



Neighborhood Parks Plan

Powhatan Park

Community Feedback, Fall 2014



The Division of Park Planning, Design, and Capital Development is currently planning for the City's existing Neighborhood Parks, which we characterize as being 0.5 - 10 acres with a service area of up to 0.5 miles. The results of this plan will help determine budgeting priorities and recommendations for both short and long-term incremental improvements, ensuring that neighborhood parks serve Alexandria's needs now and into the future.

In Fall 2014, Staff collected community feedback to understand how the Park is used and how it could be improved in the future. The following information summarizes what we heard through an online survey, community workshop, and "graffiti board" in the park. Over 270 people responded to the survey in total, 21 of which were specific to Powhatan Park.

In 10 years I would like this Park to...

(top 3 rankings shown; based on a weighted score)

1. Be a safe place for children to explore
2. Be a place to create social connections with neighbors
3. Be a place to relax

What would you like done with the seating?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	4	21.1%
Enhance it	11	57.9%
Transform it	4	21.1%

Explain

Add some picnic tables
 Additional seating for parents near the playground would be beneficial.
 I wish the few benches were in better lit areas as they attract a criminal element at night.
 Picnic tables would be nice.
 There is almost no seating and there needs to be much more
 need more benches
 The seating in this park is severely lacking. More benches and shading structures would be greatly appreciated.
 There is very, very little shade in this park and also very little sight and noise barrier from busy route one traffic. It is not a very nice park to sit in. Adding some evergreen trees or a wooden fence between the park and route one would be a huge improvement.

What would you like done with the tennis court?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	9	47.4%
Enhance it	8	42.1%
Transform it	2	10.5%

Explain

Fence is not connected to the court so the balls roll out of the court
 The tennis court is in disrepair
 Last I checked, the latch on the gate was broken. Also tennis balls can roll out from the gap under the fence, which is annoying.

What would you like done with the playground?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	3	15.8%
Enhance it	11	57.9%
Transform it	5	26.3%

Explain

My daughter is older than the play ground options.
 Needs more playground equipment for older kids. It has too much cement.
 The playground is rundown and needs attention and new equipment
 some plants to screen noise from route one.
 This playground needs some major work. The equipment is boring and outdated and something needs to be done about drainage. Whenever there's a heavy rain, the central part floods. It would also be nice to have some additional shade and benches.
 More and more young families are moving to this neighborhood and enhancement of the playground would be an excellent investment for the city.
 I feel bad bringing my daughter to this playground because the exhaust and noise from route one is so bad. It would be great to plant some evergreen trees or build a wood fence to create a barrier from busy route one traffic. Would make the the playground and park a lot less bleak!
 The playground is small and next to loud Rt 1. It also has very basic equipment that kids quickly get bored with.
 Equipment is too small and not very interesting. Swings and seesaw are good but climbing bars and slides could be improved

What would you like done with the basketball court?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	11	57.9%
Enhance it	6	31.6%
Transform it	2	10.5%

Explain

I see lots of kids and teens using this court, which is great!
 It needs to be rebuilt
 Provide some seating and maybe some shade
 The basketball court is in disrepair

What would you like done with the hard surface area?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	4	21.1%
Enhance it	7	36.8%
Transform it	8	42.1%

Explain

The park have too much hard surface area.
 This area if underutilized as it
 needs to be maintained
 I never see anyone using this. Better as more lawn or another playground. A covered picnic area would also be great - there is no shade in this park!
 The concrete area is very sad. It looks like there used to be a pavilion but it's now missing and it would be nice to have some sort of gathering space. The alleys that border the south and east sides of the park are in very bad shape, too.

What would you like done with the Open Lawn?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	9	47.4%
Enhance it	8	42.1%
Transform it	2	10.5%

Explain

Cut down the bushes next to the alley. The promote criminal behavior and limit sight lines
 It needs some more seating
 a neighborhood garden program or any landscaping would make it more interesting.
 The lawn is nice, but the bushes along the south side are not very nice. Maybe a nice fence instead of bushes.

What is currently NOT in the Park that you would like to see there?

Response

A picnic pavilion, a water fountain, and play equipment that is more exploratory for children.
Adequate maintenance of landscaping.
Bathroom facilities.
Dog park
Ideally, a water feature similar to what they have in Arlington Parks for kids to play in.
Playground equipment for older children such as monkey bars.

To be honest I would love to see a outdoor pool built. Alexandria needs more outdoor pools. I would like to see some sort of natural barrier between Route 1 and the park--Trees or bushes etc.

Shade! Also noise/car exhaust abatement from busy route one traffic. Both of those make the park really bleak. I'm glad to see kids playing on the basketball court, but it's really only the hardy souls that go there. The playground at the Fayette St park is much better and gets a lot more visitors. In my own neighborhood, we mostly go to the Chetworth pocket park, again because it has trees. The Powhatan park has a great location, but it's really not very inviting, which is too bad.
There isn't any pick-nick areas and the seating is very very limited. I would also like there to be more shade.

A better playground, perhaps with a sound barrier so kids can be heard over the traffic. Also, a softer boundary between the park and the neighborhood than the thorny bushes provide. more benches. and low plants near route one. i know there are safety concerns that would keep tall plants out of consideration. The park could be a lot prettier without too much trouble. more plantings.
Separation from the noise and pollution of Route 1 Comfortable seating Beautiful flowering plants and trees

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the Park?

Response

Great potential - just needs a little fixing up!
Nothing else

The park gets a lot of activity, mostly at the basketball court. The rest of the park isn't too interesting for kids to explore once they've mastered the basic playground.
Given the small size of the park, we feel it is adequately programmed. The playground is sufficient for the demographics of our neighborhood.

It needs some friendly landscaping. The bushes are thorny and often the thorns go through our shoes. We love the open space from our back yard but we feel it could use some updating to attract more families.

I think the park needs to be a safer place to use. Lights need to work all the time and not be disconnected by criminal elements

The bushes between the alley and the park need to go. The get too high and they block the view. People tend to use the bushes to hide and they promote illegal activities.

There are a lot of children that live in the immediate vicinity of this park and it needs to be more welcoming and interesting for them.

The park is in poor condition and needs attention. The playground is in very poor shape and there needs to be more equipment.

I wouldn't want the neighborhood to lose it. there are more young families moving to this part of Alexandria. The Chetworth park playground is for very young children. this one could serve the age group and older.

There needs to be something such as a hedge or brick wall to reduce the noise from Route 1 in the park.

How do you get to this Park?

Value	Count	Percent
Walk	19	95.0%
Bike (personal)	0	0.0%
Bike (Capital Bikeshare)	0	0.0%
Drive	1	5.0%
Public Transit	0	0.0%
Carpool	0	0.0%

How far do you typically travel to visit this park?

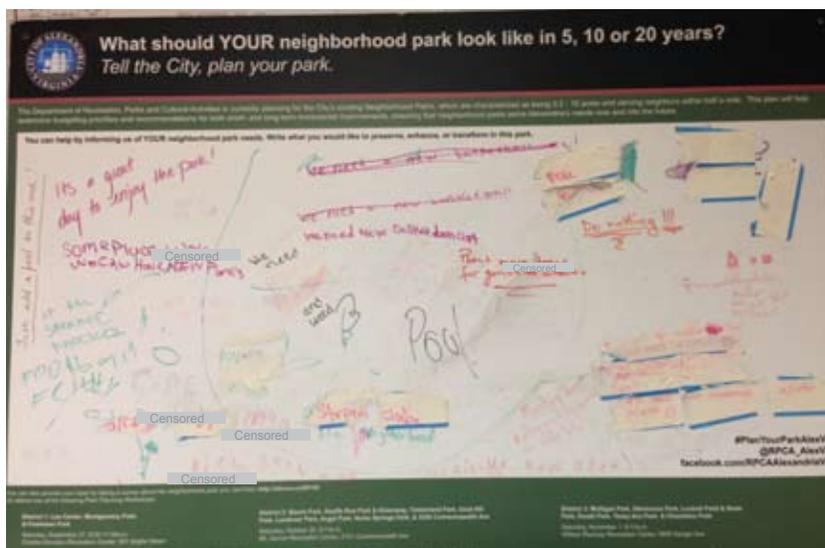
Value	Count	Percent
Less than ½ mile	18	85.7%
Between ½ mile to 1 mile	0	0.0%
Between 1-2 miles	3	14.3%
Over 2 miles	0	0.0%

Have any of the following circumstances prevented you from visiting this Park? (check all that apply)

Value	Count	Percent
I am physically limited from walking	0	0.0%
There is no pedestrian/bike friendly access	2	12.5%
I have concerns about crime or personal safety	9	56.3%
There is not enough parking	2	12.5%
There is nothing in the Park that interests me	5	31.3%

How often do you visit this park?

Value	Count	Percent
Daily	5	23.8%
Weekly	10	47.6%
Monthly	1	4.8%
Yearly	5	23.8%



A “graffiti sign” in the Park had a marker attached and asked park users to write down what they would like their park to look like in the future. The sign were on site from September to November 2014 (images from October 27).