



Parks & Recreation

Draft Goals and Objectives



Fall 2023

This document includes the draft Goals and Objectives for the updated Parks and Recreation chapter and provides additional context and background on this topic. The document is organized by the following sections:

- **Overview:** Brief introduction to this topic.
- **Draft Goals and Objectives:** The draft updated Goals and Objectives for this chapter. This is the section we’re asking for community input on this fall.
- **Phase 2 Community Input Themes:** Major themes from community input heard on this topic during the first two rounds of Phase 2 engagement (January - July 2023).
- **Topic Report and Connections to the AC44 Framework:** Information on challenges, opportunities, recent trends, and data on this topic, as previously provided in the ‘topic reports’ at the beginning of Phase 2. Summary of how this topic is connected to the AC44 Framework for an Equitable and Resilient Community.

Parks and Recreation Overview

Parks, greenways, blueways, community centers, athletic fields, and other recreation amenities play a critical role in the quality of life for a healthy and thriving community. These components create a more attractive environment and support active lifestyles, personal wellness, and public health. Greenways provide multimodal transportation opportunities and connections to key destinations. Parks offer athletic facilities for organized sports, play equipment for youth, and opportunities to access and engage natural areas and features.



Rivanna River, Darden Towe Park

Albemarle County’s parks, greenways, blueways, and nature areas are major elements of our community’s “green systems” that connect important environmental features such as forested hillsides, stream networks and riparian corridors, trail corridors, play areas, and recreation amenities. In turn, the green spaces protect valuable environmental assets, such as natural habitat for wildlife, tree canopies, and stream buffers. These green spaces make the Development Areas of the county more attractive places to live and work in addition to preserving the scenic beauty of the Rural Area.

Green spaces also support climate resilience by capturing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality, mitigating heat, absorbing stormwater runoff, and contributing to flood resilience. Given the public health benefits of parks and trails and their ability to connect community members with surrounding amenities and services, finding opportunities to more equitably distribute and provide access to County parks and trails is a key aspect of the Comprehensive Plan update.

Greenways and blueways add value to the community by connecting various parks and recreational facilities as well as other destinations, such as schools, employment areas, shopping centers and residential areas. They also offer physically active, alternative modes of transportation, including walking, running, and biking. These assets also reduce dependency on vehicles, lower emissions, and improve regional air quality.

Parks and Recreation overlaps with many other topics within the Comprehensive Plan, including land use, transportation, resource protection, environmental stewardship, and community facilities. Therefore, the updated goals and objectives for this plan topic will offer support and direction for other plan sections. Community feedback will be incorporated into parks and recreation goals and objectives, providing updated priorities and policies for the Comprehensive Plan.

Draft Goals and Objectives

These draft Goals and Objectives were developed based on input from community members, County staff and partner agencies, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors, the AC44 Framework for an Equitable and Resilient Community, best practices, and the current Comp Plan. They will inform the Action Steps that will be developed in Phase 3.

Goal 1: Albemarle County will plan for and provide a county-wide park system and greenway network that maximizes opportunities for a variety of recreation experiences, enables contact with nature, promotes public health, personal well-being, and local quality of life, and supports outdoor recreation tourism and overall economic vitality.

Objective 1.1: Plan for the parks and recreation needs of current and future community members through a planning process that is equitable, inclusive, and responsive to existing and emerging needs.

Objective 1.2: Ensure the planning process includes an emphasis on accelerating the implementation and expansion of facilities and services in response to current and projected population growth.

Objective 1.3: Integrate parks and greenways planning and multimodal planning to increase bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between parks and greenways, residential areas, and other centers and destinations.

Objective 1.4: Ensure parks/greenways planning efforts align with, support, and advance relevant local, regional, and statewide plans.

Objective 1.5: Ensure county-wide parks and greenways planning supports and advances physical interconnections with regional destinations and amenities, including coordination and collaboration with neighboring stakeholders.



Chris Greene Lake Park

Objective 1.6: Collaborate with Albemarle County Public Schools on parks and greenways planning to maximize “community use” of public-school facilities for public recreation during appropriate times.

Objective 1.7: Enhance visitor experiences by incorporating high-quality informational and interpretive signage and other similar enhancements.

Goal 2: Albemarle County will fund, develop, and deliver new county parks, greenways, and blueways County-wide, at a pace and scale that meets the needs of a growing population, accommodates urbanizing development patterns, and improves quality of life.

Objective 2.1: Prioritize and implement planned new park, greenway, and blueway projects that are identified in County plans, including the Comprehensive Plan and Master Plans.

Objective 2.2: Accelerate the development of urban parks, pocket parks, greenways, and blueways in the Development Areas.

Objective 2.3: Accelerate the development of greenway and blueway facilities along the Rivanna River and other key destinations for water-oriented recreation.

Objective 2.4: Ensure the planning, development, and management of new County parks includes opportunities for nature-focused recreational experiences.

Objective 2.5: Increase the amount of County-owned land that is planned for new parks, greenways, and blueways.

Goal 3: Albemarle County will enhance and update existing parks, greenways, blueways, community centers, and other recreation amenities and destinations with opportunities for both active and passive recreation throughout the county.

Objective 3.1: Enhance, improve, and update infrastructure and amenities in existing County parks in response to a growing population, increased visitation and use, and emerging needs and community preferences.

Objective 3.2: Expand and improve the trail networks in County parks and greenways with multiple trail types for a variety of users.

Objective 3.3: Increase the number and type of facilities that incorporate universal access standards to better serve people of all physical abilities.

Goal 4: Albemarle County will increase accessibility, connectivity, and usability for all community members to County parks, greenways, blueways, community centers, and other recreation amenities and destinations.

Objective 4.1: Expand multimodal transportation options, including enhanced bike/pedestrian connectivity, for improved access to parks, greenways, and other recreational amenities.

Objective 4.2: Increase universal access opportunities at County parks, greenways, blueways, and community centers.

Objective 4.3: Support new recreation access improvements at Sugar Hollow in partnership with Shenandoah National Park and other local stakeholders.

Goal 5: Albemarle County will utilize sustainable land management and facility maintenance practices in County parks and greenways.

Objective 5.1: Increase the use of environmentally sustainable land management practices in County parks and greenways that provide recreational and educational opportunities, protect biological diversity and ecological integrity, and support conservation of the ecosystem.

Objective 5.2: Ensure the planning, development, management, maintenance, and use of County parks and greenways includes an emphasis on conserving and restoring biodiversity, stream health, forest health, and overall environmental resilience.

Goal 6: Albemarle County will collaborate with external stakeholders and partners to build partnerships, volunteer projects and programs, and other resources to enhance and expand parks, greenways, blueways, and other recreation amenities and destinations.

Objective 6.1: Sustain and strengthen existing partnerships that align with County policies and plans to address community needs identified through the Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment.

Objective 6.2: Establish new partnerships and volunteer programs to achieve consistent and impactful outcomes in County parks and greenways and to empower community members to collaborate on improving public lands and facilities.

Goal 7: Albemarle County will provide recreational opportunities that are welcoming, inclusive, and meet the needs of a growing population.

Objective 7.1: Provide a variety of high-quality recreation programs and classes that include innovative recreation opportunities in response to changing community needs.

Objective 7.2: Ensure opportunities for a wide range of recreation experiences and facilities, including indoor and outdoor recreation and special events.

Objective 7.3: Increase the amount of multi-purpose athletic fields to meet changing recreational needs.

Phase 2 Community Input Themes

The following summary highlights the major themes from community engagement heard to date during AC44 Phase 2. These are organized by the chapter's Goals.

Planning for a Park System and Greenway Network

- Plan for and provide more splash parks and public pools
- Plan for the needs of a variety of community members, including teenagers and seniors
- Improve signage and wayfinding for parks facilities and trails
- Improve public access to school recreation facilities

New County Parks, Greenways, and Blueways

- Provide more pocket parks and greenway trails near communities currently lacking such amenities, including lower-income neighborhoods
- Expand water access and boat launches, especially for the Rivanna River
- Provide more recreation facilities for teenagers, such as ninja parks, skate parks and enhanced sports facilities
- Provide more parks, recreation and trails access near new residential development
- Provide community gardens



Rivanna River, Shadwell Island

Enhancing and Updating Existing Parks, Greenways, and Blueways

- Improve amenities at parks and recreation facilities, such as restrooms, picnic tables and benches
- Expand greenways and blueways trail networks
- Establish more horse trails in rural area

Increasing Accessibility, Connectivity, and Usability

- Improve access to parks, trails and other facilities, including wheelchairs, strollers and individuals with special needs
- Improve vehicle access and parking for parks and recreation facilities
- Improve access to nature areas to view plant and animal life
- Improve walking and biking opportunities by expanding trails access and connectivity

Sustainable Land Management

- Enhance greenways and blueways networks by protecting tree canopy, stream buffers, wildlife habitats, and wildlife corridors
- Expand pocket parks and community green spaces that provide native vegetation (including for pollinators) and tree coverage

Partnerships

- Collaborate with partners to plan for and develop the Three Notched Trail

Recreational Opportunities and Programs

- Expand existing sports facilities, including playing fields and courts
- Provide expanded facilities for growing demand, such as pickleball courts
- Provide outdoor public spaces for music and entertainment
- Provide more recreational opportunities in the evening outside of school and work hours
- Provide more indoor recreation facilities

Planning Toolkits

The following community input was shared during engagement on the planning toolkits:

- Proactively plan parks and trails prior to development, redevelopment and increasing density
- Desired facilities in the Development Area: pocket parks/green space, expanded trails, playgrounds, dog parks
- Plan parks prior to any potential future development areas expansion
- Provide expanded trails access, amenities (such as benches), and public parks/civic spaces in Activity Centers
- Create/expand facilities in Crossroads Communities: small parks, playgrounds, exercise equipment, youth centers, trails, community gardens

Parks and Recreation Topic Report

Parks, greenways, blueways, community centers, and other recreation amenities are essential components of a vibrant and healthy community. These assets offer valuable benefits for residents and county visitors: they help enable an active, healthy lifestyle, contributing to personal health and wellness as well as broader public health; they provide opportunities for sustainable transportation and active mobility; they enable contact with nature and stewardship of natural resources; and they also support economic vitality. As Albemarle County’s population continues to increase, the maintenance, improvement, and expansion of parks, greenways, and other recreation amenities are increasingly important to meet the expanding needs of our growing community.

The Albemarle County Parks and Recreation Department (ACPR) oversees the planning, acquisition, implementation, management, and maintenance of parks and greenways. The department is guided by the mission of “providing a unique system of parks, trails, and recreational experiences, while being superior stewards of the environment.” ACPR’s work is further guided by recommendations for project planning and implementation in the Master Plans and current Comp Plan.



Shared Use Path

In addition to operating public community centers and maintaining athletic amenities, ACPR works to implement, manage, and maintain a system of parks, greenways, blueways, and natural areas that comprise vital ‘green systems’ identified in Albemarle County’s 2015 Comprehensive Plan, as well as the Development Area Master Plans. Albemarle County’s green systems serve to protect important natural features including hillsides, forests, stream corridors, and wildlife habitat, and they support climate resilience and public health. These green systems also provide outdoor destinations for people to gather, exercise, and connect with the natural environment.

Updating the Parks and Recreation policies in the Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity to address the increasing demand for facilities and services, address existing gaps in the parks and recreation system, support our Climate Action Plan goals, improve our community’s resilience, and create more equitable access to our parks and trails. A strong and robust network of parks, greenways, blueways, community centers, and other recreation amenities will help ensure that Albemarle County maintains our sense of place, protects our scenic natural environment and biodiversity, and remains an attractive place to live and visit in the present and into the future.

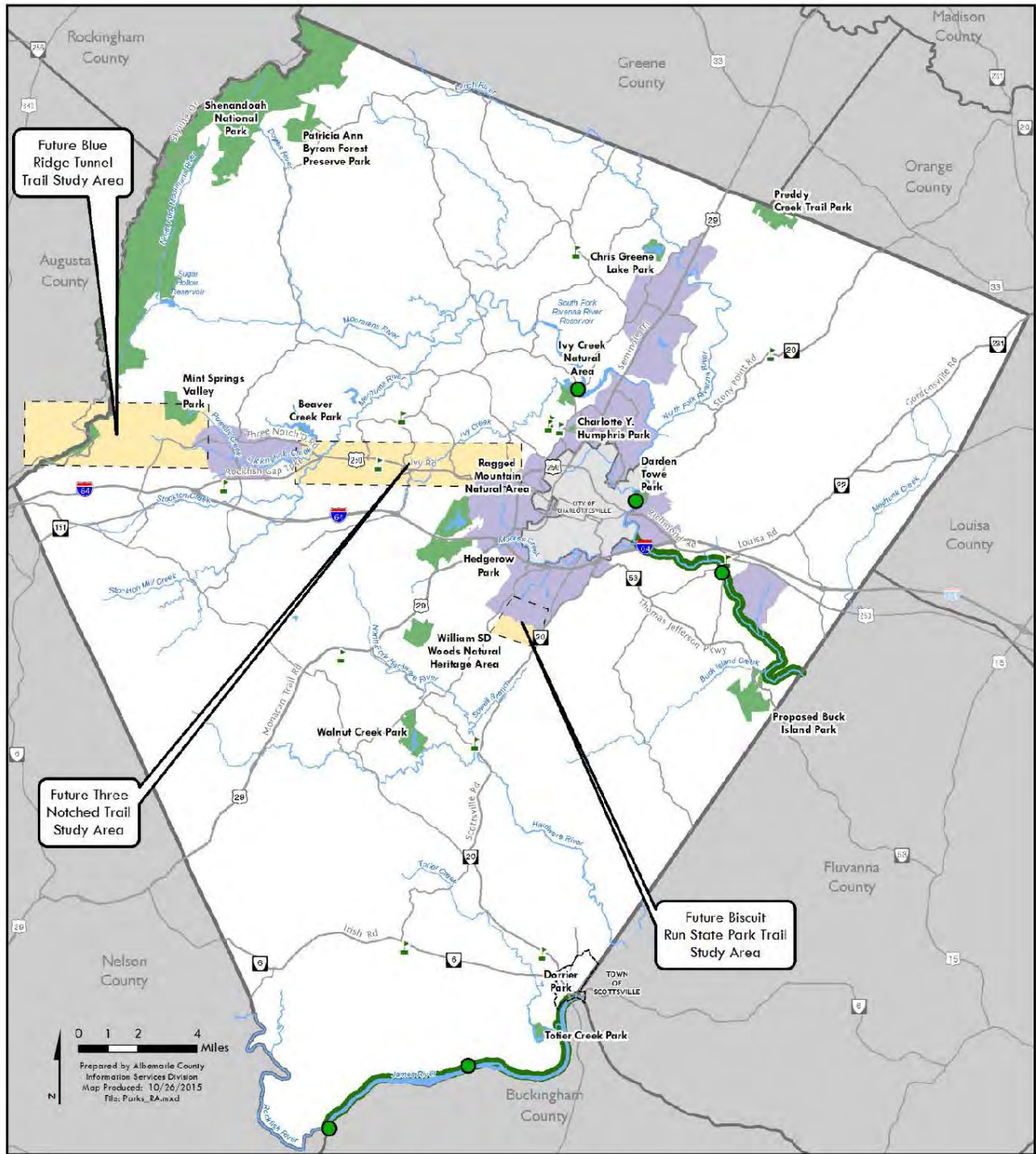
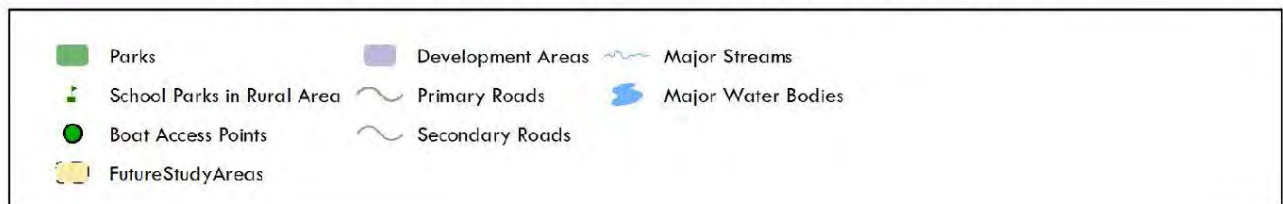


Figure 2: Albemarle County Rural Parks and Greenway Plan



There are numerous climate resilience and climate action opportunities within our parks and trails. Mature native forests found in county parks and greenways improve air quality, mitigate urban heat island effects, provide effective stormwater management functions, and reduce flood impacts. More sustainable maintenance and land management practices within the county parks system, such as the acquisition and use of electric equipment and electric vehicles and the adoption of “no mow zones”, can reduce the use of maintenance equipment, increase the amount of land cover that sequesters carbon and retains stormwater, and expand habitat for pollinators and other native wildlife species. Ongoing work between several County departments (including ACPR) on a new Sustainable Landscape Policy will work toward controlling and eradicating invasive species, restoring native habitats, and improving environmental stewardship.

Parks, greenways, and community centers (as well as public schools during Community Use hours) are critically important resources for our community – especially for households and individuals with less resources and for immigrants and refugees. These public amenities are a cost-free opportunity to recreate, to experience contact with nature, and to gather among family, friends, and other social groups. Maintaining and enhancing equitable public access to “third spaces” that do not require admission fees or retail purchases is a priority. It will be important to remove barriers to access, and to expand and improve safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian connections. Parks and other public spaces are also an opportunity to increase multi-cultural awareness. Interpretative signage and other physical and digital media can educate visitors about Albemarle County’s cultural heritage, including especially under-told histories.

Current Parks Usage and Future Needs

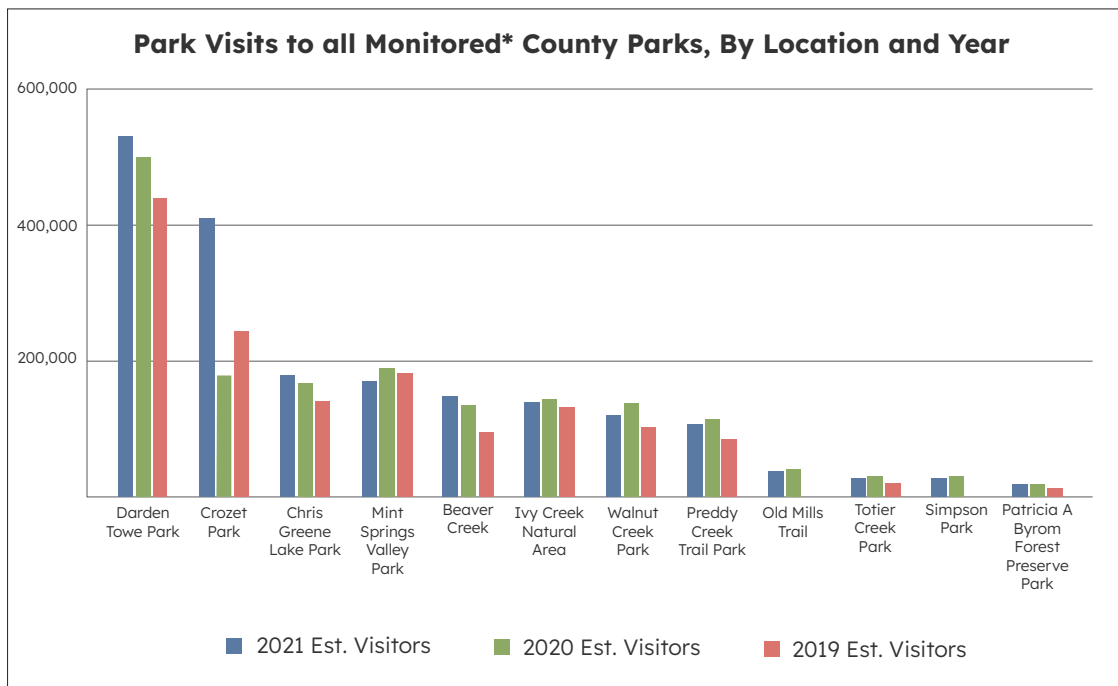
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Albemarle County’s population grew 13.6% from 2010 (98,970) in to 2020 (112,395). Albemarle County’s population is expected to further increase by approximately 26,000 people between 2020 and 2040. These trends and projections equate to increasing demand on the county’s parks, greenways, and other recreation amenities. The growing demand and usage are partially reflected through the park visitation data that ACPR staff have been collecting at most (but not all) county parks and facilities.

ACPR’s traffic counters record vehicle counts, except for the Old Mills Trail. To estimate the number of visitors, the vehicle counts are multiplied by 2.5 in accordance with industry best practices specified by the National Recreation and Park Association. Visitation and use of county parks increased by approximately 16% from 2019 to 2020, with another increase of approximately 14% from 2020 to 2021.

Year	Total* Park Visits	Increase Over Previous Years
2019	1,450,765*	N/A
2020	1,682,180*	Increase of 231,145 visits: 15.9% increase over previous year
2021	1,914,509*	Increase of 232,329 visits: 13.8% increase over previous year (32% increase over 2019)

* Excludes Charlotte Y. Humphris Park, Dorrier Park, Brook Hill River Park, Milton Landing, Crozet Greenway trails, and Glenmore section of Rivanna Greenway trail

To meet the demands of Albemarle County’s steadily growing population, to accommodate urbanizing development patterns, and to improve equitable access and quality of life, updated Comp Plan recommendations will look to accelerate and expand the development and delivery of urban and rural parks and greenways.



Park Visits to All Monitored* County Parks, By Location and Year

Existing Parks, Greenways, & Other Amenities

Albemarle County contains a wide array of parks and other recreational facilities, ranging from national parks to county parks to urban greenway trails to smaller private neighborhood parks. In total, ACPR currently operates 14 parks and 4 community centers, and manages a network of trails in parks and greenways over 85 total miles in length (and growing).

County parks are located both in the Development Areas (DA) and Rural Areas (RA). Rural Areas parks are intended for recreational areas or trails containing scenic and natural resources, such as mountain areas, stream corridors, and forests. Such parks are typically geared towards outdoor recreation opportunities such as hiking, walking, biking, paddling, fishing, and equestrian uses. Given the higher population density and urban land use patterns of Development Areas, park sizes tend to be smaller and offer different amenities. Amenities may include playground equipment, playing fields, and indoor recreation facilities.

Greenways are natural open space areas that are usually linear, and which typically include one or more trails or paths. Greenways function both as a destination as well as a connection between different places of interest such as residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, or shopping areas. In addition to recreation and transportation purposes, greenways also serve to protect natural areas such as steep slope areas and vegetated stream buffers. Similar to greenways are blueways, which are water trails with formal river access points, signage, and related amenities for paddling, fishing, and other water recreation.

Albemarle County has long had a Greenways Plan – the first such plan dates to 1999. The Greenways Plan has been developed over time in partnership with stakeholders at the local community level, and with regional focus ([2019 Jefferson Area Bike and Pedestrian Plan](#)) as well as statewide focus ([2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan](#)).

Parks & Facilities (Existing)	Type	Size	Location
Beaver Creek Park	Reservoir	219 acres	RA (White Hall District)
Brookhill River Park	River Park	20 acres	DA (Places 29)
P. Byrom Forest Preserve/Park	District Park	680 acres	RA (White Hall District)
Charlotte Humphris Park	Neighborhood/Trails Park	26 acres	DA (Places 29)
Chris Greene Lake Park	Regional Park	151 acres	RA (White Hall District)
Crozet Park	Community Park	25 acres	DA (Crozet)

Darden Towe Park	Regional Park	114 acres	DA (Pantops)
Dorrier Park	Neighborhood Park	3 acres	Town of Scottsville
Ivy Creek Natural Area	Natural Area/Trails Park	219 acres	RA (Jack Jouett District)
Mint Springs Valley Park	Regional Park	634 acres	RA (White Hall District)
Preddy Creek Trail Park	Trails Park	571 acres	RA (Rivanna District)
Simpson Park	District Park	14 acres	RA (Samuel Miller District)
Totier Creek Park	Reservoir	209 acres	RA (Scottsville District)
Walnut Creek Park	Regional Park	518 acres	RA (Samuel Miller District)
B.F. Yancey School Center	Community Center	7 acres	RA (Samuel Miller District)
Greenwood Center	Community Center	18 acres	RA (White Hall District)
Scottsville Center	Community Center	7 acres	Town of Scottsville
The Meadows	Community Center	1 acre	DA (Crozet)

Greenway Trails (Existing)	Length	Location (DA)	Notes
Old Mills Trail	2.5 mi.	Pantops	Part of planned Rivanna Greenway + Blueway (to be extended downstream to Milton Landing)
Still Meadow Trail	1.8 mi.	Places 29	Part of planned Rivanna Greenway + Blueway (future Free State/River North section; limited access)
Glenmore Trail	2.2 mi.	Village of Rivanna	Part of planned Rivanna Greenway + Blueway (currently no public access/use, located in gated community)
Rivanna Trail	16 mi.	Southern + Western, Places 29	Moore's Creek section; Old Ivy section; River North spur
Crozet Connector Greenway	1.4 mi.	Crozet	Crozet Trails Greenway System; partially complete
Lickinghole Creek Greenway	2 mi.	Crozet	Crozet Trails Greenway System; partially complete
Old Trail Greenways	2.4 mi.	Crozet	Crozet Trails Greenway System; Western Park, partially complete

In addition to our local park system, Albemarle County is also (partially) home to [Shenandoah National Park](#) (SNP), a federally owned park located along the Blue Ridge Mountains (partially) in western Albemarle County. A popular (but currently) informal boundary access point exists at Sugar Hollow, but that location is not developed or consistently managed for outdoor recreation access. SNP also contains Skyline Drive as well as a segment of the Appalachian Trail, an iconic National Scenic Trail that is nationally and internationally renowned. The southern entrance of SNP is at Rockfish Gap, where the Blue Ridge Parkway – another iconic unit of the National Park System – begins its 469-mile journey southward through the Blue Ridge Mountains. Overall, Albemarle County has a strategic opportunity to embrace and strengthen our position as a gateway community to multiple national recreational amenities, including Shenandoah National Park, Skyline Drive, the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Appalachian Trail, and US Bike Route 76.

Planned Future Parks and Greenways

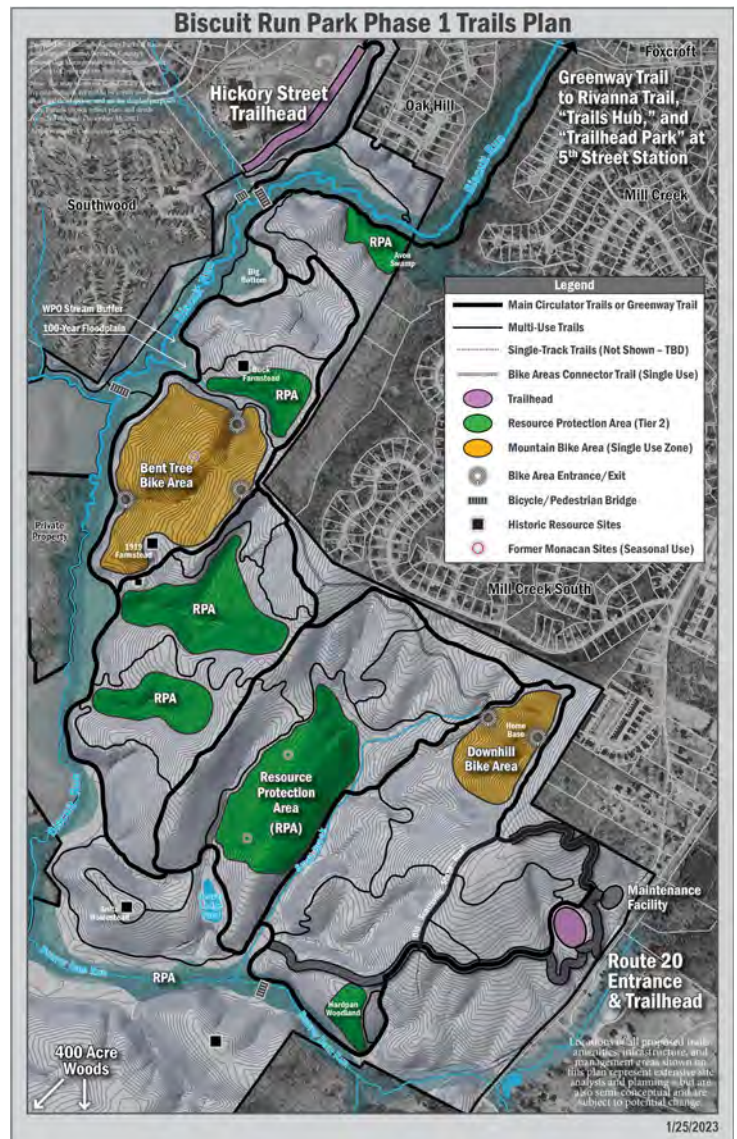
ACPR is actively planning, designing, and developing multiple additional parks and other recreation amenities in different areas of the county. The largest planned addition is Biscuit Run Park, a 1,190-acre park/nature area located south of I-64, between Scottsville Rd (Rt 20) and Old Lynchburg Rd (Route 631) that the County leases from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Biscuit Run Park Master Plan designates locations for recreational amenities such as trails, natural play areas, cultural experience areas, and athletic fields, as well as areas for environmental conservation and stewardship. Phase 1 of Biscuit Run Park is scheduled to open for public use in the fall of 2023.

Additionally, Albemarle County is continually seeking to expand its greenways, blueways, and associated trails system. There is a strategic need to integrate multi-modal planning and parks and greenways planning. There is also a high level of community expectations to accelerate and expand the development and delivery of urban parks and greenways in the Development Areas. There is growing importance of residents having non-vehicular access to parks via greenways, sidewalks, shared use paths, and bike lanes – with residents being able to “recreate from home” without reliance on the use of personal motor vehicles to access parks, greenways, natural areas. These initiatives all support a higher quality of life, personal well-being, and public health, as well as sustainability, climate action, and equity.

Priority Planned Projects & Strategic Initiatives

Albemarle County is working on the planning and development of multiple priority projects and strategic initiatives. These efforts are guided by Albemarle County’s Greenway Plan for the Development Areas and the Rural Parks and Greenway Area Plan (both contained in the 2015 Comprehensive Plan), and by adopted Development Area Master Plans, and by the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan. Examples of these efforts include the following:

- **Plan, design, construct, and operate Phase 1 of Biscuit Run Park – including the planned Biscuit Run Connector Greenway and Moores Creek Trailhead Park, which are both located outside of the park property boundaries.**
- **Continue (and accelerate) the expansion of the planned 17-mile Rivanna Greenway + Blueway, including:**
 - **Developing Brook Hill River Park**
 - **Developing the Old Mills Trail extension from Pantops to Milton**
 - **Developing Milton Landing as an enhanced river access facility and new greenway trailhead**
 - **Developing Buck Island Creek Park, river access facility and river park**
- **Provide appropriate support for new recreation access improvements at Sugar Hollow in partnership with Shenandoah National Park and other local stakeholders.**
- **Enhance, improve, and update existing county parks that have been in operation for multiple decades.**



Future Biscuit Run Park

- Plan and develop new county parks and greenways, with an emphasis on urban parks, pocket parks, and greenways and blueways.
- Increase and expand athletic fields, sports programs, and other recreation programming opportunities.
- Increase capacity to advance planned projects by increasing the county’s utilization of external resources, enhancing existing partnerships, and building new partnerships.
- Increasing Natural Resource Management planning and actions in county parks and greenways.

In addition to the priority projects and strategic initiatives described above, planned future greenway trails and other major trails include the following:

Planned Future Greenway Trails	Length	Location: (DA or RA)	Notes
Biscuit Run Connector Greenway	2 mi.	DA (Southern-Western)	Planned greenway trail connecting Biscuit Run Park with 5th St Station and Rivanna Trail to N, and Southwood to SW
Old Mills Trail (Shadwell-Milton Extension)	4 mi.	DA (Pantops) & RA (Scottsville District)	Portion of Rivanna Greenway + Blueway (future section: Pantops to Milton Landing)
Free State / River North Trail	Est. 4.5 mi. (TBD)	DA (Places 29)	Portion of Rivanna Greenway + Blueway (future section: Brook Hill River Park to Darden Towe Park)
North Fork Rivanna Greenway	Est. 3.5 mi. (TBD)	DA (Places 29)	Greenway trails along N Fork Rivanna River (between Chris Greene Lake Park, UVA N Fork Discovery Center, and North Pointe)
Meadow Creek Greenway	Est. 3 mi. (TBD)	DA (Places 29)	Between (future) Rio Point Trailhead Park in Places 29 DA and Rivanna Trail in Pen Park along Rivanna River (overlaps portion of Rivanna Trail)
Powell Creek Greenway	Est. 3 mi. (TBD)	DA (Places 29)	Greenway trail between Forest Lakes N and S Fork Rivanna River

Crozet Connector Greenway	Est. 2 mi. (TBD)	DA (Crozet)	Crozet Trails Greenway System (future section: The Square to Lickinghole Cr. Basin)
Lickinghole Creek Greenway	Est. 3.5 mi. (TBD)	DA (Crozet)	Crozet Trails/Greenway System (future section: Lickinghole Creek Basin to Western Park)
Powells Creek Greenway	Est. 2 mi. (TBD)	DA (Crozet)	Crozet Trails Greenway System (future section to Mint Springs Valley Park; partially on-road)
Three Notched Trail	TBD	County-wide/TBD (RA, Crozet DA, Pantops DA, Village of Rivanna DA)	Proposed future trail connecting: Charlottesville W to Crozet/Rockfish Gap and Charlottesville E toward Richmond
Esmont Rail-Trail	6.3 mi.	RA (Scottsville District and Samuel Miller District)	Potential future trail on CSX properties: Esmont to Boiling Spring or Warren Ferry (Friends of Esmont)
James River Heritage Trail	TBD	RA (Scottsville District and Samuel Miller District)	Local segment from Scottsville to Howardsville (Virginia Outdoors Plan)
Ragged Mountains Connector Trail	TBD	DA (Western Urban) & RA (Samuel Miller District)	Potential future trail connection(s): Ragged Mountain Reservoir to Heyward Community Forest, and Hedgerow property

Albemarle County currently owns several properties which are designated for future parks and/or recreation uses, but which have not been developed or remain partially undeveloped. Such County-owned future parkland including the following:

Future County Park Properties	Size	Location	Notes
Biscuit Run Park	1,190 acres	DA (Southern + Western) & RA (Samuel Miller & Scottsville District)	Lease restrictions and obligations; Phase 1 of park development is underway (engineering and permitting phase)
Biscuit Run Trailhead Park at 5th St Station	8 acres (total)	DA (Southern + Western)	Engineering phase beginning January 2023

Western Park	36 acres	DA (Crozet)	Park master plan updated in 2017
Rivanna Village Park	19 acres	DA (Village of Rivanna)	To be developed privately and dedicated to county for public use
Rio Point Trailhead Park	1 acre	DA (Places 29)	To be developed privately and dedicated to county for public use
Riverside Village / Free Bridge Lane Park	8 acres	DA (Pantops)	Park master plan completed in 2020
William S.D. Woods Nature Preserve at Arrowhead Farm	410 acres	RA (Samuel Miller District)	Deed restrictions: park development and resource management plans needed
Hedgerow	340 acres	RA (Samuel Miller District)	Conservation easement restrictions: park development plans and resource management plans needed
Milton Landing	2 acres	RA (Scottsville District)	To acquire approx. 18 more acres from The Clifton (SP2021-04)
Buck Island Creek	122 acres	RA (Scottsville District)	Conservation easement restrictions: park development plans, resource management plans needed
Powell Ridge Property		Development Area (Places 29)	Park development plans, resource management plans needed

There is also growing public activity and demand for water recreation. Residents and visitors are utilizing existing boat launches and river access points at levels which exceed existing capacity and infrastructure. This includes locations on the Rivanna River (at Brook Hill River Park and Milton Landing), on the James River (at Howardsville, Hatton Ferry, Warren Ferry, and Scottsville), and on local bodies of water (at South Fork Rivanna Reservoir, Totier Creek Reservoir, Beaver Creek Reservoir, Chris Greene Lake Park, and Lake Albemarle). This growing demand necessitates the expansion of county Greenways and Blueways along major waterways, as well as the provision of additional recreation opportunities at lakes and reservoirs. Priority opportunities for enhanced water recreation include:

- **Rivanna River access improvements and amenities (with emphasis on the planned 17-mile Rivanna Greenway + Blueway between Brook Hill River Park and future Buck Island Creek Park)**

- **Rivanna Reservoir water recreation access and infrastructure (with emphasis on the county-owned properties on Woodburn Road and Woodlands Road)**
- **Beaver Creek Reservoir (Crozet)**
- **Lickinghole Creek Basin (Crozet)**
- **Middle James River Trail (Scottsville District and Samuel Miller District)**

Albemarle County also has an opportunity to embrace and capitalize on our position as a gateway to Shenandoah National Park, as well as the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Specific opportunities include:

- **Sugar Hollow access management and recreation management**
- **Patricia Ann Byrom Forest Preserve Park potential future boundary access**
- **Brown's Gap Turnpike**
- **"Trail Town" designation and enhancements/amenities/signage for Crozet**
- **Enhancing and promoting US Bicycle Route 76 through Albemarle County to Rockfish Gap entrances to SNP and BRP**

Recreation and Athletics

Albemarle County's community centers, recreation programs, and athletics opportunities provide local residents a variety of valuable services and continue to play a vital role in our community's quality of life. The Recreation Division of ACPR will continue to provide athletic opportunities and recreational programs for youth and adults in Albemarle County and surrounding areas and recognizes and celebrates the ways that sports and recreation build stronger, healthier, happier, and safer communities.

Some of the specific opportunities and needs include the following:

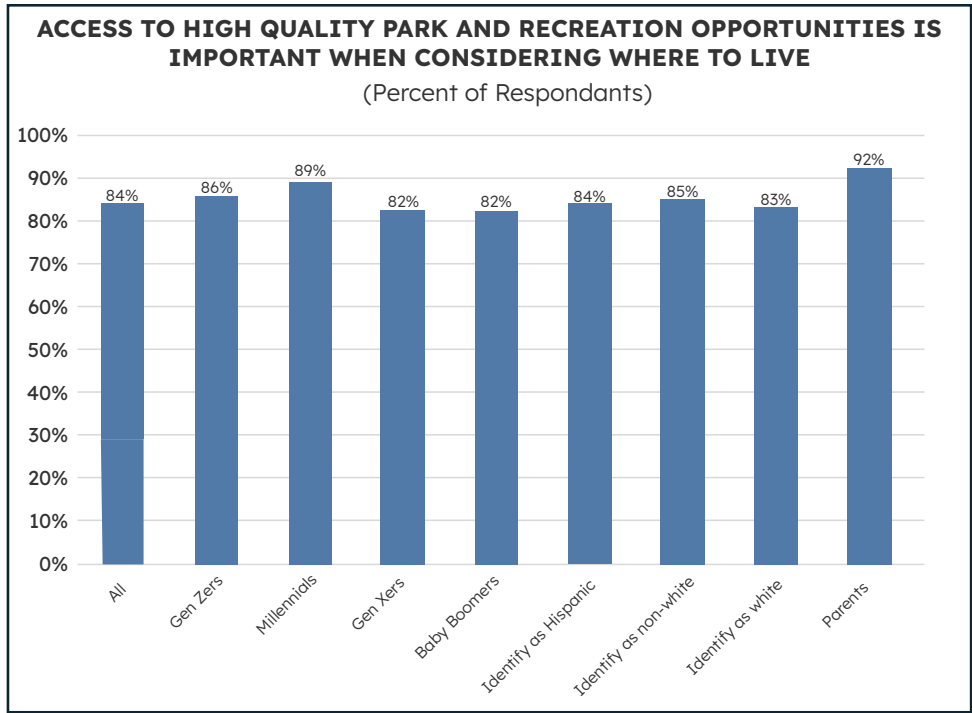
- **There is growing demand and heightened expectations for athletic fields, as identified in the 2018 Albemarle County Parks & Recreation Community Needs Assessment and as has been communicated by members of the public in more recent years.**
- **Based on recent trends and current demands, future goals include offering community events each season (such as Trunk or Treat, Parent/Child Dance, Movie Nights, and more), as well as maintaining a summer swim program from Memorial Day through Labor Day, seven days a week, at each of the three designated county parks (Walnut Creek Park, Mint Springs Valley Park, and Chris Greene Lake Park).**

As shown in the Recreation Program data from 2019-2022, the corona virus pandemic had a disruptive effect on recreation programs and athletic activities in recent years. However, services and participation are approaching or exceeding pre-pandemic levels in most service areas. The physical activity, social connection, and enrichment provided through these services are more important than ever for our community’s youth and families that have experienced the disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Recreation Activity: yearly totals	2019	2020	2021	2022
Middle School Sports	1002	954	200	1049
Fee Based Classes	3095	766	394	1018
Adult Basketball	320	320	0	320
Summer Camp	418	0	600	325

Quality of Life, Tourism, and Economic Vitality

There is growing opportunity for parks and greenways to play a larger role in the county’s economic development strategy. Our parks and greenways are a great opportunity to support the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau (CACVB) strategy to increase the average visitor’s stay by making the region’s outdoor recreation industry a stronger compliment to the region’s agritourism, events and performance arts, and heritage tourism. Our parks, greenways, community centers, and recreation amenities also support a high quality of life and help make Albemarle County a competitive place for retaining and attracting employers and employees. Enhanced partnerships with the CACVB and other local stakeholders are an important opportunity to make progress on projects and services that contribute to economic vitality while also benefiting residents.



National Recreation & Park Assoc. 2022 Engagement with Parks Report

Phase 1 Engagement – Recap

Community input shared during Phase 1 reflected the following challenges and opportunities for Parks and Recreation:

- The need for **increased parks and green spaces**, especially within Development Areas. Public amenities and open spaces support higher density housing types such as apartments, where residents may not have their own private green space.
- **More greenways and trails with increased connectivity** to trails from neighborhoods, allowing community members to access parks and recreational amenities without the need to travel by vehicle. The planned Three Notched Trail was mentioned frequently as an example.
- **Equitable access to parks and greenways facilities**. This includes expansion of facilities in areas where they are currently lacking.
- **Improved accessibility in parks and on trails**, including for wheelchairs and strollers.

AC44 Framework

The [Framework for an Equitable and Resilient Community](#) was developed during Phase 1 of AC44. The Framework presents a snapshot of what the county aspires to be in the year 2044, which is a community that has centered equity and resilience in its policies, plans, and actions. The Framework was developed based on input from community members, the AC44 working group, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors, and by incorporating equity and climate action considerations, reviewing goals in the current Comprehensive Plan, and researching best practices. Moving forward, the Framework will be used to guide updating Plan recommendations, including Plan Goals, Objectives, and Strategies.



Relevant guidance from the **Framework for an Equitable and Resilient Community** for this chapter includes:

- Green and resilient designs should be incorporated into new neighborhoods, including compact, mixed-use developments with **parks, trails**, and energy-efficient design.
- Existing neighborhoods should have **parks, trails**, and new landscaping and tree canopy added to them to bring greater access to green space and resilience to climate change and environmental challenges.
- Neighborhoods should be inclusive and incorporate a mix of uses, **green spaces**, and a variety of housing types that are accessible and affordable to all income levels and abilities.
- New developments should be designed as “complete communities” where possible with a core of amenities and services within or adjacent to a wide choice of housing types and **connected trails and green spaces**.
- County policies and investment should support the revitalization of older residential neighborhoods to incorporate **accessible amenity spaces** and community services.
- In existing and new neighborhoods, there should be **a network of trails, parks, streets, and greenways** that serve all ages and abilities.
- **Natural and wild areas should be protected** and there will be wildlife habitats with connecting corridors and stream networks.

Data Sources and References

Albemarle County Parks & Recreation: Community Needs Assessment, 2018

American Community Services (ACS), US Census Bureau

National Recreation and Parks Association: 2022 Engagement with Parks Report, Annual Survey

Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC):
[Jefferson Area Bike & Pedestrian Plan, 2019](#)

Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR):

Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, 2021
[Virginia Outdoors Plan, 2018](#)