



RIVANNA

CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

Riverview Restoration Community Input Results - Spring 2022

Profile of respondents.....	2
Question 1: <i>What features of Riverview Park are most important to you?</i>	3
Question 2: <i>What concerns do you have about the environmental and river access conditions at Riverview Park?</i>	3-4
Question 3: <i>Given these concerns, what would you like to see changed or improved?</i>	4-6
Question 4: <i>What is your vision for how the riverbank and river access area should look at Riverview Park?</i>	6-8
Community meeting responses.....	9-10

Profile of Respondents

Number of kiosk responses: 87

Number of online form responses: 33

TOTAL: 120

In the past year, how often have you visited Riverview Park?	
I go most weeks	47
I go most days	31
4-10 times	25
1-3 times	13
Once a month	1
Not from this area	1
I've never been	1

What activities do you do at Riverview Park?	
Walking/jogging	95
Observing wildlife and nature	79
Boating/tubing	42
Walking dogs	40
Swimming/wading	36
Using playground equipment	32
Biking	31
Fishing	4
Picnicking/eating at tables	2
Invasive removal, tree care	1
Looking for gems	1
Photography	1

Where do you live?	
A neighborhood close to Riverview Park	59
A different part of the City of Charlottesville	34
A nearby county (Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene)	23
Outside of this area	5

1. What features of Riverview Park are most important to you?

MOST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Trails and connectivity to local trail systems
Safe river access (for boating and swimming)
Natural landscapes (trees and native plants)
Water quality/health of the river

MODERATELY FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Scenic views of river
Wildlife
Park maintenance (trash, cleanliness, etc.)

LEAST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Dog walking
Peacefulness
Playground
Park safety
Natural floodplain restoration
Shaded areas
Community feel
Parking
Erosion prevention
Environmental education
Family friendliness
Climbing
Park accessibility

2. What concerns do you have about the environmental and river access conditions at Riverview Park?

MOST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Erosion and flood damage
Steep/unsafe river access
Trash
Water quality and pollution
Invasive plants

MODERATELY FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Trees falling into water
Park overcrowding/overuse
Development close to river

LEAST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Trees being cut down
Loss or disruption of natural habitats
Trail maintenance
Dog waste
Park maintenance

Wildlife protection
Park safety
Poison ivy
Off-leash dogs
Parking
Poor water drainage
Sustainability of proposed changes
Riverbank stabilization using native trees and shrubs
Climate change
Agricultural runoff
Water safety
Stormwater damage
Accessibility of park
Trees overtaking native plants
Riptides

3. Given these concerns, what would you like to see changed or improved?

MOST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Bank stabilization to reduce erosion

- Use natural erosion control
- I love the renderings of a natural stream - overlook and stairs leading down
- Bank erosion needs more planning

Invasive removal

- Dedicated program to eradicate non-native invasive species

River clean ups to improve water quality

Improved trash management

- More trash cans along trail
- Open registration for volunteer litter removal
- Better dog waste clean up

Education and human awareness

- More information for visitors on how area is being conserved
- More advice about where people and dogs shouldn't go
- More publicity to local households not to use fertilizers, etc. and to plant native plants
- Educational signage and physical deterrents to decrease unofficial trails
- More focus at the County/City level on understanding and mitigating erosion runoff, and focusing on water quality

More native plants

- The problem is how to water plants in this kind of terrain during summer
- Preserve nature

Improved access to river

- Extra steps and ropes, ramps

- Safe and kid-friendly
- Multiple designated access/viewing areas for boating/tubing, fishing, and swimming
- Better managed river access points
- Access that can withstand different water levels
- More access where impact is minimal

MODERATELY FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Improved trail maintenance

- Wider trails
- Extend trail
- Nothing motorized on trail

Loss of trees

- Replant trees when they're cut down
- Could fallen trees and branches be chipped once a year to create a mulch layer that would protect the soil?

Build a bridge over river

Surrounding development

- Close down industrial site next to river
- Eminent domain all adjacent property and re-wild it
- Zoning for any new building needs to ensure distance and a well-planted buffer zone
- Reduce stormwater runoff by implementing environmental requirements for business and construction near river or restrict development nearby

LEAST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Floodplain restoration

- Purposeful plantings and permeable surfaces

Limited dog use

- Dogs should be under owner control and on leash only and at all times

More benches and access points close to river

- Cut down brush that blocks views

Enhance habitat for wildlife

- Create spaces advantageous to local wildlife at night
- "Designated waters" approach to fishing be applied to the stretch of the river at the local level like you find from VDGIF on some trout stream - strategy to help protect the fish population but also enhance the optics and visibility as a special stretch of water with particular emphasis on conservation and thoughtful recreation -- e.g. catch and release only, single barbless hooks only, fly fishing only, etc.

More dog access

- Build dog park area

More lawn care and weed eating

Alternative shelter for homeless under bridge

- People who are undeterred from camping/residing in the park and along the trail system have created an unsafe and trash-laden park environment

Remove rocks from river bed

That the city doesn't have to pump tons of extra money after each storm to get it back to it's installed state

Limit park access to maintain character

Quieter, more civilized behavior in park and on river

Other park specific concerns

- Lifeguard or life saving devices
- Limit bike speed
- Shorter swings at park
- Shortening the boat carry distance between parking and launch site would be beneficial for boating and disabled communities to establish equitable river access
- A shuttle from downtown that exists exclusively to make runs back and forth from Riverview during weekends in the spring and summer months
- More parking
- Lighting
- Spread out amenities in city
- Add bathroom facilities

4. What is your vision for how the riverbank and river access area should look at Riverview Park?

Specific examples

- Native meadow near Rivanna River Company is a great example for keeping/reclaiming native habitats around Riverview
- At least one area with open view of the river - raised with places to sit and a bit of a clearing. It would likely involve a structure of some point to withstand the water levels, but I think it would be a great way for folks to enjoy the area without having to contribute to erosion by walking down to the rivers edge.
- <https://www.roanokeoutside.com/volunteer/build-kayak-launch/>
- <https://www.loc.gov/item/2015633655/>

MOST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

Keep as natural as possible

- No retaining walls or walkways
- Healthy ecosystem
- More native plants to help with erosion
- Low profile
- Natural wood (no metals or plastics - should blend in)

- Large boulders, stones and riprap sort of measures to stabilize areas along the river bank
- Giant boulders to create a wide open and shallow slope to access the river
- Close off/stabilize eroding access points not to be used
- Like natural, but understand you may need to stop erosion with artificial means

Easier and safer access

- Multiple access points where children and elderly can get close to the river
- Better boat access
- Similar to Darden Towe Park access (shorter boat carry distance)
- Park runs full span of the paved walkway, and would allow for more river frontage and access points to sit and view the river
- The put in and take out for kayaks and canoes need to be made easier
- More gradual launch
- Gradual entrance points to access the river
- Put-in with steps
- River should be accessible to people, dogs, and boats in separate locations

MODERATELY FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

I like how it is now

I like the projections

- I think the proposal would be great for the community, increasing river access for area residents

Clear invasive plants

- More invasive mitigation to have the area be more open and accessible vs. feeling like a jungle in the summer

Improved wildlife habitat

- A garden for insects/butterflies
- Wildlife checkpoints to see if I can see something
- Bat houses

More beaches

A bridge

- To other side from Wool Factory, not Riverview
- At Woolen Mills and/or Darden to connect trails on both sides of the river. Perhaps a "permanent" nature walk/exhibit about the ecosystem.
- Install a foot/bike bridge to connect Riverview Trail to Darden Towe Park
- Trail with natural surface, exercise stations

More benches along river

Clean water

LEAST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED

More park amenities (i.e. bathrooms, picnic shelters, pavilion)

No bridge

- Expensive bridge planned is a terrible, crowd-filled idea

Expand park

- Expand further upstream towards Darden Towe
- Parks on both sides of river

Reinforced banks**Off-leash days for dogs Mon - Fri****Less trash****Don't turn Rivanna into a swimming hole****Uniform seating standard for benches and tables, including memorial benches****Bamboo forest****Fenced dog park**

Community Input Meeting Responses

Number of community input meeting attendees: 45

What are your hopes and concerns about the planned work at Riverview Park?

Hopes

- Provide safe access to river
- Improve and maintain the health of banks/water quality
- Mimic natural bank shape
- Offer excellent natural sciences learning opportunities for school kids
- Increase awareness of impacts of erosion and de-stabilization
- Eliminate tons of sedimentation
- Relocate trees if possible – preserve the efforts of past group
- Take into account the paved trail and how it causes a preferred path for flood flow
- Allow the community to participate in restoration activities
- Consideration the history of the dam removal and its effects
- Keep the trail and park without having to pull everything all the way back to the parking lot
- Accessibility for neighborhoods and all people
- Ecological benefit

Concerns

- Keep impervious surfaces away from streambanks
- Invasive species, particularly vines
- Tree loss and interest in preserving trees where possible
- Longevity of the restoration given increasing public access and interest
- Long term implications
- Encourage recreation while doing so responsibly in a way that does not impact the restoration
- Projects on large rivers tend to get blown out - being super careful to plan for 1000-year flood
- Some trepidation about ease of river access for the inexperienced

Other

- Bank stabilization is more important than keeping the trail
- Early discussions are a good element of planning

Questions

- How can people enjoy the park without adding cars?
- How can Burley Moran students get involved?
- Who will pay for all this?
- Given the size of the watershed and the hundreds of miles of bank, how much does this really help with the holistic system? Perhaps it would be best and most honest to focus on the hyperlocal benefits, like public access.
- What funding sources are being explored for actual construction?
- How is sediment/siltation managed during construction?
- What is the timeline for parts of the park access being impacted?
- What are the roles of the trees? Good roots vs bad roots?
- How will the bank stabilization work – like steps or a smooth slope?
- How will the bridge and this restoration work/interact?
- How will the rest of the river be affected? Will the erosion get spread to other locations?

Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for RCA and City for this work?

- Avoid fish spawning season and bird nesting season
- Be careful to plan for 1000-year flood
- With climate change, we need really well stabilized banks
- This isn't the only rough bank in the watershed – this is just a start
- Reduce/minimize impervious cover
- Have clear timelines, as there will be lots of moving parts
- More public programming to help folks feel more invested – get community involved to create ownership of project
- Budget in interpretation signs
- Monitor structures and plants regularly after the project is done
- Monitor water quality before/after
- Look at Richmond and other cities for examples of river access
- Bring volunteers in to do projects now to get buy in early
- Ridgeview Park in Waynesboro may provide some good inspiration for recreational elements of this project - kids and adults love getting into the South River there
- Consider making a commitment to replace 2x as many trees as are removed (or something like that) since folks are quite concerned about tree loss; also a commitment from a specific responsible entity to do maintenance of the trees and structures for 5 - 10 years (and maintenance plan)
- Get pictures from the river to show what the erosion really looks like, because many people don't get to see that
- Share effort with folks beyond the local area (entire Chesapeake Watershed)
- Hire locally
- Offer internships and maybe paid work to high school students
- Have reliable contractors

Of the practices you were just shown which ones would like to see considered for Riverview Park?

- Whatever the models decide will work
- River bank restoration
- Replant trees
- Could another access to the river be added downstream of the boat launch that would sort of be a beach area for kids
- Additional recreational access for kayaks and canoes separate from access for swimming/wading