



Purpose of the CIP Update

The 2007 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is an update to the 2004 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the 2000 Capital Improvement Plan for Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation Division. The CIP Update will guide the development and expansion of parks, greenways, and recreation facilities in Gwinnett County from 2009 to 2013. This timing coincides with the period of the next Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).

Specifically, the Updated Capital Improvement Plan does the following:

- Evaluates current status of the County’s ability to provide service based upon its enhanced array of capital facilities;
- Analyzes service gaps and needs within the County due to changes in population and distribution of existing facilities; and
- Proposes a refined capital program for the period following the current (2005) SPLOST program.

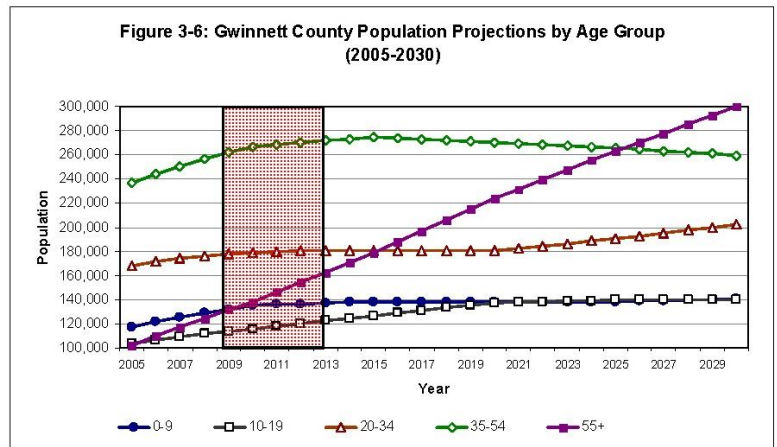
Key considerations in updating the CIP include the following, many of which are discussed in this summary:

- Demographic characteristics and projections
- Leisure trends
- Public input, parks and facility inventory
- Provision standards and service gaps
- Guidance from the Recreation Authority and County Staff

Note: This document is the Executive summary to the more detailed Capital Improvement Plan update. It contains high level information that helps to explain future directions. For more information, the reader is encouraged to review the full CIP and associated documentation.

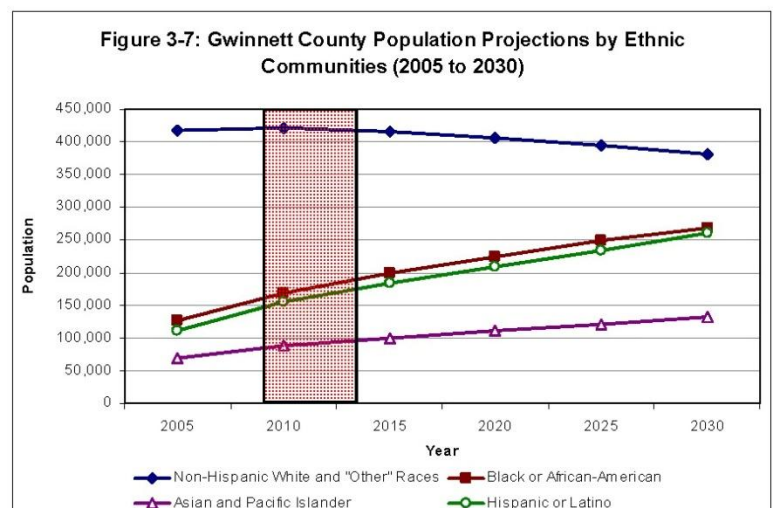
Age Comparison

- Population increases are expected for all age groups, resulting in greater demands across the board
- There is also a significant aging trend (especially 55+ cohort)
- The new generation of older adults is expected to be much more active and place greater demanding on recreational resources than past generations



Ethnic Diversity

- There is growth in all ethnic populations and foreign-born residents (and decline in white population)
- Ethnic diversity could impact park usage and recreational needs as different cultures have different activity patterns, expectations, and interests





Other Demographic Considerations

Decline in "Traditional" Households:

- Increasing numbers of single-parent families
- Growing trend towards households without children

Rising levels of income and education

- Affluent and relatively well-educated County
- Participation in recreation activities has a strong correlation to both income and education (the higher these factors are, the greater the participation)

Summary of Issues & Priorities

Based on the preceding analysis and inputs, the following items were identified as pressing parks and recreation issues to be addressed by the 2007 Capital Improvement Plan update and future planning efforts:

- Providing more opportunities in densely populated areas
- Adjusting to the needs of the growing communities
- Establishing a coordinated greenway system
- Keeping pace with population growth
- Developing new community parks to serve new school clusters
- Balancing opportunities for active recreation with passive recreation
- Transition from park acquisition to park development and – in some cases – redevelopment
- Recognizing the enhanced role of some local cities
- Providing more trails, soccer fields, and aquatic facilities
- Maintaining the County's high standards.

CIP Goals

Based on public input, the analysis of facility/park needs, and experiences of similar agencies a set of goals were developed to guide the capital project prioritization process. The purpose of the 6 goals is to ensure that service expansion will:

- Meet the needs of a growing population
- Manage and maximize the capacity of existing facilities
- Provide for new or expanded facilities and efficient operations

Overarching Goal

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.

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.

Parkland Acquisition – Under-served areas

- Proceed with the acquisition of parkland in under-served areas



Parkland Acquisition – Developing areas

- Continue with the acquisition of parkland in developing areas

Park Development – Existing parks and sites

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

Park Redevelopment

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

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.

Recommendations

Note: Prioritization of individual projects has been guided by the goals and input from the Recreation Authority, County Staff, and the needs assessment (Consultants). Attached at the end of this document is the complete Long Range Capital Improvement Plan, which identified the specific priorities for land acquisition and facility development.

Parks

The CIP Update program utilizes four approaches to meet identified needs:

- Complete planned phases of existing parks and park sites
- Accommodate needed facilities in unplanned parks
- Acquire new parkland to accommodate needed facilities
- Redevelop existing parks to meet identified needs

Parkland Gaps

- Recommend that the County address the seven (7) identified gap areas through strategic parkland acquisition

