

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The network of community facilities is integral to the quality of life in the Study Area. These facilities include the physical manifestations of buildings, land, equipment, and whole systems of activities such as the services of water, sanitary sewer, electricity, and natural gas. They form the framework that supports the daily lives of area residents.

This chapter identifies the characteristics of the existing community facilities. Recommendations are made regarding management of these services to provide an equitable level of service to all areas of the City. In addition, the City's needs to enhance existing facilities, redevelop those destroyed by recent flooding and build new facilities are also identified.



The Past—Old Braswell Library



The Present—The New Braswell Library



The Future—The Imperial Centre for Arts & Sciences



I. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Although Rocky Mount is the largest city in Nash or Edgecombe County, it is not the county seat for either county. All facilities inherent to county government operations, (i. e. County Courthouse) are located in either Nashville for Nash County residents or Tarboro for Edgecombe County residents. The following text describes the municipal facilities located within Rocky Mount.



Rocky Mount City Hall Complex. Opened October 1982.

A. MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

1. City Hall

The majority of government offices for the City of Rocky Mount are housed in the City Hall complex. This facility occupies an entire city block in the downtown area, between Church and Franklin Streets.

The three-story portion of the complex is devoted to the operations of the Rocky Mount Police Department while the five-story half houses administrative offices for other general governmental functions. The City Council Chamber is found within this building and seats approximately 200 people. Additionally, meeting spaces of various sizes are available in the complex, although their use has been compromised in recent years as flood recovery efforts and staff increases have forced some of these spaces to be converted into office use.

2. Field Service Center

The City operates a Field Service Center on Albemarle Avenue, north of East Grand Avenue. This facility focuses employees of both the Engineering and Water Resources Departments working in the street sign shop, as well as survey, water and sewer field operations crews. The center also serves as a storage area for the City's public works equipment, transit vehicles and the Fleet maintenance center, which operates gas pumps and a garage for city owned

vehicles. The physical structure of the Field Service is an abandoned warehouse and is in need of internal improvements to better accommodate the employees it houses. A study of space needs for this facility was conducted about six years ago; its recommendations are being implemented as time and money permit.

3. Environmental Services Center-Solid Waste

The new Environmental Services Center on Thorpe Road houses the division offices for the City's Environmental Services Operations. This facility is located adjacent to the City Transfer Station, which is used for compacting and holding waste awaiting transportation to a landfill in Virginia.

Since December 1990, the City has operated a citywide rollout cart garbage collection system. As of July 1, 2003 scheduled pickup occurs once weekly. The waste is taken to the City Transfer Station on Thorpe Road and then loaded into tractor-trailers to be taken to a lined landfill in southern Virginia. Both the Nash and Edgecombe landfills were closed on December 31, 1997, and there are currently no plans to construct new facilities in either county. Yard wastes are picked up weekly and taken to compost sites on Arrow Road and Gay Road. In fiscal year 2000-2001, the Transfer Station handled a total of 91,270 tons of waste of which the City generated 38,753 tons.

Curbside pickup of residential recyclable materials occurs weekly inside the municipal limits. Glass, newspaper, Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) and High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) plastics and aluminum and steel cans are collected. These recyclables are transported to a recycling center in Greenville where they are sorted and sold to commercial recycling processors.

4. Judicial Center

The Judicial Center, located on Cokey Road, provides many services related to youthful law offenders. The Center provides counselors for juvenile offenders and houses one courtroom for district juvenile court cases (criminal) and one room for small claims cases. It also houses many other municipal and non-municipal judicial services. For example, the Department of Social Services hears civil court cases at the Judicial Center, and there is a holding cell for offenders who must appear in court. Other offices located at the Center include the Edgecombe-Nash Clerk of Court's office, the District Attorney's office, a judge's office, the Adult Probation office and Community Service office.

B. SAFETY SERVICES

1. Police

The Rocky Mount Police Department is located in the City

Hall complex and employs 182 sworn officers (26 part-time) and 40 full-time civilian personnel such as clerical and dispatch personnel. The Police Department includes officers, detectives, two juvenile officers, one Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) officer and one crime prevention officer. The municipal limits are divided into 13 zones for general services. The City's jail is a 24-hour detention facility for adult males only.

2. Fire

Rather than be housed at one, central location, like the Police Department, the City of Rocky Mount's 133 firefighters and officers are housed among six fire stations. These stations are grouped into two districts, separated more or less by the Tar River. District I is served by stations #1 (district headquarters), #2, and #5, and District II is served by stations #3,#4, and #6 (district headquarters). In July 2000, Station #4 was relocated from North Church Street to Fenner Road to better serve that portion of the City and place it within a two mile radius of the station. Fire station #7, located on NC 4, is the newest facility. It is to serve the areas of north Rocky Mount within District II, especially Battleboro and Gold Rock. Table 6-1 lists each fire station, its location and equipment.



Fire Station #6—105 Rowe Boulevard

Having fire stations located throughout the City as indicated in Table 6-1 and on Map 6-1 ensures that firefighters can respond to emergencies quickly. In addition to having a quick response time from fire stations to the areas that they serve, the following are other factors that affect the adequacy of fire protection include:

- Ease of accessibility from fire stations to the areas they serve
- Size of water mains serving the area
- Location and distribution of fire hydrants
- Existence and use of built-in fire prevention/protection systems
- Combustibility of building materials
- The value of existing development

The fire insurance rates of individual sites are determined from these factors. Ultimately, all of the individual fire insurance rates determine the City's overall fire insurance rating. Rocky Mount's current fire insurance rating is a three on a scale of one to ten, with one being the best.

The fire training facility and Fire Prevention Office were severely damaged by Hurricane Floyd. On February 8, 2002, the Fire Prevention Office moved into its new home, a renovated historic structure located downtown, across from City Hall and the Train Station. The Fire Training Division has been renamed Support Services and is now located at 101 South George Street. Specific details about the equipment, location and size of each fire station can be found in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1: Fire Stations in Rocky Mount

Station	Location	Acres	Square Feet	Year Built	Equipment/Companies
#1	101 S. George St. Intersection of Cokey Rd. & George St.	1.84	16,782	1963	2 engines, Aerial truck (reserve), District Chief's car
#2	824 S. Grace St. NW corner of Grace St. & Raleigh Rd.	.67	8,300	1976	1 engine, Squad Truck
#3	900 S. Winstead SW corner of Winstead Ave. & Ridgecrest Dr.	1.04	4,800	1990	1 engine
#4	2054 Fenner Rd. South of Fenner & Instrument Dr.	1.0	6,400	2000	1 engine
#5	900 Springfield Rd. One block north of US 64 Business	1.03	4,433	1983	1 engine
#6	105 Rowe St. At US 64 Bypass & US 301	.99	14,377	1990	1 engine, Platform-aerial truck, Squad truck, District Chief's vehicle
#7	NC4 , between Battleboro & Gold Rock	2.0	9,600	2003	1 engine

Source: City of Rocky Mount Fire Department

3. Emergency Medical Services (E-911)

There are two Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies that serve the Study Area. The Stony Creek Rescue Squad serves as the EMS response for the Nash County portion of the Study Area, and West Edgecombe Rescue Squad serves the Edgecombe County portion.

The City of Rocky Mount and Nash County recently instituted Enhanced 9-1-1 systems, which improve the efficiency of dispatch and response in emergency services. Edgecombe County recently launched a similar system and is in the process of making this service available throughout the County.



4. Health Care

Hospitals

The Rocky Mount area is served by Nash Health Care Systems (NHCS), a county owned non-profit corporation comprised of four distinct facilities described below:

- **Nash General Hospital**—Nash General opened in 1971 as the first all-private room hospital in the state. Today it is a 300-bed acute care facility that aggressively seeks to implement new strategies and technology to better serve its patients
- **Coastal Plains Hospital and Counseling Center**—The counseling center is a 50-bed mental health facility, acquired in 1991, that provides inpatient and outpatient treatment services. Counseling services are designed to help citizens with emotional and behavioral problems, including drug and alcohol abuse
- **Nash Day Hospital** – Opened in 1984, it was North Carolina's first freestanding hospital offering treatments and surgeries on an outpatient basis
- **Bryant T Aldridge Rehabilitation Center** — Opened in 1999, this center is a 23-bed facility offering comprehensive rehabilitation services

NHCS primarily serves a six-county area including Nash, Edgecombe, Franklin, Wilson, Warren and Halifax Counties. The combined facilities employ between 1500 to 1700 employees and 170 to 200 physicians. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations has accredited each of the four hospitals in the NHCS.

Health Departments

Both Edgecombe and Nash County Health Departments operate branch offices in the downtown area of Rocky Mount. The Edgecombe County Health Department is located on Atlantic Avenue, and the Nash County Health Department is on South Franklin Street, across from City Hall.

In addition to these public facilities, there are two urgent care facilities and several private clinics within the area to provide medical care to community residents.

C. Public Utilities

The City serves as a regional utility provider of water, sewer, gas and electric services. The gas and electric service areas overlap in many locations, but are not coterminous.



1. Electricity

The City of Rocky Mount owns and maintains its own electrical and gas distribution systems, but purchases electricity as a wholesale customer from Carolina Power and Light Company and other sources. Gas is purchased wholesale from the North Carolina Natural Gas Corporation. The City of Rocky Mount Public utilities serve approximately 31,000 residential and commercial accounts (30,000 households). System capacity is 171 megawatts and relies on 13 existing substations. An additional substation is planned near Gold Rock.

From 1995 to 2001, the average cost of electricity was 8.18 cents (winter) and 9.26 cents (summer) per kilowatt-hour. In 2002, this cost increased by 6.5%, bringing the winter charges to 8.71 cents and the summer charges to 9.86 cents per kilowatt-hour.

Rocky Mount is the largest member city of the 51-member organization administered by Electricities of North Carolina. Electric service is available to an area larger than the City's corporate boundaries, in particular northwest and southwest of the City. The service area includes all of Rocky Mount plus the Gold Rock, Joyner's Crossroads and Winstead Crossroads areas. It does not include all of Battleboro, Bishops Row or Sharpsburg. The last three areas are served by either CP&L or North Carolina Power.

In 1975, the North Carolina General Assembly created a framework for establishing three Joint Action Agencies in the state for each of the three major investor-owned utilities. In 1981, Rocky Mount as part of the NCEMPA purchased a 16% share in CP&L's Shearin Harris Nuclear Generating Station, 18 % of the Brunswick Nuclear Generating Station and smaller shares of two CP&L coal-fired units near Roxboro. Rocky Mount's commitment, \$490 million, will con-



tinue to represent a significant percentage of the customer's monthly electric bill throughout the new millennium. Additional pressure came about in 1997 when the North Carolina General Assembly appointed a legislative study commission to investigate the course the state should take to deregulate the electric utilities, starting in 2005. The legislative study commission made no recommendations concerning the all-important municipal debt issue. Since then the economic impetus to push for deregulation has significantly eased. The City has none the less rigorously pursued through an intensive three phase planning course the maximization of investment benefits while minimizing the costs to the consumer.

2. Natural Gas

Gas service is available to an area larger than the City's corporate boundaries, in particular, southwest and west of the City, including the Town of Nashville. The existing natural gas service area boundary includes the Gold Rock area and that portion of Rocky Mount that is between I-95 and Business US 301, leaving some of downtown and all of Edgecombe County without service. Focused efforts to install natural gas mains and capture load opportunities created by new growth throughout the service territory are ongoing.



Natural gas is drawn from four stations in Rocky Mount with service provided to 16,000 customers. There is a limit on the amount of gas drawn from these four stations; however, the limits can be expanded if loops are added or new stations tapped. Progress Energy has acquired North Carolina Natural Gas Corporation, and City staff does not anticipate any service area expansions in the near future.

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3. Water

Water in the planning area is obtained either from individual private wells or from the public water treatment and distribution system. In addition to City residents, the City of Rocky Mount provides water on a wholesale basis to the neighboring jurisdictions of Pinetops, Sharpsburg, Whitakers, Nashville, Dortches and to Nash and Edgecombe Counties. Major industrial users include Co-Gentrix and Abbott Labs. The ultimate service area for water is depicted on Map 6-2, Utility Service Districts.

The City operates two water plants that obtain their water supply from the Tar River and together are able to produce 26 million gallons per day (MGD) of treated water. These two facilities presently treat an average of 13.8 MGD. Consumption figures for 2001 indicate an average use that is about half of the current capacity, 11.99 MGD.



The water system of Rocky Mount has been a municipally owned or operated system since inception in 1899. At that time, the pump station was located about one mile west of the city limits on what is now known as Country Club Drive. Water was taken from Stony Creek and pumped to the system; a standpipe located on Thomas Street between Main and Church Streets maintained the system pressure. In 1908, a combined water and power plant was located at the Tar River and Thomas Street. Water was taken from the river, treated, filtered and pumped through a newly installed main in Thomas Street to the standpipe and into the system.

In 1935, a 1,000,000-gallon tank was erected at the intersection of Marigold and George Streets. At the same time, the Sunset Avenue water plant was built adjacent to the Tar River, Sunset Park and City Lake. This plant was modernized in the early 1990's and uses standard technology to produce a maximum of 14 MGD.

In 1970, the City constructed a dam on the Tar River southwest of Rocky Mount. The 1650-acre lake impounds a reservoir of 4.3 billion gallons. This reservoir supplies the Reservoir Water Treatment Plant, which was built at the same time as the dam. This plant can treat 12 MGD using conventional treatment methods. Once treated, water can be pumped from either or both of these plants into any of seven elevated storages to provide pressure in the system.

The Tar River Reservoir should be able to handle the increases in consumption that will accompany future growth in the City. In fact, existing treatment plant capacity will provide for population growth of 65,000 new residents, or 11.375 MGD at the current rate of consumption. Furthermore, an additional 4.5 billion gallons from the Tar River Reservoir is available if needed. In addition to treating 28 MGD, an additional 50 MGD is released downstream to maintain river flow.

Recent drought conditions underscore the need for water conservation. The City has water conservation regulations, which are found in Chapter 2, Article V of the City Code. These regulations allow the City Manager to declare a water shortage condition when the water level in the Tar River Reservoir is at or below 123 feet above mean sea level.



(MSL) and likely to drop below 120 feet MSL within two weeks. In response to recurring drought conditions, the City has increased emergency water supply by purchasing two rock quarries off Old Mill Road that contain an estimated 450-500 million gallons of water.

4. Wastewater Treatment

Wastewater treatment in the planning area is a combination of individual septic systems and public sewer service. Most land uses inside the municipal limits utilize the public sewer system, although it is not currently available at all locations. Most land uses in the extraterritorial area utilize septic systems, although public sewer is available in some areas.

The City of Rocky Mount maintains approximately 300 miles of wastewater collection lines with 35 sewer lift stations. The collection system discharges to the Tar River Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant, located on NC 97 near the eastern edge of the City's planning jurisdiction. The plant that replaced the City's first wastewater plant was the Leggett Road treatment facility, constructed in 1941. The Tar River plant opened in 1982 and treats approximately an average of 13-14 million gallons of wastewater per day. The effluent is filtered and disinfected providing tertiary treatment before being returned to the Tar River. Wasted sludge is aerobically digested and disposed of by land application. The maximum treatment capacity of the plant is 21 million gallons per day (MGD). Additionally, the City's public sewer system treats wastewater from the municipalities that get water from the City as well, including the communities of Sharpsburg, Nashville, Whitakers and Dortches.

The 1992 plant upgrades allowed this plant to meet federal and state discharge requirements and helped remedy the problem of wastewater overload occurring during rainy periods. The City has an ongoing program of replacing and sealing sewer lines in order to reduce the amount of groundwater infiltration entering the treatment plant.

Existing treatment plant capacity as presently configured is 26 MGD. Average consumption is 12 MGD by 65-70,000 people served, leaving 14 MGD available for growth. Average domestic consumption by one person in Rocky Mount is about 75 GPD. Per capita consumption, which includes commercial and industrial use, is about 175 GPD.

A constraint to expansion of services further into Edgecombe County is the flat terrain which requires force-main systems and lift (pump) stations. These are more costly than gravity-flow systems and developers are not as readily able to pass these additional development costs along to new owners and tenants. No new septic tank systems are permitted within the City limits; however, some still remain

as they were grandfathered in at the time restrictions were imposed. Another policy is that sewer service, where it is reasonably available, must be provided prior to incorporation into the City limits.



Damage from the flood wrought by Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd in 1999.

5. Stormwater Management

The City is located within the Tar River Basin, and all stormwater collected in the City ultimately flows to the Tar River. The major tributaries to the Tar River include: Stony Creek, Maple Creek, Goose Creek, Hornbeam Branch, Jump Run Branch, Cokey Swamp and Grape Branch. (See Map 9-1)

The City maintains a storm drainage system consisting of culverts, pipes, ditches, and similar facilities to transport stormwater to the Tar River and its tributaries. City crews maintain over 65 miles of ditches routinely. The City also maintains approximately 253 miles of streets, including the storm drainage system associated with each street.

To comply with U.S. EPA Phase II regulations and the N.C. Division of Environmental Management rules for the Tar-Pamlico Basin, the City has initiated the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program. The program calls for public education, control of illicit discharges of pollutants into the stormwater drainage system, regulation of rate of runoff, and capital improvements to improve the management of stormwater runoff. The program provides for compliance with nutrient standard promulgated for the Tar-Pamlico Basin.

To provide a stable source of funding for the programs required under the federal and state mandates, the City plans to implement a stormwater utility beginning July of 2003. Fees associated with this new utility will be paid by property owners based upon the amount of impervious surface on their property.



These new state and federal programs will impact all properties in the City. Currently, the city requires only those projects located upstream of the Sunset Avenue Water Plant intake disturbing more than one acre of land to meet stormwater runoff standards. The Watershed Protection Regulations require properties located upstream from the water plant intake be constructed with less than 24% of area covered by an impervious surface. If the property exceeds this amount of impervious surface, the developer must install a water quality pond designed to reduce the rate of runoff to pre-development rates, but only to those properties within the Watershed Protection Area. The Watershed Protection Area represents less than 20% of the City. (See Map 9-1)

The City also has implemented Sediment and Erosion Control regulations for projects that disturb more than one acre. The developer must design a sediment and erosion control plan that will minimize the amount of sediment lost during the construction process. The City inspects the required measures to make sure that they are installed and maintained during the construction period and that a permanent means of stabilization is installed when the project is completed.

D. PARKS AND RECREATION

1. City Parks and Recreation Facilities

The City of Rocky Mount operates over 40 parks and recreation areas totaling approximately 490 acres and includes a wide range of recreational and cultural facilities. In the late 90's, flooding from Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd destroyed the Children's Museum, Arts Center, Playhouse Community Theatre and two swimming pools. The Museum and Arts Center are operating in temporary facilities downtown and plans are being developed for the construction of new facilities also located in the downtown area. The swimming pools are being replaced by constructing a new pool on Denton Street in Edgecombe County and purchasing the indoor pool at the downtown YMCA facility. The entire downtown Y-facility will be converted to Senior Center and Recreation facility upon the completion of a new Y-facility.

Braswell Park is the City's oldest park and the Rocky Mount Sports Complex, currently under design, will be the largest. Most parks contain playgrounds, picnic facilities, playing fields and basketball courts. In 2003, the City completed the Tar River Trail, a three-mile paved bike and walking trail that connects six major parks. Sunset Park includes the greatest diversity of facilities, with a carousel, miniature train, concession stand, sprayground, ramp park, picnic shelters, playground, ballfield, basketball courts, tennis courts, boat ramp and volleyball courts. The Tar River Reservoir provides an additional 1,860 acres of water recreation area for boating, water skiing, fishing and other ac-

tivities. Rocky Mount's newest park is the 15-acre Martin Luther King Park, which includes a walking trail, MLK Memorial, picnic shelters, playground, and restrooms. A list of the City's parks, including information on acreage and available facilities, is presented in Table 6-2 and the location of existing City Parks is shown on Map 6-3.

The City completed a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 1998. This plan was based on the National Recreation and Park Association Standards (NRPA). Based on an estimated City population of 58,000, Rocky Mount is in need of at least 76 additional acres of park land and 110 acres by the year 2025.

The plan recommended upgrades to many of the City's parks, including major renovations to Booker T. Washington Community Center (partial renovation begun in 2003), replacement of playground units that do not meet Consumer Product Safety Guidelines (completed 2002), construction of restrooms (2 completed) and walking trails (continuing). It also recommend acquiring land for three community parks with community centers, a special use park in the Downtown, five mini parks, and one regional park. A senior center and municipal golf course were also recommended. Due to the massive amount of damage to the City's parks facilities following Hurricane Floyd and the large amount of open space acquired through the FEMA buyout program, the plans for future park development are being studied and reevaluated.

2. City Recreation Programs

The City operates five general recreation divisions: Neighborhood Recreation Services, Athletic Programs, Special Events, Outdoor Recreation Programs and Senior Recreation Programs.

The Neighborhood Recreation Services include the operation of Booker T. Washington Community Center and South Rocky Mount Community Center, days camps, playground programs, instructional classes, neighborhood athletic programs and Special Olympics. The Athletic Division offers



Water Spray Park at Sunset Park



Table 6-2: Rocky Mount City Parks			
Park Name	Location	Acres	Available Facilities
Aycock	Aycock St & Edwards St	2.3	Lighted softball field, playground, open play area
Battle	Falls Rd at Tar River Falls	56.5	Trails, gazebo, overlook, waterfalls, boat landing, historical sites, 3 picnic shelters, playground equipment, fishing piers
Bend of the River	Bend of the River Rd at Tar River Reservoir	3.8	Boat ramps and picnic tables
Boone Street	Boone St & Eleanor Place	1.7	Lighted basketball court, baseball field, open play area, playground equipment, picnic shelter
Branch Street	Branch St at Lancaster St	7.1	2 tennis courts, ball field, lighted basketball court, trees, picnic shelter, playground, tot lot
Braswell	Between Franklin, Hickory & McDonald Sts.	2.0	Playground area, bandstand, gardens, stream
BTW Community Center	Carolina Ave at Pennsylvania Ave	4.2	Gym; auditorium; kitchen; arts and crafts; games; TV, exercise and meeting rooms; tot-lot and playground
Buck Leonard	Grace St at End & High Sts	4.1	Little league field, lighted basketball court, picnic shelter, fitness trail, playground
Charter Oaks	Neville Lane at the Tar River	3.5	Picnic shelter, lighted basketball court, playground and tot lot, open play space
City Lake	Sunset & Piedmont Aves	20.0	Lake, gazebo, benches, waterfowl, ½ mile walkway, 2 fishing piers, lighted fountain.
Cloverdale	Farmington Rd at Cloverdale Dr	3.5	Picnic shelter, lighted basketball court, playground and tot lot, baseball field, large shade trees
Daughtridge	Bounded by Cokey & Old Wilson Roads	2.5	Lighted softball field, playground equipment, basketball court, large shade trees
Dunn Street	End of Dunn St & Wye St	0.6	Playground equipment, picnic shelter, lighted basketball court, free play ball field
Eastern Avenue	Eastern Ave and Pineview St	8.2	2 lighted tennis courts, practice backboard, basketball court, lighted softball and little league field, picnic shelter, playground equipment



Table 6-2: Rocky Mount City Parks (continued)

Park Name	Location	Acres	Available Facilities
Englewood (Stone Park)	Forest Hill & Old Mill Rd	18.5	Lighted softball/baseball field and basketball court, soccer and little league fields, 4 lighted tennis courts, fitness trail, picnic shelter, outdoor grills, playgrounds
Farmington	Englewood Dr at Wellington Dr	12.4	Little League field, playground, trails (unimproved), dense woods, open spaces
Grover Lucas	Halifax Rd	10.5	Playground, picnic shelter, basketball court, 2 little league baseball fields
Holly Street	Holly St at Olive St	3.4	Picnic shelter, lighted basketball court, playground equipment, baseball field
Home Street	Home St at Davis St	2.7	Picnic shelter, basketball court, playground, small playfield
Hornbeam	Western end of Cunningham Dr	10.5	Lighted softball field, little league field, 4 lighted tennis courts, fitness trail, picnic shelter, playground, tot-lot, restroom facilities
Kite Street	Marigold St at Branch St	1.0	Playground, open space
Lancaster	Barnes St at Laurel Ct	4.2	Lighted basketball court, small playfield, picnic shelter, tot-lot, playground, shade trees
Marigold	Edgewood St at Marigold St	4.1	Picnic shelter, 3 tennis courts, small playfield, playground equipment, oak trees
Martin Luther King , Jr.	Leggett Road	28	2 picnic shelters with grills and electricity, playground area, multi-purpose field, walking trail, MLK Memorial
Tar River Trail	Beginning at Sunset Park off River Drive to MLK Park off Leggett Road	3 miles	A 3-mile foot and bike trail along the banks of the Tar River from Sunset Park through Battle Park, Tom Stith Park and ending at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
Meadowbrook	Glendale Dr. at Lynn Av and Bedford Rd	9.6	Four lighted tennis courts, lighted softball field, lighted basketball court, picnic shelter, playground, and large pine trees.



Table 6-2: Rocky Mount City Parks			
Park Name	Location	Acres	Available Facilities
Southside	Clayton and Amos St	6.6	Playfield, picnic shelter, lighted basketball court, lighted tennis court, playground.
Wildwood	Waverly Dr.	4.6	Playground, large cedar and pine trees
South Rocky Mount Community Center	End of Ravenwood Drive	27.0	Gym, kitchen, TV & meeting rooms, two exercise rooms, jogging trail, lighted basketball court, soccer field, volleyball court, horseshoe pit, 2 little league fields, two lighted softball fields spray playground, and playground.
Outdoor Recreation Park	Nashville Rd at Hammond St	21.2	Open space
Battleboro	W. Battleboro Ave	2	Play equipment, tennis courts
Holder Street	Oakwood Drive	.3	Benches, playground equipment, shade trees
Powell	Nugent St. at Tessie St	.4	Half basketball court, playground, benches
Star St	N. Harris St at Star St	1.5	Lighted basketball court, picnic shelter, playground, and open space play area
Sycamore St	Sycamore St. and Eastern Ave	.7	Giant Sycamore trees, playground, wide open spaces
Patterson Drive	Patterson Dr. at Charlotte Ave & Sunset Ave	3.6	Small stream, large shade trees, benches
Taylor Park	Wildwood Ave at Evergreen Rd	4.0	Small playfield and large shade trees
Virginia Street	East Virginia St at Hunter St	3.8	Natural Area
Western Avenue	Western Avenue at Vyne St	1.5	Open okay area, playground, basketball, goal, footbridge over stream
Westridge	Western end of Amherst Rd at Woodburne Drive	1.7	Natural Area

Source: City of Rocky Mount Department of Parks and Recreation



year-round programs for both youth and adults, including League play in baseball, softball, basketball, football and volleyball. The division also sponsors seasonal tennis leagues, Hershey Track and Field, Punt Pass and Kick and the Turkey Trot (an annual 10,000-meter run held the weekend before Thanksgiving). The Special Events Division offers annual holiday events at Easter, Christmas, and Independence Day. It also produces Tar River Fest, Project Graduation and the Down East Festival and a variety of smaller events.. The Outdoor Recreation Division operates Denton Road Pool, the ropes course, and Sunset Park. It also organizes numerous outdoor adventure classes and outings. The Senior Recreation Division sponsors events for citizens 55 years old and older and is responsible for the in-door swimming pool at the downtown YMCA, Down East Senior Games, and the annual Seniors Christmas Tour. The coordinator regularly works with senior groups throughout Rocky Mount.

3. Cultural Facilities and Events

The residents of Rocky Mount benefit from several cultural arts facilities and community events throughout the year, although Hurricane Floyd has effected some of these venues. The Dunn Center for the Performing Arts, on the campus of North Carolina Wesleyan College, features local, regional and national performers.

The City of Rocky Mount funds the Rocky Mount Arts Center and the Playhouse Community Theatre. Efforts are underway to rebuild both the flooded facilities at the Imperial Centre for the Arts & Sciences located in downtown Rocky Mount. Prior to the flood, the theatre operated in a 300-seat proscenium theatre and featured community theatre, book-in musical and theatrical performances, workshops and children's theatre during the summer. The community theatre is currently operating out of the Rocky Mount Senior High School auditorium. Before the flood, the Arts Center offered a wide range of activities including year-round exhibitions in Hines Gallery, classes, concerts and exhibitions of local artists in the Area Artists Gallery. These programs continue in temporary space shared with the Children's Museum.

Prior to the flood, the nationally acclaimed Rocky Mount Children's Museum had brought the wonder of science and history to children through hands-on exhibits, programs, and activities for over 44 years. The Children's Museum will be housed at the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences in downtown Rocky Mount.

Each year, Rocky Mount is host to a number of festivals. The Down East Festival, held on Main Street in Rocky Mount, has consistently drawn 60,000 visitors. Held the 2nd Saturday in October, the festival features a barbecue cook-off, entertainers, Tarside Tales-a storytelling and folklife

event, arts and crafts exhibitors and numerous food booths. Other events include Tar River Fest, the Harambee Festival and the Festival of International Cultures.

E. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

1. Library

The Woman's Club of Rocky Mount organized the Thomas Hackney Braswell Memorial Library in 1922. In 1923 the library moved into a new facility, given to the community by Dr. Mark Russell Braswell in memory of his son. The library housed 92,000 volumes in a 15,000 square foot building located at the southwest corner of Falls Road and North Church Street on land owned by the City.

By the late 90's, while continuing to provide exemplary services, the library had literally run out of space in which to operate. Plans were made to build a new library through a cooperative venture with the City of Rocky Mount, Edgecombe County, and Nash County. In response to this need, the City of Rocky Mount, Nash County and Edgecombe County joined together to build a new library in downtown Rocky Mount on Falls Road. The new facility opened in February 2002 and is a 56,000 square foot facility, nearly four times the size of the original Braswell Library. It has meeting and conference rooms available for community use in addition to much needed space for books and computer equipment. (See photo Page 1 of this chapter.)



2. School Facilities

Two public school districts serve Rocky Mount residents: Nash-Rocky Mount Schools and Edgecombe County Schools. In 1992, the former Rocky Mount City School and Nash County School systems merged to form Nash-Rocky Mount Schools. This consolidated district serves all of Nash County and that portion of Edgecombe County that was previously served by the City of Rocky Mount school system. The system currently serves approximately 17,822 students in 24 areas across Nash County and four located in the Edgecombe County portion of Rocky Mount. Nash-Rocky Mount Schools serving the Rocky Mount area population include: nine elementary schools serving grades K-5 or K-6, an early childhood development center serving pre-kindergartners to kindergartners, two middle schools (grades 7-12), two junior high schools (grades 10-12) and one alternative learning center (grades 7-12). Schools (with curriculum calendar indicated) serving Rocky Mount students include the following:

- Baskerville Elementary-- Year –Round calendar
- Benvenue Elementary- Traditional calendar
- Braswell Elementary- Year –Round calendar
- Coopers Elementary Traditional calendar
- Englewood Elementary Traditional calendar
- Hubbard Elementary Year Round& Traditional
- Johnson Elementary Year Round& Traditional
- Nashville Elementary Year Round& Traditional
- Pope Elementary Traditional calendar
- Red Oak Elementary Traditional calendar
- Swift Creek Elementary Year-Round calendar
- Williford Elementary Year Round& Traditional
- Winstead Avenue Elementary Year Round& Traditional
- Edwards Junior High Traditional calendar
- Nash Central Junior High Traditional calendar
- Parker Middle Traditional calendar
- Red Oak Middle Traditional calendar
- Northern Nash Senior High Traditional calendar
- Rocky Mount Senior High Traditional calendar
- Nash Central Senior High Traditional calendar
- Southern Nash Senior High Traditional calendar
- Fairview Road Early Childhood Center -Year-Round
- WL Greene Learning Center Traditional calendar
- Rocky Mount Charter School Traditional calendar

As noted above the school system provides both year round calendars and traditional for elementary school students. All grades above fifth are on traditional calendar configurations.

Part of the municipal limits and all of the extraterritorial planning area in Edgecombe County is served by the smaller Edgecombe County School system. Total system

student enrollment was 7,771 students for the 2000-01 school year. The six Edgecombe County School facilities utilized by residents of the study area include two elementary schools (K-2, K-3), two middle schools (3-8, 4-8) and two high schools (9-12).

- Bulluck Elementary (K-2)
- Coker-Wimberly Elementary (K-3)
- West Edgecombe Middle (3-8)
- Phillips Middle (4-8)
- Southwest Edgecombe High (9-12)
- North Edgecombe High (9-12)

The Rocky Mount Preparatory School (formerly Charter) opened the 1997-98 school year with an enrollment of 677 students. The school presently serves grades K-11, but plans to add a grade each year until it serves through high school. This facility was completely destroyed when Hurricane Floyd left 4-6 feet of water in it. After operating out of temporary quarters for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school year, the charter school began the 2001-02 school year in a new facility on the north side of Rocky Mount, near NC Wesleyan College.

Private education is available at several private schools in the Rocky Mount area. Many of these schools serve grades K-12. Key private educational facilities within the Study Area are listed below:

- Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School
- Faith Christian School
- Falls Road Baptist Church
- Grace Christian Church
- Mount Zion Christian Academy
- New Covenant Bible Institute
- Rocky Mount Academy

Other educational facilities that serve the area include Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC), North Carolina Wesleyan College (a private four-year liberal arts college), Nash Community College (located just outside the planning area), the Rocky Mount campus of Edgecombe Community College and an extension school of Shaw University.

See Map 6-4. Map note: All Public Schools for the system have been listed. Only those within the Study or currently serving students within the Study Area are mapped.



II. GOALS

Provide accessible facilities that serve a diverse and growing population and support a variety of community and individual needs, ranging from recreation and entertainment to education and health care and ensure that utilities help form an infrastructure for economic development and supply modern, adequate, convenient and affordable services to all areas within the community

III. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

A. UPGRADE AND MAINTAIN EXISTING MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The need to consistently and regularly evaluate for professional efficiency, image, and productivity all City-run facilities and methods of service to the citizens of the City of Rocky Mount.

1. Investigate New Locations For Satellite Police Facilities To Reduce Overcrowding And Allow More Timely Provision Of Police Service Throughout The Community

Currently the City's police function is centralized within office space in the northern half of the City Hall. Although there are benefits to a single centralized base of operations, the department is rapidly outgrowing its space and needs to establish satellite facilities throughout the community. Satellite centers will also allow the Police to improve their response time for emergency calls.

2. Reduce Litter And Graffiti Through Comprehensive Efforts

Volunteers are vital to the enhancement of the built environment. Many effective programs exist to encourage and recognize voluntary enhancement efforts. The City should foster and support these programs and participate in the identification of beautification projects that could be undertaken by them. Some specific projects to target include anti-litter and anti-graffiti efforts, Adopt-a-Highway, Keep America Beautiful, Clean Sweep, river corridor enhancements and tree planting.

3. Beautify Abandoned Or Overgrown Sites Through Neighborhood-based Efforts With City Assistance

Abandoned or vacant sites are blights to the landscape;

however, they offer great potential for neighborhoods-based revitalization efforts. While usually overgrown and littered, many have reverted to a more natural state and have been found to support attractive and hardy native vegetation. The City should look for other solutions to address this problem in addition to aggressive enforcement of housing codes and nuisance laws. Some specific projects to target include the Clean Sweep program, Community Assistance Response Teams (CART) program, Neighborhood Action Plans being coordinated by the Community Development division and tree planting. CART and the neighborhood plans have been very effective in the past in identifying specific problems in various sections of the City and getting City resources directed to address them.

4. Continue And Expand Curbside Pick-up Recycling Program And Maintain Clean Recycle Drop-off Centers

The City makes a powerful statement about litter and conservation by supporting curb-side and drop-off recycling programs. The City should continue these programs where they are offered. The City should continue to maintain its drop-off recycling centers. These centers should be clean and safe, with appropriate signage and lighting. The City should investigate ways to increase recycling opportunities at multifamily and commercial sites, in addition to continually reviewing options to expand the type of materials that are recycled.

B. PROVIDE AN EQUITABLE LEVEL OF UTILITY SERVICE TO ALL AREAS OF THE CITY IN A STRATEGIC FASHION

Public water, sanitary sewer, electricity and gas are utility services currently offered by the City of Rocky Mount. All utilities should be developed, updated and maintained emphasizing quality and capacity in ways that are consistent with the new Comprehensive Plan and desired patterns of development. The City should require all users to pay their fair share.

1. Maintain Utility Master Planning, Including Ongoing Assessments Of Neighborhood Utility Needs

The City needs to develop a master plan for expansion and maintenance needs for each utility system. As part of the process, the City needs to define service areas for water and sanitary sewer to adequately plan for future service needs.

2. Develop A Plan To Meet Strategic Utility Needs That Support Economic Development And Neighborhood Revitalization



The City needs to identify areas for future development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and adopt a program for providing new service and upgrading existing utilities.

3. Update The Capital Improvement Plan To Adequately Fund Utility Improvements Consistent With The Comprehensive Plan

The City's ability to provide quality utility service will be a key element in attracting new development. Potential needs should be prioritized and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Cost estimates should then be developed for each need along with a means of obtaining funding.

4. Explore Cost Analysis Methodologies For The Anticipation And Planning Of Future Rate Adjustments

With increased service and better quality service sometimes comes increased cost, but with improved technology service, delivery levels can increase with more efficiency. Various alternatives addressing rate schedule changes and projected proceeds needs to be investigated. Revenues should be analyzed to insure they cover the capital, maintenance and operational needs of the four municipal utilities.

C. MANAGE WATER SERVICE

The source of water for the City of Rocky Mount is the Tar River. Currently two plants treat water drawn from the river and provide service to Rocky Mount residents, businesses and surrounding communities. Current capacity can support an additional population of approximately 65,000. Additional water is available from the Tar River reservoir.

1. Manage Water Service In A Strategic Manner Consistent With The Comprehensive Plan

Plans should be developed for service line extensions to areas of anticipated growth as identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Attention should be paid to existing service areas with line size restrictions and the potential impact on future line extensions. The City should continue to implement the cost sharing process with developers. It is important to project both size and location of future lines.

2. Promote Water Conservation

Methods to conserve water particularly during periods of dry weather should be adopted and promoted. The City should study various policies to determine which are most effective in promoting conservation, such as using different rates during different times of the year, and assessing surcharges for excessive consumption. The City should utilize a water conservation ordinance in periods of drought.

3. Promote An Adequate And Safe Supply Of Water for City/County Use

The City should establish a drought management program for periods of low river flow. The City should continue to keep the reservoir model up-to-date and use it for advance planning during droughts. The City should promote long-range planning with the County to preserve and enhance source water quality for the reservoir.

D. MANAGE WASTEWATER TREATMENT

The Rocky Mount Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant is located east of the City along NC 97. Currently service is provided to residents and businesses of Rocky Mount and to those surrounding communities that obtain water service. Existing capacity is sufficient to accommodate an additional population of approximately 47,000.

1. Manage Wastewater Treatment Service In A Strategic Manner Consistent With The Comprehensive Plan

The City should identify growth and development zones from the Comprehensive Plan and determine the need for service. A plan should be established for line replacement in existing neighborhoods and extension of service into unserved areas of Nash and Edgecombe Counties.

2. Continue To Meet Federal And State Discharge Requirements

Periodic reviews should be conducted of treatment methods to insure compliance with requirements. Alternative treatment processes should be explored if appropriate.

3. Reduce Overflow And Infiltration During Wet Periods To Ensure That Wastewater Overload Does Not Occur

Recommendations identified in the sewer master plan should be followed. Upgrades and sewer line replacement should be prioritized.

4. Mitigate The Impacts Of Septic Tanks Within City Limits

Presently, new septic tanks are rarely allowed within the City; however, some existing tanks were grandfathered in. A policy should be put in place to make property owners responsible for cleanup of offsite contamination. Property owners should be educated on benefits of tying into the City system to encourage connection to new lines when installed in previously unserved areas. The City should consider waiving line fees or other incentive policies.

5. Encourage Private Sector Investment In Extension Of Water And Sewer Mains



The City should review policies governing extension of water and sewer in the City and ETJ to encourage private sector investment in extension of water and sewer mains.

E. IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The City of Rocky Mount is located within the Tar River watershed. Increased development in the future will result in increased stormwater runoff that could affect water quality. Updating existing policies and stricter enforcement of requirements will become a necessity.

1. Continue to Support the new Stormwater Management Utility Division

The City established a new administrative division to operate a new stormwater utility in 2003. The utility will make it easier to enforce guidelines and bring consistency to stormwater management policies. Stormwater utility rates should be based upon the estimated impact of development on stormwater runoff.

2. Maintain The Stormwater Carrying Capacity Of The Floodplains Of The Tar River And Tributaries To The Extent Feasible

The City should consider establishing impervious surface standards that will reduce the amount and rate of stormwater flow. Standards should also encourage maintaining the holding capacity of floodplains and restrict the clearing of vegetation (prevent filling in of wetlands and promote restoration and creation of new wetlands). Floodplain delineation boundaries should be updated once the state has completed its mapping program.

3. Continue To Require And Enforce Erosion Control Plans And Measures

The City should continue to review and approve site plans contingent on the acceptance of the erosion control plan. Measures should follow guidelines of the North Carolina Sedimentation Control Commission. Construction activities should continue to be periodically monitored by the City to insure compliance. The policy establishing penalties to be imposed for failure to adhere to the approved plan needs revisions.

4. Develop A Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program That Addresses The Impacts Of Future Development, Meets Proposed State And Federal Regulations And Addresses Current Drainage Problems

To resolve current drainage problems and to meet future regulatory challenges, the City must develop a Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program. Problems that

should be addressed in the program include the impact of future development on the existing drainage system, the lack of adequate capacity in the existing drainage system that results in periodic flooding in some locations, meeting the regulations required under the Tar-Pamlico Basin Stormwater regulations, the EPA Phase II stormwater regulations and developing a master plan for storm drainage improvements in the City.

5. Develop A Funding Mechanism To Implement The Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program And Related Improvements

The Comprehensive Stormwater Management Program must also develop a funding mechanism that fairly recoups the cost of implementing the programs and recommended improvements. The program should be developed with extensive public input and education to insure that it has broad community support.

F. MANAGE ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS

The City is a member of the NC Eastern Municipal Power Agency. Presently the City purchases electricity and gas (formerly NCNG) from CP&L. Service areas are well defined through agreement with CP&L and future expansion outside this area is unlikely. Sufficient area remains within the existing service area for additional service to be provided.

1. Manage Electric And Natural Gas Service In A Strategic Manner Consistent With The Comprehensive Plan

The City should identify potential users within the service area and the means to extend service. Where feasible, afford all existing residents and businesses within the service area an opportunity to obtain service. The City should continue to work towards increasing its customer base for natural gas service through policies that encourage such use, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

2. Develop A Long-term Strategy To Address The Impact Of Energy Deregulation

Electric deregulation has encountered problems particularly when it comes to ways of relieving municipalities of incurred debt. Signs indicate that electric deregulation may be slowed. The City should continue to monitor the situation and look for ways to address deregulation as it evolves.

3. Consider Placing Utilities Such As Electric Underground, Especially In New Con-



struction And Retrofit Existing Areas

In areas of new construction, all utilities should be placed underground where feasible. In locations where utilities are being relocated, such as with road construction, consideration should be given to placing them underground. This will result in savings in maintenance and reconstruction costs and minimize outages associated with major storms.

4. Provide Appropriate Street Lighting To Streets And Other Public Places

Cost effective street lighting is provided in all the public areas Downtown and in neighborhoods as a means of promoting safety and encouraging pedestrian activity. It is a key element in attracting businesses and revitalizing neighborhoods. The City should establish programmed maintenance, using Operation Feedback to assist in identifying non-functioning lights or areas needing lights installed.

G. IMPROVE THE PARK SYSTEM

The community has numerous parks of many sizes and types that contribute to the quality of life in neighborhoods and throughout the City. However, some areas remain underserved, and the City should expand and improve parks in these areas. The flooding resulting from Hurricane Floyd in 1999 impacted many. The City has already taken steps to improve the system by preparing a Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan (CRMP). Specific recommendations call for the development of park design standards, greenway master plan and design standards, landscape standards for public open spaces, organization of neighborhood park program and parks and recreation transportation. The CRMP recommends a series of new park facilities, including three community parks, a downtown park, five neighborhood parks, one regional park, a senior center, and a municipal golf course. The City should regularly update and implement the CRMP and ensure that it remains consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. These strategies describe priorities that the City should target to improve the



park system.

1. Rebuild And Renovate Parks Damaged By The Flooding Of Hurricane Floyd In 1999

Sunset Park and Tom Stith/Talbert Park are major parks in Rocky Mount. Each was severely impacted by flooding from Hurricane Floyd. Although bringing these facilities back into use as community recreation facilities places a significant financial burden upon the City, it offers an opportunity to improve and upgrade these facilities.

2. Obtain Additional Public Parkland

The amount of open spaces per person is critical to quality of life in cities. In order to meet national standards, Rocky Mount needs to obtain an additional 76 acres to meet current needs and up to 110 acres to meet needs by 2009. The CRMP proposes to develop mini-parks, neighborhood parks, and other new park facilities in numerous locations, as shown on the enclosed map, Proposed New Park Facilities. The City should explore methods for doing this, per the CRMP, including acquisition, conservation easements, corporate donations, grants or fund-raising. The City should consider adopting a parkland dedication and fee-in-lieu requirement to be levied against residential development as authorized under North Carolina subdivision statutes.

3. Adopt And Implement Park Design Standards And Landscape Standards For Public Open Spaces

Standards should govern the locations and programs provided in the City's parks and recreational areas. Standards should address park design, landscaping, programs and transportation services. Per the recommendations of the CRMP, the City should adopt and implement a design standards manual to govern the construction of new parks and the renovation of existing facilities. The manual should define standards for each park type (mini-, neighborhood, community, regional and special use).

4. Develop New Park Facilities

The CRMP calls for the development of numerous new facilities: three new community parks with community centers, a special-use downtown park, five neighborhood parks, five mini-parks, one regional park, an 18-hole municipal golf course and a new senior center. The City should continue to support implementation of the CRMP. This strategy should occur in conjunction with Strategy F2, which recommends a suitable amount of new parkland necessary to meet current and future needs. The plan estimates capital needs at about \$52 million (1998 dollars). Use of existing publicly owned lands or buildings should be considered as potential sites for new park facilities in order to optimize public resources.



5. Update Parks In Existing Neighborhoods And New Subdivisions To Provide For Modern Equipment And Facilities Consistent With The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan (CRMP)

Modernizing parks and trails is important throughout the City of Rocky Mount and is a priority within the master plan. The City should set aside funds for and direct efforts toward upgrading materials, buildings, equipment, programs and staff at existing facilities.

6. Continue to Develop A Regional Recreation Path System Along The Tar River And Major Tributaries, Linking Adjacent Neighborhoods, Parks And Schools

Rocky Mount's rivers and streams form corridors that spread throughout the City and region and are ideal lands to include in the City's public open space system. The City should continue in its efforts to develop the Tar River Trail. The CRMP promotes extending to connect with major park facilities in close proximity of the stream system. In addition, Hazard mitigation properties, acquired as a result of the 1999 Flood, provide opportunity to extend this system to create a open space linkage that will truly provide for a natural corridor for all to enjoy.

7. Establish A Plan For Reuse Of Properties Obtained Through The Flood Buyout Program

The City is acquiring a significant amount of acreage under the flood buyout program. These are properties that were inundated by flooding resulting from Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd, and many are located in the 100-year floodplain. The City should prepare a plan to guide reuse of these parcels, given that the obligation is to clear the sites and maintain them as public open space. Federal funds are limited, and additional resources may be necessary to remove streets and underlying unnecessary infrastructure. Some parcels could be used as stormwater or compensatory floodwater facilities.

8. Develop the Rocky Mount Sport Complex at the Former Airport Site on North Church Street.

The City's baseball and softball fields are scattered around the City in various parks. These fields are heavily used and increasingly, the heavy use is burdensome on the surrounding neighborhoods. Currently the City has only three soccer fields located in City parks. The 175 acres tract of land on North Church St. formerly used as a municipal airport, offers an opportunity for the development of additional baseball and softball fields as well as the development of

soccer fields. The concentration of these facilities on one site would allow for family recreational activity as well as weekend tournament use which would attract players from other communities to play in Rocky Mount. The design contracts were awarded by the City Council in January 2003. Plans & specifications will be advertised for bids in August 2003. Estimated construction time is 24 months. The estimated project cost is \$12 million to be financed by issuance of certificate of participation.

H. REDEVELOP AND EXPAND CULTURAL FACILITIES

The City has a history of providing cultural opportunities to its citizens. While many of these opportunities have been jeopardized by damage to facilities from flooding in 1999, resources exist to redevelop and even expand the community's cultural centers. The City should continue its efforts to site, rebuild and fund these redeveloped facilities. These strategies describe ways for the City to redevelop the community's cultural base and enhance cultural opportunities in the Edgcombe portion of the City.



Harambee Festival
Courtesy of R.M. Telegram



There Are Many Things To See And Do All Along The Tar River Trail.

The Tar River Trail

The Tar River Trail is a scenic three-mile foot & bike trail that meanders along the banks of the historic Tar River, and through some of the most beautiful areas in Rocky Mount. Several City parks, with picnic shelters, scenic overlooks, ball fields, playgrounds, interesting geographic features, and historic sites, are to be found along the way. With several access points and parking areas, the Trail is perfect for an afternoon stroll or a full workout run.

Sunset Park

Sunset Park, at the south entry to the Tar River Trail, is a major City facility that includes a miniature train, historic carousel, spray play, skate park, picnic shelters, and tennis, horseshoe and basketball courts.

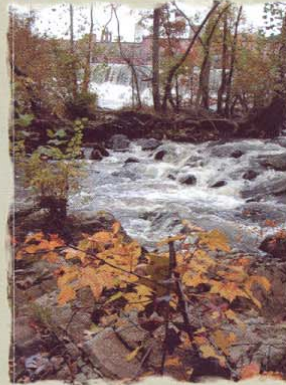
Battle Park

Rocky Mount's largest park, with 57 acres, is located at the "Great Falls of the Tar River," where aboriginal hunters once roamed, and the Tuscarora hunted and fished. The site was home to settlers from Virginia over 200 years ago, and eventually became the early Rocky Mount. In addition to the Tar River Trail, there are paths that lead to the original "rocky mounds," the site of the first Rocky Mount post office, scenic overlooks of the Tar River, three picnic shelters, a gazebo, fishing piers and a boat ramp. The Park also contains a cemetery with markers dating before the Civil War.

The Confederate Monument on the edge of the Park was unveiled in 1917 in memory of Nash County soldiers known as "The Bethel Heroes."

Stonewall Manor

Just a short walk from Battle Park is Stonewall Manor, a Federal style house built around 1830. The first brick house in Nash County, Stonewall was named for its front wall, built from stone quarried from the Tar River.



Rocky Mount Mills

Rocky Mount Mills was built in 1818 by Joel Battle, and was the second cotton mill in North Carolina. It provided yarn and cotton for the Confederacy during the early years of the Civil War until it was burned by a Union Army detachment in 1863. It was rebuilt and burned a second time by an employee. It was again rebuilt and operated until 1998. Renovation of the mill village is currently underway.

Tom Stith Park / Talbert Park

The adjoining Stith and Talbert Parks provide a popular recreation area for Rocky Mount. Features include picnic shelters, basketball court, a fishing pier, a baseball field, soccer field and playground equipment. The largest single span wooden arch bridge in the southeast connects Stith and Talbert Parks to Battle Park.

Booker T. Washington Community Center

The Center, with a full complement of recreation programming, sits alongside the Trail at Tom Stith Park. The Center contains a game room, meeting/class rooms, a gymnasium and a weight room.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park

This park, with 24 acres, anchors the Tar River Trail at its north end. A memorial area within the park contains a seven foot bronze sculpture of Dr. King, and along a walking path, a history of his life, including his famous "I have a dream" speech, originally delivered in a trial run in Rocky Mount in 1962. The Park also contains play areas, walking paths and picnic shelters.

1. Follow Through with Current Plans to Fund And Rebuild The Arts Center, Children's Museum, And Playhouse Theatre At the Imperial Centre for the Arts & Sciences In The Downtown

The City has made the commitment to redevelop an area of historic and economic significance to the community. The cultural arts complex, in conjunction with the new library, allows opportunities to optimize public investments.

2. Study The Development Of Cultural Facilities And/Or A Historical Museum In The Downtown, Or Other Appropriate Location

Development of cultural facilities should be part of an overall strategy to improve Downtown and be linked to other cultural institutions within the community. Additionally, the City should identify appropriate sites for the redevelopment of historic structures into cultural facilities. One site to consider is the Douglas Block area. The City should study the suitability of existing buildings for this facility and explore

ways to fund a project on a suitable site through partnerships, grants and in-kind contributions. Concentration of public facilities may optimize their use by the public and thus should be considered in any proposals for significant public investment.

The City should identify appropriate sites for the development of an historic museum. The City of Rocky Mount has a significant history. From its natural heritage to its early years as a mill town to its role as a stop along the Washington and Weldon Railroad, the community has a unique and multi-faceted past. The City should celebrate this past and educate citizens and visitors about it by creating a historic museum.

3. Continue To Sponsor And/or Support Local Festivals

Rocky Mount's neighborhoods and downtown are important locations for local festivals and celebrations. This climate can be supported by a variety of players. The City currently sponsors the following events: Down East Viking Classic, Down East Festival, Tar Side Tales, Harambee Festival, and Tar River Fest. The City should continue to sponsor and/or support local festivals by providing creative, in-kind support that makes room for artistic and cultural events in the City. Examples can include donating the use of public parks or private gardens for concerts or fairs, closing streets for festivals or allowing the posting of cultural events on websites.

4. Develop The Downtown Park As Recommended In The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan (CRMP)

The planned Downtown park will be a linchpin in revitalization of the City's Downtown. The City should develop this facility, as recommended in CRMP, although discussions with County officials could result in an expanded public space downtown, perhaps complementing the new Braswell Library. The plan recommends a park that links the historic train depot to the City Hall building, creating lawn space for festivals and entertainment. Amenities would include a stage with full sound and lighting equipment, water fountains and amenities, covered shade structure, farmers market space, and large grass lawn areas. The estimated cost is \$2 million. In addition, the City should publicize the completion and subsequent opening of the facility through its outreach and information channels and promote a festive atmosphere in which the entire City can celebrate access to this important resource.

5. Attract, Support, And Maintain The Development Of Cultural Facilities In The Edgecombe County Portion Of The City

Continued access to cultural facilities is important throughout the City of Rocky Mount. The City should continue to

provide and maintain cultural facilities in all parts of the City to insure that all segments of the local population have access to desired cultural activities.

I. IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Improving access is an important part of ongoing maintenance of existing and provision of new community facilities. When the public sector improves access, it sets an example for the private sector to follow. The City should ensure that all of its facilities are fully accessible. These strategies suggest how the City should target its actions in this regard.

1. Enhance Transportation Options To Reach These Facilities, Especially For The Senior Citizens, Disabled And Disadvantaged

Providing transportation options is a critical way to make community facilities more accessible. Neighborhood access via trails, bikepaths and sidewalks is one way to achieve this objective, while demand-responsive public transit and enhanced taxi cab service can be especially important to the elderly, disabled and disadvantaged. These options have the advantage of reducing traffic and building a sense of community. The City should enhance transportation options to reach parks, cultural facilities, health care centers and other community facilities. It should also promote these options to residents who would benefit from using them.

2. Maintain Full Compliance With The Americans With Disabilities Act

Community facilities should be fully accessible according to requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The City should continue to take the lead within the community by ensuring that its facilities, public services, and streets are in full compliance with these requirements.

J. MEET THE SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL NEEDS OF SENIOR CITIZENS, CHILDREN AND TEENS

Certain populations within the community have special social and recreational needs. The City has served its senior and youth population through social and recreational facilities and programs. The City should continue to meet the needs of these populations and, in particular, address care facilities, expansion of programs and activities and provision of new facilities in target locations. These strategies describe ways for the City to achieve these objectives throughout the City, with a special emphasis on increasing access to these opportunities in the Edgecombe portion of the City.



1. Encourage The Improvement Of Adult Care Services And Facilities

Many families encounter challenges when relatives become disabled or parents grow older. Affordable housing and adult care services—medical, supervision, housekeeping, shopping, etc.—are critical to these citizens. While Rocky Mount is increasing its stock of skilled and assisted adult-care service providers, these services should continue to be improved and expanded. The City should encourage co-location of these services in places that seniors and disabled residents frequent. The City should also promote the availability of these services, through innovative types of transit services, especially with regard to small-scale providers that are unable to advertise.

2. Encourage The Improvement Of Childcare Services And Facilities For Children, Minimize Impacts On Residential Neighborhoods, And Establish Location Standards

Access to quality childcare services greatly enhances a working family's financial and professional options. While Rocky Mount has child care service providers, these services should be enhanced and targeted to residents that would most benefit from them. Even when childcare services exist, the availability of them may be unknown to residents in need of them. Many of these services will be improved, especially among working families. But it is also important that home-based providers do not adversely affect the neighborhoods in which they are located. Strict guidelines should be enforced.

3. Encourage After-School Care And Care Facilities For School-Age Children

In many Rocky Mount families with school-age children, both parents work. Teacher workdays and intercession periods of year-round schools can cause problems if parents are not able to take vacation days at these times. In addition, existing facilities are severely overloaded during these temporary spikes when the school system is not in session. Rocky Mount should encourage the expansion and enhancement of childcare services for school-age children.

4. Expand Teen Programming Including Recreation And Cultural Programs, And Build Additional Community Centers

The teen-aged population in Rocky Mount enjoys recreation and cultural facilities, but these facilities should be expanded. Additional community centers targeting teenagers should be created as recommended in the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. Neighborhood access and proximity to public transportation, schools, and teen-oriented shops and services should be considerations when select-



Courtesy of R.M. Telegram

ing sites for new youth facilities. Use of existing publicly owned lands or buildings should be considered as potential locations for these community centers to optimize public resources.

5. Expand the Recreational Programs for Senior Citizens in the New Senior Center In The Downtown Area

The quality of senior life—the extent to which senior citizens are valued and served—is an important part of any community. The senior center is an important hub for programs, service delivery and gathering in the senior community. The City has created a staff position that coordinates senior programs and neighborhood programs. The City should continue to support this position and determine the best locations for a permanent senior citizen center. Use of existing publicly owned lands or buildings should be considered as potential locations for this center to optimize resources.

6. Attract And Support The Development Of Social And Recreational Facilities In The Edgecombe County Portion Of The City

Access to social and recreational facilities is important throughout the City of Rocky Mount. The City should ensure that citizens in all neighborhoods are in close proximity to these facilities and should actively target the Edgecombe portion of the City for rehabilitation of existing centers (per the recommendations for the CRMP). Moreover, the City should promote these venues as important resources for the entire community.

K. ENHANCE EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Education is critical to the welfare of all our citizens. The City of Rocky Mount is served by two school districts—



Nash-Rocky Mount Schools and Edgecombe County Schools—and a variety of home schools and private educational institutions. Facility planning, construction and maintenance are important objectives, as well as upkeep of equipment. Since education is a continuous process that occurs across many sectors of the community, the City should foster educational partnerships and collaboration that help all citizens to participate in the process. These strategies recommend ways for the City to achieve this objective.

1. Encourage The School Districts To Maintain And Improve School Buildings And Grounds Through New Investments

New investments to existing school buildings and grounds contribute to the learning environment. Although previous attempts to assist the school districts has not been as successful as desired, the City should continue to encourage the school districts to make these investments and look for innovative sources to fund them. Partnerships with educational organizations should be encouraged, as well as grants from state, corporate and foundation organizations.

2. Encourage The School Districts To Provide An Equivalent Qualitative Level Of Buildings, Equipment And Teaching Resources Throughout The City

Every student should be afforded equal access to educational resources. These resources include buildings, equipment, educational programs, teachers and testing methods. The City has made monetary contributions to the Edgecombe County School District as a result of the Nash-Rocky Mount School Districts merger in an effort to equalize educational opportunities for schools within the Edgecombe portion of the City. The City should encourage the school districts to evaluate the qualitative level of these resources at each teaching institution in order to ensure that all students are learning in the same high quality environment.

3. The City Shall Intensify Its Efforts to Facilitate Better Coordination & Cooperation With and Between The School Districts

Schools are a critical element in the development of neighborhoods. The City should foster increased partnership in the planning & placement of these elements which have such significant bearing on the growth patterns of the community. With two school districts serving one City, communication and coordination is also important. The City should increase its effort to be an active partner in coordinating with the school districts. Both formal and informal methods should be used to keep the lines of communication open among these three parties. Coordination should also apply to any joint use of school facilities for recreational or other non-school purposes.

4. Work With Key Industry Leaders such as Carolinas Gateways Partnership, OIC, Region L Council of Governments etc. To Ascertain Existing Deficiencies In Workforce Training And Work With School Districts To Develop Appropriate Programs

Industry leaders and the Carolinas Gateway Partnership, OIC, & COG etc. can play an important role in enhancing the City's educational environment by working with school officials to identify skills that students need for future employment opportunities and developing programs for schools to teach them. The City should support and participate in this partnership specifically by sharing information, helping to set goals and indicators of success, and providing a forum for this work to take place.

5. Promote And Expand Partnerships Between Schools And Businesses, Including Existing Programs Of The Chamber Of Commerce

Many players contribute to a positive educational climate in the community. The City should promote and expand these partnerships. Specific actions include identifying additional business partners, targeting the Chamber of Commerce for involvement and promoting its excellent existing programs, sharing information and providing a forum for discussions to take place.

6. Expand Higher Education Opportunities For Local Residents By Working With The Local Community Colleges And North Carolina Wesleyan College

Education does not end with high school or even college. Students of all ages look for opportunities within their community to enhance their understanding of the world around them. The City should support the expansion of educational opportunities for residents at local institutions of higher learning. Specific actions include exchanging information about needs and resources with the community colleges and Wesleyan College; supporting partnerships among these institutions, the business community and the school district and helping to set goals and benchmarks for higher education.

7. Encourage Joint Development Of Facilities For Parks And Recreation Use Between The School System, The Counties And The City

As budgets for public agencies tighten, one way to maximize use of available public dollars is to enter into agreements for joint development and use of new public facilities. This would increase the amount of money available for development of recreational facilities, increase the number of recreational sites available to the general public and decrease duplication of efforts among public providers of recreation facilities.



L. ENHANCE HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Access to health care is extremely important to community quality of life. Proximity, transportation and choice of provider are all critical components of access. The City should support and promote access to health care services, facilities and programs throughout the community, but especially in areas that have special need, such as the Edgecombe portion of the City. These strategies describe ways for the City to enhance health care.

1. Support And Promote Existing Health Care Resources And Promote The Expansion Of Facilities And Services Into Edgecombe County

Existing resources within the community (including fitness, recreation and YMCA facilities) should be identified and promoted. The City should also emphasize improving the transportation system— bus routes and schedules, in particular—in order to enhance access to existing health care resources. The City should encourage the expansion of existing outpatient services, clinics and fitness and recreation centers in Rocky Mount. Where feasible, the City should support the expansion of these facilities into the Edgecombe portion of the City by providing incentives, such as infrastructure support.

2. Attract Medical Professionals, Offices And Clinics To All Parts Of The City

Recruiting medical professionals and facilities not only enhances community access to important services, but it also promotes the community as a good location for medical businesses. Awareness will be raised of the benefits of locating medical offices in Rocky Mount. Partnerships with health care institutions, including Duke University, University of North Carolina and East Carolina University should be encouraged.

3. Maintain Good Access To Area Health Care Facilities, Including Transit Service For The Senior Citizens, Disabled And Disadvantaged

Proximity to health care facilities is important to any community, and Rocky Mount has fine facilities within its borders. Access to these medical resources will be maintained and enhanced via roads and public transportation links. The City should raise facilities and enhance transportation service to areas within sections of the community that are in need of service.



City Lake in December
Courtesy of R.M. Telegram

