John Chavis Memorial Park
REVISED MASTER PLAN 2014

Honoring our past.
Planning for our future.

JOHN CHAVIS MEMORIAL PARK
Raleigh, North Carolina

REVISED MASTER PLAN REPORT
May 20, 2014

skeo SOLUTIONS

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

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John Chavis Memorial Park
REVISED MASTER PLAN 2014

Acknowledgments

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

II. PLANNING PROCESS 4

- Introduction 4
- Structure the Process 4
- Shared Learning 6
- Recommendations 7
- Approval Process 8

III. PARK OVERVIEW 9

- History 9
- Park Development 12
- Current Conditions 14
- Context 16

IV. MASTER PLAN 18

- Introduction 18
- Vision 19
- Concept Plan Development 20
- Concept Plan 22
- Recommendations 25
  - Honoring the Past
  - Aquatic/Community Center
  - Sports and Fitness
  - Play
  - Circulation
  - Creek Stewardship
  - Basic Amenities
  - Event Facilities
  - Operations

V. LOOKING AHEAD 55

- Adoption Sequence & Phasing Considerations 55
- Community Engagement 56
- Budget Estimates for Master Plan Elements 58
- Phasing and Recommended Priorities 62

APPENDIX (will be made available upon request)

- Situation Assessment Report
- Public Leadership Group Charter
- Meeting Materials
- Conservation Easement and Neuse River Buffer Rules
- State Champions and Professional Athletes from John Chavis Memorial Park
- PRGAB and City Council Presentation
- Public Comment on Draft Master Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In January 2012, the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (PRCR) Department initiated a Community Conversation and planning process to develop a Revised Master Plan for John Chavis Memorial Park. With the last update completed in 1994, city staff and community leaders recognize the opportunity to develop a new community vision. A vision that honors the past, meets the needs of today and charts a course for the future. This Revised Master Plan for John Chavis Memorial Park includes a vision statement, a concept plan and a set of recommended priorities to guide upgrades, investments and programming in the nearterm and into the future.

The master planning process was guided by a 16-member Public Leadership Group (PLG). The PLG members were selected to include a diverse representation of interests and stakeholder groups reflecting the diversity of residents and users within the park's two-mile service radius and broader, regional historical focus. The purpose of the PLG is to build community ownership, guide the process, and build consensus on recommendations for a revised master plan for John Chavis Memorial Park. The PLG first met in October 2012 to adopt a charter and continued to meet monthly to develop the master plan recommendations.

The larger public was invited to participate during three separate forums:

- August 2012: Share initial goals and ideas
- April 2013: Offer input on the draft vision statement
- December 2013: Provide input on PLG recommendations and concept plan

In addition, all PLG meetings were open for the public to attend and PLG members were invited to share input from representative organizations and community members.

"Design Your Park" Station at August 2012 Project Kickoff Public Forum

Vision Statement

To guide the Master Plan Revision, the PLG developed the following vision statement:

John Chavis Memorial Park is a vibrant community center, downtown attraction and regional destination. The park celebrates the rich history, culture and arts of the surrounding neighborhoods and the City of Raleigh, and offers wonderful public recreation opportunities, event spaces and programs that foster community life. A place of pride and profound remembrance, the park celebrates the life and work of educator John Chavis, recognizes the community's contribution to World War II, and honors the significance of the park's history to the African-American community during and following segregation.

John Chavis Memorial Park will always offer a safe and welcoming gathering space where family and friends of all cultures come to play, relax, learn and celebrate the big events and small, meaningful moments of life. The park grounds provide a beautiful, clean and refreshing refuge, with access to nature and an expansive view of the downtown Raleigh skyline. Park features and programs promote fitness, health and wellness by offering a range of recreational activities for people of all ages and abilities. Just a few steps from downtown, the park is always full of activity, inspired by innovative programming that is interactive, fun and dynamic.

Master Plan

The Revised Master Plan calls for a comprehensive transformation and revitalization of John Chavis Memorial Park guided by the following goals:

- Honor the life and work of John Chavis, the community's contribution to World War II and the significance of the park's history to the African-American community.
- Replace the neighborhood pool and Community Center with a larger, enhanced co-located Aquatic Center and Community Center.
- Expand sports and fitness opportunities to include new multi-use courts, tennis courts and an enhanced track and field.
- Replace playground with a range of built and natural play features for all ages integrated in a connected play corridor and throughout the park.
- Increase connectivity to and throughout the park.
- Increase creek access, visibility and environmental education opportunities.
- Incorporate basic amenities into future improvements.
- Support community events and gatherings by incorporating flexible event facilities, spaces and utilities into future park improvements.
- Promote sustainability in park design and maintenance to create a beautiful, clean, safe and welcoming environment.

The community excitement and energy generated during the 75th Anniversary Celebration signifies the potential of what is to come. As each phase is implemented, the new John Chavis Memorial Park should generate the same excitement for all ages of our community as it did on opening day over 75 years ago.

John Chavis Memorial Park
REVISED MASTER PLAN 2014

Illustrative Concept Plan

PLANNING PROCESS

Introduction

In January 2012, the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (PRCR) Department initiated a Community Conversation and planning process to develop a Revised Master Plan for John Chavis Memorial Park (JCMP). With the last update completed in 1994, city staff and community leaders recognize the opportunity to develop a new community vision for the park that honors the past, meets the needs of today and charts a course for the future. This Revised Master Plan includes a vision statement, a concept plan and set of recommended priorities to guide upgrades, investments and programming in the nearterm and into the future. The planning process included four main phases:

1. Structure the Process

To initiate the process, interviews were conducted in April 2012 with over 55 stakeholders and city staff to identify needs and priorities for the park, as well as recommendations for the planning process. The outcomes of these interviews are summarized in the Situation Assessment report included in the Appendix.

Based on recommendations from the interview process, members of the community were invited to participate in a Public Leadership Group (PLG) to guide the process. The PLG members were selected to include a diverse representation of interests and stakeholder groups reflecting the diversity of residents and park users within the park's two-mile service radius. The purpose of the PLG is to build community ownership, guide the process, build consensus on recommendations on a revised master plan, and lead the effort to secure adoption of the plan by the Raleigh City Council for John Chavis Memorial Park.

In August 2012, a Public Forum was held to formally kick off the process, introduce the proposed PLG members, and gather additional ideas from the community (see Project Schedule on page 5).

Situation Assessment Recommendations

- **Ensure inclusion of existing residents, newer residents and other key institutions.**
- **Upgrade the park facilities with clear priorities and a phased approach.**
- **Recognize and honor the historic and cultural role and amenities of the park.**
- **Identify which elements of the park to recognize, restore or replace.**
- **The PLG should bring vision, mission and purpose and create broad civic and political support to implement the revised Master Plan.**
- **Make clear to the public how the results of the Revised Master Plan will result in substantive investments for the park's renewal.**

Project Schedule

2. Shared Learning

The PLG began their process with a full day retreat in October 2012 to participate in training on Building Cultural Competence and Collaborative Problem Solving. At the end of the retreat, the PLG reviewed and adopted a draft charter to guide their work together.

Public Leadership Group

Richard Bostic
Gretchel Carter-Hinton
Eyvonne Dailey
Joseph Ellerbee
Jackee Howell
Lorenzo Jackson
Angela Jackson-Mann
Vivian Lee
Rhonda Muhammad
Jonathun Muldrow
Virginia Stanley Tally
Margo White
F. Lonnette Williams
James E. Williams
Rob Wylie
Cecilia Zuvic

During initial meetings, the PLG participated in presentations and discussion of the history of the park; the park master planning process; an overview of the Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan; the Raleigh Aquatic Program and other topics to create a shared foundation for developing recommendations. In addition, the PLG conducted a walking tour of John Chavis Memorial Park and three driving tours of other parks in Raleigh.

The monthly PLG meetings included an ongoing series of speakers and exercises to explore options for honoring the past and the significance of the park to the African-American community. These included:

- Community memory, Kermit Bailey (NC State and SPERNA)
- Cultural landscapes and South Park Heritage Walk, Kofi Boone (NC State)
- Historic designation options, Martha Hobbs Lauer (Raleigh Historic Development Commission (RHDC) and Department of City Planning)
- African-American history and culture historic preservation process and successes, Irvin Henderson (National Trust for Historic Preservation)
- Honoring the past through public art and interpretation, Kim Curry-Evans (Raleigh PRCR Dept., Public Art Coordinator)
- Identify features to preserve, replace and memorialize
- Panel discussion on honoring the past strategies (Kofi Boone, Martha Hobbs Lauer, Irvin Henderson, Kim Curry-Evans and Fred Belledin)
- Mary Ruffin Hanbury, Raleigh Historic Development Commission Study List Application
- Michelle Lanier, Director of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources African-American Heritage Commission
- Explore Honoring the Past / Designation recommendations
- Draft and Finalize Honoring the Past / Designation strategy

Related Initiatives

During the planning process, the PLG also incorporated information from related initiatives, including:

- South Park Heritage Walk
- Knowledge Maps (community oral histories project)
- Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources System Plan Update
- RHDC historic designation application
- Raleigh 2008 Aquatics Facility Study
- Raleigh stormwater staff on creek management and conservation easement
- Raleigh Pedestrian Plan
- Raleigh Neighborhood and Small Area Plans

Over the course of 18 months, the PLG met monthly to develop a series of recommendations culminating in a Concept Plan for the park. These recommendations are outlined in later sections by topic and include:

- A Vision Statement
- A Concept Plan
- Honoring the Past
- Aquatic and Community Center
- Sports and Fitness
- Play
- Circulation
- Creek Stewardship
- Basic Amenities
- Event Facilities
- Operations

Public Involvement

The larger public was invited to participate during three separate forums:

- August 2012: Share initial goals and ideas
- April 2013: Offer input on the draft vision statement
- December 2013: Provide input on PLG draft recommendations and concept plan

In addition, all PLG meetings were open for the public to attend, and PLG members were invited to share input from representative organizations and community members.

3. Recommendations

Building Consensus

The Chavis Park Community Conversation is one of the first park planning projects under the City of Raleigh's new Public Participation for Park Planning program. Based on the principles of this new program, the PLG adopted a charter that included a commitment to make decisions by consensus.

For all of the major decisions of the Master Planning process, each PLG member indicated concurrence using a five-point scale. The vision and key recommendations included in the Master Plan are all a result of PLG approval by consensus. Detailed meeting summaries are provided in the Appendix that document the outcomes on all consensus votes.

4. Approval Process

After the PLG gathered and incorporated public input, they approved the Revised Master Plan for consideration by the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB). After PRGAB approval, the Revised Master Plan is forwarded to the City Council for final approval and adoption, anticipated in Spring/Summer 2014. Once the Revised Master Plan is approved, the PRCR Department anticipates moving directly into the next phase, Schematic Design, to develop additional detail for specific near-term improvements.

Project Kickoff Public Forum

PLG Retreat

PLG Charrette

PLG Walking Tour of JCMP

PARK OVERVIEW

History

In the late 1930s, the City of Raleigh created John Chavis Memorial Park in the Southeast neighborhood of Raleigh. The park was named after John Chavis, an early day minister and educator, and located near the grounds of the former school where he taught in order to honor his life and legacy. Created during the period of racial segregation known as Jim Crow, this park was meant to serve the recreational needs of African-Americans, while the nearby Pullen Park was meant to serve the needs of whites only. John Chavis Memorial Park at the time of its opening included a large swimming pool, bathhouse, playgrounds, football field with seating, baseball diamond, picnic shelters and a carousel.

Because of the harsh realities of racial segregation, John Chavis Memorial Park immediately took on outsized significance as it was the only recreational facility of its size, and with its range of amenities that blacks could use between Washington, DC and Atlanta, GA. During World War II, Colored soldiers were stationed in the park, and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) constructed several prominent features near the parks original Worth Street and Chavis Way entrances.

In Memory of John Chavis

John Chavis lived a remarkable life during the 18th century. He enlisted and fought in the Revolutionary War in the Virginia Fifth Regiment, having completed three years of service in 1783. He attended the Washington Academy at Lexington, Virginia, now known as Washington and Lee University. Chavis was licensed to preach in 1799 by the Presbyterian Church of Virginia. He went on to serve as an educator establishing a school in Raleigh, NC, where he taught white students by day and colored students by night. During this period of time very few blacks lived outside the bounds of slavery, but John Chavis was born to a free African-American family in Granville County, NC, and was able to obtain a college degree and be admitted to the clergy of a mainline protestant denomination.

During community interviews, many stakeholders who are long-time neighborhood residents mentioned that the park was "home" and told personal stories of growing up in the park, community life and celebrating key milestones at the park. Examples include:

- The community center at JCMP had the first color TV in the neighborhood. So many people would come to watch it that they had to watch TV shows in shifts.
- Wedding receptions and anniversary celebrations were held at the community center.
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities like Shaw University and St. Augustine's College held sporting events and practices at the park because they did not have their own facilities.
- Many African-Americans learned to swim via lessons offered at the park's swimming pool. School swimming meets were held at JCMP, as well as the training and hiring of the city's only black lifeguards.
- Students from North Carolina communities far outside Raleigh looked forward to school-sponsored field trips to the park as a milestone in their middle school experience.
- The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which was founded at nearby Shaw University, led civil rights marches to desegregate downtown Raleigh from JCMP.
- Teenage Frolics, a pioneering Raleigh-based televised teenage dance and music program featuring black dancers and music often filmed at JCMP.
- Community residents recalled coming to the park to watch athletes play that have since gone on to have notable careers as professional athletes. Additionally, many famous basketball players played at the community center through a semi-pro league known as the Chavis Summer League. See Appendix, Section V State Champions and Professional Athletes from JCMP for a list of distinguished athletes that played at the park.

Top: Worth Street entrance looking west. Pool complex on the left and carousel with tent canopy on right. Photo credit: Ms. Esther Delaney

Middle: Tennis courts ca. 1950.

Bottom: Original pool complex ca. 1950.

Since its construction in 1937, John Chavis Memorial Park and the surrounding neighborhood have undergone significant changes.

1938

1959

Map features
1. Original Carousel Building

2. Original Pool Complex

3. Field

4. Miniature Train

5. Community Center

6. New Carousel Building (2013)

1971

2010

Park Development

In the early 1970s after racial integration began and the formal barriers of racial segregation began to fade, John Chavis Memorial Park began to fall into a state of decline. The loss of amenities such as the Korean War Plane (which many associate with the Negro service members stationed in John Chavis Memorial Park during WWII, as well as the Tuskegee Airmen), miniature train ride, large swimming pool and original carousel location has been distressing for some long-time residents, particularly when viewed in light of ongoing investments in Pullen Park following desegregation as well as more recent investments.

The Chavis Park Community Conversation process undertaken by the City of Raleigh PRCR Department is an effort to revitalize John Chavis Memorial Park through a revised Master Plan, and make it once again a premier recreational destination and jewel in the City of Raleigh and beyond.

1937-1960 Features Moved or Removed

Originally the park had an internal road network with a main entrance at Worth Street, which has now been replaced with Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd at the southern end.

- 1937-1960 Access Roads
- 1927-1960 Roads Removed
- Roads Added (1990)
- Surrounding Streets
- Current Park Boundary

Present Day
- Buildings
- Recreational Features
- Paved Walkways
- Parking
- Park Boundary

Features Added or Modified
1. Greenway and Shelters (2)
2. Playground
3. Pool and Splash Pad
4. Track
5. Community Center Expansion
6. Carousel Relocation
7. MLK Entrance and Parking
8. Conservation Easement
9. Paved paths

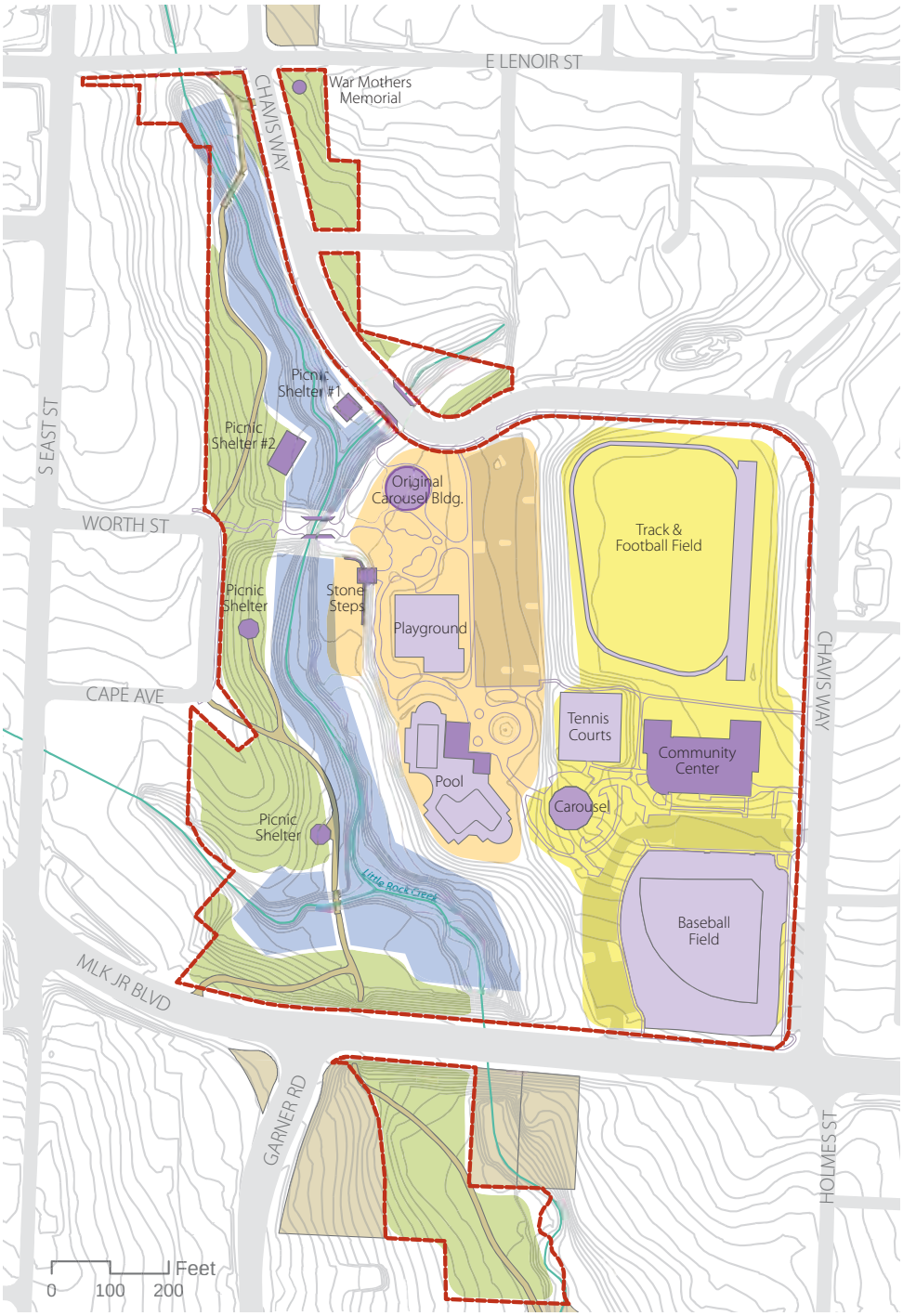
1960 Features Retained
- Buildings
- Recreational Features

Present Day (2013) and Original Park Features

Current Conditions

Today the park is divided into different activity zones by both natural and constructed barriers. The Little Rock Creek, overgrown planted vegetation, topography and limited connections separate the park into four distinct areas.

- Activity Center
- Historic Core
- Stream Corridor
- Western Corridor
- Facilities



- Park Boundary
- Capital Area Greenway Parcels
- Captial Area Greenway
- Creek
- Streets
- 2 ft Contours

Activity Center

Today, the primary hub of activity revolves around the Community Center, track and new carousel location. This area of the park sits at the highest elevation, with views of downtown and easy access from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Chavis Way. From this parking entrance, park visitors can also access the tennis courts and baseball field.

Historic Core

The next level down includes the historic core of the park that once housed the original pool and carousel. This area currently includes the original carousel building, the neighborhood pool, the playground and a large parking lot.

Stream Corridor

The stream and riparian corridor that runs through the park is protected by the Neuse River Riparian Buffer Rules and the Little Rock Creek Conservation Easement. These regulations protect and enhance the water quality of Little Rock Creek and waters downstream. The corridor includes one pedestrian crossing at Worth Street, but otherwise physically and visually separates the less active west side from the amenities on the east side.

Western Corridor

The western portion of the park is isolated from the rest of the park due to the creek and limited access and visibility. This area currently includes the Capital Area Greenway, three picnic shelters which are underutilized, and a few paths leading to these amenities.

Facilities

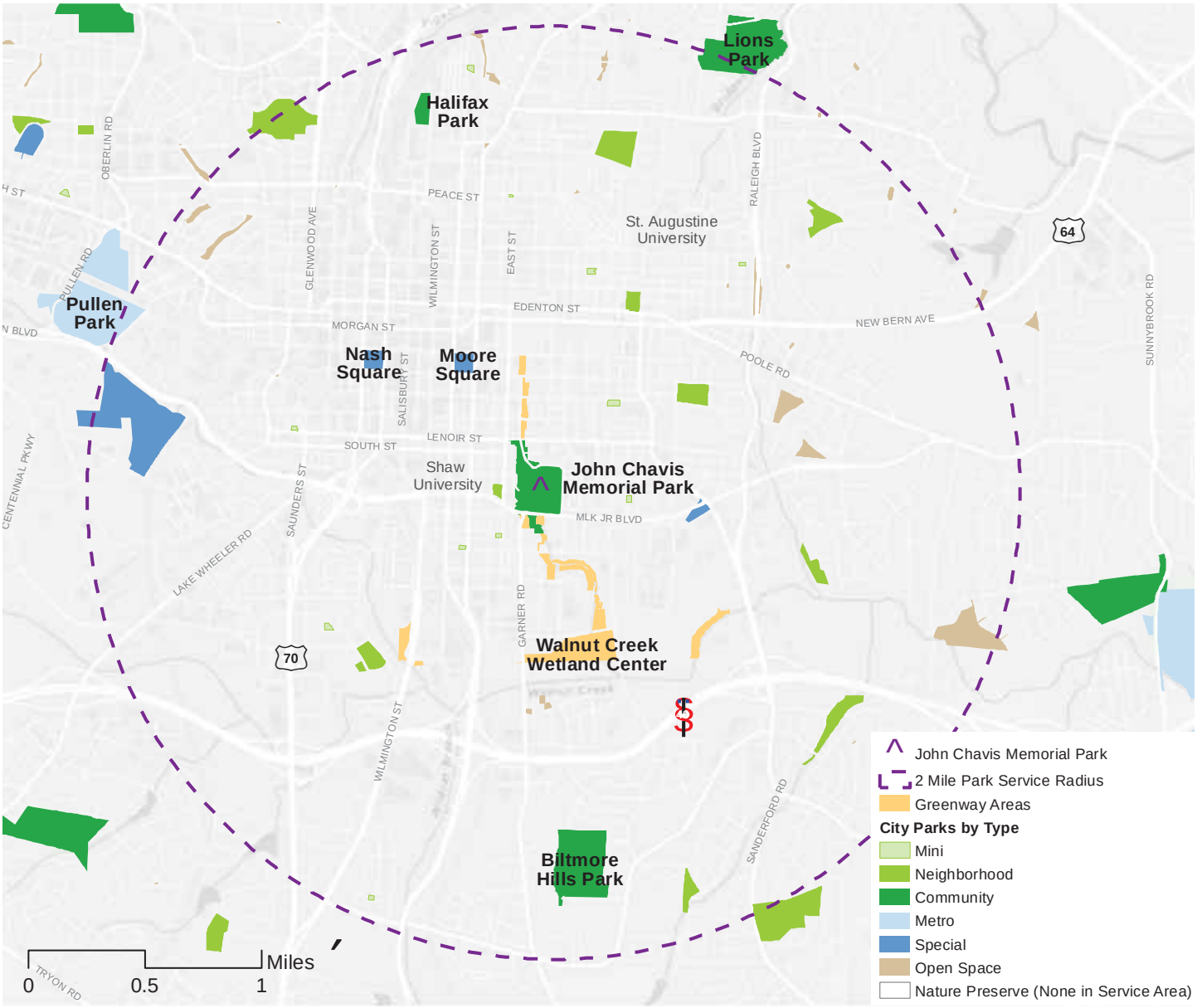
There is strong consensus among stakeholders that park facilities need significant upgrades, including the community center, pool and bath house, restrooms, drinking water fountains, playgrounds and play structures, gymnasium, tennis courts, picnic shelters and the original carousel building.

Context

John Chavis Memorial Park is the largest community park located within walking distance to downtown. The park is connected to downtown and the Walnut Creek Wetland Center through the Capital Area Greenway and Little Rock Creek. In addition, the proposed South Park Heritage Walk will also link the park to Top Greene Center, Shaw University, City Cemetery and downtown, including Moore Square. Due to its unique history, John Chavis Memorial Park has long served both the adjacent neighborhoods and the larger region. The park falls within both the Central and South Central Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) zones.

John Chavis Memorial Park has proximity to downtown, the proposed South Park Heritage Walk, Capital Area Greenway and surrounding parks, universities and community amenities.

Park master planning is informed by understanding what park amenities are available or missing within close proximity. The two-mile service area of John Chavis Memorial Park contains 27 parks, including one metro park just two miles away, three other community parks (including Biltmore Hills, Lions and Halifax), 11 neighborhood parks and 11 mini parks. Similar to most other Community Parks within the two-mile service area, John Chavis Memorial Park includes a community center, gymnasium, ball fields, tennis courts, picnic shelters and a playground. John Chavis Memorial Park currently does not include basketball courts, but does include a neighborhood pool, a track and field, and the historic Allen Herschell carousel.



John Chavis Memorial Park Two-Mile Service Area
The PRCR Department uses a general service area of two miles around community parks as a planning tool for acquisition and development of parks, but does not limit access or use of the park and its facilities.

MASTER PLAN

Introduction

This chapter describes the Revised Master Plan recommendations for John Chavis Memorial Park, including a Vision Statement, a Concept Plan and detailed recommendations by topic area.

The Vision Statement included on the following page was developed by the PLG to guide the implementation of the Revised Master Plan. The PLG generated a list of vision words and phrases to describe what they would like to see as the future of the park. These ideas were combined into a word cloud to show which concepts were mentioned most frequently. The phrases were then combined into a draft vision statement that was refined and then approved by consensus by the PLG. In addition, the PLG proposed that the concept of environmental sustainability would be a guiding overarching principle for a revitalized John Chavis Memorial Park, including the design, selection of materials used and natural resource and landscape management practices.

The Concept Plan integrates the significant recommendations into a diagram that illustrates the layout of the proposed facilities, parking, paths and recreation areas. The Concept Plan was developed incrementally throughout the PLG process starting with a charrette held in April 2013.

Significant decisions that informed the Concept Plan include:

- Determining which features to retain, honor and restore
- Determining how much of the park to redevelop
- Deciding to replace the Community Center and neighborhood pool with a new co-located set of facilities at the center of the park
- Identifying where to increase connectivity throughout the park
- Recommending to create a “wow factor” visibility from the street
- Recommending increased connection to and better management of the creek.

Following the Concept Plan, more detailed recommendations are described for each of the following topics:

- Honoring the Past
- Aquatic and Community Center
- Sports and Fitness
- Play
- Circulation
- Creek Stewardship
- Basic Amenities
- Event Facilities
- Operations

Vision

The following vision should be used to guide the Master Plan process, future improvements and the management of John Chavis Memorial Park.

Vision Statement

John Chavis Memorial Park is a vibrant community center, downtown attraction and regional destination. The park celebrates the rich history, culture and arts of the surrounding neighborhoods and the City of Raleigh, and offers wonderful public recreation opportunities, event spaces and programs that foster community life. A place of pride and profound remembrance, the park celebrates the life and work of educator John Chavis, recognizes the community's contribution to World War II, and honors the significance of the park's history to the African-American community during and following segregation.

John Chavis Memorial Park will always offer a safe and welcoming gathering space where family and friends of all cultures come to play, relax, learn and celebrate the big events and small, meaningful moments of life. The park grounds provide a beautiful, clean and refreshing refuge, with access to nature and an expansive view of the downtown Raleigh skyline. Park features and programs promote fitness, health and wellness by offering a range of recreational activities for people of all ages and abilities. Just a few steps from downtown, the park is always full of activity, inspired by innovative programming that is interactive, fun and dynamic.

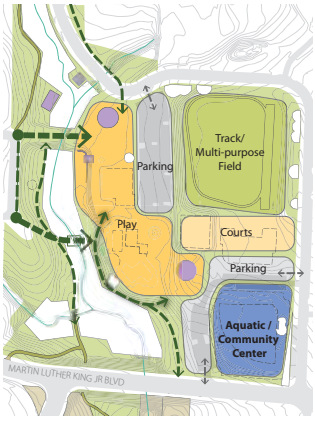
PLG members generated a list of vision words and phrases about the future of the park. The word cloud below shows which words were most frequently mentioned in the PLG suggestions. These significant words were crafted into a vision statement and approved by the PLG.

Concept Plan Development

The recommended concept plan was developed over the course of three consecutive PLG meetings. Based on PLG discussions and the site's current conditions, three scenarios were developed (Current Location, Creekside Option and Entrance Option) to show various locations of the new Aquatic and Community Centers in relation to other programmed areas of the park.

Current Location

Creekside Option



Entrance Option

After discussing these options, the PLG requested that the project team further refine the scenarios and bring two options back to the group. These two scenarios included Option 1, which orients the Aquatic and Community Centers to the southeast of the Carousel, and Option 2, which orients the Aquatic and Community Centers to the northeast of the Carousel. Based on PLG discussion of these two options, a final concept plan was developed and approved by consensus vote by the PLG.

Concept Plan Considerations
The following considerations helped guide PLG decisions during the Concept Plan Development discussions.

Principles shared by the PLG:

- *Increase "wow factor" visibility of park from the street*
- *Highlight views of and connections to downtown*
- *Limit disruption in Community Center and pool during construction*
- *Focus activity node at the park center*
- *Increase creek views, safe access and educational connections*
- *Maintain connected play area*
- *Enhance safe pedestrian flow between activities*
- *Provide safe vehicular access for services and passengers*

Option 1

Option 2

Concept Plan

Concept Plan

The Revised Master Plan calls for a comprehensive transformation and revitalization of John Chavis Memorial Park. The Concept Plan illustrates the layout of proposed facilities, parking, paths and recreation areas. A central theme of the revised Master Plan is to Honor the Past while at the same time creating a vibrant, contemporary destination with a significant "wow factor" that draws visitors back to the park again and again. New co-located Aquatic Center, outdoor Aquatics Facilities and the new Community Center radiate with "wow factors" at the center of the revitalized park with enhanced views of downtown, the restored carousel and the creek. This hub of activity extends north in a series of plazas to gather community and foster celebration. The Heritage Plaza marks the trail head of the proposed South Park Heritage Walk and honors the past through interpretive exhibits – a theme that resonates in the newly revitalized original carousel building and is carried throughout the park.

The community excitement and energy generated during the 75th Anniversary Celebration signifies the potential of what is to come.

The new play corridor integrates built and natural play features for all ages along both sides of Little Rock Creek. New creek crossings, overlooks and maintained natural spaces provide access, views and environmental education opportunities to celebrate Little Rock Creek. New tennis and multi-use courts and an expanded track and field are conveniently located near central facilities, encouraging community fitness and recreation. Destinations are connected by an enhanced and expanded path network that promotes safe and easy circulation throughout the park. Exploration is further encouraged with integrated fitness loops, linear play areas, and a wheeled train that can expand service during events.

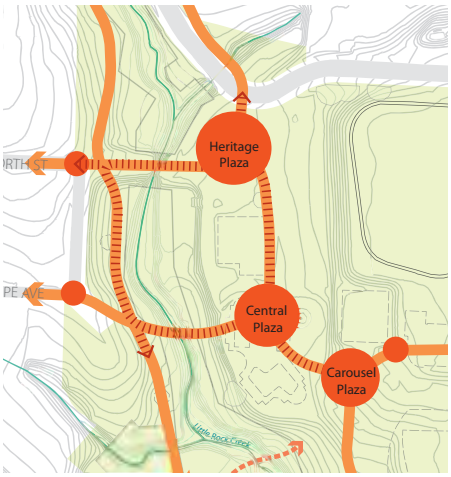
In addition to the newly renovated carousel, a list of new recommended features includes a whole range of "wow factors" are designed to attract visitors of all ages, such as:

- New Aquatics Center
- Outdoor Aquatics Facility
- New Community Center
- New Heritage Plaza
- Art and interpretive exhibits
- New hybrid playground with traditional and natural play features
- Interactive water features
- Climbing structures and climbable art
- Wheeled train
- Children's amusement ride
- Outdoor performance space
- Linear skate spots
- Creek overlooks, crossings and interpretative signage
- Enhanced track and field with lighting and spectator seating
- New courts with seating
- Fitness zones
- Pocket play zones

Illustrative Concept Plan

Newly revitalized, JCMP will become a recreational jewel that honors the past while creating a vibrant, contemporary destination with a significant "wow factor" that draws visitors back to the park again and again.

Concept Plan



The circulation of the park radiates from a series of three plazas.

The Concept Plan is organized around three activity plazas to gather community to celebrate events and heritage.

- **Heritage Plaza** - at the north entrance, the Heritage Plaza marks one of the trail heads of the proposed South Park Heritage Walk and contains the original carousel building. The Heritage Plaza will be designed to honor the past through interpretive exhibits.
- **Central Plaza** - adjacent to the Community Center, the Central Plaza will be designed to provide flexible event space that can accommodate events such as a large group gathering area, stage and performance space and a food vendor area.
- **Carousal Plaza** - the new Carousel Plaza connects the new co-located Community and Aquatic Center at the heart of the park with enhanced views of downtown, the restored carousel and the creek.

The Concept Plan is guided by the following goals. Each of these recommendations is described in more detail in the following sections.

- Honor the life and work of John Chavis, the community's contribution to World War II and the significance of the park's history to the African-American community.
- Replace the neighborhood pool and Community Center with a larger, enhanced co-located Aquatic Center and Community Center.
- Expand sports and fitness opportunities to include new multi-use courts, tennis courts and an enhanced track and field.
- Replace playground with a range of built and natural play features for all ages integrated in a connected play corridor and throughout the park.
- Increase connectivity to and through the park.
- Increase creek access, visibility and environmental education opportunities.
- Incorporate basic amenities into future improvements.
- Support community events and gatherings by incorporating flexible event facilities, spaces and utilities into future park improvements.
- Promote sustainability in park design and maintenance to create a beautiful, clean, safe and welcoming environment.

Honoring the Past

Honor the life and work of John Chavis, the community's contribution to World War II and the significance of the park's history to the African-American community.

Park improvements will honor the past by retaining early park features, honoring important former features, and memorializing significant events, stories and people, which include John Chavis, the community's contribution to World War II and the significance of the park to the African-American community during and following segregation.

Specific recommendations include:
(features are numbered and identified on the map on the following page)

A. Retain all early park features remaining in original location

1 **War Mothers Memorial** (1945)
The War Mothers Memorial Bench was erected on May 4, 1945 to honor "our sons and daughters from Wake County who served in the U.S. Armed Forces in World War II." The bench is located at the Lenoir Street entrance.

- Improve visibility of the memorial.
- Enhance memorial with landscaping and lighting.
- Integrate memorial into park's heritage themes and elements.

2 **Picnic Shelter #1** (1937)
Picnic Shelter #1 is easily accessible from Chavis Way.

- Enhance and upgrade shelter to accommodate gatherings and events.
- Clear encroaching riparian vegetation and maintain clearing around the shelter.

3 **Picnic Shelter #2** (1937)

- Enhance and upgrade shelter to accommodate gatherings and events.
- Create vehicular access to shelter to accommodate loading/unloading and persons with disabilities.

4 **Original Carousel Building** (1940s)
Located in the historic core of the park, the original carousel building was once a central source of movement, activity and music.

- Recommend schematic design explore how to accommodate a retro café, historic exhibit space, music and flexible event space within the building and surrounding plaza.
- Retain existing character and size and adaptively reuse the building to increase activity in this area of the park.

War Mothers Memorial

Picnic Shelter #1

Picnic Shelter #2

Original Carousel Building

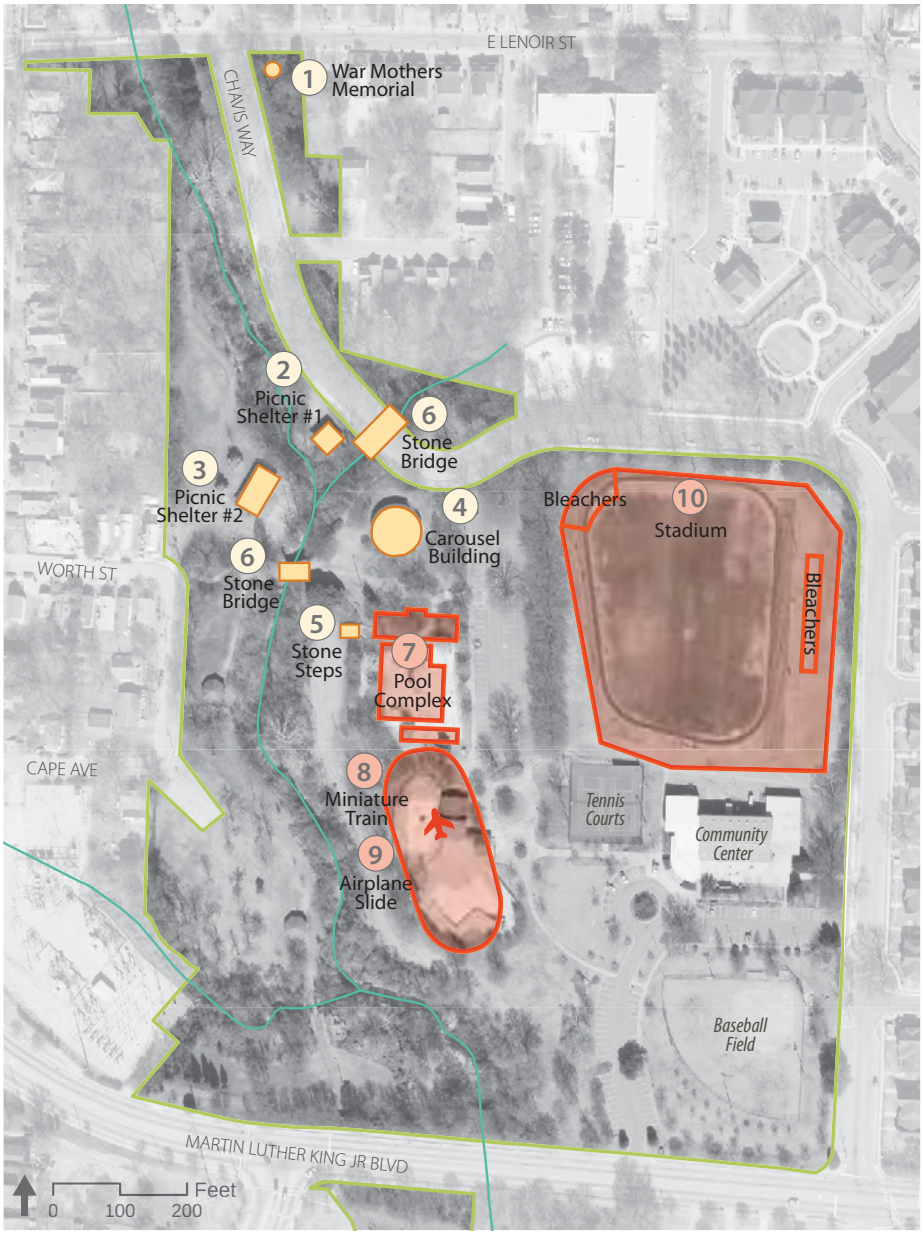
HONORING THE PAST

Specific recommendations include (continued):

5 Stone Step Amphitheater (1937)

This creekside terrace has been home to many social gatherings, Easter Egg hunts and children playing in the past. WPA-era stonework wraps the open lawn to provide an intimate setting for gatherings, small performances and low-impact recreation.

- Preserve and maintain stone work.
- Enhance area with planting beds above stone retaining walls.
- Integrate creek management strategies: 1) plant native ornamental plants along easement buffer to improve aesthetics and 2) selectively prune and thin native plants and remove invasive plants to open views to the creek and to the west side of the park.
- Recommend schematic design explore this location for potential outdoor performance space.



Original Park Features Remaining (Orange) and Removed (Red)

Stone Step Amphitheater

6 Stone Bridges and Other Stonework (1937)

WPA-era stonework can be found in the Worth Street and Chavis Way bridges as well as other stone columns along Chavis Way.

- Preserve and maintain WPA-era stonework.
- Incorporate similar stonework into new park features.

Honoring the Past

B. Honor important former features

7 Original Pool Complex (1937-1972)

The original pool complex included a bathhouse, grandstand for spectators and a pool that accommodated both competitive and leisure swimming.

- Construct new, contemporary aquatic facility (see Aquatic Center section for more information).
- Honor significance of the original pool to the community through signage.

Original Pool, Courtesy of Larry Wells

8 Miniature Train (1952-1971)

The original miniature train was located in the area of the current pool and splash pad.

- Incorporate a wheeled train option that can have a flexible course and be branded with a John Chavis Memorial Park theme (see page 41 for more information).
- Honor significance of the original train with signage and public art.

Miniature Train, Courtesy of SPERNA

9 Airplane Slide

A former F9F-6 Cougar, a Korean War era plane[1] was located in the park and modified to include a sliding board.

- Honor original plane with a replica plane that also commemorates the community's contribution to WWII.
- Consider a P-51 Tuskegee Mustang replica.
- Recommend schematic design explore location considerations, whether to enclose, and options that might allow for children to climb or interact with the replica plane.

Airplane Slide, Courtesy of SPERNA

10 Stadium and Grandstand

During the early years of the park, the stadium and grandstand evolved over time to accommodate different field configurations (baseball and football) and early bleachers were formalized into a grandstand. The stadium entrance plaza was also home to Teenage Frolics, a televised dancing program hosted by JD Lewis.

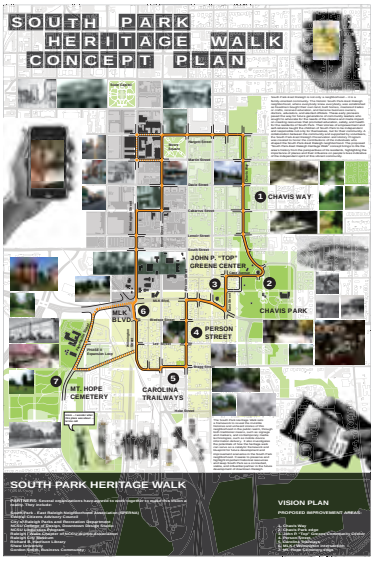
- Honor original stadium and grandstand events and famous athletes with signage.
- Enhance the current field and track area to accommodate athletics, fitness and events (see Sports and Fitness section for more information).

Grandstand and Stadium Entrance

Original Carousel Building

[1] *Dr. Joseph Campbell, Veteran and Adjunct Lecturer in History at the University of North Carolina*

Honoring the Past



"The Public Leadership Group of the Chavis Park Community Conversation has reviewed the recommendations in the South Park Heritage Walk that relate to John Chavis Memorial Park and finds them consistent in concept with the current vision of the Revised Master Plan for John Chavis Memorial Park." (October 8, 2013)

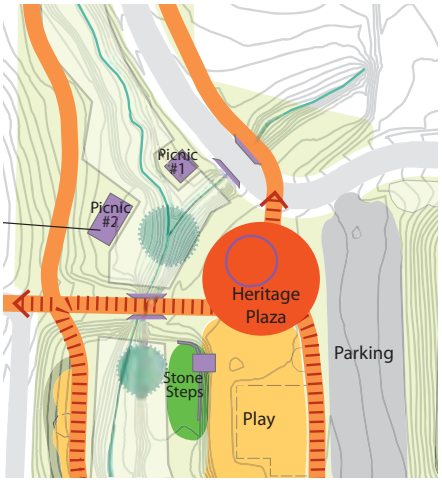
Specific recommendations include (continued):

C. Memorialize significant events and people through public art and signage

The history of John Chavis Memorial Park is rich with notable people that have either played a role in the park's development, visited the park, or participated in events and civic gatherings. There are also key locations within the park where events of community, regional and national significance have occurred.

- Develop a cohesive Interpretive Plan outlining key events and people to honor through signage and art and recommending installation locations throughout the park.
- Incorporate interpretation recommendations from the proposed South Park Heritage Walk.
- Honor John Chavis through public art.
- Consider interpretive exhibits that are "high tech and high touch."

The Heritage Plaza offers a place to honor and celebrate community memories of the park as well as significant events and people. Located at the North entrance, the Heritage Plaza and repurposed carousel building mark the trailhead for the proposed South Park Heritage Walk and can be designed to honor the past through interpretive exhibits.



Community members shared personal memories of the park that could be remembered within the Heritage Plaza:

- Miniature train
- Swimming and playing in the creek
- Airplane slide
- Swimming in the pool
- Ball games (football, baseball and basketball)
- Bandstand and dancing (Teenage Frolics)
- Homecomings and football

Honoring the Past

D. Incorporate findings from the historic designation process

The PLG initiated a separate historic designation study that was funded by the Raleigh Historic Development Commission. The study will identify a period of significance for the park's historic designation eligibility. Based on findings from the historic designation study:

- Develop design considerations for features from the period of significance.
- Evaluate historic designation options.
- Pursue future phases of the process with community support.

The PLG approved revising the name of the park to the original name "John Chavis Memorial Park." It was affirmed via City Council proclamation on March 19, 2013.

John Chavis Memorial Park, ca. late 1950

AQUATIC/COMMUNITY

Replace the pool and Community Center with a larger, enhanced co-located Aquatic Center and Community Center.

The Aquatic /Community Center will provide new and improved facilities for all ages and be located around the Carousel Plaza at the center of the park. This central location will provide views of the creek and downtown and easy access to sports, play and event areas. A shared entry plaza provides easy access to both facilities. The architecture of the Aquatic Center along with exciting features of the outdoor aquatics will increase the "wow factor" visibility from the street.

Specific recommendations include:

- Increase "wow factor" visibility of park from the street.
- Highlight views of and connections to downtown.
- Limit disruption in existing Community Center and pool during construction.
- Focus activity at the park center.
- Increase views, safe access and educational connections to the creek.
- Maintain connected play areas.
- Enhance safe pedestrian flow between activity areas.
- Provide safe vehicular access for services and passengers.

Building location should also incorporate the following site and operational considerations:

- Re-balance activity throughout the park.
- Co-locate Aquatic and Community Center facilities to accommodate staff and program needs (with shared entry).
- Locate Community Center with view of play area and track.
- Consider views to and from the carousel.
- Consider a multi-story Community Center (with rentable roof deck).
- Provide for maintenance and service access.
- Fit new features to grades and required development setbacks of the site.
- Cost-effective construction and operations.
- Recognize some program disruption may be necessary.
- Phase design and construction.

AQUATIC/COMMUNITY

Aquatic Center

Specific Aquatic Center recommendations include:

- Future pool should be a combination of leisure, recreation, competition and wellness activities.
- Future pool should be a combination of indoor and outdoor opportunities and include amenities focused on seniors and children.
- Future pool should be one of several park features rather than the primary park feature.
- Community Center model (from the 2008 Aquatic Facility Study) is the most appropriate for John Chavis Memorial Park (see below for more detail).

Recommend schematic design consider including the following aquatic features within the Aquatic Center:

- Shallow water area for children
- Warm water therapy/wellness pool/whirlpool
- Competitive swimming and diving
- Recreational swimming area
- Lap swimming/fitness area
- Water play structures
- Water spray pad / spray ground

Outdoor aquatics such as water play structures could provide "wow factor" visibility from the street and help attract visitors to the park.

The water spray pad/spray ground feature could be located elsewhere in the park.

The Community Center Model provides co-located aquatic and community center facilities. The aquatic facility would provide indoor and outdoor features for leisure, recreation, competition and wellness activities. (Images are from the City of Raleigh 2008 Aquatic Facility Study.)

AQUATIC/COMMUNITY

Community Center

Specific recommendations for the Community Center include:

- Design as multi-story building to maximize views of downtown with "wow factor" appeal inside and out.
- Design building to support outdoor events including access to restrooms.
- Rentable event spaces that are well-designed with great aesthetics for events such as reunions and receptions.
- Enhance current capacity by providing flexible meeting, event, and classroom space to accommodate large events.
- Kitchen to accommodate event rentals and cooking classes.
- Expanded fitness center with larger weight room and classroom space.
- Indoor track.
- Indoor basketball courts.
- Honoring the Past interpretive elements.
- Indoor performance space.
- Rentable roof deck area with skyline views of downtown.
- Expanded locker rooms, sauna, warming kitchen in meeting rooms and computer lab.

PLG members advocated for more programs for seniors and youths, as well as to keep programs and memberships affordable

The Aquatic/Community Center could be a "wow factor" and provide rentable event spaces that take advantage of views (such as downtown skyline). (Images are examples from PLG Pinterest Board)

The Aquatic/Community Center could include "wow factor'" interior. Example from the Dream Center.

Sports and Fitness

Upgrade sports and fitness opportunities to include enhanced track and field, new multi-use courts and tennis courts, and fitness zones throughout the park.

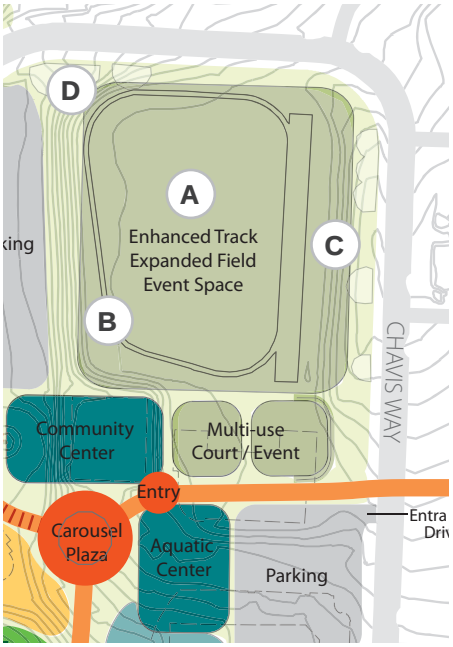
The park features and programs will promote fitness, health and wellness by offering a range of recreational activities for people of all ages and abilities.

Specific recommendations include:

Track and Field

- **A** Expand field to accommodate a range of field activities and event space, including lighting and sound for sporting events. Continue to support local schools and universities that use the field for practices. Explore the full range of field surfaces, including artificial turf for the field, balancing cost, durability and environmental impact.
- **B** Retain a track surrounding the field as a highly-used community amenity. Enhance the track and avoid user conflicts between track and field.
- **C** Incorporate shaded seating and benches around track.
- **D** Incorporate spectator seating into hillside (see example below).

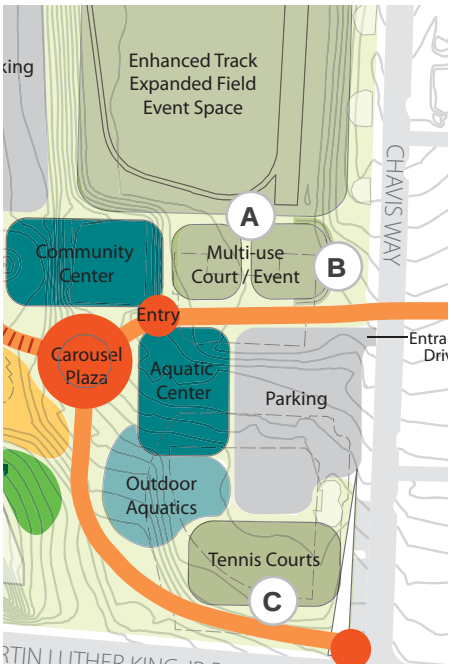
Honor the original stadium and grandstand with signage (see Honoring the Past section for more information).



Hillside along eastern side of track.

Example of shaded hillside seating.

Sports and Fitness



Specific recommendations include (continued):

Youth-Focused Recreation

Explore youth-focused and special needs sport courts and programs.

Multi-use Courts

A Incorporate multi-use courts in close proximity to the Community Center and track. Courts could accommodate Community Center programs, basketball and events and overflow from track activities.

B Provide seating around courts, including amphitheater-style seating.

Consider youth-sized courts, such as youth-sized basketball court and/or goal.

Tennis Courts

C Relocate and potentially expand tennis courts. Include seating and night lighting to accommodate evening play.

Consider youth-sized courts, such as youth-sized tennis court and/or practice wall.

Example of court side amphitheater seating.

The park has historically provided youth sport activities.

Sports and Fitness

Fitness Zones

Promote physical activity by incorporating additional fitness opportunities within the park. Provide physical activity opportunities for all ages and abilities and a variety of equipment for different types of exercise. (See Basic Amenities section for lighting and seating recommendations that could be incorporated within these areas).

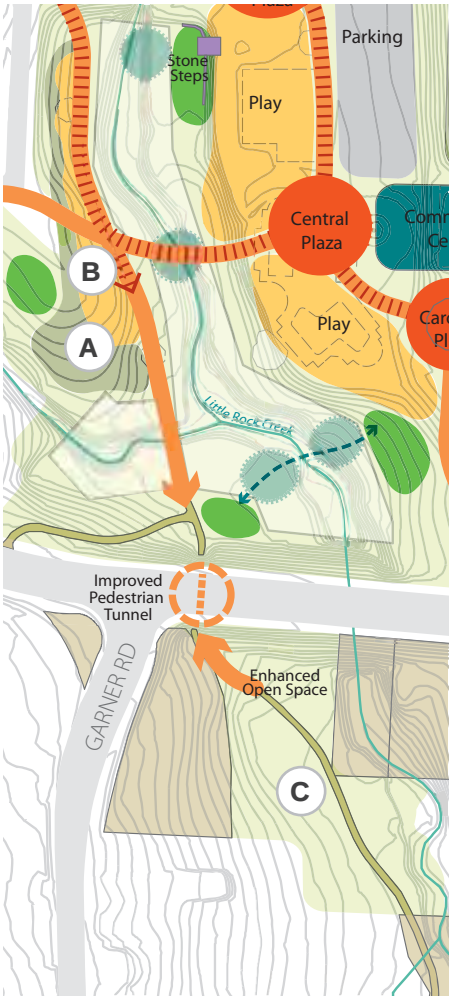
Mark park paths and greenway with distances to provide a fitness loop through the park.

A Expand fitness activity along western corridor to activate this area of the park. Fitness stations could be situated to provide additional exercise opportunities.

B Align pocket play opportunities along fitness areas to provide families an opportunity to exercise and play together.

C Integrate additional fitness opportunities along greenway portion of the park, such as an obstacle course, skateboard spots, additional fitness stations. Explore opportunities to support foot races through the park.

Promote park paths as fitness connections to and from downtown and Walnut Creek Trail.



Fitness Zones *create a fun, accessible, and social environment where people can enjoy getting fit. Just getting outdoors makes people healthier and happier. Fitness Zones take that one step further by giving people free access to top-quality exercise equipment suitable for all levels of fitness.*
Source: http://www.tpl.org/what-we-do/where-we-work/california/los-angeles-county/fitness-zones.html

Skate spots *are one example of additional fitness opportunities that could be incorporated along the greenway. Skate spots provide skateboarding opportunities for a wide range of skills by providing a range of street-like skating terrain and obstacles.*

PLAY AND AMUSEMENTS

Provide a range of built and natural play features for all ages integrated in a connected play corridor and throughout the park.

The current playground will be replaced with an entire "play corridor" filled with a range of traditional and innovative play features inspiring curiosity and movement for youth of all ages. Centered around the excitement of the carousel, the play corridor will extend from the new outdoor aquatics facility, along creek viewing and celebration opportunities, up to the interactive interpretive elements at the Heritage Plaza. Children can choose from manufactured play equipment, giant sculptural climbing structures and an interactive water feature. Imagine during special events, families might board the wheeled train at the carousel and enjoy views of downtown and park activities as they travel across the creek, along the South Park Heritage Walk interpretative stops and loop back to the Central Plaza. Shade structures, seating, water fountains, restrooms and picnic amenities will be conveniently integrated and accessible.

Principles for Play

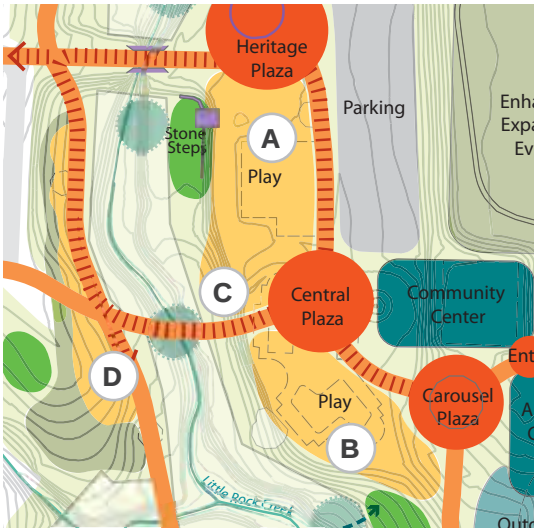
- Encourage physical activity for all ages
- Utilize the entire park for play and exploration
- Balance built and natural play features
- Provide opportunities to promote whole-child development (physical, social, mental)

Example of accessible play equipment

Example of natural play and whole child development

Play and Amusements

Specific play corridor recommendations include:



A Replace current traditional playground with a "hybrid playground" model which includes a mix of natural elements and manufactured equipment. Include traditional play equipment such as swings, slides and climbing equipment.

Ensure accessibility for playground equipment.

Incorporate seating and gathering areas, such as picnic tables or shelters (particularly in the area between the Carousel Plaza and Central Plaza).

Maintain open views between the Carousel Plaza and Heritage Plaza.

Incorporate elements of Honoring the Past into play corridor.

Explore during schematic design the idea of having areas with different themes (e.g., defined by color, material type) throughout the play corridor.

B Incorporate play pockets throughout the park so that the entire park is a playground.

C Connect play corridor to creek corridor to promote environmental education opportunities.

D Provide play opportunities on western side of greenway. Areas can be visually connected via openings created by pedestrian bridges crossing the creek and windows of thinned and managed vegetation.

Specific amusement recommendations include:

Include a wheeled train that families and visitors of all ages can ride to different areas of the park during weekends and special events (see Circulation section for more information).

Add an additional motorized or non-motorized amusement ride (such as a miniaturized train on a track or other similar attraction for youth) to be evaluated and selected during the schematic design phase.

Include an outdoor performance space (size and location to be determined during schematic design).

Elements of a ride could honor the park's legacy, such as a train or plane ride.

Example of a non-motorized amusement

PLAY AND AMUSEMENTS

Youth Perspective

The Master Plan incorporates youth perspective. Six to eight year olds and 10 to 12 year olds shared what they liked about the park and their ideas for the future of the park during a "site safari."

Additional play features to include:

1. Linear skate spots

- Incorporate skate spots along greenway. Skate spots are more accessible to a wider range of skills than a traditional skateboard park with ramps.
- Consider safely incorporating other skate spots in play and activity areas.

Skate spots

2. Interactive water feature

- Incorporate interactive water feature(s) into play area, such as spray pad, splash fountain, or water rill or constructed channel to simulate creek.

Interactive Water Features

Play and Amusements

3. Observation overlook / deck by the creek

- Construct viewing stations to provide places to observe and learn about the creek.
- See Creek Stewardship section for additional information.

Observation overlook by the creek

4. Climbing structure

- Provide creative climbing structures within play areas for all age ranges that promote physical health and wellness.
- Integrate climbing structures in other park areas to create pocket play opportunities.

Climbing Structures

5. Interactive / climbable public art

- Install interactive, climbable public art throughout park.
- Integrate Honoring the Past themes into structures so that play and education are connected.

Interactive/climbable public art

(Images are examples from the PLG's Pinterest board)

CIRCULATION

Increase access and connectivity to and throughout the park.

New park improvements will promote safe and easy access into the park, throughout the park, to the creek and to other nearby destinations, including new pathways, a wheeled train and improved entrances.

Specific recommendations include:

1. Improve circulation and access to areas within the park

- Connect paths and provide direct routes and access to park areas and features.
- Increase access to park core and across the creek.
- Align park routes to maximize space for park features and open space.
- Design primary park paths to be accessible for people of all abilities.

Specific improvements include:

- **A** Provide continuous path along western side.
- **B** Align an alternate greenway connection through eastern core of the park.
- **C** Add a second pedestrian bridge to connect Cape Avenue.
- **D** Add a foot bridge or stepping stone crossing.
- **E** Realign greenway entrances to pedestrian tunnel to avoid blind entry and improve tunnel aesthetics and safety.

Circulation

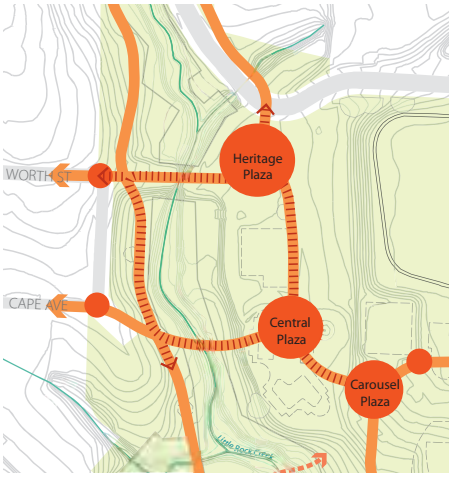
Circulation

2. Add a wheeled train to connect to park areas

The new wheeled train will honor the original miniature train, provide a "wow factor" and enhance access to park activities. The route can be expanded to support events and tours. Wheeled trains can travel a flexible course and provide a one-of-a-kind park amenity. A wheeled train at John Chavis Memorial Park could:

- Travel on park paths.
- Serve all ages, small children through seniors.
- Provide increased mobility and assist patrons with disabilities.
- Possibly travel outside of park such as along the proposed South Park Heritage Walk.
- Be used as a shuttle during high volume events to carry people to/from parking and around event.
- Be used for promotional opportunities (parades, etc.).
- Be branded with a JCMP theme.

Examples of wheeled trains.



Paths will be designed to accommodate the new wheeled train and connect areas of the park.

Creek Crossing Character

C *Cape Avenue crossing could be artistic and interpretive.*

D *A secondary creek crossing could be less formal, such as stepping stones as long as they provided safe access.*

Tunnel Improvements

E *LED lighting and public art in tunnel could improve safety and provide a "wow factor."*

CIRCULATION

Specific recommendations include (continued):

3. Improve visibility and sight lines to and throughout the park.

- Increase visibility through stream vegetation to see the stream and through the buffer to other areas of the park (see Creek Stewardship section for additional information).
- Increase visibility between park areas.
- Improve visibility to park from surrounding areas.

4. Improve access to creek

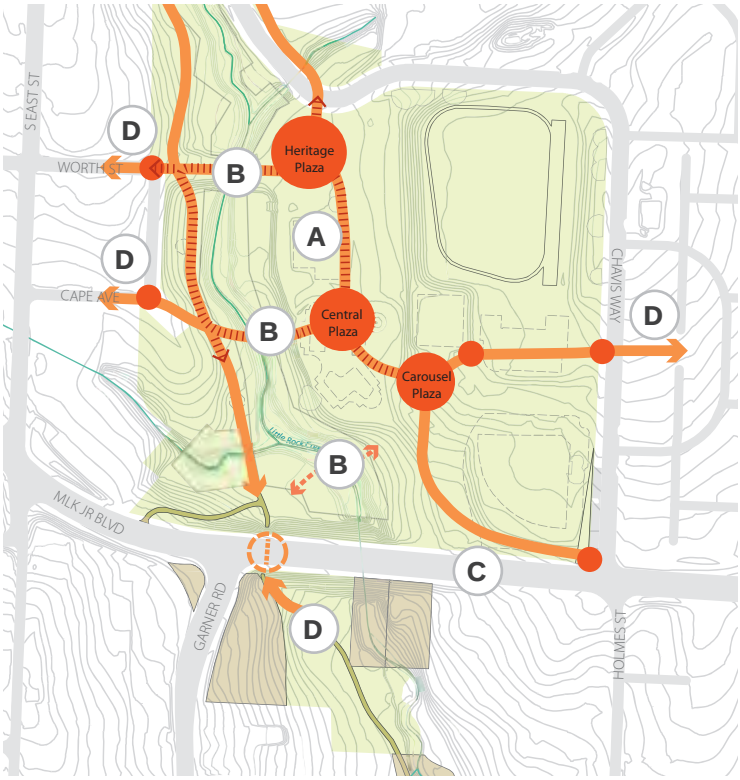
Specific improvements include:

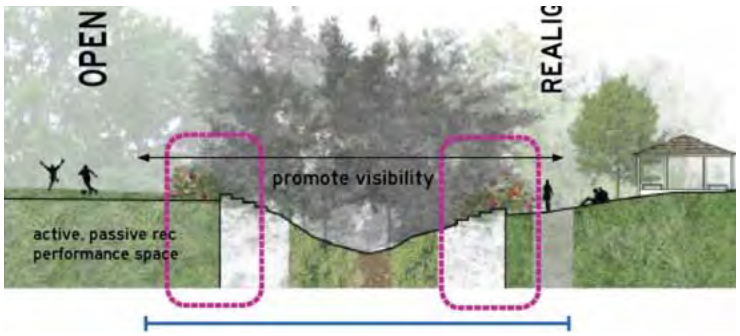
A Improve sightlines between the Carousel Plaza and the Heritage Plaza.

B Manage vegetation along creek crossings to open sightlines through the park.

C Open key views into park from Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

D Enhance neighborhood connections with improved entry areas and sightlines into park.





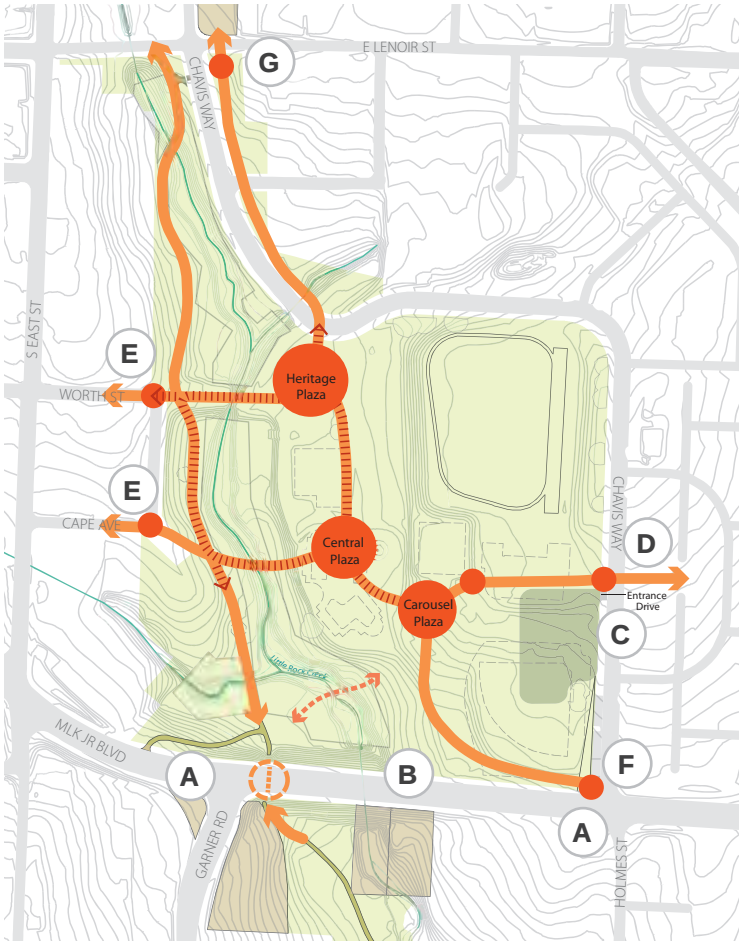
Little Rock Creek Conservation Easement

Excerpt from proposed South Park Heritage Walk highlighting opportunity to increase visibility between park areas through strategic vegetation management.

Circulation

5. Improve safety and function of park entrances

- Provide safe pedestrian access to park.
- Provide safe vehicular access to park along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- Enhance park edges and access points to connect with surrounding neighborhood.



Specific improvements include:

A Improve and promote pedestrian crossings on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. by aligning pedestrian entrances with crosswalks and sidewalks.

B Improve sightlines into park from Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

C Move vehicular entrance to park from Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to Chavis Way and improve Chavis Way intersection.

D Align pedestrian entrance with Chavis Heights central walkway.

E Improve Worth Street and Cape Avenue entrances.

F Enhance park entry signage at intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Chavis Way.

G Enhance downtown park entry at Lenoir Street with improved entry areas and sightlines into park.

Excerpt from proposed South Park Heritage Walk highlighting opportunity to improve visibility and enhance park edges and entries.

CIRCULATION

Specific recommendations include (continued):

6. Improve park connections to and from other destinations

- Promote vehicular, pedestrian and public transit access from downtown.
- Increase connectivity with other parks and community amenities.
- Link park to proposed South Park Heritage Walk.

Specific improvements include:

A Improve signage to park from downtown for vehicular and pedestrian access.

B Improve pedestrian access to park from Shaw University.

C Strengthen connection between park and John P. 'Top' Greene Center. See proposed South Park Heritage Walk for additional details.

D Strengthen greenway connection between John Chavis Memorial Park and Walnut Creek Wetland Center.

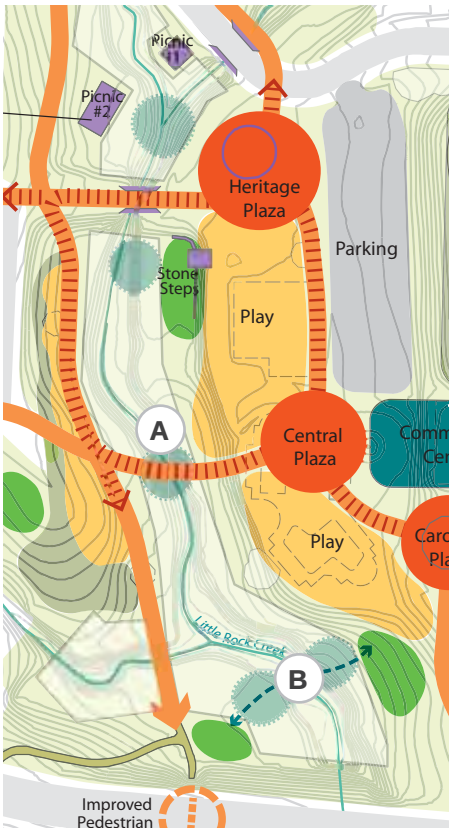
E Create Heritage Plaza as a trailhead for the proposed South Park Heritage Walk.

John Chavis Memorial Park has proximity to downtown, the proposed South Park Heritage Walk, Capital Area Greenway and surrounding parks, universities and community amenities.

Creek Stewardship

Increase creek access, visibility and educational opportunities.

The park grounds will provide a beautiful, clean and refreshing refuge, with access to nature. Improvements will include additional creek access, crossings and viewing stations, art and play features to celebrate the creek, increased visibility through riparian vegetation and environmental education.



Specific recommendations include:

1. Add additional creek crossings

- **A** Add pedestrian bridge connecting to Cape Avenue.
- **B** Add informal creek crossing.

"I can't believe there's a creek behind all those weeds."

"I would play in the creek, if I could get to it."

Youth perspectives, Site Safari

Creek Crossing Character

A *Cape Avenue crossing could be artistic and interpretive.*

B *A secondary creek crossing could be less formal, such as stepping stones as long as they provided safe access.*

Creek Stewardship

2. Add physical access and viewing stations

Constructed viewing stations could be in deck or patio form and provide a safe place to relax, view the creek and learn about the creek through interactive displays. These stations would also provide gathering spaces for environmental education and outdoor classrooms.

3. Celebrate Creek Connections

Incorporate creek references throughout the park. Formalize riparian zone edges with art and managed landscapes and retaining walls.

Incorporate features in play areas that recreate memories of wading and playing in the creek.

Reference creek in art and landscape.

Reference creek in play areas outside the riparian zone.

Images from PLG's Pinterest Board.

Creek Stewardship

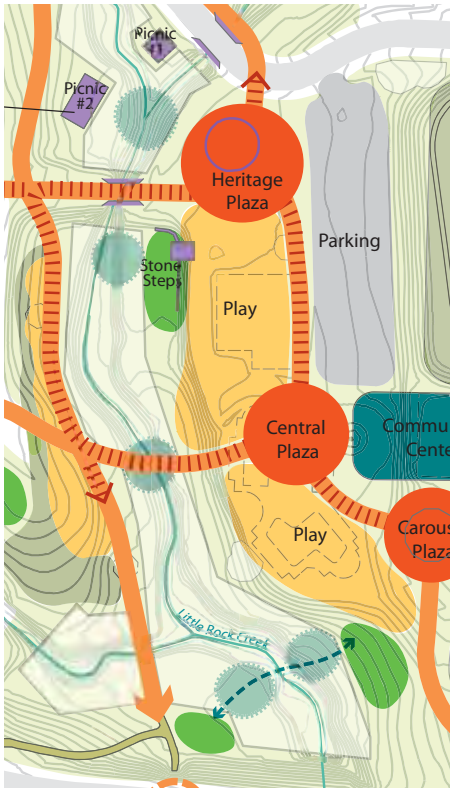
4. Manage vegetation in key locations to increase visibility to and across creek

The riparian vegetation has become overgrown blocking the view of the creek and contributes to increased concerns about safety. Focusing vegetation management on three to five "creek stewardship" zones will create and maintain safe views to the creek and across the creek. Vegetation management strategies could include:

A. Manage the understory by clearing, mulching or shading to reduce invasive plants

B. Add visual openings or "windows" to creek and across the creek with selective pruning and clearing

C. Enhance landscape with newly planted areas that may include soft paths, native plants, and educational signage

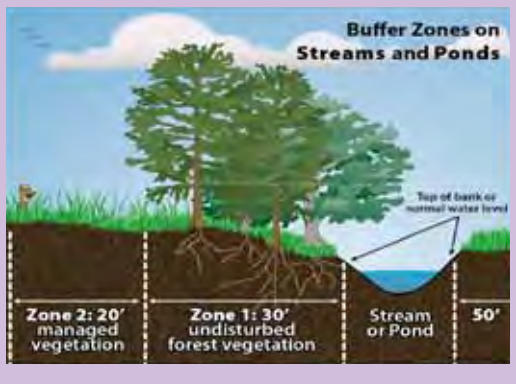


Manage vegetation in key locations to increase visibility to and across creek

A. Manage Understory (view after 50 years)

B. Add windows to creek and across creek

C. Enhance vegetation with newly planted areas



Neuse River Riparian Stream Buffer Rules and Little Rock Creek Conservation Easement

Any park improvements must be consistent with what is allowed under the state riparian buffer rules and the conservation easement:

- Planting of native vegetation (trees, shrubs, herbaceous vegetation)
- Removal and management of invasive plant species
- Hardscape features (paved trails, footing supports for bridges) are limited and require state review
- Park recreational and educational uses are allowed (consistent with the above) (see Appendix for more information)

CREEK STEWARDSHIP

Youth in the Site Safari workshop said they would like to see the creek, have a path to the creek and fish in the creek.

Promote environmental education through signs and programs

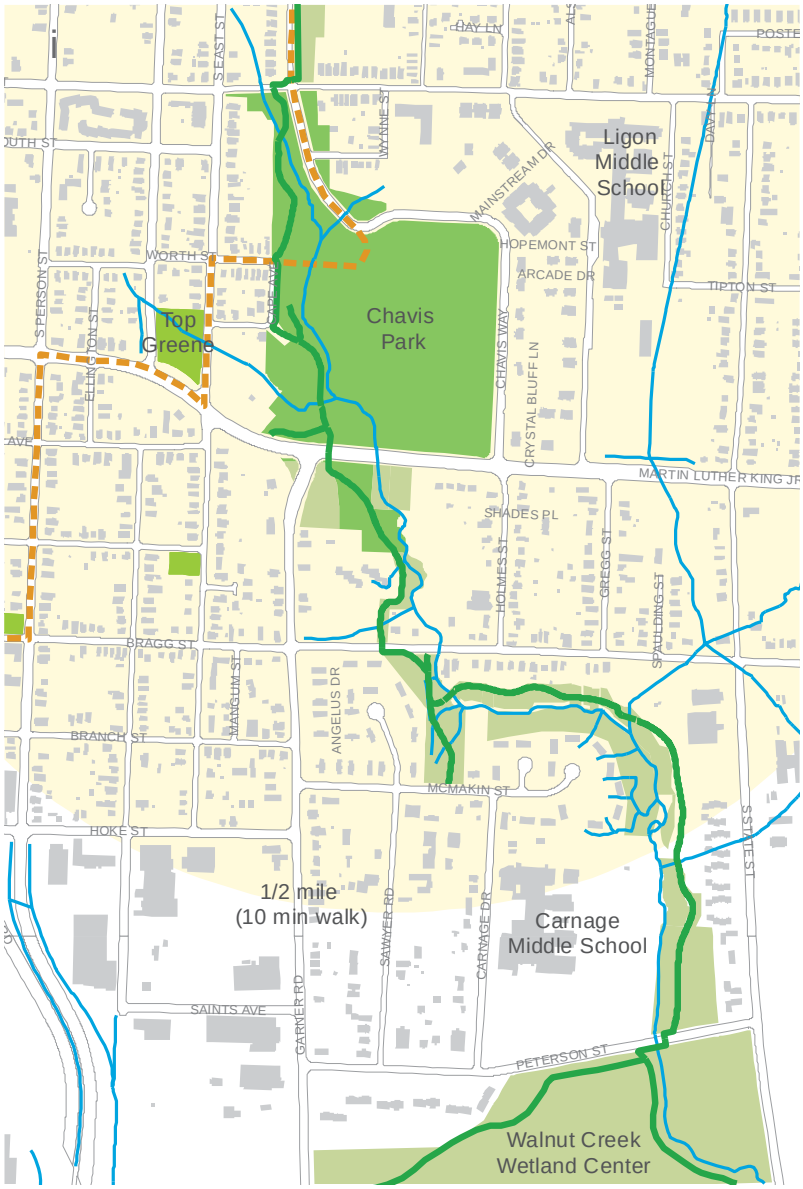
Top image: Bronx River Alliance (NY)

Bottom image: Tar River Land Conservancy (NC)

5. Promote environmental education through signs and programs

Little Rock Creek could be a unique and celebrated asset for the community with safe access, signage and programming. Educational signage in key locations could parallel exercise loops and other pathways through the park.

Paralleling the greenway, Little Rock Creek connects to the Walnut Creek Wetland Center less than a mile away. Many of the Center's educational programs could be expanded through nature walks connecting the parks or programming at the new community center.



The Capital Area Greenway (green line) parallels Little Rock Creek (blue line) and connects John Chavis Memorial Park with Carnage Middle School and the Walnut Creek Wetland Center.

Basic Amenities

Incorporate basic amenities into future improvements.

The park will include many new amenities to support a vibrant experience and encourage visitors to return again and again, including restrooms, benches, shade structures, signage, drinking fountains, trash receptacles, food and concessions, music and sound, pool chairs, bike racks, picnic shelters, lighting, public art, power and accessibility.

Specific recommendations include:

Restrooms

- Incorporate restrooms consistent with new facility and site improvements.
- Provide convenient access for people of all abilities from the greenway, picnic shelters, play area, track and carousel.

Benches

- Incorporate seating throughout the park, such as seat walls, boulders, raised planters and benches.
- Utilize park topography to create spectator seating.
- Situate seating so that visitors are drawn into the area.
- Utilize art as benches.

Shade structures

- Incorporate fun, artistic and attractive shade structures into seating area and playground.

Signage

- Create signage that is unique to John Chavis Memorial Park. Include interpretive and historical signs as well as wayfinding and directional signage for pedestrians and automobiles.
- Add directional signage outside park for park entrances and parking.
- Incorporate Walk Raleigh signs in and around park, such as “Historic City Cemetery is just a 10 minute walk.”

Drinking fountains

- Add drinking fountains at major amenities. Include adult and kid-sized fountains and separate spigots for dogs.

Trash receptacles

- Incorporate attractive trash/recycling receptacles and doggie bag stations throughout the park and along the greenway.

Food and concessions

- Explore a range of concession and vendor options to provide consistent and healthy food options for visitors.

Public art as a bench

Colorful shade sails

Artistic shade structure

Pedestrian bridge lighting.

Colorful pathway lighting.

Basic Amenities

Stairs as art.

Mural on side of building.

Replica plane as art indoor or outdoor.

Music and Sound

- Explore providing sound and music throughout the park, music can provide another form of connectivity (see the Event Facilities section for more information).

Pool chairs

- Incorporate chairs and seating into outdoor aquatics area.

Bike racks

- Incorporate attractive, creative bike racks at key entrances and buildings.

Picnic shelters

- Enhance picnic shelters with power supplies, vehicular access, permanent grills, lighting and convenient access to restrooms as appropriate.
- Revisit design, use and location of shelters #3 and #4.
- Add additional pergolas or picnic shelters with access to restrooms that range in size to accommodate family and large events and balance activity throughout the park.

Lighting

- Incorporate lighting throughout park to promote safety. Add lighting to picnic shelters and track.
- Consider creative lighting, such as up-lights on trees, lights on pedestrian bridges and public art that is lit at night or lighting that is art.

Public art

- Incorporate public art throughout the park from trash receptacles, bike racks, large play structures and memorial pieces to murals.
- Integrate Honoring the Past themes into art.

Power

- Provide utility connections at key locations to support gatherings and events (see Event Facilities section for more information).

Accessibility

- Ensure new facilities and site improvements are accessible for people of all abilities, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Event Facilities

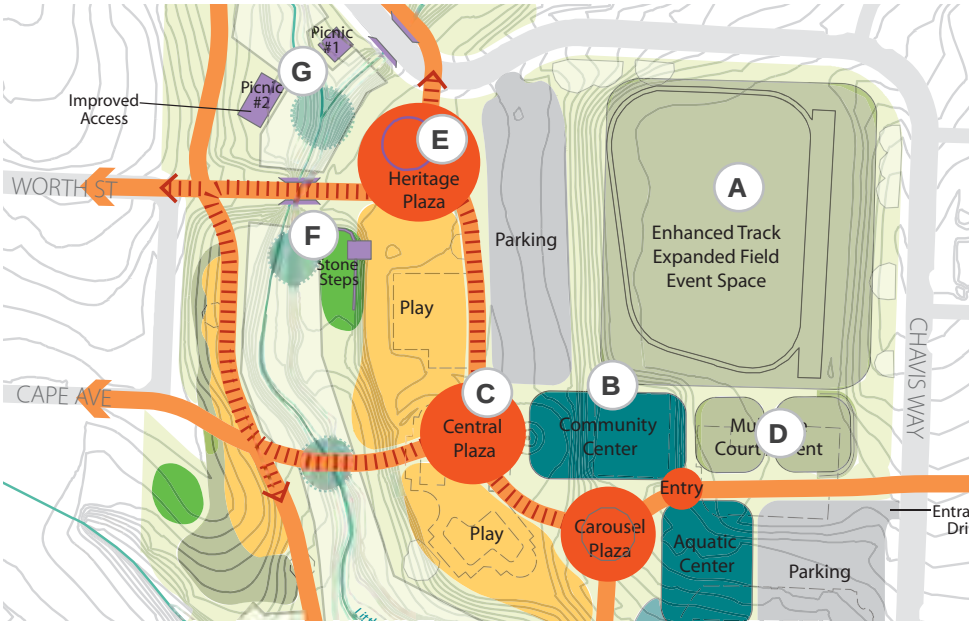
Support community events and gatherings by incorporating flexible event facilities, spaces and utilities into future park improvements.

Park improvements will be designed to support large outdoor events, performance space, vendors and supporting utilities.

Specific recommendations include:

- **A** Enhance field area to accommodate a range of events and improve access from parking areas.
- **B** Design the new Community Center to support outdoor events and provide indoor rentable event spaces.
- **C** Design the Central Plaza to provide flexible event space that can accommodate events such as a large group gathering area, stage and performance space, food vendor area.
- **D** Design the multi-use courts to accommodate events and activities.
- **E** Incorporate flexible event space into Heritage Plaza for small gatherings, reunions, weddings and special events.
- **F** Enhance stone step amphitheater area and improve connectivity to other park areas
- **G** Upgrade existing picnic shelters to accommodate events.

  Consider a dedicated area for a permanent stage.



As each phase is implemented, the new John Chavis Memorial Park will generate the same excitement for all ages of our community as it did on opening day over 75 years ago.

Event Facilities

Community event ideas that could be supported by improved facilities...

- Annual John Chavis celebration
- Music concert series
- Theater in the Park
- Family reunions
- Weddings
- Farmers market
- Voting
- Dancing in the Park
- Dances hosted by local radio stations (Teenage Frolics revival)
- St. Augustine and Shaw Days, with local radio host
- Shaw tennis
- Arts in the Park
- Music festival
- SPARKcon

Integrate utilities needed to support events:

- Include power supplies at key locations to avoid cables on the ground.
- Include lighting for special events, with consideration for aesthetics and ambiance of events.
- Provide WiFi access.
- Provide PA and sound system for announcements and music.
- Design structurally sound, level areas for tents, stage and seating.
- Include vehicular access for vendors and set up.
- Include accessible permanent restroom facilities.

During events, a wheeled train could help shuttle people from parking, nearby destinations, neighborhoods and downtown. A wheeled train could also provide tours of the park, greenway and other destinations.

John Chavis Memorial Park 75th Anniversary Celebration

Operations

Promote sustainability in park design and maintenance to create a beautiful, clean, safe and welcoming environment.

Park operations will promote sustainable design and maintenance; economic; sustainability; accessibility; safe; well-maintained spaces; and effective marketing to increase visitors, activities and funding.

Specific recommendations include:

1. Incorporate sustainable design and maintenance practices.

- Incorporate green building techniques.
- Select recycled or recyclable materials.
- Reuse materials and features found on site.
- Promote energy and water conservation, such as solar-powered ceiling fans in picnic shelters.
- Retain existing trees as much as possible.
- Select plants that are native or adapted to the area.
- Incorporate low impact development techniques.

2. Ensure park features and programs are economically viable over the longterm.

- Differentiate park from others in the service area to avoid duplicating park features.
- Plan for adaptation and flexibility over time as park users and needs change.

3. Ensure park programs remain accessible to all residents.

- Ensure fees are affordable and consistent with municipal guidelines.
- Include park on public transportation routes, including the R-Line.
- Provide job training and employment opportunities for young adults from adjacent neighborhoods.

4. Maintain the park so that it is clean, green and beautiful year round.

- Incorporate seasonal plantings.
- Foster community ownership and stewardship of the park.
- Involve the community in planting and maintenance activities.
- Improve aesthetics at all park entrances, especially the Lenoir Street entrance.

OPERATIONS

Specific recommendations include (continued):

5. Promote safe spaces in park design and maintenance.

- Ensure paths, plazas, buildings and parking areas are well lit.
- Maintain “eyes on the street” visibility throughout the park and avoid creating isolated areas.
- Promote use of the entire park.
- Promote community stewardship of the park (like community watch).

6. Market the park to increase visitors, activity and funding sources.

- Market the park as a destination park for Raleigh residents and tourists.
- Market the park as a 21st Century park, which could include a John Chavis Memorial Park app and promoting the use of state of the art technology such as in honoring the past elements and in the Community Center.
- Raise awareness of the park as an asset in downtown venues.
- Include the park in larger celebrations of African-American history and culture in Raleigh.
- Identify corporate sponsors to help implement the Revised Master Plan.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Revised Master Plan calls for a comprehensive transformation and revitalization of John Chavis Memorial Park. Implementation of this tremendous investment will be guided by the adopted revised master plan. Staff of the department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources and the consultant team will engage the Public Leadership Group and the community, including youth, as recommendations are refined during early Schematic Design. Once Schematic Design is complete, construction of the full Master Plan will need to be sequenced over several funding phases based on approved bond measures and City-wide capital budget cycles. As construction begins, the vision will start to come to life. This section describes phasing considerations, community engagement recommendations and a preliminary cost estimate to guide implementation of the plan.

Adoption Sequence and Phasing Considerations

The Revised Master Plan will be presented to the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) at a regularly scheduled meeting. Public input can be provided in writing and brief verbal comments. At the following PRGAB meeting, Board members discuss the master plan and can provide their comments and recommendation on the Draft Plan for consideration by City Council. City Council will review the Draft Plan and PRGAB and public comments as part of their approval process. Once adopted by City Council, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department intends to move into the Schematic Design phase with a consultant team to refine the details for each of the master plan recommendations, including size, location and materials of the many new improvements. With currently available funding Schematic Design will begin in summer 2014 and is typically a 12-month process.

Funding for final design and construction of the first phase of implementation will be requested during Schematic Design. The timing of phased implementation and construction can be influenced by many factors. Considerations include the amount of funds available, staff resources, site conditions, codes, regulations, community support and other factors. In the interim, some recommendations in the Master Plan may be accomplished prior to the completion of the Schematic Design phase. For example, as early as spring 2014, the city will begin pilot vegetation management activities along the creek conservation area.

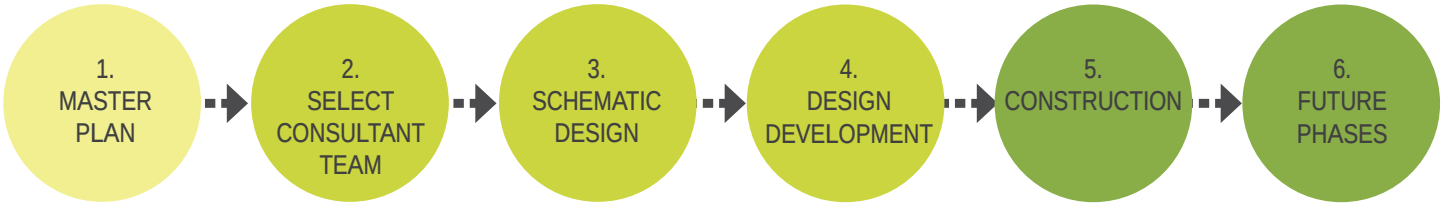
Schematic Design

Schematic design establishes the general scope, scale and relationships among the program components identified in the Master Plan. The schematic design carries the project to the level of detail required to identify any critical issue not covered in the Master Plan. The objective is to develop a clearly defined, feasible concept while exploring the most promising alternative design solutions.

Community Engagement

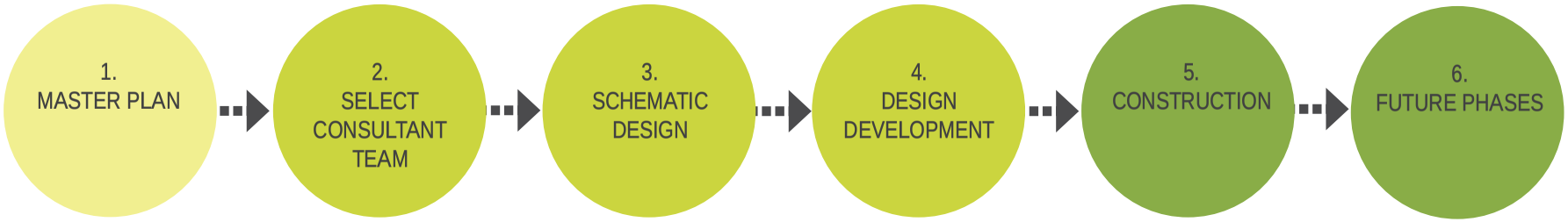
The Public Leadership Group has served the community for nearly two years in developing the Revised Master Plan. This effort required great commitment, including a day-long retreat, two public forums, 14 monthly meetings, park tours, community outreach and educational presentations from Subject Matter Experts on the many facets of the park's history and future possibilities. With the adoption of the Master Plan, the PLG will have reached a significant milestone.

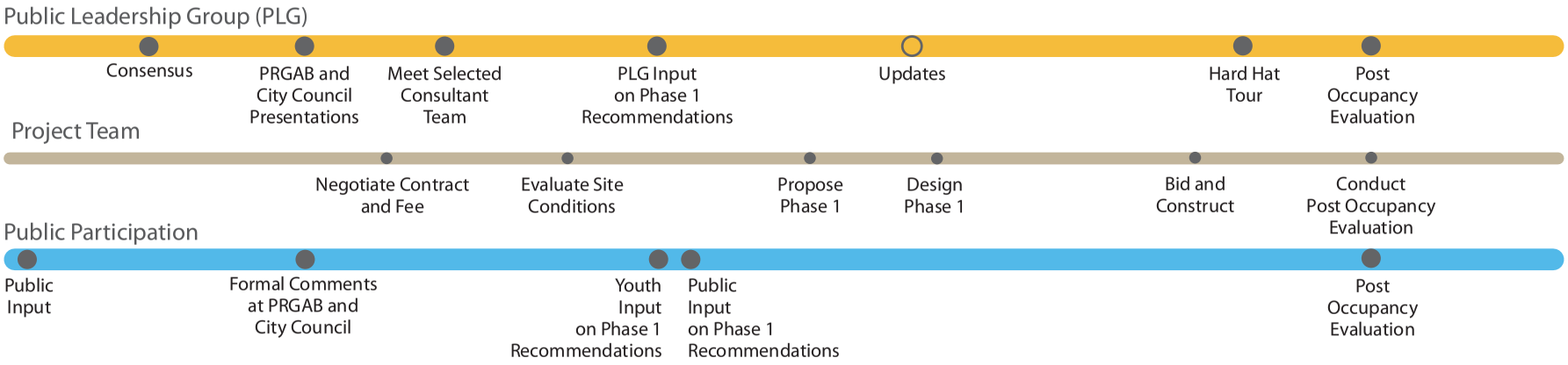
At this juncture, the PLG will transition into a less intensive, but nevertheless critical role of providing review and input during the Schematic Design phase. The selected design consultant team will engage the PLG as a first step to understand the intent of the Master Plan and the significance of the project. Design discussions may be supplemented with the Subject Matter Experts as needed to ensure relevant background is considered in the proposed preliminary design features. The consultants will present the Schematic Design to the community in a format and fashion that is easily visualized and understood. An emphasis on youth input will be part of the public engagement process during this stage. In addition, the City will provide community updates at events, through project newsletters and web sites as appropriate.



Project sequence overview

Project sequence diagram





- Consensus by PLG
- Present to PRGAB & City Council

- Request for Qualifications
- Council approves consultant team
- Negotiate and execute contract

- Evaluate site conditions
- Examine master plan and cost estimate
- Propose Phase 1
- Engage youth, PLG
- Public Review Meeting
- Incorporate/respond to public feedback

- Amend contract (Council)
- Design Phase 1
- Develop construction drawings, specs, bid package
- Apply codes, permits, etc.
- Public outreach

- Public bids
- Contract award (Council)
- Execute contract
- Construction
- Public outreach

- Conduct Post Occupancy Evaluation
- Plan for future phases

Budget Estimates for Master Plan Elements

This portion of the Master Plan provides budget estimates for the elements described within the narrative recommendations. Construction costs can be influenced by many factors including type of material, current labor market, environmental requirements, and space constraints. In addition, cost estimates may change significantly during schematic design as specific details, size, materials and locations for each element are confirmed. There is a price range associated with each item. To stay current these cost estimates need to be regularly refined and updated throughout the phases of park development.

Additional funds will be required for unknown site conditions and the addition of artistic elements within park projects. The City of Raleigh's Half Percent for Art ordinance provides funding for opportunities to include public art in the City's capital projects, and could be considered here. Community fundraising and improvement programs should also be considered, for special elements to enhance the uniqueness of each phase.

DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

(Development of guidelines for basic elements to provide direction and continuity in the development and management of John Chavis Memorial Park as the revised Master Plan is realized in phases over the coming years)	$8,000 - 12,000

PARK FACILITIES

Aquatics Center *(New building, outdoor aquatics facility, parking)*	$10,000,000 - 17,000,000
Community Center *(New building, restroom access, parking)*	$7,000,000 – 12,000,000
Original Carousel Building *(Adaptive rehabilitation of the building)*	$250,000 – 750,000

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Trails and Plaza	
• Central Trail (from War Mother's Memorial to MLK Jr. Blvd./Chavis Way intersection) *(Vehicular grade trail, furnishings, lighting, art/entry signage)*	$250,000 – 500,000
• Central Plaza *(paving, landscaping, lighting, sound, power, furnishings)*	$20,000 – 50,000
• Western Trail *(new and enhanced trails, furnishings, lighting, signage at Worth St. and Cape Ave.)*	$100,000 – 250,000
• Entry Plaza and Trail *(trail from parking lot, furnishings, art, lighting)*	$20,000 - 50,000
New Vehicular Park Entrance *(moving park entrance from Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to Chavis Way, new entrance, signage and lighting)*	$125,000 – 150,000
New Cape Avenue Bridge over Little Rock Creek *(Bridge, support walls, art and access walks)*	$40,000 – 100,000
Tunnel Improvements *(Vegetation clearing, lighting, signage, art)*	$75,000 - 200,000
Wheeled Train *(vehicle and storage building)*	$250,000 - 500,000

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural Heritage Interpretative Plan	
• Plan outlining themes and events to honor and how to do that through signage and public art	$8,000 – 15,000
Heritage Plan Implementation	
• Heritage Plaza *(New paving, new/restored stone walls, furnishings, signage, landscaping)*	$200,000 – 300,000
• Heritage signage, interpretive exhibits and art	$500,000 - 1,000,000
Replica Plane *(WWII replica plane to commemorate the community's contribution to the war)*	$300,000 - 500,000

Where indicated, furnishings may include benches, shade structures, drinking fountains, trash receptacles, and bike racks. All grading, paving and structures would include appropriate drainage and stormwater management features.

SPORTS AND PLAY

Eastern Play Corridor	
• Play corridor *(New hybrid play equipment/areas, paving, rubber surfacing, lighting, seating, picnic tables, shade structures and other furnishings, landscaping)*	$300,000 - 500,000
• Climbing structure	$40,000 – 80,000
• Amusement ride(s) *(Motorized or non-motorized amusement ride such as a miniaturized train on a track or other similar attraction for youth)*	$60,000 – 200,000
• Interactive water feature/sprayground	$250,000 – 500,000
• Outdoor performance space *(Stone step amphitheater)*	$30,000 - 75,000
• Restored terrracing stone work	$10,000 - 50,000
• Restroom and Café Concession	$120,000 – 500,000
Western Play Corridor	
• Landscaping, signage, paving furnishings and lighting	$750,000 - 1,000,000
• Upgrade picnic shelters #1 and #2	$150,000 - 350,000
• New picnic shelter	$100,000 - 150,000
• Fitness zones	$75,000 - 150,000
• Pocket play areas	$50,000 - 150,000
• Linear skate spots	$75,000 - 150,000
• Terraced seating along Cape Ave	$20,000 - 50,000
Enhanced Field and Track	
• Enhanced field and track	$575,000 - 750,000
• Sports lighting	$175,000 - 250,000
• Trackside spectator seating	$20,000 - 170,000
New Courts (adult and youth sized)	
• New multipurpose courts (2) with spectator seating	$60,000 - 100,000
• New tennis courts with seating (4)	$85,000 - 170,000

OPEN SPACE AND CREEK

Landscape Development Plan *(A guide for future landscape design and improvements)*	$5,000 - 10,000
Creek Management Plan *(Plan development and phase one installation)*	$5,000 - 25,000
Creek Overlooks *(Decks, landscaping and signage)*	$30,000 - 50,000
Creek Stewardship Zones *(Vegetation thinning, replanting with natives, interpretative signage and stepping stone crossing)*	$50,000 - 100,000

Phasing and Recommended Priorities

As part of the Master Plan process, the Public Leadership Group recommended priorities for implementation. The PLG prioritized elements within each major category and also prioritized among the categories. It was discussed and generally understood that improvements would need to be phased over time. Priorities are summarized on this page and next for reference. These priorities reflect what is most important to the community and can inform the Schematic Design phase.

PRIORITIES WITHIN EACH CATEGORY

New Facilities

1. New Community Center
2. Adaptive rehabilitation of Original Carousel Building
3. New Aquatics Center

Sports Facilities

1. Enhanced Track and Field (with lighting and spectator seating)
2. New Courts (adult and youth sized tennis and multi-purpose)

Improved Circulation and Access

1. Central Trail (from War Mother's Memorial to Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.) and Plaza
2. New Vehicular Park Entrance (moving from Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to Chavis Way) and Entry Plaza
3. Wheeled Train
4. New Cape Avenue Bridge over Little Rock Creek
5. Tunnel Improvements under Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Event Space

1. Central Plaza
   (paving, landscaping, lighting, sound, power, furnishings)
2. Heritage Plaza
   - Cultural Heritage Interpretative Plan
   - Plaza
     (new paving, new/restored stone walls, furnishings, signage, landscaping, heritage signage, interpretive exhibits and art)

Play and Open Space

1. Eastern Play Corridor
   - Play corridor
     (New hybrid play equipment/areas, paving, rubber surfacing, lighting, seating, picnic tables, shade structures, other furnishings, landscaping, restored stone terracing, concessions and restrooms)
   - Climbing structure, amusement ride, interactive water feature/sprayground, outdoor performance space, stone step amphitheater
2. Replica Plane
3. Western Corridor and Trail
   - Western trail
     (new and enhanced trails, furnishings, lighting)
   - Landscaping, signage, paving, furnishings, lighting
   - Upgrade picnic shelters 1 and 2
   - New picnic shelter
   - Fitness zones and pocket play zones, linear skate spots
4. Creek Management Plan and Implementation
   - Management Plan
   - Creek Overlooks
     (decks, landscaping and signage)
   - Creek Stewardship Zones
     (vegetation thinning, replanting with natives, interpretative signage and stepping stone crossing)

PRIORITIZATION AMONG THE CATEGORIES

1. New Facilities
   (Community Center, Aquatics Center, Original Carousel Building)
2. Sports Facilities
   (track, field, courts)
3. Play, Creek and Open Space
   (play corridors, creek management)
4. Event Space
   (Heritage Plaza, Central Plaza)
5. Improved Circulation and Access
   (trails, bridge, wheeled train, new vehicular entrance)

RALEIGH Parks, Recreation *and* Cultural Resources

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