



City of
Fayetteville
North Carolina

CENTER CITY PARKS & TRAILS MASTER PLAN

Fayetteville, North Carolina



Draft: November 2020

INTRODUCTION

The Center City Parks and Trails Plan builds on the previous work and city planning studies and provides a framework for expanding the Cross Creek Linear Park and connecting existing and planned parks in the downtown area with Fayetteville State University, surrounding neighborhoods and other key destinations.

Fayetteville is blessed with a remarkable abundance of greenspace in, or adjacent to, its city center- Mazarick Park, MLK Park, Rowan Park, Veteran’s Park I and II, Festival Park, and Linear Park are impressive assets. This plan, the Center City Parks and Trails Plan, allows Fayetteville to realize the full potential of these astonishing assets by connecting them and enhancing their beauty and usefulness with strategic improvements. It transforms currently disconnected greenspaces into a Center City Park System and provides an unparalleled amenity for neighborhoods, institutions and businesses in the greater downtown.

PREVIOUS PLANNING

- 1. Harry F. Shaw Cross Creek Linear Park:** For more two decades the City, the Linear Park Corporation, volunteers and benefactors have worked to create a series of parks space and trails along the banks of Cross Creek between Festival Park and the Cross Creek Cemetery. The trail continues to Riverside Dog Park currently and eventually will connect to the Cape Fear River and the Cape Fear Botanical Gardens. This plan works to build on this foundational project and public space and clarifies how to expand the greenway and make strategic improvements along the existing section.
- 2. Fayetteville Downtown Urban Design Master Plan:** The downtown plan, adopted in 2019 recommended enhancements to the Cross Creek Linear Park and extending the greenway to the east and west.
- 3. Rowan Street / Bragg Boulevard Realignment:** The realignment of Rowan Street to align with Bragg Boulevard has created a new single point of entry on the northwest side of downtown. It also resulted in property buy-outs that have resulted in an opportunity for new public spaces and/or entry features to create a signature gateway for Downtown Fayetteville.
- 4. Murchison Road Corridor Study:** This plan, completed in 2019 recommended extending the greenway trail in Mazarick park to Veterans Park / Airborne and Special Operations Museum in downtown. It also introduced the idea of utilizing flood-prone land along Cross Creek and Murchison Road for a parks or greenspaces and made recommendations related to streetscape improvements along Murchison Road and where and how to encourage private investment in the vicinity of Fayetteville State University.
- 5. Veterans Park Phase 2:** The relocation of Rowan Street bridge created room for the second phase of Veterans Park which will be more of a natural and passive section of the park on the north side of Cross Creek. This phase will provide a counterpoint to the more formal portion of Veterans Park that exists.

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VISION

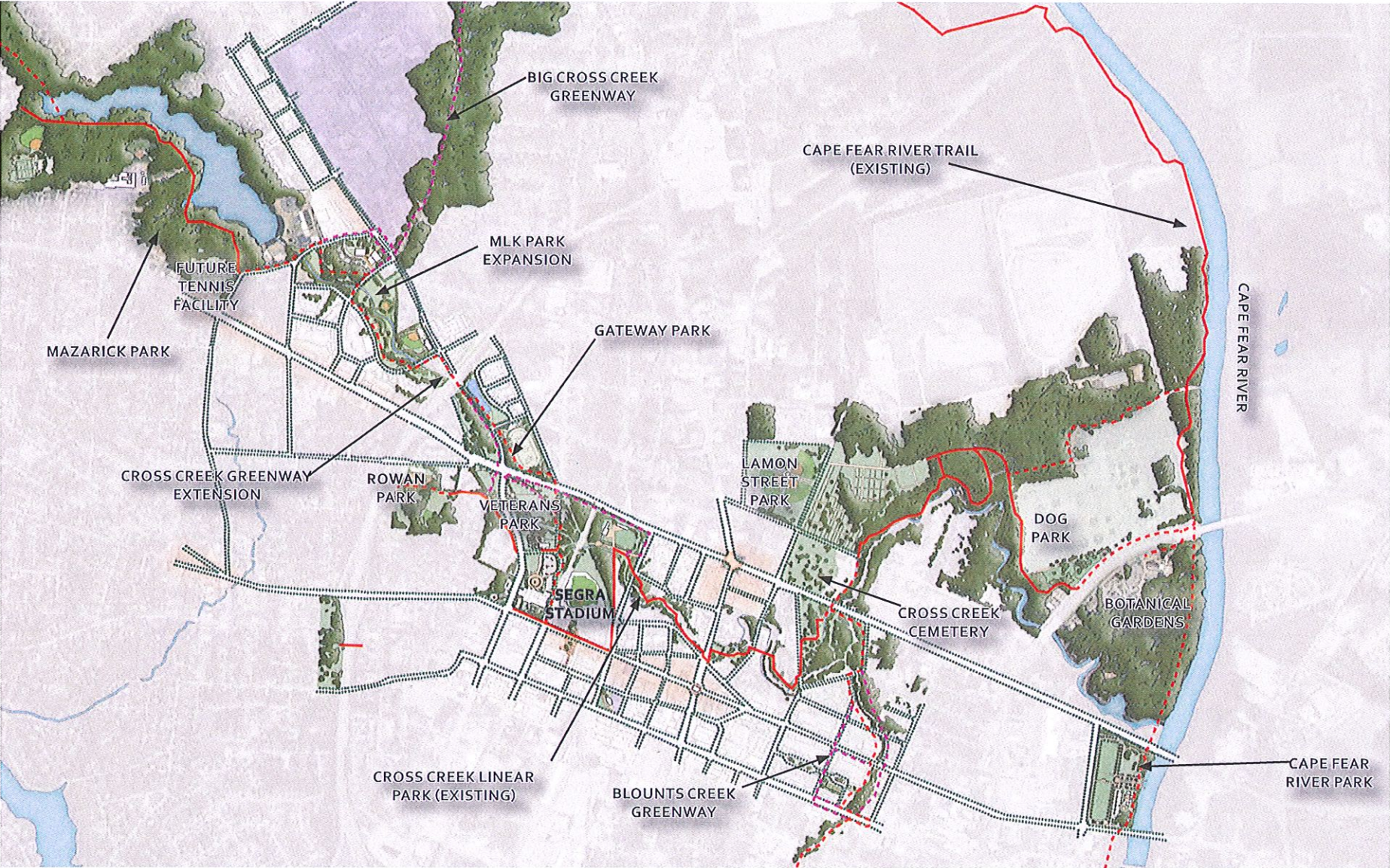
Create a world-class Center City Parks and Trails system of interconnected of parks, greenspace and greenways linking public spaces and attractions, and providing a destination for visitors and residents in greater downtown Fayetteville.

This plan is meant to be a blueprint for the future Center City Parks system. It focuses on enhancements of key parks, including the signature Cross Creek Linear Park and outlines how to utilize additional public lands and natural resources through programming and improvements. Goals of the plan include creating an identity and attractions, improving access and knitting together different parts of downtown and nearby neighborhoods to improve quality of life, health, and pedestrian safety, providing opportunities for programming and culture, beautification and improvements to the tree canopy and creating opportunities to improve the resiliency of the city and encourage revitalization.

GOALS

- 1. Access & Connections:** Increase access to parks and key destinations from surrounding residential and commercial areas. Safety, comfort, user experience (including wayfinding)
- 2. Programming & Culture:** Create destinations--through a connected facility with a critical mass of programming that gives residents and visitors reasons for using the trail. Build on community asset and provide a place for gathering, education and expression.
- 3. Plantings & Tree Canopy:** Beautifying public lands and re-establishing the urban tree canopy is paramount to improving the well being of the city's residents. Creating an identity through the use of color and a unique plant palette can help brand the parks system. Secondary goals include increasing the amount of native plants in the landscape, re-establishing plant communities and utilizing limited, hearty, non-invasive ornamentals supporting various ecological habitats along the trail while reducing maintenance needs.
- 4. Opportunities:** Utilize public lands for parks, improve resilience, encourage revitalization, co-location of facilities and leverage funding opportunities.

CENTER CITY PARKS AND TRAILS: OVERALL SYSTEM CONCEPT



MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1

EXTEND CROSS CREEK LINEAR PARK

- Extend the Harry F. Shaw Cross Creek Linear Park
 - Northwest Cross Creek Greenway Extension: Connect Mazarick Park to Veterans Park
 - FSU Connection (Student and Senior Center Site)
 - Connect trail through Veterans Park Phase 2
 - Cape Fear River Trail Connection
- Access Improvements
 - Trailhead and parking improvements

2

ENHANCE EXISTING PARKS

- Make strategic improvements to the Harry F. Shaw Cross Creek Linear Park and other existing parks in the Center City
 - Maintenance, planting and programming recommendations for the Cross Creek Linear Park, Mazarick Park and MLK Park
- Utilize Center City Parks and Trails as a cultural space for art related programming

3

NEW PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

- Utilize existing publicly owned lands for new parks to fill programming gaps and make the Center City Parks system a destination for residents and visitors

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NEW NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

- Recommendations and concepts for MLK Park Expansion, City Gateway, Catalyst Site / Stream Bank Park and Cape Fear River Park
- Make key pedestrian and bicycle improvements to connect nearby neighborhoods to existing and planned public space
- Greenway and Trail Connections
 - Cape Fear River Trail Connection
 - Blounts Creek Greenway
 - Big Cross Creek Greenway
- Capitalize on redevelopment opportunities near the trail

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WAYFINDING AND BRANDING

- Augment existing “you are here” signage with orientation signage including directional and confirmational signage
- Develop an overall trails branding scheme with sub-brand for individual trails
- Standardize trail design and furnishings