

ATTACHMENT 2
CHIPPOKES PLANTATION STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
DECEMBER 1999

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Department of Conservation and Recreation
203 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

CHIPPOKES PLANTATION STATE PARK MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chippokes Plantation is one of the oldest continuously farmed plantations in the United States and a unique and treasured Virginia State Park. The first English owner of the property was Captain William Powell, who was granted 550 acres of river frontage on Chippokes Creek in 1619. Captain Powell's son inherited the plantation in 1645, and then sold it to Henry Bishop in 1646. Mr. Bishop expanded the plantation boundaries to include 1,403 acres. From 1684 through 1827, the property was in the Ludwell family, though they did not reside there. Several absentee landlords owned the property between 1827 and 1837, when Albert Carroll Jones became the owner and resident. He built the current plantation house in 1854, but preferred to live in the River House overlooking the James. The plantation remained in the Jones family until 1918, when it was put up for public auction.

The last private owners were Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Stewart, who restored and lived on the property over a period of four decades. In 1967, Mrs. Stewart donated the plantation to the Commonwealth of Virginia as a memorial to her husband. During the same period, she also sold an additional, adjacent 280 acres to the state for \$10.00. This property, called the Chestnut Farms portion of the park, was planned to be the site for the more modern support and recreational facilities, thus enabling the Chippokes Plantation itself to "... preserve and interpret the cultural landscape which represents over four centuries of rural life along the James River."

In 1968, Stanley Abbott, FASLA, prepared the original Chippokes Plantation Park Master Plan. Mrs. Stewart provided guidance on this original plan, which carried out her wishes to preserve the plantation in its entirety for the expression of daily plantation farm life through the centuries. The original plan also detailed the development of a variety of day-use and overnight facilities to be centered on the Chestnut Farms portion of the park. The park opened to the public in 1970. Attendance that year was 11,615. In 1999, the park's visitors numbered over 77,000. Today, Chippokes Plantation State Park has a wide variety of traditional offerings including a visitor center, swimming pool complex, hiking and biking trails, and picnic facilities. Yet at the same time, it maintains the integrity of the historical, natural and landscaped resources of the site.

Additionally, the plantation grounds are home to the Chippokes Farm and Forestry Museum. In 1977, The Virginia General Assembly created the Chippokes Plantation Farm Foundation, a quasi-state agency with the autonomy to solicit donations. The foundation commissioned the efforts of Abbott and Associates to design the Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Museum for displaying a large number of antiques farm tools, early equipment, and housewares. This museum opened in 1990 on the Chippokes Plantation State Park grounds.

Now, at the start of a new millennium, we are updating and revising the master plan, detailing park enhancements and improvements. Concurrently, the Chippokes Plantation Farm Foundation has completed a feasibility study, which proposes a major educational facility with enhanced recreational opportunities. Their concept, to be known as the Chippokes Farm and Forestry Center, is intended to increase and enhance park and regional tourism. The Foundation's feasibility study incorporates the proposed developments of this master plan. An Executive Summary of the study, which was prepared by Carlton S. Abbott, is attached and is an integral part of the State Park Master Plan Executive Summary.

Proposed state park master plan components

Chestnut Farm

Expansion of the campground and picnic areas -- The original master plan proposed the development of 45 camping sites. Only 32 were developed. This revised master plan proposes the addition of 17 sites to maximize the number of overnight facilities and satisfy public service needs.

Relocation of the picnic area -- The current picnic area is situated on bluffs overlooking the James River that are steadily eroding. To prevent the destruction of the three picnic shelters due to the erosion, the shelters will need relocation to a wooded area.

Construction of a maintenance complex -- Park maintenance functions would be relocated to the Chestnut Farms portion of the park from the 19th Century Farm Support Area and Buildings. Structures to be built would include a climate-controlled storage building for portions of the park's collections.

Existing infrastructure; i.e., visitor center, swimming pool, roads and parking areas are expected to be retained and integrated into the unified plan for the park.

Chippokes Plantation

Construction of an Interpretive Wharf and Opening of the River House -- A small wharf on the James River below the River House should be constructed. This would be used as an interpretive device for educating visitors on river transportation, farm imports and exports, and the importance of the river to the plantation. The River House should be opened for educating the public on the construction materials and methods utilized in plantation architecture for the time. The River House would also serve to interpret the lifestyle of the inhabitants; i.e., the variety in space usage, furnishings, and decorations that reflect the different time periods of the home's occupancy.

Revitalization of the 19th Century Farm Support Area and Buildings -- Several residences, barns, sheds, and other outbuildings along Quarters Row have a direct relationship to the history of agriculture. Some of these buildings currently house offices, park support functions, and restrooms. However, this master plan proposes devoting all these structures to interpretation of farm management and operations. Park maintenance functions currently situated here will be relocated to the new maintenance compound proposed for the Chestnut Farms portion of the park.

Revitalization of the Chippokes Gardens -- Three acres of formal gardens exist behind the mansion along with another three acres of woodland plantings. With new programs and plans for these area, the Gardens at Chippokes could evolve into an arboretum area that stimulates the interest of horticultural societies, landscape design associations, master gardeners, and horticulture departments at major universities. In association with the redevelopment is the proposal to create a Library of Horticulture/ Landscape Architecture and associated information.

Reestablishment of the Apple Orchard – Legend tells it that the only reason Chippokes Plantation was saved from destruction during the Civil War was due to its brandy production from the plantation's legal distillery. To commemorate its history, this master plan proposes the reestablishment of the apple orchard. The orchard could be sited and designed to extend the visual aspects of the existing formal gardens. Fruits produced in the orchard could be marketed along with other items produced on the farm.

Retention and enhancement of existing farm management and interpretive programs – The farm displays and programs currently situated on the Plantation portion of the park would be retained and enhanced; e.g., the addition of livestock.

Other proposals for the Chippokes Plantation portion of the park include: 1) development of an equestrian facility with corral, stables and equestrian trails; 2) conversion of four tenant houses to overnight rental cabins; and establishment of a Water Interpretive Trail along the Lower Chippokes Creek.

Infrastructure developments are also necessary to service additional park facilities. These improvements would include construction of a maintenance road leading to the maintenance compound and a graveled Tour Trails system to be developed on existing farm roads directing visitors into the more remote portions of the park. The Tour Trails will have interpretative signage and stations along their routes. Chippokes Plantation Road, the current main access road, will continue to serve in this role -- providing access to all developed facilities on the property.

As mentioned previously, major facility developments are proposed by the Chippokes Farm Foundation; this is briefly described in the Chippokes Farm and Forest Center Executive Summary included with this document. The Foundation's plans for the future include development of educational facilities, demonstration gardens, and related activity areas. The relationship between the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Chippokes Plantation Farm Foundation continues to be a true partnership, each supporting the other while concentrating on its individual area of expertise. The Foundation's emphasis is on management of the facilities it funds and sponsors, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation works to manage and interpret the park's natural, historic, and cultural resources and the provision of such to the public.

Implementation of the proposals in this master plan for Chippokes Plantation State Park will ultimately alter the current management and human resource needs for the park. With the expansion of existing programs and implementation of new programs, staffing resources will need to be increased and will be similar to those detailed in the Chippokes Farm Foundation's Feasibility Study for the Chippokes Farm and Forestry Center. Cooperative programs and potential partnerships in resource management of the programs and facilities proposed in this master plan are probable. Partnerships could be created with Virginia Polytechnic and State University for assistance in the program areas of agriculture, forestry, and horticulture as well as swine, dairy, and cattle programs.

Completion of components proposed in this master plan is planned for three development phases. Phase I is slated for the years 2000-2005, Phase II for 2005-2010, and Phase III in the years 2010-2015. A cost analysis sheet is on page vi of this Executive Summary.

Planned phasing projects and estimates are given below – it is important to be aware that the “rolled-up” cost estimates for each phase include the estimated costs of the Chippokes Farm and Forest Center projects. For a detailed cost estimate break-out by project, please consult the cost analysis.

Briefly, Phase I projects emphasize the renovation and expansion of existing facilities such as the campground and picnic areas, the River House, the 19th Century Farm Support Area and Buildings, and the conversion of four tenant buildings into overnight facilities. Estimated cost for Phase I is \$12.4 million. This estimate includes planned expenditures by the Chippokes Farm Foundation on its Chippokes Farm and Forestry Center.

Phase II developments include renovations to the Stewart Mansion and associated outbuildings, garden enhancement, and orchard reestablishment. Estimated cost for Phase II is projected to exceed \$21 million. Over \$19 million of this amount represents expenditures by the Chippokes Farm Foundation on its Chippokes Farm and Forestry Center.

Phase III, the final stage of development, includes completion of the development of the equestrian center and the Lower Chippokes Creek Interpretive Trail. Cost

estimates total \$4.1 million; this includes planned expenditures by the Chippokes Farm Foundation in excess of \$2.5 million.

Increases in visitation to the park will result from the expansion and improvements. Maintenance and operational costs at Chippokes will also necessarily increase, as will staffing requirements. Four new full time employees will be needed -- an assistant park manager, a permanent horticulturist/gardens manager, an archival and collections curator, and a permanent carpenter. The Chippokes Farm and Forestry Center staffing needs are identified in the Executive Summary of the Feasibility Study (Appendix 2). Seasonal increases in staffing for maintenance and interpretive staff will occur during peak tourist times.

OPERATING AND STAFFING REQUIREMENTS		
STAFF: Existing	Proposed	Future
Park Manager		Park Manager
Business Manager		Business Manager
	Assistant Park Manager	Assistant Park Manager
Program Support Tech.		Program Support Tech.
Chief Ranger (2)		Chief Ranger (2)
Park Ranger (2)	Park Ranger (2)	Park Ranger (4)
SALARY TOTAL:		
\$240,866	\$104,268	\$345,134
WAGE TOTAL:*		
\$134,559	\$41,976	\$176,535
OTPS TOTAL:		
\$128,655	\$44,141	\$172,796
TOTAL BUDGET:**		
Budgeted	Proposed increase	Total needed
\$504,080	\$190,385	\$694,465

* Majority of wage dollars expended during peak season.

** All estimates are based on FY1999-2000 dollars.

