

WELCOME

TO THE

**LAKE ACCOTINK PARK
MASTER PLAN REVISION**

TRAILS WORKSHOP

DECEMBER 5, 2016



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

TONIGHT'S AGENDA

- PRESENTATION – PARK MASTER PLAN AND TRAILS
- TRAIL WORKSHOP STATIONS



LAKE ACCOTINK PARK MASTER PLAN REVISION

PROJECT IN A NUTSHELL

- A PARK MASTER PLANS ESTABLISHES A LONG-RANGE VISION TOWARDS FUTURE PARK USES AND SITE DEVELOPMENT, SPECIFIC TO AN INDIVIDUAL PARK
- A MASTER PLAN REVISION PROVIDES A CHANCE TO REVIEW AN EXISTING PLAN FOR A PARK AND DETERMINE HOW WELL IT IS MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY TODAY AND TO FURTHER PLAN FOR THE FUTURE.
- THE LAST TIME THE MASTER PLAN FOR LAKE ACCOTINK PARK WAS UPDATED WAS IN 1992.
- WE ARE SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND HOW COMMUNITY PREFERENCES AND EXPECTATIONS HAVE CHANGED SINCE THE LAST PLAN UPDATE.



LAKE ACCOTINK PARK MASTER PLAN REVISION

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING/OPEN HOUSE

- MARCH 14, 2016
- UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROCESS
- SHARE SOME INFORMATION ABOUT THE PARK

LAKE SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP

- JUNE 16, 2016
- DISCUSSED THE DIFFICULTY OF MANAGING SEDIMENT THAT FLOWS INTO LAKE ACCOTINK
- AS A GROUP, DISCUSSED A RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED.



LAKE ACCOTINK PARK MASTER PLAN REVISION

FACILITIES, PROGRAMMING, AND USAGE WORKSHOP

- OCTOBER 27, 2016
- TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW YOU USE THE PARK
- WHAT TYPES OF FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING BEST SUIT YOUR NEEDS

TONIGHT'S FOCUS:

TRAILS





Fairfax County Park Authority Needs Assessment

April 2016



The Park Authority recently completed a two year effort to understand, countywide, how people use the parks and how well their need is currently being met.

In the broad scheme, this information helps to identify areas to prioritize in our work plans.

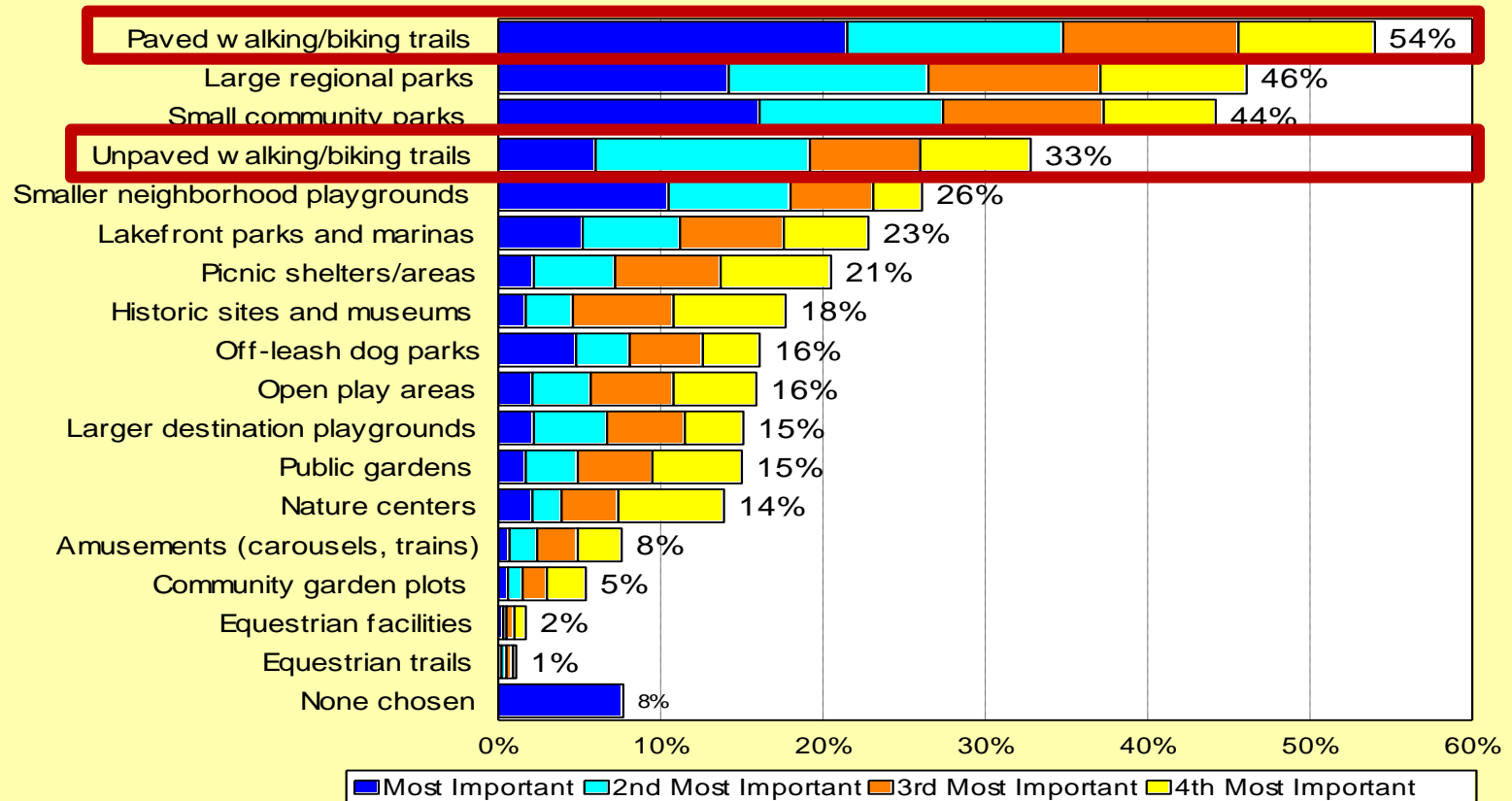
In this study, as well as previous needs assessments, trails rank as one of the park facilities in highest demand.



MOST IMPORTANT FACILITY

Q8. Park, Play Areas, Gardens, Trails, Equestrian Nature or Historic Parks or Facilities that are **MOST IMPORTANT** to Households

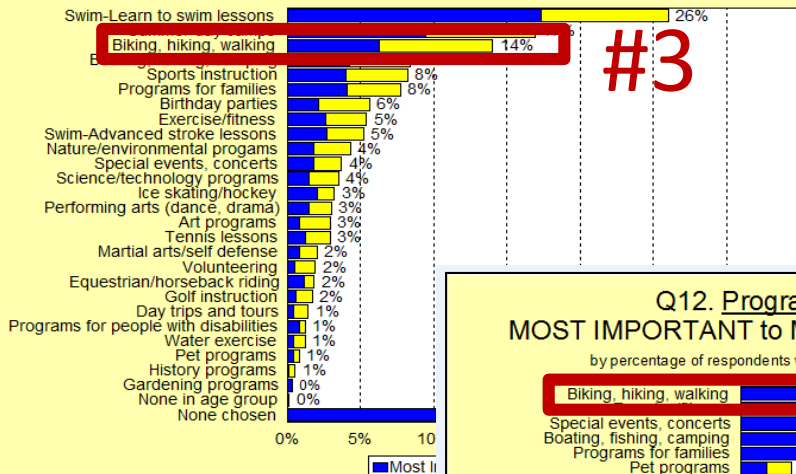
by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



Of the facilities considered most important to households, paved walking and biking trails are at the top of the list with unpaved walking and biking trails ranked only slightly lower.

Q12. Programs or Activities that are MOST IMPORTANT to Members of Households Under Age 18

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices



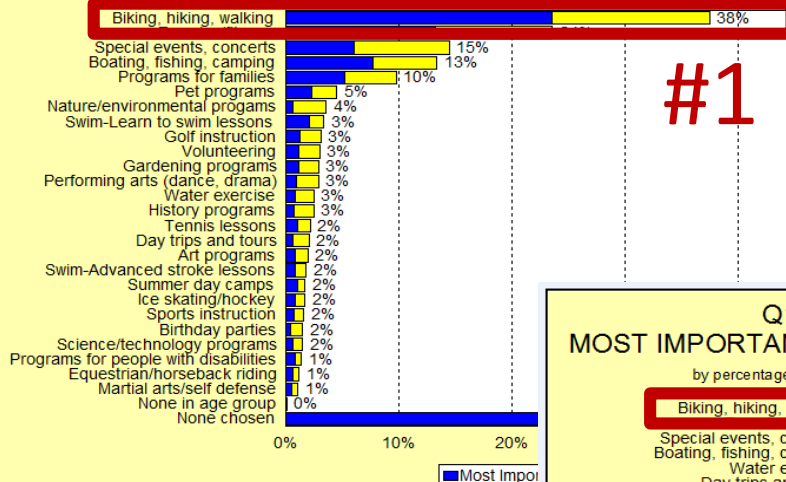
#3

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute for Fairfax County (2015)

MOST IMPORTANT PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY

Q12. Programs or Activities that are MOST IMPORTANT to Members of Households Ages 18-49

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices

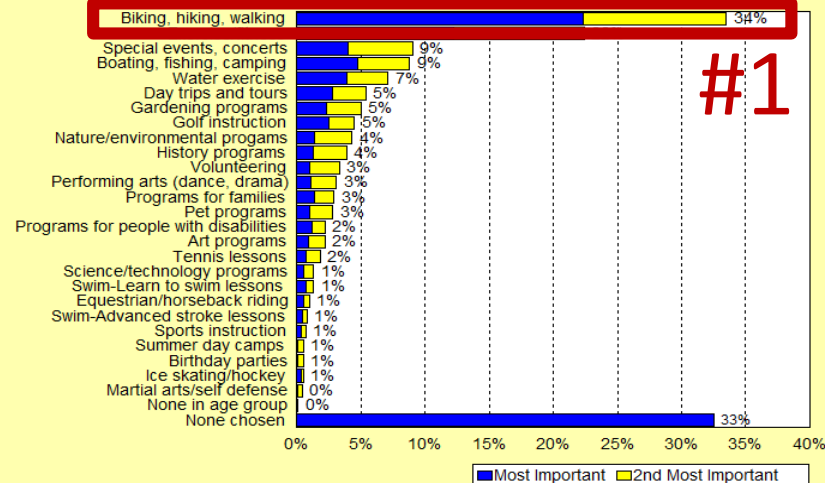


#1

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute for Fairfax County (2015)

Q12. Programs or Activities that are MOST IMPORTANT to Members of Households Ages 50 and Older

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top two choices



#1

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute for Fairfax County (2015)

Even when broken down by age brackets, trails ranked 3rd most important facility among those under 18 - but was back up to number 1 with ages 18-49 and ages 50 and over.

PARK USAGE SURVEY

A SNAPSHOT IN TIME

Please share with us what you enjoy most about Lake Accotink Park.

Trails

- 490 Hiking/walking
- 364 Biking
- 370 Nature walking
- 262 Fitness walking/running
- 124 Organized bike/walk/run events
- 259 Dog Walking

We've heard much the same thing in relation to Lake Accotink Park. When asked what people enjoyed most about Lake Accotink Park, by far, it was using the trails. And, when asked what would most improve your visit to the park, an improved trail network ranked high in number of responses. But the idea of "improved trail network" likely means different things to different people.

What actions would you most improve your visits to Lake Accotink Park?

Select three.

Active Recreation

- 104 Outdoor fitness equipment
- 143 Additional playground equipment
- 177 Disc golf
- 161 Additional sport courts
- 49 Open areas for non-specified play
- 42 Health and fitness programs
- 200 Improve trail network
- 162 Add archery range

BALANCING NEEDS

- MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLE
- MANY DIFFERENT USES
- MANY DIFFERENT PREFERENCES
- PROTECTION OF RESOURCES



Our county parks serve a wide diversity of people and interests.

TRAILS ARE A FACILITY THAT MANY PEOPLE USE FOR many DIFFERENT REASONS

We seek to balance the needs of different users, along with protection of our natural and cultural resources.



TRAIL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS



There are some basic elements that are important to good trail planning.

- Safety
- Protection of Resources
- Being a good neighbor

With these principles in mind, it should be clear that, while there are plenty of great places for trails to go, there are definitely some areas where they shouldn't. At Lake Accotink Park, a number of "social trails" have been created over the years. Some are unsafe. Some lead off of the park. Some go through resource areas. Your input will help us understand better how to refine the trail network at Lake Accotink Park – to safely get people to where they want to be while respecting the resources.



TRAIL SURFACING

- A PARK MASTER PLAN GENERALLY SHOULD NOT SPECIFY MATERIAL TYPES BUT DEFINE THE INTENDED USE AND SERVICE NEED.

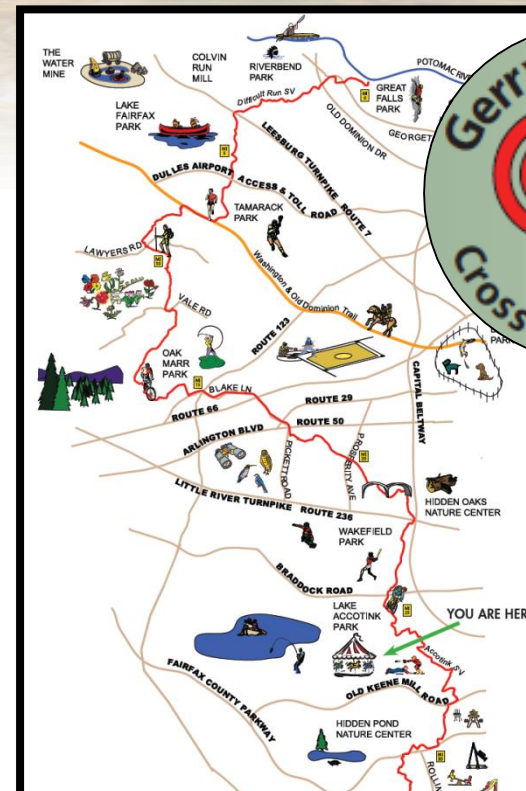
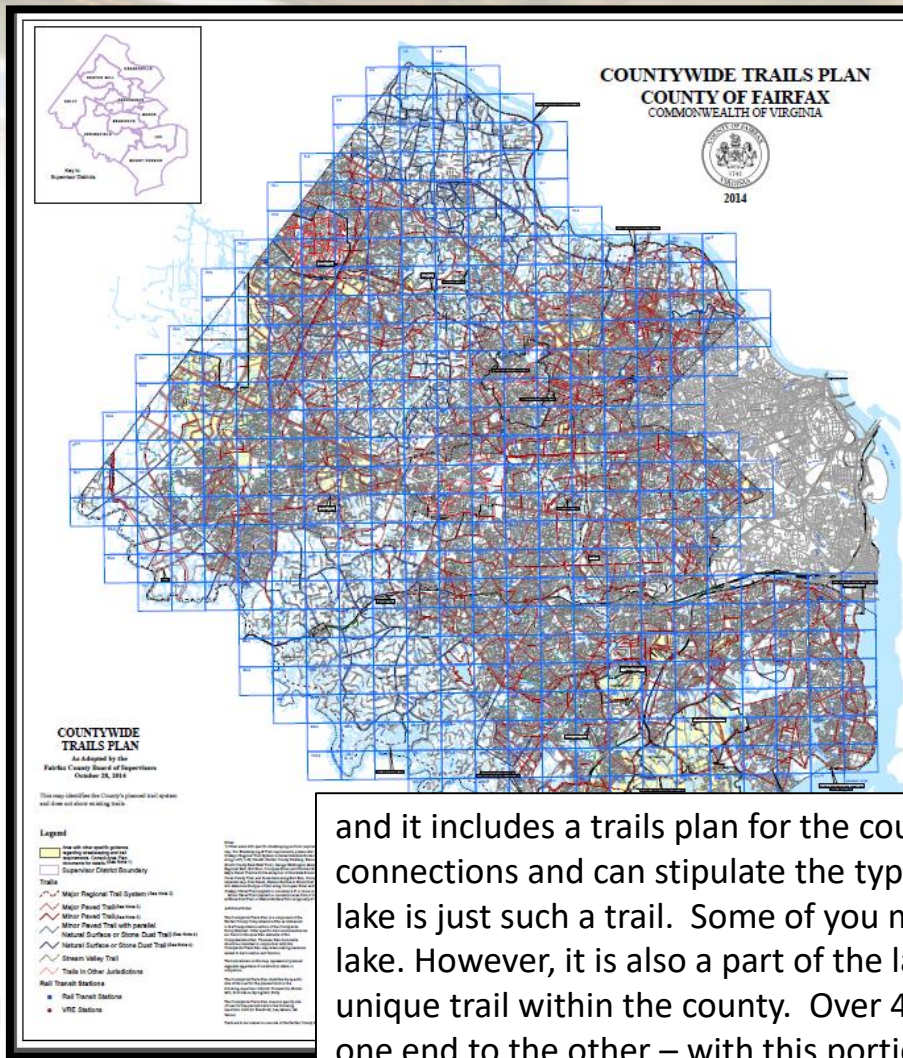
The master plan will not specify material types for trails. Rather, as the park master plan identifies what uses are appropriate to the park (and not how to construct them), any discussion on trails will address what types of use should be accommodated and the desired experience.

TRAIL SURFACING

- WHY DOES OR DOESN'T THE PARK AUTHORITY DECIDE TO PAVE A TRAIL?
 - GUIDANCE BY THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
(MAJOR TRAIL CONNECTIONS)

Some trail surfacing is determined by the County's Comprehensive Plan. This is a document with overarching guidance for how the county should develop

TRAIL SURFACING



and it includes a trails plan for the county. The Trails Plan identifies major trail connections and can stipulate the type or surfacing. The trail on the north side of the lake is just such a trail. Some of you may view it simply as part of the loop around the lake. However, it is also a part of the larger Gerry Connolly Cross County Trail, which is a unique trail within the county. Over 40 miles long connecting the entire county from one end to the other – with this portion of the CCT receiving a lot of traffic.



TRAIL SURFACING

- WHY DOES OR DOESN'T THE PARK AUTHORITY DECIDE TO PAVE A TRAIL?
 - GUIDANCE BY THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (MAJOR TRAIL CONNECTIONS)
 - ACCESSIBILITY

A second reason we consider paving is for accessibility.

Not only are we directed by government accessibility standards, we want to make our facilities as available as possible to people of all abilities. Trails that connect to unique park facilities may be paved to help make them easy for everyone to access.

TRAIL SURFACING

- WHY DOES OR DOESN'T THE PARK AUTHORITY DECIDE TO PAVE A TRAIL?
 - GUIDANCE BY THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (MAJOR TRAIL CONNECTIONS)
 - ACCESSIBILITY
 - MAINTENANCE/RESOURCE PROTECTION

A third reason is a combination of maintenance concerns and resource protection.

Many of the Park Authority's trails are in stream valleys. We make effort to secure those lands in public ownership for resource protection as well as trail connections.

Generally, by being in stream valleys, often those trails are located in floodplains – which, by nature, get flooded. Natural surface trails tend to wash away or erode. They can often be difficult to access for any significant maintenance.

TRAIL SURFACING



How many of you have ever encountered a situation like this? This is not an uncommon condition of trails in floodplains. Not only does it make trail use unpleasant, but I hope you can see where there is additional impact to the surrounding area as people, avoiding the mud and the wet, squish their way through the natural vegetation – a condition that tends to continually expand. So there is an element of paved trails that protects the surrounding natural environment.



TONIGHT'S WORKSHOP

- CIRCULATE FREELY BETWEEN THE WORKSHOP STATIONS
- THE ORDER IS NOT CRITICAL
- QUESTIONS 1-13, TWO LINES
- QUESTIONS 14-17, DISCUSSION TABLES IN THE MIDDLE
- TABLE FOR GENERAL COMMENTS
- ANSWER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS OR FEEL FREE TO SKIP ANY THAN YOU DON'T WISH TO ANSWER
- STAFF IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST YOU



**“Great things are not done by impulse,
but by a series of small things brought together.”**

Vincent van Gogh

