

# Parks, Recreation, & Events Master Plan



*Colonial Beach*  
VIRGINIA

# Table of Contents

## Section 1: Introduction to the Planning Context .....4

Purpose of this Plan.....	4
Parks and Recreation Overview .....	5
Methodology of this Planning Process.....	6

## Section 2: What We Want – Our Community, Trends, and Identified Needs..... 7

Demographic Profile .....	7
• Introduction.....	7
• Sources.....	7
• Population .....	8
• Age.....	8
• Race & Diversity .....	9

## Section 3: Trends Analysis ..... 10

Introduction .....	10
Administrative Trends .....	11
• Conservation.....	12
• Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.....	13
• Marketing and Social Media .....	15
• Signage and Wayfinding .....	15

## Outdoor & Adventure Recreation Trends ..... 16

• Beach Tourism .....	16
• Outdoor Adventure Impact from Covid-19 .....	17
• Outdoor Fitness Trails.....	17
• Outdoor/Recreation as an Economic Driver.....	18

## Sport Participation..... 18

• Baseball/Softball.....	19
• Football.....	19
• Soccer.....	20
• Volleyball.....	20
• Basketball.....	21
• Pickleball .....	21
• Estimated Local Participation.....	22

## Section 4: Recreation Expenditures.....24

Aquatic Trends .....	26
• Spray Parks .....	26
• Water-Related Activities .....	26



**Section 5: Community Needs**

**Assessment.....27**

Introduction & Methodology .....27

Staff SWOT .....28

Community Workshop..... 30

Focus Group Meetings .....31

Conclusion ..... 34

- Community Service - Survey Monkey35
- Summary of Findings from the Needs Assessment Survey .....35

**Section 6: Getting It Done – Operations, Maintenance, and Administration.....36**

Department Operational Considerations..... 36

- Covid-19 Pandemic and the Recreation Going Forward.....36
- Program Development..... 37
- Program Evaluation.....38
- Financial Analysis.....38
- Organizational Analysis .....38
- Staffing Analysis.....39
- Staffing Considerations.....39

Maintenance and Operations Analysis ..... 40

- Introduction.....40

- General Maintenance Standards for Recreation and Parks .....40
- Athletic Facilities and Competitive Fields .....43
- Playgrounds..... 45
- Picnic Areas and Shelters .....45
- Tennis Courts.....46
- Outdoor Basketball Courts .....47
- Sand Volleyball Courts .....47
- Waterfronts.....48

**Section 7: Areas of Focus and Action Plans ..... 49**

Areas of Focus and Action Steps ..... 50

Implementation Guidelines and Strategies ..... 58

**Section 8: What We Are – Our Parks, Beaches, Trails and Facilities..... 60**

Parks and Facilities Inventory and Assessment..... 60

Parks Specific Conceptual Plans .....61

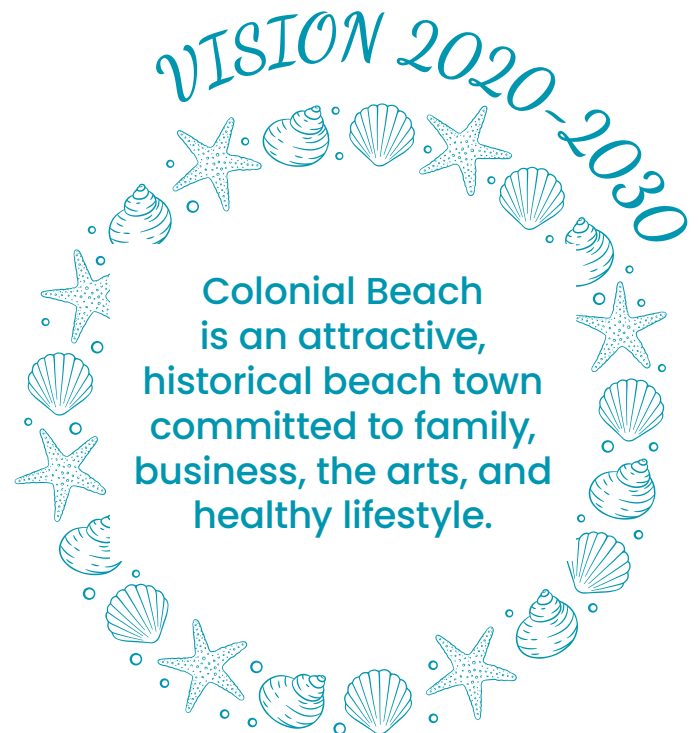
- Azela Park ..... 61
- Eleanor Park .....63
- Scenario A .....64
- Scenario B.....65
- Scenario C.....66

# Section 1

# Introduction of the Planning Context

## Purpose of this Plan

This Parks, Recreation and Leisure Service Master Plan provides an assessment of the Town of Colonial Beach's parks and recreation system through an evaluation of the parks, recreation programs, open space, trails, beaches, facilities, and amenities. The Master Plan provides a road map for ensuring an appropriate balance of facilities and amenities throughout the community for the next 10 years. Key Focus Areas and actionable strategies have been developed to guide the Town's system-wide approach for providing facilities and services. The Master Plan will be used as a resource for future development and redevelopment of the Town's parks and recreational facilities, as well as a resource to enhance environmental resiliency, environmental tourism, and leisure tourism in the Town.



# Parks and Recreation Overview

The Town of Colonial Beach is a popular destination for residents and visitors. Known as the “Playground of the Potomac,” Colonial Beach is located 65 miles from Washington, DC and 35 nautical miles from the Chesapeake Bay. The Town is committed to creating a community for families and healthy lifestyles. According to the Comprehensive Plan 2030, the Town is home to many retirees and second homeowners.

The Town’s parks system contributes to healthy lifestyles in the community with access to beaches, boat ramps, parks, and programming. This Master Parks Plan will allow the Town to take a fresh look at parks and facilities to determine priorities for the future based on public input and participation. This plan provides a vision for

parks and programming. The development of the plan focuses on community education, public engagement, sound planning, and design.

To engage people from all over the community, our team offered a variety of in-person and virtual engagement strategies including leadership interviews, focus groups, stakeholder meetings, pop-up events in parks and open spaces, an online engagement platform, social media engagement, Town Hall public workshops, and more.

This Master Parks Plan provides guidance on how to maintain sustainable parks, improve connectivity to natural areas, improve service to underserved areas of Town, and promote environmental education and a healthy lifestyle.



# Methodology of this Planning Process

BerryDunn along with LSG, worked with the staff and residents of the Town of Colonial Beach in developing this Master Plan. The process was inclusive of members of the community, and the public was given many opportunities to participate through focus groups, stakeholder meetings,

public meetings, and workshops, an online SurveyMonkey survey, and Town Hall meetings. An Action Plan was developed to assist the Town in meeting the community's expressed needs and desires. The master planning process consisted of the following steps:



FIGURE 1 | MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

# Section 2

# What We Want – Our Community, Trends, and Identified Needs

## Demographic Profile

### Introduction

The Town of Colonial Beach’s Parks & Recreation Department in Virginia (VA) demographic profile was developed to provide an analysis of household and economic data in the area to help understand the historical and projected changes that may impact the community. The demographic analysis provides insight into the potential market for the Town’s recreation services and programs by highlighting where and how the area may change.

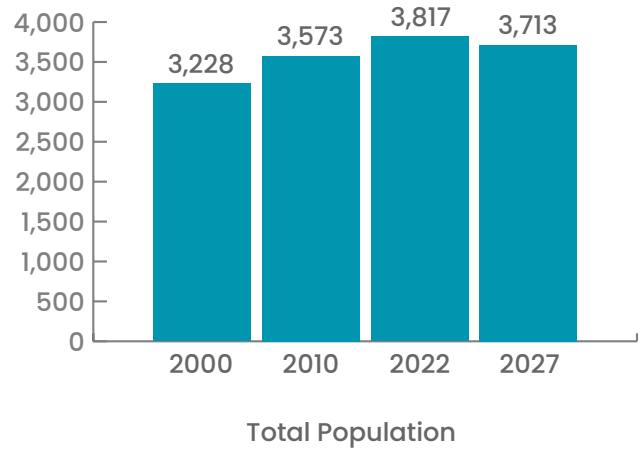
### Sources

Data points throughout this report including population, age distribution, income, race/ethnicity, and other household characteristics were sourced from Esri Business Analyst in February 2023. At the time of this report, Esri’s primary source for demographic information was the 2020 Census with estimates generated in July 2022. According to their website, Esri Business Analyst is “a solution that applies Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to extensive demographic, consumer spending, and business data to deliver on-demand analysis.”



## Population

The estimated 2022 population of Colonial Beach was 3,817 residents which is similar to both the 2010 total population (3,573 residents) and the 2027 projected population (3,713 residents). The compound annual growth rate increased minimally (0.9%) between 2010 and 2022. The compound annual growth rate is estimated to slightly decrease to a rate of 0.55% between 2022 and 2027.



## Age

Between 2010 and 2022 there was a 3.5% decrease of residents ages 45 to 54 years old, but an increase in residents 65 to 74 years (2.8%) and 75 to 84 years (2.1%). The age distribution change from 2010 to 2027 will be minimal with the largest differences being a 2.9% decrease of residents 25 to 34 years and a 2.2% increase of residents 75 to 84 years.

FIGURE 2 | HISTORICAL AND PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH, TOWN OF COLONIAL BEACH, 2000 THROUGH 2027  
SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST, 2023

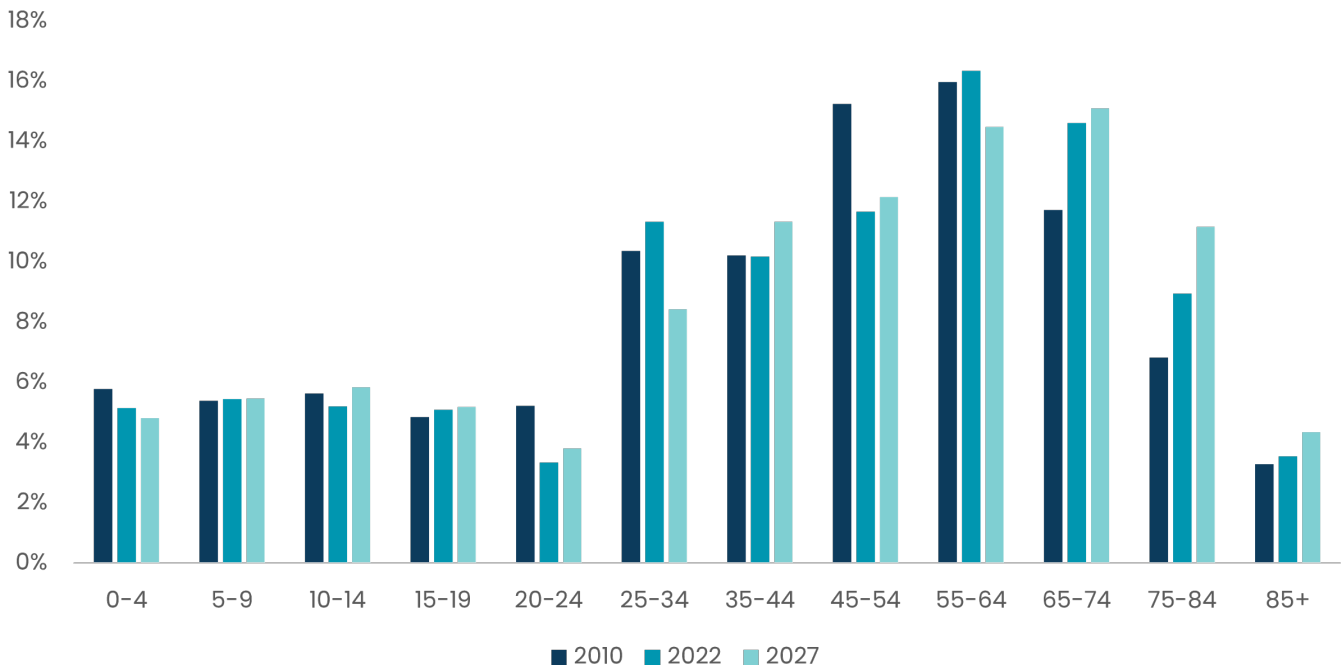


FIGURE 3 | AGE DISTRIBUTION CHANGE, TOWN OF COLONIAL BEACH  
SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST, 2023



## Race & Diversity

Between 2010 and 2022, the Town had a 4.2% decrease in white residents and a 5.3% increase in residents who are two or more races. The racial and ethnic makeup as of 2022 is 74.1% white residents, 14% Black or African American residents, 1.7% Asian residents, 0.5% American Indian/Alaska Native residents, 0.2% Pacific Islander residents, 7.9% residents who are two or more races, and 1.3% of residents are another race population (not listed in the figure below). This racial and ethnic distribution is expected to be similar in 2027.

The provision of public parks and recreation services can be influenced by a wide variety of trends, including the desires of different age groups within the population, community values, and popularity of a variety of recreational activities and amenities. Within this section of the Plan, a number of local and national trends are reviewed that should be considered by the Town when determining where to allocate resources toward the provision of parks, recreational facilities, and recreational programming for residents and visitors.

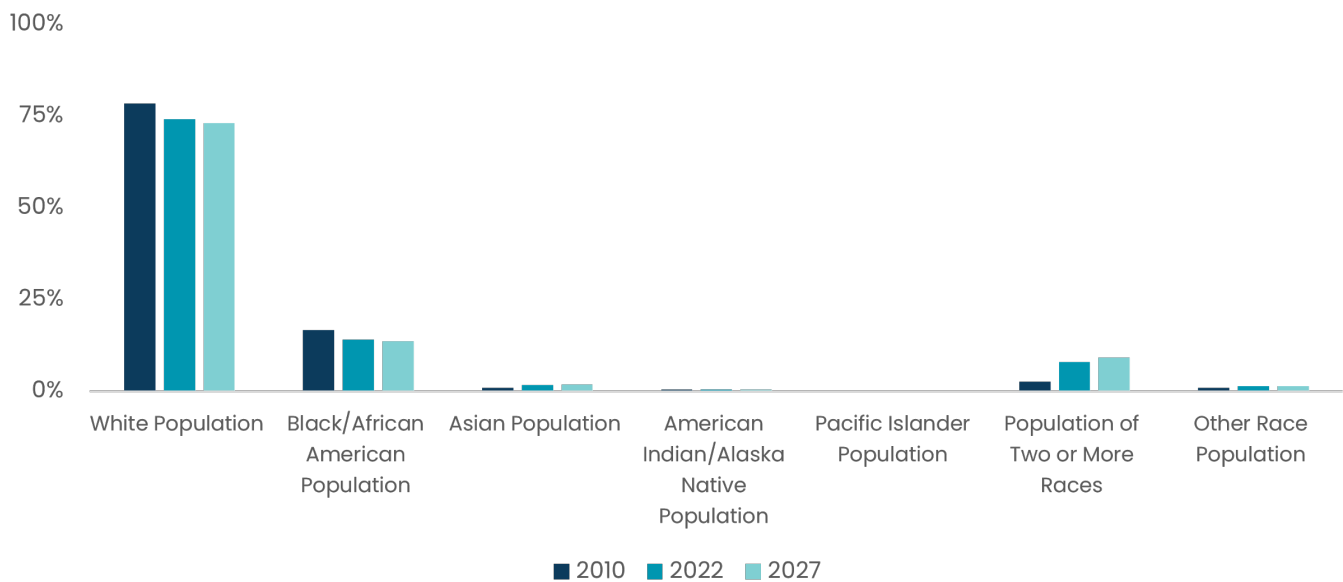


FIGURE 4 | CHANGE IN POPULATION RACE/ETHNICITY, TOWN OF COLONIAL BEACH, 2010 THROUGH 2027  
SOURCE: ESRI BUSINESS ANALYST, 2023

# Section 3

# Trends Analysis

## Introduction

The following sections summarize regional and national trends that are relevant to the Town of Colonial Beach, VA as it relates to the provision of parks and recreational services. The full Trends and Demographics Report was provided as a staff document during the planning process.

The information contained in this report can be used by staff when planning new programs, considering additions to parks and new park amenities, and creating the annual budget and capital improvement plan. Understanding trends can also help an organization reach new audiences. Trends can also help determine where to direct additional data collection efforts within an organization.

A wide variety of sources were used in gathering information for this report, including:

- American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)
- American Council on Exercise (ACE)
- Forbes
- Harris Poll Results/ The Stagwell Group
- Impacts Experience
- National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)
- The Aspen Institute
- The Learning Resource Network (LERN)
- The New York Times
- The Outdoor Industry Association
- The Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America)
- USA Pickleball website





# Administrative Trends

Municipal parks and recreation structures and delivery systems have changed and more alternative methods of delivering services are emerging. Certain services are being contracted out and cooperative agreements with non-profit groups and other public institutions are being developed. Newer partners include the health system, social services, justice system, education, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. These partnerships reflect both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health agencies is vital in promoting wellness.

The traditional relationship with education and the sharing of facilities through joint-use agreements is evolving into cooperative planning and programming aimed at addressing youth inactivity levels and community needs.

In addition, the role of parks and recreation management has shifted beyond traditional facility oversight and activity programming. The ability to evaluate and interpret data is a critical component of strategic decision-making. In an article titled “The Digital Transformation of Parks and Rec” in the Parks and Recreation Magazine from February 2019, there are several components that allow agencies to keep up with administrative trends and become an agent of change:



FIGURE 5 | ADMINISTRATIVE



## Conservation

One of the key pillars of parks and recreation is the role that it plays in conservation. Managing and protecting open space, providing opportunities for people to connect with nature, and educating communities about conservation are all incredibly important. One of the key components of conservation is addressing

climate change. Local parks and recreation can help by building climate resilient communities through water management, green infrastructure, and sustainability. A report by NRPA in 2017 titled “Park and Recreation Sustainability Practices” surveyed over 400 park and recreation agencies and found the top five ways that local departments are acting on conservation and climate change include:

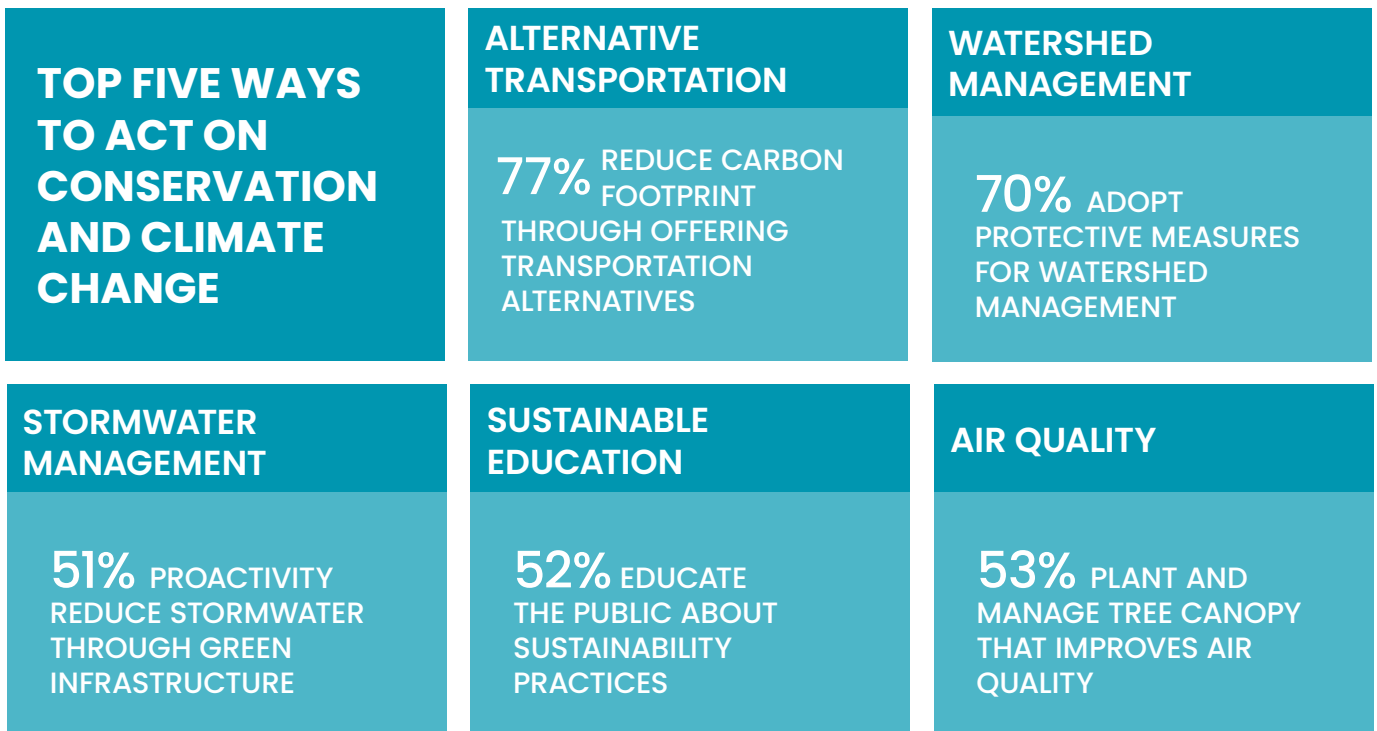


FIGURE 6 | TOP FIVE WAYS TO ACT ON CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

There is growing recognition that access to parks and recreational spaces is not equitable. According to the Urban Institute, in many cities across the United States, there are fewer quality parks in proximity to low-income residents and communities of color. As a result, many large cities have started to establish data-driven criteria to guide investment in public recreation to improve equity. The City Parks Alliance identified five common elements that are critical to developing, implementing, and evaluating a data-driven equitable investment strategy.

- **Leverage leadership from one or more sectors.** Strong leadership is critical for making the case for creating and implementing an equitable approach. In addition to various governmental bodies, involving local foundations and those from the non-profit sector can help to bring the need for equity into focus.
- **Define equity goals and collect data to support the goals.** Data collection and analysis must be reliable, consistent, and transparent, and guided by agreed-upon equity goals. The data collected in each town may vary but often includes statistics on poverty, crime, health, youth population, park access, unemployment, past capital and maintenance investment, and access to parks.



- **Educate and engage the community on equity data.** Educating all levels of government, residents, non-profits, foundations, and the private sector on data findings is important for building awareness and buy-in, as well as a commitment to implementation. Extensive outreach and engagement are critical to help ensure the data aligns with reality and that the process builds ownership of the results.
- **Establish and sustain equitable funding practices.** A variety of strategies can be implemented to help ensure that equity becomes a reality, including new ordinances, voter-approved measures, strategic plans, and internal reorganization.
- **Institute consistent tracking and evaluation procedures.** Tracking new funding initiatives with an oversight committee that is required to produce an audit, reports, or study results helps to ensure consistent implementation over time.

As the recreation field continues to function within a more diverse society, race and ethnicity will become increasingly important in every aspect of the profession. More than ever, recreation professionals will be expected to work with, and have significant knowledge and understanding of, individuals from many cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. According to the 2022 Outdoor Participation Report, participation rates among diverse groups is evolving quickly, but does still not reflect the diverse populations throughout the country. Black Americans represent approximately 12.4% of the population, but only 7.9% of outdoor participants. Hispanics, who make up almost 18% of the population only make up 10.8% of outdoor participants. These two groups are those that are particularly underrepresented, although is rising overtime.

To help ensure that parks and outdoor spaces are more inclusive, a number of recommendations are listed below for consideration that agencies can incorporate into their policies and programs. These items were originally published in an article

titled “Five Ways to Make the Outdoors More Inclusive” in The Atlantic in partnership in 2020 as a way for national parks to become more inclusive and welcoming. However, these ideas can be applied in local parks and outdoor spaces as well.

### STEP 1: TEACH THE FULL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN OUTDOORS

- ACTION STEPS**
- Seek property grants and donations for memorials
  - Lobby governments to create storytelling-driven memorials
  - Hire historians to write true history of outdoor spaces

### STEP 2: MAKE ALL VISITORS FEEL WELCOME AND SECURE

- ACTION STEPS**
- Update park uniforms with modern, welcoming look
  - Be flexible and accommodating with park visitation rules

### STEP 3: CREATE UNDERLYING POLICIES ON DIVERSITY AND FAIRNESS

- ACTION STEPS**
- Increase number of paid internships and fellowships
  - Diversity advocates to unite and form coalitions for action

### STEP 4: INCREASE ECONOMIC ACCESSIBILITY TO CREATE MORE ACCESS POINTS FOR ALL

- ACTION STEPS**
- Offer free admission for first-time users
  - Subsidize or provide free transportation for low-income families

### STEP 5: MAKE OPEN SPACES MORE REPRESENTATIVE, CULTURALLY RELEVANT, AND COOL

- ACTION STEPS**
- Utilize special events to celebrate unique cultural differences in festivals
  - Ensure images in marketing campaigns are diverse and representative
  - Celebrate diverse organizations





## Marketing and Social Media

In today's modern world, there is ample opportunity to promote and market parks and recreation services. The process of assessing marketing efforts begins with a needs assessment that details how the community prefers to receive information. Then, a marketing plan should be developed that is catered to the agency's resources, including staff, time, and budget. This should guide the agency for one to three years.

Technology has made it easier to reach a wide-reaching, location-dependent audience who can be segmented by demographics. However, it has also caused a gap in the way parks and recreation agencies are able to communicate. Agencies around the country have previously not dedicated substantial funding to marketing, however it is becoming a critical piece to receiving participants. Without dedicated staff and support, it is difficult to keep up with social media trends which seem to change daily. Furthermore, with an overarching desire to standardize a municipalities' brand, there may be limitations to the access and control that a parks and recreation agency has over their marketing. It is essential that professionals become advocates for additional resources, training, and education.

Having a strong presence on social networks, through email marketing, and through traditional marketing will help enhance the perception from the community.

## Signage and Wayfinding

To increase perception and advocacy, a parks and recreation professional needs to prioritize opportunities that impact the way the community experiences the system. This often starts with signage, wayfinding, and park identity. The importance of park identity to encourage awareness of locations and amenities cannot be overstated. A park system impacts the widest range of users in a community, reaching users, and non-users, across all demographic, psychographic, behavioral, and geographic markets. In a narrower focus, the park system is the core service an agency can use to provide value to its community (eg. partnerships between departments or commercial/residential development, high-quality and safe experiences for users, inviting community landscaping contributing to the overall look or image of the community). Signage, wayfinding, and park identity can be the first step in continued engagement by the community, and a higher perception or awareness of a park system, which can lead to an increase in health outcomes.

# Outdoor and Adventure Recreation Trends

## Beach Tourism

According to the Office for Coastal Management, ocean-based tourism in the U.S. employs over 2.5 million people and has contributed over \$140 billion to the economy each year.

In 2014, the Surfrider Foundation partnered with Point 97, The Nature Conservancy, and Monmouth University to conduct a Mid-

Atlantic Coastal & Ocean Recreation Study. Beach going (sitting, walking, running, dog walking, kite flying, etc.) was found to be Virginia's most popular activity with 96% participation within the last year. Many of the other popular activities, depicted in the figure below, indicate that beach and water-related activities are core to recreation participation.

Activities	Last Year	Last Trip	Primary Activity
Beach going (sitting, walking, running, dog walking, kite flying, etc.)	96.1%	76.8%	30.4%
Scenic enjoyment or sightseeing	71.8%	52.5%	5.5%
Photography	59.1%	40.3%	2.2%
Surfing (from board, kayak or stand up board)	58.0%	43.1%	37.0%
Biking or hiking	56.4%	29.8%	2.8%
Collection of non-living resources or beachcombing (beach glass, shells, fossils, driftwood)	51.9%	32.6%	1.1%
Sitting in your car watching this scene	27.1%	11.6%	0.0%
Camping	22.7%	5.0%	1.7%
Watching birds, whales, seals, and or other marine life (from a charter boat)	8.3%	5.5%	0.6%
Free diving snorkeling (from shore or boat)	6.1%	1.7%	0.6%
Skim boarding	5.5%	0.6%	0.0%
Kite boarding	4.4%	1.1%	0.6%
Windsurfing	3.3%	1.1%	0.0%
SCUBA diving (from charter boat)	2.2%	1.1%	0.6%
Hand gliding or parasailing	2.2%	0.6%	0.0%

FIGURE 7: VIRGINIA - ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION FOR THE LAST YEAR, LAST TRIP, AND PRIMARY ACTIVITY IN LAST TRIP  
SOURCE: MID-ATLANTIC COASTAL & OCEAN RECREATION STUDY, 2014



## Outdoor Adventure Impact from Covid-19

Consumers are seeking activities to help them stay occupied and healthy as Covid-19 necessitates social distancing. As a result, a number of outdoor activities have experienced growth. Many sought out family-based activities in order to keep everyone safe and increase health. A Harris Poll from October 2020 found that 69% of Americans reported a heightened appreciation for outdoor spaces during the pandemic, with 65% sharing that they try to get outside of the house as much as possible.

Outdoor cycling tops the list of popular outdoor activities as bicycle sales increased 63% (as of June 2020) compared to the same time period the year prior. For the first several months of the Covid-19 outbreak, the growth in bicycle sales was from family-friendly bikes. Then the growth in sales shifted to higher-end bicycles (including road bikes and full suspension mountain bikes). This was likely due to a shortage of family-friendly bikes as well as from cyclists more willing to invest in the activity for the future.

Paddle sports (including kayaks, paddleboards, rafts, and canoes) have also increased in popularity as the sale of equipment rose 56% in 2020 over the prior year. Inflatable versions of kayaks and paddleboards have gained in popularity due to their cost and the ability of the consumer to store these bulky pieces of equipment.

Camping has surged in popularity due to the Covid-19 outbreak as well. Consumers looking for a break from home life pitched tents in their yards or at a local destination. The sale of recreational tents increased in 2020 two

times faster than backpacking tents that are favored by serious campers and hikers.

The New York Times published an article (May 2020) regarding the increase in bird watching during the early stages of the Covid-19 outbreak. To aid in their sightings, many purchased binoculars, which saw a 22% increase in sales in June 2020 over the prior year. Unique bird species can be found in rural areas and urban areas, which has contributed to the appeal of this activity.

Many people will not flock back to fitness centers to exercise following the Covid-19 outbreak. With the desire to keep moving, however, people are walking and running outdoors when the weather is suitable. Outdoor walking and running clubs will continue to be a popular way for people to exercise with others in a safe manner.

## Outdoor Fitness Trails

A popular trend in urban parks for health, wellness, and fitness activities is to install outdoor fitness equipment along trails. The intent of the outdoor equipment is to provide an accessible form of exercise for all community members, focusing on strength, balance, flexibility, and cardio exercise. These fitness stations – also known as “outdoor gyms” – are generally meant for adults but can be grouped together near a playground or kid-friendly amenity so that adults can exercise and socialize while supervising their children. The fitness equipment can also be dispersed along a nature trail or walking path to provide a unique experience to exercise in nature. Educational and safety signage should be placed next to equipment to guide the user in understanding and utilizing the outdoor gyms.

## THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY IN VIRGINIA GENERATES NEARLY:



FIGURE 8 | OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

### Outdoor Recreation as an Economic Driver

Outdoor recreation has become a thriving economic driver, even in the midst of a global pandemic. In 2020, 53% of Americans over six years of age participated at least once in outdoor recreation – an increase of 7.1 million Americans over the previous year. However, a number of challenges continue to impact the industry, including retention of new COVID participants, lack of diversity, fewer outings of females and stagnant participation.

## Sport Participation

The following tables demonstrate the change in time from over the past five years (2016 to 2021) for sports that are relevant to the planning from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) 2022 Topline Report. This data was gathered from the U.S. population age six and over.

For each sport, there are two categories, which define the level of activity. “Casual” refers to users that participated in the study between 1 and 12 times in the past 12 months. CORE refers to users that participated more than 13 times in the last 12 months. The 1-year, 2-year, and 5-year average annual growth (AAG) is then charted in the tables to indicate the level of change for the following sports:



Baseball/Softball



Football



Soccer



Volleyball



Basketball



Pickleball



Lacrosse

## Baseball and Softball

Casual participation in baseball saw a decrease in participation of 8.6% in one year. However, fast pitch softball saw a huge increase in one year with an increase of 43.8% participation. Slow pitch softball participation trends have decreased over the last several years.

Definition		1-year change 2021	2-year change 2020	5-year AAG 2016
<b>Baseball</b>		-0.9%	-1.4%	1.1%
Casual	1-12 times	-8.6%	11.1%	5.9%
CORE	13+ times	7.2%	-10.4%	-1.7%
<b>Softball (Fast Pitch)</b>		15.3%	-6.9%	-2.6%
Casual	1-12 times	43.8%	-5.9%	-1.7%
CORE	13+ times	-0.6%	-7.6%	-1.8%
<b>Softball (Slow Pitch)</b>		-5.4%	-15.0%	-4.7%
Casual	1-12 times	-0.9%	-9.7%	-4.0%
CORE	13+ times	-8.8%	-19.0%	-5.3%

TABLE 1 | SPORT PARTICIPATION FOR BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL, 2016 TO 2021

SOURCE: SFIA TOPLINE REPORT, 2022

## Football

Casual participation for tackle football and touch football have seen a 6-10% increase in the last year, with flag football participation decreasing by 3.5%. Participation in flag football and tackle football increased more than nine percent in the past two years. CORE participation in tackle and touch have decreased – particularly for touch football.

Definition		1-year change 2021	2-year change 2020	5-year AAG 2016
<b>Football (Flag)</b>		-1.60%	1.60%	2.30%
Casual	1-12 times	-3.50%	9.00%	5.10%
CORE	13+ times	1.40%	-7.90%	-1.10%
<b>Football (Tackle)</b>		3.40%	2.40%	-0.90%
Casual	1-12 times	10.60%	9.50%	3.50%
CORE	13+ times	-3.00%	-4.00%	-4.40%
<b>Football (Touch)</b>		0.80%	-5.50%	-3.00%
Casual	1-12 times	6.10%	3.40%	-0.70%
CORE	13+ times	-7.70%	-18.60%	-6.30%

TABLE 2 | SPORT PARTICIPATION FOR FOOTBALL, 2016 TO 2021

SOURCE: SFIA TOPLINE REPORT, 2022

## Soccer

The SFIA report indicates that indoor and outdoor soccer has increased slightly over the past five years, however last year, there was a notable 14.1% increase for CORE participation for both indoor and outdoor soccer.

Definition		1-year change 2021	2-year change 2020	5-year AAG 2016
<b>Soccer (Indoor)</b>		-0.6%	1.4%	1.2%
Casual	1-12 times	-9.6%	18.3%	6.4%
CORE	13+ times	14.1%	-14.5%	-2.3%
<b>Soccer (Outdoor)</b>		0.9%	5.4%	1.1%
Casual	1-12 times	-9.3%	10.5%	4.2%
CORE	13+ times	21.7%	-1.6%	-1.4%

TABLE 3 | SPORT PARTICIPATION FOR SOCCER, 2016 TO 2021  
SOURCE: SFIA TOPLINE REPORT, 2022



## Volleyball

Volleyball seen a general decline in participation over the past five years, with both casual and CORE participation decreasing. However, interest and participation in sports vary by region, age group, and other factors. This national perspective provides just one indication that volleyball may be on the decline.

Definition		1-year change 2021	2-year change 2020	5-year AAG 2016
<b>Volleyball (Beach/Sand)</b>		-3.2%	-4.9%	-5.2%
Casual	1-12 times	-6.0%	0.4%	-5.8%
CORE	13+ times	4.2%	-15.2%	-2.9%
<b>Volleyball (Court)</b>		8.1%	-9.8%	-0.8%
Casual	1-12 times	11.9%	-16.8%	-2.0%
CORE	13+ times	5.5%	-4.0%	0.2%
<b>Volleyball (Grass)</b>		2.5%	-10.5%	-7.8%
Casual	1-12 times	2.5%	-14.2%	-9.6%
CORE	13+ times	2.7%	-1.8%	-3.1%

TABLE 4 | SPORT PARTICIPATION FOR VOLLEYBALL, 2016 TO 2021  
SOURCE: SFIA TOPLINE REPORT, 2022

## Basketball

The SFIA report indicates that casual and CORE participation in basketball has mostly grown steadily over the last five years. In the past year, however, there has been an almost 8% decrease in casual basketball participation.

Definition		1-year change 2021	2-year change 2020	5-year AAG 2016
Basketball		-2.20%	8.90%	4.10%
Casual	1-12 times	-7.90%	14.00%	8.60%
CORE	13+ times	2.10%	5.70%	1.60%

TABLE 5 | SPORT PARTICIPATION FOR BASKETBALL, 2016 TO 2021  
SOURCE: 2022 SFIA TOPLINE REPORT



## Pickleball

With 4.8 million people in the country playing pickleball, it is a trend not to be taken lightly. Though not at its peak, pickleball is still trending nationwide as the fastest growing sport in America with the active aging demographic, as 75% of core players are age 55 or older. Considered a mix between tennis, ping pong, and badminton, the sport initially grew in popularity with older adults but is now expanding to other age groups. It can be played as singles or doubles, indoors or out, and it is easy for beginners to learn but can be very competitive for experienced players. The game has developed a passionate following due to its friendly, social nature, and its multi-generational appeal.

Recreation facilities such as tennis or basketball courts can be temporarily or permanently converted to pickleball courts through lining a court. One consideration to recreation professionals before lining tennis courts is potential inference with competitive tennis requirements. Best practices regarding pickleball setup and programming can be found on [usapa.com](http://usapa.com), the official website for the United States Pickleball Association.

Definition		1-year change 2021	2-year change 2020	5-year AAG 2016
Pickleball		14.8%	39.3%	11.5%
Casual	1-12 times	21.9%	56.5%	15.4%
CORE	13+ times	0.1%	9.0%	4.4%

TABLE 6 | SPORT PARTICIPATION FOR PICKLEBALL, 2016 TO 2021  
SOURCE: SFIA TOPLINE REPORT, 2022

## Estimated Local Participation

This section highlights participation in fitness activities, outdoor recreation, and sports teams for adults 25 and older in the Town compared to the state. Activity participation and consumer behavior are based on a specific methodology

and survey data to make up what Esri terms "MarketPotential Index."

In 2022, the three fitness activities with the most adult resident participation were walking for exercise (30.8%), swimming (16%), and weightlifting (9.4%).

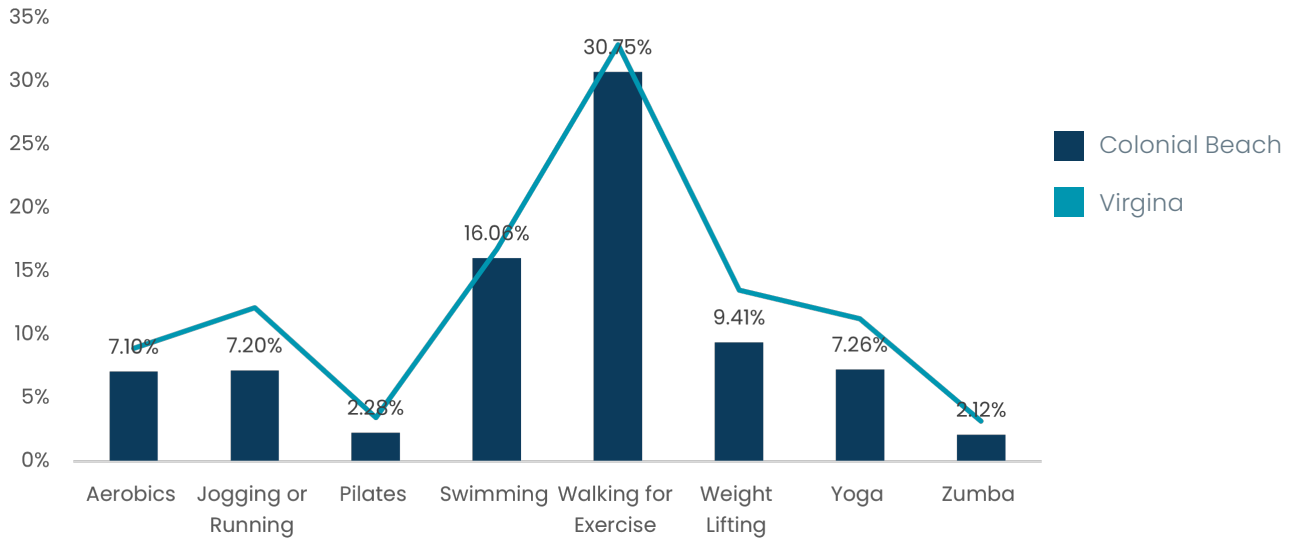


FIGURE 9 | ADULT PARTICIPATION IN FITNESS ACTIVITIES

Golf was the most popular sport among in 2022 with 7.8% adult participation. The other two most popular sports were basketball (4.9%) and baseball (3.1%).

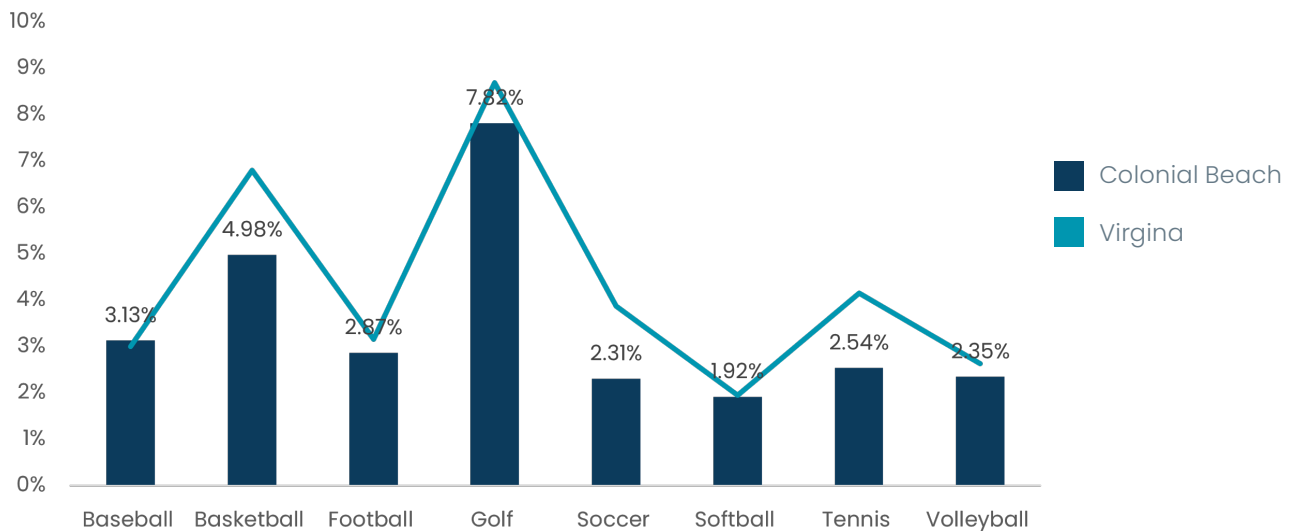


FIGURE 10 | ADULT PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS

The most popular outdoor recreation activities were freshwater fishing (17.8%), hiking (15.1%), and road bicycling (10.7%).

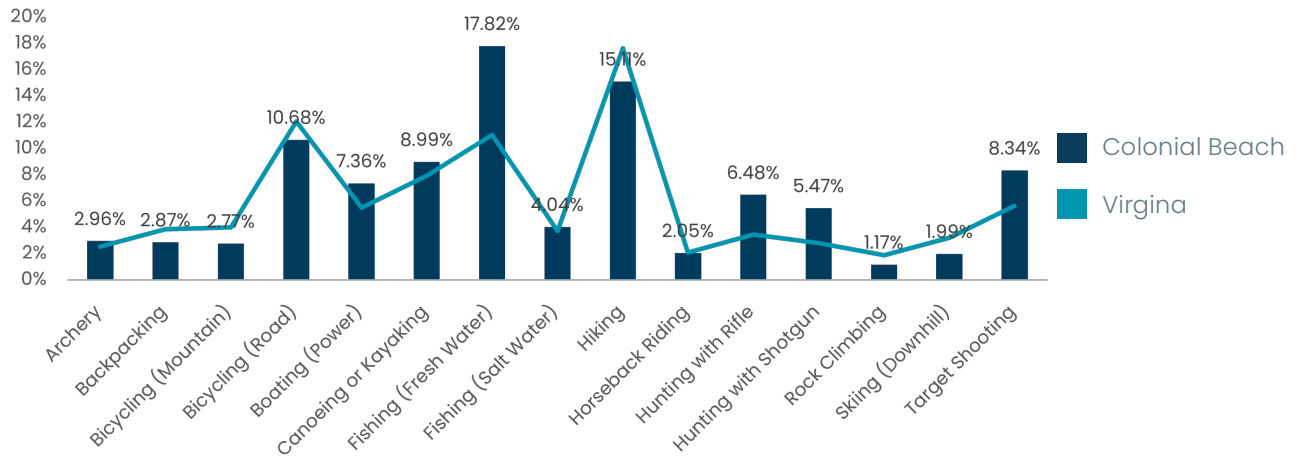


FIGURE 11 | ADULT PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES

The most popular leisure activities among adults included attending visiting a zoo (7.6%), attending an adult education course (7.4%), and attending a live theater show (7%). Bowling followed closely behind with 6.1% of adult participation.

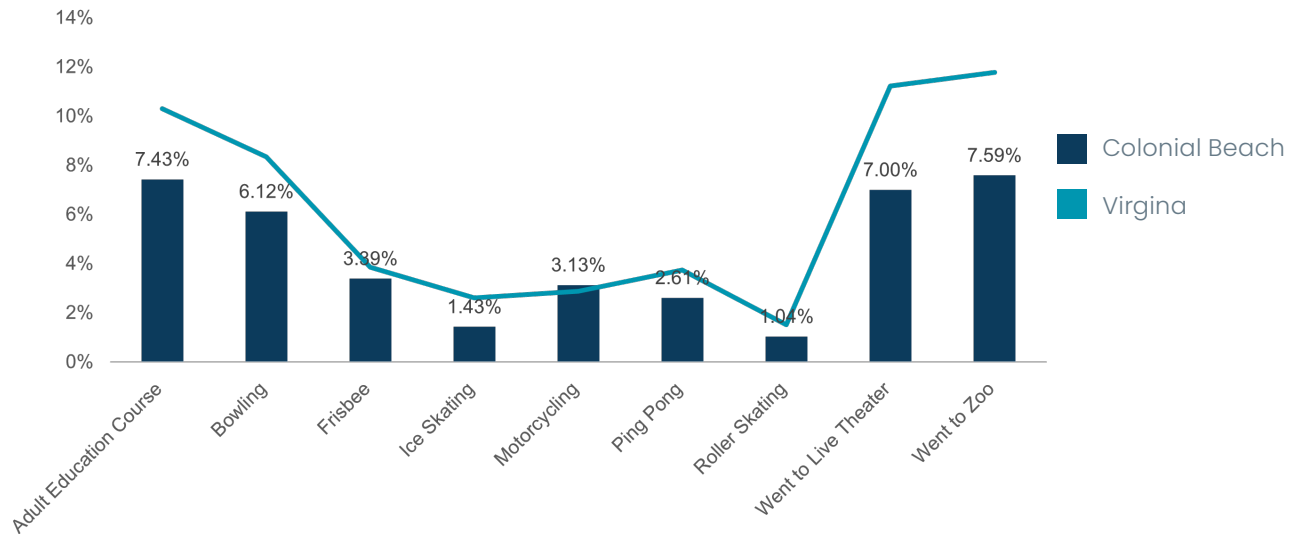


FIGURE 12 | ADULT PARTICIPATION IN LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Section  
4

# Recreation Expenditures

In 2022, the average expenditure on membership fees for social, recreation, and/or health clubs was an estimated \$208.10 per resident, totaling \$367,716 in expenditures for the Town. Expenses for sports, recreation, and exercise equipment totaled \$380,833 with an

average of \$215.53 per resident. Additional information regarding average and total amounts spent on fees for participant sports, recreational lessons, tickets to parks or museums, and bicycles are detailed in the following tables.

	Town of Colonial Beach Average	State of VA
Average Membership Fees- Social/Recreation/Health Clubs	\$208.10	\$327.01
Fees for Participant Sports Excluding Trips	\$90.19	\$150.92
Tickets to Parks or Museums	\$32.56	\$44.52
Fees for Recreational Lessons	\$103.13	\$182.32
Sports/Rec/Exercise Equipment	\$215.53	\$239.36
Bicycles	\$32.45	\$38.98
Admission to Sports Events Excluding Trips	\$55.54	\$85.37
Camping Equipment	\$16.81	\$27.66
Hunting & Fishing Equipment	\$74.19	\$65.07
Other Sports Equipment	\$16.55	\$10.85
Water Sports Equipment	\$6.36	\$9.25

TABLE 7 | ESTIMATED AVERAGE RECREATIONAL EXPENDITURES, 2022



	Town of Colonial Beach Total	State of VA Total
Membership Fees- Social/Recreation/Health Clubs	\$367,716	\$1,100,978,627
Fees for Participant Sports Excluding Trips	\$159,357	\$508,107,166
Tickets to Parks or Museums	\$57,535	\$149,874,530
Fees for Recreational Lessons	\$182,224	\$613,827,842
Sports/Rec/Exercise Equipment	\$380,833	\$805,868,873
Bicycles	\$57,340	\$131,227,261
Admission to Sports Events Excluding Trips	\$98,132	\$287,424,808
Camping Equipment	\$29,710	\$93,142,393
Hunting & Fishing Equipment	\$131,091	\$219,061,272
Other Sports Equipment	\$29,240	\$36,515,833
Water Sports Equipment	\$11,230	\$31,129,090

TABLE 8 | ESTIMATED TOTAL RECREATIONAL EXPENDITURES, 2022

# Aquatic Trends

## Spray Parks

Spray parks (or spray grounds) are now a common replacement for aging swimming pools, particularly because it provides the community with an aquatic experience without the high cost of traditional pools. Spray parks do not require high levels of staffing, require only minimal maintenance, and offer a no-cost (or low-cost) alternative to a swimming pool. A spray park typically appeals to children ages 2 – 12 and can be a stand-alone facility in a community or incorporated inside a family aquatic center.

## Water-Related Activities

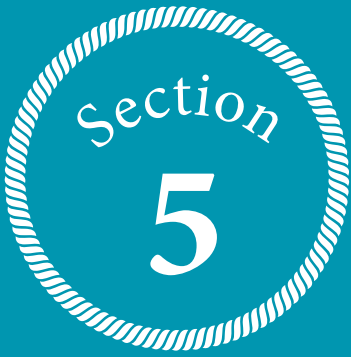
Each year, the SFIA releases a Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report. The SFIA report indicates that water sports had the largest overall growth in participation among all seven sports categories.

The table below demonstrates the change in time from over the past five years (2016 to 2021) for water-related activities. The 1-year, 2-year, and 5-year AAG are charted in the tables to indicate the level of change for boardsailing/windsurfing, canoeing, jet skiing, kayaking, sailing, stand-up paddling, and water skiing.

Between 2020 and 2021, the water sports with the highest overall growth were boarding sailing/windsurfing (+9.9%), kayaking – sea/touring (+5.6%), and water skiing (+4.7%). The water sports that experienced the highest decreases in participation between 2020 and 2021 were kayaking – recreational (-14.6%), canoeing (-6.4%), and sailing (-3.6%).

	1-year change 2021	2-year change 2020	5-year AAG 2016
Boardsailing/ Windsurfing	2.3%	-7.6%	-5.5%
Canoeing	-4.1%	2.3%	-1.6%
Jet Skiing	3.3%	-0.9%	-2.6%
Kayaking (Recreational)	2.7%	17.3%	6.0%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	3.1%	-2.5%	-3.6%
Sailing	-0.7%	-4.3%	-3.3%
Stand-Up Paddling	1.8%	5.0%	3.0%
Water Skiing	0.2%	-4.5%	-3.7%

TABLE 9 | WATER SPORT OVERALL PARTICIPATION, 2016 TO 2021  
SOURCE: SFIA TOPLINE REPORT, 2022



Section  
5

# Community Needs Assessment

## Introduction and Methodology

The purpose of this needs assessment survey was to gather public feedback on Town of Colonial Beach parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs. This needs assessment survey effort and subsequent analysis were designed to assist the Town of Colonial Beach's Parks & Recreation Department in developing the Town's Parks and Recreation Master Plan to reflect the community's needs and desires and to prepare for future enhancements to existing and new programs, facilities, and services.

To engage the community, the consultant team facilitated five focus groups with 117 participants, seven leadership interviews with 27 participants and one public workshop during their information gathering week. The public workshop was open to residents, many of whom frequently use the recreation and park facilities and/or programs located in the Town of Colonial Beach. In addition to the public's participation, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted with Town staff.

A second public meeting was held during the consultant team's findings and visioning visit. A visioning workshop was also conducted with the Parks and Recreation Department staff.

In addition to the engagement for the Master Plan, BerryDunn and LSG held several community workshops and an online SurveyMonkey survey to gather desires amenities and uses for North Park and Eleanor Park. From the meetings, LSG developed conceptual development plans for each park. Those plans are discussed later in this plan.

The information gathered was very important to determine public feedback on the Town parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs. These public input sessions and subsequent analyses were designed to assist the Town and the project team in gathering information to develop a community needs assessment survey that was used to develop the Master Parks Plan.

# Staff SWOT

Public engagement kicked off with a SWOT Analysis workshop on January 23, 2023, with Town staff. The BerryDunn consulting team met with seven full-time staff representing the Town Manager’s Office, Department of

Public Works, Police Department, Community Development & Zoning Department, Parks Recreation & Events Department, Finance and Clerk’s Office. The workshop revealed the following:

Internal Strengths	Internal Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small team’s ability to implement quality special events and other operational needs</li> <li>• Creation and implementation of the Department</li> <li>• Hiring of Department Director</li> <li>• Torrey Smith Park is the destination park and well used by the community</li> <li>• Availability of greenspace for future park developments</li> <li>• Dog park is well used</li> <li>• Town Hill is a great amenity where outdoor special events are held and well-attended</li> <li>• Volunteer organizations provide support for the Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of operational park maintenance plan</li> <li>• Staffing challenges</li> <li>• Funding challenges</li> <li>• Public Works Department absorbs budget shortfalls for mulch and other park maintenance</li> <li>• Lack of policy and plan for volunteer instructors</li> <li>• Lack of appropriate funds for contracted services</li> </ul>

What would you like to see from the Master Plan?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed plan for Northside Park</li> <li>• Local government increase funding support to the Department, including additional full-time equivalents (FTEs)</li> <li>• Operations/public works funding for maintenance of existing parks and beaches</li> <li>• Maintenance projections for North and Eleanor Parks</li> <li>• Sustainability as the Department continues expansion of parks and services</li> </ul>



External Opportunities	External Threats or Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking advantage of grant opportunity that could lead to long-term funding of maintenance operations</li> <li>• Addressing resources for the Town’s underserved northside</li> <li>• Creating public/private partnerships for park construction</li> <li>• Adopting park programs for volunteer groups</li> <li>• Generating revenue from public/private partnerships (e.g., jet ski rental program)</li> <li>• Partnering with the school district and creating a joint-use agreement</li> <li>• Developing interdepartmental collaboration</li> <li>• Taking advantage of opportunities to become a special tax district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating bike rental opportunities if bike lane is created on waterfront</li> <li>• Creating boat sharing opportunities</li> <li>• Creating connectivity between municipal parks</li> <li>• Generating revenue from public/private partnerships (e.g., jet ski rental program)</li> <li>• Partnering with the school district and creating a joint-use agreement</li> <li>• Developing interdepartmental collaboration</li> <li>• Taking advantage of opportunities to become a special tax district</li> <li>• Creating bike rental opportunities if bike lane is created on waterfront</li> <li>• Creating boat sharing opportunities</li> <li>• Creating connectivity between municipal parks</li> </ul>

# Community Workshop

Following the staff meeting, the BerryDunn consulting team met and hosted a community workshop open to the public on January 23, 2023, at Colonial Beach Elementary School. Participants included a diverse group of over 50 community members and stakeholders who have lived in the Town for as few as two years and as long as 60 years. These individuals provided opinions about current Department operations, programming, services, and future park amenity desires. The results of the community workshop are summarized below in no particular order.

## WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF THE DEPARTMENT RELATED TO PARKS, TRAILS, WATERWAYS, AND RECREATION FACILITIES/ACTIVITIES?

- Parks are quickly repaired when damaged
- Opportunities to provide programs/events for youth (e.g., soccer lessons)
- Partnerships with local volunteer and non-profit groups
- Willingness to be transparent with the public
- Added tennis, pickleball, and basketball courts at Torrey Smith Park
- Accessible to Osprey Festival planning team
- Engaged with National Night Out event

## WHAT ARE CHALLENGES OF THE DEPARTMENT?

- Accessibility in parks
- Funding for staff, maintenance, equipment, and marketing
- Communication with public
- Vandalism in parks
- Lack of indoor facility
- Resources on the Town's northside
- Resident engagement
- Lack of formal guidelines for the Department
- Need for attractive parks to appeal to tourism

## HOW WOULD YOU RANK POTENTIAL PARKS AND RECREATION INITIATIVES?

- Eleanor Park update – First
- North Park update – Second
- More trails/sidewalks in parks – Third
- New specialty park (skate park, disc golf course, etc.) – Fourth
- New outdoor athletic fields – Fifth
- Linear Park update – Sixth

## WHAT PARK WOULD YOU PRIORITIZE FOR UPDATING OR CONSTRUCTION?

- Eleanor Park – 28 votes
- North Park – 22 votes
- Castlewood Park – 5 votes
- Linear Park – 2 votes
- Torrey Smith Park – 2 votes

## WHAT KEY ISSUES OR VALUES SHOULD WE BE AWARE OF WHEN DEVELOPING PARK PLANS?

- Flooding
- Limited resources
- Prioritizing small-town feel
- Target audience
- Wildlife Habitat Conservation
- Accessibility and inclusion
- Safety
- Prioritizing family- and kid-friendly programs/ activities
- Adding a destination venue
- Sustainability
- Increasing tourism
- Making use of existing properties with amenities already in place
- Establishing Department mission statement to help ensure it aligns with community needs



## Focus Group Meetings

The BerryDunn consultant team facilitated five focus groups and one public meeting from January 23 – 25, 2023. Focus groups consisted of 57 participants and included a diverse group of residents. Of the focus group populations:

- 29% were residents who have lived in the Town for less than 5 years
- 22% were residents who have lived in the Town 6 to 9 years
- 23% were residents who have lived in the Town 10 to 19 years
- 18% were residents who have lived in the Town 20+ years
- 8% were non-residents who use programs and facilities

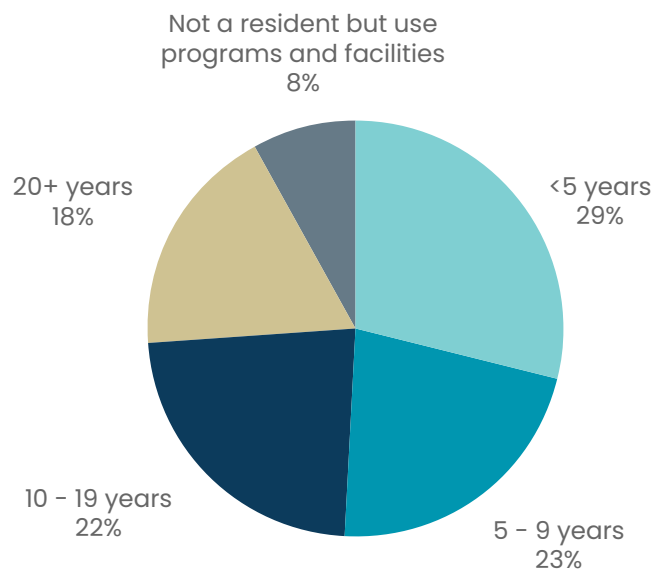


FIGURE 13 | FOCUS GROUP POPULATION



Participants expressed the desire for more marketing and services, an aquatic facility, splash pads, and connectivity between parks. Participants would also like to see increased partnerships with local volunteer groups,

the public school system, and countywide organizations. The questions and top comments of these focus groups and public forum are summarized below.

### WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF THE DEPARTMENT?

- Torrey Smith Park is an asset that is well used by the community
- The Department welcomes partnerships with local non-profit organizations and service groups
- The Department is transparent with the community
- Town Hill is a valuable asset used for special events
- Colonial Beach is the second-largest beach in the Commonwealth of Virginia
- Creation and implementation of the Department
- Castlewood Park is well used
- Department is young and has endless possibilities
- Town hosts well-attended special events and festivals
- Department staff work to provide programs with limited resources
- Greenspace opportunities are abundant for park conceptualization
- Dog park that is well used in the portfolio
- Staff are responsive
- Vision to hire consultant to complete Master Plan

### WHAT ARE CURRENT CHALLENGES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE MASTER PLAN?

- Connectivity and alternative modes of transportation to parks
- Lack of park amenities
- Department funding
- Accessibility in parks
- Marketing and communication with residents about programs and services
- Youth sports programs have not existed in over 10 years
- Lack of park maintenance staff for the Department
- Poor lighting in parks, which leads to vandalism
- Lack of pool and water safety programs
- Lack of expectations and identity for the Department without an independent location
- Lack of a Town-managed community center for the Department
- Lack of active adults and senior programs

### WHAT RECREATIONAL AMENITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AVAILABLE IN THE DEPARTMENT?

- Splash pads were mentioned in several focus groups
- Shaded pavilions, which could serve as revenue generators for the Town
- Inclusive amenities, such as safe sidewalks, ADA accessibility in parks, and an inclusive playground for those with visual and non-visual disabilities
- Bike paths near the beach and Monroe birthplace as alternative modes of transportation
- An outdoor sports complex, which would be a draw for youth and adult sports leagues and programs
- A connected trail system for bike, golf carts, and walking
- Passive parks for leisure activities for residents
- Outdoor fitness equipment for active adults
- Launches for kayak/boat rental on the bay side for water access
- Walking paths for alternative modes of transportation
- An indoor aquatic facility, which was mentioned frequently
- A playground near the Potomac River, which would help tourism
- A Department-managed community center

### WHAT PRIORITIES IN THE TOWN NEED TO BE CONSIDERED WHILE DEVELOPING THE MASTER PLAN?

- Improving and maintaining existing parks and facilities
- Completing the capital improvement project at North Park
- Creating accessibility in parks
- Increasing programming for all ages
- Adding beaches to the Department's portfolio
- Completing the capital improvement project at Eleanor Park
- Providing guidance for Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
- Increasing marketing of programs and services
- Increasing Department funding for operations, including personnel and activity
- Preserving nature
- Increasing special events planning and creativity
- Developing short-term goals
- Developing a long-term capital improvement plan
- Creating a plan that is equitable to all

### WHAT RECREATION ACTIVITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ADDED TO THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFERINGS?

- Youth sports programs as a Town resource was mentioned in several groups
- Year-round and weekly special events for residents
- Classes such as Zumba®, MixedFit®, and yoga
- Educational programs, including LEGO® Robotics and coding classes in partnership with the school district
- Water safety programs, which are essential to a Town with a large body of water
- Programs and activities for a growing senior population
- Sailing and motorboat events for residents



## Conclusion

Using the mixed-method approach to information gathering proved valuable and a huge success, engaging over 330 residents through community workshops, focus group meetings, stakeholder meetings, and interviews and online/paper survey. Recurring themes were to maintain and improve existing parks and prioritize connectivity of trails, sidewalks, and bike paths. Every group voiced the importance of community events and better awareness of programs and service needs, as well as health and wellness, including fitness, dance, and wellness classes. Residents desire access to the water, as the Potomac River is the Town's most desired amenity, and they agree that the development of Eleanor Park is long overdue.

Other desired amenities and facilities include an aquatic facility, indoor recreation center, accessible playground, and splash pad. The Town should consider prioritizing adding a splash pad to its portfolio as each group showed interest.

Clearly community members and stakeholders truly believe that the Town wants their feedback and will prioritize their concerns while implementing the final recommendations from this planning process.

## Community Survey – SurveyMonkey

To allow for greater public participation in the Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment planning process, an online survey was administered through the Recreation and Parks Department using SurveyMonkey. The survey was conducted in January and February of 2023. The survey consisted of a series of questions focused on gauging respondents' interest, usage, current barriers to use, perceptions of quality, and ideas for improving the current system of Town-managed parks, recreation amenities, and recreational assets.

The survey received a total of 273 responses, approximately 12% of the households. Survey responses were limited to one response per IP address at the request of the Town to limit multiple responses for households. General survey findings are noted in the "Summary of Findings" section below. A comprehensive report of the survey results has been retained as a staff resource by the Parks and Recreation Department and is available for public review upon request.

## Summary of Findings from the Needs Assessment Survey

The 2023 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment survey was not intended to be statistically valid and was hosted in a fashion that allowed for open participation. Unlike a statistically valid survey, the open method utilized in this process did not appear to capture a strong response from people who do not currently use Town parks and recreation amenities. However, the overall results of the survey provide insight into the general attitudes and perceptions of self-identified Town parks and recreation amenity users. The administration of a statically valid survey in the future would be beneficial for capturing the opinions of residents who may not be regular users of Colonial Beach parks and recreation facilities and programs. A full report of the survey, including open-ended comments submitted from respondents, was created as a resource document for the staff of the Parks and Recreation Department. The overall key findings of the survey are noted below:

- A total of 273 responses were received in January and February of 2023.
- The largest portion of respondents (38%) have lived in Colonial Beach less than 5 years.
- Almost half of survey respondents were either very familiar or familiar (49.81%) with parks, recreation facilities, programs, and services the Town provides.
- Most survey respondents (88.28%) feel the availability of local parks and recreation opportunities in Colonial Beach are very important or important to their household.
- Community events (87%), fitness and wellness programs (61%), outdoor recreation programs (58%), adult enrichment (57%) and Nature programs (51%) are the top activities families participate in.
- Health and wellness, handicapped accessibility within parks, family-oriented activities, maintenance of parks and facilities, land preservation, and safety and security in parks are the top six priorities for the Department to focus on improving.
- To increase utilization, respondents' top choices were additional facilities and amenities, awareness of programs (communication), condition/maintenance of parks and accessibility.
- Internet/website (75%) social networking (73%), and Email from the Town (65%), are the top three way to reach respondents.
- When asked to rank initiatives for the Department, add more trails/sidewalks, add new aquatic facilities, expand programs and activities, add new specialty parks, and improve and/or renovate and maintain existing parks, are the top five rankings.





Section  
6

# Getting It Done – Operations, Maintenance and Administration

## *Department Operational Considerations*

### **Covid-19 Pandemic and the Recreation Going Forward**

In 2019, the world was struck by the coronavirus global pandemic. This is the country's most devastating pandemic in modern history. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) public health emergency was officially declared a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, by the World Health Organization and continues to be a major global pandemic as of the writing of this report. As stated by the NRPA, parks are essential, especially during a health crisis, and a recent survey found that 83% of adults find exercising at local parks and open spaces is essential to maintaining their mental and physical health during the Covid-19 pandemic. Colonial Beach parks, beaches, waterways, open spaces, and recreation programs play an essential role in providing healthy and safe options for residents, staff, and visitors. For parks and open space and for recreation, this will shape

our collective futures in ways beyond those possibly anticipated, and likely beyond the Focus Areas of this report.

Unlike other forms of community infrastructure, parks, recreation, and open space amenities combine both developed and natural elements that serve a wide variety of functions that benefit the general public. The positive benefits of parks and natural areas are well documented, and public participation in recreation, sports, fitness, and leisure activities and opportunities that are made available by this infrastructure can have significant impacts on community identity, public health, and community well-being; preservation of natural ecological systems and services; and economic vitality. The pandemic has shown this to be a greater need and desire by members of the community.

## Program Development

Understanding core services in the delivery of parks and recreation services will allow the Colonial Beach Parks and Recreation Department to improve upon those areas while developing strategies to assist in the delivery of other services. The basis of determining core services should come from the vision and mission developed by the Department, as well as what brings the greatest community benefit in balance with the competencies of the Department, current trends, and the market.

The Department should pursue program development around the priorities identified by resident feedback, program evaluation process, and research. The following criteria should be examined when developing new programs.

- **Need:** outgrowth of a current popular program, or enough demonstrated demand to successfully support a minimal start (one class for instance)
- **Budget:** accounting for all costs and anticipated (conservative) revenues should meet cost recovery target established by the Department
- **Location:** appropriate, available and within budget
- **Instructor:** qualified, available and within budget
- **Materials and supplies:** available and within budget
- **Marketing effort:** adequate and timely opportunity to reach intended market, within budget (either existing marketing budget or as part of new program budget)



Moreover, new leisure and recreation trends may drive different needs. It is very easy to focus on programs that have worked for a number of years, especially if they are still drawing enough interested participants to justify the programs continuation. Starting new programs, based on community demand and/or trends, can be risky due to the inability to predict their success. If the program interest seems great, as with those identified in the citizen survey, then the programs should be expanded. Available space may hinder new or expanded opportunities in some cases.

Using historical participation levels to determine program popularity and participant feedback can be helpful in deciding if programs should be continued. In addition, utilizing citizen surveys and participant feedback, and researching trends in park and recreational programming are useful in determining future programming needs and desires. Sources for trends information include:

- State Parks and Recreation Associations and Conferences
- NRPA
- SFIA
- Parks and Recreation Trade Publications
- Outdoor Recreation Publications



## Program Evaluation

All current programs should be evaluated annually to determine if they should be continued, changed (market segment focus, time/day offered, etc.), or discontinued. A few simple questions should be asked about each program that include:

- Is participation increasing or decreasing? If participation is increasing, then it could clearly mean that the program should be continued. If participation is decreasing, are there any steps to take to increase interest? Such efforts include changing marketing tactics, changing the time/day the program is offered, and/or changing the format or instructor. If not, it may be time to discontinue the program.
- Is there information contained in the participation feedback that can be used to improve the program?
- Are cost recovery goals being met? If not, can fees be realistically increased?
- Is there another provider of the program that is more suitable to offer it? If yes, the Department could provide referrals for its customers for the program it does not or is not willing or able to offer.
- Is this program taking up facility space that could be used for expansion of more popular programs or new programs in demand by the community?

## Financial Analysis

The Parks and Recreation Department's programs and facilities are currently funded through a combination of revenue sources, including General Fund, User Fees, and partnerships. Since its establishment in 2021, the Parks and Recreation Department has made every effort to maintain high-quality facilities, programs, and services with few resources. As the country is recovering, Colonial Beach is investing in quality of services for citizens through General Fund contributions to the Department as well as capital investments from the General Fund.

## Organizational Analysis

BerryDunn broadly assessed the organizational and management structure of the Parks and Recreation Department and its staffing to determine effectiveness and efficiency in meeting current and future departmental responsibilities as related to the community's needs. The needs assessment – including input from staff interviews, community, and key stakeholder engagement, along with the consultant's expertise – has identified a few areas for operational enhancement.



These key organizational issues identified and observed as areas for improvement include:

- Hire a full-time Parks and Recreation Director
- Hire a full-time Recreation Programmer
- Continued improved marketing and communication of activities
- Continued use of social media
- Continue the utilization of technology to improve customer service and efficiencies

## Staffing Analysis

BerryDunn broadly assessed the management structure and staffing levels of the Parks and Recreation Department to determine effectiveness and efficiency in meeting current and future departmental responsibilities as related to the community's needs. Observations and staff feedback were considered to determine if the Department had the right mix of staffing in the right places within the Department.

The staffing analysis process included the observations and assessments from:

- Community input
- Community satisfaction rates
- Staff focus group
- Facility tours
- Observations of quality of maintenance
- SWOT Analysis

## Staffing Considerations

After considering all the organizational observations and staffing assessments, the consultant team has determined that the Parks and Recreation Department is understaffed and in need of full-time leadership and programming. The Town needs to create and fund a full-time Parks and Recreation Director and full-time Recreation Programmer to operate efficiently. Additionally, focus group participants and survey respondents saw the need for improved maintenance and upkeep of facilities and amenities. Additionally, they saw the need to increase customer service and program delivery.

One hurdle the Department must deal with is getting an appropriate pool of qualified applicants for open positions. This is a national issue and reflects the changing workforce of both the Millennial and Baby Boomer Generations. To combat this trend, organizations need to be willing to allow for flexible scheduling, allow for remote workplaces, part-time and "gig" positions, and second career applicants.

To operate more effectively in the future and to implement the action step from the Master Plan, Parks and Recreation will need to hire additional positions to supplement existing staff. This will help ensure that staffing resource levels can maintain existing and new facilities at or above acceptable standards as the Master Plan is implemented.



# Maintenance and Operations Analysis

## Introduction

BerryDunn and LSG broadly assessed parks and recreational facilities maintenance to evaluate effectiveness, efficiency, and ability to deliver the appropriate services to the community. The desired outcome of this assessment is to identify any opportunities to refine and optimize its maintenance practices and to development recommendations that will help ensure that the Town is meeting all of its maintenance and operational objectives in an efficient manner.

This process encompassed site and facilities inspections, review of materials provided by the Town, community feedback from focus group participants and survey respondents, and observations of parks and facilities operations. Analysis of all collected data provides an understanding of how well the maintenance and operations of the parks and recreational facilities is meeting the community's expectations and recommendations to improve and enhance the level of services provided.

Parks Maintenance is currently performed by the Town's Public Works Department. The Department doesn't have specific written Park Maintenance Standards nor Maintenance Guidelines. The maintenance staff focus on cleanliness, regular routine maintenance tasks, and addressing reported maintenance issues. The maintenance staff is not able to focus on preventative maintenance or special projects. The Department does not have an ADA Transition Plan, and this is an area that needs immediate attention.

## General Maintenance Standards for Recreation and Parks

Maintenance standards for the Town of Colonial Beach can be matched with the categorical information noted below. The BerryDunn team provided this overview as a standard for "best practices" that the team should consider.

### GROUNDS

- Grounds mowed and trimmed on a regular schedule
- Park is free of litter, debris, and hazards
- Safety concerns identified and eliminated
- Parking lots, if applicable, are clean; striped; and free of debris, holes, and tripping hazards

### FOUNTAINS (WHERE APPLICABLE)

- Fountains are accessible and operational
- Fountains are in appropriate locations and in compliance with ADA
- Fountains are installed on a solid surface and free of standing water and debris
- Drain system is operational
- Park facilities should include a minimum of one pet fountain

### SIGNAGE

- Signs include Town logo and contact phone number
- Park identification signs are secure and properly installed in a noticeable location
- Handicapped parking signs are secure, visible, and installed to code

- Park rules signs are secure and properly installed in a noticeable location
- Restroom signs are secure and visible
- Signs are clean, painted, and free of protrusions and graffiti
- Directional signs are provided as needed in appropriate locations

## ORNAMENTAL PLANTS AND TREES

- Plants and trees are healthy and free of disease and insects
- Plant beds are free of litter, debris, and weeds
- Plant selection is appropriate for season and climate/area usage for sustainability practices
- Trees trimmed and shaped on a regular basis; inspect for and remove hazardous trees as needed
- Tree species selection should provide a wide variety of native and selected non-native trees where appropriate
- Tree wells and planting beds mulched for protection and water conservation

## WALKWAYS AND TRAILS

- May be hard surface or soft surface depending on location and intended use
- Soft surface trails are free of water-collecting depressions and erosion
- Walkways and trails have a uniform surface, positive drainage, are level with ground, and are free of trip hazards and excessive material deflection
- Walkways and trails are free of litter, debris, sediment, and seasonal snow
- Walkways and trails meet ADA requirements

- Walkways and trails provide unobstructed access and are free from low and protruding tree limbs, guide wires, signposts, and ornamental plants
- Walkways in irrigated park areas are neatly edged
- Walkways and trails are clear of weeds and grass growth in cracks and expansion joints; adequate trash receptacles provided
- Guard rails and safety fencing provided in appropriate locations
- Routine safety and function inspections are performed including surface, culverts, water crossings, signage, and vegetation

## TRASH RECEPTACLES (RANDOM LOCATIONS)

- Receptacles are clean and free of odor with liners in place
- Receptacles are painted, free of damage and missing parts, and properly anchored
- Roll-off containers and dumpsters are clean, screened, and placed in non-intrusive locations with consideration given for attractive fencing and gating
- Area around trash receptacles is clean and free of trash and debris
- Areas around roll-off containers and dumpsters are clean and free of trash and debris

## FENCING

- Fences are intact, structurally sound, and free of damage or deterioration
- Nails, bolts, and screws are flush with surface with no exposed sharp points
- Fences have no excessive voids, cracks, or splintering

## SECURITY AND EXTERIOR LIGHTS

- Ninety percent (90%) of security and exterior lights are operational
- No electrical conduit or wiring is exposed
- Lights comply with appropriate building code with consideration of sustainable lighting fixtures added or replaced as needed
- Poles and components are secured in ground, operational, and straight with design components as noted in appropriate Town code

## BRIDGES

- Bridges have a uniform surface, are free of trip hazards, and are free of graffiti
- Lumber and other materials are structurally sound and free of cracking, deterioration, and splintering
- Bridges comply with ADA requirements
- Bridges have handrails intact and properly installed and anchored
- Bridges are free of litter and debris

## GENERAL USE TURF AREAS

- Turf areas are free of litter and debris
- Turf areas are mowed and trimmed on a regular schedule
- Turf areas have a uniform surface and are well drained
- Areas have clean trash receptacles present that are in good condition
- Turf is free of disease, insects, and weeds
- Supplemental irrigation is provided as needed
- Turf areas are fertilized and aerated on a regular basis

## ATHLETIC USE TURF AREAS

- Turf areas are free of litter and debris
- Turf areas are mowed and trimmed according to usage schedule
- Turf areas have a uniform surface and are well drained
- Playing surface maintained according to sport-specific guidelines
- Areas have clean trash receptacles present that are in good condition
- Turf is free of disease, insects, and weeds
- Supplemental irrigation is provided as needed
- Turf areas are fertilized and aerated on a regular basis

## IRRIGATION

- Irrigation system is fully operational with complete and uniform coverage
- System is free of leaks; backflow prevention devices are in place and functioning properly
- Heads are installed properly for intended use
- Heads are properly adjusted with rotations and arcs set to reduce water runoff
- Systems are set to run at specific times to minimize evaporation and waste
- Systems function checks are conducted on a regular basis
- Repair excavations are properly compacted and turf restored

## OPEN SPACE AREAS

- Native grasses mowed, if necessary, according to specific management plans, with focus on promoting natural growth heights and cycles and wildlife habitat
- Trail corridors and picnic areas mowed as needed
- Trail surfaces are free of debris and weeds
- Native tree and shrub growth is encouraged
- Wildlife habitat and water quality preservation emphasized
- Rules and regulations and identification signs are posted in noticeable locations
- Annual and noxious weeds are controlled as needed
- Property access points and boundaries are clearly marked



## Athletic Facilities and Competitive Fields

### TURF

- Turf has a healthy dense stand of grass, and coverage is no less than 95% of playable area
- Play area has a uniform surface and is well drained
- Turf to be mowed at the appropriate height for the type of grass used, time of season, and type of field use
- Turf is free of any litter or debris
- Apply top dressing and over seeding as needed to maintain healthy grass
- Fields may be closed for use periodically to allow for turf recovery
- Turf is free of disease, insects, and weeds

### SOFTBALL INFIELDS

- Infields have a uniform surface and are free of lips, holes, and trip hazards
- Infields are well drained with no standing water areas
- Infields have proper soil composition for intended use with ball field mix added as needed
- Infields are free of weeds and grass
- Infields are free of rocks, dirt clods, and debris
- Bases and plates are properly installed, level, and are at proper distances and anchored according to manufacturer's specifications and league requirements
- Fields dragged and lined as needed according to use schedules



## BLEACHERS

- Hardware is intact, and bracing and safety rails tightly connected
- Seating surface is clean, smooth, free of protrusions, and has no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners
- Clean trash receptacles provided and in good condition; area under bleachers free of trash

## LIGHTS

- Electrical system and components are operational and in compliance with applicable building codes
- Ninety percent (90%) of lamps for each field are operational
- No electrical conduit or wiring is exposed
- Lights comply with appropriate building code with consideration of sustainable lighting fixtures added or replaced as needed
- Ballast boxes and components are properly installed and secured
- Lights provide uniform coverage on facilities and fixtures and are adjusted to eliminate dark or blind areas
- Fixtures securely fastened to poles and poles secured in ground according to manufacturer's specifications
- Poles and fixtures inspected immediately after any major wind, ice, or hailstorm

## FENCING

- Fencing material is galvanized chain link and appropriate gauge wire for specified use
- Fencing material is properly secured to support rails
- Support rails are properly connected and straight
- Fencing is free of holes and protrusions
- Fabric is straight and free of bending and sagging
- Gates and latches are operational

## RESTROOMS/PORTABLE TOILETS

- Toilets are clean, sanitary, and properly stocked with paper products
- Lights and ventilation systems are operational
- Toilets, stall doors, and hand air dryers are operational
- Buildings and enclosures are free of graffiti
- Doors are properly marked according to gender
- Restrooms have clean trash receptacles
- All doors and locks are operational
- Restrooms/portable toilets are in compliance with ADA requirements



# Playgrounds

## PLAY EQUIPMENT

- Equipment and surrounding play areas meet American Society for Testing Materials ASTM, and National Playground Safety Institute (NPSI) standards
- Play equipment and hardware is intact
- Play equipment is free of graffiti
- Age appropriateness for equipment is noted with proper signage
- Monthly and annual inspections are conducted, and a repair schedule and program are in place to meet the standard

## SURFACING

- Fall surface is clean, level, and free of debris
- Fall surface meets ASTM and NPSI standards
- Fall surface is well drained
- Rubber cushion surfaces are free of holes and tears
- Rubber cushion surfaces are secure to base material and curbing

## BORDERS

- Playground borders are well defined and intact
- Playground borders meet ASTM and NPSI standards
- Decks
- Planks are intact, smooth, structurally sound, free of splinters, and there are no cracks greater than one-fourth inch
- Nails, bolts, and screws are flush with surface
- Planks are level with no excessive warping

## GENERAL

- Slides and climbing devices are properly anchored
- All moving parts are properly lubricated and functioning as intended
- S-hooks and swing seats are in good operating condition
- Damaged or under-repair equipment is removed or properly marked and isolated from public use until repaired

## Picnic Areas and Shelters

### GENERAL

- Access to facilities complies with ADA
- Shelters are clean, sanitary, and free of graffiti
- Lights and electrical plugs are operational and comply with appropriate building codes
- Vegetation around structure is trimmed back to reduce hazards and does not impede entry and egress
- Grounds around structure are mowed, trimmed, and free of litter, debris, and hazards
- Shelters are structurally sound, clean, and painted, with no rotted lumber or rusted metal and no loose siding or loose shingles
- Water fountains and hose bibs (if provided) are operational
- Signage and rules and regulations information are posted in a noticeable location



## TABLES

- Tables are clean and free of dust, mildew, and graffiti
- Table hardware is intact
- Table frames are intact, and slats are properly secured
- Table seats and tops are smooth with no protrusions and have no exposed sharp edges or pointed corners

## GRILLS

- Grills are operational and free of rust and metal deterioration
- Grills are clean and free of grease buildup
- Grill racks are operational and secure, and grills are properly anchored to reduce hazard and theft

## TRASH RECEPTACLES

- Receptacles are clean, free of odors, and liners are in place
- Receptacles are painted, free of damaged or missing parts, and properly anchored
- Area around receptacles is clean and free of trash and debris

## Tennis Courts

### SURFACING

- Surface is smooth, level, and well drained with no standing water
- Surface is free of large cracks, holes, and trip hazards

- Surface is painted and striped in accordance with U.S. Tennis Association court specifications
- Worn painted surfaces do not exceed 30% of total court surface
- Surface is free of litter, debris, gravel, and graffiti

### NETS

- Nets and windscreens are free of tears and frays
- Nets are properly installed and secured to support poles
- Nets have center stripes installed at the regulated height and are anchored to the court
- Support poles have hardware intact and are properly anchored and installed
- Windscreens are properly installed and secured to fencing

### FENCING

- Fencing is galvanized chain link and is the appropriate gauge wire for specified use
- Fencing material is properly secured to support rails
- Support rails are properly secured and straight
- Fencing is free of holes, protrusions, and catch points
- Fabric is straight and free of bending or sagging
- Gates and latches are operational
- Windscreens are tightly secured and free of tears and holes

## Outdoor Basketball Courts

### SURFACING

- Surface is smooth, level, well drained, and free of standing water
- Surface is free of large cracks, holes, and tripping hazards
- Surface is painted and striped per court specifications
- Surface is free of litter, debris, gravel, and graffiti

### GOALS AND BACKBOARDS

- Goals and backboards are level with hardware intact
- Goals and backboards are painted
- Nets are properly hung and free of tears and fraying
- Support poles are secure in ground and straight



## Sand Volleyball Courts

### NETS

- Nets are free from holes and are not torn or tattered
- Nets are hung tightly at specified height
- Nets are securely attached to support poles
- Support poles have hardware intact and are properly anchored and installed

### SAND SURFACE

- Court surface is loose sand
- Surface is smooth with good drainage and no standing water
- Surface is free of weeds, grass, debris, and litter
- Grooming and raking are conducted based on the established standard and schedule

### BORDERS

- Borders are well defined and intact
- Borders meet International Volleyball Federation (FIVB), ASTM, and NPSI standards
- Surrounding area is free of debris and encroaching landscaping to reduce hazard



## Waterfronts

### WATER

- Water area is free of trash and debris
- Bank areas are smooth and free of washouts and erosion; riprap in place where needed
- Inlet and outlet structures are operational
- Appropriate and seasonal rules and regulations signage is in place at noticeable locations

### FISHING PIERS AND DECKS

- Planks are intact, smooth, structurally sound, free of splinters, and have no cracks greater than one-fourth inch
- Nails, bolts, and screws are flush with surface
- Planks are level with no excessive warping
- Handrails are present and structurally sound
- Piers and decks comply with ADA
- Trash receptacles provided nearby

### BENCHES

- Hardware is intact and structurally sound
- Nails, bolts, or screws are flush with surface
- Seats and backing are smooth with no protrusions, have no sharp edges or pointed corners, and are structurally sound
- Benches are secured in ground and properly installed

Staff should continue to work toward developing consistent and efficient processes and tasks when completing maintenance duties. Addressing those components that were noted in the facility inventory document will serve as the first step in prioritizing next steps for the division.

Each year the National Parks and Recreation Association publishes the Agency Performance Review. This review is the most comprehensive resource of data and insights for park and recreation agencies in the United States. The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review highlights 27 of the most critical park and recreation metrics collected from the NRPA Park Metrics database.

Based on the 2023 review, agencies in communities of less than 20,000 population:

- Annual Operating Expenditure for Recreation is a low of \$537,150 and a median of \$1.2 million
- Annual Operating Per Capita is a low of \$69.65 and a median of \$120.79

For communities with less than 250 acres of parks and open space:

- Annual Operating Expenditures for Park Operations is a low of \$796,144 and a median of \$1,953,100
- Annual Operating Per Capita is a low of \$61.32 and a median of \$110.21

# Section 7

## Areas of Focus and Action Plans

Public leaders in the United States are increasingly recognizing that public recreation programs, services, facilities and related “quality of life” amenities are not secondary services provided by governmental agencies but are in fact integral to creating communities where people want to live, work, play, and visit. These services should be seen as investments in the long-term vitality and economic sustainability of any vibrant and attractive community. Community leaders recognize that parks and recreation facilities and

services in addition to Public Open Space are essential to attracting and keeping the working class in communities. These investments encourage economic growth and contribute to Colonial Beach realizing their vision: Colonial Beach, Virginia (CBVA) is the Playground of the Potomac. The Colonial Beach Parks and Recreation Department recognizes this and seeks to make recreational facilities and services improvements, enhancing the community for years to come.



# Areas of Focus and Action Steps

The following Areas of Focus with Action Steps are outlined to create a process to move forward. Over the next five to 10 years, many influences will impact the success of the development of future facilities, programs, and services. Funding availability, staff recruitment and retention, and political and community support will play significant roles in future planning efforts.

## Area of Focus 1: Create a full-time, comprehensive Parks and Recreation Department that includes strategic and operational plans for the Department, as well as a marketing, communication, and community engagement strategy for recreation programs and services.

Actions	Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement	Time Frame to Complete
<p><b>1.1</b></p> <p>Complete a comprehensive operational plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a 5 to 10-year strategic plan with annual operating action steps for the first 5 years.</li> <li>• Provide programs and services in relation to survey results, identified gaps and unmet needs, market conditions, and alternative providers.</li> <li>• Identify priorities of future development of programs, and facilities.</li> <li>• Develop capital improvement plan, cost, and phasing recommendations and implementation plan for priority items/projects.</li> </ul>	<p>Staff Time/General Funding</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>





**Area of Focus 1: Create a full-time, comprehensive Parks and Recreation Department that includes strategic and operational plans for the Department, as well as a marketing, communication, and community engagement strategy for recreation programs and services.**

Actions	Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement	Time Frame to Complete
<p><b>1.2</b></p> <p>Create a short-term plan to address immediate needs and priority projects in coordination with the FY23-24 and FY24-25 Budget development and capital improvement project (CIP), and annual review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address aging infrastructure to meet current demand for services and develop plan for future growth.</li> <li>• Create a mixed methods marketing strategy that reaches all audiences in the community.</li> <li>• Review current programming and service delivery expectations and develop operating budget with funding support for the Department.</li> <li>• Staff appropriately to meet current and future demands and maintain the current quality of service to citizens and visitors.</li> </ul>	<p>Staff Time and Funding/ Capital Funding/General Funding</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>1.3</b></p> <p>Develop a marketing plan for the Department that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-method approach to communicating with the Town and visitors</li> <li>• Branding of the Department</li> <li>• Wayfinding and signage standards</li> <li>• Continued use of social media</li> <li>• Use and development of the Department’s website</li> <li>• Partnership opportunities</li> </ul>	<p>Staff Time</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>

TABLE 10 | AREA OF FOCUS 1



**Area of Focus 2: Create a leadership structure in the Parks and Recreation Department that support innovation in program development and delivery.**

Actions	Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement	Time Frame to Complete
<p><b>2.1</b></p> <p>Hire a full-time Parks and Recreation Director to guide the Department’s full implementation and development and provide them the resources to develop and lead the Department.</p>	<p>Full-time Parks and Recreation Director, Program Staff</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>2.2</b></p> <p>Review the role of the Parks &amp; Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) and establish expectations and outcomes desired. Empower the PRAC to support the Department and provide guidance and community input.</p>	<p>Staff Time</p>	<p>2023</p>
<p><b>2.3</b></p> <p>Review current Departmental structure and operational procedures to create a data-driven and performance focused Department.</p>	<p>Staff Time</p>	<p>2023</p>
<p><b>2.4</b></p> <p>Look for opportunities to partner with Non-Governmental Organizations to produce and deliver programs, activities, and events</p>	<p>Staff Time</p>	<p>On-going</p>

Table 11 | Area of Focus 2



**Area of Focus 3: Create a financial structure that provides General Fund investment into the Department’s operations, supports fiscal responsibility, and promotes accountability and transparency.**

Actions	Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement	Time Frame to Complete
<p><b>3.1</b></p> <p>Develop a resource allocation and cost recovery philosophy, model, and policy that is grounded in the values of Colonial Beach, and vision, and mission for its recreation service offering.</p>	<p>Staff Time</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>3.2</b></p> <p>Establish a pricing methodology that continuously reflects community values, while generating adequate revenues to help sustain Colonial Beach programs, and services. Review the user fee structure annually.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Professional Services/General Fund Support</p>	<p>2024-2025</p>
<p><b>3.3</b></p> <p>Establish a reporting structure that includes regular reporting on financial accountability, participation data, and performance outcomes.</p>	<p>Staff Time</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>3.4</b></p> <p>Establish a dedicated and permanent revenue source to fund parks maintenance.</p>	<p>General Fund Support/ Dedicated Tax</p>	<p>2024-2025</p>

TABLE 12 | AREA OF FOCUS 3

**Area of Focus 4: Ensure the development and implementation of high-quality recreation programs, services, facilities, and parks are available to residents of Colonial Beach.**

Actions	Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement	Time Frame to Complete
<p><b>4.1</b></p> <p>Create and implement a program development system that considers an outcome matrix for informed evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation minimum and maximum</li> <li>• Cost recovery goals: expenses to revenue</li> <li>• Resident to non-resident ratios</li> <li>• Cancellation and refund procedures and accounting</li> <li>• End of program participant evaluations</li> <li>• Quarterly reporting and evaluation of performance</li> </ul>	Staff Time	2023
<p><b>4.2</b></p> <p>Look for opportunities to increase Community and Special Events.</p>	Staff Time/Program Materials	On-going
<p><b>4.3</b></p> <p>Expand program offerings based on survey results, community input and on-going trends. Current priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptive programs and services</li> <li>• Family-oriented/multi-generational programs and services</li> <li>• Youth sports programs</li> <li>• Health and wellness</li> <li>• Water safety</li> </ul>	Staff Time/Program Materials	On-going



**Area of Focus 4: Ensure the development and implementation of high-quality recreation programs, services, facilities, and parks are available to residents of Colonial Beach.**

Actions	Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement	Time Frame to Complete
<p><b>4.4</b></p> <p>Continue to create a balance between active and passive programs.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Program Materials</p>	<p>On-going</p>
<p><b>4.5</b></p> <p>Look for opportunities to partner with other service providers in the community to maximize resources and minimize duplication of services.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Program Materials</p>	<p>On-going</p>

TABLE 13 | AREA OF FOCUS 4



**Area of Focus 5: Invest in the current infrastructure and address aging facilities.**

Actions	Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement	Time Frame to Complete
<p><b>5.1</b> Develop and fund a deferred maintenance plan that identifies and prioritize areas of improvement.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Capital Budget</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>5.2</b> Continue to look for opportunities to add walking loops in existing and new parks, and to seek opportunities to connect parks, neighborhood, and downtown with increased trails.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Consultant Services/Capital Budget</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>5.3</b> As park improvements are made and new parks and amenities are developed, accessibility should be a top priority.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Consultant Services/Capital Budget</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>5.4</b> From the concept plan created for Eleanor Park, hire a landscape architecture firm to create the phased Master Plan to develop the plan.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Consultant Services/Capital Budget</p>	<p>Phase 1 – 2023 Phase 2 – 2025 Phase 3 – 2028</p>
<p><b>5.5</b> Create a map of designated Blueway Trails for both residents and visitors.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Consultant Services</p>	<p>2023-2024</p>
<p><b>5.6</b> Continue to look for grant opportunities to develop Northside/Azalea Park.</p>	<p>Staff Time/Consultant Services/Capital Budget</p>	<p>On-going</p>



<b>Area of Focus 5: Invest in the current infrastructure and address aging facilities.</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Resource Impact/ Budget Requirement</b>	<b>Time Frame to Complete</b>
<p><b>5.7</b> As development occurs, continue to look for opportunities to provide additional access to the water.</p>	Staff Time/Consultant Services/Capital Budget	On-going
<p><b>5.8</b> As the Department continues to grow and programming increases, look for opportunities to add additional indoor space to accommodate the growth and meet the needs of the community.</p>	Staff Time/Consultant Services/Capital Budget	Future Consideration
<p><b>5.9</b> As the Department continues to grow and programming increases, look for opportunities to add additional multipurpose fields to accommodate the growth and meet the needs of the community.</p>	Staff Time/Consultant Services/Capital Budget	Future Consideration
<p><b>5.10</b> Consider establishing and operating a seasonal, kayak rental concession</p>	Staff Time/Capital Budget/General fund Support	Future Consideration

TABLE 14 | AREA OF FOCUS 5



# Implementation Guidelines and Strategies

The following is a listing of suggestions for successful implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

These elements represent the commitment and discipline required to integrate the process into daily operations, now and in the future.

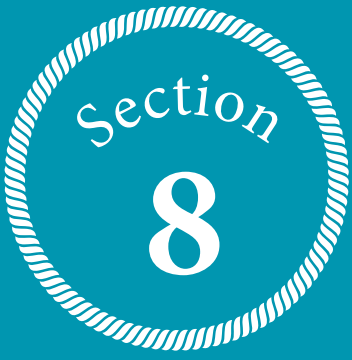
- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan becomes the guidepost for the Department. When decisions or responses to the community are needed, the plan becomes the reference point for decision-making and whether new issues or responses to the community are of higher importance than what has been established as existing direction.
- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan information should be included as part of the new employee orientation program.
- Post the Executive Summary of the plan on the website and track results on the site. This will assist in providing the community with information about the Department's strategic direction and its commitment to results. It may also be helpful to print a color brochure of the Executive Summary to distribute to interested partners and community members to provide a quick snapshot of the plan.
- A staff member or team should have responsibility of being the Project Manager or "champion" of the plan's implementation to help ensure success. This champion is responsible for monitoring the plan's progress and works with other staff, Town management, and other departments to effectively integrate the plan within operations.
- A staff member or team should be assigned accountability for each recommendation. The project lead will have responsibility for tracking progress of the plan.
- Regular reporting of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan's progress should occur. Divide the plan into separate fiscal years and report one year at a time, as an on-going annual work plan. Each action item for the year should include a list of strategies that supports its completion. The strategies are developed prior to each year for the upcoming list of action items and are developed by the staff members involved in completing the action item. It is the project leader's responsibility to report on his/her action items, in a quarterly report. A suggestion is to enter each year's data on a spreadsheet or strategic planning software that lists the goals, objectives, action items, start dates, completion dates, and the name of the staff member responsible for the action item's completion.
- At the end of the year, perform an annual review of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and document any changes to objectives and action items to reflect changes in priorities. This process can be included at an annual review meeting in which successive years' objectives and action items are discussed as part of the annual budget process. Action items will tie into both the operating and capital budget process.
- Update major stakeholders on the plan's implementation and results on an annual basis.



- Conduct staff meetings on a quarterly or semi-annual basis to review the progress on implementation of the plan.
- Post a chart of each year's recommendations on office walls in administrative areas with a check-off column designating completion as part of a visual management program.
- If there are ideas for new strategies that arise throughout the year, include them on a written "parking lot" and review them as part of the annual just-in-time review to determine if they change or replace any existing strategies or action items.
- At the five-year mark of the plan, complete a shortened update, including repeating the statistically valid survey and demographic projections. Adjust existing recommendations as necessary.



FIGURE 14 | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES



Section  
8

# What We Are – Our Parks, Beaches, Trails, and Facilities

## *Parks and Facilities Inventory and Assessment*

The current Comprehensive Plan defines Public Open Space as: The Public Open Space Designation includes existing developed and undeveloped public parks, beaches, and trail corridors. The need for additional recreational land is a pressing issue in the northern sections. The purpose of the Public Open Space district is to identify Public Open Space opportunities throughout Town to meet the existing and future open space demands. Preserving municipally owned properties into green spaces can help to address stormwater drainage and flooding problems. Conservation easements or eminent domain could be used to convert these into parks or water retention ponds into green spaces can help to address stormwater drainage and flooding problems. Conservation easements or eminent domain could be used to convert these into parks or water retention ponds.

Public open space within the Town includes all public beach areas. Public green space is primarily located in the Point and Central Neighborhoods. The Meadows and Bluff Neighborhoods of Town do not have any Public Open Space.

Public beach areas are in the Central Area and south along the Point Neighborhood.

- Designated parks include:
  - Castlewood Park
  - Eleanor Park
  - Linear Park (Bike/ Golf Path)
  - Northside Park
  - Robin Grove Park
  - Torrey Smith Park
  - Town Hill
  - Washington Ave Park

From information gathered during community workshops and surveys, increasing green space in Colonial Beach is a priority of residents and visitors.

The establishment of the Torrey Smith Recreational Park has added to the open space in the Central Area and the Robin Grove Dog Park has added another open space in the Point area. In addition, plans are being made for adding a linear park in the north side of Town, which would provide a well-lit walking path and golf cart path.

The embrace of green infrastructure and other uses of green open space may lead to additional recreational facilities for the citizens of the Town to enjoy. Family-oriented and multi-generational facilities would greatly benefit the health and wellness of the community year-round.

# Parks Specific Conceptual Plans

During the master planning process, the consultant team conducted public engagement and workshop to develop conceptual park development plans for North Park and Eleanor Park.

## Azalea Park

Azalea Park is a 0.3-acre community park located at the corner of Azalea Road and Stratford Street. The other two sides of this rectangular site are back into private residential lots. During the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process, the planning team realized a deficit of existing park amenities nearby. The community engagement revealed that the surrounding residential community strongly supported introducing a playground at this location.

The park design process explored several different ideas. The final design of the park adopts a maritime theme, anchored by an iconic Pirate ship play structure. The

proposed theme takes inspiration not only from the close relationship of Colonial Beach to the water, but also from its local schools – mascot Pete the Pirate, and athletic team the Colonial Beach Drifters. The play structure would be suitable for the 5–12-year age group. This moderate size Pirate ship would be a magnet for play, attracting children over all over with its immensely varied play offerings, above and below deck. It provides several boarding options including planks that can be climbed vertically, nets, and climbing cleats. Once up on deck, they can explore more ways across or down. The slide adds excitement while training children’s sense of space. In addition to dramatic play, children develop their cross-coordination and muscle strength. Various fine motor skill activities include binoculars, cannons, and the wheel stimulate tactility senses and inspire hours of dramatic play. Apart from being great fun, the activities support children’s cognitive development and social-emotional skills.



There were two public engagement opportunities where the community could follow along the park design process and share their feedback. In addition to play equipment, a primary ADA walking loop and a decomposed granite secondary walking trail promote passive recreation and exercise for the neighborhood residents. A provision for a set of two swings is also incorporated in the plan. Signage and benches protect children from running into traffic while providing parents with ample seating to watch children

play. Biophilic design principles have been applied by incorporating natural materials such as boulders, decomposed granite, and engineered wood mulch used throughout the park. Buffer planting along residential frontages and protection of existing trees preserve and enhance the natural setting of the park and provide shade for the playground. The overall planning and design approach will help develop a sense of connection to the natural world and enhance the overall experience of the space.

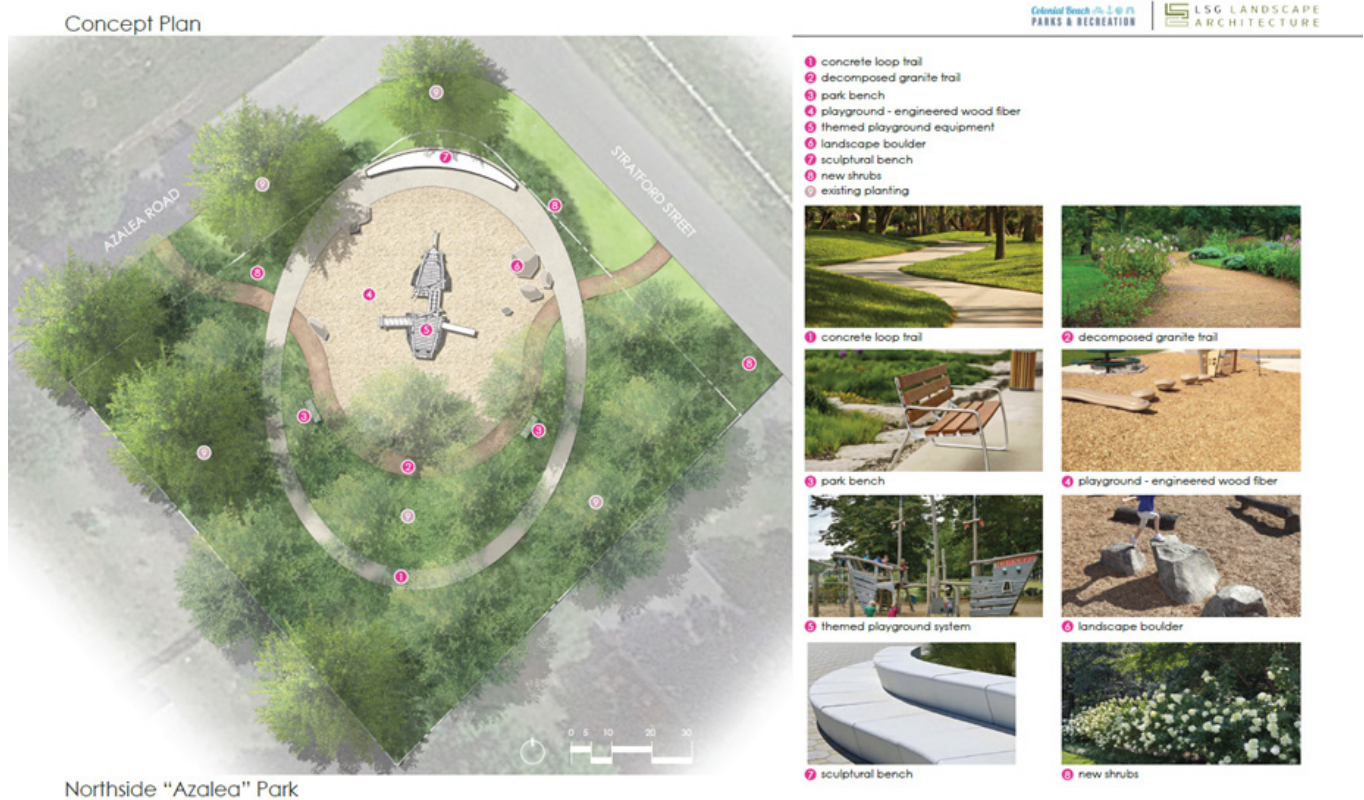


FIGURE 15 | AZALEA PARK



In April 2023, a SurveyMonkey survey was developed and distributed to receive further input on what the community wanted and did not want in Eleanor Park. The survey had 414 respondents. Of those respondents, 60% visited the park “a few time per year but not monthly” and 20% visited “weekly”. When asked what activities they would like to see in the park, respondents indicated “seating area/benches” at 78%, “restrooms” at 57%, “event lawn and pavilion” at 56%, and “walking loops” at 46%.

## Eleanor Park

Eleanor Park is a 1.80-acre community park located along Irving Avenue overlooking the Potomac River. Dandridge Lane and Lossing Ave form the southern and western boundary of this park respectively. The northern property line of the park abuts private residential property.

The park holds special significance to the community for its scenic waterfront views and natural setting. The community has been passionate about the development of the park and recent fundraising efforts resulted in the donation of several park benches which the community wants incorporated in the park planning and design. Community engagement during the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process revealed an overwhelming community desire to enjoy passive activities and gatherings rather than introducing active recreation into the park space. Based on community engagement results, three park scenarios were developed to enhance the park’s relationship to the water, upgrade park infrastructure and facilities, preserve existing trees add buffer plantings, and provide ample seating and socialization opportunities.

## Scenario A

The Scenario, "Spread Your Wings And Embrace The River At Eleanor Park", takes inspiration from the existing osprey nest often noted by residents during community engagement. A primary walking loop taking the form of wings embraces the waterfront as recreation piers, with osprey nest-themed artworks and riverside pavilion adorning the skyline. Riverside Pavilion offers great opportunities for concerts or outdoor gatherings. An additional picnic pavilion provides shade and opportunities for smaller

family-oriented gatherings. Benches gifted by the community will line the walking trails. A new restroom and additional parking spaces along Lossing Avenue and Dandridge Lane will provide support for the expansion of the park amenities. Traffic calming measures are proposed to span pedestrian activity from the park to the water. A boat launch and kayak launch areas are proposed on one side of the piers, and they help bring people down to the water. An innovative wetland planting buffer will help reinforce the edge while contributing to climate resiliency of the project and enhancing the native habitat of the region.

SCENARIO A: SPREAD YOUR WINGS AND EMBRACE THE RIVER AT ELEANOR PARK

Colonial Beach 10.1 @ 21  
PARKS & RECREATION

BerryDunn LSG LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



- 1 primary walking loop
- 2 secondary walking trails
- 3 overlook
- 4 recreation pier and boat launch
- 5 bench
- 6 picnic pavilion
- 7 event pavilion
- 8 artwork
- 9 wetland
- 10 flexible activity space
- 11 restroom
- 12 parking



Eleanor Park

FIGURE 16 | ELEANOR PARK – SPREAD YOUR WINGS AND EMBRACE THE RIVER AT ELEANOR PARK

## Scenario B

The Scenario, "Let's Meet On The Docks At Eleanor Park", takes inspiration from the fact that the park is perceived as a great place to meet people and hang out in large and small groups. The plan arranges park amenities in quadrants and a series of elevated docks as gathering spaces along the shoreline. The series of overlook docks can accommodate group gatherings of various sizes and opportunities for events and rentals. Similar to Scenario A, traffic calming measures are proposed to reduce the separation of the

park from the river's edge and help extend pedestrian activity from the park to the water without compromising vehicular movement. An event pavilion with a restroom anchors one quadrant of the park, while sharing a large event lawn with the picnic pavilion in the adjacent quadrant. The other quadrants feature a walking trail, an outdoor fitness area and benches donated by the community. A linear parking lot along the northern boundary of the park connects Irving Avenue with Lossing Avenue and provides additional parking and opportunities for farmers' markets etc.

### SCENARIO B: LET'S MEET ON THE DOCKS AT ELEANOR PARK

Colonial Beach Parks & Recreation

BerryDunn

LSG LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



- 1 primary walking path
- 2 secondary walking trails
- 3 recreation pier
- 4 flexible parking / activity / event space
- 5 bench
- 6 picnic pavilion
- 7 event pavilion with restroom
- 8 event lawn and overflow
- 9 parking
- 10 traffic calming



Eleanor Park

FIGURE 17 | ELEANOR PARK – LET'S MEET ON THE DOCKS AT ELEANOR PARK

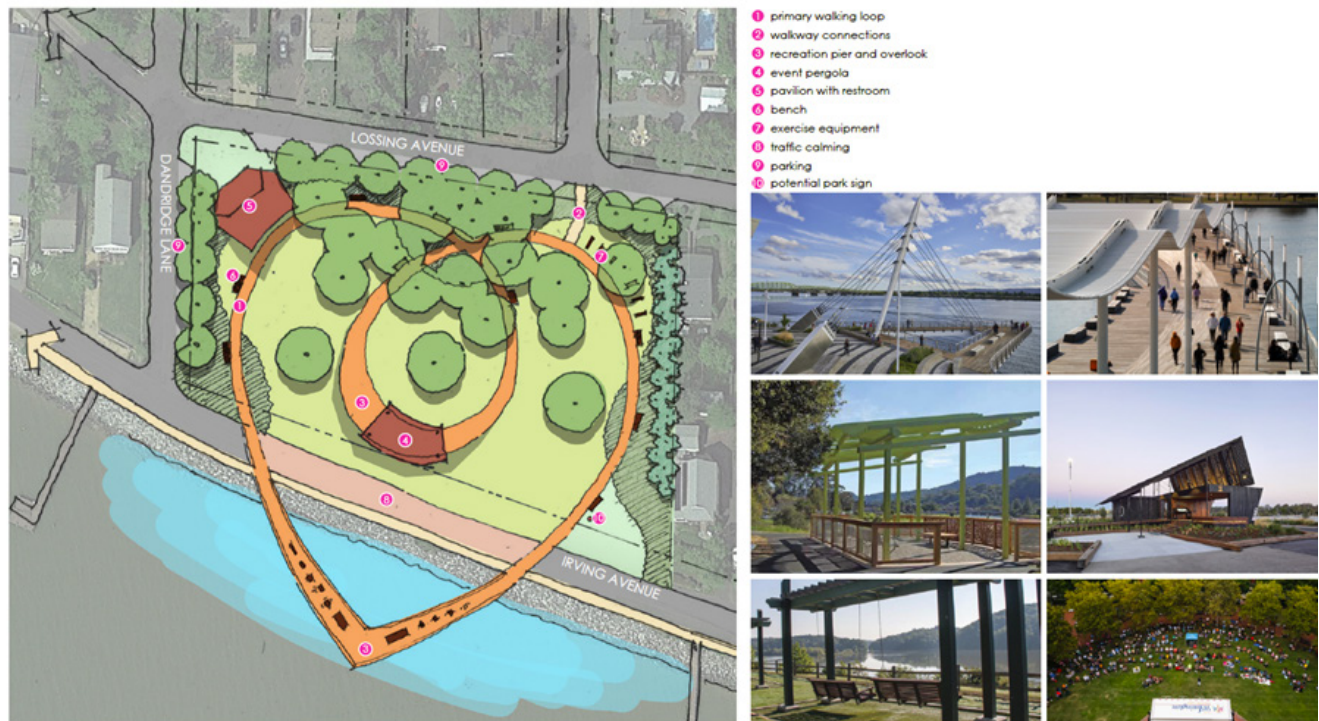
## Scenario C

The Scenario, “Eleanor Park, Made With Love”, is a community favorite. This park has been close to the heart of its community for many years and is a popular destination for celebration of life events such as birthdays and weddings. The last Scenario celebrates this aspect of the park that has been a continuous source of joy to the people it brings together. An intersecting walking loop forms a heart shape connecting walking

trails, an event pergola on the open lawn, restrooms, and a pier with an overlook toward the expansive views of the waterfront. The unique shape of the pier and its separation from the rest of the park facilities would make it conducive to wedding events and rentals. Benches donated by the community will be spaced along the internal walkways. Buffer plantings along the north side will screen the adjacent residents and the park from traffic. The protection of existing trees preserves the natural setting of the park for future visitors to enjoy.

SCENARIO C: ELEANOR PARK, MADE WITH LOVE

Colonial Beach Parks & Recreation | LSG LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



Eleanor Park  
Colonial Beach, VA

May 2023

FIGURE 18 | ELEANOR PARK - MADE WITH LOVE

Following additional workshops and information gathering, it was decided that Scenario C was the choice of the community.

# *Parks, Recreation, & Events Master Plan*

*Colonial Beach*  
  
VIRGINIA

 BerryDunn