

New Bern Parks and Recreation Outreach to Diverse Underserved Populations

New Bern Parks and Recreation strives to serve all residents and makes a special effort to identify and reach out to underserved groups including those with the following potential barriers:

Disabilities. New Bern Parks and Recreation is a long-time sponsor of the annual Visually Impaired Persons (VIP) Fishing Tournament. New Bern Parks and Recreation provides support with transportation to, from, and during the event along with staff to assist the participants while fishing, socializing, dining, and with their hotel accommodations. This ensures citizens with visual impairments have access to the VIP Fishing Tournament.

Social. New Bern Parks and Recreation recognized there was a large population of homeschooled students in our local area. To provide these students with access to more play, recreation, and physical activities, specific programs such as the Trash 2 Treasure Art Program was developed. The Trash 2 Treasure Art Program allowed homeschooled students an opportunity to create various pieces of art from everyday household items. This program increased creativity and socialization among a diverse population who otherwise may not have met. In addition, a designated open gym time was set up for homeschooled students. During this time, they had access to recreational equipment and an opportunity for physical activity and socialization.

Geographical. Due to extensive flooding caused by Hurricane Florence, the Stanley White Recreation Center was closed. This caused local neighborhoods to lose access to daily recreational, and social opportunities. In these neighborhoods, transportation is often a barrier. To continue providing recreational and social opportunities to this group of citizens, New Bern Parks and Recreation entered an agreement with The New Bern Area Improvement Association to provide recreation programs and services at the Jasper G. Hayes Omega Center. This facility is in the same neighborhood as the Stanley White Recreation Center. The residents in these neighborhoods now have access to recreational and social opportunities, such as summer camp, afterschool program, and drop-in activities.