



## Attachment 6

# Vienna Parks Master Plan – Existing Conditions Assessment

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## Introduction

Located in Northern Virginia, the quaint suburban Town of Vienna is approximately 14 miles west from Washington D.C. Vienna is an incorporated Town within Fairfax County, surrounded by neighboring communities like Tysons Corner (Northeast), Oakton and Fairfax City (Southwest), Merrifield/Mosaic District (Southeast), and Reston (Northwest). Vienna is 4.4 square miles and home to approximately 16,000 residents with a median household income exceeding \$215,000. Vienna is primarily a single-family home residential community with at least 71 percent of the land developed for residential purposes, excluding rights-of-way.

The Town is strongly committed to providing fair and just access to high-quality parks, open green space, and recreation facilities and programs for all community members. To continue this commitment, the Town has identified a need for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to guide and inform improvement, branding, visioning, and the overall future of parks and recreation in Vienna.

The Town of Vienna Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is currently developing its Parks and Recreation Master Plan, ***Our Plan to Play***. This Master Plan, the first for the Town, will shape a shared vision and implementable roadmap for a safe, accessible, equitable, healthy, sustainable, and community-centered parks and recreation experience in Vienna. This Master Plan will present a long-range vision for future parks, recreation facilities, and programs to serve residents at a premiere level today while preparing the Town to address the emerging needs of tomorrow.

This document is a comprehensive existing conditions assessment, based on work that started in December 2023 and included multiple project milestones through September 2024. The focus of this assessment was to understand the existing state of the Vienna Parks and Recreation system, to engage community members and seek their input, and to identify community needs that could be addressed within the Master Planning process.

The findings of this assessment will inform Council members and residents of the current state and inform the future next steps of the Master Planning process, as visioning and recommendations are developed to define parks and recreation for the next 10 years. This assessment included a review, development, and assessment of:

- Context of Vienna Parks and Recreation
- Future Park Typologies
- Existing Facilities Assessment
- Peer Community and National Benchmark Review
- Ongoing Trends



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## Context of Vienna Parks and Recreation

The history of Vienna is cherished, with settlements predating the United States Declaration of Independence. The Town developed organically in the 1700s with immigrants settling farms and plantations within the area known today as Vienna. With the advent of the railroads in the mid-1800s, further migration west from Washington D.C. contributed to the growth and development of the Town.

The need for and interest in parks, recreation, and open space has remained consistent throughout the Town's history. Vienna has established multiple active and passive parks for a variety of uses. Small neighborhood serving parks, large community parks with multiuse fields and playgrounds, natural open spaces, trails, stream valleys, and even cemeteries of former prominent settlers have been integrated into the Town's fabric to blend built and natural environments.

While Vienna manages its own parks and recreation facilities and programs, it is influenced by nearby regional recreation providers like NOVA Parks and Fairfax County Park Authority. Vienna residents, as residents of Fairfax County, have access to a greater variety of recreation opportunities. Most notably, the W&OD trail, a NOVA Parks facility, runs directly through the center of Vienna and serves as a recreational and commuter walking and bicycle route connecting Washington D.C. to western Loudoun County. Vienna is located in the middle of this 43-mile trail system. The trail serves Vienna residents and brings thousands of visitors to and through Vienna daily. Recently, Vienna has invested resources to improve the connections throughout Vienna between sidewalks, pathways, and the W&OD Trail.

The Town owns several properties for which a long-term use has not yet been identified. Current vacant properties such as the Maud Robinson property and the Annex could be identified for future parks and recreation use as need, funding, and priorities take shape in the future.



## Park Typologies

Park typologies are classifications to define and provide guidelines for functionally similar sites, facilities, or properties. The classifications set expectations of offered programs, amenities, recreation opportunities, practices of maintenance, and accessibility. As the Park System evolves, typologies can be updated to reflect emerging needs or sites can change typologies following improvement or use.

The Town of Vienna does not currently have an established set of park typologies. The Master Plan process considered the character and context of the diverse parks and recreation facilities in the Town and recommends establishing typologies to improve consistency between similar sites, facilities, and properties. Typologies would allow for clear community expectations for active and passive recreation programming at each location and define context-appropriate maintenance standards for each.

### **SIGNATURE SITES (SS)**

#### **Town Green, Vienna Community Center**

Signature Sites serve as the focal points and highlights in the community, designed to accommodate all ages and interests through various programs, events, and services. These unique sites attract not only Town residents but also visitors from neighboring communities. They offer a mix of activities, ranging from active sports and natural passive areas to community-wide events while also providing spaces for unstructured use. Signature Parks may be focal locations for Town-wide celebrations and host users for an entire day.

Programming: Structured/Active and Unstructured/Passive

Access: Accessibility to Signature Sites is convenient and equitable. They are connected by sidewalks and pathways for walking and biking, include parking lots for vehicles, and are within a quarter mile of the nearest public transportation stop. Each parking lot contains multiple handicap-accessible stalls to ensure inclusivity.

Level of Maintenance: The Level I of maintenance at Signature Sites is exceptional, exceeding community expectations to be intended as the most well-maintained facilities in the Town.

Amenities: Amenities at Signature Sites are diverse and comprehensive. They may include athletic fields and courts, playground areas, event facilities, park trails, benches, restrooms, water fountains, picnic tables and/or pavilions, stormwater management, and storage and/or maintenance structures. As a Signature Park, it is anticipated the site may provide 5-10 or more amenities for public use.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS (NP)**

#### **Glyndon Park, Meadow Lane Park, Moorefield Hill Park, Peterson Lane, Southside Park**

Neighborhood Parks are designed to complement the local character while supporting the interests of Town residents. These parks cater to a mix of age groups, balancing active sports, natural passive areas, and small community rentals or events. They are ideal for both scheduled events and unstructured use, making them vibrant activity hubs for the adjacent neighborhoods. All Vienna residents should live within a half mile of a Neighborhood Park. As hubs to their neighborhoods, these parks should offer amenities to host users for at least 2-4 hours.



Programming: Primarily Unstructured/Passive with some Structured/Active

Access: Access to these parks is convenient and equitable, primarily via sidewalks and pathways to accommodate walking, biking, and other forms of micro-transportation. They feature parking lots with handicap-accessible stalls and should be within a half mile of the nearest public transportation stop. Given their role as community hubs, it is recommended that a minimum of one Neighborhood Park be developed in each Vienna quadrant, ensuring all neighborhoods are well-served.

Level of Maintenance: Level II maintenance is expected for Neighborhood Parks to be well-maintained, with a strong focus on access, safety, and amenity upkeep condition.

Amenities: Common amenities in a Neighborhood Park may include natural or cultural elements to be viewed or preserved, park trails, benches, interpretive signage, picnic tables and/or pavilions, playgrounds, sports amenities, restrooms, water fountains, and storage or maintenance structures. Neighborhood Parks are expected to offer 4-7 amenities on site.

### **SPECIAL USE (SU)**

#### **Bowman House, Vienna Dog Park, Waters and Caffi Field**

Special Use sites are uniquely programmed areas designed to meet the specific needs of the Town. These sites cater to all backgrounds found in Vienna and outside the Town, offering exclusive programs and activities not available elsewhere in the Town. Primarily focused on scheduled and programmed experiences, Special Use sites host events, organized sports, and designated uses like off-leash dog areas, and classes, alongside opportunities for both active and passive recreation. On occasion, they may provide access for passive use to a niche area of interest.

Programming: Structured/Active and/or Unstructured/Passive, depending on site conditions, constraints, and location.

Access: Special Use sites are connected by sidewalks and pathways for walking, biking, and other forms of micro-transportation. Where possible, a small parking lot with at least one handicap-accessible stall is recommended, with the nearest public transportation stop within one mile.

Level of Maintenance: These sites are anticipated to be well-maintained, to a Level II of maintenance.

Amenities: Amenities typically may include large ballfields or open spaces, park trails, picnic tables and/or pavilions, off-leash dog areas, storage or maintenance structures, and other specialty uses. Special Use sites may be classified this way when offering limited unique programs or is a partnership facility with a non-Town authority.

### **NATURAL AREAS (NA)**

#### **8600 Wall Street, Bear Branch Stream Valley East Fork, Bear Branch Stream Valley West Fork, East Creek Stream Valley, Moorefield Hill Park, Northside Park, Salisbury Spring Park, Wildwood Park & Stream Valley, Wolf Trap Creek Stream Valley**

Natural Areas are dedicated to preserving, protecting, and restoring the Town's natural landforms, greenways, waterways, and vegetation. These areas manage stormwater and provide visual relief while supporting active and passive recreation programs such as walking, hiking, birding, environmental education, and fishing, primarily for Town residents. Serving a mix of age groups, these sites focus on passive recreation. The size of Natural Areas varies, reflecting the natural features of the landscape.



Programming: Primarily Unstructured/Passive with little Structured/Active

Access: Access is convenient for adjacent neighborhoods, primarily through sidewalks and pathways suitable for walking, biking, and other forms of micro-transportation. While a small parking lot for vehicles is allowed, it must be constructed in a way that does not impact the preserved natural area.

Level of Maintenance: Maintenance of these parks is anticipated to meet minimum expectations, Level III, with an emphasis on clean, safe, and usable condition of amenities and the preservation of natural features, resilience to erosion, stormwater management, and native and biodiverse vegetation.

Amenities: Amenities may include wooded or open spaces, bodies of water, environmentally sensitive areas, park trails, picnic tables and/or pavilions, and storage and/or maintenance structures.

### **POCKET PARKS (PP)**

#### **Branch Road Tot Lot, Sarah Walker Mercer Park**

Pocket Parks are the smallest park sites but invite users with intentional spaces and amenities nestled within neighborhoods, mixed with a blend of active and passive recreation. Pocket Parks may support the preservation of natural features while supplementing with built facilities to offer varying recreation opportunities. A Pocket Park is anticipated to be less than one acre but may operate as an activity hub and gathering site for the immediate neighborhood.

Programming: Primarily Unstructured/Passive with little Structured/Active

Access: Located within easy walking or biking distance from nearby homes, Pocket Parks are designed to be accessible and convenient. They are connected by sidewalks and pathways, and while they may include limited parking, their primary focus is on enhancing local green space.

Level of Maintenance: Level II is anticipated for Pocket Parks with intentional care to the access, safety, and amenity upkeep condition.

Amenities: Amenities that may be found within a Pocket Park consist of natural or cultural elements, pathways, wooded or open spaces, benches, educational or interpretive signage, picnic tables and/or pavilions, playgrounds, sports courts, and storage or maintenance structures. Pocket Parks are anticipated to offer less than 5 amenities on site.

### **MUNICIPAL SERVICE FACILITIES (MSF)**

#### **(440-442) Beulah Road Mulch Yard, Nutley Property Yard, Creek Crossing Pump Station, Tapawingo Water Tower, Wall Street Water Tower**

Municipal Service Facilities are essential for the operation and management of Town-wide properties and utilities. These sites may contribute to preserving natural conditions and managing stormwater, but their primary purpose is to house Town-managed utilities, equipment, resources, and staff. Unlike other parks and recreational areas, no recreational programs or services are offered at these sites and are not intended for public use. Sizes may vary as they reflect and accommodate natural and built conditions surrounding the sites. During the Master Plan study, Municipal Service Facilities were limited to Parks and Recreation owned properties but understand that Parks and Recreation staff are responsible for the maintenance of other Municipal sites consistent with Town Hall and the Police Station.



Programming: None for public recreational use.

Access: These sites are intentionally limited to Town staff and municipal-owned vehicles only to assist with public safety.

Level of Maintenance: Level III is anticipated for these facilities due to primary Town staff use and access. However, sites are expected to be maintained to ensure public safety to adjacent properties.

Amenities: Typical amenities include storage yards, equipment areas, and storage and/or maintenance structures.

### **HISTORIC SITES (HS)**

#### **Broadway Cemetery, Freeman Store and Little Library, Lynn Street Cemetery, Moorefield Cemetery, West End Cemetery**

Historic Sites offer specialized programs and services unique to properties with historical relevance, attracting interest from Town residents and neighboring municipalities. The impact of these sites is significant, as they help maintain the historic richness of Vienna and continue to enhance the cultural storyline of the community. These sites primarily provide passive recreation through educational activities and scheduled events.

Programming: Primarily Unstructured/Passive with some Structured/Active made available through Affiliated Organizations

Access: Access is intended to be convenient and equitable, supporting various modes of transportation. Sidewalks and pathways accommodate walking, biking, and other forms of micro-transportation. When appropriate, parking lots are provided, featuring at least one handicap-accessible stall, and the nearest public transportation stop is within one mile. However, access to cemeteries may be more limited, reflecting the lower level of visits expected, and may not include all these transportation features.

Level of Maintenance: These sites are anticipated to be well-maintained, to Level II of maintenance, with varying frequency of staff presence contingent on seasonal conditions.

Amenities: Facilities on site may consist of wooded or open space, historic elements, storage and/or maintenance structures, and other passive recreation amenities consistent with benches, park trails, and educational or interpretive signage.

### **UNCLASSIFIED PROPERTIES (UP)**

#### **Annex, Desale Street, Lullaby Lane, Robinson Property**

Unclassified Properties are parcels acquired for municipal purposes that have not yet been designated for recreational use. These sites, which vary in size, may be utilized for utility functions, stormwater management, natural preservation, or as overflow areas for nearby recreational programs. Until these sites are reclassified for Parks & Recreation use, they primarily serve Town staff.

Programming: None for public recreational use.

Access: When appropriate, access may be provided via sidewalks or pathways. Otherwise, access is restricted to municipal-operated vehicles only.





Level of Maintenance: These properties often remain in their natural or existing condition; thus, a Level III of maintenance is anticipated for these facilities due to primary Town staff use and access. However, sites are expected to be maintained to ensure public safety to adjacent properties.

Amenities: Facilities on site may consist of wooded or open space, residual site elements, storage and/or maintenance structures, and other passive recreation amenities consistent with benches, park trails, and educational or interpretive signage.

### **LEVEL OF MAINTENANCE DEFINITIONS:**

Level I: Town staff will be present at these sites daily to weekly to ensure the operation and quality of conditioned facilities and programs. The facilities shall be safe, clean, and equitable to everyone within the Town. Sites classified by this level of maintenance consist of Signature Sites. Examples of Level I maintenance and service consist of daily reviewed and cleaned bathroom facilities, daily on-site staff, weekly mowing, and monthly infrastructure and landscape-specific maintenance reviews and actions. Within the existing conditions assessment, Level I facilities shall score a minimum “B+” or greater in maintenance value. Although specific municipal sites (i.e. Town Hall, Police Station, etc.) were not evaluated as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, these sites often require Parks and Recreation staff maintenance and attention. Given the critical public-serving functions of these site, they likely warrant the adoption of Level I service.

Level II: Town staff will visit these sites multiple times a week for regular upkeep and maintenance to keep the site operable and safe. Sites designated this level of service equate to Neighborhood Parks, Special Use, and Pocket Parks.. Examples of standard maintenance consist of regular mowing of open spaces, weekly cleaning of facilities, and weekly operational checks on amenities. Within the existing conditions assessment, a “B to C+” score in maintenance value is appropriate for Level II facilities.

Level III: Town staff will visit these bi-weekly to monthly to ensure safe and upkeep conditions. Access or use to these sites may be limited for the public and staff per park typology. The frequency of staff visits may vary contingent on seasonal conditions and operations. These sites may be supplemented by community groups or volunteers to assist with upkeep and monitoring. Sites maintained to this level consist of Natural Sites, Historic Sites, Municipal Facilities, and Unclassified Properties. Examples of Level III responsibilities consist of clearing debris and litter, arborist reviews, weekly mowing of open spaces, and operational and condition checks on amenities or infrastructure. Natural Areas with no recreational infrastructure fall under Level III but may only be reviewed upon notable weather events, known hazardous conditions, or semi-annual to annual basis. Examples of these consist of fallen trees or blockages to culverts. Otherwise, the undeveloped Natural Sites are preserved to undergo natural processes. Nonetheless, related to the existing conditions assessment, Level III facilities are appropriate to score a minimum “C” in maintenance value. No site is appropriate to score below a “C” in maintenance value.





## RECOMMENDED FEATURES BY CLASSIFICATION

The chart below identifies recommended characteristics per park typology. Park improvements may vary depending on park topography, size, environmental conditions, contextual constraints, community input, Town program needs, and as approved by Park and Recreation staff and Council. The legend below identifies:

- A checkmark (✓), allows for that feature to be located within the park typology
- A hyphen (-), may allow that feature to be located within the park typology
- An ex (x), does not allow for that feature to be located within the typology

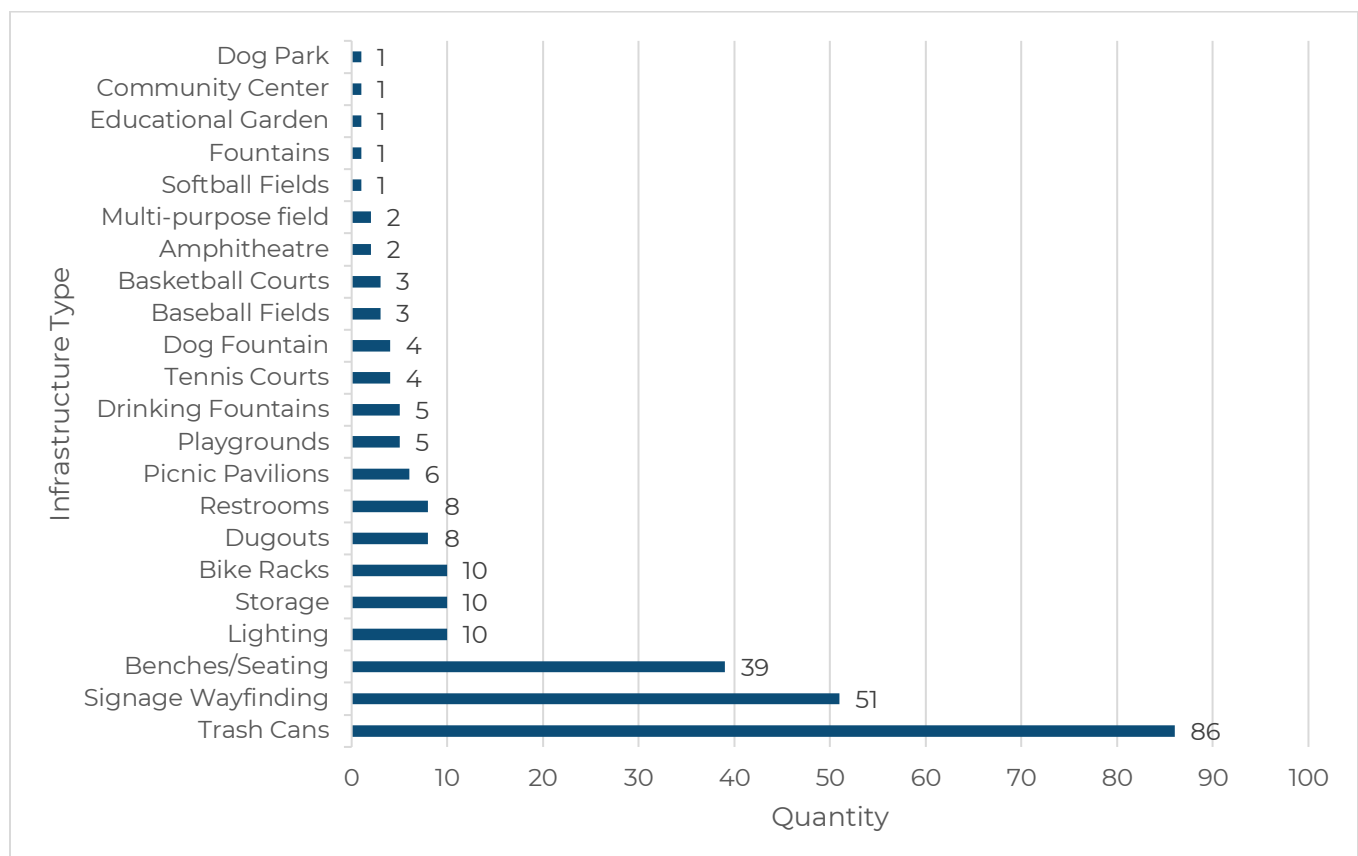
	Signature Park (SP)	Neighborhood Park (NP)	Special Use (SU)	Natural Area (NA)	Pocket Park (PP)	Municipal Service Facility (MSF)	Historical Site (HS)	Unclassified Property (UP)
Amphitheater or Stage	✓	-	✓	x	-	x	-	x
Athletic Courts - Basketball	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x
Athletic Courts - Pickleball	✓	-	-	x	x	x	x	x
Athletic Courts - Tennis	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x
Athletic Courts - Volleyball	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x
Athletic Courts - Other	✓	-	✓	x	-	x	x	x
Athletic Fields - Baseball	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	x
Athletic Fields - Football	✓	-	✓	x	x	x	x	x
Athletic Fields - Soccer	✓	-	✓	x	x	x	x	x
Athletic Fields - Other	✓	-	✓	x	x	x	x	x
Benches	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
Bike Racks	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
Bollards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinking Fountain with Dog Bowl	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	x
Fencing	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-
Flagpoles	✓	✓	✓	x	-	x	-	x
Fountains	✓	-	✓	x	-	x	-	x
Grills	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	x
Irrigation	✓	-	✓	x	-	x	-	-
Landscape Plant Material	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓
Lighting - Street/Parking Lights	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	x
Lighting - Pedestrian/Path Lights	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	x
Parking Lot	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	x
Pet Waste Dispensers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	-	-
Picnic Pavilions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	-	x
Picnic Tables	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
Playgrounds	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	x	x	x
Restrooms	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	x
Signage / Wayfinding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-
Storage/Maintenance/Utility Building	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	-	x
Trails/Pathways	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
Trash/Recycling Receptacles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-

Legend	
✓	Appropriate within typical park typology
-	May be appropriate based on site characteristics
x	Not Appropriate within typical park typology



## Existing Facilities Assessment

Kimley-Horn and the Town of Vienna staff partnered to conduct existing park site and facility assessments. The fieldwork consisted of inventorying current park facilities and evaluating the current use, condition, and maintenance of each site. A training session was conducted between Kimley-Horn and the Town of Vienna staff to ensure that the evaluations were conducted through a consistent lens. Site evaluations were conducted during February 2024 with an updated spot review of facilities during the summer of 2024 to avoid seasonal bias. The first step of the site visits was an inventory of the infrastructure on site. Inventoried elements included fields and courts, site furnishings, structures and bathrooms, and other components used by the public and staff. This inventory assists in clarifying what is currently in the Town's Park system, whether or not it meets Town residents' needs and quality expectations, or if there is a gap in service. An established inventory further helps decision-makers understand potential future investments that may be needed to achieve quality standards and to develop a consistent park identity within the Town. The following graphs and charts portray the current inventory of infrastructure throughout the park system<sup>1</sup>:



<sup>1</sup> System total does not include facilities at Waters and Caffi field or Peterson Lane as those sites are Fairfax County properties maintained by Vienna



In addition to these facilities, the Town offers numerous miles of pathways and trails and acres of open space for general use. These recreational destinations are all frequently used by residents. Vienna's offerings are consistent with expectations when compared to national data on a per-population basis.

## **TOWN OF VIENNA INVENTORIES FACILITIES COMPARES TO 2024 NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION DEPARTMENT DATA FOR JURISDICTIONS LESS THAN 20,000 PEOPLE**

Category	Town of Vienna	NRPA Number based on Median Population
Softball Fields <sup>1</sup>	1 (4)	2.3*
Playgrounds	5	4.3
Basketball Courts <sup>1</sup>	3 (4)	3.3
Baseball Field <sup>1</sup>	3 (4)	4.4*
Tennis Courts	4	5.1
Multi-Purpose field <sup>1</sup>	2 (3)	3.9
Educational Gardens	1	1.4
Community Center	1	1.4
Dog Park	1	1.2
Aquatic Center	0	1.3

\*Indicates youth field

<sup>1</sup> System total does not include facilities at Waters and Caffi field or Peterson Lane as sites are Fairfax County properties maintained by Vienna. Numbers in parentheses in these categories indicate total when account for these two properties.

This comparison reinforces community feedback that suggests higher value and priority in improving and enhancing existing sites rather than primarily focusing on new investments. Recreational needs for access to most facilities are being met in the Town and investment is needed to improve the *satisfaction*, related to maintenance, condition, quality, and consistency.

Interestingly, an observation throughout the park system is the large number of trash cans and benches. These elements support a clean, comfortable, and accessible park; however, the style and quality of each item varies. Across the park system, there are upwards of 6 different trash cans styles and 8 different benches styles, in addition to 3 different bike racks. The inconsistency creates an undefined Town of Vienna visual identity, differences in maintenance and purchasing schedules, and varying conditions and pacing deterioration which affects park aesthetics.

It is recommended that the Town adopts a standardized approach to materials and furnishings to simplify procurement, replacement and maintenance operations, and to establish a character unique to Vienna. This standardization may apply to furnishings, court and field layouts, materials, and expected means of construction.

Additionally, it was noted throughout the site investigations that there are numerous specimen trees (18-inch diameter at breast height size) found throughout the park system. It is recommended to not only protect and preserve these trees but, when appropriate, to utilize them to further support passive recreation and ecological services. Trees of this size are a valued amenity that is not easily found in other municipalities, especially those in urban settings. The presence of these trees underscores a mature tree canopy that can and should be seamlessly integrated into the built



community. This is an asset of the Parks system, and it cannot be understated how much value is created by these community-character building and environmentally sustainable elements.





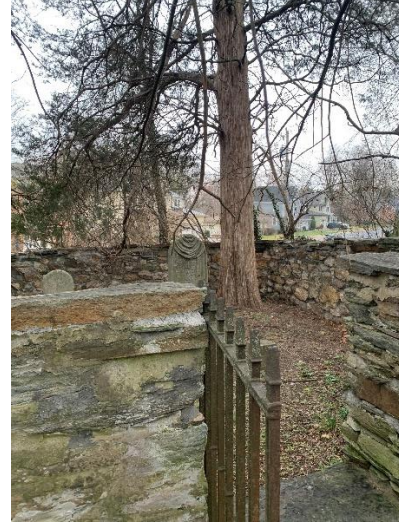
Various facilities and infrastructure throughout the Vienna Park system







Various facilities and infrastructure throughout the Vienna Park system







Various site furnishings throughout the Vienna Park system





Various site furnishings throughout the Vienna Park system







Various site furnishings throughout the Vienna Park system







The second half of the evaluation consisted of screening each site through categories of questions to gauge the use, condition, recreational value, and contextual value of each site as part of the Parks and Recreation system. The evaluation consisted of 8 primary categories: Design & Construction, Effectiveness, Condition, Comfort and Image, Access and Linkages, and Sustainability & Culture (with 3 subcategories of Sociability, Environmental, and Economic).

Within each category, multiple questions are posed and graded on a scale of 1 to 5. The scoring was defined as:

- 1 = No or none
- 2 = Few or Mostly Not
- 3 = Some or Partially
- 4 = Several or Mostly Yes
- 5 = Yes or Maximum
- N/A = Not applicable

A short description for each category is provided below and a full list of the category questions can be found as an appendix of this report.

**DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION** - Design and Construction questions were posed to assess if the site is built safely to satisfy the needs of the community. Additionally, it quantifies infrastructure differences that create inconsistency of maintenance and identity.

**EFFECTIVENESS** - Effectiveness questions were posed to assess if the offerings on site are or are not widely used and if enough recreational variety is provided to support diverse community demographics and interests.

**CONDITION** - Condition questions were posed to assess the quality and maintenance of the infrastructure, amenities, and overall site and whether or not the condition was supportive of creating a safe and usable recreation facility for public use.

**COMFORT AND IMAGE** - Comfort and image questions were posed to assess the general impression and appearance of each site and how comfortable and safe users might feel during their visit.

**ACCESS AND LINKAGES** - Access and linkages questions were posed to assess how many connection points to the site are available, how easily people can travel to or arrive at the site, and how compliant each site is to the American Disabilities Act. Internal connections throughout the site were also assessed to further understand visibility and safety.

**SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURE – SOCIABILITY** - Parks and Recreation sites are keystone locations for community building and social interaction. This category assessed what infrastructure is in place to support social interaction and improved quality of life.

**SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURE – ENVIRONMENTAL** - The Parks and Recreation sites are intuitively vital to satisfy recreation needs, but these sites also support environmental benefits for the community. This category assessed how well each site preserves, protects, or emphasizes ecological features.



**SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURE – ECONOMIC** - The economic questions were posed to assess how each site potentially contributes to the surrounding property values and the convenience of access between park sites and residential or commercial sites.

## Assessment Approach

The assessment of each site against these categories was filtered through two lenses:

- a recreational value that describes how well the site satisfies the public's need for recreation
- a maintenance value that describes how well the site satisfies the public, staff, and council expectations for condition and quality

Generally, the higher the recreational value of each site, the greater the requirement and expectation to maintain these sites in a safe, usable, and good condition for public use.

Each assessed category does not have the same number of questions. Therefore, the categories with the most questions have a greater significance to the score of recreational and maintenance value.

Additionally, each Park Typology has an expected or baseline anticipated recreational value and maintenance condition. As an example, Signature Sites are anticipated to have greater recreational value than Neighborhood or Pocket Parks and, accordingly, Signature Sites are expected to be maintained to a higher standard. The Park Typology section of this assessment previously defines the expected level of maintenance for each site.

Park Typologies further refine the recreational and maintenance value of these sites, as not every question asked is applicable to each Park Typology. For example, sites defined as Municipal Sites, with a primary function for municipal operations, do not have applicable Sustainability and Culture – Sociability questions as these sites are not intended to support the public's social pursuits.

Using the collected field data, the relevant questions for each typology, and the expected scoring range for each typology, a recreational and maintenance value score was developed for each site. The scoring is tabulated to percentages with associated letter grading (traditional academia grading A through F); the percentages are calculated as follows:

● >90%	A+	● 50-41%	C
● 90-81%	A	● 40-31%	D+
● 80-71%	B+	● 30-21%	D
● 70-61%	B	● <20%	F
● 60-51%	C+		

The following chart displays individual site's recreational and maintenance values in the grading scale for the individual categories. This chart allows for each site to be reviewed on individual performance but also assists in identifying weaknesses or trends within a certain category across the park system. Additionally, it groups each site by typology to further support identifying trends or a focus on a typology to improve categorically.



## Town of Vienna Parks and Recreation Master Plan **OUR PLAN TO PLAY**

Park Typology	No.	Site	RECREATION					MAINTENANCE				
			Effectiveness	Access and Linkages	Sociability	Economic	Total	Design/ Construction	Condition	Comfort and Image	Environmental	Total
Signature Sites	1	Town Green	A	A	A+	D+	B+	A	A+	A	D	B+
Neighborhood Park	2	Glyndon Park	A	B+	A+	D	B+	A	B+	B+	B	B+
	3	Meadow Lane Park	A	B+	B+	C+	B+	A	B+	C+	B+	B+
	4	Moorefield Hill Park	C+	A	C	C+	B	B	A	B+	B	B+
	5	Peterson Lane	B+	B+	B+	C	B+	B+	B+	B	C+	B+
	6	Southside Park	D+	B+	B+	B+	B	B	A	B+	C+	B+
Special Use	7	Bowman House	C	B+	D+	A+	B	B	A	A	C	B+
	8	Moorefield Park and Dog Park	B+	C+	C+	C+	B	B	B+	B	F	B
	9	Waters and Caffi Field	A	B	B+	B	B+	A	A+	A	C	A
Natural Areas	10	8600 Wall Street	F	D	F	N/A	F	D	D	B	F	D+
	11	Bear Branch Stream Valley East Fork (Southside)	F	F	F	N/A	F	D+	B	F	C	C
	12	Bear Branch Stream Valley West Fork (Southside)	C+	D+	B+	N/A	C+	C	B+	F	B+	C+
	13	East Creek Valley Stream Valley	D+	B	B+	N/A	C+	A	B+	C+	C	B
	14	Moorefield Park Natural Area	C+	C+	B+	N/A	B	A+	B+	C+	C	B
	15	Northside Park	B	B+	A+	N/A	B+	B+	A	B+	C+	B+
	16	Salsbury Spring	C+	D+	A+	N/A	C	C+	B	B	B+	B
	17	Wildwood Park and Stream Valleys	B+	A+	A+	N/A	A	C+	A	A+	A	A
	18	Wolf Trap Creek Stream Valley	F	F	F	N/A	F	D+	C+	F	C	D+
Pocket Park	19	Branch Road Tot Lot	C+	A+	C+	C+	B+	B	B+	B	C+	B
	20	Sarah Walker Mercer Park	A	B+	B+	A+	A	C+	A	B+	B+	B+
Municipal Facility	21	(440) Beulah Road House	N/A	C	N/A	F	D+	D+	B+	B+	C+	C+
	22	(442) Beulah Road Property (Mulch Yard)	N/A	D	N/A	D+	D	B+	C+	C+	C+	C+
	23	Creek Crossing Pump Station	N/A	A	N/A	A+	A	B+	B+	B+	C	B
	24	(249) Nutley Property	N/A	B+	N/A	A+	A	C	B	B	C	C+
	25	411-413 Tapawingo Rd SW Water Tower	N/A	B	N/A	A+	B+	B+	A	A	C	B+
	26	Wall Street Water Tower	N/A	C	N/A	A+	C+	D	C+	C+	F	C
Historic Sites	27	Broadwater Cemetery	D	A	D+	D	C+	B	B+	B	D	B
	28	Freeman Store and Little Library	A+	A	A+	D+	B+	B+	A+	A	D	A
	29	Lynn Street Cemetery	D	D+	D+	D+	D+	D+	B	C	C+	C+
	30	Moorefield Cemetery	D	B	D+	F	C	D+	B	C	D+	C+
	31	Sons and Daughters Cemetery	D	C+	D+	F	C	C+	B	C+	D	C+
Unclassified Property	32	301 Center Street South - Annex	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	B+	C+	N/A	B
	33	Desale St SW (0384-1205)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A+	B+	N/A	A
	34	Lullaby Lane (0384-1202A1)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	C+	N/A	B
	35	Robinson Property	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A+	C+	N/A	B+



	RECREATION	MAINTENANCE
Signature Sites	B+	B+
Neighborhood Park	B+	B+
Special Use	B	B+
Natural Areas	C	C+
Pocket Park	B+	B+
Municipal Facilities Sites	B	C+
Historic Sites	C+	B
Unclassified Properties	N/A	B+
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>

When distilling the data to typologies, the chart clarifies how the individual sites operate together to an overall typology score. The scoring appears appropriate for the defined typologies, with consistency across sites. Nonetheless, improvements can be made to raise the maintenance value of all typologies.

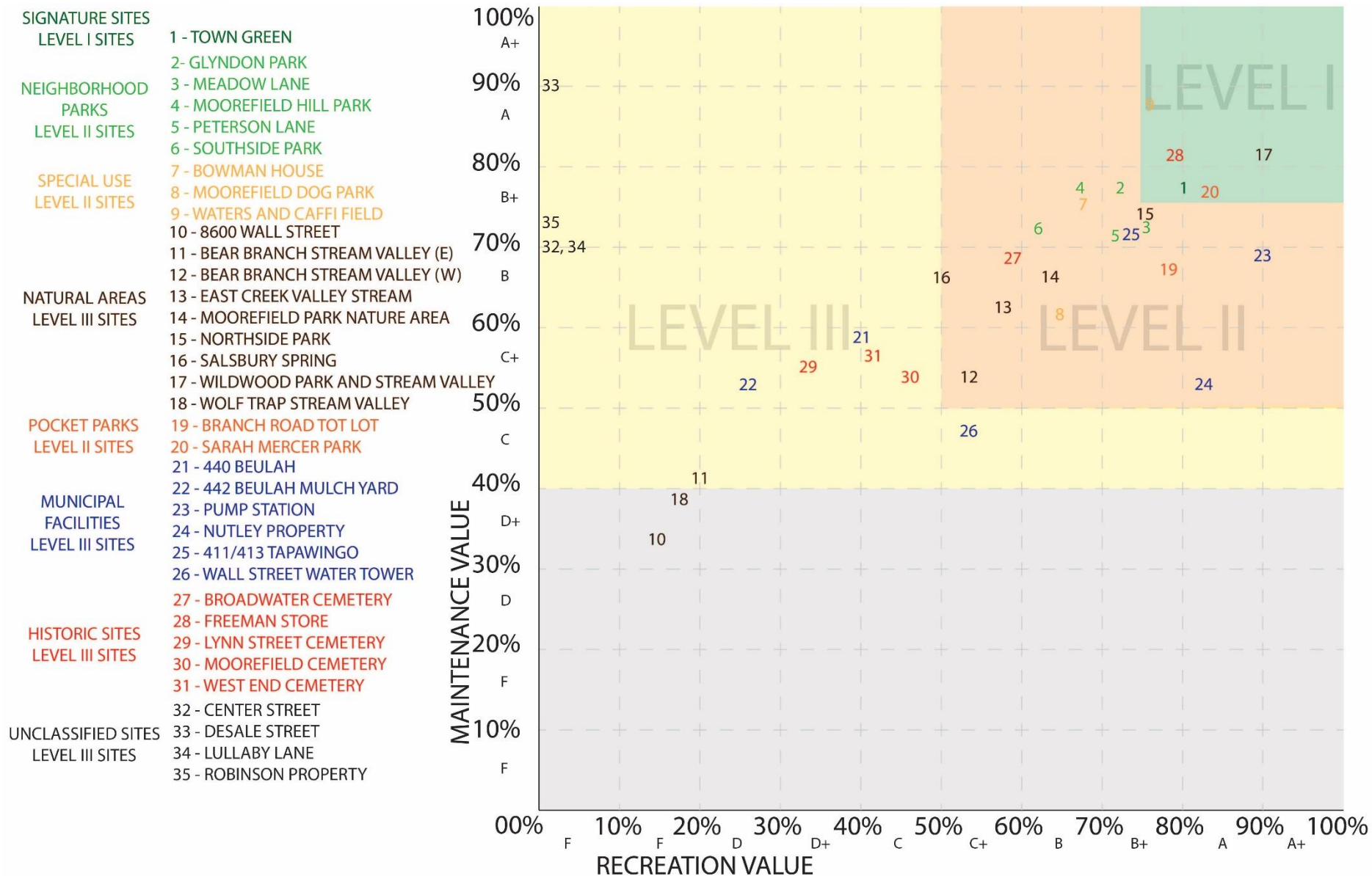
Noted observations and considerations are as follows:

- Although Natural Areas' maintenance value is appropriate per the typology, these sites should strive to maintain consistency with the other typologies.
- Signature Sites should strive for improvement in both recreation and maintenance value. Currently, these sites score consistent with neighborhood sites; the expectation would be that Signature Sites should stand alone as elite and aspirational properties within the Town.
- The Recreation value is, appropriately, volatile across the different typologies. However, improvements can be targeted for Natural Areas and Historic sites to address passive recreation needs.

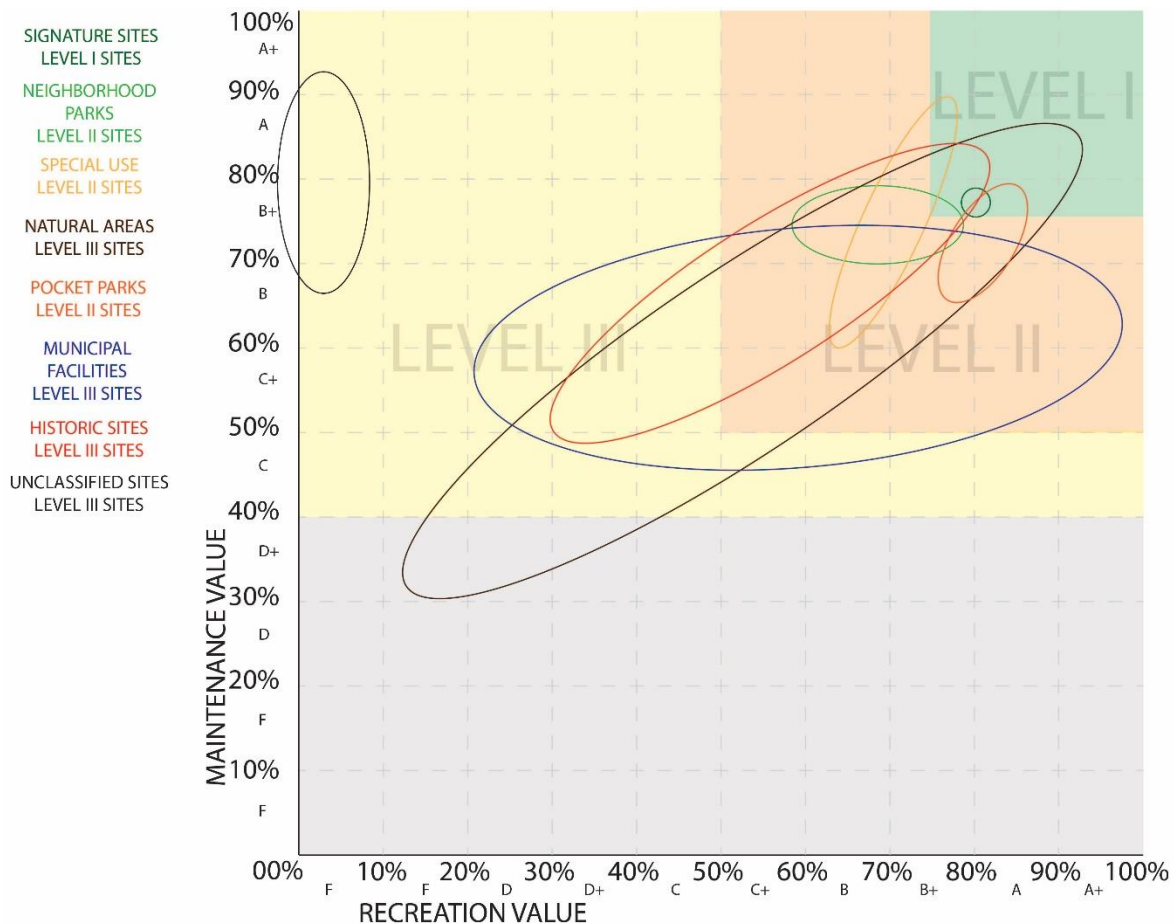
The following graphic displays the individual site's recreation and maintenance value as a percentage plotted along two axes. The shading shows the relative position within the desired minimum maintenance level for each typology. Additionally, the second graphic displays general groupings based on typologies to highlight performance gaps amongst individual sites within the same typology. These graphics further assist in clarifying which typologies could be improved or addressed and which individual sites may take priority in improvements.



# Town of Vienna Parks and Recreation Master Plan **OUR PLAN TO PLAY**







The above noted graphic diagrammatically displays the groupings of typologies and provides clarity as to which typologies have the greatest variance. In a park system, it is desired for similar sites to have similar scoring in recreation and maintenance values, with minimized variance.

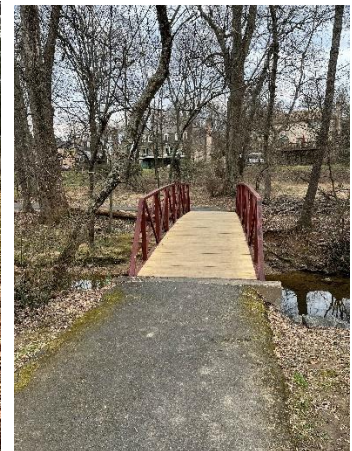
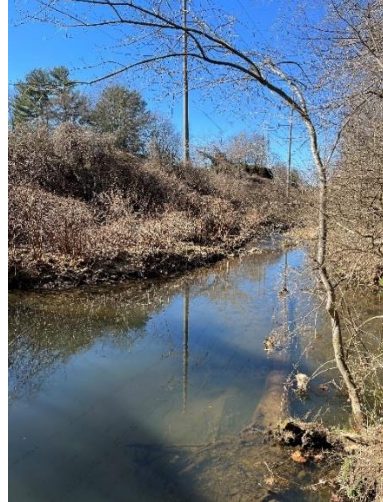
Most notably, the Natural Areas have the greatest variances across the sites in both recreation and maintenance value. Natural Areas are Level III sites, which have minimum site visits and regular upkeep from staff. However, during site evaluations, multiple sites were identified with significant stream erosion, fallen trees, overgrowth, and debris. Additionally, Natural Areas have the opportunity to support passive recreation and connectivity goals throughout the Town. These areas could warrant enhanced focus through the Master Plan process.

Historic sites have the second-greatest variance of scores for recreation and maintenance. However, all sites are currently adequately maintained as defined by the maintenance levels. Nonetheless, Historic sites may also require improvement to support passive recreation. These sites may be appropriate for low-impact recreation such as bird watching, environmental or historical education, and environmental services for native species or stormwater management through alternative paving materials.

Municipal sites are expected to have minimal recreational value. These sites should primarily be well-maintained sites to support public services.



Various locations of Natural Areas throughout the Vienna Park system







Various locations of Natural Areas throughout the Vienna Parks system







### Assessment Findings

The inventory of facilities and infrastructure throughout Vienna establishes a baseline for where Vienna is today and assists in identifying needs for tomorrow. Vienna facilities are consistent with national expectations and any future improvements should be strategically targeted to address gaps in service. Nonetheless, priority should be given to maintenance, upkeep, and operation of the existing facilities. This is consistent with the overall scoring of individual elements, sites, and noted scoring below.

Overall, as best put by residents during community engagement: **“the parks are good, but not great – and we should strive for great.”** Much of the park system scores appropriately for the expected recreational and maintenance values of their park typology, but both values could be improved across all sites. Most notably, the Natural Areas are recognized as the priority locations that warrant improvement in both recreational and maintenance value. Generally, on an individual basis and from a typology perspective, the Vienna Park Systems Facilities score a **“B.”**



## Peer Community and National Benchmark Review

Part of the Master Plan process involves comparing the parks and recreation amenities within the Town of Vienna to other communities with similar resources and demographic profiles. The comparison to peer communities provides context for the menu of strategies that the Town can reference in developing its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Unless otherwise noted, community statistics are obtained from 2018-2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

The next section describes the communities included in the peer comparison analysis.

### REGIONAL PEER COMMUNITIES

#### City of Fairfax, VA

The City of Fairfax, Virginia is a suburban community of 24,835 residents located fifteen miles west of downtown Washington, DC, and approximately five miles south of Vienna. As an independent city, the City of Fairfax is encircled by, but not part of Fairfax County, Virginia. Established in 1805, originally as the Town of Providence, the City of Fairfax's urban fabric is comprised of a balanced blend of "Old Town" infrastructure, modern development, and "small town" community character nestled within a world-class metropolitan region. Like Vienna, the City of Fairfax consistently ranks among the top lists for "quality of life" metrics and successfully maintains a "small City feel" with meaningful community connectivity and integration within the urban setting.

The City of Fairfax serves as a comparable peer community due to similar community principles: sense of place, health and wellness, economic vitality, environmental stewardship and conservation, and strategic partnerships. Fairfax's Park typology makeup reflects Vienna's well, with a collection of larger Signature Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Natural Areas preserving existing landforms, waterways, and vegetation. The City of Fairfax does not specifically align with Vienna in metrics of land area, population total, or median household income. It is noted that the City of Fairfax has a similar population density as Vienna.

The City of Fairfax Parks and Recreation goals are to develop and maintain beautiful, safe, and environmentally friendly spaces for public use. The City of Fairfax emphasizes programs and services to be affordable, comprehensive, and amazing experiences to build a sense of community that enriches people's lives.

#### City of Falls Church, VA

The City of Falls Church, Virginia is a suburban community of 14,586 residents located eight miles west of downtown Washington, D.C., and approximately five miles east of Vienna. As an independent city, Falls Church is bordered by, but not part of, Fairfax County, Virginia to the west and Arlington County, Virginia to the east. Nicknamed "The Little City," the compact land area of Falls Church lends itself to the highest population density of the peer communities. Similar to Vienna and the City of Fairfax, Falls Church strives to establish a "small-town" feel.

The City of Falls Church serves as a good peer community due to its interaction with the W&OD trail, and similar land use priorities for single-family residential housing. The City of Falls Church lacks a golf course and is adjacent to a community-scale park, but otherwise most parks are smaller, neighborhood-scale parks. Like Vienna, Falls Church is densely developed and there are limited vacant property opportunities to create new facilities.



The City of Falls Church Recreation and Parks Department's mission statement emphasizes year-round programs and offers leisure activities for all groups and interest levels. Like Vienna, the Department strives to improve residents' quality of life, foster a sense of community through superior recreational, educational, and cultural services, and provide effective maintenance to the City's natural resources.

### **Town of Herndon, VA**

The Town of Herndon, Virginia is a suburban community of 24,935 residents located twenty miles northwest of downtown Washington, DC, and approximately eight miles northwest of Vienna. Located in Fairfax County, Herndon is the state's third-largest town. Officially incorporated in 1879, the expansion of the regional railway supported development within Herndon and allowed it to blossom into a thriving suburban community.

Herndon serves as a good peer comparison to Vienna because has similar anchoring facilities like the community center, a similar interaction with the W&OD Trail, and neighborhood-scale parks. Herndon does not specifically align with Vienna in metrics of land area, population total, or median household income.

The Town of Herndon's Parks and Recreation department operates eleven neighborhood parks, the Herndon Community Center which offers a variety fitness and athletic programs, a golf course, community events, camps, and other programs and classes. The Community Center also includes an aquatics facility with an eight-lane, 25-yard indoor swimming pool with a spa, sauna, and diving and instructional swim areas. The department's mission statement prioritizes individual enrichment, community building and cohesion, and stewardship of town resources. In November 2018, the department adopted a strategic plan that compliments the Town-wide 2030 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2008. The Town of Herndon can serve as an aspirational peer for how it uses its strategic plan to encourage proactive management and how aquatics has been integrated into the Parks and Recreation portfolio.

## **NATIONAL PEER COMMUNITIES**

### **City of Birmingham, MI**

The City of Birmingham, MI is a suburban community of 21,715 residents located 16 miles northwest of downtown Detroit, MI. The city is anchored by a strong commercial core in its historic downtown, with the "shopping district" serving as a draw for residents and regional visitors. The city layout emphasizes Birmingham's goal to foster a place where you can live, shop, and play.

Birmingham's Park system is diverse with over 20 parks offering active and passive recreation, two golf courses, an ice rink, multiple athletic fields and courts, playgrounds, a wooded trail system, and uniquely, Quarton Lake located near downtown. Most of Birmingham's parks are similar to Vienna's in neighborhood scale and the City offers a variety of permanent infrastructures such as indoor and outdoor skate rinks, a skatepark, and pickleball courts. A privately owned, neighborhood, summer-only, outdoor swimming club is located within the city limits known as the Forest Hills Swim Club.

### **City of Crestwood, MO**

The City of Crestwood, MO is a suburban community of 12,221 residents located 11 miles southwest of downtown St. Louis, MO. Crestwood has been recognized as a "Best Place to Raise Kids in Missouri", warranted based on the excellence of the school system and municipal services. Crestwood's Park



and Recreation department's mission is to enhance the quality of life for all residents by offering recreation and leisure opportunities, facilities, open space, and services.

Like Vienna with the W&OD trail, Crestwood is bisected by the Ulysses S. Grant Trail (Grant's Trail) a 10-mile trail terminating in St. Louis and Crestwood. The Parks and Recreation Department manages 4 neighborhood parks that offer playgrounds, athletic courts, and other forms of active and passive recreation. The City's Signature Park, Whitecliff Park, is home to athletic courts and fields and the City's community center and aquatic center. In 2023, Crestwood completed a City Parks Master Plan with conclusions focused on upgrading existing park facilities with new elements and features, reinvesting capital to expand service and program offerings, establishing service levels for the internal organization, parks, and recreation, and elevating maintenance and beautification of all sites. In 2000, Crestwood adopted a ½ cent Park and Stormwater Sales Tax intended to help finance parks and recreation operations and maintenance.

### **Village of Deerfield, IL**

Established officially in 1951, the Village of Deerfield, IL is a suburban community with 18,950 residents located 23 miles north of Chicago, IL. The Village's origins date to the mid-1800s and today retains, celebrates, and integrates many elements of its historic infrastructure. In 2007, Deerfield was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in a list of the top 50 best places to raise children based on criteria consistent with school test scores, cost of living, recreational and cultural activities, number of schools, and risk of crime.

The Parks and Facilities Department of Deerfield operates a variety of facilities with 19 parks and 7 community centers. This creates a diverse assortment of active and passive recreation consistent with athletic fields and courts, picnic areas, playgrounds, walking trails and pathways, outdoor ice rinks, disc golf, dog parks, and skate park. The 7 community centers further support diverse offerings with golf, two outdoor swimming pools, one outdoor spray park, one indoor swimming pool, education centers, classrooms, indoor athletic courts, and a fitness center. In 2022, the Village completed a Strategic Plan to improve facilities with strategies that identified enhancing existing conditions with supplemental upgrades; enhancing community outreach, engagement and services; environmental stewardship of community sites; and improving internal organization staff retention, fiscal management, customer service, and staff diversity.

### **City of Summit, NJ**

Summit, NJ is a suburban community of 22,342 residents located 19 miles west of Manhattan, New York City, NY. Summit is a diverse community with nearly 40 spoken languages and a wide-varying economic and ethnic makeup. The earliest settlers in Summit date back to 1710, with the community context evolving over the centuries from cozy farmsteads to industrial milling and commercial, to current family-oriented suburbia. In 2019, Summit was ranked the second-best place to live in New Jersey by the New Jersey Monthly Magazine.

The Department of Community Programs (DCP) strives to provide recreation and other related programs and services that meet the community's needs, with special consideration for seniors and youth. Summit includes the Union County Open Space and Recreation Park and numerous community centers. These facilities offer programs and services consistent with active and passive recreation, a Summit Village Green, athletic fields and courts, an aquatic center, playgrounds, a golf course, and numerous hiking and walking trails. In 2016, Summit completed a City Master Plan where they identified goals of maintaining and enhancing city character, improving connectivity





between places and people, fostering a welcoming community for all backgrounds, building economic resilience, and preserving natural open spaces.

## METRICS SUMMARY TABLE

Municipality	Relation to Urban Core	Population	Land Area (sqmi)	Acres of Parks	Population Density (pp/sqmi)	Median Household Income	Crime Rate Index*
Town of Vienna, VA	12mi W of Washington, D.C.	16,276	4.40	262	3,741	\$215,556	23.16 / per 1000 residents
City of Fairfax, VA	15mi W of Washington, D.C.	24,835	6.24	473	3,870	\$128,708	23.88 / per 1000 residents
City of Falls Church, VA	8mi W of Washington, D.C.	14,586	2.05	52	7,164	\$164,536	17.62 / per 1000 residents
Town of Herndon, VA	20mi NW of Washington, D.C.	24,935	4.29	191	5,812	\$133,403	31.94 / per 1000 residents
City of Birmingham, MI	16mi NW of Detroit, MI	21,715	4.79	570	4,551	\$151,556	9.49 / per 1000 residents
City of Crestwood, MO	11mi SW of St. Louis, MO	12,221	3.59	120	3,458	\$111,791	18.82 / per 1000 residents
Village of Deerfield, IL	23mi NW of Chicago, IL	18,950	5.53	195	3,472	\$185,762	9.87 / per 1000 residents
City of Summit, NJ	19mi W of New York, NY	22,342	5.99	350	3,790	\$176,702	9.04 / per 1000 residents

Source: 2018-2022 ACS 5-year estimates

\*United States national average crime rate index according to World Population Review is 49.2 per 1000 residents.



#### LOCAL PEER COMMUNITIES' PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT BUDGETS AND STAFFING

Municipality	Adopted 2025 Budget	Budget per Capita	Number of Employees	Employees per Capita	Employees per Park acreage
Town of Vienna, VA	5.21 million	\$320	26	1 staff per 626 people	1 staff per 10.08 acres
City of Fairfax, VA	8.78 million	\$353	31	1 staff per 801 people	1 staff per 15.26 acres
City of Falls Church, VA	3.99 million	\$273	16	1 staff per 912 people	1 staff per 3.25 acres
Town of Herndon, VA	4.80 million	\$192	26	1 staff per 959 people	1 staff per 7.35 acres
City of Crestwood, MO	3.58 million*	\$292	10.5	1 staff per 1,164 people	1 staff per 11.43 acres

\*+/- 24% of the budget is allocated to the operation, maintenance, and improvement of an aquatic facility

In addition to peer communities, the analysis also considered national trends as reported from the 2023 National Recreation and Park Association *Park Metrics* Annual survey. The table below shows Vienna in comparison to all participating Towns with less than 20,000 residents. Towns across the United States with less than 20,000 residents are numerous, many of which have small populations and Parks and Recreation departments with limited resources. The data below depicts upper quartile statistics of municipalities, and creates notable comparison differences in budget, staffing, programs, and revenue. Vienna, located in the high cost of living of Northern Virginia, offers a tremendous number of programs and classes. Vienna outpaces typical municipalities warranting significant operating budget and staffing. Through reservations, donations, classes, programs, camps, and events, Vienna's revenue exceeds \$1.3 million annually, further supporting the need for variety in offerings, operating budget, and staffing.

#### 2023 NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION DEPARTMENT DATA FOR JURISDICTIONS LESS THAN 20,000 RESIDENTS

Category	Less than 20,000 Residents	Town of Vienna
Population	12,522	16,276
Total Park Acres	194.3	262
Acres of parks per 1,000 residents	19.0	16.1
Total Annual Operating Budget	\$1.5 million	\$5.21 million
Budget per Capita	\$119	\$320
Number of full-time employees	8	26
Employees per Capita	1 staff per 1,565 people	1 staff per 626 people
Employees per Park acreage	1 staff per 24.29 acres	1 staff per 10.08 acres
Number of Programs Offered	136.5	625
Number of Fee-Based Programs	114.5	595
Revenue per Capita	\$64.62	\$83.62



### PEER COMMUNITIES' ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Of the reviewed national communities, the City of Crestwood, Missouri, outside St. Louis, is the most direct peer to Vienna. Each municipality is similar in their demographic characteristics. More importantly, each is home to a prominent trail that bisects the municipality and supports transportation, economic, and recreation needs. Crestwood, with a smaller population and median income, can support and operate an aquatic center, which may be an aspirational future capital improvement in Vienna. Additionally, Crestwood and Vienna utilize various sales taxes to support improvements within the Town for Parks and Recreation purposes.

Locally, based on demographic characteristics and geographic influences, the City of Falls Church most closely aligns with Vienna, however, Vienna statistically outperforms many of its regional neighbors. Vienna has a higher budget per capita, more staff to serve residents per capita, and is in the middle range of park acreage. Vienna also scores exceptionally well against the 2024 National Recreation and Park Association departments data for jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people. Vienna outpaces each statistical category except for acres per 1,000 residents. Within the data set, Vienna scores within the upper quarter, of most of the data statistics, which emphasizes Vienna's reputation for providing high-quality services, facilities, and programs.

While Vienna's staffing level is among the highest considered, it is missing important context; through community, staff, and stakeholder engagement a consistent message was that staff serve the community at a significantly high level, focusing on responsiveness and exceptional customer service, at times working beyond their job descriptions, and often providing solutions for community challenges that stretch the responsibilities of the departments.

Additional staff, cross-training of current staff, and investment in the professional development of current staff may be valid strategies to continue to have the staff necessary to achieve and exceed the community's high expectations for responsiveness and customer service.

Similarly, Vienna may consider better defining expectations of service, and establishing clear boundaries, definitions, priorities, and responsibilities for the parks and recreation department. This would allow the department to be proactive in its management and operation (where today it often can be forced into a reactive position as community and council requests compete for priority with day-to-day duties and long-term planning).

Lastly, with the understanding of a potential interest in an aquatic facility in Vienna, the current budget does not consider additional staffing levels, skills, and time commitments to operate such a facility. Any newly adopted programs or facilities in Vienna warrant a critical review of funding, staffing, and organizational management.



## Ongoing Trends

The parks and recreation landscape is evolving to serve new interests and activities of varying generations. With changing demographics and recreation interests, Vienna should prepare for forthcoming trends that will affect offered services, programs, and required staff skillset. The following items are growing national trends according to the National Recreation and Park Association:

- Technology
- Esports
- Pickleball, Cricket, and Padle
- Public Restrooms
- Hybrid Schedules
- Walkability

### TECHNOLOGY

The fast-paced advancement of technology will continue to reshape our world, including how the community finds and enjoys recreation and how staff can more efficiently manage a park system.

As an example, there are thousands of location-sharing apps that may be integrated into park systems. These applications can support tracking the use of facilities and equipment, where users are coming from, security, condition assessment of amenities, traffic movements, and other metrics that give operators an insight into needs, public health, and safety.

Notably, the growing use and sophistication of artificial intelligence may be integrated into Parks and Recreation operations. The ability to provide AI-assisted customer service (answering phone calls, scheduling and booking facilities, preparing summary reports) and AI-technology to supplement existing security may be adopted into more nationwide park programs. AI could expand the ability of staff to focus on technical problems, service facilities, or support in-person programs or activities.

### ESPORTS

ESports (Electronic Sports) are growing popular with the younger generation of parks and recreation users, as the generation that has grown up in the technological age has more readily been willing to integrate technology into their recreation habits. Professional, collegiate, and academic ESport leagues and clubs have developed in the last decade, with Esports becoming a billion-dollar industry. Cities around the country have constructed Esports arenas, while Parks and Recreation departments have adopted ESport programs to support this interest.

### PICKLEBALL, CRICKET, AND PADLE

Three of the fastest-growing sports in the United States currently are Pickleball, Cricket, and Padle. Each sport provides recreational opportunities for varying demographics and age groups, but require specific space and programming considerations to ensure successful operation.



Pickleball has taken the United States by storm, gaining more popularity year after year than any other sport. With the small court size and commonly communal play, this game is nimble enough to fit into small urban sites and accommodate recreational and competitive play for numerous people. However, pickleball has been extremely contentious during this same timeframe with limited court access and noise issues. Parks and Recreation departments are working hard to identify ways to accommodate this growing community need while addressing the issues that challenge its full integration into their communities. Notably, noise is the typical issue around the sport, and identifying compatible outdoor settings for pickleball play can be challenging in suburban and urban communities. Pickleball is often best suited in larger parks with ample distance between residential properties or within indoor facilities.

Cricket has garnered more interest domestically in the past decade allowing diverse backgrounds of people to enjoy the game. Schools and Parks and Recreation departments around the country are establishing youth programs that will continue to grow access to and interest in the game. However, cricket requires a large playing field, often requiring several acres for adequate facilities. In urban settings where real estate is a premium, the physical space needs are difficult to accommodate. Agencies in the Northern Virginia area would require partnerships to regionally provide sufficient space to further support this emerging sport.

The last rising sport is Padle, which is currently the fastest-growing sport globally. Similar to pickleball, the court is smaller, enclosed on four sides, promotes communal play. The play is similar to tennis making the game intuitive for users to learn. With the growing interest and limited resources of courts in Northern Virginia, the adoption of Padle in Vienna would be an opportunity to provide a unique new recreation to residents, though it is recognized that current residents have shared preference for other recreation options in Vienna.

### **PUBLIC RESTROOMS**

A national conversation in recent years has revolved around public restrooms and their availability, accessibility, and safety. Within the Parks and Recreation space, families seek the availability of restrooms in the park spaces to ensure they can adequately enjoy their programs and parks.

Additionally, restrooms can improve accessibility for all ages and increase the amount of time people utilize a location. Restrooms are essential for improving access for children with physical or cognitive disabilities. Parents of these children may often spend all day at sites and any facility without a bathroom is a burden. A key goal of improvements to this amenity will be to also improve access for adults with disabilities or other medical needs. Restrooms should be physically accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act standards. However, this minimum guideline often falls short of meeting the needs and expectations for additional amenities to accommodate people of all ages with special needs.

Lastly, safety and comfort are a consistent priority for all Parks & Recreation departments in the country. Gender-neutral or family restrooms offer flexibility to the users, additional space for those that require assistance or respite, and additionally support a user's security and comfort, regardless of how they identify.



### **HYBRID SCHEDULES**

The global pandemic has increased the amount of people working remote, working hybrid schedules, having shorter work weeks, and variable working trends. In the Parks and Recreation industry, where face to face interaction and physical presence at sites and facilities is imperative, it is a challenge to accommodate these evolving work cultures.

As a new working generation enters the workforce, one that has become accustomed to these trends, Parks & Recreation departments need adapt to remain competitive for well-qualified candidates. Departments should balance flexibility for employees with service and responsiveness expectations. Creative benefits or compensation may need to be considered in job descriptions to incentivize staff and appeal to a new generation. For example, staff who manage physical spaces may have limited opportunity to have hybrid working arrangements when compared to staff who perform administrative, programming or planning jobs, but other options like enhanced compensations or shorter work weeks may be an appropriate tradeoff.

### **WALKABILITY**

A positive change during and continuing after the global pandemic was a resurgence of interest in outdoor activities and recreation. Interestingly this did not reignite walking as a common recreation habit with a decline in walking for recreation across the country of 36%.

In many municipalities across the country walking is not considered a viable form of transportation to get to Parks and Recreation facilities. With focused planning efforts for walkable communities, communities can increase engagement with and access to their parks and facilities.

Vienna has a prime opportunity to capitalize on the current and growing walkability of the Town. Vienna should continue to invest in completion of the sidewalks network and access to the W&OD trail. At the same time, Vienna should investigate how larger roadways (like Maple Avenue) may act as barriers to walkability. With intentional improvement, in the next decade, Vienna can continue its growth towards being a premier walkable Town with strategic connections between recreation areas, commercial areas, and residential neighborhoods.



## Conclusion

The Town of Vienna Park System is unique, diverse, and a valued asset to the Town and residents. The Town offers numerous active and passive recreation opportunities, programs, and services that enrich the lives of residents. The residents of Vienna are engaged and passionate about their parks and desire more investment to maintain and enhance what they currently have in Town while being strategic about exploring new recreational opportunities. Through engagement and collaboration with staff and residents as part of this Master Planning process, consistent messages occurred: improvements to the Park System need to be thoughtful, intentional in services provided and issues addressed, and perhaps most importantly, financially feasible.

Based on the site assessment, the overall park system is in good condition but there are areas for improvement within each park typology and at specific locations. Sites should be looked at critically for both the quality of materials and the availability of program offerings.

Compared to peers, Vienna is notably a high-quality Parks and Recreation system, but residents emphasize maintaining existing facilities and “making what is good, great.”

The park typologies that have been proposed will allow for clearer definitions, consistency, and expectations for each park.

There are numerous approaches the Town can consider funding the investment in the existing and future parks and recreation system. Peer communities have demonstrated that a balance can be achieved between maintaining existing facilities while gradually integrating facility and program offerings that are not yet present in Vienna.

The subsequent tasks of the planning process will continue to engage the community in conversation to more fully understand unmet community needs, potential plan focus areas, and the long-term vision for Parks and Recreation over the next 10 years.

As a starting point, potential focus areas for the subsequent tasks may include further considerations of a potential aquatic and/or recreation center, improved connectivity and access to parks throughout the Town, enhancement of existing parks and facilities, and staffing and organizational improvements to guarantee that resources are in place to provide the highest level of customer service.





## Appendix

### Existing Conditions Assessment Categories and Questions

The eight categories and questions for the existing conditions assessment as follows:

- Design and Construction
  - Is there evidence that the design and construction of the site meet the needs of the users served?
  - Does the site show any evidence of rust, corrosion, erosion, or cracking?
  - Does the site include appropriate recreation amenities for intended users? (fields and courts for athletics, etc.)
  - Has the site been developed or recently renovated? Has any known construction taken place in the past 3 years?
  - Is there evidence that the site uses consistent products or materials to unify the site?
- Effectiveness
  - Is it known or does it appear that this site is used frequently?
  - Is there evidence that the site is used by people of different ages?
  - Is there evidence that the site serves users' current needs for recreation, relaxation, or other activities?
  - Does the site offer different types of activities?
  - Does the site offer choices in intensity of activities? - ex. passive/at-will or active/programmed?
  - Is there a balance of active recreation (programmed spaces) and passive (at-will) opportunities?
- Condition
  - How would you rate the site's maintenance? – ex. grass cutting, working equipment, etc.
  - Is the site clean and free of litter?
  - Does it appear that visitor use affects condition? – ex. paving is marked for foot traffic, equipment use, etc.
  - Does the landscaping appear to be maintained?
  - Is there any evidence of stormwater issues – ex. (Standing water, erosion)
  - Are there elements or areas that are significantly failing?
  - Does the site need improvements? (1=Very Much; 5=No/none)
- Comfort and Image
  - Does the site's main entrance make a good first impression?
  - Does the site have any side entrances? Do those entrances make a good first impression?
  - Are there ample places to sit and are they conveniently located?
  - Is the lighting appropriate for the hours of use for this facility?
  - Does the site provide a feeling of safety or perceived safety? Does it use CPTED Principles? (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)
    - CPTED Principles
    - Natural Access Control - Can people trespass on my property without being seen by others?
    - Natural Surveillance - Does landscaping obscure the view of my property from neighboring properties?
    - Territoriality - Does the property ever have an unkempt appearance?



- Activity Support – Does every space and area have an intended use, and designed and maintained to encourage that use?
  - Do vehicles dominate the site through access roads, parking, and/or maintenance?
- Access and Linkages
  - Are there clear and open-view lines throughout the site and into open spaces?
  - Is there clear and useful wayfinding/signage within the site?
  - Can people easily walk to the site from surrounding areas?
  - Are there walkable residential areas to this site?
  - Are there walkable commercial areas to this site?
  - Does the site function for people with disabilities?
  - Is the site well connected with clear and safe access point(s)?
  - Do paths and/or roads connect people to primary amenities?
  - Are there transit stop(s) (within 1/4 mile) and/or parking and bike racks near primary entrance points?
  - Is the site readily accessible to the users being served? (walking, biking, vehicle, etc.)
- Sustainability and Culture – Sociability
  - Does the site provide places for people to gather?
  - Does the site promote a healthy lifestyle?
- Sustainability and Culture – Environmental
  - Does the site enhance, preserve, promote, or contribute to biological diversity
  - Does the site incorporate resilient design features or practices? Ex. Rain Gardens, Permeable Paving
  - Is the site a node within a larger ecological corridor or habitat? ex. Small clusters of trees within larger wooded areas in surrounding sites, Large wooded areas, naturally occurring water features, pollinator gardens, etc.
  - Does the site enhance environmental awareness or knowledge? – ex. Signage, camp program destination?
  - Are there opportunities to increase ecological function? – ex. Convert lawn to a meadow, add stormwater retrofits, addition of native landscaping, riparian restoration, buffer planting, or tree planting?
- Sustainability and Culture – Economic
  - Does the site create public and/or private revenue-generating opportunities?
  - Does the site contribute to nearby property development or redevelopment potential?
  - Does the site provide permanent jobs?



### Review of Relevant Plans, Documents, and Studies

An initial task in the Master Plan process was to review the current documents, plans, and studies that guide the strategic direction and current operation of Parks and Recreation in the Town today. As used in the Master Plan, these documents provide clarity on the current state and guide the development of recommendations that support or supplement current practices. They also provide information on the financial state of the department which will be relevant to consider as the Master Plan arrives at recommendations regarding future funding; departmental growth opportunities; staffing and resource needs; long-term capital and maintenance planning, and other Master Plan strategies.

Overall, these documents reflect a well-rounded Town with a balanced variety of land uses and a vested interest in maintaining, preserving, and enhancing a Parks and Recreation system that makes Vienna a special place to live, work, and play.

The list of documents that were reviewed as part of this Plan consisted of:

- 2015 Town of Vienna Comprehensive Plan (Chapters 3, 6, and 7)
- 2018 National Citizen Survey
- 2019 Town of Vienna Strategic Plan
- 2021 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) and Audited Financial Statements
- 2024-2038 Capital Improvement Plan Review Adoption
- Town of Vienna Fiscal Year 2024-25 Adopted Budget
- 2022 Bond Funding Credit Preservation
- Town Code (Chapters 20, 25, 27.5)

A brief description of these documents, key facts or insights, and their connection to the Master Plan process follows.

#### **2019 TOWN OF VIENNA STRATEGIC PLAN**

The 2019 Town of Vienna Strategic Plan focuses on creating a holistically well-rounded community. Although this document is currently 5 years old, it establishes a clear expectation of priorities of Town staff and residents. Many of the goals and actions to maintain this expectation of quality of life can be supported through ideas and recommendations of the Parks Master Plan and future investment into the park's infrastructure, programs, and services. Two strategic goals of the Strategic Plan that are relevant in this Planning process are, "Vienna as...":

- **ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE:** The Town of Vienna values and protects its natural and manmade resources. We embrace our obligation to current and future generations to foster a healthy, safe, and attractive community
- **COMPLETE COMMUNITY:** The Town of Vienna will embrace its independent, active, and welcoming character as a unique place to live/work-play-dine-shop in Northern Virginia. Our traditional events and year-round activities enrich the Town's vibrant, caring, and inclusive community identity and spirit.



### **2015 TOWN OF VIENNA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (CHAPTERS 3, 6 AND 7)**

The 2015 Comprehensive Plan is a coordinated planning document that seeks to: capture citizens' vision for the future of Vienna; guide the development of specific policies to achieve common community goals; and provide a vision for how the Town should grow and evolve into the future.

It serves to set long-range priorities regarding a wide range of community issues related to land use, transportation, parks and recreation, community facilities, community character, economic development, and the environment.

Chapter 3 (Land Use), Chapter 6 (Community Facility and Service), and Chapter 7 (Parks and Recreation) describe some of the intersecting community goals and future vision that affect Parks and Recreation. Comprehensive plan goals that are relevant to the mission and vision of Parks and Recreation include:

- Chapter 3:
  - *Maintain a balance of land uses;*
  - *Protect and preserve the natural environment,*
  - *Ensure that Vienna retains its unique single-family residential character and quality of life*
- Chapter 6:
  - *Provide residents with reliable and efficient services and infrastructure*
  - *Ensure that all Town facilities are adequate for Town functions*
  - *Maximize the functionality of Town facilities for residents*
- Chapter 7:
  - *Maintain Town parks and facilities to facilitate maximum use*
  - *Design, build, and program parks and recreational facilities to meet the needs and desires of Town residents*
  - *Create and update Park Master Plans*

It is recognized that the Town is currently preparing an update to the Comprehensive Plan. It is likely that many of the vision and strategy recommendations of the Park Master Plan can inform the goals and objectives of the updated Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan chapter.





### **2018 NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY**

The 2018 citizen survey provides a broad understanding of how the community views their park system today. It advises on resident satisfaction and trends that may affect the entire Town, not just neighborhoods. Residents rated Vienna among the 20 best communities in over 30 categories. Notable statistics from the 2019 survey are as follows:

- 91 percent positive sentiments on Town parks
- 90 percent positive sentiments on the Town's recreation centers and facilities
- 82 percent positive sentiments on the opportunity to participate in social events and activities
- 87 percent positive sentiments on recreation programs and classes
- 90 percent positive sentiments on the Town's recreation centers and facilities
- 75 percent positive in attendance of Town-sponsored events
- 64 and 66 percent positive on natural area preservation and open space, respectively.

Part of the engagement strategy of the Park Master Plan process will be to further explore the specific factors for the high satisfaction (as areas of strength to continue to maintain and prudently invest in) and to further identify and explore areas of lower satisfaction or participation to improve.

### **2022 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEW ADOPTION**

The 2022 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Review Adoption is a planning and fiscal management strategy that depicts the timing and funding for a variety of capital expenses and future plans. The current CIP shows \$9,825,000 in bond funding between 2026 and 2038 to support 25+ line-item Parks and Recreation-related projects.

### **2021 ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT (ACFR) AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The 2021 annual comprehensive report is a required audit of the Town's fiscal performance. As of the 2021 report, nearly 47% of the 25.7M of the general fund balance is generated by property taxes. As property values have continued to rise, this creates a stable financial basis through which the Town can fund many of its services and initiatives, even before pursuing bonds and grants or tapping into other Town fund balances (Capital Projects, Special Transportation, Stormwater, etc.). Parks and Recreation is funded in part from the general fund and represents 11 to 12 percent of general fund expenditures.

### **TOWN OF VIENNA FISCAL YEAR 2024-25 ADOPTED BUDGET**

The Town of Vienna Fiscal Year 2022-23 Adopted Budget details the priorities and challenges for the fiscal year for all town departments. As of FY2024-25, the general fund revenue budget has increased to \$33,074,250 of which \$14,065,000 (42.5 percent) is anticipated to be derived from property taxes and \$1,572,000 (4.8 percent) from parks and recreation fees. The anticipated budget for parks and recreation is \$5,205,530 (15.7% of general fund expenditures). The adopted budget indicates that DPR is the third largest department in Town with 26 adopted FY24-25 personnel positions. Going forward, this budget development and staffing plan process can be informed by the policy, operation, and capital recommendations of the Park Master Plan.



### **2022 BOND FUNDING CREDIT PRESENTATION**

The Town of Vienna is described as a wealthy residential community with a substantial financial performance history, that heavily focused on adapting and bouncing back from the pandemic. The Bond Funding Credit Presentation focused on economic development, zoning code modernization, and infrastructure funding while implementing strategic planning and long-range forecasts. This strategy will assist with securing avenues and funds for future parks and facility improvements.

### **TOWN CODE (CHAPTERS 20, 25, 27)**

The Town Code highlights requirements that will restrict, and shape proposed parks, facilities, or services in the Town. Chapter 20 governs public Parks and Recreation facilities, Chapter 25 governs historic structures, sites, and places, and Chapter 27 describes the Conservation and Sustainability Commission. As Park Master Plan recommendations are formed, the Town Code should be further reviewed to identify any statutory changes that may need to be amended or considered to support the future vision of Parks and Recreation in Vienna