



# Neighborhood Parks Plan

## Ewald 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, seventeen of which were specific to Ewald Park.

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

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

1. Be a safe place for children to explore
2. Be a place to create social connections with neighbors
3. Have lots of activity

### What would you like done with the basketball court?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	8	53%
Enhance it	5	33%
Transform it	2	13%

#### Explain

Add multi-sport component to the basketball court for futsal, hockey, and other sports

Appreciate the energy efficient night lighting

FUTSAL COURT!! Would be used 24/7 by the community.

I see the courts being used quite often.

This comment applies to all park elements: The big issue is safety and lack of "nice" things. There's lots of people hanging (read: "cat calls", up to no good, etc...) around as a result of the local apartment complex The Fields and the 7-11. I do believe keeping the basketball court is a good thing because it will keep the kids from the area engaged and lower potential crime. Also, kids routinely walk across Duke without using the cross walk, making it unsafe and it disrupts traffic. The 7-11 is also a problem. The Alexandria PD always has a police car there, which tells you that crime in that area is a problem. The Park and surrounding area needs a revamp.

### What would you like done with the former tennis court

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	0	0%
Enhance it	4	29%
Transform it	10	71%

#### Explain

A public pool would be great for the neighborhood.

Bring back the tennis courts! Maintain them

FUTSAL Court!

Give us back our tennis courts!

Please do SOMETHING with this. There is so much wasted/unused space in this park!

### What would you like done with the parking lot?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	8	61%
Enhance it	4	31%
Transform it	1	8%

#### Explain

Add bike parking

Needs white stripes to mark parking spaces.

### What would you like done with the open lawn?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	1	8%
Enhance it	5	38%
Transform it	7	54%

#### Explain

Maybe expand the playground or build a gazebo or something of interest

No one's played baseball here for years. Anything will improve!

Turf this. May be the most used open space in small park in the city.

All dirt and rocks totally unusable and unsafe

Put it to good use

Add small turf soccer fields/futsal courts. Many people play soccer in the open area, so enhancing this area would be attractive

### What would you like done with the playground?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	0	0%
Enhance it	9	69%
Transform it	4	31%

#### Explain

Need to make this area more family friendly

The playground is basic, old and needs enhancement or transformation.

We could use a playground suitable for younger children.

### What would you like done with the pool and bath house? (Currently closed)

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	0	0%
Enhance it	4	31%
Transform it	9	69%

#### Explain

A public pool would be great for the neighborhood.

Either fix it up and use it or replace it with something else.

If it's not to be used as a pool, then transform to be useful!

Open it for use.

Spray grounds would be awesome

Keep closed fill it in and turn it into open space! Maybe a picnic shelter!

It would be great to actually have the pool and bathhouse open again, but I understand that it was closed due to funding and the perceived abundance of private pools in the immediate West End area. In the absence of re-opening that facility, transforming it into something useable would certainly be a welcomed change.

Market the facility, no one knew it was there. Lack of hours hurt pool use. Needed weekend hours so parents could take their kids.

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

### Response

First Topic: In the distant past I had observed seniors gathering for breakfast at the McD's on South Van Dorn Street. Then the building was refurbished and the chairs and tables were anchored so that the furniture could no longer be gathered together for people to sit in groups. Next the seniors from the West End gathered at the McD's on North Paxton Street and Duke Street. This building was also refurbished and the chairs and tables anchored so that they could no longer be moved together for a gathering of customers. The seniors stopped gathering there. A "senior room" at Ewald Park should have moveable furniture so that seniors could carry in breakfast and converse. The City has been stalling for a number of years on having a Senior Center out here in the West End. An extensive survey was conducted as to the needs, and the results were included in the Chinquapin Recreation Center. Just a reminder: In the "planned" communities of either Columbia, Maryland or Reston, Virginia the seniors gathered in a Laundromat because there were chairs there! Perhaps a request should be submitted for a Laundromat in Ewald Park so the seniors would have a place to gather. Another topic: The Central Library has a large number of students using the Internet Terminal from about 3:00 PM to about 5:00 PM during the school year. Perhaps some Internet Terminals should be installed in Ewald Park for the children to use in the afternoon when school has let out. During the morning and during the evening the terminals would be available for adults. Parking: The space available for vehicle parking is about 16 or 18 spaces. White lines on the asphalt would be helpful. Would one handicap parking space be the correct amount?

A larger playground or area for my child to play  
 Good tennis courts that are in a safe park  
 Improved soccer fields, futsal courts  
 Quality playing surface  
 Restrooms!  
 Benches

I can't really say, but it's really tragic. Inner city parks in major metropolitan cities are more enjoyable. There's a huge field in the back that has potential...but I'm not sure what should go there. Maybe a jungle gym for kids?  
 A family friendly vibe. If the tennis courts were repaired a children's tennis program could be scheduled there.

A beautiful, relaxing spot for neighbors to gather. It's currently a spot for kids to loiter and smoke pot. It needs to be turned into a much better spot for all neighbors not just bored kids.

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

### Response

The state of the pool/bathhouse makes the entire park downright unappealing. The park has an appearance that is haggard, neglected, and completely unwelcoming. There is just too much wasted, unused, and/or decrepit looking space! People do not feel comfortable using the space for anything outside of basketball and soccer games. There are safety concerns at night due to the substandard lighting in the area, making it a draw to kids who want to smoke, drink, have sex and hang out. It's absolutely appalling that the city has let this park decay to this level!  
 More organized and supervised activities for children, teaching about litter prevention

It needs a complete overhaul and a cross walk across the street. People cross the street and don't care that cars have to stop. It's all the young kids from the surrounding area. Someone will get hit at some point. Also, the 7-11 creates huge problems. Doesn't really make anyone feel safe that there's a constant police presence there and often times at the park.

Park is not safe to use. Basketball court is only real usable area currently. Pick-up semi-organized soccer fills the grass area and has left the area dirt and rocks only! Bring back nice tennis courts

People frequently cross Duke Street to get to the park, and do not use the crosswalk at the intersection with Jordan Street. Since cars coming west are coming down a hill and have limited visibility, crossers are at greater risk of being struck. This needs to be addressed somehow.

The park is well used for basketball and soccer - perhaps an actual soccer field should be put in for these pickup games. The hidden portion of the playground makes it dangerous and under utilized. Lighting should be put in and the pool expanded for actual use.

There is a major issue with this park and that is accessibility. There is a lack of a crosswalk across Duke Street from The Fields apartments to the park. This intersection is so very dangerous because the kids from this apartment complex do not walk down to the crosswalk at Jordan and Duke Streets. They cross Duke in the middle of the street either stopping traffic or getting close to being hit by a car. It's an incredibly dangerous area for adults and children.

## How do you get to this Park?

Value	Count	Percent
Walk	14	82%
Bike (personal)	0	0%
Bike (Capital Bikeshare)	0	0%
Drive	3	18%
Public Transit	0	0%
Carpool	0	0%

## How far do you typically travel to visit this park?

Value	Count	Percent
Less than ½ mile	15	88%
Between ½ mile to 1 mile	0	0%
Between 1-2 miles	1	6%
Over 2 miles	1	6%

## 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	3	25%
I have concerns about crime or personal safety	10	83%
There is not enough parking	1	8%
There is nothing in the Park that interests me	6	67%

## How often do you visit this park?

Value	Count	Percent
Daily	0	0%
Weekly	5	36%
Monthly	3	21%
Yearly	6	43%

## 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. Park users recorded the following comments between September to November 2014 (image shown above from October 27).

- Basketball (10x) including indoor basketball
- Football field (13x)
- Youth basketball tournaments
- Indoor pool
- New soccer field
- New playground (2x)
- Exercise area (2x)
- change colors of basketball court (2x)

