

2024 Pitt County Planning Department Annual Report

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Pitt County Parks and Recreation

In 2024, the Pitt County Planning staff helped Pitt County reach new heights in parks and recreation. This year staff helped oversee the development of a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan, assisted with the creation of a new County department to oversee parks and recreation, and assisted with two grant applications that were awarded almost \$950,000 in funds to develop new outdoor recreation facilities.

Pitt County Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Throughout 2024, Pitt County Planning staff, in conjunction with Community Schools and Recreation and McGill Associates, P.A., worked to develop a new Pitt County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This plan provides a realistic action plan for the future focusing on park facilities, trails, programming, and staffing, and will help guide the decisions of County leadership over the next ten (10) years. It is intended to develop a park system that is accessible, inclusive, and diverse, and which fosters a sense of community spirit, collaboration, and cooperation between the Pitt County and its residents. (Continued page2)



Emergency Solutions Grant

Since 2013, Pitt County has successfully administered the Rapid Re-Housing program, which is funded through the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). This program is designed to help those who are homeless transition into permanent housing.

The primary goal is to stabilize a program participant in permanent housing as quickly as possible and provide wrap-around services after the family, or individual obtains housing.

In 2024, Pitt County utilized its annual allocation of Emergency Solutions Grant funds to assist 22 households (39 people, including 12 children) with short-and/or medium-term rental assistance and utility assistance.

Households receiving these funds must have an income level at or below 50% of the annual median income. Enrollment in the Rapid Re-Housing program relies heavily on a case management plan to ensure long-term stability for program participants. Staff has implemented a case management plan that will increase household incomes and/or increase access to mainstream benefits for program participants.

Pitt County Parks and Recreation (continued)

The plan provides an inventory of existing park and school system facilities, and is based on site observations, discussions with County staff and leadership, and significant community input. The plan prioritizes specific projects, such as recommended facility upgrades and possible expansion, by considering the needs and desires of the community and applying nationally-recognized recreational standards and best practices.

The plan establishes five (5) major goals for expanding and continuing to improve the County's parks and recreation offerings:

Establish and enhance the new Pitt County Cultural and Recreation Department by developing new policies and protocols, improving staff development, implementing new software for program registrations, and developing an internship program.

Update the joint-use agreement with Pitt County Schools to leverage school-based recreational facilities and pursue additional partnership opportunities with external agencies to provide funding and new programming opportunities.

Improve the marketing and branding of Pitt County's Cultural and Recreation Department to draw attention and public awareness to the County's recreational programs and facilities.

Expand and improve existing Pitt County parks and recreation facilities, including enhancements to Alice F. Keene District Park, and continued development of the new Pitt County Office Recreation Complex and Lake Glenwood Public Park.

Develop new Pitt County parks and recreation facilities and provide additional services and programming opportunities in rural and underserved areas of the County.

In addition to these goals and recommendations, an Action Plan was developed that outlines specific steps to for the new department to take to grow and enhance the new department and the County's recreational offerings over the next 3-5 years. It is anticipated that the department will accomplish many of its most important foundational goals during this time and will continue to flourish throughout future years. The draft plan is expected to be completed in January 2025 and will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption in February 2025.



Pitt County Hosts 2024 APA- NC Planning Conference

Pitt County and the City of Greenville hosted the 2024 Annual Planning Conference for the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association at the Greenville Convention Center on October 16-18th. Several Planning staff members served on the host committee along with Chapter leadership and staff members from the City of Greenville, East Carolina University, and several surrounding communities. This was the second time the conference has been hosted in Greenville since 2017, and was considered a huge success with over 420 attendees from across the state. The conference featured over 45 sessions for attendees, including mobile sessions that offered walking and biking tours of downtown Greenville, bus tours to the Cities of Wilson and Washington, and a scenic kayak tour along the Tar River. The conference also hosted a block party opening reception called "Party on Pitt Street" that allowed attendees to sample offerings from local businesses and restaurants including Pitt Street Brewing, Luna Pizza, Farmers and Makers Market, Native Fine Diner, Ford and Shep, and Sup Crush Vodka.

New Pitt County Cultural and Recreation Department

For nearly four decades, Community Schools and Recreation (CS&R) offered cost-effective recreation opportunities for Pitt County residents through the utilization of school-based recreation facilities. However, in the wake of several acts of violence, school systems across the nation are increasing security measures and are becoming less accessible to the public. Pitt County's schools are no exception and the County's reliance on these facilities for recreation has become a limiting factor in the County's offerings to its residents. As a result, it had become increasingly apparent that CS&R would need to transition to a wholly County-owned and operated department to continue developing new recreational facilities and programming.

In 2023, the Board of County Commissioners authorized the creation of a new parks and recreation department, and on July 1, 2024, CS&R officially transitioned the entirety of its operations to Pitt County Government under the new Cultural and Recreation Department. Planning staff (including Director Jonas Hill and retired Director James Rhodes) helped to oversee this transition by assisting with the development of a new organizational chart and ensuring that the existing CS&R staff, facilities, and equipment transitioned to the County.

Parks and Recreation Grant Awards



Another major accomplishment this year was the awarding of nearly \$950,000 in grant funding to Pitt County for parks and recreation facilities through the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) and the Accessible Parks Grant Program. Planning staff members assisted with the preparation of these grant applications including drafting the project descriptions and maps of the facilities.

Pitt County was awarded \$468,750 from the PARTF grant to fund Phase 2 of the Office Park Recreation Complex which will include a walking trail, playground area, benches, picnic shelter, restroom building, pole lights, security cameras, site work and landscaping. The County will provide a dollar-for-dollar match for the grant, and development of the facility will occur over the next three years.

Pitt County was also awarded \$479,166 from the Accessible Parks Grant, which is designed to benefit individuals living with disabilities. This grant, along with a 20% match from the County, will fund the first components of the Lake Glenwood Public Park including a parking area, sidewalks, a picnic shelter, accessible restrooms, and a trail. Staff members have also been in communication with staff from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commissions regarding a partnership for additional facilities including a fishing pier, kayak launch and information kiosk.



2024 Student Interns

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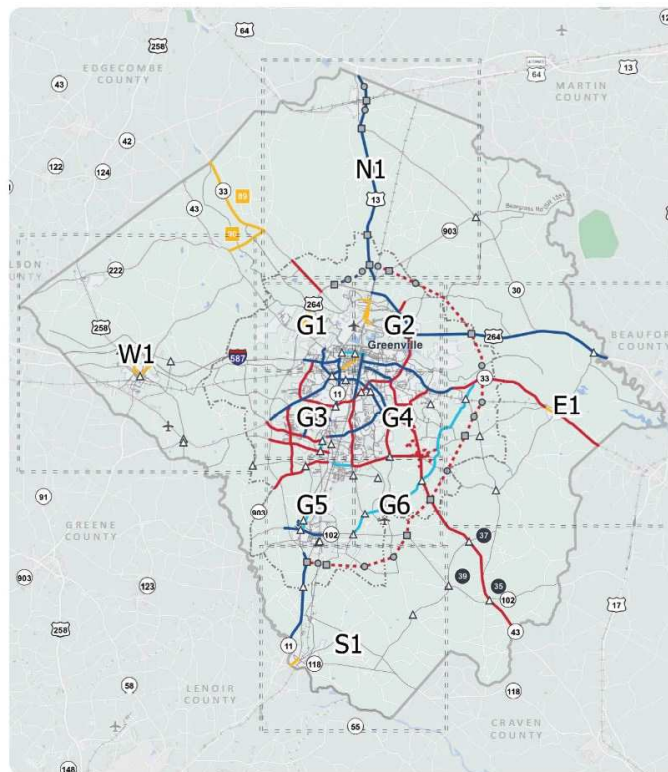
Visit us on the web:

[www.pittcountync.gov/
planning](http://www.pittcountync.gov/planning)

Pitt County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Planning staff, in cooperation with the Transportation Planning Division of the North Carolina Department of Transportation, the Greenville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Mid-East Rural Planning Organization, updated the Comprehensive Transportation Plan for the County. The Comprehensive Transportation Plan is a long-range planning document that will assist in making transportation decisions for the next 25-30 years and is required by NC General Statute 136-66.2.

A Steering Committee was formed in September 2020 consisting of representatives from the County, municipalities, NCDOT, local transportation organizations and other stakeholders. The Steering Committee met 22 times to provide input on the plan. A public input survey was conducted in the spring of 2021 and had over 1,800 participants. Two public workshops were held in the fall of 2022 at Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation and North Pitt High School to give the public an opportunity to provide input and comment on the draft document. Additionally, a virtual information session was held for those unable to attend the in-person sessions.



HIGHWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Proposals that address identified needs through 2045



PITT COUNTY Comprehensive Transportation Plan

DRAFT COPY
Plan Date: February 26, 2024

Highway Features

- Proposed CIP: Improve New Location
- Congestion / Mobility (e.g., add lanes)
 - Access Management / Operations (e.g., roundabouts)
 - Modernization (e.g., wider lanes, add turn lanes)
 - Other (e.g., safety, economic development)
 - Interchange
 - Bridge / Overpass
 - Intersection
 - Studied Roads
- Greenville MPO (area outside MPO in Pitt County served by Mid-East RPO)



Legal Disclaimer
These concepts will need additional analysis to meet state and federal environmental regulations, to determine final locations and designs, and to be funded for implementation. Local zoning or subdivision ordinances may require the dedication of right of way based on the concepts shown on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and local collector street plans, based on N.C.G.S. § 106-46.2 and § 106-46.10.

In January 2024, the Steering Committee voted 18-1 to endorse the draft plan and the Pitt County Board of Commissioners adopted the plan in March. The Greenville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and all other municipalities within Pitt County adopted the plan in March and April 2024, and the Mid-East Rural Planning Organization endorsed the plan in March 2024. NCDOT is currently working to complete the appendices of the plan prior to the official adoption by the North Carolina Board of Transportation and distribution of the final CTP document.

The final draft of the plan's Visual Core can be viewed on the project website located at:
www.tinyurl.com/PittCTP.