

City of Asheville
Parks, Recreation &
Cultural Arts Department

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Fiscal Year 2012-2013
Annual Report

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ASHEVILLE

Parks, Recreation
& Cultural Arts
Department



Park, Recreation & Cultural Arts Department

2012-2013 Annual Report

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Director's Message

Each year, I look back at all the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts Department has accomplished and it never ceases to amaze. Despite financial uncertainties this past year, staff dedication to parks, programs/services, and events has remained firm. We introduced new recreation and athletic programming for people of all abilities, continued to strengthen and develop new partnerships with organizations in the community, increased our presence in social media outlets, and continued to improve our facilities.

As a result of a greater City-wide effort to improve and increase connectivity in Asheville, we initiated more greenway design than ever before. This year we launched a new River-To-Ridge initiative designed to link existing and proposed parks and tourist destinations via a 14-mile greenway system. The system will be linked by separate walking and biking trails to offering enhanced north-south and east-west multi-access transportation options, gateways, and improved access to our riverfronts and downtown.

Please take a moment to visit our website at www.ashevillenc.gov/parks to learn more about our progress and see how we are enhancing your quality of life through diverse, community-focused, and accessible experiences. Find us on Facebook at *Asheville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts*, where we post updates regarding our parks, programs and facilities.

Acknowledgements

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts staff would like to thank all of the departments, divisions, community groups and volunteers who help make us successful. We would not be able to carry out our mission without your generous support.

Organization Mission

City of Asheville Mission: The City of Asheville is committed to delivering an excellent quality of life.

Department Mission: The Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department is dedicated to enhancing your quality of life by providing diverse cultural and recreation experiences.

Vision: To be a national leader in the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts profession by utilizing a qualified, professional, and dedicated staff to provide multi-dimensional, innovative recreation opportunities in a safe, nurturing environment while preserving traditional recreation values.



Core Services

- ❖ Park Operations – maintain and improve the health of the City of Asheville park system for the benefit of present and future generations through managed development; and routine care and maintenance of parks, trails, greenways, open spaces, and facilities.
- ❖ Recreation Services – provide year-round recreation and volunteer programs to help promote healthy and active lifestyles for all ages and abilities.
- ❖ Community Development – provide numerous opportunities for citizens and visitors to enjoy five annually produced events, the Donald Ross Municipal Golf Course, the Western North Carolina Nature Center, and a walking tour of the Urban Trail and the public art collection.

HIGHLIGHTED PROJECTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Nature Center Red Wolf Exhibit Improvement and Playground

Improvements to the Red Wolf exhibit will make it easier for guest to view and experience the Nature Center's family of red wolves. A new feature is the Spider Kingdom Playground located nearby and a trail that links them together. Construction began in 2012 and is expected to be complete in fall 2013.

Nature Center Main Entrance

As recommended in the Western North Carolina Nature Center's strategic plan, a new main entrance at the Nature Center is under design that will enhance the guests' experience and improve accessibility. Once complete, the entrance will welcome guest to the Nature Center through an attractive plaza and event area enhanced by public art and attractive landscaping.

Greenways

This year the River to Ridge Initiative was launched, which is designed to link existing and proposed parks and tourist destinations with a 14-mile greenway system. Priority greenways include these significant corridors which are in the design phase of development.

Beaucatcher Greenway: Overlooks downtown Asheville on Beaucatcher Mountain that will link downtown to Town Branch Greenway. Design work is expected to be complete in early 2014 followed by construction.

Town Branch Greenway: Connect Beaucatcher Greenway at McDowell Avenue and link to Clingman Forest Greenway at Depot Street.

Clingman Forest Greenway: Link Town Branch Greenway to a spur to the French Broad River to the west, and to Hillyard Avenue to the north.

Riverfront Development: Aligns the French Broad River Greenway Corridor within the River Arts District Transportation Project.



CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC GOALS

Fiscal Responsibility

The City of Asheville will support a stronger, more prosperous community by making smart investments that accomplish lasting, tangible returns.

Goal: Explore alternatives for enhancing the city's long-term financial commitment to master plan implementation, infrastructure maintenance, capital improvements, and public facilities.

Objective: Leverage internal and external partnerships for pursuing capital improvements and infrastructure projects.

- ✦ Friends of the Nature Center completed its donation commitment to support construction of the Red Wolf exhibit, trail and playground at the Nature Center
- ✦ Developed a private/public partnership with Pope Golf, LLC for the management of the Asheville Municipal Golf Course
- ✦ Completed improvements at Harvest House and Senior Opportunity Center with North Carolina Senior Center General Purpose Funds
- ✦ Secured partnerships:
 - Men's Garden Club of Asheville – John B. Lewis Soccer Complex landscape maintenance and improvements
 - LEAF Community Arts – Operate Easel Rider Mobile Art Lab as a community cultural art resource
 - Served as principal partner in Creative Sector Summit 2013 hosted by the Asheville Area Arts Council

Safe

Asheville will be one of the safest and most secure communities when compared to similar cities.

Goal: To provide a variety of quality community programs and facilities that are safe, well maintained, and affordable.

Objective: Number of community at-risk programs offered by the Department.

- ✦ Conducted programs to reach at-risk youth
 - Aston Tennis Youth Programs
 - Center Afterschool/Teen Program
 - Outdoor Adventure Program
 - School-Age Child Care Program
 - Skate Park Programs
 - Summer Playground and Teen Programs
 - Therapeutic Recreation Program
 - Youth Athletics
 - Youth Swimming Lessons



- ✦ 13,290 program service hours at 15 sites
- ✦ 6753 at-risk program participants
- ✦ Average cost per youth \$333
- ✦ Average cost per capita \$5.20

Multimodal Transportation

Integrate and implement a multi-modal transportation plan including sidewalks, bike paths, signal preemption, transit, greenways, streets, rivers and access to the river, and other system improvements resulting in a funding priority list.

Objective: Seek partnerships for investments in greenway and sidewalk infrastructure, including cost sharing options.

Objective: Clearly develop a long-term Capital Improvement Program funding plan for sidewalk, bike lane and greenway projects beyond a pay-go strategy.

- Launched River to Ridge Initiative to define greenway connectivity as multimodal transportation to link downtown Asheville to the French Broad River
- Applied for North Carolina Parks & Recreation Trust Fund grant to support construction of Town Branch Greenway
- Capital Improvement Program includes long-term funding plan for River to Ridge Initiative in priority greenways: Beaucatcher, Town Branch, Clingman Forest and Riverfront Development



MASTER PLAN GOALS

Improve Administration Effectiveness and Transparency

Clarify role of Boards and Commissions and their relationships with staff, each other, and City Council

- Welcomed new members to the Recreation Advisory Board and to the Public Art and Cultural Commission
- Recreation Advisory Board members attended the Citizen Board Member Forum with the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association
- Launched the community partnership and initiative series with the Recreation Advisory Board

Strengthen Marketing, Communications and Credibility

Generate awareness and credibility about Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts offerings and needs as expressed by the public

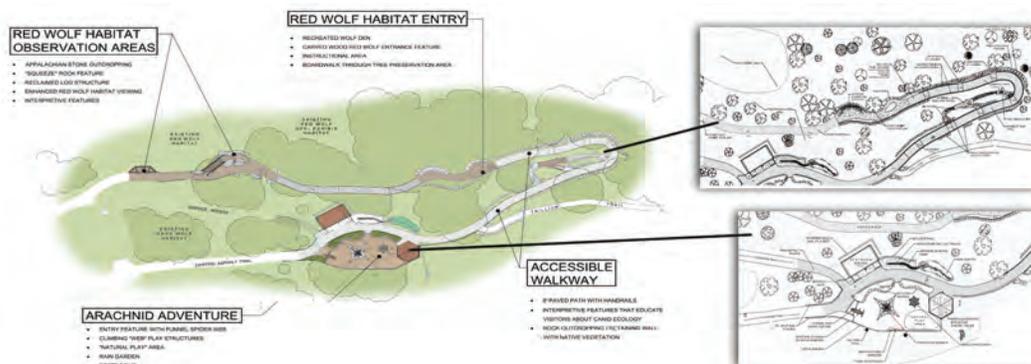
- Expanded use of social media tools including Facebook, Twitter, Twitpic
- Shared Riverside Cemetery mapping project with the public
- Created 135 Facebook postings to promote programs and events
- Translated the WNC Nature Center brochure into Spanish

Enhance public confidence for the appreciation of the “arts” including festivals and the WNC Nature Center

Maintain and enhance Asheville as an arts destination

Implement the WNC Nature Center strategic and site plans

- Debuted a new red wolf family
- Opened the new children’s play area in the North Carolina Farm
- Began the design process for the Nature Center’s new main entrance, and began construction on the new Red Wolf exhibit and Spider Kingdom Playground



Operate Mobile Art Lab programs

- Mobile Art Lab produced the Mobile Movie Series, summer school arts with the Asheville City Schools; and made appearances at Bele Chere, 4th of July Celebration and National Night Out
- Developed partnership with LEAF Community Arts for the operation of the Mobile Art Lab

Strengthen the Organizational Structure of Public and Cultural Arts Delivery

Realign strategic goals of public and cultural arts to generate additional goodwill and accurate budgeting

Follow public art maintenance and acquisition plan

- Conducted two volunteer cleaning days of Urban Trail plaques
- Designated new public art development in Capital Improvement Programs:

Nature Center entrance	US Cellular Center renovation
Public parking garage at Aloft Hotel	Beaucatcher Greenway
Town Branch Greenway	Clingman Forest Greenway
- Volunteer artist completed the temporary mural at Magnolia Park
- Completed repair of “Left of Center” railing in Pack Square Park

Review and monitor Festivals/Events for fiscal responsibility

- Produced a successful 4th of July Celebration and Bele Chere festival

Build stronger partnerships/collaborations with zoos, museums and art organizations to enhance programs and cultural opportunities that benefit the community

- Hosted the Buncombe County tour of the Americans for the Arts, Arts and Economic Prosperity IV Study
- Administered the North Carolina Arts Council’s Grassroots Arts Program Grant, and awarded \$45,000 to 16 arts organizations in Buncombe County
- Nature Center Director represented the City in the Association of Aquariums & Zoos (AZA) in accreditation process for two facilities, presented at the 2012 AZA Conference, and published an article in the AZA Connect Magazine
- Selected as principal partner for the 2013 Creative Summit hosted by the Asheville Area Arts Council
- Hosted Creative Conversations on creative community place making in the arts



Strategically Increase Recreation Programming Level of Service

Define core programs and services for the Department

- **After School Programs:** Holiday Camp, cultural activities with LEAF in Schools and Streets drumming and African dance programs, mentoring programs with UNC-Asheville, Warren Wilson and Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Outdoor Adventure Kids Day Out programs for at-risk youth and teens.
- **Aston Park Tennis Center:** Asheville Tennis Association youth and adult tennis lessons. Hosted the 81st Annual Asheville City Open, Friday night tennis socials, Halloween Tennis-Tricks-Treats Tournament, United States Tennis Association League Tennis Program, and Aston Park Ladder.
- **Athletics:** Partnered with Asheville Youth, TC Roberson, and Pop Warner for youth football and cheerleading, partnered with WNC Fall Baseball for youth programming; hosted adult softball leagues and end-of-season tournaments; increased participation in adult flag football, volleyball and women's basketball leagues; hosted National Girls and Women in Sports Day; lunchtime wall climbing series at Montford Community Center.
- **Community Events:** Hosted numerous events at recreation centers, parks and special facilities.
 - All Kids Day
 - Celebration of Water Works Week
 - Community Thanksgiving Potluck
 - Wellness Day
 - Halloween Carnival
 - New Year's Event
 - Tiny Tykes Day
 - Tiny Tykes Holiday Ball
 - Women's History Celebration
 - Asheville Police Department's National Night Out
 - Black History Month
 - Community Fall Festival
 - Easter Eggstravaganza
 - Future Male Leaders Program
 - Hot August Night 5K
 - Parents' Night Out
 - Tiny Tykes Monster Bash
 - Veteran's Affairs Stand Down

- **Outdoor Recreation Program:** Offered Active Adult Adventures, outdoor adventure camps for youth and teens, and Eco-Exploring.
- **Recreation Centers:** Ongoing programming at recreation centers included Women's Drop-In Volleyball, Clogging, Teen Yoga and Strong Roots gardening program, Home School Program Partnerships, and the Developing Future Male Leaders
- **Senior Programs:** Senior Valentine Social, Senior Games and new Fall Frolic. Senior Opportunity Center partnered with the Land of Sky Regional Council on Aging and Be-loved to offer programming for homeless populations; added yoga, movement, dance, cooking, canning, and healthy eating classes. Held National Senior Citizen day, Grandparents Day, and offered new activities that include a Rubi-cube activity group, Celtic dance, acrylic painting, card making and a singing group.
- **Summer Programs:** Summer Playground and Day Camp Programs included Skate Board Camp, Outdoor Adventure Program, Teen Programs, and licensed childcare at Vance Elementary School. Provided a summer food service program at all sites in conjunction with Asheville City Schools and Buncombe County Schools. Partnered with X-fuge for teen volunteers.



- **Swimming Pools:** Operated three outdoor pools at Recreation Park, Malvern Hills Park, and Walton Street Park. Kicked off Recreation Park Pool opening with Memorial Day event for service personnel and families. Offered the Learn to Swim and Guard Start programs. Offered City Resident Free Days at Walton Street Pool.
- **Therapeutic Recreation:** Summer teen and drama camps, adapted bowling for adults/teens, new Club Rec day for adults, youth spring break camp, and adapted baseball for youth with a new adult league. Offer a Vet Rec outreach program in outdoor programming, volunteer work, monthly breakfast, and outings. Hosted a dinner club, Fall Dance social, a Holiday Ball, Family Fun Day held at the WNC Agriculture Center, Valentine Sweetheart Social, and a Spring Fling.

Create Management Resources to Increase Efficiency, Continuity, and Sustainability in Critical Focus Areas Needed in the Department

Create standards for all activities and services

- Updated operation manuals: School-age Child Care, Summer Youth Programs and Swimming Pool Operations
- Installed recycling bins and ADA lifts at pools
- Provided new pool equipment to enhance programs, safety, and improve customer experience
- Hosted the 2012 United Day of Caring at Montford Center

Ensure a Continued High Level of Service in Parks

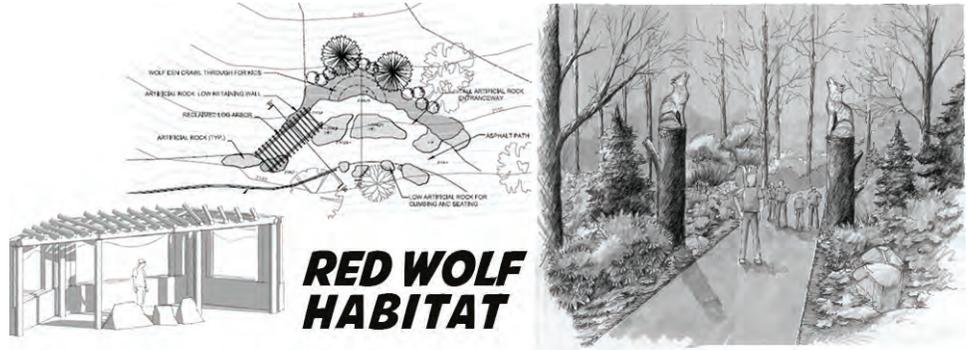
Develop cross-department maintenance plans for efficient and effective maintenance service delivery

- Identified and prioritized maintenance and repair projects in parks and recreation facilities
- Completed deferred maintenance projects:
 - New signs at Dr. Wesley Grant, Sr., Southside Center, Stephens-Lee Recreation Center, and Valley Springs Park
 - Aston Park Tennis Center: Re-graded three courts, installed new fencing and a retaining wall, repaired the irrigation system, and added a new sidewalk.
 - John B Lewis Soccer Complex: Completed clean up after two flood events to included brooming, vacuuming and topdressing all four fields.
 - Performed an Accessibility Audit on the complete park system
 - Carrier Park: Completed borings in the velodrome to explore the condition of the asphalt
- Initiated work on deferred maintenance projects:
 - Began Montford Recreation Center upgrades to include gymnasium floor, lighting and painting
 - Began the design of the restrooms and velodrome upgrade at Carrier Park



Focus primary efforts on improving existing facilities with capital improvement funding

- Began design and construction documents for Clingman Forest Greenway, Town Branch Greenways, and Beaucatcher Mountain Greenways
- Construction began on the Nature Center Red Wolf Exhibit and Spider Kingdom Playground
- Continued development of design standards for park rules sign



Increase the Level of Service and Access for Parks, Facilities and Greenways

Develop connected greenway corridors and destinations

- Developed a greenway priority list
- Launched a new River-To-Ridge Initiative

Project Management Oversight

- Applied for grants to support construction of recreation facilities and greenways:
 - North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund
 - Community Development Block Grant
 - North Carolina Recreation Trails Grant
 - Buncombe County Tourism and Development Trust Fund



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

New Construction					
Name	Description	Cost	Funding	Start Date	End Date
Nature Center Playground & Red Wolf Exhibit	New playground construction & red wolf exhibit enhancements	\$299,000	Friends of the Nature Center, Federal Grant, City CIP, State Grant	Jan 2013	Oct 2013
Nature Center Main Entrance	Entrance design	\$89,800	City CIP, State Grant	June 2012	August 2013
Nature Center Butterfly Exhibit	New exhibit construction	\$60,000	Friends of the Nature Center	TBD	TBD
Dr. Wesley Grant Sr. Southside Center Spray Ground	Spray ground, playground, trail	TBD	City CIP, Grants	TBD	TBD
Beaucatcher Greenway	Greenway design & construction	\$1,200,000	City CIP	Jan 2013	Nov 2013
Clingman Forest Greenway - Clingman Ave. Section	Greenway design	\$155,000	Federal Grant/City CIP	Jan 2013	Nov 2013
Town Branch Greenway - McDowell to Depot St. Section	Greenway design	\$315,000	Federal Grant/City CIP	Jan 2013	Nov 2013

Land Acquisition					
Name	Description	Cost	Funding	Start Date	End Date
Greenway Land Acquisition	Land and easements for Town Branch, Beaucatcher, Clingman Forest, French Broad River & Reed Creek Greenways	\$200,000	City CIP	July 2012	November 2013

Public Art

Name	Description	Cost	Funding	Start Date	End Date
Public Art Collection	Clean plaques & sculptures	\$5,000	CIP	Sept 2012	May 2013
Urban Trail Station 13: Appalachian Stage	Repair & refinish	\$25,000	CIP	Jan 2013	Sept 2013
Urban Trail Station12: Guastavino Monument	Replace	\$20,000	CIP	TBD	TBD
US Cellular Lobby Floor	New	TBD	City CIP	Nov 2012	Sept 2013
51 Biltmore Wall Art	New	\$25,000	City CIP	Nov 2012	Oct 2013

Deferred Maintenance

Name	Description	Cost	Funding	Start Date	End Date
Carrier Park	Design restroom renovation,	\$10,350	CIP	Dec 2012	Apr 2013
	Velodrome borings,	\$5,000		Oct 2012	Oct 2012
	Velodrome A& E	\$7,500			
Pritchard Park Fountains	Renovate ornamental fountains in partnership with DARN	\$3,000	CIP	Aug 2012	Aug 2012
Malvern Hills Pool	Pool cover	\$16,750	CIP	Oct 2012	Dec 2012
Facility Signs	I Brinson Sports Complex, GW Carver Edible Garden, Grant-Southside Center	\$32,000	CIP	Oct 2012	Sept 2013
Accessibility Audit	Evaluate 50% parks & facilities for accessibility	\$50,000	CIP	Dec 2012	Sept 2013
Montford Center	Replace gym floor, lights, paint	\$125,000	CIP	July 2012	June 2013
	A&E	\$11,650			
Montford Center Complex	Design master plan	---	City Operating	July 2012	June 2013
Aston Park Tennis Center	Replace 1 bank of courts	\$135,000	CIP	Sept 2012	June 2013
Azalea Park	Pond improvement	\$3,000	CIP	July 2012	June 2013
Riverside Cemetery	Monument repairs	\$2,000	City Operating	July 2012	June 2013
Veteran's Memorial	Install up lighting			July 2012	June 2013

PARK SAFETY

Information from the Asheville Police Department provides Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts with data related to safety in our parks, community centers, and other facilities. The information below is an assessment of the number and types of incidents that occurred on Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts property between July 2012 and June 2013.

For these purposes, an “incident” is defined as an event when an officer is called to a scene and determines it necessary to write an incident report, such as for a burglary that occurred. If no crime occurred, typically an officer will not write a report. An example in this case would be an officer responding to a suspicious person call, but unable to track down the individual, or not finding criminal activity.

Incident Number and Type by Park, FY 2012-2013

	Burglary	Larceny	Larceny of MV	Simple Assault	Aggravated Assault	Fraud	Stolen Property	Vandalism	Drug Violations	Missing Persons Report	Robbery	Disorderly Conduct	Sex Offenses	Prostitution	Runaway Juvenile	Other	Total
Aston Park Tennis Center and Park				1										1			2
Azalea Park	1	2	1					1									5
Carrier Park		3															3
Charlie Bullman Park	1																1
East Asheville Center		1															1
Grove Park																1	1
Herb Watts Park									1		2						3
Jake Rusher Park		1															1
Jean Webb Park				1													1
Lynwood Crump Shiloh Complex				1												1	2
Martin Luther King, Jr. Park				1													1
McCormick Field		2		1													3
Memorial Stadium / Field		1															1
Mountainside Park								1									1
Murphy Oakley Complex (Park)		4		1	1											2	8
Murray Hill Park								1			1					1	3
Pack Square Park								2					1			1	4
Pritchard Park		2		7	1			2				1				1	14
Recreation Park and Pool								1				1					2
Richmond Hill Park		1															1
Roger Farmer Memorial Park				1				2									3
Senior Opportunity Center	1				1												2
Southside Center													1				1
Stephens-Lee Center								1									1
Walton Street Park and Pool															1		1
Weaver Park			1					2									3
West Asheville Center		1		1	1			1	2	1						2	9
West Asheville Park																	0
WNC Nature Center		5															5
Total	3	23	2	15	4	0	0	14	3	1	3	2	2	1	1	9	83

VOLUNTEER REPORT

Volunteers make a significant contribution to the operations of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts Department. In the past year, volunteers gave over 28,687 hours of service to the citizens and visitors of Asheville.

Project/Group	# of Volunteers	# of Hours	Value
Advisory Boards (Recreation Board & Public Art & Cultural Commission)	113	426	\$7,711
Afterschool Youth Programs	202	3432	\$62,119
Center Advisory Boards	115	518	\$9,376
Center-Adult Programs	48	904	\$16,362
Center-Special Events	163	584	\$10,570
Other Center Programs	73	776	\$14,046
Senior Citizen Programs	247	3556	\$64,364
Teen Programs	49	864	\$15,638
Therapeutic Recreation	179	1867	\$33,793
Tennis Center	20	90	\$1,629
WNC Nature Center	1171	9909	\$179,353
Youth Athletics	182	5472	\$99,043
Public Art Programs	27	124	\$2,244
Other Volunteer Opportunities	45	165	\$2,987
Total	2634	28,687	\$519,235

Volunteer Partners:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Baptist Retirement Home | Ridgecrest X-fuge Mission |
| BBBS/Mission Hospital - Day of Caring | UNCA Nursing Program |
| Hind Foot Farm | United Way |

CITY COUNCIL-APPOINTED BOARD & COMMISSION

Public Art & Cultural Arts Commission

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Robert Todd, Chair | Guillermo Rodriquez, Vice Chair |
| Jann Ferre | Honor Moor |
| Sharron Trammel | Julie Calhoun-Roepnack |
| Gwynne Rukenbrod | Council Liaison: Gordon Smith |

Recreation Advisory Board

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Wayne Wheeler, Chair | Hutch Kerns, Vice Chair |
| John Parrish | Todd Dunnuck |
| Mildred Nance-Carson | Jordan Veale |
| Josh O'Connor | Barry Mundt |
| Ashley Arrington | Council Liaison: Cecil Bothwell |