



STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2028



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Introduction

The strategic plan sets the course for the future of the Department of Recreation and Parks, outlining our vision and objectives for the upcoming years.

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Acknowledgment

We recognize the importance of community engagement and collaboration in achieving our goals and look forward to working together to improve our parks and recreational facilities.

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Who We Are

The Department of Recreation and Parks is a dedicated team of professionals committed to enhancing community well-being by providing quality recreational programs and maintaining accessible green spaces for all to enjoy.

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What We Do

We strive to create a vibrant and inclusive environment by offering diverse recreational activities, maintaining parks, and promoting active lifestyles among residents of all ages.

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Strategic Themes

Our strategic themes focus on promoting community wellness, enhancing sustainability initiatives, improving park accessibility, fostering partnerships, and ensuring the efficient management of resources to meet our community's evolving needs.

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Summary

Introduction



Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks is dedicated to serving millions of County residents and visitors annually by offering a wide range of services and programs. The primary focus is on providing comprehensive recreational programs for residents and safeguarding valuable land by managing and maintaining over 160 parks and natural areas.

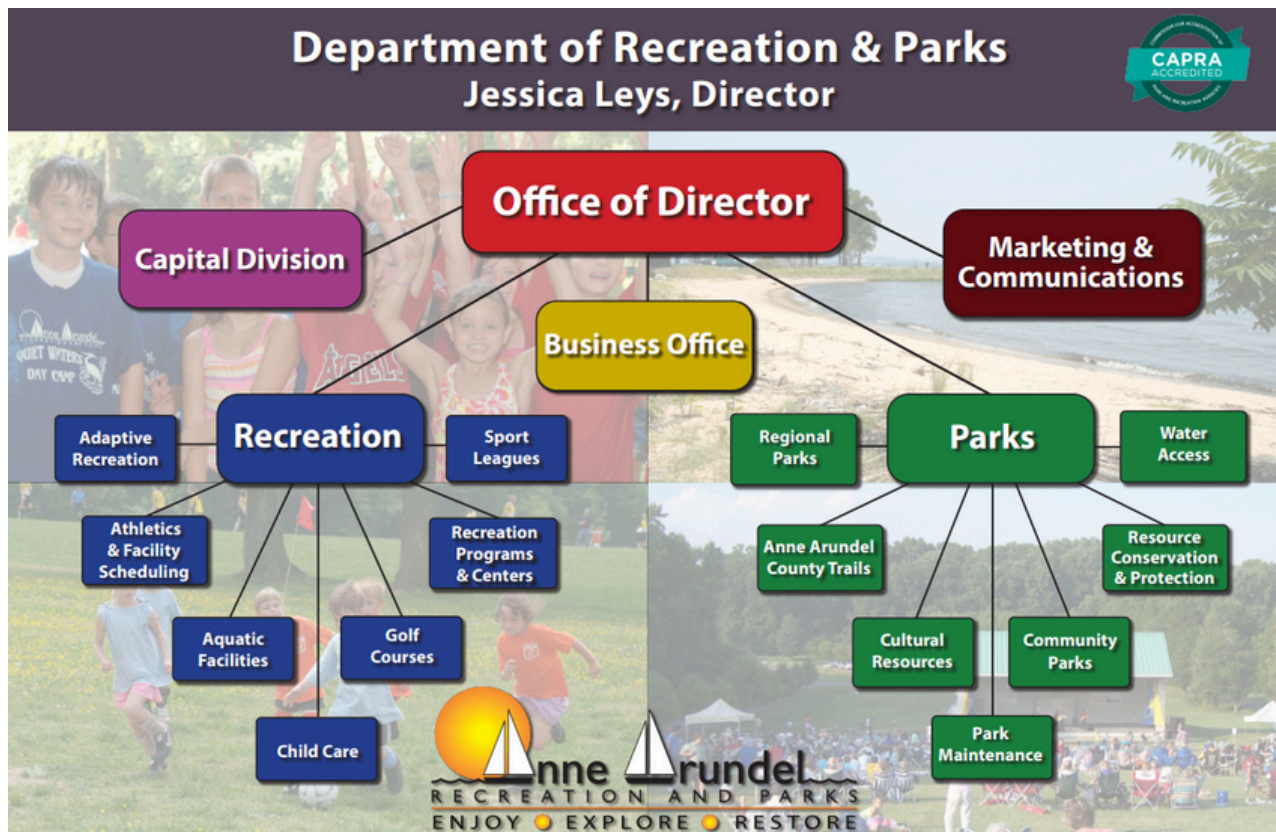
Our department manages specialized recreational facilities, including two swim centers, two golf courses, a baseball stadium, a softball complex, and programs tailored to meet diverse needs ranging from childcare to adaptive recreation. Recreation and Parks oversee thousands of acres of land, encompassing community parks, greenways, archaeological sites, environmental and historical preserves, and large regional parks spanning several hundred acres.

Our mission is to create opportunities for individuals to enjoy life, explore nature, and restore their health and well-being. The public can engage on social media platforms like Facebook, and Instagram and stay connected through the department's weekly newsletter, which provides the latest updates and information.

Acknowledgement

Thank you to the Recreation and Parks staff members who worked tirelessly to design this strategic plan for the Department. Your expertise, creativity, and hard work were crucial in creating a plan that will guide the department in providing excellent services to the community. Your dedication and commitment to improving the quality of life for our residents through parks and recreational activities is appreciated.

- **Jessica Leys**, Director
- **Erica Matthews**, Deputy Director
- **Tammy Anderson**, Chief of Childcare
- **Bruce Bruchey**, Chief of Planning & Construction
- **Chris Carroll**, Chief of Cultural & Natural Resources
- **Lisa DiGiacinto**, Business Administrator
- **Mark Garrity**, Parks Administrator
- **Jacque Hurman**, Chief of Recreation Services
- **Heath Neiderer**, Chief of Marketing & Communications
- **Bill Offutt**, Chief of Park Operations
- **David Smalley**, Recreation Administrator
- **John Spinnenweber**, Chief of Athletics
- **Joshua Thomas**, Chief of Park Maintenance



Who We Are



Vision

To enrich the lives of all residents of Anne Arundel County. **We Make Life Better!**

Mission

We Create Opportunities to **Enjoy** Life, **Explore** Nature, and **Restore** Health and Well-being.

Core Values

Responsibility, Enjoyment, Service, Teamwork

What We Do

Parks



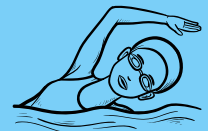
12,920 acres of parkland
160 parks
244 trail miles
1,400 park amenities
4.86 million park & trail visitors



Recreation



308,700 swimmers at two aquatic centers
119,400 golfers at two golf courses
23,000 skaters at two ice rinks
295,795 registered recreation program participants



Athletics



35,200 youth & adult participants
2,260 registered teams
soccer football volleyball
field hockey basketball lacrosse
wrestling softball baseball



Child Care



2,920 children served
50 child care centers
14 summer programs
4,070 summer camp participants



Strategic Themes



Theme 1: Service & Engagement

Maintain high-quality recreational programs and facilities with internal/external relationships that enhance programs that are safe, family-friendly, inclusive, equitable, and affordable.

Theme 2: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Commitment to providing programs and services to ALL residents of Anne Arundel County.

Theme 3: Sustainability & Stewardship

Commitment to the stewardship of our environment, our community, and the workplace through implementing sustainable practices to preserve natural resources, reduce our environmental footprint, and promote green practices.

Theme 4: Fiscal Responsibility

Maintain financial transparency and increase operational efficiency.

Theme 5: Employee Retention & Recruitment

Commitment to comprehensive team development and sustainable hiring practices.

Theme 1: Service & Engagement



Maintain high-quality recreational programs and facilities with internal/external relationships that assist in enhancing programs that are safe, family-friendly, inclusive, equitable, and affordable.

GOAL 1.1: Provide Excellent Customer Service

Action(s):

- Embrace a Customer Service Culture for internal and external customers.
- Provide customer service training to Recreation and Parks employees.
- Conduct user surveys to evaluate existing services and provide public feedback on future development.
- Encourage and respond to customer feedback in a timely matter.
- Partner with other County departments to spread awareness of Recreation and Parks programs.
- Provide patrons and employees with up-to-date online information and resources.
- Produce accurate, timely, and easy-to-understand internal and external communications.

Theme 1: Service & Engagement

GOAL 1.2: Embrace Technology to Maximize Efficiencies

Action(s):

- Continue using social media and marketing measures to communicate with County residents.
- Utilize metrics to make data-driven decisions.
- Implementation of a modern GIS-based work order system to better track workflow, maintenance trends, and expenditures which will streamline processes, improve effectiveness, and accurately track expenditures.
- Implement online reservations and payment system(s) for a user-friendly experience.



GOAL 1.3: Increase visibility of the Department of Recreation and Parks in the community by proactively communicating

Action(s):

- Reimage County website to be user-friendly.
- Enhance public engagement by expanding outreach methods.
- Develop outreach strategies that target organizations at the local, state, and national levels.
- Identify and attend community events that build awareness for local or county-wide projects and initiatives.

Theme 2: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Commitment to providing programs and services to ALL residents of Anne Arundel County.

GOAL 2.1: Promote accessibility of programs and facilities to patrons

Action(s):

- Implement ADA self-assessment recommendations.
- Increase programming accommodations to include physical limitations.
- Create Department Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Awareness Committee.



GOAL 2.2: Provide diverse programming and educational opportunities

Action(s):

- Expand programming opportunities.
- Promote cultural inclusion in programs and services through language offerings.

GOAL 2.3: Provide a safe and welcoming environment in parks and facilities



Action(s):

- Improve signage to include multiple languages and braille.
- Engage patrons in a positive manner.
- Provide regular patrols and safety communications.

Theme 3: Sustainability & Stewardship

Commitment to the stewardship of our environment, our community, and the workplace through the implementation of sustainable practices to preserve natural resources, reduce our environmental footprint, and promote green practices.

GOAL 3.1: Promote Resource Conservation through good stewardship of the environment

Action(s):

- Create a standalone Resource Conservation & Protection Unit.
- Identify priorities to reduce the Department's environmental footprint and implement sustainable practices.
- Implement the Green Infrastructure Plan.
- Promote conservation, stewardship, and volunteerism.



GOAL 3.2: Conserve, enhance, and acquire natural areas and historical resources



Action(s):

- Protect and expand high-value natural lands through acquisition, restoration, and/or conservation.
- Create a natural area management policy.
- Establish conservation easements.

GOAL 3.3: Increase green space in Anne Arundel County

Action(s):

- Secure dedicated funding for the acquisition of natural land areas.
- Prioritize land acquisition as identified in the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.

Theme 4: Fiscal Responsibility

Maintain financial transparency and increase operational efficiency.

GOAL 4.1: Maintain and share financial and budgetary data

Action(s):

- Create standards for managers/supervisors on what and how to communicate about a budget.
- Establish principles and processes to ensure a budget is fully utilized throughout the fiscal year.

GOAL 4.2: Operate within fiscal year budget appropriation

Action(s):

- Provide monthly financial reports to managers/supervisors.
- Establish quarterly meetings with managers/supervisors to review expenditures.

ANNE ARUNDEL DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS Project Development Process



1. This is the typical Project Development Process; the timeline varies occasionally.
2. **Bold** denotes public input opportunities.

Theme 4: Fiscal Responsibility

GOAL 4.3: Continue public infrastructure investment

Action(s):

- Prioritize capital improvement program to meet the needs as identified in the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan.
- Quantify the operating impact of capital investments.
- Build a team of professionals to manage the capital projects.
- Balance future investments while maintaining existing infrastructure.



GOAL 4.4: Continue to be a Certified Accredited Parks and Recreation Agency through the National Recreation and Parks Association

Action(s):

- Compare the 2020 and 2025 CAPRA Self-Assessment templates.
- Meet annual requirements for maintaining accreditation.



Theme 5: Employee Recruitment & Retention

Commitment to comprehensive team development and sustainable hiring practices.



GOAL 5.1: Attract and retain a diverse workforce representing Anne Arundel County

Action(s):

- Advertise employment opportunities on a variety of platforms.
- Streamline internal hiring processes to reduce the amount of time to onboard.
- Participate in job fairs and public outreach.

GOAL 5.2: Provide professional development opportunities for all employees

Action(s):

- Provide training and educational opportunities for all employees.
- Create and implement professional training programs.
- Provide supervisors/managers with tools and training to improve the performance evaluation process.



Theme 5: Employee Recruitment & Retention

GOAL 5.3: Create employee recognition and engagement initiatives

Action(s):

- Increase opportunities for internal engagement at all levels of the organization.
- Engage the workforce for continuous feedback and recommendations.
- Host an annual meeting for all staff to recognize accomplishments and service achievements.
- Continue quarterly newsletter to highlight staff and provide Departmental updates.



GOAL 5.4: Establish a volunteer management program

Action(s):

- Create a Volunteer Coordinator role within the Department.
- Update the Friend's Group Memorandum of Understanding to standardize the relationship and expectations.
- Conduct an overall evaluation of the current Volunteer Management program, including recruitment, operations, and staff feedback.
- Collaborate with the Office of Information Technology to automate volunteer tracking and registration.

Summary

This Strategic Plan clearly outlines the priorities of the Department of Recreation and Parks in Anne Arundel County. The five themes focus on promoting community wellness, enhancing sustainable initiatives, improving park accessibility, fostering partnerships, and ensuring the efficient management of resources to meet the evolving needs of our residents.

Each goal provides specific, achievable, and measurable action items that we can work toward to determine our progress. The Strategic Plan is a dynamic document that is reviewed regularly and guides the department in allocating resources and making decisions.

In summary, staying committed to our mission of creating opportunities to Enjoy Life, Explore Nature, and Restore Health and Well-being will enable the Department to stay focused, aligned, accountable, and adaptable. This will ultimately enrich the lives of all residents of Anne Arundel County and allow us to fulfill our mission to Make Life Better for ALL!

