

Public Comments for School Board Meetings

#414

I would like to provide: *

Written Public Comments

My public comments are related to: *

General Public Comments

Topic *

Access to safe places to play

Full Name *

John Lavalle

What is your relationship to ACPS? *

Alumnus of an ACPS School

Enter your comments here OR upload below:

ACPS School Board Leadership,

As volunteer board chair of the Alexandria Soccer Association (ASA) I would like to restart discussions around the opportunity for ACPS to work with the City and community partners (including ASA) to expand program opportunities and impact. ACPS and ASA have a very impactful partnership, through the Office of Community Partnerships and Engagement and the Department of Teaching, Learning and Leadership, to deliver free programming to over 1,000 ACPS students. Free programming includes after-school soccer at each title 1 school, an intramural league at GW & Hammond MS, an futsal club at Alexandria City High School, 100+ LINK club meetings and more! Additionally, more than 5,000 ACPS students have access to out of school time soccer teams and programs via ASA core programs (recreational league, academy teams, winter/summer futsal, etc).

To address the shortfall in safe places to play we are interested in pursuing private/public partnerships at two high impact sites – Simpson & Hammond Middle. Please see the concepts in the attached documents. These concepts were discussed positively at the March 16th City Council budget work session. Our leadership would like to present the high impact concepts for ACPS students with the school board at the upcoming city & school meeting on March 28th at 5pm. Please let us know if you can add us to the agenda.

Over the past year, the ACPS Facilities & Operations staff alongside ASA's executive team have worked closely to identify strategic opportunities to support the City of

Alexandria's growing community need for quality in-school and after-school programming. At this time the current facilities do not adequately support the students. In addition to the reality of an overall facility shortfall, the limits disproportionately affect non-varsity athletes and title 1 school participants. For example, the after-school futsal club at Alexandria High School was hosted on an unused parking area as the courts and fields were hosting varsity sports.

An important next step is the ACPS School Board collaborating with the City to prioritize timely opportunities available to us. Our team at ASA alongside a broader group of ACPS partners are eager to advocate and contribute (we've initially committed up to 2 million dollars for Simpson) towards the most impactful and feasible solutions.

We look forward to the discussion,

John Lavalle

ASA Board Chair

Upload additional information:



[high_impact_facility_proposal.pdf](#) 4.6MB · PDF

See attachment below

Meeting School and City Health & Recreation Needs



High Impact Field Solutions

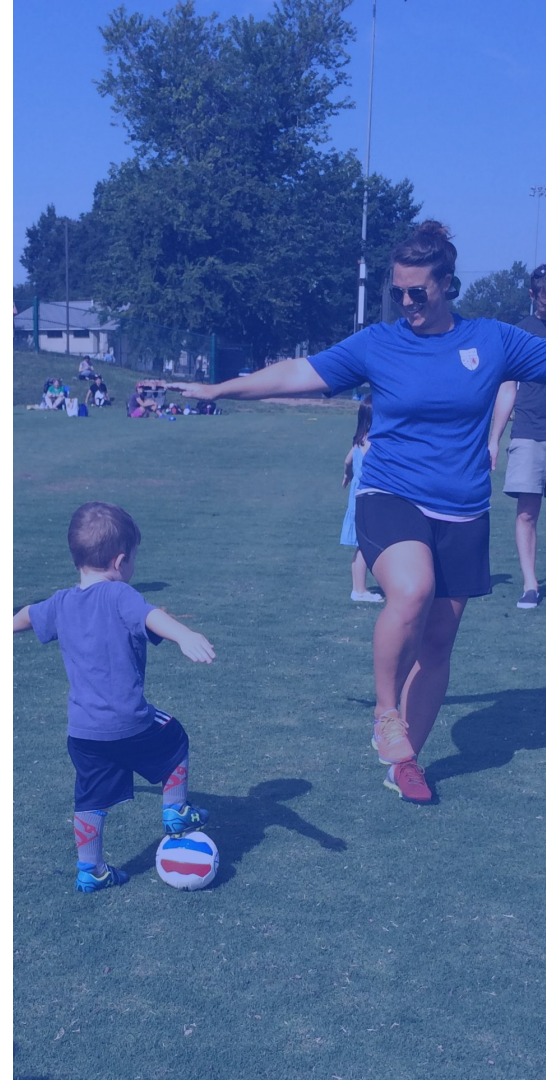


The City of Alexandria, through RPCA & ACPS, have collaborated with partner groups to deliver structured and unstructured health, wellness and recreational opportunities across the City. Together over **50,000+ participants are hosted each year**, providing high quality experiences and programming at public fields, courts, community centers, schools and parks.

In addition to keeping participants active and physically **healthy**, the continued partnerships **engage** community members, **promote cultural competency**, and provide **meaningful experiences** for families through public space and programming.

In this presentation there is an overview of the status of health and wellness of children in our community. **We have come to a crossroads where the allocation and inventory of available space no longer meets the core needs of the children interested in playing soccer and futsal.**

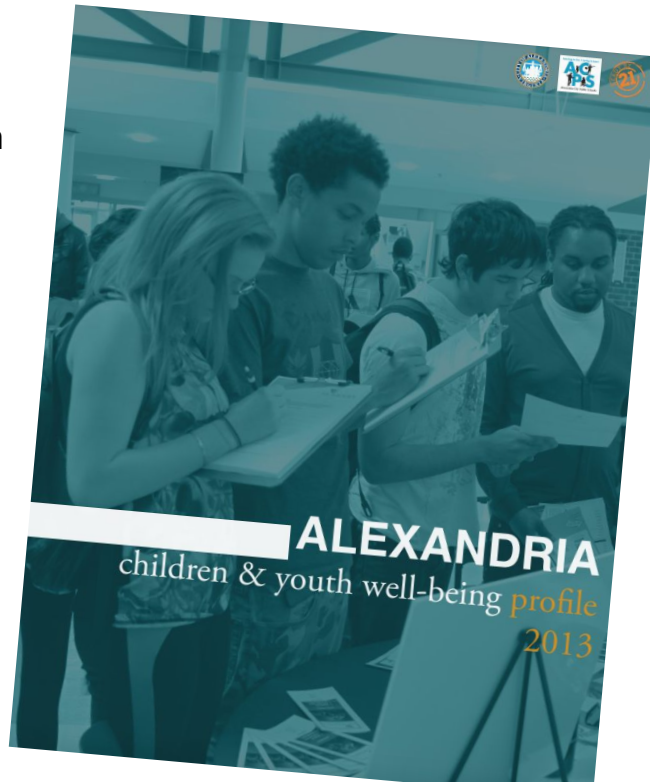
City residents and community groups propose a partnership plan to increase usable space by adding a Multi-use Fieldhouse and a health & wellness extension to Hammond lower field.



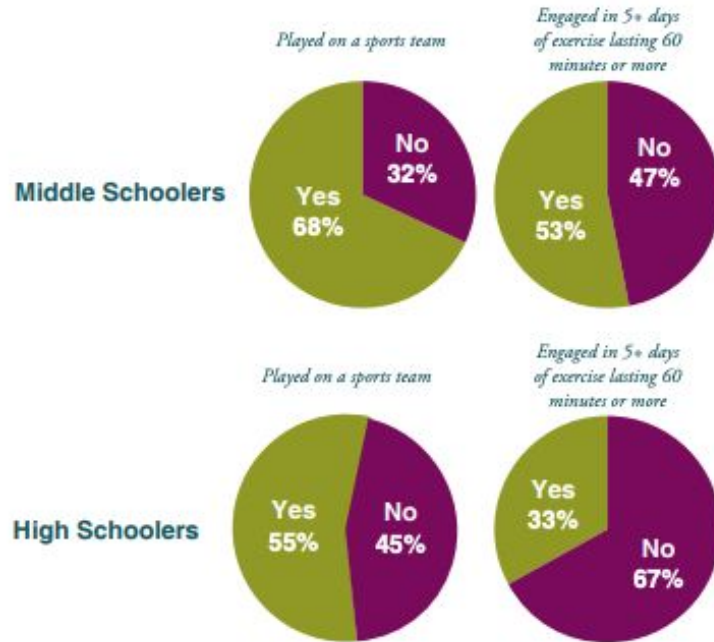
HEALTH & WELLNESS IN ALEXANDRIA

The most recent report on the well being of children and youth in Alexandria shares data regarding physical health, mental health, emotional wellness, civic engagement, bullying and more.

The next few slides highlight key health and wellness areas where Alexandria's children fall behind the national and state averages.



INVOLVEMENT IN SPORTS CAN ENCOURAGE HEALTHY BEHAVIOR



Source: 2011 YRBS (Alexandria Public Schools; CDC)

High school athletes are more likely than non-athletes to attend college and get degrees, and team captains and most valuable players achieve in school at even higher rates (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2005). Also, high school athletes are more likely to expect to graduate from a four-year college (73% girls, 59% boys) compared to non-athletes (67% girls, 53% boys).

- [Aspen Project Play](#)

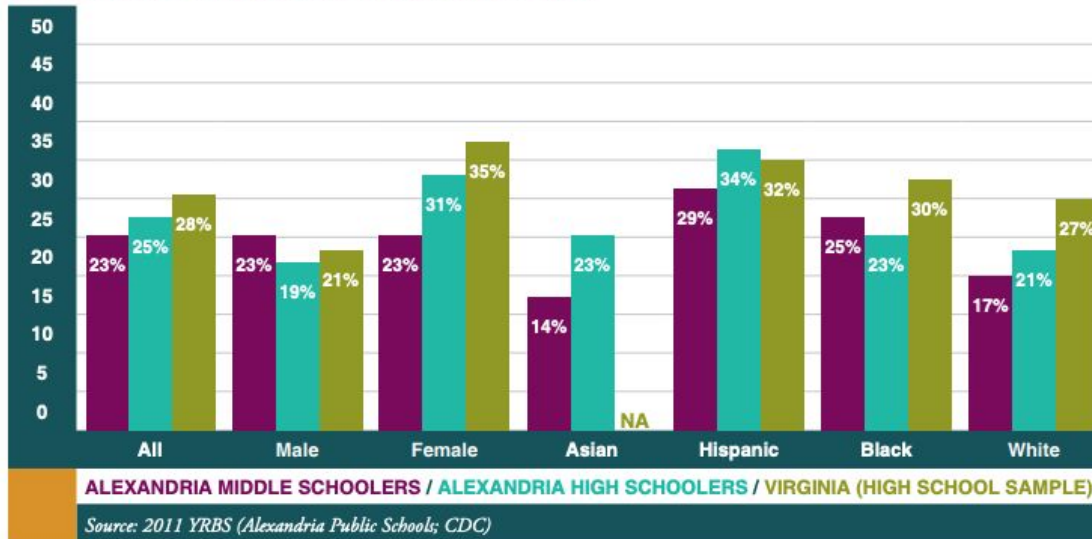
How is Alexandria doing?

Based on the 2011 survey, the percent of high school students in Alexandria reporting regular exercise is significantly lower than the national benchmark of 50 percent.

Benefits of sport participation for children include:

- reduced risk of obesity
- increased cardiovascular fitness
- healthy growth of bones, muscles, ligaments and tendons
- improved coordination and balance
- a greater ability to physically relax and, therefore, avoid the complications of chronic muscular tension (such as headache or back ache)
- improved sleep
- mental health benefits, such as greater confidence
- improved social skills
- improved personal skills, including cooperation and leadership
- gang prevention

DESCRIBE SELF AS SLIGHTLY OR VERY OVERWEIGHT



How is Alexandria doing?

Alexandria middle schoolers experience lower rates of reported obesity than highschoolers in the city and in the state of Virginia overall. Notice, however, the high percentage of Hispanic high school students who consider themselves obese^{xvi}.

Sports participation provides youth with the opportunity to develop social and interpersonal skills, such as teamwork, leadership, and relationship building, and enables youth to benefit from the communal aspect of team sports.

- [National Youth Sports Strategy](#)

[These skills are shown to have a positive influence on mental and emotional health.]

MENTAL HEALTH

MADE A PLAN ABOUT HOW THEY WOULD ATTEMPT SUICIDE



How is Alexandria doing?

Twelve percent of all ACPS middle school students and 10 percent of all ACPS high school students have made a plan about how they would attempt suicide. The highest reports came from Asian students, in both middle school and high school. The figures for Hispanic middle school students were also noticeably high. Female middle and high school students reported higher incidences than did female students in the Virginia sample^{xv}.

In Support of Kids

Alexandria Children & Youth Master Plan

- Every Child will be **physically safe and healthy**
- Every child will be academically successful and **career** ready
- Every child will be **socially connected, emotionally secure and culturally competent**
- Every **family** will be equipped and empowered to effectively support the **well-being** of their children
- Alexandria's systems and institutions will be **responsive, coordinated, efficient and effective** in service to children and families

RPCA Strategic Plan

- Connect the **Community**
- Improve **Well-Being**
- Invest in Our Natural Environment
- Support a Responsible and **Engaged** Workforce

Community Group Outcomes:

- Improved **health and well being** of every participant
- Alexandria is a **thriving community** in part because of community sport organizations

In Support of Kids

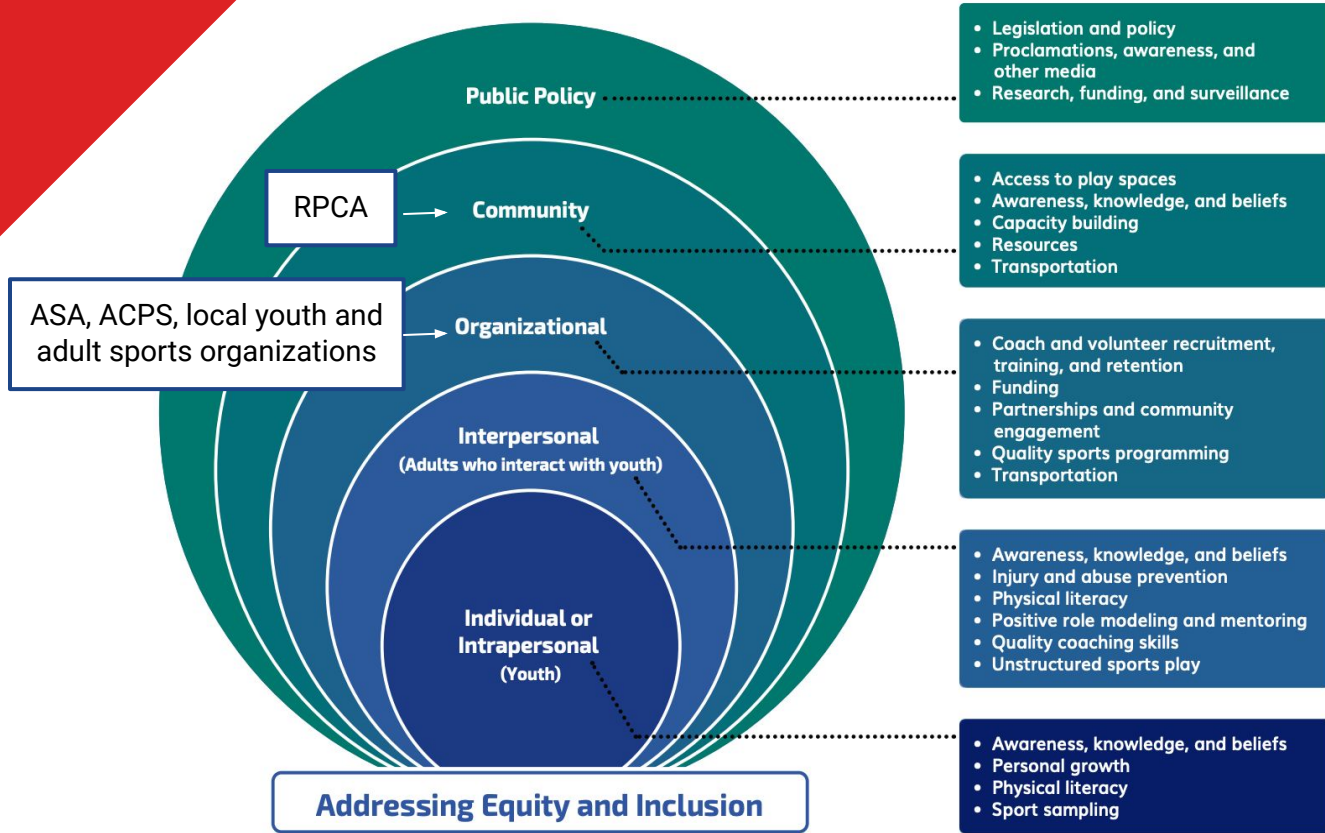
Alexandria City government, private organizations and ACPS align and coordinate services to positively impact kids (& the community).

Sporting groups and the City of Alexandria are working towards the same goals of keeping kids healthy and positively impacting the community.

ASA aims to align the **Community** and **Organizational** circles in the chart to best support individuals and the community.

We are committed to providing opportunities for play to all ages and skill levels.

Access to physical activity supports our shared goals of healthier children and a healthier, engaged Alexandria community.



High Impact for All

Everyone benefits from additional developments and recreational improvements! More accessible programming equals a healthier city.



ALEXANDRIA



TITANS



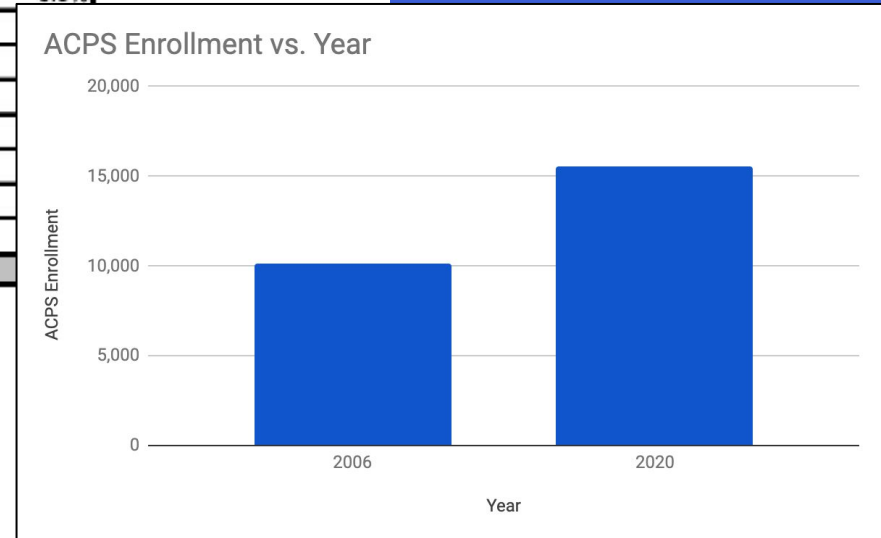
Community Growth

ACPS enrollment is up of 50% since the last comprehensive athletic fields master plan.

Participation in youth and adult athletic activities is up in line with the growth in public and private schools.

	Target Market Participant Age Segments	Actual Participation Factors from RCPA	Population of Age Segment Served (Census)	Probable Participation Percentage of Age Segment
Youth Softball	6-12	247	3,799	5.8%
Adult Softball	13-49	3,780	70,901	5.3%
Youth (60') Baseball	6-12	620	3,355	
Teen/Adult (90') Baseball	13-18	28	2,352	
Regulation Soccer	12-44	1,988	66,794	
Junior Soccer	6-11	535	7,154	
Junior Football	7-11	222	2,765	
Lacrosse/Field Hockey	8-18	511	10,711	
Regulation Football	12-18	383	2,849	
Total		8,341		

Figure 15 - Target Market Demand: Participation Factors



Overall Community Needs

2022 Estimated Annual Participants

Weeknight and weekend:

- Alexandria School Health, PE, Intramural & Varsity Sports - 15,000+ students
- Alexandria Youth Sports – 10,000+
- Alexandria Adult Sports – 2,500+

Weekday “programming” (school usage):

- ACPS at school sites
- Commonwealth at Simpson
- St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School at Fort Ward
- Alexandria Country Day School at Four Mile
- Ireton HS at Witter & Four Mile

High School Athletics/Private Rentals

- Public & Private School Sport Participants (ie. TCW, BI, etc)
- Indoor Gym rentals (ie. Pickleball, Yoga, etc)

Additional facility space is needed to meet the core needs of programming. Without additional field and court space ASA will have to cut programming hours, limit participants, hope for access to fields outside of Alexandria City (West Potomac, RFK, etc), or a combination of these variables.

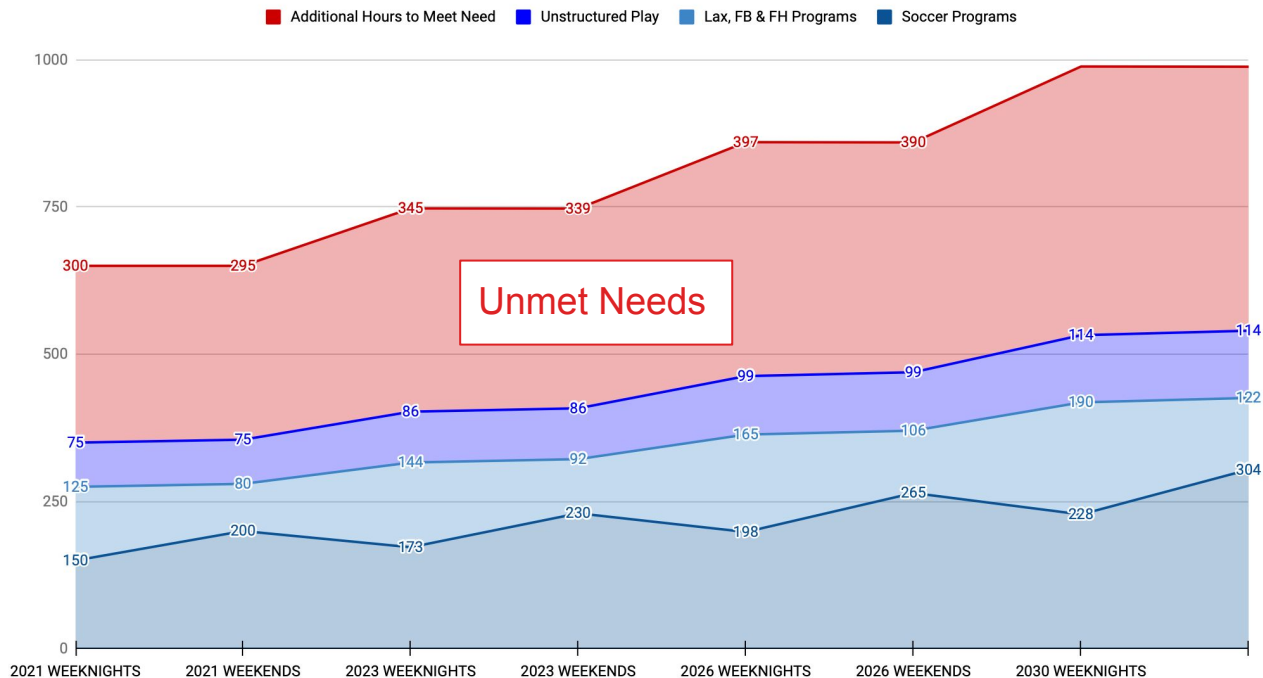
Athletic Field Needs

Rectangular Field Planning Timeline City of Alexandria										
KEY	OFFLINE	TBD	OPEN							
FIELD	2021 July-Dec	2022 Jan-June	2022 July-Dec	2023 Jan-June	2023 July-Dec	2024 Jan-June	2024 July-Dec	2025 Jan-June	2025 July-Dec	
Witter 1 Field						OFFLINE				
Witter 2 Field						OFFLINE				
Limerick Field										
Ben Brenman Park	OFFLINE									
Fort Ward Field										
Minnie Howard Field		OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	
Hammond Field										
Armistead Boothe Park	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	TBD	TBD						
Jefferson Houston Field								OFFLINE	OFFLINE	
Simpson 1 Field										
Simpson 2 Field										
GW 1 Field						TBD	TBD			
GW 2 Field										
Four Mile Field										
Joseph Hensley Park										
Douglas MacArthur Field	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	Phase I - does not include rectangular				Phase 2?	TBD	TBD	
Patrick Henry Field	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE	OFFLINE			
Stevenson Park						OFFLINE	OFFLINE			
AC High School	OFFLINE									

The City is undergoing many improvements to schools and park facilities closing existing play spaces. This trend will continue as other schools are improved over the next 10-15 years. The City is way behind on improvements making it imperative to invest now to avoid future catastrophic shortages.

Rectangular Field Needs

Rectangular Field Capacity (average weekly hours in-season)
City of Alexandria - 10 Year Planning



This chart depicts rectangular field capacity with an estimate of hours needed (5% increase per year) over the next 10 years.

In Spring 2022:

- Weeknight Hours Short: **-296.5 hours** per week
- Weekend Hours Short: **-92.5 hours** per week

The City needs additional facility space for unstructured play.

Current Field & Court Status

The City's primary roles:

- Provide and **maintain the space** to recreate. ie. Facility Development
- **Connect the community** to internally run and externally run programs
- **Minimize barriers** to participation | facility, cost, location, diversity of programs
- **Gold standard program quality**

Since 2006 RPCA & ACPS has added or improved six rectangular multi-use fields.

- Jefferson Houston Elementary field (no lights)
- Hammond Middle School Field (no lights)
- Brenman Park Field (w/ lights)
- Witter Complex (two fields w/ lights)
- Fort Ward Field w/ lights
- TC lights (limited access)

Additionally, RPCA has converted five hard court surfaces to multi-sport courts suitable for futsal.

- Powhatan Court
- Four Mile Court
- William Ramsay Rec Center Courts (three)

Based on annual capacity calculations, these improvements added 3,000 programming hours on soccer turf fields and nearly 2,000 programming hours on outdoor futsal courts annually!

The RPCA 2006 Master Plan for Athletic fields calculated 1,988 soccer participants (ages 12+) and 535 junior soccer participants (ages 6-11).

Current proposed facility improvements can not support these participants.

Partnership Opportunities

Sport group partners provide the following areas of community support:

- **Money** - contribute beyond the programming costs to offset CIP and operational costs
- **Scholarship** - remove barriers to participation including financial
- **Management** - assist in scheduling and maximizing benefit of facility
- **Program options** – soccer, futsal, summer camps, leagues
- **Curriculum** – age appropriate curriculum to develop the whole person
- **Coaching** - trained and supported volunteer & professional
- **Registration** – registration management system, database and credit card processing
- **Insurance** - General, injury, workers comp, and event specific
- **Staffing** – hiring, training and providing equipment
- **Marketing** – website, online advertisements, PR placements, social media, flyers and more
- **Equipment** – goals (regulation and small sided), tents, benches, balls, cones, pinnies, training equipment, practice equipment for coaches and more.
- **Community Outreach** - work to encourage participation through various forms of outreach



High Impact Solution - Simpson

The factors that are most critical for success include collaborative strategic planning, communication to understand roles & responsibilities, financial planning & oversight, and usage/maintenance execution once installed.

Overarching results of the proposed Eugene Simpson Park development project:

- Improved city-wide rectangular field infrastructure to support ongoing development projects (ie. Patrick Henry, Minnie Howard, etc).
- Expanded full-size rectangular field capacity.
- 200% increase in weeknight programmable hours and community use at Eugene Simpson Park rectangular fields.
- 30% increase in weekend programmable hours and community use at Eugene Simpson Park rectangular fields.
- Opportunity for a nationally recognized complex that supports a comprehensive amount of school sports and community infrastructure needs.



Proposed Partnership | Simpson Soccer Field



- * maximize artificial turf area
 - flexible layouts
 - warm up areas
- * minimize natural grass area
 - reduces maintenance
- * concrete walkways
 - ADA compliance
 - maintenance access
- * pavilion
 - enhances entry
 - focal point for events
- * new entry
 - encourages parking on Monroe and Main Line



Improve Eugene Simpson Park “Soccer” with two (2) synthetic turf fields and lights.

Eugene Simpson Park is currently approved for lights and evening programming as current ASA soccer programs take place until dark and baseball programming continues under field lights until 10pm.

This Eugene Simpson Park development project will generate a sizable community impact to address the growing need for field space alongside continuing to build the City of Alexandria & ACPS as nationally recognized entities for education, recreation and community.

SIMPSON SOCCER FIELDS

PROPOSED ARTIFICIAL TURF
& LIGHTING
April 2021

Hammond Fieldhouse & Wellness Center

Impactful Daytime School Uses

- 4 classrooms w/ digital whiteboards, flexible furniture & storage for the furniture (easy breakdown for alternative evening use)
- 1 dance/yoga room
- A crossfit, weight and performance room
- Training room w/ physical therapy assets
- Fieldhouse for PE classes

Impactful Evening & Weekend Community Uses

Fieldhouse

November to March - Court sports including

Indoor track, Futsal, basketball, tennis, volleyball, baseball/softball batting cages

April to October - field sports including

Soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, and batting cages

Wellness Center

Recreational classes of yoga, dance, gymnastics, exercise and more!

Economic Benefit Opportunities

Host national tournaments in futsal, volleyball, basketball and pickleball.

Hammond Site Plan w/ Fieldhouse & Wellness Extension

