

1.4 EXISTING PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM

Introduction

All successful parks and public spaces share common qualities:

- They are easily accessible;
- They are comfortable and have an attractive image;
- They allow users of all ages to engage in a variety of activities and allow people to gather and meet one another; and
- They are sustainable – meaning that they help meet existing needs while not compromising the needs of future generations.

Considering these qualities, Barth Associates, in collaboration with VLPRA staff, evaluated the Authority's parks based on five categories and 36 sub-categories. The Authority's premier park - Freedom Park - was used as a benchmark for the evaluation of the park system. Evaluation categories included Proximity, Access & Linkages; Comfort & Image; Uses, Activities & Sociability; Environmental Sustainability; and Buildings/Architecture. Following are the metrics considered for each category.



Freedom Park

Source: <http://vlpra.com/199/Freedom-Park>

PROXIMITY, ACCESS & LINKAGES

Visibility from a distance

Can one easily see into the park?

Ease of walking to the park

Can someone walk directly into the park safely and easily?

Transit access

Is there a transit stop located within 1/4 mile of the park that connects to the park?

Clarity of information/signage

Is there signage that identifies the park, and/or signage that provides additional information for users?

ADA Compliance

Does the site generally appear to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) laws for accessibility?

Lighting

Is the park lighted appropriately for use at night? (if applicable)