

2012

Parks and Recreation Plan

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INTENT

Introduction

The Town of Dumfries values parks and recreation as an important local public service and recognizes the vital role they play in providing a quality of life that attracts residents, businesses, and economic activities to a community. The Town of Dumfries Parks and Recreation Plan is intended to help meet the needs of current and future residents by building on the community's existing assets and identifying new opportunities.

Parks and open spaces do more than provide recreational opportunities for our residents; they also represent a cultural identity and a natural legacy. This Plan is an analysis of where we are now, how we envision our parks and open spaces in the future, and what challenges and opportunities we face in implementing our vision.

This Plan includes future recommendations about the overall parks and recreation needs within the community. However, it also recognizes these recommendations are long-term initiatives and even if they cannot all be implemented in the short term, they need to remain a priority in the Town's future vision.

The Parks and Recreation Plan is not site-specific. It does not adopt any "Local Park Master Plan" for any individual park properties, which requires review and adoption through a separate process. The Plan is meant to be a general guide to promote and enhance the Town's parks and recreation programs, services and facilities.

The process used to develop this Plan included the collaboration of a Parks and Recreation committee comprised of Town residents, a Town Council member, a Planning Commission member and a member of the business community, and was facilitated by the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The Park and Recreation Plan provides an inventory of existing parks, reviews a current park being planned in town, creates goals, objectives, and policies, and identifies potential funding sources.

Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Plan is to serve as a general guide in identifying and creating more recreational opportunities to meet the needs of all the citizen groups in the Town and to improve and enhance existing facilities and parks.

Support for the implementation of this Plan, and a strong commitment to its use as a guide and checklist in the future, will ensure a continued high quality of life for the Town of Dumfries for years to come.

This Plan is an analysis of where we are now, how we envision our parks and open spaces in the future, and what challenges and opportunities we face in implementing our vision.

The Plan

The components of the plan include the overall goals and policies, including identification of community-wide needs, including the types of parks, park and recreation uses, programs, and service levels. The strategic components:

- Provide an action plan to identify how to achieve the goals including recognition of limited resources as well as opportunities to work with potential partners.
- Present new directions for the Town to explore.
- Encourage continued commitment to provide and improve access to Parks and Recreational space in the Town of Dumfries.

Goals

The goals, objectives and policies of this plan are intended to provide direction and implementation strategies designed to promote, encourage and facilitate both passive and active recreation opportunities for all citizenry of the community. Four primary goals were identified through the process to include:

1. Recreation Goal
2. Park Design & Connectivity Goal
3. Quality of Life Goal
4. Funding Strategy Goal

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Recreational Facilities Within the Town

The availability of public recreational facilities within the Town is currently limited to Merchants Park. Merchants Park is oriented around the historic Weems-Botts House Museum which is on the National Register of Historic places. The park is approximately one and one-half acres in size and has limited use for recreational purposes except for passive use. The Town also has another park, Cecil Garrison Park, which is not currently used. The Town analyzed possible improvements to the park in 2006, but no plans were adopted to move forward with further development of the park. The park has specific environmental issues due to floodplains and resource protection areas, and is therefore better suited to passive recreational uses rather than active uses. The presence of a few private recreational facilities within the Town does provide some recreational options for Town residents. Private recreational facilities have been developed in the Grayson Village Mobile Home Park, the Williamstown development, and the Boys and Girls Club. There are currently no identified, designated trails in the town.

Ginn Memorial Park

The Town is currently in the process of planning and developing a new park, Ginn Memorial Park. The park is located on Graham Park Road near the Williamstown and Port-of-Dumfries townhouse developments, and close to the Dumfries-Triangle Rescue Squad. Ginn Memorial Park, once fully built out, will provide a great resource for the entire Town, and especially for the Townhouse communities adjacent to the site on Graham Park Road.

Phase 1 of the Ginn Memorial Park plan, which is expected to be completed in 2012, includes the following elements:

- a gravel parking facility outlined with timber
- stone dust trails
- a multi-purpose court (to include basketball) enclosed with fencing and lockable gate
- a multi-purpose field
- a play area which will include swings and benches

Future phases, to be determined at a later date, may include:

- a community center including space for a police presence onsite
- a permanent parking lot to replace the initial gravel parking lot
- additional play equipment
- additional trees, plantings, and buffers
- a community plaza with seating, possibly to include chess tables and horseshoe pits
- community garden plots with rain cisterns
- possible future connections to neighboring properties (if desired)
- a tennis court
- an amphitheater

Boys & Girls Club

The General Heiser Branch of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington offers both recreational opportunities and structured programs. The site, located on Old Stage Coach road, has a playground and a multi-purpose court used for basketball and other games. Inside the facility are a carpet gymnasium and a multi-purpose game room. In addition to before and after school care, the club offers programs for teens, a summer camp, and a sports clinic.

Private Gymnasiums

The town is limited in private recreational facilities to a single gymnasium, also located on Old Stage Coach Road. The current Zoning Ordinance does not recognize a gymnasium or other private recreational facility such as a karate studio, dance studio, or similar establishment. The only use allowed by the Town Zoning Ordinance is a Public Recreational Facility, and this use is only allowed in the B-2, Neighborhood Business and FB/O-1, Flex Business/Office zoning districts. The Town should review the Zoning Ordinance to possibly allow for a greater range of recreational facilities, and to possibly expand the zones in which these activities are allowed.

Recreational Facilities Outside of the Town

For the most part, the recreational needs of the Town are largely served through Prince William County Park Authority facilities and organized activities. The Town is fortunate to be located near and have access to large county and federal parks like Locust Shade and Prince William Forest Park. The Town also is nearby a number of schools that have recreational facilities, such as Dumfries Elementary School within the Town, and Graham Park Middle School and Potomac High School. However, as general policy, public use of the school system recreational facilities for non-school related activities is generally permitted through programs that are coordinated with the Prince William County School Board.

Prince William County Parks & Recreation

As of the writing of this plan, the entity currently responsible for parks and recreation within Prince William County, The Prince William County Park Authority, is in the process of being disbanded. The programs and responsibilities of the Park Authority will be absorbed directly by Prince William County as a new Parks and Recreation Department, scheduled to begin operation in July 2012.

The planning for recreational needs for Prince William County will henceforth be the responsibility of the Prince William County Parks and Recreation Department. The Park Authority has, and the Parks and Recreation Department most likely will, continue to conduct long range planning and needs assessment studies. The Park Authority has progressively approached meeting Prince William County's park needs through the adoption of a ten year park comprehensive plan.

Parks in Prince William County

The Prince William County Park Authority currently has 9 parks within 5 miles of the Town of Dumfries. These parks contain various active and passive recreational opportunities within a short drive of the Town. In addition, the Park Authority has purchased land on Fuller Heights Road in Triangle for a future park. The names and locations of the parks are below:

- Brittany Park 4100 Exeter Drive, Dumfries, VA 22026
- Anne Moncure Wall Park 4450 Waterway Drive, Dumfries, VA 22026

- Cloverdale Park 15150 Cloverdale Road, Dale City, VA 22193
- Birchdale Recreation Center/Turley Fields 14730 Birchdale Avenue, Dale City, VA 22193
- Rippon Landing Park 15125 Blackburn Road, Woodbridge, VA 22191
- C. Lacey Compton Neighborhood Park 17301 River Ridge Blvd, Dumfries, VA 22026
- Graham Park Pool 3511 Graham Park Road, Dumfries, VA
- Forest Greens Golf Club 4500 Poa Annua Lane, Triangle, VA 22172
- Locust Shade Park 4701 Locust Shade Drive, Triangle, VA 22172
- Fuller Heights Park (future) 18511 Old Triangle Road, Triangle, VA 22172

Three of these parks contain mainly active recreational opportunities:

Table XX - Recreational Facilities In and Near Dumfries

	<u>Playground</u>	<u>Basketball court</u>	<u>Tennis court</u>	<u>Baseball field</u>	<u>Little league baseball field</u>	<u>Soccer field</u>	<u>Open play area (multi-purpose field)</u>	<u>Volleyball pit</u>
Brittany Park	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Anne Moncure Wall Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cloverdale Park	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		

Four parks contain other types of active recreational opportunities:

Table XX - Recreational Facilities In and Near Dumfries

	<u>Playground</u>	<u>Basketball court</u>	<u>Open play area (multi-purpose field)</u>	<u>Swimming pool</u>	<u>Ice skating / Skateboarding area</u>	<u>Horseshoe pit</u>
Birchdale Recreation Center/ Turley Fields	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Rippon Landing Park	✓		✓			✓
C. Lacey Compton Neighborhood Park	✓				✓	✓
Graham Park Pool				✓		

Two parks involve golf and batting cages:

Table XX - Recreational Facilities In and Near Dumfries

	<u>Golf course</u>	<u>Driving range</u>	<u>Miniature golf</u>	<u>Batting cages</u>
Forest Greens Golf Club	✓	✓		
Locust Shade Park		✓	✓	✓

The park at Fuller Heights Road, which will be named upon completion, will contain a playground, basketball courts, baseball fields, and walking trails. The park is expected to open in 2013 or 2014.

Prince William County Forest Park

Also located close to Dumfries is a national park run by the National Park Service, the Prince William County Forest Park. This park, with approximately 17,000 acres, includes many amenities, active and passive recreation, and camping. The specific recreational opportunities at this park include: playgrounds, an open play area (multi-purpose field), a volleyball pit, a horseshoe pit, a pavilion, picnic areas, an amphitheater, fishing, walking trails, biking trails, camping, fire pits, Ranger-led programs, and cabins.

Prince William County Schools Recreation Facilities

There is one elementary school within the Town of Dumfries, and 18 additional school facilities within approximately 5 miles of the town. As seen in the table below, these schools contain active recreational facilities. The use of these sites is restricted, and applicants must contact Prince William County Schools in order to reserve the use of these facilities.

Table XX - Recreational Facilities In and Near Dumfries

	<u>Playground</u>	<u>Basketball court</u>	<u>Tennis court</u>	<u>Baseball field</u>	<u>Soccer field</u>	<u>Open play area (multi-purpose field)</u>	<u>Indoor Multipurpose Rooms (basketball courts, public assembly areas)</u>
Dumfries Elementary School	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Triangle Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Swan's Creek Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
River Oaks Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Williams Elementary School	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
Pattie Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Leesylvania Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Montclair Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Henderson Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Fitzgerald Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Neabsco Elementary School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Potomac High School		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Forest Park High School		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Freedom High School		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Graham Park Middle School				✓		✓	✓
Potomac Middle School		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Godwin Middle School			✓	✓		✓	✓
Porter Traditional School	✓	✓				✓	✓
Washington-Reid Annex	✓	✓				✓	✓

GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTION STRATEGIES

Recreation Goal

P&R-R-GOAL: Provide recreational opportunities for all ages of residents within the Town of Dumfries.

P&R-R-POLICY 1: Develop programs that encourage active participation in recreational activities, team sports, and educational programs in order to promote individual and social development.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

- P&R-R-1.1 Provide locations for residents, visitors, and businesses to engage in active recreational activities.
- P&R-R-1.2 Provide equipment for both youth and adult activities.
- P&R-R-1.3 Promote and encourage existing programs for all ages.
- P&R-R-1.4 Develop new programs to encourage team sports and the development of individual skills.
- P&R-R-1.5 Provide multi-purpose trails for walking, running, and biking.

P&R-R-POLICY 2: Develop opportunities for passive recreation and social and cultural engagement throughout the Town to include parks, trails, entertainment venues, and places to relax.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

- P&R-R-2.1 Provide venues to promote cultural arts and entertainment opportunities for residents to enjoy.
- P&R-R-2.2 Provide venues for family gatherings and social events.
- P&R-R-2.3 Provide and maintain open space and natural trails for areas to sit or stroll.
- P&R-R-2.4 Require any mixed-use, medium-to-high density development projects to incorporate plaza to encourage civic and social engagement.

Park Design & Connectivity Goal

P&R-D&C-GOAL: Develop a system of parks and trails that are designed to engage the citizens with the natural environment and connect them to recreational opportunities.

P&R-D&C-POLICY 1: Maximize the use of existing parks and identify locations for future parks which provide for the needs of the community.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

- P&R-D&C-1.1 Analyze the use of existing parks and project future needs.
- P&R-D&C-1.2 Provide a forum to encourage community input, feedback, and participation in park planning activities.
- P&R-D&C-1.3 Design new parks to accommodate projected needs and incorporate an appropriate balance of active and passive recreational uses.
- P&R-D&C-1.4 Reprogram parks over time based on changes in use and citizen input.
- P&R-D&C-1.5 Examine existing Town properties for possible use as pocket parks.
- P&R-D&C-1.6 Encourage community gardens in park locations near residential neighborhoods.

P&R-D&C-POLICY 2: Provide safe and improved connections between sites to encourage active & passive engagement in recreational opportunities throughout the town.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

- P&R-D&C-2.1 Identify connections to include sidewalks, trails, crosswalks, and bike paths.
- P&R-D&C-2.2 Provide widespread access to active and passive recreational opportunities throughout the town.
- P&R-D&C-2.3 Improve and enhance connections to existing sites.
- P&R-D&C-2.4 Design parks to promote and encourage orientation towards adjacent neighborhoods and connect to other town resources.

Quality of Life Goal

P&R-QoL-GOAL: Promote & encourage healthy lifestyles through passive & active recreational opportunities.

P&R- QoL-POLICY 1: Establish and cultivate partnerships with diverse groups and organizations to provide educational, recreational, and cultural opportunities to enhance the overall quality of life for the community.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

- P&R- QoL-1.1 Encourage and engage community stakeholders as partners in the promotion of a higher standard of community health and well-being.
- P&R- QoL-1.2 Provide programs that facilitate healthy lifestyles for all ages.
- P&R- QoL-1.3 Introduce and encourage participation in diverse cultural programs to enrich the lives of residents.

Funding Strategy Goal

P&R-F-GOAL: Identify resources to establish permanent and ongoing funding for parks and recreation in the Town.

P&R- F-POLICY 1: Incorporate changes into the Town budget to dedicate funding for Parks & Recreation within the Town.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

- P&R- F-1.1 Create a category within the annual budget consisting of multiple line items including capital costs as programmed in the CIP, operating and maintenance costs.
- P&R- F-1.2 Identify Federal, State, and local grant opportunities, and pursue those that will accomplish realistic expectations that can be achieved with existing Town Resources.
- P&R- F-1.3 Incorporate a line item into the annual Town budget as dedicated match money for pursuing grants.
- P&R- F-1.4 Create a Parks and Recreation grant revenue line item to include potential grant revenue.

P&R- F-POLICY 2: Identify additional funding sources to augment the Town budget and grant applications.

ACTION STRATEGIES:

- P&R- F-2.1 Identify public, private, and non-profit resources to offset costs associated with providing recreational opportunities for the Town.
- P&R- F-2.2 Establish a proffer policy for dedication of land for future parks or monetary contributions related to all rezonings.
- P&R- F-2.3 Allow applicants requesting a Conditional Use Permit to contribute land or money for parks as a way to mitigate the impact of development on the Town.
- P&R- F-2.4 Establish policies and standards for the negotiation of naming rights for future parks.
- P&R- F-2.5 Establish an adopt-a-bench program to provide areas to sit and relax throughout the Town.