

Town of Manchester
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**PLANNING FOR
THE FUTURE OF
OUR PARKS, TRAILS,
AND FACILITIES.**

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For Immediate Release

MANCHESTER COMMUNITY PLANS FOR THE FUTURE OF PARKS, TRAILS, AND FACILITIES

MANCHESTER, CT, October 2020 - The Town of Manchester officially kicked off the Parks and Facilities Master Plan project. The Master Plan outlines how to further develop future parks, trails, open space, and recreational areas so as to meet the needs of the community while also investing in the town's economic and cultural value. Director of the Department of Recreation, Family, and Leisure, Chris Silver explains: "We are embarking on working with a consulting group to create a plan for our parks and public spaces for the future, whether that is tomorrow or 20 years down the road. We want to create a community that is more equitable and accessible than what we have now. So, representative engagement is especially important."

Director of Planning and Economic Development, Gary Anderson, also highlighted the range of benefits this Master Plan will bring to town. Businesses and people looking for a place to call home are drawn to Manchester because they want to be in a place with a high quality of life and where there are exceptional public facilities as well as an engaged community and government. Taking care of the parks and facilities also "builds community pride," which is an "incentive for people to invest in their own neighborhoods," said Anderson.

Kyle Shiel, the Senior Planner in the Planning Department, is the project manager of the Parks and Facilities Master Plan, acting as a liaison between the consulting company, [BerryDunn](#), and various Town departments. BerryDunn is a consulting firm that "uses deep experience and a commitment to knowledge sharing to help clients gain control of the challenges and opportunities that drive value." Shiel explained that the Town selected BerryDunn as the right choice for Manchester after seeing the firm's work in Burlington, VT, and the successful results of their Master Plan.

Your Voice Matters – Get Involved Online Today!

As a part of a new communications strategy, local public decision-makers are seeking out ways to connect and engage more with residents, as well as offer a variety of ways to inform the public. One of the first initiatives launched as a part of this strategy is a new community engagement tool: Your Voice Matters – Manchester. This platform was piloted in collaboration with the roll-out of the Parks & Facilities Master Plan, as its success relies greatly on community input.

Your Voices Matters acts as a two-way street. It is not only useful for connecting community members with local officials and providing a direct avenue for voicing perspectives, but also in discovering new ways to inform Manchester residents. After signing up and creating login credentials, users can find updates on the latest projects, project questionnaires, public surveys, and community forums, in which people can post opinions, feedback, and inquiries.

Your Voice Matters – Get Involved In-Person - "Trick or Treat for Parks"!

Join the Manchester Recreation Division for "Trick or Treat for Parks," a special family community engagement event happening across Manchester on Saturday Oct, 24th from 9 AM to 11 AM. This family friendly event will offer interactive activities for community members to engage in and give feedback on related to the Parks & Facilities Master Plan. All children in attendance are encouraged to wear a costume for this Halloween themed event. Attendees will receive a FREE

goodie bag upon arrival and leave with mystery activity bag. Additionally, all those who attend and participate are eligible to be entered into a raffle to win one of the following prizes; a bike; athletic package, creative arts package, games package, or Manchester-Gear Swag.

This event will follow CDC guidelines – we encourage attendees to wear their masks, keep a safe social distance, and stay home if feeling sick.

To learn more about the Parks & Facilities Master plan, receive updates, and share your feedback, please visit yourvoicemattersmanchesterct.com and register today!

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