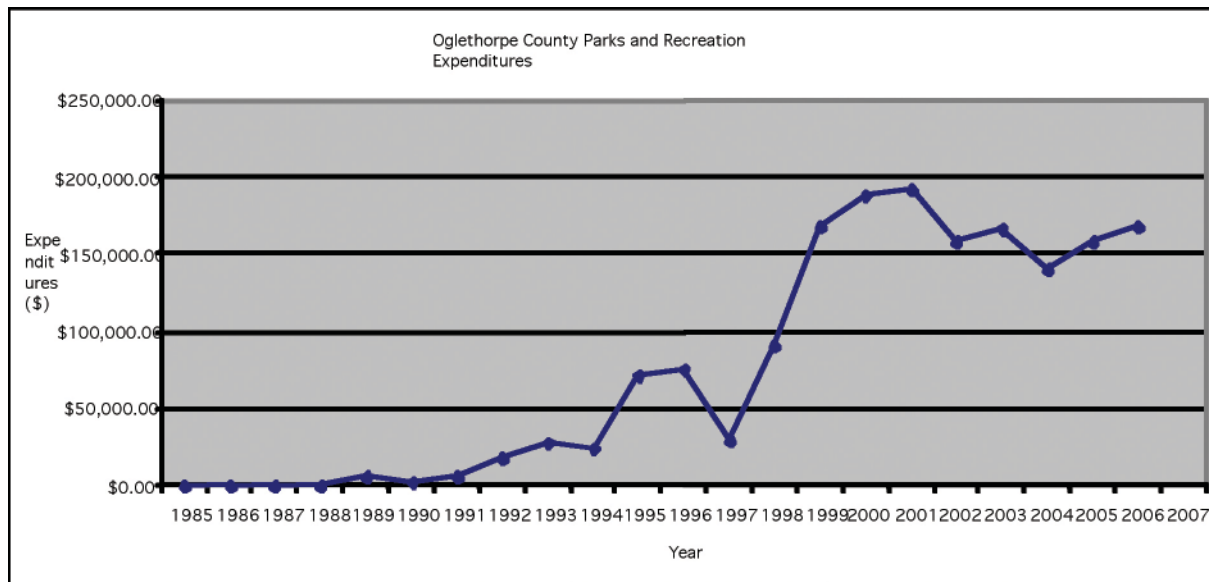
Grants

Oglethorpe County has traditionally had little reliance on grant money to fund projects. This is a significant opportunity for the county, and specifically for the recreation commission. Appendix E outlines several available grants that the Recreation Commission might consider applying for. This list is not exhaustive, but is indicative of funds available for parks, recreation, and other health and wellness programs.

Expenditures

Oglethorpe County did not begin making significant investments in recreation until the early 1990s. By 1993, the county was investing approximately \$25,000 in recreation, jumping to roughly \$75,000 by 1993, and approaching nearly \$200,000 in 2001. In more recent years, the county's recreation expenditures have leveled out at just over \$150,000

Chart 3: Parks and Recreation Expenditures History



When considered in the context of percentage of the general fund expenditures, the county's investment follows a similar trend. When investments in recreation began in the early 1990s, the county gradually got to the point of 1% of the general fund being invested in recreation. Increases remained steady, crossing the 2% threshold by 1996, and jumping to just over 5% in 2000 and 2001. As dollar value investments dropped slightly in recent years, the percentage of expenditures in recreation did the same, falling to just under 3% in 2008.

Recreation is funded from two broad sources: Charges for Services and General Fund Revenues. Table 9 (p.21) indicates the total revenue stemming from each of these

Table 9: County-level Comparative Statistics

County	2008 Population Estimate	Recreation Revenue: Charges for Services	Recreation Revenue: General Fund	Recreation Spending: Total Amount	Recreation Spending: Percent of General Fund	Percent of Recreation Spending from CFS	Per Capita Recreation Charges for Services	Per Capita Recreation General Fund	Per Capita Recreation Total Spending
Oglethorpe	14,106	\$62,877.00	\$114,021.00	\$176,898.00	1.54%	35.57%	\$4.46	\$8.08	\$12.54
Bleckley	12,683	\$0.00	\$78,982.00	\$78,982.00	1.25%	0.00%	\$0.00	\$6.23	\$6.23
Crawford	12,510	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dade	16,142	\$2,066.00	\$109,003.00	\$111,069.00	1.08%	1.89%	\$0.13	\$6.75	\$6.88
Dooly	11,548	\$0.00	\$226,108.00	\$226,108.00	1.78%	0.00%	\$0.00	\$19.58	\$19.58
Early	11,713	\$0.00	\$71,200.00	\$71,200.00	0.82%	0.00%	\$0.00	\$6.08	\$6.08
Greene	15,635	\$0.00	\$127,184.00	\$127,184.00	0.50%	0.00%	\$0.00	\$8.13	\$8.13
Jackson	61,620	\$314,187.00	\$1,026,986.00	\$1,341,173.00	1.89%	23.43%	\$5.10	\$16.67	\$21.77
Jeff Davis	13,486	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Macon	13,520	\$55,250.00	\$295,285.00	\$350,535.00	4.54%	15.77%	\$4.09	\$21.84	\$25.93
Madison	28,200	\$106,834.00	\$449,464.00	\$556,298.00	2.85%	19.21%	\$3.79	\$15.94	\$19.73
Pike	17,569	\$0.00	\$336,378.00	\$336,378.00	3.31%	0.00%	\$0.00	\$19.15	\$19.15

Source: Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Tax and Expenditure Data Center

sources in Oglethorpe and its comparable counties, as well as total spending on recreation inclusive of both sources. The table also indicates how much of the general fund revenues are being directed toward recreation (not including charges for services) and per capita charges for services, general fund spending on recreation, and total spending on recreation.

Statewide Comparison

Across Georgia, there is significant disparity in county investment in parks and recreation infrastructure. Of the state's 159 counties, Oglethorpe currently ranks 82nd in its percent of general fund budget going toward recreation (2.02% in 2007) and 92nd in total per capita spending on recreation (\$12.26 in 2007).

In many of the state's larger and more densely populated areas, cities assume many of the parks and recreation service delivery, but these independent departments are largely limited to the metro Atlanta region and counties are the primary service provider in the rest of the state.

Table 10: Oglethorpe compared to all counties

	Statewide County Average	Highest County	Lowest County	Oglethorpe County	Statewide Rank (/159)
Total Per Capita Expenditures for Parks and Recreation					
Average (1990-2008)	\$19.98	\$341.13	\$0.00 (6)	\$8.12	88
Most Recent Year	\$28.31	\$531.06	\$0.00 (16)	\$12.26	92
Expenditures for Parks and Recreation as a Percentage of County General Fund Budget					
Average (1990-2008)	2.22%	8.80%	0.00% (1)	2.39%	64
Most Recent Year	2.08%	8.62%	0.00% (16)	2.02%	82
Per Capita Self-Generated Revenues for Parks and Recreation					
Average (1990-2008)	\$3.17	\$87.05	\$0.00 (42)	\$3.91	27
Most Recent Year	\$5.36	\$130.64	\$0.00 (65)	\$4.50	44
Self-Generated Revenues as Percentage of Total Parks and Recreation Expenditures					
Average (1990-2008)	12.57%	89.61%	0.00% (39)	38.20%	8
Most Recent Year	11.58%	43.59%	0.00% (62)	35.54%	12

Source: Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Tax and Expenditure Data Center

The four measures shown in Table 10 (above) indicate Oglethorpe County's comparison against the rest of Georgia counties both in the most recent available year and the entirety of years from 1990 forward.

The first measure considered is per capita parks and recreation spending in Georgia's 159 counties. While Oglethorpe's per-capita spending in the most recent year (2008) was substantially higher than its average over the previous 19 years (nearly 50% higher), the county itself remains in the bottom half of this measure and at less than half of the statewide county average.

As a percentage of the general fund expenditures, Oglethorpe County is less than 1/10% less than the statewide average and in the top third of counties for their average since 1990, but the most recent year has seen a significant drop from their average.

Next are the per capita self-generated revenues. This measure indicates the average amount of charges for services received based on the county's population. In the most recent year, Oglethorpe's number was nearly \$.60 higher than its 19-year average but the statewide rank dropped significantly, indicating that other counties have had more significant increases in per-capita recreation funds collected.

The fourth – self-generated revenues – indicates how much of the recreation budgets are funded through charges for services provided. When considering both the 19-year average and the most recent year, Oglethorpe County's recreation department generates among the highest percentages in the state and over three times the statewide county average.

What these measures serve to indicate is that the county's per capita spending on parks and recreation and that the percentage of the budget that is being directed toward parks and recreation are well below the statewide average. These both represent opportunities for the county. In the case of per-capita spending, the county's indicators have improved drastically and at roughly the same rate as the rest of Georgia's counties (both increasing nearly 50%). In the case of the latter two measures, Oglethorpe is more reliant on charges for services to fund recreation programs than most of its counterparts. This is reflected both in the amount of charges received by the county on a per capita basis and the percentage of recreation spending that is reliant on charges for services.

Programs and Services

Youth have the opportunity to participate in Fall, Winter, and Spring recreational programs. Cheerleading and football are offered each fall, basketball during the winter, baseball in the spring, and soccer in both fall and spring.

Table 11: Athlete Participation

Activity	2005	2006	2007
Basketball	135	168	150
Cheerleading	50	39	57
Football - Midgets/PeeWees	57	65	
Football - Juniors	38	45	49
Football - Seniors	28	19	40
Soccer	222	182	184

Records were maintained for athlete registration from 2005-2007, as seen above in Table 11 (above). As it indicates, soccer is consistently the most highly participated-in sport, followed by basketball.

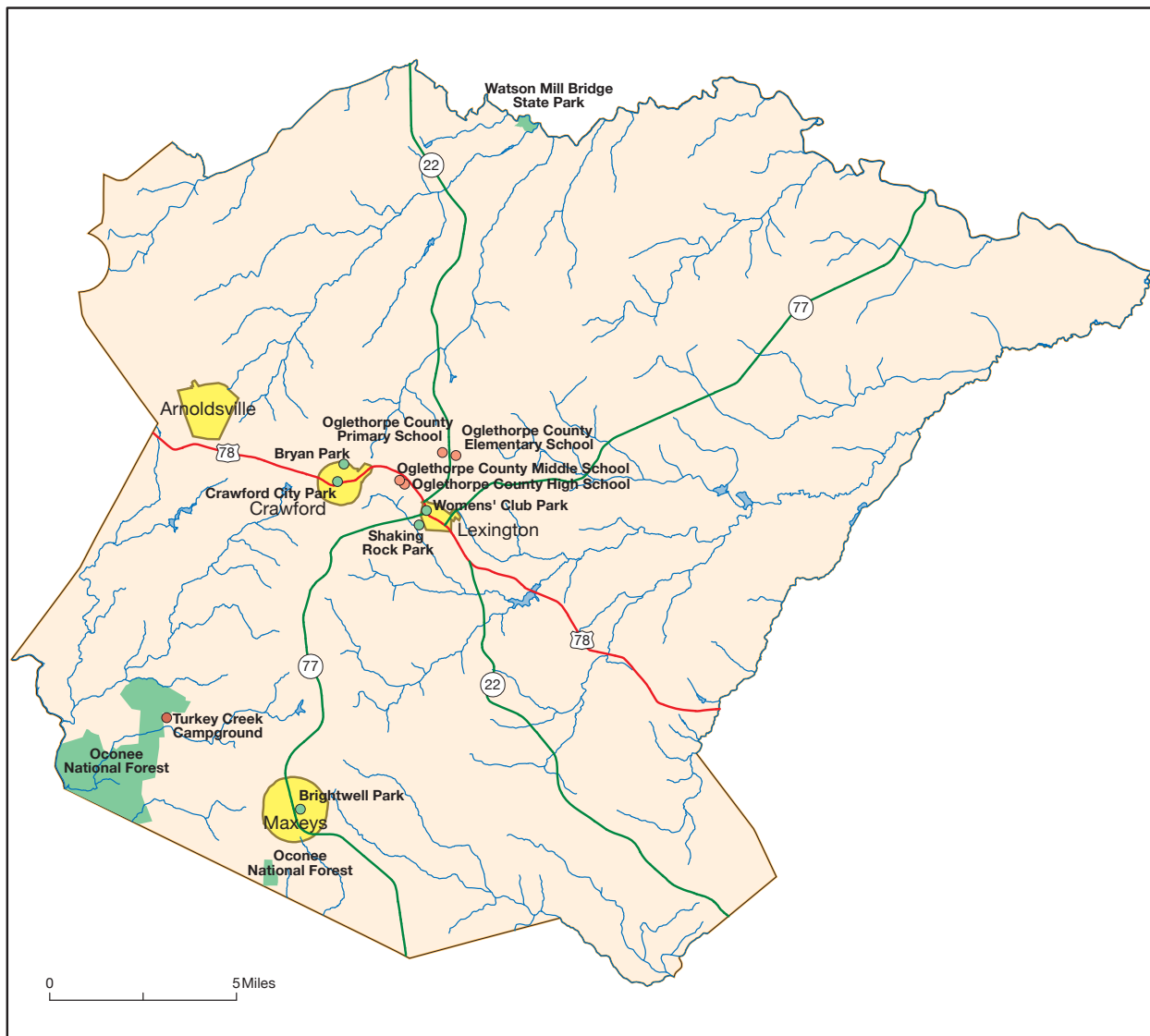
Beyond these programs, the recreation department offers other programs:

Meetings

- BB Rifle Team
- Boy Scouts
- Little League
- Recreation Commission

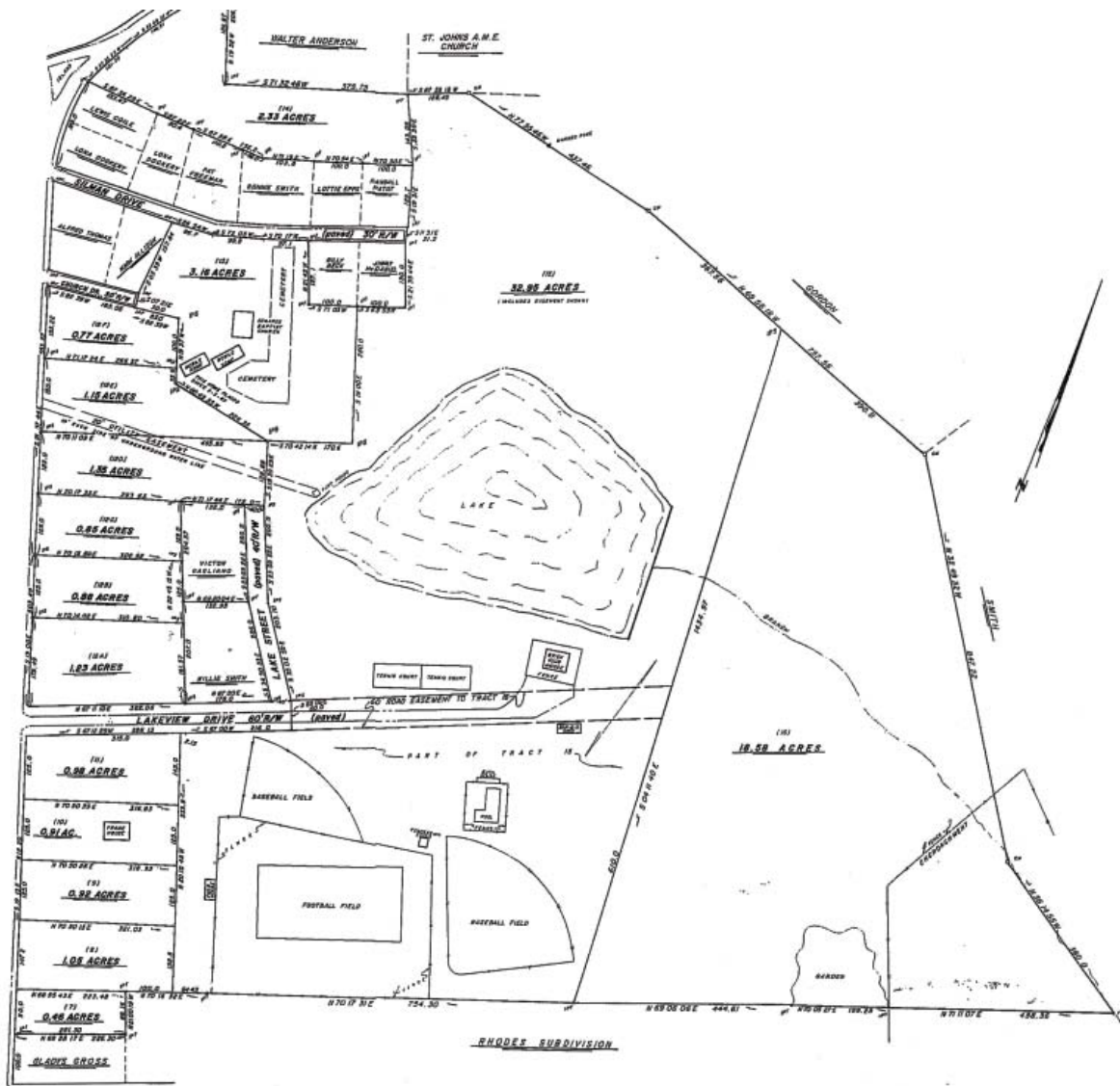
Facilities and Land Management

Park Locations Within Oglethorpe County



Bryan Park

Bryan Park is the central park/recreation facility for Oglethorpe County, located in Crawford. The park is located on Lakeshore Drive, just off North Street, north of Downtown Crawford. The 50 acre park is home to four baseball/softball fields, multi-use football/soccer fields, a seven acre pond, a nature trail, a clubhouse, and a facility with recreation department offices and meeting facilities.



Shaking Rock Park (City of Lexington)

Shaking Rock Park is located off US 78 in Lexington. Shaking Rock is a passive park, with a picnic area, pond, and nature trails. Huge natural granite outcroppings in unusual shapes are scattered throughout the park. The park's name stems from a 20-ton boulder that was so perfectly balanced that at one point it could be shaken by hand. While the rock no longer shakes at the move of a hand, the park maintains the name.

Brightwell Park (City of Maxeys)

This 3.2 acre city park includes a ball field, an outdoor basketball court, and a playground. While the Oglethorpe County Recreation Commission does not currently market or utilize these facilities, the park does present the commission with an opportunity to collaborate with the City Council in Maxeys and potentially extend recreational offerings beyond Bryan Park (approximately 10 miles between Crawford and Maxeys).

Oglethorpe County School District

The Oglethorpe County School District has three existing facilities, with a fourth scheduled to be available in Fall 2010.

The Oglethorpe County Primary School serves students through the second grade. Oglethorpe County Elementary School sits adjacent to the primary school and serves students in grades three through five. Grades six through eight and nine through twelve are currently served in the same facility (Oglethorpe County Middle and High School), but under different administrations. The new Oglethorpe County Middle School will open in fall 2010, across the street from the Primary/Elementary school complex, leaving the high school with more space in its existing facility.

It was noted in the town hall meeting that the relationship between the County Recreation Department and School District is strong, but can continually use improvement. This sentiment was shared in several individual interviews, as well, and there is an opportunity for county officials and school district officials to work together and develop more formal, more extensive, and more mutually beneficial collaborations. Among the facilities currently held by the School District are the football stadium at the Middle/High School and the gyms at the Primary, Elementary, and Middle/High Schools. In addition, the new Oglethorpe County Middle School will open in Fall 2010 and will provide another gymnasium. Prior to the opening of the new school, district and county/recreation commission leadership should make arrangements regarding usage and develop a Memorandum of Understanding that reflects these arrangements.

Watson Mill Bridge State Park

Watson Mill Bridge is the longest covered bridge in Georgia that remains on its original site. On 1,118 acres surrounding the bridge, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources operates Watson Mill Bridge State Park.

Among the activities available at Watson Mill Bridge State Park are fishing (catfish, bass, and bream); canoe and pedal boat rental in the spring and summer; horseback riding (14 miles of trail), bicycling (5 miles of trail), and hiking (7 miles of trail).

Among the facilities available at the park are 21 tent, trailer, and RV sites available for rental rates below \$25; 3 log cabin bunk houses available for \$60; 3 picnic shelters available for \$35; a group shelter available for \$100; and pioneer campground sites available starting at \$30.

Oconee National Forest

The Oconee National Forest is a United States National Forest encompassing a total of 115,353 acres. The forest is located partially in Greene, Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Morgan, Oconee, Putnam, and Oglethorpe Counties, with 3,762 acres in Oglethorpe.

The portions of the forest that are located in Oglethorpe County are south and west of Maxeys, entirely west of Highway 77.

The Turkey Creek Campground is an undeveloped campground that is a part of the Oconee National Forest in the county, located just off Highway 93 northwest of Maxeys.

Comparable County Comparison

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs administers the Government Management Indicators (GoMI) survey annually all cities and counties in Georgia. The survey measures management, services, facilities, and other local government functions.

The survey divides the state’s 159 counties into six strata based on population – “A” being the largest counties and “F” being the smallest counties. Cities are divided into 8 strata on the same standard, ranging from “A” for the largest cities and “H” for the smallest.

Oglethorpe County is among the smaller counties, falling in the “E” strata (fifth of six). The four cities in the county fall in similar position on the city equivalent – Crawford falls in strata “G” and Lexington, Arnoldsville, and Maxeys in strata “H.” The county is one of 23 in the Group E counties and reasonable expectations and goals can be gleaned from those comparable city respondents.

Table 12: Comparable County Service Provision

Facility	# of Comparable Counties	% of Comparable Counties Providing
Bicycle, Hiking, and/or Jogging Trails	6	50%
Community Center	5	42%
Neighborhood Playgrounds/Equipment	7	58%
Outdoor Courts (basketball, tennis)	9	75%
Outdoor Fields	8	66%
Parks	9	75%
Recreation Center/Gym	12	100%
Senior Citizens Center	11	92%
Stadium	5	42%
Swimming Pools	6	50%

Relations with Cities

In the Community Assessment section of the 2005 Joint City-County Comprehensive Plan, all five jurisdictions acknowledged that “intergovernmental coordination will be required to provide adequate infrastructure capacities to accommodate the projected growth.” This includes park and recreation facilities.

Maxeys has a community center, neighborhood playground/playground equipment, outdoor courts, and a park near downtown. Lexington has a passive park (Shaking Rock Park) that provides a centrally located area for outdoor activity and health and wellness outside of a formal recreation setting. Both of these facilities present opportunities for intergovernmental collaboration that is not currently in place to expand recreation and health and wellness programs for a wider audience.

Recommendations

These recommendations are proposed over the next 5-10 years and are broke down into four overarching categories: Budget and Finance, Programs and Services, Facilities and Land Management, and Cooperation and Collaboration.

There are a multitude of economic benefits to be realized by improving recreation offerings and increasing availability and quality of park space. Among the benefits noted by the American Planning Association are: 1) increased property values, 2) increased local government revenues, 3) attraction and retention of families, and 4) increased incentive to purchase homes.¹⁷

1.0 Budget and Finance

- 1.1 Increase per capita spending on parks and recreation
- 1.2 Reduce percentage of recreation budget stemming from charges for services
- 1.3 Increase the commercial/industrial makeup of the property tax base, which would increase both property tax revenue and sales and use tax revenue from LOST/SPLOST
- 1.4 Advocate for higher proportion of SPLOST revenue for recreation improvements in 2011 referendum
- 1.5 Work with county leadership and revenue officials to identify the appropriate balance between available sales and use tax revenue, property value and tax rates, and charges for services in the makeup of recreation funding

2.0 Programs and Services

- 2.1 Offer after-school programs
- 2.2 Provide summer day camps
- 2.3 Increase program offerings for older youth (15+)
- 2.4 Increase program offerings for adults
- 2.5 Increase program offerings and facilities for senior citizens

3.0 Facilities and Land Management

- 3.1 Develop facilities plan for rehabilitation of Bryan Park fields
- 3.2 Identify and correct drainage issues at Bryan Park
- 3.3 Acquire the four acres of property adjacent to Bryan Park for park expansion

- 3.4 Plan, fund, and construct a community recreation center that would focus on recreation and health and wellness programs for children, older youth (15-18), adults, and senior citizens that ensures lifelong health and vitality. The facility could include gym, parks and recreation offices, restrooms, meeting space/multi-purpose rooms, and concessions
- 3.5 Plan, fund, and construct a public pool
- 3.6 Acquire and remove existing pool and convert to public use area as part of Bryan Park rehabilitation
- 3.7 Plan, fund, and construct multi-use walking/jogging trails at Bryan Park
- 3.8 Plan, fund, and construct tennis facilities
- 3.9 Market historic sites and passive health and wellness opportunities in the county
- 3.10 Identify and market assets in Oconee National Forest and Watson Mill Bridge State Park
- 3.11 Work with City of Lexington to upgrade Shaking Rock Park, per previous plans
- 3.12 Integrate walking/jogging trails while ensuring preservation of existing woodland and forests

4.0 Cooperation and Collaboration

- 4.1 Increase collaboration with City of Moxey and use of Brightwell Park
- 4.2 Increase collaboration with City of Lexington and use of Shaking Rock Park
- 4.3 Plan future growth in facilities and programs in conjunction with all four cities
- 4.4 Develop a formal Memorandum of Understanding with the Oglethorpe County School District for facility usage and collaborative recreation programs
- 4.5 Collaborate with Oglethorpe County School District to expand transportation availability

Design Recommendations (Bryan Park)

Layout View - AERIAL FULL



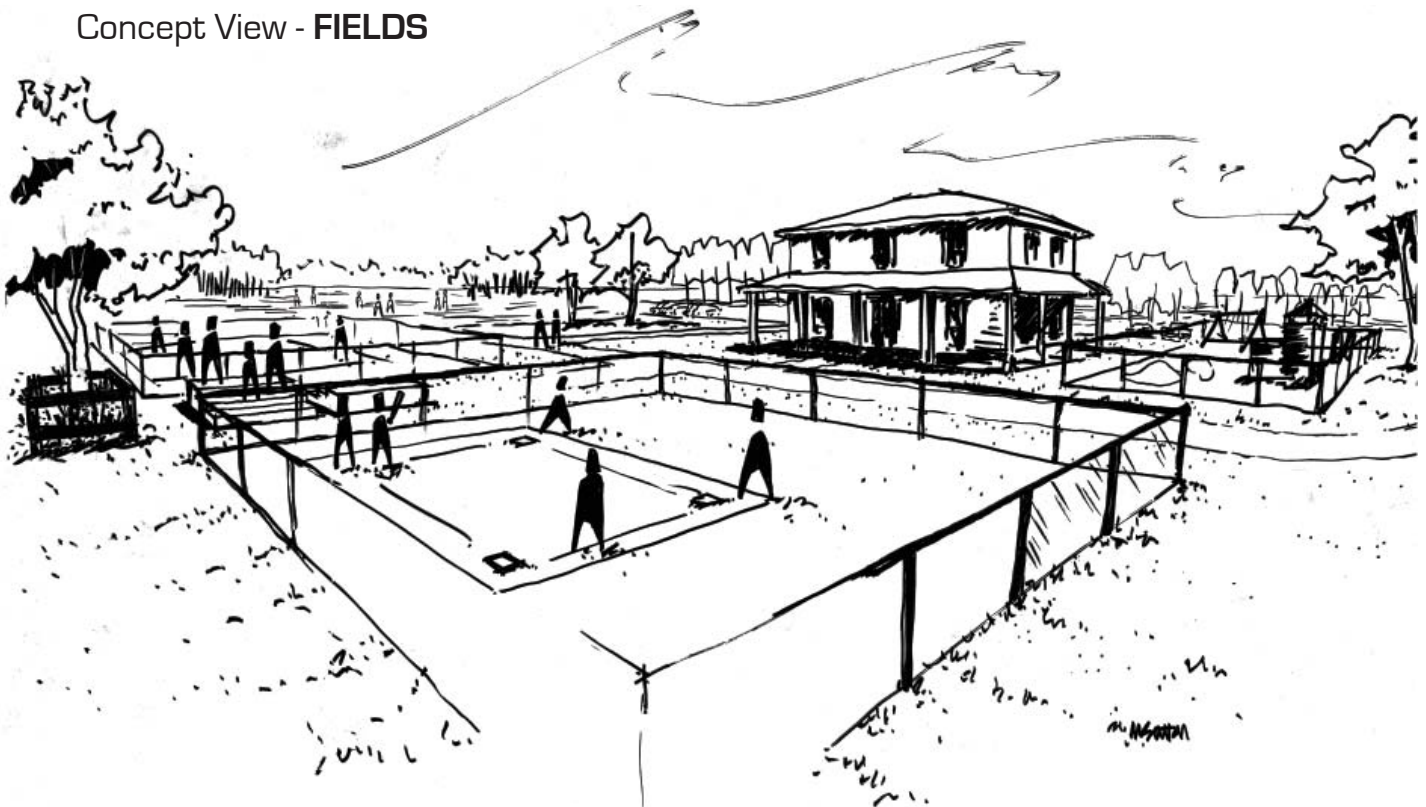
This short-term future development concept includes reconfiguration of existing sport fields. Additional facilities are laid out around the park's amenity buildings and parking areas. Clustered t-ball and baseball fields are separated by rows of shade trees. The lower parking lot is expanded before the existing building, leaving the rest of the space for football practice fields. Along Lakeview Drive, across from the main parking lot, this flat space accommodates multiple tennis and basketball courts.

Parking along the street provides access to the courts. A shade structure in the middle of the courts provides a shaded rest area for people using the courts. With much undeveloped woodland available, a pedestrian path throughout the park could provide additional fitness uses. Rows of trees along Lakeview Drive and parking lots provide shade for people and cars.

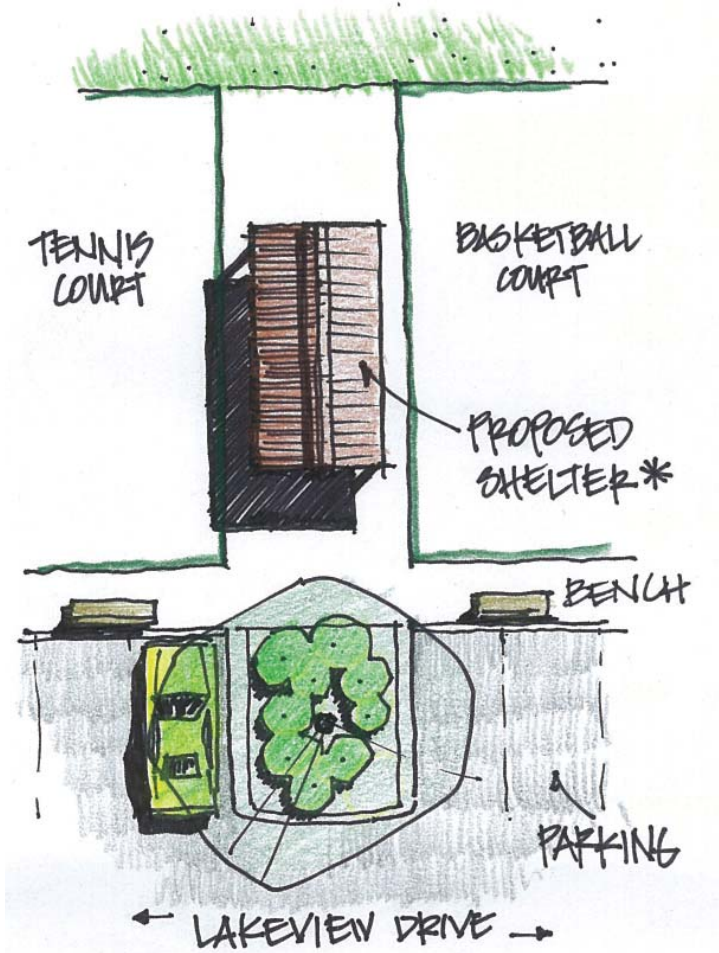
Concept View - **COURTS**



Concept View - **FIELDS**



Explanation View - **SHADE STRUCTURE**



- * Shelter mimics design of the BBQ/ Picnic shelter on site. Provides shaded seating area between tennis and basketball courts.

Explanation View - **PLANTERS**

- * Plant boxes in parking areas or heavy pedestrian use areas. Small fences constructed around shade trees surrounded by native perennial plants provide protection for newly planted trees and a site element that can define spaces.



Conclusion

The Oglethorpe County Recreation Commission and Board of Commissioners have made strides in recent years to increase the availability of and participation in active recreation programs for youth, encourage healthy lifestyles for all residents, and utilize both passive and active parks and recreation spaces for the betterment of the community. As this report identifies, there are still significant opportunities for the county, specifically in regard to:

- Revenue generation for parks and recreation from multiple sources,
- Programs and services for older youth and adults,
- Quality and ongoing maintenance and operation of existing facilities,
- Planning and constructing new facilities, and
- Developing an awareness and appreciation for all outdoor, conservation and recreational facilities in the county

The recreation staff is well respected among community members and has the confidence of the recreation commission. Their commitment to the community, dedication to the recruitment and retention of quality volunteers, and desire to begin thinking about the future of the department are both widely acknowledged and encouraged among the community members.

As was stated from the outset, two of the primary objectives of this report were to 1) provide a comparison of the county's facilities, assets, and funding with both comparable counties in Georgia and among the state as a whole and 2) provide an analysis of the existing funding mechanisms and potential new funding opportunities. The recommendations provided stem from these two objectives and are intended to help the community better understand its current state of recreation, strengthen the existing offerings of the county, identify the needs and desires of the community today, create a long-term and sustainable parks and recreation program for residents, and allow the county to prepare accordingly for growth in the coming years.

With this report, Oglethorpe County can better envision the balance needed with action on the part of the recreation commission and county commission, allocation of resources on the part of the county as a whole, and the needs dictated by residents in this report's public engagement.

Oglethorpe County has committed residents, advocacy groups, and appointed and elected leaders. There is enthusiasm about park-space and recreation programs, there is commitment to healthy and active lifestyles, and there is commitment to the continual improvement of the Oglethorpe County community. With this commitment and the information that stems from this report, the county can sustain, grow, and encourage successful programs and activities, high quality and desirable facilities, and a more active and healthy population.

Review of Public Input

Town Hall Meeting

On January 22, 2010, fifty-five people gathered to discuss the state of recreation in Oglethorpe County. Four questions were asked to spark small group discussions about what is currently working (or not) and what the future needs are. A brief summary of the responses is presented here, and Appendix D includes a full list of responses.

What is currently working well with parks and recreation in the county?

Greg and Kim, the volunteers and the coaches are doing a good job, as is the Friends of Oglethorpe Recreation Department (FORD) group. The programs and schedules are better organized, and communications is working well, especially the email notifications. There is a good relationship with the schools and elected officials. The available programs have grown, participation has grown, and the cost for participation is affordable. There are new facilities, like the scoreboard, field goals, bleachers and bridges on the walking trail.

What currently needs improvement with parks and recreation in the county?

Park facilities like the concession stands, bathrooms and sound system need improvement. More and different programs are needed for both adults and youth. There are problems with the conditions of the fields, drainage problems for example, and new fields are needed for soccer and other programs. There are also problems with some of the equipment used, like the batting cages and backstop nets at the baseball fields. New facilities needed are a gym, tennis courts, and a multipurpose building, along with walking trails and more land. Parking is a problem.

What parks and recreation services, programs and facilities are needed for children and youth over the next 5 to 10 years?

Generally speaking, after school programs and summer camps are needed for youth. In particular, people would like to see tennis, dance and gymnastics, skateboarding, paintball, archery, and track among other things. More facilities will be needed, both passive and active: playground, bike trails, more sports fields, a gym, and better basketball facilities.

What parks and recreation services, programs and facilities are needed for adults (young and mature) over the next 5 to 10 years?

A variety of team sports leagues, exercise/health and wellness programs, clubs and classes will be needed for adults. Indoor and outdoor facilities for these programs will also be needed. In addition to facilities for the programs, other facilities for meeting, walking, riding (bikes and horses) and golf are needed.

What else do we need to know?

Funding, of course, is an issue. Grants, taxes and other sources of revenue need to be investigated. More land will be needed to implement these suggestions.

Interviews

The interviews with “key players” in Oglethorpe County’s Recreation community (Appendix B) were structured around the same five questions that were presented to the public in the town hall meeting.

When asked what was working well in regard to recreation in the county, many of the same themes were heard. Parental and community support were seen as both critical to a thriving recreation program and as being present in the Oglethorpe County community. The other common response that emerged in the interviews was the role of the school system in the recreation community. Among the observations made were that the extra-curricular programs offered at all four schools (primary, elementary, middle, and high) were “rich” and provided ample opportunity for students. Several individuals specifically mentioned the programs and assistance offered by the primary school for programs and recreation activities. While strong, there was concern about sustaining and growing the relationship between the Recreation Department and School District and the response to growth in the number of students in that relationship over the coming years. Finally, the new leadership of the department was noted for its genuine interest in a thriving program and the energy that they bring forth. This was juxtaposed with previous leadership which (see earlier) had been involved in illegal activity and theft from the department.

Again, similar to the outcome of the town hall meeting, the second question elicited a great deal of emotion and enthusiastic responses. When asked what areas of the county’s recreation community needed improvement, interviewees focused heavily on space, programs, and partnerships.

Among the facility needs that were identified were a gymnasium, a community center with classrooms, and newer kitchen facilities.

Programming needs were also discussed at length in these interviews. Among the most commonly mentioned needs were an after school program, a summer camp, and mentoring programs.

Next, specific services, programs, and facilities for use by youth and adults were questioned.

Among the needs that were identified for youth were 1) mentoring; 2) after school programs; 3) weekend activities; 4) community service and volunteer activities; 5) transportation; 6) summer camp; and 7) transportation.

Interviews, the town hall meeting, and the online survey concluded by asking residents what else they wanted to be known about the state of recreation in Oglethorpe County. This provided an opportunity for residents to mention any issues, concerns, or problems that weren’t otherwise addressed in the first four questions. There were several issues that came up repeatedly in this part of the research.

First was the issue of the pool. There is a great deal of confusion over the ownership and mechanics of the pool. As Figure 1 (below) demonstrates, swimming pool sits in the middle of Bryan Park.

Individual interviews demonstrated the varying interpretations of the pool's operation. Some of those that participated in one-on-one interviews were unaware that the pool was not a part of the Recreation Commission's operations and was rather a private operation. Others were more intimately familiar with the current arrangement and describe the pool as being privately owned and operated and available to members only. To become a member, you must be invited by another member.

There was consensus, however, that the desire for a public pool is great. During the summer, it would provide an enclave for youth, families would have a recreation destination, and seniors would have a facility for water aerobics.

Among those that have been engaged in discussions about the pool in the past, though, there was consensus that if the Recreation Commission opts to provide a pool for residents that acquisition of the existing pool would not be ideal. Instead, the county should assess need and plausible locations and move forward with a new pool to sufficiently meet demand and health standards.

Figure 1: Aerial Photo of Bryan Park



Appendices

Appendix A: Attendance List from Town Hall Meeting

Oglethorpe County Parks and Recreation Plan
 Town Hall Meeting
 1.21.2010 - 7:00PM
 Crawford Baptist Church

First Name(s)	Last Name	Phone Number	Email Address
Kem	Caldwell	706.338.5098	kemuel@onlineoglethorpe.com
Russ	Paul	706.743.3163	RussPaul60@yahoo.com
Ronnie	Boggs	706.347.1052	RBoggs@windstream.net
Melanie	Johnson	706.338.1081	Melon2772@yahoo.com
Jody	Johnson	706.424.7538	
Mika	Melton	706.424.5040	mmelton@uga.edu
Chris	Prescott	706.743.5153	Larcp5@gmail.com
Mitzi	Prescott	706.743.5153	mitziprescott@gmail.com
Angela	Bouknecht	706.743.8916	tomandangelab@yahoo.com
Kristin and Alan	Overstreet	678.227.1564	koverstreet@oglethorpe.k12.ga.us
John	Vauteur	706.742.5547	luckywinhot@yahoo.com
Billy	Culbertson	706.743.5399	billyculbertson@windstream.net
Steve	Johnson	706.742.9539	smj@windstream.net
Jason	Cruce	706.743.5333	cncetjc@windstream.net
George	Bond	706.424.0329	George.bond@usg.edu
Beth	Walsh	706.224.0971	Bethwalsh2009@gmail.com
Sam	McElaney	706.742.7150	
Jay	Bowman	706.742.5668	Jbowman706@windstream.net
Sheila	Kethley	706.742.2146	kethley@windstream.net
Tom	Bouknecht	706.743.8916	tomandangelab@yahoo.com
Lisa	Boyd	706.788.2350	lisajboyd@earthlink.net
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Lacricia	Ballard	706.614.5271	lacriaballard@yahoo.com
Marteca	Adkins	706.340.4633	Mladkins03@yahoo.com
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Scott and Valerie	Chandler	706.742.2535	Scottchandler51@yahoo.com
Coach	Milligan	706.769.8050	lmilligan@oglethorpe.k12.ga.us
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Mike	Shelton	706.338.1402	
Melissa	Bates	706.936.7073	Zackian02@hotmail.com
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Melisa	Eberhardt	706.338.1678	MOEberhardt@gmail.com
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Bill and Barbara	Cabaniss	706.759.3321	bcab@windstream.net
Erin	Bower	706.742.7246	sopranogirl@gmail.com
Larry	Wackfound	706.743.0851	nackerud@uga.edu
Becky	Soto	706.338.3110	Rebeccafaye0915@yahoo.com
Mark	Farris	706.743.5718	Mfarris01@windstream.net
Jason	Gomes	706.340.7234	
Deborah	Hogan	706.742.9579	
Mike	Tittle	706.202.6969	
Joni	Gabriel	706.255.3387	jwgabriel@oglethorpe.k12.ga.us
Terri	Anthony	706.433.1178	Tanthony318@msn.com
Chris	Tuttle	706.742.5851	Christopher.tuttle@gmail.com
Frank	Waters	706.255.9583	

Appendix B: One-on-one Interview Roster

Name	Title/Position
Billy Pittard	BOC Chairman
Shamika Barnes	Oglethorpe Family Connection Coordinator
Raymond Akridge, Ed.D.	Oglethorpe County School Superintendent
Tom Hogan	President of Recreation Commission
Tina Fleming	Former Director, Oglethorpe County Recreation Department
Larry Milligan	Oglethorpe County High School Athletic Director, Head Football Coach
Cary Fordyce	Director of Economic Development and Chamber of Commerce
John Faz	Code Enforcement Officer, Rotary Club President
Kim Caldwell	Oglethorpe County Tax Assessor

Appendix C: Exhaustive List of Responses from Town Hall Meeting

What is currently working well with parks and recreation in the county?

People

- The volunteers and coaches
- Referees have been really good (soccer, basketball specifically)
- Good coaches
- Willingness of volunteers for coaches
- Kim and Greg are working together to make things good for the county and the kids
- The Rec. Dept. commission members are doing a good job
- The volunteer coaches are good
- Greg and Kim are very visible to the community
- Dedication of Greg and Kim to the department and each sport and event
- FORD group
- The most recent cleanup effort by the FORD group

Organization

- Better organization in the past year
- Football scheduling
- Cooperation on scheduling practices and games
- Registration process and online registration

Communication

- Communication has increased
- Email notices about practice changes
- Email works well
- The communication (flyers, emails, etc)

Relationships with county

- Good relationships with the schools
- Better relationship with county commission
- New Elected Official supports
- County board and commissioners involvement

Growth

- Programs have grown over the years—soccer
- New adult activities
- Increased participation
- Program growth

Finances

- The participation costs of the sports are good
- Program cost
- Monetary investments
- Desire to find funding

Facilities

- The new scoreboard
- The new field goals
- New bleachers, clean up efforts
- Bridges built on walking trail

Other

- Uniforms are very nice
- The new coaches standards committee concept
- Tobacco policy
- Rec. Dept. is flexible

What currently needs improvement with parks and recreation in the county?

Augment park facilities

- Variety in the concession stand
- Refurbish cooking areas in concessions
- Concession stand by lower fields needs updates
- Clubhouse
- Upgraded field house
- Additional bleachers for outside sports
- Sheltered bleachers
- Improved bathroom facilities
- Better bathrooms
- Announcing equipment, better PA system for the games
- Better sound system
- Playgrounds
- Work on current playground

Programs

- Fishing
- Adult programs (basketball, soccer, etc.)
- After school program
- Adult exercise programs does sound good
- Summer camps
- Sr. adult exercise programs
- Tennis is an excellent sport for all age groups!
- Host all-stars
- Host opening day football
- Table tennis

Condition of the fields

- Fields
- Condition of fields
- Conditions of fields

- Resurfacing baseball fields (ruts)
- Drainage for football and soccer fields
- Do something about drainage problem on the grounds around field
- Better fields or more of them
- Shade trees around fields

New fields needed

- More fields
- More fields
- Fields/facilities for games and practices to happen at the same time
- Multi-purpose fields
- More soccer fields
- Improved soccer fields

Program amenities

- New batting cages
- Batting cages
- Ditto batting cages
- The swimming pool needs to be accessible to all the kids
- Replace backstop nets at baseball fields
- Baseball facility
- Improved equipment to be supplied
- Scoreboards monitored by adults

Gym

- Our own gym
- Ditto on the gym
- Own gym
- Own gym
- Gym

Tennis courts

- We need tennis courts
- We need tennis courts!!!!
- Some tennis courts would be nice....
- TENNIS COURTS
- Ditto the tennis courts

Outdoor facilities (passive)

- Walking trails
- Track for walking/running
- Additional park land
- More land

Buildings

- Multi-purpose facility

- Expansion to larger facility
- Security of buildings
- Indoor soccer facility would be awesome

Parking

- Parking
- Parking
- Additional parking space
- Paved parking lots with marked parking
- Handicap parking
- ADA parking with access to fields
- Better way to funnel traffic when soccer and football are going on simultaneously

Personnel

- Incentives for volunteer coaches (half price/free, if coaching own child)
- ditto #36 [incentives for volunteer coaches (half price/free, if coaching own child)]
- Outsource refs for basketball
- Two refs for soccer—sometimes they are late or no shows

Other

- Parent help with passing out and sizing for uniforms
- Find way to control over-enthusiastic parents
- Better funding source
- Better advertising and sponsorship
- Extended registration times
- Signs to direct you to fields
- Better sign that says Bryan Park, lift off ground

What parks and recreation services, programs and facilities are needed for children and youth over the next 5 to 10 years?

General programming

- After school programs
- After school programs
- After school programs
- After school programs
- Summer camps
- Summer camps
- Summer day camp
- Summer day camp
- Host camps
- Bring in pros or well known sports stars to hold camps or clinics
- Even collegiate athletes [for camps or clinics]
- You don't need to hire a pro...I'm already here!!!!
- Teen programs

- Teen clubs
- A Boys and Girls Club
- Big Brother programs/mentor programs
- Something to keep kids out of trouble and doing something fun/productive

Specific programs

- USTA tennis program
- School tennis team
- Dance classes, aerobics, gymnastics, and other indoor activities in multi-purpose building
- Gymnastics program
- Archery club
- Volleyball when we get a gym
- Track program
- Skateboarding
- Racquetball courts would be nice
- Paintball

Outdoor park facilities (passive)

- Additional playgrounds
- Playground for older kids
- Bike trails
- Biking trails
- Pavilion
- Amphitheater
- Picnic area—sometime your family is there all day!
- Campsite
- Water park (see Lenora Park in Snellville)

Outdoor sports facilities

- Tennis court
- More fields
- Multiple fields for each sport and age group
- Frisbee golf course

Indoor facilities

- Gymnasium
- Gym
- Weight room
- Better basketball facilities
- Better basketball facilities
- Climbing walls

Other

- Increased staffing needs
- More staff

- Travel teams for all sports
- Rec. Dept. van for travel team
- Keep prices reasonable
- Free equipment for sport participants
- Scholarship funding
- Host tournaments to raise money
- Host tournaments to raise money for tennis as well
- We need to find some corporate funding partners
- Expanded concession area
- More drinking fountains
- Expand age limit
- Better local press coverage
- More resources for the public
- Youth advisory board
- A multi-purpose building

What parks and recreation services, programs and facilities are needed for adults (young and mature) over the next 5 to 10 years?

Programs

- Tennis, soccer, flag football, basketball
- Flag football
- Softball league
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Senior tennis tournaments and leagues
- Adult tennis league
- Adult leagues
- Referee courses
- Courses in becoming a referee
- Referee courses is really good idea
- Senior adult programs
- Exercise program
- Pilates, yoga classes
- Aerobic classes
- Health and wellness programs
- Shuffleboard
- Yes, shuffleboard
- Square dancing on Saturday night
- Dance lesson
- Gun club
- Skeet shooting
- Skills workshop
- Mountain biking
- Self defense

- Paintball
- Bingo on Friday night
- Table tennis
- Horseshoes

Indoor sports facilities

- Adult fitness room
- Indoor swimming
- Fitness center for adults only
- Lap pool, warm water pool
- Fitness center (weights included, treadmills, spinning classes)

Other facilities

- ADA-compliant facilities
- Clubhouse
- Spa
- Multipurpose building
- Larger facility to host class reunions, elections, civic events, etc.
- Community group meetings
- Gathering locations
- Horse shoes

Outdoor facilities (passive)

- Walking trails
- Walking trail
- Walking track
- Track
- Track
- Lighted walking trail
- Walking trails
- Walking trail
- Biking trails
- Equestrian trails
- Dog park

Outdoor sports facilities

- Tennis courts
- Local USTA members have to travel to neighboring counties to play “home” matches.
- Madison, Elbert, Clarke, Oconee, Morgan Counties all host USTA leagues and tournaments
- Golf driving range
- Golf driving range
- Putt Putt
- Horseshoe pits

Other

- Community events for families
- Pie

What else do we need to know?

- Recreation tax needs to be investigated
- Ways to raise money
- The county population needs to embrace this plan and allow changes in the county that will help this happen financially.
- Help with grant proposals
- Additional land purchase / lease in order to expand
- A lot of the ideas require more land
- May need to diversify to multiple locations within the county
- We need at least 4-5 good tennis courts. Will USTA provide grant money? Local grading business has offered to grade site for free.
- Partnering with more counties to play against each other
- Keep kids competitive with local counties
- Increase positive exposure outside the county
- Keep redesign of fields and/or facilities done by a local planning firm
- Remaster plan of Bryan Park
- Thank you!
- Thanks for allowing input from community
- We have come along way, but we still have a long way to go
- Allow practices after games have started
- The need for a gym is especially important
- Improve facility appearances

Appendix D: Property Tax Scenarios

Oglethorpe County Scenario Planning

One approach that many counties and cities across the state have taken is to apply a fixed millage to recreation funding. This tax rate is collected by the government along with the rest of their property taxes, but is devoted to recreation spending. Among the examples of this being used in Georgia are in Gwinnett County, which assesses a .79 mill recreation tax and Lowndes County at 1.25 mills.

This appendix offers several scenarios of a dedicated millage for recreation in Oglethorpe County given current property valuation and tax rates in the county. Among the scenarios presented are dedicated millage of .25 mill, .50 mill, .75 mill, and 1.0 mill for recreation purposes. Adoption of a 1.0 mill increase for this purpose would represent an increase of \$4.00 on a \$10,000 car or an \$80.00 on a \$200,000 home and yield an additional \$171,000 for park/recreation spending.

Impact on Homeowners

Value	Assessment Ratio	Taxable Value	Millage Division	Tax Burden
\$10,000 Automobile	x.40 =	\$4,000	/1000	= 4 x. Millage Rate
\$20,000 Automobile	x.40 =	\$8,000	/1000	= 8 x. Millage Rate
\$30,000 Automobile	x.40 =	\$12,000	/1000	= 12 x. Millage Rate
\$100,000 Home	x.40 =	\$40,000	/1000	= 40 x. Millage Rate
\$150,000 Home	x.40 =	\$60,000	/1000	= 60 x. Millage Rate
\$200,000 Home	x.40 =	\$80,000	/1000	= 80 x. Millage Rate

Currently, property owners in Oglethorpe County pay a variety of property tax rates dependent on where they live in the county. As a result, residents currently pay the following millage rates¹⁸:

Residents of Crawford:	.25	State of Georgia
	17.896	Oglethorpe County Schools
	9.63	Oglethorpe County (Inc)
	3.5	City of Crawford
	31.276	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Lexington:	.25	State of Georgia
	17.896	Oglethorpe County Schools
	9.063	Oglethorpe County (Inc)
	2.0	City of Lexington
	29.776	Total Millage Rate

Residents of Arnoldsville: .25 State of Georgia
 17.896 Oglethorpe County Schools
 9.063 Oglethorpe County (Inc)
 1.0 City of Arnoldsville
 28.776 Total Millage Rate

Residents of Maxeys: .25 State of Georgia
 17.896 Oglethorpe County Schools
 9.063 Oglethorpe County (Inc)
 27.776 Total Millage Rate

Residents of Unincorporated Oglethorpe: .25 State of Georgia
 17.896 Oglethorpe County Schools
 7.724 Oglethorpe County (Uninc)
 25.87 Total Millage Rate

Current Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$125.10	\$119.04	\$115.10	\$111.10	\$103.48
\$20,000 Auto	\$250.21	\$238.21	\$230.23	\$222.20	\$206.96
\$30,000 Auto	\$375.31	\$357.31	\$345.35	\$333.31	\$310.44
\$100,000 Home	\$1,251.04	\$1,191.04	\$1,151.16	\$1,111.04	\$1,034.80
\$150,000 Home	\$1,876.56	\$1,786.56	\$1,726.74	\$1,666.56	\$1,552.20
\$200,000 Home	\$2,502.08	\$2,382.08	\$2,302.32	\$2,222.08	\$2,069.60

.25 Mill – Recreation

Residents of Crawford: 31.526 Total Millage Rate
Residents of Lexington: 30.026 Total Millage Rate
Residents of Arnoldsville: 29.026 Total Millage Rate
Residents of Maxeys: 28.026 Total Millage Rate
Residents of Unincorporated Oglethorpe: 26.12 Total Millage Rate

Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$126.10	\$120.10	\$116.10	\$112.10	\$104.48
\$20,000 Auto	\$252.21	\$240.21	\$232.21	\$224.21	\$208.96
\$30,000 Auto	\$378.31	\$360.31	\$348.31	\$336.31	\$313.44
\$100,000 Home	\$1,261.04	\$1,201.04	\$1,161.04	\$1,121.04	\$1,044.80
\$150,000 Home	\$1,891.56	\$1,801.56	\$1,741.56	\$1,681.56	\$1,567.20
\$200,000 Home	\$2,522.08	\$2,402.08	\$2,322.08	\$2,242.08	\$2,089.60

Increase from Current Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
\$20,000 Auto	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00
\$30,000 Auto	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
\$100,000 Home	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
\$150,000 Home	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00
\$200,000 Home	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$20.00

.50 Mill – Recreation

Residents of Crawford:	31.776	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Lexington:	30.276	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Arnoldsville:	29.276	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Maxeys:	28.276	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Unincorporated Oglethorpe:	26.37	Total Millage Rate

Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$127.10	\$121.10	\$117.10	\$113.10	\$105.48
\$20,000 Auto	\$254.21	\$242.21	\$234.21	\$226.21	\$210.96
\$30,000 Auto	\$381.31	\$363.31	\$351.31	\$339.31	\$316.44
\$100,000 Home	\$1,271.04	\$1,211.04	\$1,171.04	\$1,131.04	\$1,054.80
\$150,000 Home	\$1,906.56	\$1,816.56	\$1,756.56	\$1,696.56	\$1,582.20
\$200,000 Home	\$2,542.08	\$2,422.08	\$2,342.08	\$2,262.08	\$2,109.60

Increase from Current Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$2.00
\$20,000 Auto	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00
\$30,000 Auto	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00
\$100,000 Home	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$20.00
\$150,000 Home	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00
\$200,000 Home	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00

.75 Mill – Recreation

Residents of Crawford:	32.026	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Lexington:	30.526	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Arnoldsville:	29.526	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Maxeys:	28.526	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Unincorporated Oglethorpe:	26.62	Total Millage Rate

Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$128.10	\$122.10	\$118.10	\$114.10	\$106.48
\$20,000 Auto	\$256.21	\$244.21	\$236.21	\$228.21	\$212.96
\$30,000 Auto	\$384.31	\$366.31	\$354.31	\$342.31	\$319.44
\$100,000 Home	\$1,281.04	\$1,221.04	\$1,181.04	\$1,141.04	\$1,064.80
\$150,000 Home	\$1,921.56	\$1,831.56	\$1,771.56	\$1,711.56	\$1,597.20
\$200,000 Home	\$2,562.08	\$2,442.08	\$2,362.08	\$2,282.08	\$2,129.60

Increase from Current Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$3.00
\$20,000 Auto	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00	\$6.00
\$30,000 Auto	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.00
\$100,000 Home	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00
\$150,000 Home	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00	\$45.00
\$200,000 Home	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00

1.0 Mill – Recreation

Residents of Crawford:	32.276	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Lexington:	30.776	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Arnoldsville:	29.776	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Maxeys:	28.776	Total Millage Rate
Residents of Unincorporated Oglethorpe:	26.87	Total Millage Rate

Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$129.10	\$123.10	\$119.10	\$115.10	\$107.48
\$20,000 Auto	\$258.21	\$246.21	\$238.21	\$230.21	\$214.96
\$30,000 Auto	\$387.31	\$369.31	\$357.31	\$345.31	\$322.44
\$100,000 Home	\$1,291.04	\$1,231.04	\$1,191.04	\$1,151.04	\$1,074.80
\$150,000 Home	\$1,936.56	\$1,846.56	\$1,786.56	\$1,726.56	\$1,612.20
\$200,000 Home	\$2,582.08	\$2,462.08	\$2,382.08	\$2,302.08	\$2,149.60

Increase from Current Property Tax Burden (\$)

	Crawford	Lexington	Arnoldsville	Maxeys	Unincorporated
\$10,000 Auto	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.00
\$20,000 Auto	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$8.00
\$30,000 Auto	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
\$100,000 Home	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00	\$40.00
\$150,000 Home	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00	\$60.00
\$200,000 Home	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$80.00

Impact on Revenue

The net value of all taxable properties in Oglethorpe County, less any exempt property and individual exemptions from property taxes is \$428,024,515 for the year 2008. Applying an increased, devoted millage to recreation as outlined above would yield the following results:

	0.25 Mill	0.50 Mill	0.75 Mill	1.00 Mill
Increased Revenue for Recreation	\$42,802.45	85,604.90	\$128,407.35	\$171,209.80

Appendix E: Grant Opportunities

1. ACHIEVE Healthy Communities

<http://www.nrpa.org/achieve/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/index.htm>

<http://www.achievecommunities.org/Pages/AboutUs.aspx>

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) support local communities to implement ACHIEVE Communities (Action Communities for Health, Innovation and EnVironmental ChangE). In 2010, NRPA will fund ten park and recreation agencies at \$35,000 each to develop coalitions of local stakeholders and community leaders to address chronic disease risk factors of physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use. With an ACHIEVE grant, agencies will: Reduce the incidence of chronic disease through policy, systems and environmental change strategies at the local level, Create partnerships with community stakeholders, Attend meetings with national leaders to learn about tools, resources, and strategies to build healthier communities, Create awareness of the vital services parks and recreation offers, Enhance the overall health and livability of your community. The application for 2011 communities will open in the fall of 2010.

CDC's ACHIEVE communities (Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and EnVironmental changE) develop and implement policy, systems, and environmental change strategies that can help prevent or manage health risk factors for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, obesity, and arthritis. CDC provides funds to selected national organizations, which provide technical support and funds to selected communities. Through this funding mechanism, ACHIEVE communities are able to capitalize on the experience and expertise of national organizations in strengthening community leadership, building capacity, and activating change.

ACHIEVE fosters collaborative partnerships between city and county health officials, city and county government, tribal programs, parks and recreation departments, local YMCAs, local health-related coalitions, and other representatives from the school, business, health, and community sectors to implement improvements. State departments of health and other state-level partners provide additional resources and information to help communities meet their goals. Examples of community-based improvements include increased access to and use of attractive and safe locations for engaging in physical activity, revised school food contracts that include more fruits and vegetables and whole grain foods, ordinances that protect children and adults from exposure to secondhand smoke and encourage nonsmoking, and requirements for sidewalks and crossing signals in neighborhoods to make them more pedestrian-friendly.

2. Land and Water Conservation Fund

<http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/>
<http://gastateparks.org/net/content/page.aspx?s=8084.0.1.5&siteid=5&wrapid=1>
<http://www.gastateparks.org/net/content/go.aspx?s=132975.0.1.5>
http://www.tpl.org/tier3_cd.cfm?content_item_id=10566&folder_id=191

The LWCF program provides matching grants to States and local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. The program is intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities and to stimulate non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the United States.

The money that GA got for FY 2009

State	Regular	GOMESA	Total
Georgia	\$455,655	\$197,718	\$653,373

In most years, all States receive individual allocations (apportionments) of LWCF grant funds based on a national formula (with state population being the most influential factor). Then States initiate a statewide competition for the amount available (including the new year allocation, any previous year allocations, and any amounts `recovered' due to cost underruns on earlier projects funded). Applications are received by a State up to its specified deadline date. Then they are scored and ranked according to the project selection criteria so that only the top-ranked projects (up to the total amount available that year) are chosen for funding. "Winning" applications are then forwarded to the National Park Service for formal approval and obligation of federal grant monies.

3. The Bowerman Track Renovation Program

http://www.nikebiz.com/responsibility/community_programs/bowerman_track_program/

A global program that provides matching cash grants to community-based, youth-oriented organizations that seek to refurbish or construct running tracks. The program distributes approximately \$200,000 in matching grants each year.

4. United States Soccer Foundation Program & Field Grants

http://www.ussoccerfoundation.org/site/c.iplQKXOVfOG/b.5482625/k.CF87/Annual_Program__Field_Grants.htm

The Foundation annually provides grant support to local communities and soccer organizations aimed at achieving the mission to enhance and grow the sport of soccer. The primary focus is providing grants to projects and programs that develop players, coaches, and referees in economically disadvantaged urban areas encompassing

populations of 50,000 or more. The Foundation also provides assistance to develop fields, including state-of-the-art synthetic grass surfaces, irrigation and lighting – Field Grants assist with every stage of the field building process – from planning and designing a new field to installing the finishing touches such as lights and field boards. Additionally, in cooperation with our National Partner, FieldTurf, the Foundation awards grant to build synthetic grass soccer fields that are durable and can be used in all weather conditions.

FIELD – A project that meets the Foundation’s 2010 focus and includes a construction element such as field renovation, addition or improvement of irrigation equipment, field equipment, lighting, installation of a futsal court or indoor structure, etc. This grant type does not include upgrading an existing field with a synthetic grass surface; these fall within the parameters of the Synthetic Field Grant type. For the 2010 grant cycle, there is a \$100,000 maximum request amount for Field Grants.

The following Field grant elements will be considered for funding:

- Field Equipment (permanent goals, benches, etc.)
- Futsal Court (indoor or outdoor)
- Graphic Signage (field boards, banners, etc. for recognizing sponsors)
- Indoor Building Structure
- Irrigation
- Lighting
- Maintenance Equipment (ex. Toro Groundskeeper, Workman Utility Vehicle, etc.)

SYNTHETIC FIELD – A project that includes the installation of a synthetic field surface. This grant type includes both new field construction and the upgrading of existing fields with a synthetic field surface. For the 2010 grants cycle, there is a maximum \$200,000 request amount for Synthetic Field Grants.

The Foundation does not award funding to assist with the purchase of land or to offset (or retire) an existing mortgage or note for land.

Additionally, the Foundation does not generally award funding for the construction of non-field specific elements such as concessions stands, restrooms, storage buildings, parking lots, and post-construction landscaping, etc., unless it can be demonstrated that funding for these elements will directly increase the number of soccer participants and fields.

5. **Baseball Tomorrow Fund**

http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official_info/community/btf.jsp?content=about
http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/official_info/community/btf.jsp?content=grant_process

The mission of BTF is to promote and enhance the growth of youth participation in baseball and softball throughout the world by funding programs, fields, coaches’

training, and the purchase of uniforms and equipment to encourage and maintain youth participation in the game. Grants are designed to be sufficiently flexible to enable applicants to address needs unique to their communities. The funds are intended to finance a new program, expand or improve an existing program, undertake a new collaborative effort, or obtain facilities or equipment. BTF provides grants to non-profit and tax-exempt organizations in both rural and urban communities. BTF awards an average of 40 grants per year totaling more than \$1.5 million annually. The average grant amount is approximately \$50,000. BTF is now funded annually by MLB and the Players Association.

6. Tennis in the Parks

<http://www.nrpa.org/usta/>

Register your parks and recreation department as a Tennis in the Parks agency and receive FREE resources and support for growing and improving tennis in your local community. Benefits include:

- Tennis programming formats and assistance
- Discounts on tennis equipment
- On-Court training support for coaches
- Facility construction and maintenance assistance and funding
- Access to USTA Recreational Tennis grants

7. Community Participation in Research (R01)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-08-074.html>

This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) issued by the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), National Institutes of Health (NIH) solicits R01 grant applications that propose intervention research on health promotion, disease prevention, and health disparities that communities and researchers jointly conduct. For the purposes of this FOA, intervention research is quasi-experimental research projects that seek to influence preventive behaviors, treatment adherences, complementary behaviors, and related attitudes and beliefs. Natural experiments also may fall under the interventions rubric. Examples include, and are not limited to promotion of physical activity-friendly neighborhoods; tobacco, alcohol and drug abuse prevention among youth; a community-led action plan for cancer, hypertension and cardiovascular disease prevention and control in minority populations; establishing safer work practices among agricultural workers in rural areas; nutrition and reducing childhood obesity; HIV/AIDS and STD prevalence among young adults; promoting infant mental health; and reducing health disparities.

8. Obesity Policy Research: Evaluation and Measures (R03)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-10-029.html>

This Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), issued by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institutes of Health, and the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC, encourages Small Research Grant (R03) applications that propose to: (1) conduct evaluation research on obesity-related “natural experiments” (defined here as community and other population-level public policy interventions that may affect diet and physical activity behavior), and/or (2) develop and/or validate relevant community-level measures (instruments and methodologies to assess the food and physical activity environments at the community level). The overarching goal of this FOA is to inform public policy relevant to diet and physical activity behavior, and weight and health outcomes of Americans. The R03 grant mechanism supports different types of projects including pilot and feasibility studies; secondary analysis of existing data; small, self-contained research projects; development of research methodology; and development of new research technology. The R03 is intended to support small research projects that can be carried out in a short period of time with limited resources.

9. Nutrition and Physical Activity Research to Promote Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Health (R01)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-09-243.html#SectionI>

This FOA encourages Research Project Grant (R01) applications that propose research on the roles of nutrition and physical activity in the development, prevention, and management of cardiovascular diseases (CVD) or pulmonary diseases. In particular, the FOA aims to (1) improve knowledge of the contribution of diet and physical activity to these conditions and how sleep influences these relationships, (2) increase the evidence base for refining public health recommendations and clinical guidelines regarding these lifestyle behaviors, and (3) develop and test strategies to improve the adoption of these recommendations. Mechanism of Support. This FOA will utilize the NIH research project R01 grant mechanism and runs in parallel with a FOA of identical scientific scope, PA-09-244, that encourages applications under the R21 grant mechanism. Funds Available and Anticipated Number of Awards. Awards issued under this FOA are contingent upon the availability of funds and the submission of a sufficient number of meritorious applications

10. Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation Grants

<http://www.ripkenfoundation.org/programs/grants/>

The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation provides a variety of grants to community groups and schools that meet our eligibility requirements, in order to support the growth of youth baseball and softball, as well as promote character growth in children.

11. The Wal-Mart Foundation

<http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/8168.aspx>

The Wal-Mart Foundation has adopted four areas of focus: Education, Job Skills Training, Environmental Sustainability and Health. While the Wal-Mart Foundation encourages funding requests that align with its four areas of focus – programs that do not align with the four areas of focus will also be given full consideration.

Through the State Giving Program, the Walmart Foundation supports organizations with programs that align with our mission to create opportunities so people can live better. The State Giving Program awards grants starting at \$25,000 to nonprofit organizations that serve a particular state or region.

12. The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program

http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/Get_Involved/Issue_Resource_Center/White%20Paper%20on%20UPARR.pdf

13. Improving Diet and Physical Activity Assessment (R21)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-09-225.html>

14. Community Participation Research Targeting the Medically Underserved (R01)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-08-075.html>

15. Community-Based Partnerships for Childhood Obesity Prevention and Control: Research to Inform Policy (R21)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-09-141.html>

Footnotes

- 1 Rhoades, Robert. **Oglethorpe County, Georgia: A Study of Desired Future Conditions.** Report. Athens, GA: Sustainable Human Ecosystems Laboratory University of Georgia, 2000.
- 2 “**Georgia 2030: Population Projections.**” Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget.
- 3 “**Outdoor Recreation and Participation Trends for Georgia.**” August 2006
- 4 Onlineoglethorpe.com
- 5 Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Georgia Historical Markers
- 6 Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health
- 7 Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health
- 8 Falb M, Kanny D, Thompson S, Wu M, Powell, K. **2006 Georgia Physical Activity Surveillance Report.** Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health, Chronic Disease, Injury, and Environmental Epidemiology Section, May 2006.
- 9 Joint City-County Comprehensive Plan 2005-2025; Short Term Work Program – Report of Accomplishments 2001-2005 and ongoing
- 10 United States Census Bureau, 2008 Population Estimates.
- 11 American Farmland Trust, Cost of Community Services Studies (2007)
- 12 Georgia Department of Revenue
- 13 Georgia Statistics System, University of Georgia
- 14 Georgia Statistics System, University of Georgia
- 15 U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 County-To-County Worker Flow Files.
- 16 Georgia Department of Labor.
- 17 American Planning Association, City Parks Forum
- 18 Millage Rates DO NOT include a 1.72 mill bond rate (debt service) assessed by the Oglethorpe County School District



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