



**ROCKY MOUNT**  
PARKS AND RECREATION  
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

*Battle Park Master Plan*  
*Rocky Mount, NC*  
*Spring 2020*



## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

Approved by Rocky Mount City Council May 26, 2020.

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## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Executive Summary

The Battle Park Master Plan is the result of numerous public meetings, the review of existing planning documents, the consideration of natural and historical areas within the park, the original intent of the park and the recreational needs of the community. The plan was developed to provide a sustainable park for the citizens of Rocky Mount and the region for many years to come.

Through a series of public, stakeholder and group meetings (pp 33-53), the public selected and prioritized (pp 23-25) the recreational amenities preferred in the renovated park. Public input indicated a preference for self-led utilization of the park's resources; however, development will be conducted in a manner that also enables staff-led or instructor-led outdoor recreation. Using the self-sustaining framework of the Outdoor Recreation Division, future operating budgets may include staff, instructors, environmental educators or park rangers.

The history of the park dates to Paleo-Indian settlements in 9,000 BC, Tuscaroran encampments (1,000 BC) and the mill community that became modern-day Rocky Mount. The renovated park will share this history and the park's natural setting via interpretive and educational signage. Development of the signage will be completed through cooperation with the Tuscaroran Nation, North Carolina Environmental Education, local and UNC system universities and various State and Federal agencies. Professional archaeologists are on the project team on an as-needed basis to ensure no relevant archaeological or historical sites are disturbed during the renovation of the park; this includes the known cemetery and any other possible artifacts or burial grounds.

The renovated park can support local or on-site livery operators (canoe/kayak rentals) and outdoor recreation providers, however the economic benefits to our citizens also include:

- Increased tourism revenue - recreation attraction
- Health and quality of life benefits to all citizens
- Business recruitment and employee retention
- Increased real estate values
- Decreased medical costs - exercise
- Decreased stormwater treatment costs

Future phases of development which includes expanding to adjacent City-owned parcels can include a treehouse village, pedestrian bridge spanning the river, canopy tour (zip lines), outdoor sculpture, etc.

The flood zones, wetlands, on-site dam, archeological matters and natural areas of the park all provided the framework for design. Floodway areas such as Panther Island and the smaller island that have restrictive regulations that inhibit development comprise 60% of the park. An additional 15% of the park is in the floodplain, which regulates most vertical development and non-permeable surfaces. The 25% of the park that is not in the flood zone has the 1800's mill cemetery and the Rocky Mount mound, these areas will not be developed. City staff has partnered with all regulatory authorities to seek full compliance in the planning, design, development and management of the park. The project has been submitted to the NC Clearinghouse and the NCDEQ for review.

*The Park Plan provides information to serve as a guide for park renovation and future management. Much of the format is based upon Federal and State best management practices and grant requirements. Citation is provided in-text or on-page as possible to enable individual sections of the document to be utilized individually as needed.*

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

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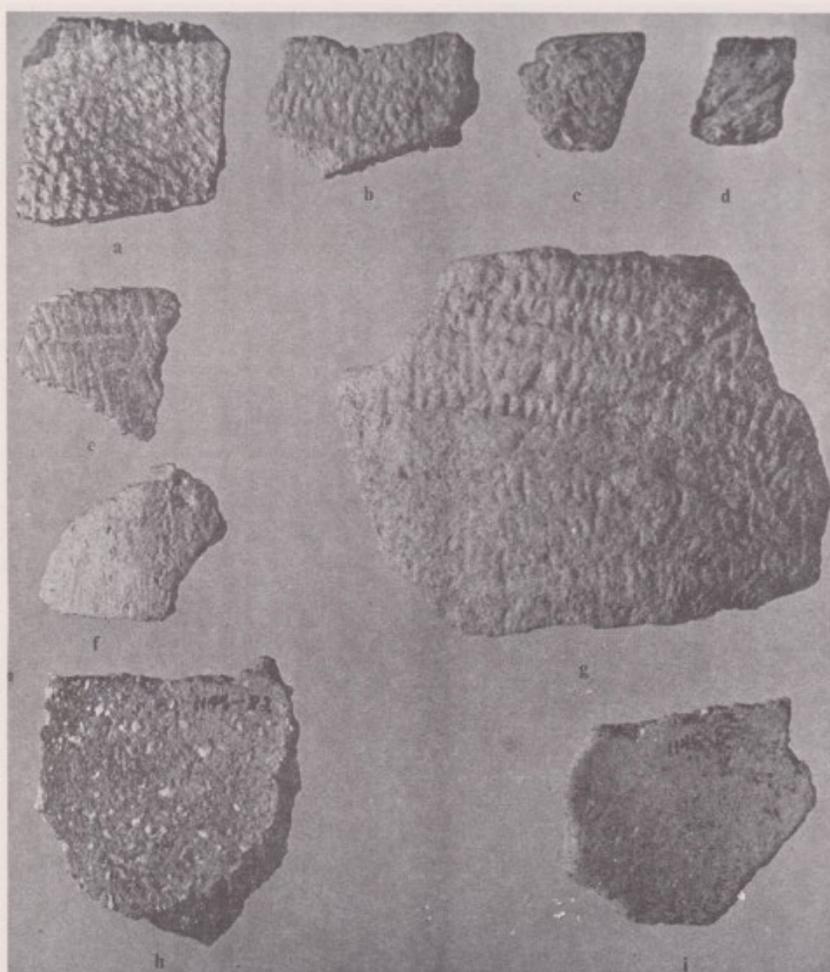
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### History and Park Use

#### Battle Park Area History

The area of modern-day Battle Park has long been the site of human habitation. As part of the design and alignment of US-64 the area was included in the East Carolina University *Archaeological Salvage of the Thorpe Site and Other Investigations* (David Sutton Phillips, ECU, 1980). Ceramic and projectile shards found onsite indicate both Paleo-Indian and Tuscarora tribes' seasonal settlements dating back to 9,000 BC and 1,000 BC respectively.



Ceramic and projectile shards from Battle Park area  
*University Archaeological Salvage of the Thorpe Site and Other Investigations*

In 1816 Joel Battle and his partners began construction of a cotton mill at the natural fall line of the Tar River. Harnessing the power of the river, Rocky Mount Mills opened in 1818, becoming the second cotton mill in North Carolina. A post office to serve the growing community was opened near the rocky mound, which is located within Battle Park. Local lore holds the postal service mis-spelled the sign for the “Rocky Mound” post office as “Rocky Mount” and a City received its name.

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Rocky Mount Mills, Rocky Mount N.C. postcard

Durwood Barbour Collection of North Carolina Postcards (P077), North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill

### **Past Recreational Use**

The location of the Tar River fall line has provided the Battle Park area numerous opportunities for recreational use for centuries. With the many boulders and moderate flow of the river, it is reasonable to assume both Paleo Indian and Tuscarora tribes spent leisure time along the banks of the river. Photographs show the area of modern-day Battle Park as a leisure and cultural destination at the turn of the last century. A stage on the riverbank and a corresponding pedestrian bridge to the islands enabled patrons to enjoy the cool breeze of the river valley while enjoying an evening show. The bridge-supports remain visible in the park and the Tar River.

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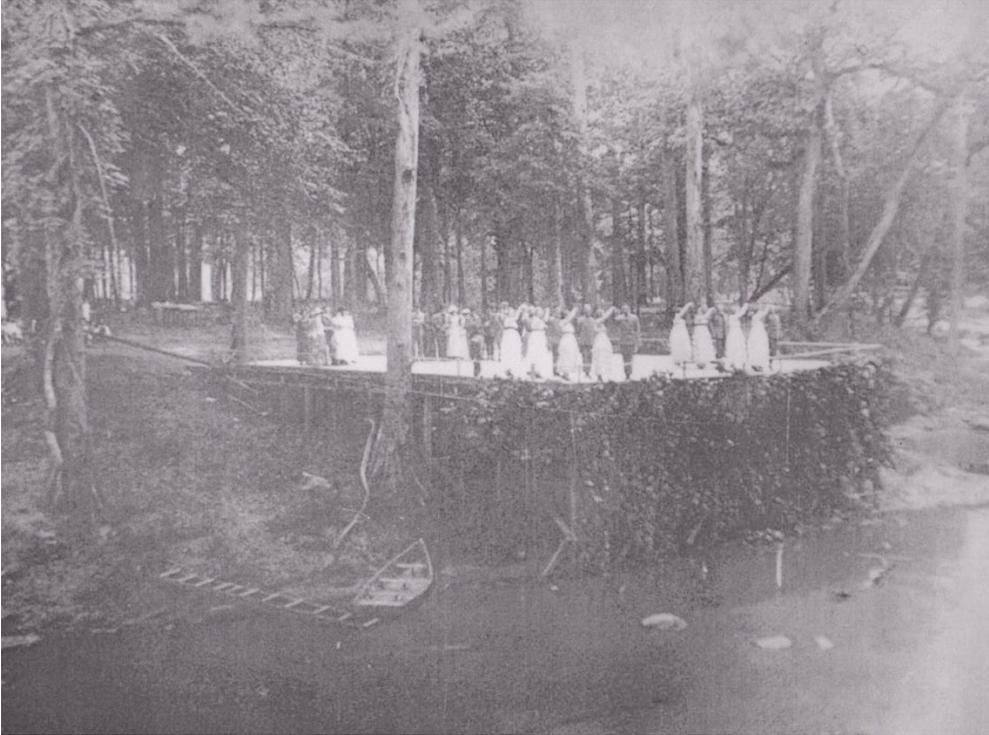


Photo of Dance at Battle Park  
City of Rocky Mount, City Hall Collection



Photo of Pedestrian Bridge at Battle Park  
Photo of unknown origin

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Battle Park is well known throughout eastern and central North Carolina for the annual migration of shad and striped bass, known locally as rock. This cultural heritage, which includes all socioeconomic groups has been passed from generation to generation and continues to mark the peak of park visitation each year.



Fishermen in the Tar River at Battle Park

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### Design Considerations

In the past 20 years, the City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department has completed numerous park projects contained in the 1999, 2005 and 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plans. As many were associated with Hurricane Floyd recovery, the associated Park Plans included the consideration of flood zones. All projects considered the recreation level of service, how well the parks system meets the needs of the public, as well as the public's expressed recreation preferences for the park. The renovation of Battle Park included more matters to consider concerning design, renovation and future management. These include:

- Original Stated Use
- Flood Zones
- Safety and CPTED
- Woodland Stewardship
- Planning
  - Planning Documents
  - Public Meetings
  - Stakeholder Group Meetings
  - Local Group Meetings

### Original Stated Use

In 1968, Battle Park was one of nine parks acquired by the City of Rocky Mount through a series of Land and Water Conservation Fund applications. Chapter 8-3 of the LWCF State Assistance Program Manual provides guidance concerning LWCF properties.

*Property acquired or developed with LWCF assistance shall be retained and used for public outdoor recreation. Any property so acquired and/or developed shall not be wholly or partly converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses without the approval of NPS pursuant to Section 6(f)(3) of the LWCF Act and these regulations. The conversion provisions of Section 6(f)(3), 36 CFR Part 59, and these guidelines apply to each area or facility for which LWCF assistance is obtained, regardless of the extent of participation of the program in the assisted area or facility and consistent with the contractual agreement between NPS and the State.*

The 1970 *Battle Park Development* plan and the December 1973 deed from Rocky Mount Mills indicate the Original Use of the park.

In 1872, Congress passed legislation creating Yellowstone, the world's first National Park. The establishing legislation stated the purpose of Yellowstone National Park was "...for the **benefit and enjoyment** of the people". This sentiment is echoed in the September 1970 *Battle Park Development* plan

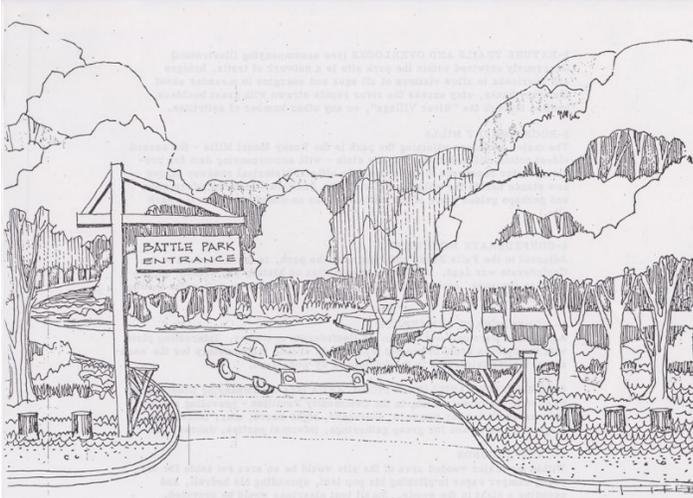
"It is the intent of the planners in developing this site richly endowed with natural features to preserve as much of these features while allowing visitors to partake of them to their maximum **benefit and enjoyment**". (Emphasis added).

The donation of the parkland to the City was executed on December 31, 1973. Contained in the deed is specific language concerning the use of the property

"...however, that this conveyance is made only so long as the real estate herein-after described is used by Grantee for a public park or playground-ground or both..."

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The 1976 *Battle Park Development* plan produced by Jerry Turner and Associates provided the anticipated development of Battle Park as agreed upon by Rocky Mount Mills (donor) and the City of Rocky Mount. The renovated park opened on Sunday December 5, 1976.



Artistic rendering of Battle Park entrance Jerry Turner & Associates, Inc. 1970

### Flood Zones

Battle Park experienced extreme flooding during Hurricane Floyd. Sixty percent of the park is in the floodway and 15% in the flood plain. This restricts most vertical development and non-permeable surfaces. The 25% of the park that is not in the flood zone has the 1800's Mill cemetery and the Rocky Mount mound, these areas cannot be developed. While several other environmental and archaeological restrictions are present, the flood zones are the most restrictive in terms of development. City staff has partnered with all regulatory authorities to seek full compliance in the planning, design, development and management of the park.

### Safety and CPTED

In each of the Stakeholder Group Meetings and Public Meetings, safety, security, line of sight, lighting and perceived / actual crime was a priority of conversation. Natural resource parks share many of the same challenges with crime due to their inherent secluded areas, Battle Park is no exception. The Rocky Mount Police Department, Nash County Sheriff Office and the NC Wildlife Commission Enforcement Division were involved in Battle Park renovation discussions. The Rocky Mount Police Department provided the following data for the time period of January 2017 - December 2019:

- 125 Officer directed patrols (Officer initiated patrol).
- 261 CAD events. (Calls from the public).
- 386 total occurrences in which RMPD was involved at the park in a 3-year period (1 occurrence / 2.8 days).

Areas of specific concern as provided by law enforcement, include the picnic shelters, loop road and dense wooded areas as their convenient access yet secluded nature provide an area for criminals to operate unnoticed.

The inclusion of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts is now standard in the design and development of natural resource parks. The three concepts of CPTED as provided by the NC Department of Public Safety are listed below and are included in the renovation design of Battle

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Park. The Rocky Mount Police Department is well versed in CPTED and supported its use in the design and development of the renovated Battle Park.

### Natural Surveillance

Increases visibility: A design concept directed at keeping intruders easily observable. Uses Lighting, landscaping and the placement of windows to increase the ability to see what's going on in an area. When used to its greatest advantage, it maximizes the potential for deterring crime because a criminal's behavior is more noticeable to anyone passing by.

### Natural Access Control

Controls access: A design concept directed at controlling access to potential targets. This is created by using and incorporating physical and mechanical means of access control.

### Territorial Reinforcement

Promotes a sense of ownership: This concept uses physical design to create or extend a feeling of ownership and sends a message that the property belongs to someone. This is accomplished by embodying all the principles of Natural Surveillance and Access Control. It uses fences, signage, landscaping, and lighting to define property lines and clear distinctions from public and private. <https://www.ncdps.gov/dps-services/crime-prevention/prevention-through-environmental-design>

### **Woodland Stewardship**

In terms of the Wilderness Act of 1964, man and his works have dominated the landscape of Battle Park for centuries. Starting with the Paleo-Indians, Tuscarora, early Europeans and modern-day Rocky Mount, each group has lived, worked and played along the banks of the Tar River at Battle Park. This provides for a rich historical and cultural presence within the park but also indicates man has long influenced the ecology of the park. Photographs from the turn of the of the last century show the understory of the park as being cut low at that time. The 1976 development of the park included seven zones of Landscaping and Plantings. The budget was \$45,000, this equates to \$260,000 in 2020. There is no way to know what was planted in 1976 and what is native.

The P&R Department will develop a forest stewardship plan. To date several non-native and invasive species have been identified in the park. The Stewardship Plan will identify the best management practices to ensure the current and future health of the woodlands within Battle Park.

*A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.*

1964 Wilderness Act, Section 2.c, Definition of Wilderness

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### **Planning Documents, Public Meetings, Stakeholder Group Meetings and Local Group Meetings**

Over the past four decades, Battle Park has well-served the citizens of Rocky Mount and the surrounding area, fulfilling the vision of the original planners as a natural resource park. In that time, the City has faced various management challenges and development discussions concerning the park. The 2015 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan is replete with comments from citizens, City Council and City Management, steering committee members and staff concerning the condition of the park and its possibilities. The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan proposed development with preliminary costs nearing \$2 million.

To ensure a Park Plan that would best serve the community for decades to come, a process including full public engagement, open communication with staff and guidance as provided by City Management and City Council was developed. Review of the 2015 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, the corresponding statistically valid Needs Assessment survey and numerous meetings with the general public, local and regional stakeholders and civic groups ensured each perspective was heard and considered in the development of the Park Plan. Each of these areas and processes are more thoroughly discussed later in this document.



**February 27, 2020 Public Meeting**

### **Site Analysis**

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Site Description

Modern day Battle Park is located on approximately 60 acres of land; the exact size is dependent upon if the non-deeded islands and river channels are included. The existing park includes a greenway trail, picnic shelters as well as dispersed picnicking, a boat ramp, a canoe launch providing access to the paddle trail, a gazebo, two fishing piers, woodlands, associated parking areas and open space. In 2017, the City of Rocky Mount and Rocky Mount Mills (now owned by Capitol Broadcasting Company, Inc) entered into a lease agreement of the 6.98 acres referred to as Panther Island.

Before being dammed in the 1800s, the location was noted by an area of swift water associated with the geographic fall line of the east coast. This fall line provides varying topography, numerous rock outcroppings and large boulders, all of which are unusual for the area. Goose Branch enters the Tar River within Battle Park. The creek is crossed by a small arch bridge within the park.

### Topography

Battle Park is located at the intersection of the fall line and Tar River, this provides small hills and numerous rock outcroppings; both are unique within the area. Also present within the park are Panther Island and a second unnamed island. These larger islands gain and lose elevation with each high event, depositing or washing away vast quantities of sand. Smaller islands grow and recede with high water events.



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### Soils

The Battle Park site contains a variety of soils. The predominant soil types are Wedowee coarse sandy loam (WeB), Wehadkee loam (Wh) and Wickham fine sandy loam (WkA). Other soils found on site include Congaree fine sandy loam (Co), Gritney sandy loam (GrB) and Nankin sandy loam (NaC).



- Co Congaree fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded
- GrB Gritney sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes
- NaC Nankin sandy loam, 2 to 10 percent slopes
- WeB Wedowee coarse sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes
- Wh Wehadkee loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded
- WkA Wickham fine sandy loam, 0 to 3 percent slopes, rarely flooded

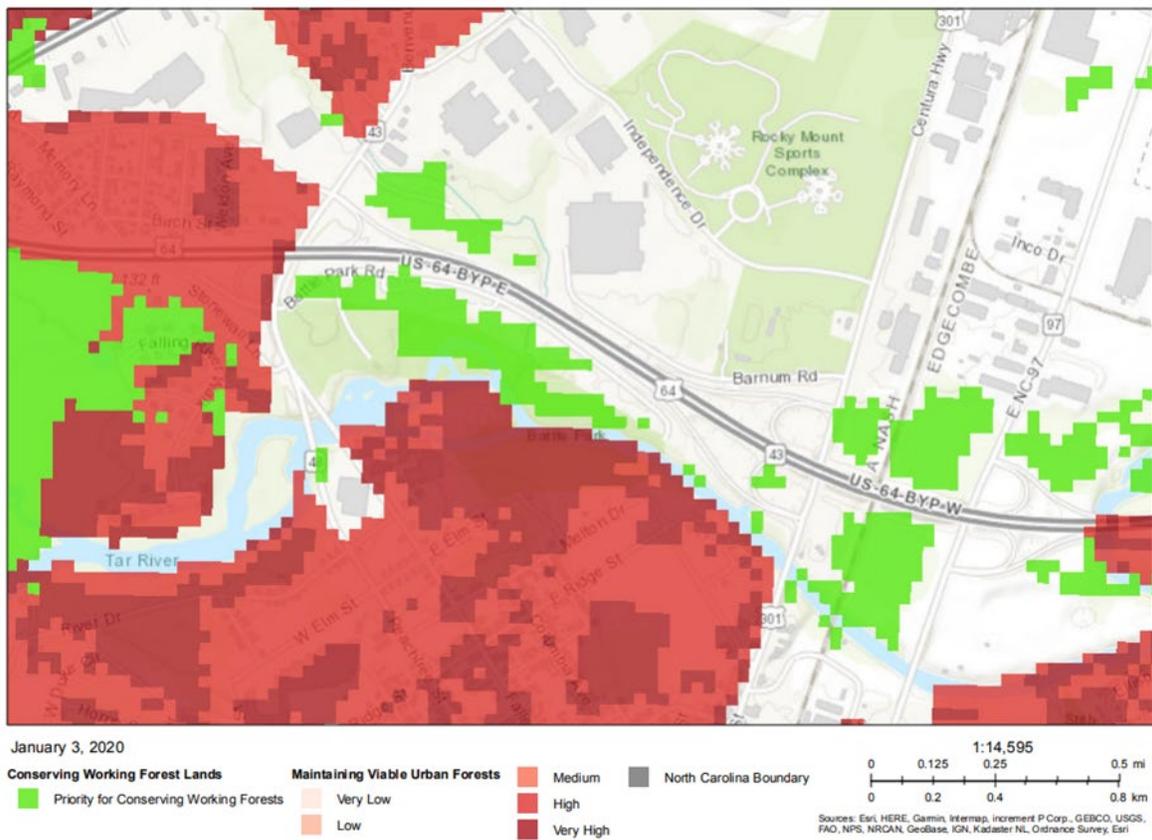
United States Department of Agriculture. 2020. *Natural Resources Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey*. USDA, Washington, DC. Available at <https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

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### Vegetation

The park is noted by areas of planted pines, hardwoods and an open space that is grass. Non-native species such as Chinese Privet, Russian Olive, Wisteria and other low vegetation have eliminated sight lines through-out the park and pose a threat to the overall health of the woodlands. Common methods of management include forestry mulching and/or hand thinning. Forestry mulching utilizes specialized equipment that processes vegetation in place leaving a bed of mulch to prevent erosion and keep nutrients in place. Annual hand thinning can be used in the riparian-sensitive or rocky areas of park; care must be taken to avoid erosion. As part of the renovation process the City will develop a woodland stewardship plan to provide guidance for the renovation and future management of the wooded areas of the park. The Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Forestry Land Assessment has identified much of the park as Priority for Conserving Working Forests.

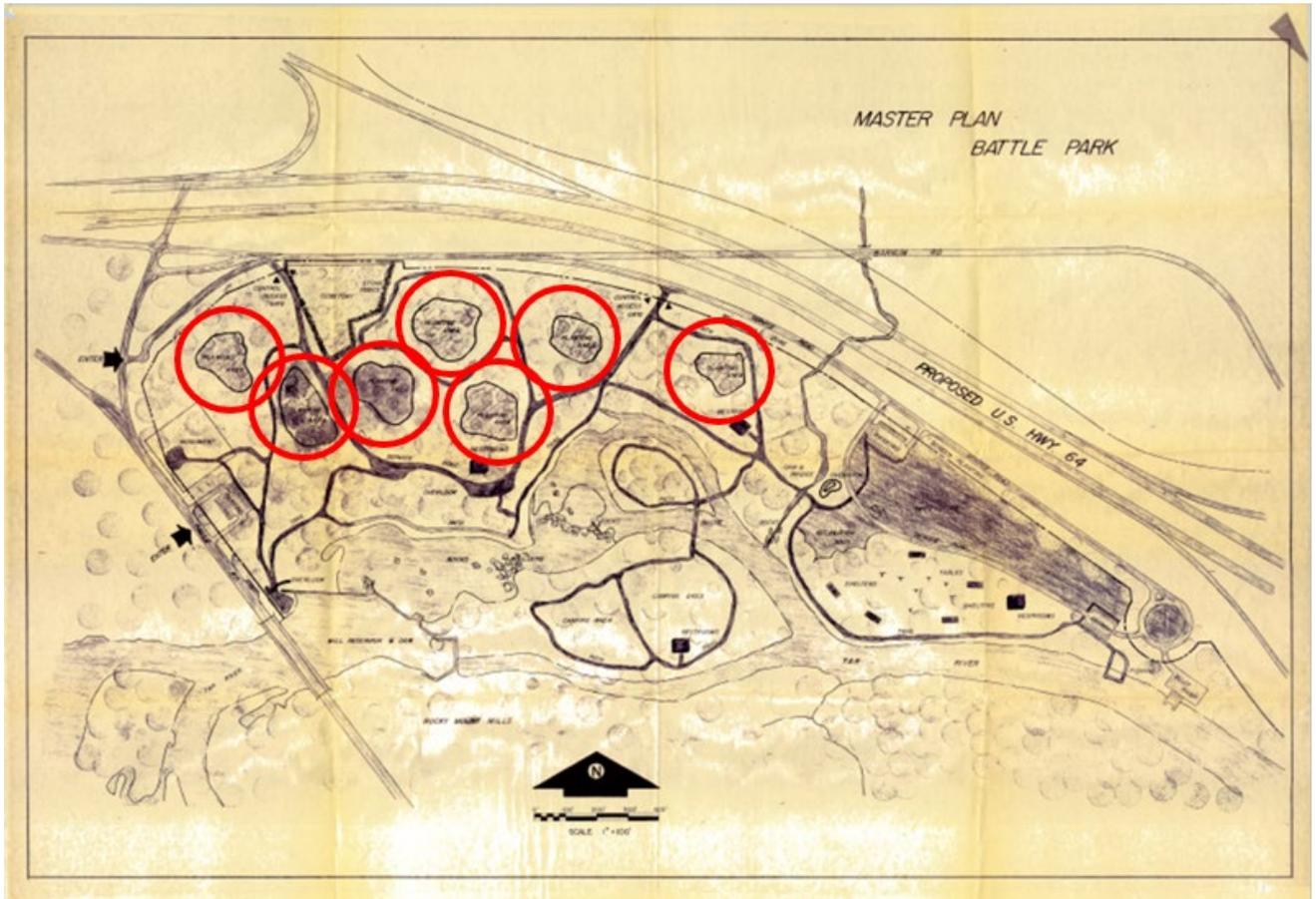
Battle Park Forestry Lands Assessment



North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. 2020. *Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Forestry Land Assessment*. NCDNCR, Raleigh, NC. Available at [www.ncnhp.org](http://www.ncnhp.org)

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The photo “Dance at Battle Park” taken at the turn of the last century, shows the understory of the park as being cut low at that time. The February 22, 1976 Rocky Mount Telegram article “Battle Park Today.. and Tomorrow” quotes the Recreation Director referring to removing the heavy dumping that occurred onsite in the 1950’s. The article also stated construction would include preserving the natural features of the park and planting native plants to create a “bog garden”. The 1976 construction budget included \$45,000 for landscaping and planting, that equates to approximately \$261,000 in 2020. The seven proposed planting areas are identified on the 1976 “Master Plan Battle Park”.



1976 Master Plan Battle Park

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### Hydrology

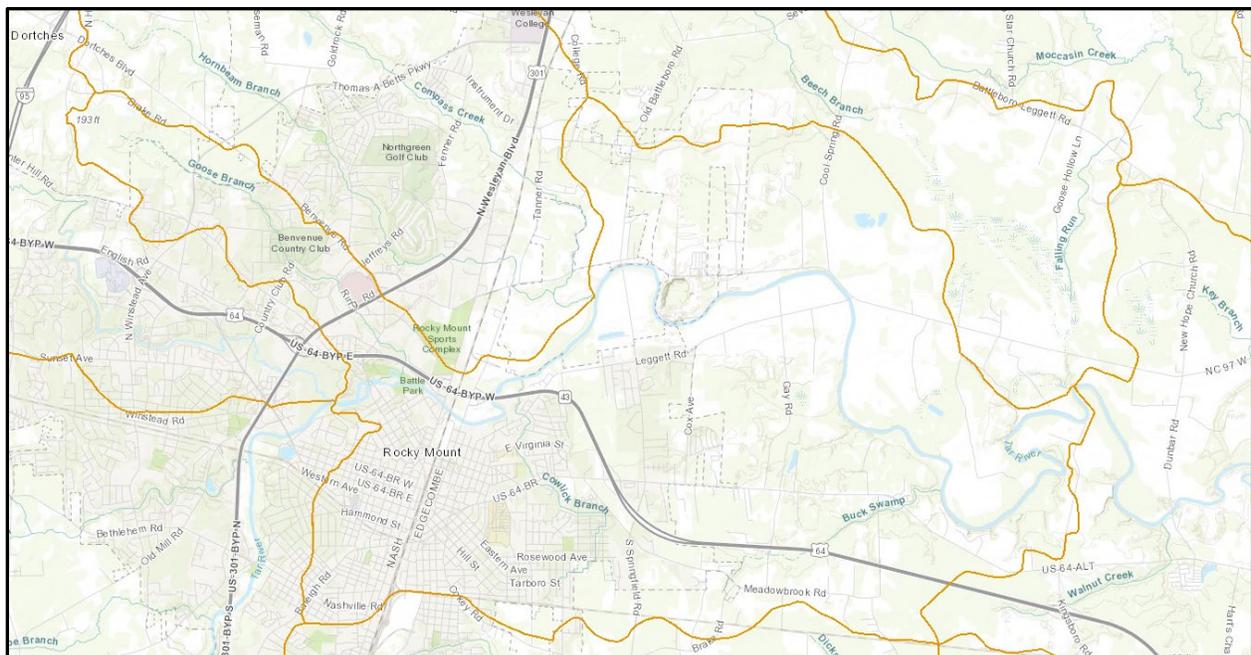
Battle Park is located within the Buck Swamp-Tar River Sub-watershed (030201010903) on the Upper Tar River of the Tar-Pamlico river basin. The Rocky Mount Mills dam found near the western border of the park is the last downstream dam in the river basin. From Battle Park, the Tar River is free-flowing to the Pamlico Sound / Atlantic Ocean. Goose Branch enters the Tar River within Battle Park.

River Basin: Tar-Pamlico  
Acronym: TAR  
Sq. Miles: 6,148  
Acres: 3,934,445

8-Digit Name: Upper Tar  
8-Digit Code: 03020101  
Basin Acronym: Tar-Pamlico  
Acres: 835,070

10-Digit Name: Beech Branch-Tar River  
10-Digit Code: 0302010109  
River Basin: Tar-Pamlico

12-Digit Name: Buck Swamp-Tar River  
12-Digit Code: 030201010903  
12-Digit Area (ac): 20,652



Battle Park located within the Buck Swamp-Tar River sub-watershed  
North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. 2020. *Division of Water Resources, Find Your HUC.*  
NCDEQ, Raleigh, NC. Available at <https://ncdenr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicInformation/index.html>

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Significant Natural Communities

Of the 74 protected species listed for Nash County, four are Federally listed as endangered, two threatened, one proposed endangered, one proposed threatened and one at risk. Bald Eagles are protected by the Federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The Tar River has been designated as a Proposed Critical Habitat for the Neuse River Waterdog (NHDE, Natural Areas).

The Tar River serves as habitat for most of the listed species. As a result, the river channel is listed as an Exceptional Natural Area and much of the parkland listed as Maximum Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat (NHDE, Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment). The renovation of Battle Park will not cause ecological disturbance, defined as any relatively discrete event in time that disrupts ecosystems, community, or population structure and changes resources, substrate availability, or the physical environment (White and Pickett, 1985).

Common Name	Federal Status	Habitat
Dwarf Wedgemussel	E	Tar and Neuse drainages, mainly near Fall Line
Tar River Spiny mussel	E	Tar drainage, very rare in Neuse drainage (endemic to North Carolina)
Red-cockaded Woodpecker [breeding evidence only]	E	Mature open pine forests, mainly in longleaf pine
Michaux's Sumac	E	Sandhills, sandy forests, woodland, woodland edges
Yellow Lance	T	Tar and Neuse drainages
Carolina Madtom	PE	Tar and Neuse drainages (endemic to North Carolina)
Atlantic Pigtoe	PT	Roanoke, Tar, Neuse, Cape Fear, Yadkin-Pee Dee drainages
Neuse River Waterdog	At Risk	Rivers and large streams in Neuse and Tar drainages (endemic to North Carolina)
Bald Eagle	BGPA	Mature forests near large bodies of water (nesting); rivers, lakes, and sounds (foraging).

E -- Endangered

T – Threatened

PE -- Proposed Endangered

PT -- Proposed Threatened

BGPA -- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (USFWS)

The Rocky Mount Mills Dam is the first upstream dam located on the Tar River, creating a barrier for further migration of anadromous fish such as American and Hickory shad and Striped bass. Most Striped bass within the Tar River system are hatchery stocked fish from the NC Wildlife Commission (NCWRC). The cultural heritage of fishing for these species pre-exists Europeans arrival on the continent.

In addition to the migrating shad and striped bass, the Tar River is home to numerous species of fish, such as largemouth bass, crappie, catfish, shellcracker and gar. The abundance of birds in the area resulted in the park being added to the NC Birding Trail (NCBT). Mammals such as squirrels and occasional deer, muskrat and beaver may be found within the park boundaries.

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North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. 2020. *Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Natural Areas*. NCDNCR, Raleigh, NC. Available at [www.ncnhp.org](http://www.ncnhp.org)

North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. 2020. *Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment*. NCDNCR, Raleigh, NC. Available at [www.ncnhp.org](http://www.ncnhp.org)

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. 2020. New Striped Bass Size Limit in Inland Waters of the Tar, Neuse and Pungo Rivers, October 1, 2018. NCWRC, Raleigh, NC. Available at <https://www.ncwildlife.org/News/new-striped-bass-size-limit-in-inland-waters-of-the-tar-neuse-and-pungo-rivers>

North Carolina Birding Trail. 2020. North Carolina Birding Trail, Sites. NCBT, Raleigh, NC. Available at [www.ncbirdingtrail.org](http://www.ncbirdingtrail.org)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2020. Endangered Species, *Threatened Species, Federal Species of Concern, and Candidate Species*, Nash County, North Carolina. USFWS, Washington, DC. Available at [www.fws.gov/raleigh/species/cntylist/nash.html](http://www.fws.gov/raleigh/species/cntylist/nash.html)

White, P.S., and S.T.A. Pickett. 1985. Natural disturbance and patch dynamics: an introduction. Pages 472 in S. T. A. Pickett and P. S. White, eds. *The ecology of natural disturbance and patch dynamics*. Academic Press, Orlando, FL.

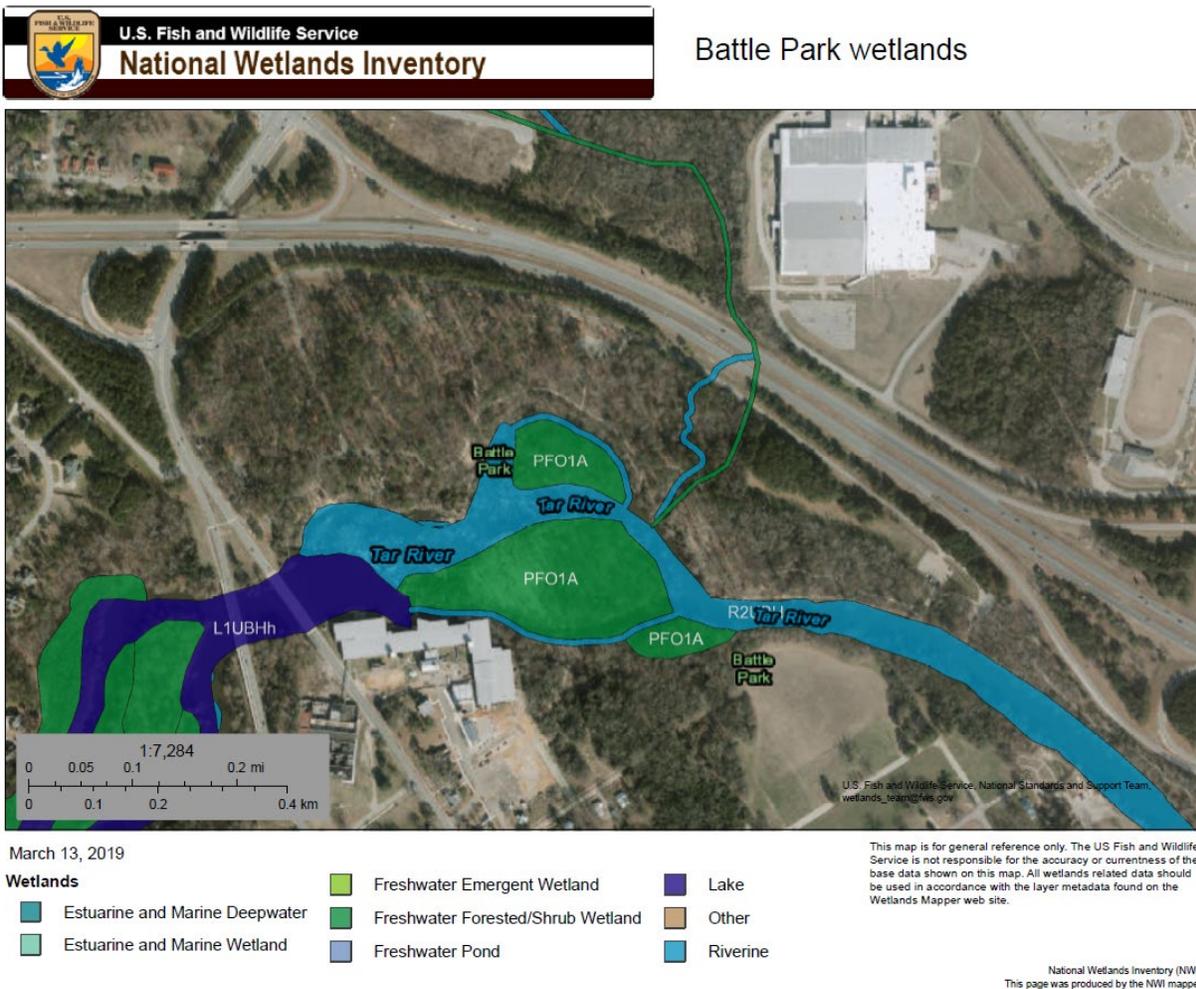
## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Wetlands

USFWS denoted wetlands within the park are limited to:

- 1) Panther Island
- 2) The small deeded, but unnamed island located immediately north of Panther Island
- 3) A linear space adjacent Goose Creek.

The City has met with NC Department of Environmental Quality staff onsite to review past and current maintenance within the park, all of which meet or exceed buffer regulations. The City of Rocky Mount Storm Water Engineer has been involved in the planning process and will ensure the project continues to meet and exceed all wetland and stream buffer regulations.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2019. National Wetlands Inventory, Wetlands Mapper. USFWS, Washington, DC. Available at <https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/mapper.html>

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Floodplains

Approximately 60% of Battle Park lies within the flood way and 15% in the flood plain. The remaining 25% near the entrance of Battle Park Lane is the site of the original post office and is out of the flood plain. All project elements will be designed in a manner to obtain no rise certification.

The City of Rocky Mount has a long and involved history with parklands in the floodplain including response, recovery, mitigation and appropriate development. The City of Rocky Mount Flood Plain Manager is involved in the planning process and will ensure the project continues to meet and exceed floodplain regulations. All development will be completed in a manner that anticipates future high-water events.



North Carolina Department of Public Safety. 2019. *North Carolina Floodplain mapping Program, Flood Risk Information System*. NCDPS, Raleigh, NC. Available at <https://fris.nc.gov/fris/Index.aspx>



## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Archaeological or historical sites

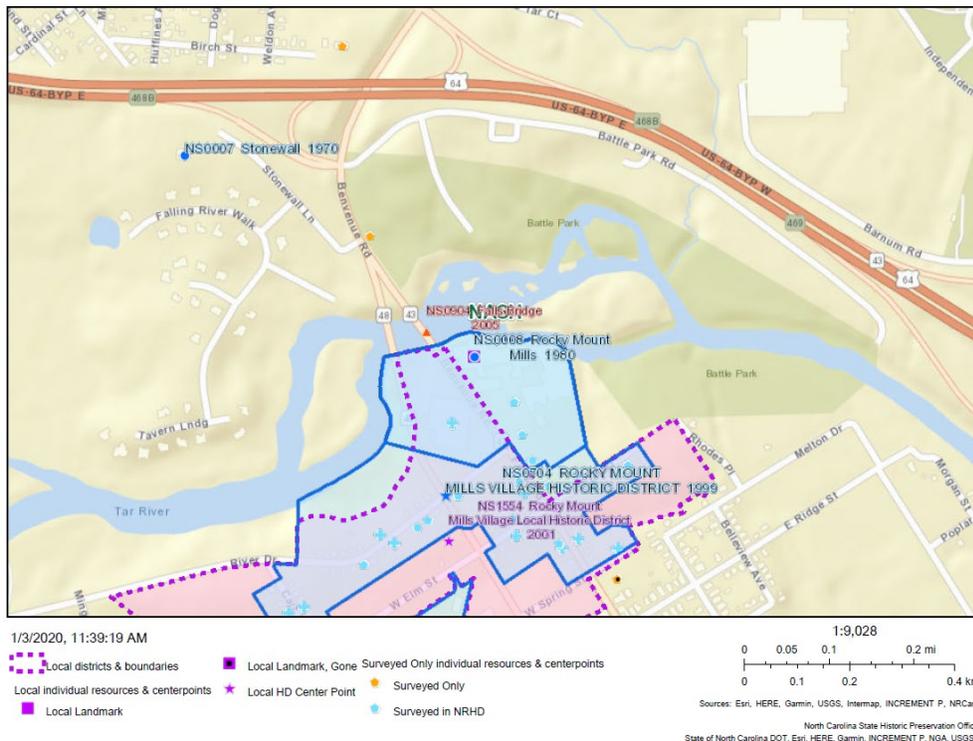
The area of modern-day Battle Park has long been the site of human habitation. As part of the design of US-64 the area was included in the *East Carolina University Archaeological Salvage of the Thorpe Site and Other Investigations* (DS Phillips, 1980). Ceramic and projectile shards found onsite indicate both Paleo-Indian and Tuscarora tribes' seasonal settlements dating back to 9,000 BC and 1,000 BC respectively.

The Battle Park area is also the site of the original Rocky Mound / Rocky Mount Post Office and across the river from Rocky Mount Mills, the second cotton mill in NC (1817).

A monument exists on a separate adjacent parcel (Nash County Book 993, Page 378). It is identified on the NCSHPO map and noted as "Surveyed Only". The 1923 and 1976 deeds to this parcel are not fee simple containing non-recreation conditions that are subject to the monument. This parcel is not included in the park deeds, is not included in the Renovation of Battle Park project and is not included in the 6f boundaries.

Professional archaeologists are on the project team on an as-needed basis to ensure no relevant archaeological or historical sites are disturbed during the renovation of the park. As part of the project, appropriate Interpretative and Educational signage will be created to share the vast history of Battle Park with Park visitors.

*Archaeological Salvage of the Thorpe Site and Other Investigations*, David Sutton Phillips, ECU, 1980.



North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. 2020. *HPOWEB 2.0 - General Audience*, Raleigh, NC. Available at <https://nc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html>

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### Existing Structures

A Mill Cemetery is present onsite. The cemetery will not be altered or disturbed in anyway.

One small portion of foundation of unknown origin is located on site. There are no other existing structures on the project site greater than 50 years old.



In 1976 the existing park was opened and included three picnic shelters, two fishing piers, park trails including a small arch bridge, a gazebo and a boat ramp. A canoe access platform was added in 2004.

### Public Access

Battle Park has served as a common-held public recreation site for over a century. The property was owned by Rocky Mount Mills and used by their employees and the surrounding community for river access and theatrical performances. The park is currently open to the public and accessible by a parking lot on Falls Road and has a dedicated City maintained street, Battle Park Lane, that forms the park's northern border.

### Utilities

There is a 42" gravity sewer main and corresponding easement within the park and two overhead powerlines that serve park security lights in the two parking areas. All utilities associated with the project will be placed underground.

### Past/Current Property Use

The site was initially made available as minimally developed parkland by Rocky Mount Mills prior to gifting it to the City in 1973. These uses date back to the turn of the last century and include river access and a pedestrian bridge and stage for performances. The City opened Battle Park in 1976. It has served the area as a natural resource park since that time.

A Mills cemetery is located within Battle Park, no renovation has been completed or will be completed within the bounds of the cemetery. It will be left undisturbed. No known brownfields exist onsite.

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Recreational needs

#### Relation to the System-wide Comprehensive Plan

Battle Park is the only natural resource park in Rocky Mount and one of three in Nash and Edgecombe Counties. Throughout its history it has allowed visitors to enjoy the experiences associated with the woods, water and boulders that are prevalent on the site. Renovation keeps with this history, enabling visitors to enjoy recreation and leisure activities in the natural setting of the park.

Battle Park is referenced on 50 pages of Rocky Mount's 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. Support for the park was received from City Administration, City Council, the steering committee, stakeholder groups and members of the public. Natural Parks and preserves are referenced on 16 occasions and section 4.4.3 Nature Center System Concept has Battle Park at its core. The corresponding 2013 Needs Assessment (statistically valid survey) stated the Top Priorities and Higher Importance/High Unmet Need, included walking/running tracks, picnic areas / shelters, natural parks & preserves and greenway trails. The Top Priority Recreation Programs, Higher Importance/High Unmet Need, included nature programs. The Battle Park renovation include many amenities to meet these expressed needs.

#### Outdoor Recreation Experiences

Listed in order of preference according to the Battle Park Site Specific Master Plan Public Meetings. The number of Blue Dots votes received are shown in parenthesis. See Public Meetings for more information.

##### 1. Natural Surface Trail (74)

There are no natural surface trails in the Rocky Mount park system and no mountain bike trails in Nash or Edgecombe county (Rocky Mount straddles both). The 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan indicated 31% of citizens deemed walking and running facilities as the highest need among recreation facilities, another 18% indicated MTB trails as a household need (p 87). In 2017 Medoc Mountain State Park opened cross country natural surface trails designed for trail running and mountain bikes. Many Rocky Mount, Nash and Edgecombe residents travel 30+ minutes to use these trails. The new trail would serve as the initial multi-use natural surface trail in our community and could be extended to provide an additional 10 miles of trail.

##### 2. Greenway (73)

To date there are seven miles of greenway trail within the City of Rocky Mount. These trails provide connectivity to seven City parks comprising 300 acres of parkland. Battle Park is the central portion of the trail system and has the oldest trail surface in the system. The 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan indicated 31% of citizens deemed greenway trails as the highest need among recreation facilities (p 87). Renovation of the greenway trails within Battle Park is critical to retain connectivity and serve the citizens of our area.

##### 3. Demonstration Areas (70) 13. Gardening / Flower Area (12)

The 1976 renovation budget included \$45,000 for landscaping and planting, that equates to approximately \$261,000 in 2020. These funds were spread through seven planting areas that covered the park. The current renovation process focuses on existing native plants and trees that exemplify habitat found within eastern North Carolina; if necessary, such areas will be augmented or planted. These areas are to be signed accordingly to educate park visitors of the Battle Park eco-system.

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### **4. Canoe Launches (43)**

At 55 miles in length, the City of Rocky Mount maintains one of the longer paddle trail system of any municipality in North Carolina. Part of the 197-mile Tar River Paddle Trail, which is maintained by various local government agencies, the City has ten improved access points on the Tar River and two on Stony Creek. Battle Park is located at mile 109 of the Tar River Paddle Trail. The access location near the Battle Park boat ramp will be renovated. A second, new access will be developed just below the Rocky Mount Mills dam and used in conjunction with the Peachtree Street paddle access to provide safe and convenient portage of the dam via the City greenway system. The 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan indicated 34% of citizens deemed Outdoor / Adventure Recreation as a household need (p 88).

### **5. Interpretive and Educational (I&E) Signage (35)**

Interpretive and Educational signage scored fifth at the park plan Public Meetings. Such signage would provide information concerning the rich historical, cultural and natural features of Battle Park. The signs should be of a design standard that can withstand high water events and occasional vandalism. The information provided by the signs should be fully vetted and cite the materials from which the information was drawn. North Carolina Environmental Education, local and UNC system universities, and various State and Federal agencies could all augment local efforts to provide information for the I&E signage. The 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan indicated 36% of citizens deemed Nature as an important household need (p 88).

### **6. Wooded Space (34)**

Battle Park has the most wooded acreage of any park in the system. Much of the woodlands received landscaping and plantings in the 1976 development of the park. Until approximately 2010 the woodlands were thinned on a regular basis. The City will develop a woodland stewardship plan to guide the renovation and future management of the park's woodlands. The 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan indicated 36% of citizens deemed Nature as an important household need (p 88).

### **7. Boulder Area (29)    14. Nature Play Area (9)**

Battle Park has two areas with prevalent rock outcroppings and boulders. The first is located on the river, providing an overlook for the dam; the gazebo currently resides in this space. The second is nestled between the pines near the boat ramp parking area and Goose Creek. This boulder area was designated on the 1976 Master Plan yet has been reclaimed by the wood line. Both areas require thinning as allowed within riparian buffer regulation. The overlook boulders will allow for scenic views of the falls, a bouldering area (climbing) and access the river. The Goose Creek boulder appears custom created for a nature play area for elementary age school children. Proper design will allow for public access and enjoyment of these natural features in a manner that will preserve them for future generations to enjoy. The 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan indicated citizens deemed Nature (36%) and Outdoor / adventure recreation (34%) as important household needs (p 88).

### **8. Piers (26)    15. Boat Ramp (6)**

The 1976 development of Battle Park include two fishing piers and a boat ramp. Being located just below Rocky Mount Mills, these were the first upstream public fishing and boating access locations on the free-flowing Tar River. These facilities are regional destinations during the spring run of shad and striped bass. Numerous high-water events and forces of nature have created the decking and railings of the piers to be replaced numerous times; however, the pier structure and boat ramp have remained much the same since 1976. The renovation of the park replaces the fishing piers in the same location and size and renovate the boat ramp as the shoulders are exposed and eroding. Renovation also improves ADA compliance for the structures.

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### **9. Open Space (24)**

Currently, Battle Park has a large 3.5 acre open space west of the boat ramp parking area. This space has hosted regional scouting events, regional clean up registration and school groups. Other than general cleaning, the open space remains an area for the public to enjoy.

### **10. Picnic Tables (23)**

Currently, Battle Park has three large shelters and dispersed picnicking throughout the park. Additional dispersed picnicking in the form of single table shelters along Battle Park Lane will provide areas for families and small groups to enjoy the park.

Locating the single table shelters for dispersed picnicking along Battle Park Lane enables ADA compliance and allows the current large shelter locations to be re-forested. There were four reservations of the large shelters from January 2017 to December 2019. Three were unpaid internal reservations, the fourth was an unpaid reservation to ensure no conflicts with Tackle the Tar. These shelters are not utilized for their intended use but have become a haven for illegal activity. They also carve large swaths of open space, creating greater edge effect within the park's woodlands.

### **Park classification**

The main purpose and intentional design of the renovated Battle Park is a natural resource-based recreation park to provide outdoor recreation experiences to park visitors. Utilizing the mid-1990's National Recreation and Parks Association parks classification system, Battle Park would classify as a Special Use park, with the single-purpose use being outdoor recreation. The design framework is discussed at length in Design Considerations.

### **Program description**

Battle Park will facilitate the numerous Outdoor Recreation Experiences above by utilizing its natural setting, river access, rock outcroppings and varied topography primarily in a self-led format. The public meetings indicated significant preference for self-led recreation experiences over staff-led / staff-scheduled activities. Educational and learning opportunities also scored high. The park will include Interpretative and Educational signage throughout, as well as demonstration areas. These amenities will facilitate both self-led, as well as instructor-led educational and learning experiences. The stakeholder group meetings were preceded by a survey to serve as a framework for the meeting, in this survey respondents indicated Park Facilities were more important than Park Programs by a score of 25-10. More information concerning the public and stakeholder meetings is provided later in this document.

### **Physical needs**

Battle Park was opened in 1976 and has been well-enjoyed by generations of park users. Battle Park Lane was resurfaced recently, however most park amenities need significant renovation due to over 40 years of constant use. The public input process indicated the desire for a restroom facility to replace the portable toilets.

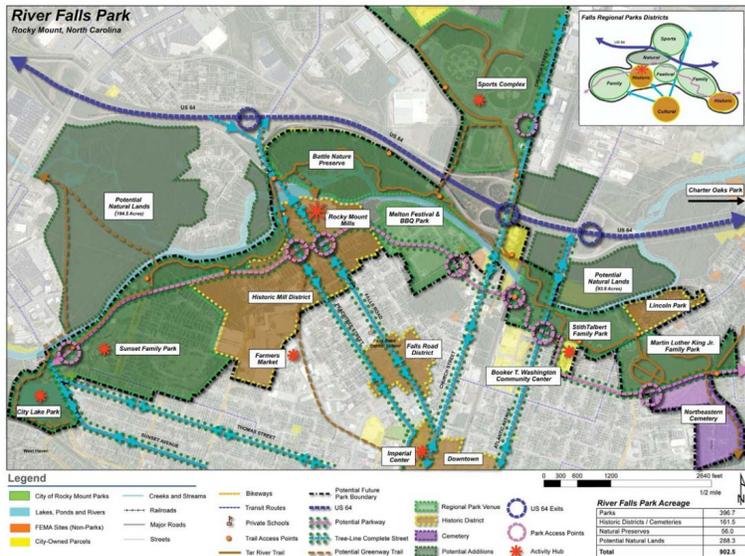
# BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

## River Falls Park

Public meetings also expressed a strong desire to retain and capitalize on connectivity to City parks to the east, north and west via the City greenway system. Significant conversation supported additional connectivity to the south, BBQ Park and Rocky Mount Mills, via bridges and proposed City greenway. This concept is referred to as the River Falls Park in the 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan (Section 4.3.2). River Falls Park redevelops and rebrands the 300+ acres of existing parks connected by the City greenway as a single Parkland. The 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan describes River Falls Park as follows:

When looking at the city’s inventory of park spaces, it became clear that there was a wealth of parkland and natural areas along the Tar River. Not only was there a significant amount of acreage, but these were some of the city’s most prestigious and utilized park spaces. In all, there are seven current City of Rocky Mount parks in the corridor, including the highly successful Sports Complex, City Lake Park, Sunset Park, Stith Talbert Park and Martin Luther King Jr. Park. This corridor is also home to the Rocky Mount Mill site and its adjacent Historic Mill District, the Lincoln Park Historic District, and is in close proximity to the Falls Road District, Downtown Rocky Mount, and the Imperial Centre. These diverse areas are all connected by the Tar River Trail, and six arterial roads linking US-64 and downtown.

Realizing that these parks and natural lands were all city-owned properties, as well as some being city-owned FEMA Buyout Program sites, the concept of Falls River Park began to take shape. The concept leverages the variety of facilities available and establishes different venues with one large entity. The concept includes space for sports, family activities, natural exploration, festivals and events, and historic experience. In addition, proposed redevelopment of the Rocky Mount Mill site is located at the heart of River Falls Park and includes links to most of the city-owned assets. This redevelopment would feature both commercial and residential development, and its location on the Falls of the Tar River make it an attractive tourist destination. The River Falls Park concept has potential to be not only a regional venue, but an attraction that draws residents from all over North Carolina to what would be the largest municipal park in Eastern North Carolina.



Conceptual Plan for River Falls Park, 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, page 118. The Trailhead at Battle Park

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

The concept of marketing and leveraging the renovated Battle Park was present in many of the public and stakeholder meetings. Battle Park is well known on regional fishing social media pages as a destination for shad and striper fishing, however other recreational experiences of the park do not enjoy equal notoriety. In other communities, a trailhead or areas to access trails are extremely popular. Towns along the Appalachian Trail are known as “Trail Towns”. The towns of Damascus and Abington Virginia have an entire small-shop and tourism industry serving the Virginia Creeper Trail that connects their communities. Asheville has become an international mountain bike destination due to its proximity to the trails within Pisgah National Forest.

Renovation of Battle Park includes replacing portions of the existing seven miles of City greenway and two canoe access locations on the 197 miles of the Tar River Paddle Trail (Rocky Mount manages 55+ miles). The new multi-use natural surface trail will be the first within the Rocky Mount Parks system. The trail will support trail hikers, cross-country trail running and mountain bike beginners. With its distance set at 5K, Battle Park can host races and events. All three trails intersect near the current parking area on Falls Road. Due to existing utilities being present in this area, the desired restroom facility will be placed adjacent the parking area as well. With inviting design and signage, this area would serve as the trailhead not only for Battle Park, but for all city trail systems. The trailhead would serve as a meet-up and start point for individuals and groups that wish to partake of the area’s natural resource-based recreation. Being located directly across the river and north on Falls Road from Rocky Mount Mills would stimulate post-activity socialization among park visitors.



**The Trailhead at Battle Park Conceptual Image**

**BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN**

**Project Costs**

**Battle Park - City of Rocky Mount**

**March 2020 (DRAFT)**

<b>Phase 1 Project Element</b>	<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Total Item Cost</b>
<b>Woodland Management</b>				
Forestry mulching	25.0	AC	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 35,000.00
Riparian area thinning per regulation	5.0	AC	\$ 3,250.00	\$ 16,250.00
Plantings, mulch, soil amendments, topsoil & seed	1	LS	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00
<b>Site Amenities</b>				
Greenway ren. (remove and replace asphalt, 10 ft wide x 7510 lf)	7,510	LF	\$ 70.00	\$ 525,700.00
Existing boat ramp renovations	1	LS	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Existing canoe/kayak launch renovations	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Fishing piers replacement (2)	1	LS	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Dispersed picnicking (single table shelter, pad, trash can)	3	LS	\$ 25,500.00	\$ 25,500.00
Dispersed picnicking and trail access ADA parking (1) and parking (3)	1	LS	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
Portage canoe/kayak launch	1	LS	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Path to portage canoe/kayak launch	1	LS	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Rain gardens (2)	2	LS	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Native species demonstration areas	7	LS	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Bouldering area	1	AC	\$ 3,250.00	\$ 3,250.00
Bike trials	1	AC	\$ 3,250.00	\$ 3,250.00
Natural surface trail	16,404	LF	\$ 7.50	\$ 123,030.00
Nature play area (400' fencing and signage)	1	LS	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Bike repair station	1	EA	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
Identification & Educational areas and signage	1	LS	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
<b>Signage, furnishings and site security</b>				
Directional signage	1	LS	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
The Trailhead at Battle Park kiosk	2	EA	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,000.00
5 Benches, 5 trash cans, & 2 bike racks	1	LS	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
Water fountain w/bottle filler	2	EA	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 13,000.00
Security camera	2	LS	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
Blue light phones	2	EA	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 15,000.00
Park entrance gate	1	EA	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00
<b>Earthwork and Demolition</b>				
Grading and erosion control	1	LS	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
Removal of Falls Rd galvanized fence	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Existing Shelters (3)	1	LS	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Existing Fishing Piers (2)	1	LS	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Removal of loop road included in greenway renovation cost				
<b>Buildings and Utilities</b>				
24x28 Restroom w/3 ADA Toilet Rooms	1	LS	\$ 191,500.00	\$ 191,500.00
Sanitary Sewer, Domestic Water, Site Electrical	1	LS	\$ 20,500.00	\$ 20,500.00
Storm Sewer and Drainage Structures	1	LS	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
<b>Phase 1 Project Cost</b>				<b>\$ 1,256,180.00</b>
<b>Contingency for the Cost of Building/Renovating</b>				
Contingency	1	LS	\$ 125,700.00	\$ 125,700.00
<b>Planning and Incidental Land Acquisition Costs</b>				
Site planning, design fees, etc. (10.62% of project cost)	1	LS	\$ 133,500.00	\$ 133,500.00
<b>Phase 1 Total Cost</b>				<b>\$ 1,515,380.00</b>

**BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN**

<b>FUTURE PHASES OR ALTERNATES (page 1 of 2) (DRAFT)</b>	
<b>Project Element</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
<b><u>Replace Shelters A, B, C (Holly St Park style shelters and amenities)</u></b>	
Replace Shelter A (Shelter, 6 tables, grill, trashcan and sidewalk)	\$ 95,000.00
Replace Shelter B (Shelter, 6 tables, grill, trashcan and sidewalk)	\$ 95,000.00
Replace Shelter C (Shelter, 6 tables, grill, trashcan and sidewalk)	\$ 95,000.00
<b>Replace Shelters A, B, C Total</b>	<b>\$ 285,000.00</b>
<b><u>Resurface Parking Lots at Shelter B &amp; C and Loop Road</u></b>	
Resurface Shelter B parking lot 14,225 sf	\$46,800.00
Resurface Shelter C parking lot 5,525 sf	\$18,200.00
Resurface Falls Road parking lot 11,400 sf	\$37,500.00
Resurface Loop Road	\$70,000.00
<b>Replace Shelter A &amp; B parking lots and Loop Road Total</b>	<b>\$ 172,500.00</b>
<b><u>Treehouse Village (16'x20')</u></b>	
Treehouse 1 (16'x20')	\$ 45,000.00
Treehouse 2 (16'x20')	\$ 45,000.00
Treehouse 3 (16'x20')	\$ 45,000.00
Treehouse - meeting house	\$ 65,000.00
<b>Treehouse Village Total</b>	<b>\$ 200,000.00</b>

**BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN**

<b>FUTURE PHASES OR ALTERNATES (page 2 of 2) (DRAFT)</b>	
<b>Project Element</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
<b><u>Future trails and shared use lanes</u></b>	
Wesleyan College Trail (2018 Bike Plan)	\$ 3,600,000.00
BBQ Park Trail (2018 Bike Plan)	\$ 810,000.00
Battle Park Islands bridge system	\$ 6,500,000.00
<b>Future Trails and Shared Use Lanes Total</b>	<b>\$ 10,910,000.00</b>
<b><u>Misc.</u></b>	
Canopy tour	\$ 150,000.00
Sculpture	\$ 25,000.00
Disc golf	\$ 63,000.00
Battle Park Lane is a City maintained street	
<b>Misc. Total</b>	<b>\$ 238,000.00</b>



**Battle Park Islands Bridge Conceptual Image**





## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### **Public Involvement**

The development of the Battle Park Master Plan included ten scheduled meetings with Stakeholders, Local Groups, Public Meetings and the City Planning Board. This process enabled the project to be discussed from numerous perspectives, enabling citizens and groups to be heard and thoughts to be considered. The resulting park design is a direct reflection of the information gathered in these meetings, facilitating as many recreational preferences as possible, while minimizing user conflict.

In the park setting, user conflict may be described as a visitor's desired "...goal interference attributed to another's behavior".

Jacob, G., and Schreyer, R. (1980). Conflict in outdoor recreation: A theoretical perspective. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 12, 368-80.

### **Stakeholder Meetings**

Monday February 3, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Social group (17)

Wednesday February 19, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Economic group (9)

Thursday March 5, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Environmental group (13)

The Stakeholder meetings were organized along the three principles of sustainability: Economic, Environmental and Social. Parks and Recreation staff invited approximately 145 individuals that included tourism, chamber of commerce, large employers, economic development, area recreation departments, area local governments, environmental groups, regulatory agencies, educators, civic groups, health care providers and law enforcement to provide input to the master planning process. This large invitation list was an attempt to assure each group in the area that had interest in the park was represented. A summary of each meeting is found on the following pages. The meetings validated many of the themes contained within the 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan and the 2013 Needs Assessment Survey. In addition, the meetings presented several park-design values as well as goals for a successful project.

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### February 3, 2 pm - Social Group

The Social Group stakeholder group meeting representing the social aspects of sustainability was attended by 17 members of the community. The invitation list included over 50 individuals that represent recreation, civic, health care and law enforcement providers of our community.



#### MEETING SUMMARY

**PROJECT:** CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK SITE  
Rocky Mount, NC

**TO:** David Griffin, City of Rocky Mount

**FROM:** R. Scales, CPL, A. Wagner, CPL

**DATE:** February 3, 2020

**LOCATION:** The Imperial Center  
Rocky Mount, NC

**SUBJECT:** Battle Park Site Specific Masterplan - Community Group Workshop Summary

**ATTENDING:** Elton Daniel, Assistant City Manager  
Phillip Barton, Friend of Battle Park  
Steve Warner, Retiree  
Daron Mac, Rocky Mount Fire Department  
John Mebane  
Mark Ream  
Evan Covington, Rocky Mount Mills  
Kirby Slade, Nash UNC Health Care  
Nicole Westley, DEPC  
Kristen Babble, First Carolina Bank  
Michael Whitley, Rocky Mount Police Department  
David Sharpe, HLXP  
Barbara \_\_\_\_\_, Villa Place  
Garry Hodges, Sunset \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Gilliam, Rocky Mount \_\_\_\_\_ Advisory Board  
Brandon Medina, Nash County Sheriffs Department  
Julie Baggett, Rocky Mount Mills  
David Griffin, City of Rocky Mount  
Allie Wagner, CPL  
Reggie Scales, CPL

# BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN



## General Comments:

### How to integrate the General Public in the Vision for the Park's Future

1. Directly address confederate monument
  - a. Effort to allow the shifting of focus to broader issues
  - b. Mark with full and accurate history
2. Meet at neutral grounds/location when developing park strategies/future
3. Go into diverse and all communities to get opinions and values
4. Start somewhere... Just start!

### Park Accessibility

1. Construction of a bridge or bridges to link R.M. Mills with the park. (I.e. like Greenville, S.C.) This would allow visitors an experience to easily enjoy the park.
2. Improve parking lots and add more trails from parking lots.
3. Create a loop by having the new western bridge and using the existing bridge to develop a trail connector on the south side of the river.
4. Enhance the beauty of overlooks by clearing vegetation to create vistas.
5. Add a mountain bike trail to draw on additional interest group.

### Safety

1. Location of Parking
2. Centralized parking around building for baths, information, maps, police department officer(s).
3. Illumination around parking
4. Enforce & publicize dawn to dusk hours of operation by controlled access at park and boat ramp(s).
5. Employ opted during design process
6. Better understand stats regarding crime at park.

### The Values of Battle Park

1. Rich biodiversity
2. Tuscarora heritage and artifacts – <the presence of a Native American cemetery was discussed however after further investigation it is was determined that there is no cemetery onsite>
3. Educational opportunity
4. Food for wildlife & birds
5. Recreation – bird watching, nature walks
6. Eco-tourism opportunities; if environmental integrity is preserved -Current under threat by harsh chemicals being used in the park\*

### Parking Lot Issues

1. Keep the gates open on all parking lots
2. Provide bathroom facilities at both ends of the park. Building good facilities.
3. Security: hire park security

## Online Survey Results – Attachment A Meeting Sign In Sheet – Attachment B Meeting Materials – Attachment C

C. Project File



February 3, 2020 Stakeholder meeting (Social Group)

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### February 19, 2 pm – Economic group

The Economic Group stakeholder meeting representing the economic aspects of sustainability was attended by 8 members of the community. The invitation list included over 70 individuals that represented businesses, chamber, local governments, tourism entities, etc. in our community.



#### MEETING SUMMARY

**PROJECT:** CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK SITE  
Rocky Mount, NC

**TO:** David Griffin, City of Rocky Mount

**FROM:** R. Scales, CPL, A. Wagner, CPL

**DATE:** February 19, 2020

**LOCATION:** The Imperial Center  
Rocky Mount, NC

**SUBJECT:** Battle Park Site Specific Masterplan - Economic Group Workshop

**ATTENDING:**  
Peter Gilliland ([phgilliland@uno.com](mailto:phgilliland@uno.com))  
Travis Stigge ([tstigge@tarboro-nc.com](mailto:tstigge@tarboro-nc.com))  
William Jones ([wmjones@embarqmail.com](mailto:wmjones@embarqmail.com))  
Stephanie Goodrich ([stephanie.goodrich@rockymountnc.gov](mailto:stephanie.goodrich@rockymountnc.gov))  
Ralph Emerson ([r.w.emerson@cummins.com](mailto:r.w.emerson@cummins.com))  
Kevin Harris ([Kevin.harris@rockymountnc.gov](mailto:Kevin.harris@rockymountnc.gov))  
Alan Matthews ([amatthews@rockymountchamber.org](mailto:amatthews@rockymountchamber.org))  
Sheila Martin, Dunn Center Explore Nash County  
David Griffin, City of Rocky Mount  
Allie Wagner, CPL  
Reggie Scales, CPL

#### General Meeting Comments:

##### Vision

1. Multiple activities
  - a. Entertainment space
  - b. Connection to nearby parks
  - c. Clean
2. A regional destination park that capitalized on the location along the river and Rocky Mount Mills.
3. Well maintained trails, secure, good lighting, fishing opportunities
4. Amphitheater on Island, picnic areas, possible camping (controlled) – don't have at the present time
5. A safe spot where one can picnic, hike, run, walk and bike
6. Library
7. Historic resource
8. Nature and culture
9. Active lifestyle
10. Adapting history

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN



Rocky Mount Battle Park Master Plan  
City of Rocky Mount  
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11. Set park up for future
12. Zipline
13. Kayaking – dock, rent, learn
14. Environmental education – signage/posted information
15. Tubing
16. Ropes course
17. Bouldering
18. Interactive nature center
19. Integrated technology – VR, iPads
20. Outdoor museum
21. Connect to other historic areas
22. Nature preserve
23. Stage area – festivals
24. Connection to other parks and Downtown
25. Parking
26. Site specific signs

### Marketing

1. Information for visitors
2. Welcome pack
3. Activities in park
4. Connect parks to the mill
5. Website – specific to Battle Park
6. Locals need to know
7. Outdoor activities – walking, biking
8. Make park part of package – mills, sports complex - Full day of fun
9. Marketing on safety
10. Go to experts
11. \*Local vs. tourism
12. Branding – Battle Park is a gateway
13. Get locals on board

### Priorities

1. Address Confederate Monument (not major but helpful)
2. Ongoing maintenance & operations
3. Safety – Perception/ Solid Lighting/ Security
4. Event Space
5. Nature learning center
6. More accessible areas along the water
7. Improved facilities throughout the trails (water/restroom/benches) / Manicured trail
8. Clean –the water where there is fishing is filthy/ Access to trash receptacles/ Attractiveness of park.
9. Protect ecosystem
10. Embrace cultural, historical and natural resources
11. View of mill
12. Safe fishing access
13. Bike/pedestrian connectivity to islands

# BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN



Rocky Mount Battle Park Master Plan  
City of Rocky Mount  
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## Challenges

1. Budget
2. City liability concerns
3. Affording creative consultants
4. Meeting diverse community needs
5. Consensus at the city council level and a park designed that meets the needs of all residents of Rocky Mount as well as attracts new visitors and residents to our community
6. I see no challenge if a good plan is in place
7. Littering and lighting
8. Marketing
9. Natural resource – river
10. Public needs and wants vs. what is best for park
11. Regulatory constraints
12. Must be measurable

## Opportunities for Short Term Success

1. Clean up graffiti
2. Special events at park
3. On-site stakeholder meetings
4. Walking tours
5. Virtual tours
6. Join with music at mills to advertise
7. A logo/brand – a new beginning
8. Tell a story – speakers bureau
9. College
10. Community and Corporate partners
  - a. Wesleyan College
  - b. Visor
  - c. Sara Lee
  - d. DMV
  - e. Cummings
  - f. LS Tractor
  - g. Draka Elevator
  - h. Nash County School System
  - i. QVC
  - j. Triangle Tire
  - k. CSX
  - l. Bridgestone and Firestone
  - m. Edgecombe County



February 19, 2020 Stakeholder meeting (Economic Group)

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### March 5, 2 pm – Environmental group

The stakeholder group meeting representing the environmental aspects of sustainability was attended by 13 members of the community. The invitation list included over 25 individuals that represent environmental groups, regulatory agencies and educators, etc..



#### MEETING SUMMARY

**PROJECT:** CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK SITE  
Rocky Mount, NC

**TO:** David Griffin, City of Rocky Mount

**FROM:** R. Scales, CPL, A. Wagner, CPL

**DATE:** March 5, 2020

**LOCATION:** The Imperial Center  
Rocky Mount, NC

**SUBJECT:** Battle Park Site Specific Masterplan - Environment Group Workshop  
Summary

#### ATTENDING:

Scott Miles, Rocky Mount Stormwater Engineer  
Donald Perry, Assistant City Engineer  
Neal Watson, City of Rocky Mount  
Stephanie Collins, City of Rocky Mount  
Shelton Sullivan, NC DWR  
Kevin DeBruhl, Edward Jones  
Will Joyner, Landscaping and Lawn Maintenance (City Contractor)  
Bob Hudkins, Sierra Club  
Jonathan Murray, NC Forest Service  
Clark Morton, NC Forest Service  
Kirk Rundle, NCWRC  
Linda Fisher, Tar River Land Conservancy  
Bill Lewis  
David Griffin, City of Rocky Mount  
Allie Wagner, CPL  
Reggie Scales, CPL

#### General Comments:

1. Tell story of history
2. Invasive species – Chinese Privet, Russian Olive, Honey Suckle, Wisteria
3. Provide Handicap access
4. Consider Educational displays
5. Lasting improvements – make it sustainable
6. Fishing

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN



Rocky Mount Battle Park Master Plan  
City of Rocky Mount  
3/5/2020  
Page 2 of 3

7. Consensus
8. Affordable changes that make a difference
9. Finance, funding, phasing
10. Long-term cleanup plan – cost & process
11. Connectivity to surrounding areas
12. Sustainability – Recycle – Zero impact to environment

### Plan for Protection of Water Resources and Species

1. Protecting water source and species in the river
2. Sediment dropped during floods
3. Cultural resources on site
4. Maintain/ add to buffers
  - a. Native species
5. Add restrooms/ environmentally friendly
6. Trash/ Recycling/ Fishing line
7. Create specific overlook points
8. Provide educational signs
  - a. Buffers
  - b. Endangered Species
  - c. Stormwater Controls
9. Possible improvement to habitat for wildlife
10. Use of environmentally friendly chemicals

### Plan for long-term maintenance

1. Vegetation Maintenance Plan
2. Natural buffer area – to target public to certain areas
3. Dedicated staff \$\$
4. Safety
5. Facility design
  - a. Reduce operation costs
  - b. Storm - Standards
6. O&M Funds
7. Emergency cleanup funds

### Family Friendly Nature Park with Capabilities for Outdoor Recreation and Environmental Education

1. Family friendly nature park with the capabilities for many outdoor recreation.
2. Sustainable natural setting, available environmental educational experiences, historical.
3. LE Presence
4. Improve visibility (this under growth)
5. Check in station
6. Surveillance video
7. Emergency station/ button
8. Information on problematic wildlife and plants/ map
9. Camping facilities
10. Restrooms
11. Markers for historical areas



March 5, 2020 Stakeholder meeting (Environmental Group)

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Public Input Meetings

Thursday February 20, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm (Snowed out)

Thursday February 27, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm (Extended to 8:00 pm to accommodate for snow date)

Monday March 2, 10:00 am - 11:30 am (Extended to 12:00 pm to accommodate for snow date)

With assistance from the City of Rocky Mount Public Information Office, an extensive advertising campaign to publicize the Public Meetings included:

- Rocky Mount Telegram ads (1/4 page) February 4, 9, 16 and 23
- Facebook postings
- Facebook boost post
- Twitter tweets
- Instagram posts
- Nextdoor app posts
- Postcards to all 2019 P&R Dept participants
- Posters posted throughout Rocky Mount
- Webpage posting
- LAMAR advertising digital billboard (located on Hwy 301)
- City of Rocky Mount City Worker Update article



March 2, 2020 Public Meeting



Political corruption trial of big N.C. donor to start

In January 2018, the federal grand jury indicted the former N.C. Gov. Roy Cooper on charges of political corruption. The trial is set to begin in March 2020. Cooper is accused of receiving \$1 million from a donor to influence the state's education policy. The trial is expected to last several weeks.

Teen charged in college student's death

A 17-year-old North Carolina teen has been charged with the death of a 21-year-old college student. The teen is accused of driving a car that struck the student on a road near a college campus. The teen's attorney has denied the charges.



Members of the Rocky Mount Community Center are seen at a recent event. The center is a community hub for the town, offering various programs and services.

Mississippi braces for flooding

Mississippi is bracing for potential flooding as heavy rains are expected to fall across the state. State officials are monitoring the situation closely and have issued warnings for residents in flood-prone areas. The flooding could impact major highways and infrastructure.

Costa Mesa, Calif. Plan to save five patients failed

A cost-saving measure in Costa Mesa, California, aimed at saving five patients from a medical procedure failed. The measure involved a change in the way the procedure was performed, but it did not achieve the intended results. The hospital is now reviewing the situation.

Sanders wins Nevada caucuses

Elizabeth Warren's campaign manager, Kamela Sanders, has won the Nevada caucuses. Sanders is a prominent figure in the Democratic primary race. Her victory is seen as a significant win for Warren's campaign.



Members of the Rocky Mount Community Center are seen at a recent event. The center is a community hub for the town, offering various programs and services.

Wells Fargo to pay \$3B to resolve probes

Wells Fargo has agreed to pay \$3 billion to resolve various regulatory probes. The settlement covers several areas of concern, including consumer protection and anti-money laundering. The bank is pleased with the resolution.

Palma Mesa, Calif. Charter for voters due 3.18

Palma Mesa, California, is set to hold a charter election on March 18. The election will determine the city's future direction and governance. Residents are encouraged to participate in the process.

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## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Public Meeting Process

The Public Meetings were intentionally crafted to provide direct feedback from the citizens on their recreational preferences for Battle Park. At sign in, participants were provided the agenda / instructions, an informational handout, one yellow dot and nine blue dots. The agenda / instructions provided the meeting objectives and how to participate, the handout provided general park information and the planning process. There were 56 images of leisure and recreation activities that could occur within the renovated Battle Park. Participants were asked to place their yellow dot on the image of their main desired activity. They placed their blue dots among the other nine activities they wished to participate. A blank board with post-it notes, and a marker was provided for items that were not provided or further comments.

### Public Meeting Agenda and Activity Board Instructions



## Battle Park

### 1<sup>st</sup> Public Input Open House

#### “Let’s Go \_\_\_\_\_ In The Park” Exercise

**Date:**

Public Input Meeting– Imperial Centre Theater Lobby, 270 Gay St, Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Thursday, February 20 6:00 – 7:30 pm

**Objectives of Exercise:**

Prioritize the community’s top recreational activities for Battle Park

**Directions:**

- Each participant will be given nine dots.
- Look over all the images representing different recreational park activities.
- Each board is distinct containing eight different activities.
- Select your favorite activities to do in the Park by placing only one dot under that image.
- Do not double vote for an image.

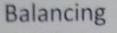
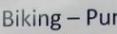
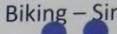
Thank you for participating!

BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

Public Meeting Activity Board 1 of 7 (With dot votes)

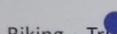
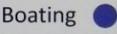
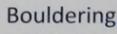
ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK - PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

"Let's Go \_\_\_\_\_ In The Park"

Balancing   Biking - Greenway  Biking - Pump Track  Biking - Single Track 






Biking - Trials  Birdwatching  Boating  Bouldering 





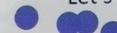

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Public Meeting Activity Board 2 of 7 (With dot votes)

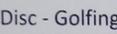
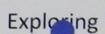
ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK - PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

"Let's Go \_\_\_\_\_ In The Park"

Camping - Platform  Camping - Tent  Camping - Treehouse  Chillin' 






Disc - Golfing  Educating (Nature) Kids  Educating (Nature) Adults  Exploring 






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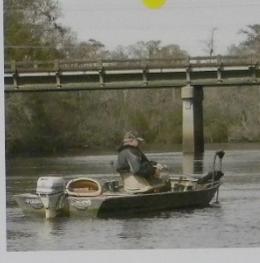
 

BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

Public Meeting Activity Board 3 of 7 (With dot votes)

ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK - PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

"Let's Go \_\_\_\_\_ In The Park"

Fishing - Pier  Fishing - Learning  Fishing - Boat  Foaming 

Gardening  Geocaching  Hammock-ing  Hiking 

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Public Meeting Activity Board 4 of 7 (With dot votes)

ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK - PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

"Let's Go \_\_\_\_\_ In The Park"

Kayaking  Learning - Adults  Learning - Pre-K Field Trip  Learning - Historic Sites 

Orienteering  Paddling  Painting  Photographing 

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# BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

## Public Meeting Activity Board 5 of 7 (With dot votes)

ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK - PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

"Let's Go \_\_\_\_\_ In The Park"

Picnicking

Playing - Tree Houses

Playing - Free Play

Playing - Nature Play

Playing - In the River

Playing - Organized

Playing - Community

Running - Greenway

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## Public Meeting Activity Board 6 of 7 (With dot votes)

ROCKY MOUNT BATTLE PARK - PUBLIC INPUT MEETING

"Let's Go \_\_\_\_\_ In The Park"

Running - Trails

Sailing - Model Boats

Socializing w/Friends

Staff Educating

Stargazing

Tree Observing

Tubing

Viewing - Wildlife

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CLH



## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Public Meetings Results

The February 20 Public meeting was canceled due to snow. The remaining two meetings were extended by thirty minutes each to accommodate those that wished to participate. The February 27 meeting had 40 participants sign-in, the March 2 had 26 participants sign-in. Not all participants used all of their dots. The combined results of the yellow dot / blue dot process, which indicates recreational preference is provided.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Yellow</b>	<b>Blue</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Yellow</b>	<b>Blue</b>
Balancing	0	3	Orienteering	0	2
Biking - Greenway	6	25	Paddling	2	14
Biking - Pump track	1	4	Painting	0	5
Biking - Single track	3	12	Photographing	1	9
Biking - Trials	0	13	Picnicking	0	23
Birdwatching	0	9	Playing - treehouse	1	5
Boating	0	4	Playing - free play	0	2
Bouldering	0	5	Playing - nature play	1	6
Camping - platform	0	4	Playing - river	0	11
Camping - tent	1	2	Playing - organized	0	0
Camping - Treehouse	0	11	Playing - community	0	5
Chillin'	0	2	Running - greenway	3	10
Disc golf	0	1	Running - trails	1	12
Educating nature kids	3	29	Model boats	0	0
Educating nature adults	2	19	Socializing	0	4
Exploring	0	6	Staff led educ	0	3
Fishing - pier	1	20	Stargazing	0	8
Fishing - learning	0	6	Tree observing	0	10
Fishing - boat	1	2	Tubing	0	10
Foaming	0	1	Wildlife viewing	0	16
Gardening	1	12	Sculpture	0	4
Geocaching	0	3	Walking - ADA	3	11
Hammocking	0	1	Walking -trail (nat surface)	11	23
Hiking (nat surface shown)	1	27	Walking - greenway	4	16
Kayaking	1	19	Yoga	0	6
Learning - adults	0	7	Zip line	1	14
Learning - PreK field trips	0	5	Zip line - canopy tour	0	6
Learning - historic	10	35	Zombie race	0	2

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### **Prioritized Amenities**

The 56 images were then correlated with recreational amenities. Some amenities support numerous activities, for example, Wooded Space supports: Exploring, Photography and Wildlife viewing.

The “dot votes” yielded the following prioritized amenities:

### **Main amenity desired at Battle Park (Number of yellow dots)**

- 1 (Tie) Greenway (16)
- 1 (Tie) Natural surface trail (16)
- 3 Interpretive and Educational (I&E) signage (10)
- 4 Demonstration area (5)
- 5 Canoe launch (3)
- 6 (Tie) Boat ramp (1)
- 6 (Tie) Camping (1)
- 6 (Tie) Camping & Treehouse (1)
- 6 (Tie) Gardening / Flower area (1)
- 6 (Tie) MTB pumptrack (1)
- 6 (Tie) Nature play area (1)
- 6 (Tie) Piers (1)
- 6 (Tie) Wooded space (1)
- 6 (Tie) Zip line (1)

### **Other amenities desired at Battle Park (Number of blue dots)**

- 1 Natural surface trail (74)
- 2 Greenway (73)
- 3 Demonstration area (70)
- 4 Canoe launch (43)
- 5 Interpretive and Educational (I&E) signage (35)
- 6 Wooded space (34)
- 7 Boulder area (29)
- 8 Piers (26)
- 9 Open space (24)
- 10 Picnic tables (23)
- 11 Zip line (20)
- 12 Camping & Treehouse (16)
- 13 Gardening / Flower area (12)
- 14 Nature play area (9)
- 15 (Tie) Boat ramp (6)
- 15 (Tie) Camping (6)
- 15 (Tie) Yoga (6)
- 18 Large open space / shelter (5)
- 19 MTB pumptrack (4)
- 20 Sculpture (4)
- 21 Education area (3)
- 22 (Tie) Disc golf (1)
- 22 (Tie) Foaming (1)

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### **Presentation to Local Groups**

Parks and Recreation staff created a presentation for Local Groups (3) and the Planning Board. The Presentation included the history of Battle Park, references from the 2013 Needs Assessment statistically valid survey, the 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan and the current Battle Park master planning process. The presentation also included the funding plan, current City CIP and proposed grant applications, specifying which amenities would be included with each.

#### Wednesday, March 4, 2020 Rocky Mount Rotary – Tackle the Tar Committee

The Rocky Mount Rotary Club hosts Tackle the Tar, an adventure-style obstacle course race including over 300 racers. In its first four years the event has raised \$234,000 in scholarships benefiting over 100 local students. The organizing group is a sub-committee of the Rotary Club. This group of volunteers works throughout the year to ensure a successful event. The event is held at Battle Park and the Rocky Mount Sports Complex. Currently, it is the largest single day event within Battle Park. The sub-committee has proven to be great stewards of the park and participate in a wide array outdoor recreation experiences in our community.

#### Thursday, March 12, 2020 Rocky Mount Neighborhood Presidents' Association

Rocky Mount currently has 20+ Neighborhood Associations. Each of these associations provide representation to the City of Rocky Mount Neighborhood Presidents Association. By presenting to this group, City staff communicated the park concept and received feedback at the city-wide neighborhood level.

#### Wednesday, March 18, 2020 Rocky Mount Area Youth Council

The Rocky Mount Area Youth Council is a forum for area high school students in grades 9-12. This meeting was cancelled due to Coronavirus restrictions.

### **Support from the City of Rocky Mount Planning Board**

#### Tuesday, March 10, 2020 City of Rocky Mount Planning Board

The City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department works closely with City Administration and Council. The Department does not have an Advisory Board. However, the City of Rocky Mount Planning Board, appointed by City Council, advises Council on planning and development matters in Rocky Mount. Parks and Recreation staff presented the renovation of Battle Park to the Planning Board during the scheduled March 2020 meeting. The presentation included a brief history of the park, the park planning process, the overall park project and information for each grant application. The board voted to unanimously support the park project and the grant applications for funding.

Presentations to Local Groups and Presentation to Planning Board detailing each project and the associated funding. Slides 21-24 (of 26).



**NC Department of Environmental Quality**  
**Division of Water Resources Development Grant**

December 31, 2019

\$199,873 request

\$591,727 intentional overmatch (City and other grants)

Renovate: Greenway, 2 Fishing piers, boat ramp, canoe launch

New: 2 Raingardens, I&E signage



**NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources**  
**Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (90 point score)**

May 1, 2020

\$350,000 request

\$500,000 intentional overmatch (City and other grants)

**New:** 5k trail, I&E, demonstration areas, nature play area, bike trials

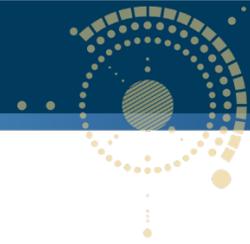
**Like:** 2<sup>nd</sup> canoe launch, dispersed picnic

**Renovate:** Greenway, 2 piers, ramp, canoe launch, NCFS woodland implementation

**Connect to greenways and Parks**



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## National Park Service

### Land and Water Conservation Fund

July 1, 2020

\$500,000 request

\$500,000 overmatch (City and other grants)

**Renovate:** Greenway, 2 piers, boat ramp, canoe launch, NCFS woodland implementation



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## NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

### Recreational Trails Program

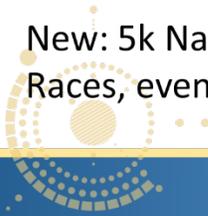
Pre-application April 2020, Full application September 2020

\$100,000 request

\$25,000 match

New: 5k Natural surface multi-use trail

Races, events, MTB, XC, First in park system



## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### **Comprehensive systemwide parks and recreation plan for the local government's jurisdiction**

The City of Rocky Mount 2015 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was approved by City Council on December 14, 2015. The Comprehensive Plan included public meetings in all seven Rocky Mount wards and in-depth discussions with the Steering Committee, Stakeholder Groups, Parks & Recreation Staff, City Administration and City Council. All expressed the desire for the renovation of Battle Park in one form or another. The Comprehensive Plan includes 50 pages relevant to Battle Park and 16 references to Natural Parks and Preserves. Section 4.4.3 Nature Center System, provides a concept of inter-related greenways and natural lands with Battle Park as hub. The Comprehensive Plan includes \$2,000,000 in improvements to Battle Park.

The relevant pages of the 2015 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan are provided as an addendum to this document. For a complete document, please go to:

[https://www.rockymountnc.gov/departments\\_\\_\\_services/parks\\_\\_\\_recreation/park\\_planning](https://www.rockymountnc.gov/departments___services/parks___recreation/park_planning)

### **3 to 5-year capital improvement plan for parks and recreation**

The City of Rocky Mount City Council approved the FY 2019-2020 Budget Ordinance on Monday June 24, 2019. Included in the FY 2019-2020 Budget Ordinance was the 2020-2024 City Manager Proposed CIP Overview. Pages 7-11 and 7-12 provide the Parks and Recreation 2020-2024 CIP, the Battle Park items are highlighted. The relevant portion of the Monday June 24, 2019 City Council Action Agenda is provided.

For complete documents please go to:

2020-2024 CIP Overview

<https://cityofrockymount.hosted.civiclive.com/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=15810220>

City Council Agendas

[https://www.rockymountnc.gov/government/mayor\\_city\\_council/agendas](https://www.rockymountnc.gov/government/mayor_city_council/agendas)

**BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN**

**2020-2024 City Manager Proposed CIP**

**CIP OVERVIEW (2020-2024 City Manager Proposed) General - Parks & Recreation**

Description	Current Year		2020-2024 CIP Funding Period				Future Years	CIP Total
	FY 2019 Proj	FY 2020 Prop	FY 2021 Prop	FY 2022 Prop	FY 2023 Prop	FY 2024 Prop		
<b>Revenues</b>								
General Fund	165,000	835,000	865,000	1,230,000	1,800,000	1,310,000	2,590,000	6,040,000
Powell Bill Allocation	-	-	-	125,000	-	70,000	-	195,000
State Grant	-	-	-	150,000	400,000	-	360,000	550,000
Federal Grant	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Installment Debt	443,000	700,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	1,000,000	1,700,000
Other	208,000	-	-	325,000	-	70,000	1,830,000	395,000
Unmet Needs	-	-	150,000	3,150,000	4,750,000	-	-	8,050,000
Donations & Contributions	-	-	30,000	40,000	30,000	-	80,000	100,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$816,000</b>	<b>\$1,560,000</b>	<b>\$2,045,000</b>	<b>\$5,020,000</b>	<b>\$6,980,000</b>	<b>\$1,450,000</b>	<b>\$5,860,000</b>	<b>\$17,055,000</b>

**Major Capital Investment Projects & Council Priorities (Order of Priority)**

1 Battle Park Master Plan	-	100,000	-	-	-	-	-	100,000
2 Spray Park Improvements	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	-	50,000
3 Battleboro Community Parks	-	50,000	50,000	300,000	-	-	500,000	400,000
4 Signage: Parks & Cemeteries	-	20,000	20,000	60,000	65,000	65,000	-	230,000
5 Neighborhood Park Renovations	125,000	300,000	120,000	120,000	750,000	750,000	500,000	2,040,000
6 Vehicles & Equipment: Parks and Cemeteries Operations	-	275,000	450,000	305,000	390,000	415,000	-	1,835,000
7 Cemetery Software	-	-	100,000	50,000	-	-	-	150,000
8 Sunset Park Attractions	-	-	25,000	25,000	-	-	275,000	50,000
9 Denton Street Pool Renovations and Improvements	-	225,000	-	-	-	-	-	225,000
10 Rocky Mount Trail & Greenway Improvements	-	25,000	-	450,000	-	140,000	1,000,000	615,000
11 Facility Roof Replacements	443,000	475,000	1,000,000	-	-	-	-	1,475,000
12 Cemeteries Driveway Resurfacing & Repairs	-	-	-	25,000	250,000	-	200,000	275,000
13 Tennis Court Resurfacing	-	-	-	125,000	-	-	600,000	125,000
14 Senior Center Building Renovation	-	40,000	-	1,500,000	-	-	-	1,540,000
15 Rocky Mount Sports Complex & Stadium	-	-	150,000	1,500,000	4,750,000	-	145,000	6,400,000
16 Rocky Mount Stadium Improvements	-	-	-	100,000	-	-	-	100,000
17 Imperial Centre Campus Improvements	-	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
18 Tar River & Water Resource Conservation Exhibit	-	-	-	-	-	-	825,000	-
19 Children's Museum & Science Center Exhibit	-	-	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	100,000	60,000

**BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN**

<b>CIP OVERVIEW (2020-2024 City Manager Proposed)</b>							<b>General - Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	
Description	Current Year		2020-2024 CIP Funding Period				Future Years	CIP Total
	FY 2019 Proj	FY 2020 Prop	FY 2021 Prop	FY 2022 Prop	FY 2023 Prop	FY 2024 Prop		
20 MLK Park: Renovations and Improvements	-	-	-	-	25,000	-	250,000	25,000
21 Park Shelter Replacements	-	-	30,000	40,000	30,000	-	-	100,000
22 Pier, Overlook, Pedestrian Bridges, and Boat Ramp Maintenance	25,000	-	50,000	-	50,000	-	100,000	100,000
23 Battle Park Overlook Replacement	-	-	50,000	150,000	-	-	180,000	200,000
24 South Rocky Mount Community Center	-	-	-	-	-	-	575,000	-
25 City Lake Improvements and Upgrades	-	-	-	-	50,000	-	400,000	50,000
26 Upgrade of Planetarium PCs and Software	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,000	-
27 Booker T Theatre	-	-	-	50,000	50,000	80,000	50,000	180,000
28 City of Rocky Mount's Off-Leash Dog Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,000	-
29 Theatre Line Set	-	-	-	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
30 Booker T Washington Community Center	-	-	-	50,000	500,000	-	-	550,000
<b>Group Expenditures</b>	<b>\$593,000</b>	<b>\$1,560,000</b>	<b>\$2,045,000</b>	<b>\$5,020,000</b>	<b>\$6,980,000</b>	<b>\$1,450,000</b>	<b>\$5,860,000</b>	<b>\$17,055,000</b>
<b>Annual Capital Maintenance (Order of Funding, by Year)</b>								
Sunset Park Boat Ramp	208,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parks & Recreation Buildings	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Group Expenditures</b>	<b>\$223,000</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$-</b>	<b>\$-</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$816,000</b>	<b>\$1,560,000</b>	<b>\$2,045,000</b>	<b>\$5,020,000</b>	<b>\$6,980,000</b>	<b>\$1,450,000</b>	<b>\$5,860,000</b>	<b>\$17,055,000</b>

BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

2020-2024 City Manager Proposed CIP adopted in FY 2019-2020 Budget Ordinance, June 24, 2019



THE CENTER OF IT ALL

- |           |   |                        |           |   |                              |
|-----------|---|------------------------|-----------|---|------------------------------|
| <b>A</b>  | = | <b>APPROVAL</b>        | <b>C</b>  | = | <b>REFERRED TO COMMITTEE</b> |
| <b>AD</b> | = | <b>APPROVAL DENIED</b> | <b>T</b>  | = | <b>TABLED</b>                |
| <b>NA</b> | = | <b>NO ACTION</b>       | <b>RA</b> | = | <b>REMOVED FROM AGENDA</b>   |
| <b>D</b>  | = | <b>DEFERRED</b>        | <b>I</b>  | = | <b>INTRODUCED</b>            |
| <b>R</b>  | = | <b>REFERRED</b>        | <b>RW</b> | = | <b>REQUEST WITHDRAWN</b>     |
|           |   |                        | <b>O</b>  | = | <b>OTHER</b>                 |

**AGENDA FOR A REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT HELD MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2019 AT 4:00 P.M. IN THE GEORGE W. DUDLEY CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING.**

8. Consideration of FY 2019-2020 Budget Ordinance and Amendments to Fees and Charges:
  - a. FY 2019-2020 Budget Ordinance – *establishes appropriations for FY 2019-2020; and sets ad valorem tax rate at \$0.685 per \$100 of taxable assessed value; same tax rate as current fiscal year*
  - b. Amendments to Fees and Charges:
    1. Department of Public Works:
      - Policy No. X.8.5 Solid Waste Transfer Station Tipping Fee

**A~** Recommended Action: 1) Adopt FY 2019-2020 Budget Ordinance; and  
2) Adopt Resolution Amending Fees and Charges Listed Above.

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

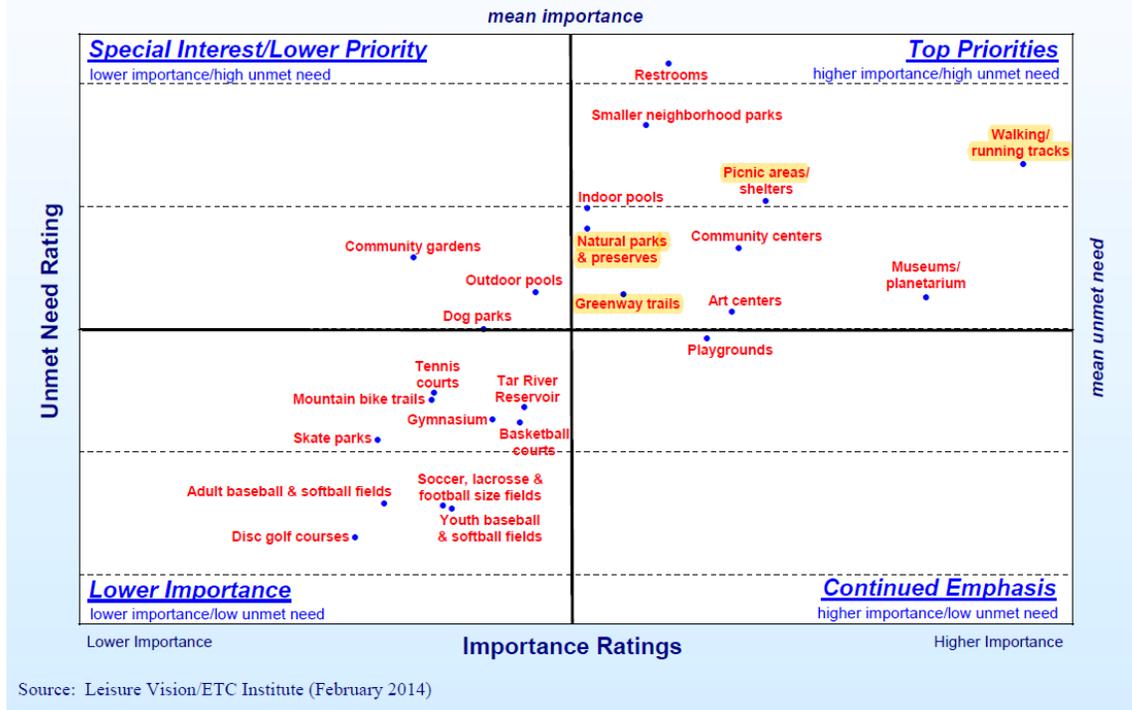
### Recreational Needs Survey

In preparation for the City of Rocky Mount 2015 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Leisure Vision conducted the statistically valid 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey. The results of the survey indicated the Top Priorities, higher importance/high unmet need as (p 35):

- Walking/running tracks
- Picnic areas / shelters
- Natural Parks
- Preserves and greenway trails

## Importance-Unmet Needs Assessment Matrix for the City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Facilities

(points on the graph show deviations from the mean importance and unmet need ratings given by respondents to the survey)



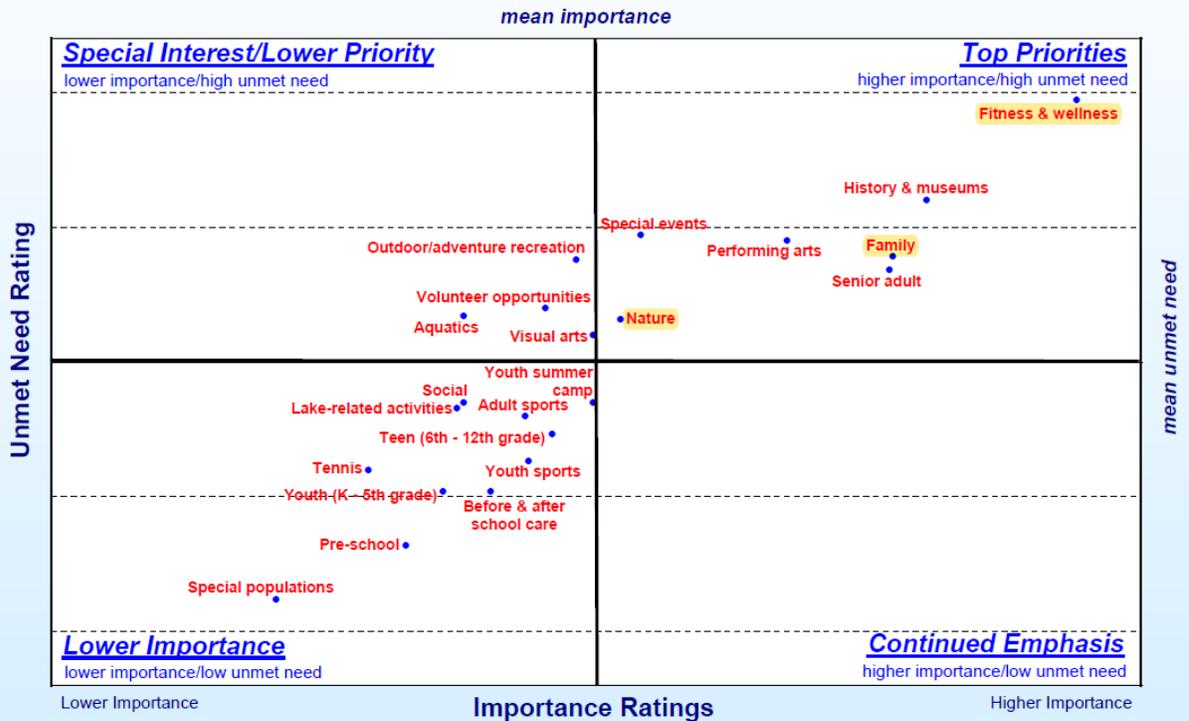
**BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN**

The top priority recreation programs, higher importance/high unmet need, included (p 36):

- Fitness and Wellness
- Family
- Nature programs

## Importance-Unmet Need Assessment Matrix for City of Rocky Mount Recreation Programs

(points on the graph show deviations from the mean importance and unmet need ratings given by respondents to the survey)



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (February 2014)

The renovation of Battle Park addresses the needs stated needs. For the complete 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey, including the survey instrument, methodology and complete results, please go to:

[https://www.rockymountnc.gov/departments\\_\\_\\_services/parks\\_\\_\\_recreation/park\\_planning](https://www.rockymountnc.gov/departments___services/parks___recreation/park_planning)

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

### Permitting

In the RFP for Design Services (RFP320-230919CK), the City anticipated the project may require a full Environmental Assessment (EA) depending upon the amenities as desired by the public. The following alternates to accommodate the EA and related permitting were included in the RFP:

#### **5.6 ALTERNATES**

##### **Alternate 1**

Construction bid documents to include:

- Construction plans bid set
- Bid manual
- Project manual

##### **Alternate 2**

NEPA / NC SEPA Environmental Assessment and the corresponding Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) as appropriate.

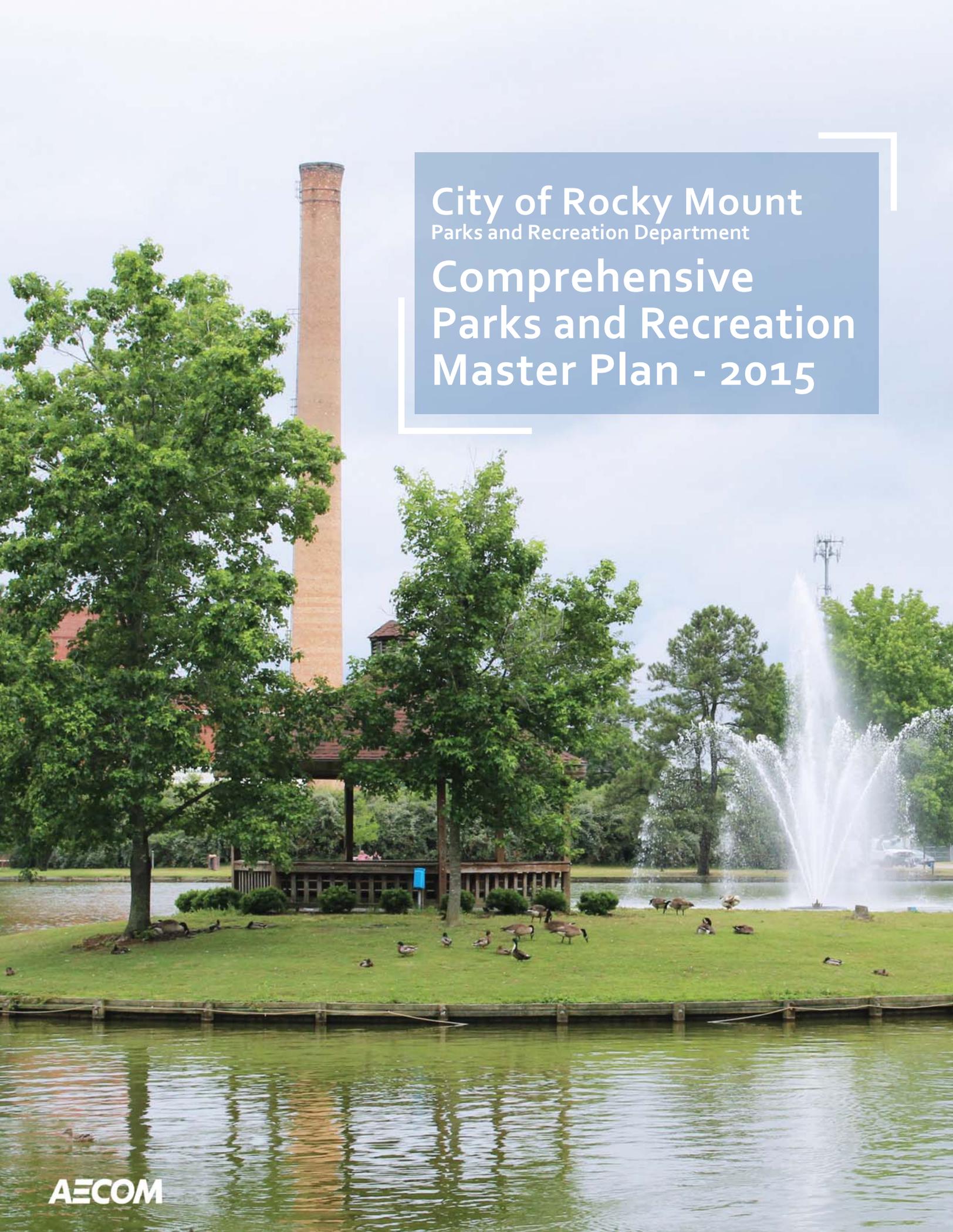
##### **Alternate 3**

Project / construction permitting

The City understands pending review of the Local, State and Federal regulatory agencies it may be required to complete the Environmental Assessment before signing grant contracts and that various permits such as but not limited to erosion control, no net rise, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits and NPDES Phase II compliance may be required.

## BATTLE PARK MASTER PLAN

The relevant pages of the 2015 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan are provided as an addendum to this document.

A scenic view of a park. In the background, a tall, slender brick chimney stands against a cloudy sky. In the middle ground, a wooden gazebo is partially obscured by several large, leafy green trees. To the right, a fountain with multiple jets of water is active. In the foreground, a grassy area is populated by several ducks. A wooden pier or dock extends into a pond in the immediate foreground, which reflects the surrounding greenery and sky.

# City of Rocky Mount

Parks and Recreation Department

## Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan - 2015

# Executive Summary

## Implementation Plan

When the prioritization criteria is applied to the Park and Recreation Master Plan Vision list of projects, the following are the highest scoring in descending order by two categories; enhanced existing parks and facilities and new parks or facilities:

*New Facilities/ Sites Project Prioritization List*

Rank	Top Project Priorities for New Facilities or Sites	Cost Estimate
<b>1.</b>	<b>Community Park Acquisition</b>	
	West Community Park Acq.	\$1,400,000
<b>2.</b>	<b>Downtown Community Facility</b>	
	Downtown Community Facility	\$39,600,000
<b>3.</b>	<b>Community Center Development</b>	
	West Community Center	\$5,625,000
<b>4.</b>	<b>Community Park Acquisition</b>	
	North Community Park Acq.	\$1,400,000
<b>5.</b>	<b>Develop Priority Trails (Pedestrian Plan)</b>	
	Holly Street Park Connector	\$370,000
	Sunset to Englewood Connector	\$580,000
	South Rocky Mt. Comm Center	\$1,690,000
	BBQ Park Trail	\$369,000
<b>6.</b>	<b>Regional Park Development (River Falls Park)</b>	
	Feasibility Study	\$75,000
	Master Plan Development	\$150,000
	Design and Permitting	\$875,000
<b>7.</b>	<b>Community Park Development</b>	
	West Community Park	\$7,000,000
<b>8.</b>	<b>Develop Priority Trails (Pedestrian Plan) - Phase 2</b>	
	Hospital Area Connector	\$1,584,000
	MLK Jr. Park to Leggett Rd.	\$159,000
	Farmington Park Trail	\$845,000
<b>9.</b>	<b>Community Park Development</b>	
	North Community Park	\$7,000,000
<b>10.</b>	<b>Nature Center at Battle Park</b>	
	Design and Construction	\$1,687,500

2014 Estimates

*Enhancing Existing Facilities/ Sites Project Prioritization List*

Rank	Top Project Priorities to Enhance Existing Facilities or Sites	Cost Estimate
<b>1.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Neighborhood Parks</b>	
	Priority Neighborhood Parks	\$995,000
<b>2.</b>	<b>Senior Center Renovation/Abatement</b>	
	Feasibility/Bus. Plan & Design	\$300,000
	Phase 1 Reno./Abatement	\$3,375,000
<b>3.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Community Parks</b>	
	Priority Community Parks	\$1,035,000
<b>4.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Mini Parks</b>	
	Priority Mini Parks	\$295,000
<b>5.</b>	<b>Sports Complex Stadium</b>	
	Locker Rm, Training Rm. Office	\$2,250,000
	Restrooms (two)	\$660,000
	Concessions	\$200,000
	Press Box, Scoreboard	\$450,000
	Eq./Maint. Building	\$437,500
	Turf Field (NCAA)	\$750,000
	Parking/ADA Access	\$200,000
<b>6.</b>	<b>Renovation of Booker T. Washington Com. Center</b>	
	Renovation of BTWCC	\$3,375,000
<b>7.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Regional Parks and Facilities</b>	
	Priority Regional Parks	\$425,000
<b>8.</b>	<b>Renovation of Sunset Park and Sports Complex</b>	
	Sunset Park / Sports Com.	\$2,250,000
<b>9.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Neighborhood Parks</b>	
	Long-Term Neighborhood Parks	\$1,765,000
<b>10.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Mini Parks</b>	
	Long-Term Mini Parks	\$395,000
<b>11.</b>	<b>Cultural / Trails / Transit</b>	
	Cultural Heritage Trails	\$562,500
	Priority Trailheads and Transit Shelters/ Signage	\$300,000
	Imperial Center Improvements	\$250,000
<b>12.</b>	<b>Natural Lands Management Plan</b>	
	Management Plan Development	\$125,000

2014 Estimates

# Existing Conditions Overview

## Section 2.3 | Existing Parks Matrix

### 2.3.1 Existing Parks Matrix

With a better understanding of current and future population trends within Rocky Mount, the system overview can turn towards existing parks. In order to observe systemwide successes or opportunities, the Master Plan team reviewed an analysis of all 43 parks completed in 2012 by the Parks and Recreation Department. The evaluation report included recommendations for each site. The Master Plan team reviewed this document and developed a matrix that included five measurements that could be learned through the review of the 2012 evaluation. These five areas include: serving the local population or use of the park/facility; appearance; condition; accessibility; and appropriate function.

Parks were ranked 1-5 for each area with 1 representing the lowest score and 5 representing the highest score. Overall scores are ranked as follows:

5 = Excellent
4 = Good
3 = Average
2 = Needs Improvements
1 = Needs Significant Improvements

In order to test the reliance of the information from the 2012 evaluation, the Master Plan team asked steering committee members to visit randomly selected parks and rank their observations using the same scoring indicators, **Table 11**. The intent of the test was to compare final scores and whether these scores would be similar to those gained through a review of the 2012 park evaluation report. In some cases, multiple evaluations of parks were completed by steering committee members. Scores were averaged for these parks, and the average score was used to compare. Results differ only slightly from the Master Plan team's evaluations and may be attributed to level of experience.

*Table 11: Steering Committee Park Evaluations. October, 2013*

	Services Residents/ Used	Appearance	Condition	Accessibility	Appropriate Function	Overall (Average)
<b>Battle Park</b>	2.6	3.3	3.3	2.7	3.5	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Charter Oaks Park</b>	3.2	4.5	2.9	2.8	3.7	<b>3.4</b>
<b>Cloverdale Park</b>	3.7	3.7	2.6	3.3	4.0	<b>3.5</b>
<b>Hornbeam Park</b>	2.8	3.4	2.5	2.2	3.0	<b>2.8</b>
<b>Lancaster Park</b>	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.0	3.9	<b>3.3</b>
<b>MLK Jr. Park</b>	3.2	3.9	3.9	4.8	3.8	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Sports Complex</b>	2.8	4.4	4.9	4.5	4.4	<b>4.2</b>
<b>Stith Talbot Park</b>	4.0	3.8	4.3	4.4	3.5	<b>4.0</b>
<b>Three Sisters Park</b>	3.8	4.2	4.0	2.8	3.3	<b>3.6</b>

Results from the review of the 2012 evaluation are shown in **Table 12**. Parks are organized by City Ward with averages measured for each Ward. This is done to determine if patterns of park performance are specific to City Wards. Park averages have also been mapped in order to determine if there are any performance patterns that are geographic. See **Map 8: Park Ratings**.

It is also important to note that not all of the properties managed by the Parks and Recreation Department are currently public parks. A number of properties were gained by the department as a result of the flooding from Hurricane Floyd in 1999. These properties were added through the FEMA Buyout Program. **Map 9: FEMA Buyout Program Sites**, identifies these properties in two categories: FEMA sites and FEMA sites as parks. In addition to the Parks and Recreation Department's management of FEMA sites, other city departments, notably Public Works, may oversee additional sites.

# Chapter 2

\* Barbecue Park was under construction at the time of the 2012 park review

Table 12: Park Rating Results, 2012

<b>How to read the Matrix:</b> Criteria are listed in the top row. Scores are based on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest score, and 5 representing the highest score possible. These scores are averaged to find the park or facility's overall score.	<b>Serves Residents/ Used</b>	<b>Appearance</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>Appropriate Function</b>	<b>Overall (Average)</b>
<b>Trails and Parks Outside City ETJ</b>						
City Trail System	4	5	4	5	4	4.4
Tar River Paddle Trail	4	5	5	4	5	4.6
Tar River Reservoir and Recreation Area	3	5	4	4	5	4.2
<b>Trails and Parks Outside City ETJ Averages</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>City Ward 1 Parks</b>						
Charter Oaks Park	1	4	4	2	2	2.6
Cloverdale Park	3	3	4	2	3	3.0
Eastern Avenue Park	5	4	4	3	4	4.0
Holly Street Park	2	3	3	2	2	2.4
Lancaster Park	3	3	3	2	3	2.8
Martin Luther King Jr Park	5	5	4	5	5	4.8
Meadowbrook Park	4	4	3	4	4	3.8
Oakwood Drive Mini Park	1	3	3	2	1	2.0
<b>City Ward 1 Averages</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3.2</b>
<b>City Ward 2 Parks</b>						
Battle Park	3	3	2	5	4	3.4
Barbecue Park*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bea Holomon Park	5	4	5	1	5	4.0
Braswell Park	2	5	4	2	2	3.0
City Lake	5	4	3	4	3	3.8
Duke Circle Property	1	2	2	2	1	1.6
Jack Laughery Park	3	5	5	5	5	4.6
Marigold Park	3	3	3	1	3	2.6
Sports Complex	4	5	5	5	5	4.8
Stith Talbert Park	5	4	4	5	5	4.6
Sunset Park	5	5	5	5	5	5.0
Sycamore Street Park	1	3	3	1	2	2.0
<b>City Ward 2 Averages</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.6</b>
<b>City Ward 3 Parks</b>						
Branch Street Park	3	1	1	1	3	1.8
Daughtridge Park	1	2	2	1	1	1.4
Home Street Park	3	3	2	2	2	2.4
Kite Park	2	4	4	2	2	2.8
Powell Park	2	4	3	2	1	2.4

# Needs and Priorities Assessment

## 3.1.3 Community Meetings Summary

Information gathered from each community meeting and the teen workshop was recorded in meeting notes and coded by the Master Plan staff to identify themes for community needs and priorities for parks, recreation programs and greenway trails. Primary themes from the meetings included:

- Emphasis on improving existing parks and facilities
- Using parks as a revitalization tool
- Improving biking and walkability
- Engaging youth and teens
- Continuing to promote the arts and education
- Promoting health and wellness
- Increasing equity and access to parks and services
- Improving the overall condition and accessibility of parks
- Increasing safety and security on parks
- Utilize Tar River area more

### Most Important Facilities with Highest Unmet Needs

1. Restrooms
2. Greenway Trails
3. Museums/ Planetarium
4. Art Centers
5. Community Centers
6. Tennis Courts
7. Small Neighborhood Parks
8. Playgrounds
9. Community Gardens
10. Swimming Pools

### Most Important Activities with Highest Unmet Needs

1. Fitness and Wellness
2. Performing Arts
3. Family
4. Senior Adult
5. History and Museums
6. Visual Arts
7. Outdoor/ Adventure Recreation
8. Youth Summer Camp
9. Youth Sports
10. Special Events

## 3.1.4 Stakeholder Interviews

In order to better understand the priorities that the community's leaders are facing, the Master Plan team conducted a series of interviews with community stakeholders. All interviews were conducted by telephone. A total of 13 stakeholders were interviewed. Responses were recorded by the Master Plan team and coded to identify consistent themes. The following questions were asked of each participant:

1. Methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?
2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the city, both facility and programs?
3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.
4. Comparable Communities: What community(s) or city(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What community(s) or city(s) should the city emulate?
5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

### Needs and Priorities:

#### General:

- Four of 13 interviewees noted: Brand and market ourselves using existing assets and resources, e.g. market the Imperial Centre; let people know about activities.

#### Facilities:

- Eight of 13 interviewees noted: Additional, connected paths, trails (e.g. along Battle Park, to athletic fields, to YMCA, to City Lake; complete the circle)
- Eight of 13 interviewees noted: Improve, upgrade, "groom" existing parks, playgrounds, trails,

# Chapter 3

with the deficiency accounting of a length that is equal to 73% of the current mileage. These conditions are projected to continue as the city grows to an estimated population of 60,387 (RMMPO) by the year 2030. The city will continue to enjoy a surplus of facilities as the population increases: however, this does not account for the distribution or quality of the facilities. As the facilities age and the population grows, updates to existing facilities and equitable access will need to be considered. The greenway deficiency will also continue to grow with the population increase, and in 2030 will represent a length equal to 80% of the current mileage.

Though a Facility LOS analysis provides a snapshot condition of the outdoor recreation facility capacity, it does not capture whether facilities are accessible by all residents and conflicts with input from public participation such the number of tennis courts or indoor recreation facilities. For this analysis the Master Plan team will conduct an Access LOS analysis to identify gaps in accessibility to facilities.

## 3.6.4 Access Level of Service Analysis

A third approach explored to better determine existing LOS is analyzing the level of access that residents have to park facilities. This is typically measured as a distance, either in miles or travel time. The City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department has established four different classification types for the parks within the system. The access level of service of the parks and facilities was analyzed using distances consistent with the park classification assigned by the City of Rocky Mount in the Together Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. These classifications and their respective level of service distance are listed below:

### Existing Park Classifications Types:

- Mini Parks - 1/4 mile (Map 12)
- Neighborhood Parks - 1/2 miles (Map 13)
- Community Parks - 3 miles (Map 14)
- Special Parks [Battle Park, etc.] - 3 miles (Map 15)

**Maps 12-15** identify gaps in accessibility for each park classification listed above.

### Access LOS Findings

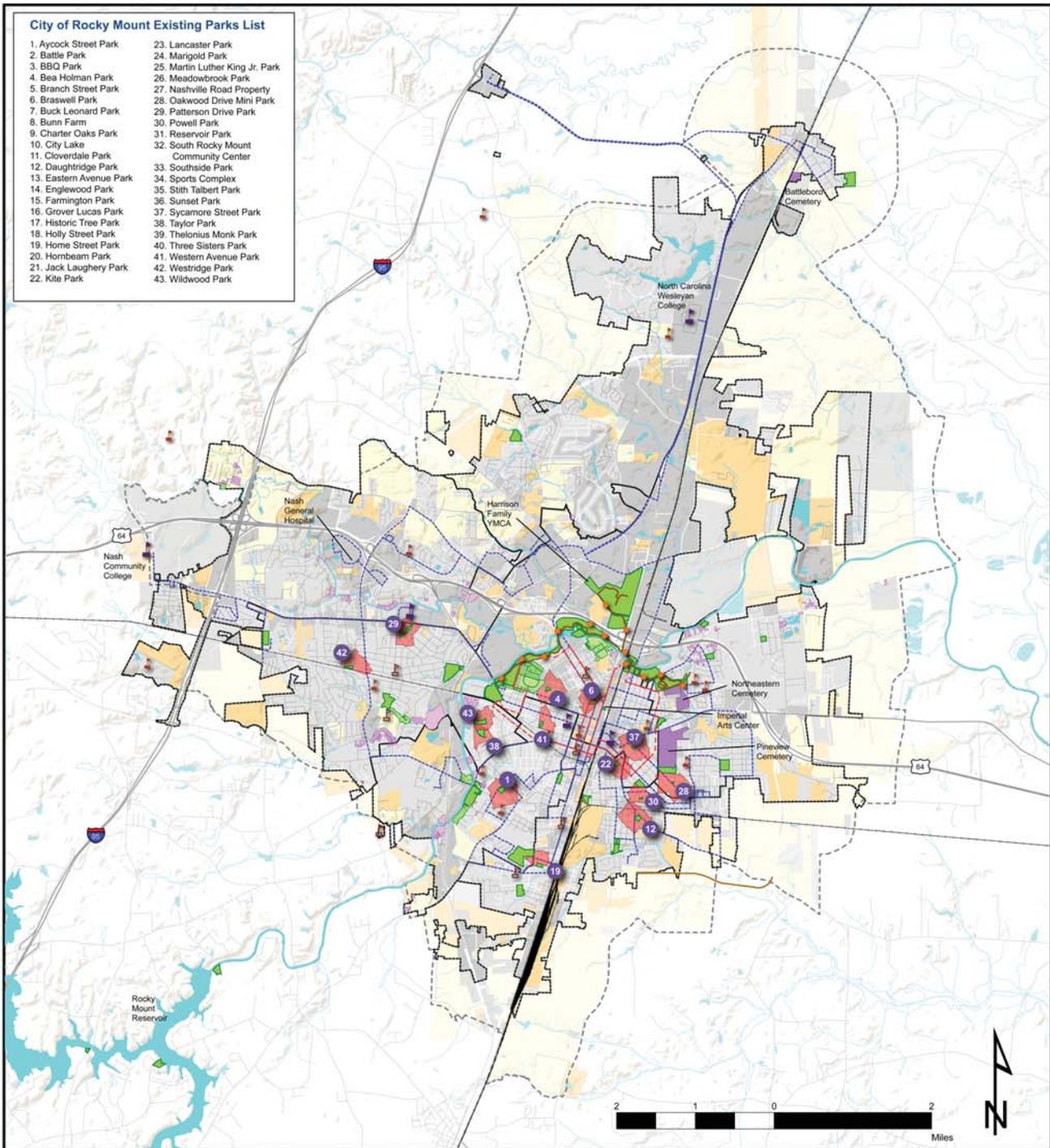
Overall, the Access LOS analysis findings were consistent with other means of identifying needs and priorities such as LOS analysis techniques, survey results and resident input from community meetings.

Mini and Neighborhood Parks were found to have significant gaps in services areas, or areas that are not within walking, biking, transit or driving range of a park or facility. These parks primarily provide access for the central and southeast portions of Rocky Mount, but leave significant gaps throughout the northern and western areas of the city. Online Survey results and public participation input indicated a willingness by respondents to travel greater distances within an individual's neighborhood to access these types of facilities. This typically ranged from half-mile to one mile in distance. An update to the Comprehensive Plan to reflect a greater distance would reduce the gap areas.

Community and Special Parks were found to have similar service areas, and provide access to a significant portion of Rocky Mount due to the larger distances used in their analysis. However, the northern half of the city represents a significant gap in service for both of these park types.

# Needs and Priorities Assessment

Map 12: City of Rocky Mount Mini Parks (1/4 Mile) Access Level of Service, 2013

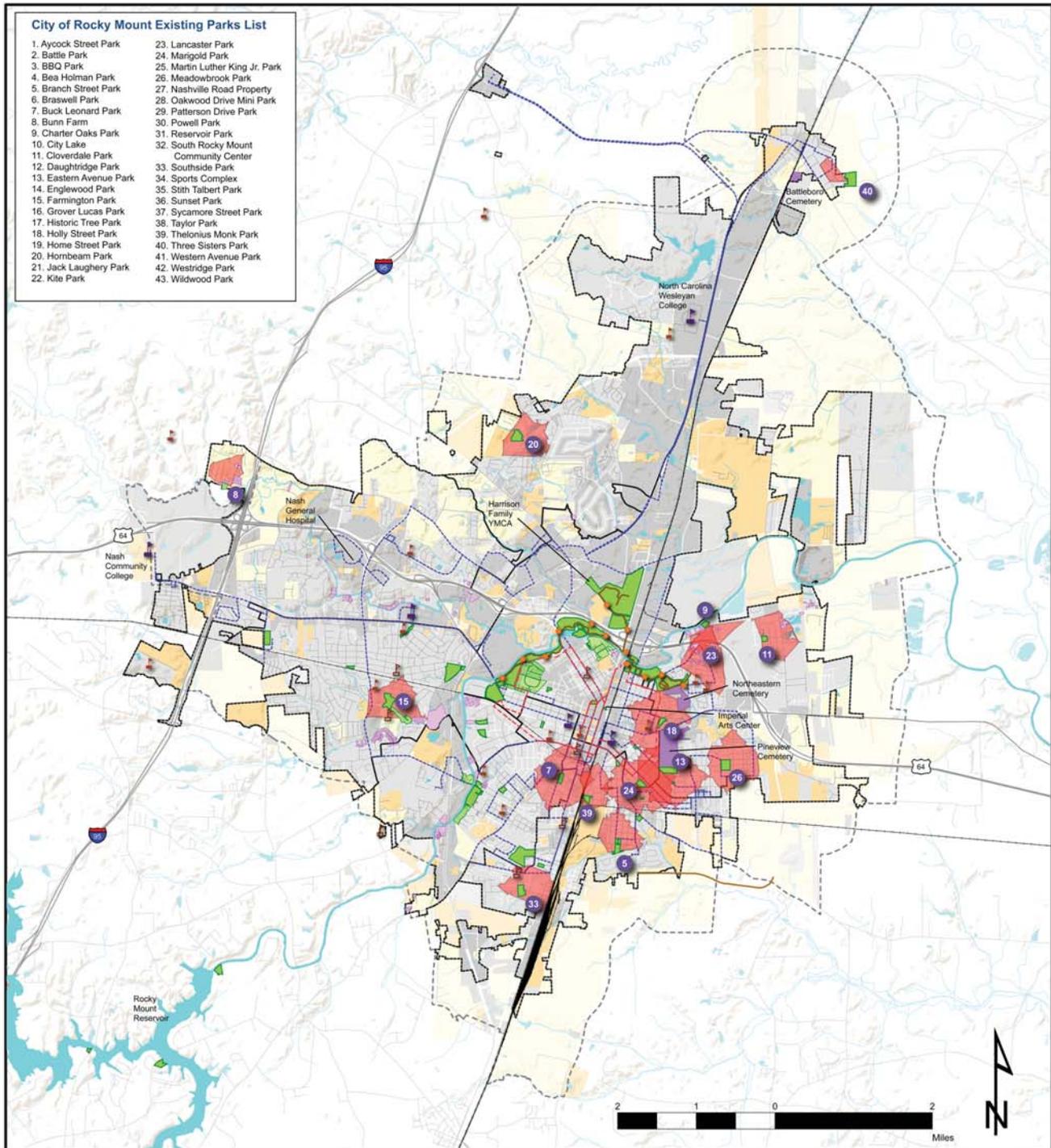


## Legend

- |                                |                     |                          |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| City of Rocky Mount Parks      | Transit Routes      | Lakes, Ponds and Rivers  | Creeks and Streams        |
| City of Rocky Mount Cemeteries | Major Roads         | Residential Land Use     | City Wards                |
| Trail Access Points            | Streets             | Non-Residential Land Use | City ETJ                  |
| Tar River Trail                | Railroads           | Agricultural Land Use    | Colleges and Universities |
| Southern Loop                  | FEMA Sites          | Split Land Use           | Public Schools            |
| Bikeways                       | FEMA Sites in Parks | Mini Park LOS 1/4 Mile   | Private Schools           |

# Chapter 3

Map 13: City of Rocky Mount Neighborhood Parks (1/2 Mile) Access Level of Service, 2013



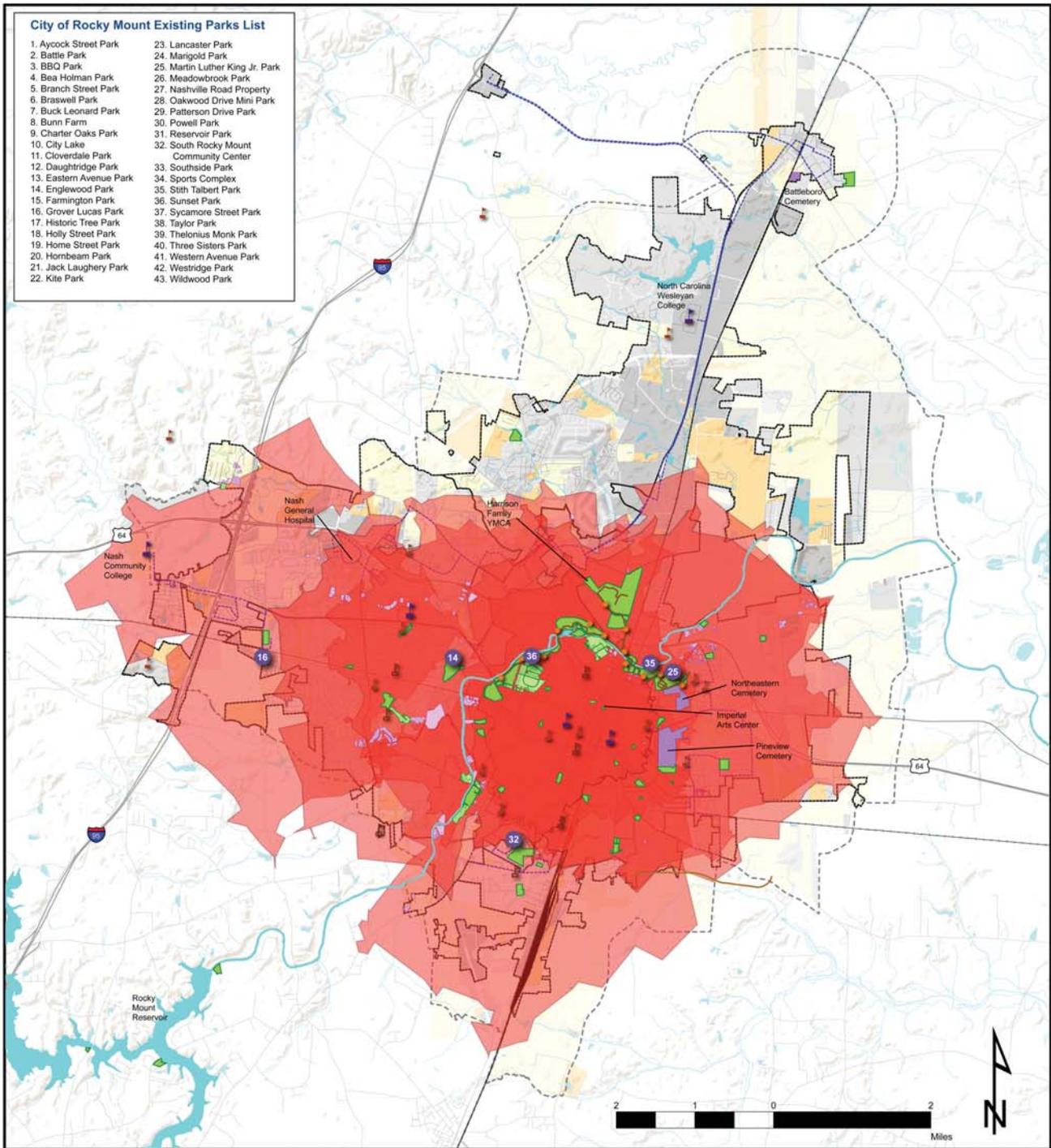
- City of Rocky Mount Existing Parks List**
- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Aycock Street Park   | 23. Lancaster Park                     |
| 2. Battle Park          | 24. Margold Park                       |
| 3. BBQ Park             | 25. Martin Luther King Jr. Park        |
| 4. Bea Holman Park      | 26. Meadowbrook Park                   |
| 5. Branch Street Park   | 27. Nashville Road Property            |
| 6. Braswell Park        | 28. Oakwood Drive Mini Park            |
| 7. Buck Leonard Park    | 29. Patterson Drive Park               |
| 8. Bunn Farm            | 30. Powell Park                        |
| 9. Charter Oaks Park    | 31. Reservoir Park                     |
| 10. City Lake           | 32. South Rocky Mount Community Center |
| 11. Cloverdale Park     | 33. Southside Park                     |
| 12. Daughtridge Park    | 34. Sports Complex                     |
| 13. Eastern Avenue Park | 35. Stith Talbert Park                 |
| 14. Englewood Park      | 36. Sunset Park                        |
| 15. Farmington Park     | 37. Sycamore Street Park               |
| 16. Grover Lucas Park   | 38. Taylor Park                        |
| 17. Historic Tree Park  | 39. Theonius Monk Park                 |
| 18. Holly Street Park   | 40. Three Sisters Park                 |
| 19. Home Street Park    | 41. Western Avenue Park                |
| 20. Hornbeam Park       | 42. Westridge Park                     |
| 21. Jack Laughery Park  | 43. Wildwood Park                      |
| 22. Kite Park           |  |

## Legend

- |                                |                     |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| City of Rocky Mount Parks      | Transit Routes      | Lakes, Ponds and Rivers        | Creeks and Streams        |
| City of Rocky Mount Cemeteries | Major Roads         | Residential Land Use           | City Wards                |
| Trail Access Points            | Streets             | Non-Residential Land Use       | City ETJ                  |
| Tar River Trail                | Railroads           | Agricultural Land Use          | Colleges and Universities |
| Southern Loop                  | FEMA Sites          | Split Land Use                 | Public Schools            |
| Bikeways                       | FEMA Sites in Parks | Neighborhood Park LOS 1/2 Mile | Private Schools           |

# Needs and Priorities Assessment

Map 14: City of Rocky Mount Community Parks (3 Mile) Access Level of Service, 2013

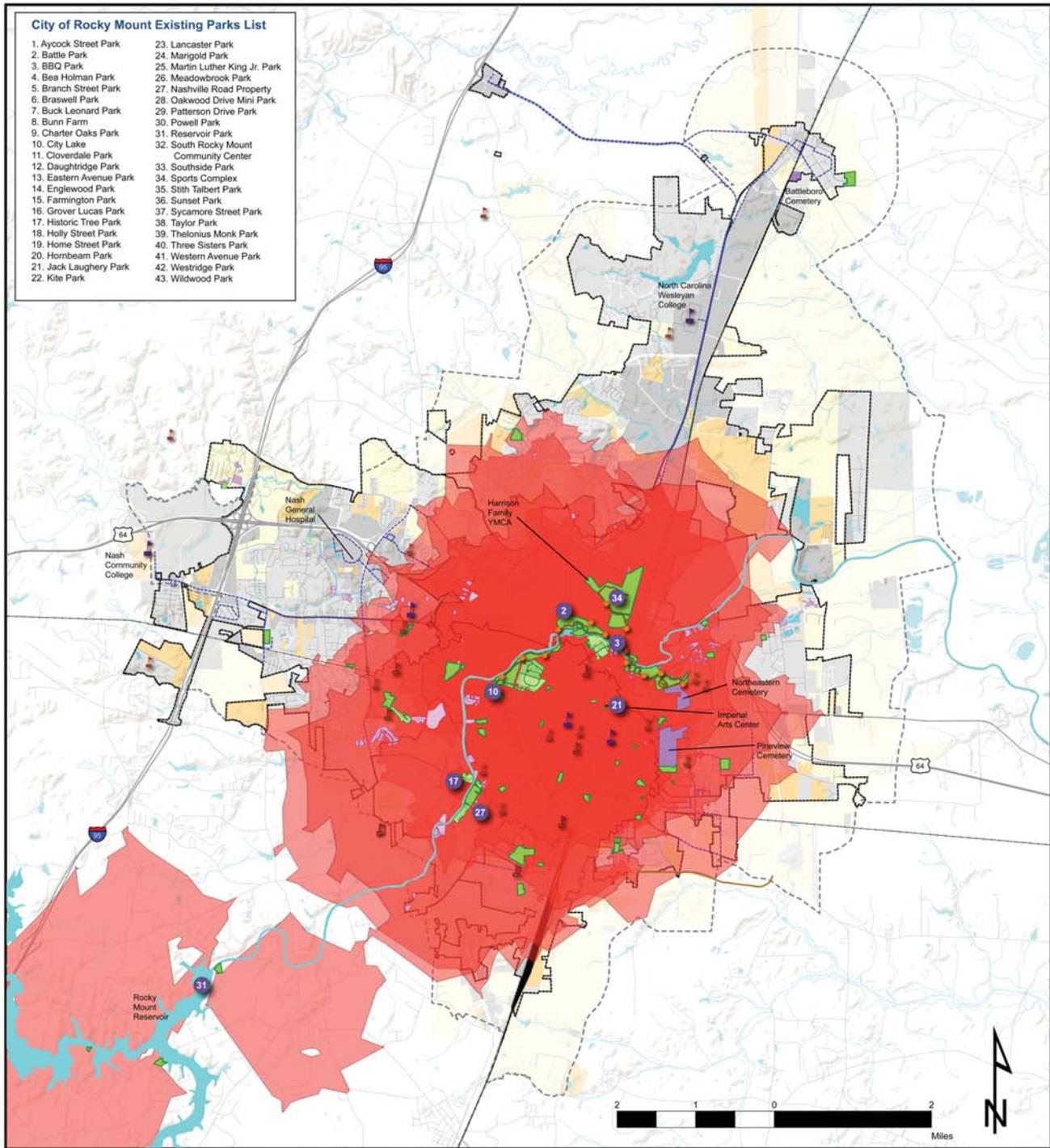


## Legend

- |                                |                     |                            |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| City of Rocky Mount Parks      | Transit Routes      | Lakes, Ponds and Rivers    | Creeks and Streams        |
| City of Rocky Mount Cemeteries | Major Roads         | Residential Land Use       | City Wards                |
| Trail Access Points            | Streets             | Non-Residential Land Use   | City ETJ                  |
| Tar River Trail                | Railroads           | Agricultural Land Use      | Colleges and Universities |
| Southern Loop                  | FEMA Sites          | Split Land Use             | Public Schools            |
| Bikeways                       | FEMA Sites in Parks | Community Park LOS 3 Miles | Private Schools           |

# Chapter 3

Map 15: City of Rocky Mount Special Parks (3 Mile) Access Level of Service, 2013



## Legend

- |                                |                     |                              |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| City of Rocky Mount Parks      | Transit Routes      | Lakes, Ponds and Rivers      | Creeks and Streams        |
| City of Rocky Mount Cemeteries | Major Roads         | Residential Land Use         | City Wards                |
| Trail Access Points            | Streets             | Non-Residential Land Use     | City ETJ                  |
| Tar River Trail                | Railroads           | Agricultural Land Use        | Colleges and Universities |
| Southern Loop                  | FEMA Sites          | Split Land Use               | Public Schools            |
| Bikeways                       | FEMA Sites in Parks | Special Use Park LOS 3 Miles | Private Schools           |

# Needs and Priorities Assessment

## 3.6.5 Summary

By utilizing a four level approach to analyze the existing level of service (LOS) for park and recreation facilities, the Master Plan team identified a number of trends that will be explored and refined further through the development of a Vision Plan and Implementation Plan. Quality LOS can be found in Section 2.3. These preliminary findings included:

### Acreage LOS

This technique identifies only a slight deficit in park acreage when looking at the system as a whole. An analysis per city ward, however, shows that while some wards enjoy a surplus of parks that will continue as the population grows, others are experiencing a significant deficit that indicates an inequitable distribution of parks throughout the city.

### Facilities LOS

This technique identifies a surplus in almost all of the city's facilities that will continue with the population projections for 2030. Despite this, the condition and distribution of these facilities is something of a concern based on the City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation 2012 Park Review, community meetings, and public input. This analysis also revealed a significant deficit in greenway trails, which will continue to grow as the city population nears the 2030 estimates.

### Access LOS

Overall, the Access LOS technique confirmed many findings the Master Plan team received during community meetings. In general, the southeast area of the city is well covered by all park types, while gaps exist in Neighborhood and Mini Parks throughout a large portion of Rocky Mount. The north and west area has been identified as the area with the highest amount of services area gaps, with many areas experience little no access to any of the park types.

Though independent in approach and findings, when these techniques are combined with others documented throughout this report, a more accurate snapshot of the city's needs and priorities becomes clear.

# Chapter 3

## Section 3.7 | Needs and Priorities Assessment Summary

Through the compilation of findings from various research techniques, a number of parks and recreation needs have emerged. The table below is an overview of the findings from each analysis technique, which will be further refined based on additional public input and analysis during the Visioning Phase of the project.

Three types of research were utilized in a mixed methods, triangulated approach as part of this needs and priorities assessment process: observational, qualitative, and quantitative. Together these three types of research provided 10 techniques to cross-check

results and better determine an accurate understanding of the City of Rocky Mount residents' needs and priorities for parks and recreation facilities. Table 68 summarizes the synthesized findings of all ten methods.

The top 10 facilities and activities needs are highlighted in Table 68. These facilities and activities are ones identified through ten techniques to have the highest level of importance and largest unmet need by the community.

Table 68. Top Ten Park and Recreation Facilities and Activities Needs

		Needs Assessment Techniques									
		Existing Conditions Review	Community Meetings	Stakeholder Interviews	On-line Public Opinion Survey	Citizen Opinion and Interest Survey	Benchmarking	High Level Lifestyle Analysis	Acreage Level of Service Analysis	Facility Level of Service Analysis	Access Level of Service Analysis
Facilities	Greenway Trails	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
	Playgrounds	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●
	Community Centers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●
	Walking and Running	●		●	●	●		●			●
	Restrooms	●	●	●	●	●					●
	Art Centers		●		●	●	●				●
	Smaller Neighborhood Parks	●	●			●		●	●		●
	Picnic Areas/ Shelters	●			●	●	●			●	●
	Museums		●		●	●	●				●
	Swimming Pools		●	●		●		●			●
Activities	Fitness and Wellness	●	●	●	●	●		●			
	Family	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			
	History and Museums	●	●		●	●	●				
	Senior Adult	●	●			●	●	●			
	Special Events	●	●		●	●		●			
	Performing Arts	●	●	●	●	●	●				
	Visual Arts	●	●	●	●	●	●				
	Nature	●			●	●	●				
	Outdoor/ Adventure Recreation	●	●	●		●	●				
	Youth Summer Camp		●	●			●				

● = Indicates Highest Need  
 ● = Indicates Need

# Needs and Priorities Assessment

In addition to the identification of the top community-wide needs, community-wide priorities have emerged. Below is a summary of the top priority themes as identified by the following methods:

- Community Workshops (seven, including a teen workshop)
- Stakeholder Interviews (13)
- Online Public Opinion Survey
- Citizen Opinion and Interest Survey
- Existing Level of Service Analysis

Figure 4: Number of Participants by Type of Engagement



Priority themes include:

- Emphasize **improving existing parks and facilities**;
- Increase **safety and security** in parks;
- Provide **better connectivity** through community via greenway trails, bike facilities and sidewalks;
- Using **parks as a revitalization** tool;
- Improve biking and walkability **safety**;
- Innovative and **engaging youth and teen** activities;
- Improve existing and provide **more community centers** throughout community;
- Continue to promote the **arts and education**;
- Promote **health and wellness**;
- Increase **equity and access** to parks and services;
- Improve the overall **condition and accessibility** of parks;
- Improve existing and provide additional **restroom facilities** in parks and along greenway trails;
- Develop **regional attractions along the Tar River** such as an amphitheater, museums and open space;
- Partner with **schools and non-profits**;
- Provide **dog park(s)** for citizens and visitors; and
- Increase **marketing** of programs and offerings to citizens, workers and visitors.



Ward 1 Community Meeting, Parker Middle School

# Chapter 4



# Chapter 4

## Section 4.6 | Greenways and Natural Lands

### 4.4.1 Guiding Principles

Greenways and natural lands are important resources for the City of Rocky Mount. These lands and their corridors provide wildlife habitat, improve water quality, reduce storm water runoff, lower surrounding air temperatures, and provide outdoor recreation and educational opportunities (Map 18). Through the Needs Assessment and Visioning Workshop, the following guiding principles were developed for greenways and natural lands:

- **Stewardship of the Natural Environment-** Emphasizing the value of natural resources in the community
- **Sustainability-** Environmental restoration and revitalization of natural habitats
- **Education-** Outdoor learning to promote environmental awareness

### 4.4.2 The Tar River Corridor and Floodplain

The presence of the Tar River and its tributaries provides a wealth of natural resources for the City of Rocky Mount. Due to the volatile nature of this river during storm events, many areas of the floodplain are no longer suitable for development and can be converted back to natural lands. The river corridor presents unique opportunities for recreation activities, and many of the city's premier parks are located along its banks. The current trail system is located primarily in or near the Tar River, and connects many of the largest parks in the system. This system can be expanded throughout the floodplain, linking many other parks and natural areas throughout the city to create a comprehensive greenway corridor system with trails.

As more of the lands within the floodplain are converted to parkland and natural areas, the Tar River corridor will not only be a recreation resource, but also an opportunity

for environmental restoration. Greenways are effective tools for establishing and maintaining natural corridors, and can also help protect the surrounding community by mitigating rising flood waters. The establishment of a citywide greenway and natural lands system will provide Rocky Mount with a resource that will set the city apart from other communities and promote outdoor recreation as well as environmental education and sustainability.

### 4.4.3 Nature Center System

Since establishing a system of greenways and natural lands is an important part of the City of Rocky Mount's Parks and Recreation vision, the incorporation of environmental education is critical to its success. The city has many parks that are centrally located along the Tar River, with all but Battle Park programmed for active recreation. Battle Park is largely a passive park with a trail loop and natural areas along the Tar River. While historically viewed as an unsafe park due to lack of activity and presence of natural surveillance, recent efforts by the City have yielded improvements in the perception of Battle Park. This vision utilizes the natural features of the park and recommends that it be rebranded as Battle Nature Preserve and upgraded to include a nature center that leverages the proximity to the Tar River and its flood plain for education opportunities. This nature center can serve as a hub for environmental education within the greenway system, and should incorporate smaller satellite centers at the proposed Cultural and Recreation Community Centers and Regional Venues throughout the city. The incorporation of community centers into the environmental education system helps promote citywide awareness of the natural resources available to the citizens of Rocky Mount and ensure that they will remain available and thriving for future generations.



Battle Park

# Chapter 5

				Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Subtotal
<b>2. Regional Parks and Venues</b>							
<b>A. Downtown Community Facility</b>							
	Downtown Community Facility						
		Development of a 175,000sf facility		ls	1	\$39,600,000*	\$39,600,000
							\$39,600,000
<b>B. River Falls Park</b>							
Priority	Planning and Design:						
		Feasibility Study		ls	1	\$75,000	\$75,000
		Master Plan Development		ls	1	\$150,000	\$150,000
		Design and Permitting		ls	1	\$875,000	\$875,000
							\$1,100,000
Long-term	Site Preparations:						
		Removal of Existing Roadways		lf	5,500	\$100	\$550,000
		Acquisition of non-city owned parcels		ea.	5	\$100,000	\$500,000
		Clear Vegetation at Falls		ac.	5	\$10,000	\$50,000
	Development:						
	River Falls Park (roadways, festival spaces, amphitheater, athletic fields, shelters		ls	1	\$12,500,000	\$12,500,000	
							\$12,500,000
<b>C. Regional Parks</b>							
Priority	Sports Complex Stadium:						
		SCS (Replace locker room building, training room, offices, eq. rm.)		sf	10,000	\$225	\$2,250,000
		SCS (Two restrooms buildings, north and south sides)		sf	2,400	\$275	\$660,000
		SCS (Concessions, northside)		sf	1,000	\$200	\$200,000
		SCS (Press box, northside, video scoreboard)		ls	1	\$450,000	\$450,000
		SCS (Equipment/maintenance, single building)		sf	2,500	\$175	\$437,500
		SCS (Turf field - NCAA min. 210x345')		ls	1	\$750,000	\$750,000
		SCS (Parking lot, ADA parking and access)		ls	1	\$200,000	\$200,000
	SCS (IAFF standard oval track 120.735', grading, base, surface, edges)		ls	1	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	
	SCS (Field and track components, AAU min. requirements)		ls	1	\$175,000	\$175,000	
							\$6,322,500
	City Lake (Tree Plan, restrooms, repairs to walks, vegetation)		ls	1	\$250,000	\$250,000	
	Battle Park (Management Plan, mountain bike trails, hiking)		ls	1	\$175,000	\$175,000	
	Nashville Road Park (Management Plan, trails)		ls	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	
	Sports Complex						
		Soccer/Baseball (turf fields, concessions repairs)		ls	1	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
							\$2,025,000
Regional Parks and Venues Total:							\$62,647,500
Priority Projects Subtotal:							\$46,072,500
Long-term Projects Subtotal:							\$16,575,000

\* Cost from City of Rocky Mount FY 2016 Adopted Budget CIP-Community Reinvestment

Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Subtotal
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# Implementation Plan

				Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Subtotal
<b>3. Trails, Streets and Transit</b>							
<b>A. Trails</b>							
Pedestrian Plan:							
	Priority Trails	lf	32,696*	\$100*		\$3,009,000	
	Priority Trails (Phase 2)	lf	25,924*	\$100*		\$2,588,000	
	Potential Trails	lf	150,325	\$100		\$15,032,500	
							\$20,629,500
Recommended Trails:							
	Priority Trails	lf	13,470	\$100		\$1,347,000	
	Potential Trails	lf	44,350	\$100		\$4,435,000	
							\$5,782,000
Trailheads							
	Priority Trailheads	ea.	6	\$25,000		\$150,000	
	Potential Trailheads	ea.	15	\$25,000		\$375,000	
	Access Points (Signage)	ea.	30	\$5,000		\$150,000	
							\$675,000
<b>B. Complete Streets</b>							
	Street Trees	mi	21	\$55,000		\$1,155,000	
	Sidewalks/ Bikelanes	mi	21	\$125,000		\$2,625,000	
							\$3,770,000
<b>C. Transit</b>							
	Shelters	ea.	10	\$15,000		\$150,000	
	Signage	ls	1	\$50,000		\$50,000	
							\$200,000
Trail, Streets and Transit Total:							\$31,056,500
Priority Projects Subtotal:							\$3,884,000
Long-term Projects Subtotal:							\$7,705,000
Vision Subtotal:							\$19,467,500

\* Quantity and Unit Cost Base from City of Rocky Mount Pedestrian Plan- 2012

# Chapter 5

				Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Subtotal
<b>4. Arts, History, Culture and Community System</b>							
<b>A. Senior Center</b>							
	Senior Center Design and Engineering	ls	1	\$300,000		\$300,000	
	Senior Center (Phase 1- 1st Floor; abatement, renovation and structural repairs to building; relocation of RM Wilson Athletics)	sf	12,500	\$270		\$3,375,000	
	Senior Center (Renovation/Abatement, Phase 2 - 2nd Floor)	sf	10,000	\$225		\$2,250,000	
	Senior Satellite Program (Vehicles, equipment)	ls	1	\$100,000		\$100,000	
							\$6,025,000
<b>B. Cultural and Recreation Community Centers</b>							
	Imperial Centre Facility Upgrades	ls	1	\$250,000		\$250,000	
	Event Equipment Replacement (bleachers, signage, etc.)	ls	1	\$100,000		\$100,000	
	Mobile Cultral Exhibits	ls	2	\$50,000		\$100,000	
	Exhibits at Community Centers	ls	4	\$50,000		\$200,000	
							\$650,000
<b>C. Heritage Trails</b>							
	Cultural Heritage Trail (signage, art)	ls	1	\$150,000		\$150,000	
	Heritage Routes (Signage)	ls	3	\$75,000		\$225,000	
	Local and National Historic Landmarks and Districts (Signage, art)	ea.	15	\$12,500		\$187,500	
							\$562,500
Arts, History, Cultural and Community Total:							\$7,237,500
Priority Projects Subtotal:							\$4,237,500
Long-term Projects Subtotal:							\$650,000
Vision Subtotal:							\$2,350,000

				Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Subtotal
<b>5. Greenways and Natural Lands</b>							
<b>Greenways and Natural Lands:</b>							
	Natural Lands Management Plan	ls	1	\$125,000		\$125,000	
	Nature Center	sf	7,500	\$225		\$1,687,500	
							\$1,812,500
Greenways and Natural Lands Total:							\$1,812,500
Priority Projects Subtotal:							\$125,000
Long-term Projects Subtotal:							\$1,687,500

# Implementation Plan

Unlike Option 1, where the key challenge is prioritizing the improvements, the challenge for Option 2 is managing the approval, planning, design, permitting and construction of a \$73.1M Capital Improvements Program over a relatively short (10+ year) period of time. It is anticipated that the Program would be implemented in phases as outlined in **Table 75**: Sub-System Prioritized Projects with the focus on work addressing priority projects first, then long-term projects and finally vision projects. If the city chooses to pursue Option 2 or elements of Option 2, the first year of the plan should be spent staffing, planning and preparing to implement the Capital Improvements Program, and beginning implementation on some of the high priority projects.

## 5.3.2 Project Prioritization

In order for the Park and Recreation Department to be able to prioritize projects, a criteria is needed that responds to community-wide needs and goals for Rocky Mount. See **Table 76**. The following criteria can be used as a test for each opportunity or project in order to determine its level of priority in comparison to other projects. This will promote the maximum efficiency of limited resources for the department.

In addition to the Project Prioritization Criteria it is important to note that the siting of park and recreation facilities can be catalysts for development and/or redevelopment of neighborhoods. As such, the primary benefits of new park and recreation facilities should be

**Table 76: Project Prioritization Criteria**

Project Name:	
Prioritization Criteria Element	Points (0-5)
Equity	
Economic Development	
Safety	
Stabilization	
Revenue Generation	
Leverage	
Public Demand	
Funding Match	
Advance City Goals	
Total Points:	

Use a 0-5 point scale; 0 = Lowest, None; 5 = Highest, Yes

maximized for city residents. Two levels of priority service areas should be realized by each project as follows:

1. Primary Service Area = City limits
2. Secondary Service Area = Areas within the ETJ and in close proximity of the city limits

Furthermore, facilities expected to be sited, constructed and operated near the city limits or outside the city limits should be undertaken only through explicit inter-jurisdictional agreements with the adjacent city/town/county. When the prioritization criteria is applied to the Park and Recreation Master Plan Vision list of projects, the following are the highest scoring in descending order by two categories; new parks or facilities (**Table 77**), and enhanced existing parks and facilities (**Table 78**):

**Table 77: New Facilities/ Sites Project Prioritization List**

Rank	Top Project Priorities for New Facilities or Sites	Cost Estimate
1.	<b>Community Park Acquisition</b>	
	West Community Park Acq.	\$1,400,000
2.	<b>Downtown Community Facility</b>	
	Downtown Community Facility	\$39,600,000
3.	<b>Community Center Development</b>	
	West Community Center	\$5,625,000
4.	<b>Community Park Acquisition</b>	
	North Community Park Acq.	\$1,400,000
5.	<b>Develop Priority Trails (Pedestrian Plan)</b>	
	Holly Street Park Connector	\$370,000
	Sunset to Englewood Connector	\$580,000
	South Rocky Mt. Comm Center	\$1,690,000
	BBQ Park Trail	\$369,000
6.	<b>Regional Park Development (River Falls Park)</b>	
	Feasibility Study	\$75,000
	Master Plan Development	\$150,000
	Design and Permitting	\$875,000
7.	<b>Community Park Development</b>	
	West Community Park	\$7,000,000
8.	<b>Develop Priority Trails (Pedestrian Plan) - Phase 2</b>	
	Hospital Area Connector	\$1,584,000
	MLK Jr. Park to Leggett Rd.	\$159,000
	Farmington Park Trail	\$845,000
9.	<b>Community Park Development</b>	
	North Community Park	\$7,000,000
10.	<b>Nature Center at Battle Park</b>	
	Design and Construction	\$1,687,500

2014 Estimates

# Chapter 5

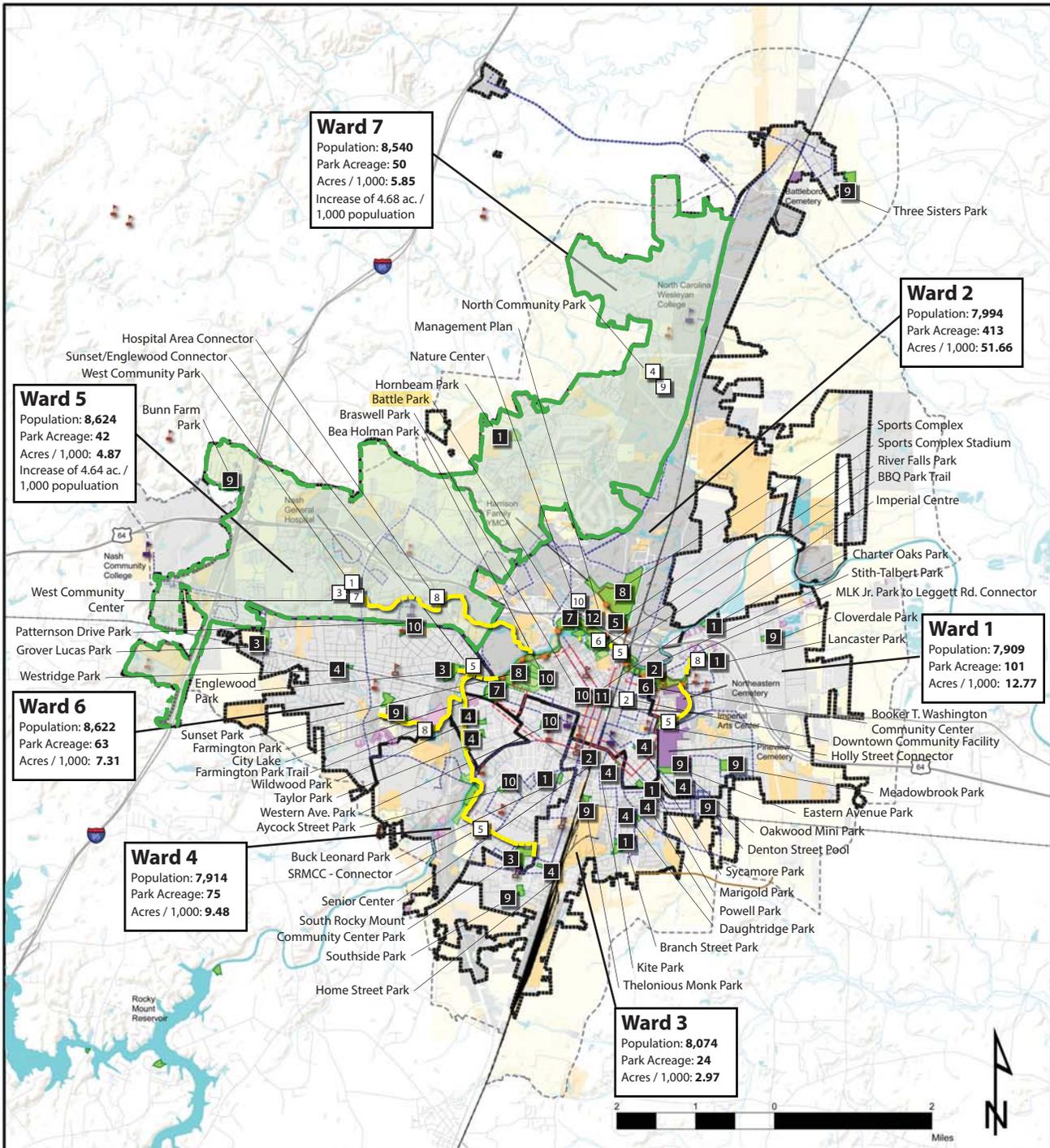
**Table 78: Enhancing Existing Facilities/ Sites Project Prioritization List**

Rank	Top Project Priorities to Enhance Existing Facilities or Sites	Cost Estimate
<b>1.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Neighborhood Parks</b>	
	Priority Neighborhood Parks	\$995,000
<b>2.</b>	<b>Senior Center Renovation/Abatement</b>	
	Feasibility/Bus. Plan & Design	\$300,000
	Phase 1 Reno./Abatement	\$3,375,000
<b>3.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Community Parks</b>	
	Priority Community Parks	\$1,035,000
<b>4.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Mini Parks</b>	
	Priority Mini Parks	\$295,000
<b>5.</b>	<b>Sports Complex Stadium</b>	
	Locker Rm, Training Rm. Office	\$2,250,000
	Restrooms (two)	\$660,000
	Concessions	\$200,000
	Press Box, Scoreboard	\$450,000
	Eq./Maint. Building	\$437,500
	Turf Field (NCAA)	\$750,000
	Parking/ADA Access	\$200,000
<b>6.</b>	<b>Renovation of Booker T. Washington Com. Center</b>	
	Renovation of BTWCC	\$3,375,000
<b>7.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Regional Parks and Facilities</b>	
	Priority Regional Parks	\$425,000
<b>8.</b>	<b>Renovation of Sunset Park and Sports Complex</b>	
	Sunset Park / Sports Com.	\$2,250,000
<b>9.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Neighborhood Parks</b>	
	Long-Term Neighborhood Parks	\$1,765,000
<b>10.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Mini Parks</b>	
	Long-Term Mini Parks	\$395,000
<b>11.</b>	<b>Cultural / Trails / Transit</b>	
	Cultural Heritage Trails	\$562,500
	Priority Trailheads and Transit Shelters/ Signage	\$300,000
	Imperial Center Improvements	\$250,000
<b>12.</b>	<b>Natural Lands Management Plan</b>	
	Management Plan Development	\$125,000

2014 Estimates

# Implementation Plan

Map 21: City of Rocky Mount Park Acreage by City Ward and Project Locations



## Legend

- |                                |                         |                          |                           |   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| City of Rocky Mount Parks      | Existing Transit Routes | Lakes, Ponds and Rivers  | Creeks and Streams        | Existing Park/Facility Project Priority Ranking |
| City of Rocky Mount Cemeteries | Major Roads             | Residential Land Use     | City Wards                | New Park/Facility Project Priority Ranking      |
| Trail Access Points            | Streets                 | Non-Residential Land Use | City ETJ                  | New Greenway Project                            |
| Tar River Trail                | Railroads               | Agricultural Land Use    | Colleges and Universities | Ward with Park Acreage Increase                 |
| Southern Loop                  | FEMA Sites              | Split Land Use           | Public Schools            |   |
| Existing Bikeways              | FEMA Sites in Parks     |                          | Private Schools           |   |

# Chapter 5

**Table 79:** Top Project Priorities for New Facilities or Sites Proposed Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Rank	Top Project Priorities for New Facilities or Sites	Cost Estimate	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
<b>1.</b>	<b>Community Park Acquisition</b>					
	West Community Park Acquisition	\$1,400,000		\$1,400,000 Acquisition		
<b>2.</b>	<b>Downtown Community Facility</b>					
	Downtown Community Facility Development	\$39,600,000	\$39,600,000 Construction			
<b>3.</b>	<b>Community Center Development</b>					
	West Community Center Development	\$5,625,000				\$562,500 Design/ Engineering
<b>4.</b>	<b>Community Park Acquisition</b>					
	North Community Park Acquisition	\$1,400,000				
<b>5.</b>	<b>Develop Priority Trails (Pedestrian Plan)</b>					
	Development of Pedestrian Plan Priority Trails (Phase 1)	\$3,009,000	\$370,000 Holly Street Park Connector Design/ Construction			\$580,000 Sunset to Englewood Connector Design/ Construction
<b>6.</b>	<b>Regional Park Development (River Falls Park)</b>					
	Feasibility Study, Master Plan Development, and Design and Permitting	\$1,100,000		\$75,000 Feasibility Study		\$150,000 Master Plan
<b>7.</b>	<b>Community Park Development</b>					
	West Community Park Development	\$7,000,000				
<b>8.</b>	<b>Develop Priority Trails (Pedestrian Plan) - Phase 2</b>					
	Development of Pedestrian Plan Priority Trails (Phase 2)	\$2,588,000			\$158,000 Hospital Area Connector Design/ Engineering	\$1,426,000 Hospital Area Connector Construction
<b>9.</b>	<b>Community Park Development</b>					
	North Community Park Development	\$7,000,000				
<b>10.</b>	<b>Nature Center at Battle Park</b>					
	Development of 7,500 sf Nature Center	\$1,687,500				
<b>Sub Totals:</b>			<b>\$39,970,000</b>	<b>\$1,475,000</b>	<b>\$158,000</b>	<b>\$2,718,500</b>

2014 Estimates; Cost estimate for the Downtown Community Facility was provided by the City of Rocky Mount

# Implementation Plan

FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	+ 10-YR
\$5,062,500 Construction						
	\$1,400,000 Acquisition					
		\$169,000 South Rocky Mt. Comm Center Connector Design/ Engineering	\$1,521,000 South Rocky Mt. Comm Center Connector Construction	\$369,000 BBQ Park Trail Design/ Construction		
				\$400,000 Design/ Engineering	\$475,000 Design/ Engineering	
\$700,000 Design/ Engineering	\$3,300,000 Construction	\$3,000,000 Construction				
\$159,000 MLK Jr. Park to Leggett Rd. Design/ Construction	\$85,000 Farmington Park Trail Design/ Engineering	\$760,000 Farmington Park Trail Construction				
					\$700,000 Design/ Engineering	\$6,300,000 Construction
						\$1,687,500 Design/ Construction
<b>\$5,921,500</b>	<b>\$4,785,000</b>	<b>\$3,929,000</b>	<b>\$1,521,000</b>	<b>\$769,000</b>	<b>\$1,175,000</b>	<b>\$7,987,500</b>

# Chapter 5

**Table 80:** Top Project Priorities to Enhance Existing Facilities or Sites Proposed Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Rank	Top Project Priorities to Enhance Existing Facilities or Sites	Cost Estimate (2014)	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
<b>1.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Neighborhood Parks</b>					
	Priority Neighborhood Parks	\$995,000	\$125,000 Hornbeam Park	\$305,000 Buck Leonard Park, Lancaster Park	\$415,000 Branch Street Park, Marigold Park	\$150,000 Charter Oaks Park
<b>2.</b>	<b>Senior Center Renovation/Abatement</b>					
	Design, Abatement and Phase 1 Renovation of 15,000 sf	\$3,675,000		\$300,000 Design/ Engineering	\$3,375,000 Abatement and Construction	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Community Parks</b>					
	Priority Community Parks	\$1,035,000		\$450,000 South Rocky Mt. Com. Center Park	\$250,000 Grover Lucas Park	\$335,000 Englewood Park, Stith-Talbert Park
<b>4.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Mini Parks</b>					
	Priority Mini Parks	\$295,000	\$85,000 Daughtridge Park	\$110,000 Home Street, Kite, Oakwood, Powell, Sycamore, Taylor, Westridge Parks		\$100,000 Wildwood Park
<b>5.</b>	<b>Sports Complex Stadium (Priority Elements)</b>					
	Renovation and expansion of Sports Complex Stadium	\$4,947,500	\$494,750 Design/ Engineering	\$4,452,750 Construction		
<b>6.</b>	<b>Renovation of Booker T. Washington Com. Center</b>					
	Renovation of BTWCC	\$3,375,000			\$405,000 BTWCC Design	\$2,970,000 BTWCC Renovations
<b>7.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Regional Parks and Facilities</b>					
	Priority Regional Parks and Facilities	\$425,000				
<b>8.</b>	<b>Renovation of Sunset Park and Sports Complex</b>					
	Sunset Park/ Sports Complex	\$2,250,000			\$800,000 Sports Complex	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Neighborhood Parks</b>					
	Long-Term Neighborhood Parks	\$1,765,000				
<b>10.</b>	<b>Renovation of Existing Mini Parks</b>					
	Long-Term Mini Parks	\$395,000				
<b>11.</b>	<b>Cultural / Trails / Transit</b>					
	Cultural Heritage Trails, Priority Trailheads and Transit Shelters / Signage	\$1,112,500			\$150,000 Priority Trailheads \$100,000 Imperial Center	\$150,000 Transit Shelters +Signage
<b>12.</b>	<b>Natural Lands Management</b>					
	Management Plan Dev.	\$125,000		\$125,000		
<b>Sub Totals:</b>			<b>\$704,750</b>	<b>\$5,742,750</b>	<b>\$5,495,000</b>	<b>\$3,705,000</b>

2014 Estimates





AECOM  
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## Meeting Notes

Subject	Rocky Mount Park System Master Plan - Ward 6 Workshop
Date	November 7, 2013
Time	6:00 pm
Location	Winstead School
Attendees	See sign-in sheets
Prepared	November 12, 2013
Prepared by	Drew Crumpton

**Purpose:** A public workshop was held for the citizens of Ward 6 in Rocky Mount, North Carolina. Those in attendance were given an overview of the system plan, and I introduced to the public involvement phase of the project. The following comments were recorded:

### Why Are You Here?

- Lack of recreation facilities in the western part of the city
  - Community centers
  - Parks
  - Pools
- Want to continue growth and improvements in recreation facilities
- BBQ Park0 historic spring
  - Not in good condition
  - Litter
- Use athletic complex for informal games
- Restoration of historic buildings
- Live music venues, new development
- Reasons for people to spend time in Rocky Mount
- Family-oriented venues
- Informal music gatherings
  - Possibly at Farmer's Market / parks
- Ability to feed animals in parks
- Bigger push for arts exposures, especially in children
- **Battle Park**
  - Solicitation
  - Graffiti
- Is the best being done?
  - Swim lessons
  - Water aerobics
- Partnerships with school systems
- Integration of parks and schools



- Track and field

### Summary and Common Themes

- Common Themes
  - Lack of equity in parks system
  - Special events
  - Partnerships with schools
  - Family oriented parks and programs
- Facilities
  - Natural parks and preserves
  - Art Centers
  - Museums
  - Outdoor pools
  - Tennis courts
  - Small neighborhood parks
  - Walking/ running trails
- Activities
  - Tennis
  - Youth sports
  - Nature/ outdoor
  - History/ museums
  - Fitness and wellness
  - Performing arts
- Funding
  - Grants
  - User Fees
  - Partnerships with schools, churches, businesses and developers
- Comparable Communities
  - Raleigh
  - Cary
  - Charlotte
  -



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## Meeting Notes

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Subject	City of Rocky Mount Visioning Workshop
Date	April 16 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
Time	Varies
Location	Imperial Center

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**Purpose:** City of Rocky Mount held a two-day visioning workshop to discuss ideas about the future of the Rocky Parks and Recreation system. The workshop was attended by city staff and members of the community. The following is a summary of the ideas and concepts that were presented and discussed during this session.

### City of Rocky Mount Potential Subsystems:

1. Neighborhood and Community Parks
2. Community Centers and Aquatic Facilities
3. Streets, Trails and Transit
4. Regional Park, Reservoir Park, and other large venues
5. Arts, Culture and Museums
6. Greenways and Natural Areas

### Notes on Subsystems and Concepts:

1. Neighborhood and Community Parks
  - Improve/change
    - Updating equipment
    - Raise standards
    - Adding equipment
  - Safety
    - Collaboration with police
  - Structured activities in flexible open space
  - Re-evaluate park locations
    - 10 parks (Sycamore, Boone St., Marigold, Meadowbrook)
    - 1-2 Regional parks in less dense areas
  - Maintenance plan
    - How to reallocate land?
    - How to manage with current staff?
  - Look at non-traditional parks and population growth
  - Amenity placements at parks and use (amphitheater)
  - Citizen stakeholders
    - Adopt a park: citizens to take interest in your community parks
  - **Comments on parks:**
    - Pilot senior parks, with more accessible parks
    - Larger, drive to parks instead of smaller neighborhood parks
    - Make streets more walkable, bike friendly
      - Complete streets
      - 2-way streets



## Community Centers / Aquatics

- Existing Centers: South Rocky Mount, Booker T. Washington, Senior Center
- Strategic location of 5-7 community centers
- Connected by trails
- Pools connected to 3 community centers
- Strong focus on education, health, fitness
- Partnerships (Hospital, Nash, Community College, Red Cross, AARP)
- Adequately staff
- Community Gardens at schools to promote healthy living
- Spray parks/lots
- LEED certified/ Environmental
- Completely wired/technology
- Cameras, well lit, utilization of PALS program to maintain safe environment
- Community group/adopt-a-center involved/invested in center
- Programs target youth, adult, seniors at all sites
- Fitness rooms/gyms/open space
- Utilize for summer camps, afterschool daycare
- Joint use agreement with schools

## Multi-purpose, Regional Events Venues

- Ideal location on I-64 and I-95
- Open to different ages and a culturally diverse population
- Water park
- Cultural festivals
- Multipurpose event center
- Park catering to large events, i.e. family reunions
- Attractive to game fishing, etc.
- Underserved communities should be considered to continue gold medal status
- Regional park system
  - Tar river paddle trail
  - Walking trail
  - Connecting parks

## River Falls Park (Regional Idea)

- Existing/proposed venues:
  - Imperial Arts Center
  - R.M. Sports Complex
  - Mill Historic Village
  - Tar River Trail
  - The Cotton Mill
  - City Lake
  - Birthplace of BBQ
  - Sunset Family Park

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- MLK Family Park
- Battle Nature Preserve
- River Research Center
- Hotel and Conference Center
- Adventure Park and Playground

### Trails/Streets/Transit

- Paved city-wide trail program that connects every major neighborhood
- Trail program promoting healthy lifestyle and active living
- Providing scenic views of our natural resources
- Youth conservation corp. that helps maintain system
- Safe routes to schools/shopping
- Bicycling routes/running routes for races
- Branded signature event
- Use utility corridors and railroad easements
- Utilizing ROW of railroads to expand for trails
- Development of park ranger program
- Repave parts of the greenway
- Sustainable strategy for paving greenways
- Bird or natural safety
- Provide public transit stops at Greenway trail heads
- Bicycle rental or checkout
- Neighborhood revitalization
- Connect downtown (Rails to Trails)
- Walker program on trail
- Connect to NC thread trail (East of 95)
- More towards bike-friendly city

### Cultural Resources

- More representation?
  - Recognition
  - Marketing
  - Create a culture
- Created a system of ease of use/accessibility
- Satellite sites
  - Pop ups/trucks
  - Park
- Online/social media
- Presence in new community centers and facilities
- Education of public
  - How to participate
  - Growth
  - School programs

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- Partner
- Field Trip
- Collaborative Classes (Partnership)
- Complete original design for I.C.
- Full Funding (Operation budget)
- Debt paid off
- Empowered staff
- Tools to provide excellence
- Fully invested community
- Full integration of technology, systems and processes



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## Meeting Notes

Subject	City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Master Plan Interviews
Date	November – December, 2013
Time	n/a
Location	n/a
Attendees	Stakeholders
Prepared	December 16, 2013
Prepared by	David Barth

**I. PURPOSE:** To help determine the priority parks and recreation needs in the community.

**II. FORMAT:** All interviews were conducted by telephone. A total of 13 stakeholders were interviewed (two stakeholders participated in the same interview). The following questions were asked of each participant:

1. Methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?
2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs?
3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.
4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?
5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

### III. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

#### 1. Methodology:

- Include recommendations for improvements to attract visitors, businesses, and residents; how do you keep people here?
- Contact members of Travel and Tourism Council, TDA, Chamber of Commerce, Women’s Professional Networking Group
- Reach segment of community that doesn’t normally participate, e.g. low income, inner city. Need to distribute surveys to Housing Authority, Head Start, schools, churches (flyer in church bulletins?), booth at Christmas Parade, Neighborhood Presidents Association
- Would like to see more involvement from west side of town



- Teen summit was a Boys and Girls Club function; may not have been representative of community
- Need to reach out to a broader audience via e-mail networks, PTOs
- Invite more people to meetings, workshops

## 2. Needs and Priorities:

(items listed are in order of priority, based on the number of interviewees who mentioned the item as a need as indicated in parentheses; top priorities are highlighted)

### General:

- Brand and market ourselves using existing assets and resources, e.g. market the Imperial Center; let people know about activities (IIII)
- Anything that we can do to set Rocky Mount apart, give us a competitive edge, make people want to live here and give us a high quality of life (I)
- Want the community to be nice; we can have some of the same amenities here that they have in Raleigh (I)
- Need to create community pride; have invested in downtown, made strides, train station, Imperial Center, etc.; people are skeptical about investing in downtown (I)
- Different experience (I)

### Facilities:

- Additional, connected paths, trails (e.g. along Battle Park, to athletic fields, to YMCA, to City Lake; complete the circle) (IIII III)
- Improve, upgrade, “groom” existing parks, playgrounds, trails, community centers with enhanced lighting, higher level of maintenance, improved/ additional restrooms, improved aesthetics; provide equity in quality throughout City (IIII III)
- A centrally located, highly visible water park, splash park, w/ lazy river, slides (IIII)
- More community recreation centers, e.g. one in each quadrant of City (IIII)

### “2<sup>nd</sup> Tier”:

- Public park/ facility at reservoir: public access, boat ramp, canoe and kayak rentals, public beach, water sports (III)
- Dog park (III)
- Additional bathrooms at all the parks; maintain restrooms (III)
- Centralized, indoor, competition swimming pool (III)
- Tar River Regional WW Treatment Park (“the farm”); mountain bike trails, horseback riding trails, ORV trails (III)
- Downtown “common area”, e.g. central park, focal point, identified with Rocky Mount (I)
- Museum, archive history of the City (II)
- Additional parks, including large community park for west area of City (land available at Halifax Road and Bethlehem Road), smaller walk-to parks (II)
- Complete Sports Complex as designed; add campground (II)



- Improved transportation, bike- friendly streets, routes, complete streets to make a statement, slow down traffic (II)
- City-run golf course, e.g. purchase and upgrade North Green Country Club (II)
- Playgrounds, including a “Super” playground (II)
- Signature park: something for families, kids, adults, teens (I)
- Place for kids to run around (I)
- Kinds of facilities that attract workers (I)
- More ballfields for tournament play (I)
- Emergency call system at parks; make parks feel safer (I)
- More tennis courts (I)
- Green design, including water conservation (I)
- Improve existing tennis courts (I)
- Boat ramps and fishing piers (I)
- Open green space (I)

Programs:

- Teen Programs (III):
  - Non-traditional, exciting programs, e.g. indoor sky diving
  - More structured youth programs in certain areas of town, such as the south Rocky Mount area
  - Safe places for positive social interaction (non-structured, independent activities) e.g. a “skateboard scavenger hunt”
- More performing, visual, and creative arts programs; Imperial Center should target more inner City kids (III)
- Family programs (I)
- Additional tennis lessons for youth and adults (I)
- Recreation, social sports such as kickball, corn-hole; particularly for young adults (I)
- Job training (high unemployment) (I)
- Health programs (obesity, STDs) (I)
- More events to get people downtown, e.g. ‘Downtown Live’(I)
- Lake-based activities (I)
- Nature programs (I)
- Adult learning programs, continuing education (I)

Amenities and Enhancements:

- Trail signage, markers (II)
- Offer ‘real food’ concessions at Sports Complex on weekends, evenings, e.g. hot dogs, barbecue sandwiches, fruit, bottled water, etc. Wouldn’t have to go home and make dinner! Could contract with local restaurants, e.g. hot dogs, Chick Fil-A, pizza, etc. (I)
- More things to do in the park geared to teenagers; more user-friendly, e.g. Wi-Fi in the parks, “cool” lounging areas, moveable furniture (I)
- Improved equipment (I)
- Connect to other community health initiatives and recreation programs (I)

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### Staffing:

- Stronger partnership with Boys and Girls Club, other organizations (e.g. south Rocky Mount area for youth development programs) (II)
- Need to reduce time spent on free services, setting up tables and chairs, events that have nothing to do with our priorities OR collect fees, get more resources: serviced over 110 community events last year (II)
- Someone to come in and administer programs; need consistency (I)
- Parks planner (I)
- Need to look at organizational structure; have added a lot of services, need additional support (I)

### 3. Vision:

#### Rocky Mount's Parks and Recreation System will:

- Be safe and comfortable for all users
- Increase a sense of community wellness, engagement, commitment, happiness, and pride
- Increase engagement, higher level of communication and networking, locals getting more involved in tournaments, visitors more engaged in community activities and destinations
- Have had a common brand
- Help define Rocky Mount, put the City on the map in a positive way
- Have a world class, signature park that satisfies the needs, wants and desires of all ages
- Have events that rotate from park to park every year to bring attention to the parks system
- Have centrally located or equitably distributed places that teenagers can access by foot, bike, or skateboard; are safe, fun, cool, and clean; and allow them to be creative
- Accommodate all types of teenagers, including athletes, skateboarders, and "loungers" (hang out and talk, video games, texting)
- Help the City to get off the list(s) of "most dangerous places to live"
- Help with developing our youth; economic development; increased quality of life; decreased crime rate; improved educational system; increasing test scores
- Ensure that every child in the Nash/ Rocky Mount school system will visit the Imperial Center once/ year
- Have a little bit of something for everyone, including creative needs, physical activity needs, new opportunities, organized sports
- Will serve everyone including families from all the neighborhoods, wealthy to low income, single mothers and grandmothers, traditional families, seniors, youth, those that want a safe place to visit, play a game of bridge, go to Italy, play on a team
- Reflect an overall caring attitude about the community
- Provide equal opportunities to be involved
- Reach out to the community to let everyone know what's available
- Be affordable
- Provide good access/ transportation
- Be both centralized (significant key facilities and structures that offer more opportunities) and decentralized (parks, trail, classes, mobile programs, etc.)
- Be all inclusive, comprehensive



- Respect and reflect the history of the community
- Be well maintained and take care of what we have
- Provide opportunities for local residents as well as visitors
- Encourage partnerships, regionalism, things we can do with other communities
- Be aligned with City Council/ manager goals and objective
- Be the major player in parks and recreation, focusing on quality of life and being leaders in parks and recreation in the region
- Evolve from a good department to great department
- Be upgraded , ADA accessible
- Have improved equipment, beautification, higher standard of quality
- Make each community proud of their parks
- Focus on core services
- Expand to the western area of City
- Collaborate with the County to share resources, remove County/ City silos (Nash County has a fledgling parks department; Edgecombe County does not)
- Control our own destiny, have a say in the types of services and programs we deliver
- Would be trusted by residents
- Be right-sized based on the community's needs
- Keep up with new development, provide equitable distribution of facilities and services
- Bank land for future development
- Offer recreation facilities and programs based on current demand, not past actions
- Extend the greenway system, and add trailheads at each neighborhood
- Provide wonderful, exciting parks for residents and their children, provide places for exercise and play
- Provide beautiful, well- kept parks from one end of town to the other
- Treat every park like it is your living room
- Groom every park to show that the City cares, fix up Sunset and City Lake Parks
- Encourage neighborhoods to volunteer
- Raise funds for improvements and maintenance
- Benefit from being bedroom community; can attract people from Raleigh who want less hustle and bustle, lower cost; parks system is center of quality of life
- Be more transparent
- Be part of community infrastructure
- Connect parks and recreation to economic development, health, livability, walkability, active living by design
- Have something always going on
- Have fabulous parks

#### 4. Comparable Communities:

- Raleigh, NC: diversity of facilities, marketing, trails system, interaction between parks and police to work on neighborhood issues (e.g. Austin has parks and rec liaisons); whatever they do they do well; well-regarded in community; inclusive (including special populations); street fairs and festivals; something always going on; field of dreams (IIII II)

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- Greenville, NC: walkability, safety (lighting, etc.), growing college community, vibrant city, investing in base, similar size (IIII)
- Asheville, NC: quality facilities, aesthetics, level of care, strong senior base, strong cultural arts base (III)
- Wilmington, NC: walkable, connected downtown.
- Kinston, NC: water park (splash park)
- Tupelo, Mississippi: doing more with their facilities, e.g. soccer and baseball tournaments; using astro-turf at high school; festivals
- Durham, NC: trails, yoga class on the lawn
- Burlington, NC: greenway system, facilities, playgrounds, marketing
- Gastonia, NC: athletic facilities
- Greenville, SC
- Austin, TX
- Charleston SC; benchmark for the nation, generate revenues, forward-thinking
- Richmond, VA; use of the river w/ overlooks, festivals, etc.
- Want others to say they want their parks to look like Rocky Mount!

### 5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities:

#### Pay As You Go:

- Grants (IIIII III)
- General Fund/ CIP (IIIII II)
- User Fees (IIII)
- Sales Tax (II)
- Park Impact Fees (I)
- Special Assessments (I)
- Restaurant Tax (I)
- Occupancy Tax (I)
- Enterprise Funds (I)

#### Borrowing:

- General Obligation Bonds (IIIII IIIII)
- Revenue Bonds (I)

#### Partnerships:

- Schools (III)
- Churches (I)
- Businesses (I)
- Parks and Recreation Foundation (I)
- Strategic Twin Counties Education Partnership (STEP) (I)
- Neighborhood Associations (I)
- General (I)



## IV. INTERVIEW NOTES:

### Interview #1:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?

Dynamics regarding the plan; is there a focus on particular parks re: attractiveness, tourism, e.g. downtown and sports complex? Recommendations or improvements to attract visitors, businesses, and residents. Some people would prefer to commute from Raleigh, Cary rather than move to RM. It's difficult to hire people to come to RM: not enough to do, not safe. Need to focus on improvements, growth. How do you keep people here?

2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

- Campground for Sports Complex
- Place for kids to run around
- Different experience
- Publicity: letting people know about activities
- Kinds of facilities that attract workers

3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.

Change of perception; communications; dedication to change; improvements to layouts, safety; need to feel comfortable with pre-teens, teens going on hikes, trails, etc. e.g. would not let kids go to **Battle Park**, doesn't feel safe (even though has much to offer).

4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?

Nothing around Imperial Center, not walkable, not connected to downtown like other cities, e.g. ice cream shops, diners, etc. are scattered. Wilmington is an example of a walkable, connected downtown.

5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

- Bonds (ad valorem taxes) – wouldn't hurt people as much
- Don't want to increase fees (for same reason); want to increase volume of participation, not create elite, 'silo' programs

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### Interview #2:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?

- Connect with members of Travel and Tourism Council, TDA; Alex forwarded survey to them. Sports Complex and Imperial Center are funded in part through occupancy tax. Members are also connected to community
- Also Chamber of Commerce, Women's Professional Networking Group

2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

- Is forwarding list to Kelvin
- Downtown is the most walkable area of the City, but has the worse reputation or crime
- Facilities:
  - Larger community/ competition pool
  - More ball fields for tournament play
  - Improve existing facilities with enhanced lighting, including sports complex, City Lake, other active and passive facilities
  - Emergency call system at parks; make parks feel safer
  - More tennis courts
  - Splash park
  - Additional bathrooms at all the parks
  - Green design, including water conservation
- Programming:
  - Additional tennis lessons for youth and adults
  - More performing and creative arts programs

3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.

- Local: increase sense of wellness, engagement; enhanced or renewed sense of commitment and happiness with the community; sense of pride
- Non-local: increased engagement, higher level of communication and networking, locals getting more involved in tournaments, visitors more engaged in community activities and destinations
- Have had a lot of branding programs, plans thrown at the community; are there existing taglines, plans (e.g. ask me why I love Rocky Mount) that still have 'legs'? (planning fatigue)
- Trails map is on website

4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?

- Greenville, NC: walkability, safety (lighting, etc.)
- Asheville, NC: aesthetics, level of care
- Raleigh, NC: diversity of facilities, marketing
- Kinston, NC: water park (splash park)



5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

- More republican, conservative community
- Partially pay as you go + borrowing (50% general fund, 50% borrowing)
- Sports Complex will be paid off in a couple of years; 1% should be used for new facilities
- User fees would be OK
- Grants

### Interview #3:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?

- Excited about growing Parks and Recreation Dept.; one of our bright spots

2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

- A lot of people will be pushing for things in specific areas of community; sports complex is a tremendous benefit, centrally located, available to everybody
- Anything that we can do to set Rocky Mount apart, give us a competitive edge, make people want to live here and give us a high quality of life
- A centrally located, highly visible water park would give people something to do, attract people from the outside
- Continue to connect paths, trails, along Battle Park, to athletic fields, to YMCA, to City Lake; complete the circle
- Need bike friendly streets, routes; complete streets. Makes a statement, slow down traffic
- Wonderful that City soccer program merged with other; great to see soccer, little league, etc. right in Rocky Mount. Need to offer 'real food' concessions on weekends, evenings, e.g. hot dogs, barbecue sandwiches, fruit, bottled water, etc. Wouldn't have to go home and make dinner! Could contract with local restaurants, e.g. hot dogs, Chick Fil-A, pizza, etc.
- City-run golf course, e.g. purchase and upgrade North Green Country Club; would be an attraction, improve quality of life
- Brand and market ourselves using existing assets and resources

3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.

- A part of what defines Rocky Mount; puts Rocky Mount on the map "in a positive way"

4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?

- Raleigh, NC; always have stuff going on
- Greenville, NC?

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5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

- Would prefer 'pay as you go' first, such as grants; don't want to raise taxes, want to be competitive tax-wise, but want to differentiate ourselves. Use grants, general fund, existing sales tax
- Sponsorships, naming rights; not many large philanthropic organizations in Rocky Mount

### Interview #4:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?

- Was at the meeting, familiar with the process
- Want to make sure that the input is taken into consideration for future plans, improvements; not as a justification for a pre-conceived plan

2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

- Hear more than anything, something for young people to do: e.g. indoor sky diving, more exciting things to do in addition to basketball, baseball
- More youth programs in certain areas of town, such as the south Rocky Mount area; more structured programs. A lot of kids don't feel safe there
- Want the community to be nice; we can have some of the same amenities here that they have in Raleigh
- Top priority is higher level of maintenance and upkeep of existing parks; currently doing just the minimum.
- Need to make the parks more attractive, make it nice enough so people don't think they can do anything
- Need to maintain restrooms
- Need more things to do in the park geared to teenagers; more user-friendly. For example, Wi-Fi in the parks, "cool" lounging areas, moveable furniture
- Programming may work, but need to pay someone to come in and administer program; need consistency
- Trade-off between structure and freedom
- Need a signature park: something for families, kids, adults, teens
- Stronger partnership with Boys and Girls Club, e.g. south Rocky Mount area, for youth development programs

3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.

- A world class, signature park here in Rocky Mount that satisfies the needs, wants and desires of all ages
- Events that rotate from park to park every year to bring attention to the parks
- Places where teenagers can come that are accessible by foot, bike, or skateboard; safe; fun; cool; clean; allows them to be creative. Either centrally located, or distributed throughout the community. Teenagers include athletes; skateboarders; and loungers (hang out and talk, video games, texting).



- Using parks system to get off the list(s) of “most dangerous places to live”
  - Parks can help with developing our youth; economic development, quality of life; decrease crime rate; improve educational system, increasing test scores
4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?
- Tupelo, Mississippi: doing more with their facilities, e.g. soccer and baseball tournaments; using astro-turf at high school; festivals
5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- Would have to borrow; need facilities, improvements in the near future, not when kids are grown; sense of urgency
  - State of the City; we don’t have time to see how things play out, we need to act now
  - Can’t do it ourselves; who do we partner with?
  - Can’t rely solely on ‘pay as you go’ until we make Rocky Mount the kind of place that people want to live in

**Interview # 5:**

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?
- Want to make sure that we reach segment of community that doesn’t normally participate, e.g. low income, inner city:
    - o Take paper copies of survey to Housing Authority, Head Start, schools, churches
    - o Develop a flyer to go into church bulletins
    - o Booth at Christmas Parade?
    - o Neighborhood Presidents Association; ask them to pass out at meetings
2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)
- Dog park
  - People are using the trail from Sunset to **Battle Park**, want more; concerns about safety, too dark
  - Signage, markers on trail; also lighting
  - Facilities need to be remodeled; equipment needs to be well-maintained, upgraded
  - Kayak and canoe launches are hidden gem
  - More programmed community recreation centers
  - Recreation, social sports such as kickball, corn-hole; particularly for young adults
  - Question: standards for aesthetics, maintenance?
  - Programs for teens; hard population to grab onto; organized, safe places for positive social interaction (non-structured, independent activities) (e.g. a skateboard scavenger hunt?)
3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.

## AECOM

- Every child in the Nash/ Rocky Mount school system will visit the Imperial Center once/ year
  - A little bit of something for everyone: creative needs, physical activity needs, new opportunities, organized sports; families from all he neighborhoods, wealthy to low income, single mothers and grandmothers, traditional families, seniors, youth, those that want a safe place to visit, play a game of bridge, go to Italy, play on a team
  - An overall caring about the community
  - People are quick to think of the negatives, not focus on the positive; may be changing
  - Broad disparity between 'have' and 'have not's'; you should have same opportunity to be involved
  - Outreach to let everyone know what's available; cost may be an issue (do we overcharge?).
  - Access/ transportation is not an issue; we have a good transit system
  - System is both centralized (significant key facilities and structures that offer more opportunities) and decentralized (parks, trail, classes, mobile programs, etc.)
4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?
- Trails System at Rocky Mount, City Lake; similar to Raleigh's Johnson Lake
  - Trail in Durham, yoga class on the lawn
  - Raleigh: interaction between parks and police to work on neighborhood issues (e.g. Austin has parks and rec liaisons) (Human Relations staff doing this in Rocky Mount)
  - Parks and rec staff to attend Neighborhood Presidents Association
5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- Pay as you go, including grants, user fees, general fund, etc.
  - General obligation bond is a possibility; City needs to be aggressive, needs a G.O. Bond to do it
  - Need partnerships, e.g. schools, to do it; superintendent is community-minded. Overall goal is to develop an educated population in community, is willing to look beyond classroom
  - STEP (Strategic Twin counties Education Partnership)
  - Heavy public involvement will help pass G.O. bond

### Interview #6:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?
- No questions, improvements
  - Administer parks and recreation trust fund
  - Some of the meetings have not been well attended; consider reaching out to church congregations, have additional meetings
2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)



- Some areas have no parks, trails, or sidewalks; false assumption that golf course provides access
  - Dog park (e.g. at Sunset Park); source funding? (FEMA land at Sunset Park)
  - Water park w/ lazy river, slides, etc.
  - Swimming pool closer to City residents; including indoor pool. High school takes up pool time at YMCA
  - Trails – use sewer easements, as well as downtown connector
  - Super playground, tremendous draw for people
  - Public park/ facility at reservoir: public access, boat ramp, canoe and kayak rentals, public beach (?)
  - Golf course: used to host ACC championships
  - Market the Imperial Center
  - Signage and wayfinding
  - Improve existing tennis courts
  - Tar River Regional WW Treatment Park (“the farm”); mountain bike trails, horseback riding trails, ORV trails
3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.
- All inclusive, comprehensive
  - Next big thing after sports complex?
  - Respect the history
  - Maintain, take care of what we have
  - Opportunities for local residents as well as visitors
  - Partnerships, regionalism, things we could do with other communities
4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?
- Raleigh, Cary: whatever they do they do well; well-regarded in community; inclusive (including special populations); street fairs and festivals; something always going on; field of dreams; do one really neat thing, that’s what you’re known for
  - Burlington: greenway system, facilities, playgrounds, marketing
  - Gastonia: athletic facilities
  - Imperial Center is better than others
5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- Restaurant tax
  - Existing occupancy tax
  - Bonds
  - Enterprise funding
  - Partnerships
  - Grants (e.g. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund)
  - Schools, businesses



## Interview #7:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?
2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)
  - Facilities:
    - o Community centers; haven't built a new one since the 1970s; when Kelvin was growing up, kids went to CC after school (propose breaking City into quadrants, 1 CC in each quadrant; currently have senior center 25,000; BTW is 20,000; S Rock Mount 15 – 18000; lie within 4 miles of each other, heavily used but not at capacity; pop. 57,000)
    - o Park upgrades; blown away about the calls regarding parks, including 26 playgrounds; need to upgrade, need playground replacement program
    - o Have high-end facilities because of the flood; but also have old low end facilities; has helped create racial tension
    - o Deferred maintenance needs (50 parks, 26 with playgrounds; gym floors, AC; do rule of thumb calculations)
    - o Have CIP funds, but no parks planner
    - o Transportation is a big issue, as well as socio-economic conditions; important to have good distribution of facilities
  - Structure:
    - o Need to look at organizational structure
    - o Have added a lot of services, need additional support
  - Programs:
    - o Focused on youth, after school
    - o Need to focus on job training; high unemployment
    - o Can be greater players
    - o High unemployment, obesity, STDs
    - o Partnering with Boys and Girls Club, other organizations
    - o Serviced over 110 community events; overtime for community service (seen as free service)
3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.
  - Make sure we're aligned with City Council/ manager goals and objective
  - The major player in parks and recreation, focusing on quality of life and being leaders in parks and rec in region
  - From good department to great department
4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?
  - Ashville: strong senior base, strong cultural arts base
  - Greenville: growing college community, vibrant city, investing in base, similar size
  - Raleigh: can benefit from being bedroom community; can attract people from Raleigh who want less hustle and bustle, lower cost; parks system is center of quality of life



5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

- Deferred maintenance: bond referendum, so far behind; will never catch up with \$650k/year in general fund
- Focus on revenue generation
- Pay as you go, including fair charges
- Imperial Center charges are high
- Expand partnerships, including over 300 churches
- Need stronger partnership with school system; need to develop a use agreement
- Need a Parks and Recreation Foundation that will allow us to provide services to low income residents; “every single citizen is welcome to participate in our community, we will find the funds”
- People know what we do; how we do it; and what we can do better

**Interview #8:**

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?

- Have been here for 29 years, have seen evolution of master plan, have been impressed with scope and methodology; like the fact that we’re not just collecting data from one point
- Ward meetings have been conducted well

2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

- Community is fairly passive, don’t hear a lot of major requests
- People may not be passionate about community, apathetic, work out of silos
- Need to create community pride; have invested in downtown, made strides, train station, Imperial Center, etc.; people are skeptical about investing in downtown
- Edgcombe/ Nash divide; social economic issues
- Need a downtown “common area”, e.g. central park, focal point, identified with Rocky Mount, draw everyone
- Colorado Springs did a water feature
- Upgrade community center
- Community center, swimming pool, other facilities in the western part
- Expansion of greenway trails, make a walkable City; meets fitness and wellness objectives, as well as improve community relations
- Mountain bike trail, 500 acres at WW treatment plant; also at Battle Park
- Dog park
- Water Park, e.g. Kinston
- Museum, archive history of the City; included in event center?
- Reservoir is untapped resource: water sports, fishing, beach, swimming, etc.; collaborate with County?
- Lack of pride; racial divide; people work in silos; Edgcombe/ Nash split; have great people, City has more things going for it than most people realize; great location

## AECOM

3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System
  - Have 50 parks, 12 acres per capita; need to upgrade, make ADA accessible, improve equipment, beautify and improve the standard of quality; should be proud of parks, each community proud of their park
  - Spending a lot of time away from core services such as maintenance, spend a lot of time supporting special events
  - Expand to western area of City
  - Collaborate with County to share resources, remove County/ City silos (Nash County has a fledgling parks department; Edgecombe County does not)
4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?
  - Hard time coming up with one that matches RM; no one town sticks out
  - Greenville SC, Austin, Raleigh are nice systems
  - Thomasville, Salisbury, Burlington, Shelby have renovated downtowns
5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
  - Bond referendums have worked well for Raleigh; think there will be support; City doesn't have much debt
  - My Rocky Mount publication features parks and recreation programs and facilities
  - Not accredited; a lot of policies are not in writing, keep us from focusing on core services
  - Have done well with grants, may be more challenging in the future
  - Sales tax would not be popular; not much support for user fees

### Interview #9:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?
  - We've done a good effort to reach as many people as we can
  - Would like to see more involvement from west side of town
  - Teen summit was a Boys and Girls Club function; may not have been representative
2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

Facilities:

  - Community centers: have two (not incl. senior center), are old and lacking; 2 or 3 short
  - Some park should be closed, not meeting needs of community
  - Need to upgrade existing parks, from playgrounds to picnic shelters
  - Need a water park; could be successful, e.g. Kinston
  - Expand greenway trails
  - Safe, walkable, travelable trails; tie to parks



Programs:

- Spend too many resources doing free services, setting up tables and chairs, events that have nothing to do with our priorities
  - Improve teen programs
  - More events to get people downtown, e.g. 'Downtown Live'
  - Athletics and Seniors Programs are strong
  - Imperial Center should target more inner City kids for culture and arts
3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.
- Control our own destiny; at mercy of others, dedicate a lot of resources serving non-core needs
  - Would like to be able to have a say in the types of services and programs we deliver
  - Would like for people to trust us that we have right direction for City and residents
4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?
- Charleston SC; benchmark for the nation, generate revenues, forward-thinking
  - Hard to keep up with Raleigh, Charlotte; more progressive
  - We have resources that are comparable or better than others, but we need to be more progressive
5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?
- Fine with both pay as you go and borrowing techniques; don't know if bond referendum will pass; no other way to get ahead
  - Tricky to work with school system, principal by principal basis
  - Partnerships would be a last case scenario; in the past we have been taken advantage of, give more than we get; would prefer to own and control our system

**Interview #10:**

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?
- No questions think AECOM is doing a fabulous job
2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

Facilities:

- Complete Sports Complex as designed; one stop shop for recreation, economic benefits, public image; central, shared
- Resource –based recreation, e.g. water sports at reservoir
- Large community park for west area of City; huge square of land with no parks. Land available at Halifax Road and Bethlehem Road
- Westridge Park is not a park

## AECOM

- Boat ramps and fishing piers
- Open green space
- Smaller walk-to parks, larger drive to parks north of the river
- Playgrounds
- Walking trails and greenways
- Mountain biking trails: Battle Park, WWT Plant

### Programs:

- Performing arts, visual arts, history museums
- Lake-based activities
- Nature programs

### 3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.

- Park land calculation is really 873 acres, including cemetery and land around rec centers; how do we 'right size' department. Lower level of management? E.g. try to keep weeds out of Southside park, which isn't used
- Vast majority of parks are south of Tar River; inequity north of the river. New development has not kept up with investment
- How do we land bank for future development?
- Offer recreation facilities and programs based on current demand, not past actions; make residents aware of opportunities
- Extend greenway system, add trailheads at each neighborhood

### 4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?

- Asheville, NC: quality of facilities
- Richmond, VA; use of the river w/ overlooks, festivals, etc.

### 5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

- Have typically gone with general fund/ CIP, grants
- Bonds would be a great idea if Council approves

### Interview #11:

#### 1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?

- No questions, good process; wish we could have gotten more people

#### 2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

- Grooming existing parks
- Upgrade existing bathrooms, make sure that they're sanitary and kept that way

#### 3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.



- Every time there is a park, you know that it's a wonderful, exciting place for you and your children. These are the parks that you could go and exercise, children can play
- People will go from one end of town to the other. Could stop anywhere. Beautiful, well kept
- Every park is like your living room
- Grooming, look like we care, fix up Sunset and City Lake, encourage neighborhoods to volunteer, raise funds e.g. Durham neighborhood park with ABC program

4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?

- Don't see others that Rocky Mount needs to look like; need to upgrade what we have; neat, pretty, groomed
- All kinds of equipment isn't necessary; could sit on the benches, read, make them inviting, read a book, meet your friends, have lunch
- Want others to say they want their parks to look like Rocky Mount

5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

- People in communities should fix up neighborhood parks; raise funds, create a sense of pride
- However project like Sunset Park should be spruced up with City funds
- Would be willing to borrow money for City-wide parks such as Sunset Park, City Lake Park

#### Interview #12:

1. Questions regarding methodology: Do you have any questions about the project scope/ methodology? Are there any additional meetings, workshops, presentations or other outreach efforts that we should consider for your community?

- Attended the initial meeting, made some suggestions.
- City should broadcast surveys to a broader audience, do e-mail blast. Also send to PTOs, schools; playgrounds are in really bad shape.
- Invite more people to meetings, workshops

2. Needs and Priorities: Based on what you know, see and hear about the community, what do you believe are the top priority parks and recreation needs in the City, both facility and programs? (refer to list on back page)

- Having fewer, more connected parks. Highlight and connect jewels in the crown. Don't feel safe, parks and activities are disconnected. Need park partners. Regular family activities that are well-publicized, people can walk to. Connect park plan to pedestrian plan, schools.
- Battle Park is a great place to run, people don't feel safe there
- Resources should be used on parks; let others go natural
- Marketing; tie parks to quality of life
- Have a lot of the components, need to connect to other health initiatives, recreation programs
- Bike trails, walking trails

## AECOM

- Family programs
- Adult learning programs, continuing education

3. Vision: Describe your long-range vision for the Parks and Recreation System.

Make the parks system much more transparent, part of infrastructure, connecting parks and recreation to economic development, health promotion, livability, walkability; active living by design; want people to think of fabulous parks. Recreation and greenways system, something is always going on, becomes a signature piece of economic development

4. Comparable Communities: What Community(s) or City(s) do you feel we should use as benchmarks for Rocky Mount? What Community(s) or City(s) should the city emulate?

Rocky Mount is competing with Raleigh, Greenville, NC; have wonderful housing stock in Rocky Mount, people commuting to Raleigh; cities with streetscapes, walkability. Much cheaper to live in RM, quality of life is improving

5. Funding/ Implementation Opportunities: Assuming that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will identify millions of dollars in desired/ needed improvements, what funding source(s) would you support?

General fund, CIP; grants; bonds (after 1st phase, if transparent, once people see how great it can be); partnerships (want people to think of system as not just what City owns and operates)