

Gregory Park Improvements – Fayetteville Parks and Recreation

ARPA Awards Application – Facilities: \$200,000 to \$500,000

Near the geographic center of Fayetteville, Arkansas is a 20 acre mostly wooded park that was originally acquired from the US Veterans Affairs Administration in 1964. The park is largely forested and had only a small picnic area, pavilion, and a hiking trail that looped around the wooded perimeter. The park has received periodic use over the years, primarily from day hikers and Scouting groups, but it has never enjoyed its full potential. For many years, recreational use was so sporadic that problematic activities began occurring throughout the park much more frequently. These activities, in turn, made the park much less desirable for recreation, which reduced legitimate use even more. A partnership with the city, volunteers, and support from philanthropic sources was developed to improve the park, particularly for trail use with an emphasis on educating youth in how to ride mountain bikes and to create an area where people can enjoy the natural surroundings.

Ozark Off-Road Cyclists (OORC), a mountain bike and trail advocacy group, helped spear head efforts to improve the existing trail that went around the park, and to add two new downhill trails, a skills course, and pump track. The city focused on creating a new trail head, parking lot, improvements to the pavilion, and space to support programs and other activities at the park. The OORC received a grant from the Walton Family Foundation to implement the trail related improvements and the city designed and funded improvements to the parking lot and trail head area.

The park is situated on the north face of a steep mountain. OORC improved the existing trail with volunteers and contracted out the construction of two new down hills trails that capitalized on the steep terrain. The trail head space was created to host groups for events centered around mountain biking, hiking, and nature appreciation. The new parking lot is designed to reduce impacts of non-source pollution and includes a 10' silhouette of a biker that greets people who arrive at the site. Other art examples are stained leaves patterns in the access walks and a giant gecko mural on one of the wall climb trail features.

Care was taken to create usable spaces for those who have mobility challenges so they can enjoy the space and participate in events. A new accessible picnic table was placed where it has great views and has become a favorite spot for people, with many people coming to the park to eat their lunch and enjoy the peaceful surroundings. The creation of this unique facility in the center of town has made trail access much more convenient for many citizens helping to support an active living lifestyle. The trails also serve as a practice course for nearby school teams participating in the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) mountain biking programs.

With multiple pieces and collaborators, the completion of the park took multiple years, but the improvements have paid off with use at the park skyrocketing. This project, implemented by and through a multi-partner partnership, has transformed a distressed park facility into one of the City's best central core recreational sites showing the importance of strong partnerships in the park and recreation industry.







IMAGINE WELCOME TO
GREGORY PARK

Soft Surface Trail Etiquette

DO NOT use wet trails – If you are leaving prints (tire or boot), the trail is too wet to use. When approaching muddy spots, go through the center of the mud to keep the trail narrow.

Stay on the trail – Do NOT go off trails, create new trails or cut and bridges. Narrow trails mean less environmental impact and happier plants and animal life.

Do not block trail – Move to the side of the trail when taking a break.

Respect – Show respect to all user groups and to the environment around you. Pick up your trash and get waste out.

Be Friendly – Every user on the trail is there to enjoy the outdoors. Be friendly and expect to see other folks around every corner.

DOWNHILL FLOW TRAILS ARE FOR BICYCLE USE ONLY
 - ONE WAY TRAFFIC - RIDE DOWNHILL ONLY -

 **YIELD TO** 
 RIDE WITHIN YOUR LIMITS!

PARK AMENITIES:


PLEASE RIDE DIRTY NOT MUD

 YES NO

CONTACTS:
EMERGENCY:
 911
LOCAL CYCLING INFORMATION:
 www.fayetteville.org

LEGEND




CITY OF
FAYETTEVILLE
 ARKANSAS

