Highlights Tour Site Descriptions

ASHEVILLE
Parks, Recreation
& Cultural Arts
Department

City Hall, Pack Square Park & Public Art	
Address	70 Court Plaza
Directions	Begin the tour at Pack Square Park.

City Hall, built by architect Douglas Ellington between 1926-1928, was originally proposed as part of a joint city-county plaza development that would have included City Hall and the County Courthouse. Buncombe County, however, did not like Ellington's predominantly Art Deco style, and the courthouse was designed by a Washington DC-based firm instead. City Hall is known for its "fortress-like" form and stylized American Indian-derived feather motif. The stepped roof and marble, brick, and terra cotta building materials were selected to reflect Asheville's natural setting. The building cost $750,000 at the time to construct, and was preserved due to the City's massive depression-era debt that preventing it from funding new construction of public buildings. During World War II, the United States Army leased the entire City Hall building to house the world headquarters of its Weather Wing and Communications Services branch of the Air Forces. City Hall was put on the National Register of Historic Places on July 11, 1976.

Pack Square Park began in 1901 when philanthropist George Willis Pack gave the county a plot of land for a new courthouse. In 2000, Pack Square Conservancy was established to design a new, improved park. Construction began on the new park in 2005 and was finished in Spring 2010. The park consists of three major areas. Roger McGuire Green borders City Hall and the County Courthouse, and is the location of Bascom Lamar Lunsford Stage, a 50-foot stage with an undulating stainless steel pergola designed by Asheville sculptor Hoss Haley. A variety of handmade tiles (reflecting the colors of City Hall) by Weaverville ceramicist Kathy Triplett adorn the front wall of the stage. Roger McGuire Green also houses a round interactive water feature, Splasheville. On the north side of the stage near College Street, a granite Veterans' Memorial honors all those who have served the United States in uniform. Located mid-park, Reuter Terrace links Pack Square and Roger McGuire Green. It's a small but distinctive area featuring a raised observation point, a water cascade, a terraced lawn and Founders' Walk. In the near future, a Visitors' Plaza and an information kiosk will be added on the north side of Reuter Terrace. Pack Square is the third and most historic section of the new park, where Vance Monument is located with benches and a large bronze and stone fountain.

Throughout the park, stations of the Urban Trail can be found including "Ellington's Dream" and "Crossroads" (pigs and turkeys).

The Energy Loop is located adjacent to the County Courthouse. This piece of public art is the creation of Dirck Cruser of Swannanoa. Cruser, who died in 1996, won a competition sponsored by the organization Quality Forward (now Asheville GreenWorks). The sculpture is considered the first outdoor piece in the city's public art program.

Stephens-Lee Recreation Center is visible from Pack Square Park, across the walking bridge from City Hall. The center offers a wide variety of programs and classes for all ages, with special emphasis on wellness and fitness for women. The center features a gymnasium and fitness center. “Women only” workout times are designed specifically for women by women. The park surrounding the center includes playgrounds, a basketball court and the Dr. George Washington Carver Edible Garden.

Also visible from Pack Square Park is Beaucatcher Overlook Park, one of the Department’s most recently acquired pieces of property. This will be developed into a natural park with a possible greenway.

McCormick Field & Memorial Stadium	
Address	30 Buchanan Rd
Directions	From City Hall, drive down hill to McCormick Field on right

McCormick Field is home of the Asheville Tourists professional baseball team. This single A team is an affiliate of the Colorado Rockies organization. McCormick Field is built into the side of a hill and is surrounded by trees, making this a unique and charming place to take in a game. Although the field itself dates back to 1924, the grandstand was completely rebuilt before the 1992 season. McCormick Field is owned by the City of Asheville and leased to the Asheville Tourists, with Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts in charge of its maintenance.

The Department also operates Memorial Stadium, above McCormick Field. The stadium contains a Veteran’s Memorial archway and is used for a variety of sports.

Harvest House (Senior Center)	
Address	205 Kenilworth Dr
Directions	From McCormick Field, go back to Charlotte St. and take it to 240-E. Take Chunns Cove exit (6). Left at light onto Tunnel Rd. Right onto Kenilworth. Drive 2 miles to center on left. It is the building with maroon awning.

Harvest House is located in the Kenilworth neighborhood in east Asheville. It is one of two senior centers, the other being the Senior Opportunity Center. Harvest House offers a wide variety of activities that include exercise, tap dance, cards, scrabble, jewelry making, line dance, Mah Jongg, ceramics, folk dance, woodworking, weaving, trips, and a monthly potluck. Harvest House also offers Senior Games, a local athletic and creative arts program, to the community.

Recreation Park, Pool & Recreation Offices	
Address	75 Gashes Creek Rd
Directions	From Harvest House, head back to Tunnel Rd. to access 240-E near the Asheville Mall. Take exit 8. Left at light onto Fairview Rd. Go to bottom of hill, right at light onto Swannanoa Rd. Right on Azalea Rd. Right to go over bridge. At the end of the bridge, turn right.

The Department operates three outdoor pools: Malvern Hills, Recreation Park & Walton Street. They are open from as early as Memorial Day through mid - August. The pools program offers American Red Cross learn-to-swim, lifeguarding and Jr. lifeguarding programs, exercise classes as well as open swim. The pools are often located in parks adjacent to picnic areas, tennis courts, playgrounds, walking trails and ball fields. There are several options for entrance fee: daily, 15 visit, individual and family passes.

The Recreation Division's offices are located adjacent to Recreation Park and the WNC Nature Center.

WNC Nature Center	
Address	75 Gashes Creek Rd
Directions	Directly adjacent to Recreation Park

The WNC Nature Center is 42 acres of animals in their native Southern Appalachian Mountain habitats. The center provides an opportunity to learn, to touch and to know our rich natural heritage through educational and interactive exhibits. The facility offers animal viewing areas, picnic areas, gift shop and restrooms. The WNC Nature Center's purpose is to increase public awareness and understanding of all aspects of the natural environment of Western North Carolina through hands-on and sensory experiences.

Azalea Park Soccer Fields	
Address	498 Azalea Rd
Directions	Return to Azalea Rd and take a right.

The main component of Azalea Park is the John B. Lewis Soccer Complex. The soccer complex is made up of four oversized synthetic turf fields. The fields are made very similar to real grass and they are top dressed with recycled rubber, which allows play in all types of weather. The oversized fields are large enough that they can be divided into 2-4 smaller fields that allow as many as 16 soccer games to take place at one time. The soccer fields are also utilized for lacrosse tournaments, ultimate frisbee tournaments and an occasional 5K race. The soccer field lights were a recent project coordinated by the Department, with donations from the Asheville Buncombe Youth Soccer Association (ABYSA).

The ABYSA and Asheville Buncombe Adult Soccer Association (ABASA) are the primary users of the soccer fields. Through their programs, over 5,000 youth and 1,000 adults participate in soccer.
The playground at Azalea Park was built in 1 week's time by volunteer labor and is one of the few structures to survive the flooding of the park. The Azalea Park Dog Park and Trout Pond are also very popular destinations within this Regional Park.

Municipal Golf Course	
Address	226 Fairway Dr
Directions	From Azalea Park, turn left onto Azalea Rd and follow it to Swannanoa Rd. Left on Swannanoa, turn next right, then left into golf course drive.

The Asheville Municipal Golf Course is one of the oldest golf courses in Western North Carolina. The 18-hole golf course was designed by Hall of Fame golf architect Donald Ross and opened for play in 1927. The course is open daily to the general public, weather permitting. Tee times are required. Rental clubs are available. The clubhouse features a pro shop and a concession area. Passholder Tags are available for individuals, families, juniors and seniors.

Carrier Park & Velodrome	
Address	220 Amboy Rd
Directions	From the Municipal Golf Course, turn right onto Swannanoa River Rd. Follow it until Bryson St. Turn right and continue onto Meadow Rd. Take a left onto Amboy Rd. Carrier Park is on the left before you intersect with the highway.

Carrier Park is the site of the old Asheville Speedway and prior to that was an airfield named Carrier Field. The Department operates facilities for softball, hockey, rugby, biking, volleyball, lawn bowling and basketball at Carrier Park. It is also a popular location for outdoor special events and hosts many 5K races. The former NASCAR racetrack has been converted to a velodrome that is used for official bike races as well as recreational riding.

On sunny weekends Carrier Park averages 2,500 visitors per day. Many people access this park for picnicking, walking (apprx. 5 miles of walking trails) or reading a book. The picnic shelter is booked on most weekends throughout the summer and is a popular respite during the week.

French Broad River Park is visible as we head toward Carrier Park.

French Broad River Greenway	
Address	Amboy Rd
Directions	From Carrier Park, take a right onto Amboy Rd. The greenway follows the road between Carrier Park and French Broad River Park.

The French Broad River Greenway is a 2.5 mile bicycle and pedestrian path that follows the north bank of the French Broad River and provides views of Biltmore Estate land. The recently completed extension segment of the greenway makes this the largest contiguous greenway constructed in Asheville to date. A section of the trail runs through the middle of a family-owned recreational vehicle park and along the storefront of a RV repair shop as well as a river canoeing outfitter, which stands as a testament to the role greenways can play in economic development. Asheville's total greenway length is 4.5 miles--a significant achievement considering the topographical constraints the Appalachian city faces as it tries to implement a nationally recognized greenway system.

Livingston Street Park	
Address	285 Livingston St
Directions	At end of Amboy Rd, take a left onto Riverside Dr. Follow road to cross railroad tracks. At intersection, turn right onto Depot St. Follow to left onto Livingston St. Livingston Street Park is the construction site on your left.

Livingston St. Park sits on the edge of the River Arts District and is in the heart of one of Asheville's most vibrant public housing communities. A new recreation center is planned for this location and a groundbreaking was held in April 2010. The plans for the new recreation center will be phased in as funding is available. Initially the new center will focus on Cultural Arts and will contain an auditorium as well as studio space for teaching. Later phases will include a multi-court gymnasium as well as an outdoor splash pad.

Aston Park Tennis Center & Park Maintenance Building	
Address	336 Hilliard Ave
Directions	Go back down Livingston St, to right onto S. French Broad next to fire station. Follow uphill to left onto Hilliard at light. Aston Tennis & Park Maintenance building are both on left.

The City of Asheville built Aston Park in the early 1890's after George Willis Pack deeded it for park purposes. The first clay tennis court was opened for play in 1905 and was built with red clay. Aston Park is one of Asheville's oldest parks and located near downtown featuring a playground, gazebo, tennis backboard, walking paths and the Aston Park Tennis Center. The center is one of the finest public clay court facilities in the United States offering 12 lighted clay tennis courts and 2 permanent Quickstart Courts for kids ages 8 and under. The center is open to the public daily, April through November. The Covington Clubhouse opened in 2006. The tennis center sponsors several annual competitions, notably the Asheville City Open.

Food Lion Skate Park	
Address	Corner of Flint and Cherry St
Directions	From Aston Park, take a left onto Hilliard, then a right onto Haywood Rd. At the light, cross Patton to access 240-E. Take the Merrimon exit. At light, go straight to next light. Right onto Broadway, go under 240 bridge, then left (past ramp entry) onto Cherry St. The Food Lion Skate Park is on the left.

The Food Lion Skate Park features 17,000 square feet of skating excitement located at the corner of Flint and Cherry St. in downtown Asheville. This complex is a unique concrete park with three distinctive areas: the beginner bowl, intermediate street course and an advanced vertical bowl. The conceptual plan was designed by Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts staff with input from the skateboard community. The final design and construction was accomplished by a profession architect, landscape architect, and skateboard designers. The Food Lion Skate Park offers a safe, challenging, and attractive skate park facility for skateboarders of all ages.

Riverside Cemetery	
Address	53 Birch St
Directions	From the Food Lion Skate Park, take a left onto Cherry St., then a right onto Montford Ave. Follow to left on Winnetta, right on Pearson, left onto Birch to cemetery entry.

Riverside Cemetery is not just a place where families come to visit a deceased friend or loved one. It is a place of beauty - a place where you can walk, take photographs, paint the scenery, and visit the grave sites of prominent writers Thomas Wolfe and O. Henry. Riverside Cemetery also offers visitors a unique journey into Asheville's past. Both guided and self-guided walking tour information are available. Tours offer insight into cultural diversity, architecture, religious customs, and landscape design. More than 600 visitors tour the cemetery each year. It is located in the Montford Historic District, a short walk or drive from downtown. The cemetery features more than 87 acres of landscaped grounds. The cemetery averages approximately 75 services each year. Services offered include grave sales, historical and genealogical research, cemetery tours, landscape maintenance, and assistance with monument purchases.

Montford Center	
Address	34 Pearson Dr
Directions	Follow Birch St. to right on Pearson. The Montford Center will be on the right. To return to City Hall, right on Pearson to right on Montford. Left on Haywood to left for 240-E access. Exit at Charlotte St. back to City Hall.

Located in the heart of the Montford neighborhood, the Montford Center features a climbing wall, gymnasium and two multi-purpose rooms. The center is surrounded by the Montford Complex with a playground, tennis court, lighted ball field and the Hazel B. Robinson Amphitheater. The Montford Center is the only recreation center that was built to be a community center; all the others were unused buildings that were converted.