

City of Manassas

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Needs

Appendix B. Public Engagement Summary



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Appendix B – Public Engagement Summary

Engagement Sessions Introduction

Public engagement sessions were organized by the consultants in conjunction with City of Manassas staff. They were held at various locations throughout the City. One session, geared toward teens, was held at Osbourn High School and the public report out was held in City Hall. In an effort to specifically engage the City's Hispanic population, an additional meeting was scheduled and held at the Portuguese Community Center. The sessions were held at a variety of times in an effort to solicit as much participation as possible. Participants were asked at each meeting to sign in with their name and email address.

This Public Engagement Summary is a synopsis of issues that were identified during nine (9) meetings with the public, staff, and teens. There were a total of 68 individuals that participated to give their input.

Questions were developed by GreenPlay with assistance from City of Manassas staff. The input listed below is a summary of comments made in focus group meetings. Participants in the focus groups expressed general agreement with this input.

Public Engagement Meeting Schedule:

Main Public Meetings

- Friday, November 13, 2015 @ 9:00 AM – Boys and Girls Club
- Friday, November 13, 2015 @ 6:30 PM – City Tavern
- Saturday, November 14, 2015 @ 10:00 AM – Manassas Museum
- Saturday, November 14, 2015 @ 2:00 PM – City Hall
- Tuesday, March 29, 2016 @ 7:00 PM – Portuguese Community Center

Stakeholder Meetings

- Teens – Thursday, November 12, 2015 @ 3:00 PM – Osbourn High School
- Seniors – Friday, November 13, 2015 @ 11:00 AM – Manassas Senior Center

County Employees Meetings

- Community Development Staff, Local Jurisdictions – Thursday, November 12, 2015 @ 1:30 PM – City Hall
- Public Works Staff – Friday, November 13, 2015 @ 7:00 AM – Public Works

Meeting Attendance

- November 12, 1:30 PM – City Hall: 9
- November 12, 3:00 PM – Osbourn High School: 8
- November 13, 7:00 AM – Public Works: 12
- November 13, 9:00 AM – Boys and Girls Club: 12
- November 13, 11:00 AM – Manassas Senior Center: 11
- November 13, 6:30 PM – City Tavern: 13
- November 14, 10:00 AM – Manassas Museum: 6
- November 14, 2:00 PM – City Hall: 6
- March 29, 7:00 PM – Portuguese Community Center: 8

Total Public Attendance: 47

Total Staff Attendance: 21

Engagement Topics

The same set of 17 questions were asked at each public engagement meeting to facilitate discussion and get a sense of community needs, opinions, ideas, and desires. The questions were as follows:

- 1) How long have you been a resident of Manassas?
 <5 years
 5-9 years
 10-19 years
 20+ years
 Not a resident but use programs/facilities
- 2) What are the strengths of the City that should be continued over the next several years?
- 3) Conversely, what are the major weaknesses that need to be addressed through the Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan?
- 4) What additional programs or activities do you feel the City should offer that are currently not available?
- 5) How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the existing park, recreation, and cultural facilities provided by the City? Why?
 5 Excellent
 4 Very Good
 3 Good
 2 Fair
 1 Poor
- 6) How would you rate the overall level of maintenance at the facilities owned or operated by the City? Please identify the location and specifics of any maintenance concerns.
 5 Excellent
 4 Very Good
 3 Good
 2 Fair
 1 Poor
- 7) What improvements are needed at existing facilities? Where are these improvements needed?
- 8) Are there any portions of the community that are underserved? Please explain (i.e., where and what type of amenities are needed, what market segment needs more attention, etc.).
- 9) What additional park, recreation, and cultural facilities would you like to see the community provide?
- 10) Are there any facilities and/or programs currently available that should be eliminated? If so, which ones and why?
- 11) How would you rate the quality of customer service provided by the Community Development staff? Please elaborate.

- _____ 5 Excellent
- _____ 4 Very Good
- _____ 3 Good
- _____ 2 Fair
- _____ 1 Poor

12) How effective is the Department in seeking feedback from the community and users on improving its performance?

- _____ 5 Excellent
- _____ 4 Very Good
- _____ 3 Good
- _____ 2 Fair
- _____ 1 Poor

13) The City’s programs and facilities are currently funded through a combination of revenue sources, including General Fund, User Fees, Impact Fees, and Partnerships. Do you think this is an appropriate way to fund the department?

- _____ Yes
- _____ No
- _____ Do Not Know

14) Who are the key partners and stakeholders in the community with regards to assisting with the implementation of this plan?

15) What are the key issues and values in the Manassas community that need to be considered while developing this Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan?

16) Are there any political sensitivities we should be aware of that could impact the success of the City’s planning efforts?

17) During the next 5-10 years, what are the top parks, recreation and cultural priorities for the City?

General Community Response – All Engagement Meetings

Each meeting was conducted by at least two members of the consultant team. One would facilitate the meeting and the other would note the public input and responses. One document of notes compiled all the public feedback and the responses to each question were either emphasized or added on over the course of all of the engagement meetings. The following question responses were the most prevalent and consistently recurring comments voiced across all engagement meetings. They represent the strongest opinions, concerns, needs, ideas, and desires of the citizenry city wide. Items followed by one or more asterisks (*) were mentioned that number of times throughout the public meetings. **This does not include City Staff, Committee members, and stakeholder feedback, only Manassas Residents who attended the engagement meetings. Please refer to notes and reference materials for City employees’ feedback and responses.**

1) How long have you been a resident of Manassas?

<u>3</u>	<5 years
<u>4</u>	5-9 years
<u>8</u>	10-19 years
<u>11</u>	20+ years
<u>4</u>	Not a resident but use programs/facilities

2) What are the strengths of the City that should be continued over the next several years?

- Freedom Center
- Staff very flexible, cooperative, accessible and responsive ***
- Festivals **
- Work very closely with other service providers**
- Cultural aspect of events: ethnically diverse *
- City Leadership seeks citizen input*
- Staff very passionate
- Neighborhood Services excellent job of engaging the community and developing partnerships
- Fiscally responsible *
- Small town feel, community
- Downtown businesses committed to cultural vibe
- Feeling of safety, police presence, community policing
- Center for the Arts, Museum, Harris Pavilion, Historic Manassas
- Sense of community
- Availability of outdoor facilities, access to public spaces
- Availability of information
- Protected the lake
- Historic Manassas Inc (HMI)
- Access to transportation regionally (Train/Omni Bus)
- Doing something with nothing
- Decent park maintenance
- Trail system
- Boys and Girls Club partnership*
- VRE – Virginia Railway Express
- History
- Proximity to DC
- Small Town feel
- Central core to city
- Green space
- Pool
- Museum
- Proximity to Battlefield
- Regional Airport
- Neighborhood Parks
- Center for the Art
- Colleges: GMU, NOVA
- Younger Demographic trend
- People/Culture
- Diversity of Parks**
- Urban Forest/Trees
- Staff very responsive
- Good use of volunteers

3) Conversely, what are the major weaknesses that need to be addressed through the Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan?

- Connectivity, not pedestrian friendly**
- Citizens can't use school facilities after school hours**
- Walkability, bikeability**
- Marketing, communication, awareness, no daily paper***
- Services and resources for seniors, disabled*
- Transportation
- Cost Recovery
- Maintenance under staffed
- Haven't kept up with changing demographics
- Need to promote the things we do
- Branding
- P&R not recognized for their economic impact to the city
- Need a collaborative effort, coordinate other service providers
- Don't conduct events in parks
- Passive utilization of parks
- Consider multiuse of facilities
- Lack of rectangle fields
- Disconnect of Schools and City
- Safety and security
- Quality of athletics (drainage)
- Low cost of field usage
- Available indoor space for activities
- Trail connectivity**
- Bike routes*
- Wayfinding and Signage ***
- Knowing what assets are available*
- Full utilization of baseball fields, maintenance*
- Implement plans developed
- Presence of programs / lack of programs**
- Lack of promotions
- Bedroom community
- No central place to go for programs / fragmented / unified message / branding
- Website more inclusive
- Lack of a department**
- Outreach to the Hispanic population
- Lack of connectivity: neighborhood, trails, bikeways
- No adult education classes / enrichment programs
- Leverage travel sports programs
- Baldwin School repurpose, playground
- Field and Court availability
- Lack of open play spaces
- No large community gathering space
- No community recreation center
- Community interaction with Boys and Girls Club
- Wayfinding / mapping **
- Tell the story
- Eyes on the parks, use reduces crime/homeless
- No library

- Amford (SP?) Manor (possible community center)
- Parking
- No recreation programs*
- Outdated Amenities

4) What additional programs or activities do you feel the City should offer that are currently not available?

- Language classes
- Yoga
- Exercise classes
- Youth Advisory Council
- Senior Advisory Council
- Adopt a park
- Recreational classes – fitness, yoga, bike maintenance, enrichment**
- Trips, day and weekend **
- Tennis lessons
- After-school program*
- Community gardening*
- More unique programming/events – Color Run***
- Opportunities for teens/Summer employment/Volunteer opportunities
- Pavilion programming
- Runs***
- Special Events: Haunted Trail
- Trips*
- Recreation Sports programs
- Leadership/Volunteering/Youth Civic Engagement****
- Adult Enrichments Classes
- Outdoor Recreation Programming/Scouting
- Language programming
- Summer Camps *
- After school programming/Elementary Schools as Neighborhood Centers
- Marketing/Communication
- Partnership
- Relationship with school and school facilities
- Ethnic festivals

5) How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the existing park, recreation and cultural facilities provided by the City? Why?

_____ 5 Excellent
 2 4 Very Good
 7 3 Good
 4 2 Fair
 _____ 1 Poor

6) How would you rate the overall level of maintenance at the facilities owned or operated by the City? Please identify the location and specifics of any maintenance concerns.

_____ 5 Excellent
 1 4 Very Good
 8 3 Good
 3 2 Fair
 _____ 1 Poor

- 7) What improvements are needed at existing facilities? Where are these improvements needed?
- Use of school fields after hours
 - Athletic fields
 - Drainage on fields
 - Storage at fields
 - General maintenance, trash
 - Targeted maintenance – historic sites,
 - Lights
 - Wayfinding
 - Lights on rectangular fields
 - Improve track at Dean / Dean Park upgrades / Master Plan
 - Transition Stonewall into a leisure style facility
 - Level baseball complex and start over
 - Boys and Girls Club
 - Expansion of museum, add library
 - Signage / Wayfinding ***/ mapping
 - Grounds at GMBL
 - Speed up Liberia Project
 - Connect trails/bikeways/Winter's Branch Trail / Connectivity
 - Stonewall Park fields
 - Accessibility / new and current
 - Preservation of Historic sites
 - Improvement to existing restroom facilities / new facilities
 - Athletic field turf
 - Landscaping / beds
- 8) Are there any portions of the community that are underserved? Please explain (i.e., where and what type of amenities are needed, what market segment needs more attention, etc.).
- Dog owners
 - At risk youth
 - Seniors
 - Disabled
 - Young professionals without kids
 - Kids**
 - Seniors*
 - Hispanic / non-whites
 - Special needs
 - Seniors (transportation)
 - Georgetown South (aquatics specifically)
- 9) What additional park, recreation, and cultural facilities would you like to see the community provide?
- Multiuse fields****
 - Multiuse Recreation Center** (The go to space!) – Manassas Park model
 - Restroom facilities at ball fields
 - Trails
 - Outdoor entertainment venue, amphitheater
 - Dog park
 - Splash pad/Spray park
 - Expanded adult recreational facilities*

- Community garden**
- Bike lanes/pathways***/fitness trail
- Trails – paved and dirt – Dean to Wellington
- Second pool – Gateway Boulevard
- Dog park***
- Disc golf
- Outdoor music venue
- Rectangle fields**
- Restrooms
- Library
- Fire pit
- Community Center**
- Community Facility at Liberia Plantation/Annabell Mansion/event center
- Splash pad**
- Miracle Ballfield
- Trees/shade
- Technology
- Splash pads

10) Are there any facilities and/or programs currently available that should be eliminated? If so, which ones and why?

- Unused tennis courts – possible repurpose**
- Repurpose wooded area behind Round
- Bank Shoot at Bird Park
- Boys and Girls Club space

11) How would you rate the quality of customer service provided by the Community Development staff? Please elaborate.

<u> 3 </u>	5 Excellent
<u> 2 </u>	4 Very Good
<u> 1 </u>	3 Good
<u> </u>	2 Fair
<u> 1 </u>	1 Poor

12) How effective is the Department in seeking feedback from the community and users on improving its performance?

<u> </u>	5 Excellent
<u> 6 </u>	4 Very Good
<u> 1 </u>	3 Good
<u> 1 </u>	2 Fair
<u> 4 </u>	1 Poor

13) The City's programs and facilities are currently funded through a combination of revenue sources, including General Fund, User Fees, Impact Fees, and Partnerships. Do you think this is an appropriate way to fund the department?

<u> 4 </u>	Yes
<u> 1 </u>	No
<u> 1 </u>	Do Not Know

Look for alternatives, pushing people to private providers

14) Who are the key partners and stakeholders in the community concerning assisting with the implementation of this plan?

- HOA
- Other Service Providers
- Kiwanis
- Lions Club
- Rotary
- Large employers
- GMBL *
- Youth serving organizations
- Boys and Girls Club
- GMU/NOVA
- Business Community
- Chamber
- VRE
- Metro/Omni Link
- NPS
- Manassas Mall
- American Red Cross
- Environmental/Preservation Groups
- Cooperative Extension
- PWC Library
- Old Town Business Association
- Regional Airport
- Faith-based Organizations**
- Schools**
- Police/Fire & Rescue

15) What are the key issues and values in the Manassas community that need to be considered while developing this Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan?

- Physical activity among kids*
- Attractive place to live – keeping people here
- Historical Relevance
- Youth Civic Engagement
- Civics in general
- Cultural respect
- Manassas as a destination
- Active recreation
- Environmental awareness / sustainability

16) Are there any political sensitivities we should be aware of that could impact the success of the City's planning efforts?

- Competition not Collaboration
- Competition between County and City
- Trail connectivity**
- Historic preservation
- Areas in need of beautification – park lots within parking lots – Mathis Avenue
- Limited resources
- Money**
- Regional destination for economic development (sport tourism)
 - Not government's role to provide recreation

- Diversity of community: ethnically, old Manassas-new Manassas, economically
- Neighborhood inequity/rental-ownerships

17) During the next 5-10 years, what are the top parks, recreation and cultural priorities for the City?

- Baseball and Softball
- Bike routes**
- Walkability, connectivity** - neighborhood to neighborhood
- Bike racks
- Do something with the Planning process/recommendations
- Community center** or smaller neighborhood centers/Library
- Programming
- Leveraging relationship GMBL
- Maintenance*
- Wayfinding
- Outreach to Hispanic Community**
- Community Service
- Keep up with trends

Extra Comments:

- Moving baseball to Dean is a bad idea
- Need more funding
- Increased focus on the pavilion, downtown