KINGSPORT
TENNESSEE



PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

November 2026











Kingsport Parks and Recreation Ten-Year Master Plan

November 2026

Adoption

Parks and Recreation Commission
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Board of Mayor and Aldermen
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Executive Summary

Kingsport's parks and recreation system is one of the City's defining strengths. Parks and facilities are well-used, widely valued, and closely tied to the City's broader vision for exceptional cultural and recreational opportunities.

The parks and recreation system includes a mix of neighborhood, community, and regional parks as well as indoor recreation spaces, programming, and experiences.

This planning process confirms that the next ten years should be defined less by expansion and more by reinvestment, modernization, and strategic growth. Public response strongly indicates residents want strong outdoor recreation, better indoor and community programming, more inclusive facilities, improved maintenance, and clearer communication about what the department offers.

A Ten-Year Strategy Built Around Six Systemwide Goals

1. **Preserve and modernize existing assets**
   Kingsport should prioritize lifecycle reinvestment and modernization of existing parks and facilities before major expansion.

2. **Expand indoor and community recreation capacity**
   The department should expand and better use indoor recreation and community space to support athletics, community programming, senior programming, cultural activities, and year-round access.

3. **Strengthen outdoor, nature, and river recreation**
   Kingsport should continue investing in the outdoor amenities residents most closely associate with the community's identity and quality of life.

4. **Deliver responsive and diverse programming**
   Programming should respond to demonstrated community demand while remaining aligned with the department's mission, staffing capacity, facility realities, and public value.

5. **Improve communication, customer experience, and partnerships**
   The department should communicate more clearly, standardize more processes, and make it easier for residents to understand and use the parks and recreation system.

6. **Build a sustainable implementation model**
   The department should link planning, budgeting, maintenance, staffing, funding, and public reporting into one master plan implementation process.

Kingsport's broader strategic plan identifies Exceptional Cultural & Recreational Opportunities as a core City focus area. Priorities named in that document include robust recreational sports, safe park environments, promotion of outdoor amenities, Holston River opportunities, funding to replace park features, an indoor community/recreation center concept, Brickyard development, and selective divestment of certain assets. This master plan operationalizes those priorities for the Parks & Recreation Department over the next ten years.

Introduction and Planning Context

The City of Kingsport initiated this master planning effort to establish a clear, systemwide vision for the future of parks and recreation and to better align community priorities with annual budgeting, capital planning, and state and regional funding opportunities.

This plan represents a locally driven, data-informed effort to guide investment, operations, and service delivery across the parks and recreation system.

The planning process was completed in-house by Parks and Recreation staff and reflects a comprehensive approach to evaluating the department. Work began in June 2025 with stakeholder and staff engagement and progressed through a series of coordinated phases.

The development of this plan included:

- **Stakeholder & Staff Engagement**
  Early input was gathered from internal staff, leadership, and key stakeholder groups.

- **SWOT Analysis**
  Department leadership and community representatives conducted a formal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats assessment to establish a baseline understanding of system performance and constraints.
- **Facility Assessment**
  All parks and facilities were evaluated to assess condition, usage, and strategic importance.
- **Program Assessment**
  Existing programs were reviewed to evaluate participation trends, service gaps, and opportunities for expansion or refinement.
- **Community Engagement**
  Public input was collected through a community-wide survey, a series of public meetings, and targeted pop-up engagement efforts designed to reach a broad cross-section of residents.
- **Review & Refinement**
  Findings from each phase were compiled, presented, and refined through continued engagement with stakeholders and the public before final recommendations were developed.



The Kingsport Parks and Recreation system includes a wide range of parks and community spaces, including the athletic fields at Brickyard Park.

Parks and Recreation System Overview

The Kingsport Parks and Recreation Department manages a diverse system that supports recreation, culture, and quality of life throughout the city. The department currently oversees 38 facilities, including parks, community centers, and other public spaces. The department also offers recreational and cultural programming across all stages of life, from toddlers and youth to adults and seniors.

Together, these facilities and programs work to create a connected system of parks, places, and people.

Mission Statement

To build community through a connected system of parks, places, and people.

Every recommendation contained within this master plan is intended to advance the department's mission while supporting the City of Kingsport's broader mission of serving the community and building the future.

Vision Statement

A community brought together by exceptional parks, welcoming places, and meaningful experiences.

This vision reflects the department's contribution to the City's vision by creating parks, recreation opportunities, and public spaces that make Kingsport the perfect place to live, work, play, and raise a family.

Facilities and Services

The system ranges from small neighborhood parks and playgrounds to large community destinations such as Brickyard Park, Domtar Park, the Kingsport Aquatic Center, and V.O. Dobbins, Sr. Complex. The Greenbelt connects many of these spaces and provides opportunities for walking, biking, and access to the outdoors.

Kingsport's parks and recreation system is designed to serve residents at multiple levels. Neighborhood parks provide convenient access to playgrounds, open space, and informal recreation close to home. Community parks support athletic activities, gatherings, shelters, and larger recreation amenities. Regional facilities serve both residents and visitors through major athletic, aquatic, cultural, and recreational destinations.



Parks serve as community gathering places where children play, families connect, and memories are created.

Organizational Structure

The Department of Parks and Recreation operates under the direction of the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and the Director of Parks and Recreation and includes several interconnected divisions, including Park Services, Recreation Services, Cultural Services, the Kingsport Aquatic Center, and the Senior Center. Facility managers, coordinators, maintenance staff, and program staff work together to maintain parks and facilities, operate programs, host events, and provide services throughout the community.

Public engagement throughout the master planning process reinforced the importance of this connected organizational structure. Meeting

public expectations requires coordination across facilities, staff, and divisions rather than viewing each service area independently.

Governance and Advisory Boards

Citizen input plays an important role in the governance of the parks and recreation system. The Parks and Recreation Commission serves as the primary advisory body for parks, recreation facilities, and programs. The Commission advises on long-range planning, policy, capital priorities, operating budgets, and other matters related to the department. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen serves as the ultimate governing authority by adopting budgets and capital improvement plans, establishing strategic priorities, enacting policies, and appointing advisory board members.

In addition to the Parks and Recreation Commission, specialized advisory groups continue to support key service areas within the department. The Senior Citizens advisory group provides input on senior programming and facilities, while the Cultural Arts advisory group advises on public art, the Kingsport Carousel, Allandale Mansion, and other cultural services. The Kingsport Aquatic Center and other athletic facilities also maintain citizen advisory groups that provide input on facility operations, programming, and long-range planning.

These advisory groups help ensure that community voices remain part of the planning and decision-making process.

Bays Mountain Park Relationship

Bays Mountain Park is one of Kingsport's most important outdoor assets, but it operates separately from the Department of Parks and Recreation. Organizationally, Bays Mountain Park functions as its own department under the City's administrative structure rather than as a division of Parks and Recreation.

This structure reflects the park's specialized mission and operating model. Bays Mountain Park operates more like a state park or nature preserve than a traditional municipal parks department. Its responsibilities include environmental education, natural resource management, captive animal care, and operation of specialized visitor attractions and trails.

While separate organizationally, Bays Mountain Park remains an important part of Kingsport's overall recreation identity. The park complements the broader parks and recreation system by supporting nature-based experiences within the community.

For the purposes of this master plan, recommendations primarily focus on the facilities, programs, staffing, maintenance, and operations managed directly by the Department of Parks and Recreation. However, Bays Mountain Park was considered throughout the planning process as part of the community's broader recreation system. In some cases, existing or future Bays Mountain Park facilities, trails, programs, and amenities may help address identified community needs or service gaps, particularly related to nature programming, trails, outdoor recreation, and tourism or destination experiences. Bays Mountain Park staff participated throughout the planning process, including involvement in key discussions and evaluations such as the SWOT analysis of the City's parks and recreation system.

Bays Mountain Park operates under a separately developed planning document, the *Bays Mountain Park Improvement Plan (2024)*, which should be considered complementary to this master plan and incorporated by reference as the guiding document for Bays Mountain Park facilities, operations, and future improvements.

Community Profile

57,109 2024 population	**+2.8%** 2020-2024 growth	**25,021** Households	**$52,490** Median household income
23.3% Age 65+	**20.6%** Under 18	**31.5%** Bachelor's degree+	**52.6 sq. mi.** Land area

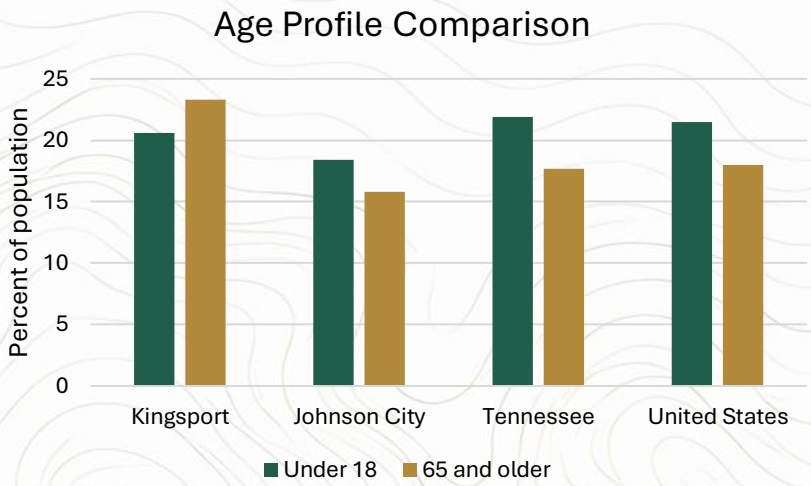
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU QUICKFACTS, KINGSPORT CITY, TENNESSEE (V2025).

Kingsport's demographic profile points to a community that is growing modestly. Recent Census Bureau estimates place Kingsport's 2024 population at 57,109, an approximately 2.8 percent increase from the 2020 Census population. This growth is steady rather than rapid, which suggests the next ten years should focus less on growth and more on reinvesting in existing assets, parks, and programs.

The most important demographic signal is age. Kingsport's older adult population is larger than both the state and national benchmarks. Residents aged 65 and older make up 23.3 percent of Kingsport's population, compared with 17.7 percent in Tennessee and 18.0 percent nationally. At the same time, residents under the age of 18 make up 20.6 percent of the city's population, slightly below Tennessee's 21.9 percent and the national figure of 21.5 percent. Kingsport has more older adults than children, and its senior population represents a substantially larger share of the community than is typical statewide or nationally. This demographic data supports the need for the department to continue offering high-quality senior programming.

Affordability should also remain a major planning principle. Kingsport's median household income is $52,490, well below Tennessee's $69,595 and the national median of $80,734. The city's poverty rate is also 20.7 percent, compared with 13.5 percent statewide and 10.6 percent nationally. These figures suggest that fees, equipment costs, and program pricing could be real barriers to participation for many households. The plan should therefore emphasize low-cost recreation wherever possible.

Accessibility is also a systemwide consideration. Census data show that 14.9 percent of Kingsport residents under the age of 65 have a disability, higher than Tennessee's 10.6 percent and the national rate of 9.3 percent. This reinforces the need to treat ADA access and adaptive programming as core components of quality parks, programs, and facilities.



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU QUICKFACTS, 2020–2024 ESTIMATES.



Accessibility as a Priority

As Kingsport's population has a high percentage of older adults and residents with disabilities, the park system must continue to remove barriers to participation.

Kingsport has typical educational attainment, with 90.6 percent of residents age 25 or older holding a high school diploma or higher and 31.5 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher. The bachelor's degree rate is slightly above Tennessee's 31.1 percent, though below the national rate of 35.7 percent.

The demographic data points to three priorities for the system. Keep recreation affordable and accessible and expand programming for children, working adults, older adults, and residents with disabilities. This aligns directly with the public engagement findings, which favored reinvestment in existing parks and centers, expanded community and senior programming, walking and outdoor recreation, aquatics, and clearer communication about available services.

Taken together, the demographic data suggests that Kingsport's parks and recreation system should be planned around three realities:

1. **An older population**
2. **Affordability pressures**
3. **The importance of accessible recreation**

Community Engagement: What we heard

81%	79%	69%
of respondents visit at least monthly.	rated the facility conditions as good or excellent.	agree the City offers a wide variety of quality parks.

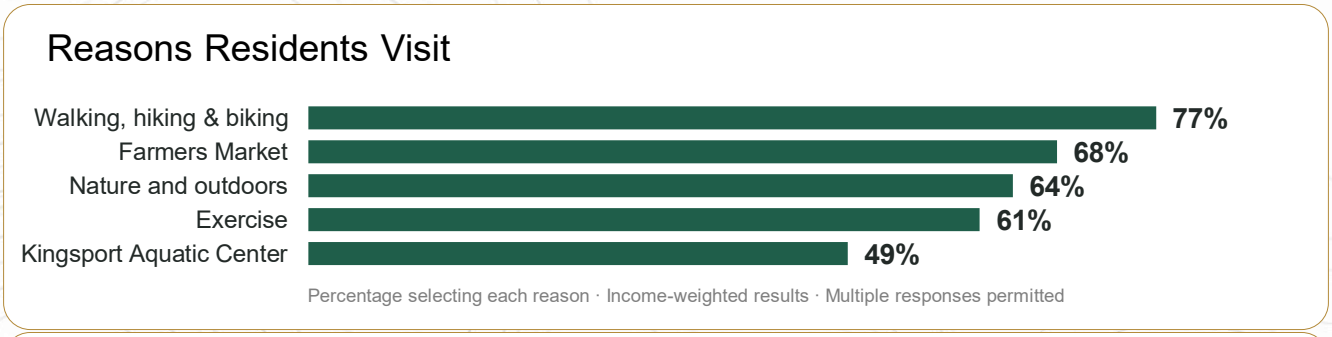
Throughout the planning process, residents, stakeholders, and user groups were invited to share their priorities through a statistically weighted community survey, public meetings, pop-up engagement events, vision boards, and written comments. More than 600 survey responses, combined with hundreds of individual conversations and comments, created a picture of how residents use the park system today and what they expect from it in the future.

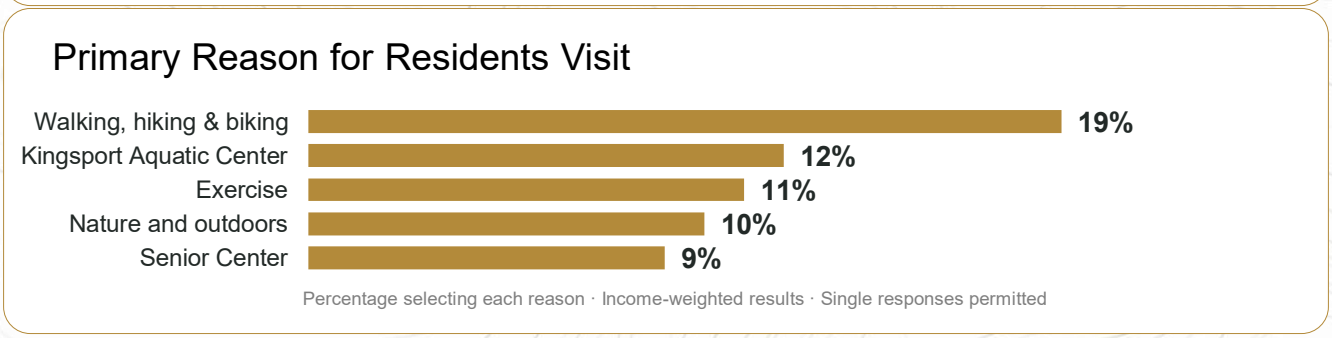
To better reflect the community, survey responses were statistically weighted by household income. Because higher-income households were overrepresented in the raw responses, their influence was reduced while responses from lower-income households were proportionally increased. This adjustment produced results that more closely reflect the demographics of Kingsport's population.

While each engagement activity focused on different topics, the results consistently pointed toward the same priorities. Residents value Kingsport's parks and recreation system, use it frequently, and overwhelmingly support reinvesting in existing facilities while expanding opportunities for recreation, nature, and community programming.

The survey confirmed that parks and recreation play an important role in everyday life. More than four out of five respondents reported visiting a City park, trail, or recreation facility at least once each month, while nearly half visit several times each week. Residents also expressed confidence in the overall quality of the system, with nearly eighty percent rating parks and facilities as being in good or excellent condition.

Walking, hiking, and bicycling were by far the most common reasons residents use the system, followed by the Farmers Market, spending time outdoors, exercise, and the Kingsport Aquatic Center.





Data Source for Section: Kingsport Parks & Recreation Master Plan Community Survey, 2025.



Recreation in Everyday Life

Residents consistently identified parks, trails, and outdoor spaces as the places they use and value most. This is also reflected in the vision people have for the future.

Vision for the Future

Residents expressed a clear preference for a parks and recreation system that serves the entire community. The highest level of support was for a department that provides recreation opportunities for children, adults, and seniors, followed closely by protecting and enhancing parks and natural areas.

Perhaps most importantly, the survey demonstrates that residents do not define Parks and Recreation primarily through athletics. Instead, they expect the department to provide programs, welcoming spaces, and experiences that improve quality of life for all.

A community that features a wide range of programs for children, adults, and seniors.
44% raw; 49% weighted

A community that cherishes its outdoor spaces and parks.
42% raw; 38% weighted

A community that values the benefits of organized & recreational athletics.
9% raw; 7% weighted

A community dedicated to the arts, music, and events.
5% raw; 5% weighted

Public Priorities

When asked how future tax dollars should be invested, residents delivered one message more consistently than any other:

Reinvest in what we already have.

Repairing and modernizing existing parks and community centers ranked well above every other investment priority. Residents also supported expanding community programming, improving park safety, extending the Greenbelt, and growing cultural events.

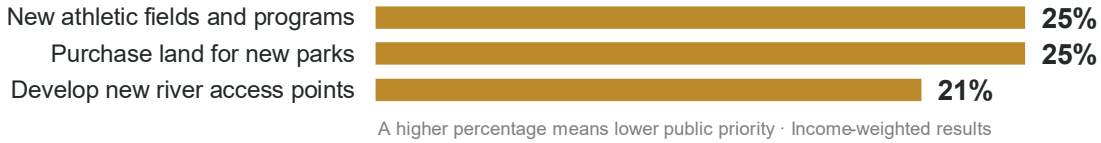
Conversely, constructing new athletic fields, acquiring additional parkland, and developing new river access ranked among the lowest priorities for public investment. This does not suggest these facilities lack value; rather, residents indicated that maintaining and improving the existing system should come first.

Top Priorities for Tax Dollars



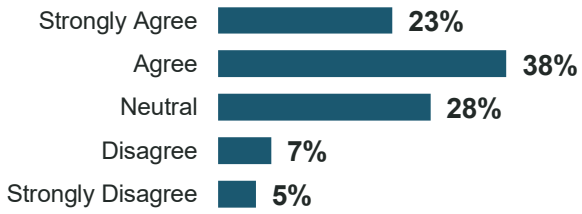
Percentage selecting each item as a top investment priority · Income-weighted results

Lowest Priorities for Tax Dollars



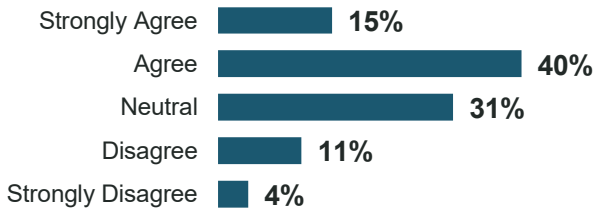
A higher percentage means lower public priority · Income-weighted results

We should re-invest vs. building new

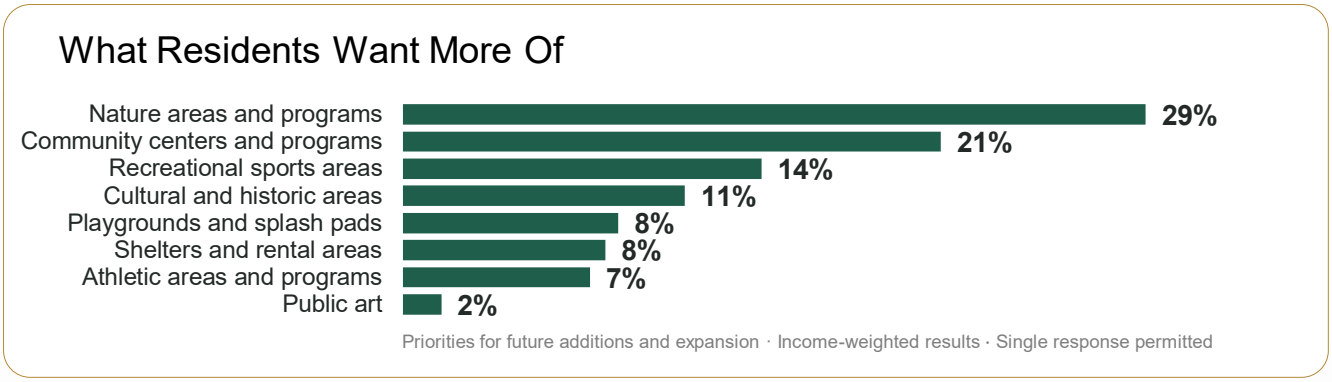


Income-weighted results

We offer enough athletic programs for your family



Income-weighted results



Program preferences reinforced many of the broader themes identified throughout the survey process. Corrected survey results showed strong interest in cultural or music festivals, nature programming, adult programs, and children's non-sports programming. Residents also expressed interest in river access and paddle-related activities as recreational experiences, although development of new river access infrastructure ranked lower as a priority for tax-dollar investment. This distinction suggests that residents value outdoor river recreation opportunities, but generally prefer that the limited public funding focus first on maintaining and improving existing parks and facilities.

When asked about the greatest need for future additions, respondents selected more nature areas and programs first, followed by more community centers and programs. Taken together, the survey results reinforce that Kingsport's outdoor setting remains one of the community's greatest strengths, while also highlighting demand for indoor recreation space and programming.

What do these results tell us?

1 Prioritize Reinvestment



Repairing and upgrading existing parks and community centers was the leading priority for tax dollars

2 Expand Community Recreation



Residents favored programming for all ages, with strong interest in community and nature programs.

3 Build on Outdoor Strengths



Walking, hiking, and biking drive system use, while nature areas and programs were the choice for expansion.

4 Take a Measured Approach to Sports



Residents considered athletic offerings sufficient, new athletic facilities ranked lowest priority for spending.

Public Meetings

A series of public meetings was conducted as part of the master planning process to gather community input on parks, recreation, aquatic services, senior services, and cultural programming. Rather than focusing on individual projects, participants consistently emphasized improving the quality and functionality of existing facilities and services while expanding recreation opportunities that serve a broad cross-section of the community.

	Top Priorities Identified	Planning Implications
Senior Center	• Expanded fitness opportunities • Parking and restroom improvements • Additional activity space • Day trips and social programming	Modernize the Senior Center while expanding lifelong recreation opportunities.
Aquatic Center	• Learn-to-swim and safety programs • More family and toddler programming • Expanded evening/weekend access • Additional shade, seating, and amenities	Prioritize access, family recreation, and customer experience.
Parks and Recreation Services	• Indoor recreation space • Splash pads and walking paths • Inclusive recreation opportunities • Park maintenance and improvements	Continue reinvesting in existing parks while expanding flexible recreation opportunities, especially indoor recreation spaces.
Cultural Services	• Food and culinary programming • Murals and interactive public art • Evening market experiences • Expanded Carousel access	Strengthen activation through arts, culture, and community events.

One of the most consistent themes to emerge throughout the public engagement process was the community's desire for additional indoor recreation capacity. While participants expressed strong interest in expanding programming, community events, and inclusive recreation opportunities, existing facilities often lack the flexible space needed to accommodate this demand. Current community centers are limited by room availability, scheduling conflicts, or spaces used by outside organizations. As a result, the ability to introduce new programs or expand successful offerings is constrained more by facility capacity than by community interest. Flexible indoor spaces, particularly multi-use gymnasiums, offer the greatest opportunity to serve a wide variety of ages, interests, and activities throughout the day. Expanding indoor recreation capacity should therefore be viewed as one of the department's highest infrastructure priorities, providing the physical foundation necessary to meet current programming demands while supporting future community growth.

Overall, the public meetings confirmed the direction established through the community survey and stakeholder engagement. Residents expressed a clear preference for preserving and modernizing existing assets, improving access to recreation opportunities, expanding inclusive programming, and continuing to develop parks and public spaces that enhance quality of life throughout Kingsport.

Public Engagement in Action



More than eighty Senior Center members gathered for a public master plan meeting.



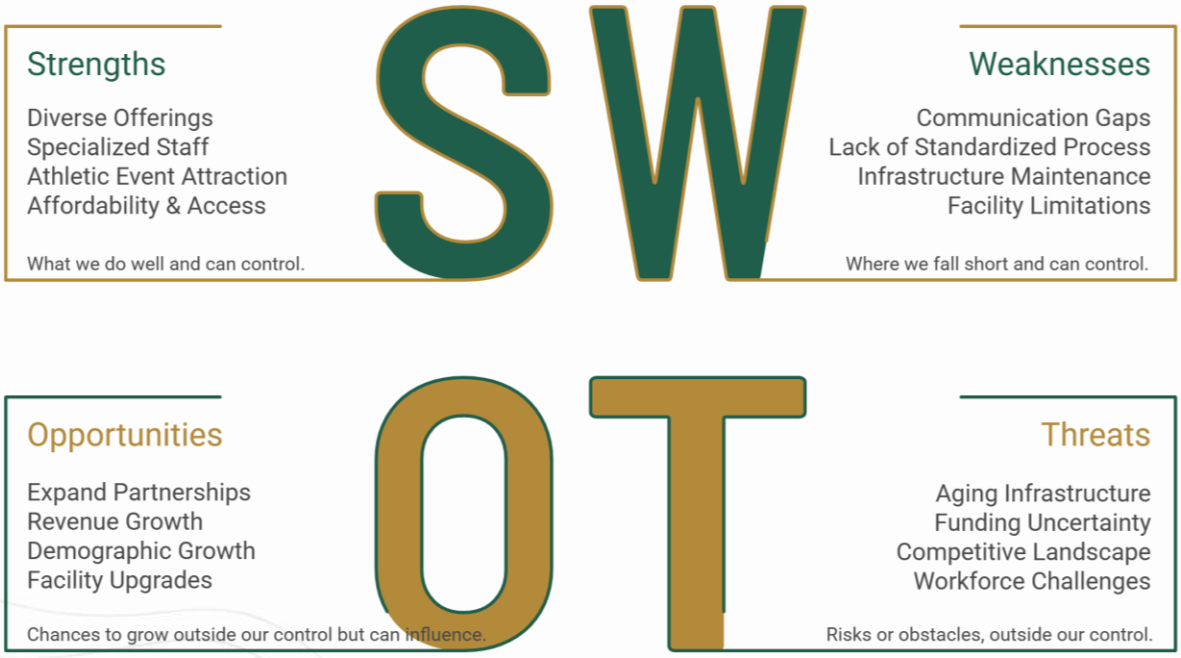
Aquatic Center staff and advisory board members met with members of the public to discuss potential changes and improvements.



Community Center vision board results highlighted strong interest in indoor recreation space, walking paths, pickleball courts, splash pads, and flexible community gathering spaces.

SWOT Analysis

The Parks and Recreation leadership team along with community representatives from the Parks and Recreation Commission completed a structured SWOT analysis to assess the department's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This exercise brought together perspectives from across the department and community and helped identify the internal capabilities, operational challenges, outside opportunities, and external risks that should guide the next ten years of planning.



Strengths

The department's strengths reflect the broad range and quality of services already available to the public. Kingsport benefits from a diverse parks and recreation system that includes major destination assets such as Bays Mountain Park, the Kingsport Aquatic Center, the Kingsport Carousel, the skatepark, the Senior Center, athletic facilities, and neighborhood parks. This variety allows the department to serve residents of different ages, interests, and abilities while also supporting community identity and quality of life.

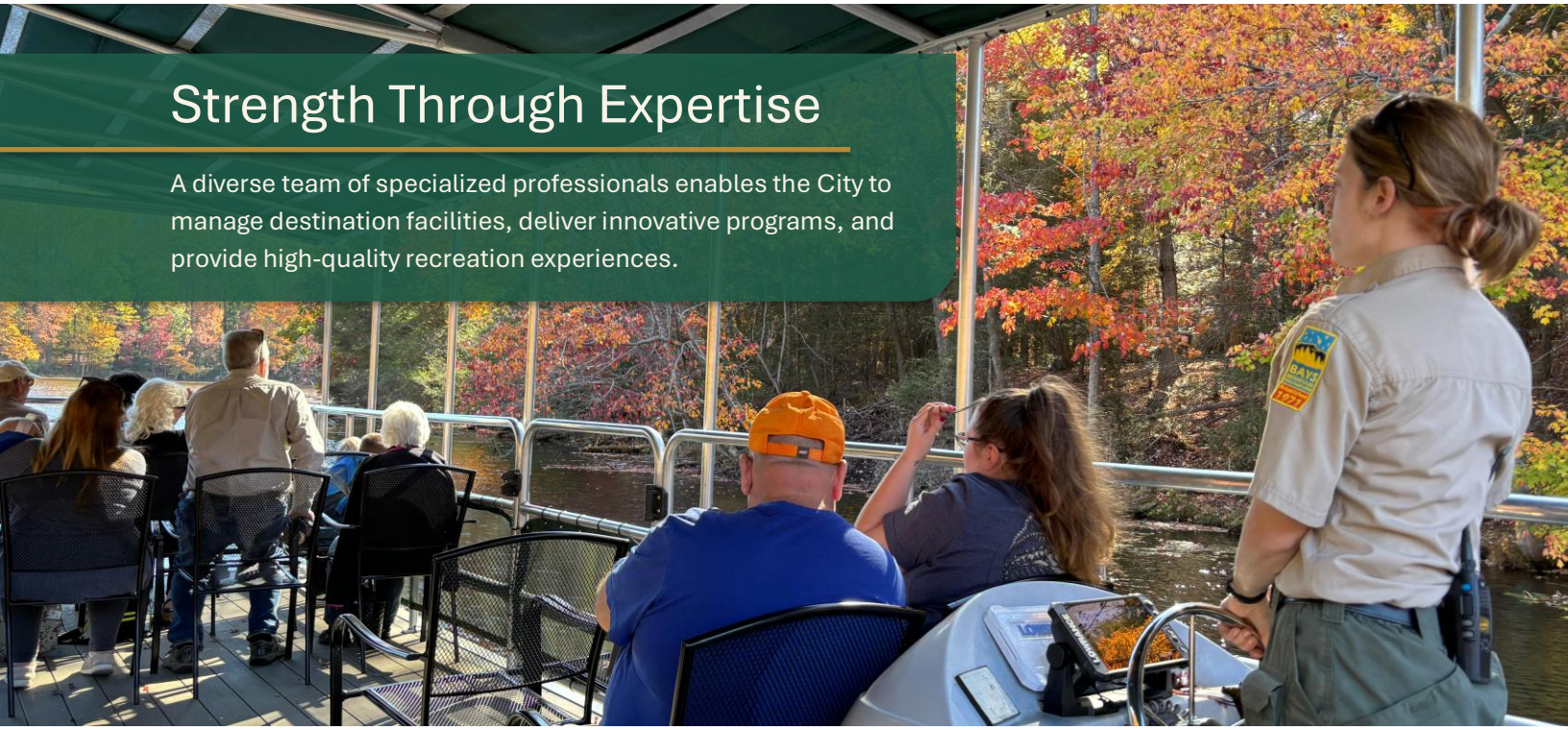
Another major strength is the department's specialized staff. Aquatics, park operations, recreation programming, senior services, athletics, special events, and natural resource-related work all require specific knowledge and experience.

The SWOT analysis recognized that staff expertise is a key reason the department is able to deliver high-quality programs, manage complex facilities, host events, and respond to community needs.

The department also has a proven ability to attract and host athletic events, including tournaments, collegiate swim meets, and other high-profile sporting events. These events bring visitors into Kingsport, support local economic activity, and raise the visibility of City facilities. At the same time, the department's commitment to affordability and access remains a defining strength. Reasonable fees and low barriers to participation help to ensure that parks, programs, and facilities remain available to a broad cross-section of the community.

Strength Through Expertise

A diverse team of specialized professionals enables the City to manage destination facilities, deliver innovative programs, and provide high-quality recreation experiences.



Weaknesses

The SWOT analysis also identified several internal areas where improvement is needed. Communication was one of the clearest weaknesses. Inconsistent internal and external communication, fragmented messaging, and an unclear department-wide brand identity can make it harder for residents to understand what the department offers. This is especially important as the department now includes a wider range of services following a 2025 reorganization.

A second weakness is the lack of standardized processes. Limited documented procedures, inconsistent customer service standards, and underused or outdated technology systems can create inefficiencies for staff and confusion for the public. As the department continues to grow and consolidate services, consistent procedures will be important for facility rentals, program registration, customer service, and internal processes.

Infrastructure and resource maintenance were also identified as areas of concern. The department has often had to operate in a reactive maintenance environment rather than a fully preventative one. This creates challenges as facilities age, public expectations increase, and natural resource stewardship needs become more complex. Facility limitations, especially the shortage of indoor recreation space and the need for stronger long-term infrastructure planning, also limit the department's ability to meet growing demand.

Opportunities

The SWOT analysis identified several opportunities that can help shape the department's future direction. Expanded partnerships are one of the most important. Schools, nonprofits, recreation groups, and civic groups can all help extend the department's reach. Stronger partnerships may allow the City to expand programming, improve access, share resources, and better serve residents whose needs cannot be met by City resources alone.

Revenue growth was also identified as a key opportunity. Grants, sponsorships, partnerships, donations, and carefully considered fee adjustments can help support the department's continued growth. This is especially important because many of the department's needs involve long-term reinvestment rather than one-time operating expenses. A more diverse funding model can reduce pressure on the general fund while helping the department maintain affordability and service quality.



Parks and Recreation's flag football program was launched as a partnership program with the Kingsport Boys and Girls Club.

The department also has an opportunity to respond to demographic growth areas, particularly young families and older adults. Public input throughout the master planning process showed interest in family programs, senior services, and accessible recreation. These trends align with the SWOT analysis and suggest that future planning should focus on flexible programs and facilities that can serve residents across life stages. Facility modernization and expansion are also major opportunities, especially where upgrades can improve efficiency and long-term sustainability.

Threats

The most significant threats identified in the SWOT analysis relate to aging infrastructure, funding uncertainty, competition, and workforce challenges. Aging infrastructure and equipment create growing repair and replacement costs, especially when dedicated funding sources are limited. This threat is closely tied to the public's strong preference for reinvestment in existing parks and facilities. Without a sustainable approach to maintenance and replacement, the department may face increasing costs, service disruptions, and declining facility conditions over time.

Funding uncertainty is another major risk. Changes or stagnation in federal, state, or local funding can directly affect programs, staffing, facility improvements, and operations.

The department also operates in a competitive landscape. Private providers, regional recreation options, event venues, and surrounding communities all compete for participants, rentals, events, and staff. This does not reduce the importance of public parks and recreation, but it does mean the department must continue improving customer experience, marketing, program quality, facility conditions, and scheduling practices. Workforce challenges are also a continuing threat, particularly for temporary and seasonal roles. Recruiting and retaining qualified staff is essential and the availability of candidates with the needed skills and experience is becoming more limited.

The future of Kingsport Parks and Recreation depends on balancing reinvestment in existing facilities with strategic growth in programs, partnerships, and community services.

Beyond Traditional Recreation

One of the department's greatest strengths is its ability to provide diverse experiences, such as the TREADZ program, which helps children learn bike skills in a safe environment.



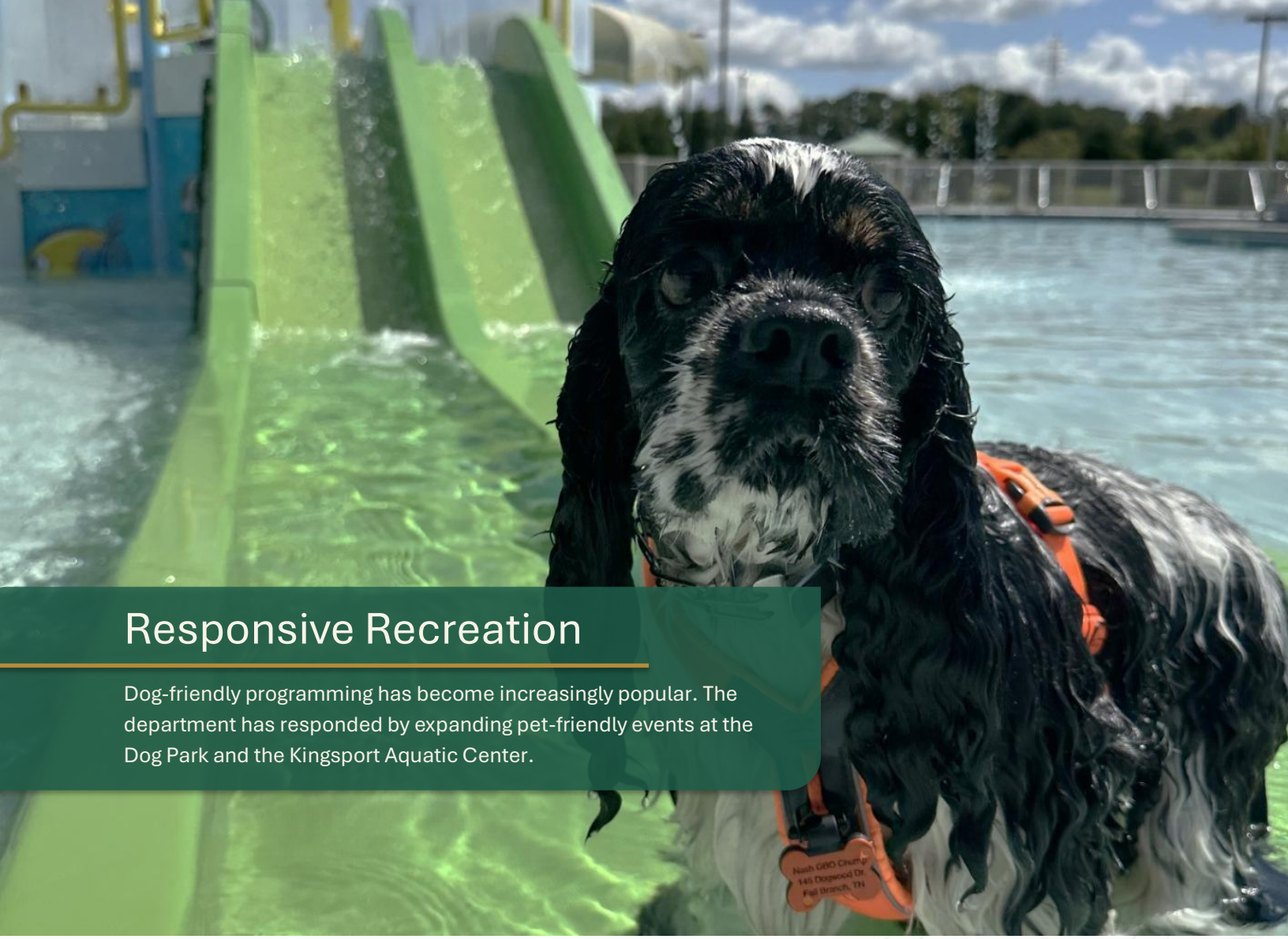
Recreation Programming Assessment

Kingsport Parks and Recreation provides a broad and increasingly diverse system of recreation programs and community experiences. The department's programming role extends beyond traditional sports and includes aquatics, senior services, cultural arts, outdoor recreation, special events, and self-directed recreation. This breadth is important because the department's mission is not simply to operate facilities, but "to build community through a connected system of parks, places, and people."

As part of this master planning process, existing programs were evaluated based on type of service, participation, and mission alignment. The review also considered the broader recreation environment in Kingsport, including programs offered by private organizations, schools, churches, and community-based providers. This is important because the City does not operate in isolation. In many areas, the most effective public role is not to duplicate what others are already doing well, but to fill service gaps, reduce barriers, provide facilities, support partners, and ensure that essential recreation opportunities remain available to all residents.

The table below summarizes the program assessment. The full Program Evaluation begins at p. A67.

	Current Program Emphasis	Future Direction
Athletic & Community Programs	Leagues, classes, camps, special events, and adaptive programming	Maintain core offerings while expanding adaptive and instructional programming.
Aquatic Programs	Swim instruction, competitive and recreational swimming, water fitness, and water safety	Expand family and children's programming and strengthen outreach.
Senior Programs	Fitness, social activities, creative and instructional programs, and trips	Broaden active-aging opportunities while addressing facility limitations.
Cultural Arts, Events, & Creative Programs	Public art, farmers market, carousel programming, and community events	Grow community activation, partnerships, and cultural experiences.
Environmental Education & Outdoor Recreation	Nature education, trails, and outdoor programs	Expand entry-level outdoor experiences and better connect programming to existing natural assets.



Responsive Recreation

Dog-friendly programming has become increasingly popular. The department has responded by expanding pet-friendly events at the Dog Park and the Kingsport Aquatic Center.

Program Delivery Framework

Lead Directly

when the program depends on City facilities, fills a public access gap, serves residents who may be priced out elsewhere, advances safety or wellness, or is central to the department's mission.

Partner

when another organization has expertise, staffing, audience trust, or an established program model and the City can contribute facilities, outreach, coordination, or affordability.

Support or Refer

when the private or nonprofit market already provides the service effectively and there is no major access barrier.

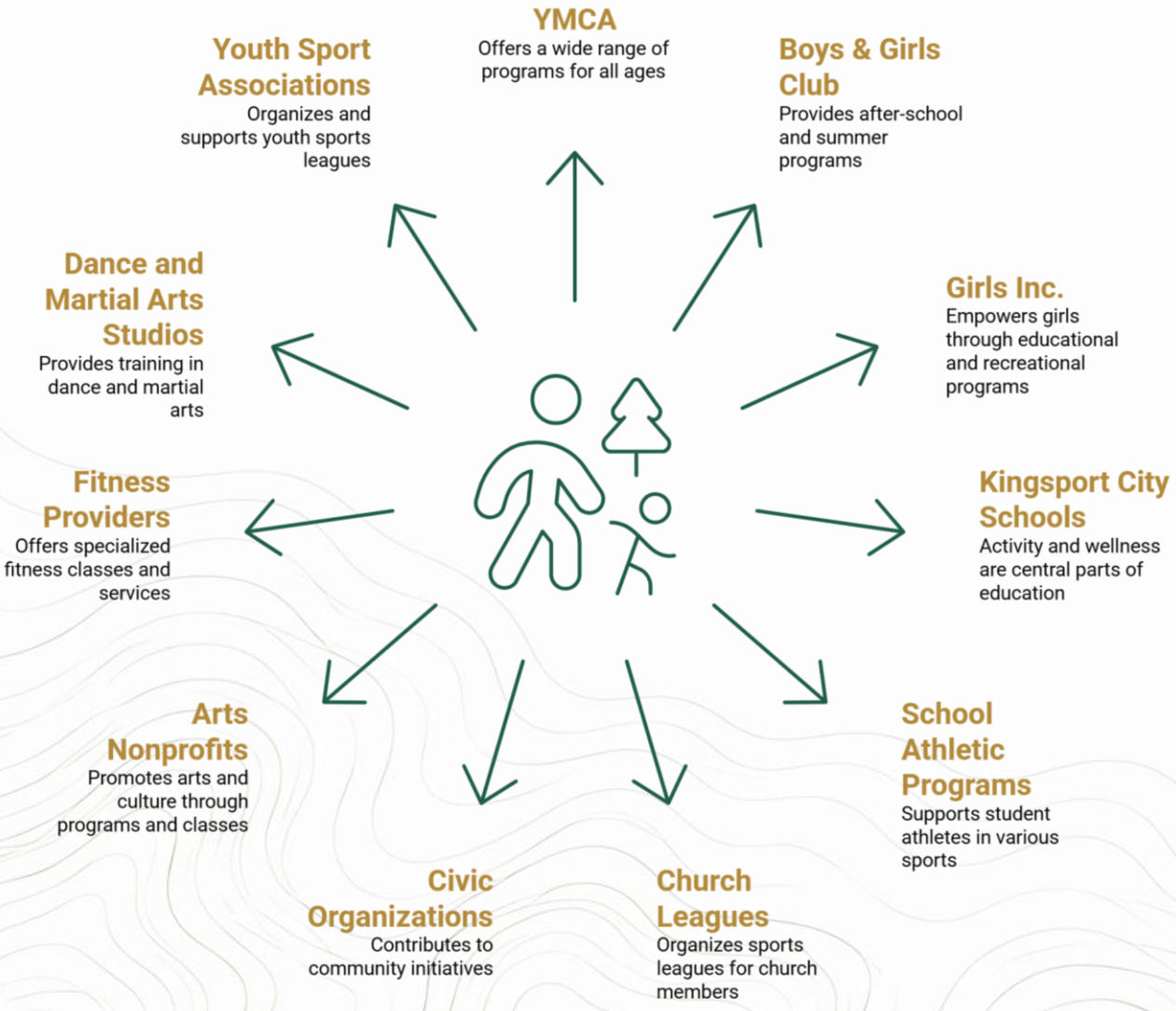
Avoid or Sunset

when a program has low participation, weak mission alignment, high staff burden, strong duplication, poor cost recovery, and no clear public-benefit justification.

Community Recreation Providers and Partners

Kingsport benefits from a strong network of non-City recreation providers. These include the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, Girls Inc., Kingsport City Schools, church leagues, civic organizations, arts nonprofits, private fitness providers, dance and martial arts studios, and youth sport associations. These organizations expand the overall recreation system and provide services that the City alone could not reasonably deliver.

Partnership with these external recreation providers is essential to the department's continued success. Using frameworks and systems described in this master plan, the department should continue to support and partner with external providers where it makes sense to do so.



Programs that are already well served by private providers may still have a place in the City's portfolio if the City's version is more affordable, more accessible, adapted for underserved populations, or tied directly to public facilities.

Cost and Revenue Considerations

The department should classify programs into service categories with different cost-recovery expectations. Public-benefit programs, such as youth recreation, adaptive programming, water safety, senior programming, and community events, should generally have lower cost-recovery targets because their value is tied to community benefit. Specialized programs, private lessons, rentals, tournaments, and premium experiences can reasonably be expected to recover a higher share of their cost. This tiered approach allows the department to balance fiscal responsibility with public service.

Higher public benefit ← → *Lower public benefit*

Broad Public Benefit Lower Cost Recovery	**Community Benefit** Moderate Cost Recovery	**Individual Benefit** Higher Cost Recovery	**Private Benefit** Highest Cost Recovery
Community activation, public art, safety related programs, basic wellness programs, youth development	Youth sports, swim lessons, camps, arts programming, community events, community center programming, carousel, and farmers market programming	Competitive teams and sports clinics, senior travel programs, specialty experiences, skill development courses	Private swim or athletic lessons, birthday party programs, private or commercial events, after-hours use

Lower cost recovery → *Higher cost recovery*

When reviewing costs, planners should consider the following factors.

Demand

- Participation and registration trends
- Waitlists
- Repeat participation

Financial Performance

- Fixed costs per participant
- Total revenue and expenses
- Net cost recovery

Quality and Access

- Participant satisfaction
- Facility and scheduling issues
- Alternative providers
- Mission alignment



Programs with broad public benefit, such as Christmas in Kingsport, warrant lower cost-recovery expectations because of their significant community value.

Program Compatibility with the Department Mission and Vision

Mission

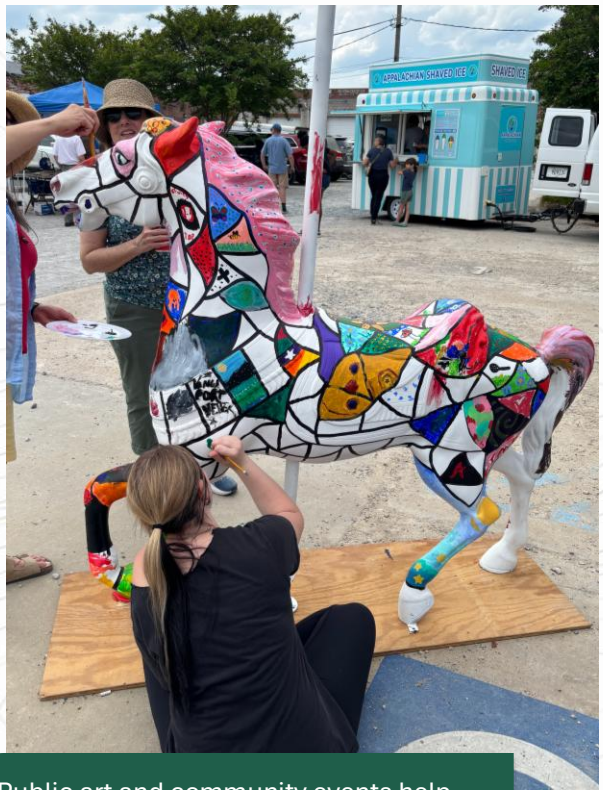
To build community through a connected system of parks, places, and people.

Vision

A community brought together by exceptional parks, welcoming places, and meaningful experiences.

The Department's mission and vision establish the standard by which every recreation program should be evaluated. While attendance, financial performance, and operational efficiency remain important considerations, they are not the sole measures of success. Recreation programs exist to build community by creating opportunities for people to connect with one another, their parks, and their city. Programs that strengthen these connections, respond to community needs, and advance the Department's mission should remain central to the City's recreation portfolio.

As the Department continues to evolve, every existing program and every new program opportunity should be evaluated through a consistent set of planning questions. These questions provide a framework for determining whether a program supports the Department's mission, advances its vision, and represents an appropriate use of public resources.



Public art and community events help create the meaningful experiences that bring the people of Kingsport together.

Questions for Mission and Vision Compatibility

1. **Does the program build community?**
   Does it bring people together or create opportunities for community connection?
2. **Does the program create meaningful experiences?**
   Does it provide recreation, learning, culture, or other experiences that improve quality of life and create lasting value for participants?
3. **Does the program connect people to parks and places?**
   Does it encourage residents to use, appreciate, and engage with the City's parks and public spaces?
4. **Does the program serve the community?**
   Is it welcoming, accessible, and responsive to the needs and interests of Kingsport residents?

Planning Priorities:

Guided by this framework, the department should focus on the following priorities and use these priorities to inform planning goals and strategies:

Priorities for the future of department programming

Protect High-Impact Community Programs
Protect and expand programs that provide significant public benefit.

Grow Teen and Young Adult Recreation
Grow teen and young adult recreation with dedicated programming and outreach strategies.

Expand Neighborhood-Based Recreation Access
Expand neighborhood-based recreation programs to improve access for residents facing transportation or economic barriers.

Maintain the City's Recreational Sports Identity
Differentiate City athletic programs from travel, elite, and private sports by emphasizing affordability, skill development, and community connection.

Advance Lifelong Recreation
Position the Senior Center as a systemwide programming hub for lifelong learning, social engagement, and active aging for the 50+ population.

Advance Outdoor and Nature-Based Recreation
Utilize Bays Mountain Park, the Greenbelt, and the Holston River corridor as signature platforms for outdoor recreation, environmental education, and nature-based programming.

Expand Arts and Cultural Opportunities
Grow cultural arts opportunities through partnerships and community collaborations that expand access while complementing, rather than duplicating, private providers.

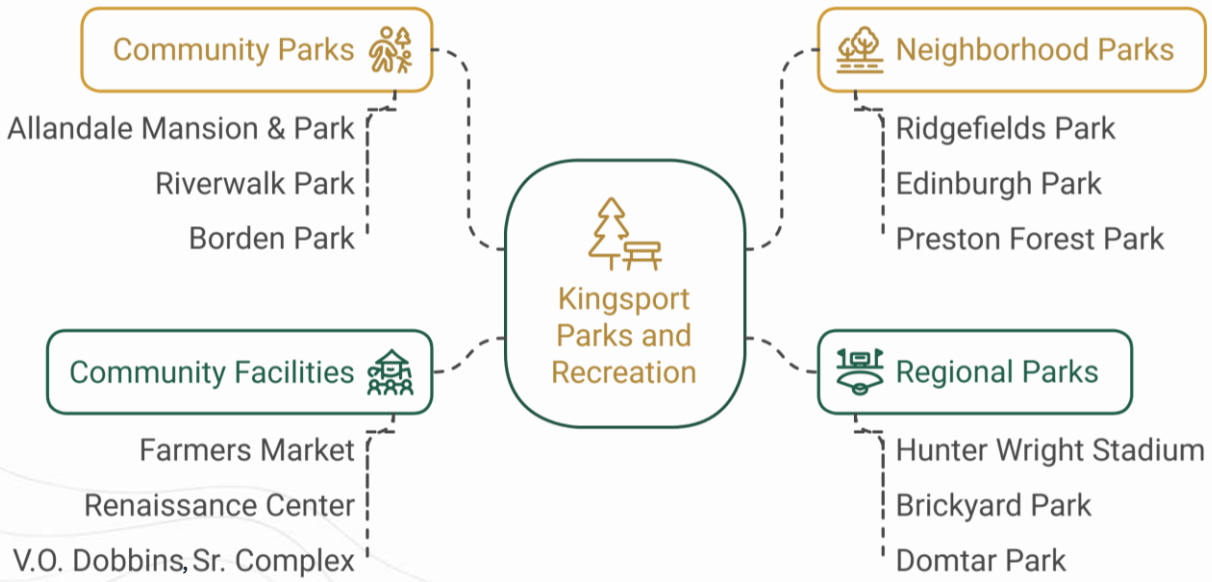
Advance Adaptive Recreation
Implement a department-wide adaptive and inclusive recreation strategy that increases opportunities for residents of all abilities.

Strengthen Community Partnerships
Strengthen partnerships with organizations such as the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, Girls Inc., Kingsport City Schools, arts organizations, civic groups, churches, universities, and private providers to expand recreation opportunities and leverage community resources.

Existing Facilities Assessment

Kingsport's parks and recreation facilities are among the City's most visible and frequently used public assets. They are where residents walk, swim, play, attend programs, participate in athletics, and experience the community's cultural and outdoor identity. Because the public survey identified reinvestment in existing parks and community centers as the leading priority for tax dollars, this facility assessment is intended to connect that public priority to clear, practical planning directions.

Kingsport Parks and Recreation System



Facility types with examples

Facility Type	Role in the System	Typical Features
Regional / Special Use	Serves the city and broader region through major destination recreation or specialized facilities.	Athletic complexes, aquatic center, stadiums, destination facilities.
Community Park	Serves multiple neighborhoods with active and passive recreation.	Playgrounds, fields, shelters, trails, event and gathering spaces.
Neighborhood Park	Provides close-to-home recreation and open space.	Playgrounds, small courts, benches, walking paths and informal greenspace.
Mini Park	Provides a small recreation feature within a neighborhood.	Playground, seating or limited passive recreation amenity.
Linear Park	Connects places and provides trail-oriented recreation.	Multi-use trails, greenway connections, fishing/water access, benches, and wayfinding.
Community Facilities	Provides indoor recreation, cultural, social, or service programming.	Gymnasiums, meeting rooms, offices, galleries, senior services, or rental spaces.
Vacant / Non-public Site	City-held site not presently functioning as an open public recreation facility.	Grounds requiring future use, disposition, or risk-management evaluation.

Facility Benchmarks

Facility benchmarking provides valuable context for evaluating the system relative to agencies serving similarly sized communities. While benchmarking should not be used as the sole determinant of facility needs, it helps identify areas where Kingsport aligns with industry norms, exceeds typical service levels, or may have opportunities for future investment.

This assessment uses two separate benchmark analyses. The first compares the number of facilities currently provided by Kingsport against benchmark quantities for comparable jurisdictions. The second examines the broader range of facility types commonly offered by peer agencies and identifies which amenities are currently available within the Kingsport system. Together, these analyses provide insight into both the quantity and diversity of recreation assets available to residents.

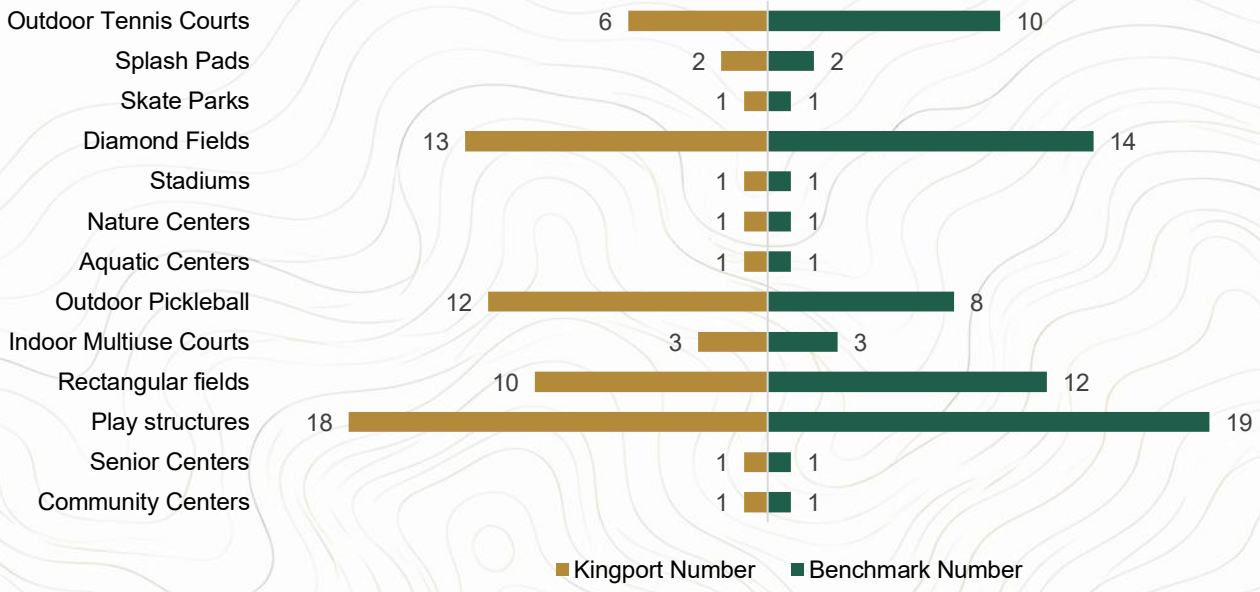
Facility Inventory Benchmark Comparison

The facility inventory benchmark compares Kingsport's existing facilities to benchmark quantities reported by comparable agencies. This analysis focuses only on facility types currently present within the Kingsport system and evaluates whether the city provides a similar number of facilities relative to peer communities.

Overall, Kingsport compares favorably across most facility categories. Particularly notable is the city's investment in outdoor pickleball facilities, playgrounds, and athletic fields, all of which reflect both community demand and the department's longstanding commitment to active recreation opportunities.

The benchmark also suggests that Kingsport has developed a mature recreation system that already provides many of the core facilities expected in a community of its size. As a result, future planning efforts should place greater emphasis on maintaining, modernizing, and improving existing assets rather than pursuing large-scale expansion solely to increase facility counts.

The benchmark does not evaluate facility condition. Consequently, facilities that meet benchmark quantities may still require reinvestment, modernization, or operational improvements to meet current and future community expectations.



Comparison of Kingsport's inventory of major recreation facilities against benchmark quantities derived from comparable communities (50k - 100k residents). This represents benchmarks only for facility types present in the Kingsport system.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION INDUSTRY METRICS, 2025.

Facility Type Availability Comparison

Community + Cultural	
◑ Recreation center, including gyms	77%
● Community centers	71%
● Senior centers	49%
◑ Teen centers	17%
◑ Arena	11%
● Performance amphitheater	51%
● Restrooms (Permanent/Semi)	75%

Athletic	
● Stadiums	17%
⊗ Indoor ice rink	17%
⊗ Outdoor ice rink	24%
● Outdoor basketball courts	91%
◑ Indoor basketball courts	32%
● Outdoor multiuse courts	34%
● Indoor multiuse courts	57%
● Outdoor volleyball	68%
● Diamond fields	78%
● Rectangular fields	74%
◑ Indoor walking loop/track	31%
● Outdoor tennis courts	84%
⊗ Indoor tennis courts	8%
● Outdoor pickleball	59%
● Indoor pickleball	15%
⊗ Outdoor multiuse tennis/pickleball	41%
⊗ Indoor multiuse tennis/pickleball	26%
⊗ Outdoor racquetball, handball, or squash	11%
⊗ Indoor racquetball, handball, or squash	14%

Outdoor Recreation	
● Nature Center	29%
● Playground or play structure	95%
● Skateboard park	59%
● Dog park	77%
● Outdoor walking loop/tracks	47%
● Outdoor fitness zone/exercise station	57%

Aquatic	
● Splashpads	56%
● Aquatic Center	41%
● Outdoor swimming pool	57%
● Indoor competitive pool	30%
● Indoor leisure pool	29%
● Therapeutic Pool	51%
● Waterpark	22%

● Provided by Kingsport Parks and Recreation
◑ Provided by a partner organization
⊗ Not available in Kingsport market
% Percentages shown correspond to percentage of peer agencies offering facility type.

Comparison of recreation facility types available within the Kingsport Parks and Recreation system to facility types commonly provided by peer park and recreation agencies (50k - 100k residents). Percentages shown correspond to percentage of peer agencies offering facility type.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION INDUSTRY METRICS, 2025.

While facility counts provide one measure of service, they do not fully capture the diversity of recreation opportunities available to residents. The facility type availability benchmark examines the range of recreation amenities commonly offered by peer agencies and identifies which facility types are currently present within the Kingsport system.

This analysis demonstrates that Kingsport offers many of the facility types most commonly found in comparable park and recreation systems. Residents currently have access to recreation amenities that span the range of offerings in other, similar sized cities.

Condition Assessment

A comprehensive assessment of Kingsport's parks and recreation facilities was conducted to establish a consistent understanding of system conditions and identify future maintenance and capital investment needs. The assessment included all parks, recreation facilities, community centers, and athletic complexes managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Assessment teams evaluated major site components and considered both current conditions and long-term serviceability. The resulting scores provide a planning-level evaluation intended to support future decision-making and investment prioritization.

To ensure consistency, all facilities were evaluated using six assessment categories.

Physical Condition evaluated the overall condition of buildings, infrastructure, amenities, and site features, including maintenance needs, structural integrity, and visible signs of deterioration.

Usage and Functionality measured how effectively a facility supports its intended purpose, accommodates users, and meets recreation needs.

ADA Accessibility* examined the extent to which facilities provide accessible routes, parking, entrances, restrooms, and recreation opportunities for users of all abilities.

Environmental and Aesthetic Quality evaluated site appearance, landscaping, natural resource conditions, cleanliness, and overall visual character.

Safety and Security considered visibility, lighting, maintenance-related hazards, security concerns, and the overall safety of the public environment.

Social Challenges considered operational concerns, recurring misuse, vandalism, conflicts, or other factors that may affect the user experience or place additional demands on staff resources.

How the Score Works

- Each facility is scored 1 to 5 for each of the six criteria
- Scores are combined for a total score range of 6 to 30
- All criteria are weighted equally
- The Condition Tier supports the planning-level prioritization
- A standardized rubric was used across all facilities

Score	Condition Tier	Planning Directions
26–30	Excellent	Protect, maintain, and monitor future needs.
20–25	Good	Continue maintenance and make targeted strategic reinvestments.
14–19	Fair	Prioritize repairs, upgrades, or redesign needs.
9–13	Poor	Evaluate major investment, repurposing, redesign, or closure options.
6–8	Critical	Address immediate risk and determine near-term action.

**The accessibility review included in this plan was conducted by internal staff and should not be interpreted as a formal evaluation of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Staff relied on previously completed accessibility inventories and assessments prepared by qualified professionals when reviewing individual sites. Those professional assessments are incorporated into this plan by reference.*

Condition Summary

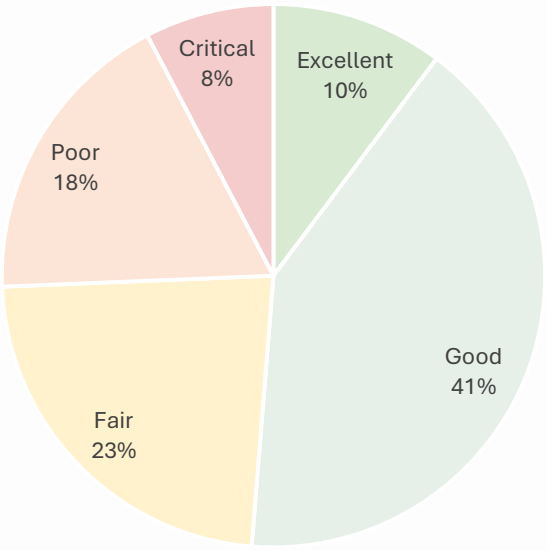
39	20	9	10
City Facilities	Excellent / Good	Fair	Poor / Critical

The facility assessment identified a parks and recreation system that includes both high-performing assets and significant reinvestment needs. Overall, the Department's facilities averaged within the Fair condition tier, reflecting a system that continues to provide community value but contains a growing number of aging facilities, deferred maintenance needs, and functional challenges.

Several facilities scored in the Excellent or Good range, demonstrating the value of continued reinvestment and modernization. Facilities such as Riverwalk Park, the Kingsport Aquatic Center, and several other recently improved facilities scored highly. These facilities generally benefit from newer infrastructure, active public use, and amenities that align well with current community expectations. The assessment reinforces the importance of protecting these investments through ongoing maintenance and proactive capital reinvestment.

At the same time, a significant portion of the system scored within the Fair, Poor, or Critical tiers. In many cases, lower scores were not driven by a single issue, but by a combination of aging infrastructure, outdated amenities, ADA accessibility barriers, deferred maintenance, and social challenges. Several neighborhood parks and older facilities continue to serve important community roles despite physical limitations and reduced levels of investment.

The assessment findings closely align with the public engagement process conducted for this master plan. Residents consistently prioritized repairing and upgrading existing parks and community centers over development of major new facilities. Survey responses, public meetings, and staff evaluations all pointed toward the need for a balanced "fix-it-first" approach that emphasizes reinvestment across the existing system.



Facilities by condition score.

Source: Kingsport Parks & Recreation Master Plan Facility Assessment, 2025.

Bays Mountain Park was evaluated as part of this facility inventory for planning purposes. Findings related to Bays Mountain should be viewed in coordination with the *Bays Mountain Park Improvement Plan (2024)*.

Complete Facility Score Matrix

Facility	Type	Score / 30	Tier	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Cement Hill (Not Open to public)	Vacant	8	Critical	3	1	1	1	1	1
Rock Springs Park	Neighborhood Park	8	Critical	2	2	1	1	1	1
Sevier Avenue Mini Park (Not open to public)	Mini Park	8	Critical	3	1	1	1	1	1
Lynn View Community Center	Community Facility	10	Poor	2	1	2	2	2	1
Edinburgh South	Vacant	11	Poor	1	1	1	1	2	5
Rotary Park	Neighborhood Park	11	Poor	3	4	1	1	1	1
Rotherwood Park	Neighborhood Park	11	Poor	2	1	2	1	2	3
Dogwood Park	Community Park	12	Poor	2	1	3	2	2	2
Hammond Park	Neighborhood Park	12	Poor	2	2	2	1	2	3
Lynn View Park	Neighborhood Park	13	Poor	3	2	2	3	2	1
Barking Lot	Neighborhood Park	14	Fair	3	1	3	2	2	3
Highland Street Mini Park	Mini Park	14	Fair	3	1	3	1	2	4
J. Fred Johnson Park	Community Park	14	Fair	2	3	3	2	3	1
Glen Bruce Park	Neighborhood Park	14	Fair	3	3	2	2	3	1
Dale Street Mini Park	Mini Park	17	Fair	3	1	4	2	3	4
Renaissance Center	Community Facility	17	Fair	3	3	3	2	3	3
Greenbelt	Linear Park	18	Fair	3	4	2	5	2	2
Borden Park	Community Park	19	Fair	3	3	3	4	3	3
Memorial Gardens Park	Neighborhood Park	19	Fair	4	4	3	3	3	2
Domtar Park	Regional Park	20	Good	3	3	3	4	3	4
Allandale	Community Park	21	Good	3	3	4	4	3	4
Legion Field Park	Neighborhood Park	21	Good	4	3	3	3	4	4
Bays Mountain Park	Regional Park	22	Good	3	3	3	4	4	5
Jack Pierce, Sr. Park at Riverview	Community Park	22	Good	3	4	4	4	4	3
Farmers Market	Community Facility	23	Good	4	5	3	5	3	3
Boatyard Riverfront Park	Community Park	23	Good	3	4	4	4	4	4
Riverbend Park	Linear Park	23	Good	4	4	3	4	4	4
Brickyard Park	Regional Park	24	Good	4	4	4	5	4	3
Ridgefields Park	Neighborhood Park	24	Good	4	2	4	5	4	5
V.O. Dobbins, Sr. Complex	Community Facility	24	Good	4	4	4	4	4	4
Carousel Park	Neighborhood Park	25	Good	4	4	4	4	5	4
Eastman Park	Community Park	25	Good	4	4	4	5	4	4
Edinburgh Park	Neighborhood Park	25	Good	3	5	5	3	4	5
Kingsport Aquatic Center	Regional Park	25	Good	3	4	5	5	3	5
Preston Forest Park	Neighborhood Park	25	Good	4	5	4	4	4	4
Kingsport Carousel	Community Facility	26	Excellent	4	5	5	4	4	4
Centennial Park	Neighborhood Park	27	Excellent	4	5	5	5	5	3
Hunter Wright Stadium	Regional Park	27	Excellent	4	5	5	5	4	4
Riverwalk Park	Community Park	29	Excellent	5	5	5	5	5	4
	Average Scores	19	Fair	3	3	3	3	3	3

Allandale Mansion & Park

GOOD

Facility Type **Community Park**		Overall Score **21 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	3	4	4	3	4

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	20	Good	Lowest criterion: Environmental
Mansion	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical
Harvey's Barn	21	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical
Brooks' Pavilion	18	Fair	Lowest criterion: ADA, Safety
Amphitheater	20	Good	Lowest criterion: ADA

Description: A 25-acre historic park and event destination centered on Allandale Mansion, supporting weddings, private rentals, community events, and passive recreation.

Amenities: Historic Allandale Mansion; Harvey's Barn; Brooks' Pavilion; Amphitheater; Two ponds / fishing access; Gazebos; Park benches and picnic tables; Public art.

What created the score: Allandale scored in the lower end of the Good tier. The site's historic and event-oriented components generally perform well and continue to support rentals, community events, and special gatherings. However, the Mansion's score was reduced by physical condition concerns, as many building elements are in need of repair and reinvestment. Landscaping and environmental conditions across the site also need additional care and improvement. Event amenities, including Harvey's Barn, remain functional and valuable but would benefit from targeted physical upgrades and improved accessibility.



Allandale Mansion serves as one of Kingsport's premier cultural and event destinations, hosting community gatherings, rentals, and special programs throughout the year.

Planning Priorities: Develop a site-specific master plan that focuses on increased public accessibility, capital maintenance improvements, and identifies strategic additions that make the park more usable outside of scheduled rentals.

Kingsport Aquatic Center

GOOD

Facility Type **Regional Park/Community Ctr.**		Overall Score **25 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	4	5	5	3	5
Assessed Component		**Subtotal / 30**	**Tier**		**Contribution to Overall Result**	
Indoor Facility		24	Good		Lowest criterion: Physical	
Water Park		24	Good		Lowest criterion: Env.	



The Kingsport Aquatic Center serves as a regional aquatic destination, supporting public swimming, swim instruction, competitive events, rentals, and seasonal water park recreation.

Description: A regional indoor-outdoor aquatic and recreation facility supporting public swimming, instruction, wellness, rentals, and competition.

Amenities: Indoor competition pool; Warm-water pool; Indoor play pool and slide; Outdoor water park; Outdoor lap pool; Concession stand; Diving boards and climbing wall; Party and meeting rooms; Swim lessons, training courses, water aerobics, and swim teams.

What created the score: The Kingsport Aquatic Center scored in the Good tier, with both the indoor facility and outdoor water park components also rating Good. Safety, usage, and social conditions scored especially well, reflecting the facility's strong public role, high level of activity, and broad range of aquatic programming. The overall score was held below the Excellent tier by physical condition and environmental/aesthetic factors, including known lifecycle and maintenance needs. Planned capital improvements are expected to significantly strengthen the facility's condition and should position the Aquatic Center to move into the Excellent tier within the next year.

Planning Priorities: Coordinate planned pool renovations, preventive maintenance, and future capital needs into an actionable and financially viable implementation plan, using the recently completed Counsilman-Hunsaker facility review as a guide.

Barking Lot

FAIR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**14 / 30**	**Fair**	**Rehab / Redesign**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	1	3	2	2	3

Description: An off-leash dog park open to the public without a membership requirement.

Amenities: Fenced off-leash recreation area; Benches; Dog waste stations; Water fountain for dogs and owners.

What created the score: The Barking Lot scored in the Fair tier. The site provides a useful downtown dog-park function, but accessibility received the lowest rating and both usage and environmental quality scored below average. These limitations reduce the park's effectiveness for residents and visitors.

Planning Priorities: Evaluate long-term service role relative to downtown residents' needs.

Bays Mountain Park

GOOD

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Regional Park	**22 / 30**	**Good**	**Coordinate through Bays Mountain Plan**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	3	3	4	4	5

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	20	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Env.
Nature Center	22	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Env.
Herpetarium	24	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, Env.
Animal Habitats	18	Fair	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA
Farmstead Museum	20	Good	Lowest criterion: Usage
Trails	18	Fair	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA
Planetarium	28	Excellent	Lowest criterion: Physical, Usage

Description: A 3,788-acre regional nature park and environmental education destination.

Amenities: Nature Center; Planetarium; Herpetarium; Animal Habitats; Hiking and Multi-Use Trails; Lake; Picnic Areas; Scenic Overlooks; Public Event and Program Spaces.

What created the score: Bays Mountain Park received an overall score within the Good tier. The Planetarium, Herpetarium, and Nature Center were strengths and each scored in the Good to Excellent range. The overall score was reduced primarily by the Trails component and by the Animal Habitats, which both scored fair.

Planning Priorities: Coordinate future improvements through the *Bays Mountain Park Improvement Plan (2024)* while continuing to support Bays Mountain's role as a major nature-based recreation and tourism asset for the community.

Boatyard-Riverfront Park

GOOD

Facility Type **Community Park**		Overall Score **23 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	4	4	4	4	4

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	20	Good	Lowest criterion: Safety
Boat Ramp	26	Excellent	Lowest criterion: Physical
Picnic Area / Shelters	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Safety
Playgrounds	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, Social



Description: A 19-acre riverfront community park providing recreation access to the Holston River and the Greenbelt.

Amenities: Greenbelt access; Swinging bridge connecting to Long Island; Boat ramps; Fishing piers; playground; Picnic shelter and tables; Historic markers; Restrooms and water fountains.

The Holston River presents a unique recreation opportunity. The Riverfront Swinging Bridge spans the river from Riverfront Park to Domtar Park.

What created the score: Boatyard-Riverfront Park scored in the Good tier. The boat ramp component scored Excellent, while the grounds, shelters, and playgrounds scored Good. Limitations at the site are mainly related to safety concerns surrounding lighting issues and aging infrastructure. The site is a key riverfront access point and should continue to be maintained as part of the broader Greenbelt and Holston River recreation network.

Planning Priorities: Continue site maintenance, address lighting needs in coordination with AEP, and improve environmental quality through targeted natural resource management.

Borden Park

FAIR

Facility Type **Community Park**		Overall Score **19 / 30**	Condition Tier **Fair**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	3	3	4	3	3

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	20	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, Safety, Env., Social
Community Center	20	Good	Lowest criterion: ADA
Picnic Area / Shelters	22	Good	Lowest criterion: Env., Social
Playgrounds	20	Good	Lowest criterion: ADA, Safety, Env., Social
Recreational Facilities	19	Fair	Lowest criterion: Physical

Description: A 17-acre park with active recreation, shelters, trails, and community-serving amenities.

Amenities: Basketball courts; Tennis courts; Disc golf; Playgrounds; Picnic shelters / pavilions; Walking trails; Restrooms; Arboretum.

What created the score: Borden Park scored in the Fair tier, but it remains highly functional and well used. The community center, grounds, playgrounds, and picnic/shelter areas all scored Good, while the recreational facilities scored Fair due primarily to physical condition. The park's compact layout supports many users but also concentrates maintenance demands and competing uses in a relatively small area.

Planning Priorities: Increase routine and preventive maintenance, evaluate the future of the aging tennis facilities, and complete a strategic review of how the park's recreation assets should be balanced on the site over the next ten years.



Borden Park is one of Kingsport's most versatile community parks, supporting active and passive recreation, family gatherings, and neighborhood access to outdoor recreation.

Brickyard Park

GOOD

Facility Type **Regional Park**	Overall Score **24 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**	Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	4	4	5	4	3

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	22	Good	Lowest criterion: Env., Social
Baseball Complex	25	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Env., Social
Miracle Complex	25	Good	Lowest criterion: Social
Miracle Playground	29	Excellent	Lowest criterion: Social
Skate Park	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Social



Description: A premier sports facility and community park serving baseball, inclusive recreation, skateboarding, and bicycling.

Amenities: Four fenced and lighted ball fields; Restrooms and concessions; Lighted parking; Picnic tables; Scott Adams Memorial Skatepark; Pump Track; Miracle League Complex / inclusive playground.

Brickyard Park combines traditional athletic facilities with innovative recreation amenities, including the Scott Adams Memorial Skatepark, Pump Track, and nationally recognized Miracle League Complex.

What created the score: Brickyard Park scored near the top of the Good tier. The Miracle Playground scored Excellent, and all other assessed components scored Good. Strong usage, inclusive recreation features, and the breadth of athletic amenities make Brickyard one of the system's highest-value regional assets, although social challenges and lifecycle needs still require strategic planning and management.

Planning Priorities: Continue development of the Miracle Complex, complete remaining capital investment at Scott Adams Memorial Skatepark, and plan for future turf infield improvements as part of ongoing lifecycle reinvestment.

Kingsport Carousel

EXCELLENT

Facility Type **Community Facility**	Overall Score **26 / 30**	Condition Tier **Excellent**	Planning Direction **Protect / Maintain / Promote**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	5	5	4	4	4

Description: A cultural attraction and community destination adjacent to Carousel Park and the Kingsport Farmers Market.

Amenities: Carousel facility; Cultural attraction / visitor destination; Adjacent playground and Greenbelt connection.

What created the score: The Kingsport Carousel scored in the Excellent tier, reflecting its value as both a beloved community attraction and a unique cultural asset. The facility received strong ratings across all assessment categories and continues to serve as one of the city's most recognizable destinations. High visitation levels, a well-maintained facility, and its prominent role within the downtown entertainment district all contributed to the score. While minor lifecycle and presentation improvements will be needed over time, the Carousel is currently performing at a level consistent with one of the department's highest-quality community assets.

Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance and monitor lifecycle needs.



The Kingsport Carousel has become one of the city's most recognizable community attractions, welcoming thousands of residents and visitors each year while preserving a unique tradition of volunteer craftsmanship and community pride.

Carousel Park

GOOD

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**25 / 30**	**Good**	**Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	4	4	4	5	4

Description: A half-acre park adjoining the Kingsport Carousel and Farmers Market area.

Amenities: Fenced playground; Rubberized play surface; Picnic tables; Park benches; Greenbelt access nearby.

What created the score: Carousel Park scored at the top of the Good tier and near the Excellent range. The playground received consistently strong scores across all categories. Its downtown location and proximity to the Carousel and Farmers Market make it a high-visibility family recreation asset.

Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance and address areas of peeling or wear in the poured-in-place play surface before they become larger issues.



Located in the heart of downtown, Carousel Park has become a popular gathering place for families, offering high-quality play experiences within walking distance of several community attractions.

Cement Hill

CRITICAL

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Vacant / Not open to the public	**8 / 30**	**Critical**	**Immediate Risk Management**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	1	1	1	1	1

Description: Vacant/Closed to the public.

Amenities: Grounds.

What created the score: Cement Hill scored in the Critical tier. While the site's basic physical condition remains relatively stable, the property experiences ongoing social challenges and requires a disproportionate amount of maintenance and staff attention relative to the public benefit it provides. Because the site is undeveloped and not open to the public, it received the lowest possible scores for accessibility and usage. The combination of limited public value, recurring social concerns, and continued maintenance obligations significantly reduced the overall score and highlights the need for an actionable plan for the property.

Planning Priorities: Retain as a planning site until a defined public use, development concept, or disposition strategy is approved.

Centennial Park

EXCELLENT

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**27 / 30**	**Excellent**	**Protect / Maintain / Promote**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	5	5	5	5	3

Description: A downtown commemorative park created for Kingsport's centennial and designed as a civic gathering space.

Amenities: Greenspace encircled by historic walkway; Illuminated interactive fountain; Public art / Santa Train sculpture; Benches; Bike rack.

What created the score: Centennial Park scored in the Excellent tier. The site is structurally and functionally strong, though restroom vandalism and related social issues should continue to be monitored.

Planning Priorities: Maintain existing service level, monitor lifecycle needs, and protect the site as a high-performing park.

Dale Street Mini Park

FAIR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Mini Park	**17 / 30**	**Fair**	**Rehab / Redesign**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	1	4	2	3	4

Description: A small neighborhood park providing close-to-home play opportunities.

Amenities: Fenced children's playground; Park benches; Picnic table.

What created the score: Dale Street Mini Park scored in the Fair tier. Safety and social conditions rated well, and the site continues to provide a limited neighborhood play function. Accessibility was the primary weakness, and usage remains limited because of the park's small scale and narrow amenity mix.

Planning Priorities: The site should be evaluated for play improvements and its continued role in meeting neighborhood recreation needs.

Dogwood Park

POOR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Community Park	**12 / 30**	**Poor**	**Evaluate / Repurpose / Close**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	2	1	3	2	2	2

Description: A membership-based community dog park located adjacent to Hunter Wright Stadium.

Amenities: Separate fenced large- and small-dog areas; Keyless controlled entry; Restrooms; Water fountains; Dog waste stations; Park benches; Dog agility equipment.

What created the score: Dogwood Park scored in the Poor tier because most assessment categories rated low and no criterion reaches the Good range. The walking path is in poor condition and is inaccessible, vegetation management is a concern, and restroom-related social challenges affect the user experience. The park's design also limits functionality and should be reconsidered before major reinvestment occurs.

Planning Priorities: Develop a site-specific reinvestment or redesign plan that addresses user experience and the long-term operating model for the dog park.

Domtar Park

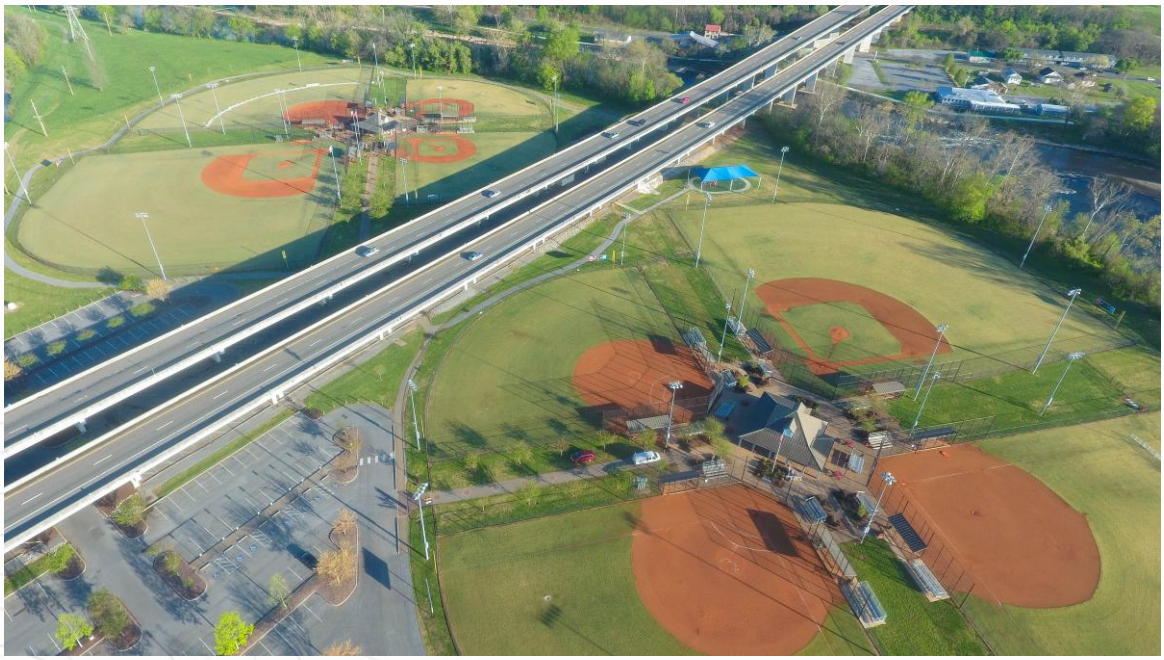
GOOD

Facility Type **Regional Park**		Overall Score **20 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Rehab / Redesign**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	3	3	4	3	4

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Env., Social
Baseball Complex	24	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical
Boat Ramp	9	Poor	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Usage
Walking Trail	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical

Description: A multipurpose park on Long Island of the Holston River supporting tournament athletics, trails, and water access.

Amenities: Eight fenced and lighted ball fields; Batting cages; Meeting rooms; Boat access ramp; Children's playground; Concessions and restrooms; 3,315-linear-foot paved walking trail; Sand volleyball court; Greenbelt access.



Domtar Park combines tournament-level athletic facilities with riverfront recreation amenities, providing baseball fields, Greenbelt access, and public access to the Holston River within a single regional destination.

What created the score: Domtar Park scored in the Good tier because several major components are strong. The grounds, baseball complex, and walking trail each scored Good, while the boat ramp scored Poor and substantially reduced the facility-level result. The athletic complex remains a major system asset, but several baseball-related components are approaching the end of their useful life and river access needs focused attention.

Planning Direction: Prioritize assessment in the boat ramp/parking area while maintaining the athletic complex, walking trail, and Greenbelt connection. Begin lifecycle planning for aging baseball complex elements.

Eastman Park

GOOD

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Community Park	**25 / 30**	**Good**	**Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**

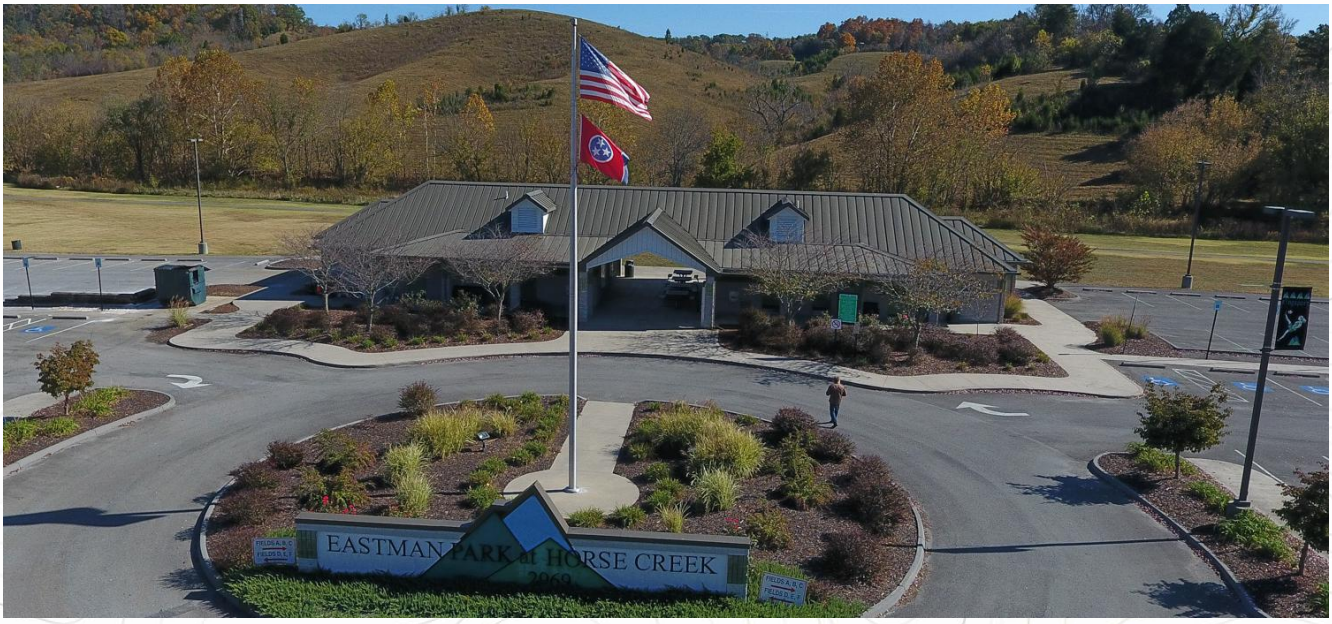
Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	4	4	5	4	4

Description: A 35-acre community park and soccer complex with event and walking amenities.

Amenities: Six Bermuda grass soccer fields; Bleacher seating; Concessions; Restrooms; Meeting space; Lighted parking; Paved walking trail; Water fountain / refill station.

What created the score: Eastman Park scored at the top of the Good tier and just below Excellent. The park received strong ratings across all categories, with usage receiving the highest score. The park is a core athletic venue and serves both organized sports and general community recreation.

Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance, with particular attention to parking lot condition and event-related parking demand. Long-term drainage and water-retention issues affecting athletic field playability should be evaluated to determine the most effective and sustainable solution.



The Eastman Park soccer complex is a major recreation destination, supporting youth athletics, tournaments, and community events throughout the year.

Edinburgh Park

GOOD

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**25 / 30**	**Good**	**Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	5	5	3	4	5

Description: A neighborhood park offering passive recreation and landscape features.

Amenities: Two ponds; Ornamental landscaping; Decorative lighting; Park benches; Unpaved walking path connecting to sidewalks.

What created the score: Edinburgh Park scored in the Good tier. Physical condition and usage were moderate, reflecting the site's passive nature and current resource management needs. The ponds are a defining feature but require attention related to invasive species, sedimentation, and mosquito control.

Planning Priorities: Coordinate future park use and maintenance with the community HOA, with particular focus on pond management, invasive species control, sedimentation, and the site's passive recreation role.

Edinburgh South

POOR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Vacant	**11 / 30**	**Poor**	**Evaluate / Repurpose / Close**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	1	1	1	1	2	5

Description: Vacant.

Amenities: Grounds.

What created the score: Edinburgh South scored in the Poor tier because it is not functioning as an active recreation asset and received the lowest ratings for physical condition, accessibility, safety, and usage. The property should not be treated as a park without a defined purpose.

Planning Priorities: Determine whether the property has a future recreation role, should be stabilized for another public purpose, or should be considered for divestment.

GOOD

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Community Facility	**23 / 30**	**Good**	**Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	5	3	5	3	3

Description: A covered community market and event facility that supports local commerce, events, and civic activity.

Amenities: Market/event facility; Rental and gathering space; Adjacent Carousel and downtown amenities.

What created the score: The Farmers Market scored Good because it performs strongly as an accessible and highly used community facility. Its overall score was reduced by lower social-challenge and moderate safety and aesthetic ratings.

Planning Priorities: Continued reinvestment should emphasize event functionality, public comfort, and management of conditions that affect the user experience.



The Kingsport Farmers Market has become a cornerstone of downtown life, bringing together local vendors, community events, and thousands of residents and visitors throughout the year.

Glen Bruce Park

FAIR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**14 / 30**	**Fair**	**Rehab / Redesign**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	3	2	2	3	1

Description: A small downtown civic park with art and passive recreation features.

Amenities: Fountain with art sculpture; Covered gazebo; Park benches; Bicycle racks; Flagpole; StoryWalk installation.



Glen Bruce Park serves as an important downtown civic space, offering public art, gathering areas, and community amenities while presenting a significant opportunity for future reinvestment and placemaking.

What created the score: Glen Bruce Park scored in the Fair tier. The park benefits from an attractive downtown setting and serves as an important civic space, with environmental quality and its central location remaining key strengths. However, aging infrastructure, limited functionality, and dated amenities reduced the overall score. While the park continues to provide value as a passive public space, it no longer fully meets expectations for a downtown destination and would benefit from comprehensive reinvestment. Social problems are a daily issue at the park.

Planning Priorities: Implement the recommended Glen Bruce Park redevelopment plan to modernize the site as a signature downtown civic space. Improvements should focus on upgrading park infrastructure, expanding opportunities for public gathering and programming, and enhancing the park's role as a destination within the downtown district.

FAIR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Linear Park	**18 / 30**	**Fair**	**Rehab / Redesign**

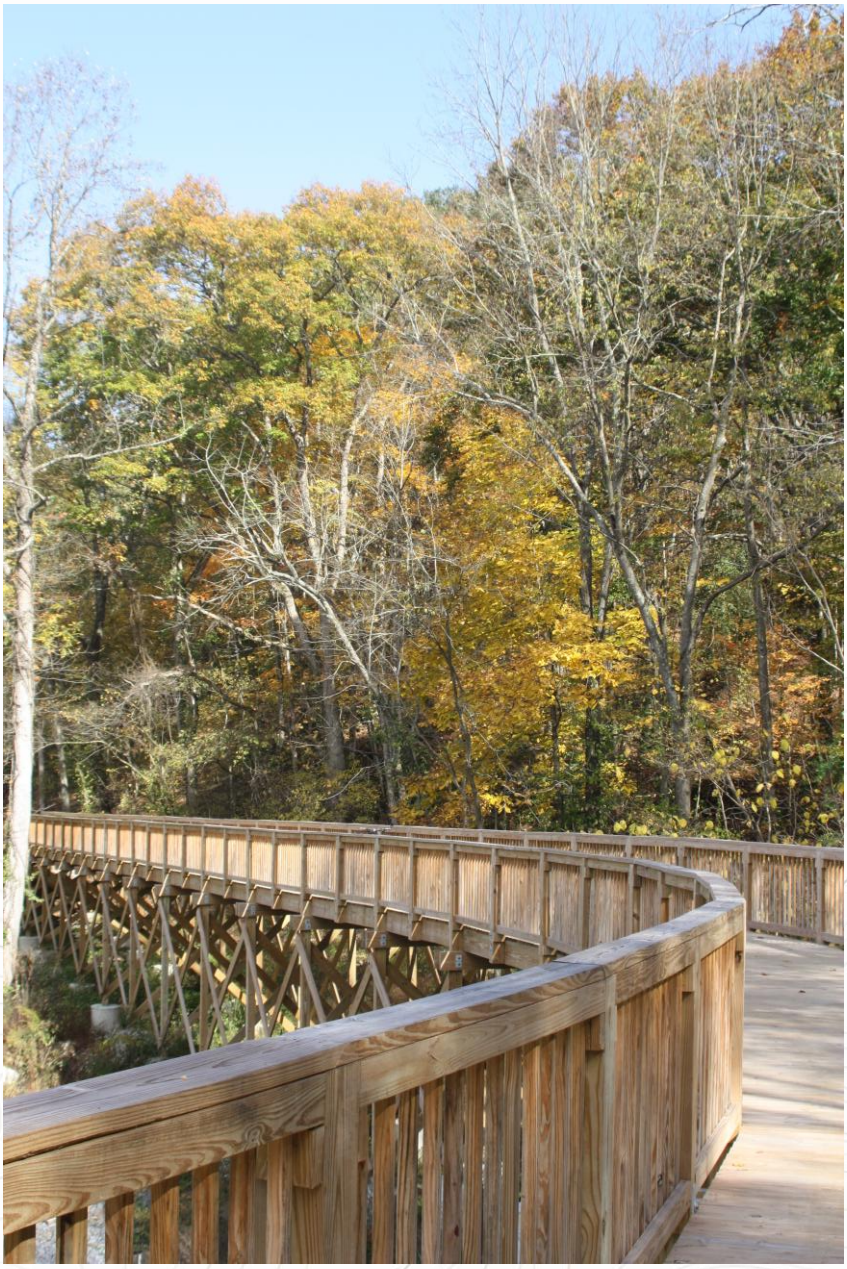
Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	4	2	5	2	2

Description: A citywide linear park linking neighborhoods, parks, commercial areas, schools, and activity centers.

Amenities: Approximately 11 miles of paved/concrete trail; Water fountains / refill stations; Restrooms or portable toilets; Picnic shelters; Fishing piers and boat ramps; Playground access; Mileage and interpretive signage; Bicycle racks.

What created the score: The Greenbelt scored in the Fair tier and received the highest possible rating for usage, underscoring its role as one of Kingsport's most important recreation assets. The overall score was moderated by physical condition, safety, and environmental ratings associated with aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance along portions of the corridor.

Planning Priorities: Priority should be given to stabilizing sections of the Greenbelt affected by erosion or structural deterioration, replacing aging amenities, and preserving the long-term integrity of this high-use community asset. Future investments should also strengthen trail connections and supporting amenities where opportunities exist.



The Kingsport Greenbelt serves as one of the city's most heavily used recreation assets, providing opportunities for walking, cycling, and everyday transportation while linking communities throughout Kingsport.

Hammond Park

POOR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**12 / 30**	**Poor**	**Evaluate / Repurpose / Close**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	2	2	2	1	2	3

Description: A small neighborhood park in a historic district.

Amenities: Small children's playground; Open green space; Park bench; Picnic table; Pet-friendly area.

What created the score: Hammond Park scored in the Poor tier due to consistently low ratings across nearly every assessment category, with usage receiving the lowest score. The park provides only limited recreation opportunities, contains aging amenities, and lacks the features needed to serve as a meaningful neighborhood destination.

Planning Priorities: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the park's long-term role within the neighborhood before making major capital investments. If the site is to remain a public park, future improvements should focus on increasing recreation value through modern play amenities, improved accessibility, and enhanced site functionality. If these investments cannot reasonably create a viable neighborhood recreation asset, alternative uses or repurposing strategies should be considered.

Highland Street Mini Park

FAIR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Mini Park	**14 / 30**	**Fair**	**Rehab / Redesign**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	1	3	1	2	4

Description: A small neighborhood park providing close-to-home play space.

Amenities: Small fenced children's playground; Picnic table; Park bench.

What created the score: Highland Street Mini Park scored in the Fair tier. Although the playground remains in relatively stable physical condition and social concerns are limited, the park received the lowest possible ratings for accessibility and usage. Its small size, limited amenities, and inability to meet current accessibility standards substantially reduced the overall score, indicating that the site no longer adequately serves neighborhood recreation needs in its current configuration.

Planning Priorities: Any future improvements should be evaluated within the context of nearby parks and neighborhood recreation needs to ensure long-term sustainability and appropriate public investment.

Hunter Wright Stadium

EXCELLENT

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Regional Park	**27 / 30**	**Excellent**	**Protect / Maintain / Promote**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	5	5	5	4	4

Description: A 2,500-seat baseball stadium used for scheduled events and the home field of the Kingsport Axmen.

Amenities: Grandstand and reserved seating; Picnic spaces; Full-service concessions; Batting cages; Press box; Team locker room; Exercise room.

What created the score: Hunter Wright Stadium scored in the Excellent tier, reflecting its role as one of the city's premier regional athletic facilities.

Planning Priorities: Protect the facility through continued preventative maintenance and lifecycle capital reinvestment to preserve its high level of service.



Hunter Wright Stadium is one of Kingsport's premier regional sports venues, home to the Minor League Kingsport Axemen.

J. Fred Johnson Park

FAIR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Community Park	**14 / 30**	**Fair**	**Rehab / Redesign**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	2	3	3	2	3	1

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	6	Critical	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Usage, Social
Veterans Memorial	19	Fair	Lowest criterion: Social

Description: Kingsport's first city park and the location of the Veterans Memorial.

Amenities: Playground equipment for young children; Park benches; Veterans Memorial; Greenbelt access; Picnic tables; Public art and interpretive kiosk.

What created the score: J. Fred Johnson Park scored in the Fair tier due to the significant contrast between its two primary components. The Veterans Memorial remains in Fair condition and serves as an important community asset for remembrance and events. However, the surrounding park grounds scored in the Critical tier because of aging infrastructure, limited functionality, and poor physical condition. As a result, the park no longer provides a level of recreation service consistent with its historic significance or prominent location.

Planning Priorities: Future improvements should focus on modernizing park amenities, improving accessibility and visitor experience, and strengthening the relationship between the memorial and the surrounding public space.



J. Fred Johnson Park, Kingsport's first city park, is home to the Veterans Memorial, one of the community's most significant civic and commemorative landmarks.

Jack Pierce, Sr. Park at Riverview

GOOD

Facility Type **Community Park**		Overall Score **22 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	4	4	4	4	3

Assessed Component	**Subtotal / 30**	**Tier**	**Contribution to Overall Result**
Grounds	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Social
Playground	17	Fair	Lowest criterion: Usage
Splash Pad	19	Fair	Lowest criterion: Physical, Social
Recreational Facilities	24	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical
Picnic Area / Shelters	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Env., Social

Description: An eight-acre community park adjoining V.O. Dobbins, Sr. Complex with active recreation and family amenities.

Amenities: Splash pad; Outdoor basketball court; Children's playground; Open greenspace; Two picnic shelters; Eight lighted pickleball courts; Restrooms; Mural / public art.

What created the score: Jack Pierce, Sr. Park at Riverview scored in the Good tier, reflecting its role as a well-rounded neighborhood park offering a diverse mix of recreation opportunities. The grounds, recreation facilities, picnic shelters, and pickleball courts all scored in the Good range, demonstrating strong overall functionality and community value. The overall score was moderated by the playground and splash pad, which both scored in the Fair tier due to aging infrastructure, physical condition, and accessibility limitations.



Jack Pierce, Sr. Park at Riverview provides a diverse mix of family recreation amenities and complements the adjacent V.O. Dobbins Sr. Complex to create one of the city's most active community recreation hubs.

Planning Direction: Continue routine maintenance while prioritizing the modernization of the playground and splash pad as future capital improvement projects.

Legion Field Park

GOOD

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**21 / 30**	**Good**	**Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	4	3	3	3	4	4

Description: Open greenspace suitable for informal use and scheduled activities.

Amenities: Open greenspace; Electrical connections; Adjacent paved parking; Ornamental trees; Pet-friendly use.

What created the score: Legion Field Park scored in the Good tier. While the park offers relatively few developed recreation amenities, it is well used for community events and summer volleyball leagues.

Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance and preserve the park's open character and flexibility for community use.

Lynn View Community Center

POOR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Community Facility	**10 / 30**	**Poor**	**Evaluate / Repurpose / Close**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	2	1	2	2	2	1

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Facility	9	Poor	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Social
Gym Space	10	Poor	Lowest criterion: ADA, Social
Senior Center	10	Poor	Lowest criterion: ADA, Social

Description: A multi-purpose community center and adjacent athletic park serving the Lynn Garden area.

Amenities: Multi-purpose community center; Senior Center branch location; indoor gymnasium.

What created the score: Lynn View Community Center scored Poor and is **one of the lowest-performing active facilities in the assessment**. The facility, gym space, and senior center components all scored Poor, with accessibility and social challenges receiving the lowest ratings.

Planning Priorities: Maintain the facility in a safe and serviceable condition until its redevelopment as part of the new Lynn View Elementary School project.

Lynn View Park

POOR

Facility Type **Neighborhood Park**		Overall Score **13 / 30**	Condition Tier **Poor**		Planning Direction **Evaluate / Repurpose / Close**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	2	2	3	2	1
Assessed Component		**Subtotal / 30**	**Tier**		**Contribution to Overall Result**	
Grounds		13	Poor		Lowest criterion: Social	
Recreational Facilities		13	Poor		Lowest criterion: Social	
Playground		13	Poor		Lowest criterion: Social	

Description: The outdoor park and athletic space adjacent to Lynn View Community Center.

Amenities: Ball fields; Lighted football field; Three-lane paved track; Children's play structure; Outdoor pickleball court; Outdoor basketball half court; Multi-purpose greenspace.

What created the score: Lynn View Park scored in the Poor tier, with the grounds, recreation facilities, and playground each receiving identical Poor ratings. The park's overall score reflects aging infrastructure, deferred maintenance, accessibility limitations, and recurring social challenges that have reduced its effectiveness as a neighborhood recreation facility.

Planning Priorities: Coordinate with Kingsport City Schools to integrate the park into the redevelopment of the Lynn View Elementary School campus while preserving long-term public recreation opportunities through joint use.

Memorial Gardens Park

FAIR

Facility Type **Neighborhood Park**		Overall Score **19 / 30**	Condition Tier **Fair**		Planning Direction **Rehab / Redesign**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	4	4	3	3	3	2

Description: A historic neighborhood park located next to Dobyns-Bennett High School.

Amenities: Memorial monument dedicated to public safety services; Paved walking path; Public art; Picnic tables; Interpretive water filtration signage.

What created the score: Memorial Gardens Park scored Fair. Physical condition and accessibility rated well, while social challenges and moderate ratings in safety, use, and environmental quality kept the site below the Good tier.

Planning Priorities: A targeted improvement plan should focus on improving visitor experience and addressing the factors affecting use and comfort.

Preston Forest Park

GOOD

Facility Type **Neighborhood Park**		Overall Score **25 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	4	5	4	4	4	4

Assessed Component	**Subtotal / 30**	**Tier**	**Contribution to Overall Result**
Grounds	24	Good	Lowest criterion: Social
Playground	26	Excellent	Lowest criterion: Physical, Safety, Usage, Env.
Recreational Facilities	25	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical
Picnic Area / Shelters	26	Excellent	Lowest criterion: Physical, Safety, Env., Social

Description: A neighborhood park supporting play, court sports, informal field use, and family gathering.

Amenities: Basketball court; Playground; Soccer field; Picnic shelter; Grills and picnic tables; Park benches; Water fountain; StoryWalk installation.



Preston Forest Park provides a mix of playgrounds, picnic facilities, open space, and recreation amenities that make it one of the highest-performing neighborhood parks.

What created the score: Preston Forest Park scored in the Good tier and is one of the department's highest-performing neighborhood parks. The playground and picnic shelter each scored in the Excellent tier, while the park grounds also rated Good, reflecting the site's strong physical condition and overall functionality. The overall score was moderated by the recreation facilities, which scored Fair due primarily to physical condition, but the park continues to provide a well-rounded mix of recreation opportunities and family amenities.

Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance and lifecycle replacement of park amenities while prioritizing reinvestment in the recreation facilities that scored below the rest of the site.

FAIR

Facility Type **Community Facility**		Overall Score **17 / 30**	Condition Tier **Fair**		Planning Direction **Rehab / Redesign**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	3	3	2	3	3

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Facility	17	Fair	Lowest criterion: Usage
Theater / Art Gallery	14	Fair	Lowest criterion: Physical, Safety, Usage, Env.
Senior Center	19	Fair	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Usage, Social

Description: A community and cultural facility that houses the Kingsport Senior Center, a theater, an art gallery, and arts organizations.

Amenities: Facility; Theater / Art Gallery; Senior Center.

What created the score: The Renaissance Center scored in the Fair tier. While the facility continues to serve as one of the department's primary community and cultural facilities, all three major components received Fair ratings. The Senior Center performed strongest, while the theater and art gallery scored lowest due to physical condition, functionality, and accessibility limitations. The overall score reflects an aging facility that remains heavily utilized but would benefit from comprehensive modernization to better support current programming and community expectations.

Planning Priorities: Develop and implement a long-term facility modernization plan that addresses accessibility, building systems, and the continued evolution of cultural and community programming spaces. Priority should be given to preserving the building's role as a destination for senior services and arts-related programming.



The Renaissance Center houses the Kingsport Senior Center as well as several art-related non-profits and an art gallery.

Ridgefields Park

GOOD

Facility Type **Neighborhood Park**		Overall Score **24 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	4	2	4	5	4	5

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	25	Good	Lowest criterion: ADA
Recreational Facilities	23	Good	Lowest criterion: ADA
Playground	22	Good	Lowest criterion: ADA

Description: A six-acre neighborhood park with active and passive recreation amenities.

Amenities: Basketball court; Children's playground; Open greenspace with soccer goals; Walking trail; Park benches and picnic tables; Water fountain; Greenbelt access; StoryWalk installation.

What created the score: Ridgefields Park scored in the Good tier, reflecting strong performance across nearly all assessment categories. The grounds, recreation facilities, and playground each scored in the Good range, with particularly strong ratings for usage, safety, environmental quality, and social conditions. Accessibility was the primary limiting factor across all assessed components, indicating that targeted ADA improvements represent the greatest opportunity to further strengthen this already high-performing neighborhood park.

Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance and lifecycle replacement of park amenities while prioritizing accessibility improvements throughout the site.

Riverbend Park

GOOD

Facility Type **Linear Park**		Overall Score **23 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	4	4	3	4	4	4

Description: A natural riverfront linear park planned as a multi-phase 22-acre destination along the South Fork of the Holston River.

Amenities: Half-mile walking trail; Floating fishing pier; Benches; Birding and natural water features

What created the score: Riverbend Park scored in the Good tier, reflecting its strong physical condition, natural character, and role as a unique riverfront recreation destination.

Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance and environmental stewardship while preserving the park's natural character and riverfront setting. Opportunities exist at the park to enhance riverfront recreation.

EXCELLENT

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Community Park	**29 / 30**	**Excellent**	**Protect / Maintain / Promote**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	5	5	5	5	5	4

Description: A 5.6-acre community park along the Holston River that blends recreation, accessibility, and river access.

Amenities: Accessible play areas for ages 2-5 and 5-12; Adult fitness area; Basketball hoop wall; Community pavilions; Kayak launch; Pickleball courts; Splash pad; Storybook trail and little library; Walking trails; Greenbelt connection.

What created the score: Riverwalk Park scored in the Excellent tier, making it one of the highest-performing parks in the Kingsport park system. The park received the highest possible ratings for physical condition, accessibility, safety, usage, and environmental quality, reflecting the success of its recent redevelopment and broad range of modern recreation amenities. The only minor reduction resulted from social challenges associated with the park's high level of public activity.

Planning Priorities: Protect the City's recent investment through proactive maintenance, preventative asset management, and scheduled lifecycle replacement of high-use amenities.



Riverwalk Park represents the future of parks in Kingsport, blending accessible recreation, nature, public art, and community gathering spaces into one of the department's signature destinations.

Rock Springs Park

CRITICAL

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**8 / 30**	**Critical**	**Immediate Risk Management**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	2	2	1	1	1	1

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	7	Critical	Lowest criterion: Physical, Safety, Usage, Env., Social
Building	6	Critical	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Usage, Env., Social
Playground	12	Poor	Lowest criterion: Social

Description: A four-acre neighborhood park located at a former elementary school site.

Amenities: 24 competition-level horseshoe pits; Children's playground; Open greenspace; Park benches; Parking; Pavilion; Picnic tables.

What created the score: Rock Springs Park scored in the Critical tier and represents one of the department's highest-priority facilities for intervention. The park grounds and building both scored in the Critical tier, while the playground scored in the Poor tier. Widespread deficiencies in physical condition, safety, functionality, and environmental quality significantly reduced the overall score. The condition of its infrastructure no longer supports an acceptable level of public service without substantial reinvestment or other corrective action.

Planning Priorities: Conduct an immediate comprehensive assessment of the site's buildings, infrastructure, and recreation amenities to identify life-safety concerns and determine appropriate corrective actions.

Rotary Park

POOR

Facility Type	Overall Score	Condition Tier	Planning Direction
Neighborhood Park	**11 / 30**	**Poor**	**Evaluate / Repurpose / Close**

Criteria Avg.	Physical	ADA	Safety	Usage	Env.	Social
Score	3	4	1	1	1	1

Description: A neighborhood park adjacent to a senior housing facility.

Amenities: Asphalt basketball court; Fenced greenspace; Park benches; Picnic tables; Walking trail.

What created the score: Rotary Park scored in the Poor tier. While the park remains physically functional, it experiences very limited public use and provides few recreation opportunities. Its location and recurring social challenges indicate that the site is no longer functioning as a high-value neighborhood recreation asset.

Planning Priorities: Future planning should determine whether improvements could restore meaningful value or whether an alternative public use would better serve the surrounding neighborhood and adjacent senior housing community.

Rotherwood Park

POOR

Facility Type **Neighborhood Park**		Overall Score **11 / 30**	Condition Tier **Poor**		Planning Direction **Evaluate / Repurpose / Close**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	2	1	2	1	2	3

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Grounds	11	Poor	Lowest criterion: ADA, Usage
Picnic Area / Shelters	11	Poor	Lowest criterion: ADA, Usage
Playground	8	Critical	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Usage, Env.

Description: A small neighborhood park with family gathering and recreation components.

Amenities: Barbecue grills; Half-court basketball area; Open greenspace; Picnic shelters; Children's playground; Unpaved walking trail.

What created the score: Rotherwood Park scored in the Poor tier due to consistently low ratings across nearly every assessment category. Limited usage and the park's inability to meet contemporary neighborhood recreation needs further indicate that the site no longer provides a level of public benefit consistent with ongoing investment.

Planning Priorities: Evaluate closure of the park and disposition of the property unless a compelling public need justifies significant reinvestment.

Sevier Avenue Mini Park

CRITICAL

Facility Type **Mini Park**		Overall Score **8 / 30**	Condition Tier **Critical**		Planning Direction **Immediate Risk Management**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	3	1	1	1	1	1

Description: A small neighborhood playground site identified in the matrix as not open to the public.

Amenities: Fenced children's playground; Park bench seating; Picnic table; Grill.

What created the score: Sevier Avenue Mini Park scored in the Critical tier and represents one of the department's lowest-performing recreation assets. Although the playground remains in fair physical condition, the site is not open to the public and received the lowest possible ratings for accessibility, safety, usage, environmental quality, and social conditions. The park requires ongoing maintenance despite providing little to no public recreation benefit, resulting in one of the lowest overall scores in the assessment.

Planning Priorities: Proceed with the divestment of the property and redirect maintenance resources toward higher-performing parks that provide greater community benefit.

V.O. Dobbins, Sr. Complex

GOOD

Facility Type **Community Facility**		Overall Score **24 / 30**	Condition Tier **Good**		Planning Direction **Strategic Reinvestment / Maintenance**	
Criteria Avg.	**Physical**	**ADA**	**Safety**	**Usage**	**Env.**	**Social**
Score	4	4	4	4	4	4

Assessed Component	Subtotal / 30	Tier	Contribution to Overall Result
Facility	24	Good	Lowest criterion:
Lease Space	23	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA
Gym Space	25	Good	Lowest criterion: Physical, ADA, Safety, Env., Social

Description: A multi-purpose community facility and departmental service hub adjacent to Jack Pierce, Sr. Park at Riverview.

Amenities: Parks and Recreation administrative and program offices; Two regulation-size gymnasiums; Meeting and rental spaces; Small kitchen / meeting area; Climbing wall; Public art and murals.



Together with the adjacent Jack Pierce, Sr. Park at Riverview, the V.O. Dobbins, Sr. Complex forms one of Kingsport's premier neighborhood recreation campuses.

What created the score: V.O. Dobbins, Sr. Complex scored in the Good tier, reflecting its importance as both a community recreation facility and the administrative hub for the Department of Parks and Recreation. The facility, lease spaces, and gymnasium all scored in the Good tier, demonstrating strong physical condition, functionality, and consistent public use. The overall score was moderated by opportunities to improve accessibility and environmental quality, but the complex continues to perform as one of the department's most valuable indoor recreation assets.

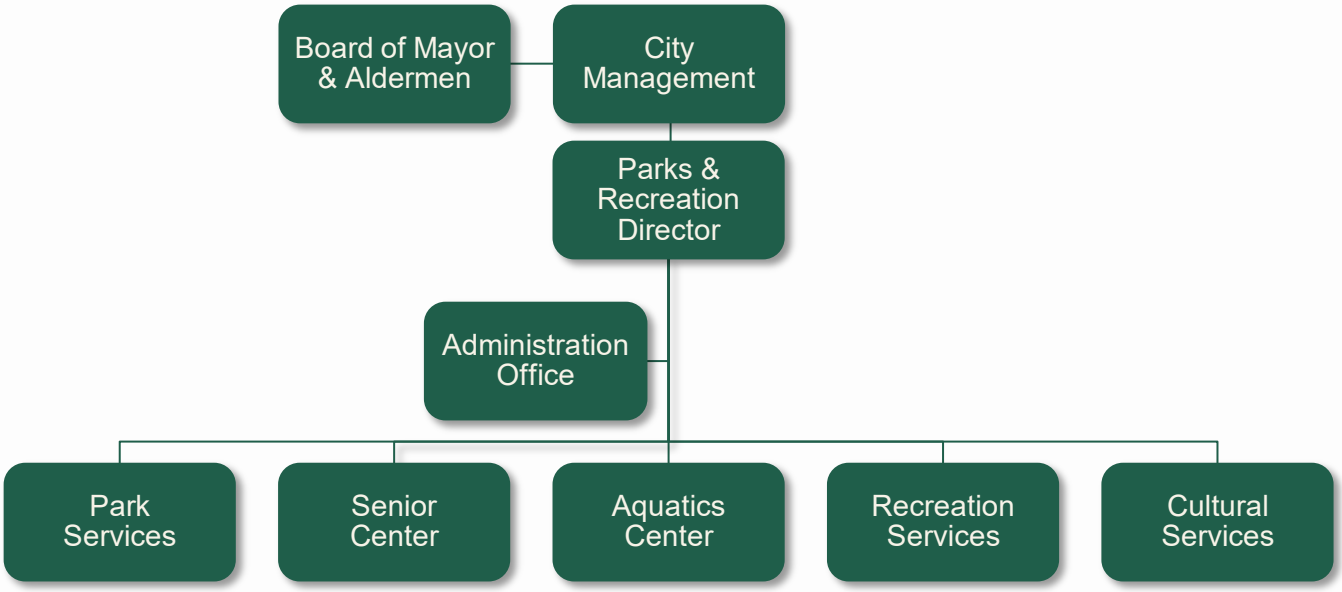
Planning Priorities: Continue routine maintenance and lifecycle reinvestment while preserving the complex's role as a primary indoor recreation, administrative, and community services facility.



Investment Produces Results

The Kingsport Carousel is one of several highly rated facilities, demonstrating the importance of continued preventative maintenance and reinvestment in community assets.

Organizational Review



Organization and Staffing Review

Since the adoption of the previous master plan, Kingsport has transformed how services are delivered. Parks, recreation, aquatics, cultural arts, special events, and senior programming have been consolidated into a single Parks and Recreation Department. This unified organizational model has reduced duplication, improved coordination between divisions, and created a more seamless experience for residents. Today, the department manages a broad portfolio of facilities and programs across five divisions.

Staffing capacity has not always kept pace with facility and program growth. New parks, renovated facilities, and expanded programming have increased operational demands throughout the department. As facilities age and new assets are added, the department must provide ongoing maintenance, custodial services, programming, and administrative oversight. These responsibilities require long-term staffing commitments that extend well beyond initial construction or capital investment.

This challenge is most evident within park maintenance operations. Significant investments have been made in parks and facilities throughout the community, including major renovations such as Riverwalk Park. While these projects have bolstered opportunities and improved the user experience, they have also increased the infrastructure and amenities that must be maintained by existing staff. Pressures are becoming more evident throughout the park system as maintenance expectations continue to rise and facilities are renovated.

Programming operations are also experiencing increasing demands. Kingsport maintains a varied portfolio of programs that serve residents across all age groups. While staffing pressures are less acute than those affecting maintenance operations, future program growth should remain aligned with available staffing resources.



Growth Requires Capacity

Riverwalk Park demonstrates how major investments create long-term operational responsibilities that must be supported through staffing and operating budgets.

Administrative support remains a critical component of the department's success. Administrative functions provide the operational foundation for budgeting, purchasing, payroll, project tracking, public communication, and reporting. Continued investment in administrative capacity will help ensure that operational and program staff can focus on delivering high-quality services rather than administrative tasks.

The department also recognizes the increasing importance of specialized expertise among the staff. As the city continues to invest in specialized assets, the department will require access to technical expertise in areas such as natural resource management, aquatics, turf, and other specialized maintenance areas. These needs will become increasingly important as the system grows in size and complexity.

Overall, the department's organizational structure remains functional and has successfully supported both consolidation and service expansion. However, future success will depend on ensuring that staffing and organizational capacity grow alongside facilities, programs, and public expectations. Protecting the City's substantial investments in parks and recreation assets will require a staffing model capable of sustaining high-quality maintenance and strategic long-term management.

Staffing Benchmarks

To better understand organizational capacity, current staffing levels were compared to benchmark data from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Comparisons were made with agencies serving populations between 50,000 and 99,999 residents.

Kingsport currently operates with approximately 86 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs), including 61 permanent full-time equivalent employees and a significant seasonal and temporary workforce. When compared to benchmark agencies, Kingsport's overall staffing levels fall between the median and average reported by comparable jurisdictions. This indicates that the department is neither significantly understaffed nor significantly overstaffed when viewed strictly through total employee counts.

However, staffing benchmarks alone do not fully capture organizational demands. Kingsport operates a broader and more diverse service portfolio than many comparable park systems. In addition to traditional park maintenance and recreation programming, the department manages aquatics operations, cultural facilities, special events, senior services, and specialized recreation facilities. These responsibilities increase operational complexity and place additional demands on existing staff.

One factor that significantly influences Kingsport's staffing profile is the operation of the Kingsport Aquatic Center. The facility functions as both a year-round aquatic center and a seasonal waterpark, creating staffing and operational demands that exceed those of a traditional municipal pool. The Aquatic Center requires approximately five full-time employees and more than 40,000 seasonal and temporary staff hours annually to support lifeguarding, guest services, programming, and facility operations. National benchmark data indicates that only 40.6 percent of similarly sized agencies operate an aquatic center and just 21.7 percent operate a waterpark.

KINGSPORT

Full-Time Equivalent Staff	86 FTE
Full-Time Employees	61 FTE
Temporary/Seasonal Hours	52,000 Hours
Area of Responsibility	**Percentage of Staff**
Administration	10%
Operations/Maintenance	37%
Programming	31%
Capital Development	1%
Other	21% (Aquatic Operations)

PEER CITY

Median / Average

Full-Time Equivalent Staff	79.3 / 113.1 FTE
Full-Time Employees	47 / 68 FTE
Temporary/Seasonal Hours	63,069 / 95,003 Hours
Area of Responsibility	**Percentage of Staff**
Administration	16.3%
Operations/Maintenance	42.1%
Programming	36.5%
Capital Development	2.7%
Other	2.5%

NATIONAL

Median / Average

Full-Time Equivalent Staff	73.9 / 167.3 FTE
Full-Time Employees	43 / 109 FTE
Temporary/Seasonal Hours	50,058 / 124,543 Hours
Area of Responsibility	**Percentage of Staff**
Administration	16.6%
Operations/Maintenance	45.4%
Programming	31.9%
Capital Development	3.1%
Other	2.9%

Staffing comparison showing full-time equivalent employees, staffing distribution, and seasonal labor hours for Kingsport, comparable agencies (50k – 100k residents), and national benchmarks.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION INDUSTRY METRICS, 2025.

Parks and Outdoor Infrastructure	
● Operate and maintain parks	99%
● Operate and maintain non-parks	75%
● Operate, maintain, or manage trails, greenway, and blueways	87%
● Operate, maintain, or manage special-purpose parks and open spaces	74%
⊗ Operate, maintain, or contract campgrounds	12%
⊗ Administer community garden	52%
⊗ Operate, maintain, or contract marina	8%
⊗ Maintain or manage beaches	23%

Recreation and Aquatic Services	
● Provide recreation programs & services	96%
● Operate, maintain, or contract golf courses	42%
● Operate, maintain, or contract racquet-sport activities, courts, or facilities	91%
● Operate, maintain, or contract indoor swim facilities or waterparks	41%
● Operate, maintain, or contract outdoor swim facilities or waterparks	76%
● Administer or manage professional- or college-type stadiums, arenas, or racetracks	9%
● Administer or manage tournament- or event-quality indoor sports complexes	27%
● Administer or manage tournament- or event-quality outdoor sports complexes	63%

Community and Visitor Services	
● Operate and maintain indoor facilities	98%
● Operate, maintain, or manage tourism attractions	31%
● Maintain, manage, or lease indoor performing arts centers	26%
● Administer or manage farmers markets	31%
⊗ Manage large outdoor performance amphitheater	34%
⊗ Manage or maintain fairgrounds	3%
● Conduct jurisdiction-wide special events	91%

Administration	
● Have budgetary responsibility for administrative staff	93%
● Include funding for planning and development functions in the operating budget	74%

● Provided by Kingsport Parks and Recreation
⊗ Not provided by Kingsport Parks and Recreation
% Percentages shown correspond to percentage of peer agencies offering service.

Comparison of operational responsibilities commonly provided by peer park and recreation agencies serving populations between 50,000 and 99,999 residents. Percentages shown correspond to percentage of peer agencies with responsibility.
SOURCE: NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION INDUSTRY METRICS, 2025.



Staff are assisted in many areas by dedicated volunteers who serve on advisory boards, deliver programs, and perform service projects.

Planning Priorities

Over the next ten years, Kingsport Parks and Recreation should strengthen its staffing model through the following actions:

Priorities for the future of staffing and organization

Align Staffing with System Growth.
Major park, facility, and recreation improvements should include an operating impact review before approval. This review should identify maintenance, custodial, programming, and administrative needs.

Prioritize Park Maintenance Capacity.
Maintenance staffing should be evaluated against the size, complexity, and expectations of the current park system, with special attention to newly renovated or expanded facilities such as Riverwalk Park.

Strengthen Organizational Leadership and Coordination.
The department should continue moving toward a structure that provides stronger support between the Director and operating divisions, improves delegated decision-making, and reduces silos.

Continue Building Administrative and Technical Capacity.
The administrative office should remain a core component of the department's operating model. The department should also evaluate long-term needs related to natural resource management and specialized park infrastructure to ensure adequate technical expertise exists within the organization.

Protect Program Quality as Services Expand.
Program growth should be guided by available staffing, facility capacity, and community demand.

Kingsport's overall staffing levels are comparable to peer agencies; however, the department operates a more complex service portfolio and relies on a leaner administrative, planning, and maintenance structure.



People Make the Difference

Staff are the foundation of successful recreation programs, transforming facilities and resources into meaningful experiences for residents of all ages and abilities.

Financial and Budget Assessment

This financial review examines the Parks and Recreation system from FY 2021 through FY 2026, with emphasis on operating budgets, recreation-related revenues, and the relationship between earned revenues and public subsidy. The review is intended to support long-range master plan decision-making rather than serve as an audit or line-item budget document.

For consistency, this analysis focuses on the services now considered part of the Parks and Recreation Department. The review includes Parks and Recreation administration, recreation centers, athletics, Allandale, cultural arts, the Carousel, Farmers Market, Senior Center, Lynn View Community Center, splash pad operations, and park maintenance. Library, MeadowView, Cattails Golf Course, and other non-Parks and Recreation functions are excluded. The Kingsport Aquatic Center is reviewed separately as an enterprise fund.

Because the department's structure changed during the review period, the analysis normalizes park maintenance to account for the creation of Leisure Services Maintenance (now Park Services). This is important because several maintenance positions and functions were moved from Bays Mountain Park, Parks and Recreation Maintenance, and the Aquatic Center into a centralized maintenance structure. Without this adjustment, year-over-year comparisons would overstate or understate true operating trends.

Summary Finding

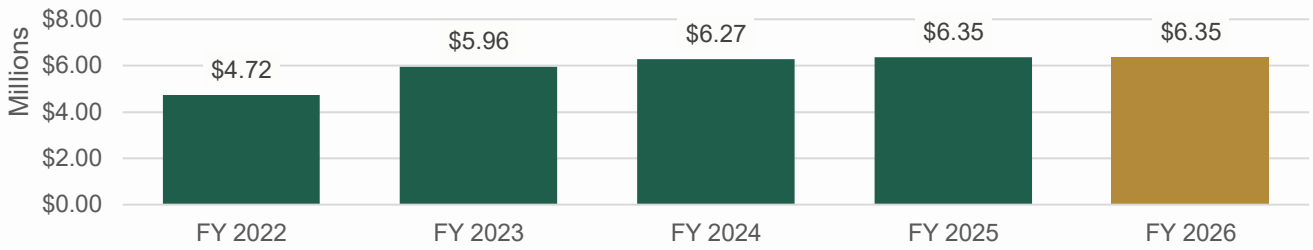
The financial trend is clear: Parks and Recreation operating budgets have increased in nominal dollars over the five-year period, but the increase is heavily influenced by reorganization, maintenance consolidation, and personnel adjustments. Once the current department structure is normalized, the operating budget has been functionally flat since FY 2024. Recreation revenues recovered after the pandemic but have also remained generally flat. The result is a department that is financially flat but increasingly constrained from an operating standpoint.

The master plan should therefore not conclude that the department is financially distressed. Rather, it should conclude that the current operating model is tight, heavily dependent on General Fund support, and not scaled to match the City's expanded recreation assets, maintenance responsibilities, and public expectations.



The Kingsport Aquatic Center is a regional attraction that operates as an enterprise fund, financially separate from the rest of the department's operations.

General Fund Parks and Recreation Operating Budget



Adopted budgets adjusted for organizational scope; amounts are in nominal dollars and are not adjusted for inflation.

SOURCE: CITY OF KINGSPORT BUDGET BOOKS.

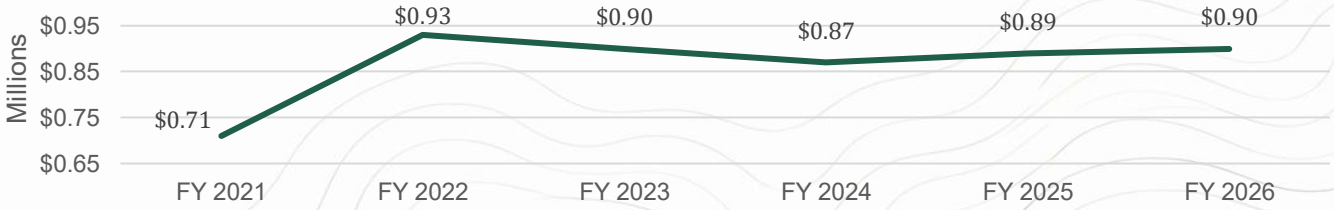
The General Fund supports the core Parks and Recreation system as a governmental activity. This is appropriate because parks and recreation programs provide broad public benefit and are not expected to operate as self-supporting enterprises.

After normalizing the budget to reflect the current Parks and Recreation structure, the approximate operating budget trend is as follows:

At first glance, this appears to show significant growth. However, most of the increase occurs between FY 2022 and FY 2023, when maintenance and departmental functions were reorganized, and employee wages increased. From FY 2024 through FY 2026, the normalized core operating budget increases only modestly and is essentially flat between FY 2025 and FY 2026.

This is the most important financial finding for the master plan. The department is being asked to maintain more facilities, expand programming, and modernize aging assets without a corresponding increase in operating budgets.

General Fund Recreation Revenues



Revenue generated by parks and recreation operations. FY 2026 shows budgeted revenue; earlier years show actual revenue.

SOURCE: CITY OF KINGSPORT BUDGET BOOKS.

Recreation revenues include program fees, athletics revenues, facility rentals, concessions, Farmers Market receipts, Carousel receipts, cultural arts revenues, Senior Center fees, Allandale revenues, and similar earned revenues. These revenues are important, but they do not replace the need for tax support. Most Parks and Recreation services are intentionally priced below full cost to preserve public access.

Approximate normalized General Fund recreation revenues show the following trend:

The trend shows a clear post-pandemic recovery from FY 2021 to FY 2022, followed by a relatively flat revenue pattern. In practical terms, the department's General Fund recreation revenue base has stabilized around $875,000 to $905,000 per year. This is a healthy and meaningful contribution, but it has not increased enough to materially offset rising operating costs.

Aquatic Center Enterprise Fund

The Kingsport Aquatic Center is accounted for as an enterprise fund. This means it is treated as a business-type activity for financial reporting purposes. Unlike the General Fund, enterprise funds are reported using full accrual accounting, which includes noncash expenses such as depreciation. For master plan purposes, the most useful question is not whether the Aquatic Center "breaks even" on a full accrual basis. The more useful questions are:

1. Does operating income cover a reasonable share of cash operating costs?
2. Is the facility priced and programmed to balance access, revenue, and regional draw?
3. Are capital improvements being planned for and funded?

Aquatic Center operating income has improved since FY 2021 but remains uneven.

There was a strong recovery from the pandemic period, with FY 2024 being the strongest year in the review period. FY 2025 softened, mostly due to planned capital improvements that interrupted services.

The Aquatic Center also depends on a recurring subsidy, primarily through Regional Sales Tax support. Transfers have generally ranged from approximately $1.86 million to $2.66 million during the review period.

In FY 2025, the Aquatic Center Fund earned approximately $1.47 million in operating revenue and had approximately $2.66 million in transfers against approximately $3.91 million in total expenses. On that basis, earned operating revenue provides roughly 36% of the overall revenue, while transfers provide roughly 64%.

Of the $3.91 million in expenses, approximately $2.29 million were operating related expenses. The remainder of the expenses mainly consist of debt obligation payments. This means operating revenue covered approximately 64% of operating expenses in FY 2025 with the remainder of the subsidy coming from the Regional Sales Tax Fund.

While the Aquatic Center generates substantial earned revenue, it is structurally dependent on ongoing subsidy to meet its full financial obligations. Regional Sales Tax transfers provide the financial capacity to cover the portion of operating costs not recovered through fees, satisfy debt service obligations associated with the original construction of the facility, and support future capital reinvestment. As a high-cost, high-wear facility, significant capital expenditures should be expected as a routine part of long-term operations.

The most important Aquatic Center conclusion is this: the facility can remain financially viable if the City maintains the Regional Sales Tax transfer as an intentional subsidy, maintains a clear pricing and revenue performance strategy, and establishes a strong capital replacement plan. Without a capital investment strategy, the fund may appear balanced in annual budget terms while still accumulating future repair obligations that must be met to continue operations.

Fiscal Year	Operating Income	Transfers	Other Revenue	Total Revenues	Total Expenditures
FY 2023 Actual	$1,373,028	$2,081,406	$32,725	$3,487,159	$3,336,602
FY 2024 Actual	$1,767,016	$2,589,624	$33,274	$4,389,914	$4,014,223
FY 2025 Actual	$1,471,280	$2,660,790	$33,771	$4,165,841	$3,909,082

Revenue and expense information for the previous three fiscal years at the Kingsport Aquatic Center.

SOURCE: CITY OF KINGSPORT BUDGET BOOKS.

Benchmark Comparison

National Recreation and Park Association benchmarking provides useful context, but it should be applied carefully. Kingsport has a unique system that includes a wide diversity of assets not found in other systems.

According to recent NRPA Agency Performance Review data, the national median operating expenditure for parks and recreation agencies is approximately $103 per capita. For agencies serving populations between 50,000 and 99,999 residents, the median operating expenditure is approximately $126 per capita. Using the FY 2026 normalized General Fund Parks and Recreation operating budget of approximately $6.35 million and a population of 56,000, Kingsport's core Parks and Recreation operating investment is approximately $113 per capita. This places Kingsport slightly above the overall national median but below the median for similarly sized agencies. When Bays Mountain is included, the operating investment rises to approximately $142 per capita, which exceeds the typical range for similarly sized agencies. Comparisons including Bays Mountain should be taken cautiously because Bays Mountain does not primarily exist as a city service for city residents but rather as a large regional nature-based destination.

NRPA benchmarking also tracks revenue generation and cost recovery. Nationally, the median parks and recreation agency generates approximately $29 per capita in revenue and recovers roughly 27% of operating expenditures through fees, charges, admissions, rentals, and other earned income. Agencies serving populations between 50,000 and 99,999 residents typically generate $45 per capita in revenue, recovering 33% in operating revenue. Kingsport's direct General Fund recreation revenue is approximately $904,400, or about $16 per capita. The core General Fund cost recovery rate is approximately 14%. Both measures fall below national medians. The system remains subsidy dependent, which is normal for municipal parks

	Operating expense per resident	Operating revenue per resident	Acres per 1,000 residents
KINGSPORT	$113	$16	7
PEER CITY	$126	$45	9
NATIONAL	$103	$29	10

Operating expense, revenue, and parkland acres for Kingsport, comparable agencies (50k – 100k residents), and national benchmarks.

SOURCE: NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION INDUSTRY METRICS, 2025.

and recreation systems but should be planned intentionally.

General Fund operating revenue and expenses per capita would increase significantly if the Aquatic Center revenue was recognized in the general fund.

Additional NRPA benchmarks provide further context. Nationally, agencies serving populations between 50,000 and 99,999 residents typically spend approximately 55% of their operating budgets on personnel and maintain 9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Based on the FY 2026 adopted Parks and Recreation budget, personnel-related expenditures account for approximately 65% of the department's operating budget. Excluding Bays Mountain Park, the

department maintains approximately 385 acres of parkland, athletic complexes, greenways, and recreation facilities. Based on an estimated service population of approximately 56,000 residents, this equates to roughly 7 acres per 1,000 residents, which is below the typical NRPA median range. Bays Mountain Park adds approximately 3,788 acres of natural area that are managed separately. Kingsport's core Parks and Recreation system maintains a relatively modest acreage base but supports a high concentration of developed facilities, athletic fields, and specialty amenities that increase maintenance and operating demands beyond those of many peer communities.

The benchmark takeaway is not that Kingsport is overspending or underspending in a simple way. Rather, Kingsport's core operating investment of approximately $113 per capita is generally within the national range but below the median for similar sized agencies. Its revenue generation and cost recovery metrics are below comparable medians, while its asset portfolio is broader and more complex than many comparable systems.

Financial Health and Operating Sustainability

The department needs a sustainable recurring operating base that grows with facilities, acreage, maintenance standards, staffing needs, and program expectations.

The financial risks facing Parks and Recreation are operational rather than immediate fiscal distress. The most important risks are:

- Operating budgets have been functionally flat since FY 2024 after normalizing for reorganization.
- Recreation revenues recovered from the pandemic but have not shown sustained growth.
- Maintenance responsibilities have increased as facilities age and new assets are added.
- The Aquatic Center depends on ongoing subsidy and faces major lifecycle reinvestment needs.
- Capital projects are being identified, but recurring operating impacts are not always fully reflected in future operating budgets.

These risks are manageable, but they require deliberate action. The City should avoid adding facilities, amenities, and programs without identifying the recurring operating funds needed to maintain them.

Kingsport’s operating investment is below the median for similar sized agencies, as are revenue generation and cost recovery, despite managing a large, complex asset portfolio.



Power of Play

Every recommendation in this Master Plan is intended to strengthen the places and experiences that bring people together.

Master Plan Goals & Strategies

The 2021 Master Plan set out 12 "Big Ideas"

Kingsport's 2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified 12 "Big Ideas" to guide the development of the City's parks and recreation services. Among its most significant accomplishments were two organizational changes: consolidating park maintenance operations into a single division and bringing recreation, senior services, aquatics, and cultural arts together under one Parks and Recreation Department. These changes created a more unified approach to service delivery and expanded the department's responsibilities. While progress has been made on many of the remaining Big Ideas, the new organizational structure created a need to revisit those priorities and consider them as part of a broader, coordinated parks and recreation system.

2021 Big Ideas and Status

2021 Big Idea (summarized)	Status
Parks and Facilities	
Extend the Greenbelt and other trails and add loops in existing parks	Partly completed | Work continues
Connect recreation to the Holston River and historic downtown	Carried forward
Add parks of at least 20 acres in north, east, and south Kingsport	Not in the 2026 plan
Programs	
Offer more nature and outdoor education programs	Carried forward
Support local sports and explore indoor tournament space	Carried forward
Add space for community events and consider an outdoor amphitheater	Partly carried forward
Staff & Operations	
Bring selected leisure services under Parks & Recreation	Completed
Increase funding and staff for maintenance, programs, and operations	Carried Forward
Train volunteers and partners and hold a joint planning session with partners	Partly carried forward
Partnerships	
Continue working with local and regional recreation partners	Carried Forward
Bring maintenance for park facilities under one team	Completed
Partner with developers and businesses on land donations and facilities	Partly completed

The 2026 Plan Organizes Work with Six Goals

Building on the progress of the 2021 plan, the 2026 Master Plan establishes six overarching goals supported by specific strategies. Rather than organizing priorities as 12 individual Big Ideas, the new plan groups related needs and initiatives under common goals, providing a clear framework for department-wide planning and decision-making. Many priorities from 2021 remain relevant and are carried forward, but have been refined to reflect updated public input, changing community needs, and the capabilities of the unified department. This approach preserves continuity with the previous plan while providing a coordinated direction for the next ten years.

The Six 2026 Goals

01 Preserve and modernize existing assets

02 Expand indoor and community recreation capacity

03 Strengthen outdoor, nature, and river recreation

04 Deliver responsive and diverse programming

05 Improve communication, customer experience, and partnerships

06 Build a sustainable implementation model

How to read the strategies

Each strategy is assigned to the early, mid, or late implementation sequence based on priority, resources, and its relationship to other actions.

E — EARLY
Implement as soon as practical. These are foundation items that set the groundwork.

M — MID
Implemented as resources become available and earlier strategies are underway.

L — LATE
Build on earlier action and expected to follow substantial completion of foundational actions.



GOAL 1

Preserve and Modernize Existing Assets

INTENT

Kingsport should prioritize lifecycle reinvestment and modernization of existing parks and facilities before major expansion.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Facility assessments, public input, and individual facility planning priorities consistently identified repair, replacement, maintenance, and deferred capital investment as the department's most immediate need. This goal establishes a more proactive approach to asset management while ensuring that underperforming sites receive timely attention.

Ⓔ Early Goal Strategy
Ⓜ Mid Goal Strategy
Ⓛ Late Goal Strategy

STRATEGIES

Address immediate risk-management sites and prepare formal stabilization, reuse, or disposition recommendations. Ⓔ
Recommendations should be presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission and Board of Mayor and Aldermen for consideration and direction.

Establish and annually update a systemwide ranked reinvestment plan. Ⓔ
The plan should prioritize facilities condition, public use, operating cost, strategic importance, and long-term service value.

Prepare site-specific reinvestment plans for the highest-priority facilities. Ⓜ
Concepts should identify intended use, deficiencies, recommended improvements, cost estimates, phasing, operating impacts, and staffing needs before major capital decisions are made.

Create a recurring lifecycle replacement program for high-wear components. Ⓜ
The department should inventory playgrounds, courts, surfaces, signage, furnishings, and other assets and establish replacement cycles for annual planning.

Establish systemwide maintenance, appearance, and signage standards. Ⓜ
Written standards and processes should define baseline expectations for park appearance, maintenance operations, signage, grounds maintenance, and public-facing conditions.

EARLY, MID, AND LATE TERM TARGETS

EARLY IMPLEMENTATION
Establish asset-management and reinvestment priorities.

MID-TERM PROGRESS
Deliver priority projects and recurring replacements.

LATE-TERM RESULTS
Maintain facilities through proactive lifecycle maintenance.

GOAL 2

Expand Indoor and Community Recreation Capacity



STRATEGIES

Evaluate and recommend a preferred approach for expanded indoor recreation space. Ⓔ
The evaluation should consider renovation, reconfiguration, acquisition, leased space, and phased development options to expand indoor recreation space.

Evaluate opportunities to expand year-round community recreation at Allandale Park and Mansion. Ⓔ
As one of the department's largest and most recognizable parks, Allandale offers significant opportunities to increase public recreation use. A comprehensive planning process should establish a phased vision for the property.

Improve multi-purpose use and program flexibility within existing facilities. Ⓜ
Priority spaces should be identified for reconfiguration, scheduling changes, or other changes that expand usable capacity. Spaces primarily used as rental space should be evaluated for public use and benefit.

Pursue funding to renovate the Renaissance Center to modernize the facility and better accommodate senior and arts programming. Ⓜ
Renovations should address current and future facility needs, including opportunities for multigenerational use while maintaining the Senior Center's primary focus on serving older adults.

INTENT

The department should expand and better use indoor recreation and community space to support athletics, community programming, senior programming, cultural activities, and year-round access.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Community feedback identified a need for more indoor recreation opportunities and year-round programming capacity. Existing facilities must be used more effectively while the City evaluates long-term solutions for additional indoor recreation space.

Ⓔ Early Goal Strategy
Ⓜ Mid Goal Strategy
Ⓛ Late Goal Strategy

EARLY, MID, AND LATE TERM TARGETS

EARLY IMPLEMENTATION
Optimize existing space and identify the preferred capacity solution.

MID-TERM PROGRESS
Advance solutions, partnerships, and expanded community recreation.

LATE-TERM RESULTS
Sustain a flexible network of year-round indoor recreation space.



GOAL 3

Strengthen Outdoor, Nature, and River Recreation

INTENT

Kingsport should continue investing in the outdoor amenities residents most closely associate with the community's identity and quality of life.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Residents consistently identified the Greenbelt, walking and biking routes, parks, natural areas, playgrounds, and outdoor recreation as some of Kingsport's greatest strengths. This goal strengthens those assets while improving access, natural-resource stewardship, and outdoor programming.

Ⓔ Early Goal Strategy
Ⓜ Mid Goal Strategy
Ⓛ Late Goal Strategy

STRATEGIES

Pursue funding to make priority repairs and renovations to the Greenbelt trail and support facilities. Ⓔ

Priority projects should go into grant applications, design, or construction as funding allows. Projects that address structural issues should be fast-tracked, if possible.

Protect natural resources while expanding nature-based recreation. Ⓔ

The department should establish dedicated professional capacity for natural-resource management and begin a comprehensive resource-management plan. Future developments should focus on developing nature-based outdoor recreation assets.

Prepare a recreation assessment of the Holston River and Reedy Creek corridors. Ⓜ

The assessment should document current recreation use, access conditions, constraints, opportunities, and potential improvements.

Develop and expand a structured outdoor recreation programming portfolio. Ⓜ

The department should establish a baseline schedule of outdoor programs and expand offerings as practical

Continue reinvestment in signature outdoor assets and destination parks. Ⓛ

Phased improvements should continue at Brickyard Park and other parks that reinforce Kingsport's outdoor identity and attract regular community use.

EARLY, MID, AND LATE TERM TARGETS

EARLY IMPLEMENTATION
Advance priority trail, river, and outdoor projects.

MID-TERM PROGRESS
Improve river and outdoor recreation opportunities.

LATE-TERM RESULTS
Maintain an outdoor system that defines Kingsport's identity.

GOAL 4

Deliver Responsive and Diverse Programming



STRATEGIES

Expand teen, young-adult, and adult programming where demand is strongest. Ⓔ
Priority program areas, participation targets, and pilot offerings should be identified, implemented, and evaluated annually.

Strengthen aquatics programming and lifeguard pathways. Ⓔ
An aquatics programming strategy should strengthen multigenerational programming and lifeguard pathways.

Maintain the City's role in recreational athletics while evaluating participation, partnerships, and affordability. Ⓔ
Core athletic services should continue while participation trends, program costs, facility needs, and partnership opportunities are reviewed regularly.

Make inclusive programming a department-wide initiative. Ⓜ
The department should establish common inclusion priorities and expand adaptive, accessible, and neighborhood-based programming across divisions.

Activate public spaces through arts, music, festivals, and community events. Ⓜ
Use parks and public gathering places to host a calendar of events that encourages community participation, supports local artists, attracts visitors, and strengthens neighborhood and downtown use.

INTENT

Programming should respond to demonstrated community demand while remaining aligned with the department's mission, staffing capacity, facility realities, and public value.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The program review and public engagement process identified strong interest in adult recreation, aquatics, cultural experiences, nature programming, family activities, inclusive recreation, and programs that serve residents across all life stages. The department should retain core strengths while adapting to emerging demand.

Ⓔ Early Goal Strategy
Ⓜ Mid Goal Strategy
Ⓛ Late Goal Strategy

EARLY, MID, AND LATE TERM TARGETS

EARLY IMPLEMENTATION
Align programs with demonstrated community demand.

MID-TERM PROGRESS
Expand access across ages, abilities, and neighborhoods.

LATE-TERM RESULTS
Maintain a balanced and responsive program portfolio.



GOAL 5

Improve Communication, Customer Experience, and Partnerships

INTENT

The department should communicate more clearly, standardize more processes, and make it easier for residents to understand and use the park and recreation system.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The consolidation process created an opportunity to establish a stronger, more recognizable department identity. Public input and internal assessment identified inconsistent information, uneven customer-facing procedures, fragmented messaging, and a need for stronger coordination among divisions and partners.

Ⓔ Early Goal Strategy
Ⓜ Mid Goal Strategy
Ⓛ Late Goal Strategy

STRATEGIES

Evaluate partnerships using consistent expectations and review practices. Ⓔ
The department should establish standard criteria for partnership purpose and annual review.

Continue improving internal organizational structure and cross-division coordination. Ⓔ
Roles, reporting relationships, and staffing priorities should support efficient operations and consistent service delivery across all divisions.

Simplify the park system by organizing parks into a clear and consistent management structure. Ⓔ
Evaluate the department's existing park unit structure and identify opportunities to consolidate management areas. A simplified system will improve public communication and understanding.

Develop a department-wide communications plan. Ⓜ
The plan should establish brand standards, coordinated promotional practices, and clear department identity.

Improve public information across websites, maps, signs, brochures, and social media. Ⓜ
A public-information audit should identify gaps and establish a phased schedule for improving consistency and usability.

Establish systemwide customer-service standards. Ⓛ
Standards should address customer facing processes and procedures for consistency and ease of use.

EARLY, MID, AND LATE TERM TARGETS

EARLY IMPLEMENTATION
Establish more consistent communications and service practices.

MID-TERM PROGRESS
Strengthen partnerships and customer experience.

LATE-TERM RESULTS
Operate as one recognizable department delivering exceptional service.

GOAL 6

Build a Sustainable Implementation Model



STRATEGIES

Establish a master plan implementation workflow. Ⓔ
The workflow should identify initiatives, accountable leads, supporting staff, budget implications, funding sources, progress status, and next steps.

Pursue a diversified funding strategy. Ⓔ
Annual funding priorities should include City capital funding, grants, sponsorships, partnerships, and other appropriate sources.

Evaluate staffing, operating, maintenance, and temporary-workforce impacts before expansion. Ⓔ
Major new facilities, programs, services, operating hours, or capital projects should include an operating-impact analysis before proceeding.

Publish an annual master plan progress update and conduct a formal review at least every two years. Ⓔ
Updates should report completed actions, active projects, funding secured, changing conditions, recommended adjustments, and next-year priorities.

Tie annual operating and capital requests to the master plan and facility prioritization matrix. Ⓜ
New capital, staffing, operating, and major maintenance requests should identify the applicable master plan action and documented need.

INTENT

The department should link planning, budgeting, maintenance, staffing, funding, and public reporting into one master plan implementation process.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The master plan will only remain useful if its priorities shape annual decisions. Facility lifecycle needs, staffing pressures, capital requests, maintenance requirements, and new-service proposals must be evaluated together so that the department can grow responsibly and sustain the assets and programs already in place.

Ⓔ Early Goal Strategy
Ⓜ Mid Goal Strategy
Ⓛ Late Goal Strategy

EARLY, MID, AND LATE TERM TARGETS

EARLY IMPLEMENTATION
Integrate the master plan into decision-making.

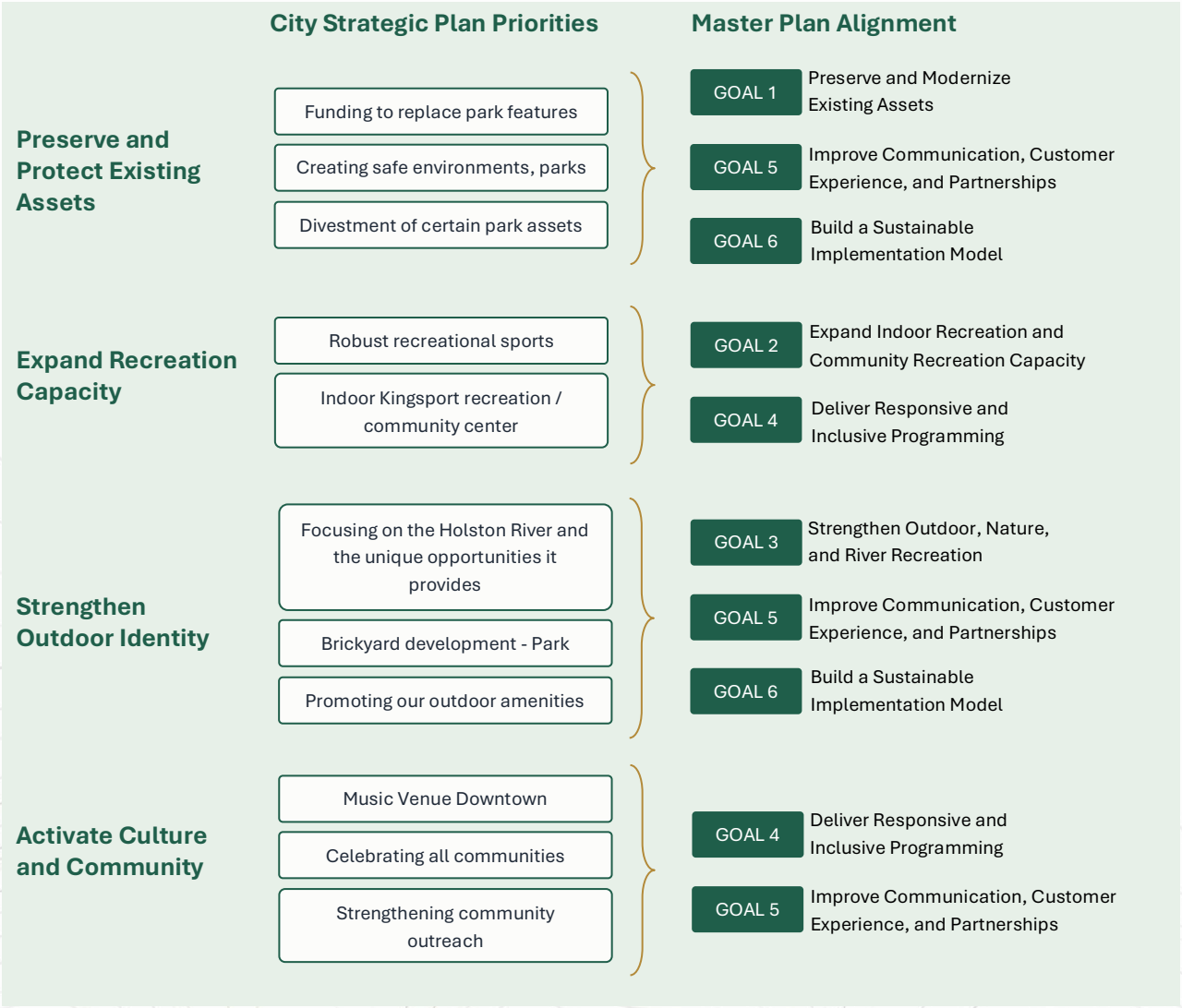
MID-TERM PROGRESS
Align budgeting, staffing, and capital planning with goals.

LATE-TERM RESULTS
Maintain continuous planning and accountability in decision making.

The Master Plan Advances the City's Strategic Plan

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan directly advances the City of Kingsport's 2025 Strategic Plan, particularly in Strategic Focus Area 3: Exceptional Cultural and Recreational Opportunities and Strategic Focus Area 6: Strong & Vibrant Neighborhoods.

The Master Plan translates these citywide priorities into a more detailed ten-year implementation plan for the Parks and Recreation Department. Each goal is designed to move the Strategic Plan from broad direction to specific action.



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