



GREENVILLE
CountyRec
PARKS • RECREATION • TOURISM

Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

Comprehensive Plan

2013 – 2020

Date Approved: _____

Signature: _____



Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

Comprehensive Plan

2013 – 2020

Introduction:

The process of creating the Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism Comprehensive Plan permitted the staff to review the Department's 45 year history, receive public input, assess current conditions, examine opportunities and determine the direction for the future.

The Comprehensive Plan was developed primarily in 2010 with input from all levels of the organization resulting in many revisions. This plan will never be a finished product and will be continually reviewed and revised to meet the needs of the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that the Department's resources and energies are focused in the most productive and cost-effective manner possible. Our strategic priorities are designed to provide a clear and unified focus and direction to enhance and expand recreation services for our citizens.

Also included as part of the Comprehensive Plan are:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. The Strategic Plan 2013-2020 | Pages 9 – 16 |
| 2. Parks and Recreation Trends Analysis | Page 17 |
| 3. The Community Inventory | Pages 18 – 19 |
| 4. The Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment | Pages 20 – 22 |
| 5. Capital Improvement Plan | Page 23 |

Mission & Vision

Mission Statement:

The mission of Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism is to be a leader in providing diverse, dynamic, ever-improving recreation opportunities in a sustainable manner.

Vision for 2020:

Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism is the regional provider of public park facilities, recreation programs and services that have been designed to meet the diverse population needs of Greenville County. Through cooperation and partnerships with the other public and private leisure providers, leisure services are equitably distributed throughout the county.

Our regional parks are connected along greenways, trails and alternate transportation means providing safe access to safe, functional and quality facilities and program opportunities. Citizens and visitors willingly participate and enjoy the park system. The Department encourages public contribution of ideas and volunteer time to make their parks and leisure programs successful and fulfilling.

Land adjacent to parks and greenways experience positive economic development. This creates a community that is an outstanding place to live, work and play. Public and private land development projects seek the Department's partnership to strengthen the community's quality of life and promote economic development. Results are that Greenville County is a leader in environmental enhancement and land preservation.

Through diverse revenue streams, the park system and recreation services are sustainable. Fees and charges do not hinder participation of citizens with limited economic resources. The community generously supports the Greater Greenville Parks Foundation with gifts of land and money allowing the Department to serve the entire community.

Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism is sought after as a partner and contributor to community services and quality development as it seeks to continually improve the park system and recreation programming provided to the citizens of Greenville County.

Purpose Statements

Administrative Division:

To provide the key support services, guidance and resources to empower the various divisions within the Department to maximize performance and production to serve the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

Recreation Division:

To develop, promote, support and evaluate diverse recreation, cultural, athletic and therapeutic leisure activities for the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

Parks Divisions:

To plan, construct, maintain and improve diverse, safe, functional, attractive and accessible active and passive environments for the enjoyment of the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

Greenways, Natural and Historic Resources Division:

To plan, preserve, enhance, construct, maintain and provide stewardship of the greenway system, historical sites and natural areas for the enjoyment of the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

Special Use Facilities Division:

To plan, construct, maintain and improve a variety of fee-based leisure facilities for the enjoyment of the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

Planning Division:

To provide planning services in support of the various divisions so they can provide park facilities and recreational programs and services to the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

Community Relations Division:

To plan, develop and maintain an integrated system of communications within the Department and to the citizens and visitors of Greenville County.

Guiding Principles

The following principles guide the actions and decisions of Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism executive leadership and staff.

Essential Public Service:

Parks, natural areas, historic sites, and recreation services are essential elements in creating a livable, dynamic and economically vibrant region.

Youth get First Preference:

Available resources will not meet all of the diverse park and recreation needs of the County and therefore on each issue we must ask, “Do children need priority related to the park and recreation resources and services?”

Connectivity of the Public’s Resources:

Striving for a system where parks, natural areas, and recreation facilities are connected by a countywide greenways and trails system in an ecologically healthy environment.

Accessible and Inclusive:

All county residents have reasonable access to safe and functional parks and enjoyable leisure services.

Resource Stewardship:

Provide stewardship for parks, historic sites, and natural areas so they are sustained for future generations.

Citizen Involvement:

Citizen involvement is actively encouraged in the planning, development and programming of the Department’s parks, natural areas, and recreation facilities.

Agency Interaction:

Department staff interacts with public and non-profit agencies and private businesses to seek cooperation and partnerships to advance the Department’s mission.

Future Resource Needs:

The Department is planning, acquiring and protecting public parks and recreation resources for the current and anticipated future needs of the County.

Financial Sustainability:

Every park and recreation facility is designed and programmed in a financially sustainable manner within its geographic, social and economic environment.

Excellence in Professionalism:

We seek quality and excellence in our services and facilities and have a commitment to integrity and professionalism in all aspects of our operation.

Public Wellness:

The Department places a priority on activities that encourage individual wellness.

Goals & Objectives

A–Parks and Natural Resources

- GA1: Rehabilitate and maintain facilities to be safe and functional.
- GA2: Maintain historic sites to nationally accepted standards as defined by US Department of Interior.
- GA3: Implement strategies in the Greenville County Comprehensive Greenway Plan.
- GA4: Collect “as built” plans for every park property.
- GA5: Develop a Master Park Maintenance Schedule.

B–Recreation Programming and Leisure Services

- GB1: Develop Long–Range Plan for Community Centers.
- GB2: Develop Volunteer Process (recruitment, handbook, evaluation, recording)
- GB3: Evaluate Youth and Adult Sports to seek improvements and identify citizen needs.
- GB4: Develop additional Therapeutic Recreation opportunities.
- GB5: Develop Conestee Park Events Plan.
- GB6: Increase Sports Tourism.
- GB7: Develop Pleasant Ridge Camp and Retreat Center Marketing Plan.

C–Community Relations and Communications

- GC1: Produce and distribute an annual report.
- GC2: Participate on community boards.
- GC3: Raise community awareness through public speaking.
- GC4: Facilitate relationship with the Greater Greenville Parks Foundation.
- GC5: Monitor system to encourage continuous citizen input.

D–Special Use Facilities

- GD1: Complete annual comprehensive evaluation of Special Use Facilities.
- GD2: Develop a five year master plan for Special Use Facilities.
- GD3: Develop a marketing plan for all Special Use Facilities to help insure revenue generation.
- GD4: Develop a business plan for all Special Use Facilities to maximize efficiencies.
- GD5: Create an asset management plan for Special Use Facilities.

GD6: Utilize patron surveys to seek improvements in service of program and facilities.

E-Administration

GE1: Design, promote, implement and monitor the Department's Vision, Mission and Goals.

GE2: Improve use of technology in all divisions.

GE3: Monitor and improve staff support services.

GE4: Develop advisory board orientation.

GE5: Support professional development and networking through budget.

GE6: Grow and diversify financial resources.

GE7: Develop bi-annual operating budget.

GE8: Develop a long range Capital Improvement Plan.



Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

Strategic Plan 2013 – 2020

Goals – Objectives – Action Steps

Introduction:

The Strategic Plan for Greenville County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism is intended to ensure the Department’s resources and energies are focused in the most productive and cost effective manner toward the Comprehensive Plan’s goals and objectives. Our strategic actions steps are designed to provide a clear and unified focus and direction for the work of the Department in order to enhance and expand parks and recreation services to the Greenville community.

The Comprehensive Plan and therefore the Strategic Plan is reviewed and updated annually.

A. – Parks & Natural Resources

GA1: Rehabilitate and maintain facilities to be safe and functional.

1. Develop and implement a facilities upgrade plan with budget priorities – 2014–2015
2. Package construction elements and develop a bidding schedule – 2014
3. Complete the Capital Improvement Upgrade Plan 2015–2020
4. Inspect and document every park at least once per month – 2013–2020

GA2: Maintain historic sites to national accepted standards as defined by the Department of Interior.

1. Evaluate and implement steps necessary for stabilization. 2013 – 2016
2. Work with the County Historic Preservation Commission to develop an inventory of public historically important sites. – 2013 (completed)
3. Seek grants to support

GA3: Implement strategies of the Greenville County Comprehensive Greenway Plan.

1. Prioritize the spur trails off the GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail – 2013
2. Identify sustainable funding sources for development and maintenance – Ongoing
3. Start development – 2015
4. Survey trail users – Ongoing

GA4. – Collect “As Built” Plans for every park property.

1. Establish a “Key Information” file on each park – 2013
2. Mark all emergency utility control – 2014
3. Mark all park property boundaries – 2015

GA5: Develop a Master Park Maintenance Schedule

1. Develop a list of every maintenance function for each park – 2014
2. Develop a function implementation schedule and routing –2014
3. Investigate technology enhancements and budget plans – Ongoing
4. Annually investigate every park location and each facility/park amenity – Ongoing
5. Prioritize improvements and budget recommendations – Annually
6. Survey users for suggestions – Ongoing
7. Seek ways to make our parks more accessible to all populations – Annually

B. – Recreation Programming & Leisure Services

GB1: Community Centers Long Range Plan

1. Develop a Long Range Plan for Community Center staffing, programming, and facilities – 3–5 year plan – 2014
2. Survey participants for improvements and needs. Meet with neighborhood leaders to determine needs – Annually
3. Evaluate Staunton Bridge and Sterling programs – Annually
4. Evaluate and seek opportunities for partnerships – Annually
5. Seek grant funding to provide additional opportunities for citizens – Ongoing

GB2: Develop Volunteer Process (recruitment, handbook, evaluation, recording)

1. Establish recruiting process – Annually
2. Develop Volunteer handbook for supervisors – 2014
3. Create all forms for documentation and recording of hours – 2014
4. Assess volunteer needs with staff. – 2013
5. Consult area volunteer sources – 2013
6. Involve Greater Greenville Parks Foundation – Ongoing
7. Involve Hands On Greenville as a volunteer partner – Ongoing
8. Develop a plan of action – 2014
9. Evaluate Volunteer process – Annually

GB3: Evaluate Youth and Adult Sports

1. Evaluate current offerings and plan next year's schedule. – Annually
2. Prioritize offerings with youth programming being #1. – Annually
3. Assess current sponsorships and develop a plan to grow more sponsorships and partners. – 2014
4. Review field usage and conditions – Annually

GB4. – Develop additional Therapeutic Recreation opportunities

1. Survey participants, parents and group leaders – Ongoing
2. Formalize Spearhead volunteer program – 2014
3. Evaluate yearly use, successes and challenges at Camp Spearhead – Annually
4. Evaluate Special Olympic events and fundraisers – Annually

5. Seek ACA Accreditation for Camp Spearhead – 2015
6. Seek grant funding to support and increase Therapeutic Recreation opportunities for citizens with special needs and disabilities – Ongoing

GB5: Develop Conestee Park Events Plan.

1. Develop and grow signature event (Get Out Greenville) – Ongoing
2. Develop marketing and media plan – 2014

GB6: Manage Sports Tourism

1. In cooperation with VisitGreenvilleSC.com, create a comprehensive sports tourism marketing plan with relevant sales tools to attract impactful events to Greenville County – Annually
2. Manage sports tourism hospitality tax income, track expenditures, and report ROI and event success twice annually to Greenville County Administrator – Annually
3. In partnership with Clemson University, collect, analyze and report visitor spending and related travel data from tourists to accurately determine annual economic impact of sports tourism events in Greenville County. Annually
4. Increase Greenville County's presence at national trade shows and in national trade publications, and grow the number of relevant contact made that result in RFP opportunities and secured business – Ongoing
5. Develop in-house welcome products for tournaments coming in – 2014

GB7: Develop Pleasant Ridge Camp and Retreat Center Marketing Plan

1. Plan and hold group specific events to target group leaders; to promote retreats, team building, and other event opportunities – Annually
2. Become a member of local and state bridal and wedding resource organizations – 2014
3. Create a variety of special one price packages for groups, with programs, meals and lodging included – 2014
4. Create a development team with Greenville Health System to explore possible populations for camp experiences – 2014

C. - Community Relations & Communications

GC1: Produce and distribute an Annual Report

1. Collect Division highlights and accomplishments
2. Highlight partners, sponsors, key volunteers and political friends
3. Feature the Greater Greenville Parks Foundation

GC2: Participate on community boards

1. Volunteer in community organizations that share the Department's goals; including Leadership Greenville, Youth Leadership Greenville, The United Way, and LiveWell Greenville.

GC3: Raise awareness through community speaking

1. Volunteer to participate in public forums and private speaking opportunity to include public, corporate and non-profit entities.

GC4: Facilitate relationship with the Greater Greenville Parks Foundation

1. Assess Department fundraising needs - Annually
2. Provide in-kind staff support to the Foundation - Ongoing
3. Manage Park Heroes program - Ongoing

GC6: Monitor System to Encourage Citizen Input

1. Assess current input systems - 2013
2. Track and record all public input - Ongoing
3. Investigate other agencies' best practices - 2014
4. Implement the plan of action - 2014
5. Evaluate and adjust the plan - Annually

D. - Special Use Facilities

GD1: Complete annual comprehensive evaluation of Special Use Facilities.

1. Conduct an end of season Operations Evaluation Meeting with staff and plan next year's schedule and changes - Annually
2. Evaluate current year marketing plan and adjust for following year - Annually

3. Evaluate concessions marketing and revenues and plan following year – Annually
4. Evaluate group tickets sales and marketing and develop a plan for the following year– Annually
5. Inspect all facilities with building services staff and plan improvements – Annually
6. Evaluate safety plan and incident reports and adjust for following year – Annually

GD2: Develop a five year Master Plan for Revenue Generating Facilities

1. Attend national educational and trade show conferences to gain new ideas and establish a professional network – Ongoing
2. Annually visit two “Best Practice” agencies to gain new ideas and establish a Professional network – Ongoing
3. Investigate public and private opportunities for development partnerships – Ongoing

GD3: Develop a marketing plan for all revenue producing facilities

1. Annually evaluate the previous year’s Special Use Facilities Marketing Plan
2. Annually revise and update the Special Use Facilities Marketing Plan

GD4: Develop a five year business plan for all revenue generating facilities

1. Utilize the “after TRAC Business Plan” model – 2014
2. Seek partnerships and sponsors – 2014
3. Continually seek new revenue producing opportunities – Ongoing

GD5: Create an Asset Management Plan to correspond with revenue generation

1. Assess the life of all the facility component’s remaining life – 2014
2. Build a five year replacement schedule – 2015
3. Develop a preventive maintenance plan – 2016

GD6: Utilize patron surveys to seek improvements in service

1. Continue to annually survey patrons in collaboration with Clemson University PRTM
2. Adjust marketing plan. – Annually

E. – Administration

GE1: Design, Promote, Implement and Monitor the Vision, Mission and Goals

1. Evaluate and redefine – Annually
2. Seek staff input – Annually
3. Seek input from participants, vendors, partners and sponsor – Annually
4. Redefine the short and long range goals – Annually
5. Host a “State of the Department” meeting for all staff – Annually
6. Communicate the “State of the Department” via the publication of an Annual Report

GE2: Improve Technology in all Divisions

1. Evaluate all systems internally and with consultants as needed – Annually
2. Investigate Best Practices of two P&R agencies – Annually
3. Conduct annual technology training
4. Develop a 3–5 year Capital Improvement Plan for technology upgrades and revise – Annually

GE3: Improve Staff Support Services

1. Be liaison between Department and County offices
2. Provide training on Procurement process and financial policies – 2013 – 2014
3. Assist staff in developing bi-annual operating budget – Annually
4. Develop a central library and archive of Department documents – 2015
5. Host an annual social function with key clients to build cooperation
6. Perform a 360 degree evaluation to identify strength, weakness, threats and opportunities – 2014 Bi-annually

GE4: Develop Advisory Board Orientation

1. Provide County Attorney examples of other advisory committee bylaws – 2013
2. Meet with County Administrator and Attorney to establish form and goals of the new citizen advisory committee– 2014
3. Seek input from past commissioners – 2014
4. Develop an orientation and manual for new advisors – 2014

5. Establish relationship between Department Directors and new advisors– 2014

GE5: Support Professional Development and Networking

1. Ensure adequate funds are budgeted for professional development for each full time employee
2. Encourage staff involvement with SCRPA board of directors and committees – Ongoing
3. Increase staff involvement with NRPA – Ongoing
4. Encourage staff to attend monthly professional development seminars
5. Develop key staff training plans for mentoring, specialty skills, and management knowledge – Annually
6. Seek opportunities to interact with Clemson Univ. PRTM Department faculty and students – Ongoing
7. Host the Executive Director’s Key Inside and Outside Players Picnic – Annually

GE6: Grow and Diversify Financial Resources

1. Assess current financial resources longevity – 2014
2. Seek outside input and develop a 5 year forecast – 2014
3. Revisit, evaluate and revise the 5 year forecast – Annually

GE7: Develop Bi-Annual operating budget.

1. Educate staff on new bi-annual budget process– 2013
2. Schedule meetings with key staff to kick-off the budget process
3. Provide staff forms and historical data to use
4. Coordinate implementation with County budget staff

GE8: Develop a Long Range Capital Improvement Plan

1. Gather multi-year expenditure data and develop a history summary – 2014
2. Facilitate long range staff planning session – 2015
3. Develop Best “Estimate” Action Plan – 2015
4. Revisit, evaluate and revise – Annually

2013 Parks & Recreation Trends Analysis

Summary:

From 2008 to 2009 Department staff conducted an ongoing analysis of trends that impact public parks and recreation. The list of trends was prioritized and given to 20+ parks and recreation professionals attending the 2009 Parks and Recreation Advance conference to prioritize. Since then the list has been re-prioritized each year by the conference attendees. The 2012 list prioritized by GCPRT staff is listed below.

1. A growing ethnically diverse, less healthy and aging population.
2. The 2008–2012 economic downturn and slow recovery has lasting impact.
3. An aging and overused public park infrastructure = deferred park maintenance.
4. The greatest public demand for park facilities continues to be trails.
5. A growing public overall environmental sensitivity – especially water.
6. Parks and recreation agencies are seeking a growth in partnerships and volunteerism.
7. The ever–advancing communication technology and its associated cost and issues.
8. Regional thinking – public park clients have no jurisdiction boundaries.
9. Gang issues and gun violence continue to plague parks as usage continues to grow.
10. Demand for outdoor adventure recreation (mt. biking, rock climbing, kayaking) continue to grow.
11. Many diverse and different public perceptions of the Parks and Recreation Mission.
12. Park facilities being used for unsafe recreational uses (futsal on tennis courts, free running on playground equipment, flash mobs at basketball courts)



Community Inventory

Summary:

- The Community Inventory of leisure services is varied and very widespread among public, private and non-profit organizations.
- There are seven public park systems in the County:
 - The Greenville County Department of Parks, Recreation Tourism
 - City of Greenville
 - City of Greer
 - City of Mauldin
 - City of Simpsonville
 - City of Fountain Inn
 - S.C. State Park System
- There are eleven United Way supported agencies that offer some park and recreation services.
- The relationships between the public and non-profit organizations are good and considered during the Department's planning process.
- Over the last decade there has been major growth in the number of churches that have gymnasiums and offer volleyball and basketball.
- The Nature Conservancy has identified a critical ecosystem habitat known as the Blue Ridge Escarpment. A portion of this escarpment comes through Greenville County. The Nature Conservancy in cooperation with the Greenville Water System has created public trails in order to appreciate this ecosystem.

Long Range Future Needs:

- There is a shortage of park lands in the rural northern and southern sections of Greenville County for the future recreation needs of the growing population.
- North of the City of Greenville there is a shortage of rectangular fields for growth in soccer, lacrosse and football.
- Expansion of the trail system
- Continuous funding for scheduled facility upkeep and renovations to avoid deferred maintenance cost and facility downtime.

Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment

Needs assessments were conducted in 2000 by Woolpert & Associates and in 2010 by Clemson University Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management.

Parks Latent Demand Comparison 2000 vs. 2010:

2000 Woolpert Survey

Parks Latent Demand

1. Walking / Jogging Trails
2. Large Multi-Purpose Parks
3. Natural Areas
4. Playgrounds
5. Picnic Facilities
6. River Access
7. Baseball Fields
8. Community Centers
9. Indoor Aquatics
10. Softball Fields

2010 Clemson PRTM Survey

Parks Latent Demand

1. Trails / Greenways
2. Large Multi-Purpose Parks
3. Small Community Parks
4. River Access
5. Playgrounds
6. Tennis
7. Fitness Facilities
8. Community Centers
9. Indoor Aquatics
10. Ice Rinks

Although the two survey tools (2000 & 2010) were different with some questions on one survey but not on the other survey, some general comparisons can be made:

- Walking Trails and Large Multi-Purpose Parks were #1 and #2 in both surveys.
- Top Ten in both surveys also were: Playgrounds, River Access, Community Centers and Indoor Aquatics.
- The Natural Areas question in the 2001 survey was not in the 2010. With the absence of Picnic Facilities, Baseball and Softball Fields in the 2010 survey, this could indicate that the 20001 Latent Demand has been partially satisfied.

Summary of Key Findings:

In general, 1/3 of the respondents state that facilities and programs “Meet Their Needs;” 1/3 state they have “Unmet P&R Needs;” 1/3 state “Not Interested or No Opinion”

Park Facilities:

Largest “Unmet Needs” in Park Facilities:

1. Trails and greenways
2. Large parks with multiple facilities and river access
3. Small parks with multiple facilities and dog parks
4. Fitness/recreation/aquatic centers
5. Ice rink for hockey and skating

Key Written Comments Related to Park Facilities:

1. More dog parks
2. Mountain biking trails
3. River access
4. Better restrooms
5. Playground shade structures
6. Improved public awareness of what facilities are available

Youth Programming:

Largest “Unmet Needs” in Youth Programming:

1. Teen activities
2. Swimming instruction
3. After school programs
4. Mountain biking (outdoor adventure programs)

Key Written Comments Related to Youth Programming:

1. 3–5 year old programs that build skills/low competition/reasonable cost
2. Strong support for Teen Programs
3. Need to improve Public Awareness of opportunities
4. Adventure Programming especially Mountain Biking

Adult Programming:

Largest “Unmet Needs” in Adult Programming:

1. Fitness: open gym/water aerobics/cardio and weight training
2. Outdoor adventure programs
3. Arts and culture activities
4. Activities for seniors and people with disabilities

Key Written Comments related to Adult Programming:

1. Strong support for adult fitness opportunities
2. Adult outdoor adventure programs
3. More arts/culture activities/special events/programs
4. More trails = Love that GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail
5. Improve marketing/public awareness



Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan for GCDPRT includes forty projects totaling \$73,189,500. The top five capital projects are:

• Deferred Maintenance at Existing Parks	\$13,000,000
• Dean “Chico” Bolin Park	\$2,250,000
• Poinsett Corridor / West Washington Park & Greenway	\$6,300,000
• MeSA Soccer Complex Expansion	\$8,500,000
• GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail Expansion	\$3,000,000
<hr/> Total:	\$33,050,000

Fund for capital improvements is authorized by Greenville County Council and the County Manager through the Capital Improvement Planning process.