



## **Chapter 2**

# **Annandale Planning District**

Published May 2011

**GREAT PARKS, GREAT COMMUNITIES  
2010 – 2020 Park System Plan**

**Fairfax County Park Authority**

**ANNANDALE PLANNING DISTRICT**

Location & Character..... 1  
Park System Summary..... 1  
Park Classification..... 5  
Park Master Plans..... 7  
Themes, Issues and Strategies ..... 8  
    THEME: Connectivity..... 8  
    THEME: Community Building ..... 12  
    THEME: Service Delivery ..... 13  
    THEME: Facility Reinvestment ..... 16  
    THEME: Land Acquisition..... 17  
    THEME: Resource Interpretation..... 19  
    THEME: Cultural Resource Stewardship..... 20  
    THEME: Natural Resource Stewardship..... 21

Maps, Figures, and Tables  
Map 1: Public Parks by Class in the Annandale District ..... 3  
Map 2: Protected Land in the Annandale District ..... 4  
Map 3: Non-motorized Connections and Points of Interest in the Annandale District ... 10  
Table 1: Parks in the Annandale Planning District ..... 6  
Table 2: Annandale Planning District 2020 Facility Needs Analysis..... 14  
Table 3: Annandale Planning District 2020 Parkland Needs Analysis..... 17

## ANNANDALE PLANNING DISTRICT

### Location & Character

The Annandale Planning District is located in the central eastern portion of Fairfax County. The District is bounded by Gallows Road and Holmes Run Stream Valley to the north, Indian Run Stream Valley and I-395 to the east, the Southern Railroad right-of-way to the south, and Guinea Road, Olley Lane and Rolling Road to the west.



The District includes both suburban land use patterns (single-family detached dwelling subdivisions with a handful of retail shopping centers) as well as the more urbanized Annandale Community Business Center (CBC). The CBC is an older, suburban commercial area that is designated as a County Commercial Revitalization District to encourage commercial revitalization in central Annandale.

### Park System Summary

Map 1 depicts the public parkland in the Annandale Planning District. There are 44 public parks with a total of almost 1,500 acres in the district. All of the public park acreage in the district is owned by the Park Authority, and is within Park Authority Maintenance Areas 2 and 4.

The parks in the district include district parks, a lakefront park, special uses, local-serving parks, resource-based parks, and stream valleys. Facilities include a RECenter, rectangle fields, diamond fields, skate park, amphitheater, mini-golf, carousel, tennis and multi-use courts, playgrounds, trails, mountain bike challenge course, and picnic facilities.

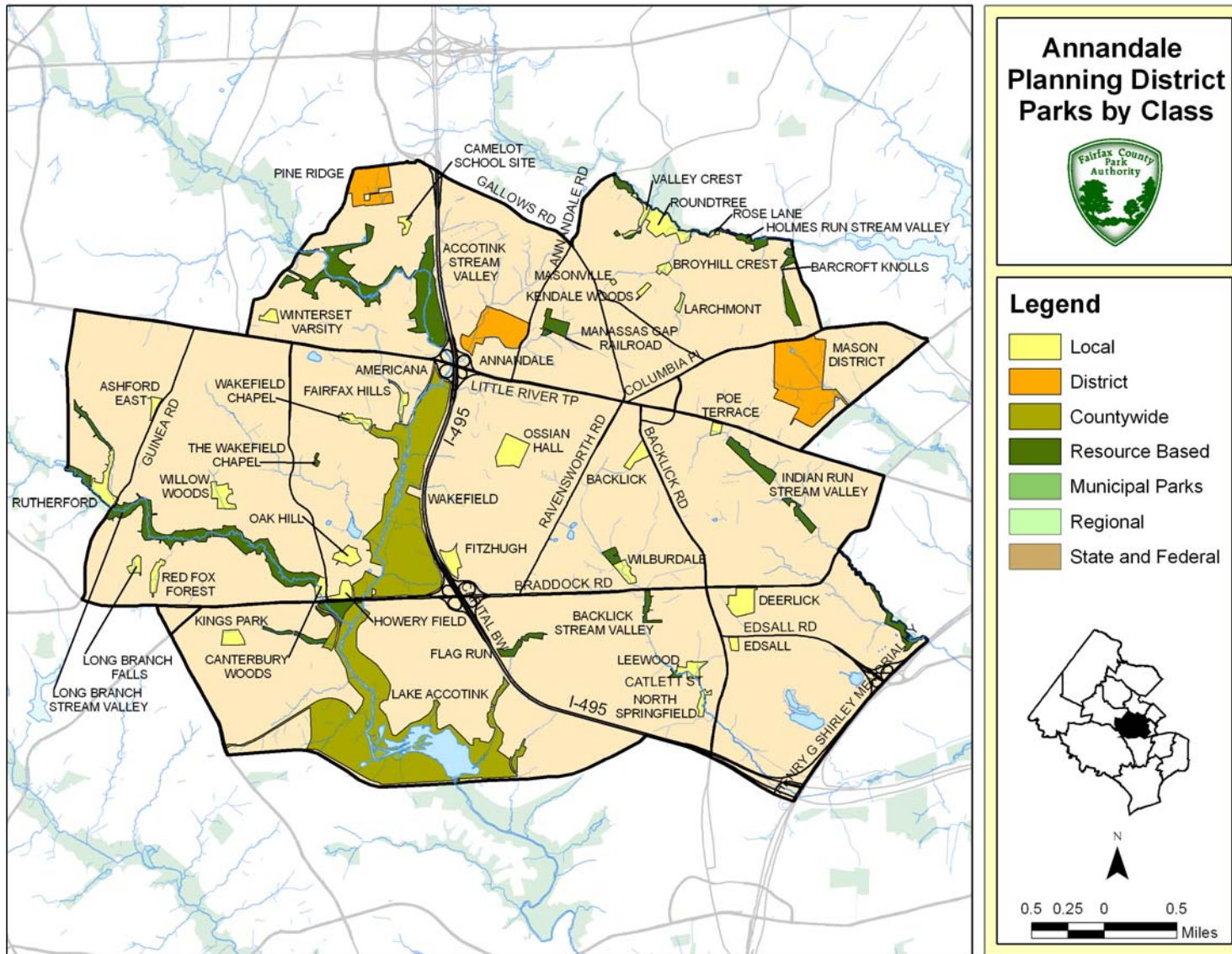
Wakefield, Lake Accotink, Ossian Hall, Roundtree, and Mason District Parks are larger parks in the district that provide a variety of active and passive recreational facilities. When combined, Lake Accotink and Wakefield Parks create one of the largest tracts of contiguous parkland in the County. The combined size is over 700 acres and they provide an extensive habitat for a diverse group of animal, bird, plant and aquatic species. This parkland also provides recreational facilities that require a large land area.

The Accotink Stream Valley Park serves as a significant thoroughfare for The Cross County Trail, as well as one of the few contiguous natural areas in the eastern section of the county. This park connects to Wakefield and Lake Accotink Parks to the south.

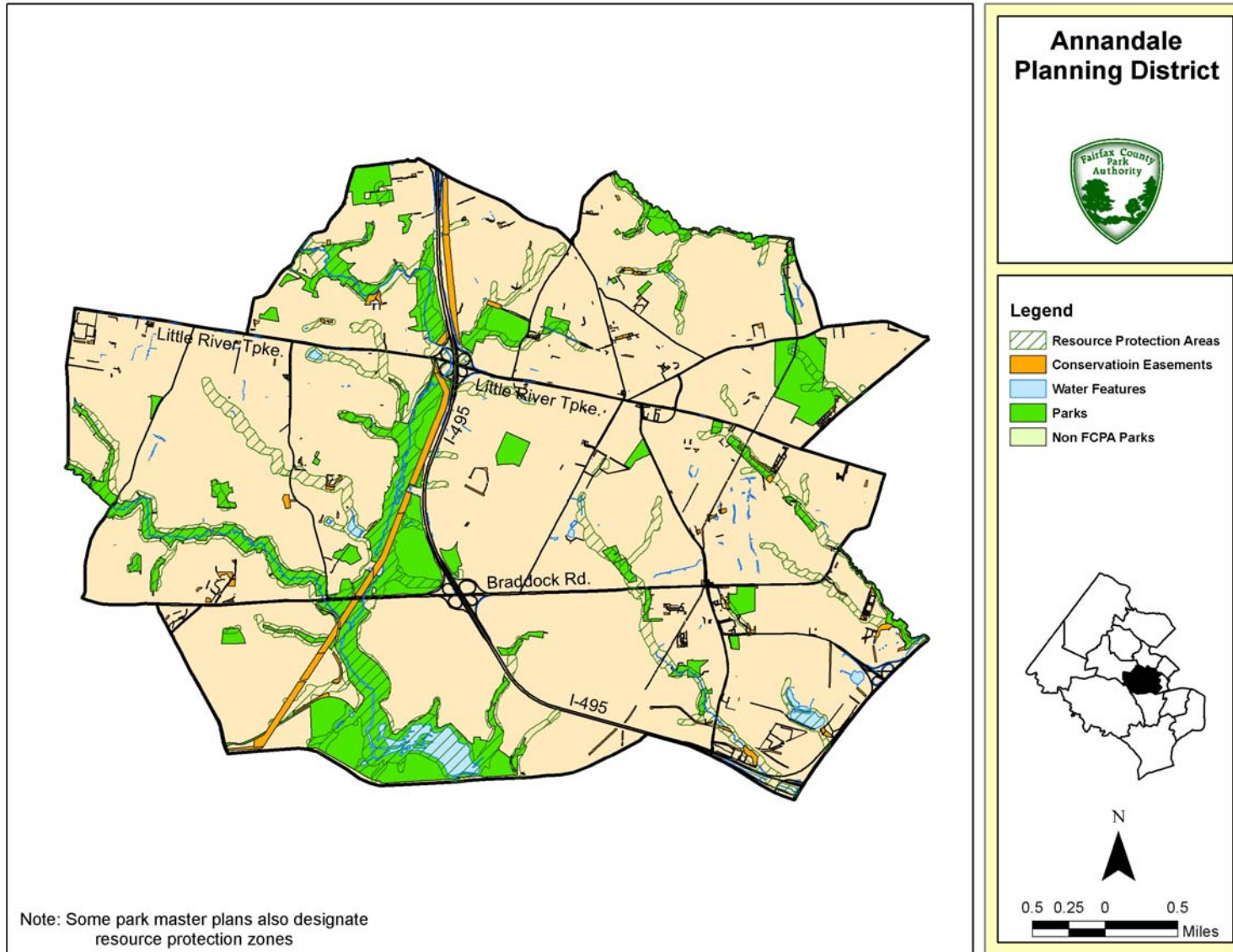
It is anticipated that the most significant land use changes in the district will likely occur through redevelopment in the Annandale CBC. There may be opportunities to add new urban parks in Annandale to the existing parkland in the district. Map 2 identifies

parkland and areas that contain regulatory or other protections including public park ownership, conservation easements, and Chesapeake Bay Ordinance designated Resource Protection Areas (RPA).

Map 1: Public Parks by Class in the Annandale District



Map 2: Protected Land in the Annandale District



## **Park Classification**

In June 2005, a new Park Classification System was adopted and incorporated into the Park and Recreation chapter of the Countywide Comprehensive Policy Plan. The Park Classification System is a general framework intended to guide open space and public facilities planning by grouping parks according to certain common typical characteristics. The park classification gives an indication of the intended use, general park size range, typical facility types, and the general experience a user may expect at a park.

Local Parks serve surrounding neighborhoods and communities and offer a variety of local-serving recreation opportunities, such as playgrounds, trails, athletic facilities, picnic areas and natural areas. Typically these parks are designed to serve up to a 3 mile radius depending on the facilities and can range from 2 to 50 acres in size.

Local parks may be urban or suburban in character. Urban parks (including pocket parks, civic plazas and common greens) are a type of local-serving park that are generally more compact and located within an urban or transit-oriented setting. These parks generally consist of high quality design and construction, are well integrated into surrounding development, uses and the public realm and primarily serve to define local urban character, support outdoor enjoyment, social gatherings, recreation needs and special events. These parks may be privately or publicly owned and are usually privately maintained.

District Parks are larger parks that serve greater geographic areas of the County (3 to 6 miles) and provide a wide variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and park experiences. Generally, these parks are more than 50 acres in size. These parks typically accommodate visits of up to a half day, longer operational hours and a larger number of users. Many district parks also have extensive natural areas.

Countywide Parks are larger parks that serve the whole County and provide a variety of larger-scale indoor or outdoor recreation facilities, or both, and facilities or resources that are unique within the County. Typically, these parks are greater than 150 acres and provide opportunities for passive and active recreation to a wide range of simultaneous users for experiences of up to a day in length.

Resource-Based Parks have significant cultural and natural resources. These parks support nature, horticulture and history programs, gardening, nature watching and appreciation of local, regional, state and national history. Extensive stream valley parks are part of the resource-based parks network. Typically, trails and interpretative features and facilities are the primary uses. Some resource parks may have separate areas designated for recreation purposes.

Regional Parks are lands and/or facilities administered by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA). These parks have region-wide significance that supplement and enhance the County and municipal park systems.

While some parks are Resource-Based, note that all park types may include areas designated for natural and/or cultural resource protection. In addition, many state and federal parks augment local and regional parks and also serve to protect natural and cultural resources within the County. Table 1 lists and classifies the parks in the Annandale district according to the County parks classification system or by state or federal ownership. Table 1 also includes information about whether and when parks were master planned and if a master planning action (new master plan development or plan update) is needed.

*Table 1: Parks in the Annandale Planning District*

Park Name	Acres	Supervisor District	Park Classification	Approved Master Plan Date	Master Plan Action Needed
Accotink S.V. <sup>1</sup>	841.13 <sup>+</sup>	BR,LEE,MA, MV,PR	Resource-Based		
Americana	3.92	BR	Local	2000	
Annandale	50.78	MA	District	1997	
Ashford East	3.80	BR	Local	*	
Backlick	8.96	MA	Local	1978	
Backlick S.V. <sup>1</sup>	63.10 <sup>+</sup>	BR,LEE,MA	Resource-Based		
Barcroft Knolls	0.49	MA	Local	*	
Broyhill Crest	4.03	MA	Local	1977	
Camelot School Site	4.37	MA	Local	^	
Canterbury Woods	4.65	BR	Local	1985	
Deerlick	19.11	MA	Local	1985	
Edsall	3.31	MA	Local	1971	
Fairfax Hills	1.62	BR	Local	*	
Fitzhugh	10.86	BR	Local	1984	
Flag Run	8.66	BR	Resource-Based	1977	
Holmes Run S.V. <sup>1</sup>	129.91 <sup>+</sup>	PR, MA	Resource-Based		
Howery Field	7.51	BR	Local	1985	
Indian Run S.V. <sup>1</sup>	56.69 <sup>+</sup>	MA	Resource-Based		
Kendale Woods	2.41	MA	Local	1984	
Kings Park	9.20	BR	Local	2009	
Lake Accotink	448.09	BR	Countywide	1993	✓
Larchmont	2.40	MA	Local	1978	
Leewood	9.44	BR	Local	1975	
Long Branch Falls	5.10	BR	Local	*	
Long Branch S.V. <sup>1</sup>	155.51 <sup>+</sup>	BR	Resource-Based		
Manassas Gap Railroad	13.32	MA	Resource-Based		



Park Name	Acres	Supervisor District	Park Classification	Approved Master Plan Date	Master Plan Action Needed
Mason District	121.15	MA	District	2001	
Masonville	0.67	MA	Local	1978	
North Springfield	4.97	BR	Local	*	
Oak Hill	10.21	BR	Local	1985	
Ossian Hall	22.75	BR	Local	2004	
Pine Ridge	42.74	MA	District	2007	
Poe Terrace	14.33	MA	Local	1984	
Red Fox Forest	7.34	BR	Local	*	
Rose Lane	1.74 <sup>+</sup>	MA	Local		
Roundtree	73.12 <sup>+</sup>	MA	Local	1971	✓
Rutherford	21.59 <sup>+</sup>	BR	Local	1971	
The Wakefield Chapel	1.44	BR	Resource-Based		
Toll House Park <sup>2</sup>	0.05	MA	Local		
Valley Crest	8.96	MA	Local	1983	
Wakefield	292.59	BR	Countywide	2000	
Wakefield Chapel	9.15	BR	Local	*	
Wilburdale	8.11	MA	Local		✓
Willow Woods	12.24	BR	Local	1965	✓
Winterset Varsity	10.29	MA	Local		

1. Resource-Based Stream Valley parks by practice do not have master plans.

2. Toll House Park is an urban park located within the Annandale CBC. It is owned by the Board of Supervisors and does not have a master plan.

\* This park was dedicated by a private developer and may be subject to a Conceptual Development Plan associated with an approved rezoning that takes the place of a park master plan.

+ A portion of this park lies outside of the Annandale district.

^ School Sites operated on an interim basis as parks by the Park Authority do not have master plans as they are owned and governed by the Fairfax County Public Schools.

## Park Master Plans

A park master plan is a general guide for appropriate park uses and their approximate location within a specific park site. The plan serves as a long-range vision (10-20 year timeframe) for future development and programming. Issues typically addressed include planned park elements, natural and cultural resource management, and general design concerns. The plan is conceptual in nature and not intended to address detailed issues related to engineered site design or park operations. The plan is just one of many steps in the process that leads to the development of a public park. An archive of park master plans is available at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/mparchives.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/mparchives.htm).

## **Themes, Issues and Strategies**

In early 2008 the Park Authority interacted with citizens at ten *Great Parks, Great Communities* public workshops in all Supervisory districts and at a variety of community festivals and events in the parks to gather input on **long-term planning for the land, facilities and natural and cultural resources of the park system**. In addition, the Park Authority received public feedback on the park system throughout the year via email and the project web site.

Based on the public feedback and staff expertise, staff identified 26 key issues that fit within eight themes relating to the land, resources and facilities of the Park Authority. **The themes are Connectivity, Community Building, Service Delivery, Facility Reinvestment, Land Acquisition, Resource Interpretation, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Natural Resource Stewardship.**

This section describes how the eight themes relate to the park system in the Annandale District and presents strategies for addressing the issues as they apply to the parks in the district. Some strategies include recommendations for construction of facilities, infrastructure and amenities at parks in the district. As part of the planning process for any proposed construction, the project area should first be assessed for possible impacts to natural and cultural resources.

### ***THEME: Connectivity***

Better integrating parks with surrounding land uses (neighborhoods and employment centers) and increasing park-to-park connections within the system will allow for greater access and enjoyment. Strategy suggestions include adding trails, trail connections, bridges and other forms of improved access to and between parks.

Map 3 illustrates existing and planned connections and points of interest within the Annandale Planning District. The map depicts high-level, conceptual connections and incorporates elements from the adopted Countywide Trails Plan and Park Authority Trail Strategy Plan. Connections link natural and cultural resources and recreational destinations, supporting recreational activity and frequently offering alternative transportation options.

***Issue: The Park Authority should work to improve non-motorized access to parks from commercial and residential areas and to increase connectivity between park sites.***

The Cross County Trail (CCT) provides full north-south connectivity through the district outside the Beltway. While the Beltway is a major barrier to east-west connectivity, a pedestrian crossing over the Beltway connects to Wakefield Park. The Heming Avenue underpass provides another Beltway pedestrian crossing in the southern end of the district.

Extensive trails around Lake Accotink connect surrounding neighborhoods to the park and each other. An extended trail along Long Branch Stream Valley connects it with Rutherford Park, Canterbury Woods Park and Howery Field. The areas inside the Beltway are less connected as parks are fragmented by development and few stream valleys exist that are in public ownership. A stream valley trail is shown on the County Trail Plan Map along Indian Run from the Beltway intersection with I-95 north connecting North Springfield, Leewood and Wilburdale Parks. Along the northern edge of the district are trails along the Holmes Run Stream Valley connecting it with Rose Lane Park, Valley Crest Park and Roundtree Park.

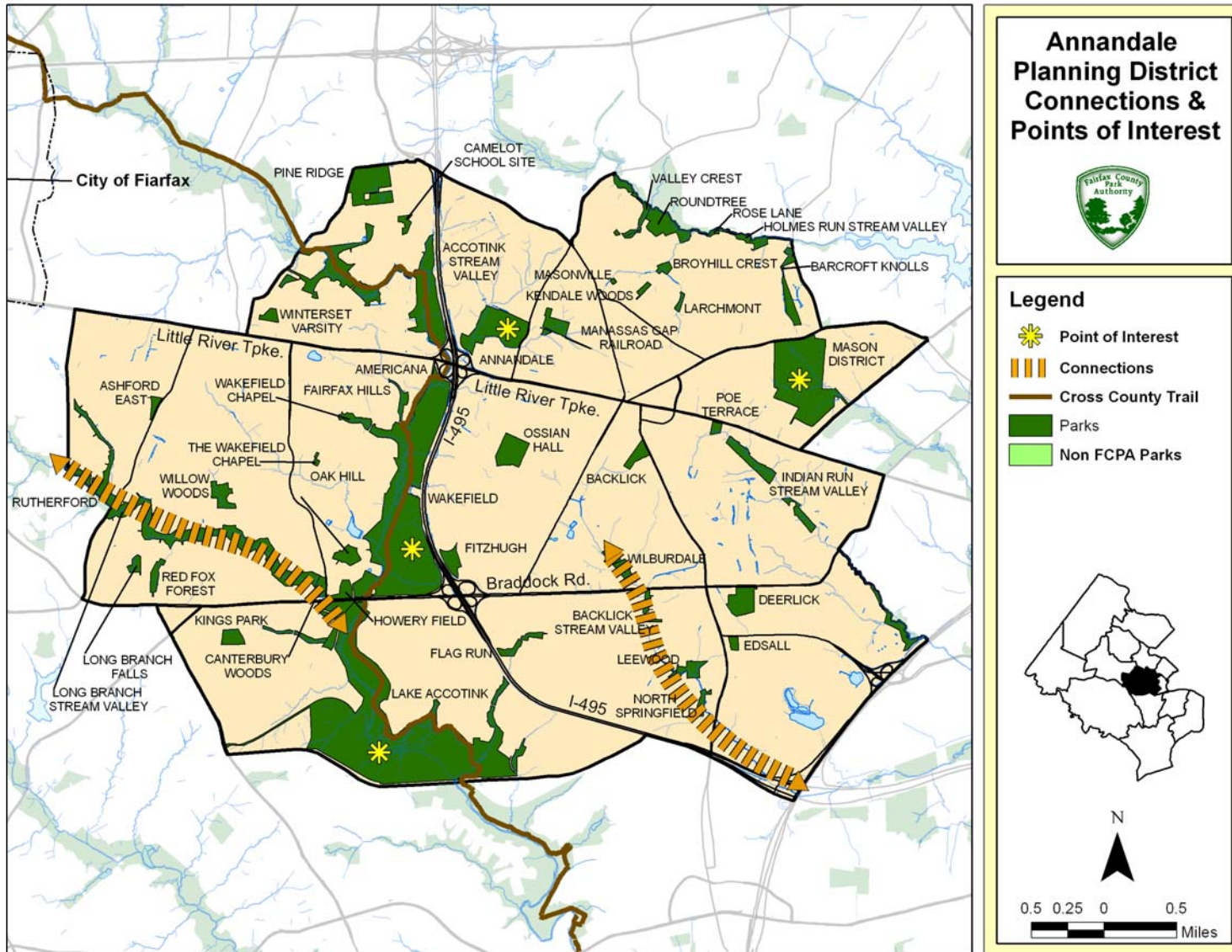
**Heard from the public: “I think we have some really good building blocks in place but creating more links from one trail to another and having better maps (or means of navigating the trails) would be great.”**

Mason District Park, Pinecrest Golf Course and Green Spring Gardens are all located near each other (although Pinecrest and Green Spring are in the Baileys Planning District) and planned to be connected with a trail through Turkeycock Stream Valley. Adding a side trail to the CCT in Wakefield Chapel Park could connect the neighborhood of Wakefield Chapel to the CCT.

Strategies:

- A-C-1. Use criteria provided in the Park Authority's Trail Strategy Plan to evaluate potential new trails, connections and improvements;
- A-C-2. Develop a side connection from the CCT to and through Wakefield Chapel Park;
- A-C-3. Improve the fair-weather crossing at Lake Accotink Dam;
- A-C-4. Support non-motorized connections from parks near the Annandale CBC to central Annandale;
- A-C-5. Implement planned stream valley trail in Turkeycock Run Stream Valley;
- A-C-6. Explore opportunities to make connections between Holmes Run Stream Valley Park and Mason District and Roundtree parks;
- A-C-7. Develop an internal trail system within Pine Ridge Park;
- A-C-8. Make improvements to the trail system integrating Annandale Community Park with the surrounding neighborhoods including improving connections between the park and Adams Walk/Championship Drive neighborhood and creating a permanent water crossing for the trail connecting the park with Lafayette Village; and
- A-C-9. Improve the existing spillway crossing at Lake Accotink Park.

Map 3: Non-motorized Connections and Points of Interest in the Annandale District



***Issue: Multiple, separate park sites located across Fairfax County should be linked through thematic interpretive connections.***

Thematic connections, emphasized through elements such as signage, maps, or website information, can foster greater public awareness of important features. Increased knowledge of site features could encourage greater support for stewardship and management activities.

A unique thematic connection for the Annandale District could include transportation history as the district includes remnants of the Manassas Gap Railroad, other railways, Little River Turnpike and Braddock Roads that have served mobility in the district for centuries. The Braddock History project may be an additional source of information around which a local history theme may emerge.

Annandale Community Park is located along the Great Falls Loop of the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail.

**Strategies:**

A-C-10. Explore the transportation theme in more detail by identifying key elements and trail connections to link them;

A-C-11. Identify key historic elements and highlights associated with the Braddock History project that are located near or along park trails that could be linked into a theme; and

A-C-12. Include Hidden Oaks Nature Center and Lake Accotink as significant nodes along a natural areas interpretive trail within the county.

***Issue: District and Countywide parks and the Cross County Trail should be served by the public transportation system to provide equitable access to recreational facilities.***

Bus transit in the Annandale district is provided along Little River Turnpike and Braddock Road. While there is some limited weekend transit service, the majority of the transit in the area is to support morning and evening commuting with flows to and from the Metro stations and the Pentagon being a primary goal. Transit supporting commuting times and patterns do not necessarily serve park users who wish to use parks. Most parks in the district are within ¼ mile of a bus stop and could serve to improve access to parks. Larger parks such as Wakefield and Mason District would most benefit from improved transit access due to the nature of facilities in these parks.

**Strategies:**

A-C-13. Work with the Department of Transportation to improve bus transit service to destination parks in the Annandale Planning District. This should include coordination with bus stop locations and transit schedules; and

A-C-14. Ensure that safe access between bus stops and parks exists and directional signage is provided.

**Issue: *The Park Authority should work to improve access to waterways and promote the use of “water trails” throughout the County.***

Since there are no navigable waterways in the district, no district- or park-specific strategies exist for this issue in the Annandale Planning District.

***THEME: Community Building***

Local parks are places where people can interact and build community. Well-designed and located parks, park facilities and programs support greater social interaction. Community-building park facilities and activities include reservable picnic areas, amphitheatres, dog parks, garden plots, farmers markets, performances and special events. Collocation of facilities with other community uses can also assist in strengthening communities. Strategy suggestions include ways to increase the community-building role of local parks in residential neighborhoods and providing parks and recreation facilities near other civic uses.

**Issue: *Local and urban parks should include a combination of facilities, amenities and gathering spaces to attract and promote social interaction among community members.***

Many of the larger parks in the district provide facilities and activities that support community building activities. Many of these parks are surrounded by residential neighbors who, along with the larger community, actively participate in all sorts of annual community festivals at the parks.

**Heard from the public:**  
“I just wanted to express my support for a mixed use program area at Lake Accotink Park where people can socialize with their dogs in a safe, fenced-in area.”

Lake Accotink hosts the annual Cardboard Boat Regatta and Halloween Dog Parade. This park offers reservable picnic areas, summer concerts and camps that support popular community gatherings. The Halloween Dog Parade, other dog programs and a dog agility course at this park has created a “dog-friendly” park culture. While there is not an official off-leash dog area included in the master plan for Lake Accotink, a revision to include a dog park here has been identified by the community and staff as desirable.

Wakefield Park hosts a Farmer’s Market from May to October and an annual crafts show in December. Mason District Park hosts Mason District Day in the fall, a Farmers Market from May to November, summer concerts and a dog park. Pine Ridge Park includes 180 garden plots that support camaraderie among those who rent these spaces. Ossian Hall Park, next to Annandale High School, hosts a series of International Summer Performances that highlight diverse cultures from around the world. Roundtree Park has evolved into a community gathering location for primarily Hispanic residents from the region who plan impromptu large scale, all day gatherings

there. This park, however, is located in a residential area and does not have proper facilities to support large scale gatherings.

Strategies:

A-CB-1. Identify appropriate locations and support amenities needed for dog related facilities in the district; and

A-CB-2. Identify appropriate facilities and location needed to support large scale, all day gatherings that are desirable to many ethnic groups who reside and visit in the district.

**Issue: Parks should be colocated with other civic uses (libraries, community centers, senior centers, etc.) to promote social interaction among community members.**

Parks that are colocated with other civic uses in Annandale Planning District include Poe Terrace Park located next to George Mason Regional Library and Ossian Hall Park next to Annandale High School. Poe Terrace is undeveloped, but planned with local park features including trails, picnic area and tot lot. Stream restoration and cultural resource interpretation are also planned at this site. Willow Woods Park is located next to Canterbury Woods Elementary School and shares parking and playground facilities. Several other parks are close to elementary schools throughout the district. Parks that are adjacent to schools and libraries offer the potential for greater partnerships to share facilities, programs, interpretive features and program space.

Strategies:

A-CB-3. Strengthen partnerships with schools and libraries that are colocated with parks by identifying existing, planned and needed facilities that could be shared for joint educational, interpretive and social programs.

**THEME: Service Delivery**

The Park Authority provides quality facilities that are well used, but may not be equitably distributed across all parts of the County or accessible to all groups. Countywide and specialty facilities, in particular, may not serve a true county-wide service area. Residents desire recreational facilities and opportunities at parks near where they live and for all age groups and socio-economic populations. Strategy suggestions include creating more facilities, better distributing facilities across the County, and reducing barriers to use.

Service level standards for over twenty park facility types were established through the 2004 Needs Assessment (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/needsassessment.htm>) process and incorporated into the Countywide Policy Plan (<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/comprehensiveplan/policyplan/parksrec.pdf>) in 2005. Facility standards are countywide goals for providing park and recreation facilities that

reasonably satisfy community needs. Standards are expressed in units per population, and are based on extensive analysis of citizen demand and preferences compared with the existing public facility inventories. Based on the Countywide adopted facility service level standards and projected population growth, Table 2 shows the projected surplus or deficit of several key local serving facilities in the Annandale Planning District for the year 2020. While overall facility needs are quantified in Table 2, the location of needed facilities is determined through the site specific master planning process that considers site conditions, context, resources, and community input. For more detailed information on existing facilities in each park and service levels, please see the Existing Conditions Report.

*Table 2: Annandale Planning District 2020 Local Serving Facility Needs Analysis*

		74,135	2010 population			
		76,002	2020 population			
Facility	Service Level Standard	2010 Existing Facilities	2020 Needed Facilities	2020 Projected (Deficit)/ Surplus	2020 Projected Service Level	
Rectangle Fields	1 field / 2,700 people	28.7	28.1	0.6	102%	
Adult Baseball Fields	1 field / 24,000 people	2.0	3.2	(1.2)	63%	
Adult Softball Fields <sup>+</sup>	1 field / 22,000 people	6.0	3.5	2.5	174%	
Youth Baseball Fields <sup>+</sup>	1 field / 7,200 people	10.5	10.6	(0.1)	99%	
Youth Softball Fields <sup>+</sup>	1 field / 8,800 people	12.5	8.6	3.9	145%	
Basketball Courts	1 court / 2,100 people	18.5	36.2	(17.7)	51%	
Playgrounds	1 playground / 2,800 people	26.0	27.1	(1.1)	96%	
Neighborhood Dog Parks	1 dog park / 86,000 people	1.0	0.9	0.1	113%	
Neighborhood Skate Parks	1 skate park / 106,000 people	0.0	0.7	(0.7)	0%	

<sup>+</sup> 60 ft and 65 ft diamond fields are assigned to the sport where primarily allocated.

**Issue: The Park Authority should provide and equitably distribute facilities to meet established facility service level standards.**

Overall, the Annandale District is fairly well served by parks and park facilities. The Cross County Trail is centrally located in the district and serves the district well. Three large parks, Mason District, Wakefield and Lake Accotink offer a variety of facilities and experiences. Smaller local parks exist in neighborhoods across the district. The large and small parks complement service to most neighborhoods in the district. Central Annandale is a designated revitalization area and future growth center in the County with planned redevelopment into a mix of uses with higher intensities. It is envisioned that urban pocket parks will be integrated into development to better serve residents



and workers in the central core area. Future parkland will likely be added through development proffers, stream valley additions/easements for trails and through a limited number of purchases. Service level deficiencies are also augmented by proffers and private providers, such as homeowner associations.

Strategies:

- A-SD-1. Implement master planned athletic field improvements at Pine Ridge Park; and
- A-SD-2. Implement master planned playground and picnic area improvements at Kings Park Park.

***Issue: The Park Authority should provide new kinds of parks and facilities and in new ways to meet the needs of the County's changing population.***

Strategies:

- A-SD-3. Encourage integration of urban parks into development plans as reinvestment and redevelopment occur in central Annandale; and
- A-SD-4. Consider providing unique dog-related facilities (such as an agility course) at Lake Accotink Park.

***Issue: The Park Authority should re-examine park master plans to determine if parks are planned to best serve the needs of Fairfax County residents.***

Most of Wilburdale Park is in the Chesapeake Bay Ordinance designated Resource Protection Area (RPA) and cannot support planned and existing facilities. The planned playground at Willow Woods Park is in a Resource Protection Area and may not be appropriate to implement. The master plan for Lake Accotink Park was last revised in 1990. Current programs and functions at the park, such as extensive dog related activities, need program facilities to support activities. Additional indoor program space is also needed. A comprehensive trails plan would also improve the trail network and experience at this park.

**Heard from the public:**  
"I am a traditional archer. I think that it would be wonderful if Fairfax County provided space for archery enthusiasts to practice their sport."

A review of the Roundtree Park master plan should address the evolving and changing large group activities at the park that conflict with the park's design. All-day large group gatherings are a regular occurrence in this park. The park was not intended to support long duration activities and large gatherings.

Strategies:

- A-SD-5. Review planned and existing facilities and their relationship to the Resource Protection Areas at Wilburdale and Willow Woods Parks; and
- A-SD-6. Consider revising the Lake Accotink and Roundtree Park master plans to address evolving community needs.

***THEME: Facility Reinvestment***

The Park Authority has a great diversity of facilities and resources in various lifecycle stages. Funding and schedules for replacement or reinvestment are inconsistent and adding new facilities has sometimes taken precedence over renewal of existing facilities. Strategy suggestions include repairing, replacing, upgrading, and improving utilization of existing facilities and equipment.

***Issue: Repair, replacement, and upgrading of existing park facilities should be addressed through a system-wide lifecycle replacement program that takes into account changing facility needs.***

Most of the park facilities in the district have been in existence since the 1970s or earlier. Not all scheduled facility replacements have been adequately funded and many have been deferred. The RECenter at Wakefield Park is nearly 30 years old and heavily used. The Hidden Oaks Nature Center at Annandale Park is also heavily used and in need of facility upgrades. The playground at Lake Accotink serves school-age children; adding a tot lot to serve ages 2-5 would complement the existing structures and better serve users of the picnic area. Horseshoe pits at Wakefield and Chapel Acres Parks are underutilized.

Strategies:

- A-FR-1. Assess replacement or renewal options for Audrey Moore RECenter at Wakefield Park;
- A-FR-2. Renovate the Hidden Oaks Nature Center including upgrades to restrooms, office and storage space, and visitor services areas;
- A-FR-3. Build a new picnic shelter/outdoor classroom at Hidden Oaks;
- A-FR-4. Consider adding a tot lot at Lake Accotink Park that serves ages 2-5 to complement the existing structures and better serve users of the picnic area;
- A-FR-5. Consider periodic dredging for Lake Accotink; and
- A-FR-6. Consider converting the horseshoe pits at Wakefield and Chapel Acres Parks to other needed facilities (for example, use horseshoe pit area at Wakefield Park as area for expansion of skate park facility).

***Issue: Parking standards and levels of service should reflect user patterns to minimize impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.***

The parking lot at Canterbury Woods receives overflow parking from Howerly Field and Wakefield Park and serves as a commuter parking lot during weekdays. The master plan for Wakefield Park shows additional parking that has not been built. Lake Accotink has a parking shortage during peak times and much of the parking is not convenient to the picnic areas.

Strategies:

- A-FR-7. Improve the roads and trails at the Hidden Oaks Nature Center;
- A-FR-8. Consider implementing planned additional parking areas at Wakefield Park;
- A-FR-9. Explore the potential to convert third lane of the entrance road into on-street parking at Wakefield Park; and
- A-FR-10. Evaluate parking at Lake Accotink and consider providing a comprehensive parking plan there as part of the master plan revision process.

**THEME: Land Acquisition**

Additional parkland is needed to protect and buffer natural areas and historic sites and to provide room to develop new recreational facilities. Strategy suggestions include ways to continue to add appropriate land to the Park Authority's land holdings to expand the park system.

Service level standards for both local and district/countywide parkland were established through the 2004 Needs Assessment and incorporated into the Countywide Policy Plan in 2005. Parkland standards represent countywide goals for providing land for the two types of parks (Local and District/Countywide) that support service delivery and facility development and are expressed in units per population. Local parks include both suburban and urban park types. Resource-based parks occur where resources are located and therefore do not require quantitative service level standards. Please refer to the Park Classification discussion earlier in this chapter for additional information on park classification descriptions.

Based on adopted service level standards and projected population growth, Table 3 shows the projected surplus or deficit of parkland in the Annandale Planning District for the year 2020.

*Table 3: Annandale Planning District 2020 Parkland Needs Analysis*

<b>74,135</b>	2010 population					
<b>76,002</b>	2020 projected population					
<b>11,947</b>	District Size (acres)					
	<b>Parkland/Open Space Type</b>	<b>Service Level Standard</b>	<b>2010 Existing Acres</b>	<b>2020 Needed Acres</b>	<b>2020 Projected (Deficit)/ Surplus</b>	<b>2020 Projected Service Level</b>
<b>Public Parkland</b>	Local Suburban	5 acres / 1,000 people	270	380	<b>(110)</b>	71%
		1.5 acres / 1,000 people plus 1 acre/10,000 employees				
	Urban					
	District/Countywide <sup>+</sup>	13 acres / 1,000 people	898	988	<b>(90)</b>	91%

	Resource-Based	*	335		
	<b>Parkland Total</b>		<b>1,503</b>		
<b>Private Land</b>	Private Recreation		0		
	HOA Property		367		
	<b>Private OS Total</b>		<b>367</b>		
<b>Public &amp; Private Total</b>			<b>1,871</b>		

+ The District and Countywide Parks that serve this Planning District may be located outside the Planning District and this outlying acreage is not reflected in this table.

\* There is no service level standard for Resource-Based parkland. The amount of resource based parkland owned and/or protected is based on the existence and sensitivity of the resources.

**Issue: Parkland for recreation should be provided according to adopted service level standards and distributed equitably throughout the County.**

Comparatively, the Annandale district is well served by parkland. The majority of the parkland in the area was acquired in the 1960s, when more open space was available. Since then, an almost complete build-out of the district has occurred. Therefore, opportunities to add to existing parkland in Annandale are limited. It may be possible, however, to add to existing stream valley parks and to create new urban parks in the central Annandale revitalization area.

Strategies:

A-LA-1. Acquire parkland that will support trail connections consistent with planned trail network.

**Issue: Urban parks should be provided in higher density/mixed use areas of the County (i.e. Tysons Corner, Transit Station Areas, Commercial Revitalization Districts).**

Strategies:

A-LA-2. Encourage the creation of urban parks in central Annandale that will help create a sense of place, spur redevelopment and serve residents, workers and visitors and that align with the urban park system envisioned in the Annandale CBC recommendations in the County Comprehensive Plan.

**Issue: Property acquisition is important for protecting historic resources in Fairfax County and ensuring their preservation for future generations.**

The Annandale Planning District contains many important cultural resources. The most important of these are Civil War features, including the Manassas Gap Railroad (unfinished railroad started in 1852, and never completed). Several segments of what remains of the Manassas Gap Railroad can be found on Park Authority property and private property. In addition, this District includes, a number of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century mills, as well as many Native American sites.

Strategies:

A-LA-3. Seek opportunities to protect additional remnants of the Manassas Gap Railroad that are appropriate for park preservation;

A-LA-4. Evaluate 18th and 19th century mill sites and Native American sites located in the district to determine if they are appropriate for acquisition by the Park Authority or for protection through conservation easements; and

A-LA-5. Encourage owners of private parcels containing historic resources to place conservation easements on their property to protect these resources.

**Issue: *Property acquisition is an important strategy for protecting natural resources in Fairfax County and ensuring open and natural areas for future generations.***

The majority of the natural areas in the district are under Park Authority ownership, though many smaller natural areas have a mix of owners including corporate and private holdings. In many areas, the connectivity in the stream valley corridors is tenuous due to many private parcels in those areas with no permanent protection.

Strategies:

A-LA-6. Focus natural resource land acquisitions on lands that expand and connect habitat areas and are appropriate for parks;

A-LA-7. Pursue wildlife crossings under the Capital Beltway and Little River Turnpike as part of any proposed highway improvements; and

A-LA-8. Seek to acquire and/or protect through purchase, donation, development dedications, or conservation easements remaining natural areas in the district, especially large tracts connecting to other natural areas and those containing unique or significant natural resources.

***THEME: Resource Interpretation***

Residents may not be aware of or understand the importance of the vast number of natural and cultural resources the Park Authority holds in public trust. Strategy suggestions include adding to the existing interpretive facilities, signs, and programs. Roadway and trail waysides permit park visitors opportunities to stop and view interpretive signage.

**Issue: *The full range of natural and cultural resources within Fairfax County should be interpreted through facilities as needed.***

The major interpretive facility in the Annandale District is Hidden Oaks Nature Center at Annandale Community Park that provides a vast number of exhibits and programs at the center and in the community. Visitation and programs at this center have increased dramatically in recent years. New exhibits were installed within the last five years. Nature Playce, a safe free-play area within a forested enclosure with a water feature, provides a natural place to play and explore. Significant prehistoric archaeological

resources were discovered prior to construction on-site and were avoided. Interpretation of these resources will contribute to the public's understanding of Native American life in the area. An innovative pervious paved parking area also demonstrates low impact development methods and is interpreted as part of the facility.

In addition, interpretive signage exists along the Cross County Trail and in several other parks to help the public better understand and appreciate natural resources in the parks. Interpretive signage also helps visitors understand the significance of Wakefield Chapel and Manassas Gap Railroad. Funding for interpretive facilities is limited and therefore resources and learning experiences can be maximized when collocated with other public facilities or programs are shared. Opportunities to use indoor space at Audrey Moore RECenter for resource interpretation may exist. Opportunities to interpret local history also exist as part of Annandale CBC revitalization efforts.

Strategies:

- A-RI-1. Seek a partnership with George Mason Library to provide interpretive exhibits at the library;
- A-RI-2. Develop new and improve existing interpretive exhibits at Hidden Oaks Nature Center, including waysides, signs, and kiosks;
- A-RI-3. As part of the master plan revision process, consider expanding upon the existing interpretive features at Lake Accotink Park;
- A-RI-4. Increase the number of interpretive signs along major trails for broader exposure;
- A-RI-5. Explore opportunities for interpretive exhibits and programs to be placed at Audrey Moore RECenter; and
- A-RI-6. Evaluate Nature Playce at Annandale District Park to determine suitability of creating other safe natural exploration areas at other locations.
- A-RI-7. Explore opportunities to interpret local history in the Annandale CBC in concert with County revitalization efforts.

***THEME: Cultural Resource Stewardship***

Many factors threaten the health, protection and viability of natural and cultural resources on county parkland. Strategy suggestions include focusing on managing threats and actively managing existing natural and cultural resources consistent with guidance provided in the countywide [Cultural Resource Management Plan](#) and [Natural Resource Management Plan](#).

Oak Hill Historic Site, a Fitzhugh family home, was constructed in 1790 on part of the Ravensworth tract. The Park Authority owns an easement on Oak Hill that allows for the protection of the architectural and archaeological resources and the historic landscape of this National Register listed site. The easement allows for public access to this private residence on a very limited basis, but the Park Authority is not responsible for its

maintenance. Wakefield Chapel was built in 1899 and the historic church and its associated cemetery are owned and operated by the Park Authority. Wakefield Chapel is listed in the Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites. The chapel is available for event rental and produces income.

***Issue: Historic structures should be stabilized, repaired, renovated and/or restored to ensure their preservation and availability for public viewing and interpretation.***

Strategies:

A-CR-1. Maintain the historic integrity of Wakefield Chapel, as well as its physical condition to provide a quality and safe experience for use as an event location and revenue producing facility.

***Issue: Cultural Resources should be identified and evaluated prior to any proposed construction activity.***

Strategies:

A-CR-2. For any site subject to proposed construction activity, a preliminary assessment of the property will be carried out using GIS and pedestrian reconnaissance. Should potential resources be present, a cultural resource survey will be conducted and mitigation measures will be developed, as necessary.

***Issue: Impacts to National Register eligible cultural resources should be avoided where at all feasible. If impacts cannot be avoided mitigation level documentation or data recovery should occur.***

Strategies:

A-CR-3. Document and record buildings and structures using Historic American Buildings/Historic American Engineering methods (research, measured drawings and archival photographs) and conduct data recovery excavations for archaeological sites, as appropriate.

***Issue: New, expanded and upgraded facilities are needed to house artifact collections to ensure their preservation for future generations.***

No district- or park-specific strategies exist for this issue in the Annandale Planning District. This is an issue of countywide concern that should be addressed with centralized facilities.

***THEME: Natural Resource Stewardship***

The larger parks in the Annandale District, including portions of Accotink Stream Valley Park, Lake Accotink Park, Wakefield Park and the Mason District Park, are not completely connected by stream corridors. These parks contain high-quality resources,

including high quality upland vegetative stands, but remain under stress due to nearby intense development and major roadways, adjacent property owner encroachments, non-native invasive plant species and deer herbivory. The stream corridors in the Accotink watershed provide relatively good connectivity within this highly developed suburban/urban watershed.

***Issue: Natural habitats and the wildlife they support are disappearing due to development and are fragmented from development, trails, easements and utilities. Meadow and upland habitats are especially scarce.***

Strategies:

- A-NR-1. Protect and improve existing corridors, linkages and watersheds;
- A-NR-2. Provide new linkages between remaining public and private natural areas;
- A-NR-3. Manage utility corridors and other easements consistent with natural resource goals, not just utility service goals;
- A-NR-4. Designate permanent resource protection zones on parkland that define appropriate uses and development;
- A-NR-5. Preserve the upland forest habitats at Lake Accotink and Wakefield Parks; and
- A-NR-6. Mitigate impacts from development, road and utility projects on parkland through leveraging easements and agreements needed from the Park Authority.

***Issue: Water resources and stream valleys are degraded due to development and associated stormwater runoff.***

The Annandale Planning District contains land in two watersheds — Accotink Creek and Cameron Run. Although the majority of the Park Authority land area is within the Accotink Creek watershed, the park parcels are fairly evenly distributed across the planning district, to include both watersheds. Both of these streams have somewhat urban watersheds with few to no stormwater controls and severe degradation from excessive runoff, despite the relatively diffuse development in portions of the planning district.

Strategies:

- A-NR-7. Work with the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES) and private land owners to capture and treat stormwater. This could take the form of incorporating Low Impact Development (LID) methods on residential and commercial lots and renovation of larger properties to provide new or enhanced stormwater facilities; and
- A-NR-8. Encourage private property owners to adopt wildlife and water friendly landscaping practices to improve water quality and habitat.



**Issue: The Park Authority does not have an adequate inventory of natural resources on parkland, nor the capacity to actively manage and protect natural resources.**

Coordinated assessment, research and documentation of natural resources on public and private properties in the Annandale district is lacking.

Strategies:

- A-NR-9. Direct development of park infrastructure to areas that, when inventoried, reflect few or poor quality natural resources, unless otherwise incompatible;
- A-NR-10. Ensure that natural resources are assessed prior to any park development. Use design principles that minimize natural resource impacts and include monitoring and restoration of impacted natural areas as part of development plans; and
- A-NR-11. Conduct natural resource inventories and develop and implement natural resource management plans for natural areas.

**Issue: Non-native invasive plants are threatening natural resources by reducing the diversity of native species and impacting wildlife habitat.**

Strategies:

- A-NR-12. Educate citizens on the problems associated with invasive plant species. Work with them to eliminate or limit invasive planting on private property near parks and to prevent new introductions of invasive species; and
- A-NR-13. Expand non-native invasive plant management and habitat restoration on parkland by implementing the Non-Native Invasive Plant [Prioritization Plan](#) and [Assessment](#).

**Issue: The County has a goal to expand tree canopy. The Park Authority should contribute to this goal wherever possible by ensuring existing forested areas are sustainable and expanding canopy where possible.**

Strategies:

- A-NR-14. Ensure sustainability of tree canopy on parkland by developing and implementing management plans and controlling threats such as non-native invasive plants and deer herbivory;
- A-NR-15. Encourage tree planting and natural landscaping techniques on private land;
- A-NR-16. Incorporate natural landscaping techniques on parkland, avoid tree loss from development and where possible increase tree canopy; and
- A-NR-17. Designate permanent resource protection zones on parkland that define appropriate uses and development.

**Issue: *The Park Authority should utilize innovative practices in construction of recreational facilities and buildings to minimize impacts to the environment and demonstrate stewardship.***

Strategies:

A-NR-18. Any additions to or replacement of the Audrey Moore RECenter at Wakefield Park should incorporate green building techniques and materials, low impact development measures and best management practices to the extent possible.