

## Westpark Improvements – Question and Answer Summary

The following is a summary of the questions received from the public and answered by the Westpark Improvements project team from the project’s inception through July 2023. Questions have been grouped by the following topics: environmental, features/park usage, general property and project information, maintenance, and policy enforcement.

### Topic: Environmental

Questions	Answers
Will the project cause trees to be removed?	<p>Mostly likely, yes. In many cases, trees that are removed during these types of projects can be incorporated into the restoration project. Many times, trees located along streams that are urbanized and degraded are lost over time to bank erosion. This project will be adding trees and other vegetation (including native species) that should provide greater habitat value, which will support the project’s environmental stability and associated wildlife in the long term. The County will be working carefully with the engineer and contractor to evaluate each tree to determine the feasibility of keeping it or if necessary, the removal and reuse of it.</p> <p>Note: There is a lot of research out there on this particularly subject, some studies have indicated that it takes about 5 years post-planting for trees/buffers to regain function.</p>
What is “stream restoration”?	<p>Restoration projects, like the one proposed at Westpark, are done to restore ecosystem balance and stabilize eroding stream banks as well as to provide for repair or replacement of failing infrastructure. In general, stream restoration and other environmental type projects can lessen downstream flood risk, improve water quality, and enhance habitat for animals and plants that live in the streams and the adjacent riparian corridor.</p>
Is the County partnering with any conservation/wildlife organizations to help fulfill the requirements for the conservation easement?	<p>The conservation easement is held by Old Dominion Land Conservancy Inc (ODLC). ODLC is responsible for making sure development is compliant with the requirements of the conservation easement. For the text of the conservation easement, please refer to the deed located on the <a href="#">project page</a>.</p>

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<p>Will invasive species, such as bamboo, be removed from the property? Are there plans to plant native species, such as wildflowers and tree seedlings?</p>	<p>The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) will evaluate invasive species during the planning process and develop a maintenance plan for mitigating invasive species. During design phase, the project team will evaluate the proposed plantings based on the overall park amenities. Based on these amenities and their respective requirements, the design will provide native species to the extent possible.</p>
<p>How are the trails going to be incorporated in the environmentally sensitive areas?</p>	<p>Since the project is in the early design phase, the trail material and layout are not finalized. However, the layout and materials of the trails will be mindful of the environment. Providing equitable access to the stream and wetland areas is an important component of the park. There will be a combination of paved trail, natural surface trail and boardwalk trail. The trails also double as maintenance access for County staff as well as the Town of Leesburg staff, so there may be some paved areas closer to the stream if necessitated by access needs.</p>
<p>How will the streams and riparian buffers (areas along the stream beds) be protected after construction?</p>	<p>The park design will include native plantings along the streams and within the buffers to help create and protect the natural areas. It will also include informative and educational signage to inform visitors of these environmental features.</p>

## Topic: Features/Park Usage

Questions	Answers
<p>Will I be able to fly a drone at the park?</p>	<p>PRCS policy prohibits the use of motorized remote-controlled devices, such as planes, helicopters, or any similar device, outside of designated areas. There are no designated areas for that type of use proposed in this park.</p>
<p>Can you reopen the property as a golf course?</p>	<p>Loudoun County purchased the property with the intent of developing it into a passive park. The property has been placed in a conservation easement and as a result, and future uses of the property must be in accordance with the easement, which restricts uses like a golf course.</p>
<p>Can I fish on the property?</p>	<p>PRCS anticipates allowing fishing in the Westpark property ponds. The department is planning to evaluate the ponds for access before such activity could be allowed.</p>

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Will equestrian use be permitted?	Equestrian uses are being evaluated for the allowable uses of the park. All requests allowable under conservation easement requirements will be considered. If you would like to request these features, please email <a href="mailto:dtci@loudoun.gov">dtci@loudoun.gov</a> or complete a comment form at <a href="http://loudoun.gov/westparkproperty">loudoun.gov/westparkproperty</a> .
How do I currently access the trails/cart paths? Can I park on the street and walk through the area?	Currently, there is access to the trails from within the community; however, there are no parking spaces for the property. This issue should be corrected when the future park is constructed. Loudoun County does not have the authority to restrict or control parking within the public right of way or within the Town of Leesburg limits. Nor can we advise parking on or accessing private property, such as the hotel parking lot.
Is there any opportunity to connect the park paths to the W&OD Trail?	Currently, connecting the park path to the W&OD Trail is beyond the scope and available funding of this project. A connection from the park paths to the W&OD Trail is being evaluated as a potential separate trail improvement project.
What kinds of facilities are planned for the park?	This property is currently being evaluated for picnic pavilions, restrooms, fishing pier, disc golf, and parking areas. If the renovation of the existing structure is not found to be feasible during the development of the project design, then a facility would be developed to replace it.
Will there be any onsite staff?	This park will not have full time on-site staff from PRCS. PRCS staff will be onsite only as needed for normal park operation and maintenance activities.
Is the park open to public use?	The public is authorized to walk on the paths and utilize the area from dawn to dusk only. Visitors are asked to be respectful of signage and to avoid marked-off areas.
Will disc golf be permitted?	A disc golf course is currently planned as a park amenity.
Will the park design comply with accessibility guidelines?	The park design will comply with all federal accessibility standards.
How will visitors be informed of the educational and interactive components of the park?	The park design will include a series of informative and wayfinding signs at entrances and at notable areas.
Will there be separate paths for pedestrians, hikers and bicyclists?	All the trails within the park will be designed as multi-use paths to accommodate all allowable uses within the park.

**Topic: General Property and Project Information**

Questions	Answers
How do I provide my suggestions for the park?	Please complete a comment form on the project page at <a href="https://loudoun.gov/westparkproperty">loudoun.gov/westparkproperty</a> . The design team will review all the comments to inform the design of the park. Remember this is a passive park and not all amenities are able to be constructed on this type of park.
Where do I find out more information about the project and sign-up for alerts?	Visit <a href="https://loudoun.gov/westparkproperty">loudoun.gov/westparkproperty</a> for more information about the project and sign-up for alerts under “Stay Informed”.
What is happening with the Westpark Hotel in Leesburg?	Loudoun County did not purchase an 8.2-acre parcel on which the former Westpark Hotel is located. This parcel remains privately owned and any future development is subject to the Town of Leesburg’s regulations. The County does not have knowledge of any plans the property owner may have for that parcel. For more information, contact the Town of Leesburg.
What will be done with the current bathroom structures?	The current restroom structures will be evaluated for reuse during the project design.
Will speed bumps be installed in anticipation of increased traffic flow to the park? Have you done any traffic studies?	There are no plans for speed bumps. No traffic studies have been conducted for this project.
What is the anticipated level of visitation?	It is anticipated that the visitors to this passive park will be primarily from the surrounding communities. Loudoun County does not have specific metrics for the anticipated numbers of visitors.
When will the park construction be complete?	Construction is currently estimated to begin summer 2026 and to be completed spring 2027.

**Topic: Maintenance**

Questions	Answers
What are you doing to minimize tick infestation?	Regularly mowing along all paths has begun and this should help with minimizing ticks along the paths. That said, the County’s parks and public health officials have always reminded visitors to walk towards the middle of all trails within our parks. Be sure to use repellent and/or do tick checks any time you are outside enjoying the parks and trails. We have more information about these protective measures on our website at <a href="http://loudoun.gov/lyme">loudoun.gov/lyme</a> .
How do I inform Loudoun County about picking up of trash on the property?	Please complete a comment form at <a href="http://loudoun.gov/westparkproperty">loudoun.gov/westparkproperty</a> or send an email to <a href="mailto:dtpci@loudoun.gov">dtpci@loudoun.gov</a> .
When is the County's equipment going to stop destroying the concrete bridges?	The damage on the concrete bridges existed on the property when Loudoun County took ownership. The County did not cause the damage; however, the County plans to repair those bridges along the existing golf cart paths.
Who do I contact when a tree or debris falls into the water?	If there are concerns about features on the property (such as a fallen tree), please submit a Lex ticket at: <a href="https://www.loudoun.gov/3055/Report-an-Issue">https://www.loudoun.gov/3055/Report-an-Issue</a> . This will allow the appropriate Loudoun County department to assess the situation and deploy resources as necessary. This link is provided on the webpage at <a href="http://loudoun.gov/westparkproperty">loudoun.gov/westparkproperty</a> .

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<p>How often will the park grounds and the facilities be cleaned, and trash collected?</p>	<p>Loudoun County is currently conducting Westpark property maintenance activities including any essential maintenance of the former golf cart paths, stormwater maintenance along certain areas of the stream corridors, and the trimming of trees as needed. These activities are conducted only on an as-needed basis to facilitate the current use of the property by the public until the new park is designed and constructed. Once the final park design is completed PRCS will develop a maintenance plan to keep the park safe and clean. Typically, all parks are inspected daily.</p>
<p>How often will you mow, and where will you mow?</p>	<p>At the present time, grass mowing procedures are as follows: A swath of grass located approximately 20 feet from residential property lines where the Westpark property grass meets residents' grass will be cut regularly. A 4-foot swath of grass along both sides of the existing golf cart paths will be cut regularly to ensure the paths are walkable.</p> <p>Weather permitting, rough-cut mowing will occur two times in 2023, in the months of July and October. The rough-cut mowing includes cutting the high grasses and weeds throughout the entire property. The rough-cut mowing was identified in the establishment of the conservation easement that was placed on the property, which recommended mowing in July and October, specifically due to known nesting animals in the area. The purpose of the mowing is to keep invasive plants from establishing and to maintain some vegetation control until the park is designed and a full maintenance plan is established.</p>

**Topic: Policy Enforcement**

Questions	Answers
Will motorized vehicles like motorbikes and scooters be allowed and what will be the restrictions regarding their use?	PRCS has placed signs informing the public that motorized vehicles are prohibited at this property.
What are you going to do about people going into the park after hours?	Signage has been installed stating that the park is open from dawn to dusk. There will be no lights at the park. If people continue to access the park after hours, we encourage you to contact law enforcement.
Will leash laws be enforced? Will there be dog poop stations?	The park will follow all Town and County policies regarding dog being leashed, which only allow dogs off leash if they are on the owner’s property or in an appropriately designated space (i.e., a fenced off leash area). The inclusion of dog waste stations will be considered during the design process. Members of the public have an opportunity to provide input on the design by email to <a href="mailto:dtci@loudoun.gov">dtci@loudoun.gov</a> or via the comment form at <a href="http://loudoun.gov/westparkproperty">loudoun.gov/westparkproperty</a> .
What will you do about the residents who are mowing the property with their own equipment?	Any encroachment on the Westpark property will be handled with individual homeowners on a case-by-case basis. Please note that “Natural Area” signage has been placed 150 feet from waterways. Mowing is prohibited in this area to meet conservation easement requirements.