

In the second workshop, participants were asked to review two (2) concept plans and vote on features they would most like to see implemented at Jordan's Point Park. Participants were also given the opportunity to comment on precedent photos and add additional comments or thoughts.

Following this workshop, participants agreed that additional responses would be necessary to gain a more complete picture of the community's priorities and goals for Jordan's Point Park. The voting exercise and opportunity to comment was extended to a wider audience via an online survey and through classroom participation at the schools.

The following is a summary of these responses.

PLAYGROUND

The nature playground emerged as the most important priority shared among respondents. Across demographics and age, the playground appeals to most residents including those with grandchildren, to families and school-aged children. Respondents support adding a context-sensitive playground such as a nature playground or a historically-themed nature playground that will best blend with the natural setting of the park.

RESTROOMS

Painting a mural on the exterior walls of the restroom is a very popular priority among online and student groups, but ranked among the lowest priorities for workshop respondents. There seemed to be a variable response to the photomodel used to show an example of a mural on the restroom, with some groups responding negatively to the sample mural itself. However, other groups saw the mural idea as an opportunity to incorporate the work of local artists onto this space and to use it to highlight something unique to Jordan's Point park, such as its ecological diversity. Cladding the restroom was less popular among respondents. In addition to the exterior of the restroom, many comments stressed the need to improve the interior. Maintenance and cleanliness are the two biggest concerns. Another idea is to convert restrooms to gender-neutral facilities responding to changing social politics.

RIVER ACCESS

Jordan's Point is located along the Maury River, which distinguishes the park among others in Lexington. Accessing the river is one of the most important priorities for the community and for this project, together with stabilizing the shoreline to preserve access. The community would like to see improved access points for swimming, fishing and recreational boating. Many ranked the area near the overlook as an optimal space for accessing the river and building a larger, sandy beach for swimming and recreation. Areas should be clearly defined to avoid potentially dangerous conflicts such as fishing hooks in swimming areas. Many are in support of providing fishing docks or platforms to designate fishing areas. Visual access for picnicking and seating areas is also a priority.

Many students would like to see tubing or kayak rentals introduced to the park. However, tubing rentals were not generally supported by many of the workshop group respondents who favor a more natural, serene setting. Perhaps, the park could facilitate pop-up kiosks that operate only on weekends throughout the summer, or for special events to help balance the priorities of all park users. Tubing would be a great recreational asset for the City and its residents.

ATHLETICS

The existing athletic field needs improvement. The grass is uneven and poses tripping hazards to players. Drainage is very poor, leading to muddy and wet areas on the field. No shade or sitting areas are included. Many groups use the field and would benefit from improving the grading, drainage and adding spectator and player seating and shade.

Aside from the existing field, many residents would like to see a basketball court added to the plan. This was one of the most popular new items across all responses. Other ideas are to add a sand volleyball court, tennis, baseball or football.

Sports and play are among the highest priorities reported by student and younger age groups in attracting them to visit Jordan's Point. Other groups, however, enjoy more passive activities, such as historical interpretation, observing the park's nature and wildlife habitats, and the overall tranquility and quiet of the park. Balancing the contrasting needs of park users will be a goal for this project. We hope to attract younger park visitors, while maintaining the natural features enjoyed by others.

TRAILS

Access to and between the Chessie and Wood's Creek Trails is a high priority among community members. Access to the Chessie remains difficult and potentially dangerous. The pedestrian bridge over Wood's Creek is a favored solution among many respondents. This reduces conflicts between pedestrians and cars along the narrow bridge, which is also being used as a back entrance for VMI. Signage will be necessary to direct trail users to the pedestrian bridge. Student and online groups did not comment on or prioritize regional trail access.

In addition to regional trails, many would like to see a loop trail included within the park. Some would like exercise stations and seating provided along the trails. Pavement of some trails should be considered to provide ADA access.

ENTRANCE

Entrance to the park should be improved. Community members commented that the park lacks a sense of arrival. The museum was offered as a potential location point for the park entrance.

PARKING AND NEW ROAD ALIGNMENTS

Parking at Jordan's Point is somewhat controversial among park users. For most, parking and roads are necessary to access the park, but should not take away space for higher priority facilities, nor detract from the park's beauty and natural habitats. Cars and people should not be in conflict within the park. The streamlined and new roadway alignments offer a solution to reduce the impact of cars in the park. Streamlining the road is a less expensive, simpler solution, while a full roadway re-route could be costly. While respondents didn't comment much on the roadway solutions, we recommend at least streamlining the existing road to create more space for park activities.

Expanded parking was not popular among most respondents, however, it is mostly agreed some location should be selected to accommodate additional parking. One potential solution is to fill in the Upper Tail Race for parking. This centralized parking concept would best serve athletic events and the kayak/ boat launch. Additional park space gained could be used for adding new basketball or volleyball courts. Another potential location for parking is to expand the lot near the restrooms. This option is less convenient for accessing the athletic field and the boat launch, but would centralize parking to a single location. Finally, a third option may include adding a semi-paved, multiuse space near the athletic field offering a place for overflow parking and a level space for performance events to occur..

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION AND INTERPRETATION

There is a strong movement among some community members to preserve, restore and interpret the history at Jordan's Point Park. The site has a rich history from its former use as a mill production facility to its location of battle during the civil war. Historic relics are deteriorating with the removal of the dam and its effect on the mill race. Some believe the highest priority of this project should be to preserve the park's history.

Interpretive signage and refurbishing historic walls, however, ranked lowest in priority among student groups. There was some support for maintaining historic education. Previous class trips to the park among respondents included activities at the batteau. These respondents hoped the batteau would be preserved for future educational opportunities. Also, others indicated a priority to expand the museum for educational purposes and to incorporate history into the design of the park's playground.

OTHER IDEAS

Promenade: The river walk promenade is a feature many would like to see implemented at Jordan's Point. The promenade would offer river views, signage for interpretation, river view access for ADA visitors, access to the river shore and connections to and between park facilities or plazas.

Point Plaza: Overall, there was very little feedback on the point plaza. Some comments favored this as an access point and liked the ramps that allow ADA accessibility for all to enjoy. Some comments included adding a theater near this location for public events with river views. At a distance from the point, many included ideas for creating butterfly gardens with seating areas, birdhouses, more trees and picnicking sites. Most responses prefer this area to remain more natural and less programmed.

Sign Plaza: Overall, many liked the idea of a plaza, but it may not be necessary to include signage in the plaza or purpose the plaza for signage.

Stage/Amphitheater: There was a lot of support for a theater in this plan. Location of the theater was varied. Relevant amenities could include a stage, a built-in/natural ABC barrier and space for food trucks. Events could draw many visitors to the park and highlight the significance of Jordan's Point within the community, while generating significant rental revenue for the City. Perhaps a less permanent structure or tent area could be designated for events and removed when not in use to better balance the needs of those not wanting additional facilities within the park.

Gazebo: The community supported adding a gazebo with cleared views in the area near the batteau shelter. The gazebo could be an asset within the park for various uses.

LESS IMPORTANT FACILITIES:

Overall, the community rated the following as lower priority items: Tail race access, paved parking areas, streamlining the roadway, and adding overflow parking areas.

Mixed responses:

Trail and interpretive signage and refurbishing historic walls were among the lowest priorities rated by student and online groups, while workshop and stakeholder respondents ranked them moderate to high priority. Streamlining the roadway ranked very low among respondents, but re-routing the roadway was popular among some. The dog walk loop path is difficult to rank. It was included with an expanded parking area and it is unclear if responses were negative towards the dog walk or the expanded parking area.

CHARTS AND DRAWINGS

The following map is a compilation of feedback from the student surveys and student workshops. Many students provided their feedback on the concept maps circling features they like and also adding notes about other features they would like to see and where.

JORDAN'S POINT PARK MASTER PLAN – Summary of Community Feedback
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Jordan's Point Park, Lexington VA Alt. Concept Part 2
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