

## **13.0 PARKLANDS**

Chapter 13 describes parklands and other recreational facilities within proximity to the proposed LRT alignment. This chapter discusses the project's effects on public and private parklands. Chapter 14 documents the "use" of these facilities where they are publicly owned.

### **13.1 Applicable Legal Authority**

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, 49 U.S.C. Section 303, declares that it is national policy to make a special effort to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside, publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife or waterfowl refuges, or any historic sites of national, state, or local significance. A Section 4(f) statement is prepared when a transportation project has the potential to use land from a publicly-owned park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or any historic site that is listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Section 4(f) permits the use of such land for a transportation project only when the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has determined that there is no reasonable or prudent alternative to such use and the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the resource resulting from such use.

### **13.2 Affected Environment**

This section identifies parklands and recreational areas protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act and all other parkland resources. As shown in Figure 13-1, there are two publicly owned parks, three Community/Recreation Centers and two public pools located within the study area. There are no federally- or state-owned parks or other recreational facilities located within the study area.

#### **13.2.1 Section 4(f) Parkland Resources**

##### **A. MacArthur Memorial Park**

MacArthur Memorial Park, owned by the City of Norfolk, is a small 0.37 acre park that is managed and maintained by the MacArthur Memorial Foundation. It is situated just north of Plume Street and is adjacent to the proposed LRT alignment. The park is designed for passive recreation with several park

benches and a public fountain and plaza, also maintained by the MacArthur Memorial Foundation, on the south side of Plume Street.

## **B. Town Point Park**

Town Point Park, owned by the City of Norfolk, is a 7 acre waterfront park located between Waterside Drive and the Nauticus Maritime Center, adjacent to the Elizabeth River. The park is designed for passive recreation, but also is the site for numerous local events and festivals.

## **C Community Facilities and Public Pools**

The following Norfolk community/recreation centers provide a variety of education and recreation based activities including: before and after school activities, senior citizen programs, and indoor and outdoor active recreation.

- Young Terrace Community Center
- Grandy Village Recreation Center
- Ingleside Recreation Center
- Northside Pool
- Chesterfield Pool (Seasonal)

## **D. Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuge Areas**

There are no publicly owned wildlife or waterfowl refuge areas in the project study area.

### **13.2.2 Non-Section 4(f) Parkland Resources**

Non-Section 4(f) resources include the second stage of the Elizabeth River Trail, which is currently in the conceptual design stage of development. The existing part of the trail is outside of the LRT study area. The second stage of this multi-use trail, shown on Figure 13-2, would begin in the vicinity of Colley and Southampton Avenues and would follow Southampton Avenue in an easterly direction to Brambleton Avenue and cross over the Hague, following the south side of Brambleton Avenue to Botetourt Street, where the trail would turn southward. From here, the trail would follow the city streets, running as close as possible to the Elizabeth River, until it reaches Waterside drive, where the trail would leave the street system and run along the river's edge. The trail would then cross under I-264/I-464 Berkley Bridge, heading eastward and follow Water Street to a terminus at Harbor Park.

The land on which the Elizabeth River Trail would run is publicly owned, however, because specific alignment plans are not in place for the Elizabeth River Trail and the proposed trail is not designated on any official map, the Federal Transit Administration has determined that the proposed LRT project precedes the trail project. Section 4(f) cannot be applied to a non-existent trail whose specific location is not yet known.

## 13.3 Environmental Impacts

The following is an assessment of the impact of the proposed project on parklands identified in the study area. As shown below, the LRT project would not result in a “use” of Section 4(f) protected resources.

### 13.3.1 No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative there would be no impact to parks or other recreational facilities in the study area.

### 13.3.2 TSM Alternative

Under the TSM Alternative there would be no impact to parks or other recreational facilities in the study area.

### 13.3.3 Preferred Alternative

The effect of the Preferred Alternative on parkland resources was evaluated with regard to use of property, noise impacts, and visual impacts.

#### A. Section 4(f) Parkland Resources

##### *MacArthur Memorial Park*

The centerline of the Preferred Alternative would run approximately 40 feet from the nearest usable space in MacArthur Memorial Park. As a result, the project would not require use of land on which MacArthur Memorial Park, the adjacent plaza or fountain, is situated. As such, a 4(f) statement is not required.

Project-related noise would not have an impact on activities that occur at this park. Visual impacts to the park would include the embedded tracks and the overhead catenary wires and support poles adjacent to the park.

##### *Town Point Park*

Town Point Park is located several blocks from the proposed LRT alignment. As a result, the Preferred Alternative would have no impacts on the park.

##### *Young Terrace Community Center*

Young Terrace Community Center is located on Whitaker Lane, just south of Virginia Beach Boulevard. This facility would not be impacted by the proposed LRT project.

### ***Grandy Village Recreation Center***

Grandy Village Recreation Center is located on Kimball Terrace, south of I-264, approximately three blocks from the proposed LRT project. As a result, the LRT Build Alternative would have no impact on this facility.

### ***Ingleside Recreation Center***

Ingleside Recreation Center is located on Ingleside Road, approximately six blocks north of the proposed LRT project. As a result, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this facility.

### ***Northside Pool***

The Northside Pool is located on Tidewater Drive, north of Brambleton Avenue and approximately four blocks north of the proposed LRT project. As a result, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this facility.

### ***Chesterfield Pool (Seasonal)***

The Chesterfield Pool is located on Westminster Avenue, approximately 320 feet from the proposed LRT alignment. I-264 is located between the Chesterfield Pool and the Preferred Alternative. As a result, the Preferred Alternative would have no impact on this facility.

## **B. Elizabeth River Trail (Non-Section 4(f) Resources)**

The second stage of the proposed Elizabeth River Trail would cross the LRT alignment at the existing grade crossings of Southampton Avenue and Botetourte Street. The trail would end at Harbor Park, immediately south of the LRT alignment. These grade crossings will be protected with signs and signals to make pedestrians and trail users aware of the LRT crossing.

## **13.4 Mitigation**

The Preferred Alternative would increase noise levels and add a new visual component to MacArthur Memorial Park, which is protected by Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, however there would be no “use” of this resource. As described in Chapter 7 (Visual Impacts Assessment) and Chapter 9 (Noise and Vibration), all noise and visual impacts would be fully mitigated. While the Elizabeth River Trail is not protected by Section 4(f), Hampton Roads Transit will coordinate with the City of Norfolk to ensure that the design of the Elizabeth River Trail is compatible with the LRT project.