



## Director's Report

### City Council Highlights

April 7, 2026, City Council Meeting

#### **CONSENT ITEMS – Budget Amendment - Approved**

##### **Budget Amendment - Forest Ridge Park/Great Trails - Approved**

The Great Trails State Program, established in 2023, provides funding for new or existing local trails that are recognized by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The City was awarded \$350,000 for the Forest Ridge Park Mountain Bike Trail Extension project. This construction project will triple the length of existing City trails designed for mountain bikers, by adding 7.3 miles of trail tread. On August 8, 2024, the City's Grant Committee reviewed and authorized submission and applying for the Great Trails State Program Grant. A budget transfer/amendment is necessary in the amount of \$350,000 to accept the grant.

Authorize a budget amendment in the amount of \$350,000 to appropriate the grant funding. Authorize necessary budget transfers to provide for the required grant match

##### **Budget Amendment - Contract Services - Fourth of July Event - Approved**

In preparation for the America 250 celebration on July 4, 2026 at Dix Park, a budget amendment is necessary to appropriate additional funds to support the scope of the event. With the event returning to Dix Park, increased resources are required for programming, logistics, transportation, operations, and public safety. The overall budget increases are driven primarily by enhanced safety measures, transportation and parking needed to accommodate a large crowd, including event perimeter fencing and contractual site security. It is recommended that \$500,000 from FY25 General Fund capital reserves be recognized and appropriated to fund the additional contractual services required to support this event.

Authorize a budget amendment to appropriate \$500,000 in FY25 General Fund capital reserves to provide contractual services for the Fourth of July event at Dix Park.

#### **REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE CITY MANAGER**

##### **Dix Park Commission – Appointees**

On January 20, 2026, the City Council authorized the City Manager to execute the third Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Dix Park Conservancy. Within the terms of the MOA is the recommendation to improve and rename the Dix Park Leadership Committee to a newly constituted "Dix Park Commission". The new commission has a total of three (3) appointees from the Mayor and City Council. It is anticipated the Commission will meet at least once a month; members will serve two-year terms with the ability for two renewals (total six-year appointment); the Commission is a public body following the North Carolina opening meeting requirements; a city appointee and Conservancy appointee will serve as Co-Chairs; and, no elected officials will serve, with the exception of the North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture. During the meeting staff will request the Mayor and City Council appointments to the Dix Park Commission.



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Based on the new MOA with the Dix Park Conservancy, three (3) appointments to the new Dix Park Commission are requested. This includes (1) appointment from the Mayor and two (2) appointments from the City Council.

Mayor's Appointee = Charles Meeker

City Council Appointees = Ashton Fisher and Christopher Moore

### REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE HISTORICAL RESOURCES AND MUSEUMS ADVISORY BOARD

Annual Report and FY27 Work Plan - Request from the Board to Revise the Board Name – Approved

The 2025 Annual Report and 2026-2027 Work Plan of the Historical Resources and Museums Advisory Board (HRMB) will be presented during the meeting and are included with the agenda materials. In addition, the HRMB voted in February 2025 to request that Council consider revising the name of the board, changing the word "Historical" to "Historic". An excerpt from the meeting minutes are included with the agenda materials. Should Council desire to endorse the name change, it would be appropriate to adopt a resolution; a draft resolution is included with the agenda materials.

Approve the annual work plan. If Council concurs with the request to revise the title of the HRMB, adopt the resolution.

### NOMINATIONS

Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board - One Regular Vacancy. A resignation has been received from Jack Hilton.

## Department Programs, Events and Announcements:

### **Business Process Management Division:**

Here is the link to see upcoming volunteer events. This site is updated regularly and does not reflect private events we are running. It shows single-time events and ongoing opportunities we are actively recruiting for:

<https://raleighnc.gov/parks-volunteer>

To sign up for an event, click on the event they are interested in and it will take you to more information and you will be able to click to register. You will be asked to either create a CERVIS profile or sign into one they already created. CERVIS even sends them our release form automatically now.

### **Recreation Division:**

#### **Project Update – Community Gardens:**

- We are excited to take the next step to build our Community Gardens program. We hosted an open house at **Barwell Road Community Garden** on Saturday April 11 where guests could explore the garden, check out the plots, and even pre-select a favorite bed before our official garden rental system launches.

#### **Youth Programs:**

- Celebrating the historic Artemis II voyage, we took the opportunity to focus on space flight for our Track 2 participants. **Space Week** took off in a big way—literally! Participants launched their very own rockets using 2-liter bottles, vinegar, and baking soda. Watching them soar through the air made for a fun-filled day of hands-on learning and discovery.



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### Community Centers:

- We were all about celebrating the spring season as we hosted fourteen (14) different events between March 27 – April 4. Activities ranged from World Theatre Day at Lake Lynn, “Hopping Down the Bunny Trail at Marsh Creek and “Glowed Up Musical Egg-sploration” at John Chavis Memorial Park. Over the week of activities we had 2,500 join us to enjoy this wonderful time of year.
- The 2022 bond projects are going to make incredible impacts to the Method Road and Tarboro Road communities. We are already planning for how we will continue to serve the communities with programs and services while community center renovation projects are happening. In the Method community we will utilize the nearby Powell Drive Neighborhood Center. We are inviting the neighborhood to Join us for our inaugural **Powell Drive Community Day!** Friday April 17 and Saturday April 18. Friday night, we will host a meet and greet with Director Denise Hill and Assistant Director Jason Rodri where you can pick their brains about programs YOU want to see at Powell Drive. On Saturday, we will be going all out with inflatables, music, food trucks, a free-throw contest, and more! We will also have many City of Raleigh program area representatives with exciting opportunities to share.
  - Details:
    - Friday, April 17, 5 - 8 p.m.
    - Saturday, April 18, Noon - 4 p.m.
    - Cost: Free
    - Ages: All

### Rowing Season \*Reminder:

- This year Lake Wheeler will host both the Lake Wheeler invitational (LWI) and the ACC Women’s Rowing Championships.
  - The LWI will impact park operations beginning Wednesday April 22 – Saturday April 26. Race days are Friday & Saturday when we will have twenty (20) teams from across the country. Teams include: Duke (Hosting), UNC (Hosting), Alabama, Boston College, Clemson, Georgetown, George Washington, High Point, Kansas, Lehigh, Louisville, Miami, Navy, Old Dominion, Oklahoma, SMU, Tulsa, Villanova, UVA & West Virginia
  - The ACC Championships will impact park operations Beginning Wednesday May 13 – Saturday May 16. Race days are Friday and Saturday.
  - We will have parking and event access for members of the PRGAB. Please work with Giavonia if you plan to attend the upcoming Lake Wheeler Invitational

### Parks and Natural Resources Division:

#### GSI Maintenance Team – One-Year Milestone

The GSI Maintenance Team recently celebrated its one-year anniversary. Comprised of four staff members, the team is dedicated to maintaining green stormwater infrastructure with a focus on improving water quality, enhancing habitat, and supporting community engagement.

Over the past year, the team has demonstrated strong resource stewardship by repurposing a canopy and shipping container from the former West Street location for use at Dix Park. This effort resulted in cost savings while promoting efficient and sustainable use of existing assets.



### Urban & Community Forestry Grant Award

The City of Raleigh has been awarded a \$1,000,000 Urban and Community Forestry grant through the NC Forest Service, funded by the Inflation Reduction Act. This funding will expand access to trees and the many environmental, social, and economic benefits they provide.

Urban trees play a critical role in cooling communities, improving mental health and wellbeing, increasing property values, and supporting environmental job creation. In Raleigh, 100% of the funding will be dedicated to tree planting and maintenance in areas of greatest need.

As part of this award, the City will conduct community outreach and education, as well as tree planting, pruning, and removal of hazardous trees along streets, in City parks, and across other City-owned properties within identified communities. This work will expand tree canopy, enhance public safety, improve tree health and resilience, reduce extreme heat, and strengthen stormwater management.

### **Resources Division:**

#### **Capital Planning**

The Lassiter Mill Greenway received an additional \$3.5M in LAPP grant funding, for Locally Administered Projects Program through the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The construction contract award will be on the April 21st Council agenda.

#### **Communications**

- Prescribed Burn video highlight:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofm8YLr\\_iJo&source\\_ve\\_path=NzY3NTg&embed\\_s\\_referring\\_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fraleighnc.gov%2F](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofm8YLr_iJo&source_ve_path=NzY3NTg&embed_s_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fraleighnc.gov%2F)
- Preparing to launch a spring safety & etiquette greenway campaign mid-April called “Many Ways. One Greenway.”

#### **Dix Park**

- The Rocky Branch project received \$1,092,000 from Congresswoman Ross Community Project Fund.
- Work at Gipson Play Plaza to improve the sand bowl drainage begins the week of April 13th. This work is expected to take one week.
- The West campus demolition is underway.
- DHHS fully exits our campus the week of April 13<sup>th</sup>.



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- The full calendar of spring programs and events is live: <https://dixpark.org/events>
- Dix Park was Highlighted in the NY Times, 36 Hours in Raleigh: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2026/03/26/travel/things-to-do-raleigh.html>

## Arts

- The Arts Commission presented its Annual Arts Grants recommendations to City Council at the April budget work session, recommending \$1,955,803 in funding for 36 nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.
- *Air Chrysalis* installation opening at Walnut Creek Wetland Park (April 22) showcases a temporary public artwork made from reclaimed materials, created with community volunteers as part of the SEEK Raleigh program.
- *Continuum: Classical to Contemporary Islamic Art* on view at Block Gallery (April 8–June 26), with a public reception on April 22.
- Raleigh’s inaugural Poet Laureate Program is now open for applications through April 17, 2026, establishing a new citywide role focused on community engagement and creative programming.
- Raleigh Arts and United Arts Wake County are now accepting applications for the 2026-2027 Arts Learning Community for Universal Access. Raleigh and Wake County-based nonprofit arts and cultural organizations are encouraged to apply by Thursday, April 30 at 4 p.m.
- Artist opportunities are available for upcoming projects, including the 2027 Pullen Exhibition Program and GoRaleigh/GoWake Access Transit Facility public art.

## HRM

- Pullen Amusements has partially reopened as the Lake Howell shoreline improvement project continues. Most attractions are open, though the lake area remains closed to visitors.
- Spring programs include Yoga in the Galleries at COR Museum, Mordecai’s Heirloom Plant Sale, World Cup viewing parties at Moore Square, and an exhibit opening at Top Greene.

## Zoning Related Items:

Raleigh Parks participates in the review of all rezoning petitions filed with the City of Raleigh. We analyze whether a proposed rezoning is consistent with parks-related policies in the City of Raleigh [Comprehensive Plan](#) and provide feedback to help rezoning applicants, Planning Commission, and City Council understand how a proposed development may impact nearby parks, greenways, and natural resources.

Via the rezoning process, Park Planning staff often pursue public-private partnerships (P3) with developers to enhance our park system, by way of zoning conditions or development agreements. We leverage



partnerships to encourage additions to our greenway trails, parks, and public art, to improve the level of service for all park users and citizens of Raleigh.

Visit the [Parks Rezoning Cases spreadsheet](#) to see the current rezoning cases that Raleigh Parks has an interest in!

*Note: Raleigh's [Rezoning Engagement Portal](#) at [engage.raleighnc.gov/rezoning](https://engage.raleighnc.gov/rezoning) is the best location for more information on the rezoning process and more ways to get involved.*

**Board Retreat Dates May 29 (afternoon) and May 30<sup>th</sup> (morning)**