City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 15, 2026

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: TAMIKA COLEMAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR (ACTING)
RECREATION SERVICES DIVISION

SUBJECT: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE ITEM

OSTP School Year Update:

Current 2026-2027 Enrollment: 1202
The Power-On afterschool program is in full swing. Program participants have been engaged in Academic Support, Sports & Cooperative Games, Civic Responsibility, Safety, Health & Well-Being, Cultural Arts, and STEAM Enrichment. Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month and preparing for Lights on Afterschool (10/22) and Halloween festivities.

Our goal is to create a safe, welcoming, and inspiring environment where every program participant can learn, play, create, connect, and thrive.

We are currently recruiting for Temporary Recreation Leaders, Therapeutic Recreation Leaders and Part Time Recreation Leaders to help support the citywide Power-On and Therapeutic Recreation Program.

Partnerships & Collaborations:

We are proud to collaborate with ACPS, UpCycle, Momentum Collective Inc., YHelp, Virginia Tech, Sports Enrichment, and Buddie Ford Nature Center. These partners contribute valuable enrichment, academic support, STEAM opportunities and specialized programming at all Power-On locations and the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center.

Program Wrap-ups:

- During the week of October 5, Minnie Howard concluded Part 1 of its fall swim lessons. Participants ranging from infants to adults developed new swimming skills, strengthened previously learned techniques, and continued building confidence in the water.

- Senior participants enjoyed the monthly Mahjong Game Time at Mount Vernon Recreation Center. Both new and experienced players spent two hours learning, playing, socializing, and building friendships in a welcoming environment.



- On October 7, a group of seniors visited the Botanical Gardens, where they explored a variety of flowers and plants while enjoying the beautiful scenery. The outing provided an opportunity for participants to socialize, build friendships, and enjoy a fun-filled day together.



- On Saturday, October 3, more than 80 Out-of-School Time Program (OSTP) employees participated in professional development training focused on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), STEM enrichment, project-based learning, communication, conflict resolution, and problem-solving. Staff gained practical strategies for navigating challenges, managing emotions during conflicts, and strengthening interpersonal skills. The training also included interactive activities designed to promote teamwork and camaraderie.





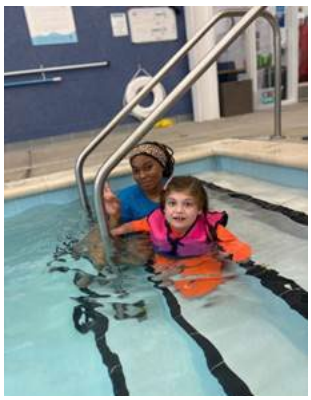
Program Updates:

- On October 13, Minnie Howard Aquatics Facility began Part 2 of its fall swim lessons, with several participants advancing to the next skill level after successfully completing the first session.

- On September 29, Minnie Howard Aquatics Facility launched its citywide swim lessons in partnership with Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), beginning with boys' lessons, followed by girls' lessons on October 8. Notably, two female participants from the original 2024 middle school pilot program returned as ninth graders, excited to continue developing their swimming skills.



- The Therapeutic Recreation (TR) Splash into Greatness program continues to provide adaptive aquatic activities at Minnie Howard Aquatics Facility that promote confidence, social interaction, and skill development. Sessions focus on sensory regulation, motor skills, and positive peer engagement in a safe and supportive environment. Participants continue to demonstrate growth and enthusiasm, highlighting the program's positive impact on inclusive recreation opportunities.







- The ACPS Parent Resource Fair provided families with an opportunity to connect with community resources and learn about Therapeutic Recreation (TR) programs. Staff engaged with parents, answered questions, and provided information on assessments, enrollment, and upcoming opportunities. The event helped increase awareness of TR services and strengthen connections with families and community partners.



- On October 2 and 5, Therapeutic Recreation participants celebrated National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) with two themed spirit days. Superhero Day on October 2 highlighted participants' individual strengths and abilities, while Tie-Dye Day on October 5 celebrated diversity, creativity, and self-expression. Both activities promoted confidence, inclusion, and a sense of community.



- **Power-Full Fun Day:** The Power-Full Fun Day program returns for another year, offering engaging activities that promote learning, social interaction, and developmental growth on days when Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) are closed. Updated program fees are $25 per day or $125 per week, with Before Care available for $15 per day or $39 per week. The program has a revenue goal of $132,000 for the year.

Upcoming Events:

- **Family Masquerade Ball:** Friday, October 30, from 6:30–8:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Recreation Center. Families are invited to enjoy an evening of music, dancing, and festive activities while wearing their favorite masquerade masks.

- **Family Movie Day:** Friday, October 16, from 4–6 p.m. Families are invited to enjoy a screening of the Halloween classic *Hocus Pocus* in celebration of the season.

- **55+ Game Night:** Held on the third Friday of each month from 6:30–10 p.m. This program offers adults ages 55 and older an opportunity to enjoy table games, card games, and social activities while building friendships and connecting with others.

- **Floating Pumpkin Patch:** Saturday, October 31, beginning at 10 a.m. Families can select pumpkins from the water, participate in seasonal crafts, and receive festive goodie bags during this Halloween-themed event.

Special Features:

- During this year's Taste of Old Town North event, RPCA celebrated the installation of a new **Little Free Library** at Montgomery Park, made possible through a partnership with the Friends of the Barrett Library.



Staff Updates:

Matilda Rogal has been promoted to Recreation Leader IV- Pool Manger at Chinquapin Recreation Center.

Michael Johnson is a Living Legend of Alexandria!

Three new George Mason University Bonner Leaders selected RPCA as their host site for their 4-year internships, paid by GMU. Joining our Community Engagement Team, **Arlette Kamara** and **Lillie Hairston** will support Alexandria's Connecting Youth Initiative and the work of our Teen Promoters, and **Brianna Ashun** will assist with Space of Her Own (SOHO) mentoring program. Our returning Bonner Leaders, **Hannah Lilly** and **Lulu Julian** continue to support partnerships.

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 15, 2026

TO: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEMBERS

FROM: BETHANY ZNIDERSIC, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

ITEM 3.a.: PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION DIVISION UPDATE
PARK SERVICES

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UPDATE

- October Park Planning & Capital Development Report, Park Services *(Attachment)*

CLOSED OR PARTIALLY CLOSED TO PUBLIC USE FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

- Four Mile Run Kayak Launch (storm damage)
- Ben Brenman Picnic Shelter Trail (intermittent trail closures October, weather permitting)
- Hooffs' Run Park between E. Oak and E. Walnut includes a tennis court - (storm sewer culvert replacement)
- Holmes Run Trail Site 1 - (construction)
- Eugene Simpson Stadium Park (construction)
- Lee Center Parking Lot South of the Miracle Field (construction)
- Wilkes Street Park between Route 1 and Alfred Street (construction)
- Eisenhower Ave. (Off-Street Trail) Partial closures for T&ES Cameron Run stream dredging and Lake Cook stormwater construction.

Training for Safer, Healthier Parks and Trails

On October 1 Natural Resources and Urban Forestry staff led a collaborative cross-training for the Park Maintenance and Park Operations teams to prepare for the newly created trail maintenance standards. The session included plant and wildlife identification, locating and

understanding resource protection areas, proper tree pruning and hazard assessment, alongside safety protocols, and PPE usage. By obtaining these skill sets, the teams can proactively ensure our parks and trails remain safe and accessible while actively protecting native biodiversity.

John Ewald Park Improvements

The John Ewald Park Improvements project is a recipient of the 2025 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant. The U.S. Department of the Interior has awarded the City of Alexandria $2 million to support improvements to modernize John Ewald Park and to create a welcoming space to serve community needs for recreation and socialization. This significant milestone allows buildout of key plan recommendations, including a new playground, multi-purpose courts, tree planting, parking facilities, parkour, stormwater management, lighting, and public art. This summer the consultant team continued developing the 60% design plans, including the grading plan, play equipment, and electrical load design. The 100% design plans will be completed this winter. The artists, UrbanRock Design, were selected and are expected to begin the public art design process in October. A meet and greet with the Artists was held on October 8. Park construction is anticipated to begin by fall 2027.



Lee Center Courtyard

The Lee Center Courtyard construction project continues to progress! The hardscape and infrastructure improvements are complete as of September, and the landscape installation is scheduled for the week of October 13th. Next up will be the construction of the wood stage and some improvements to the building facade and outdoor restrooms. Combined with future plans to

extend the mural, this project is set to bring new life to the Nannie J. Lee Center while blending seamlessly with the existing infrastructure. Stay tuned for a refreshed multi-use space designed to support community members and staff services.



Ben Brenman Park ADA Trail Improvements



In a continued effort to make the City's parks accessible to all users, RPCA has worked to establish an ADA-compliant path in Ben Brenman Park from the parking lot near the baseball fields to the volleyball courts and pavilion across the bridge. These improvements are nearly complete with the new asphalt paving having been poured as of the last week in September. With some final cleanup and grading to finish in October, this new path further enhances the southern end of the park along with the previously completed exercise stations, making Ben Brenman an exciting and accessible option for all community members.

Four Mile Run Kayak Launch Storm Damage Repairs

The Four Mile Run Kayak Launch is currently out of service after sustaining significant damage during a summer storm in August. The storm caused the floating dock and gangway to detach from its stabilizing arm and the boardwalk, where it became lodged beneath the Route 1 bridge. The floating dock was retrieved from beneath the Route 1 bridge and brought back to the boardwalk area. The City is prioritizing the repair efforts and working with the project team to assess the damage, determine the necessary repairs, and develop a plan for restoring the launch.

The City is conducting a damage assessment this fall to understand the circumstances that contributed to the damage and to identify a reasonable long-term solution that will reduce the likelihood of a similar occurrence in the future. Work on the damage assessment is scheduled to begin mid –October. Based on the results of the structural and damage assessment, the City and project team will evaluate the options for repairing and restoring the Kayak Launch. Should the inspection determine that the boardwalk is structurally sound and safe for use, the boardwalk will be the first part of the facility to reopen to the community. While the kayak launch is out of service, the existing concrete ramp to the water remains available for use until the kayak launch is reopened.





cc: Judy Lo, Acting Division Chief, Park Planning and Capital Development
Oscar Mendoza, Division Chief, Natural Resources
Tonja Walls, Division Chief, Park Support

Attachment: Capital Improvement Projects Report

Park & Recreation Commission -Park Planning Report

October 15, 2026

	Project	Project Summary/Notes	Monthly Update	Planning District	Target Completion Date	Assigned To	Project Status
1	Tree Canopy Assessment	This project will assess the City's tree canopy rate	The tree canopy assessment has been finalized and is currently undergoing an internal review to ensure that all deliverables meet the proposed scope of work. Once the reconciliation process is complete, the assessment will proceed to the next round of departmental review.	Citywide	06/30/26	Oscar Mendoza	Implementation
2	Citywide Tree Planting	This project provides Citywide tree planting along streets and publicly owned open spaces in order to achieve the City's tree canopy goals. Approximately 400 trees are planted annually. Watering and establishment costs are included.	The Urban Forestry Office began its fall tree planting season during the last week of September and will continue planting through November.	Citywide	12/30/27	Oscar Mendoza	Initiation
3	Trail Counters	This project will add new trail counters for Holmes Run Trail and Metro Linear Park	Staff are working with the vendor to replace and update trail counters along Metro Linear and Holmes Run trails. The technology uses sensors below the trail surface to count bicycle trips.	Citywide	04/01/27	Judy Lo	Implementation
4	Witter Fields ADA Parking	To provide more direct access to the field and restrooms, this project will relocate two ADA parking spaces from the far western side of the access road to the restroom area.	An interdepartmental work team will implement a solution that improves access without requiring significant infrastructure adjustments. RPCA is consolidating this improvement with other similar projects throughout the City to distribute to Contractors for implementation.	District 1	08/26/26	Jesse Van Wick	Design
5	Lee Center Courtyard Space Phase 2	This project will provide outdoor recreational amenities in the former pool area at Nannie J Lee to support the Therapeutic Recreation program. Improvements may include a synthetic ADA compliant safety surfacing.	All hardscape has been completed. The contractor is beginning landscape work on the week of October 12.	District 1	08/31/27	Jesse Van Wick	Implementation
6	Old Town Pool Replacement Design	This project will include planning and design for the replacement of Old Town Pool.	Design for the pool replacement project is complete and the project is transitioning to construction procurement. The construction ITB is anticipated to be released in October. The SUP was approved by the Planning Commission on May 5, City Council on May 16, and the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) on May 20.	District 1	05/26/28	Bethany Znidersic	Procurement
7	Hillside Park Soft Trail	This project will complete the last segment of the new park soft trail. The trail is located in a wooded area and provides a connection to the Arlandria neighborhood from Warwick Village. This project supports the Arlandria small area plan to provide a future trail located behind the existing shopping center	The Hillside Park Soft Trail Improvements Project will improve the existing park by removing deteriorated landscape timbers, asphalt, and installing a new stone dust surface trail.	District 2	12/15/26	Daniel Unkle	Design
8	George Mason Recreational Space	This project will fund a full sized gym, dedicated RPCA storage and office space, as well as outdoor accessible restrooms for the new George Mason facility.	Alexandria City Public Schools is currently in the construction phase for the George Mason Elementary School Modernization Project. Please see the ACPS website for more information: https://gm.acps.k12.va.us/about/facility-modernization-maintenance	District 2	08/03/26	Judy Lo	Implementation
9	Dora Kelley Trail and Stair Replacement Project	Replacement of the stairs from the Nature Center to the trail	Consultant has presented a design strategy for the stairs based on site conditions and aesthetic preferences. Contractor has completed soil boring and tree inventory on site.	District 3	07/30/27	Jesse Van Wick	Design
10	Fort Ward Playground Relocation	Relocate playground to an accessible location as recommended in the Fort Ward Management Plan	Construction was deemed substantially complete and the playground re-opened on August 14. A ribbon cutting will be coordinated for this fall. Staff will continue to work with the project team on close-out items, landscape replacements, in anticipation of final acceptance later this fall. Project updates will be available here: https://www.alexandriava.gov/parks/fort-ward-implementation-projects	District 3	09/01/25	Judy Lo	Close-out
11	Ben Brenman Picnic Area ADA Path	Provide improvements to create accessible pathway, grills, and picnic facilities, based on the plans developed in FY2017.	The pathway improvements are near complete, with a few field adjustments needed by the Contractor before final payment can be issued and the project closed.	District 3	04/01/26	Jesse Van Wick	Implementation
12	Holmes Run Trail Repairs Construction	This project includes the restoration of four sections of Holmes Run Trail damaged and closed following July 2019 heavy rains.	Holmes Run Trail Dora Kelley New Bridge – Site work continues on the final section of repairs to the Holmes Run Trail. Substantial completion is anticipated for fall 2026. Sites 2 , 3 and 4 are open to the public with continuous access from Eisenhower Ave. through N. Beauregard St.	District 3	10/30/26	Bethany Znidersic	Implementation