



AMHERST

Perfect Slice of Virginia

Amherst County Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Amherst County, Virginia
April 2025

The Parks and Recreation Plan was developed in partnership with the Amherst County Recreation and Parks Department to evaluate the Amherst County public parks and recreation system and submit recommendations designed for Amherst County to become a vibrant, healthy community for everyone. Its vision for Amherst County is to meet the current and future recreation needs of its residents, become a recreation destination for the region, protect and nurture its resources, and develop achievable strategies for success.

This master plan identifies the county’s current recreation facilities and cultural resources, assesses its recreation needs, investigates opportunities to appeal to residents of all ages and interests, and provides a road map to meet current and future recreation needs. It provides recommendations regarding parks and recreation facilities, access to facilities, and funding in the community. It is based on feedback from extensive community engagement including focus group meetings, pop up events, and a public survey for County residents to express their needs. This plan is designed to be a long-term vision, but its very nature intends for flexibility and adaptability. Regular reviews and updates are essential to ensure that the plan remains relevant and responsive to evolving needs.

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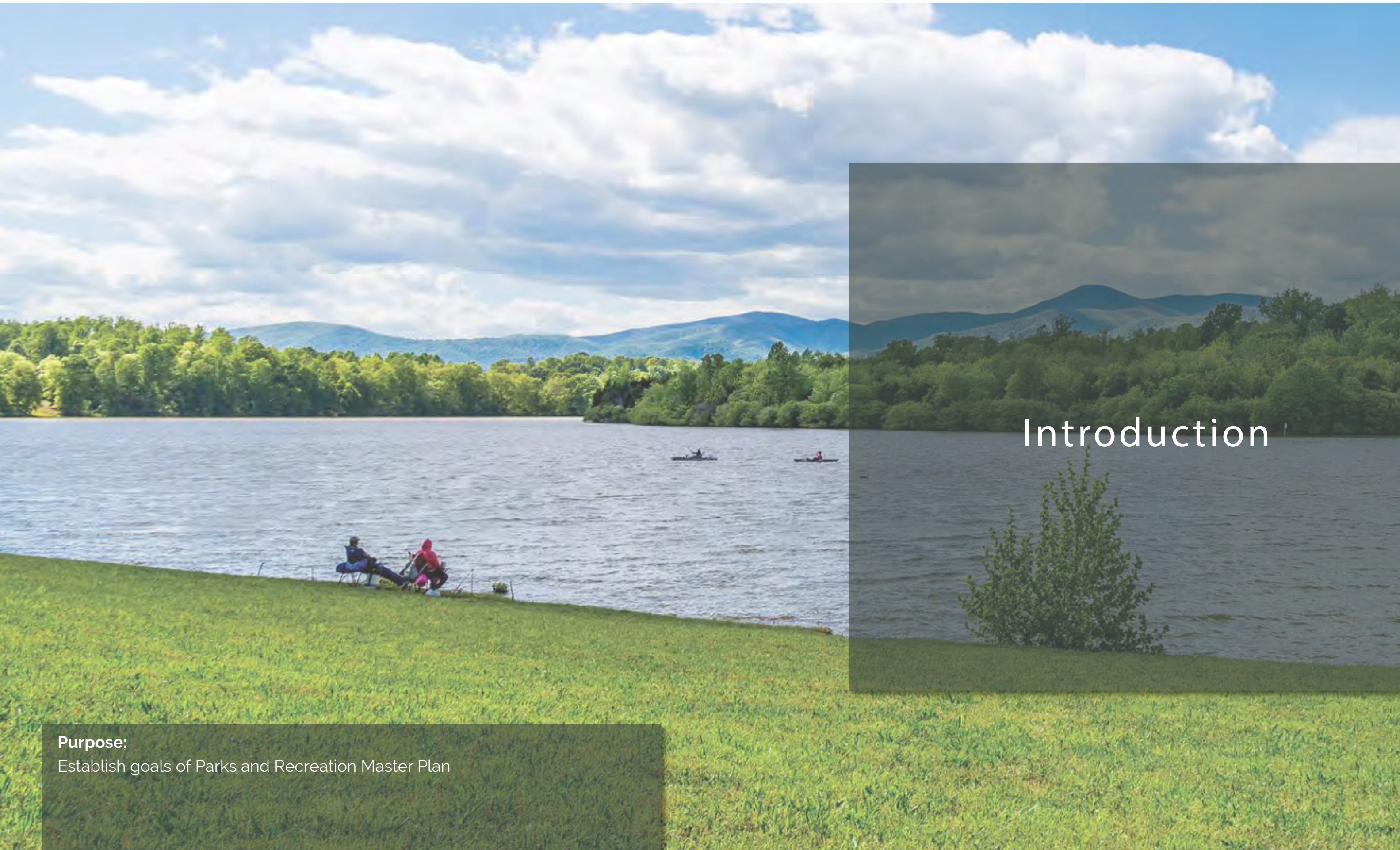
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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 : Introduction	5
Purpose	8
County Background	10
Demographics	11
Chapter 2: Existing Conditions	13
River Parks	15
Lake Parks	17
Sport Parks	20
Community Centers	21
Programming	24
Chapter 3: Community Engagement	29
Strategies	30
Community Perceptions	34
Chapter 4: Park Facilities Evaluation	49
Existing Parks & Community Centers	50
New Parks & Newly Acquired Land	78
Chapter 5: Recommendations	89
Riveredge Park	90
Monacan Park	96
Mill Creek Lake Park	100
Stonehouse Lake Park	104
Thrashers Lake Park	108
Coolwell Park	112
Monroe Community Center	116
Kilgore Community Park	118
Amherst Pocket Park	122
Madison Heights Park	126
Signage Templates	129
Route 130 & James River	130
Blue Ridge Railway Trail	132
Chapter 6: Funding & Implementation Strategies	135





Introduction

Purpose:
Establish goals of Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Introduction

The Amherst County Parks and Recreation Master Plan is an important tool in the creation of a healthy, vibrant, and well-connected community. Outlined in the county's most recent Comprehensive Plan, the county has set many goals regarding outdoor recreation and improved connectivity. These include the development of a multi-modal transportation system in the more urban portions of the county through the improvement and expansion of the county's sidewalks, bicycling lanes, and pedestrian infrastructure like trails, as well as the expansion and improvement of already existing parks, trails, and community centers.

Amherst County is home to numerous parks, trails, and community centers for the public to enjoy. These include:

Coolwell Park is a 33-acre multi-purpose park that hosts soccer pitches, a baseball diamond, a playground, an amphitheater, and basketball courts.

Coolwell Community Center is located in Coolwell Park and functions as a centrally located meeting space for classes and events.

Monroe Community Center is located in Monroe and offers public classes and meeting spaces.

Stonehouse Lake Park is located in the Temperance area of the county and includes a 41-acre lake that offers fishing. This park also has a covered picnic pavilion, grills, picnic tables, a playground, and restrooms.

Thrashers Lake Park is also located in the Temperance area of the county and includes a 36-acre lake that allows fishing along with picnic tables, grills, a playground, and a restroom.

Mill Creek Lake is another park located in the Temperance area of the county and includes a 190-acre lake. This lake offers fishing on the shore and for fishermen in non gasoline-powered boats. Mill Creek also offers a boat ramp, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, a playground, and a publicly accessible beach.

Monacan Park is located near Elon along the James River and offers residents the only opportunity to operate speedboats and waterski on public property. This park also includes a small dock, a boat ramp, a covered pavilion, picnic tables, a playground, and restrooms.

Riveredge Park is located along the James River in Madison Heights across from the Lynchburg Riverfront. This scenic park is home to the James River Association's James River Adventures building, a boat ramp, access to the river, a playground, picnic tables, and the Sara Lu Christian Trail, which runs the park's length.

Seminole Park is the systems newest park located in Madison Heights and offers locals a unique dog park in a portion of the county.

In addition to these existing parks, Amherst County has acquired many properties throughout the county recently. These new properties, along with existing parks, allow the county to provide new and increased recreational and programmatic offerings, which will become more critical as the county grows.



Thrashers Lake Park



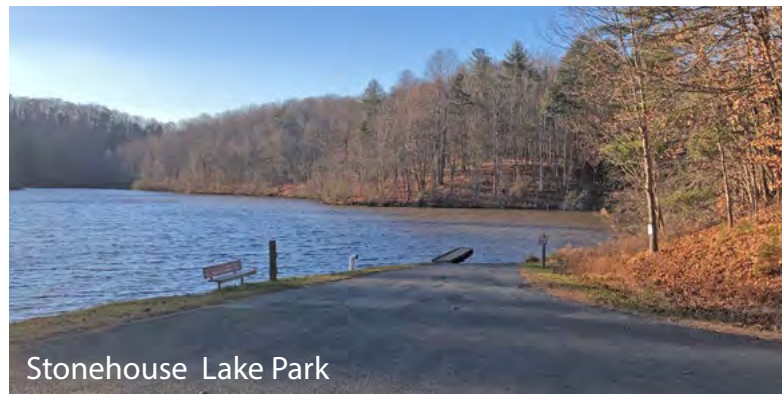
Monacan Park



Mill Creek Lake



Riveredge Park



Stonehouse Lake Park

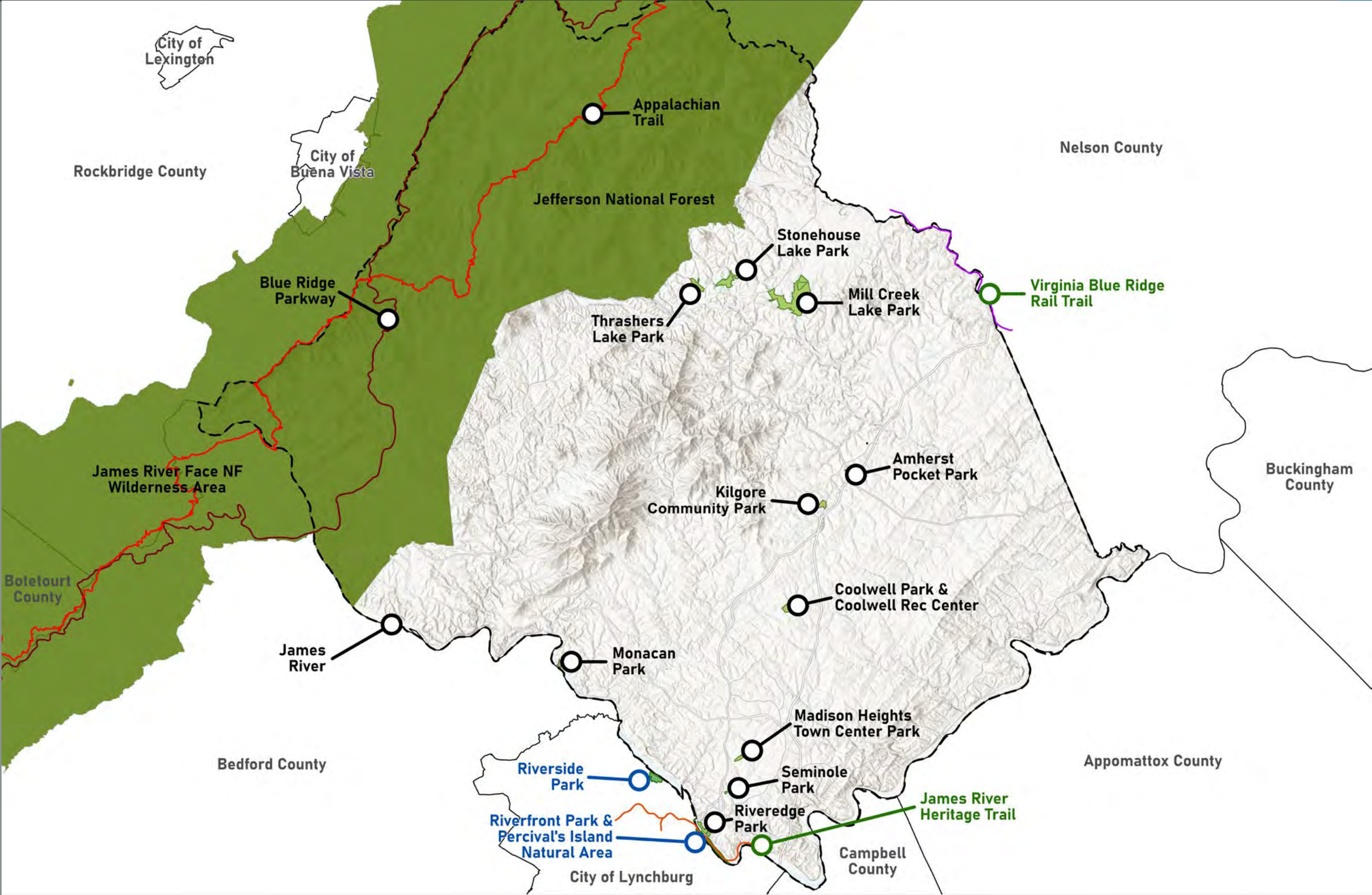


Coolwell Park



Seminole Park, Image Credit Sandy Wallace

County Parks
and Regional
Recreational
Assets



Introduction

According to UVA's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, population growth projections for Amherst County have the population remaining consistent over the next 30 years. Nearby counties and cities like Bedford and Lynchburg are projected to grow steadily over the next 30 years, which likely will spill over into Amherst County as housing costs in the City of Lynchburg increase.

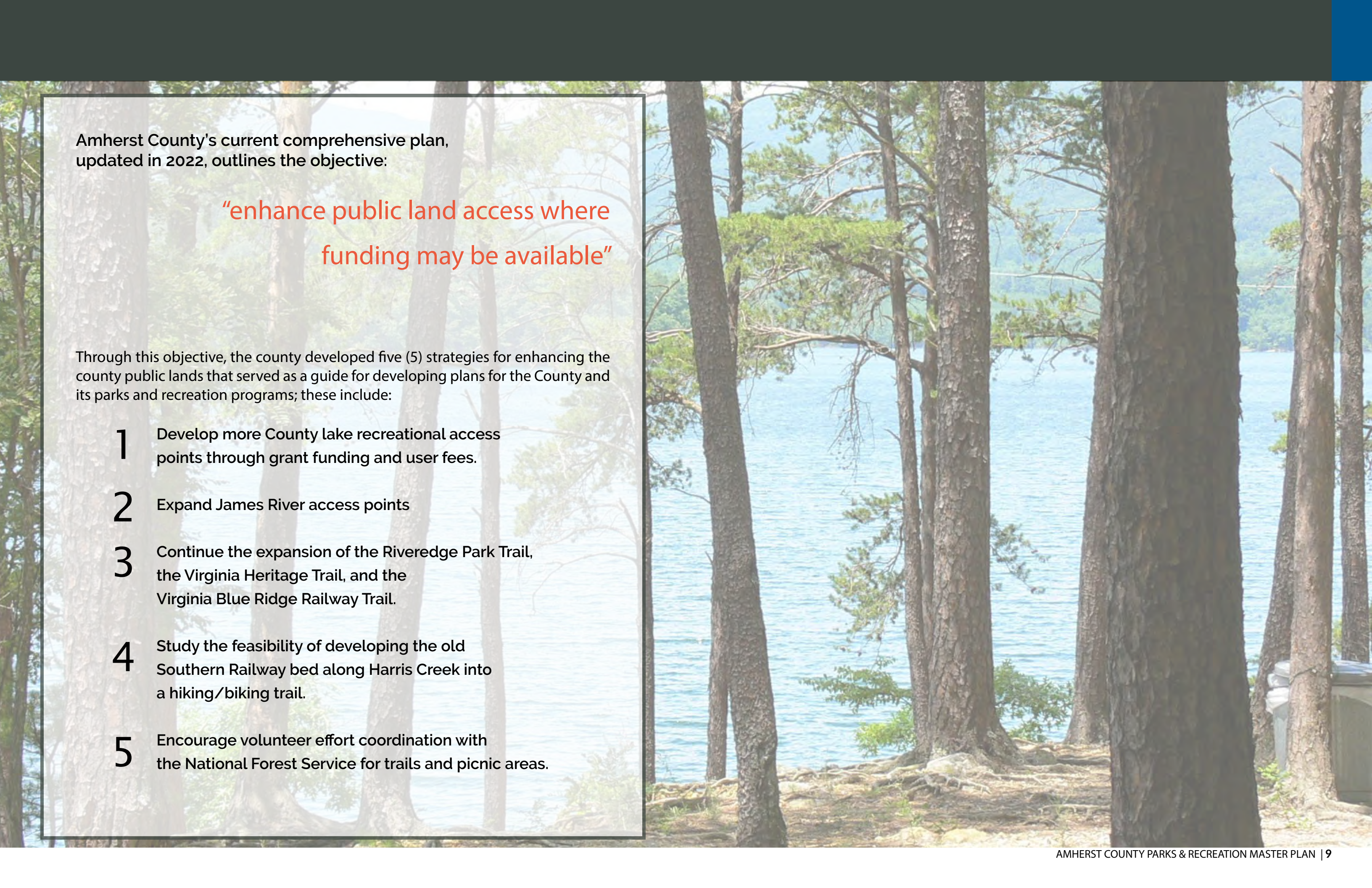
Demographics, beyond population, are another essential factor to consider. In particular, it's important to consider the growth of large user groups, particularly older residents and youth under age 18. Both demographic groups are large users of the county's parks, sports fields, and community systems but require different amenities, services, and programming. Therefore, it's important to hear from as many demographic groups as possible to ensure we meet current and future indoor and outdoor recreation needs.

Amherst County is an integral part of a quickly growing metropolitan area. With the county's proximity to Lynchburg and the drive to improve connectivity, walkability, and cycling-friendly living in communities near the James River - particularly Madison Heights - it will be essential to integrate multi-modality transportation networks within the county's parks and where deemed appropriate.

Plan Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to outline recommendations, strategies, and pathways for clearly implementing the goals of the Amherst County Comprehensive Plan, as well as the desires of the county's residents and the needs of the Amherst County Recreation and Tourism Department.





Amherst County's current comprehensive plan, updated in 2022, outlines the objective:

“enhance public land access where funding may be available”

Through this objective, the county developed five (5) strategies for enhancing the county public lands that served as a guide for developing plans for the County and its parks and recreation programs; these include:

- 1** Develop more County lake recreational access points through grant funding and user fees.
- 2** Expand James River access points
- 3** Continue the expansion of the Riveredge Park Trail, the Virginia Heritage Trail, and the Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail.
- 4** Study the feasibility of developing the old Southern Railway bed along Harris Creek into a hiking/biking trail.
- 5** Encourage volunteer effort coordination with the National Forest Service for trails and picnic areas.

County Background

Overview

Amherst County, nestled in the heart of Virginia's Piedmont region, offers a blend of natural beauty, historical significance, and cultural assets. Its topography is characterized by rolling hills, fertile valleys, and the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains to the west. The James River, a significant waterway in Virginia's history, flows through the county, providing scenic views and a variety of recreational opportunities.

Natural Features

Blue Ridge Mountains: The county's western border is defined by the Blue Ridge Mountains, offering stunning views and opportunities for hiking, camping, and outdoor recreation.

James River: The James River, a major tributary of the Chesapeake Bay, winds through Amherst County, providing a vital water source and scenic beauty.

Lakes: While there are no large natural lakes within Amherst County, there are several smaller lakes, which offer recreational opportunities for wildlife viewing, fishing, boating, and swimming.

Cultural Assets

Amherst County Museum and Historical Society: This museum preserves the county's rich history through exhibits, artifacts, and educational programs.

Amherst Milling Company: A historic gristmill that has been in operation since the 1800s, offering tours and demonstrations of traditional milling techniques.

Amherst County Winery: Local vineyards produce a variety of wines, providing opportunities for wine tasting and tours.

Art Galleries and Studios: Amherst County is home to several art galleries and studios, showcasing the work of local and regional artists.

Regional History

Native American Presence: The area was inhabited by Native American tribes, including the Monacan and Manahoac, for centuries before European settlement. The Monacan Nation's headquarters is located in Amherst County and many members live in Amherst County.

Colonial Era: European settlers arrived in the 17th century, drawn by the fertile land and opportunities for agriculture. Tobacco became a major cash crop in the region.

Civil War: Amherst County was a significant battleground during the Civil War, with several battles and skirmishes taking place within its borders.

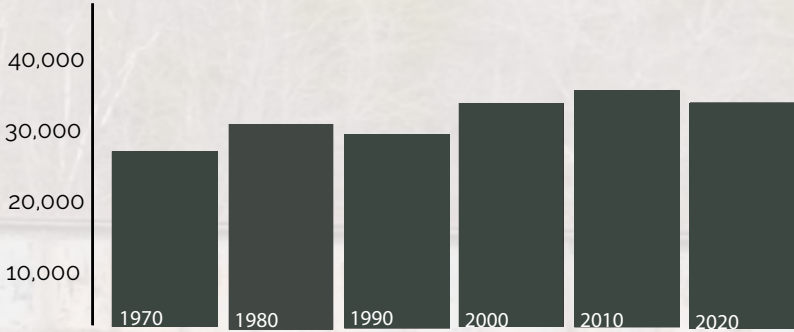
20th Century: The county experienced growth and development in the 20th century, with the expansion of industries and transportation infrastructure while maintaining its primarily rural character and charm.

Demographics

As noted in the introduction, demographics are essential to any master planning effort to ensure Amherst County's Recreation and Tourism Department can adequately plan for the future. The following demographic information is acquired from the 2022 American Community Survey's 5-Year Estimates and the 2020 US Census.

Population Growth

Over the previous 50 years, Amherst County has seen a sizable growth period, with the population gaining roughly 5,200 residents or 20%. However, this growth has not been linear, with slight population declines reported in the 1990 and 2020 censuses. However, overall, there is a trend of population growth in the county and the surrounding region.



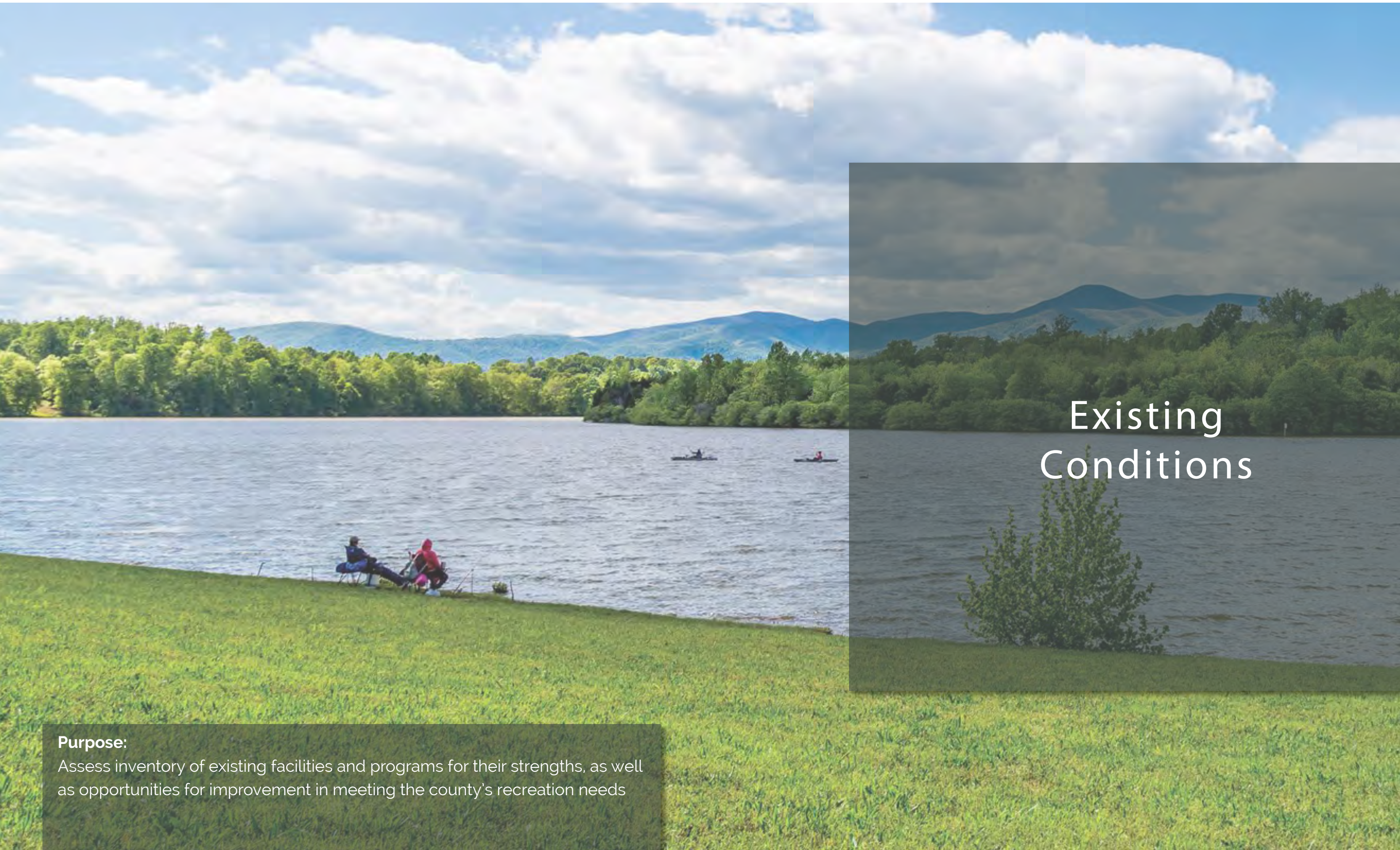
Amherst County Population Change 1970 - 2024 (Census)



Age Distribution

As is the case for much of rural Virginia, Amherst County is currently facing a population shift that has resulted in the older residents becoming a larger and larger portion of the overall population. According to the 2020 Census, residents over 65 constituted 21.6% of the population. Projected out over the next 30 years, this group is expected to grow to 25.2% of the population, with significant growth expected from residents over 85. This indicates that there will likely be an increased demand for services and programming for this cohort in the future. On the other hand, younger residents, those under 18, represent 20.4% of Amherst County's population, according to the 2020 Census. Projected out, this cohort is expected to grow by roughly 2.5% over the next 30 years. This likely will increase demand for programming, classes, and rec sports to support a growing youth population. It's important to note that these projections are based on current demographic trends and do not consider important factors such as the housing market and cost of living. More affordable housing and lower cost of living are pull factors for those looking to relocate to the county, which will likely increase the county's population overall. It is possible that these growth rates may under-report actual growth. Therefore, it is important to plan accordingly.





Purpose:

Assess inventory of existing facilities and programs for their strengths, as well as opportunities for improvement in meeting the county's recreation needs

County-Owned Properties

Amherst County’s parks, sports facilities, and community centers are the backbone of the county’s recreational opportunities. As of 2024, the county directly owns and operates seven (7) parks and two (2) community centers. In addition to these resources, the county has a partnership with the James River Association to operate the James River Adventure Center in Riveredge Park while the county retains ownership of the building. The county also partners with other organizations to provide ballfields, tennis courts, indoor basketball courts, and other recreational opportunities that are not currently offered by the county or need to be supplemented to meet demand.

With a wide variety of sports fields and recreational assets and limited funding and staffing, it is essential to ensure that existing facilities are efficiently maintained. This should continue to be a top priority of the department to ensure current assets are accessible to all users and effectively serve their purpose. To ensure this, periodic assessments of the park’s conditions will be needed to ensure the department can budget and prioritize repairs, renovations, and improvements moving forward. As noted above, Amherst County Parks have a significant footprint across the county. To better differentiate these assets, they will be divided into categories: River Parks, Lake Parks, Sports Parks, and Community Centers.

Parks Passport

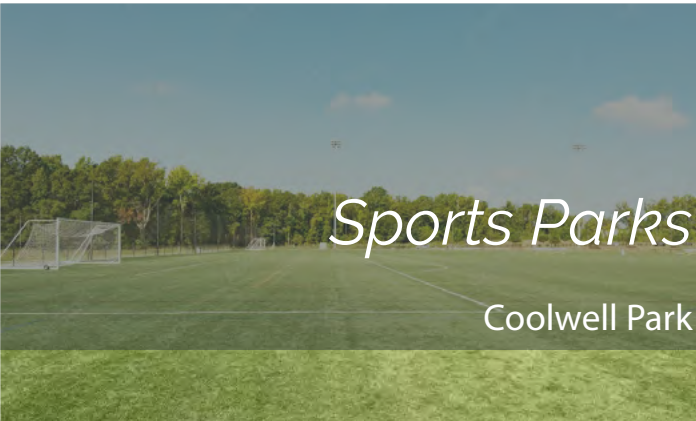
The Recreation and Tourism Department collaborates with Girl Scout Troop 1315 to develop a Parks Passport Program to encourage park visitation and various outdoor activities among the general public. Currently, all county youth can print or pick up a passport, and as they visit 6 county parks, they ‘stamp’ their passport at each park’s engraved plaque. Girl Scouts can earn a Parks Passport Patch after stamping their passport at each of the 6 county parks.

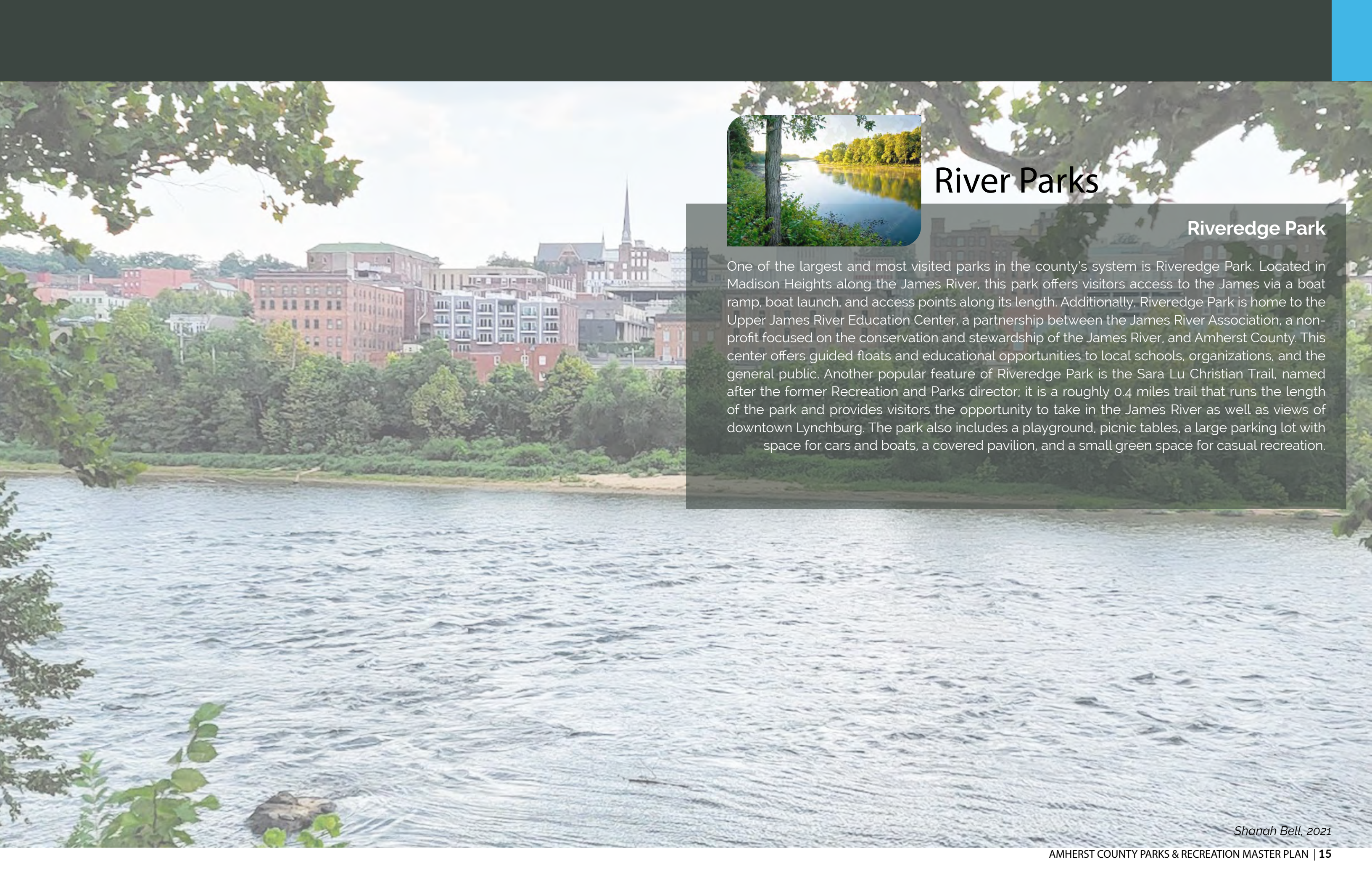


Download the Parks Passport

- Step 1: Pick up your Amherst County Parks Passport from the Amherst County Recreation and Tourism Office. Or download and print at home from the Recreation and Tourism website.
- Step 2: Bring your passport to each of the 6 county Parks. Look for the Parks Passport sign, and take a rubbing of the engraved plaque at each location.
- Step 3: After you have visited all 6 parks, bring your passport to the Amherst County Recreation and Tourism Office to receive a free Parks Passport Patch.

This program is brought to you by
Amherst County Recreation and Tourism
129 Francis Ave, Monroe, VA 24574
434-946-9371
and Girl Scout Troop 1315





River Parks

Riveredge Park

One of the largest and most visited parks in the county's system is Riveredge Park. Located in Madison Heights along the James River, this park offers visitors access to the James via a boat ramp, boat launch, and access points along its length. Additionally, Riveredge Park is home to the Upper James River Education Center, a partnership between the James River Association, a non-profit focused on the conservation and stewardship of the James River, and Amherst County. This center offers guided floats and educational opportunities to local schools, organizations, and the general public. Another popular feature of Riveredge Park is the Sara Lu Christian Trail, named after the former Recreation and Parks director; it is a roughly 0.4 miles trail that runs the length of the park and provides visitors the opportunity to take in the James River as well as views of downtown Lynchburg. The park also includes a playground, picnic tables, a large parking lot with space for cars and boats, a covered pavilion, and a small green space for casual recreation.

Shanah Bell, 2021

Existing Conditions



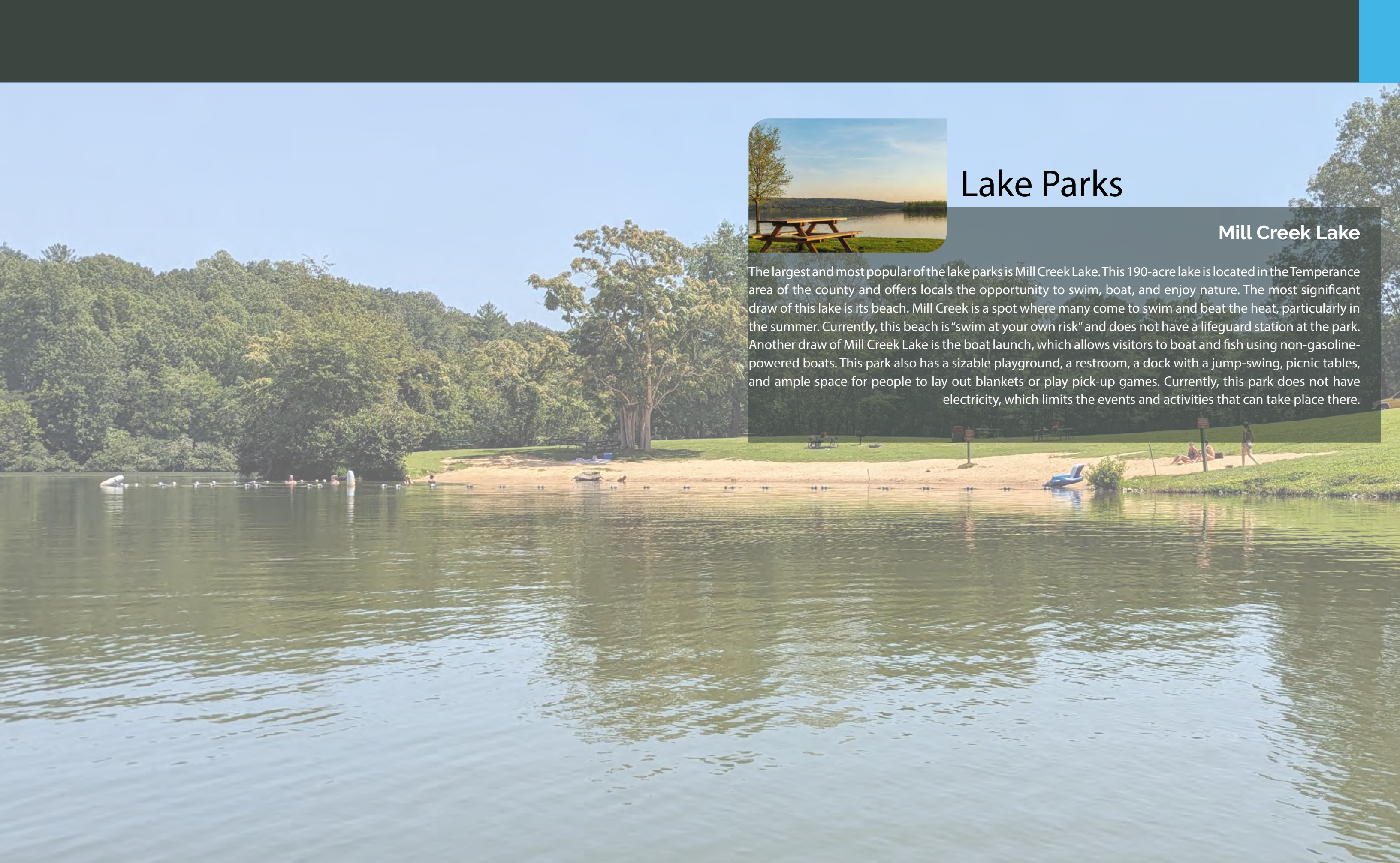
River Parks

Monacan Park

The second park along the James River is Monacan Park, located west of Elon along Route 652 (Monacan Park Rd). This park offers access to the river via a dock and boat launch; although there is no official beach, visitors can access the water via boat. Additionally, this park has a playground, restrooms, a covered pavilion, picnic tables, benches, and a sizable parking lot with spaces for cars and boats.



Yogesh Tiwari, 2021



Lake Parks

Mill Creek Lake

The largest and most popular of the lake parks is Mill Creek Lake. This 190-acre lake is located in the Temperance area of the county and offers locals the opportunity to swim, boat, and enjoy nature. The most significant draw of this lake is its beach. Mill Creek is a spot where many come to swim and beat the heat, particularly in the summer. Currently, this beach is “swim at your own risk” and does not have a lifeguard station at the park. Another draw of Mill Creek Lake is the boat launch, which allows visitors to boat and fish using non-gasoline-powered boats. This park also has a sizable playground, a restroom, a dock with a jump-swing, picnic tables, and ample space for people to lay out blankets or play pick-up games. Currently, this park does not have electricity, which limits the events and activities that can take place there.

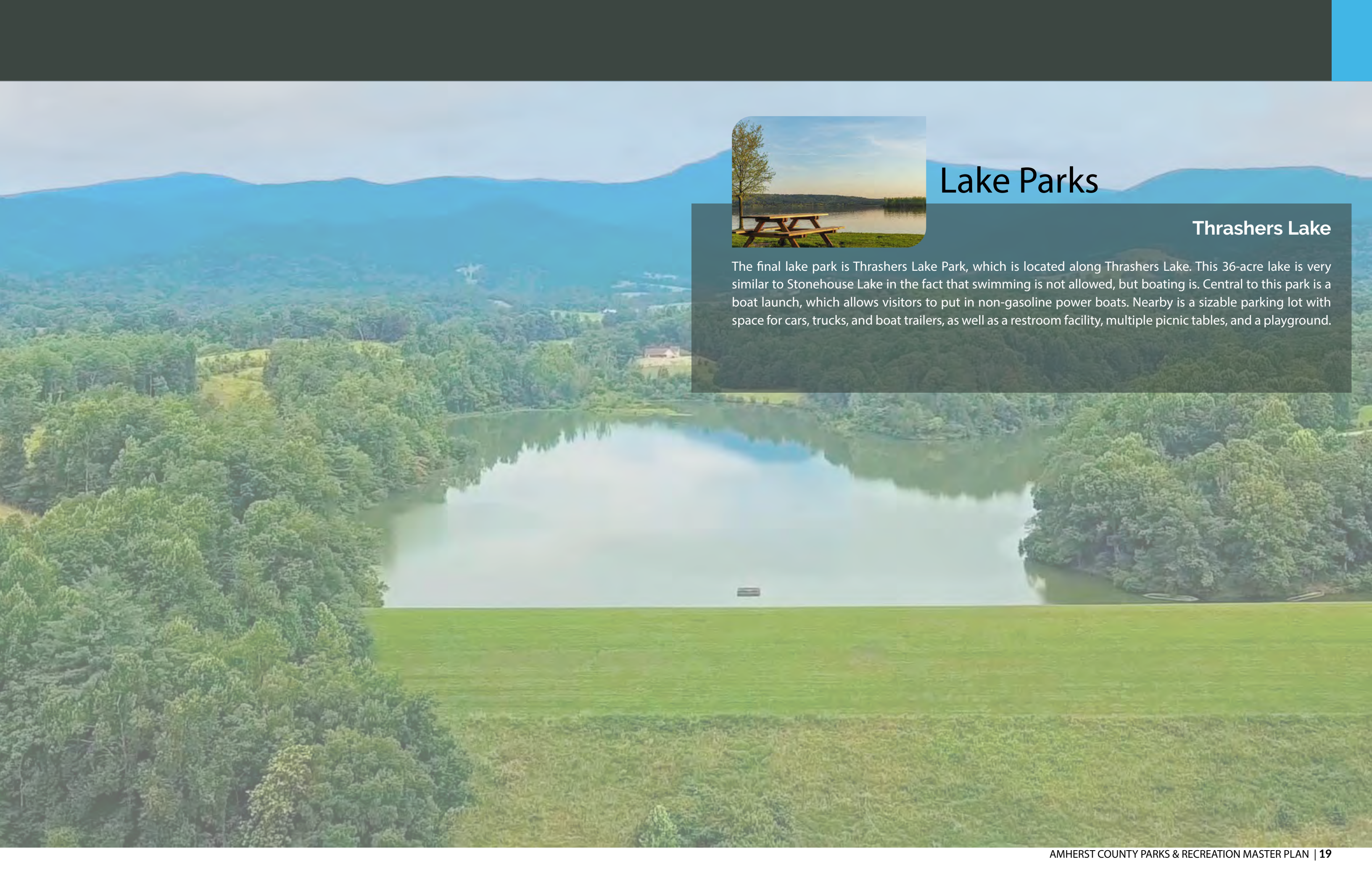


Lake Parks

Stonehouse Lake

Stonehouse Lake is the second largest lake in the park system at 41 acres and is home to Stonehouse Lake Park. This park is also located in the Temperance area of the county. Unlike Mill Creek Lake, Stonehouse Lake is narrower and swimming is not allowed. As a result, this lake does not have a beach, but there is a boat ramp with boating and fishing allowed for non-gasoline-powered boats. This park also has three parking lots, two for cars and one for boats, a covered pavilion, a playground, and restroom facilities.





Lake Parks

Thrashers Lake

The final lake park is Thrashers Lake Park, which is located along Thrashers Lake. This 36-acre lake is very similar to Stonehouse Lake in the fact that swimming is not allowed, but boating is. Central to this park is a boat launch, which allows visitors to put in non-gasoline power boats. Nearby is a sizable parking lot with space for cars, trucks, and boat trailers, as well as a restroom facility, multiple picnic tables, and a playground.



Sports Parks

Coolwell Park

The only park in the Amherst County catalog primarily used for sports is Coolwell Park. Centrally located just south of the Town of Amherst, Coolwell Park is home to multiple sports fields, courts, and the Coolwell Community Center. Sports fields include space for one (1) regulation soccer field, one (1) U-12 field, two (2) U-10 fields, one (1) U-6 field, a baseball/softball field, and two (2) basketball courts. Coolwell Park also has a nature trail, a covered pavilion, picnic tables, horseshoe pits, a bocce ball court, restrooms, and an outdoor amphitheater. As the only park that hosts a county-owned recreational field, Coolwell is home to many of the county’s recreational league sports, mainly soccer.





Community Centers

Coolwell Community Center

Coolwell Community Center is especially popular among the county's older residents offering dancing classes, bingo, and other events for the county's older residents to come together and enjoy one another's company. Senior Sites currently meet at Coolwell. With a large central room, an attached kitchen, and restrooms, Coolwell offers a space for meetings, events, and celebrations. As a single-story building, Coolwell is ADA accessible, allowing all residents, regardless of their mobility, the ability to use the facility. Residents can rent the Coolwell Community Center for events. Demand for this space is very high, with the center being rented out most weekends.



Community Centers

Monroe Community Center

Monroe Community Center is also very popular but serves more as a space for instruction and classes rather than large gatherings. Home to Amherst County's Recreation and Tourism Office, this community center has classroom space for instructors to host classes and organizations to host meetings. With amenities like Wi-Fi, the Monroe Community Center is more conducive to instruction, but efforts are being made to diversify the center's offerings. Monroe Community Center also has a softball field, which is currently in the process of being upgraded to encourage more use of the facility. Presently, the Monroe Community Center is not fully ADA compliant, with the second floor being inaccessible for people using wheelchairs or those who cannot climb stairs. Like Coolwell, space in this community center is available for rental.





Instructional Space at The Monroe Community Center



First Floor Hallway

Parks

Grade: B

Amherst County's parks are generally in good condition, with some awaiting upgrades to improve the park-going experience:

- Signage may be needed in some areas
- Surveyed amenities found to be in working order, aesthetically pleasing, and adequate to meet community needs

Opportunities to expand recreational opportunities:

- Add new amenities
- Ensure ADA accessibility to new and existing facilities
- Rehabilitate underutilized amenities
- Beautification efforts
- Expand existing park passport program to recreation centers, new county parks, and trails. Add QR codes at each passport location for visitors to view online interactive pages for cultural and environmental education

Community Centers

Grade: C

Community Centers are a portion of the system that likely needs more attention moving forward. Both centers are functional and provide a safe and comfortable environment to host events; however, it is clear both buildings need improvements.

Both Community Centers need the following improvements:

- General maintenance
- Current technology such as projectors, TVs, and Wi-fi

The Monroe Community Center needs the following improvements:

- ADA accessibility, with the second floor inaccessible for people using wheelchairs or unable to climb stairs
- Repairs for peeling paint, damaged windows, and other physical damage from years of use

All of these issues are pressing and showcase the need for financial investment in these community centers by the county to ensure continued use and the ability of the department to offer modern, aesthetically pleasing, and accessible gathering spaces in the future.

Existing Conditions

Programming

Much of Amherst County's Recreation and Tourism Department's programming centers around partnerships with other organizations. These partnerships are made to offer residents of the county programming that the county would not be able to provide themselves with, either due to funding or staffing. Current programs revolve around youth sports, senior citizens, and connecting citizens to groups for specific outings or events. The following is a list of seasonal or ongoing programs offered directly or supported by Amherst County:

Youth Sports

Sport	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
U6 - Soccer	•		•	
U8 - Soccer	•		•	
U10 - Soccer	•		•	
U12 - Soccer	•		•	
U18 - Soccer	•		•	
Adaptive Soccer			•	
Pick-Up Soccer	•	•	•	
Basketball				•
Football			•	
Cheerleading			•	
Youth Baseball	•			
Youth Softball	•			
Pickleball	•	•	•	•
Wrestling				•





Elizabeth Parr, 2024

Existing Conditions

Senior Focus Programing

Senior-focused programming takes the form of three focus areas: health & wellness, dancing, and socialization. The first of these focuses is an ongoing Aging Well Exercise Program offered at the First Baptist Church in Monroe by a YMCA instructor. These classes are \$25 monthly and take place for an hour (10-11 AM) on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Senior-focused activities and programs are located at the Coolwell Community Center. This includes table and card games, arts and crafts, local shopping and sightseeing trips, classes on nutrition, health screening, and potlucks. This group is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 AM – 2 PM and on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10 AM – 2 PM. Bingo is another popular program offered on Fridays (10 AM – 12 PM) at the Coolwell Community Center. Costs to attend are \$2 per card or \$3 for two cards.





Youth Sports

Arts / Cultural Programing

Currently, the county offers Art Tuesdays in conjunction with the Amherst Virginia Art Society at the Monroe Community Center. From 10 AM to 12 PM on Tuesdays, the society comes together to share ideas, support each other as artists, and enjoy fellowship. Events and activities associated with this group are posted routinely on Facebook and the department's website. County residents are offered one (1) free class per person with the option of joining the society for \$25 per year; this membership includes all classes for the year.

Dancing is another popular program with three (3) types of dance classes offered. Line-dancing classes are one of these, which are offered on a rolling basis at the Coolwell Community Center on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. This class costs participants \$35 for a six-week session. A second offering is Round Dancing Classes, which are also available at the Coolwell Community Center. These classes are given in eight-week sessions throughout the year with varying levels of difficulty offered. Costs for a session are \$144 per couple, \$72 per person, and \$44 for youths. The final type of dancing offered is Square Dancing with the Blue Ridge Stars. These classes are also offered at the Coolwell Community Center, with two-hour classes taking place on Thursday evenings (7-9 PM). Costs for attending are \$50 per person, with the first two sessions being free.



Opportunities for Art Classes

Programming: Overall Conditions

In general, Amherst County has a well-rounded offering of programming. This is especially true of the county youth sports, where participation is high, partnerships are long-standing and growing, and community members are active and supportive. All typical youth sports are represented (soccer, baseball, football, softball, basketball), and growing support for other sports (wrestling, pickleball, flag football) is evident. There is still room for improvement in this area, particularly when it comes to offering clinics, but overall, recreational sports are a strong asset. Additionally, programming geared towards seniors is robust and highly popular among that age group. Areas that are currently lacking are programming geared towards the arts and education. Although an art class is offered, there is a need for expanded classes targeted toward youth and specific art forms (ceramics, watercolors, paper crafts, etc.). Nature-based education and outdoor-focused programming are other avenues that are underserved by the county. Educationally, the county currently has a catalog of partners to create these types of offerings; however, efforts to codify these programs are still needed. Gardening, tree identification, camping, swimming, canoeing, or kayaking are all programs that would fall under this category and provide residents with new and unique recreational experiences not currently offered through the county.





Community Engagement

Purpose:
Receive and analyze feedback from county residents in order to find what facilities and programs are meeting county needs, as well as find unmet needs, or what residents say should be improved

Community Engagement

Community input is a crucial element of a long-term plan and is especially important for this Parks and Recreation Master Plan. With community resources highly utilized by the public, ensuring that the county's parks and community center meet the current and future needs of the county's residents will be essential to creating a forward thinking and proactive plan. To do this, the master planning process included multiple public engagement tools, including pop-up sessions, a robust community survey, and focus groups.



Focus Groups

An important element of the community input process was the focus group. These groups gathered together Amherst County officials, community partners, and knowledgeable stakeholders to inform the planning process, evaluate existing long-term plans, begin to examine future plans, and better understand how the county's parks and community center integrate into the fabric of the community. Eight (8) sessions were held at the Monroe Community Center on January 24th and 31st, 2024. These sessions focused on Indoor activities, the Monacan Nation, schools and adjacent partners, special communities, rivers, special events, ballfields, and trails & biking. Information and feedback collected during these sessions were directly incorporated into the recommendations and strategies outlined later in this report.



Pop-Up Sessions

Early in the planning process, Hill Studio and County staff attended three (3) pop-up sessions at community events. These events included the Virginia Wine and Garlic Festival (October 14th, 2023), the Amherst County Fair (October 21st, 2023), and the Halloween Spooktacular (October 27th, 2023).

"Pop-up" public input tents focused on introducing as many people as possible to the planning process and how they can take part. At each event, Hill Studio staff set up a booth that included large maps showcasing all the county's parks, boards for voting on future amenities, handout cards that pointed residents to our online survey, and at least two representatives from Hill Studio and the County to answer questions.



Pop-Up Tent @ Amherst County Fair - October 21, 2023



Pop-Up Tent @ Virginia Garlic and Wine Festival - October 14, 2023



Interactive Posters @ Virginia Garlic and Wine Festival - October 14, 2023

Community Engagement

Community Survey

Utilizing an online survey tool called Maptionnaire, Hill Studio, along with County staff, developed a community survey that asked residents for feedback, recommendations, and options on the County's current parks and recreation centers. Integrating map-based elements, this survey allowed takers to add pins to make comments, and allocate funds to a park based on what they saw as most important. Midway through the survey, an additional page was added to allow residents to voice their desires for a handful of new properties that the County had acquired since the beginning of the project. This survey was distributed via handout cards given to booth visitors and through the County's social media. At its completion, this community survey garnered 156 responses. This Community Survey was divided into parts, asking participants to answer questions about each park in the county's system. These questions were related to usage, user perceptions, desired amenities from future development, and demographics.

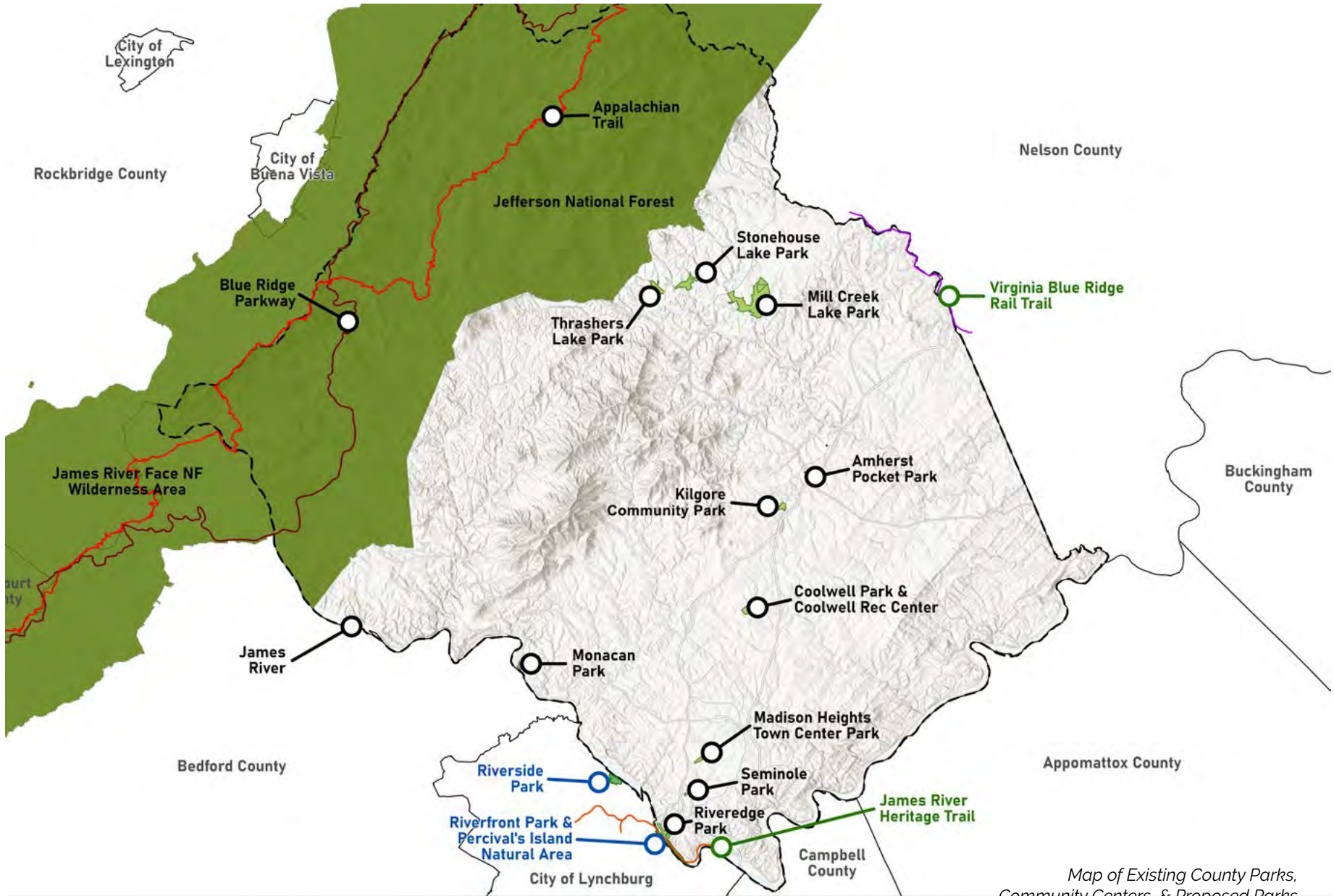
Perceptions of County Parks

Average rating of the overall quality of the park system: 2.97



This gives the park system a roughly neutral overall quality among citizens.

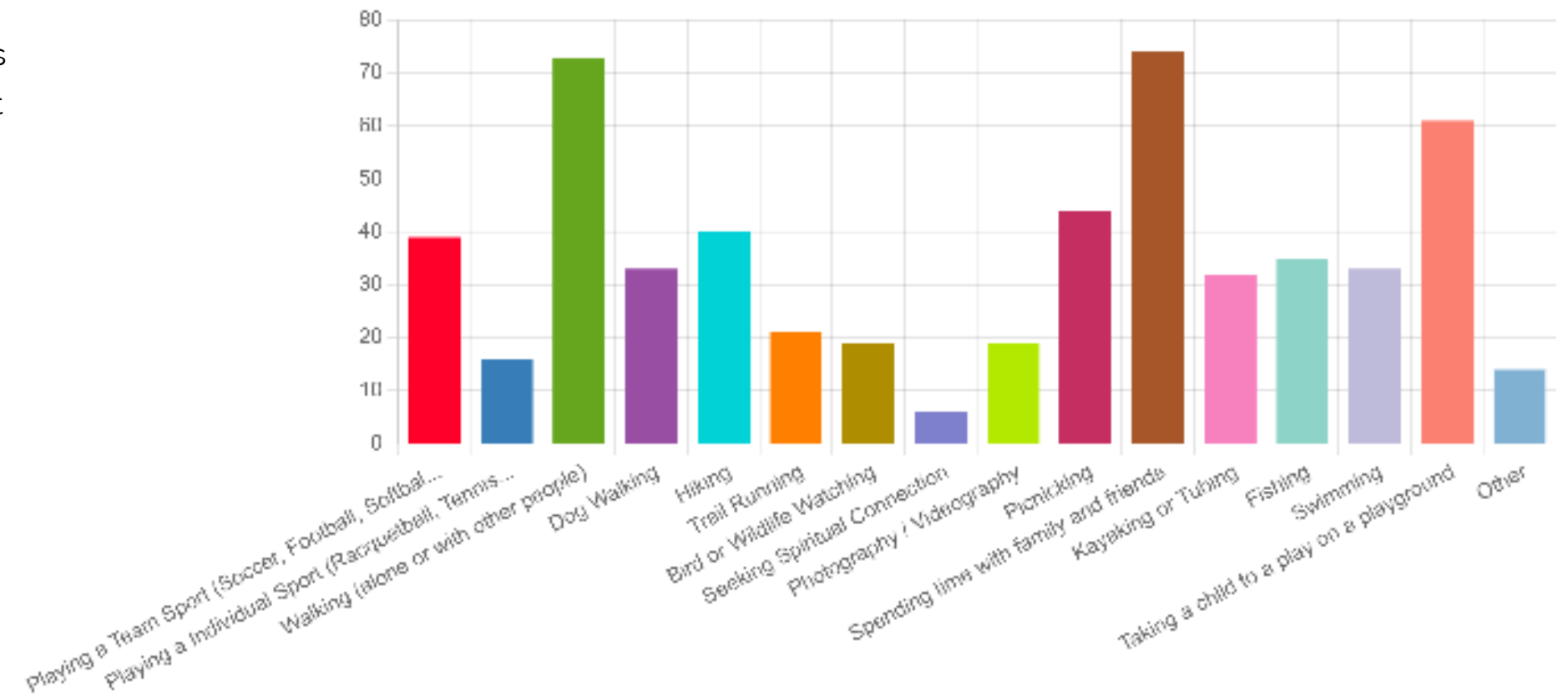
Approximately 63% of survey respondents ranked the park system higher than 2.97



Map of Existing County Parks, Community Centers, & Proposed Parks

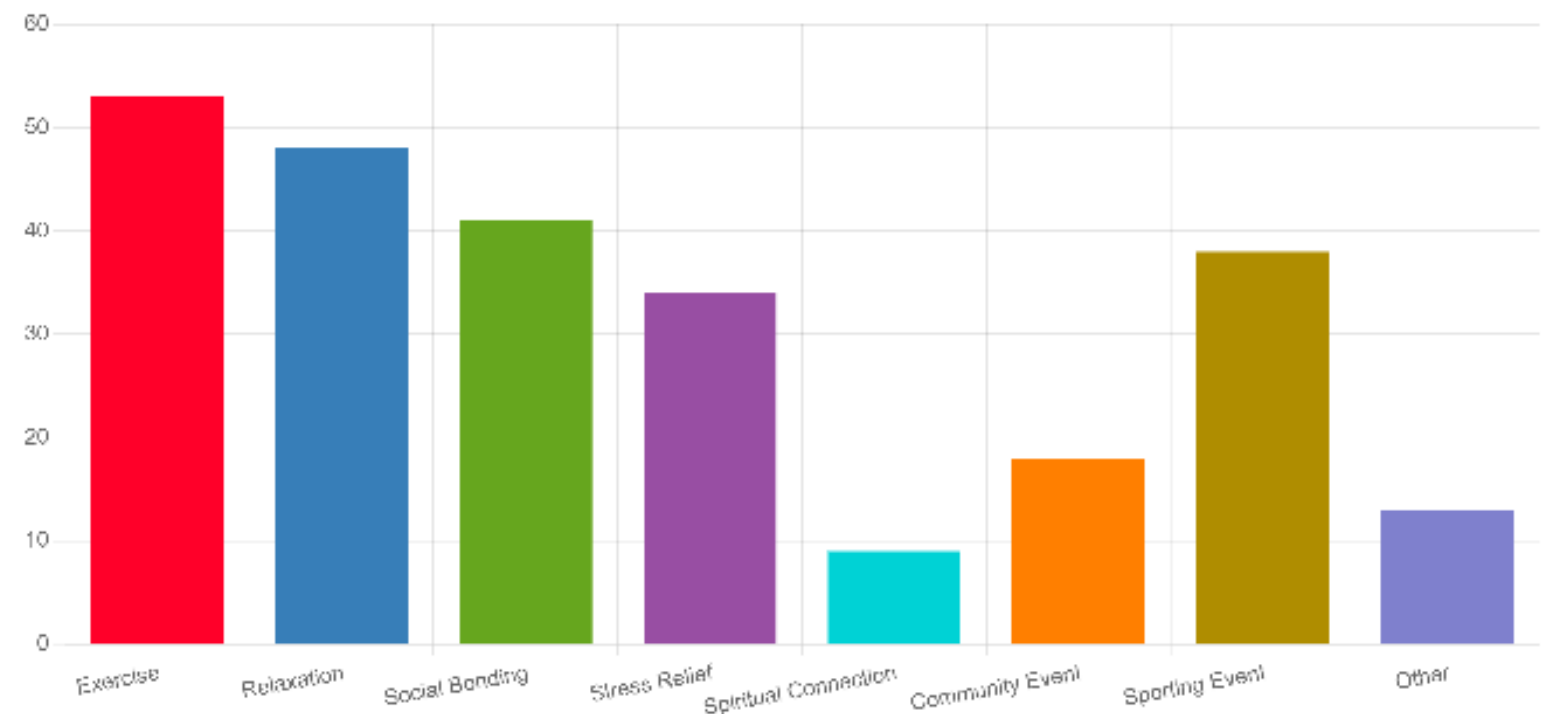
When asked what activities visitors typically engage in, the three most popular among survey responses were:

1. "Spending time with family and friends" (74 responses)
2. "Walking (alone or with other people)" (73 responses)
3. "Taking a child to play on the playground" (61 responses)



When asked what had motivated them to visit any Amherst County park in the last 12 months, the four most popular answers were:

1. "Exercise" (53 responses)
2. "Relaxation" (48 responses)
3. "Social Bonding" (41 responses)
4. "Sporting Event" (38 responses)



Graphs taken from Maptionnaire Survey analysis

Community Engagement

Perceptions of County Parks

Survey takers were also asked to note one thing they thought would be most impactful in improving the county's parks. Some common responses were:



More Trails

Improved Accessibility

Disc Golf Course

Splash Pad

More Playgrounds

Swimming Pool

Restrooms

Improved Lighting

Mountain Biking Trail

Self-Guided Activities

Public Art

More Pavilions

Most Requested Improvements:

SPLASHPAD



PLAYGROUND



TRAILS



SWIMMING



DISC GOLF



PUBLIC ART



EVENT SPACE



MOUNTAIN BIKING

Community Engagement

Mapping Survey Responses

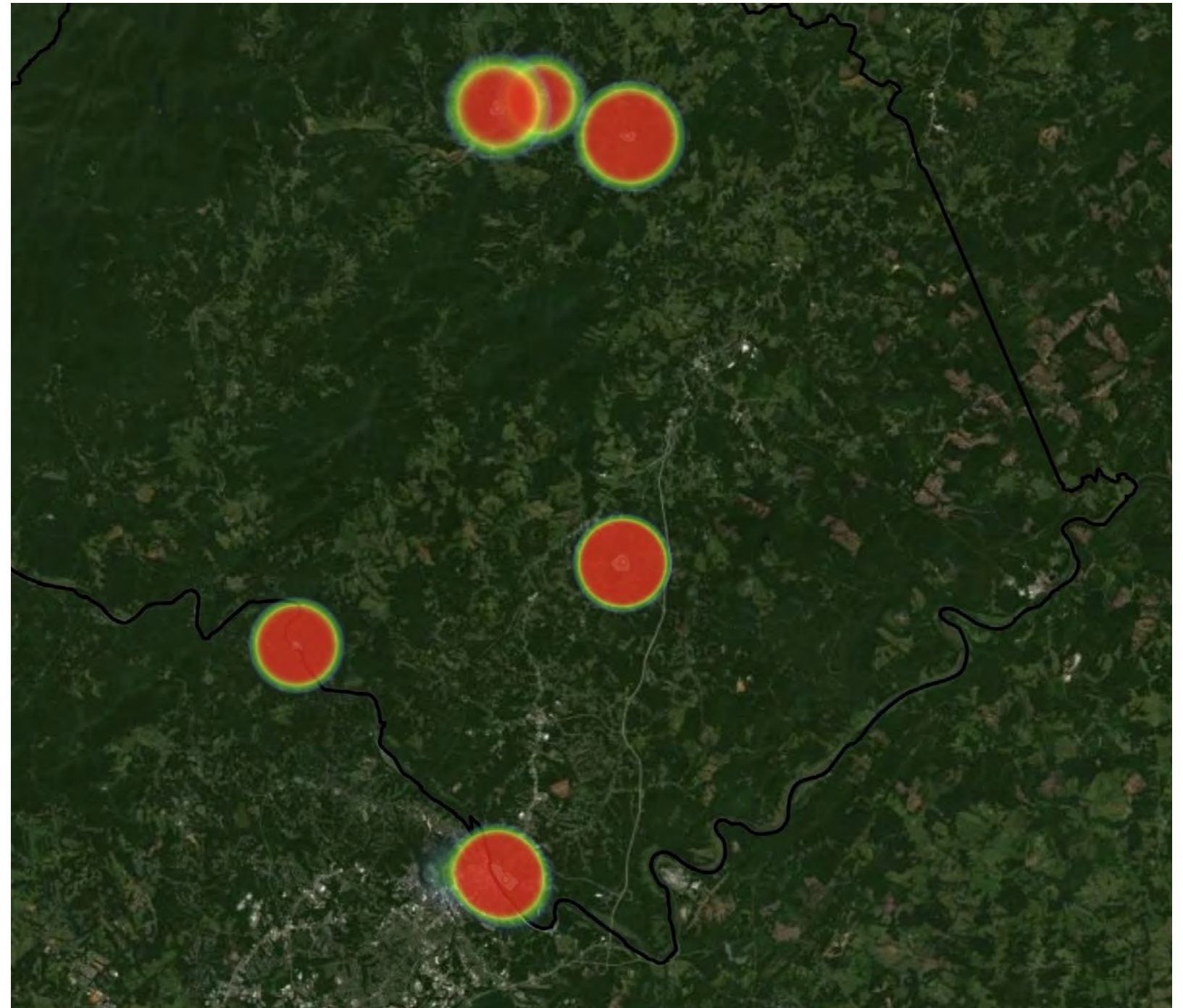
This survey allowed residents to add pins to make comments, and allocate funds to a park based on what they saw as most important. These responses were then mapped to show where respondents had indicated improvements for each park. The Heat Maps shown represent results from part of our community engagement survey. The "hotspots" in these parks show where citizens value additional park programming such as walking trails, shaded seating, more restrooms, and places to play. Analyzing these heat maps helped inform the design of these parks for Amherst County.

These heat maps are for each existing park in Amherst County:

- Riveredge Park
- Monacan Park
- Mill Creek Lake Park
- Coolwell Park
- Stonehouse Lake Park
- Thrashers Lake Park



Heat map showing locations of survey comments within a park



Heat map showing survey comments for all existing County Owned Parks

Overall Perception of Community Centers

When asked about Community Centers, the most popular reasons respondents gave for using a community center were:

- 1. "I've never visited a community center" with 46 responses or 29%
- 2. "Community Events" with 37 responses or 24%

This response indicated that, overall, the county's community centers are not reaching many residents. This may indicate a need for community centers to focus more on diversifying programming to encourage use among non-traditional user groups and expand the center's reach beyond the county's older residents, as well as advertise offered programs and events.



Monroe Community Center - Community Center & Softball Field

Among those who have visited a community center, when asked what their motivation to visit a community center in the last 12 months, the most popular responses were:

- 1. "Personal interest in an event" at 25 responses
- 2. "Social Bonding" at 13 responses
- 3. "Exercise" at 9 responses

Lastly, those who had visited a community center were asked what one thing they thought would be most impactful in improving the county's community centers. These are some common suggestions:

Improve Advertising

Improve Social Media

Fitness Classes

Updated Softball Field

Events for Young Children

Update Centers

Swimming Pool

Programs for Adults



(Left) Typical Classroom | (Right) Second Floor Hallway



Coolwell Community Center (Lower Center) in Context of Coolwell Park



(Left) Interior of Coolwell Community Center | (Right) Coolwell Community Center Sign

Community Engagement

Riveredge Park

Among respondents, roughly 61% of respondents had visited Riveredge Park in the last 12 months, with the remaining 39% indicating they had not. This equates to Riveredge being the second most visited park in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of Riveredge Park, survey respondents had a favorable view of the park, with an average rating of 3.58. This rating is higher than the park system overall and is the system’s third ranked park.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities at Riveredge Park that they have personally used. Among the options provided, the most popular was access to the James River, with 41% of respondents indicating they had accessed the River at Riveredge Park. The second most popular amenity was the park’s boat launch, which 24% of respondents noted having used the boat launch.

When asked what amenities needed to be added to Riveredge Park to better meet the community’s needs, the most requested amenity was “Trails” representing 47.1% of respondents. The second most requested facility was “Restrooms,” with 43.1% of respondents reporting this need. The third most requested amenity was “Improved Pathways,” with 37.2% of respondents noting this need.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide “other” amenities that they would like to see added at Riveredge Park. These are some of the amenities that were suggested:



Riveredge from the air



Heat map showing survey comments for Riveredge Park

61 percent of respondents visited **Riveredge Park** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.58

Most popular amenities: River Access, Boat Launch

Most requested amenities:

Trails, Restrooms



Heat map showing survey comments for Monacan Park

39 percent of respondents visited **Monacan Park** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.5

Most popular amenities: River Access, Playground

Most requested amenities:

Trails, Restrooms

Monacan Park

Among respondents, roughly 39% of respondents had visited Monacan Park in the last 12 months, with the remaining 61% indicating they had not. This equates to Monacan being the third least visited park in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of Monacan Park, survey respondents had a favorable view of the park, with an average rating of 3.5. This rating is higher than the park system overall and is tied as the system’s fourth ranked park.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities at Monacan Park that they have personally used. Among the options provided, the most popular was access to the river, which 58.8% of respondents noted having used Monacan Park as an access point to the James. The second most popular amenity at Monacan was its playground, with 56% of respondents indicating they had used this facility. Other popular amenities included the park’s restrooms (50%), the Picnic Area (35.3%), and the Boat Launch (38.2%).

When asked what amenities needed to be added to Monacan Park to better meet the community’s needs, the most requested amenity was a tie between “Trails” and “Restrooms”, each representing 29.4% of respondents. The second most requested facility was a tie between “Water Fountains / Bottle Refilling Stations” and “Improved Pathways for Walking,” with 26.5% of respondents noting this need. The third most requested amenity was “Seating Areas” at 23.5%.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide “other” amenities that they would like to see added at Monacan Park. These are some of the amenities that were suggested:



Monacan Park from the air

Community Engagement

Mill Creek Lake Park

Among respondents, roughly 56% of respondents had visited Mill Creek Lake Park in the last 12 months, with the remaining 44% indicating they had not. Mill Creek Lake is the third most visited park in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of Mill Creek Lake Park, survey respondents had a favorable view of the park, with an average rating of 3.95. This rating is higher than the park system overall and is the system’s highest ranked park.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities at Mill Creek Lake Park that they have personally used. Among the options provided, the park’s picnic tables were the most popular, with 59.1% of respondents indicating they had used the picnic tables in some fashion. The second most popular amenity was a three way tie between its playground, lake access, and swimming area, with 54.5% of respondents noted having used each of these facilities.

When asked what amenities needed to be added to Mill Creek Lake Park to better meet the community’s needs, the most requested amenity was “Improved Pathways for Walking” representing 43.2% of respondents. The second most requested facility was “Water Fountains / Bottle Refilling Stations” with 40.9% of respondents noting this need. The third most requested amenity was “Trails,” a facility not currently offered at Mill Creek Lake, with 38.6% of respondents reporting this need.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide “other” amenities that they would like to see added at Mill Creek Lake Park. These are some of the amenities that were suggested:



Mill Creek Lake Park from the air



Heat map showing survey comments for Mill Creek Lake Park

56 percent of respondents visited **Mill Creek Lake Park** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.95

Most popular amenities: Picnic Tables, Lake Access, Swimming Area

Most requested amenities:

Improved Pathways, Water Fountains / Bottle Refilling Stations, Trails



Heat map showing survey comments for Coolwell Park

62 percent of respondents visited **Coolwell Park** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.6

Most popular amenities: Multi-Purpose Sport Fields Playground

Most requested amenities:

Water Fountains / Bottle Refilling Stations, Restrooms, Trails

Coolwell Park

Among respondents, roughly 62% of respondents had visited Coolwell Park in the last 12 months, with the remaining 38% indicating they had not. This equates to Coolwell being the most visited park in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of Coolwell Park, survey respondents had a favorable view of the park, with an average rating of 3.63. This rating is higher than the park system overall and is the system's second highest ranked park.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities they used personally at Coolwell Park. Among the options provided, the most popular amenities were Coolwell's Multi-purpose sports fields, with 58.6% of respondents indicating they had played soccer or football on these fields, as well as the playground, which 58.6% of respondents noted having used. Other popular amenities included the park's restrooms (46.6%), Picnic Area (36.2%), Nature Trail (34.2%), and Community Center (31%).

When asked what amenities needed to be added to Coolwell Park to better meet the community's needs, the most requested amenity was "Water Fountains / Water Bottle Refilling Stations," with 58.5% of respondents noting this need. The second most requested amenity was restrooms to supplement or replace the park's existing facilities at 45.3%. The third most requested amenity was the addition of new trails to supplement the park's existing Nature Trail, with 37.7% of respondents citing this need.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide "other" amenities that they would like to see added at Coolwell Park. These are some of the amenities that were suggested:

Disc Golf Course

More Bathrooms

Walking Track

Swing Sets

Concessions

Fence along Roadway



Coolwell Park from the air

Community Engagement

Stonehouse Lake Park

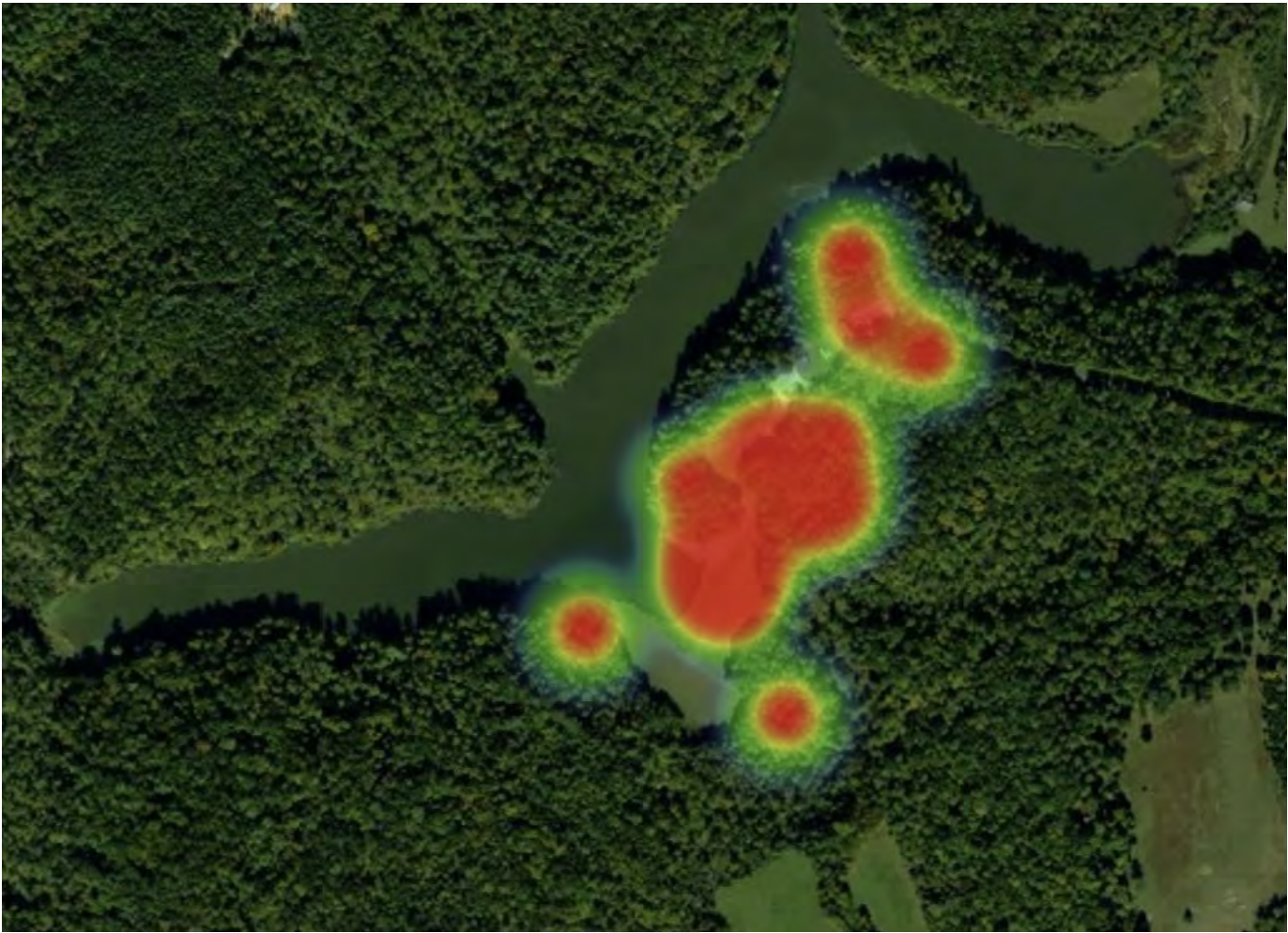
Among respondents, roughly 17% of respondents had visited Stonehouse Lake Park in the last 12 months, with the remaining 83% indicating they had not. Stonehouse Lake is the least visited park in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of Stonehouse Lake Park, survey respondents had a favorable view of the park, with an average rating of 3.5. This rating is higher than the park system overall and is tied for the system’s fourth ranked park.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities at Stonehouse Lake Park that they have personally used. Among the options provided, the most popular was lake access, with 9.2% of respondents indicating they had visited the lake. The second most popular amenity was the park’s restrooms, which had been used by 7.9% of respondents, followed by the park’s playground (5.3%).

When asked what amenities needed to be added to Stonehouse Lake Park to meet the community’s needs better, the most requested amenity was a tie between “Seating Areas” and Trails,” each representing 6.6% of respondents. The second most requested facility was “Restrooms” with 5.3% of respondents noting this need. The third most requested amenity was “Water Fountains / Bottle Refilling Stations” with 3.9% of respondents noting each of these needs.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide “other” amenities that they would like to see added at Stonehouse Lake Park. These are some of the amenities that were suggested:



Heat map showing survey comments for Stonehouse Lake Park



Stonehouse Lake Park from the air

17 percent of respondents visited **Stonehouse Lake Park** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.5

Most popular amenities: Lake Access, Restrooms, Playground

Most requested amenities:

Seating Areas, Trails, Restrooms, Water Fountains / Bottle Refilling Stations

Perfect S



Heat map showing survey comments for Thrashers Lake Park

22 percent of respondents visited **Thrashers Lake Park** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.13

Most popular amenities: Playground, Picnic Tables, Restrooms

Most requested amenities:

Trails, Seating Areas, Improved Pathways, Restrooms, Water Fountains / Water

Bottle Refilling Stations

Thrashers Lake Park

Among respondents, roughly 22% of respondents had visited Thrashers Lake Park in the last 12 months, with the remaining 78% indicating they had not. This equates to Thrashers Lake being the second least visited park in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of Thrashers Lake Park, survey respondents had a moderately favorable view of the park, with an average rating of 3.13. This rating is higher than the park system overall and is the system's lowest ranked park.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities at Thrashers Lake Park that they used personally. Among the options provided, the park's playground was the most popular, with 10.5% of respondents indicating they had used it. The second most popular amenity was the park's picnic tables, which had been used by 9.2% of respondents, followed by the park's restrooms (7.9%), and the boat launch (5.3%).

When asked what amenities needed to be added to Thrashers Lake Park to better meet the community's needs, the most requested amenity was "Trails," representing 10.5% of respondents. The second most requested facility was "Seating Areas," with 7.9% of respondents noting this need. The third most requested amenity was a tie between "Improved Pathways for Walking," "Restrooms," and "Water Fountains / Water Bottle Refilling Stations," with 6.6% of respondents mentioning each of these needs.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide "other" amenities that they would like to see added at Thrashers Lake Park. These are some of the amenities that were suggested:



Thrashers Lake Park from the air

Community Engagement

Monroe Community Center

Among respondents, roughly 30% of respondents had visited the Monroe Community Center in the last 12 months, with the remaining 70.% indicating they had not. This equates to the Monroe Community Center being the second most visited community center in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of the Monroe Community Center, survey respondents had a neutral view of the park, with an average rating of 3.1. This rating is slightly higher than the park system overall and places the Monroe Community Center in lower regard than all existing parks and the county’s other community centers. According to survey takers, the Monroe Community Center is the least popular facility in the park system.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities at the Monroe Community Center that they have personally used. Among the options provided, the meeting spaces were the most used amenity, with 61% of respondents (61%) noting that they had used the community center’s meeting spaces.

When asked what amenities needed to be added to the Monroe Community Center to meet the community’s needs better, the most requested amenity was “More Classes” representing 26% of respondents. The next most requested amenity was a tie between “Improved Facilities” and “Cultural Events” denoting 27% respectively.

Survey takers were also asked to rate the activities and events organized at the Monroe Community Center. Based on the response, those who have used the center have a generally favorable view of the center’s current offering, with an average rating of 3.2.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide “other” activities or events they would like to see added at the Monroe Community Center. These are some of the programming that were suggested:



Monroe Community Center from the air

30 percent of respondents visited **Monroe Community Center** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.1

Most popular amenities: Meeting Spaces

Most requested amenities:

More Classes, Improved Facilities, Cultural Events



36 percent of respondents visited **Coolwell Community Center** in the last 12 months

Average rating: 3.13

Most popular amenities: Playground, Picnic Tables, Restrooms

Most requested amenities:
More Classes, Improved Facilities, Cultural Events

Coolwell Community Center

Among respondents, roughly 36.4% of respondents had visited the Coolwell Community Center in the last 12 months, with the remaining 63.6% indicating they had not. This equates to the Coolwell Community Center being the most popular community center in the system among survey takers.

When asked to rate the overall quality of Coolwell Community Center, survey respondents had a favorable view of the park, with an average rating of 4.4. This rating is higher than the park system overall and places the Coolwell Community Center in higher regard than all other county parks and community centers. According to survey takers, the Coolwell Community Center is the most popular facility in the park system.

Survey takers were also asked to identify the amenities they used personally at the Coolwell Community Center. Among the options provided, 80% of respondents noted that they had used the community center’s meeting space, with the remaining 20% reporting they had attended a cultural event at Coolwell.

When asked what amenities needed to be added to the Coolwell Community Center to meet the community’s needs better, the most requested amenity was “more classes,” representing 75% of respondents. The next most requested amenity was a tie between “improved facilities” and “cultural events,” denoting 50%, respectively.

Lastly, survey respondents were asked to provide “other” activities or events they would like to see added to the Coolwell Community Center. These are some of the programming that were suggested:



Community Engagement

As part of the community survey, respondents were asked to provide input on desired amenities in the county’s newly acquired properties and parks that are in development. These include the Amherst Pocket Park, the Kilgore Property near Amherst County High School, and Seminole Park in Madison Heights. The following section will speak to each park individually.

Amherst Pocket Park

When survey respondents were asked to identify the amenities they desired at the in-development Amherst Pocket Park, the most popular amenity was more classes, with 18.7% of respondents choosing this option. The second most requested amenity was improved facilities at 13.3% followed by cultural events with 12% of respondents.

When asked what additional amenities - outside of those listed above - should be added to the park, citizens requested the following:



Amherst Pocket Park from the air

Amherst Pocket Park is in development assessment

Average rating: N/A

Most popular amenities: N/NA

Most requested amenities:

More Classes, Improved Facilities, Cultural Events

Kilgore Community Park was acquired in the last 12 months

Average rating: N/A

Most popular amenities: N/A

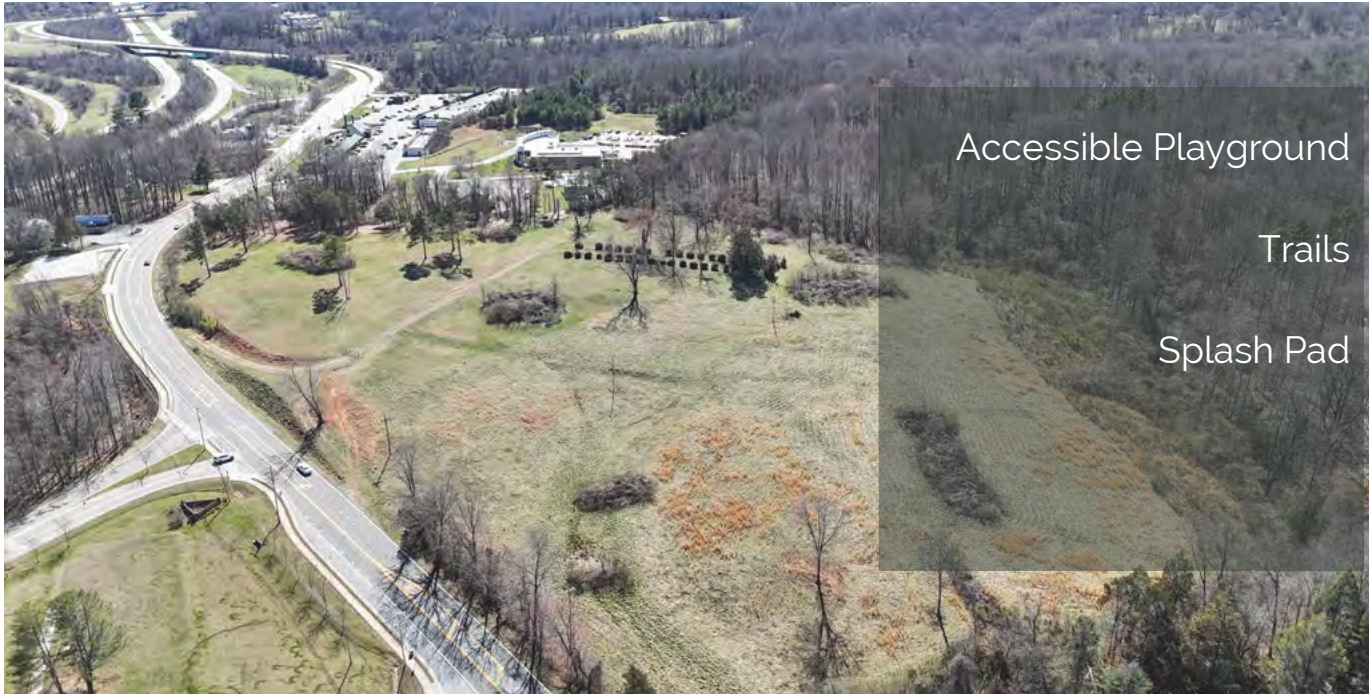
Most requested amenities:

Gazebo, Restrooms, Picnic Shelters, Walking Paths, Water Fountains / Water Bottle Refilling Stations

Kilgore Community Park

When survey respondents were asked to identify the amenities they desired at the newly acquired Kilgore Community Park, the most popular amenity was a gazebo, with 70% of respondents choosing this option. The second most requested amenity was a tie between restroom facilities and picnic shelters at 60%, with walking paths and water bottle refilling stations third at 50% of respondents requesting each.

When asked what additional amenities - outside of those listed above - should be added to the park, citizens requested the following:







Park Facilities Evaluation

Purpose:

Assess existing facilities in more detail for strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to improve amenities for each facility to best meet county recreation needs, and develop schematic plans for facility improvements

Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:
Riveredge Park



Location: 150 Rocky Hill Road,
Madison Heights, VA 24572
Size: 53.88 acres
Type: Regional River Park
Assets:

- James River Adventure Center
- Benches
- Parking
- Sara Lu Christian Trail
- Playground
- Greenspace
- Covered Pavilion
- River Access
- Fishing
- Boat Ramp
- Restrooms
- Kayaking / Canoeing

Description

One of the largest and most visited parks in the county’s system is Riveredge Park. Location in Madison Heights along the James River, this park offers visitors access to the James via a boat ramp, boat launch, and access points along its length. Additionally, Riveredge Park is home to the Upper James River Education Center, a partnership between the James River Association, a non-profit focused on the conservation and stewardship of the James River, and Amherst County. This center offers guided floats and educational opportunities to local schools, organizations, and the general public. Another popular feature of Riveredge Park is the Sara Lu Christian Trail, named after the former Recreation and Parks director; it is a roughly 0.4 miles trail that runs the length of the park and provides visitors the opportunity to take in the James River as well as views of downtown Lynchburg. The park also includes a playground, picnic tables, a large parking lot with space for cars and boats, a covered pavilion, and a green space for picnics or pick-up football or soccer games.

Assessment: A

The quality of Riveredge Park is good, with clear signage, upkeep, and maintenance; it is clear this park is well maintained. Structures such as the James River Center are aesthetically pleasing, modern, and updated and are easily accessible both from the James River and from the parking lot. Other recreational assets, such as the playground and benches, are functional, with no significant signs of wear or damage. Pathways, sidewalks, and boat launch are in good condition.

In terms of areas of improvement, entrance signage, partially along S. Amherst Highway (Route 163) and Rocky Hill Road, is a wayfinding element that should be improved moving forward. This will enhance public awareness of the park and help maintain a cohesive, aesthetically pleasing appearance that complements the county’s existing branding. An additional improvement to Riveredge Park would be the addition of passive recreational opportunities such as trails, addition of lighting for trails, the completion of existing trail projects to improve connectivity to the City of Lynchburg, and the addition of active recreational experiences like sports courts, rock climbing, or an outdoor amphitheater to take advantage of the natural topography.



Riveredge Park Looking Towards Madison Heights



Playground Overlooking the James River at Riveredge Park



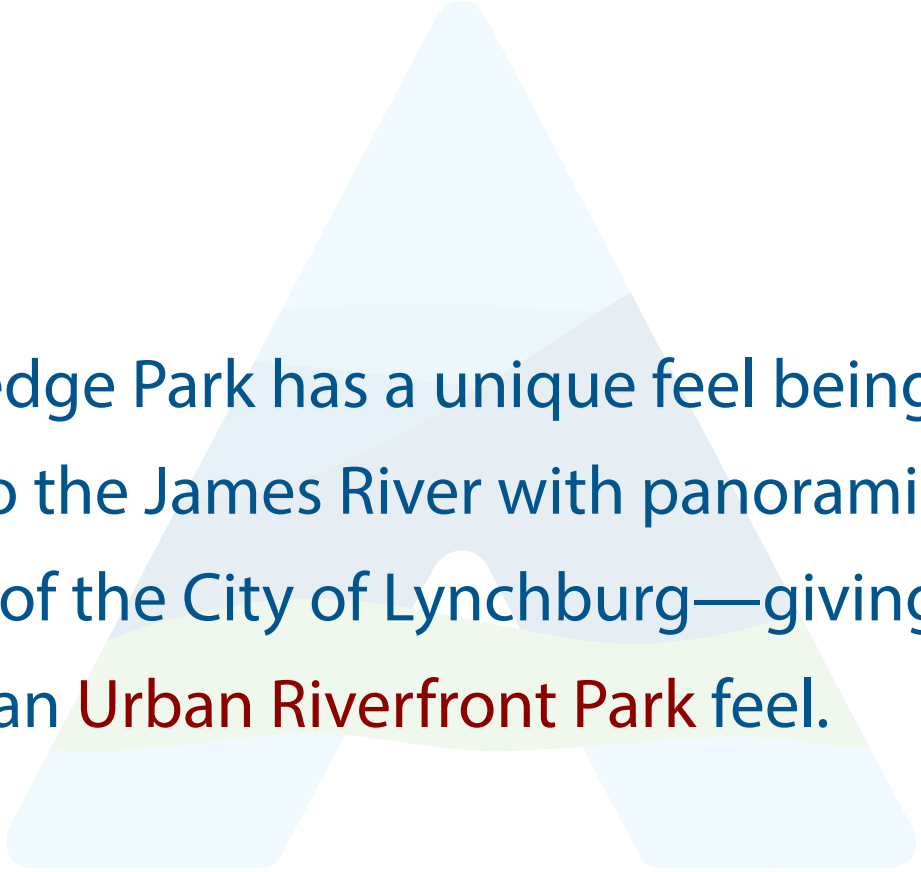
Rock Wall at Riveredge Park

Park Facilities Evaluation

Design Concept:

Riveredge Park

Riveredge Park, located across the James River from Downtown Lynchburg, frames iconic views of Lynchburg's historic urban scene. A large open space meets the river's edge, and provides an opportunity for family's to sit, eat, and play. A themed playground in this space makes it unique and attractive. A long strip of greenway direct adjacent to the open space houses an array of local artwork for public display and interaction. Lastly, a trail leads up the hill to an overlook spot, where the best views of the City can be seen and photographed. These park features give this riveredge park an exciting and iconic feel.

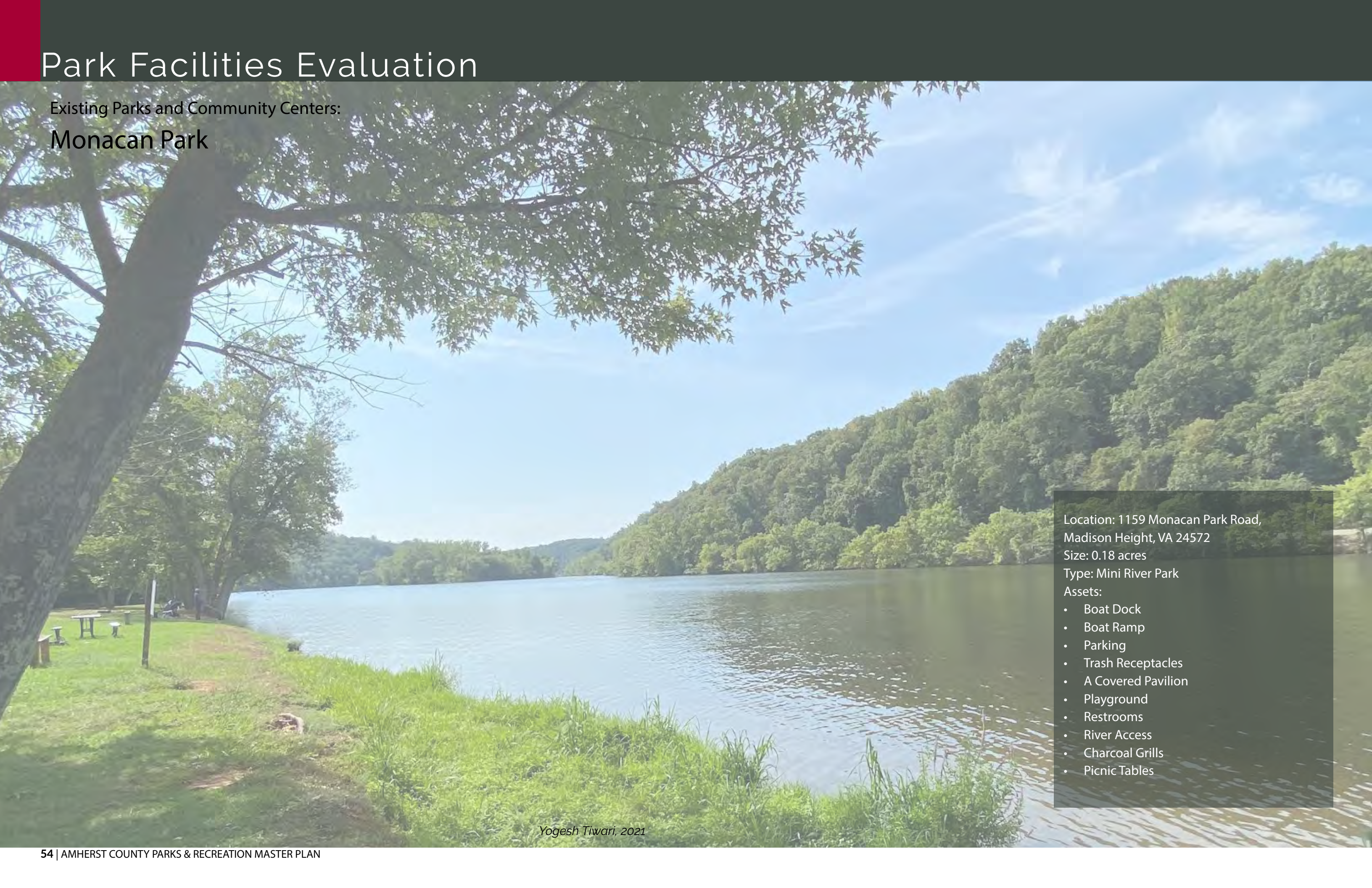


Riveredge Park has a unique feel being next to the James River with panoramic views of the City of Lynchburg—giving it an **Urban Riverfront Park** feel.



Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:
Monacan Park

- 
- Location: 1159 Monacan Park Road,
Madison Height, VA 24572
Size: 0.18 acres
Type: Mini River Park
Assets:
- Boat Dock
 - Boat Ramp
 - Parking
 - Trash Receptacles
 - A Covered Pavilion
 - Playground
 - Restrooms
 - River Access
 - Charcoal Grills
 - Picnic Tables

Yogesh Tiwari, 2021

Description

The second park located along the James River is Monacan Park, located to the west of Elon along Route 652 (Monacan Park Rd). This park offers access to the river via a dock and boat launch; although there is no official beach, visitors can access the water directly. Additionally, this park has a playground, restrooms, a covered pavilion, picnic tables, benches, and a sizable parking lot with spaces for cars and boats.

Assessment: B

Monacan Park is a functional park that, albeit small, offers visitors all the functionality that other parks in the system have to offer. Overall, the park is well-maintained, with the park’s structures being in good condition. Although the park’s restroom facility is somewhat dated, it is fully functional and serves its purpose. Benches, trashcans, and signage were in good condition with no signs of significant wear or damage. Pavement, sidewalks, and the boat launch were in usable condition, but some areas needed attention. The playground is in good condition but is not accessible for people with disabilities.

Due to the park’s size, there is little in the way of large-scale improvements that can be made. Currently, the park is functional and serves its purpose, allowing visitors access to the James River. The addition of a kayak launch would increase river accessibility and limit inconveniences when the boat launch is in active use and could be considered in the future. Pavement is an area that will need minor improvements moving forward. In particular, portions of the boat launch suffer from potholes, portions of the sidewalk in front of the playground are being overgrown by grass, and the parking lot needs striping. However, none of these issues prevent users from using the boat launch, parking lot, or playground.



Monacan Park



Boat Dock and Launch at Monacan Park



Playground at Monacan Park

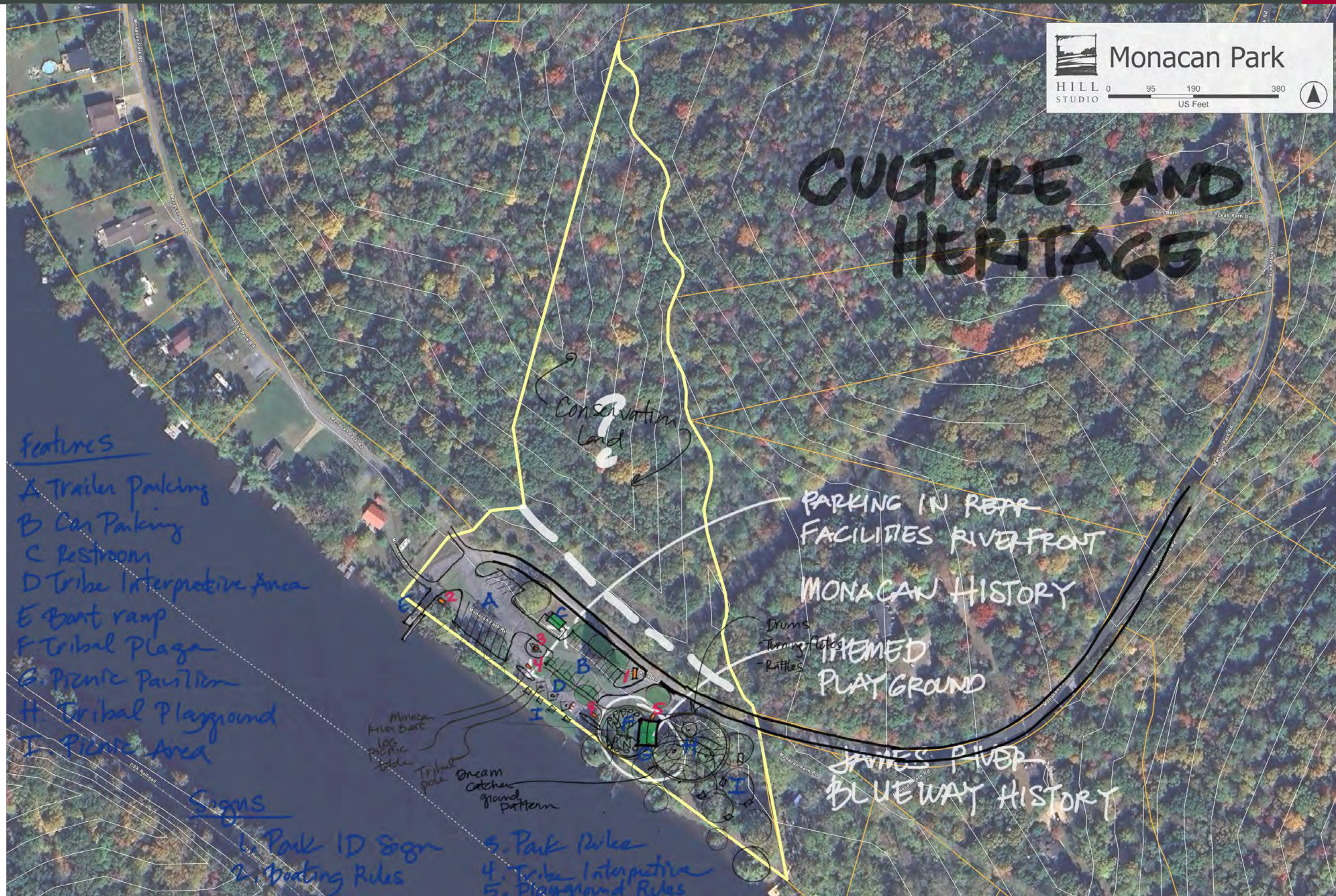
Park Facilities Evaluation

Design Concept:

Monacan Park

Monacan Park, located along the James River, will benefit from an improved layout for the parking lot to improve traffic flow and safety. Upon arrival, a new waterfront plaza will welcome visitors and highlight the history of the Monacan Nation and the James River via interpretive elements. The boat launch will be improved to allow boats and kayaks to access to the river. The playground will be relocated away from the parking lot to improve safety, and will be updated to be accessible and inclusive for people of all abilities, as well as feature elements of Monacan culture.

Monacan Park, although smaller in size, offers reliable and straightforward access to the River. It is the ideal spot to launch a kayak or canoe for some River Recreation, or learn about the **Culture and Heritage** of the Monacan Nation.



Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:
Mill Creek Lake Park



Location: 238 Mill Creek Lake Road,
Amherst, VA 24521
Size: 270 Acres (190 Water / 80 Land)
Type: Lake Park
Assets:

- Boat Dock
- Boat Ramp
- Parking
- Trash Receptacles
- A Swimming Beach
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Charcoal Grills
- Picnic Tables

Description

The largest and most popular of the lake parks is Mill Creek Lake. This 190-acre lake is located in the Temperance area of the county and offers locals the opportunity to swim, boat, and enjoy nature. The most significant draw of this lake is its beach. Mill Creek is a spot where many come to swim and beat the heat, particularly in the summer. Currently, this beach is "swim at your own risk" and does not have a lifeguard station at the park. Another draw of Mill Creek Lake is the boat launch, which allows visitors to boat and fish using non-gasoline-powered boats. This park also has a sizable playground, a restroom, a dock swing, picnic tables, and ample space for people to lay out blankets or play pick-up games. Mill Creek Lake is also a part of the Sleeping Giant Loop birding trail. Currently, this park does not have electricity, which limits the events and activities that can take place there.

Assessment: B+

Mill Creek Lake Park is well-maintained, with the park's structures being in good condition. With a newly installed restroom facility and playground, it is clear that Mill Creek Lake Park is receiving upgrades and routine maintenance. All benches, trashcans, and picnic tables were also found to be in good condition with no sign of significant wear or damage. Currently, Mill Creek Lake Park's parking lot is gravel. This lot also looks new and well-maintained and shows no signs of needing immediate replacement.

Mill Creek is home to a beach, which is unique among the other parks in the county's system and provides a highly utilized but underdeveloped resource. Efforts to build upon this resource will be included in the recommendations portion of this report, but in general, connectivity, increased accessibility, and increasing department income potential are all elements that should be improved in terms of Mill Creek's Beach. Access to electricity is an issue at Mill Creek Lake, with the park not currently supplied with electricity. Ensuring this connection will open this park to new amenities. There are currently no trails around Mill Creek Lake, which limits visitors' ability to walk and fish around the lake's perimeter.



Mill Creek Lake Park



Wildlife (Whitetail Deer) on the bank of Mill Creek Lake



ADA Accessible Playground & Restroom at Mill Creek Lake

Park Facilities Evaluation


Design Concept:

Mill Creek Lake Park

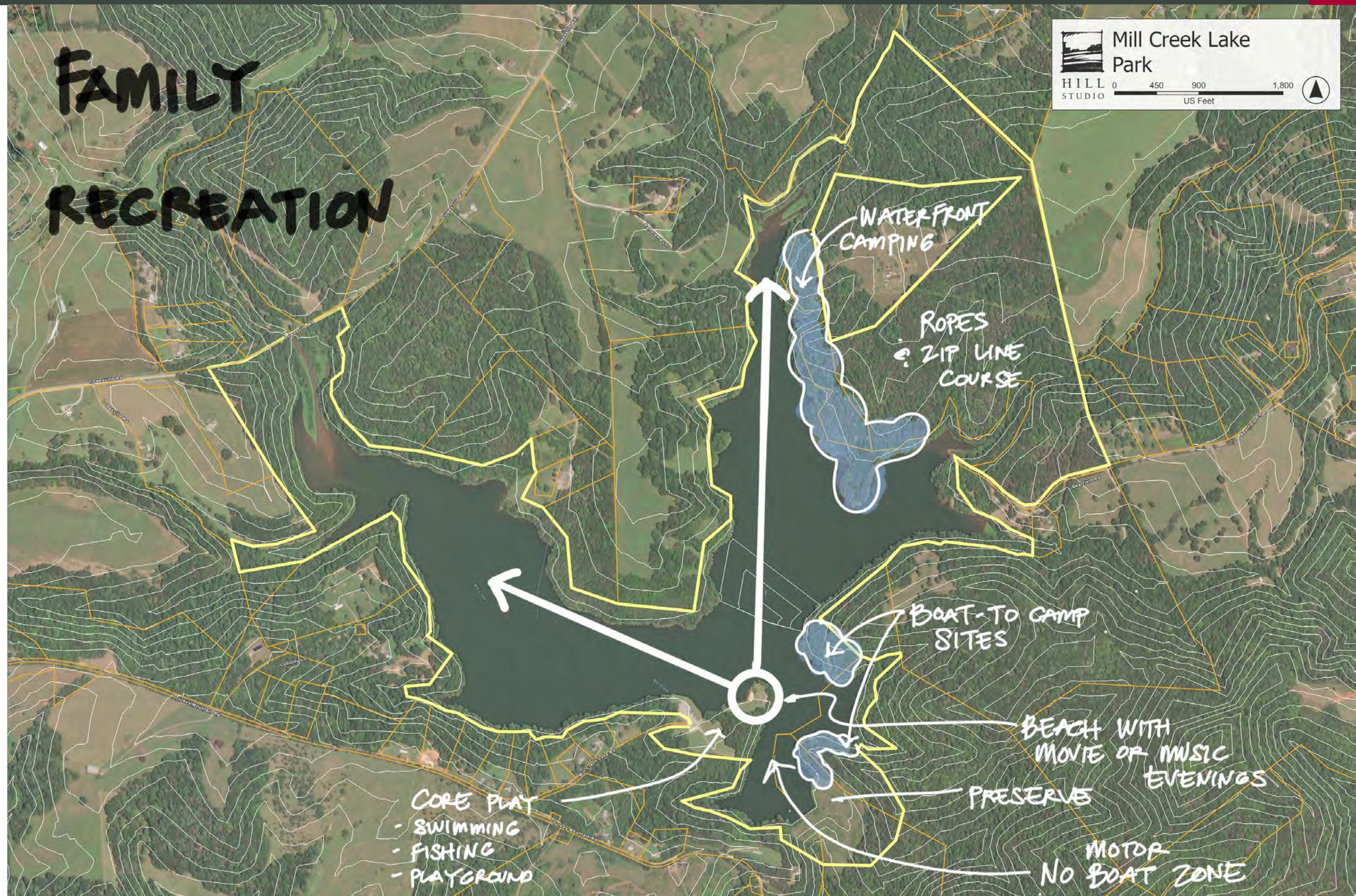
Recreation in and near the water is what Mill Creek Lake Park is all about. This park, surrounding the entirety of Mill Creek Lake, emphasizes water access, outdoor recreation, and family fun.

Water activities including fishing, swimming, and boating are highlighted for those most excited for traditional lake fun.

Unique opportunities such as ropes courses and zipline routes are offered for those seeking a boost of adrenaline and something a bit different. A playground for children ensures there's always something to do, and a beach area offers opportunity for live music events for all ages. Camping areas will be provided for all who wish to stay a while longer and enjoy the lake.

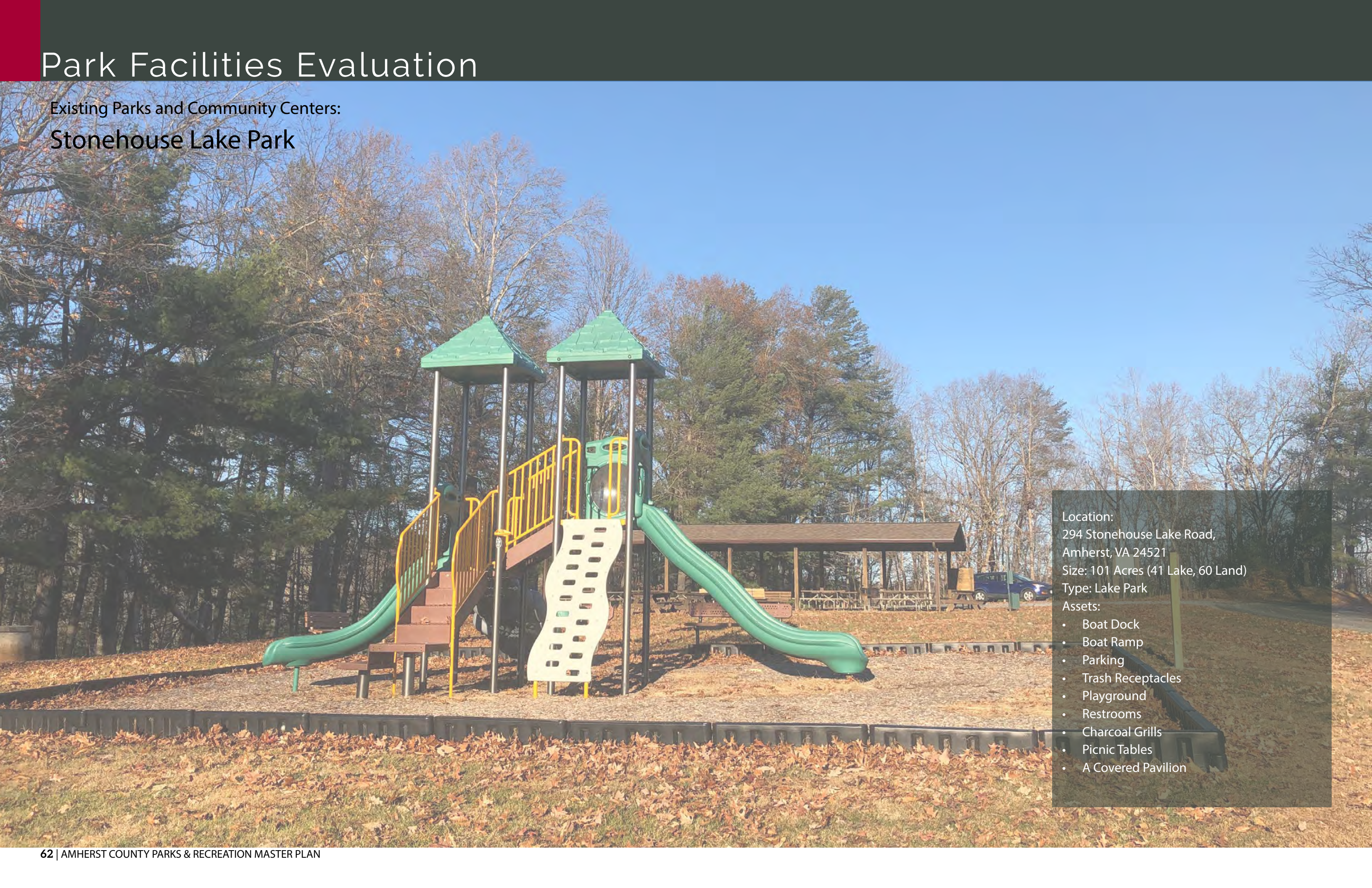


Whether coming for an afternoon
or an overnight stay, Mill Creek Lake
Park provides an abundance of **Family
Recreation** to enjoy on land and in
water.



Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:
Stonehouse Lake Park



Location:
294 Stonehouse Lake Road,
Amherst, VA 24521
Size: 101 Acres (41 Lake, 60 Land)
Type: Lake Park
Assets:

- Boat Dock
- Boat Ramp
- Parking
- Trash Receptacles
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Charcoal Grills
- Picnic Tables
- A Covered Pavilion

Description

Stonehouse Lake is the second largest lake in the park system at 41 acres and is home to Stonehouse Lake Park. This park is also located in the Temperance area of the county. Unlike Mill Creek, Stonehouse Lake is narrower, does not have a beach, and swimming is not allowed. There is a boat ramp with boating and fishing allowed for those using a non-gasoline-powered boat. This park also has three parking lots, two for cars and one for boats, a covered pavilion, a playground, and restroom facilities.

Assessment: C+

The overall quality of Stonehouse Lake Park is good, with the park’s structures being in good condition. The park’s parking lots are adequate to meet demand and show no signs of damage or excessive wear along with the boat ramp. It’s important to note that these parking lots are gravel, and although they do not present a challenge for most visitors, they may present a challenge to people who use wheelchairs. In addition, no sidewalks lead to the restroom facility, which also presents a challenge for people who use wheelchairs or walkers.

The park’s pavilion is sizable, with electricity available. This structure appears to be well-maintained, structurally sound, and of adequate size to meet demand.

There are currently no trails in this park, which limits visitors' ability to explore the property or fish along the bank without having to trek through the woods.

Currently, there are no additional recreational opportunities at Stonehouse Lake Park other than boating, fishing, and playing on the playground. Efforts to improve the recreational offerings at this park should be front of mind to improve this park’s use and ability to host classes, community events, and educational opportunities.



Stonehouse Lake Park



Picnic Pavilion at Stonehouse Lake Park



Parking, Pavilion, Playground, Restrooms at Stonehouse Lake

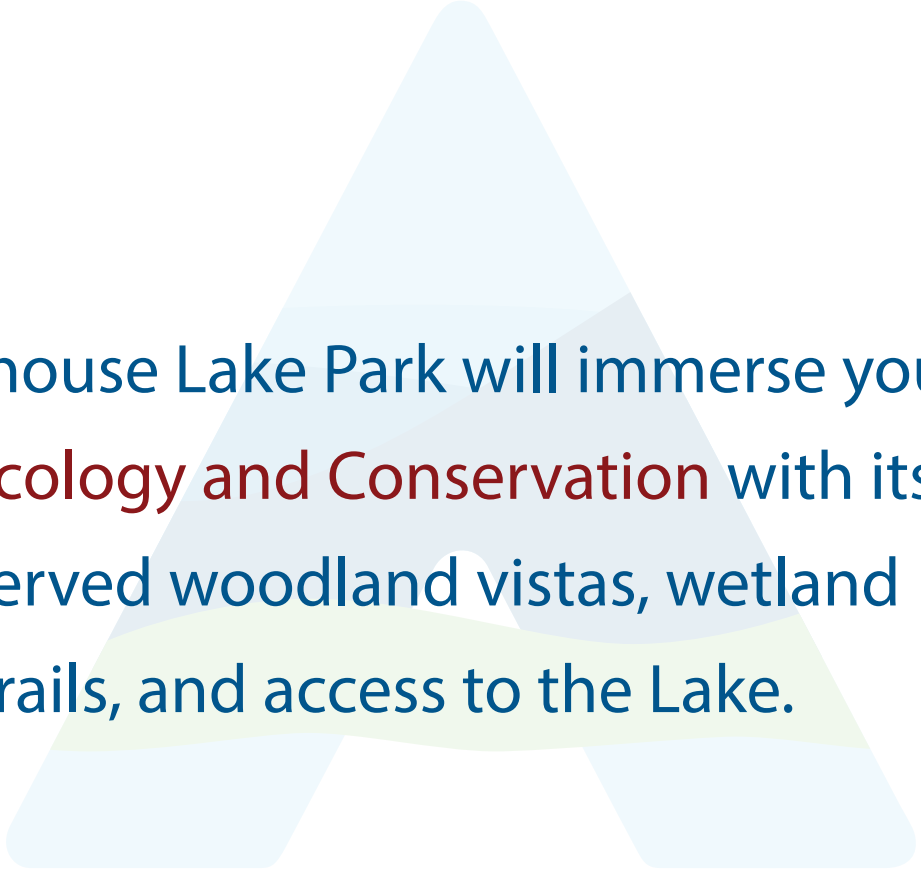
Park Facilities Evaluation

Design Concept:

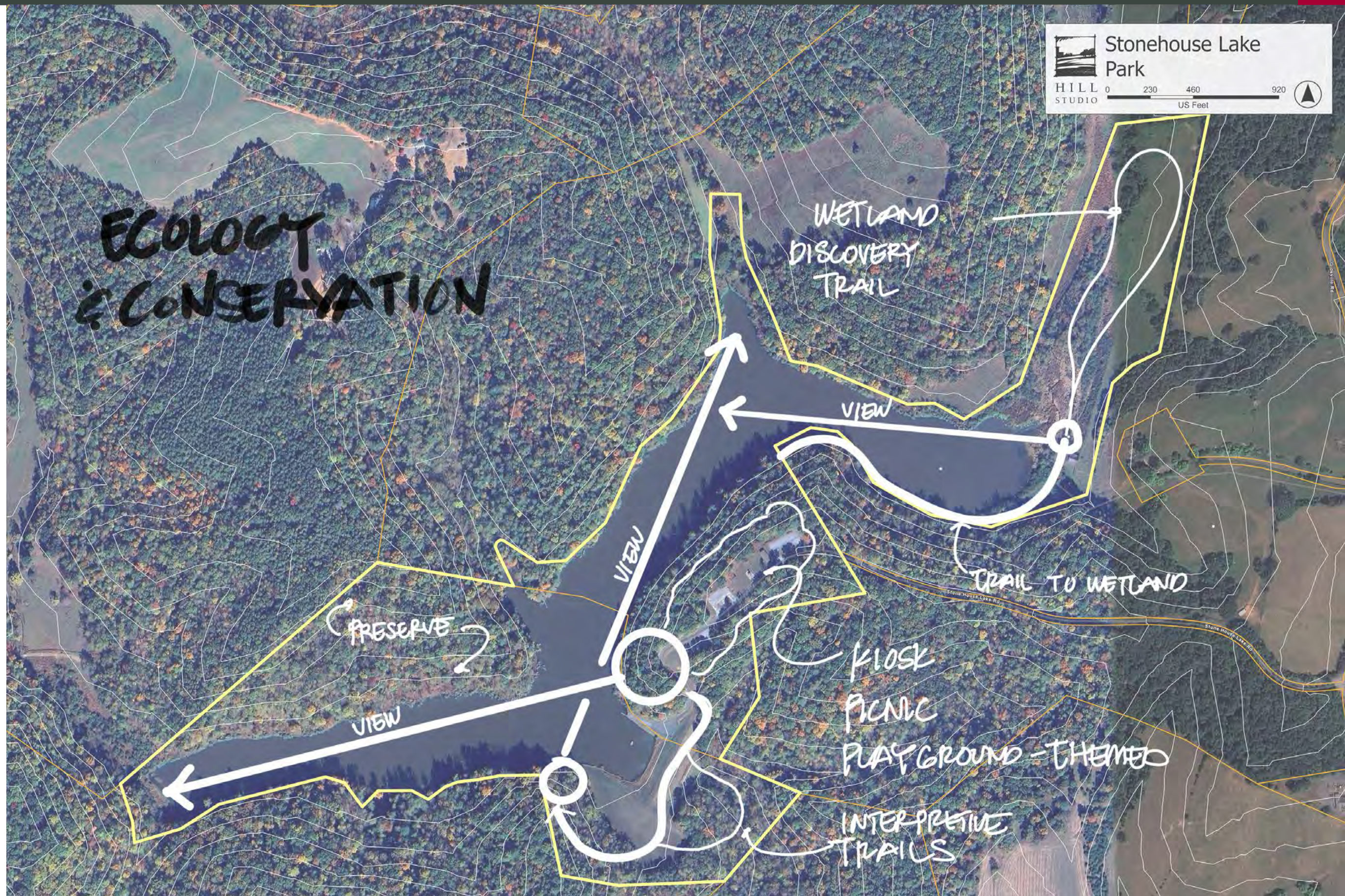
Stonehouse Lake Park

Stonehouse Lake park, bringing people back to nature, is all about ecology and conservation. The park surrounds Stonehouse Lake encompassing the water entirely and includes an abundance of land on its periphery.

Program elements include interpretive trails, designated wetland areas, a nature themed playground, picnic areas, preserved views of the lake, a wetland discovery trail, lake walk pavilion space, and a woodland walk. This park stands out as a gem of the outdoors for those who are seeking long walks in a natural setting, or looking to just relax and unwind by the lake.



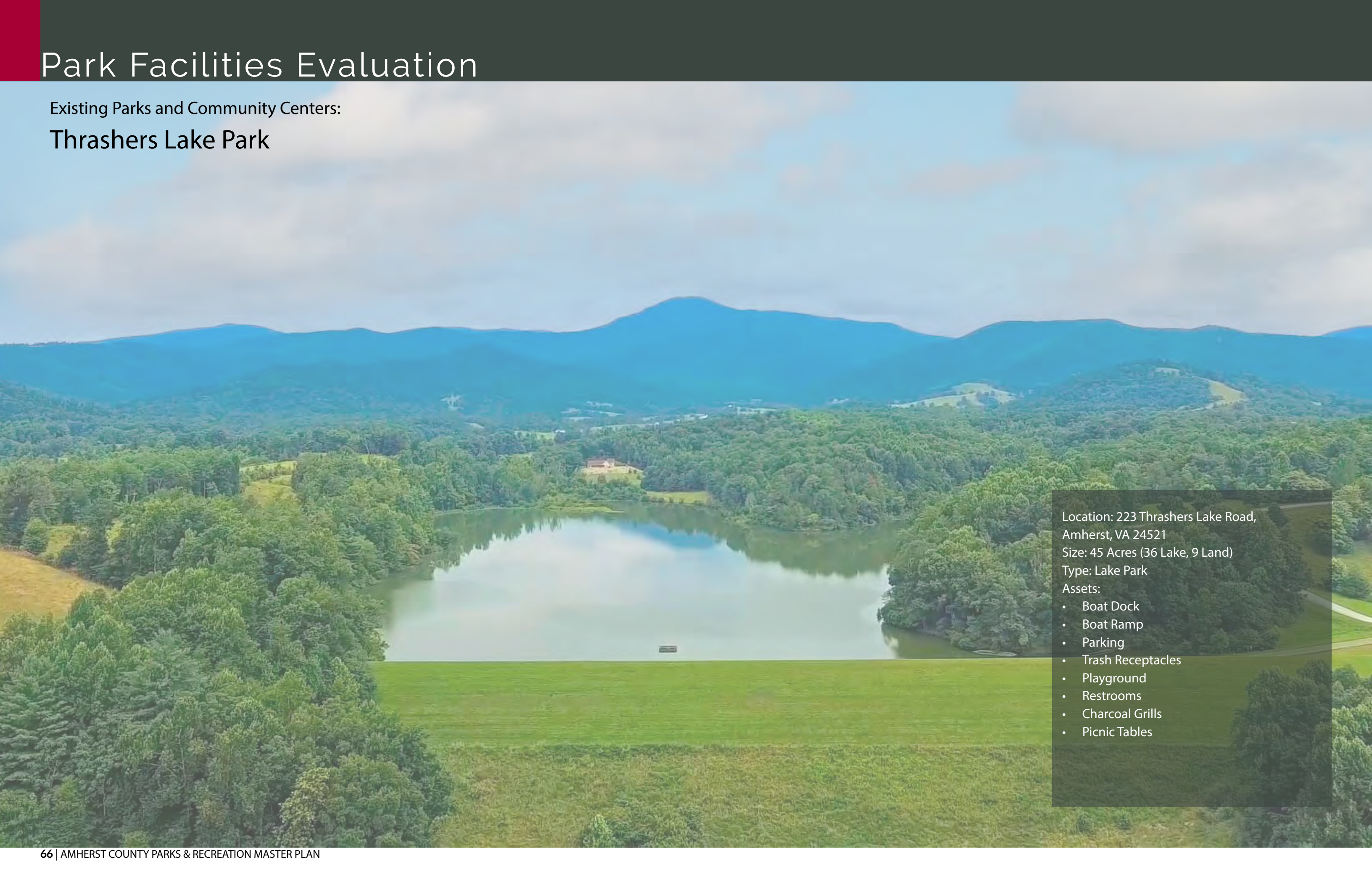
Stonehouse Lake Park will immerse you into **Ecology and Conservation** with its preserved woodland vistas, wetland trails, and access to the Lake.



Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:

Thrashers Lake Park



Location: 223 Thrashers Lake Road,
Amherst, VA 24521

Size: 45 Acres (36 Lake, 9 Land)

Type: Lake Park

Assets:

- Boat Dock
- Boat Ramp
- Parking
- Trash Receptacles
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Charcoal Grills
- Picnic Tables

Description

Thrashers Lake is the third largest lake in the park system at 36 acres and is home to Thrashers Lake Park. This park is also located in the Temperance area of the county. Although not as large as Mill Creek Lake, Thrashers Lake is a wider, open lake that offers fishers more opportunities to spread out. This lake does have a boat ramp for kayaks, canoes, and non-gasoline powered boats, but swimming is not allowed. Thrashers Lake Park is largely split into two parts. The upper section hosts an updated restroom facility, a gravel parking lot, a playground, and multiple picnic tables, and the lower section hosts a larger parking lot for both cars and boat trailers, the boat launch, picnic tables, and a large open field. It is also a part of the Sleeping Giant Loop birding trail, although the park has no official trails.

Assessment: C+

The overall quality of Thrashers Lake Park is good, with the park's structures being in good condition, well-maintained, and showing signs of recent updates (restrooms and playground). The park's parking lots are adequate to meet demand and show no signs of damage or excessive wear along with the boat ramp. It's important to note that these parking lots are gravel, and although they do not present a challenge for most visitors, they may present a challenge to people who use wheelchairs.

Although the existing playground is updated, it does not offer children with mobility difficulties the opportunity to play. The current playground is inaccessible by wheelchair and does not offer activities for children at ground level. In addition, this playground is placed so that people with mobility issues may not be able to access the seating area around the playground due to there being no sidewalks and a bridge that connects the parking lot to the playground. There are currently no trails in this park, which limits visitors' ability to explore the property or fish along the bank without having to trek through the woods. As a result, there are no designated fishing spots or easy ways to access the lake other than the boat dock.

Currently, there are no additional recreational opportunities at Thrashers Lake Park other than boating, fishing, and playing on the playground. Particularly with the field next to the lake, there is room for additional recreational opportunities, such as a multi-use field, in the lower portion of the park. Efforts to improve the recreational offerings at this park should be front of mind to improve this park's use and ability to host classes, events, and educational opportunities.



Thrashers Lake Park




Playground & Restrooms at Thrashers Lake Park

Park Facilities Evaluation

Design Concept:

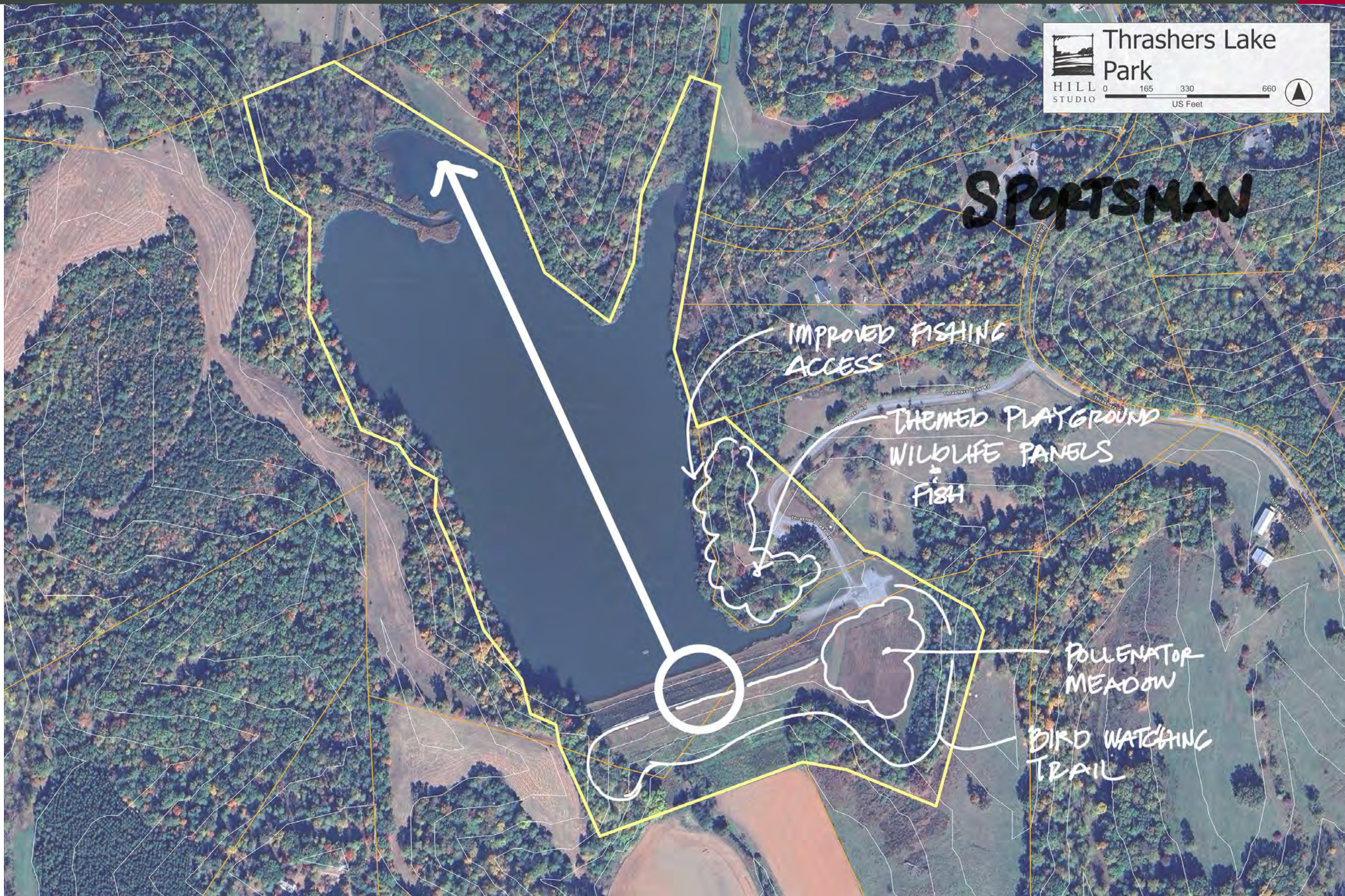
Thrashers Lake Park

Thrashers Lake park is another hidden gem for those who love the outdoors. Improved fishing access gives this park a sportsman-like feel, and birdwatching trails add to the appeal for those who love animals and the great outdoors. A wildlife themed playground will complement this nature lovers' paradise, and a pollinator meadow will encourage an abundance of essential pollinators whose contribution to the park's ecology is invaluable.



Thrashers Lake Park is the place to be
for any **Sportsman** wanting to enjoy
wildlife and fishing!

AMHERST
Perfect Slice of Virginia



Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:
Coolwell Park



Location: 640 N Coolwell Road,
Amherst, VA 24521

Size: 33 Acres

Type: Sports Park

Assets:

- Soccer Fields
- Baseball / Softball Field
- Nature Trail
- Basketball Courts
- Playground
- Covered Pavilion
- Restrooms
- Trash Receptacles
- Bocce Ball Court
- Picnic Tables
- Horseshoe Pits
- Community Center
- Amphitheater

Description

The only park in the Amherst County catalog that is primarily used for sports is Coolwell Park. Centrally located just south of the Town of Amherst, Coolwell Park is home to multiple sports fields, courts, and the Coolwell Community Center. Sports fields include space for one (1) regulation soccer field, one (1) U-12 field, two (2) U-10 fields, one (1) U-6 field, a baseball/softball field, and two (2) basketball courts. The park also has a nature trail, a covered pavilion, picnic tables, horseshoe pits, restrooms, bocce ball court, and an outdoor amphitheater. As the only park that hosts a county-owned recreational field, it is home to many recreational league sports, mainly soccer.

Assessment: A

Coolwell is one of the most popular parks in the system and is well-maintained. Structures, facilities, and sports fields were in good condition. A few facilities showed signs of wear and disuse, such as the baseball/softball field, which lacked a dirt infield, and the amphitheater. The park's parking lots are adequate to meet the demand of community events, although it is likely that more parking is needed for larger sporting events. Parking lots were free from noticeable damage, were newly striped, and exceeded the Virginia building code's requirement for ADA parking. The county convenience center is also located at the park, but is not compatible with family recreation. Relocating the convenience center would allow for more recreational space at Coolwell Park.

ADA accessibility is an issue that needs to be addressed, although this problem is not widespread. In particular, accessing the soccer fields from the Community Center parking lot is not an easy task. There is an access path from the northeast corner of the parking lot to the soccer field area, but once the path ends, there are no sidewalks or accessibility features. The only other access point to the fields is a staircase, which is not ADA accessible. It is likely that a more direct path is needed to ensure all visitors are able to access the fields. Another portion of the park that is not ADA accessible is the amphitheater, which in its current form lacks ramps and other accessibility features that would allow people using wheelchairs the ability to access the facility.

Although the existing playground is updated, it does not offer children with mobility difficulties the opportunity to play. The current playground is inaccessible by wheelchair and does not offer activities for children at ground level. Coolwell does offer visitors a trail; however, there is room to increase trails on the property. Although these trails may not be extensive, they have the potential to create educational opportunities and provide ADA accessible trails to the county's residents.

There are no racquet ball or pickleball courts at Coolwell. With the rise in the popularity of pickleball, it is likely that community demand for courts will increase. However, due to size limitations and topography, the development of the new, large-scale courts is unlikely. Instead, focus should be placed on improving the assets already in place in Coolwell Park, increasing accessibility, and ensuring current facilities (restrooms, parking, etc.) are proactively addressing future demand.



Outdoor Amphitheater at Coolwell Park

Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:
Coolwell Community Center



Location: 640 N Coolwell Road,
Amherst, VA 24521
Size: ~ 3,500 square feet
Type: Community Center
Assets:
• Kitchen
• Restrooms
• Large Meeting Room

Description

The Coolwell Community Center, located in Coolwell Park, is especially popular among the county's older residents offering dancing classes, bingo, Senior Sites, and other events for the county's older residents to come together and enjoy one another's company. With a large central room, an attached kitchen, and restrooms, Coolwell offers a space for meetings, events, and celebrations. As a single-story building, Coolwell is ADA accessible, allowing all residents, regardless of their mobility, the ability to use the facility. Residents can rent the Coolwell Community Center for events. Demand for this space is very high, with the center being rented out most weekends.

Assessment: B-

The Coolwell Community Center is functional, centrally located, and a very popular place for community groups to gather and host events. The community center meets this need but lacks the aesthetic appeal or variety of spaces that other community centers offer. In particular, the one large room floor plan works well for group meetings, classes, or events but eliminates the possibility of multiple events taking place at the center at one time.

Large-scale expansion of this building in the immediate future is unlikely due to the placement of the leach field to the building's north and the parking lot to the east and south. However, adding larger restrooms would be a much-needed improvement since the community center currently only offers two restrooms. As the leach field needs to be eventually be replaced in the future, a new leach field can be constructed and the building can be renovated and expanded.

Overall, the Community Center is in good condition, showing no signs of neglect, but it does show its age. Currently, this center meets the community's needs, but it is unlikely that this will be the case as the county grows and more demand is placed on the center. Especially given the demand for educational programming and other amenities that are more common to YMCA-style community centers, Coolwell will likely need refurbishment, a redesign, or an expansion to better meet the needs of the county unless a larger center can be created nearby.



Coolwell Community Center



Interior Meeting Room at Coolwell Community Center

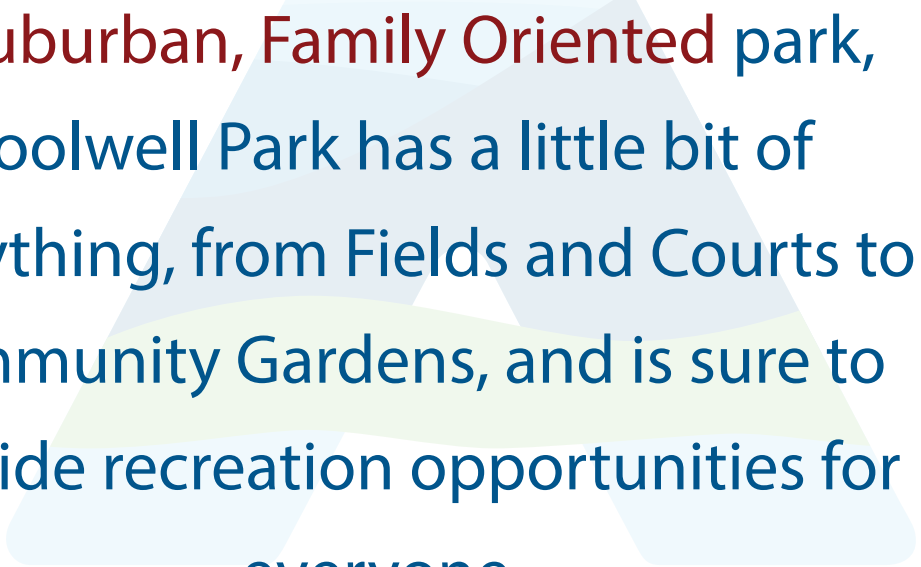
Park Facilities Evaluation

Design Concept:

Coolwell Park

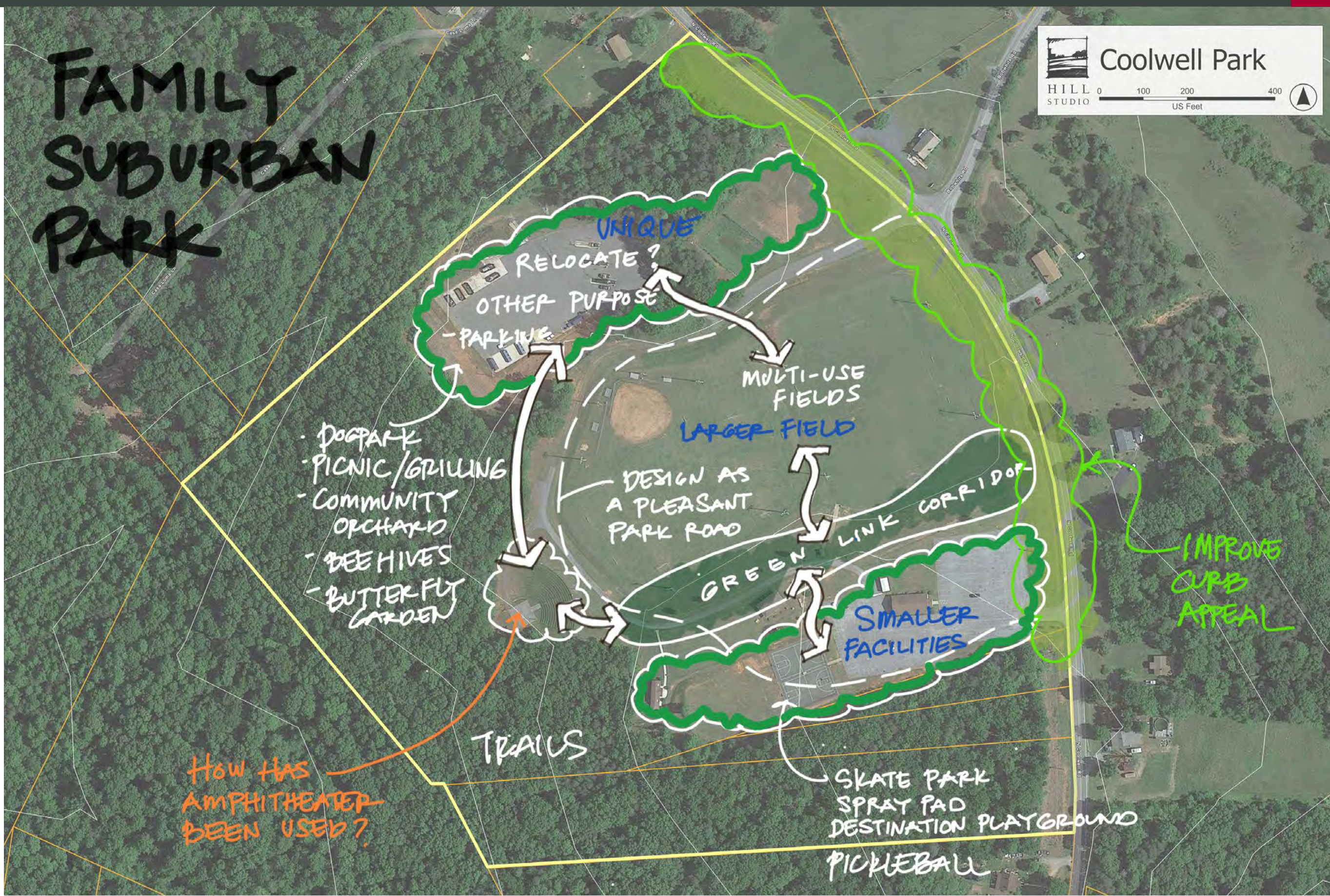
Coolwell Park, due to its existing conditions on the site, has an abundance of opportunity for housing family fun and recreation. This family-centered suburban park is designed around the concept of having larger multi-use spaces in the center, with tertiary nodes of more densely packed activity on the outsides. This park has a little bit of everything, with elements including spaces for all ages of people and all sizes of dogs!

The playground and splashpad will be all the rage for both young and older children. The skatepark, amphitheater, tennis and pickleball courts, and basketball courts provide a range of activities that are high in demand and often appealing to teens and young adults. The convenience center will eventually be relocated to create additional recreation space and improve the overall experience of the park. The picnic areas, walking trails, and meadow garden area serve as quiet and passive recreation spaces that encourages community bonding and wellness. And lastly, the multi-use fields provide a space for high-intensity sports for the whole family to come and watch.



A Suburban, Family Oriented park,
Coolwell Park has a little bit of
everything, from Fields and Courts to
Community Gardens, and is sure to
provide recreation opportunities for
everyone.

FAMILY SUBURBAN PARK



HOW HAS AMPHITHEATER BEEN USED?

UNIQUE
RELOCATE?
OTHER PURPOSE?
- PARKING

MULTI-USE
FIELDS
LARGER FIELD

DESIGN AS
A PLEASANT
PARK ROAD

GREEN LINK CORRIDOR

SMALLER
FACILITIES

TRAILS

SKATE PARK
SPRAY PAD
DESTINATION PLAYGROUND
PICKLEBALL

IMPROVE
CURB
APPEAL

ST
nia

Park Facilities Evaluation

Existing Parks and Community Centers:

Monroe Community Center



Location: 129 Francis Ave,
Monroe, VA 24574
Size: ~ 18,800 square feet
Type: Community Center
Assets:
• Multiple Classrooms
• Restrooms
• Wi-Fi
• Baseball / Softball Field

Description

The Monroe Community Center is also very popular but serves more as a space for instruction and classes rather than large gatherings. Home to Amherst County's Recreation and Tourism Office, this community center has classroom space for instructors to host classes and organizations to host meetings. With amenities like Wi-Fi, the Monroe Community Center is more conducive to instruction, but efforts are being made to diversify the center's offerings. Monroe Community Center also has a softball field, which is currently being upgraded to encourage more use of the facility. Presently, the Monroe Community Center is not fully ADA-compliant, with the second floor being inaccessible for people using wheelchairs or those with difficulty climbing stairs. Like Coolwell, space in this community center is available for rental and activities that can take place there.

Assessment: C

As with the Coolwell Community Center, the Monroe Community Center is functional but not up to the standard of more modern, up-to-date community centers. Lacking audio-visual equipment such as computers, TVs, and projectors, the classrooms at Monroe Community Center cannot provide the functionality that is to be expected from an educational setting. Although the building's classrooms have ample space to meet, they will need improvements moving forward.

The Monroe Community Center also suffers from a lack of routine maintenance, which has resulted in damaged windows and peeling paint. This was observed in most classrooms to varying degrees.

ADA accessibility is another pressing issue for this building. Although classrooms on the first floor are easily accessible, those on the second floor are not ADA accessible. Currently, the only access to the second floor is a set of stairs; there is no elevator or wheelchair accessible method for accessing the second floor. Although this is likely due to the date at which the former school was constructed, this severely limits the ability for all people to use all portions of the building. This issue should be addressed, as much as possible, to increase accessibility and improve the building's overall safety.

In its current form, the Monroe Community Center serves its purpose: a meeting space. However, it is evident that the community center needs attention to fully meet the community's needs moving forward, particularly regarding ADA accessibility, maintenance, and up-to-date technology. Addressing these issues should be a top priority to ensure the center is safe, aesthetically pleasing, fully accessible, and able to host meetings and events with technological components.



Typical Classroom Space at the Monroe Community Center



Exterior of the Monroe Community Center

Park Facilities Evaluation

New Parks:
Seminole Park



Location: 101 High Street,
Madison Heights, VA 24572
Size: 4.67 Acres
Type: Neighborhood Park
Assets:

- Parking Lot
- Event Pavilion
- Picnic Pavilion
- Playground
- Dog Park
- Water Refill Station
- ADA Accessible

Sandy Wallace

Description

Seminole Park opened in October 2024 by the county’s recreation and tourism department. Located in Madison Heights, this park offers a dog park, a playground, two pavilions and a restroom.

Assessment: A

The Park was officially opened on October 15, 2024 by the County Recreation and Tourism department. Seminole Park addresses a need for a small dog park in Madison Heights. Additionally, this park has an ADA accessible sidewalk from the parking lot to the park itself. Event space is not lacking at this site, with two (2) pavilions: a larger pavilion for events and a smaller pavilion for picnics. Also, it has a large user friendly playground for youth of all ages.

Park Facilities Evaluation

New Parks:
Kilgore Community Park



Location: 139 Lancer Lane,
Amherst, VA
Size: 22 Acres
Type: Rural Nature Park

Description

The Kilgore Community Park is a plat of land located in central Amherst County that was recently set aside to construct a new park. This property includes 22 acres of land that currently reside in a conservation easement, with the county pursuing the purchase of an additional 6 acres adjacent to the original property that does not fall within a conservation easement. This property is catty-cornered from Amherst County High School and is situated along South Main Street (BUS 29). This property is also near US 29, with an exit a short distance away, making the property highly accessible by car.

Since this property is within a conservation easement, limitations are placed on what can be developed. All development on the land within the conservation easement must be done in a manner that does not impact the environmental value of the land and does not negatively impact the local ecosystem. Agricultural, Forestry, and passive recreational uses are allowed, but more active uses, such as sports fields, are not permitted. The construction of facilities is allowed, but buildings are limited to 500 Sq ft, and impervious surfaces are limited to 19,000 sq ft, including the building.

Assessment: A

Location: A

The location of this park is a significant benefit of this property. Located along a major thoroughfare in the county, centrally located in Amherst County, and in close proximity to the county's only high school, this future park is well-positioned to be a highly visible and used facility in the park system.

Potential for New Amenities: A

In terms of new amenities, this park is poised to substantially expand the park system's current offering. Although many of the initial projects are likely to take the form of passive recreation such as trails, pathways, picnic areas, or a disc golf course, this 22-acre property has the potential to offer more educationally based programming along with an extensive hiking and cycling trail network, all three of which are currently lacking on county-owned property. Due to the restrictions placed on the initial 22 acres, the likelihood of sports facilities like fields or courts is limited. However, the county's purchase of the identified property will add the possibility of supplementing active recreational amenities. Due to the size of the additional property, 6 acres, new amenities will need to be strategically placed, but the addition of a sports field is possible, if deemed appropriate.

Potential for New Facilities: B

In the initial phase, new facilities, be pavilions or a small education/nature center, will likely be created. Due to the restrictions put on the land, it is unlikely that this park will see extensive development of brick-and-mortar facilities like a new large community center. However, there is potential to add small brick-and-mortar facilities such as restrooms, a skate park, pavilions, an outdoor amphitheater, playground, water feature, or structures associated with an agriculture and/or environmental education center.

Park Facilities Evaluation

Design Concept:

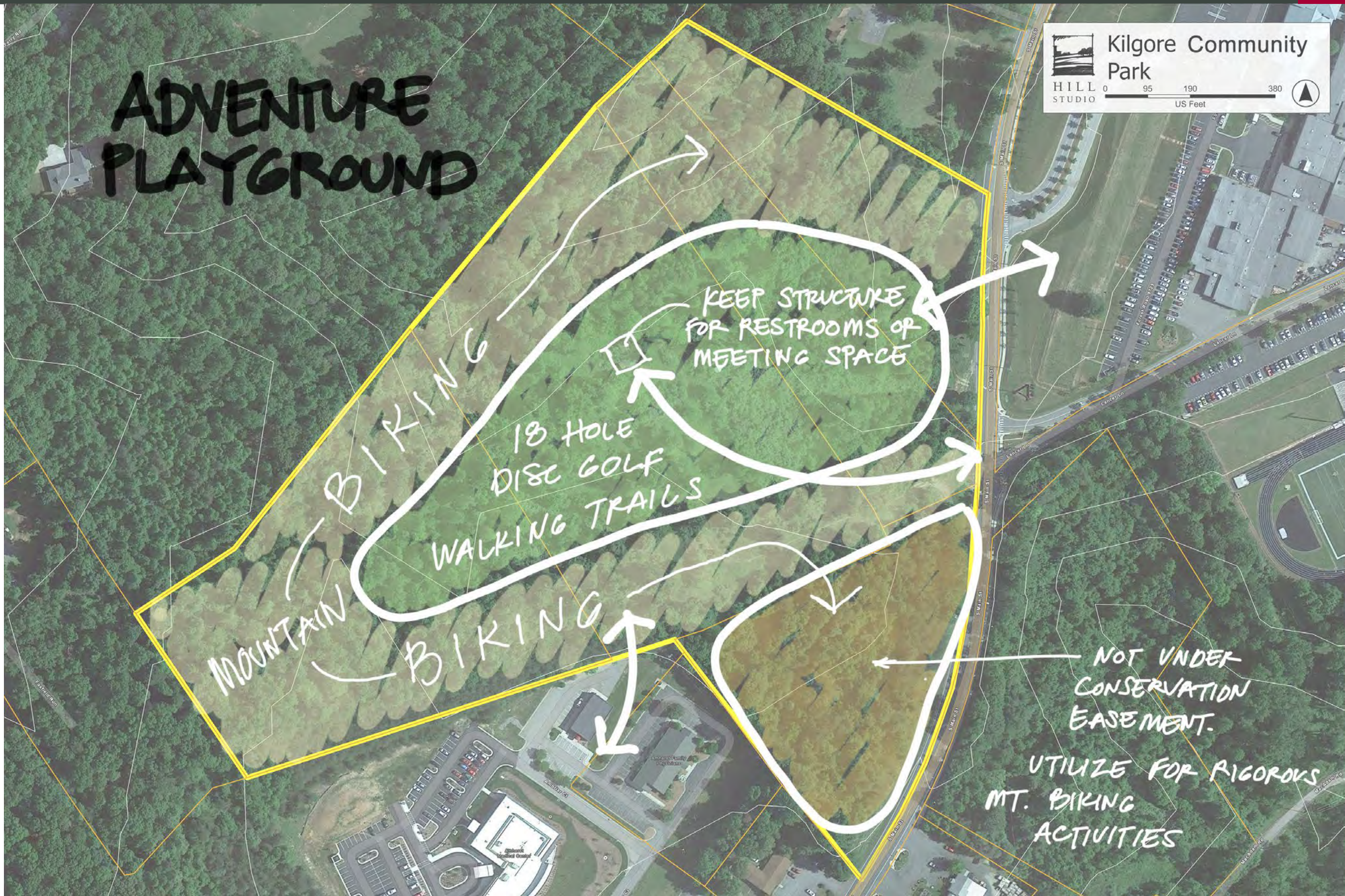
Kilgore Community Park

This park, located on the Kilgore property, invites people to seek outdoor adventures. The Kilgore Community Park will serve as a rustic destination for mountain biking and hiking, as well as and disc golf courses. Buildings will be used for gathering, environmental and agricultural education, and restroom facilities. The park's location next to Amherst County High School provides an excellent opportunity for educational partnerships. Woven throughout these areas will be a network of trails for walking and biking.



Looking for **Adventure?** Kilgore Community Park offers adrenaline focused outdoor recreation.

AMHERST
Perfect Slice of Virginia



Park Facilities Evaluation

New Parks:
Amherst Pocket Park



Location: 113 Mountain View Drive,
Amherst, VA 24521
Size: 0.76 Acres
Type: Pocket Park

Description

The smallest addition to Amherst County's catalog of in-development parkland, the Amherst Pocket Park is located in the heart of Amherst near downtown and other community assets such as Second Stage, the Sheriff's Office, and multiple churches. This park encompasses roughly 0.76 acres between the existing shopping center along Richmond Hwy (Route 60) and the Amherst County Sheriff's Office on Taylor Street. Currently, this site has an existing home, but this home will be either renovated or demolished and rebuilt for community activities. The exterior has rotted conditions in several places and the two gable ends have openings which allow rain into the house, causing considerable damage. A section of exterior wall is missing at the rear gable and will need repair. The central mid-span beam has substantial termite damage, causing the first floor to significantly bow and makes the building unsafe. Additionally, half of the second floor is missing the original floorboards and plywood is in place to provide some walkable surface. These items are the highest priority to address before further construction work can be done to make the building usable. The site has electrical, water, and sewer services.

Assessment: A

Since this park has yet to be planned in a concrete sense, this assessment will primarily be based on the ability of this park to address current shortcomings and supplement existing amenities of the park system.

Location - A

The location of this park is good, with the downtown Amherst just a short walk away. Although parking may be an issue at this park without allowances by other government agencies, this park is well positioned to become a small pocket park that offers those in and around Amherst the opportunity to relax outdoors and enjoy nature.

Potential for New Amenities – B

This pocket park does have the potential to bring some outdoor recreation to downtown Amherst. Although this park will be small and cannot offer more active recreational opportunities, it is suitable for passive outdoor recreation, and has great potential to develop into a community hub for the Town of Amherst. Smaller amenities, such as a community garden, gazebo, walking paths, picnic tables, and benches, are compatible with this park type. Amenities will need to be strategically placed.

Potential for New Facilities - C

It is unlikely that this new park will bring about large-scale brick-and-mortar facilities. Beyond the addition of restrooms or a gazebo, this park does not have the space for more extensive facilities like a large community center or educational facility. This, paired with the park's proximity to Second Stage, makes it likely that this pocket park will supplement this community center and the community at large with outdoor space for social gatherings, classes, events, and enjoying nature.

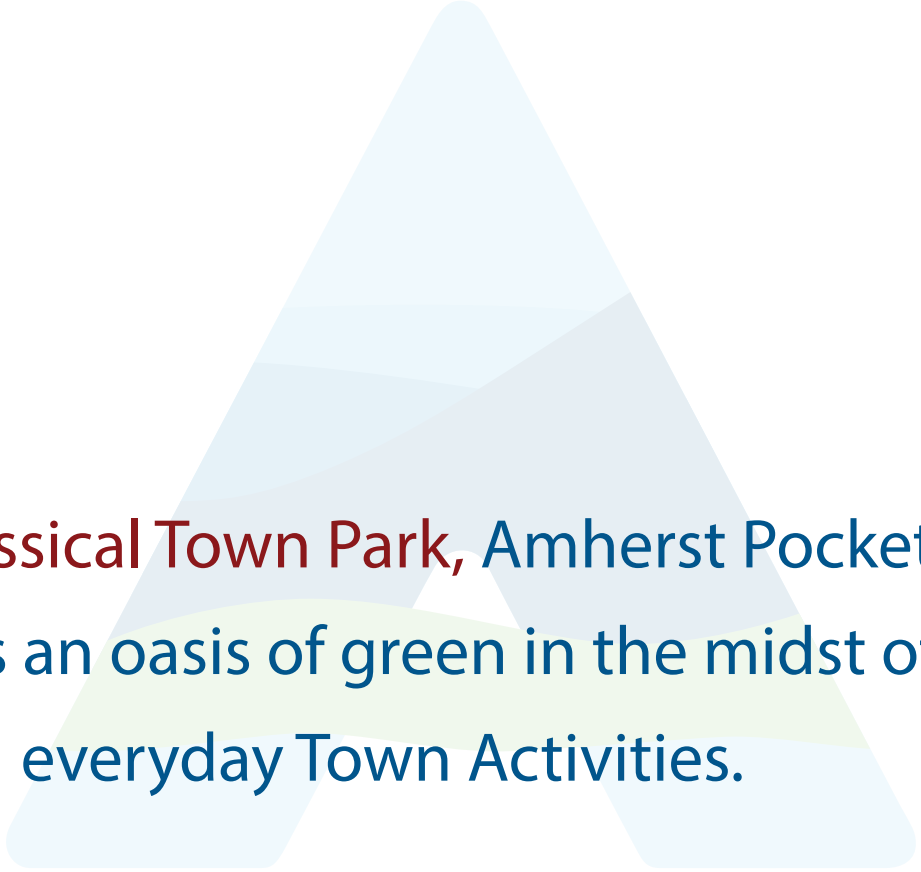
Park Facilities Evaluation

Design Concept:

Amherst Pocket Park

This small park, nestled between government and commerce buildings, serves as a vibrant, green oasis amidst an asphalt jungle. The existing trees and shrubs are mostly in good condition, and should be preserved. This park would thrive as a space for folks to come and visit, walk, sit, eat, and relax throughout the day.

Existing structures on the site have potential for storage or other purposes. A bakery or coffee shop would complement the hustle and bustle of the places of work all around the park. A serene space or solitude garden would give park visitors an opportunity to unwind and relax. Additionally, the park's proximity to Main Street lends itself capable of improving its pedestrian connections throughout downtown.



A Classical Town Park, Amherst Pocket Park is an oasis of green in the midst of everyday Town Activities.







Recommendations

Purpose:
Use information from earlier stages of planning process to design and develop conceptual long term Master Plans for each park so they can best meet the county's recreation needs



- (A) Existing Parking with Improved Striping and Buffers from Playground
- (B) Existing Upper James River Center
- (C) Existing Restrooms
- (D) Existing Boat Launch
- (E) Existing Sara Lu Christian Trail with New Entrance Arch
- (F) Existing Playground with Future Improvements and Expansion
- (G) New Overlook and Trail
- (H) New Entrance Sign, See page 129
- (I) New City of Lynchburg Overlook
- (J) New Picnic Pavilion and Restrooms
- (K) New Art Installations
- (L) New Trail Connection to Horseford Road
- (M) New Footbridge Connection to Percival's Island

The park features improved lighting, a new picnic pavilion and restrooms, and new opportunities to showcase public art. The parking lot will be restriped and add buffers to improve pedestrian and vehicular safety. A new trail meanders up the hill for views of the James River and the City of Lynchburg. Future upgrades to the existing playground make it accessible and celebrate the James River. A new foot bridge provides a pedestrian connection to the James River Heritage Trail.





- (A) Existing Parking with Improved Striping and Buffers from Playground
- (B) Existing Upper James River Center
- (C) Existing Restrooms
- (D) Existing Boat Launch
- (E) Existing Sara Lu Christian Trail with New Entrance Arch
- (F) Existing Playground with Future Improvements and Expansion
- (G) New Overlook and Trail
- (H) New Entrance Sign
- (I) New City of Lynchburg Overlook
- (J) New Picnic Pavilion and Restrooms



- (K) New Art Installations
- (L) New Trail Connection to Horseford Road



This new footbridge provides a pedestrian connection to the James River Heritage Trail via Percival's Island, creating a new pedestrian connection to Lynchburg.



Recommendations

RIVEREDGE PARK

Inspiration:
Riveredge Park



Riverfront path with opportunities for access to the water for outdoor relaxation



Public art illustrating the history of the river



Views of Lynchburg from the proposed lookout point



Public art creating archway at Entrance to Sara Lu Christian Trail



River themed expansion to the playground



Trail for active recreation along the river



View of Lynchburg 1855 by Edward Beyer, a famous German landscape painter who visited Virginia in the 1850s, capturing panoramic views of Virginia towns

CULTURE AND HERITAGE



- A Renovated Parking with New Layout
- B Existing Boat Launch
- C Existing Restrooms
- D New Accessible Fishing Pier
- E New Inclusive Playground
- F New Interpretive Signs
- G New Interpretive Canoes
- H Existing Picnic Pavilion
- I New Entrance Sign, See page 129
- J New Picnic Area in the Woods

The park will feature a variety of improvements. Parking is reorganized and pulled away from the river edge for improved safety and traffic flow. A new plaza will welcome visitors upon arrival to the park, providing a dedicated riverfront to pedestrian park amenities. This waterfront plaza will feature benches for relaxation, as well as various interpretive elements to celebrate the history of the James River and the culture of the Monacan Nation. The boat launch will be improved for better accessibility. A new inclusive playground will be located away from the road and parking lot for improved safety and closer to the tree canopy for shade and comfort, and will incorporate elements of Monacan culture in the design.





- (A) Renovated Parking with New Layout
- (C) Existing Restrooms
- (D) New Accessible Fishing Pier
- (E) New Inclusive Playground featuring Monacan Cultural Elements
- (F) New Interpretive Signs
- (G) New Interpretive Canoes
- (H) Existing Picnic Pavilion
- (I) New Entrance Sign
- (J) New Picnic Area in the Woods

Recommendations

MONACAN PARK

Inspiration:
Monacan Park



Improved boat launch



Tim Frandy

Interpretive canoes demonstrating history of James River and historic use by Monacan Nation



Interpretive cultural elements such as traditional thatch houses



Picnic Pavilion similar to style of existing pavilion of Riveredge Park



Tina Trumbo

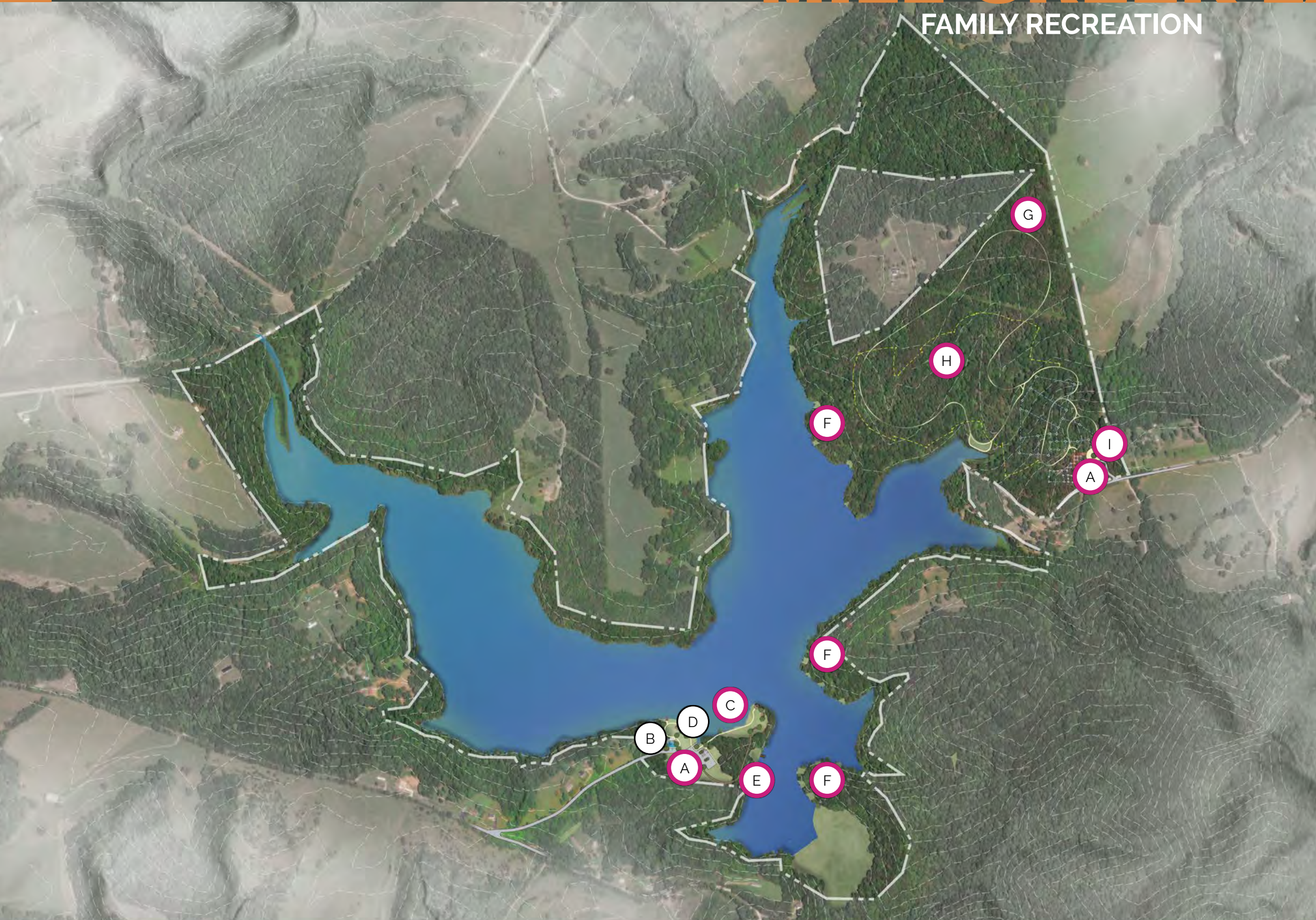
Opportunities for cultural events



Inclusive playground featuring bright colors, canoes, and drums



View of Dancers at Monacan Nation Cultural Foundation Annual Powwow
by Tina Trumbo



FAMILY RECREATION

- A New Parking
- B Renovated Lake Themed Playground
- C New Picnic Pavilions at Existing Beach
- D Existing Boat Launch
- E New Fishing Dock
- F New Boat Access Campsites
- G New Trail
- H New Disk Golf Course
- I New Adventure Center and Ropes Courses

The park will feature an improved parking lot with vehicular and boat parking, and new ADA parking. An improved boat launch will provide access to water recreation as well as to campsites around the lake. The existing playground will be expanded to build upon lake fun and feature inclusive play amenities. The surrounding area will better accommodate visitors with picnic areas, expanded restrooms, water fountains and water bottle filling stations, and a fishing dock. The beach area will feature additional picnic pavilions and overflow parking. A new adventure center will welcome visitors to the ropes course, providing restrooms, safety training for the ropes courses, and opportunities for concessions. Ropes courses for both adults and children will provide opportunities for safe outdoor adventures. A disk golf course and trails are added for outdoor recreation.

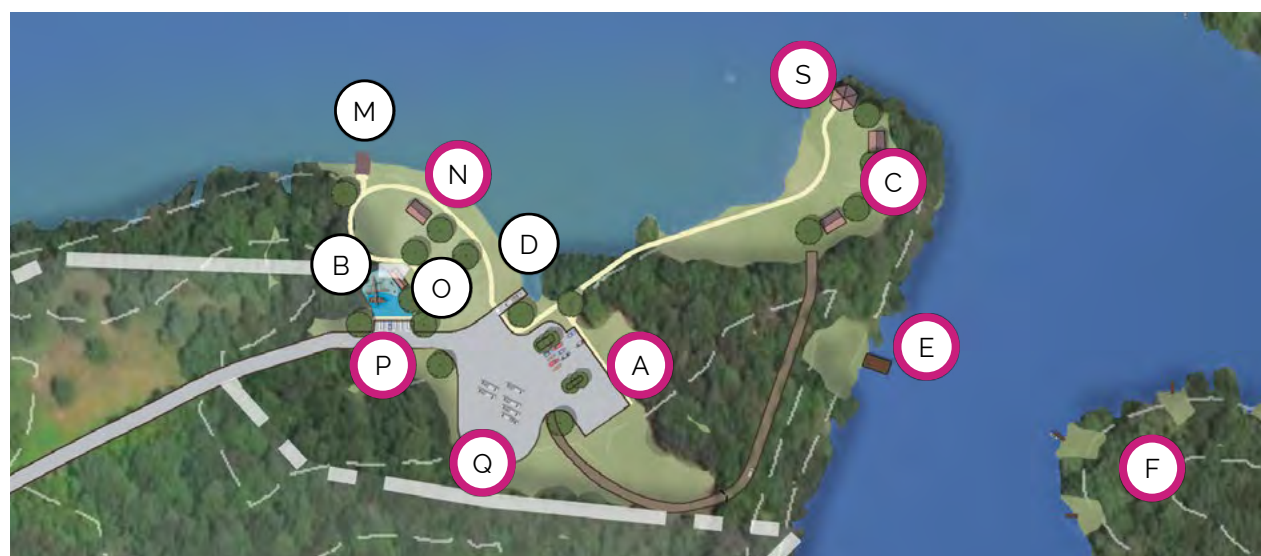




- (A) New Parking
- (B) Renovated Lake Themed Playground
- (C) New Picnic Pavilions at Existing Beach
- (D) Existing Boat Launch
- (E) New Fishing Dock
- (F) New Boat Access Campsites



- (G) New Trail
- (H) New Disk Golf Course
- (I) New Adventure Center and Plaza
- (J) New Ropes and Zipline Adventure Course
- (K) New Youth Challenge Course
- (L) New Picnic Bluff



- (M) Existing Dock Swing
- (N) New Picnic Pavilion
- (O) Expanded Restrooms
- (P) New ADA Parking
- (Q) New Boat Parking
- (Q) Overflow Parking
- (S) New Gazebo

Recommendations

MILL CREEK LAKE PARK

Inspiration:
Mill Creek Lake Park



Beach Area picnic seating



Lake themed playground



Ropes adventure course



Beach Area gazebo



Boat access camp site



Youth challenge course

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ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION



- A New Ecology Interpretive Trail
- B New Gazebo Overlook
- C Existing Boat Launch
- D New Playground and Picnic Area
- E Improved Asphalt Parking with Striping
- F Improved Existing Picnic Pavilion
- G New Woodland Trail
- H New Gazebo
- I New Boardwalk
- J New Wetland Discovery Trail

The park will feature improved parking, picnic areas, and sidewalks to improve accessibility. Approximately 2.4 miles of new trails will guide park visitors through the park's natural woodland and wetland areas and feature interpretive signage for environmental education. A boardwalk will allow accessible passage around the lake where the shore is close to the property line. Gazebos and overlooks provide stunning views of the lake. A nature themed playground provides opportunities for creative natural play. Renovated asphalt parking lots with striping ease the parking experience for park visitors.





- (A) New Ecology Interpretive Trail
- (C) Existing Boat Launch
- (D) New Nature Themed Playground and Renovated Existing Restrooms
- (E) Improved Asphalt Parking with Striping
- (F) Improved Existing Picnic Pavilion
- (G) New Woodland Trail



- (H) New Gazebo
- (I) New Boardwalk
- (J) New Wetland Discovery Trail

Recommendations

STONEHOUSE LAKE PARK

Inspiration:
Stonehouse Lake Park



Boardwalk over lake



Boardwalk over wetland



Nature themed playground



Wetland discovery walk



Interpretive trail for environmental education



Creative play in natural playground

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SPORTSMAN



- A New Park Sign, See page 129
- B New Parking
- C New Wildlife Themed Playground
- D New Picnic Forest
- E New Fishing Piers
- F Existing Batteaux Storage
- G Existing Boat Ramp
- H Existing Truck and Boat Parking with Improved Striping
- I New Pollinator Meadow with Signs
- J New Bird Watching Trail with Signs

This park will allow park visitors to enjoy nature and its wildlife. Several new fishing piers provide improved fishing access. Approximately 0.7 miles of new birdwatching trails allow park visitors to view wildlife, featuring interpretive signage about local animals, and a pollinator meadow will provide habitat for essential pollinators. The park will feature expanded parking, new picnic areas, and sidewalks to improve accessibility. A wildlife themed playground will complement this nature lovers' paradise. The playground, trails, picnic area, and fishing piers can also be ADA accessible.





- A New Park Sign
- B New Parking
- C New Wildlife Themed Playground
- D New Picnic Forest
- E New Fishing Piers
- F Existing Batteaux Storage
- G Existing Boat Ramp
- H Existing Truck and Boat Parking with Improved Striping
- I New Pollinator Meadow with Signs
- J New Bird Watching Trail with Signs
- K Expanded Restrooms

Recommendations

THRASHERS LAKE PARK

Inspiration:
Thrashers Lake Park



Pollinator meadow



Bird watching trail through natural area



Picnic area with views of lake



Wildlife themed playground



Interpretive trail through pollinator meadow



Trail through woodland with views of lake

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Recommendations

OPTION 1

COOLWELL PARK

SUBURBAN PARK



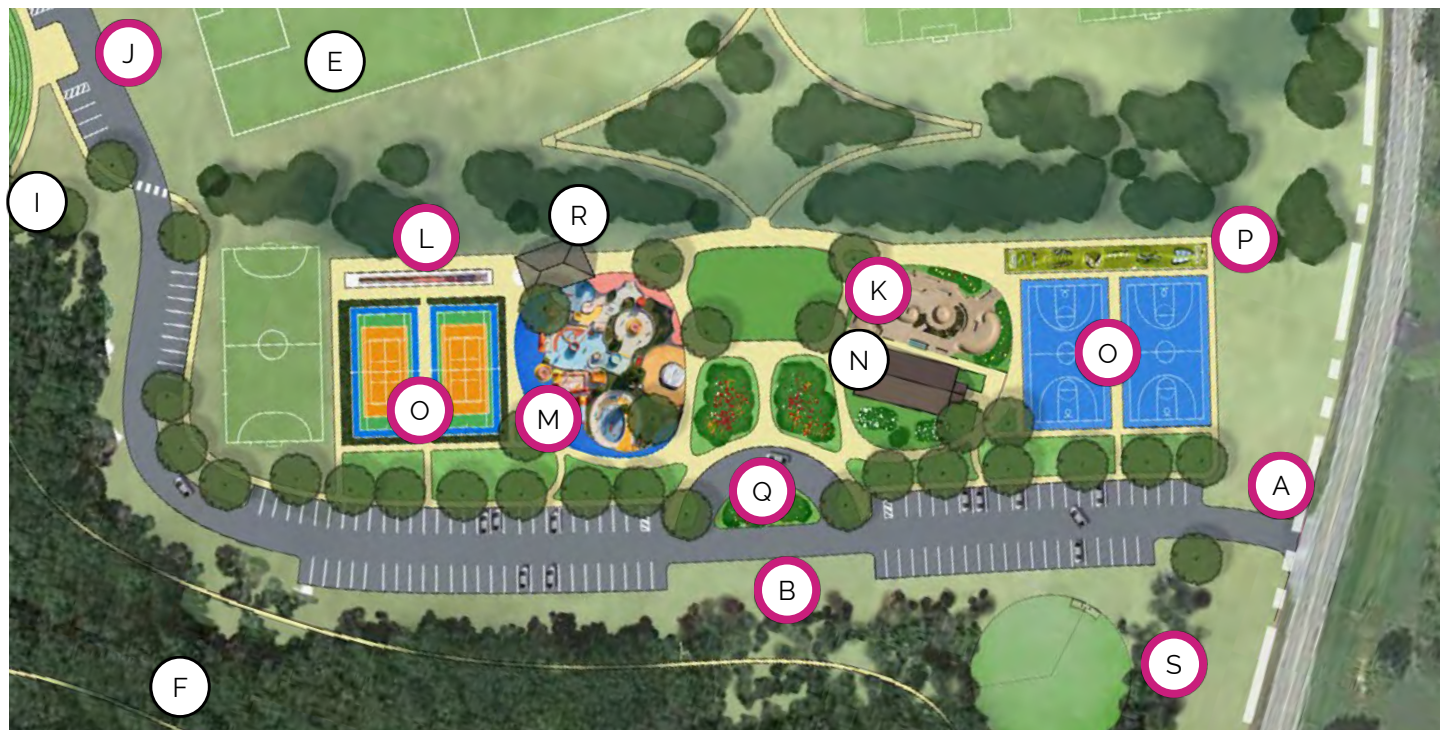
- A New Park Sign, See page 129
- B New Parking
- C New Meadow Gardens
- D New Pedestrian Green Link
- E Existing Sports Fields
- F Expanded Trails
- G New Bicycle Pump Track
- H Existing Convenience Center
- I Existing Amphitheater
- J New Amphitheater ADA Parking
- K New Skate Park
- L New Youth Zip Line
- M New Inclusive Playground and Spraypad
- N Renovated Existing Community Center
- O New Sports Courts
- S New Dog Park

This park will feature improved sports facilities and new recreation opportunities for all ages. A new inclusive playground and spraypad provide play for children of all abilities. The amphitheater will be modernized and more accessible. The walking trails and community garden encourage community bonding and wellness. The convenience center will remain at Coolwell Park.





- (A) New Park Sign
- (B) New Parking
- (C) New Meadow Gardens
- (D) New Pedestrian Green Link
- (E) Existing Sports Fields
- (F) Expanded Trails
- (G) New Bicycle Pump Track
- (H) Existing Convenience Center



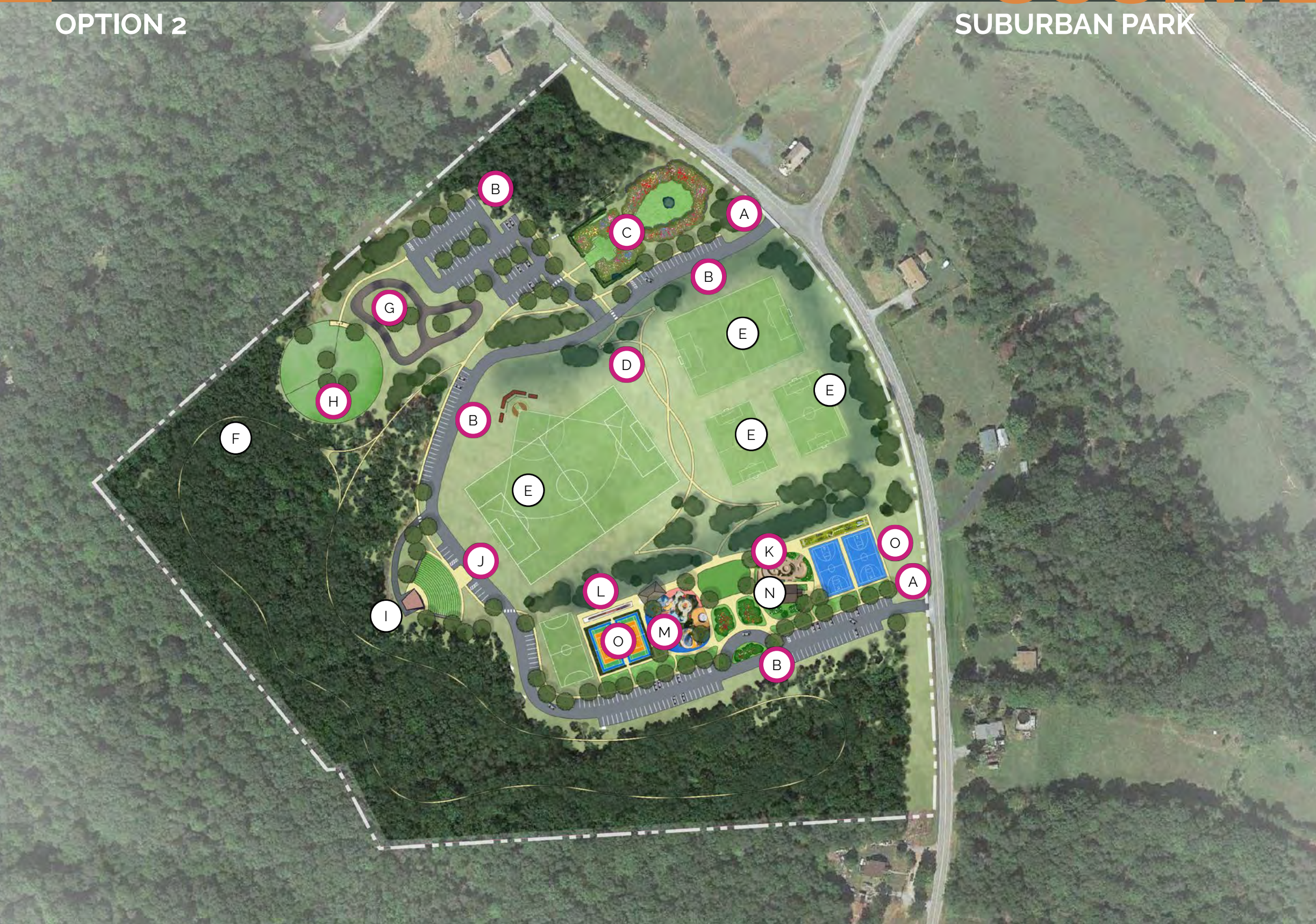
- (I) Existing Amphitheater
- (J) New Amphitheater ADA Parking
- (K) New Skate Park
- (L) New Youth Zip Line
- (M) New Inclusive Playground and Spraypad
- (N) Renovated Existing Community Center
- (O) New Sports Courts
- (P) New Ninja Challenge Course
- (Q) New Garden Court
- (R) Renovated Existing Pavilion with Facade Improvements and Added Restrooms
- (S) New Dog Park

Recommendations

OPTION 2

COOLWELL PARK

SUBURBAN PARK



- A New Park Sign, See page 129
- B New Parking
- C New Meadow Gardens
- D New Pedestrian Green Link
- E Existing Sports Fields
- F Expanded Trails
- G New Bicycle Pump Track
- H New Dog Park
- I Existing Amphitheater
- J New Amphitheater ADA Parking
- K New Skate Park
- L New Youth Zip Line
- M New Inclusive Playground and Spraypad
- N Renovated Existing Community Center
- O New Sports Courts

This park will feature improved sports facilities and new recreation opportunities for all ages. A new inclusive playground and spraypad provide play for children of all abilities. The amphitheater will be modernized and more accessible. The walking trails and community garden encourage community bonding and wellness. For this option, the convenience center will be relocated in the future to create additional recreation space and improve the overall experience.



Inspiration:
Coolwell Park



Inclusive spraypad



Inclusive playground



Multiuse sports fields



Bike pump track



Skate park



Ninja challenge course

Recommendations

MONROE COMMUNITY CENTER

COMMUNITY CENTER



Design Recommendations: Monroe Community Center



The building was a former school, probably dating from the 1930s, and is currently used as a community center with few alterations to the building layout. It has two stories with no elevator. There are indications of water damage where paint is peeling off the walls, some baseboard is rotted, and some paint peeling is occurring around windows. The windows are in poor condition and have not been replaced, with some masonry openings having infilled panels to compensate for the smaller windows. Windows should be replaced.

An elevator or LU/LA will be necessary for people with limited mobility to reach the second floor. Options include an elevator addition which will probably require relocating an egress stair, or keeping the elevator within the existing footprint which will take away classroom area on two floors. Removing the drop ceilings to restore the original tall ceiling height while introducing new light fixtures and paintable mechanical ducts will also significantly improve the quality in the rooms and corridors. Assessing the finish and condition of the corridor walls behind the non-historic finishes is also advisable. Additional assessments include dating the last time the roof was replaced, exterior masonry conditions, and mechanical, electrical, and plumbing services. A structural assessment is also advised if there are known structural issues or if there is noticeable cracking. The building official will likely want a fire alarm system if one is not in the building currently (sprinklers might not be necessary).

The existing ball field should be fenced in for increased safety, and dugouts should be added.



- A New Park Sign, See page 129
- B New Bus Drop Off
- C New Parking
- D New Agricultural Display Paddock
- E New Agricultural Learning Pavilion
- F New Entrance Plaza
- G New Arena
- H Disc Golf Start and Finish
- I New Disk Golf Course
- J New Hiking and Mountain Bike Trails
- K New Skate Park
- L New Stormwater BMP Basin

This park will serve as a destination for agricultural and environmental education as well as outdoor recreation. A new accessible pavilion will be used for gathering, education, and restroom facilities. An open paddock and an animal arena will house outdoor agricultural education. An entrance plaza serves as a social gathering space leading to outdoor recreation for all ages and interests. Rustic trails for hiking and mountain biking, as well as disc golf courses and a skate park, provide outdoor adventures.





- A New Park Sign, See page 129
- B New Bus Drop Off
- C New Parking
- D New Agricultural Display Paddock
- E New Agricultural Learning Pavilion
- F New Entrance Plaza
- G New Arena
- H Disc Golf Start and Finish
- I New Disk Golf Course
- J New Hiking and Mountain Bike Trails
- K New Skate Park
- L New Stormwater BMP Basin

Recommendations

KILGORE COMMUNITY PARK

Inspiration:
Kilgore Community Park



Mountain biking trail



Arena



Fenced paddocks



Disc golf course



Skate park



Stormwater BMP basin

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OPTION 1

CLASSICAL TOWN PARK



- (A) Existing Police Storage Shed
- (B) Space for Event Tent
- (C) New Solitude Lawn
- (D) New Gazebo
- (E) New Garden Terrace
- (F) New Central Lawn and Garden
- (G) New Catering Pergola
- (H) New Brick Paving
- (I) New Play Structures

In this version of the Park Master Plan, the existing house is demolished and the grounds are used as a garden in the urban oasis. A garden of shrubs and groundcover, as well as a pergolas define a central lawn. This central lawn, and several small spaces provide for outdoor relaxation, while a larger garden terrace provides a space for outdoor events. Small interactive play structures provide creative play for young visitors.

The advantage of demolishing the existing house is expected cost savings. While costs for demolition vs preservation are each an estimation based on observed conditions, demolition is expected to cost less than preservation.



OPTION 2

CLASSICAL TOWN PARK

- (A) Existing Police Storage Shed
- (B) Space for Event Tent
- (C) New Solitude Lawn
- (D) New Gazebo
- (E) New Garden Terrace
- (F) New Veranda
- (G) New Catering Pergola
- (H) New Brick Paving

In this version of the Park Master Plan, the existing house is preserved and the surrounding gardens will serve as a green oasis in the middle of town. Existing trees are generally preserved, while new plantings define several outdoor spaces. Several small spaces provide for outdoor relaxation, while a larger garden terrace provides a space for outdoor events. There are opportunities for various community events and classes on the lawn as well as inside the existing building if preserved.

The advantage of restoring the existing house is that it preserves the historic character of the property.



Recommendations

AMHERST POCKET PARK

Inspiration:
Amherst Pocket Park



Creative play equipment



Formal event in event terrace



Open lawn for relaxation



Group fitness classes on lawn



Casual event in event terrace



Lawn with Gazebo with opportunities for small events

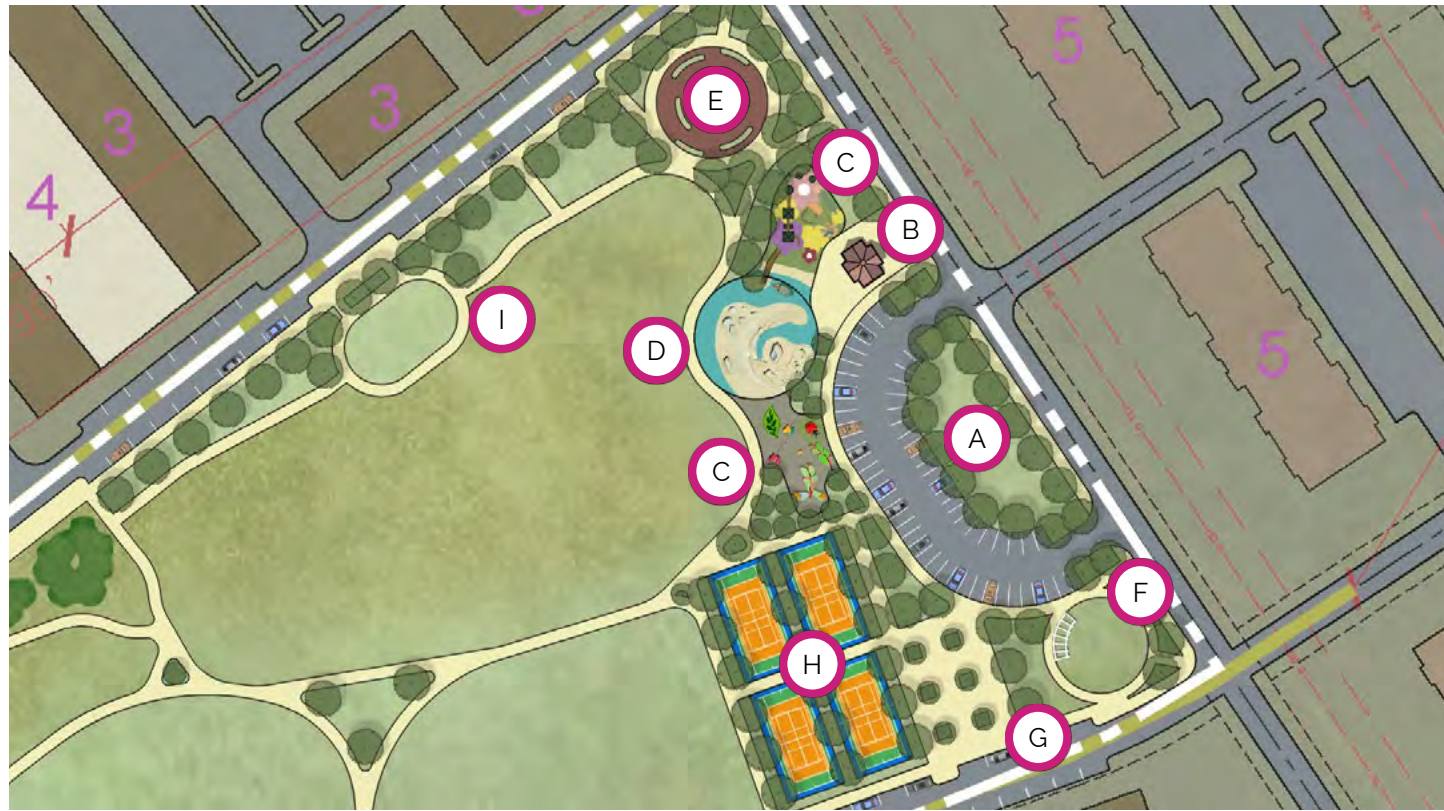
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- A New Parking
- B New Restroom Pavilion
- C New Inclusive Playground
- D New Splashpad
- E New Entrance Plaza
- F New Pergola Lawn
- G New Event Plaza
- H New Tennis/Pickleball Courts
- I New Ellipse Lawn
- J New Event Lawn and Stage
- K New Pick Up Field
- L New Open Lawn

This new park will serve as a classic neighborhood center for the Madison Heights community. This new park will feature recreation opportunities and facilities for all ages. A new inclusive playground and splashpad provide play for children of all abilities. A large lawn with a stage can host various community events. An ellipse lawn and pergola lawn offer outdoor relaxation spaces. Plazas offer social gathering spaces and opportunities for small events and farmers markets. Meandering walking trails connect the park's diverse spaces.





- A New Parking
- B New Restroom Pavilion
- C New Inclusive Playground
- D New Splashpad
- E New Entrance Plaza
- F New Pergola Lawn
- G New Event Plaza
- H New Tennis/Pickleball Courts
- I New Ellipse Lawn



- J New Event Lawn and Stage
- K New Pick Up Field
- L New Open Lawn

Recommendations

MADISON HEIGHTS PARK

Inspiration:
Madison Heights Park



Event lawn and stage



Splashpad in the style of Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Playground



Inclusive playground



Entrance plaza



Pergola lawn



Open green space featuring native wildflowers

Sign Template

These entrance signs welcome visitors upon arrival, as well as provide clear and consistent branding across the Amherst County Park system. This template can also be used to list park information and park rules.



These directional signs can be strategically placed around Amherst County to direct visitors to various parks and community centers countywide.



Recommendations

ROUTE 130 AND JAMES RIVER



RIVER VIEWS

- (A) Observation Point with Pull Over Area and Limited Views of River
- (B) James River Overlook with Pull Over Area and Clear Views of River
- (C) Observation Point with Pull Over Area and Limited Views of River
- (D) Observation Point with Trailhead and Small Gravel Parking
- (E) Appalachian Trail Access with Large Gravel Parking, Information Kiosk, and Limited Views of River
- (F) James River Foot Bridge with River Views
- (G) Connection to Blue Ridge Parkway

Route 130 boasts several existing locations to pull over to the side of the road and enjoy views of the James River. Several improvements could be to enhance the visitor experience along the road, such as selective clearing to improve river views, and sight lines pulling into and out of overlooks, traffic caution signage to slow down at overlooks, signage for identification, and improved parking areas to safely enjoy river views. A few overlooks include parking lots and trail access. The remaining overlooks could also benefit from access to trails and the James River. The area at the existing connection to the Blue Ridge Parkway could be enhanced as a picnic area with overlooks, tables, and benches.





Overlooks along Route 130 feature beautiful views of the river. Signage for locations along the route could be added. Parking areas could also be enlarged and selective clearing could be done to enhance river views. Picnic areas with river views could also be added adjacent to parking areas.



The Appalachian Trail Access & Parking Lot features an information kiosk for visitors. Similar information kiosks could be used at other overlooks along the James River.



The Appalachian Trail Access & Parking Lot could benefit from improvements to the existing lot such as increased signage from the road, crosswalk and signage for the trail crossing along Route 130 to connect parking lots on each side, a more clear entrance to the Appalachian Trail, and picnic areas with views of the river.



The James River Foot Bridge provides breathtaking river views. Renovations to make the foot bridge ADA accessible could allow more people to enjoy this foot bridge.



- (A) Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail Rose Mill Trail Head
- (B) Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail

The Virginia Blue Ridge Railway Trail provides excellent recreation opportunities along the Piney River. Currently the trail offers hiking, running, and biking, and scenic forest and river views. Several improvements could be used to enhance the visitor experience along the trail such as benches and interpretive signage. Solar powered lighting can improve trail safety while minimally impacting infrastructure requirements.

The Rose Mill Trail Head currently features a small parking lot for approximately 10 cars, a welcome sign, restrooms, and an entrance to the trail, as well as some open space. Some of this open space could be used to create a picnic area, add benches for seating, expand existing restrooms and parking, and add interpretive features about the river and railroad.





Small areas along the trail can be used to place benches for relaxation and river views. Materials can reflect the old rail-road's transport of wood and minerals to showcase the trail's history of transporting materials.



Solar powered lights can cost effectively illuminate the trail



Additional signage can be created in the style of the existing trail head sign. Image courtesy of AllTrails.



Additional interpretive elements can illustrate the trail's rail history. Image courtesy of Appalachian Trail Conservancy.





Funding & Implementation

Purpose:
Develop estimated budgets for each conceptual long term Master Plans for each park so funding can be acquired and allocated to most efficiently meet the county's recreation needs

OPINION OF PROBABLE COST

Area	Unit	Qty	Unit Cost	Total
Riveredge Park				
Renovations and Expansions to Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Concrete Pads for Public Art (along Sara Lu Christian Trail)	Each	8	\$3,000.00	\$24,000
Bluff Overlook (incl. new Trail from Parking lot to Overlook Platform)	Lump Sum	1	\$250,000.00	\$250,000
Parking Lot Renovations	Lump Sum	1	\$75,000.00	\$75,000
Footbridge Connection to James River Heritage Trail	Lump Sum	1	\$5,000,000.00	\$5,000,000
Sara Lu Christian Trail Expansion	Linear Mile	0.9	\$530,000.00	\$477,000
Trail Connection to Horseford Road	Linear Foot	1,400	\$10.00	\$14,000
Picnic Pavillion and Restrooms Near Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$300,000.00	\$300,000
City of Lynchburg Overlook (incl. Parking Lot, Signage, and Overlook Platform)	Lump Sum	1	\$40,000.00	\$40,000
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign	4	\$1,500.00	\$6,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$60,000.00	\$60,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$14,000.00	\$14,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	35	\$1,500.00	\$52,500
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$1,400,000.00	\$1,400,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$1,231,875
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$985,500
				\$10,429,875
Monacan Park				
Parking Lot Renovations	Lump Sum	1	\$55,000.00	\$55,000
Concrete Paving for Waterfront Plaza	Square Foot	11,000	\$7.00	\$77,000
Fishing Piers	Each	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Themed Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$400,000.00	\$400,000
Interpretive Elements (Signage, Drums, Canoes, Thatch House, Totems)	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Picnic Area (tables, concrete trail, grills, selective clearing and grading)	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$14,000.00	\$14,000
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign	4	\$1,500.00	\$6,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	25	\$1,500.00	\$37,500
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$140,000.00	\$140,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$125,925
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$100,740
				\$1,066,165
Mill Creek Lake Park				
Parking Lot for Boat Launch and Beach Access	Lump Sum	1	\$210,000.00	\$210,000
Picnic Pavillion adjacent to Boat Launch and Beach Access	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Expanded Restrooms	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Improvements to Existing Boat Ramp	Lump Sum	1	\$5,000.00	\$5,000
Themed Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$150,000.00	\$150,000
Gazebo adjacent to Boat Launch and Beach Access	Lump Sum	1	\$15,000.00	\$15,000
Fishing Pier	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Picnic Pavillions adjacent to Fishing Pier	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Campsites (tables, grills, selective clearing and grading)	per campsite	14	\$5,000.00	\$70,000
Parking Lot for Adventure Center	Lump Sum	1	\$88,000.00	\$88,000
New Adventure Center	Lump Sum	1	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000
Concrete Paving for Adventure Center Plaza	Square Foot	16,000	\$7.00	\$112,000
Nature Trails	Linear Foot	12,000	\$10.00	\$120,000
Ropes and Zip Adventure Course	Lump Sum	1	\$2,000,000.00	\$2,000,000
Youth Challenge Course	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Disc Golf Course	Lump Sum	1	\$15,000.00	\$15,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$16,000.00	\$16,000
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign	50	\$1,500.00	\$75,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	40	\$1,500.00	\$60,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$1,020,000.00	\$1,020,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$917,400
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$733,920
				\$7,767,320
StoneHouse Lake Park				
Parking Lot Renovations	Lump Sum	1	\$130,000.00	\$130,000
Renovated Restrooms	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Gazebo Overlook	Lump Sum	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000
Ecology Interpretive Trail	Linear Foot	8,600	\$10.00	\$86,000
Themed Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$150,000.00	\$150,000
Picnic Pavillion	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Gazebos	Each	2	\$20,000.00	\$40,000
Wetland Discovery Trail	Linear Foot	2,000	\$10.00	\$20,000
Boardwalks	Linear Foot	2,000	\$800.00	\$1,600,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$14,000.00	\$14,000
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign	15	\$1,500.00	\$22,500
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	30	\$1,500.00	\$45,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$450,000.00	\$450,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$403,125
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$322,500
				\$3,413,125

Area	Unit	Qty	Unit Cost	Total
Thrashers Lake Park				
Parking Lot Renovations	Lump Sum	1	\$23,000.00	\$23,000
Themed Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$150,000.00	\$150,000
Picnic Area (tables, concrete trail, grills, selective clearing and grading)	Lump Sum	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000
Expanded Restrooms	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Fishing Piers	Each	3	\$20,000.00	\$60,000
Pollinator Meadow	Lump Sum	1	\$36,000.00	\$36,000
Birdwatching Trail	Linear Foot	6,000	\$10.00	\$60,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	25	\$1,500.00	\$37,500
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign (average)	20	\$1,500.00	\$30,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$18,000.00	\$18,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$105,000.00	\$105,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$94,425
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$75,540
				\$799,465
Coolwell Park Option 1				
Renovate Community Center	Lump Sum	1	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000
Façade Improvements and Restrooms for Pavilion	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Basketball Courts	Each	2	\$100,000.00	\$200,000
Ninja Challenge Course	Lump Sum	1	\$80,000.00	\$80,000
Pavement for Garden Court	Lump Sum	1	\$280,000.00	\$280,000
Skatepark	Lump Sum	1	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000
Spraypad	Lump Sum	1	\$400,000.00	\$400,000
Themed Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Youth Zip Line	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Tennis Courts including Pickleball painting	Each	2	\$100,000.00	\$200,000
Peewee Field	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Parking Lots	Lump Sum	1	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
Pedestrian Green Link	Linear Foot	1,000	\$300.00	\$300,000
Pollinator Garden	Lump Sum	1	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
Access Road	Lump Sum	1	\$156,000.00	\$156,000
Bicycle Pump Track	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Dog Park (incl. Large and Small areas)	Lump Sum	1	\$250,000.00	\$250,000
Woodland Trails	Linear Foot	3,700	\$10.00	\$37,000
Ampitheater Renovations (incl. Access Road)	Lump Sum	1	\$100,000.00	\$100,000
Existing Field Upgrade Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	40	\$1,500.00	\$60,000
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign (average)	50	\$1,500.00	\$75,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$1,186,200
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$948,960
				\$10,043,160
Coolwell Park Option 2				
Renovate Community Center	Lump Sum	1	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000
Façade Improvements and Restrooms for Pavilion	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Basketball Courts	Each	2	\$100,000.00	\$200,000
Ninja Challenge Course	Lump Sum	1	\$80,000.00	\$80,000
Pavement for Garden Court	Lump Sum	1	\$280,000.00	\$280,000
Skatepark	Lump Sum	1	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000
Spraypad	Lump Sum	1	\$400,000.00	\$400,000
Themed Playground	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Youth Zip Line	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Tennis Courts including Pickleball painting	Each	2	\$100,000.00	\$200,000
Peewee Field	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Parking Lots	Lump Sum	1	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
Pedestrian Green Link	Linear Foot	1,000	\$300.00	\$300,000
Pollinator Garden	Lump Sum	1	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
Access Road	Lump Sum	1	\$156,000.00	\$156,000
Remove and Relocate Recycling Center (Option 2 Only)	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Bicycle Pump Track	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Dog Park (incl. Large and Small areas)	Lump Sum	1	\$250,000.00	\$250,000
Woodland Trails	Linear Foot	3,700	\$10.00	\$37,000
Ampitheater Renovations (incl. Access Road)	Lump Sum	1	\$100,000.00	\$100,000
Existing Field Upgrade Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$500,000.00	\$500,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	40	\$1,500.00	\$60,000
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign (average)	50	\$1,500.00	\$75,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$1,261,200
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$1,008,960
				\$10,678,160

Area	Unit	Qty	Unit Cost	Total
Kilgore Community Park				
Agricultural Paddocks (fencing)	Lump Sum	1	\$40,000.00	\$40,000
Agricultural Learning Pavilion and Restrooms	Lump Sum	1	\$40,000.00	\$40,000
Agricultural Dressage Arena	Lump Sum	1	\$55,000.00	\$55,000
Skatepark	Lump Sum	1	\$300,000.00	\$300,000
Disc Golf Course	Lump Sum	1	\$15,000.00	\$15,000
Biking & Walking Trails	Linear Foot	5,000	\$10.00	\$50,000
Parking Lot	Lump Sum	1	\$125,000.00	\$125,000
Concrete and Unit Paving for Entrance Plaza	Square Foot	6,000	\$12.00	\$72,000
Information Kiosk/Pergola	Lump Sum	1	\$4,000.00	\$4,000
Stormwater BMP Basins	Lump Sum	1	\$100,000.00	\$100,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	20	\$1,500.00	\$30,000
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign (average)	50	\$1,500.00	\$75,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$180,900
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$144,720
				\$1,531,620
Amherst Pocket Park Option 1				
Demolish Existing Building (Option 1 Only)	Lump Sum	1	\$40,000.00	\$40,000
Themed Playground (Option 1 Only)	Lump Sum	1	\$75,000.00	\$75,000
Lawn Renovation	Lump Sum	1	\$13,000.00	\$13,000
Tree Removal, Trimming, Arborist Treatments	Lump Sum	1	\$8,000.00	\$8,000
Brick Paving	Square Foot	1,600	\$25.00	\$40,000
Catering Pergola	Lump Sum	1	\$18,000.00	\$18,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	15	\$1,500.00	\$22,500
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign (average)	8	\$1,500.00	\$12,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$55,000.00	\$55,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$75,000.00	\$75,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$58,275
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$409,409
				\$856,184
Amherst Pocket Park Option 2				
Renovate Existing Building (Option 2 Only)	Lump Sum	1	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000
Lawn Renovation	Lump Sum	1	\$13,000.00	\$13,000
Tree Removal, Trimming, Arborist Treatments	Lump Sum	1	\$8,000.00	\$8,000
Brick Paving	Square Foot	1,600	\$25.00	\$40,000
Catering Pergola	Lump Sum	1	\$18,000.00	\$18,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$30,000.00	\$30,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	15	\$1,500.00	\$22,500
Wayfinding & Signage	per sign (average)	8	\$1,500.00	\$12,000
Planting	Lump Sum	1	\$55,000.00	\$55,000
Parkwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$350,000.00	\$350,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$307,275
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$451,304
				\$2,807,079
Blue Ridge Railway Trail				
Rose Mill Trail Head Improved Gravel Parking Lot	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Rose Mill Trail Head Restroom Expansion	Lump Sum	1	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
Picnic Area (tables, concrete trail, grills, and selective clearing)	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Updated Lighting	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Furnishings (benches, dog waste stations, water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, trash bins)	per element (average)	20	\$1,500.00	\$30,000
Trailwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$10,500
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$22,800
				\$223,300
Monroe Community Center				
Renovate Existing Building	Lump Sum	1	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000
New Elevator	Lump Sum	1	\$150,000.00	\$150,000
Buildingwide Infrastructure Improvements	Lump Sum	1	\$340,000.00	\$340,000
Contingency (@15%)				\$298,500
Design A/E Fees (@12%)				\$238,800
				\$2,527,300
Total (Using Option 1 for Amherst Pocket Park and Coolwell Park)				\$38,657,514
Total (Using Option 2 for Amherst Pocket Park and Coolwell Park)				\$41,243,409

Area	Priority
Kilgore Park	1
Amherst Pocket Park	2
Madison Heights Park	3
Monroe Community Center	4
Thrashers Lake Park	5
Stonehouse Lake Park	6
Seminole Park	7
Monacan Park	8
Mill Creek Lake Park	9
Riveredge Park	10
Blue Ridge Rail Trail	11
Coolwell Park	12

The estimates provided are based on the information available at the time of preparation and are subject to change. Factors such as market fluctuations, unforeseen site conditions, changes in design or scope, and other variables may significantly impact the final project cost.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Auxiliary Funding Sources

Outdoor recreation is positioned to be an important economic driver for Amherst County and a significant social amenity for attracting residents and employers. Healthy communities with opportunities for outdoor experiences are a draw for today’s workforce and families. Additional investment in and proactive planning for recreational facilities such as county parks and community centers provides social and economic benefits for residents and visitors.

Additionally, strengthened partnerships and initiatives with state and federal agencies for outdoor recreation areas will greatly benefit outdoor recreational experiences and use of these special regional assets. There is great potential for increased economic prosperity and investment. A partial list of sample grant opportunities for recreation funding:

Funding beyond existing municipal budgets can accelerate the implementation effort. Below we have outlined potential funding sources and how they could assist with general renovation, new initiatives, or new programs within the parks or buildings. Auxiliary funding is organized into Federal, State, Foundation, and local fundraising categories.

Federal Grants

- USDA Rural Development Program
- USDA Community Food Projects Program
- NEA Grants for Arts Projects Program
- Institute of Museum and Library Services: Inspire: Grants for Small Museums
- USDA Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program
- USF&WS North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) Grants: US Small Program
- USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Tourism Grant Program
- National Archives Publishing Historical Records in Collaborative Digital Editions
- Institute of Museum and Library Services Native American / Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program

State Grant Programs

- Virginia DEQ Brownfields Grants

State Grants to Buy and Preserve Parkland

- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Clean Water Financing and Assistance - Land Conservation Loan Program
- State Incentive for Local Conservation Funding
- Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund – Land Conservation Loan Program
- State Tax-Funded Conservation
- Outdoor Education in Parks
- Virginia Department of Historic Resources BIPOC Grant Program

State Grants to Design and Build Trails in Parks

- Virginia Recreational Trails Program Administered through Virginia DCR
- Trails Access Grants Administered through Virginia DCR
- Special Purpose Funding Administered through Virginia DCR

State Grants to Design and Build Piers and Water Access

- Freshwater and Saltwater Access Program Administered through Virginia MRC

State Grants to Design and Build Community Centers

- CDBG Community Improvement Grants
- Virginia Preschool Initiative
- Community Economic Development Planning Grants
- Virginia Small Business Financing Authority – Micro-loans

Public and Private Foundations

- Get Outdoors Administered by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation
- T-Mobile Hometown Grants
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation – Community Change Program
- The Helen S. and Charles G. Patterson Charitable Foundation Trust
- The Bonnel Cove Foundation
- The Ballyshannon Fund Grant Program

Opportunities for Sponsorships and Partnerships

- The Community Center or Amphitheater
- Bridges or Trails
- Picnic Shelters
- Individual rooms in Community Centers, such as Conference room, dance studio, etc.
- Special Fundraising events

List of Appendices:

- Appendix A: Demographic Information
- Appendix B: Community Survey
- Appendix C: Detailed Funding Strategy

