



CITY OF SUFFOLK

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ADDENDUM NO. 2

City of Suffolk
RFP #2014-00053-JS
February 13, 2014

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UPDATE OF CITY OF SUFFOLK'S PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for Network Infrastructure and Telecommunications Systems Implementation issued January 31, 2014 has been amended as follows:

The following hereby incorporated in the RFP:

The current Master Plan is attached. This Addendum has four parts. This is 1 of 4.

Contract Officer: _____


Jay Smigielski, Purchasing Agent.

If you have any questions regarding this Addendum, please contact Jay Smigielski, Purchasing Agent at jsmigielski@suffolkva.us

Acknowledged by: _____ Date: _____

Suffolk Parks and Recreation Master Plan

City of Suffolk, Virginia

Final: October 27, 2000

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Who Have Contributed to the Project

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Wynnewood Park
Planters Club
Northern Shores Recreation Center

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Lake Kennedy Park
Holland Athletic Field
Whaleyville Community Center and Athletic Field
East Suffolk High School
JFK Middle School Athletic Fields

Appendix E: Facility Profiles for FAZ 3 (separate document)

Crump's Mill Pond
Lone Star Lakes / Lodge
Oakland Recreation Center

Appendix F: Facility Profiles for FAZ 4 (separate document)

Cypress Park & Pool
Lake Meade Park / Howard Mast Tennis Courts
Constant's Wharf
King's Fork Athletic Field
Peanut Park
Planters Park
Coulbourn Park
Ida Easter Park
Joyner Park
Lakeside Park Tot Lot
Mary Estes Playground
Turlington Park
Tynes Street Playground
Wellons Park
Birdsong Recreation Center
National Guard Armory
Senior Citizen's Center
Suffolk Museum
Booker T. Washington Recreation Center and Tennis Courts
Forest Glen Middle School Tennis Courts
Mack Benn Jr. Recreation Center

Vision Statement

Suffolk Department of Parks, Recreation and Facility Management is No. 1 in Hampton Roads in the areas of:

*Greenways and Parks
Recreation and Cultural Programs
Environmental Preservation and Conservation
Ecotourism
Nature Interpretation*

Introduction

The City of Suffolk is enriched by a diversity of natural and cultural resources, and until recently a dominant image of the city was one of agriculture, wooded open spaces, rivers and traditional villages. While this image still exists, the City has also been the site for a substantial amount of new mixed suburban growth. In order to control the growth and to have the City develop in a balanced fashion, retaining the environment that provides the valued character and quality of life, Suffolk has undertaken a new direction in its planning process.

The following City of Suffolk Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a next step in this process of forging a vision for the future of the community. This vision retains the heritage and environment of the community, but at the same time provides the groundwork for an enhanced economy, a diversity of quality housing, and a rich cultural and public life. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan component of the Comprehensive Plan represents a radical change for a community that has neglected its parks and its recreational programming over the past years.

It is now being recognized that parks and recreation are essential to a quality lifestyle, to community health, and to economic prosperity. The value and functions of parks and open space extend far beyond the traditional image of playgrounds and athletic fields. When properly planned, implemented and maintained, a park and open space system provides multiple benefits: to residents through improved health and stress reduction; to the natural environment through resource conservation, flood water storage, and air quality; to the image and identity of the city through cultural resource protection and diversification, increased visitation and investment; and to the community through decreased infrastructure costs, enhanced property values, diversified economic base and revenues from use of special features.

The newly developed vision of the Parks, Recreation and Facility Management Department of the City is an ambitious one. The following plan

outlines policies and actions that will put the City on the path to achieving this vision. It provides a framework for developing new patterns of management, design, use and funding. It suggests a structure for harnessing invaluable citizen interest, energy and activism.

Guided by this plan, the focus of the Department will be market-driven, responding to the unique needs and desires of the populace, and taking advantage of the natural resources within the City. The plan focuses on good business management, on funding methodologies rather than specific budgets, and on continuous improvement strategies. It recognizes that partnerships within and without the City are fundamental to success. It is a map for how to move into the future.

The process of developing this plan began with a frank assessment of the condition and perceptions of the park and recreation system facilities, programs and operations. It included public input sessions and interviews with elected officials and City staff. The process is summarized and documented in Appendix B, and the facility assessments are provided for each Fiscal Analysis Zone (FAZ) in Appendices C-F. These are organized in freestanding documents to allow for easy reference. The information provided within this report has been generated to tie into the Geographical Information System (GIS) that is currently under design for the City of Suffolk. As such, the maps are only samples of the information that can be generated and updated in the future in order to continuously track and evaluate system information.

A dedicated staff has supported the City Parks and Recreation Department, but because the existing park facilities have been neglected in terms of City priority and funding, they all need radical improvement. The challenge becomes not what to do incrementally with each facility, but how to develop an evaluation system, how to engender support for the plan, and how to sequence upgrades and changes. The plan suggests development of

model facilities that will set standards and generate much-needed data on maintenance costs and site use. It also suggests that a priority be placed on development of revenue-producing facilities that will help to fund the ambitious vision for the future.

With a new Director in place, the Department has been moving forward with many changes, even as the planning has been taking place. This plan is being implemented as it is being created, and when

it is in place, Year 2000 and 2001 procedures and programs will set a process in motion that will quickly change the role and image of parks and recreation in the City. Suffolk will be on the way to fulfilling the opportunities that exist, to truly become the regional leader in providing greenways, parks, recreation programs, cultural enrichment, environmental conservation and a focus for ecotourism.

Chapter One - Themes, Policies, Actions – Where We Want To Go

1.1 The Comprehensive Plan for 2018

In 1998 Suffolk established a vision for its future with the Comprehensive Plan for 2018. The 2018 plan addresses patterns of growth and other indicators of the community's quality of life and sets a course to change some of the patterns. It recognizes the potential of Suffolk to follow familiar patterns of unmemorable suburban sprawl if guidelines and ordinances are not changed. It represents a dramatic change in philosophy from the prior comprehensive plan. Key goals presented in the plan include:

- To define and delineate two areas of compact high quality urban and suburban development: one around the Central City and one in the northeast.
- To significantly increase the community and regional scale open space and parkland available to all residents.
- To preserve the southern half of Suffolk as a rural, agricultural area.
- To make special efforts to protect the watersheds and provide drinking water for Suffolk and surrounding cities.
- To support and revitalize the historic City core and greater downtown area.

The 2018 Plan presented overarching *themes* that are related to broad *policies*, which are supported by specific *actions*. The following themes, policies and actions are particularly relevant to parks, recreation and open space and served as a base line for developing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

City of Suffolk Comprehensive Plan Theme and Policies Relating to Parks and Recreation

Theme **Balanced Growth**

Policy 9: Protect and maximize existing and future highway capacity.

Action 9B: Explore the possibility of designating and protecting scenic roads.

Action 9G: Create, designate and implement a bikeway system in Suffolk, serving both recreational and functional needs.

Theme – **Environmental Protection**

Policy 11: Relate the City's environmental programs to regional goals and priorities.

Policy 12: Protect the quality of ground and well water and the water quality in the region-serving lakes and reservoirs

Theme **Preserving Rural Character**

Policy 13: Protect rural character and landscapes as much as possible throughout the City.

Policy 14: Increase the amount of passive and active open space and public recreation amenities consistent with state/national standards. Increase public access to water.

Action 14A: Acquire lands now for community and regional scale parks that are located to serve existing and future populations.

Action 14B: Modify development ordinance to increase percentages of common open space required in planned unit developments.

Action 14C: Support locating a Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center in either the Downtown, or an expanded center at Washington Ditch.

Chapter One - Themes, Policies, Actions – Where We Want To Go

Action 14D: Increase public access to
Suffolk's shoreline and water
bodies.

Theme Core Area Revitalization

Policy 17: Create a detailed plan and strategy for the revitalization and enhancement of Downtown Suffolk. Specific actions in the Downtown Suffolk Initiatives Plan include the development of the Civic Center and Constant's Wharf and the relocation of Birdsong Recreation Center.

Theme Enhancing Economic Development

Policy 22: Protect Suffolk's agricultural and silvicultural/woodland industries.

Action 22A: Promote access to the Dismal Swamp from Suffolk for ecotourism.

Policy 23: Promote tourism in Suffolk.

1.2 Vision

During the process of preparing this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the following vision was developed:

Suffolk Department of Parks, Recreation and Facility Management is No. 1 in Hampton Roads in the areas of:

- Greenways and Parks*
- Recreation and Cultural Programs*
- Environmental Preservation and Conservation*
- Ecotourism*
- Nature Interpretation*

1.3 Overall Parks and Recreation Master Plan Policies

Parks and Recreation has been given a low priority in the City of Suffolk over the past years, and the development of this vision and preparation of this Master Plan is a first step in recognizing the importance of open space and recreation in the lives of the citizens. In order to accomplish this ambitious but achievable vision, several policies have emerged to serve as

guidance for Parks and Recreation in the City of Suffolk. These policies are the backbone of the specific recommendations contained within this Master Plan.

Policy 1: Recognize Parks and Recreation as a major contributor to community character and quality of life in the City and in the region.

Policy 2: Develop and enhance programming within the Parks and Recreation Department to provide demand-based services that will be fully utilized by the citizens of Suffolk

Policy 3: Develop a system of high quality, accessible Parks and Recreation facilities that reflects the diversity of Suffolk's people, environment and heritage.

Policy 4: Emphasize quality and durability of all design and construction of facilities within the Parks and Recreation System.

Policy 5: Develop a program for on-going maintenance budgeting in order to maintain the Parks and Recreation facilities in a clean, safe, attractive condition as community amenities.

Policy 6: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of maintenance and operations throughout the system.

Policy 7: Provide an interconnected system of parks, greenways, waterways, scenic roads and trails throughout the City and be a leader in developing regional greenway and trail systems.

Policy 8: Establish Parks and Recreation facilities and programs as a major component of City environmental protection policies.

Policy 9: Adopt design and maintenance standards that promote a positive and consistent image and experience of the Parks and Recreation system and facilities.

Policy 10: Recognize the potential for Parks and Recreation facilities to be revenue producers and to reduce the development, operations and management costs to the City.

Policy 11: Recognize direct and indirect ways that Parks and Recreation facilities and programs contribute positively to the economy of the City of Suffolk.

1.4 Recommended Parks and Recreation Action Strategies: A Summary

Several Action Strategies form the major recommendations of this Master Plan. They are outlined as follows and discussed in greater detail in Chapters Three and Four of this report.

Action Strategy 1:

Define and strengthen the role of Parks and Recreation and its relationships within the City and region.

- 1a. Recognize the value of public and private open space systems as a component of the Parks and Recreation system, and recognize the relationships of other City programs to Parks and Recreation in the City.
- 1b. Become the community clearinghouse for all things recreational.
- 1c. Develop partnerships with business and community organizations.
- 1d. Develop and coordinate relationships with festivals, events, economic development and tourism.

- 1e. Enhance the role of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and the role of youth in guiding the direction of Parks and Recreation.
- 1f. Enhance the joint use of school sites and facilities.
- 1g. Strengthen partnerships with community athletic leagues.
- 1h. Improve communication with the public about public and private recreation programs and City parks and greenways.
- 1i. Develop recognizable identity in signage and communications.

Action Strategy 2:

Implement a management program to protect physical and natural assets.

- 2a. Develop a Resource Management Plan (RMP) to implement Activity Based Costing systems (ABC) specific to park maintenance and physical assets.
- 2b. Implement the recommendations that are consistent with the resource management plan.
- 2c. Increase maintenance staffing or outsource to implement RMP.
- 2d. Establish partnership agreements with other internal and external agencies and organizations to recover grounds maintenance costs.
- 2e. Develop and fund a Maintenance/CIP program designed to protect the investment of the existing physical assets.
- 2f. Create a stewardship policy to define the balance of active vs. passive vs. preserved land in the Department.
- 2g. Create maintenance standards for each park and facility.

- 2h. Develop and administer a request for proposal for the mowing and park maintenance of parks throughout the system.
- 2i. Develop a property assessment criteria standard to evaluate potential new property for acquisition or acceptance.

Action Strategy 3:

Realign the organizations to develop operational efficiencies and strengthen areas of need in the Department.

- 3a. Create a transitional SWAT team internally to regularly focus only on the strategic plan and its evolution.
- 3b. Reactivate the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, with defined governance role, mission and objectives to support the organization.
- 3c. Develop an organizational realignment process including shared staff use agreements with other internal agencies, timing and job descriptions for new positions.
- 3d. Positions to fill:
 - GAPS Coordinator (Grants, Alliances, Partnerships, Sponsorships).
 - Support Services Superintendent.
 - Volunteer and Community Special Events Coordinator.
 - Marketing Coordinator.
 - Computer Registration Systems/ Customer Service Support.
 - Finance Manager and Clerk(s).
- 3e. Create and administer consistent policy and procedures to enhance consistency in operations.
- 3f. Develop standard and consistent internal communications systems.

- 3g. Develop performance measures for staff.
- 3h. Create incentive/recognition programs for all staff.
- 3i. Begin a campaign to develop key funding and revenue sources.

Action Strategy 4:

Refine and enhance programming offered to reflect the desires of the community, sound business practices, and to emphasize opportunities unique to Suffolk.

- 4a. Provide programming for all generations and for multi-generations, with an emphasis on partnerships with cultural organizations, social services and educational institutions.
- 4b. Promote and develop environmental education and relate to ecotourism development.
- 4c. Continue and enhance mobile programs in less populated areas of the City.
- 4d. Evaluate transportation alternatives to provide access to programs for people throughout the community.

Action Strategy 5:

Develop a system of Parks and Recreation facilities distributed throughout the community providing equitable opportunity for all citizens to utilize recreational programs, while emphasizing the unique attractions and qualities of the City.

- 5a. Develop a hierarchy of Parks and Recreation facilities with articulated goals and characteristics.
- 5b. Provide variety in facilities from active to passive, intensely developed to natural resource based, recognizing the unique ecosystems as special use areas.

- 5c. Evaluate the potential of all City owned property to support the Parks and Recreation System and Master Plan, not just parcels already designated as Parks and Recreation resources.
- 5d. Require parklands and facilities provided by developments to be dedicated into the Suffolk Parks system with a maintenance endowment.
- 5e. Develop plans for all facilities to avoid unorganized spaces and piecemeal development.
- 5f. Develop minimum standards for accessible facilities in neighborhood parks, including those maintained by Homeowner Associations.
- 5g. Develop a stewardship policy to create an appropriate balance of active, passive and preserved land holdings.
- 5h. Respect and accommodate traditional uses of parkland resources by native cultures to the greatest extent feasible.
- 5i. Develop plans for providing pedestrian and bicycle access to Parks and Recreation facilities as well as vehicular access.

Action Strategy 6:

Strive to ensure the highest level of safety in parks to increase use and enjoyment.

- 6a. Emphasize quality and durability of all design and construction of facilities within the Parks and Recreation System.
- 6b. Create safety standards for all parks and facilities with a scheduled inspection program.
- 6c. Establish an annual safety improvement budget.

- 6d. Create a Park Ranger Unit within the Department working with the Public Safety Department.
- 6e. Establish an Ambassador Program (volunteers) to increase park safety, image and to reduce vandalism.
- 6f. Develop facilities standards and design standards for uniform identity and consistent quality.
- 6g. Improve levels of landscaping at park entries, along road frontages and in parking lots to produce a high quality image and safer conditions.
- 6h. Add security lighting in parks where a need has been identified, designed to minimize disturbance to adjacent residents.

Action Strategy 7:

Develop an ongoing Capital Improvements Plan.

- 7a. Assign staff person to implement the plan including hiring design consultants and managing construction.
- 7b. Coordinate development with available grants.
- 7c. Create an RFP with requirement for design consultants to demonstrate yearly maintenance costs and lifecycle analysis for short and long term departmental budgeting.
- 7d. Coordinate with planning department policies for land donations from developers and with public works and/or utilities on surplus lands procedures.
- 7e. Coordinate with other City agencies for linkages, share use agreements or joint grant opportunities.

Action Strategy 8:

Develop seven park standard models using creative financing and located strategically around the City.

- 8a. Identify seven types of parks one in each Borough of the City - to become standard models in terms of aesthetics, maintenance and programmed use.
- 8b. Leverage grants with tax support to fully develop each model. Use the model as a basis to test maintenance standards identified in Action Strategy 1.

Action Strategy 9:

Develop a system of greenways, blueways, and bicycle, pedestrian and vehicular trails throughout the City, with connections to other regional systems and relate the system to an ecotourism initiative.

- 9a. Develop a bicycle system plan and relate to all development and zoning plans for implementation.
- 9b. Develop a system of Heritage Routes throughout the City, primarily byways reflecting natural and cultural heritage of Suffolk, for leisurely drives or bike touring, enriched by borrowed open space and agricultural uses along the routes. Relate programs to Rural Land Conservation and Heritage Conservation Goals.
- 9c. Develop an on-going inventory of potential greenway and blueway routes and linkages.
- 9d. Develop an equestrian trail plan and a pedestrian trail plan for the City with guidelines for developing trail sections when opportunities become available.
- 9e. Develop a program to utilize easements for trail connections on private land.

Action Strategy 10:

Clearly identify Parks and Recreation facilities and programs as a major component of City environmental protection and enhancement programs.

- 10a. Develop greenway initiatives to buffer water features, protect sensitive resources and to maintain the visual character of open space along travel routes.
- 10b. Develop environmental demonstration projects as a component of Parks and Recreation facilities.
- 10c. Target flood-prone land and waterway buffer land for acquisition through the development process or through purchase along targeted reaches.
- 10d. Develop a program to utilize Conservation Easements to maintain wooded and, potentially, rural private open space.
- 10e. Develop an Environmental Resource and Education Center at Crump's Mill with outreach at other key facilities.
- 10f. Coordinate Parks and Recreation planning in developing areas with environmental protection plans.
- 10g. Consider Parks and Recreation facilities to be a component of open space systems and buffer land use areas reflected in the Comprehensive Plan.

Action Strategy 11:

Adopt development guidelines and policies that support the Parks and Recreation system and master plan and produce compatible public amenities and open spaces.

- 11a. Review standards in current ordinances relative to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan policies, and provide park development standards within the Ordinance.

-
- 11b. Include Parks and Recreation staff in the zoning and development review process.
 - 11c. Elaborate on recreation standards in the Unified Development Ordinance in order to provide open space and recreational design standards appropriate to the unique character of Suffolk's City Center, hamlets, rural areas and its various types of residential and community development.

Action Strategy 12:

Create/refine revenue-producing facilities.

- 12a. Develop community-driven feasibility studies and revenue projections for the construction and/or development of revenue producing facilities.
- 12b. Establish revenue policy with enterprise funds for maintenance, re-capitalization or related program support.
- 12c. Publish results of plans with impact on the community.
- 12d. If the decision is to fund any of the development with a bond issue, develop a marketing campaign for the bond issue.

Action Strategy 13:

Embrace a partnership philosophy to leverage services and assets with other providers prior to offering new services or building new facilities.

- 13a. Analyze all existing partnerships to build equity and compatibility between each member.
- 13b. Develop a partnership agreement form that demonstrates the values and vision potential partners should share.
- 13c. Renegotiate inequitable agreements.
- 13d. Research and define untapped partnerships.
- 13e. Create new partnerships to leverage community opportunities.

Action Strategy 14:

Measure and actively promote Parks and Recreation services and their economic impact on the quality of life in Suffolk.

- 14a. Recognize the importance of Parks and Recreation and open space systems to desired community character.
- 14b. Develop a marketing plan and image campaign.
- 14c. Identify and seek corporate sponsors to help market and/or underwrite specific events, tournaments or programs.
- 14d. Create a parks foundation for planned giving opportunities in the community.
- 14e. Create initiative to maximize dissemination of information through partners, the Internet and media sources.
- 14f. Create a customer satisfaction program with monitoring tools.
- 14g. Create follow-up tools to measure impact of strategic plan.

Action Strategy 15:

Update, realign and implement recreation programs that are economical and market driven, focusing on diverse community participation.

- 15a. Analyze gaps in program offerings and community needs and restructure offerings in line with expectations.
- 15b. Create and implement recreation programs in accordance with strategic plan levels of service and/or national trends.

- 15c. Establish performance standards and continuous improvement cycle for all program offerings.
- 15d. Develop a revenue policy to provide guidance on program pricing, underwriting and earned income opportunities.
- 15e. Develop ABC model for programs to track direct and indirect costs per experience and determine subsidy levels.
- 15f. All programs and facilities should be available to all citizens. Research and implement new funding sources outside of the tax base for disadvantaged youth and adults.
- 15g. Establish a policy that all new programs will cover direct costs.
- 15h. Establish programming partners.
- 15i. Develop and fund a CIP to enhance and update facilities in response to program needs.

15j. Implement a software registration system to track and manage program offerings and public feedback.

15k. Implement a credit card payment system for programs.

Action Strategy 16:

Utilize Parks and Recreation facilities programs and staff to promote ecotourism as a contribution to economic development.

16a. Relate ecotourism to greenway, blueway, trail and scenic road networks throughout the City.

16b. Encourage additional development of park areas associated with private partners such as the park planned for Constant's Wharf.

16c. Identify target locations for private development to support ecotourism.

16d. Explore the potential for agri-tainment and other urban-supported agricultural uses in the transition areas between residential areas and major agricultural lands.

Chapter Two: Assessments – Where We Are

2.1 Summary of Facility Assessment, Equity Mapping, Regional/National Trends

Facility Assessment

The City of Suffolk has a very large land area with a great diversity of land use, population density, and natural and cultural resources. Within the City, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Facility Management is responsible for the development, operation and maintenance of a wide range of holdings and facility types. While some of these support and enrich the image and quality of life for the residents of Suffolk, others are indicative of the challenges that the Department faces and the difficulties it currently has in serving the public. In addition, the lands and facilities on them are distributed in a pattern that reflects the differences in the past development policies of Nansemond County and the City of Suffolk prior to their consolidation.

Because the Parks and Recreation system of the City has lacked a high priority for some time, the focus of the Master Plan recommendations is on an expanded role for the Department and on substantial change and expansion in the current use of the land and facilities, on new development and potential land acquisition, and on expanded programming. As a baseline, an assessment of the parks and other special use facilities that the Department actively manages at this time was prepared, and the facilities were analyzed and categorized.

Individual assessments were performed for park features and for significant buildings that serve as or have been considered for use as potential recreational facilities. The assessments documented not only the physical condition of elements such as structures, roofs and mechanical systems and play equipment, but also the overall spatial organization of a site, its relationship to surrounding uses and neighborhoods, and identification of potential connectivity to other

facilities, open space and green space, and private programs and facilities.

There are seven basic types of facilities that the Department actively manages. For the purposes of this study, the facilities have been classified in categories according to National Recreation and Park Association descriptions:

- **Mini-Parks** These small parks are intended to serve limited or isolated recreational needs. NRPA standard: 2500 square feet 1 acre.
- **Neighborhood Parks** Small parks that serve as the basic unit of the park system and as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood and provide active and passive recreational opportunities. NRPA standard 5-10 acres.
- **Community Parks** Parks that serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks, fulfill special needs or respond to unique opportunities or locations. NRPA standard: 20-50 acres.
- **Athletic Complex** Concentrated use of intensely programmed athletic facilities on larger sites at fewer strategic locations throughout the community. NRPA Standard 25 acres minimum, 40-80 acres optimum.
- **Natural Resource Area** Parklands used to preserve significant natural resources, open space, significant landscapes, or buffers. No standard size range.
- **Joint Use Schools** Recreation centers within a limited number of elementary schools, consisting of a multipurpose room, an office, a storage room, and use of the gym during non-school hours. NRPA standards for School Parks encourage the development of entire school sites along the criteria of neighborhood and community

Chapter Two: Assessments – Where We Are

parks, to efficiently expand the level of service to the community.

-
- **Special Use Facilities** Facilities maintained (but not necessarily owned) by the Department that serve a unique community function, or that are available for use by arrangement. These include the Museum, Senior Citizen s Center, and National Guard Armory. No national or local standards.

In addition to the existing categories of parklands, two new categories of facilities are added for future planning:

- **Greenways, Blueways and Trails**
- **Other Open Space**

It is recommended that park s categories be refined to reflect the City of Suffolk conditions and goals for future categorization, in line with current NRPA guidance on a systems approach to planning, reflecting local conditions and issues.

Appendices C-F provided as separate documents include the assessment summaries of the existing parks facilities, sorted by Fiscal Analysis Zone.

Tables 1 through 5 summarize the overall facilities by category, and show the zone location of each facility. In addition, supplemental facilities in each zone are also identified.

Mini-Parks Assessment Summary

Of the facility classifications, Suffolk s mini-parks are the most problematic, for a number of reasons. Because these eleven parks are in neighborhoods throughout the City, people see and interact with them on a daily basis and form strong and lasting impressions about them. Many of these are in older neighborhoods in the core city and reflect outdated trends, materials and standards. Playground equipment is the most common element in the mini-parks, but it is generally old, with some missing components, inadequate safety surfacing and other potential hazards. At the time of the preparation of this report, funding has been made available for

playground replacement in many of the parks. Elements are not age segregated and in

most instances, there appears to be little thought given to the overall spatial organization of the sites. Other elements that may be present are basketball courts, benches, picnic tables and barbeque grills, in various states of repair. Mature vegetation has been retained on a few sites, adding to the variety and appeal, but there does not appear to be any supplemental planting for shade, spatial definition or ornamental purposes. There is no standard signage, if there is identity signage at all. In the case of Tynes Street and Joyner Parks, the facilities are so minimal that it is easy to mistake them for vacant lots. Examples of more successful mini-parks include Coulbourn, Ida Easter and Wynnewood Parks.

Neighborhood Parks Assessment Summary

This category, which should be the backbone of the park system, is underrepresented with only seven existing parks in the City system, and these are below or on the small side of NRPA standards, ranging from 2-5 acres in size. The existing neighborhood parks have the potential to be quite successful, but have not been fully developed. Three are strictly athletic fields, with no other recreational amenities, and one is an abandoned industrial/commercial site with a boat launch. Planters Park has an oval track that is well used, but the other amenities need attention. The Whaleyville Community Center is the recreational focus for the village and surrounding area, but has problems associated with an aging building as well as space limitations with a minimal eight-acre site.

Constant's Wharf is currently being designed as a public/private hotel conference center and waterfront park, and will serve a special use role rather than functioning as a typical neighborhood park.

Other facilities serving neighborhood park functions with both active and passive recreational opportunities are needed within the City. Some of these may be provided by residential development projects to be managed and maintained by permanent endowments. The inventory and park planning for the future

should account for recreational needs that are met in this fashion.

Community Parks Assessment Summary

There are four community parks within the City of Suffolk system. Overall, these are more successful facilities and in better condition than the mini-parks, and provide a more diverse range of experience than the neighborhood parks. All but Bennett's Creek Park are below or at minimum NRPA standards. These are not operating at their full potential. These parks provide a variety of active and passive experiences, and each has a unique character and facilities, including access to water at Bennett's Creek, Suffolk's only public swimming pool at Cypress Park and the ten court Howard Mast Tennis Complex at Lake Meade Park. These parks can consequently serve a very diverse user base. Bennett's Creek Park is buffered from neighbors, has flexible open spaces, but is under-programmed and underutilized. Lake Meade Park is similarly buffered from residential development, but has no improvements besides the tennis complex, although the KidZone playground is soon to be installed. The City has successfully completed the first phase of renovation at Cypress Park and its pool. Lake Kennedy Park has basic features and is on a City bus route, but has no programming or unique elements to draw more users. Successful improvement of the facilities and developing facilities distributed to serve population densities can have a significant effect on serving the overall needs of the citizens of Suffolk.

Sports Complex Assessment Summary

Although a plan for the 350 acres of public park and proposed tournament athletic complex at the Naval Radio Transmitter Facility Driver was adopted in 1996 and amended in 1998, the City was only recently authorized to use the property. The land has not been transferred to the City, and no improvements will be initiated until the land is transferred. The site consequently remains unused at this time.

Natural Resource Area Assessment Summary

The Suffolk parks system includes two natural resource areas at this time, Lone Star Lakes and Crump's Mill Pond.

Lone Star Lakes is a unique regional attraction and the only natural resource area that has been developed to date. With over 1000 acres, about half covered with lakes and wetlands, it is the largest park in the inventory. The level of improvement has been low, and it is used extensively for fishing, picnicking and other passive uses, as well as for model airplane flying and other organized activities. A lodge on the Nansemond River can be rented by the public and is popular for special events. The Nansemond Indians hold a regional Pow-Wow at the site every year that draws large crowds. The City has considered the potential for development of part of the site for a golf course as well as the development of a marina on the Nansemond River. Preliminary layouts for an 18-hole golf course have been prepared. Such a development would most likely utilize a public-private partnership or private leasehold.

Crump's Mill Pond, as an early mill location, was important to the development of the village of Chuckatuck and is a picturesque resource with the potential to become a unique feature in the park system. To date, however, there has been no development of public access facilities and the existing building on site is used for storage and offices.

Both Lone Star Lakes and Crump's Mill Pond are water bodies that are part of the City water system, along with supplemental wells. The City particularly draws heavily from Crump's Mill Pond, so it is imperative that recreational use of these areas serves as an enhancement and environmental control to water quality rather than a detriment.

Joint Use Facilities Assessment Summary

The City presently operates five joint use facilities at school sites, and an additional one is currently under construction. Two are new elementary schools with recreation centers - Northern Shores and Mack Benn; two are renovated elementary

schools with recreation centers Oakland and Booker T. Washington; and one is an existing middle school with a new athletic field. Public and City response to the program has been

overwhelmingly positive and there is currently an expanded joint use agreement being formulated. There is a national trend to develop school sites as community centers and parks, extending the use of the facilities, and continued expansion of this program will help to serve overall recreational programming needs. The joint use in Suffolk has been focused primarily on gyms and indoor facilities that can be used only outside of regular use hours. There is the potential as new schools are planned to look at the whole realm of recreational experiences that can be provided at school sites to reduce the reliance on a few neighborhood and community parks.

Special Use Facilities Assessment Summary

The special use facilities are generally buildings that are used for a wide variety of purposes and are in various states of repair and ADA compliance. These facilities provide specialized programming for specific populations or provide community-gathering areas and have been evaluated individually for programming suitability as well as physical condition. Individual recommendations for each facility are being formulated relative to specific purpose and need. In expanding the understanding of the overall role of Parks and Recreation in community life, other special use facilities are recommended for evaluation. This is an area that can often involve partnerships with community groups and other public agencies, and also offers potential for revenue-producing facilities and public/private partnerships.

General Conditions

Unfortunately, the lack of priority given to Parks and Recreation is evident in the City of Suffolk facilities. Although there are good examples and adequate components throughout the system, within all of the categories many of Suffolk's Parks and Recreation facilities are outdated, in poor condition, do not meet ADA requirements, and do not provide adequate diversity or quality of experience. Recent projects such as the Cypress Park renovation, however, illustrate a higher level

of commitment to quality materials, diversity of experience, neighborhood relationships, aesthetics, and spatial organization. The Department has capable people, but the staff has had too much to do with too few resources, and compromise has been a consistent need. With the advent of a new Director, and the commitment shown by the generation of this Master Plan, the City can move forward to be a model of recreational development through the full utilization of its many natural resources and good potential parklands.

Playgrounds

With a few notable exceptions, playgrounds throughout the City are generally outdated and do not meet current standards of safety. In particular, safety surfacing is often completely lacking, increasing the likelihood of injuries from falls. In one case new play equipment and edging has been installed, but mulch surfacing has not been added. Clear zones around individual pieces of equipment such as swings and slides are not always provided and tree roots provide trip hazards. In some cases, portions of the equipment, such as clatter bridges, are missing or chain climbers are unsecured. Specific recommendations regarding play equipment are included in individual park assessments. There is current funding for replacing playground equipment in Tyne Street Park, Coulbourn Park, Lakeside Tot Lot, and Wynnewood Park, and additional funding has been requested to replace equipment at Whaleyville Community Center, Bennett's Creek Park, Planters Park, Ida Easter Park, and Joyner Park.

Besides traditional playground equipment, there are no examples of creative or specialized play environments for children, such as learning and discovery gardens, adventure play or sculptural environments that engage the imagination. Special needs children are not being accommodated in existing playgrounds through special facility design. The Department advocates an inclusive philosophy, however, and current programs are prepared to accommodate special needs.

**Table 1
Suffolk Parks and Recreation Department
System Inventory Facilities**

Facility Type and Name	Acreage	Facility Type and Name	Acreage
Special Use Facilities		Natural Resource Area	
Birdsong Recreation Center	NA	Crump's Mill Pond	70.0
East Suffolk High School	2.0	Lone Star Lakes/Lodge	1063.0
National Guard Armory	NA	Subtotal	1133.0
Planters Club	NA		
Senior Citizen's Center	NA	Community Parks	
Suffolk Museum	NA	Bennett's Creek Park & Boat Ramp	50.0
Subtotal	2.0	Cypress Park & Pool	30.6
		Lake Kennedy Park	19.3
Mini Parks		Lake Meade Park/Howard Mast Tennis Courts	25.0
Belleville Meadows Playground	5.0	Subtotal	124.9
Coulbourn Park	2.0		
Ida Easter Park	1.0	Sports Complex	
Joyner Park	2.0	Driver Park/Monogram Field (Undeveloped)	360.0
Lakeside Park Tot Lot	1.0	Subtotal	360.0
Mary Estes Playground	1.7		
Pughsville Park	5.0	School-Joint Use	
		Booker T. Washington Rec. Center and Tennis Courts	5.0
Turlington Park	1.0	Forest Glen Middle School Tennis Courts	0.5
Tynes Street Playground	1.0	JFK Middle School Athletic Fields	19.3
Wellons Park	1.0	Mack Benn Jr. Recreation Center	NA
Wynnewood Park	5.0	Northern Shores Recreation Center	NA
Subtotal	25.7	Oakland Recreation Center	NA
		Subtotal	24.8
Neighborhood Parks		Total Acreage	1721.4
Constant's Wharf and Boat Ramp	12.0		
Holland Athletic Field	8.0		
King s Fork Athletic Field	5.0		
Monogram Field	8.0		
Peanut Park	5.0		
Planters Park	5.0		
Whaleyville Comm. Center and Athletic Field	8.0		
Subtotal	51.0		

Insert FAZ Map Figure 1

**Table 2
Parks and Recreation Facilities
Department Operated and Supplemental**

<i>Zone 1 - Northeast</i>	
NAME	
Department Operated	
Belleville Meadows Playground	
Bennett's Creek Park & Boat Ramp	
Driver Park/Monogram Field	
Northern Shores Recreation Center	
Planters Club	
Pughsville Park	
Wynnewood Park	
Supplemental Facilities	
Brady's Marina	
Driver Elementary School	
Florence Bowser Elementary School	
Harbourview Recreation Area/Pool	
Homeowner Association Totlots	
John Yeates Middle School	
Nansemond River Golf Club	
Portsmouth Boat Ramp	
Riverfront Golf Course in Harbourview	
Sleepy Hole Park (Portsmouth)	
Sleepy Hole Golf Course (Portsmouth)	
Suffolk and Norfolk Lakes Fishing Areas	

**Table 3
Parks and Recreation Facilities
Department Operated and Supplemental**

<i>Zone 2 - South</i>	
NAME	
Department Operated	
East Suffolk High School	
Holland Athletic Field	
JFK Middle School Athletic Fields	
Lake Kennedy Park	
Whaleyville Community Center and Athletic Field	
Supplemental Facilities	
Homeowner Association Tot Lots	
Nansemond Parkway Elementary School	
Robertson Elementary School	
Southwestern Elementary School Softball Field	

**Table 4
Parks and Recreation Facilities
Department Operated and Supplemental**

<i>Zone 3 - Northwest</i>	
NAME	
Department Operated	
Crump's Mill Pond	
Lone Star Lakes and Lodge	
Oakland Recreation Center	
Supplemental Facilities	
Blythe Boat Launch	
Cedar Point Golf Course	
Homeowner Association Totlots	
New Middle School	
Nansemond Suffolk Academy	
Portsmouth Boat Launch	
Suffolk and Norfolk Lakes Fishing Areas	

**Table 5
Parks and Recreation Facilities
Department Operated and Supplemental**

<i>Zone 4 - Central</i>	
NAME	
Department Operated	
Birdsong Recreation Center	
Booker T. Washington Recreation Center and Tennis Courts	
Constant's Wharf	
Coulbourn Park	
Cypress Park & Pool	
Forest Glen Middle School Tennis Courts	
Ida Easter Park	
Joyner Park	
King s Fork Athletic Field	
Lake Meade Park/Howard Mast Tennis Courts	
Lakeside Park Tot Lot	
Mack Benn Jr. Recreation Center	
Mary Estes Playground	
National Guard Armory	
Peanut Park	
Planters Park	
Senior Citizen's Center	
Suffolk Museum	
Turlington Park	
Tynes Street Playground	
Wellons Park	
Supplemental Facilities	
Diamond Springs Park	
Kilby Shores Elementary School	
Mount Zion Elementary School	
Suffolk Golf Course	

Turlington Woods Elementary School

**Table 6
Parks and Recreation Facilities - Department Operated and Supplemental
Zone 1 Northeast Facility Assessment**

NAME	TYPE	ACRES
Driver Park (incl. Monogram Field, 8 acres)	Sports Complex	360.0
Bennett's Creek Park & Boat Ramp	Community	50.0
Belleville Meadows Playground	Mini-Park	5.0
Pughsville Park	Mini-Park	5.0
Wynnewood Park	Mini-Park	5.0
Planters Club	Special Use	NA
Northern Shores Recreation Center	School - Joint Use	NA
Total Acres - Current		425.0
Current Population		9738
Current Parkland Goal Minimum (10 acres/1000 pop.)		97.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) Minimum		328.0
Current Parkland Goal Aggressive (15 acres/1000 pop)		146.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		279.0
Projected Population		34938
Projected Parkland Goal - Minimum		349.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		76.0
Projected Parkland Goal - Aggressive		524.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		-99.0
The Influence of Driver Park		-360.0
Total Acres - Current (NIC Driver Park)		65.0
Current Population		9738
Current Parkland Goal Minimum (10 acres/1000 pop.)		97.0
Surplus/(Deficit)- Minimum		-32.0
Current Parkland Goal Aggressive (15 acres/1000 pop)		146.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		-81.0
Projected Population		34938
Projected Parkland Goal - Minimum		349.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		-284.0
Projected Parkland Goal - Aggressive		524.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit)- Aggressive		-459.0
Supplemental Facilities		
Driver Elementary School	School - No Joint Use	
Florence Bowser Elementary School	School - No Joint Use	
Harbourview Recreation Area/Pool	HOA/Other City	
Homeowner Association Totlots	HOA/Other City	
Portsmouth Boat Ramp	HOA/Other City	
Sleepy Hole Park (Portsmouth)	HOA/Other City	
Suffolk and Norfolk Lakes Fishing Areas	HOA/Other City	
Brady's Marina	League/Private Facilities	
John Yeates Middle School	League/Private Facilities	
Riverfront Golf Course in Harbourview	Golf Course	
Nansemond River Golf Club	Golf Course	
Sleepy Hole Golf Course (Portsmouth)	Golf Course	

Table 7
Parks and Recreation Facilities - Department Operated and Supplemental
Zone 2 South Facility Assessment

NAME	TYPE	ACRES
Lake Kennedy Park	Community	19.3
Holland Athletic Field	Neighborhood	8.0
Whaleyville Community Center and Athletic Field	Neighborhood	8.0
East Suffolk High School	Special Use	2.0
JFK Middle School Athletic Fields	School - Joint Use	19.3
Total Acres - Current		56.6
Current Population		7,116
Current Parkland Goal - Minimum (10 acres/1000 pop.)		71.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		-14.4
Current Parkland Goal - Aggressive (15 acres/1000 pop)		107.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		-50.4
Projected Population		14,730
Projected Parkland Goal - Minimum		147.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		-90.4
Projected Parkland Goal - Aggressive		221.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		-164.4
Supplemental Facilities		
Nansemond Parkway Elementary School	School - No Joint Use	
Robertson Elementary School	School - No Joint Use	
Southwestern Elementary School Softball Field	School - No Joint Use	
Homeowner Association Tot Lots	HOA/Other City	

**Table 8
Parks and Recreation Facilities - Department Operated and Supplemental
Zone 3 Northwest Facility Assessment**

NAME	TYPE	ACRES
Crump's Mill Pond	Natural Resource Area	70.0
Lone Star Lakes/Lodge	Natural Resource Area	1063.0
Oakland Recreation Center	School - Joint Use	NA
Total Acres - Current		1133.0
Current Population		25,863
Current Parkland Goal - Minimum (10 acres/1000 pop.)		259.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		874.0
Current Parkland Goal - Aggressive (15 acres/1000 pop.)		388.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		745.0
Projected Population		38,913
Projected Parkland Goal - Minimum		389.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		744.0
Projected Parkland Goal - Aggressive		584.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive (acres)		549.0
<u>The influence of Lone Star Lakes</u>		-1063.0
Total Acres - Current (NIC Lone Star Lakes)		70.0
Current Population		25,863
Current Parkland Goal - Minimum		259.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		-189.0
Current Parkland Goal - Aggressive		388.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		-318.0
Projected Population		38,913
Projected Parkland Goal - Minimum		389.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		-319.0
Projected Parkland Goal - Aggressive		584.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		-514.0
Supplemental Facilities		
Homeowner Association Totlots	HOA/Other City	
Portsmouth Boat Launch	HOA/Other City	
Suffolk and Norfolk Lakes Fishing Areas	HOA/Other City	
Blythe Boat Launch	League/Private Facilities	
Nansemond Suffolk Academy	League/Private Facilities	
Cedar Point Golf Course	Golf Course	
New Middle School	School No Joint Use	

Table 9
Parks and Recreation Facilities - Department Operated and Supplemental
Zone 4 Central Facility Assessment

NAME	TYPE	ACRES
Cypress Park & Pool	Community	30.6
Lake Meade Park/Howard Mast Tennis Courts	Community	25.0
Constant's Wharf	Neighborhood	12.0
Kings Fork Athletic Field	Neighborhood	5.0
Peanut Park	Neighborhood	5.0
Planters Park	Neighborhood	5.0
Coulbourn Park	Mini-Park	2.0
Ida Easter Park	Mini-Park	1.0
Joyner Park	Mini-Park	2.0
Lakeside Park - Tot Lot	Mini-Park	1.0
Mary Estes Playground	Mini-Park	1.7
Turlington Park	Mini-Park	1.0
Tynes Street Playground	Mini-Park	1.0
Wellons Park	Mini-Park	1.0
Birdsong Recreation Center	Special Use	NA
National Guard Armory	Special Use	NA
Senior Citizen's Center	Special Use	NA
Suffolk Museum	Special Use	NA
Booker T. Washington Recreation Center and Tennis Courts	School - Joint Use	5.0
Forest Glen Middle School Tennis Courts	School - Joint Use	0.5
Mack Benn Jr. Recreation Center	School - Joint Use	NA
Total Acres - Current		98.8
Current Population		18,021
Current Parkland Goal - Minimum (10 acres/1000 pop.)		180.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		-81.2
Current Parkland Goal - Aggressive (15 acres/1000 pop.)		270.0
Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive		-171.2
Projected Population		18,798
Projected Parkland Goal - Minimum		188.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Minimum		-89.2
Projected Parkland Goal - Aggressive		282.0
Projected Surplus/(-Deficit) - Aggressive (acres)		-183.2
Supplemental Facilities		
Kilby Shores Elementary School	School - No Joint Use	
Mount Zion Elementary School	School - No Joint Use	
Turlington Woods Elementary School	School - No Joint Use	
Diamond Springs Park	League/Private Facilities	
Suffolk Golf Course	Golf Course	

Insert Figure 2

Insert Figure 3

Insert Figure 4

Insert Figure 5