



Old Towne Creek County Park Groundbreaking Media Fact Sheet – April 2023

Charleston County Parks' newest county park: Old Towne Creek County Park in West Ashley!

Background on the property

The site where Old Towne Creek County Park now sits was once well known as Ashem Farm and was home to Charleston's preservationist couple Ashby Farrow and Emily Ravenel Farrow. For years, both Mrs. Farrow and her father Charles Jervey Ravenel operated their St. Andrews Riding Academy on the property. Prior to the riding academy, the property played a role in the once booming "truck farming" industry - wherein farmers in St. Andrews Parish and other areas off the Charleston peninsula grew crops and collectively brought produce to markets in Charleston and along the entire eastern seaboard (by rail). In 2005, Mrs. Farrow established a conservation easement with the Historic Charleston Foundation to protect the property from future development. After her death in 2011, the Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission (CCPRC) purchased the land from the Lowcountry Land Trust.

The easement stipulates that the site must provide public benefits, such as scenic views, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, education, and historic preservation. Mrs. Farrow's actions have ensured that future generations of people and wildlife would be able to enjoy all the resources Old Towne Creek has to offer.

The new Old Towne Creek County Park

Old Towne Creek County Park is located in West Ashley at 1400 Old Towne Road, alongside Old Towne Creek. It is a 67-acre estate dotted with open fields among groves of live oaks, and offers views of Charles Towne Landing, Old Towne Creek and the surrounding salt marsh. Until 2023, Charleston County Parks used the site for select low-impact special events such as Wine Down Wednesday. Public input on the master planning process was gathered in 2017. The park master planning process and a separate resource interpretation planning process were both guided by steering committees comprised of local subject matter experts.

Charleston County Parks' vision for Old Towne Creek County Park is that it will be a welcoming space for all that includes accessible trails and boardwalks, scenic marsh views, a nature-inspired playground, and opportunities to learn about the site's history and ecology.

Scope of construction and timeline

In April 2023, Phase I Development of Old Towne Creek County Park will begin. This phase is expected to be completed in late 2025.

Phase 1 of the construction will include:

- Renovations of an existing building
- Roof replacement of existing stable buildings
- New restroom/pavilion building
- New maintenance building
- New accessible boardwalks and overlooks
- Playground with inclusive play elements and surfacing
- Accessible crushed stone pathways and concrete sidewalks and paths
- Landscaped areas with irrigation
- Signage/wayfinding
- Natural history and cultural resource interpretation signage
- Small amphitheater
- Parking areas
- Decorative fencing and gates along frontage
- Preservation of old brick entry and gates, and repurposed as a pedestrian entrance
- New paved vehicular entryway and deceleration/turning lane on Old Towne Road
- Site lighting
- Various utility additions and upgrades
- Reconstruction of an existing impoundment
- Creation of the Charleston County Parks Foundation Giving Tree, an outdoor art installation and fundraiser

Closures and impacts to the public

Old Towne Creek County Park will be closed to the public during construction. Events such as Wine Down Wednesday will not be held during the construction period. The project includes vehicular and pedestrian access improvements along its Old Towne Road frontage. Contractors will work to avoid or minimize disruptions to the roadway and sidewalk during construction, although some temporary safety-related traffic management is anticipated during later stages of the project.

Old Towne Creek County Park team

Owners: Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission (CCPRC)

Park Master Planning and Development Team: CCPRC, Stantec (lead consultant, landscape architecture, civil engineering), Liollio Architecture (architectural design), Biohabitats (environmental assessment), Passarella & Associates (wetland permitting), Parker Land Surveying, Steering Committee

Park Master Planning Steering Committee: CCPRC, Charles Towne Landing (SCPRT), City of Charleston, Historic Charleston Foundation, Lowcountry Land Trust

Interpretive Master Planning Team: CCPRC, The Design Minds (interpretation consultant), Interpretation Steering Committee

Interpretive Steering Committee: CCPRC, Historic Charleston Foundation, Lowcountry STEM Collaborative, Clemson Extension, College of Charleston (Teacher Education), Charles Towne Landing, and independent West Ashley historians and authors

Updates on the park's progress

For updates on the status of Old Towne Creek County Park's construction, visit ccprc.com/oldtowne

Media contact: For news media needs, please contact Sarah Reynolds, sreynolds@ccprc.com