



2007 Update of the Gwinnett County

# Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan



November 2007

Prepared by:

*mbpc*  
**Monteith • Brown**  
planning consultants

In  
Association  
With

THE  
JAEGER  
COMPANY



Recommended for Adoption by the Gwinnett County Recreation Authority on October 11, 2007

Presented to the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners on November 13, 2007



## **GWINNETT COUNTY**

### **2007 PARKS & RECREATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**November 2007**

Prepared by:

The Gwinnett County Department of Community Services

*with the assistance of:*

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants  
The Jaeger Company





## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **SECTION 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

Gwinnett County, with a current estimated population of 776,347 people, is a dynamic, progressive and increasingly diverse community that continues to attract new residents and investment at a record pace. The County's excellent parks system provides a significant contribution to the community's high quality of life. As residents continue to demand more and better recreational opportunities, efforts must be made to expand and improve the wide range of parks and leisure facilities within the County.

The 2007 Capital Improvement Plan is an update to the County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan and 2000 Capital Improvement Plan. Considerable progress has been made since these plans were developed – the County has increased its parkland inventory and countless facilities have been built, expanded, and renovated in order to keep pace with the demands of a growing population. Proactively addressing the changing needs of its residents has been a characteristic of the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division since its inception and this Plan will assist the County in maintaining this legacy.

The time is right to re-examine and evaluate the parks and recreational needs of Gwinnettians. At the end of 2008, County residents will be asked if they want to extend the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) for another four years. The SPLOST is a self-imposed County-wide sales tax, part of which may be allocated to fund improvements to the parks system. In order to ensure that these funds are spent wisely and in those areas with the greatest needs, this Capital Improvement Plan has proposed a prioritized list of capital projects that are consistent with the current and emerging needs of residents.

Specifically, this updated Capital Improvement Plan accomplishes three major tasks. It:

- 1) evaluates the current status of the County's ability to provide service based upon its enhanced array of capital facilities;
- 2) analyzes service gaps and needs within the County due to changes in population and distribution of existing facilities, and
- 3) proposes a refined Capital Program for the period following the current (2005) SPLOST program.

The Plan was prepared by the Gwinnett County Department of Community Services, under the direction of the Recreation Authority, and with the assistance of Monteith Brown Planning Consultants and The Jaeger Company.

## **1.2 SCOPE OF THE PLAN**

The Capital Improvement Plan will guide the development and expansion of parks, greenways, and recreation facilities in Gwinnett County for the period of 2009 to 2012, inclusive. This timeframe aligns with the County's next SPLOST, should it be approved by local voters.

The full range of parks and facilities that fall under the broad definition of "leisure" or "recreation" (e.g., community centers, gymnasiums, soccer fields, aquatics, cultural space, playgrounds, nature trails, etc.) are addressed in this Plan. Recreation and parks services and programs are outside the scope of this study.

## **1.3 IMPETUS FOR THE PLAN**

Recreation plays a vital role in Gwinnett County and there is a need to continue to enhance the quality of life through improvements to the parks and recreation system. A number of factors have necessitated the need for an updated Capital improvement Plan:

- The County's population is growing at a very rapid pace and is also aging and becoming more ethnically diverse.
- The County's high growth rate requires that sufficient parkland be acquired before it is lost to development.
- Leisure trends are shifting and new approaches in recreation planning are emerging. For instance, there is growing demand for unstructured and self-scheduled forms of leisure; initiatives such as greenway expansion (which is a significant focus of this Plan) can be quite successful in addressing this demand.
- The "bar has been raised" through previous efforts and residents have greater expectations for parks and recreation services.
- There is a need to coordinate the Capital Improvement Plan with other recent initiatives, such as the Unified Plan.
- The County has a history of proactively addressing its parks and recreation needs and planning for the future in a forward-thinking, fiscally responsible manner and this must continue to be a high priority.

The County has succeeded in responding to many of these challenges. This Capital Improvement Plan builds upon this momentum and refocuses the County's future efforts through a review and assessment of needs and priorities.

## **1.4 SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The Capital Improvement Plan process commenced in April 2007 with the first meeting of the Recreation Authority and Consultants. This planning process was constructed to capitalize on past efforts and initiatives (with particular emphasis on the County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan), to be comprehensive in nature, and to provide clear and justifiable direction for the future provision of parks and recreation facilities.

A complex methodology was employed as part of the planning process for the Capital Improvement Plan, including:

- A set of goals and strategies was developed to guide the Plan and provide a framework for subsequent analysis and implementation of recommendations.
- An analysis of Gwinnett County's demographic characteristics was undertaken in order to identify any factors which may influence the way in which parks and recreation facilities are offered.
- Local and national trends considered pertinent to recreation and leisure were assessed in order to understand key areas of growth, innovations in delivering services, etc.
- A comprehensive inventory was compiled which documented the County's parks and recreation facilities, as well those offered through the various cities.
- Consultations with the general public, key stakeholders, and County staff and officials were conducted in order to gain an intimate knowledge of the issues and opportunities surrounding the parks and recreation system.
- A detailed needs assessment of parks and recreation facilities falling under the scope of the Plan, through application of demand-based standards was carried out.
- The development of facility-specific recommendations required to meet the needs of Gwinnett County's residents.

Numerous meetings with County staff and the Recreation Authority were held throughout the duration of the project in order to gather information, review the Plan's progress, and to provide direction for the Plan's goals and priorities.

## 1.5 RECREATION AUTHORITY / PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The Capital Improvement Plan is most certainly a product of community input and participation. County staff, officials and the community at large have been consulted and asked to participate throughout the process through meetings and consultation events.

Public consultation efforts were concentrated near the beginning of the planning process in order to focus on information gathering and issue identification. Five public meetings were held at various locations in the County and those attending were invited to participate by expressing their opinions and completing a questionnaire. Efforts were also made to distribute the questionnaire to leaders in the several of the County's ethnic communities. Furthermore, this study incorporates and builds upon the community needs identified in the 2004 Gwinnett County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan and 2002 Needs Assessment Survey prepared by the A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service (Kennesaw State University).

Regular meetings with the Gwinnett County Recreation Authority assisted in developing the overall goals for this Plan, providing feedback on completed work and deliverables, and prioritizing the park and facility recommendations.

## 1.6 PLAN GOALS AND PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

With the assistance of the Recreation Authority, a set of goals was developed to guide the capital project prioritization process. Specific strategies to realize many of the goals were also formulated. The goals and strategies address the most appropriate range of means to ensure service expansion to:

- meet the needs of a growing population;
- manage and maximize the capacity of existing facilities; and
- provide for new or expanded facilities and efficient operations.

The goals and strategies are based upon public input, the analysis of facility and parks needs, and the experiences of similar agencies and are described below in priority order.

The six goals for the 2007 Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan are identified below. Overriding these goals is the following statement:

*Gwinnett County will strive to provide for the diverse needs of all age groups including the growing segment of older adults. A balanced approach to the provision of parkland and recreational opportunities will continue to be sought by acquiring and developing both structured and unstructured, active and passive parkland and recreational facilities. The County will coordinate its efforts with other agencies, departments, cities, and boards to maximize project funding and benefits to local residents. Cooperation and partnerships will be sought to maximize improvements, help revitalize under-served communities, and enhance safety.*

### 1. **GREENWAYS**

**Work toward achieving pedestrian and bicycle linkage or connectivity between parks and other points of interest such as schools, libraries, institutional land uses, and commercial nodes. Work with the DOT to encourage the construction of sidewalks and/or the paving of wider shoulders to assist in the development of a “linked Gwinnett”, wherever feasible and where full trail development is not reasonably achievable.**

The highest priority efforts should be made to link parks, libraries, schools and communities to increase biking, walking and jogging opportunities (not only for recreation but also as an alternative mode of transportation). To achieve this goal, the County should proceed to develop the highest priority greenways while being cognizant of the fact that priorities may shift slightly as opportunities present themselves.

### 2. **PARKLAND ACQUISITION – Under-serviced areas**

**Proceed with the acquisition of parkland in under-serviced areas.**

There continues to be a concern about the areas of the County that do not have favorable parkland to population ratios. Although it is acknowledged that equity amongst the Recreation Planning Areas will never be fully achieved, attempts need to continue to be made to address parkland needs in under-served areas. Special attention should be given to soccer field and informal play field development everywhere (but in particular, seek out opportunities in RPAs B, C, and E).

### **3. PARKLAND ACQUISITION – Developing areas**

#### **Continue with the acquisition of parkland in developing areas.**

While there is a need to address under-serviced areas, the newly developing areas will also require parks and there is no better time to acquire parkland than before residential development occurs. This is particularly true if the County wishes to acquire and develop a site suitable for bolstering soccer opportunities and to develop suitable community parks in conjunction with new school clusters.

### **4. PARK DEVELOPMENT – Existing parks and sites**

#### **Complete the construction of planned phases of development within existing parks and undeveloped sites.**

In developing Master Plans for individual park sites, extensive public consultation occurs. Although funding is not always available for all components of an existing park site, completion of planned phases needs to move forward.

### **5. PARK REDEVELOPMENT**

#### **Renovate and/or redevelop existing parks and recreation facilities on an as-needed basis, in keeping with identified local needs.**

No park facility lasts forever; because neighborhood needs change over time and since Gwinnett County has set a high standard for parkland development, older existing parks will also need to be refreshed and/or repurposed.

### **6. COST OF OPERATIONS**

#### **Continue to calculate the cost of operations for CIP facilities to assure affordability of operating facilities within budget (or to identify shortfalls for budgeting consideration), while ensuring the sustained quality to the parks and facilities inventory.**

## **1.7 RECREATION PLANNING AREAS**

For the purposes of analyzing park and facility needs only, this Capital Improvement Plan makes use of the five Recreation Planning Areas (RPAs) established in the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Analysis by RPA allows for a "local" analysis and also accounts to a degree for geographic barriers and travel patterns.

RPAs are assigned letters from A through E and are illustrated on **Map 1-1**. Based on 2007 population estimates, the populations of the RPAs range from 139,263 to 180,050. The profiles and projections for the RPAs are discussed in detail in Section 3.

The Recreation Planning Areas are referenced throughout this Plan, most notably in relation to the projection of park and facility requirements and recommended locations for new recreational infrastructure.



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

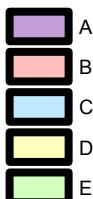
Parks & Recreation  
Capital Improvement Plan  
(2007 Update)

### Map 1-1

### Recreation Planning Areas

#### Legend

##### Recreation Planning Area



##### Plan Area A

Population: 165,996  
Area: 49,754 Ac.

##### Plan Area B

Population: 124,260  
Area: 26,528 Ac.

##### Plan Area C

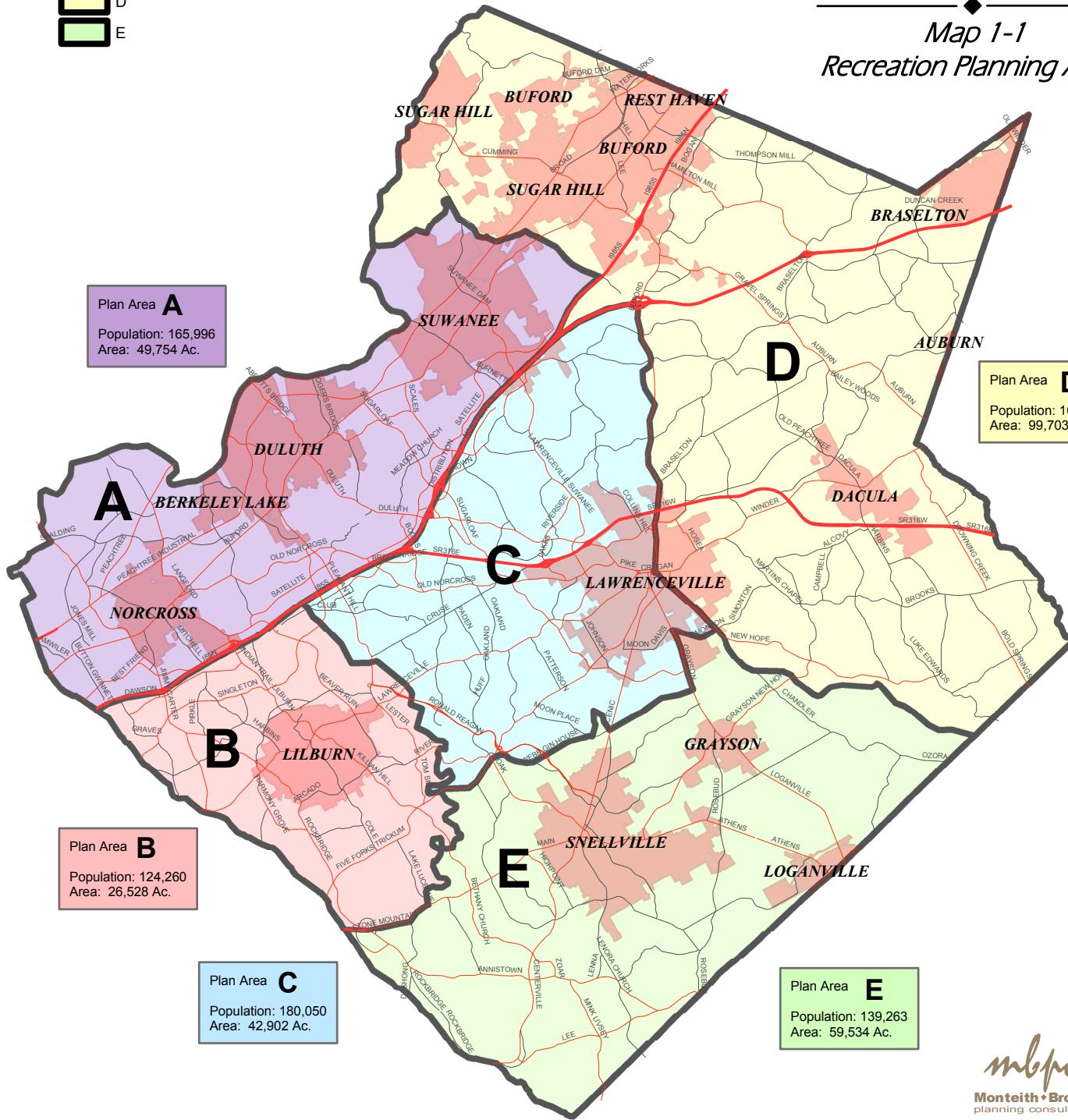
Population: 180,050  
Area: 42,902 Ac.

##### Plan Area D

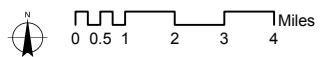
Population: 166,778  
Area: 99,703 Ac.

##### Plan Area E

Population: 139,263  
Area: 59,534 Ac.



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## SECTION 2: History of Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation

### 2.1 THE 1970s

The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Department was formed in 1971 when the Pinckneyville Militia District enacted a referendum to authorize a recreation tax levy. Other militia districts eventually joined the recreation district, although only 25% of the County's land area would be under the Department's control until 1986 when this was expanded to include the entire County.

Since its inception, the Parks and Recreation Department has undertaken numerous planning efforts to develop the County's parks system to the point it is today. The County's first Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed in 1973, but was never adopted. Nevertheless, the Plan's findings and recommendations provide insight into the issues and concerns confronting the County at that time. For example, the Plan recommended that park development be focused in the denser population zones, which then were located along the DeKalb/Fulton County Lines and Interstate-85. Under an agreement between the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners and the Gwinnett County Board of Education, school lands were used for the provision of ball fields, tennis courts and neighborhood playgrounds. Although recreation amenities were to be provided for all age groups, an emphasis was placed on young adults and adults in order to encourage their civic participation and leadership. The Plan also anticipated action to acquire some properties along the Chattahoochee River. One significant quote highlights a key strategy that would be implemented by the County over the coming decades:

*"The larger the county grows, the more its citizens will need and seek open space. Today's open space will be tomorrow's subdivision or shopping center if Gwinnett fails to acquire land now. The projected growth in the county indicates the need for planning, acquiring, and preserving open space today."*

Some County parks that were acquired and/or developed during the 1970s included: Best Friend Park, Dacula Park, Pinckneyville Arts Center, Harmony Grove Park, Jones Bridge Park, Mountain Park Park, Shorty Howell Park, and the Singleton Road Activity Building.

In 1970, the County's population was 72,349, however this would more than double in ten years to 166,808 in 1980 (an increase of 131%). Gwinnett County was the second fastest growing county in Georgia during the 1970s and the eighth fastest growing county in the United States.

### 2.2 THE 1980s

The Parks and Recreation Department began to resemble its current structure in 1986 when, in November of that year, voters in Gwinnett County approved the concept of a countywide recreation department as well as its 1 mill Recreation Tax. Around this time, the structure of the Recreation Authority was altered to 9 appointed members. As it does today, the Recreation Authority served as an advisory body and oversees the dispersed revenue of bonds and funds for park and recreation facility development.

1986 also brought the second County-wide Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This document provided the direction for development of the county park system from 1986

through 1996. The plan inventoried existing recreational facilities, incorporated the results of a previously accomplished assessment of the recreational needs and desires of the County residents, and recommended the future development of parks in Gwinnett County. A series of revenue bonds were issued by the Recreation Authority to address the land acquisition and facility construction needs identified in this master planning effort. The highlights of the Plan included:

- definition of a classification for parks (regional, community, special use, and neighborhood parks with school sites used for neighborhood parks);
- establishment of 11 service zones based on a 15-minute drive time to a community park (which contained both active and passive opportunities);
- recommended improvements for each park;
- emphasis on land acquisition in strategic growth areas – focus was on equity in park distribution; and
- development of a formal cooperative agreement with the Board of Education to develop neighborhood parks at elementary school sites.

In 1988, the Parks and Recreation Department (as it was then known) became a division of the Department of Human Services (now Community Services). Other significant events in the 1980s included the purchase of Springbrook County Club and the adoption of master plans for Lucky Shoals Park, Bethesda Park, Collins Hill Park, George Pierce Park, Lenora Park, and Tribble Mill Park. Spurred on by \$30 million in revenue bonds approved by the Recreation Authority, phase 1 of Lucky Shoals, Bethesda and Collins Hill Parks were all opened on the same day in 1991. These new parks contributed greatly to the success of the County's park system in the 1990s.

Once again, Gwinnett County's population more than doubled over the course of ten years, from 166,608 in 1980 to 352,910 in 1990 (an increase of 112%).

### **2.3 THE 1990s**

In August of 1990, the Recreation Authority issued \$10 million in revenue bonds. These bonds were used to purchase, enlarge and develop a number of community parks, as well as to begin development of Tribble Mill Park. That same year, the Vines Botanical Gardens site, valued at \$3.9 million, was donated to the County. In 1992, Gwinnett County assumed operation of Lawrenceville city parks with the stipulation that Rhodes Jordan Park be expanded and new facilities constructed. Other significant events in the early 1990s included the opening of the Gwinnett Senior Center at Bethesda Park, Tribble Mill Park, and the reopening of the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse.

Despite witnessing dramatic population growth in the 1970s and 80s, it was not until the 1990s (specifically the latter half of the decade) that the County would aggressively pursue the acquisition of parkland. Not coincidentally, it was the development of a new Comprehensive Master Plan in 1996 that would help direct the County in achieving new goals for the provision of parks and recreation facilities.

The 1996 Master Plan, which was borne out of a needs assessment survey conducted by the A.L. Burruss Institute at Kennesaw State University in 1995, contained specific capital investment recommendations through the year 2003.

The purpose of the 1996 Master Plan was:

- to provide a conceptual framework and description of the existing parks and recreation system in Gwinnett County;
- to develop a baseline of leisure services delivery; and
- to provide information on the recreational priorities and needs of Gwinnett County citizens.

The recommendations and findings of the 1996 Comprehensive Master Plan provided a detailed assessment of recreation facility and parks needs, as well as management and operational strategies. Some key recommendations included:

- the development of community centers at Lenora Park, Rhodes Jordan Park, Bogan Park, and Pinckneyville Park;
- continued reliance on community parks as the foundation of the parks system;
- the acquisition and development of four new community parks and the redevelopment and expansion of numerous existing parks;
- park system redistricting (from 11 service areas to 3 park districts – West, North and South);
- the development of a Greenway Plan to formalize linkages between parks, neighborhoods and schools; and
- projects totaling approximately \$140 million were called for between 1997 and 2003.

To help pay for many of the recommended improvements, County voters approved a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) in the fall of 1996 that included \$60 million for land acquisition and park project development through the year 2001. Additionally, during the four-year period of the 1997 SPLOST, the County's Board of Commissioners expended over \$40 million from general funds for the acquisition of recreation open space and for the enhancement of the park facilities development program.

Another significant accomplishment was the opening of Bogan Park Community Center and Family Aquatics Center in December 1997; this was the first community recreation center and indoor leisure pool facility in the County's park system. Furthermore, the Parks and Recreation Division was recognized as a National Gold Medal Award Finalist by the National Recreation and Parks Association in 1999. The Georgia Recreation and Park Association (7<sup>th</sup> District) would select the Division as Agency of the Year in 2000.

Gwinnett County's population increased by 67% between 1990 and 2000 (from 352,910 to 588,448). Gwinnett was the 31<sup>st</sup> fastest growing county in the nation over this period.

## **2.4 THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY**

Rapid population growth and the anticipated renewal of the SPLOST for the period of 2001 through 2004 necessitated the development of the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation 2000 Capital Improvements Plan. The purpose of the 2000 Plan was to review and update the capital program contained in the 1996 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The 2000 Capital Improvements Plan updated the park and facility inventory, evaluated changes in demographics and development trends, reassessed service gaps, and updated and prioritized the recreational desires of the citizenry. This study continued to recommend a very

ambitious greenspace acquisition and park construction program. Other key recommendations included:

- continued emphasis on providing parks and facilities within under-served areas; replacement of "neighborhood/school parks" with "passive community parks" as a method to address the needs of under-served & densely populated areas;
- expansion of passive recreation opportunities and open space acquisition;
- expansion of programs for teens, young adults and seniors;
- development of aquatic centers at Mountain Park Park, Bethesda Park, and the West District; and
- development of community centers at Lenora Park, George Pierce Park, Bogan Park, Bethesda Park, and Bay Creek Park.

The Board of Commissioners adopted the 2000 Capital Improvement Plan and its capital improvements recommendations became the primary source of the list of projects included for Parks and Recreation on the ballot for the extension of the SPLOST in November of 2000. The County's voters approved the sales tax extension and the Department embarked on the 2001 SPLOST Program that included a minimum of \$192 million for parks and recreation over a four-year period (with some \$10 million going to support parks and recreation capital projects within Gwinnett County's cities).

Significant capital projects completed during this timeframe (2001-2004) included the development of the County's first free skate plaza and roller hockey rink at Pinckneyville Park, the opening of aquatic centers at Collins Hill, Rhodes Jordan and Mountain Park parks, as well as numerous land acquisitions (the most noteworthy being Harbins/Alcovy River Park Site at nearly 1800 acres). The County was also successful in applying for funds through the Georgia Greenspace Program to assist in open space acquisition and preservation initiatives.

In implementing the 1996 Master Plan, Gwinnett County completed an Open Space and Greenway Master Plan in May 2002. This Plan is a comprehensive document intended to inform and guide the County's ongoing greenspace preservation program. The primary goals of the Plan are to increase recreational opportunities, protect and improve water quality, improve connectivity via a system of greenway trails, and reduce the environmental impacts of development. The Georgia Planning Association recognized the excellence of this plan with a "Best Planning Document" award in September 2002, and in November 2002 Gwinnett County was granted an "Outstanding Community" award by the Georgia Urban Forestry Council.

In the fall of 2002, the County's Parks and Recreation Division embarked on a process to update the 1996 Master Plan and 2000 Capital Improvements Plan. Like it did in 1995, the County contracted the A.L. Burruss Institute at Kennesaw State University to prepare and implement a Needs Assessment Survey. The results of this project were delivered in April 2003. The Burruss report includes a section of the changing demographics of Gwinnett County, which is now considered to be the most ethnically diverse county in Georgia.

To prepare for the 2005 SPLOST Program, the Community Services Department prepared the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. An in-depth examination of parks and recreation facility standards and needs was undertaken for this Master Plan, resulting in a refined capital program for the period covered by the 2005 SPLOST program. This Plan proposed a number of items, most important of which were: the creation of two new park types (Linear Parks and Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) that led to the acquisition of smaller park holdings in denser/underserviced areas; an enhanced profile and funding for greenway

projects connecting destinations in the County; continued land acquisition to meet the needs of Gwinnett County's growing population; and the completion of unfunded phases in existing parks.

The County's voters once again extended the SPLOST program for the period of 2005-2008; it is anticipated that the sales tax will generate a minimum of \$205 million for parks and recreation over this four-year timeframe. Dozens of parks and recreation facilities have been built and redeveloped under this program, including, but not limited to: the seniors center at George Pierce Park; the Bethesda Park Indoor Family Aquatics Center; the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center; several new parks (e.g., Club Drive Park, Duncan Creek Park, Alexander Park, DeShong Park, Sweet Water Park, Graves Park, Holcomb Bridge Park, etc.) and park acquisitions (e.g., Highway 29/Lilburn Community Park Site, Mountain View Park Site, Lanier Community Park Site, Beaver Ruin Park Site, etc.); and even the development of 4 off-leash dog parks.

In 2004, Gwinnett County was awarded *Sports Illustrated* 50th Anniversary "Sportstown" honors for having Georgia's best community sports programs. Two years later, in 2006, the County's Parks and Recreation Division was recognized as a National Gold Medal Award Finalist by the National Recreation and Parks Association.

The growth rate in the County is beginning to slow, but total population continues to rise. In only three years (2004 to 2007), Gwinnett County's population has grown by an estimated 11% (or 25,250 persons per year) to 776,347. Forecasts indicate that – for the period of 2009 to 2013 – the County will add 58,464 new residents and will become increasing ethnically diverse; a slight aging of the population is also expected. Based on current forecasts, the County is projected to top the one million population mark by the year 2026.

Since the last Capital Improvement Plan was undertaken in 1996, the County has completed the most aggressive park acquisition and development strategy in its history. With continued population growth, capital improvements to the parks system must continue to be a high priority for the County and its citizenry. In late 2008, the County's voters will be given an opportunity to express their views when they go to the polls to vote on the renewal of the SPLOST (which would take effect on April 1, 2009 if approved). This report – the 2007 Update of the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan – will assist the County in preparing for this milestone.

## SECTION 3: Demographic and Leisure Trends

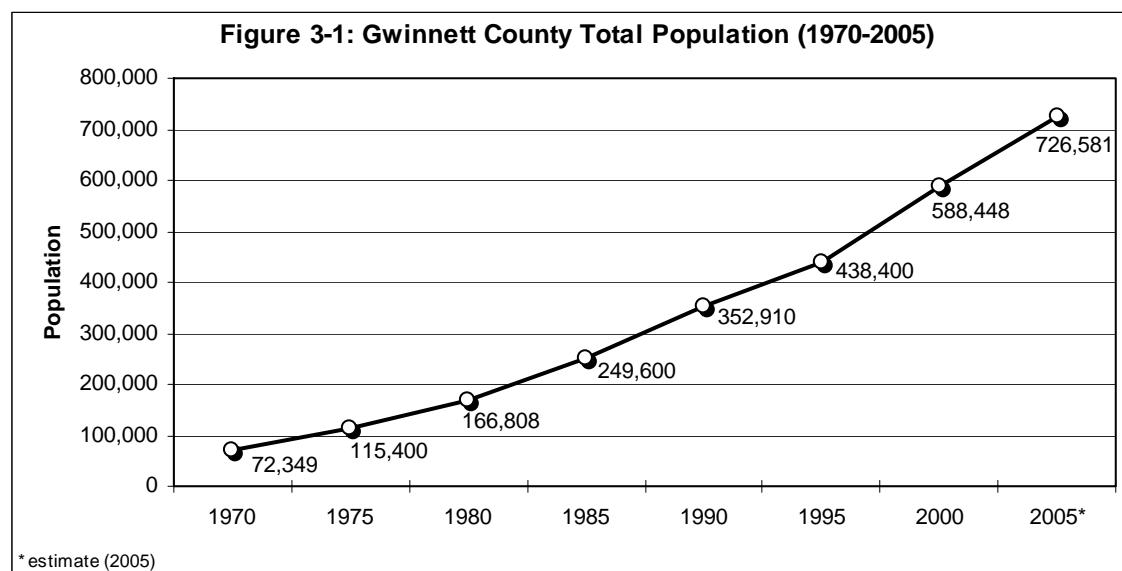
The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a forward-looking strategic document that will guide the provision of parks and recreation facilities and services within Gwinnett County to the year 2013 and beyond; the CIP functions as an update to the 2004 Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan. In order to understand the current and future needs of the County's citizenry, we must first examine the composition of the existing population and delve more deeply into the trends affecting recreational participation. Most notably, this section of the Plan examines population projections and the implications of leisure trends on the future of recreation services in Gwinnett County.

### 3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Several sources are drawn upon for the demographic analysis in this section, including the 2000 U.S. Census and the 2005 American Community Survey (both published by the U.S. Census Bureau). Most notably, the population estimates and forecasts have been provided through the background research undertaken by Dr. Thomas Hammer for Gwinnett County's 2030 Unified Plan, a plan which coordinates the updates of the Comprehensive Plan, the Consolidated Plan, and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

#### 3.1.1 Population - Past

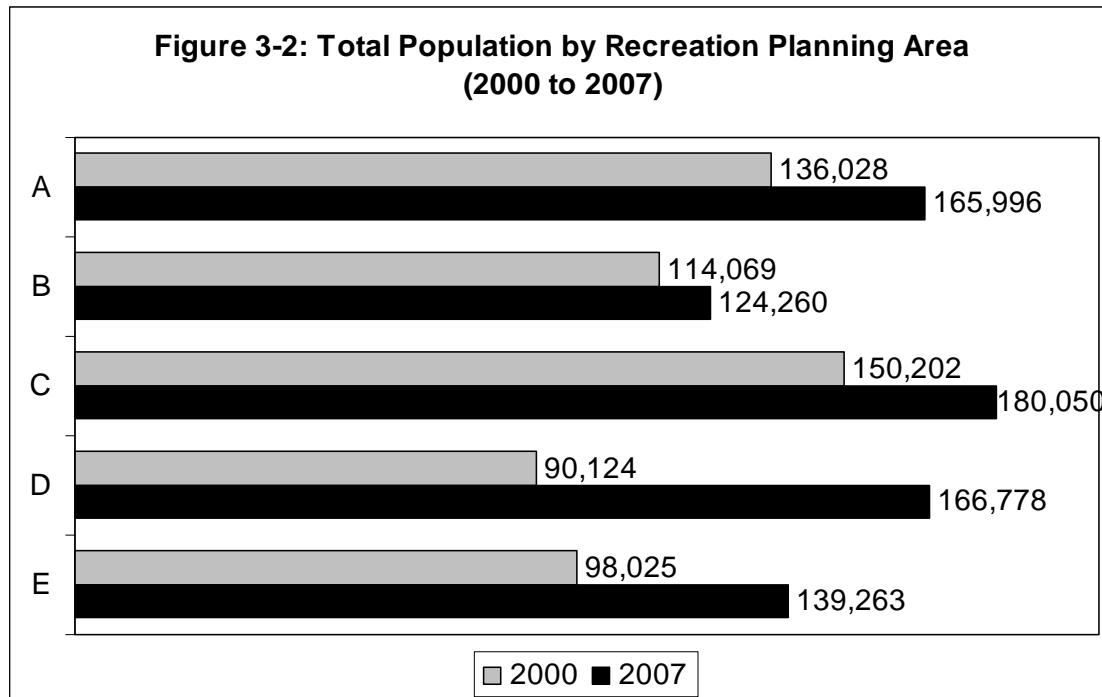
Gwinnett County's population has been experiencing tremendous growth since the 1970s, having grown by over 900% since 1970 (see Figure 3-1). Although Gwinnett County's growth rate has declined in relative terms in recent years, it remains one of the fastest growing counties in the United States and, proportionally, Gwinnett County has accounted for over one-quarter of the Atlanta Region's growth in the past three decades.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (historic populations); Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007 (estimate)

The Gwinnett County Planning and Development Department estimates that there are 776,347 people living in Gwinnett County in 2007 (as of July 1). This population estimate will be used as the baseline figure in this Capital Improvement Plan Update.

Data developed for the 2030 Unified Plan suggests that the largest population gain between 2000 and 2005 occurred in Recreation Planning Area D (85% increase), followed by E (42%), A (22%), C (20%) and B (9%). Please refer to **Map 1-1** earlier in this report for an illustration of the Recreation Planning Areas. Population changes are shown in Figure 3-2.



Sources: US Census Bureau, 2000; Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

The County's primary population growth pattern has generally followed the I-85, I-985, and Georgia Highway 316 corridors into the northeast and eastern-most portions of the County. Continued population growth and intensification is expected to continue along these highway corridors.

Population densities by census tract are shown on **Map 3-1**.

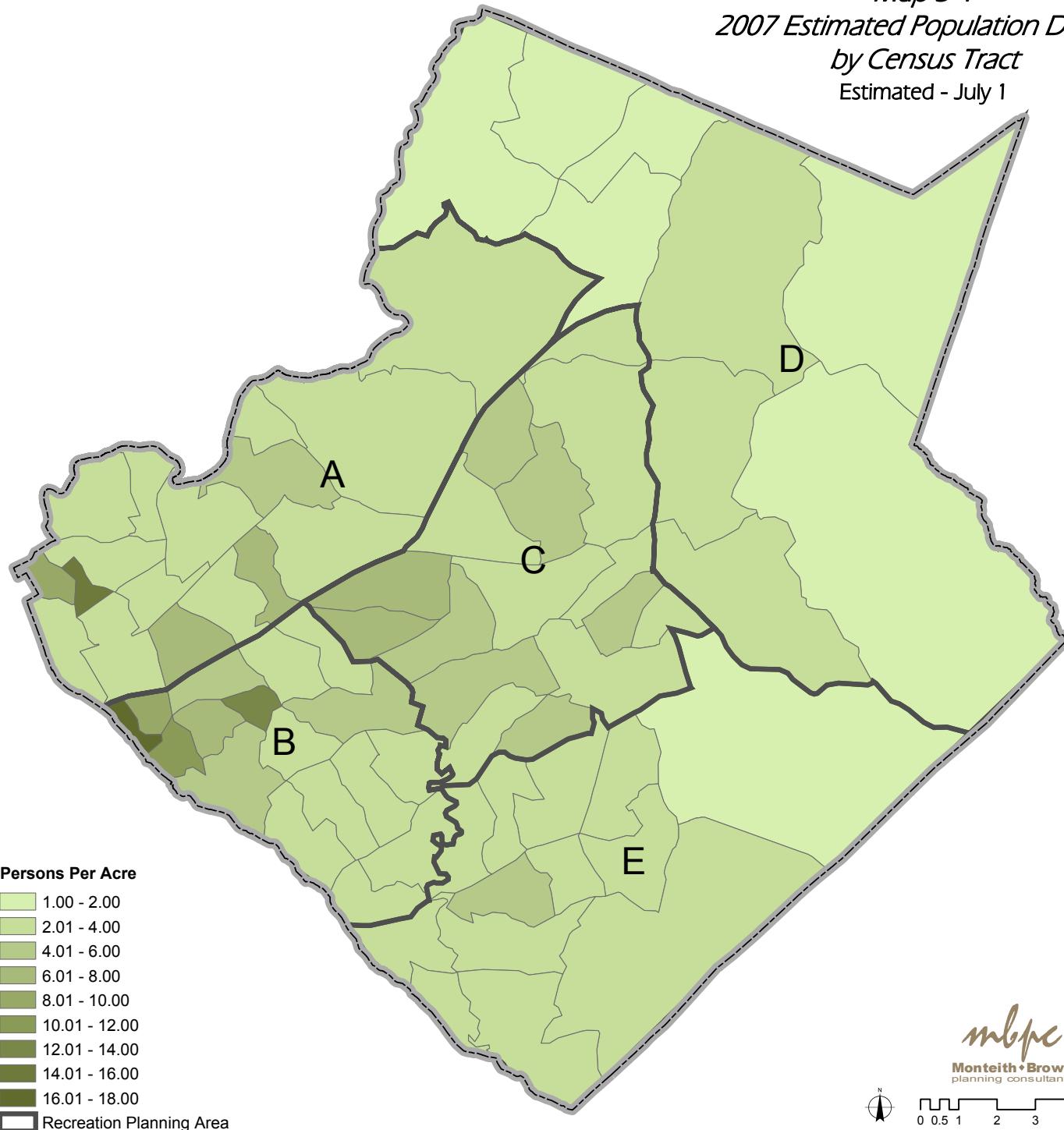


**GWINNETT COUNTY,  
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Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan  
(2007 Update)

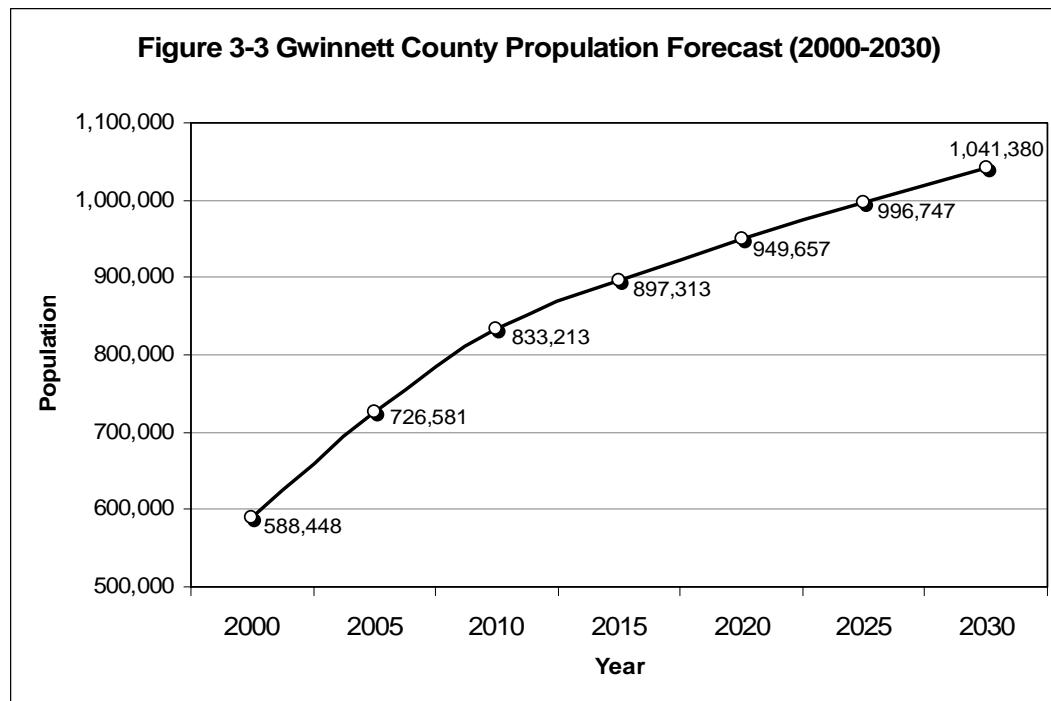
*Map 3-1*

*2007 Estimated Population Density  
by Census Tract*  
Estimated - July 1



### 3.1.2 Population - Future

Based on the population forecast generated for the Gwinnett County 2030 Unified Plan, it is estimated that the County's population will continue to increase, but at a slightly declining rate (see Figure 3-3). It should be noted that the population forecasts for the 2009-2013 period covered by this plan are considered to be very conservative.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (historic populations); Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007 (forecasts)

For the period of 2009 to 2013 (which represents the four year term of this Capital Improvement Plan), the County's population is forecasted to grow by 58,474 people (an average of 14,616 people per year). Relatively speaking, this suggests that a slowdown in growth is anticipated for the coming years – especially in comparison to the more rapid growth experienced in the early part of this decade – which may present an opportunity for the County to bridge the gap between supply and demand, should such a gap exist. Table 3-1 illustrates Gwinnett County's declining growth rate over the years.

**Table 3-1: Historical and Projected Annual Growth (Gwinnett County, 1970-2013)**

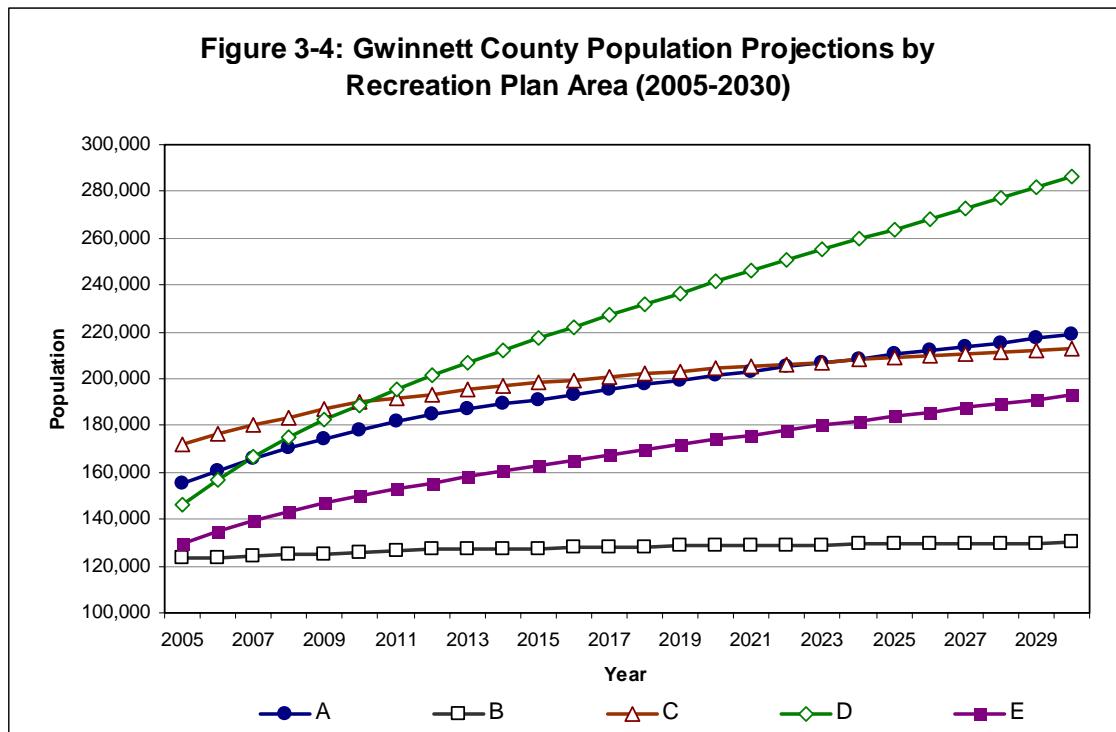
Time Period	Annual Growth	Approximate Annual Growth Rate
1970 to 1980	9,446	8.7%
1980 to 1990	18,610	7.8%
1990 to 2000	23,554	5.2%
2000 to 2010*	24,477	3.5%
2009 to 2013* (timing of this Plan)	14,616	1.7%

\* estimates

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (historic populations); Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007 (forecasts)

Intense population growth over the past thirty years has also resulted in increased densities and declines in the availability of developable land. Another contributing factor to the declining growth rate is the aging of the population (discussed in the next subsection).

In terms of where future population growth is expected to occur, Figure 3-4 illustrates that RPA D holds the most capacity for new residents over both the short and the long-term, while RPA B is largely built-out and will not see any substantial change in its population levels. The growth potential in RPAs A, C, and E is quite similar over the next few years, with growth in RPA C slowing around the year 2011.



Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

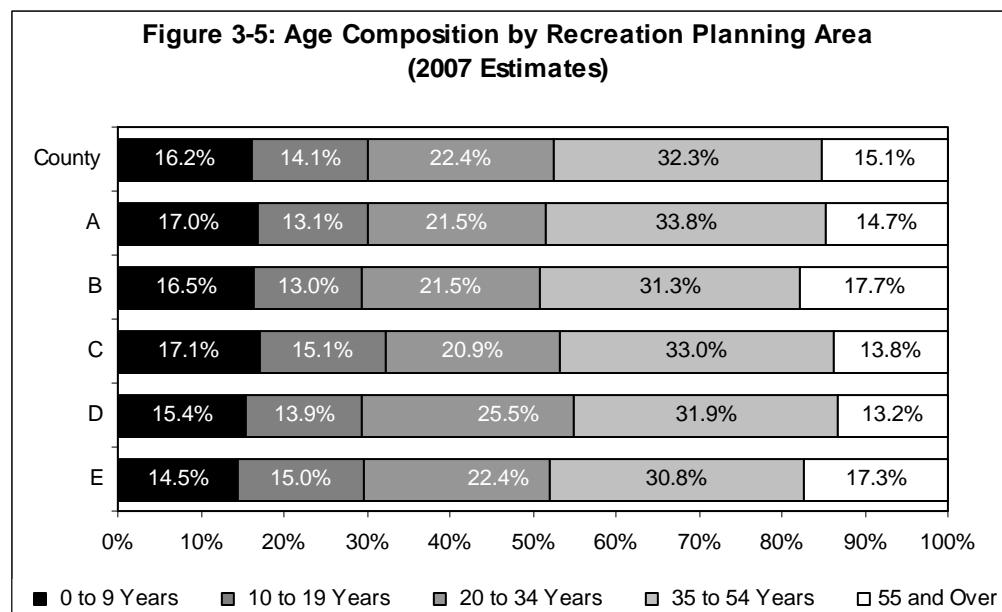
These forecasts account not only for development in greenfield areas, but also through infill and intensification in areas that are already built-up. The establishment of greater densities in built areas will only intensify the need for additional and appropriate parks and recreation facilities to serve these communities, many of which are currently deficient and have little land readily available for acquisition and/or facility development.

### 3.1.3 Age Composition

The vast majority of Gwinnett County's population increases over the past thirty years have been a result of in-migration rather than births. Due to the County's strong and diverse economic base and excellent infrastructure, thousands of people, including many families and young adults, have been attracted to the area. The result has been a population that has a relatively low median age and that, despite the aging of the baby boom generation and declining birth rates nationwide, has not aged as rapidly as most established communities.

As the County's growth begins to slow, however, a more noticeable aging of the population is expected. For example, Gwinnett County's median age increased from 30.5 years to 32.5 years between 1990 and 2000. In 2005, the median age was recorded at 33.3 years through the American Community Survey. With the leading edge of the baby boomer cohort just now approaching 60 years of age, this trend will continue to become more pronounced. Most important to this Capital Improvement Plan is that the emerging 55 and over age cohort – exemplified by the baby boom generation – is expected to be much more active and demanding on recreational resources than were past generations of seniors.

Current population estimates were developed by age and Recreation Planning Area. As can be seen in Figure 3-5, all five RPAs have remarkably similar age profiles. To the extent that these estimates can be relied upon, it would appear that RPA C has the greatest proportion of children and youth, while RPAs B and E have the greatest proportion of residents age 55 and over.



Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

**Maps 3-2 to 3-6** show age-specific population densities by Census tract for the year 2007.

Despite an overall aging trend, population increases are forecasted for all age categories. This suggests that there are likely to be continued demands for child and teen recreation, while greater demands for recreational opportunities for older adults and senior citizens are likely being experienced due to greater than average population growth in these age categories.

Figure 3-6 illustrates the growth forecasts by major age categories. In the coming years, it is anticipated that Gwinnett County's growth rate will decline, in-migration will begin to slow, and the median age will increase. Much like the past decade, the result will be considerable growth in the 55-plus age group and relatively slow growth in the younger age cohorts.



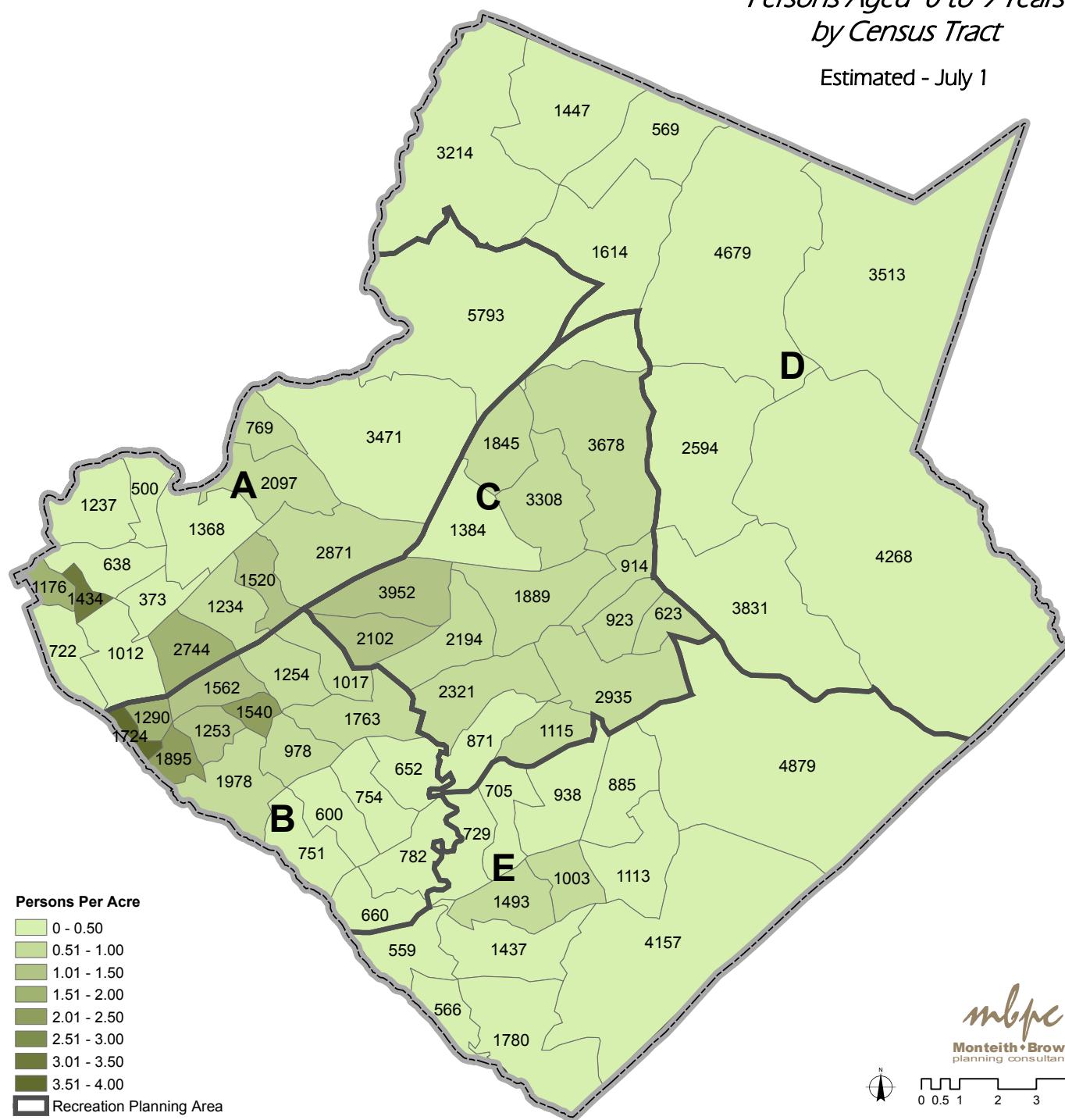
## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan  
(2007 Update)

Map 3-2

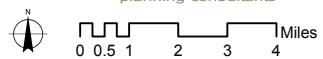
2007 Estimate of Population Distribution  
Persons Aged 0 to 9 Years  
by Census Tract

Estimated - July 1



Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

*mbpc*  
Monteith + Brown  
planning consultants





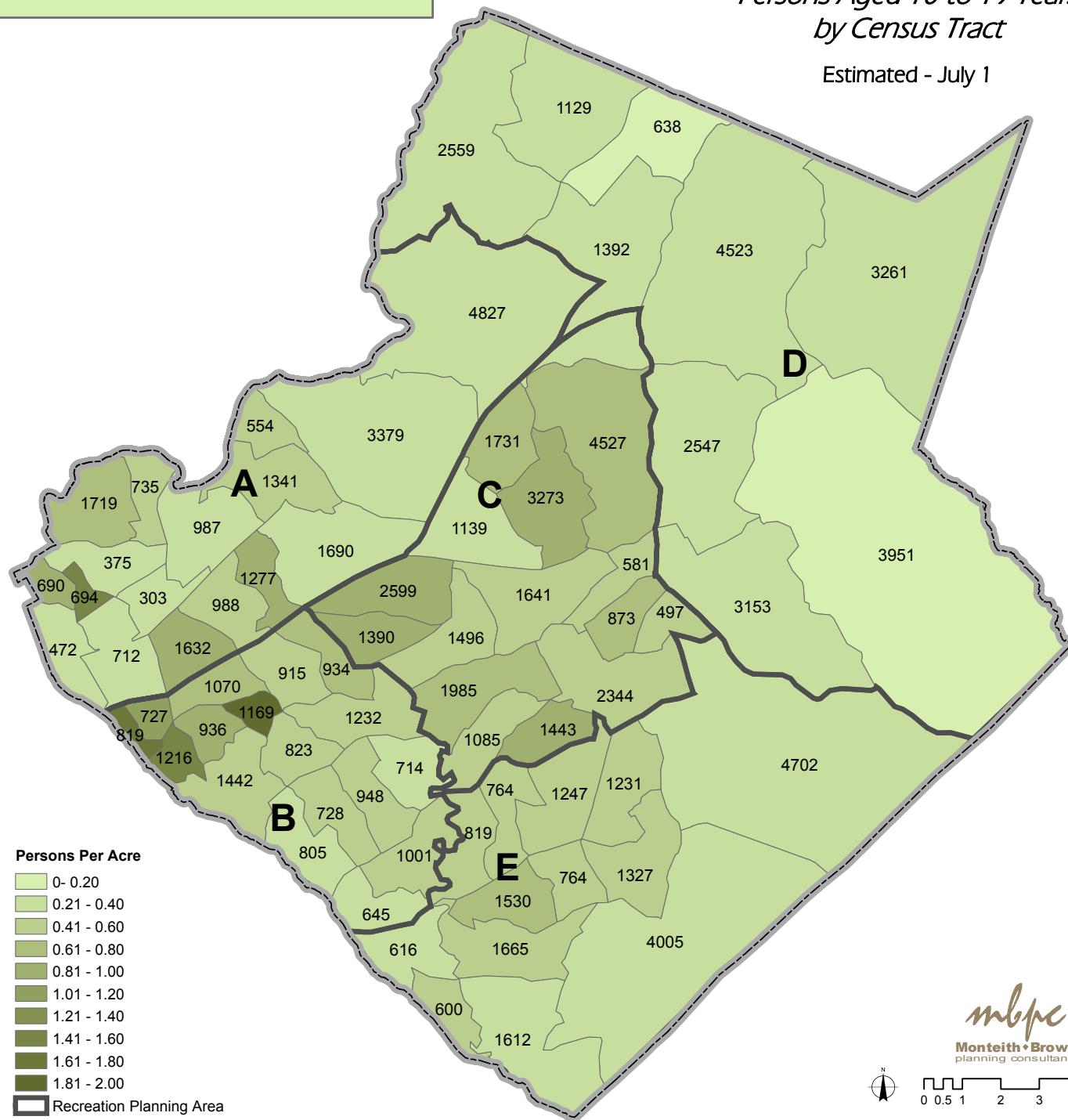
## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan  
(2007 Update)

### Map 3-3

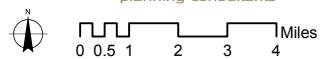
*2007 Estimate of Population Distribution  
Persons Aged 10 to 19 Years  
by Census Tract*

Estimated - July 1



Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

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Monteith + Brown  
planning consultants





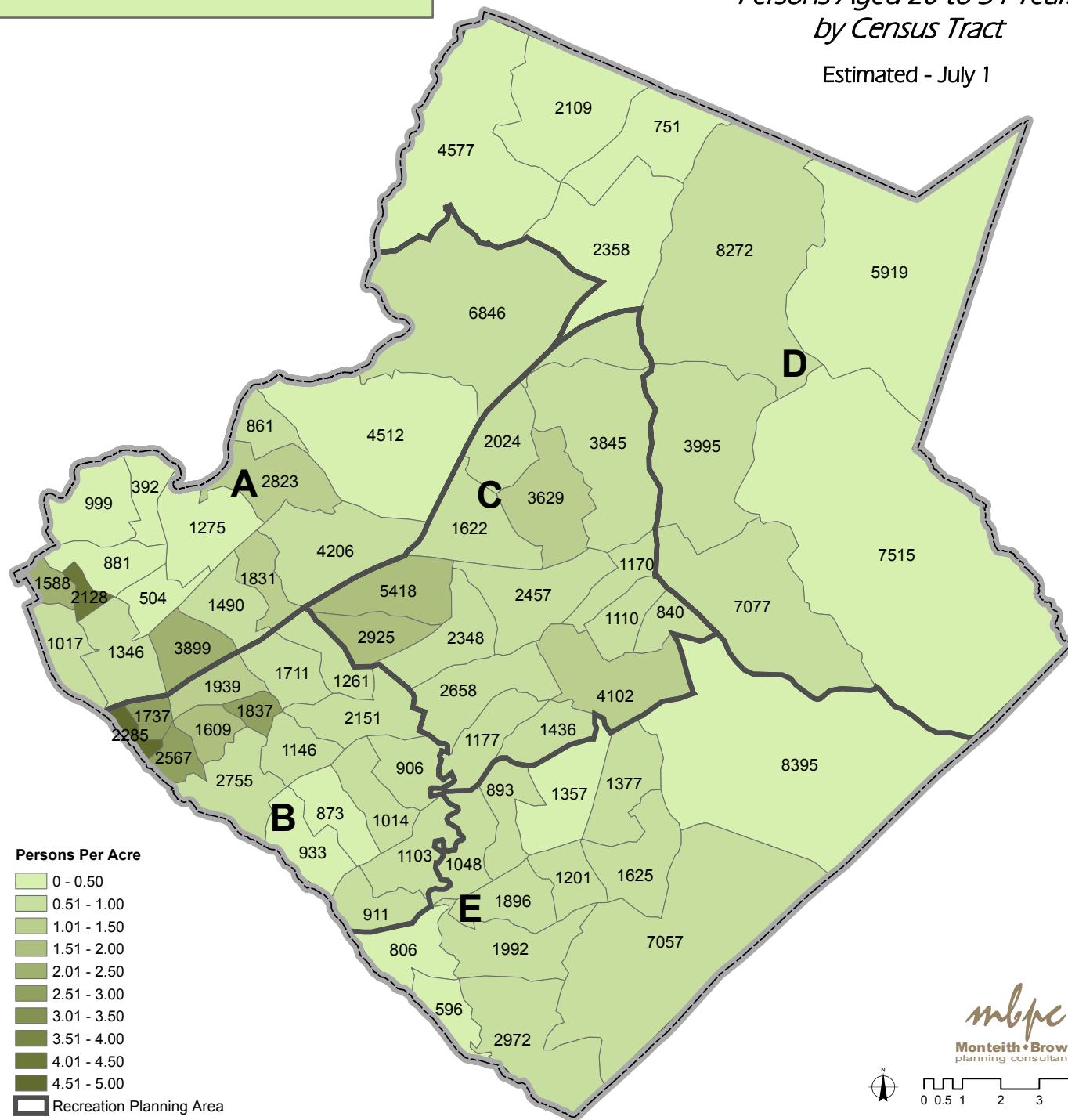
## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### Map 3-4

#### 2007 Estimate of Population Distribution Persons Aged 20 to 34 Years by Census Tract

Estimated - July 1



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Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007



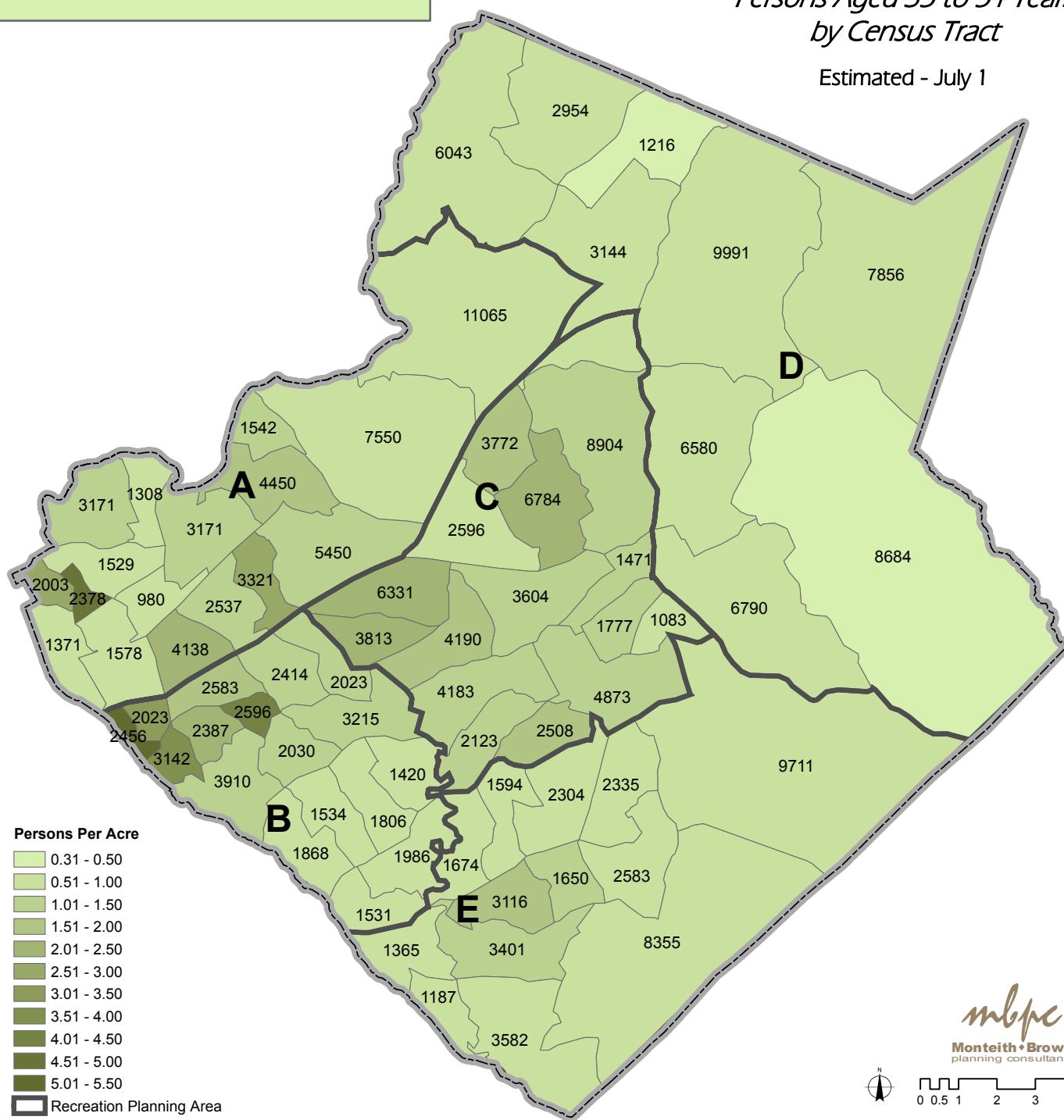
## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### Map 3-5

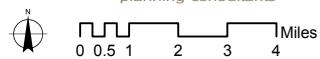
#### 2007 Estimate of Population Distribution Persons Aged 35 to 54 Years by Census Tract

Estimated - July 1



Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

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POPULATION DISTRIBUTION  
BY RECREATION PLANNING AREA

Planning Area	Total Population	55 and Over
A Population % of Planning Area	165,996 100.0%	24,370 14.7%
B Population % of Planning Area	124,260 100.0%	22,022 17.7%
C Population % of Planning Area	180,050 100.0%	24,762 13.8%
D Population % of Planning Area	166,778 100.0%	22,063 13.2%
E Population % of Planning Area	139,263 100.0%	24,068 17.3%
Total Population % of Total County Population	776,347 100.00%	117,285 15.11%



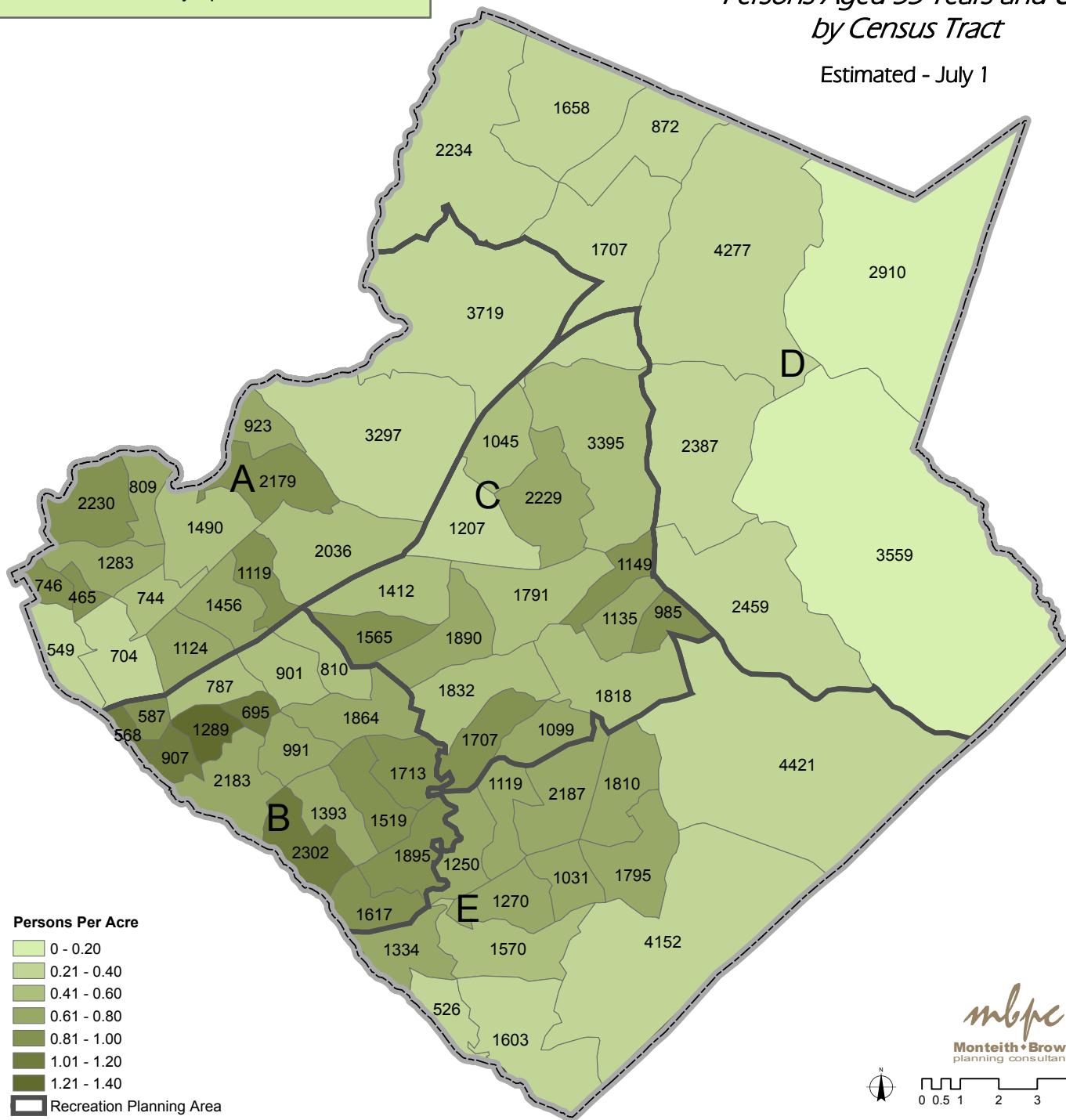
**GWINNETT COUNTY,  
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Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan  
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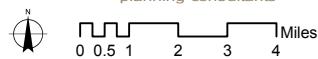
Map 3-6

*2007 Estimate of Population Distribution  
Persons Aged 55 Years and Up  
by Census Tract*

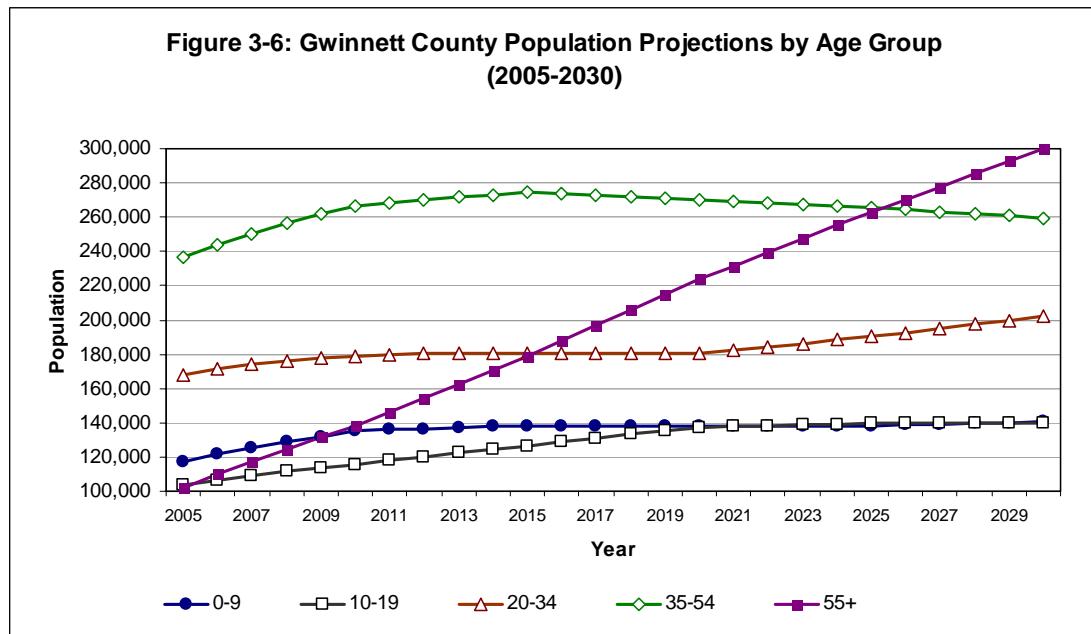
Estimated - July 1



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Monteith + Brown  
planning consultants



Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007



Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

While the graph above provides a long-term perspective of changes in the County's age composition, a closer look at the short-term is required as it relates to this plan (see Table 3-2). Between 2007 and 2013, the 0-9 age cohort is expected to increase by 9%, the 10-19 age group by 12%, the 20-34 age group by 4%, the 35-49 age group by 9%, and the 55+ age group by 39%. Clearly, the most substantial growth is projected in the 55 years and older category even during the short-term.

**Table 3-2: Projected Growth Rates by Age Group (Gwinnett County, 2007 to 2013)**

Age Group	Population Forecast		Change (2007 to 2013)	
	2007	2013	Growth	%
<b>0 to 9</b>	125,443	137,212	11,769	9.4%
<b>10 to 19</b>	109,140	122,364	13,224	12.1%
<b>20 to 34</b>	173,885	180,379	6,493	3.7%
<b>35 to 54</b>	250,594	271,980	21,387	8.5%
<b>55 and up</b>	117,285	162,824	45,538	38.8%
<b>Total</b>	776,347	874,758	98,412	12.7%

Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

In terms of age forecasts by geographic location for the period between 2007 and 2013, an analysis of the data suggests that RPA D will see the most substantial increase in all age categories (in real numbers), while RPA B is expected to see a decrease in its 20-34 age group and no major change in the number of 0-19 year olds. The 55+ age cohort will increase in all five RPAs across the County.

### **3.1.4 Household Composition**

The composition of households experienced significant changes in the 1980s with a dramatic decline in "traditional" households (households with married adults and at least one child under the age of eighteen) and an increase in the number of single parent households. The 2005 American Community Survey data indicates that 21.6% of households with children under 18 in Gwinnett County are single-parent families. This is an increase from the 2000 Census, which found that 14.8% of households with children under 18 are single mother families. Of note, the 2000 Census did not collect data on single-father households, and this could in part account for the increase in lone-parent families between 2000 and 2005.

According to the 2002 Needs Assessment Survey, 55% of Gwinnett County's households contain no children. This statistic is confirmed in the 2005 American Community Survey results which find that 59% of households have no children under 18 years of age. Coupled with a dramatic aging of the population, it is important that Gwinnett County continue to assess its ability to meet the recreational needs of the older adult and senior markets.

### **3.1.5 Income and Education**

Gwinnett County remains an affluent community, with the mean household income level increasing from \$70,206 to \$81,780 between 2000 and 2005. Furthermore, the percentage of persons 25 years and older with a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 29.6% in 1990 to 34.1% in 2000, although it remained stable through to 2005. Both college attendance and median household income levels in Gwinnett County continue to exceed Atlanta Region and State averages.

With education and income both being key indicators of recreational participation levels (research has suggested that a positive correlation exists), it is anticipated that Gwinnett County will continue to experience high levels of interest and demand for parks and recreation facilities.

### **3.1.6 Ethnic Communities**

A tremendous increase in the ethnic and racial diversity is one of the most significant trends witnessed in Gwinnett County during the 1990s and early 21<sup>st</sup> century. While the County's total population increased by 106% between 1990 and 2005, the County's non-White population increased by nearly 860%. The percentage of the County's population identifying themselves as White (including Native American and multi-racial) decreased from 90.9% to 57.6% over this span, while the Black population increased from 5.2% to 17.4%, and Asians increased from 2.9% to 9.6%. The Hispanic and Latino population realized the greatest growth, increasing from 2.4% to 15.4% during this period.

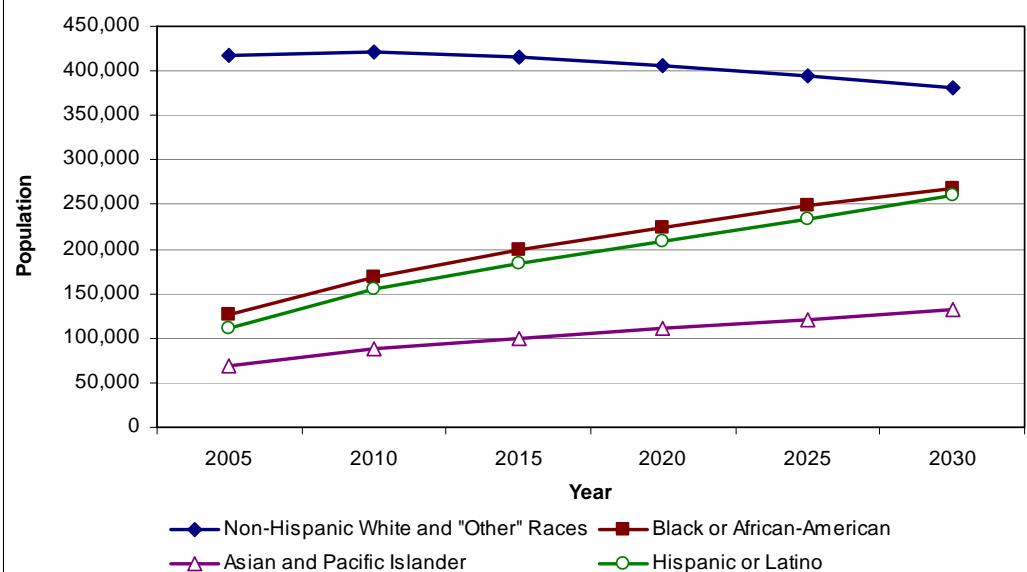
**Table 3-3: Gwinnett County Ethnic Composition (1990-2005)**

	1990	2000	2005
White (including American Indian, Alaska Native, and Multi-Racial)	90.9%	75.2%	57.6%
Black / African American	5.2%	13.3%	17.4%
Hispanic / Latino (any race)	2.4%	10.9%	15.4%
Asian and Pacific Islander	2.9%	7.2%	9.6%

Source: US Census Bureau (1990 and 2005); Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007 (2005 estimates)

Based on the 2000 Census, RPAs A, B, and C are by far the most ethnically diverse areas of the County.

Forecasts suggest that growing ethnic diversity is expected to continue in Gwinnett County. Figure 3-7 indicates that the White races are projected to decline in overall numbers, while significant increases are anticipated for the Black/African American and Hispanic Latino communities and, to a lesser extent, the number of Asians/Pacific Islanders. The extent and nature of future growth and in-migration of these races is dependent upon a number of complex factors, making this data challenging to forecast; however, it is clear that growing diversity is very much a reality in Gwinnett County.

**Figure 3-7: Gwinnett County Population Projections by Ethnic Communities (2005 to 2030)**

Source: Dr. Thomas Hammer, 2007

An examination of detailed forecasts suggests that the general population trends for each race generally apply for all age groups, meaning that declines are anticipated in the number of children, youth and adults within the White races, while increases are projected for the other races. The only exception is the 55 and over category, which is expected to increase across all identified races.

### **3.2 LEISURE TRENDS**

The analysis of trends is a critical factor in parks and recreation planning. An understanding of national and local trends will help Gwinnett County anticipate future demand for recreation and parks facilities. These trends are not just limited to those affecting participation in leisure activities – values and attitudes that people place on leisure also influence the environment, willingness to pay for services, and special needs.

The following trends are based on extensive research of National, State/Regional studies and published research from individual sport federations. To provide a “Gwinnett” face to these trends, local trends have also been identified using the participation data that has been provided by the County and by drawing comparisons between the County's 1995 and 2002 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Surveys.

*Note:* The reader will note some differences in the relative priority of some sports and activities. The discrepancies in some cases relate to differences in the age of the survey population, the frequency of participation, survey design, sampling methodology, etc. For the purposes of this analysis, which is intended to identify major trends and influences, these differences are not considered to be significant. The intent of documenting the trends is to provide a base for the Capital Improvement Plan, by articulating the major trends and influences that will affect the programs, services and facilities that need to be provided for residents.

#### **3.2.1 Demographics**

##### Aging and Household Composition

Nationally, the trend towards early retirement combined with an older age cohort that is living longer, is fitter and healthier, and has a higher disposable income indicates that there will be a growing need to consider older adults in recreation planning. Additionally, the aging of the ‘Baby Boom’ population will increase the percentage of older adults in Gwinnett and across the country. The 2005 Census data showed an increase in the percentage of the population over 55 years of age from 11.9% in 2000 to 14.0% in 2005<sup>1</sup>. Trends research indicates that the new senior citizen will maintain many of their existing recreation preferences, although participation will be at a gentler pace.

While the importance of meeting the needs of older adults will grow in the coming years, Gwinnett generally has a relatively young population – when compared to other communities. In 2005, 41% of the households in Gwinnett County contained children under eighteen years of age<sup>2</sup>.

From a recreation facility and programming perspective, Gwinnett County will have to continue plan for the needs of a significant number of young households with children as well as meeting the diverse needs of older adults. Young households are the traditional users of recreational facilities; however as the trends data indicates, older adults are becoming more active and are expected to be greater consumers of recreational programming and facility users than in the past. To the extent that is possible, the Capital Improvement Plan should also be supportive of

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<sup>1</sup>U.S. Census Bureau. (2005). 2005 Data Profiles. Available online at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

park planning policies and improvements that work to reduce physical barriers which impede access to county parks (e.g. steep slopes on walking trails).

#### Income and Education

Participation in recreation has a high correlation to both the income and education of the participant. The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment 2000<sup>3</sup> found that higher income earners have higher levels of participation and participate in a wider range of activities. Education is also a factor – participation in recreation increases with education levels. In Gwinnett, the mean household income in 2005 was \$74,209, significantly above the mean household incomes of Georgia and the United States (\$60,849 and \$62,556 respectively). As the average income and education levels of Gwinnett's population are higher than national averages, Gwinnett should continue to anticipate high levels of interest and demand for leisure facilities and programming.

The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey (2002) reported low levels of County facility use by lower income households (under \$20,000). Barriers to participation for lower income households is a key consideration, specifically policies with respect to subsidies and aspects of recreational programming (i.e. location of facilities) should be considered in order to improve accessibility among lower income households. The issue that was identified in the 2002 survey was difficulty in accessing some neighborhood parks due to a lack of sidewalks and heavy traffic. The sheer physical size of Gwinnett makes access to parks difficult without the use of an automobile (there is only one park on a bus route). The County has begun linking multi-purpose trails into communities, and we recommend this approach continue. This will be furthered addressed in the recommendations of the Capital Improvement Plan.

#### Increased Racial and Ethnic Diversity

The American demographic profile is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. This trend is also present in Gwinnett County. The 2005 Census data provides clear insight into the diversity in Gwinnett; there is a growing percentage of Asian and Hispanic or Latino persons (9.1% and 16.1% respectively). How does this influence recreation and leisure participation? Individual sport federations with declining numbers (e.g., USA swimming and USA Tennis) have developed programs that seek to attract a more diverse ethnic mix to their respective sports. While certain demographic variables may have more significance in terms of participation (e.g., income and education), sports such as soccer, which is the most popular sport internationally, serve to gain from the trend towards a more ethnically diverse population.

Ethnic diversity in other communities has resulted in increased demands for more educational programming for children and teens and - in areas experiencing growth in Asian communities - requests for more table tennis, tennis and badminton, to name a few. The Hispanic population of Gwinnett has specified a desire for locations and settings that enhance social interaction for the family as a unit. Park plaza designs, walkways, picnic areas, and informal play fields meet many of the needs of this ethnic community.

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<sup>3</sup> 1999-2002 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, (Versions 1 to 13), USDDA Forest Service and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Tennessee. <http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/trends/>

## Work and Leisure Patterns

Lack of time is a primary barrier affecting participation in recreation. While older adults may have more time and money to participate in recreation, working age households are finding themselves to be increasingly "time-stressed" (the average travel time to work for Gwinnettians is 31.5 minutes<sup>4</sup>). This directly impacts recreational providers by heightening demands for longer hours of access and for multi-purpose facilities where more than one family member can participate at the same time (e.g., swimming, fitness, library, gymnasium activities, etc.). Study after study confirms that "lack of time" is one of the major factors influencing recreational participation; other factors include access to convenient facilities, safe environments, income and education.

Research investigating the needs of the older adult population has found that the 'Baby Boom' generation will "repeatedly cycle between periods of work and leisure"<sup>5</sup>. This may increase the need for older adult programming in the prime time hours, which is typically directed towards families.

The time crunch also affects children and is a significant issue for any recreation department, as children have traditionally been the major target group of recreation providers. Free time, defined as "time left over after eating, sleeping, personal care, attending school, preschool or day-care", has decreased from 40 percent to 25 percent of a child's day according to a 1998 study of American children 12 and under<sup>6</sup>. That study also found that the average amount of time spent outdoors each day has also declined dramatically. For the 9 to 12 age bracket, the average amount of time spent outdoors declined 50% between 1981 and 1998, from 95 minutes to 47 minutes. Given the pressures of school, homework and housework, programs and facilities must be convenient and accessible for Gwinnett County's children and adults alike.

## Cyclical Nature of Sport and Leisure Participation

Trends related to sports participation must be closely tracked as the popularity of specific sports is cyclical in nature, and new 'hot' sports emerge every few years. Events and individuals play a role in the popularity of sport. For example, the explosion of soccer in the United States is partly related to the 1994 World Cup and the increasing ethnic diversity of the country. The Olympics and the performance of a given athlete or team can also influence participation. For example, gold medal wins in the last two summer Olympics have spurred interest in women's fast-pitch softball. World-class facilities in and around Gwinnett, as a result of the 1996 Summer Olympics, have also helped to promote certain sports.

An example of a 'hot' trend is non-motorized scooter riding – which gained popularity in the late nineties. The 2003 edition of the Superstudy of Sport Participation revealed that this activity was the 5<sup>th</sup> most popular sport amongst children over the age of six<sup>7</sup>. But by the 2005, participation in the use of non-motorized scooters decreased by 11.3%<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> 2005 Data Profiles. U.S. Census Bureau. Available online at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

<sup>5</sup> Merrill Lynch, The New Retirement Survey for Merrill Lynch by Harris Interactive, 2006, <http://www.ml.com>

<sup>6</sup> University of Michigan, Press Release, America's Children--- Part 1, How they Spend their time, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1998 and Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, published excerpt from Outdoor Recreation in America 2002, <http://www.umich.edu/~newsinfo/Releases/1998/Nov98/r110998a.html>

<sup>7</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Press Release, Children's Sports Interest Run the Gamut, May 30, 2003; <http://www.sgma.com/press/2003/press1054214405-13555.html>

<sup>8</sup> Sporting Good Manufacturing Association, Sports Participation Topline Report – 2005 Edition. <http://www.sgma.com/associations/5119/files/p28b-05.pdf>

As noted earlier, the marketing programs of specific sport organizations can also influence sport participation. For example, USA Tennis has in the past offered free tennis lessons and is actively promoting their sport among populations that have historically not played the game. USA Baseball has similar plans in place.

From a recreation provider's perspective, it is essential that participation trends for sport and leisure activities be closely monitored in order to determine if the activity is emerging, has peaked, or is on the decline.

### 3.2.2 Participation in Recreation and Leisure

#### Outdoor Participation Trends

Table 3-4 shows the percentage of persons 16 years and older in the United States who participated in twelve different categories of outdoor recreation activities. The factors that link the most popular activities are their low cost, minimal physical exertion and that no special equipment or developed skills are required. Of the ten most popular activities, four focus on viewing and learning.

**Table 3-4: National Participation Levels in Outdoor Activities (2000-2002)**

Type of Activity	Population 16 or older (millions)
Participated in Any Activity	98.5
Trail/Street/Road Activities*	90.3
Traditional Social Activities (e.g. picnicking)	83.4
Viewing and photographing activities	80.5
Viewing and learning activities	72.6
Driving for pleasure	66.9
Swimming activities	66.3
Outdoor Adventure activities	61.5
Boating/floating/sailing activities	41.3
Fishing	34.1
Snow and Ice Activities	29.2
Outdoor Team Sports	29.6
Hunting	12.3

\* includes bicycling, mountain biking, walking, horse riding and hiking.

Source: 1999 –2002 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, USDA Forest Service and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/trends/Nsre/update032502.pdf>

The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE), which is the oldest on-going outdoor participation survey in the U.S. (first survey in 1960) has shown an increase in the proportion of Americans who are participating in outdoor activities. The latest Study by NSRE found substantial growth in bird watching (235.9%) and walking (91.2%)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Cordell, K., G. Green (US Forest Service, Athens Georgia) & B. Stephens (University of Tennessee) Trends 2000:Outdoor Recreation: An American Lifestyle Trend, <http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/trends>

Gwinnett County residents have also signaled their interest in parks and open spaces in the 2002 Needs Assessment Survey. Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondents said they support the use of SPLOST monies for parkland acquisition and development<sup>10</sup>. This is consistent with the results of the 1995 Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey at that time 82% of respondents support renewal of the 1% local option sales tax to improve or expand county parks.

### Trails and Linkages Best Bet for Meeting Fitness/Leisure Needs

The single most popular outdoor activity according to the most recent NSRE study (1999-2002) is walking outdoors, followed by recreational bicycling<sup>11</sup>.

Of the top five most popular sports in the USA in 2004, recreational walking (92.8 million participants) was ranked second, surpassed only by recreational swimming (95.3 million participants). While there is a difference in ranking between the NSRE studies and the Superstudy reports, walking is clearly a favored activity. Table 3-5 shows the relative ranking of sports that use trails and linkages from 1998 to 2004, based data from the Superstudy of Sports Participation. Fitness walking, day hiking and running/jogging have risen in popularity. Regardless of the survey instrument, walking and trail related activities are among the favored activities of the American public.

**Table 3-5: Ranking of Sports that use Trails and Linkages (2000 - 2002)**

Sport Activity	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Recreational Walking	2	2	1	1	1
Recreational Bicycling	4	4	3	2	3
Day Hiking	9	12	12	11	11
Fitness Walking	13	13	11	12	10
Running/Jogging	14	14	13	11	11
In-Line Skating	16	18	19	20	23

Note: Ranks are based on those 6 years of age or older, participating at least once per year.

Source: Sporting Good Manufacturing Association, Sports Participation Topline Report – 2005 Edition. <http://www.sgma.com/associations/5119/files/p28b-05.pdf>

The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation 2002 Needs Assessment Survey also found trails and open space parks/greenways to be very important to Gwinnett residents. When asked about favored activities at County Operated facilities, walking emerged as a clear favorite (38% of respondents), significantly above the next favored activity (swimming 8%).

Walking was the single most frequent activity for each of the following age groups in Gwinnett County:

- 18-30 year olds (29%)
- 31-54 year olds (37%)
- 55+ (45%)

<sup>10</sup> Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation 2002 Needs Assessment Survey, The A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia

<sup>11</sup> 1999-2002 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, USDA Forest Service and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Tennessee. <http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/trends>

Based on the Needs Assessment Survey and national trends, Gwinnett County should continue to focus on trails and greenways as the County's network of trails and open spaces collectively address many of the preferred recreational activities of its residents.

#### Importance of Community-Owned Facilities for Youth Sports

The National Council of Youth Sports 2001 membership survey indicates that 52% of indoor programs rely on community-owned facilities. For outdoor programs, 83% rely on community-owned facilities, suggesting that local jurisdictions play an important role in providing facilities for youth sports.<sup>12</sup> According to the Gwinnett County 2002 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey, 74% of respondents used a county park facility for recreational or leisure activities which indicates that, in Gwinnett, the public at large rely heavily on community owned facilities.

#### Health and Fitness Levels

According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention over one half of adults in Georgia did not meet the recommended level of physical activity<sup>13</sup>. Recommended level of physical activity is defined as engaging in moderate activity at least 5 times per week for 30 minutes (gardening, walking, leisure bicycling, etc.) or rigorous activity at least 3 times per week for 20 minutes (running, heavy yard work, etc.). Although, as noted previously, education and income are positive predictors for higher levels of activity, which suggests that Gwinnett residents are likely to exceed the state's activities levels.

The percentage of Georgians that meet the recommended level of physical activity has essentially remained stagnant since 2001. The table below provides a snapshot of the physical activity levels in Georgia from 2001 to 2005.

**Table 3-6: Levels of Physical Activity in Georgia, 2001-2005**

	<b>2001</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2005</b>
Recommended Level of Physical Activity	39.2%	41.6%	41.5%
Insufficient Level of Physical Activity	38.7%	40.1%	41.2%
Inactive	22.1%	18.3%	17.3%

Source: U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2005). U.S. Physical Activity Statistics.; <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov>

Obesity levels are a concern nationally. The "epidemic" of childhood obesity is fuelling new federal initiatives to increase activity and fitness levels among American youth. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Strategy targets improved levels of activity within the school system. However, the strategy also identifies the need for "communities to develop and promote the use of safe, well maintained and close to home sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle paths, trails, parks, recreational facilities"<sup>14</sup>.

Historically, teenagers have been the fittest age group, however, trends research shows declining participation numbers for the 12-17 year age bracket. According to the 2001 Superstudy Report, seniors were the most physically active age group (26% of those over the

<sup>12</sup> National Council of Youth Sports, Report on Trends and Participation in Organized Youth Sports (2001 edition); <http://www.ncys.org>

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2005). U.S. Physical Activity Statistics.; <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov>

<sup>14</sup> Presidents Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Fact Sheet, [http://www.fitness.gov/physical\\_activity\\_fact\\_sheet.html](http://www.fitness.gov/physical_activity_fact_sheet.html)

age of 55 were frequent fitness participants) whereas only 18% of the 12-17 age bracket were frequent fitness participants. This statistic has two implications for Gwinnett: one being that adults and older adults in particular, are going to be using County facilities in increasing numbers; the other that the County should anticipate greater efforts on the part of local community organizations to engage the inactive teenager in active recreation. As a direct provider of recreational programming, the County should also ensure that its own programming helps youth get the “fitness hook” or get hooked on fitness.

In Gwinnett, the 2002 Needs Assessment Survey reported that the majority of families of households with young children believe that the County is doing an excellent job of meeting the needs of their children. The Survey concluded that a “substantial” number of respondents believe that the County could be doing a better job of meeting the needs of teenagers, young adults (20 to 30) and seniors. Facilities and programs aimed at young adults, seniors, and teens, therefore, need to be given additional consideration during future planning. Note: only 14% of respondents over the age of 54 felt that the County was doing an “excellent job” meeting their needs.

#### Planning for the “New” Senior

Looking specifically at the facility/programming needs of older adults, the trends research suggests that the recreational pursuits of the “new and future” senior citizens are going to be different from previous generations. While the senior citizen of past generations pursued more passive activities, today’s senior citizen is, as previously mentioned, fitter and more interested in maintaining their current exercise habits, albeit at a more leisurely pace. The traditional dedicated seniors’ facility typically does not permit a range of active recreational pursuits. To better meet the needs of the “new” senior, Gwinnett should look to a multi-purpose facility model where a range of active and passive recreational opportunities can be provided.

Some of the specific facility and programming trends associated with older adults:

- increased demand for lifelong learning, which could be partially accommodated by providing computer stations in recreation centers to meet the growing interest of older Americans in digital technology, web design, emailing, etc.;
- fitness pools for water walking, water aerobics and lap swimming with warmer water;
- a re-thinking in terminology; the aging baby boomers don’t consider themselves to be “Seniors”; terms to use instead of “senior center” include adult center or social center;
- some trend watchers anticipate lower time commitments to volunteering which could have an impact on parks and recreation agencies who rely on older volunteers;
- shift in programming for seniors, with interest in yoga and pilates continuing to increase;
- life long learning / interest in short courses/workshops; and
- increasing demand for activities and programs during peak hours, as the “new” senior is predicted to cycle in and out of work throughout their retirement.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ziegler, J. “Recreating Retirement: How will Baby Boomers reshape leisure in their 60s? National Park and Recreation Association, [http://www.nrpa.org/story.cfm?story\\_id=1222&departmentID=18&publicationID=11](http://www.nrpa.org/story.cfm?story_id=1222&departmentID=18&publicationID=11)

### Teen Recreation/Leisure Needs Rising to the Top of the Agenda

Survey after survey finds that the needs of teenagers are less well served than other age groups. Due to the sheer size of the age cohort at this time (children of the baby boomers), the voices of teenagers have become louder. The trend research indicates that individual sports such as skateboarding and in-line skating are popular with teens as well as activities such as wall-climbing.

In research undertaken by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants in other jurisdictions the message from teens and the list of facility "wants" have been consistent:

- dedicated space for teens which provides an opportunity for casual socializing and a range of active and passive recreational activities;
- basketball;
- skateboarding; and
- age segregated opportunities at recreational facilities; for example, the 17 year old does not want to swim or play basketball with a 12 year old.

### Female Participation Increasing

Girls and women are participating in outdoor recreation and sports generally in greater numbers. The National Council of Youth Sports Annual Survey (2001 edition) reported that girls are participating at younger ages but that the overall percentage of boys and girls participating has remained the same since 1997 (63% for boys and 37% for girls). Female participation increased for every age group other than the 16-18 year age group<sup>16</sup>. When it comes to organized sport, the 2000 Survey of Organized Youth Team Sports Participation in the U.S.A indicates that there is greater gender parity (59% boys, 48% girls)<sup>17</sup>. Looking to the future, Gwinnett can anticipate increased numbers of girls and women participating in sports and recreation.

### **3.2.3 Participation in Team Sports**

#### General

The Annual Superstudy of Sports Participation (2005 Edition) identified that the largest gains in sport participation between 1998 and 2004 were in the elliptical motion trainer, yoga/tai chi, wall climbing and kayaking. The largest number of active participants, however, is still engaged in team sports; approximately 26 million Americans (ages 6 to 24) were "frequent" participants in team sports (25+ days a year) compared to 14.2 million "frequent" participants in identified "extreme" sports.<sup>18</sup> This suggests that despite the emphasis on more individual activities, the provision of facilities to meet the needs of team sports will continue to be a focus for recreation departments. From a facility provider's perspective, there is a need to recognize the diversity of recreation pursuits and to promote a variety of opportunities.

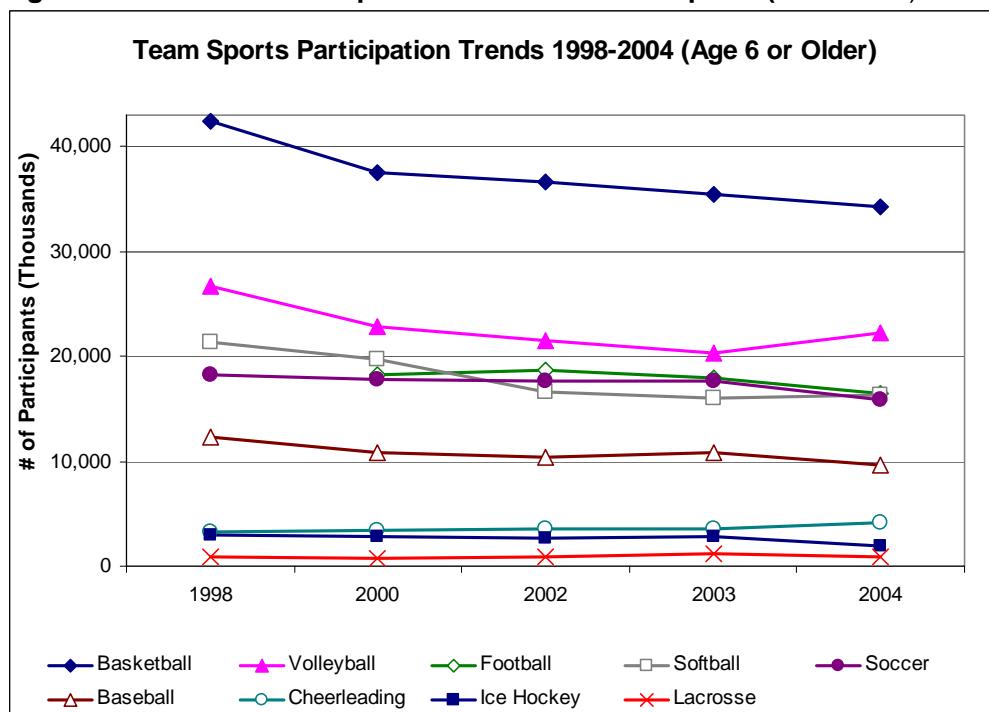
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<sup>16</sup> National Council of Youth Sports, Report on Trends and Participation in Organized Youth Sports (2001 edition); <http://www.ncys.org>

<sup>17</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, Press Release, New Survey: 54% of U.S. Youngsters Play Organized Sport; <http://www.sgma.com>

<sup>18</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Press Release. Growth of New Millennial Pursuits Outpaces Traditional Activities, August 1, 2002; [http://www.americansportsdata.com/pr\\_08-01-02\\_3.asp](http://www.americansportsdata.com/pr_08-01-02_3.asp)

**Figure 3-8: National Participation Levels for Team Sports (1998-2004)**



Source: Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, [Sports Participation Topline Report – 2005 Edition](http://www.sgma.com/associations/5119/files/p28b-05.pdf). <http://www.sgma.com/associations/5119/files/p28b-05.pdf>

Figure 3-8 shows that participation levels in team sports declined between 1998 and 2004 for all major team sports. The single most popular sport for all ages is basketball. A decline in participation in pick-up games is one of the major factors that industry experts attribute to the decline in team sports.

#### Youth Sport Participation

The most recently released survey of the most popular sports for youth rising out of the 2003 Superstudy of Sports study (based on frequent participation defined as 25+ days a year), found that 6 of the top 15 sports were team sports, the most popular being basketball. In-line skating, skateboarding, and fishing are some of the more popular individual sports or activities for American youth.

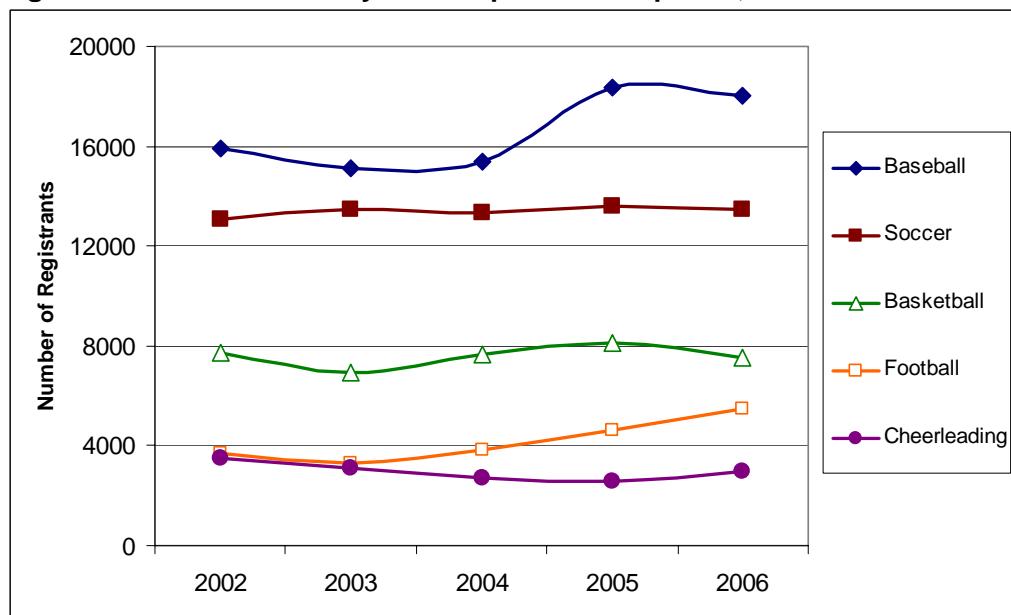
**Table 3-7: Most Popular Organized (team) Sports for Youngsters (6-17) in 2000**

Rank	Sport	Total Participants (millions)
1	Basketball	10.0
2	Soccer	9.6
3	Baseball	7.5
4	Slow Pitch Softball	3.6
5	Tackle Football	2.9
6	Swimming/diving	2.7
7	Track and Field	2.6
8	Volleyball (court)	2.4
9	Cheerleading	1.9
10	Touch Football	1.4
11	Fast-pitch Softball	1.4
12	Tennis	1.1

Source: Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association, excerpt from Organized Youth Team Sports Participation in the US, Press Release "New Survey: 54% of U.S. Youngsters Play Organized Sports", May 1, 2001 [http://www.daconline.net/press\\_release's.htm](http://www.daconline.net/press_release's.htm)

Figure 3-9 illustrates the cyclical nature of youth team sports in Gwinnett County over a six-year period. This graphic shows that, while registrations have increased in all sports, relative to the population only soccer and football have seen increases, while youth baseball/softball and basketball have been capturing fewer and fewer of the youth population in recent years.

**Figure 3-9: Gwinnett County Youth Sports Participation, 2002-2006**



Source: Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division

Generally, Gwinnett children and teens mirror the sport and recreational pursuits identified in national trend surveys. There are some differences; basketball appears to be more popular on a national scale, while baseball has higher rate of participation in Gwinnett than nation-wide. Table 3-8 provides a summary of the favored activities by Gwinnett County children and teenagers.

**Table 3-8: Favored Recreational Activities of Gwinnett Children & Teenagers**

<b>Gwinnett Children (under 13)</b>		<b>Gwinnett Teenagers (13 to 17)</b>	
Activity	Percentage	Activity	Percentage
Swimming	31%	Basketball	27%
Playgrounds	24%	Swimming	24%
Soccer	20%	Baseball	20%
Baseball	20%	Soccer	18%
Bicycling	20%	Football	17%
Basketball	17%	Softball	9%
Softball	9%	Running/jogging	9%
Tennis	9%	Cheerleading	8%
Gymnastics	4%	--	--
Skating	4%	--	--

Source: Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation 2002 Needs Assessment Survey, the A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia

The Survey of Organized Team Sports Participation (2000) also identified the relationship between income and sport participation. Nationally, households with organized youth team sport members have an average annual income of \$64,500, 15% higher than the average household income of \$56,200 for all families with children ages 6 to 17. One third of youth sport participants had an average annual income of \$75,000 or more.<sup>19</sup>

### Soccer

After years of tremendous growth, soccer participation may have peaked. Reported data from the 2005 Superstudy of Sports Participation (2004 participation data) shows a decline in soccer participation by 10% from 2003. Participation among core players (those who play 52 days or more), however, increased by 8.2 percent between 2002 and 2003. From a recreation facility provider's perspective this indicates that while the number of players may be registering a decline, field use may in fact be increasing due to an increasing number of players with greater numbers of practices and games.

In Gwinnett, soccer participation numbers declined slightly between 2000 and 2002 according to statistics provided by the Community Services Department. Between 1997 and 2002, however, soccer registration figures increased by nearly 50% in Gwinnett, illustrating the rapid growth in the late 90s. While the numbers of participants in baseball/softball are still higher than soccer in Gwinnett, the 2002 household survey found that there was no difference in the relative popularity of soccer and baseball (not including softball) amongst children under 13.

The 2003 national data that is available indicates that adult participation in soccer is growing. A 30% increase was observed between 2002 and 2003 for adults 18 years and older, while a 97% increase was tracked for the 25-34 age bracket<sup>20</sup>. This is likely tied to youth participants aging into adult age groups and continuing to pursue the sport. There is limited evidence that this trend exists in Gwinnett, however, this may be due to a lack of "adult quality" fields. Looking to the future, however, the County should anticipate an increase in adult players.

<sup>19</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association and the National Council of Youth Sports, Press Release, New Survey: 54% of U.S. youngsters play Organized Sports, May 1, 2001; [http://www.daconline.net/press\\_release's.htm](http://www.daconline.net/press_release's.htm)

<sup>20</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Press Release, Soccer, Not just for Children, June 9, 2003, <http://www.sgma.com/press/2003/press1055170659-6754.html>

Although more men than women play soccer, an increasing number of girls and women are playing the sport, spurred on no doubt by the success of the American Women's soccer team.

While soccer participation levels appear to have peaked (nationally and in Gwinnett), the physical aspects of the game, its high fitness quotient and its popularity amongst ethnic communities suggest that soccer will remain a popular activity.

#### Baseball/Softball

Baseball and softball have been in decline in the U.S. since 1993. The one exception to this has been fastpitch softball, which grew by over 15% between 2003 and 2004. Recent reports indicate that approximately 62% of fastpitch players are women.<sup>21</sup> In absolute terms, 2004 baseball participation numbers are 24% below 1998 levels<sup>22</sup>.

In Gwinnett, baseball and softball have the highest participation levels amongst team sports. The spring baseball and softball sessions, which attract the largest number of participants, however, registered a 14% decline between 2000 and 2002. The trend data suggests that Gwinnett should anticipate continued declines in baseball and softball.

That being said, the number of children and teens participating in baseball remains significant. For those athletes that are seeking a competitive edge, a variety of privately-operated specialized training facilities existing in the County that provide instruction, camps, and even travel leagues.

#### Football

Football has experienced marginal decline since 1998 (1.3%), but has declined significantly between 2003 and 2004 (19.3%). While Touch Football has a higher number of participants, its participation levels have been declining at a greater rate than Tackle Football<sup>23</sup>. Though, at the high school level, football is the number one participant sport (for boys).<sup>24</sup>

Participation rates for youth football in Gwinnett County have increased slightly over the past few years to approximately 4% of the 6 to 14 age group, suggesting that in the cyclical nature of sport participation, football may be on the upswing in the County.

#### Basketball

While basketball remains the most popular team sport, growth has been leveling off since 1998 (See Figure 3-9). Within the sport, the fastest growing segments are young children (6 to 11) and adults. Further growth in the sport is anticipated as more girls take up the sport. In Gwinnett, basketball participation rates have been steady over the past three years, capturing nearly 6% of the 5 to 18 age group.

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<sup>21</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Press Release, Fast-Pitch Softball Becoming Popular June 30, 2003, <http://www.sgma.com/press/2003/press1056985416-14826.html>

<sup>22</sup> Sporting Good Manufacturing Association, Sports Participation Topline Report – 2005 Edition. <http://www.sgma.com>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> National Federation of High School Association, High School Participation Rates 2001-2002, <http://www.laxpower.com/common/ParticipationRates2002.php>

## Cheerleading

Cheerleading has experienced strong growth since 1998, although the actual number of participants is relatively low. Between 1998 and 2004 the participation rate increased by 27%, which is the highest growth rate of all team sports. In Gwinnett there was a 5% increase in participants between 2000 and 2002, which can be attributed to overall population growth.<sup>25</sup>

### **3.2.4 Leisure Trends - Individual Recreation Activities**

#### Aquatics

Recreational swimming is the number one activity in the United States, with 95.3 million participants over the age of 6. While it was found that recreational swimming was more popular than walking, it is growing at a slower rate<sup>26</sup>. The 2005 Superstudy of Sports Participation identified a 1% growth in swimming participation between 1998 and 2004. An analysis of recreation participation trends from 1980 to 1996, confirmed that swimming is in a "slow or no-growth" situation, although increases were seen in seniors' participation (age 65+)<sup>27</sup>.

Swimming is promoted by aquatics enthusiasts as a "cradle to the grave" activity. The greatest demand is typically from the younger ages who are participating in learn to swim programs. Participation in swimming often drops off in the teen years. Adult participation, however, is growing and trend data has identified new seniors (aging baby boomers) as the "new fit generation". Therapeutic and fitness swimming (aerobics and laps) are also emerging as popular activities for adults. There were 5.8 million participants in fitness in 2005.<sup>28</sup>

Nationally, USA Swimming has programs in place to promote increased participation in competitive swimming amongst economically disadvantaged groups. Gwinnett's demographic profile (higher than average income levels) is a good fit for competitive swimming. According to USA Swimming, it costs swimming families approximately \$1000-\$2000 annually per child to participate in the sport. Gwinnett's swim teams and schools have produced many state champions over the years.

In Gwinnett, the 2002 Needs Assessment Survey found that swimming (8%) ranked second to walking (38%) as a most frequent activity in a county park. Swimming was identified as the favorite activity of children under the age of 13 in Gwinnett, and was ranked just below basketball as a favorite activity for teens.

The most significant trend in recent years in aquatic facility development and design has been the leisure pool. This trend, which began in the 1980s, continues with the addition of an increasing number of interactive play features that have turned the indoor and outdoor pool into entertainment facilities.

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<sup>25</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Press Release "New Survey: 54% of U.S. Youngsters Play Organized Sport", May 1, 2001, <http://www.sportlink.com/press/2001/press988721108-300622.html>

<sup>26</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Press Release, "Top 30 most popular Sports in the U.S.A.", April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002; [http://www.goodnewsforsports.com/NewsRelease/archive/1202/0502\\_ActivitiesDominate.htm](http://www.goodnewsforsports.com/NewsRelease/archive/1202/0502_ActivitiesDominate.htm)

<sup>27</sup> Warnick, R.B. "Recreational Participation Trends: Generational Patterns and Change", University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Amherst Massachusetts; [http://www.prr.msu.edu/trends2000/pdf/warnick\\_generations.pdf](http://www.prr.msu.edu/trends2000/pdf/warnick_generations.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Sports Participation Topline Report – 2005 Edition. <http://www.sgma.com>

The challenge for pool operators is to maximize programmable space: accommodating programming and activities for all ages. Features such as body and drop slides, lazy rivers, splash/spray pads, etc. are becoming standard items in family aquatic centers. The diving board is also making a resurgence. Incorporating shade features (sun umbrellas/sunshade structures) for staff and patrons at outdoor facilities is now standard practice. Some jurisdictions are also developing "adults only" tanks.<sup>29</sup> Gwinnett's family aquatic centers are very much in line with these trends.

### Tennis

While the Superstudy of Sports (2005) indicates that tennis participation has declined by 13.2% over the past 17 years (for those participating at least once a year), recent data demonstrates an upswing in participation levels<sup>30</sup>. In fact, between 1998 and 2004, tennis participation increased by 8.3%. Absolute participation in tennis was 18.3 million in 2004. A study found that 75% of players rely on public courts and that female participation is growing (52% of new players are women). There is also growing ethnic diversity on the court (one out of every three new players are Hispanic or African-American). This latest study also reported that the average age of new players is 18, while the average age of all players is 29.<sup>31</sup>

The Tennis Association 2003 Study identifies the states with the highest levels of tennis participation as California, New York, Florida, Texas and Illinois. However, the 2003 State-by State index prepared by the National Sporting Goods Association, reports that Georgia has above average participation in tennis. As noted previously, tennis is identified as the 12<sup>th</sup> most popular sport for youth across the nation.

Demographically, tennis is a sport that has an association with income; a majority of tennis players come from higher income households. This is a good fit with Gwinnett, suggesting that the current popularity of tennis in Gwinnett will continue.

### Golf

Golf is identified as the 14<sup>th</sup> most popular sport in the U.S., according to the 2003 Superstudy Report. A study of frequent participants (25 days or more) indicated that frequent golf participants declined 14% from 1998 to 2004. There were 30.4 million players in 2000 and 25.7 million in 2004.<sup>32</sup>

60% of frequent golf participants are over the age of 45 and 80% of the frequent players have an average household income in excess of \$50,000. The largest playing group is college educated according to the SMGA study of frequent sport participants.

The golf industry, as represented by the National Golf Foundation, is anticipates continued popularity in golf although the Foundation recorded a slight decline (1.3%) in total participants

<sup>29</sup> Bales, Beth "The water is Great, Come on In! The latest trends in pool design", Parks and Recreation (Journal of the Nation Recreation and Parks Association), November, 2002

[http://www.nrpa.org/story.cfm?story\\_id=1278&departmentID=18&publicationID=11](http://www.nrpa.org/story.cfm?story_id=1278&departmentID=18&publicationID=11)

<sup>30</sup> American Sports Data, Inc. Sector Analysis Report, Press Release "Growth of New Millennial Pursuits, outpaces traditional activities", August 1, 2002; [http://www.americansportsdata.com/pr\\_08-01-02\\_3.asp](http://www.americansportsdata.com/pr_08-01-02_3.asp)

<sup>31</sup> United States Tennis Association, Press Release, March 20, 2003, "USA and TIA Complete Most Comprehensive Research in Sports"

<http://www.mtatennis.com/HmpgArticles/USTA%20facts/USTATIAPARTICIPATIONSTUDY3.20.03FINAL.doc>

<sup>32</sup> Sporting Good Manufacturing Association, Sports Participation Topline Report – 2005 Edition.  
<http://www.sgma.com>

between 2002 and 2003. While overall participation dipped slightly, there was an increase in the number of junior participants. The golf industry anticipates future growth as children of the baby-boomers take up the sport.<sup>33</sup>

The Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association reports that there has been some scaling back of new golf course construction and a reduction in the number of new courses being built.

From a recreation department's perspective, the industry reports suggest that demand for junior golf programs will be high. Gwinnett's youthful demographic profile combined with its higher household income and education levels suggest that demand for golf instruction programs will be strong in Gwinnett.

According to the 2002 Needs Assessment Survey, golf was identified as a favorite activity by 12% of households, behind tennis (13%) and ahead of fishing, watching TV and hiking.

#### In-line Skating

In-line skating reached its peak in 1998, with 32 million participants. This was an increase of 580% from 1990 participation levels. Between 1998 and 2004, participation levels for in-line skating decreased substantially to 17.4 million participants (84% decrease). In-line skating, however, remains a very popular activity, second only to basketball for children over the age of six.<sup>34</sup>

#### Skateboarding

Participation levels in skateboarding have leveled off since its rapid growth between 1998 and 2002. In 2004, 10.6 million over the age of 6 participated at least once in skateboarding. Three quarters of all skateboarders are male and the vast majority is under the age of 18.<sup>35</sup> The sport was ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in popularity nationally for children over the age of 6 in 2002. Interestingly skateboarding was not on the list of favored activities for 13 to 17 year olds in Gwinnett and was on the bottom of the list for children under 13 in the Gwinnett County Needs Assessment Survey (2002). This should not, however, necessarily be interpreted as evidence that children in Gwinnett are less interested in skateboarding; adults are not always good at translating the needs of teenagers in survey instruments in our experience.

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<sup>33</sup> National Golf Foundation and the National Golf Course Owners Association, Golf 20/20; <http://www.Golf2020.com>

<sup>34</sup> Sporting Good Manufacturing Association, Sports Participation Topline Report – 2005 Edition.

<http://www.sgma.com>

<sup>35</sup> Sporting Goods Manufacturing Association, Press Release, "Skating- Riding a Wave of Popularity", July 2 ,2003, <http://www.sportlink.com/press/2003/press1056987137-26038.html>

## SECTION 4: Public Input Process

### 4.1 OVERVIEW

The public consultation program for the Capital Improvement Plan collected input from a variety of sources. The public participated in the process through 5 open public meetings held in June 2007 at various locations throughout the County. Questionnaires were completed at these public meetings and were also distributed to leaders of several ethnic communities in the County. In addition, a focus group session was held with representatives of the local Hispanic community.

In addition to the public participation efforts, Gwinnett County staff also participated in a workshop/interview session to provide insight into needs and challenges. Also of note, the random telephone survey of 895 households, conducted by the A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service at Kennesaw State University as part of the 2002 Needs Assessment was also reviewed as this remains a relevant source of public opinion.

### 4.2 PUBLIC MEETINGS

To assist in the preparation of the Capital Improvement Plan Update, five public meetings were held between June 11 and 13, 2007 in an effort to gather input on local parks and recreation needs. These meetings were held in the following locations and were attended by over 120 citizens:

June 11, 2007	Pinckneyville Community Center
June 11, 2007	Centerville Community Center
June 12, 2007	Rhodes Jordan Community Center
June 12, 2007	George Pierce Community Center
June 13, 2007	Gwinnett Senior Center (morning)

The purpose of these meetings was to hear the principal wishes and concerns of citizens regarding park facility development in Gwinnett County. A summary of the County's demographic characteristics, leisure trends, and the inventory of parks and recreation assets by sub-geographic area was presented to the public based on the work completed to date. Following the presentation, the public was given an opportunity to discuss a series of questions posed by the Consulting Team; other specific issues were also raised and discussed by those in attendance.

Questions and ideas for the County's parks system were abundant, as were compliments for the County's recent park acquisition and development efforts. Overall, the issues and themes that emerged from the discussion period were the same as those that were identified by the questionnaires completed by attendees. The "hot button" issues did, however, vary slightly from one meeting to the next, depending on the needs and priorities of the area in which the session was being held. The following is a brief summary of the issues and suggestions raised at the meetings. Topics raised at the meetings, but that are outside the scope of the Capital Improvement Plan (e.g., program delivery, parks operations, public transit, marketing) have not been identified.

Key themes emerging from two or more meetings included:

- there is a very high level of satisfaction with Gwinnett County parks; citizens recognize that the County is a leader in parks and open space provision and design;
- the desire to connect County parks through the use of greenways, sidewalks, and bike lanes;
- demand for additional equestrian trails as more and more private properties become unavailable for riding as they are lost to development;
- demand for more soccer fields and more opportunity for unstructured soccer play;
- demand for more parkland, particularly passive open space that can accommodate trails; and
- an indoor pool to accommodate the County's semi-annual swim meets, possibly developed in partnership with Gwinnett County Board of Education, Georgia Gwinnett College or private swim providers.

Specific park and facility requests were also received for (in no particular order):

- an off-leash dog park near Buford;
- improvements to the roller hockey rink at Pinckneyville Park (including adding a roof);
- safety and design improvements at Shorty Howell Park and Jones Bridge Park;
- development of the Beaver Ruin and Palm Creek Park Sites as passive parks;
- providing a County-owned and operated indoor ice rink;
- lacrosse fields to serve this growing sport;
- community garden plots;
- more soccer fields in areas B, C, or E;
- a plaza style park like the town square in Suwanee with a splash pad;
- outdoor amphitheatres for public concerts and events;
- badminton courts (or at least gymnasium floors marked for courts);
- demand for additional lap lane times at Mountain Park Aquatic Center during early morning hours in the summer;
- more community meeting space, additional Arts Centers or programs, shuffleboard courts, and indoor competition pool (possibly in Lenora Park) in the eastern part of the County;
- more active parks in RPA C;
- need a gym with exercise equipment in Bethesda Park;
- desire for the proposed park on Highway 29 in Lilburn to be a passive park with walking trails instead of soccer;
- a 50-meter pool, possibly in partnership with local schools or swim providers;
- more adult ball diamonds (or possibly allowing usage of youth ball diamonds by adults when they are not in use);
- indoor playground to allow children to play out of the heat;
- purchasing the Stone Mountain Tennis Center and redeveloping it as an indoor multi-use sports venue;
- canoe and kayak rentals at Tribble Mill Park;
- don't close the trail in Tribble Mill Park and try to expedite construction at Harbins Park
- concerns over the quality of certain mountain bike trails at Tribble Mill; local groups have offered to assist where possible with trail maintenance
- wildlife centers and preserves.

#### 4.4 PUBLIC MEETING QUESTIONNAIRE

The public consultation program for the Capital Improvement Plan included a questionnaire that was distributed to attendees at the five public meetings as well as leaders in several ethnic communities in the County. The questionnaire was not intended to yield statistically valid results, but is useful in providing general indications of issues, concerns, needs, and priorities. The results are provided here for information only. For a more accurate and statistically valid indicator of needs and participation patterns, the 2002 Needs Assessment should be referenced.

The survey consisted of a variety of open and close-ended questions, many with multiple parts. It bears noting that the manner in which the surveys were answered varied considerably. Comments did not always pertain to the question that was being asked, nor were all comments pertinent to the scope of the Capital Improvement Plan. Although the analysis of the close-ended questions was relatively straightforward, a greater degree of judgment was required in analyzing the open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was completed by 120 participants; 44% were present at the meeting held at the Rhodes Jordan Community Center, 22% at the Pinckneyville Community Center, 13% at the Gwinnett Senior Center, 12% at the George Pierce Community Center, and 10% at the Centerville Community Center. The parks most used by respondents are Tribble Mill Park (17%), Little Mulberry Park (14%), Pinckneyville Park/Soccer Complex (13%), and Yellow River Park (13%). In addition to the public meeting attendees, 9 people at the Hispanic focus group session completed the questionnaire and their answers have been included in the charts outlined below.

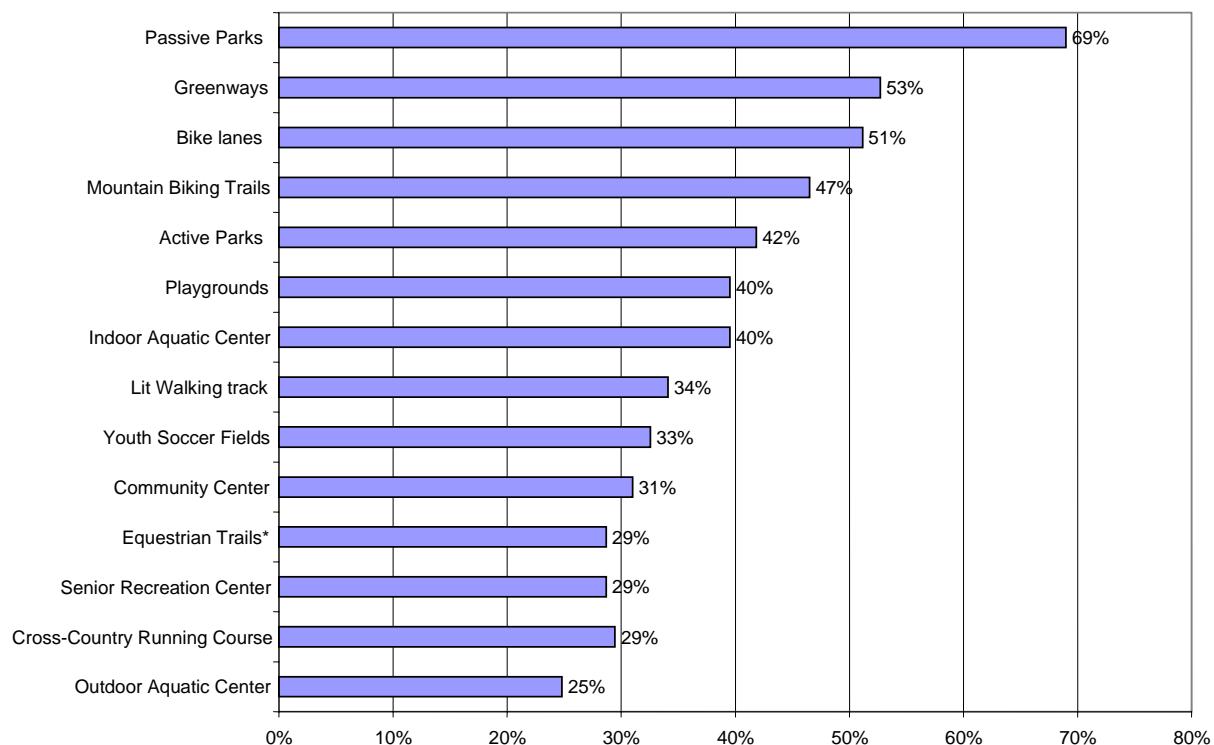
The questionnaire is not statistically significant and should not necessarily be considered representative of the views of the majority of Gwinnett County residents (unlike the 2002 Needs Assessment, which was a County-wide random sample survey).

Respondents were asked to indicate the priority the County should place on providing additional types of parks and facilities.

The chart below identifies the main facilities that respondents ranked as 'highest' and 'high' priority (top 2 on a 5-point scale).

- As illustrated in the preceding chart, respondents feel that the highest priority needs are: passive parks (69%); greenways (53%); bike lanes (51%); and mountain biking trails (47%).
- Non-programmed facilities comprise the 8 out of the top 10 facility needs, with indoor aquatic centers and community centers being the only notable departures.
- The facilities that rank as the lowest priorities are: cheerleading areas; skateboard parks; adult ball diamonds; and football fields.

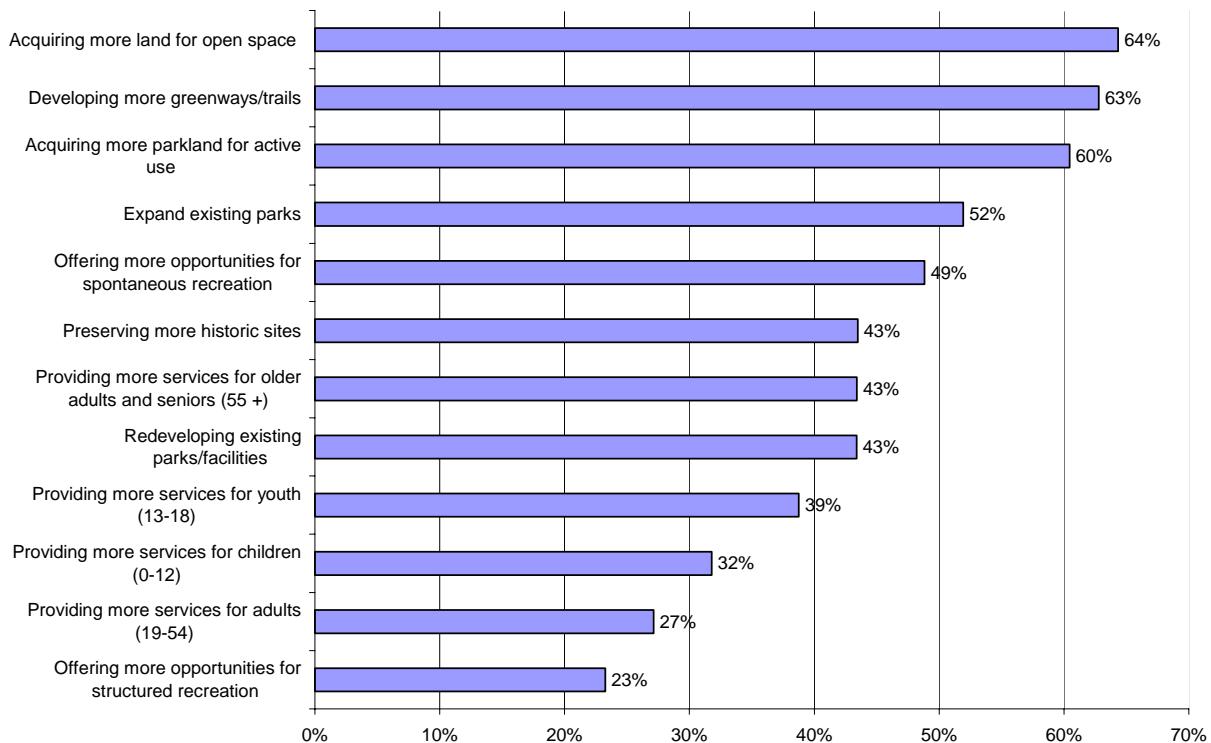
**Priority for Additional Supplies of the Facility ("Highest" & "High" Response)**



Respondents were asked to indicate the priority the County should place on a list of park system issues. The chart below identifies the issues that respondents ranked 'highest' or 'high' (top 2 on a 5-point scale).

- The top park system priorities according to questionnaire respondents are: acquiring more land for open space (64%); developing more greenways and trails (63%); acquiring more parkland for active use (60%); and expanding existing parks (54%).
- Offering more opportunities for structured recreation received the least support (23%) of all available options.

#### Priority Of Park System Issues ("Highest" & "High" Response)



Participants were also given an opportunity to provide qualitative input into the Plan. When asked to state one thing that could be done to support, enhance, or improve parks and recreation in Gwinnett County, the most common responses were:

- additional or improved bike trails (specifically mountain bike) (14% of questionnaires);
- additional or improved equestrian trails (13% of questionnaires); and
- increased park security measures (6% of questionnaires).

When asked to state other issues or concerns that had not been addressed by the questionnaire, the most common responses were: lack of park connectivity by way of paths or trails (8% of questionnaires) and a concern for park safety (5% of questionnaires).

#### 4.4 ETHNIC COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

In an attempt to ensure all residents of Gwinnett would have the opportunity to express their opinion regarding the range and location of recreational facilities, translators were hired to call identified leaders of the Bosnian, Korean, Vietnamese, and Hispanic communities to invite them to focus group meetings. Only the Hispanic community responded to the request for a focus group meeting and, despite other community leaders indicating that they would complete the questionnaire, only nine individuals representing the Hispanic community did so.

The primary issue raised at the Hispanic Community Focus Group session centered on a serious deficiency in the number of soccer fields needed to meet their needs. With all of the redevelopment and development happening in their part of the County (mainly in the

southwest), they are losing the areas where they use to be able to practice. More residential development means more children, resulting in more portables at the schools, which are replacing their practice fields on the school yards.

Generally speaking, the Spanish community has more children per household so the issue is even greater as there are more children that need to be accommodated within even smaller areas. For example, where there were 4 houses there are now 30 to 40 houses – this results in more kids and less land to play soccer on.

In this part of the County they play soccer – not baseball or tennis or football – therefore, they feel they need more soccer fields, even if it means removing tennis courts, ball diamonds, or football fields. The group suggested that if the football fields were made a little wider they could also serve as soccer fields (soccer is a year round sport while football is seasonal).

The group pointed out that in the Hispanic community the people stay home – they don't have cottages or go on vacations – and, therefore, they need something to do. If they find a piece of land, most often it turns out to be private or there is no parking. They end up playing on cul-de-sacs or in the middle of the street.

Besides soccer, the group indicated that they would like more trails ("the more the better"), as well as picnic areas. It was suggested that the barbecue areas not be so close together (people often take ownership of the barbeques – claiming them for the whole day – so that no one else can use them). They also pointed out that there are not enough water parks – they cannot afford the pools so outdoor spray pads would be fabulous. Free activities are seen as being very valuable to this community.

#### **4.5 2002 NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY DATA**

In 2002, the A.L. Burruss Institute of Public Service at Kennesaw State University prepared a Needs Assessment Survey. The major component of the Needs Assessment was a telephone survey with 895 randomly selected adults living in the county. The purpose of the Needs Assessment was to:

- identify the favorite recreational and leisure activities of Gwinnett residents,
- determine the extent to which they utilize county operated parks and other recreational facilities for these activities,
- obtain residents' general evaluations of various aspects of the county facilities, and
- gauge levels of support for the use of SPLOST monies to pay for future parkland acquisition and park development.

##### Parkland - Findings

- 50% said there are enough county parks in the area where they live. 39% felt the county should provide more facilities in their areas.
- 63% said it takes them 10 minutes or less to get to the park they use most often. 50% said they would use a county park more often if one were located closer to their home.
- When asked what type of park development should receive top priority if the SPLOST is extended in 2004, 44% preferred "active park development," 37% said "passive park

development," while 13% preferred to maintain a balance between the two types of development.

### Facilities & Activities - Findings

- When asked what types of improvements should receive highest priority for the funds generated by any future SPLOST extension, the responses were:
  - park maintenance and security issues (19%)
  - more trails (walking, jogging, biking) (17%)
  - open-space parks/greenways (15%)
  - athletic fields (15%)
  - after-school programs (14%)
  - children's programs (12%)
  - swimming facilities (10%)
  - community centers (7%)
  - more parks (general reference)/land acquisition (7%)
  - arts and cultural programs (6%)
  - mixed-use parks (5%)
  - gymnasiums/indoor facilities (5%)
  - preservation of historical sites (5%)
- According to the respondents with children under the age of 13 and/or teenagers (13-17 year olds) living in their households, the favorite activities of these age groups are:

#### Children under the age of 13

swimming (31%)  
using playground equipment (24%)  
soccer (20%)  
baseball (20%)  
bicycling (20%)  
basketball (17%)  
football/cheerleading (16%)  
softball (9%)  
tennis (9%)

#### Teens between 13 and 17 years old

basketball (27%)  
swimming (24%)  
baseball (20%)  
soccer (18%)  
football (17%)  
running/jogging (9%)  
softball (9%)  
cheerleading (8%)  
watching television (7%)  
bicycling (7%)

### Other relevant findings

- For those who did express opinions, a majority of respondents indicated the county does only a "fair" or "poor" job of meeting the needs of the physically handicapped. A substantial number of respondents also believe the county could be doing a better job of addressing the needs of teenagers, young adults ages 20-30 and seniors.
- When asked about the parks' biggest security issues, 21% said the lack of an adequate police presence. 12% mentioned lack of adequate lighting.

The 2002 Needs Assessment also conducted focus group sessions with the Hispanic and Korean communities to identify special recreational needs of these minority groups and to identify any potential problems that may dissuade members of these groups from utilizing county recreational facilities. The ethnic and racial diversity of Gwinnett County has grown significantly over the past ten years and there has been a considerable increase in the population of these two communities. The following is a summary of the activity preferences and park/facility needs identified at the focus group sessions.

### Hispanic Community Focus Group

- Favorite recreational activities include soccer, running, volleyball, baseball, bicycling, basketball, and fishing. Other popular activities that may be unique to the culture are "socializing with their friends and neighbors" and "danza (native dancing)".
- Would like to more facilities that allow for live music (mostly small bands) and a suitable area for dancing (preferably paved/concrete).
- Several respondents mentioned that they had a hard time finding a suitable location for a "pick-up" game of ball or soccer.
- Often have difficulty getting to parks - more neighborhood-level parks were suggested, as were better/more sidewalks.

### Korean Community Focus Group

- Favorite recreational activities include soccer, baseball, basketball, volleyball, tennis, walking, jogging and swimming. Other less traditional activities include ping pong, billiards, watching movies, church activities, Chinese checkers/chess, singing (choral and karaoke), and traditional dancing.
- Utilization of county operated parks appears to be low among members of the Korean community.
- Desired facilities include an inexpensive retreat facility with overnight housing capabilities that could cater to smaller community groups and a Korean Community Center that would serve as a focal gathering place for members of their community.
- There is a desire for more educational and/or informational classes that would provide their community with the skills and knowledge needed to better adapt to the political, economic and social structures in Gwinnett County.

## 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,928.27</b>	

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>466.27</b>	

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,798.31</b>	

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>222.68</b>	

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>58.50</b>	

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

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
<b>Total</b>	<b>414.02</b>	

\* 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"><li>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)</li></ul>
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>existing range: 18 to 497 acres</li><li>recommended: 100 to 200 acres</li></ul>
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>community level to County-wide (approximately 25,000+ population)</li></ul>
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>2,928 acres at 27 sites; 3.8 acres per 1,000 population</li></ul>
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 acres per 1,000 population (together with Passive Community Parks)</li></ul>

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"><li>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)</li></ul>
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>existing range: 25 to 208 acres</li><li>recommended: 20 to 100 acres</li></ul>
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>several neighborhoods</li></ul>
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>503 acres at 7 sites; 0.6 acres per 1,000 population</li></ul>
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7 acres per 1,000 population (together with Community Parks)</li></ul>

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"><li>• 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</li></ul>
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• existing range: 12 to 1,404 acres</li><li>• recommended: size is dependent upon opportunity, however, Open Space Parks should typically be over 200 acres</li></ul>
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• County-wide</li></ul>
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4,798 acres at 12 sites; 6.2 acres per 1,000 population</li></ul>
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7 acres per 1,000 population</li></ul>

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

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"><li>• 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</li></ul>
<i>Size:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• existing range: 21 to 25 acres</li><li>• recommended: 5 to 20 acres</li></ul>
<i>Service Area:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• several neighborhoods (approximately 5,000 people)</li></ul>
<i>Existing Supply:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 46 acres at 2 sites; 0.06 acres per 1,000 population</li></ul>
<i>Recommended Provision Level:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• not applicable</li></ul>

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

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.

## SECTION 6: Facilities Inventory and Analysis

### 6.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY INVENTORY

Using information in the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a point of departure, the County's parks and facility inventory was updated. The inventory data has been integral to identifying service gaps and projecting facility and parkland needs.

The detailed inventory includes all parks and facilities owned and/or operated by Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation, the cities completely or partly within Gwinnett County, and Federal property (C.O.E. and N.P.S.). There are no State-owned parks in Gwinnett County. **The inventory data includes all existing parks, facilities that are currently under construction or under design, and projects that are expected to be under construction by December 31, 2007.**

The scope of this project did not allow for a review of the private recreation facility inventory; however, it is acknowledged that these play a significant role in providing leisure opportunities in many of Gwinnett County's communities.

An electronic database was created to house and manipulate the inventory data. The database assisted in the analysis of overall parkland and facility supply through the creation of summary data and distribution mapping. The database will also allow the County to monitor and update park inventory data, as well as integrate parcel-specific information into their GIS system.

Tables 6-1 to 6-5 provide a brief summary of facilities contained with County parks, local city parks, and federal park sites.

**Table 6-1: Totals of County, City, and Federal Parks and Facilities in Gwinnett County**

Acreage:	acres	Indoor Facilities:	#	Outdoor Facilities:	#
County Parks		Indoor Lane Pools	4	Baseball/ Softball Fields	134
Community Parks	2,928	Indoor Leisure Pools	2	Soccer Fields	44
Passive Community Parks	503	Community Centers	6	Football Fields	19
Open Space Parks	4,798	Activity Buildings	8	Playground areas	97
Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks	46	Gymnasiums	8	Outdoor Lane Pools	2
Special Purpose Parks	59	Senior Recreation Centers	4	Outdoor Leisure Pools	6
Linear Parks				Outdoor Tennis Courts	87
Greenspace	223			Basketball Courts	28
Other	414			Outdoor Volleyball Courts	25
<b>Subtotal - County Parks</b>	<b>8,971</b>			Skate Parks	5
City Parks	1,312			Roller Hockey Rinks	1
Federal Parks	1,665			Dog Parks	4
<b>Total - All Parks</b>	<b>11,948</b>				

Table 6-2: County Parks in Gwinnett County, 2007

Park Name	Acreage	RPA	Indoor Facilities						Outdoor Facilities								
			Indoor Lane Pool	Indoor Leisure Pool	Community Center	Activity Building	Gymnasiums	Senior Center	Baseball/Softball Fields	Soccer Fields	Football Fields*	Playground areas	Outdoor Lane Pool	Outdoor Leisure Pool	Outdoor Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts	Outdoor Volleyball
Alcovy River Corridor #1	13.9	D															
Alcovy River Corridor #2	11.7	E															
Alcovy River Greenspace (Dixion Property)	36.6	D															
Alexander Park Site	91.1	C															
Appalachee River Park	7.6	D															
Bay Creek Park	153.8	E							8		D	4					
Beaver Ruin Greenspace	17.2	A															
Beaver Ruin Park Site	57.9	A															
Best Friend Park	43.4	A					1		2	O	2		yes	17	2		
Bethesda Park	158.7	C		yes				yes	10	4	D	2					
Bogon Park	83.1	D	yes	yes	yes		1		7	O	2				2	6	
Camp Creek Greenspace (Hovis Property)	30.7	B															
Cemetery Field Park	6.0	A									D						
Centerville Park Site	60.7	E															
Club Drive Park	25.1	C													1		
Collins Hill Aquatic Center	18.3	C	yes														
Collins Hill Golf Club (leased)	138.8	C															
Collins Hill Park	77.1	C							7	O	3		2	2	1		
Dacula Park	75.9	D			yes				7	D	2	yes	4		1		
DeShong Park	208.2	E									2			2	1		
Discover Mills Tract	8.2	C															
Doc Moore Branch Park Site	350.0	E										D	2		3.5	3	
Duncan Creek Park	109.7	D															
Edgemore North	10.2	A															
Environmental & Heritage Center	233.1	D															
Freemans Mill Park	11.9	D															
George Pierce Park	304.0	A		yes				yes	10	5	D	1		2			
Graves Park	70.2	B									2		2		1		
Gwinnett County Historic Courthouse	1.7	C															
Gwinnett County History Museum	0.4	C															
Harbins Community Park Site	497.9	D															
Harbins Park	1,403.9	D									2						
Harbins to Palm Creek Connector Trail	3.2	D															
Harmony Grove Soccer Complex	17.8	B							3								
Highway 29/Lilburn Community Park Site	67.0	B															
Holcomb Bridge Park Site	11.6	A									1						
Hospital Site	32.1	C															
Ivy Creek Greenway	n/a	A															
Janes Bridge Park	29.7	A			yes				3		1				1		
Lanier Community Park Site	66.0	D															
Lee Tract Park Site	21.0	B															
Lenora Park	178.4	E				1	6		D	2	yes						
Lillian Webb Field	3.4	A							1				0.5				
Lion's Club Park	32.0	B							4	O							
Little Mulberry Park	889.7	D									2						
Lucky Shoals Park	68.3	B		yes					5	O	1		2	2			
McDaniel Farm Park	133.6	A															
Mountain Park Aquatic Center	18.4	B	yes		yes							yes					
Mountain Park Park	43.5	B							7	O	4		6		1	1	
Mountainview Community Park Site	88.5	D															
Palm Creek Park Site	294.4	D															
Peachtree Ridge Park Site	155.7	A							4	2	D	4		2			
Pendergrast Greenspace	22.6	C															
Pinckneyville Park & Community Center	108.9	A		yes					7	5		10			1		
Rabbit Hill Park	93.2	D							6								
Rhodes Jordan Park	162.3	D		yes	1		7		O	3	yes	8					
Riverbend Park Site	48.3	B															
Riverside Parkway Greenspace	8.7	C															
Rock Springs Park	113.6	C								D	1		6				
Ronald Reagan Park	25.0	C								3			1	1	1		
Settles Bridge Park	268.1	D															
Shorty Howell Park	66.9	A			yes			7	D	7							
Singleton Road Activity Building	1.6	B			yes												
South Gwinnett Park	23.1	E						10	D								
Sweet Water Park Site	25.4	C								2			2	1	1		
Tribble Mill Park	718.2	E								2							
Vecorna Tract	68.2	E															
Vines Gardens	90.1	E															
Vulcan Site (leased)	10.0	A															
West Gwinnett Park & Aquatic Center	22.5	A	1									1					
Yellow River Park	566.1	E								2							
Yellow River Post Office	5.1	C															
Yellow River Wetlands	52.1	C															
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,971.0</b>		3	2	5	5	4	2	109	28	18	69	1	4	49	21	16
																	3

\* Football Fields - "D" means Dedicated, "O" means Overlay

Table 6-3: City Parks in Gwinnett County, 2007

Park Name	Acreage	RPA	Indoor Facilities							Outdoor Facilities							City	
			Indoor Lane Pool	Indoor Leisure Pool	Community Center	Activity Building	Gymnasiums	Senior Center	Baseball/Softball Fields	Soccer Fields	Football Fields*	Playground Areas	Outdoor Lane Pool	Outdoor Leisure Pool	Outdoor Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts	Outdoor Volleyball	
Austin Garner	49.0	D																Sugar Hill
Baggett Park	24.0	C																Lawrenceville
Baker's Rock	28.5	E																Shellville
Bartow Jenkins	4.6	C																Lawrenceville
Berkeley Lake Children's Park	1.9	A										2						Berkeley Lake
Berkeley Lake Nature Preserve	63.1	A																Berkeley Lake
Betty Mauldin Park	0.3	A																Norcross
Bona Allen Park Site	16.0	D																Buford
Braselton Riverwalk	n/a	D																Braselton
Buford City Park/Legion Fields	70.6	D							10	1		2			12	1		Buford
Buford Civic Center & City Gym	8.8	D					1				D							Buford
Buford Greenspace #1	2.7	D																Buford
Buford Greenspace #2	100.0	D																Buford
Buford Greenspace #3	10.0	D																Buford
Buford Greenspace #4	10.0	D																Buford
Buford Nature Preserve	16.6	D																Buford
Buford Town Green	1.0	D																Buford
Bunten Park	45.0	A		yes		1		4	2		2				4			Duluth
Camp Creek Greenway	n/a	B																Lilburn
Church Street Park	2.5	A										1				1		Duluth
City Hall / Shadowbrook Green	1.3	A																Suwanee
City Hall Park	0.5	A										1						Suwanee
Craig Drive Park	10.7	A																Duluth
DeLay Property/Playtown Suwanee	25.4	A										2						Suwanee
Duluth Greenspace	7.8	A																Duluth
Duluth Greenspace	20.8	A																Duluth
Duluth Town Green	2.1	A		yes														Duluth
EE Robinson Memorial Park	34.0	D						2	1		2			4	1	2		Sugar Hill
Grace Harris Park	0.7	D																Buford
Grayson Community Park	3.4	E										2						Grayson
Grayson Senior Center	0.8	E				yes												Grayson
Hovendick Property	8.7	A																Suwanee
Jhinson Dean Park	4.1	A						4										Norcross
Lawrenceville Future Park	31.9	C																Lawrenceville
Lawrenceville Park West	9.5	C												3				Lawrenceville
Library Ste	2.8	A																Suwanee
Lilburn City Park	9.1	B									2			4	1	1		Lilburn
Lilburn Greenspace	13.7	B																Lilburn
Louise Cooper Park	0.5	C																Lawrenceville
Main Street Park	0.5	A													1			Suwanee
Maple Creek Park	16.6	D									1							Dacula
Martin Farm Road Park	11.4	A																Suwanee
Moore Road / Rivermore	1.9	A																Suwanee
Moore Road Property/River Club	4.8	A																Suwanee
Oak Park	4.7	E																Shellville
Rogers Bridge Park	12.5	A														2		Duluth
Rossie Brundage Park	3.2	A						1			1					1		Norcross
S Wayne Odum Senior Center	2.0	E		yes														Shellville
Scott Hudgens Park/Soccer Complex	60.0	A							4									Duluth
Sims Lake/Hewell Property	61.7	A																Suwanee
South Point Park	n/a	A																Norcross
St. Albans Recreational Area	10.0	B																Lilburn
Sterling Trace Park	12.3	A																Lilburn
Sugar Hill Community Center	1.3	D		yes														Sugar Hill
Sugar Hill Golf Club	167.3	D																Sugar Hill
Sugar Hill Greenspace #1	25.0	D																Sugar Hill
Sugar Hill Greenspace #2	3.0	D																Sugar Hill
Sugar Hill Greenspace #3	9.0	D																Sugar Hill
Sugar Hill Greenspace #4	11.0	D																Sugar Hill
Sugar Hill Town Green	0.8	D																Sugar Hill
Swanee Creek Greenway	88.6	A																Suwanee
Swanee Creek Park	85.4	A										3						Suwanee
Swanee Town Center Park	10.1	A																Suwanee
T.W. Briscoe Park	34.4	E		yes				1	6		2	yes		8	2	3		Shellville
Taylor Memorial Park	2.4	A										1						Duluth
The Farm	7.0	A																Suwanee
Thrasher Park	2.2	A										1			1			Norcross
W.P. Jones Mem. Park & Tennis Complex	20.0	A										1			4			Duluth
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,311.6</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>

\* Football Fields - "D" means Dedicated, "O" means Overlay

**Table 6-4: Significant Private Facilities in Gwinnett County (current as of 2004)**

Park Name	RPA	Indoor Facilities						Outdoor Facilities						State Parks	Type		
		Indoor Lane Pool	Indoor Leisure Pool	Community Center	Activity Building	Gymnasiums	Senior Center	Baseball/Softball Fields	Soccer Fields	Football Fields <sup>a</sup>	Playground areas	Outdoor Lane Pool	Outdoor Leisure Pool	Outdoor Tennis Courts	Basketball Courts		
A. Worley Brown Boys & Girls Club	A			yes		1			1	1						Rec Center	
Atlanta Golf Center	B															Golf Center	
Atlanta Ice Forum	A															Ice Arena	
Bear's Best	D															Golf Course	
Beaver Run Creek	A															Open Space	
Berkeley Hills Country Club	A										yes		8			Golf Course	
Brookside Swimming & Tennis Inc.	E										yes		2			Tennis Club	
Buford Senior/Human Services Center	D						yes									Senior Center	
Buford Youth Community Center	D					1					yes					Community Center	
Calloway-Garner Cemetery	D															Open Space	
Castlebrook Subdivision	C															Open Space	
Cedar Lake Golf Course	E															Golf Course	
Centerville Community Center	E			yes												Community Center	
Chateau Elan - The Legends	D															Golf Course	
Chateau Elan Golf Club - The Chateau	D															Golf Course	
Chateau Elan Golf Club - The Woodlands	D															Golf Course	
Chattahoochee Event Center	A													2		Event Site	
Collins Hill Athletic Club	C										yes		16			Fitness Center	
Collins Hill Golf Club	C										yes					Golf Course	
Davis Flip Center	D															Gymnastics	
Drowning Creek	D															Open Space	
Flat Rock Driving Range	E															Golf Center	
Flowers Crossing Woodlot	C															Open Space	
Four Seasons Racquet Club	E										yes		8			Tennis Club	
Four Winds Community Center	E										yes		4			Tennis Club	
GA Gymnastics Academy - Lawrenceville	C															Gymnastics	
GA Gymnastics Academy - Suwanee	C															Gymnastics	
GSA Complex	B								11							Sports Complex	
Gwinnett Civic & Cultural Center	A															Cultural Center	
Gwinnett County Fairgrounds	C															Fairgrounds	
Gwinnett Gymnastics Center	B															Gymnastics	
Gwinnett Sports Center	A			3												Sports Complex	
Hamilton Mill Golf Course	D															Golf Course	
Hanarry Swim & Racquet Club	B										yes		4			Tennis Club	
Heritage Golf Club	B															Golf Course	
JM. Tull/Gwinnett Family YMCA	C	yes	yes	2			4	1	yes		4	1				Rec Center	
Lawrenceville Boys & Girls Club	C	yes	yes	1	3			1			2					Rec Center	
Lawrenceville Golf Center	C															Golf Center	
Lawrenceville Senior Center	D				yes											Senior Center	
Little Tykes Academy	A										yes					Day Care	
Magnolia Racquet Club	D												4			Tennis Club	
Mary Kistner Nature Center	E															Open Space	
Norcross Senior Center	B				yes											Senior Center	
Northwoods Country Club	C										yes		4			Golf Course	
Oak Park on The River	A															Open Space	
Peachtree Family Golf Center	A															Golf Center	
Pugh's Creek in Flowers Crossing	E															Open Space	
Racquet Club of The South	A										yes		18			Tennis Club	
Robert D. Fowler Family YMCA	A	yes	yes	2												Rec Center	
SE Side of Arc Way on Bromolow Creek	B															Open Space	
Simpsonwood Conference Center	A										yes	2	1			Retreat Center	
Singleton Creek in Northmont	A															Open Space	
Sugar Hill Golf Club	D															Golf Course	
Summit Chase Country Club	E										yes		12			Golf Course	
Suwanee Sports Academy	A				7											Sports Complex	
Sweetwater Creek	C															Open Space	
Swim Atlanta - Lawrenceville	C	yes														Swim Club	
The Hooch Golf Club	A															Golf Course	
The Soccer Academy	B							2								Sports Complex	
The Trophy Club at Apalachee	D															Golf Course	
The Trophy Club of Gwinnett	E												4			Golf Course	
TPC at Sugarloaf	A															Golf Course	
Tucker Golf Range	B															Golf Center	
Westchester Commons	C															Open Space	
<b>Total</b>		3	0	5	0	17	3	3	18	0	3	14	0	92	1	3	0

Source: Gwinnett County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2004)

**Table 6-5: Federal Parks in Gwinnett County, 2007**

Park Name	Acreage	RPA
Abbotts Bridge South Unit	112.5	A
Bowman's Island Unit	637.6	D
Corps of Engineers Parks	298.0	D
McGinnis Ferry - CRNRA	202.0	A
Medlock Bridge Unit	42.5	A
Orrs Ferry	185.8	D
Settles Bridge Unit	41.7	D
Suwanee Creek Unit	144.9	A
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,664.9</b>	

## 6.2 OVERVIEW TO PARK AND FACILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The facility and park categories that have been assessed in this CIP include:

- parkland (by type);
- greenways;
- soccer complexes;
- baseball/softball complexes;
- community centers, activity buildings, senior recreation centers, and gymnasiums (collectively referred to as recreation centers);
- indoor lane (competition) pools and leisure pools (family aquatic centers);
- outdoor lane (competition) pools and leisure pools (family aquatic centers);
- football fields;
- tennis complexes;
- teen facilities (outdoor basketball courts, skate parks, volleyball courts, and roller hockey rinks)
- dog parks; and
- playgrounds.

Items such as cultural/heritage assets, internal trail systems, pavilions, and site infrastructure – for instance – are not assessed, although their development is captured by the items identified in the Capital Improvement Projects tables, either directly or implicitly.

The identification of a community's recreation needs is a complex, highly-important, and somewhat imprecise exercise in the development of a system-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan. For this CIP, park and facility needs have been assessed based on:

- (1) overall supply per capita (provision standards);
- (2) distribution (radii mapping); and
- (3) other factors such as
  - alignment with the goals and strategies established for this Capital Improvement Plan Update;
  - expressed public input;
  - socio-demographic trends and participation patterns; and
  - park-specific information that needs to be brought forward based on usage patterns or simply recognition of opportunities that were not known or available at the time the park was master planned.

The provision standards and service radii used in this CIP were established in the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. These standards have been modified only

to allow for the exclusion of “private” facilities, which were not part of the inventory requirements for the CIP. The standards have not been reassessed for their validity; this will be a primary goal of the County’s next Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

The provision standards (from the 2004 Master Plan and their equivalencies in this CIP) are aggressive and are more indicative of ideal service levels, rather than ones that can be attained within the next few years in Gwinnett. As such, application of many provision standards suggest that the County is greatly under-supplied, which may not be the case when compared to past service levels or other jurisdictions. To interpret the standards, all demand factors must be considered in their totality, recognizing that there may be several barriers that will keep them from being fully achieved.

**Table 6-6: Park and Facility Provision Standards**

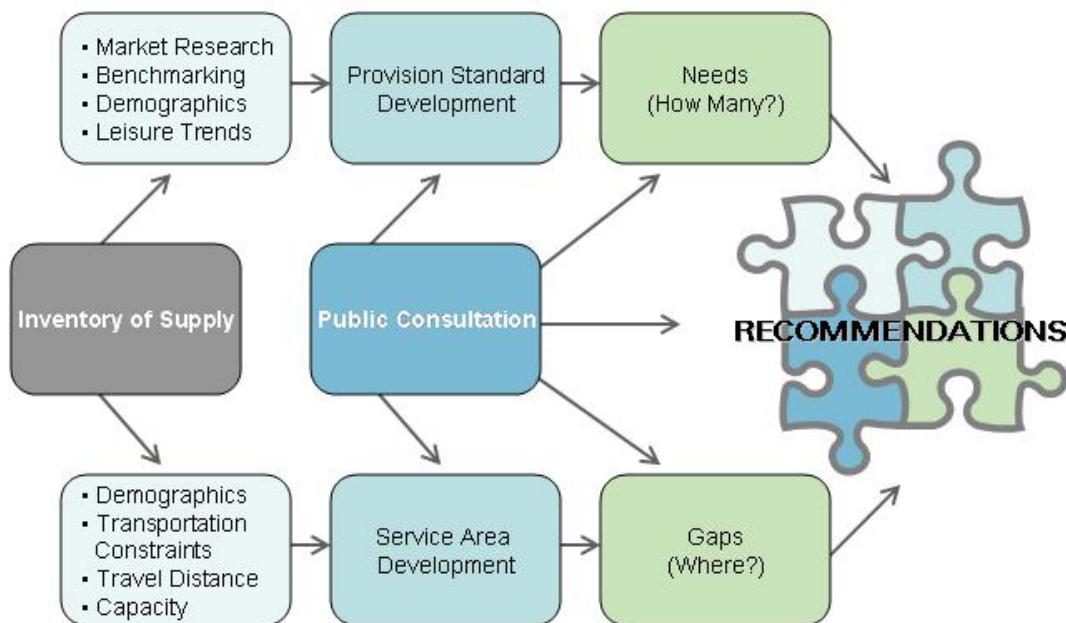
Facility / Park Type	Standards from 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan	Equivalency when Removing Private Facilities
PARKLAND		
Parkland - County, City, Federal	20 acres per 1,000 population	20 acres per 1,000 population
- Parkland - County only (all)	15 acres per 1,000 population	15 acres per 1,000 population
- County Parkland (Community & Passive Community)	7 acres per 1,000 population	7 acres per 1,000 population
- County Parkland (Open Space)	7 acres per 1,000 population	7 acres per 1,000 population
- County Parkland (Other)	1 acre per 1,000 population	1 acre per 1,000 population
AQUATICS		
Indoor Competition Pools	1 per 80,000 population	1 per 160,000 population
Indoor Leisure/Family Pools	1 per 200,000 population	1 per 200,000 population
Outdoor Lane/Competition Pools	1 per 80,000 population	1 per 640,000 population
Outdoor Leisure/Family Pools	1 per 80,000 population	1 per 80,000 population
INDOOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES		
Community Centers (CC)	1 per 100,000 population	1 per 100,000 population
Activity Buildings (AB)	1 per 50,000 population	1 per 50,000 population
Senior Recreation Centers (SRC)	1 per 75,000 population	1 per 150,000 population
Gymnasiums	1 per 20,000 population	1 per 75,000 population
OUTDOOR PARK FACILITIES		
Baseball / Softball Diamonds	1 per 5,000 population	1 per 5,600 population
Soccer Fields	1 per 6,000 population	1 per 8,700 population
Football Fields	1 per 35,000 population	1 per 37,000 population
Tennis Courts	1 per 4,000 population	1 per 7,500 population
Basketball Courts	1 per 10,000 population	1 per 10,500 population
Sand Volleyball Courts	1 per 30,000 population	1 per 35,000 population
Playgrounds	1 per 750 children ages 0-9	1 per 750 children ages 0-9
Skate Parks	1 per 5,000 youth ages 10-19	1 per 17,500 youth ages 10-19

Identifying the total number of each facility type required in Gwinnett County as a whole and by recreation planning area through the use of provision standards is only the first step in analyzing facility needs. The distribution of facilities is equally important, as it is essential that the facilities be located close to the people that use them – 50% of those surveyed for the 2002 Needs Assessment indicated that they would use a county park more often if one were located closer to their home.

To assess distribution, mapping was prepared illustrating the location of existing facilities in relation to overall population density. The service areas established in the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan have been applied to each facility and park in the inventory to help identify areas that may be under-supplied.

The following schematic (Figure 6-1) graphically illustrates the relationship of the inputs and outputs in the determination of park and facility needs.

**Figure 6-1: Determining Park and Facility Needs**



The inventory of parks and facilities are examined in detail according to facility type in the following pages. The recommendations identified in this section are not intended to imply any level of importance or timing. They are conceptual only and are intended to be a point of departure for discussions on future capital improvement projects. The recommendations are not "adopted" revisions to existing park master plans, nor are they binding on future master plans. Priorities for each topic were established with the assistance of the Recreation Authority and County staff and are described in Section 7.

### **6.2.1 Key Goals of this Plan**

As indicated in Section 1, a set of goals was developed by the Recreation Authority in order to guide the development of the capital improvement recommendations. These goals, presented in priority order below, are reiterated in this section to provide a point of reference for the following analysis.

***Preamble to Goals:** Gwinnett County will strive to provide for the diverse needs of all age groups including the growing segment of older adults. A balanced approach to the provision of parkland and recreational opportunities will continue to be sought by acquiring and developing both structured and unstructured, active and passive parkland and recreational facilities. The County will coordinate its efforts with other agencies, departments, cities, and boards to maximize project funding and benefits to local residents. Cooperation and partnerships will be sought to maximize improvements, help revitalize under-served communities, and enhance safety.*

#### **1. GREENWAYS**

Work toward achieving pedestrian and bicycle linkage or connectivity between parks and other points of interest such as schools, libraries, institutional land uses, and commercial nodes. Work with the DOT to encourage the construction of sidewalks and/or the paving of wider shoulders to assist in the development of a “linked Gwinnett”, wherever feasible and where full trail development is not reasonably achievable.

#### **2. PARKLAND ACQUISITION – Under-serviced areas**

Proceed with the acquisition of parkland in under-serviced areas.

#### **3. PARKLAND ACQUISITION – Developing areas**

Continue with the acquisition of parkland in developing areas.

#### **4. PARK DEVELOPMENT – Existing parks and sites**

Complete the construction of planned phases of development within existing parks and undeveloped sites.

#### **5. PARK REDEVELOPMENT**

Renovate and/or redevelop existing parks and recreation facilities on an as-needed basis, in keeping with identified local needs.

#### **6. COST OF OPERATIONS**

Continue to calculate the cost of operations for CIP facilities to assure affordability of operating facilities within budget (or to identify shortfalls for budgeting consideration), while ensuring the sustained quality to the parks and facilities inventory.

## 6.3 PARKLAND ANALYSIS

### 6.3.1 Parkland - Inventory

The public consultation sessions revealed a wide range of input and opinions regarding the provision of parkland in the County – the absolute importance of parks to the community was a consistent message conveyed by the public. Gwinnett citizens recognize that the County is a leader in parks and open space provision and design.

County Park Type	Acreage
Community Park	2,929
Passive Community Park	503
Open Space Park	4,798
Other (Special Purpose Neighborhood, Special Purpose, Greenspace, Other)	741
<b>Total – County parkland</b>	<b>8,971</b>
City Parks	1,312
Federal Parks	1,665
<b>Total – County, City &amp; Federal parkland</b>	<b>11,948</b>

Totals may not add due to rounding

The County currently owns and/or leases 8,971 acres of parkland at 73 sites. When city and federal parks sites are accounted for, this figure increases to 11,948 acres (approximately 4.3% of the County's land base). In relation to parkland, Gwinnett County is clearly the most significant landowner in the area with over three-quarters of publicly accessible park supplies. The data in the adjacent table includes all land owned by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division, including both developed and undeveloped parks and greenspace lands.

In the four years since the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared, approximately 815 acres of additional County parkland has been acquired, as well as 500 acres of City/Federal parkland. This is roughly equivalent to a 10% increase, the majority of which has been in the form of Community Parks.

In establishing priorities for capital projects, it will be important to keep in mind the undeveloped park sites that the County has yet to master plan, as these will provide opportunities to accommodate new recreation facilities:

#### Community Parks

- Harbins Community Park Site (D)
- Highway 29/Lilburn Community Park Site (B) *Note: The County has reserved a phase one development budget in the current SPLOST for this park, so it will be a priority.*
- Mountain View Park Site (D)
- Lanier Community Park Site (D)

#### Passive Community Parks

- Lee Tract Park Site (B)
- Riverbend Park Site (B)
- Vecoma Tract (E)

#### Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks

- Beaver Ruin Park Site (A)

#### Open Space Parks

- Centerville Park Site (E)
- Doc Moore Park Site (E)
- Palm Creek Park Site (D)
- Vines Gardens (E)
- Yellow River Post Office (C)

### 6.3.2 Parkland - Provision Standards

Provision standards of 15 acres of County-owned parkland per 1,000 residents and 20 acres of publicly-accessible parkland (including parks owned by other governmental agencies) per 1,000 residents were established in the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan. Based on these standards, the County is currently under-supplied, with year 2007 ratios of 11.6 acres and 15.4 acres per 1,000 population, respectively. Projected population growth will only continue to exacerbate this deficiency.

Based on a standard of 15 acres of County-owned parkland per 1,000 population, Gwinnett County has a current deficit of 2,674 acres. When other parkland providers are considered, this deficit grows to 3,579 acres (based on a standard of 20 acres per 1,000 population), approximately 905 acres of which is encouraged to be supplied from other levels of government (i.e., federal, state, local) or affiliated conservation agencies. Forecasted population growth leave the County with little choice but to continue to acquire and construct new parks and to complete construction of master planned facilities at existing parks. **It is recommended that Gwinnett County continue to support and work with other parkland providers in order to increase the overall supply and to ensure that parks are being acquired in the areas where they are most needed.**

As illustrated in the following charts, the County, along with its cities and federal providers, are not meeting the standards established in the 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

ALL PARKLAND (county, city, federal)			Standard:	20.0 acres per 1000 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply (acres)	Provision Rate (acres per 1,000)	2007 Demand (acres)	2007 Gap (acres)	2013 Demand (acres)	2013 Gap (acres)
A	2,064	12.4	3,320	1,256	3,744	1,680
B	452	3.6	2,485	2,033	2,547	2,095
C	875	4.9	3,601	2,727	3,903	3,029
D	6,055	36.3	3,336	-2,720	4,140	-1,915
E	2,502	18.0	2,785	283	3,161	659
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,948</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>15,527</b>	<b>3,579</b>	<b>17,495</b>	<b>5,547</b>

ALL COUNTY-OWNED PARKLAND			Standard:	15.0 acres per 1000 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply (acres)	Provision Rate (acres per 1,000)	2007 Demand (acres)	2007 Gap (acres)	2013 Demand (acres)	2013 Gap (acres)
A	981	5.9	2,490	1,509	2,808	1,827
B	419	3.4	1,864	1,445	1,910	1,491
C	804	4.5	2,701	1,897	2,927	2,123
D	4,339	26.0	2,502	-1,837	3,105	-1,234
E	2,429	17.4	2,089	-340	2,371	-58
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,971</b>	<b>11.6</b>	<b>11,645</b>	<b>2,674</b>	<b>13,121</b>	<b>4,150</b>

There are substantial deficiencies in County-owned parkland. Recreation Planning Area C – followed closely by Areas A and B – is the least well-served of the five recreation planning areas in terms of overall parkland. This issue was reinforced during the public consultation process.

The provision standard for County-owned parkland indicates a current overall need for 2,674 acres, all of which is required in Recreation Planning Areas A, B, and C. In actuality, the parkland deficiencies in three planning areas add up to 4,851 acres, which is more than half of the County's current supply. Not only are these areas the most deficient in parkland and open

space, they are also the most densely developed areas of the County and, as a result, are the most land poor.

The preceding “All County-Owned Parkland” chart illustrates the aggregate total of County parkland by park type. Recreation Planning Area D, in large part due to the size of Harbins Park, contains nearly half of Gwinnett County's parkland. In terms of overall parkland, RPAs D and E are very well supplied.

The following charts indicate the provision shortage by park type. Deficits exist in all County parkland categories, although the deficit is most acute for Community Parks and Passive Community Parks. The County is currently achieving 77% of its total parkland provision standard. Community and Passive Community Parks are substantially under-provided, with a 63% provision achievement. 89% of the provision standard for Open Space Parks has been achieved – most of these parks are large parcels that are intended to remain largely in their natural state. Despite having significant acreage in Open Space Parks, RPAs B and C do not have any such parks, while RPA A has only one (although there are numerous Federal open space parks located in the area).

COMMUNITY & PASSIVE COMMUNITY PARKS			Standard: 7.0 acres per 1000 population			
Plan Area	2007 Supply (acres)	Provision Rate (acres per 1,000)	2007 Demand (acres)	2007 Gap (acres)	2013 Demand (acres)	2013 Gap (acres)
A	766	4.6	1,162	396	1,310	544
B	348	2.8	870	522	891	544
C	509	2.8	1,260	751	1,366	857
D	1,176	7.1	1,167	-9	1,449	273
E	632	4.5	975	343	1,106	475
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,431</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>5,434</b>	<b>2,003</b>	<b>6,123</b>	<b>2,692</b>

OPEN SPACE PARKS			Standard: 7.0 acres per 1000 population			
Plan Area	2007 Supply (acres)	Provision Rate (acres per 1,000)	2007 Demand (acres)	2007 Gap (acres)	2013 Demand (acres)	2013 Gap (acres)
A	145	0.9	1,162	1,017	1,310	1,165
B	0	0.0	870	870	891	891
C	0	0.0	1,260	1,260	1,366	1,366
D	2,868	17.2	1,167	-1,701	1,449	-1,419
E	1,785	12.8	975	-810	1,106	-679
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,798</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>5,434</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>6,123</b>	<b>1,325</b>

OTHER PARKLAND*			Standard: 1.0 acres per 1000 population			
Plan Area	2007 Supply (acres)	Provision Rate (acres per 1,000)	2007 Demand (acres)	2007 Gap (acres)	2013 Demand (acres)	2013 Gap (acres)
A	69	0.4	166	97	187	118
B	71	0.6	124	53	127	56
C	295	1.6	180	-115	195	-100
D	294	1.8	167	-128	207	-87
E	12	0.1	139	128	158	146
<b>Total</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>133</b>

\* special purpose neighborhood, special purpose, linear, greenspace, other

Given the need for additional parkland in all areas, and especially RPAs A, B, and C, the County should work to expand existing parks through both the acquisition of adjacent parcels and new landholdings. Although expansion of existing parks will assist in addressing some of the under-supply in recreation planning areas A, B, and C, a significant deficit will remain. Unfortunately, it is not achievable for the County to acquire over 1,000 acres of parkland in each of RPAs A, B, and C. This amount of available land simply does not exist, nor would it be economically feasible to acquire already developed land in large quantities, remove existing structures and redevelop the sites as parkland.

Furthermore, the cost of land is rising as supply becomes scarcer; this is especially true in the under-served areas. Lilburn, for example, is under-served, but the community is mostly built-out, meaning there is a lack of available land for parks. The County is currently in the process of assembling a site for a Community Park along Highway 29 in this area. In these under-serviced areas, consideration will need to be given to smaller park parcel sizes.

Nevertheless, current and projected development and intensification patterns indicate that the demand for parks and recreation facilities in these areas will only continue to worsen. As the outlying County areas become more urbanized, there will not only be a need for the development of additional park facilities in these areas, but there will continue to be a need to meet the changing and intensifying needs of existing urban areas. Although extensive land has been assembled over the years and past Master Plans have recommended substantial parkland improvements, additional efforts are required to meet ever-growing public demand and to mitigate overuse of existing infrastructure. Aggressive, immediate and continuous action is required to address this matter.

In terms of parkland acquisition and expansion, the County should place a high priority on RPAs A, B, and C. The "Special Purpose Neighborhood Park" classification was created in 2004 to specifically to address recreation facility needs in these planning areas, all three of which are relatively densely populated and have a very limited supply of land. Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks are smaller than Community and Passive Community Parks, yet they are intended to contain active recreational activity areas with an emphasis on serving youth and those living within a close proximity. Available sites with parkland potential need to be identified, including sites containing under-utilized or vacant commercial structures. The acquisition and redevelopment of abandoned commercial sites presents an excellent opportunity for the County to not only provide parkland to under-served areas, but also to assist in revitalizing and improving the overall quality of life of such areas. The creation of a number of Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) in Gwinnett County offers an appropriate medium through which vacant commercial sites can be transformed into new park sites and integrated into broader revitalization efforts.

At the same time that increasing demands are being placed on parkland in RPAs A, B, and C, population growth will continue in other areas of the County. RPAs D and E are the least densely developed areas of the County and present the most feasible options for parkland acquisition due to a greater availability of land. In short, the County is in a position where providing parkland in the areas most in need is a challenging and costly option, whereas parkland acquisition is a more feasible and likely option in areas with lesser needs. In order to provide an appropriate supply of parkland, a balanced approach to acquisition is required that is predicated largely on opportunity. Additional parkland should be acquired in all recreation planning areas, with priorities being placed on addressing deficiencies in under-served areas and expanding existing park sites.

This Plan recommends that the County strive to acquire an additional 100 to 450 acres for parks and open space purposes in each RPA over the next four years, for a total of 1,050 acres. Although the acquisition of 1,050 acres does not fully address future (or even current) deficiencies, it is felt that this requirement strikes an appropriate balance between demand, equity, and reality.

In terms of the type of parkland required, the public meeting questionnaire provides some direction in this regard. The results indicate the top priorities to be: acquiring more land for open space (71%); developing more linear parks/greenways (56%); acquiring more parkland for active use (59%); and expanding existing parks (54%). The County's aging and ethnically diverse population also suggests a growing demand for unstructured open space and spontaneous recreation (as opposed to traditionally-structured recreation).

Across the County, 400 acres of Open Space Parks are proposed for acquisition, while the remaining 650 acres should be some mixture of Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, and Special Neighborhood Parks. Linear Parks (greenways) are not included in these calculations, but should be pursued aggressively (see Section 6.4).

The County is under-supplied with Community and Passive Community Parks in all RPAs, most notably RPAs B and C. The provision of Open Space Parks is more favorable, bolstered by the large park sites in RPAs D and E. RPAs A, B, and C are, however, deficient in Open Space Parks. As such, acquisition in RPAs A, B, and C should contain a mixture of Community/Passive Community Parks and Open Space Parks (as well as Special Purpose Neighborhood Park in areas where Community/Passive Community Parks development is not possible), while acquisition in RPAs D and E should be predominantly limited to Community Parks.

### **6.3.3 Parkland - Service Gaps**

As mentioned, recreation planning areas A, B, and C are the most deficient with regard to overall parkland acreage. The second level of the analysis, however, requires an examination of the geographic "gap" areas that are not adequately served with parkland.

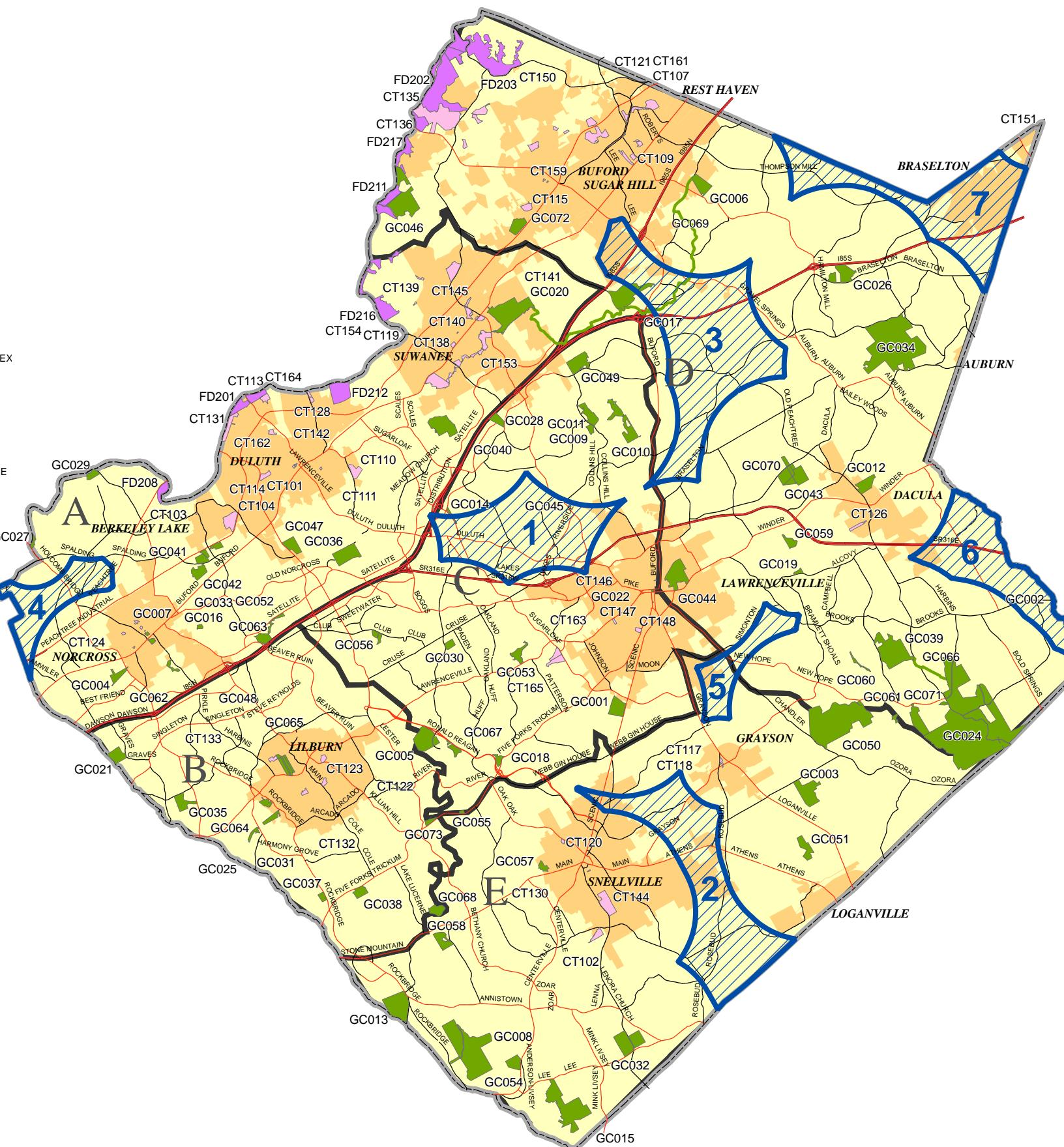
In terms of distribution and access to parkland, **Map 6-1** illustrates the 7 geographic gap areas in the County (numbered in order of priority, with 1 being the greatest need). To determine the parkland gap areas, all County (not including "green space" or "other" parks), city and federal park sites were mapped and service radii of 2 miles for parks over 20 acres and 1 mile for parks under 20 acres were applied to the park boundaries. All RPAs with the exception of area B have gaps. The most prominent void is located in RPA C, followed by gaps in E, D, and then A. Despite having an adequate overall supply of parkland, RPA D has three geographic areas that are not located within 1-2 miles of an existing park or park site.



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### MAP 6-1 Gap Analysis of Publicly Accessible Parkland



#### Legend

- City Park (Pink)
- County Park (Green)
- Federal Park (Purple)
- Gaps (Blue hatching)
- Recreation Planning Area (White line)

#### COUNTY PARKS

- GC001 ALEXANDER PARK SITE
- GC002 APPALACHEE RIVER PARK GREENSPACE
- GC003 BAY CREEK PARK
- GC004 BEST FRIEND PARK
- GC005 BETHESDA PARK
- GC006 BOGAN PARK
- GC007 CEMETERY FIELD PARK
- GC008 CENTERVILLE PARK SITE
- GC009 COLLINS HILL AQUATIC CENTER
- GC010 COLLINS HILL GOLF CLUB
- GC011 COLLINS HILL PARK
- GC012 DACULA PARK
- GC013 DESHONG PARK
- GC014 DISCOVER MILLS TRACT
- GC015 DOC MOORE BRANCH PARK SITE
- GC016 EDGEMORE NORTH
- GC017 GWINNETT ENVIRONMENTAL & HERITAGE CENTER
- GC018 RONALD REAGAN PARK
- GC019 FREEMAN'S MILL PARK
- GC020 GEORGE PIERCE PARK
- GC021 GRAVES PARK
- GC022 GWINNETT COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE
- GC023 GWINNETT HISTORY MUSEUM
- GC024 HARBINS PARK
- GC025 HARMONY GROVE SOCCER COMPLEX
- GC026 DUNCAN CREEK PARK
- GC027 HOLCOMB BRIDGE PARK
- GC028 HOSPITAL (I-85) SITE
- GC029 JONES BRIDGE PARK
- GC030 SWEET WATER PARK
- GC031 LION'S CLUB PARK
- GC032 LENORA PARK
- GC033 LILLIAN WEBB FIELD
- GC034 LITTLE MULBERRY PARK
- GC035 LUCKY SHOALS PARK
- GC036 McDANIEL FARM PARK
- GC037 MOUNTAIN PARK AQUATIC CENTER & ACTIVITY BUILDING
- GC038 MOUNTAIN PARK PARK
- GC039 PALM CREEK PARK SITE
- GC040 PEACHTREE RIDGE PARK
- GC041 WEST GWINNETT PARK & AQUATIC CENTER
- GC042 PINCKNEYVILLE PARK & COMMUNITY CENTER
- GC043 RABBIT HILL PARK
- GC044 RHODES JORDAN PARK
- GC045 RIVERSIDE PARKWAY GREENSPACE
- GC046 SETTLES BRIDGE PARK
- GC047 SHORTY HOWELL PARK
- GC048 SINGLETON ROAD ACTIVITY BUILDING
- GC049 ROCK SPRINGS PARK
- GC050 TRIBBLE MILL PARK
- GC051 VINES BOTANICAL GARDENS
- GC052 VULCAN SITE
- GC053 YELLOW RIVER WETLANDS
- GC054 YELLOW RIVER PARK
- GC055 YELLOW RIVER POST OFFICE
- GC056 CLUB DRIVE PARK
- GC057 SOUTH GWINNETT PARK
- GC058 VECOMA TRACT
- GC059 ALCOVY RIVER GREENSPACE (DIXON PROPERTY)
- GC060 ALCOVY RIVER CORRIDOR #1
- GC061 ALCOVY RIVER CORRIDOR #2
- GC062 BEAVER RUIN GREENSPACE
- GC063 BEAVER RUIN PARK SITE
- GC064 CAMP CREEK GREENSPACE (HOVIS PROPERTY)
- GC065 HIGHWAY 29/LILBURN COMMUNITY PARK SITE
- GC067 PENDERGRASS GREENSPACE
- GC068 RIVERBEND PARK SITE
- GC069 IVY CREEK GREENWAY
- GC070 MOUNTAIN VIEW PARK SITE
- GC071 HARBINS COMMUNITY PARK SITE
- GC072 LANIER COMMUNITY PARK SITE
- GC073 LEE TRACT PARK SITE

#### FEDERAL PARKS

- FD201 ABBOTS BRIDGE SOUTH UNIT
- FD202 BOWMAN'S ISLAND UNIT
- FD203 CORPS OF ENGINEERS PARKS
- FD208 MEDLOCK BRIDGE UNIT
- FD211 SETTLES BRIDGE UNIT
- FD212 SUWANEE CREEK UNIT
- FD216 MCGINNIS FERRY - CRNA
- FD217 ORRS FERRY - CRNA



When acquiring parkland, it is recommended that the County have regard to the gaps on **Map 6-1**, as well as the location of new school clusters (see discussion below). Additional consideration should also be given to expanding existing parks and acquiring new ones in areas where significant population growth and intensification is expected to occur, such as along the I-85, I-985, and Georgia Highway 316 corridors into the northeast and eastern-most portions of the County.

Between 2009 and 2014, five new school clusters will be established, creating the need for new Community Parks to serve them. At present, Community Park Sites exist for the three high schools being built in 2009/10, these will be located at Harbins Community Park Site, Lanier Community Park Site, and Mountain View Park Site (in combination with Rabbit Hill Park). However, two school clusters will be established in 2013-2014, and both require the development of appropriate Community Parks.

**Table 6-7: New School Clusters in Gwinnett County, 2007-2014**

New Cluster/High School	Location / RPA	Year Opening	Community Parks
Grayson / Dacula Cluster (Archer HS)	2255 New Hope Road (RPA D, near RPA E)	2009	Harbins Community Park Site
Mill Creek / Collins Hill / Dacula (Mountainview HS)	2351 Sunny Hill Road (RPA D, near RPA C)	2009	Mountain View Park Site (in combination with Rabbit Hill Park)
Lanier Cluster HS	918 Buford Highway (RPA D, near RPA A)	2010	Lanier Community Park Site
Berkmar / Central Gwinnett HS	1335 Old Norcross Rd (RPA C)	2013/14	tbd
Upper Mill Creek HS	location tbd (RPA D)	2013/14	tbd

### 6.3.4 Parkland - Recommendations

The following are the recommendations related to the acquisition of parkland. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

- Acquire one Community Park Site and initiate phase 1 development in each RPA C and D to serve the two new school clusters to be established in 2013/14.
- Acquire land to mitigate shortages in areas with inadequate parkland supplies. This can be accommodated through new land assembly or expansion of existing parks. Areas with lower than average parkland supplies include RPAs A, B, and C (all of which are not meeting the targets set for structured and unstructured parkland). Additional parkland will also be needed to serve RPAs D and E toward the end of the planning period. Specifically, the County should endeavor to:
  - acquire up to 50 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA A toward resolving the priority geographic gap area and achieving the following goals: 1 splash pad, 6 basketball courts.

- acquire up to 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA A for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.
- acquire up to 100 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA B toward achieving the following goals: 4 informal play fields, 1 splash pad, 6 basketball courts, 14 playgrounds.
- acquire up to 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA B for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.
- acquire up to 250 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA C toward resolving the priority geographic gap area and achieving the following goals: 12 soccer fields, 1 splash pad, 8 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 24 playgrounds.
- acquire up to 200 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA C for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.
- acquire up to 150 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA D toward resolving the 3-4 priority geographic gap areas and achieving the following goals: 1 outdoor family aquatics complex, 8 basketball courts, 13 playgrounds.
- acquire up to 100 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA E toward resolving the 1-2 priority geographic gap areas and achieving the following goals: 8 soccer fields, 6 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 6 playgrounds.

## 6.4 GREENWAY ANALYSIS

In keeping with the need for access and flexibility within the County's park system, a greenway system is required to complement and link public spaces. Previous County planning documents have identified in great detail the benefits of acquiring and/or protecting greenway corridors. The number one priority for the community and the Recreation Authority was the creation of linkages and connectivity between communities and public spaces. Linear greenway systems are ideal for trails for recreational use, non-motorized transportation, and linking a community together.

Greenways are linear corridors of greenspace, typically linking parks or other civic destinations. They contain routes for recreational walking, running, and cycling, and are generally off-road and paved (12 feet wide).

At present, there are two existing greenways available in the County: (1) the 3.6 mile Suwanee Creek Greenway that was developed by the City of Suwanee; and the 1.5 mile Camp Creek Greenway recently opened by the City of Lilburn.

There are a number of greenway projects under development, including:

- *Ivy Creek Greenway* - Phase 1 Section 1 (Suwanee Creek Greenway to Westbrook Road) - 1.77 miles
- *Ivy Creek Greenway* - Phase 1 Section 2 (Westbrook Road to I-985 Underpass) - 1.37 miles
- *Ivy Creek Greenway* - Phase 1, part of Section 3 (I-985 Underpass to EHC) - less than 2.53 miles
- *Ivy Creek Greenway* - Phase 1, Sections 4 and 5 (EHC to Buford Drive) – 0.88 miles

In addition, engineering and design and/or land acquisition is also currently underway for the following greenways:

- *Harbins/Tribble Greenway* - Sections 1 and 2 (Harbins Park Phase 1 Path to Tribble Mill Park Boundary)
- *Harbins/Palm* - Section 2 (Phillips Property Boundary to Palm Creek Park Boundary)
- *Ronald Reagan Parkway* (Bethesda Park to Ronald Reagan Park Boundary)
- *Ivy Creek Greenway* - Phase 2 (Gravel Springs Road to Bogan Park)
- *Centerville Hwy/Yellow River* (Centerville Hwy Tract to Dekalb County Line)
- *Camp Creek Extension* (Camp Creek Greenway Terminus to Harmony Grove Park) - 1.06 miles

Trails, as opposed to Greenways, include multi-use (paved) and nature (unpaved) trail systems *within* County parks. There are multiple opportunities for trail utilization in Gwinnett County. Dozens of existing County parks contain multi-use trails and/or nature/walking trails. This type of trail has become a staple of park design for all major park types. Most trail systems are built in planned phases. Currently, 19 Gwinnett County parks have planned (but unfunded) trail phases.

**Map 6-2** depicts the locations of existing trails, and the existing and funded greenways.

Public consultation revealed a very strong interest in trail and greenway development. Residents expressed the desire to connect County parks through greenways, sidewalks, and bike lanes. In fact, greenways and bike lanes were identified as the highest priorities through the questionnaire.

In addition to trails or greenways, another opportunity for Gwinnett County to expand accessibility is to combine pathway opportunities with Department of Transportation works. The construction of strategically located sidewalks or the creation of wider paved shoulders along roadways creates significant links in addressing the desire of Gwinnett residents to enhance connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

The 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was fully supportive of, and consistent with, the findings of the 2002 Open Space and Greenway Master Plan. In particular, one of the goals of the Gwinnett County Open Space and Greenway Master Plan (2002) was to increase connectivity via a system of greenways. Both Master Plans agree that “the County should consider establishing greenways in locations providing the greatest connectivity between existing greenspaces and where they can serve as useful transportation corridors”. To this end, the Open Space and Greenway Master Plan recommended that the County consider

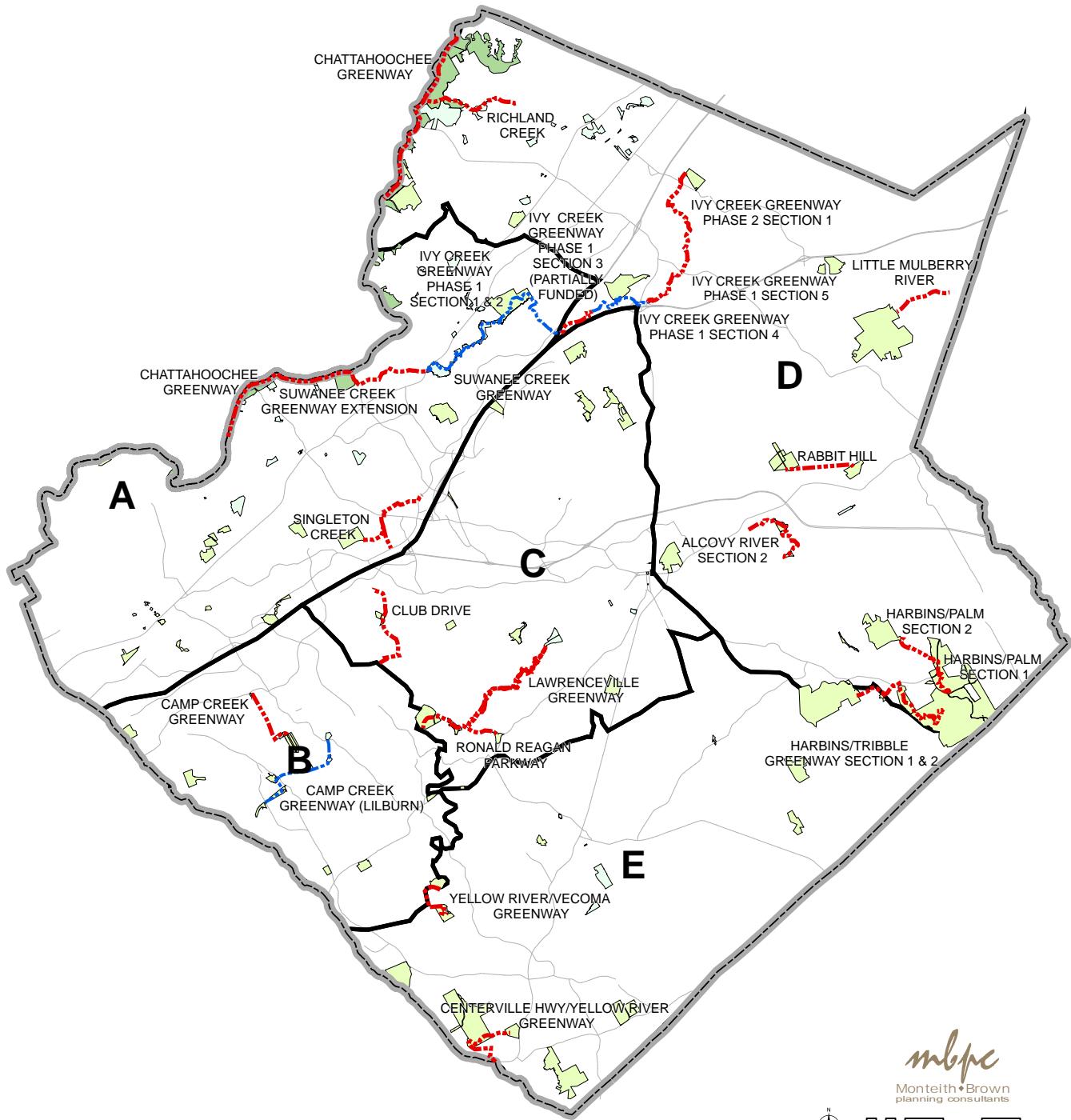
## Legend



# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

## Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

## Map 6-2 *Greenway Distribution*



**mbpc**  
Monteith♦Brown  
planning consultants



negotiating multi-purpose easements that combine greenway public access rights with sewer and access easements.

The 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan developed a definition of a “Linear Park” (synonymous with greenways) to be added to the County’s park classification system in order to advance the implementation of the Open Space and Greenway Master Plan. The provision standard established for Linear Parks was to provide a greenway within 2 miles of any location in the County. However, the challenges associated with land assembly make the development of greenways a time-consuming process, and there is still much work to be done to achieve this standard. Significant segments of other potential trail corridors have been acquired by the County over the last few years; however, greenway development cannot begin until all land is assembled. A continued focus on land acquisition is required. It has been discovered that the establishment of greenways is more challenging than acquiring new parks, but is no less important. Recreation that utilizes greenways, including walking and active transportation, are significant desires of the local community.

Proposed greenway projects are generally spread throughout the entire County, although the most significant projects (Ivy Creek Greenway and the Harbins/ Tribble Mill/ Palm Creek Greenway) are primarily located in RPA D. Smaller projects exist in the other RPAs; however, it is evident that there are fewer opportunities for greenway development in the western (more established) portion of the County. In response, the Gwinnett Department of Transportation is pursuing some off-road, multi-use trails, which run parallel to roads, in some of these locations.

In addition to trails for walking, running, and cycling, the County also offers separate trail systems for both equestrian riding and mountain biking. These two recreational activities have proved to be very popular in the County. The outward expansion of development in Gwinnett has diminished the supply of land for horseback riding, creating a demand for equestrian trails. This was a significant point raised at multiple public meetings. Completion of equestrian trails is planned for both Harbins Park and Little Mulberry Park, but these projects are not fully funded through the current SPLOST program.

The demand for more mountain biking trails was evident throughout the questionnaire, along with the quality and condition of certain mountain biking trails throughout the County (especially at Tribble Mill Park). Phase 1 of Harbins Park, which is funded under the current SPLOST program, includes the development of a mountain biking trail system.

The popularity of greenways and trails in Gwinnett means that the County will have to pay special attention to provision standards and quality. The existing Greenway Master Plan was prepared in 2002 and requires updating in order to provide the most relevant information and recommendations. Greater coordination between the Department of Transportation and the Parks & Recreation Division is recommended to encourage the provision of off-road greenways and on-road bike lanes. The County must emphasize land acquisition for greenways, and identify priority projects for construction where appropriate easements exist. Finally, it is recommended that the County acquire, design, and/or construct the greenway projects identified in the Capital Improvement Plan tables.

With the establishment of greenways as one of the highest priorities, there is greater urgency in ensuring that the right greenways are acquired and developed. To this end, the Greenway Master Plan should be updated in order to create a clear vision of issues, constraints and opportunities that may exist within these corridors.

The following are the recommendations related to greenways. Recommendations are listed RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "A" – Greenway Recommendations

- Chattahoochee Greenway Section 2 COE's (CRNRA Suwanee Creek Unit to CRNRA Abbotts Bridge Park) - Acquisition to Construction (4.26 miles)
- Singleton Creek Greenway (McDaniel Farm Park to Gwinnett Arena) - Acquisition to Construction (2.47 miles)
- Suwanee Creek Greenway Extension 1 (Suwanee Creek Park to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard) - Acquisition to Construction (1.12 miles)
- Suwanee Creek Greenway Extension 2 (PIB to Chattahoochee River) - Acquisition to Construction (1.31 miles)
- Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 1 Section 3 (Completion of route from I-985 underpass to Environment and Heritage Center; Subsections 5 and 6) - Construction (<2.53 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "B" - Greenway Recommendations

- Camp Creek Greenway (Hwy 29 Park Site to Singleton Road Activity Bldg.) - Acquisition to Construction (1.71 miles)
- Yellow River/Vecom Greenway (Vecoma Park Site to Riverbend Park Site) - Acquisition to Construction (1.30 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Greenway Recommendations

- Club Drive Greenway (Sweetwater MS to Club Drive Park) - Acquisition to Construction (1.12 miles)
- Lawrenceville Greenway (Lawrenceville Future Park Site to Ronald Reagan Parkway Greenway) - Acquisition to Construction (4.00 miles)
- Ronald Reagan Parkway Greenway (Bethesda Park to Ronald Reagan Park) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.83 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Greenway Recommendations

- Alcovy River Greenway Section 2 (Freemans Mill Park to Rock House Road) - Acquisition to Construction (2.54 miles)
- Chattahoochee Greenway Section 1 (COE's Bowman Unit to Settles Bridge Park) - Acquisition to Construction (5.00 miles)
- Harbins/Palm Section 1 (Harbins Park at Indian Shoals Road Parking Lot to Phillips Property Boundary) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.46 miles)
- Harbins/Palm Section 2 (Phillips Property Boundary to Palm Creek Park Boundary) - Additional Acquisition, Engineering/Design, Construction (1.12 miles)
- Harbins/Tribble Greenway Section 1 (Harbins Park Phase 1 Path to Harbins/Edwards Boundary) - Construction (1.54 miles)
- Harbins/Tribble Greenway Section 2 - Construction (2.28 miles)
- Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 1 Section 5 Road-side Path Alternative + Trailhead (Buford Drive at Mall of Georgia Blvd to Mall of Georgia Drive at Woodward Crossing Road) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.23 miles)
- Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 2 Section 1 (Gravel Springs Road to Bogan Park) - Engineering/Design, Construction (3.30 miles)
- Ivy Creek Phases 1 & 2 - balance of land acquisition (P1/S5 - 1.23 miles; P2/S1 - 3.30 miles)

- Little Mulberry River Greenway (Little Mulberry park to Mount Moriah Road) - Acquisition to Construction (1.55 miles)
- Rabbit Hill Greenway (Rabbit Hill Park to Dacula Park) - Acquisition to Construction (1.80 miles)
- Richland Creek Greenway (Chattahoochee Greenway to Sycamore Road) - Acquisition to Construction (2.67 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Greenway Recommendations

- Centerville Hwy/Yellow River Greenway (Centerville Hwy Tract to Yellow River) - Additional Acquisition, Engineering/Design, Construction (2.33 miles)

## 6.5 SOCCER COMPLEX ANALYSIS

There are a total of 44 soccer fields in the County, 30 of which are provided by Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation, and 14 by local cities. In addition, there were 18 soccer fields provided by the not-for-profit and private sectors as of 2004; 11 of these are provided at the GSA Complex near Mountain Park in Recreation Planning Area B.

SOCCER FIELDS	Provider	#	Area
George Pierce Park	county	5	A
Jones Bridge Park	county	3	A
Pinckneyville Park & Community Center	county	5	A
Peachtree Ridge Park	county	2	A
West Gwinnett Park and Aquatic Center	county	2	A
Bunten Park	city	2	A
Scott Hudgens Park/Soccer Complex	city	4	A
Harmony Grove Soccer Complex	county	3	B
Bethesda Park	county	4	C
Rabbit Hill Park	county	6	D
Buford City Park/Legion Fields	city	1	D
E.E. Robinson Memorial Park	city	1	D
T.W. Briscoe Park	city	6	E
<b>Total</b>		<b>44</b>	

**Map 6-3** illustrates the locations of soccer complexes (sites with two or more fields) in the County. A 2-mile radius has been applied to each park in order to demonstrate a reasonable service area for this facility. The application of this park radius indicates that there are gaps in soccer field distribution in all RPAs.

The growth of soccer in the United States has been well documented. In terms of overall participation, soccer registration has rivaled and even surpassed that of baseball in many jurisdictions. Not only are youth soccer participation rates increasing, but so too is demand for adult soccer opportunities. Soccer is now established as a mainstream recreational sport in America, meaning that a new generation of adults will have grown up playing the sport. This new popularity combined with an aging population and the sport's appeal with newcomers to the country means that the need to accommodate adult soccer will be a major driver of demand in the future.

In Gwinnett County, participation in organized soccer does not appear to have changed much in recent years; however, the sport's growing popularity has been reflected in previous surveys and it is quite possible that the under-supply of fields is hindering participation. In 2006, organized youth soccer in Gwinnett County attracted approximately 13,500 participants, which is about 4,500 less than baseball but 8,000 more than football. In comparison, there are 44 existing soccer fields, 134 ball diamonds, and 19 football fields. Strong participation rates continue amongst children and teens, and participation among ethnic communities, particularly

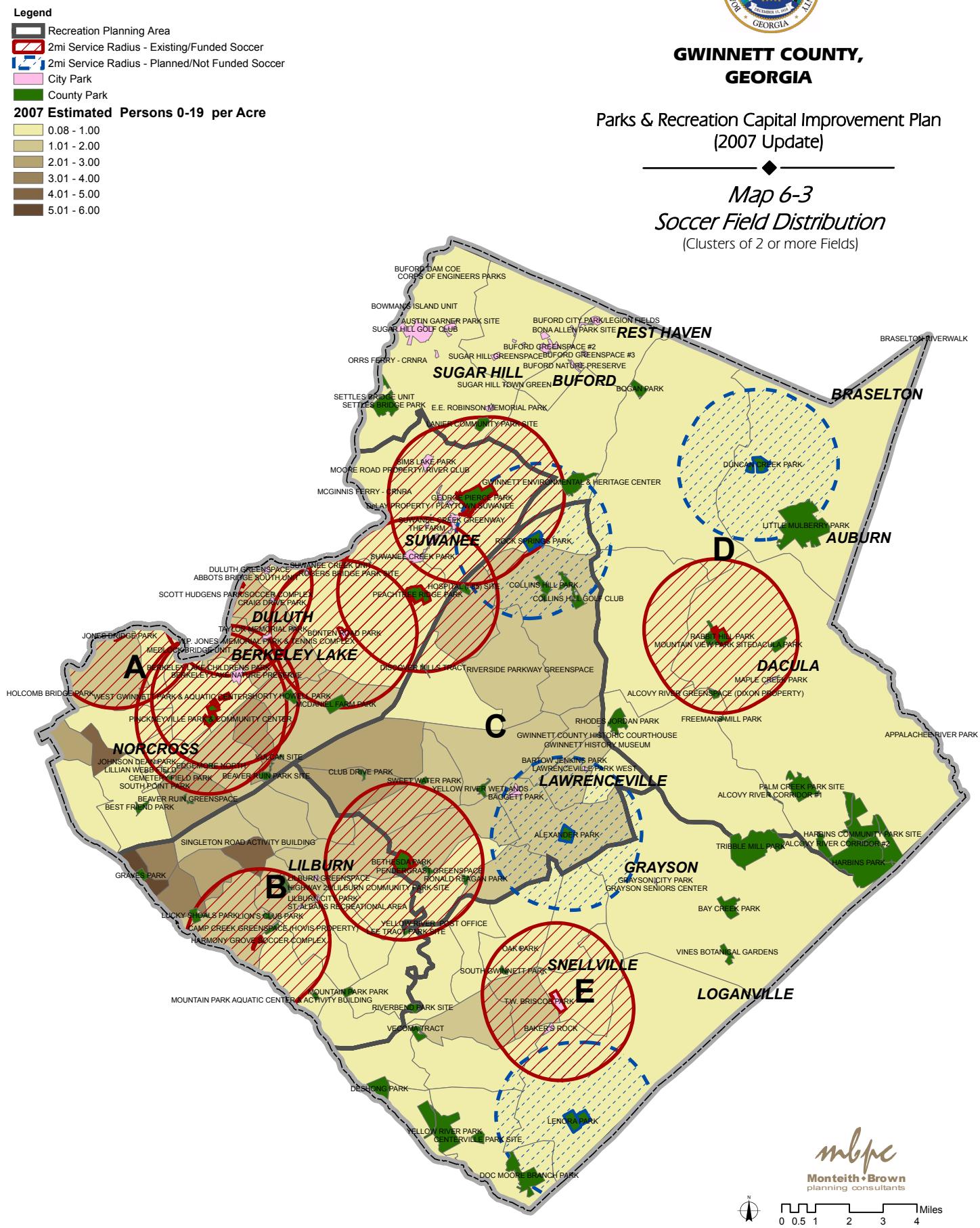


# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

## Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

*Map 6-3*  
*Soccer Field Distribution*  
(Clusters of 2 or more Fields)

(Clusters of 2 or more Fields)



the Hispanic community, is expected to remain strong. Further participation is expected from Gwinnett County adults and older adults, with a greater representation from female participants.

In addition to the increase in structured soccer teams, there is a rise in the demand for unstructured soccer opportunities. Unstructured or unscheduled non-league soccer activities result in over-utilization of the fields and often conflicts with scheduled field usage. The result of soccer's intense growth in Gwinnett in recent years is a severe lack of fields for both organized and unorganized play. As a result of this growth, existing fields are used very heavily and are not able to receive adequate rest and maintenance, further impacting on the County's ability to meet soccer needs.

Usage and participation patterns suggest the need for additional opportunities for unstructured pick-up soccer opportunities (i.e., informal play fields or unlocked and unallocated soccer fields), as well as improvements and expansions to existing soccer complexes. Informal playfields now exist at several parks, including Ronald Reagan Park, Graves Park, Sweet Water Park, Best Friend Park, DeShong Park, and Peachtree Ridge Park. These open spaces can be used for unstructured activities and sports.

A provision standard of one soccer field per 8,700 population has been established for Gwinnett County. Despite the growing need for additional soccer fields, only 4 new fields have been developed since the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared. Many communities strive for a ratio of one soccer field for every 80-100 registered participants.

SOCCER FIELDS			Standard:	1 per 8,700 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	23	7,217	19.1	-3.9	21.5	-1.5
B	3	41,420	14.3	11.3	14.6	11.6
C	4	45,013	20.7	16.7	22.4	18.4
D	8	20,847	19.2	11.2	23.8	15.8
E	6	23,211	16.0	10.0	18.2	12.2
<b>Total*</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>17,644</b>	<b>89.2</b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>100.5</b>	<b>56.5</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 18 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

Based on a provision standard of 1 soccer field per 8,700 population, the County currently has a deficit of 45 fields, requiring a doubling of the existing supply in order to meet today's needs. The County is currently achieving 49% of its soccer field provision standard. In order to meet the demand for soccer fields, a total of 56 fields will need to be developed by 2013.

With the exception of Recreation Planning Area A, all RPAs desperately require additional soccer fields. The GSA Complex (11 fields) is located in RPA B, meaning that this area is not as deficient as the numbers would suggest; however, it remains an area that is not adequately serviced with soccer fields. Both RPAs A and B are believed to have the largest concentrations of Hispanic residents, which suggests that they may require more fields per capita than more homogeneous communities. Recreation Planning Areas C, D, and E are also under-supplied with fields. By 2013, between 12 and 18 additional fields will be required within each RPA to meet the provision standard.

Several of these gaps will be at least partially addressed through the development of planned Community Parks in RPAs B and D. It is strongly recommended that soccer complexes be contained in each of these parks, with the exception of Mountain View Community Park, which

is adjacent to the soccer complex at Rabbit Hill Park. Requests from Community Focus Group sessions indicate that the development of fields should be placed in areas with higher concentrations of ethnic groups. RPAs A, B, and C are the most ethnically diverse areas of the County, and will require stronger soccer representation.

At present, five park master plans contain a total of 14 unfunded soccer/multi-purpose fields. This number is not sufficient to address the deficiency of 56 fields by 2013 as identified by this CIP.

In addition, a master plan update is currently underway for Rhodes Jordan Park that is likely to include the development of a soccer complex (two to three full sized fields). Future master planning efforts for the Highway 29/ Lilburn Community Park Site and the Mountain View Park Site (in combination with Rabbit Hill Park), among others, present future opportunities for soccer field development.

The following are the recommendations related to soccer complexes. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "A" - Soccer Complex Recommendations

West Gwinnett Park & Aquatic Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of 1 multi-purpose field</li></ul>
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#### Recreation Planning Area "B" - Soccer Complex Recommendations

Highway 29/Lilburn Community Park Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan for multi-field complexes in the future park site</li></ul>
Entire RPA B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In addition to any planned projects, establish up to 4 informal play fields</li></ul>

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Soccer Complex Recommendations

Rock Springs Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of 3 fields</li></ul>
Alexander Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of 2 fields</li></ul>
Entire RPA C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish up to 12 fields in addition to planned projects</li></ul>

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Soccer Complex Recommendations

Rhodes Jordan Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop soccer fields through revisions in master plan</li></ul>
Rabbit Hill Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expand the soccer complex in conjunction with the development of the Mountain View Community Park Site</li></ul>
Harbins Community Park Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan for multi-field complexes in the future Harbins Community Park site</li></ul>
Duncan Creek Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of 4 fields</li></ul>

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Soccer Complex Recommendations

Lenora Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of 4 fields</li></ul>
Entire RPA D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish up to 8 fields in addition to planned projects</li></ul>

## 6.6 BASEBALL / SOFTBALL COMPLEX ANALYSIS

Gwinnett County's Parks and Recreation Division provides 109 baseball/softball diamonds, 8 of which are allocated to adults. Cities provide 25 ball diamonds, bringing the total to 134. The distribution of baseball/softball complexes (containing 3 or more fields) is illustrated on **Map 6-4** using a 2-mile service radius. Since the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared, 20 new ball diamonds have been developed (an increase of 18%).

BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL FIELDS	Provider	#	Area
Best Friend Park	county	2	A
George Pierce Park	county	10	A
Lillian Webb Field	county	1	A
Pinckneyville Park & Community Center	county	7	A
Shorty Howell Park	county	7	A
Bunten Park	city	4	A
Rossie Brundage Park	city	1	A
Johnson Dean Park	city	4	A
Peachtree Ridge Park	county	4	A
Lucky Shoals Park	county	5	B
Mountain Park Park	county	7	B
Lion's Club Park	county	4	B
Bethesda Park	county	10	C
Collins Hill Park	county	7	C
Lawrenceville Park West	city	3	C
Bogart Park	county	7	D
Dacula Park	county	7	D
Rhodes Jordan Park	county	7	D
Buford City Park/Legion Fields	city	10	D
E.E. Robinson Memorial Park	city	2	D
South Gwinnett Park	county	10	E
Bay Creek Park	county	8	E
Lenora Park	county	6	E
T.W. Briscoe Park	city	1	E
	<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	

Baseball and softball have the highest participation levels amongst team sports in Gwinnett County. The spring baseball and softball sessions, which attract the largest number of participants registered a 13% increase between 2002 and 2006, regaining levels seen in the 1990s. Despite this data, many national studies have indicated that participation rates in ball is shrinking, suggesting that Gwinnett County should experience declining participation rates in baseball and softball in the coming years.

Demand for adult – and especially senior – ball opportunities remains strong in the County.

Although Gwinnett's population profile is quite youthful, it is aging, which could translate into greater demand for adult softball opportunities in the long-term.

Considering the participation rates and ball field supply in Gwinnett County, a provision standard of one ball diamond per 5,600 population was recommended in the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan. Gwinnett County is currently achieving 97% of this standard and requires 5 additional fields and 16 more by 2013, for a total of 156 ball fields.

BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL FIELDS			Standard:	1 per 5,600 population	
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand
A	40	4,150	29.6	<b>-10.4</b>	33.4
B	16	7,766	22.2	<b>6.2</b>	22.7
C	20	9,003	32.2	<b>12.2</b>	34.8
D	33	5,054	29.8	<b>-3.2</b>	37.0
E	25	5,571	24.9	<b>-0.1</b>	28.2
<b>Total*</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>5,794</b>	<b>138.6</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>156.2</b>
*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 3 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.					

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 3 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

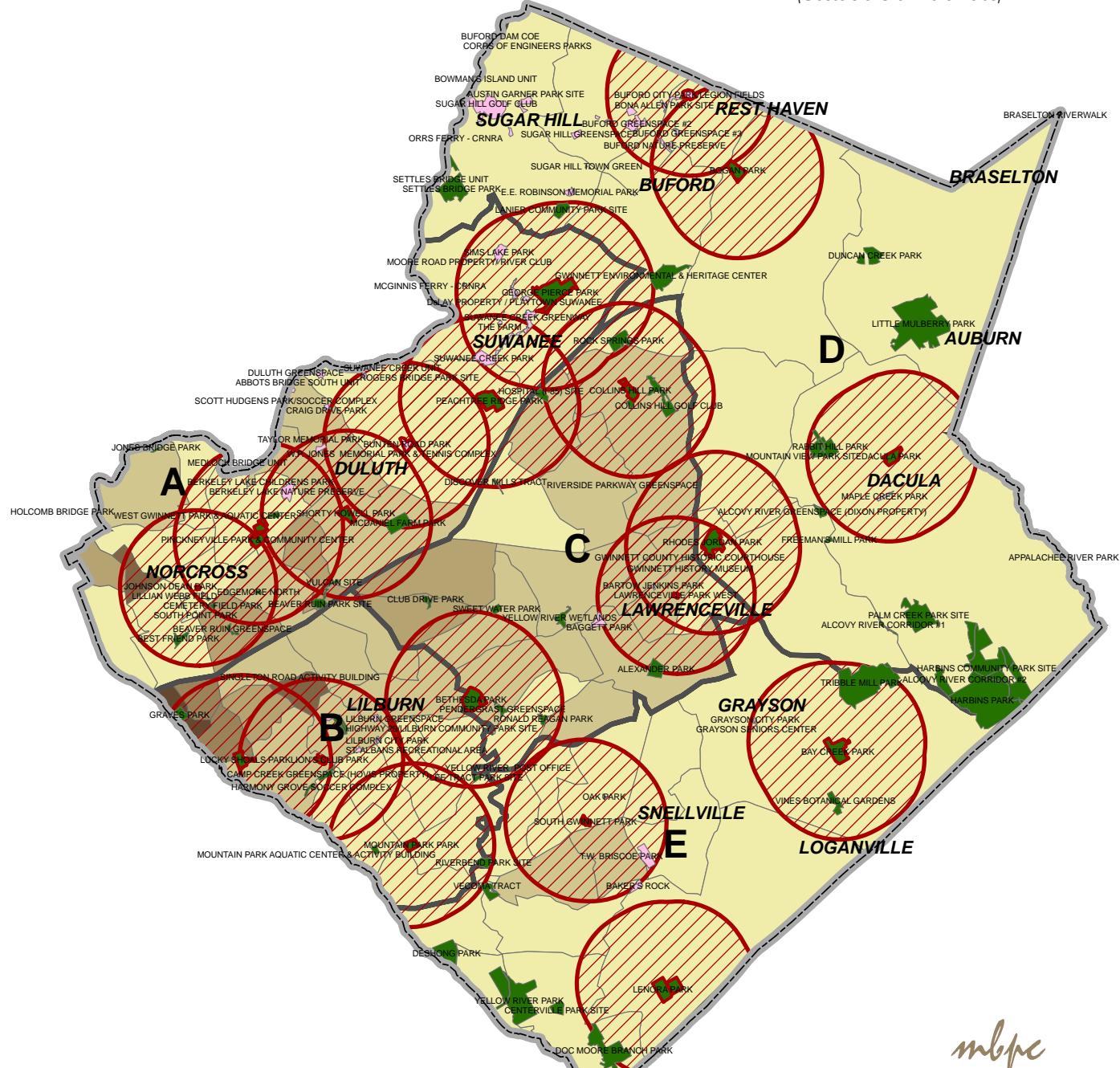
#### Map 6-4

#### Baseball Diamond Distribution

(Clusters of 3 or more Fields)

#### Legend

	Recreation Planning Area
	2mi Service Radius - Existing Baseball / Softball
	City Park
	County Park
<b>2007 Estimated Persons 0-19 per Acre</b>	
	0.08 - 1.00
	1.01 - 2.00
	2.01 - 3.00
	3.01 - 4.00
	4.01 - 5.00
	5.01 - 6.00



*mbpc*  
Monteith • Brown  
planning consultants

N  
0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

The largest gaps in distribution exist in RPAs C and D, although the overall supply in D is adequate. Land acquisition for a future Community Park in RPA C will be required to resolve this matter, likely in combination with the development of a new school cluster in 2013/14.

There is potential for the new Harbins, Mountain View, and Lanier Community Park Sites to meet ball diamond needs through to 2013. Each of these three locations could provide up to 7 fields, thereby creating a demand and supply equilibrium. This provision would then free up the new Highway 29/Lilburn Community Park Site for under-supplied facilities, such as soccer fields. The Highway 29/Lilburn area already has access to ball diamonds at the nearby Lucky Shoals Park and Lions Club Park. While ball diamonds have been an integral part of the community park template in the past, unless diamonds are required for a school feeder program, alternative designs should be considered.

Limited construction of ball diamonds in other RPAs is also recommended in order to alleviate system-wide deficiencies and to serve the needs of future populations. Participation data indicates that there has been recent growth in adult baseball/softball demand and demographic projections and trends suggest that adult ball demand will continue to increase. Conversion of some youth diamonds into adult fields may also be required over the long-term to satisfy increasing adult softball needs.

The following are the recommendations related to baseball and softball complexes. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Baseball/Softball Complex Recommendations

Lenora Park	• Proceed with planned development of 1 ball diamond
South Gwinnett Park	• Proceed with planned removal of 3 diamonds

## **6.7 COMMUNITY CENTER, ACTIVITY BUILDING, SENIOR RECREATION CENTER & GYMNASIUM ANALYSIS**

Gwinnett County provides three distinct types of recreation centers: community centers, activity buildings and senior recreation centers. Each facility type differs in its size, facilities, operation, and provision levels.

#### Community Centers

COMMUNITY CENTERS	Provider	Area
George Pierce Park	county	A
Pinckneyville Park & Community Center	county	A
Bunten Park	city	A
Lucky Shoals Park	county	B
Bogan Park	county	D
Rhodes Jordan Park	county	D
<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>

Community centers are staffed full-time and generally include multiple programmable spaces such as a gymnasium, indoor aquatic facility, dedicated arts space, teen rooms, meeting rooms, etc. Gwinnett's Parks and Recreation Division provides five community centers, while one community center is provided by the City of Duluth. Since the 2004 Master Plan, a new community center has been developed at George Pierce Park. It is noted that Gwinnett County is also home to two YMCAs, two Boys and Girls Clubs, and a community center provided by the County's Health and Human Services Department. These

Community centers are staffed full-time and generally include multiple programmable spaces such as a gymnasium, indoor aquatic facility, dedicated arts space, teen rooms, meeting rooms, etc. Gwinnett's Parks and Recreation Division provides five community centers, while one community center is provided by the City of Duluth. Since the 2004 Master Plan, a new community center has been developed at George Pierce Park. It is noted that Gwinnett County is also home to two YMCAs, two Boys and Girls Clubs, and a community center provided by the County's Health and Human Services Department. These

locations offer similar programs and services but have not been counted in the overall supply of community centers.

The location and distribution of community centers is illustrated on **Map 6-5**. Half of the community centers in Gwinnett are located in RPA A, while RPA C does not have any such facilities. However, the distribution of existing and planned community centers and activity buildings is excellent – using a service radius of 4 miles, there are no significant gap areas. RPAs C and E are currently under-serviced for community centers, but both contain planned facilities. At present, six park master plans in Gwinnett County identify 3 unfunded potential community centers; the locations include Bay Creek Park and Lenora Park in RPA E and Bethesda Park in RPA C.

Community centers provide for a wide range of recreation activities, serving the full age and ability spectrum of residents (preschool to seniors). The combination of multiple uses and activities at one location provides cross-programming opportunities, which partially addresses the “shortage of time issue” that many Gwinnettians face. Multi-purpose community centers also allow for a number of service agencies to be co-located, thereby creating “one-stop shopping” opportunities. Due to their ability to serve multiple user groups, community centers are prominent and essential facilities that provide focal points for both recreation and social interaction. These facilities, therefore, can play an important role in achieving other local objectives, including community safety, urban revitalization, etc.

Large, high quality, multi-purpose and multi-generational community centers are generally preferred over single purpose, stand alone facilities. Combining indoor aquatic centers, arts facilities, gymnasiums, teen centers, meeting space, libraries, parks, sports fields and similar facilities on one site is a desirable approach because it creates greater financial economies of scale and allows for a much higher level of customer service. This strategy has been achieved to some degree through the Health and Human Services Department's "service centers", as well as through parks and facilities such as the Pinckneyville "cluster" (community/arts center, park, and soccer complex), Bogan Park (park, indoor aquatic facility, community center), Mountain Park "cluster" (park, indoor aquatic facility, activity building), and Bethesda Park (senior center, park, indoor aquatic facility), to name a few. "Clustering", which refers to the location of multiple recreation facilities and spaces within a close proximity of each other (such as Pinckneyville and Mountain Park), can be a viable option to locating multiple facilities on one site in situations where one large parcel of land capable of accommodating all facilities is not available. It is imperative, however, that the various recreation areas be connected by trails and/or pathways so that pedestrian may easily travel between them.

Input from public meetings helped to identify short-comings or requests for facilities located in community centers. Issues included the provision of badminton courts (or at least gymnasium floors marked for courts) and the provision of more community space (such as gym space and exercise equipment at Bethesda Park). There is also demand for additional art centers and related programming.



## Legend

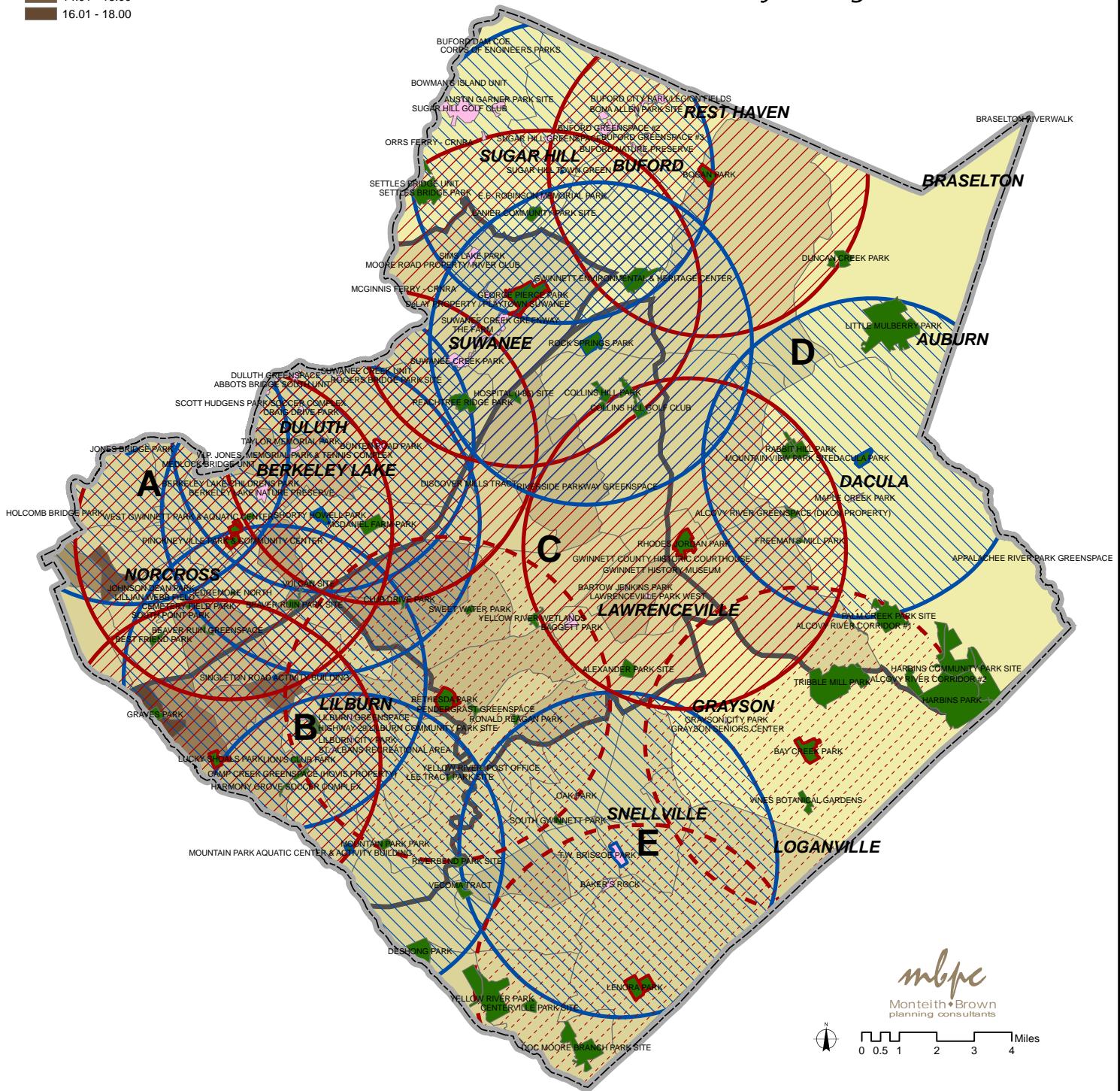
- Recreation Planning Area
- 4mi Radius - Existing/Funded Community Center
- 4mi Radius - Planned/Not Funded Community Center
- 4mi Radius - Existing/Funded Activity Building
- 4mi Radius - Planned/Not Funded Activity Building
- City Park
- County park

### 2007 Estimated Total Persons per Acre

# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

# Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

*Map 6-5  
Community Center &  
Activity Building Distribution*



COMMUNITY CENTERS			Standard:	1 per 100,000 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	3	55,332	1.7	-1.3	1.9	-1.1
B	1	124,260	1.2	0.2	1.3	0.3
C	0	0:180,050	1.8	1.8	2.0	2.0
D	2	83,389	1.7	-0.3	2.1	0.1
E	0	0:139,263	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6
<b>Total*</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>129,392</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>2.7</b>

In order to provide accessible community centers, a provision standard of 1 community center per 100,000 population was established for Gwinnett County. This standard indicates the County is currently achieving 77% of its community center provision, and is presently under-supplied by 2 community centers. By 2013, there will be a need for a total of 9 community centers in Gwinnett County.

It is recommended that the County develop more community centers to provide adequate service provision standards. Potential locations include Lucky Shoals or Dacula Park. The construction of a community center at Dacula Park would be accomplished through a major addition to the existing activity building. RPAs C and E are currently under-serviced for community centers, but both contain planned facilities.

Not all community centers are created equal; however, it is the intention that the recommended centers be generally similar to the size and scale of existing facilities within Gwinnett. The size and components of the recommended facilities should be confirmed through a community and site-specific study prior to their design and construction. Consideration should be given to accommodating dedicated teen space in every community center.

Lastly, from a population which is both aging and ethnically diverse will come a greater emphasis on the arts and cultural dimension. Community centers need to be viewed as flexible spaces capable of accommodating of basketball, music, pilates and arts programs, as well as cards or computer classes, etc.

### Activity Buildings

Activity buildings, unlike community centers, are not staffed on a full-time basis and are typically smaller in size and offer fewer amenities than most community centers. Gwinnett County maintains five activity buildings located at Jones Bridge Park, Shorty Howell Park, Mountain Park Aquatic Center/Activity Building, Singleton Road, and Dacula Park. Three of Gwinnett's cities (Duluth, Sugar Hill and Snellville) provide three more activity buildings for a total of 8 activity buildings in the County. No activity buildings have been developed in Gwinnett County since the preparation of the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan.

ACTIVITY BUILDINGS	Provider	Area
Jones Bridge Park	county	A
Shorty Howell Park	county	A
Duluth Town Green	city	A
Mountain Park Aquatic Center	county	B
Singleton Road Activity Building	county	B
Dacula Park	county	D
Sugar Hill Community Center	city	D
T.W. Briscoe Park	city	E
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	

**Map 6-5** illustrates the location of existing and proposed activity buildings in the County. The distribution of existing and planned activity buildings is excellent – using a service radius of 4 miles, there are no significant gap areas. Currently, the central area of the County, RPA C, does not contain any activity

buildings. However, there is presently an unfunded activity building (combined with a gymnasium) planned for RPA C in the Rock Springs Park Master Plan. Since activity buildings are essentially a smaller version of a community center only with more limited hours and usage, the existence of community centers in an area void of an activity building would partially offset the deficit. It is for this reason that community centers and activity buildings are shown on the same map in this report.

ACTIVITY BUILDINGS			Standard:	1 per 50,000 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	3	55,332	3.3	0.3	3.7	0.7
B	2	62,131	2.5	0.5	2.5	0.5
C	0	0:180,050	3.6	3.6	3.9	3.9
D	2	83,389	3.3	1.3	4.1	2.1
E	1	139,263	2.8	1.8	3.2	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>97,044</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>9.5</b>

A provision standard of one activity building per 50,000 residents has been proposed through the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan. This translates into a current deficiency of seven activity buildings, growing to a deficiency of 9 activity buildings by 2013. The County is currently achieving 52% of its activity building provision standard. It is recommended that the Dacula Park activity building that is scheduled to be redesigned be enlarged such that it will be classified as a community center. However, given the degree of new community center construction planned, it is reasonable to reduce the total number of required activity buildings. The provision standard for activity buildings appears to be quite aggressive given the movement away from these unstaffed program and rental locations. Where opportunities exist, it is recommended that the County remove activity buildings from the County's inventory over time. The removal of activity buildings will depend on the localized demand, or the provisions of other community opportunities, such as community centers or gymnasiums. One candidate for removal is the Good Age Building at Jones Bridge Park, which shares a service area with several other community facilities and is on land that could be put to better use within the park.

### Senior Recreation Centers

Senior recreation centers very much resemble community centers (and are connected to community centers in some instances), however, they are intended for the sole use of Gwinnett's senior citizen population (age 55 plus). The Parks and Recreation Division operates two senior recreation centers - one at Bethesda Park, which contains several multi-purpose meeting rooms, and rooms for arts and crafts, games, computers and conferences. A new senior recreation center has been constructed since the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, "Prime Timers Point" at George Pierce Park. Local cities (Grayson and Snellville) provide two senior centers, bringing the County-wide total to 4 senior centers. This total does not include the 3 senior centers managed by the County's Health and Human Services Department, which have a greater focus on social services.

SENIOR RECREATION CENTERS	Provider	Area
George Pierce Park	county	A
Bethesda Park	county	C
Grayson Senior Center	city	E
S. Wayne Odum Senior Center	city	E
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

The geographic distribution of senior centers is shown on **Map 6-6**; a 4-mile radius has been placed around each facility to illustrate a reasonable distance to travel to such a center. RPAs D and B do

not have any such facilities at present, although RPA B is well served by the Bethesda Park Seniors Center.

Demographic trends and population projections highlight the dramatic increase in persons 55 years of age or older in the next 25 years. As a whole, the County's mean age increased from 30.5 years to 32.5 years between 1990 and 2000. Significant population growth is anticipated in the 55-plus age group, which is expected to increase by 136% between 2000 and 2010. This aging of the population, along with the other trends affecting seniors (e.g., early retirements, higher incomes for many seniors, greater fitness levels amongst seniors due to active living, etc.) has significant ramifications on the provision and delivery of recreation facilities and services.

SENIOR RECREATION CENTERS			Standard: 1 per 150,000 population			
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	1	165,996	1.1	0.1	1.2	0.2
B	0	0:124,260	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
C	1	180,050	1.2	0.2	1.3	0.3
D	0	0:166,778	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.4
E	2	69,632	0.9	-1.1	1.1	-0.9
<b>Total*</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>194,088</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 3 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

With this in mind, a provision standard of one senior recreation center per 150,000 population was proposed through the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan. Because Gwinnett has an increasing percentage of older adults and seniors, consideration should be given to modifying this provision standard (or linking it to the 55 and over population) within the next five to ten years in order to better reflect the needs of the citizenry. The needs analysis indicates that the County remains short of the senior recreation center provision standard by one facility. By 2013, a total of 6 facilities should be provided.

The aging of the population will create a strong demand for dedicated seniors' space, likely to a greater degree than the per capita provision standard suggests. Recreation Planning Areas B and E have slightly larger senior population (55 years of age or older), although all areas will have a large demographic shift in the near future.

Although RPA B is deficient in total supply, the Bethesda Park Senior Center in RPA C is located close enough to RPA B to provide for adequate accessibility. RPA D is under-serviced, and will require the development of a senior recreation center in order to meet the provision standard and alleviate gaps in distribution. Based on geographic distribution, it is recommended that the County develop a senior recreation center in the Mountain View / Dacula area of RPA D.



## Legend

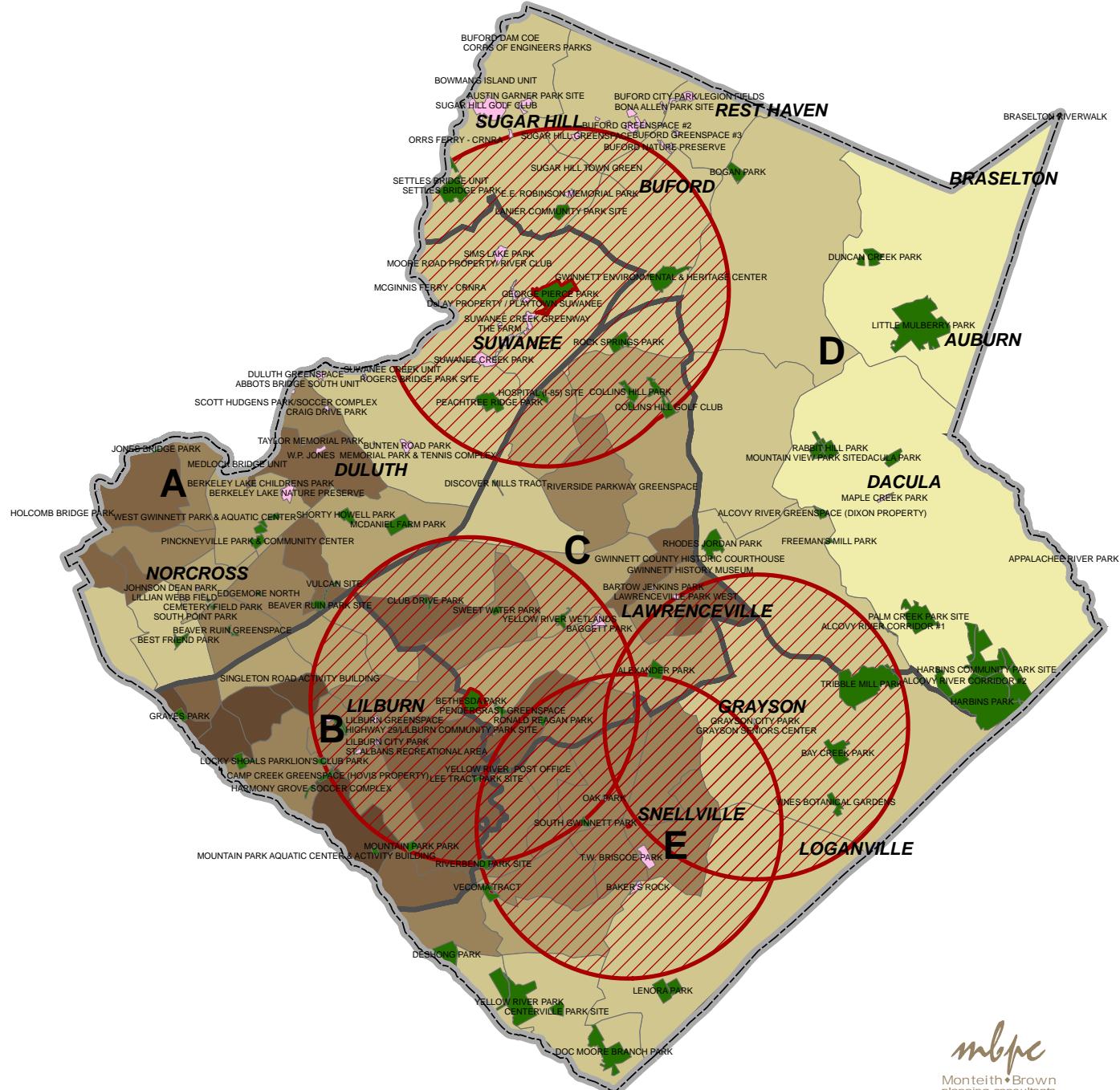
- Recreation Planning Area
- 4mi Service Radius - Existing/Planned Seniors Center (Parks and Recreation)
- City Parks
- County Parks

**2007 Estimated Persons 55+ per Acre**

# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

## Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

## *Map 6-6 Seniors Center Distribution*



mbpc  
Monteith Brown  
planners, designers



Senior recreation centers need not be stand-alone structures, rather it is recommended that senior centers developed by the County take the form of dedicated space within a community center. There are many reasons for such an approach, the most obvious being related to greater efficiencies (both operational and functional) achieved through the sharing of space and resources. For example, gymnasiums and pools are multi-functional spaces that can be used for structured and unstructured programs for all age groups. Considering that the use of such facilities would be the greatest during daytime hours for seniors and during nighttime and weekend hours for children, teens and adults, it would make sense to co-locate senior centers and community centers under the same roof. Concerns over safety as a result of the integration of age groups can be alleviated through proper design and the creation of dedicated space for seniors (e.g., arts/crafts room, games room, kitchen, lounge, etc. could be made off-limits to those that are not members of the senior center. This is the type of development that has been constructed at George Pierce Park, through the addition of a "senior suite" to the community center.

### Gymnasiums

GYMNASIUMS		Provider	#	Area
Best Friend Park		county	1	A
Bunten Park		city	1	A
Lucky Shoals		county	2	B
Bogan Park		county	1	D
Rhodes Jordan Park		county	1	D
Buford Civic Center & City Gym		city	1	D
Lenora Park		county	1	E
	<b>Total</b>		<b>8</b>	

Gymnasiums are typically operated as either stand-alone facilities or as components of community centers. The County operates six gymnasiums at Best Friend, Bogan, Lenora, and Rhodes Jordan Parks, and two at Lucky Shoals

Park. An addition two gymnasiums are operated by the cities of Duluth and Buford. The gymnasiums located at Lucky Shoals Park were developed following the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Aside from schools, which the County has an agreement with for the use of gymnasiums, private enterprise and not-for-profit agencies provide the majority of the gymnasium inventory in Gwinnett (17 gymnasiums, including 7 at the Suwanee Sports Academy). The location of gymnasiums (not including those in schools), is heavily skewed to RPA A, which contains 15 of the 23 public, not-for-profit, and private gymnasiums (see **Map 6-7**).

At present, there are five park master plans containing a total of 5 unfunded gymnasiums. Many of these gymnasiums have been combined with another community building to provide greater efficiency.

GYMNASIUMS			Standard:	1 per 75,000 population	
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand
A	2	82,998	2.2	0.2	2.5
B	2	62,130	1.7	-0.3	1.7
C	0	0:180,050	2.4	2.4	2.6
D	3	55,593	2.2	-0.8	2.8
E	1	139,263	1.9	0.9	2.1
<b>Total*</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>97,043</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>11.7</b>
					<b>3.7</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 17 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

## Legend

- Recreation Planning Area
- 4mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Gymnasium
- 4mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Gymnasium
- City Park
- County Park

## 2007 Estimated Total Persons per Acre

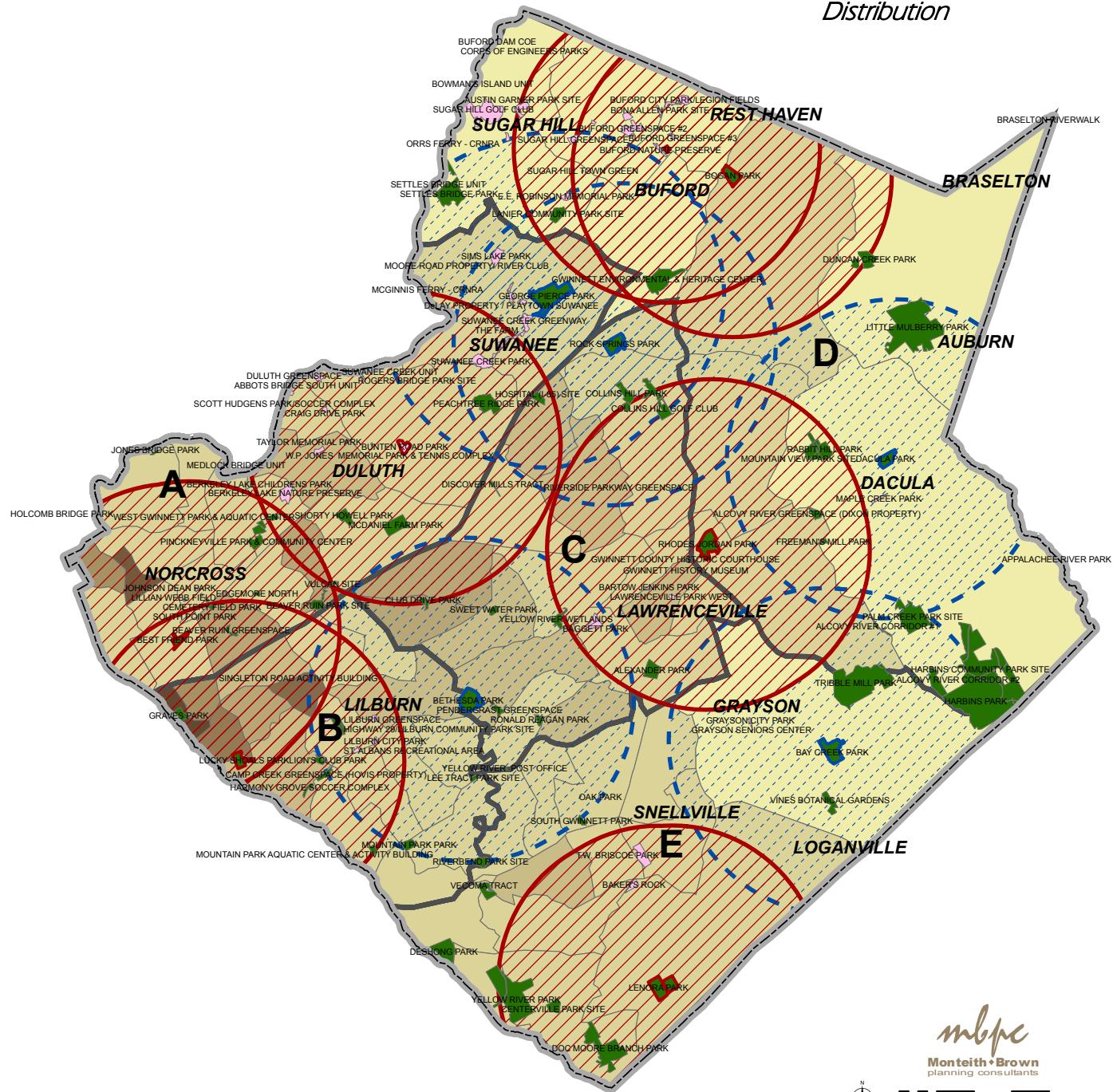
1.00 - 2.00
2.01 - 4.00
4.01 - 6.00
6.01 - 8.00
8.01 - 10.00
10.01 - 12.00
12.01 - 14.00
14.01 - 16.00
16.01 - 18.00



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### Map 6-7 Gymnasium Distribution



A provision standard of one gymnasium (county or city) per 75,000 population is recommended, translating into a need for a current total of 10 gymnasiums. Based on the established provision standard, the County is under-supplied by 2 gymnasiums. By 2013 the County will require a total of 12 gymnasiums, 4 more than the current provision.

In particular, the supply of gymnasiums in RPAs B and D is not sufficient to meet the needs of the current population. However, there are five planned (but unfunded) facilities currently noted in Gwinnett County park master plans. These new gymnasiums would allow the County to achieve the desired standard.

#### Recommendations – Community Centers, Activity Buildings, Senior Recreation Centers, and Gymnasiums

The following are the recommendations related to community centers, activity buildings, senior recreation centers, and gymnasiums. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "A" - Recreation Center Recommendations

George Pierce Park	• Develop planned gymnasium
Jones Bridge Park	• Removal of unnecessary Activity Building (Good Age Building) for better use of park space

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Recreation Center Recommendations

Bethesda Park	• Develop planned community center & gymnasium
Rock Springs Park	• Develop planned activity building & gymnasium

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Recreation Center Recommendations

Dacula Park	• Develop planned gymnasium
Dacula/Mountain View area	• Develop a new seniors recreation center

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Recreation Center Recommendations

Bay Creek Park	• Develop planned community center and gymnasium
Lenora Park	• Develop planned community center

## **6.8 INDOOR AND OUTDOOR AQUATIC FACILITY ANALYSIS**

Swimming continues to be a popular activity amongst all age groups. In the 2002 Needs Assessment, it was identified that swimming is the most popular activity amongst children under the age of 13. Opportunities for swimming in Gwinnett County exist at indoor lane/competition pools, outdoor lane pools, indoor leisure/family aquatic pools, and outdoor leisure/family aquatic pools.

## Indoor Pools

INDOOR LANE POOLS	Provider	Area
West Gwinnett Park & Aquatic Center	county	A
Mountain Park Aquatic Center	county	B
Collins Hill Aquatic Center	county	C
Bogon Park	county	D
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

A lane pool (also referred to as a competition pool) has a length of 25 meters by 25 yards and can be used for competitive swimming events. The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation department operates 4 indoor lane pools.

In 2004, 3 indoor lane pools were also identified as being provided by local YMCAs and private enterprise (note: dimensions and amenities at these facilities may vary from the design standards of County pools). Although there may be additional privately-operated indoor lane pools in Gwinnett, agreements for public or community group usage do not exist and, therefore, these facilities are not included in the Plan's inventory.

A new indoor lane/competition pool has been developed at West Gwinnett Aquatic since the preparation of the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan in response to the demand from residents on the western side of the County.

Gwinnett County's indoor lane pools are fairly evenly distributed amongst the RPAs, with the exception of RPA E. Area E is completely void of any indoor lane pools (or indoor leisure pools for that matter), and significant gaps also exist within RPA D.

There was substantial public input regarding Gwinnett County's aquatic facilities. One issue that arose was the demand for earlier swim times (which is a management issue outside of the scope of this study). Much of the public input surrounding Gwinnett County's aquatic facilities concerned the need for a competitive indoor swimming pool. This could possibly be a 50-meter pool, capable of hosting the County's semi-annual swim meets, and other state and national swim competitions. Such a pool could also meet the competition needs of other agencies (such as Georgia Gwinnett College or private swim schools), opening the door to the possibility of a partnership. The matter of developing a 50-meter Olympic size pool and indoor spectator venue for other sports was also raised by the Gwinnett Sports Council.

INDOOR LANE POOLS			Standard:	1 per 160,000 population	
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand
A	1	165,996	1.0	<b>0.0</b>	1.2
B	1	124,260	0.8	<b>-0.2</b>	0.8
C	1	180,050	1.1	<b>0.1</b>	1.2
D	1	166,778	1.0	<b>0.0</b>	1.3
E	0	0:139,263	0.9	<b>0.9</b>	1.0
<b>Total*</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>194,087</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>5.5</b>
					1.5

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 3 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

## Legend

- Recreation Planning Area
- 4mi Radius - Existing/Funded Indoor Competition Pool
- 7mi Radius - Existing/Funded Indoor Leisure Pool

### 2007 Estimated Total Persons per Acre

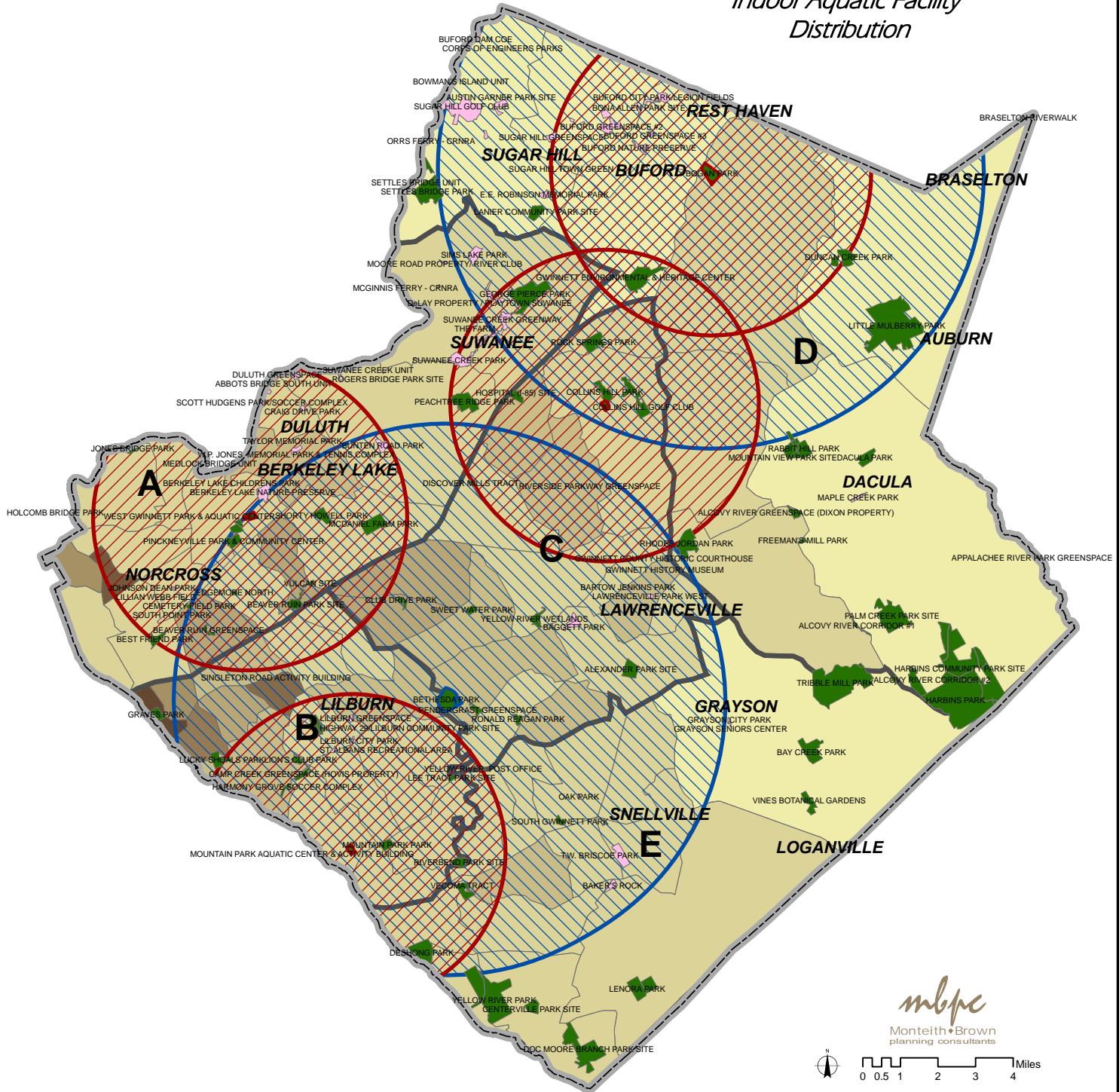
1.00 - 2.00
2.01 - 4.00
4.01 - 6.00
6.01 - 8.00
8.01 - 10.00
10.01 - 12.00
12.01 - 14.00
14.01 - 16.00
16.01 - 18.00
<span style="color: pink;">■</span> City Park
<span style="color: darkgreen;">■</span> County Park



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### Map 6-8 Indoor Aquatic Facility Distribution



*mbpc*

Monteith + Brown  
planning consultants

N  
0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Based on a provision standard of 1 indoor lane pool per 160,000 population, the County is presently under-supplied by 1 indoor lane/competition pool. The County is currently achieving 82% of its indoor lane pool provision standard. Based on this standard, an additional indoor lane pool can be justified during the upcoming planning period. An ideal location for an indoor competition pool would be in RPA E, where it could serve the local community, but also simultaneously serve South Gwinnett High School in Snellville, Grayson High School in Grayson, and the new Harbins-area High School under construction near Tribble Mill Park. It is suggested that the facility could be constructed in the Grayson Area (which is near Grayson High School and between the other two schools) by expansion of either Vines Gardens or Bay Creek Park.

With regard to the development of a 50-meter indoor pool as requested by some stakeholders, we believe that the core mandate of the Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Department should be on introductory and community-level athletics and recreational endeavors. This is not to say that the County should not become involved in the provision of facilities that serve a broader market (i.e., an indoor 50-meter pool), just that the Parks & Recreation Department should not be the lead agency of such projects; this would be better left to the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Gwinnett Sports Council, the Georgia Gwinnett College, or similar agency charged with generating local economic activity or a larger area of interest. Furthermore, given that Gwinnett County currently has four indoor lane pools, two indoor leisure pools, two outdoor lane pools and six outdoor leisure pools, and given there is only a gap in the eastern portion of the County, a 50-meter competition venue may be beyond the needs of the County. The County's level of involvement in such a project should be determined through future study and be based on a partnership model that provides adequate public access while limiting the County's exposure to financial risk.

As indicated in the trends section of this report, swimming is one of the most popular recreational activities and is one that is enjoyed by all ages. As such, there is considerable demand for swimming facilities, especially indoor aquatic centers that can be used year-round. Public consultation undertaken for this Plan identified a great deal of demand for an indoor competition pool. 38% of public meeting questionnaire respondents stated that an indoor aquatic center should be a high priority for the County.

The other indoor pool facility to be considered for Gwinnett County is the provision of leisure pools. A leisure pool (also referred to as a family aquatics center) serves the aquatic needs of the entire community. Leisure pools contain interactive play features, but are not used for competitive swimming events. There are 2 indoor leisure pools in Gwinnett County, one at

INDOOR LEISURE POOLS	Provider	Area
Bethesda Park	county	C
Bogan Park	county	D
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	

Bogan Park and one under design at Bethesda Park. The service area for indoor leisure pools is larger than that of indoor competition pools.

**Map 6-8** identifies the locations of leisure pools in Gwinnett County, and the 7 mile radius that the pools serve. The only gap is in the eastern portion of the County; anticipated population growth in this area should substantiate the need for an indoor leisure pool in the future.

INDOOR LEISURE POOLS			Standard:	1 per 200,000 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	0	0:165,996	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9
B	0	0:124,260	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
C	1	180,050	0.9	-0.1	1.0	0.0
D	1	166,778	0.8	-0.2	1.0	0.0
E	0	0:139,263	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>388,174</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>

Considering the established provision standard of 1 indoor leisure pool per 200,000 population, the County is presently under-supplied by 2 leisure pools. This is equivalent to the County achieving 52% of its indoor leisure pool provision standard. The provision standard for indoor leisure pools appears to be quite aggressive given usage levels at existing facilities.

Given the considerable capital and operating costs associated with indoor leisure/family aquatic pools, a less aggressive approach to facility development is recommended. Specifically, the County should place a greater emphasis on addressing distribution issues than meeting the recommended provision standard.

As evidenced during the public consultation process, the most pressing need is the development of an indoor competition pool in RPA E, which has limited geographic accessibility to indoor pools as compared to other areas of the County. As such, future population growth will determine when it will be necessary for Gwinnett County to acquire and/or identify land in the eastern portion of the County to accommodate an indoor leisure pool.

#### Outdoor Pools

OUTDOOR LANE POOLS		Provider	Area
Dacula Park		county	D
T.W. Briscoe Park		city	E
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

There are considerably more outdoor aquatic facilities in the County than there are indoor venues. The 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan identified 14 outdoor

lane pools provided by private groups, not including the large number of outdoor pools in local subdivisions. There are two public outdoor lane pools in the County – one operated by Gwinnett County at Dacula Park and one city-operated pool at T.W. Briscoe Park. The location of outdoor aquatic facilities operated by the County and its cities is shown on **Map 6-9**.

OUTDOOR LANE POOLS			Standard:	1 per 640,000 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	0	0:165,996	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
B	0	0:124,260	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
C	0	0:180,050	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
D	1	166,778	0.3	-0.7	0.3	-0.7
E	1	139,263	0.2	-0.8	0.2	-0.8
<b>Total*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>388,174</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>-0.6</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 14 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

Based on provision standards of 1 outdoor lane pool per 640,000, the County has an adequate supply of outdoor lane pools (they are currently achieving 167% of its outdoor lane pool provision standard). Given the large number of outdoor lane pools that are available in private

residential settings and clubs, the overall supply and distribution of outdoor lane pools is not a key concern for this Capital Improvement Plan as it appears that the demand for this type of facility is adequately being met by the current inventory. Nationwide, very few recreation departments are developing new outdoor lane pools, choosing instead to build leisure pools that have significantly greater summertime appeal, especially for children and teenagers.

The County's outdoor competition/lane pool is located at Dacula Park. The design of this pool type is not terribly appealing, particularly if an indoor competition pool is available for swim clubs and outdoor leisure pools are available for casual users. The County should consider removing the outdated pool at Dacula Park in favor of an outdoor family aquatic complex. On the existing Dacula Park site, alternatives should be considered for new recreation and park uses, such as the development of teen facilities.

OUTDOOR LEISURE POOLS		Provider	Area
Best Friend Park		county	A
West Gwinnett and Aquatic Center		county	A
Mountain Park Aquatic Center		county	B
Collins Hill Park		county	C
Rhodes Jordan Park		county	D
Lenora Park		county	E
	<b>Total</b>		<b>6</b>

There is one outdoor leisure pool/family aquatic complex in each recreation planning area, with facilities in Collins Hill Park, Lenora Park, Mountain Park Aquatic, Rhodes Jordan Park, and 2 outdoor leisure pools in RPA A at Best Friend Park and West Gwinnett Aquatic Center. There are a total of 6 such facilities in Gwinnett, all of which are operated by the County. **Map 6-9** demonstrates the location and 4-mile service radius of the outdoor pool facilities.

Since the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan, a new outdoor leisure pool has been developed at West Gwinnett Aquatics Center. There are 2 additional outdoor leisure pools intended for the County as part of park master plans; new facilities are planned for Peachtree Ridge Park in RPA A and Bay Creek Park in RPA E.

OUTDOOR LEISURE POOLS			Standard: 1 per 80,000 population			
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	2	82,998	2.1	0.1	2.3	0.3
B	1	124,260	1.6	0.6	1.6	0.6
C	1	180,050	2.3	1.3	2.4	1.4
D	1	166,778	2.1	1.1	2.6	1.6
E	1	139,263	1.7	0.7	2.0	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>129,391</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>4.9</b>

With an established provision standard of one outdoor leisure pool per 80,000 population, the County is presently under-supplied by 4 outdoor leisure pools, and is achieving only 62% of its outdoor leisure pool provision standard. The largest service gaps appear in RPAs C and D. The western portion of RPA D does not have access to an outdoor family aquatics complex; however, the indoor aquatics center at Bogan Park provides adequate service to this gap area. The southern portion of RPA C is also lacking access to an outdoor family aquatics complex; however, the indoor aquatics center at Bethesda Park provides adequate service to this gap area.

## Legend

- Recreation Planning Area
- 4mi Radius - Existing/Funded Outdoor Competition Pool
- 4mi Radius - Existing/Funded Outdoor Leisure Pool
- 4mi Radius - Planned/Not Funded Outdoor Leisure Pool
- 2mi Radius - Existing/Funded Splash Grounds
- 2mi Radius - Planned/Not Funded Splash Grounds
- City Park
- County Park

## 2007 Estimated Total Persons per Acre

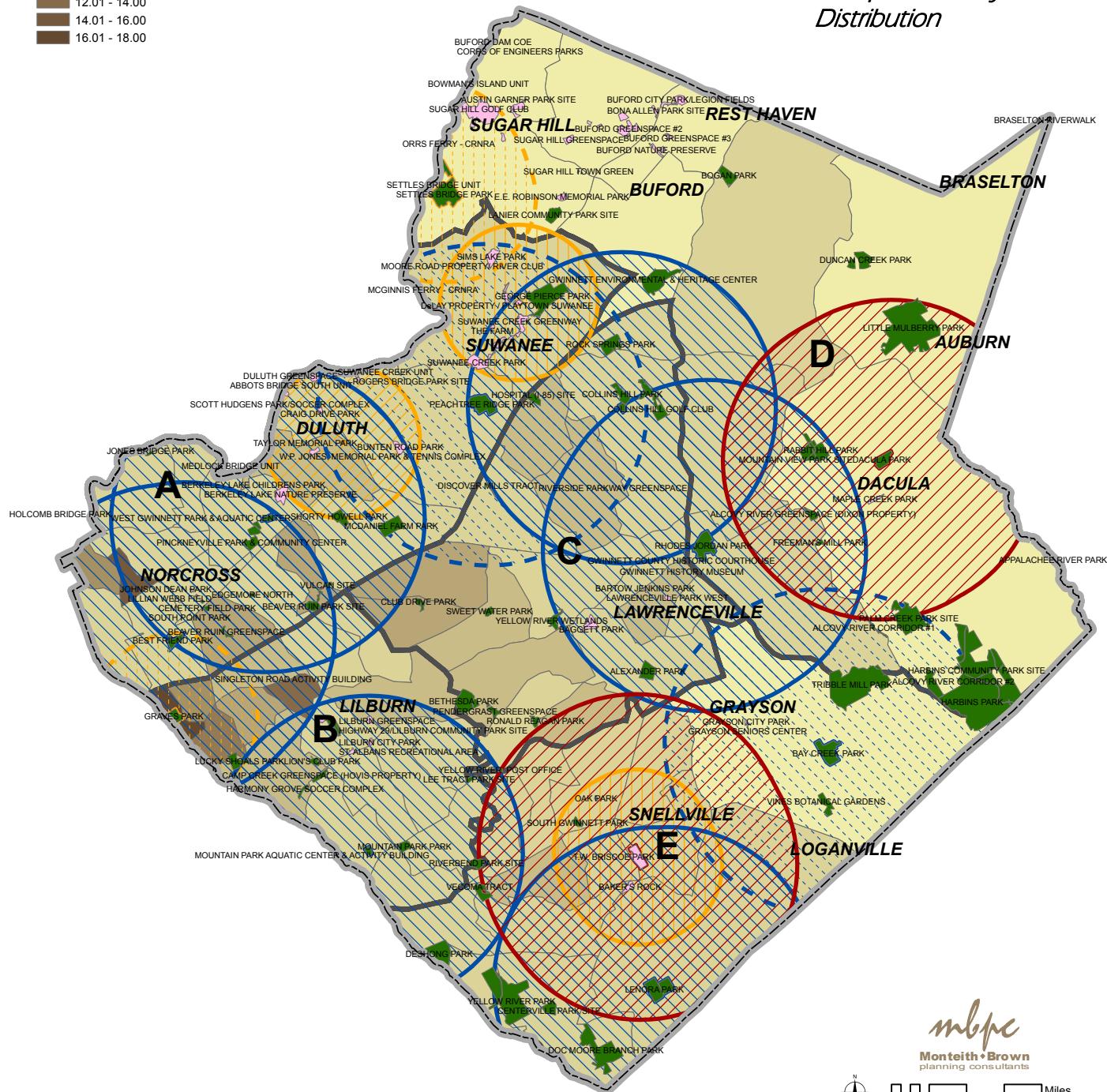
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- 12.01 - 14.00
- 14.01 - 16.00
- 16.01 - 18.00



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### Map 6-9 Outdoor Aquatic Facility Distribution



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0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

The eastern sector of the County lacks sufficient access to both an outdoor family aquatics complex and an indoor competition pool. The development of a combination indoor/outdoor facility would serve the local community and the three nearby high schools. It is suggested that the facility could be constructed in the Grayson Area by expansion of Vines Gardens, Bay Creek Park, or a new site. The outdoor family aquatics proposed for Bay Creek Park should not proceed if the indoor/outdoor pool complex is developed on another site.

An additional outdoor family aquatic complex should be considered for Mountain View Community Park Site, in RPA D. This new facility, in conjunction with the development of an indoor/outdoor pool facility in the east, would allow the County to remove the antiquated outdoor lane pool at Dacula Park.

Lastly, the newest type of aquatic facilities is a splash pad, which is also referred to as a splashground or spray pad. Splash pads are an outdoor aquatic facility that is comprised of a series of interactive water play features, such as spouts, jets, water walls, fountains, water guns/cannons, water buckets, etc. Unlike wading pools, splash pads contain no standing or pooled water and typically use recirculated water. The splash pad is a relatively new aquatic feature that is rapidly gaining popularity in other areas of North America. The core user of such facilities is children ages 2 to 14; however, splash pads can also be entertaining for all members of the family. The size and number of features per splash pad can vary tremendously, depending on the community that it is intended to serve.

There are generally three reasons that children are attracted to water: (1) to cool off from the summer heat; (2) to enjoy a fun water experience; and (3) to partake in a social atmosphere. As such, the design of a splash pad facility should incorporate a variety of fun water spray devices to diversify the experience, provide benches, picnic tables and shaded areas to assist in the social atmosphere, and include traditional play equipment that provides a sense of security for each of the various age groups (i.e., tots and older children). By providing fun, yet simple designs and sprayers, the County can minimize the need for supervision and increase both the safety and security of younger children.

Unlike an outdoor leisure pool, a splash pad allows children to do more than just splash – they can run, jump, climb, and swing all in a water setting. Older children enjoy the interactive aspect of waterplay, while smaller children enjoy the ground sprayers. If the spray facility is located near either an indoor or outdoor pool, older children can also benefit from an even greater aquatic experience.

Currently the County does not provide any such facilities, although some of the splash pad's features have been duplicated in outdoor leisure pools and there are some similar facilities operated by local cities. There are two splash grounds master planned for Graves Park and Settles Bridge Park. The locations for the proposed splash grounds are shown on **Map 6-9**, along with the 2-mile radius for which the facilities provide service. Various cities in Gwinnett County currently provide outdoor splash pads including those at Playtown Suwanee (Suwanee), Taylor Memorial Park (Duluth), and T.W. Briscoe (Snellville).

The County requires splash pad facilities to provide greater outdoor water play opportunities for residents. However, since splash pads are an untested commodity in Gwinnett County, a provision standard has not been created in this Capital Improvement Plan. Service levels experienced in other municipalities, however, are often close to 1 splash pad per 5,000 children ages 0 to 14. This standard would not be appropriate for Gwinnett County due to the considerable supply of indoor and outdoor leisure pools and the sheer size of the County, which

does not allow for neighborhood-level parks or the development of splash pads within walking or cycling distance of most residential areas. Because splash pads share many of the same recreational attributes as playground equipment (e.g., children are the target market, they are free of charge, they do not require adult supervision, etc.), it is appropriate to develop splash pads in densely populated, family-oriented, and lower-income areas that lack adequate access to outdoor family aquatics centers, as well as those communities where access to affordable leisure services is a high priority. Opportunities should be sought to establish an additional splash ground in each RPAs A, B, and C in order to mitigate outdoor aquatic gaps and/or provide affordable summertime opportunities in these areas.

The following are the recommendations related to indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

Recreation Planning Area "A" - Aquatic Facility Recommendations

Peachtree Ridge Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of outdoor family aquatics center</li></ul>
Settles Bridge Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of splash pad</li></ul>
To be determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan new splash pad</li></ul>

Recreation Planning Area "B" - Aquatic Facility Recommendations

Graves Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of splash pad</li></ul>
To be determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan new splash pad</li></ul>

Recreation Planning Area "C" - Aquatic Facility Recommendations

To be determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plan new splash pad</li></ul>
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Recreation Planning Area "D" - Aquatic Facility Recommendations

Dacula Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Replace antiquated outdoor lane pool by providing an alternative outdoor pool (leisure) at another site. New parks or recreation use for Dacula Park site.</li></ul>
Mountain View Park Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop an outdoor leisure pool to replace Dacula Park lane outdoor pool.</li></ul>
Settles Bridge Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build planned splash pad</li></ul>

Recreation Planning Area "E" - Aquatic Facility Recommendations

Grayson Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a combined indoor competition pool and outdoor family aquatics complex. Potential sites include Bay Creek Park, Vines Gardens, or a new site.</li></ul>
Bay Creek Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proceed with planned development of outdoor family aquatics center unless an indoor/outdoor pool complex is developed in the area.</li></ul>

## 6.9 TENNIS COMPLEX ANALYSIS

Gwinnett County and local cities provide and operate 87 tennis courts. The 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan identified 92 tennis courts provided by the public sector, not including the large number of courts in local subdivisions. **Map 6-10** illustrates the distribution of

tennis complexes (defined as clusters of 4 or more courts) provided by the County and local cities with a 2-mile service radius applied.

TENNIS COURTS		Provider	#	Area
Best Friend Park		county	17	A
W.P. Jones Memorial Park & Tennis Complex		city	4	A
Bunten Park		city	4	A
Thrasher Park		city	1	A
Graves Park		county	2	B
Lucky Shoals Park		county	2	B
Mountain Park Park		county	6	B
Lilburn City Park		city	4	B
Collins Hill Park		county	2	C
Sweet Water Park Site		county	2	C
Rock Springs Park		city	6	C
Lawrenceville Park West		county	3	C
Dacula Park		county	4	D
Rhodes Jordan Park		county	8	D
Buford City Park/Legion Fields		city	12	D
E.E. Robinson Memorial Park		city	2	D
T.W. Briscoe Park		county	8	E
<b>Total</b>		<b>87</b>		

By applying a 2-mile radius to each tennis complex, a number of gaps in geographic service distribution appear throughout the County, especially in RPAs C, D, and E. However, the existence of private providers may help to mitigate this lack of access to some degree.

Since the preparation of the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan was prepared, 9 new tennis courts have been developed in Gwinnett County, an increase of 12%.

There are presently six master plans containing a total of 32 unfunded tennis courts. These courts are primarily proposed for RPAs A and D.

There was little feedback from the community regarding the need for or improvements to tennis facilities. One suggestion put forward was the idea to purchase Stone Mountain Tennis Center and redevelop it as an indoor multi-use sports venue. Similar to the proposal for a 50-meter indoor competition pool, we do not feel that such a facility should be a core service of the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division and should not be a capital priority for the Department.

Tennis courts are not unlike other recreational facilities such as playgrounds, skate parks, and basketball courts in that they are considered a community-level facility, meaning that distribution is paramount. For this reason, tennis courts are typically a standard feature in Community Parks and, where geographic gaps or inadequate supplies exist, it is recommended that this practice continue. As such, even though an assessment of needs indicates that the current supply of tennis courts is sufficient, the development of new parks and redevelopment of existing ones dictates that additional tennis courts be considered.

TENNIS COURTS			Standard:	1 per 7,500 population	
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand
A	26	6,384	22.1	-3.9	25.0
B	14	8,876	16.6	2.6	17.0
C	13	13,850	24.0	11.0	26.0
D	26	6,415	22.2	-3.8	27.6
E	8	17,408	18.6	10.6	21.1
<b>Total*</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>8,924</b>	<b>103.5</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>116.6</b>
					<b>29.6</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 92 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.



## Legend

- Recreation Planning Area
- 2mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Tennis
- 2mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Tennis
- City Park
- County Park

**2007 Estimated Persons 35-54 per Acre**

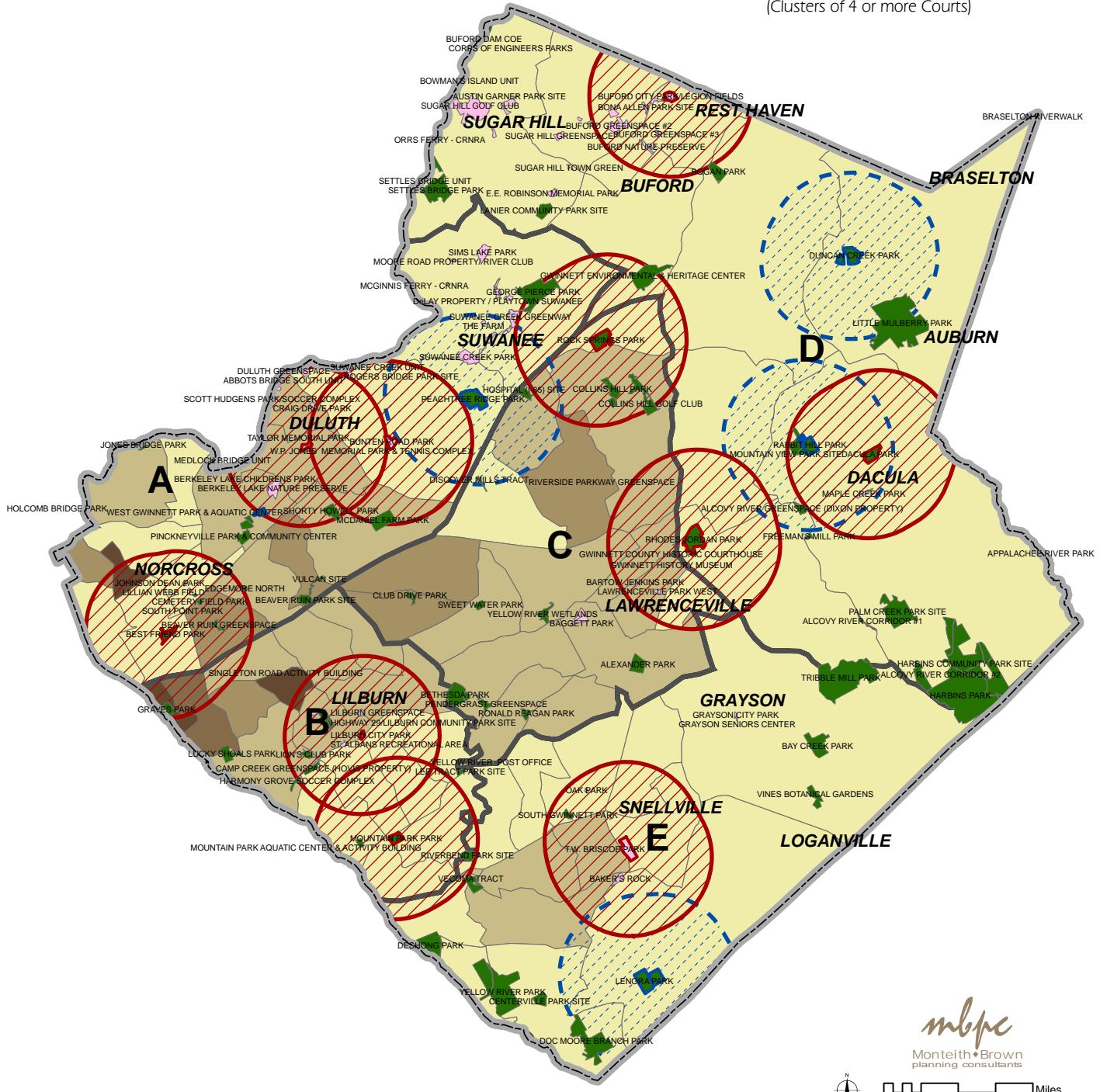
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# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

# Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

### *Map 6-10 Tennis Court Distribution*

(Clusters of 4 or more Courts)



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With a provision standard of one tennis court per 7,500 population, the County is presently under-supplied by 16 courts. By 2013 the County will need 30 additional courts. The County is currently achieving 84% of its tennis court provision standard. The areas with the lowest per capita supplies are RPAs C and D, although these areas also have higher than average private tennis court inventories.

Some issues exist concerning current proposed tennis courts. Despite having an adequate per capita supply, there are presently 20 tennis courts being proposed in RPA D. Bogan Park has 10 planned tennis courts, which should be replaced with other recreation facilities needed in this area, such as a dog park, additional picnic facilities, etc.

RPA C has both a low geographic distribution and low per capita supplies. There are currently no planned tennis facilities to be developed in RPA C. RPA E is also lacking the necessary court provision. In order to provide the recommended standard of 1 tennis court per 7,500 population, and to provide courts at a community-level, opportunities to establish new tennis courts in both RPA C and E should be considered.

The following are the recommendations related to tennis complexes. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "A" - Tennis Complex Recommendations

West Gwinnett Park & Aquatic Center	• Proceed with planned development of 2 tennis courts
Peachtree Ridge Park	• Proceed with planned development of 6 tennis courts

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Tennis Complex Recommendations

Entire RPA C	• Establish up to 8 additional tennis courts
--------------	--

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Tennis Complex Recommendations

Rabbit Hill Park	• Proceed with planned development of 4 tennis courts
Duncan Creek Park	• Proceed with planned development of 6 tennis courts
Bogan Park	• Replace the proposed 10 tennis courts with other recreation facilities needed in the area

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Tennis Complex Recommendations

Lenora Park	• Proceed with planned development of 4 tennis courts
Entire RPA E	• Establish up to 6 additional tennis courts

## 6.10 FOOTBALL FIELD ANALYSIS

The Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Division, along with one local city, provide a total of 19 football fields. Fields are also provided at schools to serve the needs of student programs. Since the preparation of the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 4 new

football fields have been developed – an increase of 21%. There are presently no unfunded football fields identified in existing park master plans.

FOOTBALL FIELDS	Provider	Area
Best Friend Park	county	A
Cemetery Field Park	county	A
George Pierce Park	county	A
Shorty Howell Park	county	A
Peachtree Ridge Park	county	A
Lucky Shoals Park	county	B
Mountain Park Park	county	B
Lion's Club Park	county	B
Bethesda Park	county	C
Collins Hill Park	county	C
Rock Springs Park	county	C
Bogon Park	county	D
Dacula Park	county	D
Rhodes Jordan Park	county	D
Duncan Creek Park	county	D
Buford Civic Center & City Gym	city	D
South Gwinnett Park	county	E
Bay Creek Park	county	E
Lenora Park	county	E
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	

the approximate 2-mile service that they provide. The geographic distribution of football fields is good, with RPA C and D having the largest gaps. Football fields are most often provided in response to school clusters/athletic associations; therefore, new fields will be needed to supply the five new clusters.

Among Gwinnett County youth, football remains a fairly popular sport. The 2002 Needs Assessment Survey found that football was the 5<sup>th</sup> most popular sport amongst teens, following basketball, swimming, baseball, and soccer.

During the public consultation process there was little to no input regarding the football in Gwinnett.

**Map 6-11** displays the distribution of football fields in the county, and

FOOTBALL FIELDS			Standard: 1 per 37,000 population			
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	5	33,199	4.5	-0.5	5.1	0.1
B	3	41,420	3.4	0.4	3.4	0.4
C	3	60,017	4.9	1.9	5.3	2.3
D	5	33,356	4.5	-0.5	5.6	0.6
E	3	46,421	3.8	0.8	4.3	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>40,860</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>23.6</b>	<b>4.6</b>

Considering the football field supply and demand in Gwinnett County, a provision standard of one football field per 37,000 residents is recommended. This means that there is a demand for 2 additional fields at present and 4-5 fields by 2013. The County is currently achieving 90% of its football field provision standard.

As football fields are community-level facilities, it is recommended that some new community parks be developed with football fields. This is especially true when the community park is intended to serve a school cluster. At present, there are no park-specific recommendations for football field development.

## Legend

- Recreation Planning Area
- 2mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Football Fields
- City Park
- County Park

### 2007 Estimated Total Persons per Acre

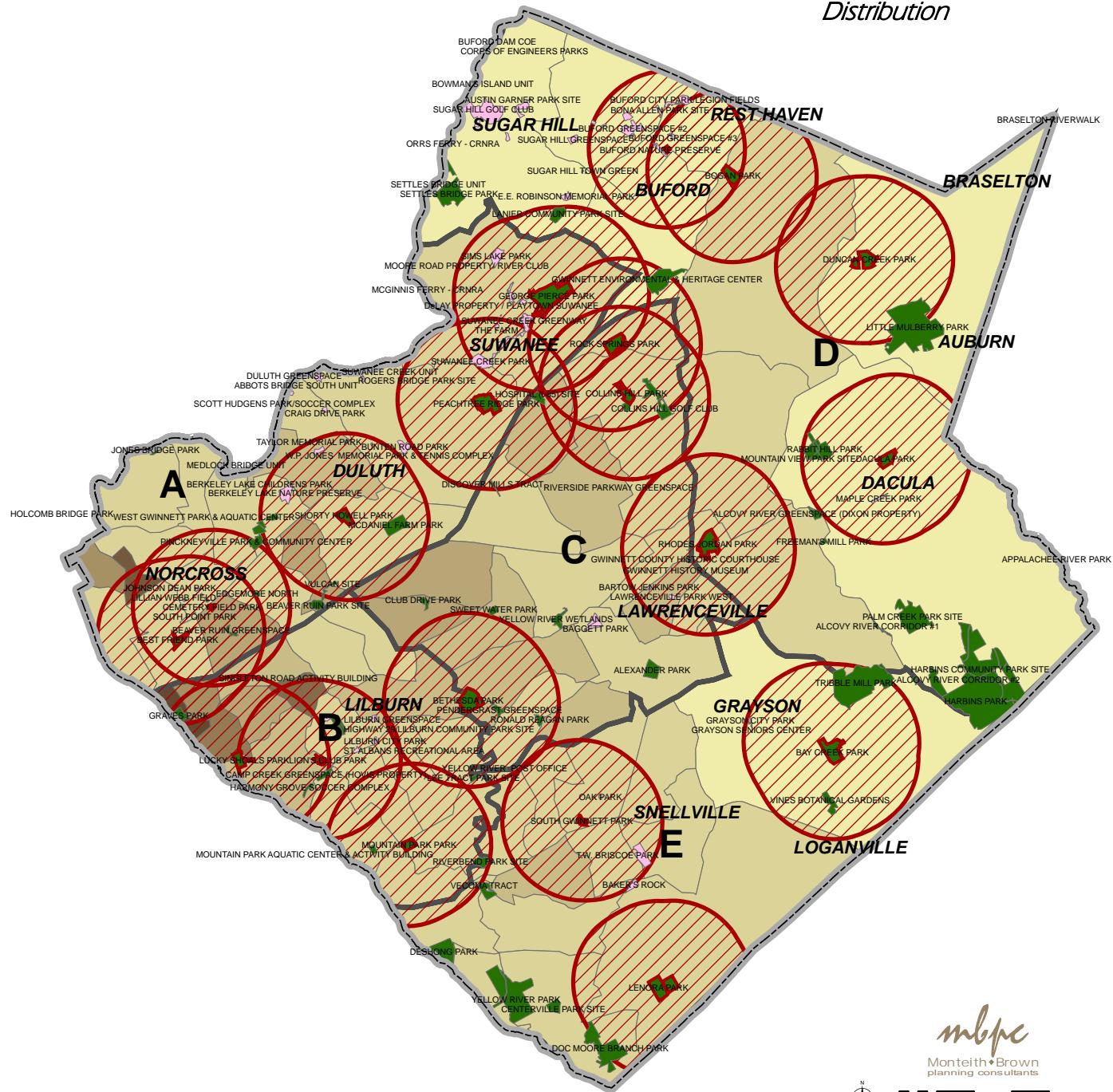
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## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### Map 6-11 Football Field Distribution



*mbpc*

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0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

## 6.11 TEEN FACILITY ANALYSIS

Teen-oriented facilities, such as outdoor basketball courts, skate parks, sand volleyball courts, or roller hockey rinks, are to teenagers what playgrounds are to children – they are essential recreational elements that should be provided in every community park in the County as well as other strategic locations. The recreational needs of youth, with the exception of traditional team sports such as baseball, have been largely neglected in Gwinnett until recently when the Parks and Recreation Division began to construct teen areas in its parks. It is precisely these types of unstructured, low cost activities that teens today are seeking.

Currently, gaps in teen facility distribution are evident in RPAs B and D. Planning for teen facilities at the community-level, such as the provision in all new Community Parks, will help to alleviate service gaps in these areas.

### Basketball Courts

BASKETBALL COURTS	Provider	#	Area
Best Friend Park	county	2.0	A
George Pierce Park	county	2.0	A
Lillian Webb Field	county	0.5	A
Peachtree Ridge Park	county	2.0	A
Church Street Park	city	1.0	A
Main Street Park	city	1.0	A
Rossie Brundage Park	city	1.0	A
Lucky Shoals Park	county	2.0	B
Lilburn City Park	city	1.0	B
Collins Hill Park	county	2.0	C
Club Drive Park	county	1.0	C
Sweet Water Park Site	county	1.0	C
Ronald Reagan Park	county	1.0	C
Duncan Creek Park	county	3.5	D
Bogart Park	county	2.0	D
Buford City Park/Legion Fields	county	1.0	D
E.E. Robinson Memorial Park	city	1.0	D
DeShong Park	county	1.0	E
T.W. Briscoe Park	city	2.0	E
<b>Total</b>		<b>28.0</b>	

Gwinnett County and local cities provide approximately 28 outdoor basketball courts. Courts are measured in full court equivalents – one half court/single basket is equal to 0.5 full courts. The location and distribution of these courts is illustrated on **Map 6-12**; a 2-mile service radius has been applied. Not only does the distribution of facilities create numerous service gaps throughout the County, but the overall supply of courts is extremely low for a County with such a youthful age profile.

Since the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared, 8.5 new basketball courts have been developed. There are two basketball courts that are funded for construction at Rabbit Hill Park. Further, there are presently three park master plans containing a total of 6 basketball courts.

Basketball continues to increase in popularity amongst Gwinnett County youth. The 2002 Needs Assessment Survey found basketball to be the most popular sport amongst teen 13 to 17, followed by swimming, baseball, soccer, and football.



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

#### Map 6-12 Outdoor Basketball Distribution

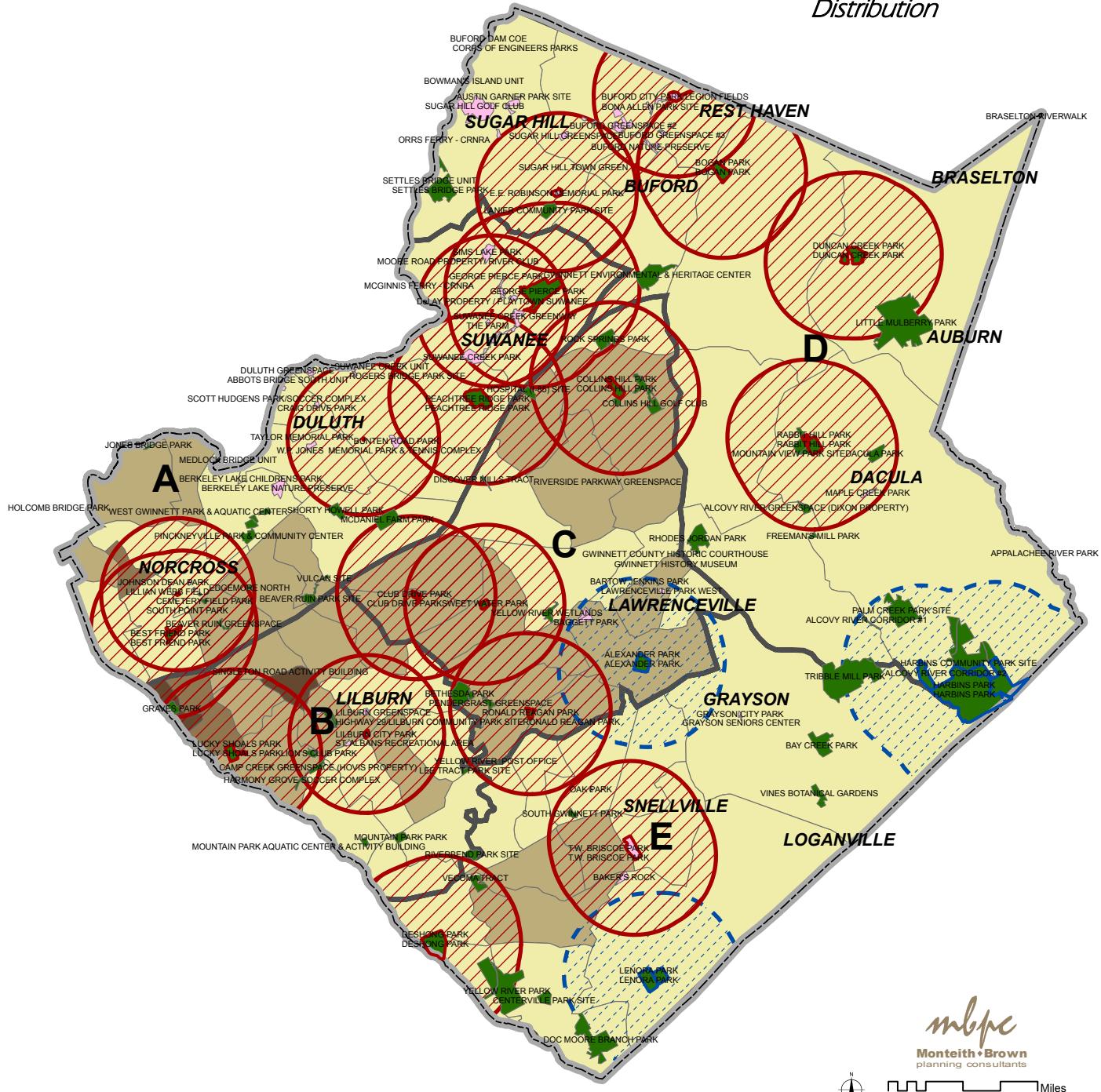
##### Legend

- Recreation Planning Area
- 2mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Basketball
- 2mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Basketball

- City Park
- County Park

##### 2007 Estimated Persons 10-19 Per Acre

- 0.14 - 0.50
- 0.51 - 1.00
- 1.01 - 1.50
- 1.51 - 2.00



0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

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BASKETBALL COURTS			Standard:	1 per 10,500 population		
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	9.5	17,473	15.8	6.3	17.8	8.3
B	3.0	41,420	11.8	8.8	12.1	9.1
C	5.0	36,010	17.1	12.1	18.6	13.6
D	7.5	22,237	15.9	8.4	19.7	12.2
E	3.0	46,421	13.3	10.3	15.1	12.1
<b>Total*</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>27,727</b>	<b>73.9</b>	<b>45.9</b>	<b>83.3</b>	<b>55.3</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 1 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

The County is achieving 39% of its outdoor basketball court standard of 1 court per 10,500 population. There is a current undersupply of 46 full court equivalents, growing to a deficit of 55 courts by 2013. This standard, although consistent with levels attained in many other jurisdictions, is clearly a goal that the County will not achieve overnight, but it is one that would go a long way toward meeting the recreational needs of Gwinnett's youth (among other age groups).

With the application of a 2 mile service radius, it would appear that the County does not have as many gaps as the provision standard suggests. The largest gaps not covered by existing or planned facilities are in RPA E and along the boundary of RPAs C and D.

In addition to the planned projects, the County should seek opportunities to develop basketball courts in all planning areas. In RPAs A and B, up to 6 additional courts should be developed in each area. In RPAs C, D, and E, up to 8 additional courts should be developed in each. It is also suggested that Rhodes Jordan Park, which is currently undergoing a master plan revision, consider the inclusion of basketball courts.

The following are the recommendations related to outdoor basketball courts. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "A" - Outdoor Basketball Court Recommendations

Entire RPA A

- Develop up to 6 additional courts

#### Recreation Planning Area "B" - Outdoor Basketball Court Recommendations

Entire RPA B

- Develop up to 6 additional courts

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Outdoor Basketball Court Recommendations

Alexander Park

- Continue planned construction of 2 half courts

Entire RPA C

- Develop up to 8 additional courts

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Outdoor Basketball Court Recommendations

Harbins Park

- Continue planned construction of 2 half courts

Rhodes Jordan Park

- Consider the addition of new basketball courts to the Master Plan revisions

Entire RPA D

- Develop up to 8 additional courts

### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Outdoor Basketball Court Recommendations

Lenora Park	• Continue planned construction of 2 full courts
Entire RPA E	• Develop up to 8 additional courts

### Sand Volleyball Courts

<b>SAND VOLLEYBALL COURTS</b>		Provider	#	Area
Jones Bridge Park		county	1	A
Rogers Bridge Park		city	2	A
Pinckneyville Park and Community Center		county	1	A
Graves Park		county	1	B
Lilburn City Park		city	1	B
Mountain Park Park		county	1	B
Collins Hill Park		county	1	C
Sweet Water Park Site		county	1	C
Bogart Park		county	6	D
Dacula Park		county	1	D
Duncan Creek		county	3	D
E.E. Robinson Memorial Park		city	2	D
DeShong Park		county	1	E
T.W. Briscoe Park		city	3	E
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>		

Beach volleyball is played on sand courts, which a number of communities are adding to their parks to meet localized demand. The sport can be played in a flexible, non-structured and is low cost, further enhancing its popularity.

Gwinnett County provides 25 sand volleyball courts, 8 of which have been developed since the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan was prepared.

<b>SAND VOLLEYBALL COURTS</b>			Standard:	1 per 35,000 population	
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand
A	4	41,499	4.7	0.7	5.3
B	3	41,420	3.6	0.6	3.6
C	2	90,025	5.1	3.1	5.6
D	12	13,898	4.8	-7.2	5.9
E	4	34,816	4.0	0.0	4.5
<b>Total*</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31,054</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>-2.8</b>	<b>25.0</b>
					<b>0.0</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 3 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

Based on a provision standard of 1 volleyball court per 35,000 population, the County has a sufficient supply of sand volleyball courts, and will not require any additional courts until after 2013. The County is currently achieving 113% of its sand volleyball court provision standard. Presently, five master plans contain a total of 9 volleyball courts, which can be pursued (albeit at a lower priority level) based on overall park design principles.

The following are the recommendations related to sand volleyball courts. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

### Recreation Planning Area "A" - Sand Volleyball Court Recommendations

Peachtree Ridge Park	• Proceed with planned development of 2 volleyball courts
Shorty Howell Park	• Proceed with planned development of 2 volleyball courts

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Sand Volleyball Court Recommendations

Alexander Park

- Proceed with planned development of 1 volleyball court

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Sand Volleyball Court Recommendations

Harbins Park

- Proceed with planned development of 2 volleyball courts

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Sand Volleyball Court Recommendations

Lenora Park

- Proceed with planned development of 2 volleyball courts

#### Skate Parks

Skate parks offer paved areas with specially constructed ramps, quarter pipes, rails, and other structures for skateboarding and freestyle skating and cycling within a controlled environment. These activities are not mere fads that will disappear; rather they are continuing to grow in popularity, particularly amongst older children and teenagers – a demographic that has traditionally been challenging to serve. Furthermore, because skateboarding and similar activities often occur in open public plazas or on private lands, resulting in conflicts with other activities (not to mention vandalism and injuries), skate parks offer an important alternative to this problem.

Gwinnett has five County-operated skate parks at Pinckneyville Park, Mountain Park Park, Ronald Reagan Park, Duncan Creek Park, and DeShong Park. It was noted in the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan that there were five privately-operated indoor parks, all of which charged a usage fee; most of these facilities have since closed.

SKATE PARKS	Provider	Area
Pinckneyville Park & Community Center	county	A
Mountain Park Park	county	B
Ronald Reagan Park	county	C
Duncan Creek Park	county	D
DeShong Park	county	E
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	

Since the 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan, 3 additional skate parks have been developed in the County. There is also funding for the construction of skate parks at Rabbit Hill Park (or Mountain View Community Park Site), Settles Bridge Park, and Bay Creek Park in 2008. At present, there are eight park master plans containing unfunded skate parks.

**Map 6-13** illustrates the locations of the existing County skate parks along with those parks for which skate parks have been proposed and funded (Rabbit Hill/Mountain View Park, Bay Creek, and Settles Bridge Park).



## GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA

### Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

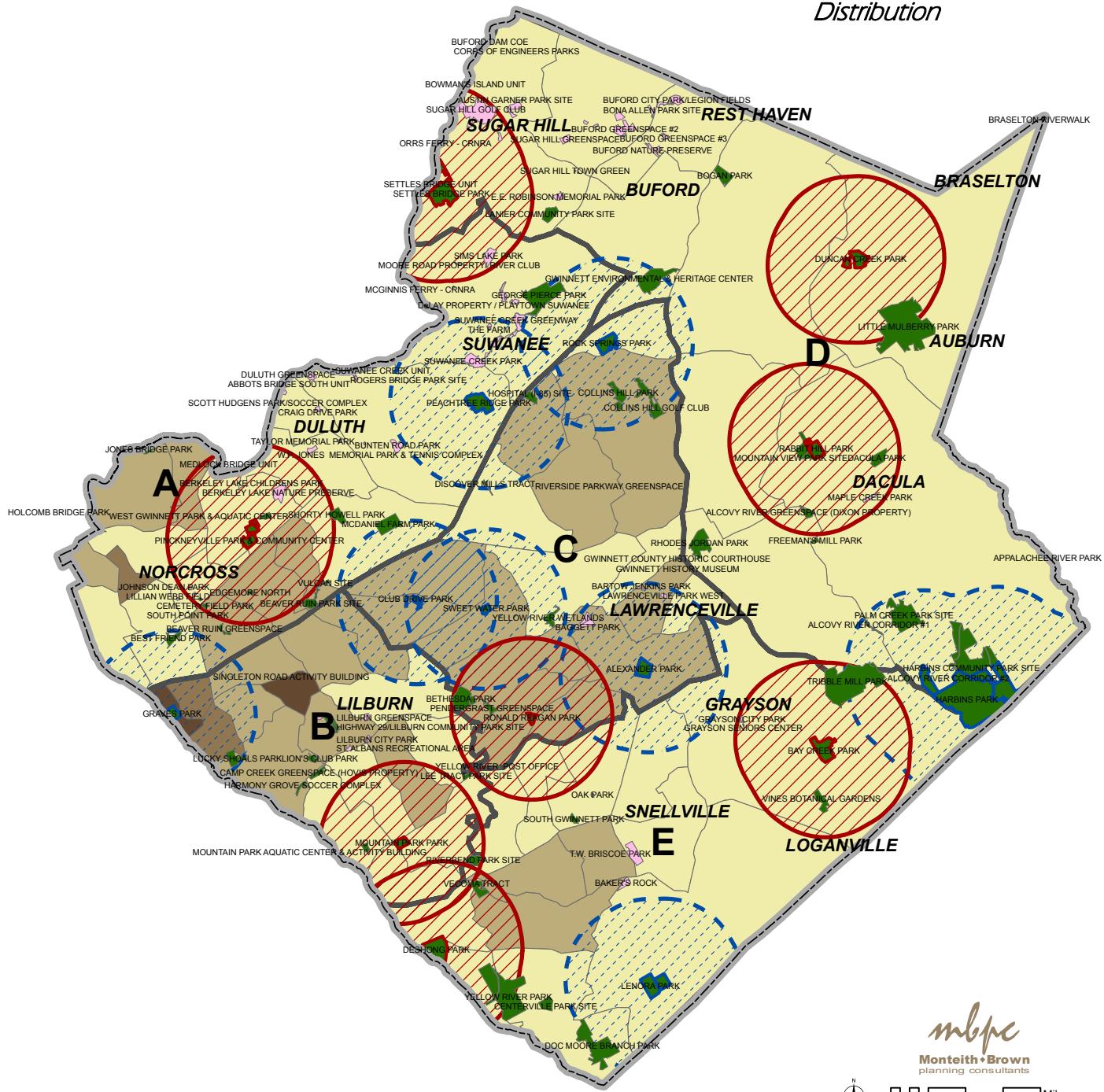
#### Map 6-13 Skateboard Park Distribution

##### Legend

- Recreation Planning Area
- 2mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Skateboard Park
- 2mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Skateboard Park
- City Park
- County Park

**2007 Estimated Persons 10-19 Per Acre**

- 0.14 - 0.50
- 0.51 - 1.00
- 1.01 - 1.50
- 1.51 - 2.00



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0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

SKATE PARKS			Standard: 1 per 17,500 pop. ages 10-19			
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per age 10-19)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	1	21,725	1.2	0.2	1.5	0.5
B	1	16,124	0.9	-0.1	0.9	-0.1
C	1	27,255	1.6	0.6	1.7	0.7
D	1	23,153	1.3	0.3	1.6	0.6
E	1	20,882	1.2	0.2	1.3	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>21,828</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>

A provision standard of one skate park per 17,500 youth ages 10-19 has been established. This standard is specifically linked to the teen population because skate parks are predominantly used by this demographic and this approach will provide a more accurate determination of demand as Gwinnett's population ages. In order to achieve the recommended level of service, one additional skate park is required, increasing to 2 parks by the year 2013. The County is currently achieving 80% of its skate park provision standard.

Applying a service radius of 2 miles, it would appear that the County could sustain more skate parks than what the provision standard suggests. Skate parks are considered a community-level facility; consequently, geographic distribution is essential. Geographic gaps in service require that additional skate parks be developed in order to provide reasonable access for the majority of Gwinnett children and teenagers. From an accessibility standpoint, there is merit in pursuing all planned (but unfunded) skate parks in order to create more conveniently located facilities. However, gaps will remain in all RPAs, some of which could be resolved through future Community Park development.

In addition to the proposed funded and unfunded skate parks, the development of a skate park should be considered for Rhodes Jordan Park, which is currently undergoing a master plan review. Furthermore, a skate park should be given strong consideration for any parkland acquired in the future, especially in areas with significant densities of teens. All new skate parks should be designed in consultation with children and teenagers.

The following are the recommendations related to skate parks. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "A" - Skate Park Recommendations

Peachtree Ridge Park      • Develop planned skate park

#### Recreation Planning Area "B" - Skate Park Recommendations

Graves Park      • Develop planned skate park

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Skate Park Recommendations

Alexander Park      • Develop planned skate park  
 Club Drive Park      • Develop planned skate park  
 Rock Springs Park      • Develop planned skate park  
 Sweet Water Park      • Develop planned skate park

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Skate Park Recommendations

Harbins Park	• Develop planned skate park
Rhodes Jordan Park	• Consider the addition of a skate park to the Master Plan revisions
Bogan Park	• Redevelop the teen zone

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Skate Park Recommendations

Lenora Park	• Develop planned skate park
-------------	------------------------------

#### Roller Hockey Rinks

Gwinnett County provides one outdoor roller hockey rink at Pinckneyville Park, and owns two indoor roller hockey rinks at South Gwinnett Park. At present, roller sports rinks that have been planned at Rabbit Hill Park, Bay Creek Park, and Lenora Park. However, these three facilities must be redesigned as covered facilities prior to the finalization of any funding or approval decisions. **Map 6-14** illustrates the location of the existing and proposed rinks.

The need to cover or enclose the existing roller hockey rink at Pinckneyville Park was raised at several public meetings. The primary concern with the Pinckneyville rink is the lack of a protective cover. The uncovered rink exposes its users to severe elements (especially sun), thereby limiting its usefulness. The County will provide a cover for the existing roller rink through funding from the recreation capital fund. Roller rink covers will be incorporated into the designs for all other planned or future roller rink facilities.

Another issue raised from experiences with Pinckneyville Park involves the clustering of teen activities. Rinks have traditionally been planned as part of a "teen area", along with skate parks, basketball courts, and volleyball courts. This combined facility planning could be re-examined, because it has become apparent that clustering teen-type activities is not necessary to produce a successful facility. Roller rinks in particular are able to be located individually.

It is recommended that the Pinckneyville Park roller sports rink be covered in order to offer protection to rink users. Following the construction of a cover, this facility should be used as a pilot program to determine the use of and demand for roller rinks prior to expanding this concept to other parks. A temporary hold should be placed on the development of additional rinks at Bay Creek, Lenora, and Rabbit Hill Parks (all of which are identified in park master plans) until the popularity of the pilot project is determined.



## Legend

-  Recreation Planning Area
-  4mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Outdoor Roller Rink
-  4mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Outdoor Roller Rink
-  4mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Indoor Roller Rink
-  City park
-  County park

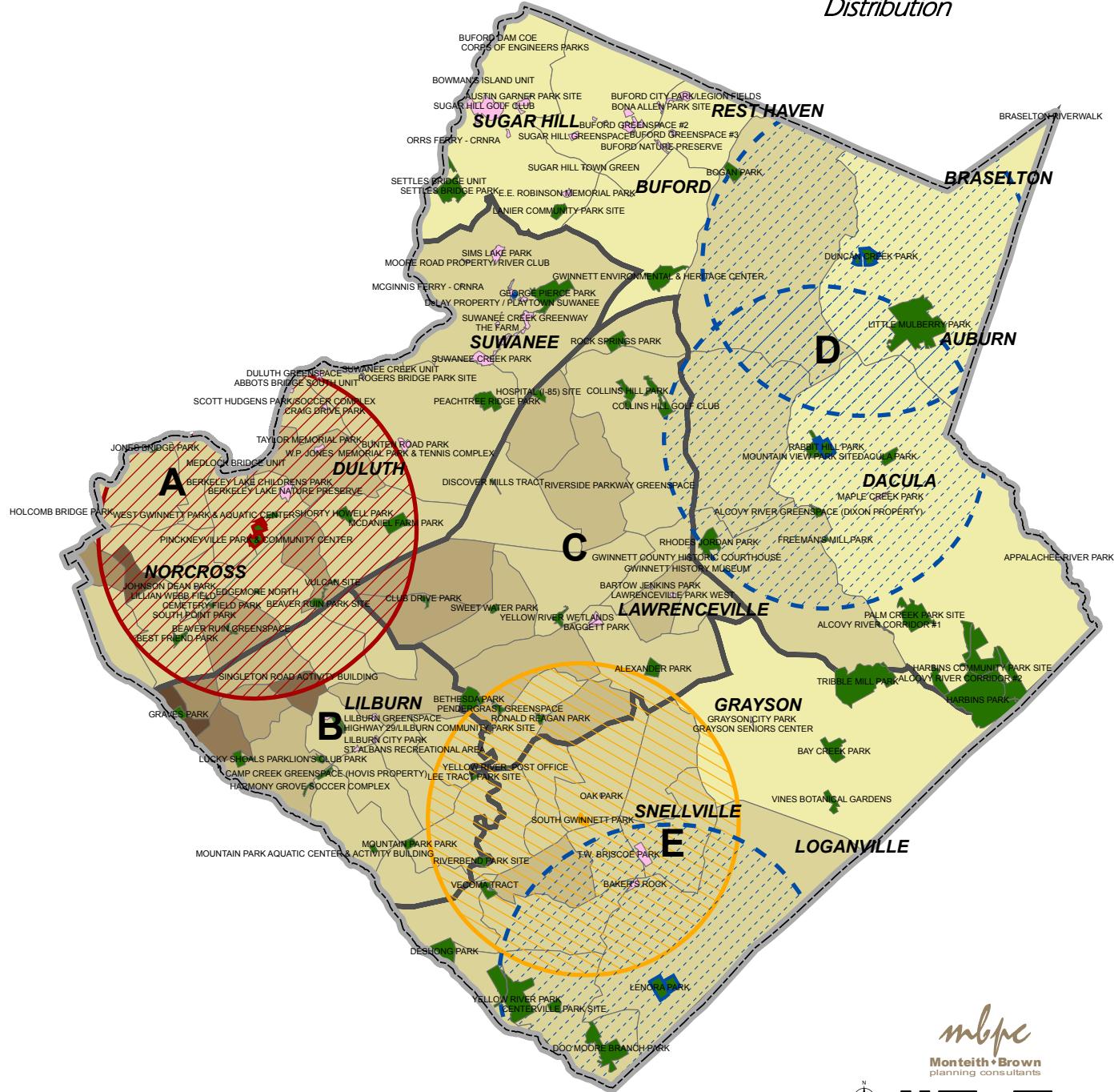
#### **2007 Estimated Total Persons per Acre**

1.00 - 2.00  
2.01 - 4.00  
4.01 - 6.00  
6.01 - 8.00  
8.01 - 10.00  
10.01 - 12.00  
12.01 - 14.00  
14.01 - 16.00  
16.01 - 18.00

# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

## Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

## *Map 6-14 Roller Rink Distribution*



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## 6.12 PLAYGROUND ANALYSIS

Gwinnett County has a total of 97 playground areas located at 42 sites throughout the county, not including playgrounds at schools or subdivisions. Most parks have more than one playground area due to the large size of the parks and a desire to separate tots from older children. 78 of these playground installations are provided by the County, at 28 different sites. The remainder are provided by local cities. Since the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared, 16 new playgrounds have been developed – a 21% increase. Additional playground/pavilion complexes are to be constructed at Rabbit Hill Park and Bay Creek Park with 2005 SPLOST funds. Schools and the private sector are also key providers of playground equipment and their existence should be considered when planning new park sites. Despite the general aging of the population, there will continue to be additional demand for playgrounds across the entire County.

**Map 6-15** illustrates the location of County and city playgrounds; service radii of a half-mile and one-mile have been applied to each playground site.

At present, twelve park master plans contain a total of 12 playgrounds, most in combination with a pavilion or shelter.

Public consultation revealed that participants rate playgrounds as a medium priority. The suggestion was received that the County consider constructing indoor playgrounds to allow children to play out of the heat.

Playgrounds are an essential amenity in every community park and can even be accommodated in many open space parks. With this in mind, it is important that efforts be made to ensure that all children have reasonable access to a playground, whether it be at a park, a school or a residential complex. In denser urban areas, it is typically recommended that playgrounds be provided within a half-mile of all residential neighborhoods so that children can easily walk or cycle; this guideline should also account for the existence of physical barriers such as rivers, rail lines and major roads that are unsafe for pedestrians to cross. Due to Gwinnett's large land base, this approach is not feasible in the County, however, a provision standard of one playground area per 750 children ages 0 to 9 has been established that, if achieved, would significantly increase free play opportunities for children and improve accessibility to play areas. It is recognized that one park may contain multiple playground areas and this standard has been designed to reflect this.

PLAYGROUND AREAS			Standard:	1 per 750 population ages 0-9	
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per age 0-9)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand
A	42	671	37.6	-4.4	40.8
B	9	2,273	27.3	18.3	26.9
C	12	2,570	41.1	29.1	43.6
D	18	1,429	34.3	16.3	41.1
E	16	1,265	27.0	11.0	30.5
<b>Total*</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>167.3</b>	<b>70.3</b>	<b>182.9</b>
					<b>85.9</b>

\*The County's 2004 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan also noted 3 facilities provided by the private sector; these should be considered in determining the demand for additional facilities.

Using the recommended standard, the County is currently achieving 58% of playground provision standard, and requires 70 additional playground areas to meet demand. By 2013, the County would require a total addition of 86 playgrounds to the current supply.



## Legend

-  Recreation Planning Area
-  1/2mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Playground
-  1mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Playground
-  1/2mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Playground
-  1mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Playground

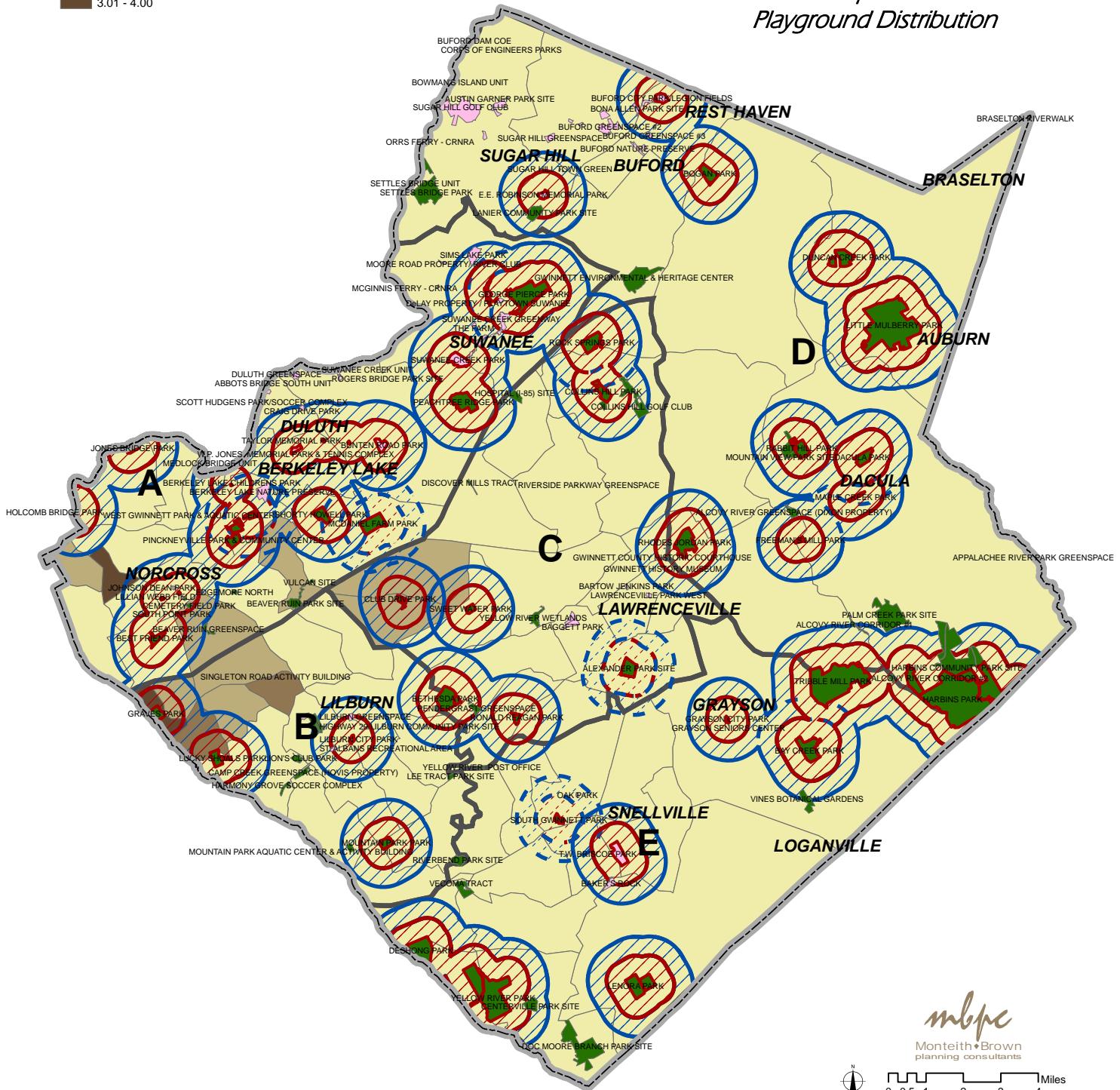
### County Park

0.15 - 1.00
1.01 - 2.00
2.01 - 3.00
3.01 - 4.00

# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

## Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

## *Map 6-15 Playground Distribution*



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Playgrounds provide a relatively small service radius (0.5 to 1.0 mile), reflecting the fact that they are neighborhood-level facilities that are intended to be within walking distance of all residents, especially children. Given the large size of the County, there are a significant number of gap areas in all RPAs with the exception of Area A. Area C is by far the least supplied area when it comes to playgrounds, despite the provision of a new playground at Club Drive Park in 2008 and the planned facility at Alexander Park. Areas B, D, and E are also under-served and will continue to be so despite the construction of planned facilities.

This Capital Improvement Plan recommends the development of up to 57 playground areas in existing and (currently) undeveloped parks. Most playground gaps cannot be resolved without new parkland. It is strongly recommended that future parkland acquisitions, where appropriate, incorporate playgrounds. Park development in all areas – and RPA C in particular – should place an increased emphasis on playground development. In addition to the planned projects, opportunities should be sought to establish up to 14 additional playgrounds in RPA B; up to 24 additional playgrounds in RPA C; up to 13 additional playgrounds in RPA D; and up to 6 additional playgrounds in RPA E. Playground/pavilion complexes should be built as part of the initial phase of park development.

It is also important to note that not all playgrounds need to be provided by the County – local governments should also assume responsibility for providing safe play equipment in all of their active parks. Developers should also be encouraged to construct playgrounds accessible to all local residents (i.e., not within "gated" subdivisions), possibly located between adjacent developments to maximize accessibility.

The following are the recommendations related to playgrounds. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

#### Recreation Planning Area "A" - Playground Recommendations

George Pierce Park	• Continue development of planned playground/shelter
McDaniel Farm Park	• Continue development of planned playground/pavilion complex
West Gwinnett Park & Aquatic Center	• Continue development of planned playground/pavilion complex

#### Recreation Planning Area "B" - Playground Recommendations

Entire RPA B	• Establish up to 14 additional playgrounds
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#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Playground Recommendations

Alexander Park	• Continue development of planned playground/pavilion complex
Entire RPA C	• Establish up to 24 additional playgrounds

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Playground Recommendations

Dacula Park	• Continue development of planned playground/shelter
Duncan Creek Park	• Continue development of planned playground to serve soccer center
Little Mulberry Park	• Continue development of planned playground/pavilion complex

Entire RPA D

- Establish up to 13 additional playgrounds

Recreation Planning Area "E" - Playground Recommendations

Bay Creek Park

- Continue development of planned playground/pavilion complex

DeShong Park

- Continue development of planned playground/shelter

Lenora Park

- Continue development of 2 planned playground/pavilion complexes

South Gwinnett Park

- Continue development of planned playground area

Yellow River Park

- Continue development of planned playground/shelter

Entire RPA E

- Establish up to 6 additional playgrounds.

## 6.13 DOG PARK ANALYSIS

DOG PARKS	Provider	#	Area
Pinckneyville Park	county	1	A
Graves Park	county	1	B
Ronald Reagan Park	county	1	C
Lenora Park	county	1	E
<b>Total</b>		<b>4</b>	

Gwinnett County has four existing dog parks, located at Pinckneyville Park, Graves Park, Ronald Regan Park, and Lenora Park. **Map 6-16** outlines the existing and planned/not funded dog parks in the County, along with a 4-mile service radius. Currently, there are two planned dog parks – at Settles Bridge Park in RPA B and Rabbit Hill Park in RPA D – that are funded (subject to the construction bids), but have yet to be built. At present, four park master plans contain a total of 4 unfunded dog parks (excluding Little Mulberry Park, which is likely to be funded in 2008).

Dog parks are well suited to larger Community Parks and Open Space Parks that provide adequate space and buffering. These parks are becoming increasingly common as pet owners have long realized the value of running their dogs off-leash for both exercise and socialization benefits, in a safe and enclosed setting. It is not unusual for the design of dog parks to incorporate “pet-friendly” features such as drinking areas, unique terrain, etc.

DOG PARKS			Standard: 1 per 125,000 population			
Plan Area	2007 Supply	Provision Rate (per capita)	2007 Demand	2007 Gap	2013 Demand	2013 Gap
A	1	165,996	1.3	0.3	1.5	0.5
B	1	124,260	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
C	1	180,050	1.4	0.4	1.6	0.6
D	0	0:166,778	1.3	1.3	1.7	1.7
E	1	139,263	1.1	0.1	1.3	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>194,087</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>

When the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared, the county did not have any dog parks, and therefore, no provision standard was established. For the purposes of this analysis, a standard of 1 per 125,000 population has been proposed. Based on this standard, the County is currently under-supplied by two dog parks. By 2013, a total of three additional dog parks will be necessary to meet the standard.



## Legend

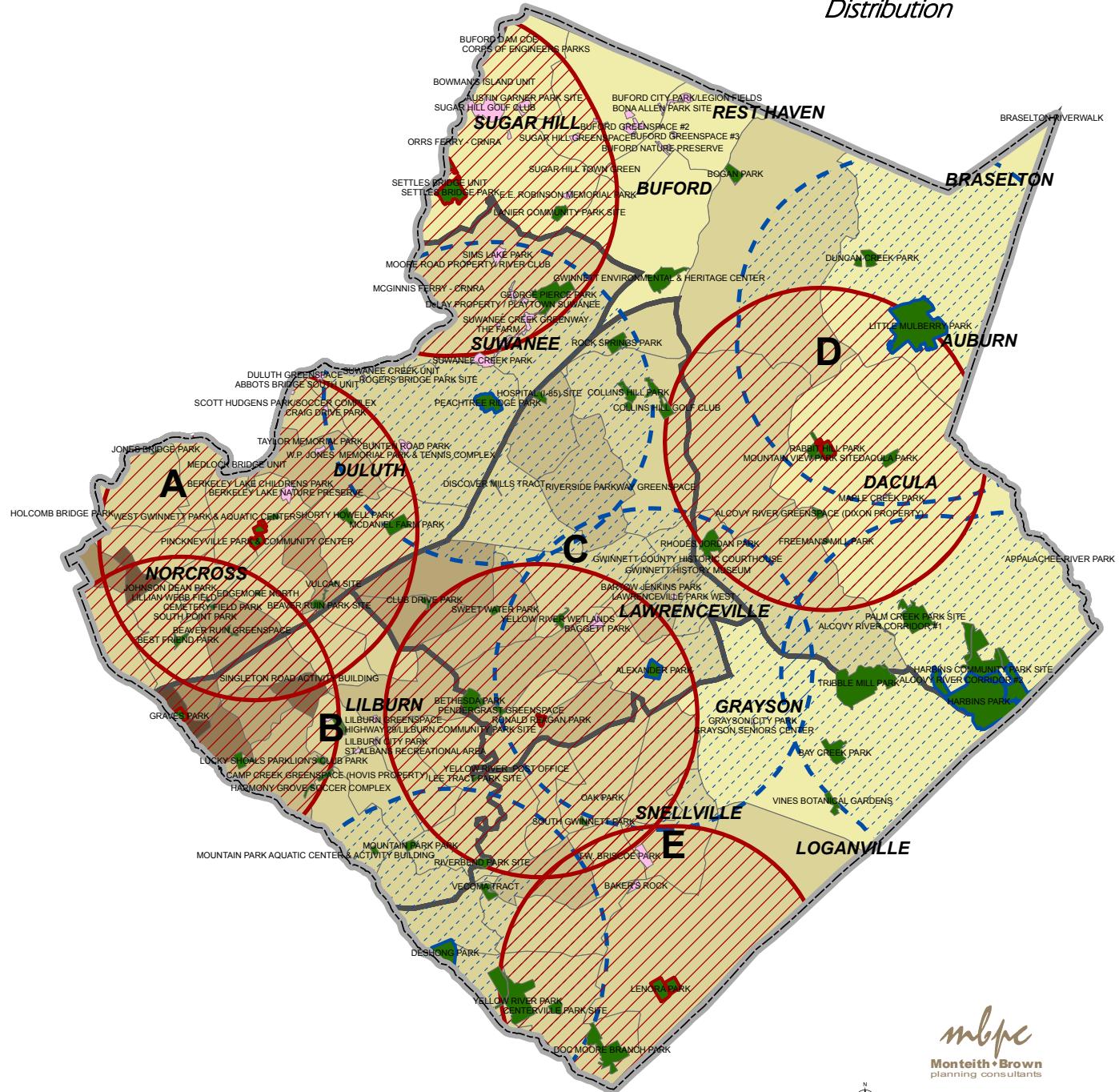
-  Recreation Planning Area
-  4mi Service Radius - Existing/Funded Dog Park
-  4mi Service Radius - Planned/Not Funded Dog Park
-  City Park
-  County Park

### **2007 Estimated Total Persons per Acre**

# **GWINNETT COUNTY, GEORGIA**

## Parks & Recreation Capital Improvement Plan (2007 Update)

*Map 6-16  
Dog Park  
Distribution*



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Monteith Brown



The County's existing dog parks have received tremendous positive response. Given this, it is reasonable to consider expansion of dog parks into under-serviced areas. Assuming a service radius of 4 miles, the existing and planned dog parks provide excellent access to all except in certain parts of RPA D.

It is recommended that the development of all planned facilities proceed as intended. Locations for future dog parks should be chosen based on plenty of space and adequate buffering. Park expansions and Master Plan updates at Rhodes Jordan Park and Collins Hill Park may provide opportunities for new dog parks to be developed in the future. Other opportunities to develop dog parks should be considered for Bogan and Collins Hill Parks.

The following are the recommendations related to dog parks. Recommendations are listed by RPA and are not in priority order.

Recreation Planning Area "A" - Dog Park Recommendations

Peachtree Ridge Park	• Proceed with planned development of dog park
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Recreation Planning Area "C" - Dog Park Recommendations

Alexander Park	• Proceed with planned development of dog park
Collins Hill Park	• Consider for new dog park development

Recreation Planning Area "D" - Dog Park Recommendations

Bogan Park	• Consider for new dog park development
Little Mulberry Park	• Proceed with planned development of dog park
Rhodes Jordan Park	• Consider for new dog park development
Harbins Park	• Proceed with planned development of dog park

Recreation Planning Area "E" - Dog Park Recommendations

DeShong Park	• Proceed with planned development of dog park
--------------	--

## SECTION 7: Recommendations

This section provides a summary of the Plan's recommendations relating to the expansion and development of the County's parks, facility, and greenway systems. These recommendations have been described in detail throughout this report and are a culmination of the input received through a variety of sources including public consultation, input from the Recreation Authority, past plans and reports, the Consultants' research and experience, and the expertise and local knowledge of County staff.

### 7.1 REVIEW OF INVENTORY/ANALYSIS SUMMARY

Table 7-1 contains a summary of the inventory of major facilities within Gwinnett County, including those provided by the County, local cities, and federal government. To provide a point of reference, a map illustrating the County park system has been inserted at the end of this section (see **Map 7-1**).

**Table 7-1: Inventory of County, City, and Federal Parks and Facilities in Gwinnett County by RPA**

	A	B	C	D	E	COUNTY
<b>Population (2007 Estimates)</b>	165,996	124,260	180,050	166,778	139,263	<b>776,347</b>
<b>Acreage:</b>	2,064	452	875	6,055	2,502	<b>11,948</b>
<b>Indoor Facilities:</b>						
Indoor Lane Pools	1	1	1	1	0	<b>4</b>
Indoor Leisure Pools	0	0	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
Community Centers	3	1	0	2	0	<b>6</b>
Activity Buildings	3	2	0	2	1	<b>8</b>
Gymnasiums	2	2	0	3	1	<b>8</b>
Senior Centers	1	0	1	0	2	<b>4</b>
<b>Outdoor Facilities:</b>						
Baseball/ Softball Fields	40	16	20	33	25	<b>134</b>
Soccer Fields	23	3	4	8	6	<b>44</b>
Football Fields	5	3	3	5	3	<b>19</b>
Playground Areas	42	9	12	18	16	<b>97</b>
Outdoor Lane Pools	2	1	1	2	2	<b>8</b>
Outdoor Leisure Pools	2	1	1	1	1	<b>6</b>
Tennis Courts	26	14	13	26	8	<b>87</b>
Basketball Courts	9.5	3	5	7.5	3	<b>28</b>
Skate Parks	1	1	1	1	1	<b>5</b>
Roller Hockey Rinks	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
Dog Parks	1	1	1	0	1	<b>4</b>

Note: inventory does not include facilities provided by not-for-profit agencies, private enterprise, schools, residential complexes, private fitness clubs, and similarly restricted facilities.

Gwinnett County has made great strides in recent years in terms of both parkland acquisition and recreation facility development. Rapid population growth and the heightened expectations of park system users, however, create the need to build upon past accomplishments by continuing to expand the number and range of leisure facilities and services.

With an increasingly complex park system, it is no longer appropriate to merely say that each recreation service area require one community park. Ethnic diversity, an aging population, and the emergence of new recreation activities requires a new approach and greater flexibility in planning for the future. In this light, this Capital Improvement Plan has adopted a methodology that examines park and facility needs from two perspectives: supply and distribution. Major categories of facility types – ranging from community centers to skate parks – were assessed using this two-pronged approach. Recommended provision standards were established to guide the provision analysis, while GIS mapping was created to provide direction for the distribution analysis.

Table 7-2 provides a "snapshot" of the current park and facility needs and priorities within each Recreation Planning Area (RPA). Applying inventory and population data within each RPA to the recommended provision standard for each facility type (see Table 6-6), parkland and facilities that did not meet the standards were identified. Included in this analysis were County facilities, as well as recreation areas provided by local cities, and the federal government. RPAs B, C, and E are the most deficient in terms of overall park and recreation infrastructure, although it bears noting that all RPAs have additional park and/or facility requirements, especially considering anticipated levels of population growth.



**Table 7-2: Application of Park and Recreation Facility Provision Standards by Planning Area**

RPA	<u>Above</u> County-Wide Provision Standard	<u>Below</u> County-Wide Provision Standard
A	Active Parkland Greenways Outdoor Aquatic Facilities Community Centers Activity Buildings Seniors Recreation Centers Ball Diamonds Soccer Fields Football Fields Playgrounds Tennis Courts Basketball Courts Picnic Pavilions	Passive Parkland Indoor Aquatic Facilities Gymnasiums Sand Volleyball Courts Skate Parks
B	Community Centers Activity Buildings Gymnasiums Tennis Courts Skate Parks	Active Parkland Passive Parkland Greenways Outdoor Aquatic Facilities Seniors Recreation Centers Ball Diamonds Soccer Fields Football Fields Playgrounds Basketball Courts Sand Volleyball Courts Picnic Pavilions

**Table 7-2: Application of Park and Recreation Facility Provision Standards by Planning Area**

RPA	<u>Above County-Wide Provision Standard</u>	<u>Below County-Wide Provision Standard</u>
C	Indoor Aquatic Facilities Seniors Recreation Centers	Active Parkland Passive Parkland Greenways Outdoor Aquatic Facilities Community Centers Activity Buildings Gymnasiums Ball Diamonds Soccer Fields Football Fields Playgrounds Tennis Courts Basketball Courts Sand Volleyball Courts Skate Parks Picnic Pavilions
D	Active Parkland Passive Parkland Greenways Indoor Aquatic Facilities Outdoor Aquatic Facilities Community Centers Activity Buildings Gymnasiums Ball Diamonds Football Fields Tennis Courts Basketball Courts Sand Volleyball Courts Picnic Pavilions	Seniors Recreation Centers Soccer Fields Playgrounds Skate Parks
E	Passive Parkland Outdoor Aquatic Facilities Ball Diamonds Skate Parks	Active Parkland Greenways Indoor Aquatic Facilities Community Centers Activity Buildings Seniors Recreation Centers Gymnasiums Soccer Fields Football Fields Playgrounds Tennis Courts Basketball Courts Sand Volleyball Courts Picnic Pavilions

Table 7-2 provides a useful guide to establishing capital project priorities throughout the County and can be used as a point of departure for the rest of the analysis. With this Capital Improvement Plan having a planning horizon of 4 years, coupled with the rapid growth of the County, it is very important to understand that there will be a need for all types of facilities throughout the County in the coming years.

Furthermore, this Capital Improvement Plan is guided by a set of goals established by the Recreation Authority. Several of the goals recommend that the County adopt a balanced approach to acquisition and development (both geographically and in terms of the range of facilities) and that the County strive to meet the needs of all residents. Equity in park and facility provision is a dominant theme of this Plan.

## 7.2 PARKLAND ACQUISITION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations related to the acquisition of parkland:

- The County currently owns and/or leases approximately 8,971 acres of parkland at 73 sites. It is recommended that Gwinnett County continue to support and work with other parkland providers in order to increase the overall supply and to ensure that parks are being acquired in the areas where they are most needed. Given the need for additional parkland in all areas, and especially RPAs A, B, and C, the County should work to expand existing parks through both the acquisition of adjacent parcels and new landholdings.
- When acquiring parkland, it is recommended that the County have regard to the gap areas identified on Map 6-1 in this Plan.
- Acquire one Community Park Site and initiate phase 1 development in each RPA C and D to serve the two new school clusters to be established in 2013/14.
- Acquire land to mitigate shortages in areas with inadequate parkland supplies. This can be accommodated through new land assembly or expansion of existing parks. Areas with lower than average parkland supplies include RPAs A, B, and C (all of which are not meeting the targets set for structured and unstructured parkland). Additional parkland will also be needed to serve RPAs D and E toward the end of the planning period. Specifically, the County should endeavor to:
  - acquire up to 50 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA A toward resolving the priority geographic gap area and achieving the following goals: 1 splash pad, 6 basketball courts.
  - acquire up to 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA A for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.
  - acquire up to 100 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA B toward achieving the following goals: 4 informal play fields, 1 splash pad, 6 basketball courts, 14 playgrounds.
  - acquire up to 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA B for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.
  - acquire up to 250 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA C toward resolving the priority geographic gap area and achieving the following

goals: 12 soccer fields, 1 splash pad, 8 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 24 playgrounds.

- acquire up to 200 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA C for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.
- acquire up to 150 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA D toward resolving the 3-4 priority geographic gap areas and achieving the following goals: 1 outdoor family aquatics complex, 8 basketball courts, 13 playgrounds.
- acquire up to 100 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA E toward resolving the 1-2 priority geographic gap areas and achieving the following goals: 8 soccer fields, 6 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 6 playgrounds.

### **7.3 GREENWAY DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The development of a greenway system in Gwinnett County is the number one goal of this Plan. There is also a need to update the County's 2002 Open Space and Greenway Master Plan. In the interim, recommendations have been set made for the allocation of significant funds toward the establishment of a County-wide greenway system (up to a total of approximately \$110 million depending on the amount of SPLOST funds available). The appropriation of funds amongst the recreation planning areas and the timing of implementation will depend heavily upon the opportunities for acquisition and development. The following are the specific capital recommendations related to greenways.



#### Recreation Planning Area "A" – Greenway Recommendations

- Chattahoochee Greenway Section 2 COE's (CRNRA Suwanee Creek Unit to CRNRA Abbotts Bridge Park) - Acquisition to Construction (4.26 miles)
- Singleton Creek Greenway (McDaniel Farm Park to Gwinnett Arena) - Acquisition to Construction (2.47 miles)
- Suwanee Creek Greenway 1 (Suwanee Creek Park to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard) - Acquisition to Construction (1.12 miles)
- Suwanee Creek Greenway 2 (PIB to Chattahoochee River) - Acquisition to Construction (1.31 miles)
- Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 1 Section 3 (Completion of route from I-985 underpass to Environment and Heritage Center; Subsections 4/5 and 6) - Construction (<2.53 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "B" - Greenway Recommendations

- Camp Creek Greenway (Hwy 29 Park Site to Singleton Road Activity Bldg.) - Acquisition to Construction (1.71 miles)
- Yellow River/Vecomma Greenway (Vecoma Park Site to Riverbend Park Site) - Acquisition to Construction (1.30 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "C" - Greenway Recommendations

- Club Drive Greenway (Sweetwater MS to Club Drive Park) - Acquisition to Construction (1.12 miles)
- Lawrenceville Greenway (Lawrenceville Future Park Site to Ronald Reagan Parkway Greenway) - Acquisition to Construction (4.00 miles)
- Ronald Reagan Parkway Greenway (Bethesda Park to Ronald Reagan Park) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.83 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "D" - Greenway Recommendations

- Alcovy River Greenway Section 2 (Freemans Mill Park to Rock House Road) - Acquisition to Construction (2.54 miles)
- Chattahoochee Greenway Section 1 (COE's Bowman Unit to Settles Bridge Park) - Acquisition to Construction (5.00 miles)
- Harbins/Palm Section 1 (Harbins Park at Indian Shoals Road Parking Lot to Phillips Property Boundary) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.46 miles)
- Harbins/Palm Section 2 (Phillips Property Boundary to Palm Creek Park Boundary) - Additional Acquisition, Engineering/Design, Construction (1.12 miles)
- Harbins/Tribble Greenway Section 1 (Harbins Park Phase 1 Path to Harbins/Edwards Boundary) - Construction (1.54 miles)
- Harbins/Tribble Greenway Section 2 - Construction (2.28 miles)
- Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 1 Section 5 Road-side Path Alternative + Trailhead (Buford Drive at Mall of Georgia Blvd to Mall of Georgia Drive at Woodward Crossing Road) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.23 miles)
- Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 2 Section 1 (Gravel Springs Road to Bogan Park) - Engineering/Design, Construction (3.30 miles)
- Ivy Creek Phases 1 & 2 - balance of land acquisition (P1/S5 - 1.23 miles; P2/S1 - 3.30 miles)
- Little Mulberry River Greenway (Little Mulberry park to Mount Moriah Road) - Acquisition to Construction (1.55 miles)
- Rabbit Hill Greenway (Rabbit Hill Park to Dacula Park) - Acquisition to Construction (1.80 miles)
- Richland Creek Greenway (Chattahoochee Greenway to Sycamore Road) - Acquisition to Construction (2.67 miles)

#### Recreation Planning Area "E" - Greenway Recommendations

- Centerville Hwy/Yellow River Greenway (Centerville Hwy Tract to Yellow River) - Additional Acquisition, Engineering/Design, Construction (2.33 miles)



## 7.4 FACILITY DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Requirements for significant recreation facilities within the County are well documented in Section 6. In an effort to summarize these recommendations, and to present them in a format that is different from that used elsewhere in this report, the capital facility-related recommendations are listed on a park-by-park basis below. If a park is not listed, there are no recommended changes to it.

The facility development recommendations are listed below by park and have not been placed in order of priority. The priority and capital cost of each recommendation is provided in Section 7.5.

### Alexander Park

- Phase II: Vehicular drive on east side, and one-way entrance/exit on Hwy 124; Soccer Complex (two adult fields, concession/restroom building, parking); Teen Recreation Area (skate park, two half-court basketball courts, sand volleyball, plaza and shelter, all lighted with parking); Pavilion/playground complex with parking and restroom building and Dog Park
- Boardwalk along Pugh Creek (on the southern border of park); Multiple lake and streamside docks, shelters and other passive use amenities; Architectural Pavilion and Contemplation area

### Bay Creek Park

- Community Center/Gym; Group Picnic Area (Pavilion/playground, restrooms, parking) and Completion of the Multi-Purpose and Nature Trail Systems
- Rollerblade Hockey Rink (covered if built)
- Indoor competition pool and outdoor family aquatics complex in the Grayson area (possibly Bay Creek Park or Vines Gardens)

### Beaver Ruin Park Site

- Park development as per Master Plan to be prepared in 2007/08

### Bethesda Park

- Community Center with Gymnasium; Second half of the Multi-Purpose Trail system and interior sidewalk system

### Bogans Park

- Replace the 10 planned tennis courts with other recreation facilities needed in this area (such as a dog park, additional picnic facilities, etc.)
- Redevelop the teen zone
- Nature trail link (connecting the paved trail system)

### Centerville Park Site

- Prepare Master Plan

### Club Drive Park

- Skate park recreation area (including pre-teen play area, shelter, and parking) and completion of multi-use pathway and two nature trails
- Fishing Dock/Lake overlook on the west side of Rolling Ridge Drive and the contemplation area on west side of park
- Park lighting

### Collins Hill Park

- Dog park
- Update Master Plan

### Dacula Park

- Remove the outdoor lane pool at Dacula Park (pending the development of an outdoor family aquatics complex at Mountain View Park Site)
- Gymnasium
- Playground/Shelter at western edge of park

### DeShong Park

- Large pavilion on east side of park; Dog Park; Second half of the multi-purpose trail system
- Playground/Shelter/Restroom/parking on west side; Entire nature trail system and the Disc Golf course

### Doc Moore Branch Park Site

- Prepare Master Plan

### Duncan Creek Park

- Soccer Complex (4 fields, concession/restroom building, tot lot, parking and vehicular access drive); Multi-Purpose Trail system and soft surface trail network (mulch pathway, boardwalks and shelter)
- Tennis Complex (6 courts, restrooms) and Picnic and Seniors area (shelters, horseshoe pits, bocce courts) and parking

### Elisha Winn House (Gwinnett Historical Society)

- Funding for future capital items, such as architectural evaluation, site master plan, repairs and capital maintenance, and/or building and site improvements

### Freeman's Mill Park

- Mill area (restore interior, restore and interpret the mill building's works and the mill pond, construction of a demonstration mill)
- Orientation Plaza; Interpretive building; Restoration of mill pond dam and Dam and River Overlook decks (boardwalk, interpretive panels)

### George Pierce Park

- Gymnasium
- Trailhead playground/shelter/restroom building near adult softball fields
- New network of trails (natural surface and paved) on south side near to soccer complex and existing playground/picnic shelters

### Graves Park

- Splashground; Skate Park and nature/historical/interpretive trails and kiosk

### Gwinnett History Museum/Female Seminary

- Various building and site development components (free-standing Kitchen Building; Service Building with restrooms, furniture storage room and catering kitchen; Well house; small Barn; Corncrib; large Arbor, landscaped Events Lawn, pedestrian paving, buffer plantings)

#### Harbins Community Park Site

- Phase 1 construction (to be determined by Master Plan in 2008) - consider the development of a Soccer complex, Ball complex, Football complex, Teen facilities, Playground/Pavilion complex

#### Harbins Park

- Dog Park; Lawn Court area; Half of the Meadow; Teen Area (basketball, volleyball, skate park); Two shelters; Half of the Multi-purpose trail system and Historical/Archeological Interpretive Signage throughout park
- Extension of the Equestrian and Mountain Biking trails
- Half of the hiking trail (including pedestrian bridge over the Alcovy River and entire loop south of the Alcovy River)

#### Highway 29/Lilburn Community Park Site & Lion's Club Park

- Complete phase 2 of construction of these parks (amenities to be determined through Master Plan and phase 1 construction in 2008)

#### Holcomb Bridge Park

- Two Nature trail loops and two pedestrian bridges with two river overlook decks

#### Jones Bridge Park

- Update Master Plan - eliminate the activity building to allow for the development of a multi-use trail loop and maintenance building/yard

#### Lanier Community Park Site

- Prepare Master Plan - consider the development of a Ball complex (small), Football complex, Teen facilities, Playground/Pavilion complex

#### Lee Tract Park Site

- Prepare Master Plan

#### Lenora Park

- Complete eastside of park: Soccer complex (4 fields), Tennis Courts (4), Walking trail and pavilion/playground/restroom complex
- Teen recreation area (Roller sports facility and rink, basketball courts, restroom facilities); Volleyball courts (2)
- Community center
- West side Pavilion/playground/restroom complex
- 7th ball diamond

#### Little Mulberry Park

- Pavilion/playground/restroom complex; Disc Golf course; dog park; Completion of paved trail system connecting new elements
- Completion of Equestrian/Walking Trail (West Loop); Wildflower Garden and Completion of Woodland Foot Trail (West & South Loops)
- Lakefront Activity Area (Fishing piers, boardwalk, outdoor classroom, 2 small shelters, lakeshore concession/shelter building)
- Native American Memorial Site
- Caretakers Residence

### McDaniel Farm Park

- East Entry drive and facilities (large pavilion, parking lot, playground, restroom building, wildlife Pond, open lawn turf area)
- Completion of the Multi-Purpose Trail System and Nature Trail System
- Woodland reforestation program (on eastern abandoned agricultural fields)
- Restroom building in stream valley; two rustic shelters and two outdoor classrooms

### Mountain View Park Site

- Prepare Master Plan in tandem with changes to Rabbit Hill Park - consider the development of a Ball complex, Outdoor family aquatics complex, Football complex, Teen facilities, Playground/Pavilion complex, and potentially a Seniors Recreation Center

### Palm Creek Park Site

- Phase 1 construction (to be determined by Master Plan in 2008)

### Peachtree Ridge Park

- Remaining Teen Facilities (free skate facility, shelter/plaza & volleyball courts)
- Tennis Courts (6) and Seniors Courts Area (2 bocce courts, 2 horseshoe pits, shelter with checkers tables)
- Outdoor Family Aquatics Center and Dog Park
- Completion of Multi-Purpose Trail System and the Nature Trail system (Escarpment Section, Fern Valley Section, Wetland Section with boardwalk and Lake Luella views) and Picnic Meadow below dam
- Second vehicular entrance to park with overpass bridge for Multi-Purpose Trail
- Lake Overlook shelter and Fishing Dock

### Rabbit Hill Park

- Soccer complex expansion (in conjunction with the development of the new Mountain View Community Park Site)
- Tennis courts (4); covered roller sports rink
- Seniors Courts Area (shelter bocce courts and horseshoe pits)

### Rhodes Jordan Park

- Park development as per Master Plan to be prepared in 2007/08 (possibly 2-3 soccer fields, teen facilities, dog park, seniors courts, park perimeter trail loop, picnic complex improvements)

### Riverbend Park Site / Vecoma Tract

- Prepare joint Master Plan for both parcels

### Rock Springs Park

- Soccer Complex (3 fields, concession/restroom building and parking); Plaza Area (irrigated lawn play area, extensive trellis, circular performance area with integrated seating); Seniors Courts Area (bocce and horseshoe courts, picnic tables, restrooms) and Playground/shelter complex
- Activity Building/Gym and parking
- Teen Area (Skate park, plaza and shelter)
- Multi-purpose trail sub-loop; Great Lawn enhancements; Open Meadow (3 acres with shelter) and Nature Trail system

### Settles Bridge Park

- Parking Lot and connecting vehicular access; Splashground and Lawn Courts (including shelter and restroom facility)
- Westside Meadow area and perimeter Multi-Purpose Trail; Suspension bridge connector (pedestrian/bicycle)
- Nature Trail System with pedestrian bridges (linking County and State owned parkland); Nature Trail System in North section plus river overlook deck

### Shorty Howell Park

- Volleyball courts and badminton courts

### South Gwinnett Park

- Park redevelopment (including removal of three baseball fields, development of maintenance and pedestrian path, maintenance building, plaza area, playground area, stormwater management pond, concession area, sidewalk system, and expansion to existing building)

### Sweet Water Park

- Teen Skate Area and Bocce courts
- Continuation of the Multi-purpose trail loop (eastern section); Pedestrian/Bike bridges over the stream (2); and nature trail connector and the creek side picnic area.

### Tribble Mill Park

- Park development as per Master Plan to be prepared in 2008 (completion of multi-purpose trail system, "Medlock" style pavilion; parking and amenities to Chandler Lake, development of 60 acres of newly acquired land)

### Vines Gardens

- Prepare Master Plan
- Indoor competition pool and outdoor family aquatics complex in the Grayson area (possibly Bay Creek Park or Vines Gardens)

### West Gwinnett Park & Aquatic Center

- Pavilion/Playground complex; 3rd multi-purpose field with restroom building and tennis courts, add viewing area at "bowl" field.

### Yellow River Park

- Pasture Restoration and additional woodland restoration of abandoned trails
- Amenity area east of the Yellow River (shelter/playground, lawn area, restroom building, park drive and parking lot) and the Pedestrian Trail System with two river outlook decks

### Yellow River Post Office

- Prepare Master Plan

## 7.5 LONG RANGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

To meet the goals of this Plan and to provide specific direction to future capital spending, priorities for land acquisition and facility development have been established.

### How Priorities were Established

In order to identify priority recommendations, a list of capital projects substantiated by the Plan's background research and public consultation program – and also containing unfunded from the County's numerous park master plans – was prepared. Each project on this list was then divided into one of eleven categories:

Table 7-3	Greenway Acquisition and Development
Table 7-4	Acquisition of Open Space Park Sites
Table 7-5	Acquisition of Unstructured and Structured Park Sites
Table 7-6	Development of Initial Phase of Open Space Park Sites
Table 7-7	Development of Initial Phase of Unstructured Park Sites
Table 7-8	Development of Initial Phase of Structured Park Sites
Table 7-9	Completion of Existing Open Space Park Sites
Table 7-10	Completion of Existing Unstructured Parks
Table 7-11	Completion of Existing Structured Parks
Table 7-12	Historical/Cultural Assets
Table 7-13	Park Rehabilitation

The capital project tables were then distributed to several key County staff and each Recreation Authority member in order for them to rank each recommendation using a scale of 1 to 5, where "1" means that they feel the project is a very low priority and where "5" represents a very high priority. The average scores were presented to the Recreation Authority and the final order of priority was refined through a group workshop. Prioritization between tables was outside the scope of this analysis.

Given the dynamic nature of the County and its citizens, it is possible that priorities for spending will change over the next four or five years. In order to meet the most critical needs of the dynamic and changing population, staff and political officials may need to modify the priorities of capital projects over time.

Tables 7-3 to 7-13 list every capital parks and recreation facility project recommended by this Plan, along with their estimated capital and operating cost implications. Table 7-14 presents a summary of the cost implications of the proposed projects.

### Capital Cost Estimates

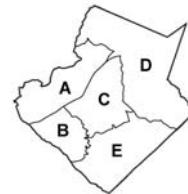
Cost estimates for each capital project were prepared by the County's Parks and Recreation Division using figures published in park master plans and actual costs for recently bid projects. Capital costs for land and greenway acquisition are represented in estimated 2009 dollars, while all construction costs are shown in estimated 2010 dollars.

It is also important to note that the actual list of projects to be implemented is entirely dependent upon the extension of the SPLOST by voters and the amount of the SPLOST allocated to the County parks system. As presently proposed, the entire capital program is approximately \$556 million with approximately \$4.63 million in annual operating costs. This figure is more than what

is anticipated to be available for parks and recreation through the SPLOST extension, however, because there is justification for each recommendation, it is important for each one to be identified and prioritized. Also of note, because the future capital budget is unknown, the lists of project have not been divided into tiers or groupings, rather a running total column illustrates the estimated cost of implementing each project in succession.

### Operating Cost Estimates

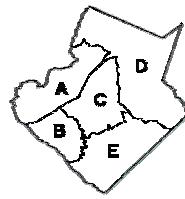
Operating cost estimates for each capital project were prepared by the County's Parks and Recreation Division. These estimates provide a general indication of expected operating costs on an annual basis; actual costs will likely vary on a park-by-park due to several factors related to programming, staff deployment, local park conditions, usage, etc. Operating costs are represented in estimated 2010 dollars.



**Table 7-3: Greenway Acquisition and Development**

Priority	RPA	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
			Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	ALL	Update Greenway Master Plan	\$129,780	\$129,780	\$0	\$0
2	ALL	Acquisition of high-priority / threatened greenway routes	\$1,500,000	\$1,629,780	\$0	\$0
3	D	Ivy Creek Phases 1 & 2 - balance of land acquisition (P1/S5 - 1.23 miles; P2/S1 - 3.30 miles)	\$2,757,825	\$4,387,605	\$0	\$0
4	A/D	Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 1 Section 3 (Completion of route from I-985 underpass to Environment and Heritage Center; Subsections 5 and 6) - Construction (<2.53 miles)	\$2,811,900	\$7,199,505	\$7,747	\$7,747
5	C	Ronald Reagan Parkway Greenway (Bethesda Park to Ronald Reagan Park) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.83 miles)	\$3,672,897	\$10,872,402	\$11,163	\$18,911
6	D	Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 1 Section 5 Road-side Path Alternative + Trailhead (Buford Drive at Mall of Georgia Blvd to Mall of Georgia Drive at Woodward Crossing Road) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.23 miles)	\$3,024,702	\$13,897,105	\$7,503	\$26,414
7	D	Harbins/Tribble Greenway Section 1 (Harbins Park Phase 1 Path to Harbins/Edwards Boundary) - Construction (1.54 miles)	\$2,997,918	\$16,895,023	\$9,394	\$35,808
8	D	Harbins/Tribble Greenway Section 2 - Construction (2.28 miles)	\$6,013,140	\$22,908,163	\$13,908	\$49,716
9	B	Camp Creek Greenway (Hwy 29 Park Site to Singleton Road Activity Bldg.) - Acquisition to Construction (1.71 miles)	\$3,883,667	\$26,791,829	\$10,431	\$60,148
10	C	Club Drive Greenway (Sweetwater MS to Club Drive Park) - Acquisition to Construction (1.12 miles)	\$2,543,688	\$29,335,517	\$6,832	\$66,980
11	A	Singleton Creek Greenway (McDaniel Farm Park to Gwinnett Arena) - Acquisition to Construction (2.47 miles)	\$5,609,741	\$34,945,258	\$15,067	\$82,047
12	C	Lawrenceville Greenway (Lawrenceville Future Park Site to Ronald Reagan Parkway Greenway) - Acquisition to Construction (4.00 miles)	\$9,084,600	\$44,029,858	\$24,401	\$106,448
13	A	Suwanee Creek Greenway Extension 1 (Suwanee Creek Park to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard) - Acquisition to Construction (1.12 miles)	\$2,543,688	\$46,573,546	\$6,832	\$113,280
14	D	Rabbit Hill Greenway (Rabbit Hill Park to Dacula Park) - Acquisition to Construction (1.80 miles)	\$4,088,070	\$50,661,616	\$10,980	\$124,261
15	E	Centerville Hwy/Yellow River Greenway (Centerville Hwy Tract to Yellow River) - Additional Acquisition, Engineering/Design, Construction (2.33 miles)	\$6,225,082	\$56,886,697	\$13,603	\$137,864
16	D	Ivy Creek Greenway Phase 2 (Gravel Springs Road to Bogan Park) - Engineering/Design, Construction (3.30 miles)	\$7,301,322	\$64,188,019	\$20,131	\$157,995
17	A	Suwanee Creek Greenway Extension 2 (PIB to Chattahoochee River) - Acquisition to Construction (1.31 miles)	\$2,975,207	\$67,163,226	\$7,991	\$165,986
18	D	Harbins/Palm Section 1 (Harbins Park at Indian Shoals Road Parking Lot to Phillips Property Boundary) - Engineering/Design, Construction (1.46 miles)	\$2,957,484	\$70,120,710	\$8,906	\$174,892
19	B/E	Yellow River/Vecom Greenway (Vecoma Park Site to Riverbend Park Site) - Acquisition to Construction (1.30 miles)	\$2,952,495	\$73,073,205	\$7,930	\$182,822
20	D	Alcovy River Greenway Section 2 (Freemans Mill Park to Rock House Road) - Acquisition to Construction (2.54 miles)	\$5,768,721	\$78,841,926	\$15,494	\$198,317
21	D	Harbins/Palm Section 2 (Phillips Property Boundary to Palm Creek Park Boundary) - Additional Acquisition, Engineering/Design, Construction (1.12 miles)	\$2,050,961	\$80,892,887	\$6,832	\$205,149
22	D	Little Mulberry River Greenway (Little Mulberry park to Mount Moriah Road) - Acquisition to Construction (1.55 miles)	\$3,520,283	\$84,413,169	\$9,455	\$214,604
23	D	Chattahoochee Greenway Section 1 (COE's Bowman Unit to Settles Bridge Park) - Acquisition to Construction (5.00 miles)	\$11,355,750	\$95,768,919	\$30,501	\$245,105
24	A	Chattahoochee Greenway Section 2 COE's (CRNRA Suwanee Creek Unit to CRNRA Abbotts Bridge Park) - Acquisition to Construction (4.26 miles)	\$9,675,099	\$105,444,018	\$25,987	\$271,092
25	D	Richland Creek Greenway (Chattahoochee Greenway to Sycamore Road) - Acquisition to Construction (2.67 miles)	\$6,063,971	\$111,507,989	\$16,287	\$287,379

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.



**Table 7-4: Acquisition of Open Space Park Sites**

Priority	RPA	Project(s)	Land Acquisition Estimates (2009\$)	
			Project Cost	Cumulative Total
1	C	Acquire up to 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA C for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.	\$10,815,000	\$10,815,000
2	B	Acquire up to 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA B for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.	\$10,815,000	\$21,630,000
3	A	Acquire up to 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA A for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.	\$16,222,500	\$37,852,500
4	C	Acquire up to an additional 100 acres of Open Space parkland in RPA C for expansion of nature, multi-use, equestrian, and/or mountain biking trails, as well as playground/pavilion complexes and similar amenities.	\$10,815,000	\$48,667,500

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.

**Table 7-5: Acquisition of Unstructured and Structured Park Sites**

Priority	RPA	Project(s)	Land Acquisition Estimates (2009\$)	
			Project Cost	Cumulative Total
1	C	Acquire up to 150 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA C toward resolving the priority geographic gap area and achieving the following goals: 12 soccer fields, 1 splash pad, 8 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 24 playgrounds. Some/all of this land will serve a new school cluster.	\$20,278,200	\$20,278,200
2	B	Acquire up to 100 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA B toward achieving the following goals: 4 informal play fields, 1 splash pad, 6 basketball courts, 14 playgrounds.	\$41,637,800	\$61,916,000
3	D	Acquire up to 150 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA D toward resolving the 3-4 priority geographic gap areas and achieving the following goals: 1 outdoor family aquatics complex, 8 basketball courts, 13 playgrounds, 1 senior recreation center. Some/all of this land will serve a new school cluster.	\$20,278,200	\$82,194,200
4	E	Acquire up to 100 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA E toward resolving the 1-2 priority geographic gap areas and achieving the following goals: 8 soccer fields, 6 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 6 playgrounds.	\$9,192,800	\$91,387,000
5	A	Acquire up to 50 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA A toward resolving the priority geographic gap area and achieving the following goals: 1 splash pad, 6 basketball courts.	\$9,463,150	\$100,850,150
6	C	Acquire up to an additional 100 acres of structured and/or unstructured parkland (Community Parks, Passive Community Parks, Special Purpose Neighborhood Parks) in RPA C toward resolving the priority geographic gap area and achieving the following goals: 12 soccer fields, 1 splash pad, 8 tennis courts, 8 basketball courts, 24 playgrounds. Some/all of this land will serve a new school cluster.	\$13,518,800	\$114,368,950

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.

**Table 7-6: Development of Initial Phase of Open Space Park Sites**

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	E	Vines Gardens	Prepare Master Plan	\$4,412,520	\$4,412,520	\$21,218	\$21,218
2	D	Palm Creek Park Site	Phase 1 construction (to be determined by Master Plan in 2008)	\$5,295,024	\$9,707,544	\$168,418	\$189,636
3	E	Centerville Park Site	Prepare Master Plan	\$4,412,520	\$14,120,064	\$117,760	\$307,396
4	E	Doc Moore Branch Park Site	Prepare Master Plan	\$5,295,024	\$19,415,088	\$168,418	\$475,814

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.

**Table 7-7: Development of Initial Phase of Unstructured Park Sites**

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	B	Lee Tract Park Site	Prepare Master Plan	\$4,412,520	\$4,412,520	\$117,760	\$117,760
2	B/E	Riverbend Park Site / Vecoma Tract	Prepare joint Master Plan for both parcels	\$8,825,040	\$13,237,560	\$235,520	\$353,280
3	A	Beaver Ruin Park Site	Park development as per Master Plan to be prepared in 2007/08	\$6,513,720	\$19,751,280	\$117,760	\$471,040

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.



**Table 7-8: Development of Initial Phase of Structured Park Sites**

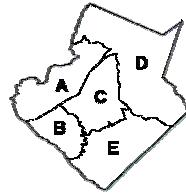
Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	D	<b>Harbins Community Park Site</b>	Phase 1 construction (to be determined by Master Plan in 2008) - consider the development of a Soccer complex, Ball complex, Football complex, Teen facilities, Playground/Pavilion complex	\$13,447,680	\$13,447,680	\$212,180	\$212,180
2	D	<b>Mountain View Park Site</b>	Prepare Master Plan in tandem with changes to Rabbit Hill Park - consider the development of a Ball complex, Outdoor family aquatics complex, Football complex, Teen facilities, Playground/Pavilion complex, and potentially a Seniors Recreation Center	\$13,447,680	\$26,895,360	\$212,180	\$424,360
3	D	<b>Lanier Community Park Site</b>	Prepare Master Plan - consider the development of a Ball complex (small), Football complex, Teen facilities, Playground/Pavilion complex	\$13,447,680	\$40,343,040	\$212,180	\$636,540
4	C	<b>Acquisition</b>	Initiate phase 1 development of Community Park yet to be acquired to serve the new school cluster to be established in 2013/14 in RPA C	\$5,578,045	\$45,921,085	\$9,972	\$646,512
5	D	<b>Acquisition</b>	Initiate phase 1 development of Community Park yet to be acquired to serve the new school cluster to be established in 2013/14 in RPA D	\$5,578,045	\$51,499,130	\$9,972	\$656,485

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.

**Table 7-9: Completion of Existing Open Space Parks**

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	D	<b>Little Mulberry Park</b>	Pavilion/playground/restroom complex; Disc Golf course; dog park; Completion of paved trail system connecting new elements	\$2,311,320	\$2,311,320	\$22,279	\$22,279
2	A	<b>McDaniel Farm Park</b>	East Entry drive and facilities (large pavilion, parking lot, playground, restroom building, wildlife Pond, open lawn turf area)	\$2,206,260	\$4,517,580	\$9,548	\$31,827
3	E	<b>Tribble Mill Park</b>	Park development as per Master Plan to be prepared in 2008 (completion of multi-purpose trail system, "Medlock" style pavilion; parking and amenities to Chandler Lake, development of 60 acres of newly acquired land)	\$2,626,500	\$7,144,080	\$21,218	\$53,045
4	D	<b>Settles Bridge Park</b>	Parking Lot and connecting vehicular access; Splashground and Lawn Courts (including shelter and restroom facility)	\$1,416,237	\$8,560,317	\$11,192	\$64,237
5	D	<b>Harbins Park</b>	Dog Park; Lawn Court area; Half of the Meadow; Teen Area (basketball, volleyball, skate park); Two shelters; Half of the Multi-purpose trail system and Historical/Archeological Interpretive Signage throughout park	\$4,202,400	\$12,762,717	\$29,122	\$93,359
6	D	<b>Little Mulberry Park</b>	Completion of Equestrian/Walking Trail (West Loop); Wildflower Garden and Completion of Woodland Foot Trail (West & South Loops)	\$2,626,500	\$15,389,217	\$1,061	\$94,420
7	A	<b>McDaniel Farm Park</b>	Completion of the Multi-Purpose Trail System and Nature Trail System	\$1,365,780	\$16,754,997	\$6,631	\$101,051
8	D	<b>Harbins Park</b>	Extension of the Equestrian and Mountain Biking trails	\$189,108	\$16,944,105	\$3,183	\$104,233
9	A	<b>Holcomb Bridge Park</b>	Two Nature trail loops and two pedestrian bridges with two river overlook decks	\$533,705	\$17,477,810	\$1,061	\$105,294
10	D	<b>Settles Bridge Park</b>	Westside Meadow area and perimeter Multi-Purpose Trail; Suspension bridge connector (pedestrian/bicycle)	\$1,605,339	\$19,083,149	\$21,218	\$126,512
11	D	<b>Settles Bridge Park</b>	Nature Trail System with pedestrian bridges (linking County and State owned parkland); Nature Trail System in North section plus river overlook deck	\$1,167,322	\$20,250,470	\$4,244	\$130,756
12	E	<b>Yellow River Park</b>	Pasture Restoration and additional woodland restoration of abandoned trails	\$52,530	\$20,303,000	\$1,061	\$131,817
13	E	<b>Yellow River Park</b>	Amenity area east of the Yellow River (shelter/playground, lawn area, restroom building, park drive and parking lot) and the Pedestrian Trail System with two river outlook decks	\$1,575,900	\$21,878,900	\$5,835	\$137,652
14	D	<b>Harbins Park</b>	Half of the hiking trail (including pedestrian bridge over the Alcovy River and entire loop south of the Alcovy River)	\$1,867,967	\$23,746,867	\$3,183	\$140,834
15	D	<b>Little Mulberry Park</b>	Lakefront Activity Area (Fishing piers, boardwalk, outdoor classroom, 2 small shelters, lakeshore concession/shelter building)	\$2,626,500	\$26,373,367	\$1,591	\$142,426
16	A	<b>McDaniel Farm Park</b>	Woodland reforestation program (on eastern abandoned agricultural fields)	\$357,204	\$26,730,571	\$212	\$142,638
17	D	<b>Little Mulberry Park</b>	Native American Memorial Site	\$157,590	\$26,888,161	\$5,305	\$147,943
18	A	<b>McDaniel Farm Park</b>	Restroom building in stream valley; two rustic shelters and two outdoor classrooms	\$336,192	\$27,224,353	\$3,183	\$151,125
19	D	<b>Little Mulberry Park</b>	Caretakers Residence	\$262,650	\$27,487,003	\$1,061	\$152,186

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.



**Table 7-10: Completion of Existing Unstructured Parks**

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	B	<b>Graves Park</b>	Splashground; Skate Park and nature/historical/interpretive trails and kiosk	\$1,050,600	\$1,050,600	\$14,322	\$14,322
2	C	<b>Club Drive Park</b>	Skate park recreation area (including pre-teen play area, shelter, and parking) and completion of multi-use pathway and two nature trails	\$2,878,455	\$3,929,055	\$6,365	\$20,688
3	A	<b>West Gwinnett Park &amp; Aquatic Center</b>	Pavilion/Playground complex; 3rd multi-purpose field with restroom building and tennis courts, add viewing area at "bowl" field.	\$1,439,322	\$5,368,377	\$30,023	\$50,711
4	C	<b>Sweet Water Park</b>	Teen Skate Area and Bocce courts	\$367,710	\$5,736,087	\$3,713	\$54,424
5	C	<b>Sweet Water Park</b>	Continuation of the Multi-purpose trail loop (eastern section); Pedestrian/Bike bridges over the stream(2); and nature trail connector and the creek side picnic area.	\$327,787	\$6,063,874	\$3,713	\$58,137
6	C	<b>Club Drive Park</b>	Fishing Dock/Lake overlook on the west side of Rolling Ridge Drive and the contemplation area on west side of park	\$210,120	\$6,273,994	\$1,061	\$59,198
7	E	<b>DeShong Park</b>	Large pavilion on east side of park; Dog Park; Second half of the multi-purpose trail system	\$693,396	\$6,967,390	\$1,061	\$60,259
8	E	<b>DeShong Park</b>	Playground/Shelter/Restroom/parking on west side; Entire nature trail system and the Disc Golf course	\$1,155,660	\$8,123,050	\$18,566	\$78,825
9	C	<b>Club Drive Park</b>	Park lighting	\$178,791	\$8,301,841	\$4,774	\$83,599

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.

**Table 7-11: Completion of Existing Structured Parks**

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	E	<b>South Gwinnett Park</b>	Park redevelopment (including removal of three baseball fields, development of maintenance and pedestrian path, maintenance building, plaza area, playground area, stormwater management pond, concession area, sidewalk system, and expansion to existing building)	\$4,944,148	\$4,944,148	\$2,122	\$2,122
2	B	<b>Highway 29/Lilburn Community Park Site &amp; Lion's Club Park</b>	Complete phase 2 of construction of these parks (amenities to be determined through Master Plan and phase 1 construction in 2008)	\$9,245,280	\$14,189,428	\$159,135	\$161,257
3	D	<b>Rhodes Jordan Park</b>	Park development as per Master Plan to be prepared in 2007/08 (possibly 2-3 soccer fields, teen facilities, dog park, seniors courts, park perimeter trail loop, picnic complex improvements)	\$8,404,800	\$22,594,228	\$111,395	\$272,651
4	C	<b>Alexander Park</b>	Phase II: Vehicular drive on east side, and one-way entrance/exit on Hwy 124; Soccer Complex (two adult fields, concession/restroom building, parking); Teen Recreation Area (skate park, two half-court basketball courts, sand volleyball, plaza and shelter, all lighted with parking); Pavilion/playground complex with parking and restroom building and Dog Park	\$10,703,095	\$33,297,322	\$214,037	\$486,688
5	E	<b>Bay Creek Park/Vines Gardens*</b>	Indoor competition pool and outdoor family aquatics complex in the Grayson area	\$17,374,298	\$50,671,620	\$334,184	\$820,871
6	D	<b>Duncan Creek Park</b>	Soccer Complex (4 fields, concession/restroom building, tot lot, parking and vehicular access drive); Multi-Purpose Trail system and soft surface trail network (mulch pathway, boardwalks and shelter)	\$5,988,420	\$56,660,040	\$169,744	\$990,615
7	C	<b>Rock Springs Park</b>	Soccer Complex (3 fields, concession/restroom building and parking); Plaza Area (irrigated lawn play area, extensive trellis, circular performance area with integrated seating); Seniors Courts Area (bocce and horseshoe courts, picnic tables, restrooms) and Playground/shelter complex	\$8,020,280	\$64,680,320	\$95,481	\$1,086,096
8	A	<b>George Pierce Park</b>	Gymnasium	\$1,260,720	\$65,941,040	\$31,827	\$1,117,923
9	D	<b>Dacula Park</b>	Gymnasium	\$3,143,921	\$69,084,961	\$128,369	\$1,246,292
10	C	<b>Bethesda Park</b>	Community Center with Gymnasium; Second half of the Multi-Purpose Trail system and interior sidewalk system	\$5,615,457	\$74,700,418	\$165,500	\$1,411,793
11	D	<b>Rabbit Hill Park</b>	Tennis courts (4); covered roller sports rink	\$1,786,020	\$76,486,438	\$98,664	\$1,510,456
12	D	<b>Bogart Park*</b>	Replace the 10 planned tennis courts with other recreation facilities needed in this area (such as a dog park, additional picnic facilities, etc.)	\$1,313,250	\$77,799,688	\$0	\$1,510,456
13	C	<b>Rock Springs Park</b>	Activity Building/Gym and parking	\$3,361,920	\$81,161,608	\$100,786	\$1,611,242
14	C	<b>Collins Hill Park*</b>	Dog park	\$353,002	\$81,514,609	\$11,670	\$1,622,912

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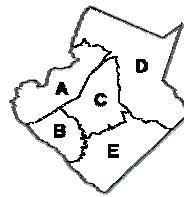
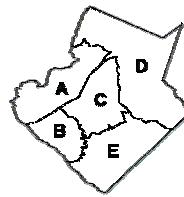


Table 7-11: Completion of Existing Structured Parks (continued)

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
15	D	Rabbit Hill Park*	Soccer complex expansion (in conjunction with the development of the new Mountain View Community Park)	\$1,575,900	\$83,090,509	\$47,741	\$1,670,652
16	E	Lenora Park	Complete eastside of park: Soccer complex (4 fields), Tennis Courts (4), Walking trail and pavilion/playground/restroom complex	\$5,904,372	\$88,994,881	\$165,500	\$1,836,153
17	E	Bay Creek Park	Community Center/Gym; Group Picnic Area (Pavilion/playground, restrooms, parking) and Completion of the Multi-Purpose and Nature Trail Systems	\$12,989,679	\$101,984,561	\$174,306	\$2,010,459
18	A	Shorty Howell Park	Volleyball courts and badminton courts*	\$26,265	\$102,010,826	\$318	\$2,010,777
19	A	Jones Bridge Park	Update Master Plan - eliminate the activity building to allow for the development of a multi-use trail loop and maintenance building/yard	\$1,575,900	\$103,586,726	\$3,183	\$2,013,960
20	E	Lenora Park	Teen recreation area (Roller sports facility and rink, basketball courts, restroom facilities); Volleyball courts (2)	\$1,654,695	\$105,241,421	\$20,422	\$2,034,382
21	E	Lenora Park	Community center	\$2,626,500	\$107,867,921	\$72,141	\$2,106,523
22	A	Peachtree Ridge Park	Remaining Teen Facilities (free skate facility, shelter/plaza & volleyball courts)	\$1,339,515	\$109,207,436	\$11,670	\$2,118,193
23	A	Peachtree Ridge Park	Tennis Courts (6) and Seniors Courts Area (2 bocce courts, 2 horseshoe pits, shelter with checkers tables)	\$840,480	\$110,047,916	\$127,308	\$2,245,501
24	C	Rock Springs Park	Teen Area (Skate park, plaza and shelter)	\$1,213,443	\$111,261,359	\$11,405	\$2,256,906
25	A	Peachtree Ridge Park	Outdoor Family Aquatics Center and Dog Park	\$3,772,705	\$115,034,063	\$0	\$2,256,906
26	D	Rabbit Hill Park	Seniors Courts Area (shelter bocce courts and horseshoe pits)	\$262,650	\$115,296,713	\$530	\$2,257,436
27	D	Duncan Creek Park	Tennis Complex (6 courts, restrooms) and Picnic and Seniors area (shelters, horseshoe pits, bocce courts) and parking	\$1,232,354	\$116,529,067	\$74,263	\$2,331,699
28	E	Lenora Park	West side Pavilion/playground/restroom complex	\$1,434,069	\$117,963,136	\$8,805	\$2,340,505
29	C	Rock Springs Park	Multi-purpose trail sub-loop; Great Lawn enhancements; Open Meadow (3 acres with shelter) and Nature Trail system	\$630,360	\$118,593,496	\$31,827	\$2,372,332
30	D	Dacula Park	Playground/Shelter at western edge of park	\$232,183	\$118,825,679	\$424	\$2,372,756
31	A	Peachtree Ridge Park	Completion of Multi-Purpose Trail System and the Nature Trail system (Escarpment Section, Fern Valley Section, Wetland Section with boardwalk and Lake Luella views) and Picnic Meadow below dam	\$1,654,695	\$120,480,374	\$3,713	\$2,376,469
32	D	Bogon Park*	Redevelop the teen zone	\$330,939	\$120,811,313	\$6,631	\$2,383,100
33	E	Bay Creek Park	Rollerblade Hockey Rink (covered if built)	\$1,575,900	\$122,387,213	\$11,670	\$2,394,770
34	C	Alexander Park	Boardwalk along Pugh Creek (on the southern border of park); Multiple lake and streamside docks, shelters and other passive use amenities; Architectural Pavilion and Contemplation area	\$2,423,458	\$124,810,671	\$13,792	\$2,408,561
35	D	Bogon Park	Nature trail link (connecting the paved trail system)	\$84,048	\$124,894,719	\$2,122	\$2,410,683
36	A	Peachtree Ridge Park	Second vehicular entrance to park with overpass bridge for Multi-Purpose Trail	\$236,385	\$125,131,104	\$3,183	\$2,413,866
37	D	Dacula Park*	Remove the outdoor lane pool at Dacula Park (pending the development of an outdoor family aquatics complex at Mountain View Park Site)	\$0	\$125,131,104	\$0	\$2,413,866
38	E	Lenora Park	7th ball diamond	\$438,100	\$125,569,204	\$18,035	\$2,431,901
39	A	George Pierce Park	Trailhead playground/shelter/restroom building near adult softball fields	\$60	\$125,569,264	\$3,819	\$2,435,720
40	A	Peachtree Ridge Park	Lake Overlook shelter and Fishing Dock	\$334,091	\$125,903,355	\$690	\$2,436,410
41	C	Collins Hill Park	Update Master Plan	\$1,575,900	\$127,479,255	\$26,523	\$2,462,932
42	A	George Pierce Park	New network of trails (natural surface and paved) on south side near to soccer complex and existing playground/picnic shelters	\$740,673	\$128,219,928	\$1,061	\$2,463,993

\* project not identified in park-specific master plan

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.



**Table 7-12: Historical/Cultural Assets**

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	C	<b>Gwinnett History Museum/Female Seminary</b>	Various building and site development components (free-standing Kitchen Building; Service Building with restrooms, furniture storage room and catering kitchen; Well house; small Barn; Corncrib; large Arbor, landscaped Events Lawn, pedestrian paving, buffer plantings)	\$2,206,260	\$2,206,260	\$15,914	\$15,914
2	D	<b>Freeman's Mill Park</b>	Mill area (restore interior, restore and interpret the mill building's works and the mill pond, construction of a demonstration mill)	\$2,626,500	\$4,832,760	\$12,731	\$28,644
3	C	<b>Yellow River Post Office</b>	Prepare Master Plan	\$2,266,932	\$7,099,692	\$12,731	\$41,375
4	D	<b>Freeman's Mill Park</b>	Orientation Plaza; Interpretive building; Restoration of mill pond dam and Dam and River Overlook decks (boardwalk, interpretive panels)	\$1,407,804	\$8,507,496	\$212	\$41,587
5	D	<b>Elisha Winn House (Gwinnett Historical Society)*</b>	Funding for future capital items, such as architectural evaluation, site master plan, repairs and capital maintenance, and/or building and site improvements	\$262,650	\$8,770,146	\$0	\$41,587

\* project not identified in park-specific master plan

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.

**Table 7-13: Park Rehabilitation**

Priority	RPA	Park	Project(s)	Capital Cost Estimates		Operating Cost Estimates	
				Project Cost	Cumulative Total	Annual Cost	Cumulative Total
1	ALL	<b>Various*</b>	HVAC replacement, park repainting, swimming pool shell maintenance, play equipment replacement, hardscape replacement, irrigation system (reuse, pump stations, etc.), park road and parking resurfacing, outdoor court resurfacing and fence replacement, etc.	\$18,200,000	\$18,200,000	\$0	\$0

\* project not identified in park-specific master plan

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.

**Table 7-14: Summary - All Proposed Projects**

Table	Category	Capital Cost Estimates (2010\$) / Acquisition (2009\$)	% of Total Capital	Annual Operating Cost Estimates (2010\$)	% of Total Operating
7-3	Greenway Acquisition and Development	\$111,507,989	20%	\$287,379	6%
7-4	Acquisition of Open Space Park Sites	\$48,667,500	9%	\$0	0%
7-5	Acquisition of Unstructured and Structured Park Sites	\$114,368,950	21%	\$0	0%
7-6	Development of Initial Phase of Open Space Park Sites	\$19,415,088	3%	\$475,814	10%
7-7	Development of Initial Phase of Unstructured Park Sites	\$19,751,280	4%	\$471,040	10%
7-8	Development of Initial Phase of Structured Park Sites	\$51,499,130	9%	\$656,485	14%
7-9	Completion of Existing Open Space Parks	\$27,487,003	5%	\$152,186	3%
7-10	Completion of Existing Unstructured Parks	\$8,301,841	1%	\$83,599	2%
7-11	Completion of Existing Structured Parks	\$128,219,928	23%	\$2,463,993	53%
7-12	Historical/Cultural Assets	\$8,770,146	2%	\$41,587	1%
7-13	Park Rehabilitation	\$18,200,000	3%	\$0	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$556,188,855</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$4,632,083</b>	<b>100%</b>

Capital/operating cost estimates are shown in 2010\$; land acquisition costs are shown in 2009\$. Cost figures provided by the Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division.



**GWINNETT COUNTY,  
GEORGIA**

Parks & Recreation  
Capital Improvement Plan  
(2007 Update)

*Map 7-1  
Gwinnett County Parks*



**Feature Legend**

- Recreation Planning Area
- County Parks

NOTE: This Map does not include those  
County-owned parcels classified  
as "Linear" or "Other"

Monteith♦Brown  
planning consultants  
  
N  
0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles