

## John Chavis Memorial Park Public Engagement Opportunities

- 1) **Public Leadership Meetings: 17.** 9 Formal PLG meetings; 1 Group Retreat/Training; 1 Parks Tour; 3 Optional Working Group Meetings, 1 Celebration of adopted Master Plan; 1 PLG introduction to the Strategic Implementation Study Project; 1 PLG Check-in Meeting during Implementation Study
- 2) **Public Meeting/Engagement Opportunities: 16, so far.** 10 Community Conversation, 4 for Strategic Implementation Study  
Remaining Meetings:
  - Study Acceptance by City Council, June 21, 2016
  - 3 Community Meetings for Phase 1 Schematic Design
  - 2 Public meetings for Design Review and Acceptance by PRGAB and City Council
- 3) **Central CAC: 15 reports by Project Staff, so far.** 9 for Community Conversation, 4 for Implementation Study  
In addition, continuous project updates at monthly Central CAC meeting and newsletters provided by CAC Chair Reports and City staff.
- 4) **Other public engagement opportunities:**
  - Up to date Project Webpage (official platform for information)
  - Continuous process overview and meeting notices posted at Chavis Community Center and Top Greene Centers
  - Press Releases for all Public Meetings – resulting in the Implementation Study making front page of Triangle Tribune three times (most recent 5/29/16) and front page of N&O
  - Purchased advertisements in The Carolinian and Triangle Tribune, most recently bought color ads for the 2/16/16 final public review session
  - Continual updates (email and phone calls) to all Public Leadership Group members during Community Conversation and Strategic Implementation Study stages
  - Outreach materials, including posters and yard signage, provided to PLG members throughout project
  - Raleigh Email Subscription Service (continuous email updates during project to 250 subscribers, last sent on 6/6/16)
  - Post cards distributed to nearby residents - ½ mile radius used on 9/23/15 to 1200 households
  - Hard Copy Meeting Notice, by traditional mail, to Community Conversation and Implementation Study participants who suggested mailing address as best contact, last done on 2/4/16 to 54 past participants
  - Overview and Meeting Postcards distributed to 7 Neighborhood/Community Centers, most recently for each of the 3 public review sessions of 2015-2016
  - Regular reports to the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (coordinated by board members who also served on the PLG)
  - Presentations to South Central CAC at various milestones, latest presentation given 8/24/15 (Note: A portion of the park is within SC CAC)
  - Implementation Study Table/Staff Presence at Chavis Celebrates Event
  - Historic Designation Process Outreach – community stakeholder interviews, 2 community meetings
  - 2 Shaw “UpFront” Radio Interviews with city staff and community representatives, most recently broadcast on 2/13/16 on WSHA 88.9
  - Raleigh Television Network coverage and interviews during process, most recently taped the final public review session on 2/16/16



222 W. Hargett Street, Suite 601  
Raleigh, NC 27602  
(919) 996-3285

DATE: May 27, 2016

TO: City Manager Office

FROM: Matthew Keough, Senior Planner

CC: Diane Sauer, Director, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources

SUBJECT: Council Agenda Item for 6/21/16:  
Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board Recommendation of  
John Chavis Memorial Park Strategic Implementation Study

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The John Chavis Memorial Park Strategic Implementation Study presents recommendations for the park's development, and specifically for an impactful, cohesive, and pragmatic Phase 1 development scope.

Begun in July 2015, the study included three official community meetings and a check-in session with the Public Leadership Group who established the community-consensus behind the park master plan adopted by Council in May 2014. The Park, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board took public input on the study at their April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting and then recommended acceptance on May 19<sup>th</sup>. The Schematic Design process for Phase 1 will include additional public meetings later this year.

The attached Executive Summary provides an overview of the planned Phase 1 improvements which include a new Community Center and Central Plaza intended to activate the core of the park. An Opinion of Probable Costs is included on the final page, reflecting optimal use of 2014 bond allocation intended for redevelopment of this park. The full study, available to the public since February, captures the public process and input to date. Also attached, please find a listing of the public outreach to date on this project.

**Recommendation:**

- Accept the Implementation Study's Phase 1 Recommendations and Park Development Strategies. Authorize staff to proceed with Schematic Design.

Please call on me directly if I can be of assistance with your preparations for this item at (919) 996-2654 or [Matthew.Keough@raleighnc.gov](mailto:Matthew.Keough@raleighnc.gov).

# Strategic Implementation Study

Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources  
Clearscapes  
Skeo Solutions  
Surface 678  
Mary Ruffin Hanbury  
Kofi Boone  
Calyx

# John Chavis Memorial Park

June 21, 2016



# John Chavis Memorial Park

This is the Executive Summary of the Strategic Implementation Study. The full study includes detailed sections on each of the primary features of the master plan (New Facilities, Sports Facilities, Play Creek and Open Space, Event Space, and Improved Circulation and Access) as well as a Reference section with meeting summaries, public feedback, and additional study material.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NEW FACILITIES

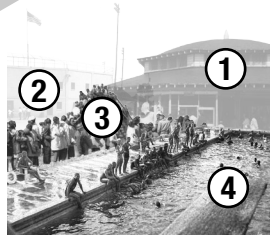
SPORTS FACILITIES

PLAY, CREEK and OPEN SPACE

EVENT SPACE

IMPROVED CIRCULATION and ACCESS

REFERENCE



① Original Carousel Building (1950's)  
Source unknown

② Grandstand and Stadium Entrance  
Courtesy of Lewis Watson

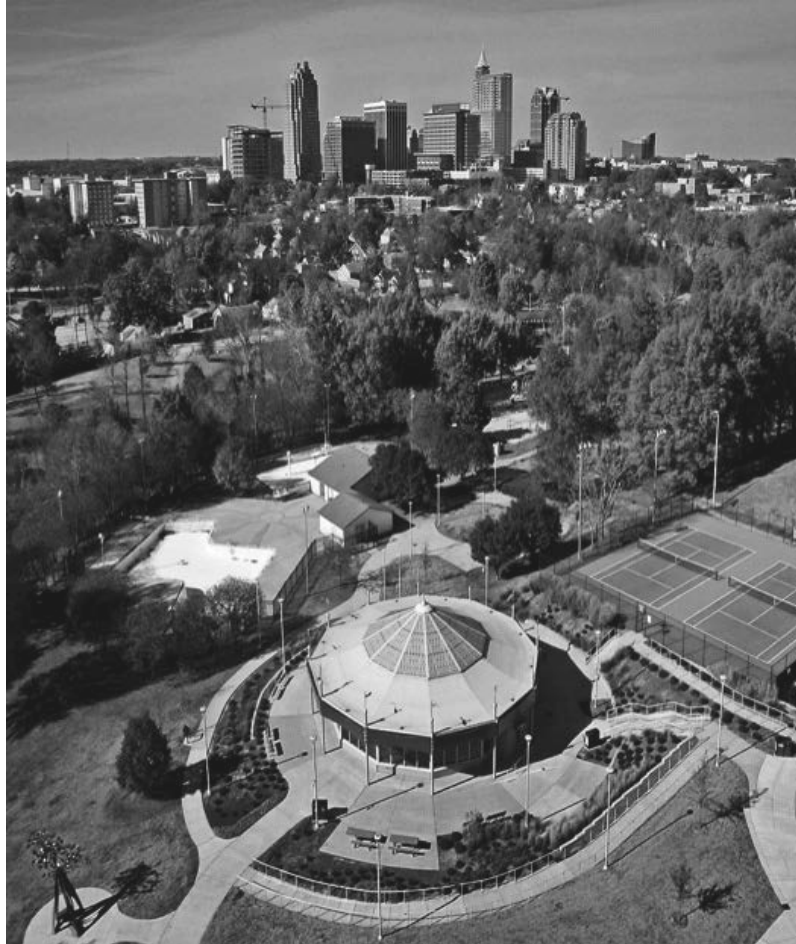
③ Chavis Park Train (April, 1959)  
Source unknown

④ Olympic Pool (1930's)  
Courtesy of Ms. Esther Delaney

# 2014 Master Plan Vision

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## The John Chavis Memorial Park Master Plan Vision Statement



Aerial view of John Chavis Memorial Park, courtesy of Lift Aerial Marketing , LLC

*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.*

# Strategic Implementation Plan

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

A bold vision for John Chavis Memorial Park was born out of a community consensus building process begun in May 2012 to “honor our past, plan for the future”. Approved by the Raleigh City Council in May 2014, the John Chavis Memorial Park Master Plan now challenges all stakeholders on how to best develop the park. The Strategic Implementation Study is the bridge from the Park Vision to the beginning of Schematic Design. The purpose of this study is to confirm - and, at times, refine - the assumptions and aspirations within the adopted Master Plan, as well as to uncover additional opportunities and challenges that may impact their implementation. The study has been comprised of four related tasks:

#### **Identify successful examples of related park features envisioned by the community**

The study has considered dozens of other parks across the country that share key similarities with John Chavis Memorial Park - urban parks, destination parks, historic community parks, parks that help to tell the African-American story, and parks that have undergone phased transformations.

#### **Address challenges and opportunities to meet the goals of the Park Master Plan**

The core of the study has been a technical planning and programming analysis to help maximize the impact of the Master Plan design concepts while ensuring that they may be implemented in a responsible and sustainable manner. Study conclusions vary in detail for different areas of the park:

- Areas recommended for Phase 1 have been studied in more detail and include more specific design and program recommendations to address challenges or enhance the adopted Master Plan.
- For areas of future work, the study recognizes that community needs and desires may change over time and that recreational and cultural opportunities in downtown are evolving. In these cases, the study identifies potential challenges and opportunities that will need to be addressed and provides a range of considerations to be evaluated based on the community needs and context at the time those areas are funded.

#### **Propose Phase 1 improvements within the \$12.5 million bond budget**

A primary point of emphasis has been the evaluation of different potential combinations of park amenities that appropriately balance a broad range of important considerations:

- Consistency with the adopted Master Plan priorities
- Adequate scale to have a meaningful impact for the community and park users, but also compact enough to be cohesive and achievable within the currently available funding
- Possibility of logical construction sequencing during both Phase 1 and future phases while maintaining access to critical park amenities

#### **Plan for the long-term development and operation of the park**

Looking ahead, it is important to understand John Chavis Memorial Park as both a community anchor providing needed services for the surrounding neighborhood as well as one of several destination parks providing broader cultural and recreational opportunities for downtown. Developing a sustainable, long-term approach to achieving the aspirations in the adopted Master Plan is dependent upon balancing both of these aspects of the park.

## Public Process

The Strategic Implementation Study process has been structured to continuously balance technical planning and programming analysis with ongoing public engagement. The schedule for the study was organized around a series of public events in which the community was invited to review and share feedback at each step during the study:

**Public Kickoff Meeting 1 (July 30, 2015):** Share feedback on related park precedents from around the country

**Public Meeting 2 (October 01, 2015):** Provide input on potential site plan refinements and preferences for specific park elements

**Public Leadership Group (PLG) Meeting (October 28, 2015):** Detailed review of potential site plan refinements

**Public Meeting 3 (December 7, 2015):** Provide input on revised potential site plan refinements and on potential Phase 1 scope

**Public Meeting 4 (February 16, 2016):** Provide input on recommended site plan refinements and on revised potential Phase 1 scope

**Park, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board Meetings (April 21 / May 19, 2016):** Public testimony received before, during, and after the April 21 meeting, followed by Board deliberations before recommendations to Raleigh City Council

**City Council Meeting (June 21, 2016):** Summary TBD

At each meeting, attendees were asked to record their feedback on the presentation boards and/or on individual comment cards. All written comments received were compiled and are included in this report in the summaries for each meeting in Appendices A-E

Following each public meeting, the project team evaluated the public feedback received for opportunities to improve the proposed refinements. Working from the adopted Master Plan priorities and within the context of related technical and budgetary constraints, public feedback directly influenced the updated refinements presented at subsequent meetings. The impact of public feedback on the Strategic Implementation Study may be traced through the evolution that occurred over the course of the study to both the proposed site plan refinements as well as the proposed Phase 1 scope.

The following Phase 1 Recommendations and the Park Development Strategies advance the 2014 Park Master Plan that was adopted by the Raleigh City Council in May 2014, particularly the community consensus-based Concept Plan and Priorities (pages 22, and 62-63 of that document). Each of the high level conclusions of the study is presented below in the context of public feedback and budget implications, as explored during the 8-month study period.



View of Public Meeting 3, courtesy of Clearscapes

## Phase 1 Recommendations

1) The single highest priority in the 2014 Park Master Plan is a new Community Center. This study recognizes this primary improvement as a means to activate a central core area for the park. It recommends a two-story building, built into the hillside to maximize park space, with overlooks of the park, creek and downtown Raleigh, and with easy access to both levels of the park: the track and field at the upper level and the Carousel Plaza/Central Plaza/Play Corridor at the lower level. Responding to public feedback, the recommended adjustment to the location of the center will allow the existing center to remain open during Phase 1 construction and to provide supportive facilities like restrooms at both levels of the park that may be designed for access beyond community center operating hours. Programmed to be 50% larger than the existing center, the center will include an air conditioned gymnasium with indoor walking track, marketable rental and programmatic spaces, and an enlarged fitness room that overlooks the track and field area. This amenity is estimated to require 80% of the \$12.5 million bond funds allocated to the park.

2) The core of the park will also be reinvigorated with a Central Plaza, the first of the fully-accessible, highly-functioning, outdoor spaces that will connect amenities and natural features. As an outdoor extension of the new community center, it is strategic from a programming and construction sequencing perspective to construct this plaza in unison with the new center, replacing the existing outdoor pool and bathhouse in that area that have already exceeded their lifecycles. The Central Plaza is the first priority item among multipurpose events spaces in the 2014 Park Master Plan.

Responding to public feedback, the Central Plaza is to be designed to accommodate year-round activities. The plaza meets the 2014 Park Master Plan's recommendations for community-gathering and event space, with electricity, water, amphitheater seating, integrated sound and lighting for performances, festivals, and food trucks. This amenity is estimated to require 10-15% of the allocated bond funds.

3) While the new Community Center and Central Plaza will activate the core of the park, there is a need to re-invest in the park's historic gathering areas which lack basic amenities such as restrooms, water fountains, electricity, and lighting. The study focuses infrastructure improvements in the Original Carousel Building, specifically: 1) stabilization and conditioning of the building shell and 2) installation of: windows around the entire building, heating and cooling systems, and restrooms that meet code requirements for the range of potential future uses identified for the building. The adaptive reuse of the Original Carousel Building is the second highest priority in the 2014 Park Master Plan which calls for a range of potential uses there including a cafe, historic exhibit space, and flexible music and event venue. This first step will result in unique programmable and rental space within the Original Carousel Building. The recommended restroom design, mostly tucked into a vestibule for the building, limits impacts to the historic structure and surrounding grounds which are the most historically intact portion of the park. The restrooms may be designed with both internal and external access to also serve the adjacent playground and historic picnic shelters. Additional infrastructure will include sinks and counter space to support events, rentals, and community-managed snack and drink sales.

Responding to public feedback received over the course of the study, annual capital improvement funds, in addition to the bond funds, were prioritized to ensure strategic infrastructure enhancements are installed here in Phase 1. Public Art funding was also identified to substantially contribute to historic interpretation, as anticipated in the Heritage Plaza area. It is equally important that enhancements in this area advance the recommendations of South Park East Raleigh Neighborhood's (SPERNA) South Park Heritage Walk community initiative. The public request for more specialized functions such as dedicated food service and standalone restrooms is beyond the Phase 1 strategic focus on multipurpose spaces. However, these interests will be continually pursued, especially with future funding opportunities and expected increases in park activity levels.



## Park Development Strategies

As called for in the 2014 Park Master Plan, the study works to ensure a balance between community-oriented and city-destination aspects of the park. Phase 1 improvements are purposely multi-use spaces able to accommodate a broad range of activities to activate the core of the park. Looking beyond the core area, future amenities become more specialized, such as the athletics and amusements. Balancing the roles and scope of these items will require ongoing evaluation, especially in the context of future conditions and needs among area parks and facilities. Scale and function strategies for the following critical improvements will be key to the successful implementation of the 2014 Park Master Plan: A) Aquatic Center, B) Amusements, C) Enhanced Track and Field

Looking ahead, it will be critical to evaluate future phases of John Chavis Memorial Park (JCMP) in the context of all parks at the downtown periphery, with each understood to be an independent community park as well as part of a broader interconnected and coordinated strategy for destination recreation, culture, and history for downtown Raleigh and beyond. To be successful, each of these parks must be singular - each should celebrate and be designed around their most unique qualities without replicating the character or destination features of their neighbors. Similarly, as evidenced by exploding interest in greenways, bike share, and other alternative paths and modes of transportation, it must be understood that the connections between destinations are as much a part of the user experience as the destinations themselves. Special consideration should be given to developing a signature path or connection between all these parks so that they may be viewed and experienced collectively, with shared resources and experiences for the citizens of Raleigh.

**A)** The study outlines development strategies regarding the function and location of the future Aquatic Center. As described with both indoor and outdoor pools, it would be the City's most significant aquatic center - on par with regional destination attractions. On the other hand, it is identified in the 2014 Park Master Plan as one of several features, not a primary feature. The study determined the envisioned facility would require 2-3 times more parking than shown on the Concept Plan and would eliminate other planned features such as athletic courts.

Responding to public feedback to maintain the park's planned amenities, the study recommends that the indoor and outdoor pools be consolidated within the Aquatic Center, which itself may be designed to open seasonably to the outdoors. Secondly, outdoor water play is recommended in the Central Plaza design in Phase 1, in concert with the closure of the existing outdoor pool.

**B)** The desired second Amusement needs to be carefully programmed and located to complement the park's attractions and provide the enticing "wow moment attraction." The recommended location will allow co-ticketing and programming with the existing carousel. In this location, the future amusement may link into the adjacent Play Corridor or function independently, without interrupting the intended open flow and views of the park. Based on relevant amusements across the country, the study includes criteria to help inform the future selection of an appropriate amusement.

Responding to public feedback, the space for the second Amusement is sufficient for a range of amusement types, including an oval track the size of the historic train ride. One of the key



View of Youth Safari at the historic stone steps, courtesy of Skeo Solutions

criteria suggested for the second amusement should be related to the park's unique story and the plan's desire to celebrate movement. Based on future conditions, there may be a need for a destination attraction, not replicated elsewhere. Alternatively, if the park visitation is high, it may be a supporting amenity for people already in the park.

**C)** Refining the Enhanced Field and Track components of the 2014 Park Master Plan presents various outdoor athletic opportunities, as documented in the study. The shift in the Community Center location during the study made more space available at the track level, including the possibility of a future regulation-sized track. While the area cleared from the center and existing hillside will largely be reserved for the future two-story Aquatic Center; the foundation of the existing center

could accommodate temporary, multi-purpose athletic courts. Programming of these courts, between development phases, will ultimately inform the design of anticipated athletic facilities in this area.

Based on the public feedback, the study suggests enhancements to the recreation-oriented track and a new regulation-sized football field within it. Looking ahead, the needs of existing (and potentially new) community partners with a wide range of programming interests should be considered in further design refinements. Tennis courts, though temporarily removed during Phase 1, are expanded in the future per the 2014 Concept Plan and programming recommendations of the study. Between development phases, the on-site multi-purpose courts, along with nearby tennis and aquatic facilities, will be heavily marketed to customary park users.

# 2014 Park Master Plan

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## Overview of the John Chavis Memorial Park Master Plan 2014

The 2014 John Chavis Memorial Park Master Plan was the result of an intensive 18-month public planning process guided by a 16-member Public Leadership Group (PLG). The purpose of the PLG was to build community ownership, guide the process, and build consensus on recommendations for a revised plan. The resulting plan, unanimously adopted by City Council on May 14, 2014, was based on the following goals:

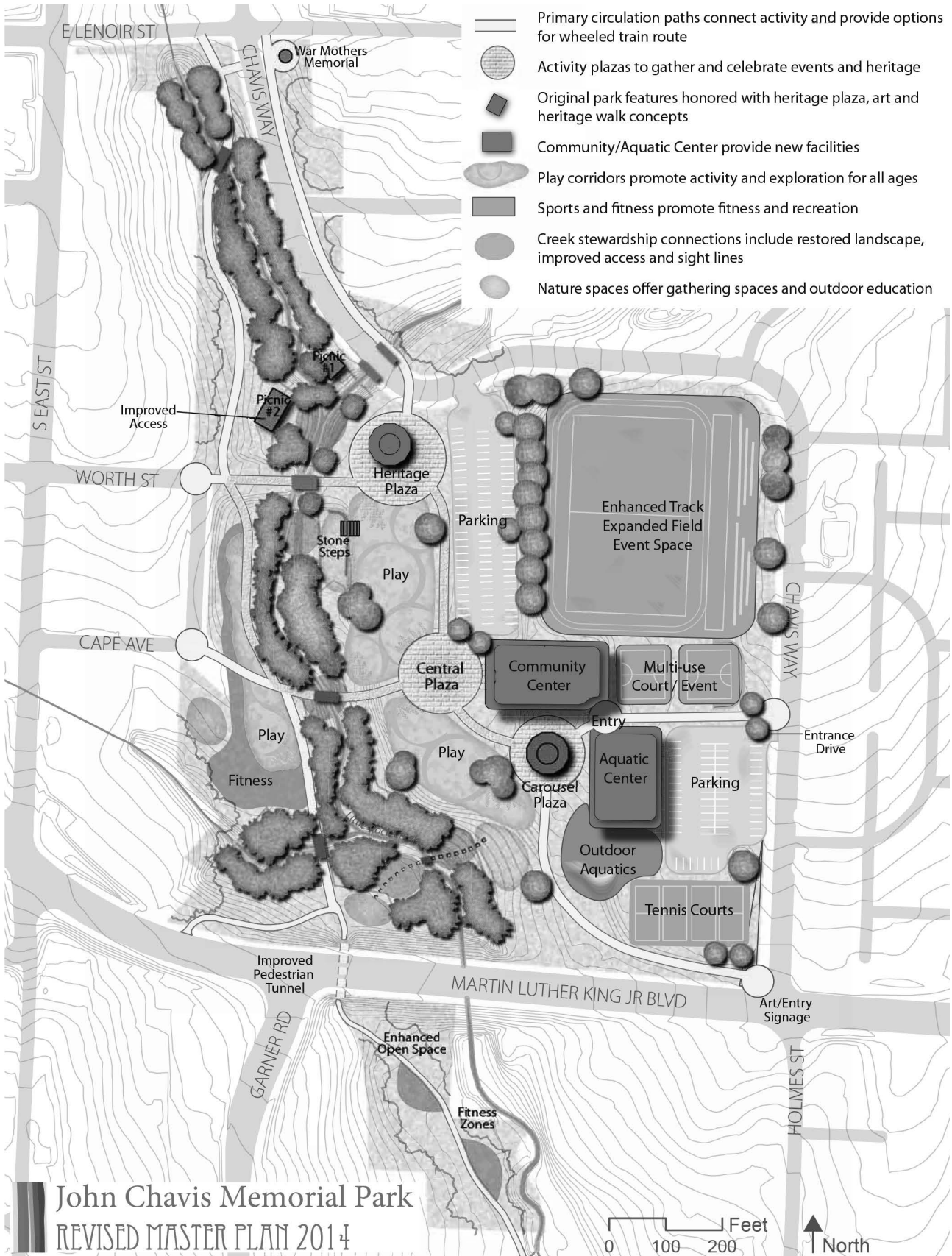
- Honor the life and work of John Chavis, the community's contribution to World War II, and the significance of the park's history to the African-American community.
- Replace the neighborhood pool and Community Center with a larger, enhanced, co-located Aquatic Center and Community Center.
- Expand 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 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.

With the understanding that the vision for the park would need to be completed in phases, the 2014 John Chavis Memorial Park Master Plan outlined the following priorities for implementation:

- 1) New Facilities
  - New Community Center
  - Adaptive rehabilitation of Original Carousel House
  - New Aquatics Center
- 2) Sports Facilities
  - Enhanced Track and Field
  - New Courts
- 3) Play, Creek, and Open Space
  - Eastern Play Corridor
  - Replica Plane
  - Western Corridor and Trail
  - Creek Management Plan and Implementation
- 4) Event Space
  - Central Plaza
  - Heritage Plaza
- 5) Improved Circulation and Access

The adopted master plan, which is the basis for the Strategic Implementation Study, can be downloaded from the City of Raleigh website:

<https://www.raleighnc.gov/content/PRecDesignDevelop/Documents/ParkPlanning/Chavis%20Park%20Community%20Conversation/JCMPMasterPlan.pdf>

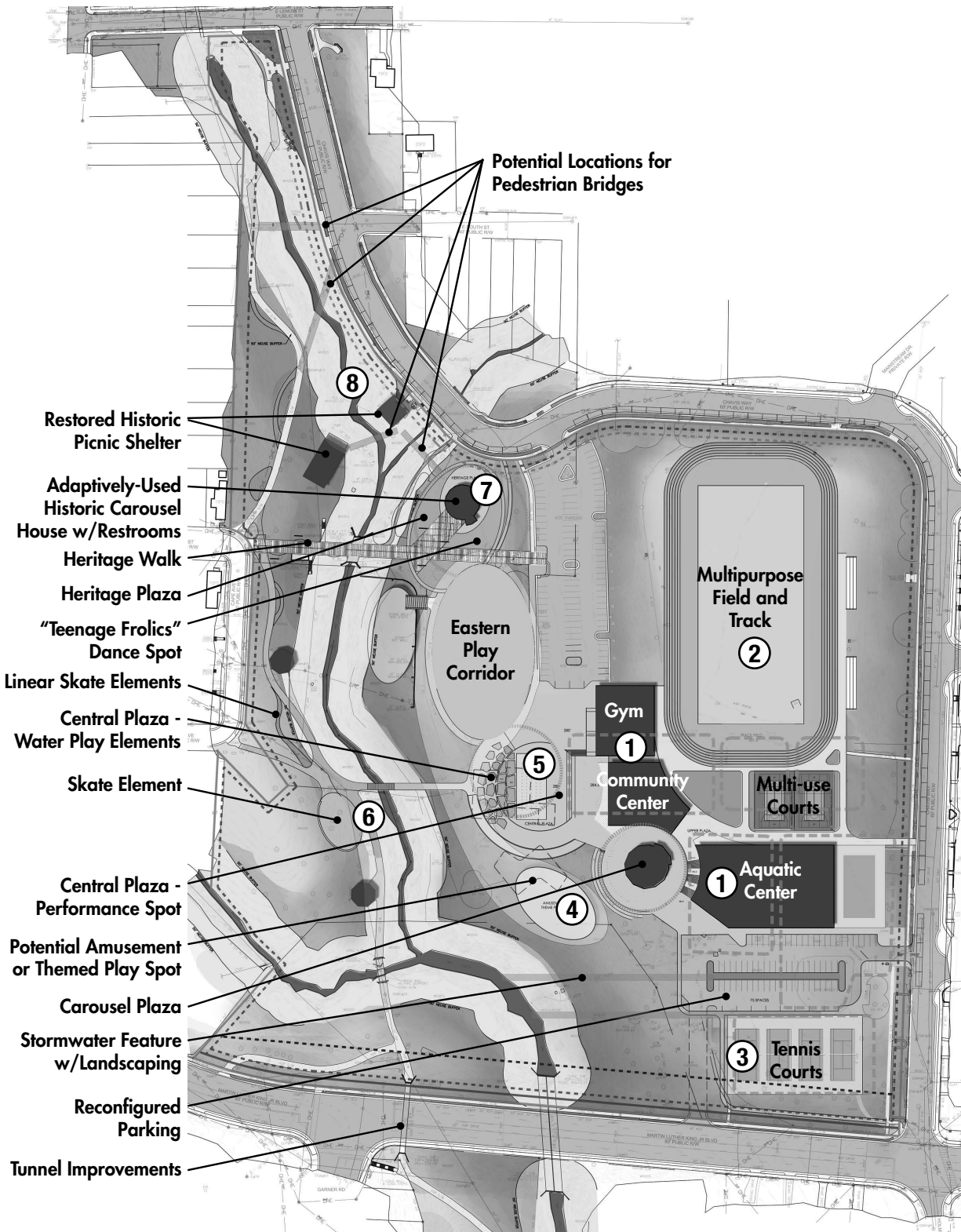


# Concept Plan

## Recommendations

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- ① The adopted master plan calls for a new Community Center and Aquatic Center at the center of the park. Recommended refinements to the orientation of these facilities take advantage of the existing topography, allow for larger plaza and athletic areas, and provide increased connectivity through the site.
- ② The adopted master plan calls for an enlarged field and an improved track and multi-use courts. Based on public interest in the multi-use courts, the alternative for a regulation-track is not carried forward but remains a future option if community needs and desires change.
- ③ The adopted master plan calls for tennis courts and parking fronting Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Based on public interest in the expanded tennis courts, they are carried forward, subject to final programming and parking needs for the Aquatic Center
- ④ The adopted master plan calls for a location for a potential second amusement to be determined. The recommended location is co-located with the existing carousel to allow for joint ticketing and to create an opportunity for a highly-visible ‘wow’ moment from Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd (as called for in the plan and depending upon the amusement selected).
- ⑤ The adopted master plan calls for the Central Plaza to be developed as a flexible event and gathering space. Recommended refinements include the enlargement of the plaza, introduction of water play features, a convertible ice skating amenity (if funding permits), and power and water connections between the plaza and north parking to accommodate food trucks.
- ⑥ The adopted master plan calls for distributed skateboard elements in the Western Play Corridor. Recommended refinements include carrying forward the distributed skateboard elements with the introduction of a larger node (potentially with some integrated amphitheater seating) adjacent to the future Central Plaza bridge to accommodate older, more experienced skaters while allowing for some visual oversight from the plaza and building.
- ⑦ The adopted master plan calls for the Original Carousel Building to be adaptively used to accommodate a retro café, historic exhibit space, music and/or flexible event space within the building and surrounding plaza. Recommendations include an initial stabilization of the historic shell as a fully-conditioned, flexible multi-use space with two mens and two womens restrooms to allow for a range of uses and potentially allow for short-term restroom access for the historic picnic shelters or play areas. The stabilization should be designed to allow graceful evolution to a cafe or other more specialized use in the future.
- ⑧ The adopted master plan calls for improving visibility and physical access across the creek. Recommendations include coordinating with ongoing State and City efforts to replace aging infrastructure to evaluate options for adding and/or relocating pedestrian crossings at the north end of the park to improve access to and between the picnic shelters and/or for the greenway trail.



# Phase 1 Scope Recommendations

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The recommended scope for Phase 1 seeks to balance the goals and priorities outlined in the adopted master plan, community feedback received during the study process, recognized best practices for park design and programming, and the opportunities and challenges unique to this existing site.

Phase 1 is focused on increasing park visitation and activity levels by activating the heart of the park. This approach will provide some of the ‘wow’ elements desired by the community and address a number of deficiencies in basic amenities, while preserving the flexibility to allow the more specialized amenities that surround the core to evolve as needed, with recreational and athletic interests.

Recommended Phase 1 amenities target flexible, multi-use spaces that can accommodate the broadest possible range of programs, activities, and events for the park:

① The new Community Center is the single highest priority in the adopted master plan and is the basis for Phase 1.

- Operationally, the study recommends continued operation of the existing center until the new building is completed.

② The Central Plaza is integrated with the design of the new Community Center and will be the primary outdoor gathering and event space in the heart of the park.

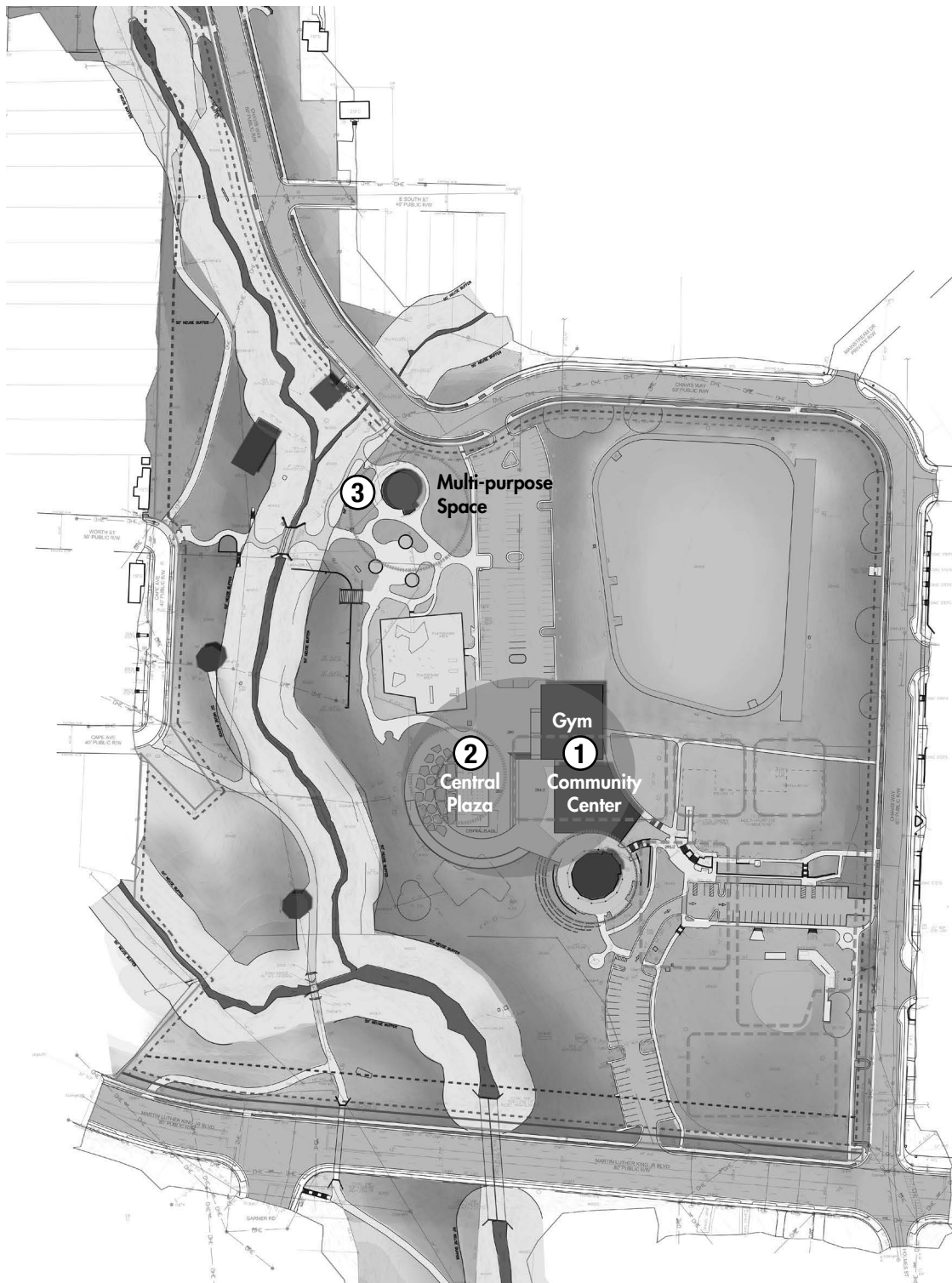
- Operationally, the study recommends incorporating water play features into the design of the plaza to provide continued water play opportunities during Phase 1.

③ The adaptive reuse of the Original Carousel Building is the second highest priority in the adopted master plan.

- Operationally, the study recommends renovation to provide a flexible, multi-use program and event space during Phase 1 that may be further adapted in the future as additional funding and activity levels permit.

Of the additional potential scope items considered (Eastern Play Corridor, Restoration of Historic Picnic Shelters, Temporary Courts), the Play Corridor is recommended as the most impactful of the options. It is expected to generate the highest visitation rate of the options, will serve neighborhood residents and visitors alike, and will create a more cohesive heart of the park.







# Opinion of Probable Cost

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	Low End	High End
<b>CONSTRUCTION BUDGET</b>	<b>\$10,500,000</b>	<b>\$11,100,000</b>
New Community Center	\$8,700,000	\$9,500,000
Central Plaza	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000
Carousel House Reuse	\$300,000	\$400,000
Site Infrastructure	\$500,000	\$750,000
<b>PHASE 1 BASE SCOPE</b>	<b>\$10,500,000</b>	<b>\$12,650,000</b>
<b>PHASE 1 POTENTIAL ADDS</b>		
Eastern Play Corridor	\$800,000	\$1,200,000
Historic Picnic Shelters	\$250,000	\$325,000
Temporary Courts	\$50,000	\$100,000

The proposed scope for Phase 1 is ambitious and will require careful program, scope, and design choices during the design process in order to remain within the limits of currently available funding. This is compounded by the fact that the current construction climate is highly volatile and is trending upwards. The preliminary Opinion of Probable Cost is based on current market rates for current and recently-completed projects of related scope and scale:

- 1) The Community Center includes a +/- 30,000sf, two-story building, including a full gymnasium w/ elevated walking track.
- 2) The Central Plaza includes a 40,000+ sf plaza area with integrated water play features and a convertible ice-skating rink.
- 3) The Carousel Building Reuse includes the exterior stabilization of the existing 2,000sf structure with interior restroom, building systems, and finishes improvements to allow the building to function as a flexible, multi-use program and event space. Improvements to the Heritage Plaza are not included.
- 4) Site Infrastructure includes demolition and site prep, grading, utility improvements, stormwater controls, miscellaneous landscaping and paving associated with the areas of the park identified above.





*City Of Raleigh*  
*North Carolina*

**DATE:** June 21, 2016  
**TO:** Ruffin Hall, City Manager  
**FROM:** Wayne Schindler, Parks Superintendent  
**CC:** Diane Sauer, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Director  
**SUBJECT:** Off Leash Dog Facilities

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**Background Information**

At the March 18, 2014 City Council meeting, the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board presented a number of recommendations related to the prohibition of dogs from certain areas of parks. The City Council approved the prohibition of dogs from playgrounds and added the following item to the board's work plan:

*"for the Board and staff to research and develop additional dog parks and dog areas in conjunction with neighborhood involvement for ongoing maintenance."*

\$150,000 has been budgeted for the development of new off leash dog facilities.

The Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board placed this item in the Greenway and Urban Tree Committee and work commenced in March 2015. The Greenway and Urban Tree Committee and staff initiated a peer analysis of other comparable jurisdictions (New York City, Portland, Seattle, Baltimore, San Francisco, Austin, Winnipeg, Colorado Springs, etc.) to gain an understanding of what others are providing in the way of off leash dog facilities. Raleigh's three existing off leash dog facilities at Millbrook Park, Oakwood Park and Carolina Pines Park were also reviewed. This research indicated three general types of off leash facilities: dog parks, dog runs and off leash dog areas.

Staff and the committee developed a guidance document for off leash dog facilities establishing a general program statement with guiding principles, site selection criteria, definitions for the three types of off leash facilities and specific design criteria for each type.

After an extensive site selection process, the committee and staff determined a location for a dog run at Jaycee Park and a new dog park at Buffalo Road Athletic Park. Staff developed preliminary plans and cost estimates for both off leash facilities which were reviewed and approved by the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board.

Several public meetings have been conducted to solicit input on the proposed projects:

Northeast CAC meeting: March 10, 2016

Wade CAC meeting: March 22, 2016

Five Points CAC meeting: April 13, 2016

Greenway and Urban Tree Committee meeting: April 19, 2016

Raleigh CAC meeting: April 20, 2016

Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board meeting: May 19, 2016

The Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board voted unanimously to forward the recommendation to the City Council for its consideration.

**Project Schedule**

May 19, 2016	Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board presentation and approval
June 21, 2016	City Council presentation and approval
July - October 2016	Construction of Jaycee Park Dog Run
October - December 2016	Construction of Buffalo Road Athletic Park Dog Park

**Attachments**

The Off Leash Dog Facilities Program Statement and copy of the PowerPoint presentation.

## **City of Raleigh**

### **Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department**

# **Off Leash Dog Facilities Program Statement**

## **Overview and Guiding Principles**

Based on the City of Raleigh having researched, planned, implemented and operated three successful off leash dog parks at Millbrook Exchange Park, Oakwood Park and Carolina Pines Park, the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (Board) recognizes that these off leash parks are beneficial to the human and canine populations of the City. The Board also recognizes a need to develop additional off leash facilities to keep pace with the City's growing population and citizen demand. It is especially important to find a way to provide facilities in urbanizing areas of the city where larger tracts appropriate for dog parks may not be available. Experience gained in the establishment and operation of our three dog parks provides insight for planning future off leash facilities. Guiding principles for the expansion of the program include the following:

- Raleigh should develop a variety of off leash facility types with consideration to appropriate geographic distribution. Well planned distribution will allow citizens to use designated facilities located close to their homes. Easy access should help prevent prohibited off leash use in areas such as ballfields, tennis courts and other recreational facilities. Too few dog areas can result in overcrowding of dogs and people and eventual site degradation.
- In order to achieve good distribution, off leash facilities will need to be considered during the master planning process for future parks, at established parks and open spaces, as well as on other City owned and managed properties. In the absence of an adopted master plan for an existing and developed park, the master plan amendment process should be followed. Suggestions to add an off leash dog facility to an existing park should take into account the physical conditions of the site, compatibility with current and expected park uses, proximity to adjacent residential properties, availability of parking and access to the site, and the overall character of the individual park.

- Site selection for future off leash dog facilities should consider the following minimum site requirements:
  - Appropriate topography in order to avoid the necessity for extensive grading, major supplemental drainage, erosion control, surface maintenance or storm water improvements.
  - Capable of being fenced with minimal tree removal and ground disturbance (exception: off leash dog areas which are unfenced).
  - Access for maintenance vehicles to the site and into the site.
  - Parking for 4 vehicles per half-acre should be considered whether provided on-site or on-street.
  - An ADA-compliant accessible route to the site is required.
  - There should be an appropriate separation from playgrounds and other children's play areas.
  - Off leash dog areas will not be planned in nature preserves, nature parks or natural protected areas.
- Encourage inclusion of off leash dog facilities in residential development.
- The City of Raleigh would welcome and evaluate offers to establish off leash dog facilities on private property and/or in partnership with private citizens or organizations.

## Definitions

A **Fenced Dog Run** is a smaller fenced area designated for dogs to exercise and socialize off leash. Design elements may include a five (5') foot perimeter fence, single or double gates for entry, appropriate surfacing for the chosen location, shade, covered trash receptacles and dog waste bag dispenser and regulatory signage. Where appropriate, a fenced dog run may provide separate areas for small dogs and large dogs.

A **Dog Park** is a larger fenced area designated for dogs to exercise and socialize off leash. Design elements may include a five (5') foot perimeter fence, double gates for entry, separate areas for small dogs, large dogs, dog training or therapy; appropriate surfacing for the chosen location, shade, a dog fountain or other appropriate water source, benches, informational kiosk, covered trash receptacles and dog waste bag dispenser and regulatory signage.

An **Off Leash Dog Area** is a definable space within a park that is identified by signage as available for off leash dog activity during designated hours. The space is not enclosed by fencing, but defined by park elements such as topography, landscaping, pathways, etc. Design elements may include shade trees, a dog water fountain or other appropriate water source, benches, covered trash receptacles and dog waste bag dispenser, regulatory signage. Barriers may need to be considered (fencing, landscaping) to separate the dog area from adjoining roads, parking, etc.

## Criteria for Fenced Dog Runs

1. Ideally, a fenced dog run shall be no less than three thousand (3,000) square feet in area.
2. The distance between the proposed fenced dog run and adjacent park features, homes, and businesses will be evaluated for conflicts associated with noise. A minimum separation of two hundred (200) feet is preferable; however changes in topography or intervening landscape screening can reduce the distance of spatial separation.
3. Fenced dog runs will require well drained soils with a maximum slope of 5%. Fenced dog runs are not recommended for placement in floodplains.
4. If located within a city park, a fenced dog run shall not be placed in any area where it will negatively impact primary uses of the park, unless the impact can be mitigated by regulating the hours of operation. Sites will be evaluated for noise conflicts with adjacent park uses, adjacent residences, and businesses. Potential use conflicts include but are not limited to the following:
  - Playgrounds and other children's play areas
  - Athletic fields and courts
  - Sensitive habitats and wildlife areas
  - Areas directly upslope from community gardens
  - Greenway trails or internal park pathways
  - Historic sites or other cultural resources
5. A fenced dog run shall have permanent signage displaying hours of operation, rules and regulations and contact information for both PRCR and Animal Control.
6. Design of a fenced dog run shall typically not include a potable water source for dogs to drink or play. It can provide a water source for cleaning and maintenance depending on the surface material utilized in order to insure proper sanitation.
7. Design of a fenced dog run shall consider an accessible route from designated parking if provided or available.
8. A fenced dog run shall comply with all applicable codes, ordinances and regulations.
9. Fenced dog runs, especially in urban areas may be lighted facilities or receive light spillage from adjacent street or building lights. Light levels shall be adequate to allow safe use of the facility and general public safety after dark.
10. Hours of operation will be set to comply with the general operating hours of the park in which it is located or if freestanding, will comply with city noise ordinance requirements.

## Criteria for Dog Parks

1. The planning guideline for a dog park is an area of approximately two (2) acres.
2. The distance between the proposed fenced dog park and adjacent park features, homes, and businesses will be evaluated for conflicts associated with noise. A minimum separation of two hundred (200) feet is preferable; however changes in topography or intervening landscape screening can reduce the distance of spatial separation.
3. Fenced dog parks will require well drained soils with a maximum slope of 5%. Fenced dog parks are not recommended for placement in floodplains.
4. If located within a city park, a fenced dog park shall not be placed in any area where it will negatively impact primary uses of the park, unless the impact can be mitigated by regulating the hours of operation. Sites will be evaluated for noise conflicts with adjacent park uses, adjacent residences, and businesses. Potential use conflicts include but are not limited to the following:
  - Playgrounds and other children's play areas
  - Athletic fields and courts
  - Sensitive habitats and wildlife areas
  - Areas directly upslope from community gardens
  - Greenway trails or internal park pathways
  - Historic sites or other cultural resources
5. A fenced dog park shall have permanent signage displaying hours of operation, rules and regulations and contact information for both PRCR and Animal Control.
6. Design of a fenced dog park shall include a potable water source for dogs to drink or play. It can provide a water source for cleaning and maintenance depending on the surface material utilized to insure proper sanitation.
7. Design of a fenced dog park shall consider an accessible route from designated parking if provided or available.
8. A fenced dog park shall comply with all applicable codes, ordinances and regulations.
9. Fenced dog parks may be lighted facilities or receive light spillage from adjacent street or building lights. Light levels shall be adequate to allow for safe use of the facility and general public safety after dark.
10. Hours of operation will be set to comply with the general operating hours of the park in which it is located or if freestanding, will comply with city noise ordinance requirements.



## Criteria for Off Leash Dog Areas

1. Ideally, an off leash dog area shall be no less than one (1) acre in size.
2. The distance between the proposed off leash dog area and adjacent park features, homes, and businesses will be evaluated for conflicts associated with noise. A minimum separation of two hundred (200) feet is preferable; however changes in topography or intervening landscape screening can reduce the distance of spatial separation.
3. The surface of off leash dog areas can include natural turf or a hard surface. Off leash dog areas are not recommended for placement in floodplains.
4. If located within a city park, an off leash dog area shall not be placed in any area where it will negatively impact primary uses of the park, unless the impact can be mitigated by regulating the hours of operation. Sites will be evaluated for noise conflicts with adjacent park uses, adjacent residences, and businesses. Potential use conflicts include but are not limited to the following:
  - Playgrounds and other children's play areas
  - Athletic fields and courts
  - Sensitive habitats and wildlife areas
  - Areas directly upslope from community gardens
  - Greenway trails or internal park pathways
  - Historic sites or other cultural resources
5. An off leash dog area shall have permanent signage displaying hours of operation, rules and regulations and contact information for both PRCR and Animal Control.
6. Design of an off leash dog area may include a potable water source for dogs to drink or play.
7. Design of an off leash dog area shall consider an accessible route from designated parking if provided or available.
8. An off leash dog area shall comply with all applicable codes, ordinances and regulations.
9. Off leash dog areas may be lighted facilities or receive light spillage from adjacent street, ballfield, court or building lights. Light levels shall be adequate to allow for safe use of the facility and general public safety after dark.
10. Hours of operation will be set to comply with the general operating hours of the park in which it is located.

Revised: 1/28/16

