



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Air Power Park 2018 Multi-year Phased Recovery Plan

**PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:**

In the early 1960s, under the leadership of Mayor Ann Kilgore, Hampton set upon a program of civic improvements intended to draw tourists to the City. Among those was the creation Air Power Park, opened to honor those who serve at Langley Air Force Base and NASA Langley Research Center. In the past few decades resources for maintenance and investment in the Park have been deferred or redirected. The result - the condition of the Park has deteriorated and requires substantial attention. Both NASA and USAF (heavily invested in the Park’s condition in that they have representative artifacts on exhibit through loan) have communicated concern with the condition of the park and how it may reflect on them. At the request of the City Manager the Phased Plan has been developed by the team (gathered specifically for this purpose) for Council consideration.

**Discussion:**

Air Power Park is widely viewed by the citizens of Hampton as a valuable community asset. Civic Dialogues held by the Hampton History Museum (inviting input from the community) informed the team that the community values the Park and supports investment in its continued operation and improvement. In May 2018, Waterwalk at Central Park opened its first section. The entry point to the trail is at Air Power Park, bringing more attention to the condition of the Park and underlining the relevance to its place in Hampton. As a reflection of that renewed interest from the community, attendance at the Park has increased 54% since 2016. In order to meet the community’s expectations, take advantage of the synergy created by the new trailhead, and fulfill the obligations to NASA and USAF, a significant investment in restoring the Park to a proud condition and maintaining that going forward will require funding estimated in the Phased Plan. Funding would be requested through the CIP process and from existing PRLS resources (Phase I).

**Impact:**

**Resilient Hampton**

A significant challenge in redeveloping the park results from the issue of sea level rise. Tidal flooding and standing water are a constant problem at the Park. This results in damage to the artifacts, a disappointing exhibit condition, and wet, muddy grounds frustrating the public's enjoyment of the Park. Planning for the infrastructure improvements which would remedy these conditions will be informed by the results of the Resilient Hampton Phase II study currently under way.

#### Education and engaged citizenry

Air Power Park is a unique location in Hampton that has the capacity, when fully restored, to be a key provider and partner with the Hampton City Public Schools in teaching history, science, math and technology through both its outdoor artifacts and floating dock and park, as well as activated indoor programming.

#### Place Making

By restoring Air Power Park, we restore one of our most unique and authentically Hampton places that reflect and celebrate the unique culture, history, and character of our community.

#### Good Government

As stewards of an iconic public park in Hampton, we are protecting the long-standing community resource and response to strong community interest in preserving the park.

#### **Recommendation:**

The Air Power Park Phased Recovery Plan is presented to the City Council for guidance and direction. Ultimately, with this guidance, funding resources should be dedicated to the accomplishment of the goals outlined in the Phased Plan.

Resolution authorizing the acceptance and appropriation of (see Phased Plan) in CIP funding to restore the artifacts and facility at Air Power Park for honoring our commitment outlined in loan agreements with NASA Langley, National Museum of United States Air Force and the National Museum of Naval Aviation, and increased capacity and use of Air Power Park for citizens.