Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
James Spengler, Director
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RPCA’s Mission

Mission
We enrich the City of Alexandria by creating meaningful experiences through public space, cultural activities, and programming.

Vision
We will improve the well-being of every person in our community by connecting them to each other and their environment.
RPCA By the Numbers

- 35,000 Street Trees
- 1,000 Acres of Open Space
- 233 Community Garden Plots
- 62 Marina Boat Slips
- 60 Tennis/Basketball Courts
- 49 Athletic Fields
- 41 Playgrounds
- 20 Miles of Trails
- 18 Dog Parks
- 12 Picnic Areas
- 10 Recreation Centers
- 4 Swimming Pools
- 1 Nature Center
- 1 Art Center
Analysis and Metrics

• RPCA Needs Assessment

  • Why does RPCA conduct a needs assessment?

  • What does RPCA do with the information collected from the Needs Assessment?
2019 RPCA Needs Assessment

Figure 7: Importance and Quality of RPCA Goals

- Provide safe, inviting, and vibrant spaces: Importance 90%, Quality 87%
- Conserve and manage our open space: Importance 86%, Quality 75%
- Provide natural spaces that offer physical and mental health benefits: Importance 85%, Quality 76%
- Offer increased engagement in physical activity and healthy lifestyles: Importance 68%, Quality 73%
- Offer events, programs, and cultural activities that bring people together and encourage social interaction: Importance 62%, Quality 74%
- Provide programs that are affordable and support my household needs: Importance 62%, Quality 67%
- Provide instructional programs to acquire knowledge and skills: Importance 57%, Quality 67%
- Offer environmental education opportunities: Importance 55%, Quality 63%
- Create opportunities to explore the city through public art: Importance 40%, Quality 68%

Percent of Respondents Rating Goals as Very Important and Job the Department is Doing in Meeting These Goals as Excellent or Good
2019 RPCA Needs Assessment

Figure 12: Facilities for Which Alexandria Households Have a Need

Please indicate if you or any members of your household have a need for each of the parks, recreation, or cultural facilities listed below by selecting the yes or no next to the facility. (Percent of households with the need.)

- Walking paths: 91%
- Farmers’ Markets: 77%
- Natural areas and wildlife habitats: 70%
- Fishing trails: 66%
- Outdoor running/walking track: 60%
- Open lawns and landscape: 55%
- Picnic shelters/areas: 53%
- Marina/waterfront: 49%
- Indoor exercise and fitness facilities: 47%
- River/stream activities (kayak launch, sailing, etc.): 45%
- Indoor pools: 44%
- Nature center: 44%
- Outdoor social gathering spaces: 40%
- Outdoor public art: 39%
- Indoor running/walking track: 39%
- Outdoor leisure/recreational swimming pool: 37%
- Community gardens: 37%
- Outdoor courts: 35%
- Indoor gym space: 35%
- Outdoor fitness station/equipment: 33%
- Rock climbing walls: 32%
- Playgrounds: 29%
- Outdoor performance space: 27%
- Indoor rental space (party space, meetings, etc.): 27%
- Indoor performance/art facilities: 27%
- Indoor facility for older adults: 25%
- Off-leash dog areas: 24%
- Water spray ground: 24%
- Fishing areas: 22%
- Multi-purpose sports fields: 22%
- Indoor play space (soft play room/playground): 22%
- Indoor multi-purpose area: 21%
- Indoor social lounge: 21%
- Outdoor rental space: 20%
- Outdoor facility for older adults: 20%
- Indoor sports fields: 19%
- Baseball/softball fields: 16%
- Racquetball/squash courts: 15%
- Outdoor competitive swimming pool: 15%
- Facilities for individuals with disabilities: 14%
- Indoor facility for teens: 11%
- Gymnastics room: 11%
- Outdoor facility for teens: 10%
- Skateboard parks: 9%
- Other: 6%

Percent of Respondents Who Have a Need
## 2019 RPCA Needs Assessment

**Figure 15: Importance-Unmet Needs Matrix for Facilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower Priorities</th>
<th>Top Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lower importance/higher unmet need</strong></td>
<td><strong>Higher importance/higher unmet need</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water spray ground, 3%, 46%</td>
<td>Indoor pools, 9%, 46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor fitness station/equipment, 2%, 49%</td>
<td>Indoor exercise and fitness facilities, 9%, 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racquetball/squash courts, 2%, 46%</td>
<td>Rock climbing walls, 7%, 70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor leisure/recreational swimming pool, 2%, 45%</td>
<td>Outdoor public art, 7%, 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor multi-purpose areas, 2%, 44%</td>
<td>River/stream activities (kayak launch, sailing, etc.), 6%, 51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor gym space, 2%, 44%</td>
<td>Nature center, 6%, 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor rental space (party space, meetings, etc.), 2%, 44%</td>
<td>Indoor running/walking track, 4%, 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor play space (soft play room/playground), 2%, 43%</td>
<td>Community gardens, 4%, 58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor facility for teens, 2%, 43%</td>
<td>Fishing areas, 4%, 56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor social lounge, 1%, 55%</td>
<td>Indoor facility for older adults, 4%, 53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor competitive swimming pool, 1%, 52%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lowest Priorities</th>
<th>Continued Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lower importance/lower unmet need</strong></td>
<td><strong>Higher importance/lower unmet need</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor performance space, 3%, 40%</td>
<td>Walking paths, 36%, 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball/softball fields, 3%, 31%</td>
<td>Biking trails, 22%, 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities for individuals with disabilities, 2%, 42%</td>
<td>Farmers' Markets, 21%, 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor sports fields, 1%, 42%</td>
<td>Natural areas and wildlife habitats, 18%, 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gymnastics room, 1%, 41%</td>
<td>Outdoor running/walking track, 11%, 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor performance/art facilities, 1%, 41%</td>
<td>Open lawns and landscape, 9%, 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor rental space, 0%, 40%</td>
<td>Outdoor social gathering spaces, 8%, 37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor facility for teens, 0%, 37%</td>
<td>Picnic shelters/areas, 8%, 34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skateboard parks, 0%, 37%</td>
<td>Off-leash dog areas, 7%, 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor courts (Tennis, Basketball, Multi-purpose, etc.), 7%, 33%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marina/waterfront, 7%, 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Playgrounds, 6%, 25%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-purpose sports fields (soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, etc.), 4%, 37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2019 RPCA Needs Assessment

2019 Results:

• The programs of higher importance with higher unmet need included:
  1. Volunteer/community projects
  2. Adult continuing education programs
  3. Adult creative and performing arts
  4. Adult nature programs/environmental education
  5. Walking/biking groups

• The facilities of higher importance with higher unmet need included:
  1. Indoor pools
  2. Indoor exercise and fitness facilities
  3. Rock climbing walls
  4. Outdoor public art
  5. River/stream activities (kayak launch, sailing, etc.)
Guiding documents in the City

- Open Space Plan
- Small Area Plans
- Park Improvement Plans
  - Citywide Parks Improvement Plan
  - Neighborhood Parks Improvement Plan
  - Pocket Parks Improvement Plan
  - Natural Resource Areas, Shared Use, Destination/Historical, Regional, Corridors/Linear Parks/Trailways
- Landscape Guidelines
Strategic Plan Focus Areas

Connect the Community
Our parks and facilities are the public's common ground that equitably bring together our vibrant and diverse community.

Improve Well-Being
Our programs and facilities motivate the community to make healthy choices and live active lifestyles through all stages of life and abilities.

Invest in our Natural Environment
Our commitment to natural spaces provides physical, mental, and community benefits, while offering opportunities to engage and conserve our natural resources.

Support a Responsible and Engaged Workforce
Our workforce embodies RPCA’s values and makes us a trusted and valued resource.
Connect the Community

• Engage with all sectors of the population and other City Departments.
• Create environments and programs that encourage social interaction in safe settings.
• Create environments and programs that encourage social interaction in safe settings.
Connect the Community

- Produce events, programs, and cultural activities that bring people together and create enduring memories.
- Explore and generate dialogue about the City and within the community through public art.
- Evolve partnership opportunities & foster relationship building.
Improve Well-Being

- Increase engagement in physical activity & healthy lifestyles to improve health
- Provide affordable programs that support family stability, security, and community connections
- Enrich the community through lifelong learning opportunities
- Create environments that expose people to the visual and performing arts
Invest in our Natural Environment

• Conserve and manage our open spaces
• Preserve and expand a healthy urban tree canopy
• Provide environmental engagement opportunities for the community
• Reduce our impact on the environment in our workforce and the community
Support a Responsible and Engaged Workforce

- Our workforce embodies RPCA’s values and makes us a trusted and valued resource
Maintaining Essential Services

- Compliance with all Federal, State, and Local health guidelines
- Appropriate signage at all parks and facilities throughout COVID-19
- Ongoing park and open space maintenance
- Shift to virtual and on-demand programs
Expanding Services to Meet Community Need

• E-learning at recreation centers
• Childcare for essential workers
• Homeless shelters
• Food delivery services/ pantries
• Showers for the homeless
• Park ambassadors
Upgrading Facilities

• Maintain appropriate signage
• Install plexiglass shields in high traffic areas
• Limit number of staff on site
• Temperature checks for people entering the building
• Hand sanitizer is provided at all entrances/other critical areas and refilled as needed
• Handwashing will be promoted
• High touch areas cleaned and sanitized regularly
• Water fountains are out of service
3 Ways to Get Involved

Commissions and Councils:

• Park and Recreation Commission
• Commission for the Arts
• Beautification Commission
• Waterfront Commission
• George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee
• Recreation Center Advisory Councils
• Youth Sports Advisory Council
• Therapeutic Recreation Advisory Council
How to Get Involved?

Provide Feedback:
• Biennial Needs Assessment
• Seasonal Program Evaluation
• On-going Experience Survey
• Periodic Planning Surveys:
  • Pocket Parks, Program Interest, Playground Manual, etc.)

PARKnerships
• Volunteer
• Partnerships
• Adopt-a-Park
• Adopt-a-Bench
• Community Matching Fund
Contact Us

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