



COUNTY of FREDERICK

Parks and Recreation Department

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MEMO

To: Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Review Committee
From: Jon Turkel, Assistant Director *JNT*
Subject: 2040 Frederick County Comprehensive Plan Update
Date: February 25, 2021

The Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Review Committee is scheduled to meet at 10:00am on March 3, 2021 in the Board of Supervisors meeting room; 107 N. Kent St. Winchester, VA 22601. Agenda includes:

Action Item:

1. Parks and Recreation Section of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan
Staff is seeking a recommendation for updates to the Parks and Recreation section to be included in the 2040 Frederick County Comprehensive Plan. A draft revision is attached (Attachment 1).

FREDERICK COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Facilities

Frederick County has four classifications of parks including Greenways (linear parks), Neighborhood, Community, and District Parks. The classification depends on the size, service area, purpose, character, and location of the property. The County currently has two district, two community, and three neighborhood parks. Additionally, a community park is planned on 25 acres adjacent to the Snowden Bridge development and the County is beginning development of a Greenway trail along Abrams Creek in the eastern part of the county.

The two district parks, Clearbrook and Sherando, currently serve the County's population with active and passive recreational programs and facilities. Clearbrook Park is located five miles north of Winchester on Route 11 and encompasses 44 acres of land surrounding a 3.5-acre lake. Sherando Park, located two miles east of Stephens City on Route 277, includes 334 acres of varied open and forested land and a diverse array of recreation facilities. Community parks include Rose Hill Park in the Back Creek District and Stonewall Park in the Stonewall District. Rose Hill Park is located 1/3 mile south of the intersection of Cedar Creek Grade and Jones Road offering visitors the opportunity to enjoy the historic and scenic features of the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley's Rose Hill Farm. Stonewall Park on Stephenson Road is developed for active recreation and has five diamond ball fields for use. The three neighborhood parks include space at the Reynolds Store Fire Company, Frederick Heights Park near Senseny Road, and county owned property behind the Bowman Library where the department has constructed a walking trail around a lake and has plans to develop an amphitheater for community use. Master development plans were adopted for both Clearbrook and Sherando Parks establishing a development vision for each park based on identified recreational needs

FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

To meet the future service demands on the County's two district parks, the Parks and Recreation Department intends to continue implementing the improvements adopted in the park Master Plans and in the Capital Improvement Plan. Additionally, new Neighborhood or Community Parks and usable open spaces should be located within the UDA, located near areas planned for future residential land uses, Neighborhood Villages and Urban Centers or within designated Rural Community Centers. The construction of additional trails throughout the community is also important. Trails are highly desired recreation facilities for county residents and provide the ability to travel safely from homes to schools, stores, work, or recreation areas without having to share roadways with vehicle traffic.

Frederick County is fortunate to have multiple entities providing publicly accessible land citizens can use for recreation and leisure purposes. Frederick County currently manages 430 acres of park land and 340 acres of other school and county owned properties. While new park land locations are identified, there is significant development potential on existing county owned park areas as almost half of these acres are yet to be developed for recreation purposes. Frederick County is fortunate to have within its jurisdictional boundary thousands of acres of publicly accessible land provided by Federal, State, school system and non-profit entities. Additionally, adjoining jurisdictions allow Frederick County residents the use of their facilities. In combination the county and other publicly accessible lands and facilities provide the array of current conditions from which remaining needs are determined.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

The Frederick County Parks and Recreation Department is building a sense of community through people, parks, and recreational opportunities benefitting all residents. Parks and recreation activities stimulate economic activity and property values are increased by proximity to parks and through the added quality of life and sense of community they provide. Families and organizations alike look to Frederick County Parks and Recreation to meet their leisure needs. Approximately 1.5 million recreational contact hours for youth, senior, and family programs are provided through programs offered by or facilitated through Frederick County Parks and Recreation with nearly two-thirds of Frederick County households reporting they use Parks and Recreation services and facilities. Nearly ½ million visitor visits are counted at the two District Parks alone on an annual basis.

GOALS/STRATEGIES

GOAL: CONTRIBUTE TO THE PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND CULTURAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY; ITS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING, AND ITS SENSE OF CIVIC PRIDE AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN INTEGRATED PLAN FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS AND PARK FACILITIES.

STRATEGIES:

- Maintain a County-wide recreation plan which identifies recreational, park, trail, bikeway and open space needs.
- Identify recreation needs associated with the Rural Community Centers.
- Continue to utilize State and Federal grants and as needed pursue voter-approved bond financing for capital projects approved in the Capital Improvement Plan.
- Continue to expand our cooperative relationship with the Frederick County School Board in jointly meeting identified County recreational needs.
- Review land development regulations to ensure that appropriate standards are provided for open space recreational facilities in new developments.

GOAL: TO HAVE EVERY RESIDENT OF FREDERICK COUNTY'S URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA (UDA) WITHIN WALKING OR BIKING DISTANCE OF A RECREATION AREA.

STRATEGIES:

- Inventory the County's natural and environmental resources to identify appropriate locations for greenways, Community and Neighborhood Parks including connectivity consistent with the 2014 Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- Strategically locate parks in or near Neighborhood Villages and Urban Centers to meet population-based needs. Parks should be carefully planned to respect and take advantage of natural and historic resources as well as to enhance the natural, scenic, and cultural value of the Urban Areas of the County.
- Ensure recreation and open space development requirements are adequate.

- Actively pursue parkland in areas where publicly accessible land does not or is not anticipated to meet citizen needs.

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2018 and outlines both long- and medium-term goals and strategies. Master Plan goals align with the Comprehensive Plan goals listed above and provide strategies and action steps for the department to pursue. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is provided as an addendum to this document.