

SECTION 5: Park System Concept

5.1 OVERVIEW

Gwinnett County parks provide a variety of high quality recreational, social, educational, historic, interpretative, and cultural opportunities to citizens and visitors alike. A well-balanced park system engages people of all ages, denominations and ethnic backgrounds and enhances the overall quality of life. The definition of a park system concept that encourages a broad range of park types and facility combinations is an important first step in meeting the varied needs of the public.

In Gwinnett County, decisions relating to the future planning, acquisition, development, and management of park resources are guided by a "concept" of the County's park system. This system concept establishes park classifications and defines that various aspects of each park type, including such items as the general intensity of development, intended service area, and potential complement of facilities.

The inventory of existing parks and facilities, public consultation program, demographic and leisure trends analysis, and goals established by the Recreation Authority have provided a foundation for the review of Gwinnett County's park system concept.

Note: This section provides a description of the County's current parks system. Recommendations relating to parkland supplies and gaps are contained in Section 6.

5.2 COUNTY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARKS

Before examining the County's park classification system in detail, a broader perspective on public parkland is warranted.

The Gwinnett County Community Services Department is the primary provider of parks and recreation facilities in the County and its incorporated cities. The County provides recreation services that are typically associated with urban communities rather than the passive open space preservation role that many county recreation departments play. Although many park amenities provided by the County may also be provided at the local town or city level, there are a number of significant differences between the County parks system and other levels of recreation areas:

- County parks tend to be larger than local level parks and draw users from a larger distance.
- County parks are often designed to incorporate both active and passive recreational opportunities (as opposed to single purpose parks, which are more common at the local level). It is the County's intention to provide a range of facilities at each park in order to serve all age groups and to provide experiences beyond which could be obtained at city parks.
- Park amenities and design standards are generally consistent among most County parks so as to provide users with a common level of service and to provide equity among

different areas of the County. Standardized design elements also provide efficiencies when designing and constructing new parks and create an "identity" for County parks.

- Park planning, acquisition, design and construction occur on an ad hoc basis at the local level. With very few incorporated cities and towns having their own parks and recreation departments, there is greater reliance on the County parks system.
- In relative terms, the County's park system is younger than the park systems of most local cities and many other similar sized county governments.
- Generally, local level parks tend to have been established years ago as part of traditional village settlement areas, whereas the majority of the landholdings within the County parks system have been developed within the past ten to twenty years. As a result of this and other factors, many city parks are smaller, more urban in nature, and contain aging facilities. This is, however, beginning to change as several cities are acquiring and developing parks with the funding being provided through the SPLOST program.
- Many city parks provide activities that are oriented toward visits of relatively short duration (e.g., playgrounds). County parks, on the other hand, are more multi-purpose and provide for activities of an extended nature.
- City parks are generally located in closer proximity to historical population concentrations, thereby allowing many of their users to travel to the park by foot or bicycle. The distance between neighborhoods and the recreation facilities within most County parks is typically greater, prompting more users to drive their cars to these parks. The result is a greater need for support amenities, such as large parking lots, at County parks.

Tremendous population growth in Gwinnett County over the past thirty years, however, has blurred the boundary lines between the County and its incorporated cities and towns. No longer are there significant differences in population densities and land use patterns between towns, cities, and the County – patterns of development are determined more by interstate and road networks than they are by political boundaries. In fact, some of the more densely populated areas of Gwinnett are not found within the cities.

Despite the growth that has occurred, the two-tier government system creates inequalities in service levels for those living within cities and those outside of cities. As such, city dwellers are served by both neighborhood-level parks that are generally in close proximity to their home, as well as County parks, which the County strives to provide on a geographically equitable basis (meaning that there is likely a County park within a reasonable driving distance of their home). Due to annexations and land development patterns, there are even instances where County parks exist within city boundaries. Those living outside of cities, however, do not typically have the luxury of having a smaller neighborhood-level park located nearby since the only provider in their area would be the County, which generally only provides large-scale multi-use parks.

In many cases, school grounds serve as neighborhood-level parks, however, their facilities (largely playgrounds and athletic fields) do not appeal to all age groups and ethnic communities. Furthermore, community access to school facilities is limited due to extended school usage and issues related to liability, maintenance, and costs. Rapid population growth has also caused schools to occupy much of their land with portable classrooms, thereby disallowing the potential for additional park space for public use. Similar concerns and barriers exist with regard to local subdivision parks and facilities, making both schools and subdivision parks undesirable options for providing appropriate public park space at the neighborhood level.

5.3 COUNTY PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

County park classifications are important because they help to focus planning, development and management efforts in a manner that balances public needs and expectations with dimensions related to physical, natural and financial resources. Through a classification framework, a consistent management approach can be created that improves equity and responsiveness to community needs.

As the County's park system has evolved and expanded, so to has its parkland classification hierarchy. The 1986 County-wide Master Plan established a classification system that was comprised of community, regional, neighborhood/school and special purpose parks. The 1996 Master Plan and 2000 CIP modified this hierarchy to better reflect the needs of the general citizenry and the realities of park development in Gwinnett County. The 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan modified the hierarchy to reflect the desire for trails, connectivity, and the reality of parcel size acquisition.

Many aspects of the classification system have remained generally consistent over the years, including:

- A continued reliance on community parks as the focus of active recreation in the County ("backbone of the park system"); as the County has grown, however, there has been a movement to increase the size of these parks and to include more passive recreation opportunities (e.g., trails, picnicking, open space preservation, etc.).
- A special purpose park category that encompasses single purpose recreation facilities.
- A desire to provide smaller scale recreation and park opportunities at the local level. Previous plans have attempted to accomplish this through encouraging agreements between school boards and the County so that school facilities could be improved for greater public usage. Due to rapid population growth, however, most schools do not have the land base to accommodate increased community use.

In 2000, the County approved a Passive Community Park category that enables the acquisition and development of smaller parks in densely populated and underserved areas. This new category partially satisfies the need for neighborhood-level parks, but is not able to provide the full complement of facilities required in some service gap zones.

One critical area of importance that has emerged over the past decade or two, and in turn affecting the classification and "development" of parkland in the County, is a greater desire for passive recreation opportunities. While the development of community parks has traditionally been the first priority of the County, the acquisition of open space parks has received significantly more emphasis in recent years. Facilitating public recreation opportunities that utilize variety of natural landscapes, as well as preserving natural resources for the sake of environmental protection, are now key goals for the County's Parks and Recreation Division.

Another concept that has generated considerable support is that of clustering park sites (e.g., Pinckneyville Park, Community Center, Soccer Complex, and West District Pool Site). Clustering (whereby two or more parks with different, but complementary, facilities are located within close proximity of each other) has been largely necessitated by the rapid growth in the County and the resulting lack of available and affordable land. As the recreational demands of Gwinnett County's population continue to increase and land supplies dwindle, there will be a greater reliance on park and facility clustering.

Two of the key elements of a parks system are equity and accessibility. In this regard, it is imperative that the County strive to provide parkland in populated areas that are void of any park facilities, as well as those that are under-supplied. **Map 6-1** illustrates those areas that do not have a public park located within two miles, which has been established as a reasonable distance to travel to a park in Gwinnett County.

The use of provision standards for the allocation of parkland is a worldwide practice. Open space is often the focal point for city development with the classic civic square or park plaza. As all areas of a community are not similar in either their physical or geographic attributes or the composition or density of their population, provision standards should not be interpreted literally, rather they should be viewed as guidelines. Standards do, however, provide a useful starting point in analyzing park system needs.

When assessing whether or not an area is meeting the “provision standards” for open space a number of other factors must be considered such as:

1. The ability of or existence of alternative facility providers (e.g., local cities, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, private enterprise, ethnic or religious clubs or facilities);
2. The threat of lost opportunity if land is not acquired before the area is completely developed or if a resource is removed/destroyed;
3. The need to respond to pressures from new development with high family demands;
4. The need for appropriate spatial distribution; and
5. The need for acquisition for purely aesthetic reasons.

In any parkland system analysis, it is also necessary to relate the supply of land and its function to the population it serves within a geographically defined area. The primary issue pertaining to the provision of parkland is whether or not the needs of residents are being met by the current supply. This issue also relates to the provision of quality and optimum recreational opportunities.

It is generally felt that the provision of parkland should be geared to socio-demographic variables such as age, socio-economic status, population density, etc. Furthermore, past development patterns, lost opportunities and the spread of new development have impacted, and will continue to impact, the County's ability to acquire appropriate lands. When a community is faced with diverse physical terrain and diverse population characteristics, such as Gwinnett County is, flexibility and choice should be the operative elements in implementing a meaningful open space system.

Fundamental to the park system strategy is the fact that all people will not have equal access to parkland and its associated amenities strictly due to a lack of acquisition and development options. Inequalities exist in Gwinnett County's park system; however, as it is impossible provide parkland equally across the County. In order to address deficiencies in older or more rapidly growing areas, the size of parcels acquired may be smaller and the price per acre may be greater than in the outlying areas of the County.

Size of parkland acquired should not be the most important factor in a park system; the level of customer satisfaction derived from the open space provided should be the ultimate goal. While park size is not an indicator of customer satisfaction, it is often correlated to maintenance costs. Too many small park parcels will result in increased travel time and less productivity from maintenance crews for the dollars spent. Also relevant is the degree of manicure to the park. Parkland that is more “landscaped” and less “naturalized” is more maintenance intensive and, therefore, more costly.

The public consultation program for the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan found that 39% of the population supported the need for more parks and recreation facilities in their area and that 50% of those surveyed indicated that they would use County parks more often if one was located closer to their home. In developed areas of the County, few if any opportunities exist to acquire and develop parks of a size that is traditionally associated with the County parks system (e.g., 20 to 50 acres or more).

Furthermore, many of these underserved areas may contain significantly higher densities than what was reported in the past Census reports. The County must also build enough flexibility into its park system in order to accommodate the needs of these communities, whether located in underserved areas or neighborhoods with existing parks. For example, many of these areas have seen increased demand for both organized and pick-up soccer opportunities.

The current park system includes "Community Parks", "Passive Community Parks", "Open Space Parks", "Special Purpose Parks", "Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks", and "Linear Parks". Informal and less-defined categories also exist, such as "Green Space" and "Other" parks. Table 5-1 identifies County parks by type.

Table 5-1: Gwinnett County Parks by Category

Community Parks	Acres	RPA
Alexander Park Site	91.10	C
Bay Creek Park	153.84	E
Best Friend Park	43.38	A
Bethesda Park	158.68	C
Bogon Park	83.11	D
Collins Hill Aquatic Center	18.26	C
Collins Hill Park	77.06	C
Dacula Park	75.86	D
Duncan Creek Park	109.66	D
George Pierce Park	303.96	A
Harbins Community Park Site	497.89	D
Highway 29 / Lilburn Community Park Site	67.00	B
Jones Bridge Park	29.65	A
Lanier Community Park Site	66.00	D
Lenora Park	178.40	E
Lion's Club Park	32.00	B
Lucky Shoals Park	68.25	B
Mountain Park Aquatic Center & Activity Building	18.43	B
Mountain Park Park	43.53	B
Mountain View Community Park Site	88.47	D
Peachtree Ridge Park	155.70	A
Pinckneyville Park & Community Center	108.90	A
Rabbit Hill Park	93.17	D
Rhodes Jordan Park	162.33	D
Rock Springs Park	113.62	C
Shorty Howell Park	66.92	A
South Gwinnett Park	23.11	E
Total	2,928.27	

Passive Community Parks	Acres	RPA
Deshong Park	208.25	E
Graves Park	70.16	B
Lee Tract Park Site	21.00	B
Riverbend Park Site	48.33	B
Ronald Reagan Park	25.02	C
Sweet Water Park	25.36	C
Vecoma Tract	68.15	E
Total	466.27	

Open Space Parks	Acres	RPA
Holcomb Bridge Park	11.63	A
McDaniel Farm Park	133.60	A
Freeman's Mill Park	11.89	D
Harbins Park	1,403.89	D
Little Mulberry Park	889.72	D
Palm Creek Park Site	294.35	D
Settles Bridge Park	268.14	D
Centerville Park Site	60.68	E
Doc Moore Branch Park Site	350.03	E
Tribble Mill Park	718.22	E
Vines Gardens	90.06	E
Yellow River Park	566.10	E
Total	4,798.31	

Green Space Parks*	Acres	RPA
Alcovy River Corridor #1	13.87	D
Alcovy River Corridor #2	11.66	E
Alcovy River Greenspace (Dixon Property)	36.56	D
Appalachee River Greenspace	7.64	D
Beaver Ruin Greenspace	17.18	A
Camp Creek Greenspace (Hovis Property)	30.72	B
Discover Mills Tract	8.22	C
Edgemore North	10.20	A
Harbins To Palm Creek Connector Trail	3.21	D
Pendergrast Greenspace	22.61	C
Riverside Parkway Greenspace	8.68	C
Yellow River Wetlands	52.12	C
Total	222.68	

Special Purpose Parks	Acres	RPA
Cemetery Field Park	6.00	A
Gwinnett County Historic Courthouse	1.65	C
Gwinnett County History Museum	0.37	C
Harmony Grove Soccer Complex	17.82	B
Lillian Webb Field	3.44	A
Singleton Road Activity Building	1.59	B
West Gwinnett Park & Aquatic Center	22.52	A
Yellow River Post Office	5.12	C
Total	58.50	

Special Purpose Neighbourhood Parks	Acres	RPA
Beaver Ruin Park Site	57.92	A
Club Drive Park	25.10	C
Total	83.02	

Other*	Acres	RPA
Collins Hill Golf Club	138.84	C
Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center	233.06	D
Hospital (I-85) Site	32.11	C
Vulcan Site	10.01	A
Total	414.02	

* these categories do not form part of the County's Park Classification System and are categorized as such for internal purposes.

The following narrative characterizes each County park classification. This Capital Improvement Plan does not recommended any changes to the current definitions or classification system.

Table 5-2: Community Parks

Community Parks are the centerpiece of Gwinnett County's park system. They contain a diverse range of active, passive, team and individual recreation opportunities for all ages. Community Parks are designed to accommodate a large number of users (and vehicles) and intense usage at peak times.

New Community Park development should address both the active and passive recreation needs of the area. Larger parks (e.g., greater than 100 acres) should be designed such that at least one-third of the land area is dedicated for passive recreation and preserved open space. The degree of development within smaller parks (e.g., less than 100 acres) should be determined on a case-by-case basis, but may exceed 67% for active recreation. Community Parks should be located on major roadways and be designed to connect to a County-wide greenway network.

<i>Facility Types:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">one or more organized sports field complex (with lighting and sufficient parking), indoor recreation facilities (community centers, aquatic centers, senior centers, gymnasiums), outdoor aquatic facilities, tennis complex, basketball complex, rollerblade hockey rink, passive recreation amenities (see Passive Community Park)
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">existing range: 18 to 497 acresrecommended: 100 to 200 acres
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">community level to County-wide (approximately 25,000+ population)
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2,928 acres at 27 sites; 3.8 acres per 1,000 population
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">7 acres per 1,000 population (together with Passive Community Parks)

As noted above, **Community Parks** are the "backbone" of the county park system. The facilities in these parks are exceptional. The only drawback to the Community Park is that utilization is entirely dependent on the ability of users to arrive by automobile. Consideration should be given to providing "bus" access to Community Parks and to connecting the parks to school sites and other public spaces through trails and greenways.

Table 5-3: Passive Community Parks

Passive Community Parks offer a smaller-scale alternative to Community Parks in areas that are underserved, densely populated, and land poor. They offer a similar complement of facilities as Community Parks, with a blend of active and passive recreation opportunities, however, sport field complexes, large community facilities, or other recreation areas requiring hundreds of parking spaces are not permitted. Approximately 25% to 33% of a Passive Community Park may be developed with impermeable surfaces.

Passive Community Parks should provide both pedestrian access as well as vehicular access to the site. In this regard, they should be located on major roadways and be designed to connect to a County-wide greenway network.

<i>Facility Types:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">playgrounds, picnic areas and pavilions, nature trails, paved multi-purpose trail, accessible public open space (meadow or woodland), lakes/ponds, tennis, basketball, and sand volleyball courts (single or paired), activity building, outdoor seniors activities, splash ground, skate park, disk golf course, dog park, irrigated turf fields for informal non-organized sport and free play (unlit)
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">existing range: 25 to 208 acresrecommended: 20 to 100 acres
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">several neighborhoods
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">503 acres at 7 sites; 0.6 acres per 1,000 population
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">7 acres per 1,000 population (together with Community Parks)

Passive Community Parks have addressed many pressing needs in the more densely populated areas. The one challenge is that in some of the more densely populated areas, the ethnic composition creates a need for informal and pick-up soccer opportunities, as well as league play. The Passive Community Park does not permit a range of active playing fields, nor does it allow for park sites less than 20 acres. In the more developed areas of the County, finding a 20-acre site is a considerable challenge.

Table 5-4: Open Space Parks

Open Space Parks are generally large parcels of mostly undeveloped land that embody natural, scenic and cultural values, resources and landscapes. These parks provide passive, non-programmed recreation opportunities in a managed environment.

In order to serve a dual purpose of open space preservation/protection, Open Space Parks are typically developed with only minimal amenities needed to provide public access for low-intensity and dispersed recreation. Open Space Parks are designed for a maximum of 10 to 15% impervious surface coverage. Where possible, Open Space Parks should be located along and/or connected to the greenway system.

<i>Facility Types:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• passive recreation amenities (see Passive Community Park), mountain biking trails, equestrian trails, boardwalks, special event facilities, interpretative elements, group camping, specialized facilities that complement the surrounding landscape and cultural/natural resources
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• existing range: 12 to 1,404 acres• recommended: size is dependent upon opportunity, however, Open Space Parks should typically be over 200 acres
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• County-wide
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4,798 acres at 12 sites; 6.2 acres per 1,000 population
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 acres per 1,000 population

Open Space Parks are increasingly popular amongst residents as they not only protect and conserve natural areas, but also provide for some level of public usage – particularly for unstructured and self-scheduled forms of recreation such as walking, hiking, riding, or nature enjoyment. The acquisition and development of open space parks has been a key thrust of the County in recent years.

Table 5-5: Special Purpose Parks

Special Purpose Parks and facilities serve special interest recreation or leisure interests and are generally single purpose and located on small sites. They can provide a special emphasis to a nearby community park or be free standing. Consideration should be given to the ability of such facilities to be self-supporting, however, each should be judged on its own merits.

<i>Facility Types:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• variable
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• existing range: 0.4 to 18 acres• recommended: size is dependent upon need
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• variable
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 59 acres at 8 sites; 0.07 acres per 1,000 population
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• not applicable

To assist in achieving the objective of creating flexibility within the design of parks in order meet specific community needs, the County may want to consider modifying the concept of Special Purpose Parks by allowing them to serve more than a single recreational purpose.

Table 5-6: Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks

Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks are intended to serve densely populated areas that :

- are deficient in park and recreation opportunities; and
- do not contain tracts of land large enough for the development of a Passive Community Park; or
- wish to develop more active recreational uses than permitted by either the Passive Community Park or Special Purpose Park.

Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks will generally be in the 5 to 20 acre range and may be developed on vacant commercial or industrial/brownfield sites in cases where more suitable options do not exist. A desirable location characteristic is within close proximity to multi-family complexes or higher density single detached areas. Park users will be encouraged to walk to Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks, thereby limiting the amount of on-site parking space to be provided.

Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks can generally contain active and passive recreational activity areas. This park type would serve various age groups with emphasis on youth and should be tailored to fit the existing and anticipated characteristics of the surrounding population. Limited non-organized sport group activities are encouraged.

<i>Facility Types:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• informal play field (soccer, baseball, etc.), open play area, game court area, playground, walking/jogging path, picnic and conversation areas, small picnic pavilion, passive areas
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• existing range: 21 to 25 acres• recommended: 5 to 20 acres
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• several neighborhoods (approximately 5,000 people)
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 46 acres at 2 sites; 0.06 acres per 1,000 population
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• not applicable

The creation of the Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks classification in the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan provided an alternative form of parkland for the more densely populated and under-served areas. Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks are generally 5 to 20 acres in size and are designed in the vein of "special purpose" parks, which are developed on an as needed and opportunity-driven basis. These are active parks with reduced parking standards and cater to a geographic area with a denser population and a greater potential for "walk to" utilization and/or bussing opportunities. Generally, the denser the population, the greater is the demand for active recreational opportunities such as soccer, basketball and walking paths; therefore, these types of facilities (in small numbers and for unscheduled play only) should be considered for Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks. Such parks may be in the form of either commercial land acquisitions or the assembly of larger land holdings, but are not intended as Community Parks. The minimum Special Purpose Neighborhood Park size should be approximately 5 acres and is intended to serve a population of approximately 5,000 people.

Table 5-7: Linear Parks

Linear strips of land typically developed along waterways, utility easements, and roadways that provide corridors for trails and greenways, open space, and physical buffers. Linear Parks are located outside of other public parks, but connect those parks and other points of interests, such as schools, residential neighborhoods and business districts.

Linear Parks provide an emphasis on walking, jogging, and bicycling; usage for motorized transport is prohibited. Such parks should be of sufficient width (25' minimum; 50' preferred minimum) to protect from adjacent infringements and maintain environmental integrity of the corridor.

The level of development of Linear Parks can range from minimal to extensive and may include trailhead (parking and amenity) areas. If parking is provided then associated facilities including rest rooms, playground, and picnic or pavilion area should be included. Linear Parks may also include adjacent pockets of open space.

<i>Facility Types:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multi-use trails, nature trails, boardwalks, trailheads, playgrounds, picnic areas and pavilions
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• not applicable• 2 – 50 acres typical (could be larger as part of Greenway network)
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• several neighborhoods to County-wide (as part of Greenway network)
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0 acres
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• within 2 miles of any location in County

The creation of the Linear Park category in the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan addressed the public's strong desire for not only more walking and cycling trails, but to link communities together through a comprehensive trail system.

The acquisition and use of land for Linear Parks is one way to implement greenways and off-road segments of bike routes. On a more localized level, these linear parks can provide associated recreation activities and connections either as part of a longer greenway or as a standalone parcel. The "Linear Park" classification also assists in protecting natural resources such as woodlots, wetlands, ravines, rock outcrops, and other significant or ecologically sensitive natural features. Wherever possible, formal linkages between open spaces should be encouraged to enhance the use of park spaces and to foster the development of community trails.

Acquisition of parcels for Linear Parks should be coordinated with proposed greenway locations in the County's strategic planning documents. In addition, opportunities may arise to acquire parcels that are not associated with an overall Greenway Plan that would still meet the requirements outlined for a Linear Park. Highest priority should be given to parcels that provide connection between existing parks, schools, public facilities, and residential areas. Currently the rezoning process in Gwinnett County (and to a lesser extent the building permit process) requires easements to be provided for greenways when the property is associated with proposed routes. Though linear parks will often be associated with rivers or streams, multi-use trails should be located outside of stream buffers and floodplains wherever possible and should follow State and County stream buffer requirements.

"Green Space Park" is not a formal category within the Gwinnett County park system, however, it has been developed internally to identify properties that are owned by the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division, but that do not contain any developed recreation facilities or

areas. Green Space Parks are not open to the public and are not actively publicized by the County. In most cases, the location, size, or topography of Green Space Parks is such that these parcels cannot and will never be developed as usable parkland. These sites are, however, largely undeveloped tracts of woodland, wetland or meadow. The County currently has 223 acres of "Green Space Parks" at 12 sites.

Similarly, the Parks and Recreation Division has created an "Other" category to account for other department land assets that are developed for uses that are inconsistent with the department's mandate. The County currently has 414 acres of "Other" land at 4 sites.