

**CLAUDIUS CROZET PARK
SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION
(SP2020-00016)
AMENDMENT TO SP-1995-43**

NARRATIVE AND CONDITIONS

Date: August 17, 2020

Revised: November 16, 2020

Revised: May 17, 2021

Revised: September 10, 2021

Applicant: Claudius Crozet Park, Inc.

Prepared By: Collins Engineering

CLAUDIUS CROZET PARK - SPECIAL USE PERMIT

PROJECT NARRATIVE & CONDITIONS

I. PROJECT PROPOSAL

The applicant is seeking a special use permit in accordance with Section 10.2.2.(1) and (4) of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance for a community center in the Rural Area district and for a swim, golf, tennis or similar athletic facilities in the Rural Area district. The applicant is also seeking a special use permit in accordance with Section 16.2.2.(1) and (4) for a community center in the R-6 Zoning District and for a swim, golf, tennis or similar athletic facilities in the R-6 Zoning district. The proposed Claudius Crozet Park Special Use Permit is an amendment to the previously approved special use permit (SP1995-00043), allowing the use of the property for a pool, parking area, walking trails, and play fields. The previous special use permit classified the proposed uses as a Community Center. This amendment to the existing Special Use permit is to expand the use of the Community Center with a fitness center and pool expansion. Included with the expansion of the pool and new fitness facility will be additional parking areas, walking trails and sidewalk connections, and stormwater management facilities. The Claudius Crozet Park property is primarily Rural Area property (RA) surrounded by residential neighborhoods. The total area of the park is 22.81 acres, with a small portion (0.41 acres) located on R-6 property donated to the park with the development of the Parkside Village Neighborhood. There are (3) parcels in total that make up the Crozet park, as listed below:

Crozet Park Parcel	Parcel Acreage	Existing Zoning
56A2-1-72	10.731 acres	Rural Area (RA)
56A2-1-72A	11.665 acres	Rural Area (RA)
56A2-4-0A4	0.41 acres	R-6 Zoning

The proposed special use permit that is being requested is for an amendment to the existing special use permit for the property, which currently operates as a community park. The applicant is proposing to construct a Community Recreation Facility, including exercise areas, sport courts, community meeting space, and a pool expansion. Phase II of the project will include an indoor pool facility, connected to the fitness building and adjacent to the existing pool deck. Access to the property is from the existing main entrance on Park Road. There is currently an emergency access road from the property onto Hill Top Street, which is also used during larger festivals and events. The proposed expansion includes improvements to the site for traffic circulation through the park and a 2nd access point onto Indigo Road, as shown on the Development Application Plan. The access connection to Hill Top Street will be removed, and the existing parking area behind the pool will be expanded for additional parking for the Community Park and parking for the proposed fitness facility.

Currently, Claudius Crozet Park includes a pool, grass recreation fields, a community center building, basketball courts, tennis courts, a soccer field, and baseball/softball fields. Lights were recently added to the baseball field through a special exception process. Most of the existing infrastructure will remain with the proposed expansion. The Development Application Plan includes the existing conditions of the site, and notes the existing improvements that will be removed for the construction of the proposed fitness facility, parking, and circulation through the site.

Crozet Park is located within the central core of the Crozet Development Area. There are multiple roadway connections and existing and proposed pedestrian/bicycle trailway connections in all directions providing access to the Park from the surrounding neighborhoods. As shown on sheet 6 of the Development plan, Crozet Park is located within ½ mile from Downtown Crozet, and within 1 mile from many of the residential neighborhoods in the area. Sheet 7 of the development plan also shows the extensive sidewalk and trailway connections in the area, which allow for pedestrian and bicycle connections to Crozet Park. Much of the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the area has come from the recent development of the adjacent properties and neighborhoods. This network is continuing to evolve as the remaining parcels are developed. These sidewalks and trailways provide additional non-vehicular access connections to Crozet Park.

The public benefits for the proposed special use permit are to provide a community fitness and recreational facility within Crozet Park to meet the needs for the residents in the Crozet Community. The proposed facility will provide a fitness center for the community, meeting spaces, recreational sport courts, and an indoor pool. The proposed facility will also provide improvements for the existing pool at Crozet Park. The proposed special use permit will not change the overall characteristic of Crozet Park. Currently, the park offers fitness, recreation, and meeting areas on the property, serving the community. The proposed special use permit will enhance these facilities, creating the expansion of the community park to service the Crozet Community.

II. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The existing Crozet Park and the proposed expansion of the community center and swim, golf, tennis or similar athletic facilities are consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. The property, which is located within the Crozet growth area, is noted as greenspace. The existing Crozet Park is consistent with the allowable uses in the Greenspace of the Crozet Master Plan. The park, as shown on the Crozet Masterplan, is designed along a Greenspace corridor, providing alternative connections to the community park, other than vehicular connections and access. The expansion of the Crozet Park is consistent with the Community Life goal of the Crozet Master plan. The improvements will help continue to provide an adequate facility in the Crozet community for fairs, festivals, and events. The proposed park expansion is also consistent with the Parks & Green Systems goal of the masterplan by providing north/south and east/west trailway connections through the park to the adjacent and surrounding neighborhoods.

III. Development Impacts on the Public Facilities & Public Infrastructure

The Claudius Crozet Park is located within the Albemarle County growth area and within the ACSA jurisdictional area. The park is currently served by public water and public sanitary sewer, and the proposed expansion of the facility will continue to connect to the public infrastructure.

The expansion of the park pool and recreational facility is not expected to have an impact on the fire and police departments. The park is located within a mile from the Crozet Fire Department, so the response times are adequate for the proposed infrastructure. In addition, the facility will have a sprinkler system that will aid in the fire suppression for the building. Exterior lighting and an alarm

system will be included with the proposed building and parking lot improvements, adding to the safety of the proposed facility. This will help limit of the overall impacts on the police department with the added infrastructure.

See attached analysis for updated traffic and pedestrian access analysis.

IV. Development Impacts on the Environmental Features

The proposed expansion of the community center and recreation facility within Crozet Park will not impact the existing environmental features on the property. There is a small section of preserved slopes south of the existing pond and limited managed slopes on the property. The improvements will have a minor impact on one of the small managed slope areas within the park and no impacts on the preserved slopes. There is also an existing pond on the property with a water protection ordinance buffer that will be maintained. The proposed development is outside of the buffer area, and the surrounding area of the pond will be enhanced to help treat any stormwater run-off before it drains into the existing pond. The existing pond is not a SWM facility, so all water quality shall be achieved prior to the run-off being released to the pond. Nutrient credits and other water quality control measures may be implemented to achieve the required stormwater management for the building and parking lot expansion. The proposed development will meet the state water quality design criteria and will be considered as development of prior developed land. In addition, the final SWM design shall take into account and provide stormwater quality and quantity controls for the existing SWM facility that is being removed with the proposed development of the parking lot expansion and recreation building.

V. Special Exception Request

The existing Special use permit (SP1995-43) for the Crozet Park also included a special exception request for Section 18.5.16(a) of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance. This proposed amendment to the Special Use Permit for the park also includes an amendment to the existing special exception request for the improvements and modifications to the pool. The conditions set forth in the approved special exception shall still apply to the project and the proposed expansion of the facility. The outside pool is staying the same. The existing pool facility is 165 feet from the property, as shown on Sheet 3 of the concept plan. The proposed indoor pool is 55 feet from the same property line (which is the closest property line). From this property line, the closest structure is another 130 feet, making the total distance of the indoor pool facility 185 feet from the closest structure and the existing pool 295 feet from the closest structure. In addition, the 55 feet is from the property line to the edge of the building. There is an internal storage room along the northern portion of the pool facility, and the limits of the indoor pool is 80 feet from the property line. A landscaping buffer area is also proposed on the west side of the proposed indoor pool facility to mitigate the building from the adjacent residences. The indoor pool is mitigated by the building and storage room, helping to reduce the sounds from the pool. The existing building will shield the noises from the pool, limiting the impact of the indoor pool on the adjacent residences. Between the landscaping buffer and the building, the sounds from the indoor pool should have limited affect on the adjacent residences. The landscaping will help mitigate any light extending from the windows on the building as well.



September 10, 2021

Albemarle County Planning Commissioners
c/o Carolyn Shaffer
401 McIntire Road
Charlottesville, VA 22902

RE: SP202000016 Claudius Crozet Park

Dear Planning Commissioners:

Thank you for considering our project. To supplement our special use permit, I'm providing additional information to clarify issues around traffic and Park usage. I am especially concerned about the perception that Crozet Park is a "small neighborhood" park rather than a "community" park serving a large segment of Albemarle County and beyond. These materials should provide the data needed to understand the considerable reach of Crozet Park.

Key points in this supplement include:

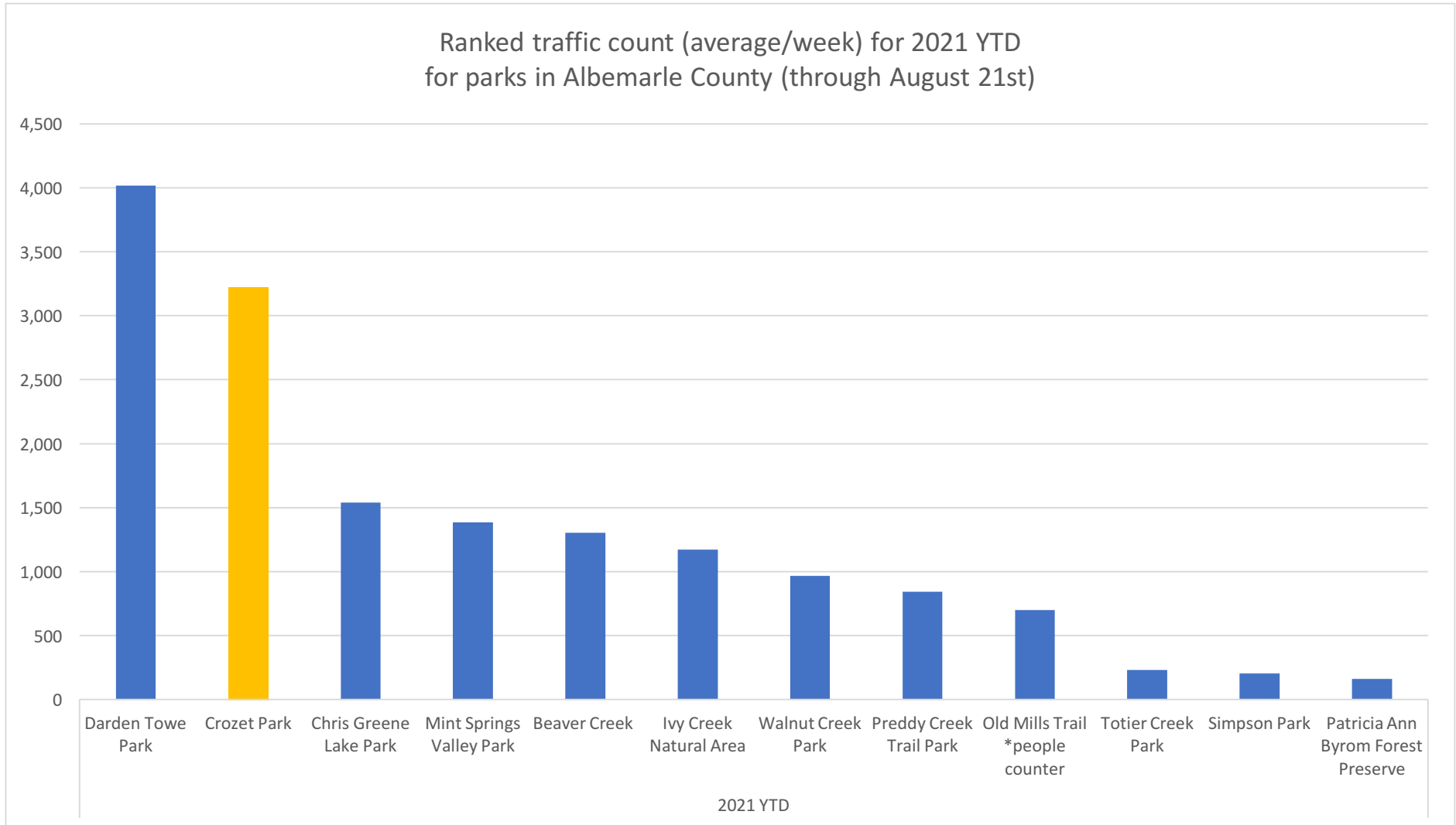
- Traffic coming into Crozet Park is second only to Darden Towe,
- Usage of Crozet Park is trending up,
- Crozet Park is centrally positioned for easy access by bike, pedestrian, and car,
- Current Crozet Park Aquatics/Fitness Center membership base extends well beyond Crozet,
- By the numbers: current use of Crozet Park shows is it central to our community.

Sincerely,

Kim Guenther
President, Board of Directors
directors@crozetpark.org

Claudius Crozet Park is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

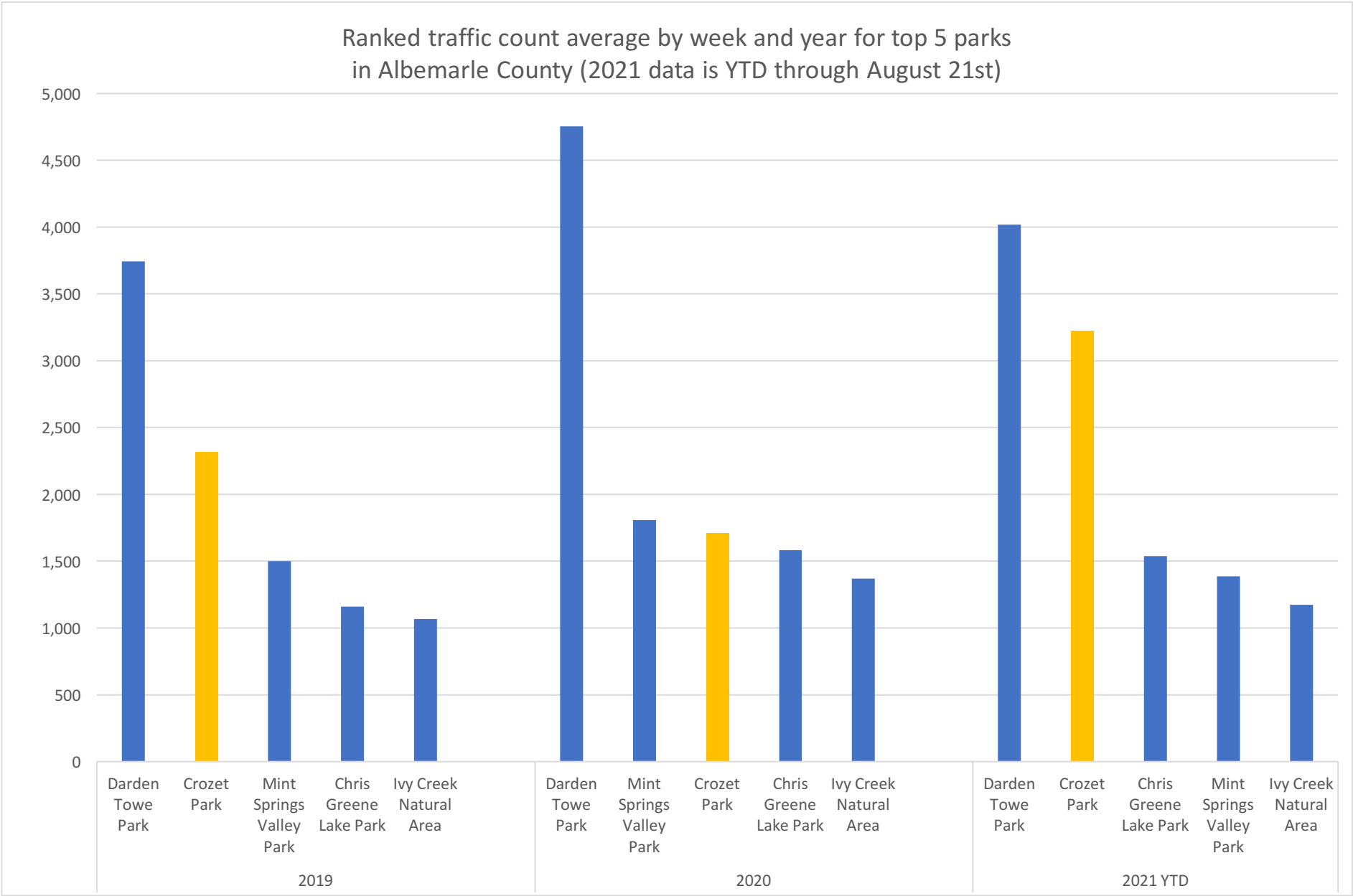
Traffic coming into Crozet Park is second only to Darden Towe



Albemarle County Parks and Recreation (ACPR) captures cars entering each of their parks using a counter located at each park's main entrance. Although Crozet Park is not a part of the County's extensive park network, ACPR does count traffic coming into Crozet Park which is then included in ACPR traffic counts. These counts do not include the numerous people who access Crozet Park by bicycle and on foot. Only Darden Towe, Simpson Park, and Crozet Park have multipurpose athletic fields which increases use of these parks. Crozet Park traffic data includes three large festivals in May, July, and October attracting 3,000 – 6,000 people in a single weekend.

Source: Traffic data from Albemarle County Parks and Recreation, August 31, 2021.

Usage of Crozet Park is trending up



Crozet Park is centrally positioned for easy access by bike, pedestrian, and car

Trip Generation

The proposed expansion of the Crozet Park Community Facility is estimated to generate an additional 847 trips per day with the largest impact occurring in the afternoon peak hour with an estimated 68 trips. This calculation is based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Code 495, Recreational Community Center. The proposed facility has very similar uses to ITE Code 495 with the exception of a daycare which is not proposed by the park application but is included in uses under ITE Code 495. An average size daycare generates 240 trips per day. It is expected that the projected 847 TPD is a conservative estimate.

A trip is defined by ITE as an ingress or an egress to the site. A single vehicle that enters the site and then leaves after their visit equals two vehicle trips. The existing entrance from Park Road will continue to serve as the main entrance and there is a proposed second entrance with access to Indigo Road. The higher volume of park traffic is expected to continue access by Park Road, but there will likely be some shifts as future road network additions are complete.

Impacts to the Existing Road Network

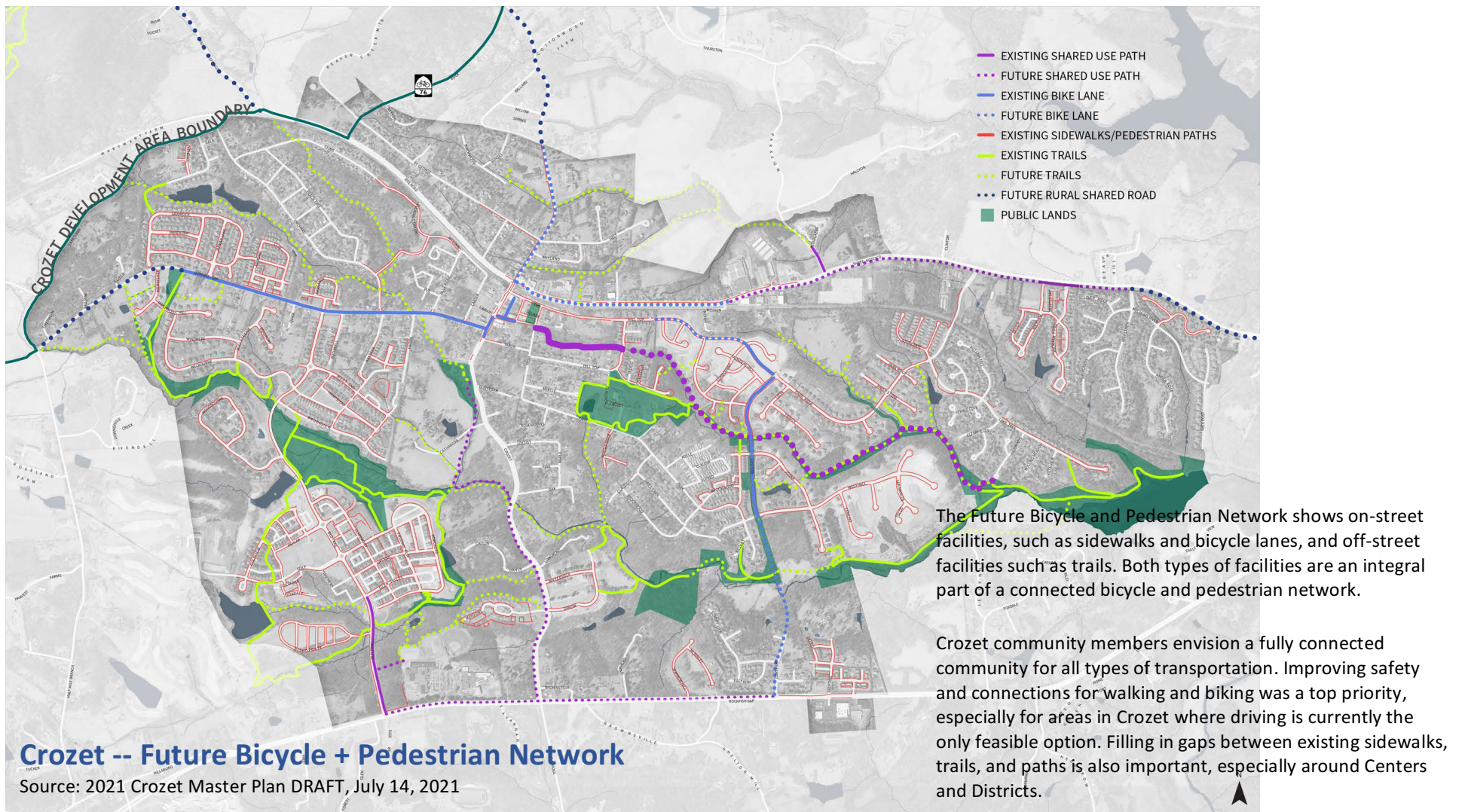
The largest impact to the existing network of roads is expected to occur at the Park Road entrance where an estimated increase of up to 508 trips per day may occur. The volume of Park Road to the east of the entrance is expected to receive the most increase of up to 305 vehicles per day, or up to 24 vehicles in the peak hour. The existing traffic count on this section of road is 1,700 vehicles per day (VPD) so the total traffic count may increase to 2,005 vehicles per day. Other existing road volumes in the area include Tabor Street at 3,700 VPD, Jarmans Gap Road at 4,300 VPD, Crozet Ave at 7,900 VPD and Three Notched Road at 7,100. Roads with similar counts include Park Ridge Road at 1,900 VPD, Railroad Avenue at 1,100 VPD, Crozet Ave North of Rte 240 at 2,700 VPD and Half Mile Branch Road at 1,300 VPD. Traffic at the proposed second entrance is expected to be minimal until the proposed Library Ave Extension is complete. At that time, an increase of up to 339 trips per day may use the entrance, or 27 trips in the peak hour.

Future Network Additions and Impacts

The proposed second entrance to the park will provide many benefits to the park and the community once some planned road network additions are complete including Library Ave Extension and Eastern Avenue. The proposed second entrance will be accessible from Library Ave Extension from areas both east and west of the park. Areas to the east such as Western Ridge, Foothill Crossing and Highlands will be able to access the park by using Library Ave and avoiding Three Notch'd Road, Crozet Ave and Tabor Street which include some of the busier or more congested intersections in the Crozet area. The second entrance will shorten trip lengths to the park, provide additional interconnectivity, provide relief to existing congested intersections and reduce emissions which is in line with the County's Climate Action Plan. The second entrance will also be served by streets with pedestrian and bicycle access from the park to the downtown area once Library Ave Extension is completed which will meet the county goals of multimodal interconnectivity.

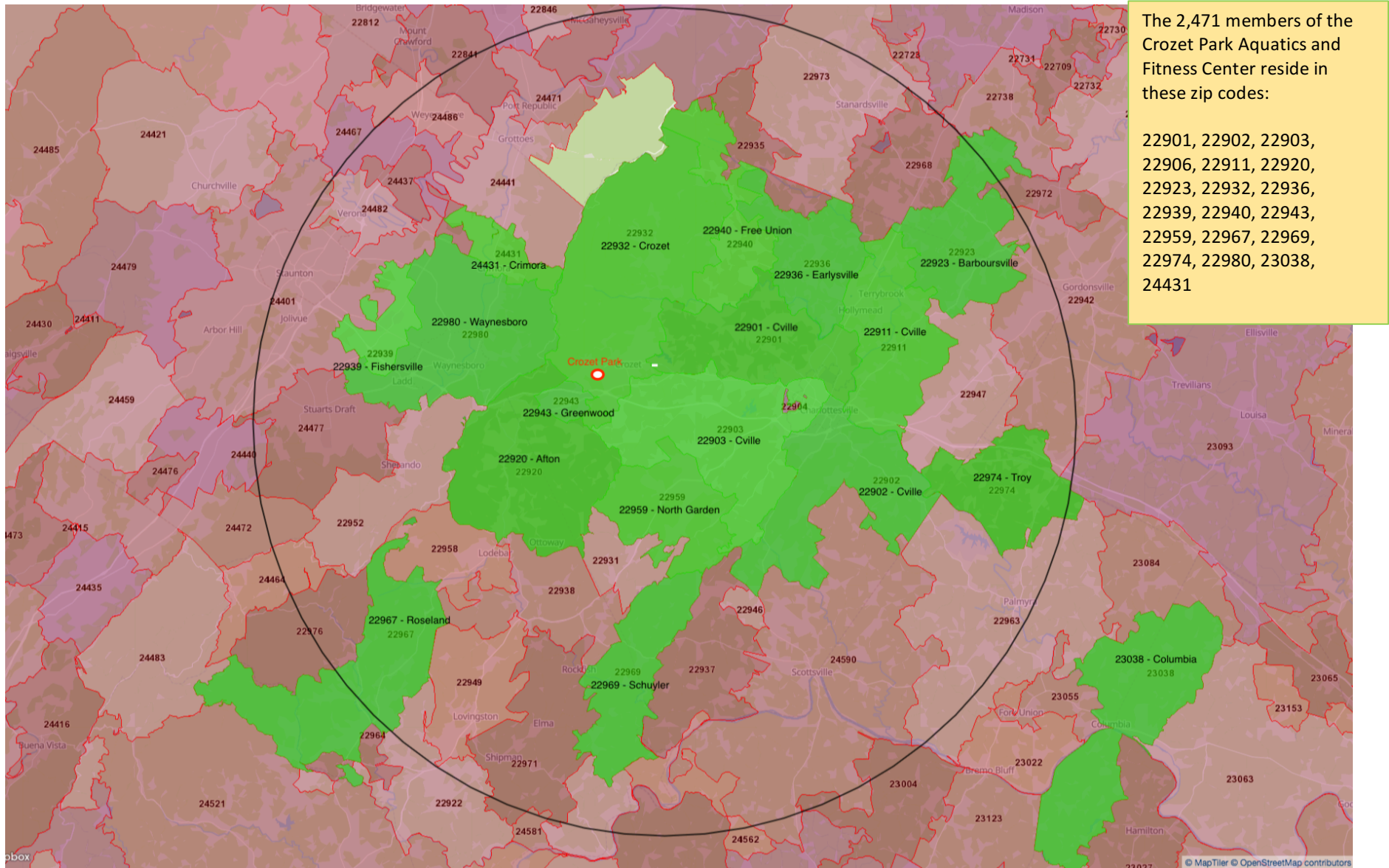
Summary

The Crozet Park is located in the central part of Crozet in close proximity to the downtown area and residential areas. It is easily accessible by vehicle from Park Road with multiple pedestrian access points in all directions from the parks perimeter trail. Adding a second entrance on Indigo Road along with planned road network projects will provide additional connectivity with multimodal access, reduce vehicular trip lengths, reduce traffic to adjacent congested intersections, reduce emissions and meets the spirit of the Crozet Master Plan. Additional traffic due to the expanded facility will be distributed by providing a second access point while connecting to a road system with existing or proposed pedestrian and bicycle facilities.



Current CPAFC membership base extends well beyond Crozet

Crozet Park Aquatics & Fitness Center (CPAFC) – membership reach by zip code within 25-mile radius of Crozet as highlighted in green.



By the Numbers: current use of Crozet Park shows it is central to our community

A typical year at Crozet Park is busy one with a variety of activities serving residents from across Albemarle County. Even during the pandemic, the Park served as a key destination by many looking to find a safe space to recreate or just sit and read a book. Our lockdown year has been a thorough lesson in the value of community amenities that are a short walk, bike, or car ride away. Here is a snapshot of all the many activities of a typical year.

Crozet Park Aquatics and Fitness Center (CPAFC)

The CPAFC continues to grow both membership and programming. As of July 31, 2021 there were 2,471 members generating approximately 7,743 scans (attendance) into the facility in July. CPAFC year-round programming includes swim lessons, group exercise classes (15 – 20 classes averaging 590 attendees per month), summer camp, after school, and multiple other special events for both youth and adult recreation. With limited CPAFC physical space (pool and enclosed floor space), summer camp and after school are regularly sold out.

After school is particularly challenging given the Park's limited space where we are licensed for only 35 children. With such limited capacity, we are in the process of licensing our small group exercise studio to allow an additional 15 children. An expanded CPAFC will allow increased after school programming to support 250 children and help alleviate the significant lack of after school in Western Albemarle County.

The CPAFC also hosts multiple swim teams:

Crozet Gators Swim Team (CGST) – The Crozet Gators Swim Team has been a part of Crozet Park since the early 60's. The 2021 summer team roster included approximately 230 swimmers plus 7 coaches who use the pool 3 hours/day, 5-6 days/week for 10-weeks from mid-May to end of July. Due to lack of pool space, 30 swimmers were put on a waiting list and there is no development swim team. CGST is expecting upwards of 300 swimmers wanting to be on the team next summer (2022) and is already considering other venues, in addition to CPAFC, to accommodate this growth. It's worth noting that during Gator swim practices, families utilize many of the Park's many amenities especially the playground and perimeter trail. Families often opt for a family membership so they can work out during practice or swim as a family once practice is over.

CGST dual home meets including swimmers, coaches, officials, and spectators totals about 1,000 people per meet. In 2021, the CPAFC hosted the Jefferson Swim League age 12 and under championships which included approximately 1,500 swimmers, parents, coaches, and officials. The JSL championships, represented by seventeen swim teams, is one of the largest youth sporting events in the area.

Shenandoah Marlins Aquatic Club (SMAC) – SMAC has offered competitive swimming in Waynesboro since 1958 and just recently began practicing at the CPAFC pool. The current roster in Crozet totals 80 swimmers and SMAC is estimating continued growth at 20 swimmers per year for the next few years. During April and May the program will add another 20-30 swimmers as part of their prep program going into the summer the swim season.

Western Albemarle High School Swim Team – The WAHS Swim Team has been practicing at the CPAFC since 2011. The CPAFC is considered the swim team's home pool. The team roster includes 44 swimmers (22 boys, 22 girls) and 4 coaches who use the pool 2 hours/day, 5-days/week for 16 weeks. This does not include time spent elsewhere in the Park or poolside participating in dryland exercises.

Youth and Adult Sports Leagues

Peachtree Baseball and Softball – Peachtree has been a part of Park activities for almost 50 years using all three of the Park's baseball and t-ball fields along with open green spaces for practice, e.g., fielding and batting. Peachtree has both a spring and fall season. From March to June team rosters total 391 players and from August to November 219 players. In total for a typical year, Peachtree has 300 games in the Park totaling 1,500 hours and involving approximately 250 volunteers. With the exception of 2020, Peachtree has been hosting the league's district tournament for the past four years which brings six or more teams into the Park to include 16 players/coaches per team plus family members, officials, and other attendees. Participation in Peachtree Baseball and Softball continues to grow each year.

Soccer Organization Charlottesville Area (SOCA) – SOCA has been a regular part of Park activities for decades and uses the Park's natural grass soccer field 6 months each year to support fall and spring adult and youth soccer practices, clinics, and matches. SOCA serves over 6,000 local soccer players in Albemarle and Augusta Counties to include the cities of Charlottesville, Staunton and Waynesboro.

Festivals at Crozet Park

May and October Arts and Crafts Festivals – now in its 41st year, the Crozet Arts and Crafts Festivals feature over 120 jury-selected artists, craft demonstrations, live music, children's activities, food, and Virginia wine and beer. With cooperative weather, each festival regularly attracts approximately 6,000 people over a weekend. In May of 2021, the event broke all previous attendance records and revenue for a single day. These two festivals are a primary source of income for Crozet Park with proceeds used for maintenance, repairs, and improvements. These festivals drive significant economic activity in Albemarle County for 4-6 days each year.

Crozet Independence Day Celebration (CIDC) – another decades-long tradition, the CIDC is primarily a local event attracting Crozet residents, vendors, and many local non-profit organizations, e.g., Crozet Volunteer Fire Dept., Western Albemarle Rescue Squad, etc. Attendance at the CIDC event totals approximately 3,000 people each July.

Crozet Winter Brews Festival – now in its 3rd year, the Winter Brews Festival showcases the area’s premier breweries and other crafts stouts, ales, and porters. This festival is still relatively new but will be kept purposefully small with 15-20 local breweries, food vendors, and entertainment. 2019 attendance totaled approximately 800 people. The festival reinforces Albemarle County’s reputation as a center of craft brewing excellence on the east coast.

Crozet Park Outdoor Pavilions

The Park’s two 40 x 60 foot outdoor covered pavilions have always been in great demand but never more so than in 2020 to present as people seek safe outdoor spaces to gather. Over the past year and a half, the pavilions have been regularly used by boys and girls scouting troops, County youth sports teams, e.g., WAHS football, swim team, x-country, and County organizations, e.g., ACPR, Community Development, etc., K12 teachers (both County and home school teachers), group exercise instructors (both CPAFC and instructors unrelated to CPAFC programming). The pavilions have hosted alumni gatherings, graduation ceremonies, birthday parties, wedding rehearsals and celebrations, meetings too many to count, numerous church gatherings. To support this increased usage during the colder months, the Park Board and ACAC teamed up in the winter of 2020 to enclose one of the pavilions on three sides, with ceiling mounted heaters, and fans. This will be a regular set-up going forward with sides installed each November and removed in March.

Perimeter Trail, Par Courses, Playgrounds, and Dog Park

Crozet Park hosts a steady ever-increasing flow of visitors on foot, bicycles, and skateboards pushing strollers, wheelchairs, running and walking, sometimes with one or several dogs in tow along the Park’s .85-mile perimeter trail. From there trail users can access multiple par course systems, playgrounds, quiet shaded areas with bench seating, open green spaces, and our large and very active fenced-in dog park. Given the Park’s central location and the multiple access points from surrounding neighborhoods, there’s no way to tally the number of people using the Park’s many amenities most of which are offered to the public for free.

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