Parks, Recreation and Events

Adequate parks, open space and recreation opportunities are vital to the quality of life in communities by providing citizens of all ages with enjoyable activities and settings in which to spend leisure time. Our city is proud of the numerous, attractive parks and recreational areas we provide to our citizens for their enjoyment. Almost half of our community's population consist of youth-aged groups (0-19 years), or elderly-aged groups (65 years and older). These groups especially utilize our parks and recreational facilities in order to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle and provide a high quality of life. The Parks and Recreation section of this plan provides a current inventory of all parks and recreational facilities located within our community and provides assessment of each with regard to improvement that may be required to accommodate the future needs of our community.

Social Organizations and Events In Chickasaw

Our City is home to several annual events as well as social clubs and organizations. One such organization is the Northside Cruisers Car Club, an automobile enthusiast club. Other clubs include the Chickasaw Kiwanis Club, Chickasaw Masonic Lodge, Chickasaw Garden Club and the Chickasaw Civic Theatre. Scheduled senior activities occur weekly at the McConnell Civic Center. The Chickasaw Historic Preservation Society meets monthly at the Civic Center as well. Our city celebrates Founder's Day every other October, to commemorate the day of our city’s foundation. This event normally features children's activities, a costume contest, live music, dancing and much more. A complete list of all available activities with scheduled dates and times can be found on our website at www.cityofchickasaw.org and in our community newsletter, which is published every other month.

Classifications and Levels of Service

Park Classifications and the Level of Service standards provide communities with a method of assessing their current park and recreational inventory and projecting improvements based on future growth. This method is based on the National Park and Recreation Association (NPRA) guidelines, which consider the type, use, size and service area of parks and recreational facilities. Future demand for parks and recreation facilities are based on comparing projected populations with recognized level of service standards and responding to changing trends. Future needs are also directly influenced by population characteristics of the community. For example, communities with
more children require more outdoor recreational opportunities close to home, within a comfortable walking distance. Communities with more seniors can benefit from having more passive parks near residential areas, senior centers and transit to accommodate their activities.

**Park Classifications**

The following park classifications are based on the NPRA standards and modified to accommodate our current park and recreational inventory as well as future goals for improvements. Overall, our city encompasses 79.6 acres of parks, which exceeds the recommended NPRA acreage of 63 acres per 6,000 persons and approximately 3.66 miles of pedestrian and aquatic trails.

**Mini-Parks**

Mini parks, or “pocket parks,” serve a limited or concentrated population, usually a neighborhood, residential district, or commercial area and provides an urban green space within a densely developed area. Amenities might include a walking path, landscaping, park benches, and picnic tables. The service area is usually less than ¼ mile radius. The desirable size of the park is 2 acres or less. The NPRA suggest 0.25-0.50 acres per every 1,000 in population.

**Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks serve residential neighborhoods in developed areas and are intended to receive a high level of use. They typically have a landscaped walking path that can withstand the impacts of heavy foot traffic and should be connected to the community’s sidewalk network. Citizens should be able to walk to this park without crossing a major arterial street. They are places where neighbors can gather, children can play, and people can engage in recreational activities. Amenities might include an open grass lawn, playgrounds, basketball courts, pool, tennis court, pavilions, etc. The service area is usually less than ½ miles radius. The desirable size of the park is between 5 and 20 acres. The NPRA suggests 1.0-2.0 acres per every 1,000 in population.

**Community Parks**

Community parks are large parks intended to serve the entire community and meet the recreational needs of multiple neighborhoods. They provide more specialized and community organized recreational services and opportunities. They should be located adjacent to major arterials or other collector streets to provide easy vehicular and pedestrian access. They should be connected to linear trails and greenways throughout the region and developed around the natural resources of the community. Amenities include sports complex, ball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, playgrounds, splash pads, pavilions, disc-golf course, etc. The service area is usually a one to two mile radius.
The desirable size of the park is 25 to 100 acres. The NPRA suggests 5.0-8.0 acres per every 1,000 in population.

**Regional Parks**

Regional parks are large recreational areas usually developed around an area’s natural resources and they serve entire regions, including several municipalities. They may be county, state, or federally operated, but should connect to smaller community parks via greenways or trails to create regional linkage. Amenities include sports complex, ball fields, tennis courts, pool, playground, hiking trails, mountain biking trails, ATV trails, camping facilities, disc-golf course, etc. The service area is usually at least five mile radius or more. The desirable size is 50 acres or larger. NPRA suggest 20.0 acres per every 1,000 in population.

**Linear Parks, Greenways and Trails**

Linear Parks, Greenways and Trails provide linkages between other parks and/or points of interest. The service area and size varies from neighborhood greenways to regional pedestrian, bicyclist, equestrian, birding and aquatic trails. Wetlands should be inventoried. Buffers should be established to provide protection for the wetlands. These buffer areas should be used to develop linear greenways/parks and trails and develop pedestrian walkways.

**Park Inventory**

The following is a list of all parks and recreational facilities located within our city, including a brief description and assessment of each area. Additional information pertaining to specific parks and trails can be found in the Community Goals and Recommendations section of this chapter. The location of each park and facility is numbered and identified on the Park Locations map in Figure 6.22 as well as the location of proposed walking and aquatic trails.

**Legg Park**

Legg Park is classified as a neighborhood park and lies on .50 acres of land, which is maintained by the City of Chickasaw. The park is located at the corner of Gulf Street and Viaduct Road, see Figure 6.1. It is named after 2nd Lieutenant John D. Legg, a Vietnam War Veteran killed in action while piloting a helicopter in South Vietnam on May 1, 1967 at 22 years of age.
Inventory includes a basketball court, monkey bars, swing set, water fountain and the John D. Legg Memorial

**Mauvilla Park**

Mauvilla Park is located at 318 Myrtlewood Avenue in our Myrtlewood community, see Figure 6.2. It is a 3.06 acre neighborhood park that is maintained by the City of Chickasaw. Inventory includes a baseball diamond, tennis court, basketball court, benches, press box, swings, bathrooms and a scoreboard. The park is home to all organized ball leagues in our city.

**Maritime Park**

Maritime Park is classified as the only mini/pocket park in our city and lies on .34 acres of land. Inventory includes benches, brick paths, gazebo, and a historical marker, see Figure 6.3. The park displays one of the original engines that was used to drain the swamp where the Chickasaw Shipyards were built. It is located in front of our Municipal complex at 200 North Craft Highway and serves as an entrance gateway to our port area. The park is maintained by the City of Chickasaw.

**Figure 6.2: Mauvilla Park**

*Source: SARPC*

**Figure 6.3: Pump Engine at Maritime Park**

*Source: SARPC*
William Brooks Park and Marina

Brooks Park and Marina is classified as a community park that encompasses 23.73 acres of land which is maintained by the City of Chickasaw. It is located at 599 North Craft Highway, see Figure 6.4. Inventory includes a boat, kayak and canoe launch, bird observation tower, fishing, boardwalks, running/walking trails, gazebos and benches, see Figures 6.5 & 6.6.

**Figure 6.4: Brooks Park**

![Figure 6.4: Brooks Park](source:SARPC)

**Figure 6.5: Picnic Area at Brooks Park**

![Figure 6.5: Picnic Area at Brooks Park](source:SARPC)

**Figure 6.6: Elevated Walking Trail at Brooks Park**

![Figure 6.6: Elevated Walking Trail at Brooks Park](source:SARPC)
This scenic park provides a landing for boat, canoe and kayak launches which makes it one of only two public parks in the Mobile area that provides access directly into the Mobile Tensaw River Delta, see Figure 6.7. There is a launching fee and fishing is available from the piers. Senior Citizens who reside in Chickasaw can receive a free launch pass through our City Hall.

Our city has received several grants through the Mobile County Commission to upgrade the park with extended boardwalks, a new pier and other amenities. The funds from the grants allowed us to extend the boardwalk around the wetlands of Chickasabogue Creek, which flows through the park and connects the boardwalk into a system of nature paths throughout the park, see Figures 6.6 & 6.8. Future improvements include an elevated bird observation tower and construction of several pavilions with benches near the popular fishing site. Additional plans for the park include a kayak, canoe and paddleboard rental facility, which will promote eco-tourism opportunities in our community. Chickasabogue Creek was recently added to the Alabama Scenic River Trail system and received the official distinction of a Scenic Blueway Trail. Our Police Department conducts routine patrols throughout the park as well as at all our recreational areas to ensure the safety and well being of our residents and visitors.
John W. Dotson Park

John Dotson Park is classified as a community park and lies on 5.51 acres of land which is maintained by the City of Chickasaw, see Figure 6.9. It is located at the 200 block of Thompson Boulevard. Inventory includes 2 baseball diamonds and a football field with goalposts, bleachers, scoreboard and bathrooms. Organized leagues utilize the field for a variety of different sporting events. The field is also used for special events sponsored by our city. Our public school will use this park for the Middle and High School baseball and football teams. Beginning in the fall school year of 2013, John W. Dotson park will become the home field to the Chickasaw Chieftains.

Jesse T. Miller Park

Miller park is classified as a neighborhood park, located at the corner of Jackson and West Lee Street. It is a larger neighborhood park, encompassing 10.60 acres which is owned and operated by the Chickasaw Housing Authority. Inventory includes softball fields and recreational fields, see Figure 6.10.

C.E. Burrell Park

C.E. Burrell Park is a large 15.33 acre neighborhood park located off Sutherland Drive, behind the Chickasaw Post Office, see Figure 6.11. It is owned, operated and maintained by the Chickasaw Housing Authority. It is for pedestrian use only and is provided to our residents for their enjoyment. Hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Inventory includes a walking/running trail, benches and bridges. The park is a valuable recreational resource utilized by many of our citizens.

**McConnell Civic Center Complex**

Chickasaw’s McConnell Civic Center Complex contains many of our city’s amenities and is classified as a community park. It encompasses 20.53 acres of land which is maintained by our city. The complex is located at 224 Grant Street and inventory includes: Paul Devine Park, which is our largest park and is named after its long time caretaker. It houses a public swimming pool, concessions, tennis courts and shuffleboard courts. Also part of the complex are the Community Library, playground, amphitheater, Civic Center, 18 basket Disc Golf Course, open green/walking space and numerous bridges. See the following Figures 6.11 through 6.20 for illustrations of all the amenities these park have to offer our residents of Chickasaw.

**Community Swimming Pool**

Our community swimming pool located at Paul Devine Park is opened seasonally, beginning at the end of May from 12:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. There is a daily admission and the facility is available to our residents and their guests only. Season passes are available to residents as well, and the facility is available to rent for private parties. The pool offers two, 1-meter diving boards, a shower room, a wading pool and full concessions, see Figures 6.12 & 6.13. Additionally, Senior and Youth scheduled activities are available at the pool. Contact the Chickasaw Parks and Recreation Department for more information. Figures 6.14 & 6.15 show some of the other amenities offered at our Civic Center Complex.
Disc Golf Course

Our Disc Golf Course is part of the Civic Center complex and is located at the corner of Grant and Court Streets. It is one of the few Disc Golf Courses in our area, offering an 18 basket course and the cost is free. A charity tournament is scheduled each year at the park and is sponsored by the Chickasaw Kiwanis Club, see Figure 6.16.

Community Amphitheatre

Chickasaw’s amphitheater is available for bookings through the Parks and Recreation Department. It has seating available for up to 100 people and is located on Civic Center grounds as well, see Figure 6.17.
Charles E. McConnell Civic Center

Our Civic Center in Chickasaw offers facilities for large or small meetings and a full kitchen. It is available and can be reserved through the Parks and Recreation Department, see Figure 6.18.

Ina Pullen Smallwood Memorial Library

The Ina Pullen Smallwood Memorial Library is available to all our citizens who reside within our city limits. It is located within the Civic Center area and is open Monday through Friday, 12-6 p.m. and on Saturdays from 1-6 p.m., see Figure 6.19.

Figure 6.19: Ina Pullen Smallwood Memorial Library

Our city provides many open green spaces and walking areas for all our residents and visitors to utilize. Around the Civic Center area there are swing sets, park benches, open spaces and bridges. See Figures 6.20 through Figure 6.23 for illustrations of these amenities.
Alabama Coastal Birding Trail

Chickasaw is home to one of the six birding trails developed by the Alabama Coastal Birding Trail (ACBT), which includes the Eastern Shore, Mobile Bay Causeway and Blakeley Island Loop Trail of the ACBT. It offers bird enthusiasts an opportunity to view and enjoy a high diversity of bird species representative of Alabama’s Gulf Coast and promotes birding through tourism in the region. The site is managed by the City of Chickasaw and features numerous picnic pavilions, trails, a boardwalk system and two public piers.

The trails pass through a variety of habitats ranging from mixed pine-hardwood uplands to forested bottomlands. Look for migrants during the spring and fall like the Prothonotary Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Summer Tanager, numerous varieties of Woodpeckers and Owls, and Red-winged Blackbird, which are regular summer residents. Our area also sees a summer and winter population of Hummingbirds. Be sure to check for the mighty Louisiana Great Blue Heron, waterfowl, waders and Osprey in the open areas over the creek as well, see Figure 6.23.
The ACBT features six birding loops in Baldwin and Mobile counties, totaling over 200 miles. Each loop covers different ecological regions representative of the northern Gulf Coast and enables birders to experience different assemblages of bird species within each region. Since its opening, the ACBT has been a very popular birding attraction and in 2003 received the Alabama Tourism Partnership Award for its outstanding contributions to the state travel industry. See Figure 6.24 for a bird species commonly found throughout the Chickasaw area.

**Chickasabogue Creek & The Ron Jones Paddle Trail**

Chickasabogue Creek has recently been added to the Alabama Scenic River Trail, which is a formal Blueway Trail offering 3000 miles of accessible waterways with amenities and campsites for kayaks, canoes and motorboats. This trail has been recognized by the U.S. Department of the Interior as “the nation’s longest one-state river trail”, stretching approximately 631 miles from the Coosa River to the Gulf of Mexico in Alabama. Our two-mile stretch of the trail begins at Chickasabogue Park in Eight Mile and ends at William Brooks Park in Chickasaw. It has earned the Alabama Scenic River Trail Distinction and will be featured on the statewide website for the Alabama Scenic River Trails, a resource that is followed by many kayakers and canoeists nationwide. This portion of the trail, named the Ron Jones Paddle Trail is in honor of Mobile County’s former Parks and Wildlife Manager Ron Jones. New signage is posted along the route and kiosks are stationed at both ends of the trail that feature maps and interpretive panels. This new trail in our area will promote public awareness and eco-tourism activities in Chickasabogue Creek and our city. See Figure 6.25 for illustrations and details of the new trail.
Figure 6.25: Chickasabogue Creek and the Ron Jones Paddle Trial in Chickasaw

Source: City of Chickasaw
Levels of Service

The National Park and Recreation Association (NPRA) recommends Level of Service Standards associated with park and recreational facilities for communities in order to achieve an adequate number and type of facilities per population. Table 6.1 illustrates these recommendations. The table is a chart showing the current inventory of all parks and facilities in our city, including the existing acreage of each park and the current acres needed for each of our parks and facilities based on our current population of 6,103.

**Table 6.1: Current Park Inventory for Chickasaw**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Park/Facility</th>
<th>Recommended Acres</th>
<th>Existing Acres</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Owner</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mini/ Pocket Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime Park</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td></td>
<td>Benches, Brick Paths, Gazebo, Historical Marker</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.5-3.0</td>
<td>0.34</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Park</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legg Park</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td></td>
<td>Basketball Court, Monkey Bars, Swings, Legg Memorial</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Park</td>
<td>10.60</td>
<td></td>
<td>Softball/Recreational fields</td>
<td>Housing Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.E. Burrell Park</td>
<td>15.33</td>
<td></td>
<td>Walking &amp; Running Trail, Benches, Bridges</td>
<td>Housing Authority</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>6.0-12.0</td>
<td>26.43</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Park</td>
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<td>Chickasaw Civic Center</td>
<td>20.53</td>
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<td>Pool, Concession, Tennis &amp; Shuffle Board Courts, Library, Playground,</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Civic Center, Disc Golf Course, Bridges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauvilla Park</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td></td>
<td>Baseball field, Tennis &amp; Basketball Courts, Benches, Swings, Bathrooms</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Dotson Park</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 Ball Fields/Football Field w/Goalposts, Bathrooms</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks Park &amp; Marina</td>
<td>23.73</td>
<td></td>
<td>Boat Launch, Fishing, Boardwalk, Walking Trails, Gazebos, Benches</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Recommended</td>
<td>30.0-48.0</td>
<td>52.83</td>
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<td>CHICKASAW TOTAL</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>79.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brooks Park Boardwalks</td>
<td>.66 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td>Elevated boardwalks &amp; trails</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.E. Burrell Park Trails</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Walking/running trails</td>
<td>Housing Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama Coastal Birding Trail</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td>Loop trails for bird watching</td>
<td>City of Chickasaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Jones Paddle Trail</td>
<td>2.0 miles</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aquatic trail</td>
<td>Mobile County</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL MILEAGE</td>
<td>~3.66miles</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: National Park and Recreation Association (NPRA)
Figure 6.26 is a map that identifies park locations throughout our city, including existing and proposed trails and boardwalks.

Figure 6.26: Park Locations in Chickasaw

Source: SARPC
Annual Events

Our city is home to many annual events that provide and promote community interaction and socializing. The following is a list of all our events and programs that occur annually or biennially.

Children’s Halloween Parade

Every year in October, our city holds its annual Children’s Halloween Parade. This is an opportunity to celebrate all Hollow’s Eve with costume contests, followed by a walking parade of children and pets in their ghostly attire. Ages of the participants usually range from infant up to twelve years old.

Kayak Fun Paddle in William Brooks Park

The Kayak Fun Paddle in William Brooks park allows participants to paddle through the scenic Mobile-Tensaw Delta. The event is held monthly, giving kayakers ample opportunity to have a little fun while enjoying the great outdoors. Contact the city's Recreation Department for more information on dates and times.

Senior Christmas and Easter Luncheon

Continuing its tradition of active involvement in the lives of our local Senior Citizens, our city offers an annual Christmas Luncheon and an annual Easter Luncheon to our Seniors. The cost is nominal and the event offers a chance for food and fellowship during the holidays.

City of Chickasaw Founder’s Day Festival

Every other year in the month of October, our community celebrates its founding with a fun-filled Founder's Day festival. This celebration is sponsored by our Chamber of Commerce and features kid’s games and activities, such as a football toss and face painting, as well as entertainment for the whole family, including live music, dancing, costume contests and a silent auction. The festival also includes good food from various local vendors as well as arts and crafts vendors.

Chickasaw Youth Fishing Tournament

Our city sponsors an annual Youth Fishing Tournament at William Brooks Park every April. The age range is usually 16 years and younger. Participants are allowed to fish from the piers, shores, or boats around the waters of Brooks Park. Parents and/or legal guardians must be present to help sign release forms. Refreshments such as hot dogs and drinks are provided for entrants and a
weigh-in station is set up, where the participants who weigh their catch can receive cash prizes for total weight in each category of catfish, bass and bream, up to five fish per fisherman.

**Kiwanis Club Freedom 5K Run & 1 Mile Fun Run**

Every May on Armed Forces Day, our Chickasaw Kiwanis Club sponsors its annual 5K Freedom Run and 1 Mile Fun Run. The event takes runners along a certified, scenic 5K course through Chickasaw. Any and all ages can participate, see Figure 6.27.

**Garden Club Plant Sale**

Our local garden club sponsors their annual plant sale each year to raise money for their continued efforts in beautifying our community. The Club plants many flowers, trees and shrubs around our city and sponsors events, such as “Yard of the Month”.

**Historic Tour of Homes and Holiday Open House**

Each December, our Historical Society members host their annual Holiday Open House. The event features house tours, crafts, refreshments and a silent auction. The "Chickasaw by Candlelight" Homes Tour delights visitors with a chance to view our city’s numerous historical homes, which are beautifully decorated with Christmas trees, boughs of holly, garland and poinsettias, see Figure 6.28. Proceeds from this fundraiser support our Society’s historic district community project.

**Children’s Mardi Gras Parade**

Our City sponsors its own Mardi Gras Parade for the children within our city. Kids, ages 12 and under are allowed to participate. They are encouraged to dress in their most festive Mardi Gras attire and either walk or ride in a wagon, with their parents or guardians, along the parade...
route and provide their own throws. All are welcome to watch the parade along sidewalks on the route.

**Easter Egg Hunt**

Our city-wide Easter Egg Hunt takes place every spring at C.E. Burrell Park and always has a great turn out of around 100 children, ages 12 and under. There are three age divisions that contain 3,000 Easter eggs for the children to hunt. The event also includes inflatables, games, refreshments and of course a visit with the Easter Bunny, see Figure 6.29.

**Fourth of July**

Our city celebrates Independence Day big with a fun filled day of festivities, which include games, live music, food, a kayak paddle, puppet show and much more. The event is held at Brooks Park and concludes with a spectacular fireworks show.

**Summer Day Camp Program**

Each year at the end of June, the our city organizes a Summer Day Camp for kids 4-12 years old, which lasts until about mid-August. This program is in its 31st year and has met much success. Day camp activities include time at the city pool, field trips to the movies, and even fun events like pajama day. It also provides an opportunity for the kids to get engaged with our community, with activities such as lessons on safety sponsored by our city’s Fire Department. The Summer Day Camp Program is open to our residents and non-residents alike. More information about the program can be found by calling our Parks and Recreation Department.

**Kiwanis Club Annual Disc Golf Tournament**

On the 2nd Saturday in January, our Chickasaw Kiwanis Club sponsors its annual Disc Golf Tournament. The Tournament takes place at the Disc Golf Course located at our Civic Center complex, located at the corner of Grant and Court Streets.
Chickasaw Annual Christmas Parade

Every 2nd Saturday in December, our City sponsors an annual Christmas parade, open to all members of our community. Participants are encouraged to make and build creative floats for the parade. Individuals and organizations can participate. A Santa Claus float with old St. Nick himself is also present in the parade, see Figure 6.30.

Summer Reading Program

The Ina Pullen Smallwood Memorial Library’s Summer Reading Program is a six-week, summer reading program available to our residents. The program focuses on keeping kids reading all summer and is always a great success! Participants enjoy stories, crafts, refreshments and special guests. Children who read the most books receive special prizes and all the children receive backpacks and goodies.

Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year

Every year in June, our Chamber of Commerce hosts an annual luncheon to award one of our selected citizens with the Citizen of the Year Award. An outside entity evaluates the nominees and selects the award recipient based on how the citizen has advanced our community and their accomplishments in the various positions they hold in our community.

This luncheon, which features a prominent guest speaker, has been hosted for almost 60 years by our Chamber. It always has a large attendance of approximately 100 people, and is an important annual event for our city, see Figure 6.31.
Future Parks & Recreation

For the purpose of our Comprehensive Plan, Auburn University’s Center for Architecture & Urban Studies prepared progressive and elaborate concept plans for our community’s development in a variety of categories to be included in our city’s master plan. Illustrated in Figures 6.32 & 6.33 are some examples of their suggestions and ideas. Figure 6.32 shows Brooks Park Landing and Recreation area, showing details for development on the east side of Highway 43. These plans include an additional boat/canoe/kayak launch and dock, a restored shipyard vessel to house a museum or lodging facility, a restored tugboat as a park attraction and the creation of an RV park, campgrounds and picnic areas.

Figure 6.33 shows a broader concept of our Parks and Recreation plan throughout our entire municipality, which includes more pedestrian greenway trails and trail heads that inter-connect throughout our city, more parks and playing fields, community gardens and “green” buffers and connecting Chickasabogue Creek into the Alabama Scenic Canoe Trail. These suggestions will promote eco-tourism in our city and provide a more walkable community. Along with the master plan that is being developed by the City of Chickasaw, other recreational areas such as trails and a historical park along Chickasabogue Creek are being developed.

Source: Auburn Design Studio
Figure 6.33: Auburn Design Studio Concept Parks & Recreation

Source: Auburn Design Studio
Elevated Boardwalks

Our city will continue to develop additional opportunities to capitalize on the birding and eco-tourism industry by constructing elevated boardwalks over wetland areas in different areas of the city, such as our port and Pirates Cove areas, see Figure 6.34. Constructing boardwalks in these areas will provide a way for the wetlands throughout our municipality to be utilized as well as recruit locals and tourist to our port and the proposed working waterfront district of our city. Our community could also benefit from hosting an annual Chickasaw Migratory Bird Festival to recruit birders and nature enthusiasts to our area. It is important that we as a city, become a local leader in developing regional initiatives that focus on conservation, sustainability and tourism in our area.

Community Gardens & Farmers Market

Community gardens or neighborhood gardens and nurseries can be developed as one large community plot or many individual plots. They contain fruits and vegetables or flowers that can be grown for individual use or sold at a Farmers Market. They provide a multitude of benefits for a community such as:

- Improves the quality of life for people in the garden and neighborhood
- Stimulates social interaction and brings communities together
- Produces nutritious food and teaches gardening skills
- Reduces family and school food budgets
- Creates opportunity for recreation, exercise, therapy, and education
- Promotes interactive agriculture learning through the development of school gardening programs
- Provides a catalyst for neighborhood and community development
- Encourages and teaches self-reliance and sustainability
- Beautifies neighborhoods and unused open spaces
- Conserves resources
- Reduces crime
- Preserves green space
- Creates income opportunities and economic development
Our community will greatly benefit from a community garden and should explore the opportunity by creating a committee to investigate areas of availability, such as vacant lots scattered throughout our neighborhoods and Alabama Power’s right-of-way along Chieftain Way (12th Avenue), which is adjacent to our public school. Additionally, the garden will provide an interactive learning environment for our school-aged children by creating an outdoor classroom, which will enable our students to gain gardening skills through hands-on learning and provide fruits and vegetables to our school cafeterias. The committee should establish and manage a Farmer’s Market in a vacant area of our city, such as the China Doll factory site. The Farmer’s Market will provide a way for local farmers from our area to sell their crops throughout the summer growing months.

**Alabama Scenic River Trail**

Water related activities and recreation is a big part of our lives in lower Alabama. Chickasaw or Chickasabogue Creek is within our city limits, providing us with waterfront access to the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, leading to the Gulf of Mexico. While always being mindful of our natural resources and being responsible stewards of our environment, we should capitalize upon our close proximity to the waterfront and the Mobile-Tensaw Delta by developing more eco-tourism activities such as boating, kayaking, canoeing and paddle boarding. These water dependent activities attract many enthusiasts and nature lovers alike. The Alabama Scenic River Trail, which is designated as a National Recreation Trail, see Figure 6.35, encompasses Chickasaw Creek. By coordinating with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) to connect into this existing trail along with the existing Bartram Canoe Trail in Baldwin County, we can acquire many more aquatic miles of outdoor recreation availability and economic opportunity.

*Figure 6.35: Alabama Scenic River Trail Route*

![Alabama Scenic River Trail Route](image)
Splashpads

Splashpads are becoming a very popular recreational activity in today’s society. Children of all ages are enjoying an alternative way to beat the heat other than swimming pools. Paul Devine Park has an open concrete area located between the pool and tennis courts that could serve as a likely candidate for a splash pad location. Due to elevated numbers of city pool users, we can serve our citizens more efficiently by providing them with this recreational activity.

Community Goals

The following is a list of issues that were identified in part by our citizens through the Chickasaw Community Response Survey, which was conducted by the Chickasaw Planning Commission and the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) in January 2013. The goals listed are items our city is addressing or will address and strive to accomplish in the future.

- Provide more facilities and activities for the young adult and young family-aged demographic group.
- Maintain, improve and expand current park and recreational facilities and events in Chickasaw. This includes the development of additional public water access facilities for boats and pedestrians. Additionally, this could include the preservation, restoration and new development of a working waterfront that includes boat slips, boat launches, and additional elevated boardwalks over wetlands.
- Expand and support eco-tourism opportunities and businesses to better capitalize on the city’s resources without resulting in an adverse impact to the social or physical environment or quality of life for the city’s residents. Applicable eco-tourism businesses would include watercraft rentals, bicycle/moped rentals, bait and tackle shops, etc.
- Host a Movie in the Park night at our Community Amphitheatre in the summer months to encourage community fellowship and promote strong neighborhoods.
- Sponsor an annual Shakespeare or Renaissance Festival to be held at our Community Amphitheatre and use the park to host a community movie night in the summer months.
- Work with our city’s Parks & Recreation Department to develop a soccer league for our children.
- Incorporate our Community Library into the Mobile County Public Library System.
- Repair and replace identified equipment at city parks.
- Install lighting and other security measures as needed in parks to promote safety and reduce crime.
- Provide additional Police in parks to promote public safety.
- Create Community Gardens.
• Construct more boardwalks in wetland areas to provide more opportunity for bird watching and other eco-tourism activities.
• Establish a Farmer's Market.
• Construct more playgrounds throughout the city and provide more playground equipment in existing parks.
• Work with the appropriate regulating authorities to remove debris and abandoned vessels from the Tensaw River where our proposed extended paddle trail is located.

Recommendations

By implementing the recommendations and strategies listed below, our city can begin to achieve the community identified goals.

• Develop a new recreational facility for water access in the area of Brooks Landing. The facility would support recreational boating, fishing, kayaking, paddle boarding, and would include boat slips, boat launches, pedestrian boardwalks, observation decks and fishing piers.
• Advertise Brooks Park as a site for recruiting private events such as weddings, birthdays, paddle board and water-ski tournaments and cross country events, just to name a few.
• Host the Chickasaw’s Founder’s Day festival annually as opposed to every other year, in order to draw more attention to the happenings around the city. Include a fireworks display and a Founder’s Day parade within the festival, to enhance the experience of the celebration.
• Contact Alabama Coastal Birding Trail and establish additional birding trails around our city’s Port and establish an annual Chickasaw Migratory Bird fest in our community.
• Work with American Veteran and Vietnam Veteran organizations to help fund the repairs and restoration of Legg Park, and provide improved memorial monument for KIA Vietnam Veteran 2L.T. John D. Legg at Legg Park.
• Install trash cans and waste collection sites throughout Brooks Landing.
• Seek funding through the Bedsole Foundation and the Alabama Department of Economic & Community Affairs (ADECA) Trails Program for development of additional playgrounds for the community and for repairs on existing park equipment.
• Establish officer patrol route through Brooks Landing to control vandalism.
• Form a committee to conduct an annual assessment of our city parks to identify needed repairs and improvements.
• Develop kayak, canoe and paddleboard rental programs at Brooks Landing.
• Work with ADECA LETS program to purchase security camera equipment and additional lighting for parks.
• Work with Mobile County Public Library System to incorporate Chickasaw’s Community library with County System.
• Establish city museum with historical items at library and around town.
• Seek funding from ADECA Trails Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to construct more pedestrian and bike trails.
• Develop campgrounds, RV park and picnic areas to attract eco-tourism to our area.
• Coordinate with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) to connect Chickasabogue Creek into the existing Alabama Scenic River Trail and capitalize on the water access points of Brooks Park Landing to develop this area into an important resource along this trail.
• Develop more nature trails and trail-heads that inter-connect with existing pedestrian trails throughout our city, creating a more walkable community.
• Locate and restore an old Chickasaw shipyard vessel to be used as a city museum, park attraction or lodging facility.
• Work regionally to build initiatives that capture conservation and eco-tourism opportunities.
• Coordinate with the American Community Gardening Association (ACGA) to develop community gardens and work with our city’s school system to integrate an outdoor classroom with a community garden.
• Establish a committee to manage and develop a Farmer’s Market and oversee the organization of the community gardens.
• Form a committee to ensure the integrity of our Blueway Trails: Ron Jones Paddle Trail and the Alabama Scenic River Trail, by coordinating with the proper regulating agencies to keep our waterways free and clear of debris and dumping and to monitor possible environmental hazards such as sewage leaks and deteriorating boat hulls, see Figure 6.36.
• Expand our efforts and participation in Alabama’s annual Coastal Clean-Up by developing and hosting our own annual “Clean-Up Our Blueways Day” in Chickasaw. This event will provide an additional way to get our community and watermen involved in environmental conservation and clean up efforts and will create public awareness to our natural resources.

Figure 6.36: Concrete and Debris Dumping Near Chickasaw Creek

Source: SARPC
• Coordinate with ADCNR to apply for funding through the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) in 2015 to identify and remove derelict vessels in Chickasaw Creek area that may pose an environmental threat due to leaking boat hulls, see Figure 6.37.

• Apply for funding through the Gulf Coast Resource, Conservation and Development Council (Gulf Coast RC & D) to construct a community Splash Pad at Paul Devine Park.

Figure 6.37: Derelict Vessel Near Chickasaw Creek

Source: SARPC