



MECKLENBURG COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION ANNUAL REPORT 2011



MESSAGE FROM THE PRC CHAIRMAN



Greetings,

While this past year certainly brought its challenges, your Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department provided outstanding service to you and all of our residents. We actually saw the department have its highest customer satisfaction results, highest attendance and highest record revenue ever!

For the second straight year, Park and Recreation was nominated for the National Gold Medal Award which is the "Academy Award" for overall park and recreation management among the largest cities in the country.

As you read through this report you'll see the accomplishments of our staff, volunteers and partners who brought you these programs and opportunities.

Our collective challenge for the future as a department and community will be to meet the increasing needs for parks, recreation programs and protection of our natural environment with limited funding. We must understand the essential nature of park and recreation services and find ways to not just maintain what we have, but grow the system to meet current residents' demands and those in the future.

There are no great cities without great park and recreation systems.

Sincerely,

Captain Robert "Rob" J. Brisley

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Commission Chairman



Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners
(Front Row L to R): George Dunlap (District 3), Harold Gogdell Jr. (At-Large), Jennifer Roberts (Chairman, At-Large), Jim Pendergraph (Vice Chairman, At-Large), Bill James (District 6). **Back Row L to R:** Vilma Leake (District 2), Neil Cooksey (District 5), Dumont Clarke (District 4), Karen Bentley (District 1).



Park and Recreation commission
Front Row L to R: Elaine Powell, Kendel Bryant, Brenda McMoore, Beverly Cotton-Lawston (Vice-Chair), Rob Brisley (Chair), **Back Row L to R:** Norman Mitchell, Jeff Tarte, Phil Carvey, Ed Barnhart, Paul Bailey, Charlie McRee, (Exec. Secretary) **Not Pictured:** Joe Pata

MAJOR EVENTS



ROMARE BEARDEN'S LEGACY CELEBRATED WITH GROUNDBREAKING OF NEW UPTOWN PARK

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, in partnership with the [Arts and Science Council](#), [Charlotte Center City Partners](#) and [Partners for Parks](#), held a groundbreaking ceremony for Romare Bearden Park, uptown Charlotte's newest park, on Sept. 2, 2011.

The groundbreaking ceremony, which would have marked the 100th birthday of the famous artist, offered unique experiences through an array of cultural activities ranging, from a musical performance from a local jazz band to an exhibit of youth art inspired by Romare Bearden. A Romare Bearden commemorative stamp display was also featured. [Watch the video.](#)



CELEBRATION MARKS GRAND OPENING OF RUTH G. SHAW TRAIL ON TOBY CREEK GREENWAY

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, along with [Catawba Lands Conservancy](#), the [Carolina Thread Trail](#) and the [University of North Carolina Charlotte](#) celebrated the grand opening of the Ruth G. Shaw Trail on [Toby Creek Greenway](#) on Tuesday, May 3, 2011.

Toby Creek Greenway is located in the University City area and connects the 7.1 mile-long [Mallard / Clark's Creek Greenway](#) to and through the campus of UNC Charlotte. The new trail is named in honor of Dr. Ruth G. Shaw, a longtime civic and business leader and the founding chair of the governing board of the Carolina Thread Trail, an interconnected trail system in Piedmont North and South Carolina.

Under Dr. Shaw's leadership, nine of the Thread's 15 counties have adopted countywide master plans for a total of 1,000 planned trail miles. About 67 miles of trail have opened, and \$1,568,002 has been awarded in catalytic grants from the Thread to community partners who are advancing the project throughout the region.

Toby Creek Greenway was funded by a \$1.25 million grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The greenway stretches two miles and links many neighborhoods in the university area to the UNC Charlotte campus, allowing many students, faculty, and staff to walk or ride bikes to the university. Neighborhoods which adjoin this greenway system include Fairlea, Wellington, Winchester, Mallard Ridge, Radbourne, Colvard Park, Mallard Trace, Brookstone, and the University Research Park.





REVOLUTION PARK GOLF COURSE RENAMED THE CHARLES L. SIFFORD GOLF COURSE

[Revolution Park Golf Course](#), held a special ceremony to rename the golf course the Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course at Revolution Park on Tuesday, May 3, 2011. The ceremony included an invocation by the Rev. George Cook Jr. of Greater Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, followed by a brief recognition and reflection period, remarks by golf colleagues and Dr. Sifford, as well as an unveiling of the new sign.

Dr. Sifford was born in Charlotte in 1922 and later became a successful PGA Tour professional. He is recognized as the first African-American to receive his official tour player's card and compete in PGA events. During his career, Dr. Sifford won the 1967 Greater Hartford Open Invitational, 1969 Los Angeles Open, and the 1975 PGA Seniors' Championship. In 2004, Dr. Sifford became the first African-American inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame.

Dr. Charles L. Sifford Golf Course is one of seven public golf facilities owned by Mecklenburg County. [Watch the video.](#)

MECKLENBURG COUNTY AQUATIC CENTER CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

On June 7, 2011, the [Mecklenburg County Aquatic Center](#) celebrated its 20th anniversary. The celebration was highlighted by the unveiling of a brand new state-of-the-art LCD scoreboard followed by brief remarks from local dignitaries as well as past and present staff.

Over the years, the facility, which features a 50-meter competition pool, a 25-meter therapeutic pool and a fitness center, has hosted several large events including the Charlotte UltraSwim. [Watch the video.](#)



PARK AND REC AND HANDS ON CHARLOTTE TEAM UP TO BUILD PARK IN LINCOLN HEIGHTS

To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and local nonprofit agency [Hands On Charlotte](#) partnered to raise money to build an 11-acre park in Charlotte's Lincoln Heights neighborhood.

“We are very excited to partner with Hands On Charlotte to make this park a reality,” said Jim Garges, director of Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation. “The master plan for our department is to have a park within six blocks of every home. This is a major step in realizing that goal.” [Watch the video.](#)

MECKLENBURG PARK AND REC NAMED A FINALIST FOR THE NRPA GOLD MEDAL AWARD FOR THE SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR!

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department was named one of four finalist agencies in competition for the [2011 NRPA Gold Medal Award](#). The award is presented annually by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to honor excellence in management and planning of parks and recreation agencies. This is the second year in a row the department has been named a finalist for the award.



Recreation professionals consider the Gold Medal Award as the top national recognition of excellence in their profession.

"I'm very proud of the work and professional dedication of our staff and volunteers to earn this recognition," said Jim Garges, director of Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department.

A panel of leading experts chose the Mecklenburg department as a finalist for the Gold Medal in the category for communities with a population of more than 250,000. Other finalists in this category included: Kansas City Parks and Recreation Department (Kansas City, MO), Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department (Miami, FL), and Portland Parks and Recreation (Portland, OR). The choice was based on extensive written submissions about the department, both statistical and narrative, in response to a series of specific questions posed by NRPA.

This award honors the top communities in the United States that demonstrate excellence in long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition.

[Watch the Gold Medal video](#)

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2011

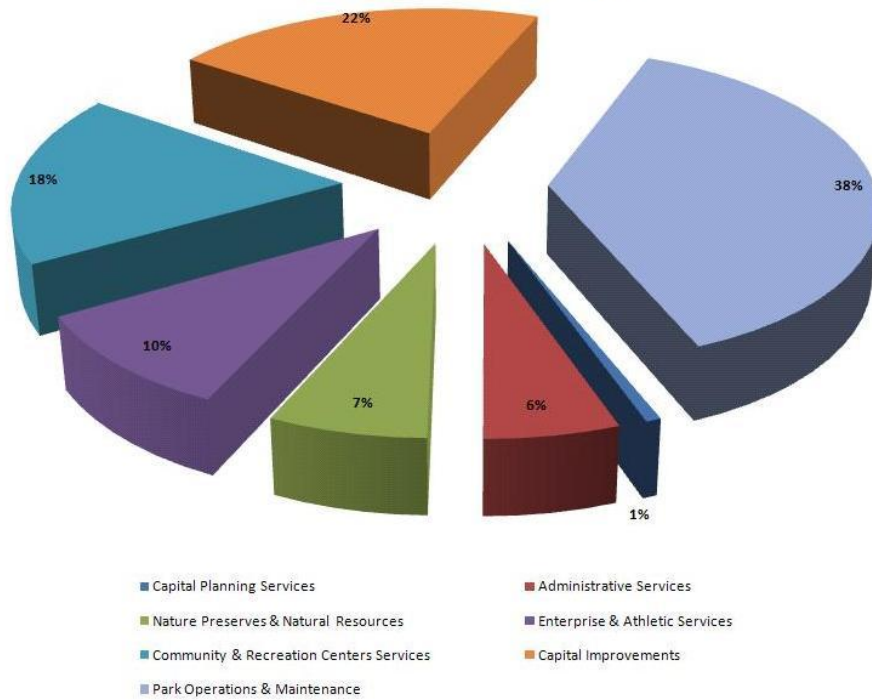
- Park and Rec was named a finalist for the NRPA Gold Medal Award for the second straight year.
- The department received OSHA Carolina Star re-certification.
- Winterfield/Sheffield community garden was expanded through a partnership with NC Recreation and Park Association and Blue Cross Blue Shield as part of the Nourishing NC initiative.
- Staff continued to work with neighborhood groups, private contractors and athletic associations to lower maintenance operating costs.
- Consolidated all mowing operations from 18 vendors to 5 and saved 15% on costs.
- Staff cut in a ½ mile walking trail through the woods, installed some drainage pipe, benches, trash cans and a sign at Porter Byrum Protected Natural Area
- The department partnered with Hands on Charlotte to build a community playground, community garden and walking trail in the Lincoln Heights community.
- 7 NACo Awards in recognition for outstanding achievement in programming:

- **All About Arts**- artistic opportunity for teens and young adults with disabilities
- **NCDT Reach**- accessible dance training for promising students with financial needs
- **Young Athletes**- program modeled from Special Olympics for children with disabilities, focusing on developing physical, cognitive, and social skills
- **Pool Pals**- pool based program for young adults with disabilities
- **McClintock Outdoor Club**- target middle school students with immersive experience in outdoor adventure recreation and nature education
- **Nature Explorer Zone**- features nine interactive play areas designed by kids
- **Orienteering for Winners on Wheels**- designed for scouts with physical disabilities (ages 6-12) teaches the competitive sport of orienteering
- Recreation staff added many new programs to fill the needs of seniors, youth and teens:
 - Expanded the Young Athletes Program in conjunction with Special Olympics of North Carolina to 145 preschool children with disabilities and increased services to 13 pre-K classrooms.
 - Developed a six-month long Paralympic Swim Club for residents with cerebral palsy or who have had an amputation.
 - Established new senior citizen programs with: NC Dance Theatre Dress Rehearsal Performances, Korean Senior Center of Charlotte at Arbor Glen, Senior Nutrition program jointly with DSS at the Mallard Creek Recreation Center.
- Cooperative Extension added a new service: *Local Foods/Food Preservation Program* to create a network of local food markets across the county. More than 1,770 participants demonstrated an increased awareness of the value of agricultural systems, over 300 households reported modifying diets substantially to include fruits and vegetables, and more than 300 adults increased knowledge of buying locally grown produce.
- 4-H partnered with the City of Charlotte to expand Truancy Intervention Program by providing teamwork, communications, and problem solving skills to 200 elementary students.
- 2011 NRPA Congress and Exposition selected 4 education presentations submitted by Park and Rec staff.
 - Managing Your Most Important Asset: Natural Areas
 - Don't Play Poker with Tax Dollars, But Leverage Your Funding
 - Leveraging Assets- Opportunities to Expand and Increase Partnerships
 - Cooperative Extension and Park and Recreation: A Natural Fit
- Revolution Park Sports Academy, in its first full year of operation, welcomed more than 25,000 residents who participated in programs such as martial arts, boxing, wrestling, and golf. Attendance in FY2012 is expected to exceed 30,000.
- Cadillac Driving Range opened in Pineville as the seventh county golf facility near the intersection of I-485 and South Boulevard.
- Opened Greenways:
 - The Ruth G. Shaw Trail on Toby Creek Greenway - Hwy 49 to Mallard Creek Greenway
 - West Branch Rocky River -River Ford Dr to West Branch Nature Preserve
 - Stewart Creek Greenway - Trade St to Rozzelle's Ferry Rd.
 - Little Sugar Creek Greenway – Alexander St Park to 12th St
 - Little Sugar Creek Greenway – Pearl Park Way to Morehead St
 - Little Sugar Creek Greenway – Elizabeth Ave to Charlottetown Ave
 - Four Mile Creek Greenway (Matthews) - E John St to Trade St (Matthews)

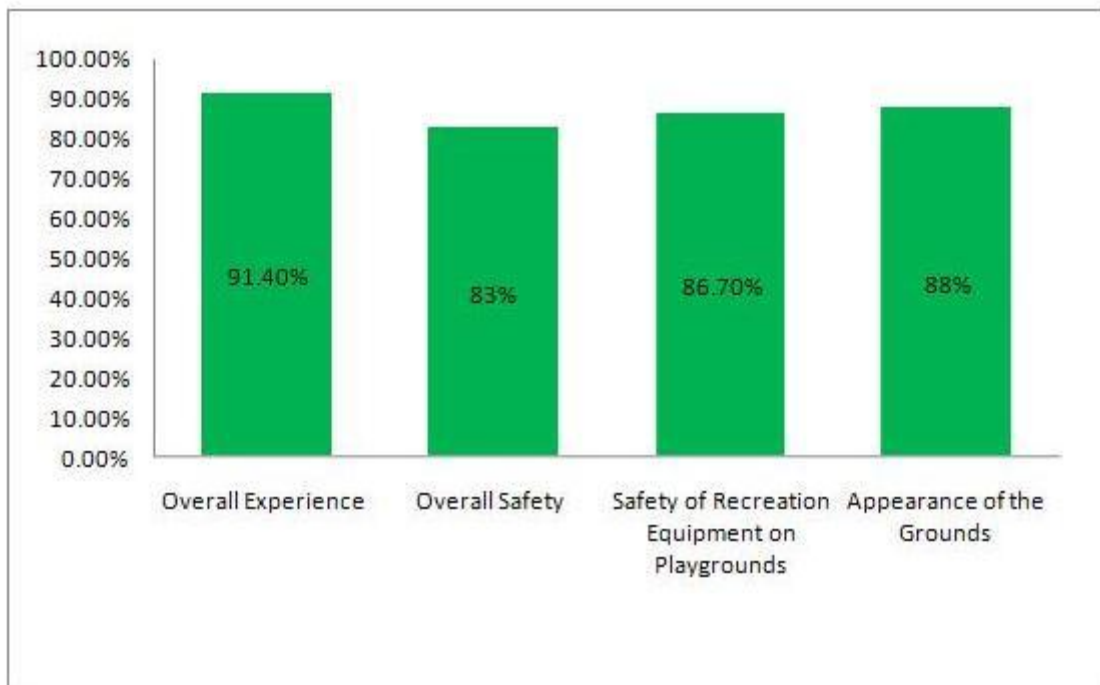


Cadillac Golf Ranch

FY-2011 Operating & Capital Budgets
Total Expenses \$34,029,000



% of Respondents Answering Good/Excellent



Survey Questions

VOLUNTEERS SERVICES

Over the past year, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation's [Volunteer Services Department](#) increased its involvement in all areas of service including coaching youth sports, helping coordinate special events, landscaping parks, conducting general park and facility maintenance, working with seniors, helping with Therapeutic Recreation programs, adopting parks and greenways, and much more!

More than 17,000 volunteers helped Park and Recreation during FY-11, logging close to 100,000 hours of service. The value of their service is over \$2 million dollars.



Volunteers work on landscaping projects in Freedom Park.

2011 PARTNERSHIPS

107.9 The Link
 21st Century Comm. Learning Center
 AARP
 Abandoned Romania
 Accuquest
 Action Plus
 Adaptive Sports/Adventure Program
 All in Play
 Allegro Foundation
 American Diabetes
 American Heart
 American Marching Association
 American Red Cross
 American Youth Soccer Association
 American Youth Soccer Organization
 AMF Bowling
 Animal Fund
 Anitagood Design
 Armin's Catering
 Arts & Science Council
 ASA Charlotte
 ASA Softball
 Asian Chamber of Commerce
 Autism Foundation of NC
 Autism Society
 Avon Walk for Breast Cancer
 Awards Express
 Balfour Beatty
 Bank of America
 Beacon Partners
 Belmont Neighborhood Association
 BEGINNINGS, Inc.
 Best Buy
 Bloom
 Blythe Development
 BMX Racing
 Bojangles'
 Bookin' It Mobile Bookstore
 Boy Scouts of America
 Breakfast Club
 Brixx Pizza
 Broomers Carwash and Tan
 Bruegger Bagels
 Budokan Charlotte
 Burke Soil & Water Conservation
 Cadillac Golf Ranch LLC
 California Pizza Kitchen
 Camel Back
 Caribou Coffee
 Carolina Clowns
 Carolina Crash Quad Rugby Team
 Carolina Panthers
 Carolina Thread Trail
 Carolina Youth Rugby
 Carolinas Asian Chamber Of
 Commerce
 Carolinas Healthcare System
 Carolinas Rehabilitation
 Carolina Raptor Center
 Catawba Lands Conservatory
 Catawba Riverkeeper
 Catawba Valley Scottish Society
 Catholic Social Services – Refugee
 Relocation Program
 Centralina Council of Government
 Central Piedmont Community College
 Charlotte Area Lacrosse Club
 Charlotte Area Transit System
 Charlotte Area Bicycle Alliance
 Charlotte Badminton/Table Tennis Club
 Charlotte Bobcats
 Charlotte Boxing Academy
 Charlotte Bridge Association
 Charlotte Catholic/Holy Trinity
 Charlotte Center City Partners
 Charlotte Country Day School
 Charlotte Dept. of Transportation
 Charlotte Disc Golf Club
 Charlotte Emergency Housing
 Charlotte Engineering and Property
 Management
 Charlotte Flights
 Charlotte Housing Authority
 Charlotte Jewish Preschool
 Charlotte Junior Soccer
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Development
 Corporation
 Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Games
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission
 Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Dept.
 Charlotte Mecklenburg Utilities Dept.
 Charlotte Montessori
 Charlotte Optimist Club
 Charlotte Racefest
 Charlotte Regional Ctr. for Deaf/HH
 Charlotte Rotary Club
 Charlotte Senior Sports
 Charlotte Soccer Academy
 Charlotte Sports Connection
 Charlotte Sports Cycling
 Charlotte Stream Water
 Charlotte Symphony
 Charlotte Turkey Trot
 Charlotte United Futbol Club
 Charlotte Women Soccer League
 Charlotte Woodcarvers Club
 Charlotte Youth Lacrosse
 Chesterbrook Academy
 Childcare Resources
 Chirp and Chatter
 Christ Church School
 Christ Episcopal Church
 Christ Lutheran Church
 City Tavern Restaurant
 City/County Golf Tourney
 Citizen Schools
 Clark Nexsen
 CooLoak Athletic Assoc.
 Coke Bottling Co/ Red Moon Marketing
 Communities in Schools
 Country Time Carriages
 Crop Walk
 CVAN
 Dell Curry Foundation
 Dick's Sporting Goods
 Dilworth Little League
 Do the Right Thing
 Dr. Leland McLaughlin
 Drug & Alcohol Prevention Services
 East Meck Lacrosse Club
 Eastfield Christian Church
 Election Central
 Elizabeth Neighborhood Assoc.
 First Ward Community Fund
 Foot Locker
 Food Lion/Pedigree
 Friends of Fourth Ward Neighborhood
 Association
 Friendship Baptist Church
 Gaston Christian
 Girl Scouts of America
 Greater Enrichment Program
 Harris Teeter
 H.A.W.K
 Hilton
 Historic Latta Plantation
 Hands on Charlotte
 Hornet's Nest BMX
 Hotel Tourism Alliance
 International Facility Mgmt Assn
 IRI Golf Group
 Irwin Ave. Open School
 Irwin Ave. Parents Night
 Irwin BED
 Jazzercise
 Johnson C. Smith University
 Johnson-Wales University
 Kidz Biz
 Lake Norman Marine Commission
 Lake Norman Tennis Association
 Lakewood Community
 Latin Soccer League
 Legends Summer Camp
 Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
 Little Sugar Creek Westfield

Mallard Creek Optimist Club
 Mallard Creek Presby. Preschool.
 Marie G. Davis Middle School
 Master Gardner Volunteer Program
 MatchMaker Tennis
 Matthews Athletic & Rec Assoc
 Matthews Soccer Club
 Mecklenburg Audubon Society
 Mecklenburg County DSS
 Mecklenburg County IST
 Mecklenburg Union Futbol Club
 Mecklenburg Youth Lacrosse
 McKinney Care
 Midwood Neighbors
 Midwood Tennis Academy
 Myers Park Baptist
 Myers Park Trinity Little League
 National Softball Association
 Nations Baseball
 Nations Ford Community Church
 Natural. Resources Conservation Service
 NC Blumenthal Performing Arts Center
 NC Dept. of Transportation
 NC Dance Outreach Program
 NC Wildlife Federation
 NC Wildlife Reserves Commission
 Nevins Inc
 New Second Ward Park
 Nothing But Noodles
 Old Providence Recreation Association
 Open Door School
 Our Children's Memorial Walkway Inc.
 Outdoor Nation
 Ovens Auditorium
 Panera Bread
 Pappas Properities
 Park Sharon Athletic Association
 Partners for Parks
 Philharmonic's Masquerade Ball
 Physical Disabled Adults Inc.
 Piedmont Charter School
 Piedmont Open Middle
 Plaza Youth Athletic Association
 Police Activities League
 Pondscapes of Charlotte
 Premier Group
 Progressive Baptist Church
 Public Defender's Office
 Queen City Dolphins Minority Swim Team
 Queen City Prep
 Queens University
 Ramblewood Soccer Inc.
 Ranson Middle
 Ratcliffe Golf Services
 REI
 Right Moves For Youth
 River Hills Community Church
 River Run Property Owners Association+
 Run For Your Life
 Rural Hill Inc.
 Safe Halloween
 Safe Kids Campaign
 Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club of
 Charlotte
 Schiele Museum
 Second Harvest Bank
 Senior Games
 Shad's Landing
 Shamrock Neighbors
 Shiloh Elementary
 Show Pros Inc.
 South Park Youth Association
 Special Olympics
 St. Matthews Catholic
 Starbucks, Inc.
 Steele Creek Athletic Association
 Steele Creek Neighborhood Association
 Sticks with US
 Swim Mac
 Target
 Tarheel Trailblazers
 Team Heidi Costume Contest
 Tennis Academy of North Carolina.
 Tennis Education Endowment
 Texas Land & Cattle
 The First Tee of Charlotte
 Thompson Orphanage Alumni Association
 Time Warner Cable
 Tora Kempa Academy
 Town of Cornelius
 Town of Davidson
 Town of Huntersville
 Town of Matthews
 Town of Mint Hill
 Trail of History, Inc.
 Trust for Public Land
 UCP Easter Seals
 University City Partners
 UNC-Charlotte
 UNCC Circle K
 UNCC Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority
 UNC-Greensboro
 United Methodist Church
 United Way
 Unlimited Engraving
 Upchurch Tennis
 Uptown Men's Shelter
 Urban Ministry Center
 Urban Restoration Ministries
 U.S. Olympic Comm.-US Paralympics
 U.S. Specialty Sports Association
 U.S. Tennis Association/Charlotte
 Visit Charlotte
 Wachovia
 Wal-Mart
 Watershed
 Wendy's
 West Enterprises
 Wing Haven Gardens
 WJZY- CW46
 World Crown Gymnastics
 WPEG/CBS Radio
 Winston-Salem State University
 Youth Family Services
 YMCA of Greater Charlotte
 YWCA



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Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation

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