



Master Plan

Implementation

City Council Presentation | March 2026

Building Better Parks for All Charlottesville Residents

AGENDA



01 Department Overview & Background

02 Master Plan Goals & Objectives

03 Key Priority Areas

04 What We've Accomplished

05 10-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

06 What's Next: Critical Needs

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



2,300+

Acres of Parkland

\$14M

Annual Operating Budget

70+

Full-Time Employees

\$78M

10-Year CIP Total

\$5.5M

Parks Maintenance Budget

57

Master Plan Projects

MASTER PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES



1 Align Capital Priorities with Community Values

Ensure all project and program investments reflect the expressed needs, priorities, and values of Charlottesville residents identified through the Master Plan process.

2 Promote Equitable Access

Advance equity by improving access to parks, facilities, and programs for all residents, with focus on underserved and historically marginalized communities.

3 Maximize Impact of Limited Resources

Develop a phased implementation strategy that balances available budget and staffing resources with high-impact improvements ensuring sustainable growth.

4 Balance Development with Stewardship

Prioritize renovation, maintenance, and modernization of existing parks and facilities while strategically investing in new projects addressing service gaps.

OUTCOMES

- 10 - year Planning Horizon
- Realistic
- Implementable
- Financially Sustainable

Community Values and Needs

Assessment of Parks, Facilities, Amenities, Pools

Program and Service Analysis

Level of Service Provisions

Operational and Organizational Assessment

Park by Park/Facility by Facility Improvement Plans

Concept Plans - Tonsler, Washington, Market Street,
Court Square Parks

Cost Estimating for Capital Improvements

Strategic Action Plan

ADOPTD GOALS



#1 PROVIDE SAFE, ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACES.

#2 OFFER MEANINGFUL RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS.

#3 PRIORITIZE HEALTH EQUITY ACROSS THE CITY.

#4 ENSURE A DIVERSE AND DYNAMIC WORKFORCE.

#5 BUILD INNOVATIVE AND LASTING PARTNERSHIPS

#6 ESTABLISH AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE PARK ECOSYSTEM.

#7 CONNECT CLEARLY AND TRANSPARENTLY WITH THE COMMUNITY.

#8 CREATE A FINANCIALLY SECURE AND RESILIENT OPERATION.

IMPLEMENTATION PHILOSOPHY



1

REINVEST

Preserve functionality & safety of existing assets. Regular upkeep, preventative maintenance, and timely repairs extend facility lifecycles and reduce emergency fixes.

EXAMPLES:

- Restroom renovations
- Facility Upgrade
- Safety surfacing
- Structural repairs

2

ENHANCE

Modernize and upgrade existing facilities to improve user experience, increase efficiency, and advance equity and accessibility for all residents.

EXAMPLES:

- ADA improvements
- Playground modernization
- Energy-efficient lighting
- Trail improvements

3

EXPAND

Build new facilities and major amenities only after ensuring existing assets are properly maintained and enhanced. Strategic expansion, not reactive spending.

EXAMPLES:

- Four Framework Parks
- Adaptive Recreation Center
- Pickleball/Tennis courts
- New Dog Park

KEY PRIORITY AREAS FROM THE MASTER PLAN



Special Events

Expand and professionalize community programming

Allocation Policy

Equitable distribution of facilities & resources

Partnerships

Public-private & nonprofit partnerships

Programs Study

Assess and enhance recreation offerings

Reinvestment

Maintain, modernize aging infrastructure

Staffing Strategy

Reorganize & grow to meet CIP demands

Trail Plan

Connectivity & trail improvement planning

Parks Framework

Four-framework plan across park categories

WHAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED



✓ Special Events Staff Hired

Brought on a dedicated Special Events Coordinator to manage and grow community programming, festivals, and recreational events across Charlottesville's park system.

✓ Allocation Policy Completed

Developed and adopted a comprehensive Allocation Policy ensuring equitable, transparent, and priority-based distribution of parks facilities and resources to all residents and user groups.

✓ 10 Year Priority CIP Plan

Developed 10-year Parks & Recreation CIP Plan, establishing a community-driven framework with 57 prioritized capital projects across all park categories.

✓ Program Planning and Management

Developed a Programs Data Dashboard for staff so they can adjust program offerings based on current metrics and trends. Implemented automated waitlist system to reduce staff time and increase fill rates.

THREE-PHASE PRIORITIZATION PROCESS



1

Staff Survey

35.0 – 46.1
Point Range

- 10 staff members scored 57 Master Plan projects
- 16 standardized evaluation criteria
- Criteria: equity, ADA, cost, sustainability, community impact
- Average score: 40.0 out of 80 points possible
- Narrow band reflects consistent staff application

2

Impact vs. Cost

19
High Impact/Low Cost

- Leadership review using 4-quadrant framework
- High/Low Impact × High/Low Cost matrix
- Identified 19 'quick win' projects
- River access elevated as special funding category
- Invasive species identified for alternative funding

3

Funding Alignment

10-Year
Roadmap

- Projects matched with available capital (\$1.2M/yr FY26-30)
- Identified funding gaps and alternative sources
- ADA fund (\$500K one-time) leveraged
- Combined same-park projects for efficiency
- City Manager priorities flagged separately

10-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN OVERVIEW



\$78M+

Total 10-Year CIP Value

\$17M

Reinvestment

~\$17M

Expand

~\$44M

Visionary

- System Wide Tree Canopy
- System Wide Lifecycle Improvements
- Greenleaf Park Improvements
- Schools Improvements

- System Wide ADA
- Tonsler Park Framework Plan
- Washington Park Framework Plan
- Market Street Park Framework Plan
- Court Square Framework Plan

- Pen Park Improvements- Adaptive Recreation Center, Bennett's Village and Pickleball
- Pump track and McIntire Park
- Rivanna River Access Plan

TOP PRIORITY PROJECTS



PARK / PROJECT	SCORE	ESTIMATED COST	IMPACT/COST RATING
System Wide- Signage and Furnishing Plan	46.1	\$500,000	Low Cost / High Impact
Greenleaf Park – Improvements	45.8	\$531,250	High Cost/ High Impact
Riverview Park - Improvement	45.6	\$500,000	Low Cost / High Impact
Downtown Mall Tree Management Plan	45.4	\$591,250	High Cost / High Impact
System-Wide ADA Accessibility Improvements	44.0	\$7,000,000	High Impact / High Cost
Four Framework plans– Planning/Implementation	43.5	\$17,491,750	City Manager Priority
School Grounds	42.5	\$400,000	Low Cost / High Impact
System Wide – Trail Implementation Plan	42.3	\$503,750	Low Cost / High Impact
Pen Park – Adaptive Recreation Center/Pickleball Courts	44.7	\$20,00,000	High Impact / High Cost

WHAT'S NEXT: CRITICAL NEEDS



HIGH

Increase Custodial Staffing

Add 2–3 custodial FTEs to meet cleanliness standards across 25 parks and 11 outdoor restrooms. 4 staff for 25 parks is unsustainable.

MEDIUM

Develop a Trails Plan

Fund a comprehensive trails detail plan to improve connectivity, safety, and equitable access throughout Charlottesville's trail network.

MEDIUM

Develop Partnership Policy Framework

Formalize public-private partnership policy with equity guardrails to unlock alternative funding and expanded service delivery.

MEDIUM

Pursue Additional Annual Funding (~\$800K)

Actively pursue federal/state grants, foundation funding, and other sources to close the gap between the \$1.2M allocation and the \$2M annual need.

MEDIUM

Staff Reorganization

Conduct organizational assessment to realign department structure with 10-year CIP demands by increasing city capacity, and grant compliance capacity. Realign divisions: parks maintenance, recreation services, planning, operations



Questions?

Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Department

Master Plan Implementation Team

www.charlottesville.gov/parks

"Create a happy, healthy community for all"