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## SECTION I • INTRODUCTION

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Sparks Foundation County Park, commonly referred to as Cascades Park (Park), is 465 acres and maintained by the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department. It is the largest of the 15 Jackson County parks and is situated near the center of the county, abutting the southwest edge of the Jackson City limits (Figure 1). Donated to the county by the William and Matilda Sparks Foundation, Inc. in 1943, the Park has been maintained as a multi-use public open space to be enjoyed by county and city of Jackson residents. Cascade Falls is the Park's most prominent feature. Its rich history and significance to the Park is discussed in this report.



★ Sparks Foundation County Park  
(Cascades Park)

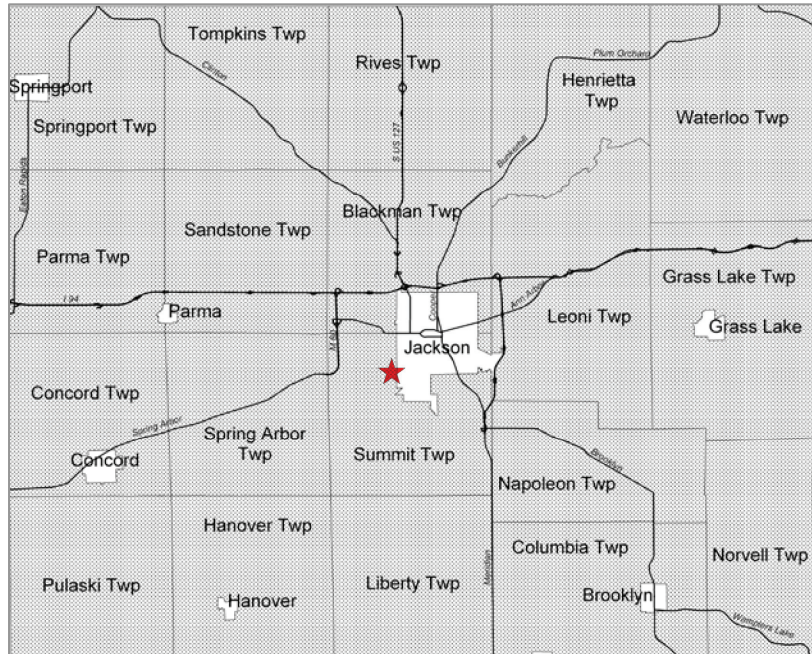


Figure 1: Jackson County Map

## A PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

The purpose of the Sparks Foundation County Park (Cascades Park) Master Plan (Master Plan) is twofold:

- Prepare a document that will guide capital improvements at the Park through the creation of a long-term, multi-year phasing strategy.
- Secure funding from private and public sources for the implementation of the capital improvements.

## B DESIGN PROCESS

The design process was a collaborative effort between a variety of stakeholders including the Cascades Project Committee (Committee), JJR, the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Commission, the Park's director and staff, and the public. The Committee played an instrumental role during all phases of the design process. They provided timely decisions and direction to the design team. Though progress meetings were sometimes scheduled on short notice, they were well attended. The Committee also provided technical support throughout the process.

Development of the Master Plan consisted of five distinct phases: data collection, analysis, public input, design alternatives, and final design.

The data collection phase consisted of gathering relevant information from public and private sources. A significant portion of data was supplied by the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department. Their project documentation extends back to 1930 and includes the original construction drawings, architectural renderings, and mechanical reports of the Cascade Falls' design and periodic upgrades. Other relevant data included proposed road alignments, site plans, topographic surveys, and historic photographs. The William Sparks Museum provided a collection of memorabilia and photographs to document the history of the Park and its founder, William Sparks.



After collection, the data was organized, interpreted, and evaluated based on its importance to the Park (analysis phase). Significant features catalogued under this phase included the natural and physical characteristics of the site. The natural characteristics consist of prominent landforms, vistas, water resources, and plant communities. The physical characteristics include the arrangement of recreation facilities on the site and their relationships to one another, focusing on road systems, active and passive recreation opportunities, park use, and the condition of the facilities (including structures).

Public input was obtained during two critical phases. Prior to the development of the three design alternatives, the public provided valuable feedback about their future vision of the Park. Following this public forum, goals and objectives were developed that helped guide the creation of the design alternatives. The alternatives were then reviewed with the public at the second public forum, which contributed heavily to the Master Plan presented in this report.



The final design phase included the development of the Master Plan, budget estimate, and phasing strategy. Refinements were made based on input from the Committee and critical stakeholders, and the end product is presented in the Final Design section of this report (IV.E.).