

Formula 2040: Parks + Recreation = Experience

Draft Project Charter

**Functional Master Plan for Parks and Recreation
Goals, Concepts and Guidelines and Public Participation Program**

September 22, 2011



“Elevating the Parks + Recreation Experience”

GOALS:

This project charts new ground for the Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County. Our last master plan was completed over 30 years ago. This Functional Master Plan for Parks will be a component of the County General Plan. The Planning Department will be updating the General Plan on a similar schedule.

- Imagine a future that recognizes both parks and recreation potential and the operative demographic trends, economic, political, environmental and budgetary constraints.
- Tie together the Commission's varied sustainability-related projects, identify new opportunities and set clear goals to measure and promote environmental, ecological and fiscal sustainable practices.
- Preserve and maintain existing infrastructure.
- Support the goals of the County's functional plans.
- Refresh and modernize the park and recreation physical infrastructure and programs to ensure a desired experience for county's residents.
- Support economic development in general and; specifically, through its land acquisitions, signature programs and events and design of recreational facilities and programs in transit-oriented development (TOD) corridors.

NAME:

Formula 2040: Parks + Recreation = Experience

The project name reflects the concept that the recreation and leisure experiences we provide depend upon correct matching of facilities with programs. Facilities that are of limited capacity frustrate opportunities for program innovation. Conversely, programs that are unimaginative and routine result in facilities that are underused. Quality facilities that are well matched to the needs of state-of-the-art programming can yield elevated experience for the participants.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1. Provide all Prince Georgians with an equivalent mix of services**
- 2. Determine the number and type of key system components at build-out**
- 3. Set standards that will establish service expectations for staff and patrons**
- 4. Show the impacts our services have on the lives of Prince Georgians**
- 5. Establish "Vision Elements" that are inspirational and aspirational to drive plan implementation**

CONCEPT:

Daniel Burnham advised planners to "Think Big." He said, "Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die..." This plan will be framed around vision elements that incorporate big ideas and visionary thinking. The plan will be built on the foundation of *Parks & Recreation: 2010 and Beyond* and the work of staff on implementation over the past two years.

- **Use existing Work Products as the Foundation**
 - 2010 and Beyond Needs Assessment
 - Updated Recreation Programming Plan
 - Program Think Tank Recommendations
 - Facility Maintenance Work Group Recommendations
 - EMG Facilities Condition Study
 - Facility Utilization Study
 - Capital Improvement Program
- **Establish “Vision Elements” that are inspirational and aspirational to drive plan implementation**
 - Signature Facilities that will put Prince George’s County on the regional tourism map
 - Signature Programs that continue our reputation as a national innovator
 - Themes – e.g. Community Wellness, Cultural Diversity, Environmental Stewardship, Economic Development, Community Capacity Building, and Transit Oriented Development
- **Define the desirable impacts to be derived from each Vision Element**
 - Set measurable objectives to track success in achieving outcomes and impacts that will produce measurable impacts on the lives of Prince Georgians

GUIDELINES:

- Be stakeholder centered
- Be collaborative, innovative, and educational
- Be cost conscious
- Be flexible
- Orient toward the future but base in reality
- Capitalize on the talents and experiences of our staff
- Support the county’s economic vitality and resiliency
- Emphasize Health and Wellness
- Structure to fully capitalize on the outcomes from the **2010 and Beyond Initiative** and subsequent implementation initiatives
- Focus on implementation with measurable performance metrics

PARTICIPATION: PUBLIC

The Department's current public outreach network of Region Managers is the backbone for the program. A legacy of this process will be a revitalized and improved network for engagement and participation. The public participation program will involve of all sectors of the Prince George's community, including: civic and homeowners' associations, recreation, sports and arts councils, non-profits, faith-based and community organizations. Multiple approaches will be used to disseminate information and receive feedback.

"Outreach Corps"

Intermittent staff will work with regional managers and facility directors to engage in grassroots level outreach. The Outreach Corps members will attend meetings of organizations and council to provide information on the status of the planning process and engage the participants in dialogue. Corps members will journal their experiences; this will provide insight into what is happening on the ground at our facilities on a day-to-day basis. They will also document alternative service providers and facilities.

Speakers Bureau

Staff will be available to speak to community groups and organizations throughout the project about findings and next steps.

Advisory Panel

A group of representatives from community groups and organizations from different sectors will serve as advisors throughout the Functional Master Plan development process.

Information Distribution

Information regarding the Functional Master Plan process and the public engagement program will be included at all Department of Parks and Recreation facilities and community events throughout the county. Department staff will be able to answer questions and refer interested parties to additional information on the website, upcoming open houses, etc.

Website- ongoing information, online survey, e-blasts, social media

A Website will include general information on the project, ways to get involved and online surveys at different points in the process. Information will also be included in the Department's e-newsletter, as well as e-blasts created specifically for the plan. Social media will inform the public and be an engagement tool.

Community Open Houses

Open houses will be offered in different geographic locations, at different points throughout the Master Plan development process to allow residents, visitors and others to get information and share their opinions. Community Open Houses will be held for extended hours to facilitate more participation.

Electronic Town Meetings

Excitement will be generated by engaging citizens in an electronic town hall style meeting to test options and receive opinions on alternative courses of action.

Public Hearing /Required Public Notification— A public hearing will be held, as required, by the statutory Functional Master Plan process.

EXECUTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Planning Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, County Council, and the Office of the County Executive will be briefed monthly and as needed.

STAFF

Staff will be engaged on an ongoing basis through multiple opportunities:

- Staff Meetings
- Program Think Tank
- Facility Maintenance Work Group
- Comprehensive Recreation Plan Update
- Director’s Meetings
- Outreach Corps
- Focus Groups with Consultant Team

WORK PROGRAM: OUTCOMES

- **Development Guidelines and Standards for Urban Facilities:** Determine desirable outcomes and the roles the Department should play in achieving them.
- **Comparable Agency Benchmarks:** Select three to five comparable urbanizing counties and provide benchmark data on LOS for key facilities
- **Methods to Monitor and Understand Patterns of Indoor and Outdoor Facility Use:** Recommend and test methods and protocols to both collect baseline data on use of key indoor and outdoor facilities and track periodic performance.
- **Departmental Program Standards:** Work with staff to establish Department-wide measurable program expectations and standards that can be used to track progress on implementation of program objectives.
- **Program and Facility Matching:** Assess the strengths and weaknesses of current facilities to meet future program demand.
- **Public Engagement and Updated Community Opinion:** Hold at least one electronic town hall style meeting per area to promote awareness, generate excitement, share information and obtain feedback on recommendations.
- **Graphic Design and Project Documentation:** The process for preparation of the functional master plan will be documented including meeting notes, work products and the synthesis of those products into recommendations. The final report will feature compelling graphics and photography in a user-friendly format. The report will be a synthesis of all materials and information collected, including work products

