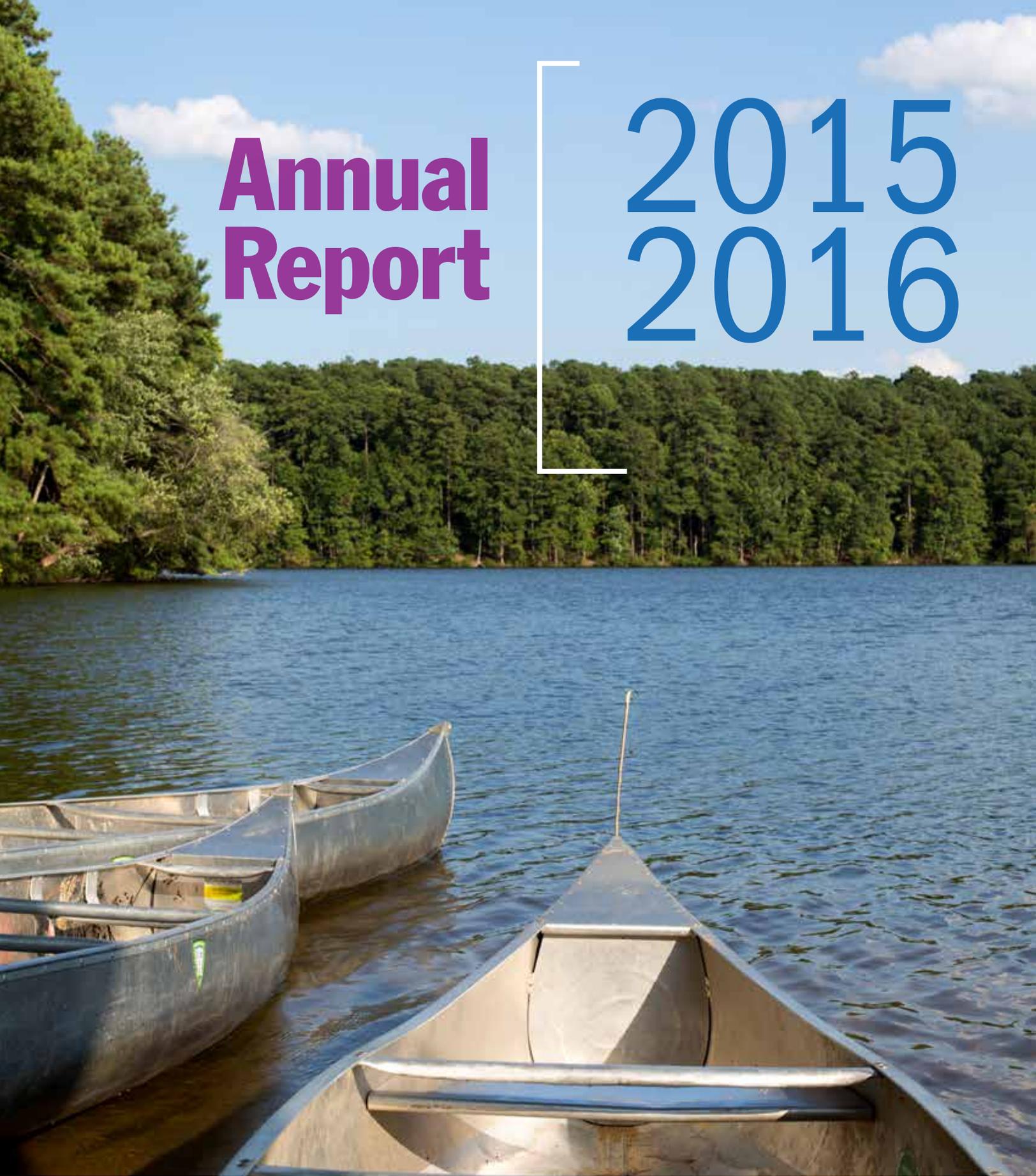


Annual Report

2015 2016



RALEIGH Parks,
Recreation and
Cultural Resources
parks.raleighnc.gov



Letter

from the Director



It is a great pleasure to present the 2015-2016 Annual Report of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department.

We had a historic year, highlighted by the City's acquisition of the Dorothea Dix property. Our goal is to create a world-class destination park for the enjoyment of all our citizens and visitors. The City has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Dix Park Conservancy for a public-private partnership to raise funds to develop a park master plan. We intend to initiate the planning process in 2017, offering extensive and diverse opportunities for the public to become engaged.

Meanwhile, planning and implementation continued to move forward aggressively on capital and bond projects.

- With tremendous citizen support and input, the **Raleigh Arts Plan**, "Creative Life," was unanimously approved by City Council. The plan lays out eight goals and associated strategies that will help make Raleigh a nationally recognized leader in arts and culture.
- The **John Chavis Memorial Park** master plan moved into the implementation study phase over the past year. The study will allow us to move from an incredible master plan vision to Phase 1 schematic design.
- City Council approved the schematic design for **Moore Square** in December 2015 with the goal of beginning construction fall 2016.
- The planned two-mile section of the **Crabtree West Greenway** trail to Umstead State Park will provide a critical link in our greenway system. City Council approved the project alignment and parking in April 2016. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2017.
- **Abbots Creek Park and Community Center** opened in northeast Raleigh, south of the North Wake Landfill. The park and community center are designed to promote healthy, active lifestyles for people of all ages.
- Construction has started on the **Thomas G. Crowder Woodland Center** at Lake Johnson Park with completion expected in early fall 2016. The multipurpose center will offer a connection to the natural environment. It will feature space for community and educational activities and displays on health and nature.

We will continue to work hard to provide a model parks system for citizens of Raleigh to enjoy and be proud of. We are committed to maintaining our parks and facilities in a clean and safe manner, to preserving and protecting our natural environment and providing the highest quality recreation opportunities for citizens of every age and ability.

In closing, I would like to sincerely thank City Council and the citizens of Raleigh whose continued and unwavering support make these accomplishments possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Diane B. Sauer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Diane B. Sauer, Director

Together we connect and enrich our community through exceptional experiences.



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Parks Bond Projects

Children of all abilities will be free to stretch their skills and imaginations at the Sassafras All Children's Playground at Laurel Hills Park in northwest Raleigh. The project involves the renovation of a fully-accessible playground built in 1991. It is scheduled for completion in fall 2016.

The renovated 3.5-acre playground will engage children in a variety of play experiences. Kids will be able to enjoy conventional play equipment, such as swings and slides, as well as a variety of special features, including a basketball court with hoops of adjustable height, accessible elevated decking and a pair of ziplines that are 50 feet long.

The City of Raleigh is working in partnership with local businesses, community partners and the Frankie Lemmon Foundation, acting as fiscal agent, to construct the Sassafras playground. The estimated cost of the project is **\$2 million**.





safras

All children's Playground

Parks Bond Projects (cont.)



Chavis

Mast



A community consensus-building process in 2012 gave rise to a bold vision for the John Chavis Memorial Park to “**honor our past, plan for the future.**” City Council adopted the vision in May 2014, setting the stage for improvements to the historic park, situated on the edge of downtown near Shaw University.

The City commissioned the Raleigh architecture firm Clearscapes to lead a public study on how best to implement a revised master plan for the park. The eight-month implementation study produced key recommendations and strategies for review by the public, the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board and City Council.

Construction documentation, engineering and permitting will be underway in the summer of 2016, with construction to begin in late 2017.

The project will receive for **\$12.5 million** in funding from the 2014 park bond issue.

er Plan

With the adoption of Raleigh’s first Arts Plan by City Council in February 2016, we are moving forward with efforts to strengthen the arts and culture for all Raleigh residents.

The 10-year “Creative Life” plan grew out of a process that engaged citizens from throughout the community. The plan lays out an ambitious agenda for the future of arts and cultural development in Raleigh, built upon this vision:

“Raleigh is a community connected through arts and culture, where every person is empowered to lead the creative life they envision.”

The eight goals of the plan reflect this shared vision:

- Goal 1.** Promote an active arts and culture life throughout the community.
- Goal 2.** Expand youth arts participation.
- Goal 3.** Ensure equity, access and inclusion in all cultural programming.
- Goal 4.** Support the work of Raleigh’s artists and arts organizations.
- Goal 5.** Enhance the vitality of Raleigh’s neighborhoods and districts through thoughtful placemaking.

Goal 6. Enhance arts leadership and governance.

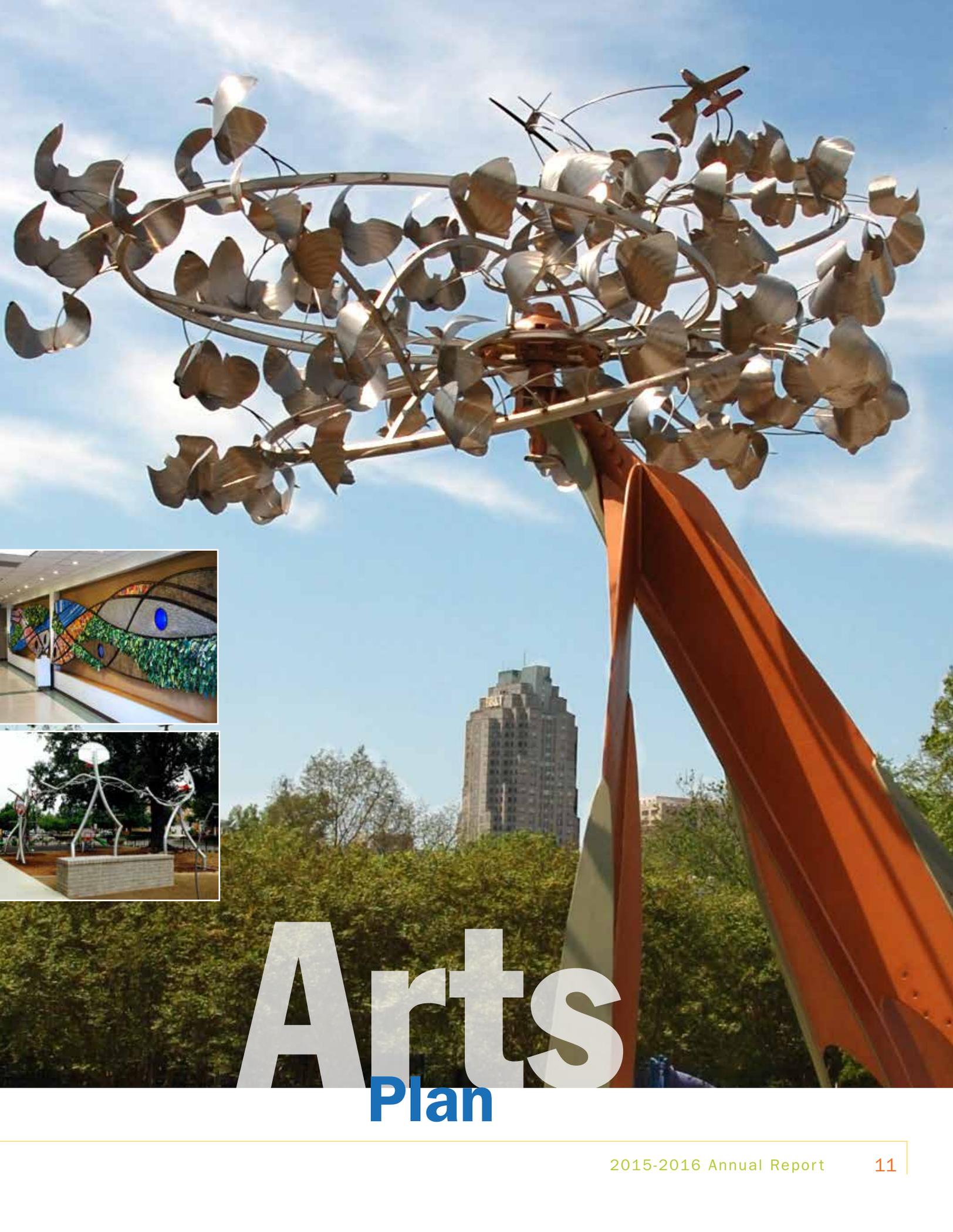
Goal 7. Strengthen marketing, promotion and valuing of the arts.

Goal 8. Create a system of sustainable arts funding.

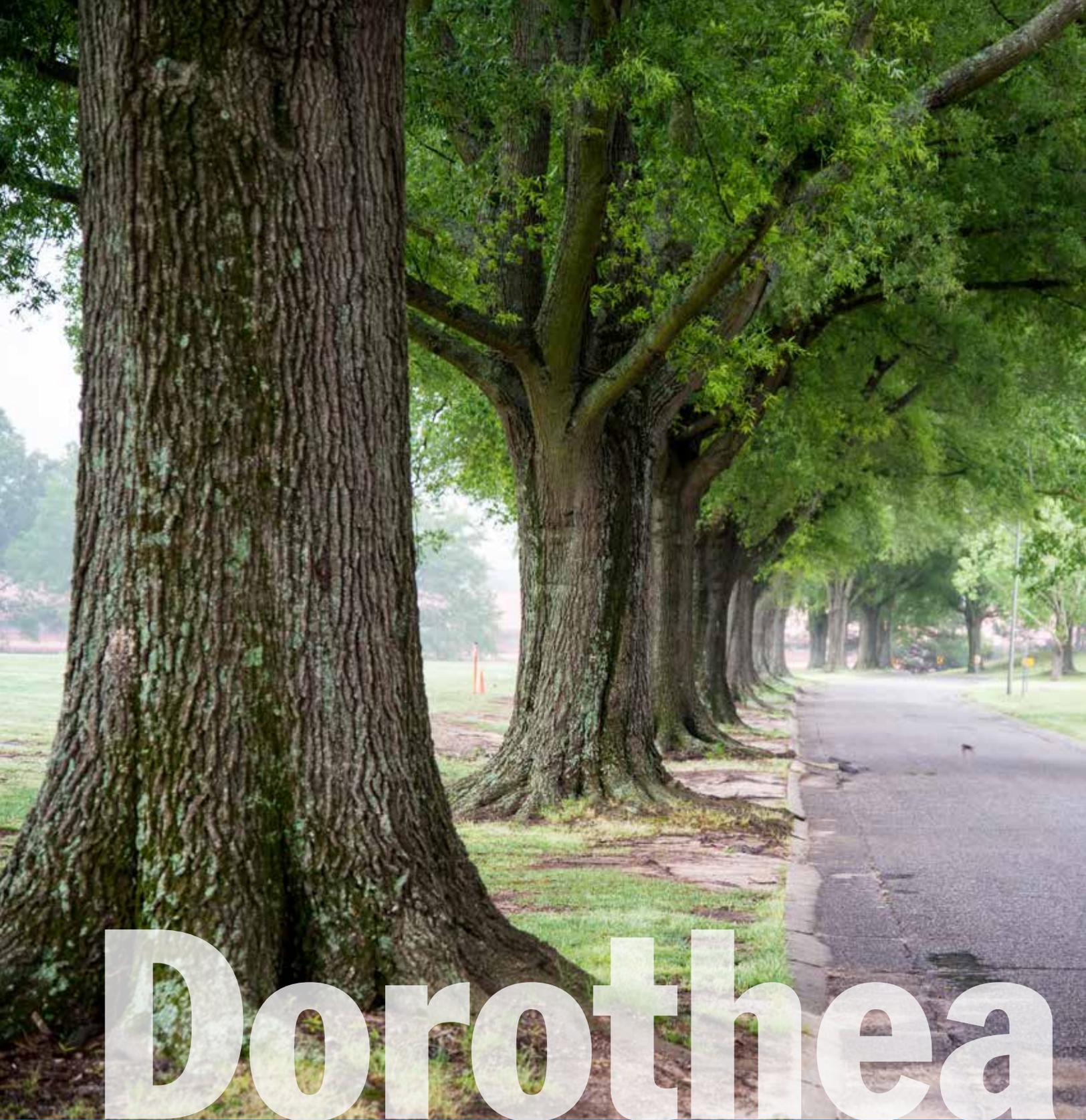
The Arts Plan embraces a key goal in the City’s 2015 Strategic Plan: “**Embrace Raleigh’s diverse offerings of arts and cultural resources as iconic celebrations of our community that provide entertainment, community, and economic benefit.**” The Arts Plan, along with community input and research from the planning process, will play a role in implementing the Strategic Plan.

The Arts Plan also advances this statement in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan: “Raleigh’s commitment to arts and culture is essential to the health, well-being, and vitality of the City.” It further reflects a goal in the 2014 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan: “The City of Raleigh will be a national leader in supporting the arts.”

The plan embraces 63 strategies—some small and easily achievable, others more aspirational and less easily attainable. Taken together, they will fulfill City Council’s vision of making Raleigh a nationally recognized leader in arts and culture.



Arts Plan



Dorothea



The City's acquisition of the 308-acre Dorothea Dix Park last year was the first step in what promises to be an exciting process of creating a destination park that showcases the beauty of the site and honors its history.

To help develop an outstanding park, the City is partnering with the nonprofit Dix Park Conservancy, which has already begun raising money for a master plan. City Council has approved a memorandum of understanding with the community-led conservancy, which has pledged up to **\$3 million** to help pay for the plan.

Together with the Community and the Dix Conservancy, we envision a future park that offers open spaces and gathering places and helps position Raleigh as a world-class city for generations to come.

The partnership is similar to arrangements in cities across the country that work with community conservancies to support great parks. The Raleigh partnership adds to opportunities for people to volunteer, enjoy programs and contribute to the future of Dorothea Dix Park. Public programs, activities, tours and other events have already started and will continue through the summer and fall.

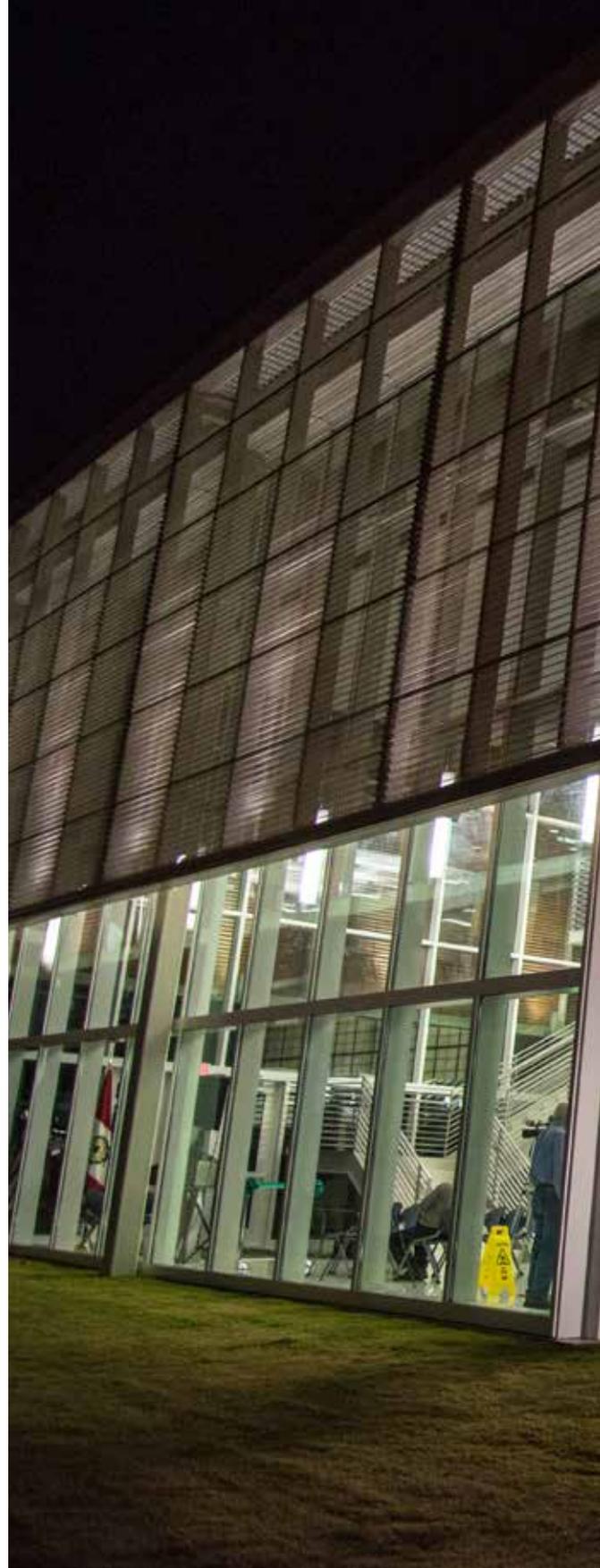
Work on the master plan will start early in 2017 and take approximately two years. We have begun inviting stakeholders and volunteers to participate in the planning process. The process will be open and transparent to all – and it promises to be engaging and fun!

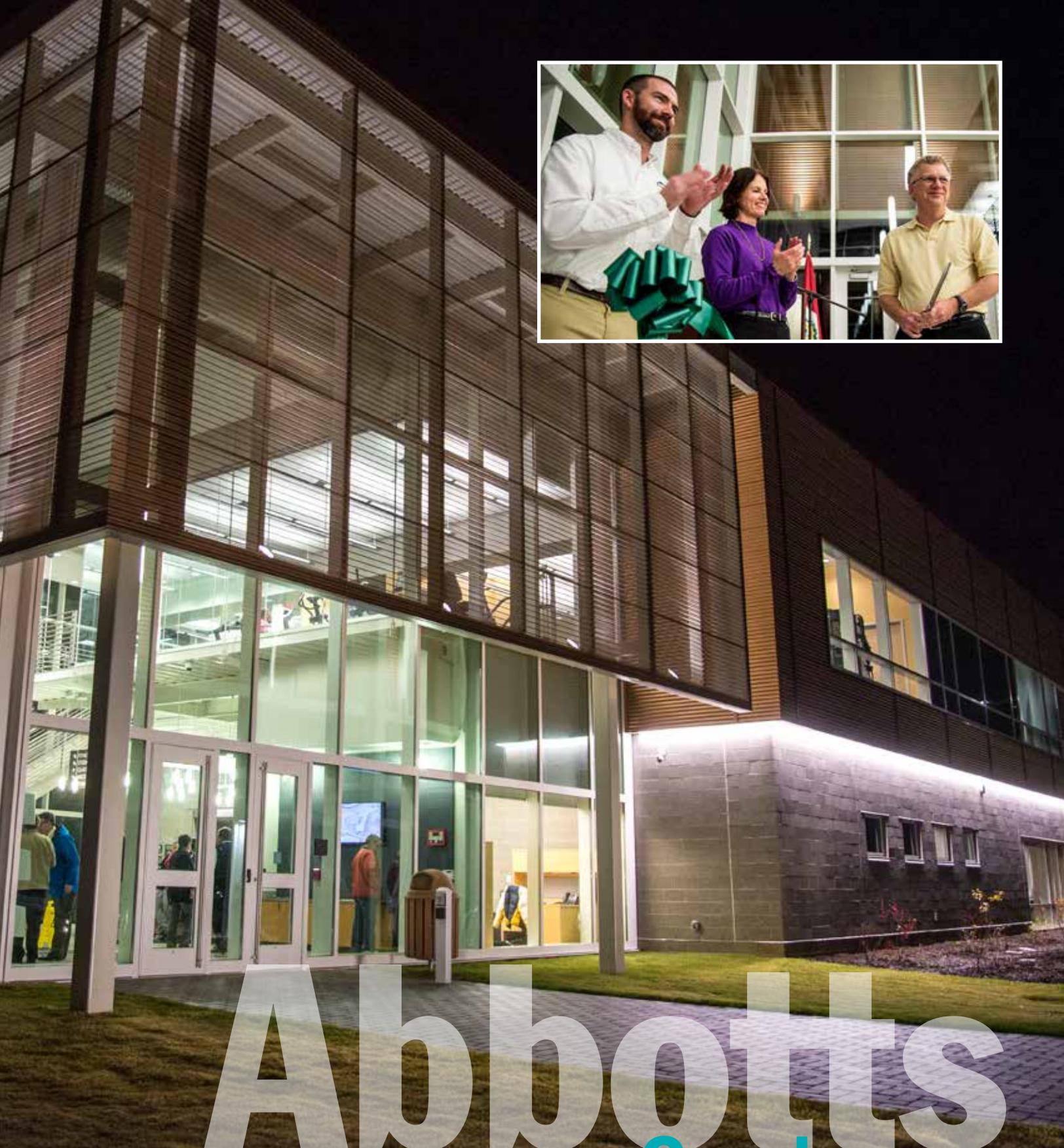
Dix Park

Dedications

Abbotts Creek Community Center opened on December 2, 2015. It is a 26,000 square foot facility and park with two multipurpose fields adjacent to the North Wake Landfill Park in northeast Raleigh. The project is a joint venture with Wake County Government and Wake County Public School System. The two story community center houses a gymnasium with a hardwood floor, fitness room, multipurpose classrooms, a fitness studio, lockers and dressing rooms, and office areas. The Center will include a range of recreation programs as well as a focus on healthy living and fitness oriented classes. The building was designed with sustainable features to obtain a Silver LEED certification based on the US Green Building Council.

We are excited about having a new space for people to play!





Abbotts Creek

December 2, 2015

Dedications (cont.)



With support from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC), local organization Walk [Your City] (WYC) teamed up with City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department to create signs that show the distance in minutes to destinations just off the greenway. The goal? To promote the use of the House Creek trail for daily transportation, in addition to connecting destinations.



Walk [Your City]

Dedications (cont.)

Horseshoe Farm held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the dedication on November 10, 2015. Carved out by the meandering of the Neuse River, Horseshoe Farm Nature Preserve sits on a U-shaped piece of land in northeastern Wake County with exceptional natural and cultural resources. The Preserve is a jewel along the Neuse River; a place of great natural beauty, abundant wildlife and rich heritage.

Surrounded on three sides by the Neuse River, Horseshoe Farm Nature Preserve consists of primarily undeveloped pastures and woodland areas. The upland fields have been farmed as crops or used as pasture for generations. The floodplain forests adjacent to the Neuse River are designated by the State of North Carolina as a Significant Natural Heritage Area due to the presence of bottomland hardwood forests, wetlands, and a system of natural river levees. With the help of a grant, plans are underway to renovate the farmhouse for future use as exhibit and interpretation space, and is expected to be open in early 2017.





Horseshoe

Farm

November 10, 2015

Dedications (cont.)

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Gardens was originally constructed in 1990 through the efforts of a number of park advocates including the Martin Luther King Committee. In 2003, the City acquired 1.67 acres of vacant land adjacent to the park for the purpose of expanding the existing Memorial Gardens. The additional amenities are intended to make the park more user and family-friendly through better meeting the needs of the visiting public, including school children, college students and citizens.

The improvements will

- Enrich the commemorative experience
- Support education opportunities
- Promote community cohesion
- Complement downtown development
- Provide safe, friendly and sustainable leisure environment
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian accessibility

To honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy and contributions to peace, justice, equality, human dignity, and education by expanding and enhancing the MLK Memorial Gardens, providing a unique historic and educational destination for the citizens of Raleigh, the people of North Carolina and the Nation.

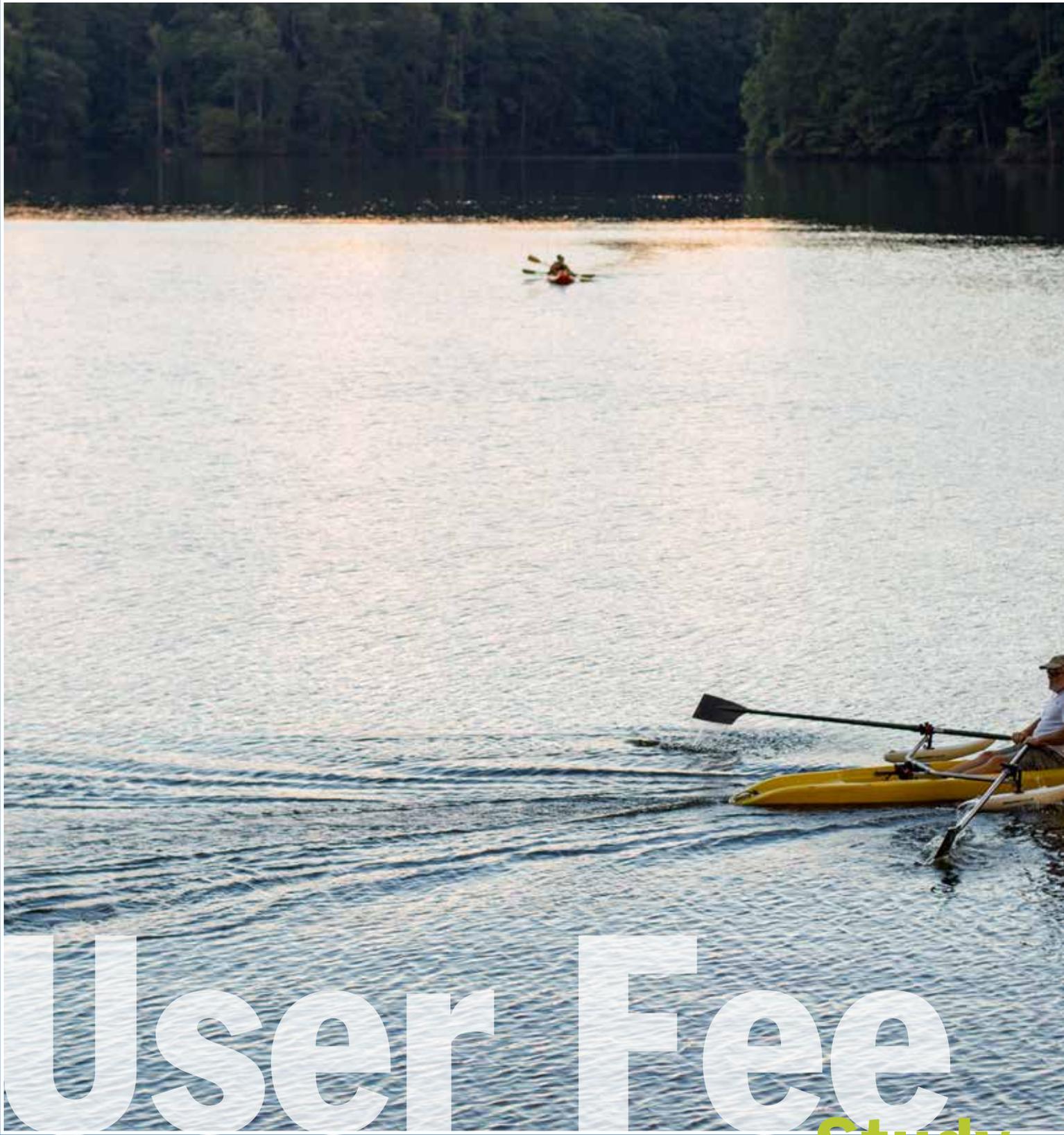


MILK

Groundbreaking

November 18, 2015





User Fee Study



Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (PRCR), Finance and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) departments partnered for the first project of this process establishing a comprehensive user fee policy specifically for parks, recreation and cultural resource facilities, programs and services. GreenPlay, a nationally renowned parks and recreation management firm, served as the consultant in this effort. GreenPlay utilizes an established approach known as the ‘Pyramid Methodology™’ to align fee amounts with levels of benefit accrual.

The approach challenged PRCR staff to organize the approximately 12,000 program offerings of FY15 into like categories of service. Through a series of facilitated conversations with the public, the PRCR array of services were placed by consensus along a spectrum of benefit accrual (i.e. who receives the benefit from the activity) with the benefits ranging from a “community benefit” to a “highly individual benefit” and gradations in between.

Information gathered from this process was used to create a User Fee Policy and Financial Assistance Policy.





\$

Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds are contributing their time, talent and resources to make a difference in our community. Parks and cultural offerings across our City are made stronger by the spirited involvement of individuals, corporate groups, schools and community organizations.

Volunteers assist with park maintenance, coach athletic teams, help out at special events and keep our greenway trails clean and safe through the Adopt-A-Trail program.

Over the past year, 10,630 volunteers gave more than 127,369 hours of service within the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department. These volunteer hours amount to a value of **\$2,872,780**.

Summer camp and outdoor nature play improve kids' physical and mental health as they build confidence and develop social skills. Our department has aligned with the City of Oaks Foundation to provide need-based scholarships that allow kids to attend camp free or little cost.

The nonprofit foundation provided more than in **\$25,000 for scholarships** for youth ages 7-17 to participate in outdoor camps and nature programs in 2016. This will make camp possible for more than 90 kids.

The foundation also is active in conservation, so that everyone can experience our parks, greenways, nature preserves, farms and community gardens. The organization:

- Works with landowners to acquire and conserve natural areas that can be enjoyed in perpetuity as parks, greenways or nature preserves.
- Co-hosted two active senior group tours and the annual Open Garden Day in April at Joslin Garden with the Joslin family and the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department.
- Partnered with Sustainable Raleigh as a co-sponsor of the annual Raleigh Environmental Awards program to recognize outstanding environmental stewardship in our community. Seven awards and mini-grants were awarded for innovative urban agriculture and community garden projects in Raleigh.





of Oaks Foundation



Funding

2015/2016 Budget

The PRCR Department's 2015-2016 operating budget is **\$54.5M**.

The Department's Capital Improvement Budget for FY16 is \$24M and includes \$18M for 2014 bond projects.



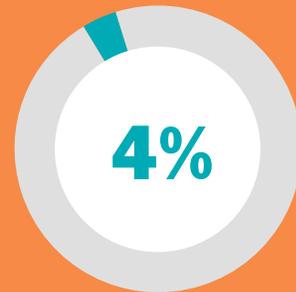
Recreation, Natural and Cultural Resources
\$21,173,428



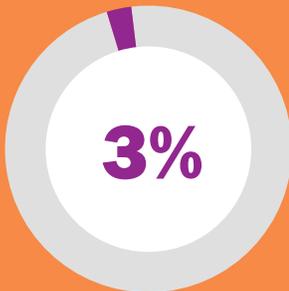
Parks/Grounds Maintenance
\$14,685,875



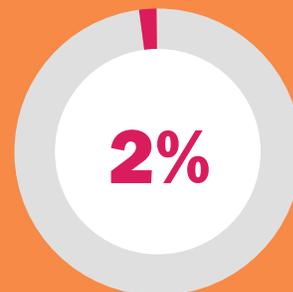
Facility Maintenance
\$13,298,274



Business Services
\$2,385,690



Strategic Planning,
Communications and Analytics
\$1,685,018



Design and Development
\$1,235,593



Keeping In Touch



Satisfaction Surveys

Raleigh residents who participate in online surveys help us learn whether we are meeting their needs. Their evaluations let us know whether we are providing the exceptional experiences they expect. Over the past year, we received about 6,050 completed surveys from program participants. Overall, their satisfaction rating was 4.5 out of 5.0.

Get Social with Raleigh Parks

The department embraces social media to keep members of the community engaged and to help us stay informed about what matters to them. We look at social media as a customer service tool, allowing us to interact with citizens, receive feedback and share information.

Our online social media community has grown to 40,844 members.

Twitter: 11,800 followers

Facebook: 3,969 page likes

Pinterest: 319 followers

YouTube: 24,111 lifetime views

Instagram: 645 followers

Join the conversation

Have a question about the parks? **Ask us.**

Have a shoutout about something fun in the parks? **Tell us.**

 [Facebook.com/raleighparks](https://www.facebook.com/raleighparks)

 [Twitter.com/raleighparks](https://twitter.com/raleighparks)

 [Instagram.com/raleighparks](https://www.instagram.com/raleighparks)

 [Pinterest.com/raleighparks](https://www.pinterest.com/raleighparks)

This year, we began providing online registration for summer camp. With this move, we hoped to improve customer experience with immediate registration confirmation, increase awareness of available programs, reduce paperwork and create efficiency for both patrons and staff.

The change was a big success. The new process increased registration by nearly 1,000 and saved 570 hours in staff time.





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Camp Registration

Boards and commissions

Current at time of printing

Raleigh City Council

Mayor: Nancy McFarlane

Mary-Ann Baldwin

Corey Branch

David Cox

Kay Crowder

Bonner Gaylord

Russ Stephenson

Dickie Thompson

Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board Members

Richard Bostic

Patrick Buffkin

Christopher Dillon

Kendall Harris

Dexter Hebert

Steve Hepler

Jennifer Hoverstad

Brad Johnson

Clodagh Lyons

Shane Mellin

David Millsaps

Amy Simes

Michael Surasky

Charles Townsend

Kimberly Wicker

Raleigh Arts Commission Members

Chanda Branch

Joe Cebina

Jason Craighead

Linda Dallas

R. Gene Davis, Jr.

Laurent de Comarmond

Andy Martin

Nancy Novell

Gail Perry

Sarah Powers

Joanne Sullivan

Stan Williams

Historical Resources and Museum Advisory Board Members

Al Brothers

Fred Belledin

Jannette Coleridge-Taylor

Dwight Coleman

Nick Fountain

Treva Jones

Amy Simes

Barbara Freedman

Melissa Hockaday

Ed Morris

Joe Mobley

Andrew Witcher

Tom Ward

Public Art and Design Board

Adam Cave

Susan Cannon

Laurent deComarmond

Scott Hazard

Linda Noble

Bob Rankin

Kathleen Rieder

Historic Cemeteries Advisory Board

David Brown

Jenny Harper

Terry Harper

Jimmy Thiem

Jane Thurman

Danny Coleman

Barden Culbreth





