Virginia Beach Department of Parks and Recreation

Highlights of the History

January 1956  The Board of Supervisors of Princess Anne County established a Recreation Department and hired the first Director.

July 1957  Summer Playgrounds was the first program established within the Princess Anne County Recreation Department.

January 1963  Princess Anne County became the City of Virginia Beach. The Department's name changed to Department of Parks, Recreation and Physical Education. The physical education aspect of the department was under the supervision of the School Board. The Department had expanded to include one full time employee to assume duties of Maintenance and Athletic Director. An Adult Recreation Program was developed.

September 1963  After-school playground program was established.

January 1965  The Department began to increase capital improvement funding and efforts were directed into acquiring property for future park and recreation sites.

June 1965  Lifeguard services began at the Steel Pier Surfing Area. One lifeguard was patrolling area, and in 1966 expanded to two guards.

May 1966  Red Wing Park opened to the public as the City's first major park.

June 1966  Little Island Beach Park was opened as the first seashore recreation area consisting of 144 acres.

1966  First senior citizen program initiated and held at Seatack Elementary School.

1966  Adult and youth class programs expanded utilizing senior high, junior and elementary schools as well as fire stations and apartment complex community buildings. Programs conducted from the oceanfront to Bayside to Kempsville to Creeds.

1968  First feasibility study conducted by staff on the subject of recreation centers. Site recommendations in the form of general areas were
established.

1969 Lynnhaven Municipal Marina was constructed and opened to the public as the City's first Marina with fifty slips leased out for recreational and commercial boaters.

1970-1971 Programs expanded to include additional classes and programs for adults, youth and senior citizens.

May 1971 Princess Anne Park opened to the public as the City's fourth major park, and currently being used for athletic league activities.

June 1971 Camp Pendleton Surfing Area opened to the public.

July 1971 Red Wing, the first municipal golf course opened.

July 1971 Senior Citizen Clubs participated in the 1st Senior Olympics in Richmond, Virginia. Local Senior Olympics began in 1977.

June 1973 A swimming area opened to the public at the Fort Story Army Base (operated on a Friday-Sunday and holiday only basis).

July 1973 Mount Trashmore Park opened - this park gained national and international attention due to the unique aspects of converting a landfill into a park.

September 1973 The Department took over the operation of the Lynnhaven Municipal Marina, which included operation of a concession and rental of 50 slips.

October 1973 A new Bow Creek Senior Center was added at a local church.

1973 During this period, the Department's name changed to Department of Parks and Recreation; Physical Education separated from the Department and operated by the School Board.

1973 The Department participated heavily in the success of the first Virginia Beach Neptune Festival, supplying manpower, equipment, program leadership and technical advice. Numerous events were held at the new Mount Trashmore Park, including coronation of King Neptune and the first Neptune Festival Fireworks Display.

1973 The City Council approved the construction of the Virginia Beach Recreation Center/Kempsville, funded through General Obligation Bonds. The design firm was selected.
December 1974  The Bayside Senior Citizen Center opened.

May 1975  Seatack Senior Citizen Center opened in a portable building behind Seatack Elementary School.

July 1975  First Annual Folk Arts Festival held at Princess Anne Park. This festival is a celebration of folk arts and traditions.

July 4, 1975  The First Annual Family Fun Day held at the newly opened Mount Trashmore Park. A family oriented event offering entertainment, games and activities for youth and adults; held yearly on July 4th.

September 1975  The first therapeutic recreation activity classes began.

November 1975  Owl Creek Municipal Tennis Center opened - 14 tennis courts, pro shop, and reserved courts.

November 1975  Bow Creek Golf Course acquired and opened to the public.

May 1977  The Virginia Beach Recreation Center/Kempsville opened - the first multi-faceted center with numerous amenities.

September 1977  Fourth Grade Learn-to-Swim program began, designed to teach all fourth graders in Virginia Beach Public Schools to swim. Children bused to the recreation center (Kempsville) and the United Way center where they were given two weeks of instruction.

September 1978  Bayville Farms Park, 66 acres, opened to the public - athletic fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, a specially designed area for the disabled, and an 18 hole disc golf course.

October 1979  Opening of the second community center - Bow Creek Community Recreation Center.

October 1979  Fishing Pier at Little Island Park opened.

April 1980  A grant, requested by Community Development, acquired a portable showmobile with stage and sound system known as M.A.C. (Mobile Activity Center) for Parks and Recreation usage in touring economically disadvantaged target areas of the City.
**December 1982**  Munden Point Park opened to the public - located on the Intracoastal Waterway.

**1986**  A bond referendum was defeated by the voters, which would have paid for the construction and operation of the proposed Great Neck Community Recreation Center.

**1986**  The 30 acre Woodstock Community Park opened.

**1987**  A bond referendum was approved by the voters providing for the construction and operation of three large, multi-faceted community recreation centers and the renovation of the Bow Creek facility.

**1987**  Kempsville Greens Golf Course opened to the public.

**1988**  City Council established a fund to enable the Department to acquire and develop open space and parks. Funding is provided by designation of 7/10 of one cent of the real estate tax.

**April 1988**  The Seatack Community Recreation Center building opened to the public.

**September 1988**  Before School Activity Centers opened to complement the already existing programs of After School and Summer Activity Centers. The Department was able to provide a comprehensive year-round program at all elementary schools to meet the ever-increasing needs of the latchkey child.

**June 1990**  Great Neck Community Recreation Center and Great Neck Park opened to the public.

**May 1991**  Bow Creek Community Recreation Center underwent pool renovation (outdoor to indoor) and addition of gymnasium.

**April 1992**  Bayside Community Recreation Center opened to the public.

**March 1994**  Princess Anne Community Recreation Center opened to the public.

**October 1994**  The City Council approved the Virginia Beach Outdoors Plan.

**April 1996**  Ground breaking for the new Seatack Community Recreation Center.

**1996**  Referendum tax, which was designated for overall operations exclusive to the recreation centers that were part of the Bond Referendum, was extended to include all recreation centers.

**April 1997**  The newly reconstructed Seatack Community Recreation Center opened
May 1997
The Department established the PLAY Team (Promoting Leisure Activities for Youth), an At-Risk Youth Program, which is responsible for coordinating programs and resources City-wide for youth and families in crisis.

January 1998
Establishment of a computer lab at the Princess Anne Community Recreation Center; K.I.S. Business Computer Center and the City established a partnership to conduct instructional classes for the public; in return, the Department utilizes the lab for staff training.

May 1998
Establishment of the Youth Opportunities Office, a cooperative effort with the City and the Schools, supported by Parks and Recreation, and housed at the Kempsville Recreation Center. This office provides systems-wide coordination for all youth services throughout the City. In cooperation with the Youth Services Coordinating Council, the Youth Opportunities Team was formed with representatives from city departments, Schools, the business community, inter-faith groups, non-profit groups and City youth to create and expand opportunities for all youth.

May 1998
The Recreation Center Officer Program (RCOP) was initiated at the recreation centers. This was a joint effort between Parks & Recreation and the Police Department. A police officer was housed in the center to provide an atmosphere of safety and security for the patrons and staff. The officers also planned and implemented educational and informational programs for youth patrons.

December 1998
The Department received two awards from the Learning Resources Network (LERN): 1st Place in the Management Practices Category for submission of Ways to Instill the Organizational Values into the Full-time Hiring Process and the Award of Excellence in the Programming category for submission of the Establishment of the KIS Computer Lab at the Princess Anne Community Recreation Center. The Princess Anne Community Recreation Center received the NRPA Marketing and communications award; class IV for the Best Public Service Announcement Program.

February 1999
The Department received national accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks & Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). The Department fulfilled requirements in 153 of 154 standards (only 137 were required to be accredited). The ten major categories that included these standards were: 1) Agency Authority, Role & Responsibility; 2) Planning; 3) Organization & Administration; 4) Human Resources; 5) Finance; 6) Program & Services Management; 7) Facility & Land Use Management; 8)
Safety & Security; 9) Risk Management; and 10) Evaluation & Research. Only 21 parks and recreation agencies in the nation have received this prestigious national accreditation. We are the first in the State of Virginia.

April 1999
Opening of Grand Lakes Neighborhood Park, approximately one acre; located off Virginia Beach Boulevard in the Bayside Planning District; amenities include playground & basketball courts.

May 1999
Opening of City View District Park, (42 acres currently developed); located off Kempsville Road. Amenities include lighted softball fields, basketball court, multi-purpose play field (soccer/football), playgrounds, walking trails, picnic shelters, restrooms & concession

May 1999
The Virginian-Pilot newspaper named the community recreation centers the Best Fitness Facilities in Virginia Beach, based on a citizen poll.

June 1999
Mini-skate Park opened at Great Neck Community Recreation Center. The skateboard ramp is portable and can move to other community recreation centers.

June 1999
Opening of Groveland Neighborhood Park, approximately one acre, located at the intersection of King’s Grant & Lynnhaven Roads; amenities include playground & picnic areas.

July 1999
The Bayside History Trail opened, after more than four years of collaborative work between the Departments of Parks & Recreation, Museums & Cultural Arts, Public Libraries, and several privately owned historic houses and concerned citizens. This trail provides citizens with a free color brochure, which includes the history of each site and a detailed map. Due to success of the opening day, an annual event will be held in which all houses linked in the Bayside History Trail will have a special activity staggered throughout the day.

August 1999
A dedication ceremony was conducted for the Al Garrett Memorial Gardens located in Munden Point District Park. Al was the Park Supervisor for the park since opening in 1982 until his death in 1998.

December 1999
The Department received the Outstanding Public Project Design Award for 1999 - City View Park, from the Planning Commission.

December 1999
The Department received the Exceptional Public Project Design Award for 1999 - Canoe Landing at Dozier’s Bridge, from the Planning Commission.

December 1999
The Department received the Community Service Award for Development of the Bayside History Trail, from LERN organization.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>The Department has grown in providing services and facilities which</td>
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<td></td>
<td>include 186 neighborhood parks, 8 community parks, 9 district parks,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6 community recreation centers, school-based recreational programs, 155</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ball fields, 197 tennis courts, 2 skateboard ramps and numerous</td>
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<td>programs for youth, adults and senior citizens.</td>
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<td>June 2000</td>
<td>The Department began offering on-line classes, coordinated through</td>
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<td>Princess Anne Community Recreation Center.</td>
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<td>July 2000</td>
<td>Consolidation of the Youth Activities Unit, Therapeutic Recreation</td>
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<td>Unit and PLAY Team into the Community Recreation Services (CRS) unit.</td>
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<td>August 2000</td>
<td>Opening of Red Wing Dog Park at Red Wing District Park; approximately</td>
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<td>one acre of fenced area where dogs may exercise off-leash.</td>
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<td>September 2000</td>
<td>The Department received the Healthy Community Award, for overall</td>
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<td>exceptional programs and facilities, from the NRPA (APRS).</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2000</td>
<td>Opening of second Dog Park at Woodstock Park; fenced area where dogs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>may exercise off-leash.</td>
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<td>November 2000</td>
<td>Youth Opportunities Team’s Youth Plan for Virginia Beach adopted by</td>
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<td>City Council.</td>
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<td>November 2000</td>
<td>Youth Leaders in Action established with $10,000 grant.</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Kempsville Community Recreation Center opened a licensed preschool</td>
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<td>program onsite.</td>
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<td>January 2001</td>
<td>Youth Opportunities Team’s Youth Plan for Virginia Beach endorsed by</td>
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<td>the Virginia Beach School Board.</td>
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<td>January 2001</td>
<td>City Council adopted the Outdoors Plan 2000 update as the City’s</td>
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<td>guidance document for outdoor recreational planning &amp; acquisitions.</td>
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<td>February 2001</td>
<td>City Council appropriated over $50 million to establish an Open Space</td>
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<td>Acquisition Program.</td>
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<td>April 2001</td>
<td>The C. William Boyce Award was created in honor of Bill Boyce to</td>
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<td>recognize youth workers who perform at the highest level.</td>
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<td>June 2001</td>
<td>The City acquired approximately 1500 acres from the City of Norfolk,</td>
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<td>known as Stumpy Lake Natural Area, including the 125-acre Stumpy Lake</td>
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<td>Municipal Golf Course.</td>
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July 2001

Resources allocated to undertake inclusion process for individuals with disabilities.

August 2001

Received VRPS Awards: Best New Renovation/Addition for Munden Point Park Amphitheater; Distinguished Private Sector for City Wide Feet First Campaign with Sentara; Distinguished Volunteer Service Award: Lillie Gilbert.

October 2001

Opening of the first phase of the United States Field Hockey Complex, 2 artificial turf fields, located adjacent to the Virginia Beach Sportsplex; constructed in conjunction with the U.S. Field Hockey Association (USFHA); home base to the USFHA Women’s National Team Residency Program.

December 2001

Opening of the Lynnhaven Boat Ramp and Beach Facility, located off Shore Drive.

June 2002

Received Outstanding Achievement City Livability Award for the Preserving our Common Ground submission, a joint effort of the Departments of Parks and Recreation and Agriculture.

June 2002

Opened the Bow Creek Neighborhood Park, adjacent to the Bow Creek Community Recreation Center and Golf Course.

August 2002

Received VRPS Awards for: Best New Facility, Lynnhaven Boat Ramp and Beach Facility; Distinguished Volunteer Service, Calvin Cephas, and Bow Creek.

November 2002

Received 2002 Virginia Tennis Facility Award from United States Tennis Association for the Owl Creek Tennis Center.

January 2003

Received 2002 Public Facilities Design Award for Design of Kempsville Greens Clubhouse from the Planning Commission.

January 2003

Park Operations and Services assumed responsibility for the operation, management and maintenance of the Virginia Beach Sportsplex.

April 2003

Received recognition from the National Arbor Day Foundation for “Tree City USA” for the 23rd consecutive year.

August 2003

The Department of General Services disbanded resulting in various divisions consolidating within existing City departments. Landscape Services Division became a part of Parks and Recreation, bringing our total number of full-time employees from 256 to 506.
August 2003 The Skate Park, located at Mount Trashmore District Park, opened to the public, providing access to skateboarders, in-line skaters and bikes.

September 2003 Received the Best Promotional Effort Award/Electronic Media from Virginia Recreation and Park Society, in recognition of the Promotional E-Stream for KidzQuest and Middle School Mania Program within the Community Recreation Services.

November 2003 Received Pinnacle Bronze Award for Best TV Promotion, for Remember September 11th, video.

December 2003 Received the International Award for Excellence in Management Practices from LERN for the Leadership Transition Process.

January 2004 Open Space Acquisition Site – Williams Farm acquired at 57.6 acres. The site was acquired to serve as a large community park for Bayside and to support elementary schools.

February 2004 Open Space Acquisition Site – Providence Road acquired at 18.0 acres. The site was partly acquired to relocate the Kempsville Pony League and partly to provide additional fields for community use.

February 2004 As a result of consolidation with the Landscape Services Division, the Department was re-organized as follows: Landscape Services Division and Park Operations and Services consolidated into one division, renamed Parks and Landscape Services Division; Landscape Architects transferred from Landscape Services to Design and Development Division; City Wide Athletics unit transferred from Recreation Division to Parks and Landscape Services Division; Parks Construction and Maintenance Bureau renamed to Parks Maintenance Bureau; the Leisure Events Office was transferred from Park Operations to Administration Office.

February 2004 The Department received national re-accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). The Department fulfilled requirements in 151 of the 152 standards (only 132 were required to be met to become accredited). We continue to be the only municipality in the State of Virginia to have met this national standard for excellence.

April 2004 Received recognition from the National Arbor Day Foundation, for “Tree City USA” for the 24th consecutive year.

May 2004 Hosted the Virginia Senior Games in conjunction with the Virginia Recreation and Park Society; nearly 1,000 athletes from the State and
neighboring states competed in over 25 athletic competitions in venues across the City. The Games were also awarded to our department for the 2005 season.

September 2004 Completion of Phase II of the United States Field Hockey Complex, located adjacent to the Virginia Beach Sportsplex, amenities added: lighting to field #1 to television broadcast standards, public restrooms, tournament building with three offices, two meetings rooms, officials changing room, two locker rooms, storage and an athletic training room.

September 2004 The Department received two awards from the Virginia Recreation and Park Society:

September 2004 Best Promotional Effort for Circular/Flyer: K9 Karnival.

September 2004 Distinguished Service Award: Beth Wood-Whitley, Parks and Recreation Coordinator/Bow Creek Recreation Center.

October 2004 City Council adopted the Bikeways and Trails Plan, with the vision for the city to become “the premier biking and trails destination in the mid-Atlantic region”. This plan superseded the 1986 Bikeway Master Plan which was developed by the Department of Planning.

November 2004 Parks/Special Events received the Bronze Pinnacle Award from the IFEA (International Festivals and Events Association) for joint sponsorship with the Disney Channel, bringing a sneak preview of the movie “The Cheetah Girls” to the Department’s movie series; Virginia Beach was the only locality in the country to have the advance preview before it aired.

January 2005 Open Space Acquisition Site – Lake Lawson acquired at 6.7 acres.

February 2005 Parks/Special Events received the Bronze Pinnacle Award from the IFEA (International Festivals and Events Association) for Best Promotional Campaign for the Princess Anne Park Arts & Craft Festival.

February 2005 Marketing and Information Systems received the Bronze Pinnacle Award from IFEA for Best Printed Marketing Collateral (Parks/Special Events 2004 Season).

February 2005 Marketing and Information Systems received the Bronze Pinnacle Award from IFEA for Best Sponsorship Solicitation Package.

June 2005 Open Space Acquisition Site – Lake Smith Fishing Station at 15.4 acres. Combined with the Lake Lawson site there is over 22 acres of natural area around Lakes Smith and Lawson.
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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 2006</td>
<td>Mount Trashmore Skate Park Phase II built, which included a new, steel 13 ½’ tall by 40’ wide competition Vert Ramp.</td>
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<td>February 2006</td>
<td>An $800,000 grant awarded to the Department for the construction of the Pacific Avenue Trail extension, which is a raised boardwalk between Norfolk Avenue and Winston Salem Avenue.</td>
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<td>March 2006</td>
<td>Opening of second Disc Golf Course at Munden Point District Park.</td>
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<td>April 2006</td>
<td>Little Island Pier reopened with a new landward section of pier, new beach access ramp, new pier lighting, and new pier railing to comply with ADA standards.</td>
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<td>May 2006</td>
<td>Host for Virginia Senior Games.</td>
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<td>July 2006</td>
<td>Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation opted to operate school-based youth programs in all 57 Virginia Beach City Public Elementary Schools exempt from licensure per state code 63.2-1715.</td>
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<td>July 2006</td>
<td>Addition of Artificial Turf Practice Field at the Virginia Beach Sportsplex.</td>
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<td>September 2006</td>
<td>Red Wing Lake Golf Course reopens after major renovations.</td>
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<td>November 2006</td>
<td>Host for VRPS Conference.</td>
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<td>February 2007</td>
<td>Reopened the Mount Trashmore Skate Park to full operations after repairing damaged components and rebuilding the above-ground bowel that were a result of the August 16, 2006 fire.</td>
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<td>March 2007</td>
<td>Owl Creek Municipal Tennis Center opens its two-court indoor tennis facility.</td>
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<td>April 2007</td>
<td>Skate plaza opened at Woodstock Park. Dog Park relocated within the park to accommodate the skate plaza.</td>
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<td>May 2007</td>
<td>PLAY Team staff re-aligned under the Youth Opportunities Office</td>
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<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Council appropriated $2,000,000.00 to renovate park/playgrounds components to meet new ADA compliance standards. (50) parks were renovated within a 2 year time frame.</td>
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<td>June 2007</td>
<td>Princess Anne Athletic Complex (PAAC) had its Grand Opening June 20, 2007.</td>
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<td>September 2007</td>
<td>Out-of-School Time programs began serving snacks to all school program</td>
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</table>
participants.

**October 2007**  
Mount Trashmore Park and Haginodai Park in Miyazaki, Japan proclaimed Sister Parks.

**November 2007**  
VRPS Distinguished Service Award – Kathy Williams.

**November 2007**  
VRPS Distinguished Volunteer Service Award – Daniel Baxter.

**November 2007**  

**January 2008**  
The Department was awarded $100,000 by the Department of Conservation and Recreation to be applied toward the purchase of the Lake Lawson Lake Smith Natural Area.

**Spring 2008**  
Changes included: Human Resources Bureau created; Service Standards Unit created; Programming Unit (Fitness, Special Events, Outdoor Programs) created; Marketing and Resource Development expanded to include Administrative Analyst, Electronic Media Coordinator, and Graphic Designer; Programming and Operations Leadership co/relocated to Citywide location.

**April 2008**  
Best All Around Award was moved from the Out-of School Time Programs Unit to the Youth Opportunities Office to facilitate a community-wide process for honoring youth and youth workers. The Malissia Lee Award was created in honor of Ms. Lee to recognize youth workers who helped to develop youth in accordance with the 40 Developmental Assets.

**September 2008**  
ASLA Council of Fellows Award – Barry Frankenfield.

**September 2008**  
Community Recreation Services school-based youth programs and Recreation Center-based youth camps combined to become the Out-of-School Time Programs Unit.

**October 2008**  
VRPS Best New Environmental Improvement Award – Waterfowl Initiative – Shawn Hopson

**October 2008**  
VRPS Fellows Award – Cindy Curtis.

**December 2008**  
City of Virginia Beach Hall of Fame Award – Phyllis Maness.

**December 2008**  
The Red Wing Park Fragrance Garden was renamed the Reba S. McClanan Fragrance Garden on December 8, 2008 by the City Council of Virginia Beach.
2008  Youth Opportunities Office spearheads community outreach efforts in Western Bayside.

January 2009  Community Outreach efforts in Western Bayside area result in the Open Gym program at Bayside Middle School.

March 2009  Providence Community Park opens as the new home to Kempsville PONY Baseball.

April 2009  The Department received national re-accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

April 2009  The Department received a reimbursement grant for the Open Space Acquisition for the Adam Thoroughgood House Expansion Site for $425,000.

May 2009  Signed Management Agreement with Hometown Sports Management to manage operations of the Virginia Beach Sportsplex. Agreement included installation of artificial turf and other improvements to the Sportsplex.

September 2009  The Virginia Beach Maritime Trail awarded VRPS Best Blueway, Greenway or Trail for Population Greater than 150,000.

September 2009  Recreation, Imagination, Socialization, and Education (RISE) programs launched at the Tri-Campus (Diamond Springs – grades K-1), Newtown (grades 2-3), Bettie F. Williams (grades 4 – 5).

September 2009  Youth Leaders in Action merged with the Mayor’s Youth Council and renamed Mayor’s Youth Leaders in Action.

October 2009  Open Space Acquisition - The final 15 acres of open space was acquired from the City of Norfolk, which effectively completes a new 40-acre park site to be known as the Lake Lawson and Lake Smith Natural Area.


April 2010  The Department received a grant for $100,000 for pedestrian trail access and connectivity improvements for Marshview Park. This grant will help build connections to provide ADA accessible access for two adjacent neighborhoods.

April 2010  South Beach Trail Boardwalk was dedicated, providing a critical pedestrian and bicycle link that connects the popular multiuse trail along Norfolk Avenue with Winston-Salem Avenue, 5th Avenue and the Rudee Inlet bridge.
May 2010  Open Space Acquisition - Over 98 acres conveyed from the U.S. Navy after 17 years of negotiations to create what will be known as Marshview Park. Located between the Oceanfront area neighborhoods of Shadowlawn, Salt Marsh Point, and Seatack on Lake Rudee, the area of mature forest will be primarily preserved with soft trails and a node of active recreation and supporting park infrastructure closer to Marshview Drive. The park was conveyed in return for a restrictive air rights easement being placed on existing City property on Indian River Road located within the Interfacility Traffic Area.

May 2010  The 15,000 square foot JT’s Grommet Island Park and Playground for EveryBODY was dedicated. The park, the first of its kind in the United States, is a fully accessible playground on a soft, ADA compliant surface at the beach level. This park includes a perimeter deck that enables individuals who use a wheelchair or other mobility device access out onto the beach. Shade is provided by a unique canopy system over the majority of the playground.

June 2010  The final agreement for the Safe Routes to School Grant Program was completed which will provide $447,367 to the City for pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the Bayside Middle School area.

June 2010  Opened the south end overflow parking area with approximately 120 additional spaces for parking at Little Island Park when the main lot is full.

June 2010  Licensed preschool program opened at Princess Anne Community Recreation Center.

September 2010  VRPS Distinguished Volunteer Service Award - Bruce Drees.

September 2010  VRPS Distinguished Service Award – Teri Dalone.

September 2010  The Out-of-School Time Programs launched new all day Thoroughgood Kinderbuddies program onsite at Thoroughgood Elementary School.

September 2010  The Out-of-School Time Programs Unit RISE concept expanded to fifteen Title I Virginia Beach City Public School sites. KidzLit curriculum implemented to support literacy and character development.

October 2010  The Stumpy Lake Natural Area Overlook located at the intersection of Indian River and Elbow Roads was dedicated and provides citizens an expansive view of the lake and an opportunity for education and passive recreational uses, such as hiking and bird watching.
November 2010  Construction of the new playground at Providence Park began. Estimated completion date is January 2011.

December 2010  The new 25,973 square foot play area of Kids Cove was dedicated. The new rubber playground surface includes three new and distinct play areas - a general play area, a swing area, and a climber area. The new play area will be almost two times the size of the existing Kids Cove, and will also include four new mini-picnic shelters, landscaping, walkways, and other amenities as part of the project. Additionally, the new play area will be fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will be barrier-free to accommodate all children.

December 2010  South Beach Trail Boardwalk and Grommet Island Park received Honors Awards in the Public Facilities Category of the Planning Commission 2010 Design Awards.

February 1, 2011  Bow Creek, Kempsville Greens and Red Wing Lake Golf Courses leased to Virginia Beach Golf Management.

April 26, 2011  Council adopted the Bikeways and Trails Plan as a component of the Comprehensive Plan, with this new Vision: “Virginia Beach will be a city where people can walk, run and ride anywhere safely, efficiently and enjoyably.”

July 1, 2011  1,922.5 acres of open space have been acquired under the Open Space Acquisition Program.

August 2011  Parks and Recreation in collaboration with VBCPS were awarded a three year 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant to serve Bayside Middle School (VBCPS is the lead and fiscal agent, grant amount $187,820.00 per year).

September 2011  VRPS Fellows Award – Beth Wood-Whitley.

September 2011  VRPS Best New Environmental Sustainability Award – Meadow Management Program.

September 2011  VRPS Best New Program – Drums Alive

September 2011  VRPS Best New Special Event – Passport to Fitness.


September 2011  The Out-of-School Time Programs Unit expanded the School-Based Kinderbuddies Program to three additional sites – Glenwood Elementary,
The City of Virginia Beach purchased approximately 792 acres of farmland and woods between Indian River Road and the North Landing River to protect Naval Air Station Oceana from encroaching development. This is the largest single land purchase in the city’s six-year program to protect Oceana by buying property and development rights around the jet base and in Oceana’s flight path. The Rock Ministries property is located in the Rural Air Installation Compatible Use Zone Area, south of Indian River Road, which lays within the noise contours for Oceana and Naval Auxiliary Landing Field Fentress. On August 9, the Virginia Beach City Council created the Rural AICUZ Area after a request from Oceana’s commanding officer to buy property in that area. The acquisition also fulfills a top priority of the Virginia Beach Outdoors Plan to provide a future waterfront signature park for residents to enjoy for generations to come. Meanwhile, the land will continue to be leased for farming (100 acres), approximately 40 acres will be used to house wild horses that have been rescued and cannot be returned to the wild, and training for Search and Rescue Teams. Future planning for the public park’s development will occur in coming years.

Youth Opportunities Office spearheads community outreach in the Green Run area that he Mayor’s request. Green Run Community Leaders begin monthly meetings.

The Federal Transit Administration awarded a $449,000 planning grant to perform an Alternative Transportation Study (ATS) to the Department of Parks and Recreation. The program is called the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program and will evaluate 3+ alternative modes for getting people to Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge without using personal motor vehicles.

The City of VA Beach re-dedicated the Seatack Rec Center located on South Birdneck Road as the Joseph Victor Grimstead Sr Rec Center -

Green Run Youth Leaders is created and Green Run Churches United is formed as a result of the Green Run community outreach efforts.

Redwing Park Azumaya (Tea House) and Japanese Garden expansion completed

The Parks and Recreation Department was awarded a Transportation Enhancement Program grant of $640,000 from the Virginia Department of Transportation for a portion of Thalia Creek Greenway, to build a trail along the creek near Town Center.
July 2012 118-acre tract known as Pleasure House Point was acquired by the City of Virginia Beach with help from the Trust for Public Land and in collaboration with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Pleasure House Point, located just west of the Lesner Bridge and south of the Chesapeake Bay is 118 acres of water, tidal marsh, sandy shores and maritime forest. The shallow water estuarine environment of the property provides habitat for the iconic Chesapeake Bay blue crab and the Lynnhaven oyster.

Acquisition of Pleasure House Point, preserves wetlands and maritime forest, provides opportunities for passive recreation and nature observation, provides non-motorized water access, grants opportunities to interpret various habitats and wildlife that the coastal wetlands and maritime forest areas support, highlights the environmental significance of the Lynnhaven estuary and Chesapeake Bay and fosters additional growth in community awareness and support for ongoing ecosystem.

August 24, 2012 Bow Creek Community Recreation Center closed. The center will be demolished and rebuilt with a projected opening date of fall 2014.

August 2012 Parks and Recreation in collaboration with VBCPS were awarded a three year 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant to serve Bettie F. Williams Elementary School (VBSCPS is the lead and fiscal agent, grant amount - $200,000.00 per year.

October 26, 2012 Williams Farm Community Recreation Center, Williams Farm Skate Park and Williams Farm Skate Park Office/Restroom opened to the public.

October 2012 Sports Management Unit created, combining Athletic Leagues, Princess Anne Athletic Complex, City View Park, Owl Creek Tennis Center, Sportsplex, and US Field Hockey Regional Training Center.

October 2012 Out-of-School Time Programs Unit opened the Early Childhood Program at Williams Farm Community Recreation Center.

November 2012 Western Bayside Youth Leaders is formed to include and engage young people in community outreach efforts in the Western Bayside area.

March 2013 USA Field Hockey Regional training Center Field #1 Artificial Turf replaced.

September 2013 VRPS Best New Environmental Sustainability Award - Pleasure House Point Natural Area

September 2013 VRPS Best New Facility (Bricks and Mortar) - Williams Farm Community Recreation Center
September 2013  VRPS Best New Facility Award (Parks, Playgrounds, Blueways, Greenways) - **Williams Farm Park and Skate Park**

October 2013  VB Planning Commission Design Awards Program Honor Award - Public Facilities - **Williams Farm Recreation Center, Park, and Skate Park**

October 2014  The Department received national re-accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

October 2014  Lake Lawson-Lake Smith Phase I/IA construction completed including boat ramp, docks, parking lots, playground, shelters & site, and a connection to the south parcel via a raised bridge.

November 2014  Removal of the 64th street Crew Launching pier.

February 2015  Marshview Park – Trail renovated to upgrade soft trail to paved ADA trail with bridges and formalized parking lot off Virginia Avenue.

February 2015  Red Wing Park Office and Restroom Building construction completed

March 2015  The new Bow Creek Community Recreation Center opened to the public.

March 2015  Kempsville Community Recreation Center closed to the public for demolition

April 2015  ‘Good Game’ statue commemorating Kempsville Pony Baseball dedicated at Kemps Landing Park

April 2015  USA Field Hockey Regional training Center Field #2 Artificial Turf replaced

June 2015  Mount Trashmore lakeside Office and Restroom Building construction completed

July 2015  Kempsville Community Recreation Center new building construction begins

August 2015  Lake Lawson-Lake Smith Phase IB construction completed (Office and Restroom building)

November 2015  VRPS **Best New Renovation/Addition (Parks, Playgrounds, Greenways, & Trails)** – **Lake Lawson – Lake Smith Natural Area Restoration**

November 2015  Virginia Beach – Olongapo Phillipines Sister Cities Monument dedication (Kempes Landing Park)

December 2015  Purchase of Old Pungo Ferry Rd. Property (old Captain Georges Property)
February 2016  Lake Lawson-Lake Smith Natural Area listed as a Virginia Treasure by Governor Terence R. McAuliffe

Spring 2016  Renovation of Old Pungo Ferry Rd. Property and boat ramp

July 2016  Grand Lakes and Lynnhaven Colony Parks renovated

November 2016  VRPS Best New Facility Award (Bricks and Mortar) – Bow Creek Community Recreation Center and Family Golf Center

November 2016  VRPS Best New Environmental Sustainability Award – Virginia Beach Trees for Clean Water Grant Initiative

July 2017  The new Kempsville Community Recreation Center opened to the public.

April 2018  The new Parks & Recreation Administration Building opened.

April 2018  38th consecutive year that Virginia Beach received a Tree City USA designation by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

April 2018  Virginia Beach received its fifth Tree City USA Growth Award.