



Staff Report

Department:	Administration
Staff contact:	Eric Hardy
Agenda title:	Formation of a Parks and Greenways Advisory Committee
Requested action:	Approve by resolution the formation of a Parks and Greenways Advisory Committee
Related documents:	Parks and Greenways Advisory Committee membership criteria

SUMMARY

With the Woodfin Greenway and Blueway (WGB) (now under construction, the Town of Woodfin has begun an ambitious expansion of its parks and greenways system. The next phase of this capital project requires focus as Riverside Park doubles in size and the Whitewater Wave becomes a reality. It is imperative to continue public engagement, and solicitation of public input, during this critical phase. An advisory committee plays a critical role in the realization of this vision.

A successful advisory committee will comprise and represent future park users, subject matter experts, and passionate advocates. Applicants for membership will be measured in part by the following qualifications:

- Those who work with a nonprofit or local government related to active transportation, recreation, public spaces, land conservation, or athletics.
- Parents or guardians of children that do or will utilize Woodfin parks and greenways.
- Those who identify as an individual with a disability, serve as the parent, guardian, or caretaker of an individual with a disability, or serve in an advocacy function for individuals with disabilities.
- Individuals who have professional experience as an engineer, architect, landscape architect, urban planner, environmental stewardship, etc.
- Individuals who have professional experience in event management or recreational programming.
- Students (college or high school) with experience in active transportation, recreation, public spaces, land conservation, or athletics.
- Individuals who have experience with the parks and/or greenway project implementation including construction, master planning, design, advocacy, fundraising, etc.

The proposed seven (7) member committee should represent the interests of the residents and taxpayers of Woodfin, who voted overwhelmingly to fund the project and will continue to maintain and operate the parks and greenways system in the future. As such, the majority of members should live or work in the Town.

Activities of the committee will initially be centered on the WGB through the completion of the project. At the completion of the project the committee will continue to assist with public engagement and oversight to ensure that park assets are optimally performing and meeting the needs of stakeholder groups. More specifically, this advisory committee will perform and exercise these duties:

- Review progress; understand adherence to, or deviation from, the Woodfin Greenway and Blueway project timeline and budget; and provide recommendations to the Woodfin Greenway and Blueway Project Steering committee¹.
- Assist in public engagement and outreach efforts related to the Woodfin Greenway and Blueway project.
- Recognize partnerships for the duration of the Woodfin Greenway and Blueway project between the Town of Woodfin:
 - a. Riverlink, as communications and fundraising partner;
 - b. Buncombe County Recreation Services, as project manager for design and construction of greenways.
- Provide strong, clear messaging about the Town’s entire parks and greenways system that demonstrates how the public is being served.
- Recommend strategic priorities for capital investments and facility improvements.
- Review and provide feedback concerning funding strategies and priorities of recreation-related capital improvements.
- Work in partnership with affinity groups—nonprofits, parent organizations, schools, etc.—to advocate for and promote Woodfin parks and greenways.
- Make recommendations to the Woodfin Board of Commissioners regarding the brand and image of town parks and greenways assets including, but not limited to, amenity naming rights, branding, and partnership and sponsorship policies.

The prospective design team for Riverside Park Expansion and the Whitewater Wave have endorsed this advisory committee model in order to channel public input into final design of these park system elements. Additionally, the grants coordinator encourages standing up an advisory committee to increase the likelihood of successful grant applications.

As proposed, the Town Administrator will be the staff liaison to this committee.

BUDGET IMPACT

Budget impact is expected to be minimal as committee members will not receive financial compensation. Other anticipated expenditures relate to the costs of organizing meetings and conducting public engagement.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Should the Town Board approve the formation of the Parks and Greenways Advisory Committee, the Town will begin to solicit applications from interested parties and will actively seek out individuals having preferred qualifications listed earlier in this report. Appointment to the committee is the responsibility of the Town Board. Once a quorum of membership is reached (four member appointments) meetings will be scheduled to begin work.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board form a Parks and Greenways Advisory Committee.

¹ *Project Steering committee comprises the Woodfin Town Administrator, a Woodfin Commissioner appointed by the Town Board, and the chairman of the Parks and Greenways Advisory committee.*
February 16, 2021 Board of Commissioners Meeting