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# City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation



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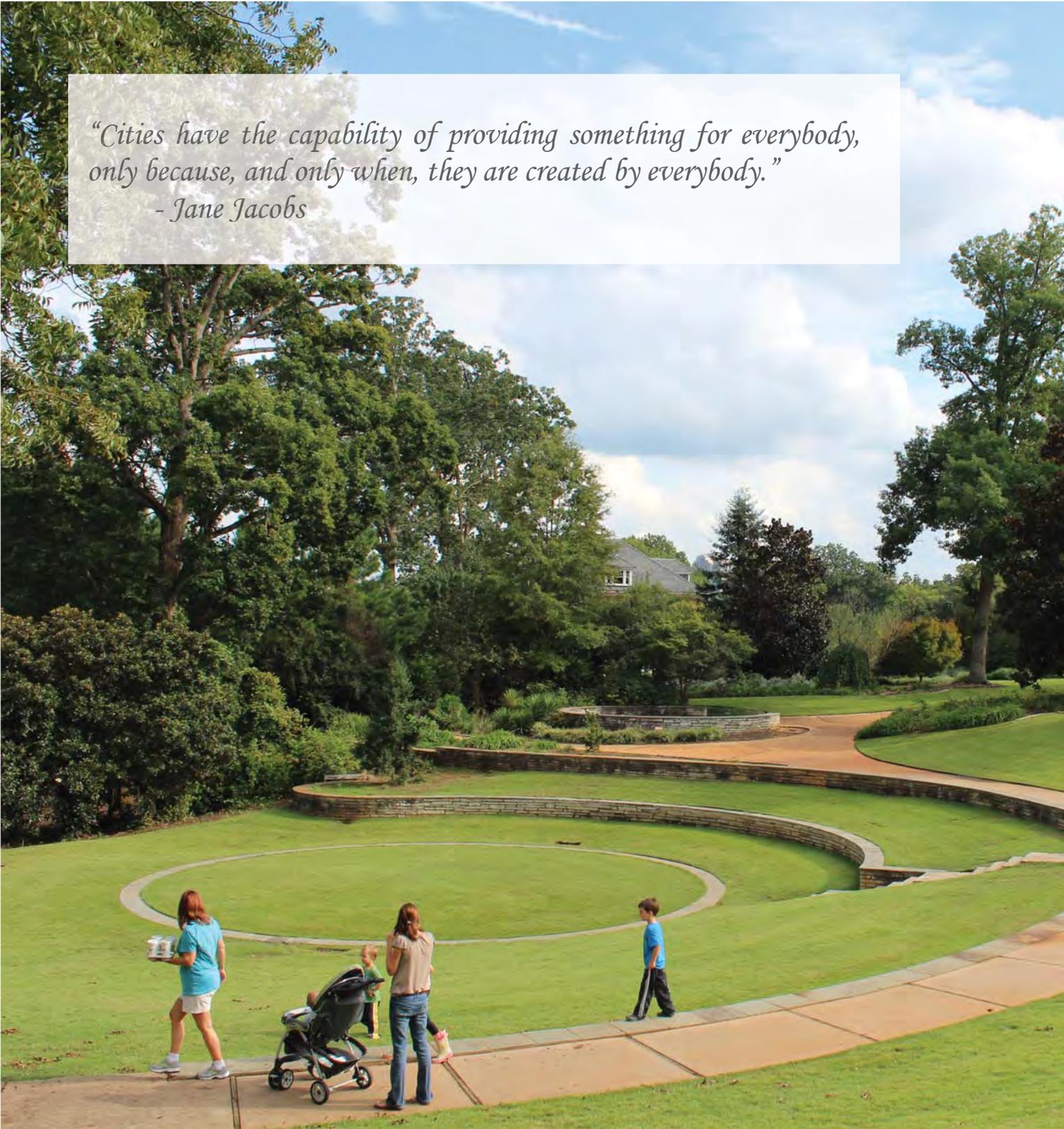
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# Chapter One

*“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”*

*- Jane Jacobs*



# Introduction



*Fred Fletcher Park*

## Chapter 1 | Purpose & How to Use the System Plan

### 1.1 Purpose

Begun in late 2012, the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan (System Plan) is a supplement to the 2030 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Raleigh (Comp Plan). Multiple elements of the Comp Plan relate to the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department's mission for services and facilities, and includes a significant update for the delivery of parks and recreation services. The System Plan seeks to expand on those elements.

The City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System Plan (System Plan) is a comprehensive long-range planning document that is meant to help shape the direction, development and delivery of the City's parks and recreation services over the next 20 years.

The System Plan utilized extensive public engagement in the form of a City Council-appointed citizen Planning Committee, websites, social media, focus groups, a statistically valid survey, community visioning workshops, public presentations, and presentations to boards and commissions to fully involve the community throughout the planning process.

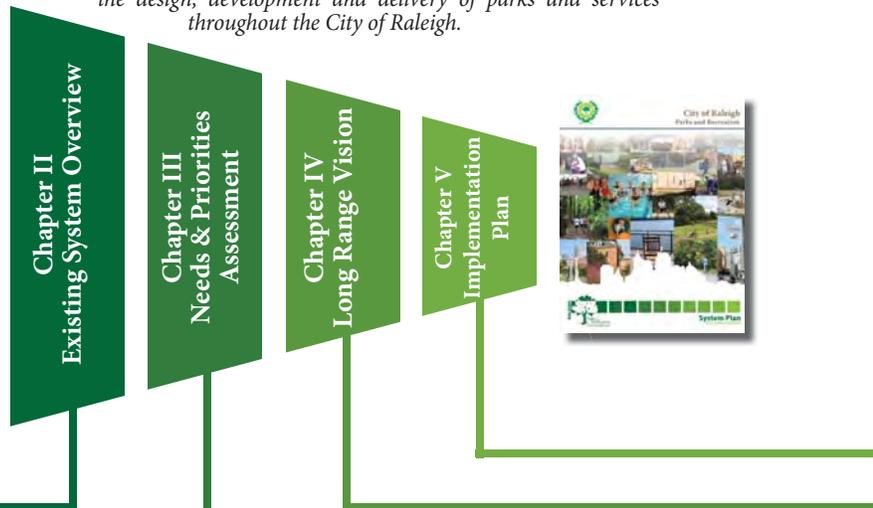
# Chapter One

## 1.2 How to Use the System Plan

This document is intended to be used by all parties involved with the design and/or planning of parks in the City of Raleigh. As a comprehensive resource for planning of parks within Raleigh, this System Plan will assist users in the formation of programming needs and priorities and long range visioning for the planning and design of new and existing parks, greenways and facilities.

This document has been developed in a linear process, building upon previous work; beginning with an overview of the existing parks and greenway system, analysis of public needs and priorities, formation of a long range system-wide vision, and lastly implementation priorities, funding alternatives and policies recommendations.

Diagram 1 below illustrates the linear four step process utilized in this System Plan. Following these steps, needs and priorities are refined through the creation of a long range vision and a detailed implementation plan. The final product is an achievable plan for the design, development and delivery of parks and services throughout the City of Raleigh.



### Chapter II Existing System Overview

#### 2.1 - History of Parks and Recreation in the City of Raleigh

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The Beginning                | 4. The Expansion Era     |
| 2. The Formative Period         | 5. The Open Space Era    |
| 3. Consolidation and Refinement | 6. The Collaborative Era |

#### 2.2 - City-wide Integration

- |                                       |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Guiding Documents                  | 3. Area Studies and Plans |
| 2. City & Regional Plans & Ordinances |                           |

#### 2.3 - Population and Demographics Overview

- |                      |                               |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Overview          | 3. Population Characteristics |
| 2. Population Growth | 4. Housing Characteristics    |

#### 2.4 - Existing Parks and Facilities Overview

- |                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Methodology                    | 4. Successes of Existing System      |
| 2. Rating Scale                   | 5. Opportunities for Existing System |
| 3. Individual Facilities Overview |                                      |

#### 2.5 - Existing Greenway Network Overview

- |                                  |                                                |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Methodology                   | 4. Opportunities for Existing Greenway Network |
| 2. Individual Greenway Overview  |                                                |
| 3. Successes of Greenway Network |                                                |

#### 2.6 - Existing Programs and Services Overview

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Introduction           | 4. Lifecycle Review     |
| 2. Program Identification | 5. Age Segment Review   |
| 3. Program Mix            | 6. Marketing Approaches |

#### 2.7 - Existing System Overview Findings

### Chapter III Needs & Priorities Assessment

#### 3.1 - Public Involvement

- |                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Community Engagement | 4. Websites |
| 2. Focus Groups         | 5. Summary  |
| 3. Interviews           |             |

#### 3.2 - Peer Comparison

- |                     |                       |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Methodology      | 3. Citizen to Citizen |
| 2. Agency to Agency | 4. Summary            |

#### 3.3 - Citizen Opinion and Interest Survey

- |                 |                               |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Methodology  | 3. Importance and Unmet Needs |
| 2. Key Findings | 4. Summary                    |

#### 3.4 - High Level Lifestyle Analysis

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Methodology  | 3. Implications |
| 2. Key Findings |                 |

#### 3.5 - Recreation Programs and Services Assessment

- |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Survey Results for Programs | 3. Future Programs |
| 2. Current Program Assessment  | 4. Recommendations |

#### 3.6 - Level of Service Analysis

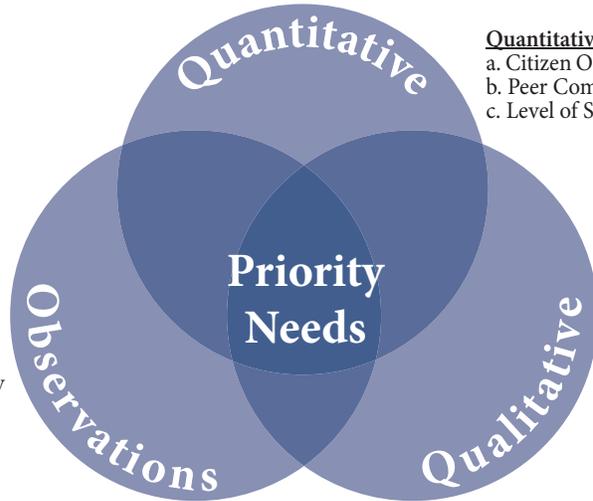
- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. Methodology    | 4. Access LOS |
| 2. Acreage LOS    | 5. Summary    |
| 3. Facilities LOS |               |

#### 3.7 - Summary Needs and Priorities

# Introduction

## Data Analysis Process

To gain an accurate understanding of the City of Raleigh's parks and greenway network as well as residents' needs, the Project Team utilized a three point approach to data analysis. The following diagram identifies the techniques used:



### Quantitative Techniques:

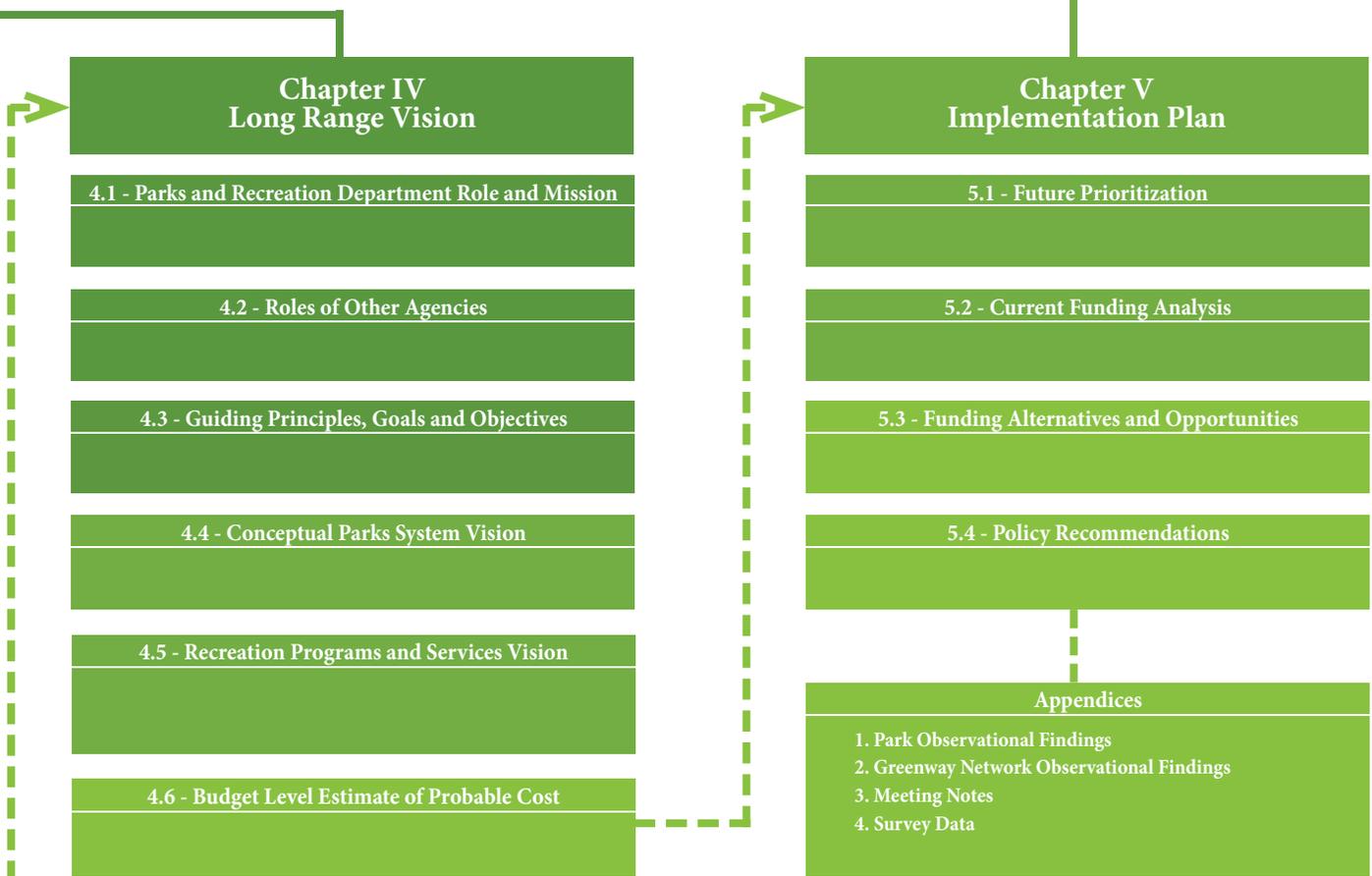
- a. Citizen Opinion and Interest Survey
- b. Peer Comparison
- c. Level of Service Analysis

### Observational Techniques:

- a. Individual Park and Greenway Evaluations
- b. Population & Demographic Overview
- c. Recreation Programs and Services Assessment

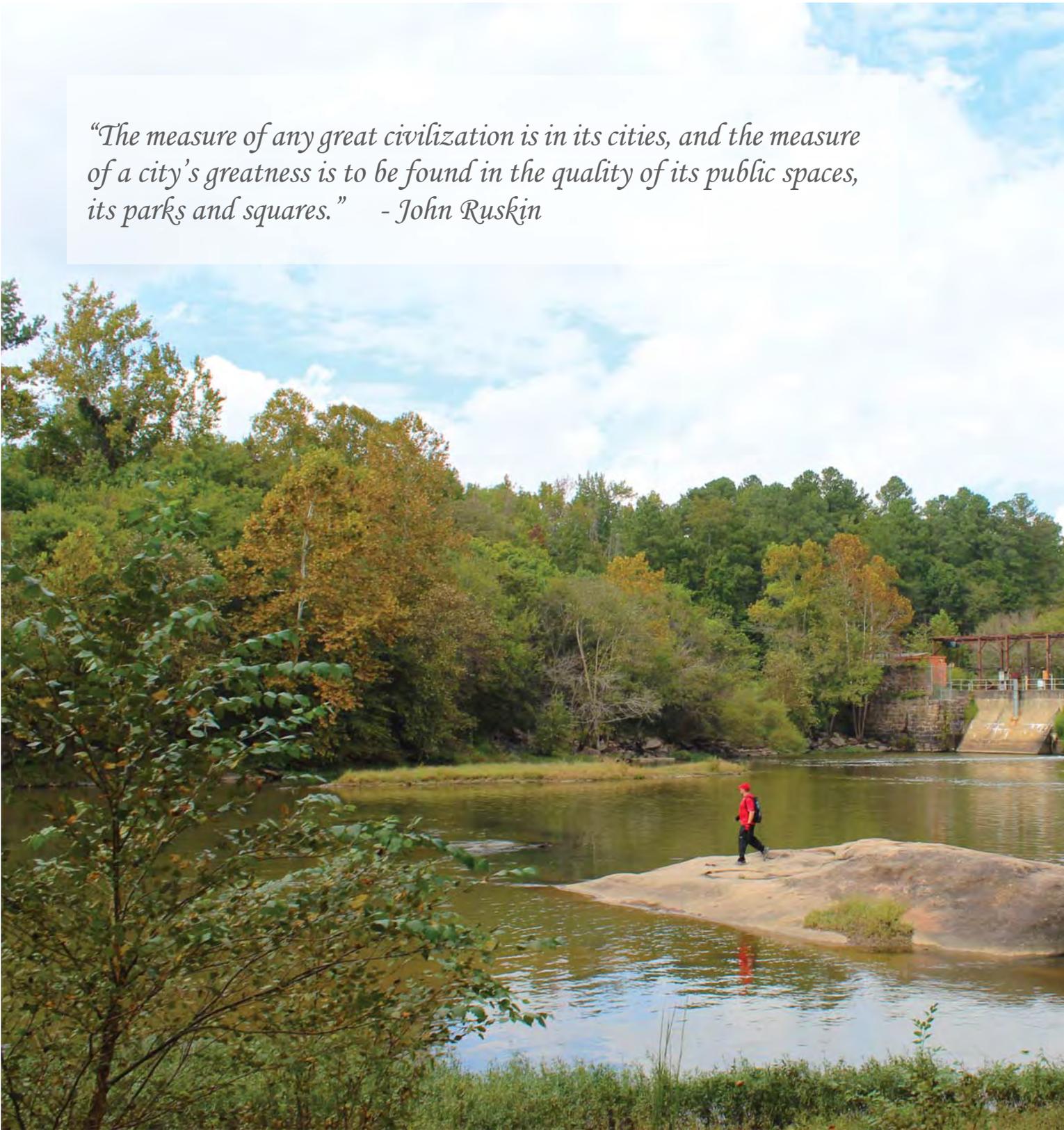
### Qualitative Techniques:

- a. Intercept Interview
- b. Focus Groups
- c. Planning Committee
- d. Community Workshops
- e. Websites
- e. Online Survey



# Chapter Two

*“The measure of any great civilization is in its cities, and the measure of a city’s greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces, its parks and squares.” - John Ruskin*



existing system overview

# Existing System Overview



Milburnie Park

## Chapter 2 | Existing Conditions Overview

The purpose of this section is to gain a broad understanding of current conditions of the City of Raleigh's parks, recreation facilities, greenways, programs and services. Currently, the City of Raleigh manages 135 parks, 44 staff and non-staffed centers, 8 public swimming pools, over 2,150 programs, 82 open spaces, 75 miles of greenway trails and approximately 9,500 acres of parks and greenways.



### Chapter II Existing System Overview

#### 2.1 - History of Parks and Recreation in the City of Raleigh

- |                                 |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The Beginning                | 4. The Expansion Era     |
| 2. The Formative Period         | 5. The Open Space Era    |
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#### 2.2 - City-wide Integration

- |                                       |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Guiding Documents                  | 3. Area Studies and Plans |
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#### 2.3 - Population and Demographics Overview

- |                      |                               |
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| 1. Overview          | 3. Population Characteristics |
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- |                                   |                                      |
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| 1. Methodology                    | 4. Successes of Existing System      |
| 2. Rating Scale                   | 5. Opportunities for Existing System |
| 3. Individual Facilities Overview |                                      |

#### 2.5 - Existing Greenway Network Overview

- |                                  |                                                |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Methodology                   | 4. Opportunities for Existing Greenway Network |
| 2. Individual Greenway Overview  |                                                |
| 3. Successes of Greenway Network |                                                |

#### 2.6 - Existing Programs and Services Overview

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Introduction           | 4. Lifecycle Review     |
| 2. Program Identification | 5. Age Segment Review   |
| 3. Program Mix            | 6. Marketing Approaches |

#### 2.7 - Existing System Overview Findings

existing system overview

# Chapter Two

## Section 2.1 | History of Parks and Recreation in the City of Raleigh

### 2.1.0 Introduction

The history of the City of Raleigh’s parks and recreation system is valuable background information to consider during an update to the City’s Parks and Recreation System Plan. Information included in this section has been documented in the City of Raleigh Parks Plan, published in 2004, and updated for this System Plan.

The principles of park design and planning have been developed over the last several hundred years in response to changing social conditions. The tradition of parks in the United States is rooted in European design, however, by the late nineteenth century, park design and planning

began to take its own distinct path in America. Through these phases, (see **Diagram 2**), there were guiding principles, influenced by changes in society, which shaped our parks.

Today, we stand at the beginning of a new era in park design and planning. One of new social, economic and environmental concerns. Today’s parks and greenways must be justified based on the perceived benefits to the public and must contribute to alleviating problems that constitute the prevailing political concerns of policymakers, John Crompton (Texas A&M University, 2007).

**Diagram 2.** Goals and functions of parks eras of the last 150 years in the United States, (Galen Cranz)

	Pleasure Ground (1850 - 1900)	Reform Park (1900 - 1930)	Recreation Facility (1930 - 1965)	Open Space System (1965 - 1990)	Sustainable Park (1990 - present)
Goals of Parks	public	social reform assimilation	public	revitalization psychological relief participation public	place-making ecological health revitalization psychological relief participation public
Functions of Parks	health	public health	health active recreation	health active recreation passive recreation arts and culture	health active recreation passive recreation arts and culture resource conservation community building

existing system overview



# Existing System Overview

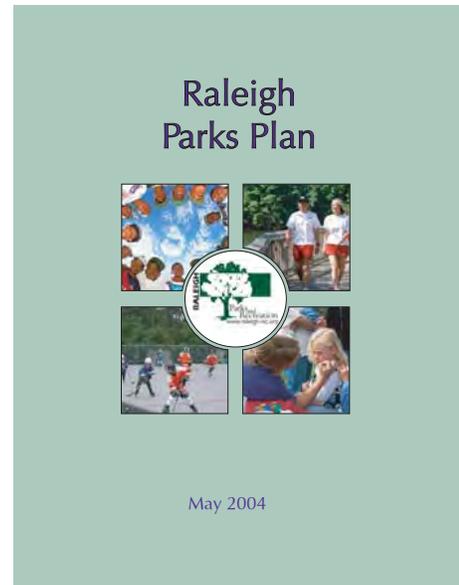
## 2.1.1 The Beginning

The City's original planners envisioned an "ideal" that, though modified through the years, has served as a guiding vision. The Raleigh of today may not bear an immediate resemblance to the City of 1792, but the City of Raleigh's core mission and commitment to its citizen's well-being and quality of life remains the same.

Unique to the history of Raleigh, parks in the City of Oaks may be organized into five periods: **The Formative Period** (1792-1941); **Consolidation and Refinement** (1942-1970); the **Expansion Era** (1971-1981); the **Open Space Era** (1982 – 2004); and the new **Collaborative Era** (2004 to present).

During the Formative Period the philosophy and direction of the young parks program emerged, influenced by local visionaries and national trends. In the second period, the City became fully committed to a centrally organized municipal park system with definite goals. The Expansion Era was a period of refinement and adjustment to population pressure, city expansion, Federal mandates, and a subsequent increase both in parkland and park programs. The mission of the Parks Department also became more clear and its commitment to open space preservation was broadened and strengthened by the development of the Capital Area Greenway Network. The Open Space Era was marked with relative growth in the parks and recreation system but high population growth, in terms of absolute number of new residents, through annexation and greenfield development. The Open Space Era ended with the publication of the City's last Parks and Recreation System Plan Update in 2004, which established new goals for the Park and Recreation Department.

The Collaborative Era finds Raleigh faced with limited funding for its burgeoning and successful programs and facilities. Competition for limited fiscal resources tempers a renewed awareness of the urgent need for parks and open space, and new approaches in providing these services. A heightened awareness of environmental conservation, water quality protection and the effects of intensive urbanization influence park development and uses. Most important to



*City of Raleigh's Parks Plan, published in 2004*

residents is a seamless park and recreation system which offers multiple benefits from public facilities. Quality and stewardship of natural resources within parks are seen by residents as a barometer of the commitment of the City to the quality of life of its citizens. In addition, the awareness of the benefits of meaningful public involvement has greatly expanded and become an integral part of park planning and design.

The following text provides a sketch of the influential trends and decisions which have brought Raleigh to its current philosophy and direction of parks and open space.

## 2.1.2 The Formative Period (1792 - 1941)

Raleigh has never been without parks. The original 400 acre city plan, laid out through 1,000 acres of woodland in 1792, included five public squares centered in a grid of streets. The General Assembly selected fellow Senator William Christmas, a surveyor, to lay out the lots and city streets of the Capital-to-be. William Christmas's visionary gift to the city was a modification of the plan

# Chapter Two

of Philadelphia: A central site (Union Square) for the State Capitol and four axial streets, following the compass points, which divided the city into four quadrants or wards. The heart of each ward was a public square (Moore, Nash, Caswell, and Burke). Four lots were left open at the corners of the rectangular plan for “future parks, for children, flowers, trees and fountains.” Of the original City plan, only one-half of the original 400 acres included was allocated for development and nearly 40 acres or 20% of the this developed land was reserved as open space.

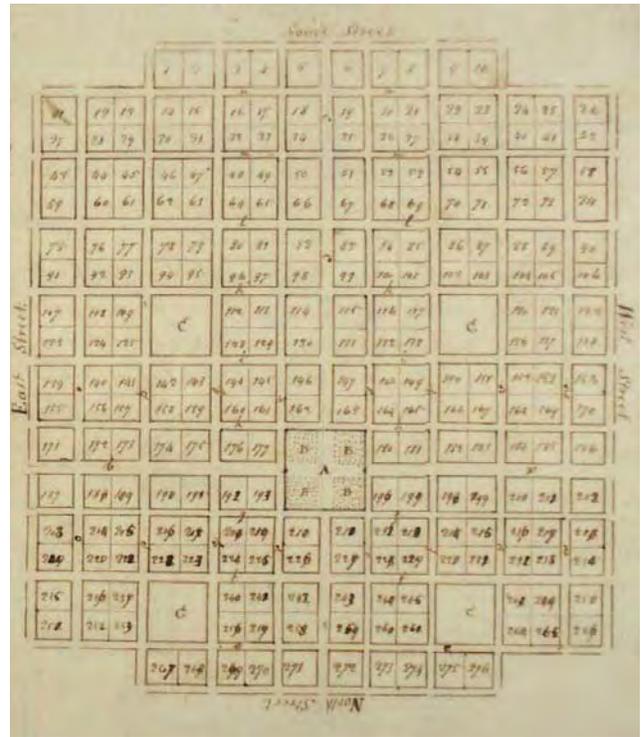
The existing trees were spared on the original five squares, perhaps a decision of necessity, nevertheless, it made a powerful statement which was to become the foundation of Raleigh’s heritage of sensitivity to open space preservation.

The Christmas Plan, parks and all, served Raleigh well for nearly fifty years before the city began to grapple with new growth brought by railway service in 1840. The city pushed beyond the original boundaries during this decade and development, and convenience, claimed two of the original squares: Caswell Square became the site for a school for the deaf and Burke Square became the grounds of a new Governor’s mansion.

The vision for parkland never vanished, however, in the 1860’s it resurfaced. Oakwood was designed as a Park Cemetery, having a dual function of a memorial park for the deceased and strolling and carriage grounds for the living. This cemetery became Raleigh’s first experiment with a multi-use, privately funded recreational and open space facility.

The Victorian Era touched Raleigh in both mood and fashion. The theory of “green relief” from urban chaos (hardly applicable by comparison to northeastern cities), promulgated by Frederick Law Olmstead, designer of Central Park in New York and the Boston parks system, encouraged citizens to donate land and finance the development of pleasure grounds or natural retreats.

Richard Stanhope Pullen responded with a gift of 69 acres in 1887 for an accessible pastoral retreat – a major public park. At the time the land was on the outskirts of the City and meant to be used as a get-away from bustling Victorian life in the downtown.



Christmas’s 1792 plan for Raleigh which included five public squares centered in a grid of streets.

At the turn-of-the-century nationwide influences stamped Raleigh’s budding park enthusiasm, and its urban form, with visionary ideas. The Columbian Exposition of 1893 inspired the nation with the crusade that cities can be “beautiful and noble manifestations of civilization.” The aesthetic renaissance found specific expression in the landscaped boulevards of Glenwood and New Bern Avenues. Subtly, a shift in park philosophy simultaneously gained popularity. “Reform Parks” beckoned the entire citizenry to recreational opportunities, not solely pastoral retreats, and the notion of a system of parks, rather than individual parks, began to gain favor.

Parks also became an amenity of fine residential neighborhoods developed for an emerging middle class whose homes were linked to downtown by trolley service. The transportation service carried citizens to “Street railway” owned parks at the edge of town. Bloomsbury Park, near Lassiter Mill, Brookside Park north of Oakwood, and Pullen Park fit this category of open space. The new residential subdivision called Cameron Park set a model tone by arranging streets around natural drainage ways, leaving the creeks as neighborhood open space.

# Existing System Overview



Residents picnicking near the Neuse River, 1902 (image courtesy of Remember Raleigh - North Carolina State Archives)

The evolution of the parks system's direction roared in the twenties. In short order, the City obtained an annual appropriation for a playground supervisor, and the Mayor and City Board appointed a City Parks Commission. This at-large group of prominent citizens surged forward with plans for the development of a parks system and the maintenance and beautification of the current landholdings. The decade closed with the General Assembly granting the new commission the responsibility for Union, Nash and Moore Squares and the donation of land for Edna Metz Wells Nature Park by eminent North Carolina State College botanist, Dr. B. W. Wells.

The following depression decade brought increased recreation time to all citizens. In response to this demand, the General Assembly established the Raleigh Recreation Commission to oversee supervised recreation. In turn, a Raleigh Recreation Department was created and placed under the Division of Public Works. The ambition of this original organization is outlined in their 1938 annual report which contained some prescient goals. Among them were:

1. that leadership was as important as facilities,
2. schools should be used as community centers,
3. public tennis and badminton courts were important,
4. careful consideration of new leisure activities and the design of the required facilities,
5. increased funding,
6. recreation areas to be set aside in new public housing projects, and,
7. that Raleigh's School Board, the Raleigh Recreation

Commission, the Raleigh Park Commission, City officials, the Housing Board and other organizations should work together to survey and plan for the future long term growth in public recreation

The immediate result of the 1938 report was the development of more facilities in existing parks. This would not have been possible without the financial assistance of the Federal Works Progress Administration which provided salaries and funding for capital recreation components.

The thirties concluded the formative years of Raleigh's Park system. A philosophy of service and need was firmly established, and, more importantly, recreation and parks were officially institutionalized as an accepted province of local government (albeit with Federal assistance).



Public Swimming Pool at Pullen Park, 1940 (image courtesy of Remember Raleigh - North Carolina State Archives)

## 2.1.3 Consolidation and Refinement (1942 - 1970)

The mission of Parks and Recreation was spread through several agencies in 1940. In 1941, Raleigh began a program of centralization. The City Commissioners combined the Parks Commission and the Recreation Commission into the Recreation and Park Commission. The following year Fallon Park was dedicated to the city. By 1950, and with the redesignation of the Commission to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the system included 189 acres in the form of 16 parks, 12 playgrounds and two recreation centers.

# Chapter Two



City of Raleigh's Fallon Park, founded 1942

With its institutional structure intact, Raleigh embarked upon a mission of refinement and redefinition of its goals by hiring a recreational consultant in 1950. The Master Plan that was prepared provided an exhaustive methodology using citizen surveys and growth trends to mold the goals of both parks and recreation elements into an ideal acquisition and development program. This plan, though not executed completely, solidified the thinking and planning efforts which have since become a standard approach. Though quickly outpaced by growth, the Master Plan completed the refinement of the City's mission. In addition to increased parkland and improved facilities in existing park property, the plan's legacy includes defined standards for determining park needs and a methodology of planning.

## 2.1.4 Expansion Era (1971 - 1980)

In 1960, a new study was completed with a 20-year projection of parks needs based on nationally accepted standards. This study launched the footrace of the Expansion Era, where the need for parks would be constantly refined in an urgent effort to adapt to rapid urbanization which claimed desirable park sites more rapidly than the city could mobilize to secure them. In spite of this competition, Raleigh was on the brink of its greatest park growth in 1969, spurred by citizen demand and the realization that quick action must be taken in tandem with growth pressure. In this year the city published "Raleigh, The Park With a City In It," an open space plan for the pending decade.

Cover of "Raleigh, The Park with a City In It"

Old concepts of drainage systems and natural areas as preservation were dusted off and re-worked in the form of the "Greenway concept." The early visions of a parkway along Crabtree Creek leap-frogged to the Neuse River; roadway beautification, historic preservation, regional facilities and even a municipal golf course became valid and valued objectives to meet recreation and park goals. New concepts of land acquisition through subdivision control tied land preservation to development. Conservation easements, planned unit developments, joint school/park programs, and private/public ventures, gained credibility as methods of trying to stay even with the development boom. Federal funds supplemented these programs substantially, with more than one million dollars in matching funds. More than 20 parks, targeted in areas of anticipated growth, entered the system during this decade. The Greenway concept, borne of a 1972 study entitled Capital Areas Greenway, linked floodway development and flood control issues brought about by development to a system of open space preserves and recreational trails. In 1973 the City Council created a fifteen member Raleigh Greenway Commission to oversee the fledgling program.

These concepts and strategies crystallized in a final refinement of the parks system in the 1979 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Raleigh. An element of that plan refined goals and specified standards, which were further

# Existing System Overview

used to target future park acquisition. The policies of this plan were used in planning and development of park programs up to the withdrawal of Federal funds in 1981.

## 2.1.5 Open Space Era (1981 - 2004)

During the Open Space Era, the City of Raleigh more than doubled in land mass and population, taxing the Parks and Recreation Department infrastructure with responding to the rapid growth. The focus of the department was to retain the level of services throughout the city while expanding in geography. This required the additional of numerous parks and acreage to the system, primarily in the northwest, northeast and eastern areas of Raleigh. Standards were adopted to ensure services were offered equitably throughout the City with utilization of a park classification system; mini park, neighborhood park, community park, metro park, nature preserve and special.

Since 1982 Raleigh has been solely responsible for the acquisition, funding, and development of its Parks Program. Intense competition for valuable Federal funds has become the norm and the City must continually look for creative ways in which to obtain funding. Due to accelerated growth, the continued exploration of creative means to finance future park acquisition and development still persists. As a result, the City's Facility Fee Program was designed to collect fees from developers to directly assist with the purchase of new parklands and to bolster park development in pace with the City's expansion.

Another vital element of parks and recreation funding in recent decades has been the use of publicly-supported and funded bond referendums. In 1984, the City committed itself to its future parks program with the passage of an \$8 million bond program. In 1987, a \$10 million bond was approved and used to develop a year-round aquatics facility, softball complex and three new major parks. Since then, through bond referendums, citizens have encouraged continued growth of a wide variety of parks and recreation facilities. Citizen desires continue to be represented through the City Council appointed Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board. In 1995, citizens of Raleigh passed a \$28 million bond referendum, in 2000, a \$16 million bond for parks system improvements, investments and land acquisition was passed, and in 2003 a \$47 million bond was approved for park system development.

## 2.1.6 Collaborative Era (2005 - present)

The last ten years has been marked with further expansion of services and responsibilities for the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department. Several collaborative efforts have been undertaken by the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department in an attempt to keep pace with growth, provide a broad spectrum of parks and recreation opportunities at a reasonable cost to the City. Through partnerships with the Wake County Public School System two major community centers were built, Brier Creek and Barwell Road, both of which serve as models for leveraging public services and investments.



*Brier Creek Community Center*

# Chapter Two

The City continues to lead the major efforts in greenway trail system development by partnering with other municipal jurisdictions including Wake Forest and Knightdale on the creation of the Neuse River Greenway Trail, a \$28 million regional recreational destination. Volunteerism, nonprofit and private corporate opportunities have continued to grow over the last several years. A long list of projects have been completed in the park system with assistance from Kaboom, AT&T, Target, Methodist Home for Children's Alumni Association and the Fred and Margie Fletcher Volunteer Award Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation. These are just a few examples of various organizations continued commitments to parks and recreation services in Raleigh.



*Neuse River Greenway Trail at Milburnie Park*

In 2009 the City of Raleigh adopted the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The visionary plan provides the overall guidance for the City's services and development over the next two decades. More specifically the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of the plan provides framework for the direction the department should move in. Additionally the parks and recreation services and amenities are reference in both policy statement and action items throughout several other elements including Environmental Protection, Arts and Culture and more. A primary recommendation of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan was to update the Parks and Recreation System Plan.

The long history of parks and recreation services and facilities in the City of Raleigh is the result of overwhelming public support. In return the City Council adopted a comprehensive Public Participation Program. The program provides the department with guidelines and

best practices for involving the citizens of Raleigh in park and recreation planning and design process.

Two recent programming areas that have grown in the Parks and Recreation Department are the Arts and Historical resources. In 2011 the City Arts Commission was moved from under the overview of the City Manager's Office to under the Direction and oversight of the Parks and Recreation Department. Additionally, in 2012 the City of Raleigh assumed responsibility of the Raleigh City Museum and acquired a new historic City downtown called the Pope House. These two changes now provide the Parks and Recreation Department with improved opportunities to deliver a more diverse set of cultural experiences for the citizens of Raleigh.

Another recent change in the parks and recreation department is the creation the Nature Preserve park classification. Specific criteria were created by an ad hoc committee of local experts, Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board Members and staff. These criteria help determine if a park should be classified as a Nature Preserve. In 2011 the Raleigh City Council approved 4 parks to be classified as Nature Preserve.



*Annie Louise Wilkerson, MD Nature Preserve*

Today the department manages approximately 135 parks, 82 open spaces, 75 miles of greenway trails, 44 staffed and non-staff centers, over 2,150 annual programs, and a combined 9,493 acres of parks and greenways. This constitutes a diverse system that includes historic sites and buildings, cemeteries, nature preserves, and public arts programming for the City of Raleigh. A map of this system can be found on the next page (Map A - Public Realm).

# Existing System Overview



*Buffalo Road Park Aquatic Center*



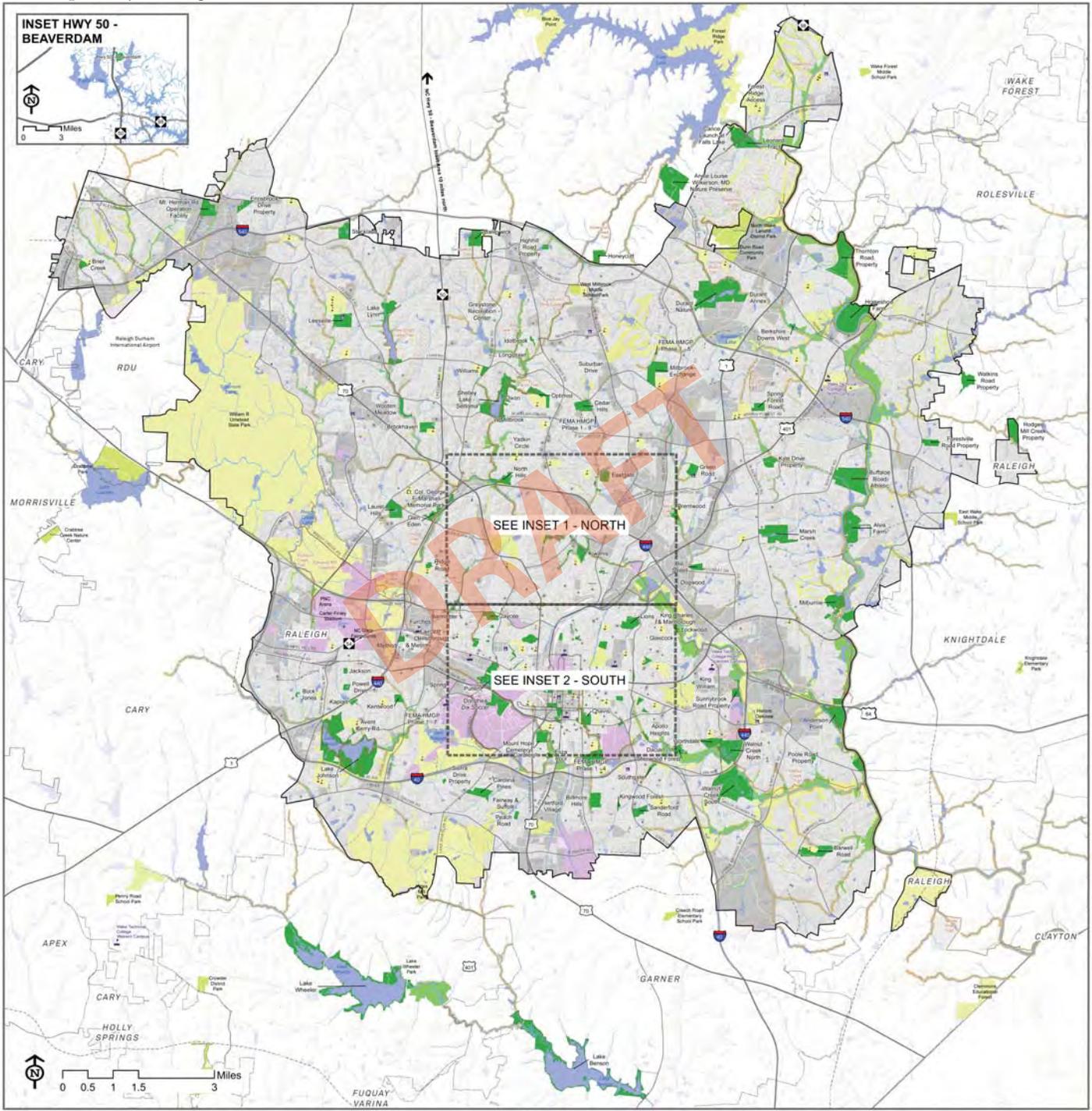
*North Hills Park*

existing system overview



# Chapter Two

Map A. City of Raleigh Public Realm, 2012



**LEGEND**

- City of Raleigh Park
- City of Raleigh Greenway
- Wake County Park
- Non-City of Raleigh Parks & Open Space
- COR CAG Corridors
- Greenway Trail
- Lake/Pond/Reservoir
- Rivers and Streams
- Jurisdiction
- Raleigh ETJ
- Residential
- Non-Residential
- State Site
- Wake County Site
- Historic Landmark
- Library
- Universities and Colleges
- Public School
- Private School
- Place of Worship
- Major Road
- Proposed Major Road
- Street
- Proposed Street

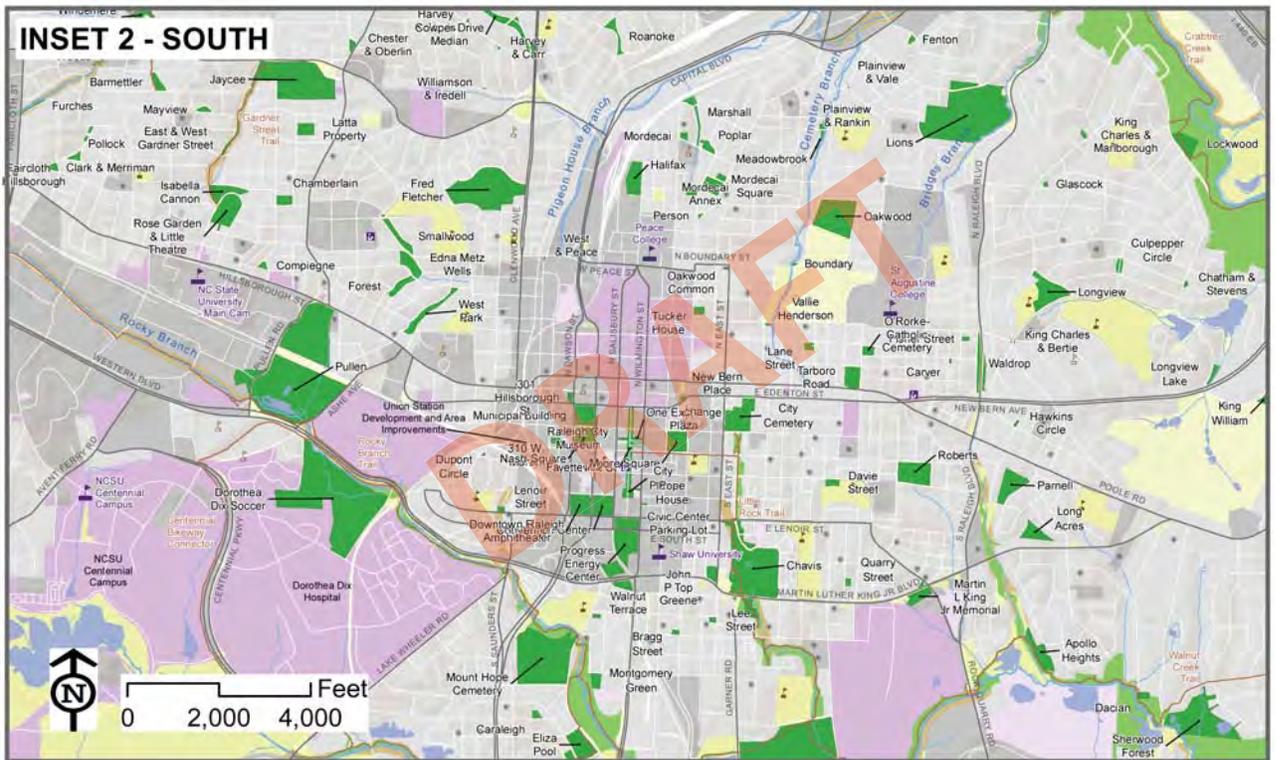
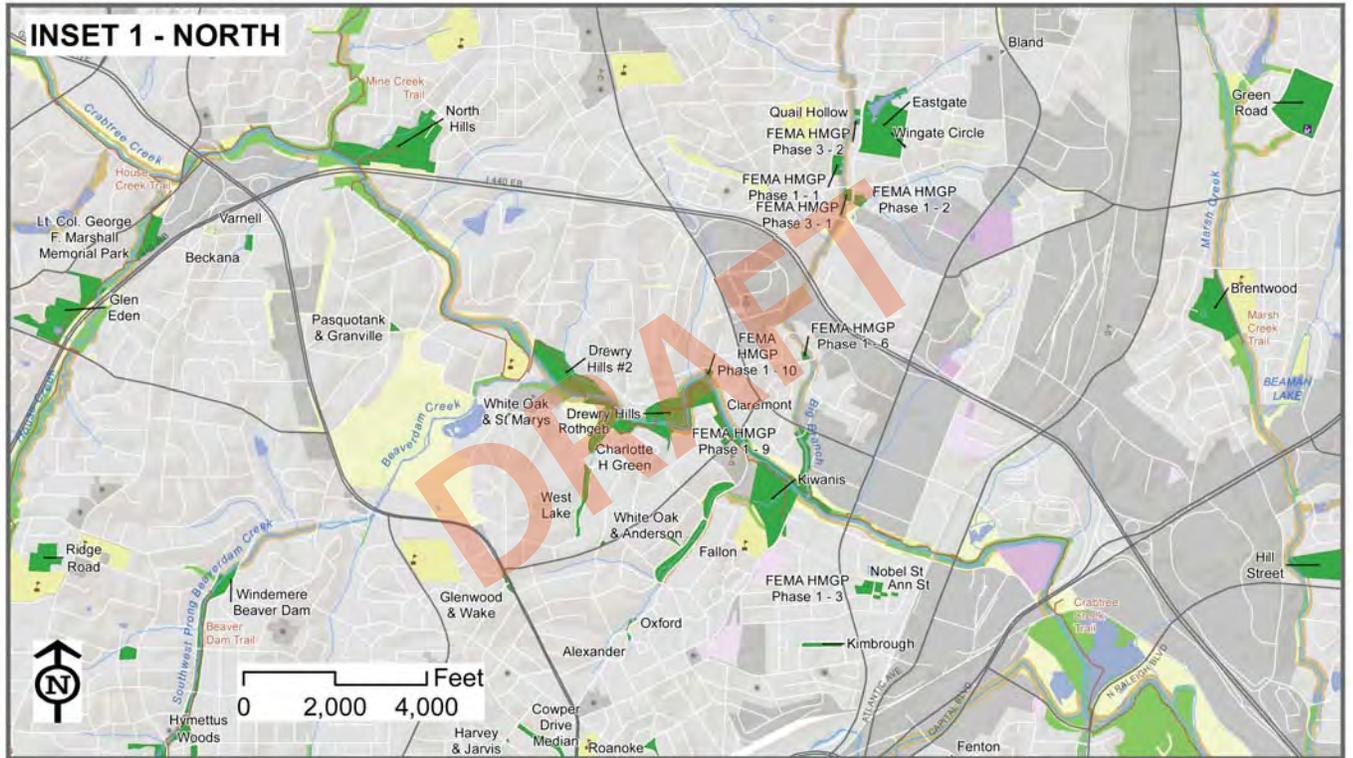
Esri is the source of the Terrain Base Map. Other data sources include the City of Raleigh and Wake County.

existing system overview



# Existing System Overview

Map A Insets. City of Raleigh Public Realm, 2012



existing system overview

# Chapter Two

## Section 2.2 | City-wide Integration

### 2.2.1 Guiding Documents

In an effort to build upon the work of previous planning studies and to ensure the coordination with other official documents that could influence the development of the City of Raleigh's Parks and Recreation System Plan, the Project Team has researched multiple sources of information. The documents reviewed can be classified into two broad categories; guiding regional documents; and area or facility specific studies and plans. Significant influencing plans or documents include:

- 2030 Comprehensive Plan (2009)
- Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Final Draft form 2012
- Wake County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2003)
- Thoroughfare Plan (2011)
- Bicycle Transportation Plan (2009)
- CAT and Wake County Transit Plans
- Draft Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan
- Capital Area Greenway Master Plan Update (1989)
- Capital City Greenway 1976 Master Plan (1976)
- Streetscape Program
- Corridor Plans (Capital Blvd., Blount/Person, New Bern, Blue Ridge)
- Senior Center Feasibility Study
- Aquatics Facilities Study
- Strategic Plan for Historic Cemeteries

### 2.2.2 City & Regional Plans and Ordinances

Several regional and city-wide plans and studies have been reviewed to ensure a comprehensive approach to the System Plan. Some plans reviewed include; Wake County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan; Thoroughfare Plan; Bicycle Transportation Plan; and the Capital Area Greenway Master Plan. Two of the most influential regional guiding documents are the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Ordinance (currently in draft form).

The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) for the City of Raleigh, in its current draft form, is intended to preserve, protect, and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of residents and businesses in the City. More specifically, the UDO is intended to achieve the following objectives which have significant influence in future development and operation of the City's parks and recreation system:

1. Implement the policies and goals contained within officially adopted plans, including the Comp Plan;
2. Improve the built environment and human habitat;
3. Conserve and protect the City's natural beauty and setting, including trees, scenic vistas, and cultural and historic resources;

Raleigh, North Carolina

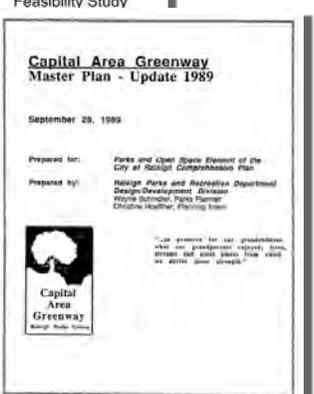
#### UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE



Raleigh  
Parks Plan



City of Raleigh  
Senior Center  
Feasibility Study



Sample of guiding documents researched

# Existing System Overview

4. Ensure that new development conserves energy, land, and natural resources;
5. Protect water quality within watershed critical areas, the general watershed areas of designated water supply watersheds and other watershed districts;
6. Encourage environmentally responsible development practices;
7. Promote development patterns that support safe, effective, and multi-modal transportation options, including auto, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit, and therefore minimize vehicle traffic by providing for a mixture of land uses, walkability, and compact community form;
8. Provide neighborhoods with a variety of housing types to serve the needs of a diverse population;
9. Promote the greater health benefits of a pedestrian-oriented environment;
10. Reinforce the character and quality of neighborhoods;
11. Remove barriers and provide incentives for walkable projects;
12. Protect and promote appropriately located commercial and industrial activities in order to preserve and strengthen the City's economic base;
13. Encourage compact development;
14. Ensure that adequate facilities are constructed to serve new development;
15. Provide for orderly growth and development of suitable neighborhoods with adequate transportation networks, drainage and utilities and appropriate building sites;
16. Save unnecessary expenditures of funds by requiring the proper initial construction of transportation networks, sidewalks, drainage facilities and utilities; and
17. Provide land records for the convenience of the public and for better identification and permanent location of real estate boundaries.

This system plan and its findings, recommendations and priorities are to be consistent with the UDO in its current draft form, and once adopted, in its final form. Several of the above objectives of the UDO will be implementable through integration of this System Plan's priorities and recommendations.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2009 and is a long range policy document which establishes a vision for the City of Raleigh. The document provides policy guidance for growth and development and contains action items directed at the City to implement the vision. The Plan contains six strategic visions themes:

- Economic Property and Equity
- Expanding Housing Choices
- Managing Our Growth
- Coordinating Land Use and Transportation
- Greenprint Raleigh
- Growing Successful Neighborhoods and Communities

Specific to the development of this System Plan, the 2030 Comp Plan outlines eight major issues which the Comp Plan strives to address in order to guide decision-makers to work towards providing parks and recreation facilities that create a balanced system which responds to the varied needs of the City's residents. These eight major issues are:

- Maintaining existing passive and active parks and recreation facilities;
- Addressing the need for walkable, neighborhood parks in existing and newer parts of the City;
- Acquiring adequate land for future park development;
- Developing recreational facilities in close proximity to all residents, equitably distributed throughout the City;
- Enhancing access to and awareness of Raleigh's recreation and natural resource opportunities;
- Providing better interconnectivity between the parks, greenways, and open space system locally and regionally;
- Providing best practice management and stewardship of Raleigh's natural resources;
- Integrating the parks and recreation system into a broader context of green infrastructure to maximize ecosystem conservation

## 2.2.3 Area Studies and Plans

Area or facility specific studies and plans pertinent to the development of the System Plan have been reviewed and will be incorporated into the formation of the City-wide vision for parks and recreation in the City of Raleigh.

Two primary categories of area and facility studies and plans have been reviewed; corridor plans; and Park and Recreation Department feasibility and facilities plans, in addition to strategic plans. Many of the objectives of these plans and studies will be considered during the visioning and implementation phases of this System Plan in order to harness a collaborative and comprehensive approach to planning.

# Chapter Two

## Section 2.3 | Population & Demographics

### 2.3.0 Overview

Parks, recreation, and greenways are essential to the City of Raleigh's quality of life. Planning for these facilities, however, is not just about creating places, it's about how to best serve residents and build strong communities. One of the first steps in park system planning is to better understand the population, current demographic trends, and projections for the future. Though data is static in nature, the City of Raleigh can make better informed decisions based on trends that may impact delivery of services over the next 20 years.

Over the past one hundred years, Raleigh has transformed itself from a small town to a metropolitan city with a population of 403,892<sup>1</sup>. The city is now one of the 50 largest cities in the United States<sup>2</sup>. If regional population projections are correct, Raleigh will continue to grow, reaching almost 600,000 residents by 2035. As a result of its growth, the City faces a dual challenge: how can we make sure we are providing the right parks and recreation services to our existing population while simultaneously preparing for the future?

The Project Team reviewed available City of Raleigh demographic data to determine implications for parks and recreation needs and priorities, including:

1. Population Growth
2. Population Characteristics
3. Housing Characteristics

### 2.3.1 Population Growth

With the City of Raleigh's current policies, population growth directly affects the provision of parks and recreation facilities through additional stresses on level of service goals: simply put, the more people in the community, the more facilities or acreage of parks is needed. This approach does not ensure the right type of facility or program but can be modified in accordance to changing goals or impacts. The primary goal for reviewing Raleigh's population growth as part of this System Plan is to identify

trends. According to the City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Raleigh has grown at a rate ranging from 2.0 to 4.3 percent every year since 1900<sup>3</sup> (see Table 1). Recent growth has hovered near the top of this range, resulting in even larger absolute gains. This growth, while affecting most areas of the City, has largely been concentrated at the fringes of the City, particularly in the northeast, northwest and southeast.

Table 1. Historic Growth Rates in the City of Raleigh

Year	Population	APGR*	Land Area	Pop. Density
1900	13,643	--	1.76	7,765
1910	19,218	3.5%	4.03	4,773
1920	24,418	2.4%	6.96	3,508
1930	37,379	4.3%	7.25	5,153
1940	46,879	2.3%	7.25	6,463
1950	65,679	3.4%	10.88	6,035
1960	93,931	3.6%	33.67	2,790
1970	122,830	2.7%	44.93	2,734
1980	150,255	2.0%	55.17	2,724
1990	212,092	3.5%	91.40	2,321
2000	276,093	2.7%	118.71	2,326
2010	403,892	4.1%	143.77	2,801

\* APGR, Annual Population Growth Rate

Source: CAMPO (via the City of Raleigh 2030 Comprehensive Plan), U.S. Census 2010.

A primary trend identified in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan is that growth is expected to continue. The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (CAMPO) projections estimate that the City will have approximately 590,000 residents by 2030, an increase of over 180,000 residents, shown in Table 2. Although in absolute terms this projection is a large number, it actually represents a lower rate of growth than the City has experienced in previous decades, however, the absolute growth of approximately 100,000 per decade is consistent with the last two decades. Map B identifies the projected change in population by Census tract according to CAMPO between 2010 and 2035 in relations to existing park locations. According to a land capacity analysis completed during the comprehensive planning process, within the City's current jurisdiction and zoning, a potential population of 670,000 could reasonably



# Existing System Overview

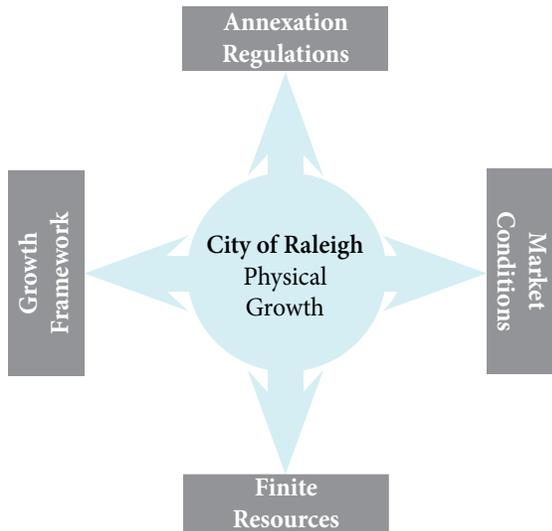
Table 2. Wake County and Municipalities Population Projections, 2005-2035

Area	2005		2015		2025		2035	
	Population	% of County	Population	% of County	Population	% of County	Population	% of County
City of Raleigh	371,443	49.9%	489,762	45.5%	565,701	41.0%	590,560	39.0%
City of Cary	118,728	15.9%	162,564	15.1%	179,792	13.0%	184,870	12.2%
Western Wake	98,608	13.2%	134,759	12.5%	230,124	16.7%	269,146	17.8%
Eastern Wake	105,884	14.2%	207,122	19.2%	297,853	21.6%	351,861	23.2%
Rural Wake	49,980	6.7%	82,746	7.7%	107,701	7.8%	117,237	7.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>744,643</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,076,960</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,381,171</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,513,674</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: CAMPO (via the City of Raleigh 2030 Comprehensive Plan)

be accommodated by 2035<sup>4</sup>. There are, however, physical barriers to the city’s growth; such as finite resources, annexation limitations, redevelopment vs. greenfield (new development) market conditions and growth framework policies (Unified Development Ordinance once adopted). **Diagram 3** illustrates the barriers to physical growth for the City of Raleigh.

Diagram 3. Barriers to Physical Growth



This growth trend is present at the regional level as well. Wake County’s population is expected to grow significantly in the same period. Unincorporated areas are anticipated to grow at a faster rate than the City, resulting in a relative decline of Raleigh’s percentage of population in Wake County compared to the other municipalities, increasing needs to continue cross-jurisdictional planning and coordination.

## 2.3.2 - Population Characteristics

Total population and growth can help to determine park and greenway level of service goals, however, population characteristics can help to define what type of facilities will serve the community better.

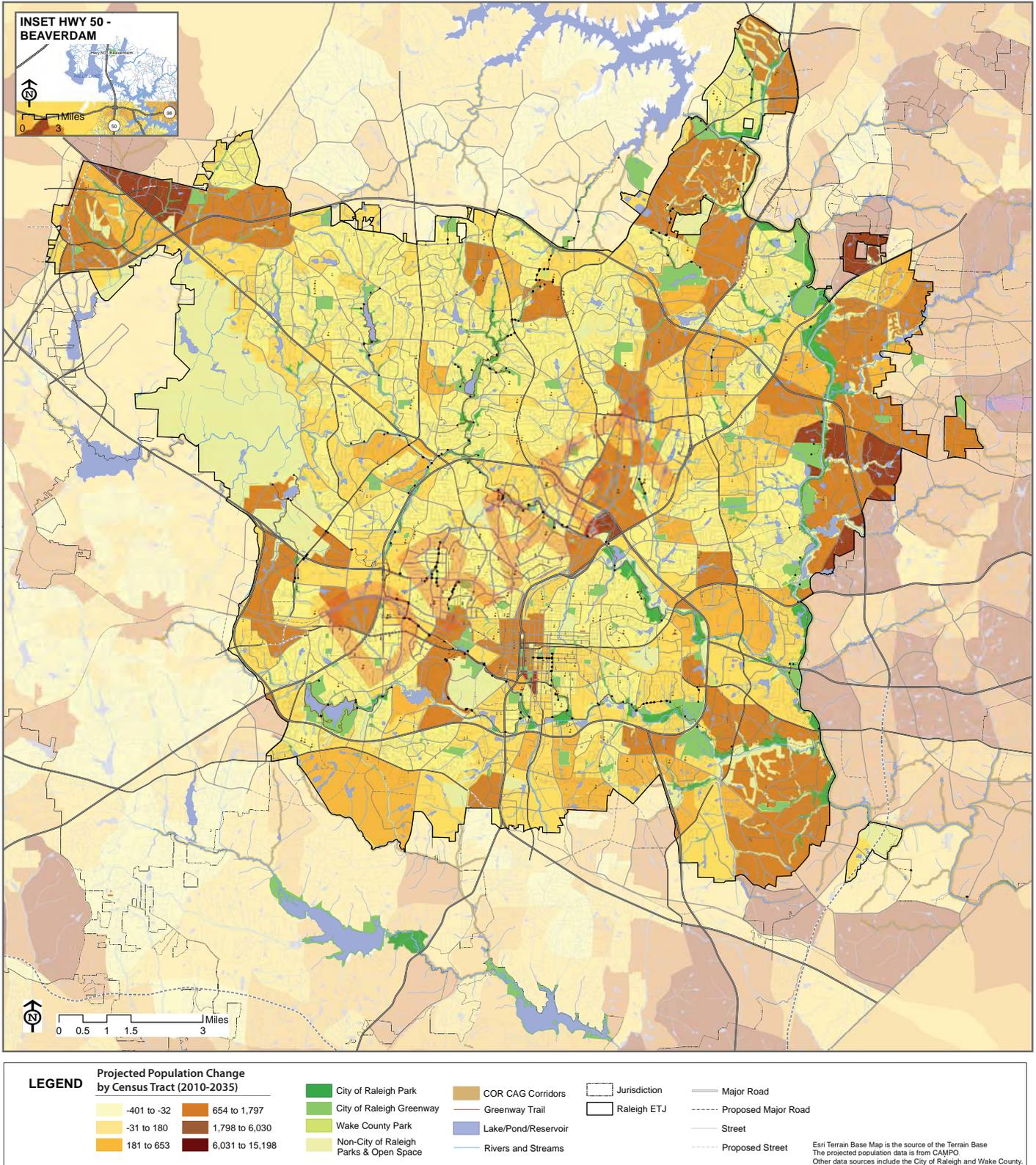
The 2010 Census data for the City of Raleigh presents a snapshot of the population. When compared to data from 2000 and from Wake County, the data is put into a temporal and geographic context. For 2010 Census data that has not yet been released, data from the most recent American Community Survey (ACS) was used. This research among other factors will help determine needs for parks and facilities.

### Race/Ethnicity

The City of Raleigh is racially diverse and becoming more so every decade. From 2000 to 2010, the white population declined from 63.3 percent to 57.5 percent, whereas the African-American population increased from 27.8 to 29.3 percent (see Table 3). In fact, the percentages of all minority populations have increased since 2000; Asian population increased by 0.9 percent to 4.3 percent in 2010, and people who defined themselves as “Other Race” increased from 3.2 to 5.7 percent. Ethnically, Raleigh is also becoming more diverse, with the Hispanic/Latino community growing from 7 percent in 2000 to 11.4 percent in 2010. Although the City is more diverse than the rest of the county, Wake County is also demonstrating a trend towards greater diversification: its white population declined by 6.1 percent between 2000 and 2010, and its Hispanic/Latino population has risen by 4.4 percent.

# Chapter Two

Map B. City of Raleigh Projected Population Change (2010-2035) with Park Locations.



existing system overview

# Existing System Overview

## Age

In addition to becoming more diverse, Raleigh is also showing signs of becoming younger. Between 2000 and 2010, the population under 15 years-old has grown by 1.8 percent, contrary to a decline nationally, whereas the population over 75 years-old has decreased by 3.5 percent (see Table 4). In addition, the City's population between 55 and 74 has grown by 4.1 percent which probably reflects the aging Baby Boomer generation. Growth in this age group is not enough to offset the increase in population under 15 years' impact on the City's median age. Interestingly, the population of young adults aged 20 to 34 decreased by a combined 4 percent, again contrary to national trends.

Compared to the rest of Wake County, the City of Raleigh's population of children is growing at a faster rate. The County's elderly population did not reflect the change seen in Raleigh, and remained stable with about 0.3 growth in residents aged 75 or older.

## Gender

Typically, populations do not witness extreme changes in sex unless a major event occurs, such as the closing of a military base. In 2010, the Census indicated that 51.7 percent of Raleigh residents were women, an increase of 1.2 percent from 2000 (see Table 5). In Wake County, the sex ratio also shifted slightly more in favor of women, with an increase of 0.9 percent for a ratio of 51.3 women to 48.7 men. One possible explanation for this shift is the proximity of many large universities; according to the National Center for Education Statistics, an estimated 59 percent of all higher education degrees will be earned by women in 2012, with more women than men enrolling in universities every year.<sup>5</sup>

## Income

On the surface, the City of Raleigh's population has experienced a slight increase in median household income between 2000 and 2010, from \$46,612 to \$49,931 (see Table 6). However, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor's Inflation calculator, \$46,612 in 2000 would have the same buying power as \$59,025 in 2010.<sup>6</sup> So, although absolute income has increased, residents have actually experienced a marked decrease in purchasing power.

Wake County as a whole has fared slightly better. The top three income ranges grew by 7.5 percent, compared to 5 percent within the City. Additionally, the median income in the County grew by \$6,438, bringing its 2010 median to \$61,426, which is significantly higher than the City of Raleigh's median.

## Educational Attainment

Between 2000 and 2010 Raleigh's residents' educational attainment levels increased slightly, with 44.8 percent of the population having at least a Bachelor's degree. The proportion of residents who have not graduated high school also decreased by 3.4 percent, as shown in Table 7. Wake County's figures are similar; the percentage of residents who do not have a high school diploma decreased by 3.4 percent, and the percentage of residents with a Bachelors or higher increased by 2.8 percent to 46.7 percent in 2010. By contrast the national figure is 27.9 percent and the statewide figure is 26.1 percent are much lower, indicating a highly educated community of residents in Raleigh and Wake County.

## Employment

The economic downturn strongly affected both the City of Raleigh and Wake County residents' employment. Between 2000 and 2010, the City of Raleigh's unemployment rate increased from 3.8 percent to 10.7 percent (see Table 8). Likewise, unemployment County-wide increased 6.8 percent to 9.7 in 2010.

## Mode of Commute

The type of transportation Raleigh residents used to travel to work changed little between 2000 and 2010 (see Table 9). In the city, the only notable change is that people who drove alone increased by 2.5 percent to 81.2 percent, which is higher than the national rate, and those who carpooled decreased by 2.5 percent. Despite the increase in percentage of workers driving alone, the mean travel time to work decreased from 22 minutes to 21.6 minutes.

Wake County experienced a similar trend in commuting patterns: an increase in people who worked at home and drove alone, a decrease in carpooling, and a slight decrease in the mean travel time of workers. Compared to

# Chapter Two

Table 3. Race and Ethnicity in the City of Raleigh and Wake County, 2000-2010

Race & Ethnicity (% of pop.)	City of Raleigh			Wake County		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
White	63.3%	57.5%	-5.8%	72.4%	66.3%	-6.1%
Black/ African-American	27.8%	29.3%	1.5%	19.7%	20.7%	1.0%
American Indian	0.4%	0.5%	0.1%	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%
Asian	3.4%	4.3%	0.9%	3.4%	5.4%	2.0%
Other Race	3.2%	5.7%	2.5%	2.5%	4.5%	2.0%
Two or More Races	1.9%	2.6%	0.7%	1.6%	2.5%	0.9%
Hispanic/ Latino (any race)	7.0%	11.45%	4.4%	5.4%	9.8%	4.4%

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

Table 4. Population by Age in the City of Raleigh, Wake County and United States, 2000-2010

Age (% of pop.)	City of Raleigh			Wake County			United States		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Under 5	6.3%	7.2%	0.9%	7.2%	7.3%	0.1%	6.8%	6.5%	-0.3%
5 to 9 years	6.0%	6.5%	0.5%	7.3%	7.6%	0.3%	7.3%	6.6%	-0.7%
10 to 14 years	5.5%	5.9%	0.4%	6.9%	7.1%	0.2%	7.3%	6.7%	-0.6%
15 to 19 years	7.2%	7.2%	0%	6.5%	6.9%	0.4%	7.2%	7.1%	-0.1%
20 to 24 years	11.8%	10.1%	-1.7%	7.8%	6.9%	-0.9%	6.7%	7.0%	0.3%
25 to 34 years	20.7%	18.4%	-2.3%	18.1%	15.2%	-2.9%	14.2%	13.3%	-0.9%
35 to 44 years	15.9%	15.2%	-0.7%	18.4%	16.2%	-2.2%	16.0%	13.3%	-2.7%
45 to 54 years	11.9%	12.4%	0.5%	13.4%	14.6%	1.2%	13.4%	14.6%	1.2%
55 to 64 years	6.4%	8.8%	2.4%	6.9%	9.8%	2.9%	8.6%	11.8%	3.2%
65 to 74 years	2.7%	4.4%	1.7%	4.1%	5.0%	0.9%	6.5%	7.0%	0.5%
75 to 84 years	4.4%	2.6%	-1.8%	2.5%	2.6%	0.1%	4.4%	4.2%	-0.2%
85 years or older	2.9%	1.2%	-1.7%	0.8%	1.0%	0.2%	1.5%	1.8%	0.3%
Median Age	30.9	31.9	+1	32.9	34.4	+1.5	35.3	37.2	+1.9

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

Table 5. Gender as a Percentage of Population in the City of Raleigh, Wake County and United States, 2000-2010

Gender (% of pop.)	City of Raleigh			Wake County			United States		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Male	49.5%	48.3%	-1.2%	49.6%	48.7%	-0.9%	49.1%	49.2%	0.1%
Female	50.5%	51.7%	1.2%	50.4%	51.3%	0.9%	50.9%	50.8%	-0.1%

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

# Existing System Overview

Table 6. Household Income in the City of Raleigh and Wake County 2000-2010

Household Income (% of pop.)	City of Raleigh			Wake County		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Less than \$10,000	7.2%	6.2%	-1.0%	5.5%	4.7%	-0.8%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.6%	5.0%	0.4%	3.6%	4.3%	0.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.3%	12.5%	1.2%	9.2%	9.3%	0.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13.2%	10.5%	-2.7%	11.1%	9.1%	-2.0%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	16.9%	15.9%	-1.0%	15.4%	13.3%	-2.1%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.4%	18.7%	-1.7%	21.5%	18.9%	-2.6%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11.8%	11.6%	-0.2%	14.0%	13.3%	-0.7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	9.6%	10.9%	1.3%	12.9%	15.2%	2.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2.7%	4.3%	1.6%	3.7%	6.1%	2.4%
\$200,000 or more	2.3%	4.4%	2.1%	3.0%	5.8%	2.8%
<b>Median Income</b>	\$46,612	\$49,931	+\$3,319	\$54,988	\$61,426	+\$6,438

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

Table 7. Educational Attainment in the City of Raleigh, Wake County and United States 2000-2010

Education (% of pop. 25 or older)	City of Raleigh			Wake County			United States		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Less than 9th grade	4.2%	3.5%	-0.7%	3.8%	3.3%	-0.5%	7.6%	5.2%	-2.4%
9th - 12th grade, no diploma	7.3%	4.7%	-2.6%	6.9%	4.0%	-2.9%	12.0%	7.6%	-4.4%
High school graduate	16.2%	16.3%	0.1%	17.8%	16.8%	-1.0%	28.6%	31.2%	2.6%
Some college, no degrees	20.6%	21.1%	0.5%	20.1%	20.3%	0.2%	21.1%	16.8%	-4.3%
Associate's degree	6.9%	8.1%	1.2%	7.6%	8.8%	1.2%	6.3%	9.1%	2.8%
Bachelor's degree	30.4%	31.3%	0.9%	29.6%	31.3%	1.7%	15.5%	19.4%	3.9%
Master's degree or higher	14.4%	15.0%	0.6%	14.3%	15.4%	1.1%	8.9%	10.5%	1.6%

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

Table 8. Employment in the City of Raleigh, Wake County and United States, 2000-2010

Employment (% of pop. over 16)	City of Raleigh			Wake County			United States		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
% in Labor Force	72.7%	69.9%	-2.8%	73.8%	71.5%	-2.3%	63.9%	58.5%	-5.4%
% Unemployed	3.8%	10.7%	6.9%	2.9%	9.7%	6.8%	5.8%	9.6%	3.8%

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

# Chapter Two

**Table 9. Mode of Commute by City of Raleigh, Wake County, and United States Workers 2000-2010**

Commute (% of workers)	City of Raleigh			Wake County			United States		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Drove Alone	78.7%	81.2%	2.5%	81.1%	81.5%	0.4%	75.7%	76.6%	0.9%
Carpooled	11.5%	9.1%	-2.4%	11.2%	8.6%	-2.6%	12.2%	9.7%	-2.5%
Public Transit	2.4%	1.6%	-0.8%	1.2%	1.0%	-0.2%	4.7%	4.9%	0.2%
Walked	2.9%	1.8%	-1.1%	1.7%	1.3%	-0.4%	2.9%	2.8%	-0.1%
Other	1.3%	1.4%	0.1%	1.0%	1.4%	0.4%	0.7%	1.7%	1.0%
Worked at Home	3.3%	4.9%	1.6%	3.8%	6.3%	2.5%	3.3%	4.3%	1.0%
Mean Travel Time (min)	22	21.6	-0.4	24.7	23.9	-0.8	25.5	25.1	-0.4

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

**Table 10. Household Types in City of Raleigh and Wake County 2000-2010**

Household Type (% of pop.)	City of Raleigh			Wake County		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Family w/ kids under 18	26.5%	29.0%	2.5%	34.0%	34.6%	0.6%
Family w/o own kids under 18	28.0%	26.9%	-1.1%	31.6%	31.1%	-0.5%
Non-Family	45.5%	44.1%	-1.4%	34.4%	34.3%	-0.1%
HHs w/ people under 18	28.8%	31.3%	2.5%	36.2%	36.8%	0.6%
HHs w/ people over 65	14.4%	15.0%	0.6%	13.5%	16.1%	2.6%
Avg. HH size	2.30	2.36	0.06	2.51	2.55	0.04
Avg. family size	2.97	3.06	0.09	3.06	3.12	0.06

HH = Household Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010

**Table 11. Housing Occupancy in City of Raleigh, Wake County, and United States Workers 2000-2010**

Housing Occupancy	City of Raleigh			Wake County			United States		
	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change	2000	2010	Change
Total Housing Units	120,699	176,124	+55,425	258,953	371,836	+112,883	115,904,641	131,704,730	+15,800,089
% Units Occupied	93.3%	92.5%	-0.8%	93.5%	93.0%	-0.5%	91.0%	88.6%	-2.4%
% Vacant	6.7%	7.5%	0.8%	6.5%	7.0%	0.5%	9.0%	11.4%	2.4%
% Owner-Occupied	51.6%	53.5%	1.9%	65.9%	65.1%	-0.8%	66.2%	65.1%	-1.1%
% Renter-Occupied	48.4%	46.5%	-1.9%	34.1%	34.9%	0.8%	33.8%	34.9%	1.1%

Source: US Census, 2000 and 2010



# Existing System Overview

Raleigh residents, Wake County residents outside the city traveled an average of 23.9 minutes to work, a little over two minutes more than their in-town counterparts.

## Household Types

The most common type of household in the City of Raleigh is the non-family, which comprises 44.1 percent of all households, which may be higher due to several universities in the area. However, between 2000 and 2010 (see Table 10) the percentage of households that were families with children under 18 grew by 2.5 percent to 29 percent, and non-family households decreased by 1.4 percent. This shift in the City towards more families with children under 18 is reflected in the growing percentage of children in Raleigh. In contrast, Wake County had an almost even three-way split of household types: roughly one third were families with children under 18 (34.6 percent), about one third were families without kids under 18 (31.1 percent), and about one third (34.3 percent) were non-family households.

## 2.3.3 Housing Characteristics

Demographics are usually thought of in terms of people, but an overview of the City's housing characteristics can provide additional clues about the population. For example, high levels of homeownership typically signify stable communities, whereas high levels of vacancy can indicate a struggling local economy. The number of new residential units not only mirror population growth, but can also provide clues as to how densely a community is growing as well based on residential building type and annexations.

In absolute numbers, the amount of housing in the City of Raleigh grew by 55,425 units between 2000 and 2010, as shown in Table 11, a jump of 45.9 percent. County-wide, there were 112,883 units added between 2000 and 2010, an increase of 43.6 percent. Both of these historic rates of housing growth are phenomenal, and are above national trends. When compared to absolute gains in population, the amount of housing is growing at almost exactly the same rate, indicating no significant change in household size.

According to the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the most common type of housing in Raleigh is single-family detached homes, the great majority of which were built after 1950; only 6 percent of existing housing was constructed prior to 1950. The Comprehensive Plan also noted the rise in homeownership, but pointed out that Raleigh is still lagging behind the national average. This may be due to a higher percentage of multi-family rental housing (see Table 10) and a large student population (see Table 4).

## 2.3.4 Summary of Implications

With an understanding of Raleigh's population, the next step is to apply these findings to parks and recreation needs. What does this population growth, characteristics, housing, and lifestyles mean for the next twenty years of parks and recreation planning?

### Population Growth

The City of Raleigh has experienced rapid growth in both population and land area. Raleigh is expected to continue to grow in population at a healthy pace, and will likely be challenged to not only "catch up" in providing services to the existing population, but plan ahead for future residents. It is essential that the City identify and secure land for parks and facilities now to accommodate the anticipated demand and urbanization.

It is also important to note that the City's population is expected to decrease as a percentage of the County's total population. This implies that the City will have a comparatively less percentage of tax revenue from the County to provide services to residents, but depending on the quality and location of other municipalities' services the City may still be expected by citizens to provide facilities and services.

### Population Characteristics

As a rapidly urbanizing community, the City of Raleigh is becoming a more diverse place in terms of race and ethnicity. From a parks and recreation perspective, this means that the City will be increasingly called upon to serve a broader range of needs developing flexible parks

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and facilities will be key. Taken a step further, the City has an opportunity to provide community gathering places and special events to help bring different groups together and foster a spirit of community.

Raleigh's age profile is also changing in two different ways. There are more children in the City whose families will likely desire nearby neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and youth programs. Concurrently, the 55 to 74 age group, which includes Baby Boomers, are aging, and many may stay in Raleigh to "age in place" due to the City's amenities and moderate climate. The City will need to consider how to improve the accessibility of its parks to meet an aging population's needs; there may also be an increased demand for walking trails and community centers.

Like most of the country, Raleigh residents have suffered as a result of the economic downturn, and now have significantly less purchasing power than in 2000. It is essential that parks and recreation opportunities remain affordable, and that the city provide affordable recreation and leisure alternatives.

As Raleigh expands, the transportation network will also need to expand to accommodate the need to travel greater distances. The City is currently heavily oriented towards single-occupancy cars as the mode of transportation to work.

## Housing

Most of Raleigh's housing is single-family, detached units built after 1950. Nation-wide, many neighborhoods built between 1960 and 1980 lack sidewalks. A large number of Raleigh's homes were built in this era, and lack these facilities, though the City has prepared a Bicycle Transportation Plan to address this issue. As the City improves roadways in these communities, efforts should be made to improve pedestrian connections as well. For the 6 percent of Raleigh homes built prior to 1950, the parks and recreation system can actively support the health of these historic communities through attractive streetscapes and the provision of adequate open spaces. Helping to maintain the health of these neighborhoods is critical to Raleigh's sense of place.

Home ownership is rising in Raleigh, but it is still behind the county and national figures, mostly due to the large number of students. Parks and open spaces contribute significantly to quality of life and can ultimately help make the city a place where people want to stay. This not only improves the tax base, but provides stability and security to neighborhoods.

## 2.3.5 Conclusion

The City of Raleigh is growing and diversifying. Noting historic trends in population growth the City has grown at a tremendous rate. As a result, the City may need to "catch up" to its population growth and ensure that it is meeting the parks and recreation needs of its current residents equitably. The City's changing age profile is important when considering equitable facilities and services as a growing number of children and young families and an aging Baby Boomers segment, change demands for specific facilities and services. This will be evident in the Needs and Priority Assessment, which includes public engagement. At the same time, a projected population growth of 180,000 by 2030 increases the need for the City to plan for growth by acquiring additional parkland in advance of growth in urbanizing areas.

### Citations:

- <sup>1</sup>2010 U.S. Census
- <sup>2</sup>City of Raleigh 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Adopted October, 2009. Pg 11.
- <sup>3</sup>City of Raleigh 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Adopted October, 2009. Pg 11.
- <sup>4</sup>City of Raleigh 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Adopted October, 2009. Pg 16. Note that CAMPO included the City's future annexation areas, and did not study potential limiting factors like water supply.
- <sup>5</sup>National Center for Education Statistics. Digest of Education Statistics: Table 268. Degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by level of degree and sex of student: Selected years, 1869-70 through 2018-19. Online: [http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09\\_268.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09_268.asp) Accessed 9/2012
- <sup>6</sup>U.S. Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Inflation Calculator. Online: [http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm)



# Existing System Overview

## Section 2.4 | Existing Parks and Facilities Overview

### 2.4.1 Introduction to Methodology

With a better understanding of existing and future population trends within Raleigh, the existing system overview can turn towards existing parks and facilities. In order to observe system-wide successes or opportunities, the Project Team reviewed a sampling of parks and facilities based on geographical mixture and the Department's existing classification system. Map C identifies the sample of parks visited. The Capital Area Greenway Network was observed separately, with findings documented in Section 2.5 of this report. The following criteria was used and is based in part on guidelines developed by Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. A copy of the evaluation form can be found in Section 6.1 of the Appendix along with individual park findings.

#### Proximity/Access/Linkages:

- Is the park easy to reach?
- Can someone who lives nearby easily and safely walk into the park?
- Does the park have clear directional and informational signage/wayfinding?

#### Comfort and Image:

- What is the first impression a user has of the park?
- Is the park clean and well kept?
- Are there a variety of comfortable places to sit?
- Does the park provide sufficient protection from inclement weather?

#### Uses and Sociability:

- If a park space, is there a mix of things to do?
- If a special use park, how well does it fulfill its intended function?
- Is the park consistently busy/activated?
- How much of the park space is used versus parts that are unused?
- Is flexibility of spaces maintained?

#### Environmental Sustainability (Developed and Natural):

- How is stormwater being handled?
- Are there any partnership/environmental opportunities?
- Is the park energy and resource efficient?
- Does the park design/location facilitate and encourage multi-modal transportation?
- Does the landscape utilize native plant materials?
- Does the park or facility utilize stewardship techniques?



*Fred Fletcher Park*



*Lake Lynn Park*

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## 2.4.2 Facility Ratings

Each park observed was assigned a score based on how well it met the aforementioned criteria based on the time of observation. Once all scores were assigned, a matrix was created (see **Table 12**) that allowed system-wide trends to become visible. It is important to note that there is no “one size fits all” set of criteria that can accurately evaluate every type of park, however, seeing each individual park’s score helps to generate a general idea if that park is:

### Exceeding Expectations:

- These parks are functioning as intended and are also exceptionally well maintained, aesthetically pleasing, safe and often demonstrates sustainable techniques.
- The park accommodates a wide variety of uses and maintains a consistently high level of activity while still maintaining flexibility.
- The park shows clear evidence of good design standards and embraced heritage resources (if applicable).
- There are many ways for users to access the park including via mass transit, walking, and biking.
- Multi-purpose fields or lawn surfaces are maintained well and could be considered tournament/competition grade.
- Sports fields may contain premium amenities such as score boards, enclosed dugouts, bleachers and lighting.
- These parks score in the 100-75 range.

### Meeting Expectations:

- From a programmatic level, these parks function as intended.
- They are generally well maintained, and may be aesthetically pleasing.
- The park can accommodate several different activities and has a moderate level of activity.
- This park may or may not have a transit stop nearby, but has reasonable sidewalk connectivity.
- This park is generally compatible with the surrounding land uses and provides the user with a feeling of safety.
- Field surfaces are well maintained and playable, but typically do not include the premium features that may be present in parks that “exceed expectations.”
- These types of parks score in the 74-50 range.

### Not Meeting Expectations:

- These parks are not currently performing as intended.
- Although they can still be well maintained and/or aesthetically pleasing, they typically are not.
- These types of parks may have a consistently low level of activity; few accommodated uses, and may not be compatible with the surrounding land uses.
- These parks may not be perceived as safe by their users.
- It is common for these parks to be difficult to access either by public transit, bicycle, or on foot.
- Field surfaces are not typically well maintained, or the fields are so over-programmed that adequate maintenance is impossible.
- These types of parks score in the 49-0 range.

## 2.4.3 Individual Facilities Analysis

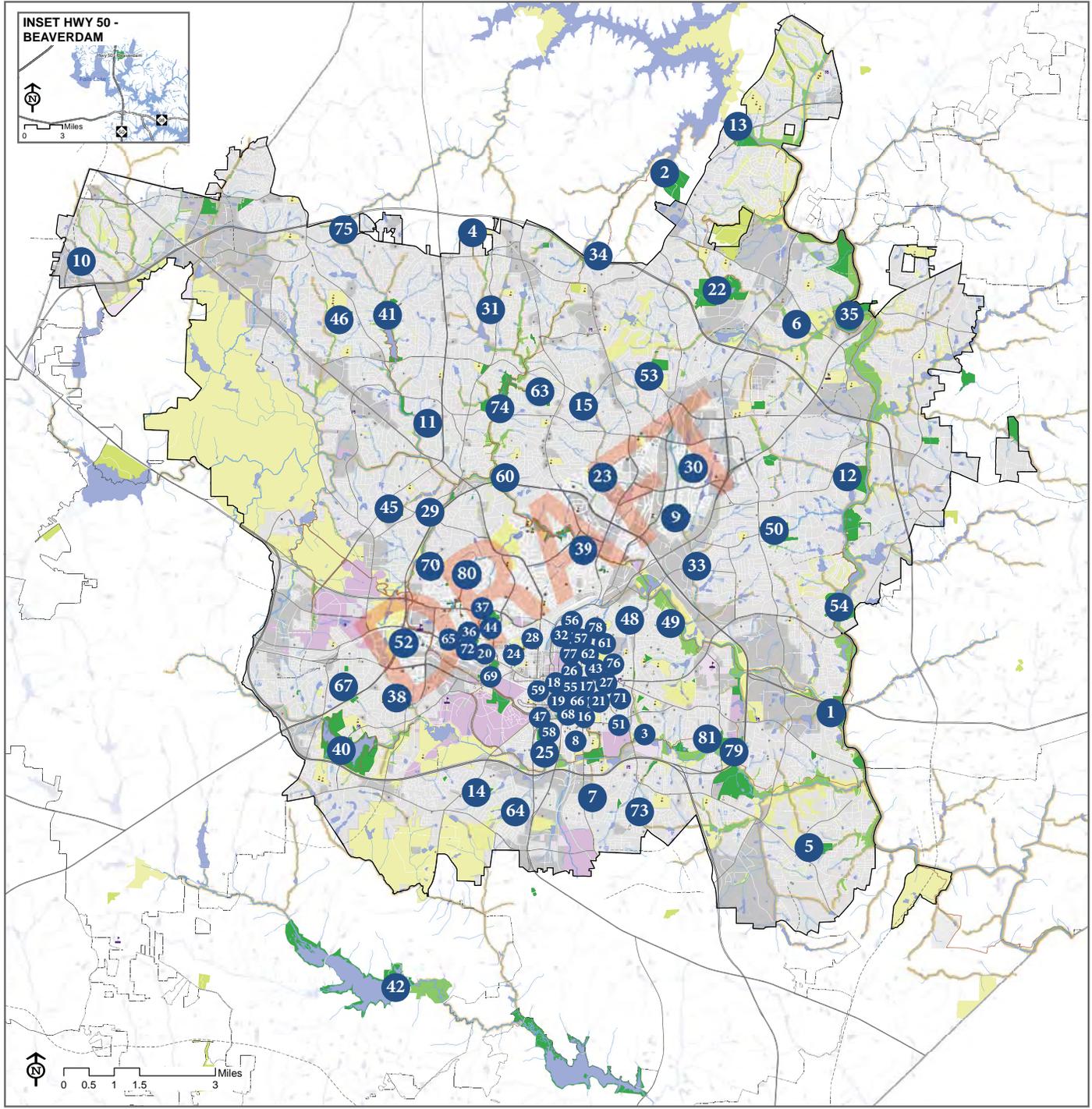
The following are the results of the individual site observations. A sampling of eighty-one parks and facilities were evaluated by the Project Team over a two week period in October, 2012. Parks and facilities are listed alphabetically in **Table 12**, with identifying scores for each category, weighted overall scores and category score summaries on the last page.

Each park’s observation provides a summary of all four criteria subjects along with site-specific observational notes. It should be noted that these are based on the team’s observations during a limited time period and do not necessarily reflect the recommendations produced during the Needs Assessment portion of this report which includes public engagement.

The following map (see **Map C**) identifies parks visited by the Project Team. In addition to a geographic mix, the team visited an array of parks from each of the Parks and Recreation Department’s current classifications; mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, metro parks, nature preserves and special.

# Existing System Overview

Map C. City of Raleigh Parks and Facilities Observational Sites



**LEGEND**

City of Raleigh Park	COR CAG Corridors	Jurisdiction	State Site	Universities and Colleges	Major Road
City of Raleigh Greenway	Greenway Trail	Raleigh ETJ	Wake County Site	Public School	Proposed Major Road
Wake County Park	Lake/Pond/Reservoir	Residential	Historic Landmark	Private School	Street
Non-City of Raleigh Parks & Open Space	Rivers and Streams	Non-Residential	Library	Place of Worship	Proposed Street

Eri is the source of the Terrain Base Map. Other data sources include the City of Raleigh and Wake County.

existing system overview



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Table 12. Park Observation Results

### How to Read Table:

Criteria are listed by category in the far left column. Scores are based on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest score and 5 representing the highest score possible. In cases where a specific criteria is not applicable, a score of 'n/a' is listed. Final park scores are weighted to a scale of 0-100, with 100 being the highest possible. Numbers shown above park or facility names correspond to locations shown on Map C.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Anderson Point													
Wilkerson Nature Preserve													
Apollo Heights													
Baileywick													
Barwell Road													
Berkshire Downs West													
Biltmore Hills													
Bragg Street													
Brentwood													
Brier Creek													
Brookhaven													
Buffaloe Road Athletic													
Canoe Launch at Falls Lake													
<b>Proximity/ Access/ Linkages (max 30)</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>
Visibility from a distance	3	2	4	3	2	4	3	4	2	5	2	4	1
Ease in walking to the park	3	2	4	3	1	3	4	3	2	5	3	3	2
Transit Access	2	2	5	2	2	3	4	5	4	2	1	2	1
Clarity of information/ signage	5	5	5	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	2	5	5
ADA Compliance	5	4	4	4	5	1	3	3	2	5	2	5	2
Lighting	4	5	3	4	5	5	4	2	5	3	4	5	4
<b>Comfort &amp; Image (max 30)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>
Overall attractiveness	5	5	4	5	5	3	4	3	4	3	3	5	5
Feeling of safety	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	3	5	5	4	5	4
Overall maintenance (Exterior)	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	3	5	5
Overall maintenance (Interior)	5	5	5	5	5	n/a	4	n/a	3	5	n/a	5	n/a
Comfort of places to sit	5	5	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	2	3	5	3
Protection from bad weather	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	2	5	5	3	5	1
<b>Uses and Activities &amp; Sociability (max 20)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>
Mix of Uses & Activities	5	3	4	4	4	3	5	3	5	5	3	5	2
Level of activity	4	4	5	4	4	2	4	3	5	5	2	5	5
Sense of pride/ Ownership	4	5	5	4	5	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	5
Programming Flexibility	5	4	4	4	4	2	3	2	5	5	2	3	2
<b>Environmental Sustainability (max 30)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>
Stormwater Management	3	5	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	2	3	3	3
Multi-modal Capacity	3	2	5	2	1	3	3	4	5	3	2	5	2
Co-location/ Integration	3	3	3	2	5	3	2	3	3	5	2	5	3
Facility Energy Efficiency	4	5	4	3	3	n/a	4	n/a	3	4	n/a	5	5
Stewardship (Exterior)	4	5	4	5	4	3	3	3	5	3	3	5	5
Stewardship (Interior)	3	5	5	5	5	n/a	4	n/a	2	5	n/a	5	n/a
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>68</b>

Exceeding Expectations

Meeting Expectations

Not Meeting Expectations



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14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Carolina Pines	Cedar Hills	Chavis	City Cemetery	City Museum, Raleigh	City Plaza	Compiegne	Davie Street	Durant nature	Eastgate	Edna Metz Wells	Eliza Pool	Fayetteville Street	Fisher Street	Fred Fletcher	Glen Eden	Green Road	Greystone Recreation Center	Halifax	Hill Street	Honeycutt	Horseshoe Farm	Isabella Cannon	Jaycee
21	18	26	23	24	28	24	23	20	26	19	24	30	12	29	19	27	23	20	25	19	10	25	22
3	2	5	5	4	5	5	4	1	4	2	5	5	2	5	3	5	3	3	3	2	1	3	4
3	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	4	5	2	5	4	5	3	4	5	3	1	5	4
4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	3	5	3	5	2	5	2	5	3	2	2	4	4
3	2	3	4	3	3	3	4	5	4	2	4	5	1	5	4	4	5	3	4	4	2	4	3
3	3	4	1	4	5	2	3	3	4	1	4	5	1	4	3	3	5	2	5	3	1	5	3
5	5	4	3	3	5	5	3	5	5	5	4	5	3	5	3	5	5	3	5	5	3	4	4
24	21	28	17	25	25	22	23	25	23	16	26	24	14	29	22	30	29	20	30	27	18	25	25
4	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4
4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	5	5	3	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4
4	3	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
4	3	5	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	3	4	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	4	4	5	5	n/a	5	4	n/a	n/a	5
3	4	4	1	2	5	4	3	4	5	3	4	5	2	5	3	5	4	3	5	4	3	5	3
5	4	5	1	5	5	4	5	4	4	2	5	4	2	5	4	5	5	3	5	5	1	5	5
17	14	18	12	15	20	6	13	17	18	7	17	18	12	20	16	17	16	18	15	15	12	15	19
5	5	5	2	3	5	1	4	5	5	1	5	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	5	2	3	5
5	4	5	3	3	5	1	3	4	5	2	3	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	2	5	5
4	3	5	5	5	5	2	4	3	5	3	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3	3	4	5
3	2	3	2	4	5	2	2	5	3	1	5	4	2	5	3	3	4	5	3	4	5	3	4
21	19	24	15	21	17	17	19	23	19	20	22	17	11	24	19	24	20	18	29	19	20	20	24
3	3	2	2	2	3	3	1	5	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	3	3	3	5	3	5	3	3
4	2	5	5	5	5	3	4	3	4	4	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	5
2	4	3	3	5	5	1	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	5	2	5	4	5	5	2	3	3	3
4	3	5	n/a	3	n/a	5	3	3	3	5	3	n/a	n/a	3	3	3	5	3	5	3	5	5	4
4	4	4	5	3	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	n/a	4	5	4	5	5	4
4	3	5	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	3	4	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	4	5	5	5	n/a	5	4	n/a	n/a	5
75	65	87	71	77	95	73	71	77	91	65	81	94	52	93	69	89	84	80	90	73	63	89	82

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Table 12. Park Observation Results (con't)

	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
	Kentwood	Kiwanis	Lake Johnson	Lake Lynn	Lake Wheeler	Lane Street	Latta Property	Laurel Hills	Leesville	Lenoir Street	Lions	Lockwood	Marsh Creek
<b>Proximity/ Access/ Linkages (max 30)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>
Visibility from a distance	4	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	2
Ease in walking to the park	5	5	3	3	2	5	2	2	4	4	2	4	4
Transit Access	4	5	2	2	2	5	3	5	2	5	5	4	4
Clarity of information/ signage	5	4	4	5	2	5	1	2	3	4	5	2	4
ADA Compliance	2	3	4	4	2	4	2	3	4	2	4	5	5
Lighting	5	5	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	5	4	4
<b>Comfort &amp; Image (max 30)</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>
Overall attractiveness	3	4	4	5	3	5	4	4	4	3	5	5	5
Feeling of safety	4	5	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	4
Overall maintenance (Exterior)	2	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	5	5	5
Overall maintenance (Interior)	1	3	5	5	4	n/a	n/a	5	5	n/a	5	n/a	5
Comfort of places to sit	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	3	3	1	3	5	4
Protection from bad weather	5	5	3	4	5	3	3	5	5	3	5	2	5
<b>Uses and Activities &amp; Sociability (max 20)</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>
Mix of Uses & Activities	5	5	4	5	5	4	2	5	4	4	5	4	5
Level of activity	4	3	5	5	5	4	2	5	3	3	4	5	5
Sense of pride/ Ownership	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5
Programming Flexibility	1	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	5	4
<b>Environmental Sustainability (max 30)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>26</b>
Stormwater Management	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	2	3
Multi-modal Capacity	4	5	3	2	2	5	3	4	3	4	4	5	5
Co-location/ Integration	2	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3
Facility Energy Efficiency	2	3	3	4	3	n/a	n/a	3	5	n/a	4	n/a	5
Stewardship (Exterior)	2	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	5	5
Stewardship (Interior)	2	3	4	5	4	n/a	n/a	5	5	n/a	4	n/a	5
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>87</b>

Exceeding Expectations
  Meeting Expectations
  Not Meeting Expectations



# Existing System Overview

51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74
Martin L King Jr Memorial	Method	Millbrook - Exchange	Millburnie	Moore Square	Mordecai	Mordecai Square	Mount Hope Cemetery	Nash Square	North Hills	Oakwood	Oakwood Commons	Optimist	Peach Road	Pollock	Pope House	Powell Drive	Progress Energy Center	Pullen	Ridge Road	Roberts	Rose Garden & Little Theater	Sanderford Road	Shelley Lake - Sertoma
27	24	29	15	27	21	29	19	28	17	22	24	17	19	20	24	18	29	28	17	21	25	24	24
5	4	5	1	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	3	3	5	5	3	5	5	2	5	4	4	4
5	4	5	2	5	3	5	3	5	3	4	5	2	3	3	5	3	5	4	4	4	5	3	4
5	5	5	2	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5	3	4	5	2	5	5	2	3	4	5	5
4	3	5	3	4	4	4	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	5	2	3	4	3	5
5	3	4	2	4	2	5	2	5	3	2	2	2	4	1	3	2	5	4	4	3	3	4	2
3	5	5	5	4	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	4
20	26	30	14	17	18	30	16	23	15	26	22	20	24	19	25	16	28	29	17	28	29	25	22
5	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	5	3	4	5	3	4	4	5	2	5	5	3	5	5	4	4
5	4	5	3	4	4	5	3	5	3	5	5	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	3	5	5	4	4
4	5	5	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	3	4	4	4	2	5	5	3	4	5	5	4
n/a	4	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	4	4	n/a	5	n/a	5	4	3	5	4	4	3
4	4	5	3	3	3	5	3	5	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	4	4	5	1	4	5	3	3
2	5	5	1	3	3	5	2	3	3	4	3	4	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4
12	14	18	11	17	15	19	13	17	14	16	19	14	16	15	15	11	17	19	10	19	11	19	17
2	5	5	3	4	4	5	3	3	3	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5
3	3	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	5	5	3	4	3	3	2	4	5	1	5	3	5	5
4	3	5	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	3	4	5	5	2	5	5	3	5	3	5	4
3	3	3	1	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	4	2	4	3
10	21	26	17	16	13	25	13	15	9	18	15	21	19	15	19	15	26	27	17	22	23	23	23
1	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	4	2	3	2	2	3	2	3
5	3	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	2	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	5	2	4	3	5	5
2	4	5	5	3	3	4	3	3	2	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	5	4	3	5	3	4
n/a	4	4	n/a	3	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	4	3	n/a	3	3	5	4	3	4	3	5	3
2	4	5	3	3	4	5	4	5	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	2	5	5	3	4	5	3	4
n/a	4	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	4	4	n/a	4	n/a	5	5	3	5	4	5	4
73	77	94	60	81	71	94	64	87	58	75	84	65	71	73	75	63	91	94	55	82	80	83	78

existing system overview



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Table 12. Park Observation Results (con't)

	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	
	Strickland	Tarboro Road	Tucker House	Vallie Henderson	Walnut Creek North	Windemere Beaver Dam	Worthdale	Total
<b>Proximity/ Access/ Linkages (max 30)</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>
Visibility from a distance	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	73
Ease in walking to the park	2	5	5	4	1	2	3	72
Transit Access	2	4	5	5	1	2	2	73
Clarity of information/ signage	4	5	4	2	4	1	2	68
ADA Compliance	5	4	3	4	4	2	4	65
Lighting	5	3	3	4	4	3	4	80
<b>Comfort &amp; Image (max 30)</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>
Overall attractiveness	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	84
Feeling of safety	5	5	4	5	4	4	3	84
Overall maintenance (Exterior)	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	86
Overall maintenance (Interior)	n/a	5	5	5	4	n/a	4	83
Comfort of places to sit	4	3	3	4	3	2	2	70
Protection from bad weather	2	5	5	5	2	2	4	78
<b>Uses and Activities &amp; Sociability (max 20)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>
Mix of Uses & Activities	4	5	3	3	2	3	5	78
Level of activity	5	5	5	3	2	4	5	79
Sense of pride/ Ownership	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	83
Programming Flexibility	4	4	4	3	2	3	3	66
<b>Environmental Sustainability (max 30)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>
Stormwater Management	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	54
Multi-modal Capacity	3	5	5	4	2	3	3	73
Co-location/ Integration	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	66
Facility Energy Efficiency	n/a	4	3	n/a	3	n/a	4	85
Stewardship (Exterior)	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	81
Stewardship (Interior)	n/a	4	5	5	5	n/a	4	83
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>69</b>	

Exceeding Expectations
  Meeting Expectations
  Not Meeting Expectations

existing system overview



# Existing System Overview

## 2.4.4 Successes of Existing Park System

The following are examples of successes of the existing parks system observed by the Project Team. In addition, corresponding policies and actions from the 2030 Comp Plan have been identified in order to assist in the integration of these initiatives into the System Plan. Policies and actions listed are not exhaustive. Instead, these lists provide a summary of potential corresponding efforts. This document's implementation plan (Chapter V) provides a more thorough evaluation of the 2030 Comp Plan.

### Appearance Factor of Maintenance

The overwhelming majority of the parks visited by the project team appeared to be well maintained. There were few incidences of litter, the landscape appeared well kept, and most of the park structures were in good or stable condition. Despite heavy or over use of some facilities the general condition of facilities and amenities was good.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 6.1 - Innovative Maintenance Strategies

### Making Parks Green Through Sustainability

Many parks provided on-site recycling, which appeared to be well used. Additionally, many of the park landscapes, most notably the newer parks, incorporate native plant materials. Standards for newly designed and constructed parks show a vast improvement to the handling of stormwater and attention to water quality. In addition, solar and LED lighting is being installed throughout the system and some parks offer charging stations for electric vehicles. Facilities, mostly a number of community and neighborhood centers, have been updated with new energy efficient lighting and HVAC systems.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 4.2 - Sustainable Park Design
- PR 4.2 - Sustainable Practice Development
- PR 6.3 - Park Stewardship
- PR 6.6 - Stewardship Capacity
- EP 1.7 - Sustainable Development
- EP 1.8 - Sustainable Sites
- EP 3.8 - Low Impact Development

### Increase Use by Connectivity

For a predominantly suburban community, the City of Raleigh exhibits good overall connectivity near parks. Multi-modal options are offered at a number of the larger community and metro parks throughout the City, however, complete access is still lacking. Shelley Lake Park is a wonderful example of park facilities serving as a Park and Ride facility while also providing connectivity to mass transit for park users, a wonderful combination.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 3.6 - Greenway Connectivity
- PR 3.8 - Pedestrian Links to Greenways
- PR 5.4 - Improving Park Access
- T 5.4 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity
- T 5.7 - Capital Area Greenway

### Making Parks Last with Higher Quality

The newer parks in Raleigh, such as Hill Street Park and renovated facilities such as Jaycee Park Community Center, are raising the bar for sustainability, quality, and design within the park system, to a much higher level. These parks exhibit an awareness of the need for connectivity, sustainability, and functionality within park design. Additionally, the quality of their furnishings, materials, and construction is high.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- HP 1.1 - Stewardship of Place
- EP 1.9 - Sustainable Public Realm

## 2.4.5 Opportunities for Existing Park System

### Universal Accessibility

Accessibility can be improved system-wide, most notably in older parks. Clear markings for accessible parking spaces and routes were lacking in many parks. Many seating areas were often set back from accessible routes or located within turf areas. Playgrounds in many cases lacked accessible routes and either had a sand or engineered wood mulch surface which typically lacked the level of maintenance needed to provide universal access. Some park shelters lacked accessible picnic tables and/ or restroom facilities.

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New playgrounds and parks throughout the system have an increased level of accessibility which is fully reflective of the needs demonstrated by users. Parks such as Marsh Creek and Strickland Road Park are great examples of newer parks which demonstrate excellent accessibility.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 2.2 - Park Accessibility
- PR 4.6 - Universal Access

## Leading by Example with Stormwater Management:

A system-wide approach to stormwater management is needed. Several older parks throughout the system lack any kind of storage, treatment and management system for stormwater on-site. Some parks have erosion problems due to development of amenities within high sloped areas and lack vegetation which adds to the issues of water quality. Other parks channel stormwater from parking areas to nearby streets which tax the existing infrastructure with additional runoff. In general, parks should be examples within the community of good water management techniques. Strickland Road Park and a number of parks with existing lakes provide good examples of stormwater management and/or techniques to improve stormwater quality.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 6.1 - Innovative Maintenance
- EP 3.12 - Mitigation Stormwater Impacts
- EP 3.16 - Stormwater Management
- PU 5.1 - Sustainable Stormwater
- PU 5.6 - Rainwater Collection and Storage

## Economics of Program Flexibility:

Several parks throughout the system provide single-use facilities and/or programming that requires a high level of investment for equipment and construction but do not offer flexibility for multiple uses. Examples include the large number of baseball and softball fields, particularly lighted fields which are commonly sited in configurations or locations which limit use as multi-purpose fields. Configuring fields to face towards one another with lighting along the perimeter can provide the opportunity to locate a multi-purpose field between the baseball fields. Athletic fields represent a high level of maintenance which should be utilized by multiple programs.

Many new community or neighborhood centers are being constructed with flexible multi-purpose rooms with moveable walls. Two centers, Barwell and Brier Creek Community Centers are directly connected to schools which provide a high level of flexibility as the centers are often used for school programs during the day and community events in the evening and weekends. Extended hours for these centers is critical in order to provide ample community use of the facilities.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 1.3 - Coordinated Park Planning
- PR 2.8 - Creating Recreation Facilities through Adaptive Reuse
- PR 4.1 - Recreation Facilities and Programs
- PR 4.9 - Adequate Indoor Facilities

## Leading with Wayfinding:

The City has implemented a new set of standards (Master Sign Program, 2006) for wayfinding which is being implemented as funding allows but was not represented in all parks observed. There was a clear difference in the type of wayfinding in parks with the new standards implemented compared to parks which lack the standards. Two very helpful features of the new signage standards are a location map and directional signage for amenities. As these standards are implemented in all parks, these features should be included. Wayfinding is an important part of encouraging users to explore park offerings and overall branding of the system. Include such features as website addresses, phone numbers, QR Codes, and bus route information as part of the signage information to assist user education.

Interpretive and educational signage is lacking in many parks which offered exercise stations or contained natural features. This represents a missed educational opportunity. The addition of directional signage can inform park users of nearby community and commercial points of interest, providing a more meaningful experience.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 5.3 - Interpretive Conservation Activities
- PR 6.5 - Awareness of Natural Resource Areas
- AC 1.1 - Public Art and Neighborhood Identity
- AC 1.2 - Public Art in Public Spaces and Public Projects

# Existing System Overview

## Section 2.5 | Existing Greenway Network Overview

### 2.5.1 Introduction to Methodology

Greenway network observations included a sampling of the overall Capital Area Greenway System by the Project Team by foot and bicycle. Specific greenway trail findings can be found in Section 6.2 of the Appendix. Individual greenway notes are provided for each segment observed.

#### Access and Connectivity:

- What amenities and destinations are nearby?
- Is there connectivity to adjacent sidewalks and bike lanes?
- Are there connections to additional trails?
- Is the greenway accessible?

#### Use and Activities:

- Is there a good mix of uses?
- What is the observed level of use?
- Are there any potentials for user conflicts?

#### User Safety:

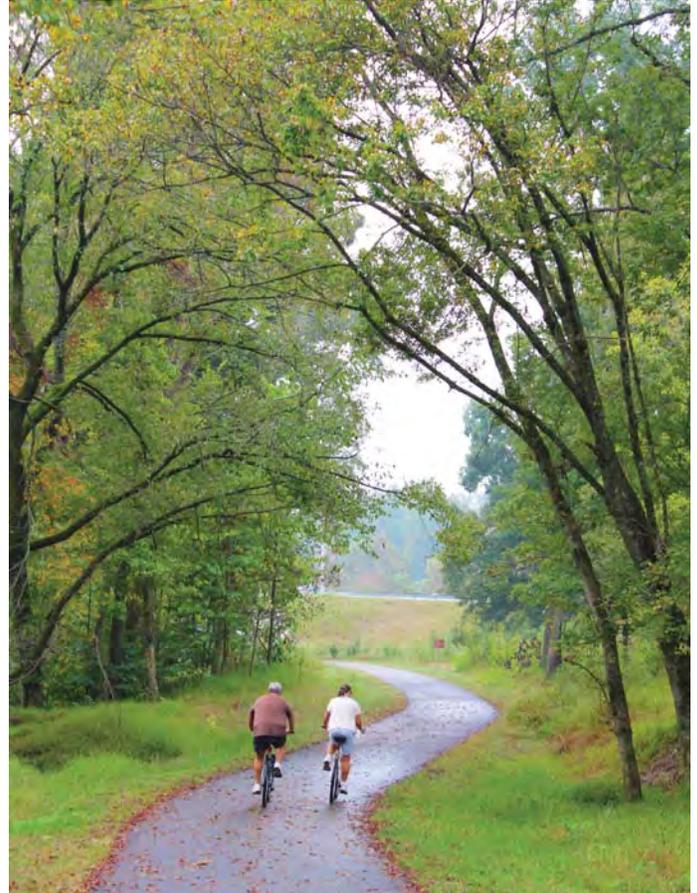
- Is there appropriate signage and wayfinding?
- Are sitelines and clear views provided?
- Are crosswalks sufficiently marked?
- Are there pedestrian signals at intersections?
- Condition and type of lighting

#### Trail Amenities:

- Are seating options provided along greenway?
- Is there parking provided where appropriate?
- Are bicycle parking facilities provided?
- Are there restrooms provided?
- Is there a wayfinding system established or implemented?
- What type of landscape is provided and is it sustainable, native or low maintenance?

#### Trail Infrastructure:

- How is stormwater and drainage treated?
- Is the greenway clean and maintained well?
- What is the condition of the greenway tread?
- Are shoulders provided where appropriate?

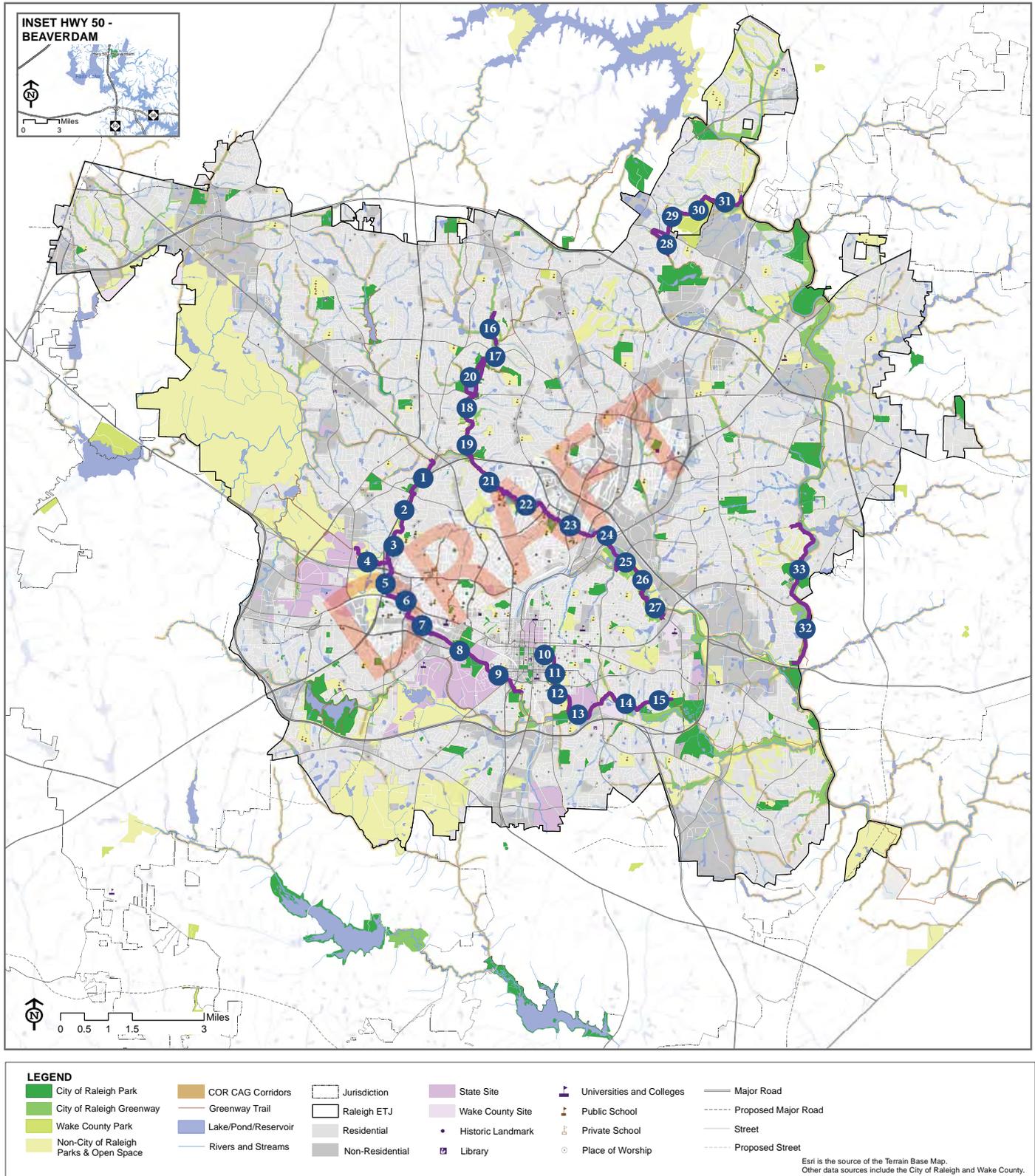


### 2.5.2 Individual Greenway Analysis

Results of the individual greenway observations can be found in Table 13. A sampling of the Capital Area Greenway System were observed by the Project Team over a one week period in October, 2012. Observations help identify the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvements for system-wide issues as well as specific greenway trails. Map D identifies greenway trails observed by the Project Team.

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Map D. Capital Area Greenway Network Observational Sites



existing system overview

# Existing System Overview

**Table 13. Greenway Observation Results**

**How to Read Table:**

Criteria are listed by category in the far left column. Scores are based on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest score and 5 representing the highest score possible. In cases where a specific criteria is not applicable, a score of 'n/a' is listed. Final greenway scores are weighted to a scale of 0-100, with 100 being the highest possible. Numbers shown above greenway names correspond to locations shown on Map D.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Crabtree Creek/ House Creek Trail</b> Blue Ridge Road to Glen Eden Road										
<b>House Creek Trail</b> Glen Eden Road to Horton Street										
<b>House Creek Trail</b> Horton Street to Reedy Creek Trail										
<b>Reedy Creek Trail</b> House Creek Trail to Reedy Creek Road										
<b>Reedy Creek Trail</b> Pedestrian Bridge to Meredith College										
<b>Reedy Creek Trail</b> Meredith College to NC State Sullivan										
<b>Rocky Branch Trail</b> Sullivan/ Gorman St. to Morrill Underpass										
<b>Rocky Branch Trail</b> Morrill Underpass to Hunt Drive										
<b>Rocky Branch Trail</b> Hunt Drive to Mount Hope Cemetery										
<b>Little Rock Trail</b> Martin Street to Chavis Way (Martin Connector)										
<b>Access + Connectivity (max 20)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>
Nearby Destinations	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5
Adjacent Bike Lanes + Sidewalks	4	3	4	4	1	2	4	1	4	1
Trail Spurs or Trail Connections	5	n/a	5	5	2	1	5	4	n/a	n/a
ADA Accessible	4	4	4	1	4	3	4	2	3	n/a
<b>Use + Activities (max 15)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>
Mix of Uses	5	2	4	5	5	3	5	3	3	n/a
Level of Observed Activity	5	4	4	5	4	3	5	1	2	n/a
Potential for User Conflicts	5	3	4	1	4	0	2	1	4	n/a
<b>User Safety (max 35)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>
Regulatory Signage	5	4	4	5	3	3	1	1	1	1
Site Line/ Clear Views	5	3	4	3	5	5	2	1	3	n/a
Marked Crosswalks	4	1	1	4	2	4	4	2	3	n/a
Access Control	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	5	n/a
Pedestrian Signals	n/a	1	1	5	n/a	5	n/a	1	1	n/a
Lighting	1	1	1	n/a	1	2	2	1	1	5
Railings	5	5	5	3	5	n/a	4	3	4	n/a
<b>Trail Amenities (max 40)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>
Seating	5	1	3	1	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	5	n/a
Trash Receptacles/ Recycling	5	1	5	5	1	n/a	2	n/a	5	n/a
Automobile Parking	4	2	5	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	5	n/a
Bicycle Parking	1	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	4	1	1	n/a
Fitness Stations	n/a	n/a	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a
Restrooms	3	1	1	4	n/a	n/a	1	5	n/a	n/a
Interpretive Wayfinding	5	5	5	5	3	2	5	2	1	n/a
Landscape	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	2	2	n/a
<b>Trail Infrastructure (max 20)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>
Drainage Facilities	5	3	5	5	3	5	3	2	2	n/a
Cleanliness/ Overall Maintenance	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	1	4	n/a
Tread Condition	5	5	5	4	3	3	3	2	4	n/a
Shoulders	5	5	5	5	4	4	2	2	4	n/a
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>60</b>

Exceeding Expectations
  Meeting Expectations
  Not Meeting Expectations



existing system overview

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Table 13. Greenway Observation Results (con't)

	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<b>Little Rock Trail</b> Matrin St. to MLK Jr. Drive											
<b>Little Rock Trail</b> MLK Jr. Drive to Walnut Wetland Center											
<b>Walnut Creek Trail WCT-A</b> Walnut Wetland Center to Rock Quarry Road											
<b>Walnut Creek Trail</b> Rock Quarry Road to Dacian Road											
<b>Walnut Creek Trail</b> Dacian Road to Worthdale Park											
<b>Mine Creek Trail</b> Sawmill Road to E. Fork Mine Trail (Hiking Trail)											
<b>Mine Creek Trail</b> E. Fork Mine Trail to Shelley Lake Trail											
<b>Mine Creek Trail</b> Shelley Lake Trail to North Hills Drive											
<b>Mine Creek Trail</b> Mine Creek Trail to Crabtree Creek Trail											
<b>Shelley Lake Trail</b> Mine Creek Trail to W. Millbrook Trail Road											
<b>Crabtree Creek Trail</b> I-440 to Hertford Street											
<b>Access + Connectivity (max 20)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>
Nearby Destinations	5	4	2	3	3	n/a	2	4	3	4	3
Adjacent Bike Lanes + Sidewalks	2	1	2	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2
Trail Spurs or Trail Connections	3	2	1	5	1	n/a	5	5	4	5	3
ADA Accessible	1	2	5	5	1	n/a	2	4	3	4	3
<b>Use + Activities (max 15)</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>
Mix of Uses	2	1	1	2	1	n/a	3	5	2	5	2
Level of Observed Activity	2	1	1	1	1	n/a	4	5	2	5	3
Potential for User Conflicts	5	5	1	3	1	n/a	5	2	5	2	3
<b>User Safety (max 35)</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
Regulatory Signage	2	2	1	1	1	n/a	2	1	4	2	3
Site Line/ Clear Views	5	5	3	4	3	n/a	5	3	5	3	3
Marked Crosswalks	1	1	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a
Access Control	4	5	4	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a
Pedestrian Signals	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lighting	3	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Railings	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	3	4	3
<b>Trail Amenities (max 40)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>11</b>
Seating	5	1	5	2	3	n/a	5	5	3	5	1
Trash Receptacles/ Recycling	5	4	5	2	1	n/a	5	4	2	4	2
Automobile Parking	1	4	n/a	2	3	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	5	n/a
Bicycle Parking	1	1	1	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a
Fitness Stations	1	1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	n/a
Restrooms	1	5	1	2	4	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	5	n/a
Interpretive Wayfinding	3	5	2	4	1	n/a	3	5	4	5	4
Landscape	3	5	3	4	3	n/a	4	4	5	4	4
<b>Trail Infrastructure (max 20)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>
Drainage Facilities	3	5	2	2	1	n/a	3	3	5	4	4
Cleanliness/ Overall Maintenance	4	5	2	1	1	n/a	3	4	5	4	3
Tread Condition	3	4	2	1	1	n/a	3	3	4	4	3
Shoulders	5	5	2	3	3	n/a	2	2	4	3	4
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>59</b>

Exceeding Expectations Meeting Expectations Not Meeting Expectations

existing system overview



# Existing System Overview

22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	Total
Crabtree Creek Trail Hertford Street to Rothgeb Drive	Crabtree Creek Trail Rothgeb Drive to Trail Intersection	Crabtree Creek Trail Trail Intersection to Atlantic Ave.	Crabtree Creek Trail Atlantic Ave. to N. Raleigh Blvd.	Crabtree Creek Trail N. Raleigh Blvd. to Trail Spur	Crabtree Creek Trail Trail Spur to Shanta Drive	Simms Branch Trail Hiking Trail Road to Durant Road	Abbotts Creek Trail Durant Road to Falls River Ave.	Abbotts Creek Trail Falls River Ave. to Ashmead Lane	Abbotts Creek Trail Falls River Ave. to Falls River Ave.	Neuse River Trail Anderson Point Drive to Boardwalk	Neuse River Trail Raleigh Beach Road to Crag Burn Lane	
14	15	12	11	13	12	15	11	17	17	16	12	
4	3	2	3	2	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	76
4	3	1	3	3	1	4	3	4	4	3	n/a	53
2	5	5	1	5	5	4	1	5	4	4	4	73
4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	5	5	4	67
12	9	10	10	11	9	9	10	12	13	0	8	
4	4	3	4	3	3	2	4	4	4	n/a	2	64
4	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	4	4	n/a	2	62
4	2	4	2	5	3	5	3	4	5	n/a	4	65
17	14	13	18	21	14	14	15	11	26	21	17	
3	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	4	4	5	4	53
5	3	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	5	5	5	76
4	2	1	3	3	2	4	2	1	3	1	n/a	47
5	4	n/a	4	n/a	4	4	n/a	3	4	5	4	90
n/a	1	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	52
n/a	1	2	1	1	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	32
n/a	n/a	4	4	4	2	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	5	4	81
15	17	7	9	13	7	20	13	30	14	26	22	
4	3	1	2	3	1	4	1	4	4	3	4	61
4	3	1	4	3	1	4	4	4	1	4	4	66
n/a	4	n/a	2	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	5	n/a	5	5	78
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	28
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	23
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	5	n/a	5	1	59
3	3	2	1	3	1	2	3	3	5	5	4	67
4	4	3	n/a	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	80
17	16	16	9	16	0	15	0	16	20	20	20	
4	4	4	1	4	n/a	4	n/a	4	5	5	5	72
4	4	4	4	4	n/a	4	n/a	4	5	5	5	78
5	4	4	4	4	n/a	3	n/a	4	5	5	5	72
4	4	4	n/a	4	n/a	4	n/a	4	5	5	5	77
75	65	58	57	70	53	66	58	75	82	87	79	

existing system overview

# Chapter Two

## 2.5.3 Successes of the Greenway Network

The following are examples of successes of the existing Capital Area Greenway Network observed by the Project Team. Corresponding policies and actions from the 2030 Comp Plan have been identified for integration of these initiatives into the System Plan. Policies and actions listed are not exhaustive. Instead, these provide a summary of potential corresponding efforts. This document's implementation plan (Chapter V) provides a more thorough evaluation of the 2030 Comp Plan in relations to the Capital Area Greenway Network.

### Diverse User Experience

The diverse range of trail types offers a variety of aesthetic and sensory user experiences. Natural surface hiking trails, as seen on the west side of Lake Johnson and northern portion of Mine Creek Trail, provide a natural experience within an urban area and include a variety of challenges suitable for families, trail runners, and recreational hikers. Paved multi-use trails are found near parks, including Abbotts Creek Trail near North Wake Landfill District Park and Reedy Creek Trail through the North Carolina Museum of Art. Other paved multi-use trails provide loops and connections to neighborhoods. Through observations, a growing population of bicyclists are using trails for transportation, portions of Reedy Creek Trail and Rocky Branch are becoming important connections within a commuter trail network.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 3.1 - Greenway Trail Expansion
- PR 3.1 - Capital Area Greenway

### Navigation and Wayfinding

The Master Sign Program provides eight different typologies of wayfinding signage for the greenway system. These include trailhead identification, trail markers, pedestrian directional, mile markers, regulatory signage, confidence markers, interpretive signage, and map kiosks. This branded package provides standards and guidelines

to unify the system and improves legibility for navigating the city. User experience is enhanced by maps depicting connections and lengths of trails, mile markers aiding in fitness milestones and emergency locators, confidence markers indicating users are on the correct route during on-road transitions, and navigation aids at trail intersections.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 3.2 - Greenway Awareness



*Baileywick Trail*

### Connectivity and Access

With over 80 miles of trails, Raleigh is well connected to downtown urban environments, suburban residences and commercial areas, and more remote rural landscapes. Reaching in all directions, the system is well planned to connect users at a local and regional level. The Neuse River Trail from the eastern edge connects north Raleigh to South Raleigh and beyond to Clayton and other towns along the Neuse River. Closing gaps to the west will eventually provide access to Cary and the American Tobacco Trail leading into Durham.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 3.6 - Greenway Connectivity
- PR 3.8 - Pedestrian Links to Greenways
- T 5.1 - Enhancing Bike and Pedestrian Circulation
- T 5.4 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity

# Existing System Overview

## 2.5.4 Opportunities for the Greenway Network

### Wayfinding for Health and Economic Vitality

To serve residents and visitors to the Triangle and as a means of contributing to economic development, a more extensive wayfinding program should be implemented. By conforming to the current Master Sign Program, additional strategically-located signs can indicate proximity to shopping, dining, grocery stores, parks, and cultural resources. These wayfinding signs should be integrated into the map kiosks and used at trail intersections. Spur, trail intersection, road intersection, and trailhead signage should indicate road names, availability of services, and nearby destinations. Walk and bike timing and mileage will enhance the decision making process. Improving perceived access and connectivity by adding destinations will entice commuters to use the greenway system for transportation, thereby improving personal health.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 3.2 - Greenway Awareness

### Closing Gaps and Identifying Alternatives

While the existing trail system radiates throughout Raleigh, opportunities exist to augment this framework, close gaps, reroute experienced cyclists, and extend routes and spurs into additional neighborhoods and commercial areas. In lieu of paving natural surface trail corridors that create important connections, alternate alignments and on-road facilities should be explored to accommodate cyclists and preserve the unique character of hiking trails. Utility corridors, roadway rights-of-way, public trail easements, and land acquisition can be employed to complete connections which will boost walkability and bicycle access to daily needs.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 3.9 - Infrastructure Projects and Greenways
- T 5.2 - Incorporating Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements
- T 5.4 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity



Horse Creek Trail at Glen Eden Park

### Programming and Economic Contributions

Including the greenway system in parks and recreation programming will enrich the experience of residents of Raleigh. The trails around Lake Johnson are already used for group runs, photography courses, and other programs within the park. Special greenway programming can be developed to create awareness of the network of trails and contribute to the mission of promoting health and social vitality. Large regional or national events may also be appropriate for the city to host including trail marathons, benefit runs, and festivals suitable for linear organization. These events generate revenue through ticketing, donations, hotel occupancy, restaurant patronage, and exposure to local retail outlets.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 6.1 - Budget Adequacy

# Chapter Two

## Section 2.6 | Existing Programs and Services Overview

### 2.6.0 Introduction

This overview includes a review of the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department's current recreation program and service offerings. The overview offers a review of recreation programs and events and helps begin to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for future program direction which will be outline in subsequential chapters of this report. It also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community which will help in identifying future program offerings for residents based on community input and trends found in Chapter 3 - Needs and Priorities Assessment.

Program findings were based on a review of program information, program assessment worksheets completed by staff, and interviews and meetings with staff. In addition, marketing materials such as the Leisure Ledger and the department's website were reviewed.

The content of this section is organized as follows:

- Core Program Identification
- Program Mix
- Lifecycle Overview
- Age Segment Overview
- Marketing Approaches and Leisure Ledger Review

### 2.6.1 Core Program Identification

The ability to align program offerings according to community need is of vital importance to successfully delivering recreation services. At the same time, it is also important to deliver recreation programs with a consistent level of quality, which results in consistent customer experiences. Core programs are generally offered each year and form the foundation of recreation programs. In assessing the categorization of core programs, many criteria are considered. The criteria includes:

- The program has been provided for a long period of time
- Offered three to four sessions per year or two to three sessions for seasonal programs
- Wide demographic appeal
- Includes 5% or more of recreation budget
- Includes tiered level of skill development
- Requires full-time staff to manage the program area
- Has the ability to help solve a community issue (childhood obesity, crime, community engagement, etc.)
- High level of customer interface exists
- High partnering capability
- Facilities are designed to support the program
- Evolved as a trend and has resulted in a "must have" program area
- Dominant position in the market place
- Great brand and image of hte program, based on the Departments's experience of offering the program



*Youth Learning to Swim Program*

Core programs, by definition meet at least the majority of these criteria. The establishment of core programs helps to provide a focus for program offerings. This focus, in turn, creates a sense of discipline for quality control of these program areas and helps to reduce variation of service for the program participants. It must be noted that the designation of non-core programs does not suggest they

# Existing System Overview

are unimportant. Instead it means there may be less focus and fewer programs compared to core programs. Using a Core Program Assessment tool can help in determining core program areas.

During discussions with staff and reviewing the core programming criteria, the following programs were identified as core program areas:

- Active Adults
- Arts (Cultural)
- Athletics
- Aquatics
- Educational (ESL)
- Fitness
- Teens
- Historical
- Nature
- Adventure
- Special Recreation Services

\* Pending results of the needs assessment survey, this categorization may change

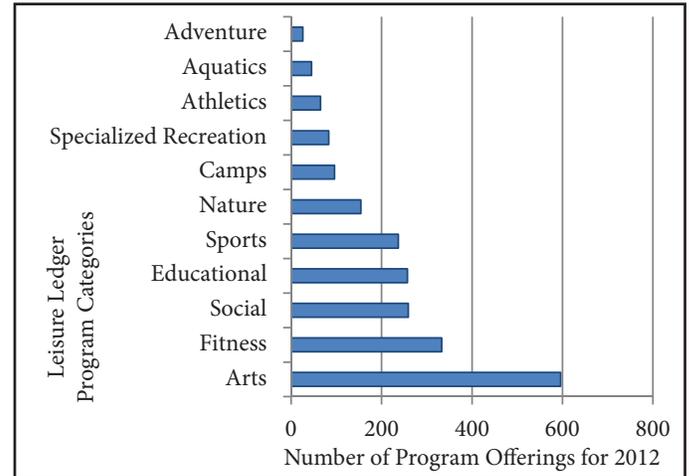
## 2.6.2 Program Mix

The program mix or the distribution of types of programs offered should represent the programming needs of the residents. Therefore, this should be evaluated annually through an assessment process. In addition, the program offerings should include emphasis on the delivery of core programs. In reviewing program offerings listed in the 2012 winter, summer, fall, and camps Leisure Ledger, the list and numbers of programs offered included:

- Adventure: 26
- Aquatics: 45
- Arts: 596
- Athletics: 65
- Educational: 257
- Fitness: 333
- Nature: 154
- Social: 259
- Specialized Recreation: 83
- Sports: 237
- Camps: 96

\* The program mix will be compared to household need types from the household survey to identify gaps in program offerings

Table 14. Program Offerings



## 2.6.3 Lifecycle Analysis

The program assessment included a lifecycle analysis of the core programs selected for review. This assessment helps to determine if the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department needs to develop newer and more innovative programs, reposition programs that have been declining, or continue the current mix of lifecycle stages. This assessment was based on staff members' perspectives and were categorized according to the following areas:

- **Introduction Stage** (Getting a program off the ground, heavy marketing)
- **Growth Stage** (Moderate and interested customer base, high demand, not as intense marketing)
- **Mature Stage** (Steady and reliable performer, but increased competition)
- **Decline Stage** (Decreased registration)

The percentage distribution of programs according to lifecycle categories includes:

- Introductory programs: 26%
- Growth programs: 31%
- Mature programs: 29%
- Decline programs: 14%

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The rule of thumb for percentage distribution (according to other agency benchmarks) is 60% of programs should be in introduction and growth stages, and 40% in the maturation and decline stages. For Raleigh, the percentage is 57% introduction/growth and 43% maturation/decline which are fairly consistent with the benchmark.



*Aqua Group*

Any program area in decline should be targeted for repositioning or deletion. Mature programs should be monitored closely in order to prevent decline in registrations. Some agencies, in order to develop accountability for an increased percentage of introductory programs, establish a performance measurement indicating new programs initiated by each staff member. The Parks and Recreation Department has a policy in place for new programs in which program managers are required to complete a new program business plan prior to offering a new program which will determine if it falls in line with the goals of the managers' area of responsibility.

## 2.6.4 Age Segment Analysis

Park and recreation systems should strive for an equitable balance of offerings for various age segments, including:

- Youth under age five
- Youth ages 6-12
- Youth ages 13-18
- Young adults 19-54

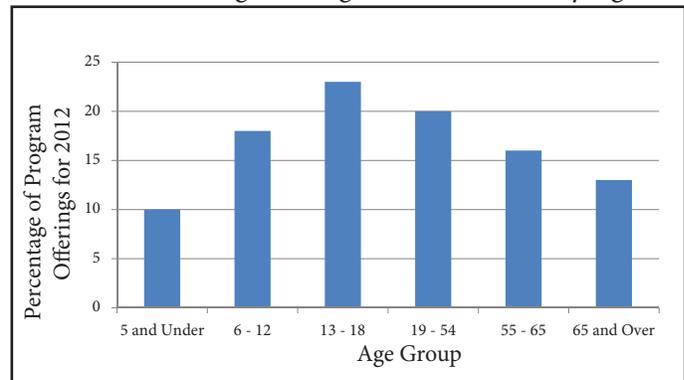
- Older active adults 55-64
- Seniors 65 and above

The percentage of program offerings in each age category closely matches community demographics.

The following table (see **Table 15**) shows the age segment percentages. This information was calculated by reviewing the 2012 winter, summer, fall, and camps program offerings listed in the Leisure Ledger and counting the number of programs offered for each segment. Programs and events offered for all ages, such as family special events, were not included in the list. The age distribution of programs is as follows:

- |                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| • Youth under age five: 433      | 10% |
| • Youth ages 6-12: 740           | 18% |
| • Youth ages 13-18: 956          | 23% |
| • Young adults 19-54: 850        | 20% |
| • Older active adults 55-64: 677 | 16% |
| • Seniors 65 and above: 523      | 13% |

**Table 15.** Percentage of Programs Breakdown by Age



## 2.6.5 Marketing Approaches and Program Guide

This section evaluates the City of Raleigh's Parks and Recreation Department marketing approaches. Included in this analysis is a review of the Leisure Ledger and other marketing approaches, branding and image, and Website. It is important to have an overall plan for marketing approaches that relates to the overall system of programs and services. In absence of a plan, marketing approaches become random and tactical.

# Existing System Overview

## Program Guide

The program guide, Leisure Ledger, is distributed to households three times a year, with a separate Camps brochure, and is available online, which is helpful for customers. This publication is distributed to only those resident households who have participated in a program or service in the past year.

The cover of the Leisure Ledger is currently enhanced by photographs and displays the Website address and phone number clearly at the bottom of the page. A Director's Message would be a good addition to the Leisure Ledger which would focus on the Department's recent park projects and program updates. A suggestion would be to highlight the benefits of the Parks and Recreation Department to the community as a whole by including any environmental initiatives, awards, partnerships, etc.



*Youth Tennis Programs*

The inside front cover includes a short summary description of the Department. The description is concise and has an appealing photograph below. The first page, Discover Your Parks and Recreation Department is effective as well as it is visually appealing, has very little text, and is instructional for learning about ways to register. Discover Your New Spaces and Places is also very useful and showcases new facilities.

Overall the Leisure Ledger has extensive information. However, much of this information may be hard to find and minimally marketed. A different method of organizing this information and visual marketing may go a long way in turning the current information brochure into a widespread marketing tool.

This process begins with defined program guide sections. These include sections such as: Dance, Gymnastics, Teens, Seniors, Active Adult, Athletics, Aquatics, etc. Some of the sections listed currently have descriptions of the activity, such as Adventure and Aquatics. Others do not have a description, such as Social Programs. Social Programs may be interpreted differently by customers and should include a brief definition.

After the sections are defined, the appropriate programs should be placed according to the targeted program's ages and demographics. An example of this is the Active Adult/Senior programs. This demographic may not want to spend time searching through program categories throughout the brochure. Instead, all programs catering to that age group should be located in one section of the brochure (i.e. Ballroom dance class for ages 55+ should be located in the Active Adult section and not the Dance section). Some agencies, such as Arlington, Texas provides a separate brochure targeted to older adults. This same concept also pertains to teens. Traditionally parents and adults under the age of 55 tend to look for specific program areas like dance, pre-school, athletics, etc.

Another alternative to organizing the programs within the Ledger would be to categorize them by facility. The City of Henderson, Nevada organizes their programs in this manner which can benefit the patron as well as the Department. This is useful in large systems in which location is the most important customer consideration

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for program choice. When listing programs based on location, it makes it easy for the reader to research programs located near their neighborhood. It also allows for better scheduling for the registrant as they will know right away if the programs they are registering for are in opposite locations. Additionally, the facilities benefit from having programs listed by location as it promotes each facility and creates a marketable identity.



*Volunteer Gardening*

The Web address is listed on the bottom of every page of the program guide. A recommendation would be to also list a phone number for the Department. Additionally a header should be developed for each page that can be used for highlighting areas such as Department Mission, Tag lines, photos, etc. The callout of “NEW” to program listings is a good technique to use, not only for potential customers to identify those programs that are new, but also for staff as a reminder to constantly innovate.

According to staff, there is currently no collaboration with the Visitor’s Bureau to reach out to new residents with the Leisure Ledger. This would be an opportunity that the Department could explore and develop a type of “Welcome Packet” to new community members on an annual basis as a method of marketing. Additionally this may be helpful, as a result of mailing the Leisure Ledger to only past year participants there may be lost opportunities to gain resident participants who have never participated or participated years ago.

Program guides typically are the most important marketing method used by park and recreation agencies. According to national information, 50% of residents in communities across the country find out about programs from their guide.

The program guide is available online in a PDF format on the City website. However, a “virtual” online program guide would be more visually appealing and easier to read. In addition, this type of guide can be downloaded on smart phones; whereas PDFs are not. As an example, the City of Virginia Beach has a virtual online program guide that is easy to read and also allows for links to registration while browsing programs in the brochure.

Customers generally look to the price of a program and then the program title as a means of determining whether or not they will register for a class. Therefore, creative program titles are important. WOW: The Wonders of Wetlands is a good example of a creative title. Many others simply state what the program is about. The goal should be to develop more creativity in the program titles.

After price and title, the third element of importance is the description. Descriptions should include features, attributes, and benefits. Some of the text included in program descriptions is informational, rather than promotional. Identify the unique value propositions for each program and identify the “hook” that will entice people to register. It is also suggested to try to keep the descriptions brief, no longer than six or seven lines, as readers lose interest in programs if they read too much. A good example is on page 56 of the Leisure Ledger. The program Bird Buddies uses a creative title while the description captures the interest of the reader as well as provides all basic information for participating in the program. Some other descriptions are lengthy and others are purely informational, without creating incentive for a person to be interested in registering.

The Leisure Ledger includes a staff highlight section, which is a nice feature. This could be supplemented with information about a couple of key instructional staff in each issue, which brings a personal and approachable touch to the programs they teach/instruct. Along with pictures, a contact person, number, and/or e-mail should also be included in this section. Currently there is a list

# Existing System Overview

of Executive Staff at the front of the program guide. A recommendation would be to include phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses for the Executive Staff as well as contact information for program managers. It is also helpful to have customer testimonials, as word of mouth is an important form of marketing.

The Department currently has a small Special Events section located at the beginning of the program guide. It would be beneficial to make this section larger and list core events with pictures to increase potential interest in these programs. Additionally, this would be an opportunity to promote or market sponsors/partners that are supporting those events.

The Unique Facilities section includes facilities that are available for rental opportunities. However, these facilities are mixed in with facilities that are not available as rental opportunities. A recommendation would be to either create a separate program guide section for Facility Rentals or to use an icon that would distinguish rentable facilities from others. Additionally, rental fees are not included in the facility descriptions. Including such fees would be a good addition to the program guide. A good example for Facility listings is in The Town of Cary program guide. The Town of Cary lists their rentable facilities in their program guide with a description of facilities and a table of fees for each facility. By doing this, it is easy for the reader to determine what facilities are available for rent and what the associated fees are for those facilities.



*Youth Art Program at Sertoma Art Center at Shelley Lake Park*

## Website Review

Parks and Recreation Websites are becoming increasingly important as a marketing tool, an identification of brand and image, and an avenue to provide government transparency. The City of Raleigh's Parks and Recreation Department does not have its own separate Website but is instead a Department category within the City's Website under Arts & Parks.

There is a concern among staff over the lack of brand and image for the Parks and Recreation Department. One suggestion would be to create a Department brand by developing a logo and a clear Webpage on the City's Website. A recommendation would be to change the tab from Arts & Parks and replace with a more obvious title such as Parks, Recreation, and Arts.

On the Department's home page, there are categories of information, listed as Parks and Recreation News, Parks and Facilities, Greenways and Trails, Raleigh Arts, Park Planning and Development, Programs, Classes and Events, RecLink, Leisure Ledger and Publications, and Corporate Services. These categories are organized well, and make it easy for the customer to find needed information. The photographs on the home page add good visual appeal. However, the Website does not have a compelling call to action. Content is informational rather than promotional. Although the basic information is presented and available on the main page, there are several opportunities for improvement for this important marketing and informational tool. Websites are fluid and have the ability to promote programs, events, and amenities visually. Similar to "a picture is worth 1000 words" written program descriptions can be minimized with the addition of descriptive photos.

The majority of patrons using the Web do not want to read a large amount of text. However, the insertion of pictures or even videos of users can have a much quicker "sell." An example of this would be when a user chooses to view the "Halloween and Fall Events." The use of a picture or video from last year's Pumpkinfest would be very beneficial. Other recommendations include:

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- Develop an About tab on the Department page that would include a Staff Directory, Mission Statement, Governing Information, and Frequently Asked Questions. The City of Henderson, Nevada has a clear and easy to read Parks and Recreation page that makes it easy to find content while being visually appealing
- Consider creating a link to Google Maps for the Park listings page
- Create a Volunteer Section where all volunteer opportunities are listed. This gives the Department another opportunity to brand their volunteer program and highlight awards, recognition, and opportunities
- Redesign the main page for the Recreation Department in a way that is more visually appealing. This can be done in a variety of ways such as a photo slider of upcoming programs or events, a video from the Director or Leadership staff, or testimonials from community members
- Reinforce the Department's commitment to sustainable practices. Provide information about maintenance and design practices being used to promote sustainability

A process should be put into place to constantly assess the Website, at least on an annual basis, as this is the first introduction of the Department to many potential customers. An assessment should include a review of the following items:

- Content
- Maintainability
- Accessibility
- Customer Usage
- Internal Support

The assessment should include external customer feedback through focus groups. In addition, it is helpful to have recreation program staff and contractual instructors review the site and provide suggestions in areas of improvement, based on their use of the site and suggestions they hear from customers.

It is projected that within the next five years, there will be an equal number of users who may access Websites through smart phones (I-phones, Androids, Blackberries, etc.) and Tablets (I-Pad, Samsung Galaxy, HP Slate, etc.).

In order to maximize outreach to its target market, the Department should evaluate developing applications and a WAP (wireless application protocol) enabled Website which can be easily viewed by potential users on smart phones or tablets and also allow them to make online reservations. A great example of a mobile Recreation site is the Parks and Recreation Department of Arlington, Texas. The City has created an Application for their Recreation Department and easy to access applications for Leagues, Registration, Special Events, and their program guide.

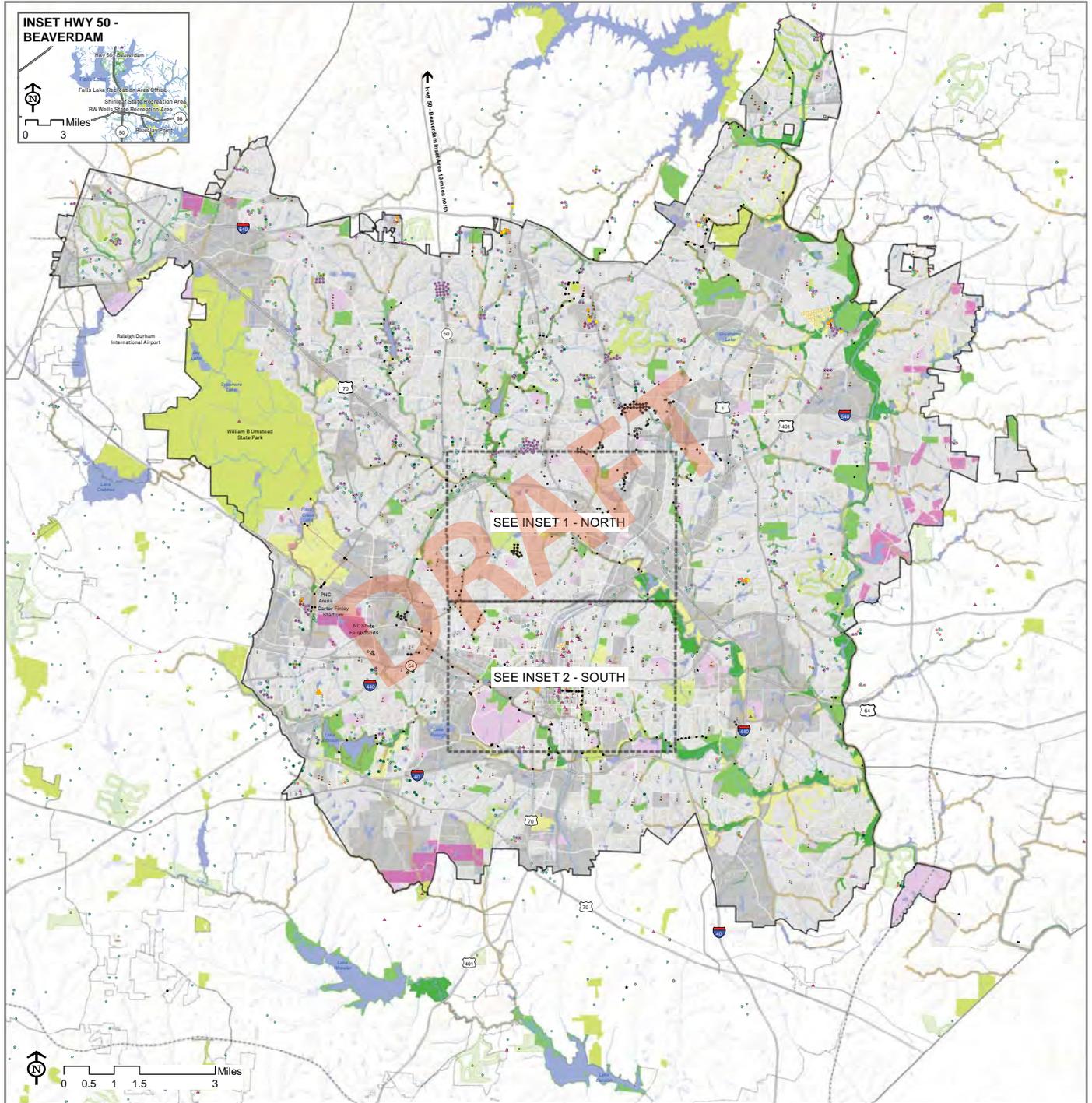


*Canoeing Program*

The Department has also adapted to the world of Social Media and offers applications on their website for Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, Flickr, and Beehive. All of these allow community members more opportunity to be informed and connected to the City. Currently these tools are being used for basic City information such as public hearings and public input meetings. Another effective use of these media outlets is for promotional marketing of programs, events, and current projects. When using it for this purpose, the Department can post photos of events or testimonials from past participants as a way to promote itself.

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Map E. City of Raleigh Private and Other Recreation Providers, 2012



**LEGEND**

**Private Recreation Facilities**

- Football Stadium
- Basketball Court
- Track
- Baseball Field
- Volleyball Court
- Playground
- Softball Field
- Tennis Court
- Pool
- Soccer Field
- Indoor Tennis Facility
- Clubhouse
- Multipurpose Field

- Nonprofit
- National Register Historic Place
- School
- Church
- Ice Skating Rink
- Golf Course
- Wake County Pools
- Residential
- Non-Residential
- Greenway Trailhead
- College

- City of Raleigh Park
- County/Other City Park
- Greenway
- Other Park
- COR CAG Corridors

- Golf Course Property
- Wake County Building
- Wake County Site
- Wake County Historic Property
- CIP Project
- Lake/Pond/Reservoir

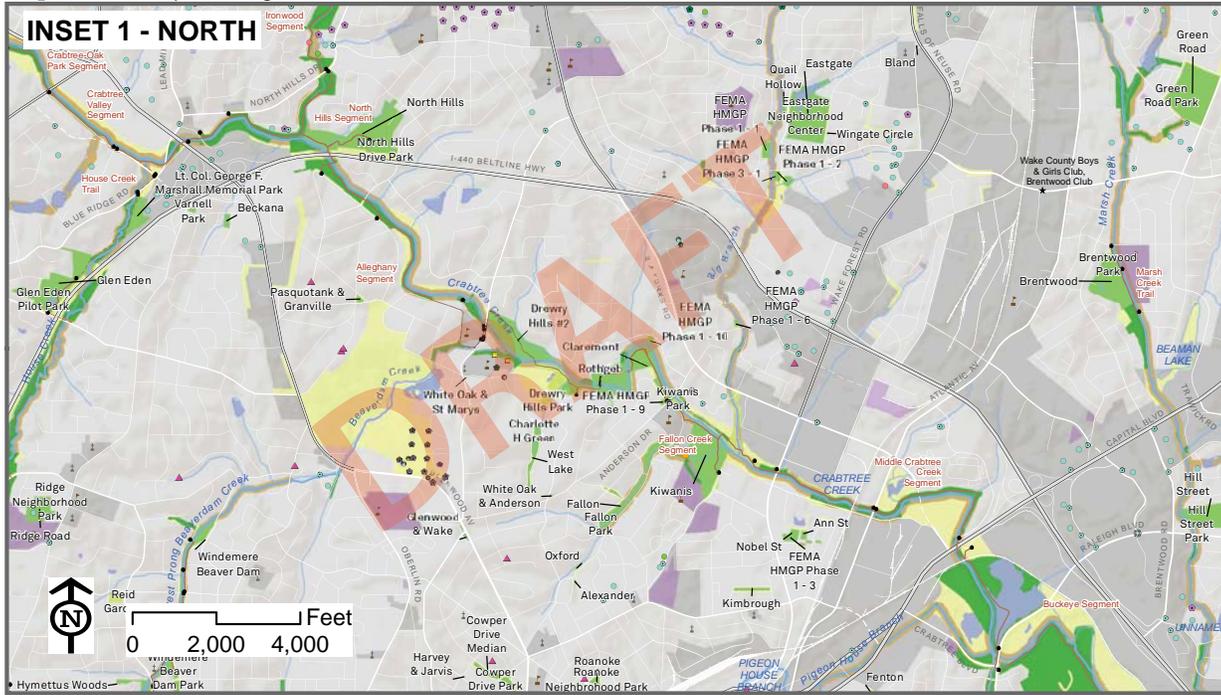
- Existing Greenway Trail
- Future Greenway Trail
- Rivers and Streams
- Major Road
- Proposed Major Road
- Street
- Proposed Street

existing system overview

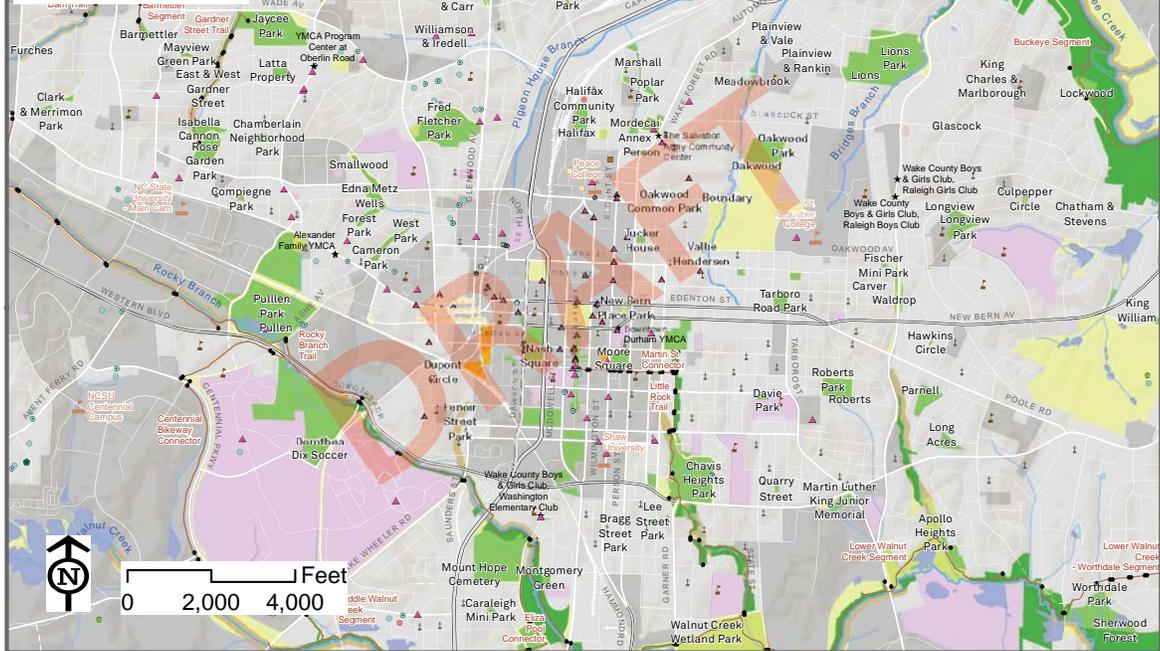


# Chapter Two

Map E Insets. City of Raleigh Private and Other Recreation Providers, 2012



INSET 2 - SOUTH



**LEGEND**

- |                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Football Stadium</li> <li>• Baseball Field</li> <li>• Softball Field</li> <li>• Soccer Field</li> <li>• Multipurpose Field</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basketball Court</li> <li>• Volleyball Court</li> <li>• Tennis Court</li> <li>• Indoor Tennis Facility</li> <li>• Clubhouse</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Pool</li> <li>• Ice Skating Rink</li> <li>• Wake County Pools</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nonprofit</li> <li>• National Register Historic Place</li> <li>• Golf Course</li> <li>• Wake County Pools</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greenway Trailhead</li> <li>• College</li> <li>• School</li> <li>• Church</li> <li>• Residential</li> <li>• Non-Residential</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Raleigh Park</li> <li>• County/Other City Park</li> <li>• Greenway</li> <li>• Other Park</li> <li>• COR CAG Corridors</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golf Course Property</li> <li>• Wake County Building</li> <li>• Wake County Site</li> <li>• Wake County Historic Property</li> <li>• CIP Project</li> <li>• Lake/Pond/Reservoir</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Existing Greenway Trail</li> <li>--- Future Greenway Trail</li> <li>— Rivers and Streams</li> <li>— Major Road</li> <li>--- Proposed Major Road</li> <li>— Street</li> <li>--- Proposed Street</li> </ul> |
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existing system overview



# Existing System Overview

## Section 2.7 | Existing System Overview Findings

### 2.7.0 Findings

An overview of existing conditions was conducted in order to obtain an understanding of the physical, aesthetic and social characteristics of the existing City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation System. Within the City of Raleigh there is a diverse system of over 135 parks, 44 staff and non-staffed centers, 8 public swimming pools, 82 open spaces, 2,150 programs, 75 miles of greenway trails and approximately 9,500 acres of parks and greenways. Taken as a whole, the system has a number of successes and opportunities.

### History of Parks and Recreation in Raleigh

The history of Raleigh parks can be organized into five periods: **The Formative Period** (1792-1941); **Consolidation and Refinement** (1942-1970); the **Expansion Era** (1971-1981); the **Open Space Era** (1982 – 2004); and the new **Collaborative Era** (2004 to present), which has been marked with further expansion of services and responsibilities for the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department.

### City-wide Integration

Integration of the System Plan with adopted or currently under review plans, studies and policies is a key goal. Currently there are two levels of influencing documents; city and regional plans and ordinances; and area or facility specific plans or studies. Significant regional guiding plans or documents include:

- 2030 Comprehensive Plan (2009)
- Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Final Draft form 2012
- Thoroughfare Plan (2011)
- Bicycle Transportation Plan (2009)
- CAT and Wake County Transit Plans
- Draft Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan
- Capital Area Greenway Master Plan Update (1989)
- Capital City Greenway 1976 Master Plan (1976)

### Population and Demographic Overview

The City of Raleigh is growing and diversifying. The City needs to “catch up” to its population growth and ensure that

it is meeting the parks and recreation needs of its current residents equitably. At the same time, it is imperative that the City plan for growth by acquiring additional parkland in advance of growth in urbanizing areas.

### Existing Parks and Facilities Overview

An observational review of the City of Raleigh’s existing parks and facilities found the following successes and opportunities:

#### Successes:

- Appearance Factor of Maintenance
- Making Parks Green Through Sustainability
- Increase Use by Connectivity
- Making Parks Last with Higher Quality

#### Opportunities:

- Universal Accessibility
- Leading by Example with Stormwater Management:
- Economics of Program Flexibility:
- Leading with Wayfinding

### Existing Parks and Facilities Overview

Observational reviews conducted of the Capital Area Greenway Network found the following successes and opportunities:

#### Successes:

- Diverse User Experience
- Navigation and Wayfinding
- Connectivity and Access

#### Opportunities:

- Wayfinding for Health and Economic Vitality
- Closing Gaps and Identifying Alternatives
- Programming and Economic Contributions

### Existing Programs and Services Overview

A review of existing programs and services offered by the Department found the following highlights:

- Successful operation of 11 core programs
- 12 program types with an emphasis on arts, fitness and social programming
- A healthy mix of programs at various lifecycle stages
- An equitable mix of programs for various age groups
- Extensive use of printed (Leisure Ledger) and the Department’s website for marketing information

