



Athens Clarke County Leisure Services Department



2020

FISCAL YEAR ANNUAL REPORT



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Mission Statement

ACCGov Leisure Services builds a healthier and more livable community by providing opportunities to learn, to create, and to play in quality parks, programs, and facilities that are valued by our citizens.

Our Facilities



Athens-Clarke County Tennis Center
Bear Hollow Zoo
Ben Burton Park
Bishop Park
Boulevard Woods Park
Dudley Park
East Athens Community Center
East Athens Educational Dance Center
Firefly Trail
Holland Youth Sports Complex
Lay Park
Lyndon House Arts Center
Memorial Park

Morton Theatre
North Oconee River Greenway
North Oconee River Park
Quinn Hall
Reese and Pope Park
Rocksprings Park
Sandy Creek Nature Center
Sandy Creek Park
Satterfield Park
Southeast Clarke Park
Trails and Open Space
Walker Park
Ware-Lyndon Historic House

Highlights

In the past year, the Leisure Services Department....



...received the prestigious Georgia Recreation and Park Association's "Agency of The Year" Award for populations of 80,000 - 150,000 and the "Marketing Campaign Award."



...acquired a North American River Otter "Bobbles" from the Alaska Zoo in Anchorage. Bobbles has transitioned well to his new home at Bear Hollow Zoo in Memorial Park.



...debuted a new outdoor stage designed for concerts and performance events and measures approximately 24' by 24.'



...purchased two e-bikes for staff use on the Greenway. This pilot program is designed to increase staff patrol of multi-use paths and travel between ACCGov facilities.



...hosted the Professional Practice for Visual Arts Summit Day 2020 at the Lyndon House Arts Center. The event included a full day of workshops, sessions, and services designed to elevate professional skills for artists.

...showcased The East Athens Educational Dance Center's annual production "Emotions" at the historic Morton Theatre. This presentation included dancers from the University of Georgia dance department, East Athens Educational Dance Center, and professional dancers from Ballethnic Dance Company.



...launched a partnership with Gaines Elementary School to provide after school programming where one previously did not exist. Department staff from all programming divisions, as well as Administration, developed and conducted activities for a total of 97 students two days each week from September 2019 - March 2020.



...purchased a new outdoor inflatable movie screen. The inaugural holiday double feature was enjoyed by approximately 100 people. A series of drive-in "Movies by Moonlight" debuted in June with a sellout crowd at Sandy Creek Park.



...dedicated the East Campus Connector Bridge, which links the North Oconee River Greenway and the University of Georgia campus. Also, an additional one-mile of Greenway Trail was opened near downtown Athens.



...marked the 110th birthday of the Morton Theatre with the "110th Anniversary Signature Event: Morehouse College Glee Club in Concert." This special concert, presented by the Morton Theatre Corporation, was enjoyed by a full house.



...renamed Trail Creek Park as Virginia Callaway-Cofer Walker Park in honor of this community leader for her service to Athens-Clarke County and her extensive involvement in civic organizations. A plaque unveiling ceremony will be held later this year.



By the Numbers

19

adults participated in the Frog Watch citizen science program at Sandy Creek Nature Center. They learned to identify frog calls to help assess amphibian diversity and health.

38

area teens from four different high schools were selected for the Mayor's Youth Council, which was developed and implemented by department staff on behalf of the mayor's office.

40

American Chestnut trees were planted within the managed forest project at Sandy Creek Nature Center. This project included the Georgia Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation, Athens-Clarke County Government staff, University of Georgia's Horticulture Farm, and the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources.

100

individuals participated in the inaugural "Kids Riverside Fun Ride." They decorated their bikes, learned about bicycle safety checks, and rode through a fun obstacle course along the Greenway.

199

works of art were displayed for the 44th Juried Exhibition at the Lyndon House Arts Center. During the year, 15 exhibitions featuring 857 pieces of art were displayed in the galleries at the Lyndon House Arts Center.



1,300

people attended the annual “Deck the Hollow” holiday lights event at Bear Hollow Zoo during the five-night presentation.

1,545

tickets sold to four separate Athens Creative Theatre (ACT) productions.

2,294

children and staff visited Department parks through the ‘Shared Use Agreement’ with the Clarke County School District.
An additional 502 students visited Bear Hollow Zoo!

7,000

people attended the Above Athens Balloon Festival at Sandy Creek Park. 2,500 attendees took the opportunity to ride in one of the nine tethered hot air balloons. Eighty ACC employees worked the event, 56 of whom were staff members from Leisure Services.

11,059

attendees/participants were part of 65 events/performances at the Morton Theatre.

12,000

spectators attended the 2019 Downtown Parade of Lights. This year’s parade attracted more than 80 entries, a record number which included more than **1,000 people in the parade.**

20,002

admissions at the five pools and two splash pads during the one month modified aquatics season.

Along Came COVID



Here are a few ways the Department continued to serve the Athens community during the pandemic...

- Provided “COVID Camp” for ACCGov essential employees who needed to work during the pandemic. Participants, ages 4 and older, attended this all-day camp every Monday-Friday for nine weeks at East Athens Community Center and Rocksprings Park. Department staff from all divisions assisted with the program delivery.
- Launched “Virtual Leisure Services” to provide activities for the community. Activities and videos were posted on social media, including arts, crafts, sports, story time, and even the annual Snake Day. Art exhibitions went virtual, too! Select programs, including gymnastics and dance, immediately adapted their instruction for an online platform to continue the development of their students.

- Presented the annual “Star Spangled Classic” in a drive-in style event allowing for social distancing. Fireworks were launched from Ben Epps Airport to the delight of thousands of community members.
- Converted the Lyndon House Arts Center into a mask making factory! ACCGov employees created more than 3,000 cloth masks for fellow staff under the supervision of Lyndon House staff.
- Assisted with Athens-Clarke County Unified Government Community Response to COVID-19 through policy research, development, and implementation. Thirteen department staff joined this essential effort.
- Led a four-hour “Bunny Brigade” with two different Easter Bunnies traveling in open vehicles throughout the community spreading a little joy and fun to families.

COVID-19 Economic Impact to Leisure Services

Cleaning supplies - \$2,130
Equipment usage cost - \$5,288
Total Expenditures - \$7,418

Total Refund of Program Fees - \$784,867
Total Refund of Rentals - \$11,962
Total Loss of Revenue - \$796,829



Financials

\$8,060,667

Operating Budget

Total Expenditure:

\$7,521,174

Leisure Services contributed

\$339,304

back to the county government
for COVID-19 assistance.

Rental Revenue:

\$91,495

Lost due to COVID-19:

\$11,962

Value of Volunteer Service:

\$329,750.81

Expenditure for
SPLOST projects:

\$5,293,284

Scholarship Subsidies Used:

\$42,052

631 qualifying Athens-Clarke County children
benefitted from the Department's scholarship program.

Leisure Services At Work

10 Promotions

73 Full time employees

120 Seasonal Part-Time Staff

147 Contract labor employees

737 Volunteers who contributed 12,297 hours in service

818 Work Orders completed, including 204
playground inspections



Photography

Aimee Cheek, Brian McGhee, Morton Theatre, Stephanie Raines

Design

Lakshana Hall



Athens-Clarke County
Leisure Services Department
www.accgov.com/leisure