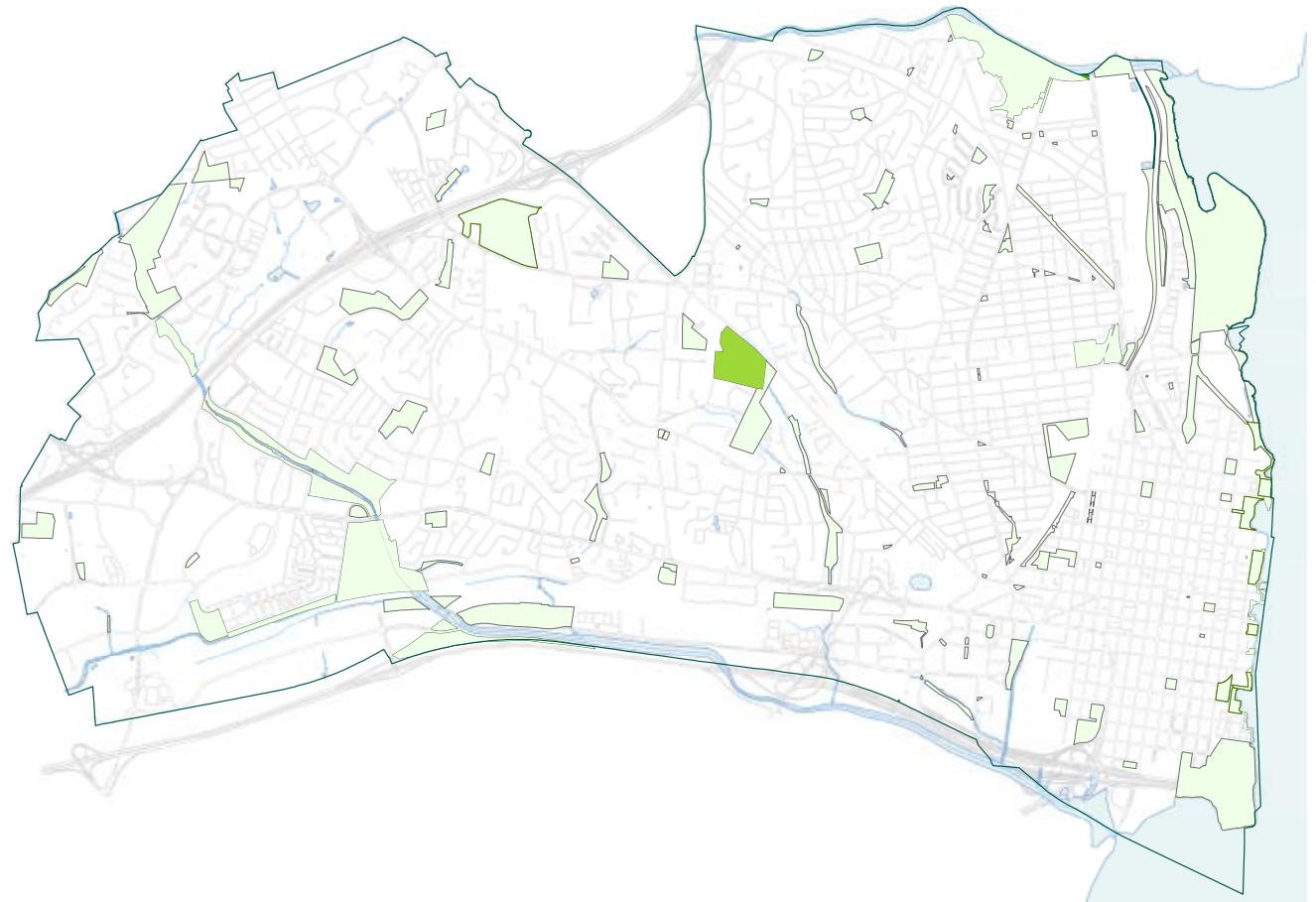
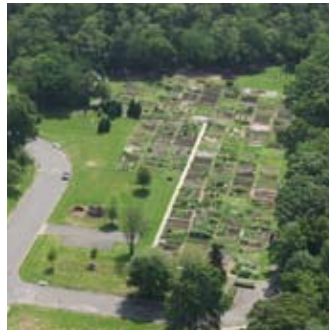


CHINQUAPIN PARK





Background

Chinquapin Park (28.27 acres) is centrally located in the City and adjacent to T.C. Williams High School and the Chinquapin Recreation Center, making it a very popular location for park users of all ages. Chinquapin is commonly regarded as one of the most familiar open spaces in the City. Before becoming a park, Chinquapin was home to several residential communities. In the early twentieth century, there was an African American community known as “Macedonia” or “Seminary” in the immediate vicinity of Chinquapin Park. Children from Macedonia attended the Seminary Colored School on the site of what is now T.C. Williams High School.

During WWII, the site became the location of Chinquapin Village, a war housing development built by the government for Torpedo Factory workers. The layout of today’s Park is still reminiscent of the historic Chinquapin neighborhoods. In fact, Chinquapin Drive, the terraced landscape and sets of concrete steps throughout the park are vestiges that point to a time when Chinquapin was an active residential neighborhood. The City acquired the property in 1961 and first proposed building a mini amusement park on the site. Later, in the summer of 1971, former Mayor Charles E. Beatley opened Chinquapin Park. The recreation center in the Park followed, opening in 1986. The Park is named for the Chinquapin Oak Tree.

When the Park opened it was an extremely popular gathering space on the weekends. Families from all over the City came to watch soccer games, see friends, and play tennis. While the Park is not as active as it once was, visitors are often seen jogging or walking around Chinquapin Drive, attending summer camp, or tending to their plots at the Chinquapin community garden. Most often, though, people visit Chinquapin because it is one of the few parks with large, open and bucolic spaces in the City. As one Park user stated, “It’s a unique little oasis and community recreation area in our urban community.” The space provides a mix of opportunities from casually enjoying the scenic beauty to playing sports.

Yet, there are many issues with the current park design that restrict efficient and safe use of the site. Most prominent is the lack of pathways connecting the park facilities. In order to walk through the Park and access amenities such as the playground, basketball court, or pavilion, park users have to blaze a trail through the parking lot, scale down eroding banks, and walk along moving traffic and parked vehicles. During the public outreach for this plan, Park users stated that more than any other activity, they visit the Park to run or walk around the road (known as the loop). However, the loop does not

Neal’s local spot



Neal, a twelve year resident of Alexandria, lives two miles away from Chinquapin Park. Since retiring, he visits the Park a couple of times a week to tend his plot in the community garden. Over the summer, he has grown tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, and several herbs. In addition to gardening, Neal enjoys playing tennis and swimming at the Chinquapin Recreation Center. Neal likes the diversity of activities at Chinquapin and the convenient location to his home.



In 2012, RPCA hired the firms of Kimley-Horn and Counsilman-Hunsaker to perform an Aquatics Facilities Study identifying a set of recommendations to meet the existing and future aquatic needs in Alexandria. The study found that Chinguapin Recreation Center is well located to service the entire city as the central indoor aquatic facility. However, the aging pool is not constructed to proper competition meet dimensions and lacks sufficient space for all user groups. Therefore, City Council included the addition of a competition pool to the current Recreation Center in the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 budget. The existing pool will be converted to a recreation pool.

have a designated walking/running lane. The paths that do exist are not fully accessible and void of any signage for directing Chinguapin's visitors. Without any gateway or welcome signs, visitors have no means of knowing when they are entering the park, the adjacent Forest Park trail, or any of the Park's programmed spaces.

Access and circulation are also issues related to visitors driving to the Park. In addition to parking spaces around the loop, there are three parking lots associated with the Chinguapin Recreation Center. Two of the three lots are consistently full while the third, located by the tennis courts, is rarely used as its location requires driving all the way around the loop to get to it. Also, each of the parking lots have a shared entrance and exit, making it difficult for cars to turnaround if the lots are full or when exiting the Park. The current parking design is inefficient and detracts from the Park user experience.

As mentioned repeatedly by park users involved in this planning process, Chinguapin's current conditions do not adequately support the desired levels of both passive and active recreation. T.C. Williams sports teams and recreational classes use the Park, but the fields closest to the school are in poor condition since their use as a construction lay down space for the T.C. Williams High School renovation in 2005. The playground, sport courts, and picnic shelter are located below a steep hill and hidden from the rest of the Park. None of these areas are fully accessible. Furthermore, the Park's open field area lacks benches, trash and recycling receptacles, high quality grass surfaces, and other amenities that make it easy for visitors to casually enjoy their time in the park.

One area of the Park facilities that stands out as having a strong and dedicated user group is Chinguapin's community garden. The garden has nearly 175 plots, each with its own aesthetic reflecting the passions and countless hours of the devoted gardeners. Come rain or shine, there are always people tending to their plots during the growing months. In addition to connecting people with their food source, the garden creates a vibrant community in the Park. However, the Park's gardening space is limited and the plots have a very infrequent turnover rate, creating a very long wait list for plots.



Community Feedback

From September through early December 2012, RPCA solicited input on the existing conditions and possible future uses for Chinguapin Park.

To gather information, RPCA held a public workshop to discuss park needs, distributed an online survey asking for feedback, and placed hard copy surveys in boxes located at entrances to the park and in the mailboxes of adjacent neighborhood homes. Staff also visited events, local businesses, and a class at T.C. Williams High School, to hold “mobile workshops.” The survey asked park users to identify their usual point of access into the parks, the mode of transportation they use to get there, their typical park activities, what they like about the park, and what areas of the park need improvement. Survey participants also prioritized their improvement needs. See the appendix for detailed community feedback reports.

RPCA received 99 completed surveys. Of those surveyed, 26 participants lived in the 22302 zip code, 20 lived in the 22314, 17 lived in 22305, and 16 lived in 22304. Fewer than 10 participants lived in each of the other Alexandria zip codes. Two participants lived in Fairfax County. The majority of those who visit do so weekly (47%).

This is what we heard:

Seventy percent of survey participants drive to Chinguapin Park. Twenty-four percent walk to the Park and only 6% bike. This high number of vehicles implies both a need to improve the parking options and to review opportunities for encouraging safe cyclist and pedestrian access into the Park.

The access response is particularly interesting when looking at this information in combination with the question “**What do you do in the Park?**” The majority of participants stated that they use **the park to walk, indicating that they drive to Chinguapin, park their car and then walk. Twenty-three participants stated that they run in the park.** Presumably many are walking or running along the loop, shared with vehicles or on the nature trail. Other activities of significance include the community garden, playground, and the tennis courts. Fewer participants reported using the fields for athletics.

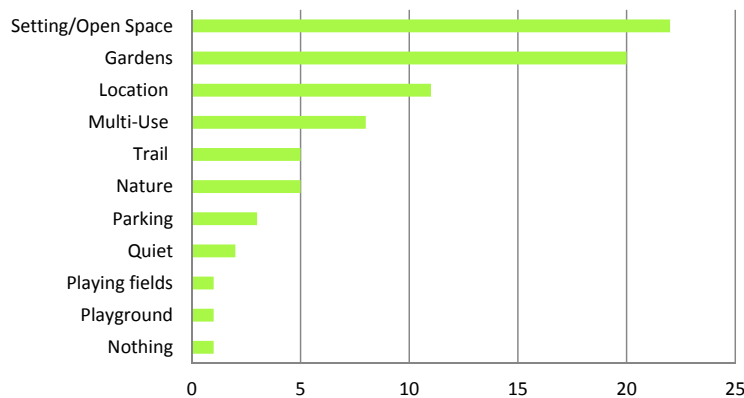
When asked, “**What do you like about the Park,**” **participants overwhelmingly identified the Park’s open space and natural setting, reinforcing the uniqueness of a large passive use green space in the City.** Chinguapin Park has a serene and pastoral character, which is

What needs improvement in Chinguapin Park?



The highest priority is shown as the largest circle; the lowest priority is the smallest circle. Priorities are based on the number of responses to needed improvements and then weighted by how participants prioritized their answers

What do you like about the Park?



clearly desired as an escape from more urban areas nearby.

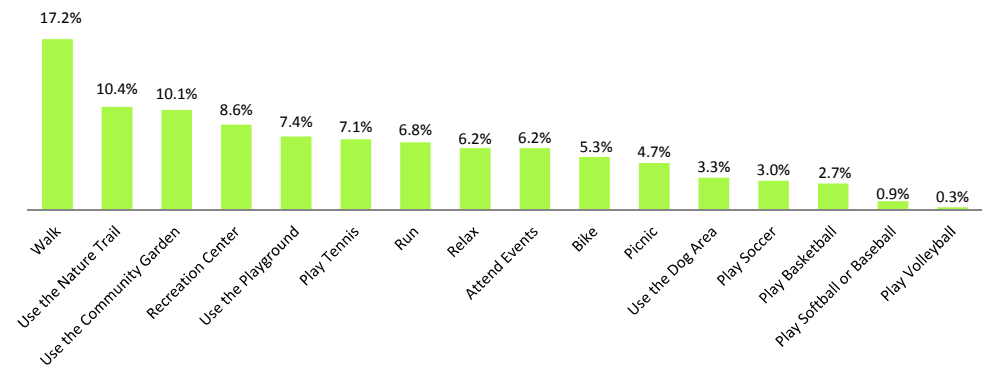
Many also replied that the gardens are extremely important to them. While it appeared that a disproportionate number of garden users may have responded to the survey compared to other Park users, their response clearly identified that the gardens bring a sense of community and culture to the City. This type of passion shown in the comments about the garden exemplifies how open space is so important in bringing residents and nature together.

There are some consistent themes throughout the various methods of community feedback. These include:

Improve mobility for pedestrians and vehicles

The survey and both workshops indicated that

What do you do in the Park?



a parking management strategy is needed to determine how to maximize use of the parking lots and limit parking along the Loop. This may allow the development of a car free lane for walkers and runners, better supporting one of the Park's main uses.

Preserve the pastoral green space, while accommodating multi-use sports

The survey results clearly stated that people like the Park because it is open and green. However, the T.C. students remarked that the green space is not usable for their recreational activities. Chinquapin's future design will need to be flexible enough to support multiple uses, such as sports, while still open and natural in character.

Expand or improve the community gardens

The gardens are highly active, year-round, and create a vibrant community within the Park. The

land dedicated to gardening is currently limited and the plots have a very infrequent turnover rate. The City needs to improve access to gardening.

Improve the playground

As shown in the survey results, the playground is a priority for Park improvements. The workshop participants also indicated the need to renovate the picnic area, frequently used for summer camps. These two renovation projects may be combined in order to create a multi-use outdoor activity center with equipment geared towards various age groups and abilities.

Improve general maintenance

The survey and workshop results both stated the need for improved general maintenance of the Park, including better distribution of trash receptacles. Many maintenance improvements can begin prior to other projects and continue as park renovations trigger the implementation of park facility standards.


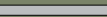
The Plan

KEYED LEGEND

1. EXPAND AND/OR RENOVATE CHINQUAPIN POOL ACCORDING TO FEASIBILITY STUDY
2. CONSOLIDATE & EXPAND REC CENTER PARKING ACCORDING TO FEASIBILITY STUDY
3. CONSTRUCT NEW PARK SHELTER
4. RELOCATE PLAYGROUND
5. RELOCATE AND ENCLOSE DOG PARK
6. CREATE ADULT FITNESS AREA AND MULTI-USE COURTS
7. CREATE GROVE OF NATIVE PLANTS RELATING TO SITE HISTORY
8. CONSTRUCT 1/4 MILE MARKED WALKING LOOP AT PERIMETER OF FIELD
9. RE-GRADE OPEN FIELD IN CENTER OF LOOP
10. MAKE WEST HALF OF LOOP PERVIOUS MATERIAL AND ONE-WAY WITH OVERFLOW PARKING LANES
11. MAKE EAST HALF OF LOOP TWO-WAY WITH TURN-AROUND AND PARKING
12. ESTABLISH ACCESSIBLE PARKING & ENTRANCE TO AQUATICS FACILITY
13. STUDY POSSIBLE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE
14. CONTINUE INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL
15. PLANT ADDITIONAL TREES
16. ADD TURN-AROUND AND RENOVATE ROAD AROUND GARDEN WITH PERVIOUS PAVING



GRAPHIC KEY

	PERVIOUS PAVING AREAS		PARK BOUNDS		ENTRANCE PLAZAS		PASSIVE AREAS		COMMUNITY GARDEN		ATHLETIC TURF		COURTS
	HARD TRAILS		SOFT TRAILS		MULTI-USE TRAIL								

Recommendations & Implementation Strategy



The existing Chinquapin Recreation & Aquatics Facility needs to be expanded to meet the City's aquatic needs. The new building footprint will impact the park uses.



Relocating the courts, playground, fitness area, and dog park to the center would create a nexus of activity in the Park, bringing a place for the community to congregate and interact.

1

Expand and/or renovate Chinquapin Pool according to feasibility study

RPCA is currently conducting a feasibility study and determining the parameters for the new Chinquapin aquatic facility. The new facility will be designed to service year-round citywide aquatic needs while occupying the least amount of open space possible. A new pool will most likely take the place of Chinquapin's tennis courts. Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) will be constructing six new tennis courts at T.C. Williams H.S. in 2014 that would make up for the loss. ACPS has already performed a feasibility study for these courts that considers parking, ADA accessibility, utilities, design, proper solar orientation. These new courts would meet the needs of current park users and T.C. Williams students.

ACTION: Feasibility Study currently underway

2

Consolidate & expand Recreation Center parking according to feasibility study

Any improvements to the parking lot, south east of the center, will be determined in conjunction with the Chinquapin Aquatics Feasibility Study. The parking lot will need to accommodate the expected increase in the users of the Recreation Center and the traffic during the park's peak use times. At current capacity, Chinquapin can accommodate a total of 186 cars. With expansions and improved layout, the new parking lot should accommodate nearly 80 more spaces.

ESTIMATED COST: \$400,000 - \$500,000 PRIORITY: High PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 years

3

Construct new park shelter

The centrally located park shelter will provide a comfortable space for park users to congregate, picnic, or rest with a clear view of the surrounding activities in the park. It can also be used as a gathering place for summer camp participants.

ESTIMATED COST: \$500,000 - \$750,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 10 years +

4

Relocate playground

The playground will be more visible from its new location between the proposed park shelter and sport courts. Children and parents using the playground will feel a heightened sense of safety with other nearby park activities. With the new location, people using the other park facilities will be able to canvass the activity at the playground while parents and guardians playing with their children can interact with other park users.

ESTIMATED COST: \$170,000 - \$250,000 PRIORITY: High PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1-3 years



The existing dog area is defined by four wooden bollards. It is rarely used.

5

Relocate and enclose dog park

The proposed dog area is shown in a central location in the Park where it will not affect the protected natural resources along the edges of Chinquapin. The new design will follow the guidelines proscribed by the RPCA's Park Facility Standards Manual and the Dog Park Master Plan. The dog area can foster a new community of park users, as is currently seen in Simpson Park.

ESTIMATED COST: \$50,000 - \$101,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years

6

Create adult fitness area and multi-use courts

These additions will provide park users with a greater range of non-programmed recreational opportunities. The adult fitness area will include various exercise and stretching stations for active park users while the multi-use courts will accommodate a range of different sports such as basketball, volleyball, tennis, and futsal. Having these facilities in one condensed area will encourage interaction between different user groups. The 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment showed a strong desire for outdoor fitness areas throughout the City's park system.

ESTIMATED COST: \$160,000 - \$315,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years

7

Create grove of native plants relating to site history

The 2011 and 2013 Park and Recreation Needs Assessment identified community gardening as an unmet need in Alexandria. This grove will supplement the existing Chinquapin community gardens and provide a valuable educational opportunity for all park users to learn about native, edible plantings. The grove fuses gardening with walking trails, another high priority need shown in the Needs Assessment. Park users will be able to walk an interactive trail weaving through native varieties of trees planted according to the grid pattern of the 1940's Chinquapin War Village. Along the way, visitors will learn about the grove's different species from informational signs on the trail. The grove concept is dependent upon community partnerships for installation and maintenance. In the meantime, the space can be an open landscape. The trees can be planted over time as sponsors dedicate them.

ESTIMATED COST: \$215,000 - \$392,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years

Precedent:

Edible Arbor Trail, Missouri City, Texas



In 2011, Missouri City's Parks and Recreation Department opened the first edible arbor trail of its kind. The 2.5 mile trail already has more than 70 native fruit trees and nut plants as well as educational signage including plant information and sponsor logos. While walking the trail, visitors learn about different plants that grow well in the region and pick food from the trees on a first come first serve basis. The project was sparked by the City Forester's dream "to create a recreational opportunity where people could hike or bike or walk their dogs along a trail and actually reach over and grab something to eat right off the trees." Missouri City wanted the grove to be a community led project, and so far community members have taken great pride and ownership of their new park space. In fact, community partners sponsor the installation and maintenance of each tree.



Joggers and pedestrians use the Loop to run, yet there is no sidewalk or dedicated recreational lane.

8

Construct ¼ mile-marked walking loop at perimeter of field

Many survey respondents and workshop participants expressed a strong desire for a continuous pedestrian walking loop circling the bucolic open space at Chinquapin. Currently, park visitors walk or jog in the loop with moving traffic around them. The proposed walking loop also addresses the 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment desire for more spaces to walk, particularly in the West End and Seminary Valley. The walking loop will contribute to the synergy of park uses located at the center of the park.

ESTIMATED COST: \$320,000 - \$795,000 PRIORITY: High PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years



The fields inside the Loop are in such poor condition that the Alexandria Soccer Association will no longer use them. There are many divets and rough spots, making it unsafe to play on.

9

Re-grade open field in center of loop

The open space inside of the loop will be re-graded so that it is better suited for sports games and T.C. Williams' recreational uses. One large multi-purpose irrigated field can accommodate many uses, including P.E. class, soccer class and camps, and open passive play. If used, artificial turf would allow significantly less maintenance and all-weather play. The area would remain unfenced to maintain the open, pastoral character of the Park.

ESTIMATED COST: \$535,000 - \$960,000 PRIORITY: High PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years



By re-constructing the east half of the Loop as a two-way road, the western portion can be transformed to open space. Using a grass-pave systems, as shown above, the area can be a pervious surface and also used for parking during special events.

10

Make west half of loop pervious material and one-way with overflow parking lanes

The west section of Chinquapin Drive running along the passive space and grove will be converted to grass pave in order to increase the amount of usable open space in the park. Cars will be able to park on the grass-paved section when the park is heavily programmed. Otherwise, the section will be blocked off by bollards on either end. Park users will easily move in and out of the park and access parking spaces using the rest of Chinquapin Drive, which will become a two-way road with a turn-around at the end. The proposed parking lot adjacent to the Chinquapin Recreation Center and Aquatics Facility can accommodate the vehicles that currently park on the loop.

ESTIMATED COST: \$582,000 - \$970,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years



11

Make east half of loop two-way with turn-around and parking

The east section of Chinquapin Drive adjacent to the parking lot will be converted to a two-way road to concentrate traffic only in one area of the park. Cars will be able to parallel park on one side of the road. The turn-around will allow traffic to flow through without three-point turns or clogging the parking lot area. During peak time (school hours), around 185 cars are parked in the Park (including the inner and outer loop and parking lots). The proposed design accommodates 262 spaces during peak hours (of which, 75 are only available during school hours or events).

ESTIMATED COST: \$944,000 - \$1,500,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years



12

Establish accessible parking and entrance to aquatics facility

Accessible parking will be located at the entrance to the newly renovated and expanded Chinquapin Recreation Center. All of the Recreation Center's entrances will be accessible so that all park users can access the Center from different parts of the park.

ACTION: Include as part of the Chinquapin Aquatics Facility Study.

Cars currently park around the Loop with its highest use during school hours. Yet, the parking lot by the tennis courts is almost always empty. Since traffic moves in one direction, drivers park in the first space they see before driving around the loop to get to the empty parking lot.

13

Study possible stormwater management infrastructure

The City is evaluating the feasibility of a stormwater management facility near the outfall that daylight into Taylor Run, located in the area in front of the existing recreation center. An existing stormwater pipe runs beneath this area, providing an opportunity to treat a significant volume of previously untreated stormwater. Any stormwater management facility at this location would not only be designed for functionality, but the design would also aim to create a park amenity. The stormwater facility may also be combined with a stream restoration project downstream of the existing outfall. Since the area is between a high school, a recreation center and a park, the site would provide a great educational opportunity for students, children, and residents. Educational signage can help explain the stormwater benefits of the stormwater facility.

ACTION: T&ES to complete engineering feasibility



Invasive species, such as English Ivy, shown above, have grown throughout the Park. Volunteers often help remove them to allow restoration of the natural and native species.

14

Continue invasive species removal

RPCA will continue its work of removing invasive plants that disturb the Park's natural habitat and choke out its endemic species.

ESTIMATED COST: \$35,000 - \$50,000 PRIORITY: High PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: On-going



The existing volleyball court, above, is under used. The 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment ranked volleyball as the second lowest facility need in the City.

15

Plant additional trees

More trees of appropriate native species will be planted throughout the site, including the current and unused volleyball court area, in order to provide shade for park users and reforest areas of the park near natural areas. This recommendation is consistent with the City of Alexandria Urban Forestry Master Plan (2009).

ESTIMATED COST: \$16,000 - \$33,000 PRIORITY: High PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 1-3 Years



The road behind the community garden is in poor condition. It also has a dead end which causes drivers to conduct a three point turn, often damaging the adjacent wooded area.

16

Add turn-around and renovate road around community garden with pervious paving

The new turn-around will make it easier for community gardeners to drive materials to and from their plots. It also has added benefits to the garden. The pervious surface of the turn-around will be designed to filter stormwater running off the garden.

ESTIMATED COST: \$778,000 - \$1,300,000 PRIORITY: Medium PROPOSED TIMEFRAME: 3-10 Years



Stairs along the Park's slopes are reminiscent of the past site of Chinquapin Village.

Overall Preliminary Cost Estimates

The estimated cost range (in 2013 dollars) shown below includes two scenarios: 1) If the recommendations were implemented independent of other projects and include associated soft costs (contingency, engineering, survey, geotechnical, environmental, permitting) and 2) a cost scenario in which all the recommendations are implemented together.

The priority for each recommendation is shown as “low, medium, or high.” RPCA determined these rankings based upon three factors: 1) park user safety, 2) community prioritization feedback and the results of the 2011 and 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, 3) life span of existing facility.

The proposed timeline for each recommendation considers the project priority, the project cost with relation to the Department budget and contingent upon the Capital Improvement Plan, and the construction sequencing of recommendation amongst other park projects.

ESTIMATED COST RANGES

DESCRIPTION	If recommendations are addressed all together as package		If recommendations are addressed individually (soft costs are loaded in each item)		Priority	Timeline
WAYFINDING	\$11,178	-	\$14,285	\$13,414	-	\$17,142 high 1-3 years
01 CONDUCT AQUATICS FEASIBILITY STUDY	ALREADY UNDERWAY					
02 CONSOLIDATE & EXPAND REC CENTER PARKING	390,486	-	507,576	\$550,585	-	\$705,530 high 3-10 years
03 NEW PARK SHELTER	420,390	-	537,804	\$592,750	-	\$747,548 medium 10+ years
04 RELOCATE PLAYGROUND	122,388	-	179,311	\$172,567	-	\$249,243 high 1-3 years
05 RELOCATE & ENCLOSE DOG PARK	50,891	-	72,892	\$71,757	-	\$101,320 medium 3-10 years
06 ADULT FITNESS AND MULTI-USE COURTS	159,248	-	227,575	\$224,540	-	\$316,329 medium 3-10 years
07 NATIVE PLANT GROVE	215,124	-	282,333	\$303,325	-	\$392,443 medium 3-10 years
08 1/4 MILE WALKING LOOP AT FIELD PERIMETER	320,326	-	572,232	\$451,659	-	\$795,402 high 3-10 years
09 RE-GRADE FIELD IN CENTER OF LOOP	536,356	-	690,850	\$756,262	-	\$960,282 high 3-10 years
10 WEST LOOP ROAD	582,522	-	698,301	\$821,357	-	\$970,638 medium 3-10 years
11 EAST LOOP ROAD	944,134	-	1,142,177	\$1,331,229	-	\$1,587,627 medium 3-10 years
12 PARKING AND ENTRANCE TO AQUATICS FACILITY	60,280	-	68,592	\$84,995	-	\$95,343 high 3-10 years
13 SWM INFRASTRUCTURE				TBD		
14 INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL	34,500	-	34,500	\$41,400	-	\$47,955 High 1-3 years
15 REFORESTATION	16,021	-	23,748	\$19,226	-	\$33,010 High 1-3 years
16 COMMUNITY GARDEN ROAD & TURN AROUND	778,630	-	959,149	\$1,097,869	-	\$1,333,217 medium 3-10 years
DOCUMENTARY STUDY/EVALUATION	56,800	-	80,200	\$56,800	-	\$80,200 medium 3-10 years
INTERPRETATION	50,000	-	75,000	\$50,000	-	\$75,000 medium 3-10 years
UTILITY UPGRADES	110,000	-	137,500	\$155,100	-	\$191,125 high 1-3 years
SUBTOTAL	\$4,859,275	-	\$6,304,027			
Soft Costs	CONTINGENCY	971,855.07	-	1,260,805.39		
	ENGINEERING	583,113.04	-	756,483.23		
	SURVEY	145,778.26	-	189,120.81		
	GEOTECHNICAL	97,185.51	-	126,080.54		
	ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING	194,371.01	-	252,161.08		
	150,000.00	-	200,000.00			
GRAND TOTAL	\$7,001,578	-	\$9,088,678			