

The **recreation opportunities** in Garner do more for our community than just provide a place to play: they signify our commitment to being a healthy place; increase property values through association with green space; and connect great places to great neighborhoods along scenic trails.



RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Identify and Invest in Outdoor Space
- Connect Us Internally with Open Space
- Keep Adding Indoor Recreational Space
- Connect Us with Regional Trail Network
- Explore Public and Private Partnerships, including Neighboring Towns

















The Town created a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Master Plan in 2007 to serve as a guide for the future expansion of parks, recreation facilities, and programs. This Comprehensive Plan draws from the goals of the 2007 Master Plan and offers additional guidance for meeting the objectives of the original plan.

Due to rising land prices throughout Garner, the Town should act quickly to procure land, especially in the southern portion of the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) before new development increases land costs. The newly acquired areas could be designed for recreational athletic fields, open space, and greenways or for specialty facilities such as disc golf, mountain biking trails, or skateboard parks.

In addition to large projects, small "parklets," splash pads, landscaped transportation corridors, and small connections between neighborhoods, commercial areas, and schools should be priorities to soften perspectives and communicate a human scale for pedestrians.

The new recreation and community center, with three gymnasiums, kitchen, and showers, will be located downtown and provide a new, valuable resource to Garner's residents. The new center's success should be closely monitored in order to plan for new capacity, but working with private, community-based recreational centers can help postpone future need for additional public gyms.

- **PARKLET**
- *NOUN*
- A sidewalk extension that provides more space and amenities for people using the street. Usually parklets are installed on parking lanes and use several parking spaces.
- *"The parklet provides seating for pedestrians with large planters of tall shrubs to shield visitors from traffic."*

supports us		practice or policy	
			Invest in the maintenance of current parks and recreational facilities.
			Continue to implement the Town's Parks and Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Master Plan, but also prepare an update to this plan.
			Hardwire greenway and sidewalk language into the development code to align open spaces and connections between projects that occur under different time frames.
			Support health related events. Design a 5k course incorporating the Garner bridges.
			Expand the existing linked open space system by acquiring other potential open space and/or "green fingers" along potential stream easements or utility corridors.
			Encourage the use of conservation developments to preserve natural features and green space.
			Increase the number of recreational facilities and fields for athletic events.
			Partner with athletic leagues to maintain and expand athletic fields.

Benefits Available from Adopting Recommended Policy or Practice.



HEALTH

supports community health and environmental quality



ELEVATE

instills quality in appearance, design, or community



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

adds value to people, businesses, and town



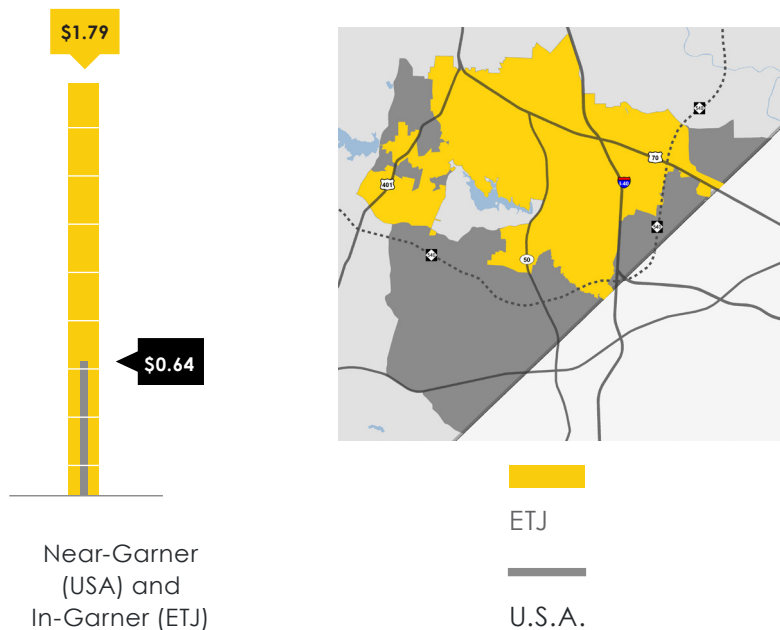
Community play space

Not all recreational centers have to take up a field. The proposed Fifth Avenue commercial center is the perfect location for a "splash pad" - an interactive water feature that promotes play in the plaza and draws families to the area.

In the pocket

Parks play a vital role in neighborhood life, providing a place for children to play and residents to meet. This includes pocket parks, areas of a quarter acre or less, that serve as small-scale breaks in the urban fabric.

RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS



Land value in v. around Garner

x\$2.8

The average assessed value of a square foot of land in the Urban Service Area (future planning) boundary around Garner is 64 cents. Inside the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (current planning boundary) the value is \$1.79, nearly three times the value. The difference in median (instead of average) values is even more dramatic.

RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Secure Open Space and Recreational Areas in the South of Town

As the large tracts of land in the south become developed (mostly as residential dwellings), the need for preserving green space and recreational facilities (both indoor and outdoor) will increase. Garner's biggest parks and new indoor recreational facility are located in the middle or south end of the current town limits, but they will ultimately be located well north of the future town geographic center as more southerly tracts in the Urban Service Area develop. The cost for procuring land however, is unlikely to decrease, making procurement a more immediate need in order to be cost-effective. While the Town has recently procured a large tract for a future recreational facility, working with Wake County to procure additional open space that can be converted later is, ultimately, a cost-saving measure.

Review the AARP Livability Index (<https://livabilityindex.aarp.org>) and other tools to create a relevant evaluation to other peer towns.



Wake County and the Triangle Land Conservancy are potential partners.



Spending funds outside of the municipal limits isn't supported, ongoing coordination will help position the town for future opportunities as they arise.



Develop a Public Arts Program

Public art can help enhance a "sense of place" in the public realm. Many towns and cities have incorporated sculptures, murals, and rotating gallery exhibits of local artists into their public arts program.



"I see what you mean."
Public art in Denver, Colorado.

Participate in the formation of a citizen-led Art Advisory Committee to assist in the organization and implementation of a new Public Arts program



Potential partnership with United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County



Larger projects can be potentially funded through community partnerships or a new art ordinance fee.



RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Invest in the Maintenance of Current Parks and Recreation Facilities and Increase Programming

Before expanding the park system, it is important that Garner restores and maintains the conditions of the Town's existing facilities. The culture of Garner can be promoted by increasing programming and holding more events and activities at the Town parks. In addition, having more people use the parks will make them safer and more attractive to citizens and visitors. To generate ideas and gain community support, the Town could host biannual or quarterly meetings for citizen focus groups, a Citizen Advisory Committee to recommend and organize programming. A possible new event would be a 5K charity run/walk that incorporates use of the three bridges in Garner.

Designate or hire staff to inventory current park conditions and explore options for additional programming.



Partner with local arts or health organizations to host events and activities.



Staff time for inventory, 20 hours a week for 5 weeks. Programming, 5 hours per week.



Preserve, Install, and Maintain Street Trees

Street trees provide shade to pedestrians, encourage traffic calming by creating visual friction, and increase property values. Garner residents responded positively to the importance of protecting current and planting new street trees as part of preserving the character of the town. Investigate being a part of the Tree City USA program to document existing conditions and progress. Planning for tree preservation should begin during the site review process.

Preserve trees during the site review process. Install and maintain street trees along Town's neighborhood streets. Complete Tree City USA application.



Potential partnership between Planning and Zoning and Parks and Recreation

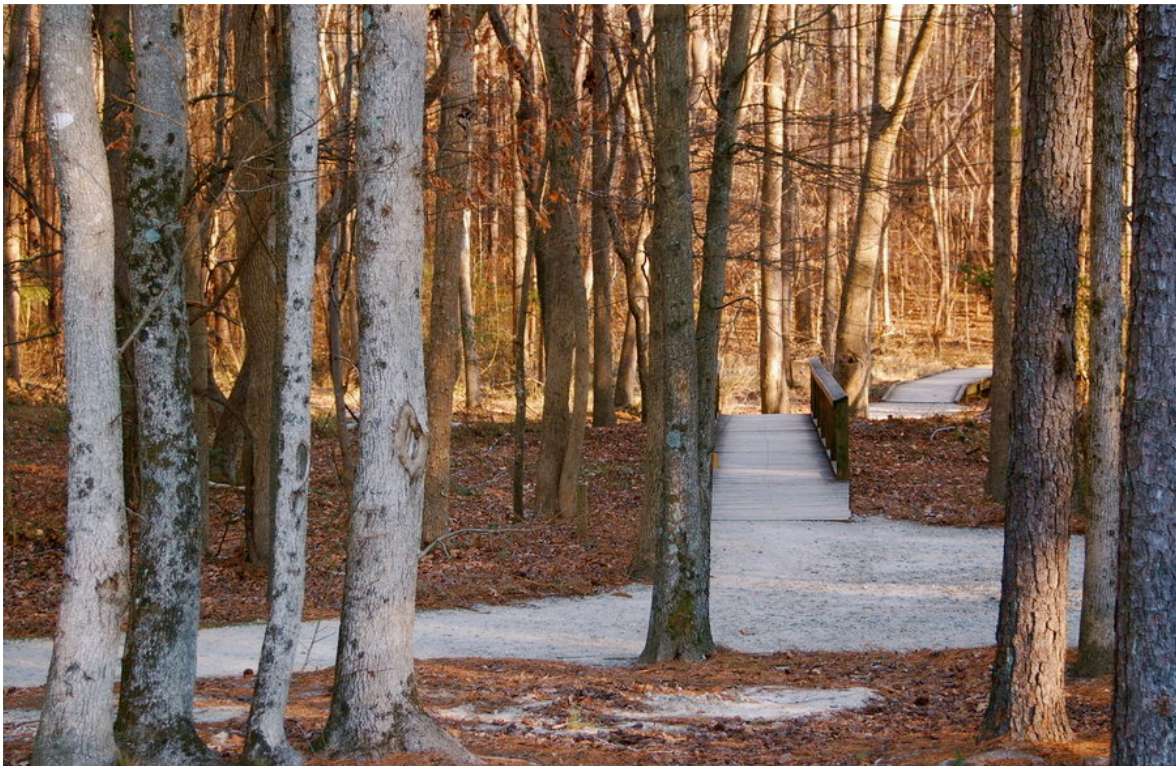


Street tree estimates range from \$500-\$1,000 per tree including the tree, labor for installation, and a tree or root guard.





White Deer Nature Center



Garner Trails