

Item Title: Submittal of North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grant Application for Crowder County Park

Specific Action Requested:
That the Board of Commissioners:

- 1. Authorizes staff to submit a North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) Grant Application for Crowder County Park; and**
- 2. Authorizes the Board of Commissioners' Chair to execute the PARTF application for Crowder County Park.**

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners must grant prior approval for matching grants.

Background: At its September 15, 2025 meeting the Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted the Master Plan for Crowder County Park.

Since this time, staff and its consultant team have moved into design development stage of the project with a goal of completing design and bidding the project in Summer 2026. To leverage County resources, staff is requesting authorization to submit a PARTF grant in the amount of \$500,000 for Crowder County Park.

Strategic Plan: This action supports Inclusive Prosperity Goal 3: By 2029, nine out of ten residents asked will share that they can find and enjoy enriching experiences that support our community's high quality of life.

Fiscal Impact: The County's source of funding for Crowder County Park, including elements constructed with PARTF funding is the 2018 Parks Recreation Greenways and Open Space bond.

Additional Information:

Crowder County Park opened in 1998 on land donated by Doris Pierce Crowder. The Park's original 33 acres provides outdoor recreational opportunities for all ages — including paved and natural surface trails, boardwalk across a 2.7-acre pond, open play field, sand volleyball court, outdoor amphitheater and three picnic shelters with adjacent playgrounds. In the last year, more than 110,000 people visited the park.

In 2018, voters approved a \$120 million Parks Greenways Recreation and Open Space (PGROS) bond, which included funding for renovations at Crowder.

In July 2019, the County acquired approximately 96 acres adjacent to the original Crowder County Park as a part of the 2018 PGROS bond. Due to this significant acquisition, a new Master Plan process was started in 2024, and the Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted the updated Master Plan for the Park at its September 15, 2025.

Since this time, staff and its consultant team have moved into design development stage of the project with a goal of completing design and bidding the project in Summer 2026. To leverage County resources, maximize project outcomes, and expand greenway connections, staff is requesting authorization to submit a PARTF grant application in the amount of \$500,000 for Crowder County Park. The grant application will focus on the following projects:

- Paved greenway connector, including a bridge over Dutchman's Branch Creek and signalized pedestrian crossing at Ten-Ten Road
- Natural surface trails
- Indoor Classroom

The North Carolina General Assembly established the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) in 1994 to fund improvements in the state's park system, to fund grants for local governments, and to increase the public's access to the state's beaches. The local government grants are dollar-for-dollar matching grants that can be used to acquire land and/or to develop parks and recreational projects that serve the public. The Parks and Recreation Authority, a nine-member appointed board, reviews grant applications and allocates PARTF funds to grant recipients.

Community Services submitted a Notice of Interest (NOI) Form to County Manager's for this grant opportunity which was approved on February 27, 2026.

The PARTF grant is due May 1, 2026. The Parks and Recreation Authority meet in August 2026 to select grant recipients and will notify all applicants of their status shortly thereafter.

Attachments:
None.