Albemarle will have a system of high quality parks and recreational facilities throughout the County that is interconnected by greenways and paths, and is available to all residents.
Parks and Recreation, Greenways, Blueways, and Green Systems

Introduction

Parks, recreation, greenways, and blueways are overlapping resources that work together as part of the County’s green systems. Greenways are the interconnected features of vegetated critical slopes, streams and stream buffers, wetlands, floodplains, parks, trails, and recreational amenities that provide a variety of benefits to residents and preserve the natural environment. Parks and recreation facilities provide people with formal and informal gathering places to be physically active, socialize, relax, build community, and connect with the natural world. They make our urban neighborhoods and rural areas more attractive places to living, working, and relaxing. Rural parks provide places for residents to enjoy nature and the scenic beauty of Albemarle County’s outdoors. Greenways also provide environmental benefits such as stormwater management, protection of sensitive natural features, buffers between built and natural environments, and wildlife habitat.

Greenways, blueways, and other green systems also add value to our County by serving to connect residents and visitors alike to parks and other popular destinations throughout the region. Greenways can add economic value by potentially increasing property values, and increasing tourism and recreation-related revenues. In addition, connected greenway paths can offer effective transportation alternatives by connecting homes, workplaces, schools, parks, and attractions through transportation corridors that link centers and neighborhoods. The protection of sensitive natural areas, especially riparian areas, also helps protect people and property from flood damage by buffering the natural floodplains along rivers and streams.

Albemarle County is committed to provide a high quality system of public parks, recreation facilities, and recreational programming to meet the needs of County residents.

Relationship to the Vision

Vibrant communities are places where residents enjoy living. Key components of enjoyable places are parks and recreational areas located within a short walk from homes and work. Greenways in natural areas help connect places and, when complete with trails, can provide an alternative to driving. Parks and play areas provide places for school children to play and adults to enjoy the outdoors. In the Rural Area, parks help to preserve natural and scenic beauty. All of these things are important to the economy because of their strong contribution to quality of life for existing and new County residents who live and work in the County.

**County's high quality public parks** are characterized by having a vision that is must be responsive and adaptable to a growing population with changing user needs, demands, and interests. **Parks and recreational amenities must reflect this vision.** It must be informed and inclusive of the broader range of values and services provided to those who are interested in the public. A high quality parks system also requires standards and guidelines for operations and maintenance, and development and acquisition. Parks should also be safe, enjoyable, and provide for meaningful use by all sectors of the general public.

The goal and objectives in this Chapter are to be achieved on public lands, and voluntarily on private lands. Standards for parks, greenways, blueways, and trails are found in the Parks and Recreation Appendix. Proposed locations for greenways and greenway trails, places for greenway crossings over rivers, and access points are found later in this Chapter. More detailed information is provided also in the Appendix.

### Existing Facilities

Parks and recreation services are managed by the County Parks and Recreation Department. The Department provides **over 75 different programmatic activities each year.** Facilities provided by the City of Charlottesville’s parks and recreational facilities are also available for County residents with Pen and McIntire Parks being two of those most frequently visited. County parks are also used by City and other residents. Private facilities within residential developments, as well as on the University of Virginia campus, also play a vital role in meeting the recreational needs of County residents. Facilities belonging to these groups provide many of the area’s privately owned tennis courts, basketball courts, tot lots, swimming pools, and other recreational facilities. County, City, state, and national and State parks are listed shown in Figure 1. Current recreational programs at County parks are shown found in Figure 2 and the Reference documents.

### National and State Parks

The National Park Service maintains Shenandoah National Park, which is owned by the federal government and is located in the Rural Area along the County’s western boundary with Augusta County and part of Nelson County. The northern section of Skyline Drive, which is an extension of the Blue Ridge Parkway, runs the length of Shenandoah National Park, it is within the park. **Skyline Drive extends from Afton, Virginia, towards Northern Virginia. Skyline Drive is the only north-south public road through Shenandoah National Park.**

The Appalachian Trail runs through the western portion of Albemarle County, primarily through the Shenandoah National Park. The Trail is a 2,175-mile long unit of the National Park System that provides opportunities for visitors to traverse and experience a wide variety of wild, scenic, natural, and pastoral settings that represent the landscape of the Appalachian Mountains. A public-private partnership, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, is engaged in the conservation and management of this nationally significant resource. The Trail is an existing National Scenic Trail and affords opportunities for backcountry recreation and long distance hiking. It also incorporates a legacy of natural and cultural resources.

A future State park, Biscuit Run State Park, will be planned for development south of Interstate 64. The County has been a major participant in developing the master plan for that park. The land for Biscuit Run State Park contains over 1,200 acres of woodlands, streams, and mountain views and is located in the County’s southern urban neighborhood, and western neighborhoods of the County. It is identified as an area for future study on the Greenway Plan.

### Existing Local County-owned Parks

County-owned parks are categorized as follows:

- **Pocket Parks** are small parks in neighborhoods in the Development Areas with a size of ¼ acre to 5 acres. The use of the park depends on the size and location. Larger pocket parks are expected to have playgrounds with play equipment.

- **Neighborhood Parks** are parks of 5 – 25 acres in the Development Areas. Playgrounds, play equipment, and recreational amenities are expected. Playing fields are expected in larger neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks should be located such that nearby residents have no more than a 15 minute walk to the park.

- **Community Parks** are parks of 25 – 50 acres. When located in the Development Areas, they can be walked to by residents of nearby neighborhoods. However, the service area for a community park is larger than that of a neighborhood park and many patrons will need to drive, ride a bus, or bicycle to the park.

- **District Parks** serve different parts of the County and are typically located in the Rural Area. Park size is expected to be 50 – 100 acres with a service area radius of up to 10 miles.

- **Regional Parks** have over 100 acres and serve all County residents. These parks have a service area radius of up to 25 miles.

- **Trail Parks** have no size standard, may be found in the Development Areas and the Rural Area, are available for hiking, walking, and bicycling, and are most often associated with greenways.

Details on expected features in each park are found in the Appendix. In addition to listing existing parks in the County, Figure 1 provides a list of parks by acreage and classifications. Most of the public parks are located in the County’s Rural Area where almost 4,000 acres of land is preserved in the Rural Area Parks.

The Development Areas have only 3 public parks, but there are many residential developments with private parks and amenity areas. The Crozet Park in Crozet is owned by the community, but the County has participated in building several features of the park which it also maintains. These include 3 baseball fields and 1 soccer field. Additional improvements may be made in the future. Several new public parks and greenways have been proffered by developers during rezoning of land and they will be publicly available in the future.

There is a fundamental difference in the expectations for parks, recreational facilities, and green systems in the Development Areas and the Rural Area. In the Rural Area, the County often seeks to conserve large tracts of land of particular value (such as agricultural and forestry lands) or to preserve areas of significant resources (mountain ridges, stream valleys, and wildlife habitat). In the Development Areas, natural areas shown on the Master Plans are to be preserved. In addition, other open spaces intended to serve as trail parks and playgrounds are to be provided.

**New Park Facilities**

There is a fundamental difference in the expectations for parks, recreational facilities, and green systems in the Development Areas and in the Rural Area. In the Rural Area, the County seeks to create scenic recreational areas or provide trails and trail parks in areas with significant
resources (mountain ridges, stream valleys, and wildlife habitat). In the Development Areas, where growth and development is expected, smaller parks and preserved natural areas are expected. These places are shown on the Development Area Master Plans and designated as parks and green systems. Important environmental resources are to be preserved. In addition, other amenities, such as neighborhood parks, playgrounds, playing fields, indoor sports and recreation facilities are expected in Development Areas. New public neighborhood parks will be needed where there are no privately owned parks and amenities available to residents.

New park facilities, especially pocket and neighborhood parks, are expected to be located within the Development Areas to support the County’s Land Use Policy. Parks, playgrounds, and playing fields in the outlying Development Areas, such as Communities and Villages, as well as on existing school sites, serve these Development Areas as well as residents in the Rural Area residents.

Parts of the Rural Area are not currently served by County park facilities. Eventually parks are to be located to serve all geographic areas of the County. However, as indicated in the Growth Management Policy, the residents of the outlying Rural Area should not anticipate an equal level of park service that is equal to that provided in and around Development Areas. It is the County’s expectation that parks and green systems will be designated, developed, and maintained in accordance with the guidelines, standards, and locations shown on the Development Areas Master Plans and as indicated in this Chapter, as well as in the Parks and Recreation and Land Use sections of this Plan.

A list of new parks and park improvements may be found in the Appendix.

Figure 1: Parks in Albemarle County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Park Type</th>
<th>Size / Owner</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dorrier Park</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>2 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simpson Park</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>13 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte Humphris Park</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>25 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darden Towe Park</td>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>113 acres / Albemarle County &amp; City of Charlottesville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totier Creek Park</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>200 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy Creek Natural Area</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>215 acres / Albemarle County &amp; City of Charlottesville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaver Creek Lake Park</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>219 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Greene Lake</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>253 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mint Springs Valley Park</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>520 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Creek Park</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>525 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preddy Creek Trail Park</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>571 acres / Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Byrom Forest</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>600 acres / Owned by Albemarle County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve Park</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>1,200 acres / State of Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shenandoah National Park</td>
<td>Countywide</td>
<td>16,000 acres / Federal government</td>
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</table>

Source: Albemarle County 2013
### Parks in Albemarle County by Size, Type, and Location

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Park Classification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yancey ES</td>
<td>Park at School in RA</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Neighborhood Park</td>
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<td>Broadus Wood ES</td>
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<td>Calie ES</td>
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<td>Simpson Park</td>
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Future park – See expectations in Appendix
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<th>Potsau Tannen Forest Park</th>
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</table>

Figure 2: Recreational Programs at County Parks

Figure 3: County, City, State, and National Parks in Albemarle County

Objective 1: Preserve and maintain important natural areas, rivers, and lakes in County-owned parks in the Development Areas and the Rural Area, in parks owned jointly owned with the City, and in City-owned parks in the County.

The County owns and maintains the large amount of public park land, as shown in Figure 1. Some of the parks are in the Development Areas and some are in the Rural Area. Two parks are jointly owned with the City of Charlottesville, Rural Area. These parks contain many natural features and important environmental resources and are all located in the County’s Rural Area.

Strategy 1a: Continue to preserve and maintain the County’s Rural Area large parks: William S.D. Woods Heritage Preserve, Beaver Creek Lake Park, Chris Greene Lake Park, Heyward Park, Mint Springs Valley Park, Patricia Ann Byrom Forest Preserve, Freddy Creek Trail Park, Totier Park, and Walnut Creek Park.

The Albemarle County Parks and Recreation Department maintains these nine eight large, natural area parks comprising a total of 3,300,862 acres. The parks range in size from 209 acres to 600 acres, they and help to preserve water resources and provide valuable habitat for plants and animals in the County. Some of the rural parks provide opportunities for active recreation, others provide trails and passive recreation, and a few provide for both. These important County-owned facilities provide walking trails, scenic views, and resource preservation, and should be maintained for current and preserved for future residents.

Strategy 1b: Continue to maintain and enhance existing smaller parks and recreational facilities in the County.

In addition to the large countywide parks described in Strategy 1a above, the County owns and maintains Charlotte Yancy Humphris Park and Darden Towe Park in the Development Areas, Dorrier Park in Scottsville, and Simpson Park in the Rural Area. The County also considers the outdoor recreational facilities of County Schools as parkland and maintains these facilities for public use outside of school hours. The County should continue to assist with maintenance of these facilities since they contribute to the high quality of life experienced by County residents who use these smaller parks and the recreational programs offered in them. As the Development Areas

Charlottesville and Albemarle County will continue to provide a system of high quality public parks, recreation facilities and programming to meet the needs of all residents of the community.

To do this, the County will:

- Share community visions
- Explore shared-use facilities as a first option when contemplating new or replacement recreation facilities within either jurisdiction.
- Explore the possibility of a Regional Park Authority to manage shared resources including, but not limited to the Rivanna River.
- Develop and implementing a shared vision for parks, trails, and recreation opportunities associated with the Rivanna River.
- Work with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to develop a shared vision for recreation opportunities associated with Biscuit Run State Park.
- Coordinate shared parks and recreation resources.
- Utilize existing Needs Assessment documents to initiate a dialogue on meeting recreation needs.
- Evaluate existing user fees associated with all parks, facilities, and programs to explore rec programs.
- Coordinate with UVA to identify both active and passive recreation opportunities that may be shared with the larger community.
- Create a common City-County park, recreation and programming “amenity matrix,” and an associated map of amenity locations.
- Create a regional plan to address need for additional recreational fields.
continue to build out, more emphasis may be needed on indoor facilities and programs. The section on Community Facility Standards in the Appendix of this Plan provides the standards for parks and recreational facilities found in the Appendix. These standards should be used when new facilities are proposed and existing facilities are upgraded.

Strategy 1c: Continue to allow and manage recreational uses of drinking water reservoirs and adjacent public land only as incidental uses to the primary function of water supply and in such a manner as to prevent cumulative impacts that may impair that primary function.

The County’s water supply reservoirs and adjoining land are used for various active and passive recreational purposes. These uses are considered incidental to the reservoirs’ chief function of providing a source of public drinking water. Beaver Creek Reservoir, Totier Creek Reservoir, and Chris Greene Lake are managed for public fishing and picnicking by the Parks and Recreation Department. Chris Greene Lake also has a public swimming beach. The South Fork Rivanna Reservoir is utilized for competitive and community rowing by University of Virginia-affiliated and community rowing organizations. The South Fork Reservoir is also used extensively for fishing and canoeing.

Land around the drinking water reservoirs is also used recreationally. Two boat ramps currently exist (South Fork Rivanna Water Treatment Plant land and the Route 676 bridge), although fishing and boating access at these sites is accepted rather than actively managed. The Ivy Creek Foundation has developed a system of hiking trails on land surrounding the Ragged Mountain Reservoir. Finally, the land adjacent to and upstream from the Sugar Hollow Reservoir, owned by the City of Charlottesville and Shenandoah National Park, is heavily used for hiking, fishing, and mountain biking.

Sections 11-200 through 11-306 of the Albemarle County Code contain some regulations for recreational use of waters owned or controlled by the County and use of water supply reservoirs managed by the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority. The regulations pertain to boating (prohibition of internal combustion engines in most cases), prohibited uses on reservoirs (swimming, hunting, camping, and other uses specific to each reservoir), vehicular traffic, and hours of operation. Section 11-300 states that permits pertaining to recreational use of reservoirs and reservoir land addressed in the Code are to be administered by the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority.

As recreational demand increases in or adjacent to water supply reservoirs, it will be necessary to adhere to the County’s policy that, most importantly, provides for the continued protection of reservoirs and adjacent public land for their principal water supply function. As long as current recreational demands do not compete with the primary use of the reservoirs for water supply and activities do not degrade the resources, recreational use can be compatible with the drinking water reservoirs. Decisions regarding recreational uses on reservoirs should be consistent with the Growth Management policy. Restoration of areas previously degraded from over-use should also occur.

If recreational demands become so great as to threaten the public water supply or result in confusion over the appropriate level of recreational use, the County should take a lead role in developing a recreation and water supply protection plan for each reservoir. Each plan should address incidental recreational uses of drinking water reservoirs and adjacent public land. This effort should be coordinated with the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority, the City of Charlottesville, Shenandoah National Park, and other relevant agencies.
Strategy 1c: Work with the City to assist with providing access on ways to make City-owned park land in the County’s Rural Area available for greater public enjoyment of these natural areas and resolve misuse of resources.

Ragged Mountain Park and Sugar Hollow Park are rural parks with public water supply reservoirs that are owned by the City of Charlottesville, but that are located in the County. They provide important habitat and water resources for the region. At present, these areas are not developed for public use. Joint work between the City and County could be done to help enhance access so that the public can enjoy these natural areas.

At present, these City-owned areas are not developed for public use. However, residents and non-residents alike are currently overwhelming this resource. Unmanaged parking is causing safety concerns and erosion. Emergency service to Sugar Hollow is often impaired by the quantity of vehicles. Sugar Hollow Road is not sufficient for the volume of traffic travelling to Sugar Hollow Reservoir. Because Sugar Hollow is a drinking water supply reservoir, protection of the resource is essential for public health. Issues related to Sugar Hollow Reservoir should be resolved through cooperation and collaboration with City officials and the National Park Service.

Strategy 1d: Preserve important natural areas shown on the Development Areas Master Plans for the Development Areas and acquire areas planned for public parks.

Each of the Development Area Master Plans designates areas for preservation of important natural resources, such as steep slopes, wooded slopes, and streams. In addition, the Master Plans show existing and proposed areas for public parks. Both types of areas are important for serving residents in the County and need to be preserved and/or acquired. Although the County does not own or maintain small neighborhood-level parks, many of these small neighborhood-level parks and amenities are part of residential neighborhoods and are owned and maintained by owners associations or other private entities. Definitions of park types (Neighborhood, Community, Regional and Countywide) as well as location and facility standards are found in the Appendix.

Parks shown on Master Plans are needed as amenities for residents and can sometimes be acquired through a rezoning or site plan process. Where environmentally sensitive areas are shown as greenways, staff should ask for conservation of these areas and, potentially, a dedication of land or easement during rezonings, special use permit requests, subdivision review, and site plan reviews.

Strategy 1e: Develop criteria for reviewing offers of park land and accept donations that will help to achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

From time to time, residents offer land to the County for preservation or use as a County-owned park; however, for example, the County is considering acceptance of two new Rural Area parks. Located in the eastern part of the County near the Fluvanna County line, one would be a 122-acre park with providing a boat launch and access to the Rivanna River. This park would also protect a riparian area and provide for a greenway trail. The second park would contain over 150 acres and be located along Route 29, abutting the Ragged Mountain Natural Area. This park would provide trails for hiking and biking, as well as scenic views near the urban areas.

At present, no standard criteria exist for accepting park land. County staff provides a general review of the benefits the offered parkland could provide, and makes a recommendation to the
Board of Supervisors. Some of the issues staff evaluates are whether the offered land could provide for greenway connections and trails, whether it has access and could provide opportunities for active recreation, and whether the offered land is in an underserved part of the County. Because of the number of offers that the County receives, a more formalized review process is needed.

**Strategy 1f:** Consider whether the County should adopt a new policy for acceptance of Rural Area land for rural park preserves.

There are many stewards of rural land in Albemarle County, some of whom wish to dedicate land to the County to preserve in perpetuity. Although there are other options available, such as placing conservation easements on land or dedicating land to other conservation entities, some property owners believe that the County would provide better long term protection of resources. While this strategy is not intended to imply that the County wishes to obtain numerous rural park preserves, it will help provide guidance for future decision-making.

Staff should draft a policy for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. This policy should contain standards for rural park preserves, criteria for acceptance, and funding options for maintenance. The Natural Heritage Committee should assist in development of the proposed policy. Once it is presented to the Board of Supervisors, the Board will decide whether to adopt such a policy.

**Objective 42:** Develop parks for active recreation in both the Rural Area and the Development Areas.

Parks in both the Development Areas and the Rural Area and Development Areas are expected to have active and passive recreation features. Neighborhood parks, community parks, and some regional parks with play equipment and fields are expected in the Development Areas. Larger regional, County, State and National parks are in the Rural Area. Multi-purpose fields are needed in both places.

In the planning for park and recreation facilities, it is important to incorporate broad and meaningful public participation to determine needs, expectations, and priorities. Meaningful public participation allows an opportunity for the general public and stakeholders to become informed, and to understand possible impacts and benefits, and to allows for evaluation and accountability of resources and expenditures. Public participation is important to the success and longevity of the County’s parks and recreation system.

**Strategy 2a:** Update the County’s parks and recreation needs assessment. As part of this assessment, determine whether the needs of all age groups are being met with existing outdoor parks and recreational facilities.

The County last conducted a needs assessment in 2004 where it learned about the community’s desires for more recreational trails and paths, dog parks, and playing fields. As the Development Areas are becoming more built out, these needs may change. In addition, as adults become seniors, accessibility and age appropriate activities are needed. Other types of recreation, such as public swimming pools or indoor facilities may be needed. Without an updated survey, it is difficult to know how to best address the recreation needs of and accessibility for all age groups.
Strategy 2d: Provide a full range of recreational opportunities within specific service areas, in a complementary and non-duplicative fashion.

Albemarle County strives to make efficient use of its resources, and when providing parks and recreational facilities, works to have a full range of opportunities across the County. Duplicative parks and facilities are not encouraged. From very small parks to large parks, facilities include playgrounds, playing fields, swimming, beaches, a spray park, mountain biking, and trails. Numerous programs take place within school gymnasiums and at the parks. Depending on the size of the park, the location, and area needs, the County accommodates many of the community’s desired amenities. Provision of facilities and programs should continue.

Strategy 2e: Study the parks and recreational needs of residents of existing neighborhoods in the Development Areas to determine whether parkland for public neighborhood parks should be acquired and developed.

Neighborhoods in the Development Areas reflect the development style of the decade in which they were built. Homes built during the 1970s and 1980s were typically built on ¼ to ¾ acre lots. Some were built on streets that had curb and gutter; many of the streets lacked these improvements. A few residential developments provided recreational amenities such as small playgrounds. During the 1990s, lots got smaller and more developers provided outdoor activity areas such as trails and swimming pools for new subdivisions. From 2000 to the present, more compact development has occurred on smaller lots; sidewalks have been built, and recreational facilities have become more varied. Indoor athletic clubs and outdoor socializing areas are more common than outdoor tennis courts, basketball courts, and swimming pools.

Until recently, the County has expected parks and recreational facilities to be built by developers and turned over to owners associations for operation and maintenance. Almost all of the recreational facilities provided in new developments are owned and operated privately to serve specific developments. However, in the older neighborhoods, there are few owners associations and even fewer recreational amenities available. To help create and maintain the Development Areas as the places where new residents want to live, recreational amenities must be provided. A study is needed to see whether and how new public parkland could be provided to serve the needs of existing residents in areas that are currently underserved with parks and recreational facilities.

Strategy 24da: Acquire the sites for public parks shown for active recreation on Development Area Master Plans for the Development Areas.

Each Development Area Master Plan for the Development Areas shows land intended to be preserved as a natural area, developed with greenway trails, or, in a few cases, acquired and built as a future public park. Some of the Master Plans designate land for future parks. During rezonings, special use permit applications, site plans and subdivision plat review County staff should work with owners of the land under review to ask for voluntary donations of land, improvements, or both. Proffer credits for donation of land can be obtained in rezoning. Density bonuses can be applied with site plans and subdivision plats. The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to monitor development activities in these areas so that discussions with developers can take place before parks can be developed without the desired park, playing field, or greenway shown on the Master Plan. Park land and playing fields should be privately owned and maintained until the County is able to accept them for ownership and maintenance.
Strategy 24eb: Obtain and develop additional public multi-purpose athletic field facilities and/or park land, where needed and appropriate, that can accommodate athletic fields in the Rural Area to ensure a proper balance of athletic fields throughout the County.

In Albemarle County, the demand by from organized sports for playing fields is very strong in the County. At present, needs exist for fields near the Route 250 West Corridor, the Route 29 North Corridor, and the southern part of the County. Proffered field space exists on Route 250 East. Some of these needs can be met on Development Area land.

Decisions to acquire and develop playing fields in the Rural Area should be in keeping with the goals, objectives, and strategies for the Rural Area. Assessment of impacts on rural resources and infrastructure should continue to be a key feature. Because land acquisition for parks in the Rural Area typically occurs by gift, as mentioned earlier, additional criteria are needed to help determine the appropriateness of accepting offered land to help meet the identified need. Additional criteria are needed, as mentioned earlier in this Chapter, to help determine whether the offered land is appropriate and should be accepted to help meet the identified need.

Strategy 24f: Provide a full range of recreational opportunities within specific service areas in a complementary and non-duplicative fashion.

Albemarle County strives to make efficient use of its resources, and when providing parks and recreational facilities, works to have a full range of opportunities across the County. Duplicative parks and facilities are not encouraged.

Strategy 24g: Ensure that all improvements and upgrades to park and recreational facilities meet the standards provided in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and permit individuals with mobility disabilities to use other power-driven mobility devices (OPDMDs).

ADA requirements should be met in all new park and recreational facilities. A recent determination by the United States Department of Justice found that all park and greenway trails should be accessible by “other power-driven mobility devices” or OPDMDs unless it can be demonstrated that legitimate safety concerns preclude their usage. OPDMDs should be accommodated unless it can be demonstrated that a particular class of OPDMD cannot be operated in accordance with legitimate safety requirements.

Strategy 24h: Continue to use County school facilities as an integral part of providing recreational opportunities for County residents.

As in the past mentioned earlier, playing fields for all public schools are considered public parks and are to be available for public use after schools meet their responsibilities to their students. For elementary schools, the minimum playing fields needed are those fields that serve the school’s use only. When adding playing fields for parks and recreational use, it is important to be aware of how the size and number of fields relate to pedestrian accessibility to the schools. Extra playing fields are not essential at all sites if these fields can be obtained nearby. As provided in the Community Facilities and Services section, anytime a new school is constructed, collaboration is needed between the Schools Division and the Parks and Recreation Department should collaborate and coordinate to ensure that school, park, and recreational facilities are available.
Strategy 2h: Work to make school park facilities more user friendly.

Although most of the County’s small outdoor recreational facilities are located at public schools, much of the public does not know that school facilities are public parks and open to the public for use after school hours. Providing on-site information, such as signage, could help the public know that the facilities are publicly available. Working with school principals will be an important part of this activity.

Objective 32: Complete the greenway trail system and provide access to blueways.

Greenways are areas of vegetated open space, usually linear in nature, which connect places. They are often, though not always, located along streams and rivers, utility easements, abandoned railroads, and sometimes along roadways. Many greenways include trails, but not all do. Blueways are waterways or trails along waterways that provide access to the water for boating, fishing, camping, or educational opportunities. Blueway trails, like greenway trails, help to preserve the rivers and streams along which they are developed. Figure 2 shows the locations of the County’s Rural Area parks, existing, and proposed greenways. Figure 3 contains the Greenway Plan for the Development Areas. Standards for development and construction of greenway trails are found in the Appendix.

The six navigable rivers in Albemarle County are the James River, the Rivanna River, the Hardware River, the Mechums River, the Moorman’s River, and the Rockfish River. Three of these rivers— the Moorman’s, the Rivanna, and the Rockfish River—are State-designated scenic rivers.

Greenways and greenway trails have several functions in Albemarle. Specifically, they can:

- **Protect important and sensitive resources.** Greenway corridors preserve and maintain streamside forests and buffer areas. These areas are highly productive and diverse systems that provide many important benefits, such as improved water quality and habitat.

  Greenways also serve as overflow areas to absorb storm runoff and prevent flood damage, recharge aquifers, and preserve the settings of natural and historic features. More information on greenways and stream buffers is in the Natural Resources Chapter.

- **Provide recreational and educational opportunities.** Greenways provide recreational opportunities such as hiking, bicycling, fishing, picnicking, and canoeing. Also, greenways can function as “living classrooms” for nature studies of the life histories and behavior of plants, animals, and fish. These areas also have a great variety of birds making them favorite sites for bird watchers. Greenways increase the public’s awareness of the environment.

- **Provide an alternative transportation system.** Greenways can provide pedestrian and, in some cases, bicycle connections to natural, recreational, commercial, and cultural resources. Portions of the planned greenway system in the County are located near a large segment of the County’s population, allowing citizens to travel by foot and bicycle instead of by automobile to parks, activity centers, and commercial areas. Greenways provide important connections between County neighborhoods, provide an excellent opportunity to promote public access to rivers and
streams, and improve the overall environment of the neighborhood. Greenways can help build Albemarle County’s sustainable future by connecting people and land in a manner that helps reestablish the close connections between the environment, economy, and society.

- Provide an economic benefit. Greenways promote the area’s economy by providing attractive, outdoor places for residents and visitors. At the same time, greenways while maintaining preserves environmental assets, which support eco-tourism directly and, indirectly, can increase property values. Commercial ventures, especially restaurants, can consider greenway and river-oriented locations. Greenway design could encourage trail users to come up to the shopping and commercial area and encourage shoppers to visit the river.
Strategy 32a: Enhance, protect, and maintain stream and river corridor vegetation, water quality, and the viability of wildlife habitats by acquiring or training greenways and blueways and, in some instances, improving designated greenways by adding trails.

A connected greenway system is a recreational amenity that can provide great benefits to Development Area and Rural Area residents by making it more pleasant and easier to live in both areas. Connecting the greenway system to blueways will help further complete the greenway system via rivers and streams.

Strategy 32b: Continue to develop the County’s greenway system as shown in the Development Area Master Plans and on the Greenway Plan.

The County’s existing and proposed Greenway System for the Development Areas is shown on the Greenway Plan, in Figure 33. The map shows the existing 28 miles of trails and calls for building 52 more miles. In addition, the Plan also shows conceptual study areas, which are places for future trails. It also shows other transportation connections to other parks and trails. Since 2004, the County has added trails to the greenway system at a rate of approximately 3.5 miles per year. These greenway trails are not contiguous but represent pieces of a larger greenway system shown on the Greenway Plan. Within public parks, there are 60 miles of continuous trails. The County has received commitments from many property owners, especially in the Development Areas, for many more miles of trails. Detailed information on elements of the Greenway Plan can be found in the Appendix to the Greenway Plan.

The City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County’s Parks and Recreation Departments have worked for many years to connect City and County greenways and greenway trails. Many of the City trails have been created and are maintained by the Rivanna Trails Foundation, a non-profit organization that creates and protects footpaths, trails, and greenways within the Rivanna River watershed. Since 2004, individuals and groups have provided over 19,000 hours of volunteer labor to create and maintain the trails system. The newest greenway trail is the Old Mills Trail system in the Pantops community. This trail, located along the Rivanna River, added three miles of new trail to the system. These three miles represent the most urban and visible section of the County’s greenway system.

The Greenway Plan shows expected public trails and, as expected future pedestrian and bicycle connections in the County. A hierarchy of trail types is described in the Appendix, which describes the distinctions among tourist trails, regional trails, and neighborhood trails. Greenway trails through neighborhoods are typically owned by homeowner’s associations, are privately maintained, and are intended for smaller, more localized hiking and biking trips. Because they are usually only open to residents of the neighborhood in which they are located, these trails are not shown on maps for tourists.

Certain trail segments within the total greenway network are considered expected to be established as high priority projects, and resources should be targeted to construct these trail segments. It is also expected that the greenway system will be built by different groups as opportunities present themselves. Some trails will be built by the County. Trails will also be built by developers as part of development projects, by civic organizations, or by a combination of any of these groups.
It is important to note that trail locations shown on the Greenway Plan are conceptual in nature. A trail’s ultimate location may not be along a river or stream corridor due to steep slopes, soil types, sensitive resources, environmental resources, or other community concerns. Also, there may be areas identified in this section for a greenway trail that, for various reasons, do not lend themselves to trail construction.

Specific guidelines on County greenway and greenway trail development standards, as well as guidance on the locations of future trails, bridges, and connections, and access points can be found in the specific Development Area Master Plans and as well as in the Parks, Recreation, Greenways, Blueways and Green Systems Appendix.

**Strategy 32c:** Continue to upgrade and maintain parks and greenway trails using the resources of public and private entities.

Several of the County’s park facilities are in need of being upgraded to meet established federal and County ADA standards. Totier Creek Park and, as well as at several County schools, some elementary and middle school parks do not meet standards and should be improved. Specific needs expectations for these facilities are listed provided in the Parks and Recreation Appendix.

Administrative overhead can be reduced if portions of the greenway can be maintained by private organizations involved with the greenway system. Neighborhood groups, church groups, and other organizations, such as scout troops, garden clubs, and civic clubs, and other organizations may wish to participate in an “Adopt-a-Greenway” program to maintain a section of the greenway network. As mentioned later in this section, a Greenway Trail Advisory Committee, discussed later in this section, is recommended to help publicize greenways and to build citizens’ support for them, and to support building citizen volunteer maintenance programs to assist with maintenance.

Often, when a trail project is promoted, people assume that it will be completed in a short period of time. It is imperative that people understand that the greenway system is a long-term project. It is also essential to maintain contact with local interest groups and keep them apprised of the project’s status in order to cultivate support. Encouraging citizen participation in the development of the future Greenway Plan can give the community a “stake” in the success of the greenway system.

**Strategy 32d:** Secure funding for greenways, greenway trails, blueways, and blueway improvements.

Creating, maintaining, and constructing greenway trails and blueway improvements all require both money and volunteers. However, funding for greenways and trail development has waned in recent years, however, so public investment is needed through the Capital Improvement Program to ensure that the trails expected and desired by the public are constructed and maintained. Exploring and obtaining different sources of funding will help greenway trail development occur sooner rather than later.

**Strategy 32e:** Set up a Greenway Trail Advisory Committee to assist the County in designing, implementing, promoting, and maintaining a greenway system.

Public input, prioritization, and other direction are needed when implementing a greenway trail system. For this reason, a Greenway Trail Advisory Committee is recommended. This Committee would work with various stakeholders to oversee and coordinate greenway implementation and maintenance. Implementing and maintaining a greenway system may require public-private partnerships.
that could involving many different groups and agencies. An oversight entity, such as this advisory committee, would be desired to assist Parks and Recreation staff in facilitating communications and coordinating activities among the agencies, organizations, and citizens groups involved to ensure that actions are coordinated.

Committee membership should be representative of the many organizations with an interest in greenway trails. Membership should be diverse and contain representation from the City of Charlottesville, the University of Virginia, Piedmont Virginia Community College, the development community, landowners, running and bicycling clubs, equestrian clubs, the environmental community, civic groups, the historic preservation community, naturalists, and the business community. Also, at least one person with a biological background in such areas as botany, ornithology, and/or mammals, should be on the committee. This Committee should assist Parks and Recreation staff to:

- Prioritize the various greenway projects.
- Determine methods to promote and fund the greenway system.
- Review trail plans to ensure that they are designed in a manner that adheres to agreed-upon locations and standards.
- Provide advice during Serve as advisory to the development process when necessary, and suggest methods in which a site can connect or be integrated into the greenway system.
- Make recommendations to amend current zoning and subdivision regulations to facilitate implementation.
- Refer landowners to appropriate land trusts; be proactive in acquiring right-of-way or donation of land for greenways.
- Serve as advisory to the development process, and suggest methods in which a site can connect or be integrated into the greenway system.
- Establish methods to address the safety and maintenance concerns of adjacent property owners.
- Work with the community and facilitate allowing for citizen’s input on trail-related issues.
- Arrange and coordinate operation and maintenance of the greenway system with volunteers and cooperating organizations.
- Establish methods to address the safety and maintenance concerns of adjacent property owners.

A Greenway Trail Advisory Committee will help to ensure successful construction and maintenance of the greenway system.

**Strategy 32**: Work with volunteers and greenway partners from the State to the local level to complete the greenway system.

The process of turning a plan for the greenway system into a reality is a complex, but exciting challenge that requires a cooperative effort among involving many different people and organizations. While the total land area of the proposed greenway system is relatively small, its benefits will be widely felt. It is unlikely that a single entity, such as Albemarle County, will have the means to acquire and manage the extensive system proposed in this section. Therefore, the network of greenways should be coordinated through a partnership effort. The greenway system is most likely to be established piece by piece by a number of groups, entities using various methods. The Greenway Trail Advisory Committee should coordinate the activities of the partners in implementing the greenway system.
Strategy 3g: Continue to encourage developers to contribute to the greenway system by dedicating land, donating easements or funds, and/or constructing portions of the trails identified on the Greenway Plan.

Developers may increase the marketability of their developments and provide amenities by contributing to the greenway system. Protected scenic views and trails in wooded areas or near streams are valuable amenities, and economic studies indicate that such amenities increase the value of the development site. During the development review process, staff should make applicants aware of these places and the proposed greenway locations and seek, through dedication, donation, or open space easement, the preservation of these corridors and the possible development of trails.

Strategy 3h: Continue to demonstrate the benefits and values of greenways to individual landowners whose land, or parts thereof, could be made a part of the greenway system shown on the Greenway Plan through donation of the land or an easement.

The County rarely purchases land specifically for greenways. As a rule, the greenway system is developed on donated land. For these reasons, staff should continue to work with landowners to provide information on the County’s proposed greenway system and how an individual property may contribute to that system. Landowners can provide greenway land through a variety of voluntary methods, the most common of which is a conservation easement. Easements may provide permanent protection and may be tailored to the landowner’s needs and wishes. Also, landowners may wish to donate or sell their land for the establishment of the greenway.

Strategy 3i: Increase public awareness of greenways and provide for educational opportunities, such as nature hikes, species and plant identification, and interpretation of historic, architectural, and natural resources.

Local awareness of and interest in the development of a greenway system is critical to its success. Promotion and marketing are key ingredients of a successful greenway system. To help increase community awareness of the existing greenway system and future planned segments, it is important to provide a brochure, which includes maps, trail lengths, photographs, directions, and park logos. This resource can be useful with regular events on the trail, such as nature walks, bird-watching trips, trail and river clean-up days, photo competitions, and walk-a-thons.

Strategy 3j: Coordinate adjacent land development with consideration of the greenway, so that existing and future development can be integrated into and harmonious with the greenway system.

Greenway trail sections are often built at different times, such that trail segments on adjoining parcels may not connect for many years. However, it is important to plan ahead for trail development. In particular, attention is needed to the ways in which people will access greenway trails and what can be seen along a greenway trail. For example, if a greenway trail is proposed next to a commercial development that will have a tall retaining wall or stormwater outfall, the result may be an uninviting section of trail. In addition, new and existing residential and non-residential developments should consider providing internal trails that link their development to an adjoining greenway.

Strategy 3k: Improve the functionality of Greenway Plan maps so that they are more accessible to the public and can be more easily understood.
Greenways in Albemarle County are valuable assets; however, clear maps of greenways are not currently available. Both maps are difficult to create because of the large land area covered by greenways, especially in the Rural Area. In addition, a map showing County parks, school and city trails that connect to transportation systems and specific trail segments is difficult to read because it shows multiple layers of information that can be confusing. A better way to illustrate greenways is needed for both the public and for the Comprehensive Plan. Coordination with the staff working on the transportation plan and County-owned stormwater facilities will be important to help create a comprehensive, yet functional Greenways Plan map.

Objective 43: Provide access points for greenways and blueways.

Reliable and frequent access to greenways is important to ensure safety and constant use of facilities. Constant use helps to reduce maintenance because walkers are able to keep weeds down and notify maintenance workers of trail maintenance issues before they become problems. Public access to blueways helps to keep boaters from trespassing on private property. Planned access points for both greenways and blueways are provided in the Appendix.

Strategy 43a: Provide access to public greenways at locations shown in Development Area Master Plans and in places listed in the Greenway Plan. Details are provided in the Appendix to this Plan.

Access points are important because they make it possible for residents and visitors to get to community destinations by trail. A hierarchy of trail access points exists for the hierarchy of trails identified in the Appendix. Neighborhood connections are important so residents can access trails that ultimately lead from their neighborhood to key places in the community. Access points for the larger community can become destinations for tourists, such as the Old Mills Trail along the Rivanna River. A hierarchy of trail access points exists for the trails identified in the Appendix.

Strategy 43b: Provide boat access at appropriate locations along the Rivanna River, the Rivanna Reservoir, and the James River. Target access or improvements to access points at the locations listed in the Greenway Plan. Details are provided in the Appendix to this Plan.

Many residents enjoy boating on the County's rivers; however, parking areas providing access points to these rivers are very limited. Safe boat access to the Rivanna Reservoir is needed to help alleviate the unmanaged and unsafe access currently in use. In some cases, the safety of boat launches is very poor. A plan for better maintenance of public boat launches and adjacent parking areas is also needed.

Objective 4: Develop parks for active recreation in both the Rural Area and the Development Areas.

Parks in both the Rural Area and Development Areas are expected to have active and passive recreation features. Neighborhood parks, community parks, and some regional parks with play equipment and fields are expected in the Development Areas. Larger regional, County, State and National parks are in the Rural Area. Multi-purpose fields are needed in both places.

In the planning for park and recreation facilities in the County, it is important to incorporate broad and meaningful public participation to determine needs, expectations, and priorities.
participation allows an opportunity for the general public and stakeholders to become informed and understand possible impacts and benefits and allows for evaluation and accountability of resources. Public participation is important to the success and longevity of the County’s parks and recreation system.

**Strategy 4a**: Obtain and develop public parks shown on active recreation on Master Plans for the Development Areas.

Each Master Plan for the Development Areas shows land intended to be preserved as a greenway, and some of the Master Plans designate land for future parks. During rezonings, special use permit applications, site plans and subdivision plat review, County staff should work with owners of the land under review to ask for voluntary donations of land, improvements, or both. Proffer credits for donation of land can be obtained in rezoning. Density bonuses can be applied with site plans and subdivision plots. The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to monitor development activities in these areas so that discussions with developers can take place prior to the land being developed without the desired park, playing field, or greenway shown on the Master Plan. Park land and playing fields should be privately owned and maintained until the County is able to accept them for ownership and maintenance.

**Strategy 4b**: Obtain and develop additional multipurpose athletic field facilities and/or park land that can accommodate athletic fields in the Rural Area to ensure a proper balance of athletic fields throughout the County.

The demand by organized sports for playing fields is very strong in the County. At present, needs exist for fields near the Route 250 West Corridor, the Route 29 North Corridor, and the southern part of the County. Preferred field space exists on Route 250 East. As mentioned earlier, additional criteria are needed to help determine the appropriateness of accepting offered land to help meet the identified need.

**Strategy 4c**: Provide a full range of recreational opportunities within specific service areas in a complementary and non-duplicative fashion.

Albemarle County strives to make efficient use of its resources, and when providing parks and recreational facilities, works to have a full range of opportunities across the County. Duplicative parks and facilities are not encouraged.

**Strategy 4d**: Ensure that all park and recreational facilities improvements and upgrades meet the standards provided in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and permit individuals with mobility disabilities to use other power-driven mobility devices (OPDMDs).

ADA requirements should be met in all new park and recreational facilities development. A recent determination by the United States Department of Justice found that all park and greenway trails should be accessible by “other power-driven mobility devices” or OPDMDs unless it can be demonstrated that legitimate safety concerns preclude their usage. OPDMDs should be accommodated unless it can be demonstrated that a particular class of OPDMD cannot be operated in accordance with legitimate safety requirements.

**Strategy 4e**: Continue to use County school facilities as an integral part of providing recreational opportunities for County residents.

As in the past, playing fields for all public schools are considered public parks and are to be available for public use after schools meet their responsibilities to students. For elementary schools,
the minimum playing fields needed are those fields that serve the school’s use only. When adding playing fields for parks and recreational use, it is important to be aware of how the size and number of fields relate to pedestrian accessibility to schools. Extra playing fields are not essential to all sites if these fields can be obtained nearby. As provided in the Community Facilities and Services section, anytime a new school is constructed, collaboration is needed between the Schools Division and the Parks and Recreation Department to ensure that school, park, and recreational facilities are available.

Objective 5: Provide bicycle and pedestrian connections from City and County parks and schools in the Development Areas to from-neighborhoods, employment centers, shopping areas, public parks, and public schools.

The Neighborhood Model emphasizes the need to connect important places with sidewalks and bicycle paths. These paths can make it possible to walk to schools, parks, and other important places.

Strategy 5a: With the City of Charlottesville, continue to coordinate with the City of Charlottesville to connections to City and County parks, using sidewalks, multi-purpose paths along roads, and greenway trails.

The City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County Development Area parks are connected with trails and sidewalks. Additional these connections continue to be needed and existing ones strengthened to help provide all community residents with easy access to nearby public parks. The City and County have committed to this strategy through the Livability Project Goals listed found in the Introduction of this Plan.

Strategy 5b: Coordinate with the Albemarle County School Board to connect multipurpose paths and greenway trails to public school sites throughout the County. In the Development Areas, sidewalks should provide access to school sites and connections to schools should be made.

Students and the public should be able to reach nearby school sites on foot or on sidewalks, by bicycle or pedestrian paths, or on greenway trails in the Development Areas. Walking and bicycling help improve health and can reduce obesity. Sidewalks, paths, and trails help provide all community residents with easy access to nearby schools and which often also serve as public parks.

Strategy 5c: Coordinate the transportation improvements identified in the Transportation Plan with greenway trails to further develop a pedestrian and bicycle network in the Development Areas.

The County’s Transportation Plan recognizes that a system of pedestrian and bicycle improvements is needed to provide for multimodal access throughout the County and, especially, throughout the Development Areas. Making connections to important centers in the Development Areas and, as well as making connections to City parks and other County-owned parks, means that sidewalks and paths along streets will also be needed to complete the pedestrian system. The County’s Transportation Plan also relies on off-road paths, which are shown on the Greenway Plan.

Objective 6: Connect Rural Area parks to each other and to other nearby parks.

Albemarle County is the second largest County in Virginia in land area. The County’s Rural Area encompasses 690 square miles and there are many scenic vistas and natural resources. County Rural
Area parks, of which there are 10, provide places for residents and visitors to enjoy the outdoors in the Rural Area. More and more, residents and visitors are expressing a desire to walk or bicycle from one recreational area to another. For this reason, connecting the parks throughout the County has become a long-term goal.

**Strategy 6a:** Develop a detailed plan and strategies for interconnecting public parks in the Rural Area.

As shown on the Greenway Plan, County-owned parks in the Rural Area are widely dispersed. In the future, connecting those parks can be beneficial to residents wishing to travel from one rural park to another nearby rural park or to the City parks, State parks, or national parks. Having these kinds of connections will support tourism in the County.

Connecting rural parks can also connect the rural communities the parks and can improve safety by providing alternatives to on-road bicycle and pedestrian travel on rural roads. This concept of connecting rural parks is recognized that this plan is a long-range plan and that being able to obtaining connections may take many years. Developing the plan and strategy is the essential first step to making this happen.

The Greenway Plan shows potential bicycle and pedestrian connections in the Development Areas and the Rural Area that will help connect residents reach the parks. A future opportunity may exist for using railroad rights-of-way if a railroad line is abandoned. Grant money may also be available to help fund these kinds of trails.

**Objective 7:** Work with the City of Charlottesville on joint projects to improve parks and recreation services, greenways, blueways, and green systems.

The City’s and County’s urban area parks are connected by greenway trails, and the City and the County share several parks and recreation facilities. The arrangement to share facilities enhances the quality of life for both City and County residents. Through the Livability Project, several other recommendations have been made to encourage additional cooperative efforts.

**Strategy 7a:** Create a plan that incorporates a unified vision for land adjacent to the Rivanna River.

Through the Livability project, the City and County have decided that developing a unified vision for the Rivanna River in the Pantops and Woolen Mills area is a top priority. Along with creating a plan to coordinate building sidewalks across City-County boundaries, this strategy was chosen as one of the top two projects for the communities to work on in the future. Both localities believe that the Rivanna River is a shared resource; coordinating land use and recreation planning efforts that can benefit County and City residents by coordinating land use and recreation planning efforts. Coordinated land use efforts can also ensure that future land uses do not further degrade water quality and works to improve it. Coordinating Unifying lands uses adjacent to the River under a joint vision can also lead to land uses that transition well between the City and County and across the River well. A shared vision for parks, trails, and recreational opportunities associated with the river can make the Rivanna River an enjoyable destination for residents and tourists. Ultimately, City and County’s residents, their economies, and the health of the Rivanna River should benefit from a shared City-County plan for the river. Recommendations from the Rivanna River Basin Commission on how a plan might be developed are provided in the Reference Documents.
recommendations should be reviewed as part of development of the plan for the Rivanna River in Pantops and Woolen Mills.

**Strategy 7b:** With the City of Charlottesville, continue to develop ways in which residents may more easily use the parks and recreational facilities and programs of the other locality.

At present, both the City and County charge fees for use of their parks. Both localities provide season passes to some facilities. However fees are different for City and County residents. Because these facilities are used so much of the amount of use of facilities by residents of both communities, work is needed to see if and how fees could be adjusted to make access more convenient for both groups.

This topic was discussed as part of the Livability Project. Specific actions were recommended to improve coordination of parks and recreation resources between the City and the County. They were:

- Use the existing Needs Assessment documents to initiate a dialogue on meeting recreation needs.
- Evaluate existing user fees associated with all parks, facilities, and programs to explore reciprocity programs.
- Coordinate with the University of Virginia to identify both active and passive recreation opportunities that may be shared with the larger community.
- Create a common City-County park, recreation, and programming "amenity matrix," similar to the matrix found in the Reference documents, and an associated map of amenity locations.
- Create a regional plan to address the need for additional recreational fields.

Jointly, the City and County can work to improve parks and recreational opportunities for the full community.

**Strategy 7c:** Pursue joint partnerships for ownership and maintenance of regional resources.

Opportunities exist for the City and County to partner for ownership and operation of new parks for cost-savings to both. Strategies were developed as part of the Livability Project. Creating new partnerships could make parks and recreation programs and facilities more effective and cost-efficient. Ways to do this could include:

- Explore shared use facilities as a first option when contemplating new or replacement recreational facilities within the County.
- Explore the possibility of a Regional Park Authority or Joint Advisory Committee to manage and coordinate shared resources including, but not limited to, Ivy Creek Natural Area and Darden Towe Park.
- Develop and implement a shared vision for parks, trails, and recreational opportunities associated with the Ragged Mountains, the Rivanna River, the Rivanna Reservoir, and Sugar Hollow.
- Continue to work with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to develop a shared vision for recreational opportunities associated with Biscuit Run State Park. Ensure active recreation facilities are considered for park users.
By partnering, the two communities may be able to provide their residents with more access to parks and recreational amenities in a more cost-effective manner.

**Strategy 7d:** Work with the City to prepare and apply for grants for the funding of the greenway system.

Grants often require leveraging funds and are sometimes more available to partnerships than to single entities. The City and the County should work together to leverage grant funding to improve the region’s interconnected greenway system. Because of potential joint benefits, the County and City should coordinate and work together in applying for grants concerning the greenway system.

**Strategy 7e:** Encourage the maintenance and enhancement of existing public access points to the Shenandoah National Park and the Appalachian Trail. Provide for public trail connections to Biscuit Run State Park.

Enhancing and improving existing access points to the Shenandoah National Park and the Appalachian Trail, and the future Biscuit Run State Park makes it easier for County and City residents to access these parks and recreational resources. Access points to federal and State parks and trails will allow for the County’s and City’s local greenway system to connect to a larger network of parks and green systems. Continued attention and activities designed to physically connect the City and County to the State and national parks could make access more convenient to residents and visitors and improve opportunities for tourist opportunities.