

## IV. Public Participation

An extensive effort was made to obtain community input on the existing condition and perceived needs for indoor and outdoor recreation in the community. The mechanisms used were public surveys, school visits/teen surveys, and personal interviews.

**A. Public Survey** - Individuals were provided with ample opportunities to complete an eleven question survey. Surveys were distributed through the *Winchester Sun*, youth leagues, churches, schools, REA and the internet. Detailed survey results are shown in Attachment A. A total 576 individuals responded to the survey with the analysis shown below.

1. **Optional Information** - Only a portion of the respondents disclosed their name and/or address. Thus, it could not be determined appropriately what percentage of individuals were within a rural or urban area. A total 492 (85%) responded to the number in their household as follows:

**Table 8  
 Number in Household**

Number	Amount	Percent of Total
1	19	3.9
2	146	29.7
3	100	20.3
4	137	27.8
5	58	11.8
6	17	3.5
7	7	1.4
8	5	1.0
9	2	0.4
10	1	0.2

2. **How often do you visit a public park?** - A total 554 (96%) responded to this question. Responses in order of frequency are:

**Table 9  
 Frequency of Park Visitation**

Frequency	Amount	Percent Of Total
Twice a week or more	149	26.9
Once every six months	101	18.2
Once a week	90	16.2
Twice a month	82	14.8
Once a month	81	14.6
Once a year	46	8.3
First time visiting	5	0.9

A total 239 individuals, 43 percent of the total respondents are frequent park users--once, twice, or more per week. Individuals utilizing the parks once or twice a month totaled 163 or 29% of the total. Infrequent users, once every six months or less, totaled 152, or 27%. From this information it is recognized that the public parks system is heavily utilized by the community.

3. ***Do you feel that there are adequate parks and recreational facilities in Winchester-Clark County?*** - A total 555 (96%) responded to the adequacy of facilities. Most individuals--304, or 54.8%--stated that there are adequate facilities with only 45 respondents (8.1%) stating that the facilities are very adequate. Inadequacy was noted by 206 respondents or 37.1%.
4. ***How would you rank the condition of the existing facilities?*** A total 562, or 98%, ranked the facilities as shown:

**Table 10  
Ranking Condition of Existing Facilities**

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Percent Of Total</b>
Very Adequate	2	0.4
Excellent	90	16.0
Good	285	50.7
Fair	156	27.8
Poor	28	5.0
Very Poor	1	0.2

A total 377 respondents, or 67%, were pleased with the condition of the facilities (very adequate, excellent, good) with 185 (33%) showing displeasure (fair, poor, very poor).

5. ***How do you feel about the condition of the existing facilities?*** - 549, or 95%, responded to the condition with 369, or 67%, being satisfied or very satisfied. A total 99 individuals (18%) are either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with 81, or 15%, not having an opinion. Results are shown:

**Table 11  
Attitude Toward Existing Facilities Condition**

<b>Condition</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Percent Of Total</b>
Very Satisfied	63	11.5
Satisfied	306	55.7
Unsatisfied	97	17.7
Very Unsatisfied	2	0.4
Do Not Know	81	14.8

6. ***Do you feel that Winchester-Clark County needs more active facilities?*** - Respondents were asked to state their need for the below listed six active facilities along with space to list other facilities. Only one response was received for a facility not listed. Respondents did not check each facility since the total responses ranged from the highest (indoor pool) at 501 and the lowest (tennis courts) at 407. The facility with the highest positive (453) and lowest negative (48) response was for an indoor pool. Respondents indicated that tennis courts were the least needed with the highest negative (196) and lowest positive (211) response. In all cases the yes's outnumbered the no's.

**Table 12  
Need for More Active Facilities**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Yes/% Total</b>	<b>No/% Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
Indoor Pool	453 / 90.4	48 / 9.6	501
Gymnasium	367 / 81.6	83 / 18.4	450
Fitness Center	303 / 67.8	144 / 32.2	447
Athletic Fields	294 / 66.2	150 / 33.8	444
Skateboard Ramps	288 / 64.9	156 / 35.1	444
Tennis Courts	211 / 51.8	196 / 48.2	407

7. ***Do you feel that Winchester-Clark County needs more passive parks space?*** - Respondents were asked to state their need for the below listed five activities and were also provided space to list other activities. A total 425 responses were received in other. Each listed facility was not checked since the total responses ranged from the highest, 515 (nature walks), to the lowest, 355 (boat docks). The facility with the highest positive (452) and lowest negative (48) response was for nature walks. Respondents indicated that boat docks were the least needed with the highest negative (144) and lowest positive (211) response. In all cases the yes's outnumbered the no's.

**Table 13  
Need for More Passive Facilities**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Yes/% Total</b>	<b>No/% Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
Nature Walks	452 / 87.8	63 / 12.2	515
Hiking Trails	435 / 85.3	75 / 14.7	510
Fishing Areas	365 / 77.0	109 / 23.0	474
Camping Areas	357 / 76.1	112 / 23.9	469
Boat Docks	211 / 59.4	144 / 40.6	355

8. ***What, if anything, do you think could be done to improve the parks system in Winchester-Clark County?*** - A total 300, or 52%, responded to this question. A wide array of comments were provided relating to the need for specific facilities, activities, programming, funding and maintenance. Although some comments were site specific most related to overall needs. Some of the comments included the need to provide facilities for teens, the need to fund the parks system, more and better playgrounds, programs (arts/crafts, environmental, etc.) increased maintenance in certain parks, and more parks. A need was also seen to contain dogs in specific areas--dog park.
9. ***How did you get to the park today?*** - A total 525 (91%) responded to this question. Although the survey asked for a response in four categories--automobile, bicycle/motorcycle; walk, and other--respondents checked combinations of the categories. The vast majority (457, 87%) indicated that they drove to the park. Responses included the following:

**Table 14**  
**Mode of Transportation to Park**

Mode of Transportation	Amount	Percent of Total
Automobile	457	87.0
Automobile, Bicycle	4	0.6
Automobile, Walk	26	5.0
Bicycle	2	0.4
Bicycle, Walk	1	0.2
Bicycle, Motorcycle	1	0.2
Boat	1	0.2
Bus	1	0.2
Walk	26	5.0
Do Not Know	4	0.8
Other	2	0.4

10. ***In what age groups do the people in your household fall?*** - Respondents were asked to circle all categories that apply; therefore, the response rate for this question could not be determined. There were a total 1,534 individuals identified in seven age groups. The age group most checked was 36-50 with 308 responses at 20.1%. The least checked was the 65+ group with 135 at 8.8%. The under 10 to 17 groups accounted for 545 at 36%. The 18-35 groups accounted for 362 at 24%. The 36-64 age groups totaled 492, 32%. The age groups were:

**Table 15**  
**Age Groups Within Household**

Age Group	Amount	Percent Of Total
Under 10	261	17.0
10-17	284	18.5
18-25	147	9.6
26-35	215	14.0
36-50	308	20.1
51-64	184	12.0
65+	135	8.8

11. ***Several counties in the surrounding area are focusing on the development of a multi-purpose one-stop recreational complex. These are year-round facilities, which serve all income and age groups. Which of the following, if any, would you like to see included in such a complex for Winchester-Clark County?*** Respondents were asked to circle all that would apply in the following categories:
- fitness center - walking, jogging, bicycling, weight training, aerobics, indoor basketball
  - social center - safe place for friends and family to gather, plenty of places to sit and relax, areas for picnics, concerts, classes, events, playgrounds
  - cultural center - support for local and regional artists, craftsmen, musicians, actors/amphitheater, indoor theater, gallery
  - meeting center
  - aquatic center
  - none

Total responses where at least 1 category was marked was 541 or 94%. Each response was positive except for one negative for a social center. However, a social center was seen as the greatest need within a multi-purpose complex (352, 65%) with the meeting area (129, 23.8%) least needed. Fifteen respondents indicated no need.

**Table 16  
Need for Facilities Within  
Multi-Purpose Recreational Complex**

Function	Amount	Percent of Total
Social Center	352	65.1
Fitness Center	341	63.0
Aquatic Center	239	44.2
Cultural Center	219	40.5
Meeting Center	129	23.8
None	15	2.8

**Comments** - Individuals were provided an opportunity on the survey form to add comments. Only three comments were negative. The remaining related to the need for specific facilities, activities, programming, funding and maintenance. The need for passive facilities generated the greatest amount of response with the need for an aquatic and multi-purpose center generating the second greatest. Other comments included the need to provide facilities for teens, the need to fund the parks system, more and better playgrounds, programs (arts/crafts, environmental, etc.), increased maintenance in certain parks, and more parks. A need was also seen to contain dogs in specific areas--dog park. Individuals also questioned the status of the Fish & Game Club property which is leased by the city until 2005.

**Implications of the Survey** - An important component of this survey shows decisively which facilities are most in demand. The demand for passive recreation is slightly higher than that for active with 54 more responses for passive activities. The survey results clearly indicate that within the passive category nature walks and hiking trails are seen as a priority. These could be combined in one facility. In the active category an indoor pool is a high community need, with 87% of the respondents indicating the need. A gymnasium at 82% is a close second. These activities could be combined in a multi-purpose complex. In addition to the activity needs, a vast amount of comments from respondents indicated the need to provide more parks with improved activities for all ages. The average park user is within a household of 2 to 4 and drives to the facility once or twice a week. Overall, respondents feel that there are adequate parks and recreation facilities within the community and rate those facilities as being good.

**B. School Interviews**

A total 100 students were interviewed in a classroom setting, with 41 seventh grade (19 at Clark Middle and 22 at Conkwright) and 59 George Rogers Clark High School students. Discussion was held with the students and responses encouraged. The students had some good, well thought out ideas. A survey form was completed by each student. The results of the survey with comments are included as Appendix B. High school students also had an opportunity to design their ideal park within a 25 acre site. Six designs were submitted.

The typical teen lives in Winchester and has not heard about the recreation survey. Parents usually drive the teen to the park; however, it is generally once a month or less. Additionally, most teenagers do not visit a public park outside Winchester-Clark County.

Most teens, 58%, interviewed do not play an organized sport. Of those that do (42%) most play basketball and soccer through school.

Most teens, 66%, feel that Winchester-Clark County does not have adequate parks and recreation facilities. An indoor pool is seen as the overall highest priority with 62% recognizing the need. The second highest need is hiking trails at 45%. Camping areas, at 42% and skateboard park, at 41%, follow closely.

Teens exhibit a need for socialization--a place to "hang-out". They like the idea of a teen center and understand the need to have controls and supervision. They want to be with their friends participating in activities such as dances, skating, bowling (at improved alley), parks with "mature" play equipment, paintball, among others. The need for socialization is also exhibited in the teens needs for a mall and more restaurants.

A skate park was discussed as a need particularly by the high school students. The teens expressed an interest in helping with the design, construction, and funding of the park.

Overall, the teens expressed a genuine interest and willingness to share their opinions. They appreciated the opportunity to comment and asked if there would be additional meetings requesting their input.

### C. Personal Interviews

In an effort to allow for more input, personal interviews were conducted with community leaders interested in expanding recreational opportunity within the community. Individuals represented the following organization or sport:

Civitan	Baseball
Soccer	4th of July Festival
Daniel Boone Pioneer Festival	Winchester First
Men's Church Softball	Generations Center
School Athletics	YMCA
Co. Extension Office	Industrial Authority
Chamber of Commerce	Tourism Commission
Clark Co. Fish & Game Club	Clark Co. Assoc. for Handicapped

Individuals were asked the following questions.

1. ***Have you completed a survey form?*** - Individuals interviewed were well informed on community activities, were aware of the master plan process and completed a survey.
2. ***Do you feel there are adequate facilities within Winchester-Clark County?*** - Most individuals felt that there is a need for improvement specifically for walking trails, gymnasium, and indoor pool. The need for more parks was also expressed in light of the existing and future growth in the community.
3. ***In your opinion, what is the condition of the local public parks?*** - The overall opinion relating to the condition is good considering the limited staff available. Programming should be provided to encourage participation by seniors and young mothers.

4. **What type of image does the Winchester-Clark County parks system project?** - The image of the parks system is viewed as good. Maintenance of the parks is very good considering the small budget for the Parks Department. Due to budget constraints the parks system is not keeping up with growth demands. More funding should be provided to allow for more development. Individuals need to be educated on the importance of parks and what the parks department is providing to the community with its limited resources.
5. **What do you feel are the needs for facilities and programs?** - A need exists for a skate park and indoor pool. The parks system needs to work with the YMCA to avoid duplication. More programs should be added for all age groups. Some felt that the YMCA's gymnasium plans would fill community needs.
6. **Is there a need for a one-stop, year-round multi-purpose facility with opportunities for activities such as: aquatic, fitness, socialization, culture and meetings?** - Most felt that an aquatic complex would be a good addition to the community. However, others felt that a community center with meeting and programming space is a priority.