

**PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**FEBRUARY 6, 2025**

**Present:** Ned Michie, Jeffrey Fracher, Hosea Mitchell, Mark Denison, Kent Merritt, Jennie Taylor, Jessica Jackson (Virtual)

**Absent:** Amanda Burns, Jacqueline Webber

**City:** Riaan Anthony, Annie Sechrist, Will Bassett, Rachel Smith, Chris Gensic, Mike Svetz (**PROS Consulting**)

**Public Comments:** Peter Krause

- Representing 40 organizations under the Mobility Alliance
- Expressed appreciation for the thoroughness of the parks and recreation Master Plan, especially regarding the citizen needs assessment
- Highlighted the need for more development along the Rivanna River, mentioning missed opportunities in the Master Plan regarding greenways and natural areas
- Emphasized the importance of adding more urban bicycle infrastructure, such as flow tracks and traffic playgrounds for children
- Advocated for increased collaboration with schools for projects like urban biking programs and highlighted the significance of McIntire Park, which needs more focus in the plan

**Administrative Items:** None

**Action Items:**

**A-1 Parks and Recreation Master Plan   Mike Svetz**

**Master Plan Review**

- **Key Clarifications:** The Master Plan is a guiding document reflecting community values over a 10-year horizon and is flexible to accommodate changes over time
- **Implementation:** Stressed the importance of understanding that not all projects or recommendations are expected to be implemented immediately
- **Partnerships:** Emphasized that community partnerships and collaboration with various entities, including schools and other city departments, are crucial for realizing the plan's goals
- **Feedback Integration:** Ongoing feedback from staff and the public has helped shape the Master Plan, which will continue to evolve with future iterations

**Capital Improvement Prioritization:**

- The plan includes reinvestment in existing park infrastructure, expanded services, and visionary projects such as shared-use path system and Rivanna River access
- Mention of ongoing efforts to ensure accessible public spaces and the inclusion of plans for adaptive recreation at Pen Park

**Staffing and Budget Requirements:**

- **Staffing Needs:** As the park system grows, more planning and construction management personnel will be required to handle the increase in projects
- **Operational Costs:** Detailed the cost of maintaining park amenities, including operational impacts like trash collection, maintenance of dog parks, and playground equipment replacement

**Community Engagement & Feedback:**

- **Survey Responses:** Public feedback, including responses to a statistically valid survey, indicates strong community support for certain initiatives such as greenways and playground expansions
- **Tax Considerations:** A large portion of the community indicated support for a tax increase to fund improvements to the parks and recreation system. However, concerns were raised about whether this response was representative of the entire population, particularly lower-income residents

**Greenways Development:**

- Explore further collaboration between Parks and Recreation and Transportation and Economic Development departments for greenway expansion and funding

**McIntire Park Enhancements:**

- Revisit and update plans to allocate more resources to McIntire Park, focusing on the trail system, connectivity, and urban biking infrastructure

**Plan for Adaptive Recreation at Pen Park:**

- Move forward with planning and budgeting for the adaptive recreation facility and all-inclusive playground at Pen Park

**Comments:** None

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned