



## Chavis Park

# A COMMUNITY PARK MASTER PLAN REPORT

Prepared for  
**City of Raleigh Parks  
and Recreation Department**  
Raleigh, North Carolina

Prepared by  
**E D S A**  
Edward D. Stone, Jr. and Associates  
Planners and Landscape Architects  
Durham, North Carolina

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## PREFACE

Chavis Park, located in Southeast Raleigh, was first built in the late 1930's. The original park had a combination baseball-football stadium, large swimming pool, carousel, and miniature train. Chavis Park was one of the first to serve the black community and was popular for individuals from the area and from throughout the state of North Carolina. Chavis Park was originally located on the outskirts of the City but now is located adjacent to downtown.

Chavis Park is comprised of approximately 34 acres of rolling terrain that is bisected north to south by Little Rock Creek containing a portion of the Capital Area Greenway System. In 1950, the City acquired the site from the State of North Carolina and in 1960 opened the community center. In 1971 a master plan was completed for Chavis Park.

The current facilities in Chavis Park are a relocated swimming pool, the carousel, community center, children's playground, picnic shelters, tennis courts, little league field, and a practice field and running track. Recently, Martin Luther King Boulevard has been completed on the southern property boundary and is planned to be connected to Western Boulevard in the future. Several neighborhoods in the area are undergoing redevelopment efforts. The City Council authorized an evaluation of Chavis Park and the preparation of a Revised Master Plan in response to the changes.

Edward D. Stone, Jr. and Associates, (E D S A) of Durham, North Carolina was engaged as the consultant to conduct the evaluation and prepare the Revised Master Plan. A Master Plan committee composed of 19 citizens was appointed. E D S A conducted nine meetings with the Committee and Parks and Recreation Staff to develop a consensus for the Revised Master Plan. The Final Master Plan reflects the consensus reached by the team with citizen input.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Master Plan Committee recognizes that because of its special history, Chavis park enjoys a unique and valuable position within the Raleigh Parks System.

The Master Plan should reflect the history, heritage and tradition of the Chavis Park Community. The Park should foster ownership, care and pride by its users through the quality of its programs, the quality and safety of its atmosphere, and its high level of maintenance.

Chavis Park should offer a variety of activities with a goal being to provide opportunities for interaction between users of all ages from surrounding communities.

## CHAVIS PARK PROGRAM STATEMENT

The Master Plan, in recognizing the goals of the Mission Statement and the Committees desires, shall provide the following:

- Restoration of the Park and its "image" to attract and make its users proud.
- Provide and implement a continuous maintenance and upkeep plan for the Park and its facilities.
- Renovation, upgrade and expansion of the existing pool and bathhouse facilities.
- Provide and maintain an increased security program through Park Rangers and the Police Department to deter crime and misuse of the park and its facilities.
- Instill pride and ownership of the Park throughout neighboring areas and the Community.
- Draw on the history and tradition to create a special unique park within the City System.
- Provide programs, services and recreation for a broad range of ages, groups and create an expanded programming opportunity through the adjacent services and facilities.

## MASTER PLAN

The final Master Plan dated October 4, 1994 was prepared based on approval of the Preliminary Master Plan by the Committee, Parks, Recreation and Greenways Advisory Board and the Raleigh City Council. The Final Master Plan illustrates those elements and areas previously outlined in the Preliminary Master Plan. The highest priority items as defined by the Committee are as follows:

- A possible cultural arts center
- Upgrade, maintain the greenway to deter improper use
- Provide a strong pedestrian connection to Shaw University
- Renovate, expand and relocate the entrance of the Community Center to face the park and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
- Upgrade the ballfield to become a "special" little league facility.
- Relocate the carousel adjacent to the pool and bathhouse to create a central "Park Core Area".
- Create a performance or theater area adjacent to the old stone wall and stairs.
- Upgrade and enhance the entrance image areas with walls, signage and plantings
- Provide outdoor basketball courts which can be supervised and monitored.
- Provide a centralized concessions to work out of the bath house/core area.
- Expand the idea of the Park Core Area to include the concept of the Children's Plaza and Enrichment/Community Center.
- Encase Little Rock Creek along the Greenway, into a piping system or at least clean-up and stabilize its sides to reduce crime, hazards and infestation of insects.

The plan was unanimously approved by the Chavis Park Master Plan Committee and recommended to the Parks, Recreation and Greenways Advisory Board and City Council. The following pages detail the plans, sketches and explanations of the Master Plan.

## PARK CORE AREA

The Park Core and its elements and features will be the centerpiece for Chavis Park. Being centrally located to other areas of the park, it will serve as the main gathering area. From this point, the park staff can control and oversee the many activities this area has to offer.

Relocating the carousel to the Core Area is expected to increase the activity and usage as well as provide animation, sound and color creating a fun atmosphere. Direct pedestrian links from parking lots and the Community Center allow for easy circulation.

The tennis courts will be re-built and depressed into the hill which will allow visual control to the Core Area from the Community Center lobby. The retaining wall on two sides of the tennis courts can also serve as a practice and teaching wall. The existing pool will be renovated to include new edge coping and scored concrete decking.

A waterslide is proposed for the existing deep end and a wood trellis to provide shade would be located along the southwest side of the pool deck. The bath house will be renovated and expanded to include locker rooms and offices for staff and lifeguards, a concessions area which will open to the pool and out to the plaza area around the carousel and storage for equipment and supplies. An Activity pool with waterplay apparatus and a children/infant wading pool are proposed to the north and west of the existing pool. The activity pool will be a shallow depth shell with a non-slip finish on the bottom. Ramps will allow for handicapped access. The waterplay apparatus is best described as a playground within a pool. It may have slides, water cannons, geysers, valves to open and close different levels to climb and slide down etc. Another shade trellis is located at the pools west side. Plantings and trees located along the outer edge of the deck will provide color and shade. The entire pool complex is to be enclosed by heavy wrought iron or tubular steel fencing to deter vandals and nighttime intruders.

The combination of elements, features and activities within the Park Core Area will make Chavis Park unique within the City of Raleigh Park System.

## PARK CORE AREA - ALTERNATE PLANS

E D S A presented the Preliminary Master Plan along with the Park Core Area Plan to the City of Raleigh Administration for their review. The Administration endorsed the preliminary plan and suggested the Core Area be expanded even further.

E D S A developed two different schemes at a very conceptual level for discussion only. These schemes depict the comments and interest voiced by the Administration.

The plaza around the carousel could be expanded to include an Arcade enclosure which might feature video and computer activities gear toward education. A separate structure might house additional restrooms and storage to serve other areas of the Park. The Administration termed the revised and expanded core the "Children Plaza."

The Community Center was also expanded upon by the Administration. Their feeling was that additional programs and services could be offered emphasizing educational and social activities. The "Enrichment and Community Center" would serve all age groups offering a wide variety of functions, activities and programs.

