

2020

# DC SCORP

District of Columbia Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan





## Acknowledgments

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## Executive Summary

This Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves to fulfill the requirements of the Land and Water Conservation Fund's State Assistance Program. This SCORP was produced by the DC Department of Parks and Recreation, which acts as the state liaison agency for the administration of LWCF funds for the District of Columbia.

This SCORP is centered around eight key priorities. These priorities were developed from a national review of trends in recreation, an assessment of existing citywide DC plans released or adopted since the publication of DC's last SCORP plan in 2014, numerous conversations with DPR staff and agency partners, and feedback from thousands of DC residents through surveys, virtual, online and direct community engagement. Strategies from existing citywide plans are included in the adopted strategy matrix at the back of this plan and each one of these strategies is aligned with one or more of the eight priorities. The eight key priorities and goal statements which will drive DC's selection of future LWCF projects include:

1. **Resilience & Sustainability:** Build a park system that helps the District adapt to climate change by using parks to capture rainwater, reduce flooding, provide shade and cooling, and be part of the community network that builds social resilience.
2. **Access, Connectivity & Diversity of Recreational Experiences:** Ensure that every resident has access to a quality park or green space within ½ mile of their home and a safe route to get there. Work to build a system of green spaces, corridors, and trails across the city that connect residents to nature. Ensure different recreational needs are met by providing diverse amenities and programs across the city.
3. **Accessibility & Inclusion:** Work to adopt universal design principles at all playgrounds and facilities and go beyond the minimum of ADA in all new construction. Ensure that everyone feels safe and welcome at DC parks.
4. **Health & Equity:** Promote an approach to investment and policy that addresses the historical inequities and racism that communities of color have faced. Ensure that the design of our parks and programs reflects a focus on improving the social determinants of health and improving health outcomes for communities suffering from inequities.
5. **Technology, Innovation & Education:** Integrate and utilize new technology in our parks, promote educational and entrepreneurship programming opportunities, and continue to innovate by designing new spaces and programs to address the concerns of our time.



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6. **Identity & Culture:** Increase performance space and arts and cultural programming in our parks and create programming, events, and designs that celebrate the rich diversity, culture, and identity inherent in our city.
  7. **Enhancement & Maintenance:** Work to equitably invest in capital improvement projects at sites facing the greatest need. Ensure regular upkeep and repair of our parks and facilities across every neighborhood.
  8. **Collaboration & Administration:** Seek out partners to expand public access to recreational space and programs, whether through co-location, joint-use agreements, contracts, or partnerships agreements. Work with partner agencies, community groups, and nonprofits to identify and apply for new LWCF projects. Increase the amount of public engagement in the annual selection of LWCF projects.



This plan also includes an assessment of DC’s current outdoor recreation inventory and an analysis of existing gaps in that inventory. Feedback from recreational users and providers also highlights new ideas and opportunities to expand and diversify our outdoor recreation portfolio.

Finally, this plan includes an Open Project Selection Process, which presents the process and rubric used to evaluate and select future LWCF projects. This rubric is tied to the eight key priorities with additional criteria included to ensure that equity and community support factor into future project selection as well as an evaluation of whether the project will fulfill any of the identified amenity gaps currently existing in our outdoor recreation system.

## Introduction

The District of Columbia is a monumental city whose urban form is shaped in large part by its parks and public spaces. It is the seat of the national government and it boasts a population of over 705,749<sup>1</sup>, larger than the state populations of Vermont and Wyoming. It totals 68 square miles of land, 20% of which is parks and outdoor space<sup>2</sup>. Of its overall parkland and open space, 74% is federally owned<sup>3</sup>. DC’s unique position of being a dense urban area with a high proportion of federal land compounds competing land use pressures on limited space. Thus, it is critical for the District to plan for the future of its parks and outdoor recreation in concert with its federal partners and other land managers.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. “ACS Population Estimate 2019”. Census.gov.

<https://www.census.gov/search/results.html?searchType=web&cssp=SERP&q=population%20estimates%202019%20washington%20dc>. (accessed August 14, 2020)

<sup>2</sup> National Capital Planning Commission. *Federal Parks and Open Space Element NCPC*. PDF file. 2018.

[https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/Parks\\_and\\_Open\\_Space\\_Element\\_December2018.pdf](https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/Parks_and_Open_Space_Element_December2018.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> DC Comprehensive Plan

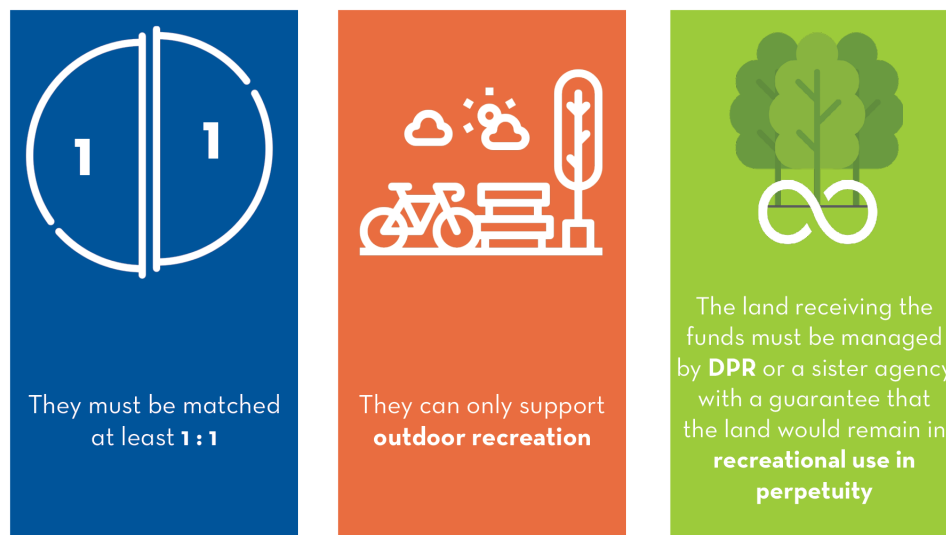
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## Background: What is the SCORP?

This Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a requirement of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program, a federal grant program administered by the National Park Service. This program provides formula-based grant funds annually to states to be used for outdoor recreation. The DC Department of Parks and Recreation acts as the state liaison agency for the District of Columbia and is responsible for identifying and submitting projects to receive these funds. The grant funds are capital funds, so they are primarily used to design and construct new or replacement recreational amenities. These funds can also be used for land acquisition, although DC has not used them for this purpose since the 1970s.

Key restrictions of these grant funds include:

- They must be matched at least 1:1
- They can only support outdoor recreation
- The land receiving the funds must be managed by DPR or by a sister agency with a guarantee that the land would remain in recreation use in perpetuity



An updated SCORP plan must be submitted to the National Park Service every five years. The purpose of the plan is to provide a framework and roadmap for how the state will address its outdoor recreation needs and prioritize the types of projects that will receive future funds from the LWCF program.

There are various required components of a SCORP including:

- An overview and assessment of outdoor recreation facilities across the state
- Community engagement to better understand the demand for future facility types
- A framework to guide future work and investments in outdoor recreation
- An open project selection process that lays out the criteria for selecting future LWCF projects
- A history of the state's use of LWCF funds
- A wetlands protection component

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The SCORP is also used to justify projects put forward under the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program, which has the same requirements as the annual LWCF funding but is a competitive grant.

DC's last SCORP was submitted in 2014 and was heavily informed by a planning effort taking place concurrently, called PlayDC. Major priorities in that SCORP included:

1. ***Deliver equitable access, great spaces and world class experiences.*** All residents will be able to reach outstanding parks and facilities close to home. These spaces will be designed for beauty and function, and support creative and diverse activities for all kinds of users.
2. ***Foster community health and sustainability.*** The District's parks and facilities will be places where people go to get active and lead healthier lifestyles. These resources will help boost the local economy, strengthen civic bonds, and enhance environmental quality.
3. ***Respond to existing residents' needs and priorities.*** Although the District has many parks and recreation assets, there are still needs to be met. It is imperative to first take care of our existing system and tackle long-standing deficiencies as identified by residents.
4. ***Address changing demographics and other trends.*** The District's parks and recreation system must be flexible enough to change with population growth and other emerging issues. Programs, in particular, will adapt to changing interests, and facilities will be designed for multiple purposes.
5. ***Fulfill the DPR mission to Move, Grow, Be Green.*** All projects and programs in the District's parks and recreation system will champion the principles of Move, Grow, and Be Green.

DC's previous SCORP also included the following short-term strategies for implementation:

- Improve the availability and use of playfields
- Partner with DC Public Schools to ensure that schoolyards meet community recreational needs
- Renovate DPR playgrounds to improve ADA access and create inspiring, age-friendly, inclusive play spaces
- Partner with NPS to renovate Franklin Park to improve parks access for downtown DC residents and visitors
- Develop parks in the NoMA neighborhood
- Improve the maintenance and use of small parks

This new SCORP is the first deliverable of DPR's broader master planning effort, Ready2Play. Ready2Play will be a long-range plan for DC's parks and recreation that looks holistically across local, federal, community, and private assets to plan for the best possible future for parks and recreation across the nation's capital. DPR intends that as soon as the Ready2Play Master Plan is complete, this SCORP will be amended to reflect the goals, priorities, and strategies of this larger plan.

## LWCF History

DC has significantly benefited from the utilization of LWCF dollars to enhance its outdoor recreation. Since the program's inception in 1965, the District has received a total of nearly \$15M in matching grant funds, which has supported over 100 projects. These projects include acquiring new land, building or rehabbing recreational infrastructure and amenities, and planning projects. This fund was heavily relied upon during the 1970's and 1980's when the District had less local funding available for recreational improvements. Over this period, annual LWCF grant funds often supported improvements at multiple sites, such as court resurfacings or field lighting upgrades, and made up a much larger percentage of DC's overall recreational improvement funds. As DC's economy and tax base have grown, so has DPR's annual budget. DPR's current fiscal year 2020 budget included over \$106 million in capital<sup>4</sup> and \$60.7 million in operating<sup>5</sup>, prior to the budget impacts of Covid-19.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, DC, like other cities, is experiencing revenue shortfalls and will see at least a temporary dip in the amount of funds available for new recreational investments. Therefore, these LWCF grant funds will play a tremendous role in filling this gap and ensuring that DC can continue to provide excellent outdoor recreational amenities to its residents.

**Table 1.** LWCF and GOMESA funds allocation per year between 2016 -2020 – DC DPR, 2020

Year	LWCF	GOMESA*	Total
2016	\$217,536.00	\$198.00	\$217,734.00
2017	\$215,605.00	\$711.00	\$216,316.00
2018	\$229,413.00	\$141,431.00	\$370,844.00
2019	\$229,413.00	\$162,275.00	\$391,688.00
2020**	\$927,754.00	\$987,847.00	\$1,915,601.00

\* Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act funding, which is included as part of every state's annual LWCF apportionment

\*\* Allocations were much higher in FY20, due to implementation of the John D. Dingell Jr., Conservation Management and Recreation Act (P.L. 116-9), which amended the apportionment formula to treat DC the same as every other state for allocation purposes.

One of the major benefits of LWCF funding is that the land receiving the funds is protected for recreational use in perpetuity. While much of DC's existing parkland is federal (74%) and therefore, ineligible for LWCF, there are still several sites that are locally managed that do not have this type of protection. In a state where land is scarce, this land-use protection becomes even more valuable.

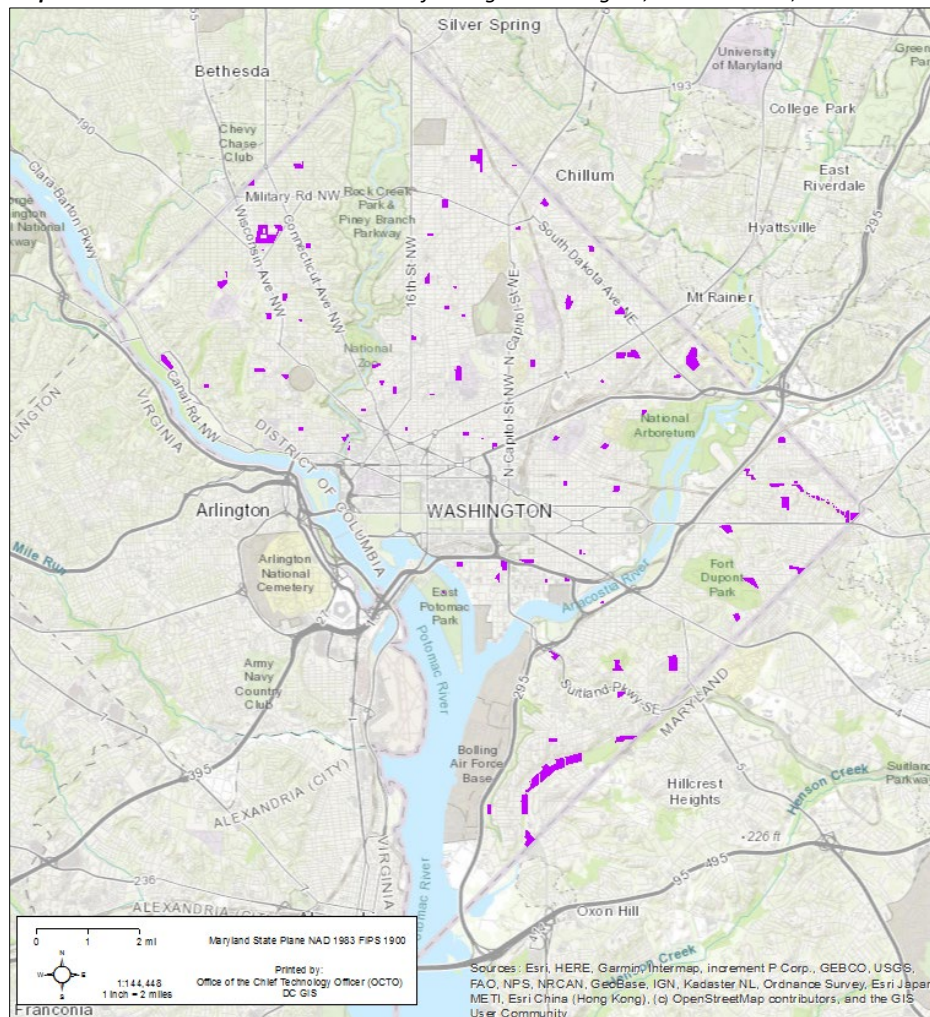
<sup>4</sup> Bowser, Muriel. FY2020 Approved Budget and Financial Plan – Volume 5: FY2020-FY2025 Capital Improvements Plan. PDF File. 2019.

[https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/DC\\_2020\\_OCFO\\_Budget\\_Vol\\_5.pdf](https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/DC_2020_OCFO_Budget_Vol_5.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Bowser, Muriel. FY2020 Approved Budget and Financial Plan – Volume 4: Agency Budget Chapters – Part III. PDF File. 2019.

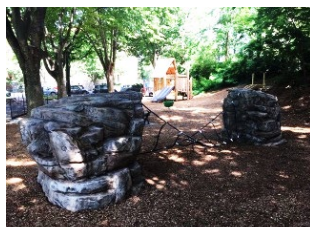
[https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/DC\\_2020\\_OCFO\\_Budget\\_Vol\\_4.pdf](https://cfo.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocfo/publication/attachments/DC_2020_OCFO_Budget_Vol_4.pdf)

**Map 1. DPR Sites that have received LWCF funding in Washington, D.C. – DC DPR, 2020**



Since 1965, LWCF funds have supported over 100 projects in DC across more than 70 sites. DC has three active LWCF-funded projects in different stages of execution. A fourth LWCF project is slated to begin in late fall 2020. See a full list of previous LWCF funded projects in Appendix A.

### Active LWCF funded projects



**Figure 1. Walter Pierce Playground renovation - DC DPR, 2020.**

**Walter Pierce Playground:** Renovations to the Walter Pierce Playground. The previous playground was old and in poor condition. New nature-based play equipment was installed this summer. This project has completed and will close out soon.



**Figure 2.** 16th Street Playground before renovation - DC DPR, 2020.

**16<sup>th</sup> Street Playground:** This is also a playground renovation project. This effort will replace the outdated play equipment at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street playground and provide additional seating and pathways through the park. This project is in the design phase and moving into construction soon.



**Figure 3.** New Jersey and O St Park before renovation - DC DPR, 2020.

**New Jersey & O Street Park:** This project is in the planning phase. It will improve the landscape of New Jersey and O Street Park, opening up the park for greater access and installing some additional play elements and potentially public art and/or performance space in the park. This project will transform the park into a community destination and a desirable place for relaxation and recreation.



**Figure 4.** Oxon Run Playground at Wayne Place - DC DPR, 2020.

**Oxon Run Playground at Wayne Place:** An old playground with dated and limited equipment in Oxon Run Park will be fully renovated as part of the newest LWCF project. DPR will begin engagement with the community around this project when an LWCF grant award is executed in the fall of 2020.

## SCORP Planning Process

The process for creating this SCORP included research, review, analysis, and engagement. All these elements informed the key priorities, adopted strategies, and OPSP included in this plan. The SCORP team knew that an assessment of DC's demographic trends and national trends in outdoor recreation would be a critical research piece to incorporate. They also knew that there has been a lot of great work completed by sister agencies within the DC government to develop policies and release plans on issues of local importance over the course of the last half-decade. Due to the timing of this plan, corresponding with the launch of DPR's larger 20-year master planning effort, Ready2Play, the SCORP team decided that, rather than developing new strategies, this SCORP would propose eight high level key priorities to guide its work and adopt relevant strategies from these existing citywide plans. As DPR furthers its work on the Ready2Play plan, new goals and strategies will be identified to guide the long-term planning of DPR and these will be incorporated into this SCORP as amendments once the final Ready2Play plan is complete.

There was also a key part of this SCORP process that entailed identifying and mapping DC's current outdoor recreation inventory. This mapping assessment included both local and federal parkland, as well as other potential partners, such as DC's public schools. These maps allow DPR planners to see gaps

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existing in the current availability of outdoor recreational amenities to more intentionally target specific areas and types of amenities in future LWCF projects.

Finally, and most critically, the voices of thousands of DC residents helped inform this plan. From survey questions, to online comments to direct virtual feedback, what we heard from DC residents helped add structure and specifics to the demand for various types of outdoor recreation and solidify the eight key priorities that form the core of this plan.

What follows are findings from these various elements of the SCORP planning process.

## Demographic Changes in the District

### Population

The most recent population projection forecasts from the DC Office of Planning, based on 2015 data and trends, estimated that DC will reach a population of 894,000 people by the year 2035, an increase of nearly 200,000 people from its current population<sup>6</sup>. As of the most recent census population estimate, the District's population was estimated at 705,749, a 19% increase from a decade ago. Over the past year, D.C.'s population grew by 4,202 people, which was the lowest annual growth since 2005<sup>7</sup>. As its population has grown the city has experienced an influx of white, Hispanic, and Asian residents. Meanwhile DC's black population has fallen from 70% in 1980 to just under half today<sup>8</sup>. By today's estimates, Black residents make up 47.2% of the District's population, White residents 45.1%, Hispanic or Latino residents 11.3% and Asian residents 5.4%.<sup>9</sup> The District's population is also aging. From 2014 to 2019, the percentage of residents age 65 or older increased from 11.3% to 12.4% and the median age increased from 33.8 to 34.3.<sup>10</sup> 11.3% of all DC residents are living with a disability of some sort, including nearly a quarter of residents age 65-74 (24.3%) and nearly half of residents age 75 or older (49.2%)<sup>11</sup>.

### Income

In the District, between 1990 and 2018, median income increased by about 50%, from \$61,430 to \$92,041. In the same period, the share of neighborhoods with a median income near \$50,000 declined by nearly 50%. In turn, the share of neighborhoods with a median income of over \$100,000 grew over 100%<sup>12</sup>. In 2020, 13.5% of families live below the poverty level<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> DC Office of Planning (DC OP). *Forecasting the District's Growth*. PDF. Washington, D.C.: 2016.

[https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Forecasting%20DC%20Growth%202015-2045%20-%20Results%20and%20Methodology%20-%20FINAL\\_011217.pdf](https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Forecasting%20DC%20Growth%202015-2045%20-%20Results%20and%20Methodology%20-%20FINAL_011217.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> DC Policy Center. "The District's population grows for the 14<sup>th</sup> year in a row, but at a weaker rate." [dcpolicycenter.org](https://dcpolicycenter.org), April 15, 2020.

<https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/districts-population-grows-14th-year-row-weaker-rate/>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates 2019" [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=district%20of%20columbia&tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP05&hidePreview=false), accessed September 19, 2020,

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=district%20of%20columbia&tid=ACSDP1Y2019.DP05&hidePreview=false>

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates 2014" [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=district%20of%20columbia&tid=ACSDP1Y2014.DP05&hidePreview=false), accessed September 19, 2020,

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=district%20of%20columbia&tid=ACSDP1Y2014.DP05&hidePreview=false>

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Disability characteristics" [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=district%20of%20columbia&t=Disability&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S1810&hidePreview=false), accessed September 19, 2020,

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=district%20of%20columbia&t=Disability&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S1810&hidePreview=false>

<sup>12</sup> Brookings Institution Center for Washington Area Studies, 2020

<sup>13</sup> D.C. Health Matters Collaborative, 2020

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## Health

Life expectancy has trended upward in the District over the last several decades. However, it varies significantly across wards and neighborhoods. The highest life expectancy of 87 years is found in Ward 3, in the northwest of the city, while Ward 8, to the southeast, has the lowest, 71.7 years - a difference of over 15 years. Neighborhood data highlights even more significant differences, with life expectancy in the wealthy Woodley Park neighborhood at 89.4 years and life expectancy near St. Elizabeth's campus at just 68 years.<sup>14</sup>

From 2011-2015 the District's "Racial Dissimilarity Index Score" was 70.9, indicating a high segregation level. Referencing the life expectancy distribution, 70% of the observed difference is explained by racial segregation<sup>15</sup>. 76% is explained by the combination of racial segregation together with economic segregation.

Homelessness also continues to be a major crisis in the District. From 2009 to 2016 there was a 112% increase in families experiencing homelessness. This number then dropped by 21.8% from 2016 to 2017. Most individuals experiencing homelessness are children under 18 years old. Conditions of homelessness can delay physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral developments in children. Racial equity is an enormous consideration when it comes to this lack of housing. African Americans comprise 47% of the District's population, but 86% of single adults and 97% of family households experiencing homelessness.<sup>16</sup>

## Trends in Outdoor Recreation

The SCORP team reviewed recent literature on outdoor recreation trends produced by knowledgeable leaders in the field such as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL), among others. What follows is a brief synopsis of this research.

### Health benefits

Scientific research has demonstrated the numerous benefits to physiological health, psychological well-being, and cognitive development associated with access to nature and outdoor recreation. Some of the visible trends in parks and outdoor recreation related to the increase of health benefits are:

1. **Park Prescription Programs** designed by healthcare providers in coordination with government agencies that manage parkland. Community healthcare partners prescribe patients time in nature and open spaces to improve health. DC Park Rx in Washington, D.C., is one of the most successful models of a park prescription program and provides an online searchable database of parks in the D.C. area for health care providers to prescribe.
2. **Wellness-inspired outdoor programs** offer group classes like yoga, Zumba, and boot camps in parks. A great example is the San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department's "Fitness in the

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<sup>14</sup> Health Matters Collaborative. *Community Health Needs Assessment District of Columbia, 2019*. PDF file. June 2019.

[https://www.dchealthmatters.org/content/sites/washingtondc/2019\\_DC\\_CHNA\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.dchealthmatters.org/content/sites/washingtondc/2019_DC_CHNA_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> D.C. Department of Health, 2018

<sup>16</sup> ICH Report

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Park” program. The program uses a vehicle to travel to different parks and schools with fitness equipment and a health kiosk for screenings such as blood pressure and Body Mass Index.<sup>17</sup>

3. **Nature-based therapy and biophilic design** to increase the connection of people with natural elements, improve mental and physical well-being, and promote the sustainability of spaces.
4. **Parks as Community Wellness Hubs** offer health services such as food and nutrition assistance, urban farming, access to healthcare providers, health screening, and support to the homeless population. The “Parks After Dark” program is a partnership between the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation and the Los Angeles County Department of Health to make parks safer in high crime neighborhoods. It offers classes on healthy eating and exercise and provides healthcare and social services, including mental health assessments and mammograms.<sup>18</sup>
5. **Adult Recess Programs** offer adults the opportunity to exercise and have fun in a non-competitive way. The Hampton Recreation and Parks Department, as well as other cities like Seattle and Greensboro, have developed “Adult Recess” programs with games like badminton, soccer, cornhole, kickball, and pickleball.

## Equity and access

In 2019 a University of British Columbia-based research team published a study indicating the correlation between income, education, race and access or lack thereof to green space across U.S. metro areas<sup>19</sup>. Recent Black Lives Matter protests have brought to light the deep divides and inequalities in America, which also apply to access to green space and parks. Some of the current trends that intend to amplify a focus on equity in parks and outdoor recreation include:

1. **Use of high-profile campaigns and commitments** to expand access to parks and recreation. An example is the Trust for Public Land’s “10-Minute Walk” campaign that advocates for safe, convenient access to a park within a 10-minute walk of home for everyone. Mayors from across the country, including DC’s Mayor, Muriel Bowser, have signed on to commit to this goal.
2. **Equity frameworks and plans** are being developed by cities to advance significant progress toward more equitable access to parks and recreation programs for its residents. Minneapolis enacted a 20-Year Neighborhood Park Plan ordinance to achieve a shared goal of closing a neighborhood parks funding gap. The city also has a Racial Equity Action Plan to ensure that capital improvements do not reinforce current racial disparities by directing funding where needs are greatest.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> San Antonio Parks and Recreation “Mobile Fitness” <https://www.sanantonio.gov/ParksAndRec/Programs-Classes-Fun/Programs-Classes/Fitness/Mobile-Fitness>. (Accessed September 18, 2020).

<sup>18</sup> Clement Lau. “Parks and Public Health: Working Together to Advance Health and Wellness”. April 2, 2018. <https://www.nrpa.org/blog/parks-and-public-health-working-together-to-advance-health-and-wellness/>. (Accessed September 18, 2020).

<sup>19</sup> Nesbitt, Lorian, Michael J. Meitner, Cynthia Girling, Stephen R.J. Sheppard, and Yuhao Lu. “Who Has Access to Urban Vegetation? A Spatial Analysis of Distributional Green Equity in 10 U.S. Cities.” *Landscape and Urban Planning* 181 (2019): 51–79. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204618307710>

<sup>20</sup> City Parks Alliance. *Investing in Equitable Urban Park Systems: Case Studies & Recommendations*. cityparksalliance.org. PDF file, 2020. [https://cityparksalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/equitable-parks\\_case-studies-recs\\_2.19.20.pdf](https://cityparksalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/equitable-parks_case-studies-recs_2.19.20.pdf)

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3. **Equity mapping** of park access is informing many cities and regions' investment decisions. Portland's Regional Equity Atlas includes various maps related to park access and access to nature<sup>21</sup>.
  4. **Bringing play to nontraditional park spaces.** Kaboom's "Play Everywhere" initiative utilizes streets, right-of-ways, vacant lots, and underpasses to bring play opportunities to communities that may not have easy access to a traditional park or playground<sup>22</sup>.
  5. **Parklets** are another way that new access to park space is being created out of unused or left-over street space or parking spots. These small oases can be temporary installations or more permanent fixtures. One of the leading initiatives across the country is San Francisco's "Pavement to Parks" program, which is a partnership between the planning department, public works department, transportation agency, and Mayor's office<sup>23</sup>.

## Accessibility and inclusion

All people, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, income level, physical ability, sexual orientation, gender, or religion, can enjoy quality programs, facilities, places, and spaces that help improve their lives. Some trends in parks and outdoor recreation that support accessibility and inclusion are:

1. **Incorporating universal design practices and ADA principles** that allow people living with disabilities of all ages to access the same parks and recreational programs as people without disabilities.
2. **Adaptation of recreational activities and facilities** to the needs and interests of different racial and ethnic groups, sexual orientations, gender identities, individuals living with physical or cognitive disabilities, and an aging population, with an emphasis on making all people feel welcome and cared for.
3. **Recruit a diverse and representative workforce** and provide them with an ongoing diversity and inclusion training.
4. **Safety improvements** through design, programming, maintenance, and citizen involvement. The "Summer Night Lights" program in L.A. is a national model for violence reduction. It extended the nighttime hours in parks in high-crime neighborhoods, doubled the programs available, provided workforce opportunities for youth, and empowered the community<sup>24</sup>.
5. **Age-friendly communities** are taking shape across the country and the world that promote policies and design to make it easier to grow older at any age. Grandparents parks like the one created in Wichita, KS are creating play spaces, equipment, and seating for all ages<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> The Regional Equity Atlas. "Proximity to Parks and Natural Areas". <http://www.equityatlas.org/atlas-maps/proximity-publicly-accessible-parks-and-natural-areas-composite-heatmap>. (Accessed September 18, 2020).

<sup>22</sup> Kaboom "Play Everywhere: Turning everyday places into Playspaces" <https://kaboom.org/play-everywhere>. (Accessed September 18, 2020).

<sup>23</sup> San Francisco Public Works. "Parklets". <https://sfpublicworks.org/services/permits/parklets>. (Accessed September 18, 2020).

<sup>24</sup> National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). *Creating Safe Park Environments to Enhance Community Wellness*. PDF file. N.D. <https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/f768428a39aa4035ae55b2aaff372617/park-safety.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> AARP. "How to Create a Grandparents Park". <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/info-2014/grandparents-park-wichita-kansas.html>. (Accessed September 18, 2020).

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## Resilience

Americans now predominantly live in urban areas, experience urban heat islands, or reside in flood-prone locations. Globally, cities comprise over two-thirds of energy consumption and produce 70% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions<sup>26</sup>. While climate change impacts are daunting, there is growing recognition that parks can be part of the climate solution. Below are a few examples of the parks and outdoor recreation trends associated with resilience:

1. **Parks and trees combat urban heat islands and extreme heat waves.** Tree planting is one of the most effective strategies to cool down urban areas and increase outdoor comfort levels. A recent study in Washington, D.C., showed that parks could be as much as 17 degrees cooler on hot summer days than other parts of the city lacking tree canopy and green space<sup>27</sup>. Park and recreation agencies in different cities affected by extreme heat are increasing the amount of shade in parks with trees or shade structures.
2. **Late-night park activities** to accommodate extreme heat. The Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation extends its hours of operations so residents can use outdoor amenities when the heat is not so extreme.
3. **Floodable infrastructure** like courts, playgrounds, and streetscapes that absorb rainfall while reducing flood risk. The city of Virginia Beach is looking at the idea of floodable parks that serve as open play areas during dry times but can capture and retain stormwater during rain events.<sup>28</sup>
4. **Parks as resilience hubs prior to and after catastrophes.** Parks and open spaces can provide dual-use assets and a perfect location for evacuation, medical assistance, shelter, and food and water distribution during a crisis, and can be day-to-day places for social gathering and information sharing.<sup>29</sup>
5. **Parks, open spaces, and natural lands that are strategically located** to buffer cities from rising seas, coastal storms, inland flooding, and wildfires.
6. **Green infrastructure** in parks to reduce flooding and protect water quality. Research has shown that green infrastructure features, such as rain gardens, can reduce stormwater runoff by as much as 90 percent, reducing costly flooding.<sup>30</sup>
7. **Brownfield restoration and repurposing** for recreation and conservation purposes. This can serve to remediate the contamination, increase access to nature and open spaces, and reverse the unhealthy conditions for surrounding neighbors.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>C40 Cities. *A Global Opportunity for Cities to Lead*. [https://www.c40.org/why\\_cities](https://www.c40.org/why_cities). (Accessed September 18, 2020).

<sup>27</sup> Jason Samenow, "On Sizzling Summer Days, Northeast D.C. Heats up the Most, NOAA Analysis Shows," *The Washington Post* (WP Company, October 15, 2018), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/weather/2018/10/15/sizzling-summer-days-northeast-dc-heats-up-most-noaa-analysis-shows/>.

<sup>28</sup> "Climate Change Is Changing the Face of Outdoor Recreation: Feature: Parks and Recreation Magazine: NRPA," National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2017/october/climate-change-is-changing-the-face-of-outdoor-recreation/>.

<sup>29</sup> Laureen Fagan, on August 19 et al., "Designing City Parks to Support Disaster Resilience," *Sustainability Times*, August 19, 2019, <https://www.sustainability-times.com/clean-cities/city-parks/>.

<sup>30</sup> "Parks as a Solution to Climate Change: Health & Wellness: Parks and Recreation Magazine: NRPA," National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2019/april/parks-as-a-solution-to-climate-change/>.

<sup>31</sup> Turning Brownfields into Greenspaces: Examining Incentives and Barriers to Revitalization Juha Siikamäki Resources for the Future Kris Wernstedt Virginia Tech University Journal of Health Politics, Policy, and Law, Vol. 33, No. 3, June 2008 DOI 10.1215/03616878-2008-008 © 2008 by Duke University Press [https://activelivingresearch.org/sites/activelivingresearch.org/files/8\\_JHPPL\\_Wernstedt.pdf](https://activelivingresearch.org/sites/activelivingresearch.org/files/8_JHPPL_Wernstedt.pdf)

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## Technology

1. **Use of big data** to identify trends and demand for rec programming and measure the level of use of different rec amenities.
2. **GIS mapping technology** that helps to identify park deficient communities and neighborhoods and track park access improvements.
3. **Virtual exploration** connects people to outdoor recreation and learning resources about nature (apps, social media, and live streaming). This has been used effectively during Covid-19, to connect people to nature through the safety of their homes.
4. **E-Sports and augmented reality** as an alternative recreation program that can appeal to hard-to-reach audiences and can provide access and socialization benefits for users with physical disabilities and older adults.<sup>32</sup>
5. **Wi-Fi** can offer park visitors an enhanced outdoor experience, allowing them to stay connected while enjoying nature. Connection to Wi-Fi also provides a sense of safety as it allows access to emergency services and live updates.
6. **Asset management systems** to visualize and track maintenance issues, status of tasks, and equipment. The Philadelphia Parks and Rec department uses an asset management system to visualize assets across their inventory – and assign and update work orders.
7. **Remote control systems** are an efficient resource to control activation and deactivation of power outlets and lighting in public spaces, courts, and fields.

## Partnerships and funding mechanisms

Collaboration with other organizations and agencies is critical for improving access to parks and outdoor recreation. Partnerships with the private sector bring not only additional financial resources but also new constituencies. Some of the partnerships and financial mechanisms that can help parks and recreation departments include:

1. **Intergovernmental/interagency partnerships** between federal and local agencies and between local government agencies to collaborate for a common goal. Many parks departments and school districts across the country partner to provide better sports and recreational amenities to the community and the students.
2. **Stewardship programs** to develop conservation advocacy and encourage nature appreciation, education, and stewardship.
3. **Friends of groups and community groups** collaborate with park departments to improve parks, programs, or services. New York City's *Framework for an Equitable Future* proposes long-term community partnerships that generate stewards to sustain the city parkland's ongoing care and investment.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> "Esports: The Next Big Thing for Parks and Rec: Feature: Parks and Recreation Magazine: NRPA," National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), accessed September 19, 2020, <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2019/september/esports-the-next-big-thing-for-parks-and-rec/>.

<sup>33</sup> NYC Parks. Framework for an Equitable Future. PDF file. 2014. <http://www.nycgovparks.org/downloads/nyc-parks-framework.pdf>

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4. **Business improvement districts or BIDs** can collaborate with park departments to maintain and program nearby parks. Funding for this maintenance and programming often comes from commercial taxes.
  5. **Private funding provided by nonprofit park-benefit organizations** (conservancies, foundations, alliances, or trusts) can be used to improve, create and maintain parks. There are many examples of these types of organizations playing a critical role in the success and preservation of their respective community's park systems. The Fairmont Park Conservancy in Philadelphia and Central Park Conservancy in New York are just two examples.
  6. **Revenue generation** from the services and innovative programs and activities hosted in parks and open spaces. In Minneapolis, funds are generated from independent restaurant licenses to operate within select parks<sup>34</sup>.

## Flexible use

Many cities are working to create flexible open spaces to optimize opportunities for hosting different events and activities that offer people social interaction. Urban parks offer spaces that can bring different socioeconomic groups and generations together. Parks are adapting to be more than just recreation, and amenities can include food trucks, dog spaces, venues for concerts and movies, and fitness activities. The following are trends in the flexible use of park space:

1. **Artistic expressions** such as performances, concerts, movies, installations, and public art give identity and vibrancy to parks and open spaces.
2. **Markets, festivals, and civic demonstrations** are held regularly in parks. Parks can also act as meeting places or gathering hubs before or after protest marches.
3. **Entrepreneurship, skills training, and economic empowerment** can be encouraged through kiosks, food trucks, or busking.
4. **Outdoor office and dining seating** have been encouraged by seasonal programming promoted by BIDs, and the rise of food trucks around parks. During Covid-19, parks and streets have been essential resources for outdoor dining, birthday parties, and small group convos.
5. **Outdoor education and classrooms**, especially in the time of Covid-19, where many school districts are seeking additional outdoor learning space. NYC Public Schools have even partnered with the city's parks department to offer outdoor learning space for students<sup>35</sup>.

## Review of Existing District Plans

This SCORP builds off the great work of various citywide plans already released or adopted in DC. Paramount to this is the District's Comprehensive Plan, which sets policy and a guiding framework for land use across the city. DPR worked closely with the DC Office of Planning during the amendment process of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of that plan.

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<sup>34</sup> "Food & Drink," Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, November 13, 2018, [https://www.minneapolis-parks.org/parks\\_destinations/food\\_drink/](https://www.minneapolis-parks.org/parks_destinations/food_drink/)

<sup>35</sup> Erin Durkin. "NYC schools to use streets and parks for outdoor learning." Politico. (August 24, 2020). <https://www.politico.com/states/new-york/albany/story/2020/08/24/nyc-schools-to-use-streets-and-parks-for-outdoor-learning-1311665>

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DPR staff also reviewed several additional citywide plans that have been completed since the publication of DC's previous SCORP plan in 2014. All of these plans conducted their own engagement processes, which DPR planners were actively involved in. The plans reviewed and integrated into this SCORP are listed below (release year in parenthesis):

### **DC Comprehensive Plan, Draft Amendments (2020)**

The DC Comprehensive Plan is technically the District Elements of a larger District and Federal Comprehensive Plan, but it carries the real policy weight. It sets the future land use across the District, which is used to inform zoning and its policies dictate the development review process. The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element is one of 13 citywide elements included in the plan.

[https://plandc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/Comprehensiveplan/publication/attachments/Chapter%208\\_Parks%26Open-Space\\_April2020.pdf](https://plandc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/Comprehensiveplan/publication/attachments/Chapter%208_Parks%26Open-Space_April2020.pdf)

### **Sustainable DC 2.0 (2019)**

Sustainable DC 2.0 builds on the original Sustainable DC plan, initially released in 2012, which called for the District to become the greenest, most livable city in the United States with fishable and swimmable rivers by 2032. The plan includes various strategies aimed at protecting the natural environment and reducing the adverse impact of humans on that environment. The 2019 version instilled a focus on equity throughout the plan.

[http://www.sustainabledc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/sdc-2.0-Edits-V5\\_web.pdf](http://www.sustainabledc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/sdc-2.0-Edits-V5_web.pdf)

### **Age-Friendly DC (2018)**

Age-Friendly DC is a strategic plan to help DC adapt to become a city where all residents can age gracefully and with the support, resources, and care needed throughout every stage of that life continuum. There is a heavy focus on inclusion and accessibility throughout the plan.

[https://agefriendly.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/agefriendly/page\\_content/attachments/Age-Friendly%20DC%202023%20Strategic%20Plan%20FINAL.PDF](https://agefriendly.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/agefriendly/page_content/attachments/Age-Friendly%20DC%202023%20Strategic%20Plan%20FINAL.PDF)

### **Resilient DC Strategy (2019)**

The Resilient DC Strategy was produced through the 100 Resilient Cities Initiative and sets various strategies and actions to help the District adapt and thrive both in the case of a disaster but also in the day to day challenges that residents face.

<https://app.box.com/s/d40hk5ltvcn9fqas1viaje0xbnbsfwga>

### **DC Healthy People 2020 Framework (2016)**

DC Healthy People 2020 is a framework laid out by the DC Department of Health that sets health indicators, objectives, and strategies to track.

<https://doh.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/doh/publication/attachments/FINAL%20DC%20HP2020%20Framework%20Report%205-23-16.pdf>

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### **DC Cultural Plan (2019)**

DC's Cultural Plan is a set of policies and actions on a citywide level aimed at promoting and protecting a vibrant arts scene across the District.

<https://app.box.com/s/nz05c2gpc51bxofgdh4vjadp4q3tooyd>

### **Federal Parks and Open Space Element, Amendments (2019)**

The Federal Parks and Open Space Element is another element of the combined Federal and District Comprehensive Plan. It was produced by the National Capital Planning Commission and its policies predominantly address federal parkland and the monumental core of the city.

[https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/Parks\\_and\\_Open\\_Space\\_Element\\_December2018.pdf](https://www.ncpc.gov/docs/Parks_and_Open_Space_Element_December2018.pdf)

### **Climate Ready DC (2016)**

DC's adaptation plan for the changing climate. Produced by DOEE, this plan assesses the climate risks and vulnerabilities currently faced across the District and lays out strategies for how the city can respond and adapt.

[https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/service\\_content/attachments/CRDC-Report-FINAL-Web.pdf](https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/service_content/attachments/CRDC-Report-FINAL-Web.pdf)

## **Wetland Protection Element**

Another plan which is fully integrated into this SCORP through reference in this section is the District's Wetland Conservation Plan. Per LWCF Manual Chapter 2 A. 4(e), The District of Columbia Wetland Conservation Plan and its prioritization is consistent with the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 and the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan, prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service<sup>36</sup>. To view DC's Wetland Conservation Plan directly, visit:

[https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/release\\_content/attachments/WCP\\_200311.pdf](https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/release_content/attachments/WCP_200311.pdf).

See Appendix B for further information regarding this plan.

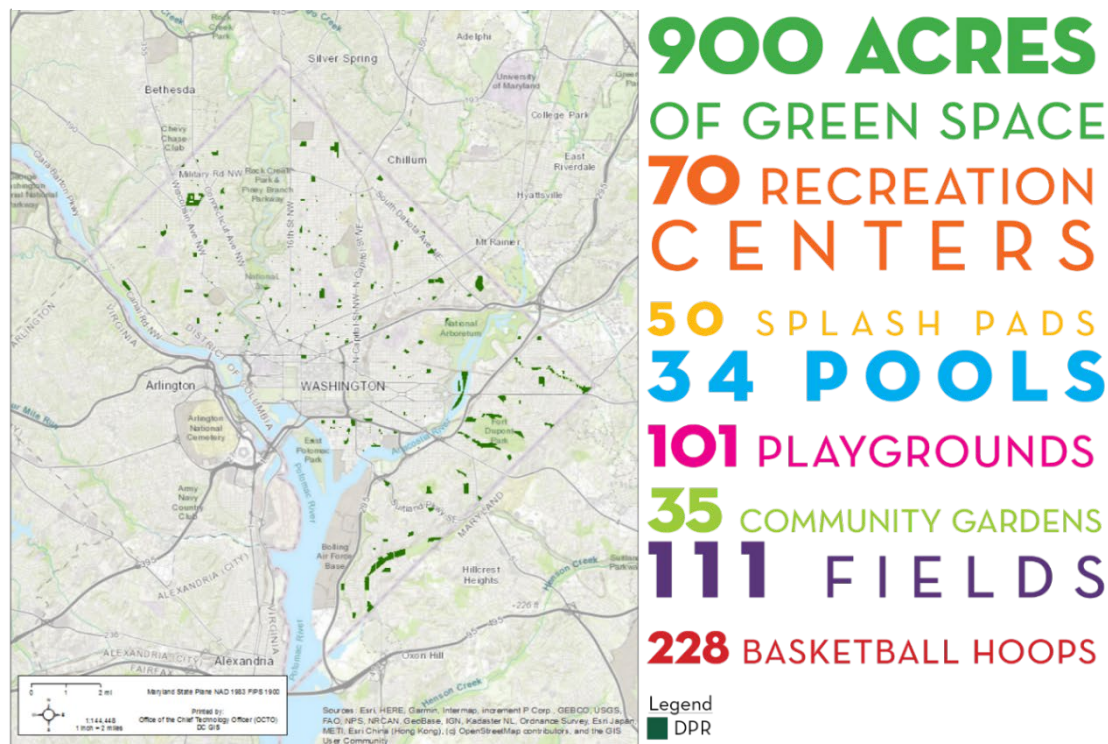
## **Overview of DC's Parks and Recreation**

As the local District-government manager of parks and recreation, DPR operates close to 250 parks and small open spaces. DPR supervises over 930 acres of green space, 70 recreation centers, 50 splash pads, 34 pools, 35 community gardens, 6 urban farms, 101 playgrounds, and hundreds of fields and courts across the city- including basketball, tennis, and futsal courts, as well as additional outdoor recreational amenities such as skateparks, trails, walking tracks, fitness equipment, amphitheaters, and pavilions.

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<sup>36</sup> National Park Service. Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program: Federal Financial Assistance Manual. PDF File. 2008.  
<https://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/manual/lwcf.pdf>

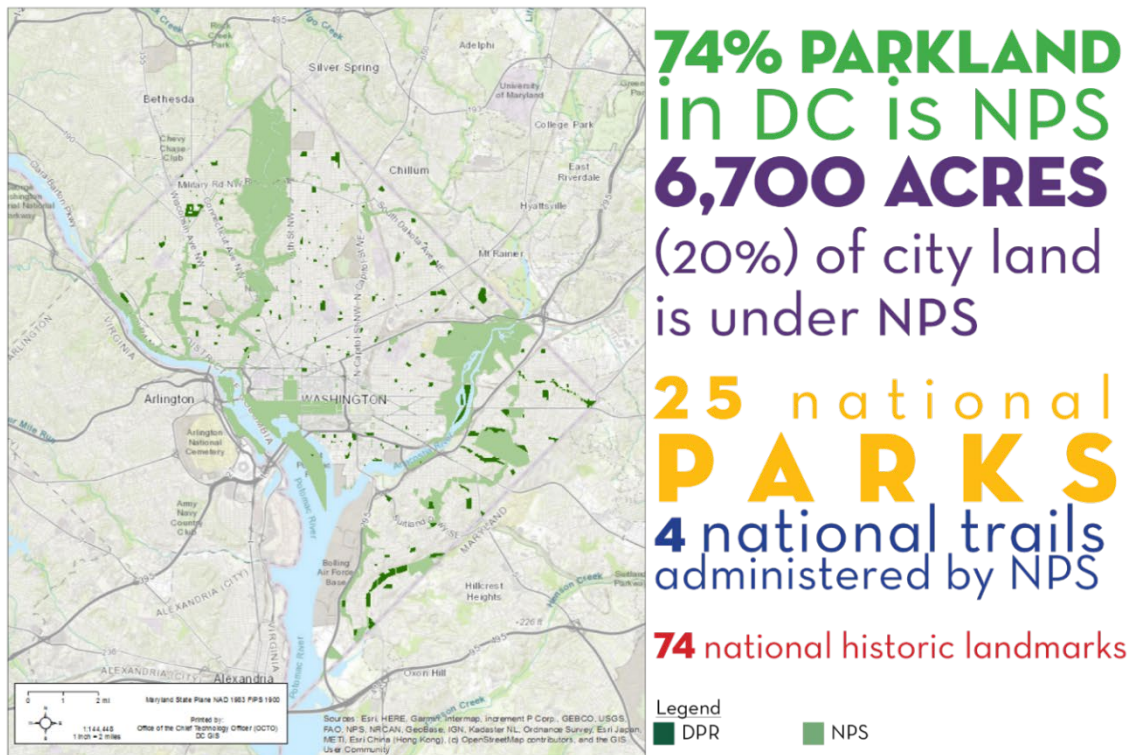
**Map 2. Properties managed by the DC Department of Parks and Recreation - DC DPR, 2020**



The National Park Service (NPS) is another major provider of outdoor recreation in the District. NPS operates over 6,700 acres of parkland, including the National Mall, Rock Creek Park, Anacostia Park, and the Fort Circle Parks. This parkland encompasses 25 recognized national parks, which are part of 4 park systems throughout DC, and include 74 national historic landmarks<sup>37</sup>. NPS is the main operator of natural land for outdoor recreational opportunities such as hiking, fishing, birding, and different types of water recreation. It also operates the only public golf courses in DC – both adult golf and mini-golf- and two large performance spaces, one in Fort Dupont Park, featuring a summer concert series, and the other in Rock Creek Park- the Carter Barron Amphitheater. NPS recreational amenities include several picnic areas, playgrounds, courts, and fields across the District. DC did not gain local representation or control of much of its parkland until Home Rule in 1973. Because of this, many of the parks currently under DPR management are transfers of jurisdiction from NPS.

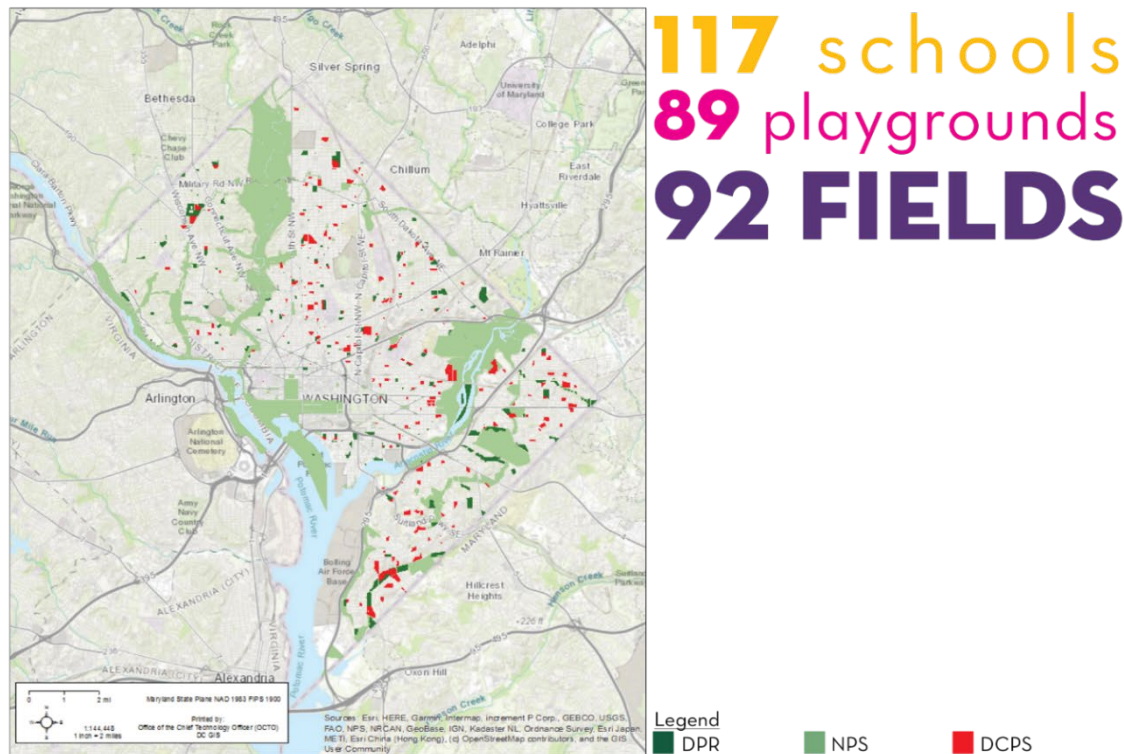
<sup>37</sup> National Park Service. “Working with District of Columbia: By the Numbers”. [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov/state/customcf/bythenumbers/print.cfm?state=dc).  
<https://www.nps.gov/state/customcf/bythenumbers/print.cfm?state=dc>. (accessed August 14, 2020).

**Map 3. Properties managed by the National Parks Services and the DC Department of Parks and Recreation - DC DPR, 2020**



DC Public Schools (DCPS) is also a key provider of outdoor recreation. DCPS currently operates 117 public schools offering close to 100 playgrounds and fields as well as numerous courts. A few school sites are officially co-located with DPR and share certain outdoor and indoor facilities. In previous decades, a much greater number of schools and recreation centers were co-located, and LWCF funds were even allocated to several of these sites. While DC schools are a key provider of recreational amenities, these spaces are unfortunately not always open to the public. There is no blanket public access policy, thus these spaces tend to be open to the public on a school by school basis. DPR and DCPS are actively working on solutions to address the valid safety and maintenance concerns of various principals and school administrators in order to allow for greater public access to these spaces outside of school hours.

**Map 4.** Properties managed by DC Public Schools, the National Parks Services and the DC Department of Parks and Recreation - DC DPR, 2020



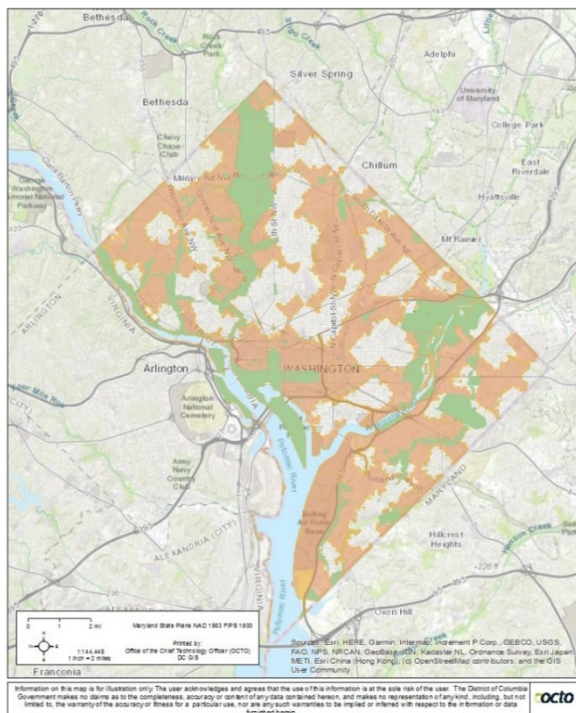
Other providers of open spaces and recreation include the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), DC Public Charter Schools (DCPCS), the DC Housing Authority (DCHA), community-based organizations, and the private sector. DDOT operates several small open spaces and triangles of green space across the city as well as plazas and public spaces that are often used for events and recreation and leisure activities. Like traditional public schools, many charter schools also have recreational amenities on their campuses, but these too are inconsistently available to the public and depend on the local administration of the schools to grant access. The DC Housing Authority also operates numerous playgrounds, recreational amenities, and community centers, but these tend to be mostly used by residents and are not viewed as amenities available to the broader community. Likewise, there are also many community-based organizations such as YMCAs, Boys and Girls Clubs, or childcare centers that offer recreation space and programming, but these spaces are used by the respective members of these organizations and are typically not freely available to the public. Finally, the private sector has been playing an increasingly important role in DC's publicly accessible parks and open space. Large private developments approved through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process are required to agree to certain negotiated benefits with the community, many of which include some form of public space. DPR is currently working with the DC Office of Planning (DCOP) to identify all these privately owned public spaces and map them, so that they can be integrated into District-wide maps of the entire system of parks and open space.

## GIS Gaps Analysis

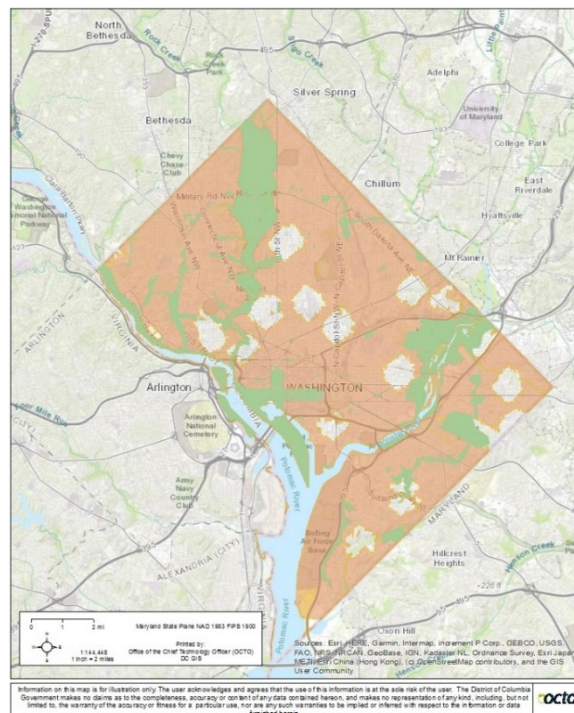
As part of this SCORP, DPR mapped and analyzed walksheds across all its amenities using 10-minute walksheds in ArcGIS. DC Public Schools and National Park Service assets were also identified and mapped. These were layered on top of the original DPR gap analysis to see a more holistic view of gaps in the District-wide network.

This analysis broke down sites by amenity so that the maps don't simply show who has a "park" or green space within a 10-minute walk but what type of amenities someone has access to. A 10-minute walk was selected to maintain consistency with the national standard developed by the Trust for Public Land, National Recreation and Park Association, and Urban Land Institute through their collaborative "10-Minute Walk" initiative<sup>38</sup>. DPR felt that it was important to look at *all* its amenities through the 10-minute walk lens, since this is a reasonable distance for one to travel without using another means of transportation. This 10-minute walk analysis should not be misconstrued as an official level of service for each of these amenities. DPR will have a robust conversation regarding level of service standards as part of its larger Ready2Play plan.

### DPR-only mapped amenities



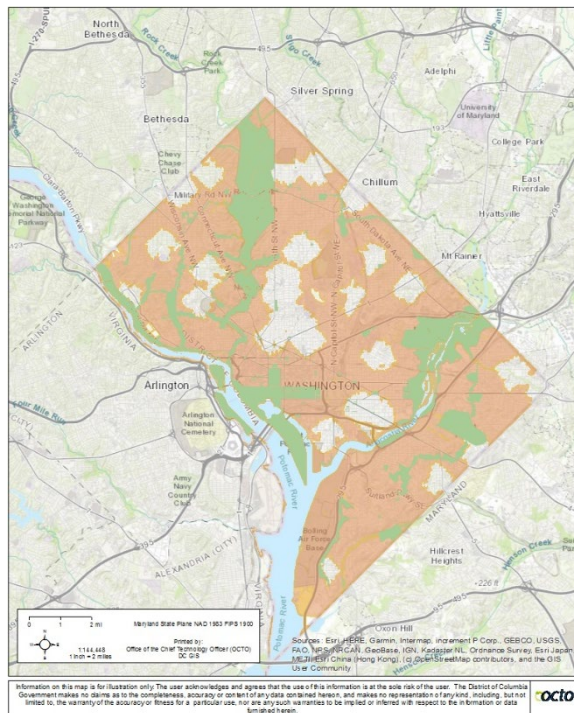
**Map 5. 10-minute walk analysis of DPR Recreation Centers - DPR, 2020.**



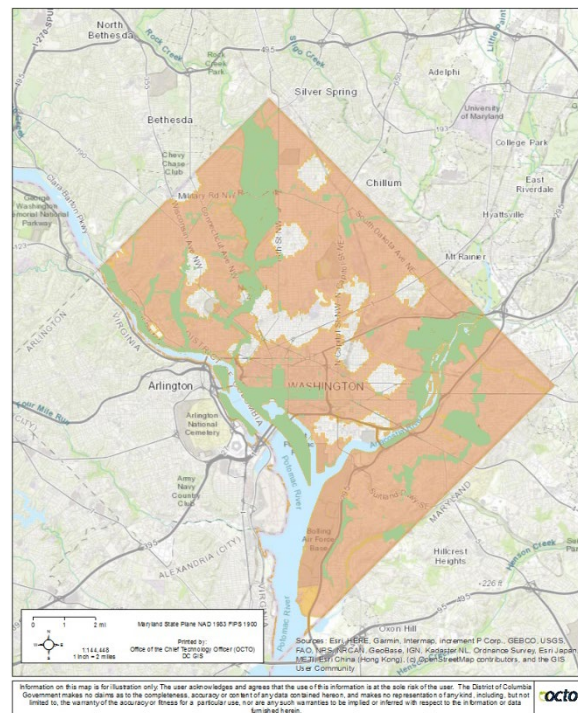
**Map 6. 10-minute walk analysis of DPR Outdoor Pools - DPR, 2020.**

<sup>38</sup> 10 Minute Walk. "10 Minute Walk: Improving Access to Parks + Green Spaces." 10minutewalk.org. <https://10minutewalk.org/> (Accessed Sep 22, 2020).

## DPR-only mapped amenities (cont.)

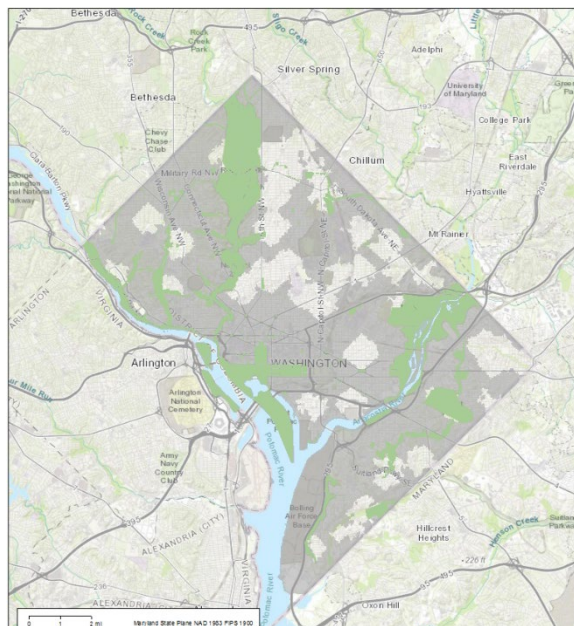


**Map 8.** 10-minute walk analysis of DPR Spray Parks - DPR, 2020.



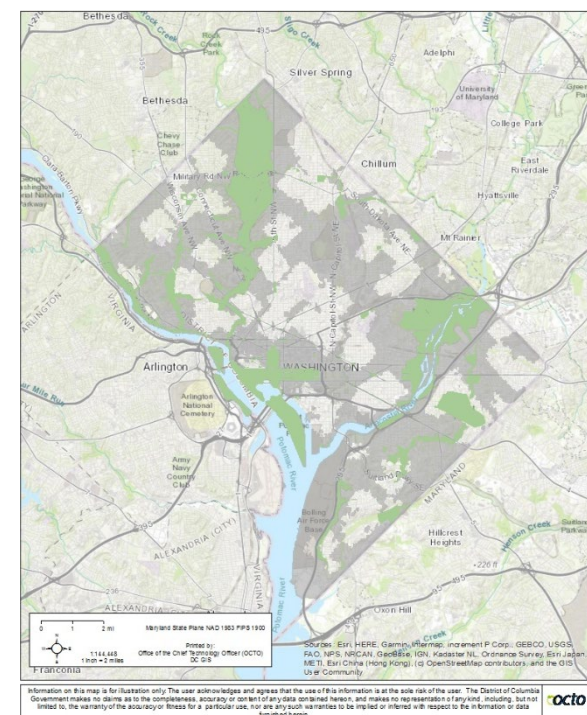
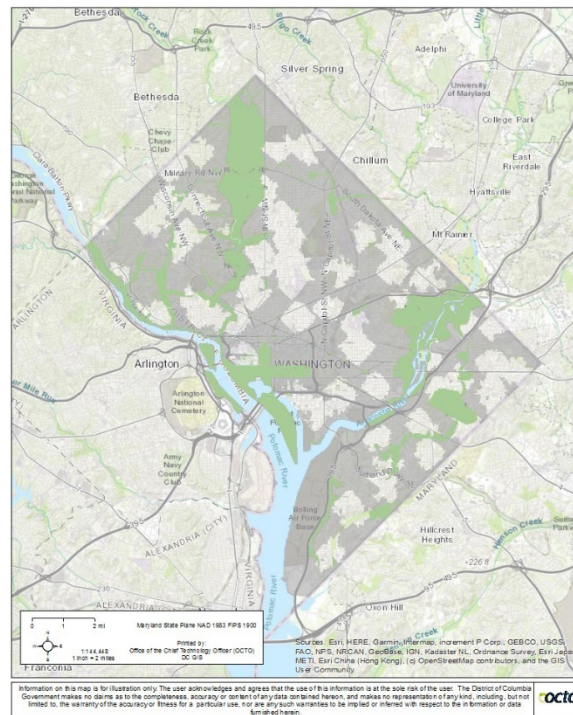
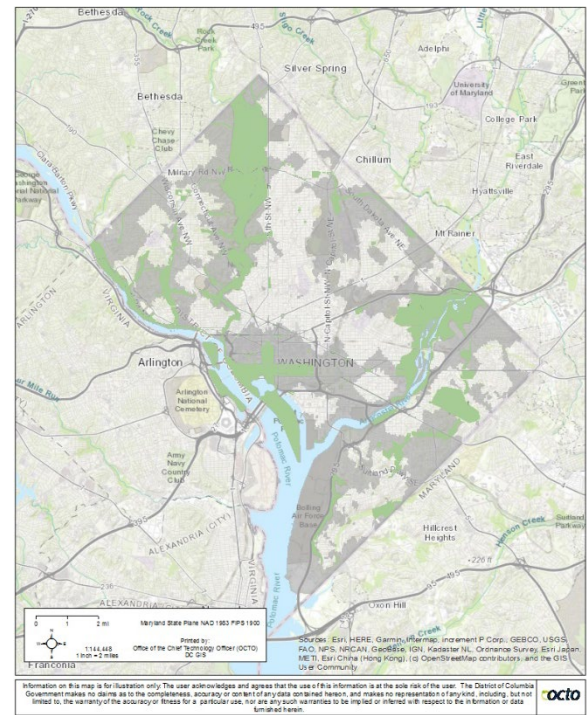
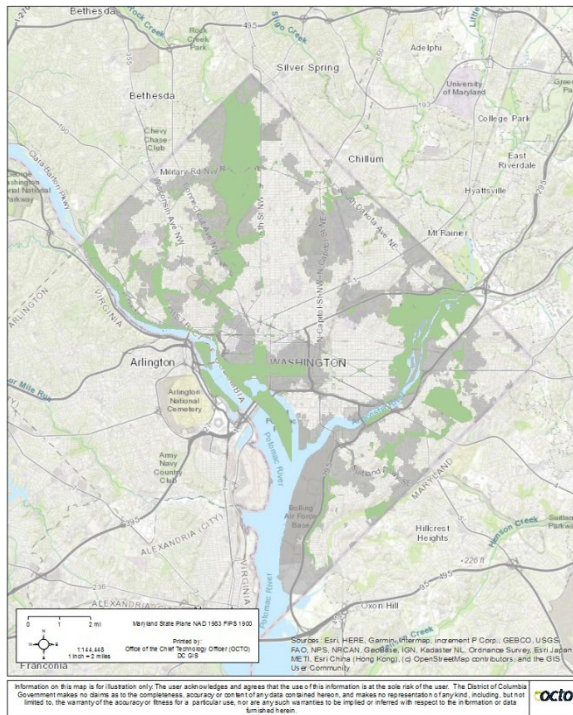
**Map 7.** 10-minute walk analysis of DPR Dog Parks - DPR, 2020.

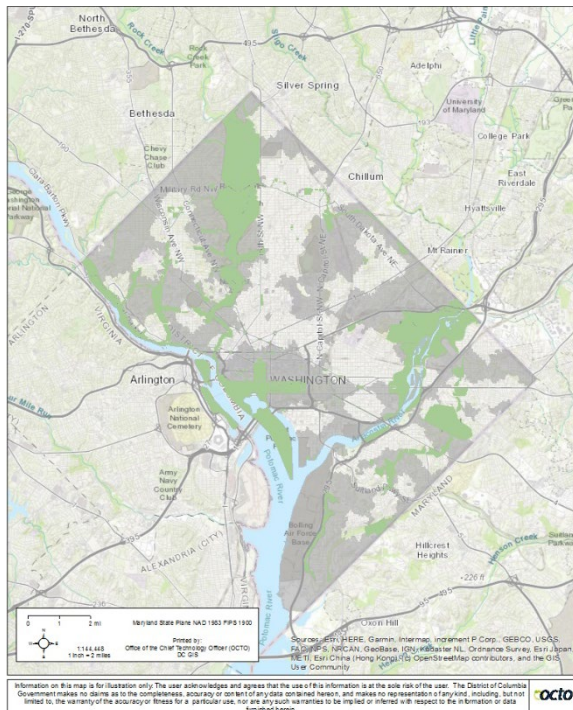
## DPR + NPS mapped amenities



**Map 9.** 10-minute walk analysis of DPR + NPS Community Gardens - DPR, 2020.

## DPR, NPS, and DCPS mapped amenities





**Map 14.** 10-minute walk analysis of DPR + NPS + DCPS Rectangular Fields – DPR, 2020

## Engagement

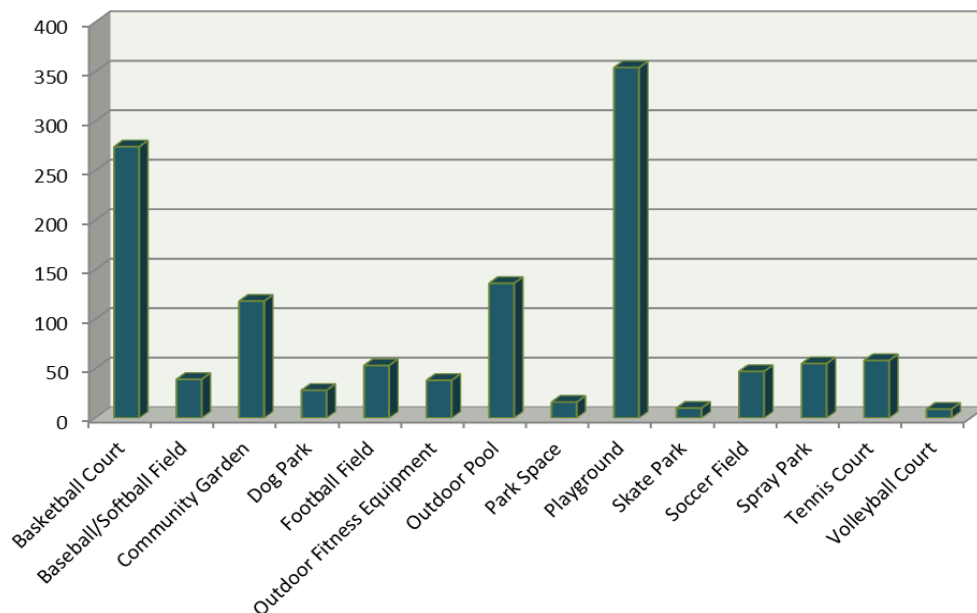
Thousands of District residents, dozens of DPR staff, and several local and federal government partners, community groups, and non-government recreational providers were involved in this process. Their voice was heard through participation in DPR programs, responses to surveys or direct feedback at any of the various engagement events put on specifically for the launch of the Ready2Play plan. This feedback has been invaluable and has shaped the key priorities, adopted strategies, and open project selection process included herein.



**Figure 5.** Ready2Play face-to-face engagement events (January-March 2020) - DPR, 2020

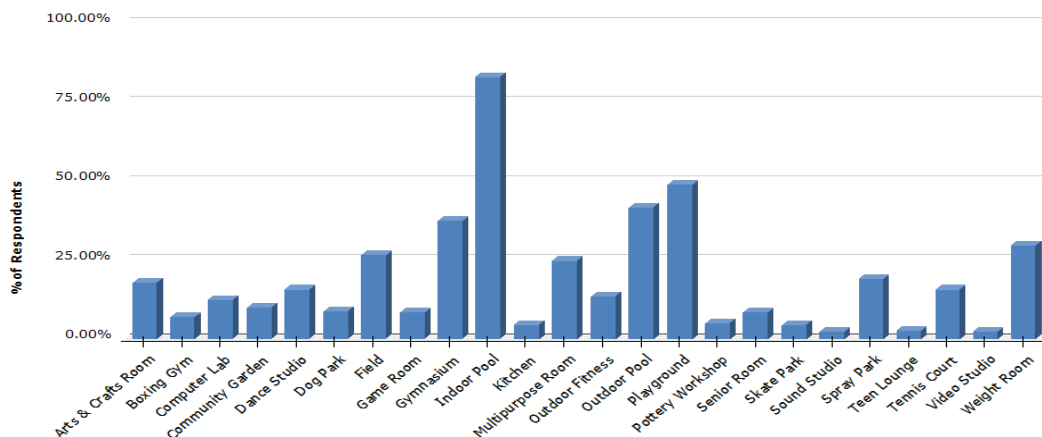
From surveys that DPR has been doing since 2017, we know that the most used outdoor amenities in DPR's inventory are playgrounds and basketball courts, followed, at significantly lower rates of usage, by outdoor pools, community gardens, tennis courts, spray parks, and fields.

**Graphic 1.** Preferred DPR Outdoor Amenities 2017-2020 – DPR Survey 2017-2020 (n=668).



A 2019 survey, which asked about indoor and outdoor rec amenities, re-enforced these findings. While indoor pools were the most used amenity selected by survey respondents, the next two highest were both outdoor recreation amenities: playgrounds and outdoor pools. Fields, spray parks, tennis courts, and outdoor fitness equipment were also selected in the second tier of amenities that people use regularly.

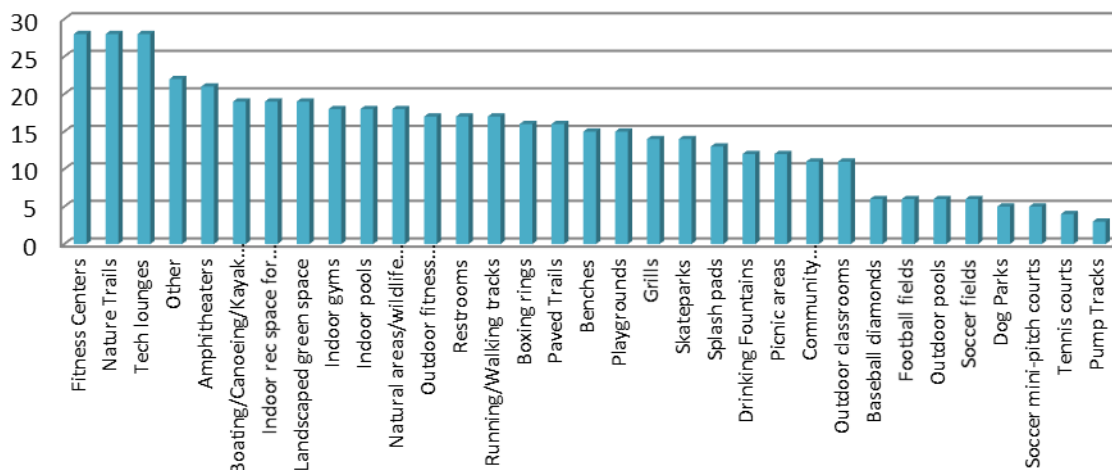
**Graphic 2.** Preferred DPR Amenities in 2019 – DPR Survey 2019 (n=2,586).



As DPR prepared to kick off its larger Ready2Play plan, DPR’s planners held meetings with recreational staff across the agency in the winter of 2019 and conducted a DPR staff survey in December 2019. These conversations and responses from the survey revealed the importance of various issues. At the forefront was providing accessible and inclusive facilities and programming opportunities. Suggestions included continuing to innovate and offer a diverse array of rec facilities and programming, ensuring that opportunities exist for all age groups and cultures, and ensuring that we are making our parks and rec centers inclusive and welcoming spaces. Safety was expressed as a major concern, as was the lack of culturally relevant or age-relevant programs, particularly for teens. Staff suggested investing in new tech programs, arts and cultural programs, cooking classes, and job and vocational training.

Of the new amenities that DPR staff wanted to see the agency invest in, most were outdoor facilities. The top outdoor amenities selected were nature trails, amphitheaters, boating, kayaking and canoeing facilities, and landscaped green space.

**Graphic 3.** *Desired New DPR Amenities - DPR Staff Survey 2019 (n=67).*



In February and early March 2020, DPR met with various agency partners including the Department of General Services, DC Public Schools, the DC Office of Planning, the DC Department of Transportation, the Department of Health, the Department of Energy and Environment, the Deputy Mayor for Education and others. DPR staff also began public outreach on the Ready2Play plan, tabling at various events including the Mayor’s Budget Engagement Forums and a Fit DC 5k race. At these events, DPR staff collected short engagement cards asking residents what their favorite park was, why, and what their big idea was on the future of parks and recreation. 382 total responses were collected. These responses were then coded and analyzed to identify themes and priorities.

As the second week of March approached, DPR was prepared to host a series of 4 large citywide meetings to officially kick off its larger Ready2Play effort as well as gather additional SCORP feedback. Unfortunately, that was the week that the pandemic shutdown all public gatherings in DC and all public engagement went into hiatus for a few months.

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DPR was eventually able to relaunch its public engagement efforts in the summer, releasing a new website dedicated to online Ready2Play engagement activities at the end of June and hosting a series of virtual kick-off meetings in July. 192 participants were able to join one of the seven kickoff meetings, which featured a series of poll and discussion questions. Over 4,500 site visits have been logged so far, with close to 400 engagement activities completed.

Questions asked through the Ready2Play tabling, kickoff meetings, and online website included:

- What is your favorite park or rec center and why?
- What do you love about parks and recreation in DC?
- What improvements would you like to see for parks and recreation in DC?
- What types of amenities, events, programs, and activities would you like to see more of and where?
- What barriers, if any, limit your use of DC's parks and rec centers?
- Are there particular outdoor amenities you'd like to see more of in DC?
- What factors would you like to see DPR use to prioritize site selection for future LWCF projects?
- What priorities or themes would you like to see reflected in this plan?
- What topics would you be interested in joining a focused discussion on at a future meeting?
- What are your big ideas for the future of parks and recreation in DC?

Key themes that emerged through this engagement include:

While respondents often selected proximity to home as the reason for why they liked a park, the type and quality of amenities or programs also influenced responses. Major reasons for why particular sites were selected as favorites included outdoor and natural space, trails, and amenities such as pools, playgrounds, and walking/running tracks.

Improvements recommended largely tracked across the following categories: improved maintenance, better access, diversified or expanded programs, greater consideration of equity in allocation of resources, stronger collaboration with partners, more concern on safety, more flexible, accessible, and inclusive design, smoother operations, and the need for specific capital improvements.

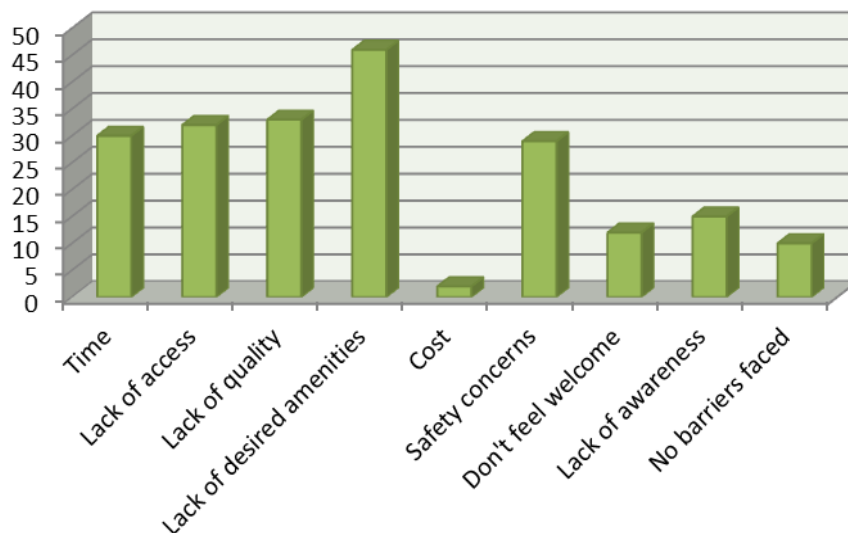
When asked what outdoor amenities people would like to see more of, there were many responses for trails, both for walking and biking. There was a split between some people wanting more natural trails for hiking versus others wanting paved pathways. Relatedly, many residents also mentioned walking/running tracks both for leisurely walking and for competition. Landscaped green spaces and natural areas for wildlife were also very popular. Shade also came up as critically important, especially at playgrounds. Several residents mentioned the need to create more opportunities for water recreation such as kayaking and fishing. Community gardens were also popular as were dog parks, particularly in areas currently lacking in this amenity. There were other suggestions for new or more unique amenities such as climbing walls, parkour, skateparks, and bike parks. Programming requests included more spin classes, aquatic fitness, and gymnastics offered at sites across the city, not just one location.

The top barriers faced in limiting people’s use of DC’s parks and recreation centers were:

- Lack of desired amenities
- Lack of quality
- Lack of access
- Time
- Safety concerns

Four of these five barriers speak to improvements that can be made to DC’s parks and recreation by looking at strategies that diversify and add new amenities, improve the maintenance, quality, and upkeep of our spaces, improve access for all populations, and address outstanding concerns about safety- either through operations, design, or a combination of the two.

**Graphic 4.** Barriers limiting use of DC’s Parks and Recreational Facilities and Programs - Ready2Play Engagement, 2020 (n=85).

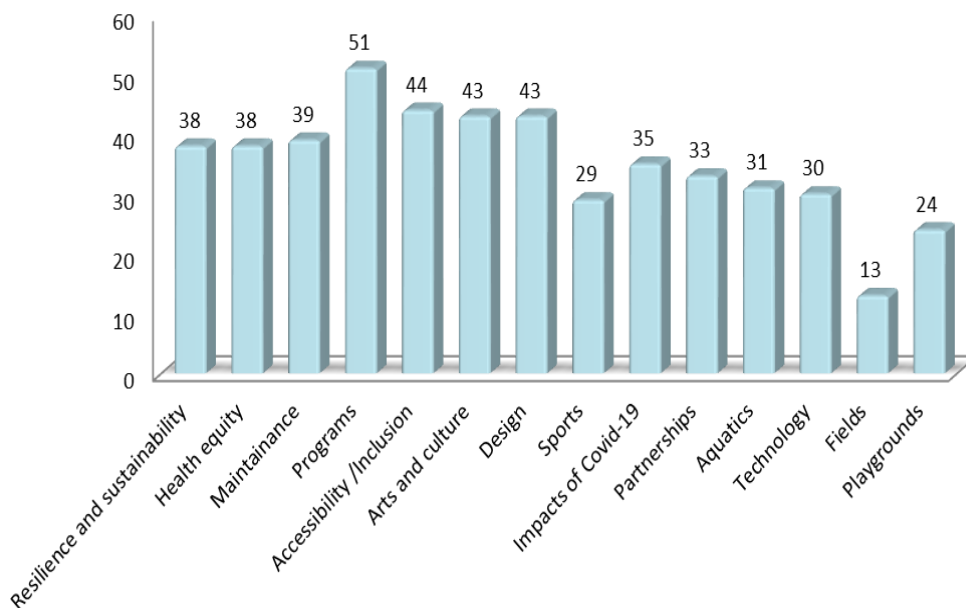


As far as key priorities that residents wanted to see addressed in this plan, equity was at the core of many responses, whether it was called out explicitly or was alluded to through comments like “address gentrification”. Inclusivity was another key theme, particularly ensuring that all ages, genders, races, ethnicities, and interest groups have programs and facilities that meet their interests and needs. Along with this, accessibility is a critical component to ensure that our facilities and programs are accessible for all abilities. There was also a focus on collaboration and maintenance. Seeking out additional opportunities for partnership with community groups and other agency partners as well as ensuring that maintenance was equitably performed across the District. Finally, there was an interest expressed in ensuring a diverse offering of programs that offered educational, health and fitness, culinary, and non-traditional sports programming as well as ensuring that park spaces and the routes to them are safe.

When asked what topics meeting attendees were interested in participating in future discussions on, the most popular topics selected were included:

- Programs
- Accessibility/Inclusion
- Arts and Culture
- Design
- Maintenance
- Health Equity
- Resilience and sustainability

**Graphic 5.** Preferred Topics for Future Discussions - Ready2Play Engagement, 2020 (n=97).



When asked for factors to consider in identifying future LWCF projects through the Open Project Selection Process, comments received included: addressing equity, which was a common theme across a number of the discussion questions; ensuring that there is community desire for whatever improvements are proposed; enhancing accessibility; selecting sites or projects that offer some kind of co-location benefits; and also taking into account the size of the project and number of nearby residents who will benefit.

Finally, in August, a draft SCORP plan was released for public comment and promoted widely. Three Q & A sessions were organized for residents to join virtually to ask any questions about the SCORP. In total, 41 public comment forms were received. Many of these suggestions have been incorporated into this SCORP. All public comments received are included in Appendix C.

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## Key Priorities

These eight key priorities and accompanying goal statements form the core of this SCORP plan and will be the basis through which proposed projects are identified and selected. These were informed from the trends and comparative research that the SCORP team performed, as well as an analysis of existing citywide plans and the feedback heard from the community in our initial rounds of engagement.



1. **Resilience & Sustainability:** Build a park system that helps the District adapt to climate change by using parks to capture rainwater, reduce flooding, provide shade and cooling, and be part of the community network that builds social resilience.

The climate is getting hotter and wetter. Climate Ready DC predicts that by 2080 DC will see on average 40-75 heat emergency days every year. That is between double and quadruple the amount experienced currently<sup>39</sup>. Many coastal areas of DC will also be underwater by the next century due to rising sea levels<sup>40</sup>. Parks and public space have a key role to play in resilience. There are great international and national examples of redesigning parks and public space to better capture rainwater and create playable rec amenities that are floodable. Numerous residents engaged in this SCORP also cited the need for more shade. This need will only become more critical as DC's temperatures continue to rise.

Examples of potential actions:

- Support conservation and stewardship work that protects and preserves our natural environment for future generations.
  - Work to address the greatest impacts of climate change: hotter temperatures and increased flooding. Parks can be viewed as blue/green infrastructure to address these issues of great importance.
  - Develop strategies to enhance the social resilience and connectivity of communities so that parks and rec centers can act as resilience hubs- places of shelter during neighborhood-level disasters like power outages, but also day-to day locations for information and connection.
  - Add shade and/or floodable infrastructure to proposed park improvements
2. **Access, Connectivity & Diversity of Recreational Experiences:** Ensure that every resident has access to a quality park or green space within ½ mile of their home and a safe route to get there. Work to build a system of green spaces, corridors, and trails across the city that connect

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<sup>39</sup> DC Department of Energy & Environment. *Climate Ready DC*. PDF File. 2016.

[https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/service\\_content/attachments/CRDC-Report-FINAL-Web.pdf](https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/service_content/attachments/CRDC-Report-FINAL-Web.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> DC Department of Energy & Environment. DC Flood Risk Tool. <http://dcfloodrisk.org/>. (Accessed September 22, 2020).

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residents to nature. Ensure different recreational needs are met by providing diverse amenities and programs across the city.

It has become a national standard to have a park within a 10-minute walk<sup>41</sup>. While DC leads the nation when it comes to meeting this standard<sup>42</sup>, not all access is created equal and not all parks within a 10-minute walk are desirable destinations. Furthermore, it is critical to consider the connection between parks and the diversity of assets, amenities, programming, and experiences available to residents both throughout the city and close to home.

Examples of potential actions:

- Ensure everyone has safe access to a great neighborhood park.
  - Improve connections between parks.
  - Invest in neighborhood parks and small triangles
  - Connect residents to immersive and meaningful experiences with nature.
  - Improve access routes to parks and look at inequities that different communities face in park access
  - Provide for a diversity of rec programs and amenities across the District to meet the needs of all rec users
3. **Accessibility & Inclusion:** Work to adopt universal design principles at all playgrounds and facilities and go beyond the minimum of ADA in all new construction. Ensure that everyone feels safe and welcome at DC parks.

On this, the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it behooves us to remember this historic occasion and celebrate it by striving for a higher standard. We know that ADA is the minimum of what we should be doing when it comes to accessibility and that universal design principles encourage flexible designs that are even more inclusive for all users. Language access is another critical element of accessibility and inclusion. We must ensure that our parks and recreation centers offer spaces for everyone and that all visitors can see their culture reflected in the design, commemoration, and programming offered in these spaces. It is also imperative that people feel safe while visiting our parks and rec centers.

Examples of potential actions:

- Apply universal design principles in new design
- Focus on providing sensory equipment
- Ensure ADA access to every park and facility
- Expand adaptive equipment and amenities
- Expand therapeutic recreation across the District

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<sup>41</sup> 10 Minute Walk. "10 Minute Walk: Improving Access to Parks + Green Spaces." 10minutewalk.org. <https://10minutewalk.org/> (Accessed Sep 22, 2020).

<sup>42</sup> The Trust for Public Land. 2020 ParkScore Index. tpl.org. <https://www.tpl.org/city/washington-district-columbia>. (Accessed August 14, 2020)

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- Ensure inclusive programming and recreation opportunities at every rec center
  - Train staff and invest in occupational therapists and specialists to inform design and curriculum for new amenities and programs.
4. **Health & Equity:** Promote an approach to investment and policy that addresses the historical inequities and racism that communities of color have faced. Ensure that the design of our parks and programs reflects a focus on improving the social determinants of health and improving health outcomes for communities suffering from inequities.

Covid-19 has exacerbated health disparities already prevalent across this nation and DC is no different than everywhere else. Black and brown residents have higher rates of underlying health conditions and have been disproportionately affected by this pandemic. Parks and outdoor recreation can play a significant role in the fight to address these inequities by providing the space, amenities, and programs to offer healthful activities for residents to engage in. We know that exposure to nature and time outside have positive physical and mental benefits and we saw the inequities in access to green space when Covid-19 shut down our city in the spring and many parks closed.

Examples of potential actions:

- Host nutrition and cooking classes
  - Target fitness classes to areas with a lack of private fitness centers
  - Enhance investments in areas of high health inequities
  - Design facilities to promote health and well-being
  - Incorporate biophilic design and providing more trails and access to our natural lands, especially accessible trails
5. **Technology, Innovation & Education:** Integrate and utilize new technology in our parks, promote educational and entrepreneurship programming opportunities, and continue to innovate by designing new spaces and programs to address the concerns of our time.

Advances in technology continue to transform every industry and parks and recreation is no different. From cutting edge asset management systems that offer the potential to make capital investments and maintenance repairs more efficient, to new motion-sensors and people-trackers to help provide use data, to the data management software that is used for DPR's operations, technology has a huge role to play in parks and recreation management. Innovations in technology are also changing the way we experience the outdoors, with virtual gaming, smart parks, tech-aided exploration, and augmented reality creating new ways to incorporate technology into outdoor recreation and expand environmental education.

Examples of potential actions:

- Apply new technological tools, especially in data management

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- Add new environmental education programming and teaching spaces such as outdoor classrooms
  - Expand public Wi-Fi access in parks
  - Integrate environmental education into interpretive signage
  - Utilize technology to encourage youth to explore the outdoors
  - Expand access to nature virtually for those who are unable to experience it firsthand
6. **Identity & Culture:** Increase performance space and arts and cultural programming in our parks and create programming, events, and designs that celebrate the rich diversity, culture, and identity inherent in our city.

The arts are critical to the vibrancy of a city. As arts and culture go, so goes a city. That's why it is crucial to create opportunities for the arts to grow and flourish and provide free or affordable space and opportunities to display and experience art. Parks and recreation centers are great locations to act as these venues for performance, expression, and exhibition. Parks can also educate and incubate an appreciation for art through additional arts programming and help tell the city's story through historic signage and information.

Examples of potential actions:

- Create new arts programming and partnerships
  - Develop new performance space and host regular events
  - Install new murals and public art in parks
  - Add historic signage and information
  - Host events and honor individuals that represent the rich cultural identity and diversity of our city
7. **Enhancement & Maintenance:** Work to equitably invest in capital improvement projects at sites facing the greatest need. Ensure regular upkeep and repair of our parks and facilities across every neighborhood.

Numerous communities raised the equitable distribution of capital dollars and maintenance as a key issue. There is a concern that certain parts of the District are not given the same focus, particularly when it comes to regular upkeep and maintenance of facilities. DC could lead the way in adopting efficient and effective procedures and policies to track and plan for future maintenance needs and develop a framework for how to equitably invest its future capital funds.

Examples of potential actions:

- Perform regular preventative maintenance planning
- Develop criteria to equitably determine where new capital dollars will be invested that considers the history of racism, redlining, and lack of investment in certain communities
- Address pressing repair issues in timely manner

- Compile historical information on investment across all sites
  - Work to create maintenance efficiencies across multiple agencies and federal partners
8. **Collaboration & Administration:** Seek out partners to expand public access to recreational space and programs whether through co-location, joint-use agreements, contracts, or partnerships agreements. Work with partner agencies, community groups, and nonprofits to identify and apply for new LWCF projects. Increase the amount of public engagement in the annual selection of LWCF projects.

Strong partnerships are the key to a robust parks system. Not only can partners expand the types of programming offered across rec departments and lead or co-sponsor events, they can also provide space for recreational activities. In DC, partnerships are critical, both between federal park managers and local but also between different agencies within government as well as community partners. Working together and viewing the recreation system holistically can lead to all kinds of realized efficiencies. Administratively, DPR is looking to be much more public facing in its administration of LWCF funds and involve the community in this effort.

Examples of potential actions:

- Provide resources and technical assistance to underserved groups and areas of the city to help establish friends of groups for local parks
- Identify new programmatic and investment partners
- Pursue co-beneficial capital investments with other agencies and non-governmental entities
- Seek public input to determine the annual allocation of future LWCF funds
- Partner with schools and other rec providers to provide public access to rec amenities and open space
- Pursue new cooperative management agreements with NPS
- Seek additional public recreational benefits through the zoning and development review processes

## Adopted Strategies from Existing Plans:

After reviewing the relevant citywide plans mentioned above, this SCORP adopts the following strategies from each of them. Alongside each strategy in the matrix below are icons identifying which of the eight key priorities that strategy aligns with.

DPR will continue to engage with District residents and stakeholders over the next year to develop its final Ready2Play plan, which will build upon the eight key priorities laid out in this plan and develop new strategies that will be adopted, through future amendment, into this SCORP.

## LEGEND



Resilience  
& Sustainability



Access,  
Connectivity  
& Diversity



Accessibility  
& Inclusion



Health  
& Equity



Technology,  
Innovation  
& Education



Identity  
& Culture



Enhancement  
& Maintenance



Collaboration  
& Administration

## POLICIES FROM CITYWIDE PLANS

## SCORP PRIORITIES

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT (2020)

“CP.1: Policy PROS-1.1.2: Consideration of Federal Parkland.

Work with federal agencies to evaluate the role that federal lands play in meeting the recreational needs of District residents, particularly for regional parks and sports complexes.”



“CP.2: Policy PROS-1.1.3: Park Diversity.

Provide a diverse range of recreational experiences in parks within the District of Columbia, including a balance between passive and active recreational uses, and a mix of local-serving, region-serving, and national recreational uses.”



“CP.3: Action PROS-1.1.C: Master Plans for Individual Parks.

Prepare master plans for large individual parks (such as regional parks), prior to major capital improvements as funding allows, and use these plans to guide capital improvement and implementation processes.”



“CP.4: Action PROS-1.1.D: Quality of Existing Park Spaces.

Develop an enhanced maintenance and improvement schedule to upgrade the quality of passive and active parklands and outdoor facilities to make the most of existing District parks.”



“CP.5: Policy PROS-1.2.1: Closing the Gaps.

Achieve a better distribution of high-quality parks in all neighborhoods of the city.”



“CP.6: Policy PROS-1.2.2: Improving Accessibility.

Improve access to the major park and open space areas within the city through pedestrian safety and street crossing improvements, wayfinding, signage, bike lanes and storage areas, perimeter multi-use trails within select parks, and adjustments to bus routes where appropriate. “



“CP.7: Action PROS-1.2.B: Park Spaces on District Properties.

Encourage shared use agreements for green spaces owned by District government and DC Public Schools (DCPS) so that these areas are available and accessible to residents for recreation purposes.”



“CP.8: Action PROS-1.2.C: Temporary activation of Underutilized Spaces.

Identify underutilized spaces that can be programmed on a seasonal and temporary basis to advance public life.”



“CP.9: Action PROS-1.2.D: Open Space Plan.

Evaluate the need for a citywide open space plan focusing on improving physical access to green space and the rivers.”



“CP.10: Policy PROS-1.3.2: Parks and Environmental Objectives.

Use park improvements to achieve environmental objectives such as water quality improvement, air quality improvement, wildlife habitat restoration, and tree canopy protection and improvement.”



## POLICIES FROM CITYWIDE PLANS

## SCORP PRIORITIES

"CP.11: Policy PROS-1.3.3: Protecting the Small Open Spaces.

Develop a coordinated approach for the improvement of small open spaces. Maintain the District's small open spaces as neighborhood amenities supporting a range of recreational, ecological, cultural, and commemorative uses."



"CP.12: Policy PROS 1.3.7 Health and Wellness.

Use the District's parks, open space, and recreation spaces to help meet the city's health and wellness priorities, which are linked to physical activity, public safety, healthy food access, psychological health, air and water quality, and social equity."



"CP.13: Policy PROS 1.3.8 Multipurpose Resilient Infrastructure

Design parks and recreational facilities with infrastructure to serve multiple purposes, including flood risk reduction, urban heat island mitigation, and stormwater management."



"CP.14: Action PROS-1.3.E: Coordination of Maintenance and Programming Responsibilities

Improve the coordination, scheduling, and management of park and open space maintenance and programming responsibilities among relevant government agencies, including the DPR, DGS, NPS, DCPS, DDOT, the Department of Public Works (DPW), and the Department of the Environment (DOEE)."



"CP.15: Policy PROS-1.4.1: Park Acquisition

Acquire and improve additional parkland to meet the recreational needs of existing and future residents. This should occur both through the expansion of existing parks, and the development of new parks"



"CP.16: Policy PROS-2.1.1: Recreational Facility Development

Improve the physical and psychological health of District residents by providing a variety of recreational and athletic facilities, including playing fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, basketball courts, trails and paths, art studio and exhibition spaces, and open areas for other sports activities"



"CP.17: Policy PROS-2.1.6: Nature-Based Design

New recreational facilities should incorporate nature-based design principles, which value residents' innate connection to nature and allow abundant opportunities to be outside and to enjoy the multi-sensory aspects of nature."



"CP.18: Policy PROS-2.1.7: Alternatives to New Facilities

Identify opportunities to meet outdoor recreational needs through existing public or private facilities, as an alternative to building new facilities. "



"CP.19: Policy PROS-2.1.8: Project Development Process

Maintain a well-defined and transparent project development process to ensure that future park projects meet resident needs and achieve context-sensitive design solutions. Recreational needs should be confirmed through area plans, neighborhood plans, and plans for individual parks."



"CP.20: Action PROS-2.1.B: Needs Assessments and Demographic Analysis

Conduct periodic needs assessments, surveys, and demographic studies to better understand the current preferences and future needs of District residents with respect to parks and recreation."



"CP.21: Action PROS 2.1.C: Parks Restroom Inventory

Conduct an assessment of the existing parks restroom inventory, considering park size and usage to determine the needs for additional public restrooms."



"CP.22: Action PROS-2.1.E: Improvement of Outdoor Recreational Facilities

Systematically evaluate existing outdoor recreational facilities based on Park Master Plan design guidelines."



"CP.23: Policy PROS-2.2.2: Park Safety and Security

Design parks, trails, and recreational facilities to improve public safety."



## POLICIES FROM CITYWIDE PLANS

## SCORP PRIORITIES

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT (2020)

"CP.24: Policy PROS-2.2.3: Program Diversity

Provide diverse recreational activities to promote healthy living for persons of all ages and cultural backgrounds, distributed equitably in all parts of the city."



"CP.25: Policy PROS-2.2.5: Special Needs

Increase efforts to meet the needs of underserved population groups, particularly persons with disabilities."



CP.26: Policy PROS-2.2.5B Physical Activity in Everyday Spaces

Prioritize community-driven strategies to support physical activity in non-traditional everyday spaces across the District.



"CP.27: Policy PROS-2.2.6: New Funding Sources

Seek out and pursue new forms of local, federal, non-profit, and private financial support to acquire, develop, and operate the District's park and recreational facilities."



"CP.28: Policy PROS-3.1.1.O: District Open Space Networks

Coordinate with the National Park Service and other relevant organizations to restore the environmental health of the District's open space networks, including tree cover and habitat, and to help more DC residents experience these areas through nature programs and trails. "



"CP.29: Policy PROS-3.2.5: Water-Oriented Recreation

Provide for a variety of water-oriented activities, including fishing, boating, kayaking, and paddle-boarding, on the District's rivers."



"CP.30: Action PROS-3.2.A: Anacostia River Park Improvements

Work collaboratively with the federal government, the private sector, community and non-profit groups to implement the open space improvement plans of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative."



"CP.31: Policy PROS-3.3.3: Small Park and Open Space Cluster Improvements

Prioritize improvements of small open spaces in areas with limited access to parks and open space and a growing population."



"CP.32: Policy PROS-3.4.1: Trail Network

Develop a network of trails, paths, and linear parks to link the District's open space areas and improve access to open space."



"CP.33: Action PROS-4.1.B: Expanding Partnerships

Provide an annual list of parks and recreation partnerships, including "friends" groups, program partners, inter-agency government partners, and sponsors that support District parks, recreation facilities, and programs."



"CP.34: Action PROS-4.1.C: Sponsorships and Foundations

Explore opportunities for financial sponsorship of park and recreation facilities by corporate and non-profit partners, foundations, and "friends" organizations."



"CP.35: Action PROS-4.1.D: Joint Use Partnerships

Consider alternative joint use partnership models with DCPS and non-profit service providers, and select and implement the most effective approaches. "



### SUSTAINABLE DC 2.0

SDC.1: Implement the "Urban Farming and Food Security Act" and expedite the process to make public and private lands available for a variety of urban agriculture uses.



SDC.2: Develop food-producing landscaping on five acres of District public spaces distributed throughout all eight wards



SDC.3: Collect data at parks and recreation centers, particularly in areas of low-use and low income, to improve planning and programming decisions.



## POLICIES FROM CITYWIDE PLANS

## SCORP PRIORITIES

### SUSTAINABLE DC 2.0

SDC.4: Prioritize community-driven strategies to support physical activity in unexpected but everyday spaces.



SDC.5: Design parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities to reflect the resident preferences and culture of the local population, and to accommodate a range of age groups and abilities.



SDC.6: Improve public safety through the development and implementation of resident-driven design, programming, and maintenance of streetscapes, parks, and other public spaces.



SDC.7: Develop an inter-agency heat management strategy to minimize the injury rate associated with extreme cold and heat temperature days



SDC.8: Develop a Wetland Registry to facilitate restoration or creation of wetland habitat.



SDC.9: Plant and maintain an additional 150 acres of wetlands in targeted Conservation Opportunity Areas.



SDC.10: Plant and maintain 10,500 new trees per year in priority areas to achieve 40% tree canopy cover by 2032.



SDC.11: Improve the formal trail network for hiking and biking—prioritizing areas east of the Anacostia River—while balancing protection of habitat.



SDC.12: Increase the number of “nature play spaces” at District playgrounds.



SDC.13: Create or improve small parks and natural spaces in underserved areas.



SDC.14: The District Government will incorporate nature into the places we live, play, and work, to reduce stress and improve health—known as biophilic design.



SDC.15: Incorporate neighborhood-scale stormwater collection into large-scale planning efforts early in the redevelopment process, including public right of way and parks.



SDC.16: Create and promote accessible opportunities for adults to learn and build connections to the natural world.



AFDC.1: Transportation, housing and outdoor spaces and buildings are safe, affordable, livable, and accessible for residents of all ages and abilities.
















































AFDC.2: Residents will be empowered with information about safe, healthy and accessible housing, transportation and recreation programs.



AFDC.3: Inform and connect older residents to arts, recreation and educational activities



### AGE-FRIENDLY DC (2018)

	POLICIES FROM CITYWIDE PLANS	SCORP PRIORITIES
RESILIENT DC (2019)	RDC.1: Ensure all residents have access to free, accessible cooling areas or centers within walking distance of their home.	   
	RDC.2: Create a map-based tool that combines data on the urban heat island, heat-related illness, tree canopy, land cover, cool roofs, and green infrastructure.	  
	RDC.3: Preserve existing cultural institutions in DC	
	RDC.4: Design climate-ready neighborhoods and developments	
	RDC.5: Launch a data-driven campaign to significantly reduce the urban heat island	  
	RDC.6: Re-imagine public space for the future	  
DC CULTURAL PLAN (2019)	CuP.1: Increase out-of-school cultural programming for youth	  
	CuP.2: Maximize Access to Public Facilities for Cultural Presentation	  
	CuP.3: Increase evening and weekend access to cultural spaces	  
	CuP.4: Deploy experimental strategies for infusing culture in public space	  
	CuP.5: Promote a range of cultural spaces throughout the city	  
CLIMATE READY DC (2019)	CR.1: Incorporate climate resilience into development planning and review processes.	  
	CR.2: Leverage land-use planning to promote resilience.	 
	CR.3: Reduce risks of extreme heat and the urban heat island.	  
	CR.4: Strengthen community cohesion for safety and resilience.	   
	CR.5: Develop eco-resilience districts and community resilience hubs.	  

## POLICIES FROM CITYWIDE PLANS

## SCORP PRIORITIES

### HEALTHY PEOPLE DC

HP.1: When renovating playgrounds and parks, design new infrastructure for active recreation, including workout equipment, for all ages and abilities.



HP.2: Ensure all residents have access to parks and open spaces within 1/2 mile



HP.3: Older adults have access to and information about active recreation, healthful food, and safe and walkable neighborhoods to promote healthy lifestyles



### FEDERAL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT (2019)

Protect the Historic Features of Parks and Open Space



Encourage Stewardship of Natural Resources



Balance Commemorative Works within Parks



Improve Access to, and Connections between, Parks and Open Space



Balance Multiple Uses within Parks



Build a Cohesive Parks and Open Space System



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## Open Project Selection Process

One of the requirements of the SCORP plan is to develop an Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) that will be used to identify projects for future LWCF grants. DC reviewed several other SCORP's Open Project Selection Processes (OPSPs) as well as other evaluation frameworks that parks and recreation departments across the country have used to guide capital investments such as the Minneapolis Neighborhood Park Plan and NYC's Equity Development Standards for Parks. DC's new OPSP process is outlined below

### Process

DPR planners will actively solicit feedback from DPR staff, other government agency partners, and the general public for its annual identification of LWCF projects. A project recommendation process will be set up that asks for ideas for new LWCF projects. This will be an official process that is advertised annually and has an open window and form for submitting proposals. These proposals will be evaluated by an internal team of DPR planning staff based on the criteria outlined below. DC is unique compared to other states administering the LWCF State Assistance Program because it acts as the state, city, and county all in one. Thus, DPR is technically the fund administrator, the project applicant, and the body charged with identifying and evaluating potential projects. Therefore, it is imperative that DC has a robust OPSP in place to ensure that it weighs and evaluates all potential projects as objectively as possible and selects those that score highest in addressing the priorities of this SCORP and advancing equity.

For a proposal to be selected and go through the official application process, it must satisfy the criteria below. Proposals that do not meet these criteria may be deferred and considered in a future grant cycle when they meet the criteria. This deferment will primarily apply to projects that lack local matching funds at the time they are proposed but meet all other criteria.

### Prerequisites

- Must have local matching funds
- Must be on District owned property with guarantee that land will remain in recreational use in perpetuity
- Must directly address at least one of the 8 key priorities
- Must be for outdoor recreation

If a proposed project meets all prerequisite criteria, it will be evaluated by a team of DPR staff using the following rubric.

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## Weighted score

- Amount of key priorities addressed (10 points for each priority addressed)

*The project must address at least one key priority in a significant way. This means being able to draw a direct correlation to how the proposed project will further the goal statement expressed by the key priority. For each key priority where a direct correlation can be documented, 10 points will be added to the project score.*

- In area of high health inequities/ high rates of violent crime/ high rates of poverty (20 points)

*Is the project in an area of the city with high rates of health inequities, violent crime, or poverty? If so, and if this can be demonstrated through data, project will receive 20 points.*

- Community support (20 points)

*Is there documented evidence of strong community engagement and support? This could include any or all of the following: documents from previous engagement, a strong engagement plan, focused specifically on reaching marginalized populations, letters of support from a wide cross-sector of the community. Based on documentation produced, project will receive up to 20 points.*

- Fulfills known area of need for an amenity (as depicted in maps in GIS Gaps Analysis section) (15 points)

*Does the project add a new amenity to the parks and recreation inventory in an area that previously had a gap in access to that amenity? (based on the 10-minute walkshed maps published in the GIS Gap Analysis)? If so, 15 points will be added.*

- Time since last investment (10 points)

*When was the last significant upgrade to the park space? If last significant investment was more than 10 years ago or if it can be demonstrated that last significant investment was past the estimated useful life of most of the existing assets in the park space, project will receive 10 points.*

- Scale (10 points)

*Do the matching LWCF grant funds significantly enhance the scope of the project? What new amenities or design considerations will these matching grants enhance? What is the breakdown of the overall project funding? Typically, projects funded closer to a 50/50 match will score higher than larger projects with a significant amount of local funds already allocated.*

- Uniqueness/innovation of proposed intervention (5 points)

*Is the proposed intervention something that will provide a new recreational experience in DC? Has it either shown success elsewhere or is it supported by research or data that it will provide a benefit to the community? If so, 5 points will be added.*

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Previous LWCF Funded Projects

Grant No.	Grant Name	Fiscal Year	Obligation Amount	Park Name
1	ARBORETUM PLAYGROUND	1967	93,383.00	Arboretum Recreation Center (24th St & Rand Place NE)
2	FORT STANTON PLAYGROUND	1966	214,609.64	Fort Stanton Recreation Center? (Erie St SE?)
3	FAIRFAX PLAYGROUND	1967	177,882.93	Fort Davis Recreation Center (Alabama Ave SE)
4	DOUGLASS PLAYGROUND	1967	192,693.39	Douglass Community Center
5	15 WALK-TO-LEARN-TO SWIM POOLS	1967	373,260.28	Barry Farms Community Center
				Benning-Stoddert Recreation Center
				Deanwood Recreation Center
				Garrison Playground
				Happy Hollow Playground
				Capper Playground
				North Michigan Park Playground
				Parkside Playground
				Park View Playground
				Powell-Lincoln Playground
				Riggs-LaSalle Playground
				Trinidad Recreation Center
				Watkins Recreation Center
				Wilson Playground
				Woodson Recreation Center



6	SUMMER CAMP SITE	1968	54,250.00	Camp Riverview (Scotland, MD)
7	POWELL PLAYGROUND	1967	93,075.39	Powell Recreation Center
8	LANGDON PARK PLAYGROUND	1968	125,000.00	Langdon Park (East) Playground
10	JUNIOR VILLAGE SWIMMING POOL	1968	22,048.55	?
13	BRENTWOOD PARK	1970	107,865.20	Brentwood Hamilton Field
14	LANGDON PARK-WEST	1970	205,591.63	Langdon Park-West
15	MULTI-SITE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT	1970	221,742.00	Barry Farms Community Center
				Deanwood Playground
				Greenleaf Hoover (MLK)
				Kelly Miller Playground
				New York Avenue Playground
				Park Morton
				Rabaut Playground
				Riggs-LaSalle Playground
				Sherwood Playground
				Trinidad Playground
				Washington Highland
16	ACTIVITY LIGHTING PROJECT	1971	237,229.00	Banneker Pool
				Banneker Lower Field
				Evans Recreation Center
				Fort Greble
				Hart



				Keene
				Petworth
				Ridge Road Recreation Center
				River Terrace
				Takoma Pool
				Watts Branch
				Wilson Teachers College
17	BARRY FARMS SWIMMING POOL AND BATHHOUSE	1971	185,000.00	Barry Farm Recreation and Aquatic Center
18	NORTH MICHIGAN PARK	1971	76,136.13	North Michigan Park Recreation Center
19	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA REC PLAN	1972	180,682.30	
20	REPAIR & IMPROVEMENT - SWIMMING POOL	1972	250,549.21	Anacostia Pool
				Banneker Pool
				Takoma Pool
21	REPAIR & IMPROVEMENT - JF KENNEDY PL	1972	144,344.61	Kennedy Recreation Center
22	ROSEDALE REC CENTER & SWIM POOL REPLACEMENT	1972	293,110.00	Rosedale Recreation Center
23	REHABILITATION 40 TENNIS COURTS	1972	49,699.65	Banneker Recreation Center
				Raymond Playground
24	BENNING PARK PLAYGROUND	1972	480,775.00	Benning Park Recreation Center
25	FAIRFAX PLAYGROUND STORM DRAINAGE	1972	13,012.50	Fort Davis Recreation Center (Alabama Ave SE)
26	ASPHALT INSTALLATION ON 19 SITES	1972	35,472.87	Barry Farms Community Center
				Banneker Recreation Center
				Raymond Playground



				Rudolph Recreation Center
				Stead Recreation Center
27	MORGAN-HAPPY HOLLOW SITE ACQ. & DEV.	1972	99,085.00	Marie H. Reed Recreation Center
28	KENILWORTH-PARKSIDE RECREATION CENTE	1973	375,000.00	Kenilworth-Parkside Recreation Center
29	BENNING-STODDERT RECREATION CENTER	1973	416,553.12	Benning-Stoddert Recreation Center
30	ACTIVITY LIGHTING SEVEN SITES	1973	117,121.63	Chevy Chase Playground
				Congress Heights Playground
				East Potomac Park Swimming Pool
				Emery Recreation Center
				Guy Mason Recreation Center
				Harrison Playground
				Lamond Recreation Center
				Stead Recreation Center
31	BENNING STODDERT LIGHTING	1973	66,808.99	Benning-Stoddert Recreation Center
32	DOUGLAS COMMUNITY CTR	1974	119,500.00	Douglass Community Center
33	MORGAN HAPPY HOLLOW PLAYGROUND	1974	135,250.00	Marie H. Reed Recreation Center
34	KENILWORTH - PARKSIDE (PHASE II)	1975	416,560.73	Kenilworth-Parkside Recreation Center
35	EAST POTOMAC PARK BATH HOUSE REPLACEMENT	1975	210,485.00	East Potomac Park Swimming Pool
36	FAIRFAX RECREATION CENTER GROUNDS DE VT	1978	297,000.00	Fairfax Recreation Center
39	DAKOTA PLAYGROUND	1978	133,000.07	Dakota Playground
41	SCORP PLANNING AND MAINTENANCE	1975	124,612.00	



42	OUTDOOR PLAYCOURTS REHABILITATION	1975	163,586.40	Arboretum Recreation Center (24th St & Rand Place NE)
				Cathedral Heights (appears to be Newark Park)
				Chevy Chase Playground
				Edgewood Playground
				Emery Recreation Center
				Forest Hills Playground
				Fort Greble Recreation Center
				Francis Recreation Center
				Friendship Playground
				Georgetown Recreation Center
				Hearst Recreation Center
				Hillcrest Recreation Center
				Kalorama Playground
				Kelly-Miller Recreation Center
				Palisades Recreation Center
				Rose Park Playground
				Rosedale Recreation Center
				Oxon Run Recreation Center
				Takoma Playground
				Taft Recreation Center
				Turkey Thicket Recreation Center
				Watts Branch Playground
43	FRANCIS SWIMMING POOL	1976	89,867.00	Francis Park
44	FOREST HILLS PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENT	1977	117,000.00	Forest Hills Playground



45	LAFAYETTE PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENT	1976	170,000.00	Lafayette Recreation Center
46	SHAPIRO TRACT	1976	995,000.00	Walter Pierce Park
47	PLAYGROUND REHABILITATION	1977	276,705.00	Garfield Park
				Lansburgh Park
				Mitchell Park
48	IMPROVEMENTS OF ANACOSTIA BATHHOUSE	1978	200,000.00	Anacostia Recreation Center
50	OXON RUN SWIMMING POOL AND BATHHOUSE	1977	115,000.00	Oxon Run Recreation Center
53	PALISADES TOT-LOT DEVELOPMENT	1978	8,000.00	Palisades Recreation Center
54	RANDLE HIGHLANDS - PLAYGROUND DEVELOPE	1978	148,896.29	Randle Highlands Elementary School Playground
57	SCORP	1979	42,397.68	
58	SHAPIRO TRACT- PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMEN	1979	311,133.25	Walter Pierce Park
59	RANDALL RECREATION CENTER REHABILITA	1979	170,069.15	Randall Recreation Center
60	COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION PLAN FOR D.	1979	94,197.81	
61	CAMP SITE DEVELOPMENT	1979	308,000.00	Camp Riverview (Scotland, MD)
62	GUY MASON TOT-LOT DEVELOPMENT	1979	5,000.00	Guy Mason Recreation Center
63	PLAYGROUND REHAB. THREE (3) SITES	1979	105,347.69	Chevy Chase Playground
				Congress Heights Playground
				Hearst Recreation Center
64	OXON RUN PARK DEVELOPMENT	1980	443,973.75	Oxon Run Recreation Center

66	GEORGETOWN RECREATION CENTER	1980	165,000.00	Volta Park
67	WARD FIVE SWIMMING POOL AND BATHHOUSE	1981	600,000.00	Fort Lincoln Park
68	IMPROVE COMMUNITY RELATIONS	1981	32,867.50	
69	EAST POTOMAC PARK SWIMMING POOL	1981	430,576.94	EAST POTOMAC PARK SWIMMING POOL
70	PLAYCOURT CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILIT	1981	110,000.00	Banneker Recreation Center
				Fort Reno Park
71	SHERWOOD RECREATION CENTER RENOVATIO	1982	100,000.00	Sherwood Playground
72	CAPITOL EAST NATATORIUM PLAZA	1984	30,000.00	Rumsey Aquatic Center
73	GROUNDS REHABILITATION, FOUR SITES	1983	126,200.00	Barry Farms Community Center
				Lincoln (Capper) Community Center
				Langdon Park
				Riggs-LaSalle Recreation Center
74	CAMP SITE DEVELOPMENT PHASE II	1983	491,700.00	Camp Riverview (Scotland, MD)
75	DEMAND SURVEY AND COMP. REC. PLAN UP	1984	36,045.75	
76	MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM	1984	84,096.00	
77	FOXHALL PARK IMPROVEMENT	1984	4,629.30	Foxhall Park (now Powell Recreation Center)
79	REHAB AND REPLACEMENT OF OUTDOOR LIG	1985	40,000.00	Banneker Community Center
				Barry Farms Community Center
				Bundy Field



				Capper Recreation Center
				Fort Greble Recreation Center
				Fort Stanton Recreation Center
				Guy Mason Recreation Center
				Hillcrest Recreation Center
				Jefferson Recreation Center
				Randall Recreation Center
				Turkey Thicket Recreation Center
80	HORACE MANN AMPHITHEATER	1985	53,000.00	Horace Mann Community Center
81	1986 COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION PLAN	1986	28,891.00	
82	PLAYCOURTS RENOVATION	1985	42,932.26	Raymond Recreation Center and Playground
				Ridge Road Recreation Center
83	SWIMMING POOL REHABILITATION	1986	282,310.00	Kelly Miller Recreation Center
				Takoma Recreation Center
84	SWIMMING POOL & BATHHOUSE REHAB.	1986	89,400.00	Kenilworth-Parkside Recreation Center
				Benning Park Recreation Center
85	Community Park West, Ph. 2, PLAYGROUND DEVT.	1988	52,123.00	Walter Pierce Park
86	COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION PLAN, 92-97	1991	66,046.00	
87	REHABILITATION OF FOUR PLAYGROUNDS	1993	34,574.00	Brentwood Recreation Center
				Raymond Recreation Center and Playground
				Stoddert Recreation Center
				Upshur Recreation Center
89	REHABILITATION OF THREE PLAYGROUNDS	1993	46,000.00	Benning Park Recreation Center



				Douglass Community Center
				Fort Stanton Recreation Center
90	CHEVY CHASE PLAYGROUND REHABILITATION	1994	17,100.00	Chevy Chase Recreation Center
91	JOY EVANS THERAPEUTIC RECREATION CENTER PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENT	1995	72,931.00	Joy Evans Early Childhood Center
92	REHABILITATION OF 11 PLAYGROUNDS	1996	142,500.00	Edgewood Playground
				Fort Lincoln Park
				Fort Stanton Recreation Center
				Guy Mason Recreation Center
				Hearst Recreation Center
				Jefferson Recreation Center
				Randall Recreation Center
				Ridge Road Recreation Center
				Upshur Recreation Center
				Takoma (0092)
				Oxon Run (0092)
93	REHABILITATION OF 10 PLAYGROUNDS	1996	62,982.64	Congress Heights Recreation Center
				Dakota Playground
				Edgewood Playground
				Friendship Recreation Center
				Guy Mason Recreation Center
				Macomb Playground
				Newark Street Park
				Takoma Recreation Center
				Virginia Avenue Playground

				Watts Branch Playground
				Hamilton (added to 0093)
				North Michigan Park (added to 0093)
				Mitchell Park
95	Mitchell Park Playground Development	2001	50,000.00	Mitchell Park
97	District of Columbia Parks & Recreation Master	2003	125,000.00	
99	Lamond Recreation Center Outdoor Improvements	2005	172,500.00	Lamond Recreation Center
101	Hearst Park Playground	2008	4,642.08	Hearst Park
104	Walter Pierce Park Rehabilitation	2016	217,536.00	Walter Pierce Park
105	16th Street Playground	2017	329,806.00	16th Street Playground
106	NJ & O	2018	507,747.00	NJ & O

## Appendix B: Wetland Protection Element

The District of Columbia Wetland Conservation Plan was prepared by the District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE), the District agency responsible for wetland protection and fish and wildlife services. In 2014, DOEE began working on a comprehensive update of its 1997 Wetland Conservation Plan and a reassessment of the District's wetland inventory using enhanced aerial surveys, site visits, and geospatial mapping software. Within the District, 289 acres of wetlands have been mapped and assessed in the field. Given the compact and dense nature of DC's geographic area and population pressures, over 92% of these wetland areas are located within 500 feet or less of urban development, highlighting the significant need for strong protections as DC's population continues to grow. These wetland areas are generally quite small, 76% of all assessed wetland areas are less than 0.5 acres<sup>43</sup>.

Another threat to DC's wetlands is climate change. Over the next 100 years, sea level is expected to rise 24–48 inches in the Chesapeake Bay, and this change will be seen readily in the tidal portions of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers and Rock Creek. Much of the District, approximately 1.74–2.55 square miles, lies below 40 inches in elevation and is expected to be affected significantly by sea-level rise<sup>44</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> DC Department of Energy & Environment. *District of Columbia Wetland Conservation Plan*. PDF File. March 2020. [https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/release\\_content/attachments/WCP\\_200311.pdf](https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/release_content/attachments/WCP_200311.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

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The core goals of the District’s new Wetland Conservation Plan remain the same as the original goals set in its 1997 plan: no net loss and an eventual net gain of wetland acreage and functions.

The District has numerous types of wetlands, including both tidal and nontidal wetlands. These types include palustrine emergent, scrub shrub, forested wetlands, vernal pools, and ponds. The wetlands throughout the District were broken down into regions based on location. Below is a list of the number and acres of wetlands by region.

- Anacostia Park (16 wetlands, 2 acres)
- Anacostia River (7 wetlands, 23 acres)
- Anacostia River Gateway (4 wetlands, 35 acres)
- Arboretum (12 wetlands, 4 acres)
- Bald Eagle Hill (3 wetlands, 1 acre)
- Broad Branch (2 wetlands, 0.5 acres)
- Dumbarton Oaks (1 wetland, 0.005 acres)
- Fort Dupont Tributary (9 wetlands, 1 acre)
- Fort Lincoln (6 wetlands, 3 acres)
- Fort Stanton Park (5 wetlands, 0.4 acres)
- Foundry Branch (12 wetlands, 4 acres)
- Hains Point (10 wetlands, 1 acre)
- Kenilworth (22 wetlands, 83 acres)
- Kingman & Heritage Islands (19 wetlands, 28 acres)
- Oxon Hill (7 wetlands, 0.7 acres)
- Oxon Run (7 wetlands, 13 acres)
- Pinehurst Branch (1 wetland, 0.08 acres)
- Piney Branch (3 wetlands, 0.4 acres)
- Poplar Point (4 wetlands, 6 acres)
- Potomac River floodplain (39 wetlands, 41 acres)
- Rock Creek (14 wetlands, 6 acres)
- Soapstone Valley (2 wetlands, 0.1 acres)
- Theodore Roosevelt Island (2 wetlands, 27 acres)
- Unassigned and scattered throughout District (38 wetlands, 9 acres)

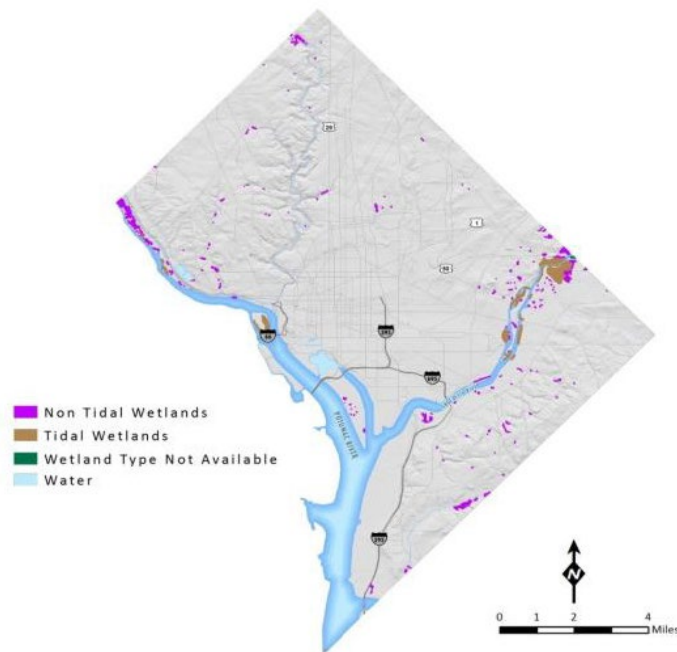
Of the 243 wetlands investigated during the field study, 113 were considered high relative value, 113 were considered average relative value, and 17 were considered low relative value

In the assessment that took place as part of the new Wetland Conservation Plan, the New Hampshire method was used to evaluate wetlands across 12 function categories, calculating a score for each function. This analysis led to a prioritized assessment of those wetlands in most need of restoration<sup>45</sup>.

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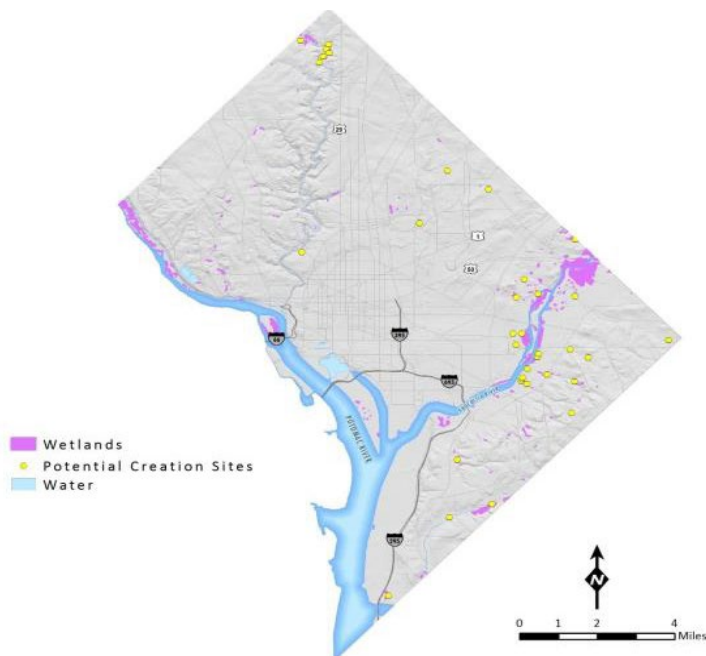
<sup>45</sup> Ibid

**Map 15. Tidal and Non-Tidal DC Wetlands (2017)** - District of Columbia Wetland Conservation Plan, DC Department of Energy & Environment, March 2020.



Many wetland areas in the District sit within National Park Service lands and are thus ineligible to receive LWCF funding. However, wetlands on District land in greatest need of restoration shall be prioritized in this SCORP.

**Map 16. DC Wetlands and Potential Creation Sites (2017)** - District of Columbia Wetland Conservation Plan, DC Department of Energy & Environment, March 2020.



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Recent and ongoing work to restore or enhance wetland functions in the District includes:

- Congress Heights Stream restoration
- Pope Branch stream restoration
- Alger Park stream restoration
- Branch Ave stream restoration
- Fort Dupont Stream Restoration

Aside from the Wetland Conservation Plan, other DC plans include specific goals and guidance regarding wetlands.

### **DC Comprehensive Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan sets various policies regarding wetlands in the Environmental Protection Element. These include:

- No net loss of wetlands and the creation of new wetlands, especially along the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and as green infrastructure, with the design of these engineered wetlands capable of withstanding 100-year floods.
- Encourage the design of parks, wetlands, open space, natural cover, and rights-of-way that can withstand a 100-year flood event or stricter standards as prescribed by District law while improving quality of life in neighborhoods.
- Increasing the acreage of wetlands along the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers
- Expand and leverage the ability of natural landscape features, such as vegetated land cover and wetlands, and the beneficial ecosystem services they provide to mitigate natural hazards<sup>46</sup>.

### **Sustainable DC**

- Target NA1.1: Develop a Wetland Registry to facilitate restoration or creation of wetland habitat.
- Target NA1.2: Plant and maintain an additional 150 acres of wetlands in targeted Conservation Opportunity Areas.
- Target NA1.3: Partner with developers to incorporate living shorelines in waterfront developments.
- Target NA1.4: Reduce threats to 75 aquatic species of greatest conservation need<sup>47</sup>.

### **State Wildlife Action Plan**

Tracks threats across different types of wetlands from a wildlife habitat perspective and has multiple reporting outcomes related to wetlands:

- Wetland acres revegetated with native plants
- Wetland regeneration/revegetation

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<sup>46</sup> DC Office of Planning. Comprehensive Plan Environmental Protection Element: Proposed Amendments. PDF File. 2020. [https://plandc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/Comprehensiveplan/publication/attachments/Chapter%206\\_Environmental-Protection\\_April2020.pdf](https://plandc.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/Comprehensiveplan/publication/attachments/Chapter%206_Environmental-Protection_April2020.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> DC Department of Energy & Environment. Sustainable DC 2.0. Plan. PDF File. 2019. [http://www.sustainabledc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/sdc-2.0-Edits-V4\\_web.pdf](http://www.sustainabledc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/sdc-2.0-Edits-V4_web.pdf)

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- Acres of groundwater-fed wetlands restored<sup>48</sup>

### Recreational opportunities in wetlands

Wetlands provide a unique opportunity for passive recreation such as hiking and birding, environmental education, citizen science, habitat for rare plants, wildlife and fisheries, and an immersive experience with nature.

There are various District owned and managed sites that would be eligible for future LWCF funding and present opportunities to expand recreational and education enjoyment of wetlands. These include but are not limited to the following.

- Kingman and Heritage Islands
- Kenilworth Parkside North
- Oxon Run Park

Enhancing the passive recreational and educational opportunities and facilities associated with wetlands on District-managed land will be prioritized in this SCORP.

### Appendix C: Public Comments Received

A draft version of the SCORP was posted online on the DPR Ready2Play website and was widely advertised through DPR's newsletter and social media. Public comments were open for 30 days, from Aug 21 -Sept 20, 2020. In total 41 public comment forms were received. Many public comments received related to immediate programming or facility requests and were referred to appropriate staff. Other comments suggested elevating certain key priorities over others, but the stance of the SCORP team is to treat all the eight elements equally.

A summary of the adjustments made to this plan focused on comments received is included below:

- More weight was given to community engagement in the OPSP (moved from 10-20 points)
- Additional language was added to many of the key priorities to more explicitly incorporate climate change, connection with nature, safety, and collaboration on maintenance.
- Language was changed in the OPSP to clarify what would count as community engagement and to clarify what was meant by uniqueness.
- Language was updated to clarify the requirements of the LWCF grant program as there was a lot of confusion about the matching grant.
- Language was added the OPSP criteria to also prioritize investments in areas experiencing high rates of violent crime.

Other comments made will be addressed through the future development of DPR's Ready2Play Master Plan.

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<sup>48</sup> DC Department of Energy & Environment. 2015 District of Columbia Wildlife Action Plan. <https://doee.dc.gov/service/2015-district-columbia-wildlife-action-plan>. (Accessed August 14, 2020).

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All public comments received are listed below:

*The priorities and goal statements are fine. I would like to suggest that there real-life examples incorporated. I realize it will lengthen the report but it will provide the readers more clarity.*

*The priorities should place more emphasis on promoting residents' connection with nature. In an urban jurisdiction like DC, many residents do not have opportunities to regularly connect with the natural environment, such as the plants and wildlife of the District. The urban environment compounds with a national trend where children, in particular, are spending less time outdoors (see <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/parenting/wp/2018/05/30/kids-dont-spend-nearly-enough-time-outside-heres-how-and-why-to-change-that/>). However, connection with nature is a powerful to promote residents' well-being. Research has found that "Connectedness with trees, wildlife, and nature was associated with better psychological well-being and less mental distress" (see <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsc.2020.00018>). Often Black and Latinx people have the least access to these connections with nature. In addition, when residents have an opportunity to connect with the natural environment, it promotes their understanding of environmental issues (see <https://youthoutdoorpolicy.org/why-youth-outdoors/>). The 8 draft priorities seem to treat anything "outdoors" as being the same. In the SCORP, "outdoor" in the SCORP mean only pavement or sterile grass lawns. The SCORP priorities should specifically emphasize enabling residents to connect with the natural environment. Enabling a connection with nature is included in DC's Comprehensive Plan and the Sustainable DC plan, which are referenced in the draft SCORP (see below). This goal must be more directly incorporated into the SCORP priorities. Comprehensive Plan: "CP.17: Policy PROS-2.1.6: Nature-Based Design: New recreational facilities should incorporate nature-based design principles, which value residents' innate connection to nature and allow abundant opportunities to be outside and to enjoy the multisensory aspects of nature." Sustainable DC: "SDC.16: Create and promote accessible opportunities for adults to learn and build connections to the natural world." As a point of comparison, this concept is also included in Maryland's SCORP: "Public parks and open spaces are places where anyone can go to be surrounded by nature and participate in activities that create palpable connections with the natural world. Federal, state, and local land conservation programs ensure that Marylanders continue to have places to go to develop connections with nature that support a sustainable land conservation and environmental stewardship ethic as fundamental for a healthy, prosperous, and resource-rich Maryland." It's crucial that these ideas be clearly reflect in the priorities of DC's SCORP. While the draft priorities refer to "access to a park or green space," not all parks are alike. While they are important for other reasons, a basketball court or soccer field do not provide connections to nature. The SCORP should specifically include connection to nature as a priority.*

*I believe it should be safer outdoor spaces via the public alleys in Ward 7 Deanwood ANC 7C04 neighborhood. I also believe that Ward 7 and 8 needs to be re-zoned to allow more zone mixed use development in Ward 7.*

*More senior classes in ward 3, more realistic dog parks, more pools*

*Create a smoking section in parks similar to dog parks. This allows drug users to have a place to use instead of scattered throughout public spaces in DC.*

*I will vote to reopen public swimming pools with very strict conditions enforced by police officers.*

*I think that education is very important, and that some of it should be the responsibility of DCPS - not DPR. It's my understanding that there is very little swimming instruction being provided in physical education to students in DCPS despite the many swimming pools that are attached to the schools. Children should be learning to swim in elementary school as part of their curriculum. It can start in Kindergarten. The children should have physical education multiple times per week at the elementary school level (this would also help with attention issues among students, as well as interest in attending school -- physical education is fun!). Another though I have is that I am hoping that a sincere effort is being made toward allowing swimming in the Anacostia River. I understand that the Anacostia River cleanup is underway, the water quality is improving, and that it might be deemed swimmable by 2022. This should be a top priority, especially considering COVID. It's shameful that we have 2 rivers in this city, and that swimming is prohibited in both of them. During COVID, I have acquired temporary use of a motor vehicle so that I can drive to Annapolis to swim (most people are not so lucky)...this situation has made me consider moving to Annapolis because they have clean waterways. I think Enhancement and Maintenance is really important. I'd really like to see the East Potomac Park pool renovation completed. It is a couple years behind schedule. I also think that when new facilities are built that*

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*you should hire qualified contractors and make sure they do a good job. Whatever the business was that was contracted for building new locker rooms for the swimming pool at Marie Reed had never worked on a swimming pool before and they did a terrible job with the locker rooms; it was evident from the first week that the pool reopened that the locker rooms were poorly designed, that the floor was uneven, that the water pressure in the showers was too low, that the shower for disabled residents was broken -- but NONE of these things were addressed!*

*Maybe the first priority would be to have them OPEN. A long summer without OUTDOORS pools opened in the District (They ARE OPEN in Montgomery County) for NO reasons (the virus is the same in Maryland and they found a way to open their outdoor pools...)*

*I'm glad to see safe access to parks being considered a priority, but I didn't see how "access" is defined. There are numerous deficient sidewalks in the vicinity of DC parks. This week we were walking to a park in our neighborhood and my son walked into a signpost on a sidewalk that is far too narrow- a sidewalk about which I've submitted concerns to DDOT previously only to have them agree that it's deficient without committing to fix it. I also think that the streets which provide access to the parks need to have adequate tree cover that it's comfortable and healthy to walk there during the high temperature months. I would specifically call out the National Park Service on the deficiency of sidewalks also. There are numerous blocks where Rock Creek Park faces a street, and NPS does not provide sidewalk connectivity. There are typically sidewalks on either side of the NPS owned block, but no connectivity between. See for instance, the block of Arkansas between 16th St and Taylor St. This is a disgrace and needs to be remedied.*

*1. Quickly and briefly. As a parent of a special needs child I will say accessibility and inclusion should be number one. Not just in "play equipment" but in facilities and programming. To have to travel to far SE to an unsecured dilapidated facility on the edge of nowhere that is falling apart, is discriminatory to the community who needs it. Don't know how DPR has allowed this for so long. There needs to be more family restrooms and changing stations not closets. Programming really should be offered at every facility at the very least at several centers in each ward. Definitely at every pool and organized sports. Hiring a recreation therapist for each designated center is not that complicated.*

*It would be nice if the report was written in plain English so the average person with an advanced degree (me) could understand it.*

*Ensuring regular upkeep is a critical piece; it doesn't matter if you get a park within 1/2 mile of every resident when DPR is not maintaining them, and they are unsafe.*

*You have to implement an online reservation system so pools can open at reduced capacity due to Covid-19. See what Montgomery county has done since July. It is a disgrace that after 6 months of closure pools in DC have not reopened.*

*I would like DPR to publish a survey showing how much each demographic group is using the parks. This would be helpful to set the goals.*

*Updated supplies for staff, so they don't have to come out of their pockets. Also, more vehicles for transporting participants. Each center should have their personal vehicle.*

*I think all 8 key priorities are great.*

*Do resilience and sustainability include assessment of potential impacts of climate change, as well as identification of appropriate measures to address these impacts? This should be more explicit.*

*Open the weight room ASAP*

*No, without knowing how specific terms are defined it is difficult to comment, for example, what does "safe way to get there" mean. This is very different for people walking v's people in cars and what can this agency do about this issue in any case?*

*There are no dog parks east of the river (ward 7) and none in this plan. There needs to be dog parks put in ward 7.*

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*I think sustainability and resilience should be explicitly laid out as the #1 goal. The resilience plays a key factor in the sustainability, the less upkeep is necessary, the longer the equipment can last, the more sustainable the project.*

*Resilience and sustainability need to be the top priority because climate change is such an overarching threat. It isn't stopping just because we're in the midst of a pandemic and social/racial strife. I don't think people really understand what is at stake.*

*This is a good list. I suggest adding "of experiences" to #2, i.e. Access, Connectivity & Diversity of Experiences*

*Yes, I think it is important to specifically call out that the variety of programming and park features should be spread out evenly and equitably, where possible, among the eight wards of the District. There are currently poorly maintained facilities in Wards 7 & 8, no dog parks in Wards 7 & 8, and no spin class offered in Wards 7 or 8.*

*We believe the highest priorities to be: - Accessibility and Inclusion - Resilience and Sustainability - Collaboration and Administration - Health & Equity - Identity & Culture*

*Accessibility and Inclusion - HIGH priority -DC should establish a goal that residents and commuters in Washington are within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenspace, recreation area or community space -Make sure parks and public parks are developed where the benefits are needed the most (e.g. areas where there is less public tree canopy, areas to recreate and enjoy etc.) - Implement safe zones for families with children within parks that provide security screening in high risk areas. Only registered, weapon-less individuals with children able to enter. -All spaces should be developed to be widely accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities -Work with DC agencies to preserve and promote fishing areas along riverfront areas, including on leased public land. Seek to educate the public on the health, community, and ecological benefits of recreational fishing. - Implement retractable shades above high use areas of the park to encourage use during hot summer weather. For example, enable semi-transparent shading along a track. Resilience and Sustainability - HIGH priority -The improvement and expansion of the tree canopy should be highly prioritized. The lack of maintained greenspace in Ward 8 in particular, is acute. (advocacy group Ward 8 Woods Conservancy could be a lead on this) -Use more light-colored pavement to reflect the sun's energy and to reduce urban heat island effects -Ensure that greenspace and parks are designed with wildlife and natural habitats in mind (e.g. lighting should be efficient and not radiate upwards into the atmosphere. This harms wildlife such as bats) -Combat climate change stressors (E.g. flood resilient plans, native plants, maintain and preserve riparian buffers, ensure connectivity between green space, preserve and expand the tree canopy) Collaboration and Administration - HIGH priority -Establish stronger partnerships between NPS, often charged with managing park land, and local communities who regularly enjoy this land - Leverage community volunteer groups The District should pursue opportunities to establish land trusts in partnership with organizations like Casey Trees to safeguard and expand parks for residents in perpetuity (e.g. Crispus Attucks Park) Link: <https://caseytrees.org/2015/11/the-story-of-crispus-attucks-park/> -Partner with academic and non-profit organizations to study the benefits of park space use for park users. -Administration should encourage and cultivate worker cooperatives as a more justice-oriented way of fostering social relationships and business opportunities. -Develop a plan to ensure that parks are adequately maintained (e.g. trash collection and litter clean-up) in all areas of the city. Health & Equity - HIGH priority - Discourage management of public park space by commercial entities or business improvement districts (BID). The lack of oversight of BIDs who assume ownership of public space is a detriment to health and equity because they often focus on certain parks in communities that tend to be wealthier and whiter. -Enable parks to be a place for the community to "come together." Social spaces make for stronger communities. Enable large communal seating and consider concert seating. Design and promote space for regular and permanent community activities (e.g. designs for long term farmer's markets, community gardens, outdoor concerts, food trucks, public viewing of movies on screens) -Contribute to the annual report of the Office of Racial Equity to show changes in important racial equity measures such as improving imbalance of funding, improving park utilization in areas that would stand to benefit most from community social space (e.g. high crime areas). -Encourage and expand access to community gardens. The desire for community gardening still exceeds the space available. Community gardens that consist of only individual plot owners/renters should be discouraged. Instead, new community gardens should either be communal, or be a hybrid of individual plots and public plots (ex. SW Community Garden: <https://swgardens.org/>). -Work with DC government agencies, including DC FACES, to optimize public space for monuments or memorials to historically underrepresented groups including women and people of color. -Conduct study to assess cultural and psychosocial conceptualizations for optimal park space use. -Use this insight for culturally appropriate park designs. -Monitor changes in park design and amenities and assess changes in terms of all residents, for example, not just new residents -Develop and implement a racial equity scoring. Apply this*

scoring to each park in the annual report. Ensure public safety. -Thoughtfully consider the types of materials used to develop and maintain parks to ensure they are not harmful (e.g. grass is preferable to turf fields as artificial turf is often made out of low-grade/crumb rubber and likely carcinogenic) -Provide adequate, down-focused lighting that provides safety to visitors but does not disrupt wildlife (such as bats). -Read Important considerations and examples: How Decades of Racist Housing Policy Left - Neighborhoods Sweltering <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/24/climate/racism-redlining-cities-global-warming.html> -Learn how cities are working to mitigate the impacts of racist policies in neighborhood planning Identity & Culture - HIGH Priority -Honor and acknowledge historical and cultural spaces through use of education plaques and informational boards etc. -Innovate with the use of public space to encourage the visual and performing arts. Select a park in each ward that provides a 6-month, lease-free office space/pods for artists-in-residence. It will be necessary to create a pop-up office (e.g. small glass frame building) -Design space to be versatile for small and large groups, including large secular and religious groups -Innovate with the use of public space to help support the small business community, especially Black-owned businesses. Consider the use of six-month lease pods for small businesses (e.g. glass pod for barber-in-residence). -Consider sponsoring art galleries in large scale lightboxes. -Implement outdoor Gospel in the Park series in public parks in Ward 6, 7, and 8.

Accessibility and Inclusion ○ DC should establish a goal that residents and commuters in Washington are within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenspace, recreation area or community space ○ Make sure parks and public parks are developed where the benefits are needed the most (e.g. areas where there is less public tree canopy, areas to recreate and enjoy etc.) ○ Implement safe zones for families with children within parks that provide security screening in high risk areas. Only registered, weapon-less individuals with children able to enter. ○ All spaces should be developed to be widely accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities ○ Work with DC agencies to preserve and promote fishing areas along riverfront areas, including on leased public land. Seek to educate the public on the health, community, and ecological benefits of recreational fishing. ○ Implement retractable shades above high use areas of the park to encourage use during hot summer weather. For example, enable semi-transparent shading along a track. Resilience and Sustainability ○ The improvement and expansion of the tree canopy should be highly prioritized. The lack of maintained greenspace in Ward 8 in particular, is acute. (advocacy group Ward 8 Woods Conservancy could be a lead on this) ○ Use more light-colored pavement to reflect the sun's energy and to reduce urban heat island effects ○ Ensure that greenspace and parks are designed with wildlife and natural habitats in mind (e.g. lighting should be efficient and not radiate upwards into the atmosphere. This harms wildlife such as bats) ○ Combat climate change stressors (E.g. flood resilient plans, native plants, maintain and preserve riparian buffers, ensure connectivity between green space, preserve and expand the tree canopy) Collaboration and Administration ○ Establish stronger partnerships between NPS, often charged with managing park land, and local communities who regularly enjoy this land The District should pursue opportunities to establish land trusts in partnership with organizations like Casey Trees to safeguard and expand parks for residents in perpetuity (e.g. Crispus Attucks Park). Link: <https://caseytrees.org/2015/11/the-story-of-crispus-attucks-park/> ○ Partner with academic and non-profit organizations to study the benefits of park space use for park users. ○ Administration should encourage and cultivate worker cooperatives as a more justice-oriented way of fostering social relationships and business opportunities. ○ Develop a plan to ensure that parks are adequately maintained (e.g. trash collection and litter clean-up) in all areas of the city. Health & Equity ○ Discourage management of public park space by commercial entities or business improvement districts (BID). The lack of oversight of BIDs who assume ownership of public space is a detriment to health and equity because they often focus on certain parks in communities that tend to be wealthier and whiter. ○ Enable parks to be a place for the community to “come together.” Social spaces make for stronger communities. Enable large communal seating and consider concert seating. Design and promote space for regular and permanent community activities (e.g. designs for long term farmer's markets, community gardens, outdoor concerts, food trucks, public viewing of movies on screens) ○ Contribute to the annual report of the Office of Racial Equity to show changes in important racial equity measures such as improving imbalance of funding, improving park use in areas that would stand to benefit most from community social space (e.g. high crime areas). ○ Encourage and expand access to community gardens. The desire for community gardening still exceeds the space available. Community gardens that consist of only individual plot owners/renters should be discouraged. Instead, new community gardens should either be communal, or be a hybrid of individual plots and public plots (ex. SW Community Garden: <https://swgardens.org/>). ○ Work with DC government agencies, including DC FACES, to optimize public space for monuments or memorials to historically underrepresented groups including women and people of color. ○ Conduct study to assess cultural and psychosocial conceptualizations for optimal park space use. Use this insight for culturally appropriate park designs. ○ Monitor changes in park design and amenities and assess changes in terms of all residents, for example, not just new residents ○ Develop and implement a racial equity scoring. Apply this

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Accessibility and Inclusion should be the top priority; without this, the other aspects are moot. I highly value Resilience and Sustainability, as climate change is ravaging our local environment, and access to green space is key to personal (and community) health.

I think the eight goal statements are commendable statements.

No suggestions; these seem to be comprehensive statements that aren't being followed currently. As a local journalist covering ANCs, Civic/Citizens Associations, etc., my experience is that none of these are possible until the process of public outreach and case management gets much better. DPR, DGS, DDOT, and NPS spend most of their time in conversations with residents explaining how a different agency runs or fixes the water fountain that's broken, the lead abatement in the playscape, etc. Residents asked for natural grass at Edgewood Rec Center and you installed FieldTurf which you mischaracterize as having lower maintenance and higher playtime capacity (that's not true in the long-term). Why take public comments if you'll ignore them and pass the buck (other than for Title VI compliance)?

Maintenance has to be a higher priority. When something breaks at a park, playground, etc., it should be fixed in a reasonable amount of time. Friendship Park (Turtle Park) was improved only a couple of years ago, and it is already falling apart and there has been no maintenance. It's a shame.

Pope Branch Park at 2900 M Place, SE and corner of 2900 block Fairlawn Ave, SE was enhanced in 2016 by DOEE. Maintenance of grassy areas are poorly maintained. Neighbors are complaining of high grass, snakes and vermin living in the western most portion of the park from Minnesota Ave to the culvert. We want a comprehensive maintenance plan to substantiate the grounds and to ease the burden of our community to be blighted.

Collaboration but also independence from the NPS; the City needs its own major park lands.

That you're having a virtual opening for MLK Library is evidence of why these types of large structures no longer fit within the resilience and sustainability strategy for this city. Large congregate spaces are a thing of the past because of public health and homeland security concerns. Focus on maintaining Park areas in each community instead of building or renovating more large facilities. The MLK money could have been better spent on improving each neighborhood Library and park area. It's unlikely the mayor is going to support purchasing any green space and leaving it that way when Developers who funded her campaign will eventually want Payback.

DC should prioritize additional, complimentary programming for residents of all ages to engage more fully with nature. I think Fairfax County does this well -- with ample, regular and ongoing programming opportunities to learn about the distinct, and significant natural habitats and culturally and historically significant sites (e.g., campfire and nature talks, tree identification, etc.)

Greater emphasis should be placed on access to green space and recreational areas. Specifically, more attention should be placed to ensure that all DC residents have a park or green space within a short walk, spaces are prioritized in areas that have

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*been historically under-served, and all spaces are accessible to folks with disabilities. I appreciate that resiliency and sustainability is a priority, but given increasing effects of climate change, we have to do all we can. Efforts to preserve and expand the tree canopy is absolutely critical to minimizing the heat island effect, especially in neighborhoods in areas where there has historically been under-investment in parks and green spaces. In addition, more attention should be given to creating areas that can serve both people and animals, which will help improve quality of life for all. For example, lighting that is downfacing so as not to disturb bats. The planting of native plants and/or designating areas as no-mow zones to create areas for pollinators (great example: the riparian meadow restoration done along the Anacostia). Finally, parks should be places for the community to gather, and that should be emphasized. During these past months, the need for outdoor space has only grown and I suspect the desire for people to enjoy nature will continue even after the pandemic. Social spaces make for stronger communities. We should design and promote space for regular and permanent community activities, such as farmer's markets, community gardens, outdoor concerts, and public viewing of movies on screens.*

*I think activation and promotion of underutilized spaces is something really cost effective. I think in a lot of cases, people just aren't aware of all the green space they have access to and how it can be used. I think more attention should be paid to collaboration with groups of all sizes that program in public green spaces. Especially groups like Free Forest School and Tinkergarten that focus on outdoor engagement for young children. But also groups like Fit4Mom that provides outdoor fitness opportunities for parents with their children and Mr. Tony's which offers camps/activities that are outdoor based. I know NPS has done some outreach via their Children & Nature Network but I think more of this is critical to supplement some of the federal/governmental programming. Other priorities I'd like to highlight: certain amenities like toilets, sinks, fountains, etc. are critical for people to feel comfortable spending time outside. I also think we are entering an age where Wi-Fi access also needs to be made more broadly available in parks. Incorporating more performance space into parks and creating more garden space as part of our park structure. I think, as we move forward, more attention needs to be paid to maintenance issues. It seems like there have been several amazing projects that quickly deteriorate because necessary maintenance falls by the wayside.*

*I believe the criteria is appropriate. I also believe it is weighted fine.*

*Yes. Incorporating the police force to make people comply with the rules*

*I guess this is unrelated to DPR, but it is something related to cultural recreation which is that I think our local government needs to provide more support to live-music venues, especially those that provide space for performance of creative music of historical significance like jazz. The venues in this city are closing because of COVID and the musicians need opportunities to perform. I think maybe DPR could create some outdoor amphitheaters in parks for live music and other outdoor arts performances (for dance, theater, drama classes, etc.).*

*The money will go to the well-connected and friends of friends. Not sure why you bother to pretend there is a process..*

*There could be more accessibility on the park trails and green spaces with minimal environmental impact. This ice skating movement when roller skating is more sustainable and inclusive even two way lanes around green spaces. Surrounding counties have water parks. At one time years ago there was talk of putting one at Emery and another on the South side. It could be sustainable with fees.*

*I think this is complete gibberish.*

*Community support needs to be second on the list, with a much heavier weighting.*

*I am good with what I have read thus far.*

*This is not a strategic plan, this plan is catering to the wealthy parts of the city and does not equally represent the 7th ward or poverish / low income communities.*

*I am fine with the criteria but would like sustainability should be given as great a weight as health inequities/high rates of poverty.*

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*You have plenty of criteria. Do you have a limit on how many projects can be submitted?*

*Point systems are very tricky and may result in unintended bias. I recommend testing it extensively on a variety of projects and conditions. The issue of local matching funds is not clear -- does that mean you are expecting the local community to raise funds? This is not realistic in some of the neediest neighborhoods.*

*I think projects in areas of high health disparities should be given greater weight than 20 points as many of those areas lack access to fresh food, gyms, and hospitals. Having quality city funded programming could literally be the difference between life and death. You should also add points for areas of high violent crime as DPR facilities provide safe places for people to gather in areas where people may be afraid to leave their homes.*

*We provide comments on the highest priorities referenced above: SW DC Action Comments on Aspects of DC SCORP 2020 Plan Accessibility and Inclusion - HIGH priority 1) DC should establish a goal that residents and commuters in Washington are within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenspace, recreation area or community space 2) Make sure parks and public parks are developed where the benefits are needed the most (e.g. areas where there is less public tree canopy, areas to recreate and enjoy etc.) 3) Implement safe zones for families with children within parks that provide security screening in high risk areas. Only registered, weapon-less individuals with children able to enter. 4) All spaces should be developed to be widely accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities 5) Work with DC agencies to preserve and promote fishing areas along riverfront areas, including on leased public land. 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As DC is one of the most gentrified cities in the country, too many resources are allocated to neighborhoods that have had an influx in white residents with simultaneous displacement of non-white residents. A quick review of DC shows that many areas that fall outside of this category are less desirable, considered food deserts with a dearth of supermarket and fresh healthy food options, less reliable transportation, etc. Green spaces in these areas should be prioritized first and always to give residents a sense of belonging and community when most other resources have been diverted away from their neighborhoods.

The requirement that projects must all have matching funds in addition to the SCORP dollars, severely limits the areas where SCORP projects can be undertaken. While other evaluation criteria may give more priority to projects in historically underserved, and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the city, the requirement for matching funds is an insurmountable hurdle for many of those very neighborhoods.

The requirement that projects must have local matching funds in addition to SCORP dollars severely limits the areas where SCORP projects will be undertaken. While other evaluation criteria may give more priority to projects in historically underserved and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the city, the requirement for matching funds is an insurmountable hurdle for many of those very neighborhoods.

I feel that the Community Support section of the OPSP will be difficult to obtain (how many letters of support are you looking for in order to get the ten points?) if you are not an organization that has funding for outreach and education. For example, the Washington Area Frisbee Club (WAFC) wants to make ultimate a more diverse and inclusive sport; however, WAFC currently lacks the funding to increase awareness of the sport in underserved communities and would therefore have a difficult time drumming up interest/support.

"Areas of Inequity" is the highest weighted at 20 points, but community support should be weighted at least 15 -- if not 20. It doesn't make any sense to score a project highly if it's simply located, just as an example, in Deanwood if the sentiment of Deanwood residents are considered at least as heavily. The "uniqueness of asset" should be thrown out. Novelty is not an innate good. It's made for a press release, rarely because the residents and neighbors asked for that thing. "Time Since Last Investment" should include counts for maintenance as well as new capital or operating funds.

Make maintenance of grass and wetland parks under DPR make sense!

Make sure all DC Parks are protected as historic properties and held in perpetuity as parks in community land trusts. Every neighborhood should have its own wide open space for enjoying nature, growing food, etc., not just little benches and chairs like they have downtown in these ridiculous pop-up parks.

I think the community support element is not thoughtful and doesn't correspond with current planning best practices. An organization may have a good idea but not be fully connected to the type of institutions and organizations that provide letters. I have administered grants for HUD and found these "letters" to be unhelpful indicators of actual community support and engagement. I would prefer to see a robust community engagement plan. Additionally, the weighted score elements do not appear to correspond to all 8 key priorities. I would recommend reassessing. For example, where could they get points regarding interconnectedness?

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*More weight should be given to projects that are planned for areas with fewer outdoor recreational and green spaces, areas that have been under-served in the past. Racial equity should also be a factor.*

*I think the OPSP has mostly appropriately weighted criteria. I think the 5th item that scores based on "uniqueness" should also look at "innovation." Projects shouldn't just be different; they should also be forward-thinking.*

*The SCORP was easy to read and easy to follow. As stated earlier, I would recommend more examples for overall reader clarity. I also thought the layout was very organized.*

*Please convert RFK to a sports Complex. We need this in DC.*

*The format of pages 16 -21 is confusing and not reader-friendly. It looks like a legal document and I just skipped over it. I don't really expect other people are going to read all of that text about policies.*

*I just want to reiterate my plea to National Park Service to be a better neighbor - when NPS parks exist in the urban context and are bounded by sidewalks on either side, NPS must maintain the connectivity of the sidewalk network and must install and maintain sidewalks.*

*There has to be something done about the triangle parks and circles, particularly in the winter. Many have bus stops or sit in a path to one. You contract for grass cutting but no one shovels or salts. As a native Washingtonian I remember at the start of first sub zero temps DPW would put barrels at precarious areas and residents could lay sand at trouble spots or retrieve for their walkways. Perhaps some could be changed to small dog parks by subscription or volunteerism to clear the walkways. For years and years I would shovel a pathway and a standing place for my kids to and at the bus stop. Others benefit but I was one person.*

*The report needs to be focused on what people actually do or want to do in the parks.*

*Open the pools*

*No, I appreciate the opportunity to weight. I live in Ward 8 and I love the new look of the park and trail, continue improve of all will be great.*

*You want to know what systemic racism looks like? This plan is exactly that! This plan is applying the majority of its resources to higher income, wealthy communities while only applying minimal resources to lower income communities so DPR can say they are supporting those lower income areas. Wealthy communities have been unproportionally benefited for years. It is time they receive zero funding and apply "catch-up" funding to the underrepresented communities. This does not and will not happen because the people making decisions live in those wealthy communities, and they are not going to starve their own communities. This is called bias, discrimination and systemic racism.*

*You used monumental city 2x in the opening paragraph of the executive summary - once is probably sufficient.*

*You need to better define what local matching funds means. Public dollars? Private dollars?*

*Need more explanation on the purpose and intended use of the document beyond conferring eligibility for LWCF funds. The order and sequence of the document do not seem to make sense. The most important sections on gap analysis, priorities, and project selection are buried at the end. Most of the upfront information on trends and the review of plans from other states have not been synthesized into anything coherent or readable. Put it in appendices. FYI -- Maryland's SCORP process is quite good -- every county does a SCORP that is rolled-up into the state SCORP. Most of the charts are not readable at the current scale. There are typos -- e.g. gold course on page 8. I recommend providing an example of the Corps of Engineers Unit Day Value methodology (page 16). Define ecosystem services (page 18). Wetland acreage is missing from many sites (pages 22-23). Define Exurban, Suburban, Urban (page 27). I could not decipher the income chart on page 34. The food environment charts on page 38 and the physical activity charts on page 39 need explanation. Regarding livability, the document says DC "ranks 57" -- what does that mean (page 44)? Re the DPR survey, the document says 67 staff responded -- out of how many. Anytime a survey is mentioned the response rate and level of confidence metrics should be included -- many surveys are of no value. The language regarding existing plans on page 92 is repeated on page 94.*

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*Yes section "CP.30: Action PROS-3.2.A: Anacostia River Park Improvements" The need to improve the park is great. But there is a greater need to clean the river.*

*The requirement that projects must all have matching funds in addition to the SCORP dollars, severely limits the areas where SCORP projects can be undertaken. While other evaluation criteria may give more priority to projects in historically underserved, and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the city, the requirement for matching funds is an insurmountable hurdle for many of those very neighborhoods.*

*Specifically for SW but related to parks everywhere in DC: Consider equity in green space enjoyment. Parks on the S. Capitol side are not maintained the same to provide the kinds of amenities, seating, shade, and activities as Waterfront Park and the Duck Pond. This represents a clear hierarchy and priority for the maintenance of parks. This should not be the case and all residents should be able to enjoy a well-maintained and designed green space no matter where they live.*

*Of the 'Themes' in the report, the improvement and expansion of the tree canopy should be highly prioritized. The lac of maintained greenspace in Ward 8 in particular, is acute. (Ward 8 Woods Conservancy would be a valuable partner in this endeavour.)*

*Field usage prioritizing- should include outreach efforts to the local community as a factor, ideally would outweigh/replace the historic use priority factor. Maintenance grants - awarded to accredited organizations that perform maintenance work at county parks. Does DC provide maintenance grants to organizations who use their fields? If yes, then also use this as a factor in field priority. If not, then introduce this program in DC. Encourage local advertising of sport/event near/around the field that you are reserving. DC P&R should offer an annual good volunteer award highlighting a community volunteer who has done work to improve green spaces in DC. Also offer a good sport award by becoming a member of Mid-Atlantic Rec and Parks Sports Alliance (MARPSA). The GOOD SPORT Award goes to one coach and one player each of the scheduling areas. Start a program similar to Transit to Trails Act to ensure that all green spaces are truly accessible to the underprivileged community. Apply for transportation grants. Create as many new green spaces as possible (no matter how small) in the most dense neighborhoods. Make access to green spaces a public health matter: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/07/how-nature-deprived-neighborhoods-impact-health-people-of-color/> Start a Plant More Trees in the city or Plant-a-Tree Day initiative: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/11/02/how-planting-trees-in-cities-can-save-thousands-of-lives/>*

*Stop creating projects top-down, going to the community with fleshed out alternatives in pretty PDFs and presentation boards with glossy artist renderings. Go to the community from the beginning with blank pieces of paper, dot journals, and plan out from the beginning without spending any design contractor money. Get as many people, as many kinds of people, as possible into the room. Send landscape architects on staff, certified planners who understand stormwater management. Please, please stop spending all this staff time and contractor money and going to the community with what is obviously an already in motion plan, and asking for thanks*

*Pope Branch Park at 2900 M Place, SE and corner of 2900 block Fairlawn Ave, SE was enhanced in 2016 by DOEE. Maintenance of grassy areas are poorly maintained. Neighbors are complaining of high grass, snakes and vermin living in the western most portion of the park from Minnesota Ave to the culvert. We want a comprehensive maintenance plan to substantiate the grounds and to ease the burden of our community to be blighted.*

*The City needs, and has the opportunity, to have a major City park in the City center - that being a future park above and below ground at the McMillan Filtration Site. Nothing less than that property's preservation above and below ground and its adaptation into a major park would allow for a complete City Park and Recreation plan. That was the original intent of the property, and the intent of the USG when sold to the City.*

*The mayor needs to halt any construction of new buildings if she is serious about acquiring land for use as Green Space and Parks (lol). There is no way this mayor is going to allow for more green space to remain Green Space for long. She want to build rec centers and large developments because that's what her developer friends want her to do.*

*I think this needs to be focused on creating more interactive spaces and active recreation experiences.*

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*Management of public park space by commercial entities or business improvement districts should be discouraged. There isn't effective oversight of BIDs who assume ownership of public space. In addition, BID management of these spaces is a threat to health and equity because they tend to focus on parks in communities that are wealthier and whiter. If there is to be true equity in DC, this practice needs to be curtailed in favor of public management of parks and recreational areas.*

*I think that DPR should take a hard look at how life played out during the pandemic. The city ended up restricting access to significant amounts of green space that should've remained open as part of necessary mental health tool. It seems like this could've been avoided if people were better aware of green space near them or felt some of the outdoor options closer to their homes was more inviting, instead of feeling compelled to congregate at a few extremely popular sites. I also think that there needs to be more attention paid to outdoor space as educational space, particularly in light of COVID 19. It would've been wonderful if there were more appropriate outdoor spaces that could double as classrooms as we search for alternatives to distance learning.*