



JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION **2026 MASTER PLAN**

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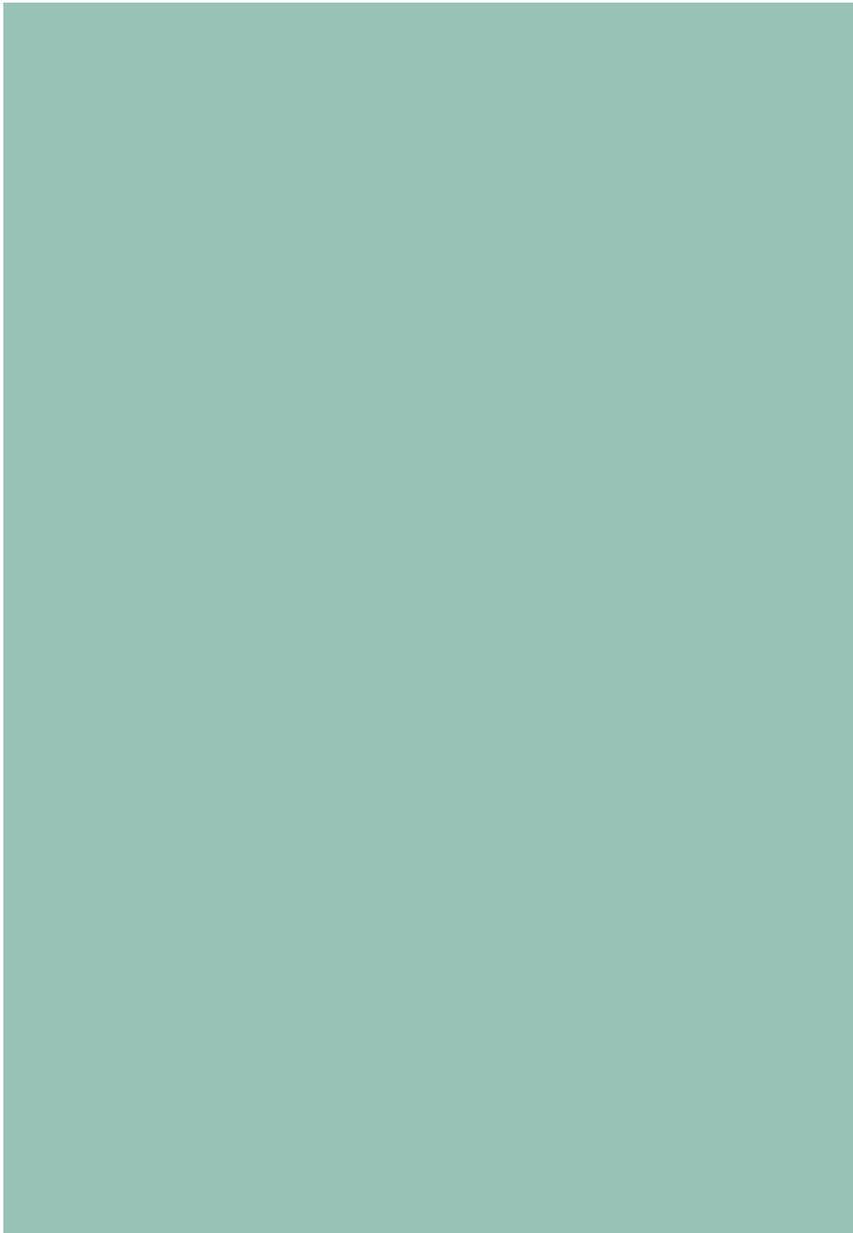
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THE VISION OF THE FUTURE

Imagine living, working and recreating in a place that has riches of small cities and towns within a few minutes of pastoral farmlands, scenic rivers, majestic mountains, greenways, wonderful history and beautiful parks. Everyone has the ability to hike, bike and walk in all types of places. You have the opportunity to enjoy and participate in diverse and varied forms of recreation, from the most active of team sports to a self-guided hike, a nationally significant historic experience, a casual bicycle ride, or reflective lounging with family and friends and taking-in a post card river view. Every family in Jefferson County has easy access and the full ability to enjoy a place with beauty that Thomas Jefferson said, “is worth a trip across the Atlantic.” Parks and recreation play an important role in successful communities. The ability to provide a diverse set of parks and recreation experiences and opportunities is a barometer of success for a high-quality parks system, but more so, the measure of a vibrant and desirable community where people will want to live, work, and invest.

Jefferson County has the potential to be a community that is a most-desirable place from a parks and recreation standpoint, and to benefit from its locational advantages of abundant and beautiful natural spaces and major metro areas with a very competitive cost-of-living.

COUNTY CONTEXT

Realizing that challenges exist and opportunities are un-tapped, the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission (JCPRC) undertook this planning effort to develop a game plan for moving ahead to ensure that Jefferson County’s parks system is fully serving the community, including the population across the entire county. This plan looks ahead but is grounded in the here and now, understanding that the needed resources to realize the vision will take time to garner.

Jefferson County Parks & Recreation plays an important role in....

- + Improving the health and well-being of residents of all age groups throughout the County;
- + Advancing Jefferson County’s economic development opportunities;
- + Supporting real estate values and the continued re-investment in neighborhoods;
- + Educating the population;
- + Promoting tourism and supporting jobs and business, of all scales and sizes;
- + Facilitating social engagement that forms a strong sense of community identity; and
- + Putting forward a compelling perspective that parks and recreation are not a luxury in communities that want to be economically competitive in the 21st century.

WHY NOW?

Jefferson County has experienced growth and is poised to potentially experience greater growth. County and community leaders understand that quality-of-life aspects are an important component of economic development and for maintaining a community where property values are stable and continued investment occurs. See: “The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space: How Land Conservation Helps Communities Grow Smart and Protect the Bottom Line”, Trust for Public Land (1999), www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/cloud.tpl.org/pubs/benefits_EconBenef_Parks_OpenSpaceL.pdf.

Despite a lull in growth since the economic downturn of the late 2000s, incremental growth in Jefferson County is picking up and the time is ripe to act in order to be ahead of growth and best shape the parks system for maximum positive community value, environmental protection, community connectivity, parks and recreational development, and support for human health and well-being, before it is too late or much more costly to do so!

JEFFERSON COUNTY’S PARKS SYSTEM HAS BOTH OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

It’s Rich with Resources: Jefferson County is rich with resources that can support the creation of a parks and recreation system that would make communities across the nation envious. There are national parks, dedicated natural resource protection areas, two major scenic rivers, historic towns and cities, and access to internationally recognized multi-state trail systems including the Appalachian Trail and the C&O Canal Towpath Trail. These resources, however, do not replace the community value of a quality Jefferson County parks system. These resources support the potential for a county system to become greater than most counties of comparable size and character across the nation.

It Fulfills a Vitaly Important Community Need: A county parks system fills a specific niche in a community that would otherwise be unmet. Its parks provide the types of major recreational facilities and experiences that individual municipalities alone cannot provide. Conversely, it is much more able to serve the specific needs of its community when compared to the national role the National Park Service can provide. This notion is referred to in this plan as “thinking county-wide.”

Not Connected: While Jefferson County has some important hiking, pedestrian and bicycle trails including the Appalachian Trail, the C&O Towpath, the Route 9 Trail and others, there is a fundamental lack of trail connections within many communities as well as to Jefferson County park and recreational resources. Charles Town and Ranson are not connected by trails to Bolivar and Harpers Ferry or Shepherdstown. No communities or neighborhoods have trail access to Sam Michael’s Park or James Hite Park, and many other connectivity gaps remain throughout the county.



However, Jefferson County Parks have Evolved Versus Being Planned: This park system evolved into its current state mostly without significant planning and often based on happenstance decisions. Therefore the size, type, and location of some of the parks are purely a function of what land was available at a particular time or because of donations of properties. As a result, some of the parks are not located to best serve the population or have physical factors to support the best uses.

It is “Present” but Lacks “Presence:” Parks evolved with limited planning or resources at the site specific level, sometimes resulting in parks that are inefficiently configured, have limited amenities, are difficult to maintain, and lack the fundamental characteristics of a high-quality park. Many of the parks lack landscape plantings and design elements that are integrated into the most publicly utilized portions of the parks, resulting in a high utilitarian feel and bare experience for the park user.

Parks and Recreation is a Public Service not a Business: The Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission as a public agency is becoming overly revenue driven. The commission must remember its functions as a public service. All public parks and recreation departments are trying to generate more revenue but they do not forget their root mission. This master plan clearly shows that JCPRC is already recovering approximately double the national average in operating costs. In contrast it spends about 1/10th what other comparable departments spend on maintenance and is significantly understaffed based on the current size of the system and the services it provides. The commission needs to go back to the basics and utilize this master plan to define its actions and decision making process to ensure that it is functioning in a manner consistent with the greatest public good.

Start with the Basics: Overall, Jefferson County’s parks fundamentally have quality and conditions issues to overcome in order to create a logical and functional county-wide parks system. This means that many of the parks need the most basic improvements like drainage, circulation, parking, signage, and support facilities like restrooms or concession stands. Great parks are not created without a plan. Most of the parks have never been properly master planned and facilities have been added with, at most, an evaluation of where to locate a specific facility, without considering the full potential of the entire park in which the facility will be located.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

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WHAT IS A SYSTEM-WIDE PARKS MASTER PLAN?

This system-wide master plan explores the options for the development of parks and recreation facilities and programs throughout the Jefferson County-owned system. It considers existing and potential park users, county conditions, municipal recreation, cultural needs, opportunities, and the overall potential desires of the Jefferson County community. The process for developing the vision for the system, and supporting policy recommendations, emphasized robust citizen input to develop a path forward that targets existing and likely future community needs. This document, as referenced specifically within Element 3 of the Jefferson County, West Virginia, Envision Jefferson 2035 Comprehensive Plan, as adopted by act of the County Commission on January 14th, 2015, serves as Jefferson County's Parks and Recreation Master Plan under the auspices and in support of, the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan.

FUNDING RESOURCES

JCPRC has had solid success in obtaining grants to support projects and programs in Jefferson County. This Master Plan contains a "Resource Roadmap" that builds on that success, outlining more than a dozen sources of grant funding and support that could be sought by JCPRC, along with strategies and recommendations for how Jefferson County can be most competitive for these resources. This report also recommends that Jefferson County should establish more proactive policies for requiring and encouraging land developers to contribute to new and improved park and recreational facilities, particularly trail connections.

It must be noted, however, that the level of capital and operating resources that would be needed to achieve the recommendations in this plan – between \$16 million and \$23 million for capital projects alone – cannot be supported

just by grant funding. Jefferson County and its citizens need to consider a levy or other fee-based campaign that could raise these resources from the people of the community. This plan discusses the approach to such a community campaign to raise resources for a wonderful park and recreation system envisioned in this master plan.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION 2026 BLUEPRINT

To achieve the long term vision of this plan, the following key goals and initiatives have been identified for the next 10 years.

An effective system-wide master plan...

- + Defines the vision and the role the Jefferson County's park system plays within the community's overall parks and recreation needs;
- + Establishes a mission for how management structures and capital improvements are shaped for the extended future, with an emphasis on what should be the focus for the next 10 years;
- + Establishes a framework for how the vision can be achieved via policies, actions, and projects;
- + Determines the major funding resources and advocacy actions needed to achieve the vision;
- + Defines operational and management parameters for today and all future decision-making;
- + Establishes a general guidance and policy tool for decision-making as implementation occurs and to address future unforeseen conditions; and
- + Enables Jefferson County to be competitive for grant funding for parks and programming improvements.

The recommendations in this system-wide master plan report are for guidance in decision-making; the plan is not the letter of the law. The master plan includes a clear vision for what can be achieved in Jefferson County and the key next steps. Multiple parties will be involved in making many future decisions, and many partnerships are needed; therefore the plan can serve as common reference for all parties, as step-by-step decisions are made. As each major project is advanced through detailed planning and design, public engagement should be integral to the process.



Goal #1 - Enhance the user's experience in all of Jefferson County's parks through basic amenities, comfort facilities, and landscape upgrades.

In order for park visitors to have a great park visitation experience there must be a consistent level of quality throughout the entire park system. This includes basic amenities such as restroom facilities, access to drinking water, and, in parks with active sports recreation facilities, concession facilities. All of the JCPRC parks should have uniform branding elements which convey that each park is part of the JCPRC park system and is clean and safe. Successful branding extends well beyond the information provided and the look of an entrance sign; it includes a broad set of components that are consistent park-to-park ranging from benches, signing, pavilions (architectural "style"), lighting, restroom facilities, etc. The branding standards should also establish an ecology-based approach to landscape management based on regional plant communities that govern landscape management and plantings with the parks to establish richer landscape experience in the parks that today are predominantly mowed-turf intensive. At the conclusion of this effort, park visitors will have confidence in knowing that when visiting any park in the Jefferson County park system, they will be provided with quality facilities, basic services, and code compliant facilities. James Hite Park especially requires basic amenities to serve the large number of park visitors now using the recreational fields. Sam Michael's Park, however, is the one exception

to this recommendation, although it could benefit from comprehensive system signing and additional landscape improvements.

What will it take to achieve this goal? To ensure a consistent level of quality throughout the entire park system a uniform set of amenity and landscape design standards should be developed and then systematically implemented in each park. JCPRC should be the leader of this effort, develop the standards, systematically implement the improvements park by park, and ensure that consistency is maintained.

What are the financial resources needed? \$2M to \$3M ranging from \$250K to \$750K per park, depending on the size of the park and the facilities required.

Timeline: This effort can start in year 1 and will likely take 3-6 years to implement the base improvements throughout the system.



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Goal #2 - Create a 100 Mile “Jefferson Connectivity” Trail Network (starting by connecting the C&O Canal Towpath, the Appalachian Trail, and the Harpers Ferry National Park trail network to Sam Michael’s Park, the Route 9 Trail, and the Cities of Ranson and Charles Town.)

Residents are clamoring for more trails and greater interconnectivity between parks, schools, and neighborhoods. Trails are investments that pay multiple dividends since they are recreational facilities unto themselves as well as serving a larger role in enhancing overall connectivity to a wide range of uses and activities. Jefferson County is well served with major regional and larger trail facilities such as the C&O Towpath and the Appalachian Trail. Jefferson County only needs to provide the critical connections to potentially link Jefferson County neighborhoods and parks directly to a large swath of the Mid-Atlantic region and major destinations such as Washington, D.C. and Pittsburgh. Trails were one of the top facilities requested for expansion by the public through the entire planning process. A great trail system doesn’t happen overnight, but Jefferson County already has a solid basis for creating a truly world class trail network with potentially 100-miles of dedicated trails. Trails have one of the highest participation rates of any recreation facility and are also incredibly effective economic development tools. As infrastructure investment is planned, it should include the appropriate trail facilities and connections required to make Jefferson County a truly connected community.

What will it take to achieve this goal? A dedicated Trail Development “Champion” staff person within Jefferson County government focused on advancing the planning, design, and construction of trail segments and reviewing all plans, whether public infrastructure or private development to ensure that all trail connectivity opportunities are capitalized and no critical connections are lost.

What are the financial resources needed? Trail projects can be costly, but incremental trail segments can be achieved at relatively low costs, especially if critical segments are achieved through the codification of trail construction requirements as a part of the typical land development process. \$1M would support a major effort to expand out from the existing trails and parks as a visible effort to advance this Jefferson County-wide connectivity goal.

Timeline: This effort can start immediately through the coordination work as private land development plans are submitted and reviewed for approval. It will likely take 10 years or longer to establish the key linkages described.



Goal #3 - Design and implement a grand vision for Sam Michael’s Park that elevates the park to a true county-scale and “the premiere” park facility for Jefferson County (100+ acres).

Thinking as a county park system means that parks should be larger and more comprehensive than what has historically been provided. Premier parks should have facilities that will serve broad community needs and are at a scale that individual cities and towns cannot likely provide, such as amphitheatres, gyms, and other larger format facilities.

What will it take to achieve this goal? Sam Michael’s Park needs a truly comprehensive master plan that takes into account all of the opportunities within the current site and to explore the opportunities to acquire adjacent land which in some manner can be directly connected to the existing park.

What are the financial resources needed? \$75K for master planning; \$3M to \$5M based on land value to have a significant impact on expanding the size and caliber of Sam Michael’s Park.

Timeline: This effort should start within the first 2 years and then be implemented incrementally over the next 10+ years. It is critically important that a comprehensive site master plan be developed for Sam Michael’s Park before any additional major capital improvements are made. This effort should consider some of the special facility opportunities/recommendations proposed in Chapter 5 of this master plan.



Goal #4 - Increase public access to Jefferson County's unique and bountiful waterways by permanently protecting waterfront properties for the public benefit.

Natural resources are often the aspect of a community that influences what makes a parks and recreation system unique and special. In this regard, Jefferson County is truly blessed with riches, especially with its waterways and major historical and cultural attractions, many of which occur along or near them. With the Potomac River, the Shenandoah River, and the Opequon Creek, Jefferson County is literally surrounded on three sides with waterways as well as having important water corridors running through it, such as the Evitts Run Creek, Flowing Springs Creek, and Cattail Run Creek. Despite the presence of these assets and a national treasure in Harpers Ferry National Park, surprisingly little of the waterway frontage is actually publicly accessible. Efforts to increase public access to the rivers and creeks with the county will greatly enhance the recreational opportunities of the residents, expand Jefferson County as a tourism destination, and protect valuable natural resource areas in this Chesapeake Bay watershed.

What will it take to achieve this goal? As with the creation of county-wide interconnected trail network, it is important to have a staff person in Jefferson County government specifically focused on creating a comprehensive inventory and tracking the status of waterfront properties. The goal of this initiative is to consider a series of land acquisition criteria and then actively pursue a property-by-property strategy for obtaining public access rights, permanently protecting natural resources and habitats and strategically planning support facilities to provide greater access to water-based recreation.

What are the financial resources needed? Open space preservation can be costly if outright, fee-simple purchasing of land is sought. The plan proposes that a palette of open space preservation tools be utilized including improved ordinances, easements, gifting/estate planning, conservation incentives, and land acquisitions. A dedicated fund should be established and cultivated to generate on-hand resources needed to potentially respond to open space preservation opportunities as they arise. \$1M to \$2M in seed funds for open space preservation should be a goal.

Timeline: This is a long-term effort, however, outreach to property owners is important to determine donations, easements, and the potential for fee-simple acquisitions, over time. Ultimately, this effort will be continual until all or a significant amount of the waterway frontage is addressed.



Goal #5 – Plan and construct an aquatics facility in partnership with the Jefferson County Schools System and fulfill a long-standing community desire for recreational aquatics, safety training, and water-based health and well-being activities in Jefferson County.

The need for a full service indoor aquatics facility is highly apparent and was by far the most commonly expressed desire in terms of new facilities, throughout the community outreach aspect of this plan's preparation. Modern aquatic facilities are costly to construct, maintain, and manage. If planned and designed properly they can serve as important destination and revenue generators to aid in their financial operation.

What will it take to achieve this goal? Partnerships are important to many of the recommendations in this plan, but none more so than the undertaking of the creation of a high-quality modern aquatics facility. The JCPRC cannot and should not create a facility on its own but instead should explore a partnership with Jefferson County Schools which also needs a facility. Creating a jointly constructed facility could create a path to overcome the financial barriers that otherwise exist. It would also ensure the maximum utilization by the community of a public funded facility is achieved. This effort is just one of several opportunities identified in this plan to strengthen the partnership between Jefferson County Schools and JCPRC in order to optimize recreational facilities to their maximum community benefit.

What are the financial resources needed? \$50K for a feasibility study; \$7M to \$10M for construction based on the size and complexity of the facility as well as other support facilities beyond a traditional tank pool, such as spray pools, or other amenities. The partnership would support the shared cost of insurance, operation, maintenance, and regulatory compliance based on costs evaluated during the feasibility study stage.

Timeline: This effort should start within the first 2 years to undertake the full feasibility analysis of a joint aquatics facility. Years 3-6 for fund raising and years 6-9 for final design and construction.

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Goal #6 - Plan for growth by acquiring the necessary land to create another county level park (100+ Acres) within the next twenty years.

Even with the modest growth projected in *Envision Jefferson 2035*, the Jefferson County's Comprehensive Plan prepared in 2015, there will be a substantial increase in population over the next 20 to 30 years in Jefferson County. An important value of a comprehensive planning effort, whether broadly considered or topic specific, is to ensure that as community population and demographic changes occur, Jefferson County is well prepared for those changes. Based on project population growth with the targeted growth management areas within the Comprehensive Plan, there will be a need for additional parkland. Since Jefferson County's parks are already considered under-sized by typical county level standards, it is suggested that lands specifically adjacent to existing parklands should be given a priority in order to build upon existing resources. An example area that may represent an opportunity to link multiple properties is in the Leetown Park Planning District. If lands and easements could be acquired that link Leetown Park, James Hite Park, and the Jefferson County Fairgrounds Complex, a county-scaled park "complex" could be established.

What will it take to achieve this goal? JCPRC staff, in conjunction with other Jefferson County departments and commission staff should be researching opportunities to strategically acquire lands for future park spaces. It is important to start now in order to be prepared to have new parks on line in the next 10 to 20 years.

What are the financial resources needed? \$2M+ based on land values.

Timeline: This is a long-term effort, however, outreach to property owners surrounding the larger existing Jefferson County parks should start now to determine if there are opportunities to acquire strategically valuable lands that could connect to, or directly expand, the size of existing parks. Long-term options on properties might be able to be secured within years 5-8 with the ability to acquire within years 8-10.



Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management, operations, and programming actions to achieve the vision of this plan.

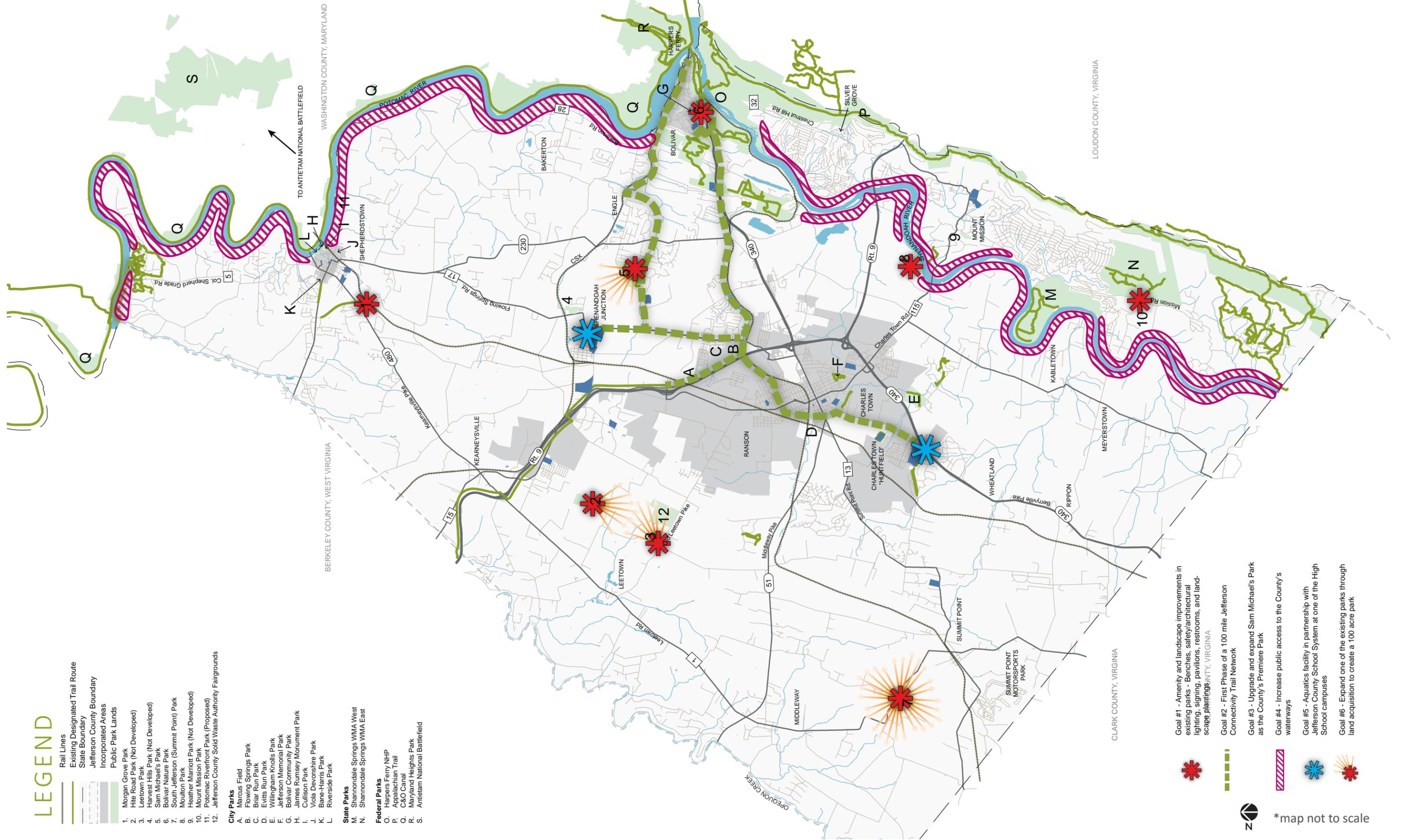
Although not as exciting to many as physical projects, the fact is, a great park system is not achievable without equally high-quality management and operations. The master plan makes extensive recommendations on ways to build upon the management and operations structures that exist to improve the quality of what exists today, in order to better serve residents. This can be achieved through the provision of additional and enhanced programs, especially utilizing expanded facilities developed as a part of this plan, and to be prepared to efficiently serve a growing system.

What will it take to achieve this goal? JCPRC staff, in conjunction with elected officials, need to commit the necessary staffing, budgetary, and policy resources to foster the JCPRC's management and organizational growth.

Timeline: This system-wide master plan provides the basis for many of the management and operation procedures and protocols needed to implement the plan. Actions needed to implement the plan can start immediately and in fact the JCPRC staff have already begun to enact many of the recommended procedures.

Using this master plan as a guide, Jefferson County's community leaders can continue their efforts and leverage momentum to position this area as the region's and state's top-tier opportunity for commerce, recreation, tourism, smart growth, urban revitalization, and high-quality-of-life living.

RECOMMENDED INITIATIVES MAP



LEGEND

- Rail Lines
 - Existing Designated Trail Route
 - State Boundary
 - Jefferson County Boundary
 - Incorporated Areas
 - Public Park Lands
1. Morgan Grove Park
 2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
 3. Leetown Park
 4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
 5. Sam Michael's Park
 6. Bolivar Nature Park
 7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
 8. Moulton Park
 9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
 10. Mount Mission Park
 11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
 12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

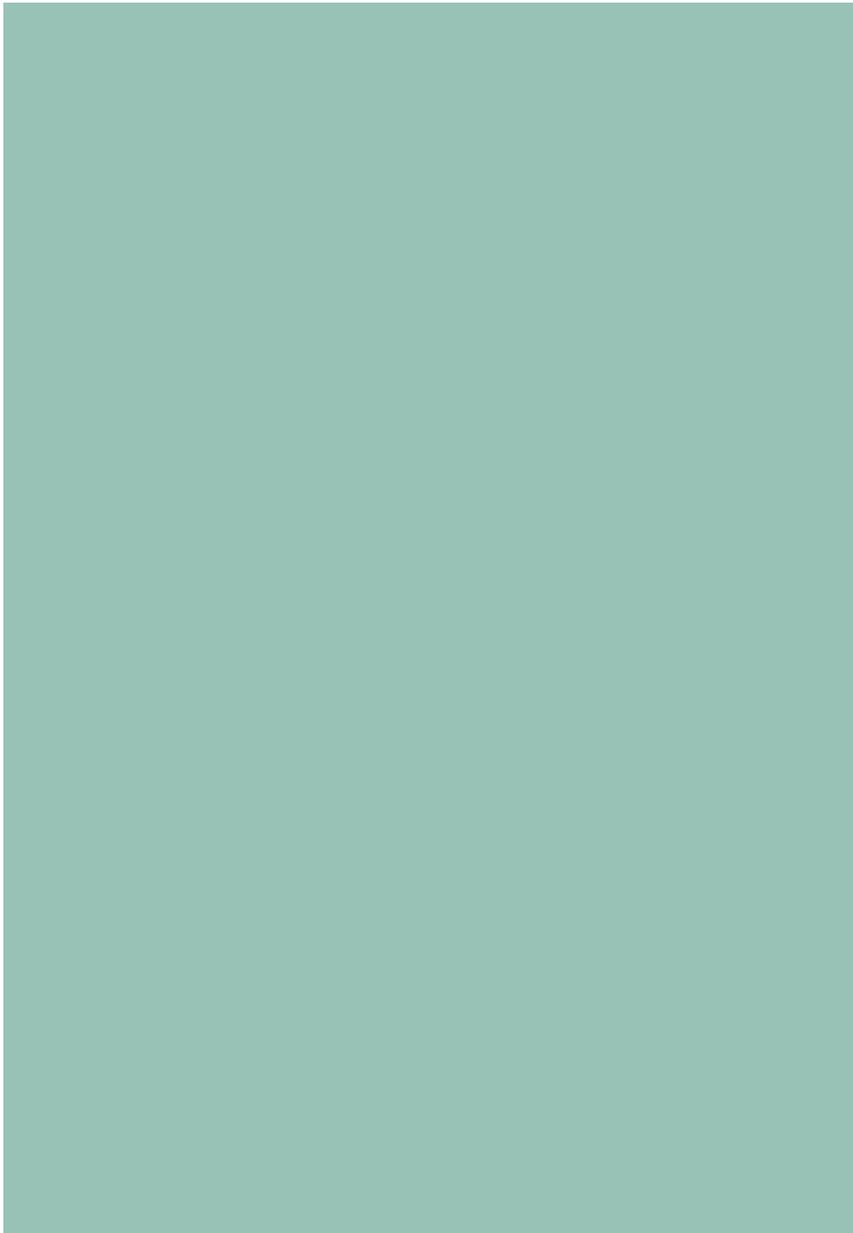
- City Parks**
- A. Marcus Field
 - B. Flowing Springs Park
 - C. Briar Run Park
 - D. Everts Run Park
 - E. Williamson Knolls Park
 - F. Jefferson Memorial Park
 - G. Bolivar Community Park
 - H. James Rumsey Monument Park
 - I. Cullison Park
 - J. Viola Devonshire Park
 - K. Bane-Harris Park
 - L. Riverside Park
- State Parks**
- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
 - N. Shannondale Springs WMA East
- Federal Parks**
- O. Harpers Ferry/NHP
 - P. Appalachian Trail
 - Q. C&O Canal
 - R. Maryland Heights Park
 - S. Antietam National Battlefield

- Goal #1 - Amenity and landscape improvements in existing parks - Benches, safety/architectural lighting, signing, pavilions, restrooms, and landscape plantings
- Goal #2 - First Phase of a 100 mile Jefferson Connectivity Trail Network
- Goal #3 - Upgrade and expand Sam Michael's Park as the County's Premiere Park
- Goal #4 - Increase public access to the County's waterways
- Goal #5 - Aquatics facility in partnership with Jefferson County School System at one of the High School campuses
- Goal #6 - Expand one of the existing parks through land acquisition to create a 100 acre park

* map not to scale

JEFFERSON COUNTY SYSTEM-WIDE PARKS MASTER PLAN

Jefferson County's
parks today & the
future



01

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

jefferson county's parks today & the future

PARKS AND RECREATION – A KEY COMPONENT OF COMMUNITY SUCCESS

Jefferson County, West Virginia, is a recreation mecca. Home to national, state, and local treasures, the county is rich with opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy the great outdoors and experience culture and heritage. These treasures include Harpers Ferry and C&O Canal National Parks, the Appalachian Trail; important historical sites; the Potomac River and Shenandoah River; state wildlife management areas; places to hunt, fish, hike, and ride bicycles and horses; a county-wide parks and recreation system; charming towns and cities with close-to-home parks; and educational institutions from kindergarten through university that serve as community recreation venues. In addition to public recreational opportunities, many private recreation businesses support participation in outdoor recreation, cultural, and historic activities. In fact, tourism is a driving force behind the economy in Jefferson County. In 2015, Yahoo named Harpers Ferry as the number one fall destination in the United States.

Today, Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission (JCPRC) is a provider of recreation services to the residents, and to a lesser extent, visitors to the county. Through this plan JCPRC will be the primary provider of recreation services, including aiding Jefferson County's residents in achieving greater health and wellness. JCPRC believes that only through a bold and well defined vision can everyday living in Jefferson County be filled with activity and recreational engagement for all ages, interests and abilities.

This master plan is the long-range plan for the county's parks, recreation, and open space resources. It provides JCPRC with a defined path forward for improving parks and recreation services in a manner that emphasizes what makes Jefferson County great. It also expands Jefferson County's economic potential, while preserving what makes it an attractive and exciting place to live, work, and play!

Vision

By the year 2025: Jefferson County will offer an exceptional setting in which to live, work, invest, and visit. The park system and its beauty will be a part of daily life and shape the character of Jefferson County. Access to the great outdoors will be conveniently available for nature-based recreation; there will be close-to-home parks for active recreation; and the trail system will connect recreational cornerstones, historical destinations, and open space for recreation and transportation.

Sound ecological stewardship and vibrant recreation opportunities will make Jefferson County renown as a destination with "lots to do" in a pristine environment yet close to metropolitan life. The park system will be sustainable, well-maintained, and safe and meet the needs of individuals, families, and the county's communities. Aware of its value to their lives, residents will be proud stewards and supporters of an extraordinary park and recreation system.

Based on its role in a thriving county economy and a very desirable quality-of-life in Jefferson County, the park system will be fiscally sustainable through support from a mix of public and private resources and collaborative partnerships to contribute to the renewal of the human spirit and a strong sense-of-place unique to Jefferson County.

Mission

Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission

Mission in Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Why Does JCPRC exist?

JCPRC exists to provide places and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, well-being, community, and the environment. Its mission is to take a leadership role in harnessing resources for the purpose of planning, developing, implementing, evaluating, and operating a county-wide system of parks, recreation, conservation areas, and trail opportunities for people who live, work, and visit here.

Jefferson County Parks & Recreation Commission **Guiding Statements**

The vision, mission, and values are the guiding statements for the JCPRC. These statements will be connected to the work of the organization through annual budgets, work plans, capital improvement program, and the ten-year implementation plan. Progress toward achieving the vision set forth in the plan will be evaluated at an individual, organizational, commission, and community level. The guiding statements are as follows:

Action Statements

The Action Statements identify how JCPRC performs its work.

Sustainability - Meet park and recreation needs by balancing environmental, economic, and equity concerns to ensure that the Jefferson County parks and recreation system thrives for many generations far into the future.

Environment - Sustain and enhance parklands, waters, and forests.

Economic - Develop short-term and long-term financial stability of the park system.

Equity - Provide residents with the opportunity to improve their quality-of-life and well-being through outstanding parks and recreation services that are suited to their respective needs.

Visionary Leadership - Recognize the need for ongoing leadership and collaboration in achieving excellence.

Responsiveness and Innovation - Anticipate and thoughtfully respond to the diverse needs of Jefferson

County's communities, continually seeking ways to better deliver park and recreation services.

Independence and Focus - Focus on obtaining and providing the resources necessary to accomplish its mission and form effective, responsible partnerships while maintaining its independence.

Applying the Statements

This plan embraces innovation. It also communicates that ongoing learning and community outreach and research are required to provide the best park and recreation services to Jefferson County residents and visitors. The success of this vision is tied to the commitment of the County Commissioners, the JCPRC, its employees, and its partners, and to the value the community places on maintaining and improving the Jefferson County's park system. As the plan is implemented, residents and park visitors can look forward to an exciting future in which services are continually evaluated and improved to ensure that needs are met; facilities are maintained and renewed as new ones are created; connection with the natural environment is strengthened; sustainable practices are expanded; and parks and recreation is a highly valuable economic asset.

Providing parkland and preserving and protecting open space will be a fundamental part of Jefferson County's overall decision-making process in terms of all relevant aspects of policies and regulations, especially those that impact land development, development expansion, smart-growth, and infrastructure.

JCPRC not only provides a service to its residents in the form of parks and recreation facilities and programs, it also provides greater value to Jefferson County as a whole by making it a more attractive place to live, work, and play, therefore increasing its economic competitiveness.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

+ *Jefferson County's Parks Today & The Future*

HOW DOES JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMPARE?

A valuable tool to evaluate how JCPRC is functioning today, is to compare key physical, management and financial aspects against national standards, or a system with comparable factors. As the table below shows, JCPRC has an exceptionally high Cost Recovery Rate, yet its Maintenance Budget per Park Acre is extremely low, when compared to typical parks and recreation agency equivalencies, such as the amount of park acreage and population. This comparison is meant only as one tool to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of Jefferson County's parks and recreation system and how these aspects and factors support the Vision and Mission of JCPRC for the future.

<i>Jefferson County by the Numbers</i>		
	JCPRC	Typical Parks and Recreation Agency Equivalent to Jefferson County* and its Facilities
Square Miles	209	18
Population in 2015	56,482	43,511
Number of County Parks	10	24
County Park Acreage	409	564
Acres Per 1,000 Residents	7.17	9.5
Parks & Recreation Budget	\$1,013,611	\$2,137,279
Per Capita Budget	\$17.95	\$76.44
Ratio of Parks and Recreation Budget to County Operating Budget	3.3%	5%
Cost Recovery Rate	53%	29%
Full Time Employees	6	41
Maintenance Employees	1 FTE and 6 PT Seasonal	22
Maintenance Budget Per Park Acre	\$558	\$3,764 - 6,476

*National Recreation and Park Association. (2015) Field Report. (Ashburn, VA)

JEFFERSON COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION
MASTER PLAN

key

recommendations



02

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

key recommendations

This master plan covers diverse aspects of Jefferson County's parks and recreation system. The master plan identifies specific recommendations that support the implementation of the Parks and Recreation 2026 Master Plan. These recommendations should be considered as the underlying aspects that will drive the master plan's implementation.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Implement a Program Management Plan

Develop and implement a Program Management Plan that focuses on identifying and meeting the needs of customers of the JCPRC as the driver in program planning rather than focusing on what programs to offer.

Monitor and Track Program Performance

Use the formulas and guidelines recommended in the plan to develop the Program Management Plan including program standards, high quality customer service, benefits and outcomes, cost recovery, and program life cycle.

Develop and Implement a Strategic Promotional Program

This program will increase public awareness about parks and recreation opportunities and the benefits that JCPRC brings to the economy, the environment, and the health and welfare of the citizens.

Perform and Regularly Update the Management Impact Statement

Use the Management Impact Statement in determining when to add new major programs, programs that require significant financial support, and programs that have ramifications for staffing.

Recognize that the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission Cannot be All Things to All People

Limitations of staff and budget require the JCPRC to focus on programs and services that matter most to the public, conserve the environment, contribute to Jefferson County's economic vitality, and help to sustain the long-term financial viability of public parks and recreation. The JCPRC should always be thinking at a "county-scale" when making decisions related to programs and facilities.

PARKS AND FACILITIES

Operate with a "County-scale" Mindset on All Actions Related to Parks and Facilities

Thinking like a county park system means that parks should be larger and more comprehensive than what has historically been provided. This approach means that some of the existing smaller facilities, such as Bolivar Nature Park, may be more appropriately run at the municipal level, freeing up the JCPRC to expand and improve its larger facilities. JCPRC staff and its board should visit other model county level systems to see comparable systems and examples of "best practices."

Formalize and Implement System-wide "Base" Improvements

To ensure a consistent level of quality throughout the entire park system, first and foremost, a uniform set of landscape design standards should be developed. These standards should establish a set palette of consistent park amenities including benches, signing, pavilions (architectural "style"), lighting, etc. These standards should also establish an ecology-based approach to landscape management based on regional plant communities, which should govern landscape management, i.e. limit turf and mowing to high-use areas, as well as set plant material lists, exotic/invasive removal, etc. All of the parks should have some consistent elements that brand them as part of the JCPRC park system. Successful branding extends well beyond the information and look of the entrance sign; it includes a broad set of components that are consistent park-to-park.

Elevate the Quality of Parks through Site Specific Park Master Plans

Historically, there has been a limited site specific park master planning occurring as a formal process. This has resulted in parks that lack cohesive and coherent organization and utilization of lands. Parks are not only about sports. Great parks are not just about how many active sport facilities can be crammed onto a tract of land, but considers the balance of needs of all age groups, interests, and a park's role in the overall county system. In all cases, parks should be master planned with an emphasis of evaluating the management and maintenance implications on the JCPRC to ensure that any investments made can be sustained in a high-quality manner for the long-term.

Optimize School Facilities for the Full Recreation Benefit of County Residents

Some of Jefferson County’s highest quality recreation facilities are located on school properties. In many cases these facilities are off-limits to the general public. JCPRC and the school district established a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to begin the process of partnering and sharing of facilities. JCPRC should take the lead on defining pilot efforts to deploy the MOU to ensure that it is mutually effective and sustainable.

Expand the Reach of Recreation Facilities and Recreation Opportunities Through a County-wide Trail System

Trails were one of the top facilities requested for expansion by the public through the entire planning process. A great trail system doesn’t happen overnight, but Jefferson County already has a basis for creating a truly world class trail network with potentially 100-miles of dedicated trails. Trails have one of the highest participation rates of any recreation facility and are also incredibly effective economic development tools. The master plan proposes a series of proactive techniques for implementing a county-wide trail system with the key recommendation of establishing a dedicated Trail Development Coordinator which, ideally, is based in the County’s Office of Planning and Zoning. This will ensure that as each new land development and infrastructure investment is planned considering parks and recreation needs and includes the appropriate trail facilities and connections.

MANAGEMENT, MAINTENANCE AND BUDGET

Increase Partnerships

Leverage resources through partnerships with the Jefferson County Board of Education, private businesses, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), the National Park Service, the Potomac Audubon Society, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and others.

Add Staff Positions

Add a new position for Program Development and Special Events within JCPRC. The goal of this position should be to generate revenue through special events and through

development of partnerships and sponsorships. The JCPRC should also add a new position of Facility Manager to manage scheduling, rentals, use, promotion, and coordination with maintenance. As stated above, the JCPRC should collaborate with the Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning on establishing a shared a Trail Development Coordinator position to plan the county-wide trail system, review land development projects, to promote inter-connected trail linkages, and to prepare grant applications for trail acquisition and development. The JCPRC positions should be elevated to include a “Cabinet” level positions for major functions such as parks, recreation programs, development, and marketing (customer service). The goal should be to enable the Director’s position to become 60 percent outreach, 20 percent administration, and 20 percent program and facility development including park planning.

Enhance Financial Management

Develop a Revenue Policy Manual that identifies the JCPRC’s revenue philosophy, fees and charges goals, and cost recovery. It should also include revenue producing facilities, financial assistance goals, guidelines for programs and services, gifts, fund-raising events, friends’ organizations, county allocations, compulsory resources such as a future bond levy, and how all revenues are accounted for and presented for the purposes of accountability, AND decision-making.

Formalize and Implement Consistent Maintenance Management Protocols

Recognize that current maintenance management accomplishes a great deal with an undersized budget and staff. Establish park maintenance quality standards to ensure efficient allocation of resources where the need is greatest. Work towards the standards recommended in this plan of additional staff and per acre budget for park maintenance. Add maintenance management components for sports turf, natural resources, and maintenance. Align fees with actual maintenance costs. The maintenance management program should be formalized to ensure that the system is in place for weather management, staff, JCPRC, and county government changes.

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JEFFERSON COUNTY
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r e c r e a t i o n
o p p o r t u n i t i e s



03

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

recreation opportunities

The creation of program opportunities focuses on the direct provision, facilitation, and promotion of recreation opportunities within Jefferson County, as well as providing goals and recommendations for the future.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Jefferson County, is a recreation mecca. Home to national, state and local treasures, the county is rich with opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy the great outdoors and experience culture and heritage. These treasures include Harpers Ferry National Park; the Appalachian Trail; important historical sites; nationally significant rivers; state wildlife management areas; places to hunt, fish, hike, and ride bicycles and horses. There is a county-wide parks and recreation system; charming towns with close-to-home parks; and educational institutions from kindergarten through the university level, that serve as community recreation venues. In addition to public recreational opportunities, many private recreation businesses support participation in outdoor recreation, cultural, and historic activities. In fact, tourism is a driving force behind the economy in Jefferson County. In 2015, Yahoo named Harpers Ferry as the number one fall destination in the United States.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION'S MAJOR ROLE IN RECREATION

The JCPRC has three distinct roles in recreation in the 209 square mile county. These include providing facilities for self-directed recreation; facilitating recreation provided by other community-based organizations; and offering organized scheduled programs, activities, and events. All three of these roles are essential to a high quality parks and recreation system.

Self-Directed Recreation

The majority of recreation opportunities experienced in Jefferson County are those in which people enjoy the great outdoors. Outdoor recreation participation highlights include:

- + About 49.2 percent of the U.S.A. population participated in an outdoor are recreation at least once in 2013;

- + Almost one-quarter of all outdoor enthusiasts participated in outdoor activities at least twice per week;
- + Running, including jogging and trail running, was the most popular activity among Americans when measured by number of participants and by number of total annual outings;
- + Walking for fitness is the most popular crossover activity. In 2013, 53 percent of outdoor enthusiasts also walked; and
- + The biggest motivator for outdoor participation was getting exercise.

Interest in participation in outdoor recreation varies throughout one's lifetime. It is important for recreation program planners to understand these changes in order to provide the kinds of opportunities that people would enjoy at various life stages as well as for the purpose of target marketing. Table 3.1 presents outdoor activities of the most interest according to age group to help the JCPRC with targeting programs to all age groups.

As described in the parks and recreation facilities assessment aspects of this plan, the JCPRC offers a wide range of facilities for people to enjoy on their own including places to walk, run, and get fit; playgrounds; ballfields; game courts; a dog park; picnic areas with pavilions; a camp ground; natural areas for de-stressing and experiencing nature; and an indoor recreation center with a fitness room, gym, walking area, and activity rooms. It is estimated that about 80 percent of recreational participation is self-directed. Making people aware of the extensive recreation opportunities throughout the county is an important aspect of the role of the JCPRC.

Facilitating Recreation Provided by Community-Based Organizations

The JCPRC devotes a considerable amount of time to facilitating the recreational opportunities offered by other community-based organizations. Sports leagues are the majority of the providers with whom the JCPRC works on a regular basis. There are approximately nine sports leagues in the county, many of which depend upon the use of Jefferson County's athletic facilities and their amenities such as restrooms, parking, and water fountains in addition to the facility scheduling and coordination provided by the JCPRC. Other organizations such as the Jefferson County

Table 3.1. Outdoor Activities of Most Interest by Age Group

Ages 6-12	Ages 13-17	Ages 18-24	Ages 23-34
Swimming For Fitness	Camping	Camping	Swimming for Fitness
Camping	Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness	Bicycling
Bicycling	Bicycling	Bicycling	Camping
Running/Jogging	Working Out with Weights	Hiking	Hiking
Basketball	Working Out Using Machines	Working Out with Weights	Working Out with Weights
Fishing	Hiking	Running/Jogging	Running/Jogging
Hiking	Running/Jogging	Backpacking	Working Out with Weights
Soccer	Shooting	Working Out Using Machines	Backpacking
Swimming on a Team	Trail Running	Climbing	Canoeing
Working Out with Weights	Fishing	Trail Running	Trail Running
Ages 34-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55-64	Ages 65+
Hiking	Swim for Fitness	Bicycling	Swimming for Fitness
Swimming for Fitness	Camping	Swimming for Fitness	Birdwatching/ Wildlife Viewing
Camping	Bicycling	Camping	Working Out Using Machines
Bicycling	Hiking	Hiking	Hiking
Working Out with Weights	Working Out Using Machines	Working Out with Weights	Fishing
Working Out Using Machines	Birdwatching/Wildlife Viewing	Fishing	Bicycling
Running/Jogging	Working Out with Weights	Working Out Using Machines	Working Out with Weights
Canoeing	Canoeing	Birdwatching/Wildlife Viewing	Fitness Classes
Backpacking	Fishing	Canoeing	Camping
Rafting	Backpacking	Fitness Classes	Golf

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

+ Recreation Opportunities

Board of Education; Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts; and families and social groups use county parks and recreation facilities for a wide range of activities such as sports; running races; special events; family reunions; weddings; and other celebrations. The JCPRC also assisted Charles Town in providing swim lessons. While the commission once directly provided the swim lessons, the arrangements changed regarding aquatics programs. The Charles Town Recreation Board now provides the lessons while the JCPRC handles the administration of the summer program including registration. The JCPRC does not charge any fee for this service. The JCPRC schedules events offered throughout the year by other groups. This includes providing customer service, scheduling coordination, and facility maintenance to provide an excellent experience by those using county facilities.

Organized Programs and Services

The JCPRC provides programs and services year round in: aquatics; arts and crafts; athletics; camps; cheer and gymnastics; dance and fitness; day trips; martial arts; and special interest programs for learning and lifelong enrichment. Table 3.2 presents the inventory of programs by program category offered by the JCPRC in Fiscal Year 2014-15. Table 3.2 also shows that the JCPRC offered 219 different programs with a total of 715 sessions. Some of the programs were so popular that people were wait-listed due

to lack of program space. Aquatics had the highest number of unserved residents.

Who Participates in JCPRC’s Organized Programs?

The majority of the participants in the JCPRC’s organized programs are children age 12 and under and females of all ages.

Where Are the Programs Located?

The majority of the organized programs are held in Sam Michael’s Park and the Community Center. This is the hub of the county’s parks and recreation services and operations. The JCPRC management team has expressed concern about the need to provide more services throughout the county and is exploring ways to address this need.

How Are the Programs Supported?

The JCPRC charges fees for participation in the organized scheduled programs. The fees cover the direct expenses of instructor wages or fees. The JCPRC also generates approximately 54 sponsorships for programs and donations for programs in the last fiscal year ranging from \$5 to \$2,000. The Fireworks and Movie Nights were the two major sources of revenue from donors.

How Are Programs Planned and Managed?

Program	Number of Programs	Number of Participants	Number of Sessions Offered	Number on Waitlist
Aquatics	11	161	20	50
Arts & Crafts	42	661	94	18
Athletics	31	628	100	19
Camps	45	1,222	123	32
Cheer/Gymnastics	17	626	91	3
Dance/Fitness	14	344	107	4
Day Trips	3	63	3	4
Martial Arts	9	295	75	0
Special Events	21	984	39	0
Special Interests	26	278	63	7
TOTALS	219	5,262	715	137

The JCPRC offers three program seasons that correspond with the school year: fall, winter/spring and summer. The recreation staff develops the program guide for each season. The program guide serves as the basis for program planning for the impending season. There is no formal planning or evaluation process in place. The orientation of program planning is providing programs in the Sam Michael's Park area of the county with an emphasis on children under 12 and females. No formal evaluation system is in place for recreation programs. Programs are advertised in the program guide, on the website, and through social media.

What Is the Commission's Staffing Capacity for Recreation Programs?

The JCPRC has limited staff for planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluation of organized, scheduled programs. The Director, Assistant Director, Marketing Coordinator, and even front desk personnel all pitch in with respect to programs and services. The Assistant Parks and Recreation Director has the most significant responsibility for organized programs. There is no dedicated recreation program coordinator on staff.

OTHER RECREATION PROVIDERS

Jefferson County is fortunate in having major organizations, both public and commercial, that provide parks and recreation programs and services. They offer important opportunities for partnerships in the delivery of recreation services for people who live, work, and visit here. These include the following:

National Organizations

The National Park Service and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy have major sites in Jefferson County.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park - Harpers Ferry and Bolivar are two tiny 19th century villages, side-by-side, which lie at the eastern-most point of West Virginia, bordered by the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park surrounds both towns, providing visitors with tours, museums, hiking, and biking trails --- all within easy walking distance of the living history villages. Today, the majestic beauty of the two rivers and the cliffs surrounding Harpers Ferry draw visitors from all over the world. The Appalachian Trail goes through the heart of town. Boutique shops offer a variety of beautiful items for our visitors and local eateries can satisfy the palate. Local

outfitters can help with rafting, tubing, or kayaking trips. As the eastern gateway to West Virginia, Harpers Ferry beckons visitors from near and far.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy Visitors' Center in Harpers Ferry is the physical and psychological midpoint of the Appalachian Trail being approximately 1,000 mile north and 1,000 mile south from the trail's terminal points. Consequently, it is a major destination for hikers.

National Conservation Training Center - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works diligently at its National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) located north of Shepherdstown, to become a home for inspiring conservation excellence through learning and collaboration. They are committed to "conservation through learning"—building and sharing knowledge among Service professionals and their many partners who work to conserve and manage fish and wildlife resources. The National Conservation Training Center supports the mission of the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service in five critical ways:

- + **Home and Heritage** (<http://training.fws.gov/history/>): NCTC serves as the physical and virtual "home" of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, where the history and heritage of the Service are preserved and shared;
- + **Training for the Mission** (<http://training.fws.gov/courses/>): NCTC provides exemplary training and professional development tailored to support Service employees and conservation partners in accomplishing the agency's mission;
- + **Youth in Conservation** (<http://training.fws.gov/topic/youth/>): NCTC helps the Service engage, educate, and employ the next generation of conservationists who reflect our diverse society, ensuring that our natural resource legacy is left in capable hands;
- + **Partnerships** (<http://training.fws.gov/programs/>): NCTC helps solve urgent conservation challenges, such as climate change, by bringing together diverse partners representing multiple points of view; and
- + **Sustainability** (<http://training.fws.gov/campus/nctc-is-green.html>): NCTC is a national leader in the conservation community for its state-of-the art facility and green practices.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

+ Recreation Opportunities

NCTC could potentially be a critical partner for advancing conservation efforts, parks, recreation, and stewardship in Jefferson County. One of the NCTC's core objectives, as shown in their strategic plan, specifies:

Increase the number of partner organizations using the NCTC facility. Evaluate the partnerships analysis and implement a marketing plan to increase the number of new partners using the facility for training and special events, while maintaining priority for service employees.

STATE ORGANIZATIONS

The 1,361-acre West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management area is located in the southeastern part of Jefferson County. Near Shannondale Springs is the home to For the Love of Children (FLOC). The Outdoor Education Center has been giving many children the opportunity for hands-on learning through a variety of activities. Expert staff runs day-long to week-long programs, and summer camps where people of all ages are free to learn and grow. FLOC's programs have grown to include youth development, professional and organizational development, adventure programming, facility rental, and retreats and trainings - all serving clients' needs.

Additionally, the Outdoor Education Center has also been able to establish a highly successful After School Program, Leaders In Action, in two local Jefferson County middle schools. The Outdoor Education Center continues to grow and serve the local and regional schools, non-profits, businesses, and municipalities.

JEFFERSON COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATIONS

Related county and municipal recreation providers in Jefferson County include the following:

- + **Jefferson County Board of Education** - Jefferson County Schools offer facilities for community recreation and sports. The use of school facilities for public recreation falls under the purview of the principal of each school. Jefferson County Schools has sponsored an Adult and Community Education Program for over 30 years. The program has grown to over 100 classes per session. A great variety of choices is offered for lifelong learning for all members of the community. The program also provides members of the community, who do not have children enrolled in the school system, a chance to use

school facilities. The courses offered each session are based on community needs and interests. Individuals, as well as business and industry, use the occupational and educational training courses such as computer application classes. Special interest classes are also offered in several areas, including arts and crafts, and fitness. Tuition is based upon the instructor's fee, the cost of supplies or textbooks needed, and, at times, the cost of using facilities other than school buildings. Two full sessions and a summer mini-session are held each year, allowing Adult and Community Education to run year-round.

- + **Jefferson County Libraries** - There are three public libraries in Jefferson County. They are the South Jefferson Library located in Summit Point; the Shepherdstown Library, and the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library.

- + **Jefferson County Senior Center and the Jefferson County Council On Aging (JCCOA) Jefferson Center** - The Anna Mae Reedy Senior Center is located in Ranson. The mission guides JCCOA in supporting and providing services to Jefferson County Older Adults. JCCOA helps older adults to remain independent and to stay in their homes as long as possible. They are a non-profit agency dedicated to community outreach and committed to enhancing the quality-of-life for older adults through social, health and wellness, education, nutrition, recreation, and various other supporting programs.

- The JCCOA Jefferson Center opened in 2010 to provide day habilitation, pre-vocational, and supported employment services to adults with disabilities. The center is currently providing services to 21 individuals with a ratio of 1 instructor to 1-6 customers. The center is open Monday-Friday from 9am-3pm and provides a very active training schedule. Individuals are learning functional academics, health, safety, communication, social, and job readiness skills. Individuals are also learning how to access their community resources by going to the local library, participating in dances and other activities at the Senior Center, and buying their lunches in the community. Community activities are also brought into the center such as line dancing instructors, service dog visits, and community volunteers who

provide craft classes. The center has also started a Special Olympics group and has taken on contract work, such as bulk mailing for the Circuit Clerk, promotional brochures for the Bloomery Distillery Plantation, shredding for Jefferson County Parks and Recreation, and water bottle design and labeling for Senator Herb Snyder.

+ **Incorporated Towns** - Charles Town and Ranson offer municipal parks and recreation services. As small communities, their programming is limited. Bolivar and Shepherdstown offer close-to-home recreation facilities and attract many visitors traveling to the area for Heritage Tourism.

- **The City of Charles Town Parks & Recreation Commission** (CTPR) was established in 2005 by the City of Charles Town Council. CTPR currently owns and operates three city parks, open daily from dawn to dusk, for public use and enjoyment. Aquatics programming is provided at the community pool in Jefferson Park with support from the JCPRC. The city has also planned a major expansion of its park system to include a linear trail along Evitts Run, from the Ranson Civic Center, south to the recently acquired Happy Retreat property, which is the historic former home of Charles Washington. This effort includes creating a new park on the city's former public works yard, a reservoir, a small park and natural area on the former Supertane site, south of Washington Street.
- In 2004, the **Ranson City Council** authorized the creation of the Parks and Recreation Commission to resolve a serious deficiency in parks and recreational opportunities within the City of Ranson. The city did not have any public parks prior to 2004. In the subsequent years, and with the help and hard work of many people, the City of Ranson now has multiple parks and many assets for citizens and visitors to enjoy.
- The **Town of Bolivar** has two recreation facilities: Bolivar Children's Park, and the Bolivar Community Center, which is available to rent for activities and events.

- **Shepherdstown** has six parks, including a new park under construction. A seven member Parks and Recreation Board serves in an advisory capacity to the town on parks and recreation concerns. The Board has a Facebook page in which they solicit ideas from the community on parks and recreation improvements. Currently, comments for improvements included a skate park, an amphitheater, and more baby swings in Morgan's Grove Park.

PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

- + **Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau** - The Bureau's mission is to promote the economic development of Jefferson County through tourism. In fulfillment of their mission, visitor bureaus typically rely on extensive parks and recreation opportunities to draw tourists, especially visitors making overnight stays. In order to promote parks and recreation facilities for tourism, they must be of high quality design and construction and maintained in premier condition.
- + **Shepherd University** - Shepherd University is an important source of public recreation support. Shepherd University offers the use of its facilities to the greatest extent possible for public recreation. The University is an important partner in aquatics by providing use of its indoor pool for the competitive swim teams. However, the University is limited in its capacity due to its own demands on its pool, thus limiting other swim teams to use the pool only three hours weekly.
- + **Museums** - The Jefferson County Museum is located in historic downtown Charles Town and shares a building with its partner organization, the Charles Town Library. Since its founding in 1965, the museum has been dedicated to fostering the understanding and love of history. The museum is committed to the acquisition, preservation, and exhibition of objects of historical value and of relevance to the county and the region. The historic Shepherdstown Museum is located in the Entler Hotel. In 1983 the Historic Shepherdstown Museum was founded to preserve and display artifacts, furniture, and historic documents that might otherwise have been lost.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

+ Recreation Opportunities

- + **Sports Leagues** - There are approximately nine sports leagues in Jefferson County. It is anticipated that leagues for rugby and lacrosse will be formed in the near future.
- + **Potomac Valley Audubon Society** - The Society offers a wide range of programs and activities that are aimed at promoting greater understanding and appreciation of the natural world for youth, adults, and families such as field trips to natural areas, summer camps, monthly lectures, school programs, and many others.

COMMERCIAL RECREATION PROVIDERS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

- + **Outdoor Recreation Outfitters** - The tremendous outdoor recreation features of Jefferson County have stimulated economic development in the form of businesses related to outdoor recreation, these include outfitters, bicycle shops, eateries, bed and breakfasts, and hotels. They offer white water rafting, zip-lining, hiking, camping, tours, bicycle, and boat rentals, etc.
- + **River Riders Adventure Park** - The park offers white water rafting, tubing, Zip Line Canopy Tours, Aerial Adventure Parks, kayaking, canoeing, stand up paddle boards, mountain biking, and fishing adventures on the beautiful Potomac River (class I-III) and the Shenandoah River.
- + **Bloomery Plantation Distillery** - The Bloomer Plantation Distillery offers tours and programs. It is an important tourism venue.
- + **Hollywood Casino and Thoroughbred Horse Racing Track** - The casino is a major tourist attraction. Revenues generated from the casino and the overnight stays in hotels provide support for Jefferson County operations, including a portion of the JCPRC budget.
- + **Golf Courses** - One golf course is located in Shepherdstown: Cress Creek. Two golf course are located in Charles Town: Sleepy Hollow and Locust Hill.

STRENGTHS

Jefferson County is an outdoor recreation heaven. There are very few counties blessed with the quality, variety, and extent of outdoor recreation opportunities available

here. People travel from all over the world to visit here and experience, the heritage, culture, recreation opportunities, and scenic beauty of the area.

The JCPRC offers programs year round with 650 offered in 2015. Given the organizational nature of Jefferson County with its four small towns, the JCPRC serves as the main provider of public parks and recreation countywide for the people who live, work, and do business here. The JCPRC offers about 219 programs annually with a total of 715 sessions. Nearly 5,300 participants signed up for the JCPRC's programs in Fiscal Year 2014 – 2015. Another 137 people were on the waiting lists for several programs, mainly in aquatics and camps. The programs are targeted largely to children under the age of 12 and adult women. Special events serve people of all ages including families. The JCPRC is fortunate in having an indoor recreational facility complete with a full gym, activity rooms, a small fitness center, and the extensive grounds and facilities of Sam Michael's Park in which the Community Center is located.

Although the focus of the JCPRC appears to be on programs because of the pressure to generate revenue, the JCPRC also serves in the important role of both providing recreation opportunities for people to engage in on their own and facilitating the provision of recreation programs, activities, and services provided by other community based organizations. The vast majority of recreational use in the county is through self-directed recreation such as walking, bicycling, enjoyment of nature, and recreation in the great outdoors including water-based recreation such as paddle sports.

CHALLENGES

The challenges listed below are intended to foster the evolution of the JCPRC into higher levels of program and service delivery as well as customer satisfaction. The JCPRC operates with a lean staff and limited resources. Just managing the day-to-day operation with its high demands precludes strategic medium and long-term planning. While the JCPRC is faced with a limited staff, it has also experienced expensive employee downtime due to health issues and part-time seasonal employees. Consequently, staff have pitched in to provide support as a whole rather than on the primary function of their respective jobs. For example, front desk staff helps with pre-school programs and marketing helps with programming.

Revenue Generation

The main challenge regarding programs is the revenue driven nature of JCPRC operations. As Jefferson County financial support for JCPRC has been steadily decreasing, the pressure to raise revenues has been increasing. The main source of revenues for JCPRC is programs. JCPRC has been growing the number of programs and increasing revenues but it is still important to remember that parks and recreation is an essential public service that benefits the county economically, socially, environmentally, and in health and wellness. Not all programs and services can, nor should, generate revenue.

Information and Public Awareness

The major factors that prevent participation in programs and use of facilities appear to be the lack of information provided for citizens, the type of facilities located in county parks, and the perception of parks being “too far away.” While the JCPRC publishes a recreation guide several times a year, it is not mailed directly to households or businesses. The website and Facebook page serve as the primary source of promotion of programs and services. While the JCPRC pays an annual fee for newspaper advertisements, this type of advertising is passé and the newspaper actually needs the JCPRC for its human interest and news features to attract readership, thus this mutual benefit should cancel out the need to pay for advertising. The parks do not have a comprehensive signage system with quality kiosks that would help to identify the parks as well as create a positive image for the countywide parks and recreation system. The JCPRC has been innovative in using videos on the website to convey information to website visitors.

Evaluation and Customer Satisfaction

No formalized system is in place for evaluation and determination of customer satisfaction. Developing standards and methods for evaluating programs and customer satisfaction and implementing these standards should be an important priority because it will facilitate the JCPRC’s movement into a higher level of service. The key is to consider evaluation and customer satisfaction as a system and a component of program planning and management. Various techniques can be used such as surveys, participant evaluations both during programs and upon completion, focus groups, interviews with participants as well as non-participants, and comment opportunities on the website.

Obtaining testimonials during the evaluation process is one key aspect of successful advertising.

Program Planning and Life Cycle

Programs should be planned two seasons ahead. This is essential for advertising, introducing new programs and, most importantly, securing sponsorships. At present programs are planned following the creation of the program guide which does not allow sufficient time for advertising and no time for pursuing sponsorships. This is not in line with how businesses typically make their budget decisions on important functions such as sponsorships.

Program life cycle is not a formal part of program planning, but could be a valuable component of programming for the JCPRC. By addressing where programs are in their life cycle, the JCPRC would be able to adjust programs to give them new life, add new programs, and terminate programs that have outlived community interest. For example, connecting children with nature is a major nationwide goal but the JCPRC only provides very limited nature based programs. Some significant partners exist in Jefferson County that could join forces with the JCPRC to address this important program area. There appears to be major interest in special events. Perhaps abandoning certain low response, or time-consuming programs, to focus on special events would be a sound programming strategy. Consideration should also be given to securing a program coordinator with a specialty in special events, which could also tie with revenue generation and sponsorships.

Staff Capacity

A major limitation in county programs and services is staff capacity. While there is a total of eight full-time employees who are responsible for every aspect of parks and recreation, from building management to program implementation, there is no single recreation coordinator. The Assistant Director serves as the primary program planning staff member, while the Director also works in programming probably beyond the extent normally required of that position. Office and marketing staff also work on programs. A Director should not spend more than 20 percent of her/his time on programs unless it is a one or two person department in a small town, but in the case of the JCPRC the Director exceeds this time allotment.

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Location

While the JCPRC offers recreation opportunities throughout Jefferson County via its parks and recreation facilities that are well distributed, about 80 percent of the programs are offered in Sam Michael's Park. The JCPRC would like to be able to offer programs in locations throughout the county.

A major limitation is the lack of access to Jefferson Schools' facilities. Permission to use school facilities is decentralized with permission to use facilities granted or not granted to varying degrees by school principals. Getting more access to the schools could help to create community hubs that would reduce the need for additional recreation facilities.

Policies

The JCPRC has historically operated without policies governing the development and use of sports facilities. Consequently, significant donations of time and money by community-based organizations into county facilities have come with certain expectations regarding ownership and use. Some of these informal agreements regarding expectation of use of fields based upon the group's investment go back decades and have not taken into consideration the fact that county parks belong to the public estate and must serve the overall good of the community, not only the interest of a limited organization. That said, partnerships and public private investment are crucial, as the government cannot do all that citizens would like to do. Consequently, managing partnerships, joint capital improvement projects, and public-private financing is crucial.

OPPORTUNITIES

The history, beauty, environmental resources, the rivers and mountains, combined with Jefferson County's planning to preserve open space and scenic rural character offer the potential for Jefferson County to have a premier parks and recreation system. Programs and events are important to the economy and often are among the top reasons businesses decide to locate or expand in an area. Focusing on program development and expansion is a prime objective of JCPRC and this needs to continue.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following goals and recommendations emerged through the planning process and will help to advance recreation experiences that address significant social, economic, and environmental issues. Specific initiatives and actions to

meet these goals are spelled out in the Implementation and Action Plan section of this master plan document and include:

- + Providing quality recreation programs and opportunities that are responsive to community needs;
- + Improving health and wellness through recreation;
- + Making recreation opportunities available to people of all means equitably;
- + Connecting children to nature and foster conservation and stewardship of our natural resources;
- + Fostering opportunities for lifelong learning and enrichment; and
- + Ensuring financial sustainability for recreation programs and services.

New Roles and Responsibilities

JCPRC is largely perceived as an operation that focuses on organized, scheduled programs. However, JCPRC actually delivers recreation opportunities in multiple ways. The three main ways that JCPRC offers recreation opportunities are through organized programs, for the public and other groups to utilize, and by partnering with other community based organizations to provide programs and services.

There will be times when the JCPRC will be best suited to be the "**provider**" of a program, service, or facility. In those cases, JCPRC will align its resources to deliver the specific programs or services to attain desired outcomes. At other times, JCPRC is better suited as an "**enabler / facilitator**," either by initiating and then transferring a program or service to another to operate, or by contracting out for services after having set standards for service delivery that are then met by community partners. Finally, JCPRC conducts "**outreach through partnerships**" with other agencies to provide facilities, programs, and services based upon the availability of assets or resources. Partnerships allow for shared resource use and are developed, by contract or agreement, to satisfy a desired outcome that may be easier for another provider to deliver. JCPRC is engaged in discussion with the Board of Education Superintendent about the community use of schools for recreation. This would be an important new way to expand public recreation opportunities through optimum use of existing facilities and resources.

As a direct provider, facilitator, or through community partnerships and outreach, JCPRC will consider the most effective, efficient, and expedient delivery of services to Jefferson County. This model of delivery provides a sustainable framework from which to operate.

New Processes

JCPRC has been evolving from focusing much of its attention on meeting immediate needs of constituents in a cafeteria style of programming into more of a systematic program management plan. JCPRC management is focusing on a strategic planning approach for the delivery of services that would be based on outcomes rooted in a solid program philosophy, and designed with a revenue management plan geared toward the challenge of meeting public recreation needs equitably, while providing for the financial sustainability of the JCPRC.

Program Management Plan

JCPRC will move toward Benefits-Based Programming consistent with JCPRC Board's desire to show outcomes of the programs as well as financial returns on the investment of resources in programs, services, and facilities. This will help JCPRC to make its case that parks and recreation is an essential public service as well as demonstrate its financial recovery efforts along with equitable access for people of all means.

Benefits-Based Programming is based on the idea that programmers will take a developmental approach in creating recreation activities and programs. The premise is that through recreation experiences, the potential exists for addressing significant issues (social, economic, environmental) while still being an enjoyable recreational experience. Benefits-Based Programming, then, is an outcome-oriented approach that focuses on producing identified benefits for participants as a result of their participation. Table 3.3 presents the outcomes and benefits desired for Jefferson County's recreation programs and services for the four major target groups of citizens.

Program Organization

Currently Jefferson County has ten core areas, as indicated in Table 3.2. The recommended number of divisions within JCPRC's overall recreation program function is between five and ten. Some of the JCPRC categories could be combined to align with new goals of focusing on health, wellness, and

fitness; connecting people with the outdoors; and lifelong learning. In addition to these core areas, a main function in the future is to help to advance tourism through facilities, trails, and recreation opportunities, as an economic engine in Jefferson County.

Program Cost Recovery Philosophy and Policies

JCPRC has been working toward financial sustainability through a mix of revenue sources. A main source of the revenues is program fees and charges. Having a sound cost recovery philosophy with policies to match is critical to JCPRC's financial control, providing equitably priced programs, and identifying the core program areas, facilities, and services. The cost recovery philosophy must match JCPRC's mission "to provide safe public parks and year round recreational activities for the citizens in the Jefferson County community." Underlying this mission statement is a commitment to children and youth regardless of means; building a sense of community; fitness and wellness; connecting people to nature; and advancing tourism as a means to create and sustain a vibrant economy in Jefferson County.

The proposed pricing plan is set forth in Table 3.4. JCPRC Proposed Cost Recovery Modes. Generally the public is in support of users paying fees for programs and services that benefit the individuals while preferring to see tax dollars support facilities.

Cost Recovery Rate Explained

The Cost Recovery Rate reflects tax and non-tax support of the program. For example, the cost recovery rate of programs in Mode 1 is 0 (zero) percent, meaning that it is totally subsidized with tax dollars. Programs in Mode 2 have a cost recovery rate of 20 percent. Therefore, 80 percent of the program fee is supported by tax dollars while 20 percent comes from user fees.

Program Cost Setting Guidelines for Revenue Generating Programs (Modes 2,3,4, & 5)

The three levels of costs of programs include:

- + Direct Costs – Instructors, program leaders, program supplies or materials, room rental etc.;
- + Program Administration – Staff salaries, office equipment such as software and computers etc.; and

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- + Institutional Costs – Total costs to operate JCPRC such as heat, lighting, building expenses, maintenance etc.

Table 3.5 presents the Model Budget Format for an individual program and the ideal percentages for each cost line item.

This Model Budget Format can be used for the core program areas too. All the programs within those core areas would be totaled in each line item shown in the chart. By looking at the budget for the Core Division, JCPRC will see which program areas are performing well financially and where adjustments could be made to meet goals. The third way this can be used is to include the totals for all programs for recreation overall. This would be an indication of how programs, rentals, etc. are performing overall.

One cautionary note regarding adjustments in this chart based upon consultant experience is that when adjusting the financial components, it is wise not to reduce promotional costs. Cutting advertising is usually counterproductive because research shows that one of the main deterrents to participation in recreational activities and the use of parks is that people don't know about the opportunities that exist.

Parks and recreation departments across the country have a tremendously wide range of cost recovery, ranging from 10 to 85 percent. Research shows that Oglebay Park in Wheeling, WV may very well be the only self-sustaining public park system in the country. This success is rooted in tourist-based facilities while it does offer public recreation opportunities to those who live nearby. This should be food for thought for JCPRC with all of the scenic, natural cultural, and outdoor recreation resources available in Jefferson County.

PROPOSED JCPRC PROGRAM STANDARDS

As JCPRC moves towards the development of a formalized Program Management Plan, the following factors should be priorities in guiding program planning:

- + **Quality** – This is the most important priority. JCPRC should resist adding program just to increase revenues if quality suffers;
- + **World Class Customer Service** – JCPRC's customers want information, answers to their questions and resolution of their problems. The amount of time the

phone is ringing in the Community Center is testimony to this fact;

- + **Speed** – We live in a world where everything is expected instantly. It is important to be able to “rev-up” to provide customers with what they want when they want it as much as possible;
- + **Innovation** – Set up a goal of offering 30 percent new programs or services every year. This means eliminating programs that are outdated;
- + **Flexibility** – Offer programs in different formats, locations, duration, and times; and
- + **Cost** – Make public parks and recreation programs affordable while working toward financial sustainability.

PROGRAM EVOLUTION GOALS

It is important for JCPRC to grow its programs in a way commensurate with staff capacity, partnerships, and facilitating offerings by other providers. It is to be expected that JCPRC will offer new programs AND have program cancellations. If JCPRC does not have cancellations, that means they are not trying hard enough with new programs – something that is not in the staff vocabulary! If cancellation rates are low, JCPRC could be losing out on a bigger market. The following are guidelines for growing the programs:

- + 70 – 90 percent of the programs should be “old” courses;
- + 10 – 30 percent of the programs should be “new” courses;
- + For old programs, an acceptable cancellation rate is up to 13 percent;
- + For new programs, an acceptable cancellation rate is 30 – 5 percent; and
- + For all programs in JCPRC, an acceptable cancellation rate overall is 15 percent.

Based upon the needs assessment and findings of the public participation process, there are multiple elements that should be considered in growing the programs.

Table 3.3 JCPRC Program Outcomes & Benefits for Target Markets

Youth Program Outcomes	Family and Community Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and/or improve health, motor, and social skills • Provide opportunities to be successful • Improve self esteem and self worth • Encourage creativity through art and performance • Provide opportunities to learn about culture and heritage of Jefferson County • Encourage situations that enhance decision making skills • Create an environment that reduces loneliness and isolation • Provide safe after-school developmental opportunities • Provide or facilitate assistance that improves grades • Offer productive alternatives that reduce self-destructive / anti-social behavior • Create opportunities to improve leadership qualities • Foster stewardship through opportunities to engage our unique environment • Create opportunities that promote volunteerism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for neighbors to interact, communicate, and bond • Create opportunities to connect families • Offer alternatives to less productive activities • Promote neighborhood and community involvement • Create a sense of place for Jefferson County • Promote cultural and ethnic understanding and harmony • Provide opportunities that promote community pride • Foster opportunities for community integration
Adult Program Outcomes	Senior Adult Program Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to improve health, wellness, and fitness • Create an atmosphere that reduces stress • Provide opportunities to be successful and to deliver a sense of accomplishment • Create situations that deliver satisfaction and improve one’s feeling of worth • Foster stewardship through opportunities to engage our unique environment • Provide opportunities for self-exploration • Promote ethnic and cultural understanding • Provide programs that promote social interaction • Create opportunities that promotes volunteerism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and/or improve health and wellbeing • Improve fitness and mobility • Build confidence in one’s abilities, promote independence, reduce dependence • Promote social interaction and help to reduce loneliness and isolation • Provide opportunities to be successful and improve self-esteem • Create opportunities that enhance life satisfaction • Foster an atmosphere that helps to reduce stress • Promote ethnic and cultural understanding • Improve one’s feeling of self-worth through volunteerism • Engage our unique culture, heritage, and environment through exploration and education

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- + **Continue to focus on children and families** until more staff resources are available.
- + **Focus on identifying and meeting the needs of customers of the JCPRC as the driver in program planning rather than focusing on what programs to offer.** By identifying the needs of the customers first, the programs and support services will fall logically into place.
- + **Focus reporting on outcomes and benefits rather than input and features of programs.** That is, rather than reporting on numbers of programs alone, monitor and track the outcomes and benefits of the JCPRC's work with the citizens.
- + **Consider securing a new staff position that would focus on special events, revenue development, and partnerships.**
- + **Decide on what the core programs the JCPRC should be offering.** This could include health and fitness, nature and stewardship, youth development, and special events, or some other variations that the JCPRC feels make sense. These core areas should be the heart of recreation opportunities in Jefferson County.
- + **Develop and implement the program management plan using the recommendations described here.** Create an annual work plan for recreation programs with revenue goals based upon the formulas provided in this Master Plan. Consider taking a "re-building year" for programming. This means deciding which programs could be eliminated in order to focus on developing a program management plan; maintaining the same schedule as the previous year with no new additions and perhaps some reductions in programs; and striving to create a program management plan in which the JCPRC is planning two seasons ahead. This would need to be phased-in by taking the re-building year, then planning most of the programs one season ahead and then in the next year or two, two seasons ahead. Defining an annual work program will help with time management, accountability, revenue generation, sponsorships, and partnerships that may be beneficial. Forming a technical support committee of related recreation providers will be valuable in order to develop a program management plan that takes in to consideration other providers. This will help to reduce duplication of services; provide services where there currently may be a gaps; reduce costs; and potentially generate more revenues. Obtaining the wisdom and advice from national caliber organizations is a rare and invaluable opportunity
- + **Develop and implement a formal evaluation system.** Use the information from the evaluations to enhance quality and to plan programs in the public interest. Include securing testimonials in the evaluations in order to promote the JCPRC.
- + **Develop and implement a strategic promotional program.** The program guides are developed with major time and effort but are not mailed. While we are moving into the social media age, the hard copies of the program guides continue to be valuable to parks and recreation departments for programming as well as image enhancement and increasing public awareness.
- + **Review the organizational structure and staffing in order to ensure adequate staffing in terms of functions and numbers.**
- + **Position programs and services to align with tourism goals.** This is especially important for special events and advancing the economic development goals of the county.
- + **Recognize that the Jefferson County Parks and Recreation Commission cannot be all things to all people.** Limitations of staff and budget require the JCPRC to focus on programs and services that matter most to the public and help to sustain the long-term financial viability of public parks and recreation.

Table 3.4 JCPRC Proposed Cost Recovery Modes

Mode	Description Mode	JCPRC Facilities, Programs or Services Examples	Recommended Cost Recovery Rate
Mode 1: Mainly community benefit	Basic level of parks and recreation that benefits the citizens at large. Costs are usually supported by tax dollars.	JCPRC’s ten parks. Administration and support of parks and recreation through JCPRC.	0%
Mode 2: Considerable community benefit with some individual benefit	Programs, facilities, and services that promote health & wellness, connect people to nature, and provide recreation skill development with a focus on introducing people to various recreational interests at the beginner level. Fees are based on a specified percentage of direct and indirect costs offset by both a tax subsidy for the community benefit and participant fees for the individual benefit.	Summer camps, school holiday programs, beginner classes such as learn to swim.	20%
Mode 3: Equally beneficial to the community and individuals	Rentals, tournaments, leagues, classes, programs or workshops that are of the intermediate level, rentals and exclusive use, community based organization events	Pavilion rentals, day camps, sports leagues, classes, Intermediate Gymnastics, sports fields. Art Show and races.	50%
Mode 4: Considerable individual benefit with some community benefit	Trips, leases, specialty camps, Drop-in babysitting or child care	Advanced Ninjas, soccer camp, Best of NY Trip	150%
Mode 5: Mainly individual benefit	Organized parties, permitted services, concessions, vending, private lessons, private enterprise use of parks.	Snack bar in community center, private enterprise sponsored races and festivals, filmmaking, weddings, private lessons	200%

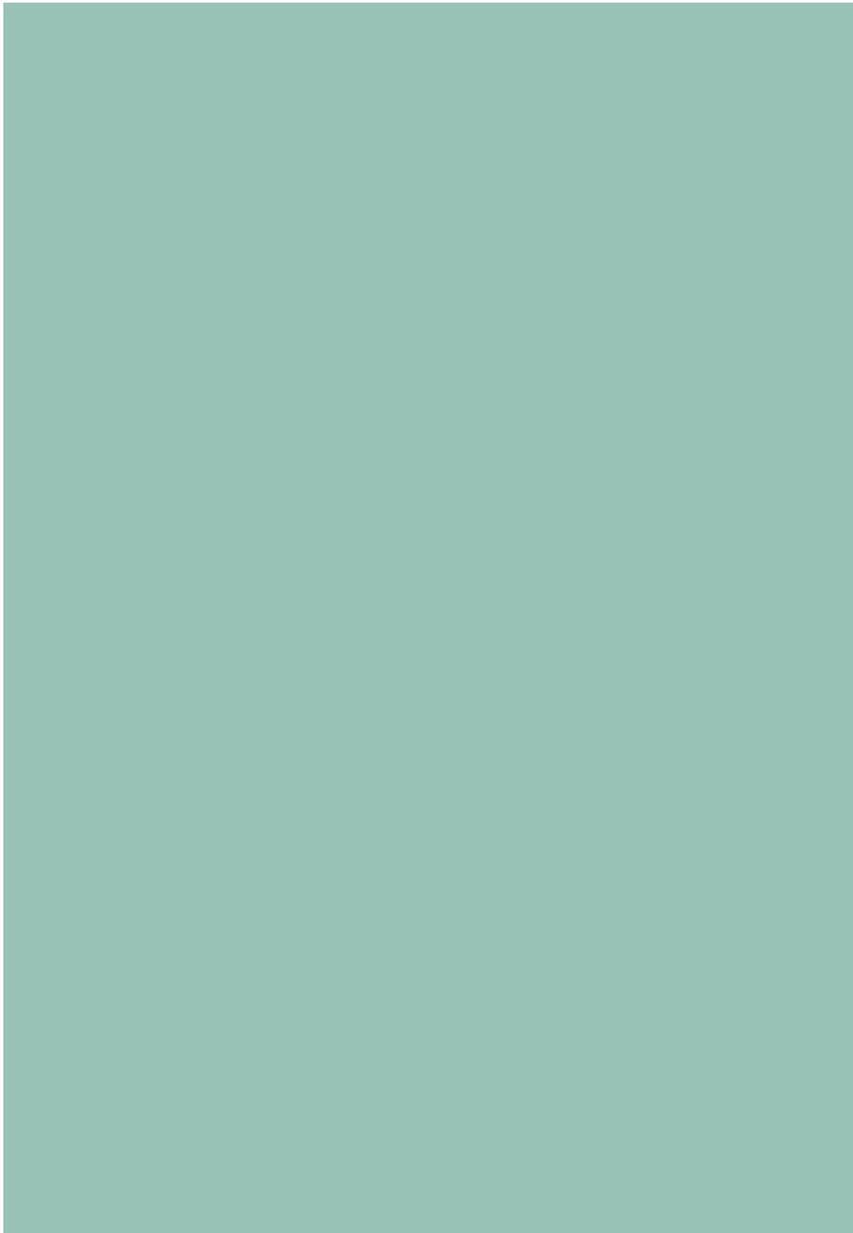
Table 3.5 Model Budget Format for a JCPRC Recreation Program

Item	Description/Definition	\$ Amount	% of the Cost	Ideal Percentage
Income	Total amount generated by the program	\$ _____	% _____	Always 100%
Promotion	What it costs you to advertise the program. Generate this number by examining the costs of brochures, fliers, time on social media.	\$ _____	% _____	10-15%
Production	Instructors, materials, administration, rental space costs etc.	\$ _____	% _____	40-50%
Direct Costs	The total cost of promotion and production	\$ _____	% _____	60%
Operating Margin	This is the amount of money that is left after you deduct Direct Costs from Income.	\$ _____	% _____	40%

Note: An operating margin of 40% is ideal. If it is higher than 40%, the JCPRC is doing well. If it is lower, this is where the JCPRC can adjust its costs and expenses. If under 40%, JCPRC can increase its fees or decrease its costs or a combination of both.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

organization, management, &
budget



04

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

organization, management, & budget

Organization, Management, and Budget aspects focus on the fundamentals needed to achieve, operated and manage a parks system that meets the community's vision for the future.

ABOUT THE JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

The JCPRC functions within the framework of the enabling legislation set forth for counties by the State of West Virginia as shown in Figure 4.1.

In 1970, the Jefferson County Commission established the Jefferson County Parks & Recreation Commission. The Commission operated as a county department until 2006 when the county re-configured the JCPRC as an adjunct operation. In 2015, the JCPRC obtained its status as a private non-profit 501-C-3 organization under the codes of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The JCPRC operates under the auspices of an 11 member Board. The JCPRC has six full-time staff and 96 part time and seasonal staff. JCPRC manages 10 parks with 409 acres of parkland and offers 580 programs attended by more than 8,000 residents. The JCPRC operates with funds derived from a mix of public and private resources including an allocation from Jefferson County, a portion of the hotel tax, revenues from program fees and charges, grants, gifts, sponsorships, and rentals. As county funding has been decreasing, JCPRC has been working toward generating revenues from non-tax sources.

JCPRC BOARD

The purpose of the JCPRC Board is to advise the Jefferson County JCPRC regarding all matters affecting the parks, parks facilities, and recreation budget. The JCPRC Board is empowered to appoint and advise the JCPRC Director in all matters affecting: parks and recreation facilities; land and services; policy; programs; finances; acquisition and disposal of lands and properties related to the total community recreational services; facility development; facility maintenance; and long range planning. The board members elect their President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. They meet monthly to discuss and advance parks and recreation programs, facilities, and services. They provide recommendations to Jefferson County Commission on parks, recreation, trails, open space, and the management

and support mechanisms required. The JCPRC Board can form advisory committees to aid in the administration and business of the JCPRC Board, for example the undertaking of the development James Hite Park.

JCPRC Board Responsibilities

- + Supervise and regulate parks and recreation programs
- + Oversee park planning, maintenance, and improvements
- + Expend funds
- + Interpret parks and recreation operations to the public
- + Cooperate with Jefferson County schools and community organizations
- + Represent JCPRC at official occasions
- + Make full and complete reports to the Jefferson County Commission, as requested
- + Serve as advisors in development of the annual operating and capital budgets

THE JCPRC MISSION

The current mission of the JCPRC is to provide diverse year round opportunities by creating and providing recreation, leisure, and community services necessary to promote and improve the overall quality-of-life for the citizens of Jefferson County.

Responsibilities

JCPRC is responsible for the following:

- + Identifying recreational needs for the diverse community;
- + Working with the JCPRC Board to develop programs and activities that take advantage of recreational assets in Jefferson County;
- + Coordinating recreational program staff, service providers, and seasonal staff resources;
- + Coordinating all rental and reservation activities for all park and recreation facilities (e.g. pavilions, ballfields, parks, and Community Recreation Center);

Figure 4.1 West Virginia Enabling Legislation for County Parks and Recreation Commission

The legislation of the West Virginia Code §7-11-2 enables Jefferson County to have a *Parks and Recreation Commission*. Any parks and recreation commission created by a county court pursuant to the authority of this article shall be a public corporate body with perpetual existence and a corporate seal. It shall be known as the (name of county) county parks and recreation commission. The commission shall have the power and authority to receive and control any gift, federal grant, other grant, donation and bequest or devise; to exercise the right of eminent domain if an order of the county court authorizing exercise of the right as to any proposed acquisition is first made and entered; to take and hold title to any real or personal property, whether such property be located wholly within or partly within and partly without the county; to receive all operating and capital funds appropriated by the county court to the commission; to receive all income and other funds, whether in cash or check, received by the county court and derived from properties and facilities devoted to park and recreational uses and under the control of said commission; to receive all receipts from income producing park and recreational properties and facilities under the control of the commission; to deposit, invest, manage and disburse, all such funds, income or receipts, including the interest or income earned thereon or therefrom; to borrow money and execute and deliver negotiable notes, mortgage bonds, other bonds, debentures and other evidences of indebtedness therefor, and give such security therefor as shall be requisite, including giving a mortgage or deed of trust on the properties or facilities under the control of the commission or assigning or pledging the gross or net revenues therefrom; to raise funds by the issuance and sale of revenue bonds in the manner provided by the applicable provisions of article sixteen, chapter eight of this code, it being hereby expressly provided that for the purpose of the issuance and sale of revenue bonds, the commission is a “governing body” as that term is used in said article sixteen; to establish, charge and collect reasonable fees and charges for services or for the use of any part of the properties or facilities under its control, or for both services and such use; to sue and be sued; to contract and be contracted with; to obtain one or more insurance policies affording coverage for loss of or damage to the properties and facilities under its control and affording public liability coverage for the legal liability of the commission, its officers, agents and employees; to adopt bylaws governing the operation of the commission and specifying the powers and duties of its officers; and to do any and all things which may be necessary or convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this article.

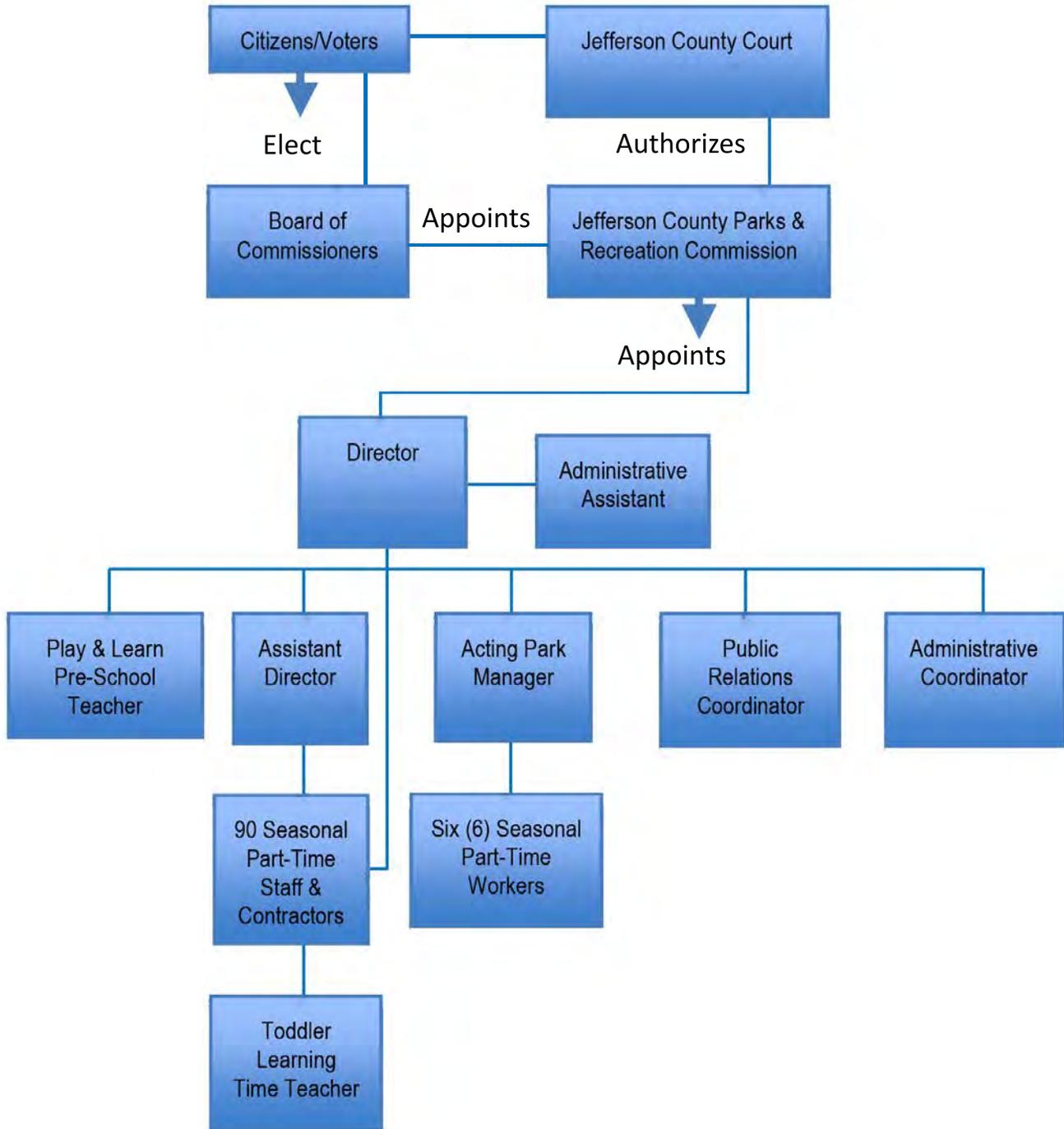
Any such county court is hereby empowered and authorized to transfer to any such commission all such funds or income, as provided for in the preceding paragraph of this section, and such county court may require a blanket surety bond covering those individuals authorized to sign checks on behalf of the commission in a penal sum not in excess of twenty-five thousand dollars.

The commission may incur any proper indebtedness and issue any obligations and give any security therefor which it may deem necessary and advisable in connection with carrying out any of its purposes. No indebtedness or obligation incurred by the commission shall give any right against the county or any member of the county court or any member of the commission. No indebtedness of any nature of the commission shall constitute an indebtedness of the county or the county court or be a charge against any property of the county. The rights of creditors of the commission shall be solely against the commission as a corporate body and shall be satisfied only out of property held by it in its corporate capacity.

Without in any way limiting the generality of any of the other provisions of this article, the commission may, in connection with obtaining moneys or property for its purposes, enter into any agreement with any person, including the federal government, or any department, agency or subdivision thereof, containing such provisions, covenants, terms and conditions as the commission may deem advisable.

The commission shall be exempt from the payment of any taxes or fees to the state or any subdivision thereof or any municipality or to any officer or employee of the state or of any subdivision thereof or of any municipality. The property of the commission shall be exempt from all municipal and county taxes. Bonds, notes, debentures and other evidences of indebtedness of the commission are declared to be issued for a public purpose and to be public instrumentalities, and, together with interest and income thereon, shall be exempt from taxation.

FIGURE 4.2 - JCPRC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



- + Coordinating all concession activities related to the park facilities;
- + Managing volunteers interested in supporting the parks;
- + Planning, designing, and constructing parks and recreation facilities, including trails;
- + Maintaining parks and recreation facilities;
- + Coordinating parks and recreation with other providers such as the towns and school district;
- + Promoting parks and recreation to increase public awareness and participation; and
- + Providing professional support to the JCPRC Board in developing policies, procedures, rules, and regulations for the park facilities.

RELATED COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

The Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning, Jefferson County Schools, and the public libraries have closely aligned functions to parks and recreation.

The mission of the Office Planning and Zoning is to provide a healthy, pleasant environment for those who live, work, and visit Jefferson County, by blending the unique natural and built resources of the county with quality, sustainable development that ensures responsible and sound growth. The office welcomes community based problem solving and public/private cooperation that assists the community in implementing standards, which create a positive impact, and achieves its ultimate vision.

The three public libraries in Jefferson County provide important close-to-home recreation services. They are located in Harpers Ferry, Bolivar, and Shepherdstown. Charles Town has a private library.

Jefferson County Schools offer the potential for major collaboration and partnerships in providing both facilities and services to citizens county-wide and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been established between the JCPRC and Jefferson County Schools.

JCPRC STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Figure 4.2 shows the organization of the JCPRC, including staff.

The **Director** is charged with managing all aspects of recreation programs and services. This includes planning, directing, operating, and controlling all operations to accomplish the directives of the JCPRC Board and coordinating with Jefferson County Commission.

The **Assistant Director** oversees programming. This position plans new programs and oversees the sports leagues.

The **Temporary Park Manager** is responsible for planning, directing, and controlling the maintenance of all 10 parks composed of 409 acres. The Temporary Park Manager advises on park planning, supervises six part-time seasonal workers, coordinates volunteers, and provides support for major events and all programs.

The **Administrative Coordinator** works the Director on the JCPRC's financial management, budgeting, purchasing, analysis, and reporting.

The **Public Relations Coordinator** manages advertising and promotion. This staff person is responsible for all print and social media.

The **Administrative Assistant** is responsible for the production and management of all administrative materials for the JCPRC, providing information to the public in a responsive, accurate, and timely manner. This staff person serves as the initial frontline contact for the public to JCPRC. This is the "go to" position for the public to call. This position also includes supporting function programming such as registration and program management.

Seasonal Staff – JCPRC has 90 seasonal and part-time recreation leaders, instructors, and six seasonal park maintenance workers. In addition, JCPRC contracts with instructors for specialized programs such as sports camps, sports programs, and instructional programs.

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

+ Organization, Management & Budget

PARK AND RECREATION MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

Public parks and recreation systems have a broad set of mandates. These mandates are related to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizenry. Trends and issues that have impacted parks and recreation include legal requirements, potential litigation, risk management, the aging of the population, custodial care issues of youth participants, obesity as the number one public health issue, protection of open space, need to generate alternative revenue sources, increasing participation in sports, life-time leisure interests beyond sports alone, natural resource conservation, and planning and formalizing management/information management systems.

Policy and Operating Procedure Development

Parks and recreation agencies are required to develop policies, procedures, and guides that contribute to the professionalism and accountability of public services in this area. Striking the right balance between spending the time on developing useful policies and procedures and not wasting efforts on policies and procedures without a significant public benefit is crucial, especially in a small department such as JCPRC.

Important policies to develop include:

- + Naming of Parks and Facilities and Donor Recognition;
- + Revenue Management; and
- + Gifts.

MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT

Maintenance management is the most expensive part of a public parks and recreation system. Park maintenance supports a variety of uses including self-directed use by people on their own time, enjoying their preferred activities, organized use by sports leagues and tournaments, and special events staged by major community based organizations. The park maintenance in Jefferson County is quite remarkable. The parks consistently look safe, clean and ready to use. The Temporary Park Manager is responsible for planning, directing, controlling, and evaluating park maintenance. This staff person has a staff of only six part-time seasonal employees. They are responsible for ten parks covering 409 acres across 209 square miles. This includes a community recreation center, special use facilities such

as the Grove in Sam Michael's Park, the campgrounds, and the new sports complex for soccer at James Hite Park. The Temporary Park Manager is involved in planning and constructing new facilities and renovating existing ones. This is all accomplished with a budget of \$558 per acre, in contrast to national averages that is more in the realm of \$8,000 – 9,000 per acre. This is done with only a staff of one full time and six seasonal part time workers instead of the 20 workers normally found maintaining systems of comparable size.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The most effective means to reduce exposure to liability is through the establishment of a formalized maintenance management program. At present, park maintenance is conducted based upon past practices without a formalized maintenance management program. A maintenance management program would set forth in writing the policies and procedures to plan, direct, control, evaluate, monitor, and report all actions regarding park maintenance. Written and filed documentation either manually or through a computer software program serves as the municipal record regarding the action taken on park maintenance as well as what remediation was done to correct problems in the parks. A formalized maintenance management system provides information that can be helpful when making decisions related to staffing, fees and charges, partnership agreements, and allocation of human and financial resources. A formalized system facilitates transitions through the inevitable changes in management, personnel, elected, and appointed officials.

MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS

In this time of economic challenges, decreasing county tax revenue sources, and increasing accountability at all levels of government, decision-makers, staff, and citizens alike expect efficient and effective operating systems. The following analysis includes the strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding parks and recreation management.

Management Strengths

Accomplishments – The JCPRC secured its private non-profit status as a 501-c-3 organization. It operates as an independent parks and recreation organization, thereby being able to raise funds that are tax deductible for donors.

Commitment to Organizational Capacity – The JCPRC operates within a framework of trying to create organizational effectiveness that could potentially provide better public service despite being a county-wide system with a small staff.

JCPRC Board Support – The JCPRC Board members provide support and engage in activities to advance the mission of the JCPRC and support its activities.

Maximizes Resources – The JCPRC management does a “lot with a little.” The staff of six provides a full array of programs and services, along with outdoor recreation facilities in 10 parks and year round recreation in the Community Center. They plan, manage, and implement about 600 programs annually.

Park Maintenance – The parks are well maintained with a safe, clean, and ready to use appearance. The staff performs a yeoman’s job with the resources available in terms of staff and budget.

Staff Commitment – The staff works many more hours than the standard “9:00 – 5:00” workweek. They work evenings, weekend, and holidays to provide the public with important recreation opportunities.

Pursue Partnerships – The management team actively pursues partnerships for the purpose of advancing public recreation. The small size of the staff limits this outreach but building partnerships is an important function within the capacity of what they are able to do.

Management Challenges

Optimal Organization - Throughout major staffing changes, JCPRC has not been able to organize in an optimal manner given the high demands that force attention on immediate and urgent needs instead of medium and long term planning.

Leadership and Positioning – Since the focus is on the immediate and the urgent, there has been a leadership vacuum to position JCPRC as an essential public service and making the case for the value of JCPRC to Jefferson County’s economic, environmental, and social vibrancy. The focus has been on “surviving” not “thriving” out of compelling circumstances.

Major Partnerships – Collaboration with Jefferson County Schools and the Towns of Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown, Ranson, and Charles Town need to be cultivated, put into place, and sustained over time. These five entities operate independently now.

Cost Recovery - The pressing need for the JCPRC to recover costs, its limited staff, and budget given the level of responsibility, are driving the organization toward cost recovery as its major focus instead of a vision, mission, and values for long term sustainability.

Planning for Impact of Major Facilities -Planning to operate, fiscally support, and maintain major facilities and a program needs to be formalized and put in to place. The Temporary Park Manager needs to be part of the process.

The following conditions emanate from the major challenges identified above.

Decreasing Resources – Management has become more revenue-driven as a result of budget decreases from Jefferson County. Demands to generate revenue to become more self-sustaining drive operations.

Small Staff – The JCPRC operates a county parks and recreation system. The existing staff provides a skeleton operation. Tasks that are important, that are left undone due to the small staff include: trail planning and development; park planning; systems development such as a formal maintenance management system; projection of maintenance costs with facility development plans; more partnership development and fundraising; program planning that is two seasons ahead; social media management; and other functions.

Wide Service Area – The JCPRC has a service area of 209 square miles. Due to limitations in staffing levels, JCPRC is not reaching all areas of Jefferson County.

Expectations and Mission – It appears that a mix of people and organizations perceive JCPRC as the main provider of parks and recreation in the county. This has led to JCPRC essentially functioning as a “local” park system with smaller parks and numerous programs. JCPRC needs to function as a true county parks and recreation system offering parks, programs, services, and support county-wide with an emphasis on outdoor recreation and trail connections.

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Organizational Development – The JCPRC has experienced organizational changes in recent years without concurrent organizational development planning. Due to extreme daily pressure, the management team has been unable to take a step back to figure out optimal ways of operating, staff development plans, board roles, responsibilities, operations, and training.

Program Management Plan – The JCPRC operates by planning programs each season, without a program management plan. A program management plan would help JCPRC grow its programs, eliminate programs beyond their life-cycle, and enable the JCPRC to focus on core program areas that would empower the program operations.

“Brain Trust” information and procedures could be lost – Operations are mainly carried out in the minds and traditional unwritten operating procedures of staff and management. Formalizing operations through written workload cost tracking and other information systems need to be put into place to optimize current operations, provide information for informed decision-making, and facilitate continuity throughout future changes in staff and management.

Lack of formal written park maintenance management system – No system is in place to plan, direct, control, and evaluate park maintenance. Without a formal written system, responding to emergencies, urgent requests, and individual demands is the norm and is more expensive than routine task performance. Workload and equipment cost data is not available on which to base decisions and allocate resources effectively.

Park planning is not a designated function with defined parameters and requirements – Park planning has been undertaken informally, without the involvement of key stakeholders, a public participation process, and professional consultants early enough in the project. Major park projects have not addressed the long-term responsibility for maintenance, programming, financial and human resources, potential partners, or alternatives to traditional support by JCPRC.

Communication tends to be fragmented and disjointed – No formal communication system is in place. The practice of responding immediately to urgent requests is ingrained in the JCPRC’s culture. While excellent public service is admirable, this practice of accommodating immediate demands has a downside. The downside includes the cost

of dropping everything to provide an emergency response. The result of deferring or abandoning scheduled work, good will is lost due to conflicting information and responses. While the intent by all involved in accommodating the public is rooted in a desire to serve the community well, the community will be better served by having formalized systems in place.

There is no overall program plan for the JCPRC – While programs are offered and advertised, there is a lack of organization. Certain tools that are needed, but have not yet been put into place, include an overall program management plan, policies for fees and charges, an evaluation system, and an information data base. Figuring out how best to serve identified client groups could be facilitated through timely data collection, analysis, and the implementation of public involvement strategies.

Determining best use of staff time for programs – Having staff evaluate where the demands on their time lie may help to generate innovations in programming and customer service.

Management Opportunities

The support of elected and appointed officials and the general citizenry is an important factor in a successful parks and recreation system. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan has offered a fresh look at the current operating structure and ways to improve it for the future. Several major areas should be considered in future management enhancements, including:

- + The JCPRC should serve as “the convener” to establish a collaboration among the Jefferson County Schools and the Towns of Charles Town, Ranson, Shepherdstown and Harpers Ferry for public parks, recreation, and trails. Together these entities could provide a higher level of service countywide for less cost than anyone could provide on their own.
- + Create an optimal organizational structure by obtaining the services of an Organizational Development expert to work with the JCPRC management, staff, and Board to assess current operating methods, consider revisions in the organizational structure, and staffing. It should also put in place a newly optimized structure and the training for management, and the JCPRC staff to work toward success in a new operational framework. The development of training materials for new staff and Board members should be included.

- + Focus on core functions and programs by determining the core functions and programs upon which the JCPRC will focus. The JCPRC and its staff cannot do everything. Doing a few things well and to a high quality is key to success.
- + Consider changing the organizational structure to reflect major functions within parks and recreation rather than staffing positions. Grow the staff within these functional areas. Which could be: Recreation Services; Parks and Facilities; Community Awareness; and Operational Support. The Director should never have more than seven people reporting directly to their position.
- + Develop an Annual Work Program for the JCPRC as a whole and drill down to an annual work program with goals and expectations for each staff member. Do quarterly “check-ins” to determine progress and where adjustments need to be made to match changing needs and opportunities. It would also serve as the tool for employee evaluation. Employee evaluations should include immediate feedback that is supportive and corrective, as well as a formal annual evaluation. It is important to recognize ongoing good work for each and every person in order to foster ownership and pride in work and accomplishments.
- + Create a team to assess, document, and promote the impact of the JCPRC as an essential service. This could include a university, county economic development, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, visitors bureaus from the cities and towns, realtors, local businesses and so on. Include in this planning for sports tourism and how to establish the required facilities and services through JCPRC parks.
- + Formalize Maintenance Management as a system for implementation and computerization. Consider using an electronic software system that would allow management and staff to input data in real time, as system that utilized technology such as iPads. Four distinct areas of maintenance could be addressed in the formalization of a maintenance management system: Parks; Recreation Facilities; Natural Resources; and Trails. By organizing maintenance into these areas, decision-making regarding staffing, financing, training, setting priorities, and partnerships could be enhanced and presented to substantiate budget support.
- + JCPRC must plan for the management impact of major new facilities and programs. This would include taking into account staff, labor, and budget as well as partners and revenue sources to offset costs. Use the Management Impact Statement shown in Figure 4.3 to plan for all new major projects and programs. If the JCPRC is unable to support the improvement long term or for its life expectancy it should not undertake the project.
- + Consider staffing changes for efficiency, streamlining, and growing the system through several staffing related actions:
 - Configure the Director’s time to be 70 percent outreach and towards positioning the JCPRC as an essential public service; 20 percent on department functions such as park planning, programming, and trails etc., and 10 percent on administration.
 - Add new positions:
 - Development Director/Special Events Coordinator - The focus of this position would be on revenues generation. This should occur immediately.
 - Trails Planner/Coordinator - This position should ideally be added and housed in the Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning. It could perhaps be a shared position between JCPRC and the Office of Planning and Zoning. By housing this position in the Office of Planning, the Trails Planner could be the first line of contact in new developments in order to secure important linkages for the future Jefferson County Trail network.
 - Additional positions to consider include a Facilities Manager and a Program Coordinator.
 - Define the roles and responsibilities of the Assistant Director. This should primarily be programming for now but evolve into more work in park planning, fundraising, etc. as additional staff are added.

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- + Incorporate natural resource management as a function of maintenance and park and recreation planning and continue to integrate natural resource management with overall community planning.
- + Invest in JCPRC's biggest expenditure; its employees. A five-year employee development plan should be established for parks and recreation management, staff, and the Board. Consider setting a goal of allocating 1 percent of the respective operating budget annually for training and phase in increases to 1.5 percent then 2 percent over the next ten years. Keeping up with JCPRC's software, social media, maintenance workload cost tracking, other trends, regulations, and all aspects of the field is an important investment.
- + Focus on information management to track information about programs, services, and all aspects of management will help to enhance planning, decision-making, and the allocation of resources. Facts and figures at hand will provide a solid basis for making informed decisions, increasing customer convenience, and decreasing staff time. Annual reports should continue to be produced. These reports are crucial to creating a framework for decision-making. They help to document trends, program life cycles, community needs, and interests in order to allocate resources most effectively. This should include all functional areas such as parks, programs, administration, maintenance, and financing. Cost centers for parks, types of recreation facilities, problems such as unscheduled repairs and vandalism, should be established. This will provide information for setting fees and charges, negotiating partnerships, establishing guidelines for public use of parks and recreation facilities, purchasing equipment, and developing alternatives that might reduce costs or provide better public service.

JCPRC BUDGET

The JCPRC provides crucial services and facilities that contribute to the Jefferson County economy, improves the quality-of-life, and preserves the scenic character of the area. The JCPRC's budget comes from a combination of investment from public and private resources. The purpose of the financing assessment is to review how the financial aspects of parks and recreation are supported, managed, and directed toward meeting community goals, with

Figure 4.3 MIS - Management Impact Statement

Purpose

- + To assess the impact of a proposed project in terms of capital and operating costs, including capital cost, human resources required for operations, maintenance costs including labor, equipment, materials, supplies and cyclic repair, and the effect of on other parks and recreation facilities and services.
- + To use this information to make an informed decision about moving ahead with the proposed project.

Method

Determine:

- + Capital cost of proposed project.
- + Operating costs for proposed project or program. Include:
 - Number of staff hours required
 - Cost of staff hours in salary, wages, benefits and payroll taxes.
 - Cost of materials and supplies.
 - Utility costs.
 - Miscellaneous costs.
- + Impact on other facilities and programs should the proposed project be undertaken.
 - Will the project/program require funds needed for other facilities or services?
 - Will the project/program require staff time needed for other facilities or services?
 - How will the project impact the quality of services that JCPRC has set as a goal?
- + Revenue Sources or Other Means of Support
 - County funds – additional appropriation
 - County funds – within current budget
 - Grants
 - Gifts or donations
 - Non-tax funds to be generated for the project/program through fees, charges, sponsorships, partnerships, and/or other means.

Decision-Making

Based upon the above information should the JCPRC allocate the resources to move ahead with this project or program?

respect to the JCPRC’s resources as well as support from alternative means such as fees and charges, rentals, grants, gifts, and donations.

Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Budget

The two major areas to be considered in financing are operations and capital improvements.

- + The operating budget supports the daily operation of parks and recreation, with the largest category being personnel covering salaries, wages, and benefits. The JCPRC operating budget is funded through the hotel and motel tax, which is an allocation of the county’s general fund, user fees and charges, grants, and sponsorships.
- + The capital improvement budget is used for improvements that cost more than \$10,000 and last more than five years. Such improvements include park and recreation facility development, purchase of major equipment such as trucks, or the rehabilitation of existing facilities. It also includes land acquisition. Typical ways to fund capital improvements include county funds, grants, gifts, fundraising, donations, bond issues, partnerships, and loans. Detailed

recommendations to fund capital improvements are described in the Chapter 6 of this master plan document, however, it is important to note a major limitation in the JCPRC’s current ability to utilize Jefferson County impact fees. As the JCPRC knows well from its own deliberations and its presentations to the Jefferson County Commission, the Jefferson Office of Impact Fees has created a methodology for disbursement of impact fee revenues that, in short, is badly restricting the ability of the JCPRC to construct basic, needed improvements to Jefferson County parks. The Jefferson County system has mandated that there must be a ratio of fee revenue spent on land acquisition vis-à-vis land improvement. Because land improvement at many Jefferson County parks can be very expensive, JCPRC is now in a position that it must buy more lands before it can improve the parks it has already established. As a result, there is currently \$80,000 in unused parks and recreation revenue sitting frozen in the local impact fee accounts that is badly needed to provide improvements in existing parks, such as restroom facilities, as well as other site improvements such as new building facilities, competitive play athletic fields, etc. that would greatly improve the quality and utilization of the parkland Jefferson County already owns.

Table 4.1 JCPRC Operational Revenues FY2011-2012 through FY2015-2016

	2015 – 2016 Budgeted	2014 – 2015 Actual	2013 - 2014	2012 - 2013	2011 - 2012
Hotel/Motel Tax	247,500	270,497	224,509	231,542	256,915
Audit Fees	0	0	10,000	5,000	0
P-Card Rebates	3,000	2,617	2,336	2,374	181
County Commission Staff Allocation	249,111	249,329	270,789	222,041	210,056
Hite Road Project Manager	0	0	0	65,000	0
Impact Fee Reimbursement	0	4,000	69,148	0	0
Park Use	110,000	70,480	143,570	57,757	54,344
Community Center Use	0	23,501	25,571	28,802	32,122
Programs	375,000	380,897	354,243	391,625	356,026
Concessions & T-Shirt Sales	18,000	18,348	12,148	20,794	22,347
Banner/Sponsorship	5,000	3,795	2,950	1,410	2,035
Donations	51	0	391	530	114
Scholarship Fund	2,500	43	5,000	3,000	2,925
Grant Work	36,910	3,394	15,450	15,551	34,614
Interest	338	4,059	1,370	823	1,007
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	50	211
Fringe Benefits Income	0	5,103	6,807	1,701	0

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Table 4.2 JCPRC Parks and Recreation Expenditures FY2014-2015

	2015 – 2016 Budget	2014 – 2015 Actual	2013 – 2014 Actual	2012 – 2013 Actual	2011 – 2012 Actual
Recreation					
Administration & Programming					
Commission Salaries	216,850	206,436	230,435	222,791	216,340
Commission Benefits	32,750	32,910	31,363	34,194	31,000
Worker's Compensation	36,984	25,816	16,329	25,256	22,244
Program Staff Compensation	80,910	79,443	98,705	97,144	94,860
Community Center Payroll	31,102	34,278	56,669	50,270	52,007
Payroll Expenses	74,500	70,991	71,957	71,552	77,314
Brochure Printing	10,000	9,763	11,668	2,729	3,152
Program Supplies	47,000	59,058	61,752	72,138	59,510
Community Center & Facilities Supplies	5,000	11,963	5,779	6,934	4,770
Swimming – Jefferson Park	0	596	3,725	3,945	5,294
Transportation	5,000	7,495	5,345	4,648	3,015
Insurance	45,000	60,459	46,540	15,100	20,742
Public Information Ads	9,225	11,703	9,177	10,853	3,337
Concessions	11,500	5,664	2,183	5,301	1,477
Cost of Goods Sold	8,000	16,752	10,330	12,197	18,614
Office & Facility Expense	38,700	47,033	35,338	14,910	19,188
Cell & Telephone service	1,100	791	59	617	1,400
Bad check and Bank feed	0	251	398	385	946
Audit Fees	5,000	5,000	8,740	4,520	21,230
Dues	500	449	555	764	150
Continuing Education	5,000	449	2,164	1,575	1,049
Bookkeeping	3,000	0	300	1,300	4,600
Background Check	2,000	863	1,797	505	265
Pre-School	35,200	25,917	25,502	2,788	3,697
Unencumbered expenses	0	0	57,441	72,017	-
Other	0	0	8,077	1,300	1,212
Total Administration & Programs	704,301	709,050	802,328	735,733	656,113
Parks Maintenance					
Salary (Full-Time)	43,500	42,168	42,168	60,705	59,455
Benefits (Full-Time)	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Worker's Compensation (Full- Time)					
Seasonal Maintenance Staff Compensation	97,500	82,136	70,034	69,357	67,248
Equipment Maintenance	11,000	47,266	10,502	11,975	9,687
Park Expenses & Maintenance	139,650	527,012	138,372	72,332	39,429
DMV Checks	50	50	20	5	37
Fuel	10,000	4,899	9,048	4,749	6,804
Electric	1,110	1,110	1,005	877	813
Grants		285,000	31,683	45,054	25,480
Total Parks Maintenance	309,310	996,141	309,332	271,554	215,453
TOTAL	1,013,611	1,705,191	1,111,660	1,007,287	871,566

Table 4.3 JCPRC Grants Secured 2012-2015

Grant	Award	Park/Program	Year
Land & Water Conservation Fund	\$90,000	Moulton Park	2012
Land & Water Conservation Fund	\$200,000	James Hite Park/Soccer Fields	2012/2015
Let's All Play National Inclusion Grant	\$7,000	Summer Play Camps: Aides fir children with disabilities	2012
CommuniTree Fall Grant	\$1,200	Sam Michael's Park Dog Park	2013
Eastern WV Community Foundation	\$1,200	Summer Play Camps/Garden	2013
Let's All Play National Inclusion Grant	\$6,000	Summer Play Camps: Aides fir children with disabilities	2013
Community Participation Grant	\$20,000	Jefferson County Community Center/Storage Addition	2013
Land & Water Conservation Fund	\$80,000	Sam Michael's Park: Picnic Pavilion & Handicapped Play Equipment	2013
Land & Water Conservation Fund	\$60,029	South Jefferson Park: Expansion & replacement of play equipment	2015
CommuniTree Spring Grant	\$1,200	South Jefferson Park: 16 Trees	2014
Chesapeake Bay Community Grant	\$10,000	Sam Michael's Park: 100+ Trees	2014/15
Community Participation Grant	\$4,000	Jefferson County Community Center/Program Equipment	2014
Community Participation Grant	\$6,000	Veteran's Memorial Pavilion: Medallions & Plaques	2014
USTA	\$1,500	Tennis Program Supplies & Equipment	2015
Eastern Area Health Education Grant	\$40,000	James Hite Park: Trail	2015
TOTAL	\$531,329		

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Operating Budget

The operating budget includes both revenues and expenditures as reported in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. Table 4.1 shows the revenues while Table 4.2 presents the expenditures.

Grants

Table 4.3 presents the grants that the JCPRC Director obtained as of mid-year 2016. As shown in the table, the grants were for a wide range of JCPRC purposes ranging from support for children with disabilities to trees, tennis equipment, trails, and ballfields.

Capital Budget

The JCPRC invests in parks and recreation improvements annually. A new five year capital budget was established in 2015. A summary is provided on Table 4.4. The JCPRC funds the capital budget with 15 percent of the hotel tax, up from 10 percent in the previous four years, county allocations, and grants. In 2015-2016 that percentage equates to \$37,125. The Director has been very successful in securing grants to improve the parks or build a new park such as James Hite Park, which recently received an \$31,000 to be matched and allocated for constructed picnic pavilions in James Hite Park.

Major Findings

The following list presents major findings of the analysis during the analysis phase of the master planning process. The JCPRC staff have been working on modifying the budget format for several years in order to best serve and inform the JCPRC's administration and Board.

- + A review of the Jefferson County Budget shows major significant downward trends in revenues from the loss of the impact fee and decreases in casino revenues. The Fiscal year 2015-16 county budget is \$21,459,488.
- + The JCPRC's budget of \$1,013,329 for fiscal year 2015-16 is about 4.7 percent of the county budget. However, if the non-tax revenues were not included in the ratio, then the JCPRC would have about 3.3 percent of the county budget. Nationwide the average is about three percent and public parks and recreation departments with highly regarded systems have five percent or greater of their jurisdiction's budget.
- + While the ratio of the county budget is positive, another benchmark shows a less favorable comparison. Jefferson County invests \$17.95 per capita in public parks and recreation. The nationwide average is \$76.41. This discrepancy supports the finding that the county budget is austere.

Table 4.4 JCPRC Capital Improvement Budget 2016-2020

PROJECT NAME & DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED TOTAL COST	PRIOR ALLOC, SOURCE	CURRENT REQUEST FY 2015	CURRENT ALLOC, OTHER SOURCES	EXPECTED FIVE-YEAR FUTURE PROGRAM REQUESTS				
					FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Hite Road Park Development	\$1,000,000	\$600,000	\$400,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintenance Vehicle	\$35,000	0	0	0	\$35,000	0	0	0	0
Mowing Equipment	\$32,500	0	\$32,500	0	0	0	0	0	0
Park System Master Plan	\$85,000	\$63,750	\$21,250	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	\$1,152,500	\$663,750	\$455,765	0	\$37,016	0	0	0	0

- + The JCPRC raises 53 percent of its budget from non-tax sources such as fees and charges and property rentals. This is very positive, as a more typical rate is about 35 percent. Most notable is that this percentage also covers the maintenance budget. Many departments do not include maintenance in this comparison as maintenance skews revenues to be a lower percentage of the budget.
- + The maintenance budget was \$319,371 in fiscal year 2014 – 2015. With a total of 571.93 acres of parkland to maintain, the JCPRC spends about \$558 per acre. This is an extremely low per acre cost. The national average is more in the \$8,000 per acre range. In fact, \$558 per acre is more consistent with the rate for the maintenance of unimproved nature based parks. If one were to reduce the more typical cost of \$8,000 by 75 percent, the dollar figure would be \$2,000, resulting in a maintenance budget of \$1,143,860 annually. Currently the JCPRC operates with one full-time maintenance position and several seasonal part-time employees.
 - While these figures alone are disconcerting, the opening of James Hite Park further complicates matters with its additional 119 acres. While the park has a master plan, planning for maintenance was not included in that planning process despite the fact that over the next 40 – 50 years 70 – 80 percent of its cost will be for maintenance. Furthermore, the development of this site includes maintenance intensive facilities such as soccer fields which require a sports turf management program to be properly maintained. The annual cost of maintaining a soccer field ranges from \$9,000 upwards to tens of thousands of dollars per field. The higher costs are associated with tournament quality facilities and facilities used for sports tourism. In these cases, the investment in maintenance has a return in the form of tourism and the spending in the local economy that sports tourism generates in the form of overnight stays, money spent on food, shopping, and related recreation. Sports tourism is a major component of the tourism program in recreation based counties elsewhere simply because sports are powerful for promoting economic development.

Budgetary Assumptions

Based upon the public outreach findings, review of JCPRC’s budget, revenues, and trends in the Jefferson County budget and policy, the following assumptions can be made:

1. County residents will support programs, services, and facilities that they believe worthy of investment.
2. The JCPRC needs an adequate, reliable funding mechanism to ensure the sustainability of its facilities and programs.
3. The JCPRC must continue in cost recovery mode.
4. The JCPRC needs to adopt a cost recovery policy as shown in the Programs section of this master plan to acknowledge that different programs and services have different cost recovery potential. Some services require full public support, while other programs that benefit unique individuals with specialized services or facilities will generate revenues.
5. It is essential to secure maintenance funding in conjunction with park development to ensure that Jefferson County has high quality facilities that people want to use.
6. To improve or expand service level, the JCPRC must continue to seek innovative practices, management efficiencies, partnerships, and trade-offs.
7. The JCPRC must take advantage of its private non-profit 501-c-3 status to raise revenues. A dedicated staff person in the form of an experienced, connected Development Director with expertise and a proven track record needs to manage this effort.
8. Further reductions in county fiscal support jeopardize operations.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to create a more stable and sustainable financial framework through short-term and long-term actions, JCPRC needs to continue to change the way it does business by:

1. Leveraging resources;
2. Increasing department efficiencies;
3. Evaluating alternative management or disposition of land and facilities; and
4. Seeking additional revenue streams.

1. Leverage resources.

Cooperating with other agencies to leverage resources is of great importance to the JCPRC. With only 409 acres in 10 parks, the JCPRC parks system is relatively small. Due to limitations in funding for land acquisition and the facilities that are already in place in other park and recreation related organizations, collaborating with other organizations makes sense. JCPRC will leverage resources in the following ways:

Cooperate with Jefferson County School - The JCPRC and the school district have mutual goals related to providing facilities and programs for youth in the community. This can be built upon with the recently adopted MOU between the two entities.

In preparation for collaboration under the new MOU, the JCPRC Director and the Jefferson County School Superintendent have been engaged in discussions related to joint facility use, programs, and the Adult Evening School.

Work with other government agencies - The JCPRC needs to work with the Jefferson County Office of Planning and Zoning in sharing a staff person to oversee the planning and development of trails to create a county-wide trail network.

Partner with other providers, businesses, and community based organizations - The JCPRC has developed working relationships with several outside sources including:

- + Ranson Parks & Recreation;
- + Charles Town Parks & Recreation;
- + FLOC – The Outdoor Education Center;
- + Two River’s Treads;

- + Elegant Events;
- + Jefferson rentals;
- + Izaak Walton League;
- + Local fire fighters from all departments;
- + Jefferson County Sheriff’s Department;
- + Shepherd University Sports Coaches;
- + Freedom’s Run; and
- + CommuniTree.

Other partnerships to tap include the National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and the USDA.

2. Continue to increase JCPRC efficiencies.

The budget shows how the management team scrutinizes all expenditures. They have reduced some expenditures significantly, such as office supplies. Major changes related to food service and the concession area will further these efficiencies. Offering meals as part of youth camps will help to increase revenues through additional fees. Removing the concession service will also result in new efficiencies by eliminating staff time for services that fail to cover costs.

3. Evaluate alternative management or disposition of properties.

Some of JCPRC’s parks are small and more evocative of a small local park system rather than a county-scaled agency. Consideration of how to manage and maintain them could lead to other partnerships that will help care for these sites with less money and time. Specific alternative management options include:

- + Naturalizing areas to reduce mowing would serve to increase the nature-based scenery and resources so treasured by the residents, as well as significantly reducing maintenance costs.
- + Re-evaluating agreements on the management of parks, such as Morgan’s Grove, ballfields and sports complexes, and future trails, could spur the reduction of costs, capture a higher level of service, and produce maintenance for less cost.

- + The future maintenance of the James Hite Park sports facility should be addressed and determined now that the first phase of development is completed and the public has access to the park.

4. Seek additional funding streams.

Given trends in Jefferson County reductions in impact fees, it is unlikely that the JCPRC will receive the annual budgetary support it did in the past. An additional 1 percent sales tax for parks and recreation should be considered.

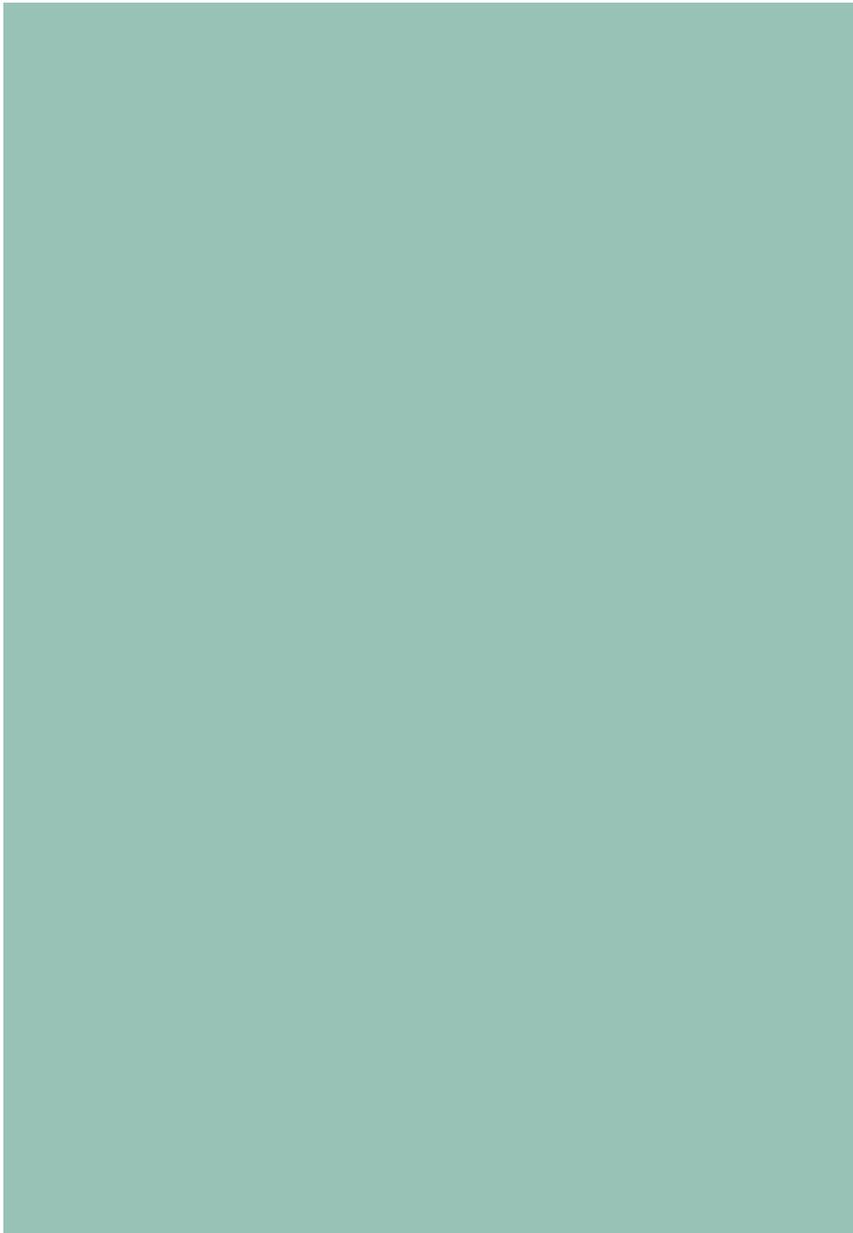
Promoting county-wide special events and activities could also help generate specific revenues. These must be county-scale events. One possibility could be the expansion of the Christmas Light Show. Since the show is already of outstanding quality, improving it could help make it a major show that would draw people from surrounding cities, such as Frederick, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. This would require sponsorships, partnerships, and volunteers. Activities and programs in the dog park are likely to generate substantial income (either in its current or new location). Also a review of the art show agreement is warranted since the fair is held in a county park. Another event that could generate substantial financial benefits is a Brew Fest or a Wine Fest.

Sports tourism has major potential to help the JCPRC as well as for Jefferson County's overall economic vibrancy. Although park and recreation agencies are the engines of tourism, their central role in generating the economic impact emanating from tourists is not widely recognized by taxpayers or elected officials. Sports tourism is growing dramatically, and events such as tournaments, competitions, dances, cheerleading, and other activities generate overnight stays. For example, softball tournaments that do not require an overnight stay generate spending of about \$55 per day for youth and \$100 per day for adults in the local economy. Tournaments that generate overnight stays bring in several thousand people, resulting in the direct spending of several million dollars per major tournament.

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JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

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05

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

shaping parks & recreation for the future

Parks and Recreational Facilities are the infrastructure backbone of a great parks system and include not only parks, but greenways, trails, natural resources areas, and other community destinations.

SHAPING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

Jefferson County is wealthy in some recreational resources and in other areas it is under-served or untapped in terms of its potential. The county has large expanses of open space which are conducive to nature-based recreational activities such as hunting or fishing.

Looking to the future, Jefferson County wants to promote economic development yet maintain its rural characteristics that attract people to the county, while enhancing the recreational opportunities and amenities for residents. This includes meeting and exceeding basic needs in a way that establishes Jefferson County as a leader in recreation. By doing so, the county will retain existing businesses, attract new employers, and add to the quality-of-life for all residents. Enhancing the existing recreation facilities, strategically adding new parks for people to use throughout their lifetime, providing quality maintenance, and tying it all together with a Jefferson County greenway and trail network will serve the people of Jefferson County, not only today, but for generations far into the future.

The challenge will be to do it right, especially within the current funding limitations. Jefferson County has limited resources and has never undertaken a truly comprehensive approach to providing parks and recreation facilities and programs to its residents. This master plan offers Jefferson County the opportunity to take a step back and develop a realistic and achievable plan for the next ten years to establish quality facilities that will be durable, safe, attractive, accessible, and desirable places to enrich the lives of the citizens into the future.

ASSESSMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

The purpose of the parks and recreation assessment is to determine if recreation needs are being met and to project how the system should change to meet the present and future recreation needs, especially for facilities that are part of a county-level system. Existing public facilities throughout Jefferson County have been analyzed to determine how they may be improved or expanded, and what changes must be made to comply with current safety and accessibility standards.

Service areas were developed to determine if citizens in all parts of Jefferson County have access to parks. Connections between parks, schools, historic areas, cities, designated growth areas, and other destinations were explored. The analysis of parks and recreation facilities was based on seasonal fieldwork, evaluation of existing conditions and service areas, and expressed community needs and interests.

Five Factor Assessment

Six factors guided the assessment of Jefferson County's park and recreation facilities including:

- 1. Amount of parkland;**
- 2. Location and distribution of facilities;**
- 3. Connections between parks;**
- 4. Type of recreation facilities; and**
- 5. Condition.**

Map 5.1 shows the location of existing parks and recreation facilities in Jefferson County. An inventory of parks and recreational facilities within Jefferson County and the cities and towns is provided on Table 5.1 (located at the rear of this chapter).

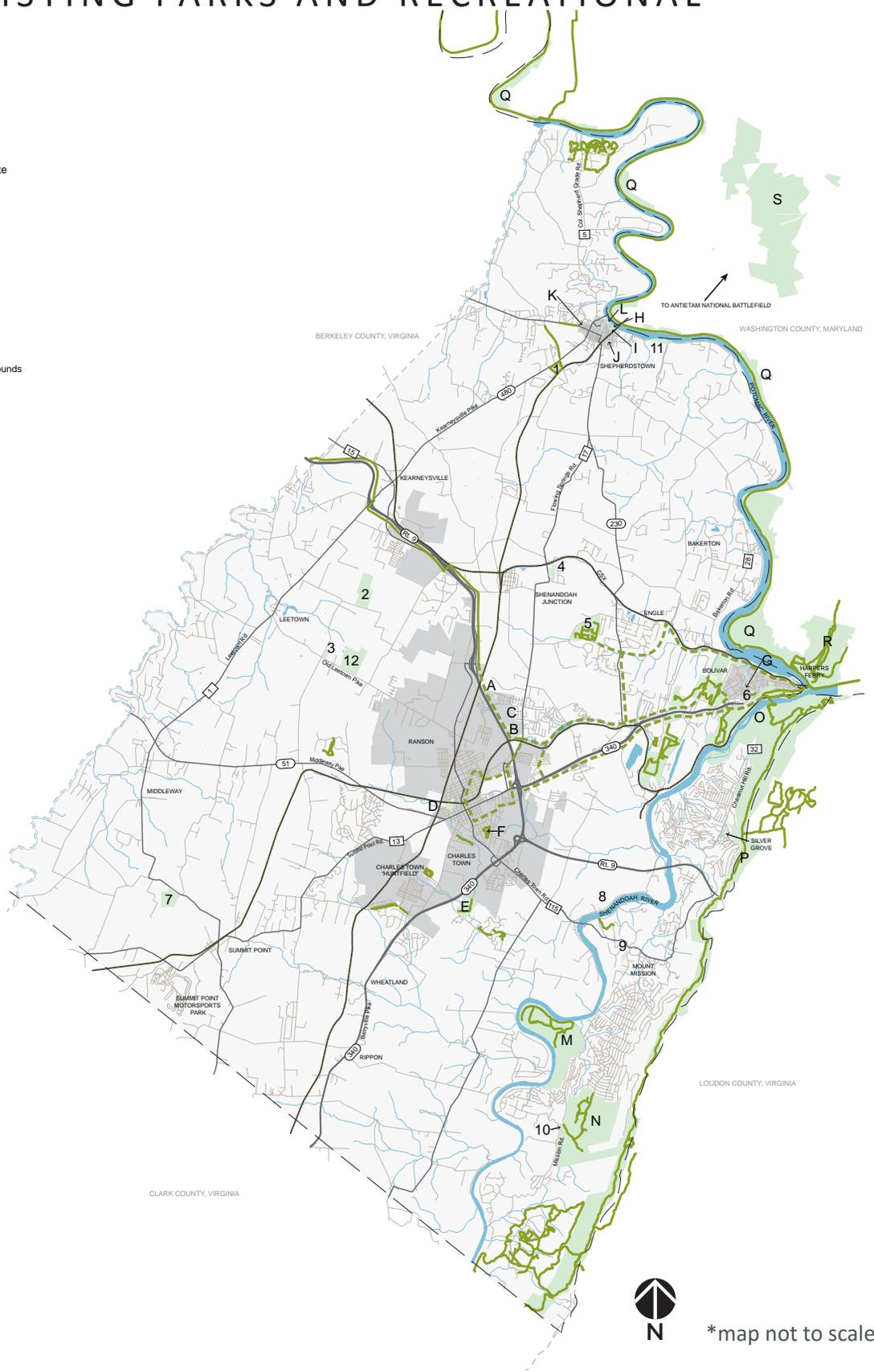
National

The National Park Service owns and manages the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and the C&O Canal National Historical Park which combined includes several thousand acres of preserved lands within Jefferson County that are directly accessible from Jefferson County. The parks are

MAP 5.1 EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

LEGEND

-  Rail Lines
 -  Existing Designated Trail Route
 -  State Boundary
 -  Jefferson County Boundary
 -  Incorporated Areas
 -  Public Park Lands
1. Morgan Grove Park
 2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
 3. Leetown Park
 4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
 5. Sam Michael's Park
 6. Bolivar Nature Park
 7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
 8. Moulton Park
 9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
 10. Mount Mission Park
 11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
 12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds
- City Parks**
- A. Marcus Field
 - B. Flowing Springs Park
 - C. Briar Run Park
 - D. Evitts Run Park
 - E. Willingham Knolls Park
 - F. Jefferson Memorial Park
 - G. Bolivar Community Park
 - H. James Rumsey Monument Park
 - I. Cullison Park
 - J. Viola Devonshire Park
 - K. Bane-Harris Park
 - L. Riverside Park
- State Parks**
- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
 - N. Shannondale Springs WMA East
- Federal Parks**
- O. Harpers Ferry NHP
 - P. Appalachian Trail
 - Q. C&O Canal
 - R. Maryland Heights Park
 - S. Antietam National Battlefield



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estimated to attract an estimated 250,000 or more visitors each year. Jefferson County has also petitioned Congress and the National Park Service to extend the Antietam National Battlefield into Jefferson County, to include several large parcels located along the Potomac River, south of Shepherdstown.

The U.S. Fish and Wild Service maintains its National Conservation Training Center in the northern portion of Jefferson County. The facility is not open to the general public, but does support community educational activities and has extensive facilities for gatherings, training, and education that could benefit the JCPRC system.

State

The West Virginia Division of Natural Resources (WVDNR) owns and manages the 1,361 acre Shannondale Springs Wildlife Management Area which is located in the southeastern section of the county, east of the Shenandoah River. This facility is mostly dedicated toward wildlife habitat, hunting, and fishing. Camping is not permitted.

City and Town

City and town parks play a critical role in providing parks and recreation opportunities to Jefferson County residents. In many cases these facilities are the closest to home recreation facilities that provide for the daily needs of the citizenry. They range in size from .2 acres (Viola Devonshire Park in Shepherdstown), to 32.85 acres (Flowing Spring Park in Ranson), and Willingham Knolls Park (Charles Town), which are both mostly undeveloped naturalized areas. There are numerous city and town-owned parks within Jefferson County. An inventory of these facilities is listed in Table 5.1.

PARK FACTOR 1: AMOUNT OF PARKLAND

Jefferson County owns an estimated 409 acres of parkland, of which, approximately 376 acres are true “improved and accessible” public parkland. This include the 117 acres being added by James Hite Park. Determining what amount of parkland is “ideal” for Jefferson County requires considering several factors.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has moved away from a purely number of acres per population approach of determining parkland needs. Many municipalities, especially in the mid-Atlantic region, follow a standard for comprehensive park and recreation

planning that is less formula-based and more community specific. Based on socioeconomic and demographic shifts, increases in populations, cultural changes in the types of sports activities pursued, and the increased awareness of natural resource preservation, there is a need for a comprehensive review of not only the acreage of parks and recreation facilities but also the types of facilities provided. The latest park, recreation, open space, and greenway guidelines released by the NRPA are based on a “systems approach” to community facility planning at its core. This approach presents an alternative premise which states that every community has its own unique blend of social and economic characteristics that define it. Each community must be considered on an individual basis in order to tailor the most appropriate range, quantity, and quality of recreational facilities within fiscal limits. These guidelines specifically address the following:

- + **Environmental Trends** such as connecting people to nature, creating the next generation of park stewards, pollution reduction, habitat preservation, protecting disappearing resources such as wetlands and forests, reducing greenhouse effects, etc.
- + **Social Trends** that focus on the importance of wellness activities and desire to maintain diverse cultural heritage as well as the continued introduction of new recreational activities.
- + **Economic Trends** in which parks and recreation is positioned as an economic engine while, at the same time, acknowledge the struggle to fund parks and recreation at appropriate levels.
- + **Demographic Trends** such as the aging population, changes in household sizes, family composition, as well as the growth of minority populations.

Applying these consideration to Jefferson County especially supports the need for more park facilities that are diverse. Conservation and appropriate public access to environmental areas with natural resources, such as the rivers, via trails is especially important. The broad range of recommended amounts of parkland is especially driven by the dramatic increase in recent years, nationally, in organized sports like soccer and lacrosse. If even modest projected population growth occurs within Jefferson County, by 2035 there will likely be a need for additional parkland that is equivalent to approximately 110-125 percent the current size of Sam Michael’s Park. This may be further compounded when

taking into account exponential growth in active sports and the need for large format recreation facilities. The amount of overall parkland that is needed is also impacted by the desire of the community to greatly increase the network of county-wide and feeder trails. Creating such trails, however, does not necessarily mean that Jefferson County needs to own all of the land required to achieve such a true trail network. It could be achieved through a coordinated effort within the traditional land development process.

In the end, it is beneficial for Jefferson County to be strategically looking to acquire lands adjacent to existing parks to make those parks more county-scale and diversified. This means parks consisting of multiple hundreds of acres. Lands along major waterways should always be considered for acquisition in order to create public access points to valuable regional natural resources. Even though county residents have proximity access to the C&O Canal Towpath which parallels the Potomac River, this facility is located in Maryland. Establishing key greenway corridors, including corridors along waterways and also between parks and neighborhoods should be pursued as well. Trail acquisitions may be in the form of access easements to create public access without necessitating outright land purchases.

PARK FACTOR 2: LOCATION AND DISTRIBUTION PARKS

Just as the amount of park acreage is important, so are the types of parks available and their public accessibility. Different types of parks provide different recreation opportunities for people who live, work, and visit Jefferson County. Table 5.1 shows the range of park facility types available in each park, both county and city or town-owned.

Counties typically provide regional parks for resource-based passive recreation or preservation of historic and cultural resources. County parks are complemented by municipal/city neighborhood, community, and athletic complexes. Most of Jefferson County's public parks would most accurately be classified as neighborhood parks or athletic complexes, with the one exception of Sam Michael's Park, which is the largest and has the greatest mix of passive and active recreational facilities. As James Hite Park is developed it has the potential to be comparable to Sam Michael's Park if a mix of passive and active facilities are developed within the park. The rest of the parks are small, less than 15 acres, with limited facilities. Unless they provide a very unique recreational experience, parks of these size are not typically the purview of a county parks system. The parks in Jefferson

County primarily provide active recreation facilities with a few support related facilities such as pavilions and barbecue pits.

Jefferson County Schools'-owned property are, in most cases, only fulfilling very limited needs for active recreation and passive use such as playgrounds. Some Jefferson County Schools' facilities are locked, such as the running tracks, to prevent non-school use. As a result of this limited role that public school lands currently provide to the broader public, the evaluation of existing park service areas organized in this master plan places limit emphasis on school properties. However, publicly owned Jefferson County Schools' properties could play a much greater role of serving Jefferson County residents' overall recreational needs. School lands could serve as close-to-home recreational and community hubs. A partnership in the utilization of school facilities would support JCPRC's role as a county-wide recreation system, focusing on nature based and special use facilities connected by a trail network and with county-wide programming, yet reduce the need to construct new facilities to meet current and projected needs.

Map 5.1 illustrates the locations of the parks throughout Jefferson County and their service areas. In the case of a county-wide system, the applicable size of service areas can vary. It was commonly mentioned by the public that some of the parks, "Seem to be in the middle of nowhere." If a 10-minute drive criteria is applied (a common measure of convenience accessibility) as the broadest service area capture, it shows that much of Jefferson County's population is served by a park. This analysis doesn't account for the size of the actual parkland and the mix of available facilities in most cases, which realistically might reduce the practical attraction of a particular park for someone driving to it as a destination.

From a county-wide perspective it is helpful to subdivide Jefferson County into park planning districts. The boundary of the districts approximately reflect functional circulation of the community, including physical barriers to facility access, as well as aspect of neighborhood identity and association with developed activity centers. The Park Planning District Map 5.2 shows how Jefferson County could be subdivided into planning districts, and how those districts align with existing parks and recreation facilities as depicted on Map 5.3 Park Service Areas. These park planning districts can also aid in determining that a base level of services and facilities are provided throughout Jefferson County.

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The analysis of the park locations shows:

- + Recreation land is not evenly distributed throughout Jefferson County; however the distribution, especially if school sites are included in the evaluation, responds to existing population concentrations and targeted growth areas.
- + Parks and recreation facilities, especially city and town-owned, are primarily concentrated in the core of Jefferson County.
- + Charles Town and Ranson, combined, serve as the primary population center for Jefferson County and have traditionally been the community, activity, and commercial center as well. Many Jefferson County residents, especially those located in the southern two-thirds of the county, travel to Jefferson County's core for services and activities, including recreation activities. This is supported by the transportation network of Routes 9 and 340, which makes the county core highly accessible by car from all areas within Jefferson County.
- + The southern portion of Jefferson County will likely continue to look towards Virginia for a portion of its recreation needs, based on proximity.
- + Jefferson County Schools could play an important role in providing recreation opportunities, especially in some of the less dense areas of Jefferson County and to supplement the need for active recreational facilities. Currently these facilities are mostly off-limits to the general public during non-reserved times.
- + The Harpers Ferry National Historical Park serves as both a major tourist destination and as a major regional park which supplements the supply of parkland provided by Jefferson County and its cities and towns.

PARK FACTOR 3: CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS

Trails and greenways provide passive recreation opportunities and green corridors of protected open space. Easy access to trails facilitates exercise and fitness, as well as safe linkage to connect neighborhoods and communities. Connecting the parks of Jefferson County with trails and greenways will add to the livability and quality-of-life for

citizens. Trails offer tremendous opportunity to boost tourism. Counties with major trail networks such as York and Allegheny in Pennsylvania have experienced significant economic growth including the development of new businesses and increased tourism that results in substantial spending in the local communities.

The analysis of the existing trails, park accessibility, and connections shows:

- + Most of the county-owned facilities have very limited accessibility beyond vehicular access, even by residents that are in very close proximity. This is mainly due to the fact that the parks are located in primarily agricultural areas or as a result of adjacent developments not being planned or designed to accommodate connections to the parks.
- + Jefferson County has made strides to improve pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the county, especially within recently approved land development plans.
- + Many of the parks in the cities and towns are accessible by sidewalk networks and traditional streets that are more supportive of bicycle traffic.
- + Most rural roads serving Jefferson County's parks have no accommodation for pedestrian or bicycle uses, including adequate shoulders, even those within target growth areas.
- + Jefferson County's creek and river corridors represent major linear corridors that could become the framework for a robust greenway and trails network, connecting residents to parks and natural resources.

PARK FACTOR 4: TYPE OF RECREATION FACILITIES

Recreation facilities should be provided within a community to meet the demands of individuals, community groups, and organized leagues. There are opportunities, however, to fill gaps, meet unmet needs, and to further diversify the system. The Parks and Facilities Inventory is provided on Table 5.1 and the location of playgrounds throughout Jefferson County is depicted on Map 5.6. In general, Jefferson County provides a fairly diverse set of active and passive recreation options.

For the larger, more capital intensive facilities such as a swimming pool, ice rink, or expansion of the Sam Michael's Park Community Recreation Center, it may be prudent to undertake dedicated feasibility studies to determine their full need, along with other design parameters required to most effectively create such a facility in Jefferson County. A feasibility study would address items such as: optimal size; preferred location; special design attributes, need for supporting facilities (restrooms, storage, utilities, equipment, etc.); as well as the operation, management, and maintenance impacts to ensure fiscal sustainability. A feasibility study should also identify level-of-magnitude costs, potential financing, phasing, partnerships, ownership structure (if other than JCPRC), and funding opportunities.

In some cases the accommodation of new facilities may require the re-configuration of existing facilities. The introduction of any new facility, major facilities especially, should only be done after a master plan is established for the entire area of a respective park to ensure that capital

investments are made in a matter that makes the most long-term sense for the JCPRC. This will also insure that near-term investments do not preclude future long-term build out potential in existing or future parks.

The following list represents the key recreational and park programming element needs that were identified through this planning effort. These are presented in no specific order.

Amphitheater - Amphitheatres can greatly vary in size and complexity. Depending on the size of the facility, use can range from facilitating a small gathering to serving as a venue for a major regional event. Studies performed to construct facilities in Morgan's Grove Park and Sam Michael's Park illustrate the range of facilities that are possible. Cost aside, the size, location, and design can also dramatically impact the viability and utilization of a facility and therefore its sustainability. It appears that Jefferson County could support a large, more revenue intensive



Amphitheatres that are designed to sensitively capitalize on their landscape context can become major regional attractions and support economic and tourism development goals.



Aquatics do not exclusively mean tank pools. Themed spray pads can fulfill an important community desire for summer play facilities, and are less expensive to operate and manage.



High-quality architecture can dramatically elevate the attractiveness and sense of awareness of the landscape in a great public park.



Credit: SGA Inc. - Moon Township, PA - Ohio Riverfront Park

Jet plazas can provide unique and simple park attractions, especially as a part of a mix of play facilities such as environmental and landform play areas.

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and revenue generating facility, which could serve both its resident population and compliment Jefferson County's larger tourism development goals. Jefferson County should first evaluate the revenue and financial structure of such a facility before undertaking any additional efforts to locate and construct a large venue amphitheater.

In the interim the current band shell at Sam Michael's Park is in need of significant repair or replacement. This facility serves as a significant revenue generator and if improved, could potentially increase income. Although requiring capital, replacing the current facility is a project that could be considered a deferred maintenance expenditure and justifiable until the more comprehensive evaluation (including an economic an operational assessment) of a regional events amphitheater is performed in tandem with the preparation of a master plan for Sam Michael's Park.

Aquatics Facilities - Aquatic facilities were universally identified as the top facility type requested by the public. With the exception of the small and outdated pool at Charles Town's Jefferson Memorial Park and the facility at Shepherd University, Jefferson County lacks indoor and adequate outdoor aquatics facilities. Due to cost and complexity of creating a major aquatics facility, whether indoor or outdoor, it is not likely that Jefferson County would be able to construct and sustainable operate such a facility. Therefore the most logical, and likely the most viable approach is for Jefferson County to partner with the School District. This partnership would include undertaking a comprehensive feasibility to determine the ideal, sustainable, and cost-effective aquatic facility or facilities to be constructed in Jefferson County. The feasibility study would also address a pathway forward for a partnership agreement between the two entities to advance the project, including raising capital, if deemed viable.



Quality camping facilities should have on-site, nearby amenities.



The trend in play area design is moving away from "off-the-shelf" play equipment and towards site inspired, unique play experiences.



Camping areas should be designed to be attractive and functional.



Locally-inspired environmental features can be a play area design theme.

Camping – Outdoor recreation is a major draw in Jefferson County. Although there are private camping facilities, there is an opportunity to provide additional facilities in alternative locations that meet local and visitor needs, and do not directly compete with private facilities. In addition, Jefferson County’s camping facilities could extend the reach of existing parks and increase programming opportunities around major natural resource areas. Moulton Park is an example of a location where JCPRC provides such facilities focused on meeting a demand partially generated by the draw of the Shenandoah River. Ordinances are in place to prohibit camping in municipalities mainly near the Appalachian Trail so this constraint should be addressed with the local governments. An example of a camping area with quality amenities is:

<https://www.hipcamp.com/nc/land-share/snaggy-mountain/apple-orchard-tent-camping>

Creative Play/Destination Play Area (Large) and Nature Playscapes – The existing children’s play facilities in Jefferson County are generic and consist of off-the-shelf play equipment from the typical equipment providers. Although these facilities clearly fill a need, Jefferson County should consider creating a larger, more intensive, inter-generational play area. A recent trend has been to create creative play areas with over-arching design themes that are informed by the local environment and/or community identity. When done properly these facilities are able to serve not only younger generations but also function as socializing venues for parents, grandparents, etc. In order for these facilities to be successful they must have nearby amenities including, restrooms, sufficient parking, trails, signing, seating, lush landscaping, and ideally comfort elements such as concession stands/café’s.



Great dog parks are more than a fenced-in area.

Equestrian Park – Specialty facilities are increasingly becoming focal points of successful park systems. In many cases, specialized facilities, such as an equestrian park, are created as a partnership between a lead entity, (non-profit or for-profit entity), a parks departments, and potentially a tourism bureau, and/or an economic development corporation. In the case of Jefferson County, there is a group leading an effort to create an equestrian park. Such a facility would fit well with the broader aspects of what Jefferson County is known for, such as its highly scenic, agricultural landscapes, and historical tourism. JCPRC should not necessarily take the lead on the development of such a facility. It should explore partnerships that would take the lead role in the creation of an equestrian park and exploring opportunities for joint programming within a constructed facility. Montgomery County, MD Parks has a potential model for a public equestrian park called the Woodstock Equestrian Special Park, which can be seen by accessing the link below:

http://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks_facilities_directory/woodstockequestriansp.shtm

Dog Park – A dog park is located at Sam Michael’s Park. This facility has a devoted user group and clearly fills a need. However, it does have some fundamental flaws. Most notably it does not provide separate facilities for large and small dogs, as recommended by the American Kennel Club. The facility also lacks double-gated entries to keep dogs from escaping and to facilitate wheelchair access, as well as seating areas. In addition, the current facility takes up a disproportionately large amount of space in the epicenter of Sam Michael’s Park and is located on land that is suitable for other recreational field facilities that have much more constrictive design constraints. It is recommended that



Disc golf courses provide an opportunity to engage participants in the full extent of park sites, in a relatively low-impact manner for an active sport.

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the facility be relocated to another location in the park, or ideally be part of an expansion of the park itself. In addition to this facility, additional dispersed dog parks could be supported in Jefferson County. One suggestion is to move it to county-owned land on or near Leetown Park, which is still located in the core of the County.

Disc Golf – Disc golf has become a very popular sport for all age groups. Successful models for disc golf course in urban, suburban, and rural communities exist throughout the U.S. They are often designed to overlap with broader open space within parks. It is recommended that a Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) regulation compliant course be developed so tournaments can be held. This would require approximately 4,500 linear feet of course for an 18-hole facility. Multiple disc courses in the county would facilitate tournaments, which would help promote sports tourism. A group called LoCo Disc Golf Club is an organized disc golf sports group that organized and created a course in Loudon County and could be looked to for advice and support: <http://www.locodiscgolf.com/>

Additional information about disc golf course is available on the Disc Golf Association’s website: <http://www.discgolf.com/>

A model facility for Jefferson County is located at Moraine State Park in Butler County, PA: <https://www.visitbutlercounty.com/attractions/lakeview-disc-golf-course>

Fitness Center (Outdoor) – Providing outdoor health and wellness facilities to serve a broad sector of the population is a growing trend. These outdoor facilities consist of gym equipment grouped together to promote socialization and programming. These facilities are especially popular with the older population and could be beneficial in Jefferson County due to evidence of aging in place population numbers. Implementation of this type of facility could also help address obesity, which is the number one health issue according to the U.S. Surgeon General. If created, this facility should be located adjacent to the creative play/destination play area.

Football (Premiere level) – There was a great deal of discussion at this planning effort’s “sports forum” about the need for higher quality football facilities in Jefferson County. All of the existing field facilities suffer from poor construction quality, especially related to grading and drainage. When the new fields are ready for use at James



Outdoor gyms are increasingly popular, especially as a component of parks with balanced approaches to active and passive facilities.



Ice rinks could be used as a way to promote year round recreation in county parks.



Skating tracks are a new approach to providing outdoor ice skating in a more exciting format than a traditional rink.

Hite Park, the burden of over-use on existing fields will be decreased, but, based on demand, Jefferson County could support a dedicated multi-use field that meets football playing regulations. In order to maximize year-round use, the return on investment, and lower maintenance costs, it is recommended that a synthetic turf field with lighting be constructed.

Ice Rink (Outdoor) – Expanding off-season recreational opportunities is important in the county. An outdoor ice rink could increase the winter utilization of one Jefferson County’s parks. It could be a traditional rink or skating track. The use of synthetic skating surfaces is becoming more

common and may be worth considering. Encouraging a skating track could increase tourism, which is a main goal of this master plan.

Indoor Recreation Facilities – There is a great need for additional indoor recreation space. The interior facilities at Sam Michael’s Park should be expanded to include another gym, a larger fitness center, an indoor track, and additional activity rooms. The assessment of the ability to accommodate the expansion of the facility should be done at the same time as a master plan is created for the entire Sam Michael’s Park. This recommendation is consistent with recommendations made in Jefferson County’s 2035 Comprehensive Plan.

Lacrosse – Interest in organized lacrosse is growing in Jefferson County, which is consistent with trends in the mid-Atlantic region. Jefferson County should pursue options to create a multi-purpose field large enough to support competitive lacrosse. At the Sport Forum held for the preparation of this master plan, South Jefferson Park was identified as one location for such a facility. This would likely require the acquisition of additional, adjacent land to support the introduction of a lacrosse facility, which requires 1.5 to 2 acres of dedicated field and support area. More information is available at: <http://www.uslacrosse.org/>



Photo Credit: Jerad Minnick [Http://Growinggreengrass.net](http://Growinggreengrass.net)

Properly designed and constructed sports fields are critical investments and provide the safest play and the greatest longevity.

River Access and Water-Based Facilities – Water-based activities are very popular in Jefferson County, and there is a strong desire for water access. Increasing access to, expanding opportunities on, and diversifying uses at the edge of the county’s waterways would greatly enhance recreation opportunities. Water-based recreation would help to advance tourism initiatives.



The best way to serve all of the population of Jefferson County is to find ways to maximize the utilization of existing facilities.



People are naturally attracted to water and providing simple but well designed and constructed facilities creates a high return on investment.

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Running Track – Both Washington and Jefferson High Schools have competition level outdoor running tracks. Gaining some level of public access to these facilities should be discussed with the school district. There is also a potential need for an additional public track facility. This facility could be integrated into another competition level field facility, such as a football facility.

PARK FACTOR 5: CONDITION

Each park site was viewed during the tour of facilities and subsequent fieldwork. Generally, the parks appear clean. Some of the sites suffer from inadequate infrastructure and focus on underlying conditions, such as improper drainage facilities, poor lighting, etc. Most of the parks have evolved over time, as needs arose, and were not formally master planned. The findings of the facility inventory for each park have similarities that relate to accessibility and the regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the safety guidelines of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and recommendations to enhance the users experience through the addition of convenience facilities such as benches, grills, picnic tables, restroom facilities, etc. Specific findings of site observations and recreation opportunities include the conditions of turf, equipment, signing, and structures, as well as the overall functionality of the parks. Some conditions increase park maintenance requirements. Park master planning and consideration of any changes in facilities need to have substantial input from the Temporary Park Manager and the maintenance team. The following are the key observations related to park conditions.

Inconsistent Routine Maintenance - Several of the municipal parks have inconsistent maintenance. This is likely from a combination of inadequate design, construction issues, and limited time available from the small maintenance staff.



Quality turf management is an important part of park maintenance.



There are fundamental infrastructure improvements needed throughout the Jefferson County parks.



The overall quality of facilities varies significantly throughout the system.



The utilization versus cost of maintenance of facilities should be evaluated to determine their long-term value.

Ballfields exist which have large areas with bare turf, suffer from compacted soils, and poor drainage. These facilities are impossible to maintain properly despite the efforts of the crews that apply band-aided solutions to try to overcome underlying construction quality problems. Each park should be evaluated for its specific maintenance needs and uniform maintenance standards, based on industry standards, should be adopted.

County Parks Lack “Park-Like” Settings - Most of the developed portions of Jefferson County’s parks have a utilitarian aesthetic. All of the parks need landscape improvements to make them more attractive and “park-like.” Each park has issues related to the layout and the functionality of facilities. Overall design logic is lacking. Good design could aid in creating strong civic interaction

and pride in the parks, as well unifying the parks into one cohesive system. An improvement initiative should also include developing a System-Wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual. Having high-quality, well designed and uniform fixtures such as benches, lighting, signing, etc. is cost effective, efficient, and improves the perception of the overall park system. By doing projects jointly with Jefferson County Schools and at a county-wide level, a value-added component could be gained through efficient long term maintenance and management.



Rural parks should be treated with the same design care as urban parks. This includes providing the complete package of amenities from active sports fields, quality materials, extensive landscape plantings, high-quality architecture, site fixtures, etc.



The uniform treatment of facilities, such as paths and plantings, can provide the visual impact of high-quality and a well-cared for park.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

System-Wide Recommendations

The following are overarching recommendations focused on reinforcing the system-wide aspects of the county-wide parks and recreation facilities. Reference Map 5.7 for the location of some of the proposed recommendations.

1. Ensure that all Jefferson County parks are safe, well maintained, and meet a uniform high-quality standard.

Trends and Findings

- + Existing facilities have inconsistent levels of investment, quality, and amenities.
- + The current condition of parks is not a function of poor maintenance, but of improper and/or poor construction, lack of thorough planning, or inadequate design.
- + There is a lack of consistency in site amenities, fixtures, elements, etc. There is no sense of an overall “county brand” for the parks system.

1. Develop a System-wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual.
2. Add restroom facilities.
3. Add pavilions.
4. Ensure that all facilities meet current safety standards and ADA compliance .
5. Implement more intensive improvements, such as grading and drainage, ideally after master plans for each park are prepared.

2. Think in a county-scale manner when considering all aspects of parks and recreation facility management, development, and expansion.

Trends and Findings

- + Current park facilities are scaled more to a municipal level.
- + JCPRC should be looking at serving the needs of Jefferson County residents and providing facilities that the individual cities and towns cannot provide.
- + County parks and recreation facilities and trails should both serve residents and function as a major tourism draw and for economic development.

1. Explore the feasibility of developing special use facilities that will have county-wide appeal, such as a regional trail connections, aquatics facilities, an amphitheater, equestrian parks, etc. These facilities could be incorporated into Jefferson County’s system, either through special use feasibility studies or individual park master plans.
2. Include special event space, especially in Sam Michael’s Park for uses such as major festivals, the seasonal light show, weddings, performances, races, etc.
3. Continue to expand a few strategic parks to elevate them to the size and level of a true county park facility. Recommended parks for this approach are Sam Michael’s Park, James Hite Park, and South Jefferson Park.
4. Incorporate the rich history of Jefferson County and region into parks through interpretative signs and displays, heritage trails, community celebration areas, etc.
5. Develop a comprehensive greenway network that connects park sites, historic sites, regional environmental resources, watercourses, open space, residential neighborhoods, cities, schools, and community destinations.
 - Develop greenways to provide safe convenient travel between points of interest, while providing for hiking, bicycling, and walking.

- Explore the creation of greenways and trails through land acquisition, easements, and use of existing rail, road, and utility rights-of-way.
6. Target acquisition and development of parkland to meet needs for expanded facilities, especially adjacent to existing parks.
 7. Develop and implement a plan to maximize public riverfront and creek access, water-based recreation, and education. Build upon existing resources near the riverfronts and creek corridors.
 - Seek additional parkland to provide greater public access to the Potomac River and the Shenandoah River for recreation. Land should

be contiguous to existing riverfront park parcels and trail connections. Jefferson County already has the makings of a riverfront park system with Moulton Park, Harpers Ferry and the C&O Canal National Parks, and the pending addition to the National Park System with the expansion of Antietam Battlefield National Park into the county. Connections and infill parks between these sites should be developed to provide convenient access to the river with support facilities typically found at a trailhead (restrooms, parking, boat docks, trail/river map signs, etc.). Contiguous parcels to these sites should be sought to expand the linear opportunities along the river and to eventually connect the sites, creating major greenway/blueway corridors.

Highlights of Why the Riverfronts are Key Opportunities

The Potomac and Shenandoah riverfronts have only begun to achieve their full recreational potential in Jefferson County. The rivers add to the scenic and historic qualities of Jefferson County and provide opportunities for recreation, environmental education, and interpretation of the culture and history of Jefferson County. Jefferson County and its communities should embrace the rivers and provide expanded access to its shores for residents and visitors. The following are suggestions and opportunities to embrace the rivers and all they have to offer.

- + *Maximize on these lands near the rivers that are already in public ownership.*
- + *Give them a presence and identity as riverfront parks by tying them together thematically through trail connections, and a public identity and promotion system. The parks are already providing some access to the rivers but they only represent a small example of the full potential.*
- + *Seek additional land for public access. Consider acquisition of land, as well as access easements. These efforts should be an outgrowth and high priority of a formal county system-wide policy for land acquisitions and donations.*
- + *Develop as many river access points as possible with facilities to meet community need and to tap community opportunity. Master plan the areas incorporating facilities that may include:*
 - *Boat ramps and docks;*
 - *Stabilized fishing locations;*
 - *Restrooms;*
 - *Benches and picnic facilities;*
 - *Signs that provide information about the culture and history of the area;*
 - *Trails that parallel the river along the dike system and shoreline that connects to a regional trail system;*
 - *Trails and boardwalks that explore the ecosystem of the river, adjacent wetlands and shoreline;*
 - *Lighting for trails in the urban area, benches, trash receptacles and landscaping; and*
 - *Create public spaces for viewing the river and holding community events.*
- + *Develop paralleling and feeder trails along, and to, the rivers and creeks to turn the community towards the watercourses. Provide open visual access to the rivers and creeks from the trails and seating area for viewing.*
- + *Explore public/private partnerships, such as leases for restaurants, canoe/paddler outfitters, and/or boat rentals, at appropriate locations and in a sensitive manner to promote supporting amenities and create economic development possibilities.*
- + *Develop a comprehensive wayfinding sign system that will guide residents and visitors to greenway/blueway opportunities.*
- + *Work with Jefferson County Schools to identify the types of environmental education opportunities that would enhance the school curricula for those located in close proximity to greenways/blueways.*
- + *Work with neighboring counties on the Potomac River, the Shenandoah River, and the Opequon Creek corridors to extend public access regionally.*

3. Improve and maximize the function, convenience, and aesthetics of parks through thoughtful planning and design.

Trends and Findings

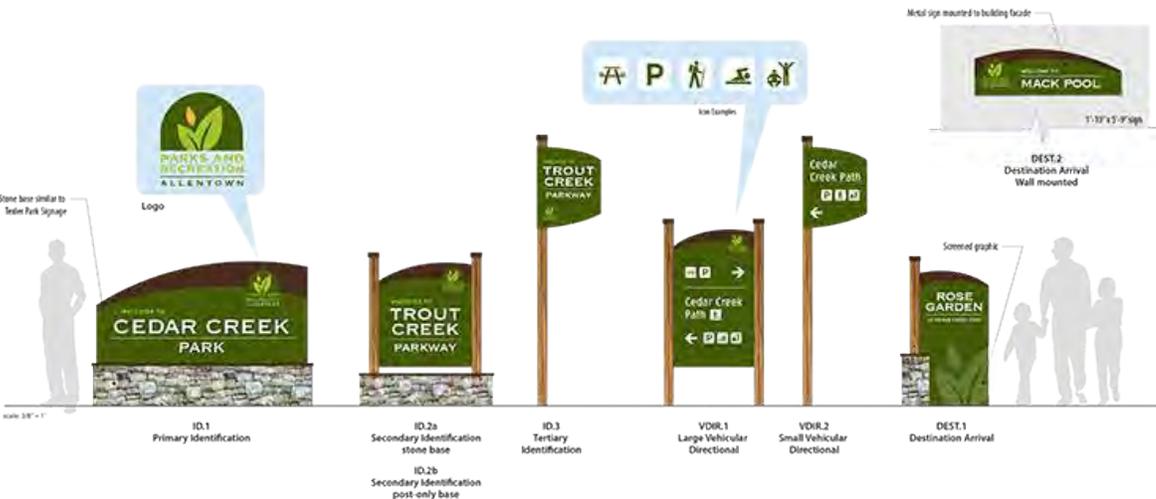
- + *The quality of park facilities varies significantly. This should not be confused with daily maintenance which the JCPRC does well, but instead is a function of the level of investment made in the construction of infrastructure and facilities.*
- + *All of the parks suffer from a lack of comprehensive planning that ensures that parklands are used to their maximum benefit, their layout is efficient and functional, and that the parks enhance and capitalize upon the natural resources available.*
- + *Jefferson County's system has a mix of active and passive facilities, but individual parks could provide a better balance of both. High quality design will ensure that parks serve the widest population of park users and to provide diverse park experiences throughout the county.*

1. Complete master plans for each park and greenway incorporating public participation as part of the planning process. The master plans should evaluate the functional relationships within existing parks, determining if facilities should be removed, added, renovated, or moved to maximize the use of each park site. Master planning is an important means to address management issues through park design and aligning facilities with recreation trends and current and projected community needs. Park sites should be designed to provide order to facilities and activity

areas. The suggestions in the park assessments outlined as an Appendix to this plan and this system-wide master plan should be incorporated into applicable park planning efforts. The master plans should include operation and management strategies as well as a phased cost estimates that outlines the anticipated development costs. A model park master planning scope of work is provided in Appendix C of this document.

2. Provide walking trails in parks and to park facilities, especially connected to adjacent existing or future developments. Trails are enjoyed by all segments of the population and are highly desired recreation facilities. ADA accessibility laws and regulations require appropriate accessibility to recreation facilities and activity areas. Jefferson County should require multi-use trails within, and to, new developments. They should also require connecting those trails to existing and planned park and recreation facilities nearby. This policy action could be one of the most effective means of expanding community accessibility within the county and to other parks and recreation facilities, and potentially at the lowest costs.
3. Enhance park sites by making them comfortable and convenient to use by adding consistent and uniform benches, trash receptacles, drinking fountains, bike racks, restrooms, and other convenient facilities, as appropriate. Provide benches near playgrounds, in shaded locations, and at other activity areas for adults to sit and watch park activities.

A comprehensive signing system can have a major impact on the perception of quality from the visitor's perspective and greatly enhance the visitor's experience. This example shows all of the potential sign types needed for a typical public park system, including trails, historic interpretation and arboretum sites. (City of Allentown Parks and Recreation System Comprehensive Signing System, copyright, SGA, Inc.)



4. Add uniform system-wide signing and branding at each park to identify the park as well destination within the park. A signing system includes not only uniform entrance signing but internal facility signing, trailblazers, kiosks, regulatory interpretative signing, and donor recognition. Utilize a standard vocabulary of sign materials and design to unify and promote the park opportunities within Jefferson County while noting ownership of each site. JCPRC currently has matching arrival signs at most parks, this system could be the basis for a complete signing system.
5. Develop a high quality county-wide map that illustrates the location of parks, trails, and greenways in Jefferson County for residents and visitors.
6. Provide facilities for teens such as skate parks, parkour, climbing walls, bicycling, sand volleyball courts, and basketball courts. While organized sports have grown in recent years, current national trends show that younger generations are also looking for broader options for un-programmed activities.
7. Provide facilities for lifetime recreation/leisure pursuits such as trails, volleyball courts, tennis courts, and picnic pavilions.
8. Consider the needs of aging populations. Make facilities pedestrian friendly, convenient to use, and provide sitting areas in the shade.

4. Optimize school facilities for community recreation.

Trends and Findings

- + Schools currently provide limited recreation opportunities beyond scheduled and programmed events. After school operation facilities are generally closed off from the public.
- + Schools are currently primarily focused on scholastic athletic needs, yet opportunities exist to expand the type and amount of facilities to serve a broader community audience, especially in locations that are underserved by park facilities.
- + Creating after hours and seasonal access to outdoor school facilities could represent a dramatic and immediate increase of facilities available to the Jefferson County community.
- + Work with Jefferson County Schools to create "Community School Parks" that would serve as community hubs for people of all ages year round during non-school hours.

1. Undertake a pilot partnership project with Jefferson County Schools to enhance one school site into a Community School Park. Strive to make the school grounds more campus- or park-like. Add amenities such as:
 - Entry plantings and shade trees;
 - Walking paths;
 - Picnic shelters or pavilions;
 - Park benches and tables;
 - Playground/play area improvements; and
 - Gardens to grow food and provide nutrition programs to cultivate lifelong healthy living through nutrition and active lifestyles.
2. Target the enhancement of additional schools as regional community parks – school sites within park planning districts least served by parks or with the greatest population concentrations.



5. *Work with the Jefferson County and city visitor bureaus in the promotion of county park resources and trails to expand the tourism and economic development potential and draw residents, business, and visitors to Jefferson County.*

Trends and Findings

- + *Parks, trails, recreation facilities, and cultural heritage areas are crucial to tourism.*
- + *Trails and other facilities influence overnight stays in hotels and contribute millions of dollars to the local economy. Trails will actually increase park use.*
- + *Parks and recreation is a powerful economic development tool because it draws tourism and more.*
- + *The citizens of Jefferson County believe that recreation related improvements could help to further revitalize the cities and towns.*
- + *This step would align with Jefferson County's economic development recommendations in its 2035 Comprehensive Plan.*

1. JCPRC should work with the Jefferson County Development Authority (JCDA) to identify incentives for the specified target private providers of recreation-based tourism on an annual or semi-annual basis. This could be a shared position with JCPRC.
2. Actively market potential "priority" projects/facilities to private and non-profit providers for signature facilities such as an equestrian park, amphitheater/performance venues, etc.
3. Use the land development process to secure parkland, linkages, and recreation funds.
4. Work with Jefferson County's Farmland Protection Board and the Historic Landmarks Commission to protect important lands for agricultural (character), scenic beauty, vistas, and historical preservation/protection.

6. *Partner with the School District on the development of aquatics facilities and programs in Jefferson County.*

Trends and Findings

- + *Aquatic facilities and programming were the highest priority requested facilities needed in Jefferson County.*
- + *Jefferson County's 2035 Comprehensive Plan also recommends exploring the feasibility of an indoor aquatic center that includes a competition pool with diving apparatus for students and swimmers of all ages.*

1. Undertake an Aquatics Facility Feasibility Study.
 - Perform detail facilities needs and programming analysis.
 - Determine partnership opportunities and policies.
 - Evaluate high school sites for feasibility and preferred location.
 - Include a Facility Operation and Management Plan as a part of the feasibility study.
 - Develop level-of-magnitude costs and potential phasing.
 - Include a funding and financing strategy.
2. Prepare a model cooperative operational agreement.
3. Work on county, city and town zoning and subdivision ordinances to discourage the construction of small pools in individual residential developments (often referred to as "bird baths" by community and civic leaders) that often end up not being constructed after the development is completed because the home owners associations do not want to assume the financial cost of maintenance and upkeep.
4. Supplement a tank pool with small splash pad facilities at JCPRC's larger parks.

7. Implement a Comprehensive Trail Planning, Development and Management Program

Trends and Findings

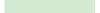
- + *Increased accessibility to existing resources and destinations can be achieved through smaller measures.*
- + *Trails are the most used and least expensive (based on a level of utilization) recreation facilities.*
- + *Trails can be a major tourism attractions.*
- + *Trail implementation in other counties demonstrates the need for dedicated staff. It is too big of a responsibility for the additional responsibility to just be added to an existing staff position.*

1. Establish a new dedicated position in Jefferson County's office of Planning and Zoning focused on trail development, funding, coordination, design, construction, and management.
2. Utilize the comprehensive trail routing plans provided in on Maps 5.4 and 5.5 as well as in Appendix B of the plan as a **guidance** document for creating trail linkage between parks, other destinations, and neighborhoods.
3. All of the cities and targeted growth areas within Jefferson County should have comprehensive sidewalk systems that connect residential and commercial areas with schools, parks, and other public lands.
4. Use the land development process to create multi-trail linkages, permanent easements, and interconnected bicycle/pedestrian networks.
5. Ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are included in all transportation improvements along identified trail routes and feeder networks.
6. Strive to create a 100-mile trail loop within the county. This would create a special facility unique to Jefferson County that could be used to advance tourism and bicycle events that will generate revenue. Include scenic and historic destinations along the route along with a mix of scenery including water views, woodlands, towns, etc .

MAP 5.2 PARK PLANNING DISTRICTS

LEGEND

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT LEGEND

-  Rail Lines
-  Existing Designated Trail Route
-  State Boundary
-  Jefferson County Boundary
-  Incorporated Areas
-  Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

City Parks

- A. Marcus Field
- B. Flowing Springs Park
- C. Briar Run Park
- D. Evitts Run Park
- E. Willingham Knolls Park
- F. Jefferson Memorial Park
- G. Bolivar Community Park
- H. James Rumsey Monument Park
- I. Cullison Park
- J. Viola Devonshire Park
- K. Bane-Harris Park
- L. Riverside Park

State Parks

- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
- N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

- O. Harpers Ferry NHP
- P. Appalachian Trail
- Q. C&O Canal
- R. Maryland Heights Park
- S. Antietam National Battlefield



MAP 5.3 PARK SERVICE AREAS

LEGEND

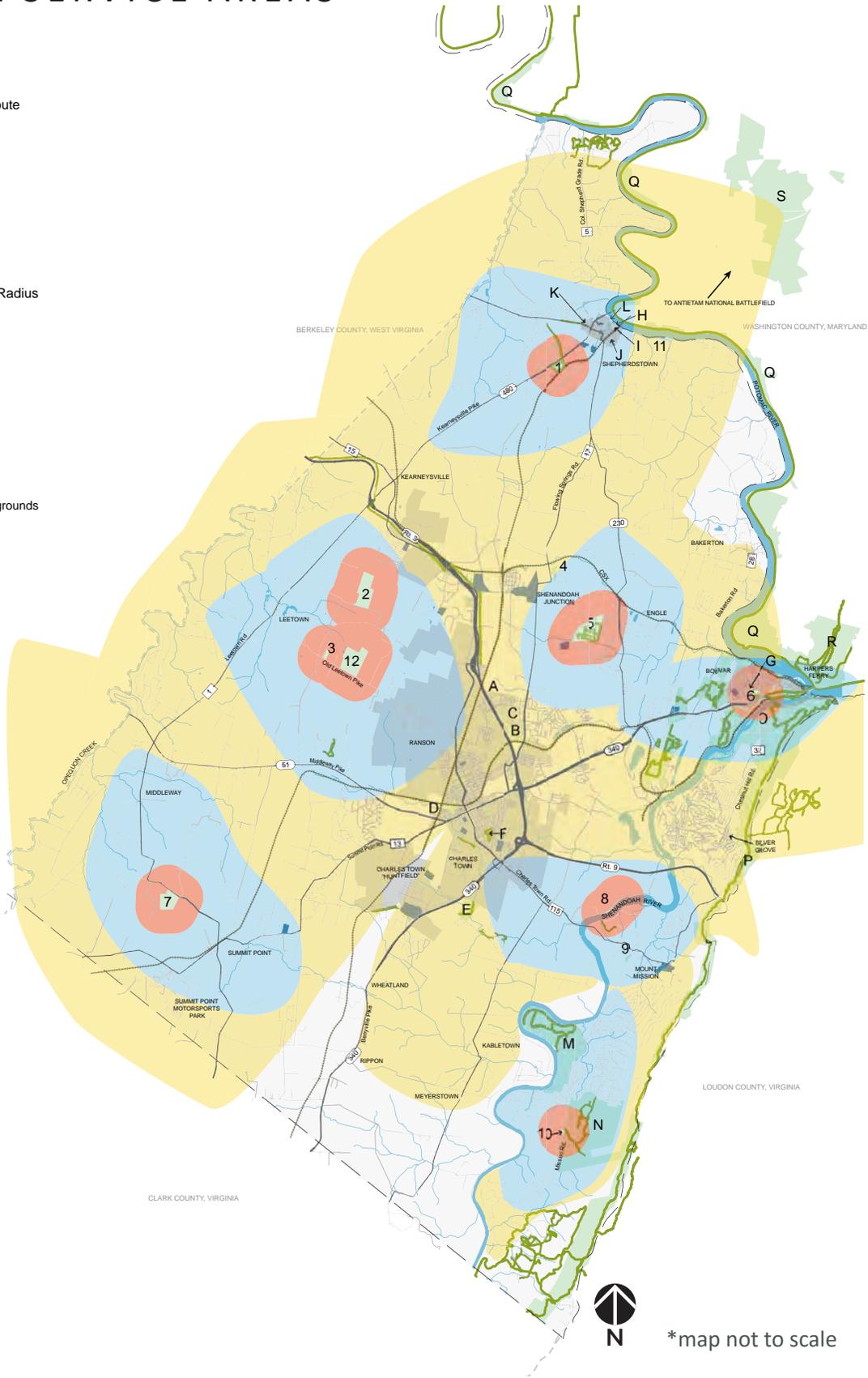
-  Rail Lines
-  Existing Designated Trail Route
-  State Boundary
-  Jefferson County Boundary
-  Incorporated Areas
-  10 Minute Driving Distances
-  5 Minute Driving Distances
-  1/2 Mile/10 Minute Walking Radius

- Public Park Lands**
1. Morgan Grove Park
 2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
 3. Leetown Park
 4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
 5. Sam Michael's Park
 6. Bolivar Nature Park
 7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
 8. Moulton Park
 9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
 10. Mount Mission Park
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 12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

- City Parks**
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 - E. Willingham Knolls Park
 - F. Jefferson Memorial Park
 - G. Bolivar Community Park
 - H. James Rumsey Monument Park
 - I. Cullison Park
 - J. Viola Devonshire Park
 - K. Bane-Harris Park
 - L. Riverside Park

- State Parks**
- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
 - N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

- Federal Parks**
- O. Harpers Ferry NHP
 - P. Appalachian Trail
 - Q. C&O Canal
 - R. Maryland Heights Park
 - S. Antietam National Battlefield



MAP 5.4 PROPOSED TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

LEGEND

-  Rail Lines
-  Existing Designated Trail Route
-  Proposed Dedicated On-Road Route
-  Proposed Multi-Use Trail Route
-  Proposed On-Road Portion of a Trail Route
-  State Boundary
-  Jefferson County Boundary
-  Incorporated Areas
-  American Battlefield Protection Program
-  Greenway Corridors (Recreation/Conservation)
-  Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Leetown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
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City Parks

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- G. Bolivar Community Park
- H. James Rumsey Monument Park
- I. Cullison Park
- J. Viola Devonshire Park
- K. Bane-Harris Park
- L. Riverside Park

State Parks

- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
- N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

- O. Harpers Ferry NHP
- P. Appalachian Trail
- Q. C&O Canal
- R. Maryland Heights Park
- S. Antietam National Battlefield



*map not to scale

MAP 5.5 TRAILS AND GREENWAYS WITH HISTORIC BATTLEFIELD PROTECTION AREAS DEPICTED

LEGEND

- Rail Lines
- Existing Designated Trail Route
- Proposed Dedicated On-Road Route
- Proposed Multi-Use Trail Route
- Proposed On-Road Portion of a Trail Route
- State Boundary
- Jefferson County Boundary
- Incorporated Areas
- American Battlefield Protection Program
- Greenway Corridors (Recreation/Conservation)
- Public Park Lands

1. Morgan Grove Park
2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
3. Lestown Park
4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
5. Sam Michael's Park
6. Bolivar Nature Park
7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
8. Moulton Park
9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
10. Mount Mission Park
11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

City Parks

- A. Marcus Field
- B. Flowing Springs Park
- C. Briar Run Park
- D. Evitts Run Park
- E. Willingham Knolls Park
- F. Jefferson Memorial Park
- G. Bolivar Community Park
- H. James Rumsey Monument Park
- I. Cullison Park
- J. Viola Devonshire Park
- K. Bane-Harris Park
- L. Riverside Park

State Parks

- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
- N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

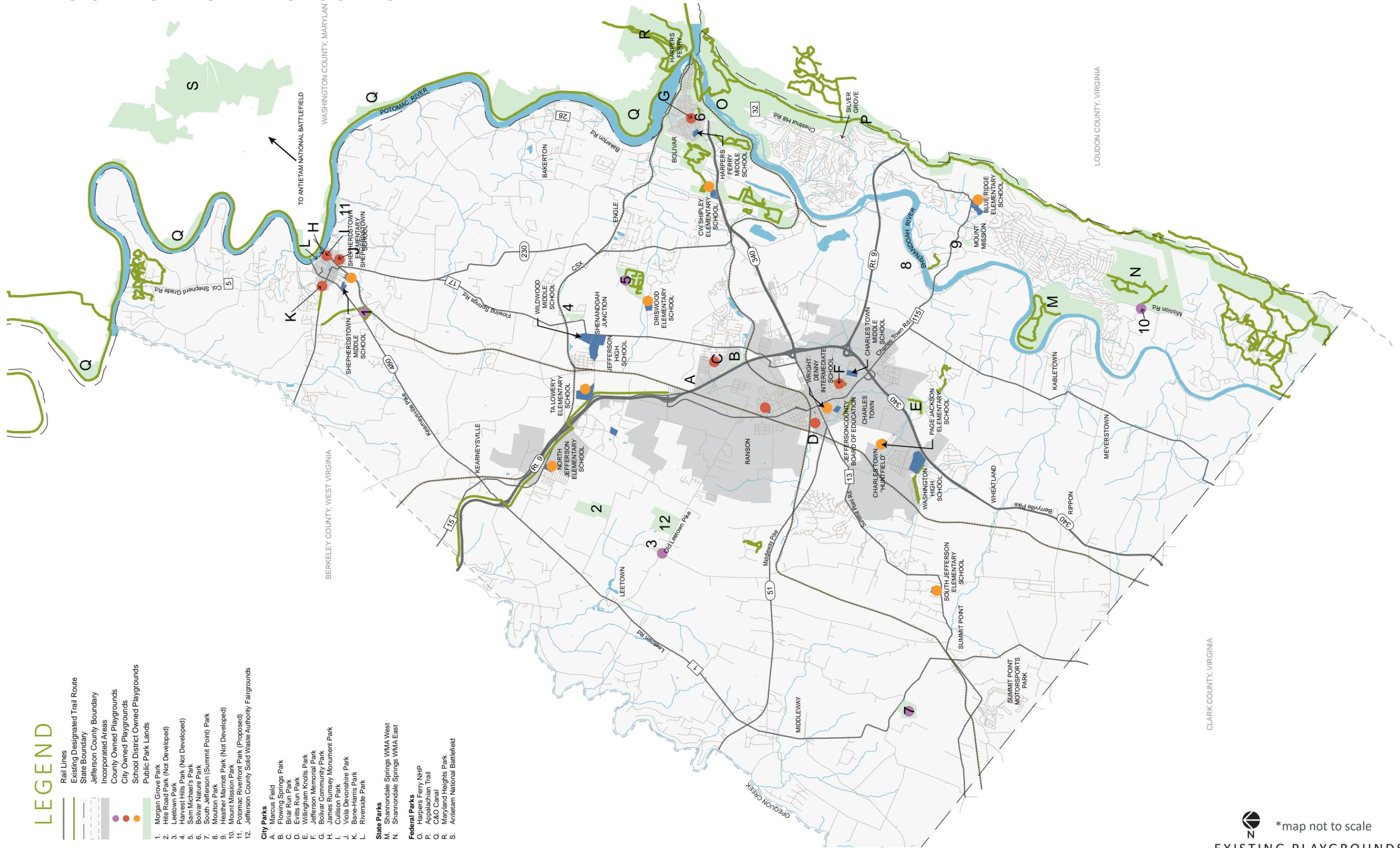
Federal Parks

- O. Harpers Ferry NHP
- P. Appalachian Trail
- Q. C&O Canal
- R. Maryland Heights Park
- S. Antietam National Battlefield



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MAP 5.6 EXISTING PLAYGROUNDS



LEGEND

- Rail Lines
 - Existing Designated Trail Route
 - State Boundary
 - Jefferson County Boundary
 - Incorporated Areas
 - County Owned Playgrounds
 - City Owned Playgrounds
 - School District Owned Playgrounds
 - Public Park Lands
1. Morgan Grove Park
 2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
 3. Leetown Park
 4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
 5. Sam Michael's Park
 6. Bolivar Nature Park
 7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
 8. Moulton Park
 9. Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)
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City Parks

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- L. Riverside Park

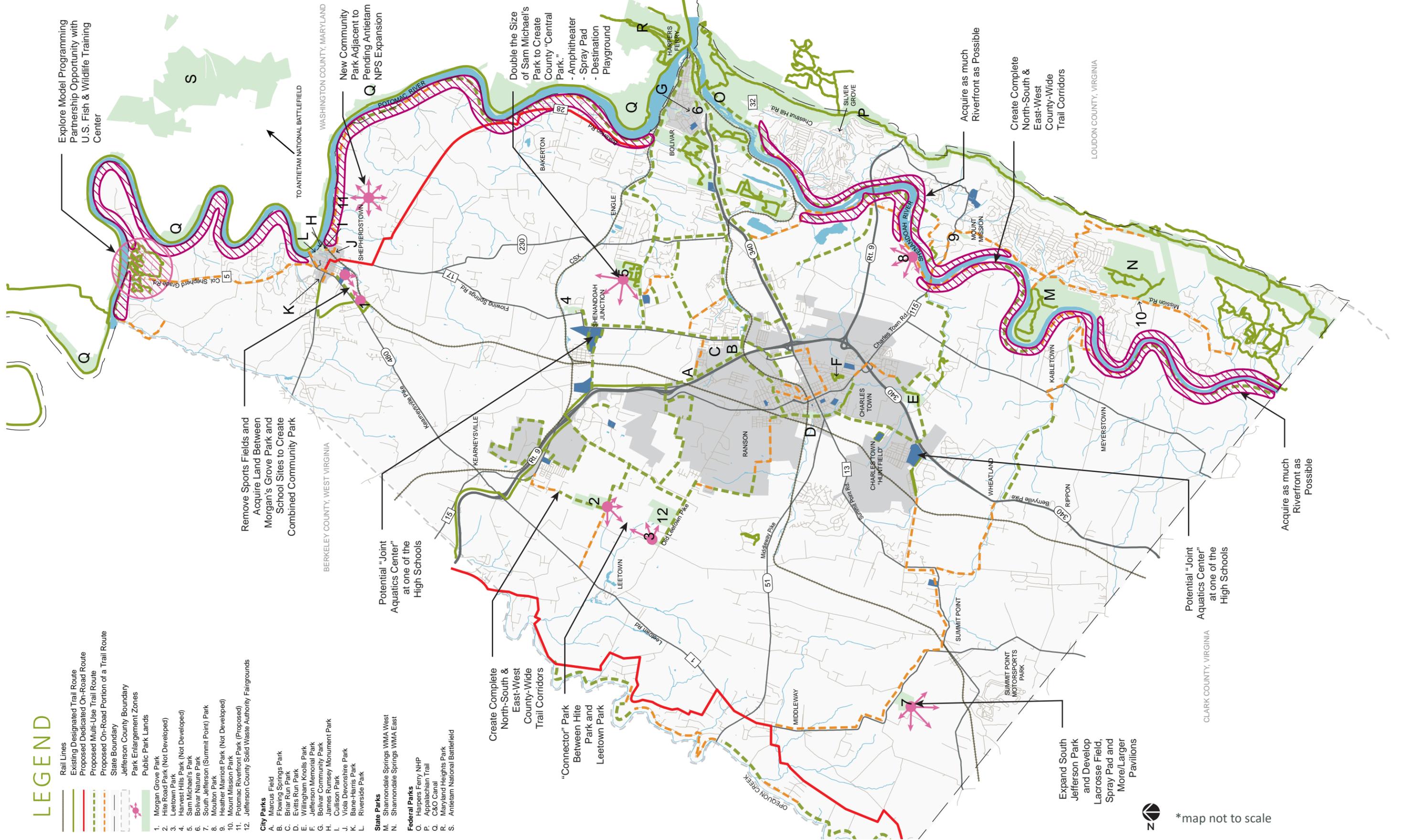
State Parks

- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
- N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

- O. Harpers Ferry NHP
- P. Appalachian Trail
- Q. C&O Canal
- R. Maryland Heights Park
- S. Antietam National Battlefield

MAP 5.7 PROPOSED PARKS, RECREATION AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN - 2025



LEGEND

- Rail Lines
 - Existing Designated Trail Route
 - Proposed Dedicated On-Road Route
 - Proposed Multi-Use Trail Route
 - Proposed On-Road Portion of a Trail Route
 - State Boundary
 - Jefferson County Boundary
 - Park Enlargement Zones
 - Public Park Lands
1. Morgan Grove Park
 2. Hite Road Park (Not Developed)
 3. Leetown Park
 4. Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)
 5. Sam Michael's Park
 6. Bolivar Nature Park
 7. South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park
 8. Moulton Park
 9. Heather Marriot Park (Not Developed)
 10. Mount Mission Park (Proposed)
 11. Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)
 12. Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority Fairgrounds

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- C. Briar Run Park
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- E. Williamson Knolls Park
- F. Jefferson Memorial Park
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- I. Cullison Park
- J. Viola Devonshire Park
- K. Bane-Harris Park
- L. Riverside Park

State Parks

- M. Shannondale Springs WMA West
- N. Shannondale Springs WMA East

Federal Parks

- O. Harpers Ferry NHP
- P. Appalachian Trail
- Q. C&O Canal
- R. Maryland Heights Park
- S. Antietam National Battlefield



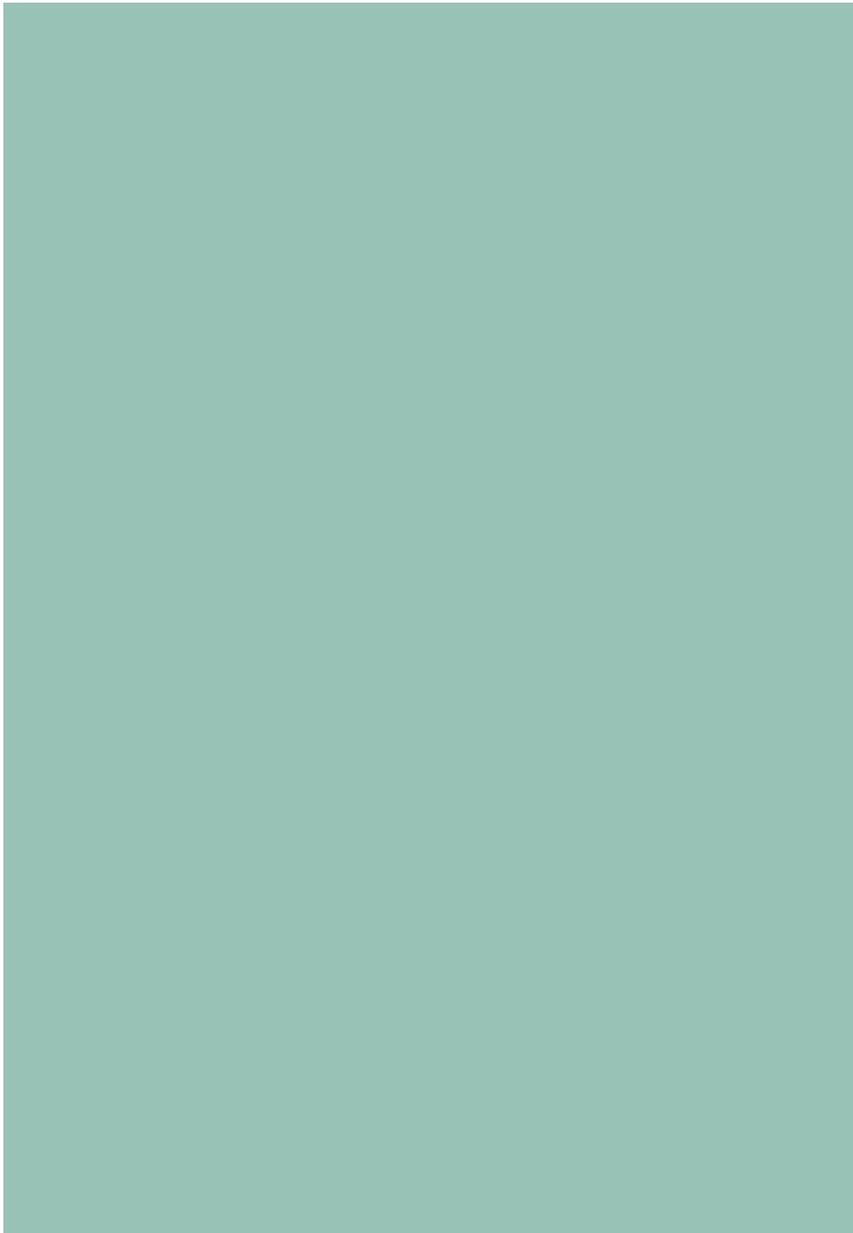
*map not to scale

TABLE 5.1 JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES INVENTORY

Jefferson County Parks & Facilities Inventory																														
		Jefferson County Parks										Shepherdstown					Bolivar	Harpers Ferry			City of Ranson			City Of Charles Town			Totals			
		Morgan's Grove Park	Leetown Park	Sam Michael's Park	Bolivar Nature Park	South Jefferson (Summit Point) Park	Moulton Park	Mount Mission Park	James Hite Park (In Construction)	Harvest Hills Park (Not Developed)	Heather Marriott Park (Not Developed)	Viola Devonshire Park	Bane-Harrison Park	Cullison Park	James Rumsey Monument Park	Riverside Park	Potomac Riverfront Park (Proposed)	Bolivar Community Park	Harpers Ferry Band Stand	Childrens Park	1007 Washington Street	Briar Run Park	Flowing Springs Park	Marcus Field	Jefferson Memorial Park	Evitts Run Park	Willingham Knolls Park			
Acreage:		26.69	10.43	137.86	6.78	72.57	3.06	1.85	117	22	11	0.2	0.47	3.39	1.55	1.59	16.57	0.86	0.31	0.17	0.17	1.35	32.85	3.43	10.95	14.97	73.86	571.93		
Active Recreation Facilities																														
T-ball																													0	
LL Baseball - 60'				2/1L		1L																							2+2L	
Baseball -90'				1		2																							3	
Softball	1	2L				3		1																					5+2L	
Soccer full size	2			1		1																			1				5	
Practice Area	4			1		4																							9	
Volley Ball Courts	1			1		1		1																	1				5	
Misc. Courts																				1									1	
Football field																							1						1	
Basketball				3.5		1.5		0.5			0.5	1													2	1			6.5	
Horseshoe Pits	2	1		2				2																					7	
Tennis				2		2																			3L				4+3L	
Playground	1	2		2		1		1			1	1	1							1		2			2	2			17	
Swimming pool																									1				1	
Roller Hockey																													0	
Exercise trail	1													1															2	
Consession Stand	1	2		3		1		1																1					9	
Biking Trails																													0	
Passive Recreational Facilities																														
Passive open space	√			√		√								√	√					√		√		√	√	√	√	√	√	11
Picnic Tables	23	7		100		2		6			14			2	2	2	1					2		4	28	14			208	
Pavilion	1L	1		5		1		1											1						3	2			14+1L	
Barbecue Pits/Grills	4	1		2				11			2			1	1										1	2			25	
Benches	9	7		14		2		8			9			2	4	2				3	3	5	4		2	25	5		105	
Paths/walkways	1					1								1	1	1	1	1			1	1	0.5			1	1	1	12.5	
Support Facilities																														
Security Lighting				Limited				Limited																		Street			3	
Facility Lighting																								√	√				2	
Drinking water		2		2		3															1				3				11	
Security Cameras															1														1	
Equipment shed	2	1		2																				1					6	
Restrooms	1	1		3		TBD		1																	2	1			9	
Trash receptacle	5	10		16		1					2	4	2	1								2		7	19	4	2		77	
Parking Spaces	5-2H.C	2 H.C.				Gravel	Gravel	Gravel				Street	Street	2+2HC	4+1HC	Gravel					Street	Street	4 on Street		61+5HC	Street	12+2HC	Gravel 50?	138+14HC	
General Utility Ratings																														
Pedestrian access		√		√		√					√	√	√	√	√	√			√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	15
ADA access	√	Limited		√		√		Limited			√	√								√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	14
Existing use																														

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

investing in parks
and recreation -
implementation and action
plan



06

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

investing in parks & recreation - implementation & action plan

The Implementation & Action Plan includes a list of priority initiatives that inform and include capital improvements and the strategies for financing them, including grants, bonding, and other capital sources.

ACTION PLAN

The vision for parks and recreation in Jefferson County fosters active, healthy living, and environmental conservation. The work performed in preparation of this master plan is based upon extensive public engagement. It is essential to maintain momentum in moving ahead with the master plan's implementation. It will take many steps to achieve the community's vision of having a premier county-wide parks and recreation system. While some of these steps are major, many others are smaller and can readily be undertaken successfully now, such as the incremental facility and infrastructure upgrades in most of the county's parks. Every incremental success, no matter how small, will advance the vision for the future. Demonstrating success with projects that meet public needs and working to increase public awareness about them can have a domino effect in creating more public support and more success that further advances the vision for parks and recreation. The intent of this Implementation and Action Plan is to set forth a course of action that is pragmatic and achievable and that also allows for bigger initiatives, should the opportunities emerge.

The next steps can be challenging, but it is possible to meet those challenges in this community that treasures its parks and recreation system. Many recommendations have strong public and partner support and can be accomplished despite the current regional and national economic challenges. The recommendations in this plan include a broad range of program, policy, management, and financing actions. They also include capital improvements to improve and expand parks, recreation facilities, trails, and methods to increase protected open space. Among these recommendations, priorities for implementation include the actions that have public support or timely interest from partners, plant seeds for the future opportunities, and create capacity for operating a successful parks, recreation, and open space system well into the future.

The implementation schedule sets forth the time frame for the actions that Jefferson County and the JCPRC will undertake over the short, medium, and long term through 2026. The schedule is organized according to the major goals of the plan.



A strategic Implementation and Action Plan can result in small and large scale successes. In each case, project implementation should be recognized as another positive achievement towards the JCPRC's overall park system vision.

Goal #1 - Enhance the user's experience in all of Jefferson County's parks through basic amenities, comfort facilities, and landscape upgrades.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇒ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	James Hite Park – Parking improvements, restrooms/main pavilion, and major utility investments (water supply/wastewater treatment).	\$1,650,000	✓		
	James Hite Park – Extensive Canopy Tree/landscape plantings, site lighting, pavilions, signing.	\$250,000		✓	
	Sam Michael's Park - Replace existing band shell facility	\$75,000 - \$100,000	✓		
	South Jefferson Park – Site drainage improvements/field upgrades, new bleachers and dugout repairs, vinyl coated field fencing, parking lot improvements.	\$250,000	✓		
	South Jefferson Park – Extensive canopy tree/landscape plantings, safety lighting and signage.	\$75,000		✓	
	Leetown Park - Site drainage improvements/field upgrades, new bleachers and dugout repairs, concession building repairs, retaining wall replacements, vinyl coated field fencing, parking lot improvements	\$75,000	✓		
	Leetown Park – Restroom/concession building upgrades, ADA compliance upgrades, parking lot improvements, tennis court resurfacing, new benches, canopy tree/landscape plantings, safety lighting and signage.	\$150,000		✓	
	Moulton Park – Parking lot, boat ramp, river's edge stabilization with soft-engineering, benches and signing.	\$50,000			✓
	Mount Mission Park – Parking lot improvements, ADA accessibility compliance upgrades, site drainage improvements/field upgrade, basketball court resurfacing, benches, safety lighting.	\$70,000	✓		
	Morgan's Grove Park – Parking lot improvements including drainage and asphalt paving, benches, lighting and signing.	\$100,000			✓

Goal #2 - Create a 100 Mile "Jefferson Connectivity" Trail Network starting by connecting the C&O Canal Towpath, the Appalachian Trail, and the Harpers Ferry National Park trail network to Sam Michael's Park, the Route 9 Trail, and the Cities of Ranson and Charles Town.

Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇒ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
	Trail Route Engineering Feasibility and Preliminary Engineering for R.O.W. determination.	\$60,000	✓		
	Segment 1 Sam Michael's Park to Route 9 Trail - Final Engineering and Surveying.	\$130,000	✓		
	Segment 1 Sam Michael's Park to Route 9 Trail - Right-of-way Acquisition.	Mostly through existing public R.O.W or proposed land development.		✓	
	Segment 1 Sam Michael's Park to Route 9 Trail - Construction.	\$500,000		✓	
	Segment 2 Route 9 Trail to Ranson/Charles Town Evitts Run Greenway - Final Engineering and Surveying.	\$60,000		✓	
	Segment 2 Route 9 Trail to Ranson/Charles Town Evitts Run Greenway - Right-of-way Acquisition.	TBD – Mostly Ranson or Charles R.O.W. or on-road		✓	
	Segment 2 Route 9 Trail to Ranson/Charles Town Evitts Run Greenway - Construction.	\$500,000		✓	
	Segment 3 Harpers Ferry to Bakerton Road - Final Engineering and Surveying.	\$150,000	✓		
	Segment 3 Harpers Ferry to Bakerton Road - Right-of-way Acquisition.	TBD – Mostly public R.O.W	✓		
	Segment 3 Harpers Ferry to Bakerton Road - Construction.	\$750,000		⇒	⇒
	Segment 4 Bakerton Road to Sam Michael's Park - Final Engineering and Surveying.	\$225,000			✓
	Segment 4 Bakerton Road to Sam Michael's Park – Right-of-way Acquisition.	TBD – Could be easement within CSX R.O.W.			✓
	Segment 4 Bakerton Road to Sam Michael's Park - Construction.	\$1,000,000			⇒

Goal #3 - Design and implement a grand vision for Sam Michael's Park that elevates the park to a true County-scale and "the premiere" park facility for Jefferson County (100+ acres).

Status	Project Key	Cost/Source/Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
C- Completed	✓ Start Project				
IP – In Progress	⇒ Continue Implementation				
	Remove dog park and fencing.	\$10,000	✓		
	Undertake a comprehensive site master plan.	\$75,000	✓		
	Tree/landscape plantings, site lighting, pavilions, signing.	\$300,000		✓	
	Phase I Master Plan major capital projects.	\$1,000,000 - \$2,000,000 TBD determined based on site master plan findings.		✓	
	Land acquisition.	\$1,000,000			⇒

Goal #4 - Increase Public Access to the county's unique and bountiful waterways by permanently protecting waterfront properties for the public benefit.

Status	Project Key	Cost/Source/Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
C- Completed	✓ Start Project				
IP – In Progress	⇒ Continue Implementation				
	Negotiate preservation and public access easements/agreements.	Staff time and legal review.	✓		
	Land acquisition.	TBD		⇒	⇒

Goal #5 - Plan and Construct an Aquatics Facility in Partnership with the Jefferson County Schools System and fulfill a long-standing community desire for recreational aquatics, safety training, and water-based health and well-being activities in the county.

Status	Project Key	Cost/Source/Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
C- Completed	✓ Start Project				
IP – In Progress	⇒ Continue Implementation				
	Aquatics feasibility study.	\$50,000	✓		
	Architectural design and site engineering.	\$750,000	✓		
	Construction.	\$7,000,000 to \$10,000,000		✓	

Goal #6 - Plan for growth by acquiring the necessary land to create another county level park (100+ Acres) within the next twenty years.

Status	Project Key	Cost/Source/Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
C- Completed	✓ Start Project				
IP – In Progress	⇒ Continue Implementation				
	Evaluate nearby parcels for park viability, size, and ownership status.		✓		
	Initiate discussion with owners of potential property owners.			⇒	
	Negotiate acquisition purchase option agreements.			⇒	
	Fundraising and partnership for property acquisition.				✓

Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management actions to achieve the vision of this plan.

Status	Project Key	Cost/Source/Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
C- Completed	✓ Start Project				
IP – In Progress	⇒ Continue Implementation				
	Develop and implement a three to five-year program management plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Create a program mission statement rooted in the foundation of JCPRC limited staff and resources. + Assume the roles of facilitator, direct provider, and provider of facilities for self-directed recreation. + Identify customers. + Build a customer data base and their needs. + Establish four core areas of programs: health and fitness; connecting people with the outdoors; lifelong learning; and tourism support. + Establish quality standards for programs. + Establish a formula for pricing programs and cost recovery rates, including fee splits with contractors. + Establish guidelines for class sizes with respect to cost recovery and staffing. + Continue to focus on youth and family programs for 2017-2018. + Begin to add services to adults and active seniors 2018-2021. + Create and evaluation system that will cover every program offered. 	Staff Time	✓	⇒	⇒
	Plan and implement the Lifelong Learning Adult Evening School program area.	JCPRC working in partnership with the JC Board of Education. Seek School District funding to plan and launch the program. Future revenue generator.			
	Develop and implement a promotional program to increase public awareness about JCPRC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Begin to catalog the benefits of parks and recreation in Jefferson County. + Phase in strategic implementation of promoting the benefits of the value of JCPRC's work and impact on the community. 	Staff Time. Potential contract of \$20,000 – 25,000 for assistance. Seek assistance of Shepherd University and the University of WV in studies of benefits of parks and recreation			

Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management actions to achieve the vision of this plan.

Status	Project Key	Cost/Source/ Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
C- Completed	✓ Start Project				
IP – In Progress	⇒ Continue Implementation				
Organization and Management					
	Establish JCPRC in the role of convener of parks and recreation providers countywide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Hold a summit of providers to present this county master plan. + In the summit, explore comments on the plan and participant perspectives on how the group can continue to work together in the future. + Create three specific action steps for the group to undertake with designated roles, responsibilities and time lines. 	Staff time plus summit expenses for food and materials. Estimate: \$500.			
	Develop an annual work program prior to budget season. Use a JCPRC team based approach to ensure the involvement and participation of all staff.	Staff time.	✓		
	Create an organizational structure reflecting major functional areas rather than staffing positions including: Recreation Services, Parks and Facilities, Community Awareness, and Organizational Support.	Staff time.			
	Add positions to JCPRC staff:		✓	⇒	⇒
	+ Chief Development Officer/Special Events Coordinator.	\$55,000 to \$73,000 salary and benefits; phased in partial cost recovery anticipated			
	+ Facilities Coordinator and Manager.	\$55,000 to \$73,000 salary and benefits; with partial cost recovery expected through fees, rentals and sponsorships	✓	⇒	⇒
	+ Lifelong Learning Coordinator.	\$55,000 to \$73,000 salary and benefits; with cost recovery expected through lifelong learning fees and expanded services		✓	⇒
	+ Trails Planner/Coordinator.	\$55,000 to \$73,000 Shared positions with Jefferson County Planning staff		✓	⇒
	Evolve the position of Director to be 70% outreach, partnership building and advocate for benefits of JCPRC; 20% administration and 10% services. Include function of Park Planning.	Staff Time with support for JCPRC	✓	⇒	⇒
	Create a staff time tracking system in order to gauge where staff time is being spent for distinct programs, services and tasks. Use this information as eh basis to deciding about types and numbers of programs, fees and charges, and streamlining operations. It is not to be used as an employee performance indicator. It is to be used for JCPRC to determine how they are going to use limited staffing and the nature and extent of services to be offered.	Staff time. Create a staff team to set up and review the effort.	✓		
	Evaluate and further define the roles and responsibilities of the Commission members. Consider planning and holding a board retreat facilitated by an outside expert. The goal of the retreat would be to settle on roles and responsibilities and an annual work program for year 1 following the retreat.	Staff time and outside contractor. \$5,000 – \$10,000.			

	Consider retaining planning professionals including parks and recreation planners and landscape architects to be available on an as-needed basis to support departmental operations and initiatives.	Set an annual budget. Start with \$1,000- \$1,500/month to start and see how it works.			
Goal #7 - Institute the necessary parks management actions to achieve the vision of this plan.					
Status C- Completed IP – In Progress	Project Key ✓ Start Project ⇒ Continue Implementation	Cost/Source/Responsibilities	2017-2019	2020 -2024	2025 - 2026+
Organization and Management					
	Formalize the maintenance management system:	Staff time. Potential \$20,000 – 25,000 for outside assistance in workload cost-tracking and computerized real time reporting. Consider university assistance.		✓	⇒
	+ Develop a maintenance management plan including a turf management plan for Hite Road Complex. Use this as basis to set polices on field use fees and concessions.	Staff time. Consider outside contractor to help develop a sports turf management program. \$15,000 – 20,000.	✓	⇒	⇒
	+ Incorporate natural resource management and trail management as JCPRC expands system.	Staff time. Seek Training from NPS and the U.S. Forest Service.		✓	⇒
	+ Phase in addition of maintenance staff working toward ratio of one worker per 20 acres of parkland.	Additional salary of \$45,000 - \$50,000 per worker.		✓	⇒
	+ Develop a Management Impact Statement for each major park addition or improvement to document the resources required for maintenance and to plan the allocation of resources and setting fees accordingly.	Staff time	✓	⇒	⇒
	Conduct an information needs assessment for the department and create an Information Management Plan to ensure that the right information gets to the right person in a timely manner including staff, county officials and other key stakeholders.			✓	⇒
Budget and Financing					
	Continue to work with a mix of tax and non-tax resources. Continue to generate a cost recovery rate of 53%, which is 1.82 times the national recovery rate.	53% non-tax sources and 47% taxes	✓	⇒	⇒
	Work toward increased support from Jefferson County working toward an annual per capita investment of about \$38.	\$1.3 million additional	✓	⇒	⇒
	Phase in increased support for park maintenance. Work toward a budget of \$4,000 per acre on average yearly.	This would mean phasing in the maintenance budget from about \$310,000 to about \$1 million and included in the line item above.		✓	⇒
	Develop a Revenue Policy including a philosophy on cost recovery, policing on pricing, field and facility use fees.	Staff time	✓	⇒	⇒
	Develop a gifts and donations policy. Strive to create an endowment for the maintenance of all major gifts for facilities or major programs.	Staff time		✓	⇒

CAPITAL PROGRAMMING ELEMENTS

The implementation section of this plan focuses on capital improvements that are organized into two key categories. The first category focuses on detailed policy documents, developing strategic site-specific master plans, and construction documents to prepare for implementation. The second category focuses on actual construction activities that are informed by the activities performed in the first category. This system-wide master plan is a first step in a logical and informed process of determining values, needs, vision, goals, priorities, and actions. The undertaking of the specific actions should be informed by the direction of this document and the process used to prepare it, while also focusing on much greater detailed evaluations and creative processes (or beta-testing in the case of procedural and policy initiatives) in order to develop specific capital allocations and improvements. Furthermore, site specific activities are informed by the identified needs for certain types of facilities/programs, such as aquatics, and major regional facilities that need to be considered as park site master plans are developed for each park.

In addition, a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is provided to address the **most immediate needs** to provide a “safe, clean, and ready to use experience” in the parks. This level of improvement is focused on targeted upgrades to meet the **most critical improvements** that cannot wait until park specific site master plans are developed. Ideally, these improvements will be of value even after a site master plan is developed and will not preclude the best use or layout for a particular park in the future.

The information in the following matrix should be viewed as a summary framework that itemizes major recommendations and elements in the master plan for policy, staffing, and development. It uses a phased approach and is meant to serve as reference for capital programming. As funding is available, as needs change in the community, or as opportunities present themselves, the sequence of development may change, especially for sub-components or steps of each recommendations.

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**Project Phasing and Potential Costs - Capital Improvement Program Elements
Planning, Policies, Studies & Capital Projects**

Item #	Facility/ Park Planning District	Programming Activity	Priority	Leaders / Partners	Potential Costs	Potential Action Items/Notes
A	System-wide	System-wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual.	Near Term	JCPRC - Potential partners: cities, sports groups, environmental groups, tourism directors, NFW, and NPS.	\$30K for System-wide Manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select system-wide palette of park amenities, including benches, lighting, trash receptacles, signing, branding, fencing, active sports elements (nets, bleachers, goals, etc.), park regulations, etc. - Develop model system-wide plant lists focused on regional native and ecological diversity principles and typical applications. - Develop removal of invasive species and stabilization of appropriate re-planting policies and procedures. - Potentially establish native plant nursery in partnership with another lead entity/volunteer group. - Retain on-call arborist for large tree removal and management. - Develop policies to limit mowed turf to areas of maximum benefit, promote meadow/pollinator plantings.
B	James Hite Park/Leetown PPD	Re-evaluate James Hite Park Master Plan Based on Actual Phase I Construction and Findings of this System-wide Parks Master Plan and Undertake Construction Documents for Large Pavilion.	Near Term	JCPRC	\$80K DD, CD, & CA /\$500K Pavilion Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine location for combined restroom facilities and pavilion. - Develop Construction/Bidding Documents for restroom facilities and pavilion. - Develop a Operation and Management Plan for the park before any additional facilities are added. Could be done in conjunction with System-wide Design Standards and Landscape Management Manual.
C	High School Sites	Aquatic Facilities Feasibility Study.	Near Term	JCPRC and School District	\$50K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perform detail facilities needs and programming analysis. - Determine partnership opportunities and policies. - Evaluate high school sites for feasibility and preferred location. - Include facility Operation and Management Plan. - Develop level-of-magnitude costs and potential phasing. - Prepare model cooperative operational agreement. - Include funding and financing strategy
D	Sam Michael's Park/Charles Town/Ranson PPD	Master Plan Sam Michael's Park.	Near Term	JCPRC	\$75K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A master plan for this park should be developed which reflects the location and needs of current facilities. - The effectiveness and functionality of current facilities, such as the dog park, should be evaluated to determine potential changes/modifications in the context of the System-wide Master Plan and current park needs/vision. - The potential to introduce new facilities including: destination playground, spray pad and amphitheater should be included as a part of the master planning effort. - The relocation of the dog park, potentially to County-owned lands adjacent to Leetown Park, should be studied. - Opportunities to expand the park through future acquisitions to create a large county-level park should be considered. - Additional trail connections linking the park to existing and future development within the park service area, as well as connections to a future park at Harvest Hills and Jefferson High/Wildwood Middle school sites, should be considered.

Key: Near Term = Within 1-5 years Mid Term = Within 6-10 years Long Term = 10+ years

**Project Phasing and Potential Costs - Capital Improvement Program Elements
Planning, Policies, Studies & Capital Projects**

Item #	Facility/ Park Planning District	Programming Activity	Priority	Leaders	Potential Costs	Potential Action Items/Notes
E	Leetown Park/ Leetown PPD	Master Plan Leetown Park.	Near Term	JCPRC	\$65K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A master plan for this park should be developed, which focuses on addressing the condition of existing facilities (such as poor drainage conditions, undefined circulation/parking and the overall mix of facilities. This master plan should explore the opportunity to integrate and link adjacent County-owned lands into a large, more comprehensive facility. - The relocation of the dog park from Sam Michael's Park should be considered on adjacent County-owned lands. - Opportunities to create pedestrian and bicycle connections to James Hite Park should be explored as well as other trail linkages shown in Appendix B - Comprehensive Trail System routing plans.
F	Mount Mission Park/Sheperdstown PPD	Master Plan Mount Mission Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	\$55K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This small park is in a location that is under-served with parkland so JCPRC should consider keeping the park for the near future and upgrading it. - Evaluate the former church property for adaptive reuse as an indoor facility. - The master plan should explore opportunities to transfer ownership to a partner in the future.
G	Bolivar Nature Park/Harpers Ferry/Bolivar PPD	Master Plan Bolivar Nature Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC in Partnership with Bolivar	\$35K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This park is in a location to serve an important role in the Bolivar/Harpers Ferry/NPS/Appalachian Trailhead area. It is however, really too small to be a County park and should be transferred to another entity. - JCPRC should lead a master planning effort with partners, with the possible goal of determining the best ownership strategy for the park for the future.
H	Morgan's Grove Park/ Sheperdstown PPD	Master Plan Morgan's Grove Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	\$60K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address long-term ownership issues with the park as a condition of performing the master plan. - Remove active sport facilities and emphasize the park's design as a primarily passive facility.
I	South Jefferson Park/Summit Point/Kabletown PPD	Master Plan South Jefferson Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	\$75K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine location for restroom facilities and pavilion. - Evaluate opportunities to expand park through strategic acquisitions of adjacent lands.

Key Near Term = Within 1-5 years Mid Term = Within 6-10 years Long Term = 10+ years

**Project Phasing and Potential Costs - Capital Improvement Program Elements
Planning, Policies, Studies & Capital Projects**

Item #	Facility/Park Planning District	Programming Activity	Priority	Leaders	Potential Costs	Potential Action Items/Notes
J	Moulton Park/ Summit Point/ Kabletown PPD	Master Plan Moulton Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	\$30K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine preferred mix of facilities to be located in the park. - Evaluate opportunities to expand the park through strategic acquisitions of adjacent lands along the riverfront and across Bloomery Road. - Consider removing camping from the park unless the park grows in size.
K	Heather Marriott Park/Mount Mission/Ridge PPD	Master Plan Heather Marriott Park.	Long Term	JCPRC	\$75K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This undeveloped park could serve as a vital expansion of parkland within the Mount Mission/Ridge Park Planning District which is under-served with parkland.
L	Harvest Hills Park/North Port/Shenan- doah Junction PPD	Master Plan Harvest Hills Park.	Mid Term	JCPRC	\$75K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This undeveloped park could serve as a vital expansion of parkland within the core of the County.
M	Formerly Proposed Potomac Park/ Sheperds-town PPD	Coordinate with NPS on Antietam NP Expansion onto lands in Jefferson County.	Near Term	JCPRC/ County Planning Staff	Staff Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing coordination with Jefferson County Historic Landmarks Commission.
N		County-wide Trail Standards Manual.	Near Term	JCPRC/ County Planning Staff	Staff Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish official facility standards for trail facilities, to be especially utilized by private developers as incremental trail development occurs within. Standards should be connected to new land development projects.
O		Land Acquisitions and Donation Acceptance Policy.	Near Term	Historic Landmarks Commission/ JCPRC	Staff Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a formal written policy for land acquisition and land donations. - Determine land designation policies for assigning the future value to the system for each parcel. - Determine future and long-term land management protocols for “land banking” parcels for future park development. - Formalize a policy for disposition of property that does not fit the vision of the JCPRC system.

Key Near Term = Within 1-5 years Mid Term = Within 6-10 years Long Term = 10+ years

RESOURCE ROSTER FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

This section of the report provides recommendations on a strategic approach to raising and utilizing funds to support JCPRC's priority projects, programs and initiatives. This section also provides information on target funds that could advance your efforts.

Unfortunately, many traditional sources for parks and recreational funding have been eliminated or greatly reduced over the past decade, and there are very few grant sources available from the public sector, philanthropy, or Jefferson County corporations/businesses that could provide significant funding amounts for large capital projects, staff, or maintenance costs. Typically, a community will need to use bonding or other local capital financing strategies for the build-out and development of these types of projects, and their long-term maintenance. Also, some projects can incorporate revenue strategies which generate usage, rental and event fees, such as events centers, amphitheaters for music/theatric events, or recreational facilities.

In this context, JCPRC should consider grant funding and strategic investments as seed and planning resources that can be used to support and justify local capital financing campaigns that can cover the larger costs of capital projects, staff and long-term maintenance.

This section provides a brief overview of the targeted projects and funding needs identified in this report based on substantial consultations with the public, key stakeholders, and the JCPRC Board of Directors; a set of strategic recommendations for how JCPRC can position itself to be most competitive and successful on its funding objectives; and a summary of potential public, private, and philanthropic sources of funding that could be available for JCPRC's key initiatives.

OVERVIEW OF JEFFERSON PARK & RECREATIONAL NEEDS

This report provides recommendations on priority staff, programmatic, planning, and capital projects for JCPRC to pursue, including:

SEVEN KEY GOALS/INITIATIVES

The report identifies seven projects that could produce major, game-changing capital improvements to the County-wide park and recreational system, totaling \$16-\$23 million overall, in 2016 dollars. These include:

1. System-wide upgrades to **amenities, such as comfort facilities, infrastructure improvements and enhanced landscaping at existing parks**, at cost of \$2 million to \$3 million;
2. 100-Mile **Jefferson Connectivity Trail Network**, at initial cost of \$1 million;
3. Expansion of **Sam Michael's Park** into a premier facility, including with the addition of a amphitheater, pavilions, and potential expansion, at the cost of \$3 million - \$5 million;
4. **Jefferson County aquatics facility**, at the cost of \$7 million to \$10 million;
5. **Increased public waterway access project**, at initial cost of \$1 million to \$2 million;
6. Land acquisition and development of amenities for a second **County-Level Park**, or a major expansion of existing park such as James Hite Park, at initial cost of \$2 million; and
7. Institution of a strong parks and recreation **management system**.

STAFF & EQUIPMENT RESOURCES

- + This report recommends the establishment of new positions including "Director of Program Development & Special Events", a "Facilities Manager", and a "Trail Development Coordinator"
- + Estimate of \$220,000 annually for salary and benefits for all three positions (in 2016 dollars)
- + \$35,000 for an additional maintenance vehicle and \$32,500 for additional mowing equipment

JEFFERSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

+ Investing in Parks & Recreation - Implementation & Action Plan

PROGRAMS & PLANNING

This report recommends key next steps to support system-wide planning and management, drastically increased maintenance budgets, more detailed park master plans, feasibility studies, and collaboration with other entities, including:

- + \$30,000 for a System-Wide Design Standards & Landscape Manager Model
- + \$30,000 for a County-Wide Trail Standards Model
- + \$50,000 for an Aquatic Facilities Feasibility Study
- + \$515,000 in near- and medium-term park master plans for James Hite Park, Sam Michael's Park, Leetown Park, Mount Mission Park, Morgan's Grove Park, South Jefferson Park, Mouton Park, Marriott Park, and Harvest Hills Park
- + An increase in the annual maintenance budget to \$1,150,000 (an increase of ~\$820,000 annually)
- + Collaboration with the Jefferson County Board of Education, schools, the Jefferson County Planning Department among others, on sharing costs for staff and facilities, and national park and federal agency partners located in the County.

KEY STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO FUNDING & FINANCING

Jefferson County and the JCPRC should consider a strategic approach to planning, implementing, and justifying its efforts to secure local and other sources of funding for its priority parks and recreation initiatives:

Framing the Projects

1. FUNDING SUCCESS IS BASED ON PARTNERSHIPS & OUTREACH:

Parks & rec systems that focus on building robust partnerships with its public users, the broader general public, influential community leaders, and key organizations will be the most successful in raising funds for improvements and expansions. Such support will improve your success rate on applications for grant funding from state, federal, private sector and philanthropic funders. Such public support is also the critical foundation of any efforts to seek expanded local funding for parks, such as through increased County budget

allocations, or public parks levies. This overall Master Plan recommends a number of approaches to improved JCPRC partnerships in the community and with key organizations including the school system. This Plan calls for additional JCPRC staff, so that the Parks & Recs Director can spend more time on the important role of partnership building and community outreach. It may also be valuable for JCPRC to consider launching a "Friends of Jefferson County Parks" type campaign, using a small membership fee (perhaps \$10 per year), social media, influential local spokespeople, and outreach to key customer groups such as JCPRC users, soccer families, and other such groups to build a base of support for future fundraising efforts, and a revenue mechanism to support fundraising campaigns and other costs.

2. ONE BITE AT A TIME:

The sheer size of the needs for Jefferson County parks and recreational upgrades, programming and maintenance could seem overwhelming, but your goals can be pursued in the same way as one eats an elephant – one bite at a time. Each project is really a series of phases, and each phase requires resources to pursue. These phases include: conceptual planning phases, public engagement, preliminary design and engineering, final engineering and permitting, construction bid documentation, construction, operations, programming, and maintenance. As you progress through these phases, you can build additional public support, local governance support, and support from key funders that can help you build momentum for later bites of the project. Focus on what kind of resources, support, staff, volunteers, and momentum you must utilize in order to get to and through the next bite of the project. Grants and contributions to JCPRC are typically easier to obtain to catalyze earlier stages of concept design, public engagement and engineering, and programmatic development, and typically harder for construction, operations and maintenance (which are also very costly in relation to available grant resources).

3. LAYERS / FOCUS AREAS:

Every parks & rec project also has layers. Each project can have a variety of focus areas. A "park" or "recreational" project could be considered a watershed protection project, a stormwater and green infrastructure project, an urban forestry project, a trails project, a childhood education and development project, a recreational project, a tourism project, a public arts project, a festival project, a public health project, a sports project, a project to support

economically distressed citizens – or any and all of these combined, depending upon the specific project or initiative. The point is that each of these layers of a park and recreational project may have different sources of grants or other resources available to support them, which should frame your thinking about where you will seek funding, how you will shape your project to be competitive for that funding, and how you will approach the funding agencies to pitch your project.

4. CONFIRM COSTS:

Once JCPRC has identified the focus areas and phases of each priority project, it is important to create estimates of probable costs for each component and phase of these priorities. It is difficult to plan for, budget, or ask the County or the public for funding if you have not clearly defined the costs for the projects you seek to pursue. For instance, if JCPRC identifies James Hite Park improvements as a key priority, and delineates key phases of that project to include the extension of water/sewer utilities to the property, bathroom facilities, and concession facilities, JCPRC must then identify the costs of each of these components. With clear estimates of costs, JCPRC can better match funding sources to priority needs, and persuade funders to support your requests.

5. ASSESS CAPACITY TO SERVICE DEBT:

Park and recreational projects are often funded through local levies and bonding, and can also be funded by low-cost loan financing tools, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Communities Facilities Program loans. JCPRC should consider working with a financial professional to conduct an assessment of JCPRC's capacity to service debt to support capital building and maintenance projects. For instance, debt that is used to create sports fields at Hite Road Park could be serviced at some level through sports user fees, tournaments, and sports tourism. Financing for a Sam Michael's Park pavilion could be supported at some level by events, concessions, or rental fees. Typically, it is difficult to make a convincing case for funding by saying, "If we build it, they will come". But it can be convincing to convey that, "If we build it, they will come and, if they come, they will pay, and we have done a professional assessment of how much they will likely pay – so here is the amount you should support for financing."

There are firms that specialize in sports and recreation finance, with services including cost and revenue projection,

fee study and development, and financial analysis for new or improved parks, sports and recreation facilities. JCPRC could consider procurement of such an expert firm. The cost of retaining such a firm truly depends on the scope of effort you seek. If JCPRC can work with internal County personnel on the structuring of a levy/bond effort, and assessment of what it would cost to service such debt, the costs of outside consulting can be reduced.

Below are some examples of some of the best reputed firms in these areas:

Ballard*King & Associates

- + <http://www.ballardking.com>
- + Highlands Ranch, CO 80126
- + B*K forms a consulting team that provides a variety of pre-and post-design services for clients who are considering construction of a sports, recreation, aquatic, or wellness facility.
- + Premiere firm that evaluates the feasibility of public aquatic recreation facilities including performing analysis of operating cost & revenues, capital generations, funding, and project partnering.

Sports Facilities Advisory / Sports Facilities Management (SFA/SFM)

- + www.sportadvisory.com/index.php/Portfolio
- + *One of leading firms in nation focused on financing and business plans.*
- + *Based in Clearwater, FL*
- + *Services include feasibility studies, recreation center feasibility and business plans, offer financing options, planning, design, funding, and management, tools to assess feasibility, design, plan, fund, open, and manage community recreation and tourism venues.*

Sports Management Group

- + <http://sportsmgmt.com/projects/community.html>
- + *Berkeley, CA*
- + *Work all over U.S.*
- + *Services emphasis on strategic planning support, policy manuals and facility maintenance programming.*

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Johnson Consulting Group

- + <http://chjc.com/>
- + Offices in New York, Chicago, and California
- + Huge portfolio all over the nation, including tourism and entertainment projects: <http://chjc.com/past-project-experience/>
- + Firm specializing in serving public- and private-sector clients in North America including state, county, and municipal governments, sports franchise owners and teams, convention and visitors bureaus, asset and portfolio managers, financial institutions, private-sector developers, and universities and colleges.

6. BRIEFING SHEETS, RENDERINGS & OUTREACH MATERIALS:

Once you have conducted initial concept planning or preliminary engineering, it is very valuable to use your professional consultants to create briefing sheets, brochures, conceptual drawings, artists' renderings, web pages, and other outreach materials. These materials are critical to working with the public, funders, elected officials, and other key stakeholder to create a vision for a park and recreational project, and to project the outcome of the effort to fund the initiative. These materials can be distributed to customers, users and supporters, via the internet and social media campaign, in funding pitch packages, and in grant applications.

FUNDING SOURCES TO CATALYZE PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

Following are known sources of funding to support park and recreational planning, design, and programmatic design phases of your priority projects.

- 1. Land & Water Conservation Fund:** As JCPRC knows well from several successful efforts to secure LWCF funding, the West Virginia Department of Commerce provides annual grants using federal LWCF funding, on a 50/50 reimbursable grant basis, for a wide variety of high-quality public park and recreational projects, and parks/rec support projects. Grants average \$75,000 each, but can go as high as \$250,000. This fund could be used for nearly all of the parks planning and

construction projects recommended in this report. See www.wvcommerce.org/people/communityresources/infrastructure/landandwaterconservationfund/default.aspx.

- 2. National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance:** The National Park Service annually awards packages of expert technical assistance to units of local government and parks departments to, among other activities, plan trails and greenway projects and systems, build recreational tourism plans, support youth involvement in conservation and recreational opportunities, and build partnerships to support projects. Jefferson County may have a competitive advantage for this assistance, given its proximity to the National Park Serviced headquarters, and the key role of the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in this community. JCPRC should consider applying for this NPS assistance for the development of the multi-use trail network recommended in this report. Deadline is June 30 each year. See www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm.
- 3. USDA Community Facilities Funds:** USDA will provide loans and grants (Jefferson County does not have the demographic/economic distress to be highly competitive for grant funds) that can provide lower-cost and subsidized finance for community facilities including park and recreational projects, community centers, festival event facilities, and similar projects. These loans can be for up to \$10 million and for terms of up to 40 years, if reliable repayment streams can be confirmed. This could be a solid source for any big capital project, such as the Sam Michael's Park, Hite Road, multi-use trail, and/or aquatic facilities projects. See www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program and the West Virginia office at www.rd.usda.gov/wv.
- 4. Transportation Alternative Program Grants:** The WV Department of Transportation provides annual "TAP" grants of up to \$200,000 on a 50/50 reimbursable matching basis for, among other kinds of projects, multi-use, pedestrian and bicycle trails. See www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm and www.transportation.wv.gov/highways/programplanning/planning/grant_administration/transportationalternativesprogram/Pages/default.aspx.

5. **WV Division of Highways, Surface Transportation Priority Funds:** The State of West Virginia receives very substantial levels of “STP” funding each year from the U.S. Department of Transportation for a variety of road, bridge, and other surface transportation projects – including multi-use, pedestrian and bicycle trails. While these funds can be difficult to wrest from State DOTs (particularly WV DOT, which is essentially broke), it is possible to secure these funds with a well-conceived project that has high public support, backed by strong advocacy.
6. **Benedum Foundation:** One of the few major charitable foundations which funds West Virginia projects is the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation based in Pittsburgh, which spends 50% of its annual funding in West Virginia. Two focus areas for Benedum funding are community development and health promotion. Benedum generally does not fund capital construction projects. If JCPRC can articulate how its major parks and parks/rec tourism projects (e.g., festivals) can empower local people and improve their lives, JCPRC could potentially obtain planning and programmatic development grants for these planning efforts. Grants can be for up to \$500,000, typically on a 50/50 matching basis. See www.Benedum.org.
7. **Kaboom!:** Kaboom! is a national non-profit organization in Washington, DC that provides grants for community-engaged playground design, playground equipment grants, and innovative/creative playground equipment grants to municipal park entities. See www.Kaboom.org.
8. **Coca Cola Foundation/NRPA:** The Coca Cola Foundation is providing grants to local communities to improve park and recreation facilities and improve access to physical activity, with focus areas in sports facilities, teen wellness initiatives, outdoor fitness equipment, and similar initiatives. See www.coca-colacompany.com/our-company/the-coca-cola-foundation.
9. **CitizInvestor:** CitizInvestor is a crowdfunding service that helps a local community design a crowdfunding campaign for local projects, often including parks and recreational projects. CitizInvestor takes a small cut (6-7%) to organize your local crowdfunding campaign. It is adept and highly successful at funding projects in the \$5-\$15k range, and can also organize larger campaigns for up to \$50,000 with more effort. See www.CitizInvestor.com.
10. **Urban & Community Forestry Grants / CommuniTree:** As JCPRC knows from its successful efforts to secure these grants in the past, the WV Division of Forestry can provide state and U.S. Forest Service funding to support tree planting campaigns which can be part of park landscaping initiatives. These programs can provide free or subsidized trees, technical assistance for community forestry development efforts, and grants for forestry projects. JCPRC can begin efforts to secure additional resources through communication and collaboration with the WV State Forester and the State regional forestry contact for the Eastern Panhandle. Grants are typically due July 1. See www.cacaponinstitute.org/Forestry/CTree.htm#Application_Materials.
11. **WV Governor Community Partnership Fund:** As JCPRC knows from its successful efforts to secure these grants, the Governor’s, Community Partnership Fund is essentially an earmarking fund for local delegates and senators that can provide grants of between \$5,000 and around \$50,000 for well-supported local projects.
12. **Appalachian Regional Commission:** Although multi-use trails are not a primary focus of ARC funding, the federal agency has provided grants under its “asset-based economic development” grant funding category for the development of multi-use trail systems that enhance a local economic development strategy – which could definitely apply to JCPRC efforts. See www.arc.gov/grants, and reach out to the ARC representative in West Virginia, housed at the West Virginia Development Office (Mr. James Bush at the time of this writing).
13. **Natural Capital Investment Fund:** An affiliate of the Conservation Fund and based in Shepherdstown, WV, Natural Capital is an investment and loan fund providing resources to rural communities in a nine-state region, including West Virginia, for a variety of sustainable local initiatives that can include heritage and recreation-based tourism and land conservation, which could apply to JCPRC riverfront preservation and recreation initiatives, or multi-use trails deployment. The Appalachian Regional Commission gave Natural Capital a large grant in summer 2016 to form a program to provide more funding for community activities in

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the region. See www.conservationfund.org/what-we-do/natural-capital-investment-fund/our-approach-and-impact.

14. Green Infrastructure Resources: Jefferson County communities are going to come under increasing pressure, and have increasing opportunities, to design and deploy resources including raingardens, tree-planting, riparian buffers and similar “green infrastructure” facilities to protect the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. If JCPRC intends to further develop Moulton Park or new riverfront park and recreational resources, it may be able to obtain grants from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Chesapeake Bay Trust, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, the WV DEP (through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund “Green Reserve” set-aside program), or other funders for green infrastructure projects that can double as natural areas, green spaces, landscaping projects, and environmental education centers in Jefferson County parks.

15. Local Institutions: Although many local institutions seem to be struggling with their own resource levels at this time, certain entities may be able to provide reasonable matching grants for park and recreational planning by the JCPRC to improve the quality-of-life and tourist and investment potential in Jefferson County. These entities could include Hollywood Casino, the American Public University System, the National Park Service, Wal-Mart and others. To succeed with these funders, JCPRC should develop a very specific project, leverage other funding, and seek gap-filling investments from senior leadership in these institutions.

16. West Virginia Tourism Division, Matching Advertising Partnership Program: JCPRC may be able to obtain matching marketing dollars, on a 50/50 reimbursement basis, from the West Virginia Division of Tourism’s “Matching Advertising Partnership Program” or “MAPP”, which provides grants of up to \$10,000 for advertising of programs, projects and locations that attract tourism to West Virginia. This could be a good source for festival and event programming by JCPRC and its park users. See <https://gotowv.com/industry-information/mapp/>.

17. Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program, National Park Service: The National Park Service provides approximately 25 grants of up to \$450,000 each for outdoor recreation projects that provide benefit to economically distressed citizens and families. Each state, which in this case means the WV Department of Commerce, can submit up to two (2) recommended projects each year, which puts those projects into the national competition for grant award. The challenge for JCPRC will be to demonstrate that the project provides a significant benefit to economically distressed citizens and neighborhoods, which is a focus for this NPS program. To begin the process of seeking selection by the State of West Virginia for this grant, which is typically due in the spring each year, contact the Land and Water Conservation Fund officials at the WV Department of Commerce, see www.wvcommerce.org/people/communityresources/communityrevitalization/LandAndWaterConFund/default.aspx.

LOCAL FUNDING

As mentioned at the outset of this funding and implementation section, the core strategy for the Jefferson County Parks & Recreation Commission should be to make the case for, and organize for, a strategy to secure local financing resources for the betterment of County parks and recreation resources. Without this additional local “skin in the game”, Jefferson County will have a difficult time matching grant funds, conducting significant capital construction projects, fulfilling staffing and maintenance goals, and accomplishing your key future goals.

Local funding can be boosted in three significant ways:

1. Flexible Use of Development Impact Fees: As JCPRC knows well from its own deliberations and its presentations to the Jefferson County Commission, the Jefferson Office of Impact Fees has created a methodology for disbursement of impact fee revenues that, in short, is badly restricting the ability of the County to construct basic, needed improvements to County-wide parks such as James Hite Park. Using a “Level-of-Service” approach and “cash flow methodology” to charging and disbursing impact fees which were created locally but are not required or specified by state or local code, the County system has mandated that there must be a ratio of fee revenue spent on land acquisition vis-à-vis land improvement. Because land improvement

at major County parks can be so expensive, JCPRC is now in a position that it must buy more lands before it can improve the parks it has already established. As a result, there is \$300,000 in unused parks and rec revenue sitting frozen in the local impact fee accounts.

Thus, for instance, James Hite Park is now a cleared, graded, essentially empty 119-acre park with an only an entrance road, parking lots, stormwater management and perimeter trail – but no other facilities whatsoever. There are soccer goals and painted fields that were funded and installed by the local recreational soccer league. These soccer fields support nearly 1,000 players plus their families on numerous days throughout the year, without any bathroom facilities, concession facilities, or other improvements. Yet, there is a fund of \$300,000 sitting in the Parks & Recreational account of the County’s impact fee resources, which cannot be spent on any aspect of James Hite Park improvements unless JCPRC buys more parkland (which, in turn, may sit fallow because available fees may be restricted from supporting improvements under the County’s impact fee methodologies).

In June 2016, the County Commission directed County staff overseeing the Office of Impact Fees to assess this issue and determine whether a more flexible, solution-oriented approach could be adopted that would allow funds sitting in the parks and recreational accounts to be needed to provide needed upgrades and amenities on county-wide parks that lack them. JCPRC should seek to provide more proactive and organized input to County staff and elected officials, backed by the involvement of citizens from the local sports recreational leagues who are suffering the impacts of these funds being barred from use. JCPRC should work with County staff to find a methodology for parks and recreation fee disbursements that ensures that we are following state and local law mandates that impact fees serve the citizens who paid these fees, without locking them away inflexibly from the very uses that could serve these citizens.

2. Development Dedication of Facilities, Particularly Trails & Riverfront Lands: As land is developed in Jefferson County, there are opportunities to create park and recreation facilities that benefit both the specific development and the broader community – especially multi-use trails or riverfront/riparian lands. And, if

particular lands are developed that could contribute to broad trail networks, without considering how the trail might be part of the development planning and implementation, such opportunities could be lost.

JCPRC should consider working with partners such as the Hagerstown-Eastern Panhandle MPO and local municipalities to establish a map with targeted future trail systems and links, which can then be used to inform local planning, zoning and development officials about the need for development dedications, proffers, or requirements for set-aside of lands or easements for such trails when particular lands are moved into development. JCPRC can ask county and city development authorities to review their codes and policy positions to determine whether and how they could establish development donation, dedication, or incentive programs to encourage or require landowner and developer dedication of these trail or other recreational facilities. In some cases, land developers may be favorable to such dedications, because they may seek to improve the future value of their own projects, or the broader community quality-of-life. There may also be permissible tradeoffs of density or other development rights in exchange for the dedication and/or construction of trail or recreational facilities. For instance, in recent years parks and multi-use trails were created or pledged at Craighill Estates, Norbourne Glebe, Huntfield, Fairfax Crossing, Briar Run, and Shenandoah Springs. Given that the cost of purchasing lands or easements for regional trail or riverfront open space systems can be very expensive, such approaches to developer dedications in Jefferson County could drastically reduce the costs of these recreational facilities.

3. Local Parks & Recreation Fee Levy: Perhaps the most important approach to funding Jefferson County parks and recreational improvements, particularly for the large capital projects identified as high priorities in this master plan, is to seek citizen approval of a local parks and rec bond levy. A bond levy would enable the County to obtain and service municipal bonds that can be used on major capital projects. We note that, across the nation, local parks and recreation funding campaigns are usually highly successful, because local citizens are willing to pay for parks. Like the 78% positive vote for the Excess School Levy in Jefferson County in 2015, if local citizens know what they are paying for and believe

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that it is worthy, they will vote for tax and fee levies to support these priority initiatives. We note that more than 85% of local park levies, ballot initiatives and referenda across the United States have been passed over the past decade. In the cast of Jefferson County, some of the major proposed improvements to park facilities could also be revenue generators for not just JCPRC, but for the community as a whole. For instance, the creation of a better amphitheater at Sam Michael's Park could support additional musical and theateric events that could provide revenue. An aquatics center could generate revenues from users. A James Hite Park with concession, bathroom and lighting facilities could draw sports tourism that could be an economic boon to the County through hotel and hospitality spending.

We also suggest that the JCPRC explore a relationship with the Trust for Public Land (www.tpl.org), which runs a "Conservation Finance Center" which provides direct technical assistance to local governments to research park funding initiatives, and to compose ballot initiatives and campaigns to raise this local public funding. See www.tpl.org/services/conservation-finance. The Trust for Public Land has already achieved significant conservation, parks and recreation victories in Jefferson County, including the saving and preservation of Murphy's Farm and the Schoolhouse Ridge Battlefield site.

In this context, we recommend that JCPRC and its supporters work with the public, community organizations, sports leagues, JCPRC users, the Jefferson County Commission and other stakeholders to develop a public campaign to support a 2017 ballot measure for a dedicated, 5- to 10-year parks and recreational levy fee in Jefferson County. There are several potential keys to success on such a levy effort:

- + **Define the Deliverables:** Do not base the campaign on a vague "we need to improve our parks" justification. Identify specific initiatives, such as trails, aquatic facilities, Sam Michael's Park upgrades, James Hite Park improvements, staff and programmatic improvements, and so on. Clearly define what the levy would pay for and produce – what are taxpayers paying for, and how will it benefit them?
- + **Major Public Engagement:** Be prepared to engage and motivate a cadre of volunteers and supporters

to reach out to the public, key organizations, and key constituencies to explain and support the parks levy, using professional brochures, social media, and marketing tools. Again, it would be valuable for this purposes, and many other reasons, to launch and build a "Friends of the Jefferson County Parks" campaign.

- + **Community Leader Engagement:** Identify the top group of local elected officials and influential parties who need to be engaged early and often, including the Jefferson County Commissioners, Jefferson County staff, business leaders, tourism development leaders, and recreational league leaders. There are also leaders within the network of local library and arts communities who may be seeking county levy support for their own goals. Convene these local influential leaders and stakeholders early and often to talk about the campaign's goals, to discuss their questions and concerns, and to enlist their support and leadership.
- + **Crunch the Numbers:** JCPRC and its allies should thoroughly understand, and be ready to convey, how the levy works in practical action. For instance, we know that the Jefferson County Schools excess levy passed in late 2015 is raising \$19 million per year for five (5) years, and that the excess levy rate is 45.9-cents per \$100 of assessed property value. With a median house value in Jefferson County (in 2016) of \$260,000, the median assessed value for taxation purposes would be \$156,000. At the school levy rate, a median-value household would pay \$716 per year, or around \$60 per month, to support the overall \$19 million annual need. In the case of JCPRC costs, this Master Plan recommends a range of \$16-\$23 million in total project costs for the seven key initiatives – with a midrange value of about \$19 million total (that is, Parks & Rec would not need \$19 million each year over five years, just once). Thus, an approximate levy rate for a median household for a JCPRC levy would be about one-fifth of the school levy rate, or about \$144 per year or \$12 per month. This kind of information is critical to moving a levy campaign forward. Clear and explainable information on the financing approach will inspire confidence in voters that the levy is money well spent.
- + **Use Professionals:** Again, it is important to engage professional support for your local financing efforts, such as park and recreational consultants, professional

marketing consultants, the Trust for Public Land's Conservation Finance Center, and similar support. JCPRC's Board of Directors should also consider whether a levy campaign can and should be run by the Board, or should be conducted by an independent organization, such as a Political Action Committee, which can raise and expend funds for these purposes without entanglement with day-to-day JCPRC operations.

In addition to a parks/rec levy which would be imposed as taxes or fees on property owners, JCPRC should explore other funding opportunities with its allies and Jefferson County leadership, including:

- + **Restoration of Parks & Rec Impact Fees:** It is unreasonable to ask existing citizens to pay more fees for parks and recreational improvements, when new growth and incoming future residents do not bear their fair share of park and recreational upgrades to meet the needs of this expanding growth. JCPRC should explore adding a ballot provision to the parks levy measure that asks voters whether they support a restored development impact fee for parks and rec.
- + **Parks & Recreation Funds from a new Jefferson County Sales Tax:** In 2015, the cities of Charles Town and Ran son, together with 19 other West Virginia cities, obtained the "home rule" authority to apply a 1% sales tax within their jurisdictions, which is already providing hundreds of hundreds of thousands of dollars each to these local municipalities. Although West Virginia counties have not yet taken advantage of the opportunity, state law will allow counties that have fulfilled the requirements of the Local Powers Act (including Jefferson County) to impose sales taxes in a similar way as home rule cities do. This could be a significant source of revenue for the scarce Jefferson County budget and, with collaboration with the public and the Jefferson County Commission, the JCPRC could potentially obtain a meaningful portion of such new resources for its parks and recreational priorities.

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