INVOLVING THE PUBLIC IN PARK PLANNING

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An Evaluation of the City of Raleigh's Park Master Planning Processes

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... **III**
Outcomes iv
General Recommendations v
Recommendations Specific to the Community Meeting Process vii
Recommendations Specific to the Resolution Process viii

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE **2**
Purpose and Scope of Study 3

DATA COLLECTION METHODS **5**
Literature Review 5
Focus Group Interviews 5
Internet Surveys 7
Design Consultants Interviews 7

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION **8**
Why Involve the Public? 8
Characteristics of Effective Public Participation Processes 9
Outcomes of Effective Public Participation 10
How Should the Public be Involved? 10

DISCUSSION FROM THE LITERATURE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION **14**
Public Participation Formats and Practices 14
Inclusiveness 15
The Internet and Public Participation 16

RALEIGH'S PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESSES FOR PARK PLANNING **18**
Community Meeting Process 18
Resolution Process 23

ASSESSMENT OF RALEIGH'S PARK MASTER PLAN PROCESSES **35**
Community Meeting Process 36
Resolution Process 41
Evaluation Summary 47

RECOMMENDATIONS **50**
General Recommendations 50
Recommendations Specific to the Planning Process 56

LITERATURE CITED **60**

APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS AND SURVEYS **A-1**

APPENDIX B – PARK PLANNING PROCESSES **B-1**

APPENDIX C – SURVEY DATA SUMMARIES **C-1**

APPENDIX D – STAKEHOLDER MATRIX **D-1**

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Involving the Public in Park Planning

AN EVALUATION OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH'S PARK MASTER PLANNING PROCESSES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Park Master Plan is a conceptual design document that generally describes and guides the future management and development of a park property. Its preparation is intended to be a public process to ensure that the needs of the public are met while preserving the ecological function and environmental quality of the site. All parks should have an adopted, relatively recent Master Plan when intended for park development.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the City of Raleigh's park master planning processes to determine how, to what degree, and to what end citizens participate in decisions regarding the scope and character of future park sites. The study was designed specifically to assess:

1. How, to what degree, and in what form the opinions, needs, and desires of citizens were included in final park designs that resulted from both processes. This will provide information about the inclusiveness of the planning process.
2. How well citizens understood the process and how their opinions, needs, and desires were factored into the final design. This will lead to deductions about the transparency of the planning process.

This study reviews two planning processes: the formalized and committee-driven Resolution Master Planning Process (Resolution Process) and the less formal Community Meeting Master Planning Process (Community Meeting Process). Public involvement in the planning of the following four parks was examined:

- Forest Ridge Park (Resolution Process)
- Horseshoe Farm Park (Resolution Process)
- Leesville Park (Community Meeting Process)
- Timberlake Park (Community Meeting Process)

Focus group interviews and internet surveys were used to gather data from the following groups:

- Raleigh Parks Department Staff
- Raleigh Parks Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board members
- Park planning committees
- Citizens attending park planning meetings
- Park planning consultants

Outcomes

We evaluated the Community Meeting Process and the Resolution Process with respect to whether and to what degree the processes have the potential to improve the quality, legitimacy, and capacity of park planning decisions.

Quality refers to decisions that (1) identify the values, interests, and concerns of all who are interested in or affected by the planning decision; (2) use the best available knowledge relevant to the above tasks, and (3) incorporate new information, methods, and concerns that arise over time.

Legitimacy refers to a process that is seen by the public as fair and competent and that follows governing laws and regulations.

Capacity refers to participants, including Department staff and consultants, (1) becoming better informed and more skilled at effective participation; (2) becoming better able to engage the best available knowledge and information about diverse values, interests, and concerns; and (3) developing a more widely shared understanding of the issues and decision challenges and a "reservoir of communication skills, mediation skills, and mutual trust."

Both processes produced quality planning from the perspective of the public involved. Both processes identified the values, interests, and concerns of all who were interested in or might be affected by the planning decision. Both processes integrated the concerns and issues considered important by the public into the analyses and reflected those concerns and issues in the final plan. And third, both processes generated decisions based on and consistent with the best available information, and new information was added in the process as needed. Each of these dimensions of quality planning were met to varying degrees in each of the four park planning processes.

Process legitimacy was the most problematic of all three practice outcomes for both planning processes. The problems stem from how the processes were conducted rather than the type or form of process used. Both the Community Meeting Process and the Resolution Process created issues of legitimacy, but for different reasons. Both process are capable of being designed and conducted in ways that participants feel are acceptable and that conform to standards of sound analysis and decision making.

The issues that most troubled the Community Meeting Process were lack of community-wide participation and transparency. Without wide representation at community meetings, the core team is compelled to act in the interests of an unrepresented constituency and introduce program elements that local meeting participants may not desire. When locally unwanted program elements remain in the final master plan without visible public support, neighboring residents begin to question the authenticity of the process. This issue posed significant problems for the Leesville planning process in the context of the proposed dog park. It was less of a problem in the Timberlake process, but many residents were not happy to see a half-court basketball venue remain in the final plan.

The Resolution Process was not shadowed by matters of transparency, rather, problems stemmed from issues of leadership and process management. These problems were present almost entirely in the Horseshoe Farm planning process, but the Forest Ridge process was not immune from them either. The difficulties experienced by the Horseshoe Farm committee leaders in being able to facilitate deliberations of the committee in a neutral and impartial manner had a profound effect on the outcome of the committee process. Without solid facilitative leadership, the committee was unable to work together to identify valid information to guide their analysis, nor find options or solutions that met the common needs of all members. The fact that the resolution

process has no procedure or guideline for training its committee chairs to facilitate committee discussion is a significant shortcoming.

Both processes, when done well, can create capacity for future decisions. However, The Resolution Process, by the very nature of its superior participation intensity, presents more opportunities for civic development than does the Community Meeting Process. When conducted according to the core principles of public participation, the Resolution Process can effectively engage the public and department staff in becoming better informed and more skilled at effective participation, better able to share the best knowledge and information about diverse values, interests, and concerns, and develop a shared understanding of the issues and decision challenges. To enable this to happen, the Resolution Process needs to be better planned, organized and conducted.

General Recommendations

1. ADHERE TO CORE PRINCIPLES

Early in the report we describe five core values of public participation which we used as a standard for evaluating the Department's public participation processes. These principles are to: (a) promote full participation, (b) make the process transparent, (c) promote mutual understanding among participants and the agency, (d) strive for inclusive solutions, and (e) share responsibility for decisions. When the Parks Department adheres to these principles in its planning and decision making processes, then the quality, legitimacy, and capacity of park plans will likely be improved.

2. MANAGE PROCESSES EFFECTIVELY

When the Parks and Recreation Department engages in public participation, it should do so with specific management objectives that improve its outcomes. These objectives are: (a) make the purpose clear, (b) commit to the process, (c) provide adequate capacity and resources, (d) time processes in relation to decisions, (e) focus on implementation, and (f) commit to learning.

3. DEVELOP A BROAD PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT POLICY

The Parks and Recreation Department should augment its current documentation of master planning process (Resolution (2003)-735) with a comprehensive public involvement policy that defines the roles and responsibilities of staff positions implementing <u>all</u> the Department's public participation processes, expands and then defines the purposes and circumstances for which public involvement will be used, and outlines and defines the procedures to be followed.

4. ENGAGE CITIZENS IN COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND SITE INTEGRATION PLANNING

The Department should organize extensive public participation in the update of the comprehensive plan to get direction and support for park designations system wide. For parkland currently owned but as yet unplanned and new lands purchased for park development, the System Integration Planning process should be used as a mechanism for citizens to participate in decisions about park classification and purpose.

5. ESTABLISH CLEAR DEFINITIONS OF APPROPRIATE PARK ELEMENTS AND PROGRAMS

The Department, through deliberation and approval by the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board, should clearly identify and communicate general programs and activities that are consistent with the

comprehensive park plan and SIP. Programs and activities should be appropriate for the park site given its park type and site characteristics, including the introduction of special facilities such as dog parks and high intensity use areas. These intentions should be made very clear in setting up the master planning process for each park.

6. DECOUPLE PLANNING FOR CONTROVERSIAL ELEMENTS FROM PLANNING FOR THE PARK

Dog parks, high intensity use facilities, special facilities, and adventure elements engender controversy and conflict during the development of a park master plan. Discussion and deliberation about these individual park elements robs precious time from the discussion of other important issues and can hijack the park plan as citizens stake out positions for and against inclusion of these elements in the park. Instead, the Department should organize citizen deliberation processes to develop design and siting criteria for these elements systemwide, apart from the individual park master plans.

7. GATHER DATA ON POTENTIAL PARK USES AND USERS BEFORE ENGAGING IN PLANNING

The Department should Use survey instruments to gather data on user preferences and key issues affecting park use early in the planning process to provide critical information when it is most needed. Data also should be collected on pressing issues related to the park and its surroundings to help shape public participation processes. User preference surveys should be designed so responses from neighboring residents, citizens residing in the planning area, and citizens outside the planning area can be analyzed separately.

8. IMPROVE COMMUNICATION MECHANISMS INCLUDING USE OF THE INTERNET

Information flow in a public participation process should be multi-way and timely. An effective communication mechanism should enable information to flow from the Department to the public, from the public to the Department, and from public to public. Organize and streamline the Department's existing web links so that information about park master planning can be easily located and associated with related links. Collect contact information from all attendees at public meetings. Create and maintain electronic mailing lists to communicate news about Parks and Recreation planning activities. Keep citizens posted with meeting summaries, community input data, and other planning-related information. Post information on the Department website in a timely fashion and send out email alerts and reminders to help people find it. Conduct online evaluations or surveys following the completion of citizen involvement processes to determine the effectiveness of achieving project goals with respect to public participation, project management, and project implementation.

9. USE CONSULTANTS WITH PROVEN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SKILLS

Hire planning consultants with strong facilitation training and skills who understand how to guide collaborative decision processes and can manage conflict when it arises.

10. EVALUATE EVERY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The Department should put in place a rigorous evaluation methodology to help track progress, learn from its successes and failures, and make improvements. This includes evaluating overall public participation programs as well as specific practices and activities. The department should use process and substantive criteria to assess: (1) process design, (2) project management, and (3) outcome measures.

11. MAINTAIN PROCESS FLEXIBILITY

Use process formats that fit the context and circumstances of the site and the people that will interact with it. Within each format, various practices, tools and techniques can be applied and tailored to the specific

circumstances of an issue or the stakeholders involved, drawing on elements or practices to suit the context and incorporating different participatory modes at different project stages. Practices include working groups, panels, field trips, voting, consensus-seeking, visioning, and so on. The Department has experience in using two basic formats, the Community Meeting Process – an unbounded feedback and consultation process, and the Resolution Process - a bounded, participant-intense process. We recommend that the Department continue to use and adapt these two process formats. Department staff, PRGAB members and interested citizens are familiar with them and they have proven potential to be successful when applied correctly and appropriately. We also recommend that the Department establish a set of criteria for selecting the process most appropriate to the circumstances and stakeholders.

Recommendations Specific to the Community Meeting Process

1. DIVERSIFY MEETING PROMOTION METHODS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION

We recommend that the Department advertise and promote meetings through wider direct mailings, postings in parks and recreation centers, and signs posted on roads adjacent to the park site. Notifications of planning meetings should be issued using subdivision or neighborhood boundaries rather than an arbitrary radius.

2. BE CLEAR UP FRONT ABOUT PROGRAM CONSTRAINTS AND PRIORITY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Citizens can participate more effectively when they know what the constraints and expectations are for their participation. If, through the SIP and comprehensive planning processes, there are constraints on program elements that are appropriate for the site, or priority program elements that have already been identified for the site, make this clear at the beginning of every meeting.

3. ADD COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO THE CORE TEAM

We recommend expanding the core team to include two to four community members. A possible condition for serving on the core team is that community members serve as communication links to the neighborhoods they belong to. Parks Department staff and consultants should assist the citizen core team members in preparing communication materials such as summaries of core team meetings and community meetings, small-format draft plans and other handouts, and links to web sites. Citizen Advisory Council members could be good candidates for core team membership depending on the park's location.

4. PROVIDE HANDOUTS OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Department should provide meeting participants with attractive, easy to read fact sheets that clearly describe the park master planning process. The fact sheets should include information about how the process works (i.e., number of meetings, what is accomplished at each meeting), the dates of each meeting, how citizens can participate, how citizen comments and suggestions are handled, and contact information for the Parks and Recreation Department and PRGAB members.

5. ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION LINKS WITH MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Keep track of meeting attendees who express an interest in being kept informed. The Department should gather names, addresses, and email addresses from all community meeting participants and use this to establish a consistent and timely communication mechanism to keep participants informed of the planning process, implementation decisions, construction schedules, and park openings.

6. PROVIDE CLEAR AND TIMELY MEETING SUMMARIES

Summaries of all core team meetings and community meetings should be created within days of the meetings and distributed widely.

7. INCREASE THE VENUES THROUGH WHICH PEOPLE CAN PARTICIPATE

Increase the opportunities for citizens to participate in plan formulation and review. Maps, plans, and other information can be made available for people to view and comment at open houses and on kiosks at recreation events, in recreation centers, and on-line.

Recommendations Specific to the Resolution Process

1. IMPROVE CRITERIA FOR COMMITTEE SELECTION

Balanced representation on the planning committee is the linchpin to legitimacy of the Resolution Process. The Department should develop criteria for selecting committee members that relate to the issues specific to the park site, the neighborhoods and communities that surround the site, and potential elements that may be included in the final plan. We suggest using a stakeholder matrix (see Appendix 4) as a tool for identifying committee members. We also recommend amending the committee application form to capture information about key interests and expertise of the applicant relative to the park site and its development, and connections to groups or organizations with a vested interest in the park site and its development. We also suggest relaxing the rule in Resolution (2003)-735 that sets the number of committee members to 15 so that the committee makeup can be representative of key interests without violating the resolution.

2. DEVELOP A PROCESS CHARTER AND GROUND RULES

Make process understandable and transparent by creating a process charter that defines the process protocols and gives a group a framework to follow. The charter should be specific and appropriate to each park planning process. A draft of a charter should be presented to the committee for amendment and approval. In addition, the committee should be free to amend the charter at any time during the planning process so that it remains relevant and applicable to circumstances that arise.

3. ENCOURAGE OPENNESS OF DESIGN

Development and approval of a group charter provides the opportunity for participants to have control over the process itself. A process design developed collaboratively by Parks staff, the consultant, and committee members will yield benefits, particularly in terms of legitimacy.

4. USE A CONSENSUS DECISION RULE

Consensus is the decision rule that allows collaborative problem solving to work. It is a method that enables a group of people to reach agreement. Consensus prevents domination by the majority and allows trust-building and the sharing of information, especially under conditions of conflict. Consider adopting an 'agreement gradient' that allows groups to settle on issues at differing levels of agreement, and even allows people to opt out of certain parts of a larger agreement.

5. USE A NEUTRAL FACILITATOR

We recommend limiting the process role of the PRGAB members and vesting the process guidance role with a facilitator. This will enable the PRGAB members to continue to serve as chair and co-chair and have an active

role in the deliberations without being perceived by other committee members as manipulating the process. A facilitator can help committee members through the planning process toward agreed-upon objectives in a manner that encourages participation, ownership and creativity from all involved. Ideally, the facilitator should be part of the planning consultant team.

6. TRAIN THE COMMITTEE IN PRINCIPLED NEGOTIATION

We recommend that the consultant team provide a brief training in the basics of principled negotiation at the first committee meeting. We also recommend providing to every committee member a copy of the book, *Getting to Yes, Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (By Roger Fisher, William Ury, Bruce Patton, Houghton Mifflin Books, 1991).

Involving the Public in Park Planning

AN EVALUATION OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH'S PARK MASTER PLANNING PROCESSES

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A Park Master Plan is a conceptual design document that generally describes and guides the future management and development of a park property. Its preparation is intended to be a public process to ensure that the needs of the public are met while preserving the ecological function and environmental quality of the site. All parks should have an adopted, relatively recent Master Plan when intended for park development.

Prior to 2003 the City of Raleigh used volunteer citizen master plan committees to develop park master plans. These committees were led by members of the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) and supported by staff from the Parks and Recreation Department, and in most cases hired consultants. During this time several planning efforts were initiated by City Council under the moniker "modified master plan process." In 2003, after approximately three years of research and discussion by the PRGAB the City Council adopted Resolution (2003)-735 to revise the master plan process. Most features of the previous process (adopted in 1988) were retained, but specific language was added concerning the advertisement of meetings, the specific timing and form of public meetings to introduce and review the plans, and an interim management plan strategy called the System Integration Plan (SIP) for newly acquired properties.

The so called Resolution Process was first employed in 2006 and 2007 on two parks being planned nearly concurrently. Master planning for Horseshoe Farm Park, a 146-acre oxbow sited on the north side of the Neuse River in north Raleigh began in December 2004. Planning for Forest Ridge Park, a 486-acre park on Falls Lake near Wakefield Plantation subdivision began later that summer.

Soon after it began, the planning process for Horseshoe Farm Park became contentious and difficult for committee members and parks staff, and was strongly criticized by interested observers. The planning process spanned 19 committee meetings and two public meetings and took 15 months to complete. On the other hand, the planning process for Forest Ridge Park was much less controversial and generated a plan in nine months.

In the interests of expediting the planning process for parks funded by the 2000 Park Bond, City Council gave the Parks Department approval to use another planning process for two parks in north Raleigh, Leesville Park and Timberlake Park. The alternative process, called the Community Meeting Master Planning Process (also referred to as the Core Team Process) grew out of an effort used by Wake County at the North Wake Landfill that was regarded as successful by those involved.

The Community Meeting Process is a citizen involvement process that uses community meetings as the primary means of citizen input with direction from a core team of professionals including members of the PRGAB, consultants, and support from the parks staff

The Natural Resources Leadership Institute and the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management at NC State University were contracted by Raleigh City Council to conduct an evaluation of the City of Raleigh's park master planning processes and provide recommendations to guide future park planning.

Purpose and Scope of Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the City of Raleigh's park master planning processes to determine how, to what degree, and to what end citizens participate in decisions regarding the scope and character of future park sites. The study was designed specifically to assess:

1. How, to what degree, and in what form the opinions, needs, and desires of citizens were included in final park designs that resulted from both processes. This will provide information about the inclusiveness of the planning process.
2. How well citizens understood the process and how their opinions, needs, and desires were factored into the final design. This will lead to deductions about the transparency of the planning process.

This study is an evaluation of the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Departments public participation processes used in park planning. The term "public participation," as used in this study, includes organized processes adopted by the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department to engage the public in planning and decision making. These processes supplement traditional forms of public involvement such as public hearings and lobbying by directly involving the public in park planning decisions.

This study is an evaluation of public participation in parks planning, and is <u>not</u> an evaluation of the Department's planning process. The distinction is subtle yet important. Good public participation processes do not necessarily result in good planning. Planning is a scientifically rational process that requires a combination of sound data gathering techniques, competent technical analysis, and a comprehensive understanding of the context within which the plans are devised and implemented. However, planning public spaces is a collective endeavor, and one that requires the input, guidance, support and approval of the people with whom the planner plans. Good public participation is a prerequisite for good planning.

This study reviews two planning processes: the City Council-adopted Resolution Master Planning Process (Resolution Process) and the Community Meeting Master Planning Process (Community Meeting Process). We examined public involvement in the planning of four parks:

- Forest Ridge Park (Resolution Process)
- Horseshoe Farm Park (Resolution Process)
- Leesville Park (Community Meeting Process)
- Timberlake Park (Community Meeting Process)

The evaluation is based on a set of factors that, taken together, form a central definition of a citizen involvement process. These factors are abstracted from the literature of best practices for participatory decision making and park facility planning. Factors include:

- Participant representation – people who are interested in and affected by a planning decision have an opportunity to participate.
- Process transparency – participants understand the process and how and why their input was used or not used in the final analysis.
- Process Acceptance – participants accept the process as having conformed to standards of sound analysis and decision making.
- Mutual education – participants and department staff gain a better understanding of each other and become better informed about relevant issues.
- Information use – decisions are based on and consistent with the best available information, and that new information is added in the process as needed.
- Issue basis – the concerns and issues considered important by the participants are addressed in the analysis and reflected in the final plan.
- Outcome relevance – outputs of the process reflect a broad view of the situation and address all issues considered important by the participants.
- Context – the participation process is appropriate to the decisions to be made, in other words, "fitting the forum to the fuss."

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The study team gathered information about citizen involvement in the park planning process through four major sources of data: a literature review, focus groups, online surveys, and phone interviews using structured interviewer questionnaires. The staff of the Parks and Recreation Department provided current contact information and assisted in scheduling the focus group meeting sites.

Literature Review

The study team began its analysis by reviewing Parks Department documents associated with the planning of the four parks. Documents reviewed included meeting summaries and reports, master planning documents for each park, citizen comments and feedback, documents distributed by parks staff and others at the meetings, minutes of pertinent PRGAB meetings and City Council meetings, and the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan. While we were seeking to learn about the overall context of the planning process, our focus in reviewing these materials was to gather data on aspects of public involvement such as participant representation and authority, decision rules, role definition, and other factors of best practices.

In addition to the park planning documents, we conducted a review of the pertinent park planning literature to identify state of the art citizen involvement in park planning processes. More than 30 articles from journals and professional publications were reviewed. Although much of the literature focused on specific planning efforts (e.g., USFS Wilderness areas, city and regional applications, and environmental policy at local, state, and regional scales), other articles were more generally focused on evaluating public participation processes.

We also focused our review on new and emerging technologies that serve to increase and enhance citizen participation. We describe this research later in the report in a discussion of the role of the internet in public participation.

Focus Group Interviews

Using the information gained from the literature review, the study team developed four different survey instruments targeting the following groups of people who had participated in at least one of the park planning processes:

1. Staff of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department
2. Design consultants who worked on the four park master plans
3. Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Advisory Board members who had served on the board between 2001 and the present
4. Park master plan committee members for Horseshoe Farm Park and Forest Ridge Park
5. Citizens attending community meetings for Leesville Park and Timberlake Park

We conducted seven focus groups sessions in July and August 2008. The Study Team met initially with the staff of Raleigh Parks and Recreation and Department, and several Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Advisory Board members. These initial interviews provided the study team with background information on the Resolution and Community Meeting planning processes, and their perspectives on the public involvement processes used in park planning. We used this information to refine our survey instruments.

We offered two focus group sessions to each survey cohort, changing days of the week in an attempt to increase our response rate. All focus group sessions were held in Raleigh Park and Recreation facilities. Contact information for master plan committees and citizens attending community meetings was provided by parks staff. PRGAB members were contacted by postal mail as well as email. Planning committee members and citizens received invitations by email. Participants unable to attend focus group meetings provided information through email response and through an internet survey. The number of participants it reached through focus group sessions and other methods is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Data Collection Methods and Numbers Participating

Method	Parks Staff	PRGAB	Design Consultants	Planning Committees		Community Meetings	
				Forest	Horseshoe Farm	Leesville	Timberlake
Focus Group	6	18		2	3	0	1
Internet Survey				7	6	8	6
Written	2	3					
Telephone			4				

The structure of the focus group interviews was similar for each cohort group. The study team asked a set of questions, and recorded participants' responses on laptop computers while the participants were speaking. No recording devices were used, so the recorded responses are not verbatim. The conversational style of the focus group interviews resulted in widely ranging responses to the questions, as participants reacted to the statements of others. In addition to the open ended questions, we included a short, Likert-scale questionnaire for the committee member and citizen focus groups.

Each focus group cohort was asked a different set of questions. Questions for the PRGAB interviews were designed to gather information about their perceptions of the two planning processes, and ways that public involvement could be improved. We were also interested in understanding how they perceived their role as citizen representatives in the park planning process.

The interview questions for the master plan committee members focused on their perceptions of the Resolution Process. We were interested in whether they felt that their interests were heard and reflected in the final plan, their perceptions about the effectiveness of the committee and the committee chair to work cooperatively, the committee's use of information, and their general level of satisfaction with the process. Prior to each discussion question posted by the interviewers, the focus group participants filled out a questionnaire consisting of two to seven questions. The questionnaire helped to prompt focus group participants about the question to be discussed, and provided specific data that we could use to evaluate the planning processes.

Questions for citizens attending community meetings for Leesville Park and Timberlake Park were primarily focused on inclusion: whether they felt that there was adequate representation at the meetings, and if they felt that their concerns and interests were heard and respected at the meetings, and whether their interests were reflected in the final plan. We were also interested in issues of transparency: whether citizens understood the planning process as it unfolded at the community meetings, and understood how their comments and suggestions would be used.

Internet Surveys

Because of the low turnout to the focus group interviews by planning committee members and citizens, we augmented our data collection process with internet surveys. The survey questionnaires were the same questionnaires we introduced in the focus group interviews. The Raleigh Parks and Recreation staff provided 31 additional names and email addresses of community meeting participants. In September, we distributed the questionnaires through the internet site, Survey Monkey, to the planning committee members and community meeting participants we had not interviewed. Participants were sent emails with the internet site address. Separate emails were sent to planning committee members and citizens, and the internet sites for each group were also separate. We followed up initial invitation to the survey sites with one reminder posting.

The survey worked to significantly improve our data pool. Among planning committee members, seven additional members from Forest Ridge and six more from Horseshoe Farm responded to the survey. In total, we heard from 9 of 13 Forest Ridge committee members and 9 of 13 Horseshoe Farm committee members. Of the 12 citizens reported to attend Timberlake Community meetings, we interviewed or surveyed seven. Among community meeting participants for Leesville Park, we received eight responses, all from the survey. Although attendance data were not available for Leesville community meetings, we estimate that 50-60 attended the first meeting. Survey responses for each group are shown in Table 1.

Design Consultants Interviews

We arranged telephone interviews with the four consulting firms hired by the City of Raleigh to lead the planning processes we investigated. Interviews were conducted individually in September 2008. The focus of the interviews with the consultants centered their perception of their role leading and facilitating public involvement in the Raleigh parks planning processes.

The focus group survey protocols and questionnaires for all groups and the design consultants are contained in Appendix A.

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Why Involve the Public?

Fundamentally, citizens should have a say in decisions that affect their lives. Decisions about park programming and design can affect the lives of citizens who live nearby and play in the park. To develop and carry out solutions that are effective and long term requires the knowledge, commitment, and action of multiple levels of government, special interest groups and concerned citizens.

Inviting the public to participate in environmental decisions has become a standard method of managerial decision making by government organizations for the past 30 years. During this time, public participation has moved beyond the means by which municipal park and recreation departments merely establish accountability to the public interest, to a process by which citizens define the public interest and establish public policy. The public has grown to expect a balance of the efficiency of managerial expertise with the transparency and participation consistent with our democratic system. Examples abound of local officials organizing and supporting public forums to help inform decision-making in order to (Institute for Local Government, 2007):

1. achieve the best policy result by promoting the overall public interests;
2. maximize the public satisfaction with the ultimate decisions; and
3. foster the public's support for the agency.

Few theorists and practitioners doubt the benefits of public participation (Beierle & Cayford, 2002; Creighton 1992 & 2005; Institute for Local Government, 2007). Thomas Beirele and Jerry Cayford (2002), in their work on evaluating public participation in environmental decisions, define five social goals that can be achieved through public participation. These goals are:

1. informing and educating the public;
2. incorporating public values into decision making;
3. improving the substantive quality of decisions;
4. increasing trust in institutions; and,
5. reducing conflict.

Inform and Educate the Public

Being knowledgeable about the issues allows citizens to make informed choices on decisions that affect them and their interests. By participating in decision processes, people can become knowledgeable about the social, physical, and political dimensions of the issues at hand. An informed public can better deliberate issues and formulate alternatives that are workable and effective.

Incorporate Public Values into Decision Making

To be effective, policy actions for watershed protection and improvement need to reflect the total public perspective. The values, assumptions, and preferences of stakeholders should shape policy content and procedures. Because the public is not monolithic in its views, all relevant interests, fairly represented, must be involved in any process in which the public is invited to contribute to policy decision-making.

Improve the Substantive Quality of Decisions

Many people and ideas contribute to public solutions. Planners and managers typically rely on technically rigorous studies to base their decisions about management options. But the public is also a source of facts, ideas, and knowledge that can contribute to the quality of policy decisions. Examples include identifying relevant factual information, discovering mistakes, and generating alternatives that satisfy a wider range of interests.

Foster Trust in Institutions

Citizen trust in government has declined steadily since the 1960s. Paralleling this erosion of trust is the view of many that government-led solutions to complex environmental problems are too sweeping and irrelevant, costly, and burdensome. One of the most effective ways to rebuild trust is to involve and empower citizens in the decision-making process.

Reduce Conflict

Conflict is endemic in the environmental policy arena. Environmental and natural resource issues usually involve many parties, multiple political jurisdictions, and highly complex ecological interactions. Incompatible perspectives between use and preservation of natural resources, compounded by resource scarcity have exacerbated value differences among stakeholders. Public participation can be a process for identifying shared norms and values and can build the foundation for cooperative, rather than confrontational, decision making.

Characteristics of Effective Public Participation Processes

The following are core attributes of public participation processes as identified by Kaner, et al. (2007):

Full Participation

- All parties who are interested in or might be affected by the planning decision are involved or represented in the process.
- All participants have an opportunity to express their values, interests, and concerns in a meaningful and responsive forum.
- All participants have the opportunity to discover and acknowledge diverse perspectives and opinions

Transparency of Process

- All parties have an understanding of, and are willing to operate within the established process and procedures. The process must be explainable and designed to meet the circumstances and needs of the situation.
- Flexibility should be designed into the process to accommodate changing issues, data needs, political environment, and programmatic constraints such as time and meeting arrangements
- All parties have equal access to relevant information and the opportunity to participate effectively throughout the process.

Mutual Understanding

- Participants share a common perspective or framework of understanding the issues and potential solutions.
- The process relies on mutual education of all participants.
- Participants accept one another's needs and goals as legitimate
- Individuals are able to develop innovative ideas that incorporate everyone's point of view

Inclusive Solutions

- It is accepted as a norm that everyone has a piece of the truth
- Wisdom emerges from the integration of everyone's perspective and needs
- Wise decisions result

Shared Responsibility

- The participants are accountable both to their constituencies and to the process in which they have agreed to participate
- Participants share a strong sense of responsibility for creating and developing sustainable agreements
- They make every effort to give and receive input before a final decision is made
- Participants are willing to help implement the proposals they endorse

Outcomes of Effective Public Participation

Public participation, if well designed and capably conducted should result in decisions that improve the quality, legitimacy, and capacity of park master plans. Dietz and Stern (2008) specify these outcomes as:

Quality refers to decisions that (1) identify the values, interests, and concerns of all who are interested in or affected by the planning decision; (2) identify the range of actions that might be taken; (3) identify and systematically consider the effects of alternative actions; (4) use the best available knowledge relevant to the above tasks, and (5) incorporate new information, methods, and concerns that arise over time.

Legitimacy refers to a process that is seen by the public as fair and competent and that follows governing laws and regulations.

Capacity refers to participants, including Department staff and consultants, (1) becoming better informed and more skilled at effective participation; (2) becoming better able to engage the best available knowledge and information about diverse values, interests, and concerns; and (3) developing a more widely shared understanding of the issues and decision challenges and a "reservoir of communication skills, mediation skills, and mutual trust."

How Should the Public be Involved?

A public agency has a wide array of processes available for involving citizens in public decisions. These tools range from minimal public engagement such as passively informing the public through media outlets, to intensive participation – empowering the public to make the decisions through negotiated rule making. Which

process is best for specific policy-making needs? To answer this question, you must consider the range of public involvement processes in relation to your public participation goals.

Figure 1 shows a continuum of public participation using three scales: public participation goal; promise to the public; and example techniques. The level or intensity of public involvement is displayed along five distinct columns. The diagram provides an overview of public involvement methods and allows a comparison of each method with desired agency objectives for public interaction and the degree of decision making shared with the public. The diagram can be used to assist an agency in deciding on public participation methods that are consistent with its participation goals.

The diagram shows that as you move toward the right, from Column 1 - where decisions are made by the agency, to Column 5 – where decisions are made by stakeholders, the level of public involvement becomes more intensive. That is, the public is more actively involved in the decisions of the agency. This does not mean, however, that more people are necessarily involved in the decision. In fact, more extensive public involvement, meaning involving more people, usually occurs leftward on the continuum. Examples of how an agency can use this diagram follow.

Figure 1. IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT				
INFORM	**CONSULT**	**INVOLVE**	**COLLABORATE**	**EMPOWER**
Public Participation Goal:	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**	**Public Participation Goal:**
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**	**Promise to the Public:**
We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Tools:	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**	**Example Tools:**
• fact sheets • web sites • open houses.	• public comment • focus groups • surveys • public meetings.	• workshops • deliberate polling.	• citizen advisory committees • consensus-building • participatory decision-making.	• citizen juries • ballots • delegated decisions.

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Source: International Association for Public Participation. Available at: http://www.iap2.org/associations/4748/files/IAP2%20Spectrum_vertical.pdf

Keeping the Public Informed

In many cases, an agency may wish to maintain full control of a decision, and inform the public of its actions. Here, the level of public involvement is typically a one-way flow of information from the agency to the public. The agency can keep the public informed of its actions through press releases, direct mailings, and informational meetings. These actions can lead to an informed and educated public, yet will not further the remaining four social goals of public participation.

Consulting with the Public

If the agency's objective is to shape a decision based on public concerns about an issue, it will be consulting with citizens and gathering feedback on alternatives. Open houses, public hearings and focus groups are appropriate participation methods for this level of involvement. These types of public participation process are useful for gauging the level of interest or concern the public may have in an issue, and using this feedback from which to base decisions.

Involving the Public

Moving to Column 3 on the continuum, an agency may wish to work more closely and consult with the public to be sure that their concerns and interests are understood and considered in future actions. To gather this type of feedback, the agency can organize information exchange meetings (if the stakeholding public is large and diffuse) or form advisory committees (if the stakeholding public can be adequately represented by committee members). Information exchange meetings are usually open to anyone who wishes to attend, usually provide a single opportunity for input, and are useful for gathering information from a large population. Advisory committees typically have a defined and consistent membership and meet over a period of time. Both participation processes provide citizens with an opportunity to provide specific opinions, develop and refine plans, or suggests courses of action.

Collaborating with the Public

When an agency desires to partner with the public in all aspects of its decision making, then it can organize consensus-seeking policy dialogues, round-tables, and other collaborative forums. These processes, typically lead to outcomes that take the form of specific policy recommendations. Public involvement is typically intense and long-term, and participants are usually representatives of organized interest groups or individuals who can articulate shared interests of a broader public such as homeowners and business owners. Decision making often takes the form of consensus which requires opposing interests to work together to develop a common and mutually acceptable solution in ways that voting and other approaches to decision-making do not.

Empowering the Public

Processes in this column typically involve negotiations and mediations in which participants form agreements that bind their organizations to particular courses of action. In such cases, the negotiating parties will implement the agreement themselves, or agree to bind themselves to a decision in exchange for a strong commitment that the agency will act on it. The participants are typically professional representatives of organized interest groups and speak for the views of those they represent and make commitments on their behalf. The agency is often one of the organizations represented at the negotiating table. Although public involvement is highly intensive, it is rarely extensive in that it only involves a limited number of interested parties.

Using the IAP2 spectrum, we could classify the Community Meeting Process as falling somewhere between columns 2 and 3, consulting and involving. The Resolution Process might fall columns 3and 4, involving and collaborating.

DISCUSSION FROM THE LITERATURE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

We conducted a review of the pertinent literature to identify state of the art citizen involvement in park planning processes. More than 30 articles from journals and professional publications were reviewed. Much of the literature focused on specific planning efforts such as wilderness areas, municipal planning, and environmental policy at local, state, and regional scales. Another body of literature is more generally focused on evaluating public participation processes.

We focused our review on three areas that we considered useful in our analysis. These are namely,

1. Public participation typology and formats, including the intensity of participation and boundedness.
2. Inclusiveness
3. The internet and public participation

Public Participation Formats and Practices

Public participation processes can be organized in many different ways. It is reasonable to assume that certain formats work better generally, or in some circumstances, than others. However, the evidence does not support such conclusions (Dietz and Stern, 2008). Various public participation formats have been successful in achieving the goals of high-quality and widely acceptable decisions, and each format has also failed at times in achieving these goals.

Many terms have come into use over time to describe ways of organizing participatory processes. Numerous typologies of them can be found in the published literature (e.g. Creighton, 2005). Some terms refer to broad "formats." Examples include public hearings, scoping meetings, focus groups, workshops, open houses, charrettes, listening sessions, advisory committees, policy dialogues, negotiated rule-making, and so on. Other terms refer to more specific practices, tools, or techniques that can be used together with particular formats. These include working groups, panels, debates, field trips, web sites, voting, consensus-seeking, professional facilitation, visioning exercises, surveys, and so forth.

Frequently, different formats share practices in common or a single format is flexible enough that it can, under the right circumstances, integrate practices that are usually associated with another format. As a result, processes called by the same name can look quite different in use, and processes with different names can have many specific components in common.

Consensus-building formats tend to promote binding agreements between an agency and a relatively small number of participants, selected to represent a range of stakeholders (Birkhoff and Bingham, 2004; Langbein, 2005). They require some level of facilitation, whether by an involved agency or stakeholder or by an uninvolved professional.

Public participation processes are commonly tailored to the specific circumstances of an issue or the stakeholders involved, drawing on elements or practices to suit the context and incorporating different participatory modes at different project stages (Creighton, 1992; Bleiker and Bleiker, 2000; Zarger, 2003).

Intensity

Intensity of participation includes such variables as the number and length of face-to-face interactions and the amount of time participants spend in the process. Studies in the public participation literature find a positive association between the intensity of deliberation and desired results (Beierle and Cayford, 2002). The association between intensity and outcomes reflects the great importance of intensity in many situation in which a major controversy or mistrust demands intense interaction to reach a resolution (Dietz and Stern, 2008). The key point is to have a process for which the intensity is appropriate to the context. Contexts that require intensive interactions are those involving the potential for significant conflict.

Intense public participation processes create significant potential to promote desired results, but at some costs. Beierle and Cayford (2002) found that more intensive processes tend to be less inclusive and less representative. Furthermore, intense processes may separate those participating beyond other interested and affected parties not involved, thus reducing transparency (Dietz and Stern, 2008).

It is not intensity in itself that matters, but a design that is appropriate to the context, including the nature of the parties and their relationships. Research from a variety of settings demonstrates that face-to-face communication enhances the probability of cooperation (Dietz and Stern, 2008). Individuals are more likely to support decisions made by a group if they feel that that the decision-making process was fair (Susskind and Cruikshank, 1987). Fairness implies that all participants are given reasonable hearing, whether their views are held by a majority or a minority of participants.

Bounded vs. Unbounded Processes

Processes are bounded in that they identify and target specific parties and stakeholders representing specific interests. Unbounded processes are open to all parties and constrained only by the extent to which individuals and organizations have sufficient interest and resources to participate. Unbounded process often tend to attract well-organized interests (Leach, 2005).

Some observers suggest that less bounded formats may be appropriate early in a process for the purpose of problem formulation, when organized interest groups have not yet formed, or when there may be affected groups that are unorganized. As interests become more organized and the needed information and expertise clarified, it may be useful for the process to become more formalized and less open to new participants (Dietz and Stern, 2008).

Inclusiveness

Public participation processes are more successful when they include the full spectrum of parties who are interested in or will be affected by a decision (Suskind and Cruikshank, 1987; Dietz and Stern, 2008). A significant literature in public participation is devoted to the issue of whether the level of public participation improves decision quality, legitimacy, and the capacity of agencies and participants.

A number of analyses of decision-making processes argue that inclusiveness is important for achieving legitimacy with the public and for improving the quality of decisions (Beierly and Cayford, 2002; Dietz and Stern, 2008). However, a number of studies cite practical limits to inclusiveness. Some restrictions extracted from the literature include avoiding having too many parties involved, and being selective in including those who have the time and knowledge to effectively engage and are able to represent the views of their

organization (Leach 2005; Wondolleck and Yaffee, 2000). A number of studies have suggested that participation should be restricted to those who can commit for the duration of the process and who have some expertise or can speak authentically for interested and affected groups (Selin and Myers, 1995; Shindler and Neburka, 1997; Yaffee, Wondolleck, and Lippman, 1997).

Processes that are too large for real communication are not likely to be effective. There are strong theoretical arguments and evidence in the literature on collective action that the ability to develop and realize a common agenda is inversely related to the size of the group involved (Baland and Platteau, 1996). The most relevant factors affecting group size are the levels of heterogeneity and interdependence among those in the group.

A problem deserving special attention in considering inclusiveness is the balance between citywide and neighborhood interests. The spatial scale of the issue affects who the parties are, and particular constellations of parties can present specific challenges to effective participation. Parties representing neighborhood interests have a significant motivation to protect their property interests, a concern not usually shared by other stakeholders. It is difficult for neighborhood representatives to remain totally altruistic and advocate solely for the larger good.

The Internet and Public Participation

Though not a format in itself, the internet can overcome some of the practical difficulties of conducting participatory processes when participants cannot be available for face-to-face contact. The individual and institutional costs of information transfer and acquisition can be lowered by internet technologies, while convenience can rise. However, concerns persist about the "digital divide" in which access to and facility with online communications are not equitably distributed, with the possible results that use of the internet will diminish the participation of some groups (Mossberger, Tolbert, and Stansbury, 2003; Chakraborty and Bosman, 2005; Martin and Robinson, 2007). Moreover, one cannot assume that interactions via the internet will have the same effects as face-to-face processes.

The internet is most commonly used as a tool to provide information to the public. For example, it is used as a repository for documentation and information to aid decision-making, for broadcasting information about upcoming public meetings or events to a large number of people, for broadcasting meetings live or on demand, for providing data that is readily accessible and current, and as a central location for project data. The importance of keeping electronic public communications and website information current and easily accessible cannot be understated. Citizens tend to rely on a central source when the information about meeting and project updates, status reports, calendars, press releases and other communication are timely, thus reducing phone calls and other kinds of inquires about park and greenway planning efforts.

The Internet is also useful for gathering information from the public and providing a forum for cross communication between citizens and government agencies. Fewer examples of such applications exist, partly because technological developments in e-democracy and e-participation have taken longer to advance. According to Citizen Participation and Government Transparency Online (Harris, 2007), 76 percent of municipalities surveyed used the internet as a repository of information while only 21 percent used it to conduct online polls for gauging public opinion on matters of public concern, and only 11 percent hosted moderated online discussion boards.

The limited evidence on using the internet for public participation suggests that successful participatory processes can be conducted online, but the conditions for success are not yet established (Beierle, 2002). Studies suggest that online participation yields many of the benefits of face-to-face participation, but that in some cases it can also increase polarization (Price and Capella, 2001; Price, Nir, and Capella, 2002; Iyengar, Luskin, and Fishkin, 2003).

Online processes for citizen engagement are not available to citizens without access to, or the basic skills to make use of, online technology. Moreover, more sophisticated uses of online technology can necessitate a more advanced skill set for everyone involved, including those who maintain and periodically upgrade the online environment. A tension exists between the provision of meaningful public engagement processes in planning efforts through internet technology, and doing so in efficient and cost-effective ways that do not overburden staff and divert resources away from the planning project. Rather than replacing existing face-to-face public involvement strategies, online processes should augment existing public participation activities.

Two examples of online public participation efforts worthy of note are Neighborhood America, and the efforts undertaken in e-democracy by the City of Bristol, England.

1. Neighborhood America is a private company that builds online social networks for citizen engagement (e-democracy). Using web 2.0 technology, this online platform creates opportunities for a web system to enhance communication and collaboration using secure information sharing. The Town of Cary has used Neighborhood America's public comment solution to streamline communication between Town officials and Cary citizens regarding zoning issues. The one-stop communication tool enabled the town to manage and respond more efficiently to citizen feedback (Neighborhood America, 2007).

2. A promising case study of the use online formats for public participation is Bristol City in England. Bristol has received national and international recognition for its online citizen involvement work and has been part of the Local E-democracy National Project. This was a large multi-method academic study examining more than 20 e-democracy pilot projects across England. The results of the national evaluation are available online at Bristol's website. Bristol has been using various formats to engage its citizens in decision-making processes including deliberative polls, street kiosks, and e-panels to list a few. Some of these formats may be useful in augmenting the planning processes or specific activities. A review of their efforts is available at: http://www.kevinomalley.org/downloads/ebook.pdf.

RALEIGH'S PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESSES FOR PARK PLANNING

In this section, we describe the two processes currently in use by the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department for involving the public in developing park master plans. Each process is discussed in turn, beginning with a description of the process and the public's role, followed by a detailed discussion of how the process was used in each park. Information used for the summary and analysis of park planning meetings was gathered from meeting summaries and other documentation provided on the Raleigh Parks and Recreation website.

Community Meeting Process

The Community Meeting Process (also referred to as the Core Team Process) features a series of open, public meetings with the community and user groups, interspersed with meetings of a core team of professional staff, design consultants, PRGAB representatives, and other agencies. The core team works to insure the project's progression through the public participation process as well as provide quality control and insure consistency between public meetings. The Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department modeled this public involvement process on one used by the Wake County Environmental Services for planning for future use of the North Wake Landfill on Durant Road. A Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department document describing the Community Meeting planning process is contained in Appendix B.

The Community Meeting process typically consists of five open, public meetings. Each meeting is intended to build on the previous one, moving the planning process through: (1) introduction to the project site, (2) development of a prioritized list of preliminary goals and objectives, (3) prioritization of design elements to be included in the plan, feedback on alternative designs, (4) comment on preliminary draft master plan, and (5) final comment on the draft master plan and report prior to presentation to the PRGAB.

Public meetings are promoted and advertised in a number of ways. Public notification begins with a direct mailing to immediate neighbors, within a specified radius from the proposed park. For example, all residents within ½-mile of a neighborhood park are notified by mail. Public meetings are also posted in the newspaper, sent out with water bills, posted at the location of new park site, at location of the meetings themselves, and posted on the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department website. Recently, parks staff has begun alerting Citizen Action Committees in the vicinity of the park, neighborhood groups registered with the Raleigh Community Services Department and Homeowner Associations (Park Staff interview, July 2, 2008 and follow-on correspondence).

Leesville Park

The City of Raleigh purchased this 55 acre site in 1990 for a Community Park. Funding for planning and first phase development, $1 million, was approved in the 2000 Park Bond and appropriated in 2003. The site is due south of the Leesville Elementary, Middle and High School campus. It has varied terrain with streams, a variety of mature trees, and residential development on three sides.

Planning for Leesville Park began in August, 2006. The City had contracted with the firm OBS Landscape Architects to develop the park master plan. A The Core Team was formed that consisted of staff from City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation (2 members), OBS Landscape Architects (2 members), Wake County Facilities,

Design and Construction (2 members), MACTEC Engineering (1 member), and Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Greenways Advisory Board (2 members). The Core Team met on seven occasions between August 2006 and January 2007.

The Core Team meetings were designed to prepare for, and review information gathered from five community meetings. The community meetings were held each month between October 2006 and February 2007in Leesville Road Elementary School across the road from the park site. Although attendance records of the community meetings were not retained (nor were attendance numbers reflected in the consultant's summaries of the meetings), information gleaned from participant response data generated at the first meeting yielded an estimate of 50 to 60 people at the that meeting. No data are available regarding attendance at the other four meetings.

A brief description of the outcomes of the five community meetings is given in Table 2, below. Meeting summaries of the five community meetings and the Core Team meetings held in preparation for them is available on the internet at:

Table 2. Leesville Park Community Meeting Summary

Date	Location	Attendance	Meeting Highlights
10/11/06	Leesville Elementary	50-60 (estimated)	Participants become familiar with the park master planning process and how Leesville Park relates to other parks in the system. Provide individual feedback to four questions: (1) What do you envision for this park? (2) What is important to you about this park? (3) What role do you see this park playing in the community? (4) What other issues are important to you? Citizens produce a listing of desired and undesired park elements with the number of 'votes' given to each.
11/02/06	Leesville Elementary	Unknown	Staff and design consultant provide information presented at meeting #1 and the results of the questionnaire and comments received. Participants become familiar with the park planning process, how Leesville Park relates to other parks in North Raleigh, and opportunities and limitations of the site itself. Participants share ideas about future park uses and design elements. These elements are recorded and participants rank them by individual preference. Meeting participants voiced significant support for library, trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters, and environment/nature center, and an aquatic center. Votes cast for these elements ranged from 22 to 10 indicating general support. Support for other elements including a pet exercise area, tennis courts, ball fields and paved trails dropped off significantly. No item received more than six votes.

Date	Location	Attendance	Meeting Highlights
12/06/06	Leesville Elementary	Unknown	Consultants provide information from the first two public meetings and present the formulation of the "park program," resulting from the listing and ranking of desired park elements and activities. Three alternative concept plans are presented for discussion and preference ranking. Elements common to all alternatives are: community center, library, dog park, playground, paved trail, open space, interpretive area, and overlook. Participants choose concept plans A1 and A3. Specific comments on program elements focus parking areas, location of buildings, and the location of the dog park,
01/11/07	Leesville Elementary	Unknown	Consultants summarize the comments received on the three alternative concept plans presented at Community Meeting #3. Consultants present the Preliminary Draft Master Plan and get feedback. Major design elements in the plan are a community center, library, dog park, playground / shelter, open space, heritage garden, paved trails, interpretive area, overlook, and outdoor classroom.
02/08/07	Leesville Elementary	Unknown	The consultants present the Draft Master Plan and provide information about construction phasing. The major design elements included in the plan are a community center, library, dog park, playground / shelter, open space, heritage garden, paved trails, interpretive area, overlook, and outdoor classroom. Many participants attend for the first time. Many were there because they object to the location of the dog park in the plan. Much of the discussion and feedback is devoted to issues surrounding the location of the dog park

PRGAB ACTIONS

At their meeting on February 15, the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board reviewed the Draft Master Plan and received public comment on the plan. A petition, and letters were submitted to the Advisory Board in opposition to the location of the dog park. Board members discussed the proposed dog park, including problems and opportunities for moving and/or buffering it.

At their March 15 meeting, the Board heard a report from staff regarding difficulties in siting the dog park in other locations within Leesville Park property. The board approved a motion to send the Leesville Community Park Master Plan to City Council as presented, with the addition of additional buffering adjacent to the perimeter of each property line with evergreen vegetation.

COUNCIL ACTION

On May 1, 2007 Raleigh City Council approved the master plan for Leesville Community Park. The 55-acre park will include a branch of the Wake County Library System and a community center. The master plan also includes a playground, two miles of paved park trails, a multi-use path system, a natural interpretive area, an outdoor classroom, open space and a heritage garden. The City Council decided to substitute a picnic shelter with open space and sand volleyball courts for a proposed off-leash dog area in the final plan.

SUMMARY

The concepts and program elements scored favorably by citizens participating in the community meetings were realized in the final park plan. From the meeting documentation produced by the planning consultant, it appeared that the program theme was accepted early in the process and that participants were comfortable with focusing on amending specific elements consistent with the theme. The location of the proposed dog park was the most highly contested issue. The dog park issue was raised early in the planning process by neighboring residents and was eventually removed from the plan by the City Council. Several survey respondents raised concerns that the dog park was placed in the park plan with very little support from the beginning. Citizens who had not attended earlier meetings had little information from which to understand the rationale for previous planning decisions. Meeting summaries, if available to the public prior to the start of the next meeting, lacked sufficient detail to understand how decisions were made and why.

Timberlake Park

Timberlake Park is a mostly wooded, 16 acre site located in East Central Raleigh. The City of Raleigh purchased the park in 1973 through the Land & Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) program administered by the National Park Service.

In 2003, a parks bond was passed to fund the project that includes funds for planning and partial development of a neighborhood park. The City of Raleigh contracted with the landscape architecture firm of Lappas + Havener for design and construction administration services. The master plan was begun in March 2007 and adopted in November 2007.

The Timberlake Park Core Team consisted of: City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation (2 members), Lappas + Havener architects (2 members), Baker Engineering (1 member), and Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Greenways Advisory Board (2 members). The Core Team met five times between March 2007 and October 2007.

The Timberlake Park Core Team met prior to each of five community meetings. The community meetings were held monthly from April to August 2007 when the final plan was presented. Staff and consultants presented the Draft Master Plan at the North East CAC meeting for input and feedback. Table 3 provides a brief description of the highlights of the five community meetings. A fuller accounting of the five community meetings and the Core Team meetings held in preparation for them is available on the internet at:

Table 3. Timberlake Park Community Meeting Summary

Date	Location	Attendance	Meeting Highlights
04/25/07	Raleigh Municipal Building	10	Staff and consultants introduce the master planning process for Timberlake Park to participants and gather input on goals and objectives for the park.

Date	Location	Attendance	Meeting Highlights
05/23/07	Vena Wilburne Elementary School	12	Staff and consultants re-introduce the master planning process. The consultants present demographic information about the neighborhood and parks program registrations, and an overview of the physical and cultural characteristics of the site and adjacent land uses. Participants generate a list of prioritized park goals, objectives or elements.
06/27/07	Vena Wilburne Elementary School	12	Consultants review the design and public meeting process to date and present a summary of public comment from the previous meeting. They present three alternatives concepts for the park representing different intensities of site development. Participants comment about each concept and rank the plans on a 1 to 5 scale: Alternative A – Lowest use-intensity: received both high and low rankings Alternative B – Moderate use-intensity: received high rankings Alternative C – Highest use-intensity: received no rankings.
07/25/07	Vena Wilburne Elementary School	12	Consultants review the vision and goals for the park as stated in previous and present a Preliminary Draft Master Plan, a composite of the three preliminary design alternatives offered at Community Meeting #3. Main features of the park include a neighborhood center, tot lot, play area and play lawn; paved and unpaved trails; picnic shelter; ½ court basketball; woodland playground with nature-play elements and a rock-climbing. Participants provided various comments. The issue of confusion between Timberlake Park and Timberlake Subdivision was raised by subdivision residents with suggestions to change the park's name.
08/22/07	Vena Wilburne Elementary School	Unknown*	Consultants present the Draft Master plan and provide information about the major elements. All elements presented in the preliminary plan remain in the final draft. Park security was a concern for several participants. Staff addressed questions about lighting.

*Minutes from Community Meeting #5 were not available on the Raleigh Parks and Recreation website. Information about this meeting was provided through the record of public comments from the meeting and a copy of the consultant's presentation

PRGAB ACTION

The PRGAB reviewed the Draft Master Plan and made no changes. The plan was approved unanimously at their October 18, 2007 meeting.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION

City Council approved the Master Plan without changes on November 7, 2007.

SUMMARY

The Timberlake Park Community Meeting Process succeeded in producing a park master plan that contained elements and programs that satisfied the interests of the citizens who were involved in the planning process. The only program element not endorsed by all participants was the basketball court.

The number of citizens participating in the process was low – no more than 12 citizens attended the first four community meetings. Parks staff publicized the meetings through mailings to residents within ¼-mile from the park site, distributing flyers in English and Spanish at the neighboring mobile home park, meeting with the Northeast CAC to announce the planning effort, and posting signs on the park property. Citizens reported not hearing about the planning meetings until they were already underway. Of the citizens who did attend, it is not clear from the meeting documentation which neighborhoods they were from. Citizen sign-in sheets recorded only zip codes and email addresses.

Resolution Process

The Resolution Process is so named because of its establishment as an official planning process under City Council Resolution (2003)-735 (see Appendix B for a copy of the resolution). Prior to 2003 the City of Raleigh utilized volunteer citizen master plan committees, led by members of the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) and supported by professional City staff and in most cases hired consultants. In 2003, after approximately three years of research and discussion by the PRGAB, the City Council adopted Resolution (2003)-735 to revise the master plan process. Most features of the previous process (adopted in 1988) were retained, but specific language was added concerning the advertisement of meetings, the specific timing and form of public meetings to introduce and review the plans, and an interim management plan strategy called the System Integration Plan (SIP) for newly acquired properties.

The Resolution Process is a committee-directed planning process that involves a volunteer committee of citizens co-chaired by elected members of the PRGAB. Parks and Recreation Department staff and a design consultant support the process, provide background information, and draft the plans and supporting documents.

Committee appointments are recommended by the PRGAB and made by the City Council. As per Resolution (2003)-735, the composition of the master plan committee is intended to be representative of people with interests in the park and its appropriate uses, should reflect demographics of the area, and take into account other relevant qualifications related to the characteristics of the park involved. The committee is defined in size to be no fewer than 12 and no more than 15 members including the co-chairs.

The Resolution Process is intended to move through a series of steps from the development of a program statement to the selection of a Draft Master Plan as follows:

1. Development of a Program Statement. The program statement describes the overall vision for the park, including uses, sensitivity to natural elements, identity, history and other characteristics and should be consistent with the System Integration Plan and the Parks, Recreation and Greenways Comprehensive Plan Elements.
2. Based on the Program Statement, the design professionals develop alternative site related diagrams representing a range of Master Plan Alternatives. The committee selects the concept that best accomplishes the Program Statement goals.

3. The park concept is developed into a Draft Master Plan that includes the conceptual plan rendering, the Program Statement, a written description of the intent of the Master Plan concept and other background information as appropriate
2. The committee identifies priorities for phased development of the project, and approves the Draft Master Plan with a recommendation to the PRGAB.
3. The plan is made available for public review and comment.
4. The PRGAB reviews public comment and may modify the plan prior to its approval and recommendation to City Council.

Horseshoe Farm Park

Located in North Raleigh, just west of the intersection of US 401 and Ligon Mill Road, Horseshoe Farm Park is a 146 acre oxbow sited on the north side of the Neuse River. Surrounded on three sides by the river, Horseshoe Farm Park consists of primarily undeveloped pastures and woodland areas. The most recent use for the land prior to the City's 1994 purchase was as a residence and horse pasture.

In 1996 City Council adopted the Neuse River Regional Park Master Plan that included Horseshoe Farm as part of a Regional Park concept along the Neuse River corridor. This master plan for an integrated series of parks envisioned different recreational elements being served at various locations according to the opportunity, site character and need.

To begin the master planning process for Horseshoe Farm Park, the Raleigh City Council appointed the 15-member Horseshoe Farm Park Master Plan Committee in early 2005, and contracted with HagerSmith Design, PA to design the master plan and assist the committee in its deliberations. The committee along with the rest of the master plan team met through 2005 and early 2006 holding 19 committee meetings and two public meetings to create a draft master plan.

The preliminary draft master plan was made available to the public at a meeting in November 2005 to receive public comment. The written and spoken public comment overwhelmingly supported preserving the natural character of Horseshoe Farm and removing the high intensity active recreation elements from the master plan. In response to the feedback, the committee scaled back the structural components of the plan and wrote the plan narrative to reflect the environmental stewardship intent of the plan.

A brief description of the committee meetings is given in Table 4, below. Full summaries of the committee meetings and associated public meetings can be found in the Horseshoe Farm Park Master Plan appendix on the internet at:

City Council appointed 13 members to the Park Master Plan Committee.

Representation on the committee consisted of:

Interest or Association (number of members)
PRGAB members (2; Chair and Vice-chair)
Active recreation, court and field sports (4; two stopped attending by the fourth meeting)

Greenways, hiking (3)
River access (1)
Dog parks, walking in parks (1)
Parks generally (2)
Conservation organization (1)
Neighboring landowner (1)

The PRGAB Chair regularly participated in committee meetings.

Master Plan Support

Jimmy Thiem	HagerSmith Design, PA
David Shouse	City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department Senior Planner

Table 4. Horseshoe Farm Committee Meeting Summary

Date	Location	Committee & PRGAB Attendance	Citizen Attendance	Meeting Highlights
02/23/05	Durant Nature Park	15	0	Introductions; park planning process overview; description of park types; Horseshoe Farm Park and the Raleigh Park System
03/05/05	Various parks	12	0	Tour of an existing Millbrook Exchange Park (community park) and Spring Forest Road Park (neighborhood park). Tour of Horseshoe Farm Park site.
03/30/05	Durant Nature Park	16	30-40	**Public Meeting.** Public interaction and identification of desired facilities and programming ideas. Committee business: selected a decision rule (majority vote).
04/13/05	Durant Nature Park	12	10	Meeting focus is on developing programming recommendations. Committee discusses characteristics of the site important to them. Parks staff provide information on area demographics, participation in park programs by residents within two miles of site, and growth projections. Committee members list their preferred program elements. Public comments are received. Most comments favor natural elements.
04/27/05	Durant Nature Park	14	15	Staff provide information on system-wide and northeast park use, latent demand, trends, and capacities. Program elements reviewed from previous meeting. Public comments are received. Most comments are oriented toward youth activities.
05/11/05	Durant Nature Park	11	10	Committee continues to brainstorm and discuss program elements. Staff provides a list of recreational facilities in proximity to the park site. Staff also provides examples of program statements from other park master plans. Public comments are received. Comments vary from keeping a natural focus to opening up the park for active recreation.
05/25/05	Fox Road	10	12	Committee continues to brainstorm and discuss program elements. Public comments are received. Comments

Date	Location	Committee & PRGAB Attendance	Citizen Attendance	Meeting Highlights
	Elementary			ranged from environmental education, need for open space, to need for football fields.
06/08/05	Durant Nature Park	14	20	Committee discusses program narratives generated from previous program element brainstorm sessions. Committee chairs ask committee to consider an aquatic element. Committee members at odds over passive versus active recreation focus. Agreed on river-oriented recreation and environmental center. Informal/formal open play areas discussed but not agreed on. Public comments are received, mostly in favor of keeping a natural setting.
06/22/05	Durant Nature Park	9	10	Committee continues discussion of program narratives. Public comments are received. Most are focused on the need for environmental education center, and maintaining natural areas.
06/29/05	Durant Nature Park	13	15	Committee begins prioritizing program elements using a scoring process. Four committee members express dissatisfaction with the scoring process, specifically not being able to eliminate elements. Public comments are received, all in favor of keeping the park natural.
07/27/05	Durant Nature Park	12	15	Design consultants present three alternative schematic plans. Committee discussion touches on whether low priority elements should be included in the schematics, as well as the need to include elements that meet the needs of Raleigh residents. Some committee members express the concern that they are proceeding without a defined program statement. Public comments are received. Most express concern over presence of high activity areas on the site.
08/17/05	Durant Nature Park	12	10	Committee members comment on alternative schematic plans. Most have a preference for plan B or a combination of A and B. Some like none of the plans due to presence of high activity areas. Committee hears from parks staff on various program areas. Committee begins to craft a vision statement for the park. Public comments are received. One commented on wildlife considerations, another on environmental education.
09/08/05	Durant Nature Park	14	20	The committee postpones its work on the mission and vision statements and votes on whether to keep and/or alter specific plan elements. Many active recreation elements are retained, others are eliminated. Public comments are received. All comments are related to the protection of natural areas.

Date	Location	Committee & PRGAB Attendance	Citizen Attendance	Meeting Highlights
09/21/05	Durant Nature Park	11	15	The committee adopts mission and vision statements. They continue discussion and adoption of program elements and element narratives. Design consultants present the Preliminary Master Plan based on the decisions and discussion from the 9/8/2005 committee meeting. Public comments are received, all related to the preserving natural features on the site.
11/16/05	Durant Road Middle School		150 attending; 22 speakers	**Public Meeting:** 21 of 22 speakers are in support of maintaining a natural park setting. One speaker in favor of a disc golf course. 79 written comments submitted and can be classified in the following way: • Maintain natural setting: 63 • Add disc golf: 9 • Provide active recreation: 3 • Recommendations about canoe launches: 2 • Other: 2
12/07/05	Durant Nature Park	13	15	Staff provides information about the Neuse River Master Plan, reminds committee that HSF is designated as a community park. Committee hears from Friends of Horseshoe Farm, and Friends of Millbrook Dog Park. **The committee votes to eliminate the recreation center, the dog park and the tennis courts.** Public comments are received.
01/04/06	Durant Nature Park	11	15	The committee hears presentations by Friends of Horseshoe Farm and the NC Natural Heritage Program. **Approves a motion to use the definition of a Nature Preserve as the overall guiding principle for the park**.
01/25/06	Durant Nature Park	11	13	The committee discussed ways to amend previous versions of the draft narrative to reflect changes in committee direction. Receives public comment, mostly concerning arrangement of canoe launches.
02/08/06	Durant Nature Park	10	13	Committee continues to make changes to the plan narrative and changes to greenway locations.
03/01/06	Durant Nature Park	10	12	Design consultants present the revised master plan based on committee discussion from the five previous meetings. The committee votes to accept the revised plan. More work is spent revising the master plan document.
04/05/06	Durant Nature Park	11	12	The committee completes its work on the master plan document.

PRGAB ACTIONS

The PRGAB called a special meeting on June 29, 2006 to consider the Draft Master Plan. Public comment was received at the meeting as well as two weeks prior and two weeks after the meeting. After

consideration of the Draft Master Plan approved by the Master Plan Committee and public comment the PRGAB recommended (by the votes shown below) the following six (6) specific motions for City Council consideration at Council's August 8, 2006 meeting, as follows:

1. Recommends sending the Draft Master Plan forward, as the original motion was amended (below) to City Council for consideration [of adoption]; (12-1)

2. Recommends charging the design team with the following guidelines when placing buildings to encourage innovative design: a) to preserve view sheds and scenic vistas; b) to use current natural landscapes to hide, camouflage buildings, parking and roads; (13-0)

3. Recommends considering [as] an addition to the park a recreation center with indoor active recreation, and that the facility be similar in size and program to the Laurel Hills Community Center; (12-1)

4. Recommends the recreation center be sited as indicated on the Preliminary [Draft] Master Plan [November 16, 2005]; (12-1)

5. Recommends including two (2) outdoor basketball courts, unlit, in a location in keeping with the Board's design guidelines (#2 above). (11-2)

6. That the Board a) devise a cover letter to City Council that specifies where the Board recommends modifying the [Draft] Master Plan as presented to them; b) itemize the areas that they recommend modifications by showing them in a plan; c) point out to Council where the language in the [Draft] plan will need to be modified if the Council accepts the Board's [recommended] modifications. (12-1)

CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS

On May 15, 2007, in an effort to get Phase 1 underway, the City Council approved the following adjustments to the Draft Master Plan:

1. Avoid clearing and paving in the Significant Natural Heritage Area (SNHA) for the canoe launch and trails, as recommended by the NC Natural Heritage Program. Clearing is the SNHA is allowed for the specific case where it supports connectivity of the environmentally sensitive Raleigh Greenway.
2. In order to maintain the natural vistas of the park, move the parking lot to a decentralized location closer to the existing park gate.
3. Incorporate the environmental stewardship recommendations into the draft Master Plan under the section titled "Environmental Stewardship".
4. After improvements to the access road have been addressed, trails, wildlife habitat enhancements, picnic facilities, and restrooms should have the highest priority for development.

At their meeting on January 8, 2008, the City Council voted to accept the recommendations of the Public Works Committee to adopt the Horseshoe Farm Draft Master Plan as unanimously recommended by the Horseshoe Farm Master Plan Committee. The Council also adopted a resolution to clarify City Council's intent regarding the future of Horseshoe Farm Park. The resolution stated the following points:

1. That it be a natural resource-based recreation and education park, appropriate for passive recreation only;

2. That the planning classification for the park be changed to "Special Park" to be consistent with the characteristics of the park and Council's intent for the park;
3. That it be a showcase for innovative, sustainable, environmentally sensitive park management and development;
4. That staff coordinate and communicate with all stakeholders to ensure water and sewer services reflect the best possible compromise between fiscal responsibility, engineering practicability, and a demonstrable commitment to using innovative "best of breed" and environmentally sustainable practices.
5. That any conflict between the Horseshoe Farm master plan adopted on this date and the environmental stewardship goals of this resolution shall be resolved in favor of the stewardship goals.

SUMMARY

The committee was almost evenly split among those who favored more intense recreational development and those who desired to keep the site in a more natural state. Most of the votes reflected this split, with decisions being made with margins of one or two votes. From early spring through the fall of 2005, the committee was maintaining a focus, at the urging of the committee chair, of providing recreational opportunities consistent with Raleigh's other community parks. Comments voiced by citizens attending the committee meetings were nearly all in opposition to high intensity recreation activities and facilities on the site. During this time, two committee members supportive of more intensive recreation activities (athletics) dropped off the committee and were not replaced. Following the second public meeting in November, where the public voiced overwhelming support for a more environmentally sensitive plan, the committee's votes were weighted more toward a natural resource-based recreation and education park. Committee members and PRGAB members interviewed in this study remarked on the significant level of conflict and discord among committee members and the public.

In April 2006, the committee forwarded its recommendation to the PRGAB for a master plan that focused on natural resource protection and environmental education. The fact the PRGAB chose not to honor the essential elements agreed to by the planning committee is a reflection of the committee's inability to work cooperatively and build trust among its members. It is also indicative of strong philosophical differences that existed at the time between the recreation providers (the Department and its advisory board) and a large segment of the public. These differences were chiefly based on the role that the Department should have in providing the full range of recreational experiences commensurate with the site's designation as a community park.

Forest Ridge Park

Located in Wake County, Forest Ridge Park is situated on a 586-acre peninsula of Falls Lake, between Falls dam and Highway 98. The park land is owned by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and leased and managed by the NC Wildlife Resource Commission (WRC). The City of Raleigh, in partnership with the USACE and the WRC, prepared the Forest Ridge Park Master Plan for this site. Raleigh citizens approved funds for Phase 1 Development to assist the multi-agency partnership in the 2003 Park Bond Referendum. The multi-agency partnership is one of the unique aspects of this particular planning process.

Forest Ridge Park is designated as a Metro Park; designed to provide a leisure or recreational opportunity, which, by size or scale or theme will appeal to a majority of citizens. A Metro Park may also include characteristics of community and neighborhood parks in order to meet the general recreation needs of the local population. Other Metro Parks include Lake Wheeler and Pullen Park, which serve a greater metro area.

Using the Resolution process adopted by the City of Raleigh, the development of the mission statement, park goals, park program, and ultimately the final Master Plan resulted after nearly a year of work by the 15-member Master Planning Committee, Parks and Recreation staff, the USACE, the WRC, and the design consultants. Principles from the firm Haden Stanziale facilitated the Master Plan Committee, which was chaired by members of the Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Advisory Board.

Representation on the committee consisted of:

Interest or Association (number of members)
PRGAB members (2; Chair and Vice Chair)
Neighboring landowners (2)
Parks generally (4)
Wildlife interests (1)
NC Division of Environmental Education (1)
NC Division of State Parks and Recreation (1)
NC Wildlife Resources Commission (1)
NCSU Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (1)
US Army Corps of Engineers (1)
Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (1)

Master Plan Support
George Stanziale, Haden Stanziale Consulting Firm
Victor Lebsock, City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department Project Manager

The Master Plan Committee worked closely with Parks and Recreation staff and consultants to contribute a wide range of insights regarding appropriate uses for the site. In all, 14 meetings were held, beginning with a public meeting that was followed with 12 committee meetings, and a subsequent public meeting.

Once the Forest Ridge Master Committee completed their recommendations, then the master plan was sent to the Parks, Recreation, and Advisory Board for review, prior to submitting the plan to the City Council for approval. One major criteria of the process is that every meeting is open to public, and the public is offered several ways to engage with the Master Plan Committee including working through the various committees to introduce new information or provide presentations by groups at various committee meetings.

A brief description of the committee meetings is given below. Full summaries of the committee meetings and associated public meetings can be found in the Forest Ridge Master Plan Appendix at:

Table 5. Forest Ridge Committee Meeting Summary

Date	Location	Committee & PRGAB Attendance	Citizen Attendance	Meeting Highlights
3/16/05	City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Dept.	Committee Chairs, Consultant, Parks & Rec staff	0	Project meeting to coordinate and schedule the first public meeting.
4/05/2005	Durant Nature Park		Unknown	First **Public Meeting** to inform area residents and interested parties about the upcoming process. Attendees are orientated to the planning process through site analysis maps and a presentation. Attendees state concerns and preferences for park program.
6/22/2005	Green Road Community Center	11	0	Committee Members are introduced to the Forest Ridge project. Committee's role in the planning process is defined.
7/20/2005	Green Road Community Center	14	1	Site analysis is presented and discussed Site specific issues are presented. The Raleigh Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan is discussed in the context of the park.
8/10/05	Green Road Community Center	9	2	Committee is introduced to the recreation programs and needs for the City of Raleigh. Parks staff present overviews and specific needs of their respective programs. A quorum is not present so no voting occurs. Consultants introduce the programming phase of the process. Staff provide an overview of recreation needs as defined by the Comprehensive Plan.
8/24/05	Green Road Community Center	13	1	Committee breaks into groups and develops 3 alternative mission statements for the park. Consultants will synthesize into one statement for presentation at next meeting.
9/14/05	Green Road Community Center	15	3	Committee discusses and finalizes the master plan mission statement. Brainstorms and ranks potential program elements for the park.
9/28/05	Green Road Community Center	14	4	Committee works on finalizing the park program and amends the mission statement. Hears from the Triangle Off-Road Cyclists. Continues discussion of program elements and votes to remove the White Water Park from the plan. Other elements are removed or combined. Wakefield Community representatives present a list of their concerns to the committee.

Date	Location	Committee & PRGAB Attendance	Citizen Attendance	Meeting Highlights
10/26/05	Green Road Community Center	13	6	Consultants introduce the preliminary relationship diagrams and receive input and direction from the committee. Committee discuss facility layout as well as individual program elements. Vote to return disc golf and sand volleyball to the list of possible program elements. The Committee votes to approve Concept B. The program theme is focused on adventure recreation.
11/30/05	Green Road Community Center	14	8	Consultants present the Preliminary Master Plan and receive input and direction from the committee. The Committee have difficulty reaching agreement about the proposed campground and table the issue. Committee members agree that they will continue thinking about the Master Plan for the next two weeks and will return to the next meeting with additional comments.
12/14/05	Green Road Community Center	12	2	The committee continues its discussions of program elements in the preliminary master plan. The climbing wall & ropes course is discussed and length. One member strongly opposes the course and presents argues to remove it. The committee votes 10-2 to retain it. The committee continues its discussion of the campground. They also propose removing some bike trails.
1/11/2006	Green Road Community Center	14	14	The committee hears from David Bell, a representative of Camp Kanata, a nearby private camp, about their ropes course. They also hear from Bill Camp of Triangle Off-Road Cyclists regarding mountain biking needs in the area. The consultants present the trail revisions discussed at the last meeting. After much discussion, they vote to add back some of the trail mileage cut at the last meeting and convert some paved trails to multiuse trails with an earthen surface. A motion is made to eliminate the adventure theme from the park plan. The motion was defeated 11-2. The consultants distribute a draft master plan report for discussion at the next meeting.

Date	Location	Committee & PRGAB Attendance	Citizen Attendance	Meeting Highlights
1/25/06	Green Road Community Center	14	2	The consultants present the Final Master Plan and the Priority Element Recommendations. After much discussion, the committee approves the Final Master Plan 11-2 with 1 amendment to change the surface on the southern portion of the paved park trail into a pervious surface. After discussion and input from the Committee, the Priority Program Elements are approved with some changes.
3/6/06	Durant Elementary School	Not listed	21	**Public Meeting** #2 was held, and followed with a two-week public comment period. Of note is the consistent recognition by the public for the thoughtful and thorough work of the committee. Major concerns raised focus on the cost of the proposed plan, specifically the adventure building might consume most of the funding; strong support is evident for the bike trail.
3/22/06	Green Road Community Center	14	16	The committee reviews comments from Public Meeting #2 and discusses potential revisions to the Master plan. Some concerns registered by committee members include making decisions without a budget; not understanding some of the budget contributions that outside groups could make toward the process. The committee votes to expand the total miles of single track bike trails and wilderness trails. The committee also votes to phase the development of the park

PRGAB ACTIONS

The Forest Ridge Master Plan was introduced to the Parks, Recreation, and Advisory Board at their May 18, 2006 meeting. Questions were raised by the PRGAB about the master plan including the anticipated funding allocations and whether additional funds would be raised to support the plan, whether any potential concerns were raised by the other partners about the plan, whether other parks offer adventure programming, and the importance of evaluating the master plan processes to continue to learn how to improve the processes. The PRGAB approved the plan at their June 15, 2006 meeting.

CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS

The City Council on July 11, 2006, adopted the Master Plan for Forest Ridge Park. The major elements included in the plan are an adventure education center, ropes course and climbing wall, lakeside center, multi-use activity areas, an adventure education overnight lodge, mountain biking and hiking trails, and secondary south entrance with parking, picnic shelter, disc golf and trails.

SUMMARY

The Forest Ridge Master Plan Committee succeeded in reaching a consensus on a mission statement (also referred to as a program statement) early in their deliberations. This provided the groundwork from which the committee could then deliberate and decide on individual program elements. Although many of its

decisions were made unanimously, the committee was not totally unified moving forward from the mission statement. As the plan began taking shape, many decisions were made with one or two consistent dissentions. The final vote to approve the master plan was 11-2. The two dissenting votes on the final plan, and many of the other dissenting votes on specific plan elements, were cast by the members representing the residential area adjacent to the park.

ASSESSMENT OF RALEIGH'S PARK MASTER PLAN PROCESSES

The Community Meeting Process and the Resolution Process as employed in the planning of the four parks under study all yielded master plans with mixed support of the citizens involved. Data collected in surveys and group interviews with parks staff, design consultants, PRGAB members, committee members, and citizens attending community meetings provided a mix of perceptions, experiences and expectations for outcomes for each of these four processes and park planning generally.

From PRGAB members, we gathered information about their perceptions of the two planning processes, and ways that public involvement could be improved. We were also interested in understanding how they perceived their role in the park planning process. We asked planning committee members about their perceptions of the Resolution Process. We were interested in whether they felt that their interests were heard and reflected in the final plan, their perceptions about the effectiveness of the committee and the committee chair to work cooperatively, the committee's use of information, and their general level of satisfaction with the process. Citizens attending community meetings provided us with information about inclusion -- whether they felt that there was adequate representation at the meetings, and if they felt that their concerns and interests were heard and respected at the meetings, and whether their interests were reflected in the final plan. They also responded to questions about transparency: whether citizens understood the planning process as it unfolded at the community meetings, and understood how their comments and suggestions would be used. Interviews with parks staff and design consultants provided background data and some evaluative information. The compiled data are contained in Appendix C.

To make sense of this evidence, it is necessary to distill the very large number of variables down to a manageable set to use in our assessment. We chose to base our evaluation on the extent to which key outcomes of public participation are met. The outcomes we selected are defined by Dietz and Stern (2008) as legitimacy, quality, and capacity. The attributes of each of these broad outcomes is described below:

Legitimacy of Process and Decisions

- People who were interested in and affected by planning decisions had an opportunity to participate
- Participants understood the process and how and why their input was used or not used in the final analysis
- Participants accepted the process as having conformed to standards of sound analysis and decision making, even if they did not agree with the final outcome
- Mistrust among participants, including the Department, was avoided or reduced
- The plan emanating from the process was widely accepted, even among nonparticipants
- Participants did not resort to venues outside the process to overturn its results

Quality of Planning

- Concerns expressed by the public were addressed in the analysis
- Information was added in the process as needed
- Outputs reflected a broad view of the situation that addressed all issues considered important by the participants
- Conclusions were based on and consistent with the best available evidence
- Innovative ideas were generated for solving problems

Capacity for Future Decisions

- Public participants became better informed about relevant issues
- Participants and Department staff gained a better understanding of each other
- Department staff gained an understanding of public concerns
- Participants gained skill in participatory decision making

Using these outcomes and their operative attributes to organize our assessment, we first discuss the Community Meeting Process first and its application in creating master plans for Leesville Park and Timberlake Park. We then present a discussion of the Resolution Process as used in planning Forest Ridge Park and Horseshoe Farm Park. We summarize our assessment in the final section.

Community Meeting Process

Master plans were developed using the Community Meeting Process in Leesville Park, and Timberlake Park. Leesville Park is designated as a community park, and Timberlake is a neighborhood park. We asked past and present members of the PRGAB, Parks Department staff, and citizens who had attended community meetings for their feedback on this form of public involvement process.

Our analysis is most heavily weighted on the comments provided by citizens participating in community meetings. Participants' observations of what had transpired at these meetings and their perceptions of legitimacy and quality can tell us a lot about the value of this process. Most of the feedback we received from citizens attending community meetings for both parks was collected using the internet survey. We interviewed one Timberlake Park participant face-to-face. All respondents answered the short questions on the questionnaire. Some survey respondents and the interview participant provided additional comments related to each question.

Legitimacy of Process

Feedback relating to the legitimacy criterion was mostly centered on people's ability to participate in the process, their understanding of the process and their role in it, and their acceptance of the final plan. Responses to survey questions about process legitimacy were generally favorable and are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Survey Responses Related to Process Legitimacy, Participants in the Community Meeting Processes for Leesville Park and Timberlake Park. Average Rating.

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: ***Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5***	**Leesville n=8**	**Timberlake n=7**	**Combined**
A. You received adequate notice of park planning meetings	3.75	3.00	3.40
B. Most people that you know who were interested in this park were notified of park planning meetings	3.57	3.14	3.36
C. People who shared your interests and concerns were present at park planning meetings	3.75	3.43	3.60

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5	Leesville n=8	Timberlake n=7	Combined
D. There seemed to be a diverse representation of interests at the planning meetings you attended	3.25	3.57	3.40
E. You felt welcomed at park planning meetings	4.25	4.57	4.40
F. There were too many meetings to have to attend in order for you to get your message across	1.71	1.57	1.64
G. There were too few opportunities for you to really get involved	1.63	2.00	1.80
H. The park planning process was adequately described at the meetings you attended	4.13	4.00	4.07
I. Over the duration of the park planning process, you came to understand how the park planning process works	3.38	3.86	3.60
J. During the planning process, it was clear to you how this park fit into the larger park system	3.25	3.14	3.20
K. During the planning process, it was clear to you how citizen comments would be taken into account by the design team	3.38	3.29	3.33
L. You were given feedback about how <u>your</u> comments and concerns would be taken into account in the final park master plan	3.38	3.86	3.60

Source: Focus group interviews and internet survey of citizens attending community meetings. August – September, 2008.

The first step in establishing process legitimacy is to involve people who are interested in and affected by planning decisions. Leesville survey respondents were generally more satisfied that they and their neighbors were notified of community meetings than were Timberlake respondents. Reported one Timberlake participant, "*I live in an adjacent neighborhood to Timberlake Park. The ONLY way I found out there were planning meetings was by accidentally driving past the park and seeing the sign indicating the meeting.*" Although sparsely attended, the Timberlake meetings were perceived by survey respondents to have a diverse representation of interests, as did Leesville participants (Leesville = 3.25; Timberlake = 3.57). Once at the meetings both Leesville and Timberlake participants reported feeling welcomed (Leesville = 4.25; Timberlake = 4.57).

In addition to being aware of participation opportunities, citizens also must be able to participate. Location and timing of meetings have an obvious affect on participation – attendance will be greater if meetings are held at times and locations convenient to most people. Effective participation is also contingent on peoples' opportunity to participate over time. Too many meetings, and attendance may drop off or be too spotty to get consistent participation throughout the process. Too few meetings and citizens may miss their only opportunity to have a voice. In response to number of meetings, survey respondents mostly disagreed with the statements that there were too few opportunities to get involved or too many meetings to get their message across. Some Timberlake respondents reported that they had too few opportunities to participate. This may be directly related to problems of notifications.

Participants at both park meetings apparently understood the master planning process and how and why their input was used or not used in the final plan. From the perspective of the survey respondents, the planning process was adequately described (Leesville = 4.13; Timberlake = 4.00) and participants came to understand how the process works (Leesville = 3.38; Timberlake = 3.86). There was clarity in the Leesville process about how the park fit into the larger park system, less so in the Timberlake process (Leesville = 3.25; Timberlake = 3.14).

Of course, people's understanding of the planning process was not uniform. Stated one Timberlake survey respondent, "*I don't know who made the decision, because the majority of those who attended the meetings did not want a half-court basketball area. But somehow, that made it into the plan.*"

Although the scores averaged in the moderate range on the statement, "it was clear to you how citizen comments would be taken into account by the design team," (Leesville = 3.38; Timberlake = 3.29), participants in both processes reported the full range of agreement (from not at all to completely). Said one Timberlake participant, "*I felt like the citizens were listened to and the plans drawn up truly reflected our suggestions*." On the other side of the spectrum, a Leesville participant reported, "*It was not completely clear how citizen comments would affect the outcome. The dog park was a prime example*." Hence, participants came away from the process with divergent ideas about how their comments were to be integrated into the final plan.

Other comments and concerns about legitimacy of the Community Meeting process were provided by PRGAB members and parks staff. Both groups cited problems with maintaining participant continuity across all five public meetings. Said one PRGAB member, "*Citizen involvement was not consistent from meeting to meeting. We kept having to regroup and repeat. But you really get a park plan quickly*."

Another PRGAB member reported that while interest may be high at the initial meeting, turnout tends to dwindle over time. We did not find this to be the case at the Timberlake meetings, and the lack of attendance data prevented us from making this determination for the Leesville meetings. However, indirect evidence – a statement made by a citizen at the PRGAB meeting where the Leesville master plan was presented, indicates that attendance at the last Leesville meeting had dropped.

Another concern voiced by some PRGAB members about the Community Meeting Process was lack of community-wide representation at the meetings. Participant representation was largely limited to neighboring residents (this was true for Timberlake Park, but could not be verified for the Leesville meetings), and that other voices were not heard. According to PRGAB members, without wide representation the core team must act in the interests of an unrepresented constituency. Stated a PRGAB member, "*Some of the Core Team [Community Meeting] processes have been dominated by people who live close by. The staff takes on the role of unheard constituency and local people feel that the staff has a predetermined plan.*

The issue of the core team acting in the interests of those not present is the most common criticism about process legitimacy by survey respondents. When locally unwanted program elements remain in the final master plan without visible public support, neighboring residents begin to question the authenticity of the process. Concerns about legitimacy of the Timberlake process revolved around the basketball court. Legitimacy concerns about the Leesville planning process centered on the fact that the dog park remained in the plan on the side closest the residential area despite no evident support by participants in the community meetings and continued protests by neighbors. Said one respondent, "*I did not understand how a dog park came to be incorporated into our plan since I did not hear anybody ask for a dog park. It has since been removed, but only through hiring a lawyer*."

The fact that some neighboring residents felt they needed to go beyond the community meeting process and hire a lawyer to represent their interests to the PRGAB and City Council is indicative that they did not believe that the Leesville Park community meeting process was a legitimate forum for resolving this issue.

Quality of Planning

To produce quality decisions, a public participation process should identify the values, interests, and concerns of all who are interested in or might be affected by the planning decision. As shown in Table 7, most survey respondents participating in either the Leesville or Timberlake planning process felt that the Department was actively seeking their views and opinions (Leesville = 4.00; Timberlake = 4.29), that the their comments and concerns were regarded as important (Leesville = 3.50; Timberlake = 4.00) and were adequately recorded at the community meetings (Leesville = 3.29; Timberlake = 3.86). Reported one Timberlake participant, "*I was surprised and impressed at how many of our suggestions were used.*"

Although more Timberlake respondents agreed to the statement that their comments and concerns were dealt with fairly (Leesville = 3.63; Timberlake = 4.14) they were about even in reporting that their interests were met in the final park master plan (Leesville = 3.50; Timberlake = 3.43). This reflects the fact that some of the Leesville respondents were opposed to the planned location of the dog park and were satisfied with its removal from the plan by the City Council.

Table 7. Survey Responses Related to Planning Quality, Participants in the Community Meeting Processes for Leesville Park and Timberlake Park. Average Rating.

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: ***Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5***	**Leesville n=8**	**Timberlake n=7**	**Combined**
A. Your views and opinions about the planned park were actively sought by the park planning team	4.00	4.29	4.13
B. You were given feedback by Raleigh Parks staff and/or the design consultant that your comments and concerns were important	3.50	4.00	3.73
C. Your comments and concerns were adequately recorded at park planning meetings	3.29	3.86	3.57
D. Your comments were dealt with in a fair and understandable manner	3.63	4.14	3.87
E. You saw how your interests were met in the final park master plan	3.50	3.43	3.47
F. The final park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings	3.43	3.14	3.29
G. The final park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens	3.86	3.29	3.57
H. The expertise of parks staff and the design consultant were important in balancing citizen interests in the final park plan	3.75	3.86	3.80
I. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that went to the Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Greenways Advisory Board (the Parks Board)	3.14	3.43	3.29
J. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that was ultimately approved by City Council	3.17	3.43	3.31

Source: Focus group interviews and internet survey of citizens attending community meetings. August – September, 2008.

Another indication that a public participation program produces quality output is that the finished plan reflects a broad view of the situation and addresses all issues considered important by the participants. Most respondents in both the Leesville and Timberlake processes agreed to the statements that the final park plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings (Leesville = 3.43; Timberlake = 3.14), and the plan meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens (Leesville = 3.86; Timberlake = 3.29).

The lower agreement rate among Timberlake respondents was explained by one participant this way, "*The park really fit the needs of our neighborhood, not so much the citizens of Raleigh.*"

Most respondents agreed that the expertise of parks staff and the design consultant were important in balancing citizen interests in the final park plan (Leesville = 3.75; Timberlake = 3.86). On the surface, this is incongruous with the issue brought up by many respondents about unwanted program elements being introduced into the plan by the staff and consultants. However, they may have interpreted the statement to mean that the planning team balanced the interests of those present at the meetings.

The quality of output of a public participation process depends heavily the effective use of quality information for decision making. It was clear from the review of the core team meetings for both Leesville and Timberlake that core team members concentrated their efforts in presenting information to help meeting participants make sound choices. Community meeting participants were not specifically asked about their perceptions of the information provided in the planning process. However some unsolicited comments indicate that some citizens found information to be relevant and helpful. For example, "*They did a good job of showing other park plans in parks of similar size to Timberlake, and what would be feasible to look at doing. They clearly stated what wouldn't fit in our park at the beginning. That gave us ideas about what to ask for*."

Public participation processes that generate innovative ideas for solving problems typically produce quality plans. The generation and expression of innovative ideas at a public meeting is entirely dependent on the application of good public practice. Design consultants and meeting facilitators should organize and conduct meetings with this objective in mind. We asked participants, consultants and planning board members to identify ideas generated at the community meetings that were particularly inventive and useful. The consultant on the Timberlake plan recalled, "*We always get useful critique about placement, and at Timberlake we got really good feedback about issues with safety and security – something that we normally don't consider or deal with.*" According to a PRGAB member, one particularly innovative suggestion that came out of the Leesville meetings was the idea of a reading porch on the library and a reading theme in the playground.

Survey respondents participating in the two community meetings by and large agreed with the statement, "you were generally satisfied with the park master plan that was ultimately approved by City Council (Leesville = 3.17; Timberlake = 3.43). The level of satisfaction was bimodal among the Leesville respondents, with most respondents agreeing to a great extent with the statement, one agreeing only to some extent, and one not at all in agreement. Responses for Timberlake participants were clustered in the moderate range.

It is apparent from the survey data that the Community Meeting Process applied in both Leesville Park and Timberlake Park resulted in quality planning, at least from the perspective of those involved in the planning process.

Capacity for Future Decisions

The Community Meeting Process can potentially build capacity for citizens to become more meaningfully engaged in shared decisions about what they want for future park and recreation opportunities in the City of Raleigh. Realizing this capacity results in better educated and informed publics, publics more capable of participating effectively in public decisions about parks and recreation, and better communication among interested parties. For this to happen, citizens need to be fully engaged in a transparent process that promotes mutual understanding, strives for inclusive solutions, and results in shared responsibility for decisions.

From the feedback provided by citizens attending community meetings for Leesville and Timberlake parks, some process improvements are in order to improve participation, open the decision process to get more transparency, and work toward more inclusive solutions. One problem that has been pointed out by Department staff and PRGAB members that needs to be overcome is the lack of continuity of participation through all five public meetings. Studies have shown that participation intensity – repeated encounters that build on one another over time – improves the capacity of participants to learn from one another and build integrative solutions to problems. When people attend just one or two meetings their participation often is limited to merely reacting to information presented to them.

Another limitation of the Community Meeting Process is loss of transparency as decisions made by the core team simply 'appear' as program elements at the next community meeting. Capacity can be enhanced if citizens are involved in those core team decision venues and can add their knowledge of the community, convey critical concerns and interests of the community to the decision process, and communicate decisions to their neighbors and associates.

Resolution Process

The Resolution Process was employed in developing master plans for Forest Ridge Park and Horseshoe Park. The comprehensive plan for parks and greenways designates Forest Ridge Park as a metro park, and Horseshoe Park is a community park. We asked citizens appointed to the planning committees for both parks, past and present members of the PRGAB, and Parks Department staff for their feedback on these public involvement processes.

In the same way that we used the comments of citizens to evaluate community meetings, our analysis of the Resolution Process is most heavily weighted on the comments provided by planning committee members. Most of the feedback we received from committee members for both parks was collected using the internet survey. We interviewed three Horseshoe Farm committee members and two Forest Ridge members face-to-face. All respondents answered the short questions on the questionnaire. Most survey respondents and interview participants provided additional comments related to each question. We also relied on comments provided by PRGAB members who were on one of the committees or had attended committee meetings.

The interview and survey questions for the master plan committee members focused on the work of the committee. We were interested in their perceptions about the effectiveness of the committee and the committee chair to work cooperatively, the committee's use of information, whether they felt that their interests were heard and reflected in the final plan, and their general level of satisfaction with the process.

Legitimacy of Process

The same criteria used to assess perceptions of legitimacy of the Community Meeting Process were applied in our analysis of the Resolution Process. We gathered feedback about people's understanding of the process and their role in it, their acceptance of the process as having conformed to standards of sound analysis and decision making, their perception about the efficacy and fairness of committee meetings, and their acceptance of the outcome of committee deliberations. Table 8 contains responses to questions on the committee member questionnaire that pertain to process legitimacy.

Table 8. Survey Responses Related to Process Legitimacy, Participants in the Resolution Process for Forest Ridge Park and Horseshoe Farm Park. Average Rating.

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5	Forest Ridge n=9	Horseshoe Farm n=9	Combined
A. The committee members, as a group, represented an appropriate range of all affected concerns.	3.33	3.67	3.50
B. All committee members had full access to relevant information they needed in order to participate effectively in this process..	3.22	2.88	3.06
C. The validity of the information used in this process was accepted by all of the committee members	3.22	2.88	3.06
D. The committee chair made sure we had a realistic work plan and time line for the process.	3.33	2.22	2.78
E. The committee chair was fair and unbiased.	3.00	1.78	2.39
F. When things got tense, the committee chair was able to help us find ways to move forward constructively.	3.33	1.33	2.33
G. The committee chair made sure that the views and perspectives of all participants were heard and addressed.	3.56	2.22	2.89
H. The committee chair made sure that no one dominated the process or other participants.	3.22	1.89	2.56
I. The committee chair helped us manage technical discussions efficiently.	3.44	2.00	2.72
J. The committee chair made sure that options for addressing the issues or resolving the controversy are implementable.	3.44	1.89	2.67
K. Trust was built among the committee members.	3.33	1.78	2.56

Source: Focus group interviews and internet survey of park planning committee members. August – September, 2008.

The first question on Table 8 relates to how committee members perceived the makeup of the group to which they were appointed. A fundamental legitimacy criterion is whether the committee itself is considered valid. Respondents generally agreed to the statement that the committee members, as a group, represent an appropriate range of all affected stakeholders (Forest Ridge = 3.33; Horseshoe Farm = 3.67).

A few members of both committees voiced concern about committee makeup. Said one Forest Ridge member, "*In my opinion, residents that lived next to Forest Ridge that supported the park were underrepresented… So, from my point of view, at a high level, the objections of a small minority opposed to the park were overrepresented in the committee, and this greatly reduced our effectiveness as a committee.*" Two responses from Horseshoe Farm committee members draw very different conclusions about the makeup of that committee: "*I felt that the committee was split into two totally opposite directions and visions for what the park could be. Neither side seemed to ever really consider the other's concerns.*" Said another committee member: "*The committee chosen couldn't have been more equally balanced between passive and active recreation interests, what was called a 'divided committee' was actually a 'very balanced committee'*".

Another legitimacy criterion is whether the process conformed to standards of sound analysis and decision making. One component of that is access to valid information for decision making. We asked respondents whether the committee had full access to relevant information and whether the validity of the information used

in the process was accepted by all committee members. Perceptions of information access and validity were very different between the two committees. Forest Ridge committee members were more in agreement with the statement that all committee members had full access to relevant information (3.22) and that the validity of the information was accepted by all the committee members (3.00). By comparison, for the Horseshoe Farm committee the average agreement score on the question about full access to relevant information was 2.88, and only 2.50 on the information validity question.

Said one Forest Ridge committee member about availability of information, "*We had good information about recreation needs and where and how those needs could be currently met. When we asked for information, we'd get it at the next meeting.*" To the contrary, one respondent had this to say about availability of relevant information within the Horseshoe Farm committee: "*We didn't have the information needed to make a collective choice. All we were able to do was to stick to our own interests and see if we could get what we personally wanted.*" And said another, "*If we asked specific questions, we would get specific answers. But we didn't have an overall perspective of recreational needs and how those needs were being met or could be met in the future.*"

The Resolution Process places significant responsibility for the success of the process on the committee chair and vice chair. According to Resolution 2003-735, the committee chair and vice chair, members of the PRGAB nominated by their fellow board members, have a responsibility to "formulate meeting procedures that encourage open-discussion, well-informed decision making, and working towards an agreement." This is a difficult assignment to ask volunteers who give freely of their time to this process. It is doubly so, when the committee members are in conflict over key decisions and under the scrutiny of the public. The role requires considerable skill in facilitative leadership, a skill that requires training and practice to perfect.

Given the prominent role of the chair in guiding the committee toward the development of the park master plan, we believed that it was important to assess how the chair's performance affected the process outcome. Statements D through J on Table 8 relate to this line of inquiry. The opinions of committee members about the performance of their chairs differ remarkably between the two committees. Among the comments we heard from committee members about the functioning of the committees, a large number of them were focused on the actions of the Horseshoe Farm committee chair.

It is important for a committee chair to be perceived by his or her committee members as being fair and unbiased, to make sure that all views and perspectives are heard and no single interest dominates, and to be able to help the committee move forward when people are in conflict. In circumstances where people are in disagreement and choices are difficult, such as the situation in the Horseshoe Farm planning committee meetings, these skills become more critical, and at the same time, more difficult to execute. It is clear from the Horseshoe Farm survey responses shown in Table 8 that the committee chair did not have the process skills needed to effectively lead the committee through the planning process. The difficulties experienced by the committee chair had a profound effect on the outcome of the committee process. The fact that the resolution process has no procedure or guideline for training its committee chairs to facilitate committee discussion is a significant shortcoming.

One final indicator of process legitimacy we chose to measure was trust. A process deemed legitimate by its participants is one where mistrust among participants is avoided or reduced. Among Forest Ridge committee respondents, most agreed to this statement to a great extent or completely (agreement score = 3.33). To the contrary, mistrust was a significant issue for Horseshoe Farm committee members. The majority of respondents disagreed completely that trust was built among committee members (agreement score = 1.78). This is indicative of the philosophical division among members of the committee over whether to keep the park largely undeveloped, and their inability to find common ground.

We heard a number of negative comments about the efficacy of both committee processes. Most of the negative comments we heard from Forest ridge committee members were in regards to the incongruence of interests among committee members from the nearby residential area and everyone else. By far, most of the criticism relative to process legitimacy was leveled at the Horseshoe Farm process. This comment seems to sum up what we heard throughout this study, "*…at the core, two fundamental factors really created this disenfranchisement [among committee members]: 1) a lack of a common goal of the committee members, and 2) giving the committee too much responsibility, without enough structure.*"

These statements, and the responses on the interview/survey questionnaire regarding process legitimacy lead us to the conclusion that the Horseshoe Farm process was significantly challenged with respect to committee members acceptance of the process.

On a more hopeful note, one member of the Horseshoe Farm committee had this to say: "*Having a "balanced" committee of citizens is important to this process. The input from different sides throughout the process was helpful, yet time-consuming. I notice the City has moved away from full citizen involvement after these two plans. They really should move back to this process, just have more skilled committee chairmen to lead the groups and control the discussions.*"

Quality of Planning

The quality of planning in the resolution process rests largely on two factors: (1) that the concerns and issues considered important by the committee members are addressed in the analysis and reflected in the final plan; and (2) committee decisions are based on and consistent with the best available information, and that new information was added in the process as needed.

We asked planning committee members a series of questions about their perceptions of the quality of the output of their planning efforts. The data are summarized in Table 9, below.

Table 9. Survey Responses Related to Quality of Planning, Participants in the Resolution Process for Forest Ridge Park and Horseshoe Farm Park. Average Rating.

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5	Forest Ridge n=9	Horseshoe Farm n=9	Combined
A. The park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings.	3.78	3.67	3.72
B. The park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens.	3.78	3.00	3.39
C. You feel that the completed park master plan takes into account your interests.	3.33	3.22	3.28
D. You feel that the completed park master plan serves the interests of other committee members.	3.56	3.11	3.33
E. You are confident the plan can be carried out in its current form.	2.88	3.56	3.24
F. The process helped you identify and focus on the key issues that had to be addressed.	3.78	3.33	3.56
G. The process helped you identify appropriate options for dealing with important park and recreation issues.	3.67	2.67	3.17
H. You worked effectively to identify information needs.	3.78	2.75	3.29

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: *Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5*	Forest Ridge n=9	Horseshoe Farm n=9	Combined
I. You understood all important information and data used in this process.	3.56	3.25	3.41
J. The process helped you gain a more complete understanding of the issues in this project.	4.00	3.63	3.82

Source: Focus group interviews and internet survey of park planning committee members. August – September, 2008.

On nearly all indicators of planning quality, most committee members from both Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm rated the output of their planning efforts favorably. Respondents from both committees were in general agreement that the adopted plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings (Forest Ridge = 3.78; Horseshoe Farm = 3.67). More of the Forest Ridge committee members (but not all) were satisfied that the finished plan meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens than were Horseshoe Farm committee members (Forest Ridge = 3.78; Horseshoe Farm = 3.00). Indeed, Horseshoe Farm respondents were evenly split between being in agreement and not, which accurately reflects the philosophical division of the committee. Said one Horseshoe Farm committee member, "*I feel that the master plan is appropriate for providing a specific type of recreational opportunities that benefit the public while protecting the unique characteristics of this site. It demonstrates great vision when planning for the future.*" And another, "*I feel that the master plan represents a vocal minority of the planning committee, but not the citizens of Raleigh.*"

Owing to the fact that City Council had decisively made its intentions known regarding the implementation of the Horseshoe Farm plan, more respondents from this committee were confident that the plan would be carried out in its current form (Forest Ridge = 2.88; Horseshoe Farm = 3.56).

Disagreement on the final plans among members of both committees is reflected in their responses to statements about whether the plans take into account their own interests (Forest Ridge = 3.33; Horseshoe Farm = 3.22) and the interests of their fellow committee members (Forest Ridge = 3.56; Horseshoe Farm = 3.11). Although average agreement scores on both these statements rank above 'moderate agreement', the distribution of positives and negatives is decidedly split, especially among Horseshoe Farm respondents.

The ability to understand and apply key information for making planning decisions is a critical factor in overall quality of committee output. Committee respondents reported that the process helped them identify and focus on the key issues that had to be addressed (Forest Ridge = 3.78; Horseshoe Farm = 3.33), and helped them gain a more complete understanding of the issues (Forest Ridge = 4.00; Horseshoe Farm = 3.63). Forest Ridge participants were more in agreement that the process helped them identify appropriate options for dealing with important park and recreation issues (Forest Ridge = 3.67; Horseshoe Farm = 2.67), and that were more able to work together to identify information needs than those in the Horseshoe Farm process (Forest Ridge = 3.78; Horseshoe Farm = 2.75). Reported one Forest Ridge committee member, "*[The] [g]roup also challenged their own assumptions. [We} tried to understand what we did not know and then go about requesting that information.*" Taking an opposite view, Horseshoe Farm committee member reported, "*We weren't given enough background and it had to come out of the committee deliberations, which were often way too late.*"

Regarding whether they understood all important information and data used in the process, Forest Ridge respondents were more in agreement with the statement (Forest Ridge = 3.56; Horseshoe Farm = 3.25). It is not likely that respondents were unable to understand the information per se, but some may have had difficulty accepting its appropriateness. Reported one Horseshoe Farm committee member, "*We have pages*

and pages of demographics, but there is no way to record who comes to a park for passive recreation. The data are skewed to active recreation."

Some of the key determinants of public processes resulting in quality output were positive for both Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm. Specifically, there was general agreement that both adopted plans effectively deal with key issues related to the park and its surroundings. Secondly, the committee process helped them gain a more complete understanding of the issues – an important first step for quality decisions. However, whether the resolution process produced quality decisions in Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm cannot be decisively determined given the mixed appraisals of the planning committee members.

Differences in perspective about the quality of each committee's output boils down to whether or not the individual members were in agreement with the overall program statement for their respective master plan. Because both committees were unable to reach consensus on key program elements going into the plan, those who did not agree with the final outcome were less likely to judge the final product as beneficial to the citizens of Raleigh. This result points to a notable shortcoming of the committee process – the choice of majority voting as the decision process. Admittedly, a consensus decision rule is more difficult to put into practice – groups would likely need the assistance of a neutral facilitator, and the process would likely take longer – but the outcome would likely lead to greater acceptance of the finished plans, and potentially more innovative ideas as the committee worked to resolve differences and reach common ground.

Capacity for Future Decisions

The resolution process holds promise for improving the capacity of citizens to become better informed about parks and recreation issues in the City of Raleigh, better able to engage in meaningful exchange about diverse values, interests and concerns, and to develop a widely shared understanding of the issues and decision challenges in park planning. Our analysis centered on whether and to what degree the resolution process as practiced in the Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farms master planning process succeed in improving civic capacity.

We looked at four dimensions of participative capacity in our study: the degree to which participants (1) were able to work together cooperatively, (2) sought options or solutions that met common needs, (3) gained a better understanding of the needs and interests of other committee members, and (4) had the skills and time to participate effectively. Table 10 shows the results of this line of inquiry.

Table 10. Survey Responses Related to Capacity for Future Decisions, Participants in the Resolution Process for Forest Ridge Park and Horseshoe Farm Park. Average Rating.

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: ***Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5***	**Forest Ridge n=9**	**Horseshoe Farm n=9**	**Combined**
A. The committee members worked together cooperatively on the key issues in this case or project.	3.22	2.67	2.94
B. The committee members sought options or solutions that met the common needs of all committee members.	3.11	2.67	2.89
C. The process helped us gain a better understanding of the other's views and perspectives.	4.00	3.22	3.61
D. You had the skills needed to participate effectively in this process.	4.44	3.44	3.94

Rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements: *Not at all = 1; Some extent = 2; Moderate extent = 3; Great extent = 4; Completely = 5*	Forest Ridge n=9	Horseshoe Farm n=9	Combined
E. You had the time needed to participate effectively in this collaborative process.	4.33	3.89	4.11
F. My first choice would be to use this type of process again for similar situations.	3.78	3.22	3.50
G. I feel the benefits of this process will outweigh the costs.	3.89	3.33	3.61

Source: Focus group interviews and internet survey of park planning committee members. August – September, 2008.

As discussed throughout this report, committee members on both the Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm planning processes reported difficulties in working cooperatively toward a common goal. This is reflected in the responses to the statements, committee members worked together cooperatively on the key issues (Forest Ridge = 3.22; Horseshoe Farm = 2.67), and committee members sought options or solutions that met the common needs of all committee members (Forest Ridge = 3.11; Horseshoe Farm = 2.67). Reported one Forest Ridge committee member, "*Some committee members worked to explain and gain support for their own interests, only. A community group was formed that was very vocal. That is a valid option for them, but no work was done to understand the other side of the issue.*"

Although respondents reported difficulties working cooperatively, they did find that committee deliberations helped them gain a better understanding of others' views and perspectives (Forest Ridge = 4.00; Horseshoe Farm = 3.22).

With respect to their self assessment of their skills needed to participate effectively in the planning process, nearly all Forest Ridge participants agreed that they possessed the necessary skills (4.33). Among the Horseshoe Farm respondents, although most believed they had the skills, some reported that they did not (3.44). Similar responses were reported for having the time needed to participate effectively (Forest Ridge = 3.33; Horseshoe Farm = 3.89). One Horseshoe Farm committee member said this about skills and time: "*We had the time, we had the skills, but we didn't have the background information to do an intelligent job.*"

When asked whether they felt the benefits of the process outweighed the costs, and whether they would commit to a similar process in the future, most respondents from both committees were upbeat. This was a particular surprising finding for Horseshoe Farm participants. Although a minority of Horseshoe Farm committee members were adamant in their response that the process failed them, most replied that they would engage in similar committee planning process in the future (3.33), and that their time and effort was worth the outcome (3.28). Nearly all Forest Ridge respondents agreed that the benefits of the process were greater than the costs (3.89) and that their first choice would be to use this type of process again for parm master planning (3.78). Said on Forest Ridge committee member, "*Please keep the process and improve the implementation.*"

Evaluation Summary

We evaluated the Community Meeting Process and the Resolution Process with respect to whether and to what degree the processes have the potential to improve the quality, legitimacy, and capacity of park planning decisions.

Quality of Planning

Both processes produced quality planning from the perspective of the public involved. Both processes, to some degree, identified the values, interests, and concerns of all who were interested in or might be affected by the planning decision. Both processes, to some degree, integrated the concerns and issues considered important by the public into the analyses and reflected those concerns and issues in the final plan. And third, both processes, to some degree, generated decisions based on and consistent with the best available information, and new information was added in the process as needed.

Participants engaged in the Community Meeting Process for Leesville Park and Timberlake Park reported fairly positive results with respect to factors indicative of planning quality. Both reported that their interests were reflected in the final park plan, the final plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens, and to a lesser degree, the final park plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings. Participants in the Timberlake planning process reported higher agreement scores on statements reflecting plan quality than did participants in the Leesville plan. This is likely due to the fact that many neighboring property owners objected to the location of the proposed dog park. Hence, if other tenets of best practice in public participation are adhered to such as inclusivity, transparency, and shared responsibility, the Community Meeting Process can, and did, produce quality planning.

The Resolution Process used for the Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm master plans is also capable of producing quality planning. As reported, some factors of quality planning were positive for both Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm. Specifically, there was general agreement that both plans effectively deal with key issues related to the park and its surroundings. Secondly, the committee process helped them gain a more complete understanding of important concerns and issues. However, because neither committee was able to reach consensus on the final plan, we cannot plainly state that the resolution process produced quality decisions based on feedback from planning committee members. Those in favor of the final plan are more in agreement that the planning process yielded quality output, and those opposing the plan are less inclined to perceive it positively. As stated earlier, this result points to a notable shortcoming of the committee process – the choice of majority voting as the decision process.

Legitimacy of Process

Process legitimacy was the most problematic of all three practice outcomes for both planning processes. The problems stem from how the processes were conducted rather than the type or form of process used. Both the Community Meeting Process and the Resolution Process created issues of legitimacy, but for different reasons. Both process are capable of being designed and conducted in ways that participants feel are acceptable and that conform to standards of sound analysis and decision making.

The issues that most troubled the Community Meeting Process were lack of community-wide participation and transparency. Without wide representation at community meetings, the core team is compelled to act in the interests of an unrepresented constituency and introduce program elements that local meeting participants may not desire. When locally unwanted program elements remain in the final master plan without visible public support, neighboring residents begin to question the authenticity of the process. This issue posed significant problems for the Leesville planning process in the context of the proposed dog park. It was less of a problem in the Timberlake process, but many residents were not happy to see a half-court basketball venue remain in the final plan.

The Resolution Process was not shadowed by matters of transparency, rather problems stemmed from issues of leadership and process management. These problems were present almost entirely in the Horseshoe Farm

planning process, but the Forest Ridge process was not immune from them either. The difficulties experienced by the Horseshoe Farm committee leaders in being able to facilitate deliberations of the committee in a neutral and impartial manner had a profound effect on the outcome of the committee process. Without solid facilitative leadership, the committee was unable to work together to identify valid information to guide their analysis, nor find options or solutions that met the common needs of all members. The fact that the resolution process has no procedure or guideline for training its committee chairs to facilitate committee discussion is a significant shortcoming.

Capacity for Future Decisions

Both processes, when done well, can create capacity for future decisions. However, The Resolution Process, by the very nature of its superior participation intensity, presents more opportunities for civic development than does the Community Meeting Process. When conducted according the core principles of public participation, the Resolution Process can effectively engage the public and department staff in becoming better informed and more skilled at effective participation, better able to share the best knowledge and information about diverse values, interests, and concerns, and develop a shared understanding of the issues and decision challenges. To enable this to happen, the Resolution Process needs to be better planned, organized and conducted.

The Community Meeting Process also holds promise for building the capacity for participants to engage in future problem solving together. But the Department should open the decision process to enhance process transparency, improve continuity of participation by improving meeting notification early and in a variety of forms, and enable people to participate through a variety of venues such as open houses, kiosks in recreation centers around the city, and online.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendations to the Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department are targeted specifically to assist the Department in involving Raleigh residents in meaningful and effective ways to plan parks, greenways and recreation programs. Our recommendations are drawn from the academic literature as well as from the accumulation of methods and practices developed by public participation practitioners. These recommendations, we believe, will improve the quality and legitimacy of Raleigh's park plans. They also serve to improve the capacity of Raleigh citizens and parks staff to become better informed and more skilled at effective participation.

We present our recommendations in two categories. First are general recommendations that cover all aspects of public participation and can be applied in most circumstances in which the Department engages citizens in planning and decision making. Secondly, we offer process-specific recommendations as improvements to the Department's application of the Resolution Process and the Community Meeting Process for park master planning.

General Recommendations

1. Adhere to Core Principles

Early in the report we describe five core values of public participation which we used as a standard for evaluating the Department's public participation processes. These principles are to:

- promote full participation,
- make the process transparent,
- promote mutual understanding among participants and the agency,
- strive for inclusive solutions, and
- share responsibility for decisions.

When the Parks Department adheres to these principles in its planning and decision making processes, then the quality, legitimacy, and capacity of park plans will likely be improved. This is true regardless of the context in which citizens are engaged (park master planning, site integration planning, or comprehensive planning), or the form of public participation the Department is using (the Resolution Process or the Community Meeting Process).

Promote Full Participation. First, work diligently and devote resources to effectively promote public meetings. Many citizens turn out to a public meeting only when they perceive that they may be negatively affected. Tailor the message to appeal to people's major concerns: how the development of a nearby park will affect them, and what they can do about it. Public meeting notices should provoke their interest and be visually appealing.

Second, once citizens turn out to public meetings, get them engaged and participating. Have them discuss what is important to them, get them talking with their neighbors, use interactive tools such as maps and visuals, and get them on their feet. A number of process techniques, such as charrettes, affinity processes, dot voting, etc. can be employed to get them participating fully.

Make the Process Transparent. Participants engaged in a public involvement process should have a clear idea of the purpose of the process and who is responsible for organizing it, how the process will unfold, how decisions will be made and by whom, their role in the decision process, and how their ideas and concerns will be integrated into the final decision. In processes where citizens will be engaged over an extended time, participants should be constantly and consistently reminded of the process timeline and their current position within it. Master planning committees especially need to have a clear road map of the process, and in fact should take part in its design. Participants should have equal and easy access to relevant information. Flexibility should be built into the process to accommodate changing issues, data needs, political environment, and programmatic constraints.

Promote Mutual Understanding. Citizens participating in public decision making should come away from the process with a greater understanding and appreciation of the perspective of other citizens and the Department. Participants should have the opportunity to accept one another's needs and goals and legitimate. This requires time and a process that allows people to freely exchange information about what is important to them. Given that opportunity, people are able to develop innovative ideas that incorporate other's points of view.

Strive for Inclusive Solutions. In many circumstances, parks can be planned and designed to meet the priorities of most people with a stake in the outcome. Participation processes should be designed to avoid either/or decisions and advance opportunities to build win/win solutions. The key to building integrative outcomes is to provide the the means for people to make their interests known and understood.

Share Responsibility for Decisions. The Department should plan with people, not for people. The outcome of a planning decision is far more likely to be accepted and implemented if the citizens affected by a decision share in the responsibility for it. This requires that citizens have access to decision events and are able to weigh in on choices that are important to them. Responsibility goes both ways. Sharing decision responsibility obligates citizens to find solutions to shared problems rather than simply fighting against alternatives they dislike.

2. Manage Processes Effectively

When the Parks and Recreation Department engages in public participation, it should do so with specific management objectives that improve its outcomes (Dietz and Stern, 2008).

Make the Purpose Clear. The Department should develop a clear set of objectives for a participatory process, integrated with a plan for how the outcomes of the process will be used. Planning processes will yield better results when the clear purpose reflects an agreement about goals among the Department and the participants and when it takes into account the objectives of all parties involved, and the scope of possible actions given the constraints commensurate with a particular park type or designation

Commit to the Process. Public participation processes are more likely to be successful when the Department is committed to supporting the process and taking seriously the results. Commitment involves support of Department leadership, staff, and PRG Advisory Board members for the objectives of the process. Commitment to a high-quality process, rather than to a particular kind of decision outcome, motivates participants to engage in evenhanded and effortful consideration of the available options rather than defensive justification of their preferred alternative.

Provide Adequate Capacity and Resources. Public participation processes are more likely to be successful when they are backed with adequate capacity and resources and deployed appropriately according to the scale, complexity, and difficulty of the issues involved. Organizational capacity in the form of skilled and enthusiastic staff is vital to program success.

Time Processes in Relation to Decisions. Public participation processes are more likely to have good results when planned so that they can be informed by emerging analysis and so that their outputs are timely with regard to the decision process. That is, participatory processes need to be designed so outcomes can be acted upon by decision makers in a timely fashion.

Focus on Implementation. Public participation processes tend to be more successful when designed to relate in clear ways to policy decision making and implementation. The Department needs to be clear from the outset about what it can and cannot implement. When citizen recommendations are significantly altered or rejected by staff, the PRGAB, or City Council, people become skeptical or distrustful of the Department's intentions.

Commit to Learning. Public participation processes benefit from engaging in self-assessment and design correction as they proceed. The deign of participatory processes can benefit from opportunities for participants and Department staff to assess the process both as it is under way and at the end. Designs that allow for midcourse adjustments and that are evaluated to generate lessons for future public participation efforts are most conducive to learning.

3. Develop a Broad Public Involvement Policy

The Parks and Recreation Department should augment its current documentation of master planning process (Resolution (2003)-735) with a comprehensive public involvement policy (see for example: http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/policy/PIP.pdf). The policy should define the roles and responsibilities of staff positions implementing all the Department's public participation processes, expand and then define the purposes and circumstances for which public involvement will be used, and outline and define the procedures to be followed. The policy document should also contain a glossary of terms used in park master planning and public involvement generally, and provide consistency of language from process to process. In addition, sufficient flexibility in procedure should be incorporated into the policy so that various and appropriate forums for engagement can be applied to fit the circumstances.

4. Engage Citizens in Comprehensive Planning and Site Integration Planning

Some of the problems the Department has experienced regarding public acceptance of its master planning process has to do with classification, purpose and development intent for the park being planned. These issues are best dealt with during the development and update of the Park, Recreation and Open Space element of the City of Raleigh Comprehensive Plan and the development of the System Integration Plan. The Department should organize extensive public participation in the update of the comprehensive plan to get direction and support for park designations system wide. For parkland currently owned but as yet unplanned and new lands purchased for park development, the System Integration Planning process should be used as a mechanism for citizens to participate in decisions about park classification and purpose.

5. Establish Clear Definitions of Appropriate Park Elements and Programs

Once the park classification, purpose, and development intent is defined and accepted through an extensive (and intensive) public participation process, the Department should make these intentions very clear in setting up the master planning process for each park. The Department, through deliberation and approval by the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board, should clearly identify general programs and activities that are consistent with the comprehensive park plan and SIP. Programs and activities should be appropriate for the park site given its park type and site characteristics, including the introduction of special facilities such as dog parks and high intensity use areas. Communicate these 'de minimus' park elements and programs early in the master planning process so that expectations of the PRGAB, Department staff, and citizens are more closely aligned.

6. Decouple Planning for Controversial Elements from Planning for the Park

Dog parks, high intensity use facilities, special facilities, and adventure elements engender controversy and conflict during the development of a park master plan. Discussion and deliberation about these individual park elements robs precious time from the discussion of other important issues and can hijack the park plan as citizens stake out positions for and against inclusion of these elements in the park. Instead, the Department should organize citizen deliberation processes to develop design and siting criteria for these elements systemwide, apart from the individual park master plans. This way, citizens can take the time needed to learn about the actual risks, costs and benefits of these park activities and together can develop best practices for designing and siting them.

7. Gather Data on Potential Park Uses and Users before Engaging in Planning

Planning committee members and citizens turning out for public meetings can provide information about their preferences for park programs and issues that may be critical for successful planning. However, information they may furnish is limited by the number of people who actually participate in the planning process. Moreover, information they provide may be offered too late in the process to be useful. Using survey instruments to gather data on user preferences and key issues affecting park use early in the planning process will yield critical information when it is most needed. Not only can you get data on what people want to see in a park, survey data can also alert you to pressing issues related to the park and its surroundings and help shape your public participation process. User preference surveys can be designed so that you can separately analyze responses from neighboring residents, citizens residing in the planning area, and citizens outside the planning area.

8. Improve Communication Mechanisms Including Use of the Internet

Information flow in a public participation process should be multi-way and timely. An effective communication mechanism should enable information to flow from the Department to the public, from the public to the Department, and from public to public. Collect contact information from all attendees at public meetings. We recommend enhancing the Department's use of internet applications to improve information flow. The following four recommendations relate to the use of the internet:

a) Organize and streamline the Department's existing web links so that information about park master planning can be easily located and associated with related links. Citizens visiting the department website should have access to current information about "Park and Greenway Planning" and the role of citizens in the master planning process. A link to the "Park and Greenway Planning" is currently located on the city of Raleigh website Leisure section, and a link to the Parks, Recreation, and Greenway Advisory Board is currently located in the Government section. Both links should remain in these locations, but should also be accessible from the Departmental site. Add a web link titled "Park and Greenway Planning" to the Parks and Recreation Department website along with a link to the "Parks, Recreation, and Greenway Advisory Board", placing both links in the section titled "Related Information."

b) Create and maintain an electronic mailing list to communicate news about Parks and Recreation planning activities. The electronic mailing lists can be set up for citizens to self-subscribe and un-subscribe, significantly reducing listserv maintenance by park staff. Subscribers can be made aware that the list itself is a public record under NC Law. We recommend that an electronic mailing list be created for each new master planning project and made available to the citizens who are participating, the parks staff, and the consultants so that all communication about a particular project is transparent and accessible. Use the list to keep people posted with meeting summaries, community input data, and other planning-related information.

c) Ensure that all information related to citizen involvement in the park and greenway-planning process is up to date and easily accessible on the web. Include periodic progress reports about projects as they move from planning through implementation. If citizens rely on the website as a central source of information, this will reduce staff's time in responding to phone and email inquires about specific projects.

d) Enhanced use of the internet for public participation should be considered a comprehensive city management effort. The City should review best practices for a web system that can address the needs of all its departments, not simply the Parks and Recreation Department. For instance, Microsoft recently development its Citizen Service Platform, a comprehensive solution designed to help local governments serve citizens. The City of Bristol has numerous online examples on how the city has engaged its citizens, and Neighborhood America also provides examples to learn from, including the experience of other municipalities. Keep them posted with meeting summaries, community input data, and other planning-related information. Post information on the Department website in a timely fashion and send out email alerts and reminders to help people find it.

9. Use Consultants with Proven Public Participation Skills

Design consultants are central figures in master planning processes. They are the ones who are in closest contact with the public during the deliberative process, they direct participants in identifying and prioritizing park program elements and goals, and answer tough questions. Design consultants who are also skilled facilitators can enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of public meetings and contentious committee meetings. Hire consultants with strong facilitation training and skills who understand how to guide collaborative decision processes and can manage conflict when it arises.

10. Evaluate Every Public Participation Process

Public participation improves when you evaluate how you are doing and make necessary changes (Creighton, 2005). The Department should put in place a rigorous evaluation methodology to help track progress, learn from its successes and failures, and make improvements. This includes evaluating overall public participation programs as well as specific practices and activities. The department should use process and substantive criteria to assess: (1) process design, (2) project management, and (3) outcome measures. (The Speller and Ravenscroft article, *Facilitating and Evaluating Public Participation in Urban Parks Management*, offers an example of a process and substantive outcomes evaluation matrix.)

While there are certainly challenges and costs to evaluation, there are some simple measures that the Department can take to integrate evaluation procedures in its planning processes. A simple, yet very effective method to use in the Resolution Process is to schedule periodic check-in meetings with the committee to assess how the project is moving forward and what changes need to be made. Other examples include direct observation by a party not directly involved in the process, hand-in, mail-I, focus groups, advisory panel reviews. Evaluations can also be conducted online. There are inexpensive online survey tools available on the web (e.g., Survey Monkey: www.surveymonkey.com) that can be used by Parks and Recreation staff to gather information from citizens.

Whether evaluating specific activities or an overall project, evaluation serves to improve future decision-making and process design, and public perception about the various perspectives and aspects surrounding community values and goals in park planning.

11. Maintain Process Flexibility

Use process formats that fit the context and circumstances of the site and the people that will interact with it. As discussed earlier, public participation processes can be designed and conducted in many ways. Different public participation formats can be used to achieve the goal of high quality and widely acceptable decisions, and each format can also fail at achieving these goals. The key to ensuring success regardless the format is adhering to the core principles of public participation.

Within each format, various practices, tools and techniques can be applied and tailored to the specific circumstances of an issue or the stakeholders involved, drawing on elements or practices to suit the context and incorporating different participatory modes at different project stages. Practices include working groups, panels, field trips, voting, consensus-seeking, visioning, and so on.

The Department has experience in using two basic formats, the Community Meeting Process – an unbounded feedback and consultation process, and the Resolution Process - a bounded, participant-intense process. We recommend that the Department continue to use and adapt these two process formats. Department staff, PRGAB members and interested citizens are familiar with them and they have proven potential to be successful when applied correctly and appropriately.

We recommend that the Department establish a set of criteria for selecting the process most appropriate to the circumstances and stakeholders. Criteria we suggest include:

- Park type (as a rough guide). Some form of the Resolution Process should be used for community parks, metro parks, and special facilities. The Community Meeting Process is best suited for neighborhood parks since most meeting attendees will be from the local area.

- Complexity of the park site with respect to size and diversity of physical features, ecological characteristics, and compatibility with surrounding land uses
- Diversity of potential uses and users
- Level and geographic scope of interest in the park
- Existing conflict over uses and activities that may be incorporated in the park (e.g., dog parks)
- Historical conflict over specific issues related to the park site

While the Department has had success with these two processes, it has also experienced failure with them as well. We will present recommendations to improve the Community Meeting Process and the Resolution Process in the following section.

Recommendations Specific to the Planning Process

Improving the Community Meeting Process

Two problems related to the Community Meeting Process cited by meeting participants, PRGAB members and Department staff were: (1) inconsistent participation across the five public meetings; (2) unexplained additions of locally unwanted program elements in draft and final plans. The result of both of these issues is a significant communication problem that leads some community members to claim that the Parks Department has a 'hidden agenda' and is attempting to force program elements into the plan that neighboring residents oppose. The following recommendations are designed to address these problems and improve process legitimacy.

1. DIVERSIFY MEETING PROMOTION METHODS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION

For the Community Meeting Process to result in better quality planning and enhance the capacity of participants to engage in meaningful exchange, community meetings must be widely and consistently attended by people who have an interest in the development of the park. We recommend that the Department advertise and promote meetings through wider direct mailings, postings in parks and recreation centers, and signs posted on roads adjacent to the park site. Notifications of planning meetings should be issued using subdivision or neighborhood boundaries rather than an arbitrary radius.

2. BE CLEAR UP FRONT ABOUT PROGRAM CONSTRAINTS AND PRIORITY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Citizens can participate more effectively when they know what the constraints and expectations are for their participation. If, through the SIP and comprehensive planning processes, there are constraints on program elements that are appropriate for the site, or priority program elements that have already been identified for the site, make this clear at the beginning of every meeting.

3. ADD COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO THE CORE TEAM

We recommend expanding the core team to include two to four community members. A possible condition for serving on the core team is that community members serve as communication links to the neighborhoods they belong to. Parks Department staff and consultants should assist the citizen core team members in preparing communication materials such as summaries of core team meetings and community meetings, small-format draft plans and other handouts, and links to web sites. Citizen Advisory Council members could be good candidates for core team membership depending on the park's location.

4. PROVIDE HANDOUTS OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Department should provide meeting participants with attractive, easy to read fact sheets that clearly describe the park master planning process. The fact sheets should include information about how the process works (i.e., number of meetings, what is accomplished at each meeting), the dates of each meeting, how citizens can participate, how citizen comments and suggestions are handled, and contact information for the Parks and Recreation Department and PRGAB members.

5. ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION LINKS WITH MEETING PARTICIPANTS

The Department should gather names, addresses, and email addresses from all community meeting participants and use this to establish a consistent and timely communication mechanism to keep participants informed of the planning process, implementation decisions, construction schedules, and park openings.

6. PROVIDE CLEAR AND TIMELY MEETING SUMMARIES

Summaries of all core team meetings and community meetings should be created within days of the meetings and distributed widely.

7. INCREASE THE VENUES THROUGH WHICH PEOPLE CAN PARTICIPATE

Increase the opportunities for citizens to participate in plan formulation and review. Maps, plans, and other information can be made available for people to view and comment at open houses and on kiosks at recreation events, in recreation centers, and on-line.

Improving the Resolution Process

Feedback from committee members involved in planning Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm expressed frustration with the process, but also the notion that, on the whole, the process was a worthwhile. Many PRGAB members, past and present, are strongly vested in the process and believe that it provides an opportunity for citizens to have meaningful impact on the design and programming of future parks. The problems with the process as it was practiced in planning Forest Ridge and Horseshoe Farm parks mostly stem from the way the process was managed, rather than a more systemic problem. We offer several recommendations that, if followed, should enhance the quality of planning, reduce problems of legitimacy, and increase the capacity for future decision-making that the process promises.

1. IMPROVE CRITERIA FOR COMMITTEE SELECTION

Balanced representation on the planning committee is the linchpin to legitimacy of the Resolution Process. Committee members should represent groups, organizations, and other entities that have an interest in how the park is developed, and the program elements that are contained within its boundaries. Committee members must be viewed as credible by the people with whose interests they align, and ideally, they should have communication mechanisms in place to provide information to others who share their interests and get feedback from them. The Department should develop criteria for selecting committee members that relate to the issues specific to the park site, the neighborhoods and communities that surround the site, and potential elements that may be included in the final plan. We suggest using a stakeholder matrix (see Appendix 4) as a tool for identifying committee members. We also recommend amending the committee application form to capture information about key interests and expertise of the applicant relative to the park site and its development, and connections to groups or organizations with a vested interest in the park site and its development. We also suggest relaxing the rule in Resolution (2003)-735 that sets the number of committee

members to 15 so that the committee makeup can be representative of key interests without violating the resolution.

2. DEVELOP A PROCESS CHARTER AND GROUND RULES

Make process understandable and transparent by creating a process charter. A process charter defines the process protocols and gives a group a framework to follow. It is a written outline of the process and describes how the committee will accomplish its task. It also serves as an agreement between the members of the group, and as such it acts to bind the group together in a common language and working union. The charter should be specific and appropriate to each park planning process. A draft of a charter should be presented to the committee for amendment and approval. In addition, the committee should be free to amend the charter at any time during the planning process so that it remains relevant and applicable to circumstances that arise. Possible elements of a charter include:

- **Background** – A summary overview of the park site and key issues.
- **Definitions** – terms and acronyms used in the planning process
- **Purpose** – explains why the committee has convened and what it intends to accomplish.
- **Final Product** – defines what the committee will produce and how their recommendations move forward through the PRGAB and City Council
- **Authority of the Committee** – describes the role of the committee in the decision process
- **Committee Members** – Lists the committee members and their affiliations
- **Responsibilities of the Committee**
    - Conduct – Expectations for how committee members will conduct themselves during the process
    - Attendance – Expectations for attendance and participation
    - Preparation for Meetings – States that participants should read all appropriate materials and arrive prepared to work.
    - Informing Constituents – Expectations for how and how often committee members are to keep their constituents informed of the process
- **Responsibilities of the Consultant/Facilitator** – Describes the responsibilities of the consultant/facilitator during and after the meeting.
- **Agendas** – Identifies who is responsible and how they will be drafted.
- **Meeting Summaries** – Identifies how meeting summaries will be prepared and distributed.
- **Decision Process** – Describes how the committee will reach decisions. If consensus is the decision rule, the charter should outline the method by which consensus will be defined. It should also describe what will occur if consensus is not reached.
- **Ground Rules for Interaction** – Lists the rules that will be followed during meetings.
- **Enforcement of Ground Rules** – Describes how rules will be monitored and enforced.
- **Consequences of Violating the Charter** – Describes consequences if committee members chose to violate the charter.
- **Input From and Information to the Public** – Identifies how the public will be informed and involved
- **Schedule and Duration** – Describes how often the committee will meet, how long meetings will be and when the group intends to complete its work.
- **Amendments to the Charter** – Describes how the charter can be amended by the committee

3. ENCOURAGE OPENNESS OF DESIGN

Development and approval of a group charter provides the opportunity for participants to have control over the process itself. A process design developed collaboratively by Parks staff, the consultant, and committee members will yield benefits, particularly in terms of legitimacy. When participants co-invent and co-govern a process, they have a direct way to communicate information about what would motivate them to participate actively and to express their views about how to organize the process in a manner that is likely to engage effectively their capabilities and promote their acceptance of the process.

4. USE A CONSENSUS DECISION RULE

Consensus is the decision rule that allows collaborative problem solving to work. It is a method that enables a group people to reach agreement. Consensus prevents domination by the majority and allows trust-building and the sharing of information, especially under conditions of conflict. Consensus does not mean that everyone will be equally happy with the decision, but all do accept that the decision is the best that can be made at the time with the people involved. A consensus method called an 'agreement gradient' allows groups to settle on issues at differing levels of agreement, and even allows people to opt out of certain parts of a larger agreement.

5. USE A NEUTRAL FACILITATOR

As the Resolution Process is currently designed, the committee chair has the responsibility to formulate meeting procedures that encourage open-discussion, well-informed decision making, and working towards an agreement. As discussed earlier in this report, this is a difficult responsibility for a non-paid volunteer, particularly when the issues are complex and potentially contentious. We recommend limiting the process role of the PRGAB members and vesting the process guidance role with a facilitator. This will enable the PRGAB members to continue to serve as chair and co-chair and have an active role in the deliberations without being perceived by other committee members as manipulating the process. A facilitator can help committee members through the planning process toward agreed-upon objectives in a manner that encourages participation, ownership and creativity from all involved. Ideally, the facilitator should be part of the planning consultant team.

6. TRAIN THE COMMITTEE IN PRINCIPLED NEGOTIATION

The role of the committee is to work together to develop a park plan that reasonably meets the physical constraints of the site, satisfies community objectives for recreation and open space conservation, and satisfies the defined interests of committee members. To carry this out, committee members must engage in negotiations in an attempt to persuade others to agree to their point of view. People engaged in this type of activity who understand and use basic tenets of principled negotiation are generally more successful in finding innovative solutions that work for everyone. We recommend that the consultant team provide a brief training in the basics of principled negotiation at the first committee meeting. We also recommend providing to every committee member a copy of the book, *Getting to Yes, Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (By Roger Fisher, William Ury, Bruce Patton, Houghton Mifflin Books, 1991).

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APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS AND SURVEYS

Focus Group Interviews
Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Greenways Advisory Board
August 6 and August 14, 2008
Raleigh Jaycee Park Community Center

Preamble

The Raleigh City Council commissioned the Natural Resources Leadership Institute at NC State University to conduct a study of citizen involvement in Raleigh parks master planning. The goal of the study will be to determine how, to what degree, and to what end citizens participate in decisions regarding the scope and character of future park sites.

The Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department employs two citizen involvement processes for planning parks. The City Council-adopted Resolution Master Planning Process, in place since January 2004, is a tightly designed, committee-driven citizen involvement process. The Community Meeting Master Planning Process is a citizen involvement process that uses community meetings as the primary means of citizen input with direction from a core team of professionals and Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board members. We are examining both approaches to determine:

How, to what degree, and in what form the opinions, needs, and desires of citizens were included in final park designs that resulted from both processes. This will provide information about the inclusiveness of the planning process.

How well citizens understood the process and how their opinions, needs, and desires were factored into the final design. This will lead to deductions about the transparency of the planning process.

How efficient the process was –in terms of time and dollars spent, and public benefits gained.

We have selected for analysis a representative set of park planning projects undertaken in the last few years. The parks and the planning processes we are reviewing and evaluating are Horseshoe Farm Park and Forest Ridge Park – both planned under the "Resolution Process", and Leesville Park, and Timber Lake Park, planned under the "Community Meeting Process."

Interview Questions

1. What makes a good citizen involvement process?

2. How do you describe your role as Advisory Board members in providing citizen input into planning decisions?

3. In the park planning process, how do you balance the interests of the public when some interests are strongly motivated and insistent in being heard and other interests are less vocal?

4. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the two planning processes – resolution process and community meeting process?
   - Chair, co-chair role in the resolution process

- Degree of citizen representation
- Time efficiency
- Information availability
- Dealing with conflict
- Integrating opinions and ideas into the final plan

5. How would you build a better planning process?

6. Thinking back on all four park master plans, can you think of any specific occurrences where ideas or comments provided by committee members or the general public have added significantly to the value of finished park plan?

Focus Group Interviews
Planning Committees
August 13 and August 21, 2008
Optimist Park Community Center

☐ I was on the **Forest Ridge Park** Planning Committee

☐ I was on the **Horseshoe Farm Park** Planning Committee

1. Regarding the completed park master plan please circle the appropriate number on the scale below to indicate the extent to which:

	1 **Not at All**	**2** **Some Extent**	**3** **Moderate Extent**	**4** **Great Extent**	**5** **Completely**
A. You feel that the completed park master plan takes into account your interests.	1	2	3	4	5
B. You feel that the completed park master plan serves the interests of other committee members.	1	2	3	4	5
C. The park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings.	1	2	3	4	5
D. The park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens.	1	2	3	4	5
E. You are confident the plan can be carried out in its current form.	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***How do you define "success" in a park master planning process?***

2. The park master planning committee chair plays an important role in guiding the deliberations of the committee. Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below to indicate the extent to which:

	1 **Not at All**	**2** **Some Extent**	**3** **Moderate Extent**	**4** **Great Extent**	**5** **Completely**
A. The committee chair made sure we had a realistic work plan and timeline for the process.	1	2	3	4	5
B. The committee chair was fair and unbiased.	1	2	3	4	5
C. When things got tense, the committee chair was able to help us find ways to move forward constructively.	1	2	3	4	5
D. The committee chair made sure that the views and perspectives of all participants were heard and addressed.	1	2	3	4	5
E. The committee chair made sure that no one dominated the process or other participants.	1	2	3	4	5
F. The committee chair helped us manage technical discussions efficiently.	1	2	3	4	5
G. The committee chair made sure that options for addressing the issues or resolving the controversy are implementable.	1	2	3	4	5
H. The committee chair was useful in helping us to document our agreement appropriately.	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***Can you describe ways that the planning process could be managed better?***

3. With respect to the ability of the members of the committee to work together during the process, please circle the appropriate number on the scale below to rate the extent to which:

	1 Not at All	2 Some Extent	3 Moderate Extent	4 Great Extent	5 Completely
A. The committee members worked together cooperatively on the key issues in this case or project.	1	2	3	4	5
B. The committee members, as a group, represent an appropriate range of all affected concerns.	1	2	3	4	5
C. The committee members sought options or solutions that met the common needs of all committee members.	1	2	3	4	5
D. Trust was built among the committee members.	1	2	3	4	5
E. The process helped us gain a better understanding of the other's views and perspectives.	1	2	3	4	5
F. The process helped us identify and focus on the key issues that had to be addressed.	1	2	3	4	5
G. The process helped us identify appropriate options for dealing with important park and recreation issues.	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***Thinking back on the master planning process, can you think of any specific occurrences where ideas or comments provided by committee members or the general public added significantly to the value of finished park plan?***

4. Please tell us how the park master planning process helped committee members better understand the issues. Please use the scale below to rate the extent to which:

	1 Not at All	2 Some Extent	3 Moderate Extent	4 Great Extent	5 Completely
A. You worked effectively to identify information needs.	1	2	3	4	5
B. You understood all important information and data used in this process.	1	2	3	4	5
C. All committee members had full access to relevant information they needed in order to participate effectively in this process.	1	2	3	4	5
D. The validity of the information used in this process was accepted by all of the committee members.	1	2	3	4	5
E. The process helped you gain a more complete understanding of the issues in this project.	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***How could information be more effectively handled in the park planning process?***

5. Please use the scale below to rate the park master plan process with respect to the extent to which:

	1 Not at All	2 Some Extent	3 Moderate Extent	4 Great Extent	5 Completely
A. You had the skills needed to participate effectively in this process.	1	2	3	4	5
B. You had the time needed to participate effectively in this collaborative process.	1	2	3	4	5

6. Using the Disagree – Agree scale below, please rate the following statements about the value of this planning process to yourself and others.

	1 Completely Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Completely Agree
A. My first choice would be to use this type of process again for similar situations.	1	2	3	4	5
B. I feel the benefits of this process will outweigh the costs.	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***How would you build a better planning process?***

Focus Group Interviews
Citizens Attending Community Meetings
August 18 and August 20, 2008
Optimist Park Community Center

☐ I attended planning meetings for **Forest Ridge Park**
☐ I attended planning meetings for **Leesville Road Park**
☐ I attended planning meetings for **Horseshoe Farm Park**
☐ I attended planning meetings for **Timberlake Park**

1. Participation by citizens in park planning is important. We want to know your opinion about citizen involvement in park master planning processes. Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below to indicate the extent to which:

	1 **Not at All**	**2** **Some Extent**	**3** **Moderate Extent**	**4** **Great Extent**	**5** **Completely**
A. You received adequate notice of park planning meetings	1	2	3	4	5
B. Most people that you know who were interested in this park were notified of park planning meetings	1	2	3	4	5
C. People who shared your interests and concerns were present at park planning meetings	1	2	3	4	5
D. There seemed to be a diverse representation of interests at the planning meetings you attended	1	2	3	4	5
E. You felt welcomed at park planning meetings	1	2	3	4	5
F. There were too many meetings to have to attend in order for you to get your message across	1	2	3	4	5
E. There were too few opportunities for you to really get involved	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***In what ways (if any) could Raleigh Park and Recreation do better to get citizens involved in park planning?***

2. It is important that citizens understand how the planning process works so that they can get their views heard by the planning team. Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below to indicate the extent to which:

	1 Not at All	2 Some Extent	3 Moderate Extent	4 Great Extent	5 Completely
A. The park planning process was adequately described at the meetings you attended	1	2	3	4	5
B. Over the duration of the park planning process, you came to understand how the park planning process works	1	2	3	4	5
C. During the planning process, it was clear to you how this park fit into the larger park system	1	2	3	4	5
D. During the planning process, it was clear to you how citizen comments would be taken into account by the design team	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***What can Raleigh Parks and Recreation do to make the park planning process more easily understood?***

3. We are interested in how you feel that comments made by you and other citizens were integrated into the final park master plan. Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below to indicate the extent to which:

	1 **Not at All**	**2** **Some Extent**	**3** **Moderate Extent**	**4** **Great Extent**	**5** **Completely**
A. Your views and opinions about the planned park were actively sought by the park planning team	1	2	3	4	5
B. You were given feedback by Raleigh Parks staff and/or the design consultant that your comments and concerns were important	1	2	3	4	5
C. Your comments and concerns were adequately recorded at park planning meetings	1	2	3	4	5
D. You were given feedback about how your comments and concerns would be taken into account in the final park master plan	1	2	3	4	5
E. Your comments were dealt with in a fair and understandable manner	1	2	3	4	5
F. You saw how your interests were met in the final park master plan	1	2	3	4	5
G. The expertise of parks staff and the design consultant were important in balancing citizen interests in the final park plan	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***How can Raleigh Parks and Recreation more effectively balance the needs of Raleigh citizens when designing new parks and recreation facilities?***

What specific items or comments that<u>you</u> provided were included in the final park master plan?

4. Regarding the completed park master plan please circle the appropriate number on the scale below to indicate the extent to which:

	1 **Not at All**	**2** **Some Extent**	**3** **Moderate Extent**	**4** **Great Extent**	**5** **Completely**
A. The final park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings	1	2	3	4	5
B. The final park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens	1	2	3	4	5
C. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that went to the Raleigh Parks and Greenways Advisory Board (the Parks Board)	1	2	3	4	5
D. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that was ultimately approved by City Council	1	2	3	4	5

Discussion Question: ***How would you build a better planning process?***

Raleigh Parks Study
Consultant Interview Protocol

We are conducting a study for the City of Raleigh on citizen involvement in Raleigh parks master planning. The goal of the study will be to determine how, to what degree, and to what end citizens participate in decisions regarding the scope and character of future park sites. We are focusing our examination on three aspects of citizen involvement: inclusiveness, transparency, and efficiency. A measure of Inclusiveness is the degree to which citizens were involved in the planning. We are evaluating transparency by getting feedback from citizens on how well they understood the process and their understanding and knowledge of how their opinions and interests were factored into the finished design. We are evaluating efficiency in terms of time and dollars spent, as well as the public benefits gained.

I would like to ask a few questions about your role in public involvement in planning for Timberlake (Leesville, Forest Ridge, Horseshoe Farm) park.

1. How would you describe your role in working with citizens in planning Timberlake (Leesville, Forest Ridge, Horseshoe Farm) park?

2. Was your role in citizen involvement in this park about the same or different from your role in planning and designing parks in other public park systems? Please elaborate.

3. Would you say that the role is changing or not changing for landscape planning and design firms in helping citizens make decisions about the design and function of parks? Please elaborate.

4. Thinking back on the planning process for Timberlake (Leesville, Forest Ridge, Horseshoe Farm) park, can you identify any specific occurrences where ideas or comments provided by committee members or the general public added significantly to the value of the completed plan?

5. Do you have other observations or comments that you would like to make?

APPENDIX B – PARK PLANNING PROCESSES

Community Meeting Master Plan Process
Adopted from Wake County

A series of meetings with the community and user groups will structure the project planning process and the master plan's evolution. Tasks carried out between meetings will insure the projects progression. Meetings with a **Core Team** (professional staff, design consultants, PRGAB representatives, other agencies as appropriate) will serve as quality control and insure consistency between public meetings.

Core Team Meeting – Introduction of process, schedules, and roles.

It is important that the community is invited into the project prior to any plans being prepared other than site analysis plans.

Community Meeting #1 / Introduction / Site Analysis
At this meeting the community will be introduced to the project site (Site Analysis, Comprehensive Plan, etc.) and be invited to discuss the project, developing a prioritized list of preliminary goals and objectives. These goals will come from the community as well as from the city staff and other agencies. The goals and objectives will also be based on the development criteria defined in the consultant's Site Analysis. This could include a project mission statement.

Meeting Focus
- Introduction of the project
- Description of the planning process
- Site Analysis presented
- Goals and Objectives defined

Core Team Meeting – Review meeting results, confirm agency interests and format for next Community Meeting. Review draft Land Use Diagram.

Community Meeting #2 / Programming
Programming for the project will be the focus of this meeting. The meeting will begin with a summary of the previous meeting and presentation of the Land Use Diagram. Meeting attendees will be invited to express their perspectives on what should be included in the program for development. Attendees will be subdivided into groups to formulate a prioritized list of elements they would like to see included in redevelopment plans. A group leader from each group will be given an opportunity to present the groups thoughts. In addition to identifying program elements, those elements or uses will be prioritized by groups and the community.

At this meeting the project goals and objectives are advanced and refined and evaluation criteria which will be utilized to evaluate alternative concepts will be developed.

Meeting Focus

- Develop a prioritized list of program elements
- Advance project goals and objectives

Within the programming sessions held during community meeting #2, arrangements will be made to accommodate various stakeholders and special interest groups such as non profit user groups, athletic and otherwise, to assist in finalizing a prioritized list of potential uses.

Core Team Meeting **-** Review meeting results, content and format for next Community Meeting. A series of draft design concepts and options may be presented to insure a wide range of alternatives are presented at the next meeting, if appropriate for the site and community input.

Community Meeting #3 / Evaluation of Design Alternatives
Alternative designs will be presented to the community for input and feedback. The alternatives will be evaluated in light of goals and objectives previously defined and the level of development. Attendees may once again be divided into groups to consider the attributes of one alternative versus another and potential combinations of aspects from various alternatives. With consensus from attendees and other stakeholders on the design direction the draft master plan will be prepared. This plan may be one of the alternative designs primarily or a combination of elements found within each of the alternatives.

Meeting Focus

- Presentation of Design Alternatives
- Receive input on alternatives from meeting attendees
- Prioritize input

Core Team Meeting **-** Review meeting results, content and Preliminary Draft master plan for next Community Meeting.

Administrative Review of Preliminary Draft Master Plan – Consultant and Parks and Recreation staff review Plan with City Administration and other Departments.

Community Meeting # 4 / Preliminary Draft Master Plan
Community will be assembled to offer final comment on draft master plan prior to preparation of the final master plan and report.

Meeting Focus

- Present Draft Master Plan and receive comments

One week prior to community meeting #4 plans will be posted at Jaycee Park office and the nearest community center along with comment forms.

Community Meeting #5 / Draft Master Plan and Report

Community meeting will be held to present the Draft Master Plan prior to the presentation of the plan to City Council. This meeting may be held in conjunction to the monthly PRGAB meeting or as a separate meeting. If a separate meeting, presentation to the PRGAB of the Draft Plan and public comments will be scheduled as well.

Meeting Focus

- Presentation of Draft Master Plan and Report and receive comments

Presentation to the City Council for adoption.

Revised
January 6, 2004
Resolution (2003) – 735

A RESOLUTION TO REVISE THE PROCESS FOR APPROVAL OF MASTER PLANS FOR PARK AND RELATED PROJECTS

PURPOSE: To develop a total program for a park which will best meet the needs of the community for which it is intended to serve. To insure that this purpose is met, there needs to be citizen input as well as professional planning and design. The entire process is designed to optimize public participation.

The purpose of a Master Plan for an individual piece of property is to determine the scope and character of its transformation for recreational purposes and for conserving significant environmental features. It has a relationship to the larger comprehensive recreation plan in that it fulfills some portion of the broader recreation objectives.

This resolution was developed to clarify and improve the Master Planning Process. It will serve as a helpful guideline for both the professionals and citizens involved in park planning. It is intended to replace Resolution (1988)-195 and all other Master Planning guidelines, procedures and policies. Flow charts have been provided as visual aids. Descriptions of the park acquisition and development process have been added after the discussion of the Master Planning Process. A new element has been added to guide planning prior to the development of the Master Plan, and titled the "System Integration Plan (SIP)."

The Park Master Planning Process

Please refer to Figure 1, "Park Master Planning Process," as a visual aid to the following explanation of the steps involved in the master planning process.

I. Master Plan

A Master Plan is a conceptual design document that generally describes and guides the future management and development of a park property. It's preparation is intended to be a public process to ensure that the needs of the public are met while preserving the ecological function and environmental quality of the site. Generally, all parks should have an adopted, relatively recent (less than 15 years old) Master Plan when intended for park development.

II. Request to Initiate Master Plan

Recommendation to consider a Master Plan study (new, revised. or amended) may come from a variety of sources, including: City Council, citizen request or petition, City Administration, or the PRGAB (Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Advisory Board). The City Council may choose to set thresholds which * automatically trigger a public master plan process but the City Council retains

the right to require a master plan for any and all park properties, including qreenways and nodes on the greenways.

* See Decision 2, Section 3, Page 11.

III. City Council Authorization

City Council shall approve the initiation of a complete Master Plan, revision, or an amendment to a plan, and refer the project to the PRGAB and administration for implementation. Administration shall provide a report to Council and the PRGAB addressing available funding, project schedule, special circumstances, system integration plan, and any other background information.

IV. Select Chair/Vice Chair

Council shall initiate the formal master plan process with the designation of a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for the Master Plan Committee, who shall also be members of the PRGAB. PRGAB shall nominate for appointment to the Master Plan Committee, however, final appointment of the Master Plan Committee shall be made by the City Council.

Chairperson/Vice Chairperson responsibilities will be to:

- Call all meetings and select the dates, times, and locations.
- Preside over the meetings and invite public comment at all appropriate stages throughout the process.
- Formulate meeting procedures that encourage open-discussion, well-informed decision making, and working towards an agreement. The chair will call for a majority vote as needed to finalize decisions.
- Report to the PRGAB on the progress of the Committee, notify the PRGAB of meeting times, and present the final recommendations of the committee to the PRGAB and the City Council.

V. Staff Assignment

A core group of Parks and Recreation staff will be identified by administration for participation on the Master Plan Team. (The Master Plan Team consists of staff, design consultants, and the citizen Master Plan Committee.) The core group will consist of a minimum of three staff members including the Project Manager, Parks Division Representative (maintenance), and Recreation Division Representative (programming) or appropriate substitute members as the Department may determine. The committee may request other appropriate staff, such as the City Naturalist. Urban Forester. or representatives from other City departments as needed for appropriate reports. Staff will be responsible for preparing agendas for meetings, recording meeting minutes, providing background information, and insuring adequate professional input throughout the process.

VI. Project Notification

A. Notification

- A notification sign (or more if the site fronts on multiple streets) will be posted at the site 30 days before the initial public meeting.
- Meeting and project information/background shall be made available at least two weeks prior to the first meeting to the City Council, PRGAB, owners of adjoining properties, registered neighborhood groups, including CACs, and registered park support groups * within a 2 mile radius for any park master plan. Other interested groups as suggested by the Public Affairs or Community Services departments, such as the Historic Districts Commission, the Appearance Commission, the Planning Commission, the Human Resources and Human Relations Advisory Commission, and Mayor's Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities, shall also be notified. Meeting and project information will be posted at community centers and at other sites suggested by the Public Affairs Department. PRGAB, City Council, Master Plan Team (and Committee) Members (once identified), or administration all may recommend concerned individuals or groups who may have an interest in the park to receive notifications and mailings.
- Project and press releases shall be posted on Parks and Recreation website(s) at least one week prior to any meetings, with appropriate linkages to other websites as suggested by the Public Affairs Department.
- A procedure for establishing registered park support groups should be developed by staff and submitted to Council for approval.

B. Public Meeting

A public meeting will be held to inform area residents and interested parties of the beginning of the Master Planning Process and to receive initial input, including local knowledge of natural or historic features and community desires. At this meeting, potential Master Plan Committee members may be identified from among the participants. The public meeting will be in an accessible location as close to the park site as practical.

- Notification of the Initial Public Meeting shall be posted 30 days prior to the meeting date, and mailings sent at least 14 days prior to the meeting date. The meeting date will be posted on the Parks and Recreation Department website 30 days prior to the meeting.
- The Public Meeting notice will be publicized as required by City Council, the open meetings law[1], and will be more extensively publicized where deemed appropriate by the Chair, Vice Chair, or staff, utilizing appropriate consultation from the Public Affairs Department.

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[1] North Carolina State statute Chapter 143, Article 33C specifies that each official meeting of a public body shall be open to the public, and any person is entitled to attend such a meeting. Every public body shall keep minutes of all official meetings. If a public body has established a schedule of regular meetings a current copy of that schedule is to kept on file with tile city clerk Changes to the regular schedule shall be filed with the city clerk at least seven calendar days before the day of the first meeting held pursuant to the revised schedule. For any other meeting the public body shall cause written notice of the meeting stating its purpose to be posted on the principal bulletin board (Public Affairs Department) of the public body and to mail or deliver to each media service which has requested notice (Public Affairs Department handles these notices). The public body shall also cause notice to be mailed or delivered to any person who has filed a written request \with the clerk This notice shall be posted and mailed or

delivered at least 48 hours before the time of the meeting. These statutes are subject to change. The City staff should annual review these requirement with the City Attorney's Office.

VII. Consultant Selection

The City's Standard Procedure 100-5 and related Management Policy 100-36 will be followed by the Parks and Recreation Department professional staff and the City Manager for drafting a Request For Proposals (RFP) and selection of the project consultant except as directed by this policy. Final selection shall be subject to final approval by the City Council following normal procedures.

For a Master Plan Amendment, which is required when a new specific use is proposed in a park that does not significantly alter the uses established by the adopted Master Plan for the park, skip items VIII through XI and proceed to XII Public Review of Draft Master Plan or

VIII. Master Planning Committee Selection

- The PRGAB, after appropriate consultation with staff, shall recommend the membership and composition of the Master Plan Committee to the City Council for final appointment. The Master Plan Committee should be representative of persons with interests in the park and appropriate uses. The selection should take into account demographics of the area including age, race, gender, educational background and professional/personal experience, and other relevant qualifications related to the characteristics of the park involved.
- A minimum of twelve (12) members and a maximum of fifteen (15) members, including the Chair and Vice Chairperson, will be chosen.
- Potential members may be solicited at the Initial Public Notification Meeting, through flyer mailings, nominations from CACs and City appointed bodies, recommendations from City Council, or by posting on the City's Parks and Recreation webpage.
- Candidates should be informed of the expected time commitment and need to attend substantially all committee meetings. Candidates unable to make the commitment of time and study should not be selected.
- Nominees for the Master Plan Committee shall be forwarded to City Council by the PRGAB for final appointment.

IX. Education

The Master Plan Committee shall receive background information useful to the master planning process, including:

- A review of the expectations for full participation, including attendance at meetings and individual study to understand the process and the project.
- A description of meeting procedures by the Chair.
- The current Council approved Master Planning Policies as well as the City Conflict of Interest policies.
- Comprehensive Park, Greenway and Open Space Plan and other relevant portions of the City Comprehensive Plan.
- If there is a Systems Integration Plan, it will be provided.
- The staff will provide an executive summary (and make the complete copy available for review by committee members) of the site inventory with additional staff comment relevant to special features identified in the inventory, and make preliminary suggestions about objectives for the park to be considered by the Committee. Detailed information should be provided on any special environmental features identified through any available sources such as the Wake County Natural Areas Inventory, the NC Natural Heritage Program Database. or the Wake County Capital Trees Program.
- Staff will arrange an appropriate tour of other facilities with relevant programming and a site visit to the target park facility.
- Formal or informal citizen survey from the park planning area if available, and a summary of the public comments that have been received.
- Information on existing or anticipated funding.
- A description of the Parks and Recreation Department organization and operations as it applies to the project, and a description of the consultant and staff roles.

All Master Plan Committee Meetings will be open to the public. It will be the staff's responsibility to insure that the meeting dates are published in accordance with the State of North Carolina's Open Meetings Law.

X. Master Plan Program Development

The Master Plan Committee shall develop a program statement for the Master Plan that describes the overall vision for the park, including uses, sensitivity to natural elements, identity, history and other characteristics as appropriate. The Master Plan Program should be consistent with the System Integration Plan and the Parks, Recreation and Greenways Comprehensive Plan Elements. The Program Statement should include reference to the ecological significance and functions of the site and its relationship to the larger citywide and countywide facilities and their functions, particularly with respect to watershed protection and riparian buffers.

XI. Draft Master Plan

Based on the Program Statement, the design professionals will develop alternative site related diagrams representing a range of Master Plan Alternatives. The committee will select the concept that best accomplishes the Program Statement goals.

The Draft Master Plan shall include the conceptual plan rendering, the Program Statement, other background information as appropriate, a written description of the intent of the Master Plan concept proposed, including the established elements of other previously adopted Master Plans, as well as recommendations for environmental stewardship of the park site and development of the park project.

The Master Plan Committee shall identify Priorities for phased development of the project, with consideration given to information on existing and anticipated funding. This information shall be approved by the Master Plan Committee and made available for public review and comment as provided in the following section.

XII. Public Review of Draft Master Plan or Draft Master Plan Amendments

The Draft Master Plan or Draft Master Plan Amendments will be made available for public review and comment. The complete "draft" and the Systems Integration Plan will be displayed on the Parks and Recreation Department website, at the nearest community center to the park location, the administrative offices for the Parks and Recreation Department at Jaycee Park, or other suitable locations suggested by the Public Affairs Department. There will be comment cards available at those locations. This display should be available at least fourteen (14) days prior to the public meeting.

The public meeting will be held by the Master Plan Committee to receive comment on the Draft Master Plan prior to recommendation to the PRGAB. Public notification of this meeting shall be consistent with notification requirements in section V, "Project Notification." The PRGAB should be encouraged to attend this public meeting. Public comments shall be received for a period of at least two weeks after the public meeting. All comments received shall be summarized in a document and provided to the Master Plan Committee and Consultant, the PRGAB, and the City Council.

Concurrently, City administration interdepartmental review of the Draft Master Plan will take place. Comments provided through this review will be summarized in written form and provided to the Master Plan Committee, the Consultant, and the PRGAB, as well as the City Council.

XIII. Recommended Master Plan

The Master Plan Committee shall review comments received and address them in the final proposed Master Plan or Amendment to be forwarded to the PRGAB for consideration. The proposed Master Plan or Amendment shall include the final conceptual plan rendering, program statement, other background information as appropriate, written description of the intent of the Master Plan concept proposed, and recommendations for phased development of the park project, as well as the established elements of other previously adopted master plans.

XIV. PRGAB Review of Proposed Master Plan

The PRGAB shall consider the proposed Master Plan or Amendment with supporting documents and report to City Council. The public will be given the opportunity to comment on the plan to the PRGAB at a meeting advertised as prescribed in Section XI. Oral or written comments shall be accepted and transmitted with the proposed Master Plan to the City Council.

XV. City Council Review for Adoption

City Council shall receive the proposed Master Plan report with recommendations and comments of the PRGAB for consideration. Final approval of any Master Plan or Master Plan Amendment lies with the City Council after they have completed their review. The City Council may choose to return the plan to the PRGAB for additional revision of key elements.

The Master Plan Committee shall stay in existence until dissolved by the City Council, and the membership will be encouraged to attend the presentation to the City Council.

General Description of the Park Development Process

For a visual representation of the park development process, please refer to the Park Development Process Flow Chart (Figure 2.) The "Decisions" outlined below refer to the points at which a decision must be made in the process before continuing on to the next step.

I. Comprehensive Plan

The Park, Recreation and Open Space element of the City of Raleigh Comprehensive Plan is the document that guides development of the City's park system. The City Comprehensive Plan projects local and regional growth patterns and public infrastructure needs including parks, greenways and open space for conservation of natural resources and preservation of our environmental quality. The overall Comprehensive Plan and its influence on these specific elements must be considered in the context of park planning in order to ensure that public needs are met in the decision-making processes.

Future park needs are compared with an existing inventory of park facilities over a twenty to thirty year horizon. Capital improvement funding, acquisition of park properties, classification of new park lands acquired, and master planning of specific parks should each be guided by the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

II. Capital Improvement Program.

The Capital Improvement Program ("CIP") is a multi-year budget for implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The CIP includes capital allocations for park development projects, including land acquisition, facility development and renovation, including both park bond projects and general fund projects. The City Administration reviews and updates its recommendations for the CIP annually and forwards them to the PRGAB for review and comment. Then, the Administration forwards its final CIP recommendations to City Council for review and adoption.

Decision 1:
Is the land owned by the City?
(If the City already owns the park land, then skip III and IV, and proceed to Decision 2 below)

III. Land Acquisition

The City Administration conducts all land acquisition for the park system with direct supervision by the City Council. Land acquisition includes identification of potential park sites, negotiation of purchase agreements with landowners, and acquisitions. All acquisitions should be consistent with the goals and objectives established by the Comprehensive Plan, and must include appropriate environmental investigations and a minimal site assessment prior to recommendation to the City Council.

IV. System Integration Plan

The objective of the System Integration Plan (SIP) is to develop a set of guidelines for the interim management of parkland prior to the initiation of a Master Plan, to document existing site conditions and constraints, to establish the park's classification consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and if applicable, any proposed special intent for the park. The SIP is not intended to restrict the Master Plan Process.

Public notification of the SIP process shall be given to the City Council. the PRGAB, the CACs, registered neighborhood groups, registered park support Groups, and appropriate City appointed bodies.

Greenway Parcels and open space parcels will generally not require a site-specific System Integration Plan as the purpose and management of greenways is generally defined by the Greenway Element of the Comprehensive Plan and the restrictions included in the acquisition instruments. Special segments with unique ecological features or larger nodes in the greenway system may require an SIP and/or a Master Plan. The Master Plan in these cases may equate to a General Management Plan as used by the NC Division of Parks and Recreation or adopted City Parkland Greenway Management policies.

A. SIP Elements:

1. City Council Directed Purpose

Review and confirm any proposed purpose stated by the City Council for the development and use of the property. Utilize the baseline inventory to identify any potential conflicts with existing City policies or ordinances as well as applicable state and federal laws. Potential conflicts and proposed resolutions of these conflicts should be reported to the City Council for final approval.

2. Property Deed Restrictions

Review the deed or purchase agreement for any restrictions, limitations, or commitments to the intended development of the property.

3. Comprehensive Plan Correlation

The current Comprehensive Plan should provide initial direction regarding the classification of, purpose and development intent for the park acquisition. Correlation to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations should be confirmed in the City Council action to acquire the property.

4. Site Inventory

An initial evaluation of the property will be conducted to determine the range of features and qualities of the property to provide direction and guidance for the management and future development of the property. This evaluation and management plan will be enhanced by:

- Documentation of existing site conditions and constraints, the extent and character of natural and cultural resources, and any existing facilities.
- Tree, flora and fauna-inventories.
- A general review of the site to determine potential stream and watercourse buffers, property buffers, and special features to be addressed in the SIP.
- A review of development regulations for additional requirements that should be addressed in the SIP.
- An inventory of historical data at the local and state levels to determine potentially significant features to be addressed in the SIP.
- An inventory of archeological data at the local and state levels to determine potentially significant features to be addressed in the SIP.

The tree, flora, fauna, ecological, historical and archeological inventories should be performed by staff or consultants specifically qualified to perform such inventories. These findings shall be presented to the PRGAB for review in their entirety along with attached staff comment.

At this stage, the PRGAB should consider referral to an appropriate PRGAB committee to serve as an SIP Advisory Committee to review the findings and assist staff with interim management policies.

Any unique findings will be used initially in management decisions for the property and then later shared with the citizen Master Plan Committee and consultant. Interim management decisions for the site should be resolved to best maintain the environmental quality and ecological function of the site.

B. Develop and Submit for Approval

Parks and Recreation Department staff shall develop the SIP, working with the SIP Advisory Committee where the PRGAB has chosen to assign to the appropriate PRGAB committee. The draft SIP shall be posted on the City's website and other appropriate publication as suggested by the Public Affairs Department. The public shall be given reasonable opportunity to comment through email or other written communication as well as the formal presentation to the PRGAB. A sign (or more if the property fronts on multiple streets) shall be posted at the site fourteen (14) days prior to presentation to PRGAB. Adjoining property owners and CACs previously identified City appointed bodies, registered neighborhood groups, and registered park support groups will be notified of the plan fourteen (14) days before presentation to the PRGAB. The public shall be

given an opportunity to comment in person at a regularly scheduled PRGAB meeting. The PRGAB shall submit the recommended SIP to the City Council for adoption after appropriate review. The SIP shall be established and adopted by

City Council as soon as is practical after site acquisition.

Decision 2:

Is a master plan needed?

1. A new Master Plan is needed in the following situations:

- Every park site should have a minimal baseline inventory showing property boundaries and riparian buffers and a Master Plan or General Management Plan
- For acquired but undeveloped park property, a Master Plan derived through a public process is required before any development for public utilization.

2. A Revised Master Plan is needed in the following situations:

- When a Master Plan has been in place more than 15 years, the park has not been fully developed and additional facilities or renovations are planned. This may be minimal review by the PRGAB and staff if the plans are consistent with an existing Master Plan, but must be publicly advertised for comment.
- Proposed park improvements are not consistent with the existing adopted Master Plan.
- The Revised Master Plan Process will be the same as for a new Master Plan.

3. The following thresholds will be considered when evaluating whether to initiate a new Master Plan, revised Master Plan or Master Plan Amendment:

- An improvement with a monetary value greater than $350,000 or $500,000 over five years.

4. A Master Plan Amendment is needed when a new specific use not included in the adopted Master Plan is to be considered for the park or a specific change for the park is proposed that does not significantly alter other uses of the park.

5. A Master Plan is not needed when:

- There is facility development or maintenance that is consistent with an existing Master Plan.
- Greenway development. However, special segments with unique ecological features or larger nodes in the greenway system may require an SIP and/or a Master Plan. The Master Plan is these cases may equate to a General Management Plan as used by the NC Division of Parks and Recreation or adopted Park and Greenway Management Policies. A Master Plan Amendment to the Greenway Element may also be appropriate.

V. Design

Design is the first step in implementing a Master Plan. The design phase provides the detailed, technical development plans for components and/or phases of a park. The design process is directed by the City staff utilizing appropriate consultants and public comment, based on the adopted Master Plan and reflecting the development regulations and codes that regulate the design and implementation of construction projects. Schematic design of components or phases of a park will be reviewed with the PRGAB and the public to provide the Parks and Recreation Department staff with feedback on the compatibility of the project with the adopted park Master Plan. The Master Plan Committee (those who are still local and/or reachable by normal means) shall be notified of the Design Phase and invited to comment to the PRGAB during the public review.

Additional direct community feedback on the project design plans will be solicited by the following methods: (1)For at least 14 days there will be a display/posting of plans on City's website and (2) at a nearby community center for at least 14 days in advance of the advertising of the bid process for public review and comment. Comments shall be forwarded to the PRGAB and the City Council prior to awarding of contracts.

VI. Construction

Construction is the final step in implementing the Master Plan. City Administration directs the construction process. Public bid and contract laws and procedures regulate the process of construction bidding, contract award, execution and implementation of construction projects.

VII. Post Occupancy Evaluation/Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation

After each major phase of development and construction, the park facilities and customer satisfaction with the facilities will be evaluated by the staff through user surveys. The objective of these evaluations is to identify improvements that the City can make to improve functioning of the park. The staff will prepare a report to the PRGAB and the planning consultant including information from public survey or comment. The PRGAB shall report to the City Council as they deem appropriate.

Adopted and Effective: April 15, 2003

APPENDIX C – SURVEY DATA SUMMARIES

LEESVILLE PARK, n=8

	Not At All	Some Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Completely	Average
1. Participation by citizens in park planning is important. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. You received adequate notice of park planning meetings	0	0	5	0	3	**3.75**
B. Most people that you know who were interested in this park were notified of park planning meetings	0	1	3	1	2	**3.57**
C. People who shared your interests and concerns were present at park planning meetings	0	0	2	6	0	**3.75**
D. There seemed to be a diverse representation of interests at the planning meetings you attended	0	1	4	3	0	**3.25**
E. You felt welcomed at park planning meetings	0	0	1	4	3	**4.25**
F. There were too many meetings to have to attend in order for you to get your message across	5	0	1	1	0	**1.71**
G. There were too few opportunities for you to really get involved	4	3	1	0	0	**1.63**
Totals	**9**	**5**	**17**	**15**	**8**	**3.15**
2. It is important that citizens understand how the planning process works so that they can get their views heard by the planning team. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. The park planning process was adequately described at the meetings you attended	0	0	1	5	2	**4.13**
B. Over the duration of the park planning process, you came to understand how the park planning process works	0	2	1	5	0	**3.38**
C. During the planning process, it was clear to you how this park fit into the larger park system	1	1	1	5	0	**3.25**
D. During the planning process, it was clear to you how citizen comments would be taken into account by the design team	0	1	3	4	0	**3.38**
Totals	**1**	**4**	**6**	**19**	**2**	**3.53**
3. How do you feel that comments made by you and other citizens were integrated into the final park master plan? Please rate the extent to which:						
A. Your views and opinions about the planned park were actively sought by the park planning team	0	0	1	6	1	**4.00**

B. You were given feedback by Raleigh Parks staff and/or the design consultant that your comments and concerns were important	0	1	3	3	1	**3.50**
C. Your comments and concerns were adequately recorded at park planning meetings	0	2	2	2	1	**3.29**
D. You were given feedback about how your comments and concerns would be taken into account in the final park master plan	1	0	2	5	0	**3.38**
E. Your comments were dealt with in a fair and understandable manner	0	1	2	4	1	**3.63**
F. You saw how your interests were met in the final park master plan	0	1	2	5	0	**3.50**
G. The expertise of parks staff and the design consultant were important in balancing citizen interests in the final park plan	0	1	1	5	1	**3.75**
	1	**6**	**13**	**30**	**5**	**3.58**
4. Regarding the completed park master plan please rate the extent to which:						
A. The final park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings	0	2	0	5	0	**3.43**
B. The final park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens	0	0	2	4	1	**3.86**
C. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that went to the Raleigh Parks and Greenways Advisory Board (the Parks Board)	2	0	0	5	0	**3.14**
D. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that was ultimately approved by City Council	1	1	0	4	0	**3.17**
Totals	**3**	**3**	**2**	**18**	**1**	**3.54**

TIMBERLAKE PARK, n=7

	Not At All	Some Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Completely	Average
2. Participation by citizens in park planning is important. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. You received adequate notice of park planning meetings	2	1	1	1	2	**3.00**
B. Most people that you know who were interested in this park were notified of park planning meetings	0	3	2	0	2	**3.14**
C. People who shared your interests and concerns were present at park planning meetings	0	1	2	4	0	**3.43**
D. There seemed to be a diverse representation of interests at the planning meetings you attended	0	1	2	3	1	**3.57**
E. You felt welcomed at park planning meetings	0	0	0	3	4	**4.57**
F. There were too many meetings to have to attend in order for you to get your message across	4	2	1	0	0	**1.57**
G. There were too few opportunities for you to really get involved	3	1	3	0	0	**2.00**
Totals	**9**	**9**	**11**	**11**	**9**	**3.04**
3. It is important that citizens understand how the planning process works so that they can get their views heard by the planning team. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. The park planning process was adequately described at the meetings you attended	0	0	2	3	2	**4.00**
B. Over the duration of the park planning process, you came to understand how the park planning process works	0	0	3	2	2	**3.86**
C. During the planning process, it was clear to you how this park fit into the larger park system	1	1	2	2	1	**3.14**
D. During the planning process, it was clear to you how citizen comments would be taken into account by the design team	0	2	2	2	1	**3.29**
Totals	**1**	**3**	**9**	**9**	**6**	**3.57**
4. How do you feel that comments made by you and other citizens were integrated into the final park master plan? Please rate the extent to which:						
A. Your views and opinions about the planned park were actively sought by the park planning team	0	0	0	5	2	**4.29**
B. You were given feedback by Raleigh Parks staff and/or the design consultant that your comments and concerns were important	0	1	0	4	2	**4.00**
C. Your comments and concerns were adequately recorded at park planning meetings	0	1	1	3	2	**3.86**
D. You were given feedback about how your comments and concerns would be taken into	0	0	2	4	1	**3.86**

account in the final park master plan						
E. Your comments were dealt with in a fair and understandable manner	0	0	1	4	2	**4.14**
F. You saw how your interests were met in the final park master plan	0	2	1	3	1	**3.43**
G. The expertise of parks staff and the design consultant were important in balancing citizen interests in the final park plan	0	1	1	3	2	**3.86**
	0	**5**	**6**	**26**	**12**	**3.92**
5. Regarding the completed park master plan please rate the extent to which:						
A. The final park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings	0	1	4	2	0	**3.14**
B. The final park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens	0	0	5	2	0	**3.29**
C. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that went to the Raleigh Parks and Greenways Advisory Board (the Parks Board)	0	1	3	2	1	**3.43**
D. You were generally satisfied with the park master plan that was ultimately approved by City Council	0	1	3	2	1	**3.43**
Totals	**0**	**3**	**15**	**8**	**2**	**3.32**

FOREST RIDGE PARK, n=9

	Not At All	Some Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Completely	Average
1. Regarding the completed park master plan please rate the extent to which:						
A. You feel that the completed park master plan takes into account your interests.	0	3	1	4	1	**3.33**
B. You feel that the completed park master plan serves the interests of other committee members.	0	0	5	3	1	**3.56**
C. The park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings.	0	1	2	4	2	**3.78**
D. The park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens.	0	1	1	6	1	**3.78**
E. You are confident the plan can be carried out in its current form.	0	3	3	2	0	**2.88**
Totals	**0**	**8**	**12**	**19**	**5**	**3.48**
2. The park master planning committee chair plays an important role in guiding the deliberations of the committee. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. The committee chair made sure we had a realistic work plan and time line for the process.	0	1	4	4	0	**3.33**
B. The committee chair was fair and unbiased.	2	0	4	2	1	**3.00**
C. When things got tense, the committee chair was able to help us find ways to move forward constructively.	1	1	2	4	1	**3.33**
D. The committee chair made sure that the views and perspectives of all participants were heard and addressed.	1	0	3	3	2	**3.56**
E. The committee chair made sure that no one dominated the process or other participants.	1	1	3	3	1	**3.22**
F. The committee chair helped us manage technical discussions efficiently.	0	2	2	4	1	**3.44**
G. The committee chair made sure that options for addressing the issues or resolving the controversy are implementable.	1	1	1	5	1	**3.44**
H. The committee chair was useful in helping us to document our agreement appropriately.	1	2	0	6	0	**3.22**
Totals	**7**	**8**	**19**	**31**	**7**	**3.32**
3. With respect to the ability of the members of the committee to work together during the process, please rate the extent to which:						
A. The committee members worked together cooperatively on the key issues in this case or project.	0	3	2	3	1	**3.22**
B. The committee members, as a group, represent an appropriate range of all affected concerns.	0	2	3	3	1	**3.33**
C. The committee members sought options or solutions that met the common needs of all	1	2	2	3	1	**3.11**

committee members.						
D. Trust was built among the committee members.	0	3	1	4	1	**3.33**
E. The process helped us gain a better understanding of the other's views and perspectives.	0	0	3	3	3	**4.00**
F. The process helped us identify and focus on the key issues that had to be addressed.	0	0	2	7	0	**3.78**
G. The process helped us identify appropriate options for dealing with important park and recreation issues.	0	1	2	5	1	**3.67**
Totals	**1**	**11**	**15**	**28**	**8**	**3.49**
4. Please tell us how the park master planning process helped committee members better understand the issues. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. You worked effectively to identify information needs.	0	1	3	2	3	**3.78**
B. You understood all important information and data used in this process.	0	1	2	6	0	**3.56**
C. All committee members had full access to relevant information they needed in order to participate effectively in this process.	1	2	1	4	1	**3.22**
D. The validity of the information used in this process was accepted by all of the committee members.	1	2	2	4	0	**3.00**
E. The process helped you gain a more complete understanding of the issues in this project.	0	0	2	5	2	**4.00**
Totals	**2**	**6**	**10**	**21**	**6**	**3.51**
5. Please use the scale below to rate the park master plan process with respect to the extent to which:						
A. You had the skills needed to participate effectively in this process.	0	0	0	5	4	**4.44**
B. You had the time needed to participate effectively in this collaborative process.	0	0	0	6	3	**4.33**
Totals	**0**	**0**	**0**	**11**	**7**	**4.39**
6. Using the Disagree – Agree scale below, please rate the following statements about the value of this planning process to yourself and others:						
A. My first choice would be to use this type of process again for similar situations.	0	1	0	8	0	**3.78**
B. I feel the benefits of this process will outweigh the costs.	0	1	0	7	1	**3.89**
Totals	**0**	**2**	**0**	**15**	**1**	**3.83**

HORSESHOE FARM PARK, n=9

	Not At All	Some Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent	Completely	Average
1. Regarding the completed park master plan please rate the extent to which:						
A. You feel that the completed park master plan takes into account your interests.	1	1	3	3	1	**3.22**
B. You feel that the completed park master plan serves the interests of other committee members.	0	2	4	3	0	**3.11**
C. The park master plan effectively deals with key issues related to the park and its surroundings.	1	1	1	3	3	**3.67**
D. The park master plan effectively meets the recreational needs of Raleigh citizens.	1	3	1	3	1	**3.00**
E. You are confident the plan can be carried out in its current form.	2	0	1	3	3	**3.56**
Totals	**5**	**7**	**10**	**15**	**8**	**3.31**
2. The park master planning committee chair plays an important role in guiding the deliberations of the committee. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. The committee chair made sure we had a realistic work plan and time line for the process.	2	4	2	1	0	**2.22**
B. The committee chair was fair and unbiased.	5	2	1	1	0	**1.78**
C. When things got tense, the committee chair was able to help us find ways to move forward constructively.	6	3	0	0	0	**1.33**
D. The committee chair made sure that the views and perspectives of all participants were heard and addressed.	4	2	1	1	1	**2.22**
E. The committee chair made sure that no one dominated the process or other participants.	4	3	1	1	0	**1.89**
F. The committee chair helped us manage technical discussions efficiently.	3	4	1	1	0	**2.00**
G. The committee chair made sure that options for addressing the issues or resolving the controversy are implementable.	4	2	3	0	0	**1.89**
H. The committee chair was useful in helping us to document our agreement appropriately.	4	2	1	2	0	**2.11**
Totals	**32**	**22**	**10**	**7**	**1**	**1.93**
3. With respect to the ability of the members of the committee to work together during the process, please rate the extent to which:						
A. The committee members worked together cooperatively on the key issues in this case or project.	1	2	5	1	0	**2.67**
B. The committee members, as a group, represent an appropriate range of all affected	0	2	2	2	3	**3.67**

concerns.						
C. The committee members sought options or solutions that met the common needs of all committee members.	1	2	5	1	0	**2.67**
D. Trust was built among the committee members.	5	1	3	0	0	**1.78**
E. The process helped us gain a better understanding of the other's views and perspectives.	1	1	4	1	2	**3.22**
F. The process helped us identify and focus on the key issues that had to be addressed.	0	2	3	3	1	**3.33**
G. The process helped us identify appropriate options for dealing with important park and recreation issues.	1	3	3	2	0	**2.67**
Totals	**9**	**13**	**25**	**10**	**6**	**2.86**
4. Please tell us how the park master planning process helped committee members better understand the issues. Please rate the extent to which:						
A. You worked effectively to identify information needs.	2	1	2	3	0	**2.75**
B. You understood all important information and data used in this process.	2	0	1	4	1	**3.25**
C. All committee members had full access to relevant information they needed in order to participate effectively in this process.	1	2	3	1	1	**2.88**
D. The validity of the information used in this process was accepted by all of the committee members.	2	2	2	2	0	**2.50**
E. The process helped you gain a more complete understanding of the issues in this project.	0	1	2	4	1	**3.63**
Totals	**7**	**6**	**10**	**14**	**3**	**3.00**
5. Please use the scale below to rate the park master plan process with respect to the extent to which:						
A. You had the skills needed to participate effectively in this process.	1	1	1	5	1	**3.44**
B. You had the time needed to participate effectively in this collaborative process.	0	1	1	5	2	**3.89**
Totals	**1**	**2**	**2**	**10**	**3**	**3.67**
6. Using the Disagree – Agree scale below, please rate the following statements about the value of this planning process to yourself and others:						
A. My first choice would be to use this type of process again for similar situations.	2	1	1	3	2	**3.22**
B. I feel the benefits of this process will outweigh the costs.	2	0	2	3	2	**3.33**
Totals	**4**	**1**	**3**	**6**	**4**	**3.28**

APPENDIX D – STAKEHOLDER MATRIX

Stakeholder Matrix

Topic:

Interests

Name/Organization

1. Generate a list of interests along the top row. Interests are the values, perspectives, or concerns that affect people's responses to the issues at hand.
2. Second, identify the people and organizations that you believe have a stake in the issue.
3. Cross-reference the interest with the names or people and organizations you have identified.
4. Are any interests not represented on your list?