



FY2020 – FY2024 Strategic Plan

January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 - Review

Vision - “A leader in cultivating exceptional leisure experiences in our community.”

Mission - “To provide an enriched quality of life for the community through the preservation of natural, cultural and historical resources, enhancement of parks and outdoor spaces, and promotion of a variety of leisure experiences.”

Evaluation covers items outlined in the Strategic Plan that have been designated as short term and ongoing action items. See the full Strategic Plan document for complete listing of Recommendations and Actions for future years <https://www.stmarysmd.com/docs/strategicplan.pdf>

Goal 1: Provide a variety of quality recreation, leisure and educational experiences for the public to enjoy		
Recommendation	Action(s)	Progress
Enhance existing programs and develop new programs, activities and events that are supported by appropriate fees, grants and other revenue sources.	Update the process for evaluating programs and events. Utilize customer feedback to offer new programs that match current trends and popular requests throughout the year.	The Department continues to utilize printed and online evaluation surveys, and comments received via social media, to gather feedback from participants. Example: Feedback has resulted in a new program - Fling golf and additional Junior Golf offerings.
Recruit and retain effective and self-motivated staff members.	Work with the Department of Human Resources (HR) to explore monetary and other retention strategies and develop plans for recruiting and retaining a competent work force.	Discussions were held with HR regarding recruitment and retention. Example: Staff worked with HR to develop Museum Assistant position to provide another classification option to attract experienced/motivated personnel.
Maintain and enhance staff training opportunities.	Develop schedule of annual training opportunities for all staff. Budget for ongoing educational opportunities/encourage professional certifications and continuing education.	Examples: Seven staff members are working toward Certified Park & Recreation Professional (CPRP) certification. Hourly staff training opportunities are also being expanded beginning with increasing the number of Certified Pool Operators.
Continually seek to enhance existing partnerships, while developing new community partnerships, and sponsorships to broaden program and event offerings.	Identify appropriate methods for advertising and research innovative ways for garnering sponsorship support.	Staff is working to develop new methods to obtain additional sponsorship and community support through various advertising mediums. Example: Researching ideas such as virtual golf tournaments and other internet events with associated sponsorship or advertising.

Goal 2: Create new recreational amenities as needed to address growing community needs

Recommendation	Action(s)	Status
Seek to acquire land suitable for the development of public water access facilities and parkland.	<p>Develop ad hoc groups to discuss and prioritize recreational space needs.</p> <p>Utilize Program Open Space (POS) funds and seek other funding sources for purchase and/or development of available park property that meet the level of service goals.</p> <p>Develop an aggressive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that addresses level of service goals for property acquisition.</p>	<p>The Department has recently worked with several groups related to space needs. Example: Sports Complex Study Group.</p> <p>POS Funds are anticipated to be used for the upcoming Lancaster Park playground replacement.</p> <p>See the approved FY21 CIP link</p>
Develop a large, outdoor sports complex in a central location within the county. Such a facility should include multiple athletic fields and associated infrastructure capable of supporting league/tournament play for field-based sports.	<p>Partner with the Maryland Stadium Authority to develop an economic & market conditions study.</p> <p>Engage with youth sports leaders to determine 5-10-year participation plan.</p>	<p>The CIP includes a proposed Sports Complex project (RP1904) which is being studied with the Stadium Authority. In addition to the Sports Complex, three Multi-Purpose Turf Fields (RP1704) were completed in FY20 (Chaptico, Chancellor's Run and Lancaster Parks). The FY21 CIP proposes upgrading three additional fields with artificial turf as a result of current market conditions and meetings with sports leagues.</p>
Develop master plans for new parks and facilities.	<p>Utilize the approved Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan (LPPRP) as a guide for master planning recommendations for new parks and facilities; LPPRP.</p> <p>Develop master plans consistent with approved CIP, including feasibility study for large, multiple use recreation/community center.</p>	<p>Consistent with the LPPRP, the firm of A. Morton Thomas & Associates is conducting master planning services for the Shannon Farm waterfront property located in Lexington Park. A solicitation for Master Planning and Architect and Engineering for Snow Hill Park (RP1901) will be completed in FY21.</p>
Consider the development of a countywide bicycling and pedestrian plan, and associated steering committee, to guide the development of a connected and sustainable trails network.	<p>Work with MDOT for consistency with state's long-range Transportation Plan.</p>	<p>The Department continues to participate in the Tri-County Council's Bicycle & Pedestrian Infrastructure Advisory Committee (BIAC) meetings to promote non-motorized transportation in region.</p>



New playground at Dorsey Park - 2020

Goal 3: Enhance existing parks, trails, golf course, historic sites, waterfront areas and recreational facilities

Recommendation	Action(s)	Status
Ensure facilities and equipment are maintained to all appropriate safety standards and regulations.	Revise the current Park Operations and Maintenance Plan to include park maintenance schedule; waterfront sites maintenance schedule; and equipment maintenance and replacement schedule.	Revisions are currently being considered to the current Parks Operations Manual. Example: Work is underway to develop a consolidated document to include parks policies & procedures and maintenance and equipment replacement schedules.
Explore new ways to measure attendance, participation and visitation for parks, facilities and events.	Install counters, push buttons, motion detectors, or other means where feasible to assist in measuring attendance and visitation at parks and facilities.	Counters are installed at museum site piers and staff is exploring additional means to measure attendance. Example: Parks Division is examining data from rapid flash beacons on Three Notch Trail to estimate the number of trail users.
Make recommendations to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County for park and facility upgrades.	Assess current facilities and meet with user groups to determine necessary improvements and enhancements to lighting, playgrounds, fields, parking and gymnasiums, as well as ADA upgrades.	Several recommendations were made and approved for FY2021; see project RP2103 link
Collaborate with state and county partners in efforts to better inform the public of the total inventory of parks, waterfront public landings and other facilities throughout the county.	Develop new or update existing marketing and promotional materials for existing parks, public landings and facilities to include print, signage, web and other media sources. Capitalize on tourism/recreational opportunities afforded by historic trails and byways in which the museums and parks are included.	Staff has held discussions with local tourism partners – including VisitStMarys, on new marketing efforts. Examples: Electronic signage advertising the golf course may serve to attract visitors to facility. The Museum Division continues to meet regularly with local and state partners to promote historic sites, byways and events.



Lancaster Park Lights & Turf Field – 2020

Goal 4: Foster the preservation of our museums and natural, historical and cultural resources

Recommendation	Action(s)	Status
<p>Continue to protect, enhance, improve and update the county-managed museum sites and other appropriate county-owned sites.</p>	<p>Complete the renovations and enhancements at county-managed museum sites as detailed in the approved Capital Improvements Program (CIP).</p>	<p>Work on several museum projects is underway. Examples: Work on exhibit installation at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum has begun (RP1203); work is moving forward with consultants on the scope of work for the St. Clement's Island Museum renovations (RP1401).</p>
<p>Develop and promote programs that will improve visitor experiences and encourage preservation of the county's heritage culture and rural character.</p>	<p>Promote local heritage awareness through programs, collections and awareness activities (such as an "In Your Own Backyard" program; stories; and work with the local Tourism agency, Visit St. Mary's, on focused marketing campaigns).</p> <p>Collaborate with the St. Mary's County Public Library, Historical Society, and other area museum staff to work on joint membership, marketing, and programming.</p>	<p>The Museum Division has developed several new awareness programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples: The Facebook Wayback Wednesday program features lesser known, but important events and people from St. Mary's County history. The Throwback Thursday program features items from collections not currently on display.</p> <p>The Division meets regularly with other museum partners to collaborate on projects. Example: Joint advertising has been done for a number of programs and the museums have worked together at events.</p>
<p>Assess the county museum site collections and holdings.</p>	<p>Promote preservation efforts by sharing the Museum's Preservation Plan for all large assets with the public; hold community meetings; and offer programs that highlight what the Museum Division does behind the scenes.</p> <p>Conduct regular collections assessments as specified in the Museum's Collections Management Plan.</p> <p>Hold Community Days at facilities whereby citizens can have objects and artifacts evaluated.</p>	<p>Examples: The Museum Division held meetings with residents of Lighthouse Road to inform of plans at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum. Similar meetings will be held as plans progress at the St. Clements Island Museum. Business leaders have been invited to both sites and have toured behind the scenes.</p> <p>Collections are assessed annually for condition, as well as for filling gaps in certain areas of interest. Conservation plans are then prepared and implemented.</p> <p>Examples: Community Days and the annual Appraiser's Fair have been enhanced, generating greater interest in collecting and donating to the museums.</p>
<p>Promote environmentally sensitive areas as well as opportunities for passive recreation and nature interpretation.</p>	<p>Create and maintain trails on county property.</p> <p>Promote increase use of water taxi, public piers, and kayak launches via improved marketing and special offers.</p>	<p>The Department has several trail projects underway. Examples: Three Notch Trail Phase Seven is at 95% design stage. Museum Division is working with MD DNR on trails and outdoor recreation opportunities at the St. Clement's Island site.</p> <p>Examples: Summer 2020 special promotions included the water taxi Father's Day special and offerings at Piney Point lighthouse kayak launch.</p>

Goal 5: Promote community, stakeholder, governmental agency and staff engagement and participation through partnerships and other innovative means

Recommendation	Action(s)	Status
Continue to involve citizens, agencies and staff in the planning process for development of new park and facility plans and visionary documents.	Increase efforts for awareness of public meetings, especially where citizen input is sought, on the R&P and County website, other applicable agency websites, and social media.	Examples: Input sought on the recent Sports Complex Study with Maryland Stadium Authority. Public input and participation will be solicited on website and social media for the Shannon Farm master plan.
Work to eliminate barriers to participation by promoting the many benefits of parks and recreation.	Ensure information is accessible for individuals of all abilities.	Information is distributed through printed guides, social media platforms, website, direct emails, and text messaging to specific user groups. Example: The website is formatted to be viewed by individuals with visual disabilities and has been simplified for easier navigation on devices (cellphone, tablet, desktop).
Make use of new and emerging technology for promotion and to improve the registration and payment processes.	Continually update the R&P website in order to remain efficient and engaging.	Examples: Recreation Division recently added a Pinterest page which categorizes topics and activities providing ideas for users. During COVID-19 closures, a mass deployment of virtual resources was promoted through the website and across social media platforms. Golf Course Division is exploring updating the point-of-sale system within the next two years.

For More Information:

www.stmarysmd.com/recreate/capra

