ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

ROCKY MOUNT CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023

CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2023
5:00 PM

AGENDA

1. Second Quarter Financial Review: City	Ken Hunter
Second Quarter Financial Review: Event Center	Ken Hunter
2. Sunset Park Master Plan	Joel Dunn
3. RMPD January Report	Robert Hassell
4. City Council Retreat	Peter Varney
5. Legislative Agenda	Peter Varney

MEMORANDUM

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

To: Peter Varney, Interim City Manager

Cc:

From: Kenneth Hunter, Assistant of the City Manager for Budget & Evaluation

Date: 2/7/2023

Re: Review of FY 2023 Second Quarter Review of Revenues & Expenditures of Government Funds; Financial & Operational Performance of Rocky Mount Event Center

Attached are copies of reports summarizing Revenues & Expenditures of Governmental Funds for the Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2023, and providing an overview of financial and operational performance of the Rocky Mount Event Center for the Second Quarter of Fiscal Year 2023. The following summarizes the findings of this information:

General Fund

Total revenues through the Second Quarter grew by 0.2% compared to Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, reflecting a slowdown from the growth trend experienced in the First Quarter. This is due to the timing of payments of Property Taxes, which were due January 6th. Staff has reviewed payments received in January 2023 and can confirm collections from this source are consistent and ahead of last year's performance. Therefore, the lower revenue posted from Ad Valorem at the end of the Second Quarter reflects a timing matter.

Revenues from Local Option Sales Tax continue to increase by a significant level compared to last year (+7.3%), reflecting increased activity across multiple programs, including solid waste services, Parks & Recreation programs, and the Rocky Mount Event Center. Revenues from sales and service fees for General Fund programs, including the Event Center, increased 19.3%. Overall, General Fund current revenues are performing in such fashion to meet their overall projections for the current Fiscal Year.

Total expenditures through the Second Quarter grew by 35.5% compared to FY 2022. This reflects the continued impact of planned increases in employee pay, employee benefits, operating expenses (due to inflation), and capital outlay (primarily for replacement equipment). The end-of-quarter operating ratio of 1.10 is lower than the prior 3-year average of 1.325, influenced heavily by the timing delay in Ad Valorem revenues.

Enterprise Funds

All City Enterprise Funds continue to show increases in sales revenue. For the Electric Fund, this reflects minor increases in customer usage. For the Gas Fund, this reflects increased customer usage and the impact of the $0.40/Therm Purchased Gas Adjustment. For the Water Fund, this reflects increased customer usage and the impact of rate adjustments approved by Council and effective July 1, 2022. Usage is down in the Sewer Fund, but revenues have increased due to the impact of rate adjustments.

Electric Fund expenses contracted due to reductions in capital project activity and vacancy savings. Gas Fund expenses increased significantly due to the increased cost of wholesale gas. Water Fund expenses increased significantly due to increased operating costs (due to inflation) and increased capital project activity. Sewer Fund expenses are almost the same as last year, with a decline in Capital Outlay offsetting operating costs increases. Stormwater Fund expenses reflect the impact of substantial upcoming capital project activity, which will utilize a combination of current revenues, planned reserves, and grants.

Rocky Mount Event Center

Second Quarter financial performance of the Rocky Mount Event Center reflects the start of increased public usage, with full-capacity operations starting in January. Revenues and expenditures are in line with expectations for this period.

For the Second Quarter of FY 2023, the Event Center incurred a net operating margin (Revenues minus Operating Expenses) of -$489,552. The budget for the entire fiscal year projects a year-end operating margin of -$647,370, with the plan to reduce negative margins in Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025 and achieve a positive year-end operating margin in Fiscal Year 2026.

ROCKY MOUNT
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Report of Revenues and Expenditures of Government Funds

Fiscal Year 2023, as of December 31, 2022

Purpose

This report provides summary information on revenue, expenditures, and budget balance for primary City funds, including General Government, Transportation, and Utilities. It is presented to the public and the Mayor and City Council on a quarterly basis to represent recent financial activity and the current status of the City's financial condition.

Source of Information

Information in this report is summarized from the General Ledger of the City, as entered in our financial management system.

Timeframe

This report includes information for specific funds budgeted in Fiscal Year 2023, reflecting adjustments and activity as of December 31, 2022.

Guide to Reading Report Information

Report on General Fund Revenues and Expenditures

Summary Statement
Brief description of fund

Description
Revenue or expenditure category for line.

Comparison of Performance
3-Year Average %
End of Year Actual (Blue) to
FY 2023 % of Amended Budget (Purple)

	Y 2023 dopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Y A YTD
General Summary						
First Quarter Agencies exceeded their budgeted revenue for the period, continuing last year's trends. Expenditures reflect increased operating activity for a First Quarter of the fiscal year. General Fund finished the First Quarter with an operating ratio (revenues/expenditures) of 0.821, close to the average of performance for the past 3 years (0.856).						
Revenues						
Ad Valorem	29,291,000	29,291,000	4,969,435	-0.8%	17.0%	15.5%
Intergovernmental	8,557,640	8,557,640	1,867,467	-3.1%	21.8%	20.0%
Sales Tax	17,450,000	17,450,000	1,624,214	-1.1%	9.3%	10.8%
I	1,695,800	1,695,800	330,839	3.0%	19.5%	16.4%
S	12 0	12,650,240	2,974,465	8.8%	23.5%	22.2%
Investments		630,87	219,018	2.2%	34.7%	32.6%
Miscellaneous		811		4%	23.5%	17 9%
Transfers	3,250,000			%	23.1%	0%
Lease Proceeds	5,967,000			A	0.0%	0%
Capital Leases	-			A	N/A	
Fund Balance Appropriated	3,700,000		-	N/	0.0	
Total Revenue	**84,004,050**		**12,926,292**	**2**	**14.2**	

FY 2023 Adopted Budget
Adopted budget total for line.

FY 2023 Amended Budget

YTD
Actual FY 2023 Year to Date amount for line.

YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022
1-Year % DIfference in YTD Amounts.

YTD% of Budget
Actual FY 2023 Year to Date amount for line as percentage of Amended Budget.

3-Year Avg. YTD%
Year to Date of budget percentagefor similar period averaged for last 3 fiscal years (FY 2020 to FY 2022).

Comparison of Performance
Graphic representation of FY 2022 Year to Date performance (bottom, purple horizontal bar) in relation to performance of 3 prior years (top, light blue horizontal bar) and 100% of budgeted amount (red vertical line).

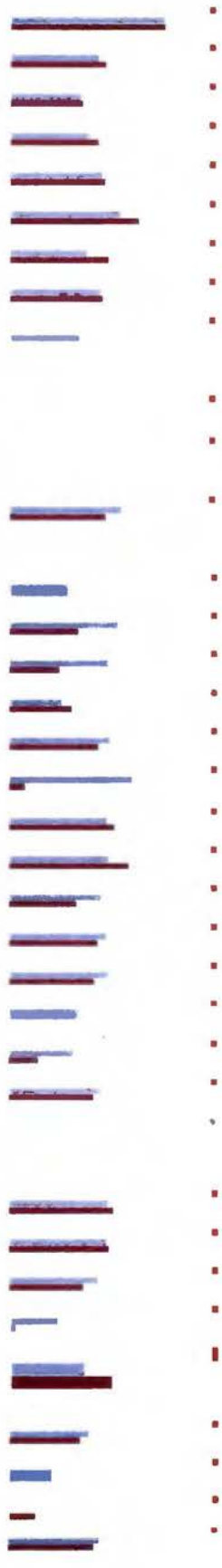
Prepared By

Kenneth Hunter
Kenneth.Hunter@rockymountnc.gov
(252) 972-1335

Report on General Fund Revenues and Expenditures

	FY 2023 Adopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Year Avg. YTD%
General Fund Summary						
Second Quarter revenues remain consistent with budgeted projections and prior year performance. Expenditure increases reflect growth of employee wages and benefits, impact of inflation on operating expenses, and significant increase in capital equipment replacement and other projects.						
Revenues						
Ad Valorem	29,291,000	29,291,000	22,508,061	-3.2%	76.8%	76.1%
Intergovernmental	8,557,640	8,557,640	4,085,647	5.6%	47.7%	43.8%
Sales Tax	17,450,000	17,450,000	6,293,035	7.3%	36.1%	34.9%
Licenses & Permits	1,695,800	1,695,800	749,766	-4.3%	44.2%	39.0%
Sales & Services	12,650,240	12,650,240	5,975,539	19.3%	47.2%	45.5%
Investments	630,870	630,870	403,154	39.9%	63.9%	54.4%
Miscellaneous	811,500	822,401	402,962	-1.2%	49.0%	38.0%
Transfers	3,250,000	3,250,000	1,500,000	-55.0%	46.2%	44.8%
Lease Proceeds	5,967,000	7,396,520	2,583,000	N/A	34.9%	0.0%
Capital Leases	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fund Balance Appropriated	3,700,000	11,216,461	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Restricted Fund Balance Appropriated for Streets	-	3,792,700	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Total Revenue	**84,004,050**	**92,960,932**	**44,501,163**	**0.2%**	**47.9%**	**55.0%**
Expenditures by Department						
Mayor & City Council	2,327,220	2,761,026	791,067	-2181.3%	28.7%	10.0%
City Clerk	220,600	210,600	71,875	-18.7%	34.1%	53.0%
City Manager	1,690,590	2,606,774	644,163	256.6%	24.7%	48.3%
Human Resources	1,738,120	1,612,280	497,156	18.3%	30.8%	25.4%
Human Relations	578,970	578,970	255,297	42.8%	44.1%	49.3%
Finance, Technology Services, Business & Collections Services	3,482,370	4,398,699	342,940	-44.0%	7.8%	60.1%
Police	20,069,840	20,302,830	10,526,409	25.5%	51.8%	47.9%
Fire	16,173,290	17,183,296	10,115,453	55.9%	58.9%	48.6%
Public Works	16,058,360	21,501,550	7,163,378	41.4%	33.3%	44.6%
Parks & Recreation	11,283,850	14,175,865	6,199,267	27.1%	43.7%	47.6%
Development Services	3,054,480	3,291,770	1,383,200	3.3%	42.0%	48.1%
Event Center	6,426,230	6,326,492	2,125,052	19.8%	33.6%	N/A
Community & Business Dev.	900,130	1,803,480	257,845	-40.8%	14.3%	31.3%
Total Expenditures	**84,004,050**	**96,753,632**	**40,373,102**	**35.5%**	**41.7%**	**44.3%**
Balance - Revenues Over/(Under) Expenditures			***4,128,061***			
Operating Ratio			***1.102***	***(Prior 3-Year Avg.: 1.325)***		
Expenditures by Category						
Salaries & Wages	42,932,290	41,870,541	21,331,514	13.0%	50.9%	48.1%
Employee Benefits	15,777,550	15,771,001	7,721,224	4.9%	49.0%	47.2%
Professional Services	1,628,560	2,264,836	820,464	26.3%	36.2%	43.2%
Operating Costs	7,218,815	8,279,483	179,374	-227.7%	2.2%	22.7%
Debt Service	3,696,433	3,591,252	1,772,650	5.5%	49.4%	35.7%
Capital Leases	-	-	-	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capital Equipment	11,677,633	24,250,666	8,430,870	522.6%	34.8%	38.6%
Transfers	318,270	318,270	65,480	N/A	20.6%	0.1%
Other	754,500	407,583	51,526	N/A	12.6%	N/A
Total Expenditures	**84,004,050**	**96,753,632**	**40,373,102**	**35.5%**	**41.7%**	**44.3%**

Comparison of Performance
3-Year Average %
End of Year Actual (Blue) to
FY 2023 % of Amended Budget (Purple)



Report on Powell Bill and Public Utility Funds

Powell Bill Fund

Summary

FY 2023 Powell Bill Allocation is confirmed to be 1.7% above FY 2022 and 3.1% lower than originally projected.

	FY 2023 Adopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Year Avg. YTD%
Powell Bill Allocation	1,723,000	1,723,000	1,669,425	-0.8%	96.9%	50.0%
Other Revenue	924,000	924,000	44,543	-2.3%	4.8%	N/A
Fund Balance Appropriated	800,000	915,295	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Total Revenues	**3,447,000**	**3,562,295**	**1,713,968**	**125.9%**	**48.1%**	**28.9%**
Total Expenditures	**3,447,000**	**3,562,295**	**259,988**	**-11.4%**	**7.3%**	**26.9%**
Balance - Revenues Over Expenditures			***1,453,980***			

Electric Fund

Summary

Utility sales performed slightly higher than last year, while expenditures reflect vacancy savings and reductions in capital project activity.

	FY 2023 Adopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Year Avg. YTD%
Utility Sales	75,750,000	75,750,000	38,682,730	0.6%	51.1%	41.7%
Other Revenue	5,234,700	5,234,700	2,941,600	69.5%	56.2%	38.3%
Fund Balance Appropriated	4,000,000	7,768,751	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Total Revenues	**84,984,700**	**88,753,451**	**41,624,330**	**3.5%**	**46.9%**	**51.7%**
Operating	71,888,490	72,748,647	31,556,551	-6.5%	43.4%	45.2%
Non-Operating	4,436,210	4,436,210	1,928,971	-18.6%	43.5%	49.4%
Capital	8,660,000	11,568,594	2,011,631	-54.9%	17.4%	47.4%
Total Expenditures	**84,984,700**	**88,753,451**	**35,497,153**	**-3.8%**	**40.0%**	**45.5%**
Balance - Revenues Over Expenditures			***6,127,177***			

Gas Fund

Summary

Sales are greater to last year due to significant increases in wholesale prices, which is also reflected in operating expenditures.

	FY 2023 Adopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Year Avg. YTD%
Utility Sales	23,275,000	23,275,000	10,566,035	38.8%	45.4%	49.1%
Other Revenue	500,000	500,000	308,955	88.0%	61.8%	36.8%
Fund Balance Appropriated	2,700,000	3,625,830	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Total Revenues	**26,475,000**	**27,400,830**	**10,874,990**	**39.9%**	**39.7%**	**33.8%**
Operating	24,111,680	24,325,289	11,658,396	95.6%	47.9%	33.1%
Non-Operating	968,820	1,154,166	362,873	N/A	31.4%	49.9%
Capital	1,394,500	1,921,375	87,100	-90.2%	4.5%	58.2%
Total Expenditures	**26,475,000**	**27,400,830**	**12,108,370**	**14.7%**	**44.2%**	**38.8%**
Balance - Revenues Over Expenditures			***(1,233,380)***			

Comparison of Performance
3-Year Average %
End of Year Actual (Blue) to
FY 2023 % of Amended Budget (Purple)

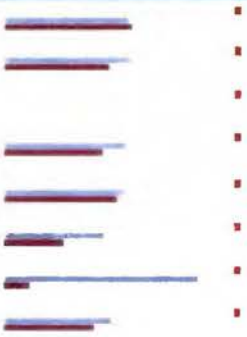
Report on Water Resources and Stormwater Management Funds

Comparison of Performance
3-Year Average %
End of Year Actual (Blue) to
FY 2023 % of Amended Budget (Purple)

Water Fund

Summary
Sales are 9.8% greater than last year through the second quarter, with expenditures increased to reflect filling of prior vacant positions and increased costs for treatment chemicals.

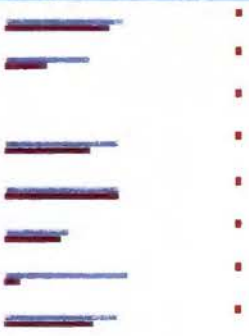
	FY 2023 Adopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Year Avg. YTD%
Utility Sales	11,893,360	11,893,360	6,464,006	9.8%	54.3%	52.5%
Other Revenue	550,000	550,000	245,705	-27.4%	44.7%	52.9%
Fund Balance Appropriated	3,400,000	3,528,791	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Total Revenues	**15,843,360**	**15,972,151**	**6,709,711**	**7.8%**	**42.0%**	**51.5%**
Operating	11,543,660	11,593,262	5,591,545	27.7%	48.2%	50.2%
Non-Operating	387,850	387,850	97,720	12.4%	25.2%	42.3%
Capital	3,911,850	3,991,039	435,024	-30.1%	10.9%	83.0%
Total Expenditures	**15,843,360**	**15,972,151**	**6,124,288**	**20.3%**	**38.3%**	**45.8%**
Balance - Revenues Over Expenditures			*585,423*			



Sewer Fund

Summary
Sales are 4.5% greater than last year for the second quarter, with operating expenditure increases reflecting impact of wages and benefits.

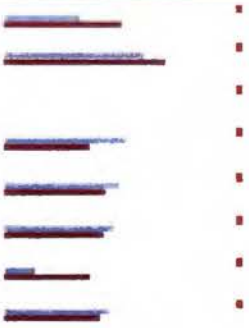
	FY 2023 Adopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Year Avg. YTD%
Utility Sales	15,290,000	15,290,000	6,793,831	4.5%	44.4%	49.7%
Other Revenue	2,093,000	2,093,000	372,353	80.0%	17.8%	35.5%
Fund Balance Appropriated	1,500,000	2,294,205	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Total Revenues	**18,883,000**	**19,677,205**	**7,166,183**	**6.8%**	**36.4%**	**47.9%**
Operating	13,934,020	14,016,497	6,829,493	8.3%	48.7%	48.2%
Non-Operating	1,314,480	1,314,480	317,536	-21.5%	24.2%	27.2%
Capital	3,634,500	4,346,228	298,726	-57.6%	6.9%	52.1%
Total Expenditures	**18,883,000**	**19,677,205**	**7,445,755**	**0.4%**	**37.8%**	**47.7%**
Balance - Revenues Over Expenditures			*(279,572)*			



Stormwater Fund

Summary
Revenue are slightly above budgeted projections. Expenditure growth reflects significant increase in capital project activity.

	FY 2023 Adopted Budget	FY 2023 Amended Budget	FY 2023 YTD Actual	YTD %Dif to YTD FY 2022	YTD% of Amended Budget	3-Year Avg. YTD%
Utility Sales	4,170,000	4,170,000	2,086,866	1.1%	50.0%	31.7%
Other Revenue	400,000	400,000	273,660	-61.0%	68.4%	58.9%
Fund Balance Appropriated	900,000	1,943,814	-	N/A	0.0%	0.0%
Total Revenues	**5,470,000**	**6,513,814**	**2,360,526**	**-14.6%**	**36.2%**	**51.0%**
Operating	4,040,780	4,041,480	1,737,931	9.0%	43.0%	48.4%
Non-Operating	256,220	256,220	107,944	38.7%	42.1%	46.2%
Capital	1,173,000	2,216,114	803,905	185.4%	36.3%	13.2%
Total Expenditures	**5,470,000**	**6,513,814**	**2,649,780**	**35.6%**	**40.7%**	**43.9%**
Balance - Revenues Over Expenditures			*(289,255)*			



Revenues & Expenditures, Rocky Mount Event Center (Fiscal Year-to-Date as of End of December 2022)

			COVID-Impacted				
Accounts	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Adopted	FY 2023 Amended	FY 2023 Year-to-Date
Revenue							
Non-Operating Revenue							
349000 INTEREST	210,519	210,519	210,519	210,519	210,520	210,520	52,630
Non-Operating Revenue Total	210,519	210,519	210,519	210,519	210,520	210,520	52,630
Operating Revenue							
341063 EVENT CTR FACILITY FEE	23,856	11,395	-		-	-	-
341063 EVENT CTR FACILITY FEE EVENT	8,830	14,665	26,167	44,925	133,650	133,650	4,350
341064 EVENT CENTER-BASKETBALL EVENT	91,250	21,820	92,014	115,143	-	-	14,496
341065 EVENT CENTER-VOLLEYBALL EVENT	28,671	39,220	96,550	135,147	-	-	13,019
341066 EVENT CENTER-OTHER EVENTS EVENT	10,500	12,000	12,750	13,333	-	-	9,090
341067 EVENT CENTER-CONCERT EVENT	19,387	18,045	-	49,445	22,300	22,300	16,186
341068 EVENT CENTER FEC EVENT	213,603	150,676	12,814	102,525	75,000	75,000	36,044
341069 EVENT CENTER CORP EVENTS EVENT	80,599	98,499	47,724	134,868		-	101,596
341600 PARKING EVENT	45,693	25,595	75,594	94,363	110,400	110,400	6,844
348000 CONCESSIONS EVENT	423,000	396,620	199,974	687,564	1,410,940	1,410,940	346,910
389000 MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE EVENT	44,446	3,302	308,313	15,786			10,045
384004 SPONSORSHIPS EVENT	28,222	15,696	5,450	29,083	24,000	24,000	63,385
385010 MISC CREDITS AND REFUNDS EVENT	-	(3,168)	-		-		-
Operating Revenue Total	1,018,056	804,365	877,352	1,422,183	1,776,290	1,776,290	621,956
Revenue Total	1,228,575	1,014,884	1,087,871	1,632,702	1,986,810	1,986,810	674,585
Expenditure							
Operating Expenses							
Cost of Goods Sold							
412000 EVENT EVENT CENTER-SALARIES/WAGES	631,897	1,038,761	671,483	807,198	1,024,430	1,024,430	440,900
412200 WAGES-OVERTIME	-	3,905	424	-	-	-	
418000 EVENT EVENT CENTER - EMPL BENEFITS	109,809	165,616	126,890	134,779	180,000	180,000	64,971
439300 EVENT TEMPORARY HELP SERVICES	178,344	132,365	6,863	26,745	39,000	39,000	23,323
495400 EVENT EVENT CENTER - COST OF GOODS	302,680	281,710	102,243	269,775	378,340	378,340	148,623
Cost of Goods Sold Total	1,222,729	1,622,356	907,903	1,238,497	1,621,770	1,621,770	677,817
Facility Expenses							
419200 EVENT LEGAL FEES	31,058	1,497	-	-	-	-	-
426000 EVENT GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE	97,840	107,869	99,240	108,789	170,620	170,620	45,408
429900 EVENT SUPPLIES-MISCELLANEOUS	29,415	38,565	27,409	36,413		-	17,313
431200 EVENT TRAVEL-CONFERENCE/SCHOOLS	48,492	36,785	2,708	18,445	-	-	10,723
433000 EVENT UTILITIES	168,078	197,670	136,728	157,326	221,680	265,000	88,984
435100 EVENT REPAIRS BUILDING	30,616	62,326	55,996	78,721	132,340	132,340	47,584
439100 EVENT ADVERTISING	79,458	92,045	98,479	174,446	210,000	210,000	127,254
439900 OTHER SERVICES	200		-	-		-	-
441100 EVENT RENTAL-BUILDING		25,800	25,800	25,800	6,450	6,450	12,900
443000 EVENT RENTAL -EQUIPMENT	2,323	-	-	-		-	-
444000 MAINT & SERVICE CONTRACT	-	-		-	-	-	-
444012 CONTRACTS-DRIVERS	19,964	-		-	-	-	-
444036 EVENT CONTRACTS-BANKS	14,144	9,005	5,994	12,579		-	24,088
444061 EVENT CONTRACTS-FACILITY MGMT	51,000	204,000	188,000	180,000	204,000	204,000	88,144
445000 EVENT INSURANCE	27,379	50,833	51,735	41,876	67,320	67,320	23,922
445600 EVENT DAMAGES & JUDGEMENTS	-	14,702	-	-	-		-
Facility Expenses Total	599,966	841,100	692,089	834,390	1,012,410	1,055,730	486,320
Operating Expenses Total	1,822,696	2,463,456	1,599,992	2,072,887	2,634,180	2,677,500	1,164,137
Revenues Over/(Under) Operating Expenditures	(594,121)	(1,448,572)	(512,121)	(440,185)	(647,370)	(690,690)	(489,552)

Revenues & Expenditures, Rocky Mount Event Center (Fiscal Year-to-Date as of End of December 2022)

Accounts	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Actual	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Adopted	FY 2023 Amended	FY 2023 Year-to-Date
			COVID-Impacted				
Non-Operating Expenses							
441100 RENTAL-BUILDING (NMTC)	106,072	185,000	205,000	205,000	205,000	205,000	102,500
443000 RENTAL-EQUIPMENT (NMTC)	142,000	142,000	25,800	142,000	142,000	142,000	71,000
445000 INSURANCE-DCP LLC)	63,800	65,467	58,250	61,197	80,000	80,000	69,322
Non-Operating Expenses Total	**311,872**	**392,467**	**289,050**	**408,197**	**427,000**	**427,000**	**242,822**
Non-Operating Expenses Sub-Total	**2,134,568**	**2,855,923**	**1,889,041**	**2,481,084**	**3,061,180**	**3,104,500**	**1,406,958**
Revenues Over/(Under) Operating & Non-Operating Expenditure	**(905,993)**	**(1,841,039)**	**(801,171)**	**(848,383)**	**(1,074,370)**	**(1,117,690)**	**(732,373)**
Debt Service							
471000 BOND PRINCIPAL	300,000	1,455,000	1,510,000	1,575,000	1,650,000	1,650,000	
472000 BOND INTEREST	1,624,400	1,612,400	1,554,200	1,493,800	1,415,050	1,415,050	707,525
Debt Service Total	**1,924,400**	**3,067,400**	**3,064,200**	**3,068,800**	**3,065,050**	**3,065,050**	**707,525**
Capital Leases (GASB 87, Implemented 6/30/2022)							
444043 MAINT & SERVICE CONTRACT-CONTRACT	-	-	-	347,000		-	-
477000 LEASE PRINCIPAL	-		-	283,445		-	
477001 LEASE INTEREST	-	-	-	63,555	-		-
Capital Leases Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**
Capital Outlay							
554000 MOTOR VEHICLES	-	-		27,114	-		-
555500 OTHER EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	18,956		6,942	6,473
558000 BLDGS STRUCTURES IMPROVE	-	-		-	150,000	150,000	4,095
Capital Outlay Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**46,070**	**150,000**	**156,942**	**10,568**
Revenues Over/(Under) All Expenditures	**(2,830,393)**	**(4,908,439)**	**(3,865,371)**	**(3,963,253)**	**(4,289,420)**	**(4,339,682)**	**(1,450,467)**

Calendar Year Overview of Operational Performance (As of End of December 2022)

	2021	2022	1-Year Change	
Attendance (Spectators, Visitors, and Participants):	52,398	77,011	24,613	47%
Total Economic Impact (Est.):	$9,132,348	$14,956,388	$5,824,040	64%
# Major Sporting Events:	N/A	21		-
# Concerts & Conferences:	N/A	-		
# Banquets & Community/Local Rentals:	N/A	223		

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Review of Revenues & Expenditures

2nd Quarter FY 2023

February 2023

General Fund

- Revenues remain ahead of last year through December
  - Ad Valorem decreased 3.2% due to timing of Property Tax payments
  - Local Option Sales Tax increased 7.3%
  - Strong increases in Sales & Services revenues
  - Increased returns on investment of idle funds
- Anticipated, manageable expenditure growth
  - Impact of pay increases
  - Operating cost increases due to inflation
  - Increased capital outlay (equipment and facilities)

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

General Fund Operating Ratio

Enterprise Funds

- Electric & Gas
  - Sales slightly higher in Electric, significantly higher in gas
  - Impact of increase in wholesale Gas costs
- Water & Sewer
  - Sales up in Water, reflecting increased usage & adjusted rates
  - Usage down in Sewer, with increased revenues reflecting rate adjustment
  - Water capital spending increasing, sewer capital spending decreasing
- Stormwater
  - Revenues meeting expectations
  - Planned, significant capital project activity underway

Outlook

- Revenue Monitoring Continues
  - Project finishing FY 2023 in line with budgeted forecasts
  - Focus attention on trend with Local Option Sales Tax
- Monitoring Expenditures with respect to Inflation
  - Fuel
  - Consumables
  - Capital Equipment
- April: Present Proposed CIP for Fiscal Years 2024 to 2028
- Departments working on FY 2024 Budget submissions

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Rocky Mount Event Center Performance

Financials: 2nd Quarter FY 2023

February 2023

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Financial Performance

	FY 2023 Amended	FY 2023 Q2 Year-to-Date
Revenues	1,986,810	674,585
Cost of Goods Sold	1,621,770	677,817
Facility Expenses	1,012,410	486,320
Net Operating Margin	**$(647,370)**	**$(489,552)**
Tax Credit Expenses	427,000	242,822
Debt Service	3,065,050	707,525
Capital Outlay	156,942	10,568
Net Total Margin	**$(4,296,362)**	**$(1,450,467)**

- Second Quarter financial performance reflects normal activities for this period in operations
  - Activity picking up, with full-occupancy starting in January
- Net Operating Margin
  - Loss will reduce in FY 2024 and FY 2025
  - Positive for FY 2026
- Capital Outlay
  - Ongoing facility improvements
  - Equipment
  - Included in CIP

MEMORANDUM

ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

To: Peter F. Varney, Interim City Manager

Cc: Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager

From: Joel Dunn, Director of Parks and Recreation

Date: January 26, 2023

Re: Adoption of Sunset Park Master Plan

Background
In summer 2022 Parks & Recreation staff began review of existing planning documents, consideration of environmental conditions, equity, accessibility and held several public input meetings for the Renovation of Sunset Park.

Discussion
The resulting Sunset Park Master Plan is the most thorough park plan created to date and is grant-ready. Highlights of the plan include:

- Carousel renovation
- Miniature train replacement
- Spray Park renovation
- Renovation of 6,000 linear feet of greenway
- Sunset Park concession building & outdoor restrooms renovation
- Renovation of the tennis courts
- New playground
- Three new mini-shelters
- Multi-purpose field
- Fishing piers & kayak launch renovation
- New multi-use, natural surface trail (7,920 lf)
- Wildlife observation, river access & riparian restoration
- Pollinator Gardens at Community Gardens
- Park security cameras

Action(s) Requested
City Council adopt Sunset Park Master Plan.

Staff's Recommendation
Staff recommends approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Joel Dunn, Director | Parks and Recreation

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park Master Plan and Grant Funding Progam

Committee of the Whole, February 2023

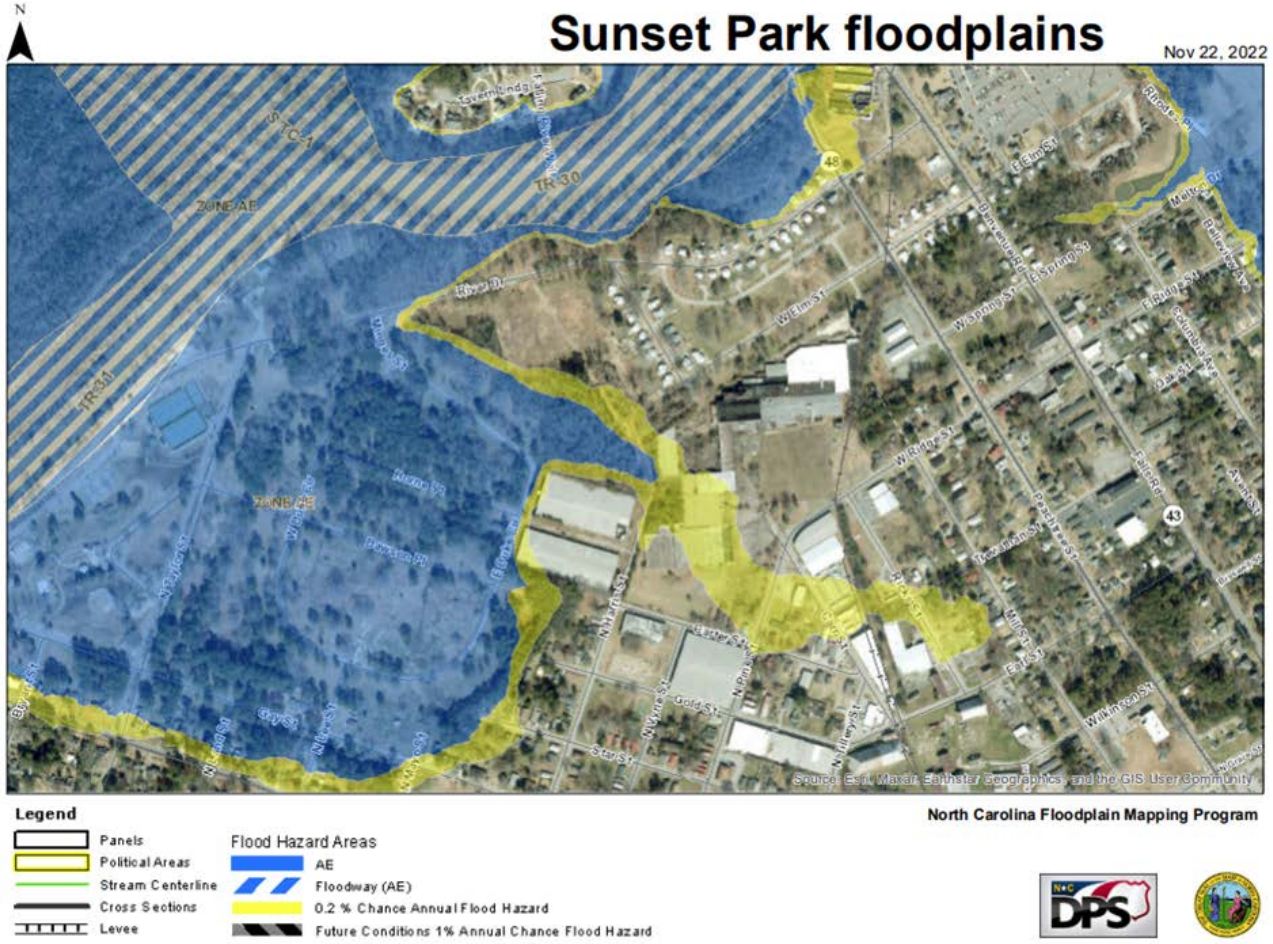
2/13/2023, Joel Dunn Parks & Recreation Director

Sunset Park Brief History (p6)

- Land purchase began in 1930's
- Park built in 1940's (WPA)
- Train & Carousel 1952
- Renovated 2002 (Floyd)

Renovation Design Considerations

- Historic Use
- Floodplain



Existing Studies Review (p 14)

- 1975-1980 City of Rocky Mount Open Space Plan
- 1999 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
- 2005-2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
- 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
- River Falls Parks / Tar River Park System
- 2002 Renovation and Park Master Plan
- 2007 City of Rocky Mount Comprehensive Bike Plan
- 2012 City of Rocky Mount Pedestrian Plan
- 2018 City of Rocky Mount Bike Plan
- 2016 Monk to Mill Trail Feasibility Study
- 2022 Stony Creek Trail Feasibility Study (In progress)

Equity Research & Accessibility (p 64)

- NC Equity & Transportation Disadvantage Screening
  - Environmental Justice Statewide Map
  - Transportation Disadvantage Statewide Map
- US Census Tracker
- Trust for Public Land ParkServe Mapping Application
- 2021 Outdoor Foundation Participation Trends Report
- 2022 Physical Activity Council's Report on U.S. Part.
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- United States Access Board
- Universal Design Principles

National Standards, Regional Trails, NC SCORP (pp 33, 41, 54)

- Park, Recreation, Open Space & Greenway Guidelines
- East Coast Greenway
- NC Mountains to Sea Trail
- Carolina Thread Trail / American Tobacco Trail
- NCDOT Great Trails State Plan Network
- 2020-2025 NC SCORP

Public Involvement (p 97)

- Public Meeting #1, Sept 27, 2022
- Public Meeting #2, Sept 27, 2022
- Public Meeting #3, Sept 29, 2022
- Nash Co. Travel & Tourism Council Oct 25, 2023
- Rocky Mount Rotary Club, Nov 7, 2022
- Neighborhood Presidents' Assoc Nov 10, 2022
- Rocky Mount Planning Board, Dec 2022
  (Non-elected, appointed board)

Public Meeting Results (p 105)

Amenity	Gold Stars	Red Hearts
Mountain Bike / Cross Country trail	10	32
Tennis courts	6	11
Miniature train and train house	4	15
~~Stony Creek trail feasibility study~~	4	13
Restrooms	3	15
Playground, tot-lot, accessible	2	17
Carousel and carousel house	1	17
Spray Park	1	16
Greenway & Boardwalk	1	16
~~Pickleball~~	4	5
Fishing piers	1	11
Sunset concessions building	0	13
Community Gardens	1	8
Riparian restoration, boardwalk	2	5

Amenity	Gold Stars	Red Hearts
MTB skills area & pump track	0	10
Landscaping	0	8
Baseball field	1	3
Basketball courts	0	6
Sand volleyball courts	0	5
Misc	1	2
Skate park	0	4
Bug ride	0	3
Medium shelters (3)	0	2
Dog Park	0	2
Boulder play area	0	1
Large shelter 30’x60’ w/12 tables	0	1

Proposed Project Budget (p 119)

Item	Estimated Cost
New	
Multi-use, natural surface **Trail**, 7,920 lf	$50,000
Wildlife observation, river access & riparian restoration	$62,000
Pollinator Gardens at Community Gardens	$25,000
Like	
Mini Shelters (3)	$17,500
Multi-purpose field	$15,000
Renovate	
Tennis courts	$100,500
Miniature train	$165,000
Sunset park building & outdoor restrooms	$75,000

Item	Estimated Cost
Playground	$180,000
Carousel	$100,000
Spray Park	$100,000
Greenway 6,000 lf - **Trail**	$150,000
Fishing piers & canoe / kayak launches	$130,000
Subtotal	**$1,170,000**
Trailhead at Sunset Park kiosk	$7,500
Park security cameras	$20,000
Design, project & grant management, permitting 10%	$12,500
Contingency	$50,000
Project budget	**$1,260,000**

Proposed Grant Plan

- Match in Current FY23 CIP Accounts
  - Each grant will request City Council approval
- NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund
  - $500,000 (50/50), May 1, 2023 submission
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
  - $500,000 (50/50), July 15, 2023
- Recreational Trails Program
  - $32,000 (80/20), February 2024
- NCDEQ Water Resources Development Grant
  - $250,000 (50/50), TBD

ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park Master Plan

Rocky Mount, NC

Spring 2023

Approved by Rocky Mount City Council XXX XX, 2023.

Acknowledgements

Mayor
C. Saunders Roberson, Jr.

City Council
Andre Knight, Ward 1
Reuben C. Blackwell IV, Ward 2
Richard Joyner, Ward 3
T.J. Walker, Ward 4, Mayor Pro-Tem
Lige Daughtridge, Ward 5
Tom Harris, Ward 6
Jabaris D. Walker, Ward 7

City Staff
Peter F. Varney, Interim City Manager
Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager
Joel Dunn, Parks and Recreation Director
Kelvin Yarrell, Parks Superintendent
Matt Sledge, Horticulturalist
JoSeth Bocook, Planning Administrator
Ramona Plemmer, Purchasing Manager
Scott Miles, Assistant City Engineer
Gabrielle Bryson, Stormwater Engineer
David Griffin, Grant & Project Administrator
Wendy Gupton, Administrative Secretary
Kevin Harrell, Senior Signal System Operator
Michael Crumpler, Engineering Technician

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Executive Summary

Sunset Park has served the citizens of Rocky Mount and the surrounding community since the 1940's. The park's train and carousel have served generations and are revered as part of the fabric of the Rocky Mount. The park has evolved in eight decades as society, recreational preferences and the flood waters of hurricane Floyd shaped Rocky Mount. Staff entered the renovation planning process with the understanding Sunset Park is part of the shared heritage of Rocky Mount.

Over ninety percent of the park is in the floodplain; the park has flooded often and severely. The Rocky Mount Children's Museum, Sunset Park pool and the adjacent Riverside neighborhood were all lost to hurricane Floyd. **The history of the park and the guarantee of future high-water events represent the primary Design Considerations in park renovation.** These factors reduce the ability to significantly change the park and limit *new* construction to non-structures and pervious surfaces.

Through numerous public meetings and attention to the Design Considerations, the plan provides a public-prioritized plan for a resilient and sustainable park. By intentionally designing within the historic and environmental framework of Sunset Park, the nature of the project is renovation of existing resources. This results in minimal environmental or historic preservation challenges. The city will fully comply with all regulations throughout the planning, design, development and management of the park.

The Park Plan provides information to serve as a guide for park renovation and future management.
Much of the format is based upon Federal and State best practices and grant requirements.
Citation is provided in-text or on-page as possible to enable individual sections of the document to be utilized individually as needed.

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NC State Parks Natural Resources
NC Wildlife Resource Commission
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NC Department of Health and Human Services
NC State Historic Preservation Office, Renee Gledhill-Earley
NCDEQ, DWR 401 & Buffer Permitting Branch (Riparian)

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Section 1 Sunset Park History and Past Recreational Use

Sunset Park History

The City of Rocky Mount began acquiring land on the Tar River in the 1930's. Construction of Sunset Park was initiated by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of the Roosevelt Administration. During the 1950's the Rocky Mount Children's Museum, a miniature train and a carousel were added to the park (more information below). In 1968, 1973 and 1980, assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund allowed the City to purchase adjacent property to expand and further develop the park.

On September 17, 1999 the flood waters associated with hurricane Floyd inundated Rocky Mount and Sunset Park. The Children's Museum and Sunset pool were total losses, and the train and carousel were severely damaged. In addition, the Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department lost Stith pool and the Rocky Mount Arts Center to the flood waters. Several parks including Battle Park, Talbert Park and City Lake received significant damage. At the time, Rocky Mount was the largest FEMA buy-out in history; this was later surpassed by the City of New Orleans (Katrina). To guide recovery, the Rocky Mount developed the Sunset Park Master Plan in 2001. Many concepts now referred to as Sustainability or Resiliency were incorporated in the plan, as the city designed and redeveloped with an eye towards future high-water events. Through the persistence of Mayor Fred Turnage, the members of the Rocky Mount City Council, Parks & Recreation Director Pete Armstrong and funding from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF 2001 & 2004), Sunset Park recovered and continued to serve the community. The 50-acre Riverside neighborhood directly east of the park was lost to flood waters. Once the homes were removed (FEMA), the open space became part of the park.

In 2014 the tennis courts were fully renovated. The community driven and funded *Best Friends Dog Park* was added in 2015. Golden LEAF funds replaced the Sunset Park boat ramp in 2017.

Past Recreational Use

Children's Museum

On Easter Sunday, 1954 the Rocky Mount Children's Museum opened its doors to the public at Sunset Park. Led by Parks & Recreation Director Fairy Bandy and Children's Museum Director Mae Bell Woods, the Children's Museum became a treasure within the Rocky Mount community and has served generations of school children until it was lost to the flood waters of hurricane Floyd. In 2006, the Rocky Mount Children's Museum re-opened as a member of the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences located at 270 Gay Street, approximately one mile east of Sunset Park and out of the floodplain.

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Sunset Park Train

In 1952, the Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) purchased an Allen Herschell Company Model G-16 miniature train for Sunset Park. The train is a one fifth model of a F7 General Motors locomotive. Powered by a 20 horsepower Wisconsin gasoline engine, the train carries 36 passengers at an operating speed of 8 miles per hour.

In 1999 Consolidated Diesel Company (Cummins Rocky Mount Engine Plant) reconditioned the operating system of the train and refinished the body in purple and silver to match *The Champion,* a well-known passenger train that traveled from New York City to Miami, with regular stops in Rocky Mount. *The Champion* now resides in the round house at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, North Carolina.

Allen Herschell Company G-16
Sunset Park, Rocky Mount, NC

Electro-Motive Corporation (EMC) E3
North Carolina Transportation Museum, Spencer, NC

1978 *Work on Train*
Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation file photo

Sunset Park Train Station, Late 1990's
Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation file photo

Sunset Park train delivery, 1952
Rocky Mount Junior Chamber of Commerce Scrapbook [1951-1952], Braswell Memorial Library, Rocky Mount, NC

Sunset Park train, Circa 1952
Rocky Mount Junior Chamber of Commerce Scrapbook [1951-1952], Braswell Memorial Library, Rocky Mount, NC

Sunset Park Train Station, October 2006
Clocktower was relocated from Terry Town Mall, by the Rocky Mount Rotary Club.

The Train Station is the former pool house. The door on the far right was the entrance to the ladies changing room; the door to the far left served the men. The Sunset Park pool was in the grass area in the foreground of the building.

Sunset Park Carousel

Also in 1952, the Rocky Mount Civitan Club purchased a 1920 Herschell-Spillman "County Fair" style carousel for Sunset Park. County Fair carousels are designed to be portable carousels. The wood-carved horses feature laid-back ears, so they are not broken in transportation as well as front and rear legs that make the horse appear that it is jumping; these legs double as handles for transportation and installation.

Sunset Park Carousel, Circa 1953
Black and White Sheet Film 1953_0351_03 Sunset Park merry-go-round, 1953 Scan 1, Charles S. Killebrew Photographic Collection (P0091), North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Sunset Park Carousel, August 2022
Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation file photo

Past Parkland Use

For eight decades Sunset Park has offered a variety of recreation experiences. Located just upstream of the Rocky Mount Mills dam on the Tar River, the park is located on the section of the river considered the millpond. This results in little current and consistent water levels. The Sunset Park boat ramp is the only ramp located between the Rocky Mount Mills dam and the Davenport Mill dam (breached) just upstream of Halifax Road in Nash County. Fishing and boat riding at Sunset have been long-established recreation activities in Rocky Mount. Previous generations water skied the area and the Parks and Recreation Department offered riverboat cruises on weekends. Countless Rocky Mount children learned how to swim, play tennis and baseball and celebrated birthdays at the park. The western most trailhead for the Rocky Mount greenway is within the park. Sunset Park has been and remains the cornerstone of public recreation in the community.

Sunset Park Swimming Pool, Circa 1952

Black and White Sheet Film 1952_1533_03 Recreation, 1952 Scan 02, Charles S. Killebrew Photographic Collection (P0091), North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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Sunset Park Tennis, Circa 1968

1968_0269 Tennis Sunset Park, 1968 2, Charles S. Killebrew Photographic Collection (P0091), North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives, The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The article and images below were first published in the Rocky Mount Sunday Telegram, July 6, 1958.

THE ROCKY MOUNT
SUNDAY TELEGRAM
SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 6, 1958

Summertime Is Fun Time!

BY EDWARD.NEAL RINER
Telegram. Feature Writer

It is summertime!

Children are out of school. And it is just too hot and tiresome to stay at home all summer. So why not drive out to Sunset Park off of Sunset Avenue on Riverside Drive. Sunset Park provides a short, inexpensive vacation any day of the week.'

Why not start one afternoon by going to the swimming pool for cool relaxation, and then visit the Children's Museum and the zoo The museum always has interesting exhibits on subjects of interest to the whole family. The planetarium is also housed in the museum building. The antics-of the monkeys and the beautiful feathers of the, peacoks *(sic)* make the Zoo a definite stop in Sunset Park.

"The arcade might be the next stop on a hot summer day after which a cool ride on the-Cruiser on Tar River is in order. Or a ride in the family outboard; the river, is also a fine place for skiing.

Not only do. the swimming pool and river provide water fun, but the City Lake does also for fishermen. It's simple: fasten bait on hook; with a twist of the wrist send the baited hook and line into the water; and wait for the fish to bite.

Just before the sun goes down it is a good time to put the fishing pole away, take fish in hand and head for the numerous tables and fireplaces on the riverbank for a' big picnic supper for all the family.
When the outdoor meal is over, it is not time to leave, but time to start more fun. Although the sun is-down, the bright lights make the park's amusement facilities glow in merriment. There are the miniature train and merry-go-around for the kids (and adults); parents and teenagers have fun on the 18-hole miniature carpet golf-course and the tennis courts.

And each Monday and Friday nights the Rocky Mount Youth Council in co-sponsorship with the Recreation Department have a dance on the patio at the park." Mrs. Fairy Bandy, director of the City Recreation Department, invites everyone "in Rocky Mount and the area "to take advantage of the park. Whatever your form of recreation-might be, Rocky, Mount' Sunset Park has facilities for it. It's one of the City's best drawing cards.

DRAFT

WATER FUN
Whether its fishing at the City Lake or water skiing in the river, as Judy Barnes and Jake Rosenbloom are doing, the City Recreation Department offers many activities for children and adults at Sunset Park.

AROUND-AROUND-AROUND
As the carousel gives delighted children a ride to the rhythm of gay music, mothers quietly wait and watch in the shade.

Past Recreational Use and Design Considerations
Two intertwined design considerations shape the Renovation of Sunset Park:

1) The historic recreation activities of Sunset Park. Removing the Sunset Park train or Carousel is not acceptable in Rocky Mount. The Sunset tennis courts, Sunset Train Station and access to the Tar River are of equal importance to the community.

2) Almost the entire park property is located within the floodplain. This limits or eliminates the addition of structures and non-pervious surfaces within the park. The inclusion of a new structure would need to be offset by the removal of another in the same location of equal or greater size or elevating new structures above the floodplain, which becomes cost prohibitive.

Coupled together, these design considerations reduce the ability to significantly change the park and limits new opportunities to non-structures and pervious surfaces. This framework led the inclusion of the disc golf course in 2002 and the dog park in 2015. The floodplain directly impacted (minimized) the renovation of the boat ramp in 2017.

DRAFT

Section 2 Existing Studies Review
1975-1980 City of Rocky Mount Open Space Plan
City of Rocky Mount Department of Community Development, 1976 Pg 65

The 1975 City of Rocky Mount Open Space Plan (pp 65-67) referred to Sunset Park as "…the largest, most intensively developed park within the City." The listed recreation facilities included "a museum, a zoo, a putt-putt golf course, a skating area, a planetarium, a miniature train, and a merry-go-round. Other facilities at the 25-acre park include a Little League baseball field, a general activity field, eleven lighted tennis courts, two lighted basketball goals on a paved court, a 9,000 square foot swimming pool, a wading pool, thirty picnic tables, five outdoor fireplaces, four picnic shelters, twenty-one park benches, and a number of children's play apparatus". The challenges discussed were attributed to overcrowding due to its small size (25 acres at the time).

The plan recommended adding basketball, tennis, baseball and swimming pools to lessen the demand at Sunset. The plan also included the following seven-year capital plan:

Pave parking	$25,000
Clear Sunset Park extension	$2,000
Develop Sunset Park extension	$7,000
Rehabilitate swimming pool	$40,000
Additional paving	$30,000
Replace merry-go-round	$45,000

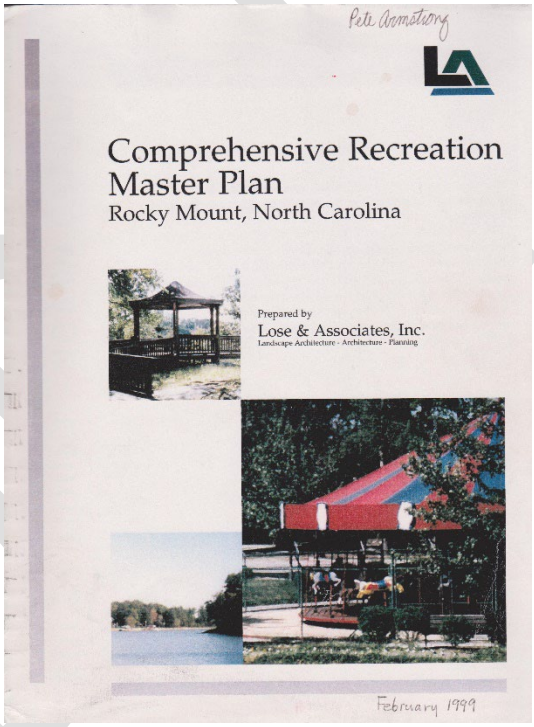
The city finalized purchase of the 14 acres of Sunset Park extension in 1999 for inclusion in the City Greenway in 2002. Invasive species management and the addition of Salamander Ridge trail were completed in 2022. The carousel was (thankfully) not replaced and has become a crown jewel of Rocky Mount.

DRAFT

1999 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation, Lose & Associates, Inc. Pg 6.49

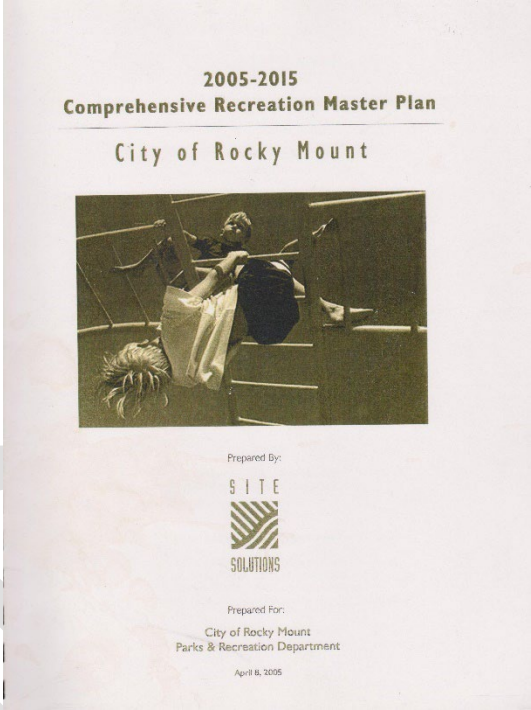
The 1999 document was the first comprehensive planning document led by the Parks and Recreation Department. It is a thorough document that should have served the Department for at least a decade. However, it was completed in the summer of 1999, just before Hurricane Floyd submerged 20% of Rocky Mount. The Arts Center, Children's Museum, bottom floor of Booker T. Washington Community Center and all parks along the Tar River including City Lake, Sunset, Battle, Stith and Talbert parks were devastated by flood waters. For the next decade the Parks and Recreation Department focused all efforts and funds to restoring what was lost.

The 1999 document recommended renovating the pool and museum, which were total losses within weeks of the document being published. Other items such as renovation of the train and merry-go-round became required due to flood damage. Removal of the baseball field was delayed and additional restrooms in the east of the park were no longer possible due to post-Floyd flood maps and regulations.



2005-2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation, Site Solutions

The 2005 document was developed to reflect the post-Floyd needs of the city parks system. The document was being written and implemented simultaneously to seek grant funds and renovate / build Sunset Park, Stith-Talbert Park, the Rocky Mount Sports Complex, Three Sisters Park, the City greenway system, etc. The document provided a brief overview of the post-Floyd renovation needs of Sunset Park, recognized the expansion of the park due to FEMA mitigation and include the construction of the Tar River Trail (Rocky Mount Greenway).


2005-2015
Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan

City of Rocky Mount

Prepared By:

SITE SOLUTIONS

Prepared For:

City of Rocky Mount
Parks & Recreation Department

April 8, 2005

2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation, AECOM
https://rockymountnc.gov/RockyMountNC/Documents/ParksAndRec/ParkPlanning/RockyMountMasterPlan.pdf

The 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan was developed within a decade of the post-Floyd renovation of Sunset Park. As a result, the park was in excellent condition scoring a five out of five by the Comprehensive Plan Review Group in the areas of *Serves Residents, Appearance, Condition, Accessibility and Appropriate Function* (p 48).

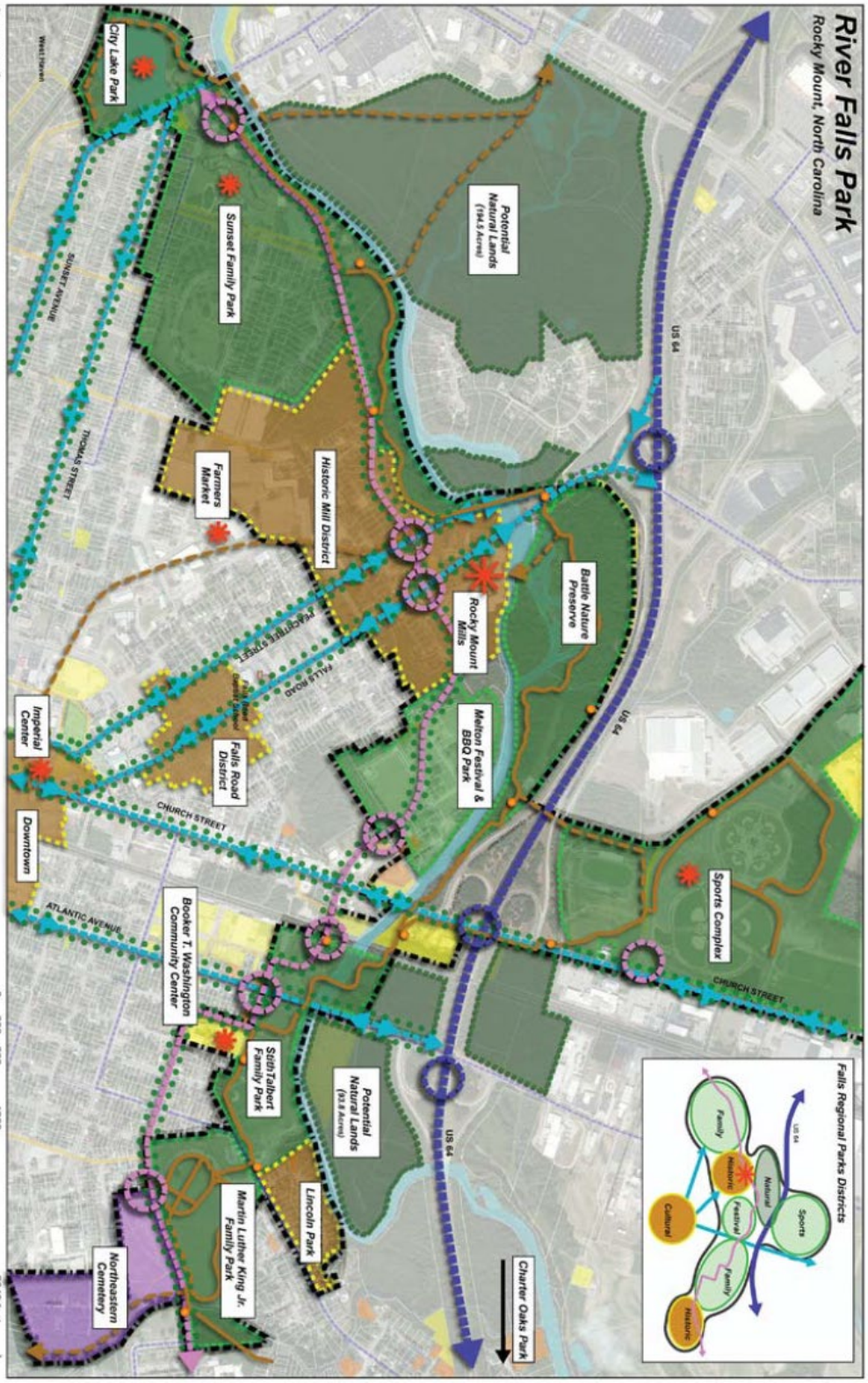
The 2015 plan includes Sunset Park as a latter-year funding park on pages 16, 116 (River Falls), 138, 143, 144, 148 & 149. The importance of Sunset Park as a trail hub is prioritized by funding on pages 143 & 146. Various public comments concerning the park are located on pages 183, 215, 221, 223 and 229.

River Falls Parks / Tar River Park System
Sunset Park is also central to the River Falls Parks / Tar River Park System concept found within the 2015 plan (p 116). The Tar River Parks System redevelops and rebrands the 403 acres of six existing parks connected by the Rocky Mount Greenway. The recreational opportunities of the system are extensive and diverse, ranging from the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. monument to the 1920 Herschell-Spillman "County Fair" carousel. The playing fields in the Rocky Mount Sports Complex are second-to-none and host local youth leagues during the week and tournament play most weekends. Battle Park, the City's only nature park is in the center of the greenway and includes six miles of mountain bike trails. The Tar River Parks System offers numerous fishing piers, boat ramps and paddle trail accesses along the 197-mile Tar River Paddle Trail.

The recent renovation of Battle Park (2022) initiated several design concepts and signage formats that will be replicated in renovation of Sunset Park. The 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan describes River Falls Park as follows:

> *When looking at the city's inventory of park spaces, it became clear that there was a wealth of parkland and natural areas along the Tar River. Not only was there a significant amount of acreage, but these were some of the city's most prestigious and utilized park spaces. In all, there are seven current City of Rocky Mount parks in the corridor, including the highly successful Sports Complex, City Lake Park, Sunset Park, Stith Talbert Park and Martin Luther King Jr. Park. This corridor is also home to the Rocky Mount Mill site and its adjacent Historic Mill District, the Lincoln Park Historic District, and is in close proximity to the Falls Road District, Downtown Rocky Mount, and the Imperial Centre. These diverse areas are all connected by the Tar River Trail, and six arterial roads linking US-64 and downtown.*
>
> *Realizing that these parks and natural lands were all city-owned properties, as well as some being city-owned FEMA Buyout Program sites, the concept of Falls River Park began to take shape. The concept leverages the variety of facilities available and establishes different venues with one large entity. The concept includes space for sports, family activities, natural exploration, festivals and events, and historic experience. In addition, proposed redevelopment of the Rocky Mount Mill site is located at the heart of River Falls Park and includes links to most of the city-owned assets. This redevelopment would feature both commercial and residential development, and its location on the Falls of the Tar River make it an attractive tourist destination. The River Falls Park concept has potential to be not only a regional venue, but an attraction that draws residents from all over North Carolina to what would be the largest municipal park in Eastern North Carolina.*

Figure 8: Conceptual Plan for River Falls Park



Conceptual Plan for River Falls Park, 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, page 118.
The Trailhead at Battle Park

2002 Renovation and Park Master Plan

The 2002 Sunset Park Master Plan (Site Solutions) was developed to recover from Hurricane Floyd and incorporate the Duke Circle FEMA properties into the park. The plan has been included in its entirety. While the document guided much of redevelopment, the PGA Golf School was not possible due to four homes not participating in the FEMA mitigation process and revised floodplain regulations prohibiting or minimizing redevelopment possibilities, such as a 30,000 sf building in the floodplain.

Project History/Overview

Sunset Park has long been a centerpiece of the Rocky Mount Park system. Located adjacent to the City's first water treatment facility, the original property covered 30 acres and provided over 2200 linear feet of water frontage along the Tar River.

Through the years, there have been changes to the facilities offered in the park, but traditionally Sunset has been a community park with a focus on special use facilities. Special use facilities like a miniature train, carousel and petting zoo have made Sunset Park a regional attraction. Newer facilities such as the skateboard park and sprayground have kept Sunset Park a favorite among the community's youth.

In addition to the special use facilities offered at Sunset Park, the park has played a significant role in providing more traditional recreation activities for the community. The City's first swimming pool was constructed here. The park has also been a primary setting for the City's little league and tennis programs.

Finally, Sunset Park has served as one of the City's most visible and heavily used open spaces. Its trails, picnic facilities, playgrounds and river access have provided citizens from Rocky Mount and the surrounding counties with a wonderful setting for passive recreation.

In 1999, when Hurricane Floyd ravaged the North Carolina coastal plains, Rocky Mount was dealt a crushing blow. The Tar River left its banks and flooded much of the City. All of Sunset Park was under water. More importantly, much of the residential neighborhood surrounding Sunset Park was under water. As part of a FEMA buyout program, the City obtained 61 acres of property immediately adjacent to Sunset Park. A Master Plan was developed to provide guidance in the renovation and expansion of Sunset Park.

The purpose of these revisions was to:

- Renovate the damaged areas of the park.
- Add new amenities to make the park more attractive/user friendly/desirable.
- Make appropriate use of FEMA property.

Site Analysis

Previous Land Use

The entire Sunset Park site has experienced the hand of man. The property, which covers 91 acres, is divided into two distinct buildable acres by North Taylor Street. The area to the west on North Taylor Street is the original park site. The area to the east of North Taylor Street is the site of the FEMA buyout. It was previously developed for residential use. While the landform on each of these areas is similar, previous land use has created some differences in the two sites. This site analysis will identify those differences.

Topography

The entire property is relatively flat. The existing park site is totally developed with parking, open fields, playfields and courts. Likewise, the FEMA buyout property has previously been developed for residential development and has very little topographic relief.

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The total elevation change across the site is less than 9 feet, and no slope on the site exceeds 5%. This site is ideally suited for most any park development.

Vegetation

The entire property is covered with a man-controlled vegetative palate. The existing park site is predominately open grass fields with scattered large trees (pine, oak and maple). Along the river, the tree cover becomes more dense with more lowland deciduous varieties. The area east of the North Taylor Street is covered by the remnants of the residential landscape which was associated with the houses and apartments which once covered the site. Like the park site, the general character of this area is grass ground cover with large maturing trees. In addition to the large trees, there are clusters of evergreen and ornamental shrubs found around the previous houses.

This existing vegetative cover provides an excellent setting for most any proposed park use.

Hydrology

The entire property is within the floodplain of the Tar River. While many park facilities can be developed within regulated flood plains, care must be taken to ensure that buildings and structures are located above flood-prone areas. Likewise grading operations within the floodplain are restricted to minimize excessive areas of fill which may impede water flow.

Water flow across the site is from east to west and drains to the Tar River. The drainage patterns on the site are completely manmade. Much of the site is drained across grassed fields to an existing storm drainage system from previous development.

There are some regulated drainage ways along the site adjacent to the river, as well as Tar-Pam buffer zones associated with the river. All of these drainage ways and buffer requirements are important and should be acknowledged as the park is renovated and developed.

Public Access

The park site, which is centrally located in Rocky Mount, is easily accessible from all areas of the City. Sunset Avenue, which runs from Rocky Mount's uptown area to Highway 64 and Interstate I-95, provides immediate access to the park.

Existing Structures

As noted above, the entire park property has been previously developed. The majority of the FEMA buyout property was originally covered with single-family residences and apartments. Most all of the existing structures have been removed, but much of the residential infrastructures (road, utilities, storm drainage, etc.) are still in place. While some of the existing infrastructure will be reused as part of proposed park improvements, most of this infrastructure will be removed or abandoned.

Recreational Needs

Sunset Park has long been Rocky Mount's most popular and widely known park. Several generations of Rocky Mount citizens have experienced the joys of spending a sunny afternoon picnicking, riding the miniature train, or watching children ride the carousel. The importance of Sunset Park as a community park with regional attraction has been

documented through a series of public meetings (see other sections of this Master Plan) for both this park and the City's Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan.

Through these meeting and the Comprehensive Plan, it is apparent Sunset Park's role as a community park with special use facilities for picnicking, amusement ride/activity, and passive recreation (picnicking, trails, river access) should be continued and expanded. In addition, the park expansion through the FEMA Buyout Program, provides the City with a very unique opportunity to expand the park and offer other special use facilities. Through the public meeting process, a number of suggested activities were proposed. These activities included:

- Community gardens
- River access
- Climbing wall
- Improvements to existing facilities

The improvements proposed in the Sunset Park Master Plan address each of these new activity suggestions, as well as renovate many of the existing facilities.

Program Description

The Master Plan for Sunset Park calls for significant renovations to the existing park area, and proposes a ± 60 acre addition allowing significant expansion of existing facilities.

In the area of the existing park (located between North Taylor Street and the Tar River) the majority of the existing facilities will remain, but will undergo significant renovation. The proposed Master Plan calls for the following renovations.

- Removal of the existing swimming pool.
- Renovation of the existing bathhouse to provide a Visitor Center and Depot for the miniature train. Existing pool and deck area are to be removed and redeveloped as an entertainment area with carousel and patio area.
- Expansion of train ride and development of Train Depot.
- Removal of existing street (River Drive) and relocation of parking areas to provide better pedestrian access to the river. Construction of walkways and docks along river.
- Landscape enhancements to North Taylor Street to create a parkway boulevard.
- Expansion of picnic facilities.
- Creation of new volleyball courts.
- Creation of new climbing wall.
- Improvements to the existing tennis courts.

A number of new park facilities are proposed for the area of the park expansion east of North Taylor Street. These new facilities includes:

- PGA Golf School with driving range, putting green, 3 hole teaching course and short game practicing area.
- 18 hole disc golf course.

- Community garden areas.
- Performing Arts areas with stage, seating and festival lawn.
- Basketball area with 3 courts.

The park master plan maintains Sunset Park as the premiere community park for the City. The renovation and expansion of the train and depot, the relocation and reuse of the carousel, renovation of the spray ground and the development of the performance stage reinforce the park's role as a special use facility. Expansion of the park and development of the golf school address special needs for a public golf facility as expressed in the public meeting. Development of the basketball courts, volleyball courts, and renovation of the little league ball field and tennis courts provide an important avenue for active recreation within the park.

Physical Needs

Hurricane Floyd saw the Tar River rise from its banks and flood much of Rocky Mount and eastern North Carolina. The hurricane's affects have significantly shaped the Master Plan for Sunset Park. All of the existing park was under water as the result of Hurricane Floyd. While this flooding did not significantly damage most of the park facilities, floodwaters did inundate the swimming pool filtration system; further damaging a system that was failing. The flooding of the pool confirmed the City's belief that the aging pool had outlived its useful life, and should be closed. Flooding damaged the existing carousel and demonstrated the need to relocate the popular park attraction to higher ground.

The most dramatic impact of Hurricane Floyd was on the neighborhood surrounding the park. A residential area of over 60 acres adjacent to the park was flooded as the result of the hurricane. As part of the FEMA Buyout Program, over 50 homes and apartments were purchased by the federal government. The purpose of the buyout program is to minimize future flooding impacts. To minimize future flood impacts on personal property, the federal government removed all of the dwelling units on the buyout property and made the property available to the City for park expansion.

The park expansion provided the City with a unique opportunity to more than double the size of the park. This expansion allowed the City to provide additional special use facilities to attract citizens from throughout the City. It also provides the perfect setting for a much needed municipal golf facility. While the land and demolition of the houses was provided as part of the buyout program, the City will be required to invest in some infrastructure improvements, as well as the construction of the facilities. A cost estimate for these improvements is included in other parts of this Master Plan document.

Public Involvement

The City of Rocky Mount completed a thorough Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan in early 1999. Several public meetings were held as part of the comprehensive plan process. Sunset Park was discussed during these meetings. Its importance as a city-wide specialty park was evident from the public input sessions. After Hurricane Floyd ravaged the City and its parks system in September of 1999, the need to revise the plan to meet the challenges of flood recovery was obvious. In order to accomplish this, the City held public meetings for

each Park that was damaged. The information gathered from these meetings was used to develop a revised Park Master Plan for the individual parks. Taken as a whole, the individual revised Park Master Plans provided guidance to revise the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan to meet the recreation needs of post-flood Rocky Mount.

The park specific meeting for Sunset Park was held on January 18, 2001. A plan to renovate existing facilities and properly use land obtained through the FEMA Buyout Program was discussed. Community gardens, river access, performance area and municipal golf facility were ideas that arose from the discussion.

On December 6, 2001 a second public meeting was held to discuss the individual Park Master Plans, make recommendations and suggest revisions to the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. During this meeting, support for the inclusion of outdoor recreation facilities such as climbing structures and disc golf in the Sunset Park Master Plan were presented by groups of the public.

SUNSET PARK MASTER PLAN

Sunset Park Master Plan

Master Plan Cost Estimate

Item	
Demolition	**$215,607.00**
East Duke Circle Basketball Area	**$161,985.00**
Road Monument	
Gazebo	
(3) Basketball Courts ($97,7600.00)	
Maintenance Building - Storage	**$109,775.00**
Existing Tennis Area	**$189,508.00**
Tennis Backoard - Wall ($10,000.00)	
Tennis Court Improvements - Wall ($96,000.00)	
Parking Improvements	
Festival Area	**$326,212.00**
Stage and Concrete seating	
Parking Improvements	
Golf Facility	**$4,758,658.00**
30,000 sf Building	
Restaurant	
Driving Range, Putting Greens, 3 Holes	
9- Hole Disc Golf Course ($10,000.00)	
Parking Improvements	
Community Garden	**$22,175.00**
Fenced Play Area	**$17,200.00**
Train center and Amenity Areas	**$653,759.00**
Parking Improvements	
Renovated Pool Building / Covered Train loading	
Concrete Plaza	
Site improvements / furnishings	
Renovated Miniature Train Tracks	
Relocated Shuffle board, horse shoe pits	
Relocated Carousel	
Site Amenities	**$39,000.00**
(2) Bocce Courts ($6,000.00)	
Bouldering wall ($28,500.00)	
(3) Park Pets children play structures ($4,500.00)	
Misc. Site Improvements	**$106,900.00**
Site Furnishings, Landscape	
River Walk	**$154,595.00**
(3) Overlook Docks ($60,000.00)	
Sub-Total	**$6,746,374.00**
Contingency-12%	**$809,444.88**
Sub-Total	**$7,554,818.88**
Architectural, Geotechnical, Survey, Permit Fees and Construction Observation (8%)	**$604,385.51**
Total Estimated Construction	**$8,159,204.39**

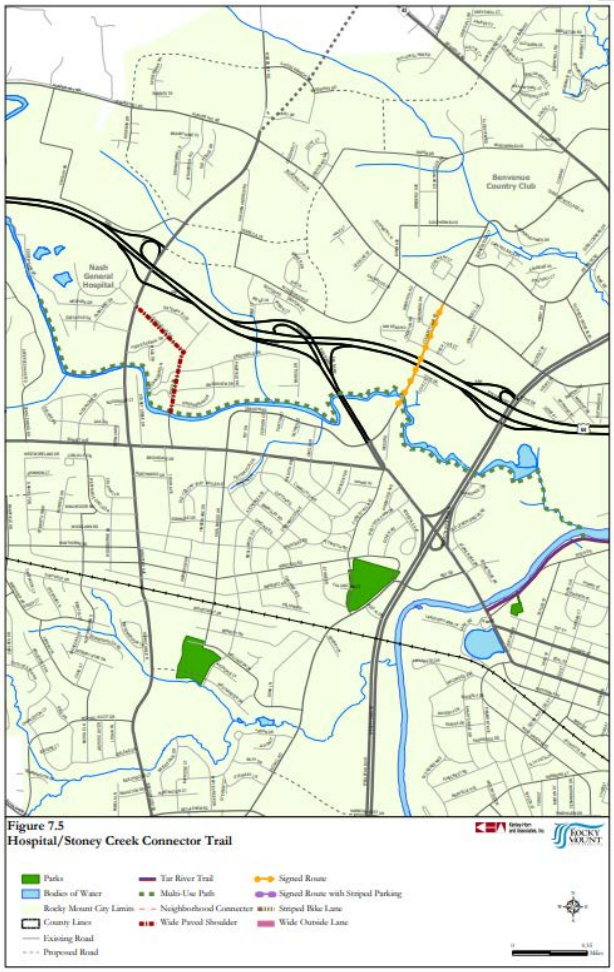
2007 City of Rocky Mount Comprehensive Bike Plan
City of Rocky Mount Engineering, Kimley-Horn and Assoc.

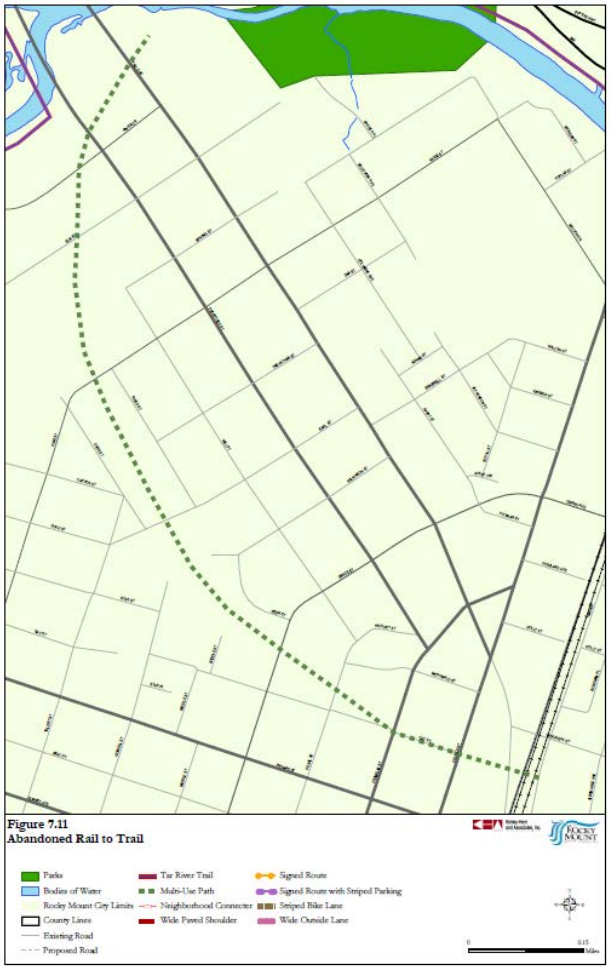
The 2007 document includes:
The Hospital/Stony Creek Connector Trail (Figure 7.5) with the trailhead at Sunset Park, near Shelter A.
The 2007 plan includes the Stony Creek connector trail as a Potential Project (p 9-4).

Consists primarily of a greenway multi-use path along the southern bank of Stoney Creek, with some connectors. Connects to the existing Tar River Trail and three proposed trails. Connects with the hospital. Cost: $800,000.

The Abandoned Rail to Trail (Figure 7.11) connecting to the existing greenway at the northeastern border of Sunset Park. The 2007 plan includes the Abandoned Rail to Trail as a Potential Project (p 9-4).

Connects the Imperial Center downtown with Battle Park and the Falls of the Tar River.
Cost: $250,000.

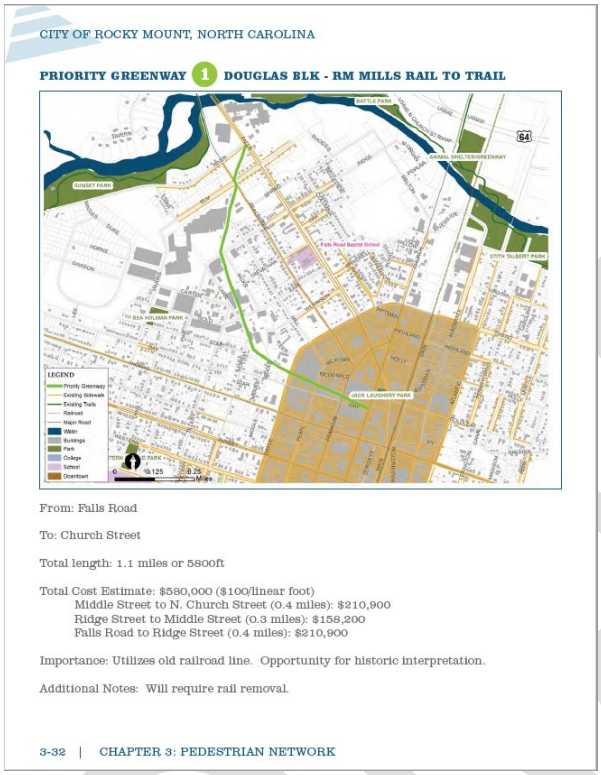




2012 City of Rocky Mount Pedestrian Plan

City of Rocky Mount Engineering, Alta/Greenways

The 2012 Pedestrian Plan included the Douglas Block to RM Mills Rail-to-Trail greenway and the Sunset Park to Hospital Area greenway as the #1 and #2 Priority Greenways. The 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan (pp 26-30) adopted the plan for prioritized greenway trails from the 2012 Pedestrian Plan. Both greenways originate in Sunset Park.



CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA

PRIORITY GREENWAY 1 DOUGLAS BLK - RM MILLS RAIL TO TRAIL

From: Falls Road

To: Church Street

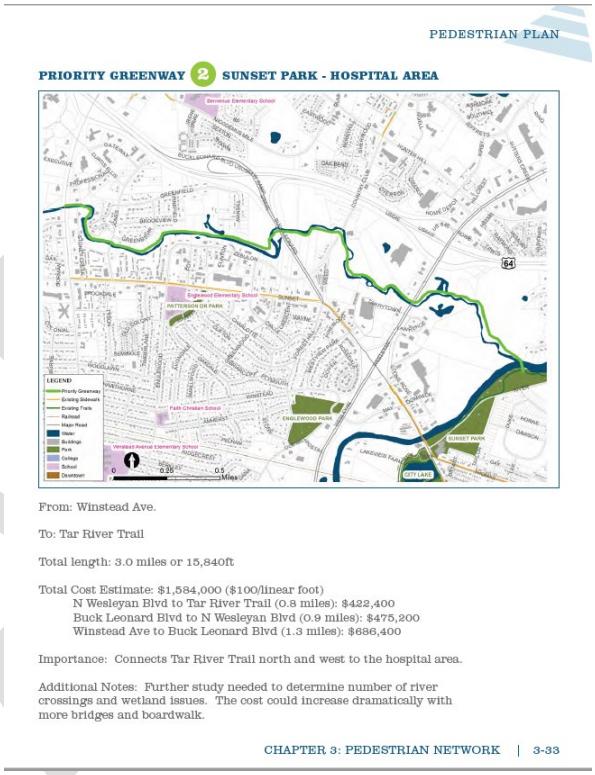
Total length: 1.1 miles or 5800ft

Total Cost Estimate: $580,000 ($100/linear foot)
Middle Street to N. Church Street (0.4 miles): $210,900
Ridge Street to Middle Street (0.3 miles): $158,200
Falls Road to Ridge Street (0.4 miles): $210,900

Importance: Utilizes old railroad line. Opportunity for historic interpretation.

Additional Notes: Will require rail removal.

3-32 | CHAPTER 3: PEDESTRIAN NETWORK



PEDESTRIAN PLAN

PRIORITY GREENWAY 2 SUNSET PARK - HOSPITAL AREA

From: Winstead Ave.

To: Tar River Trail

Total length: 3.0 miles or 15,840ft

Total Cost Estimate: $1,584,000 ($100/linear foot)
N Wesleyan Blvd to Tar River Trail (0.8 miles): $422,400
Buck Leonard Blvd to N Wesleyan Blvd (0.9 miles): $475,200
Winstead Ave to Buck Leonard Blvd (1.3 miles): $686,400

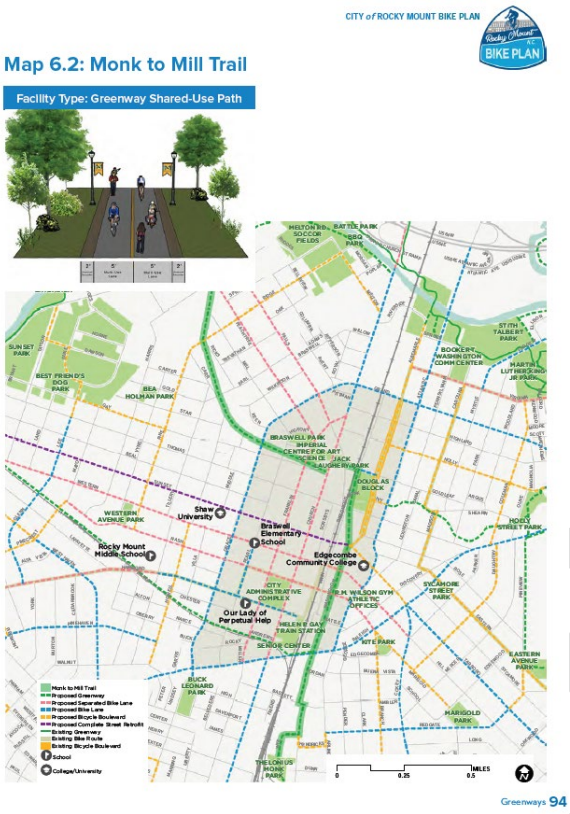
Importance: Connects Tar River Trail north and west to the hospital area.

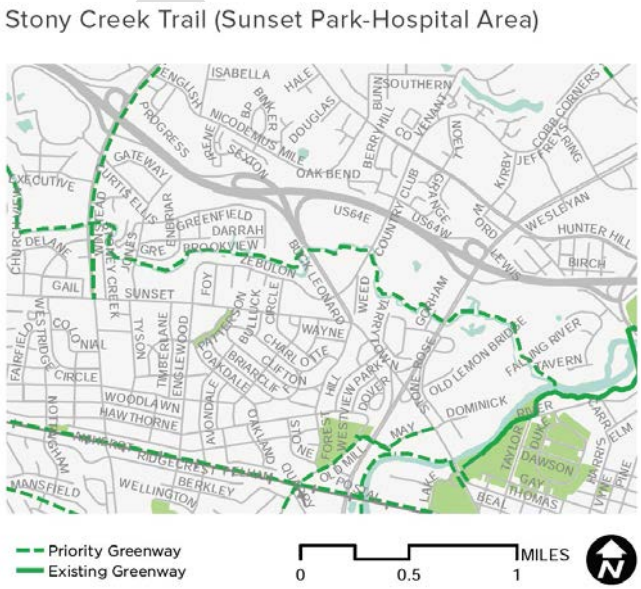
Additional Notes: Further study needed to determine number of river crossings and wetland issues. The cost could increase dramatically with more bridges and boardwalk.

CHAPTER 3: PEDESTRIAN NETWORK | 3-33

2018 City of Rocky Mount Bike Plan
City of Rocky Mount Engineering, Alta/Greenways

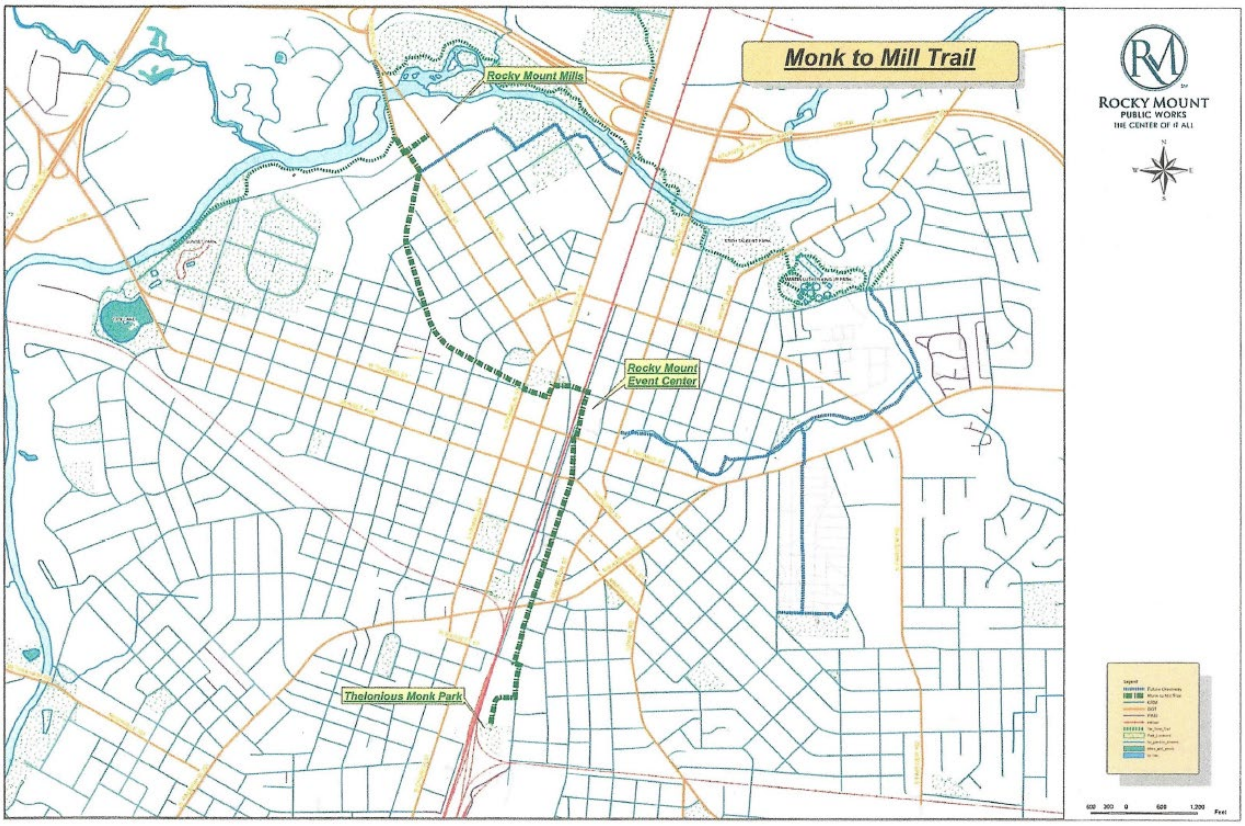
The 2018 Bike Plan includes both the Monk to Mill Trail and the Stony Creek Trail.





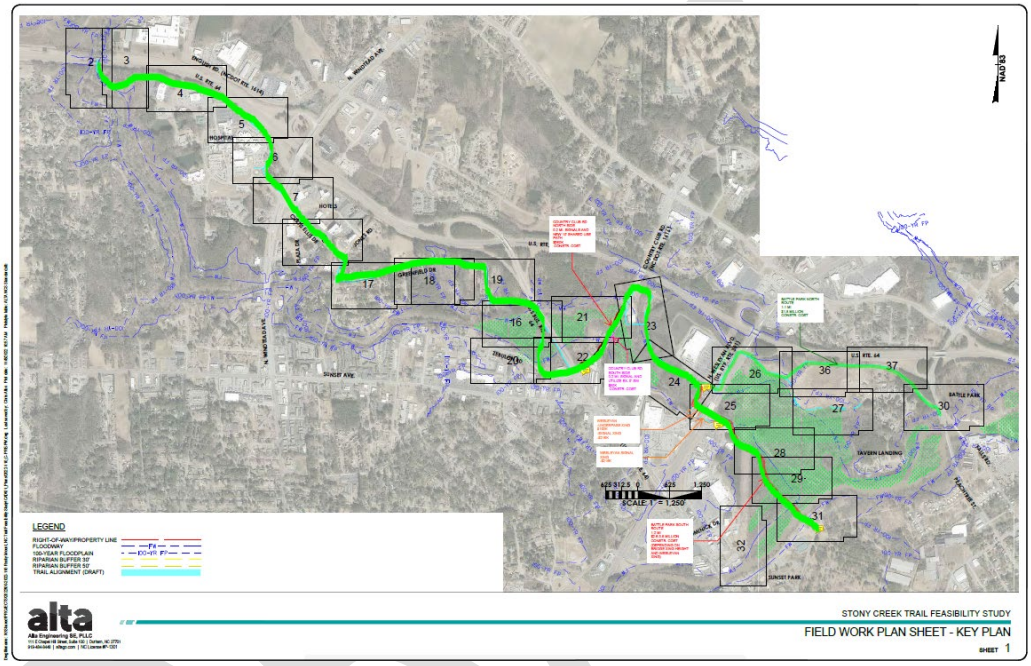
2016 Monk to Mill Trail Feasibility Study
City of Rocky Mount Engineering, EHI Consultants

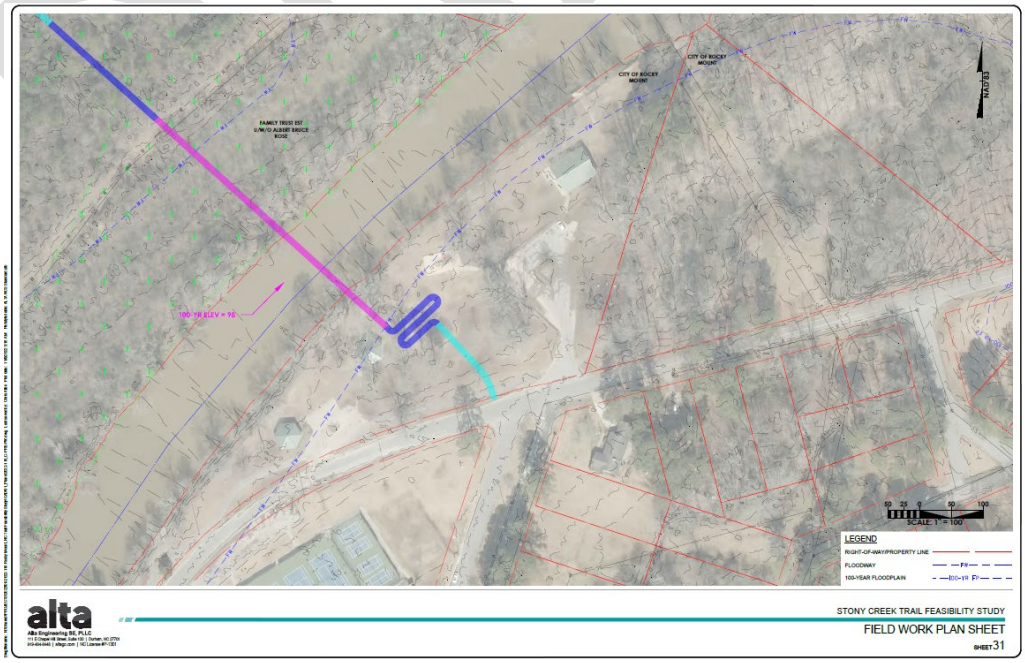
The purpose of the Monk to Mill Trail Feasibility Study was to evaluate the feasibility of developing a 2.5-mile recreational trail from the existing Monk Park to the existing Rocky Mount Greenway system at Sunset Park. The connection site will be Sunset's northeastern border, adjacent Rocky Mount Mills. Approximately 1.1 miles of the trail will include converting a former rail bed into a multi-use trail. The trail will connect neighborhoods in south and central Rocky Mount to the parks along the existing Rocky Mount Greenway (Tar River Parks System) as well as the retail, and service establishments of Downtown Rocky Mount and Rocky Mount Mills. The Monk to Mill Trail has been led by the City of Rocky Mount Public Works Department and has received funding from the NC State Transportation Improvement Plan. Preliminary engineering is underway.



2022 Stony Creek Trail Feasibility Study
City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation, Alta Design & Planning

In the spring on 2022, the P&R Department began the process to gather public input concerning the recreation needs and desires of Ward Five; this occurred prior to Ward redistricting, the project area is now in Wards 5 and 2. The process determined the preference for a trail connecting to the rest of the city and the parks along the Tar River. The Department contracted with Alta Design & Planning to conduct the study which is currently in progress. One trailhead consideration for the Stony Creek Trail is near Sunset Park Shelter A. DRAFT images are provided, route highlighted in lime green.





Section 3 National Standards for Recreation and Parks

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Forms of Programs and Services

The NRPA is the national association for local government recreation departments, the Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation Department has been a member for decades and has numerous certified staff members. The NRPA recognizes four basic forms of Programs and Services. While programs are commonly attributed to indoor facilities, it is wise to consider *HOW* the proposed park renovation will be used by the visitor. This allows for the inclusion of appropriate staff members and partners in the planning process and for the associated operating budget.

Self-Directed Programs and Services
Self-directed recreation opportunities for individuals and groups to participate without leadership, and minimal to no supervision. Examples include picnic facilities, tennis courts, roadways in scenic areas, bridle trails, self-guiding nature trails, and open playgrounds.

Leader-Directed Programs and Services
Leader-directed recreation opportunities that provide recreation opportunities where participant involvement is directed by a leader, including skills instruction classes. Examples include tennis, crafts, dance; synchronized swimming performance; creative dramatics for children.

Facilitated Programs and Services
Facilitate assistance to individuals and groups of individuals that provide or want to provide recreation programs and leisure services independently from the agency. An example of facilitated programs and services is an individual or group that wishes to start a community theater organization; the agency may help initially by providing a meeting place, some administrative help in publicity, and "seed money" with the intent that the organization will become self-sustaining. Demonstration projects may be utilized for this purpose.

Cooperative Programming
Cooperative agreements with public, commercial, and nonprofit entities to provide programming.

2020 NC SCORP and NRPA 1995 Park, Recreation, Open Space & Greenway Guidelines

The 2020 NC SCORP and the 1995 NPRA Park, Recreation, Open Space & Greenway Guidelines provide a general framework to discuss park "type" by size and park-use. Both are provided for reference purposes. The size and use of parks may not fit cleanly into a given classification. Terms are for general discussion purposes only.

NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Division of Parks and Recreation (May 2020). *North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan.* Retrieved December 2022, from https://www.ncparks.gov/media/897/open

Mertes, J. D., & Hall, J. R. (1996). *Park, recreation, open space and greenway guidelines*. Urban Land Inst.

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2020 NC SCORP Regional/State Parks
Area of natural quality for natural resource-based outdoor recreation. Generally, 80 percent of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management with less than 20 percent developed for recreation. Typical size is 3,000-5,000 acres. Examples include state parks, state recreation areas, state natural areas, educational state forests and large natural resource-based county parks. Activities include nature study, picnicking, camping, fishing, boating, swimming, and various trail uses. Rocky Mount is within the Medoc Mountain State Park service area. Medoc Mountain, managed by the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, State Parks Division encompasses 3,893 acres in Halifax County.

NRPA Regional Park
Regional parks are typically very large sites, encompassing unique qualities that exemplify the natural features, diverse land formations, and the variety of vegetation and wildlife found in the region. Examples of the types of facilities provided in a regional park include environmental centers, camping, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas. Open fields for non-structured activities, such as frisbee throwing or kite flying, are also generally found in these parks. Land chosen for future preserves or the expansion of existing sites should contain the previously mentioned characteristics accompanied with natural water features such as beach areas, rivers, and creeks. The majority of the site should be reserved for passive recreation, with the remaining acreage used for active recreation.

Service Area: Typically serve the entire county
Acreage/Population Ratio: 10 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size: Sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed. Typically, a minimum of 200 acres; up to 1,000 acres.
Regional Parks are typically provided by federal, state and/or county agencies.

Rocky Mount
Currently there are no Regional Parks in Nash or Edgecombe County due to minimum size (200 acres). In Rocky Mount, Battle Park and **Sunset Park** function similarly to regional parks, although they are limited by size. The Tar River Parks System would be a Regional Park.

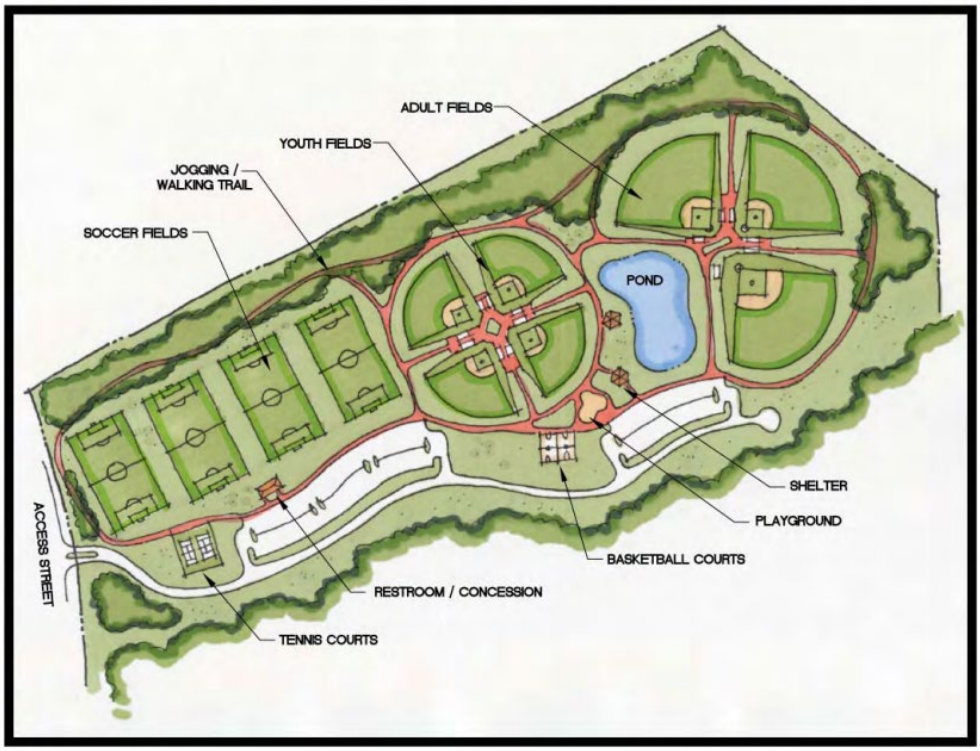
Typical Regional Park 200 + Acres

2020 NC SCORP District/Metro Area Park
Area serving one or more suburban or rural communities. Like the Community Park, these areas offer both intensive recreation activities and natural environment areas. Typical size is 20-100 acres. Examples include intensively developed county-wide or regional parks and developed public recreation sites at large reservoirs.

NRPA District Parks and Sports Complexes
Sports complexes function as the major source of active recreation in many communities. Activities are similar to those found in community parks but are developed to support tournament level competition. Passive recreation opportunities are usually limited, but may be found in undisturbed areas, often within surrounding buffers. Sites for sports complexes should be relatively flat to minimize the need for excessive grading. Since most of the land will be developed for athletic fields, sites without significant vegetation or natural features are acceptable, and in some cases may be preferred. Sites should be reasonably accessible from major thoroughfares. Direct access to residential areas should be limited. Buffers should be provided adjacent to residential areas.

Service Area: Typically serve the entire community
Acreage/Population Ratio: 2.0 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size: 40-80 acres
Development of district parks typically falls within the responsibility of county or municipal agencies.

Rocky Mount
Encompassing over 150 acres and 20 championship fields, the Rocky Mount Sports Complex is well-known on the east coast as a quintessential Sports Complex Park.



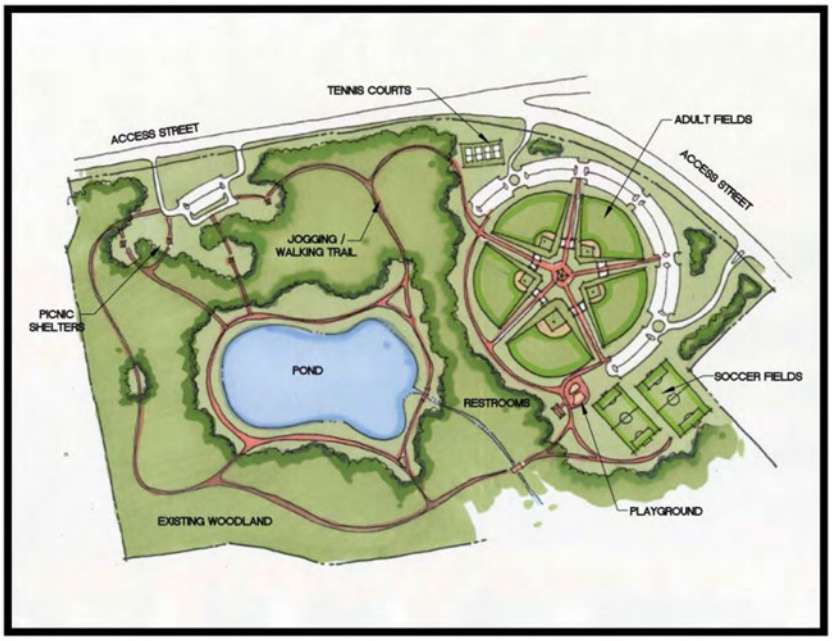
Typical Sports Complex 40-80 Acres

2020 NC SCORP Community Park
Area providing a wide array of active recreational opportunities such as a recreation center with a gymnasium, athletic fields, swimming pool, hard surface courts, and picnicking areas. Natural or landscaped areas are provided for passive recreation. 10-20 acres is a typical size. Examples include large park/school complexes; recreation center/ pool/sports field and court complexes; and community center/park complexes.

NRPA Community Parks
Community parks provide for the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community. A range of facilities is typically provided and may support tournament competition for athletic and league sports or passive recreation. These parks also present opportunities for nontraditional types of recreation. Fifty percent of community park sites should be developed for passive recreation. These relatively undisturbed areas may serve as buffers around the park and/or act as buffers between active facilities. Community Park sites should have varying topography and vegetation. Forested areas should have a variety of tree species. Cleared areas should be present for siting active recreational facilities. One or more natural water feature(s), such as a lake, river, or creek, are desirable. Parkland should be contiguous and strategically located in order to be accessible to all users within the neighborhoods it serves.

Service Area: .5 - 3 mile radius
Acreage/Population Ratio: 3 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size: 30-50 acres
Development of community parks may fall within the responsibility of municipality or county agencies.

Rocky Mount
The Stith-Talbert / Dr. Martin Luther King parklands, as well as **Sunset Park / Sunset Park extension** are two well-known community parks in Rocky Mount. At approximately 30 acres, Ennis (Red Oak) Park in Nash County is a community parks with a focus on active recreation.



Typical Community Park 30 - 50 Acres

2020 NC SCORP Neighborhood Park
Area for active recreation such as field and court games or using a playground or splash pad. Can also be smaller informal parks for open space activities. Two to eight acres is a typical size. Examples include mini parks serving residential areas, playgrounds, sports fields and combination playgrounds/ sports fields/ passive natural areas.

NRPA Neighborhood Park
Neighborhood parks provide the basic unit of most park systems. These parks are usually located within walking distance of the area serviced and provide a variety of activities of interest to all age groups. While their small size requires intense development, fifty percent of each site should remain undisturbed, if possible, to serve as a buffer between the park and adjacent land users.

Service Area: .25 to .75-mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio: 1.5 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size: 5-10 acres

Neighborhood parks are typically developed by municipalities

Rocky Mount
Eastern Avenue, Three Sisters, Branch Street, Buck Leonard, Farmington and Hornbeam parks in Rocky Mount as well as Livesay Park in Tarboro are all examples of neighborhood parks.

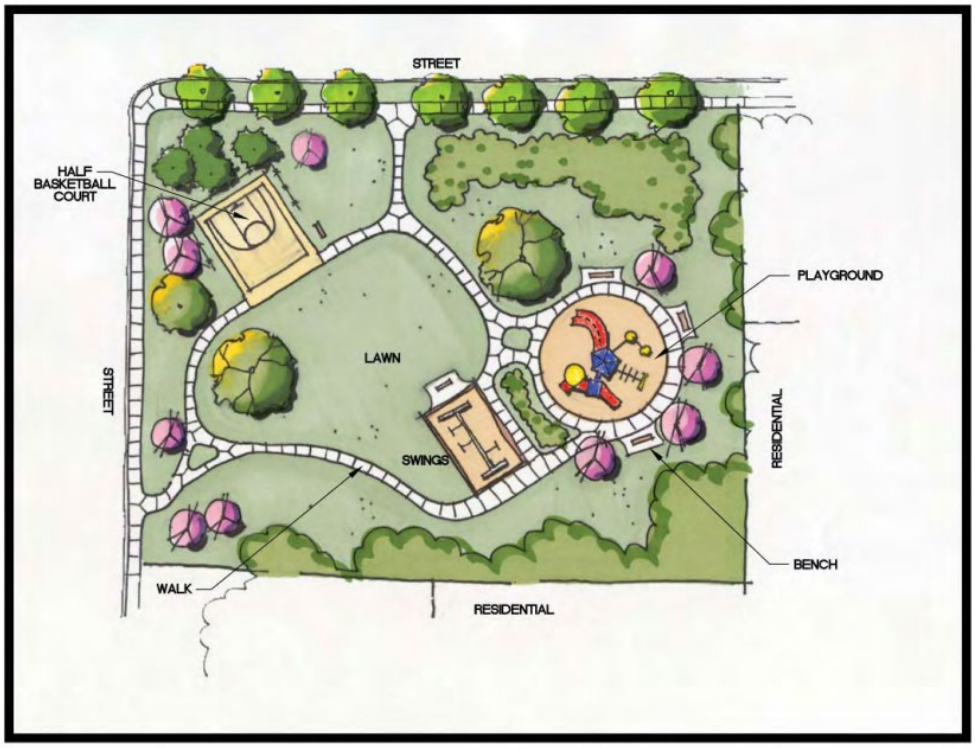
Typical Neighborhood Park 5 - 10 Acres

Mini Parks
Mini parks are the smallest park classification. These parks are located within walking distance of the area serviced, and they provide limited recreational needs. The small amount of land associated with mini parks usually results in intense development with little to no buffer between the park and adjacent properties.

Service Area: .25-mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio: .25 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size: .25 - 1 acres

Mini parks are typically developed by municipalities.

Rocky Mount
At just 0.26 acres, Oakwood Drive Mini Park is an example of a Mini Park within the Rocky Mount Parks system. The recreation value offered to the community weighed against the weekly maintenance required make Mini Parks the least efficient parks within a parks system.



Typical Mini Park .25 - 1 Acres

Dispersed Use/ Conservancy Area
Area for protection and management of the natural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective. Multiple-use management approaches produce natural resource outputs such as timber, agricultural produce and minerals. Examples include state gamelands, multiple use areas of national and state forests, reservoir shoreline buffer lands, and Blue Ridge Parkway acreage. These sites are generally large enough to manage the primary natural resource while providing secondary recreational uses.

Conservation Areas

- Tar River Land Conservancy (TRLC), Bunn Farm Tract. 36.37 acres adjacent Bunn Farm Park
- Town of Tarboro / TRLC, St. Luke's Church Tract 8.98 acres
  TRLC owns or protects numerous tracts in the Rocky Mount area, the two provided are adjacent a city park or open to the public.

North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission Gamelands (Nash and Edgecombe Counties)

- Lower Fishing Creek game lands (Edgecombe, Halifax) 1,296 acres
- Tar River game lands (Edgecombe) 134 acres
- Sandy Creek game lands (Nash, Franklin) 923 acres
- Shocco Creek game lands (Nash, Halifax, Warren) 8,109 acres

Wilderness Area
Area characterized by unmodified natural environment of fairly large size. Low interaction between users, and evidence of others is minimal. Motorized use is not permitted. Typical size is 5,000-15,000 acres. Examples are congressionally designated National Wilderness Areas.

Designated Wilderness Areas in North Carolina
Croatan National Forest

- Catfish Lake South Wilderness
- Pocosin Wilderness
- Pond Pine Wilderness
- Sheep Ridge Wilderness

Pisgah National Forest

- Linville Gorge Wilderness
- Middle Prong Wilderness
- Shining Rock Wilderness

Nantahala National Forest

- Ellicott Rock Wilderness
- Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness
- Southern Nantahala Wilderness

Uwharrie National Forest

- Birkhead Mountain Wilderness

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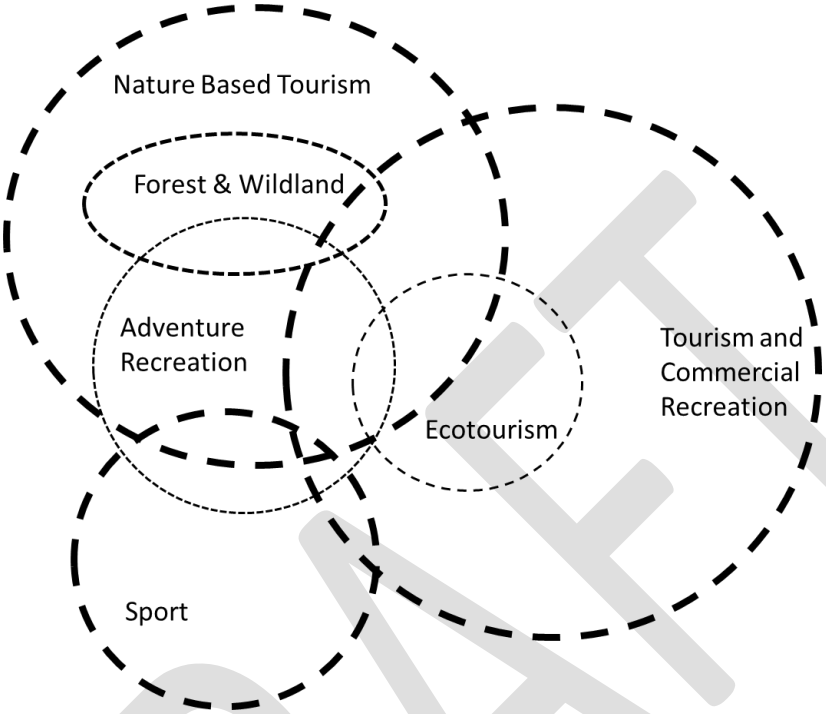
Forms and Overlap of Outdoor Recreation
Moore, R. L., & Driver, B. L. (2005). *Introduction to outdoor recreation: Providing and managing natural resource based opportunities. Venture.*



Nature Based Tourism
An aspect of tourism where the focus is the study and/or observation of flora, fauna and/or landscape.

Forest & Wildland Recreation
Recreational activities conducted outdoors in wildland areas that are dependent on the natural resources of these areas.

Adventure Recreation
A variety of self-initiated activities utilizing an interaction with the natural environment that contain elements of real or apparent danger.

Sport
Competitive events held in the natural environment.

Tourism and Commercial Recreation
The entire world-industry of travel, hotels, transportation, and all other components including promotion, that serves the needs and wants of travelers.

Ecotourism
Responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people.

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Section 4 NC Regional Trail Systems and NCDOT Great Trails State Plan Network
Sunset Park is the western-most trailhead for the Rocky Mount Greenway. As the City renovates the park and considers the Monk to Mill Trail and Stony Creek Trail expansion of the greenway system, an understanding of other greenway and trail systems is appropriate.

East Coast Greenway
https://www.greenway.org/

On June 25, 2021, Governor Roy Cooper signed HB 130, designating the East Coast Greenway as part of the NC State Parks System and an official NC State Trail. The East Coast Greenway is a 3,000-mile greenway that spans from Maine to Florida. In North Carolina, the greenway will create a 365-mile spine and a 425-mile coastal complimentary route.

"Designating these trails as part of the State Parks system will ensure that we continue to develop and maintain these important resources for all North Carolinians. It is vital to the health and well-being of our state's residents that public outdoor spaces are available to everyone, in every community."

- Governor Roy Cooper, June 25, 2021 Signature Ceremony of HB 130

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021

SESSION LAW 2021-54
HOUSE BILL 130

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITION OF THE EAST COAST GREENWAY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA TO THE STATE PARKS SYSTEM.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. The General Assembly finds that a multiuse trail across Central and Eastern North Carolina would provide a multitude of economic, recreational, health, environmental, community, and transportation benefits. The General Assembly further finds that federal, State, local, and private partners have expressed substantial interest in completing such a trail, that such a trail would be a recreational resource of statewide significance, and that including such a trail in the State Parks System as a State Trail would be beneficial to the people of North Carolina and further the development of North Carolina as "The Great Trails State."

SECTION 2. The General Assembly authorizes the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to add the portion of the East Coast Greenway traversing North Carolina to the State Parks System as the "East Coast Greenway State Trail," as provided in G.S. 143B-135.54(b). The Department shall support, promote, encourage, and facilitate the establishment of trail segments on State park lands and on lands of other federal, State, local, and private landowners. On segments of the East Coast Greenway that cross property controlled by agencies or owners other than the Department's Division of Parks and Recreation, the laws, rules, and policies of those agencies or owners shall govern the use of the property. The requirement of G.S. 143B-135.54(b) that additions be accompanied by adequate appropriations for land acquisition, development, and operations shall not apply to the authorization set forth in this act; provided, however, that the State may receive donations of appropriate land and may purchase other needed lands for the East Coast Greenway with existing funds in the Land and Water Fund, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, and other available sources of funding.

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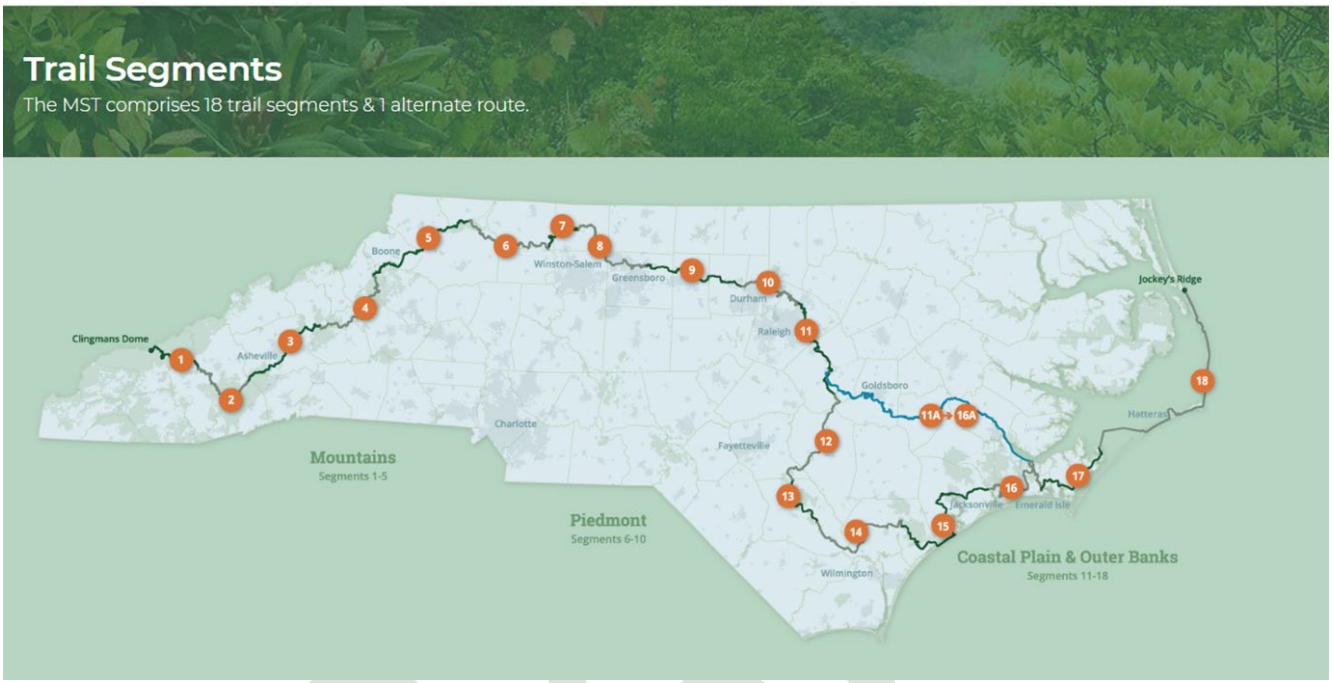
NC Mountains to Sea Trail
https://mountainstoseatrail.org/



The Mountains-to-Sea Trail is a simple footpath stretching almost 1,200 miles across North Carolina from Clingmans Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains to Jockey's Ridge on the Outer Banks.

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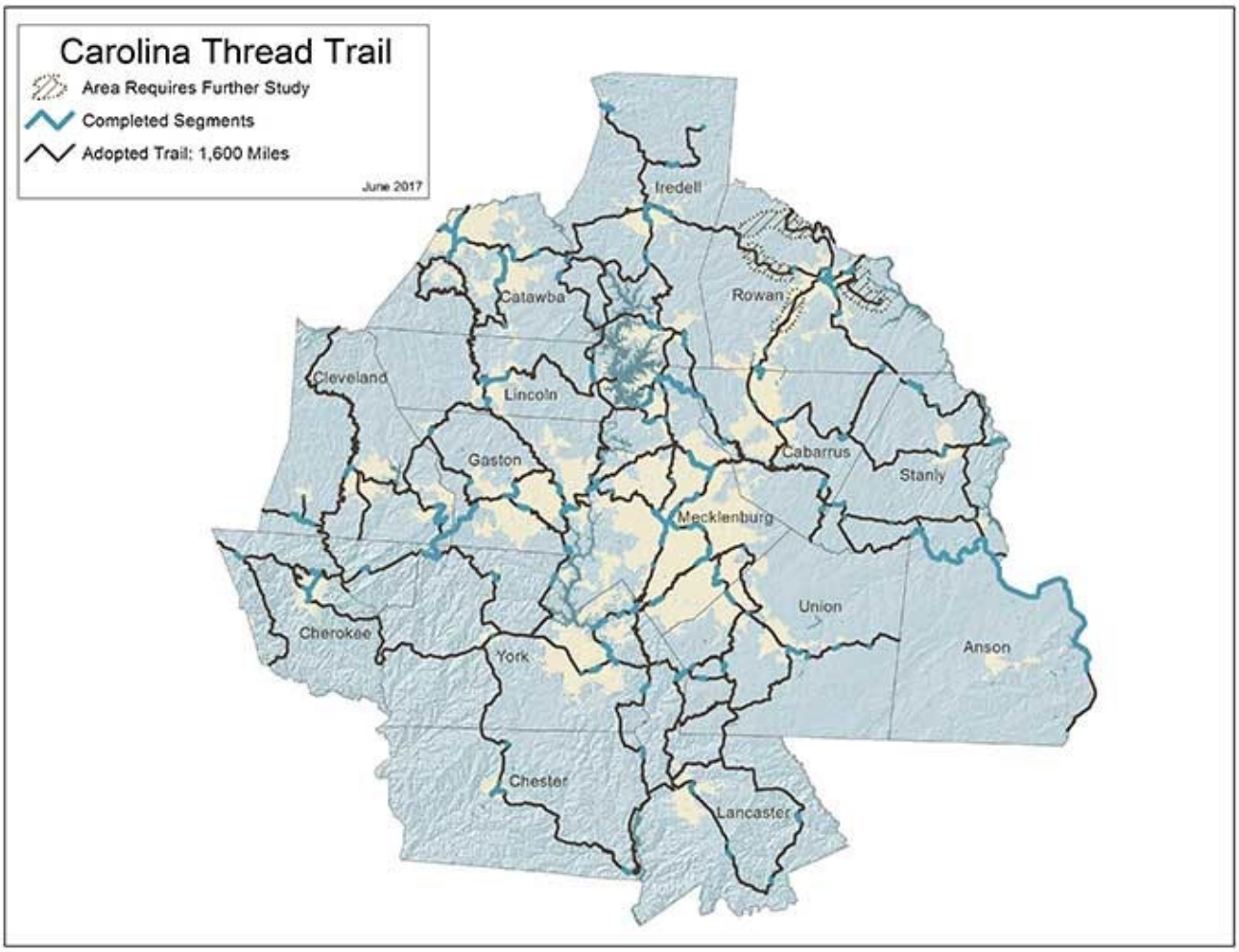
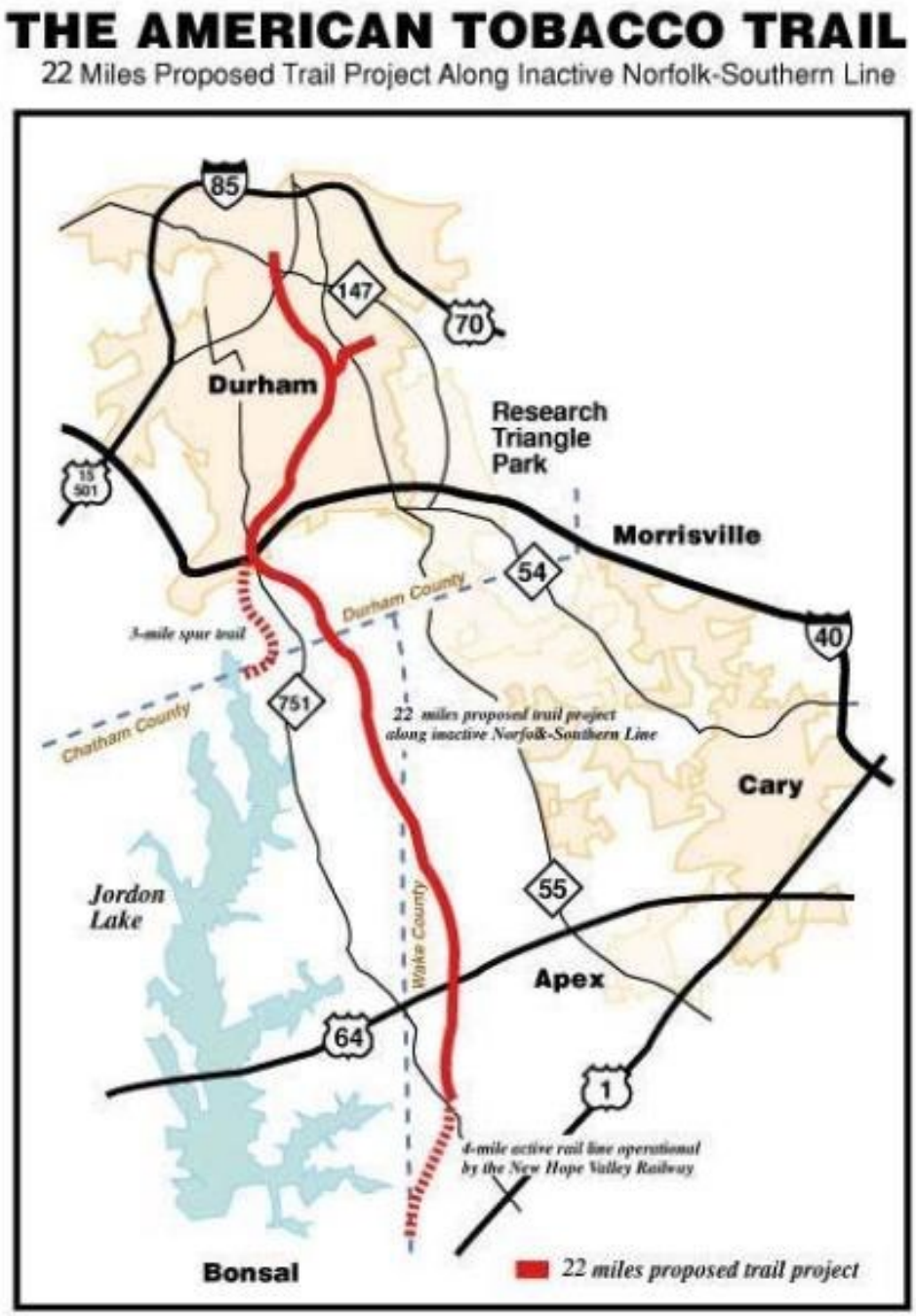
Carolina Thread Trail
https://www.carolinathreadtrail.org/



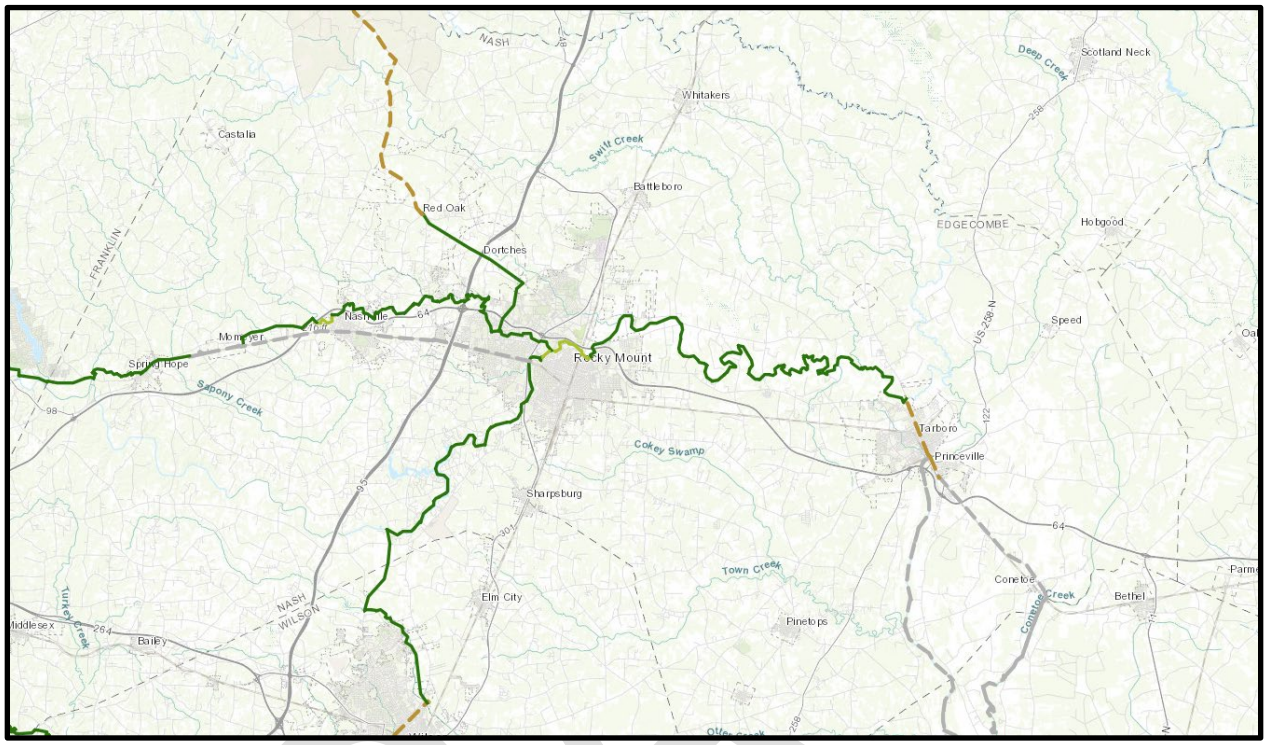
The Carolina Thread Trail is a regional network of connected greenways, trails and blueways that reaches 15 counties, 2 states and 2.9 million people. There are over 300 miles of trails and 170 miles of blueway open to the public – linking people to places, and communities to each other. The Thread Trail preserves natural areas and is a place for recreation, transportation and conservation. This is a landmark project that provides public and community benefits for people of every age, every background and in every community in our region.

American Tobacco Trail
http://www.triangletrails.org/american-tobacco-trail



The American Tobacco Trail is a 22+ mile rails-to-trails project located in the Triangle Region of North Carolina. The route crosses through the City of Durham; Durham, Chatham, and Wake counties; the planning jurisdictions of the Towns of Cary and Apex; and passes through the Lake Jordan project land of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

NCDOT Great Trails State Plan Network
https://ncdot.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?useExisting=1&layers=daecddb2e6374981b3ed122305d2baf5



Plan Goals
The Great Trails State Plan and network seeks to connect all counties and key destinations throughout the state to a growing network of strategic greenways. Other principal goals of the plan include:
• Foster connections between urban and rural areas in all 100 counties
• Provide transportation options between where people live, work and play for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities
• Create opportunities for conservation, recreation, education, physical health, environmental health, tourism, and economic prosperity
• Identify resources needed to plan, design, construct and connect the system
• Facilitate multi-jurisdictional partnerships to support, develop, manage, and maintain the system

https://www.ncdot.gov/divisions/integrated-mobility/multimodal-planning/great-trails-state/Documents/great-trails-summary.pdf

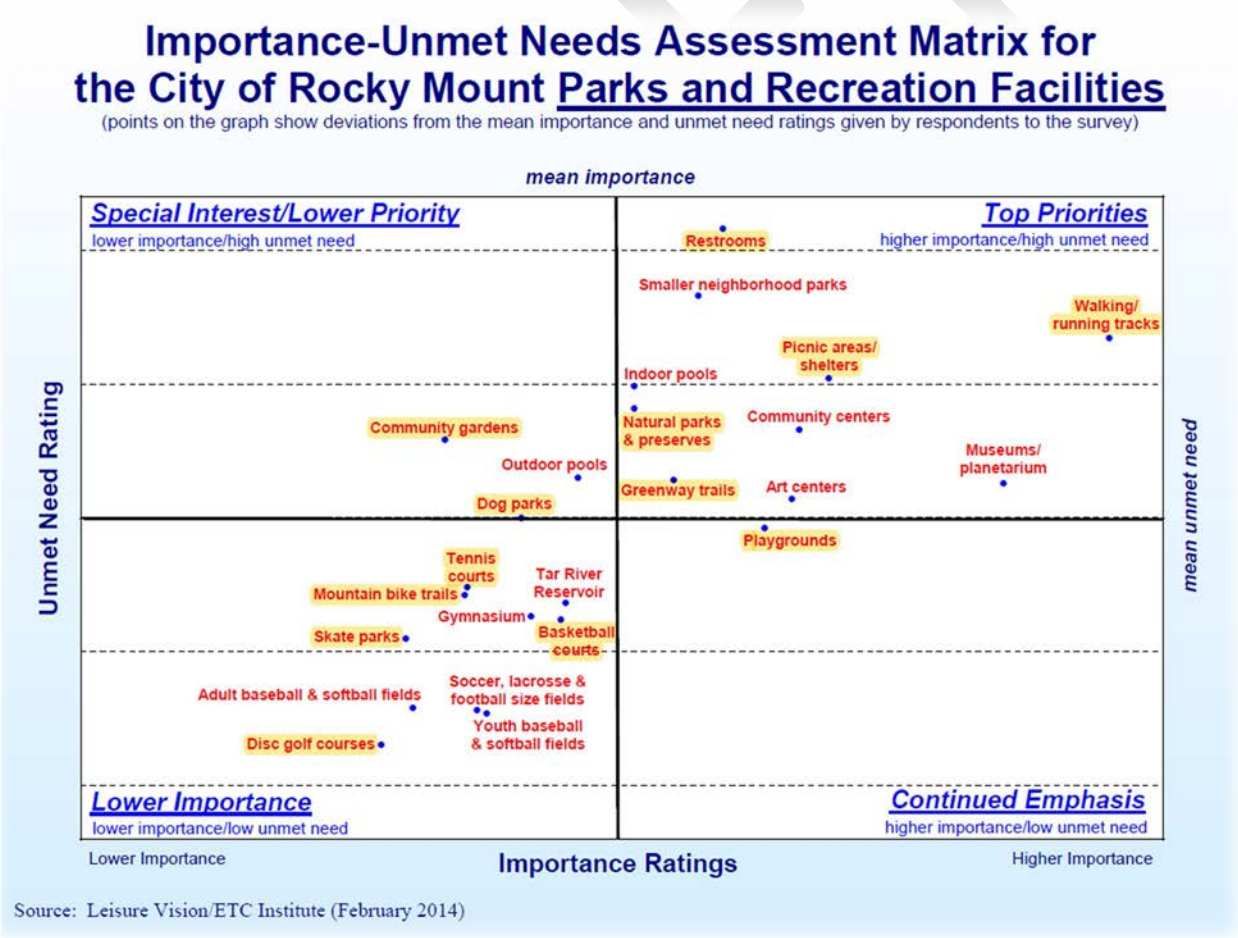
Section 5 2014 Recreational Needs & FY2023 Capital Improvement Plan

2014 Recreational Needs Survey

In preparation for the City of Rocky Mount 2015 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Leisure Vision-ETC conducted the statistically valid 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey.

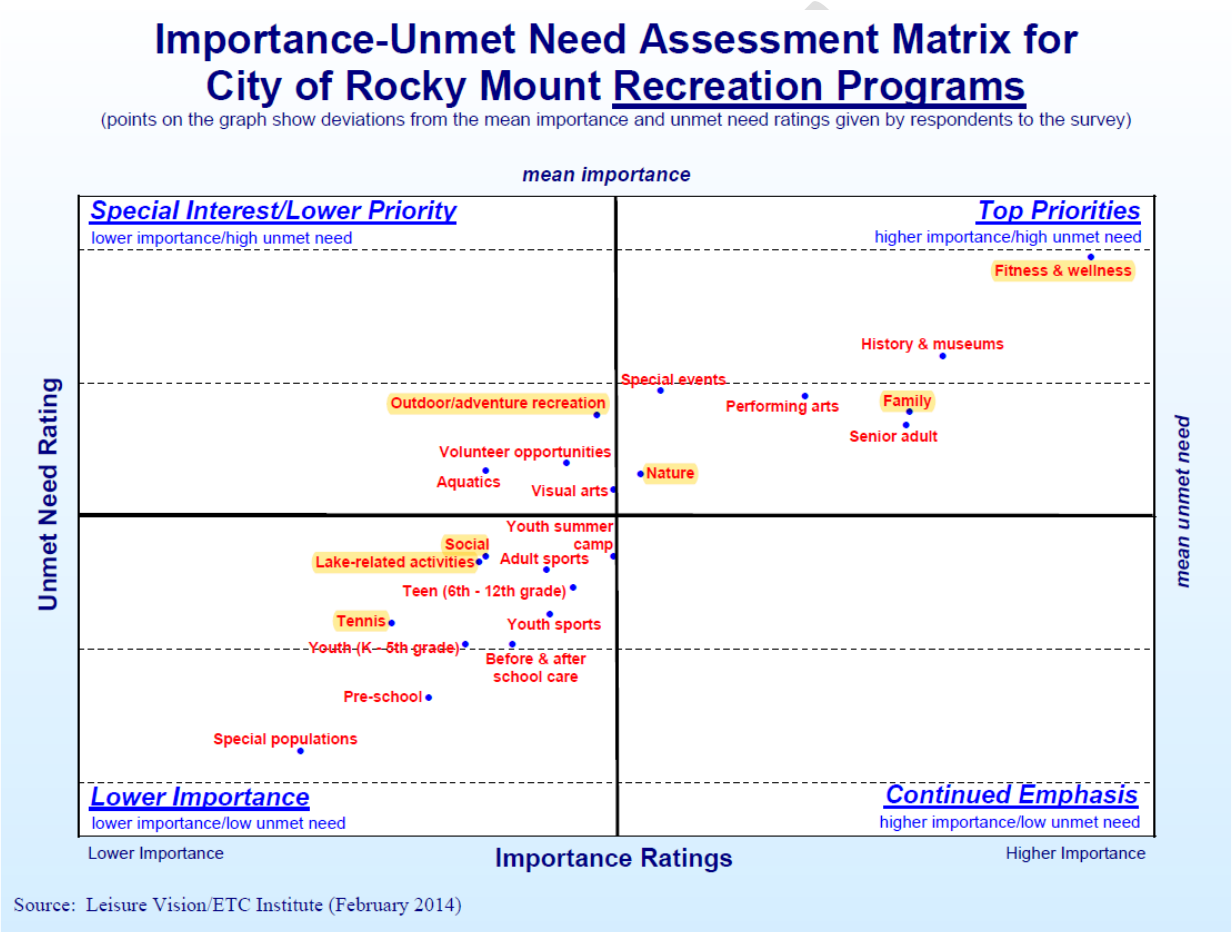
The renovated Sunset Park will align with the stated **Importance-Unmet Needs Assessment Matrix for the City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Facilities** as follows (p 35):

Top Priorities *higher importance/high unmet need*	**Continued Emphasis** *higher importance/low unmet need*	**Special Interest/Lower Priority** *lower importance/high unmet need*	**Lower Importance** *lower importance/low unmet need*
Restrooms	Playgrounds	Community gardens	Tennis courts
Picnic areas / shelters		Dog Park (existing)	Mountain bike trails
Walking / running tracks			Skate parks (Existing)
Natural parks & preserves			Basketball courts
Greenway trails			Disc golf courses (Existing)



The renovated Sunset Park will align with the stated **Importance-Unmet Need Assessment Matrix for City of Rocky Mount Recreation Programs** as follows (p 36):

Top Priorities *higher importance/high unmet need*	**Continued Emphasis** *higher importance/low unmet need*	**Special Interest/Lower Priority** *lower importance/high unmet need*	**Lower Importance** *lower importance/low unmet need*
Fitness & wellness		Outdoor / adventure recreation	Social
Family			Lake-related activities
Nature			Tennis



For the complete 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey, including the survey instrument, methodology and complete results, please go to:

https://www.rockymountnc.gov/departments___services/parks___recreation/park_planning

FY2023-2027 Capital Improvement Plan for Parks and Recreation

The City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department shares capital maintenance of its facilities with both the City Finance Department (Property Management) and the City Engineering Department. As a result, capital projects are often split and listed by their component parts for out-years and combined as single as a project budget when the project commences.

The FY2023-2027 Capital Improvement Plan with highlighted components is attached. City Council approved the FY 2023-2027 Budget Ordinance on Monday June 22, 2022.

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CIP OVERVIEW *(City Council Proposed)* — General - Parks & Recreation

Description	Current Year FY 2022 Proj	2023-2027 CIP Funding Period FY 2023 Prop	FY 2024 Prop	FY 2025 Prop	FY 2026 Prop	FY 2027 Prop	Future Years	CIP Total
Revenues								
General Fund	1,045,000	3,450,750	2,105,250	1,770,250	1,348,000	490,000	5,043,000	9,164,250
Powell Bill Allocation	-	-	70,000	-	-	-	-	70,000
Installment Debt	400,000	500,000	-	-	-	750,000	-	1,250,000
GO Bond	-	-	-	3,250,000	-	-	-	3,250,000
Project Loan	-	-	-	-	-	2,000,000	6,250,000	2,000,000
Other	-	90,000	70,000	-	-	-	1,630,000	160,000
Donations & Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,000	-
Total Revenues	**$1,445,000**	**$4,040,750**	**$2,245,250**	**$5,020,250**	**$1,348,000**	**$3,240,000**	**$13,003,000**	**$15,894,250**
Major Capital Investment Projects & Council Priorities (Order of Priority)								
1 Rocky Mount Trail & Greenway Improvements	-	450,000	140,000	-	-	-	1,180,000	590,000
2 Depot Park	100,000	650,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	-	-	1,400,000
3 Battleboro Community Recreation Facilities	435,000	150,000	-	-	-	-	-	150,000
4 Unity Cemetery Restoration	700,000	225,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	-	175,000	750,000
5 Art Education Building Repairs	-	210,000	120,000	80,000	75,000	30,000	-	515,000
6 Holiday Decorations (City Lake/Downtown)	-	100,000	100,000	100,000	50,000	50,000	-	400,000
7 Ward 5 Improvements	-	70,000	-	3,250,000	-	-	-	3,320,000
8 Battle Park Improvements	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	-	-	150,000
9 Neighborhood Park Renovations	100,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
10 Signage: Parks & Cemeteries	30,000	50,250	50,250	50,250	30,000	-	250,000	180,750
11 Denton Street Pool Renovations and Improvements	-	500,000	35,000	-	8,000	10,000	8,000	553,000
12 Pier, Overlook, Pedestrian Bridges, and Boat Ramp Maintenance	30,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	250,000	200,000
13 MLK Park: Renovations and Improvements	-	-	200,000	50,000	250,000	-	-	500,000
14 Ballfields Upgrades and Renovations	-	-	85,000	100,000	-	-	350,000	185,000
15 Renovation and Conversion of Playground Surfaces	-	-	180,000	100,000	100,000	-	100,000	380,000
16 Booker T Theatre	-	75,000	50,000	50,000	60,000	100,000	-	335,000
17 Spray Park Improvements	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	50,000
18 Cemeteries Driveway Resurfacing & Repairs	-	350,000	50,000	250,000	-	-	200,000	650,000
19 Sunset Park Attractions	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	1,200,000	50,000
20 Children's Museum & Science Center Exhibit	-	-	50,000	-	-	-	100,000	50,000

17-Apr-2022 12:50 Page 79

CIP OVERVIEW *(City Council Proposed)* General - Parks & Recreation

Description	Current Year FY 2022 Proj	2023-2027 CIP Funding Period FY 2023 Prop	FY 2024 Prop	FY 2025 Prop	FY 2026 Prop	FY 2027 Prop	Future Years	CIP Total
21 City of Rocky Mount's Off-Leash Dog Park								
	-	50,000	-	-	-	-	80,000	50,000
22 Stith Talbert & Cloverdale Parks Basketball Courts								
	-	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	200,000
23 Tennis Court Resurfacing/Upgrades								
	-	500,000	-	90,000	-	-	160,000	590,000
24 Rocky Mount Sports Complex & Stadium								
	-	-	100,000	-	-	-	6,395,000	100,000
25 City Lake Improvements and Upgrades								
	-	90,000	-	-	-	-	550,000	90,000
26 South Rocky Mount Community Center								
	-	20,500	10,000	75,000	-	750,000	25,000	855,500
27 Senior Center Building Renovation								
	-	25,000	-	-	-	2,000,000	-	2,025,000
28 Upgrade of Planetarium PCs and Software								
	-	-	-	-	-	-	480,000	-
Annual Capital Maintenance (Order of Funding, by Year)								
Parks & Recreation Buildings								
	-	75,000	-	-	-	-	-	75,000
Total Expenditures	**$1,445,000**	**$4,040,750**	**$2,245,250**	**$5,020,250**	**$1,348,000**	**$3,240,000**	**$13,003,000**	**$15,894,250**

For complete documents please go to:
https://rockymountnc.gov/budget-office/

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ROCKY MOUNT
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

A	=	APPROVAL	C	=	REFERRED TO COMMITTEE
AD	=	APPROVAL DENIED	T	=	TABLED
NA	=	NO ACTION	RA	=	REMOVED FROM AGENDA
D	=	DEFERRED	I	=	INTRODUCED
R	=	REFERRED	RW	=	REQUEST WITHDRAWN
			O	=	OTHER

ACTION AGENDA FOR A REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT HELD MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022, AT 4:00 P.M. IN THE GEORGE W. DUDLEY CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

1. Meeting Called to Order by the Mayor

2. Prayer

3. Roll Call by the Deputy City Clerk

4. Community Update – Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney

5. Petitions to be Received from the Public

   Note: Please complete Citizen Sign-In Sheet and provide to Security Officer prior to start of meeting. Please limit presentations to three (3) minutes. Time will be monitored.

   The following individuals spoke (more details to be included in minutes):

   - *Crystal Wimes-Anderson*
   - *Nehemiah Smith, Jr.*

6. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
   A. Consideration of the Following FY 2022-2023 Ordinances:

   - *Project Ordinances:*

   1) Tar River Transit ($5,287,593 – requires matching appropriations of $358,507):
      a) Urban Operating - $1,205,733;
      b) Urban Capital - $1,016,625
      c) Transit Planning - $53,950;
      d) Rural Operating - $2,690,200;
      e) Rural Capital - $71,085
      f) Rural Feeder - $250,000
   2) Community Development:
      a) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Grant Project ($460,426); and
      b) HOME Investment Partnership Grant Project ($505,813 - requires matching appropriation of $50,000);

7. Consideration of FY 2022-2023 Budget Ordinance and Amendments to Fees and Charges:

a. FY 2022-2023 Budget Ordinance – *establishes appropriations for FY 2022-2023; and sets the City property tax rate at $0.685 per $100 of taxable assessed value; same tax rate as current fiscal year*

b. Amendments to Fees and Charges:

1. Department of Public Works:
   - Policy No. X.8.5 Entitled "Solid Waste Transfer Station Tipping Fee" – *increases tipping fees to accommodate 4.6% increase in solid waste disposal contract fee.*
2. Department of Water Resources:
   - Policy No. X.9.2 Entitled "Water and Sewer Retail Rates" – *increases monthly usage rates by 8.8% per unit to increase revenue for operational and capital expenditures.*
   - Policy No. X.9.3 Entitled "Water and Sewer Wholesale Rates" – *increases monthly usage rates by 8.8% per unit to increase revenue for operational and capital expenditures.*

c. Department of Human Resources:

1. Amendments to Position Classification and Pay Plan (FY 2023 budget revises Table II and includes funding for 22 new positions)

A~ Recommended Action: 1) Adopt FY 2022-2023 Budget Ordinance;
2) Adopt Resolution Amending Fees and Charges Listed Above;
3) Adopt Ordinance Amending Water and Sewer Retail and Wholesale Rates Listed Above; and
4) Adopt Resolution Approving Amendments to Position and Classification Pay Plan

City Council Agendas
https://rockymountnc.gov/council-agendas-minutes/

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Section 6 2020-2025 North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
https://www.ncparks.gov/media/897/open

NC SCORP 2020-2025 Goal Statement
North Carolina's parks and recreation infrastructure will meet the outdoor recreation needs of a growing population, will help to manage and protect North Carolina's natural resources for current and future citizens, and will help to achieve related health and economic benefits for local communities and the state.

North Carolina's population continues to grow and diversity. While this growth is in many ways positive, it also brings with it a growing demand on amazing natural resources. Planning for outdoor recreation and conservation are vital in ensuring that North Carolina grows and provides for its citizen and visitors alike, while at the same timing protecting these resources. Failure to do so, harms the very resources that North Carolinian's and visitors have come to love.

Sunset Park Renovation Park Plan Alignment with SCORP Goal
Sunset Park has well-served the outdoor recreation needs of Rocky Mount and the surrounding counties for eight decades. Renovation of this community treasure will ensure the park continues to serve for generations into the future.

The primary Design Consideration of the Sunset Park Renovation Park Plan are:

- The historic public-recreation opportunities provided by the park
- The park is located within the floodplain

Through numerous public meetings and consideration of these factors, the Park Plan provides a public-prioritized plan for resilient and sustainable renovation. By intentionally designing within the historic and environmental framework of the park, the nature of the project is renovation of existing resources. The result is a plan that "provides for its citizen and visitors alike, while at the same timing protecting these resources."

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NC 2020-2025 SCORP Issue: Growing Population

Objective #1: *Meet the needs of North Carolina's rapidly growing population by providing more recreation opportunities in areas of the state where growth is taking place.*

North Carolina's population is one of the fastest growing in the nation. However, this growth is not equally distributed across the state. Much of the growth is taking place around major urban areas while rural population in many areas is stagnating or declining. New recreation opportunities are needed in fast-growing population centers. At the same time, rural areas should not be neglected because quality of life, including parks and recreation amenities, can be important in attracting and enhancing economic growth.

Cooperation and collaboration among recreation providers at all levels can help ensure that the needs of both urban and rural areas are addressed cost-effectively.

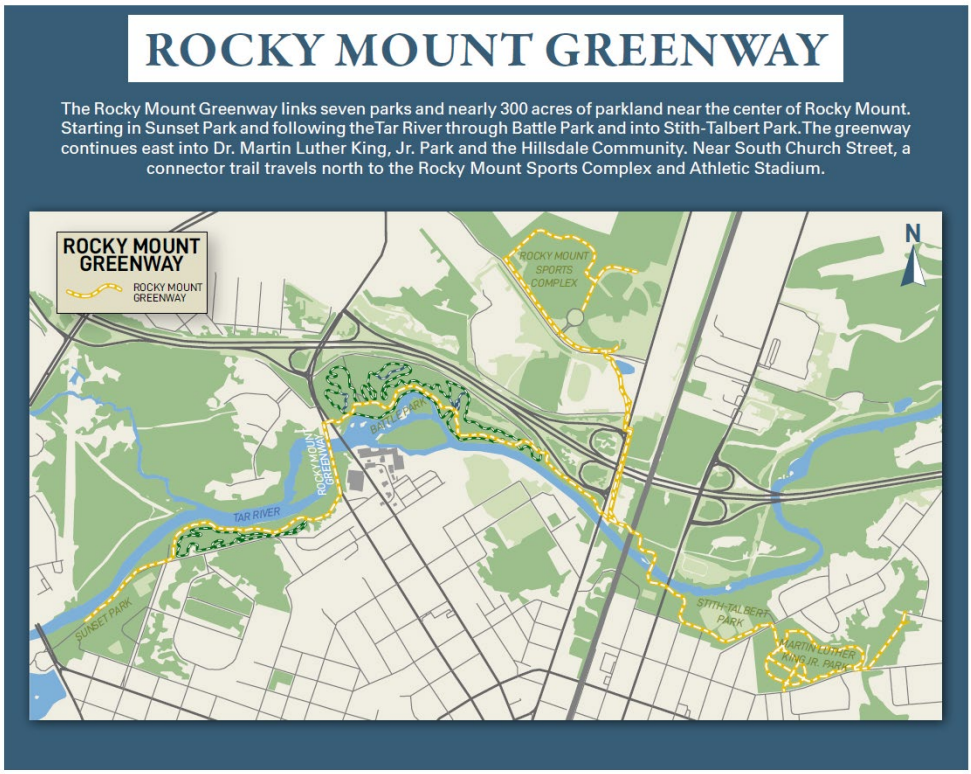
Initiatives and Recommendations
1. Add additional recreation units near major urban areas to help decrease the long-term demand on the more ecologically sensitive state parks and natural areas.
2. Provide funding to local parks and recreation departments for new recreation amenities in areas with growing populations.
3. Create information and management infrastructures that allow for federal, state and local governments to better understand which agency is addressing which recreation need.
4. Better educate citizens about current and future outdoor recreation resource needs for a growing population.
5. Extend information and data sharing capacity between recreation providers and non-recreation providers within government agencies so that more holistic planning practices are possible.
6. Grow recreation regional planning capacity on all levels and incentivize these plans by promoting their best practice in grant applications.
7. Develop new recreational facilities in an eco-friendly manner.

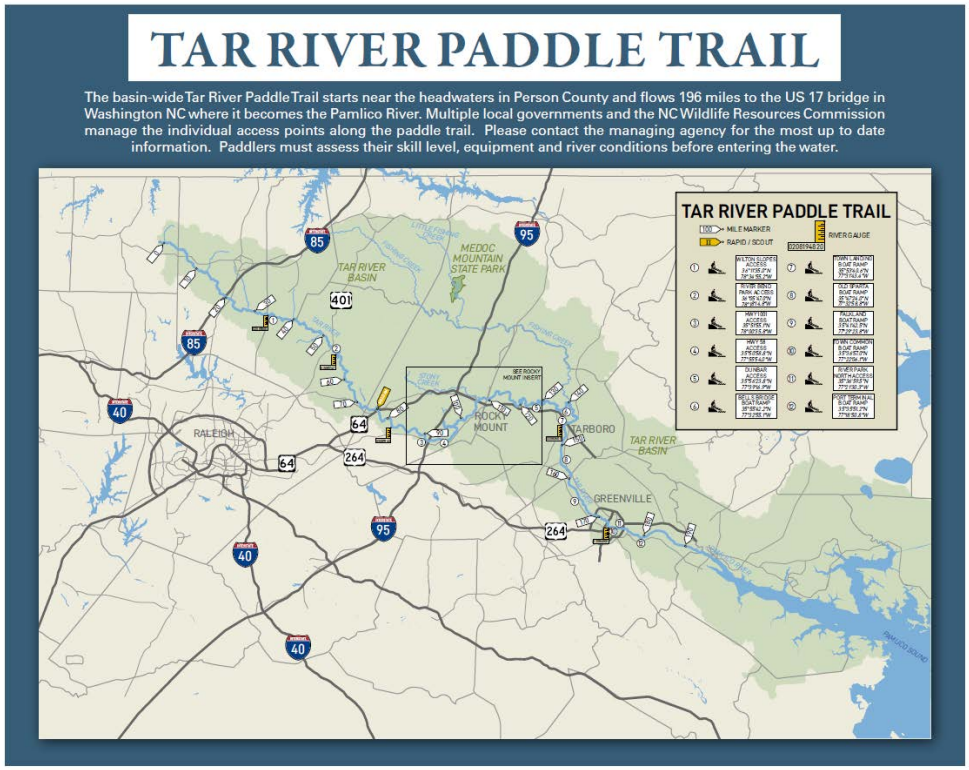
The Rocky Mount MSA is one of 15 MSA's in North Carolina and is in the Medoc Mountain State Park service area. Sunset Park picnic shelters are among the most heavily used in the Rocky Mount Parks system due to the diverse recreation opportunities found within the park, this use reduces demand at Medoc (#1). Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation has been the recipient of numerous state and federal grants in the past two decades and Sunset Park Renovation will submit applications to LWCF, PARTF and RTP (#2).

Sunset Park design concepts and signage formats will integrate the River Falls Parks / Tar River Parks System concept detailed in the 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. This Parks System includes the six major city parks connected by the Rocky Mount Greenway that total over 400 acres of parkland. This comprehensive approach educates citizens of the current and future outdoor recreation opportunities began with the 2022 Battle Park Renovation. This included kiosk maps of the Tar River Parks System and the Tar River Basin (#3 & #4); see images on following page. The Paddle Trail map was developed with input from recreation and non-recreation providers from the eight counties in the Tar River basin. All the greenway, mountain bike trail and local / regional paddle trail maps are hosted by the city at https://rockymountnc.gov/trails/ (#5 & #6). This planning document has anticipated and incorporated the scoring system of PARTF, LWCF, ORLP and RTP; these applications and scoring systems were created by the state and federal government to reflect Best Practices planning (#6). The design

process was shaped by the extensive floodplain and historic nature of the park which yielded a resilient and sustainable renovation plan. This is discussed in depth in *Design Considerations (#7).*

Battle Park Tar River Parks System Rocky Mount Greenway and Tar River Basin signage





NC 2020-2025 SCORP Issue: Diminishing opportunities for protecting natural areas and greenspace

Objective #2: *Protect and conserve North Carolina's high-quality natural resources and landscapes*

One reason North Carolina is attractive for new businesses and in-migration is because it is blessed with scenic, diverse and amazing natural resources. Population growth is placing enormous demands on North Carolina's natural resources.

In North Carolina land conservation is viewed as an essential ingredient in the efforts to enhance North Carolina's economic prosperity, health, and quality of life. The "North-Carolina-Return-on Investment-in-Conservation-Report" (2011) by The Trust for Public Land found that the state's investments in conservation in the past have returned four dollars for every one dollar spent. The value comes in the form of natural goods and services, such as cleaner drinking water sources, erosion control and flood mitigation. Additional economic benefits result from the impact that conservation has on jobs, agribusiness, parks and recreation, military bases, and tourism. Agriculture and defense are the two largest sectors of North Carolina's economy, with an annual impact of $77 billion and $26 billion, respectively.

Many agencies, organizations and non-profits help to protect North Carolina's natural lands. Parks and recreation departments play an important role in the ability to protect land at large and small scales, in urban and rural areas. Park agencies are also skilled in managing public use of natural lands and in enhancing public understanding and appreciation of natural and historic heritage.

Initiatives and Recommendations

1. Identify natural areas near areas of rapid development in the state and protect these critically endangered greenspaces for future recreation and conservation uses.
2. Encourage acquisition of inholdings within existing recreation areas.
3. Encourage acquisition of unique natural areas and watersheds that are at risk of development.
4. Explore state sponsored short-term land-holding mechanisms for properties that could be then turned over to local governments for development and operation, especially for vital greenway corridor development. Support state and local land use planning that bolsters conservation of important natural resources/landscapes and opportunities for outdoor recreation.
5. Identify, encourage and enable land preservation around military installations, linking agriculture and defense to strengthen the state's economy and military readiness.
6. Seek partnerships with federal, state, and local governments, as well as non-profits on coordinated goals for the continued protection, enhancement, and expansion of important natural resources and landscapes.
7. Pursue land donations including easements, inheritance trusts, developer incentives, etc. to assist in acquiring and preserving important outdoor natural resources.

Sunset Park and the parks of the Tar River Parks System were acquired and developed with assistance from numerous LWCF, PARTF and RTP grants dating back to 1968. With the renovation of Battle Park process, the city has ensured all grant-related parkland has the current Limitations of Use placed on the related deeds. The Stony Creek Trail Feasibility Study is in progress and will more than likely result in additional protected parklands along Stony Creek. The Renovation of Sunset Park will include the most up to date deed restrictions (#1-#7).

NC 2020-2025 SCORP Issue: Issue: Aging Recreation Facilities and Infrastructure

Objective #3: *Renovate, replace and revitalize existing park amenities across the State.*
Many state and local parks are aging. Parks developed with LWCF and PARTF funds decades ago, while functional, are not optimally serving their communities. They either need renovating or repurposing to better serve the current needs of the citizens. Aging parks and recreation facilities may have outlived their intended usefulness by being in disrepair or obsolete. In some cases, newer materials and construction codes could result in increased safety, reduced maintenance costs, and greater accessibility.

Initiatives and Recommendations
1. Target funding to renovate, replace and revitalize existing recreation amenities for state and local agencies before facilities go into disrepair due to overwhelming demand.
2. Retrofit existing facilities to make them more eco-friendly.
3. Ensure that all updates demonstrate best practices for accessibility.

Sunset Park is a 1968, 1973 and 1980 LWCF recipient as well as being renovated with PARTF funds in 2001 and 2004. The park has been the cornerstone of public outdoor recreation in Rocky Mount since its opening in the 1940's. It has been renovated numerous times over the decades and needs renovation at this time. Parks and Recreation staff anticipates applying for LWCF and PARTF assistance for the current renovation (#1). With the floodplain being one of the two primary Design Considerations, the entire park renovation will be designed, renovated and operated in an sustainable and resilient manner, understanding the park will experience high water events (#2). The design, renovation and operation will employ best practices for accessibility (#3).

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NC 2020-2025 SCORP Issue: Limited Recreation Opportunities in Economically Depressed Areas

Objective #4: *Promote the economic benefits of the state's recreation opportunities for communities across North Carolina*

While much of North Carolina is experiencing enormous growth and economic vitality, there are places that sorely need economic development and growth. Parks and trails can provide recreation to residents while at the same time supporting economic development. Expenditures by people who visit parks and participate in outdoor recreation make an important contribution to state and local economies. The influx of recreation dollars comes from more than just tourist-related businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, and shopping centers. It also encompasses the economic growth that results from people visiting or moving to an area to take advantage of its recreational amenities and services. This has the potential to transform a community by attracting businesses, retirees, and families seeking a higher quality of life.

Initiatives and Recommendations

1. Develop innovative and comprehensive planning efforts that examine underutilized/ underdeveloped recreation opportunities in economically depressed areas.
2. Increase marketing efforts of local and state outdoor recreation opportunities in economically depressed areas to increase participation and enhance the economic impact.
3. Develop and promote recreation programs, events, and facilities that attract regional travelers, to encourage overnight stays in economically depressed areas.
4. Develop targeted recreation opportunities that both help citizens in economically depressed areas and serve to improve the local and regional economic vitality.

The City of Rocky Mount has made significant economic investments in the Tourism Economy of Nash and Edgecombe Counties, both ranked as Tier I counties by the North Carolina Department of Commerce. These investments include the construction and operation of the Rocky Mount Sports Complex, Rocky Mount Event Center and the Imperial Centre for the Arts & Sciences. Nash County regularly finishes in the top 20 NC counties for tourism; this is a combination travel sports and the proximity of I-95. Capital Broadcasting Company (WRAL, American Tobacco Campus) has fully renovated the adjacent Rocky Mount Mills and the multi-block mill village to include residential living and numerous breweries and restaurants. With help from LWCF, PARTF and RTP, the City of Rocky Mount has renovated Battle Park.

In 2024 Rocky Mount, with assistance from NC State Transportation Improvement funds, will connect Downtown Rocky Mount to the Rocky Mount Greenway with a Rail to Trail conversion. Once completed, the Sports Complex, Event Center, Imperial Centre, Rocky Mount Mills, Battle Park, Sunset Park and the other parks of the Tar River Parks System will all be connected by the Rocky Mount Greenway. This will allow visitors to enjoy the Tar River Parks System as a whole, and further recruitment of event and overnight stays (#1-#4).

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NC 2020-2025 SCORP Issue: Equity of access

Objective #5: *Increase opportunities and public awareness of the state's natural resources and recreation opportunities for underserved populations.*

North Carolina derives strength from its diversity. Recreational opportunities across the state should meet the diverse needs of people with different ability levels, different age groups, different racial and cultural backgrounds, and different socioeconomic levels. Achieving this objective involves both developing opportunities and making all people more aware of recreation opportunities available in North Carolina. In cases where noted gaps of service exist for segments of the population, efforts should be made to remedy these deficiencies.

Access to high quality recreation opportunities and natural areas are a vital part of addressing larger disparities along socio-economic lines.

Initiatives and Recommendations
1. Increase the use of environmental education and conservation curriculum in the state's K-12 school systems. Promote opportunities to take students outdoors to learn about the environment through visits to state and local parks, especially in areas of the state where underserved populations exist.
2. Continue to design recreational facilities to ensure universal access with recognition of the needs of under-served and aging populations.
3. Develop online educational materials and make them available for use at state parks as well as local government parks and recreation areas.
4. Improve public information about outdoor recreation opportunities as well as the value of protecting natural resources in the state.
5. Identify recreational needs in underserved populations, and expedite funding and development opportunities in these areas.

Battle Park is immediately northeast / downstream of Sunset Park. The parks are connected by paddle trail, mountain bike trail and the Rocky Mount Greenway. The current Renovation of Battle Park included extensive invasive species management, woodland management and riparian restoration all with the intent of providing improved public access to woodlands and the Tar River. The renovation of the park is in its final stages and public use, especially among underserved groups, has increased exponentially.

Staff has applied these successful management practices to the Sunset Park Plan. The budget includes wildlife observation locations, river access, riparian restoration and a pollinator gardens. The renovated greenway and fishing piers enable simple and practical wheelchair access. These features will allow Sunset Park to provide both outdoor recreation and environmental education to park visitors. (#1- #5).

Invasive species management was conducted as allowed by 15A NCAC 02B .0734 Tar-Pamlico River Basin riparian buffer regulations in a manner consistent with NCDOT *Invasive Plants of North Carolina*, Cheri Smith.

NC 2020-2025 SCORP Issue: Public Health

Objective #6: *Support improvements in public health and fitness by increasing opportunities for physical activity*

Researchers continue to provide scientific evidence about the health benefits of exercising outdoors by participating in outdoor recreation. Benefits include enhanced physical, mental and emotional well-being. Parks, trails and other recreation facilities can provide convenient, safe, and attractive places for North Carolinians to be physically active.

The N.C. State Center for Health Statistics found that more than two thirds of adults are overweight or obese as well as an estimated 30% of children ages 10 – 17. Nationwide, local, county, state, and federal governments are working to reduce childhood obesity and encourage children and families to be more physically active through initiatives like Safe Routes to Play and other recreation planning and infrastructure programs. The provision of outdoor open spaces and recreational space has been identified as a key to addressing these issues. Making parks accessible to all citizens will continue to be important.

The Outdoor Foundation's 2013 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report found 90 percent of adults who regularly recreate outdoors were introduced to outdoor activities between the ages of five and 18. This makes youth participation critical to encouraging similar patterns for future generations. Nearly 60 percent of children and young adults aged six through 24 participate in some type of outdoor recreation. However, the trend is toward reduced participation. Increased "screen time" spent on television, video games and the internet have decreased time spent outdoors.

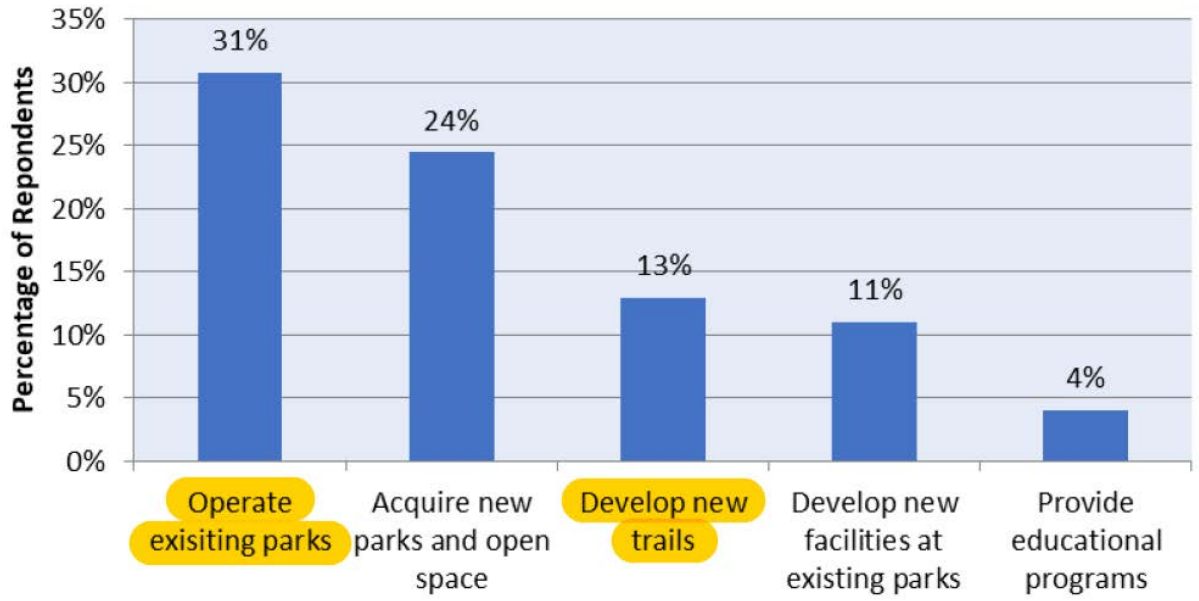
Initiatives and Recommendations
1. Provide adequate park land and recreational facilities to encourage children and their families to be more physically active.
2. Promote public and private partnerships, especially recreation providers, healthcare organizations, and insurance companies, to encourage physical activity through outdoor recreation.
3. Continue to seek efficiencies in providing more opportunities for outdoor recreation by leveraging projects with PARTF and LWCF assistance.
4. Provide communities up-to-date information about the role of accessible parks, open space, and non-motorized transportation routes in facilitating healthy residents.
5. Encourage the development of community policies, recreational facilities, schools, trails and bicycle-friendly routes to help people be more physically active.

The recreation amenities of Sunset Park have drawn families for the past eight decades. The inclusion of greenway and trails increases the physical activity of park visitors. The Trust for Public Land ParkServe Mapping Application, 2021 Outdoor Foundation Participation Trends Report and the 2022 Physical Activity Council's Overview Report all helped shape the renovation and are included in Section 6 of the Park Plan. The city intends to submit LWCF, PARTF and RTP applications for the Renovation of Sunset Park. The extensive public meetings gained not only input concerning the project, but also shared information concerning the existing and proposed parks, open space, and non-motorized transportation routes in Rocky Mount and the area. The project renovates the cornerstone of public outdoor recreation in the community and the western portion of the 7-mile Rocky Mount Greenway (#1-#5).

NC SCORP 2020-2025
Public Priorities for park management / Types of Facilities Currently Needed
Amenities included in the renovation of Sunset Park mirrors the *Public Priorities for park management* and the *Types of Facilities Currently Needed* of NC SCORP. This is not surprising as both documents were driven by public input to determine the outdoor recreation needs of the local community / state of North Carolina.

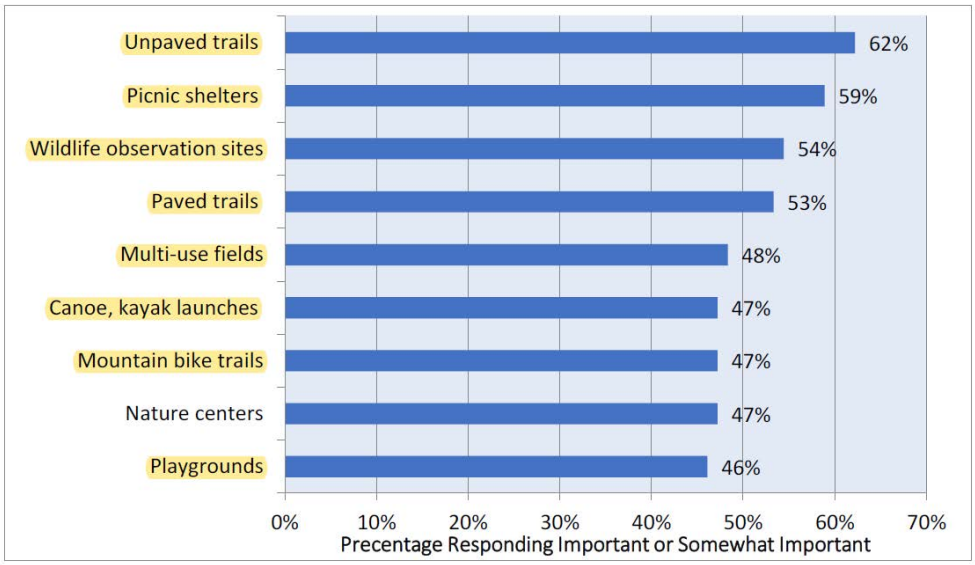
Figure 2.4 of the NC SCORP indicates *Operate existing parks* and *Develop new trails* as the #1 and #3 public priorities for park management by the citizens of NC. The Renovation of Sunset Park aligns with these interests as the project renovates a park that has been in operation for eight decades as well as provides new mountain bike trail mileage to the existing network.

Figure 2.4 Public Priorities for park management (p 10)



The Renovation of Sunset Park includes eight of the nine *Types of Facilities Currently Needed* listed in Figure 2.12 of the NC SCORP. These are: unpaved trail, picnic shelters, wildlife observation sites, paved trail, multi-use field, kayak launches, mountain bike trails and a playground.

Figure 2.12 Priorities: Types of Facilities Currently Needed (p 16)



Edgecombe and Nash Counties Ranked by Current Supply of Recreation Resources
The data for the table below is taken from *Table for Item I.1 - NC Counties Ranked by Current Supply of Recreation Resources* (pp E18 – E19). In the table, 1 is the highest (best) county in NC and 100 is the lowest (worst) county in NC. **Rocky Mount is the largest recreation provider in the Twin Counties. The location of the larger Rocky Mount parks (Tar River Parks System*) and their fields, courts, shelters, playground and trails significantly affect the county rankings.**

The Renovation of Sunset Park will add an additional 1.5 miles of multi-use, natural surface mountain bike trail to Nash County, replace one playground and add three new mini picnic shelters. The project will also renovate 1.15 mile of greenway, eight tennis courts and 103 acres of parkland.

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, Stith-Talbert, RM Sports Complex, Battle Park, Sunset Park and City Lake Park.*

County	2015 Pop.	residents/ athletic field rank	residents/ athletic court rank	residents/ picnic shelter rank	residents / playground rank	residents / trail mile rank	residents / local park acre rank
Edgecombe	55,744	92	50	45	86	91	58
Nash	94,197	33	4	20	7	95	41

Section 7 Equity & Accessibility

Summary of Equity, Demographics and Recreation Need Research

The following pages include data and research concerning the residents of Sunset Park neighborhoods, the citizens of the corporate limits of Rocky Mount and the citizens of Edgecombe and Nash Counties. For comparative purposes, census data is also provided for North Carolina and the United States. As discussed in *Section 3 National Standards for Recreation and Parks,* Battle Park and Sunset Park are Community Parks that function similarly to Regional Parks. This indicates they serve the entire city-limits of Rocky Mount (Community Park) and because of the unique characteristics of their recreation amenities, they serve all of Nash and Edgecombe Counties (Regional Park). From this perspective, the City of Rocky Mount and Rocky Mount MSA (Edgecombe and Nash) data should be considered.

The reader should also understand the impact Sunset Park has upon the immediate neighborhoods surrounding the park. This data is found at the Block Group and Census Tract Level. This captures the families and children that live within a one-mile radius of the park, which is considered walking distance.

From the immediate neighbors to the Rocky Mount MSA, Sunset Park serves those that experience significant disparities when compared to North Carolina and the United States; *this underscores the importance of renovating the park before it falls into disrepair, creating further challenges*. Recreation preferences as provided by the Trust for Public Land, the 2021 Outdoor Foundation Participation Trends Report and the 2022 Physical Activity Council's Overview Report on U.S. Participation support the need for renovation of recreation amenities that are in high demand.

NC Equity & Transportation Disadvantage Screening Tool

https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/Pages/EJ-TDI-maps.aspx

Overview

The N.C. Department of Transportation has developed web-based tools that display data to illustrate the disproportionate impact transportation barriers have on communities of color. These tools were created to help inform decisions aimed at improving disadvantaged communities' transportation access and mobility. These tools are the basis for policies that address environmental justice and transportation disadvantage.

The Environmental Justice, or EJ, tool responds to a variety of federal protections such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 12898. The EJ tool focuses on low-income and racial/ethnic minorities, the prime environmental justice indicators identified in the executive order. The tool is not specific to transportation, but instead focuses on federally protected demographics.

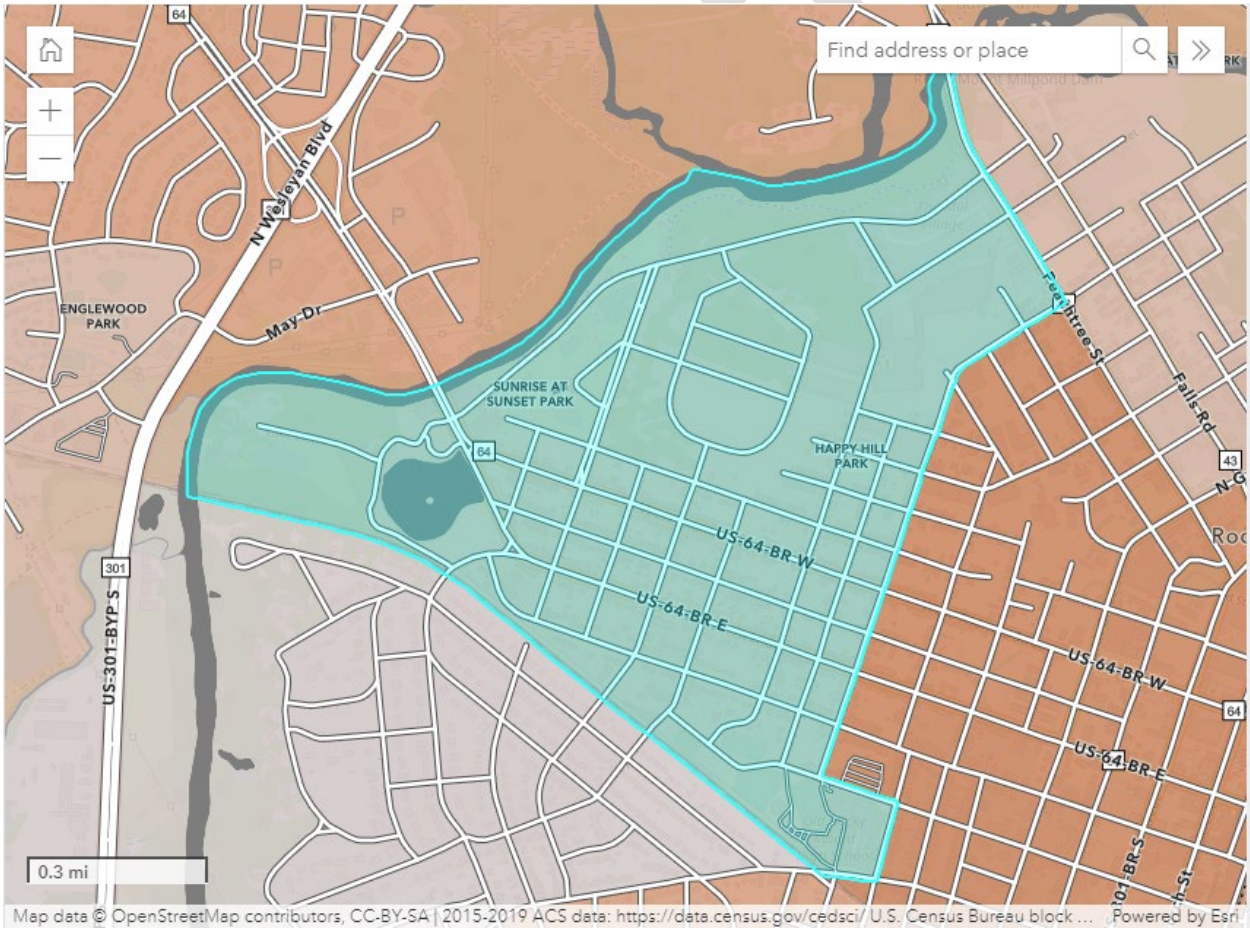
The Transportation Disadvantage Index, or TDI, tool is a customized approach to support a high-level assessment of equity impacts. The TDI tool focuses on race (Black, Indigenous and persons of color), income, personal vehicle access, people with mobility impairments, the elderly and youth. The TDI tool allows users to see where transportation disadvantaged communities potentially exist and to compare the needs of neighboring communities.

NC Equity & Transportation Disadvantage Screening Tool
Environmental Justice Statewide Map

Environmental Justice Factors

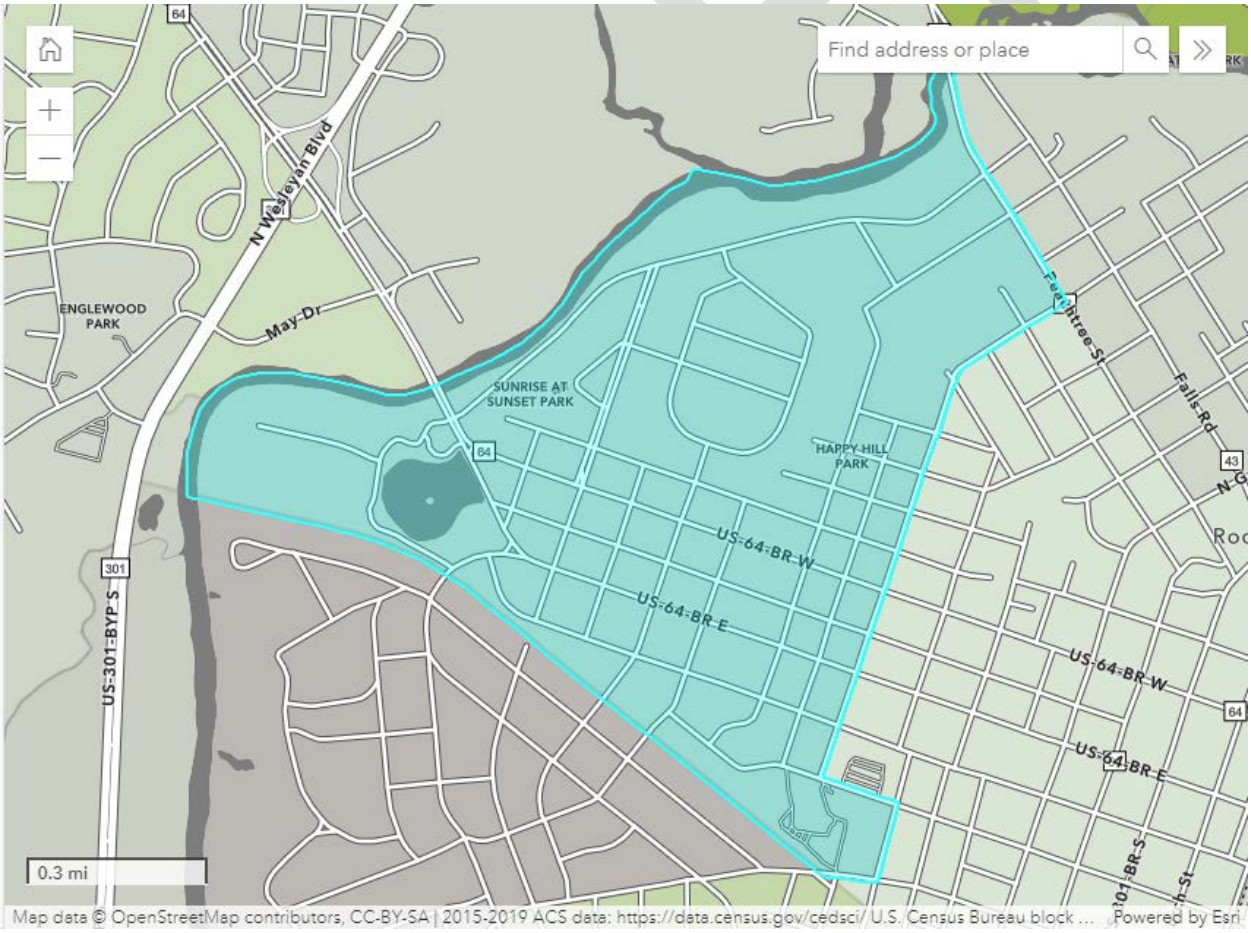
Block Group ID: 371270104003

EJ Index Score, relative to State (max=12)	7
Poverty	31% (vs NC Average of 23%)
Racial Minority	80% (vs NC Average of 32%)
Hispanic & Latino	0% (vs NC Average of 10%)



NC Equity & Transportation Disadvantage Screening Tool
Transportation Disadvantage Statewide Map

Transportation Disadvantage Factors	
TDI Score, relative to State (max=18)	10.5
Block Group ID	371270104003
Age 15 and Under	9% (vs NC Average of 20%)
Age 65 and Over	22% (vs NC Average of 16%)
Poverty	31% (vs NC Average of 23%)
BIPOC Population	80% (vs NC Average of 37%)
Zero-Car Households	0% (vs NC Average of 6%)
Disability Prevalence (Adult Population)	21% (vs NC Average of 16%)



Census Reporter

https://censusreporter.org/locate/

Census Reporter Dec. 14, 2022 https://censusreporter.org/locate/	Block Group 3, CT 104	Census Tract 104 Nash	Rocky Mount	Rocky Mount MSA	North Carolina	United States
Population	960	3,582	54,375	143,535	10,551,162	331,893,760
Size (square miles)	0.8	1.9	45	1,045.9	48,623.1	3,537,068.5
Population density (people/sq. mile)	1,269.70	1,908.7	1,208.1	137.2	217	93.8
Median age	46.2	37.4	41.1	42.1	39.4	38.8
Sex Female	53%	52%	53%	52%	51%	50%
Sex Male	47%	48%	47%	48%	49%	50%
Race & Ethnicity - Black	82%	68%	63%	43%	20%	12%
Race & Ethnicity - White	12%	22%	29%	42%	61%	58%
Race & Ethnicity - Other	6%	10%	8%	15%	19%	30%
Per capita income	$23,659	$20,006	$26,416	$29,306	$35,254	$38,332
Median household income	$48,617	$46,391	$46,396	$51,769	$61,972	$69,717
Persons below poverty line		29.5%	18.9%	15.1%	13.4%	12.8%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)		24.5	21.3	23.2	24.5	25.6
Travel to work - drive alone		67%	84%	83%	70%	68%
Travel to work - carpool		14%	7%	8%	8%	8%
Travel to work - public transport		4%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Travel to work - bike / walk / other		9%	4%	3%	2%	3%
Travel to work - work at home		5%	5%	6%	19%	18%
Number of households	378	1,351	22,232	56,840	4,179,632	127,554,730
Persons per household	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5
Marital status - Single	71%	73%	59%	55%	49%	50%
Marital status - Married	29%	27%	41%	45%	51%	50%
Housing number of units	620	1,848	26,496	66,587	4,801,698	142,148,050
Housing types of structure Multi-unit	51%	44%	27%	17%	18%	26%
Housing types of structure Single-unit	49%	56%	66%	66%	70%	68%
Housing types of structure Mobile home	0%	0%	7%	17%	12%	6%
Housing vacant	39%	27%	16%	15%	13%	10%
Housing occupied	61%	73%	84%	85%	87%	90%
Housing owner occupied	24%	25%	50%	64%	67%	65%
Housing renter occupied	76%	75%	50%	36%	33%	35%
Housing median value owner occupied	$87,200	$57,800	$114,400	$151,900	$236,900	$281,400
Housing geographical mobility		21.4%	12.5%	8.6%	14%	13%
Moved from same county last year		9%	4%	3%	6%	7%
Moved from different county last year		9%	5%	4%	4%	3%
Moved from outside NC last year		3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Education no degree	14%	16%	13%	12%	10%	11%
Education high school	50%	44%	35%	33%	25%	26%
Education some college	26%	24%	30%	34%	30%	28%
Education Bachelor's	10%	15%	15%	14%	22%	21%
Education Post-grad	0%	1%	7%	7%	13%	14%

The Trust for Public Land
https://www.tpl.org/city/rocky-mount-north-carolina

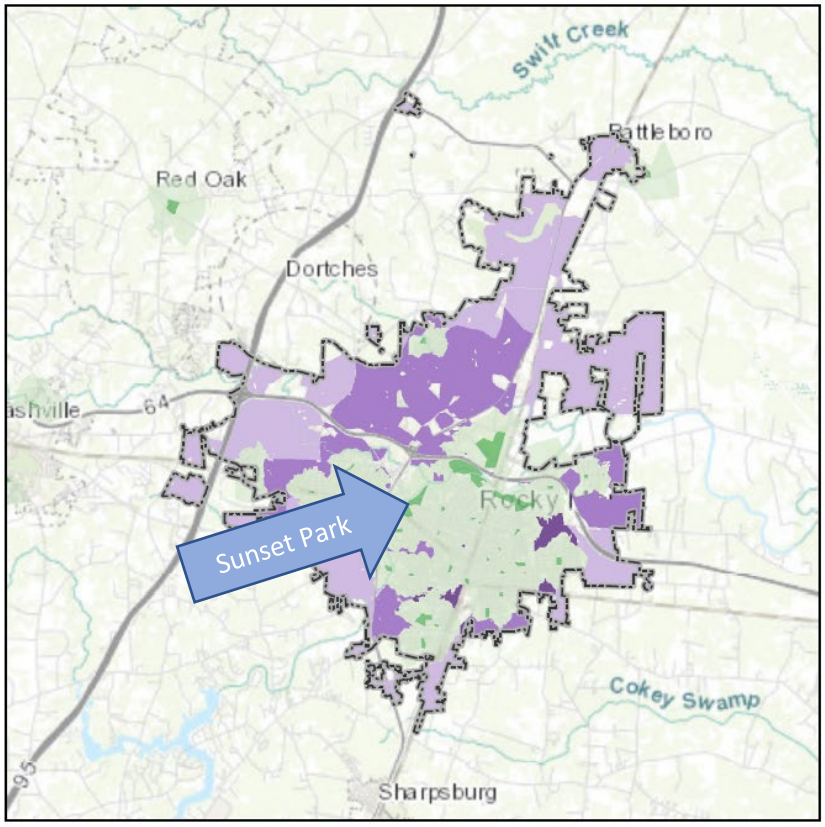
City Statistics	Current
City: Rocky Mount, NC	
Park Acres	519
Total Population	56,282
Served Population	28,469
Percent Served	50.6%

Legend

- City Boundary
- Parks
- Service Areas

Priority areas for new parks

- Very high priority
- High priority
- Moderate priority



2021 Outdoor Foundation Participation Trends Report
https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2021-outdoor-participation-trends-report/
The 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report, commissioned by the Outdoor Foundation, reveals that in 2020, 53 percent of Americans ages 6 and over participated in outdoor recreation at least once, the highest participation rate on record. Remarkably, 7.1 million more Americans participated in outdoor recreation in 2020 than in the year prior.

The tables provided are found on pages 6, 10 and 16 of the report.

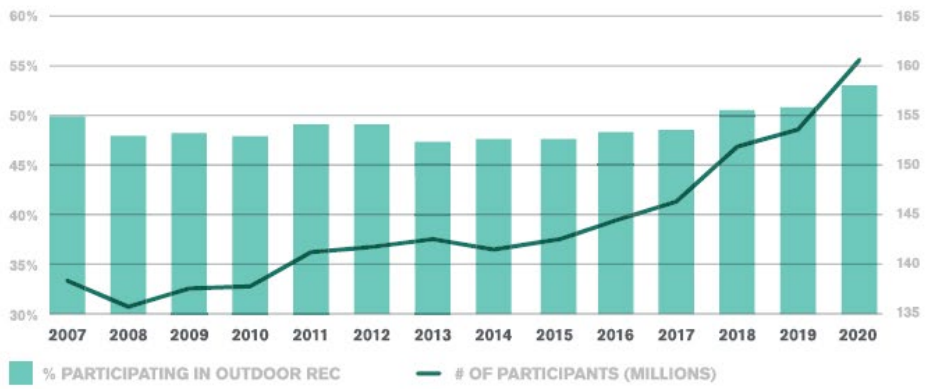
OUTDOOR PARTICIPATION SNAPSHOT

KEY FINDINGS

In 2020, 160.7 million Americans ages 6 and over participated in at least one outdoor activity.
Driven by COVID impacts, 7.1 million more participated than in 2019.

The outdoor participation rate—the percent of the population that reported participating—rose to 52.9 percent in 2020, up from 50.7 percent in 2019.
This was the largest one-year jump on record.

OUTDOOR PARTICIPATION GROWS AMID COVID-19



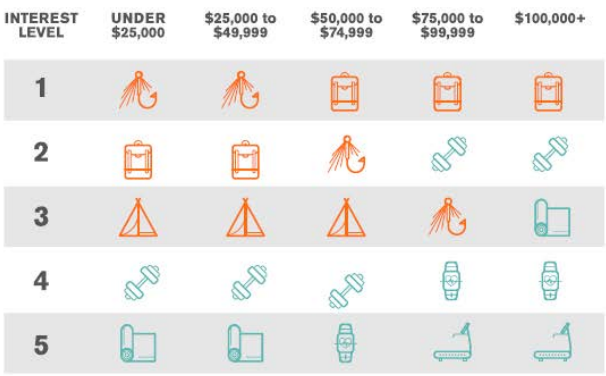
MOST POPULAR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES BY PARTICIPATION RATE

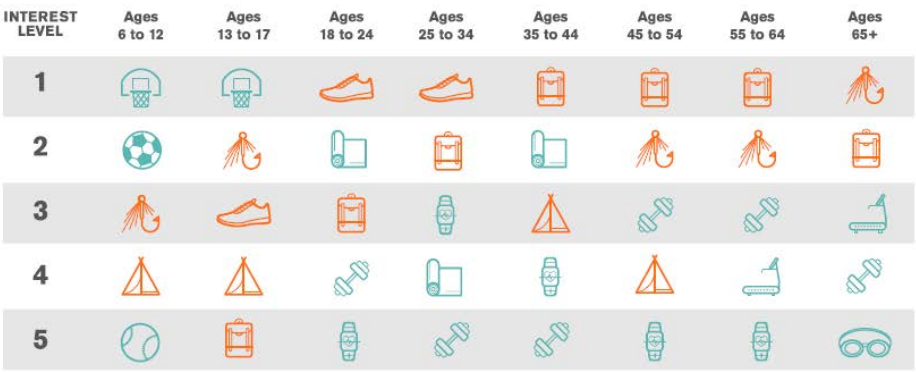
1 RUNNING, JOGGING AND TRAIL RUNNING	21.0% of Americans	63.8 million participants
2 HIKING	19.0% of Americans	57.8 million participants
3 FRESHWATER, SALTWATER AND FLY FISHING	18.0% of Americans	54.7 million participants
4 ROAD BIKING, MOUNTAIN BIKING AND BMX	17.3% of Americans	52.7 million participants
5 CAR, BACKYARD, BACKPACKING AND RV CAMPING	15.8% of Americans	47.9 million participants

INTEREST LEVEL OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Survey respondents, both outdoor participants and non-participants, were asked to choose which of 122 team, individual and outdoor activities they intended to participate in during the next 12 months. Outdoor activities ranked highly on that list. Activating non-participants and retaining current ones must remain a key priority for every outdoor company and organization.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ARE OF HIGHEST INTEREST





TOP FIVE MOST POPULAR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES*

The popularity of outdoor activities has been determined by those with the highest participation rates.

	ASIANS	AFRICAN AMERICANS	HISPANICS	WHITES
1	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 25%	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 17%	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 21%	Hiking 22%
2	Hiking 22%	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 12%	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 17%	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 19%
3	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 16%	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 11%	Hiking 17%	Car, Backyard, Backpacking, and RV camping 18%
4	Car, Backyard, Backpacking, and RV camping 12%	Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV Camping 7%	Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV Camping 16%	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 17%
5	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 10%	Hiking 6%	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 14%	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 16%

*Note: Similar activities have been grouped.

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2022 Physical Activity Council's Overview Report on U.S. Participation
https://www.physicalactivitycouncil.org/
The Nation's Definitive Source for Sports, Fitness and Recreational Activity Participation. Each year, 8 of the leading trade associations in sports, fitness and recreation join forces and combine resources to conduct the single largest study detailing the Sports, Fitness and Recreational Habits of all Americans.

The table below is taken from slide 11 of the 2022 report.

Intent to Participate in the Next 12 Months by Income

Under $25,000	$25,000 to $49,999
Working out with weights	Working out with weights
Fishing	Hiking
Hiking	Cardio Fitness
Cardio Fitness	Fishing
Working out using machines	Running/Jogging
Running/Jogging	Working out using machines
Camping	Camping
Yoga	Yoga
Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness
Basketball	Basketball

$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 to $99,999	$100,000+
Working out with weights	Hiking	Working out with weights
Hiking	Working out with weights	Hiking
Cardio Fitness	Cardio Fitness	Cardio Fitness
Running/Jogging	Working out using machines	Working out using machines
Working out using machines	Running/Jogging	Running/Jogging
Fishing	Camping	Yoga
Camping	Fishing	Fishing
Yoga	Yoga	Swimming for Fitness
Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness	Camping
Bicycling	Bicycling	Bicycling

Americans with Disabilities Act, United States Access Board and Universal Design Principles

Sunset Park ADA, ABA and Universal Design

Each renovation of Sunset Park has made the park more accessible, meeting or exceeding the cultural norms and building codes of the time. The 2002 renovation included renovations and additions to adhere with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The current renovation will continue to Meet or Exceed ADA and ABA compliance as well as incorporate the concept and principles of Universal Design.

ADA Accessibility Standards

https://www.access-board.gov/ada/guides/

Standard	Compliance	Explanation
Accessible Routes	Exceeds	Numerous accessible routes to all amenities
Entrances, doors and gates	Exceeds	Greater than 60% of public entrances are accessible in new construction
Ramps and Curb Ramps	Meets	Ramps and curb ramps are provided as required
Parking spaces	Meets	Accessible parking spaces are provided for each parking facility
Drinking fountains	Meets	Drinking fountains are dual access
Toilet rooms	Exceeds	All single user toilets are accessible (new construction)
Lavatories and Sinks	Exceeds	All lavatories and sinks are accessible (new construction)
Accessible Amusement Rides	Meets	Amusement rides provide an accessible route to the load and unload areas and a turning space
Recreational boating facility	Meets	Accessible parking and route provided
Fishing Piers	Exceeds	All piers include accessible routes, wheelchair opportunity-to-fish rails and required turning space
Playground & surfaces	Meets	Specifically designed pathway for wheelchairs or mobility devices. Apparatus-specific compliance

United States Access Board – Outdoor Developed Areas

https://www.access-board.gov/aba/guides/

Standard	Compliance	Explanation
Trails - greenway	Exceeds	Exceeds all Technical Requirements
Trails – natural surface	Meets	Natural surface trails are compacted to firm and stable
Trailhead	Exceeds	Trail Information Sign compliance, 100% of Constructed Features comply, Accessible Parking provided
Trail Facilities	Exceeds	Picnic Areas and Wildlife Observation areas (Viewing Areas) are accessible
Outdoor Recreation Access Routes	Exceeds	All of Sunset Park is accessible by ORAR and meet Technical Requirements
Outdoor Constructed Features	Exceeds	All picnic tables, grills and benches are accessible
Picnic facilities	Exceeds	All picnic facilities include accessible tables and access routes
Viewing Areas	Exceeds	All Wildlife Observation areas (Viewing Areas) are accessible and meet technical requirements

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Universal Design (UD)
https://disabilityandmultimodality.wordpress.ncsu.edu/universal-design-ud/

The term "Universal Design" comes from architect, Ronald Mace, and the associated seven principles of Universal Design were developed by a group at North Carolina State University's Center for Universal Design.

According to the Center for Universal Design, "Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design". Universal Design rests on seven principles for design, which serve as a heuristic for creating usable products and environments. The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Accessibility for Parks (AFP) Grant Program utilizes the definition as provided by the Center for Universal Design.

The "Seven Principles of Universal Design" include:

1. ***Equitable use*** *ensures that the design is "useful to diverse abilities";*
2. ***Flexibility in use*** *ensures that "design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities";*
3. ***Simple and intuitive use*** *ensures that the "design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level";*
4. ***Perceptible information*** *ensures that the "design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities";*
5. ***Tolerance for error*** *works to minimize "hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions";*
6. ***Low physical effort*** *ensures that the "design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue"; and*
7. ***Size and space for approach and use*** *ensures that the design affords "reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility".*

Universal Design Principle	**Sunset Park Highlight**
Equitable use	Base loop of the Sunset Park natural surface, multi-use trail (MTB) is IMBA designated Beginner, appropriate for all riders, offroad handcycles, runners and walkers
Flexibility in use	Park design incorporates high-density areas as well low-density areas to accommodate those that may be sensitive to sensory input
Simple and intuitive use	Trailhead at Sunset Park kiosk is map-based information concerning connectivity to other parks. A compass rose is painted on the adjacent greenway to orient North
Perceptible information	Spray ground has no "right or wrong" method for use and may be "properly" utilized and enjoyed by individuals of all abilities
Tolerance for error	Wildlife Observation areas will include gates with safety latches in the existing fence, rather than removing fence along the Tar River
Low physical effort	Sunset Park is located almost entirely in the floodplain. This creates an extremely flat location. Minimal effort is needed to traverse the park by walking or rolling
Size & space for approach & use	Fishing piers have opportunity-to-fish rails to accommodate fishing from a wheelchair

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Section 8 Project Area Assessment

Safety and CPTED

The Renovation of Battle Park included the inclusion of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). These conversations and resulting management activities involved safety, security, line of sight, lighting and crime. Inclusion of the CPTED principles were very effective and appreciated by the public. These principles are being utilized throughout the Rocky Mount Parks system and will be incorporated into the Renovation of Sunset Park. The three concepts of CPTED as provided by the NC Department of Public Safety are listed below. The Rocky Mount Police Department is well versed in CPTED and supports its use in the design and development of the renovated Sunset Park.

Natural Surveillance

Increases visibility: A design concept directed at keeping intruders easily observable. Uses Lighting, landscaping and the placement of windows to increase the ability to see what's going on in an area. When used to its greatest advantage, it maximizes the potential for deterring crime because a criminal's behavior is more noticeable to anyone passing by.

Natural Access Control

Controls access: A design concept directed at controlling access to potential targets. This is created by using and incorporating physical and mechanical means of access control.

Territorial Reinforcement

Promotes a sense of ownership: This concept uses physical design to create or extend a feeling of ownership and sends a message that the property belongs to someone. This is accomplished by embodying all the principles of Natural Surveillance and Access Control. It uses fences, signage, landscaping, and lighting to define property lines and clear distinctions from public and private.
https://www.ncdps.gov/dps-services/crime-prevention/prevention-through-environmental-design

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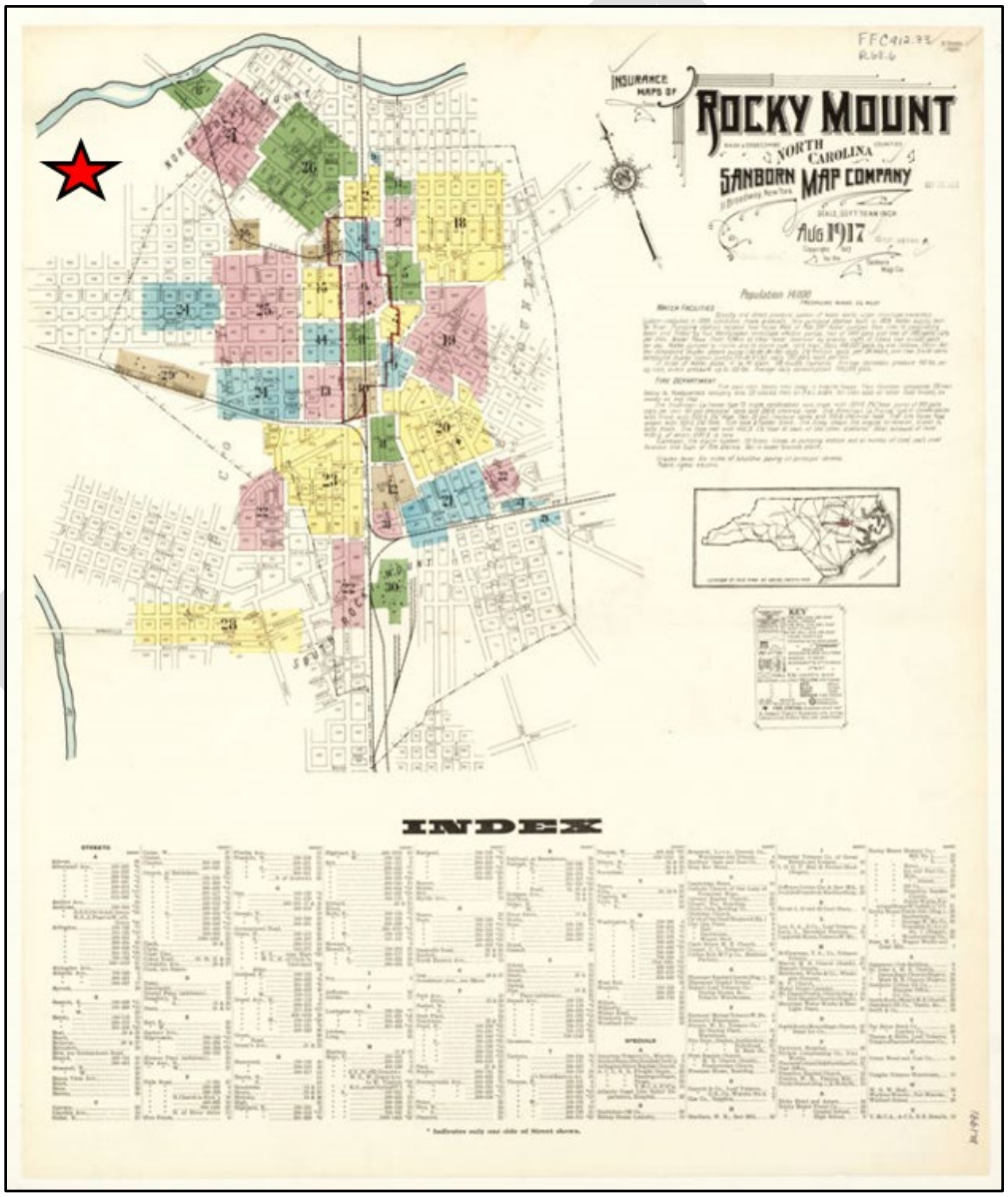
Site Analysis

Site Description

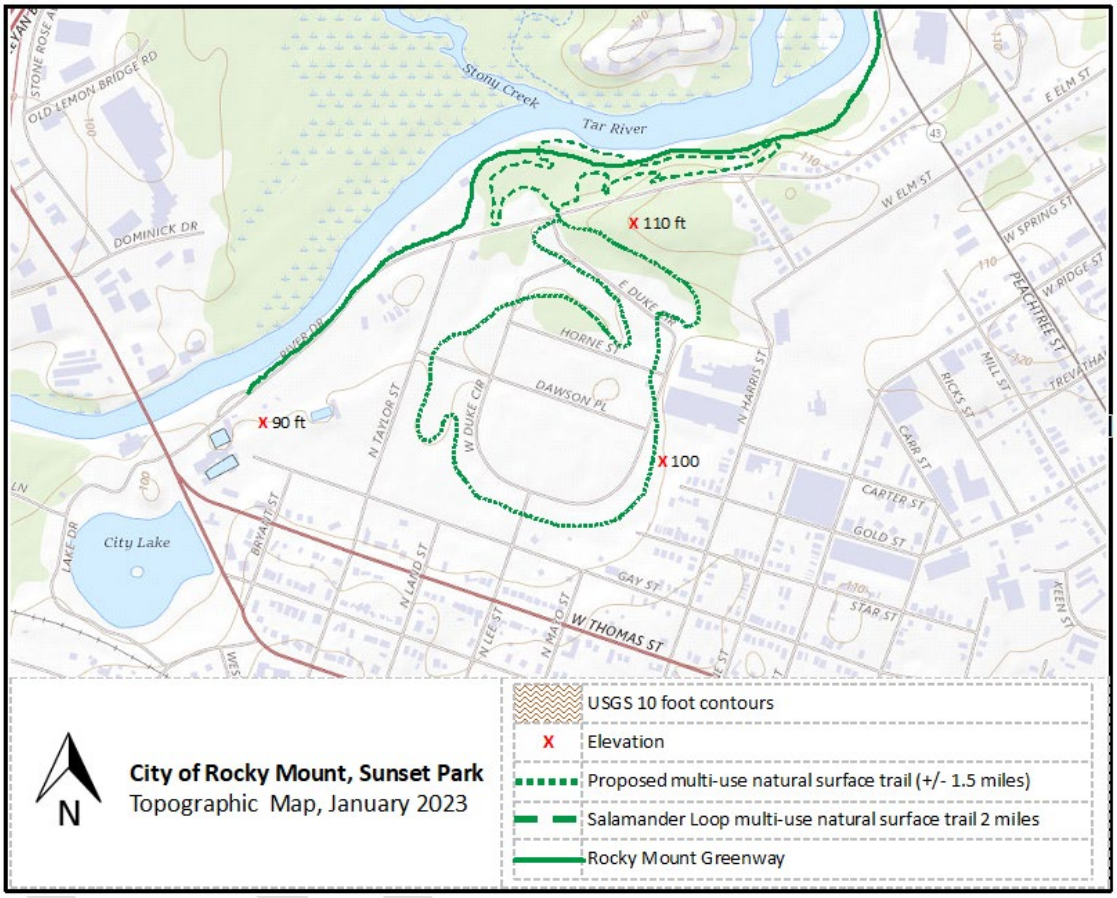
Encompassing 103.22 acres, Sunset Park is located on the southern bank of the Tar River just upstream of the Rocky Mount Mills dam. This section of the river is considered the millpond of the dam. This results in little current and consistent water levels. The Sunset Park boat ramp is the only ramp located between the Rocky Mount Mills dam and the Davenport Mill dam (breached) on Halifax Road in Nash County. The mouth of Stony Creek is located on the north bank of the Tar River at Sunset Park. The park has been public parkland for 80 years, with little information concerning previous development in the area. The red star in the undeveloped area on the 1917 Sanborn map below indicates the current location of Sunset Park. Four private residences that did not participate in the FEMA buyout remain in the Duke Circle area of the park; these are designated on the Site Plan and **are not** part of the project.



Insurance Maps of Rocky Mount, Nash & Edgecombe Counties, North Carolina, Aug. 1917
https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/ncmaps/id/5598/rec/8

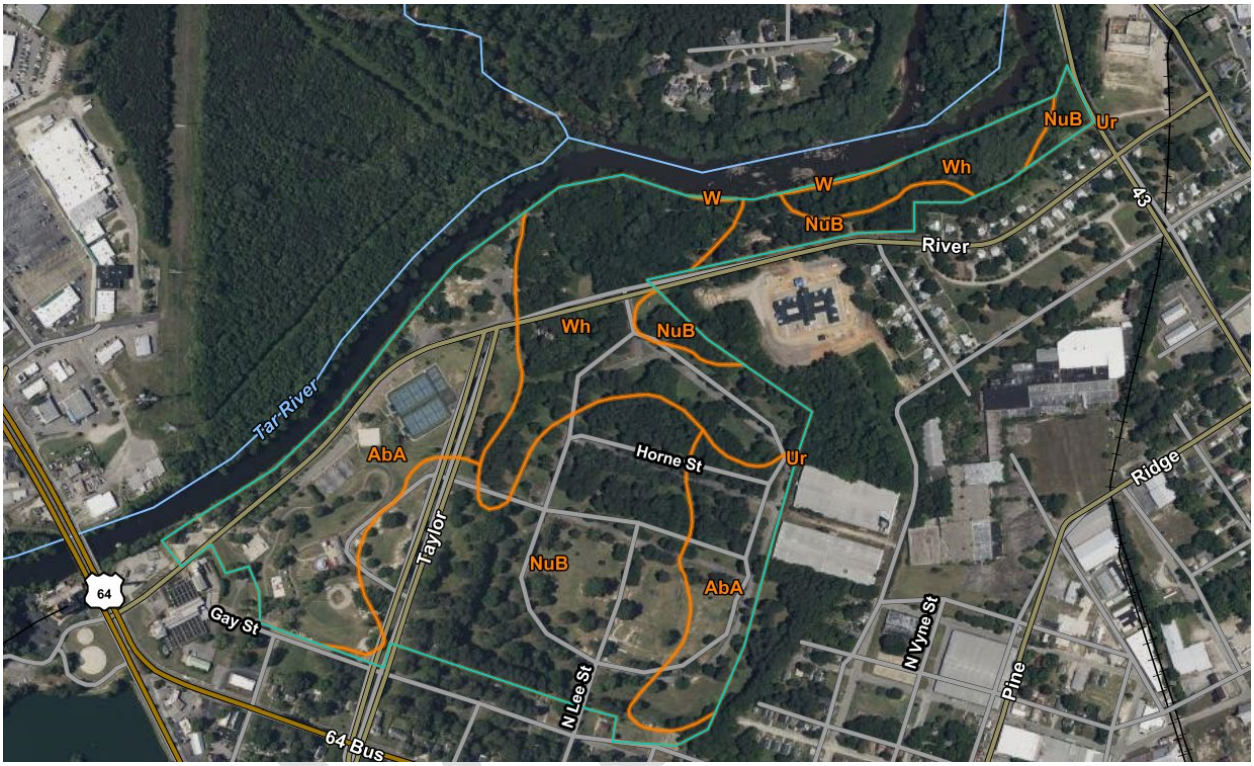
Topography

Sunset Park is located upstream of the Rocky Mount Mills dam. The mills dam was constructed at the intersection of the fall line and Tar River. A low-lying island, known locally as Snake Island is located across from the park's northeast boundary. Most of the park is low lying at approximately 90 feet of elevation and flat. Small portions in the western boundary rise to 110 feet of elevation.



Soils

The Sunset Park site is comprised of three types of soils: Norfolk-Urban land complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes (NuB), Altavista-Urban land complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, rarely flooded (AbA) and Wehadkee loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded (Wh).



Map Symbol	Map Name	Acres	Percent
AbA	Altavista-Urban land complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, rarely flooded	37.8	34.0%
NuB	Norfolk-Urban land complex, 0 to 6 percent slopes	43.8	39.5%
Wh	Wehadkee loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	29.4	26.5%

United States Department of Agriculture. 2022. *Natural Resources Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey.* USDA, Washington, DC. Available at https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/

Vegetation

The vegetation of Sunset Park is divided into three distinct areas: Traditional Park, Duke Circle FEMA properties and the River Drive woodlands.

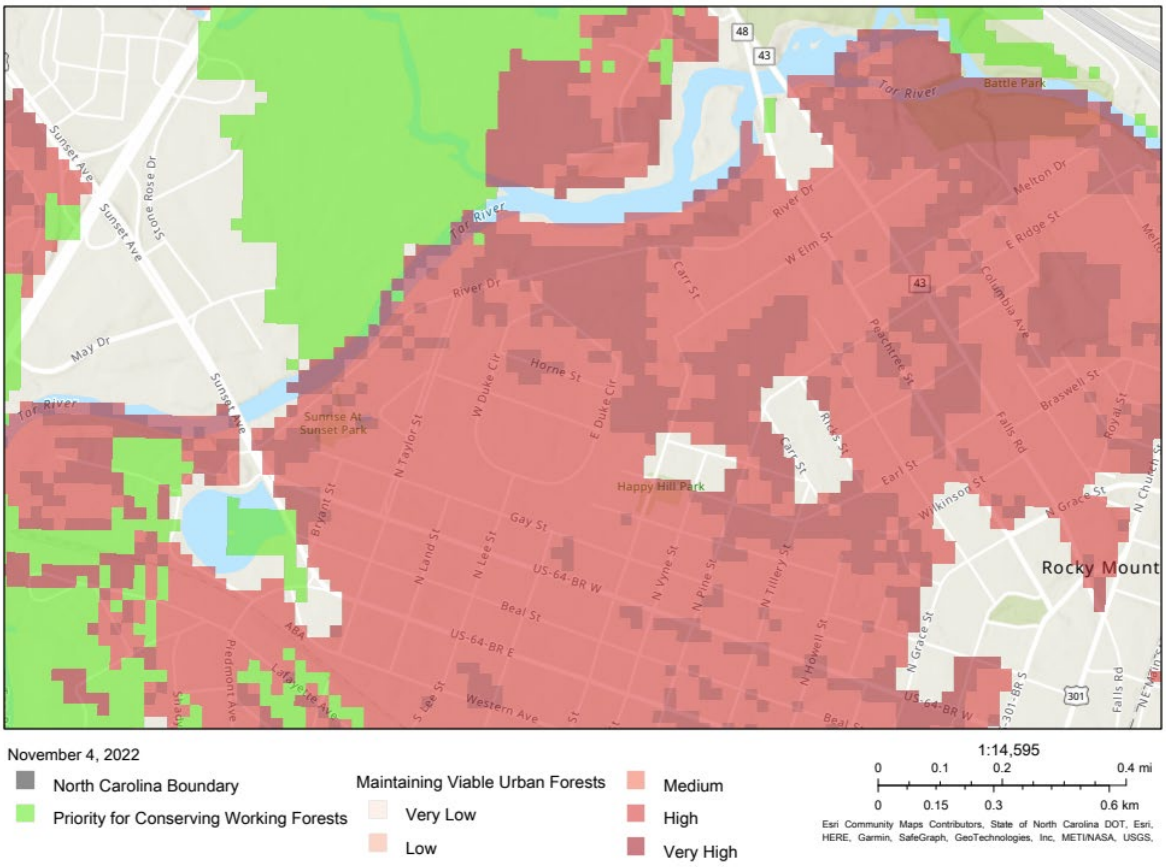
The traditional park is noted by areas of holly, wisteria, crepe myrtle, eastern red cedar, pine, oak, etc. Grass and landscaped park areas dominate the vegetation surrounding the recreation amenities. Due to the age of the park, a few of the oaks and pines in this area are massive.

The Duke Circle portion of Sunset is post-Floyd FEMA mitigation property. A large dog park and disc golf course have been constructed. This area retains much of its residential landscaping including mature pine, oak, crepe myrtle and maple. Invasive species such as privet and mimosa are also present.

The River Drive woodlands have numerous mature pines, oaks, cypress, sweet gum and other species associated with bottomlands. Non-native species such as chinese privet, russian olive, wisteria, english ivey, mimosa, etc. are prevalent in this section of the park. This has eliminated sight lines and pose a threat to the overall health of the woodlands. Much of this will be addressed by riparian restoration.

The Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Forestry Land Assessment has identified all the park as High or Very High in Maintaining Viable Urban Forests.

Sunset Park Forestry Lands Assessment

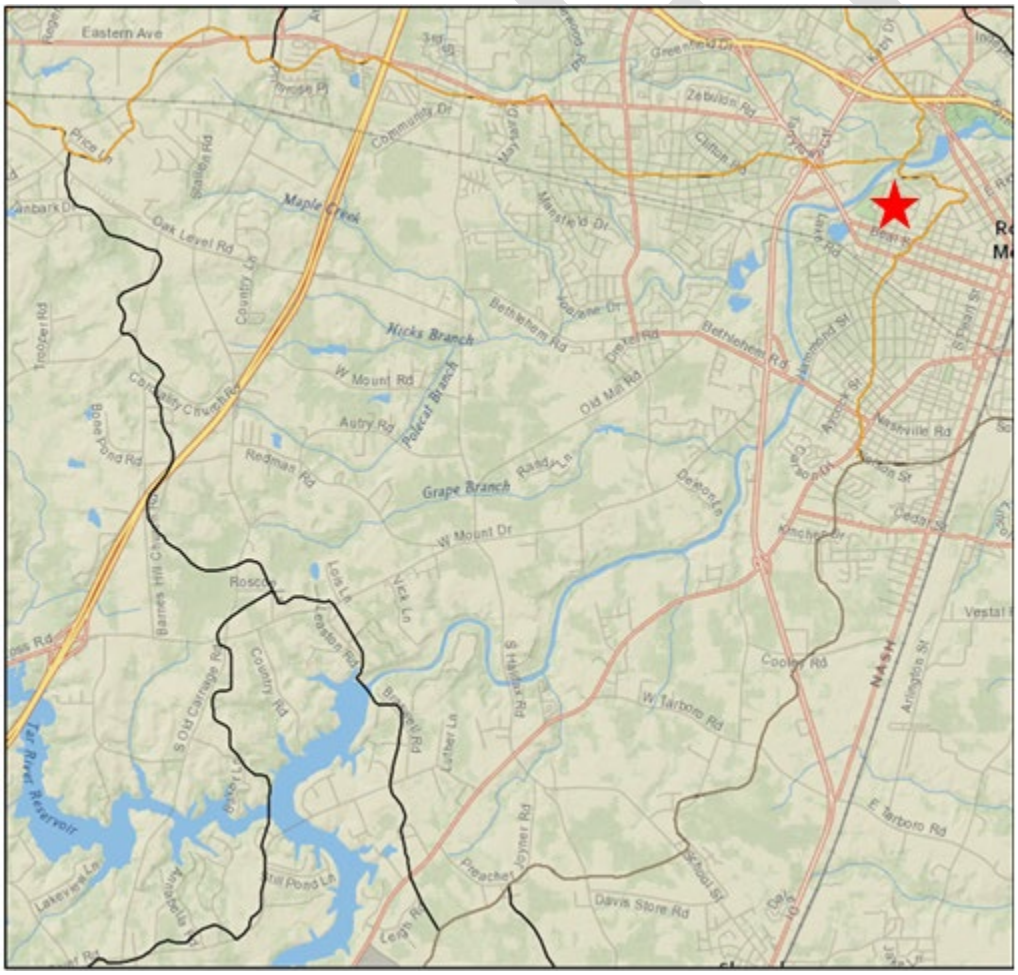


North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. 2022. *Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Forestry Land Assessment*. NCDNCR, Raleigh, NC. Available at www.ncnhp.org

Hydrology

Sunset Park is located within the Maple Creek -Tar River Sub-watershed (030201010607) on the Upper Tar River of the Tar-Pamlico river basin. The Rocky Mount Mills dam found near the eastern border of the park is the last downstream dam in the river basin. From the dam, the Tar River is free flowing to the Pamlico Sound / Atlantic Ocean. Stony Creek enters the Tar River north of Sunset Park, upstream of the dam.

River Basin:	Tar-Pamlico	10-Digit Name:	Tar River Reservoir-Tar River
Acronym:	TAR	10-Digit Code:	0302010106
Sq. Miles:	6,148	Square Miles:	200
Acres:	3,934,445		
8-Digit Name:	Upper Tar	12-Digit Name:	Maple Creek-Tar River
8-Digit Code:	03020101	12-Digit Code:	030201010607
Basin Acronym:	Tar-Pamlico	12-Digit Area (ac):	17,335.97
Acres:	835,070		
Square Miles:	1,305		



North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. 2022. *Division of Water Resources, Find Your HUC.* NCDEQ, Raleigh, NC. Available at https://data-ncdenr.opendata.arcgis.com/apps/ncdenr::find-your-huc-in-north-carolina/explore

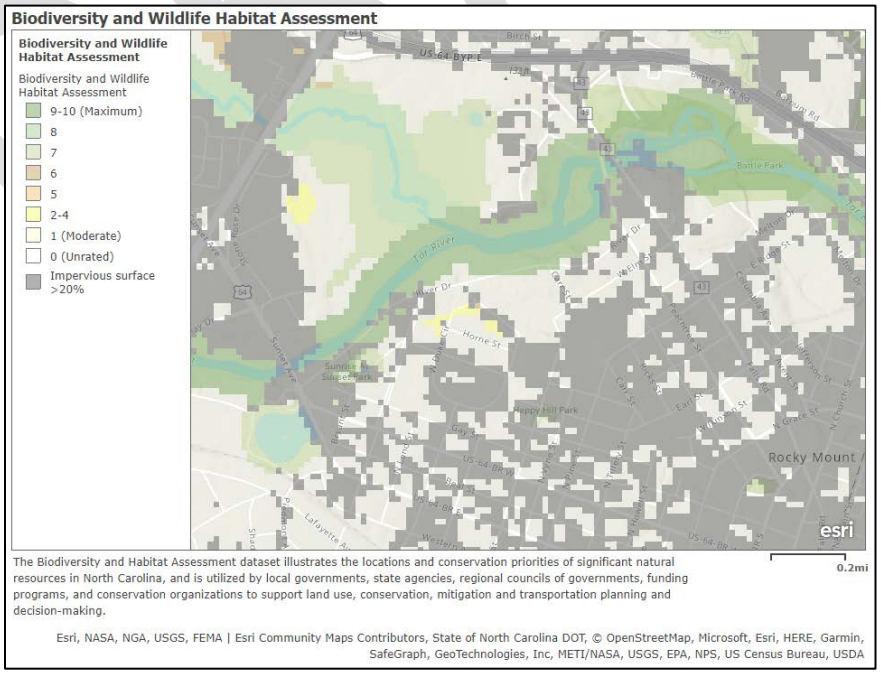
Significant Natural Communities / Tree and wildlife species

Of the Nash County protected species, five are Federally listed as endangered, four threatened, and one proposed endangered. Bald Eagles are protected by the Federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The Tar River has been designated as a Proposed Critical Habitat for the Neuse River Waterdog (NHDE, Natural Areas).

Group	Common Name Scientific name	Status
Mammals	Northern Long-Eared Bat, Myotis septentrionalis	Threatened
Mammals	Tricolored bat, Perimyotis subflavus	Proposed Endangered
Insects	Monarch butterfly, Danaus plexippus	Candidate
Mammals	Little brown bat, Myotis lucifugus	Under Review
Birds	Red-cockaded woodpecker, Picoides borealis	Endangered
Clams	Green floater, Lasmigona subviridis	Under Review
Clams	Tar River spinymussel, Parvaspina steinstansana	Endangered
Flowering Plants	Michaux's sumac, Rhus michauxii	Endangered
Fishes	Carolina madtom, Noturus furiosus	Endangered
Clams	Dwarf wedgemussel, Alasmidonta heterodon	Endangered
Clams	Atlantic pigtoe, Fusconaia masoni	Threatened
Amphibians	Neuse River waterdog, Necturus lewisi	Threatened
Clams	Yellow lance, Elliptio lanceolata	Threatened

https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/

The Tar River serves as habitat for most of the listed species. As a result, the river channel and banks are listed as Maximum Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat (NHDE, Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment). The renovation of Sunset Park will not cause ecological disturbance, defined as any relatively discrete event in time that disrupts ecosystems, community, or population structure and changes resources, substrate availability, or the physical environment (White and Pickett, 1985).



https://www.nconemap.gov/maps/NC::biodiversity-and-wildlife-habitat-assessment/about

The Rocky Mount Mills dam is the first upstream dam located on the Tar River, creating a barrier for further migration of anadromous fish such as American and Hickory shad and Striped bass. Most Striped bass within the Tar River system are hatchery stocked fish from the NC Wildlife Commission (NCWRC). The cultural heritage of fishing for these species pre-exists Europeans arrival on the continent.

The Tar River at Sunset Park is home to numerous species of fish, such as largemouth bass, crappie, catfish, shellcracker and gar. The abundance of birds in the area resulted in the park being added to the NC Birding Trail (NCBT). Mammals such as squirrels, deer, muskrat, river otters and beaver may be found within the park boundaries.

North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. 2020. *Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Natural Areas*. NCDNCR, Raleigh, NC. Available at www.ncnhp.org

North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. 2020. *Natural Heritage Data Explorer, Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment*. NCDNCR, Raleigh, NC. Available at www.ncnhp.org

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. 2020. New Striped Bass Size Limit in Inland Waters of the Tar, Neuse and Pungo Rivers, October 1, 2018. NCWRC, Raleigh, NC. Available at https://www.ncwildlife.org/News/new-striped-bass-size-limit-in-inland-waters-of-the-tar-neuse-and-pungo-rivers

North Carolina Birding Trail. 2020. North Carolina Birding Trail, Sites. NCBT, Raleigh, NC. Available at *www.ncbirdingtrail.org*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2020. Endangered Species, *Threatened Species, Federal Species of Concern, and Candidate Species*, Nash County, North Carolina. USFWS, Washington, DC. Available at www.fws.gov/raleigh/species/cntylist/nash.html

White, P.S., and S.T.A. Pickett. 1985. Natural disturbance and patch dynamics: an introduction. Pages 472 in S. T. A. Pickett and P. S. White, eds. The ecology of natural disturbance and patch dynamics. Academic Press, Orlando, FL.

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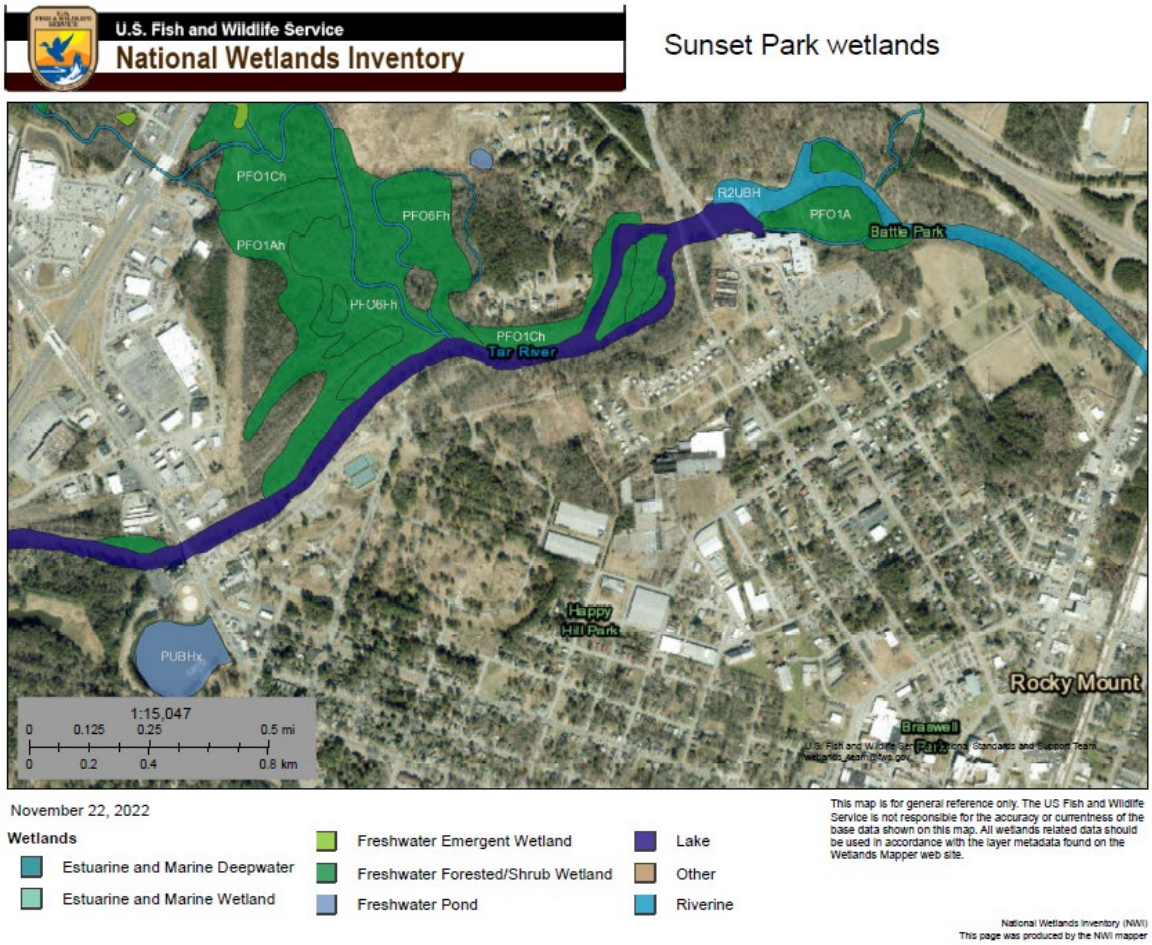
Wetlands

There are no USFWS designated wetlands within Sunset Park. All wetlands are north of the Tar River from the park, on Snake Island or east of the park near Battle Park.

The City of Rocky Mount Storm Water Engineer has been involved in the planning process and will ensure the project continues to meet and exceed all wetland and stream buffer regulations.



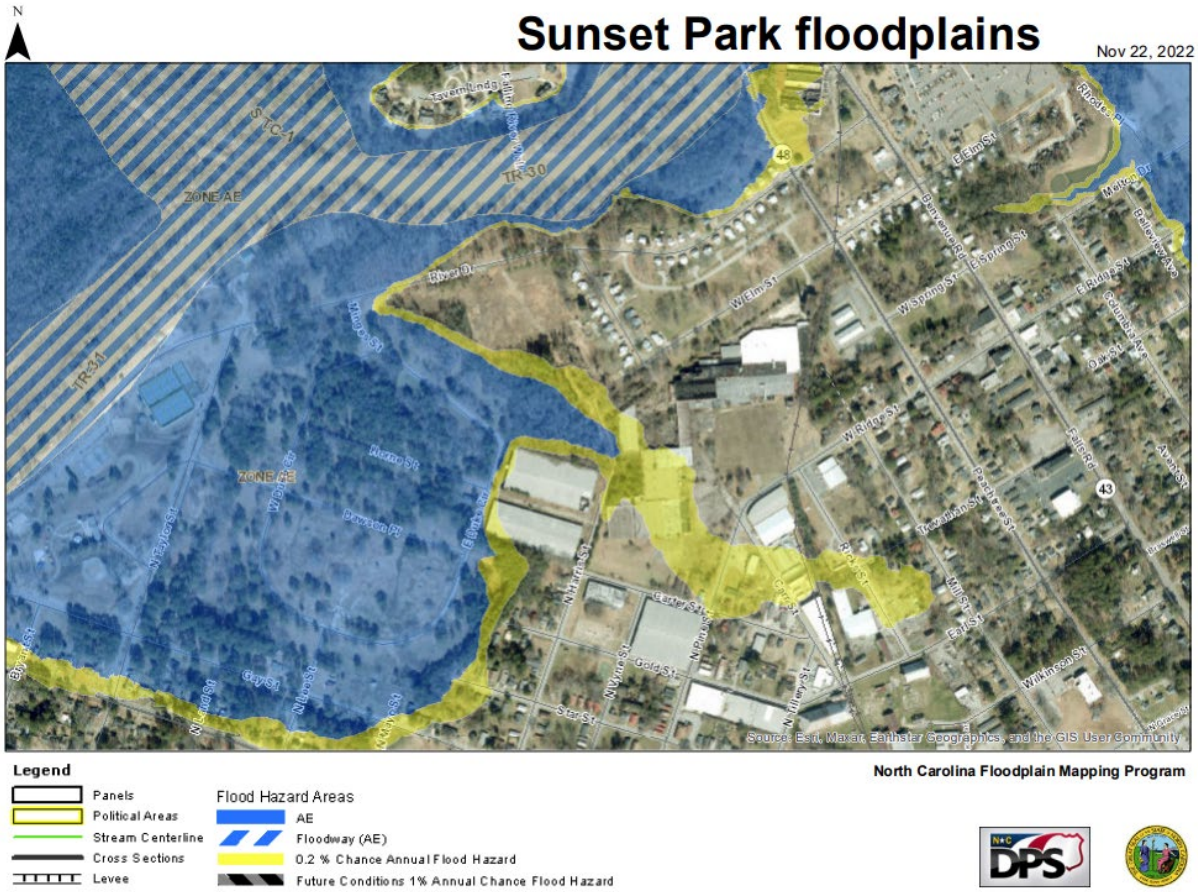
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2022. National Wetlands Inventory, Wetlands Mapper. USFWS, Washington, DC. Available at https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/mapper.html

Floodplains

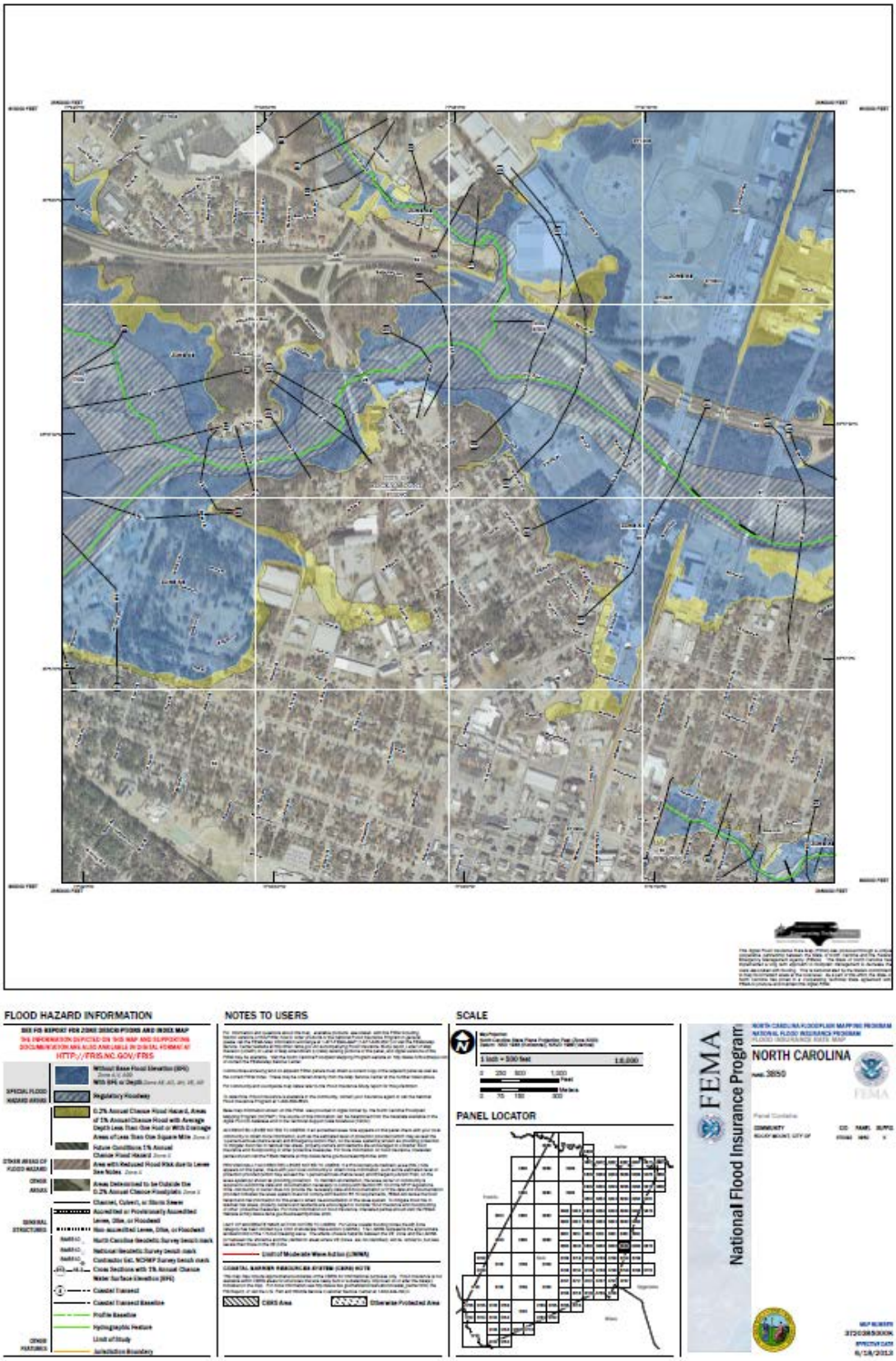
Nearly all of Sunset Park lies within the 100-year floodplain, with river-adjacent portions in the floodway. A small eastern portion rises above the floodplain. Renovation will focus on existing amenities and the construction of a natural surface trail with no built upon areas.

The City of Rocky Mount has a long and involved history with parklands in the floodplain including pre-event preparation, response, recovery, mitigation and sustainable & resilient development. The City of Rocky Mount Floodplain Manager is involved in the planning process and will ensure the project continues to meet and exceed floodplain regulations. All renovation will be completed in a manner that anticipates future high-water events.

Sunset Park was last renovated in 2002 because of being severely damaged by the flood waters of Hurricane Floyd (September 1999). Floyd is the storm of record, reaching 31.7' on the downstream USGS Hwy 97 gauge. Since the 2002 renovation, Sunset Park has been partially submerged by Hurricane Matthew (October 2016) 28.7', June 2020 high water 27.3', Hurricane Alberto (June 2006) 25.3'. Due to the resilient and sustainable 2002 renovation design and Parks Maintenance preparations learned from Floyd, Sunset Park emerged with little damage and re-opened quickly after cleaning. The floodplain is one of two primary Design Considerations that shaped the planning of Renovation of Sunset Park.



North Carolina Department of Public Safety. 2022. *North Carolina Floodplain mapping Program, Flood Risk Information System*. NCDPS, Raleigh, NC. Available at https://fris.nc.gov/fris/Index.aspx



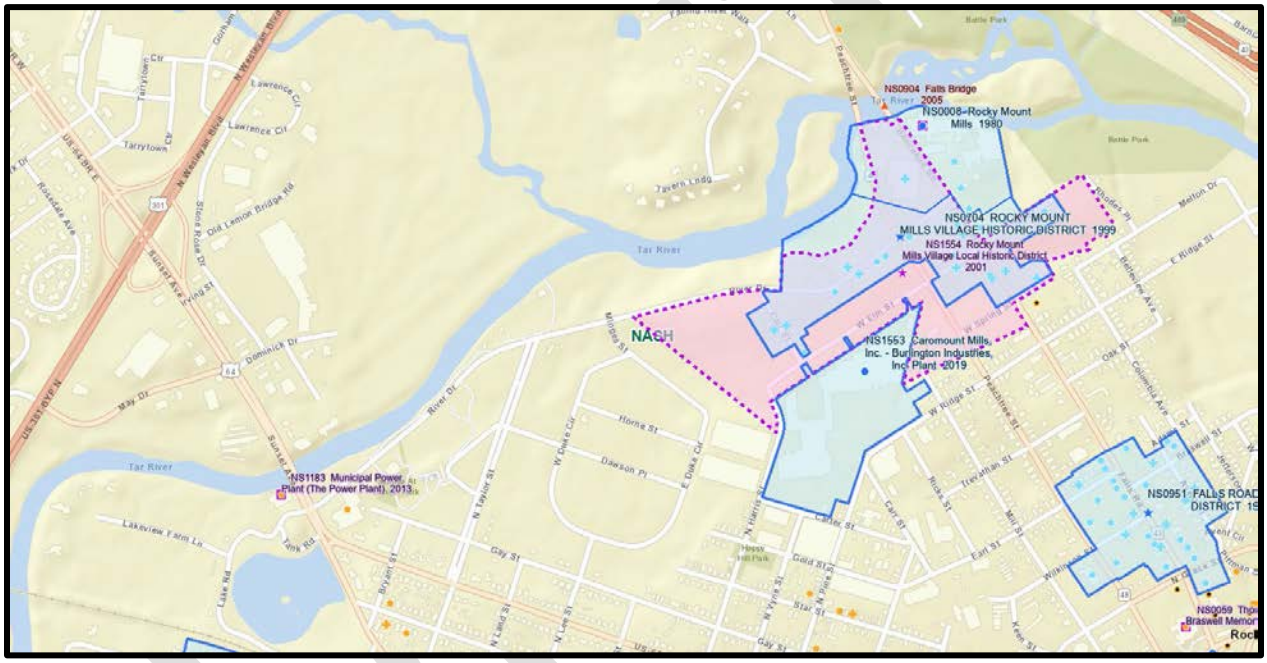
National Flood Insurance Program, Panel 3850

Archaeological or historical sites

The following North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office Historic Sites and Districts are found adjacent Sunset Park, however no sites exist within the park boundaries. The park has been public parkland for the past eight decades and will remain public parkland. The historic public recreation usage of the park is one of two primary design considerations that shaped the planning of renovation of Sunset Park.

Adjacent North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office Historic Sites and Districts

- NS1183 Municipal Power Plant
- NS1554 Rocky Mount Mills Village Local Historic District
- NS0704 Rocky Mount Mills Village Local Historic District
- NS1553 Caromount Mills
- NS0008 Rocky Mount Mills



North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. 2022. *HPOWEB 2.0 - General Audience,* Raleigh, NC. Available at https://nc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html

Existing Structures. .

The Train Station is the former pool house. This structure was severely damaged by Hurricane Floyd in 1999 and renovated in 2002. The current renovation will rehabilitate the exterior restrooms and add exterior security cameras; no structural changes will be made.

Public Access

Sunset Park has served as a public park since the 1940's. The park is currently open to the public and accessible by Taylor Street, River Drive and Sunset Avenue. The Rocky Mount Greenway connects the park to adjacent parklands of the Tar River Parks System. Paddle craft access connects Sunset to the 197-mile, basin-wide Tar River Paddle Trail. The Sunset Park boat ramp provides the only motorized boat access between the Rocky Mount Mills dam and the Davenport Mill dam (breached).

Utilities

The City of Rocky Mount is a Public Utility and Public Power municipality. A City of Rocky Mount gravity sewer main is located at the intersection of River Drive and Taylor Street, this is marked on the Site Plan. There is no easement as both the utility and the park are owned by the city. Overhead powerlines that serve park security lights are in the parking areas. All utilities are owned and operated by the city.

A City of Rocky Mount electric sub-station is immediately west of the boat ramp and the City of Rocky Mount Sunset Water Plant is located immediately south of the boat ramp. Both facilities are owned and operated by the city and are not in the Sunset Park boundary.

Ground Disturbance / Site Clearing

The project will primarily consist of renovation of existing recreation amenities which will require no ground disturbance or site clearing. Riparian area restoration will include thinning and invasive species management as allowed by 15A NCAC 02B .0734 Tar-Pamlico River Basin riparian buffer regulations in a manner consistent with NCDOT *Invasive Plants of North Carolina*, Cheri Smith. No built upon areas are included in the riparian.

New Facilities (Indoor, greenway or trail)

No new indoor facilities are included in the project. Renovation of 6,000 lf (10' width) of existing greenway and construction of 7,920 lf (18" width) of new natural surface trail is include in the project. The trail will be designed by a professional trail builder to ensure sustainable design and construction.

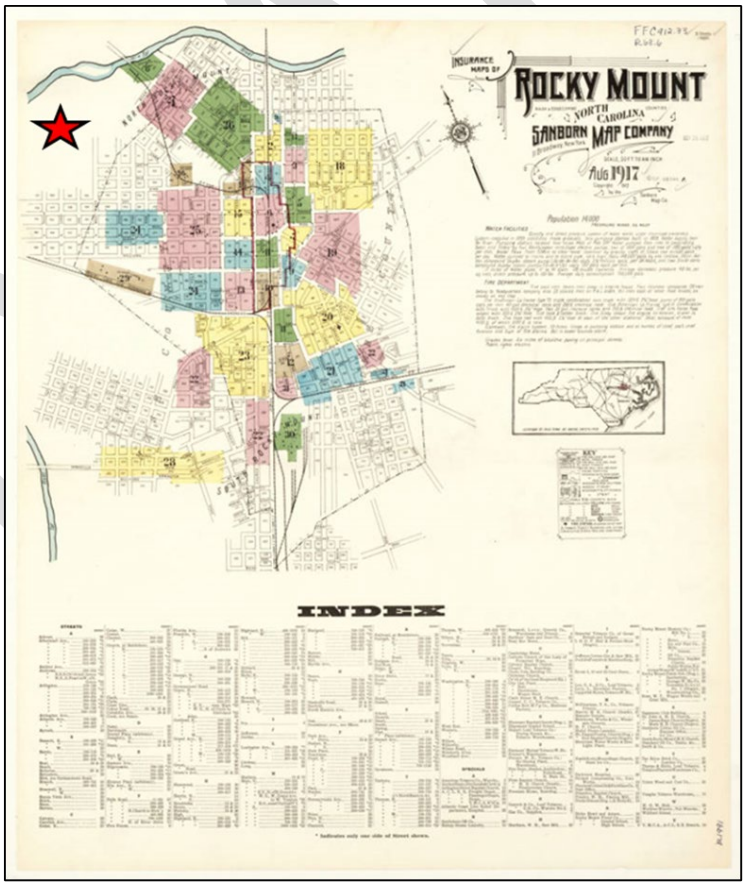
Past/Current Property Use

The park has been public parkland for 80 years, with little information concerning previous development in the area. The 1917 Sanborn map (below) shows no development in the current Sunset Park location.

The City of Rocky Mount began acquiring land on the Tar River in the 1930's. Construction of Sunset Park was initiated by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Roosevelt Administration. In the 1950's, the Rocky Mount Children's Museum, a miniature train and a carousel were added to the park. In 1968, 1973 and 1980, assistance from the Land and Water Conservation Fund allowed the City to purchase adjacent property to expand and further develop the park. With assistance from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF 2001 & 2004), Sunset Park recovered from Hurricane Floyd and continued to serve the community.

The 50-acre Riverside neighborhood directly east of the park was lost to flood waters. Once the homes were removed (FEMA), the open space became part of the park. Four private residences did not participate in the FEMA buyout and remain in the Duke Circle area of the park; these are designated on the Site Plan and are not part of the project.

In 2014 the tennis courts were fully renovated. The community driven and funded *Best Friends Dog Park* was added in 2015. Golden LEAF funds replaced the Sunset Park boat ramp in 2017.



Insurance Maps of Rocky Mount, Nash & Edgecombe Counties, North Carolina, Aug. 1917
https://dc.lib.unc.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/ncmaps/id/5598/rec/8

Recreational needs
Considering the historic and recreational importance of Sunset Park, the City of Rocky Mount completed numerous processes to understand the community served, the *Recreational Needs* of the community, how Sunset Park has met these needs and how Sunset Park should continue to meet these needs. These processes and their results are discussed at length throughout this document. **A summary is provided on the following pages, please reference the appropriate section for complete information.**

2014 Recreational Needs Survey
The 2014 Recreational Needs Survey (Section 5) indicates the renovated Sunset Park will meet the **Top Priorities** of the **Importance-Unmet Needs for <u>Facilities</u>** by providing:

- Restrooms
- Picnic areas / shelters
- Walking / running tracks
- Natural parks & preserves
- Greenway trails

The 2014 Recreational Needs Survey (Section 5) indicates the renovated Sunset Park will meet the **Top Priorities** of the **Importance-Unmet Needs for <u>Programs</u>** by providing:

- Fitness & wellness
- Family
- Nature

2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
The 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan (Section 2) was developed shortly after the post-Floyd renovation of Sunset Park. As a result, the park was in excellent condition scoring a five out of five by the Comprehensive Plan Review Group in the areas of Serves Residents, Appearance, Condition, Accessibility and Appropriate Function. The 2015 plan includes Sunset Park as a latter year funding park and recognizes the park as a trail hub. Sunset Park is also central to the River Falls Parks / Tar River Park System concept, which redevelops and rebrands the 403 acres of six existing parks connected by the Rocky Mount Greenway.

Much of the current renovation complies with the 2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan and aligns with the implementation of the River Falls Parks / Tar River Park System concept.

DRAFT

(Recreational Needs continued)

Public Input Meetings

The City of Rocky Mount held three Public Meetings in September 2022 that were intentionally crafted to provide direct feedback from the citizens on their recreational preferences for Sunset Park. The process is discussed at length in Section 9. The items below are ranked by preference; items in **BOLD** are included the Renovation of Sunset Park:

1. **MTB / XC trail +/- 1.5 miles**
2. **Tennis courts**
3. **Miniature train**
4. **Stony Creek trail feasibility study**
5. **Restrooms**
6. **Playground, tot-lot, accessible**
7. **Carousel**
8. **Spray Park**
9. **Greenway & Boardwalk**
10. Pickleball
11. **Fishing piers**
12. **Sunset concessions building**
13. **Community Gardens**
14. **Riparian restoration, boardwalk**
15. MTB skills area & pump track
16. Landscaping
17. Baseball field
18. Basketball courts
19. Sand volleyball courts
20. Misc
21. Skate park
22. Bug ride
23. Medium shelters (3)
24. Dog Park
25. Boulder play area
26. Large shelter 30’x60’ w/12 tables

DRAFT

(Recreational Needs continued)

Existing Studies Review, National Standards, Trail Systems, NC SCORP & Equity Research
In addition to Recreational Needs insight provided by the Needs Survey, the Comprehensive Plan and the Public Meetings, the Renovation of Sunset Park was shaped and supported by considering Existing Studies (Section 2), National Standards (Section 3), Trail Systems (Section 4), NC SCORP (Section 6) and Equity Research (Section 7). A listing of these documents and a summary of how they shape or support the Renovation of Sunset Park is provided below, please refer to the appropriate section for full detail.

Existing Studies Review

- 1975-1980 City of Rocky Mount Open Space Plan
- 1999 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
- 2002 Renovation and Park Master Plan
- 2005-2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan
- 2007 City of Rocky Mount Comprehensive Bike Plan
- 2012 City of Rocky Mount Pedestrian Plan
- 2018 City of Rocky Mount Bike Plan
- 2022 Stony Creek Trail Feasibility Study

All existing recreation studies indicate the importance of Sunset Park to the community in meeting their past, current and future recreation needs. The pedestrian and bike plans demonstrate the importance of Sunset as the hub / trailhead for current and future trails due to its central location in Rocky Mount and proximity to Sunset Avenue.

National Standards

- National Recreation and Park Association Forms of Programs & Services.
- 2020 NC SCORP / NRPA 1995 Park, Recreation, Open Space & Greenway Guidelines
- Forms and Overlap of Outdoor Recreation

In addition to providing context for conversations concerning park classifications, National Standards assist with understanding the role of Sunset Park in the Rocky Mount Parks System. Serving as a combination of a small regional park and a large community park, Sunset Park remains the cornerstone of public recreation in Rocky Mount.

NC Regional Trail Systems and NCDOT Great Trails State Plan Network

- East Coast Greenway
- NC Mountains to Sea Trail
- Carolina Thread Trail
- American Tobacco Trail
- NCDOT Great Trails State Plan Network

Sunset Park is the western most trailhead for the Rocky Mount Greenway. As the City renovates the park and considers the Monk to Mill Trail and Stony Creek Trail expansion of the greenway system, an understanding of other greenway and trail systems is appropriate.

DRAFT

(Recreational Needs continued)

2020-2025 NC SCORP

- NC SCORP Goal, Objectives and Initiatives
- NC SCORP 2020-2025 Public Priorities for park management
- NC SCORP 2020-2025 Types of Facilities Currently Needed
- NC SCORP 2020-2025 Nash & Edgecombe residents / recreation facility ranking

Section 6 contains detail how the Renovation of Sunset Park directly aligns with the 2020-2025 NC SCORP.

Equity Research

- NC Equity & Transportation Disadvantage Screening Tool
    - Environmental Justice Statewide Map
    - Transportation Disadvantage Statewide Map
- US Census Tracker
- The Trust for Public Land ParkServe Mapping Application
- 2021 Outdoor Foundation Participation Trends Report
- 2022 Physical Activity Council's Overview Report on U.S. Participation

Equity Research provides the importance of the Renovation of Sunset Park to the Rocky Mount MSA (all of Edgecombe and Nash Counties), Rocky Mount city residents and the residents within walking distance of the park.

ADA, ABA and Universal Design

The Renovation of Sunset Park will meet and exceed ADA and ABA technical requirements as well as incorporate the concept and principles of Universal Design (Section 7).

DRAFT

(Recreational Needs continued)

Recreational Opportunities
Based upon the Recreational Needs assessment, the recreational opportunities to be provided by the Renovation of Sunset Park are ranked below as prioritized by the Public Meetings.

1. **MTB / XC trail +/- 1.5 miles**
   The Battle Park and Salamander Ridge mountain bike trails opened in Spring 2022. These are the first public mountain bike trails in Edgecombe and Nash counties. The trails have been well received and the trail riders greatly supported the addition of 1.5 miles of new multi-use, natural surface trail. The trail will be directional by user group and will connect to the Salamander Ridge trail.

2. **Tennis courts**
   The courts at Sunset Park have served as the hub of tennis play in the Rocky Mount community for decades. Local players greatly supported renovation of the courts. New windscreens and resurfacing as possible will be included.

3. **Miniature train**
   The Sunset Park miniature train has served generations of Rocky Mount children and their families. Funds will be used to renovate or fully replace the train.

4. **Stony Creek trail feasibility study**
   The City of Rocky Mount contracted with Alta Greenways to conduct the Stony Creek trail feasibility study in late 2022.

5. **Restrooms**
   Floodplain regulations prohibit new construction in the floodplain. The current Sunset Park building has outdoor restrooms that are closed during winter months due to vandalism and cold-weather related maintenance issues. The restrooms will be renovated and additional security features added to meet the need for permanent outdoor restrooms.

6. **Playground, tot-lot, accessible**
   The playground at Sunset Park will be replaced and relocated out of the floodway.

7. **Carousel**
   Like the miniature train, the Sunset Park carousel has served generations of Rocky Mount children and their families. Built in 1920, it is an operating antique and local treasure. Funds will be used to renovate the carousel to enable it to continue to serve the community.

8. **Spray Park**
   The Sunset Park spray park was one of the early spray parks in North Carolina. The spray park will be renovated and updated.

9. **Greenway**
   Sunset Park serves as the western trailhead for the Rocky Mount Greenway. Approximately 6,000 linear feet will be renovated.

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(Recreational Needs continued)

10. **~~Pickleball~~**
    Floodplain regulations prohibit new construction in the floodplain. The existing tennis courts received greater support and would not justify a Conversion of Use as required by PARTF or LWCF. Alternate locations for pickleball are being considered.

11. **Fishing piers**
    The fishing piers receive extensive use and will be renovated in full compliance with no rise regulations. Utilizing design from the Battle Park project, the existing canoe launch will be relocated to the downstream fishing pier.

12. **Sunset concessions building**
    In addition to renovation of the outdoor restrooms, the Sunset Park concession building will receive needed renovation.

13. **Community Gardens**
    A new pollinator garden will be developed at the Community Garden to attract and sustain pollinators to assist with successful gardening.

14. **Riparian restoration**
    The riparian area of Sunset Park has experienced extensive growth of privet. Regulation-compliant invasive species management* and the addition of childproof fence gates will restore the riparian area and provide public access to the Tar River.

    **As allowed by* 15A NCAC 02B .0734 Tar-Pamlico River Basin riparian buffer regulations *in a manner consistent with NCDOT* Invasive Plants of North Carolina*, Cheri Smith. No new built upon areas are included in the riparian.*

As supported by the City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation staff and reservation system, Sunset Park Renovation will include additional family-sized picnic opportunities (mini-shelters) and an additional multi-purpose field.

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Program description
Sunset Park has evolved in eight decades as society, recreational preferences and the flood waters of hurricane Floyd shaped Rocky Mount. Staff entered the renovation planning process with the understanding Sunset Park is part of the shared heritage of Rocky Mount.

Over ninety percent of the park is in the floodplain; the park has flooded often and severely. The Rocky Mount Children's Museum, Sunset Park pool and the adjacent Riverside neighborhood were all lost to hurricane Floyd. The history of the park and the guarantee of future high-water events represent the primary design factors in park renovation. These factors reduce the ability to significantly change the park and limit *new* construction to non-structures and pervious surfaces.

Through numerous public meetings and consideration of these design factors, the plan provides a public-prioritized plan for a resilient and sustainable park. By intentionally designing within the historic and environmental framework of Sunset Park, the nature of the project is the renovation of existing resources to continue to serve the citizens of Rocky Mount and the surrounding communities.

Purpose
The purpose of Sunset Park is to serve Rocky Mount and the Rocky Mount MSA as Community Park, with unique and historic recreation opportunities typically found within a Regional Park. Recreation opportunities of the renovated Sunset Park will include:

New, Like or Renovated
Greenway trail
Multi-use, natural surface trail
Multi-purpose field
Wildlife observation, river access & riparian restoration
Pollinator Gardens & Community Gardens
Fishing piers & canoe / kayak launches
Mini shelters
Tennis courts
Playground
Carousel
Spray Park
Miniature train
Sunset Park building & outdoor restrooms

Existing
Boat ramp
Party Pack Picnic Areas (Dispersed picnicking)
Shelters (medium and large)
Basketball courts
Sand volleyball courts
Bocce & Shuffleboard
Disc golf
Skatepark
Bug ride
Dog Park
Boulder play area

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Physical needs
Sunset Park was constructed and opened to the public in the 1940's. The current renovation will include the park amenities listed below, with alternates provided. No land will be acquired. All renovation and construction will be completed per regulation.

Current Renovation
Greenway trail
Multi-use, natural surface trail
Multi-purpose field
Wildlife observation, river access & riparian restoration
Pollinator Gardens & Community Gardens
Fishing piers & canoe / kayak launches
Mini shelters
Tennis courts
Playground
Carousel
Spray Park
Miniature train
Sunset park building & outdoor restrooms

Alternates or Future Phases of Renovation
Tennis courts Phase 2
Train House
Train track replacement
Carouse replacement
Carousel House
Spray Park replacement
Bug ride replacement
Skate Park renovation
Basketball courts renovation
Volleyball court renovation
Boulder play surfacing
Medium shelters renovation or replacement
Large shelter renovation or replacement
MTB pump track

Pickleball. Floodplain regulations prohibit new construction in the floodplain. The existing tennis courts received greater support and would not justify a Conversion of Use as required by PARTF or LWCF. Alternate locations for pickleball are being considered.

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Section 9 Public Involvement

Public Meetings, Civic Group Presentations and Rocky Mount Planning Board Presentation

For almost 80 years Sunset Park has served as the cornerstone of public recreation in Rocky Mount. The park has renovated and expanded numerous times to change with society and recreational preference. To ensure a Park Plan that would best serve the community for decades to come, a process including full public engagement, open communication with staff and guidance as provided by City Management and City Council was developed. In addition to the 2015 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, the corresponding statistically valid Needs Assessment survey and numerous other planning documents discussed previously, the City held three Public Input meetings to determine and prioritize the renovation, presented the plan and grant strategy to local civic groups and the Rocky Mount Planning Board (Council appointed, non- elected group) to ensure various perspectives were heard and considered in the development of the Park Plan.

Public Input Meetings

Public Meeting #1, Sept 27, 2022, 3:30 pm
Public Meeting #2, Sept 27, 2022, 5:30 pm
Public Meeting #3, Sept 29, 2022, 5:30 pm

With assistance from the City of Rocky Mount Public Information Office, an advertising campaign to publicize the Public Meetings included:

- Facebook postings
- Facebook boost post
- Webpage posting Twitter tweets
- Instagram posts
- Postcards to P&R Dept participants
- Rocky Mount Telegram front page article September 24, 2022
- Rocky Mount Telegram ads September 12, 17 & 24, 2022

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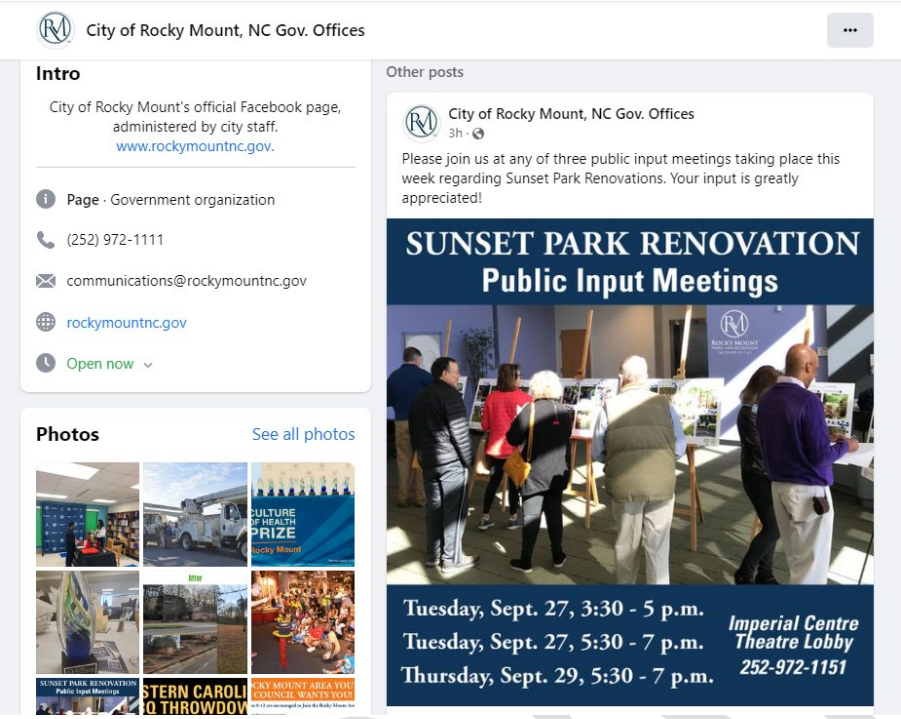
Rocky Mount Telegram Public Meeting Advertisements

Social Media Posts



Mailed Postcards

Rocky Mount Telegram advertisement, September 12, 2022

WEEKEND EDITION

Rocky Mount TELEGRAM

Your Journey. Our Commitment.

School board OKs sale of old baseball stadium

Edgecombe schools set to transition

Demerger slated to begin

City ceremony marks 9/11 anniversary

Police charge suspect in roommate's assault

Index

SPORTS

Playoff Series thoughts, opinions and observations

PANTHERS

CLASSIC

VOLLEYBALL

A wild week starts college football season

Rocky Mount Telegram advertisement, September 17, 2022

WEEKEND EDITION

Rocky Mou TELEGRA

Your Journey. Our Commit

Helping Buyers & Sellers!

KEY REALTY

Tahyla Smith Hill

Man convicted of attack on woman, car theft

Area woman accepts plea deal in death

Murder charge reduced

Council OKs $150K for senior housing

Nash board to discuss infrastructure funding

Index

SPORTS

Football season has an interesting start

PANTHERS

CEREMONY

ROUNDUP

PEARCE

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

SUNSET PARK RENOVATION

Public Input Meetings

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 29, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby

252-972-1151

Rocky Mount Telegram Public Meetings article and advertisement, September 24, 2022

WEEKEND EDITION

Rocky Mount TELEGRAM

Your Journey. Our Commitment.

City to take input on Sunset Park renovations

Public offers ideas about rescue funds

City has $5.25M to spend

Charters of Freedom display unveiled

Police investigate after woman in crisis found

LOCAL & STATE

DISPLAY

PARK

OBITUARIES

FUNDS

DEATHS

OBITUARY POLICY

SPORTS

Football has definitely evolved over the years

Take fouls, score changes will be different in NBA this year

PEARCE

TENNIS

PANTHERS

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

SUNSET PARK RENOVATION Public Input Meetings

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 29, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby

252-972-1151

Public Meeting #1, Sept 27, 3:30 pm
Sign In (Telephone and email removed)

ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 1, September 27, 2022, 3:30pm – 5:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

	Name (Please print)	Address	Telephone	Email
1	FRANK QUINLAN			
2	Gerald Jenkins			
3	Denise Murdock			
4	Richard Murdock			
5	Valerie Steel			
6	Will Stacey			
7	Robert Reid Goodson			
8	Pete Armstrong			
9				
10				
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13				
14				
15				

(252) 972-1151 / 331 S. Franklin St., PO Box 1180, Rocky Mount, NC 27802-1180 / www.rockymountnc.gov

ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 1, September 27, 2022, 3:30pm – 5:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

	Name (Please print)	Address	Telephone	Email
1	Keelie Ryan			
2	Marion Stagn			
3	Karen Hesserle			
4	JAMES P BAXTLE			
5	Kelly L. Cook			
6	Michele Barton			
7	Bud Young			
8				
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14				
15				

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Public Meeting #2, Sept 27, 5:30 pm
Sign In (Telephone and email removed)

ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 2, September 27, 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

	Name (Please print)	Address	Telephone	Email
1	Tero Harris	[redacted]		
2	Frian Glover			
3	Cody + Amanda High			
4	[illegible]			
5	[illegible]			
6				
7				
8				
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10				
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13				
14				
15				

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ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 2, September 27, 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

	Name (Please print)	Address	Telephone	Email
1	Clifton Glover	[redacted]		
2	Bridget Sykes			
3	Justin Sykes			
4	Bronson Williams			
5	Philip Barton			
6				
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15				

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Public Meeting #3, Sept 29, 5:30 pm
Sign In (Telephone and email removed)

ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 3, September 29, 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

	Name (Please print)	Address	Telephone	Email
1	Rob Westlund	[redacted]		
2	Fran Westlund			
3	Barden Winstead			
4	Sarah Griffin			
5	David Edgerton			
6	Esther Edgerton			
7	Lydia Edgerton			
8	Beth Edgerton			
9	Ben Edgerton			
10				
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14				
15				

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ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 3, September 29, 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

	Name (Please print)	Address	Telephone	Email
1	Raymond Gantt	[redacted]		
2	Michael Davis			
3	Rachel Westlund			
4	Annie Daughtridge			
5	Lize Daughtridge			
6	Stephanie Griffin			
7	Kathy Bell			
8	Sherry Little			
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ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 3, September 29, 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

	Name (Please print)	Address	Telephone	Email
1	Allison Baker	[redacted]		
2				
3				

Public Meeting Process

The Public Meetings were intentionally crafted to provide direct feedback from the citizens on their recreational preferences for Sunset Park. At sign in, participants were provided the agenda and instructions, an informational handout, one Gold Star and six Red Hearts. The agenda and instructions provided the meeting objectives and how to participate. Hard copies of the eight *Existing Studies* (Section 2) and various other city and county (Nash & Edgecombe) planning documents were available to illustrate past processes and how the Sunset plan integrates with all other planning.

Three activity boards displayed 24 images of leisure and recreation activities within Sunset Park*. Participants were asked to place their Gold Star on the image of their main desired activity. They placed their Red Heart among the other six activities they wished to participate. A blank board with post-it notes, and a marker was provided for items that were not provided or further comments.

This process reflects the limitations created by the floodplain and historic nature of the park; this is discussed in depth in *Design Considerations.

Public Meeting Activity Board Directions

ROCKY MOUNT
PARKS AND RECREATION
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Sunset Park - Public Input Meetings
Meeting 1, September 27, 2022, 3:30pm – 5:00 pm
Meeting 2, September 27, 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Meeting 3, September 29, 2022, 5:30pm – 7:00 pm
Imperial Centre Theatre Lobby, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount, NC

Participant Directions:

• Each participant receives one gold star and six red hearts.

• Review all three boards, noting the recreation activities **YOU** would like for the Renovation of Sunset Park to include. **This should be your preferences and activities in which you will participate,** not what you think others would want or a park "should have".

• Select your #1 favorite activity for the Sunset Park to meet your personal recreation needs. Place your Gold Star on this image.

• Select your #2 through #7 favorite activities for the Sunset Park to meet your personal recreation needs. Place your Red Hearts on these images. Please do not double vote for an image.

• Post-It notes and an additional board are available for comments or activities not included.

Thank you for participating!

Public Meeting Activity Board 1 of 3 (With votes)

Public Meeting Activity Board 2 of 3 (With votes)

Public Meeting Activity Board 3 of 3 (With votes)

Post-It Note Board for activities not listed or other comments

Public Meetings Results
The participant attendance by meeting:
Public Meeting #1 15 participants
Public Meeting #2 10 participants
Public Meeting #3 18 participants

In total 43 participants placed 42 Gold Stars and 241 Red Hearts. Some participants chose to place their Stars or Hearts on their Post-It Notes. Not all participants placed all their Stars or Hearts. The combined results of the Gold Star and Red Heart process, which indicates prioritized recreational preference for Sunset Park by the participants, is provided.

Amenity	Gold Stars	Red Hearts
Mountain Bike / Cross Country trail +/- 1.5 miles	10	32
Tennis courts	6	11
Miniature train and train house	4	15
Stony Creek trail feasibility study	4	13
Restrooms	3	15
Playground, tot-lot, accessible	2	17
Carousel and carousel house	1	17
Spray Park	1	16
Greenway & Boardwalk	1	16
Pickleball	4	5
Fishing piers	1	11
Sunset concessions building	0	13
Community Gardens	1	8
Riparian restoration, boardwalk	2	5
MTB skills area & pump track	0	10
Landscaping	0	8
Baseball field	1	3
Basketball courts	0	6
Sand volleyball courts	0	5
Misc	1	2
Skate park	0	4
Bug ride	0	3
Medium shelters (3)	0	2
Dog Park	0	2
Boulder play area	0	1
Large shelter 30’x60’ w/12 tables	0	1

DRAFT

Presentation to Civic Groups
Parks and Recreation staff created a presentation for Local Groups (2) and the Planning Board. The Presentation included the history of Sunset Park, recent renovations and the current Sunset Park master planning process. The presentation also included the funding plan and proposed grant applications (PARTF, LWCF, RTP and NCDWR).

Tuesday, October 25, 2022 - Nash County Travel and Tourism Council
The City of Rocky Mount Parks & Recreation Department and Nash County Travel and Tourism have partnered for the past two decades bringing countless weekend tournaments to the Rocky Mount Sports Complex. This partnership understands the role Sunset Park serves for residents and visitors alike. On Tuesday, October 25, 2022, Parks and Recreation staff presented the Renovation of Sunset Park to the Nash County Travel and Tourism Council and received support for the project and corresponding grant applications.

Tuesday, October 25, 2022 Nash County Travel and Tourism Council Agenda

Nash County Travel & Tourism Council Meeting

Claude Mayo Jr. Administration Building

Behind Parks & Rec. Department

Commissioner's Board Room

120 W. Washington St., Nashville, NC

4:00 PM- 5:00 PM

Tuesday, October 25th, 2022

Call to Order- Welcome New Members	Shelly Gray
Melissa Dooley and Misty Lee	
Guest Speaker- Upcoming Projects	Joel Dunn
Director of Parks & Recreation/ City of Rocky Mount	
Approval of September Minutes	Shelly Gray
Finance Report- October	Shelly Gray
Marketing Committee- Update	Lisa Ferguson
Old Business	Shelly Gray
New Business-	
Adjournment	Shelly Gray

Nash County Travel and Tourism Council Letter of Support

NASH COUNTY
ROCKY MOUNT, NC

Joel Dunn
Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Director
PO Box 1180
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Good Afternoon Mr. Dunn,

Thank you for presenting the Renovation of Sunset Park to the Nash County Travel and Tourism board on Tuesday, October 25, 2022. We were impressed with your presentation that included a brief history of the park, the park planning process, the overall park project and the associated grant applications. The grants discussed included the Division of Water Resources Development Grant (DWR), the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

The Nash County Travel and Tourism board supports the renovation of Sunset Park and the applications for DWR, RTP, PARTF and LWCF.

All the Best,

Barbara Green
Executive Director
Nash County Travel & Tourism

1104 Falls Rd, Rocky Mount, NC 27804
Office: 252-972-5080 / 800#: 800-849-6825 / Website: www.explorenashcounty.com

Monday, November 7, 2022 - Rocky Mount Rotary Club

The Rocky Mount Rotary Club is a long-term partner of Sunset Park, sponsoring the relocation of the Sunset Park Clocktower from Terry Town Mall which was lost to hurricane Floyd. The Rotary also hosts Tackle the Tar, an adventure-style obstacle course race including over 300 racers. In its first five years the event has raised $315,000 in scholarships benefiting local student scholarships. On Monday, November 7, 2022, Parks and Recreation staff presented the Renovation of Sunset Park to the Rocky Mount Rotary Club and received support for the project and corresponding grant applications.

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Monday, November 7, 2022 - Rocky Mount Rotary Club Agenda

Membership

Ballew, Pam
Belfield, Fred Jr
Bishop, Stephen
Brinn, Ray - PP06
Carney, Skip - PP90
Coats, Eddie - PP19
Coppedge, Daryle
Cox, Cary
Crawford, Caroline
David, Royal J
Davis, Frenchy
Davis, Robbie
Duff, Evan
Edwards, Cindy
Foster, Sonny - PP12
Frohman, Mark
Gall, Erin
Gottschalk, Rob III
Green, Ron - PP15
Hassell, Robert
Hayden, Crystal
Jorgensen, Carther
Jorgensen, Robert

Lewis, Trey
McAdams, Larry W
Meads, Wayne
Morgan, Anne
Nelson, Joe - PP67
Nelson, Neill - PP18
Newhouse, Jacqueline
Norman, Betty
Parker, Scott
Pittman, Leonard Jr
Respess, Larry M
Roberson, C Sandy Jr
Shaw, Brenda Reges - PP09
Shepheard, Betty Jo
Slade, Kirby
Smith, Sandra
Solomon, Will
Tulloss, Gus - PP79
White, Jean
Williford, John S Jr
Winstead, Harold R - PP92

Garry Hodges
Lyn Brown
Teresa May

Rotary

Service Above Self
Rotary Club of Rocky Mount #6122

Chartered April 26, 1923
District #7720

Monday October 24, 2022
Double Tree 1 p.m.

Guest Speaker
Joel Dunn / Director of Parks & Recreation

Brief history of the Sunset Park, the park planning process, the overall park project and associated grant applications.
The grants discussion included the Division of Water Resources Development grant (DWR), the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The Rocky Mount Rotary Club supports the renovation of Sunset Park and the applications of DWR, RTP, PARTF and LWCF and look forward to being a part of the changes!

The Four Way Test
Is it the truth?
Is it fair to all concerned?
Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Please Welcome New Members
Teresa May

Last Week - Ken Mullen Mission Field

LOOKING AHEAD

June 27th - Install New Officers 6-8pm
July 4th - No Meeting

Object of Rotary
The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:
First: The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service
Second: High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to serve society
Third: The application of the ideal service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life
Fourth: The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal service

Weekly Membership Meeting

Welcome / Call to order
Pledge
Invocation
4 Way Test
Recognize Guests or Visitors
Anniversaries / Birthdays
Happy Bucks
Raffle Drawing / Cart
Club Business
Speaker
Adjourned

As Rotarians let's make decisions using the 4 way test and remember service above self

Officers

Christy Warrick	President
Daryle Coppedge	President Elect
	President Nominee
Jean White	Secretary
Kathy Akers	Treasurer

Board Members

Jacqueline Newhouse (2024)	Pam Gould (2023)
Trey lewis (2024)	Dave Iery (2024) - PP13
Bill Shaw (2023)	Lynwood Roberson (2024)

Rocky Mount Rotary Club Letter of Support

DRAFT

Thursday November 10, 2022 – Rocky Mount Neighborhood Presidents' Association

There are twenty active Neighborhood Associations within Rocky Mount. Several decades ago, the City Human Relations Department formed the Rocky Mount Neighborhood Presidents' Association to host monthly meetings for two-way communication between the city and its neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Presidents are an imperative link in communication with underserved and disadvantaged members of the community. On Thursday, November 10, 2022 Parks and Recreation staff presented the Renovation of Sunset Park to the Neighborhood Presidents' Association and received support for the project and corresponding grant applications.

Thursday November 10, 2022, Rocky Mount Neighborhood Presidents' Association
Agenda

ROCKY MOUNT
HUMAN RELATIONS
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Neighborhood Presidents Meeting
November 10,2022
4:00 PM

Agenda

I. **Welcome**

II. **Introductions**

III. **Approval of Minutes – October 13, 2022**

IV. **Approval of Agenda Items**

V. **David Griffin – Parks and Recreation Sunset Park**

VI. **City Update**

VII. **Neighborhood Concerns/Questions**

VIII. **Announcements**

IX. **Adjournment**

Rocky Mount Neighborhood Presidents' Association Confirmation of Support for the project

DRAFT

Support from the City of Rocky Mount Planning Board

Tuesday, December XX, 2023, City of Rocky Mount Planning Board

The City of Rocky Mount Parks and Recreation Department works closely with City Administration and City Council. The Department does not have an Advisory Board. However, the City of Rocky Mount Planning Board, appointed by City Council, advises Council on planning and development matters in Rocky Mount. Parks and Recreation staff presented the renovation of Sunset Park to the Planning Board during the scheduled December XX, 2023, meeting.

Tuesday, December XX, 2022, City of Rocky Mount Planning Board Agenda

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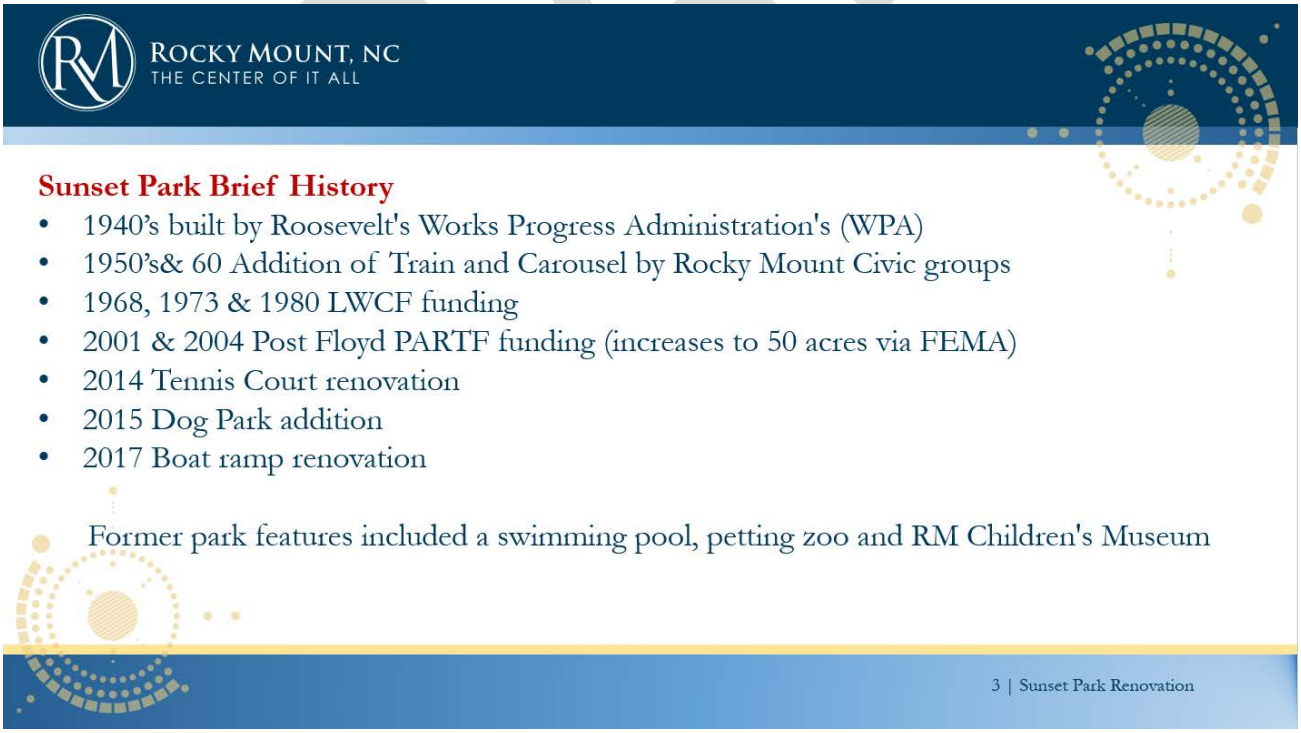
City of Rocky Mount Planning Board Letter of Support

DRAFT

Presentations to Civic Groups and Rocky Mount Planning Board sample slides



Section 10 Proposed Project

Project Costs
Sunset Park - City of Rocky Mount
March 2023

Item	Estimated Cost
New	
Multi-use, natural surface **Trail**, 7,920 lf	$50,000
Wildlife observation, river access & riparian restoration	$62,000
Pollinator Gardens at Community Gardens	$25,000
Like	
Mini Shelters (3)	$17,500
Multi-purpose field	$15,000
Renovate	
Tennis courts	$100,500
Miniature train	$165,000
Sunset park building & outdoor restrooms	$75,000
Playground	$180,000
Carousel	$100,000
Spray Park	$100,000
Greenway 6,000 lf **- Trail**	$150,000
Fishing piers & canoe / kayak launches	$130,000
Subtotal	**$1,170,000**
Trailhead at Sunset Park kiosk	$7,500
Park security cameras	$20,000
Design, project & grant management, permitting 10%	$12,500
Contingency	$50,000
Project budget	**$1,260,000**

DRAFT

Alternates	
Tennis courts phase 2	$ 100,000
Train House	$ 125,000
Train track replacement	TBD
Carouse replacement	$ 400,000
Carousel House	$ 500,000
Spray Park replacement	$ 1,500,000
Bug ride replacement	$ 100,000
Skate Park	$ 500,000
Basketball courts	$ 100,000
Volleyball drains (2), 3- 80’ lines per court. 480 lf @$25	$ 12,000
Boulder play surfacing 2,800sf @ $26/sf	$ 72,800
Medium shelters (3) 30’x30’ w/ 6 tables $95,000 ea	$ 285,000
Large shelter 30’x60’ w/12 tables	$ 190,000
MTB pump track @ $9 / lf, 1,200	$ 10,800

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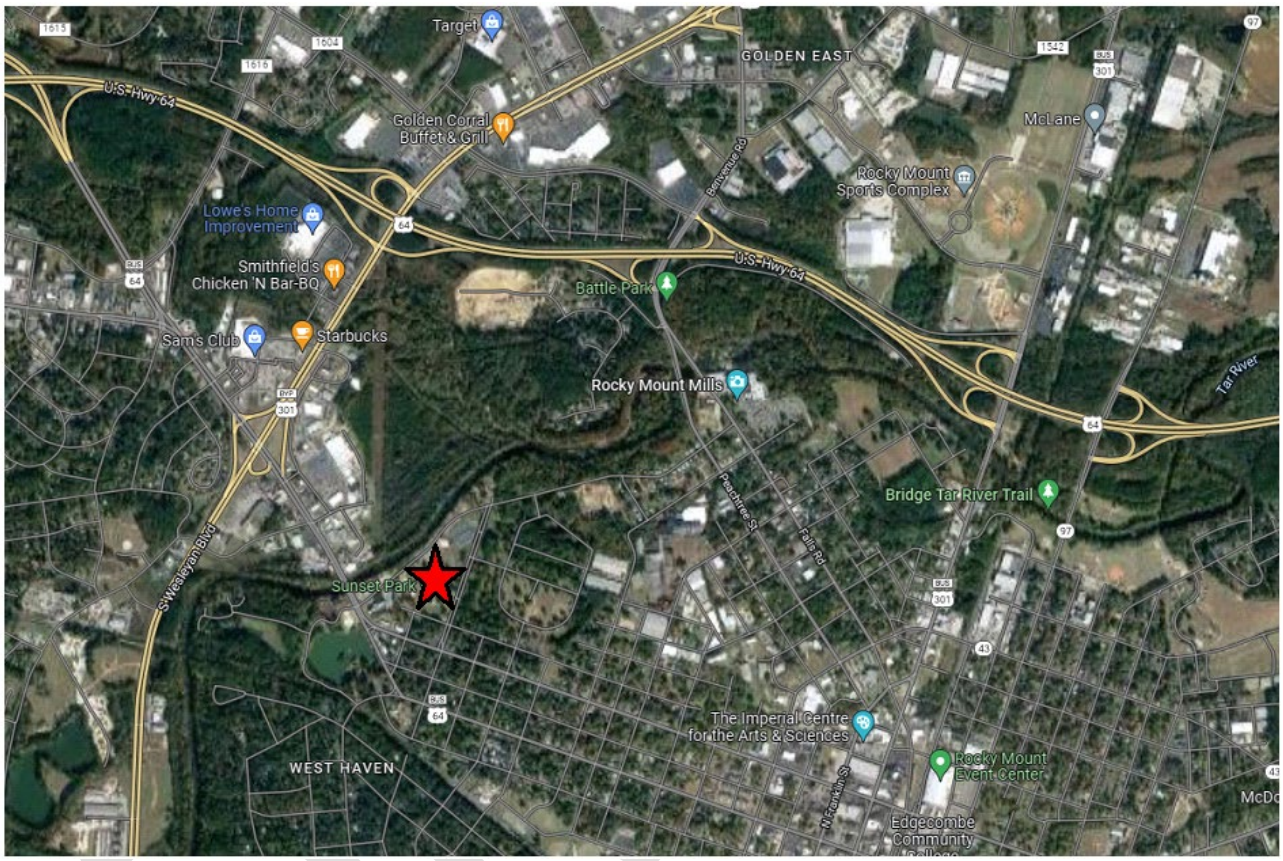
Site Vicinity Map

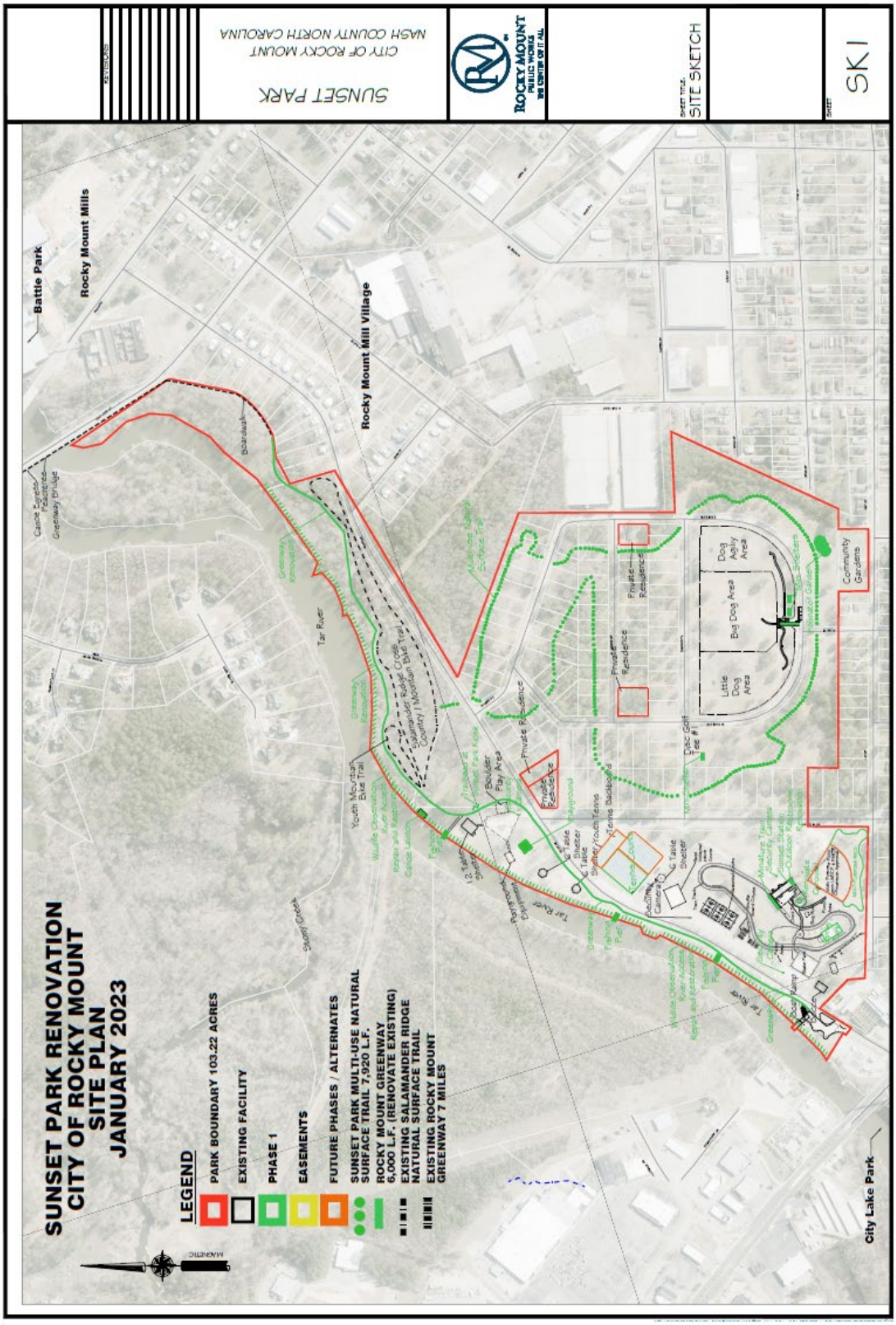
Sunset Park
550 North Taylor Street
Rocky Mount, NC
Latitude / Longitude: 35.953432, -77.814343



From the east:
Take US64 to exit 468B
Turn left onto NC-43 S/ Benvenue Rd
Continue 0.7 mile, turn right onto River Dr
Continue 0.6 mile, turn left onto N Taylor St

From the west:
Take US64 to exit 468B.
Turn right onto NC-43 S/ Benvenue Rd
Continue 0.7 mile, turn right onto River Dr
Continue 0.6 mile, turn left onto N Taylor St

Site Plan


SUNSET PARK RENOVATION
CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT
SITE PLAN
JANUARY 2023
LEGEND
PARK BOUNDARY 103.22 ACRES
EXISTING FACILITY
PHASE 1
EASEMENTS
FUTURE PHASES / ALTERNATES
SUNSET PARK MULTI-USE NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL 7,920 L.F.
ROCKY MOUNT GREENWAY 6,000 L.F. (RENOVATE EXISTING)
EXISTING SALAMANDER RIDGE NATURAL SURFACE TRAIL
EXISTING ROCKY MOUNT GREENWAY 7 MILES
Battle Park
Rocky Mount Mills
Rocky Mount Mill Village
City Lake Park
Tar River
Little Dog Area
Big Dog Area
Dog Agility Area
Community Gardens
Private Residence
Boulder Play Area
Youth Mountain Bike Trail
Salamander Ridge Country / Mountain Bike Trail
Boardwalk
Disc Golf Tee #1
Tennis Backboard
Shelter/Youth Tennis
Table
Shelter
Playground
Parking
Sunset Green
Community Garden
Sunset Creek
SUNSET PARK
CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT
NASH COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA
ROCKY MOUNT
PUBLIC WORKS
SITE SKETCH
SK I

Section 11 Anticipated Comments, Approvals or Permits

Due to nature of the project being primarily renovation of existing structures, the City of Rocky Mount does not anticipate a full Environmental Assessment (EA). Based upon previous projects, the P&R Dept. anticipates the following comments, approvals, conditional requirement for permits or permits:

US Fish and Wildlife

- Moratorium for in-water work Feb 15 - Sept 30 (may not be required upstream of Mill Dam)
- Carolina Madtom and Neuse River Waterdog are present in Tar-Pam basin. Avoid impacts.

US Army Corps of Engineers

- Section 10 navigable waterway (may not be required upstream of Mill Dam)
- Delineation of potential water of the US & Corps verification
- Discharge of dredge or filled materials
- Nationwide permits (NWPs) 14, 18, 39 or 42
- General regional permits 197800125 and 19780056
- Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act). Adjacent property, not in project area.
- Rocky Mount Mills Historic District. Adjacent property, not in project area.
- Section 7 (Endangered Species Act)

Group	Common Name Scientific name	Status
Mammals	Northern Long-Eared Bat, Myotis septentrionalis	Threatened
Mammals	Tricolored bat, Perimyotis subflavus	Proposed Endangered
Insects	Monarch butterfly, Danaus plexippus	Candidate
Mammals	Little brown bat, Myotis lucifugus	Under Review
Birds	Red-cockaded woodpecker, Picoides borealis	Endangered
Clams	Green floater, Lasmigona subviridis	Under Review
Clams	Tar River spinymussel, Parvaspina steinstansana	Endangered
Flowering Plants	Michaux's sumac, Rhus michauxii	Endangered
Fishes	Carolina madtom, Noturus furiosus	Endangered
Clams	Dwarf wedgemussel, Alasmidonta heterodon	Endangered
Clams	Atlantic pigtoe, Fusconaia masoni	Threatened
Amphibians	Neuse River waterdog, Necturus lewisi	Threatened
Clams	Yellow lance, Elliptio lanceolata	Threatened

https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/

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NC Dept of Public Safety, Risk Management Section (Floodplain)

- Keep the Rocky Mount Floodplain Administrator involved in the planning, permitting and construction process.

NC Dept of Public Safety, Hazardous Waste Section

- No comment anticipated

NC State Parks Natural Resources

- Moratorium for in-water work Feb 15 - Sept 30 (may not be required upstream of Mill Dam)

NC Wildlife Resource Commission

- Moratorium for in-water work Feb 15 - Sept 30 (may not be required upstream of Mill Dam)

City of Rocky Mount Design Review Committee (DRC)

- Full and complete review of entire project

NC Department of Health and Human Services

- No comment anticipated.

NC State Historic Preservation Office, Renee Gledhill-Earley

Adjacent North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office Historic Sites and Districts

- NS1183 Municipal Power Plant
- NS1554 Rocky Mount Mills Village Local Historic District
- NS0704 Rocky Mount Mills Village Local Historic District
- NS1553 Caromount Mills
- NS0008 Rocky Mount Mills

NCDEQ, DWR 401 & Buffer Permitting Branch (Riparian)

- Maintain and protect existing riparian buffers in the Tar-Pamlico River Basin per 15A NCAC 02B.734

The City understands a formal review by Local, State and Federal regulatory agencies may be required prior to signing grant contracts and various permits such as but not limited to erosion control, no net rise, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits and NPDES Phase II compliance may be required.

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

ROCKY MOUNT
POLICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

To: Peter Varney, City Manager

Cc:

From: Robert Hassell, Police Chief

Date: 01/30/2023

Re: Presentation of Crime Statistics

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to present a summary of the city-wide crime numbers to the Committee of the Whole during the February 13, 2023 meeting.

Discussion

The presentation covers the crime incidents throughout the city currently and compares them to last year during the same time period. The crimes tracked in this presentation are crimes labeled as part 1 crimes in the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) by the federal government. These crime numbers are tracked by the FBI and shared with the Bureau of Justice Statistics for tracking purposes.

The presentation includes investigation outcomes for the violent crimes and the related arrests. It also includes maps depicting the areas of shots fired, incidences of aggravated assault and murder. The presentation also highlights the efforts and successes of the police department to combat the violent crime occurring in the city.

Requested Action

None

ROCKY MOUNT
POLICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

January Crime Report

February 13, 2023
Robert Hassell, Chief of Police

ROCKY MOUNT
POLICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

January 2023 Crime Report

Part 1 Crimes Comparison Chart

The table is a comparison of crime numbers by month and year to date compared to the same time periods last year.

NIBRS Part 1 Comparison

CRIMES	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	+/-	YTD 2022	YTD 2023	+/-
Murder	1	1	0	1	1	0
Rape	1	0	-1	1	0	-1
Com Robbery	6	3	-3	6	3	-3
Ind Robbery	4	2	-2	4	2	-2
Agg Assault	18	37	19	18	37	19
Violent	**30**	**43**	**13**	**30**	**43**	**13**
Commercial B&E	7	14	7	7	14	7
Residential B&E	12	11	-1	12	11	-1
Non Residential B&E	3	4	1	3	4	1
Larceny	89	86	-3	89	86	-3
MV Theft	8	8	0	8	8	0
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	0
Property	**119**	**123**	**4**	**119**	**123**	**4**
****Total****	**149**	**166**	**17**	**149**	**166**	**17**

RHO

ROCKY MOUNT
POLICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

January 2023 Crime Report

Part 1 Crimes Comparison Chart

The table is a comparison of crime numbers by month and year to date compared to the same time periods last year.

Violent YTD

43%

increase

Property YTD

3%

increase

Overall YTD

11%

increase

NIBRS Part 1 Comparison

CRIMES	Jan 2022	Jan 2023	+/-	YTD 2022	YTD 2023	+/-
Murder	1	1	0	1	1	0
Rape	1	0	-1	1	0	-1
Com Robbery	6	3	-3	6	3	-3
Ind Robbery	4	2	-2	4	2	-2
Agg Assault	18	37	19	18	37	19
Violent	**30**	**43**	**13**	**30**	**43**	**13**
Commercial B&E	7	14	7	7	14	7
Residential B&E	12	11	-1	12	11	-1
Non Residential B&E	3	4	1	3	4	1
Larceny	89	86	-3	89	86	-3
MV Theft	8	8	0	8	8	0
Arson	0	0	0	0	0	0
Property	**119**	**123**	**4**	**119**	**123**	**4**
****Total****	**149**	**166**	**17**	**149**	**166**	**17**

Part 1 Crimes Comparison Chart

January 2023 Crime Report

Aggravated Assault Cases and Investigations

Aggravated Assault Cases	18
Aggravated Assault Victims	38
Number of Cases with Multiple victims	7
Aggravated Assault Arrests	6
Aggravated Assault Cases Cleared	1

Case Dispositions

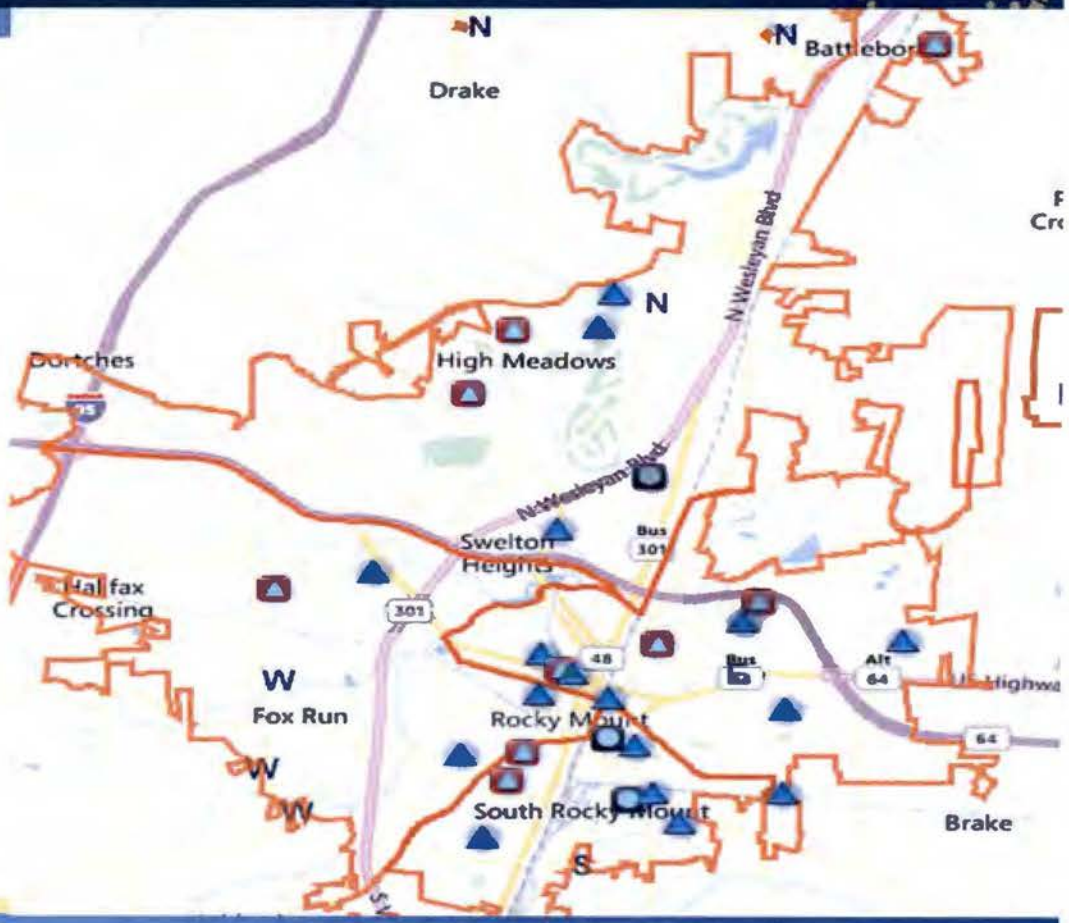
• Cleared by Arrest	1
• Inactive Cases	2
• Open Cases	15
• **Grand Total of Incidents**	**18**

ROCKY MOUNT
POLICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

January 2023 Crime Report

- Murder
- Aggravated Assault
- Shooting Into OCC Build/Veh.

• Victims with Injuries	28
• Victims Without Injuries	9
Grand Total of Victims	**38**



ROCKY MOUNT
POLICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

January 2023 Crime Report

Murder

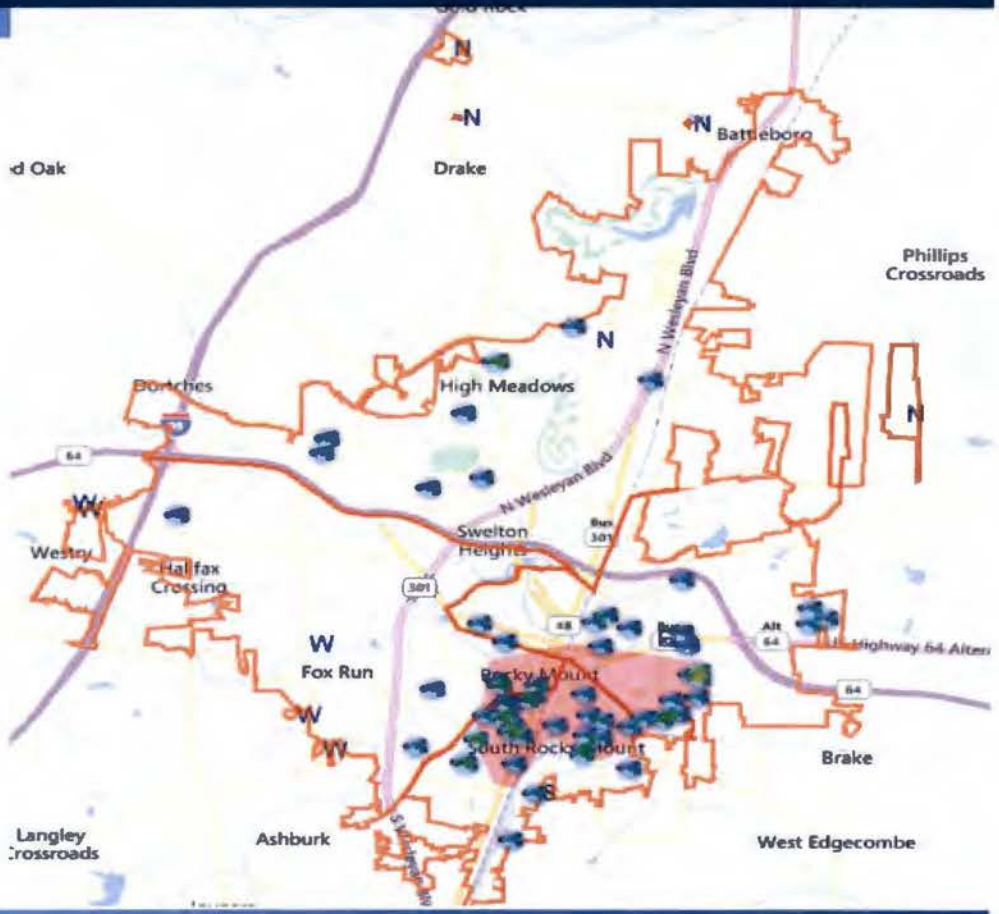
- **Total of Incidents** **1**
- **Total of Victims** **1**
- **Total of Closed Cases** **0**

ROCKY MOUNT
POLICE
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

January 2023 Crime Report

ShotSpotter & Citizen Calls Throughout the City

• Shots Fired	66
• Shell Casings were Found	24
• Number Shell Casings Found	226
• Number Shell Casings Found YTD	226
• Number of Firearms Seized	26
• Number of Firearms Seized YTD	26
• Weapon Violation Arrests	03



Shots Fired Heard Comparison Chart

Other Police Stats

8,049	115	149	$752,950	685	39	75
Calls for Service	On-View Arrests & Warrant Service	Traffic Accidents	Accident Property Damage	Traffic Stops	Citations Issued	Warnings Issued

Community Involvement

- Community Gang Awareness
- PALS Basketball Game

RETREAT SCHEDULE

March 2023

SPONSORED BY

AGRI SUPPLY

FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6 Keith Rogers	7	8	9	10	11
Daylight Savings Time Begins 12	13 City Council 5:00 c-o-w 7:00 meeting	14	15	16	St. Patrick's Day 17	18
19	Spring Begins 20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Reschedule to April 3 NLC meeting	28	29	30	31	1

April 2023

SPONSORED BY AGRI SUPPLY

MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
Palm Sunday 2	3 City Council 5:00 C-O-W 7:00 meeting	4	5	Passover 6	Good Friday 7 Holiday	8
Easter 9	10 SPRING	11 BREAK	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	Earth Day 22
23 / 30	24 City Council 4:00	25	26	27 RETREAT ?	28	29

MEMORANDUM

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

To: Peter Varney, Interim City Manager

Cc:

From: Kenneth Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget & Evaluation

Date: 2/6/2023

Re: Review of 2023 Legislative Agenda

With the start of the 2023 Legislative Calendar for the United States Congress and North Carolina General Assembly, City Council needs to review and approve a Legislative Agenda for the current calendar year encompassing their goals and objectives with respect to intergovernmental funding and policy. Once approved, staff will work with our contracted Legislative Liaisons at the Federal and State levels to advocate, promote, and secure these initiatives.

The following have been identified, based on prior discussions with Council and suggestions from members of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to be included in the 2023 Legislative Agenda:

Federal Agenda

- Earmark Requests
    - Development of Depot Park (Downtown);
    - Renovation of the Booker T. Washington High Schools Campus, including the High Schools, Gymnasium, and Community Center; and
    - Rehabilitation of sewer outfall lines.
- Policy Requests
    - Increase funding and support for locally-led construction and renovation of affordable and workforce housing;
    - Increase funding and support for locally-led efforts to expand delivery of mental health services to residents;
    - Increase funding and support for locally-led efforts to ensure food security for all residents;
    - Increase the "bank-qualified" financing cap, which has been at $10 million/year for the City for the past several decades. This enables the

City to secure financing for facilities and equipment at lower interes rates. And,

  - Ensure planned renovations to address passenger ADA issues at the Rocky Mount Train Station do not diminish the character and design of the facility.

- Grant Focus Areas
  - Funding for major stormwater improvements, including Downtown, Edgecombe, and Parker's Canal areas; and
  - Transportation planning through the RAISE Grant program to evaluate and address mobility challenges along and in the vicinity of South Church Street.

State Agenda

- Earmark Requests
  - Construction of new Judicial Center (goal is for the State to fund approximately 75% of total costs);
  - Matching funds for existing Federal Earmark for construction of Downtown Pedestrian Bridge; and
  - Additional funding for local affordable and workforce housing efforts.
- Policy & Annual Appropriation Requests
  - Property Tax reform meant to expand municipal capacity to provide abatement and deferment programs for residents struggling with property tax bills;
  - Annual funding and additional resources to expand supply of safe, efficient, and affordable housing;
  - Established flexibility enabling the City to provide funding for private investments in broadband infrastructure; and
  - Public safety improvements, including:
    - Establishing a State Law classifying and enabling punishment for the public endangerment of discharging a firearm in a public or residential area;
    - Enabling the City to use civilian traffic investigators;
    - Allowing for Court Orders to destroy guns with serial numbers;

- Allowing Magistrates to issue ex party Domestic Violence orders; and
- Pretrial detention reform.

Action is needed quickly from Council on the review, revision, and approval of this Agenda in order to move forward and ensure consideration prior to deadlines established by leadership of the United States Congress and North Carolina General Assembly. I recommend presentation and review of this memo and attached presentation at the next City Council Committee of the Whole.

Additional goals and objectives have been identified by the North Carolina League of Municipalities, and a summary of their approved agenda is attached for Council review.

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

2023 Legislative Agenda

2/13/2023, City Manager's Office

ROCKY MOUNT, NC
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Delegation

- North Carolina General Assembly
  - House
    - East: Shelly Willingham (D-23, 6th Term)
      - Co-Chair, Alcoholic Beverage Control Committee
    - West: Allen Chesser (R-25, 1st Term)
  - Senate
    - East: Kandie Smith (D-5, 2nd Term)
    - West: Lisa Barnes (R-11, 2nd Term)

Delegation

- US Congress
  - House
    - Donald Davis (D-1, 1st Term)
  - Senate
    - Thom Tillis (R, 2nd Term)
    - Ted Budd (R, 1st Term)

Coordination

- Legislative Liaison (Contracts)
  - State: Jonathan Brooks (Ward & Smith)
  - Federal: Ron Hamm (The HAMM Consulting Group)
- NC League of Municipalities (John C. McDonald)
  - Board of Directors: Councilmember T.J. Walker
  - Staff Liaison: Kenneth Hunter
- Professional Organizations
  - NC Association of Police Chiefs (Chief Robert Hassel)
  - NC Association of Fire Chiefs
  - NC City and County Management Association (Elton Daniels)

Federal Agenda

- Earmark Requests
  - Depot Park
  - Booker T Washington High School Campus
  - Sewer Outfall Rehabilitation
- Policy Requests
  - Affordable & Workforce Housing
  - Mental Health Support
  - Increase "Bank-Qualified" Financing Cap
  - Renovations to Train Station (Amtrak/FRA)

Federal Agenda

- Grant Focus Areas
  - Stormwater Improvements
    - Downtown
    - Edgemont
    - Parker's Canal, Phase II
  - Transportation Planning (RAISE)
    - South Church Street

State Agenda

- Earmark Requests
  - Judicial Center
  - Downtown Pedestrian Bridge (Match Federal Earmark)
  - Affordable Housing

State Agenda

- Policy & Annual Appropriation Requests
  - Property Tax Reform (Abatement and Deferment)
  - Affordable/Workforce Housing
  - Broadband Funding Flexibility
  - Public Safety
    - State Law for Public Endangerment (discharge of firearms)
    - Enabling City use of Civilian Traffic Investigators
    - Allow Court Order to Destroy Guns with Serial Numbers
    - Allow Magistrates to Issue ex parte Domestic Violence Orders
    - Pretrial Detention Reform

Deadlines

- Federal
  - Earmarks: February-March
  - Legislation: Ongoing
- State
  - Earmarks: February
  - Local Bills
    - House: March 1st
    - Senate: February 23rd
  - Public Bills
    - House: March 22nd
    - Senate: March 9th

NCLM
NC LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES

WORKING AS ONE.
ADVANCING ALL.

2023-24 NCLM Legislative Goals

RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Create an adequate and permanent funding stream for local infrastructure.

- *Infrastructure – including roads, water, sewer, stormwater, parks and beaches – is critical to economic development and job creation.*
- *Many cities in the state are growing, creating a constant need for investment to keep pace with population growth; many cities and towns also have aging infrastructure that must be replaced.*
- *Creating more permanent funding streams for local infrastructure, such as a dedicated tax source, would allow for better planning to meet needs.*

Expand state transportation funding streams for construction and maintenance for municipal and state-owned secondary roads.

- *Current Powell Bill and other state funding is not adequate to address transportation needs, particularly as they affect municipal and state-owned secondary roads.*
- *In many cities and towns, major commuting corridors are not receiving the level of investment needed to keep pace with traffic.*
- *More investment is needed for these roads if existing residents are to embrace business and residential growth.*

Allow municipalities to use local resources and capabilities to expand broadband access in their communities through innovative partnerships.

- *Slow and unreliable internet service threatens educational and professional opportunities, and the economic future of entire communities.*
- *Municipalities own existing infrastructure – including dark fiber, towers and electric poles – that could be utilized in innovative partnerships and assist in making broadband service more affordable.*
- *Failure to utilize local government assistance and assets will continue to create digital gaps that have real-world consequences for North Carolinians.*

Expand incentives that encourage regionalization of water and sewer, as well as other municipal services, when appropriate.

- *A number of municipal water and sewer systems continue to financially struggle with deferred maintenance needs.*
- *These challenges came about largely due to population and job losses in rural areas, leading to an erosion of taxpayer and ratepayer bases.*
- *While legislators and municipalities have begun to address these issues with the creation of the Viable Utility Reserve and the use of ARPA funding, state estimates show needs still exceed expenditures by several billion dollars.*

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HEALTHY FINANCES

Provide local revenue options beyond property tax.

- *Roughly 40 percent of municipal general fund revenue is generated by local property taxes.*
- *Cities have little to no authority to raise significant revenue in other ways.*
- *A lack of diverse, local tax options can affect economic growth, as well as cause large swings in revenue based on economic changes.*

Expand incentives and funding for local economic development.

- *Funding is simply inadequate in many cities and towns to encourage job growth.*
- *State grants and incentives are often targeted in ways that fail to assist the areas in greatest need of job creation.*
- *Maintaining or expanding funding for film tax credits, major industrial site development, downtown development and renewable energy tax credits helps cities and towns across the state.*

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBORHOODS

Expand federal and state resources for affordable housing.

- *Housing affordability is a growing problem across North Carolina, affecting cities and towns of all sizes and people across different income levels.*
- *Increasingly, the lack of affordable housing acts as a major impediment to business and workforce recruitment.*
- *Ongoing state and federal revenue streams to address housing affordability are extremely limited, with much of the burden for solutions left with cities and towns.*

Revitalize vacant and abandoned properties with enhanced legal tools and funding.

- *Abandoned and vacant properties, often the subject of so-called tangled titles, can affect the ability of communities to revitalize areas and improve economic conditions.*
- *The abandoned properties, with enhanced legal tools to help heirs clear up title issues and sell properties at market rates, could help address local housing needs.*
- *Many towns do not have the funding to adequately address abandoned properties.*

RACIAL EQUITY

Enhance state systems and resources for local law enforcement officer recruitment, training, and retention.

- *Municipalities across the state are facing law enforcement staffing shortages, in many cases severe shortages.*
- *State training resources are limited, and the cost of local law enforcement agencies to send recruits and existing officers to NC Justice Academy locations can be prohibitive.*
- *Grant writing assistance is one of several options that might provide better access to the large volume of federal law enforcement grant funding that is available.*

ADAPTIVE MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

Revise state contracting laws to better protect public entities from the effects of inflation.

- *Labor and materials costs have been rising at a rapid rate, leaving municipalities with few options when project bids and costs exceed expectations.*
- *Additional flexibility regarding the contracting process could assist municipalities in protecting taxpayers from inflation and escalating costs.*
- *Without contracting law flexibility, projects can be delayed and costs can further increase.*

North Carolina League of Municipalities

Legislative Liaison Group

January 26, 2023

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Outline

- City Officials' Legislative Priorities
- Long Session Overview
- Q&A

City Officials' Legislative Priorities

City Officials' Legislative Priorities

- Infrastructure
  - Transportation
  - Broadband
  - Water/wastewater/stormwater
- Jobs & community
  - Housing
  - Public safety
  - Economic development investments
    - Downtown revitalization
  - Financing
    - Increased revenue options
    - Inflation mitigation for municipal projects

Focus Areas

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- Resilient Infrastructure
- Healthy Finances
- Vibrant Communities & Neighborhoods
- Racial Equity
- Adaptive Municipal Operations

NCLM Legislative Priorities

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Resilient Infrastructure

RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

- Create an adequate and permanent funding stream for local infrastructure.
- Allow municipalities to use local resources and capabilities to expand broadband access in their communities through innovative partnerships.
- Expand state transportation funding streams for construction and maintenance for municipal and state-owned secondary roads.
- Expand incentives that encourage regionalization of water and sewer, as well as other municipal services, when appropriate.

NCLM Legislative Priorities

Healthy Finances

HEALTHY FINANCES

- Expand incentives and funding for local economic development.
- Provide local revenue options beyond property tax.

NCLM Legislative Priorities

Vibrant Communities & Neighborhoods

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBORHOODS

- Expand federal and state resources for affordable housing.
- Revitalize vacant and abandoned properties with enhanced legal tools and funding.

NCLM Legislative Priorities

Racial Equity

Adaptive Municipal Operations

RACIAL EQUITY AND ADAPTIVE MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS

- Enhance state systems and resources for local law enforcement officer recruitment, training, and retention.
- Revise state contracting laws to better protect public entities from the effects of inflation.

Core Municipal Principles

CORE MUNICIPAL PRINCIPLES

- Preserve Municipal Authority
- Protect Local Revenue Streams
- Minimize State & Local Mandates

Core Municipal Principles

CORE MUNICIPAL PRINCIPLES

- Promote Open Government and Ethical Conduct
- Limit Imposition of Liability
- Support Responsible Growth and Economic Development Policies

Long Session Overview

Partisan Breakdown

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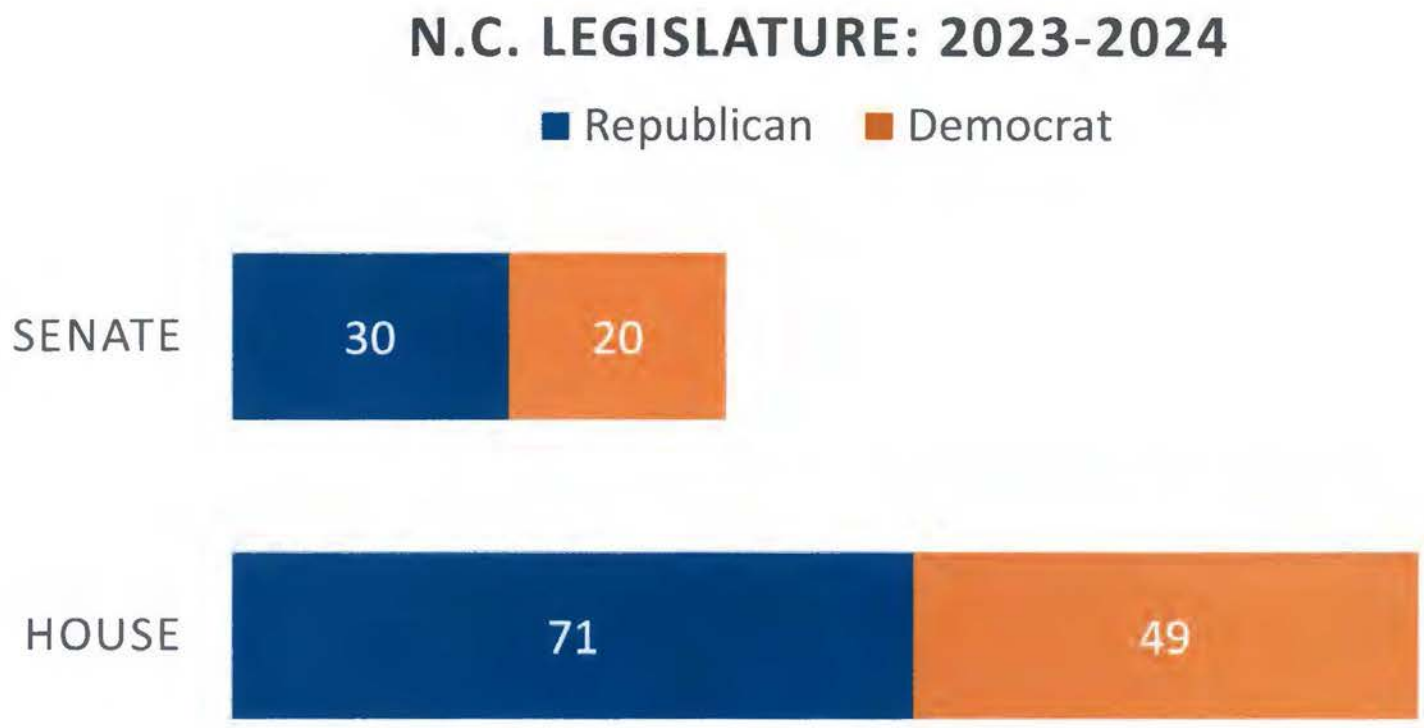

Municipal Caucus

- 26 members of the House and 9 members of the Senate have municipal experience.
- Three Senators with a municipal background will hold Chairmanships during the Biennium, along with 13 House members

General Policy Focus

DOMINANT POLICY TOPICS FOR LEGISLATURE IN 2022

- Budget adjustments
- Medicaid expansion
- Sports wagering
- Medical marijuana

Session Timing

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LONG SESSION

- January 11 — Mid Summer
- Crossover – May 4th
- Local Bills deadline
  - Senate – March 9th
  - House – March 23rd

Schedules and Deadlines

2023 Request and Filing Deadlines

House

Drafts	Requested By 4:00 PM	Filed in House By 5:00 PM
Bills recommended by Study commissions	Wednesday, February 1	Thursday, February 16
Bills recommended by State Agencies	Wednesday, February 8	Thursday, February 23
Local Bills	Wednesday, March 1	Thursday, March 23
Public Bills & Resolutions (Not Approps or Finance)	Wednesday, March 22	Tuesday, April 18
Public Bills (Approps and Finance)	Wednesday, March 29	Tuesday, April 25

Senate

Drafts	Requested By 4:00 PM	Filed in Senate By 4:00 PM
Local Bills	Thursday, February 23	Thursday, March 9
Public Bills & Resolutions	Thursday, March 9	Tuesday, April 4

Bills eligible to be filed in 2023 with no deadlines

- Redistricting bills for House, Senate, Congress, or local entities. (H&S)
- Ratification of amendments to the Constitution of the United States. (H&S)
- Adjournment resolutions. (H&S)
- Bills introduced on the report of the House Committees on Appropriations, Finance, or Rules. (H only)
- Bills proposing amendments to the North Carolina Constitution. (S only)
- Statutory changes necessary to implement State constitutional amendments. (S only)
- Bills addressing election laws. (S only)
- Bills providing for action on gubernatorial nominations or appointments.(S only)
- Appointments by the General Assembly. (S only)

2023 Crossover Deadline: Thursday, May 4

- Please refer to Senate Rule 41(b) and House Rule 31.1(h) for types of bills not subject to crossover deadline.

1/11/23

2023 HOUSE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
8:30am-10am		Appropriations/Finance 643 Approps. Subcommittees: • Education 423 • Gen. Gov. 421 • IT CC • HHS 643 • AGNER Auditorium • JPS 422 • Transp. 1228/1327 • Capital CC	Appropriations/Finance 643 Approps. Subcommittees: • Education 423 • Gen. Gov 421 • IT CC • HHS 643 • AGNER Auditorium • JPS 422 • Transp. 1228/1327	Appropriations/Finance 643 Approps. Subcommittees: • Education 423 • Gen. Gov. 421 • HHS 643 • JPS 422 • AGNER Auditorium • Transp. 1228/1327
10am-11am		Health 643 Local Gov 1228/1327 Elections 421	Transportation 643 J2 421	State Gov./State Personnel 1228/1327 J3 421 Unemployment/Federal Relations 415 Rules Auditorium
11am-12pm		ABC 1228/1327 Pensions 415	Reg Reform 1228/1327 Rules Auditorium	Banking 1228/1327 Ed-Com Col/Ed Univ 1228/1327 Land Use 421
12pm-1pm		**SESSION/CAUCUS**	Wildlife/Marine 1228/1327 J1 423	**SESSION/ CAUCUS**
1pm-2pm		Education K-12 643 Environment 1228/1327	Insurance/Disaster 1228/1327 Agriculture 643	**SESSION/CAUCUS**
2pm-3pm		Education K-12 643 Military/Families 421	**SESSION/CAUCUS**	
3pm-4pm		Energy & Public Utilities/Commerce 643	**SESSION/CAUCUS**	
4pm-5pm		Rules Auditorium		
5-6pm				

SESSION/CAUCUS
Tuesday Noon
Wednesday 2PM; Thursday Noon

CALL OF THE CHAIR (CC)
Ethics, Rules, Redistricting, Oversight, UNC BOG

ALTERNATING COMMITTEES
Rules Chairman will provide direction in consultation with Central Staff

Dominant Political Narratives

WHAT POLITICIANS TALKED ABOUT IN THE SHORT SESSION…

- Inflation
- Parents' voice in schools
- Community safety
- Abortion

Issues To Watch

- Local land use and permitting
- Short term rentals
- Police and fire employee benefits
- Local official ethics

What To Do Now

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- State Earmarks
  - Contact your state reps right now to discuss your needs
  - Consider water/sewer projects and potentially transportation

- Federal Earmarks
  - Great uncertainty about process and scope, GOP did not bar them in rules
  - Reach out to your Federal delegation to lay the groundwork
  - Process generally starts in March/April

Q&A

John McDonald, Senior Government Affairs Associate
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Phone: (919) 323-7510