

# Existing System Overview

## Section 2.4 | Existing Parks and Facilities Overview

### 2.4.1 Introduction to Methodology

With a better understanding of existing and future population trends within Raleigh, the existing system overview can turn towards existing parks and facilities. In order to observe system-wide successes or opportunities, the Project Team reviewed a sampling of parks and facilities based on geographical mixture and the Department's existing classification system. Map C identifies the sample of parks visited. The Capital Area Greenway Network was observed separately, with findings documented in Section 2.5 of this report. The following criteria was used and is based in part on guidelines developed by Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. A copy of the evaluation form can be found in Section 6.1 of the Appendix along with individual park findings.

#### Proximity/Access/Linkages:

- Is the park easy to reach?
- Can someone who lives nearby easily and safely walk into the park?
- Does the park have clear directional and informational signage/wayfinding?

#### Comfort and Image:

- What is the first impression a user has of the park?
- Is the park clean and well kept?
- Are there a variety of comfortable places to sit?
- Does the park provide sufficient protection from inclement weather?

#### Uses and Sociability:

- If a park space, is there a mix of things to do?
- If a special use park, how well does it fulfill its intended function?
- Is the park consistently busy/activated?
- How much of the park space is used versus parts that are unused?
- Is flexibility of spaces maintained?

#### Environmental Sustainability (Developed and Natural):

- How is stormwater being handled?
- Are there any partnership/environmental opportunities?
- Is the park energy and resource efficient?
- Does the park design/location facilitate and encourage multi-modal transportation?
- Does the landscape utilize native plant materials?
- Does the park or facility utilize stewardship techniques?



*Fred Fletcher Park*



*Lake Lynn Park*

# Chapter Two

## 2.4.2 Facility Ratings

Each park observed was assigned a score based on how well it met the aforementioned criteria based on the time of observation. Once all scores were assigned, a matrix was created (see **Table 12**) that allowed system-wide trends to become visible. It is important to note that there is no “one size fits all” set of criteria that can accurately evaluate every type of park, however, seeing each individual park’s score helps to generate a general idea if that park is:

### Exceeding Expectations:

- These parks are functioning as intended and are also exceptionally well maintained, aesthetically pleasing, safe and often demonstrates sustainable techniques.
- The park accommodates a wide variety of uses and maintains a consistently high level of activity while still maintaining flexibility.
- The park shows clear evidence of good design standards and embraced heritage resources (if applicable).
- There are many ways for users to access the park including via mass transit, walking, and biking.
- Multi-purpose fields or lawn surfaces are maintained well and could be considered tournament/competition grade.
- Sports fields may contain premium amenities such as score boards, enclosed dugouts, bleachers and lighting.
- These parks score in the 100-75 range.

### Meeting Expectations:

- From a programmatic level, these parks function as intended.
- They are generally well maintained, and may be aesthetically pleasing.
- The park can accommodate several different activities and has a moderate level of activity.
- This park may or may not have a transit stop nearby, but has reasonable sidewalk connectivity.
- This park is generally compatible with the surrounding land uses and provides the user with a feeling of safety.
- Field surfaces are well maintained and playable, but typically do not include the premium features that may be present in parks that “exceed expectations.”
- These types of parks score in the 74-50 range.

### Not Meeting Expectations:

- These parks are not currently performing as intended.
- Although they can still be well maintained and/or aesthetically pleasing, they typically are not.
- These types of parks may have a consistently low level of activity; few accommodated uses, and may not be compatible with the surrounding land uses.
- These parks may not be perceived as safe by their users.
- It is common for these parks to be difficult to access either by public transit, bicycle, or on foot.
- Field surfaces are not typically well maintained, or the fields are so over-programmed that adequate maintenance is impossible.
- These types of parks score in the 49-0 range.

## 2.4.3 Individual Facilities Analysis

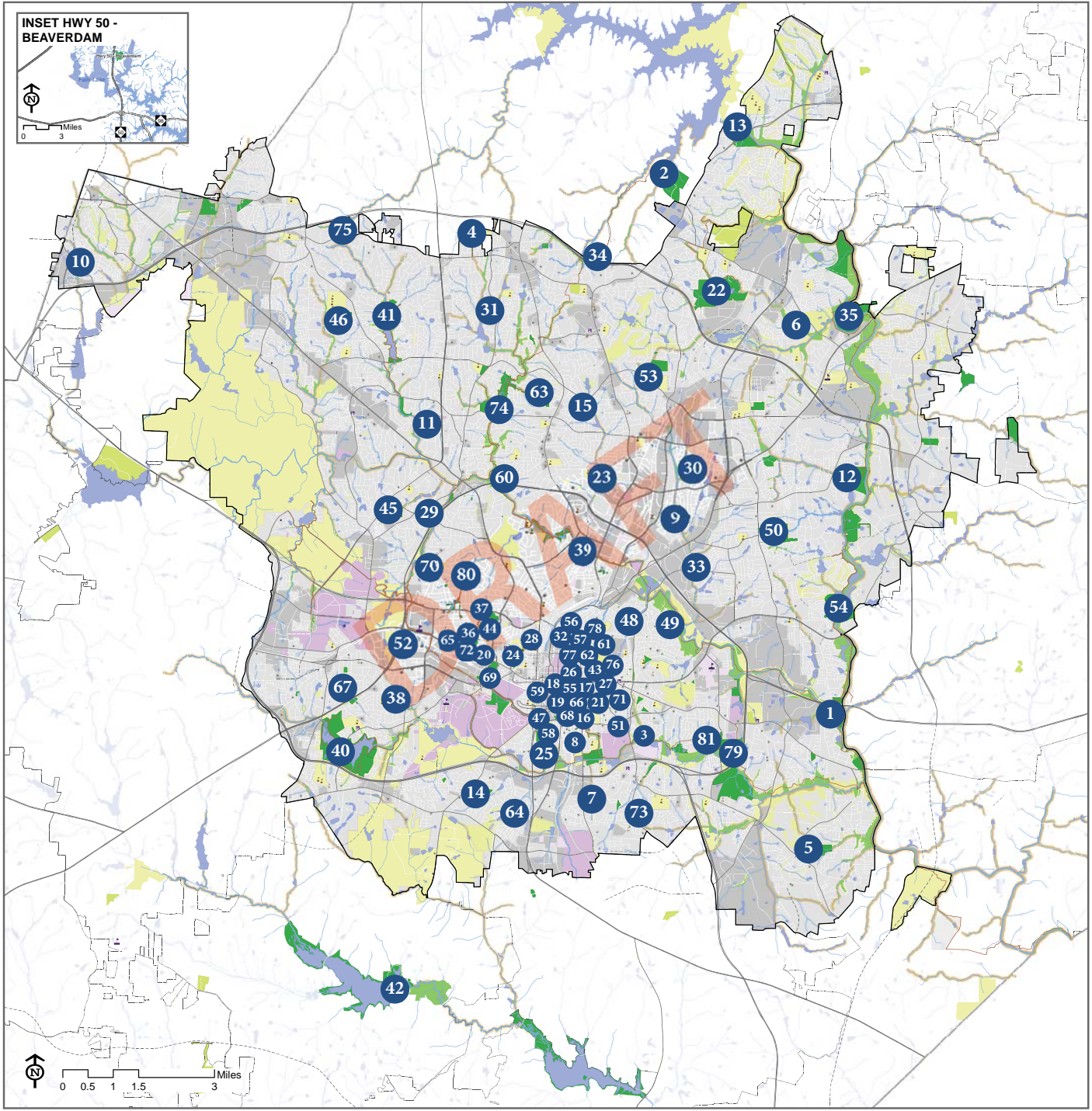
The following are the results of the individual site observations. A sampling of eighty-one parks and facilities were evaluated by the Project Team over a two week period in October, 2012. Parks and facilities are listed alphabetically in **Table 12**, with identifying scores for each category, weighted overall scores and category score summaries on the last page.

Each park’s observation provides a summary of all four criteria subjects along with site-specific observational notes. It should be noted that these are based on the team’s observations during a limited time period and do not necessarily reflect the recommendations produced during the Needs Assessment portion of this report which includes public engagement.

The following map (see **Map C**) identifies parks visited by the Project Team. In addition to a geographic mix, the team visited an array of parks from each of the Parks and Recreation Department’s current classifications; mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, metro parks, nature preserves and special.

# Existing System Overview

Map C. City of Raleigh Parks and Facilities Observational Sites



**LEGEND**

City of Raleigh Park	COR CAG Corridors	Jurisdiction	State Site	Universities and Colleges	Major Road
City of Raleigh Greenway	Greenway Trail	Raleigh ETJ	Wake County Site	Public School	Proposed Major Road
Wake County Park	Lake/Pond/Reservoir	Residential	Historic Landmark	Private School	Street
Non-City of Raleigh Parks & Open Space	Rivers and Streams	Non-Residential	Library	Place of Worship	Proposed Street

Eri is the source of the Terrain Base Map. Other data sources include the City of Raleigh and Wake County.

existing system overview



# Chapter Two

Table 12. Park Observation Results

### How to Read Table:

Criteria are listed by category in the far left column. Scores are based on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest score and 5 representing the highest score possible. In cases where a specific criteria is not applicable, a score of 'n/a' is listed. Final park scores are weighted to a scale of 0-100, with 100 being the highest possible. Numbers shown above park or facility names correspond to locations shown on Map C.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Anderson Point													
Wilkerson Nature Preserve													
Apollo Heights													
Baileywick													
Barwell Road													
Berkshire Downs West													
Biltmore Hills													
Bragg Street													
Brentwood													
Brier Creek													
Brookhaven													
Buffaloe Road Athletic													
Canoe Launch at Falls Lake													
<b>Proximity/ Access/ Linkages (max 30)</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>
Visibility from a distance	3	2	4	3	2	4	3	4	2	5	2	4	1
Ease in walking to the park	3	2	4	3	1	3	4	3	2	5	3	3	2
Transit Access	2	2	5	2	2	3	4	5	4	2	1	2	1
Clarity of information/ signage	5	5	5	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	2	5	5
ADA Compliance	5	4	4	4	5	1	3	3	2	5	2	5	2
Lighting	4	5	3	4	5	5	4	2	5	3	4	5	4
<b>Comfort &amp; Image (max 30)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>
Overall attractiveness	5	5	4	5	5	3	4	3	4	3	3	5	5
Feeling of safety	4	5	4	4	5	5	4	3	5	5	4	5	4
Overall maintenance (Exterior)	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	3	5	5
Overall maintenance (Interior)	5	5	5	5	5	n/a	4	n/a	3	5	n/a	5	n/a
Comfort of places to sit	5	5	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	2	3	5	3
Protection from bad weather	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	2	5	5	3	5	1
<b>Uses and Activities &amp; Sociability (max 20)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>
Mix of Uses & Activities	5	3	4	4	4	3	5	3	5	5	3	5	2
Level of activity	4	4	5	4	4	2	4	3	5	5	2	5	5
Sense of pride/ Ownership	4	5	5	4	5	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	5
Programming Flexibility	5	4	4	4	4	2	3	2	5	5	2	3	2
<b>Environmental Sustainability (max 30)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>
Stormwater Management	3	5	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	2	3	3	3
Multi-modal Capacity	3	2	5	2	1	3	3	4	5	3	2	5	2
Co-location/ Integration	3	3	3	2	5	3	2	3	3	5	2	5	3
Facility Energy Efficiency	4	5	4	3	3	n/a	4	n/a	3	4	n/a	5	5
Stewardship (Exterior)	4	5	4	5	4	3	3	3	5	3	3	5	5
Stewardship (Interior)	3	5	5	5	5	n/a	4	n/a	2	5	n/a	5	n/a
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>68</b>

■ Exceeding Expectations     
 ■ Meeting Expectations     
 ■ Not Meeting Expectations



# Existing System Overview

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Carolina Pines	Cedar Hills	Chavis	City Cemetery	City Museum, Raleigh	City Plaza	Compiegne	Davie Street	Durant nature	Eastgate	Edna Metz Wells	Eliza Pool	Fayetteville Street	Fisher Street	Fred Fletcher	Glen Eden	Green Road	Greystone Recreation Center	Halifax	Hill Street	Honeycutt	Horseshoe Farm	Isabella Cannon	Jaycee
21	18	26	23	24	28	24	23	20	26	19	24	30	12	29	19	27	23	20	25	19	10	25	22
3	2	5	5	4	5	5	4	1	4	2	5	5	2	5	3	5	3	3	3	2	1	3	4
3	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	4	5	2	5	4	5	3	4	5	3	1	5	4
4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	3	5	3	5	2	5	2	5	3	2	2	4	4
3	2	3	4	3	3	3	4	5	4	2	4	5	1	5	4	4	5	3	4	4	2	4	3
3	3	4	1	4	5	2	3	3	4	1	4	5	1	4	3	3	5	2	5	3	1	5	3
5	5	4	3	3	5	5	3	5	5	5	4	5	3	5	3	5	5	3	5	5	3	4	4
24	21	28	17	25	25	22	23	25	23	16	26	24	14	29	22	30	29	20	30	27	18	25	25
4	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	4
4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	3	5	5	3	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4
4	3	4	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4
4	3	5	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	3	4	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	4	4	5	5	n/a	5	4	n/a	n/a	5
3	4	4	1	2	5	4	3	4	5	3	4	5	2	5	3	5	4	3	5	4	3	5	3
5	4	5	1	5	5	4	5	4	4	2	5	4	2	5	4	5	5	3	5	5	1	5	5
17	14	18	12	15	20	6	13	17	18	7	17	18	12	20	16	17	16	18	15	15	12	15	19
5	5	5	2	3	5	1	4	5	5	1	5	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	5	2	3	5
5	4	5	3	3	5	1	3	4	5	2	3	5	3	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	2	5	5
4	3	5	5	5	5	2	4	3	5	3	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	3	3	4	5
3	2	3	2	4	5	2	2	5	3	1	5	4	2	5	3	3	4	5	3	4	5	3	4
21	19	24	15	21	17	17	19	23	19	20	22	17	11	24	19	24	20	18	29	19	20	20	24
3	3	2	2	2	3	3	1	5	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	3	3	3	5	3	5	3	3
4	2	5	5	5	5	3	4	3	4	4	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	5
2	4	3	3	5	5	1	4	3	3	3	2	3	3	5	2	5	4	5	5	2	3	3	3
4	3	5	n/a	3	n/a	5	3	3	3	5	3	n/a	n/a	3	3	3	5	3	5	3	5	5	4
4	4	4	5	3	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	n/a	4	5	4	5	5	4
4	3	5	n/a	3	n/a	n/a	3	4	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	4	5	5	5	n/a	5	4	n/a	n/a	5
75	65	87	71	77	95	73	71	77	91	65	81	94	52	93	69	89	84	80	90	73	63	89	82

existing system overview

# Chapter Two

Table 12. Park Observation Results (con't)

	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
	Kentwood	Kiwanis	Lake Johnson	Lake Lynn	Lake Wheeler	Lane Street	Latta Property	Laurel Hills	Leesville	Lenoir Street	Lions	Lockwood	Marsh Creek
<b>Proximity/ Access/ Linkages (max 30)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>
Visibility from a distance	4	5	4	4	3	5	4	3	3	3	4	4	2
Ease in walking to the park	5	5	3	3	2	5	2	2	4	4	2	4	4
Transit Access	4	5	2	2	2	5	3	5	2	5	5	4	4
Clarity of information/ signage	5	4	4	5	2	5	1	2	3	4	5	2	4
ADA Compliance	2	3	4	4	2	4	2	3	4	2	4	5	5
Lighting	5	5	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	5	4	4
<b>Comfort &amp; Image (max 30)</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>
Overall attractiveness	3	4	4	5	3	5	4	4	4	3	5	5	5
Feeling of safety	4	5	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	4
Overall maintenance (Exterior)	2	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	5	5	5
Overall maintenance (Interior)	1	3	5	5	4	n/a	n/a	5	5	n/a	5	n/a	5
Comfort of places to sit	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	3	3	1	3	5	4
Protection from bad weather	5	5	3	4	5	3	3	5	5	3	5	2	5
<b>Uses and Activities &amp; Sociability (max 20)</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>
Mix of Uses & Activities	5	5	4	5	5	4	2	5	4	4	5	4	5
Level of activity	4	3	5	5	5	4	2	5	3	3	4	5	5
Sense of pride/ Ownership	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5
Programming Flexibility	1	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	5	4
<b>Environmental Sustainability (max 30)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>26</b>
Stormwater Management	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	2	3
Multi-modal Capacity	4	5	3	2	2	5	3	4	3	4	4	5	5
Co-location/ Integration	2	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3
Facility Energy Efficiency	2	3	3	4	3	n/a	n/a	3	5	n/a	4	n/a	5
Stewardship (Exterior)	2	4	4	5	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	5	5
Stewardship (Interior)	2	3	4	5	4	n/a	n/a	5	5	n/a	4	n/a	5
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>87</b>

Exceeding Expectations
  Meeting Expectations
  Not Meeting Expectations

existing system overview



# Existing System Overview

51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74
Martin L King Jr Memorial	Method	Millbrook - Exchange	Millburnie	Moore Square	Mordecai	Mordecai Square	Mount Hope Cemetery	Nash Square	North Hills	Oakwood	Oakwood Commons	Optimist	Peach Road	Pollock	Pope House	Powell Drive	Progress Energy Center	Pullen	Ridge Road	Roberts	Rose Garden & Little Theater	Sanderford Road	Shelley Lake - Sertoma
27	24	29	15	27	21	29	19	28	17	22	24	17	19	20	24	18	29	28	17	21	25	24	24
5	4	5	1	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	3	3	5	5	3	5	5	2	5	4	4	4
5	4	5	2	5	3	5	3	5	3	4	5	2	3	3	5	3	5	4	4	4	5	3	4
5	5	5	2	5	5	5	4	5	2	5	5	5	3	4	5	2	5	5	2	3	4	5	5
4	3	5	3	4	4	4	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	5	2	3	4	3	5
5	3	4	2	4	2	5	2	5	3	2	2	2	4	1	3	2	5	4	4	3	3	4	2
3	5	5	5	4	3	5	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	4
20	26	30	14	17	18	30	16	23	15	26	22	20	24	19	25	16	28	29	17	28	29	25	22
5	4	5	4	3	4	5	4	5	3	4	5	3	4	4	5	2	5	5	3	5	5	4	4
5	4	5	3	4	4	5	3	5	3	5	5	3	4	5	4	3	4	5	3	5	5	4	4
4	5	5	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	3	4	4	4	2	5	5	3	4	5	5	4
n/a	4	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	4	4	n/a	5	n/a	5	4	3	5	4	4	3
4	4	5	3	3	3	5	3	5	3	3	4	3	3	3	2	4	4	5	1	4	5	3	3
2	5	5	1	3	3	5	2	3	3	4	3	4	5	3	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	5	4
12	14	18	11	17	15	19	13	17	14	16	19	14	16	15	15	11	17	19	10	19	11	19	17
2	5	5	3	4	4	5	3	3	3	3	4	5	4	3	4	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5
3	3	5	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	5	5	3	4	3	3	2	4	5	1	5	3	5	5
4	3	5	3	4	4	5	4	5	3	5	5	3	4	5	5	2	5	5	3	5	3	5	4
3	3	3	1	4	3	4	3	4	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	4	2	4	3
10	21	26	17	16	13	25	13	15	9	18	15	21	19	15	19	15	26	27	17	22	23	23	23
1	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	4	2	3	2	2	3	2	3
5	3	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	2	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	5	5	2	4	3	5	5
2	4	5	5	3	3	4	3	3	2	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	4	5	4	3	5	3	4
n/a	4	4	n/a	3	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	4	3	n/a	3	3	5	4	3	4	3	5	3
2	4	5	3	3	4	5	4	5	3	3	5	3	4	4	3	2	5	5	3	4	5	3	4
n/a	4	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	4	4	n/a	4	n/a	5	5	3	5	4	5	4
73	77	94	60	81	71	94	64	87	58	75	84	65	71	73	75	63	91	94	55	82	80	83	78

existing system overview

# Chapter Two

Table 12. Park Observation Results (con't)

	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	
	Strickland	Tarboro Road	Tucker House	Vallie Henderson	Walnut Creek North	Windemere Beaver Dam	Worthdale	Total
<b>Proximity/ Access/ Linkages (max 30)</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>
Visibility from a distance	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	73
Ease in walking to the park	2	5	5	4	1	2	3	72
Transit Access	2	4	5	5	1	2	2	73
Clarity of information/ signage	4	5	4	2	4	1	2	68
ADA Compliance	5	4	3	4	4	2	4	65
Lighting	5	3	3	4	4	3	4	80
<b>Comfort &amp; Image (max 30)</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>
Overall attractiveness	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	84
Feeling of safety	5	5	4	5	4	4	3	84
Overall maintenance (Exterior)	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	86
Overall maintenance (Interior)	n/a	5	5	5	4	n/a	4	83
Comfort of places to sit	4	3	3	4	3	2	2	70
Protection from bad weather	2	5	5	5	2	2	4	78
<b>Uses and Activities &amp; Sociability (max 20)</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>
Mix of Uses & Activities	4	5	3	3	2	3	5	78
Level of activity	5	5	5	3	2	4	5	79
Sense of pride/ Ownership	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	83
Programming Flexibility	4	4	4	3	2	3	3	66
<b>Environmental Sustainability (max 30)</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>
Stormwater Management	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	54
Multi-modal Capacity	3	5	5	4	2	3	3	73
Co-location/ Integration	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	66
Facility Energy Efficiency	n/a	4	3	n/a	3	n/a	4	85
Stewardship (Exterior)	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	81
Stewardship (Interior)	n/a	4	5	5	5	n/a	4	83
<b>Weighted Total Score: (max 100)</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>69</b>	

Exceeding Expectations
  Meeting Expectations
  Not Meeting Expectations

existing system overview



# Existing System Overview

## 2.4.4 Successes of Existing Park System

The following are examples of successes of the existing parks system observed by the Project Team. In addition, corresponding policies and actions from the 2030 Comp Plan have been identified in order to assist in the integration of these initiatives into the System Plan. Policies and actions listed are not exhaustive. Instead, these lists provide a summary of potential corresponding efforts. This document's implementation plan (Chapter V) provides a more thorough evaluation of the 2030 Comp Plan.

### Appearance Factor of Maintenance

The overwhelming majority of the parks visited by the project team appeared to be well maintained. There were few incidences of litter, the landscape appeared well kept, and most of the park structures were in good or stable condition. Despite heavy or over use of some facilities the general condition of facilities and amenities was good.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 6.1 - Innovative Maintenance Strategies

### Making Parks Green Through Sustainability

Many parks provided on-site recycling, which appeared to be well used. Additionally, many of the park landscapes, most notably the newer parks, incorporate native plant materials. Standards for newly designed and constructed parks show a vast improvement to the handling of stormwater and attention to water quality. In addition, solar and LED lighting is being installed throughout the system and some parks offer charging stations for electric vehicles. Facilities, mostly a number of community and neighborhood centers, have been updated with new energy efficient lighting and HVAC systems.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 4.2 - Sustainable Park Design
- PR 4.2 - Sustainable Practice Development
- PR 6.3 - Park Stewardship
- PR 6.6 - Stewardship Capacity
- EP 1.7 - Sustainable Development
- EP 1.8 - Sustainable Sites
- EP 3.8 - Low Impact Development

### Increase Use by Connectivity

For a predominantly suburban community, the City of Raleigh exhibits good overall connectivity near parks. Multi-modal options are offered at a number of the larger community and metro parks throughout the City, however, complete access is still lacking. Shelley Lake Park is a wonderful example of park facilities serving as a Park and Ride facility while also providing connectivity to mass transit for park users, a wonderful combination.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 3.6 - Greenway Connectivity
- PR 3.8 - Pedestrian Links to Greenways
- PR 5.4 - Improving Park Access
- T 5.4 - Pedestrian and Bicycle Network Connectivity
- T 5.7 - Capital Area Greenway

### Making Parks Last with Higher Quality

The newer parks in Raleigh, such as Hill Street Park and renovated facilities such as Jaycee Park Community Center, are raising the bar for sustainability, quality, and design within the park system, to a much higher level. These parks exhibit an awareness of the need for connectivity, sustainability, and functionality within park design. Additionally, the quality of their furnishings, materials, and construction is high.

#### Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- HP 1.1 - Stewardship of Place
- EP 1.9 - Sustainable Public Realm

## 2.4.5 Opportunities for Existing Park System

### Universal Accessibility

Accessibility can be improved system-wide, most notably in older parks. Clear markings for accessible parking spaces and routes were lacking in many parks. Many seating areas were often set back from accessible routes or located within turf areas. Playgrounds in many cases lacked accessible routes and either had a sand or engineered wood mulch surface which typically lacked the level of maintenance needed to provide universal access. Some park shelters lacked accessible picnic tables and/ or restroom facilities.

# Chapter Two

New playgrounds and parks throughout the system have an increased level of accessibility which is fully reflective of the needs demonstrated by users. Parks such as Marsh Creek and Strickland Road Park are great examples of newer parks which demonstrate excellent accessibility.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 2.2 - Park Accessibility
- PR 4.6 - Universal Access

## Leading by Example with Stormwater Management:

A system-wide approach to stormwater management is needed. Several older parks throughout the system lack any kind of storage, treatment and management system for stormwater on-site. Some parks have erosion problems due to development of amenities within high sloped areas and lack vegetation which adds to the issues of water quality. Other parks channel stormwater from parking areas to nearby streets which tax the existing infrastructure with additional runoff. In general, parks should be examples within the community of good water management techniques. Strickland Road Park and a number of parks with existing lakes provide good examples of stormwater management and/or techniques to improve stormwater quality.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 6.1 - Innovative Maintenance
- EP 3.12 - Mitigation Stormwater Impacts
- EP 3.16 - Stormwater Management
- PU 5.1 - Sustainable Stormwater
- PU 5.6 - Rainwater Collection and Storage

## Economics of Program Flexibility:

Several parks throughout the system provide single-use facilities and/or programming that requires a high level of investment for equipment and construction but do not offer flexibility for multiple uses. Examples include the large number of baseball and softball fields, particularly lighted fields which are commonly sited in configurations or locations which limit use as multi-purpose fields. Configuring fields to face towards one another with lighting along the perimeter can provide the opportunity to locate a multi-purpose field between the baseball fields. Athletic fields represent a high level of maintenance which should be utilized by multiple programs.

Many new community or neighborhood centers are being constructed with flexible multi-purpose rooms with moveable walls. Two centers, Barwell and Brier Creek Community Centers are directly connected to schools which provide a high level of flexibility as the centers are often used for school programs during the day and community events in the evening and weekends. Extended hours for these centers is critical in order to provide ample community use of the facilities.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 1.3 - Coordinated Park Planning
- PR 2.8 - Creating Recreation Facilities through Adaptive Reuse
- PR 4.1 - Recreation Facilities and Programs
- PR 4.9 - Adequate Indoor Facilities

## Leading with Wayfinding:

The City has implemented a new set of standards (Master Sign Program, 2006) for wayfinding which is being implemented as funding allows but was not represented in all parks observed. There was a clear difference in the type of wayfinding in parks with the new standards implemented compared to parks which lack the standards. Two very helpful features of the new signage standards are a location map and directional signage for amenities. As these standards are implemented in all parks, these features should be included. Wayfinding is an important part of encouraging users to explore park offerings and overall branding of the system. Include such features as website addresses, phone numbers, QR Codes, and bus route information as part of the signage information to assist user education.

Interpretive and educational signage is lacking in many parks which offered exercise stations or contained natural features. This represents a missed educational opportunity. The addition of directional signage can inform park users of nearby community and commercial points of interest, providing a more meaningful experience.

## Corresponding 2030 Comp Plan policies and actions:

- PR 5.3 - Interpretive Conservation Activities
- PR 6.5 - Awareness of Natural Resource Areas
- AC 1.1 - Public Art and Neighborhood Identity
- AC 1.2 - Public Art in Public Spaces and Public Projects