

**Item Title:** Approval of Schematic Design for the Crowder County Park Expansion – Phase I

**Specific Action Requested:**

**That the Board of Commissioners approves the Schematic Design for the Crowder County Park Expansion – Phase I Project.**

**Item Summary:**

**Purpose:** The Board of Commissioners reviews and approves Schematic Design for all new construction projects. This is an important milestone in the development of buildings, renovations, parks, or other major projects.

**Background:** The revised 2017 Parks Facility Master Plan Update recognized a need for additional Park facilities and services but also identified Crowder County Park to be fairly developed and heavily used. It recommended expansion if land became available.

The 2018 Bond Referendum for Parks, Greenways, Recreation and Open Space included funds for the acquisition of additional land and for the design and for construction of an expansion to Crowder County Park. In July 2019, Wake County acquired and integrated 96 additional acres to Crowder Park. On September 15, 2025 the Board of Commissioners adopted the Master Plan for the Crowder Park Expansion. Staff request the Board approve the schematic design for the first phase of expansion.

**Strategic Plan:** This action supports: Growth, Land Use & Environment Goal 3: Protect 1,000 acres of green space, including open space, parks, greenways, farmland, and forest by 2029;

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”; and

Foundations for Service Goal 3: “By 2029, 10% more residents will agree that Wake County provides high-quality, fair, and equitable services”.

**Fiscal Impact:** \$6,685,000 of funding for the design and construction of this project is appropriated in the Parks, Greenways, Recreation, and Open Space element of the County Capital Fund for this purpose.

## Additional Information:

Crowder County Park is located in the Cary-Apex area of the southwest part of Wake County. Originally, the park covered an area of only 33 acres. The land was donated by Doris Pierce Crowder in 1992, with the stipulation that the land could be used for public recreation only. The park was opened for the first time to the public in 1998 and since then, the park has served more than 200,000 community members annually.

Below is a map of Wake County, with Crowder Park depicted in red.



In July 2019, the County acquired approximately 96 additional acres to expand Crowder County Park. Due to this significant acquisition, a new Master Plan process was started in 2024

CLH Design was selected as the landscape architectural firm and lead design consultant to prepare a Master Plan for Crowder County Park Expansion. Throughout the 14-month master plan process, the team gathered input from the community, stakeholders, and Wake County staff. This effort and community engagement process produced a detailed site analysis, explored opportunities and constraints, and continued to draw excitement from the community via community meetings and surveys.

The core values and principles developed during this engagement process included opportunities for preservation of nature, environmental stewardship, connectivity and access, opportunities for play, to build community, and to provide nature education. These core values and principles support the recreational needs of the surrounding communities and align with the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space mission and core services of recreation and leisure, open space and educational opportunities.

The Schematic Design plan for Phase I includes: a pedestrian crossing at Ten-Ten Road, natural surface trails, a bridge over Dutchman's Branch, construction of a portion of a greenway that, in the future, will connect to Cary's Greenway System, a new park center with an indoor classroom and restrooms, and additional parking spaces. The plan will also include public art.

The Schematic Design has been presented to the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee and the committee has endorsed and unanimously supported the project.

Final design documents are scheduled to be completed by the fourth quarter of 2026 with the park scheduled to open in the fourth quarter of 2027. Staff requests that the Board of Commissioners review and approve the schematic design for Crowder Park Expansion – Phase I.

**Attachments:**

1. Presentation
2. Phase I – Site Plan Rendering
3. Phase I – Ten-Ten Road Pedestrian Crossing Rendering
4. Phase I – Park Center Rendering