

Richmond Inspire

A Citywide Vision Plan for Parks, Recreation
and Facilities

Christopher Frelke, Director
December 10, 2025



DEPARTMENT OF
**PARKS, RECREATION
AND COMMUNITY
FACILITIES**

 **Richmond
INSPIRE**
A Citywide Vision Plan for Parks,
Recreation & Community Facilities

Timeline

2021:

- \$500,000 of ARPA allocated by Council

2022 – 2023:

- RFP issued
- Contract awarded

February 2024:

- Kick-Off

March 2024 – April 2025:

- 11 public workshops, 35 community meetings, 11 focus groups
- 3 rounds of surveys
- Total Engagement: 24,000



Timeline Continued

May 2025 – August 2025:

- Preparation of 90% draft

December 2025:

- Presentation to City Council; 60-day public review of the full draft

January 2026- February 2026:

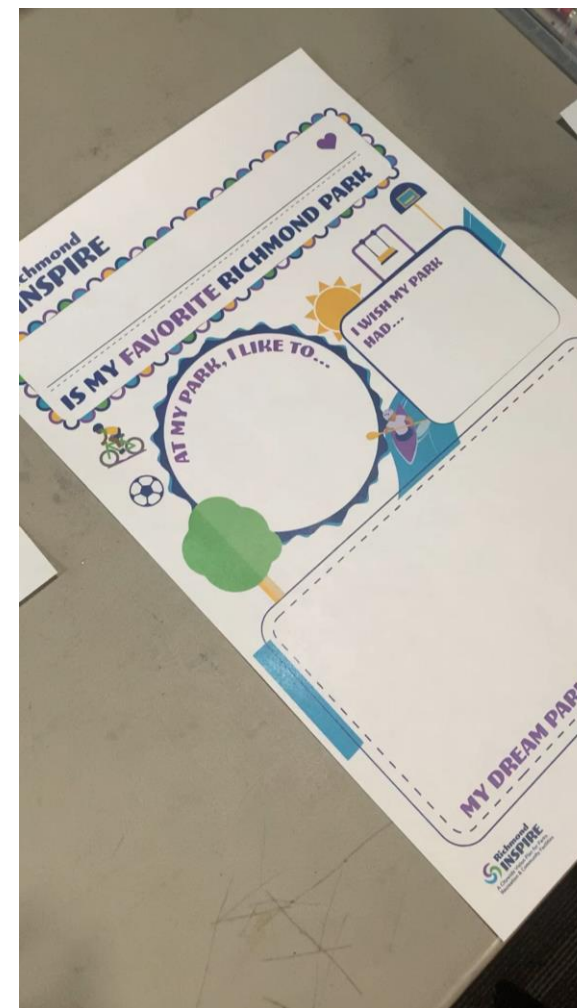
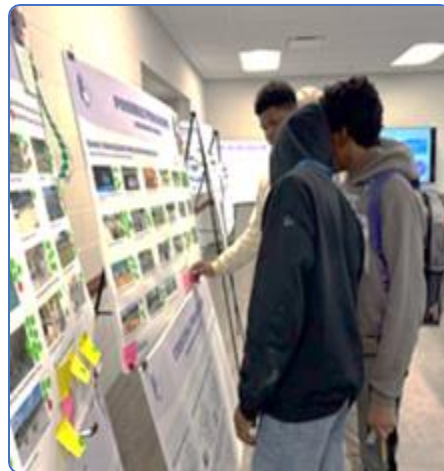
- Final Feedback (Online, District meetings)

March 2026:

- Final routing to City Council for adoption



How We Engaged



DEPARTMENT OF
**PARKS, RECREATION
AND COMMUNITY
FACILITIES**

How Engagement Informed the Plan

Developing the community vision and understanding needs and priorities

Needs Assessment

Public Workshop Series #1

11 Facilitated Focus Groups
2 Steering Committee Meetings
100 September District Workshop Attendees
24 Neighborhood Meetings & Pop-Ups
502 Coloring Sheets



Citywide Survey #1

2,195 Online Survey Responses

Refining community priorities and physical projects

Shaping Priorities



Public Workshop Series #2

2 March Workshops
6 Community Center Pop-Ups
89 Online Map Responses
2 Steering Committee Meetings

Citywide Survey #2

500 Online Survey Responses



16,000 Visits To The Project Website

Project Website

+19,000

Estimated Community Touchpoints To Date

Final Recommendations

11 + 136

Strategies Action Items

UNIFYING THEMES

	Greenways and Trails	Access and Connectivity	Open Space Conservation	Community Engagement	Equity and Justice	Park and Recreation Community Needs	Park and Recreation Capital Projects	Implementation and Funding Resources	Environmental Health and Resilience
CONNECTED PLANS	Richmond 300: A Guide for Growth	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	RVA Green Climate Equity Action Plan 2030	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
	Richmond Connects Strategic Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	James River Park System Master Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Richmond Riverfront Plan	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
	RVA Clean Water Plan		●	●	●			●	●
	Mayor's Equity Agenda: Parks		●	●	●		●		●
	A Community Garden Opportunity Plan for Richmond			●	●	●	●	●	●
	Virginia Outdoors Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Revealing Richmond: A Public Art Master Plan			●	●			●	
	Richmond Bicycle Master Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Richmond Vision Zero Plan	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
	Greater Scott's Addition Small Area Plan	●	●	●		●	●		●
	Shockoe Small Area Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	City Center Innovation District Small Area Plan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Pulse Corridor Plan		●	●	●	●		●	
	Richmond INSPIRE	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Figure 10: How Engagement Informed the Plan

What We Heard

DRIVING PRINCIPLES

ACCESS

Everyone in Richmond can walk to a great park in 10 minutes or less. Parks are easy to reach using safe, comfortable, and beautiful streets and paths.



Walkable Parks For All
Connected System



WELCOMING

Richmond's parks, trails, and centers use public art, park design, and programs to celebrate Richmond's people and culture. Parks are welcoming and reflect the neighborhoods they serve.



Safe And Welcoming
Parks



Cultural Preservation &
Celebration

EQUITY

Richmond's parks and recreation projects are shaped by the community. They make neighborhoods stronger without pushing people out. The City is open about where it spends parks and recreation dollars.



Community-Driven System



Beautiful Parks, Strong
Neighborhoods

ENVIRONMENT

Richmond's parks help keep the city cooler, greener, healthier, and better prepared for the future. The City leads the way in green design and stewardship of the environment.



Cool, Healthy, Resilient City



Green Design, Sustainability, &
Stewardship

BIG MOVES

DRIVING PRINCIPLES

QUALITY

Richmond's parks and community centers are built to last, maintained to high standards, and supported by ongoing investment in staff, funding, and partnerships. Staff are encouraged to be lifelong learners and dedicated stewards of the city's parks and recreation system.



Standard of Excellence



Sustainable Funding
And Partnerships



World-Class
Staff

BIG MOVES

COMMUNITY

Richmond's parks and community centers bring people together through diverse and inclusive programming. Recreation centers are engines of social, economic, and environmental resilience.



Recreation &
Programming For All



Park-Based Urban
Agriculture



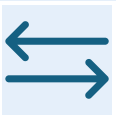
Community Resilience
Hubs



Access



Expand park system so everyone can walk to a high-quality park in 10 minutes or less.



Greenway connectivity, prioritize investments in underserved neighborhoods.



Welcoming



Create safe, inclusive, and culturally expressive spaces.



Public art, cultural celebrations, and design that reflects local identity.



Staff training, long-term maintenance funding, strategic partnerships for investment.



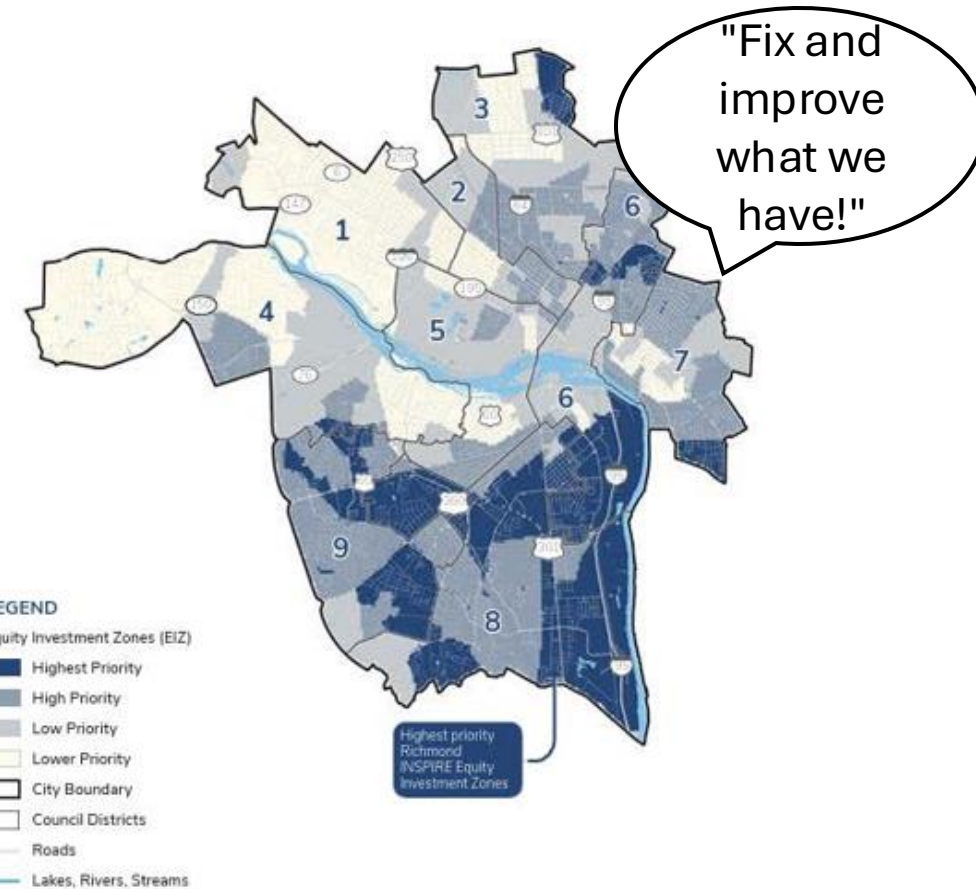
Equity



Build a fair and transparent park system by directing resources to historically underinvested areas.



Community-driven project selection, transparent tracking, and collaboration.



Environment



Advance Richmond as a Cool, Healthy, and Resilient City.



Parks are the model for green infrastructure, stormwater management, tree canopy expansion, natural area growth.



Cooler neighborhoods, cleaner air/water, and climate resilience.



Quality



Maintain world-class standards across facilities and programs.



Tackle deferred maintenance citywide.



Staff training, long-term maintenance funding, strategic partnerships for investment.



Community



Strengthen community through recreation, urban agriculture, and resilience hubs.



Expand programming, develop community gardens, use centers as resilience hubs.



Create connections to local food access.



Next Steps

December 2025 – Begin Legislative Process

January- February 2026 – Final engagement

March 2026 – Adoption and begin the work to achieve our community's vision



Outreach

December 2025 – February 2026

- 90% Document Live on Richmond INSPIRE website for public review and comment (60 days)
- Attendance and presentations at council district meetings, civic association meetings, friends of parks meetings
- One-on-one review with councilmembers
- Media engagement for awareness



Questions?



DEPARTMENT OF
**PARKS, RECREATION
AND COMMUNITY
FACILITIES**

 **Richmond
INSPIRE**
A Citywide Vision Plan for Parks,
Recreation & Community Facilities