



Neighborhood Parks Plan

3550 Commonwealth Park

Community Feedback, Fall 2014



The Division of Park Planning, Design, and Capital Development is currently planning for the City's existing Neighborhood Parks, which we characterize as being 0.5 - 10 acres with a service area of up to 0.5 miles. The results of this plan will help determine budgeting priorities and recommendations for both short and long-term incremental improvements, ensuring that neighborhood parks serve Alexandria's needs now and into the future.

In Fall 2014, Staff collected community feedback to understand how the Park is used and how it could be improved in the future. The following information summarizes what we heard through an online survey, community workshop, and "graffiti board" in the park. Over 270 people responded to the survey in total, seven of which were specific to 3550 Commonwealth Park.

In 10 years I would like this Park to...

(top 3 rankings shown; based on a weighted score)

1. Be a place to relax
2. Be a safe place for children to explore
3. Be a place to create social connections with neighbors

What would you like done with the open lawn?

| Value | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|-------|---------|
| Preserve it as is | 0 | 0% |
| Enhance it | 2 | 29% |
| Transform it | 5 | 71% |

Explain

Plant trees
Bocce
Improve it
Perhaps the open lawn could be transformed into a pathway featuring native plants and dispersed relaxing seating.
Seriously, site specific public art in this location would create a useful, effective cultural bridge.

What would you like done with the planting bed?

| Value | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|-------|---------|
| Preserve it as is | 0 | 0% |
| Enhance it | 5 | 71% |
| Transform it | 2 | 29% |

Explain

Have art commission advise with participation from community
How about creating more green space such as a butterfly garden, and planting trees?
A good neighborhood start but needs more plantings
More plantings
This could be a nice site for the nearby school children to learn about plants and gardening. Could it become a community garden?

What would you like done with the seating?

| Value | Count | Percent |
|-------------------|-------|---------|
| Preserve it as is | 0 | 0% |
| Enhance it | 4 | 67% |
| Transform it | 2 | 33% |

Explain

Seating along a mulch pathway featuring native plants would be nice.
Turn this park into a sculpture garden!
Add more
Improve the desire path

How do you get to this Park?

| Value | Count | Percent |
|--------------------------|-------|---------|
| Walk | 4 | 57% |
| Bike (personal) | 2 | 29% |
| Bike (Capital Bikeshare) | 0 | 0% |
| Drive | 1 | 14% |
| Public Transit | 0 | 0% |
| Carpool | 0 | 0% |

How far do you typically travel to visit this park?

| Value | Count | Percent |
|----------------------------|-------|---------|
| Less than 1/2 mile | 4 | 57% |
| Between 1/2 mile to 1 mile | 2 | 29% |
| Between 1-2 miles | 0 | 0% |
| Over 2 miles | 1 | 14% |

Have any of the following circumstances prevented you from visiting this Park? (check all that apply)

| Value | Count | Percent |
|---|-------|---------|
| I am physically limited from walking | 0 | 0% |
| There is no pedestrian/bike friendly access to the park from where I live | 0 | 0% |
| I have concerns about crime or personal safety | 1 | 33% |
| There is not enough parking | 1 | 33% |
| There is nothing in the Park that interests me | 3 | 100% |

How often do you visit this park?

| Value | Count | Percent |
|---------|-------|---------|
| Daily | 2 | 29% |
| Weekly | 4 | 57% |
| Monthly | 1 | 14% |
| Yearly | 0 | 0% |

What is currently NOT in the Park that you would like to see there?

Response

A butterfly garden, especially a Monarch way station. And more trees.
 Active uses. Trees
 Public art!!!
 More plants and pathways to invite activity. A demonstration or community garden.
 Information about native plants. Signs that invite pedestrians and school children
 Needs more seating a gazebo would be great more plantings the walkthrough needs to be reestablished labyrinth
 ART. Creative seating, interesting water feature, colorful signage, many other elements - just please don't make it another ho-hum park (yawn).

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the Park?

Response

HSCA did a fantastic job getting this started! It needs a name!
 Too much of Alexandria has been paved over, and looks like Crystal City. How about letting parks be green spaces with lots of trees and flowers and no concrete, no jungle gyms, and no organized activity.
 It is in a great location near a school and a lot of residential space. It would be great to see the school children use it more to learn about the environment.

Comments from Community Workshop held on October 25, 2014

- Change park's name
- Connection to Cora Kelly should be improved
- Preserve planting beds
- Enhance existing planting beds and provide additional seating and gathering area
- Enhance soft trail around seating area
- Maintain green space. Use landscaping and plantings to provide social and play opportunities
- Suggestion: provide labyrinth

Graffiti Sign

A "graffiti sign" in the Park had a marker attached and asked park users to write down what they would like their park to look like in the future. The sign was on site from September to November 2014. Comments included:

- Community garden
- Bocce ball
- Badminton
- Volleyball
- Lots of 'spinning things' and slides
- Fountains
- Public art
- Water park (x3)
- Skate park
- Ice skating rink
- Swings and slides

