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Harrisonburg Parks & Rec to unveil Spraygrounds design next week

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Community members will soon have a chance to see how their input has shaped an exciting new project from Harrisonburg Parks & Rec.

Designs for the Spraygrounds at Ralph Sampson Park will be unveiled to the public at a meeting Thursday, June 20, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Lucy F. Simms Continuing Education Center, 620 Simms Ave. Community members are invited to come see the designs, check out close-up images of spray features, talk with project designers and celebrate the upcoming project with others excited for the new amenity.

Harrisonburg Parks & Rec staff, along with project consultants Nielsen Builders, Kimley-Horn and Southern Playgrounds, held two community engagement sessions at the Simms Center and two pop-up events at local after-school programs this spring to get feedback on design themes and other ideas future spraygrounds visitors had for the upcoming destination play space. That community input has led to a creative and engaging park design that is likely to turn the Spraygrounds at Ralph Sampson Park into one of the most popular attractions in The Friendly City.



(Above) Harrisonburg Parks & Rec Facilities and Projects Manager Scott Erickson talks with kids from the Boys & Girls Clubs of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County at an engagement event this spring for the Spraygrounds at Ralph Sampson Park.

“It’s been amazing getting to meet with kids from across our community to hear directly from them about what they would like to see included at the spraygrounds and to see how excited they are for this project,” Harrisonburg Parks & Rec Deputy Director Vic Garber said. “This design, which was created based on our community’s input, is really incredible and I’m so excited to see everyone’s reaction when we reveal it next week.”

The spraygrounds, at approximately 6,000 square feet in size, will include 36 spray features spread across zones tailored for toddlers, teens and families. Interactive elements will allow children to enjoy different experiences across the park, with water spraying up from the ground, dropping out of elevated sprayers and even jetting out of features children can move around themselves. The project will include a number of other amenities for families, such as shelters and seating areas, restrooms and green space for picnics and other activities.

Construction on the project will begin this fall. The spraygrounds will be built where the current Ralph Sampson Park baseball field is located, replacing the under-utilized field and adding to the revitalization of the popular park.

The spraygrounds is one of nearly two dozen American Rescue Plan Act-funded projects – including six Parks & Rec efforts – approved by Harrisonburg City Council in December 2022. Find more information on other Harrisonburg ARPA projects at <https://harrisonburgva.gov/ARPA>.

Harrisonburg Parks & Rec will be providing sneak peeks at portions of the spraygrounds on its Facebook and Instagram pages leading up to the June 20 event. See more at <https://www.facebook.com/harrisonburgparksandrecreation> and <https://www.instagram.com/HarrisonburgParks/>.

***The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 55,990 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.*

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