



**DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS
AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

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James B. Spengler
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June 6, 2016

Mayor Allison Silberberg
Vice Mayor Justin M. Wilson
Councilman Willie F. Bailey, Sr.
Councilman John Taylor Chapman
Councilman Timothy B. Lovain
Councilwoman Redella S. Pepper
Councilman Paul C. Smedberg

Re: Taney Avenue Park

CC: City of Alexandria Planning Commission

Dear Mayor Silberberg and City Council Members:

The Park and Recreation Commission submits this letter to enthusiastically support the plan for Taney Avenue Park. The plan implements the vision set forth in the Neighborhood Parks Plan developed by the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA) and presented to you in March. The improvements will provide significant benefits to the West End and leverage outside partnerships to do so. We ask you to approve the plan.

RPCA's Neighborhood Parks Improvement Plan was the culmination of a year-long process to develop a vision for 17 mid-size "neighborhood" parks. RPCA used community input and recreational needs assessments to propose a set of concepts and priorities for each park. Over time, RPCA will develop more detailed, park-specific plans based on those concepts.

The Taney Park Plan was one of the first plans to move forward, and should be approved without delay. The plan makes important improvements for bike and pedestrian access, adds play facilities and an improved picnic area, and improves park landscaping, all while retaining the existing context of passive use. In a community surrounded by apartment buildings and dense overgrowth, the open field at Taney Park is a place of respite and relaxation. It is retained that way in the plan, but with features that make it more welcoming to the community.

We also applaud RPCA's initiative in using community partnerships to make the Taney Park Plan a reality. RPCA obtained grant funding from a partnership between Running Brooke and Rebuilding Together Alexandria, and Taney Park will be included in upcoming planned September 2016 volunteer build events.

We urge you to approve the Taney Avenue Park Plan.

Sincerely yours,

Jennifer Atkins, Chair, and Judy Coleman, Vice-Chair, on behalf of the

Park and Recreation Commission