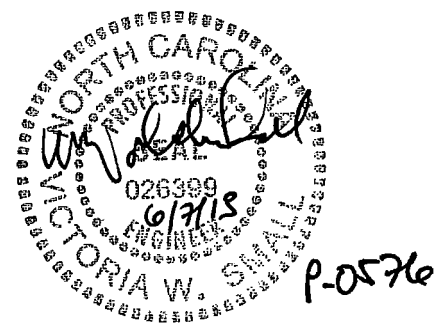


# City of Greensboro Heath Park Master Plan

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# BACKGROUND

The City of Greensboro manages over 120 facilities, including more than 85 neighborhood parks throughout the City. Each of these neighborhood parks has its own identity, but provides generally the same level of service and amenities, regardless of size or location. These parks are intended to serve the surrounding neighborhood, within 1/2 mile, and are considered “walkable” destinations. Generally the size is 5-15 acres, but many times the park is much smaller in size. These parks should serve as neighborhood hubs while providing a variety of safe, family-oriented recreational opportunities. Often the parks also serve as locations for community-wide events, such as holiday picnics, Neighborhood Night Out, etc. Park amenities generally include a playground, basketball courts, sandboxes and open space for quiet or passive activities. Parking lots, restroom facilities and picnic shelters are typically not located within neighborhood parks, and such amenities are intended to support more intense recreation activities with larger facilities.

Heath Park is located on Holts Chapel Road within the Heath Community. The park is approximately 13 acres and features a softball field, basketball court and playground. A conceptual master plan was created by a community volunteer during the mid-2000’s and recommended two phases of upgrades. The first phase, which included a new entrance sign, lighting, reduction in parking lot and new fencing has not been entirely completed. The second phase proposed additional parking, two additional entrances, a playground, basketball courts, fencing, buffering and a trail system. Parks and Recreation staff has identified several amenities and features for the proposed Phase II that are no longer feasible to construct, and thus additional public input and a revision to the map became necessary.



Through meetings, emails and phone conversations, community members indicated park usage is reduced due to:

- Concerns with illicit activities/crime (especially prior to the removal of the restroom facility)
- Lack of a restroom, so children cannot spend long hours playing
- Safety concerns because parking and playground is hidden behind houses
- Lack of play equipment for toddlers
- Safety when trying to access the park on foot

# BACKGROUND

In addition to reviewing and updating the park master plan, the Parks and Recreation Department collaborated with the City's Planning and Community Development Department to combine the park plan with a larger Neighborhood Planning process for the greater Heath Community. The goals of the Neighborhood Plan focus on Traffic Safety, Housing, Land Use and Economic, Environment and Building Community. Items identified in the park master plan can assist the community in meeting specific goals identified within the Land Use and Economic, Environment and Building Community sections of the Neighborhood Plan.

Westcott, Small & Associates, PLLC (WSAA) was selected by the City of Greensboro to provide master planning services at Heath Park in early 2012. On May 24, 2012, WSAA and City staff meet with 22 members of the community at a public input session to gain insight into the needs of the community for the park. At this meeting, community members identified the following improvement needs and concerns related to the park:

- Beautification at the entrance
- Would like walking trails
- Grills and water fountain need replacing
- Would like restroom building returned
- Would like community center
- Would like nice wrought iron fence instead of split rail fence
- Need to keep neighbors adjacent to park safe from crime (people using park to access backyards for theft)
- Need play equipment for toddlers
- Do not decrease basketball courts or parking
- Would like better picnic area
- Would like more Parks and Recreation programs for kids at park (i.e. summer program)

Following the public input session, WSAA met with City Staff from the Parks and Recreation, Planning, Water Resources, Transportation, Field Operations and Police Departments to determine the impact of any upcoming projects on the park and to ensure that proposed master plan elements do not conflict with the goals of other departments. Items discussed included:

- The timing and widening of Holts Chapel Road and installation of sidewalk (construction approximately 2015)
- Paved trails and parking preferred by P&R; Field Operations does not have a preference
- P&R reviewing community center service areas and feasibility of summer program in the park (Note: The community is within the service area (2 mile radius) of the Peeler and Windsor Recreation Centers.)
- Stormwater may participate in construction of Best Management Practices (BMP) if not required in association with development
- Reduction of basketball courts to half court is not required if neighborhood supports leaving full courts in place
- Trail system indicated on previous master plan is too complex
- Franklin Boulevard Entrance will not be allowed due to transportation safety concerns
- P&R policy does not support new restrooms, water fountains or grills

# MASTER PLAN

Incorporating both community and staff suggestions and concerns, WSAA developed a master plan rendering for Heath Park. The rendering was presented to the community at a second public input session, with 14 attendees, on February 26, 2013. Reviews of the master plan were positive. The master plan was adopted by the Parks & Recreation Commission on March 13, 2013. The adopted master plan incorporates feedback received from the neighborhood meetings and includes walking trails with exercise stations, relocated and additional parking, expanded basketball courts, relocated and multi-age playground equipment, modified baseball field, improved picnic area with shade structures and enhanced landscaping and fencing throughout the park. The master plan also recommends connecting the park to the proposed sidewalk along Holts Chapel Road and relocates the main entrance to provide for a more well-defined and identifiable entrance that is consistent with new signage being installed at other parks and recreational facilities. The parking will be relocated to a more visible portion of the park and will be accessed by a single point on Holts Chapel Road. The drive will extend towards the baseball field and picnic areas allowing for ease of delivery to these areas.



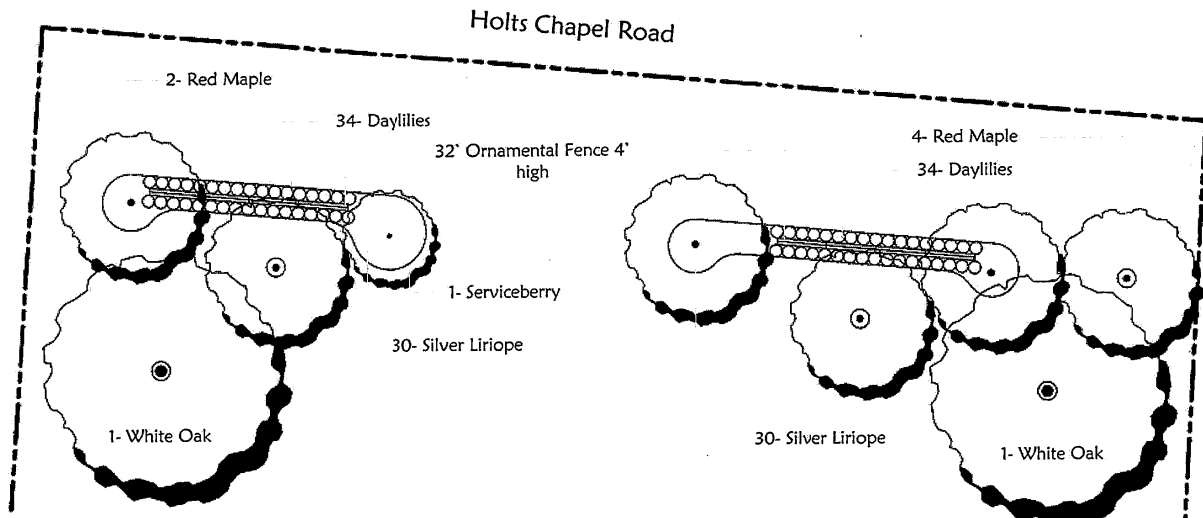
# MASTER PLAN



**HEATH PARK  
MASTER PLAN**

# MASTER PLAN

Bike racks, playground equipment, signage, trashcans and fitness stations should be installed to match Parks and Recreation Department standards. The entrance landscaping developed in conjunction with the previous master plan should be installed in recognition of the previous community volunteer's efforts.



Although the major elements of the plan should be considered long range (at least 10 years for completion), phasing of some items (parking, landscaping) can occur. As funds for park projects become available, the main parking area can be installed prior to the circular drive. At that time, bollards or boulders should be installed just beyond the residential driveways that share the current park access drive to prevent unwanted vehicular access. Play equipment can be installed between the existing trees for shade, prior to the removal of the existing play equipment to allow for construction of the circular drive feature. The trail system can also be installed in sections and utilize an out and back circulation if funds are not available for construction of the entire length. As the playing surface of the baseball field is modified, the open space adjacent to the new parking area can serve as a multi purpose field and a partial fence can be constructed to protect walkers on the trail from foul balls.

The master plan was limited to the existing boundaries of the park, but the park experience would be enhanced by obtaining the three lots fronting Holts Chapel Road that jut into the park property. The City may want to consider purchasing these lots (3800, 3802 & 3804 Holts Chapel Road) as they come available. Creating a park boundary along the roadway rather than behind houses would create a more defined and safer park environment. Obtaining these lots, would create better visibility to the park, increasing awareness of activities taking place which should draw additional users to the park. The increased visibility will also make the park safer, with easier patrols by police and increased eyes on the park by adjoining neighbors.

The newly acquired area would provide additional open space for the park, allowing more area for informal games, play and relaxation. Upon acquisition of 3800 Holts Chapel Road, access to the rear garage at 3706 Holts Chapel Road would need to be addressed in order to completely close the existing park entrance. Finally, the new circular drive feature and large trees would be visible from Holts Chapel Road, creating a beautiful view of the park for neighbors and passersby.

# MASTER PLAN

Short term (1-3 years) elements of the master plan include:

- Replacement of rock dust with grass at the softball field
- Repair or removal of crushed storm drainage pipe
- Activation of Adopt-a-Park and associated committee
- Installation of new park signage and associated landscaping
- Installation of bollards or boulders along Franklin Boulevard frontage
- Installation of benches (anchored into concrete pads)

Long term (3-10+ years) elements of the master plan include:

- Construction of new park entrance and associated parking lot
- Construction of access drive with circle and parking/drop-off to service picnic area
- Installation of all ages play equipment and removal of existing play equipment
- Continued maintenance of multipurpose fields/open space
- Installation of shade structures
- Construction of trail system
- Installation of fitness stations
- Repair and expansion of basketball courts
- Installation of bike racks
- Renovation/relocation of picnic area
- Continue installation of benches
- Enhancing baseball field with dugouts and fencing

If funding is available, trails or parking improvements are suggested as items that could move from long-term to short-term construction projects.





# COST ESTIMATE

Total funding required for the completion of all master plan elements is approximately \$1,000,000. In addition to possible general fund or bond funding, the City should also pursue grants and donations for specific items. Once the park has been formally adopted and a committee is active in the park, local foundations, religious institutions, boy scout troops and corporations may be solicited in order to fund smaller park projects or portions of larger projects. The Adopt-a-Park committee should develop applications for submittal for City grants such as the Neighborhood Small Projects program. Additionally, developing the parking lot and trails as pervious pavement rather than traditional asphalt may allow these portions of the master plan to be funded by the City's Stormwater Management Division.

A cost breakdown associated with the proposed master plan follows:

2 signs	\$2,613
Park entry landscaping	\$7,460
Type B Landscape Buffer (4000 lf)	\$269,293
Parking lot (29 spaces)	\$108,949
Extended drive and parking spaces	\$164,855
Trail with fitness stations	\$135,876
Baseball Field	\$158,103
Repaint existing basketball	\$6,472
New basketball expansion	\$41,113
Wide age range playground	\$48,967
Picnic table area	\$28,631
Sunscreens	\$24,067

# RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to begin implementing the master plan, the following steps should be taken:

- Create formal Adopt-a-Park committee and establish neighborhood contact
- Implement low cost/ short-term plan elements and maintenance items (crushed pipe, rock dust, etc.)
- Encourage Adopt-a-Park committee to contact corporations and civic and religious groups for project support
- Review feasibility of afterschool and summer programs in the park
- Determine level of funding available for first phase of construction
- Develop construction plans for first phase of construction
- Bid and construct Phase I improvements
- Discuss funding of trails and parking with Stormwater in order to move those elements from long-term to short-term
- Begin grant review and preparation for additional funding
- Contact Property Management Division to discuss property acquisition along Holts Chapel Road
- Ensure regular meetings between Parks & Recreation Staff and Adopt-a-Park committee to align funding requests and priority projects
- Continue to review grant opportunities and capital funding requests to continue phased implementation of park elements



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