

# Fiscal Year Annual Report



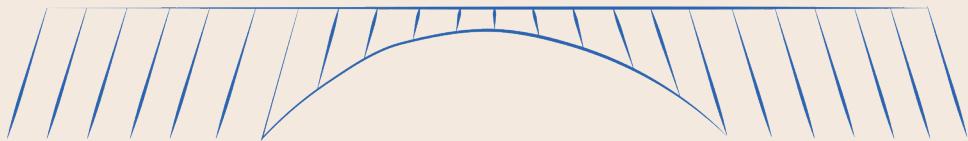
# 2024

The Firefly Bridge over Trail Creek illuminated during the  
2024 Flight of the Fireflies Lantern Parade.



ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY  
LEISURE SERVICES

*The Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Department promotes lifelong recreation, cultural, environmental, and educational opportunities for Athens-Clarke County's diverse communities. We contribute to Athens' health and wellness by providing connections to parks, facilities, programs, and community.*



*On the cover: The Firefly Bridge over Trail Creek project was the redesign of what was commonly referred to as the R.E.M. Murmur Trestle. The project earned four state and local awards, as well as one national award.*

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**11,481** Hours of Volunteer Service

\*The Independent Sector estimates the value of one hour of volunteer service at \$29.95. Using that statistic, the Department's value of volunteerism totals \$343,866.73

**3,201** Completed Work Orders

**665** Volunteers

**216** Playground Inspections

**147** Seasonal Staff

**95** Part Time Employees

**74** Full Time Employees

**13** Promotions,  
New Hires, and  
Transfers

**LEISURE SERVICES  
AT WORK**

# FACILITIES & PARKS

Bear Hollow Zoo

Ben Burton Park

Bishop Park

Boulevard Woods Park

Dudley Park

East Athens Educational Dance Center

Firefly Trail

Heard Park and Community Center

Holland Youth Sports Complex

Lay Park and Community Center

Lyndon House Arts Center

Memorial Park

Morton Theatre

North Oconee River Greenway

North Oconee River Park

Pop up Park

Quinn Hall

Reese and Pope Park

Rocksprings Park

Sandy Creek Nature Center

Sandy Creek Park

Satterfield Park

Southeast Clarke Park

Tennis Center

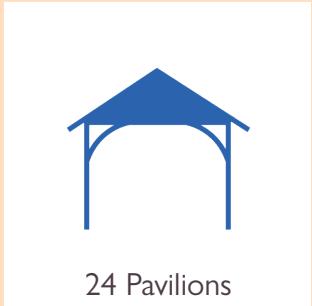
Walker Park

Ware-Lyndon House





# ALL OVER TOWN



24 Pavilions



20 Acres of  
Dog Parks

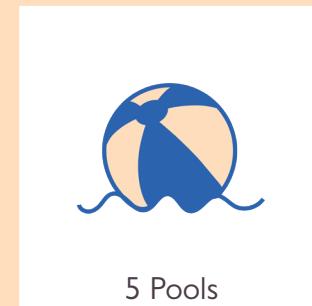
Athens-Clarke County  
Leisure Services offers...



7 Mountain  
Bike Trails



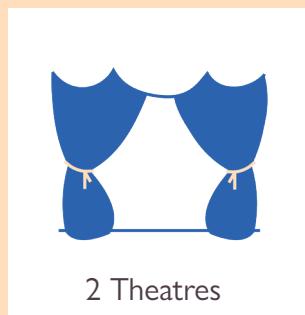
6 Dedicated Pickleball  
Courts (& 14 Shared)



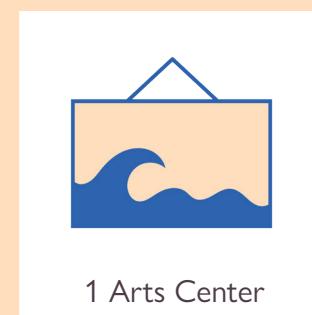
5 Pools



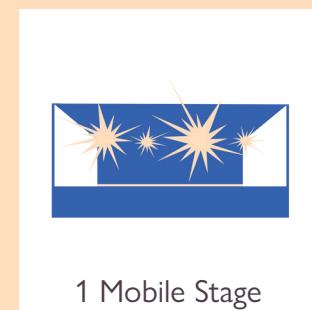
2 Splash Pads



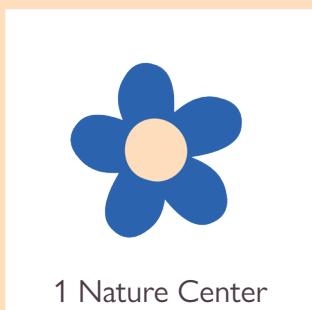
2 Theatres



1 Arts Center



1 Mobile Stage



1 Nature Center



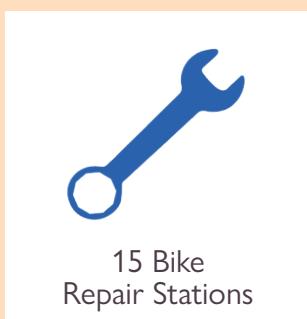
35 Athletic Fields



33 Tennis Courts



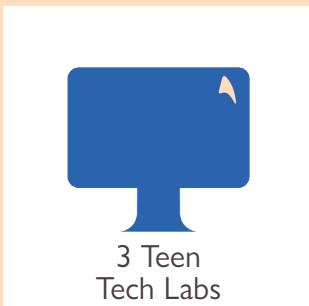
16 Playgrounds



15 Bike Repair Stations



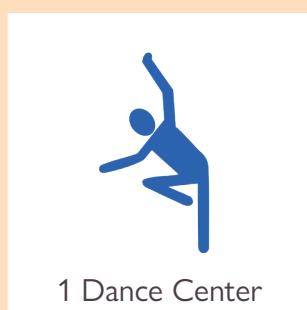
15 Outdoor Basketball Courts



3 Teen Tech Labs



3 Petanque Courts



1 Dance Center



1 Historic House Museum



1 Planetarium



1 Pop up Park



1 Skate Park



1 Zoo

# F I N A N C I A L S

**\$73,659**

Total Scholarships Subsidies to 375 qualifying ACC children.  
The scholarships were used 1,878 times for program participants.

**\$98,762**

Awarded in 6 Grants

**\$1,195,556**

Total Revenue

**\$1,987,553**

State of Georgia Grants for park and facility improvements.

**\$5,359,404**

in SPLOST Funding for park repairs and updates.

**\$9,858,946**

Total Expenditures

**\$10,028,362**

Operating Budget





# PARK ENHANCEMENTS

## Dudley Park

- Installed nesting and roosting boxes for birds
- Created river access point
- Installed Water Trash Trap inside of Trail Creek

## East Athens Educational Dance Center

- Replaced 20 year-old lighting system with energy-efficient LED lighting
- Added additional lighting elements to better highlight performers
- Updated parts of the audio and video system to improve the audience's experience
- Installed a new roof and flooring

## Heard Park

- Painted interior and exterior of the community center
- Installed new interior floors
- Upgraded lighting in the stairwells
- Installed new door intercoms, magnetic door locks, and security cameras



## Holland Youth Sports

- Installed bottle filler fountains at all three concession stands

## Lay Park

- Painted the baseball dugouts, gym, and pool locker rooms
- Upgraded lighting in community center stairwells
- Added 60-foot shade structure at the pool
- Installed new door intercoms, magnetic door locks, and security cameras

## Lyndon House Arts Center

- Installed new door intercoms, magnetic door locks, and security cameras
- Upgraded lighting and sound in Community room



## Memorial Park

- Replaced the pool's old vinyl liner with concrete
- Replaced the filter system and pool motor
- Resurfaced the entire pool deck and repainted locker rooms and bathrooms
- Renovated dog park
- New otter deck and connecting boardwalk



## Morton Theatre

- Upgraded WiFi in the theatre and offices

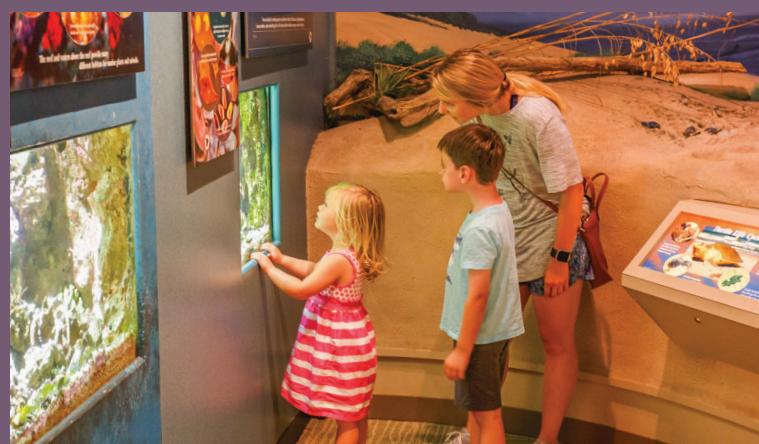


## Rocksprings Park

- Installed new door intercoms, magnetic door locks, and security cameras

## Sandy Creek Nature Center

- Installed new door intercoms, magnetic door locks, and security cameras
- Expanded and renovated the outdoor restroom, adding a changing table and making the restroom more accessible



# STATISTICALLY SPEAKING...

**80,693**

Admissions to Sandy Creek Park



**665**

Picnic Shelter/Pavilion Rentals



**516**

Individuals learned  
to swim



**4,424**

Registered campers

**800**

Attendees at Zoo Day



**2,023**

Attendees at the Above  
Athens Balloon Festival

**23,409** Attendees

**113** Events



at Morton Theatre



**72** Tons of sand added to Sandy Creek Park Beach



**2,534**

Pounds of greens consumed by the bears



**258** Miles traveled by Pop up Park Bus

**\$900,000**

Inclusive playground officially opened at Sandy Creek Park



**18**  
Exhibitions

**402**  
Pieces of art displayed



**5** Inductees to the Athens Music Walk of Fame



**8,000**

Pounds of chlorine used at the pools

**10**

# BUT WAIT... THERE'S MORE!



**OPENED** the next phase of the North Oconee River Greenway Trail System along Carr's Creek.

**PARTICIPATED** in six competitions featuring Athens-Clarke Gymnastics Academy gymnasts. The group received eight team awards and numerous individual athlete awards.

**INITIATED** a master plan process in partnership with Berry, Dunn, McNeil & Parker, LLC to include public engagement, focus groups, and an interactive website.

**HOSTED** the annual "Bears Birthday Party" with more than 700 people in attendance.

**PRODUCED** five ticketed Athens Creative Theatre performances with a total of 2,333 patrons in attendance.



**HOSTED** the second annual “Flight of the Fireflies” Lantern Parade with approximately 900 participants.

**TRACKED** trail usage totaling more than 575,000 users on the Greenway and Firefly Trails.

**LAUNCHED** “ArtWork: Workshops for Artists and Creative Professionals” in partnership with the Athens-Clarke County Economic Development Department with approximately 140 area artists participated in the various sessions.

**PARTNERED** with the Clarke County School District through a Shared Facility Use Agreement resulting in 2,474 students from 15 schools visiting facilities and parks at no cost to the school district. The agreement resulted in \$24,925 savings in rental and admission costs.

**RELOCATED** the Star Spangled Classic to Southeast Clarke Park to include fireworks and family activities. Attracted approximately 4,000 attendees.

**ORGANIZED** the Downtown Athens Parade of Lights attracting more than 70 entries and an estimated 8,000 spectators.





# GETTING SCHOoled

During FY24, department staff participated in training offered by the following organizations:

American Council  
of Engineering  
Companies

Georgia Emergency  
Management Agency

Pool and Hot  
Tub Alliance

American Red Cross

Georgia Recreation  
and Park Association

Professional Trail  
Builders Association

Athens Technical  
College

Georgia Soil & Water  
Conservation  
Commission

Project for  
Public Spaces

Bear Taxon  
Advisory Group

National Association  
for Interpretation

USA Gymnastics

Collaboration of  
Design and Art

National Outdoor  
Wilderness School

United States  
Forest Service

Georgia Association  
of Museums

Nuçi's Space

United States Institute  
for Theatre Technology

# **SORRY FOLKS!**

Our trophy case is full!

Over the past year, the department has been honored on the local, state, and national levels...

**34th Annual Emancipation Proclamation Observance and Pioneer Awards:  
“A Salute to the Arts”**

- Award presented to Lynn Green

**34th Annual Emancipation Proclamation Observance and Pioneer Awards:  
“A Salute to the Arts”**

- Award presented to Morton Theatre

**Georgia Recreation and Park Association: Programmers Network Outstanding Program Award for  
“Bring the Gnome Home”**

**Georgia Recreation and Park Association: State Agency of the Year Award (populations: 80,001-150,000)**



**Georgia Recreation and Park Association: State Volunteer Award**

- Presented to Dan Long for volunteer service to Sandy Creek Nature Center

**Georgia Recreation and Park Association: District 7 Volunteer Award**

- Presented to Dan Long for volunteer service to Sandy Creek Nature Center

**Georgia Association of Museums: 2024 Special Project- Category #2 \$1,001-\$25,000 Award for “Resilient Civic and Musical Life: Ware-Lyndon House Enslaved and Descendant Stories”**

- Presented to Lyndon House Arts Center

**Georgia Association of Museums: 2024 Institution Award**

- Presented to Lyndon House Arts Center

**Dance USA**

- Presented to Nena Gilreath, East Athens Educational Dance Center Program and Facility Supervisor

**Governor’s Awards for the Arts and Humanities**

- Presented to Nena Gilreath, East Athens Educational Dance Center Program and Facility Supervisor

**American Council of Engineering Companies Awards: “National Recognition Award”**

- Presented to Firefly Bridge over Trail Creek

**American Council of Engineering Georgia Companies Awards: “Category 3 Structural Systems 1st Place State Award”**

- Presented to Firefly Bridge over Trail Creek

**Georgia Partnership for Transportation Quality 2023 Preconstruction Award “Grand Prize Award”**

- Presented to Firefly Bridge over Trail Creek

**Georgia Partnership for Transportation Quality 2023 Preconstruction Award “Context Sensitive Planning and Design Including Public Participation Plan Award”**

- Presented to Firefly Bridge over Trail Creek

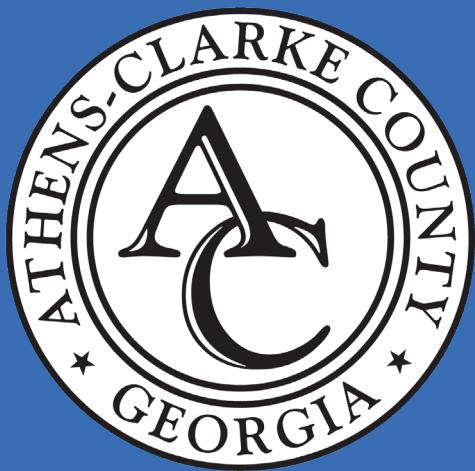
**Historic Athens 2024 Innovative Solutions in Rehabilitation Preservation Award**

- Presented to Firefly Bridge over Trail Creek

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**ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY**  
Leisure Services Department

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