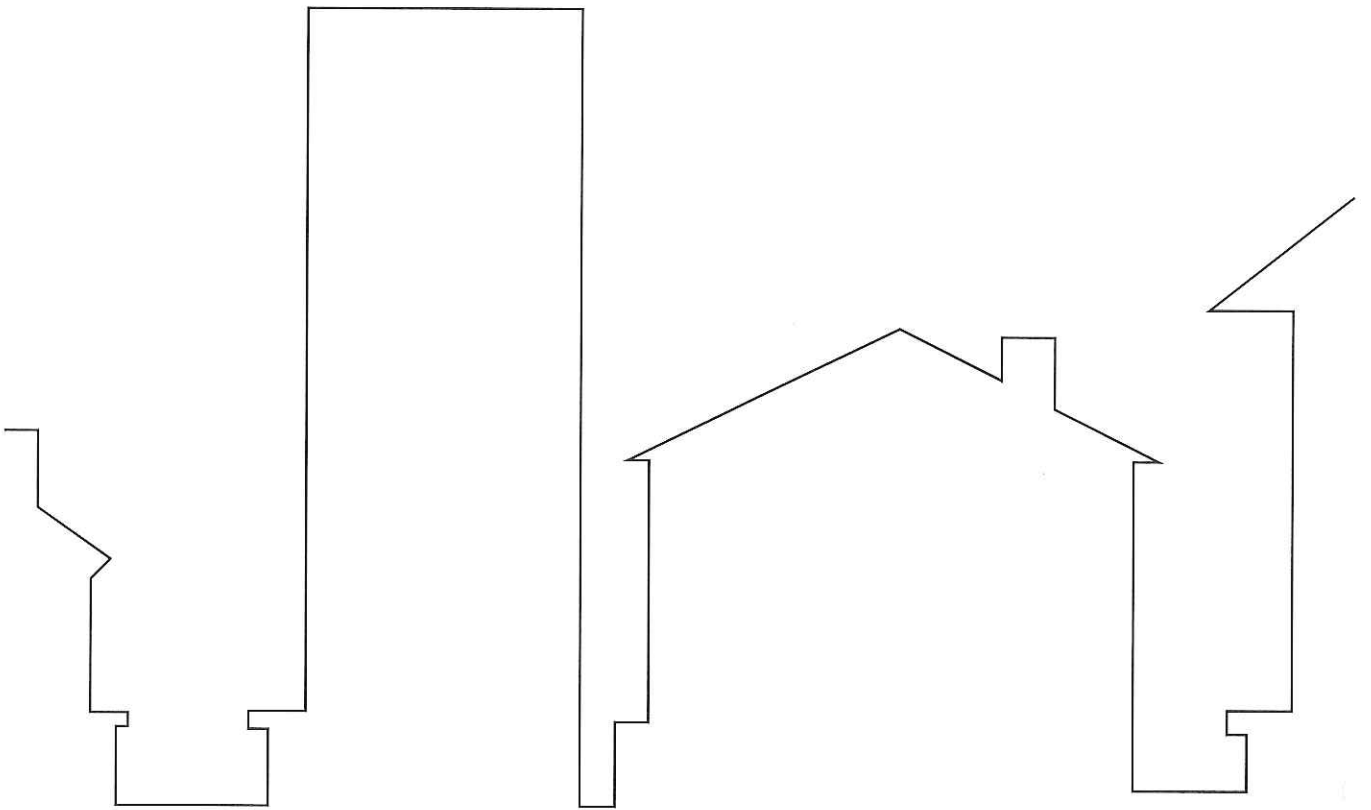


# 06 Facility Assessments & Recommendations



# 06 Facility Assessments and Recommendations

As we evaluate the Division's delivery of recreation services in a community, a primary task of the planning team is an assessment of existing parks and recreation facilities. This assessment includes facilities provided by the City of Brookhaven, as well as other public and private recreation providers in the area, to determine the level of access to facilities and recreation services in the city. The primary groups providing recreation facilities in and around Brookhaven are the Recreation and Parks Division, DeKalb County Parks and Recreation Department, the cities of Dunwoody, Sandy Springs and Chamblee, the YMCA, churches and other religious organizations, and private not-for-profit providers who use Brookhaven park facilities to offer programs. There are also some private recreation providers in the city, primarily in the form of swim/tennis clubs and homeowners' associations that offer swimming, tennis and a few other amenities and private country clubs.

All 14 of the City of Brookhaven's parks were visited and an individual site assessment was made for each facility. These assessments were to determine the diversity of facilities, distribution patterns, maintenance practices, age, condition and compliance with the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Staff members were interviewed regarding the programming and maintenance of the facilities in order to gauge the level of use at each park. If there was a private group (such as Murphey Candler Little League) who operate programs in the park or provide any facility maintenance in a park, these groups were interviewed in addition to staff. The planning team also looked for design characteristics that either reduced or increased maintenance requirements or affected the way a park functions. After completing site visits and inventories, a written narrative of recommendations were prepared for each park to address existing conditions, use patterns and the potential for redevelopment and expansion. Concept plans were developed for several of the parks in the system. See the Appendix for these concept plans as well as their recommendations.

Each existing park, along with proposed parks and greenways, were mapped according to the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) guidelines for service areas to determine the level of service offered to citizens throughout the city and to identify service gaps based on the location of the existing parks. The team also made recommendations for future park development patterns that will better serve citizens by providing improved access



to parks and will reduce travel time and service gaps throughout the city. Existing and proposed greenway routes were also examined to look at possible connections between parks, neighborhoods and other recreation facilities throughout the city.

The NRPA guidelines for facility development and parkland on a per capita basis were reviewed along with current NRPA PRORAGIS inventories for cities under 35,000 in population to gain an understanding of the level of service, in terms of parkland and facilities, being provided in Brookhaven. The planning team then developed the recommended levels of services, which have been included in this master plan. These recommended standards were then presented to a citizen steering committee appointed by the Mayor and Council and used to develop local standards based on the unique characteristics of Brookhaven. These community-based standards were then used to identify deficiencies within the system based on acreage, facility type and distribution. These same factors, along with interviews and public comments gathered as part of this planning process, were used to make the recommendations found throughout this section. Recommendations have been made for all existing park properties and new park construction to help reduce current deficiencies and provide more equitable park opportunities for all City of Brookhaven residents. General park recommendations have also been made for issues that exist throughout the entire park system, particularly those that deal with safety, ADA requirements and maintenance reduction.

## Overall Plan Recommendations

### Parks

- Acquire land in Planning Areas 2 & 3 and develop neighborhood parks, and find a large parcel near the Buford Highway Corridor to develop a new community park
- Set a target to obtain 8.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents over the next 10 years
- Develop a network of small neighborhood parks throughout the city connected by a community greenway system
- Complete the redevelopment of Blackburn Park
- Do major renovations throughout the park system to improve safety, ADA compliance and to create a unified appearance for park architecture, signage and site furnishings
- Develop a redevelopment Master Plan for each park in the system.





### Recreation Facilities

- Develop new sports fields at the proposed new community park near Buford Highway Corridor
- Develop multi-use synthetic sports fields at multiple parks to increase use of the parks
- Develop a dog park in one or two of the existing parks
- Perform a community center and aquatics study to determine if the city would be better served to replace existing community centers and pools with one or more modern new facility
- Expand community gardening programs
- Redevelop parking at Murphey Candler Park to reduce the impact on surrounding neighborhoods
- Create more walking trails in existing parks
- Remove unnecessary and unsightly fences throughout the park system
- Develop picnic facilities and rental pavilions throughout the park system

### Greenways

- Create major east-west greenway corridors that will begin a regional trail system connecting with surrounding communities - highest priority is along the North Fork of Peachtree Creek.
- Create north-south greenway corridors connecting community parks and neighborhoods to the proposed regional greenway
- Improve sidewalk and bicycle lanes throughout the city to provide access to greenways, parks and public transportation
- Create walking and running clubs when greenways are developed
- Sponsor a minimum of one 5K and 10K run/walk on community greenways and trails
- Greenways should complement complete street initiatives in the city and street crossings should be at controlled intersections or through grade separation (when possible) to improve safety for the greenway user
- Greenways should have a minimum 14' paved surface where space allows to better accommodate different user groups
- Good directional signage and rules should be provided at all trailhead access points

### Conservation

- Promote the formation of friends groups for each park
- Promote the use of green infrastructure in all parks
- Develop bank stabilization plans for the lake at Murphey Candler Park
- Begin a beautification program in parks including a tree planting program





- Begin a program to remove invasive plant materials from parks to create more open views in parks
- Look at mandatory park land dedication, or fees in lieu of dedication, as part of zoning code
- Create green density bonuses within the land use code to encourage the development of public open space and the elimination of large surface parking lots
- Create more non-vehicular access routes to MARTA Station to promote healthier lifestyles for community residents
- Minimize impervious surfaces in parks where possible and use porous pavements where possible
- All parks should have a recycling program and add site furnishing to promote recycling
- Use synthetic turf on some sports fields to reduce use of water and other natural resources as part of maintenance of the fields

When viewed collectively, these recommendations reflect the development of a park system that is commonly found in other communities in the Atlanta Metro Region, and are also consistent with comments heard during the public input process and in the survey responses gathered during this master planning effort. Brookhaven is unique because it inherited only portions of a county park system and has not had 30 to 40 years to develop a complete park system as the community has grown. While the residential and commercial areas developed in direct relationship to the population growth, the county did not provide the same level of park facilities. The city now contends with a park system that lacks a proper mix of facilities, parkland, recreation opportunities and a balanced level of service. Many of the goals outlined above will allow the city to create, over time, a more balanced park system that is more consistent with typical park systems.

## NRPA Guidelines

In 1995, the NRPA published *Park, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines* by James D. Mertes, Ph.D, CLP, and James R. Hall, CLP. The book presented a template of typical park classifications, number of acres a system should have, and recommended service levels based on population. Strictly intended as a guideline, the book did not take into account the unique character of each community throughout the country. Local trends and the popularity of some activities often dictate a greater need for particular facilities. The guidelines serve as a good baseline for determining a minimum standard.



To supplement the 1995 guidelines we looked at more recent data compiled by NRPA through their PRORAGIS database. **Table 6.1** below lists the median population served per facility.

**Table 6.1: Facility Types, Fiscal Year 2013**

| Median Jurisdiction                        | Population Per Facility |
|--|-------------------------|
| Playground                                 | 3,840                   |
| Diamond fields (e.g., baseball/softball)   | 3,403                   |
| Rectangular fields (e.g., football/soccer) | 4,202                   |
| Tennis court (outdoor)                     | 4,283                   |
| Basketball court (outdoor)                 | 6,644                   |
| Recreation/community center                | 24,645                  |
| Swimming pool (outdoor)                    | 30,376                  |
| Community gardens                          | 32,529                  |
| Dog Park                                   | 50,852                  |
| Golf course (9 holes)                      | 29,631                  |
| Swimming pool (indoor)                     | 61,322                  |
| Tennis court (indoor)                      | 22,852                  |

In addition, if we look at agencies serving similar populations and with a budget of less than 4 million dollars, we have additional data with respect to the number of acres provided per 1000 residents based on the response of 38 park agencies across the country. See **Table 6.2**.

**Table 6.2: Acreage of Parkland per 1,000 Population**

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Number of Responses | 38   |
| Lower Quartile      | 6.5  |
| Median              | 10.8 |
| Upper Quartile      | 18.5 |
| Average             | 16.3 |



These guidelines, coupled with input received from the community, analysis of participation numbers for various activities and comparisons to similar communities, were used to develop recommended level of service standards for Brookhaven.

For a public park provider, the guidelines suggest, “A park system, at a minimum, should be composed of a ‘core’ system of park lands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population” (Mertes,1995). In looking at the 2014 PRORAGIS database for similar departments, we see the lower and median quartile agencies following within the range. Brookhaven has approximately 280 acres of parkland serving a population of approximately 50,000 residents. This is approximately 5.6 acres per 1000 residents. This would place the city in the lower quartile when compared with similar agencies. Based on the city’s high-income levels and other agencies with similar income levels that the planning team has worked with, a much higher ratio of parkland would be expected.

Due to the limited availability of open space and undeveloped land in the city, the planning team recommends a park acreage goal of 8.0 acres of parkland per 1000 residents. This would increase overall park acreage to 400 acres. The recommended community standards chart showing all the recommended park and facility standards for the City of Brookhaven, along with current and projected deficiencies, is shown in **Table 6.3**.





Table 6.3: NRPA Standards and Developed Standards for Park Facilities

| NRPA Standards for Park Facilities             | NRPA Recommended Level of Service | Community-based Desired Level of Service | Existing Number of Brookhaven Park Facilities | NRPA Facility Recommendation Based on Brookhaven Estimated 2013 Population 55,418 | Future Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using NRPA Recommended Level of Service) | Community-based Desired Level of Service Brookhaven Estimated 2013 Population 55,418 | Current Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using Desired Level of Service) | NRPA Facility Recommendation Based on Brookhaven Estimated 2018 Population 57,631 | Future Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using NRPA Recommended Level of Service) | Community-based Desired Level of Service Based on Brookhaven Estimated 2018 Population 57,631 | 2018 Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using Desired Level of Service) |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|
|  |                                   |  |   |   |  |  |  |   |  |   |   |
| Acreage  | 10.5/1,000                        | 8/1,000                                  | 280   | 582   | -302   | 443  | -163   | 605   | -325   | 461   | -181  |
| Outdoor Basketball                             | 1/5,000                           | 1/7,500                                  | 5   | 11  | -6   | 7  | -2   | 12  | -7   | 8   | -3  |
| Tennis (outdoor)                               | 1/2,000                           | 1/3,000                                  | 28  | 28  | 0  | 18   | 10   | 29  | -1   | 19  | 9   |
| Volleyball (outdoor)                           | 1/5,000                           | 1/10,000                                 | 0   | 11  | -11  | 6  | -6   | 12  | -12  | 6   | -6  |
| Baseball/ Softball                             | 1/2,500                           | 1/3,500                                  | 14  | 22  | -8   | 16   | -2   | 23  | -9   | 16  | -2  |
| Football / Multi-use                           | 1/20,000                          | 1/4,500                                  | 2   | 3   | -1   | 12   | -10  | 3   | -1   | 13  | -11   |
| Soccer/ Multi-Use                              | 1/10,000                          | 1/4,500                                  | 7   | 6   | 1  | 12   | -5   | 6   | 1  | 13  | -6  |
| Swimming Pool/ Aquatics <sup>1</sup> (outdoor) | 1/20,000                          | 1/30,000                                 | 3   | 3   | 0  | 2  | 1  | 3   | 0  | 2   | 1   |
| Running Track                                  | 1/20,000                          | 1/20,000                                 | 0   | 3   | -3   | 3  | -3   | 3   | -3   | 3   | -3  |
| Indoor Pool                                    | n/a                               | 1/60,000                                 | 0   |   |  | 1  | -1   |   |  | 1   | -1  |
| Indoor Tennis                                  | n/a                               | 1/25,000                                 | 0   |   |  | 2  | -2   |   |  | 2   | -2  |

| Developed Standards for Park Facilities | NRPA Recommended Level of Service | Community-based Desired Level of Service | Existing Number of Brookhaven Park Facilities | NRPA Facility Recommendation Based on Brookhaven Estimated 2013 Population 55,418 | Future Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using NRPA Recommended Level of Service) | Community-based Desired Level of Service Based on Brookhaven Estimated 2013 Population 55,418 | Current Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using Desired Level of Service) | NRPA Facility Recommendation Based on Brookhaven Estimated 2018 Population 57,631 | Future Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using NRPA Recommended Level of Service) | Community-based Desired Level of Service Based on Brookhaven Estimated 2018 Population 57,631 | 2018 Facility Deficit/ Surplus (using Desired Level of Service) |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|---|---|
|   |                                   |  |   |   |  |   |  |   |  |   |   |
| Trail System                            | 1mile/3,000                       | 1/3,000                                  | 2.3   | 18  | -16  | 18  | -16  | 19  | -17  | 19  | -17   |
| Playground                              | 1/1,000                           | 1/5,000                                  | 14  | 55  | -41  | 11  | 3  | 58  | -44  | 12  | 2   |
| Community Center                        | 1/50,000                          | 1/25,000                                 | 2   | 1   | 1  | 2   | 0  | 1   | 1  | 2   | 0   |
| Picnic Pavilion                         | 1/2,000                           | 1/4,000                                  | 2   | 28  | -26  | 14  | -12  | 29  | -27  | 14  | -12   |
| Dog Park                                | n/a                               | 1/40,000                                 | 0   |   |  | 1   | -1   |   |  | 1   | -1  |
| Community Garden                        | n/a                               | 1/32,000                                 | 2   |   |  | 2   | 0  |   |  | 2   | 0   |

<sup>1</sup>Includes spraygrounds

\* From City of Brookhaven Comprehensive Plan, June 2010





**Table 6.3** uses Brookhaven's estimated population of 50,000 and NRPA standards to determine where deficiencies and surpluses in the park system exist. The recommended community-based standards reflect other recreation providers in the community, such as churches, schools, neighborhood associations and private clubs. The figures shown in **Table 6.3** do not include facilities found on school properties that are not open to the public during the school day, nor do they include the park acreage of churches and private facilities, as they are not fully accessible to the public, either. However, these facilities were considered in order to develop the recommended service levels. Based on research and interviews, the planning team has recommended lower facility numbers in some categories and higher ratios in others to provide services that are more balanced in the future. As an example, even though the YMCA offers soccer programs, the condition of soccer fields in Brookhaven reveals the need for more field space. The recommended soccer/multi-use field ratio was recommended at 1/4500 to be more in line with current national averages and to decrease the overuse of existing fields. New standards were recommended for greenways, dog parks, community gardens, indoor aquatics and indoor tennis, which were not part of the original NRPA standards.

Based on both the established NRPA standards and the recommended community-based standards, the city is deficient in almost every category. The city currently lacks public parkland, multiuse/soccer fields, outdoor basketball courts, indoor swimming pools, greenways and volleyball courts. Based on population growth in the next five years, the shortage of sports fields will grow to include baseball. The facility shortages are being slightly offset by other providers, including the City of Dunwoody, where senior baseball for the area is played as well as a previously mentioned YMCA who has soccer fields in the city. It is clear that additional parks, facilities, greenways and natural areas are needed throughout the community. This evaluation is also consistent with the comments heard in the interviews, the public meetings and the community survey. The planning team's observations and review of public input indicate deficiencies other than just a lack of facilities.

Other deficiencies in the parks include overuse, causing increased maintenance needs and environmental degradation of resources, lack of diversity of facilities and deferred maintenance that are now creating safety and ADA issues. Soccer fields and open spaces at Blackburn Park are overused and have very poor turf condition. The one open lawn area at Murphey Candler Park is completely bare and creating erosion above the lake. The banks of the lake at Murphey Candler are bare from overuse and are contributing to siltation issues at the lake. The community centers are in very poor shape as are most of the pools and need major updating to serve the community. Many survey comments and public input comments spoke to the need to make the parks more attractive and to improve the overall level of maintenance. Based on these findings, it is clear that the city needs to acquire more parkland in order to provide additional facilities. In addition, existing parks should be redeveloped where possible to maximize diversity and the quality of current facilities.



According to the desired level of service ratios per 1000 residents, the city's greatest deficiencies include a deficit of 13 rectangular fields (soccer/football/multi-use fields) as well as a deficit of 14 miles of trails. Again, we know some of the sports field needs are being met by other providers, but it is clear additional multi-use sports fields – particularly sports fields that can serve soccer, lacrosse, ultimate Frisbee, kickball and pickup games are needed. In addition, there is a need to add diversity in the parks by adding more basketball and sand volleyball courts that serve all ages and to offer quality picnic facilities and rental pavilions for group gatherings. Survey responses indicated a high desire to have more restrooms in the parks and to beautify the parks. The current lack of facilities and the condition of those that are provided are limiting and reducing the quality of the recreation experience for Brookhaven residents.

There is also a deficit in useable indoor programming space. While the city does have two community centers, neither is conducive to active programming based on the current condition. While the Lynwood Community Center is open, it is so antiquated and in need of repair to meet current programming needs that, it is functionally obsolete. The Briarwood Community Center is newer and better suited for programming, but it needs a new roof and major cosmetic repairs before it can be reopened. The city also lacks an indoor aquatics center that could serve both competitive swimming and recreational swimming needs of the community. Without a functional community center or indoor aquatics facility, the city lacks a major recreation resource that the surrounding city and county recreation agencies are providing to their citizens. The recommendations for meeting these needs are detailed in the facility recommendations discussion later in this section.

### Park Classifications

For many years, communities across the country have developed parks within a basic classification system developed by NRPA in order to offer balanced parks and recreation opportunities to residents. The standard park system is made up of the following park classifications:

- Mini-Park/Pocket Park
- Neighborhood Park
- School Park
- Community Park
- Large Urban Park
- Natural Resource Area
- Special-Use Park
- Greenway
- Sports Complex





Critical to the service delivery system of any parks and recreation department is the provision of the four basic park categories: mini, neighborhood, community and regional/large urban park. In urban or high-density areas where the proper level of neighborhood and community parks are not adequate to meet the community needs, a larger hybrid park has developed in recent years known as the large urban park. These parks are larger in size and provide activities commonly found in community parks but also offer areas that preserve natural settings and provide community open space. Beyond these five basic park types are sports complex, special-use parks, natural areas/preserves, greenways, school parks and private parks/recreation facilities that complete the system of parks in most communities. Each is classified differently based upon the types of amenities, size, service area and how access is gained to the facility. The following gives a description of the different types of parks and facilities common to a system.

### Mini-Park

The smallest type of park, a mini-park, is typically a site less than five acres. Another term, "pocket park," has been used in some instances to identify a mini-park. The park is designed primarily to attract residents who live within a quarter mile of the park. The park is generally a walk-to type park, meaning no parking facilities for vehicles are normally available. Mini-parks' service levels are 0.25 to 0.5 acres per thousand residents.

Size normally prescribes these parks to be passive, limited-activity park facilities. Common elements include benches, playgrounds and tables in an attractively landscaped setting. The parks are sometimes themed to blend in with the surrounding neighborhood. Designs sometimes match the existing homes, fencing, sidewalk pavers, etc. A park of this size is not developed with fields for league play or community-wide events.

### Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks are found in most county and city systems. The park normally has 2 to 10 acres and typically serves a population living within a half mile of the park. Neighborhood parks concentrate intense recreation activities and facilities into a limited amount of space. Facilities typical to this park include:

- Playing Fields
- Playgrounds
- Shelters
- Walking Paths
- Swimming Pool
- Parking Facilities



- Restrooms/Concessions

Parking is necessary for this type of facility due to its scope of activities and size. The standard for parking is a minimum of seven spaces for the first ten acres and one additional space for each additional acre. This may vary based upon the activities and program appeal. If team sport facilities or special features such as a swimming pool are included, parking spaces in the range of 40 per field or greater will be needed.

Although the park is classified as a neighborhood park, the scope of people served can vary based upon densities and the number of other parks available. Typically, one neighborhood park should serve between 10,000 to 20,000 residents, or one to two acres per 1,000 people.

### Community Park

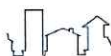
Community parks are needed within a system to ensure that all users' recreation needs and interests are addressed and included. This type of park expands beyond a local neighborhood and may sometimes include several neighborhoods. The concept behind community parks is to include essentially a one-stop-shop for all recreation users. It should include a mix of active and passive activities and attract users of all ages. From sports fields to a community center, the park should provide as many recreation and support services as possible. A park of this size and scope commonly has from 30 to 50 acres.

Community parks have both day and night activities. Large facilities, such as a large indoor fitness/recreation center or multi-field sports complex, can be placed in such a facility because of the amount of space available and ability to buffer from the surrounding community.

The service area for such a facility can vary based upon the size and scope of activities offered. However, a facility of this type may serve anywhere from 50,000 to 80,000 people, or 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 people. User analyses are often based upon a service radius, while others in more urban areas may be based upon drive times.

### Large Urban Park

A large urban park is typically the largest park within a system. These parks are normally found in large park systems, highly populated communities or in communities with pockets of high populations. The size of these parks varies from a minimum of 50 to 75 acres, up to several hundred acres, depending on the type of activities and the amount of use.





The service radius for this type of facility is tied to the facilities provided in the park and the overall community makeup. In many large urban systems where there are multiple large urban parks, each park will serve a five-mile or 15 to 30 minute drive time for core recreation services and may serve an entire community if a unique or one-of-a-kind facility is provided there.

### Special-Use Park

Special-use parks are designed to meet the needs of a specific user group. An example of a special-use park would be a golf course, a zoo or a museum. A typical feature of these parks is that they are normally good revenue generators. If maintained and properly staffed, these parks can provide a substantial cash flow for the designated entity.

These facilities can vary in size according to the demand and type of layout. For example, a regulation size (par 72) golf course would need at least 140 acres, while an executive style (par 60) layout may only require 100 to 120 acres, based upon amenities such as driving range and practice facilities.

### Natural Resource Area/Preserve

According to the NRPA, natural resource areas are defined as “lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space and visual aesthetics/buffering.” These lands consist of:

- Individual sites exhibiting natural resources
- Lands unsuitable for development but offering natural resource potential (examples: parcels with steep slopes and natural vegetation, drainage ways and ravines, surface water management areas and utility easements)
- Protected land, such as wetlands, lowlands and shorelines along waterways, lakes and ponds

Acquisition of natural resource areas and preserves serves to enhance the quality of the community by maintaining a portion of its natural amenities.

### Greenways

Greenways have become one of the most popular family recreation activities across the country. The value of greenways in terms of recreation, education and resource protection is invaluable. Greenways serve as linkages between cities, parks, schools, commercial areas and neighborhoods. They provide a safe mode of transportation that preserves the environment.





Typically, greenways can vary between 10 to 14 feet wide and can be paved or natural surface. When developing a greenway system, corridors should be identified where people will access the area easily. Greenways connect elements within the community and incorporate all the characteristics of the natural resource areas. Greenway corridors should be no less than 50 feet in width, except in neighborhoods, where 25 feet may be acceptable. In his article published in 1995, Julius Fabos, a former professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Massachusetts, divides greenways into three categories: ecological, recreational and cultural.

Greenways can be located in a variety of settings and can be utilized for active and passive recreation activities. Ecologically speaking, they are typically located along natural environments such as rivers, ridgelines and coastal areas. These trails provide connections to nature, protect and maintain biodiversity, minimize development, and provide for wildlife migration across natural and manmade boundaries.

Recreational greenways commonly link elements that have diverse and significant landscapes. Many link rural areas to more urban locales and range from local trails to larger systems. Most are paved trails that accommodate pedestrians, skaters and bicycles.

Another type of greenway is the cultural trail, which connects areas of significant historic value and culture. Economic benefits from these types of trails may be significant if linkages can be directed toward areas of commerce to provide an infrastructure for commuting.

### School Park

School park sites are an excellent way to combine resources and provide accessible recreation amenities to the community. Depending on the school type (i.e. elementary, middle, high school) the size of the park will be dictated by the land available adjacent to the school. Typically, middle and high schools are constructed with youth athletic fields to support team sports. These facilities provide the basis for developing a community park or, at the very least, youth athletic fields for recreation programs. The selection of school sites is determined by the school district, and the countywide or citywide distribution of students. The school site selection criteria may or may not meet the needs for parkland distribution. When development of school parks is possible, guidelines for neighborhood/community parks should be followed to meet the needs of residents. When joint developments occur, features common to other parks in the county and surrounding cities (i.e. signs) should be used to identify the property as a public facility.



### Private Park/Recreation Facility and Church/Non-profit Groups

The private park and recreation facility, as described by the NRPA, meets one of the two following characteristics:

*“Private Parks, such as swimming pools, tennis courts, and party houses, are generally within a residential area developed for the exclusive use of residents and are maintained through a neighborhood association. They are not, however, a complete substitute for public recreation space. Private Recreation Facilities that are for-profit enterprises, such as health and fitness clubs, golf courses, water parks, amusement parks and sports facilities. Not-for-profit private providers include the YMCA, churches, and private schools and colleges that offer sports and recreation facilities.”*

These facility types can be entirely private or, in many cases, be a joint venture between a public entity and a private organization. Partnerships of this kind allow for the provision of facilities and programs at a reduced cost to the public sector. One opportunity for partnering might be redevelopment of the rental pavilion and lawn at Blackburn Park. The YMCA uses this area extensively for the summer camp programs. The YMCA may have some specific facility needs that they would be willing to spend money on if they would not have to rent the facility for some defined period of time. The city would benefit by having a new facility to use and rent when the facility is not being used by the YMCA. Other opportunities may exist with other repeated users of park property.

Determining the impact of private providers on the delivery of park and recreation opportunities in a community is difficult to quantify. However, in the case of Brookhaven, the large number of church, not-for-profits and private school providers indicate that the community’s need for recreation facilities and opportunities was not being met by the County for a good number of years and further strengthens the community comments for more parks and greenways.

## Other Park and Recreation Service Providers

Brookhaven is unique compared to most communities in Georgia in that it has taken over a portion of what was a County park system as part of the incorporation of the city. This unique trait is one that has recently occurred in several other communities within the ARC region, including Dunwoody, Milton, Sandy Springs and Johns Creek. Because Brookhaven parks were formally DeKalb County parks, many of the facility users are not city residents. In fact, many of the children under the age of 12 still play baseball, softball and football at Murphey Candler Park are not city residents. Conversely, many of the children over the age





of 13 who play baseball play at a Dunwoody Park. The county only developed one skate park in the area and it is located in Dunwoody, so children and adults have to travel outside the city to use a skate park. The survey findings indicate that 75.5 % of residents go outside the city for park activities. The primary reasons stated for this travel outside the city were:

- We go to private pool because the hours are better
- Recreation centers are closed on weekend when we could use them
- Murphey Candler pool is dirty
- Programs are not offered in Brookhaven
- Go to private facility

The park locations and service areas are shown in maps that are described in detail in the service area analysis, later in this section.

### Private Providers

As previously mentioned, the biggest providers of recreation facilities other than the city are local churches and religious-based organizations. **Table 6.4** below lists churches which provide some type of recreation opportunities at their facility.

**Table 6.4: Church Facilities**

| CHURCH NAME                                | FACILITIES   |
|--|--|
| Brookhaven Christian Church                | Small Playground   |
| Cross & Crown Lutheran Church              | Fitness Room and on-site Preschool                             |
| Oglethorpe Presbyterian                    | Daycare on-site and medium-sized playground                    |
| Our Lady Of The Assumption Catholic Church | Soccer Field (artificial turf) and Small Playground            |
| Episcopal Church Of St Martin              | Soccer Field and Large Playground. Pre-K thru 8th Grade School |
| Skyland United Methodist Church            | Small Playground   |
| Iglesia De Dios Hispana De Atlanta         | Small Multi-Purpose Field with Soccer Goals                    |
| Congregation Or Veshalom Inc               | Small Playground   |
| Clairmont Baptist Church                   | Medium-sized Playground  |

The Cowart Family Ashford Dunwoody YMCA offers a wide variety of facilities at their main facility, located in Brookhaven. They have facilities for swimming, wellness, a gymnasium and soccer fields. What they lack is open play space and facilities for their summer camp program. In addition to the YMCA, other for-profit private gym or health clubs have facilities in the city. These private providers are listed below.





### Private health clubs include:

- Body Fit Atlanta  
3677 Womack Rd.  
Brookhaven, GA 30360
- Brookhaven Body Works  
2480 Jett Ferry Road  
Brookhaven, GA 30338-3040
- Fitness Together  
5482 Chamblee Brookhaven Road  
Brookhaven, GA 30338
- Liberty Fitness of Brookhaven  
5495 Chamblee Brookhaven Road  
Brookhaven, GA 30338
- RJG Fitness - Personal Training  
6205 Ashford Gables Dr  
Brookhaven, GA 30338
- Workout Anytime 24 Hour Fitness Center  
4630 Shallowford Road  
Brookhaven, GA 30338

These private providers are all membership-based and are commonly found in metropolitan areas. It is the planning team's experience that most private providers serve a different user group than public recreation facilities. Public providers tend to be more family orientated and offer programs that, in many cases, are not revenue generators for the facility, while private facilities offer programs that can cover cost. The same is true for religion-sponsored facilities; there is a segment of the population that does not feel comfortable participating in programs that are religion-based. Therefore, a good mix of all types of providers is needed to meet the needs of the entire community.

## Community Green Space and Zoning Provisions

Other factors that can impact the delivery of parks and recreation services and the provision for greenways and open space in the community are the requirements associated with land development within a community. There is a broad range of community zoning and open space standards across the country. Some communities have very strict requirements for funding park development, which range from setting aside land for public parks to paying fees that help construct parks. Several rapidly growing communities have charged park impact fees in an effort to keep pace with the growth, while others have used a less clear-cut approach and have negotiated with landholders and developers to acquire parkland.

Brookhaven is still using the DeKalb County zoning regulations to guide development within the city. Within the county regulations, there are no mandatory parklands or regulatory fees to promote the development of new parks to offset the impact new development has on the park system. There are minimum greenspace requirements within the zoning regulations, but none that dedicate the greenspace as public parks.

Many communities have set up detailed requirements that look at the total recreation needs of a community other than those that can be met on site by each individual development. Many communities start with mandatory park dedication requirements with an option to pay



a fee in lieu of dedicating the land. The parkland dedication takes into account the facilities that would normally be found in both neighborhood and community parks. This is done by keeping an inventory of current facilities on an annual basis and developing level of service ration on a per capita basis. The better ordinances seek to balance the dedication of land that is provided in the community where the development is occurring, or at the nearest community park that will actually serve the development. In a city like Brookhaven where high-density vertical development is anticipated such as is proposed in the new MARTA plan, a fee in lieu of arrangement would be a good alternative to address the impact of thousands of new residents living in multi-story units. The money collected could then be used to upgrade or add facilities at one of the existing community parks to meet sport field needs and interior programming space. Collierville, Tennessee, has a good ordinance for both parkland and greenway ordinance tied to new development and would be a good one to review if the city decides to pursue mandatory parkland dedication requirements.

Another new trend for green development is to offer incentive programs to developers who set aside open space or utilize green infrastructure solutions in their developments. Nashville, Tennessee, has developed a form-based zoning code for the central business district that has incentives for green roofs, rain gardens and structured parking. The incentive is in the form of density credits, which can in turn be used to increase density of the development or be sold as credits to other developers, who can use them on a different property. These types of incentive programs could work well around the MARTA station to gain valuable green space and parkland.

## Service Area Analyses

### Gap Analysis

A gap analysis is an assessment of the service areas of facilities to determine if there are areas of a community that are being underserved and represent gaps in the overall service standard for each park category. The service area analysis begins by classifying existing parks using the NRPA park categories. All existing parks were classified as follows based on use patterns as well as size and NRPA standards. Service areas for each category were also provided.





Table 6.5: Park Acreage by Service Area

| SERVICE AREAS             | CLASSIFICATIONS              | PARK ACREAGE | TOTAL PARK ACREAGE |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| <b>0.25 miles</b>         | <b>Mini-Parks / Playlots</b> |              | <b>3.00</b>        |
|                           | Clack's Corner               | 0.25         |                    |
|                           | Fernwood Park                | 1.00         |                    |
|                           | Parkside Park                | 1.75         |                    |
| <b>0.50 miles</b>         | <b>Neighborhood Parks</b>    |              | <b>81.70</b>       |
|                           | Ashford Park                 | 3.40         |                    |
|                           | Blackburn II                 | 3.00         |                    |
|                           | Briarwood Park               | 15.70        |                    |
|                           | Brookhaven Park              | 20.80        |                    |
|                           | Georgian Hills               | 5.90         |                    |
|                           | Lynwood Park                 | 10.80        |                    |
|                           | Osborn Park                  | 11.50        |                    |
|                           | Skyland Park                 | 10.60        |                    |
| <b>2.00 miles</b>         | <b>Community Parks</b>       |              | <b>51.20</b>       |
|                           | Blackburn Park               | 51.20        |                    |
| <b>.5 to 1 hour drive</b> | <b>Regional Parks</b>        |              | <b>120.60</b>      |
|                           | Murphey Candler Park         | 120.60       |                    |
| <b>Total Park Lands</b>   |                              |              | <b>256.50</b>      |

Our findings related to service area gaps reveal that the best-served area of the city is Planning Area 1, which is served by the two largest parks in the system, Murphey Candler and Blackburn Parks. These two parks contain 171.8 acres of the total 256.5 acres of parkland in the city, shown in **Table 6.5**. They offer the most diversity of services and contain the majority of active recreation facilities found in the city. Planning Areas 2 and 3, which serve the north central and south central sections of the city, respectively have a similar level of service being provided by neighborhood parks. They have some active recreation opportunities, but for the most part, are open greenspace and have playgrounds. Other smaller mini-parks are located in Area 2, but these have limited recreation opportunities.



The maps on the following pages illustrate the service area analysis and are described in the text below. **Figure 6.1** through **Figure 6.8** show the relationships of existing parks, schools and other recreation providers and to the community as a whole. Their service areas reflect the NRPA community park standard of .25 mile for mini parks, .5 mile for neighborhood parks and 2 miles for community parks. **Figure 6.5** also shows Murphey Candler as a Regional Park with a 5-mile radius, which was its intended purpose when initially developed by DeKalb County to serve as a major park for the region.

**Figure 6.1** is a map showing the location of the city's 14 parks, private recreation providers and school facilities located within the municipal boundaries. The Brookhaven Parks and Recreation department does not own or operate programs in these parks, but rather facilitates the use of the parks by organized groups who do the programming or private contractors who are managing programs. The majority of the parkland lies in the northern half of the city. The largest private providers, the YMCA and Merist School, which have large sports field facilities, are also located on the north side of the city. Neighboring communities of Dunwoody, Sandy Springs and Chamblee also have parks within easy reach to residents who live in northern Brookhaven.

**Figure 6.2** is a map showing the most densely populated areas in the southern section of the city, between Peachtree Road and Interstate 85. The highest density is along Buford Highway where densities average 3,719 people per square mile. This is approximately 1,000 people per square mile more than the density on the north side of the city where most of the parks are located. Planning Area 2 also has higher population densities than the northern part of the county where most of the parks are located.

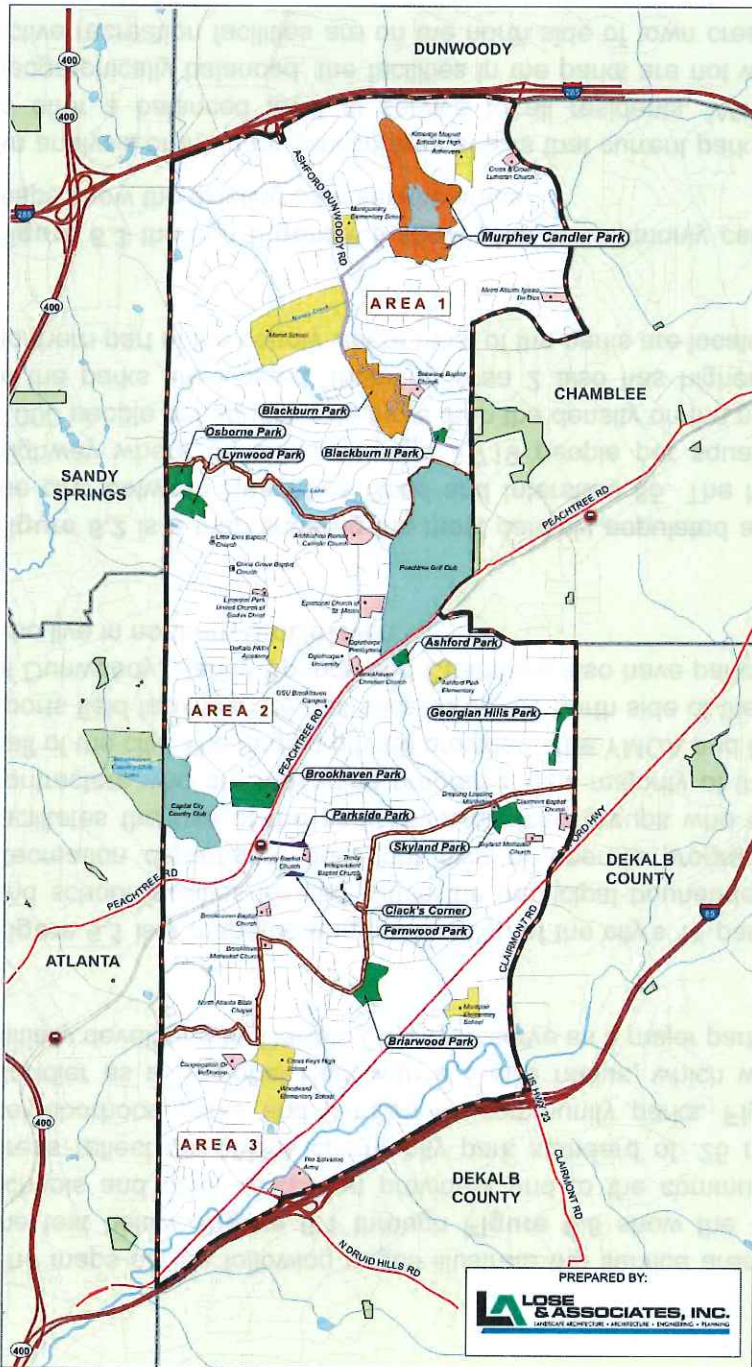
**Figure 6.3** through **Figure 6.5** show what is commonly called gap analysis maps. These maps show the existing park service areas.

An analysis of the park service area shows that current park properties do not allow the city to offer a balanced level of service to all residents. While the distribution of parks is geographically balanced, the facilities in the parks are not well balanced. All the organized active recreation facilities are on the north side of town creating a drive to park system for team sports and active recreation. Travel to the north side is not easy for all residents, and particularly for lower income residents who are concentrated in the south end of the city.

There are major service area gaps in Planning Areas 2 and 3. In the smaller parks in Planning Areas 2 and 3, Brookhaven Park and Skyland Park are the only parks with large green spaces that could potentially be programmed for more active recreation. Both of these





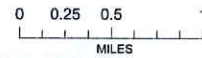


**FIGURE 6.1**  
**EXISTING FACILITIES**  
**MAP**



**LEGEND**

- Brookhaven Parks:**
- Mini-Parks
  - Neighborhood Parks
  - Community Parks
  - Regional Parks
- DeKalb PATH
- K-12 Schools
  - Golf Courses
  - Houses of Worship
  - Surrounding Parks
  - Planning Districts
  - Brookhaven City Limits
  - MARTA Rail Station



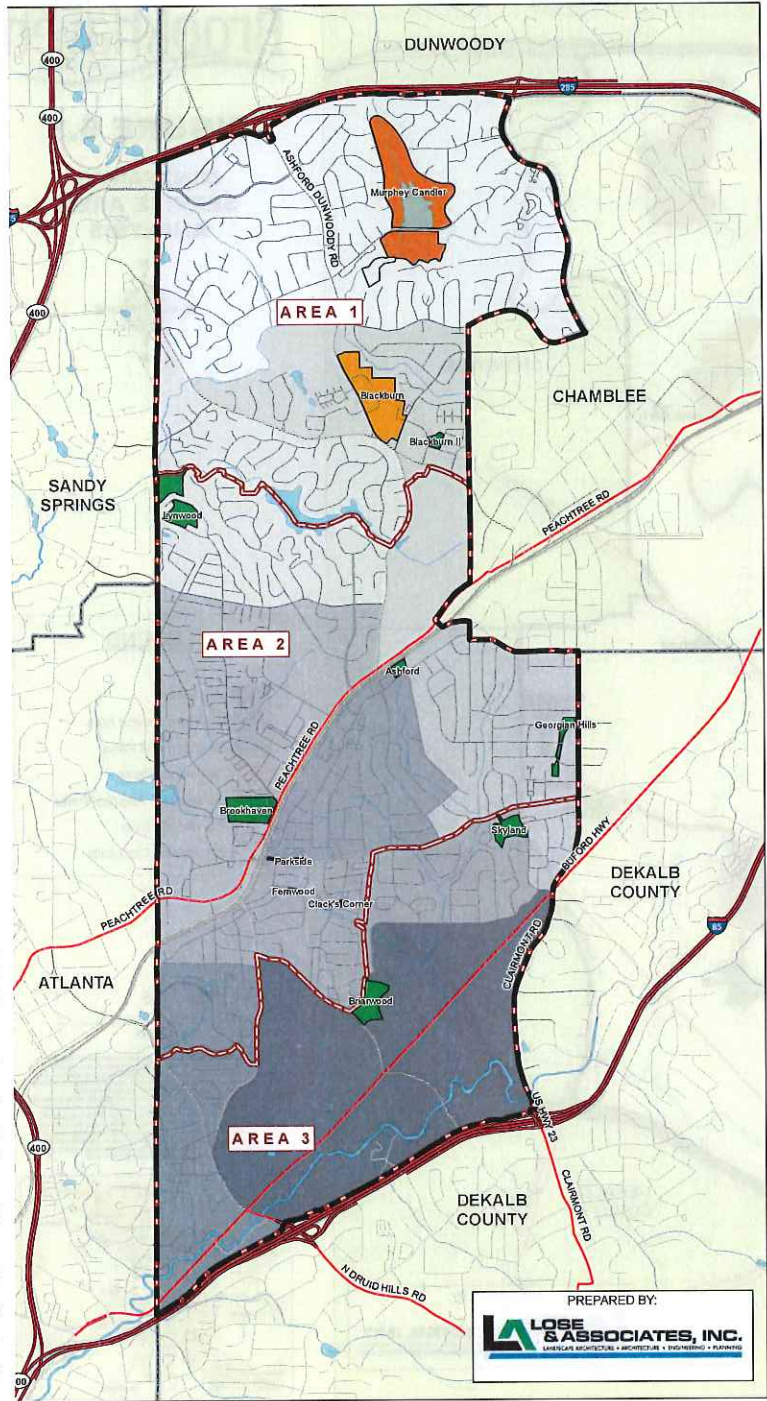
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Fig. 6.1



**FIGURE 6.2**  
**CITY PARKS & POPULATION DENSITIES**  
**MAP**

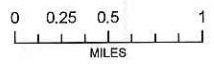


**LEGEND**

POP. DENSITY / SQ. MILE

|        |
|--------|
| 14,300 |
| 11,323 |
| 10,431 |
| 8,284  |
| 5,123  |
| 4,892  |
| 4,885  |
| 3,718  |
| 2,997  |
| 2,991  |
| 2,890  |
| 2,435  |

- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Community / Regional Parks
- Planning Districts
- Brookhaven City Limits



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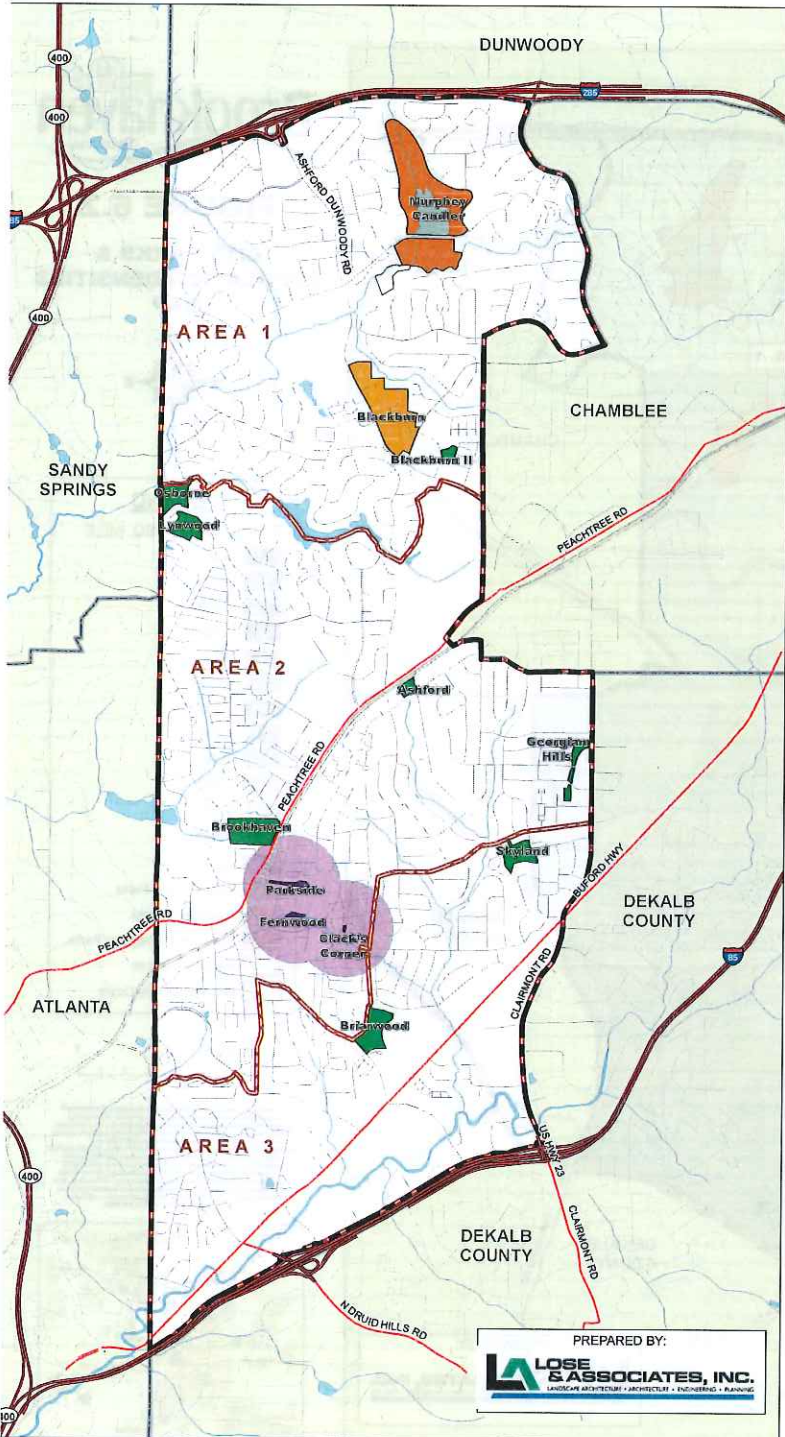


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Fig. 6.2



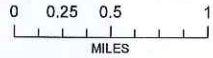


**FIGURE 6.3**  
**MINI-PARKS**  
**SERVICE AREA**  
**ANALYSIS**



**LEGEND**

- Mini Parks
- Mini-Park Service Area
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Community / Regional Parks
- Planning Districts
- Brookhaven City Limits

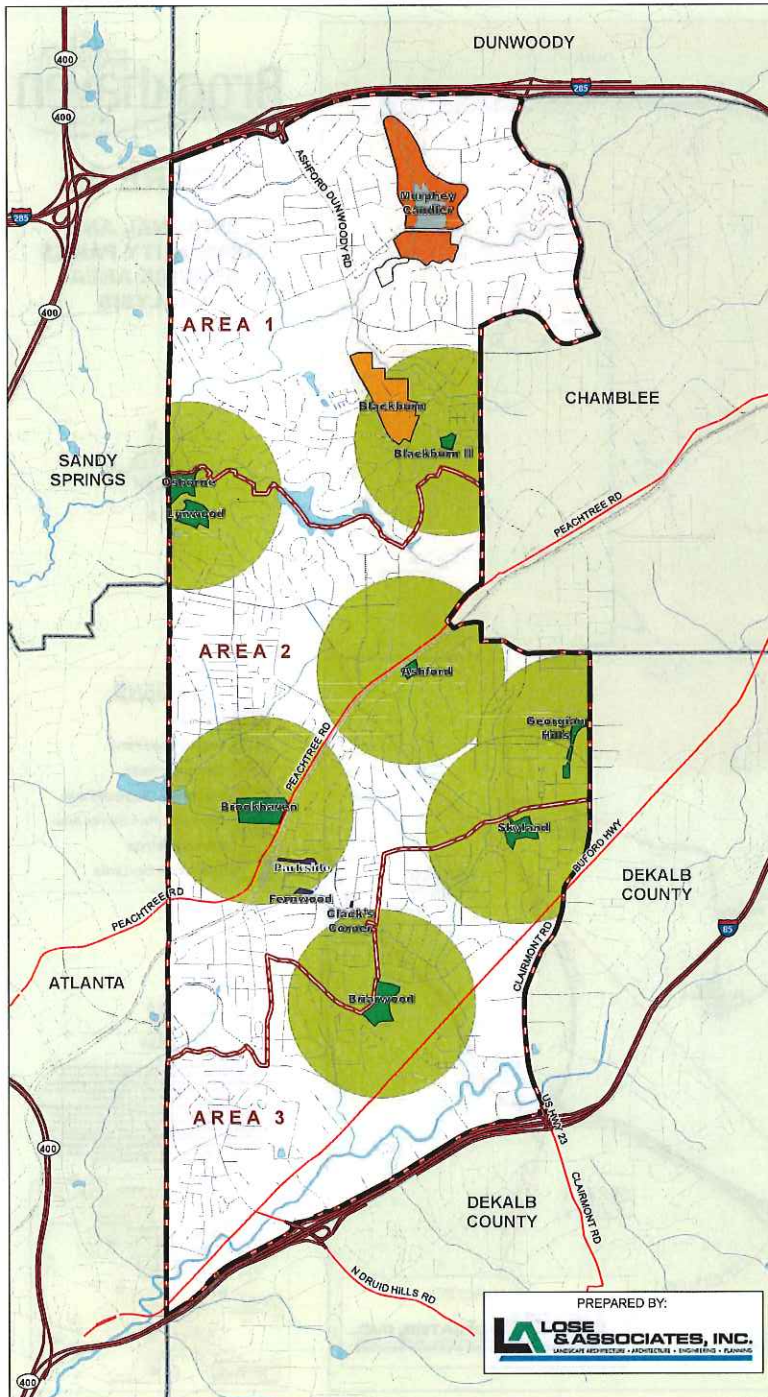


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 Fig. 6.3

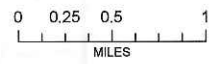


**FIGURE 6.4**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**  
**SERVICE AREA**  
**ANALYSIS**



**LEGEND**

- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- NBHD Park Service Area
- Community Parks
- Community / Regional Parks
- Planning Districts
- Brookhaven City Limits



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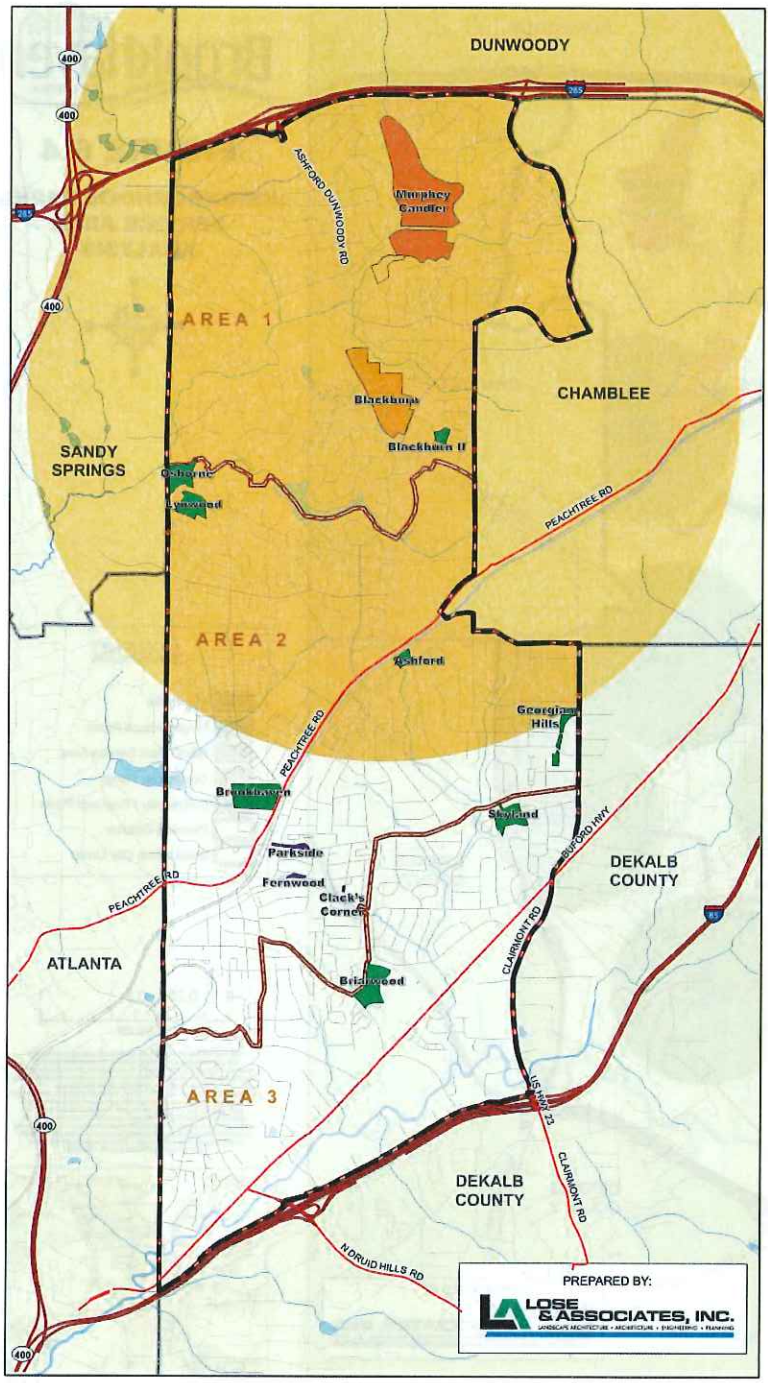


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Fig. 6.4



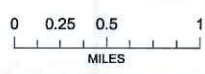


**FIGURE 6.5**  
**REGIONAL AND**  
**COMMUNITY PARKS**  
**SERVICE AREA**  
**ANALYSIS**



**LEGEND**

- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Community / Regional Parks
- Community Park Service Area
- Planning Districts
- Brookhaven City Limits



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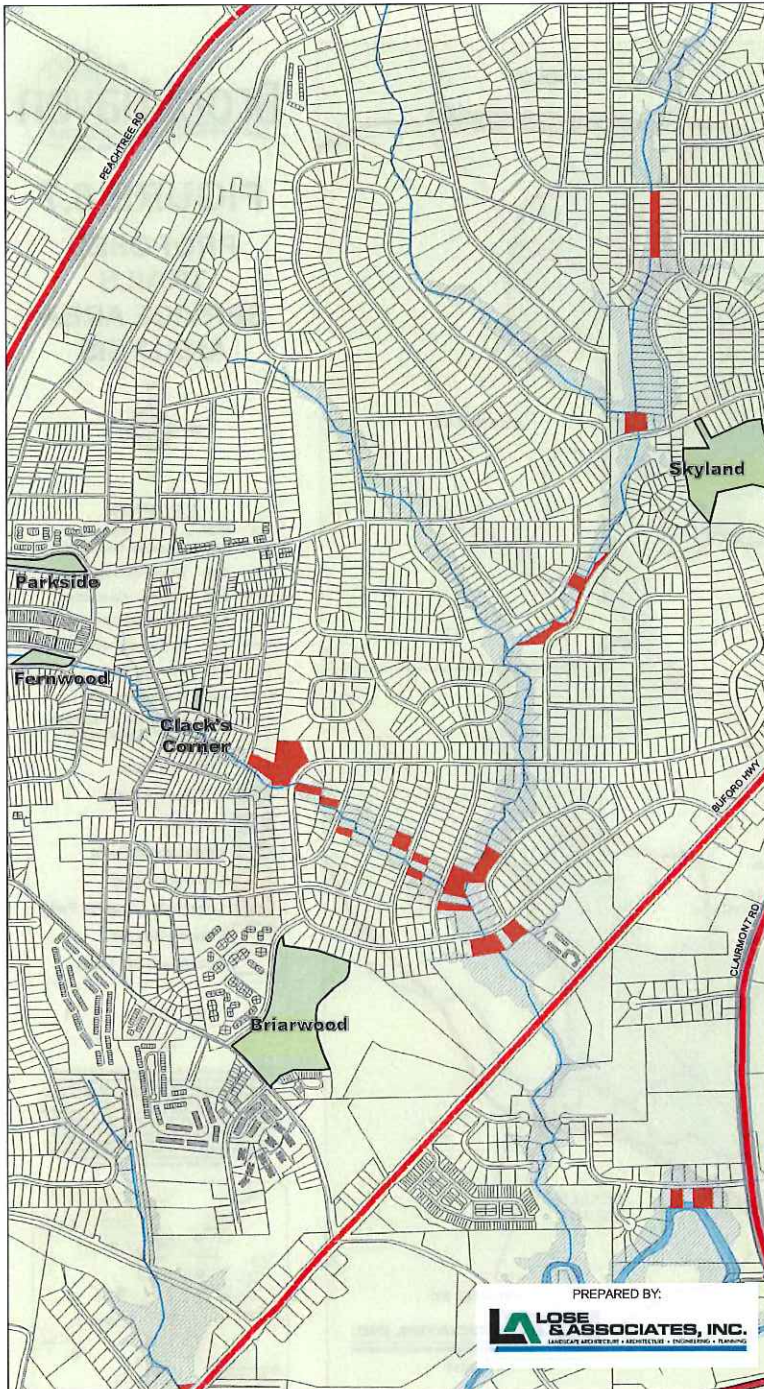
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 Fig. 6.5



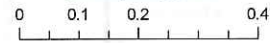


**FIGURE 6.6**  
**PARCELS PURCHASED BY FEMA**



| LEGEND                             |                  |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> | FEMA Properties  |
| FLOODZONES                         |                  |
|                                    | 0.2%             |
|                                    | A                |
|                                    | AE               |
|                                    | Brookhaven Parks |

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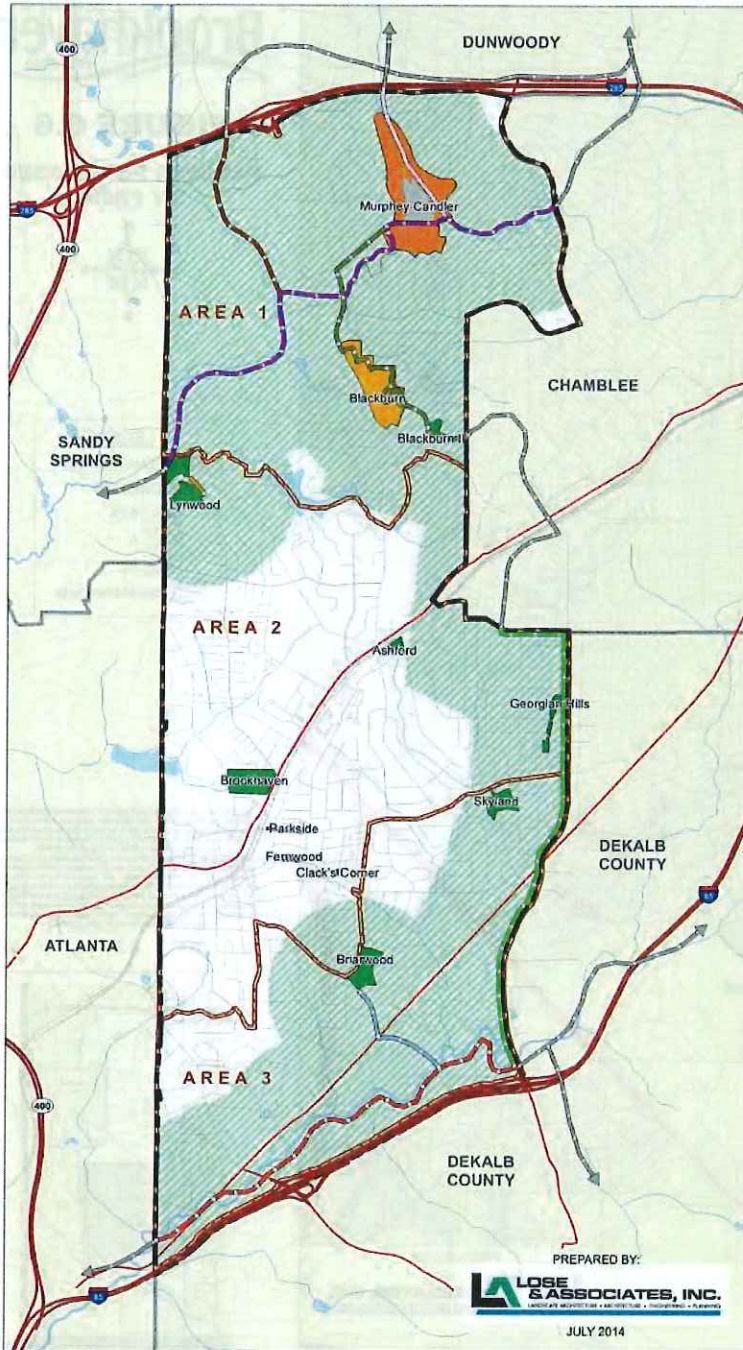
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Fig. 6.6





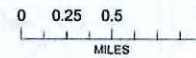
Fig. 6.7



### FIGURE 6.7 PROPOSED TRAILS SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS



| LEGEND |       |   |
|--------|-------|---|
| KEY    | MILES | TRAIL NAME                                    |
|        | 2.09  | Blackburn Connector                           |
|        | 0.68  | Briarwood Connector                           |
|        | 2.85  | Clairmont Connector                           |
|        | 0.79  | Dunwoody Connector East                       |
|        | 1.01  | Dunwoody Connector West                       |
|        | 0.13  | Lynwood Trail                                 |
|        | 3.29  | Nancy Creek Trail                             |
|        | 2.62  | North Fork of Peachtree Creek Connector Trail |
|        |       | Trails By Others                              |
|        |       | Trail Service Areas                           |
|        |       | Mini Parks                                    |
|        |       | Neighborhood Parks                            |
|        |       | Community Parks                               |
|        |       | Community / Regional Parks                    |
|        |       | Planning Districts                            |
|        |       | Brookhaven City Limits                        |



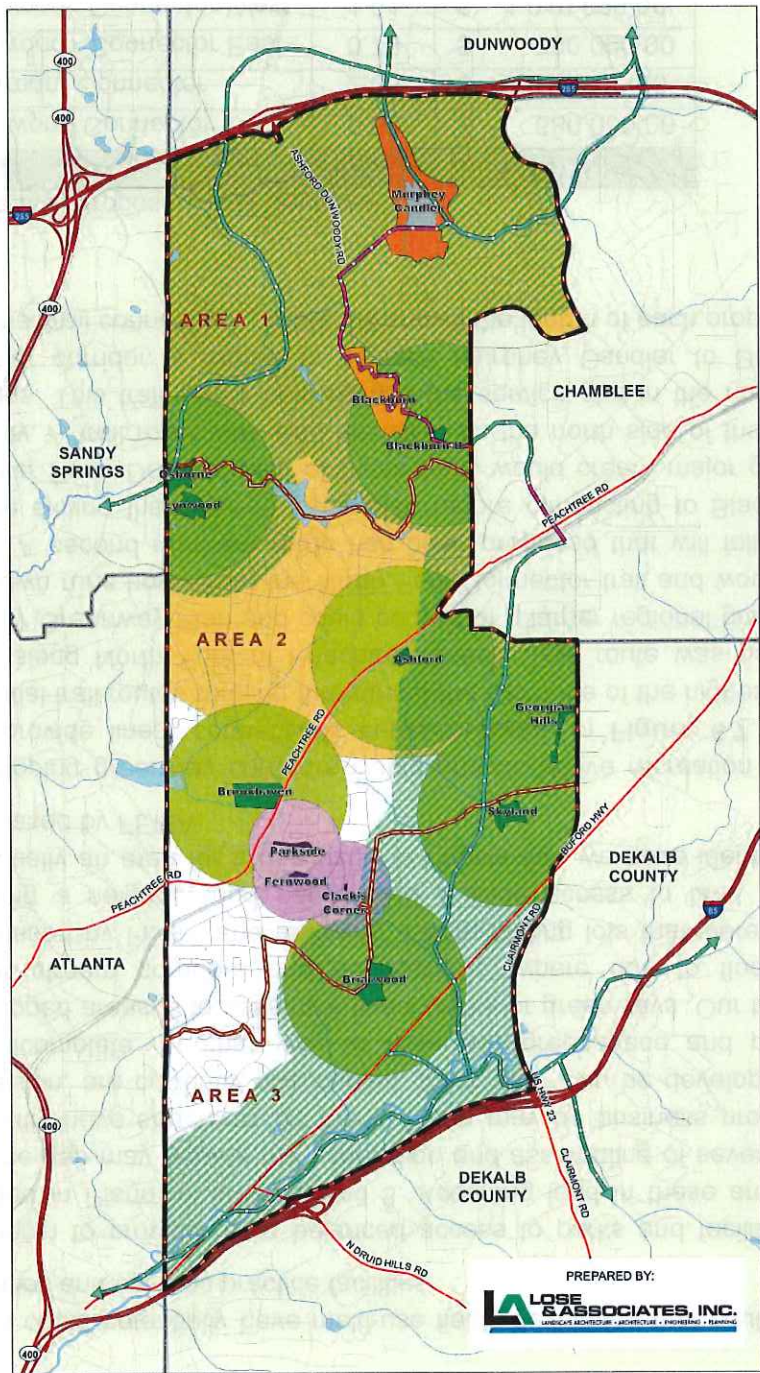
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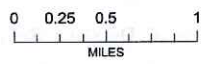


**FIGURE 6.8**  
**EXISTING**  
**PARKS AND TRAILS**  
**SERVICE AREA**  
**ANALYSIS**



**LEGEND**

- Existing Trails
- Future Trail Routes (by others)
- Trail Service Areas
- Mini Parks
- Mini-Park Service Area
- Neighborhood Parks
- NBHD Park Service Area
- Community Parks
- Community / Regional Parks
- Community Park Service Area
- Planning Districts
- Brookhaven City Limits



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Fig. 6.8



parks could potentially have multi-use fields developed that could be programmed for new activities and used as practice facilities.

To begin to provide more balanced access to parks and facilities, additional parkland is needed in Planning Areas 2 and 3. Acquiring land in these areas to reduce the existing service gap may require the acquisition and assembling of several adjacent parcels, which currently have structures on them. There may be business properties, which, due to the recession, are currently unoccupied; there may also be development properties that were left incomplete. Another way to assemble greenspace and park land in these highly developed areas is to assemble linear parks or greenways. Our team has looked at several major stream corridors and subdivisions, where due to flooding, homes have been purchased by FEMA and removed. Consolidating lots that were purchased by FEMA and building a neighborhood park would provide access to land for passive activities and potentially an area for a dog park. In **Figure 6.6**, we have identified the parcels that were purchased by FEMA.

Developing greenway corridors would provide active recreation for runners and bicyclists and provide linear connections between parks. In **Figure 6.7**, we have mapped seven potential trail routes running throughout the city. One of the highest priority trails runs east to west along North Fork of Peachtree Creek. This route was part of the original DeKalb County Greenway Plan and could be part of a larger regional greenway. A second trail that is shown runs north from the North Fork Connector trail and would connect into Briarwood Park. A second northern route has been proposed that will follow along Clairmont Road before exiting the city into Chamblee before connecting to Blackburn Park and Murphey Candler Park. Development of these trails would create major green corridors throughout the city. A trail route was also identified on the north side of the city connecting to Sandy Springs. This trail would help reduce the service gap in the northwest corner of the city. Another corridor is routed to connect Murphey Candler to Dunwoody, adding another regional trail connection. **Table 6.6** shows the length of each proposed trail section.

**Table 6.6:** Proposed Trail Sections

| <b>Trail</b>                                  | <b>Miles</b> | <b>Total Cost</b>       |
|---|--------------|-------------------------|
| Briarwood Connector                           | 0.68         | \$ 680,000.00           |
| Clairmont Connector                           | 2.85         | \$ 2,230,000.00         |
| Dunwoody Connector East                       | 0.79         | \$ 790,000.00           |
| Dunwoody Connector West                       | 1.01         | \$ 1,010,000.00         |
| Lynwood Trail                                 | 0.13         | \$ 130,000.00           |
| Nancy Creek Trail                             | 3.29         | \$ 3,290,000.00         |
| North Fork of Peachtree Creek Connector Trail | 2.62         | \$ 2,620,000.00         |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>11.37</b> | <b>\$ 10,750,000.00</b> |



One of the best methods to add natural resources to the park system is through greenway development. If the city could obtain easements along stream corridors and develop greenways, it would insure both protection of the resources and access. The improved access could be used to increase public awareness of the value of these stream corridor resources and greatly expand city park acreage through the applications of easements rather than fee simple purchases of property.

**Figure 6.8** shows the combined service areas for all parks and greenways if all proposed greenways were developed. This map clearly shows the number of residents that would be served if greenways were developed and areas where additional park development is needed to close service gaps.

In addition to the development of smaller neighborhood parks, there is a need to try to find a single large tract of land or several smaller tracts, that when combined, would provide the necessary acreage to develop a community park on the south side of the city. With the highest population densities along Buford Highway, finding a park property in this area would provide great access to the most underserved area of the city. A park in this area should have a balance of active play fields and passive parkland, like Blackburn Park, to meet the needs of team sports and individual park users. Obtaining a property of at least 50 acres should be a high priority for the city.

In the other underserved sections of Planning Areas 2 and 3, small 2 to 3 acre parks would serve as walkup destination parks much like Ashford Park. These small parks would not have major facilities that would require a lot of parking, as that would limit the greenspace in the parks. Support infrastructure development in the form of greenways, bicycle lanes and sidewalks along roadways should be developed to create alternative access opportunities to these parks.

Interviews and subsequent discussions with staff regarding a proposed mixed-use development near the exiting MARTA station will have an impact on parks. This high-density development is near Brookhaven Park. This park is already heavily used and the impact of increased populations around the MARTA station will increase demand on this small park. The city should work with DeKalb County to relocate the DeKalb Service Center that is located at the east side of the park. Then the entire park could be redeveloped as City Center for Brookhaven and become a destination park within the city. Access improvement including wide sidewalks and bicycle lanes should be provided along Peachtree Road to link to the new development. As part of the development, green roofs should be planned atop parking garages to provide additional greenspace in the area. Depending on the size of the parking garages, synthetic multi-use sports field could be developed above the garages to provide active recreation opportunities.





In order to improve the balance of service, it is clear that additional property and facilities will be needed. Greenway development, along with redevelopment of existing parks, will provide the greatest initial impact and expand recreation opportunities. Because there is so little land available, it is critical to secure land purchases quickly, even if development has to wait for some years. Therefore, in our summary of recommendations, we have ranked acquisition of parkland and greenway corridors and the redevelopment of existing parks as the priorities. These priorities are followed by improving the overall safety and ADA accessibility at all other facilities.

## General Park Evaluations, Observations and Recommendations

The completion of the existing facility assessments has revealed a park system that is in fair to poor condition. The facilities in the best shape were found to be the Murphey Candler sports fields and swimming pool and the Ashford Park community building. Beyond these few facilities, most all other facilities in the park system need major renovations. The facilities vary in age and style, as they have been developed over a number of years. All of the facilities were developed by DeKalb County before they were purchased by the city. Many of the parks are located in residential neighborhoods and lack proper roadway access for the amount of use the parks generate. As the city continues to grow and densities increase, access to the many parks will become difficult.

### General Park Observations

- Items listed in “good” condition are either new or require little maintenance or repairs. Items listed in “fair” condition are still functional but require maintenance to ensure their use throughout the life of the master plan. Items listed in “poor” condition will require replacement during the span of this master plan.
- In general, all the parks have major ADA access issues. Proper access routes connecting parking lots to facilities is a major issue. Another issue is bringing bathrooms into compliance or making them operational.
- Lighting levels in parking lots are inconsistent
- Some sports fields have good turf and other have terrible turf
- Old fencing is found throughout the parks and is distracting for the parks appearance
- Tennis court conditions vary widely throughout the system with many not suitable for play
- Playground conditions vary widely from new to being in need of total replacement



- Most items noted during the assessment were found to be in poor condition. Team members noted that the majority of issues found throughout the site were maintenance-related and primarily due to the high levels of use at each park.
- Signage at each park is inconsistent. Recommend developing sign standards to bring park facilities to full compliance and to create a unified look.
- Site furnishing such as benches and trashcans are needed throughout the parks, along with standardization of the site furnishings.
- Parking quantities are inadequate in most every park
- Several areas require additional maintenance due to excessive use and erosion. Where steep slopes are difficult to maintain, recommend low-maintenance plantings for both aesthetics and erosion control.
- The athletic fields provided at Blackburn Park are overused, resulting in poor turf quality. If the current level of programming is to remain, alternative synthetic turf material should be explored or increased maintenance of natural surfaces will be needed.
- Pavilions throughout the park system are in need of renovation or replacement
- Buildings throughout the park system are in need of renovation or replacement

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

A large issue facing both public and private recreation providers is the ability to enhance access for disabled patrons. Park and recreation departments are not exempt from this requirement, and legislation dictates that primary park amenities be barrier-free.

Primary access routes as described in the *Recommendations for Accessibility Guidelines: Recreation Facilities and Outdoor Developed Areas*, by the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB), are defined in the following manner:

*Outdoor recreation access routes are the paths that connect the primary developed spaces and elements that are basic to the recreation experience being offered at the site. For example, the outdoor recreation access routes at a picnic ground are the paths linking the parking area, restrooms, picnic units, and water hydrants. While many of these elements – parking area, restroom and water hydrant – are not the primary reason for a person to visit the site, they are basic developed elements that serve all visitors.*

*Designers and managers, in consultation with users, must determine which of the developed activities and elements at a recreation site are basic to the recreation experience being offered. Further, they must insure that there is a comprehensive system of outdoor recreation access routes that connect all primary elements and*





*spaces with each other and with accessible parking spaces and facility entrances. This determination should be based upon visitor expectations as well as the level of development at the site.*

The ADA regulations were updated in July of 2010, when President Obama signed the legislation that governs the design standards. The new standards offer more governance and specifics than the previous standards, but still leave some room for interpretation for some park facilities; however, they are very specific in their requirements for all playgrounds, hard courts, pathways, spectator areas, fishing piers, water play features, restrooms and programming spaces to be accessible. The guidelines provide specifics on maximum vertical and horizontal slopes that can be used along access routes if they are to be compliant. Several of the key standards that will impact new park and renovation projects are as follows:

**206.2.10 Recreational Boating Facilities.** Boat slips required to comply with 235.2 and boarding piers at boat launch ramps required to comply with 235.3 shall be on an accessible route. Accessible routes serving recreational boating facilities shall comply with Chapter 4, except as modified by 1003.2.

**206.2.11 Bowling Lanes.** Where bowling lanes are provided, at least 5 percent, but no fewer than one of each type of bowling lane, shall be on an accessible route.

**206.2.12 Court Sports.** In court sports, at least one accessible route shall directly connect both sides of the court.

**206.2.13 Exercise Machines and Equipment.** Exercise machines and equipment required to comply with 236 shall be on an accessible route.

**206.2.14 Fishing Piers and Platforms.** Fishing piers and platforms shall be on an accessible route. Accessible routes serving fishing piers and platforms shall comply with Chapter 4 except as modified by 1005.1.

**206.2.15 Golf Facilities.** At least one accessible route shall connect accessible elements and spaces within the boundary of the golf course. In addition, accessible routes serving golf car rental areas; bag drop areas; course weather shelters complying with 238.2.3; course toilet rooms; and practice putting greens, practice teeing grounds, and teeing stations at driving ranges complying with 238.3 shall comply with Chapter 4 except as modified by 1006.2.

EXCEPTION: Golf car passages complying with 1006.3 shall be permitted to be used for all or part of accessible routes required by 206.2.15.

**206.2.16 Miniature Golf Facilities.** Holes required to comply with 239.2, including the start of play, shall be on an accessible route. Accessible routes serving miniature golf facilities shall comply with Chapter 4 except as modified by 1007.2.



**206.2.17 Play Areas.** Play areas shall provide accessible routes in accordance with 206.2.17. Accessible routes serving play areas shall comply with Chapter 4 except as modified by 1008.2.

**206.2.17.1 Ground Level and Elevated Play Components.** At least one accessible route shall be provided within the play area. The accessible route shall connect ground level play components required to comply with 240.2.1 and elevated play components required to comply with 240.2.2, including entry and exit points of the play components.

**206.2.17.2 Soft Contained Play Structures.** Where three or fewer entry points are provided for soft contained play structures, at least one entry point shall be on an accessible route. Where Titles II and III - 2010 Standards - 30 60 - 2010 Standards: Titles II and III Department of Justice AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: SCOPING ADA CHAPTER 2: SCOPING REQUIREMENTS 29 four or more entry points are provided for soft contained play structures, at least two entry points shall be on an accessible route.

Refer to the following web site for additional ADA information.

<http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/2010ADASTandards.pdf>

### Playground Safety Standards

Another prominent issue within some park systems is the non-compliance of playground equipment to safety standards by organizations such as the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the International Play Equipment Manufacturers' Association (IPEMA). The standards proposed by these organizations are meant to serve as a guideline to help create atmospheres that are safe and pose a minimal threat of injury. Studies show that the majority of injuries sustained on public playgrounds are to the head—a result of falls from the play structure to the ground. For this reason, consideration has been given as to what the critical fall height would be in which a fatal head injury might occur.

Guidelines have been established measuring the impact performance of various materials. As with ADA issues, alternatives should be studied and a standard established for implementation of safe play environments throughout the parks system.

While the playgrounds throughout the park system have safety surfaces, the current level of maintenance does not meet the requirements for these surfaces to be considered compliant. The use of natural surface wood chips is a common playground surface material but has much higher maintenance requirements to maintain its safety rating. Many of the playgrounds lacked proper maintenance, which should occur daily. Newer poured-in-place rubber surfaces are becoming more cost effective, as they involve a higher initial cost but eliminate the need for annual maintenance and material costs. As playgrounds are added to the system and older equipment is updated, this type of surfacing should be examined as an alternative.





*It is recommended that at least one member of the park staff maintain a playground safety certification (Certified Playground Safety Inspector, CPSI) to monitor playground conditions and limit the city's liability. This is a standard practice in public park agencies across the country.*

# Individual Park and Facility Assessments and Recommendations

The following are individual park assessments and recommendations. Information regarding the size, location and amenities within each park and facility is listed. Planning team members analyzed facilities for their age, functionality and conditions, and provided the following recommendations accordingly. Additionally, information and commentary from PARC, the Parks and Recreation Coalition of Brookhaven, which was formed to aid in the production of an executive report by the Governor's Commission on the City of Brookhaven, has been included as part of the analysis and recommendation process.

## Mini Parks

### Clack's Corner

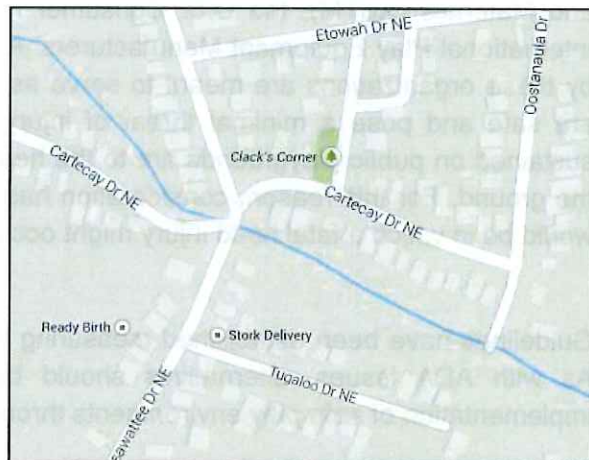
**Location:** 1410 Cartecay Drive

**Size:** 0.25 acres

**Classification:** Mini Park

**Overview:** Clack's Corner serves primarily as a small green space for the adjacent neighbors. It contains some gravel and brick paths, landscape beds, a granite seat wall and some residential-grade patio furniture in gathering areas.

**Review:** The park lacks any signage identifying it as being a component of the city's park system. Due to the facility's size, there is only street parking; however, no ADA access has been provided into the site. The gravel paths on the site have wash out areas that require more material and stabilization. An irrigation system services the landscape beds, but is reportedly not in working condition. Site furnishings on the site are residential-grade and may require updating to conform to design standards.



### Recommendations:

- Stripe handicapped parking space on street and provide ADA access route into the site
- Replace gravel with pavement or brick walkways for stabilization and enhanced access
- Repair irrigation system
- Provide additional privacy screening to neighboring property
- Provide site furnishings that conform to adopted city design standards
- Consider some accent landscape lighting to help provide low nighttime illumination

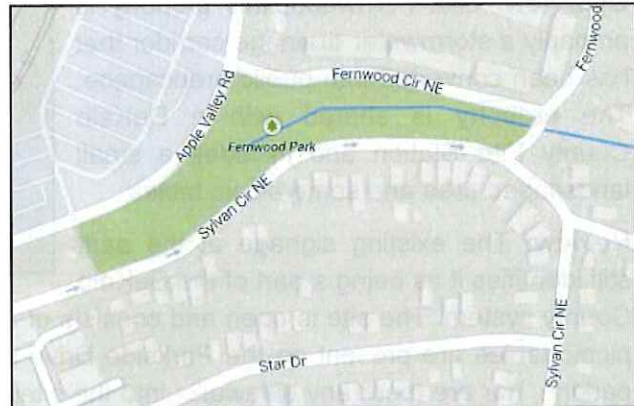
### Fernwood Park

**Location:** 1342 Sylvan Circle

**Size:** 1.00 acres

**Classification:** Mini Park

**Overview:** Fernwood Park is one of several drainage areas that have been converted into public greenspace. The park is located near the Brookhaven/Oglethorpe University MARTA Station. It features a partial gravel perimeter trail and a pedestrian bridge crossing a tributary to North Peachtree Creek.



**Review:** The facility has no identification signage to indicate that it is a city park. Much of the vegetation has been thinned within the stream buffer, yet many invasive plants from upstream continue to be a problem. A portion of the perimeter of the park has a gravel trail contained within timber edging. In some places, this timber edging conflicts with the adjacent on street parking areas. There is no ADA access into the park. The pedestrian bridge is in good condition but should be cleaned. Stairs at the end of the bridge need to be replaced with a ramp for ADA compliance

### Recommendations:

- Create a paved sidewalk connection from the park to the proposed mixed use development at the MARTA station
- Provide a paved perimeter sidewalk and adjust connections to the bridge to make an ADA accessible route
- Maintain as a greenspace only and continue invasive plant removal. A remedial planting plan will help to boost the quality of the stream buffer.





## 06 Facility Assessments and Recommendations

- Review the adjacent greenspace closer to the MARTA development and consider expanding the park to include those parcels.
- Pressure wash the bridge to increase longevity of the materials and overall appearance.

### Parkside Park

**Location:** 1316 Dresden Drive

**Size:** 1.75 acres

**Classification:** Mini Park

**Overview:** Like Fernwood, this property is primarily a stormwater drainage corridor that has been converted into public greenspace. The property is shared with a DeKalb County Fire Station and includes a small landscaped area and some picnic tables.

**Review:** The existing signage at the park still identifies it as being a part of the DeKalb County system. The site is open and consists of a combination of tree and lawn areas. Two picnic tables are present on the Parkside Drive side of the property. There is no off-street parking, nor are there any sidewalks into the site. The primary use of the site is by adjacent residents, particularly dog walkers. There are no paved walkways to picnic tables, which creates an ADA issue for accessibility.



### **Recommendations:**

- Continue primary use as maintained open greenspace
- Provide paved sidewalk connections into the park from the surrounding area, including Dresden Dr.
- Replace signage with new city standard
- Provide paved pads for picnic tables and benches
- Install pet waste stations
- Update site furnishings with new city standard



## Neighborhood Parks

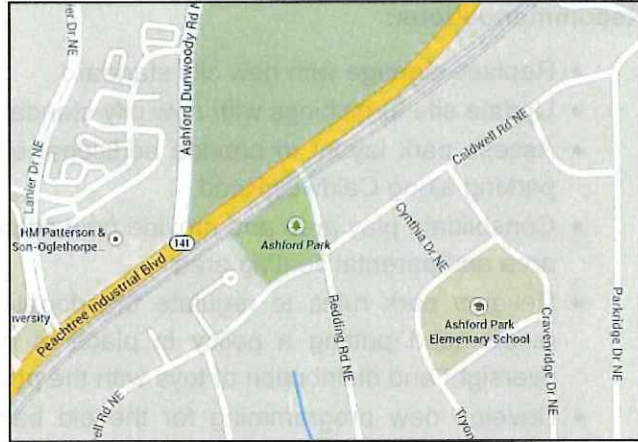
### Jennie Kirkpatrick Ashford Memorial Park

**Location:** 2980 Redding Road NE

**Size:** 3.40 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Overview:** This facility features a large community playground, as well as a small community building used for event rentals. Other elements of the park include a two-court tennis pod, picnic pavilion, basketball court and off-street parking.



**Review:** Park entry signage is consistent with former DeKalb County design standards. This is a heavily used facility with limited parking space. Pull-off parking from Caldwell Road is particularly dangerous due to traffic volume.

The community playground has two large areas with mulch surfacing. The surfacing is compacted and lacks an ADA access route. Playground equipment is in fair condition, but does not maximize the available space within the play area.

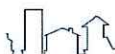
Neighbors bring toys and play houses to the park for community play. What may have begun with good intentions has become a litter and maintenance issue for the park. Staff are constantly disposing of old or damaged toys and are also moving toys on a regular basis in order to maintain the grounds.

The tennis courts have no lights and the surfacing is in fair condition. Although cracks are minimal and the surface is playable, the court colors and striping are faded. Residential grade benches and tables are in the courts for players to use. Adjacent to the courts is a viewing area beneath an arbor. The arbor is not properly maintained and may require replacement in the future. Portions of the perimeter fencing are damaged and need repairs.

At the top of the property are the remnants of an old basketball court. The slab is cracked and settling and the goals have been removed. No programming is currently being provided at this location, which provides an excellent overlook of the rest of the park.

The lawn area between the courts, pavilion and the playground has poor drainage, creating muddy spots in the lawn.

The picnic pavilion is in fair condition and requires general cleaning and paint or stain. Currently, there is no ADA access route to the pavilion.





The rental building has a dividable meeting room, restroom and kitchen area and is generally in good condition. Some minor ADA upgrades are needed, as well as a fresh coat of paint on the interior.

### Recommendations:

- Replace signage with new city standard
- Update site furnishings with new city standard
- Assess park layout to provide additional off-street parking and remove the pull off parking along Caldwell Road
- Consolidate play area and provide new equipment with shade canopies for both play area and parental seating area
- Develop park rules to regulate the donation of toys to the park. At a minimum, recommend putting a policy in place to donate directly to parks department for oversight and distribution of toys with the possibility of toy storage sheds.
- Develop new programming for the old basketball court site and provide an ADA access route
- Resurface tennis courts and provide heavier gauge fence fabric. Consider adding sports lighting for night play.
- Address poor drainage in lawn areas
- Repaint picnic pavilion and address ADA access route
- Replace arbor with shade canopy or pavilion
- Develop restroom expansion for park users not renting the building
- Repair/provide safety surface for the playground

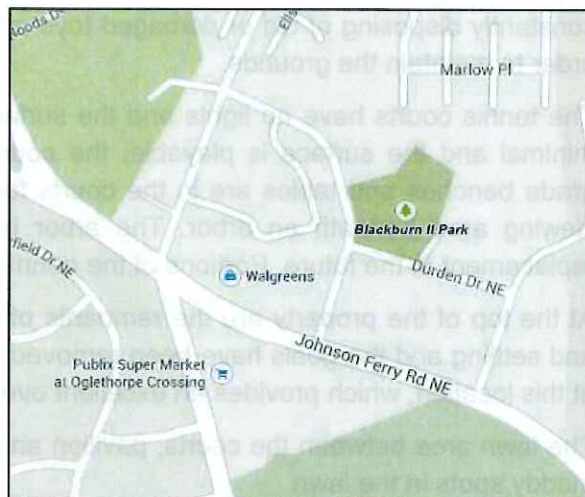
### **Blackburn II Park**

**Location:** 3509 Blair Circle

**Size:** 3.00 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Overview:** Blackburn II Park is a dedicated greenspace that was developed as part of the adjacent multi-family residential development. The park includes a connection to the Nancy Creek Trail as well as a paved perimeter walking trail and open lawn area.



**Review:** Park entry signage is inconsistent with any other park in the system, which leads the casual observer to believe it is private greenspace. The park is accessed by a perimeter sidewalk and trail loop, as well as on-street parking that is primarily a function of the



adjacent residential development. The lawn area is in good condition and is apparently used, in part, for stormwater management for the surrounding development.

**Recommendations:**

- Replace signage with new city standard
- Provide additional site furnishings consistent with the new city standard
- Explore additional programming potential to maximize the potential of the greenspace. Planners should be considerate to all, if any, restrictions to development resulting from dedication as public greenspace.

**Briarwood Park**

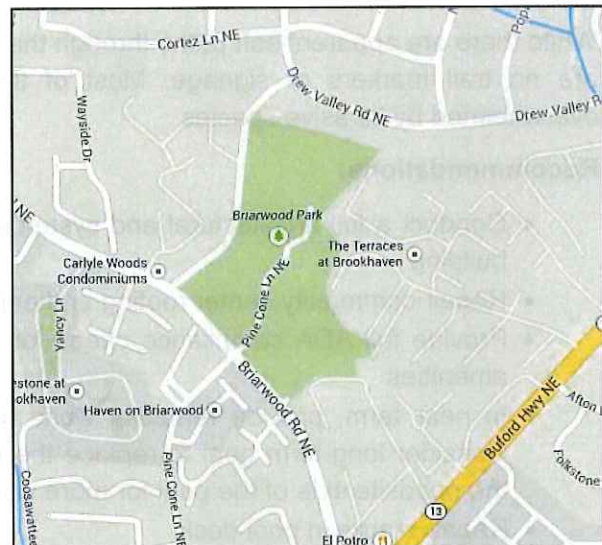
**Location:** 2235 Briarwood Way NE

**Size:** 15.70 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Overview:** Briarwood Park features a full community center with an outdoor pool, a community garden with picnic pavilion, a new playground with picnic pavilion, two tennis courts and off-street parking, in addition to wooded drainage areas with soft surface paths.

**Review:** The Brookhaven Community Center features multiple activity rooms and classrooms, a kitchen, an air conditioned gymnasium, staff offices and multiple storage rooms. Overall, the building requires a full inspection by an architectural team due to years of neglect and a leaking roof. The building should have mechanical and electrical systems inspected along with a full codes and ADA inspection. The building should also be inspected for the presence of mold or any building materials, such as asbestos that are no longer permitted.



The park's pool is located behind the community center- a location that does not lend itself to good passive security. Security measures such as the barbed wire perimeter fencing make the facility appear unwelcoming. The pool includes a diving board, as well as an adjacent splash pad but does not feature any site furnishings or shade structures. The pool house is in need of overall repairs, including roofing, electrical, painting, etc. A pump room is located beneath the pool and is frequently accessed by non-parks personnel.

In the middle of the park, the small community garden is cared for by the Briarwood Park Friends Group. The garden is fenced and includes arbors and raised planter boxes. Both the garden and the adjacent picnic pavilion have a pull-off parking area, but neither is ADA





accessible, nor is there any handicapped parking spaces. The garden area is very attractive and well cared for by the friends group.

The front of the park was recently redeveloped to contain pull-off parking to access a new playground area. This area features separate play structures for 2-5 year olds and 5-12 year olds. Both have new poured-in-place rubber surfacing, as well as accessible sidewalks into each area. A new picnic pavilion was also provided at this location, including new site furnishings and decorative steel perimeter fencing.

The park's tennis courts are remotely located within the park and have no sidewalks for visitor access from the parking area. The court surface shows multiple cracks requiring repair and the perimeter fencing is damaged in multiple locations. These courts do not have lighting.

While there are apparent soft paths through the wooded area in the middle of the park, there are no trail markers or signage. Most of the drainage areas alongside this path are overwhelmed by invasive species.

### **Recommendations:**

- Conduct a full architectural and systems assessment of community center and pool building
- Repair community center roofing and enhance overall aesthetics and finishes
- Provide full ADA compliance check for restrooms, service counters and classroom amenities
- In near term, provide remedial work and aesthetic enhancements to pool house. Consider long-term goal to replace the pool house with a new structure located on the opposite side of the pool for more visibility.
- Repair cracks in pool deck
- Provide alternative perimeter security at pool such as decorative steel fencing
- Provide pool amenities such as furnishings and shade canopies
- Evaluate pool capacity and programming needs to determine if it is desired to modify the pool to become competition facility
- Develop ADA parking and access routes into community garden and the adjacent picnic pavilion. Provide modified planters for access by handicapped park users.
- Identify and develop formal trail loop with connections to neighborhood
- Provide handicapped parking at tennis courts with accessible route to the courts
- Resurface tennis courts and replace perimeter fencing.
- Provide sports lighting at tennis courts
- Install handicapped parking signage at playground parking lot
- Provide new park signage using city standard
- Begin invasive plant species removal program



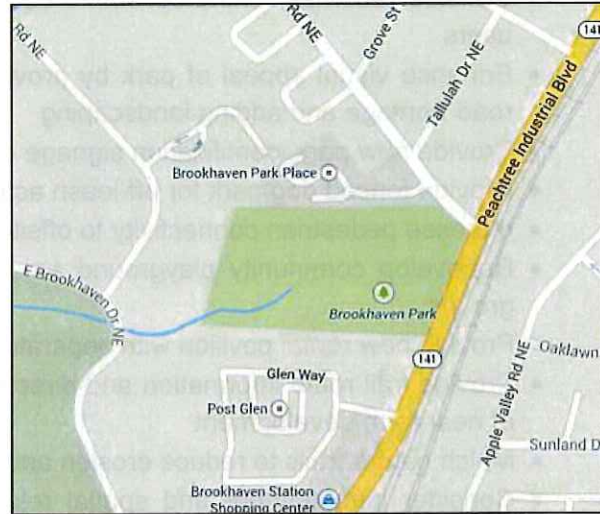
### **Brookhaven Park**

**Location:** 4158 Peachtree Road

**Size:** 20.80 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Overview:** Located behind the DeKalb Services Center, Brookhaven Park is a large passive park that features rolling lawns, paved and soft trails, a rental pavilion with restrooms, another group pavilion, a community garden, a court area with basketball goals and a playground. The park also has off-street parking.



**Review:** Nearly all of the parking for the site is associated with the DeKalb Services Center. Parking for park visitors is extremely limited and does not include a turnaround or handicapped parking.

The paved trail network needs repaving as most of the pavement is cracked or degraded. Trail routes are not clearly marked and pedestrian bridges are not accessible. The natural surface trails are eroding and creating compaction on tree roots.

At the center of the park is a court and playground area that was designed to incorporate stormwater management. This entire area is in disrepair and should be renovated. The court is not striped for any particular sport, although two basketball goals are present. The playground structure surfacing is a compacted mulch area that is not accessible and is not ADA compliant. Lack of maintenance in this area has caused it to be virtually un-useable.

At the top of the hill is a rental pavilion with outdoor grills and restrooms. The restrooms have been out of service for several years and the building has major maintenance needs. The plaza area around the pavilion is also in need of maintenance. The second smaller pavilion in the park also needs maintenance.

This park is a favorite for dog owners, who use the rear of the park as an off-leash area although no formal fenced-in area for off-leash has been provided.

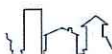
Large open lawns double as multi-purpose fields and include a backstop. The turf in this park, like in other parks, is in need of improved maintenance.

The community garden is maintained by a non-profit group and is not open to the public.

This entire park has a worn out appearance and is lacking a pleasant park aesthetic.

### **Recommendations:**

- Develop full master plan to reprogram site to meet community needs





## 06 Facility Assessments and Recommendations

- Consider alternate entrance from Peachtree Road with dedicated parking for park users
- Enhance visual appeal of park by providing alternative fencing materials along the road frontage and adding landscaping
- Provide new park identification signage consistent with new city standard
- Provide fenced dog park for off-leash activities
- Increase pedestrian connectivity to offsite residential and commercial properties
- Redevelop community playground area with separate equipment for different age groups
- Provide new rental pavilion with separate restroom facility
- Provide trail route information and directional signage. Repave existing trails as part of near term development
- Mulch nature trails to reduce erosion and protect tree roots
- Consider infrastructure and spatial relationships necessary for community events and festivals
- Provide invasive species removal program
- Replace all bridges with a new city standard design
- Add irrigation to large turf areas

### Georgian Hills Park

**Location:** 2800 East Georgian Drive

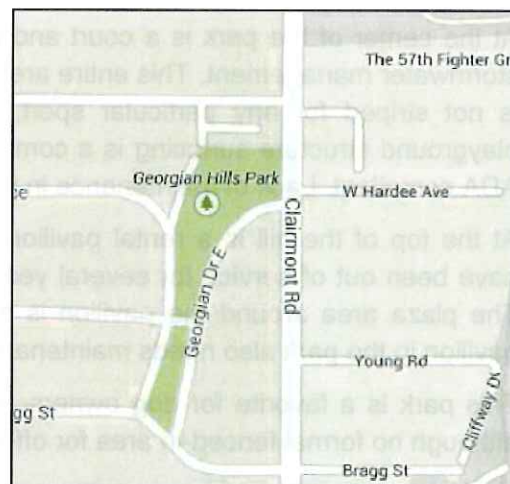
**Size:** 5.90 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Overview:** This linear park is located on the east side of the city and functions primarily as a drainage corridor like Parkview and Fernwood Parks. However, Georgian Hills Park has some additional amenities such as two playground areas, a picnic pavilion, an open field with small baseball backstop, a half size basketball court, and a gravel off-street parking area.

**Review:** On the north end of the park, a small gravel parking lot is provided at the end of Georgian Drive West. The lot has no lighting or striping, no handicapped spaces, and is delineated by a partial timber border.

Adjacent to the parking area is a stair connection to the adjacent residential area to the north. No paved connection is made between the two or other side amenities. A concrete slab is also located in this area and includes an old rusted basketball goal. The slab has no striping and no additional court surface area for the necessary safety zones.



Portions of the park's perimeter along the north end are secured with alternating chain link fencing and pipe bollards. The inconsistency of these materials is not visually appealing.

At the top of the park is a large open field with a backstop at one end. The turf is in poor condition with several large bare spots.

The northern most playground includes a single play structure for 5-12 year olds with railroad timber border and mulch surfacing. Surfacing depth is inadequate and no accessible route is provided to the area. Overall, the play structure is in fair condition, in spite of its age and sun-faded plastic components.

Just to the south, there is a second playground with a single play structure for 2-5 year olds with a railroad timber border and mulch play surfacing. Like the other play area, the mulch is inadequate and lacks an accessible route. This structure, too, is in fair condition but requires cleaning.

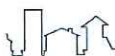
A single pavilion is located next to the southern play structure. Overall, it is in fair condition. The roof is good, but the steel and wood members and panels will need repainting. No picnic tables are provided at the pavilion and it does not have an accessible route.

Much of the remainder of the property is open greenspace with passive walking trails. These trails are not clearly marked, nor are they maintained, resulting in turf wear areas from pedestrian traffic. A small pedestrian bridge in the middle of the park connects both sides of this trail. The bridge decking is starting to show some wear and vertical safety railing is not provided. In addition, there is no ADA accessible route to the bridge.

The park lacks any signage to identify it as a city facility.

### **Recommendations:**

- Provide park entry signage consistent with the new city standard
- Develop a park master plan to guide redevelopment of this park
- Provide paved off-street parking with handicapped spaces and paved accessible routes to connect park amenities and to connect to adjacent residential areas.
- After reviewing park system programming needs, determine if open field needs to be developed into an a practice area with a backstop
- Demo basketball court and playgrounds to provide new playground area near parking with appropriate safety surfacing and accessible routes
- Enhance and protect stream corridor, including invasive species removal. Perform storm water analysis of existing culverts for performance and consider aesthetic enhancements to storm drainage components.
- Consider providing small restroom with new playground and open play lawn as part of the Master Plan.
- Enhance trail system to make ADA compliant and provide reflection areas with benches or adult swings
- Consider providing trail fitness stations





## 06 Facility Assessments and Recommendations

- Clean and paint picnic pavilion. Provide new site furnishings, including charcoal grills and coal bins.

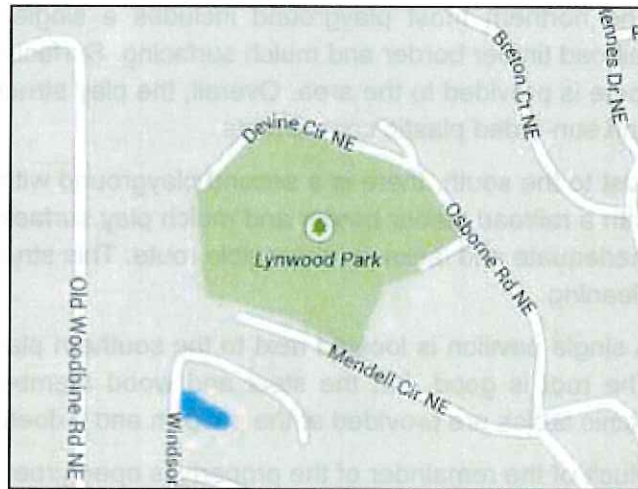
### Lynwood Park

**Location:** 3360 Osborne Road

**Size:** 10.80 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Overview:** Located on the west side of the city, Lynwood Park features a large list of amenities including a large community center, two unlit tennis courts, several playground areas, walking trail loop, two unlit basketball courts, two hexagon pavilions, an outdoor pool, off-street parking areas, and a multi-purpose field. The park is divided into an upper and a lower portion, which are separated by a steep wooded hillside.



**Review:** Lynwood Recreation Center features multiple activity and game rooms, including a classroom and a fitness center. The center also has staff offices, a kitchen, storage rooms and a full gymnasium with a stage at the rear. Beneath the gymnasium are team locker rooms that include large shower and toilet stalls and a furnace room with exterior maintenance doors.

A full architectural assessment should be done on this building to determine if it should be renovated or removed. ADA issues include the restrooms, service counters, stage access, door hardware and access to the locker rooms.

Parking serving the community center and the upper portions of the park is pull-off style from a dead-end residential street. Parking quantities are insufficient for such a large recreation center and there is not an accessible route from parking into the building or site. Sidewalks near the building have excessive cross slopes and do not meet ADA standards.

The uphill portion of the park has a paved sidewalk loop that connects the various park amenities. Multiple sections of the pavement are cracked from maintenance vehicles and tree roots.

The basketball courts are in good condition, requiring mostly aesthetic enhancements such as new paint and landscaping.

Overall, the tennis courts are in fair condition. Portions of the fencing are damaged and full accessibility is needed from adjacent sidewalks. Court striping and the surfacing are worn and need to be replaced.



Two sets of stairs are located at the rear of the tennis courts to provide access to the lower portion of the site. In both cases, the handrails are insufficient and require replacement or modification. These paths should also have pedestrian levels lighting along their routes.

The uphill picnic pavilion is in fair condition. But, like others throughout the park system, it needs maintenance.

Three playground areas are located on the east side of the uphill portion of the park. All three lack adequate safety surfacing and ADA access routes. Parental seating areas should be paved to include a handicapped seating area. Two older pieces of play equipment are located within a timber border, and neither the swings nor the slide complies with current playground design standards for safety and ADA. The playground surfacing is also inadequate for proper safety. An interactive play system has also been provided at near the other play equipment and is in excellent condition.

The park entry signage along the road identifies the facility as a DeKalb County park.

Access to the lower portion of the park is via a park access road off Devin Circle. There is no directional signage to identify this access road as part of the park property. Visitors exiting this access drive onto Devin Circle have limited sight lines to see oncoming traffic, due to adjacent vegetation. At the bottom of the drive is a paved parking lot serving another rental pavilion and the Lynwood Pool. The striping in the parking lot is faded and handicapped access routes are not clearly marked.

Like its uphill version, the rental pavilion is in fair condition, requiring new paint and roof, in addition to updated site furnishings.

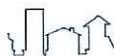
Aesthetic enhancements are needed at the pool, including fresh paint on bollards and handrails and removal of overgrown shrubs. The interior of the pool house was not accessible for review at the time of the site visit; however, an exterior inspection reveals a need to address painting, gutter and fascia repair, as well as possible roof replacement.

The outdoor pool has barbwire perimeter fencing, which makes it look uninviting. In general, the area consists of a lap pool with diving area and a shallow toddler pool. The pool deck appears to be in good condition, but there are inadequate accessory areas for deck chairs and tables.

The lower portion of the park also has a gravel parking area off Mendell Circle that services a large multipurpose field. The field has perimeter chain-link fencing with backstops in the corners. Some portions of the fencing are damaged and there are no paved accessible routes from the parking to the field or to spectator areas. The turf is in poor condition like many of the other parks.

The overall appearance of this park is poor and the community center is a big part of the problem. In addition to having a shortage of parking for the number of amenities in the park, the streets that serve this park are undersized. The overall parking and circulation system relating to this park should be reviewed.

### **Recommendations:**





## 06 Facility Assessments and Recommendations

- Complete a full architectural assessment on the Lynwood Recreation Center
- Develop a full redevelopment master plan for this park
- Review parking and circulation throughout this park
- Provide ADA access to all park facilities
- Consider sports lighting at both tennis and basketball courts
- Consolidate playground components into one area with adequate safety surfacing and ADA access. Provide new swings to be included in that area and remove old play equipment.
- Provide park entry signage conforming to new city standard.
- Provide new site furnishings conforming to new city standard
- Provide lighting along all pedestrian routes in the park
- Repaint and reroof both picnic pavilions
- Provide directional signage to lower parking lot and remove vegetation for clear site lines
- Repave lower parking lot and provide expanded paved parking on gravel lot
- Renovate pool after aquatics study on all city pools is completed
- Repair fencing at multi-purpose field and provide paved spectator seating and accessible routes to player areas
- Re-grade multipurpose field and install irrigation for higher quality turf
- Remove all un-needed fencing in the park and install additional landscaping

### Osborne Park

**Location:** 3412 Osborne Road

**Size:** 11.50 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

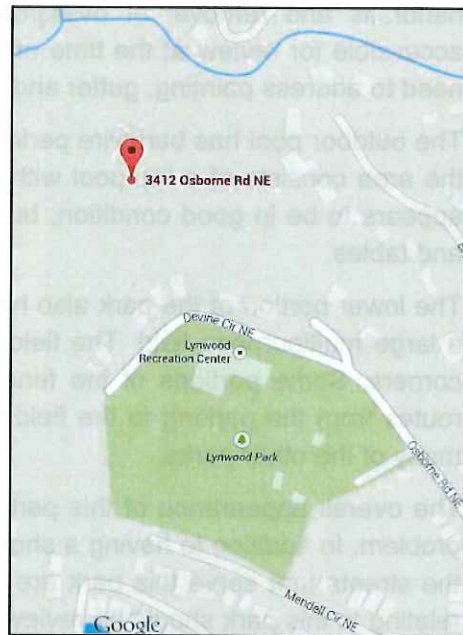
**Overview:** Osborne Park is a large greenspace adjacent to Lynwood Park.

**Review:** At some point in this property's history, the front portion was filled in to create large terrace approximately seventy feet above the lower portion. The fill was construction debris from DeKalb County projects. Two large open areas are present with the remainder of the site being wooded.

A single driveway from Osborne Road dead-ends into the site.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Include this property as part of the new master plan for Lynwood Park



- Investigate potential property or easement acquisition to connect this property with Lynwood Park
- Consider development of a dog park at this location

### **Skyland Park**

**Location:** 2600 Skyland Drive

**Size:** 10.60 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Overview:** Skyland Park features off-street parking, two tennis courts, playground areas, a picnic pavilion and a large multi-purpose field.

**Review:** Off street parking is undersized and lacks adequate striping, including dedicated handicapped parking.



The park entry signage is located behind the parking lot and still identified the property as a DeKalb County park.

The existing removable bollards are in poor condition and need replacement.

A picnic pavilion is located near the front of the park and is in poor condition. This all-wood construction pavilion is showing signs of rot and wear. An electrical panel and outlet are located on a riser in the lawn area next to the pavilion. This should be relocated and mounted in a more secure location. Site furnishings associated with the pavilion are mixed styles and they are in varying states of repair.

Between the pavilion and the tennis courts is a set of stairs. The handrails at the stairs do not meet current ADA guidelines.

The two-court tennis pod has been resurfaced over the years, but large cracks in the play surface make the courts virtually unusable. The courts do not have sports lighting and the perimeter fencing is in need of replacement, especially the court access gates.

Playground equipment is broken up into three areas. All three of the areas have compacted mulch surfacing. Two of the remote play areas have crosstie borders and play equipment that does not meet current industry standards. The large play area has multiple pieces of equipment that are in fair condition. None of the play areas are ADA accessible.

Many of the lawn areas at the center of the park are heavily worn and need replacement.

A small path leads from the playground area to the adjacent property, which is a state records office. The wooded area between the two is overrun with invasive plants, filling up the understory. The lack of visibility in this area is a safety concern.





## 06 Facility Assessments and Recommendations

The large multi-purpose field has a chain link perimeter fence and a backstop in one corner. Overall, the perimeter fence is in good condition, but the backstop requires replacement. No ADA access is provided onto the field or the player areas.

### Recommendations:

- Analyze community needs and develop new park master plan
- Consider expanding off street parking
- Renovate courts for tennis play or other programming
- Provide sports lighting for courts
- Set up pedestrian controls to protect small landscape areas
- Consolidate playground equipment and provide ADA access in addition to compliant safety surfacing
- Replace backstop
- Provide paved access into the field area
- Renovate pavilions as necessary and provide ADA access to each location
- Thin invasive plants along south property line for more visibility
- Remove fencing around park open space
- Add additional parking

## Community Parks

### Blackburn Park

**Location:** 3493 Ashford Dunwoody Road

**Size:** 51.20 acres

**Classification:** Community Park

**Overview:** Blackburn Park is located on the north end of the city and features several walking trails, including a section of Nancy Creek Trail, a PATH project that currently extends from Murphey Candler Park to Blackburn II Park.

The park also includes two soccer fields, two softball fields, a playground, restroom building, large rental pavilion, a multi-purpose field, a large open lawn with hilltop trail, off-street parking and the Blackburn Tennis Center,



which has 18 tennis courts, as well as a large pro shop with restrooms, lockers and showers.

**Review:** The Blackburn Tennis Center has 18 courts set upon several terraces. All courts have sports lighting and paved access to them. Sidewalk and plaza conditions vary, as well as the overall ADA compliance. Court lighting systems vary in brand, age and condition. Overall, the courts are in good shape, but much of the complex interior requires attention. Much of the landscaping around the center is overgrown and needs replacement. A reconfiguration of the internal sidewalks and plazas should be completed to resolve ADA issues, as well as provide for additional spectator seating areas.

The Tennis Center is an old structure. Staff has reported flooding in the basement, which houses the locker rooms and showers. None of the basement amenity areas are ADA accessible and require full renovation. Players and spectators must currently go through the pro shop, which is on an elevated level, to access the courts. Although there is a lift, it is frequently out of order. Access ramps from the pro shop to the courts do not meet current ADA design criteria.

Overall, the layout and location of the off-street parking is very inefficient. Access into the main portion of the park is very close to a major intersection, which makes the park difficult to enter or leave due to traffic. The majority of the parking spaces are not located near the areas with the highest intensity of use. Overall, the parking lot pavement is deteriorating and striping is fading. Some handicapped parking spaces are provided, but few, if any meet ADA guidelines. Parking to serve the softball fields is insufficient. All parking lots have insufficient parking lot lighting. Sidewalk access from the parking lots to the various facilities is in poor condition or non-existent.

A small memorial area is located at the end of Roberts Way. Adjacent to the memorial is a soccer field that has been striped to near full-size dimensions. The field is not lighted and does not provide enough safety between the field and the perimeter fencing. Spectator seating is located in adjacent grassy areas and is not ADA compliant.

A small storage shed is located between this soccer field and the softball fields. The shed appears to be in poor condition and likely requires new roofing, fascia, and service doors.

The softball complex is arranged so that the outfields also double as another soccer field. This area has sports lighting but lacks paved connections to adjacent parking areas. The overall condition of the fields and amenity areas around them is poor. Turf areas are bare or weedy and the skinned infields require regarding with new mix. Spectator seating areas are not ADA compliant and the fence mesh, especially at the backstop, needs replacement. Score towers are showing rust and their electrical connections are not properly routed or secured. The stairs connecting the softball complex to the playground have a non-complaint handrail.

Blackburn's playground location is not ideal, as it is not easily accessed from parking areas. Furthermore, it is undersized for a community park and lacks adequate ADA access and safety surfacing. Adjacent to the playground is a small restroom building that is in fair





condition. Some minor fixture modifications for ADA are needed, as well as fresh paint. Access to the restrooms from the softball fields is via a sidewalk, but it is not ADA compliant.

Like the other soccer field, the one near the main entrance is not properly sized for safety zones and has no sports lighting or ADA access. In addition, the spectator areas are once again located in adjacent turf areas.

The large hilltop trails are in excellent condition and offers excellent views of the rest of the park and the surrounding area. Many of the open lawn areas on the hilltop have turf areas with heavy wear and erosion that need remedial work.

On the north end of the park is a large wooden rental pavilion. This pavilion is an old model that likely needs major renovations or replacement. A structural analysis of the support members is needed, as well as fresh wood stain and a new roof. Site furnishings at the pavilion need to be replaced to meet the new city standard. Catering truck parking is available at the pavilion, but no other parking is provided adjacent to the building for other visitors.

Next to the pavilion is a large open lawn area with a backstop. The lawn is in very poor condition and requires full renovation to correct grading and erosion problems.

Nancy Creek Trail is an excellent pedestrian thoroughfare that skirts the rear property line. Some attention should be given to repairing portions of the boardwalk where the railing is damaged.

### **Recommendations:**

- Provide new entry signage conforming to new city standard
- Provide new site furnishings matching new city standard
- Perform a study and master plan for vehicular and pedestrian circulation in the park. Items to consider should improve park entry relocation away from Johnson Ferry Road and redistribution of parking areas to serve high use facilities. Pedestrian analysis should include ADA accessibility from parking into all facilities as well as a perimeter trail loop that utilizes Nancy Creek Trail.
- Perform full renovation of the Blackburn Tennis Center. At minimum, provide new sports lighting, and interior sidewalks, plazas and landscaping. Renovation or replacement of the facility's pro shop should be a top priority for the department.
- At both soccer fields, reduce play area to incorporate the necessary safety zones and paved spectator seating areas. Change turf from a natural to synthetic surface.
- Provide sports lighting at the soccer fields
- Perform full renovation of the softball complex
- Demolish the playground area and relocate to rental pavilion area. A large community playground with fully accessible features should be established at Blackburn Park.
- Provide expanded parking at the rental pavilion in addition to a smaller lawn area
- Renovate or replace the rental pavilion and provide paved parking area for catering and equipment parking



- Provide new restroom building at pavilion/playground area
- Replace and relocate the storage building at the softball complex
- Address turf areas in lawn around pavilion. Consider installing synthetic multipurpose field in this location.
- Continue maintenance and repairs to trail boardwalks
- Provide additional lighting in the park between various facilities in the park.
- Explore options to relocate and/or add additional playgrounds in the park as part of the development of a park Master Plan.

## Regional Parks

### Murphey Candler Park

**Location:** 1551 West Nancy Creek Drive

**Size:** 120.60

**Classification:** Regional Park

**Overview:** Murphey Candler is the largest park in the Brookhaven system and is located on the northern end of the city. Youth sports programs that are run from this park draw participants from across the northeast perimeter area and beyond. For these reasons, planning team members have identified this park as a regional facility.

Murphey Candler can be reviewed in two portions: North- that has elements that are more passive such as the lake, trails, playgrounds, pavilions and the outdoor pool; and the South- that houses fourteen athletic fields for baseball, softball and football programs.

### **Review:**

#### *Murphey Candler North*

Located adjacent to the outfall of Candler Lake is an old structure known as the “Caretaker’s House.” This structure was once located on Peachtree Road but was moved to its current location in the 1960’s. The building has undergone multiple additions and renovations. Today, the structure is in need of a major overhaul to protect it from further degradation. An assessment of the building’s integrity should be performed, as well as a review of potential





uses under the new parks program. Similar assessments and renovations should be performed on the adjacent garage.

Parking in the area of the Caretaker's house is off-street, paved and primarily serves the athletic fields to the south. The pavement needs resurfacing and the parking need to be reconfigured to provide adequate handicapped parking meeting ADA standards. Pedestrian connections into the athletic facilities also need to be improved.

Park signage near the bridge is difficult to see and identifies the park as a DeKalb County facility.

On the opposite side of the lake is a small trailhead area with paved parking and sidewalk connections to paved portions of the lake trail. Parking for trail use is also consumed by athletic field users and the handicapped parking configuration needs to be addressed. The adjacent wooded area may be suitable for parking expansion. A lake overlook is also provided at this location. Rail heights and access route modifications area needed for ADA compliance. Signage and pedestrian control fencing near this parking lot need to be replaced.

Twelve picnic pavilions are randomly located throughout the north end of the park. All are wood structures with shingle roofs. The condition of these pavilions varies, but all require cleaning, painting and new roofing to extend their lifespan. ADA access to these pavilions is not available. Furthermore, the site furnishing styles and conditions vary widely.

At the far east end of the park is an open field with a baseball backstop. The field is partially surrounded by perimeter fencing and access is obtained by a small gravel lot off Candler Lake Drive, which is inadequate for the area it serves. The turf on this field is in poor condition.

A two-court tennis pod is located on the northeast side of the lake. These courts have no dedicated parking nearby and have no ADA access. Only a single set of stairs into the street is provided. The courts have no sports lighting and the perimeter fencing is in poor condition. Some cracks are present in the court surfacing and there are no dedicated spectator areas.

A maintenance access loop is located along the wooded portions of the area north of the lake. This road is in poor condition due to surface wear and root intrusion. Vehicular access gates are residential chain-link and there are no paved pedestrian connections to the loop.

Pedestrian and maintenance vehicular traffic has damaged the lake's shore. Much of the once grassed areas are now destabilized and eroding into the lake. Measures are needed to protect and stabilize the lake's shoreline, including the provision of a paved trail loop, fencing, designated fishing areas, shoreline plantings and possible dredging of the lake.

The north shore of the lake also features a playground area in a densely wooded stand of pines. This area is served by a gravel pull-off parking area that lacks handicapped parking and paved sidewalk connections. Any sidewalk connections inside the wooded area are not visible and are covered by layers of pine straw mulch. Three separate playground structures are located here. None of these structures have adequate safety surfacing or ADA access.



Furthermore, none of these structures meet current playground design standards for safety. A small restroom building is located in this area. This building does not meeting ADA design guidelines and requires renovation to repair damage to the interior.

Signage identifying the location of the Murphey Candler pool is not visible from the road. Existing signage located on the building identifies the facility as part of DeKalb County system. The parking lot is not adequately sized for a competition facility and the striping is faded. Lighting is not provided at the parking lot.

The pool area features a pool house with outdoor showers and ticketing, a pavilion, a competition pool with diving area, a zero-depth toddler pool and an arbor in a turf area. Overall, the facility is in good condition. Some shade structures could be used on the pool deck area. ADA compliance issues are present.

A remote parking lot is provided between the pool and the Caretaker's house and is in good condition. Paved sidewalk connections to other park amenity areas are needed.

### *Murphey Candler South*

Parking for the southern portion of the park, which houses multiple athletic fields is severely insufficient. Large events often spill into surrounding residential streets or occupy parking areas intended for other park facilities. Both paved and gravel parking areas are provided. Neither has lighting and neither has ADA compliant handicapped parking or access sidewalks into the facility.

The football practice field has full perimeter fencing, goal posts spectator seating areas and sports lighting. Overall, the field is in fair condition. Bare spots were observed at the time of the review and some drainage issues were noticeable. Paved access routes onto the field are not provided, nor are there any towards the spectator areas. Turf and drainage issues in the common areas around the field were also observed.

Adjacent to the practice field is a multi-purpose building that houses restrooms, locker rooms, an equipment room and coach's office. ADA renovations are needed throughout the building, as well as aesthetic upgrades and connections to the rest of the site.

Martha's Spirit Wear Shed, a small structure for vending is located near the practice field and lacks any ADA access for sales staff or customers.

Bob Johnson Stadium is a lighted athletic field with perimeter fencing, sports lighting and built-in bleacher structures that are integral to three buildings along the sideline. The first building is a maintenance/ storage building with large bay doors and an attached dumpster enclosure. A large concession building is located in the middle. Multiple aesthetic and functional repairs and upgrades are needed at this facility. The kitchen includes a hood exhaust system that is located under the spectator seating. The third building includes coach's offices and additional equipment storage rooms. Handicapped seating areas are not provided at the stadium seating and there are no sidewalk connections from the ends into the rest of the site. The field is showing signs of wear and requires re-sodding.





The bleacher/building complex is much larger than needed and is also inefficient in its design. The same level of seating could be provided in a much smaller space. Properly design buildings would also meet the leagues space needs better and take up less space. The entire football complex needs to be redesigned to improve space utilization and create more room for parking.

Overall, the seven baseball fields and five softball fields are in good condition in terms of the fields, themselves. Turf grass and infield material are well maintained; however, accessory structures and features have issues that require consideration, especially for ADA requirements. There is also an inconsistency in terms of amenities, such as bullpens, shading for spectators, sports lighting systems, etc.

At field 5, there is no handicapped spectator seating area. Backstop netting is connected to light poles and score towers for support, placing loads upon these structures that were not intended in their design. Sports lighting for field 5 is on wood poles. There are no paved connections into dugouts and the field.

A wood pavilion is located near field 14 that requires new roofing, fresh paint and new site furnishings. Backstop netting at field 14 is also connected to the sports lighting poles. Similar issues for handicapped seating and field access routes are present at this location.

Fields 1, 2, 3, and 4 share a common core area that has compacted aggregate surfacing that lacks fully accessible routes to dugouts and spectator areas. The central pavilion is in fair condition but could use some additional staining to enhance its appearance. Access routes between the fields have aluminum edging to hold in the aggregate that is damaged or failing in some locations.

The AAA field has 8' tall backstop fencing with 20' tall netting that is secured by independent support posts. These posts are anchored to the score tower roof for additional support.

A bridge has been provided to span the spillway of Candler Lake in order to connect both sides of the athletic complex. The decking on this bridge has gaps in excess of ADA regulations and could be a tripping hazard.

A new restroom building was recently installed next to the Majors field that is in excellent condition. The building's interior appears to be ADA compliant, but an exterior drinking fountain blocks the only accessible route into the men's room.

Just to the north of the restroom is another storage building used by the Murphey Candler Little League.

The Majors field features a built-in grandstand with folding stadium seating. These spectator seating areas have shade sails overhead, but do not provide for designated handicapped seating areas. The dugouts are not ADA compliant due to the change in grade and additional safety railing is required along the front of the built-in bleachers. Many of the stairs around the field and spectator areas lack adequate handrails to meet code, and the entry sidewalk exceeds five percent grade and does not have handrails. Landscaping and lawn in common areas around this field need replacement.



The Mac Scoggins Field House includes concessions, restrooms and meeting rooms for coaches. A full ADA compliance review is needed for this building.

Adjacent to the Field House, the AA Field has terraced spectator seating in addition to traditional bleachers. Weed control in the gravel areas of the terrace is needed, as well as paved pads at the bleachers, along with accessible routes to both bleachers and the dugouts. Grassing surrounding the common areas at the field is in need of replacement. Both dugouts need replacement to eliminate security issues with the back walls.

The interior of the complex also features a large shelter with batting cages and bullpens. The batting cage is covered by a metal frame structure that is in excellent condition and is lighted for nighttime use. A secondary wooden picnic pavilion is also located nearby and requires new paint and site furnishings.

A small children's playground is located adjacent to the International and Southern fields. The 2-5 year old play structure is in good condition and has a mulch safety surfacing. ADA access and additional surfacing are needed. Parent benches and a picnic table are also provided.

The three remaining fields, the Coastal, Southern and International, all share similar deficiencies as their larger counterparts. Spectator seating areas and the dugouts lack accessible routes and require re-sodding of common turf areas.

Finally, an additional storage shed and covered storage area is also located next to the International and Southern ball fields. This storage area needs a paved connection to the barn and canopy to reduce wear on the sod between them and the sidewalk.

### **Recommendations:**

#### *Murphey Candler North*

- Provide new park entry signage conforming to city standard
- Provide new site furnishings conforming to city standard
- Develop parking analysis with intention to maximize available off-street parking and potential expansion areas on site
- Provide handicapped parking areas with full ADA connections to site facilities. Consider using tabletop pedestrian crossings along W. Nancy Creek Drive.
- Perform full inspection of Caretaker house and develop remedial work plans to renovate and improve
- Provide lake shore stabilization initiatives to control pedestrian access to the lake shore and protect shoreline plantings
- Provide paved perimeter trail around portions of the lake as called for in the greenways plans. Other trails around lake can be granular paved, so long as they meet ADA, creating a full ADA loop trail around the lake.
- Expand trailhead parking area and renovate the lake overlook for ADA considerations





- Replace pavilions with metal structures to ensure long lifespans. Provide ADA sidewalk access to each location
- Redevelop multi-purpose field at Candler Lake Drive and provide enhanced parking and pedestrian access
- Renovate tennis courts to provide new pavement, sports lighting and spectator areas. Provide dedicated parking with ADA considerations
- Redevelop playground and restroom area. Consider select removal of some trees to reduce pine needle litter in playground areas. Develop sidewalk connections to play structures connected to maintenance road and lake trail
- Replace restroom building at playground area
- Provide new paved parking along Candler Lake Drive at playground area with ADA considerations
- Provide vehicular directional signage to all remote facilities on the north end of the park
- Provide roadside facility identification signage at pool
- Renovate pool parking lot and provide lighting
- Perform renovations to pool house for ADA and aesthetic considerations
- Provide additional shade structures at pool

### *Murphey Candler South*

- Develop a park master plan that includes a parking study for the park to determine if a parking deck is needed to meet the overall parking needs for the park
- Provide new park entry signage conforming to city standard
- Provide new site furnishings conforming to city standard
- Develop parking analysis with intention to maximize available off-street parking and potential expansion areas on site
- Provide handicapped parking areas with full ADA connections to site facilities. Consider using tabletop pedestrian crossings along W. Nancy Creek Drive.
- Renovate playing surface of practice field and develop paved pedestrian connections between common areas, spectator seating and the field
- Renovate Bob Johnson Memorial Stadium to provide code compliant facilities and spectator seating areas. Provide enhanced plaza experience with shaded picnic area. Renovate playing surface of the football field and develop paved pedestrian connections between common areas, spectator seating and the field.
- Provide ADA compliant access routes and service windows to Martha's Spirit Shed
- Provide ADA compliant access routes into team areas and field of play, as well as spectator seating areas at all ball fields
- Renovate backstop netting systems to provide independent supports that do not connect to sports lighting poles or score tower roofs
- Repaint wood pavilions and provide ADA access from sidewalks



- Provide analysis of spectator areas surrounding Majors field and AA field for site safety, including guardrails, handrails, fencing, etc.
- Relocate drinking fountain attached to restroom building for clear access route
- Redevelop the spillway crossing to provide ADA compliant decking and guardrails meeting AASHTO guidelines
- Provide additional mulch safety surfacing at baseball playground and add access ramp
- Perform full analysis of Mac Scoggins Field House for life safety code and ADA compliance. Provide remedial work as necessary.
- Provide concrete pads in front of maintenance buildings and storage areas

## Greenways

### Greenway Design Standards

#### Land Acquisition

When planning and locating greenways within an existing community, both connectivity of population centers and the natural features of the land must be considered. It is very common for greenways to be built in the riparian zone of rivers, streams and associated watercourses adjacent to wetlands and costal marshes and along wooded corridors. Waterways are natural routes through the landscape, and they are often unsuitable for development due to periodic and natural flooding. Protecting wide riparian zones also preserves water quality and wildlife habitat. Acquisition of floodplains, wetlands or marshes and riparian zones is recommended even if they are not used in the short-term for public access greenways. Once these areas are under city ownership, they can be retrofitted with trails in the future.

Another corridor that presents an opportunity for a greenway is along existing roadways where excess public right-of-way exists. Many times, greenway trails run parallel to roadway travel lanes and combine on-road bicycle lanes and wide sidewalks to provide both safe pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The preferred roadway based greenway trail design standard is to separate the trail and roadway with a landscaped buffer strip.

There are many avenues that can be pursued in the land acquisition process. Land acquisition can occur through purchase of land in fee simple, purchase of development rights, and acceptance of donations of land and development rights (i.e., conservation easements).





In the development of greenway trails, public access will be required. The process of mandating public access to private property is difficult, at best, and raises significant legal problems. The issue at hand is how the City of Brookhaven and Brookhaven Parks and Recreation can ensure that properties that are developed along a planned greenway trail cooperate in its construction and provide public access. The options are as follows:

- Acquire the greenway portion of the property in fee simple
- Acquire an easement for the greenway portion that stipulates public access as a condition
- Arrive at a mutual agreement between the developer and the city, in which creating the public access greenway is a condition of rezoning
- Provide incentives for developers to include public access greenways

### Trail Design

In developing the proposed routing plan for the greenway routes, the routes were divided into two major groups: “on-road systems” and “off-road systems.” The “on-road systems” contain sidewalks, bike routes, bike lanes and off-road paths that are constructed within the right-of-way of a road. The “off-road systems” are multi-use paths that are developed in rights-of-way that are shared with utilities or are acquired exclusively for the development of greenway trails. These “off-road systems” would fall within road rights-of-way only at points where they connect to road-based systems or cross a public street, or to complete a loop of the trail where off-road routes were not available. The following standards for the design of vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian circulation are adapted from a number of sources, including AASHTO, and various state highway departments' planning and design guidelines.

**Pedestrian Walks and Trails** include the incorporation of both new sidewalks and existing sidewalks with needed repairs and improvements to provide safe connections and links between neighborhoods, schools, parks and other community activity centers. These routes should be developed to accommodate all pedestrians, including children, senior citizens and individuals with disabilities.

**Vehicular/Pedestrian/Bicycle Routes** include provisions for travel routes for pedestrians, pedestrian routes in combination with vehicular routes, and bicycling routes in combination with vehicular routes. Designated bicycle routes identify a specific route that has been allocated for a bicyclist to get from a point of origin to a point of destination. Streets with standard 12-foot wide lanes do not necessarily have to be physically widened to become designated as a bike route if certain conditions are met. A designated and restricted segment of a shared street or roadway for use by cyclists can be indicated by the use of a colored stripe as separation between vehicles and bicycles. The stripe provides psychological rather than physical protection. However, where space is available, physical separation can be created through the use of plant materials, guardrails or low curbs. As an



added reinforcement to the designated bicycle route, bicycle route signs should be posted at all areas where new traffic enters the roadway, denoting the multiple use of the shared street or roadway. The distance between signs should not be greater than two miles. In urban areas, directional arrows should be used at intersections to indicate whether the bicycle route continues through the intersection or turns right or left. Bicycle route signs help encourage use and warn motorists that bicyclists may be using the road. These signed routes are considered appropriate for basic and proficient bicyclists.

In a typical urban setting where bicycles share a single lane with vehicles, in conjunction with speed limits under 35 mph, and with traffic lanes between 11 and 12 feet, the bicycle lane is recommended to be a minimum of four feet wide from the back of the curb; however, a five-foot width is preferred. Where road rights-of-way are greater than the normal 40 to 50 feet or where land acquisition will be required for trail construction, bicycle lane widths should be expanded beyond minimum standards to increase safety. The actual bicycle lane width for specific locations should be determined after evaluating vehicular operating speeds, traffic volume and composition, on-street parking, number of turning movements, number of businesses and residences and the degree of public awareness of the bicyclist presence.

An additional concern for safety within the bicycle lane is the potential problem caused by drainage grate inlets and utility covers. In new road construction, it is recommended that no inlets and covers should be located within bicycle lanes; the use of curb inlets is suggested and would eliminate grate inlet safety issues. It is also recommended that grates and utility covers be installed flush with the road surface, whether in new road construction or resurfacing.

Existing parallel bar drainage grate inlets located within bicycle lanes are potential traps for the front wheel of a bicycle, which can slip between the bars, causing serious damage to the bicycle and bodily injury to the cyclist. It is highly recommended that these grates be replaced with bicycle-safe and hydraulically efficient grates.

Vehicular/Pedestrian/Bicycle Routes should be designed to accommodate pedestrians, including children and senior citizens with varying degrees of physical and mental capabilities, and individuals with disabilities.

**Multi-use Off-road Trails** are typically 12 to 14 feet wide to accommodate two-way travel and serve a variety of users, including walkers, joggers, runners, bicyclists, skateboarders and skaters. These trails are also serviceable by emergency and maintenance vehicles. It is





recommended that trail surfaces be paved in order to ensure safety and access for all users, depending upon site-specific limitations. Pervious paving materials that are ADA-compliant and accommodate wheeled equipment should be used where it is appropriate. We have used pervious materials on past projects with good success.

In areas where trails coexist with jurisdictional wetlands, the trail should transition to a boardwalk to minimize its impact on the wetland. Where visual separation is required, such as along boardwalks located within jurisdictional wetlands, a three-rail wood fence, as illustrated in **Figure 6.9: Prototypical Trail Sections** provides an appropriate separation. It is recommended that all on-grade trails provide a 2-foot cleared shoulder on both sides of the trail for maneuverability and safety. A painted centerline stripe to designate and separate travel direction should also be considered. Detailed design of the multi-use trails should follow AASHTO standards and criteria in order to accommodate bicycle, emergency and maintenance vehicular travel. Multi-use trails should be designed to serve all pedestrians as well as basic, novice and proficient cyclists.

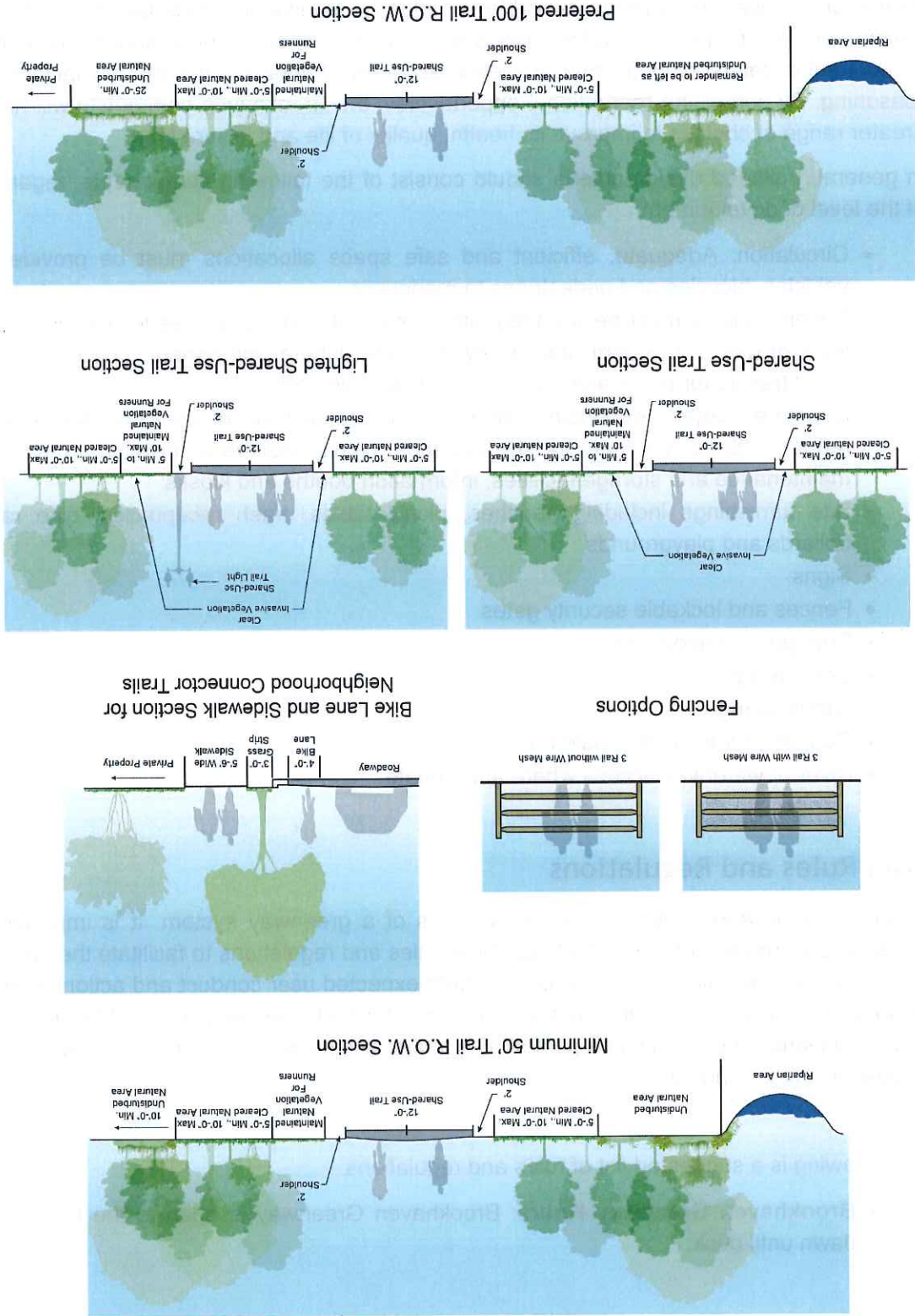
Multi-use trails can be in the floodplain of rivers, streams and creeks. Such trails should avoid the state-required buffers and any wetlands. They provide access to and connections between historic and cultural sites, exceptional natural resources and other points of interest. Multi-use trails may follow roadways, but physical separation is established between motor vehicles and trail uses. Where physical and secure separation is required (i.e., multi-use trails along a highway right-of-way), the three-rail wood fence with wire mesh, as illustrated in the *Prototypical Trail Section Sketches*, will provide an aesthetically pleasing and acceptable barrier between the heavy vehicular traffic roadway and the adjacent pedestrian/bicycle multi-use trail. Along portions of the trail, changes in elevation are required to conform to existing topography, avoid significant natural features such as rock outcroppings or compensate for fill materials in floodplains. In these transition areas, porous or standard concrete ramped trails with supporting gabion walls should be used. Trails should not exceed a five percent (5%) vertical slope in order to comply with ADA guidelines for accessibility and to maximize user comfort. Any trails that exceed five percent are considered ramps and must conform to specific ADA requirements relevant to handrails, length of run, landings and other issues. AASHTO allows for steeper grades on trails than ADA but we have found that grades over 5% are difficult on seniors both walking and bicycling and are the maximum grade that small children and many adults can comfortably ride a bicycle. Therefore, we try to keep trails under this gradient.

### Trailhead Design

Simply stated, trailheads are trail access points for the general public. However, in terms of available facilities and amenities, the various types of trailheads can be extremely diverse. Trailheads will establish the trail user's first impression of the greenway system; therefore,



# FIGURE 6.9 PROTOTYPICAL TRAIL SECTIONS



2014 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan Fig. 6.9





attention to details of design will be critical as construction documents are developed. Where possible, trailheads should be located in or adjacent to existing or planned parks so that public amenities such as restrooms, parking, picnic pavilions, playgrounds and general recreation facilities are already available. In addition, educational facilities should also be considered as a prime location for trailheads. Frugal use of economic resources is a strong component in determining location. However, economy of means is not the only factor in this reasoning. By combining recreational opportunities, the Brookhaven community will have a greater range of choices to improve its health, quality of life and leisure time.

In general, trailhead design criteria should consist of the following components, regardless of the level of development:

- Circulation: Adequate, efficient and safe space allocations must be provided for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians to maneuver
- Parking: There must be an adequate number of parking spaces for the anticipated level of use of the particular facility including, where appropriate, spaces for RVs, small trailers for boats and canoes, buses and bicycles
- Structures: Again, depending upon the anticipated level of use, buildings may be required. Structures may include gazebos, picnic shelters or pavilions, restrooms, maintenance and storage facilities, information booths and kiosks.
- Site furnishings including benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles, bike racks, bollards and playgrounds
- Signs
- Fences and lockable security gates
- Emergency telephones
- Security lighting
- Landscaping
- Connector trails to the main trail
- River or waterway access where appropriate

### Trail Rules and Regulations

Public safety is a key element for the success of a greenway system. It is important to establish and implement a standard set of trail rules and regulations to facilitate the safety of all trail users. The trail rules should identify both expected user conduct and actions that are in violation of trail policy. Public notification is key for trail user awareness of the trail rules and regulations, which should be posted at all major access points to the greenway and also be available in a handout form.

The following is a suggested list of rules and regulations:

- **Brookhaven Greenway Hours:** Brookhaven Greenway is open to the public from dawn until dusk.



- **Be Courteous:** All greenway users, including walkers, joggers, skaters, skateboarders, wheelchairs and bicyclists, must be respectful of other users, including their mode of travel, speed and level of skill. Respect the privacy of adjacent property owners and the existing wildlife living in their natural habitat; remember, greenway users are sharing community space.
- **Use the Buddy System:** Always use the greenway system with a friend!
- **Do Not Use This Trail Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs:** It is illegal to use this trail (public property) while under the influence of alcohol in excess of the State of Georgia statutory limits or if you have consumed illegal drugs. Trail users that are on prescribed medications should consult their doctor or pharmacist to ensure that their medications will not impair their abilities for safe usage of the greenway system.
- **Clean Up Your Litter:** Please keep our greenways clean and neat for other trail users. Dispose of all debris appropriately or pack out what you bring in. Remember to recycle whenever possible. Please clean up after your pets. Violations will result in fines.
- **Keep Pets on Leashes:** All pets must be kept on a secure and tethered leash. Violations will result in fines.
- **Keep to the Right:** Always keep to the right when using the trail, or stay in the lane that has been designated for your user group. An exception to this rule is when it becomes necessary to pass another user.
- **Pass on the Left:** When it becomes necessary to pass another user traveling in your direction, pass the user on their left. Verify that trail user traffic is clear prior to passing; remember, always yield to both slower and oncoming traffic.
- **Give Audible Signal When Passing:** All users should give a clear warning signal prior to passing. Common voice signals are "Passing on your left!" or "Cyclist on your left!" Be courteous and respectful with audible signals; profanity is not acceptable.
- **Be Predictable:** Travel in a consistent and predictable manner. Always look for traffic clearance prior to changing trail position.
- **Be Alert:** Inattention can cause disasters. Always stay alert. Maintain control of your bicycle, skateboard and skating travel.
- **Do Not Block the Trail:** When traveling in a group or with your pets, use no more than half of the trail. Do not block the flow of other trail users. If approached by trail users from both directions, oncoming and from behind, merge your group into a single line to the far right to allow the safe passage of others.
- **Yield When Entering or Crossing Trails:** When entering or crossing a trail at a non-controlled intersection, yield the right-of-way to traffic on the other trail.
- **Use of Lights:** When using a trail near dawn or dusk, or during inclement weather, be equipped with appropriate lights, and wear light or reflective clothing. Cyclists should be equipped with a white light in the front and a red or amber light in the rear of the bicycle, both visible from 500 feet in either direction. All other trail users should be equipped with a source of white lights capable of being seen from 250 feet to the front.





- **Trail Subject to Flash Flooding:** Sections of the Brookhaven Greenway are subject to flooding and the Greenway is officially closed during the times when trails are subjected to floodwater conditions. For your personal safety, please be prepared to leave the greenway immediately during periods of heavy rainfall.

The above rules and regulations represent an acknowledgement of basic concerns and are by no means final. They require review, modifications, additions per trail-unique conditions, and approval by the City of Brookhaven and Brookhaven Parks and Recreation Agency in the interest of public health, safety and well-being.

### Safety and Security

Safety and security are fundamental for all public facilities, which include community greenways.

The greenway is being developed to accommodate the general public, with special emphasis given to pedestrians, including children and senior citizens with varying degrees of physical and mental capabilities, and individuals with disabilities. The main trail will also accommodate two-way travel, serving a variety of users, including walkers, joggers, runners, bicyclists, and skaters; it will also accommodate emergency and maintenance vehicles.

With the Brookhaven Greenway being a public facility developed for the general public, a basic level of safety must be maintained. This level of safety does not end in the design efforts of the greenway, but extends to the maintenance and security policies to be implemented by the city. These policies will require safety patrols, routine maintenance of the trails and be recognized as high priorities by the city. Signage, both temporary and permanent, must be immediately in place from the beginning of construction to its completion. The signage system must include regulatory, warning and guidance signage.

An emergency plan should be developed and put in place by the city. This plan can respond to emergency situations from the common to the most unlikely accidents. Public agencies that should be involved include, but are not limited to, Parks, Fire, Emergency Services and Police Departments, Utility and Public Works Department and any other group that is tasked with emergency planning for city facilities.

In addition to public agencies, support from private groups and/or adjacent property owners along the greenway could be formed and become a major resource in both policing and maintaining the greenway system. This resource will have a strong bond of public ownership



and will make a special effort to see that the greenway, with its built facilities and natural resources, is protected and used as per city rules and regulations.

The following is a suggested list of additional components for the safety and security of the greenway:

- Installation of distance markers at .25 mile intervals to aid in identifying trail location in the event of an emergency
- Establishment of a safety committee or coordinator
- Preparation of a trail safety manual for employees and agencies
- Establishment of user rules and regulations
- Development of greenway and trails emergency procedures
- Preparation of a safety checklist
- Preparation of a trail user response form
- Development of a system for reporting accidents
- Development of a regular maintenance and inspection program
- Development of a site review program
- Development of a public information program
- Implementation of an employee training program for safety and emergency response
- Conducting ongoing research and evaluation of program objectives

Because the Brookhaven Greenway will be built in multiple phases, policies and emergency procedures should be expanded accordingly to deal with all of the greenway sections as a whole.

As construction phases are completed and opened for use by the public, a new construction phase will begin. It is highly recommended that public use not be allowed until the current construction phase is completed and that any use will be considered a violation of the posted rules and cited accordingly. This recommendation should minimize, if not avoid, unnecessary vandalism and damage to the greenway during construction. It will also reduce or prevent accidents during subsequent construction phases.

## General Recommendations

### Create a Greenway Conservation Easement Document

The potential for development of greenways throughout the city creates the need for a greenway conservation easement document. This document is a tool to gain access for greenways across private property without having to purchase the property or acquire the land at a reduced rate. A sample agreement is provided in the appendix. Parks staff should





work with the city's legal counsel to create a similar document to be used for greenway corridor acquisitions. Another option for obtaining greenway easement is to work with a non-profit agency such as the Path Foundation. The Path Foundation is an established greenway development non-profit that works with communities in the Greater Atlanta Metro area to obtain greenway routes. They would be a good partner for the city to work with as the city initiates its own greenway development program.

### **Develop Facility Design Standards**

The basis for creating a strong image of the Recreation and Parks Division is to follow design guidelines and standards in park development that allow a visitor to immediately identify a public park by the elements that are present there. Design standards also reinforce the branding efforts of communities who want to present a unified approach among all public facilities. Gwinnett County is a great example of a park system that uses standard design guidelines in their parks, which are readily identifiable by residents and visitors to the county.

#### **Architectural**

Architectural standards apply to the built structures within a park and dictate such elements as construction materials, roofing materials, paint colors, hardware and furnishings. While a strong park system does not require that every structure look exactly the same, using a combination of the same building materials and colors is enough to create an identity for the park structures. Using common hardware and building materials throughout the park system can reduce maintenance costs by increasing the efficiency of repairs. Our observations indicate a lack of architectural uniformity in Brookhaven parks.

#### **Athletic Amenity Standards**

Athletic amenity standards relate to backstops/dugouts, bleachers, fencing, gates, lighting, scorers' stands, irrigation, turf, spectator seating, concession/restroom buildings and other elements that support the athletic fields or complexes. Using the same fencing materials and dugout standards, etc. helps to strengthen a system's image by creating uniformity at major features found in the interior of a park. It also allows for the development of uniform field maintenance when all fields contain the same equipment and mechanical systems.

Due to the high usage level of soccer/multipurpose fields and some of the limited open space such as the area at Murphey Candler Park and the area by the large pavilion at Blackburn Park, there are on-going issues with turf care and safety. The city should consider using synthetic turf on some fields and open areas in the park system to maximize the use of these spaces. Not only would synthetic turf reduce long-term maintenance, it would reduce weather-related delays and would support increased programming and use of these



spaces. A design standard for synthetic fields should be developed with the overall field standards.

### **General Site Amenity Standards**

General site amenity standards are some of the easiest and most cost feasible to implement. They include such things as perimeter fencing and gates, furniture, green space irrigation, landscape planting, trash receptacles, lighting and playgrounds. Some basic guidelines for developing a standard package for park amenities include specifying elements that are produced by the same product supplier and are of the same color scheme and design style.

Using the same plant materials at park entrances and around key park features like pavilions or restroom buildings is one way of using site amenity standards to create an identity for the system. Maintenance of these landscapes is simplified because the inventory of replacement landscape material has been established beforehand. Repairs are made faster and scheduling is easier because time standards for repetitive repairs can be tracked. Our observations indicate a lack of uniformity in the site furnishings and landscaping.

### **Parking, Circulation and Site Development Standards**

Parking, circulation and site development standards relate to the dimensions and construction specifications of parking, paving, roads, sidewalks and trails. These standards set parameters for the layout of new or redeveloped parks through requirements such as the type of curb and gutter found along roadways and parking lots and the minimum width of sidewalks. In addition, these standards can provide general guidelines that minimize the visual impact of parking to create circulation that is more efficient by grouping similar activities like basketball, tennis and other court games.

Some parking, circulation and site development standards that should be considered include:

- Providing shade for picnic areas during 11:00 am and 5:00 pm
- Maximum buildable slope of 20% with 2-15% being most desirable
- Providing a proper balance of wooded and open lawn areas
- Minimizing offensive sounds and smells through careful site selection
- Minimizing the impact of lighting through the placement and selection of light fixtures
- Locating large facilities in open areas and on flatter slopes to minimize removal of existing tree canopy
- Providing shade along walking paths and playgrounds
- Providing a central restroom for several recreation facilities to share in more developed parks





- Locating facilities where they are visible from a main road
- Locating unique park facilities in locations that are accessible for walkers and cyclists
- Locating parks along proposed greenway corridors
- Establishing parking ratios for each type of facility
- Providing standard turf and maintenance for dog parks
- Identifying and specifying where green infrastructure systems should be used
- When looking at parking lot layouts, the following should be considered:
  - Minimizing the visual impact of large parking lots with landscaping
  - Utilizing right-angled parking for the greatest space efficiency
  - Providing overflow parking on stabilized turf or lawn areas
  - Separating pedestrian and vehicular circulation routes
  - Using wheel stops where parking spaces abut sidewalks
  - Using porous pavements and bioswales to reduce and clean stormwater runoff
  - Where reuse or installation of granite curbs is appropriate

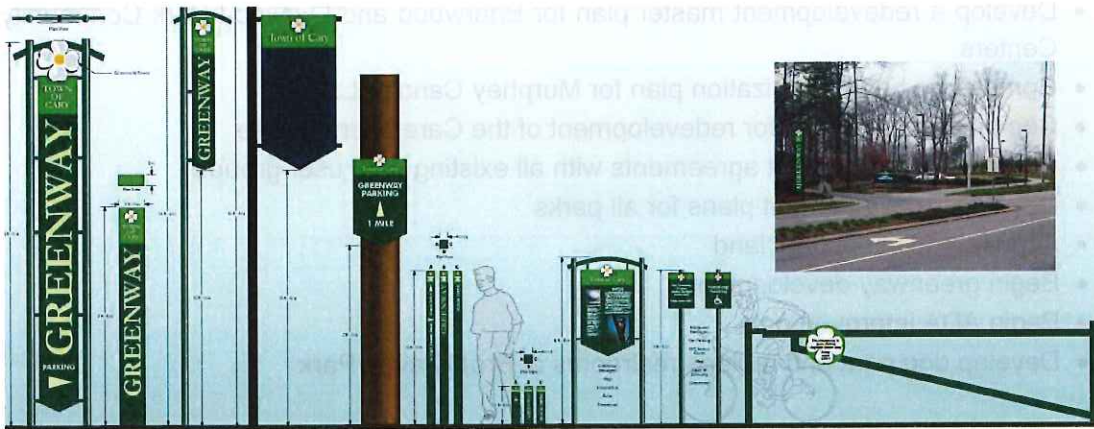
### Sign Standards

Entrance signs, directional signs and identification signs are critical elements for providing a standard image of the park system. Park sign programs can be implemented into an existing community-wide wayfinding program or as an independent program.

The existing granite park entry signs are attractive and could be used as the bases for develop park sign standards. These signs can be updated to add the name of city to the signs. Additional landscaping around these signs should also be added to enhance the setting of the signs. A uniform set of park signage standards should be developed. **Figure 6.10** below provides an example of the new park sign standards adopted by the City of Cary, North Carolina. While the materials used in this example would not be ideal for Brookhaven, the family of signs does reflect the variety of signs needed for the park system including greenway signs.



Figure 6.10: City of Cary, North Carolina Greenway Sign Standards



### Action Plan

As part of the overall capital plan, funding for the development of design standards should be included. The standards can be developed as part of the redevelopment and renovation of existing parks and development of new parks. The standards should reflect the city's overall visioning program and other community projects.

## Park Development Priorities

The planning team has prioritized the projects recommended throughout this master plan. For a detailed phasing of these projects, including opinions of cost and the year in which they should be implemented, refer to Section 7, *Opinions of Probable Cost and Phasing Plan*.

### Tier One Priorities

Tier One Priorities are the actions that should be taken and the park projects that should be funded in the next 24 months. Many of the projects listed in Tier One are additional studies on existing facilities that are needed to determine which existing facilities should be renovated and which one should be removed.

- Develop all recommended design standard documents including standardize signage for all parks
- Develop a prioritized capital plan and funding mechanism for implementation
- Secure funding for capital plan
- Begin redevelopment of all parks by removing unnecessary chain link fences in parks
- Develop an aquatics facility master plan for all three pools





- Acquire property in District 4 for a neighborhood park and develop park master plan
- Develop a redevelopment master plan for Briarwood and Lynwood Park Community Centers
- Complete a bank stabilization plan for Murphey Candler Lake
- Complete master plan for redevelopment of the Caretakers House
- Complete management agreements with all existing park user groups
- Develop redevelopment plans for all parks
- Acquire additional park land
- Begin greenway development
- Begin ADA improvements
- Develop dog park and replace restrooms at Brookhaven Park

### Tier Two Priorities

- Tier Two Priorities are projects to be completed in months 25-60 following adoption of this master plan. Begin redevelopment of parks per the capital plan.
- Add restrooms per park plans throughout the park system
- Implement the recommendations of the aquatics master plan
- Complete redevelopment of Caretaker House
- Develop additional parking at Murphey Candler and redevelop football complex
- Complete the redevelopment passive facilities at Murphey Candler
- Develop neighborhood park in District 4
- Continue greenway development
- Implement recommendations for Briarwood and Lynwood Community Centers

### Tier Three Priorities

Tier Three Priorities are projects to be completed in months 61-120 following adoption of this master plan.

- Continue park renovations per the capital plan
- Continue greenway development per the capital plan
- Continue to acquire land for additional neighborhood parks

### Projects to be completed in the future, beyond the 10 year master plan time frame

- Section 7 contains a year-by-year spending plan and cost estimates for park renovation and redevelopment

