



# Pathways to Play:

# A Roadmap to Active Recreation

2019 Somersworth Pilot Project Report





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This report is pending acceptance by the City of Somersworth.

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# INTRODUCTION

Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) received funding from the New Hampshire Children’s Health Foundation (NHCHF) in late 2018 to conduct a project aimed at reducing obesity in children under 5, and their families, in the greater Strafford region. SRPC’s approach to this public health challenge was to examine access to recreation in the region. We looked at areas where the population has a lot of access to recreation sites, and also at those areas where there are gaps and opportunities for increased access.

The project’s first phase began with developing an updated recreation map layer for our 18 municipalities showing all public recreation sites. The data for this layer came from many recreation, conservation, and trail data layers that SRPC had compiled from GRANIT, New Hampshire’s GIS Clearinghouse, and our 18 communities, as well as data that SRPC had collected for the communities over the years. After creating this initial layer, we distributed maps to each municipality’s recreation, planning, and public works departments, where applicable, and asked them to help us confirm the identified sites and amenities to ensure our maps are representative of real public access recreation sites.

Phase two was a pilot project in the City of Somersworth that examined barriers that prevent children from accessing parks. This phase enabled us to dive deeper into Somersworth’s recreation assets and to examine barriers such as road infrastructure, safety, signage, and public awareness that prevent residents from using recreation sites to lead more active lifestyles. We began by meeting with the City’s Department of Development Services to identify potentially under-utilized recreation sites, and the neighborhoods in close proximity that could benefit from increased access to these sites. We identified three sites: Malley Farm, Somersworth Riverwalk, and Jules Bisson Park that potentially serve a large section of the densely populated downtown area.

Our “Pathways to Play” plan provides an overview of the spatial analyses and the identified opportunities to improve access to recreation for children under 5 and their families in this concentrated area of Somersworth. This guide identifies assets, analyze gaps, and explores opportunities with associated actions and prospective funding sources.

## Our Funders

Funding for the Pathways to Play project was provided by the NH Children’s Health Foundation (NHCHF).

NHCHF’s mission is: “To improve the health and wellness of New Hampshire’s population, with a focus on its most vulnerable children.” SRPC’s approach in aligning with this mission is to look at access to recreation. The result will be that those who need physical activity and do not already seek it or enjoy it can find easier and more visible ways to lead more active and healthier lifestyles. The method is to translate opportunity to play and be active in outdoor accessible spaces into reducing childhood obesity in those under 5.

NHCHF’s Strategies for Obesity Prevention

1. “Support for establishing and sustaining coalitions or partnerships that result in communities with increased access to healthy food and enhanced places for physical activity, for NH children up to age 5 and their families.
2. Support for activities to establish local level policies and practices to promote healthy eating and active living for children up to age 5 and their families.
3. Data collection, analysis, communication and advocacy to increase awareness of childhood obesity across New Hampshire for children up to age 5, and build support for state and local policies and practices to prevent childhood obesity.”<sup>1</sup>

Through a measured mix of the above strategies supported by NHCHF, we aim to lower barriers for Somersworth families, particularly families with young children, to have easier access to recreation, and in turn to increase physical activity.

<sup>1</sup> <https://nhchildrenshealthfoundation.org/what-we-fund/>





Former SRPC GIS Planner, Marcia Moreno Báez, conducts outreach with children at Somerworth's Recreation Summer Camp program. (SRPC Photo)



# Why Somersworth?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has identified a connection between children living below the poverty level and childhood obesity. They have found that nationwide “obesity prevalence was 18.9% among children and adolescents aged 2-19 years in the lowest income group, 19.9% among those in the middle-income group, and 10.9% among those in the highest income group.”<sup>2</sup>

In New Hampshire, 12.4% of children under five years old are obese.<sup>3</sup> Strafford County ranks 9th out of the ten NH counties in overall health outcomes<sup>4</sup>, making the SRPC region a prime location for this study. The City of Somersworth has a population of 11,756 in a 9.78 square mile city. 7.2% of the city’s population is under five years old (2% above Strafford County), 10.8% of all children in Somersworth live under the poverty line (1.8% above the state), and the city’s median income is \$60,943 (11% below the state median). In addition, Somersworth is one of New Hampshire’s most diverse cities with 18% of the population non-white. These demographic factors led SRPC to determine that Somersworth could have a population that would benefit from a closer examination of access and barriers to recreation, particularly in its downtown core.

Several parks in the focus area are heavily used, so we focused on three under-utilized parks at the southeastern end of downtown: Malley Farm, Somersworth Riverwalk, and Jules Bisson Park. These three parks are within proximity to densely populated neighborhoods with a lower income population are not used to their potential. By identifying barriers such as safety, infrastructure or awareness that may be deterring young residents and their families from using these parks, we can look at options to help make these areas more accessible and fun for all.

We conducted a basic review of existing publicly available information (maps, the city website, and other social media) to get a sense of the public impressions of the parks and how the City represents and promotes them. Our first impressions were that there are many parks and recreation areas in Somersworth and located close to the neighborhood we were starting to focus on, but that they may need some updated marketing.

The City’s Recreation Division website serves its purpose as a base for information. You can click into the “City Parks” tab and receive a short informational narrative about each city park and what you can do there. There are separate pages showing camp information, youth athletic leagues’ registration, and special events like trick or treating or holiday fairs. Although the basic information is provided, there are not a lot of visually enticing photographs or design to draw visitors in.

2 <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/childhood.html>

3 <https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/nhp/wic/surveillance-reports.htm>

4 <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/reports/state-reports/2019-new-hampshire-report>

## PARK OVERVIEWS

### Jules Bisson Park



Jules Bisson is a fenced-in neighborhood park with a baseball field, basketball court & playground. The city is planning upgrades to this park using a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant.

### Somersworth Riverwalk



The Riverwalk is a half mile long trail that follows the Salmon Falls River. It is located a short .25 mile walk from Jules Bisson Park. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty and unique water access for residents and visitors. It has heavy tree coverage providing shade and respite.

### Malley Farm



Malley Farm is an expansive park approximately one mile from the residential neighborhood we focused on. It contains trails, water views, baseball fields, beautiful pastures, and a community garden.





### Legend

-  Focus Population
  -  Focus Recreation Sites
  -  All Recreation Sites
- Roads**
-  Major Roadways
  -  Local Roads



The Recreation Division’s Facebook page is more vibrant and exciting with pictures of children doing activities and being active presents a more inviting and fun, forward facing platform than the City’s website. Primarily, seeing pictures of people and children using the parks and enjoying them creates a much more visually stimulating and inviting impression.

“The urban built environment, including parks and other green space, and recreation programs that provide structured settings for exercise, might also shape opportunities for physical activity, affecting development of obesity.”<sup>5</sup> Providing inviting and safe spaces that encourage different kinds of physical activity for children in Somersworth can have a direct and positive effect on their health. Removing existing barriers that may cause children not to use the recreation spaces available will have similar positive effect. Varied structures and environments can increase different kinds of movements and play and develop different skills that lead to direct benefits in both physical and mental fitness. They can also make these open spaces more accessible to individuals with physical and intellectual challenges, creating a more inclusive public space.

5 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4380517/>



Group activity led by the Somersworth Recreation Director, Kristen Davenport, at the City’s National Night Out Event. (SRPC Photo)



# OUTREACH STRATEGIES

From June to October 2019, SRPC conducted an outreach campaign to hear from residents of Somersworth and users of the three focus recreation areas. The purpose of this outreach was to understand and learn how people use these areas, if there are issues with getting to these areas, what could improve these areas, and what factors may play into lack of use. We also endeavored to understand informal pedestrian crossings, networks, paths, and uses that could not be determined just by looking at maps.

## Survey

We created a short, user-friendly survey with just 10 questions to share with Somersworth residents. Questions included “How do you get to these parks?” “Is this park suitable for children?” “What would make this park better?” and so on. SRPC staff attended Somersworth Recreation summer camp at Noble Pines Park to distribute the survey and to speak with camp attendees and their parents. We also shared the survey on social media, the city newsletter, and handed out cards with the information to take the survey online.

## Custom Coloring Sheets

In an effort to engage the youth in Somersworth, a crucial set of voices in the recreation realm, we created custom coloring sheets which gave young people the opportunity to draw their “dream park” in each of the three sites. These were distributed in a display at the library along with a map where people could put a sticky dot where they lived. We also hoped to use these large maps as a way to raise awareness of where these recreation sites are in reference to people’s homes.

## Park Visits

In addition to the formal events we attended, we did informal conversational outreach at each of the sites in July and August. We talked to people using the parks or just passing by. We asked them questions about each site, where they lived in relation, how much they used each site, and if they experienced any barriers to use the parks. In all, our outreach process helped us to gain a much deeper level of understanding on how people in Somersworth interact with these recreation sites, and what may make them more attractive for use, in turn leading to a more active lifestyle for residents who live nearby.

## OUTREACH SNAPSHOTS



### Surveys

50 surveys were taken as part of the outreach for the Somersworth Pathways to Play project.



### National Night Out

A chalkboard was used at the National Night Out Event to ask people, “What would make Jules Bisson Park even better?”



### Coloring Sheets

20 coloring sheets were completed during outreach in Somersworth.



### Park Visits

Holding outreach events at the parks gave SRPC an opportunity to talk with those who use the parks the most, children. Great input was gathered from multiple park visits.



# National Night Out

We set up a booth at National Night Out in Jules Bisson Park on August 6th which was an amazing opportunity to meet with Somersworth residents at a community event. We handed out our survey and had people show where they lived on the map with sticky dots. We also set up a big chalkboard so that visitors could congregate, give feedback by writing on the board, and discuss “I would love this park more if…” We also set up the coloring sheets activity at National Night Out.

In the next section we will highlight some of the perceptions and comments we heard from Somersworth residents in reference to each of the three focus recreation areas. A full inventory of all comments, feedback and survey results can be found in appendix A.



SRPC Staff conduct outreach at the City's National Night Out Event in August 2019. (SRPC Photo)



# OUTREACH RESULTS

It was clear to the SRPC team throughout the outreach process that Somersworth residents love their city and displayed a lot of excitement about improving access to recreation and making these areas more attractive to residents and visitors. We heard many ideas and enthusiastic responses. There was a lot of energy and excitement around future possibilities.

The results presented below are grouped by the park they were concerning, and then by overarching topic area.

## Jules Bisson Park

### I would like this park more if...



- There were more benches
- Picnic tables
- Rock Wall
- Community Garden Beds
- Trapeze bar in the playground
- Climbing Ropes
- Public Swimming pool
- Safer for the kids
- More equipment



### What do you like about this park?



- Walking Distance from home
- The national night out event
- Like the basketball courts
- Close By
- Playground and activities
- It has a playground next to the baseball field
- Ballfield
- Playground equipment & open space



### Does anything prevent you from using this park more often?



- Safety/Cleanliness
- Restrooms
- Parking
- They seem run down
- Some known drug use occurs there too
- The one park that has a children's area to play (jungle gym) - is unclean or sketchy people are there
- Jules Bisson is full of drug deals
- Jules Bisson (needs) a covered area
- Things to do at the park
- We live near the Pines so only went to Jules Bisson when my son played baseball, or for National Night Out
- Nothing for older kids to do





# Somersworth Riverwalk

## What do you like about this park?



- The view and location!
- The path along the river
- Easy access, plenty of parking
- I enjoy being close to the water for a quick stroll and enjoying nature

- Though not easy, there is water access
- I walk my daughter's dogs
- The river
- Swimming, canoeing

• The trails, the river, the feeling of serenity in the woods, away from the business of city life, yet so close to home. My friends, family love it. My four year old granddaughter and I have a special snack spot that she looks forward to every visit.



## Does anything prevent you from using this park more often?



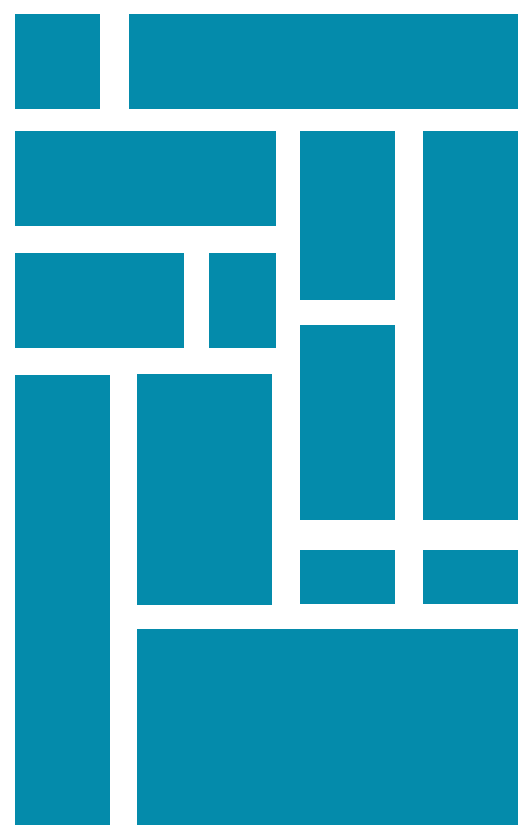
- What is the riverwalk???
- ...just didn't know it existed
- I don't know where the riverwalk even is!
- No place to ride a bike or take a long walk
- Riverwalk: poison ivy

- Better access to water for swimming, for launching non-motorized vessels is needed at the Riverwalk
- I am handicapped using a wheelchair.

• I went to the River walk once years ago and found a "campsite" with dirty socks and trash. It turned me off to wanting to take my kids there.



Map of the Somersworth Riverwalk. (SRPC Map)



# Malley Farm

## What do you like about this park?



- Nature
- The mix of grass and forest
- We love the Malley Farm trails. They are so clean also!
- Fields and places to run

- Dump leaves
- Close by
- I walk my daughter's dogs.
- Great walking trails
- Ball field

- Walking with my dog along the water it's beautiful
- The view of the river and wildlife
- The dog enjoys Malley farm



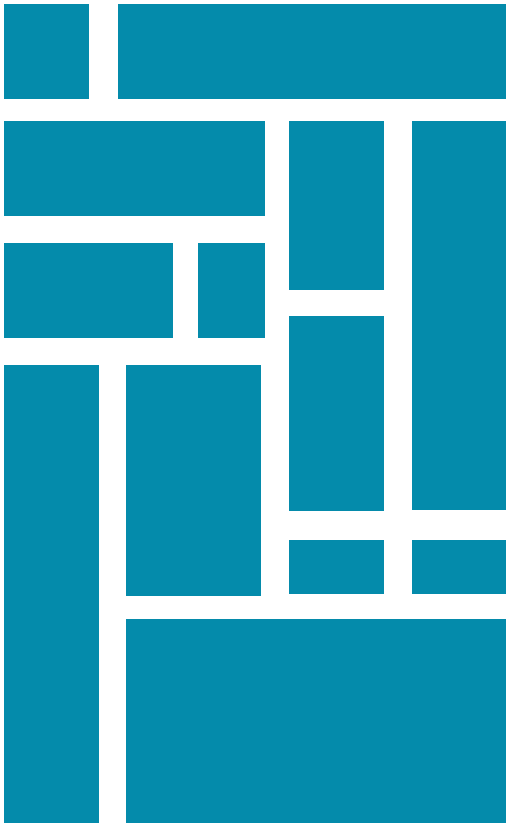
## Does anything prevent you from using this park more often?



- Did not know Malley Farm was a park. I worry about the safety in the areas.
- Just the ability to get there
- Where is it? What does it offer? Is it dog friendly?
- Malley farm is too secluded

- Too far and I didn't know Malley Farm was a park. I was told it was a place to dump leaves and sticks.
- Time in life! Malley Farm's path from the ball fields to the woods is overgrown and full of ticks for much of the summer. Otherwise, I am there

almost once a week. I have started going to Rollinsford entrances while the grass is overgrown.





# Access and Infrastructure

We received some comments on the survey about how people get to the parks, what prevents them from accessing the parks, and other transportation barriers. To better understand the barriers they described, we conducted a basic walkability assessment and looked at other transportation needs near Jules Bisson and the Riverwalk to determine whether people living in the area can easily and safely walk, bike, or drive to these parks.

## Parking

At Jules Bisson there are limited paved parking spaces and the unpaved area used during baseball games gets very muddy.

At the Riverwalk, we found that there is plenty of space for parking in the lot, but that people tend to park close to the road and block off the entrance to the parking lot. As a result, the perception is that there is not enough parking.

## Sidewalks

The sidewalks approaching Jules Bisson and the Riverwalk are not in good condition. The sidewalks on the east side of Main St. are obstructed by large bushes. The concrete sidewalks on the west side of Main St. are uneven and cracking. The asphalt sidewalks on Buffumsville Road are crumbling. The railroad crossing on River Street is so uneven that wheelchairs and strollers have a hard time crossing. Some crosswalks on Main Street are blocked by hydrants and utility poles.

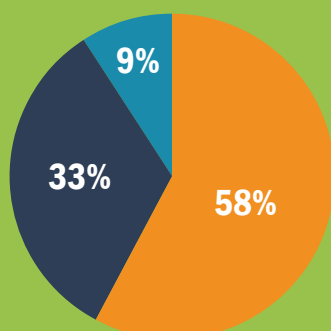
## Bicycle Safety

Our bicycle level of traffic stress (LTS)8 model assigned a score of 1 or 2 to all of the roads in the focus area except for Indigo Hill Rd, Main St, and High St. This means that as long as you avoid those three roads, the entire focus area could access Jules Bisson and Riverwalk on low stress roads.

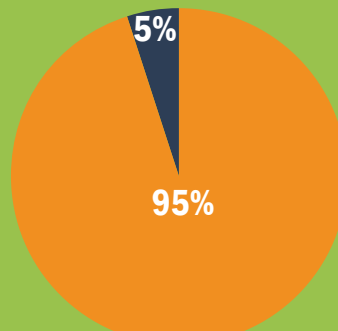
The LTS model was developed collaboratively by Plymouth State University and the four NH Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO). The model looks at the number of lanes of traffic, the shoulder widths, the presence of bike lanes and on-street parking, speed limits, and traffic volumes and assigns a score from 1 to 4. An LTS score of 1 is safe for bicyclists of all ages. An LTS score of 2 indicates the traffic stress that most adults will tolerate. Both LTS 1 and 2 are considered low stress and suitable for accessing schools and recreation sites.

## WE ASKED: How do you get to...

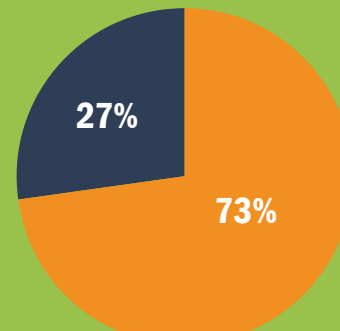
...Jules Bisson Park?



...Somersworth Riverwalk?



...Malley Farm?

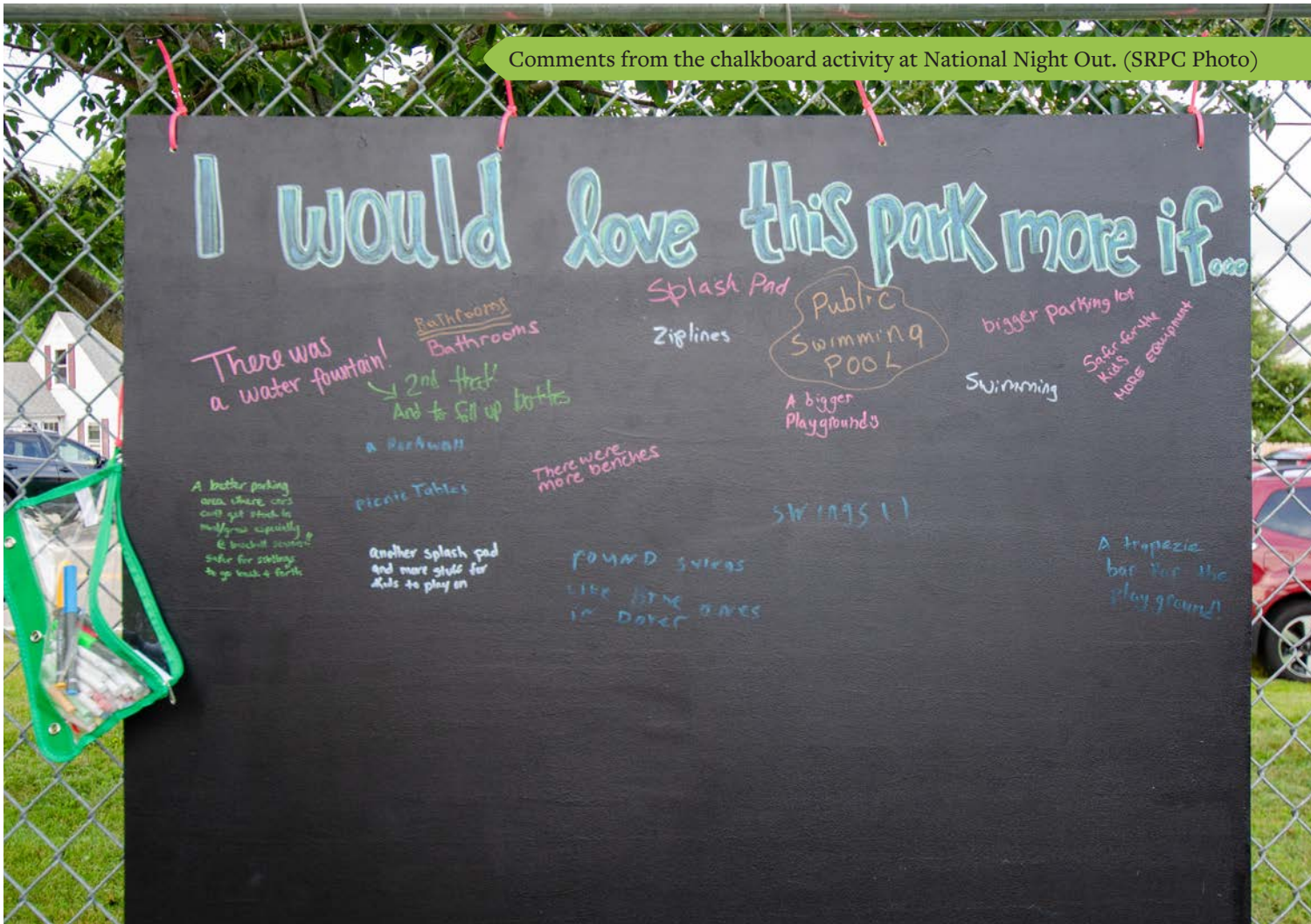


### Key



# Transit

As of 2019, COAST route 1 follows Main St and Indigo Hill Rd before returning to High Street. Starting on the summer of 2020, the route will only include High St.



Comments from the chalkboard activity at National Night Out. (SRPC Photo)

## WE ASKED: What are your access/infrastructure concerns with...

### ...Jules Bisson Park?



- Not enough parking
- It's not safe for walking or biking
- No transit access
- Easy for kids to access the train tracks
- People drive fast on River St
- Gates into the park are too far apart

### ...Somersworth Riverwalk?



- Not enough parking
- It's not safe for walking or biking
- No transit access
- Overgrown path from parking lot to trails in woods during warmer weather

### ...Malley Farm?



- Not enough parking
- It's not safe for walking or biking
- No transit access
- It has a very steep walk down to the path that makes it somewhat difficult



# RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to use the information we received from the public outreach process, and explore possible implementation ideas, SRPC has created a recommendation table below to address specific challenges and opportunities for each recreation site organized by amenity. In addition, we have general recommendations that apply across all three sites:

## Signage & Wayfinding

Perhaps the most significant and surprising element of the outreach process was how many people said they “just didn’t know it existed” about each of the sites. This included people standing in Jules Bisson park – mere yards from the Riverwalk. We did not observe signage for any of these three recreation sites, either from surrounding neighborhoods or from the downtown areas. Considering their rich potential to offer recreation activity and connect residents and visitors to exercise, nature, and the inherent natural beauty of the area – we highly recommend investment in both signage and maps for all three sites. Signage represents a cost-effective way to increase awareness and knowledge, and therefore usage, and also to encourage visitors to Somersworth to visit these sites. There is a direct economic development impact with recreation and Somersworth businesses could benefit from visitors coming to take a walk or explore and then having lunch or dinner or doing some shopping in downtown stores before or after they visit a recreation site.

## Capitalize on the community energy

SRPC witnessed an extremely positive and dynamic energy amongst citizens to invest time, energy, and volunteers in projects to upgrade and maintain these community recreation sites. In addition, throughout the process, SRPC was contacted by a number of individuals and groups that expressed interest and skills to volunteer. These included citizens, architects, and the Children’s Museum of NH looking for ways to connect ongoing or upcoming initiatives to this effort. These opportunities should be explored fully as they offer substantial potential.

## Create a connection between the sites

Considering the proximity between Jules Bisson Park, a community playground and playing field, and the Riverwalk, an area of extreme natural beauty and serenity, as well as an opportunity for nature education, we strongly recommend making a conceptual connection between these two sites. There is defined research and evidence that access to nature and play is an instrumental part of children’s development and well-being. The current potential linkage between these two recreation sites presents an excellent opportunity to marry these two concepts organically. Were Jules Bisson Park re-designed to incorporate a river theme and the Riverwalk refined to connect back to play, the addition of a physical connection in between the two, such as fish painted on the sidewalk, could make both parks exponentially more inviting, exciting, and create a “destination” for regional visitors.

## Marketing

Referring back to recommendation #1- there exists a documented lack of awareness or knowledge about these parks. The City could consider a marketing campaign, through events, newsletters, social media blasts, school tours, or community-led clean ups. We maintain that increasing knowledge and awareness of the recreation areas that are available, and in close proximity, could increase use of these sites greatly. With a strong marketing campaign, or associated general community buy-in and acknowledgement, many residents would take advantage of these sites to a much greater degree.



Views from the Somersworth Riverwalk. (SRPC Photo)



# Safety

One of the recurring themes in talking to Somersworth residents is that there is a negative perception about the safety of these sites. The concept that “gangs of older kids are hanging around” in Jules Bisson Park, or that the Riverwalk may be used as a campground for homeless persons suggests to residents and visitors that these are unsafe areas. This is a major barrier to increased usage. The perception of increased police presence could be considered, as well as visibility such as more or better lighting. In addition, if these recreation sites are enhanced and knowledge and access is improved, then the result will hopefully be more users. Increased and visible usage and enjoyment of these sites will organically promote a more positive sense of each site’s safety.

Following, please find a table of amenities, challenges and opportunities, as well as potential resources, for each focus site of this study.



Good example of a safe intersection with signage at Main St. and River St. in Somersworth. (SRPC Photo)

Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
Playground Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The current structures need updating and refreshing.</li> <li>Current structures are not designed for many different ages.</li> <li>Unfavorable wood chip surface in playground.</li> <li>Not ADA accessible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with a design firm and the public to create a Salmon Falls River-themed park-this could be connected visually to the Riverwalk</li> <li>ADA accessible playground features</li> <li>Choose playground structures to accommodate multiple age and physical ability groups. Include ADA accessible features, as well as something for older demographic (7+) – large games, horse shoes, kickball, gaga pit, etc.</li> <li>Consider a connection to the Riverwalk in design stage to choose features that enhance connection. This could be the installation of boulders that children could climb and hop from one to the other to stay out of the “water”.</li> <li>Replace woodchips with a different surface – e.g. rubber mulch, tires, etc.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding is already in place to do improve this park. Playground structures are set to be updated with Land and Water Conservation funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.gametime.com/grant-application">https://www.gametime.com/grant-application</a></li> <li><a href="https://www.earlychildhoodeducationzone.com/best-playgrounds-in-america/">https://www.earlychildhoodeducationzone.com/best-playgrounds-in-america/</a></li> <li>Connect with Partners such as the Children’s Museum of New Hampshire to explore possible programming overlaps and assistance</li> <li><a href="https://kaboom.org/grants?successcode=2">https://kaboom.org/grants?successcode=2</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low once installed</li> </ul>	
Picnic Table	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did not appear to be present on our outreach visits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a number of seating and picnic options in the shade – we heard “more places to sit” from many</li> <li>Benches and tables</li> <li>Use creative seating solutions as an additional park attraction</li> <li>Consider using natural materials such as logs for seating options to begin creating the conceptual connection to the more natural Riverwalk</li> <li>Consider holding a “Design a Park Seat” competition for local artists, artisans etc. to foster community engagement and enthusiasm</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for a new gazebo is part of the upgrade plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.playgardens.co.uk/project/outdoor-playground-seating/">https://www.playgardens.co.uk/project/outdoor-playground-seating/</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally low, but it depends on what types of installations are chosen.</li> <li>Trash will need to be emptied which is already taking place.</li> </ul>	



Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
Ballfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Field maintenance – overgrown grass.</li> <li>Worn equipment (bases).</li> <li>Parking in mud season.</li> <li>No scoreboard.</li> <li>Very little seating for spectators.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the ball field–new bases, home plate, etc.</li> <li>Increase maintenance after the official season ends to create a fun and usable space for young people to continue to use throughout the summer.</li> <li>Improve drainage in parking area.</li> <li>Incorporate a safe path for younger children to access playground while siblings are playing baseball.</li> <li>Re-brand the field with a river-connected name, create a new scoreboard with river elements in design.</li> <li>New bleachers.</li> </ul>			X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High due to upgrade funding</li> <li>Additional funding possible through grant applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://walmart.org/how-we-give/local-community-grants">https://walmart.org/how-we-give/local-community-grants</a></li> <li>Engage parents of youth players to create a volunteer maintenance team or to fundraise for new plates etc.</li> <li>Possibly engage CTC marketing and digital media students in redesign and re-branding exercise.</li> <li>Woodworking students could be engaged to create scoreboard and signs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lengthening of regular maintenance season.</li> <li>Review condition of plates etc. yearly.</li> </ul>
Basketball court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No seating</li> <li>Court needs some updating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install benches around the court</li> <li>Install a water bubbler</li> <li>New hoops</li> </ul>		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for a new gazebo is part of the upgrade plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://dsgcommunity.sponsorport.com/">http://dsgcommunity.sponsorport.com/</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low additional maintenance</li> </ul>
Proximity to neighborhoods and Riverwalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access</li> <li>Lack of signage</li> <li>Lack of visibility</li> <li>Fencing creates a barrier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and install signage both in surrounding neighborhoods and from the downtown area that invites visitors before the park or from downtown to lead people to the park. The park is not visible from Main St. and has no signage to attract and interest residents and visitors</li> <li>Consider more gates to enter the park at different access points to increase accessibility (there is no shoulder or sidewalk on Indigo Hill Rd entrance to ball field)</li> </ul>			X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low once installed</li> </ul>

## Jules Bisson Park

Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
General Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No bathroom</li> <li>No water fountain</li> <li>No splash pad</li> <li>Nowhere to ride scooters</li> <li>Not a lot of shade</li> <li>Not safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore future options for a public bathroom or porta-potty at minimum</li> <li>Explore funding options for a splash pad or water feature</li> <li>Explore shade options-new pavilion will provide some</li> <li>Explore installation of a drinking fountain</li> <li>Possible more lighting</li> <li>Possible increased police attendance to the park</li> </ul>		X				Unknown
<b>Access and Infrastructure</b>								
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not enough parking</li> <li>Unpaved baseball parking is muddy in the spring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalized raised dirt parking between the park and tracks</li> </ul>		X				
Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Big gap in sidewalks along Indigo Hill Rd to River St</li> <li>Sidewalks in poor condition</li> <li>Sidewalks not ADA accessible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add sidewalks between Main St and River St along Indigo Hill Rd</li> <li>Improve sidewalks around the city</li> </ul>		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be incorporated into CIP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete streets re-design is on-going</li> </ul>	
Bicycle safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No bike shoulders</li> <li>People speed on River St</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share the road signs</li> <li>Increase speed enforcement on River St</li> </ul>		X				
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no public transit for those without vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with COAST to expand the route to include access to the park</li> <li>Supplement COAST routes with city-run transit</li> </ul>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recent COAST strategic plan removed stops from this area</li> </ul>		
Railroad safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal path through the woods from Main St crosses the tracks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Either formalize the path and put up train safety signs/signals or put up a fence to stop it</li> </ul>		X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FHWA Transportation Alternatives funds, Railway-Highway Crossings (Section 130) Program</li> </ul>	



Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is not apparent there is a recreation area-no signs to direct residents and visitors from downtown or surrounding neighborhoods</li> <li>● Trails are not very long to allow for lengthier exercise</li> <li>● The trails are overgrown and not maintained</li> <li>● Invasive species</li> <li>● Steep Entrance/Exit-not ADA accessible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create or continue river themed trail network to connect Riverwalk to Jules Bisson park and create an interchange between the two. (Public art, enhanced natural features or sculpture, informational signage or learning tools)</li> <li>● Build an ADA accessible entrance to the walk.</li> <li>● Install wooden bridges or infrastructure where wet areas exist</li> <li>● Create points of interest and alternate trails to enhance the nature and river themed experience for visitors</li> <li>● Geo-caching/Scavenger Hunt, Launch Events</li> <li>● Create a trail map for the entrance-possible to incorporate “distance traveled” information for different loops/trails</li> <li>● Continue with future plans to extend the Riverwalk to downtown Somersworth.</li> <li>● Explore possibility of a bike trail rather than walking path from Riverwalk to Downtown.</li> </ul>			X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider engaging with school-aged programs to take upgrading the Riverwalk as a leadership project</li> <li>● Scouts or other youth groups (Eagle Scout Project)</li> <li>● <a href="https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program">https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program</a></li> <li>● <a href="https://kaboom.org/grants?successcode=2">https://kaboom.org/grants?successcode=2</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Growth management would need to be increase</li> <li>● Replacement of bridges or wooden infrastructure in waterlogged areas</li> <li>● Maintain signage</li> </ul>	
Water Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No formal dock or safety equipment?</li> <li>● Dangerous water entry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Install an ADA accessible dock for cartop access</li> <li>● Install signage downtown and in surrounding neighborhoods to advertise access to water</li> <li>● More accessible trail entrance-currently very steep</li> <li>● Kayak or Canoe rentals</li> </ul>			X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Specific funding would need to be sought</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="https://wsfprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/BIG/BIG_Funding.htm">https://wsfprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/BIG/BIG_Funding.htm</a></li> <li>● <a href="https://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/access/index.html">https://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/access/index.html</a></li> <li>● <a href="https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1600/whatwedo.htm">https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1600/whatwedo.htm</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● High</li> </ul>

## Somersworth Riverwalk

Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
Natural Beauty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is not apparent from street level and no signs to direct residents and visitors from downtown or surrounding neighborhoods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and install signage from downtown, nearby neighborhoods and from Jules Bisson park that leads visitors to the Riverwalk</li> <li>Enhance visual access to water by weed and invasive plant species management</li> <li>Create gathering spots with picnic tables or natural seating (e.g. Logs)</li> </ul>		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tasks can be done simultaneously with trails upkeep and improvement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider engaging with school-aged programs to take upgrading the Riverwalk as a leadership project</li> <li>Start a Riverwalk clean-up annual event-create a steering committee or Riverwalk Committee to lead the effort.</li> <li>Scouts or other youth groups (Eagle Scout Project)</li> <li><a href="https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program">https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium-would require annual upkeep and increased maintenance.</li> </ul>
Shade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No seats or benches or picnic tables to enjoy being in shade near the river</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create gathering spots with picnic tables or natural seating (e.g. Logs)</li> </ul>		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are low cost options to create these natural gathering areas for citizens to enjoy the beauty and cooler temperatures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.playgardens.co.uk/project/outdoor-playground-seating/">https://www.playgardens.co.uk/project/outdoor-playground-seating/</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low after initial installation</li> </ul>
General Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No connection to downtown</li> <li>Trails are too short</li> <li>No garbage</li> <li>No rest room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue with future plans to extend the Riverwalk to downtown Somersworth.</li> <li>Explore possibility of a bike trail rather than walking path from Riverwalk to Downtown.</li> <li>Explore installation of garbage cans and rest rooms</li> </ul>		X	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependent on steps taken.</li> </ul>
<b>Access and Infrastructure</b>								
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no public transit for those without vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for additional COAST routes</li> <li>Supplement COAST routes with city-run transit</li> </ul>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review every five years for need</li> </ul>		



Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
<b>Access and Infrastructure</b>								
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Design of the parking lot blocks others from entering the lot</li> <li>● Limited</li> <li>● Very steep access point to Riverwalk</li> <li>● Barrier across entrance is not inviting</li> <li>● Visitors tend to park in such a way that blocks access for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alter the lot so that there are two clear driveways into it</li> <li>● Large rocks as parking markers (See Gonic Trails image below)</li> <li>● Build an ADA accessible entrance to the walk.</li> <li>● Possibly create more formalized parking to maximize parking capacity- Remove steel barrier and create an ADA accessible gate if needed</li> <li>● See parking notes on page xx</li> </ul>		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Medium once</li> <li>● Re-design complete or new parking guides in place</li> </ul>
Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sidewalks in poor condition</li> <li>● No curb ramp or crossing from sidewalk on Buffumsville Rd to the parking lot</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add a curb ramp and crosswalk to safely connect the sidewalk to the Riverwalk</li> <li>● Incorporate river themes into sidewalks connecting to the Riverwalk</li> <li>● Repave the sidewalk on Buffumsville Rd.</li> <li>● Consider concrete curb ramps at the River St intersection</li> </ul>		X				
Bicycle Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No bicycle lanes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add road markings such as bike lane striping or sharrows where appropriate.</li> </ul>		X				
Access from parking to trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The access path from parking to the trail is very steep</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Consider a wooden or concrete ramp from the lot to the trail</li> <li>● Consider changing the grade of the boat ramp so that it is easier for pedestrians to use as well</li> </ul>		X				

## Malley Farm

Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
River Views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No clear entrance to trails or advertisement or maps of trails</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalize trail network though signage, maintenance and advertising.</li> <li>Capitalize on the natural beauty of the areas and create a nature walk- monarch habitat in existence which could easily be made into an “attraction” with simple educational signage</li> <li>Create walking exercise “loops” with signage telling you how far you have gone ½ mile, 1 mile, 1.5 mile markers etc.</li> </ul>		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider engaging school aged programs to take on upgrading the Malley Farm trails as a leadership project</li> <li>Scouts or other youth groups</li> <li><a href="https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program">https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program</a></li> <li><a href="https://monarchjointventure.org/resources/faq/how-can-i-fund-my-monarch-project">https://monarchjointventure.org/resources/faq/how-can-i-fund-my-monarch-project</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher than present</li> </ul>	
Community Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not very well tended to (as of 2019)</li> <li>Not very known or popular- SRPC did not come across any advertising or publicity about the garden</li> <li>No signage from downtown</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charge a fee for membership</li> <li>Create public events e.g. harvest dinner to build community around the garden</li> <li>Explore partnerships with schools to introduce agricultural programming</li> <li>Signage from downtown</li> </ul>		X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site is existing- there is public interest and possibility of many connections to make within the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect with school aged programs for opportunities to collaborate and coordinate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low-if a good network is built up the community garden could be generally self-sustaining in terms of maintenance</li> </ul>	
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No signage or maps</li> <li>No clear entrance or exit</li> <li>Overgrown and a lot of ticks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formalize trail network though signage, maintenance and advertising.</li> <li>Create walking exercise “loops” with signage telling you how far you’ve gone (i.e. ½ mile markers)</li> <li>Explore a connection to Rollinsford and a joint campaign to increase trail use.</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider engaging school aged programs to take on upgrading the Malley Farm trails as a leadership project</li> <li>Scouts or other youth groups</li> <li><a href="https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program">https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-us/trails-bureau/grants/recreational-trails-program</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium- a few extra cuts of trails over the growing months would most likely suffice</li> </ul>	
<b>Access and Infrastructure</b>								
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no parking challenges at this site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>						
Bicycle safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No bike lane to Malley Farm along Main St</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a safe bicycle lane</li> </ul>		X				



Amenities	Challenges	Recommendations	Feasibility			Feasibility Notes	Resources	Maintenance
			Low	Medium	High			
<b>Access and Infrastructure</b>								
Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No sidewalks extend out that far</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend sidewalk all way to Malley Farm entrance</li> <li>Add a cross walk</li> </ul>		X				
Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no public transit for those without vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for additional COAST routes</li> <li>Supplement COAST routes with city-run transit</li> </ul>	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recent COAST strategic plan removed stops from this area</li> </ul>		
Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"I didn't know there was anything there"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Property maps and signs down near the baseball field</li> <li>Trail maps</li> <li>Trailhead parking</li> </ul>					X	



