

3.4.3 – Marketing Plan

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Date



New Bern Parks and Recreation MARKETING PLAN

The marketing plan is used to gain an understanding of our customer needs, wants, concerns and behaviors. The plan includes strategies to promote interest in the department, the benefits of parks and recreation, participation in our programs and visitation to our parks to various segments of the target audience.

Our Mission – To enhance the quality of life for all citizens through the development of sustainable facilities, parks, programs, and services that promote a lifestyle of cultural arts, physical activity and wellness for all.

Our Tag Line – “Family, Fun, and Fitness come together here.”

Marketing Objectives:

- To distribute relevant parks and recreation information via flyers, press releases, and social media in a timely manner.
- Provide well-written, accurate information to the public.
- Share unique insights about all city parks via the website and social media.
- Share photos, and videos of activities, parks, programs, and special events to generate interest.
- Educate the public on parks and recreation-related issues through shared links, photos, and videos.
- Work with community partners on special events, programs and volunteer initiatives such as the annual MumFest. Specialized programs such as pickleball nature/outdoor education, community clean-up days, and more.
- Increase the awareness of our department through the smart use of social media.

Situation Assessment:

Demographic information has been compiled from the United Census Bureau Quick Facts page for New Bern, NC.

Population

- (*Most recent estimate – April 1, 2020*) 31,291

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Age and Sex

- Persons under 5 years 5.9%
- Persons under 18 years 21.3%
- Persons 65 years and over 22.7%
- Females 52.5%

Race and Hispanic Origin

- White 56.8%
- Black or African American 31.2%
- American Indian 0.3%
- Asian 5.9%
- Two or more races 1.6%
- Hispanic or Latino 8.0%

Housing

- Owner-occupied housing 56.9%

Computer and Internet Use

- Households with a computer 89.6%

Education

- High School graduate or higher 85.6%
- Bachelor's degree or higher 27.7%

Health

- With a disability, under age 65 9.9%

Income and Poverty

- Median household income \$43,406
- Per capita Income \$30,483
- Person's in poverty 18.5%

Geography

- Size (*source - City of New Bern*) 29.79 sq. miles
- Population per square mile 1,045.9

Race and Ethnicity

In analyzing race and ethnicity, the City of New Bern has remained the same from past years. 2020 statistics shows that 89% of the population falls into the White Alone (56.8%) and Black Alone (32.2%) categories. Future predictions expect the population to remain mostly concentrated within the two largest racial categories, with the White Alone and Black Alone representing 61.6% and 34.4%, respectively. Based on future projections, the Asian population and those belonging to two or more races are expected to continue to remain the same as well. As expected from the last update the Hispanic/Latino population grew from 6.8% and to 8% of the total population. This race and ethnic composition will have an impact on the nature of programs offered as well as the marketing and outreach strategies employed by New Bern Parks and Recreation. Specifically, we will continue to

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provide programs and services for the major groups while developing specific programs and events targeting the Hispanic/Latino and Asian American demographic.

Age & Sex

Our largest demographic are people under the age of 18 (21.3%) and people 65 and older (22.7%). This information will allow us to specifically target these ages groups for programs and events. The female population comprises slightly over half (52.5%) of the total population of New Bern. This trend will affect programming by offering a balance of programs and events targeting both genders.

Housing

The housing market has been on an upswing since 2018. With this new housing trend, our department is carefully examining potential areas for new parks, facilities, and based on the population dynamics, programming needs, and special events. New Bern has multiple new housing developments in the works such as the West New Bern development phase two set to include an additional 140 single-family homes and Blue Water Rise which will include numerous single-family homes.

Education Level

85.6% of adults 25 years and older in the City of New Bern have at least a high school diploma, but only 27.7% have a bachelor's degree or better. This is slightly less than the national average. Using this information, our department has plans to offer more educational opportunities and seek partnerships with local educational institutions.

Computer Use and Internet

Nearly 89.6% of households in New Bern have computers and/or internet access, this indicates a need to make greater use of online and social media tools to seek information for program development and implementation. Continuing to focus on online promotion, marketing, community input efforts, and capitalizing on the benefits of social media will be an on-going goal.

Economic Climate

The City of New Bern's tagline is - "Everything comes together here". There's a good reason for that. Located in the inland coastal region of North Carolina, at the confluence of the Trent and Neuse Rivers, New Bern is a thriving community with small-town charm and big city events and activities. The downtown is a thriving destination with plenty of bnb's, hotels, restaurants, quaint shops, bars, and lots of excitement. Our economic climate supports growth and growth opportunities.

Business and Housing:

- The City of New Bern and Craven Community College received a nearly \$1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) to transform one of the gateways into New Bern. The grant was used to modify

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the City's old electric generation plant and warehouse (which dates to the 1940s) into a regional workforce development and training center in 2019.

- B/S/H of New Bern, a European-based appliance manufacturer (Gaggenau, Thermador, Bosch), recently announced a major expansion. B/S/H plans to increase production by 50% creating additional local jobs and build a new \$32 million facility in order to accommodate staff and operations for continued growth.
- Carolina East Health System, New Bern's regional medical center, has been working on a \$64 million construction project which created the Women's Center and expanded the Emergency Room. Recently, the hospital partnered with UNC Health Care in a commitment to developing a comprehensive cancer care center that will be called the SECU Comprehensive Cancer Center at CarolinaEast Medical Center.
- Along New Bern's major retail corridor of Martin Luther King Junior Boulevard/Highway 17, the world's largest Harris Teeter now calls New Bern Home. Located at the New Bern Marketplace, this retail development also features Ulta, Ross, West Marine, Five Below, Academy Sports, Hobby Lobby, Home Goods Store, and Rack Room Shoes.
- The housing market has been on fire since Hurricane Florence in 2018. Many new housing developments are under construction and in West New Bern, A Weyerhaeuser Community has started on phase two of a 540 development which includes the addition of 140 single-family homes.

Market Coverage by Alternative Providers

There are several other recreational service providers in the area. These providers include, but are not limited to, Craven County Parks and Recreation, the YMCA, Planet Fitness, area golf courses, private swimming pools, niche fitness centers, arts and craft businesses, athletic associations and churches. In order to remain competitive, New Bern Parks & Recreation has partnered with certain entities (Sunday School League, Craven County Parks and Recreation) in order to remain relevant with youth athletics. The department continues to stay strong in providing a variety of activities, programs and special events to the community.

Segmentation, Targeting & Positioning

Segmentation

We have identified the following segments of our population:

- Youth age 3 – 15.
- Homeschoolers.
- Families with young children (15 & under).
- Newcomers (those who have moved to New Bern within the last two years).
- Longtime residents
- Seniors for social gathering and travel.
- Adults (18+) interested in athletics.
- Outdoor enthusiasts (water, biking, running, ornithology, nature).
- All ages interested in cultural arts.
- Those with developmental disabilities.

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- Visitors (Special events, local history).

Targeting

Based on the Community Inventory, we have determined that there should be a focus on the following:

- Families with young children
- Outdoor enthusiasts
- Seniors
- Adult programming
- Longtime residents
- Newcomers.

Positioning

We have determined the best way to target these population segments include the following:

Social media

- By posting meaningful information, photos and videos in a timely manner.
- Utilizing the City of New Bern Parks and Recreation website.
- Providing press releases to all media outlets.
- Utilizing RecDesk mass distribution email system.
- Using social media as mass distribution has proven effective, reaching over 10,000 followers. In 2017 social media followers was approximately 300. In 2022 this number has grown to over 10,000.

Partnerships

- Work with area non-profits and community interest groups to get our information out.
- Set up vendor booths at area events to promote our brand.

Marketing Mix

Our marketing mix is determined by the 4 p's listed below:

Product

- Our product is quality of life. This includes quality parks and facilities, meaningful recreation programs for a variety of interests, and engaging special events.

Place

- The best place to see what New Bern has to offer is online at our parks and recreation page at www.NewBernNC.gov and on the social media platforms, currently Facebook and Twitter.

Price

- All products and services offered through our department are competitive with area businesses and parks and recreation departments. We strive to provide a value in our pricing.

Promotion

- We promote our brand and offerings on a consistent basis through social media, websites, Press releases and the PEG channel. We target our advertising promotions at key times of the day, namely morning – before work and evening – after work.

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According to our metrics, the key times for social media releases are around 8:00pm on weeknights.

Marketing Methods

The department marketing methods are detailed in the Community Relations Plan.

Evaluation Criteria & Methods

New Bern Parks and Recreation recognizes the importance of data collection to measure customer expectations and satisfaction. Some of the evaluation criteria include the following:

- Community Input Meetings
- Needs Assessments
- Participant surveys
- Provider surveys
- One on one conversations
- Suggestion box

When evaluations have been completed, the results are analyzed and discussed with the appropriate staff to adjust in the activity, program, and/or special event.