

CHAPTER ONE – PARK AND FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Park properties and facilities are the physical backbone of the recreation, parks, and open space system which support and facilitate all programming, user experiences, and access to recreational opportunities. It is paramount that these properties and facilities be well maintained, meet current standards, and accommodate the highest and best use. The upkeep, repair, and improvements to existing facilities should be a top priority for any Recreation and Parks Department. Periodic assessment of their physical condition is critical to the department's ability to budget and implement priority repairs and improvements in an organized and timely manner.



The Elizabeth River Trail offers scenic view of the Elizabeth River and downtown Norfolk

1.1.1 METHODOLOGY

The design team performed and facilitated the assessment of physical conditions of parks and facilities operated by the department, as well as school facilities maintained by the Norfolk Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Department (RPOS) and used for recreation. The objective of the assessments was to identify and quantify conditions which ultimately have a direct effect on the quality of programming, user experiences, and the public health, welfare, and safety.

Assessments were conducted by both LPDA staff, with over 50 years combined experience with conditions assessments and facility planning, and RPOS staff with the facilitation of LPDA. Facilitated by RPOS staff, LPDA conducted assessments for a sampling of sixteen (16) facilities (buildings) and park sites in a variety of classifications and locations throughout the City. LPDA reviewed the assessment forms and method with RPOS staff and provided the forms to them to conduct assessments of the remaining sites.

Assessment forms were customized to gather specific information. Forms required staff to inventory park and facilities features, such as infrastructure, parking, and amenities, and then to evaluate their condition using a numeric scoring system. The forms also included qualitative assessments of development potential for infill and connectivity. The scores for all categories were added together, to yield the total score for the site's condition. Higher scores denote worse conditions and a greater need for maintenance and repair. A facility with many amenities may garner a high score because of the quantity of amenities rather than because the park or trail is in terrible condition. To more fairly evaluate the relative condition of the park, trail, and school sites, the percentage of points scored is also determined. The percentage is between points scored compared to possible scorable points at a park. The lower the percentage the better condition of the site.

Park conditions were assessed on a scale of (0) to (4) in a range of categories. A score of (0) indicates no concerns, and a score of (4) indicates immediate major problems. The maximum total score possible for a park to receive is 80, which would indicate that there are immediate major problems in every category evaluated.

PARK EVALUATION CATEGORIES

- ADA accessibility
- Ball fields
- Equipment (playground, backstops, hoops, etc.)
- General cleanliness/appearance
- Hard courts (tennis, basketball, etc.)
- Irrigation systems
- Landscaping (ornamental and natural)
- Neighborhood linkages/connections
- Parking availability
- Parking facilities
- Personal safety
- Sidewalks/paths/trails
- Storm water drainage systems
- Turf
- Vehicular access

Facility conditions were assessed on a scale of (0) to (4) in a range of categories. A score of (0) indicates no problems, and a score of (4) indicates immediate major action needed. The maximum total score possible for a facility to receive is 71, which would indicate that there are immediate major problems in every category evaluated.

FACILITY EVALUATION CATEGORIES

- ADA accessibility
- Adequacy of space
- Auditorium
- Classrooms
- Gymnasium
- Interior lighting
- Kitchen
- Mechanical equipment
- Overall facility conditions,
- Offices
- Parking
- Security
- Storage areas
- Vandalism

A development potential evaluation was included as part of the park conditions assessment. During the site evaluation, the reviewer noted opportunities for infill and connectivity. Reviewers identified the available space for infill development, selecting from ‘no development potential without replacing an existing amenity’; infill space for small (fitness station), medium (basketball court), or large (full size 90’ ball diamond) sized facilities; or ‘significant portions of the site are undeveloped’ and multiple amenities could be added. The reviewers also noted if there were marginalized areas that could be developed for environmental benefit, potentially including wildlife/pollinator habitat, stormwater treatment, and integrated flood management. Opportunities for connectivity both within and to areas outside of the park were noted on the forms.

Space was also provided on the forms for reviewers to note specific observations that were not encompassed by any category, or to expand in further detail about the conditions of a category. These observations are incorporated into each site’s assessment summary.

1.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Norfolk Recreation, Parks, and Open Space is an established institution with a long history of providing recreational opportunities to residents and visitors. Some of the facilities are very new, so were built with contemporary planning standards and their materials are still at the beginning of their lifespan. Other facilities are older and showing the years of use and intermittent investment.

LPDA and NPROS staff evaluated the condition of 122 sites around the City. The scores for the condition of parks and facilities ranged from perfect 0% scores for condition concerns (Broad Creek Park, Brambleton Dog Park) to 71% condition concerns at Reservoir Avenue Mini Park. Overall, the sites are generally in good condition. Very few of the total 122 sites assessed in the report scored above 50%, or

very poor, on the conditions scoring. The only sites that did so were: Barraud Park (51%, Community Park), Craig Street Playground (57%, Neighborhood Active Park), Reservoir Ave. Mini Park (71%, Neighborhood Active Park), Stone Park (52%, Passive Greenspace), and Berkley Dog Park (59%, Dog Park).

Over the course of assessing the condition of the parks and facilities, several issues were noted as recurring in multiple places. Common deficiencies/opportunities are listed alphabetically below, with issues affecting health, safety, and accessibility in bold:

PARKS

- **Lack of or limited ADA accessibility**
- **Lack of or limited universal accessibility design and site amenities**
- **Safety hazards (cracked sidewalks, tripping hazards, broken equipment)**
- **Perceived crime and personal safety concerns**
- Aging and damaged site furnishings
- Aging and outdated play equipment
- Aging sports fields, hard courts, and sports equipment such as field fencing and backstops are in poor condition, needing repair or replacement
- Damaged turf at dog parks
- Faded striping and damaged parking areas
- General appearance and upkeep of facility
- Infill development opportunities ranging from small to significantly sized areas.
- Lack of adequate storm water infrastructure (conveyance, detention, treatment)
- Lack of or inconsistency in the design of site furnishings
- Lack of or limited internal park loop trails
- Outdated or lack of park master plans
- Poor neighborhood connectivity
- Parking shortages during peak use periods at special event parks
- Underutilized areas could be developed for habitat, stormwater, and/or flood management services.



Ballentine Park - Basketball court with poor drainage and missing backboard



Poplar Hall Park - Aging play equipment on substandard playground safety surfacing and extents



Campostella Center - An aging facility

FACILITIES

- **Limited or no ADA accessibility**
- **Limited or lack of connectivity to surrounding area**
- Aging buildings with general condition issues
- Inadequate storage space
- Insufficient parking during peak use times
- Poor condition of some rooms

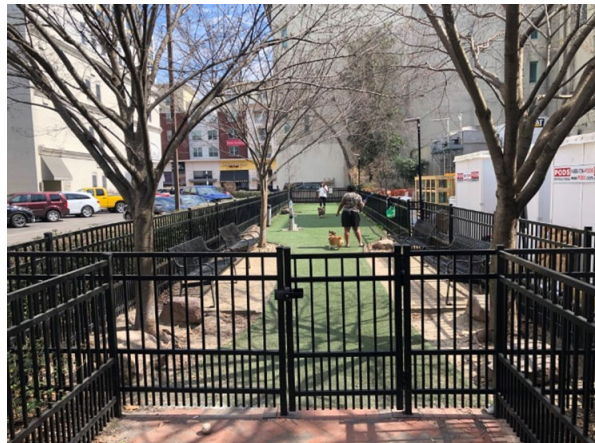
Several of the parks contain positive features that promote better usability and experience for park visitors. These include, in alphabetical order:

- Environmental best practices in materials, site design, and integrated stormwater management
- Newer recreation centers integrated into population centers
- Newer unique or destination style amenities
- Public water access
- School sites as public recreation areas
- Variety of dog parks
- Variety of specialty park amenities included in the system
- Well-maintained event parks



Plum Point park - Recently redeveloped to integrate wetland mitigation and estuarine habitat with new passive park amenities. (photo courtesy of WPL)

The general condition and themes for each park of facility category are summarized on the following pages. The tables illustrate the assessment percentage score of parks and facilities, with a gradient of green to red to highlight those in best to worst condition, based on the percentage of total points accrued compared to total possible. Refer to the individual park summary matrixes in the appendix for details on specific conditions and development potentials. It is important to note that even though a park may have scored well on overall conditions, there may be an issue such as inadequate ADA access or faulty equipment which requires immediate attention.



Downtown Dog Park - An example of a popular well maintained dog park created in an otherwise underutilized space

Some RPOS sites were not assessed by the Department during the assessment process. These sites are clustered at the bottom of the summary assessment charts and were not used to develop condition themes for park and facility sites.

1.2.1 FESTIVAL PARKS

The team evaluated both festival parks managed by RPOS, Towne Point Park and Ocean View Park. Both parks scored well, 15% and 22% respectively, and are in good condition requiring only some minor improvements. Both sites face parking shortages during events. Towne Point Park is well connected with the surrounding area via the Elizabeth River Trail, but Ocean View Park could be improved with more connectivity to the surrounding area. Both sites have space for small amenity infill and Towne Point Park has opportunities for underused areas to be developed for environmental benefit.

CONDITION - SPECIAL EVENT PARKS			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Towne Pointe Park	8	52	15%
Ocean View Park	13	60	22%

1.2.2 COMMUNITY PARKS

The team evaluated eight of the ten community parks; Tarralton Park and Triangle Park were excluded by RPOS staff when conducting assessments. Assessment scores range from 3% of total possible points for Bay Oaks Park to 51% for Barraud Park. Issues for Barraud Park include inadequate access and poor condition of parking, hard courts, and sidewalks. Improvements to vehicular access and parking availability are also needed, as well as improvements to safety and community connections.

There were some general themes observed in many of the parks, the primary including the need for improved ADA access, enhanced safety, and expanded linkages and connections. Many of the hard courts are in poor condition, facilities and equipment need maintenance or replacement, and parking areas require repair.

CONDITION – COMMUNITY PARKS			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Bay Oaks Park	2	60	3%
Linear Park at Outlet Mall	6	52	12%
Ballentine Park	16	52	31%
Lakewood Park	25	72	35%
Northside Park	31	80	39%
Poplar Hall Park	27	68	40%
Lafayette Park	33	72	46%
Barraud Park	37	72	51%
Tarralton Park			
Triangle Park (Legacy)			

All of the sites except Barraud Park can support infill of amenities, with the Linear Park at Outlet Mall, Ballentine Park, and Lakewood Park having significant opportunities to develop multiple amenities. Many of the sites would support the conversion of marginalized spaces into environmental performance areas. Seven of the eight sites evaluated would benefit from increased connectivity, both loop trails within the park and pedestrian/bike linkages with the surrounding area.

1.2.3 NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVE PARKS

There are 40 Neighborhood Active Parks within the RPOS system and the team evaluated 36 of them; Westover Memorial Park, Pollard Street Playground, Maple Avenue Playground, and Colonial Gateway were excluded by RPOS staff when conducting the evaluations. The site in the best condition is Freemason Playground, earning a score of 5%, while Reservoir Avenue Mini Park was by far in the worst condition, earning a score of 71%. Reservoir Avenue Mini Park is in very poor condition and has major safety concerns, no ADA access, and poor linkages to the neighborhood. The Department may want to consider a complete redevelopment of the facility rather than improving the existing design.

CONDITION – NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVE PARKS			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Freemason Playground	2	40	5%
Goff & Maltby Mini Park	3	54	6%
Munson Park	4	56	7%
Shoop Park	6	72	8%
Berkley Park	7	64	11%
Jeff Robertson Park	9	60	15%
Meadowbrook Park	9	60	15%
Kaboom Playground aka Denby Playground	11	64	17%
Glenwood Park	11	60	18%
Riverpoint Playground	15	76	20%
Tanners Creek	12	60	20%
Hermitage Museum Playground	11	52	21%
38th Street Park	13	60	22%
Roland Park Playground	12	54	22%
S. Main Street Playground	12	54	22%
Bluestone Playground	14	60	23%
Oakmont North Playground	15	64	23%
Plum Point Park	14	56	25%

CONDITION – NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVE PARKS (continued)			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Raleigh Avenue Playground	14	54	26%
River Oaks Park	16	60	27%
North Shore Rd Playground	15	56	27%
Monticello Village Park	17	60	28%
37th Street Park	16	56	29%
Ashby Street Park	19	64	30%
North Foxhall Playground	23	72	32%
Princess Anne Park	24	72	33%
Fergus Reid Tennis Courts	22	64	34%
Azalea Acres Playground	21	60	35%
Redgate Playground	19	52	37%
Mona Avenue Park	20	54	37%
Hyde Park	18	48	38%
Azalea Little League Fields	28	72	39%
Lafayette Residence Park	33	72	46%
Monkey Bottom Park	26	52	50%
Craig Street Playground	34	60	57%
Reservoir Avenue Mini Park	37	52	71%
Westover Memorial Park			
Pollard Street Playground			
Maple Avenue Playground			
Colonial Greenway			

Many of the sites are in good to very good condition, with half of the sites scoring 25% or less. There were several reoccurring issues observed at the parks. Primary issues include limited to no ADA accessibility, either routes and/or amenities, safety hazards and concerns, limited neighborhood connections, and aging amenities, including fields and hard courts that are in poor condition and either require extensive maintenance or replacement. Some level of maintenance and repair is required at all of the sites. Secondary issue themes observed at 2-5 parks include crime concerns, stormwater management, a lack of or inconsistent furnishings, and the need for new or updated park master plans.

There is infill development potential for most of the sites - fourteen (14) have space for small improvements, six (6) have space for medium improvements, and eleven (11) can accommodate significant amenity development. Most of the sites have marginalized areas that could be developed for improved environmental functionality. Connectivity within and to the surrounding community could be improved at most of the sites.

1.2.4 PASSIVE GREENSPACE

The Department manages 36 Passive Greenspace style parks, 23 of which were evaluated by the team.

Two sites were in perfect condition, scoring 0% on the conditions evaluation: Broad Creek Park and MacArthur Memorial Plaza. The greenspace in the worst condition was Stone Park, earning 52%. Eight sites were in excellent condition with scores less than 10% and require only minor repair or maintenance. Primary recurring issues observed at most sites include limited or no ADA access, safety hazards (uneven sidewalks, empty fountain basins), interrupted internal circulation, some personal safety concerns, and general maintenance and upkeep. Some secondary issues that occurred at a few sites or have limited impact on park usage include necessary maintenance to landscaping and turf areas, replacement of site furnishings, insufficient peak parking, trash and vandalism, and insufficient community connections.

CONDITION – PASSIVE GREENSPACE (not evaluated)
Cambridge Park
Poplar Halls Medians
Martin Luther King Memorial Plaza
Willow Wood Drive & Cromwell Space at Norway
Olney Road parks
Linear Park Outlet Mall
Sutton Street Mini Park
Gleneagles Park
Fred Huett Center
Granby Street Park
Graydon Avenue Medians
Greenway Court Park
Hague Park

CONDITION – PASSIVE GREENSPACE			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Broad Creek Park	0	48	0%
MacArthur Memorial Plaza	0	52	0%
Friendship Park	2	52	4%
Myrtle Park	2	52	4%
Beechwood Park	2	44	5%
Virginia Park Median	3	52	6%
Freemason Green aka College Place	3	40	8%
Middletown Arch	4	52	8%
Algonquin Park	5	40	13%
Farragut Park	6	44	14%
Wisconsin Plaza	8	48	17%
Stone Bridge Park	9	52	17%
Yellow Fever Park	10	52	19%
Community Beach	14	68	21%
Colonial Avenue Park	10	48	21%
Airport Gateway	13	52	25%
Botetourt Gardens	13	48	27%
Plume Fountain	15	52	29%
Graydon Place Medians	15	44	34%
Sarah Constance Park	23	56	41%
Lake Modoc	24	52	46%
Stockley Gardens	24	52	46%
Stone Park	25	48	52%

Capacity for infill development varies between the parks, with nine (9) parks having spaces for small amenities, one (1) park with room for medium amenit(ies), and four (4) parks with space for significant. The remaining nine (9) sites are built to capacity. Some of the sites have marginalized areas that could be developed for wildlife/pollinator habitat, stormwater treatment, and/or integrated flood management. A limited number of sites could be improved with internal loop trails and/or strengthened connection routes to the surrounding area.

1.2.5 SCHOOL SITES WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES

The RPOS Department manages and maintains portions of some school sites, primarily elementary schools, and so those facilities function as neighborhood parks. There are 40 of these sites integrated with schools throughout the City, 29 of which were evaluated by the team.

CONDITION – SCHOOL SITES WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Richard Bowling Park Elementary School	4	52	8%
Camp Allen Elementary School	6	72	8%
Campostella STEM Elementary School	6	64	9%
Lindenwood Elementary School	6	60	10%
Granby High School	7	60	12%
James Blair Middle School	8	64	13%
Norview High School	10	68	15%
W.H. Tayler Elementary School	10	64	16%
Ocean View Elementary School	13	76	17%
Booker T. Washington High School	11	64	17%
Jacox Elementary School	12	60	20%
Little Creek Elementary & Primary Schools	15	72	21%
W.H. Tayler Playground	11	52	21%
Easton Pre-School	17	72	24%
Coleman Place Elementary School	16	64	25%
Maury High School	16	60	27%
Academy for Discovery at Lakewood	19	68	28%
Coronado School (NPS Open campus)	18	64	28%
Willoughby Elementary School	18	64	28%
Suburban Park Elementary School	20	64	31%

CONDITION – SCHOOL SITES WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES (continued)			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Azalea Garden Middle School	24	76	32%
Granby Elementary School	21	64	33%
Oceanair Elementary School	22	64	34%
Willard Model School	22	64	34%
Sewells Point Elementary School	24	68	35%
Lake Taylor High School	25	68	37%
Larrymore Elementary School	25	68	37%
Madison Career Center	24	60	40%
Ghent Elementary School	26	64	41%
Ballentine School			
Dreamkeepers Academy			
Norview Middle School			
Oakwood Elementary School			
P.B. Young, Sr. School			
Poplar Hall Elementary School			
Rosemont Middle School			
Ruffner Middle School			
Stuart Early Childhood Center			
Tidewater Park Elementary			
Tanners Creek Elementary			

The school sites with active park amenities that were in the best condition were Richard Bowling Park Elementary School and Camp Allen Elementary School, both of which received a score of 8%. The site in the worst condition was Ghent Elementary School with a score of 41%. Almost half of the sites scored in the 27%-41% range, indicating that many sites need improvements.

The primary issues observed at school parks sites were limited ADA accessibility, limited or no neighborhood connectivity, and aging or damaged courts, fields, and playground equipment that either need extensive repair or replacement. Other observed themes include the need to remove old equipment, increase internal connectivity, general equipment maintenance, minor turf issues, and occasional parking shortages. Some of the school sites are older and are being considered for closing. This would be an opportunity to redevelop the site to better serve the community.

There is capacity for infill development at every site except for Granby High School and James Blair Middles School, ranging in capacity of small to significant infill potential. Most sites also have marginalized areas that could be developed for increased environmental service. Every site except for the two school mentioned above also has the opportunity for increased internal connection and/or connections to the surrounding areas through sidewalks, multi-use paths, or bridges over wet areas.

1.2.6 CITY CENTERS WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES

The team evaluated nine of the thirteen city centers with active park amenities - Youngs Terrace is closed and scheduled to be shut down and Lamberts Point Community Center, Ocean View Community Center, and Titustown Visual Arts were not evaluated by RPOS staff. Scores for indoor facilities ranged from 3% for Huntersville Community Center to 40% for Merrimack Landing Recreation Center. The park surrounding Captain's Quarters had the highest score, 43%. It should be noted that Captain's Quarters is a seasonal facility and is open spring through early fall.

Most of the sites are well maintained, requiring some general maintenance and facing parking shortages at peak use times. Some of the sites had additional issues including limited/no ADA accessibility, poor condition of the facility overall, insufficient storage space, poor condition of some rooms, and problems with the mechanical equipment.

In the park grounds surrounding the city centers there was space for some amenity infill, marginal space conversion, and internal and neighborhood connectivity.

CONDITION – CITY CENTERS WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES				
Type	Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Facility	Huntersville Community Center	2	60	3%
Facility	Grandy Village	3	48	6%
Facility	Norfolk Fitness and Wellness Center	7	68	10%
Facility	Southside Aquatic Center	7	68	10%
Facility	East Ocean View Community Center	9	68	13%
Facility	Campostella Center	20	68	29%
Facility	Captain's Quarters	20	56	36%
Facility	Merrimack Landing Recreation Center	24	60	40%
Park	Captain's Quarters	24	56	43%
	Lamberts Point Community Center			
	Ocean View Community Center			
	Titustown Visual Arts Center			
Facility	Youngs Terrace			

1.2.7 CITY CENTERS WITHOUT PARK AMENITIES

The team evaluated both city centers with no park amenities that are operated by the Department: Norfolk Boxing Center - Harbor Park and Vivian C Mason Teen Center. The sites were in very good conditions, scoring 2% and 14% respectively. The Boxing Center is in good condition with no updates needed. The Teen Center has insufficient/poorly designed room lighting and does not have enough parking during peak-use.

CONDITION – CITY CENTERS WITHOUT PARK AMENITIES			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Norfolk Boxing Center - Harbor Park	1	64	2%
Vivian C Mason Teen Center	8	56	14%

1.2.8 SCHOOL AND CITY SITES WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES

The Department manages seventeen sites with school and city facilities that have active park amenities, fifteen of which were evaluated for the condition of the facility and/or park, as applicable. The two sites that were excluded from RPOS staff evaluation were Chesterfield Elementary School & Chesterfield Pool and St. Helena Elementary School & Beckley Community Center. Some of the facilities are relatively new, like Ingleside Gym and Crossroads Recreation Center.

CONDITION – SCHOOL AND CITY SITES WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES				
Type	Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Facility	Ingleside Gym	1	56	2%
Facility	Bayview Elementary & Recreation Center	1	40	3%
Facility	Norview Elementary & Community Center	2	68	3%
Facility	Berkley Camostello Early Childhood Ctr. & Diggs Town Center	3	56	5%
Park	Diggs Town Park	5	60	8%
Facility	Crossroads Elementary & Recreation Center	5	60	8%
Facility	Norfolk Therapeutic Recreation Center	5	60	8%
School Park	James Monroe Elementary School & Park Place Community Center	10	64	16%
School Park	Larchmont Elementary & Recreation Center	15	72	21%
Facility	Tarrallton Elementary School & Community Center	15	68	22%
Facility	Ingleside Elementary & Recreation Center	13	56	23%

Of the indoor facilities, Ingleside Gym, Norview Community Center, and Diggs Town Center were in the best condition, receiving scores of 2%, 3%, and 5%, respectively. They are all in very good condition and the only issue noted was that Norview Community Center needs some leaks addressed and stained ceiling tiles replaced. The indoor facility in the worst condition is Sherwood Forest Community Center, with a score of 36%. The building has some major problems, a shortage of space, and occasional vandalism, as well as common issues shared with other facilities. Those common themes for the indoor facilities are insufficient peak parking, and secondary themes of some minor problems with the facility and some rooms requiring improvements or renovation.

Of the outdoor facilities, Diggs Town Park is in the best condition, scoring 8%, and Tarralton Elementary School & Community Center (34%), Northside Middle School (33%), and Norview Elementary & Community Center (33%) are in the worst condition.

Common issues observed include limited or no ADA access to portions of the site, damaged sidewalks, poor condition of hard courts, equipment and facilities are old and outdated, and a need for general repair and maintenance. Some of the sites have safety hazards and need to be designed to improve sight lines. Some sites have faded striping or cracked parking lots. Many of the sites would benefit from improved neighborhood linkages and loop trails within the sites. Almost two-thirds of the sites have space to accommodate small to medium infill development, and the remaining third of the sites have space for significant infill development. Almost all of the sites have marginalized areas that can accommodate environmental services like habitat creation or stormwater treatment.

CONDITION – SCHOOL AND CITY SITES WITH ACTIVE PARK AMENITIES (continued)				
Facility	Fairlawn Elementary & Recreation Center	15	64	23%
School Park	Mary Calcott ES	16	64	25%
School Park	Ingleside Elementary & Recreation Center	18	68	26%
Park	Fairlawn Elementary & Recreation Center	21	76	28%
Park	Sherwood Forest Elementary School & Community Center	19	68	28%
School Park	Berkley Camostello Early Childhood Ctr. & Diggs Town Center	16	56	29%
School Park	Northside Middle School	21	64	33%
School Park	Norview Elementary & Community Center	21	64	33%
Park	Tarralton Elementary School & Community Center	26	76	34%
Facility	Sherwood Forest Elementary School & Community Center	23	64	36%
School Park	Chesterfield Elementary & Chesterfield Pool			
	St. Helena Elementary School & Berkley Community Center			

1.2.9 DOG PARKS

There are many dog parks within Norfolk and NPROS operates thirteen of them, seven fenced and six unfenced. The only dog park excluded from the conditions assessment was Meadowbrook Dog Park. There is a fairly even spread of site conditions for the dog parks. The two sites in the best condition are Brambleton Dog Park and Downtown Dog Walk, with scores of 0% and 5% respectively. These parks are in very good condition, requiring only minor landscaping maintenance or attention to drainage. The park in the worst condition is Berkley Dog Park, which scored 59%. The site is deeply rutted and uneven with no sidewalk, and is basically abandoned. The park with the second highest score is Stockley Garden Dog Park, which scored 42%. This site has major personal safety concerns, as well damaged sidewalks, damaged or no trashcans and lights, and not enough parking.

Some common themes observed with the dog parks are limited/no ADA accessibility, limited parking availability, damaged turf, use regulation signage needs to be clearly displayed, and improvement/replacement of site furnishings.

A third of the dog parks are built to capacity and the remainder have space for small to medium sized infill, with one dog park, Cambridge Crescent, having capacity for significant development. More than half of the dog park sites have marginalized areas that could be developed as habitat, stormwater treatment, and/or integrated flood management. There are opportunities at many of the sites for increasing internal and/or neighborhood connections.

CONDITION – DOG PARKS			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Brambleton Dog Park	0	44	0%
Downtown Dog Walk	2	44	5%
Winona Dog Park	6	48	13%
Maple Avenue Dog Park	7	52	13%
Gleneagle Dog Park	7	44	16%
Cambridge Crescent Dog Park	9	48	19%
Tait Terrace Dog Park	9	44	20%
Lafayette Dog Park	10	48	21%
Colonial Greenway Dog Park	15	48	31%
Hague Dog Park	17	44	39%
Stockley Garden Dog Park	22	52	42%
Berkley Dog Park	19	32	59%
Meadowbrook Dog Park			

1.2.10 BEACHES, KAYAK LAUNCHES, BOAT RAMPS, AND TRAILS

The Department manages a variety of specialty amenities that take advantage of Virginia Beach’s abundant water frontage: six kayak launches, three boat ramps, two piers, and the Elizabeth River Trail. The Harbor Park Canoe & Kayak Launch was the only facility not evaluated for this report.

The site in best condition was the Highland Park ADA Veterans Kayak Launch, which scored 8%. The facility in worst condition was the East Ocean View Kayak Launch & Fishing Pier, which scored 47%.

Common condition concerns observed include lack of parking, visibility/safety concerns, some ADA access concerns, landscaping improvements, and minor maintenance required.

CONDITION – BEACHES, KAYAK LAUNCHES, BOAT RAMPS, AND TRAILS				
Type	Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Kayak Launch	Highland Park ADA Veterans Kayak Launch	4	48	8%
Boat Ramp/ Kayak Launch	Haven Creek Boat Ramp & Kayak Launch	9	48	19%
Kayak Launch/ Pier	LaValette ADA Kayak Launch & Fishing Pier	10	52	19%
Trail	Elizabeth River Trail	8	40	20%
Boat Ramp	Lake Whitehurst Boat Ramp	10	48	21%
Boat Ramp	Willoughby Boat Ramp	15	48	31%
Beach	Ocean View Beach Front	19	60	32%
Kayak Launch	Captain's Quarters Kayak Launch	21	56	38%
Kayak Launch/ Pier	East Ocean View Kayak Launch & Fishing Pier	28	60	47%
Canoe & Kayak Launch	Harbor Park Canoe & Kayak Launch			

All of the sites except for Highland Park ADA Veterans Kayak Launch have space available for small or medium-sized infill development. All of the sites have marginalized spaces that could be developed for habitat, stormwater, and/or environmental functions. Many of the sites have opportunities for increased

community connection with sidewalks and/or trails. Some of the larger sites, like East Ocean View Kayak Launch and Fishing Pier, have opportunities for loop trails within the site.

1.2.11 CEMETERIES

RPOS manages Norfolk’s public cemeteries, a total of eight sites. LPDA staff evaluated two of the sites and the rest have not yet been evaluated by NPROS staff. Calvary Cemetery scored 14% for conditions rating and Forest Lawn Cemetery scored 27%.

The two sites are generally in good condition, requiring some minor repairs to the sidewalks and roads. There is limited internal connectivity and neighborhood linkages at the two sites - developing these amenities/connections could increase the recreational capacity of cemeteries into passive greenspaces. There is the opportunity for the cemetery sites to be developed as passive green spaces, with interior loop trails and increased connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods where possible.

Both cemeteries have marginalized areas that could be developed for wildlife/pollinator habitat or stormwater management.

CONDITION - CEMETERIES			
Facility Name	Overall Score	Potential Total	% Issues
Calvary Cemetery	6	44	14%
Forest Lawn Cemetery	13	48	27%
Cedar Grove Cemetery			
Elmwood Cemetery			
Hebrew Cemetery			
Magnolia Cemetery			
Riverside Cemetery			
West Point Cemetery			

1.3 CONCLUSION

The Norfolk Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Department manages 144 separate sites in a broad range of categories, from traditional neighborhood parks, open greenspaces, and indoor recreation centers, to special event spaces, school sites, cemeteries, and water access points. RPOS is dedicated to providing high quality recreational opportunities, but with an extensive, aging system and resource constraints, maintaining uniformly high levels of service is a challenge. During the system site assessments several common themes related to the condition of parks and facilities were observed, including a lack of or limited ADA accessibility, poor neighborhood connectivity, aging amenities and equipment, deferred maintenance, and opportunities for improved design and material standards. It is recommended that the City take a phased approach to repairs and refurbishment, addressing issues of safety and code-deficiency immediately, and then proceeding to address more systemic issues related to deferred maintenance and obsolescence.

In order of priority, the order of repairs and improvements in the parks should be as follows:

1. Safety: tripping hazards, standing water, broken play equipment, surfacing.
2. Code: ADA, ingress/egress, lighting, fire
3. Deferred Maintenance: paint, equipment repairs, etc.
4. Obsolescence/Replacements: obsolete non-standard/ non code compliant amenities, etc.
5. Park Improvements: additions which address programs, address current needs, add value etc.

The Department has implemented several features that promote better usability and experience for park visitors, including larger amenity-driven recreation centers, environmental best practices, and destination amenities integrated into larger parks. Continuing and expanding these themes, as well as other best practices in park design, management, and integrated green infrastructure, will further Norfolk’s park system as a high-quality recreation system delivering community-focused opportunities with integrated environmental services.