

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Adventure and Outdoor Recreation Focus Group
Date	January 10, 2013
Time	10:00 am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheet)
Prepared	January 10, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group on adventure and outdoor recreation was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

- **Constituent Groups Present:**
 - Carolina Kayak Club
 - NC State Student – Parks and Recreation
 - REI
 - Triangle Off-Road Cyclists
 - NC State Professor
 - Durant Park
 - Great Outdoor Provision Company
 - YMCA of the Triangle
 - Triangle Rock Club
 - WRAL Meteorologist/ PlanCo member
 - Carolina Canoe Club
- **Characteristics of the Future Vision for Parks and Open Space in Raleigh:**
 - Provide opportunities for unique but shared experiences for people in the community
 - Need to address community health, especially in the younger generations
 - Need to provide parks and facilities that are easy to access, preferably to walk to.
 - Is there equitable access amongst the communities?
 - It should be “easy” for people to take advantage of the system, not a hassle
 - Provide a relief from the “daily grind”
 - Should have access to outdoor spaces of all kinds
 - Should continue to expand/purchase land as available
 - Facilities/services/programs should be cost affordable
 - Should address a diverse population
 - Should reconnect the youth with the outdoors; nature deficit disorder
 - Activate existing natural areas, promote them
 - Safety is paramount; regardless of activity or location

- Should provide facilities that help build families, and kids – less competitive, more experience
- Residents should have access to facilities and services reasonably near their homes
- Keep up with maintenance on existing facilities, as well as building new ones.
- Adequate parking at appropriate sites
- Provided restrooms at appropriate sites
- Can there be some sort of mentorship/scholarship program that subsidizes the fee structure for those who cannot afford to participate?
 - Some programs are high-cost to do on your own, that is where the city should come in
- Have a dynamic marketing and outreach program
 - Reinvigorate the website; it is difficult to navigate and find the information that you are looking for
 - It's hard to sign up for programs, which it shouldn't be
 - How do you effectively reach those who don't use the web?
Flyers/pamphlets at places like REI, schools, parks, etc.
 - Integrate outreach in the high schools; start clubs or host talks
 - Have various mailers, not just the leisure ledger
- Should be able to easily find out information on the website about all types of parks and programs

- **General Comments:**
 - Winter climate affects the amount of use, due to limited daylight and parks/trails closing at sunset. May need to revisit hours of operation, lighting, etc.

- **Program Ideas:**
 - River Races along the Neuse? Community events and activates along the river that could create a regional draw; many parks along the river
 - (San Marcos, TX riverfront park as a comparable)
 - Events could be planned/coordinated by third parties
 - Safety education for water activities; need to educate the public
 - Acquire land/build parks in areas with high low-income (minority) populations
 - Consider bringing back the Adventure Connections program; already has equipment
 - Is there an opportunity to develop social/commercial areas along the river, e.g. river walks

- **Potential Partnership Opportunities:**
 - Outdoor center at Forest Ridge Park Adventure Center – is there a way to partner for success?

- **Funding Opportunities:**
 - Support for a bond issue?
 - Tax increase: concerned about whether the money would be used for its intended purpose
 - Wake County recently stopped issuing impact fees
 - Need a long-term funding source for the master plan, if we want it to be implemented

- Need to seek out creative, alternative funding sources (naming rights, licensing of kayaks/canoes, sponsorships, volunteers/interns etc.) in addition to the normal funding mechanisms

Summary Themes:

- Request for equitable distribution of access to safe opportunities for adventure and outdoor recreation
- Facilities and programs should be less competitive based and more experience base (family and individuals)
- Establish a mentoring or sponsorship program to help lower income individuals, children, or families have opportunities in adventure or outdoor recreation which is costly
- Current website is difficult to navigate and sign-up when looking for adventure/outdoor recreation opportunities
- Target facilities in low-income areas or minority population areas to provide better transportation access
- Programs for river activities should be developed with safety classes
- Long-term funding is needed and should be used for intended purposes
- Seek creative or alternative funding sources such as naming rights, licensing fees, sponsorships, etc.

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Greenways Focus Group
Date	January 10, 2013
Time	8:30 am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheet)
Prepared	January 10, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group on greenways was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

- Evolution from recreation to transportation, but what does that mean?
 - Probably wider greenways in general, however, there is a need to view the greenways system as a highway system; different sections/solutions for different capacities and areas.
 - There may be a need to upgrade existing facilities to increase capacity; e.g. pavement markings, widening
- Connectivity is core: there are barriers in the city that need to be addressed, in order to assure true connectivity
- The bigger the city gets, the bigger the need for trails/greenways gets as well
- Volunteer “supervisors” or patrolling users on the trails, sponsored by the police department.
- Recommended width of some of the existing corridors was determined due to development plans and land constraints at the time of development (1970’s), which may need to be evaluated to see if they are still relevant today.
 - Parks and Recreation has managed the greenways as trail.
 - Defining the role of greenways; ecological, transportation, trails, preservation etc
- City Council recently amended the definition of “public infrastructure” to include greenways in addition to the standard water/sewer/utilities.
 - Qualifying characteristics; continuous, diminished by fragmentation
 - Most infrastructure systems have well documented design and maintenance standards, however, not for greenways
 - There is a need for a much more complex/complicated vision for bikeways/trails/greenways.
- Difference in understanding of “trail” vs. “greenway”
 - Need to capitalize on the multiple values of greenways; ecological, transportation, greenspace, recreation, wetlands/water treatment
 - Not all greenways will incorporate paved trails; possibly unpaved foot-trails, or no trails at all. A trail is not necessary to constitute a greenway.

- There needs to be a diverse amount of destinations within the greenways system that are all interconnected.
- Trail amenities needed:
 - More restrooms
 - Adequate parking; most lots fill up during the weekend. (Possible need for more neighborhood connections to relieve the burden on the trailheads?)
- Wayfinding:
 - Needs to be a comprehensive system both leading people to the trails, and on them.
 - Need maps at common destinations showing their adjacency of the greenways system (e.g. at the mall)
 - Touch-screen, interactive maps along the trail or at destinations
 - Access for emergency personnel: needs to be access to the trail system, and there needs to be maps/locations provided to the emergency responders
 - Put maps/information at the airport, convention center for arriving guests.
 - Create a QR Code
 - There is a need for smaller, local maps as well as regional maps
- Intersection of systems:
 - Hierarchy of intersections of bikeways/trails and greenways, as well as roadways etc.
 - There needs to be connectivity from the major trails into the neighborhoods (see note above); need more options other than driving and parking
 - Need signage indicating direction to other roadways/trails and destinations, especially at dead ends
 - Need to tell direction (cardinal), distance/travel time
 - Key intersections should have amenities: drinking fountains, air stations, signage
 - Need to revisit the on-road trail blazing; existing signs/markings are too small, blend into the environment, not obvious

Summary Themes:

- Need for a hierarchy of greenway trails based on level of use and type, i.e commuting, recreation, etc.
- City Council has adopted the definition of greenways as an infrastructure which operates as a system. This is diminished by fragmentation
- Wayfinding needs to address destinations and include more innovative techniques that inform the public of the greenway system
- Request to provide better connectivity into neighborhoods
- Request for key intersections to provide user amenities

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Southeast Raleigh Focus Group
Date	January 10, 2013
Time	12:30 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 10, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for SE Raleigh was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

General Notes:

- There is a perception is that the East, Southeast, and Central portions of the city are treated different than the more wealthy portions of the city; fewer improvements, and the improvements made are not as high in quality as the other areas in the city.
- Would like to see a regional draw, like a regional zoo; would provide a draw, and employment opportunities (referenced the Dix property)
- Perception of a racial divide in the City; certain groups are treated differently, more poorly than the others (mainly resident to resident conflict and division)
- Need more racial diversity in the Department's staff, particularly on the west/northwest
- Safety on the greenways needs to be increased; some sort of physical patrol or policing may be necessary
- Need to give people a reason to come to the southeast side of town.
- Need to ensure that southeast gets "its fair share of funding" from the Department budget

The Future Parks, Recreation, and Greenways System will...

- Preserving and embracing the history of the communities within Raleigh
- Should be more diverse, in both the population served and the Department
- Programming and facilities targeted at all age groups and races
- Parks and recreation plays a dynamic role in raising our youth, through programs, facilities, and influence

Current Needs:

- There is a need for additional facilities, specifically a pool, on the southeast side of town.
- We need to improve/update the facilities that we have.

- The majority of the gyms on the SE side do not have AC, and it is resulting in programs not being held, or people going elsewhere for programming needs
- According to participants, no gyms on the SE side of town have AC.
- There is a need for programming and facilities geared towards older youth
- Needs and desires of today's youth are very different than in the past; need to reevaluate design standards
- There is concern regarding perceived safety of trails in wooded areas; would like more open views and safety features
- There needs to be additional restrooms/drinking fountains in Chavis Park other than in the Center. Lions Park has the same issues.
- Chavis is one of the oldest "black" parks in the City, if not the nation, and residents feel that the city neglects that resource.
 - There are repairs/maintenance issues on site (e.g. track)
 - People having to go Pullen Park because there are no improvements at Chavis, nothing to do.
 - Currently a public planning and needs assessment process is underway
- Need more facilities and programs
- Need more innovative, unique parks that include new features like splash pads. Need to reinvigorate the existing parks.
- Parks should offer WiFi...all parks
- Community centers should have up to date IT equipment (e.g. wireless, computers, projectors)
- There is a need for additional programming for kids, older adults, and young women.
 - Specific example is single-parents
- Would like to see exercise equipment in some of the parks
- Programs need to be more affordable to the lower-income participants.
 - There should be some resource for a scholarship or subsidy for those participants.
 - Can we get the business community involved to come up with a solution, or partnership?
 - Need better partnerships/relationships for community members (residents, builders)
 - Staff is just the "brick and mortar;" the community (residents, businesses, etc) make the "community" center
 - Local businesses need to reinvest in the Southeast, if they do business there
- Need to introduce new, non-traditional black sports in the Southeast (example: tennis)

Summary Themes:

- Department staff is not representational of the city's demographics
- Greenway safety is a major concern throughout SE Raleigh and need more open views
- Preserve and embrace heritage throughout Raleigh
- Residents request a pool in SE Raleigh
- Focus on improving or reinvigorate existing facilities
- Need more programs for older youth and teenagers, older adults and young women
- Up-to-date IT equipment at community centers for community meetings and use
- Desire to establish a scholarship program sponsored by the business community

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Arts Focus Group
Date	January 11, 2013
Time	8:00 am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 11, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for arts was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Guiding Vision:

- The Creative Capital of the South (guiding vision)
- Arts are fully integrated into every aspect of life
- Art is not just embracing the past, but envisioning the future.
 - Engage, enrich, inspire
- Identity embrace, or defined by, art
- Making threads across all kinds of ages and cultures; connectivity at a cultural level; “cultural connectivity”
 - How to provide access to this experience, how do you “link” people in?
- Should be able to enjoy art as both a participant and an observer
 - What is the opportunity for Raleigh residents to get involved in the art in our community?

General Notes:

- Art is a process; not necessarily the end product.
 - Demonstrations, participatory, experiential
 - Engagement, at various levels
 - Archaeological; digging, uncovering, discovering.
 - Physical connection to tangible history
- Identity, history, culture; telling the story of community

Defining the Arts:

- **Arts Education;** K-12, universities, “cradle to grave”
- **Performing Arts;**
 - dance theater
 - music
 - opera

- performance art
- circus
- spoken word
- film/animation
- festival
- storytelling
- **Visual Arts;**
 - Painting
 - Sculpture
 - Drawing
 - Photography
 - digital imaging
 - projection
 - printmaking
- **Design;**
 - graphic design
 - architecture
 - landscape architecture
 - fashion design
 - urban design
- **Places/Homes of Arts:**
 - **Locations:**
 - Public Realm; indoor/outdoor
 - Museums
 - Private Property (e.g. bank with sculpture in their lobby/plaza)
 - Streets
 - Neighborhoods
 - Parks
 - Universities (campuses)
 - Schools, public/private
 - Churches
 - Restaurants/bars
 - Public/civic spaces
 - Libraries
 - Community centers
 - Malls
 - Public transportation; (Airports, Train stations)
 - **Facilities:**
 - Galleries
 - Theaters
 - Concert halls
 - Amphitheaters
 - Creation spaces (shop space, studios)
 - Rehearsal halls
 - Virtual community: access, storage, distribution
 - Technology centers

Needs:

- **Coordination:** aligned effort amongst the various arts groups, providers, and facilities.
 - Lack of a defined brand, common voice
 - Multiple arts calendars/agendas:
 - Arts commission
 - SparkCon (Raleigh arts conference)
 - Artsposure
 - FirstNight
 - United Arts Council of Raleigh (County)
 - State Department of Cultural Resources
 - State Arts Council
 - Public Art and Design Board
 - Triangle Art Works
 - Arts North Carolina (State)
 - Can everyone come together once a year and coordinate schedules, events, direction?
 - Need a facilitated system for distribution of information and sharing of calendars/schedules
 - Used to be the local paper/magazine, Friday edition (The Independent, as a current example)
 - Is there is a need for a “clearing house” or “portal” for the arts; linking facilities/locations, providers, and participants?
- **Leadership:** political, education
 - Arts Commission is the local advocacy group, lobby leadership
- **Better Outreach:** QR code, etc.
- **Coordinating Personnel:**
 - Festival Coordinator: Programming/Scheduling
 - Arts Ombudsmen: Liaison
 - Should ideally be a role filled by someone already employed with the City
- **Accessibility:** Sites/programs need to accessible to people, both in access (public transport, trails) and cost
- **Need an arts inventory**
 - What is the “arts” carrying-capacity of each park?
 - What facilities exist in the city?
- **Venue Needs:**
 - Lots of providers/facilities, but access is limited due to limited capacity, overbooked, or too expensive
 - Need variety of performance arts spaces:
 - Need 800-1,500 seat concert facility, performing arts facility for local groups
 - Need a 200-300 seat facility for experimental arts facility
 - Have a 2,200 seat facility, which is too large for smaller groups mentioned above
 - Basic infrastructure in parks, where possible:
 - Power
 - Restrooms

- Stage space (covered, if permanent)
- Backup indoor facilities
- Performance/display spaces need to be located in active areas (downtown, commercial centers, high-profile spaces) to generate appropriate levels of interest and economic benefits (future development centers)

Summary Themes:

- Vision as the 'Creative Capital of the South'
- Should be able to enjoy art as both a participant and an observer
- Top need is for coordination or alignment efforts amongst the various arts groups, providers and facilities
- No common voice and lack of branding to achieve Vision
- Multiple arts calendars/ agendas make scheduling very difficult, need once a year coordination meeting
- Desire for a facilitated system for distribution of information and sharing of calendars
- Need festival coordinator position
- Need variety of performance arts spaces, primarily a need for 800-1500 seat venue, a 200-300 seat venue for experimental arts
- Include basic infrastructure in parks for arts (power, restrooms, stage space, etc.)
- Economic benefits require spaces that are active i.e. downtown, commercial centers, etc.)

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Athletics Focus Group
Date	January 11, 2013
Time	12:30 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheet)
Prepared	January 11, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for athletics was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Participants:

- Adult kickball and softball players
- Parents of youth athletics participants
- Coaches (basketball, baseball, football)
- PlanCo member (Bobby Hill)

Existing Programs:

- Basketball
- No soccer
- Lacrosse
- Cheerleading
- Adult softball (one of the biggest leagues)
- Adult volleyball
- Adult kickball
- Adult Beach Volleyball
- Football
- Softball: Slow pitch and fast pitch
- Baseball
- Tennis

Desired Programs:

- Wrestling
- Adult and Youth Soccer, indoor and outdoor
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Ice hockey
- Adult indoor volleyball
- Swimming (youth)

- Flag football (adult and youth)
- Canoe/Kayak water sports
- Track and Field

Needs:

- Baseball/softball – more fields for the younger kids than the older kids (middle school to high school).
 - Middle/High schools are very competitive, so a lot of kids turn to parks and rec, however, there are limited facilities for that age group (Green Road and Laurel Hills are two such sites)
 - Existing fields in this age group are in bad shape
 - Nothing on the NW side of Raleigh for this age group
 - Nothing on the NW side of Raleigh for this age group
- Adult softball: not a good distribution of the existing facilities, throughout the city
- Increased Maintenance at existing sites
- There are a lot of multi-purpose fields; good for flexibility, but doesn't accommodate all uses (e.g. full-size softball fields, or worn out outfields due to football).
- Limited dedicated football fields
- Walnut Creek and Buffalo Road are very nice.
- Walnut Creek:
 - Need additional parking towards the back fields; too long of a hike to lug equipment and for older spectators
 - Need different sized fields for different age groups; revenue generation opportunity for renting to tournaments, private leagues
- Are there opportunities to look for acquiring field spaces outside of the city limits
 - Difficult to build in the watershed
- Room at Lions Park for reconfiguration of fields.
- Some of the youth football leagues are losing participants to Pop Warner due to limited field sizes (70 yards vs. 100 yards)
- Would be willing to pay higher fees, if facilities were improved, but have to keep in mind those that cannot afford programs.
- Look for opportunities to bring in revenue; sponsor jerseys, score boards, naming rights, advertising etc.
 - Would have to be regulated, but could lower the cost and improve maintenance
- Need good referees and coaches; those who want to be there for the kids.
 - City should offer training seminars or clinics
 - Could be taught by college players, other coaches etc. Volunteer service.
 - Umpires/Referees clinic
- Partnerships:
 - Leagues, private
 - YMCA
 - PopWarner

Summary Themes:

- Participates stated a need for more baseball/softball fields for middle school and high school kids, specifically in NW area of Raleigh, existing fields are in poor condition

- Increase maintenance at existing facilities before expanding
- Multipurpose fields are in poor condition
- Look at acquiring additional space outside of city limits
- Reconfigure existing fields to better accommodate various fields sizes
- Consider additional opportunities for revenue sources i.e. sponsor jerseys, score boards, naming rights.
- Training programs for referees and coaches, college students could teach the programs

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Multi-Cultural Focus Group
Date	January 11, 2013
Time	6:30 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 11, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for multi-culturalism was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

What does it mean to be a world-class city/system (attributes)?:

- Have multi-cultural students serving as docents, ambassadors in the parks and greenways – explain, describe, and exchange cultural information
- Change in the transportation system; increase access to alternative forms of transportation; mass transit, electric cars etc.
 - Free parking spots at the airport for electric cars etc.
- Does material need to translate into multiple languages?
 - Current investment is largely in Spanish; mostly at hospitals, colleges, etc.
 - Multi-lingual vs. bi-lingual
 - Universal symbols can be better interpreted than words
- How are events, programs, resources marketed or advertised?
 - Currently it’s mostly in English; should have an additional plan to reach non-English speakers
- Food/Beverages in parks; cafés, beer gardens, snacks, food trucks
- Vendors/Rentals: bikes, kayaks, play boats
- Duke Gardens as a good comparable or model: unique experience from the city
- The presence of art in the system, regardless of who funds or provides it
- Fairgrounds? Not part of the “System,” but a destination
- Driver Training; more societal need than part of the world class system
- Fresh-markets, green markets – layers of outdoor activities
- Open space for market space near Coastal Hills
- Music/Concerts
- Unique, internationally popular sports
- Provide spectator facilities at sports venues

Summary Themes:

- Alternative transportation options are needed
- Universal symbols should be used on wayfinding and printed material
- Provide food/beverages in parks (cafes, snacks, food trucks)
- Art is should be in parks, regardless of who funds it
- Provide spectator facilities at sports venues

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Nature/Environment Focus Group
Date	January 11, 2013
Time	2:30 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 11, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for nature/environment was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Participants:

- Partners for Environmental Justice
- PlanCo member (Dr. Norman Camp)
- NC State Forestry and Natural Resources
- Park users, hikers
- Parents
- Peace College; Biology Department
- Wake Nature Partnership
- North Carolina Birding Trail
- North Carolina Audubon
- North Carolina Office of Public Affairs

General Notes:

- Laurel Hills Park; playground currently being renovated, sought public input, set up a booth at the park during a busy Saturday. Allowed an easy way for people to provide input and comments
 - Is it relevant to utilize this sort of outreach in the master planning process?
- Future Lands to Acquire: is there a list?

Typology:

- Parks
- Preserves
- Forest
- Wetlands
- Creeks/streams
- Environmental education centers
- Greenways

- Trails nature parks
- Lakes
- Wildlife

Guiding Vision Attributes:

- Accessible to wildlife, people
- Connected/linked, for wildlife and people
- Preserving unique natural areas and settings
- Used as an educational tool, for children/students, and adults as well
- Long-term commitment and sustainability of the natural areas; perpetuity
- Well management; funding is endowed
- Art
- Interpretative signage, exhibits branding
- Appealing to diverse populations
- Docent program for greenways and natural areas
- A [staffed] nature park in every section of town; (within 10-15 miles of every citizen)
- Urban pocket parks; pocket wetlands; community gardens
- Special events (flowerings, birds; seasonal outings and/or festivals)
- Connect greenways to the existing parks and downtown Raleigh
- Bike-share programs for greenways
- Shelters and Restrooms at nature parks
- Make every park accessible by public transit(bus)
- Experiences for the differently abled
- Wise-Elder walks – organized senior parks
- Clearinghouse for environmental resources information
- Utilize clean energy and building practices at nature centers; low impact, “green”
- Nature parks are viewed as areas for appropriate active recreation; need to bridge the gap between sports and nature

Needs:

- Assurance for perpetuity
- Need to educate the residents, staff, and administration on the value of natural areas
- Need an increased awareness of creeks and waterways other than the lakes; need to connect to that resource
- Future Lands to Acquire; need to identify and map
- Appropriately qualified staff to teach nature education; need more educators/staff
- Comprehensive plan for the protection of native plant and animal species
 - Need to know what is there, and how we may impact them with the proposed activities on site
- Need policy prohibiting the use of invasive plants
- Need coordinated effort to identify and remove invasive plant species
- Need to work better with partners who have aligned interests
- More boat rentals at the lakes (kayaks, canoes, sail boats, paddle boats)
- More opportunities for “citizen science” e.g. bird banding, plant identifying etc.

Summary Themes:

- Funding should be endowed for natural preserves to ensure commitment of a high quality experience in perpetuity
- Docent program for greenways and natural areas is needed
- Vision should include a staffed nature park within 10-15 miles of every citizen
- Nature preserve should be accessible by public transportation
- Need to bridge gap between sports and nature facilities
- Should education residents of value of natural areas
- Create a 'Future Lands to Acquire' map
- Desire to conduct a comprehensive inventory of flora and fauna in natural areas
- More opportunities for 'citizen science' e.g. bird banding, plant identifying, etc.

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Tennis Focus Group
Date	January 11, 2013
Time	10:00am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheets)
Prepared	January 11, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for tennis was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

General Notes:

- Do we understand the usage of the existing facilities in the City? Which are overused and underused?
- Fee Structure:
 - Much cheaper than the private clubs
 - Competitive regionally; Cary is much more expensive but has better facilities/amenities

Values of the Existing System:

- Millbrook is a great facility
 - Known as the big tennis park
 - Home of most of the league play (also use Optimist)

Needs:

- Capacity is sometimes a challenge;
 - Is there a way to see if the courts are reserved online? Pay online?
 - Live scheduling monitoring of courts?
 - Reservation tickets (print-outs)
- Future sites for tennis should include more than 2-4 courts per site.
- Lack of indoor or covered courts (only private sites)
 - Can we partner with NC State (Isenhour Tennis Center) to use their facility?
 - Indoor courts could generate revenue; would be highly utilized because there aren't any public courts
 - Would have to be located at the right location to justify the cost.
- Large court facilities should have restrooms nearby (or at least port-a-potty)
- Upgraded, or properly maintained lighting at existing courts
- Maintenance:

- Most courts ok
- Leaves need to be blown off in the fall
- Lack of courts in popular areas;
- Lack of coverage in the northwest of the City
- Groups should be able to buy annual passes
- Millbrook needs to be expanded, renovated
 - Office space for staff
 - Good coordination
- Need to design future facilities to allow for viewing areas of the courts
- Not good access to water at many sites
- Greensborough and Winston-Salem, Winston have superior systems/tournaments
- Would like clay courts, but understand the cost and high maintenance; would benefit seniors
- Lack of a stadium court
- Lease a bubble to put over some outdoor courts, at least six (6) courts to get the revenue necessary
 - Could be a multi-purpose facility; e.g. put basketball, batting cage, indoor golf etc. on a courts
- Greystone; Indoor Kids Park in a vacant big-box facility.
 - Could you do quick-start tennis centers in vacant big-box sites?
- Large amount of women and seniors group.
- Parking lot at Millbrook; need to make people aware of the flying balls.
 - Expansion of parking lot is much appreciated

Existing Typologies:

- **Levels of Play:**
 - Junior Leagues/Lessons
 - Free Play/Meet-Up matches
 - Adult Leagues/Lessons
 - Public/Private Schools (high schools/middle schools)
 - Schedule ahead of time, contract and fee-based
 - School fees are subsidized
- **Facilities:**
 - Single-Court/double-court (not many of those)
 - Tennis Complex (3-6 or more courts, no building)
 - Tennis Center (10+ more courts, with pro-shop, locker rooms)
 - Millbrook is the only existing example in the City
 - Stadium Court (tournament court, with bleachers etc)
 - Currently none existing
 - Lighted vs. non-lighted
 - Amenities:
 - Provide squeegees
 - Restrooms at sites with multiple courts
 - Some sort of reservation system
 - Water access

Outreach:

- Online “Meet-Up” groups
- Lots of opportunities for coaches

Potential Partnerships:

- Private provider (Raleigh Racket Club)
- Isehour Tennis Center (NC State)
 - potential co-op facility
 - difficult to access or get playing time
- Duke Univ.
- High schools?

Programs:

- USTA vs. RATL (Raleigh Area Tennis League) requirements for ratings
 - Difference in who is allowed to play with whom...
- City works with schools programs, which is good. Some programs would not exist without this partnership.
- Raleigh needs to host a tournament...economic development

Summary Themes:

- Except for Millbrook, most courts are in fair or poor condition
- Future development of courts should include 5-6 courts to allow high school tournament use
- Annual pass needed for groups/clubs and online reservation system would be more up-to-date
- Participates expressed a need indoor facilities/courts (either bubble or vacant big box store)
- Northwest area of Raleigh lacks tennis courts that are playable or in fair condition
- Tournaments are economic boom to Raleigh with hundreds of teams coming into town, coaches and scouts

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Multi-Cultural Focus Group
Date	January 12, 2013
Time	3:30 pm
Location	Chavis Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 12, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for multi-culturalism was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

- Nature Talk Camps: daughter aged out, and currently there are no programs for her age.
Live by Lake Wheeler
 - Lack of general programming in that area.
 - Need programs for both adults and kids – adult development, ESL etc
 - Lack of transportation for residents in that area; currently walking more than 30 minutes to take daughter to camp
 - Current parks near where I live do not offer many things to do; very boring
- Impressed by the amount of current programs for children and adults
- Would like to see more computer classes, in the area of the Green Road Center
 - No programs currently, however, City is looking to expand
- More sports leagues for both boys and girls, in the Green Road Area
- More sports leagues, not enough space, existing programs filled
 - Would help keep kids away from gangs, etc
 - In the Spring Forest area, Capital Boulevard area
 - Lexington Apartments – area in need of additional programs for both boys and girls
 - Programs should be low-cost
- General need for additional public transportation
 - Only good access downtown, not the areas outside of the downtown core
- There is a lack of general information in the Hispanic community; do not know what programs and services are currently being offered.
 - Most Hispanics utilize the park facilities, but are not aware of the programs.
 - Outreach Strategy:
 - Host programs in parks that are commonly utilized by Hispanics
 - Create events
 - Saw advertisements for ESL programs on the Spanish TV Channel (40), list more
 - Make the Leisure Ledger in Spanish

- Green Road and Kiwanis, Shelly Lake Park; no facilities or programs at this facility
- Need additional Spanish Senior Programs – Spanish seniors have nothing to do
- There is a desire for some Hispanics to sell concessions in the parks and facilities; people selling sodas...would be beneficial to explain to the community how to obtain permits
- Would like the ESL classes to continue to be fully funded, so they can continue to participate
- Important to provide childcare while the programs are going on, so that the adults can attend, otherwise most parents cannot participate
- There is a need for computer classes at Green Road and Marsh Creek
- At Buffalo Road Park, there is a need for a facility that has an indoor gym and offers classes that teach or provide access to computer labs
 - Many classes now require some homework to be completed online, and some families do not have the means to own a computer – lack of equity
- Would like to see more splash play areas (water park, more than just a splash-pad)
- Need more senior programs
- Lack of advertising/marketing to the Hispanic community
 - Radio should be the key point of advertising to the Hispanic community
- Would like to see more libraries
- There are a lot of Hispanics living around the Buffalo Road park, it would be key to have additional programs, library there...
 - Many people do not have drivers licenses, so they cannot drive to the sites; need to provide additional transportation
- Primary Spanish TV Channel is Univision 40
- Could the Department issue park user ID cards? That way users can feel comfortable walking into facilities or signing up for programs

Summary Themes:

- More computer classes, especially in the Green Road area
- More sports leagues are needed and more space, especially in the Spring Forest and Capital Blvd. areas
- Better outreach in the Hispanic community as current programs and services are not well advertised. Radio or Univision (Channel 40) should be primary avenues
- More programs for Spanish seniors
- Desire more food options in parks
- ESL classes should be fully funded and offered multiple times per week

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Teen Workshop
Date	January 12, 2013
Time	1:00 pm
Location	Chavis Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheets)
Prepared	January 12, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A teen workshop was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

General Comments:

What I like Best about parks:

- Camp programs
- Swings
- Monkey bars
- Activities
- Basketball courts
- Parallel bars
- Play areas for little kids
- Buffalo Road Aquatics
- Birthday parties
- Pullen Park attractions

What I like Least about parks or need more of:

- Sand at playgrounds
- Rain
- Not enough for teens
- Too predictable
- Rusty equipment
- No access to greenways
- Not enough basketball courts
- Not enough soccer courts
- Some neighborhoods not safe
- Indoor basketball courts
- Indoor spaces
- Better lighting of courts and fields in parks
- Need more running tracks
- Bathrooms aren't clean

- Need free standing bathrooms
- Need outdoor climbing walls
- Don't like graffiti, dirty, uninviting
- Need more computers
- Outdoor fitness, exercise equipment
- Wi-Fi
- Need tennis courts at Robert Cambell Park
- Need indoor pool
- Need skate park
- Need multi-purpose fields
- Need paintball area
- Need equipment to check out, balls, pads, etc.

Current Uses:

- Playgrounds
- Greenways
- Park paths/trails
- Pools
- Tennis
- Visually Impaired Program
- Sports fields
- Hiking trails
- Special outings with visitors; destinations/icons (Rose Gardens)
- Photography
- Greenways for transportation
- Dog Parks
- Monthly meetings, CAC
- Birding
- Fishing
- Fieldtrips
- People watching
- Arts and crafts
- Education
- Sports for kids
- Special events
- Weddings
- Skateboarding
- Birthday parties
- Group picnics
- Special Olympics

Needs:

- Better, safer street connections (South Saunders area and Tryon area). Need crosswalks, safety features, connections to trails
- Need equity; southeast underserved
- Laurel Hills Park; need sidewalk leading into the park; would never send the kids to the park alone because there is no sidewalk

- Most kids don't go to schools in their neighborhood
- Would like to see better signage and wayfinding leading to the park sites; create identity, help people remember
- Need consistent, durable trail markings
- Greenways; need directional wayfinding showing where the next adjacent greenway/connection is
- Crabtree greenway closure; no detour telling people where to go.
- Walking/biking on the new greenways that are still in progress along the Neuse River, some of those sections are quite long; we would like to see some benches or rest areas along these sections.
- Need better planning for maintenance, include within budget/plan
- Would like to see more art installations in the parks and greenways
- Bike rental programs; none existing at this point, but something that should be explored.
- Connectivity in the southwest is not as good as some other areas

Thought Boards:

What will the top 3 needs for parks be in 20 years?

1st

- Cameras in the Parking Lot (Every Park)
- Gear for pools because some pools won't let us bring our own and use
- Camping trips, more field sports for after school program, more field trips
- Outside need to change and other things – Courtney T. Johnson (CTJ) Community Center
- Cultural arts center/ Concerts
- Inside Pool
- I would put in a game room
- Ice cream trucks (probably for about 25cents) (everywhere parks)
- Good security
- Indoor gyms with music

2nd

- Great outside bathrooms
- Live concerts
- More water activities
- Separate dog parks from human parks
- Rust protection/ prevention maintenance
- I would remodel whole center

3rd

- Remodel the whole center; make it bigger
- I would hire police to patrol the building to stop all the stealing
- A way you can shape – shift the park that corresponds with the weather

If you could **change** or add items to a park, what would you **change/add**?

- I would want Tops open on the weekends
- Female Staff
- Time, make Tops open longer
- Tops on Saturday
- More events downtown,
- Public party hosted by Raleigh
- Swimming pools, outdoor water parks, more summer camps, more teen jobs

- More outdoor water activates
- Computer labs at centers better indoor gyms
- Carnival rides
- Free Wi-Fi in parks
- Better balls, hoops, and more snacks
- Dancian Road doesn't have center at all
- I would add an indoor court/ I would add an computer lab
- Green road want Felicia Santiago back

If you could change or add items to a park, what would you change/add?

- From CTJ more programs for all ages
- Baseball free play for after school program
- I would invest in an indoor play area for when it rains so they wouldn't injured from playing on wet equipment
- Field sports for after school program
- Concrete ping-pong tables
- Soccer field at Millbrook exchange so I can play my friends afterschool or weekends
- Don't know if there is WiFi at Millbrook Exchange, if there isn't place put in WiFi
- Indoor swimming pool
- A water park like on the Power Point
- Boulderling Wall
- Dances
- More Trips, More food
- More water activities and that water park like at Power Point
- Outdoor pool at Pullen Park/ Teen activities at Pullen Park
- Playground for Kids 13 and older
- I would like to add some type of sports team (Football or baseball) with all equipment needed.
- I would add a pool for the summer
- Pools
- Green Road Community center needs an all-girl teen room/ should let staff stay at certain place until they're ready
- Better football field at Chavis Park
- CTJ We want a tennis court, badminton court or volleyball
- CTJ Park, I would add and indoor gym and pool
- Light outside courts
- An electrical game system
- Working water fountains
- Indoor swimming pool Chavis Park
- Lots and lots of climbing things (like ropes and pulleys)
- More inside basketball facilities
- I would add a bigger park
- Inside gym full of equipment to play sports (football, basketball, and baseball)
- Climbing Wall
- A better park for Chavis Park
- Better computers at Chavis Park
- Pools
- Pools/ indoor basketball court
- Clubs
- Train for Chavis Park
- Concerts

- A better track at Chavis park
- WiFi at Chavis Park
- Activities for older kids
- Softball/Baseball

Summary Themes:

- Request to provide equipment (balls, pads, etc.) for rental with potential sponsorship program
- Desire to have more after school oriented programs and weekend programming, specifically Tops
- Food/ Ice cream trucks in parks
- Request for indoor pool/ gym fitness area, more indoor spaces
- Provide better security/ cameras in parking lots and at community centers
- More water activities in parks
- Request for wi-fi in parks

Session Name: Teen Workshop (Chavis) 1-12-2013 3-04 PM

Turning Point Results

Date Created: 1/12/2013 12:03:42 PM Active Participants: 67 of 67

Average Score: 0.00%

Questions: 11

Results By Question

1.) What is your favorite NCAA basketball team? (test question) (Multiple Choice)

	Responses	
	Percent	Count
NC State Wolfpack	29%	17
UNC Tarheels	27%	16
Duke Blue Devils	29%	17
Wake Forest Demon Deacons	0%	0
Virginia Tech Hokies	0%	0
USC Gamecocks	0%	0
Tennessee Volunteers	0%	0
You didn't list my team!	15%	9
Totals	100%	59

2.) Do you go to parks? (Multiple Choice)

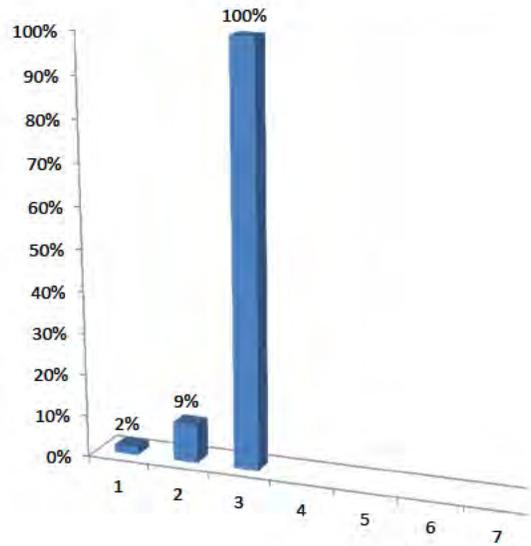
	Responses	
	Percent	Count
YES	86%	48
NO	14%	8
Totals	100%	56

3.) Overall, how would you rate the condition and appearance of ALL the parks and recreation sites in the City of Raleigh you have visited? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
Excellent	6%	4
Good	27%	17
Fair	34%	22
Poor	11%	7
Very Poor	22%	14
Totals	100%	64

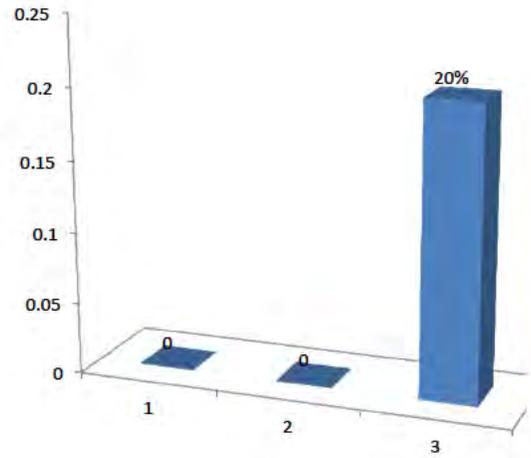
4.) In the City of Raleigh, how far should a resident have to WALK to reach a "meaningful" park, greenway or open space? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
1/8 mile (2-3 min. walk)	36%	22
1/4 mile (5 min. walk)	20%	12
1/2 mile (10 min. walk)	28%	17
3/4 mile (15 min. walk)	2%	1
1 mile (20 min. walk)	5%	3
1.5 miles (30 min. walk)	0%	0
2 miles (40 min. walk)	10%	6
Totals	100%	61



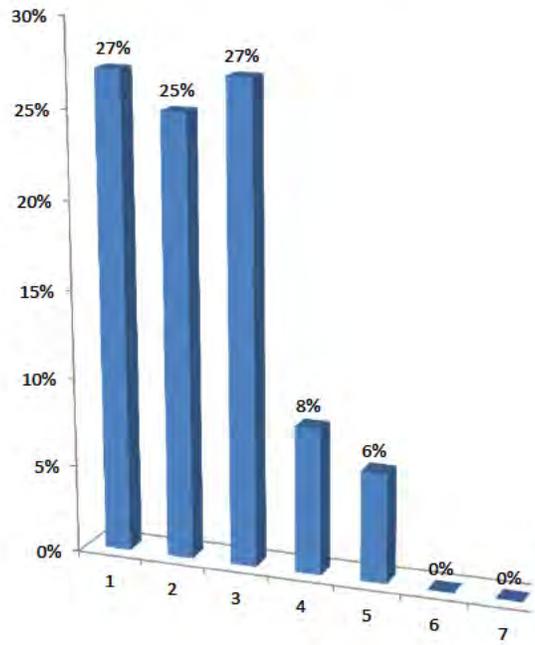
5.) In the City of Raleigh, how far should a resident have to BIKE to reach a "meaningful" park, greenway or open space? (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
½ mile (5 min. ride)	48%	26
¾ mile (8 min. ride)	19%	10
1 mile (10 min. ride)	15%	8
1.5 miles (15 min. ride)	7%	4
2 miles (20 min. ride)	2%	1
3 miles (30 min. ride)	9%	5
Totals	100%	54



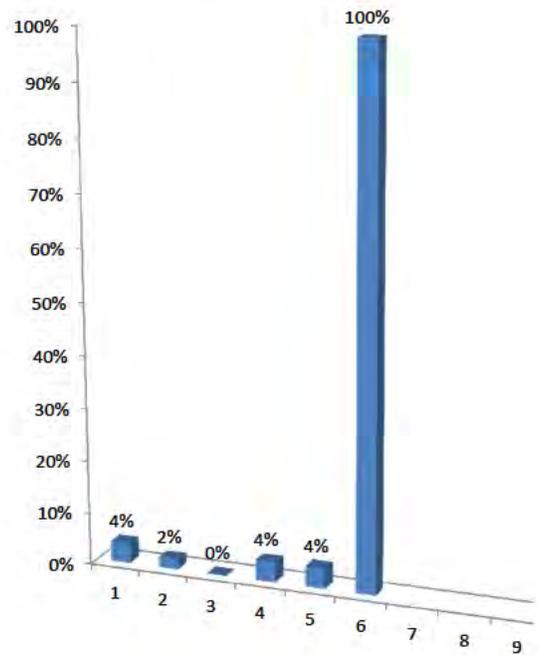
6.) How far do you think a city of Raleigh Resident should have to walk/bike/drive to:PLAYGROUND/TOT LOT (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
¼ mile	25%	13
½ mile	25%	13
1 mile	28%	15
2 miles	8%	4
3 miles	9%	5
4 miles	0%	0
5 miles	0%	0
7 miles	0%	0
10 miles	6%	3
Totals	100%	53



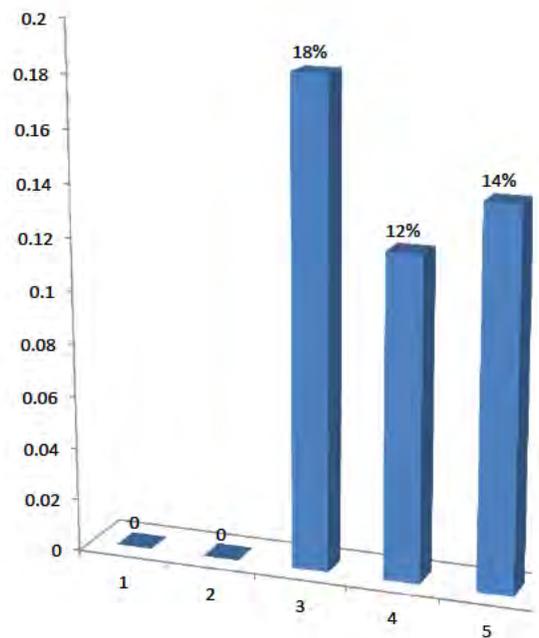
7.) How far do you think a city of Raleigh Resident should have to walk/bike/drive to:FOOTBALL/SOCCER FIELD (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
¼ mile	20%	12
½ mile	14%	8
1 mile	37%	22
2 miles	5%	3
3 miles	5%	3
4 miles	5%	3
5 miles	3%	2
7 miles	2%	1
10 miles	8%	5
Totals	100%	59



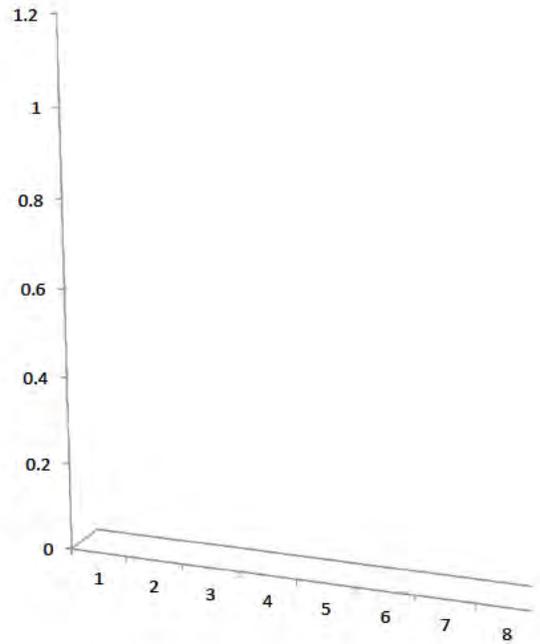
8.) How far do you think a city of Raleigh Resident should have to walk/bike/drive to:OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
¼ mile	27%	13
½ mile	25%	12
1 mile	27%	13
2 miles	8%	4
3 miles	6%	3
4 miles	0%	0
5 miles	0%	0
7 miles	0%	0
10 miles	6%	3
Totals	100%	48



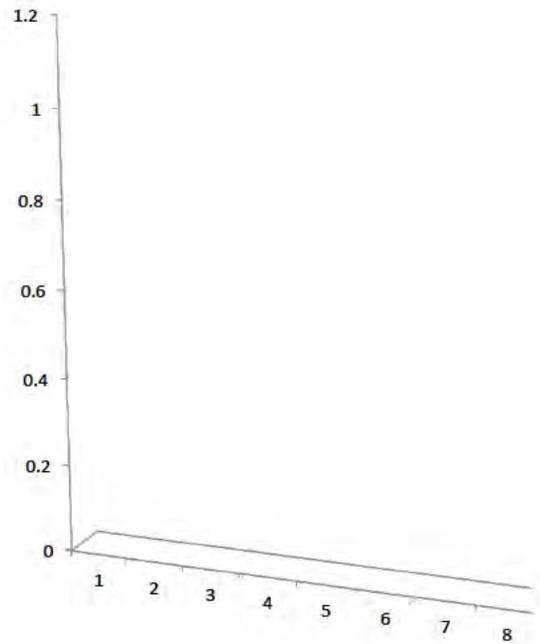
9.) How far do you think a city of Raleigh Resident should have to walk/bike/drive to:ACCESS A GREENWAY TRAIL (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
¼ mile	25%	13
½ mile	25%	13
1 mile	29%	15
2 miles	8%	4
3 miles	4%	2
4 miles	2%	1
5 miles	0%	0
7 miles	4%	2
10 miles	4%	2
Totals	100%	52



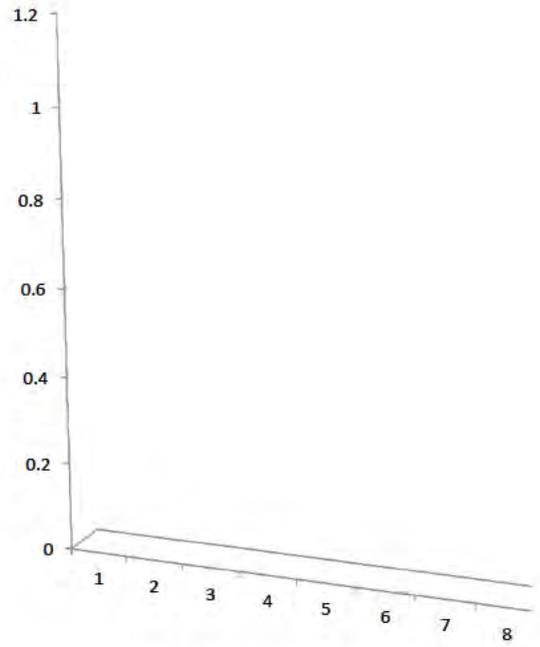
10.) How far do you think a city of Raleigh Resident should have to walk/bike/drive to:SKATEPARK (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
¼ mile	24%	11
½ mile	13%	6
1 mile	15%	7
2 miles	2%	1
3 miles	15%	7
4 miles	4%	2
5 miles	4%	2
7 miles	2%	1
10 miles	20%	9
Totals	100%	46



11.) How far do you think a city of Raleigh Resident should have to walk/bike/drive to:NATURE/ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER (Multiple Choice)

Responses		
	Percent	Count
¼ mile	18%	9
½ mile	12%	6
1 mile	14%	7
2 miles	18%	9
3 miles	8%	4
4 miles	6%	3
5 miles	4%	2
7 miles	2%	1
10 miles	16%	8
Totals	100%	49



Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Active Adults/ Seniors Focus Group
Date	January 16, 2013
Time	12:30 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 16, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for active adults/ seniors was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Groups Represented:

- Greenway supporters
- In-Home Care representative
- Programming provider for Senior Technology – computer classes, iPad classes etc.
- State Department of Adult Services
- President for Resources for Seniors (Wake County)
- NC State University – Director of the Encore Program
- Former Parks and Recreation Staff
- Planning Committee
- Psychologist
- Church Senior Group representative
- PlanCo member (Anne Gordon)

Feedback:

- Appreciate the variety of senior-specific programs and amenities
- Great greenways system – class leading
- Raleigh has a great number of parks/facilities comparable to other similar communities
- Accessibility is crucial; not just physical barriers/strategies (ramps etc.), but also amenities for the blind, those with hearing loss, etc.
- Great programs for the special populations
- Technology is dynamic; programs/platforms change. How do we help seniors keep up with the times
 - Many programs are reactionary to changes in the marketplace; e.g. introduction of Windows 8 vs. legacy Windows 7
- Big component or desired outcome of senior programming is the socialization and interaction

- Senior health-care taking place more at home (e.g. digital blood pressure monitors).
- How do you hear about the facilities/program:
 - Handouts/fliers
 - PSA's
 - Some seniors hear from their caretakers; need to inform service providers of programs
 - Word of mouth one of the most common methods – seniors telling seniors
 - Need to provide a quality program; “build it and they will come”
 - Advertise in supermarkets, etc.
 - Need to be innovative; have strategies to reach those who are new, or not connected with social groups (word of mouth may not apply)
- The quality senior programs and facilities are a draw for people to move to Raleigh, especially as the general population ages.
 - Tied to keeping residents from leaving
 - Economic development.
- Hearing loss is a significant challenge to the senior population; need to acknowledge
- Senior population is one of the fastest growing populations; need to plan for this growth in facilities and programs

What do you currently utilize in the parks and recreation system:

- Special needs classes/programs
- Greenways
- Physical therapy
- Lap pool
- Technology classes
- Pullen Park
- Destinations for grandkids; e.g. Pullen Park
- Community centers: for meeting/activity space
- Meeting rooms
- Public Transportation

Needs/Desires:

- Therapeutic pool
- Parks need to be interesting/accessible for multiple generations; e.g. grandparents and grandkids
- Programs/sites need to be distributed throughout the City.
- Not enough good meeting spaces in Raleigh – size, AV equipment, kitchen etc.
- There is a big need for seniors who are home-bound (inactive adults), to have transportation, social interactions.
 - Passive, social recreation. No pressure to do one certain activity, just “hang out”
 - Lack of socialization causes serious depression
- Need for increased accessibility at existing facilities – some grades are too steep, lack ramps, narrow walks (e.g. Lake Lynn)
- Need additional transportation alternatives – Wake County/Triangle area has one of the worst transportation systems in the nation, based on population.

- One of the biggest needs. Why talk about seniors, if they cannot even get to the parks.
- Need consensus on a regional transportation plan, City-County government
- Integrate the awareness of technology/health-care/self-care into the programs and centers in the Department
- Look for expanded volunteer opportunities
- Need better outreach about programs/services
- More senior centers, active adult centers
- Transportation service just for seniors; door-to-door
- Adult day/living care programs – provide more at the active adult centers
 - Most of the existing are non-profit, third-parties

Summary Themes:

- Technology classes need to remain dynamic with a clear strategies for upgrades
- More classes/training for at-home senior health-care or self-care, potentially partner with Wake Med or other hospitals
- Inform service providers of programs and be innovative with outreach to newcomers to Raleigh
- Quality of programs and facilities is draw for people to move to Raleigh
- Acknowledge need for hearing impaired programming and activities
- Express a need for a therapeutic pool
- Equitably distribute facilities/programs throughout Raleigh
- Address grades/slopes at existing facilities
- Additional transportation alternatives are desired, biggest barrier for seniors to participate, door-to-door service
- Adult day-care is needed throughout Raleigh

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Healthy Living Focus Group
Date	January 16, 2013
Time	8:30 am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheet)
Prepared	January 16, 2013
Prepared by	Dave Barth

Purpose: A focus group on healthy living and outdoor recreation was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Issues, Needs

- Physical activity and healthy eating
- Hesitancy to allow community gardens by the city?
- Low income population, older population; many are not English speakers; getting them to feel safe in parks and greenways
- Obesity is biggest issue; how do we get kids out to parks, single parents, kids at home, supervision; more things to do indoors, kids driven everywhere, kids playing in neighborhoods
- People don't live within walking distance of grocery stores, healthy eating
- Public transportation to link to community gardens, grocery stores; food trucks
- ROLE OF THE CITY AS A HEALTH FACILITATOR?
- Eat Smart, Move More of Wake
- Why don't we have more sidewalks? Greenways are tucked away, don't feel safe. People accosted on trails, get lost, need better signage
- MAKING GREENWAYS MORE USER FRIENDLY?
- Signage needs to be bi-lingual
- People don't realize that there are opportunities within systems; where do people migrate? Health events, family days, health screenings, food trucks
- EDUCATION OUTREACH – USE VOLUNTEERS? OBESITY, SMOKING, LOW COST RESOURCES
- Partner with school systems, PE classes, churches
- Aren't adequate sidewalks to walk to schools
- SAFE WALK TO SCHOOL PROGRAM?
- Need to get walking to school to become part of culture; not parents at home who can walk kids to school
- City has volunteers on greenways
- Need joint use agreements between schools and municipalities, joint school siting

- JOINT USE
- Healthy vending machines; no sodas
- NEED OVERALL HEALTHY FOOD PROCUREMENT POLICY (e.g. Sport Snack Game Plan)
- Stronger “no smoking” policies
- Incentives for employees; disincentives for poor behavior
- Eliminating smoking in public housing
- PARKS AND RECREATION PART OF THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMUNITY
- Implement District by District
- NEED BETTER COMMUNICATIONS, PR RE: PROGRAMS, WILLINGNESS TO HOST INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS
- POLICIES: HEALTHY FOOD PROCUREMENT, NO SMOKING, COMMUNITY GARDENS ON PUBLIC LAND, HEALTHY VENDING, NO WEAPONS IN PARKS
- Food trucks, farmers markets, farm to table
- Need to study why some center programs are well-attended, others are not; affordable fees?
- TRANSPORTATION: SIDEWALKS, SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS, CROSSWALKS, BIKE LANES; INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN SCHOOLS; PEOPLE RISKING LIVES TO CATCH BUSES
- SENIORS NEEDED: SAFE WALKS TO SCHOOLS, HEALTHY EATING, CROSSING GUARDS
- How well are senior centers used? Could senior programs be offered in other centers?
- Need more bathroom facilities at trails
- ON-GOING EDUCATION PROGRAM RE: SAFETY IN PARKS AND RECREATION, HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF, BIKE SAFETY, STRANGER DANGER – on going, assemblies, not just one-day events, summer camps
- Not every section of greenway needs to be the same – paved, etc
- Loop trails are very nice, family friendly

Summary Themes:

- Role of the City as a health facilitator
- Mark greenways more user friendly, bi-lingual signage
- Education outreach for obesity, smoking, low cost resources, safety in parks, how to protect yourself, bike safety, stranger danger; use volunteers
- Safe walk to school program
- Seek better joint-use agreement between schools and city
- Need overall healthy food procurement policy
- P&R Dept. is part of the health and wellness community
- Better communications regarding programs and willingness to host innovative programs
- Need healthy polices; healthy food procurement, no smoking, community gardens on public land, healthy vending, no weapons in parks
- Transportation system needs improvements; safe routes to school; crosswalks; bike lanes; inconsistency between schools

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Historic/ Cultural Focus Group
Date	January 16, 2013
Time	10:00 am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheet)
Prepared	January 16, 2013
Prepared by	Dave Barth

Purpose: A focus group on historic and culture was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Issues:

- Dix is very historic, cultural
- Not everyone in favor of it becoming park; losing mental illness services
- Raleigh does not have a great track record of how it handles historic properties
- Struggles, failure to get off the mark
- Mordecai is a “history zoo”, collection of unrelated historical sites; City took it over, substantially reduced funding
- Charlotte has done a better job
- Give history the kind of importance it deserves
- For the first time there is an historical/cultural cluster under Parks and Rec; “nugget” to build around, part of the system plan
- Historically City has not funded historical/ cultural resources; “if there is no money there is no mission”
- Need commitment to African- American presence in City, more than slavery, civil rights movement; kids programs diminish AA kids
- Group could come together to plan a “day in Raleigh” for kids historical program, brochure, etc.
- There is no visitors center, historical center
- Lack of marketing

Actions:

- Identify buildings, properties that should be preserved. City already has National Register of Historic Places, Raleigh Historic Landmarks
- Need to identify City-owned properties that need to be preserved
- Prepare a really good RFP for a Master Plan for Dix Park

- Use the Historical Resources Advisory Board to coordinate different historical/ cultural groups
- Locate a Visitors Center at the City Museum
- Create a City-wide school curriculum/ marketing brochure of historical cultural resources
- Create a multi-media approach to cultural/ historical resources for new and existing residents, visitors
- City should continue to act as a facilitator, ombudsmen
- Charlie Ashby can help with marketing
- Need more tours: walking, bus, cemeteries, food, African-American, etc; similar to Wilmington, New Bern
- Work with Meredith, Peace College, Shaw, NCSU, Wake County schools, others to develop materials
- Marketing
- Move African American Cultural Complex Museum to Dix Complex

MISSION:

- Improves quality of life
- Share the history
- Sense of place
- Increases visitors
- Tells the story of Raleigh
- Sustainable economic development

Summary Themes:

- Dorothea Dix is a very historic site
- City does not have a good history of 'handling historic properties'
- Need commitment to African-American community beyond slavery, civil rights movement history
- Desire for a visitor center or historic center (City Museum?)
- Identify city owned properties that need to be preserved
- Use Historical Resources Advisory Board more
- Work with universities to prepare materials, marketing, etc.

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Special Populations Focus Group
Date	January 16, 2013
Time	2:00 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheets)
Prepared	January 16, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for special populations was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Groups Represented:

- 16 participants
- Teacher, special-ed.
- Disability Community
- Triangle Down Syndrome Network
- Special Olympics of North Carolina
- Parents of children with disabilities
- One-On-One services provider
- Autism Society
- Wake Tech Community College
- Alliance for Disability Advocates
- Bridge II Sports
- Therapist
- PlanCo (Sally Hunter)

Activities/Programs Currently Used:

- Picnic spaces
- Walking trails
- Pullen Park
- Dog Park
- Community Centers
- Pools
- Active Adult Centers
- Playgrounds
- Gyms
- Softball fields
- Shelly Lake for walking, family time

- Lakes
- Trails
- Special-Rec programs
- Basketball courts
- Multi-purpose fields
- Special-Events (Special Olympics, tournaments etc)
- Tennis
- Dances
- Social Clubs (youth, young adults, older adults); hang out time, more than active recreation
- Accessible busses

Needs and Desires:

- Programs too segregated; programs should include people of all abilities, where feasible be inclusive
- Programs should be more inclusive; allowing those with different abilities to participate within general programs, not just programs solely for those with disabilities
- More inclusive programming...
- Programs need to be more inclusive; kids shouldn't just be inserted into a disabilities group
- Need to focus on inclusion; the older the participants get, the less inclusive the programming.
- More inclusive programming...
- Need programs for those in the young-adult age groups; feel like that demographic has been left out of programming
- Biggest gap is for kids in transition, between high-school and adulthood (young-adult)
- The young-adult don't want exclusion, but rather inclusion
- Need more opportunities for young adults; many young-adult are in-between public schooling/higher-ed/employment, and need opportunities for social interaction, connection
- Better, collaborative partnerships amongst agencies/providers
- Need better partnerships with neighboring communities (Cary, Wake Forest, etc)
- Cooking facilities for classes
- Need better communication/ partnerships amongst providers, about which programs are available, and who can participate
- Coordinate/Partner better with the (5) local Universities. Increase access to those facilities and programs, wherever possible
- Increased transportation opportunities; transportation is one of the biggest barriers to participation for those with disabilities
- Transportation is a huge issue and barrier.
- Transportation is critical; many participants live outside of the central Raleigh area and Raleigh's programs/facilities are the best.
- Increased capacity for fully accessible facilities, or, additional fully accessible facilities
- Need Specialized Recreation Department or Division?
- Programming needs to address physical disabilities as well as mental disabilities
- There is a need to update some of the older facilities, not just build new

- Everyone should have access to recreational programs/facilities; regardless of age, ability
- The disability community must work better together, communicate a shared message
- Raleigh needs to set the bar for the surrounding communities for special-rec
- There is inequity in the scheduling/availability of field/court space for those with disabilities; creates the desire for a dedicated facility (opposite of inclusion)
 - There needs to be a “safe place” for recreation for those with disabilities, where they are comfortable, regardless of where the site exists
- Not all kids/people have equitable access to the programs provided; it’s not that there aren’t enough programs; it’s that a lot of people don’t know the programs exist, or cannot get to them.
- Should be more social groups that focus on “hanging out;” intentional development of social skills, friendship skills
- Scheduling needs to be improved
- Need more open play
- Need to provide more training to staff, Department-wide regarding inclusion, accessibility, special-rec
- There is a need for more, fully-accessible pool space (zero entry, aquatic wheelchair, and a lift at every pool)
- Needs to be equity in scheduling; the differently abled groups get the worst times
- More staff
- All facilities need to be *fully* accessible

General Feedback:

- Overwhelmingly grateful for the programs and facilities that exist in Raleigh
- Special Olympics very grateful for the good relationship with the City
- Some programs are cost-prohibitive to young adults who go from having their parents pay for most things, to having to pay for their own programs/fees. Need to address within this demographic, as this is a significant barrier to participation.

Summary Themes:

- Current programs are too segregated in terms of skills/abilities
- Participants requested programming for older youth and young adults that is low cost and/or sponsored, biggest gap
- Better collaboration between partners and agencies/providers is needed
- Partner with surrounding communities in Wake County
- Partner with universities and increase access to their facilities
- Transportation is one of the biggest barriers to participation
- Many participants live outside City of Raleigh
- Need better coordination of special programs, transportation needs, etc. with a point person at the P&R Department
- City of Raleigh should set the bar for programs and facilities for special populations
- Request to provide more programs that focus on social aspects i.e. hanging out time
- Provide Department-wide training to staff at all facilities to work with accessibility, inclusion, special rec.
- Special Olympics events are large economic benefit for region

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Sustainability Focus Group
Date	January 16, 2013
Time	3:30 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheet)
Prepared	January 16, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for sustainability was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Groups Represented:

- Power Secure Parts for Solar
- Triangle Commuter Bike Initiative
- SAS
- Inter-agency sustainability coordinator for the State of North Carolina
- Professor
- Duke University, Campus Farm
- Site Certification Specialists
- Program Manager of Sustainability, SAS (PlanCo – Jerry Williams)
- Energy Management (residential and commercial)
- North Carolina USGBC
- URS – working on transportation plan for State
- GreetingsFromGreenNC.com
- EarthShare North Carolina (coalition of non-profit organizations)
- Springleaf Strategies (Marketing and sustainability firm)
- Advanced Energy (non-profit)
- Sinerra (sp?) Valuing the intangibles of sustainability
- Bridgepoint Construction Agency

Activities/Programs Currently Used:

- Parks
- Trails

“The Most Sustainable Mid-Size City in America”

- Is it just environmental sustainability?
 - Environmental
 - Social

- Economic
- Ecological
- Remove the word mid-size?
- Is there an official ranking system?
- What are the metrics? They need to be well-defined
- LEED Certified buildings, solar panels, low energy use
- Better transportation choices
- Equitable, affordable housing
- Economic competitiveness
- Recognize and build neighborhoods
- We need a statement/policy to base the initiative on.
- There are multiple systems for ranking; should we take an existing one and use it, vs. creating another one?
- Is it just to win the award, or to actually be sustainable?
- Why is this goal? We all agree, but where is the directive coming from?
 - Partially about being a competitive city, about being world-class
- How does this interact with the office of sustainability?
- Equal access to parks and open space, across economic range, is an indicator of sustainability
- Reduce heat island
- Lower carbon footprint
- Resource conservation; higher demand on limited resources (water, land, energy),
- Energy Efficiency fund; offset higher cost of sustainable features, structures etc.
- What is the Council's drive behind this? What is the goal we are trying to achieve?
 - It will drive which metrics will be evaluated to achieve the desired end result
 - Need to be certain before going forward
- What is the bare minimum to equal sustainable? What criteria are we using?
- What do businesses want to see, in order to draw them in?
- Metrics, metrics, metrics...

Potential Metrics:

- **Resource Conservation and Management;**
 - Recycling
 - Water Conservation and Treatment
 - Pervious Paving
 - Gray Water
 - Native planting
 - Energy Use/Density/Consumption
 - Renewable energy
 - Baseline assessment
 - Energy Efficiency
- **Sustainable Planning:**
 - Density and Land-Use (poor planning, despite good principles)
 - Number of Policies addressing sustainability
- **Sustainable Design:**
 - Community farms/gardens
 - Pervious Paving

- Native Planting
- Biodiversity
- **Green Building:**
 - LEED (one-time)
 - EnergyStar (repeated)
 - Green Roofs
- **Carbon Footprint**
 - Tracking/Calculation
- **Economic Development** (tax values of land adjacent to greenways/parks)
- **Education and Awareness** (of sustainability...metric?)
 - Parks are in a position to inform/educate the public via outreach, exhibits/experiences, and programs
- **Equity**
 - Equitable access to recreation facilities across socioeconomic classes
- **Alternative Transportation**
 - Greenways (consider as a “real” transportation option)
 - Multi-modal
 - Air quality
 - Electrical Vehicle Charging stations

Sustainable Park Principles:

1. Environmental:

- Native Plantings
- Community Gardens
- Urban Gardens
- Electrical vehicle charging stations
- Rain gardens
- Green Roofs
- Pervious Paving
- Water re-use
- Biodiversity
- Water treatment/remediation
- Wildlife habitat corridors; preservation, protection, or creation
- LEED structures
- Landfill park, adaptive-reuse sites
- Hybrid or alternative fuel company vehicles

2. Social:

- Outreach, education
- Programs
- Connectivity and corridors
- Sustainable construction practices – required
- Equity, in access to, quantity/quality of facilities and programs.

3. Economical:

- Energy efficient features (lights, buildings)
- Renewable energy

- Fiscal Sustainability? Operations and Maintenance efficiency
- Cost Savings

Summary Themes:

- Need clear understanding of what is the intent and meaning behind 'Most sustainable mid-size city America'
- Need to identify the ranking organizations and metrics needed to achieve goal
- Clear coordination is needed with City of Raleigh's Office of Sustainability
- Work with business community to define acceptable metrics and draw support
- Metrics should include;
 - Resource Conservation & Management
 - Sustainable Planning
 - Sustainable Design
 - Green Building Practices
 - Carbon Footprint Tracking
 - Economic Development
 - Education & Awareness
 - Equity
 - Alternative Transportation

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Aquatics Focus Group
Date	January 17, 2013
Time	8:30 am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 17, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for aquatics was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Participants:

- Arthritis Foundation
- Marlins of Raleigh (Competitive swim team)
- Pool Users
- Parents of swimmers
- Master Swim Coaches
- Master Swimmers/Competitive Swimmers
- North Carolina Inside Swim
- Raleigh Area Masters
- Water Polo
- Firemen
- PlanCo member (Erika Braun)

General Comments:

- Is Pullen still a warm water pool? If so, why are there no exercise programs currently?

Needs:

- Need additional public lanes at Optimist and Pullen Park; for non-team swimmers. Most lanes are taken up by private teams and/or schools
- Lane availability limits program growth and participation
- Private facilities are too expensive to use- cost prohibitive
- Demand for lane space is very high

Current Facilities/Activities:

- Millbrook Park
- Optimist Park
- Pullen Park

- Warm-water pools
- Indoor pools
- Outdoor pools
- TAC Center in Cary
- Competitive swimming
- Recreation swimming (lap swimming)
- Masters swimming
- Firemen training
- Therapy (arthritis)

Vision:

- No more 25 yard facilities; they do not meet the needs. Need to only build 50M facilities.
 - Should have movable walls/bulkheads for flexibility
- Pools need to be multi-purpose in order to gain support and justify funding (Aquatics Centers)
- Aquatics Facility Components:
 - Competitive swimming (cool water)
 - Lap swimming
 - Therapeutic/rehab pool (+87 degree water temp)
 - Splash play (slides, splash play)
 - Thermo-pool
 - Accessible (zero entry, water-wheelchair, lift)
 - Need appropriate deck space and spectator seating for competitions
 - Diving Well (deep-water pool)
 - Concessions
 - Locker rooms
 - Appropriate parking (amounts)
 - Other uses: civic, cultural, school, retail, restaurants either attached or nearby
- Need qualified and trained staff
- Future facilities need to recover more cost than the current model
 - Barwell and Brier Creek Community Centers attached to a school
- Explore better partnerships
 - Schools
 - Swim leagues
 - Other agencies
- Surround facilities with other uses (community center, shopping/retail, school etc)
- Educating children, teaching them to swim, should be a high priority
 - Use pool downtime to schedule swimming lessons, partner with the local schools
 - The ability to swim should be a core value.
 - Make it a part of the school curriculum

Site Selection Criteria:

- Close to a school
- Near a library
- Accessibility from major roadways
- Enough property for appropriate site development
- Near user-base, to support it

- Co-located with mixed use (commercial, retail, restaurants, office, library) (large mixed use development)
 - Where the major development is going to take place, opportunities to partner
- Appropriate parking
- Near airport, hotels for competition
- Potential Sites:
 - Dorothea Dix?
 - Lauriel Hills?
 - Brier Creek Area?

Comparables:

- Mission Bay (Glades Road and 441 in Boca Raton, FL)
- Lenexa CityCenter

ACTION ITMES:

- People we need to meet with:
 - Hill Carrow (Planning Board to provide contact info to Grayson; invite to Vision)

Summary Themes:

- Demand for lane space at area pools is very high
- Raleigh public pools are a value to private facilities
- Desire to focus on 50m pools with moveable walls/bulkheads for flexibility
- Request for additional aquatic features such as therapeutic, warm water pools, etc.
- Pool/aquatic facilities needs to be multi-purpose in order to justify operation and maintenance costs
- Explore better partnerships
- Include teaching programs tied to curriculum at public schools to teach everyone to swim
- Should co-develop aquatic centers with mix-use areas to encourage economic impacts
- Co-locate with schools, libraries, community centers, etc.

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - CVB Focus Group
Date	January 17, 2013
Time	2:00 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 17, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for the CVB was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Participants:

- USSSA
- Greater Raleigh Sports Alliance
- FS Series
- JD Hills Multipurpose Center
- North Carolina AAU
- Capital Area Soccer League (2nd largest league in the country; 8,000 kids)
- Tobacco Road Tours
- Omega Si Phi
- Convention Services
- Hopscotch Music Festival
- Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Marlins of Raleigh Swim Team
- North Carolina Swimming
- PlanCo member (Laruen Gold)

What sells Raleigh?

- Parks and Greenways!
 - It's one of the first things people evaluate when determining whether or not to host an event in or move to Raleigh
- Utilize the literature/documents from the Parks Department to sell the city to potential residents
- Central location in the ACC region (sports tournaments)
- Hotel and restaurant options
- Airport accessibility
- Cost
- Children-centric assets

- Local Universities

Needs:

- Need better court surfaces and goals/backboards, specifically indoor basketball
 - Prevent traveling tournament usage
- Prices for working with the school districts is not affordable; resource that is available, but not able to be utilized
- Some Departmental policies prohibit certain events usages and activities, makes Raleigh less desirable
 - E.g. varying drinking permit policies? Case-by-case or park-by-park basis
- It's not just the presence of the park, it's what is offered there that draws people; there has to be something to do.
- Need a good event planning mechanism/database that is searchable:
 - What is available at what sites? (kitchens, restrooms, pavilions, etc.)
 - How much is the rental fee?
 - What are the restrictions?
 - Who is the local contact?
 - How do I reserve?
 - What is the site capacity?
 - Parking spaces?
- Greenways map is confusing; needs to be more user friendly
 - Need more comprehensive signage/wayfinding/branding along the greenways system
 - Mile markers
 - Amenity/destination map
- Need additional quality outdoor soccer fields to meet the tournament programming demand.
- Need more pools, especially those that have the capacity for competitive swim
- More smaller, neighborhood pools
- No public track and field facilities
- Fee structures for support staff need to be evaluated
- Need backup plan for events (event coordinator?)
 - E.g. power goes out, need generators
- RV Parking areas? Temporary?
 - Nowhere for overnight parking during the month of October
- Some major tournaments are being turned away in favor of smaller events, generating less revenue, bringing in less people
 - Needs to be an awareness of the value of these large events?
 - Can there be multi-year agreements?
 - Need better scheduling/prioritization of events
- Need to be more intentional, less reactionary
- Why is it so difficult to use the greenways for races?

Vision:

- A central multi-sport, indoor/outdoor quality field complex”
 - (Boo Williams, near Norfolk, as comparable?)
 - Multi-purpose (soccer/football/lacrosse/field hockey)
 - Multiple fields: 10-12 fields

- High quality
- Percentage of synthetic surface
- Warhill Sports complex as a comparable (Virginia)
- Indoor facilities
 - 8-10 basketball courts (striped for volleyball)
- Stadium with track
- Have a realistic balance between recreation/play and economic development associated with tournament/league play
- Overnight facilities (cabins, tents, RV)
- Need an events coordinator, full-time, to coordinate the efforts of the CVB, tournaments/leagues, special events, economic development, and general rec
- Comprehensive marketing/outreach strategy to showcase what Raleigh has to offer
 - Better outreach materials; digital, hard-copy, maps, apps,
 - Advertise to travelers, and non-residents
- Re-evaluate long-term contracts (e.g. events getting the same weekend every year)

Summary Themes:

- The number one selling aspect of Raleigh is the greenways
- Request for better facilities for indoor tournaments (basketball, tennis, etc.)
- A thorough and up-to-date database is needed that is searchable for events and facilities
- Greenway map is confusing and needs to highlight 'plain people' attractions
- Soccer tournament facilities is a underserved area
- Need for competitive pools has not been met
- Major tournaments are being turned away in favor of smaller events, some dates need to be based on revenue/economic impacts getting priority
- A centralized indoor/outdoor tournament facility is needed for basketball, soccer, competitive swimming and track, like Walnut Creek Softball complex
- Utilize long-term contracts for events (can be based on certain criteria for economic impact)
- Request for better, more comprehensive marketing/outreach to showcase Raleigh parks (digital, print, maps, apps, travelers, etc.)

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Downtown Raleigh Focus Group
Date	January 17, 2013
Time	10:00 am
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 17, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for Downtown Raleigh was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Participants:

- First Baptist Church
- Duke/Progress Energy
- Wake County Planning
- Parks Board
- Landscape Architect
- Relators
- Downtown Living Advocates
- Downtown Raleigh Alliance
- Urban Design Center
- Ratio Architects
- Marbles Children's museum
- PlanCo member (Sally Edwards)

Activities:

- Running
- Cycling

What Defines Downtown?

- Residents group, DLA, had recent seminar on this; two main takeaways:
 - How downtown facilitates community
 - A gathering or meeting place, where people come together and share. Parks can play a role in this.
 - It's the heart of the City; a common place for all people
 - Downtown is a welcome mat to Raleigh
 - The importance of good design, streetscapes, connections, crosswalks, etc.
- The Green City: trees, greenways, parks, forest
 - Outsiders coming into the City are typically very attracted to this, while residents don't think there is enough
- Social complexity:

- Transit
- Homeless population, social service

What's missing?

- Downtown parks are not in good shape
- Moore Square redesign
 - Important spaces, challenging solutions
- Nash Square; not really appropriate for its urban location downtown. Needs to be lifted, opened up, more multi-purpose
- No dog facilities for downtown residents
- Downtown not well connected to the greenways system; need to connect the heart to the network
- Need better signage/wayfinding leading people to the greenways system from downtown
- Need to link the current planning/design initiatives; downtown master plan, parks master plan etc.
- Open space is not just park space; needs to be thought of creatively, and funding needs to come from various organizations/partnerships rather than just parks.
- There are a lot of private spaces that could be public spaces (e.g. underutilized parking spaces)
 - Can we do more to acquire, partner, or develop these spaces.
 - Can we improve these spaces in exchange for public usage
- Need to make immediate improvements, in addition to a large, long-range plan
 - E.g. Moore Square and Chavis Park; need to clean up site and image, prior to waiting for the redesign.
- Can we meet some of the open space needs through the open space requirements of the zoning ordinances through private development?
 - *Open Space Mitigation? Don't want open space on your development site? Pay into a fund for the City to establish/improve elsewhere?*
- Barriers to implementation:
 - Complexity
 - Coordination
- Better, more facilitated partnerships:
 - City
 - County
 - State
 - Railroads
 - Private developers
- Need to find a balance between public/private responsibilities and roles: sometimes we're asking the public to provide more than it should, or the private more than they should.
- Sidewalks as open space; linear parks
- Need more temporary/pop-up public spaces as an interim solution; low-cost, low-impact creative solutions
 - Art installations
 - Community gardens

- Needs to be an incentive (tax rebate, etc), for the private owner to allow the space to be used? Rewrite code to allow?
- More opportunities to capitalize on the Moore Square Transit Center; could be better promoted and utilized.
 - It is a hub of activity, with a permanent purpose.
 - There are issues, however, can we make it better?

General:

- Raleigh currently seeking funding for a new downtown Vision/Master plan
- There are many themes that could be in place downtown; how do we intertwine/relate them
 - Maintenance
 - Art
 - Social services
 - Green space
 - Preservation/history
 - Civic/Cultural components
- Can we utilize or repurpose/activate existing spaces downtown for recreation/open space?
 - Parking decks for sports courts?
 - Cemeteries?
 - State owned properties? Can we work with them
- Local developers feel beat up on; too many requirements, codes, cost of development
 - Limits potential opportunities
 - Raleigh is still a smaller, growing city – adding downtown residential which is a new component to the City
 - Developers are market-driven; has to be market incentives
 - Would outside developers have a different view/approach?
- Many of the downtown churches are really investing in the local area
 - Excited about the continued development, diversity, vibrancy
 - Keep the churches in mind in regards to partnerships (e.g. First Night)
 - Churches have underutilized spaces

“You can’t take the parks out of downtown, and you can’t take the “downtown” out of parks!”

Summary Themes:

- No dog facilities in downtown, these are needed
- Intertwine themes of downtown (i.e. art, social services, preservation/history, etc.)
- Activate empty spaces throughout downtown for temporary uses/ green spaces
- Work with downtown churches when planning events, especially on Sundays
- Provide incentives to developers to provide green spaces, public amenities
- Capitalize on Moore Square transit center
- Downtown requests more temporary ‘pop-up’ spaces and uses downtown
- Plan for immediate improvements and for longer-term strategies
- Better coordination between City and State facilities for public use of spaces
- Provide better connections from downtown to greenway system
- Coordinate downtown planning efforts and ordinances/ zoning requirements

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Education Focus Group
Date	January 17, 2013
Time	12:30 pm
Location	Jaycee Park Community Center
Attendees	(see sign in sheet)
Prepared	January 17, 2013
Prepared by	Ryan P. Cambridge

Purpose: A focus group for education was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

Participants:

- Wake County Public School System
- Girl Scouts North Carolina
- CLH Designs (landscape architects for schools)
- School principal
- Boys and Girls Club
- PlanCo member (Betty Parker)

How do we currently use the PR System?

- Shared use of gyms, meeting facilities, multi-purpose rooms, cafeterias, baseball fields, softball fields, multi-purpose fields
- Field trips, on-site experiential classes
- Events
- Programming at the Community Centers (Girl Scouts)
- After school program (Chavis)
- Use parks for cross country, tennis, pool access
- Parks provide space, schools have space issues.
- Use the park centers for meeting spaces
- Walnut Creek wetland center (girl scouts)
- Greenway connections (Safe Routes to schools)
- Shared-parking
- Outdoor classrooms

Needs and Priorities:

- Girl Scouts need larger indoor spaces for events/meetings
 - Over 150 capacity spaces are hard to find; need 200-250
- Low-cost for rentals/fees etc...

- Facilitated, uniform scheduling/registration/reservations system
 - Different vehicles exist for different sites, some easier than others...
- Mutually beneficial (equitable) co-location of facilities
- Outreach effort towards the school system
 - Defining available benefits, facilities, schedules, contact information, etc.
 - Website? Fliers? Email blasts?
- Link/partner better:
 - Community gardens and school gardens
- Parks offer a great opportunity for science/nature experiential spaces. When designing future parks, take this into account, provide these spaces
- Child nutrition and health

Vision:

- Can the school system and parks department develop curriculum sheets that go along with the parks?
 - Guide the teachers on how to use the parks, what is there, and what are educational resources that are utilized.
 - School Department needs to work with the parks department when developing the criteria to ensure that they match up with the state required standards in order for them to be utilized adequately by the teachers.
 - Need to facilitate the experience, make it easier for the teachers to utilize.
 - Common field trips are already set up, have curriculum, standards, etc...end up being the default because of time/effort constraints
- Parks need to be about learning, not just about playing (for both kids and adults)
 - Incorporate learning/education within programs and events
 - Summer camps, youth programs, etc)
- Label plants/trees/species etc. for educational purposes
- Provide educational exhibits/kiosks/signage within parks
- Embrace the history of Raleigh that exists in parks
- Provide exercise opportunities/equipment within the parks and trails for the kids to utilize
- Interconnect the parks and schools that we have with the greenways system
- Educational support program in the parks and recreation centers, where there is an identified need.
 - Almost like a park guide; the kids are going to be there anyway, can we educate them further in that time?
 - E.g. tutoring, mentoring, etc.
 - Provide opportunities where partner organizations can serve the communities that the parks and schools are within
- Need staff member liaison with both the Schools and the Parks Department to ensure adequate coordination
- Use of the parks by the school districts needs to be more intentional, so that the kids get more out of it.
- School system well known for its special-ed programs and services.
 - Better partner with the services that the Department currently provides
- Miracle League fields?
- Special-ed specific, assessable/experiential programs
 - Form and function of equipment is very important

- (Kids Together Park in Cary as a good comparable)
- Would love an aquarium, next to the Neuse River
 - Water management and treatment
 - Water cycle
 - Stewardship
 - Aquaculture
 - Science
 - Environmental focus
- Partner with Trees Across Raleigh to create a forest or arboretum
- Largest challenge to use of facilities is adequate public transportation
- Parking lots should be designed to accommodate school bus access
- Get more community gardens/learning gardens downtown
 - Partner with undeveloped land owners (see notes from Downtown Raleigh focus group)
 - Work out a joint use agreement, indemnification agreement etc. with land owners to allow use of private property until they want to sell.
 - School district has large tracts of undeveloped land that is available for temporary use (e.g. field space, farming, etc), until there is a need to develop a new school
 - Parks staff are typically included in the school districts land acquisition and development processes

Benefits of Partnering with the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Colocation
- Better facilities (if costs are shared, potential opportunity for increased funding)
 - Larger schools mean higher levels of use, maintenance
 - Artificial turf?

General Comments:

- Blue Jay Point and Chavis Park are both heavily used by the school system.
- Summer camps are wonderful

Summary Themes:

- Indoor facilities for groups between 150-250 are needed
- A uniform scheduling/registration system which is searchable by facility capacity
- Focus on co-location of facilities for multiple benefits
- Develop outreach programs to schools/teachers with curriculum developed/handouts that follow standards
- Utilize existing empty school sites/ plan with schools for temporary uses of unbuilt sites for park uses, i.e. multi-purpose fields, dog parks, etc.
- Coordinate with schools for higher quality facilities at co-located sites
- Public transportation to sites is biggest barrier

Meeting Notes

Subject	Raleigh System Plan - Youth Focus Group
Date	February 7, 2013
Time	6:00 pm
Location	Laurel Hills Park Community Center
Attendees	(see scanned sign-in sheet)
Prepared	February 7, 2013
Prepared by	Nicholas D. Kuhn

Purpose: A focus group on youth programs was held as part of the public involvement process for the needs and priority assessment phase of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan. The following are comments recorded:

What do you use now?

- Track Out
- Summer Express Camp
- Football
- Swimming/ Swim Team
- Bicycling
- Playgrounds
- Dog Parks
- Basketball Camps
- Free Play/ Open Gyms

What is your vision for the park and recreation system?

- More focus on full scope of diversity - expose children to more types of children (accessibility)
- More youth programs on healthy lifestyles – nutrition education, obesity, active lifestyles, incentives on smart choices
- Equitable distribution of quality in programs
- Quality staff with early education/ childhood background should be at everyone location that has youth programming
- CPR/ Emergency training for both staff and children
- Training needed to prevent/ defend against school violence (city staff required to have shooter training)
- Enforce the changes that are already in place
- After School Programs with transportation from Parks and Rec department

- Priority for you if you have been in the system – early sign-up for programs or resident priority or priority for year-round use – maybe survey if you are going to use program next year and hold if so
- Online options for sign-up should be expanded; either forms prefilled out or able to download history; keep forms on digital fill, keep medical forms
- Registration at Summer Camp is a mad dash in Feb for a service in June. Get the brochure in December but can't mail it in till January. Then question of whether your request gets processed in order received.
- Summer Camps are great program and affordable but stressful to ensure your child has a place
- In March you can go online after first sign-up would like to be able to go online in January for first sign-up
- Need more Track Out options
- Closer working relationship with the city, schools and YMCA
- More options for signal parent such as programs and classes
- More options for young boys – mentoring programs
- More facilities in SE Raleigh – Swimming Pools, Tennis Courts etc.
- Parenting classes, Support, Childcare
- More Free Play – too many facilities are closed for team or organized activities
- System use to be more accessible and is now overcrowded
- Marsh Creek is a great place for Free Play and it is needed more throughout the system
- Don't close gyms at the same time
- Occupational aka 'work hard' training needed

What do we need to get to the vision?

- Dedicated facility for Free Play seven days a week
- Buffalo Road Aquatic center is a great example of free play
- Get the whole family involved in programs – Adult, teen, youth
- More opportunities for adults to volunteer
- Get universities involved for college students to volunteer – especially with early education and coaching programs; accredit some volunteer opportunities to incentivize their participation
- Maybe "star" players can help promote programs

Summary Themes:

- More follow through is needed to enforce the changes recently implemented
- Staff and youth need training to prevent/ defend against school violence and CPR
- Registration process needs to be simplified so that parents can sign up for Track Out, Summer Camp or Before/After School programming online
- Sign-in process needs to reuse information already provided each year, simply verify if information is correct
- Increase options for Track Out, Summer Camp and Before/After School programming as the school population increases through growth (More students = more schools = more programming)
- Designated free play space is needed throughout community daily
- Family oriented free play and programming is great and should be expanded
- Partner with universities for early education and coaching programs and training