

**McLEAN CITIZENS ASSOCIATION**  
**SUMMARY OF McLEAN AREA GENERAL PARK PRIORITIES**

The items designated below as priorities are listed separately from the “big ticket” Park Bond priorities that should be addressed on a County-wide basis. They do, however, represent significant priorities for the greater McLean Area. In the case of trail items, funding may become available through specially earmarked portions of the Park Bond.

**No-cost redesignation of status and name**

- McLean High School/Saucy Branch Park. This park has recently been evaluated by two consulting firms for long-term planning purposes. The conclusion was that because much of the park lies in a Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area (RPA) and the remainder is largely steep slopes, the park should be “down-zoned” from community park status to neighborhood park status and that much of it be permanently protected. We have entirely agreed with the findings of the consultants’ reports. The one additional thing we have requested is that the name revert to the historic designation of the stream, which forms the defining feature of the park, i.e., Saucy Branch Park and Nature Preserve. It should be noted that the McLean High School has customarily used the park as a field laboratory for its biology classes and such usage would continue to be supported by this change. It should be emphasized that making these changes will cost nothing in terms of additional planning or development money. In addition, several adjacent homeowners associations (HOAs) have already volunteered to provide such cleanup and maintenance as may be required.

**Trail development activities**

- Completion of the Pimmit Run Stream Valley Trail. Completing the Pimmit Run Stream Valley Trail through McLean is the top priority in this category because it will benefit the largest number of our citizens. Much of this trail is already in place, and planning was recently completed for the section between Old Dominion Drive and Brookhaven Drive. Constructing a few stream crossings and acquiring some additional strips of land and trail right-of-way easements are still needed to complete a useable trail through McLean.
- Completion of Other Parts of the McLean Area Trail System. A continuing need is to improve the connectivity of, and complete acquisition and development of missing segments of our trails system, which forms a vital part of our passive recreation facilities. The cost of many of these segments is relatively small but, given the number involved, may become significant in the aggregate. However, improvement of this part of the system can be done incrementally. Moreover, most of the needed planning has already been done by our excellent volunteer

organizations, such as Fairfax Trails and Streams and the Fairfax County Non-Motorized Transportation Committee.

- Scotts Run Park and Difficult Run Park. Both of these parks receive heavy usage equivalent to full-fledged regional parks. The trails, which are a key part of their infrastructure, are significantly deteriorated. This deterioration represents both a useability and a safety issue. Performing the needed maintenance to restore these intra-park trails to adequate condition should be a high priority.
- Potomac Heritage Scenic Trail. This trail, designated by Congress in 1983 along both sides of the river, is the only National Scenic Trail to pass through an urban area. Its authorized route runs from Great Falls to Arlington, through the length of McLean, and is already complete along the river inside the beltway. The PNHST will go through Dranesville District Park and reach Great Falls Park along a route yet to be determined. The primary costs of McLean's part of the trail would not be borne by FCPA, but we recommend up to \$50,000 of planning money for it, in view of the trail's significance. This funding would help determine the best route and to integrate FCPA's McLean sections with those of other agencies, such as VDOT and the National Park Service.

#### **Other development activities**

- Spring Hill Park. A revised Master Plan has recently been adopted for this park. It calls for extensive rework of the parking, which has been an increasing problem for a number of years, and relocation of some of the ball fields on parcel 1C, as well as construction of a new baseball diamond and passive recreation facilities on parcel 1D. Clearly, the full extent of the changes proposed will take a considerable period of time and incur significant costs. Revamping the parking on parcel 1C to alleviate the current overcrowding and relocation of one of the park entrances for greater traffic safety are by far the most immediate priorities. Although the revised Master Plan included 64 temporary parking spaces (at an estimated cost of \$5000 per space) on an area reserved for future expansion of the Recreation Center building, construction of these should be delayed until FCPA and the park's users can assess whether such parking is actually necessary. To do otherwise would not be a prudent use of scarce FCPA resources. The other changes projected for parcel 1C should be addressed at a future time but are less urgent. Finally, changes and developments on parcel 1D would be the final phase of implementation. Availability of funds will necessarily represent the pacing consideration for development activities at this park.