

Recreation/Open Space Element

Description of Recreation/Open Space Element

This element includes an inventory of parks and open space, programs for expansion of the parks and open space areas to meet future needs, trends in recreation and parks, and a description of potential sites for parks and open space use. The Greenway Plan will be discussed in this element to include bike routes, pedestrian improvements and includes the Waccamaw River Trail. Other subjects will be funding opportunities and technical assistance; street design for intermodal use; the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan; recreation master plans and the economics of recreation and open space; health and fitness and any other topics related to recreation and open space.

Recreation/Open Space Inventory

City of Conway Recreation and Parks

The City's Parks and Recreation Department provides a comprehensive program of recreational activities, programs, and facilities for the citizens of Conway and the surrounding area. See **Map R/OS – 1** in the Appendix. The department has nine fulltime, six year round part time, and eight seasonal part time employees.

Parks and Recreation employees perform a variety of jobs in organizing and promoting team sports programs and individualized recreational activities for all age levels. The Department maintains a total of eleven buildings, five vehicles, and eleven sites including:

- ❑ Collins Memorial Park(Sixteenth Avenue and Main Street) Facilities include four tennis courts with lights, four basketball goals, two picnic shelters, twelve picnic tables, three grills, eight park benches, a gazebo, a shuffleboard court, a walking trail, a retreat garden and a playground area with playground equipment. A building is available to rent for parties and various activities and there are outdoor men and women restrooms. Future plans include a water feature and a splash pad. (Approx. 7.4 acres)
- ❑ Sherwood Park (Sixteenth Avenue and Sherwood Drive) Playground equipment including 2 modular units and 3 spring animals; a picnic area with one table are available at this park. Future plans include a picnic shelter and grill, a volleyball court and a splash pad. (Approx. 1.6 acres)
- ❑ Conway Marina (End of Elm Street and adjacent to the Waccamaw River) Facilities available are permanent and temporary docking for boats – 1 eight slip boat dock, 1 sixteen slip boat dock and 1 transient dock, a boat launch area, gasoline, a marina store, picnic facilities with six picnic tables, and riverboat tours. Showers and restrooms are available for public use. A new facility at the marina was constructed in 2000, and opened in 2001. The marina also offers canoe/kayak rentals and there is a playground at the site. (Approx. 5.8 acres)
- ❑ Riverwalk (located along the Waccamaw River) The Riverwalk can be accessed at Main Street (Highway 501 Business) and Second Avenue or near Kingston Pointe Marina. The Riverwalk allows visitors to stroll along the river enjoying beautiful scenery and nature at its best. The City completed Phase I in the early to mid 90's from the northernmost historic warehouse to the City Marina. Also included was the extension of Laurel Street to connect to Elm Street. Phase II was completed in spring of 2001 and included a northern extension of the Riverwalk, the conversion of the campground to a park, and the Marina store. Phase

III improvements are to be constructed in 2008 and include Elm Street sidewalks, parallel parking at the Marina and a northern connection of the Riverwalk to Second Avenue.

- ❑ Smith-Jones Recreation Area (Highway 378 West) Smith-Jones Recreation Area contains two tennis courts with lights, a volleyball court, a picnic shelter with two grills and four picnic tables, a playground area, sixteen benches and a swimming pool with a bathhouse. A joint use agreement with the Smith Jones Board allows the City to utilize property and facilities adjacent to Smith Jones Recreation Area, which has two basketball courts, one softball field (unlit), and playground equipment. (City – 5.9 acres/Smith Jones Board – 10.7 acres)
- ❑ Twelfth Avenue Recreation Area (Between Twelfth Avenue and Magrath Avenue) Adjacent to Conway Elementary School, the site has a ¼ mile track that is used by walkers.
- ❑ Recreation Complex (Jenkins Drive) The administrative offices of the Recreation Department are located at the Complex. All registrations for the various sports and activities are taken at the administrative offices. The complex has five lighted baseball/softball fields, one lighted football field, one lighted soccer field and a T-ball field. Two of the baseball/softball fields have grass infields. Structures at the Complex include a picnic shelter with eighteen picnic tables and three grills and playground equipment. There are concession/restroom/press box buildings at the football and baseball fields. The newest building at the complex is the Conway Senior Center, which was built in 1999. (Approx. 100 acres)
- ❑ Riverfront Tennis Center (Elm Street) Located on Elm Street, the center offers seven lighted clay tennis courts and a pro shop. There are sixteen benches, two picnic tables, and a storage building. Membership fees or hourly court fees are charged. A tennis professional works on site and offers lessons. (Approx. 7.7 acres)
- ❑ Jasmine Park (Dewberry Lane) Located in Jasmine Woods subdivision off Hwy. 701 South Jasmine Park has an unpaved trail leading through this wetlands area. (Approx. 4.4 acres)
- ❑ Crabtree Recreational Walking Trail (North Conway off Long Road) The paved 1 ½ mile trail extends from the trailhead at Long Avenue to US 701 North. Parking is available at Sherwood Drive and limited parking is located at Long Avenue.
- ❑ Park Avenue property This City owned property was donated to the City for recreation purposes but has never been developed. (one lot)

The Recreation Department supports sports and sports related programs including football, soccer, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, softball, and tennis. Other recreational activities offered for all ages include Father/Daughter Valentines Dance, Easter Festival, Hook a Kid on Golf, Summer Playground Program, Summer Sports Camp, Camp out at Coastal Carolina University, Movies at the Riverfront (summer and fall), Fall Festival, Children's Turkey Shoot, Christmas Card Contest, Santa's Calling and Breakfast with Santa. Shag lessons and aerobics classes are also offered by the Department.

Community Center

In 2008, the City of Conway is developing plans for a community center to include a variety of recreational opportunities for the Conway area. The final location, recreational uses and funding

sources will be determined as part of the Recreation Complex Master Plan development. A consultant will be chosen to assist the City in the Plan's completion.

Greenway Master Plan

Upon completing the overall Conway Greenway Master Plan in July 2005, the Conway Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee chose six greenway corridors as Priority Greenway Corridors. The priority designation highlights these corridors as the initial greenway corridors to be developed first as part of the Conway Greenway Master Plan. Priority corridors were chosen based on the following factors: overall connectivity, existing facilities served by and within the corridor, historic nature of the area and user experience levels. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee will continue to examine the feasibility of projects within these Priority Greenway Corridors and other opportunities for greenway improvements in Conway. (Master Greenway Plan)

An added project of the Master Plan that has great potential is the Blueways Trail that includes stretches of Crabtree Canal, Kingston Lake, and the Waccamaw River. With the 2007 addition of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife project on West Cox Ferry Road this trail provides Conway with another recreational opportunity for its citizens and visitors. See **R/OS 2** in the Appendix.

Priority Greenway Corridors:

Corridor A: Historic Walking Trail

This greenway corridor uses the existing route and sidewalks of the Historic Walking Trail through Historic Conway. The majority of the infrastructure is in place for this corridor with the exception of some sidewalk improvements and greenway signage. Centered around downtown Conway, this corridor will attract both residents of Conway and visitors to the city.

Corridor B: Riverwalk

The Riverwalk is a wonderful amenity for Conway, highlighting the beautiful Waccamaw River. Much like Corridor A, this corridor is easily accessible from downtown Conway and the majority of infrastructure is in place. It is important to continue to preserve and maintain this amenity.

Corridor D: US Highway 701/Highway 905 Trail

One fact uncovered during this master planning process was that this corridor is part of the Coastal Route of the South Carolina Bikeway. This particular corridor stretches approximately 235 miles from the North Carolina state line to the Georgia state line. Trail surfaces would include existing sidewalks and proposed bike lanes. Through much of the corridor, restriping the existing road would accommodate the bike lanes. This corridor runs directly through downtown Conway.

Corridor E: Mill Pond Road Trail

This greenway corridor moves along the central western edge of the Conway city limits and through a number of neighborhoods. Bike lanes are not an option through much of this corridor due to inadequate distance between existing curbs. Much of this corridor's trail surfaces would be existing sidewalks and proposed multi-use asphalt trails. This corridor is important in connecting other priority corridors, creating a manageable loop within the city.

Corridor J: North US Highway 701/Crabtree Creek Swamp Trail

This corridor offers a very unique experience with the entire Conway Greenway System, an off-road trail along one of Conway's major creeks. The corridor links downtown Conway to an existing trail along Crabtree Creek. This greenway corridor would use a variety of trail surfaces: existing sidewalks, improved multi-use asphalt trails, proposed bike lanes and proposed multi-use asphalt trails.

Corridor L: East Bikeway (Long Avenue)

This is currently a popular, though unsafe, cycling route for many of the area's more experienced cyclists. This particular corridor is designed for those who have a good deal of cycling experience. The corridor also completes a large loop around the city for distance cyclists, as well as connects to the Coastal Route of the South Carolina Bikeway.

Along with these 6 Priority Corridors, the Plan recommended that a trailhead, or greenway access point, be located and completed at the Conway Marina. In addition, 5 Interpretive Focal Points have been identified, each concentrating on a significant aspect of the surrounding environment. These areas include: Crabtree Creek Swamp, the Old Train Depot, Lake Busbee, Downtown Conway and a Wetlands/River Bottoms area. Signage for each focal point should be located and installed with the Priority Corridor projects.

Complete Streets

A possible component of the Conway Greenway Master Plan in order to facilitate its development would be the adoption and promotion of a Complete Streets policy for Conway. Complete Streets is a policy that has been promoted by the U. S. Department of Transportation. A Complete Streets policy ensures that transportation agencies/departments routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users. A Complete Streets policy should reverse the current practice of designing streets primarily for vehicular traffic. Design plans that do not achieve this goal are allowed only when certain conditions are present. Those conditions are: 1) where bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law; 2) when costs to meet the requirements are "excessively disproportionate" (typical amount - above 20%); 3) Where there is an absence of need.

Elements of Complete Streets as developed by the U. S. Department of Transportation:

The Principle:

- ❑ Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.
- ❑ Creating Complete Streets means changing the policies and practices of transportation agencies.
- ❑ A Complete Streets policy ensures that the entire right of way is routinely designed and operated to enable safe access for all users.
- ❑ Transportation agencies must ensure that all road projects result in a complete street appropriate to local context and needs.

Complete Streets Policy:

- ❑ Specifies that ‘all users’ include pedestrians, bicyclists, transit vehicles and users, and motorists, of all ages and abilities.
- ❑ Aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network.
- ❑ Recognizes the need for flexibility: that all streets are different and user needs will be balanced.
- ❑ Is adoptable by all agencies to cover all roads.
- ❑ Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way.
- ❑ Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions.
- ❑ Directs the use of the latest and best design standards.
- ❑ Directs that Complete Streets solutions fit in with the context of the community.
- ❑ Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes.

Implementation:

- ❑ Restructures procedures to accommodate all users on every project.
- ❑ Re-writes design manuals to encompass the safety of all users.
- ❑ Re-trains planners and engineers in balancing the needs of diverse users.
- ❑ Creates new data collection procedures to track how well the streets are serving all users.

City Open Space

The developer of any development for residential purposes is required to dedicate to the City of Conway land for park, recreation and/or open space designed to serve the residents of the development and residents of the immediate neighborhood of the development.

The land proposed for dedication shall be suitable for the intended purpose as determined by the Planning Commission. Factors to be considered in evaluating suitability shall include but not be limited to the following:

- ❑ Unity: The preferred land should be one parcel with a width not significantly greater than the depth.
- ❑ Location: The preferred land should be centrally located relative to the development and neighborhood and/or in conformance with the comprehensive plan.
- ❑ Accessibility: The preferred land should have easy, direct access to the public street system and be accessible by both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- ❑ Usability: The preferred land should be usable for active recreation facilities and/or passive open space.

Notwithstanding the criteria above, the Planning Commission may accept as suitable any land, which meets an entirely different set of criteria when in its opinion such land meets the purpose of this section in providing for the particular circumstances and needs of the development and neighborhood. As an alternative, the Planning Commission may require that the developer make a

payment in-lieu of all or part of the required land dedication whereby the City may acquire recreational land or areas to serve the development or developments in the immediate area. The City has received through dedication parcels of varying size for use as open space. The fee in lieu of open space has generated approximately \$25,000 (two payments) as of early 2008.

Flood plain and other vacant properties the City has received may be used for open space and recreation purposes as well or could be marketed to receive funds for recreation or other uses. All vacant open space properties of the City are shown on **Map R/OS – 3** in the Appendix.

Crabtree Swamp Stream Restoration Initiative

The Crabtree Swamp Stream Restoration Initiative was established in 2007 by the Kingston Lake Environmental Action Network (KLEAN), to explore ways to restore Crabtree Swamp. The group is comprised of local agency representatives, Coastal Carolina University - Waccamaw Watershed Academy, local volunteers, the City of Conway and Horry County. Their goals are to improve the water quality and the appearance of Crabtree Canal.

Crabtree Canal is included the City's Blueways Trail and while the Initiative wishes to improve the appearance of the Canal the goal is to make the area a public amenity as well. Crabtree Canal is included in the City's Greenway Master Plan efforts for this intended use.

Horry County Parks and Recreation

The Horry County Parks and Recreation Department offices are located at 307 Smith Street in Conway. The Department's mission statement is "The professional staff of Horry County Parks and Recreation is dedicated to providing the highest quality of active and passive recreational opportunities. These opportunities encompass diverse programs and facilities to promote the mental, physical and social well-being of its citizens." (Horry County Parks and Recreation) The programs that are offered include athletics, camps, clubs, senior events, special events and trips.

The athletic programs provided are for a wide range of ages. Their instructional athletic programs are geared toward younger participants and new beginners up to 5 and 6 years old. The youth athletic programs are designed to offer each participant an understanding of skills, teamwork and sportsmanship with a chance to build upon those experiences as they grow older. (Horry County Parks and Recreation)

Horry County Recreation Facilities in the Conway Area

County owned parks and boat landings on the Waccamaw, Little Pee Dee and Great Pee Dee within the Conway Area are listed below. County recreation facilities and Waccamaw River boat landings are shown on **Map R/OS 1** in the appendix. All the nearby parks are less than ten miles from downtown Conway and can be reached within approximately a ten-minute drive. All boat ramps shown are approximately 30 minutes or less from downtown and less than 30 miles away.

County-owned Parks

- ❑ Atlantic Center (Century Drive)

This facility has 12 soccer fields, 2 rugby fields, and restrooms on 25 acres.

- ❑ Greenwood Park (4161 J. & S. Countryside Road)
This 10-acre parcel is the site for a future park.
- ❑ Kingston Tennis Courts (2615 Old Reeves Ferry Road)
This small .2 acre site has 2 tennis courts.
- ❑ McNeil Park (2093 Sterritt Swamp Road)
This park has 3 ball fields, 1 restroom, a concession stand and a playground on 9.6 acres.
- ❑ Pee Dee Park (7175 Marsh Drive)
Pee Dee Park has 4 ball fields, 2 restrooms, a concession stand, 1 picnic shelter, 4 picnic tables, and a grill on 5 acres.
- ❑ Sandridge Park (3428 Cates Bay Road)
This site has 1 ball field, 2 basketball courts, 1 tennis court, a playground, 1 picnic shelter, 4 picnic tables, 2 grills, and a concession stand on 5 acres.
- ❑ Waccamaw Park (2889 Lee's Landing Circle)
Waccamaw Park has 3 ball fields, 1 restroom, a playground, 1 picnic shelter, 2 picnic tables and a concession stand on 4 acres.
- ❑ White Oak Park (2737 New Home Road)
White Oak Park has 1 ball field on 7.17 acres.

County-owned Boat Landings

Waccamaw River

- ❑ Bucksville Landing
This landing has 2 ramps, a dock, is paved with 6 parking spaces and has .25 acres.
- ❑ Hootersville Landing (1460 Caines Landing Road)
This landing has 1 ramp, is unpaved and has .2 acres.
- ❑ Lee's Landing (485 River Road)
Lee's Landing has 1 ramp, is unpaved and has .5 acres.
- ❑ Pitch Landing (100 Pitch Landing Road)
Pitch Landing has 1 ramp, is unpaved and has .5 acres.
- ❑ Port Harrelson Landing (1900 Big Bull Landing)
This landing has 1 ramp, is unpaved and has 1.38 acres.
- ❑ Reeves Ferry Landing (588 Old Reaves Ferry Road)

Reeves Ferry Landing has 1 ramp, is paved with 26 spaces and has 6.8 acres.

- ❑ Savannah Bluff Landing (990 Waccamaw Drive)
Savannah Bluff Landing has 2 ramps, is unpaved and has 0.85 acres.

Little Pee Dee River

- ❑ Jordan Lake Landing (8620 Jordan Lake Road)
Jordan Lake Landing has 1 ramp, is unpaved and has .54 acres.
- ❑ Punch Bowl Landing (7099 Punch Bowl Road)
Punch Bowl Landing has 2 ramps, 1 dock, is paved with 25 parking spaces and has 2 acres.

Great Pee Dee River

- ❑ Yauhannah Landing (9300 Highway 701 South)
This landing has 2 ramps, 1 dock is paved with 30 parking spaces and has 1 acre.

Athletic Associations

In Horry County several athletic associations provide athletic programs, primarily Dixie Youth Baseball. In some instances the boards may provide other programs and manage parks owned by Horry County. Two of the associations, the Pee Dee Athletic Association and the Waccamaw Community Athletic Association offer opportunities for participation by Conway area youth.

The volunteer board of the Pee Dee Athletic Association manages the Dixie Youth Baseball program at Pee Dee Park. This program and any others are offered and coordinated by the volunteer board Pee Dee Park. Pee Dee Park is located at 7175 Marsh Dr. in Conway.

The volunteer board of the Waccamaw Community Athletic Association also provides Dixie Youth Baseball at Waccamaw and McNeil parks. Waccamaw Park is located at 2889 Lee's Landing Circle near Conway and McNeil Park is located at 2093 Sterrit Swamp Road, also near Conway. Management of these parks and their programs are also coordinated through Waccamaw's volunteer board.

Conway Medical Center's (CMC) Wellness and Fitness Center

The Conway Medical Center campus including the Wellness and Fitness Center is located on Singleton Ridge Road, between Highway 501 and Highway 544. The Center is an innovative approach to preventative health care. The objective of the Center is to reduce medical costs by providing opportunities for improved overall health. The Center offers an extensive variety of equipment, classes and programs to encourage members to exercise regularly. The facility and equipment include the following:

Facility & Equipment

- ❑ Indoor, heated pool with 2 lap lanes

- ❑ Aerobics studio
- ❑ Strength training equipment
- ❑ Free weights
- ❑ Climate controlled, indoor walking track
- ❑ Half Court basketball
- ❑ Racquetball court
- ❑ Child care room
- ❑ Whirlpool
- ❑ Saunas
- ❑ Full service locker rooms
- ❑ Massage therapy
- ❑ Conference rooms
- ❑ Physical Therapy
- ❑ Cardiac Rehabilitation
- ❑ Membership Amenities: 3 Sessions w/ a fitness instructor, towels, daily lockers, access to on-site child care, health education lectures, access to exercise counseling by a certified personal trainer, member lounge, member socials and pro shop

The staff members at the Center are certified in several areas as follows:

- ❑ CPR certified staff
- ❑ Certified aerobics instructors
- ❑ Certified swimming instructors
- ❑ Certified lifeguards
- ❑ Certified personal trainers
- ❑ Licensed massage therapists
- ❑ Certified Reiki (Japanese massage technique) practitioner
(Conway Wellness and Fitness Center)

Additional Amenities

Other services offered include therapeutic massage, personal training and nutritional counseling as well as a range of programs throughout the year. Members receive discounted rates on the above.
(Conway Medical Center)

Horry County Schools

Physical Education

Horry County Schools mission for its physical education programs is “to ensure that all students in Horry County receive adequate instruction in physical education. Such instruction shall be maintained at the level required by the state of South Carolina Department of Education as measured by the South Carolina Physical Education Assessment.” (Horry County Schools)

The South Carolina Physical Education Assessment Program (SCPEAP) is designed to do state level assessments of physical education programs in South Carolina. The state professional organization, the South Carolina Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance,

has been chosen by the South Carolina State Department of Education to collect data on the extent to which students in South Carolina school programs meet the state standards. (SCPEAP)

Athletics

Horry County Schools “basic education philosophy is to prepare students to become productive, contributing citizens of our community and society. A comprehensive program of student activities is vital to the educational development of students. The athletic program is an extension of this philosophy. The primary objective of the athletic program is that the participants have fun. While having fun, student athletes are expected good coaching, teaching and discipline.

Athletic programs offered at Conway High School and Carolina Forest High School in the fall are varsity and junior varsity (JV) football, varsity and JV volleyball, girls golf, varsity girl’s tennis, cross country, and cheerleading. Winter sports include varsity and JV basketball and varsity wrestling. Spring sports offered are varsity baseball and softball, JV baseball and softball, boy’s tennis, varsity and JV soccer, track and boy’s golf. Carolina Forest’s has freshman baseball and softball programs and a swim team.

Facilities

Horry County schools have a number of facilities within the Conway and Carolina Forest attendance area. Listed below are the facilities at schools where City youth attend. School locations are shown on **Map R/OS 1** in the appendix.

High Schools

Carolina Forest – A gymnasium, a practice gymnasium, a football stadium, baseball and softball fields, a track, four tennis courts, and basketball courts

Conway – A gymnasium, a practice gymnasium, a football stadium, baseball and softball fields, a track, five tennis courts, and basketball courts

Middle Schools

Black Water – A gymnasium and a playground/multi-purpose practice field

Former Carolina Forest (now part of high school) – A gymnasium and a playground/multi-purpose practice field

Conway – A gymnasium and a playground/multi-purpose practice area

Whittemore Park– A gymnasium and a playground/multi-purpose practice field

Elementary Schools

Carolina Forest – A multi-purpose room and a playground

Conway – A multi-purpose room and a playground and a walking track/field (used daily by the Conway community)

Homewood – A multi-purpose room and a playground

Kingston – A multi-purpose room and a playground

South Conway - – A multi-purpose room and a playground and basketball courts

Waccamaw – A multi-purpose room and a playground

Other School Facilities

Conway Education Center – Playground

Horry County Education Center - Playground

Coastal Carolina University/Horry Georgetown Technical College

Coastal Carolina University has a wide range of recreational facilities for its students and faculty. There are facilities and programs, which are offered to area citizens in the Conway area and throughout Horry County.

Quail Creek Golf Club

Quail Creek Golf Club, a par 72 golf course, is operated by the University's Professional Golf Management Program and maintained by Horry-Georgetown Technical College's Sports Turf Management Program. Quail Creek's practice facility offers an all grass driving range, practice bunker, and a 3,000 square foot putting green. The program offers tournaments, golf outings, corporate outings and clinics. (Coastal Carolina University)

A Better Lifestyle Experience (ABLE)

ABLE is offered by the Coastal Carolina Department of Campus Recreation to provide adults 50 and older opportunities for exercise, fitness and social interaction. The primary services provided by the staff (1 full time staff member and 3 part-time instructors) are water aerobics, land aerobics, weight training, and yoga. All staff members hold aqua/aerobic certifications. The program serves approximately 250 participants a year.

Community Fitness Testing Program

The Community Fitness Testing Program is run by the Department of Physical Education and Recreation and "is designed to provide both beginning and advanced exercisers a picture of their fitness and health status" (Coastal Carolina University). Three options are available for participants who are either beginning exercisers, intermediate exercisers or advanced exercisers. There is a cost associated with this community service, which is available to the general public. The service is provided at the Smith Exercise Science Laboratory at 101 Williams-Brice Building.

Other Coastal Carolina Programs and Events

The Department also provides swim lessons, aquatic programs and coaches a junior swim team. Yearly events sponsored by the Department include a 5K Race and a Triathlon.

Churches and Recreation

The City of Conway Recreation Department contracts with Friendship Baptist Church for use of their gymnasium to run the City's basketball program. Bethel Bible Chapel located on Grainger Road recently completed the construction of a gymnasium on their property. Other churches in the Conway area currently have plans for various types of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities as part of their overall development.

Private Sector Recreational/Fitness Opportunities

The private sector provides opportunities for recreational/fitness activities in the Conway area. The Grand Strand is known as a golf destination worldwide and several golf courses are located within short driving distance of Conway. There are also 2 fitness clubs located in the City limits as of 2008.

National and State Outdoor Recreation Areas

Waccamaw River National Wildlife Refuge

Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1997, to protect and manage diverse habitat components within an important coastal river ecosystem for the benefit of endangered and threatened species, freshwater and anadromous fish, migratory birds, and forest wildlife, including a wide array of plants and animals associated with bottomland hardwood habitats. The refuge has a total approved acreage of 49,732 but currently consists of 18,620 acres. Refuge headquarters are presently located in Georgetown, South Carolina. Waccamaw NWR includes portions of Georgetown, Horry and Marion counties along the Great and Little Pee Dee rivers and the Waccamaw River. Plans for a refuge/visitor center are currently underway. This facility will be located on Highway 701 South midway between Conway and Georgetown at Yauhannah Bluff, overlooking Yauhannah Lake. This facility will offer environmental education opportunities to local schools and communities as well as interpretation and information on the Waccamaw Refuge. (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

The refuge includes portions of the Great Pee Dee, Little Pee Dee and Waccamaw rivers. Habitats range from black water forested wetlands to tidal forested and emergent wetlands, which were once the mainstay of the lucrative Georgetown rice culture. These river systems and associated wetlands comprise a large portion of the Winyah Bay drainage basin and are an important component of the Winyah Bay ecosystem. (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

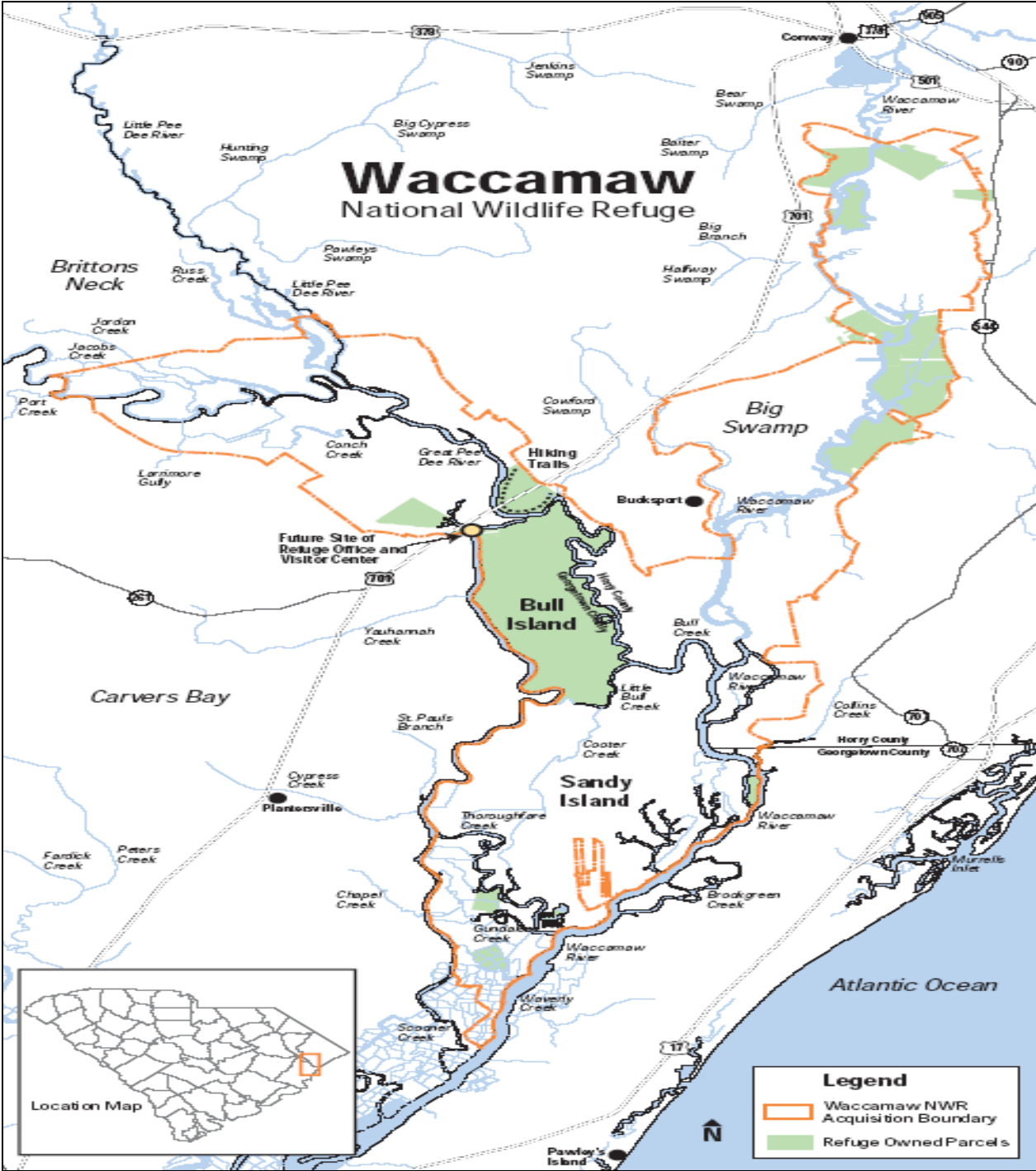
Over 400 species of animals are supported by the variety of habitats on the refuge, including 4 endangered species. Large concentrations of wintering waterfowl, wading birds and neo-tropical migratory songbirds utilize the refuge area which is also the northern most nesting area for swallow tailed kites. Refuge objectives include providing habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, raptors, neo-tropical migratory birds, and resident species. Environmental education and

interpretation, opportunities for hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation are also refuge objectives. (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

Permitted activities on the refuge include wildlife observation and photography, boating, canoeing and kayaking. Hunting is allowed for deer, turkey, hog, squirrel and waterfowl during refuge hunting season and freshwater fishing is allowed year-round. Hiking is permitted along the Great Pee Dee River and Bull Creek at the Highway 701 bridge just north of Yauhannah Lake. (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

A 340-acre tract owned by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service was annexed into the City of Conway in December of 2007. The plans for this site are centered on recreation and outdoor education. A boardwalk and connecting nature trails will be constructed and a canoe/kayak launch site will be put in place. Future plans also include a screened-in shelter for outdoor education and a Recreational Vehicle (RV) pad for volunteer-worker/camper programs to provide outdoor educational programs and site maintenance. (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

Map R/OS 4: Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge



Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve River Trail

The preserve protects 28 miles of the Waccamaw River. You can paddle all 28 miles, but the most convenient spot to start is Wortham's Landing. You will pass through bottomland hardwood forests for most of the entire length of the Preserve. (Department of Natural Resources)

Bird watching is a popular activity and best in the spring and fall. Waterfowl, wading birds, and birds of prey like the Mississippi kite and barred owls are seen. Also songbirds are present such as the Acadian and great-crowned flycatchers, bright yellow prothonotary warblers and other warblers, yellow-billed cuckoos and woodpeckers. Picnicing, swimming, and paddling are popular pastimes and fishing for bream and bass is done as well. There are no fees unless you are hunting or fishing. (Department of Natural Resources)

Otters, beavers, and other mammals are seen along the river. The Waccamaw River is home to the cottonmouth (water moccasin) and plenty harmless snakes and turtles. (Department of Natural Resources)

Access/Take-out Points

Mile 0 - Wortham's Ferry Landing - From US 17 in North Myrtle Beach, drive west on SC 9 for approximately 3.5 miles and turn right onto Horry County S-26-57. Drive 2.3 miles, turn left onto S-26-111, and continue to the landing.

Mile 5.5 Highway 9 Public Landing - From Wortham's Ferry Landing, drive east on Horry County S-26-111 and turn right onto S-26-57. Drive 2.3 miles and turn right onto SC 9. Drive 2.3 miles and turn right into the public parking area. The landing is at the base of the parking area.

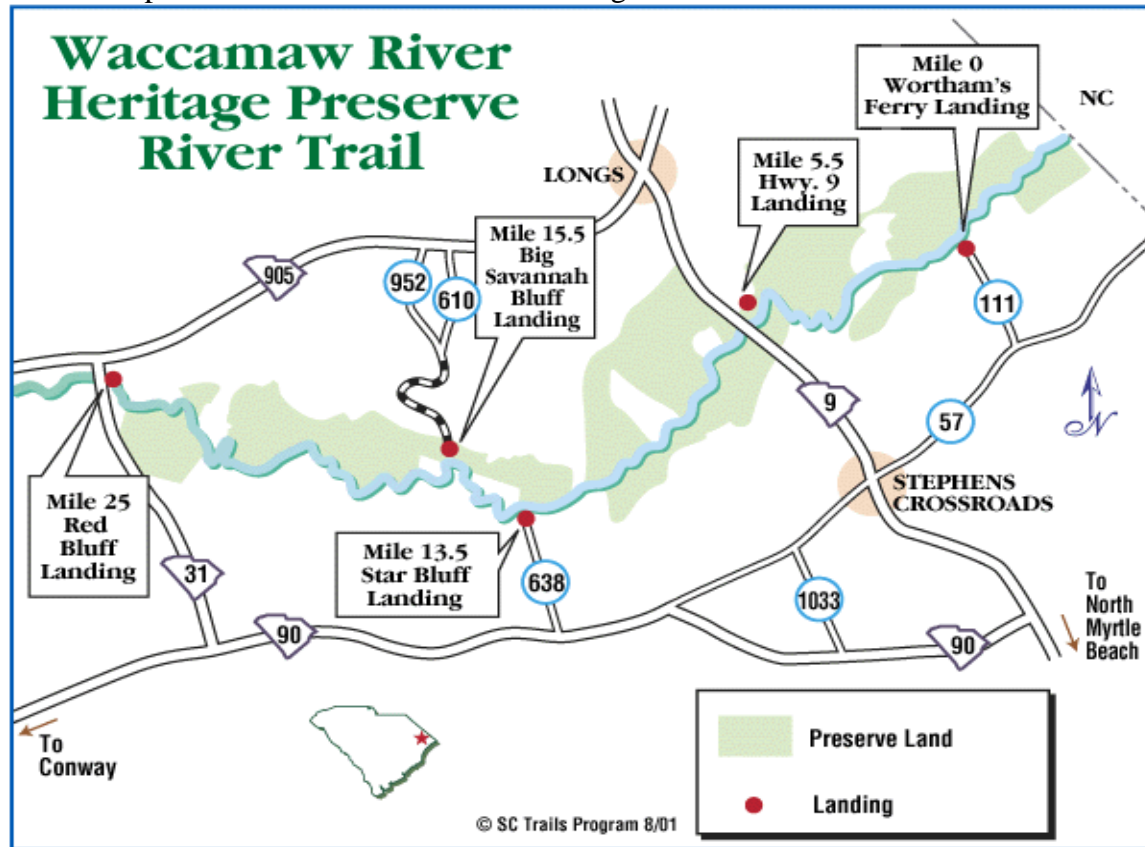
Mile 13.5 Star Bluff Landing - From the Highway 9 Public Landing, drive east to Stephens Crossroads and turn right onto Horry County S26-57 (joins SC 90). Drive 4.4 miles and turn right onto S-26-638. The landing is 1.5 miles.

Mile 15.5 - Big Savannah Bluff Landing - From Star Bluff Landing, drive east on Horry County S-26-638 and turn right onto SC 90. Drive 4 miles and turn right onto S-26-31. Drive 3.8 miles and turn right onto SC 905. Drive 4.1 miles and turn right onto S-26-952. After 3 miles, S26-952 becomes dirt. Continue for 4 miles on the dirt to the landing.

Mile 25 - Red Bluff Landing - From Big Savannah Landing, drive west on Horry County S-26-952 and turn left onto SC 905. Drive 4.1 miles and turn right onto S-26-31. The landing is at the bridge.

In late summer or fall when the water level is usually higher, people can navigate the river by motorboat, canoes or kayaks. There are numerous sandbars along the river. At just about anytime, people can put in canoes or kayaks. Paddlers can expect to travel 2 miles per hour at low water and 4 miles per hour at high water. Average paddle times from Wortham's Ferry to SC Highway 9 ramp is two hours; from SC Highway 9 ramp to Star Bluff, three and a half hours; from Star Bluff to Big Savannah Bluff, one hour and from Big Savannah Bluff to Red Bluff, four hours.

Map R/OS 5: Waccamaw River Heritage Preserve River Trail



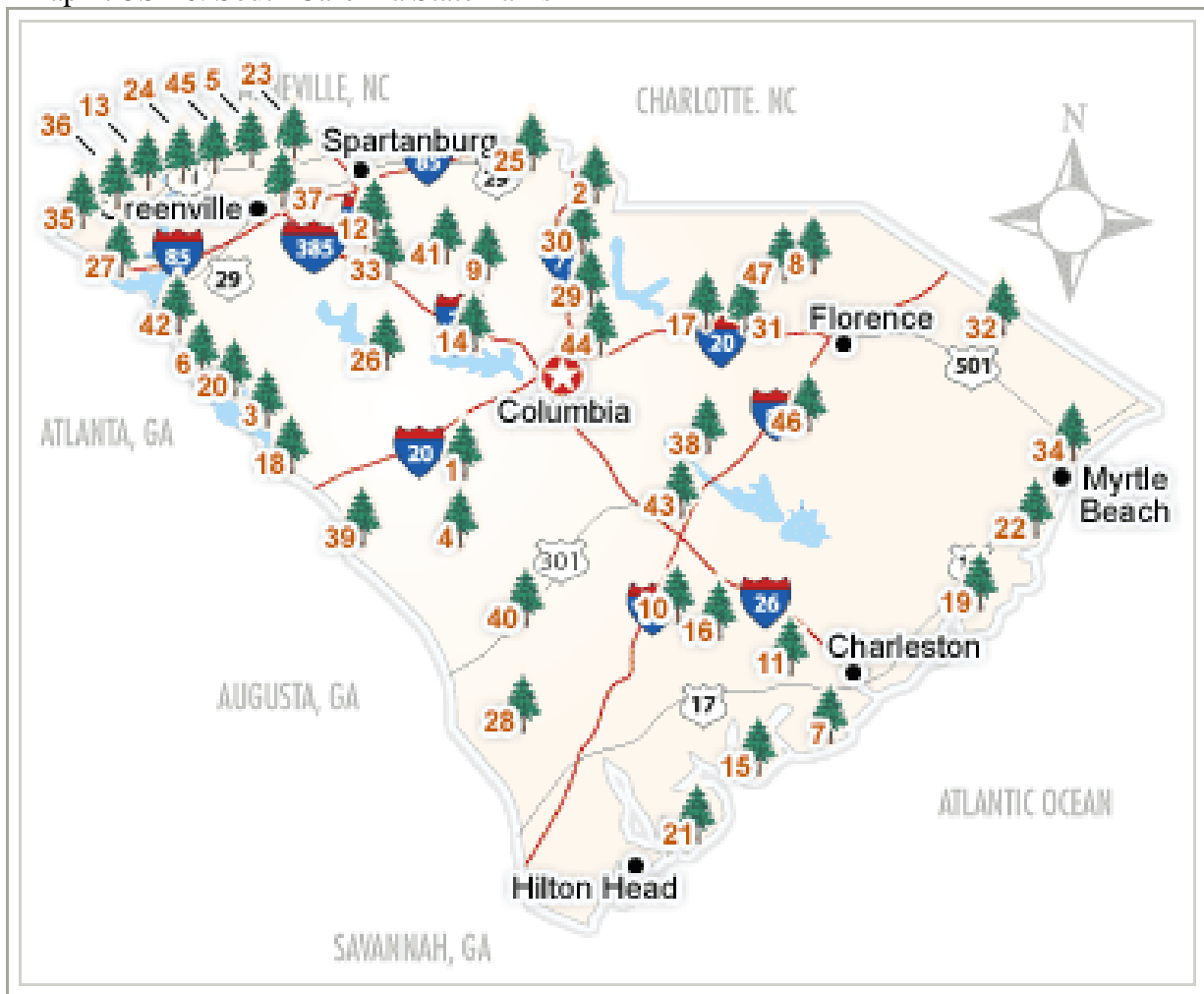
Source: S. C. Department of Natural Resources

State Parks

There are three South Carolina state parks within 50 miles of downtown Conway, Myrtle Beach State Park on Kings Highway (19 miles away), Huntington Beach State Park south of Murrells Inlet on Highway 17 (28 miles away) and Little Pee Dee State Park (48 miles away) in Dillon County. While Lake Waccamaw State Park is located in North Carolina it is included here since the lake is the source of the Waccamaw River and the only Carolina Bay that does so in the world. Lake Waccamaw State Park is only 61 miles away. Hiking, swimming, fishing and biking and camping are available at all of these state parks.

South Carolina state parks are shown on **Map R/OS – 6**. It is worth noting that the vast majority of state parks are concentrated in the mountains and along the lakes with only 11 parks located east of Interstate 95.

Map R/OS - 6: South Carolina State Parks



Source: South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism

Federal Programs and Grant Opportunities

There are a number of possible funding sources and agencies that offer technical assistance to cities. Listed below are some of the agencies, grant opportunities and programs.

Recreation/Open Space

United States Department of Agriculture

The U. S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has "programs that provide environmental, societal, financial and technical benefits with both on-site and off-site benefits". Programs benefits may include "an enhanced natural resource base that supports recreation" among other purposes. (USDA) For Conway, the USDA/NRCS and the Clemson Extension Service provide technical assistance and assistance for funding requests. Their offices are located in the Horry County Industrial Park.

Trust for Public Land

They are currently working with municipalities in the region to help conserve land for recreation and spiritual nourishment and to improve the health and quality of communities. They played a major role in establishing the Waccamaw National Wildlife Refuge.

Transportation Enhancement Program

Funds are allocated by the South Carolina Department of Transportation through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (also known as TEA-21). These funds can be used for a number of projects, including providing safe and educational facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, scenic beautification, rehabilitation of historic transportation buildings and addressing environmental problems caused by highway runoff. SCDOT works directly with GSATS in this region of South Carolina.

Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism grants:

Recreation Land Trust Fund

This fund provides matching grants for eligible entities for the land acquisition for recreational uses.

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

LWCF provides matching grants to local governments for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Applications for this grant are due annually.

Park & Recreation Development Fund

The fund provides matching grants to eligible entities within the state for development of new recreational facilities or renovation of existing recreational facilities.

South Carolina Conservation Bank

While many funding programs have increased very little or even decreased in recent years, significant progress has been made since the 2002 SCORP, particularly in the area of land conservation. The SC Conservation Bank Act launched the State's first conservation land bank program for the purchase of land and easements. The Bank has provided more than \$70 million for the conservation of more than 134,000 acres of land since 2004. Although limited, funding for recreation programs and facilities in some local jurisdictions was enhanced through a wide range of methods such as partnerships, tax allocations, and one-time capital funding.

Greenway/Bike and Pedestrian Trails

South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism grant program:

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program, under the direction of the Federal Highway Administration, provides matching grants to eligible entities for the development of trails for use by hikers, ATVs, motorcycles, equestrians and/or mountain bikes.

Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse

This resource catalogues several regional specific grants sources and offers useful technical assistance.

Safe Routes to Schools

This program, which has grant opportunities, is geared toward creating walking and biking improvements for students with an emphasis on safety while fighting childhood obesity. The program is a Federal Highway Administration initiative with responsibilities for administering the grants given to the S. C. Department of Transportation.

National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was an outgrowth of the recommendations of a Presidential commission, the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC). Among other things, the commission recommended that the nation protect wild rivers and scenic rivers from development that would substantially change their wild or scenic nature. The act was signed into law October 2, 1968. A river or river section may be designated by the U.S. Congress or the Secretary of the Interior. As of 2006, a total of 165 rivers in 38 states stretching 11,000 miles have wild and scenic status. (National Wild and Scenic River System)

Designation as a wild and scenic river is not the same as designation as a national park, and does not generally does not confer the same level of protection as a Wilderness Area designation. Instead of enacting strict and mandatory conservation measures, the goal is often to preserve the character of a river. (National Wild and Scenic River System)

South Carolina Scenic River Program

The South Carolina Rivers Act of 1989, established the South Carolina Scenic Rivers Program to protect “unique or outstanding scenic, recreational, geologic, botanical, fish, wildlife, historic or cultural values” of selected rivers or river segments in the state. The goal of the program is the conservation of South Carolina’s river heritage through the proper management of the natural and cultural character of the state’s river corridor. (Envision 2025)

The basic method of river corridor protection is a cooperative, voluntary management program created by landowners, community interests, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. The intent of the program is to bring landowners together to study the river and key river issues and to address these issues and management practices on lands bordering the river. Together, landowners and other interested parties in the community develop a scenic river management plan that recommends long term management strategies oriented toward preserving traditional uses of the river and the preservation of the scenic beauty of the river corridor. (Envision 2025)

Nine South Carolina river segments have been designated State Scenic Rivers to date – the Middle Saluda, Little Pee Dee (US 378 to the Great Pee Dee River), Lower Saluda, Broad, Lynches, Ashley, Black, Great Pee Dee, and Little Pee Dee (Dillon County). Several others are considered eligible – Congaree, Whitewater, Thompson, Edisto, and Little Pee Dee/Lumber.

Recreation and Open Space Planning

Recreation/ Open Space Master Plans

With the growth that has taken place in Conway with new construction and annexation especially across the Waccamaw River, in the Long Avenue Extension area and along major corridors the City may need to consider the development of a Recreation/Open Space Master Plan in order to provide direction for public expenditures in the expansion of its recreation programs and parks and the protection/preservation of open space.

The master plan would include a needs assessment based on demand and population numbers and projections, a detailed inventory of existing facilities, which will help determine the need for more facilities. Also based on the National Park and Recreation Association guidelines and established by the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism in its State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) are park and facility standards for the various kinds of parks (neighborhood, district, community and regional). This section would be included to address the communities overall needs, and provide guidance for capital improvements estimates and plans for future funding.

Trails, parks and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home, according to 2,000 recent homebuyers surveyed in 2002 by the National Association of Home Builders and National Association of Realtors. There is a direct correlation between a community's proximity to parks and greenways and increased property values, tax revenues and aesthetics to businesses and workers. (The Economics of Urban Park Planning, National Recreation and Park Association)

Many communities feel park and recreation facilities are a key element in assuring economic vitality. A comprehensive and strategic plan for parks and recreation facilities at the state, regional or local level can enhance opportunities for economic development by facilitating effective park site selection, program development and financing. Effective strategic planning is the first step in achieving a community's vision for parks and recreation and contributing to economic development and providing social and environmental benefits. (The Economics of Urban Park Planning, National Recreation and Park Association)

The open space section would inventory areas to be protected and preserved based on a variety of criteria. The inventory and identification of wetlands, floodplain and floodway areas, scenic and fragile areas, critical wildlife habitat, areas where fragmentation could occur, corridors adjacent to water resources, existing open space in order to potentially capitalize of their locations and any other criteria that is determined to be important.

A crucial part of the open space component will be to determine if and how some of these areas can be for recreation. Many of these fragile areas need to be preserved and care should be taken to assure that if recreation there will be no negative impacts. Key to any use of these areas will be their management and proper maintenance.

For both the recreation and open components a funding strategy should be developed to allow for implementation of the plan. Items to consider are the existing open space inventory, partnerships, grants and foundations, private sector participation, and the open space fee in lieu and other sources that may be available.

Volunteers can be important for the management and development of a recreation and open space program. The Master Plan should outline in detail how to implement a successful volunteer recruiting and retention effort.

South Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan for 2002 and Draft for 2008

The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is South Carolina's official outdoor recreation plan and serves as a guide to Federal, State and local governmental agencies and non-profit and private sector entities involved in recreation and natural resources planning and development. The purpose of the plan is to consider outdoor recreation issues relating to the needs of both residents and visitors to South Carolina, examine the State's recreational resources, analyze demand for recreational opportunities, develop an implementation program to address identified needs and issues, identify funding opportunities, and identify issues of state and national importance. The South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) is the designated agency responsible for outdoor recreation planning in the State to include the update of the SCORP every five years. (South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism)

Part of the 2002 and 2008 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans consisted of recreation participation surveys conducted by the by the University of South Carolina Institute for Public Affairs for the South Carolina in 1999 and 2005 for the S. C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism to provide guidance for state and regional parks and recreation planning. Included in the SCORP plan is a need for regions to develop Regional Outdoor Recreation Plans (RORP's). To date, according to the Waccamaw Regional Planning Commission, there is no RORP for the Waccamaw Region (Horry, Georgetown and Williamsburg counties). Horry County, in the early to mid 2000's, prepared a recreation plan but it was never formally adopted. In 2008, the Horry County Planning Department and Parks and Recreation Department are preparing to address parks, recreation and open space once again.

Regardless of the lack of a regional or county plan at this time, **Tables R/OS 1 and R/OS 2** taken from the 2002 and 2008 SCORP provide Conway with a good source of information regarding area participation in recreation activities. Worth noting are activities that scored high and support the need for implementation of the Greenway Plan. Walking, biking, jogging/running, hiking and water related and nature-based activities are all popular in the Waccamaw region.

Interesting as well, is the ranking of golf finishing only 21st out of 49 activities listed in 1999 and only 19th of 46 activities in 2005. Golf is, however, more popular in this region as of 2005, at 26.7 percent than the statewide total of 21.1 percent. Freshwater fishing in 1999 was more popular than saltwater fishing by a 32.4 percent (18th) total compared to 21.6 percent (27th) for saltwater fishing. In 2005 both increased with freshwater fishing climbing to 13th with 33.6% participation and saltwater fishing increasing to 29.2 % participation and rising to number 17th. The SCORP can provide additional information

that would be useful should Conway decide to pursue a recreation master plan. Horry County's efforts to address recreation and open space will also be helpful in planning for Conway's recreation needs.

Table R/OS 1: Statewide and Waccamaw Region Recreation Participation – 1999

		Waccamaw Region	Statewide
1	Walking for pleasure or exercise	85.4	82.8
2	Beach swimming/Sunbathing	68.8	63.1
3	Going to a movie	66.7	66.8
4	Pool swimming	60.7	56.4
5	Attending outdoor sporting events	60.6	62.1
6	Driving for pleasure	60.2	61.9
7	Attending music concerts	60.1	48.1
8	Visiting historic sites	55.3	51.3
9	Weights and exercise machines	52.5	52.5
10	Attending a play or live theater	49.0	38.8
11	Picnicking	47.0	55.7
12	Bicycling	43.5	38.8
13	Visiting a museum	42.6	40.2
14	Motor boating	37.9	33.0
15	Bird watching	36.9	35.2
16	Watching wildlife	36.3	36.5
17	Playing basketball	34.8	36.5
18	Freshwater fishing	32.4	38.0
19	Visiting a zoo	32.3	38.3
20	Visiting an amusement park	31.3	35.6
21	Golf	27.7	22.1
22	Jogging/Running	27.1	25.2
23	Visiting an unusual natural feature	26.8	28.5
24	Guided nature trail/study	25.1	24.5
25	Lake/River swimming	23.3	30.5
26	Off-road vehicle riding	22.9	19.1
27	Salt water fishing	21.6	4.4
28	Attending an auto race	20.8	17.9
29	Playing volleyball	20.7	22.1
30	Camping	20.6	24.7
31	Playing baseball	17.7	16.6
32	Playing softball	17.2	16.9
33	Hiking	15.8	18.9
34	Playing football	14.8	18.4
35	Hunting	12.7	14.4
36	Playing tennis	12.4	14.6
37	Skateboarding	10.6	13.1
38	Shellfishing/Shrimping	9.8	8.7
39	Other shooting sports	9.6	10.4
40	Jet skiing	8.0	11.1
41	Playing soccer	7.9	8.2
42	Canoeing, kayaking, rafting	7.5	8.1
43	Water skiing	7.0	8.4
44	Horseback riding	6.9	8.0
45	Rock climbing, rappelling	5.1	3.9
46	Sailing	3.5	3.4
47	Hunting dog field trials	2.5	2.5
48	Inline hockey	1.5	0.9
49	Sailboarding/Windsurfing	0.5	0.6

Source: University of South Carolina Institute of Public Affairs/South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Notes: 1) Survey is for ages 12 and older.

2) Activities shown in bold were eliminated on the 2005 survey.

Table R/OS 2: Statewide and Waccamaw Region Recreation Participation – 2005

		Waccamaw Region	Statewide
1	Walking for pleasure or exercise	84.5	83.2
2	Beach swimming/sunbathing	69.6	62.5
3	Driving for pleasure	61.3	58.2
4	Attending outdoor sporting events	57.9	63.4
5	Pool swimming	57.3	53.2
6	Visiting historical sites	56.0	52.1
7	Weights and exercise machines	48.1	57.1
8	Bicycling	46.8	42.8
9	Picnicking	46.0	53.4
10	Watching wildlife	43.5	33.4
11	Visiting a museum	40.1	38.4
12	Motor boating	34.1	34.1
13	Freshwater fishing	33.6	37.2
14	Playing basketball	31.9	34.5
15	Visiting a zoo	31.4	34.1
16	Off-road vehicle riding	29.5	23.5
17	Salt water fishing	29.2	16.2
18	Visiting an unusual natural feature	27.7	34.7
19	Golf	26.7	21.1
20	Lake/River swimming	26.5	28.0
21	Jogging/Running	25.2	33.9
22	Guided nature trail/study	22.6	20.2
23	Bird watching	21.4	20.2
24	Camping	19.3	23.1
25	Playing volleyball	19.0	17.2
26	Playing tennis	18.4	14.3
27	Playing football	17.4	22.4
28	Attending an auto race	15.6	11.1
29	Playing baseball	13.8	15.9
30	Shellfishing/Shrimping	13.3	7.1
31	Playing softball	13.2	13.5
32	Hunting	13.0	13.6
33	Canoeing, kayaking, rafting	12.5	10.7
34	Other shooting sports	12.5	12.0
35	Driving a motorcycle for pleasure	11.2	11.1
36	Hiking	9.1	18.2
37	Jet skiing	8.4	11.8
38	Playing soccer	5.7	7.6
39	Skateboarding, in-line skating, roller skating	5.6	10.0
40	Horseback riding	5.5	9.1
41	Geocaching and orienteering	4.2	2.5
42	Water skiing	4.0	6.1
43	Sailing	3.8	2.7
44	Hunting dog field trials	2.0	2.2
45	Rock climbing, rappelling	1.6	6.1
46	In-line hockey	0.2	1.2

Source: University of South Carolina Institute of Public Affairs/South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Notes: 1) Ages 12 and older.

2) Activities shown in bold were not on the list in 1999.

Comprehensive Plan Community Workshops Results

The City held three Community Workshops to receive public input and provide guidance for developing the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Recreation/Open Space was one of the topics highlighted in addition to the required elements in order to receive input during the workshops.

The public input opportunities included:

- ❑ A survey/questionnaire
- ❑ Written comments taken at 10 “stations” with boards describing plan elements or topics
- ❑ Voting on the written comments
- ❑ Verbal comments.

The questionnaire allowed citizens to: (1) Rank city services from Very Satisfied to Very Dissatisfied and (2) rank quality of life issues from Very Important to Very Unimportant. Table R/OS 3 show the results of the questionnaire that relate to recreation and open space.

Table R/OS 3: Community Workshop Questionnaire Results

Service	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Average	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Willing to pay additional taxes
Sidewalk availability	5	24	21	14	8	5
Street connectivity	13	31	17	6	1	1
Recreation programs	8	17	27	10	6	1
Access to the river	16	24	23	6	2	1
Access to parks	9	22	31	7	2	2
# of recreational facilities	5	18	22	17	9	6
Diversity of recreation opportunities	9	12	29	14	3	5
Maintenance of existing parks	13	23	28	4	1	2
Issue	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Willing to pay additional taxes
Open space preservation	39	18	7	2	1	4
Access to off street walking/bike trails	41	20	4	2	1	5
Preservation of wildlife habitat	37	18	11	1	1	6
River protection/preservation	43	19	4	1	1	6
Streetscape & corridor beautification	43	20	1	2	1	6
Wetland protection	38	19	9	1	1	5

Source: City of Conway Planning Department

The written input and voting that was received concerning recreation and open space is summarized under general categories as follows:

- ❑ Facility (gymnasium, etc.) including pool (46 votes)
- ❑ Parks, including mini-parks, community parks and more ball fields (36 votes)
- ❑ Walking and biking trails/off road (23 votes)
- ❑ Sidewalks for walking (21 votes)
- ❑ River protection and enhancements including eco-tourism (20 votes)
- ❑ Bike lanes and on-street improvements (18 votes)
- ❑ Open space preservation/development regulations to require dedications (18 votes)

- ❑ Expanded recreational programs (12 votes)
- ❑ Expand and improve existing parks (11 votes)
- ❑ Natural resource protection and environmental education (6 votes)

The information above from the Community Workshops would serve as a good source of information to guide the development of a recreation master plan.

Summary of Findings

While the City of Conway has a variety of park properties, public input at the Community Workshops indicates a strong desire for expansion of parks, open space with trails, and a wider variety of programs. Many residents expressed the need for a gymnasium/fitness facility with a pool. The City is currently pursuing a Community Center project and should complete this key element of the City's recreation facilities within the next few years.

The City through annexation has extended its boundary to include a large area across the Waccamaw River and along Long Avenue Extension. These neighborhoods are in need of park facilities convenient to these Conway areas.

Bike routes and bike trails for biking as well as sidewalks and trails for walking are included in the City's Greenway Master Plan. The City should begin to take the necessary steps for completing projects that ultimately will result in a series of biking and walking opportunities throughout Conway. The adoption of a Complete Streets program would be a significant step in helping to advance the Greenway Plan.

The City has requirements for open space dedication from developers when residential development occurs. There is also a fee in lieu option, which some developers opt for rather than dedicating property.

The Crabtree Swamp Stream Restoration Initiative was begun in 2007 to explore ways to restore and enhance the appearance of the Crabtree Canal. The City includes the Crabtree Canal Trail as a project in the Greenway Plan and the Initiative hopes to make the areas around Crabtree Canal an amenity as well.

Horry County has seven parks and one undeveloped park within ten minutes of downtown Conway. They range in size from .2 acres with two tennis courts to 25 acres with 12 soccer fields and two rugby fields. The County also has ten boat ramps on three rivers within 30 miles of downtown Conway with several within ten minutes of downtown.

Athletic Associations work throughout Horry County in conjunction with the County Parks system to offer baseball through the Dixie Youth organization as well as other programs. The Pee Dee and Waccamaw Community athletic associations offer programs for Conway area youths.

The Conway Medical Center operates its Wellness and Fitness Center as part of its preventative health care efforts. The Center has an indoor heated pool, half court basketball court, racquetball court and indoor walking track along with classes, programs, and equipment to encourage its members to exercise regularly.

Horry County Schools provide physical education and athletic programs for Conway students in the Carolina Forest and Conway attendance zones. The twelve schools and two education centers have a variety of recreational and athletic facilities.

Coastal Carolina University (CCU) and Horry Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) offer recreational opportunities to the Conway area at Quail Creek Golf Club. CCU operates the course and HGTC maintains the facility as part of its Sports Turf Management Program.

CCU also offers A Better Life Experience with exercise programs for adults 50 and older and swim lessons and aquatics programs for the area's citizens. Yearly events sponsored by CCU include a 5K Race and a Triathlon.

Churches and the private sector provide recreational and fitness opportunities for area residents. The City of Conway contracts with Friendship Baptist Church for use of their gymnasium to run the City's basketball program.

Outdoor recreation at the state and national level includes the Waccamaw River National Wildlife Refuge with 18,620 acres including several tracts along the Waccamaw River. A recent purchase by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been annexed into the City Limits of Conway.

The Heritage Trust Program owns several tracts along the River north of Conway. The 28-mile trail has five landings for the public to use.

There is only one state park in Horry County – Myrtle Beach State Park. Two other parks, Huntington Beach and Little Pee Dee State Park are with 50 miles of Conway. Lake Waccamaw State Park in North Carolina is only 61 miles from Conway.

There is a National Wild and Scenic River program and a South Carolina Scenic River program that offers different levels of protection and planning opportunities. The City should consider partnering with other agencies to seek state scenic river status for the Waccamaw River.

Numerous federal programs and grants provide guidance and financial assistance for communities such as Conway. Area offices can provide assistance in finding out about programs and funding sources.

The South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department completed its last State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) in 2002. Currently drafted but not completed is the 2008 Plan (SCORP). Along with the Community Workshop public input results the City has participation preferences that is beneficial in determining what programs and facilities to offer the Conway area. It also is an excellent resource to identify funding sources and other information for recreation planning and development.

The development of a Recreation Master Plan would serve the City well in providing guidance for providing recreational opportunities for its citizens and visitors. As Conway continues to grow the demand for recreational facilities for both active and passive recreation will also need to be addressed. Partnerships with other recreation and fitness providers may serve the City well in meeting these future needs.

Primary Goal

Work to create a comprehensive recreation program with quality facilities for all ages to fully participate in a wide variety of active and passive recreation activities. Stay abreast of current national trends in fitness and recreation to meet the needs of Conway area citizens. Develop an open space policy and management strategies to protect and improve the area's natural resource base and expand the amount of open space of Conway. Encourage volunteer participation in all recreation and open space programs and projects.

Goal 1: Comprehensive and Strategic Planning **Develop a recreation/open space master plan.**

Objective 1: Assemble background information for use in a recreation/open space master plan.

Strategies: Research further or conduct survey(s) to determine participation preferences for types of recreational/open space activities

Assemble information to identify future trends in recreation/open space.

Determine the demand for recreational/open space facilities, parks and programs based on population projections and other pertinent information for the Conway area.

Consider hiring a consultant to complete a recreation/open space master plan

Objective 2: Seek to partner with other recreation/open space providers in offering recreational/open space opportunities in Conway. Identify options/ideas for a greater Conway area master plan to meet the long-term needs.

Strategies: Schedule meetings with Horry County Parks and Recreation, Horry County Planning, Conway Medical Center/Wellness and Fitness Center, Horry County Schools, Coastal Carolina University, the private sector and non-profit organizations and others to plan recreation, open space and fitness programs.

Meet with natural resource agencies, the private sector, non-profit organizations and others to discuss joint efforts in providing recreation and open space management and use, especially along the Waccamaw River, Kingston Lake and Crabtree Canal.

Goal 2: Active Recreation **Continue to expand active recreation/open space opportunities for the Conway area.**

Objective 1: Offer a wide range of indoor and outdoor recreation and open space facilities.

Strategies: Complete the Community Center to include at least a pool and gymnasium as supported by the input from the Community Workshops that is in the

planning stages in 2008.

Continue the efforts of the Bike and Pedestrian Committee to provide walking trails and sidewalk expansions/improvements and bike routes and trails.

Complete the Waccamaw River Blueways Trail from Crabtree Canal to Jackson Bluff Landing.

Identify areas of Conway that are in need of parks/open space in order to provide convenient recreational opportunities for all of Conway.

Research and apply for grants, which accelerate the completion of recreational/open space projects.

Seek technical assistance from regional, state and federal agencies.

Objective 2: Seek cooperative agreements with the various recreation providers to meet short-term goals for improving recreational/open space facilities and programs.

Strategies: Meet with Horry County Parks and Recreation to coordinate park/open space expansions/improvements in the Conway area.

Meet with the Horry County Schools and others to explore partnership opportunities and use agreements.

Goal 3: Passive Recreation/Open Space
Provide passive recreational activities for Conway.

Objective 1: Develop facilities for and information/promotional about passive recreation opportunities. Promote business opportunities for eco-tourism.

Strategies: Develop within the Visitor Center, along the Riverwalk, and/or the Marina Facility interpretive displays and audio-visual media marketing to promote heritage tourism and eco-tourism activities and environmental education programs in the Conway area.

Create incentives for and promote eco-tourism business development.

Develop wildlife viewing and bird watching locations in areas suited for these activities. Develop a series of interpretive/interactive displays for promoting these pastimes.

Integrate the greenway system, wetlands, floodplain and other sensitive and strategic areas into the Land Use Element recommendations to facilitate their protection and further offer recreational opportunities when appropriate. Consider overlay zones to address development issues.

Meet with Horry County Planning Department to develop a cooperative effort in providing open space in the Conway area.

Seek grants and technical assistance to facilitate completion of projects.

Goal 4: The Economics of Recreation/Open Space

Consider the economic impact recreation planning and implementation may create for the Conway community.

Objective 1: Research how other communities have effectively impacted their economic condition through comprehensive and strategic recreation/open space planning. Select cities in South Carolina that have been successful in capitalizing on their efforts.

Strategies: Gather information from Rock Hill concerning their targeted efforts in soccer (Manchester Meadows) and softball tournaments (Cherry Hill Park).

Explore the possibilities of a cooperative approach similar to Anderson County and the City of Anderson with their Sports and Entertainment Complex.

Research the City of Aiken's success in achieving positive economic benefits through recreation tournaments etc., for example, with soccer tournaments.

Consider including these findings in the Master Plan.

Objective 2: Develop economic base information regarding the economic importance of natural resources.

Strategies: Research the topic as part of the Horry County Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

Assemble information from various governmental agencies, educational institutions, and research entities for economic base data and sustainable economic strategies.

Objective 3: Research the local economic impact of active and passive recreation programs and facilities, including those that utilize open space and natural areas.

Strategy: Conduct research to assess and demonstrate the full economic value of active and passive recreation programs and facilities to the communities of the City of Conway and Horry County.

Conduct research to assess and demonstrate the economic value of open space, natural areas, and outdoor recreation to the communities of the City of Conway and Horry County.

Identify ways to generate public support for acquisition of open space, natural areas, and recreational facilities.

Objective 4: Seek secure and dedicated funding for open space and recreational facilities and activities.

Strategy: Establish a dedicated fund for open space and recreation to be utilized by a fee-in-lieu program, private donations, and/or budget allocations to complete priorities identified in the recreation and open space master plan.

Enable the dedicated fund, through appropriate policy and rule changes, to be financially viable for utilization by the development community to meet open space requirements.

Aggressively pursue grant funding opportunities that leverage local government funds for active and passive recreation priorities in the recreation and open space master plan.

Goal 5: Health and Fitness

Promote and foster efforts to make Conway a fit and healthy community.

Objective 1: Establish cooperative efforts with the Horry County Schools, the Conway Medical Center, and Coastal Carolina University to develop programs to advance fitness and health initiatives.

Strategies: Meet with representatives from Conway Medical Center, Horry County Schools, Coastal Carolina University and others to discuss programs for youths and adults which targets physical fitness and health especially those populations which are susceptible to obesity.

Research information available from the National Institute of Health including grants that may be available.

Create a spot and/or links on the City's website for health, fitness and diet tips.

Interview representatives from the Conway Medical Center to discuss health issues and programs on the City Access Channel.

Consider a community-wide effort to promote Conway as a fit and healthy community similar to programs in other communities.

Continue to seek funds and solicit Horry County Schools' support in the Safe Routes to Schools program through the Federal Highway Administration and the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

Include people with disabilities in the planning of all recreation and open space facilities to address their health and fitness needs. Meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Strategies: Include health and fitness concepts in the efforts to expand the Farmers' Market.

Goal 6: Environmental Quality, Attractive Facilities, and Quality of Life
Support efforts to improve and address environmental issues, improve the attractiveness of recreational facilities and natural areas in order to enhance and expand the recreational/open space opportunities and quality of life in the Conway area.

Objective 1: Meet regularly with natural resource agencies to identify ways to assist in their efforts to provide a cleaner environment, knowing that a cleaner environment expands recreational opportunities.

Strategies: Support the efforts of the Crabtree Swamp Stream Restoration Initiative, KLEAN, the Waccamaw Watershed Academy and the Riverkeeper® Programs, and the Coastal Waccamaw Stormwater Education Consortium to raise environmental awareness and improve the water quality of the Kingston Watershed and the Waccamaw River.

Initiate efforts to have the Waccamaw River designated as a State Scenic River. Communicate with interested groups about protecting the Waccamaw River in North Carolina.

Include in Riverfest activities that highlight the history of Conway as a historic river town. Include environmental education and eco-tourism events as part of the event.

Explore cooperative efforts to preserve the River with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the South Carolina Heritage Trust Program/Department of Natural Resources and Santee Cooper.

Expand the City's participation in the Tree City USA program with a major event for the City's 25th anniversary of being a Tree City in 2009.

Objective 2: Promote efforts to improve the appearance of Conway's recreational facilities and open space.

Strategies: Establish a "Friends of the Parks/Open Space" fund to accept donations for park and open space projects.

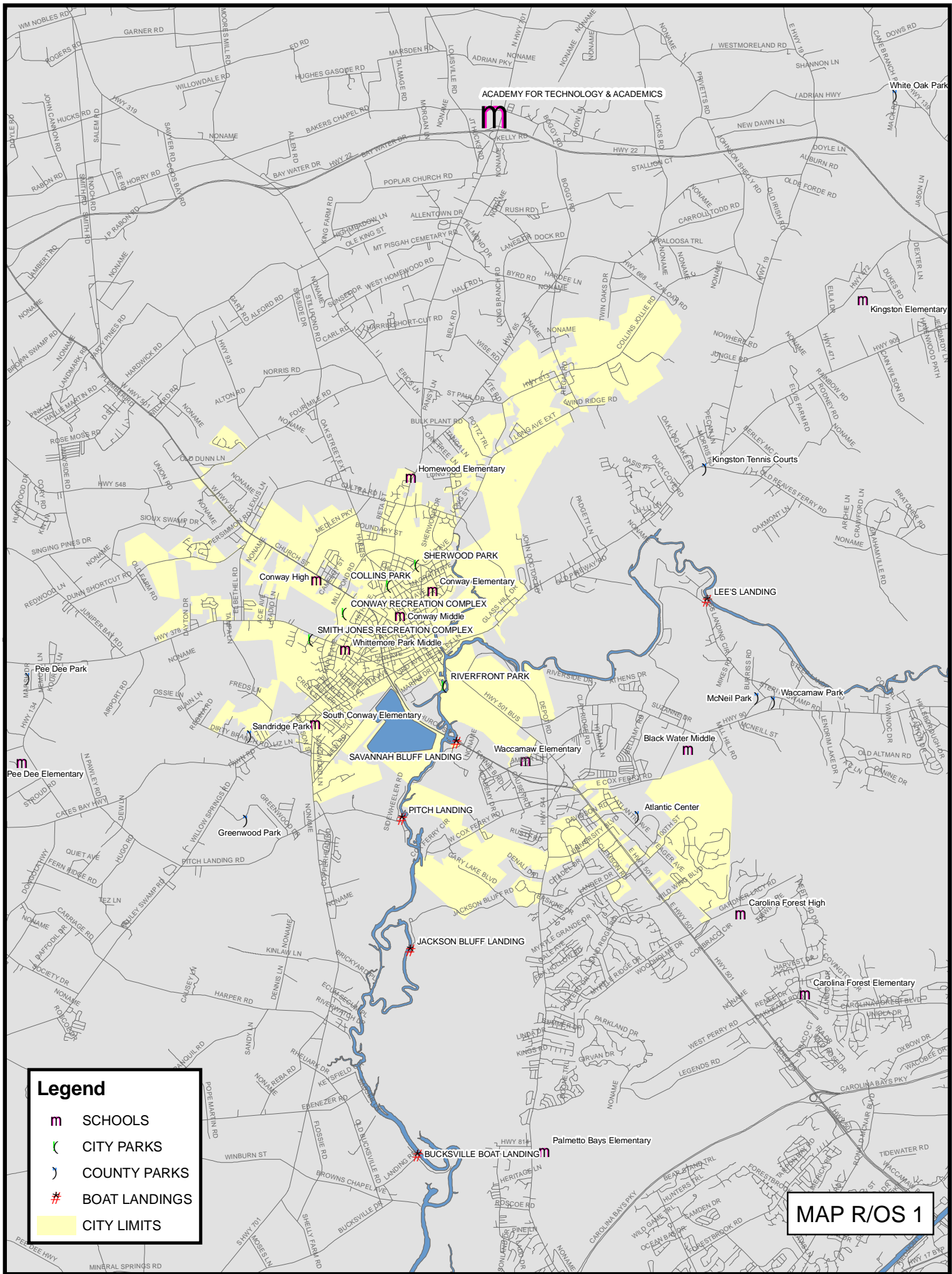
Promote more participation in the city and river cleanup efforts that take place several times yearly.

Identify public projects that may attract private donations such as has taken place in Spartanburg, for example.

Support and promote cleanup and beautification efforts as neighborhood initiatives not just the City's responsibility.

Promote and provide support for Keep Conway Beautiful.

Develop a volunteer program for recreation, open space and beautification programs and projects.



ACADEMY FOR TECHNOLOGY & ACADEMICS

m

White Oak Park

m Kingston Elementary

m Homewood Elementary

m SHERWOOD PARK

m Conway Elementary

m Conway Middle

m Smith Jones Recreation Complex

m Whittemore Park Middle

m South Conway Elementary

m Sandridge Park

m Savannah Bluff Landing

m Pitch Landing

m Jackson Bluff Landing

m BUCKSVILLE BOAT LANDING

m Palmetto Bays Elementary

m Waccamaw Elementary

m Black Water Middle

m Atlantic Center

m Carolina Forest High

m Carolina Forest Elementary

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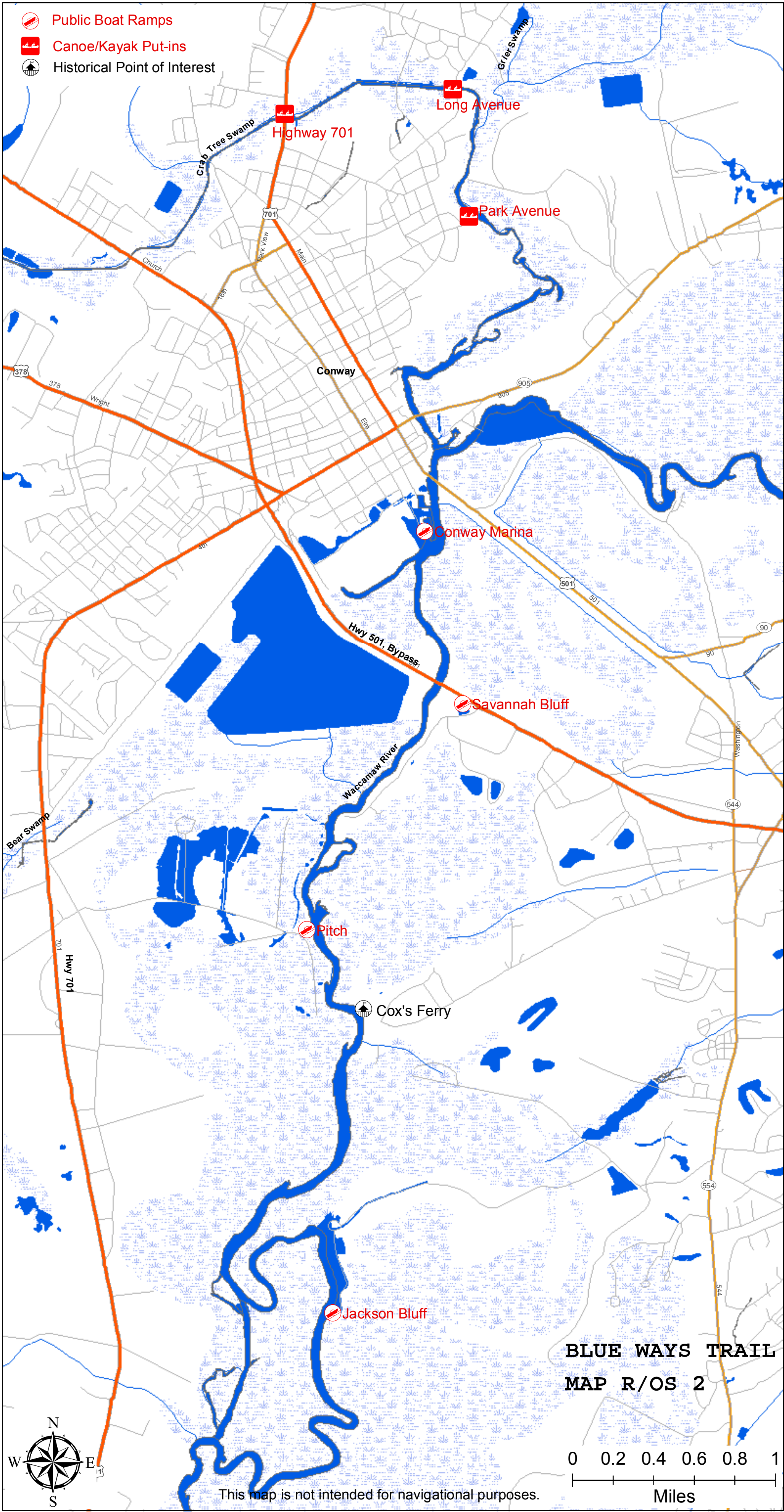
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Legend

- m SCHOOLS
- () CITY PARKS
- () COUNTY PARKS
- * BOAT LANDINGS
- YELLOW CITY LIMITS

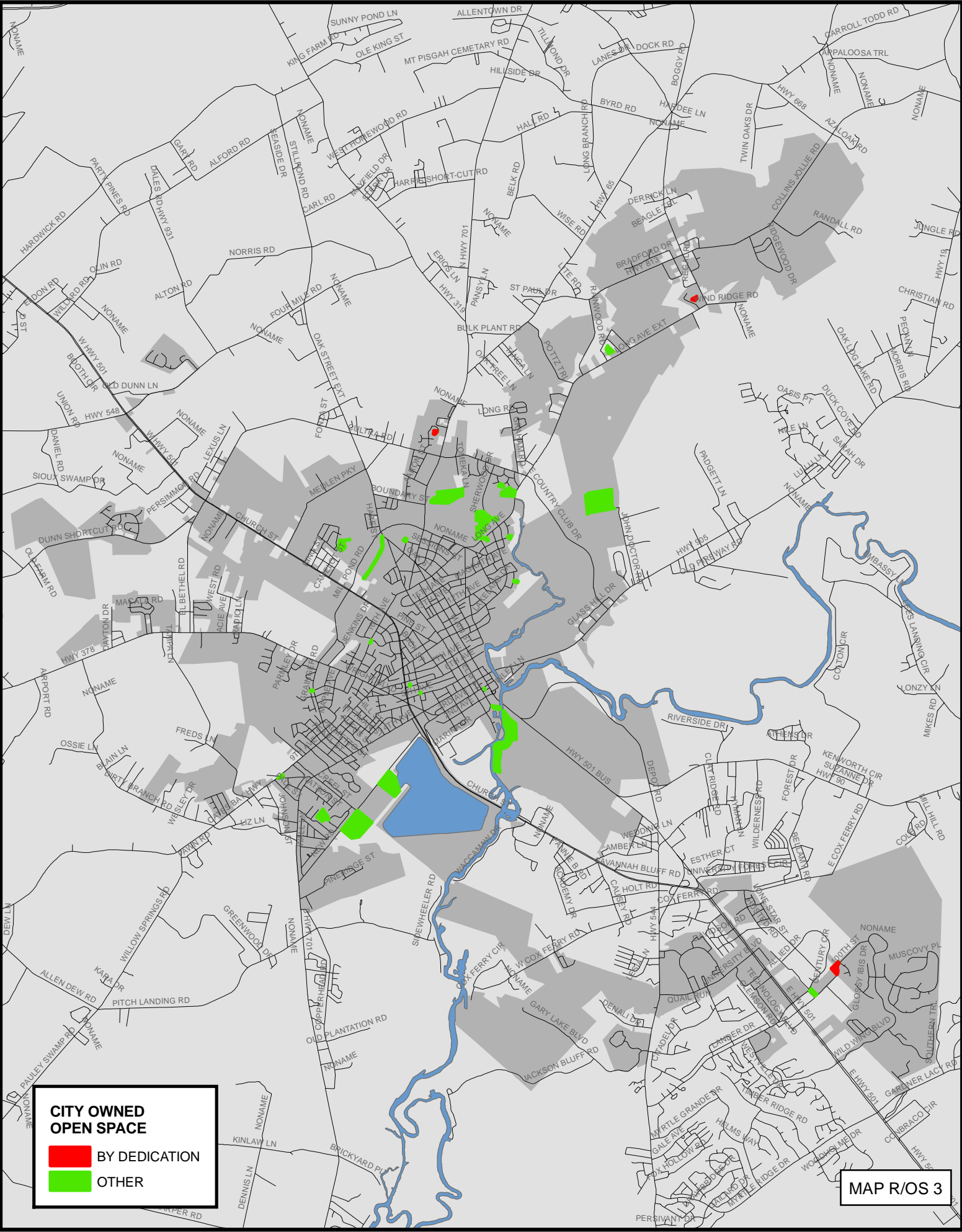
MAP R/OS 1

-  Public Boat Ramps
-  Canoe/Kayak Put-ins
-  Historical Point of Interest



This map is not intended for navigational purposes.

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Miles



**CITY OWNED
OPEN SPACE**

BY DEDICATION

OTHER