



Watkins Regional Park Master Park Development Plan



One of 4 Regional Parks in the County

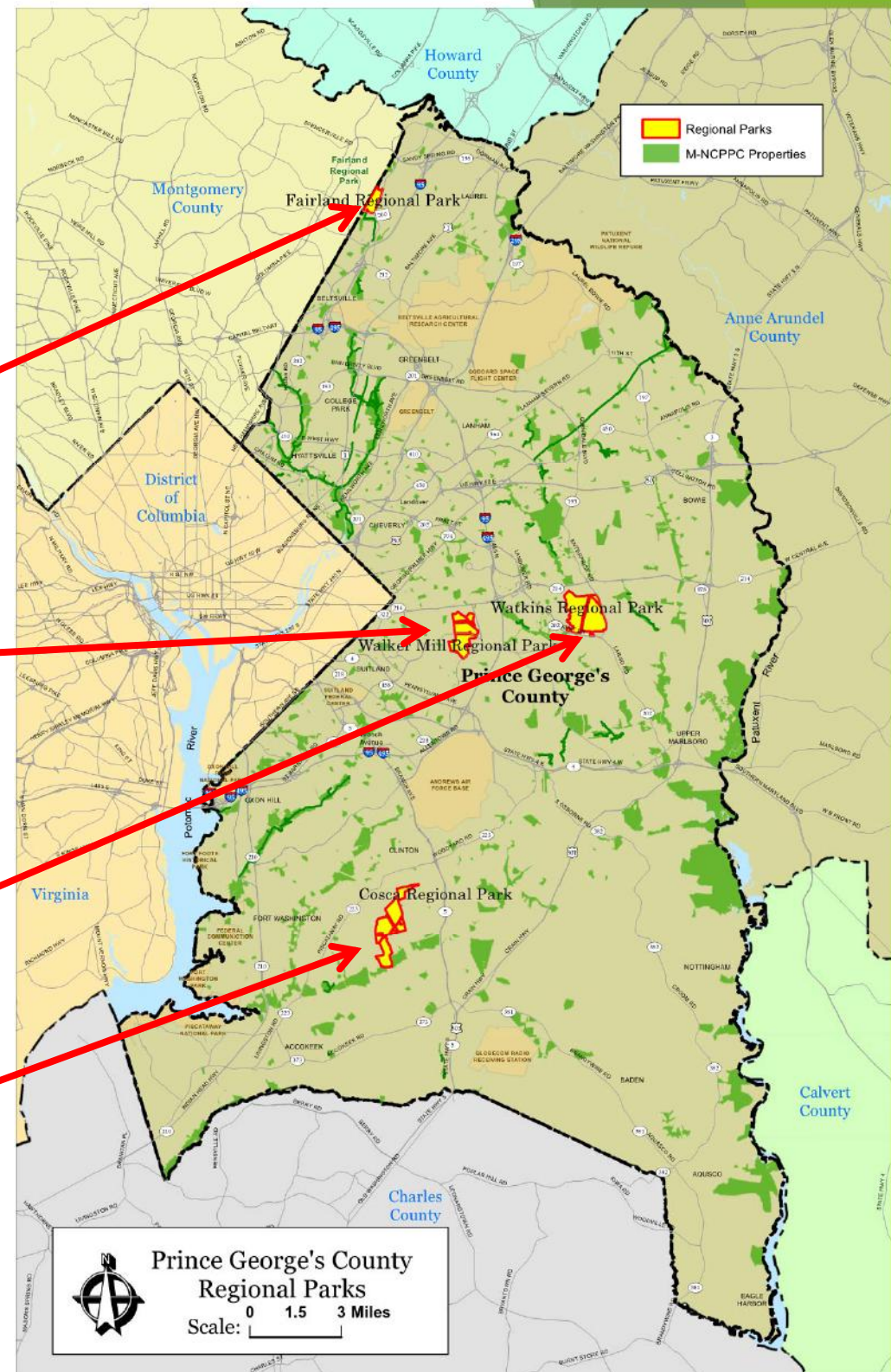
Regional Parks offer unique experiences to County residents while providing neighborhood park experiences to adjacent communities

Fairland Regional Park
Laurel

Walker Mill Regional Park
District Heights

Watkins Regional Park
Upper Marlboro

Cosca Regional Park
Clinton

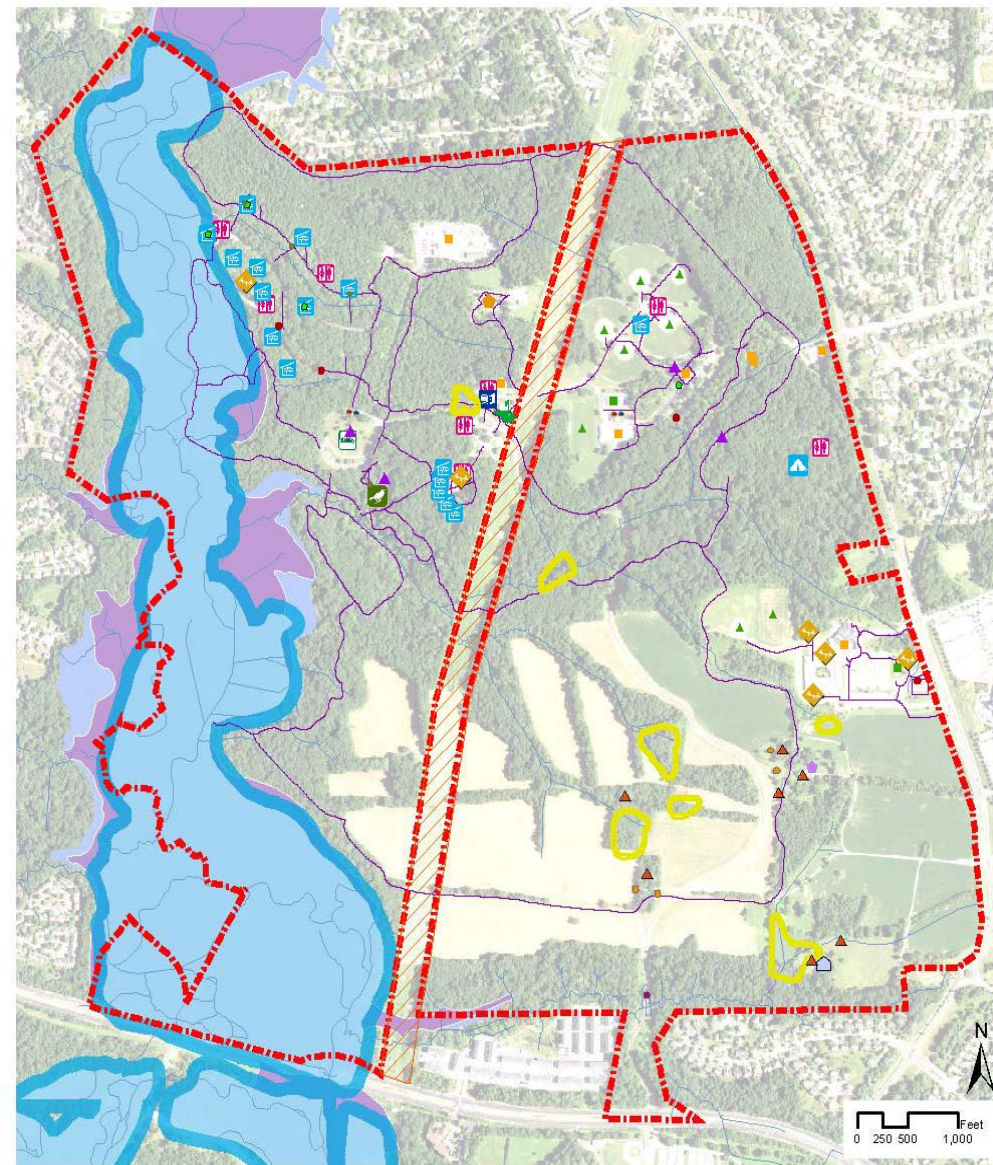


- 839 acres in size
- Busiest park in the system
 - *300,000 vehicles annually*
 - *1,000,000 visitors annually*
- Acquisition 1964-1996
- Named after Robert M. Watkins, former Chairman of M-NCPPC



Park Features

- Watkins Nature Center
- Old Maryland Farm
- 4 Basketball, Half Courts
- 1 Basketball, full Court at L/K/P
- 34 Camping sites
- Football/Soccer Combination Field, Lighted
- 1 multi-purpose field at L/K/P
- 5 Lighted Softball/Baseball Fields; 1 at L/K/P
- 5 Indoor Tennis Court
- 4 Lighted Outdoor Tennis Court; 1 at L/K/P
- Miniature Train
- 18 hole Mini Golf Course
- Antique Carousel
- Natural Surface Trail Network
- Paved Walking Loop and Exercise System
- 4 Picnic Areas and 16 Picnic Shelters
- 2 Playgrounds/4 Playgrounds at L/K/P
- 8 Restrooms and 2 porta-potty sites
- Snack Bar Refreshment Depot
- Largo/Kettering/Perrywood Community Center
- Chelsea Historic Site
- 11 Structures in the south (barns, outbuildings)
- CAM and CAO



Legend			
Structure	Train Station (LKLA)	Basketball Courts (LKLA)	PEPCO use restriction (LKLA)
Chelsea I (LKLA)	Chelsea Historic Site	Miniature Golf Park (LKLA)	Park Boundary (LKLA)
Pedestrian Bridge (LKLA)	Covered Bridge	Athletic Fields	Park Trail (Prince George's County Open Data)
Type	Campground	Playgrounds (LKLA)	Hydro (ESA Fieldwork)
Baseball (Little League) (LKLA)	Old Maryland Farm	Memorial Site	Wetland of Special State Concern (Prince George's County Open Data)
Multi-purpose Field (LKLA)	Barn	The Green	Wetland of Special State Concern 100 foot Buffer (LKLA)
Playground (LKLA)	Nature Center	Picnic Shelters	100-year Flood (FIRM 1996)
Porta-Pottie (LKLA)	Outdoor Tennis Court		500-year Flood (FIRM 1996)
ADA	Horseshoe Pit Walls (LKLA)		
Regular	Tennis Bubble/Office (LKLA)		
Nontidal Wetlands (ESA Fieldwork)			

Why plan now?

Plans have been done in the past...

Demographics are changing.

Increasing population in the Central Region

Population is aging and the size of a yard diminishing

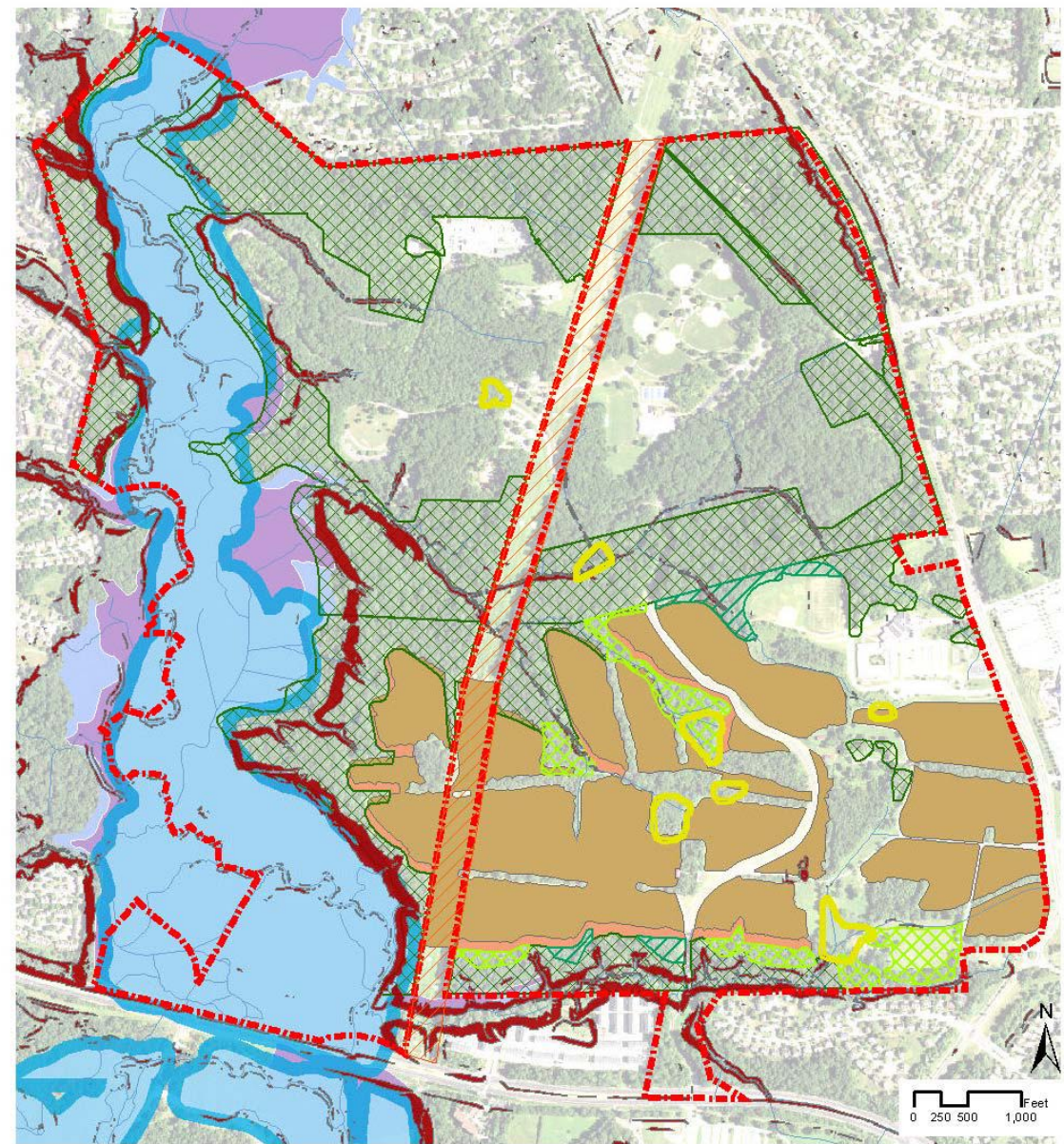
Recreation interests are changing.

New activities, changing demographics

**Balance natural resources
and farmland with
recreation and active uses.**

Challenges

- Development Restrictions
 - Western Branch – a wetland of Special State Concern
 - Rare and Endangered Species throughout the north
 - Steep Slopes greater than 25%
 - TCP2 sites (woodland/forest land protection)
- Congestion
- Aging Facilities
- Needed Infrastructure
- Growing Demand for recreational and leisure activities



Themes of Key Recommendations

- Meet Increasing Demand (Current and Future)
- Celebrate the Strengths of the Park and Expand its Regional Reach
- Protect the Natural and Historic Elements
- Make the Park a Life Learning Lab
- Develop a Tournament Sports Facility
- Integrate Largo / Kettering / Perrywood Community Center
- Improve Walking and Biking Connections
- Continue to accommodate Big Events and Everyday Visits

THE PLAN WILL:

- ▶ Illustrate the vision for future growth and management of the park
- ▶ Direct future renovation, development, and investment of physical improvements
- ▶ Outline a coordinated approach for park enhancements, choreographed to **take place over the next 20-25 years** in an orderly and fiscally responsible manner

Framework Plans

- **Formula 2040** (2013)
 - Connectivity
 - Health & Wellness
 - Economic Development
- **Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan** (2012)
- **Needs Assessment and 2040 Vision & Framework** (2010)



Master Plan Guiding Principles

- Create a Sense of Place A compelling mix of destinations will enhance the comfort, ambiance, and choice of activities at Watkins Regional Park. Several new features and experiences will entice and engage all park visitors
- Education and Environmental Learning Nature and landscapes will be more central to the visitor experience. Changes will allow visitors to connect with nature and agriculture
- Infrastructure Expansion Maintain and expand the capacity of the park to accommodate larger numbers of visitors as the park continues to grow as a regional destination and attracts new diverse audiences
- Family Fun Activities, spaces, and features that support family togetherness and fun for a whole day in the park -- rain, shine or heat of summer.
- Personal Health and Fitness Expansion of the existing trail network for fitness and leisure trail users. Health programming will be available at hours desired by park visitors
- Habitat and Wildlife Educate, celebrate, capitalize, and support the rediscovery of the park's natural resources through special preservation areas in combination with enhanced active recreation opportunities.

Vision Statement

Watkins Regional Park will continue to nurture and promote its signature outdoor experiences to attract people from far and wide, further making the park a key contributor to Prince George's County's culture and economy. The park's exceptional natural resources will continue to be protected from development, while being utilized to provide greater opportunities for environmental discovery and understanding. The park's historic agricultural and cultural landscapes will become a new centerpiece for education and innovation, and better connections will make these experiences more accessible. New leisure activities and refreshed existing activities will fully embrace an accessible and multi-dimensional leisure environment. Integrating play, recreation and exploration will foster community ties and learning. Watkins Regional Park will remain a jewel in the Department of Parks and Recreation system and a great outdoor place within Prince George's County.

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Watkins Regional Park

Master Park Development Plan



EXISTING USES

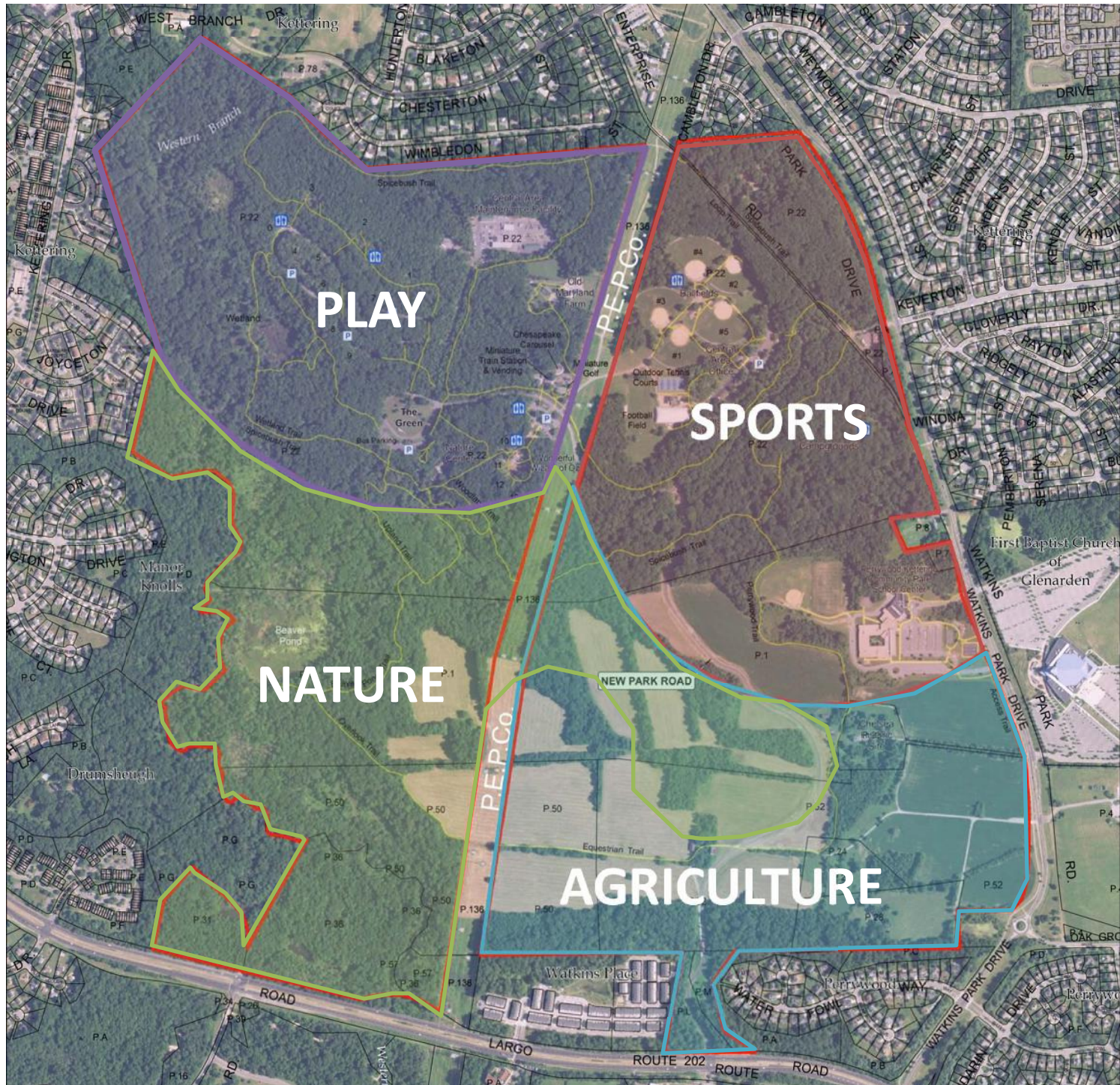
Northern Section

- Softball / Baseball / Football Fields
- Tennis / Basketball Courts
- Picnic Shelters
- Summer Ops - Carousel, Train, Mini Golf, Wiz of Oz
- Playgrounds
- Camping
- CAO and CAM
- Trails

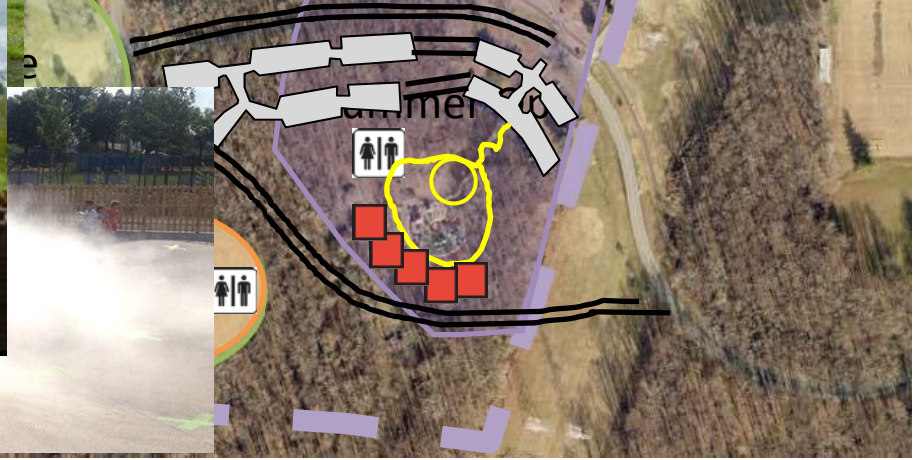
Southern Section

- Largo/Kettering/Perrywood CC
- Chelsea Historic Manor / Chelsea 1
- Leased Farmland
- Trails

Quadrants: Sports, Play, Nature, Agriculture,





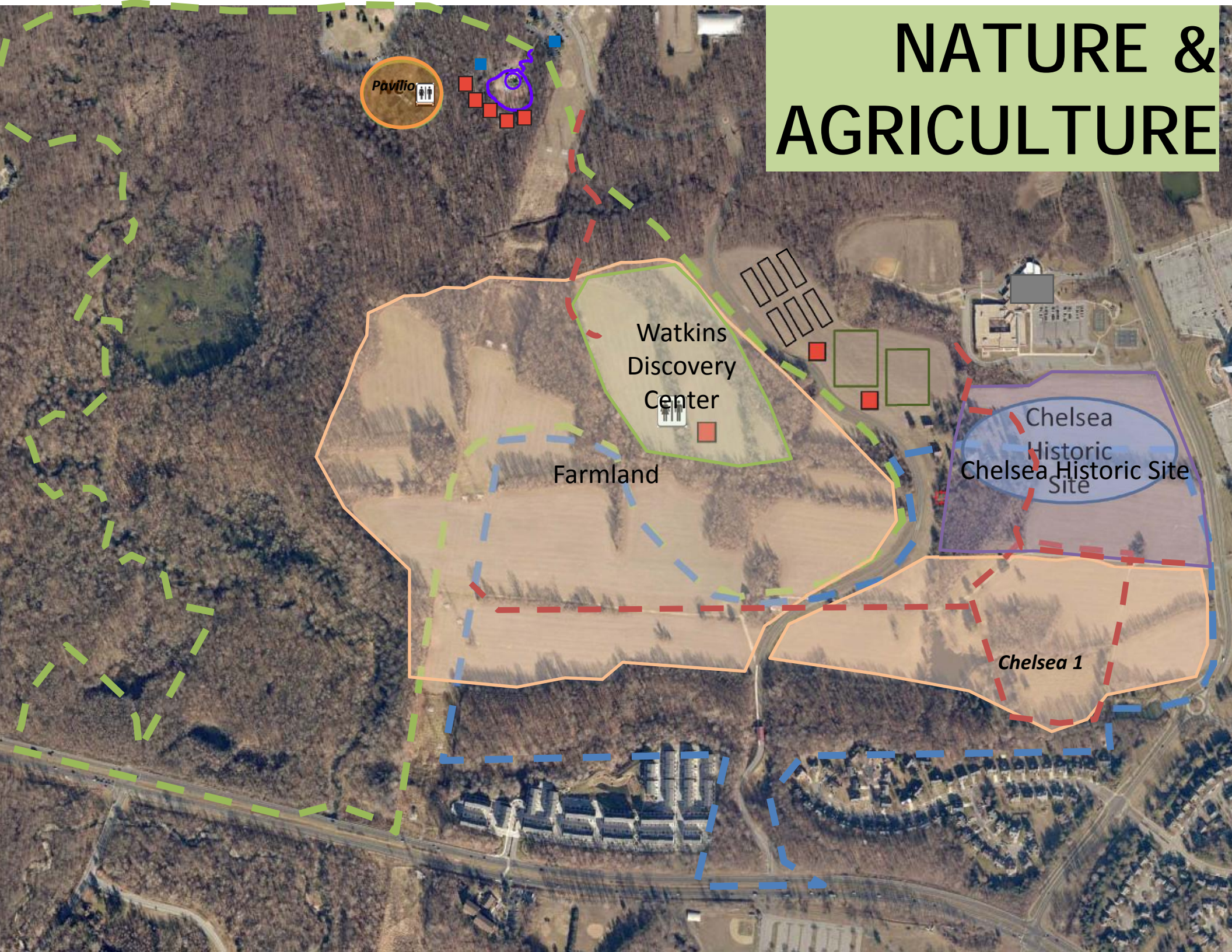


Pavilion Vision

- Rental / Events Facility with a View over the Fields
 - Popup Restaurants
 - Weddings
 - Executive Retreats



NATURE & AGRICULTURE



Watkins Discovery Center Vision



Knoch Knolls Nature Center



Aldo Leopold Legacy Center

Watkins Discovery Center Vision



Old Maryland Farm Vision

- Expanded Facilities
- Expanded Pasture
- Better Education, Training, and Meeting Facilities
- Expanded Farming, Gardening Show and Shared Spaces
- Farm Animals and Programs
- Repurpose Barns



Implementation:

Phase 1: Improving the Core

Focused on reinvesting and improving the developed portions of the park by targeting issues related to congestion and aging infrastructure.

Phase 2: The Big Move

Focused on transforming the southern portion of the park. The southern portion of the park will become a showcase of agrarian uses, retelling the history and complex stories of Prince George's County's agrarian culture.

Phase 3: Knitting it All Together

Completes the plan by knitting the northern and southern portions of the park together.

IMPROVING THE CORE - ACHIEVING BETTER CONNECTIVITY, SAFETY, AND FUNCTION

Enhance Infrastructure - Add parking, upgrade water system, stabilize existing features

PHASE 1 DRAFT

Phase 1A	Location	Action	Order of Cost Magnitude	Why?
Western Branch Picnic Area				
Features	Close and remove 3 picnic shelters	Picnic Shelters Number 4 (150 permitted capacity), Number 5 (100 permitted capacity), and Number 6 (100 permitted capacity) - all located inside the drive.	\$	Reduce and better distribute use demand for picnic shelters throughout entire park, reduce impact on facilities and ground near playground
	Relocate basketball half-court and existing picnic shelter and existing picnic shelter used for basketball in parking lot near Picnic Shelters #4 and 5	Relocate two half-court basketball courts to center of Western Branch Picnic Loop (side of removed picnic shelters) and relocate parking spaces used for basketball in parking lot near Picnic Shelters #4 and 5	\$	Consolidate activity offerings in center loop at Western Branch Picnic Area to make clear that facilities are for all park users, and not reservable in conjunction with a single shelter reservation
	New open course, parkour course or similar outdoor activity	Add rope, parkour or other climbing type course or similar activity between Nature Center and Western Branch Picnic Area	\$	Provide outdoor activity to attract teens and teens
Restrooms	Replace restroom #6	Replace existing Restroom #6 (on septic) with ADA accessible compost toilet	\$	This is the one remaining public restroom still using a septic system in the park. Replace with a more environmentally friendly system and make facility ADA accessible
Parking	Retain existing parking	Retain approximately 446 parking spaces	\$	
Chesapeake Children's Park				
Features	Renovate mini-golf course	Renovate existing 18-hole course	\$	Upgrade is needed for player interest and to make facility ADA accessible
	Add bike share/stalls	Add individual picnic tables and pads throughout park for family use - do not cluster more than three in one spot to avoid informal "group" reservation	\$	Increase non-motorized mobility in the park
Restrooms	Close and remove Restroom #4	Close and remove Restroom #4 at end of Wizard of Oz playground, reuse space for parking separation (Closure of Restroom #4 requires keeping Restrooms #6 3 and 5 open year round)	\$	The park has two informal picnic areas near the CAO and a third used by groups near the train. There are no other accommodations for casual picnicking by families or individuals. Picnic shelters are permitted and heavily occupied by groups, individual tables, in small groups of 1-3, will provide opportunities for individual and family use on an informal, spontaneous approach
	Add additional parking spaces to existing lot	Develop 60 - 100 parking spaces near Wizard of Oz playground	\$	Facility is in poor shape and is close to two other restrooms that are each ADA accessible - Restrooms Number 3 and 5. Restroom 3 is waterized and should be open year round. There is a severe shortage of formal parking spaces in the core of the park
Northern Athletic Complex and CAO				
Features	Replace Tennis Bubble	Replace tennis bubble with similar with similarly sized permanent structure	\$\$\$\$	Maintain current size due to infrastructure restrictions - water pressure restriction on increasing size, use flooring to allow for multi-purpose use of the facility
	Add family picnic areas	Add individual picnic tables and pads throughout park for family use - do not cluster more than three in one spot to avoid informal "group" reservation	\$	Picnic shelters are permitted and heavily occupied by groups, individual tables, in small groups of 1-3, will provide opportunities for individual and family use on an informal, spontaneous approach
Coville's Picnic Area				
Features	Close Campground	Close Campground completely	\$	Campgrounds receive very little use, other sites provide better camping opportunities nearby
	Add new picnic shelters #4, 5, 6, 7	Add 3 large capacity - 150 capacity - picnic shelters at former campground site	\$	Extend capacity throughout park, better distribute demand across park. Add Revenue Stream with Picnic Shelter Rentals
Restrooms	Renovate restroom #1	Retain restroom #1, replace shower stalls with family changing area and additional toilet stalls	\$	Create secondary "green" or wooded glade in former campground area to support play from views of picnic shelters
	Add parking for picnic shelters	Develop 150 parking spaces along existing drive or on former camp sites to serve as parking facilities for 3 new shelters	\$	
Park Infrastructure				
Features	Add family picnic areas	Add individual picnic tables and pads throughout park for family use - do not cluster more than three in one spot to avoid informal "group" reservation	\$	Picnic shelters are permitted and heavily occupied by groups, individual tables, in small groups of 1-3, will provide opportunities for individual and family use on an informal, spontaneous approach
	Add Tree Banks	Establish tree banks in cleared screening areas as screening areas for mitigation planting	\$	Incorporate for necessary screening and buffering uses within the park
Restrooms	Upgrade park utilities/water system	Current system is very low on water pressure and likely leaks throughout, evaluate whether repair or full replacement is warranted to address need for additional service and water pressure	\$\$\$\$	
	Expand Festival of Lights driving loop and display to the southern portion of the park	Incorporate the southern portion of the park in the Festival of Lights display	\$	
Restrooms	Extend park utility electrical service to the south	Extend electrical service to southern portion of park, in particular to provide service along new entryway for use with Festival of Lights expansion	\$	
	Southern Portion of the Park			
Features	Incorporate trails on existing farm roads and add links to existing system	Re-purpose the existing gravel drives in the southern portion of the park for walking and biking and connect to adjacent neighborhoods per the Trail Master Plan	\$	Create a slow stroll learning/looking sequence of paths and trails woven through the farmlands in the southern portion of the park - treat some trails more formally and others informally to appeal to all kinds of bikers and bikers
	Add Wayfinding System	Add Wayfinding to southern portion of the park	\$	
Chelsea Historic Site				
Features	Establish Farm Museum in repurposed barns associated with Chelsea, stabilize outbuildings near Chelsea Historic Site	Move antique farm equipment to Watkins from Biltmore storage barn for display and use on site, re-purpose, stabilize and renovate tobacco barn and livestock barn near Chelsea for use as storage and display of antique farm equipment moved to site	\$	Support future home of CMF, use for antique farm equipment storage
	Add parking	Provide 15-25 parking spaces (consider gravel or permeable pavers) near outbuildings for access to farm equipment and site	\$	
Southern Athletic Complex				
Features	Add bike facility, skate park, or similar outdoor activity	Add pump track, skate park or similar west of Large/aftering/Personhood Community Center	\$	
	Add temporary parking	Provide 5-10 parking spaces with access from park drive (consider gravel or permeable pavers) at site of future sports field parking area for use by visitors to pump track, dog off or other recreational activities	\$	
Old Maryland Farm				
Features	Establish pasture associated with relocation of CMF	Develop new, extended pasture area in the southern portion of the park in support of CMF, ensure viability of farm from Watkins Park Drive, expand pasture along Watkins Park Drive road frontage	\$	
	Relocate approximately 100 acres for active agricultural farming activities	Preserve cultural landscape and view of Chelsea Historic Manor from Watkins Park Drive and surrounding landscape (fields are not within parcel subject to protections from Environmental Historic Setting)	\$	Design and Engineering for relocation of CMF facility
Restrooms	Add beehives, gardens at future CMF site	Use agricultural fields for demonstrations, add farm gardens and bee hives, develop pasture fencing	\$	
	Re-purpose Chelsea I	Evaluate Chelsea I for reuse as on-site residence for farm manager, (perhaps a recent sustainable Ag graduate) or demolition	\$	Design and Engineering Phase 1A
Phase 1B				
Western Branch Picnic Area				
Features	Add water features to existing playground	Add splash pad or mistler to playground within picnic loop, at a scale not intended to attract additional users solely for the water feature	\$	
	Restrooms	Renovate/replace restroom #6	\$	
Chesapeake Children's Park				
Features	Add water features to existing playground	Add splash pad or mistler to Wizard of Oz Playground, at a scale not intended to attract additional users solely for the water feature	\$	Design and Engineering in Phase 1A
	Restrooms	Upgrade softball fields to adult softball league tournament standards	\$	Design and Engineering in Phase 1A, 100 foot field depth/facility
Restrooms		Add concession stand	Add concession stand	\$
	Restrooms	Replace restroom #2	Replace Restroom #2 with new ADA accessible restroom facility	\$
Restrooms		Add parking	Extend existing parking lot to the west in front of Tennis Bubble approximately 60-100 spaces	\$
	Coville's Picnic Area			
Parking	Add overflow parking for Northern Athletic Complex	Develop up to 150 parking spaces along existing driveway in former campground to serve as overflow parking for the Athletic Complex	\$	
Park Infrastructure				
Features	Provide new, nonpublic CAM vehicle access	Access to CAM from Watkins Park Drive (northern end), separate from public drive	\$\$\$\$	Design and Engineering in Phase 1A
	Expand sewer, water and electric system to serve future needs in southern portion of park	Expand sewer, water and electric system to serve future needs in southern portion of park	\$\$\$\$	
Old Maryland Farm				
Features	Begin relocation and expansion of Old Maryland Farm activities in the southern portion of the park	Begin the relocation and expansion of the CMF from the north to the south. Locate expansion of the CMF full facilities complex west of southern entry drive, away from the school and Watkins Park Drive. CMF to be located adjacent to future location for the Watkins Discovery Center (formerly WHC) to keep activities on same side of park drive. Build CMF complex (barns, shelters, exhibit areas, multi-purpose room, office and parking space west of South Entry Drive for CMF use)	\$\$\$\$	
	Add picnic shelter #17	Add new group rental picnic shelter - 150 capacity - to serve CMF	\$	
Restrooms	Add restroom #10	Restroom can be free-standing or a part of building in the CMF complex	\$	
	Add parking	Add new parking spaces (50 spaces, gravel) for CMF use and 30 more for picnic shelter - 65-100 spaces total, circulation to be configured for bus drop-off and pick-up/parade	\$	

KEY: \$ under \$250,000; \$\$ between \$250,000-\$500,000; \$\$\$ between \$500,000-\$1,000,000; \$\$\$\$ over \$1,000,000

Next Steps:

December 12

- Final Stakeholder Meeting
- Release Draft Document for Community Review

January 2019

- Planning Board Presentation
- Releases Final Document

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