



Keeley Park Phase II: A National Model

About Keeley Park

Having formerly served as a 138-acre family farm and then City-owned plant nursery, Keeley Park is the City of Greensboro, NC's fourth regional park. The first phase of the park, developed with a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant, included a playground, picnic shelter, sprayground, community garden with a greenhouse, walking trails, five ponds with fishing, restrooms, maintenance building and two parking areas. It opened in 2012 and received 140,000 annual visitors by 2016.

Phase II Redevelopment

In anticipation of annual increases of visitors as well as population growth and residential development in this area, Parks and Recreation conducted an April 2016 master plan update.

Informed by extensive community outreach,

Phase II of Keeley Park called for additional picnic shelters, an outdoor fitness area, additional trails, disc golf, a mountain bike trail, cornhole courts, an open play area, an additional restroom, more parking and other site amenities. Renovations to the existing facilities included enlarging the sprayground deck and adding a second shelter, removing a traditional playground for an inclusive playground and installing a teaching deck and adding raised beds in the community garden.

Construction began in 2018. The \$3.4 million project was funded with voter-approved bonds and grants, including a \$250,000 federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant that will ensure the space is protected parkland in perpetuity.

National Demonstration Site

Phase II also became a National Demonstration Site (NDS) as part of the North Carolina Recreation



“We want to attract the community to a playground where children of all abilities can play together with a range of physical, sensory, and social experiences. We want this play environment to encourage children to be active, learn from and teach each other that differences are OK, make friends, socialize, and be happy children.”

-- Planning and Project Development Manager Shawna Tillery

and Park Association (NCRPA) Healthy Play Initiative with GameTime. NDS use evidence-based best practices in design and implementation, support health-related initiatives, and provide meaningful ways for community stakeholders to gather and share data about the sites’ community impact.

Keeley Park was designed to align to three NDS designations: applying seven principles of inclusive playground design to enhance physical and social inclusion; promoting physical activity through active play and encouraging developmental progress; and providing outdoor fitness parks.

Phase II’s one-of-a-kind Up in the AIR (Adaptive and Inclusive Recreation) Playground is the City’s first inclusive, barrier-free and accessible to all play destination. The outdoor fitness park offers a cost-effective, accessible ways to improve health for adults.

Results

The final Phase II developments, including the playground and fitness area, were completed in 2020. Surveys of park visitors, conducted by PlayCore’s Center for Outreach, Research and Education, showed “an overwhelming level of satisfaction with the new play and recreation space. One hundred percent of surveyed visitors were satisfied with their experience, with a majority (94 percent) reporting being very or completely satisfied with the site during their visit.”

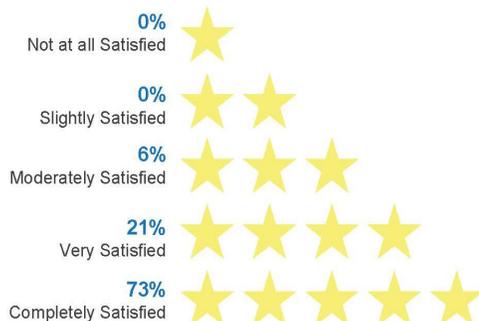


Figure 1. Keeley Park Visitor Satisfaction Survey Results

