



# City of Tucker Recreation and Parks Master Plan

May 2019



Prepared by:



April 2019

# Acknowledgments

The City of Tucker Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was completed by the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department with planning and technical support provided by the consulting team led by Barge Design Solutions in partnership with PROS Consulting and ETC Institute.

Special thanks to City staff, elected officials, community organizations, stakeholders, and residents for providing valuable insight and support during this process. Without the dedication and commitment of the community, this master plan would not have been possible.

## **CITY OF TUCKER MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

Mayor Frank Auman  
Pat Soltys - District 1, Post 1  
William (Bill) Rosenfeld - District 1, Post 2  
Matt Robbins - District 2, Post 1  
Noelle Monferdini, District 2, Post 2  
Michelle Penkava - District 3, Post 1  
Anne Lerner - District 3, Post 2

## **CITY OF TUCKER PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

Carlton (Rip) Robertson, Director  
Jason Collins, Park Operations Manager  
Ray Rollins, Recreation Center Manager  
Crystal Dawson, Recreation Leader  
Joe Stewart, Recreation Leader

## **CITY OF TUCKER STAFF**

Tami Hanlin, City Manager  
Cindy Jenkins, Assistant City Manager

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Cara Schroeder	Tyler Parsons
Shawn Stone	Sue Fillon
Jenna Greene	Linda Clarke
Susan Ludwig	Mark Nufer
Claire Hayes	Michael Kidd
Valerie Nichols	

## **STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS**

Tucker Youth Soccer Association	Friends of Tucker Recreation Center
Tucker Football League	Friends of Johns Homestead
Taylor Academy of Arts	Friends of Henderson Park
Expressions in Motion	Friends of Kelley Cofer Park
Tuckercise	Friends of Tucker Nature Preserve
Wade Walker YMCA	Friends of Peters Park
Tucker Elite Gymnastics	Friends of Montreal Park
Tumble Pros	Friends of Smokerise Parks

This page was left blank intentionally.

# Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgments.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>1.0 Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW: THE PLANNING PROCESS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.3 DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.4 TRENDS SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.5 PUBLIC INPUT.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.6 LEVEL OF SERVICE.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.7 PARK RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1.8 ACTION PLAN.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.9 PARK PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.10 MAINTENANCE RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.11 CURRENT AND PROPOSED SPENDING LEVEL.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.0 Research &amp; Analysis.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2.1 COMMUNITY PROFILE.....</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1.1 Demographic Analysis.....	9
2.1.2 Methodology.....	9
2.1.3 Race and Ethnicity Definitions.....	9
2.1.4 City of Tucker Populace.....	10
2.1.4 City of Tucker Demographic Implications.....	11
2.1.5 Recreation Trends Analysis.....	12
2.1.6 Local Sport and Market Potential.....	22
<b>2.3 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>2.4 EXISTING PARKS &amp; RECREATION FACILITIES.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.5 BENCHMARK ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>37</b>
2.5.1 Introduction.....	37
2.5.2 Comparison of Service Area, Inventories, and operations.....	38
2.5.3 Key Takeaways.....	39
<b>3.0 Outreach &amp; Needs Assessment.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.1 QUALITATIVE INPUT SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>40</b>
3.1.1 Focus Groups.....	40
3.1.2 Public Forums.....	42
<b>3.2 STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY.....</b>	<b>44</b>
3.2.1 Overview.....	44
3.2.2 Methodology.....	44
3.2.3 Overall Use and Ratings of Park and Recreation Facilities.....	45
3.2.4 Overall Participation and Ratings of Programs.....	45
3.2.5 Communication About Recreation Programs and Activities.....	45
3.2.6 Facility Needs and Priorities.....	45
3.2.7 Programming Needs and Priorities.....	48
3.2.8 Additional Findings.....	51
3.2.9 Recommendations.....	52

<b>4.0 Recommendations.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>4.1 BENEFITS OF PARKS.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>4.2 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES.....</b>	<b>53</b>
4.2.1 Definitions used in Park Classification.....	54
4.2.2 Park Classifications.....	54
<b>4.3 LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>4.4 SERVICE AREAS ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>4.5 PARKS, TRAILS FACILITIES, PROGRAMMING, AND OPERATIONAL PLAN.....</b>	<b>64</b>
4.5.1 land acquisition.....	64
4.5.2 Determining locations for new parkland.....	64
4.5.3 New Parks and Facilities.....	65
4.5.4 Trail Recommendations.....	66
4.5.5 Improvements to Existing Parks.....	67
4.5.6 Improvements to undeveloped Parks.....	69
4.5.7 Implementation Recommendations.....	70
<b>5.0 Program &amp; Services Assessment.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5.1 OVERVIEW OF PRIORITIES AND CORE PROGRAM AREAS.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>5.3 TUCKER PARKS AND RECREATION CORE PROGRAM AREAS.....</b>	<b>75</b>
5.3.1 Ensuring the Right Core Program Mix.....	76
<b>5.4 SURVEY FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>5.5 AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>78</b>
5.5.1 Age Segment Analysis – Current Segments Served.....	78
<b>5.6 LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>5.7 PROGRAM AND SERVICE CLASSIFICATION.....</b>	<b>79</b>
5.7.1 Parameters for Classifying Program Types.....	80
5.7.2 Service Classification Process.....	80
5.7.3 Program Classification Descriptions.....	81
5.7.4 Classification of Services - Key Recommendations.....	81
<b>5.8 UNDERSTANDING THE FULL COST OF SERVICE.....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>5.9 PROGRAM PRIORITY RANKINGS.....</b>	<b>85</b>
5.9.1 Key Findings.....	86
5.9.2 Key Recommendations.....	87
<b>5.10 SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>5.12 RECREATION PROGRAM STANDARDS.....</b>	<b>88</b>
5.12.1 High-Quality Experience Standards.....	88
5.12.2 Operational and Pricing Standards for Programs.....	89
<b>6.0 Operations &amp; Funding Recommendations.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>6.1 EXTERNAL FUNDING.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>6.2 CAPITAL FEES.....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>6.3 USER FEES.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>6.4 GRANTS (GENERAL).....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>6.5 TAX SUPPORT.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>6.6 FRANCHISES &amp; LICENSES.....</b>	<b>95</b>

# List of Figures

**Figure 1.1:** Tucker location map .....1

**Figure 1.2:** The planning process.....2

**Figure 1.3:** Stakeholder meetings, October 2018.....2

**Figure 1.4:** Recent population growth and future population projections.....3

**Figure 1.5:** Overall Level of Satisfaction with the Park System.....3

**Figure 1.6:** Top seven Facility and Programming priorities based on comments from City residents.....4

**Figure 1.7:** Existing and proposed park service areas.....5

**Figure 2.1:** Population and Households.....10

**Figure 2.2:** Population by Age Segment.....10

**Figure 2.3:** Population by Race.....10

**Figure 2.4:** Hispanic Population.....11

**Figure 2.5:** Comparative Income Characteristics.....11

**Figure 2.6:** US vs. Southern Region Core Program Areas Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies.....20

**Figure 2.7:** U.S. vs. Southern Region Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas for Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities.....21

**Figure 2.8:** General Sports Trends.....22

**Figure 2.9:** Fitness Trends.....23

**Figure 2.10:** Outdoor Activity.....23

**Figure 2.11:** Tucker Park Locations.....26

**Figure 2.12a-b:** Henderson Park.....27

**Figure 2.13a-e:** Kelley C. Cofer Park.....28

**Figure 2.14a-e:** Montreal Park.....29

**Figure 2.15a-c:** Peters Park.....30

**Figure 2.16a-e:** Tucker Nature Preserve.....31

**Figure 2.17a-b:** Tucker Recreation Center.....32

**Figure 2.18a-d:** Johns Homestead.....33

**Figure 2.19a-d:** Smoke Rise Park.....34

**Figure 2.20a-d:** Smoke Rise Crossing.....35

**Figure 2.21a-c:** Lord Park.....36

**Figure 3.1:** Public Forum at Tucker Recreation Center; October 2, 2018.....43

**Figure 3.2:** Programs and Facilities voting boards.....43

**Figure 3.3:** Additional ideas.....43

**Figure 3.4:** Public Forum at Tucker Recreation Center; December 11, 2018.....44

**Figure 3.5:** Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Facilities Are Being Met 50% or Less (ETC, 2018)...46

**Figure 3.6:** Facilities that are Most Important to Households (ETC, 2018).....47

**Figure 3.7:** Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating.....48

**Figure 3.8:** Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Programs Are Being Met 50% or Less.....49

**Figure 3.9:** Programs that are Most Important to Households.....50

**Figure 3.10:** Top priorities for investment for recreation programs based on the PIR.....51

**Figure 4.1:** Current level of service - park acreage.....61

**Figure 4.2:** Recommended level of service - park acreage.....61

**Figure 4.3:** Current level of service - amenities.....62

**Figure 4.4:** Recommended level of service - amenities.....62

**Figure 4.5:** Service area analysis.....64

**Figure 4.6:** Proposed service areas.....65

**Figure 5.1:** Program needs of Tucker residents.....77

**Figure 5.2:** Program and Services Classifications.....80

**Figure 5.3:** Total Costs for Activity.....83

# List of Tables

<b>Table 1.1:</b> Types of parks recommended, based on the LOS in the near-term.....	5
<b>Table 1.2:</b> Action plan timeline by priority.....	7
<b>Table 2.1:</b> National Participatory Trends in General Sports.....	14
<b>Table 2.2:</b> National Participatory Trends in General Fitness.....	15
<b>Table 2.3:</b> National Participatory Trends in Outdoor and Adventure Recreation.....	16
<b>Table 2.4:</b> National Participatory Trends in Aquatics.....	17
<b>Table 2.5:</b> National Participatory Trends in Water sport / Activities.....	18
<b>Table 2.6:</b> Top 5 Most Offered Core Program Areas (Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies) in the U.S. and the Southern Region.....	19
<b>Table 2.7:</b> U.S. vs. Southern Region Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas for Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities.....	21
<b>Table 2.8:</b> Park classifications as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).....	24
<b>Table 2.9:</b> Existing Tucker parks and recreation facilities and acreage.....	25
<b>Table 2.10:</b> Park condition descriptions.....	26
<b>Table 2.11:</b> Benchmark analysis of nearby parks and recreation systems.....	37
<b>Table 2.12:</b> Comparison of parks, acreage, developed acres, percent of developed acres, and level of service of nearby parks and recreation systems.....	38
<b>Table 4.1:</b> Summary of current and future LOS needs.....	63
<b>Table 4.2:</b> Types of parks recommended, based on the LOS in the near-term.....	65
<b>Table 4.3:</b> Budget Summary.....	74
<b>Table 5.1:</b> Core Program Areas offered by the City of Tucker.....	76
<b>Table 5.2:</b> Core programs and the ages they serve (primary market and secondary market).....	78
<b>Table 5.3:</b> Recreation program Lifecycle Analysis– current distributions and recommendations.....	79
<b>Table 5.4:</b> Program Classification Matrix.....	81
<b>Table 5.5:</b> Programs and Services, Classifications, and Cost Recovery Goals.....	83
<b>Table 5.6:</b> Pricing strategies.....	85
<b>Table 5.7:</b> Data Source Weighting (by percentage).....	85
<b>Table 5.8:</b> Priority Ranking for Programs and Services.....	86
<b>Table 5.9:</b> Action plan timeline by priority.....	88





**Twin Brothers Lake,  
Johns Homestead**

This page was left blank intentionally.

# 1.0 Executive Summary

## 1.1 Introduction

Tucker is a 20.27 square-mile city located northeast of Atlanta, Georgia. Formerly an unincorporated community in DeKalb County, Tucker officially became a city in late 2015. However, the area now known as Tucker was settled in the 1820s and later became a railroad community in the 1890s.<sup>1</sup> During this time, Tucker was primarily an agricultural community. After World War II, the area began to transition to industrial, retail, and residential land uses. The City continued to grow during the second half of the twentieth century due to a county-wide water system; the establishment of large employers, such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC), General Motors, Kraft Foods, and Emory University; and the expansion of the highway system and the affordability of the automobile and fuel.<sup>2</sup>

While the Tucker community has a long history and a rich cultural identity, once the City incorporated, creating a strong municipal identity became an important task for Tucker. One of the ways the City plans to strengthen its identity is by standardizing their parks and recreation system. The purpose of the Tucker Recreation and Parks Master Plan is to guide the City through the standardization process and to help them achieve the best possible park system during the next ten years (2019-2029). As Tucker's population continues to grow and the City matures, it will become increasingly important to protect, enhance, and expand the City's parkland. Parks improve physical and mental health, strengthen community ties, and make cities more attractive places to live and work. The benefits of great parks on environmental, social, and economic factors are well-documented through scientific studies.<sup>3</sup> Great parks can also help a city create a strong sense of identity. Additionally, it will be crucial to connect the parks to each other, adjacent neighborhoods, and other points of interest throughout the City.

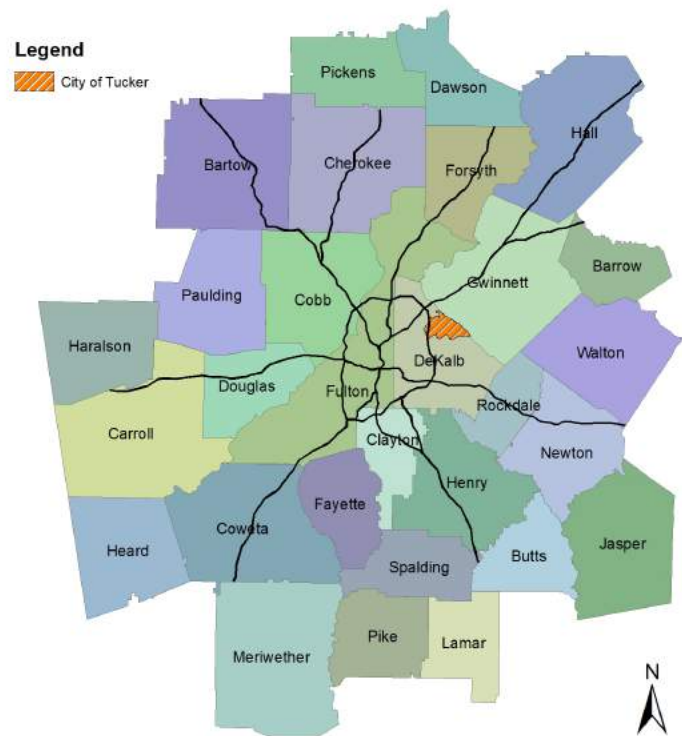


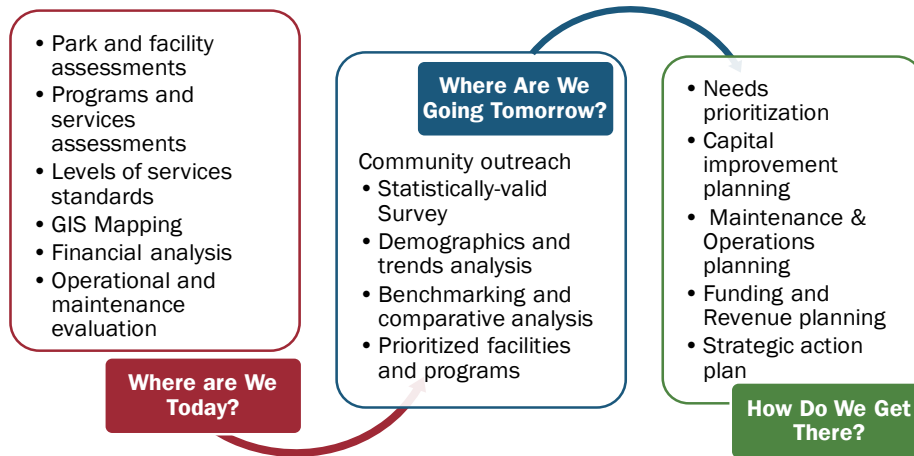
Figure 1.1: Tucker location map (ESRI)

The Tucker parks and recreation system has a number of opportunities and challenges. As a newly incorporated city, Tucker was fortunate to start with an existing park system—this meant not starting from zero. However, this also created a challenge in terms of deferred maintenance, particularly for parks that the City inherited from DeKalb County. This also meant a lack of aesthetic and qualitative consistency between the parks, as different parks came from different sources. While Tucker is fortunate to have a significant acreage of parkland, there is limited availability for new parkland. Similarly, where there is a good potential of future growth opportunities, there is currently a finite number of funding sources. The parks in Tucker are well-loved, as evidenced by the number of “Friend of Parks” groups and the professional park staff. These groups and staff ensure that Tucker parks are maintained and advocate for their parks when necessary. Through the survey conducted for this study, it became evident that many Tucker residents were not aware of existing parks and recreation options, which is a challenge for the park system to overcome. Finally, connectivity to and between the City's existing parks is also a challenge.

1. Lucas, Silas Emmett Jr. (1986). *The Fourth or 1821 Land Lottery of Georgia*. Southern Historical Press, Inc.  
2. Turner, Dewey (2009). *From Cotton Fields to High Technology in Tucker, Georgia*. Tucker Historical Society.  
3. “The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space.” <[https://conservationtools.org/library\\_items/729-The-Benefits-of-Parks-Why-America-Needs-More-City-Parks-and-Open-Space](https://conservationtools.org/library_items/729-The-Benefits-of-Parks-Why-America-Needs-More-City-Parks-and-Open-Space)>

## 1.2 Project Overview: the Planning Process

The Tucker Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan utilizes several information-gathering strategies to create recommendations. The project process incorporates a thorough research and data-driven process to create the recommendations and the implementation plan. This process includes five phases: Research and Analysis, Community Outreach, Needs Assessment, Development Plan and Recommendations, and Implementation Plan. The purpose of these three phases is to assess Where We Are Today, Where Are We Going Tomorrow, and How Do We Get There.



**Figure 1.2:** The planning process

Additionally, a Parks Advisory Committee was formed to work with the planning team, review information, and help understand park needs within the community. With the help of the Parks Advisory Committee, a list of interested stakeholders was created for Focus Group input meetings. The planning team conducted stakeholder meetings during which members of local groups with vested interest in the City's parks were given the opportunity to voice their concerns, as well as identify the needs within the park system as it relates to their organization. Informal surveys were also conducted at these meetings.



**Figure 1.3:** Stakeholder meetings, October 2018.

Further, the planning team led public meetings during which the general public was given the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions. During the meetings the public was shown a presentation about the project and asked to participate in several engagement and input activities.

A statistically valid community interests and opinion survey was conducted for the City of Tucker during the fall/winter of 2018. The survey and its results were used to establish priorities for improvements to parks, open space system, and recreation programming. The survey also helps the City take a verifiable resident-driven approach to making decisions about the future of the City's park system.

### 1.3 Demographics Summary

The population in Tucker is expected to grow by 11.9% over the next 15 years (2018-2033) from 35,217 to 39,419 residents. While 35-54 age segment is expected to decrease by 7.1%, the 65-74 age segment is expected to increase by 6.8%. Additionally, the 75 and older age segment is predicted in increase by 2.8%, while the 0-12 age segments is expected to decrease by 2.5%. Residents who are 55 and older will make up 38.2% of the population by 2033. When developing park and recreation recommendations, the City should cater to active adults in the 55-64, 65-74, and 75+ age segments. However, it will be equally important to provide access to services and programs suited to a multitude of age segments, which is a challenge due to the differing activity preferences for each age segment.

#### Recent Growth



#### Population Projections

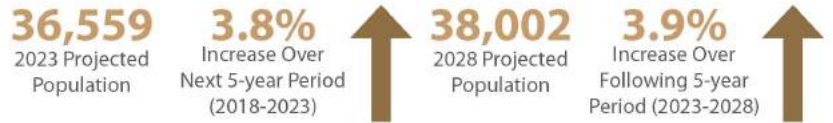


Figure 1.4: Recent population growth and future population projections.

Other key findings include the City’s per capita and median household income levels are above state and national averages. Additionally, Tucker’s population will become more diverse. By 2033, the White population will decrease by 6% and the Asian population will increase by 5%. The Black population will only increase by 1% over the next 15 years.

### 1.4 Trends Summary

The Trends Analysis provides an understanding of national, regional, and local recreational trends. The Trends Analysis looked at the market potential of General Sports, General Fitness, and Outdoor Activity. Overall, Tucker demonstrates average to above-average Market Potential Index (MPI) numbers. This is particularly noticeable when assessing the fitness market potential. The overall MPI scores show that Tucker has strong participation rates regarding recreational activities. The MPI gives the City a strong tool for estimating resident attendance as they City considers building new facilities and/or starting new recreational programs.

Overall Level of Satisfaction with City of Tucker  
Parks and Recreation Department  
by percentage of respondents

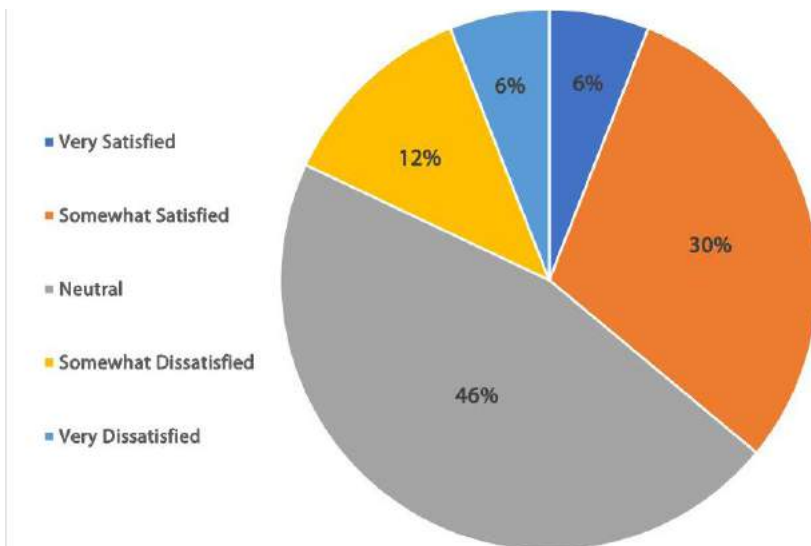


Figure 1.5: Overall Level of Satisfaction with the Park System

### 1.5 Public Input

Responses from the Community Survey show that thirty-six percent (36%) of residents indicated they are either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the overall value their household receives from the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department, as shown in Figure 1.5.

To ensure that the City of Tucker continues to meet the needs and expectations of the community, this plan recommends that the Recreation and Parks Department sustain and/or improve the performance in areas that were identified as “high priorities” in survey responses. The highest-ranked facilities and programs are listed in the charts on the following page.



**Figure 1.6:** Top seven Facility and Programming priorities based on comments from City residents.

## 1.6 Level of Service

There are currently 176.32 acres of existing developed parkland and 88.60 acres of undeveloped parkland in Tucker. Upon evaluating the current acreage of parkland compared to the input from city residents and after much consideration, the consultant team recommends increasing the LOS standard from 15.11 to 17.00 acres/1,000 population as a goal. This means that currently, the City is deficient by 11 acres of developed parkland. To keep up with the projected population growth, the City will need to add a total of 32 acres of developed parkland to the parks and recreation system by the year 2028 to achieve the recommended standard.

## 1.7 Park Recommendations

Tucker is fortunate to have a sizable amount of parkland, primarily in the form of Community Parks. However, just adding land is not the intent of the recommendation. The key is adding certain types of parks in strategic locations. Simply adding acres to Tucker’s park system will not address the recommended goals. Based on the data gathered during this study, there is a shortage of Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Sports Complexes, and Special Use Parks. The undeveloped park land currently owned by the city may be appropriate for Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, but probably not for Sports Complex fields. Further detail and recommendations for addressing the Level of Service can be found in section 4 of this report.

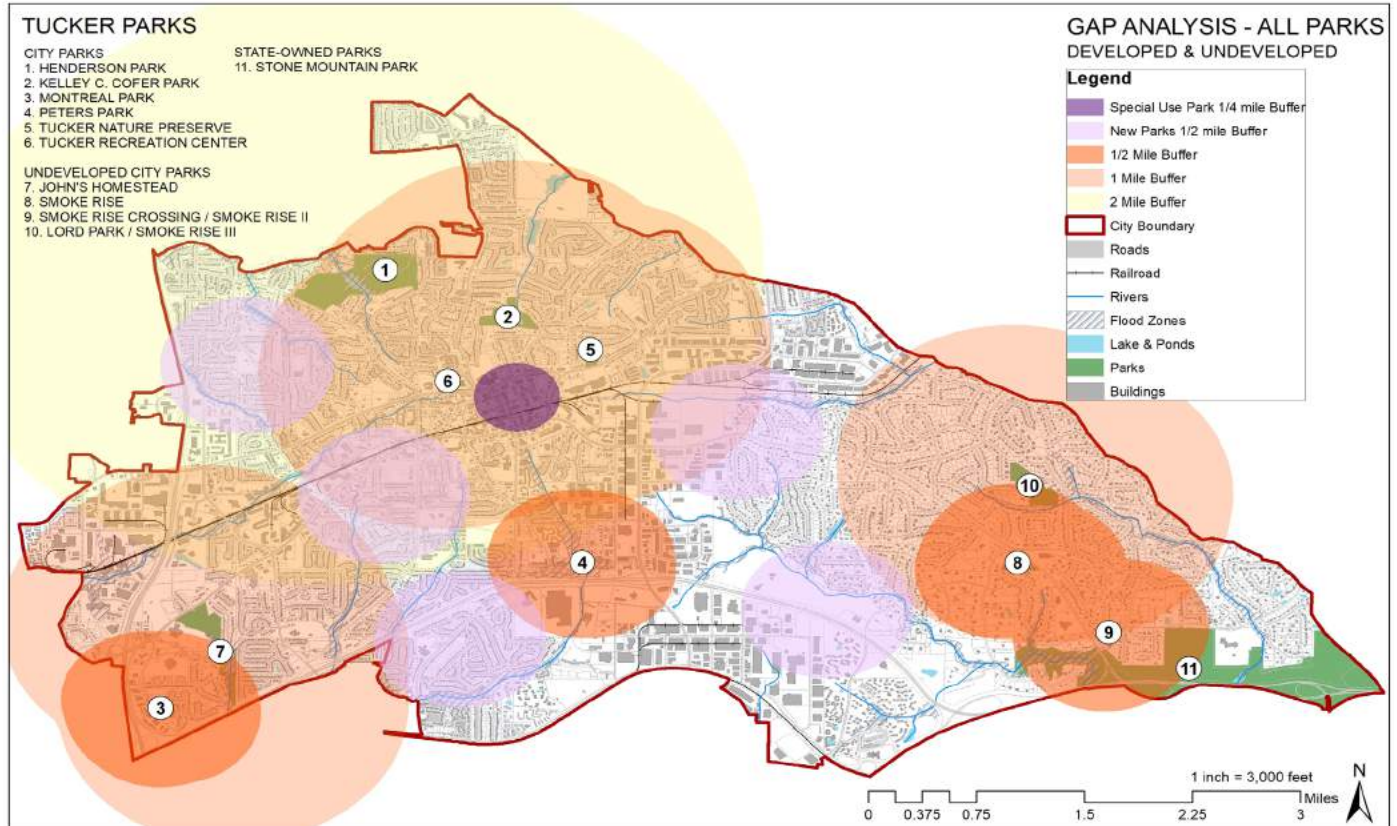


Figure 1.7: Existing and proposed park service areas.

**New Park Land Acreages by Category:**

Park Type	Acreage per Park	Total Acres	Number of Parks
Mini Parks	2,500 SF - 1 acre	2 acres	2 to 4 new parkland
Neighborhood Parks	5 - 10 acres	14 acres	1 to 3 new parkland or develop existing parkland
Community Parks	30 - 50 acres	51 acres	1 to 2 new parkland or develop existing parkland
Sports Complex	40 - 80 acres (minimum 25 acres)	26 acres	1 new parkland
Special Use Parks	Variable	7 acres	1 new parkland
Open Space/ Conservation Parks	Variable	None	No need exists

Table 1.8: Types of parks recommended, based on the LOS in the near-term.

**1.8 Action Plan**

The Tucker Parks and Recreation Department has a unique and impressive inventory of parks in the current system; however, several parks need a complete overhaul to maximize their use and a multitude of park types need to be added to the system. Working with staff, the consulting team created a list of action items to be completed over the next ten-years to improve the system.

## **ACTION PLAN**

### **Short-term Action Items (1 to 5 Years):**

- Conduct recreation center feasibility plan
- Update and/or replace recreation center following feasibility study
- Propose a park bond to fund key capital improvement projects in each city district
- Implement general upgrades to existing developed parks (1 – 3 years):
  - Henderson Park
  - Kelly Cofer Park
  - Peters Park
  - Smoke Rise Park
  - Smoke Rise Crossing
  - Tucker Nature Reserve
- Produce master plans for undeveloped parks as needed and phase one construction plans
- Implement phase one improvements (3-5 years):
  - Lord Park
  - Tucker Recreation Center
  - Johns Homestead Park
  - Montreal Park
  - Smoke Rise Park
- Include trail heads and/or city trail connections within parks that are on the city trail system network as part of park improvements
- Study feasibility of seasonal pool enclosure for winter use at Cofer Park
- Implement park staff growth strategies per staffing recommendations in this plan as park system and programs grow
- Begin to identify park land acquisition opportunities in or near areas identified on the park service area gap analysis map

### **Long-term Action Items (6 to Ten years):**

- Purchase or acquire appropriate park lands to maintain recommended Level of Service goals for park acreage
- Produce master plans for new park lands as needed and phase one construction plans
- Implement capital improvements (6-7 years):
  - Henderson Park
  - Johns Homestead Park
  - Kelly Cofer Pool
- Implement phase one plans for top priority new parks (7-10 years)
- Include trail heads and city trail connections to and within new city parks lands
- Update City of Tucker Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan
- Continue to implement park staff growth strategies per staffing recommendations in this plan as park system and programs grow

## **1.9 Park Programming and Services**

The vision of the Department is to be one of the premier park and recreation systems in the United States providing all residents access to high-quality programs and experiences. Part of realizing this vision involves identifying Core Program Areas to create a sense of focus around activities and outcomes of greatest importance to the community as informed by current and future needs. However, public recreation is challenged by the



premise of being all things to all people, especially in a community such as Tucker. The philosophy of the Core Program Area assists staff, policy makers, and the public focus on what is most important.

The Core Program Areas provided by Tucker currently appears to meet some of the major needs of the Tucker community, but the program mix must be evaluated on a regular and reoccurring basis to ensure that the offerings within each Core Program Area – and the Core Program Areas themselves – align with changing leisure trends, demographics, and needs of residents.

Based on assessment of the existing park programs in the City of Tucker, the Department is delivering quality programs, services and events to the community. However, it does have opportunity for improvement and there is a need for more direct programming rather than contracting. The chart below provides a summary of the recommended actions that the Department should implement in developing a program plan to meet the needs of residents.

PROGRAM	ACTION	TIMELINE
<b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>		
Community Special Events	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Fitness and Wellness Programs	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Adult/Senior Programs and Services	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Gardening/Farm-to-Table Classes	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Art Classes	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Outdoor Programs	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Socialization with Dogs	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM (dog park development)
Visiting Parks	FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (enhance parks)
<b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>		
Performing Arts Programs	DEVELOP/DIREST PROVIDE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Environmental Education Programs	DEVELOP/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Walking/Jogging/Running Events and Clubs	DEVELOP/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Water Fitness	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM (seasonal)
Running Events	DEVELOP/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Music Classes	DEVELOP/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
After School/Out of School Camps	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
<b>LOW PRIORITY</b>		
Youth Learn to Swim Programs	CONTINUE/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Youth Sports	CONTINUE/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Youth Enrichment/Learning Programs	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Golf	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Adult Sports	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Gymnastics	CONTINUE/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Programs for People with Special Needs	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Competitive Swim Teams	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Bicycle Lessons and Clubs	CONSIDER	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)

**Table 1.9:** Action plan timeline by priority.

## 1.10 Maintenance Recommendations

The annual maintenance budget will need to increase when the existing 88.60 acres of undeveloped property is developed. As the City begins to purchase land to address the shortage of 11 acres currently, as recommended in the level of services analysis, the Department will need to slightly increase the current maintenance budget. By 2028 and with the new total 32 acres added, the Department will require a maintenance budget of somewhere in the range of \$1,500,000 to \$2,100,000 (\$7,000 to \$10,000 per acre).

## 1.11 Current and Proposed Spending Level

**Annual Park Operation and Maintenance Funding:** The Annual Park Maintenance Budget in Tucker is approximately \$706,200 for 177.32 acres of developed park land, approximately \$3,985 per acre. Best Practice Cost per Acre is \$10,000-\$15,000 per acre. Based on analysis, Tucker's unit costs are in alignment with best practice cost per acre.

Based on the analysis of the landscape maintenance standards provided in the scope of work and the cost provided by the third-party contractor as well as the additional expenditures allocated to parks maintenance, the City of Tucker is receiving an incredible bargain with the current services provided by third-party contractors.

**Systematic Approach to Contracting Services:** Through the development of management processes, the Department must continually evaluate the private sector to determine if the financial resources dedicated to parks maintenance are sufficient as well as effective and efficient. It should be expected that the cost for third-party contracted services.

**Management of Contract Services Management:** Continue to provide the necessary resources for the management and oversight of all third-party contractors that provide maintenance services for the City of Tucker's parks and grounds

**Create Work Plans Based on Maintenance Standards:** Maintenance standards are based on a Level (1), (2) and (3) modes (tasks and frequencies of each task) and follow best practices as established by the National Recreation and Park Association. The department should update and customize the standards found in the third-party contract based on the park and recreation values of the Tucker community and need to be adopted and implemented regardless of whether work is performed by City staff or third-party contractors.

**Asset Management Staffing:** The City of Tucker is seeking to hire one staff person, in part, to manage the assets in the parks system. It is recommended that the City hire at least two additional staff to manage the assets (built environment) of the park system within the next 3 years.

## Budget Summary

An opinion of costs was developed to determine a preliminary budget for the Parks and Recreation Department over the next ten years. The following is a summary of the recommended funding levels.

- Land Acquisition = \$7,150,000
- New Park Implementation = \$12,740,000
- Existing Park Improvements Short Term (1-5 years) = \$26,950,000
- Existing Park Improvements Long Term (6-10 years) = \$4,000,000

Grand Total: \$50,890,000

In conclusion, the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department has a lot to be proud of regarding their current parks and recreation system. Tucker benefits from great leadership, which will be critical as they move forward to meet the growing demand for recreation and parks. For more detailed information on items in this Executive Summary, please review this full report.

## 2.0 Research & Analysis

### 2.1 Community Profile

The Community Profile provides an understanding of the population of Tucker, Georgia. This analysis is reflective of the total population, and its key characteristics such as age segments, income levels, race, and ethnicity.

It is important to note that future projections are all based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the projections could have a significant bearing on the validity of the final projections.

#### 2.1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The Demographic Analysis provides an understanding of the population of the City of Tucker, Georgia. This analysis is reflective of the total population, and its key characteristics such as age segments, income levels, race, and ethnicity.

It is important to note that future projections are all based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the projections could have a significant bearing on the validity of the final projections.

#### 2.1.2 METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from ESRI, the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in July 2018 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2010 Censuses and estimates for 2018 and 2023 as obtained by ESRI. Straight line linear regression was utilized for projected 2028 and 2033 demographics. The City of Tucker boundaries utilized for the demographic analysis.

#### 2.1.3 RACE AND ETHNICITY DEFINITIONS

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as below. The Census 2010 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 2000 Census and earlier censuses; caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the US population over time. The latest (Census 2010) definitions and nomenclature are used within this analysis.

**American Indian** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment

**Asian** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam

**Black** – This includes a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa

**Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands

**White** – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa

**Hispanic or Latino** – This is an ethnic distinction, a subset of a race as defined by the Federal Government; this includes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race

### 2.1.4 CITY OF TUCKER POPULACE

#### Population

The City's population has experienced a slight growing trend in recent years and is currently estimated at 35,217 individuals. Projecting ahead, the total population is expected to continue to grow over the next 15 years. Based on predictions through 2033, the service area is expected to have 39,419 residents living within 16,578 households.

#### Age Segment

Evaluating the population by age segments, the service area exhibits a fairly balanced distribution among the major age segments. Currently, the largest age segment is the 55+, making up 31.7% of the population.

The overall age composition of the population within the City is projected to undergo an aging trend. While most of the younger age segments are expected to remain the same or experience decreases in population percentage; those who are 55 and older are projected to continue increasing over the next 15 years, making up 38.2% of the population by 2033. This is assumed to be a consequence of a vast amount of the Baby Boomer generation shifting into the senior age segment.

Given the differences in how the active adults (55 and older) participate in recreation programs, the trend is moving toward having at least two to three different program age segments for older adults. When developing the park and recreation system, the City should evaluate recreation experiences that would cater to active adults who are 55-64, 65-74, and 75+ age segments.

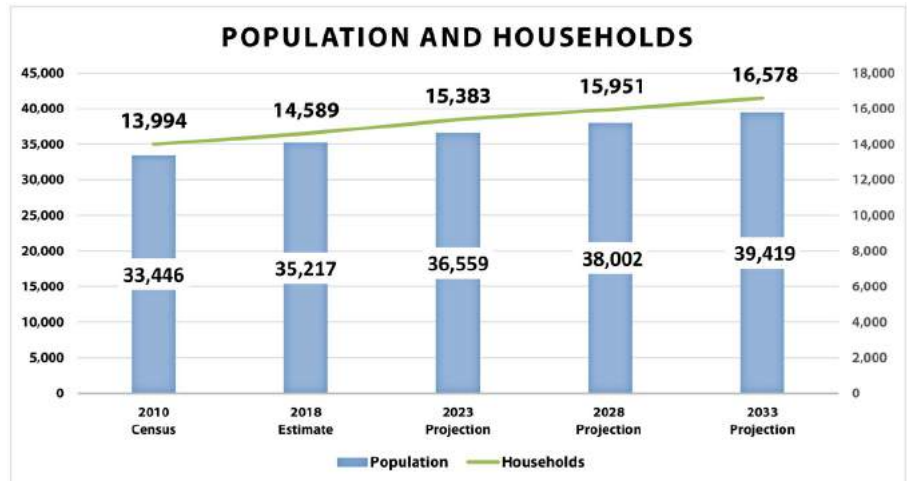


Figure 2.1: Population and Households

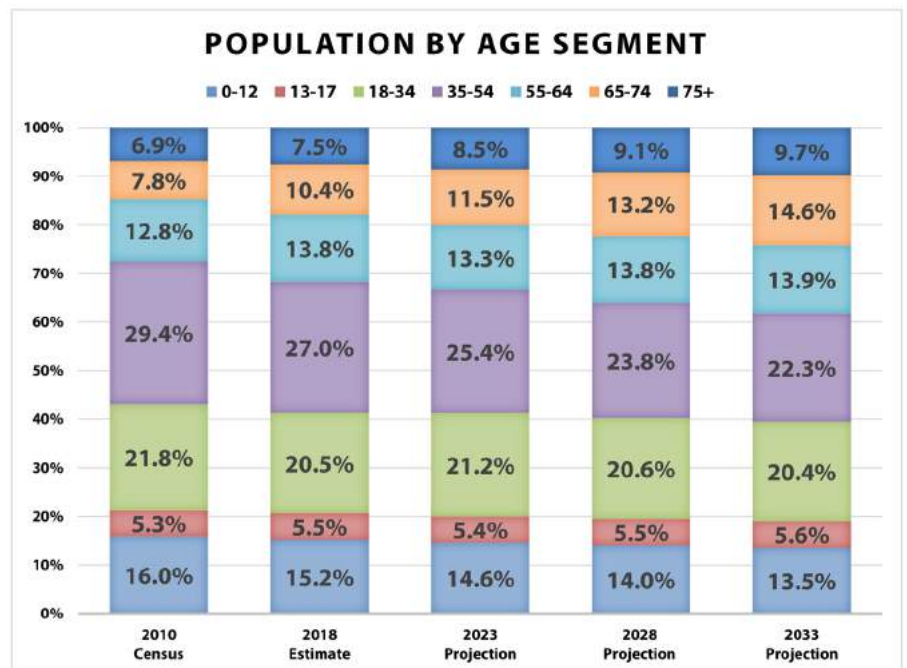


Figure 2.2: Population by Age Segment

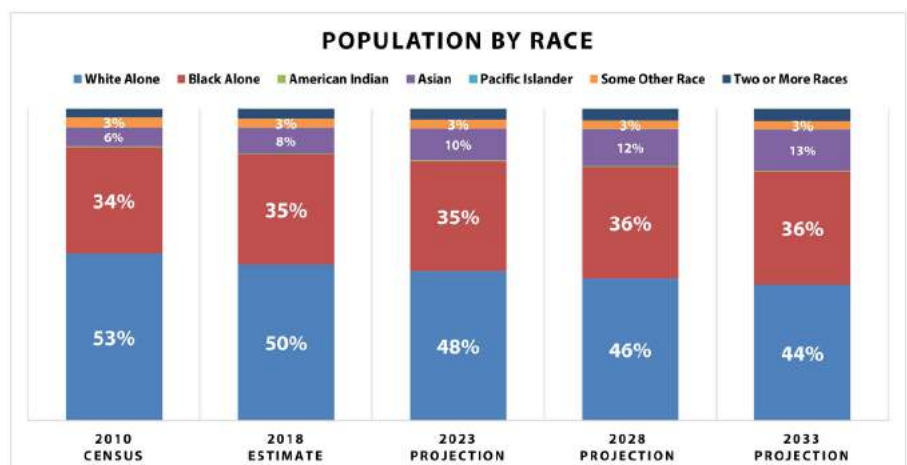


Figure 2.3: Population by Race

### Race and Ethnicity

In analyzing race, the City’s current populations are predominately White Alone. The 2017 estimates show that 50% of the City’s population falls into the White Alone category, while the Black Alone category (35%) represents the largest minority. The predictions for 2033 expect that the City’s population by race will change in that White Alone will decrease by 6% and the Asian segment will grow by 5%.

Based on the 2018 estimate, those of Hispanic/Latino origin represent 8% of the City’s total population. The Hispanic/Latino population is expected to experience a slight decrease to 7% by 2033.

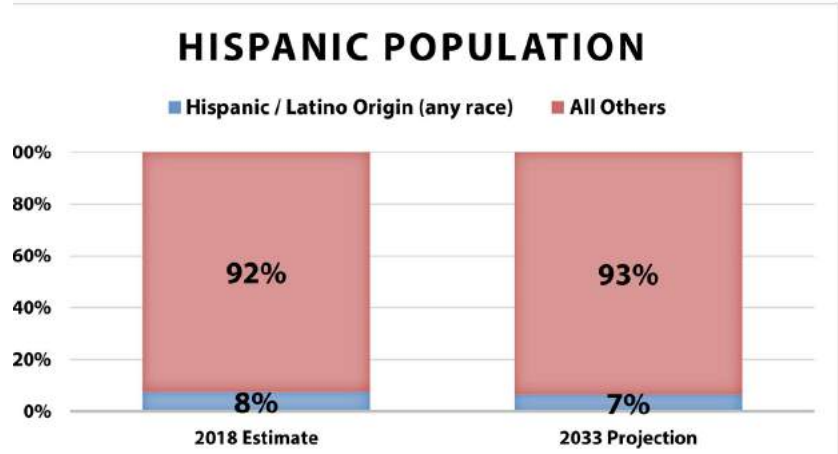


Figure 2.4: Hispanic Population

### Households and Income

As seen in Figure 2.5, the City’s per capita and median household income levels are above state and national averages.

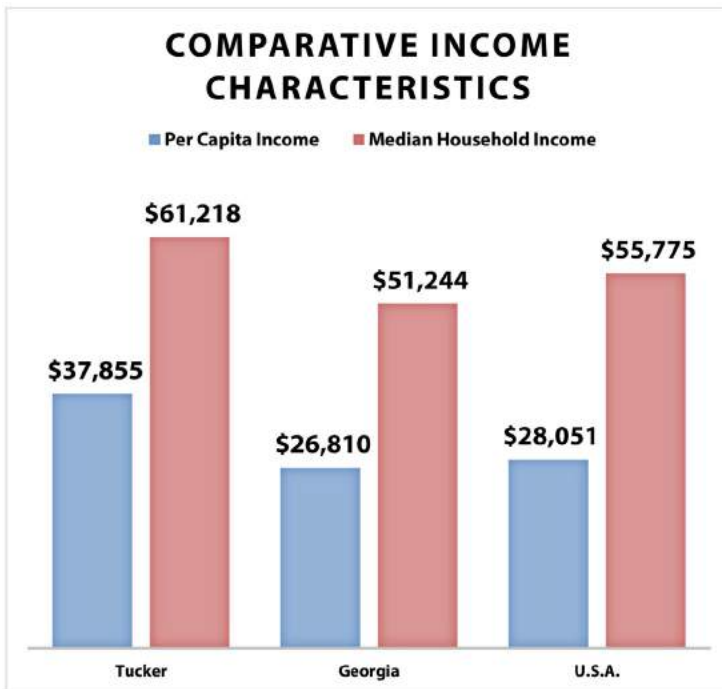


Figure 2.5: Comparative Income Characteristics

with the largest group being 55+ with the second largest group being 35-54. This is significant as providing access to services and programs will need to be focused on multitude of age segments simultaneously and equally challenging as age segments have different likings towards activities. Equal distribution across all age segments will require the City to continue to provide programs, services, parks and facilities that appeal to all residents of the community.

### Race and Ethnicity

A slightly diversifying population will likely focus the City on providing traditional and non-traditional programming and service offerings while always seeking to identify emerging activities and sports.

### 2.1.4 CITY OF TUCKER DEMOGRAPHIC IMPLICATIONS

The following implications are derived from the analyses provided above. Each implication is organized by the outlined demographic information sections.

#### Population

The population is slightly increasing and is projected to experience a 12% population growth over the next 15 years. With a growing population, park and recreation services must continue to grow to keep up with the population. Additionally, development will continue over the next 15 years and the parks and recreation system will need to strategically invest, develop, and maintain parks and facilities in relation to current and future housing development areas.

#### Age Segmentation

City of Tucker has a very broad age segmentation with the largest group being 55+ with the second largest group being 35-54. This is significant as providing access to services and programs will need to be focused on multitude of age segments simultaneously and equally challenging as age segments have different likings towards activities. Equal distribution across all age segments will require the City to continue to provide programs, services, parks and facilities that appeal to all residents of the community.

## Households and Income

With a median and per capita household income above the state and national averages, it would be important for the City to prioritize providing offerings that are first class with exceptional customer service while seeking opportunities to create revenue generation.

### 2.1.5 RECREATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Trends Analysis provides an understanding of national, regional, and local recreational trends. This analysis examines participation trends, activity levels, and programming trends. It is important to note that all trends are based on current and/or historical patterns and participation rates.

#### Methodology

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2018 was utilized in evaluating the following trends:

- National Trends in Sport and Fitness Participation
- Core vs. Casual Participation
- Activity by Generation

The study is based on findings from surveys carried out in 2017 and the beginning of 2018 by the Physical Activity Council, resulting in a total of 30,999 online interviews – both individual and household surveys. A sample size of 30,999 completed interviews is considered by SFIA to result in a high degree of statistical accuracy. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.27 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. Using a weighting technique, survey results are applied to the total U.S. population figure of 298,325,103 people (ages six and older). The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation across the U.S.

#### Core vs. Casual Participation

In addition to overall participation rates, SFIA further categorizes active participants as either core or casual participants based on frequency. Core participants have higher participatory frequency than casual participants. The thresholds that define casual versus core participation may vary based on the nature of each individual activity. For instance, core participants engage in most fitness and recreational activities more than 50 times per year, while for sports, the threshold for core participation is typically 13 times per year.

In a given activity, core participants are more committed and tend to be less likely to switch to other activities or become inactive (engage in no physical activity) than casual participants. This may also explain why activities with more core participants tend to experience less pattern shifts in participation rates than those with larger groups of casual participants.

#### Inactivity Rates / Activity Level Trends

SFIA also categorizes participation rates by intensity, dividing activity levels into five categories based on the caloric implication (i.e., high calorie burning, low/med calorie burning, or inactive) and the frequency of participation (i.e., 1-50 times, 50-150 times, or above) for a given activity. Participation rates are expressed as 'super active' or 'active to a healthy level' (high calorie burning, 151+ times), 'active' (high calorie burning, 50-150 times), 'casual' (high calorie burning, 1-50 times), 'low/med calorie burning', and 'inactive'. These participation rates are then assessed based on the total population trend over the last five years, as well as breaking down these rates by generation.

#### National Trends in General Sports

The sports most heavily participated in the United States were Golf (23.8 million in 2016) and Basketball (23.4 million), which have participation figures well in excess of the other activities within the general sports category. The popularity of Golf and Basketball can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number

of participants. Even though Golf has experienced a recent decrease in participation, it still continues to benefit from its wide age segment appeal and is considered a life-long sport. Basketball’s success can be attributed to the limited amount of equipment needed to participate and the limited space requirements necessary, which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at the majority of American dwellings as a drive-way pickup game.

Since 2012, Rugby and other niche sports, like Boxing, Lacrosse, and Roller Hockey have seen strong growth. Rugby has emerged as the overall fastest growing sport, as it has seen participation levels rise by 82.8% over the last five years. Based on the five-year trend, Boxing for Competition (42.6%), Lacrosse (35.1%), and Roller Hockey (34.2%) have also experienced significant growth. In the most recent year, the fastest growing sports were Boxing for Competition (13.1%) and Pickleball (11.3%).

During the last five years, the sports that are most rapidly declining include Ultimate Frisbee (-39.1%), Touch Football (-22.8%), Tackle Football (-16.0%), and Racquetball (-13.4%). For the most recent year, Ultimate Frisbee (-14.9%), Badminton (-12.6%), Gymnastics (-10.7%), and Volleyball-Sand/Beach (-9.9%) underwent the largest declines.

In general, the most recent year shares a similar pattern with the five-year trends; suggesting that the increasing participation rates in certain activities have yet to peak in sports like Rugby, Lacrosse, Field Hockey, and Competitive Boxing. However, some sports that increased rapidly over the past five years have experienced recent decreases in participation, including Squash, Ice Hockey, Roller Hockey and Volleyball-Sand/Beach. The reversal of the five-year trends in these sports may be due to a relatively low user base (ranging from 1-5 million) and could suggest that participation in these activities may have peaked.

**Core vs. Casual Trends in General Sports**

The most popular sports, such as Basketball and Baseball, have a larger core participant base (engaged 13+ times annually) than casual participant base (engaged at least 1 time annually). Less mainstream, less organized sports such as Ultimate Frisbee, Roller Hockey, Squash, and Boxing for Competition have larger casual participation. Although these sports increased in participation over the last five years, the newcomers were mostly casual participants that may be more inclined to switch to other sports or fitness activities, resulting in the declining one-year trends.

National Participatory Trends- General Sports					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Golf* (2011, 2015, & 2016 data)	25,682	24,120	23,815	-7.3%	-1.3%
Basketball	23,708	22,343	23,401	-1.3%	4.7%
Tennis	17,020	18,079	17,683	3.9%	-2.2%
Baseball	12,976	14,760	15,642	20.5%	6.0%
Soccer (outdoor)	12,944	11,932	11,924	-7.9%	-0.1%
Softball (slow pitch)	7,411	7,690	7,283	-1.7%	-5.3%
Football (flag)	5,865	6,173	6,551	11.7%	6.1%
Badminton	7,278	7,354	6,430	-11.7%	-12.6%
Volleyball (court)	6,384	6,216	6,317	-1.0%	1.6%
Football (touch)	7,295	5,686	5,629	-22.8%	-1.0%
Soccer (indoor)	4,617	5,117	5,399	16.9%	5.5%

Football (tackle)	6,220	5,481	5,224	-16.0%	-4.7%
Volleyball (sand/beach)	4,505	5,489	4,947	9.8%	-9.9%
Gymnastics	5,115	5,381	4,805	-6.1%	-10.7%
Track and Field	4,257	4,116	4,161	-2.3%	1.1%
Cheerleading	3,244	4,029	3,816	17.6%	-5.3%
Raquetball	4,070	3,579	3,526	-13.4%	-1.5%
Pickleball	N/A	2,815	3,132	N/A	11.3%
Ultimate Frisbee	5,131	3,673	3,126	-39.1%	-14.9%
Ice Hockey	2,363	2,697	2,544	7.7%	-5.7%
Softball (fast pitch)	2,624	2,467	2,309	-12.0%	-6.4%
Lacrosse	1,607	2,090	2,171	35.1%	3.9%
Wrestling	1,922	1,922	1,896	-1.4%	-1.4%
Roller Hockey	1,367	1,929	1,834	34.2%	-4.9%
Rugby	887	1,550	1,621	82.8%	4.6%
Field Hockey	1,237	1,512	1,596	29.0%	5.6%
Squash	1,290	1,549	1,492	15.7%	-3.7%
Boxing for Competition	959	1,210	1,368	42.6%	13.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
<b>Legend:</b>	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0 to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

**Table 2.1:** National Participatory Trends in General Sports. \*2017 information not available for **Golf**. Information to be released by National Golf Foundation. Participation figures above reflect 2011, 2015, and 2016

### National Trends in Fitness

Overall, national participatory trends in fitness have experienced strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among Americans to improve their health and enhance quality of life by engaging in an active lifestyle. These activities also have very few barriers to entry, which provides a variety of options that are relatively inexpensive to participate in and can be performed by most individuals.

The most popular fitness activity, by far, is Fitness Walking, which had about 110.8 million participants in 2017, increasing 2.7% from the previous year. Other leading fitness activities based on total number of participants include Treadmill (52.9 million), Free Weights (52.2 million), Running/Jogging (50.7 million), Weight/Resistance Machines (36.2 million), and Stationary Cycling (36.0 million).

Over the last five years, the activities growing most rapidly are Non-Traditional / Off-Road Triathlons (74.7%), Trail Running (57.6%), and Aerobics (32.7%). Over the same time frame, the activities that have undergone the most decline include: Boot Camps Style Cross Training (-11.3%), Stretching (-7.5%), and Weight/Resistance Machines (-6.9%).

In the last year, activities with the largest gains in participation were Triathlon Non-Traditional/Off Road (10.1%), Running/Jogging (7.1%), and Trail Running (6.6%). From 2016-2017, the activities that had the most decline in participation were Traditional/Road Triathlon (-8.9%), Cardio Kickboxing (-3.0%), and Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise (-2.6%).



### Core vs. Casual Trends in General Fitness

It should be noted that many of the activities that are rapidly growing have a relatively low user base, which allows for more drastic shifts in terms of percentage, especially for five-year trends. Increasing casual participants may also explain the rapid growth in some activities. For instance, core/casual participation trends showed that over the last five years, casual participants increased drastically in Non-Traditional/ Off Road (119.6%) and Tai Chi (26.9%), while the core participant base of both activities experienced significantly less growth.

National Participatory Trends- General Fitness					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Fitness Walking	114,029	107,895	110,805	-2.8%	2.7%
Treadmill	50,839	51,872	52,966	4.2%	2.1%
Free Weights (dumbbells/hand weights)	N/A	51,513	52,217	N/A	1.4%
Running/Jogging	51,450	47,384	50,770	-1.3%	7.1%
Weight/Resistance Machines	38,999	35,768	36,291	-6.9%	1.5%
Stationary Cycling (recumbent/upright)	35,987	36,118	36,035	0.1%	-0.2%
Stretching	35,873	33,771	33,195	-7.5%	-1.7%
Elliptical Motion Trainer*	28,560	32,218	32,283	13.0%	0.2%
Free Weights (barbells)	26,688	26,473	27,444	2.8%	3.7%
Yoga	23,253	26,268	27,354	17.6%	4.1%
Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise	N/A	25,110	24,454	N/A	-2.6%
Choreographed Exercise	N/A	21,839	22,616	N/A	3.6%
Aerobics (high impact)	16,178	21,390	21,476	32.7%	0.4%
Stair Climbing Machine	12,979	15,079	14,948	15.2%	-0.9%
Cross-Training Style Workout	N/A	12,914	13,622	N/A	5.5%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	8,477	8,937	9,409	11.0%	5.3%
Trail Running	5,806	8,582	9,149	57.6%	6.6%
Pilates Training	8,519	8,893	9,047	6.2%	1.7%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,725	6,899	6,693	-0.5%	-3.0%
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	7,496	6,583	6,651	-11.3%	1.0%
Martial Arts	5,075	5,745	5,838	15.0%	1.6%
Boxing for Fitness	4,831	5,175	5,157	6.7%	-0.3%
Tai Chi	3,203	3,706	3,787	18.2%	2.2%
Barre	N/A	3,329	3,436	N/A	3.2%
Triathlon (traditional/road)	1,789	2,374	2,162	20.8%	-8.9%
Triathlon (non-traditional/off-road)	1,075	1,705	1,878	74.7%	10.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
<b>Legend:</b>	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0 to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

Table 2.2: National Participatory Trends in General Fitness.

### National Trends in Outdoor Recreation

Results from the SFIA report demonstrate a contrast of growth and decline in participation regarding outdoor/adventure recreation activities. Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or within a group, and are not as limited by time constraints.

In 2017, the most popular activities, in terms of total participants, from the outdoor / adventure recreation category include: Day Hiking (44.9 million), Road Bicycling (38.8 million), Freshwater Fishing (38.3 million), and Camping within ¼ mile of Vehicle/Home (26.2 million).

From 2012-2017, BMX Bicycling (83.4%), Adventure Racing (56.3%), Backpacking Overnight (38.3%), and Day Hiking (30.1%) have undergone the largest increases in participation. Similarly, in the last year, activities growing most rapidly include: BMX Bicycling (10.0%), Backpacking Overnight (8.1%), and Day Hiking (6.6%).

The five-year trend shows activities declining most rapidly were In-Line Roller Skating (-20.7%), Camping within ¼ mile of Home/Vehicle (-16.5%), and Birdwatching (-9.2%). More recently, activities experiencing the largest declines were Adventure Racing (-15.7%), Traditional Climbing (-9.4%), and In-Line Roller Skating (-2.1%).

### Core vs. Casual Trends in Outdoor Recreation

Regarding the national trend of outdoor activities participation is on the rise, all activities, except for In-Line Roller Skating and Freshwater Fishing, underwent increases in casual participation over the last five years. Any decline in participation over the last five years was mainly ascribed to decreases in core participants for activities such as In-Line Roller Skating (-32.6%), Skateboarding (-10.7%), Road Bicycling (-10.4%), Camping Recreational Vehicle (-10.0%), and Archery (-3.2%).

National Participatory Trends- Outdoor / Adventure Recreation					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Hiking (day)	34,519	42,128	44,900	30.1%	6.6%
Bicycling (road)	39,790	38,365	38,866	-2.3%	1.3%
Fishing (freshwater)	39,002	38,121	38,346	-1.7%	0.6%
Camping (<1/4 mile of vehicle/home)	31,454	26,467	26,262	-16.5%	-0.8%
Camping (recreational vehicle)	15,903	15,855	16,159	1.6%	1.9%
Fishing (saltwater)	12,000	12,266	13,062	8.9%	6.5%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of vehicle/home)	13,535	11,589	12,296	-9.2%	6.1%
Backpacking (overnight)	7,933	10,151	10,975	38.3%	8.1%
Bicycling (mountain)	7,265	8,615	8,609	18.5%	-0.1%
Archery	7,173	7,903	7,769	8.3%	-1.7%
Fishing (fly)	5,848	6,456	6,791	16.1%	5.2%
Skateboarding	6,227	6,442	6,382	2.5%	-0.9%
Roller Skating (in-line)	6,647	5,381	5,268	-20.7%	-2.1%
Bicycling (BMX)	1,861	3,104	3,413	83.4%	10.0%
Adventure Racing	1,618	2,999	2,529	56.3%	-15.7%
Climbing (traditional/ice/mountain)	2,189	2,790	2,527	15.4%	-9.4%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
<b>Legend:</b>	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0 to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

**Table 2.3:** National Participatory Trends in Outdoor and Adventure Recreation.

### National Trends in Aquatic Activity

Swimming is unquestionably a lifetime sport, which is most likely why it has experienced such strong participation growth among the American population. In 2017, Fitness Swimming is the absolute leader in overall participation (27.1 million) for aquatic activities, due in large part to its broad, multi-generational appeal. In the most recent year, Fitness Swimming reported the strongest growth (2.0%) among aquatic activities, while Aquatic Exercise and Competitive Swimming experienced decreases in participation.

Aquatic Exercise has had a strong participation base of 10.4 million, however it also has recently experienced a slight decrease in participants (-1.1%). Based on previous trends, this activity could rebound in terms of participation due largely to ongoing research that demonstrates the activity’s great therapeutic benefit coupled with increased life expectancies and a booming senior population. Aquatic Exercise has paved the way as a less stressful form of physical activity, while allowing similar benefits as land-based exercises, such as aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and balance. Doctors are still recommending Aquatic Exercise for injury rehabilitation, mature patients, and patients with bone or joint problems. Compared to a standard workout, Aquatic Exercise can significantly reduce stress placed on weight-bearing joints, bones, and muscles, while also reducing swelling.

National Participatory Trends- Aquatics					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Swimming (fitness)	23,216	26,601	27,135	16.9%	2.0%
Aquatic Exercise	9,177	10,575	10,459	14.0%	-1.1%
Swimming (competition)	2,502	3,369	3,007	20.2%	-10.7%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
<b>Legend:</b>	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0 to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

**Table 2.4:** National Participatory Trends in Aquatics.

### Core vs. Casual Trends in Aquatic Activity

While all activities have undergone increases in participation over the last five years, most recently, casual participation (1-49 times) is increasing much more rapidly than core participation (50+ times). For the five-year time frame, casual participants of Competition Swimming increased by 56.2%, Aquatic Exercise by 24.8%, and Fitness Swimming by 21.0%. However, core participants of Competition Swimming decreased by -6.5% and Aquatic Exercise declined by -4.6% (from 2012 to 2017).

### National Trends in Water Sports/Activities

The most popular water sports / activities based on total participants in 2017 were Recreational Kayaking (10.5 million), Canoeing (9.2 million), and Snorkeling (8.3 million). It should be noted that water activity participation tends to vary based on regional, seasonal, and environmental factors. A region with more water access and a warmer climate is more likely to have a higher participation rate in water activities than a region that has long winter seasons or limited water access. Therefore, when assessing trends in water sports and activities, it is important to understand that fluctuations may be the result of environmental barriers which can greatly influence water activity participation.

Over the last five years, Stand-Up Paddling (138.9%) was by far the fastest growing water activity, followed by White Water Kayaking (33.1%), Recreational Kayaking (28.7%), and Sea/Tour Kayaking (20.8%). Although the five-

year trends show water sport activities are getting more popular, the most recent year shows a different trend. From 2016-2017 Stand-Up Paddling Recreational Kayaking reflect much slower increases in participation (3.3% and 5.2%), while White Water Kayaking (-2.0%), Sea/Tour Kayaking (-5.4%) both show decreases in participation numbers.

National Participatory Trends- Water Sports / Activities					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2012	2016	2017	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Kayaking (recreational)				28.7%	5.2%
Canoeing				-6.0%	-8.2%
Snorkeling				-3.2%	-3.8%
Jet Skiing				-22.6%	-6.3%
Sailing				3.5%	-3.0%
Water Skiing				-19.4%	-3.5%
Rafting				-7.4%	1.5%
Stand-Up Paddling				138.9%	3.3%
Wakeboarding				-10.8%	3.2%
Kayaking (sea/touring)				20.8%	-5.4%
Scuba Diving				3.3%	-7.6%
Surfing				5.3%	-4.0%
Kayaking (white water)				33.1%	-2.0%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing				14.7%	-9.4%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
<b>Legend:</b>	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0 to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

**Table 2.5:** National Participatory Trends in Water sport / Activities.

### Core vs. Casual Trends in Water Sports/Activities

As mentioned previously, regional, seasonal, and environmental limiting factors may influence the participation rate of water sport and activities. These factors may also explain why all water-based activities have more casual participants than core participants, since frequencies of activities may be constrained by uncontrollable factors.

### Activity by Generation

Analyzing participation by age for recreational activities reveals that fitness and outdoor sports were the most common activities across all generations. Breaking down activity level by generation shows a converse correlation between age and healthy activity rates.

**Generation Z (born 2000+)** were the most active, with only 17.6% identifying as inactive. Approximately 65% of individuals within this generation were active in 2017; with 26.3% being active to a healthy level, 18.5% being active & high calorie, and 20.1% being casual active & low/med calorie.

Almost half (46.7%) of **millennials (born 1980-1999)** were active to a healthy level (35.4%) or active & high calorie (11.3%), while 24.0% claimed they were inactive. Even though this inactive rate is much higher than Generation Z's (17.6%), it is still below the national inactive rate (28%).

**Generation X (born 1965-1979)** has the second highest active to a healthy level rate (35.0%) among all generations, only being 0.4% less than Millennials. At the same time, they also have the second highest inactive rate, with 28.1% not active at all.

**The Boomers (born 1945-1964)** were the least active generation, with an inactive rate of 33.3%. This age group tends to participate in less intensive activities. Approximately 34% claimed to engage in casual & low/med calorie (4.3%) or low/med calorie (29.6%) burning activities.

#### 2017 Participation Rates by Generation

#### Programs Offered by Park and Recreation Agencies (Southern Region)

NRPA’s Agency Performance Review 2018 summarize key findings from NRPA Park Metrics, which is a benchmark tool that compares the management and planning of operating resources and capital facilities of park and recreation agencies. The report contains data from 1,069 park and recreation agencies across the U.S. as reported between 2015 and 2017.

The report shows that the typical agencies (i.e., those at the median values) offer 161 programs annually, with roughly 60% of those programs being fee-based activities/events.

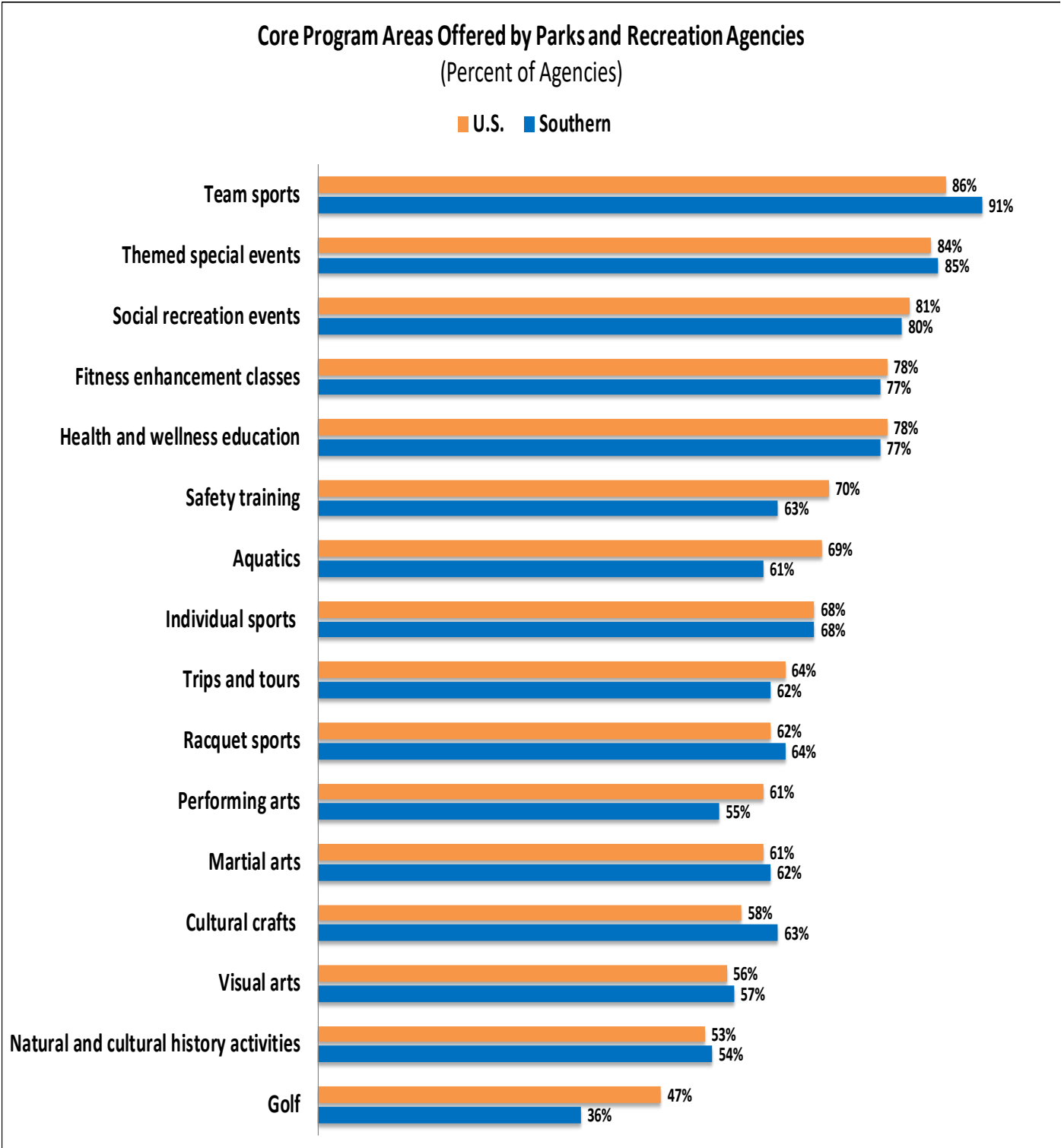
According to the information reported to the NRPA, the top five programming activities most frequently offered by park and recreation agencies, both in the U.S. and regionally, are described in the table below.

When comparing Southern agencies to the U.S. average, team sports, themed special events, social recreation events, fitness enhancement classes, and health and wellness education were all identified as top five most commonly provided program areas offered regionally and nationally.

TOP 5 MOST OFFERED CORE PROGRAM AREAS (OFFERED BY PARKS AND RECREATION AGENCIES)	
U.S. (% of Agencies Offering)	Southern Region (% of Agencies Offering)
Team Sports (86%)	Team Sports (91%)
Themed Special Events (84%)	Themed Special Events (85%)
Social Recreation Events (81%)	Social Recreation Events (80%)
Fitness Enhancement Classes (78%)	Fitness Enhancement Classes (77%)
Health and Wellness Education (78%)	Health and Wellness Education (77%)

**Table 2.6:** Top 5 Most Offered Core Program Areas (Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies) in the U.S. and the Southern Region.

In general, programs offered by park and recreation agencies in the Southern Region resemble agencies nationwide. However, based on a discrepancy threshold of 5% or more, Southern agencies are offering programs such as team sports and cultural crafts, at a higher rate than the national average. Contradictory, the agencies in the South are trailing the national average in regards to safety training, aquatics, performing arts, and golf (see figure 2.6).



**Figure 2.6:** US vs. Southern Region Core Program Areas Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies.

### Targeted Programs for Children, Seniors, and People with Disabilities

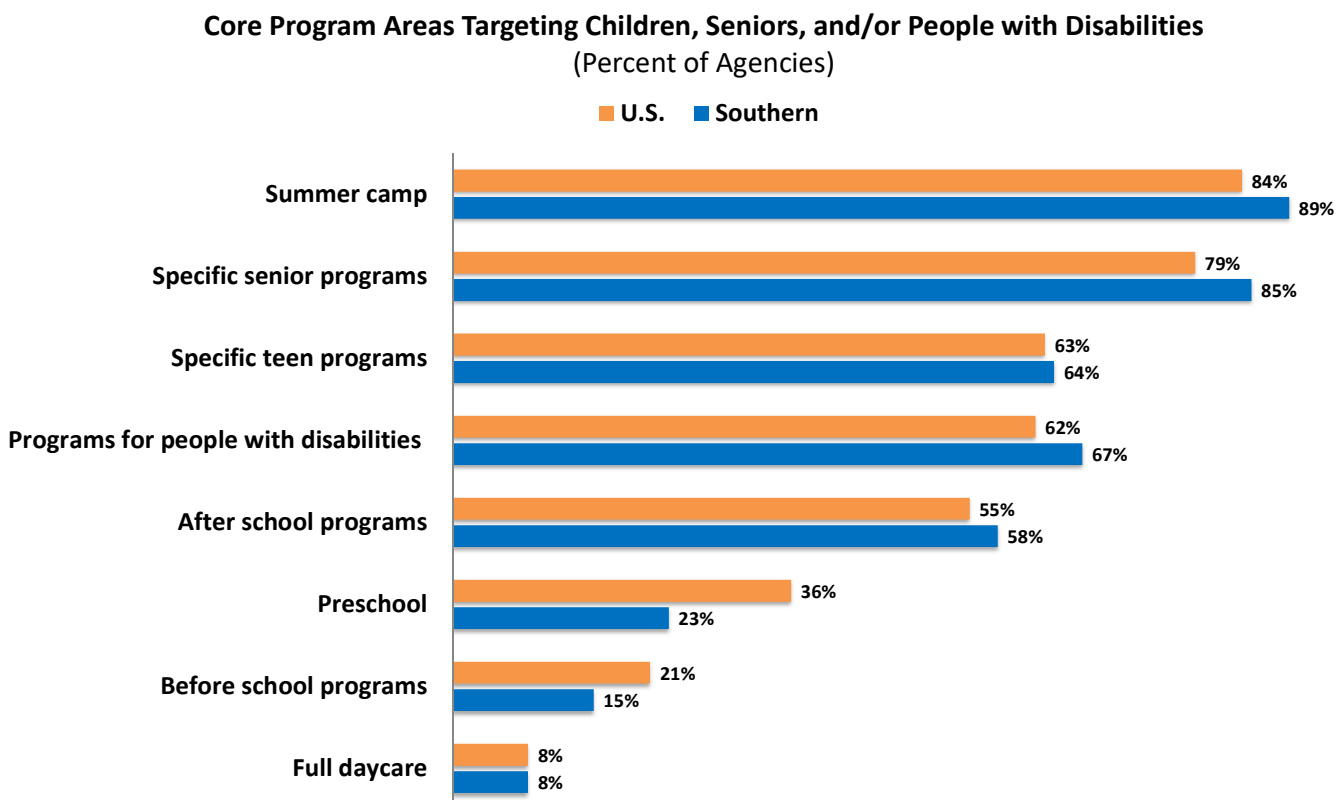
For better understanding of targeted programs by age segment, the NRPA also tracks program offerings that cater specifically to children, seniors, and people with disabilities, on a national and regional basis. This allows for further analysis of these commonly targeted populations. According to the 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review, approximately 79% of agencies offer dedicated senior programming, while 62% of park and recreation agencies provide adaptive programming for individuals with disabilities.

Based on information reported to the NRPA, the top three activities that target children, seniors, and/or people with disabilities most frequently offered by park and recreation agencies are described in the table 2.x.

Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas (Targeting Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities)	
U.S. (% of Agencies Offering)	Southern Region (% of Agencies Offering)
Summer Camp (84%)	Summer Camp (89%)
Senior Programs (79%)	Senior Programs (85%)
Teen Programs (63%)	Programs for People with Disabilities (67%)

**Table 2.7:** U.S. vs. Southern Region Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas for Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities.

Agencies in the Southern Region tend to offer targeted programs at a slightly higher rate than the national average. Southern agencies are offering summer camps, specific senior programs, and programs for people with disabilities at a significantly higher rate, while preschool and before school programs are the only targeted program in which Southern agencies are below the national rate.



**Figure 2.7:** U.S. vs. Southern Region Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas for Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities.

### 2.1.6 LOCAL SPORT AND MARKET POTENTIAL

The following charts (figures 2.6, 2.7, and 2.8) show sport and leisure market potential data from ESRI. A Market Potential Data (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service within the City. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident of the target area will participate in certain activities when compared to the US National average. The national average is 100, therefore numbers below 100 would represent a lower than average participation rate, and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rate. The service area is compared to the national average in three (3) categories – general sports, fitness and outdoor activity.

Overall, City of Tucker demonstrates average to above average market potential index (MPI) numbers; this is particularly noticeable when assessing the fitness market potential tables. All activities from the fitness market potential table have MPI scores of 100+; The other two tables (general sports and outdoor activity) have at least three activities that rank below the average MPI score. Looking at the other two categories (general sports and outdoor activity), even though they each have a few activities with MPI scores below the national averages, a majority of the activities' MPI scores fall above 100+. These overall MPI scores show that City of Tucker has strong participation rates when it comes to recreational activities. This becomes significant for when the City considers renovating or building new facilities/parks or starting up new programs; giving them a strong tool to estimate resident attendance.

High index numbers (100+) are significant because they demonstrate that there is a greater potential that residents of the service area will actively participate in offerings provided by the City.

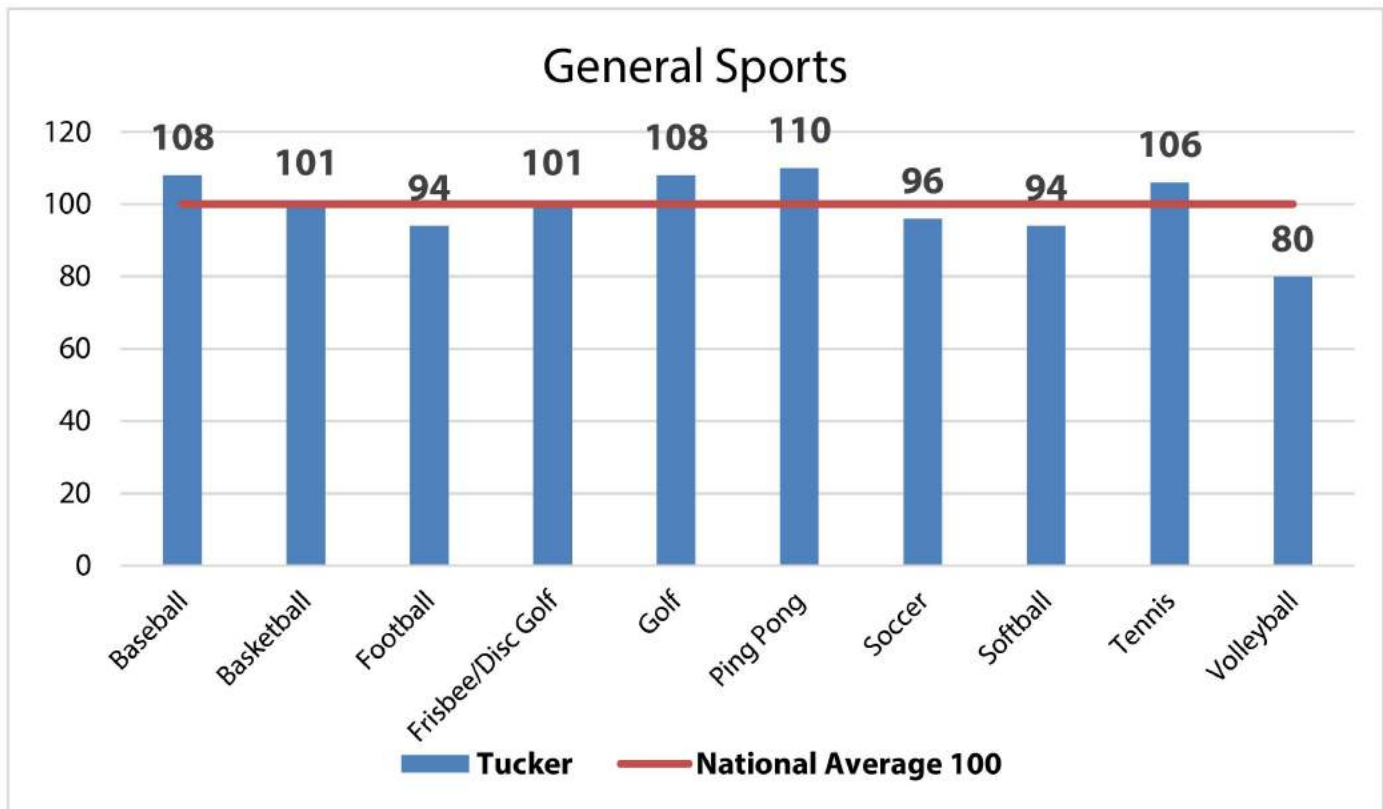


Figure 2.8: General Sports Trends.



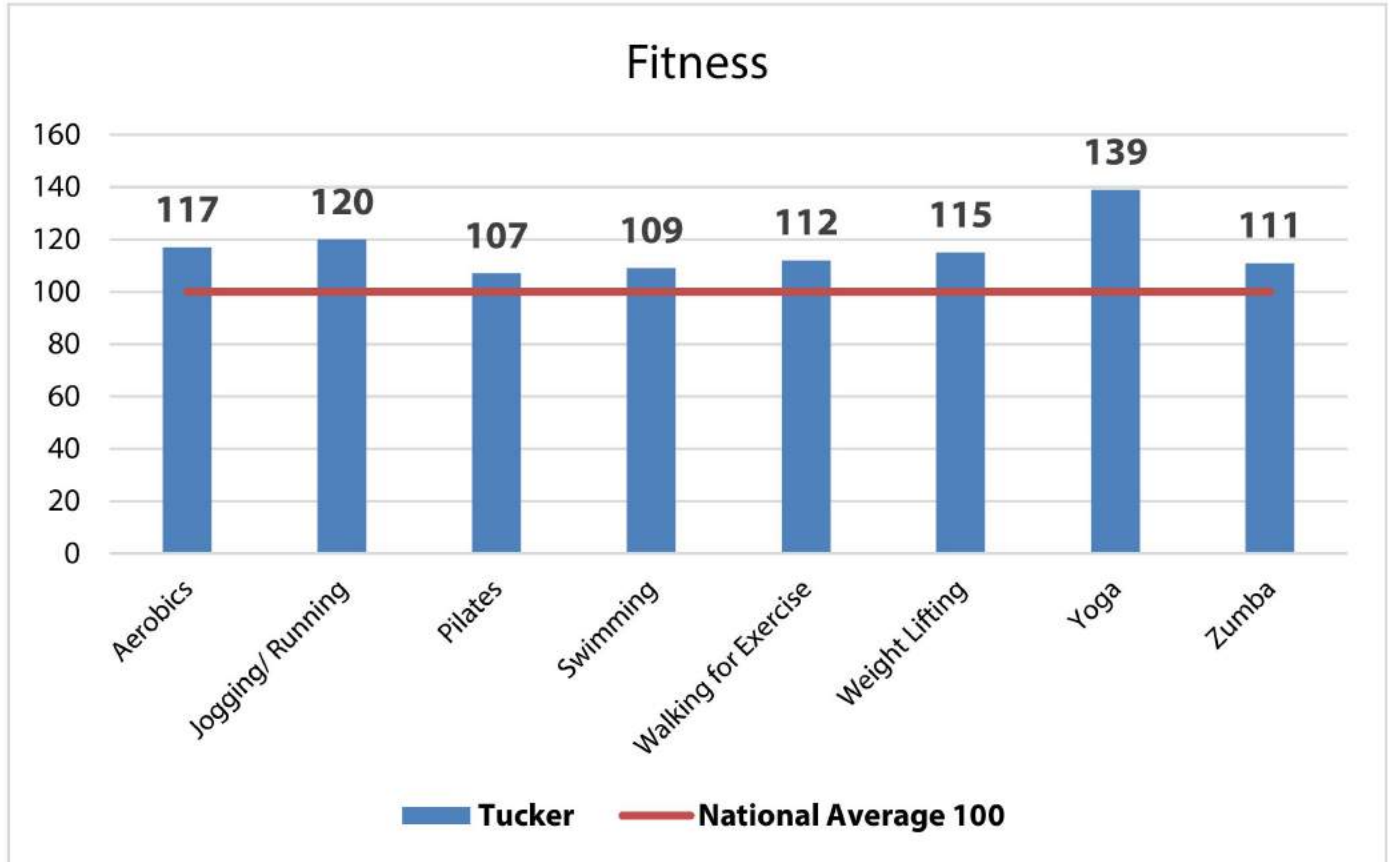


Figure 2.9: Fitness Trends.

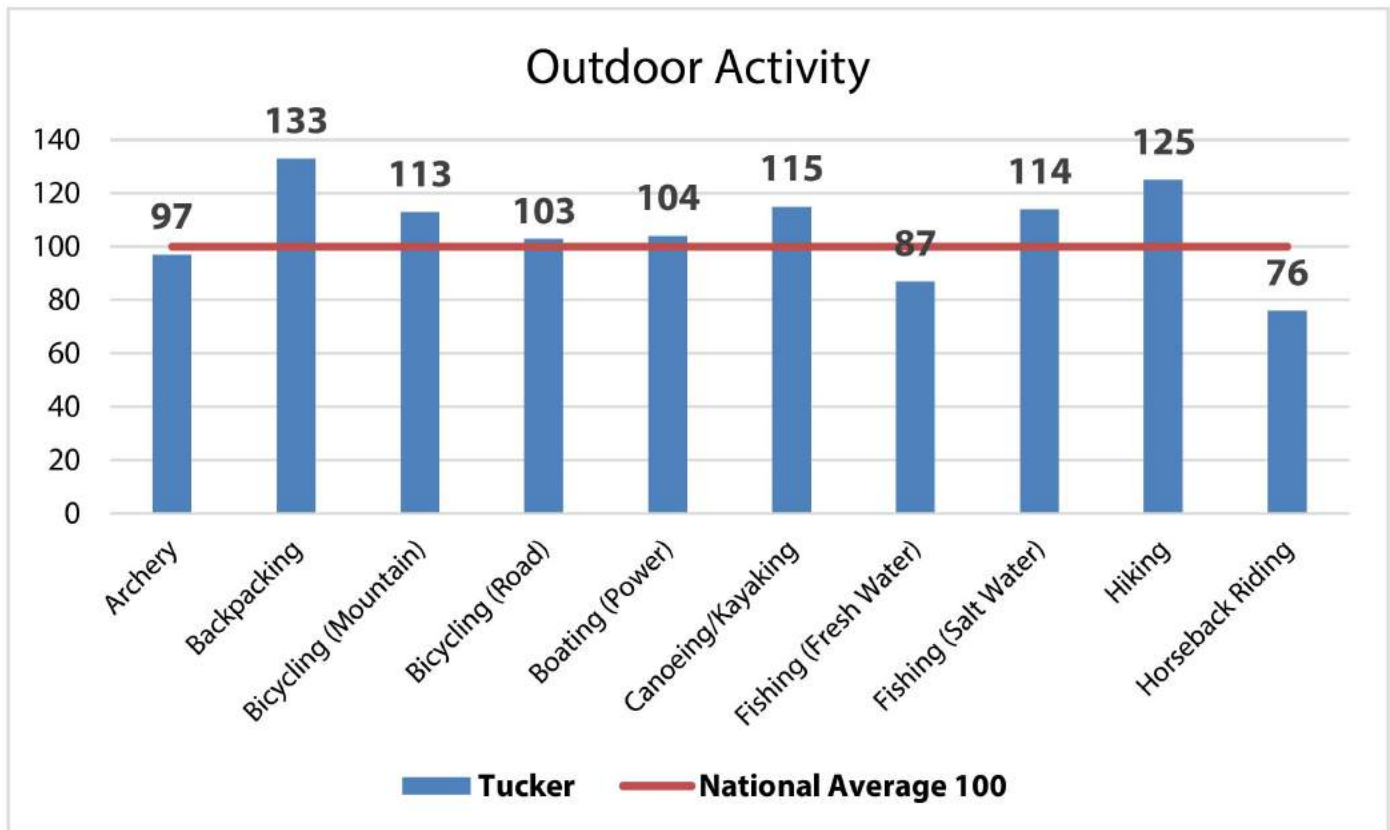


Figure 2.10: Outdoor Activity

## 2.3 Park Classifications

Table 2.8 reviews park classifications, as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Each park classification is represented or recommended (see section 4.5.3 for more information). within the City of Tucker. Park classifications are intended to be used as guidelines and are based on community needs.

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria
Mini Park	Used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.	Less than a 1/4 mile distance in a residential setting.	Between 2,500 sq. ft. and one (1) acre in size.
Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood Park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	1/4 to 1/2 mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	Five (5) acres in considered minimum size. Five (5) to ten (10) acres is optimal.
Community Park	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus us on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and 1/2 to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.
Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscape, open space, and visual/aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Special Use Park	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.	Variable; dependent on specific use.	Variable.
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal.
Greenways	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Variable.

**Table 2.8:** Park classifications as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

For more detailed descriptions of Park Classifications, see section 4.2.2.

## 2.4 Existing Parks & Recreation Facilities

This section provides a brief description of City facilities managed by the Park and Recreation Department. Table 2.8 shows the current park inventory by classification, along with their acreages. Figure 2.3 shows the locations of the parks in the City. The City of Tucker current inventory of park and recreation facilities includes six parks totaling approximately 176 acres. As part of this project, the consulting team visited each to conduct an evaluation.

Tucker Parks		
Park	Park Type	Acreage
Henderson Park	Community Park	120.70
Kelley C. Cofer Park & Pool	Community Park	23.00
Montreal Park	Neighborhood Park	9.00
Peters Park	Neighborhood Park	3.62
Tucker Nature Preserve	Nature Preserve	12.00
Tucker Recreation Center	Recreation Center	12.00
		<b>Total: 180.32</b>
Johns Homestead	Undeveloped/Community Park	54.90
Smoke Rise Park	Undeveloped/Neighborhood Park	10.54
Smoke Rise Crossing	Undeveloped/Neighborhood Park	5.60
Lord Park	Undeveloped/Community Park	27.72
		<b>Total: 98.76</b>

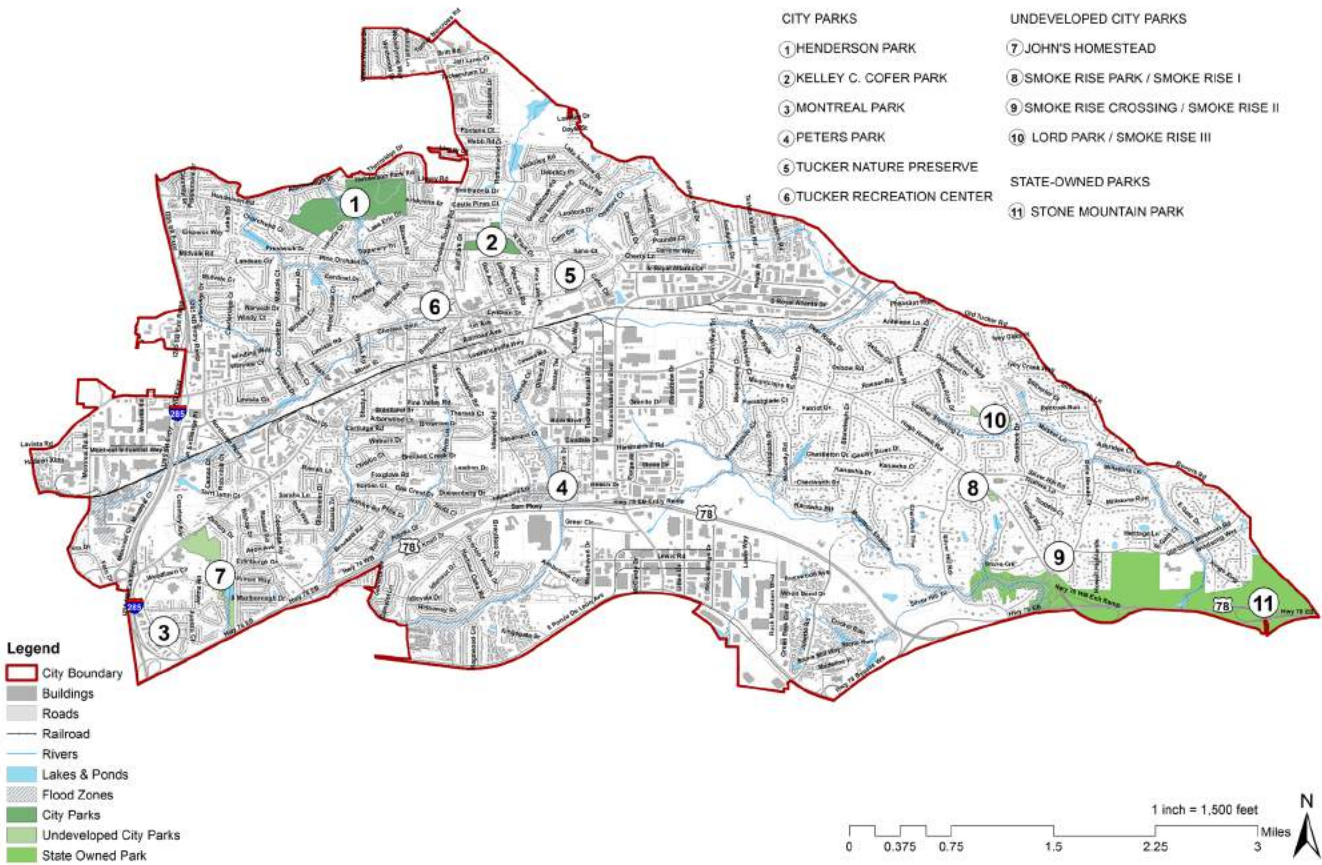
**Table 2.9:** Existing Tucker parks and recreation facilities and acreage

A detailed evaluation of the condition, ADA compliance, and identification of deferred maintenance items at existing parks was not a part of the scope of this study. Each park was visited by the planning team and general observations regarding the condition and accessibility of the facilities in each park are included in the descriptions.

The condition of each park is based on Table 2.9 and was determined by the consultant team and approved by Parks and Recreation Department staff.

**TUCKER PARKS**

- |                            |                                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>CITY PARKS</b>          | <b>UNDEVELOPED CITY PARKS</b>         |
| ① HENDERSON PARK           | ⑦ JOHN'S HOMESTEAD                    |
| ② KELLEY C. COFER PARK     | ⑧ SMOKE RISE PARK / SMOKE RISE I      |
| ③ MONTREAL PARK            | ⑨ SMOKE RISE CROSSING / SMOKE RISE II |
| ④ PETERS PARK              | ⑩ LORD PARK / SMOKE RISE III          |
| ⑤ TUCKER NATURE PRESERVE   | <b>STATE-OWNED PARKS</b>              |
| ⑥ TUCKER RECREATION CENTER | ⑪ STONE MOUNTAIN PARK                 |


**Figure 2.11:** Tucker Park Locations

Scale of Conditions	
Score	General Description
<b>Excellent</b>	Park/amenities are in excellent condition with little or no maintenance problems noted. Park/amenities do not feature any major design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance.
<b>Good</b>	Park/amenities are in good condition and feature only minor maintenance problems. Generally, most maintenance issues with these park/amenities appear to be the result of age and/or heavy use. Park/amenities may only feature minor design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance (i.e. drainage, structural, utilities, etc.).
<b>Fair</b>	Park/amenities are in fair condition and indicate ongoing maintenance problems. Generally, most maintenance issues with these park/amenities appear to be the result of age and heavy use. Some maintenance issues may be compounded over time due to being deferred because of budget and/or resource limitations.
<b>Poor</b>	Park/amenities are in poor condition and clearly show ongoing maintenance problems that may result in suspended use for repair/replacement. Maintenance issues with these park/amenities are the result of age and heavy use, and generally are compounded over time due to deferred maintenance as a result of budget and/or resource limitations.

**Table 2.10:** Park condition descriptions.

## HENDERSON PARK

**Location:** 2803 Henderson Road

**Size:** 120.70 acres

**Classification:** Community Park

**Condition:** Good

This large community park has two entrances and functions like two separate parks due the Lake Erin, which is in the middle of the park. Pedestrian connections are available but there is no vehicular connection. On the east side of the park, there are tennis courts, multi-use fields, access to the lake, pavilion, a playground, and access to paved and unpaved trails. On the west side, the park has 3 large soccer fields and 4 medium and 5 small fields. Adult league kickball is also played on the fields. There are two parking areas, a concession stand, a playground, and paved trails with pet-waste stations along them.

Both park entrances have entry signage and trailhead map signage at the main entrances to the trails. The asphalt paved path on the west side is approximately .5 miles. The access point appeared to exceed ADA accessibility limits. The other trails in the park are unpaved and approximately 6 miles total. Invasive plants were present throughout.

On the east side of the park, graffiti and trash were present. Repairs are needed on the dam. Erosion issues along the bank of the lake should be addressed along with repairs to the pier. The existing playground is currently in the process of being replaced and new mulch has been put down. Drainage has also been recently enhanced.

In parking lots, large curb drains should be retrofitted to keep trash and other items out of the storm drain. Staging areas for mulch and other maintenance should have a dedicated location away from public access and view. Fencing around fields is in poor condition and should be repaired/replaced. A railing should run continuously along the top and bottom edge of the fence. On the westside, a new concrete field access area was paved but appears not to meet ADA requirements. Parking lots have lots of cracking and striping is faded.

### Amenities:

- Lake
- Soccer fields
- 2 playgrounds
- 4 tennis courts
- Pavilion and picnic tables



**Figure 2.12: Henderson Park** a.) Paved trail; b.) Soccer fields

### KELLEY COFER PARK & POOL

**Location:** 4259 N. Park Drive

**Size:** 23 acres

**Classification:** Community Park

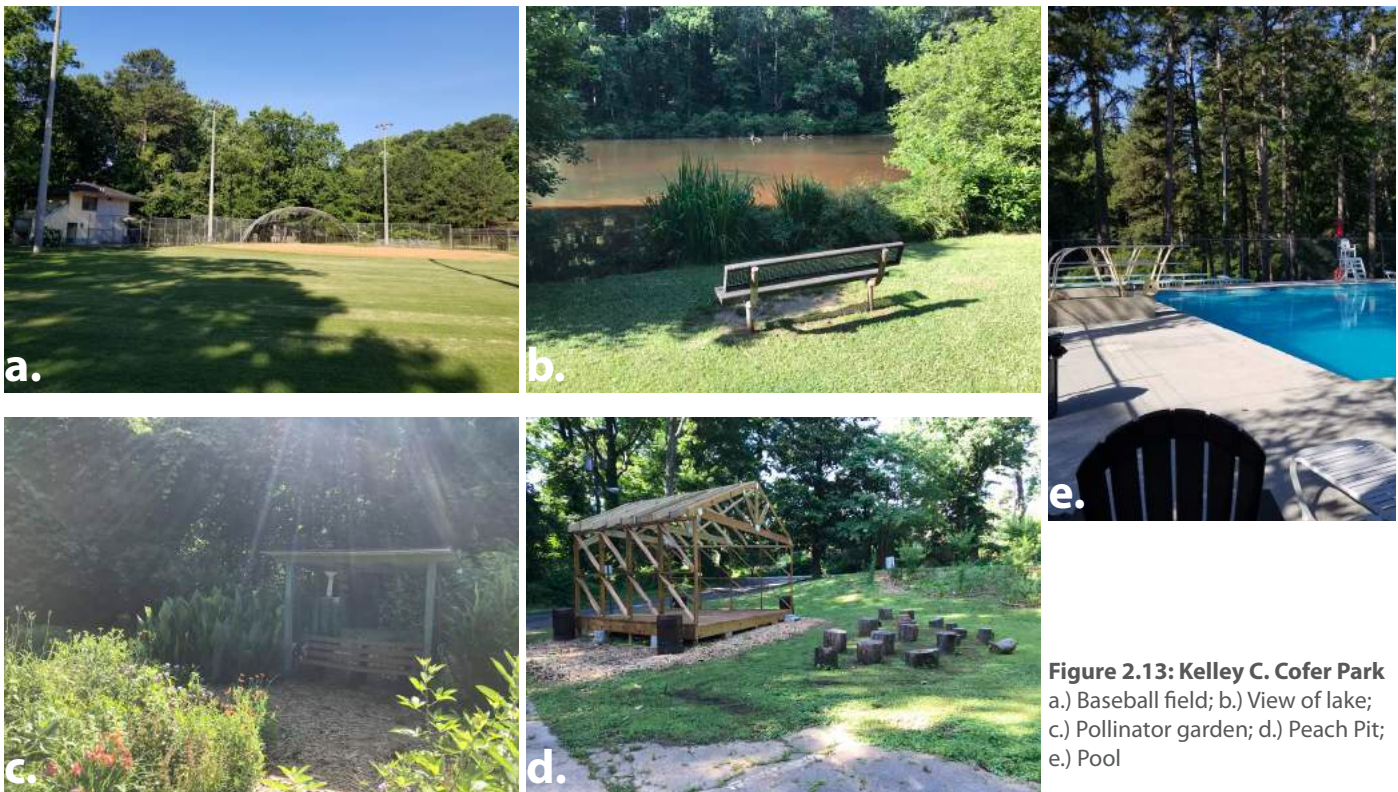
**Condition:** Good

Kelley C. Cofer Park is a 23-acre park located in the north central portion of Tucker. It is primarily an active park, with amenities for swimming and baseball/softball. Surrounded by single-family homes, Cofer Park is comprised of two parcels, which are separated by N. Park Drive. The larger parcel is 19.8 acres, while the smaller parcel is 3.2 acres.

The larger area, which lies south of N. Park Road, contains many of the park's amenities, including a pool with restrooms/changing rooms; a pond with a walking trail; two baseball/softball fields, which have recently been worked on; and a restroom/concession building. There is also a parking lot with approximately 80 spaces at the park's entrance near the pool. The smaller area of the park, which lies north of N. Park Road, is home to a pollinator garden with a few benches, a "little free library," and an outdoor performance stage called The Peach Pit. The Peach Pit is a wood frame stage with tree stump seats in front of it. A semi-circle of fruit trees encloses the space, creating an amphitheater-type space.

#### Amenities:

- Pool and pool house
- ADA playground
- Baseball/softball fields (2)
- Concessions building
- Lake with walking trail
- Pollinator garden
- The Peach Pit outdoor performance venue



**Figure 2.13: Kelley C. Cofer Park**  
 a.) Baseball field; b.) View of lake;  
 c.) Pollinator garden; d.) Peach Pit;  
 e.) Pool

## MONTREAL PARK

**Location:** 1241 Montreal Road

**Size:** 9.00 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Condition:** Fair

Montreal Park is a 9-acre neighborhood park located in the southwest corner of Tucker, near the I-285 and US-78 interchange. A former DeKalb County park, the park is surrounded by single-family residential development and is accessed at the end of T-shaped double cul-de-sac. There is no dedicated parking available for Montreal Park. A chain-link fence surrounds the park.

The developed portion of the park includes a large grassy area, a swing set with two swings for older children, and a playground with a four-swing swing set for younger children. Both the playground and swing set are surrounded by mulch, which is enclosed within a metal frame. There is also a small, hexagonal open-air pavilion with six wood and metal picnic tables under it. A new playground with swings was recently installed. There is a metal trash can near the pavilion. Much of the park is heavily wooded and undeveloped. Several trails meander through the woods.

### Amenities:

- Playground
- Two swing sets
- Pavilion with picnic tables
- Large open field
- Wooded hiking/walking trails



**Figure 2.14: Montreal Park**

- a.) Entrance sign;  
b.) Playground;  
c.) Picnic Pavilion;  
d.) Wooded trails;  
e.) Open meadow in woodland area

## PETERS PARK

**Location:** 1852 Clark Drive

**Size:** 3.62 acres

**Classification:** Neighborhood Park

**Condition:** Fair

William McKinley Peters Park (Peters Park) is a 3.6-acre neighborhood park located in the south-central portion of Tucker. Peters Park was formerly owned by DeKalb County and is now part of the Tucker park system. Situated at the dead-end of Clark Drive, Peters Park is denoted by a stone and wood sign. An asphalt drive leads to the parking lot. The parking lot is in fair condition, with some potholes and uneven surfacing. A large grassy field is located directly west of the parking lot. There is a concrete walking trail around the perimeter of the field, with benches and bench swings spaced periodically around the trail.

A concrete path leads from the parking lot to an open-air pavilion with ten wood and metal picnic tables, which is situated directly south of the parking lot. There are trash cans and a water fountain associated with the pavilion. There is a playground to the west of the concrete path leading to the pavilion. A basketball court is located behind the playground. The court has four basketball hoops. Adjacent to the basketball court and the playground, there is a swing set with four swings within a circular concrete path. This path connects to the walking trail around the grassy field, as well as a concrete path that wind its way through and around the other park elements.

Wooden table and benches, as well as metal benches, can be found throughout the park along the walking trail. Some of the benches are damaged and/or have graffiti on them. There are also several concrete pads with grills, trash cans, and hot ash receptacles located in the space between the pavilion and the basketball court. Some of the grills are missing or damaged.

While Peters Park is in a residential area, the park is nicely vegetated with abundant shade trees and mature vegetation, the grassy field is an exception, of course. The park is bordered by a small creek on its western edge.

### Amenities:

- Parking
- Large pavilion with picnic tables
- Playground
- Swings
- Basketball Court
- Large open field
- Designated grilling areas
- Walking trail

**Figure 2.15: Peters Park** a.) Picnic table and swing set; b.) Basketball court and grilling station; c.) Walking loop





### TUCKER NATURE PRESERVE

**Location:** 4440 Lawrenceville Highway

**Size:** 12.00 acres

**Classification:** Nature Preserve

**Condition:** Good

Tucker Nature Preserve is a 12-acre park located near the intersection of Lawrenceville Highway and Old Norcross Road. It is a passive park with space for picnicking and nature walks. The park features a small gravel parking lot with about twelve spaces, a grassy knoll with shade trees, a raised concrete deck with picnic tables and a “little free library,” benches, additional picnic tables, and a series of nature trails through the woods.

#### Amenities:

- Wooded walking/hiking trails
- Picnic area



**Figure 2.16: Tucker Nature Preserve**

- a.) Parking lot;
- b.) Open meadow;
- c.) Raised picnic area;
- d.) Woodland trail;
- e.) Informational kiosk

## TUCKER RECREATION CENTER

**Location:** 4898 Lavista Road

**Size:** 8.00 acres

**Classification:** Community Park/Recreation Center

**Condition:** Fair

Tucker Recreation Center is housed in a former school building constructed in 1954. Safety and maintenance issues are significant due to the age of the building. The roof appears to leak, and the building is poorly insulated. The building includes a gym setup for gymnastics. Numerous safety concerns were seen including a lack of adequate safety zones around equipment. A professional gymnastic consultant should be hired to prepare a safety operation manual. Water fountains are available within the building. Given the age of the building, lead tests should be performed along with regular maintenance of the fountains. As a former school, the recreation center is comprised of classrooms, where various programs are offered to Tucker residents, including pottery, dance, yoga, food bank, card games, and art studio.

Outside, there is a multi-use field, which has severely damaged turf. The field has irrigation that it is working condition. A new playground was recently installed outside as well.

The Browning Courthouse, which was built in the late 1860s, is located on the front lawn of the Tucker Recreation Center property. Tucker was formerly known as the Browning Community. The courthouse was used for over 100 years, until the Justice of the Peace was moved to the Cofer Building.

### Amenities:

- Playground
- Tucker butterfly garden
- Browning Courthouse, circa 1860
- Multi-use field
- Classrooms
- Gymnasium



a.

**Figure 2.17: Tucker Recreation Center** a.) Entrance sign;



b.

## JOHNS HOMESTEAD

**Location:** Lawrenceville Highway

**Size:** 54.90

**Classification:** Undeveloped/Community Park

**Condition:** N/A

Johns Homestead is a 54.9-acre undeveloped park in the southwestern portion of the city. A former farm and homestead, the site stretches from Lawrenceville Highway to US-78/Stone Mountain Freeway. There is no dedicated parking for the park.

The site dates to 1829, when the Johns family settled the property during the original land lottery. The main house, dairy house, well house, potting shed, and equipment shed are extant, but the cluster of dilapidated buildings is surrounded by a chain link and barbed wire fence for protection. Johns Homestead is one of the oldest houses in Dekalb County. When the Johns family vacated the property in the 1980s, it was also one of the longest continually occupied structures in the county.

The land north and west of the homestead site is cleared, but the land to the south and east of the site is heavily vegetated. There is a wooded trail to the south of the homestead site, called "Marsh Trail," but there is no signage denoting the length of the trail. The park is primarily undeveloped and heavily wooded. A stream runs through the park from north to south, terminating a dammed lake, called Twin Brothers Lake.

Twin Brothers Lake can be accessed via Stapp Road, which dead-ends at a gate leading to the lake. The lake is clean and the land around it is cleared. The park is officially open, and the City encourage passive use of the park, such as hiking and bird-watching.

### Amenities:

- Historic homestead
- Wooded nature trails
- Lake



**Figure 2.18: Johns Homestead**

a.) Historic Johns Homestead main house; b.) Historic Homestead outbuilding; c.) Woodland trail; d.) Twin Brothers Lake

### SMOKE RISE PARK (SMOKE RISE I)

**Location:** 5623 Hugh Howell Road

**Size:** 10.54

**Classification:** Undeveloped/Neighborhood Park

**Condition:** N/A

Smoke Rise Park is a mostly undeveloped 10.5-acre park in the Smoke Rise area of Tucker, near Stone Mountain. Smoke Rise Park is on the southwest side of Hugh Howell Road, near the intersection at Silver Hill Road. Smoke Rise Park is heavily wooded and features a nature trail with steep topography. There are benches and picnic tables along the trail. There are several wooden bridges that cross streams along the trails. There is no parking at the park, but its entry is marked by stone piers and a stone walls with a sign. The park has characteristic wood fencing throughout.

#### Amenities:

- Wooded walking / hiking trails
- Picnic areas



a.



b.



c.



d.

**Figure 2.19: Smoke Rise Park** a.) Entrance sign/wall; b.) Wooden pedestrian bridge; c.) Benches along woodland trail; d.) Woodland trail

### **SMOKE RISE CROSSING (SMOKE RISE II)**

**Location:** 1590 Lilburn-Stone Mountain Road

**Size:** 5.60

**Classification:** Undeveloped/Neighborhood Park

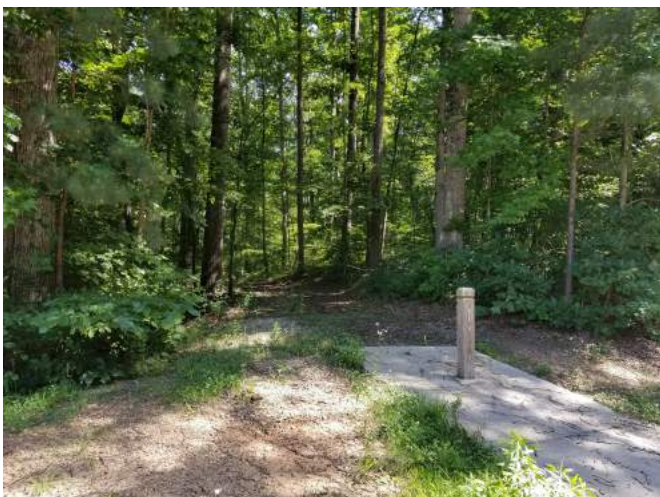
**Condition:** N/A

Smoke Rise Crossing is also a mostly undeveloped 5.6-acre park in the Smoke Rise area of Tucker. Smoke Rise Crossing is located on the northern side of Lilburn-Stone Mountain Road near the intersection of Hugh Howell Road. Similar to Smoke Rise Park, Smoke Rise Crossing is primarily undeveloped and heavily wooded. The park fronts the front and backs up to a single-family residential area.

The park is denoted by a wooden sign on Lilburn-Stone Mountain Road, but there is no dedicated parking available. A concrete path with a wooden bollard leads into the park from the sidewalk but ends after a short distance. A cleared path winds throughout the park's 5.6 acres. There is a wooden bridge that crosses a stream. The wooden bridge is similar in style to the bridges found at Smoke Rise Park. There are picnic tables and benches along the path, as well.

#### **Amenities:**

- Wooded walking / hiking trail
- Picnic areas



**Figure 2.20: Smoke Rise Crossing** a.) Entrance sign; b.) Trailhead; c.) Wooden pedestrian bridge; d.) Creek bed

**LORD PARK (SMOKE RISE III)**

**Location:** Smoke Rise Drive

**Size:** 27.72 acres

**Classification:** Undeveloped/Community Park

**Condition:** N/A

Lord Park is also an undeveloped park in the Smoke Rise area of Tucker. Lord park is located between Smoke Rise Drive, Bahia Mar Circle, Gunstock Drive, and Militia Drive. Situated in the middle of a single-family residential development, the 27.72-acre park is accessed via a dead-end road (Smoke Rise Drive) and there is no signage denoting its entry. Utilities were available on the site at one time; however, it appears they are no longer active. The park is heavily wooded and there is an old road bed throughout the park.

**Amenities:** Not applicable



**Figure 2.21: Lord Park** a.) Entrance; b.) Woodlands; c.) Woodland trail

**Other Park Providers:**

**GEORGIA’S STONE MOUNTAIN PARK**

**Location:** 1000 Robert E. Lee Boulevard, Stone Mountain, GA 30083

**Size:** 3234.59

**Type:** State Park

**WADE WALKER YMCA**

**Location:** 5605 Rockbridge Road, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30088

**Size:** 62,000 square feet

**Type:** YMCA

**LUCKY SHOALS PARK**

**Location:** 4651 Britt Road, Norcross, Georgia 30093

**Size:** 68 acres

**Type:** Community Park and Recreation Center/Gwinnett County Park

**2.5 Benchmark Analysis**

**2.5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The consulting team identified metrics to be benchmarked against comparable Parks and Recreation systems in the Atlanta, Georgia, metropolitan area. The complexity in this analysis was ensuring direct comparison through a methodology of statistics and ratios in order to provide objective information that is relevant and accurate, as best as possible.

It must be noted that the benchmark analysis is only an indicator based on the information provided. The information sought was a combination of metrics based on jurisdiction size and park inventories. The attributes considered for selection in this benchmark study included:

- Jurisdiction population size
- Jurisdiction land area size
- System focused on suburban parks and recreation service delivery

Benchmark analysis incorporates a mix of systems that are close in geographical proximity to Tucker. The benchmark includes the following agencies:

Agency	State	Jurisdiction Type	Population	Jurisdiction Size (square miles)	Population per Square Mile
Alpharetta Parks and Recreation	GA	City	65,799	27.30	2,410
Dunwoody Parks and Recreation	GA	City	48,884	13.17	3,712
Johns Creek Parks and Recreation	GA	City	84,350	31.30	2,695
Marietta Parks and Recreation	GA	City	61,048	23.17	2,635
Roswell Parks and Recreation	GA	City	94,786	42.01	2,256
Sandy Springs Parks and Recreation	GA	City	103,068	38.53	2,675
Tucker Parks and Recreation	GA	City	35,217	20.14	1,749

**Table 2.11:** Benchmark analysis of nearby parks and recreation systems.

Due to difference in how each system collects, maintains, and reports data, variances exist. These variations have an impact on the per capita and percentage allocations; hence the overall comparison must be viewed with this in mind.

The benchmark data collection for all systems was obtained in December, 2018. Population figures used for analysis reflect data from the Environmental Systems Research Institute, as of July 1, 2018. While it is possible that there may have been changes or updates in the data provided, to ensure consistency only the original figures obtained at that time have been used in the benchmark. The goal is to evaluate how Tucker Parks and Recreation is positioned among peer agencies as it applies to the delivery of its parks system through data that offers a view of each system’s park acreage inventory.

### 2.5.2 COMPARISON OF SERVICE AREA, INVENTORIES, AND OPERATIONS

#### System Acreages

This section provides a general overview of each system within the benchmark analysis. The table below describes the total parks, total acreage, total developed acres, percentage of developed acres, and level of service (total park acres per 1,000 residents for each agency).

Agency	Population	Total Number of Developed Parks	Residents per Park	Total Acres	Total Developed Acres	Percentage of Developed Acres	Total Developed Acres per 1,000 Residents
Alpharetta Parks and Recreation	65,799	16	4,112	862	832	97%	12.64
Dunwoody Parks and Recreation	48,884	7	6,983	172	162	94%	3.31
Johns Creek Parks and Recreation	84,350	4	2,1088	356	197	55%	2.34
Marietta Parks and Recreation	61,048	29	2,105	221	194	88%	3.18
Roswell Parks and Recreation	94,786	20	4,739	920	902	98%	9.52
Sandy Springs Parks and Recreation	103,068	21	4,908	1,045	996	95%	9.66
Tucker Parks and Recreation	35,217	10	3,522	533	519	97%	14.74

**Table 2.12:** Comparison of parks, acreage, developed acres, percent of developed acres, and level of service of nearby parks and recreation systems.

#### Total Parks

Total number of parks for the benchmark agencies ranges from four to 21, with a benchmark median of 15. Tucker is below the median but provides one developed park for every 3,522 residents, which ranks second only to Marietta (one for every 2,105 residents).

#### Total Park Acres

Total acreage reported for benchmark systems ranges from 172 acres to 1,045 acres, with a benchmark median of 587 acres. Tucker is slightly below the median and has the fourth most acres of the benchmark cities at 533 acres. It must be noted that of Tucker’s total acreage, 354 acres are provided by other service providers, most notably Georgia State Parks (Stone Mountain).

#### Developed Park Acres

In terms of percentage of developed acres, the benchmark agencies range from 55%-98%. With developed



acreage accounting for 97% of its total, Tucker is well above the benchmark median of 89% developed.

### **Level of Service**

When comparing total acreage to each benchmarked community, there is a wide range of coverage, anywhere from 2.34 to 14.74 acres per 1,000 residents. Tucker's 14.74 acres per 1,000 residents ranks at the top of the list and well above the benchmark median (7.91 acres per 1,000). It must be noted that of the 14.74 acres per 1,000 residents, 10.04 acres per 1,000 residents is provided by other service providers, most notably Georgia State Parks (Stone Mountain).

### **2.5.3 KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Percentage of Developed Acres:

- Least developed acres: Johns Creek – 55% developed
- Most developed acres: Roswell – 98% developed
- Benchmark median – 89% developed
- Tucker – 97% developed

Total Developed Park Acres per 1,000 Population:

- Benchmark leader: Tucker – 14.74 acres/1,000 residents
- Benchmark bottom: Johns Creek – 2.34 acres/1,000 residents
- Benchmark median – 7.91 acres/1,000 residents

## 3.0 Outreach & Needs Assessment

### 3.1 Qualitative Input Summary

In the Fall of 2018, consultants conducted a series of meetings with individuals representing diverse organizations and perspectives. The outreach process for the project consisted of three basic components: a series of focus group discussions, two public forums, and a community interest and opinion survey. Each group was asked a series of similar questions, and the results are condensed to a series of key themes that emerged from the qualitative data collection method. Note that words “the Department” relate specifically to the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department. This section presents the results of the stakeholder and public input.

#### 3.1.1 FOCUS GROUPS

The first focus group meeting for the Tucker Parks and Recreation Master Plan took place on September 7, 2018. The consultant team met with City staff to discuss the strengths and challenges of the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department programs and facilities, as well as desired programs and facilities, one item the participants would like to see covered in the master plan, and an open-ended question for any other comments or ideas.

The planning team and City staff also conducted three focus group discussions in Tucker on October 1 and 2, 2018. A total of 16 different groups participated in the focus groups. The focus groups were identified and participants invited by City staff. The following is a listing of the focus groups that were involved in the process:

- Friends of Henderson Park
- Friends of Johns Homestead
- Friends of Kelley Cofer Park
- Friends of Tucker Nature Preserve
- Friends of Tucker Recreation Center
- Friends of Lord Park
- Friends of Montreal Park
- Friends of Peters Park
- Taylor Academy of Fine Arts
- Tucker Cheerleading
- Tucker Exercise
- Tucker Football League
- Tucker Gymnastics
- Tucker Orchard Guild
- Tucker Youth Soccer Association
- Windsong Sailing Academy

A presentation was made to each group that summarized the demographics and trends analysis and the current level of service of recreation facilities and programs in Tucker. Each group was asked some general questions and then questions specifically related to the group’s potential particular interest. The following is a summary of the responses.

*List the top five **strengths** of the Tucker Recreation and Parks Department programs and facilities:*

- Friends Groups Programs
- Variety of Open Spaces
- Prime Location of the Parks
- Tucker Recreation Center
- Parks and Recreation Staff

*List the top five biggest **challenges** that Tucker Recreation and Parks Department is facing:*

- Safety
- Deferred Maintenance
- Lack of Public Knowledge About Existing Programs and Facilities
- Funding Sources
- Lack of Available Land for New Parks

What top five **facilities** would you like add to Tucker?

- Multi-use Trails
- Dog Parks
- Playgrounds
- Amphitheater
- Pools (indoor and outdoor)

What top **programs** would you like to add to Tucker?

- Arts in the Parks
- Competitive Youth Sports Leagues (i.e., soccer, baseball/softball, football, lacrosse, etc.)
- Programmed Adult Activities
- Cooking and Nutrition Classes with a Farm-to-Table Perspective
- Senior Services (fitness classes, trips, caregiver support, etc.)

If there was just one thing that you would like to **make sure that the master plan covers**, what would that be?

- Publicity
- Safety
- Parking for parks that currently do not have any
- Master Parks Plan will have to demonstrate tie in with trails and transportation to indication integration and connectivity
- Move idea of “what to do” with/for a rec center?
- Central greenspace in downtown core
- Connected the parks with a multi-use trail/path
- New master plans for all the open parks to bring them up to speed and make beautiful / top notch
- Clean parks
- Railroad connected to parks
- Walking trails that would connect the different neighborhoods
- Identifying additional land purchases that will allow the City to purchase vacant lands now before they are developed. Identify funds to commit to land acquisition. Recommended budgets for the City to implement now.
- Helping with the organization of the positions of the department and to add more staffing to help get things done. Maintenance and recreations.
- Renovations to Gymnastics
- Resurface parking lot with lights for security
- New playground
- Defined accessibility to parks via walking trails, bike trails, golf cart access (similar to Peachtree City)
- We would love to have newer facilities and new options. We need ice arena, there is none anywhere nearby.
- Include programs to encourage internationalism
- Development of parks that create many sport activities, open and accessible to all ages
- Bigger indoor facilities for sports like basketball and indoor swimming
- Parking improvements at Henderson Park. More spaces and new surface. We have over 1,000 families going through the park every Saturday and lots of times families have to park in the street or on the greenescapes.

### 3.1.2 PUBLIC FORUMS

Following the Focus Group meetings, the consultant team facilitated a public input workshop forum, which was held at the Tucker Recreation Center on the evening of October 2, 2018. After a presentation of information regarding the current City of Tucker parks, programs, and level of service, the approximately 80 participants were asked to vote on the facilities and programs they would like to keep and/or add to parks in the community. The planning team also had them provide comments and markup a map of the community where participants thought improvements could occur. Participants were asked to choose each of their **four** most important park programs and facilities. Results can be found on the following charts.

#### **What PROGRAMS would you like to add or expand in Tucker?**

Programs	Priority
Community special events (festivals, etc.)	1
Outdoor programs (nature hikes, etc.)	2
Environmental Education and Programs	3
Performing arts programs	4
Gardening Classes, Farm-to-Table Classes and Events	5
Fitness and Wellness Programs (Yoga, Tai Chi, etc.)	6
Senior Programs and Services	6
Youth Soccer Programs	7
Art classes (pottery, painting, etc.)	8
Walking/Jogging/Running Clubs	9
Youth Learning/Enrichment Classes	9
Adult Learning Classes (Language, Tech, etc.)	10
Programs for People with Special Needs	10
Water Fitness Programs/Lap Swimming	10
Youth Baseball/Softball Programs	10
Adult Basketball/Volleyball Programs	11
Running Events (5K, 10K, Marathons)	11
Tennis Lessons and Leagues	12
Gymnastics	13
Recreation/Competitive Swim Team	14
After School Programs/Out-of-School Camps	15
Bicycle Lessons and Clubs	15
Youth Basketball/Volleyball Programs	15

Programs	Priority
Golf Lessons/Clinics	16
Music Classes	16
Sand Volleyball Programs	16
Youth Football Programs	16
Youth Learn-to-Swim Programs	16
Youth Lacrosse Programs	17

*Note: multiple same numbers indicate a tie.*

#### **What FACILITIES would you like to add or expand in Tucker?**

Facilities	Priority
Walking and Hiking Trails (Natural Surface)	1
Walking and Biking Trails (Multi-Use Paved)	2
Restroom Buildings	3
Community Gardens	4
Soccer/Lacrosse Multipurpose Fields	5
Playgrounds	6
Mountain Bike Trails	6
Dog Parks	7
Pavilions/Picnic Sites	8
Amphitheater	9
Splash Pad	10
Disc Golf Course	11
Indoor Pool/Natatorium	12
Senior Center	13
Zipline and Adventure Ropes Course	13
Basketball Courts	14
Tennis Courts	14
Fishing Pier/Docks	15
Aerobics/Dance Rooms/Dance Floors	16
Baseball Fields	16
Outdoor Board Games (Chess, Checkers)	16
Banquet/Meeting Rooms	17
Recreation Center/Gymnasium	17
Sand Volleyball Courts	17
Gaming Rooms	18
Racquetball Courts	18
Concession Stands	19
Football Fields	19
Softball Fields	19

*Note: multiple same numbers indicate a tie.*

The charts above show the results from the voting exercise. Community special events (festivals, etc.) and Outdoor programs (nature hikes, etc.) were the top program priorities. For facilities, walking and hiking trails (natural surface) and walking and biking trails (multi-use paved) were the top priorities. While some programs and facilities did not receive any votes, it does not mean that they are not valued in the community, rather that the current level of programs and facilities may be being met.



Figure 3.1: Public Forum at Tucker Recreation Center; October 2, 2018.

In addition to the Programs and Facilities Boards, participants were provided with a third board and asked if they had any other ideas to share. Participants left approximately 110 individual notes with various ideas and comments. The comments differed greatly and included topics such as a desire to have pickleball courts to a request to maintain natural areas and animal habitats and from plein air painting classes in Tucker parks to aqua therapy and water aerobics classes at a new indoor pool. The input received from engaged Tucker residents was invaluable to the planning process.

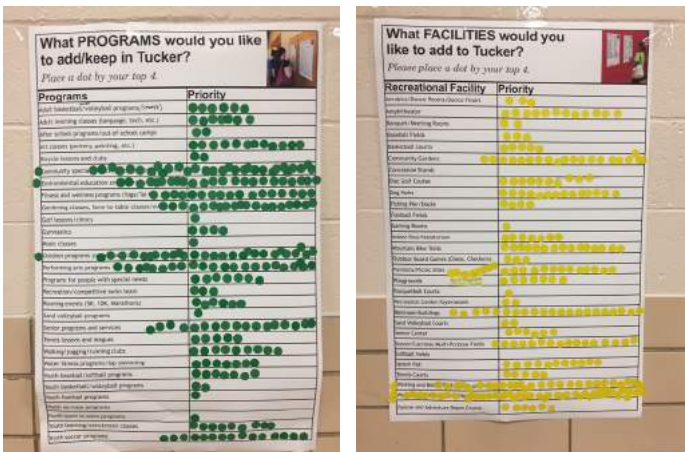


Figure 3.2: Programs and Facilities voting boards.

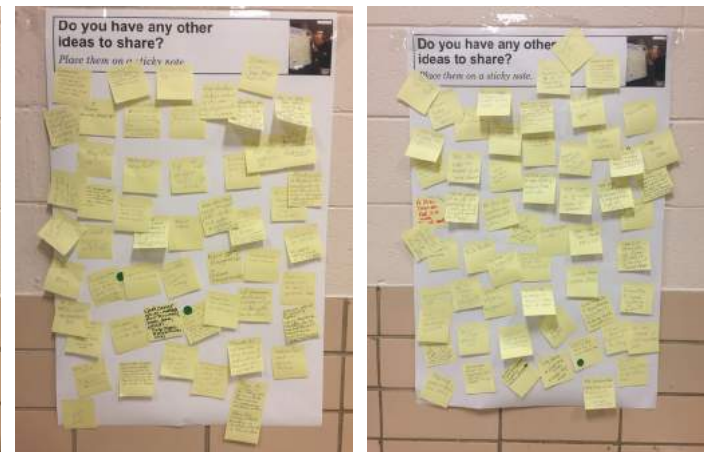


Figure 3.3: Additional ideas.

About 50 Tucker residents attended the second public meeting located at the Tucker Recreation Center on the evening of December 11, 2018. While the goal of the first public meeting was to gather community-based information, the goal of the second public meeting was to present Tucker residents with the results of the Research and Analysis phase and the Community Outreach phase. The results of the statistically-valid community survey, as well as the information gathered during the previous public meeting and corresponding stakeholder meetings. At the end of the presentation, participants were given time to ask the consultant team questions.



**Figure 3.4:** Public Forum at Tucker Recreation Center; December 11, 2018.

## 3.2 Statistically Valid Survey

### 3.2.1 OVERVIEW

The consultant team administered a needs assessment for the City of Tucker's Parks and Recreation Department during the Fall of 2018. The Parks and Recreation Department is conducting a Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, in which, launched the effort for a parks and recreation programming needs assessment survey. The results of this survey, in addition to the information gathered from the public meetings and stakeholder meetings, will be used to establish priorities for improvements to City parks, open space system, and recreation programming that will best serve the needs of its residents.

### 3.2.2 METHODOLOGY

The consultant team mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Tucker. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online.

Ten days after the surveys were mailed, households that received the survey also received emails and phone calls to encourage participation. The emails contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete. To prevent people who were not residents of Tucker from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. The addresses entered online were matched with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not counted.

The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 375 residents from the number of surveys mailed. The goal was exceeded with a total of 403 residents completing the survey. The overall results for the sample of 403 households have a precision of at least +/-4.85% at the 95% level of confidence.

The report contains the following:

- Charts showing the overall results of the survey
- Priority Investment Rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities and programs
- Benchmarking analysis comparing the City's results to national results
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey
- A copy of the survey instrument

The major findings are summarized in the following sections.

### 3.2.3 OVERALL USE AND RATINGS OF PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

**Facility Use.** The most frequently used Parks and Recreation facility, as indicated by responding households that had visited Parks and Recreation facilities in the past 12 months, was Henderson Park (44%), followed by Tucker Recreation Center (27%), and Kelley C. Cofer Park and Pool (22%). Of the survey participants who had not visited any City of Tucker parks or trails in the past 12 months, the following reasons they did not, were: not aware of parks or trails locations (39%), use parks/trails in other cities (27%), and do not feel safe using parks/trails (18%).

**Ratings.** The Parks and Recreation facilities that had received the highest ratings, based on the sum of “excellent” and “good” responses among residents who had an opinion, were: Peters Park (100%), paved trails (76%), Tucker Nature Preserve (75%), and Henderson Park (71%).

### 3.2.4 OVERALL PARTICIPATION AND RATINGS OF PROGRAMS

**Program Participation.** Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents indicated they or members of their household has participated in recreation programs offered by the City of Tucker during the past 12 months. The top reasons given by respondent households as to what prevents them from participating in recreation programs were: I don’t know what is offered (69%), too busy/not interested (30%), use programs of other agencies (11%), and program times are not convenient (8%).

**Ratings.** Of the respondents who had participated in the City of Tucker recreation programs, 25% rated the quality of program(s) as “excellent,” 57% rated the quality of program(s) as “good,” 15% rated the quality of program(s) as “fair,” and 3% rated the quality of program(s) as “poor.”

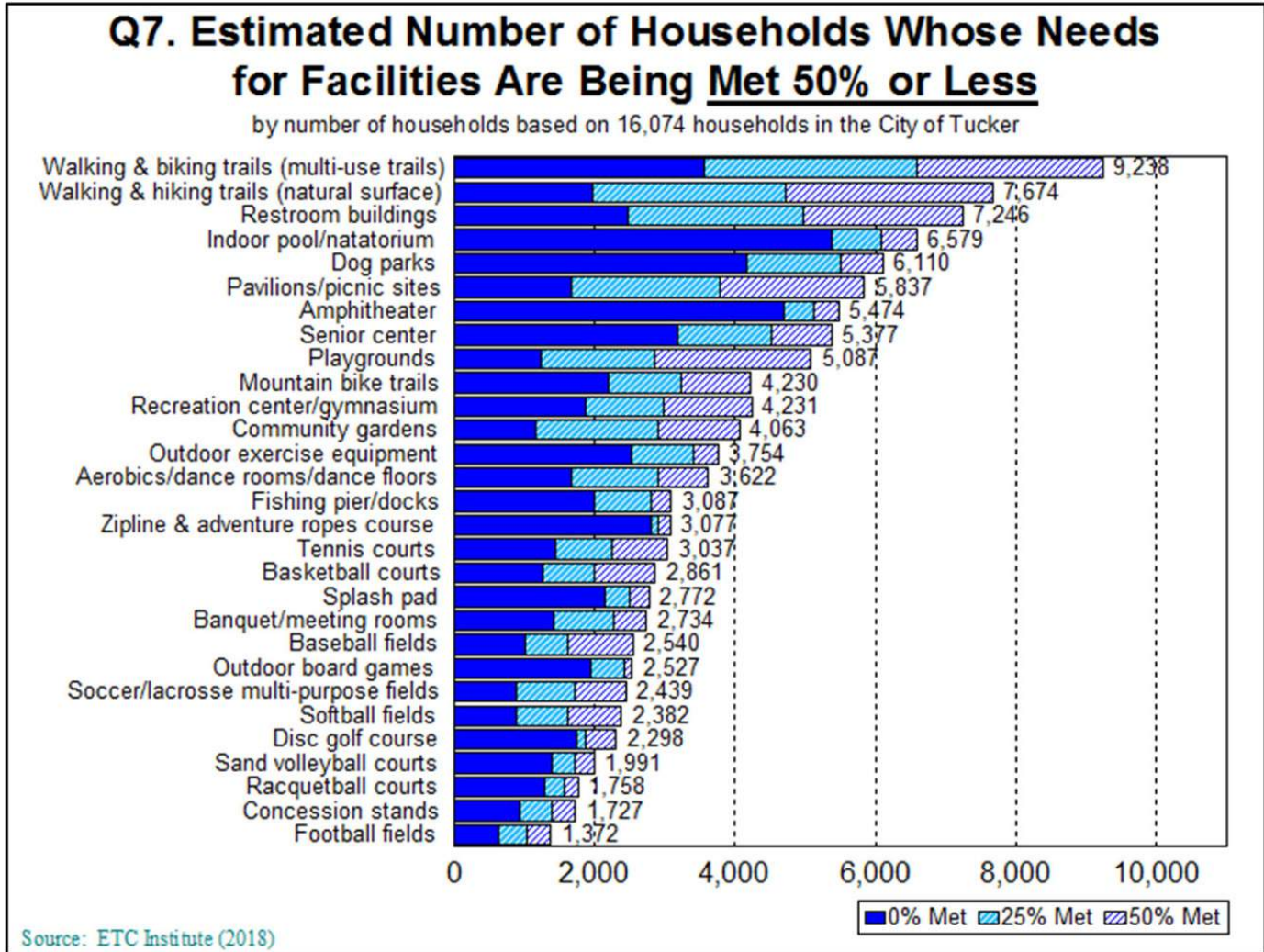
### 3.2.5 COMMUNICATION ABOUT RECREATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

From a list of 15 various methods in which respondents could learn about recreation programs/activities, survey participants were asked to select the method(s) they use, the highest rated methods were: friends and neighbors (59%), Facebook (30%), City website (28%), and temporary signs at parks or around the City (26%). The most preferred methods of communication based on the sum of the survey participants’ top three choices, were: emails (45%), City website (36%), flyers/newsletters (36%), and Facebook (29%).

### 3.2.6 FACILITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

**Facility Needs.** Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 29 recreation facilities and amenities and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest “unmet” need for various facilities.

The top four recreation facilities with the highest percentage of households that indicated a need for the facility were: multi-use walking and biking trails (73%), natural surface walking and hiking trails (70%), restroom buildings (56%), and pavilions/picnic sites (52%). ETC Institute estimates a total of 11,798 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have a need for multi-use walking and biking trails and an estimated total of 11,171 households of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have a need for natural surface walking and hiking trails. ETC Institute estimated a total of 9,238 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have unmet needs for multi-use walking and biking trails, an estimated total of 7,674 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have unmet needs for natural surface walking and hiking trails, and an estimated total of 7,246 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have unmet needs for restroom buildings. The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 29 facilities that were assessed is shown in Figure 3.5.



**Figure 3.5:** Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Facilities Are Being Met 50% or Less (ETC, 2018).

**Facility Importance.** In addition to assessing the needs for each facility, the consultant team also assessed the importance that residents placed on each facility. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the four most important facilities to residents were:

1. Multi-use walking and biking trails (49%)
2. Natural surface walking and hiking trails (43%)
3. Dog parks (21%)
4. Playgrounds (19%)

The percentage of residents who selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown in Figure 3.6.



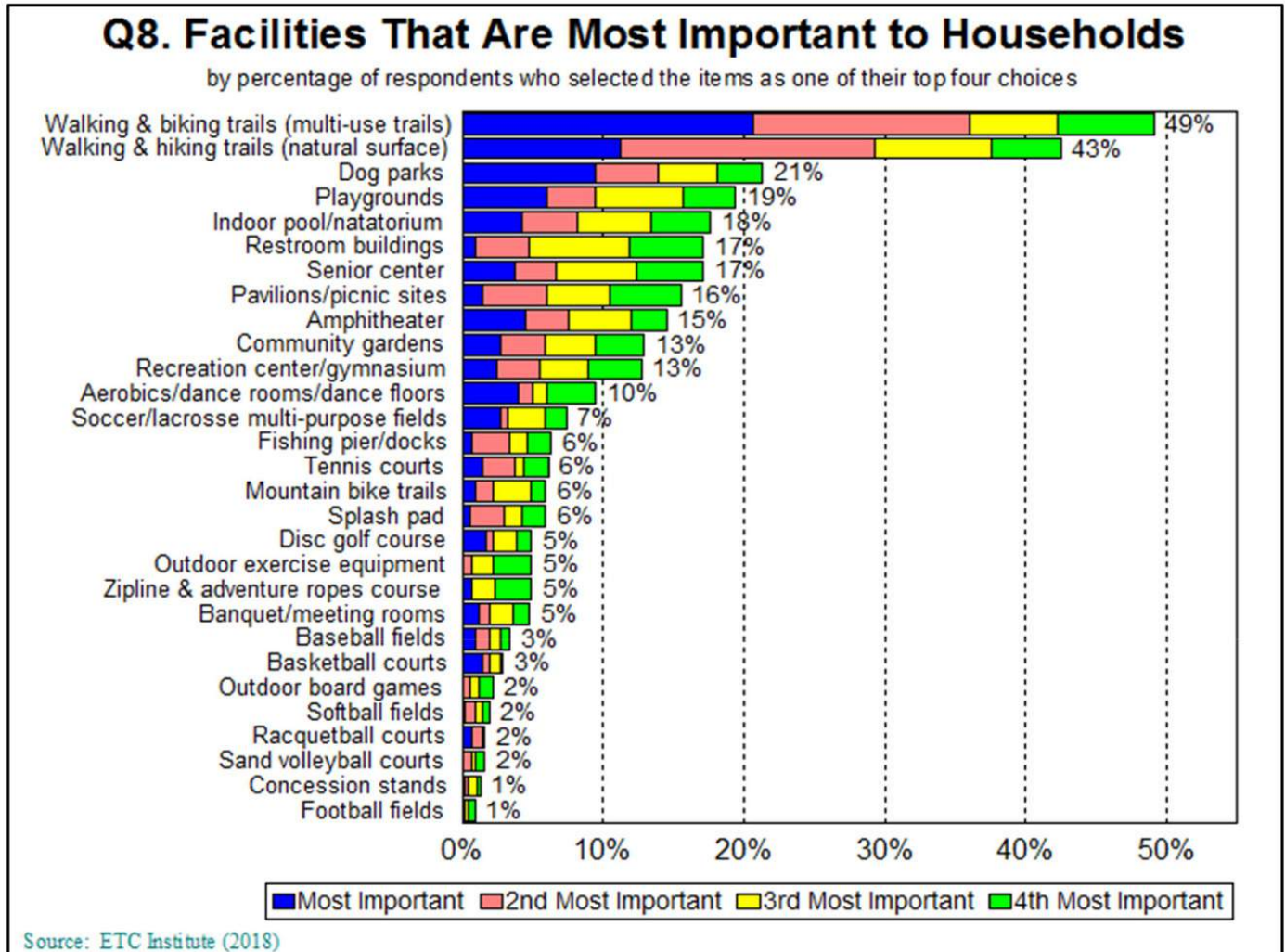


Figure 3.6: Facilities that are Most Important to Households (ETC, 2018).

**Priorities for Facility Investments.** The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on Parks and Recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility.

Based the *Priority Investment Rating (PIR)*, the following five facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Multi-use walking and biking trails (PIR=200)
- Natural surface walking and hiking trails (PIR=170)
- Restroom buildings (PIR=113)
- Dog parks (PIR=110)
- Indoor pool/natorium (PIR=107)

Figure 3.7 shows the Priority Investment Rating (PIR) for each of the 29 facilities that were assessed on the survey.

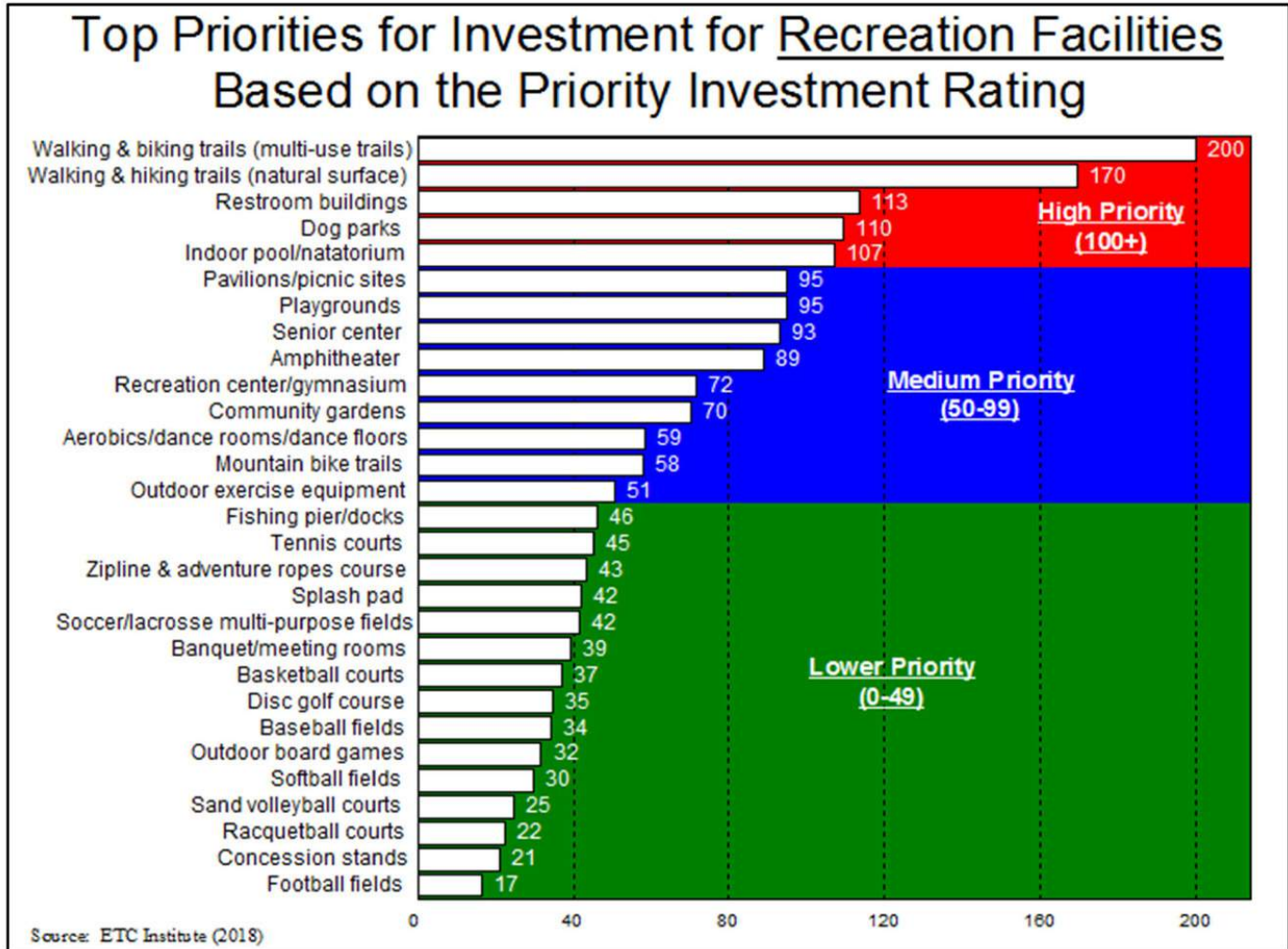


Figure 3.7: Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating (ETC, 2018).

### 3.2.7 PROGRAMMING NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

**Programming Needs.** Respondents were also asked to identify if their household had a need for 29 recreational programs and rate how well their needs for each program were currently being met. Based on this analysis, the number of households in the community that had “unmet” needs for each program was estimated.

The four programs with the highest percentage of households that had needs were: community special events (66%), fitness and wellness programs (59%), adult learning classes (45%), and senior programs and services (41%). ETC Institute estimates a total of 10,657 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have a need for community special events, and an estimated total of 9,500 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have an estimated need for fitness and wellness programs. It is estimated a total of 8,333 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have unmet needs for community special events, an estimated total of 8,028 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have unmet needs for fitness and wellness programs, and an estimated total of 6,617 households out of the 16,074 households in the City of Tucker have unmet needs for adult learning classes. The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 29 programs that were assessed is shown in Figure 3.8.

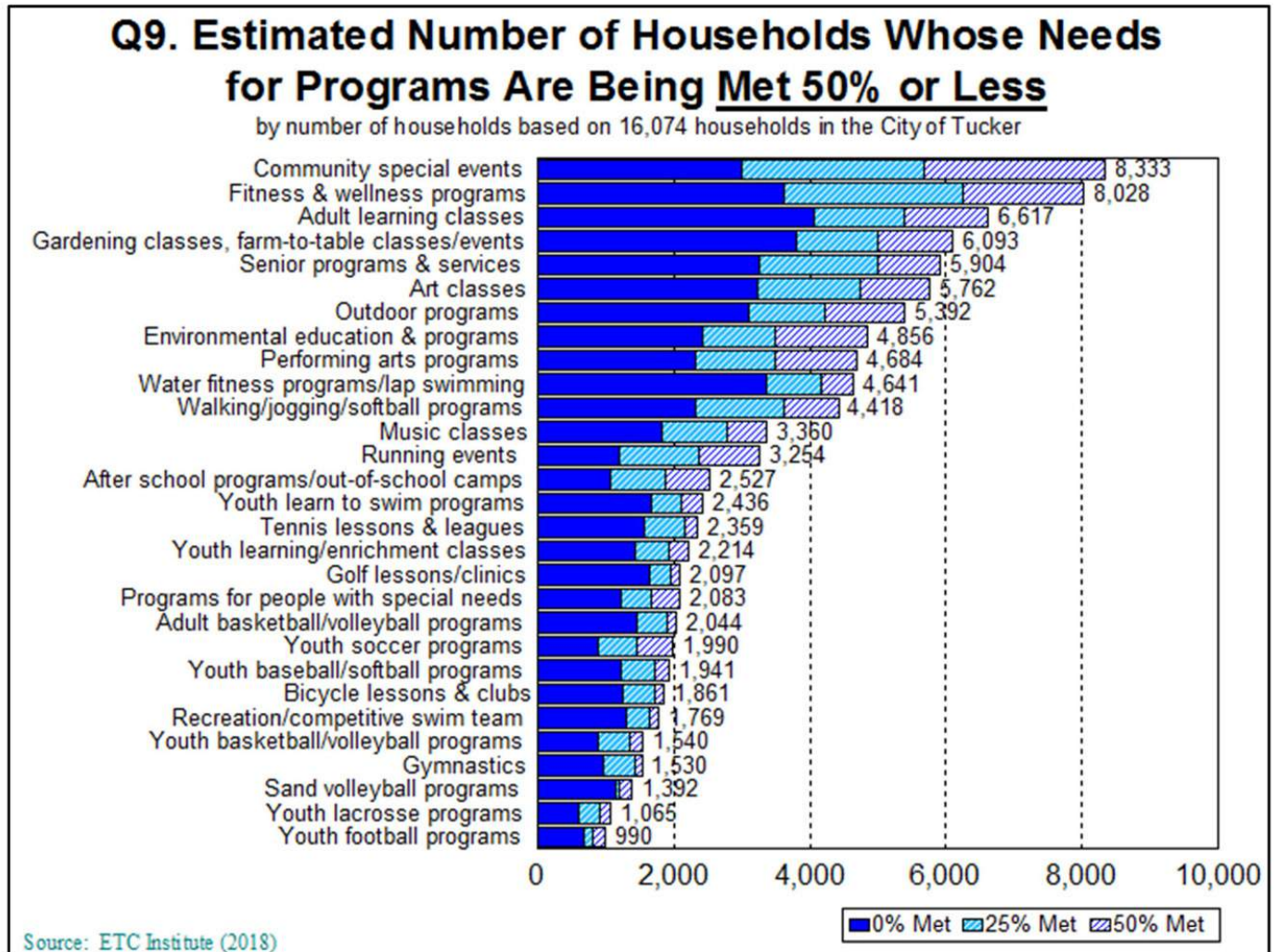
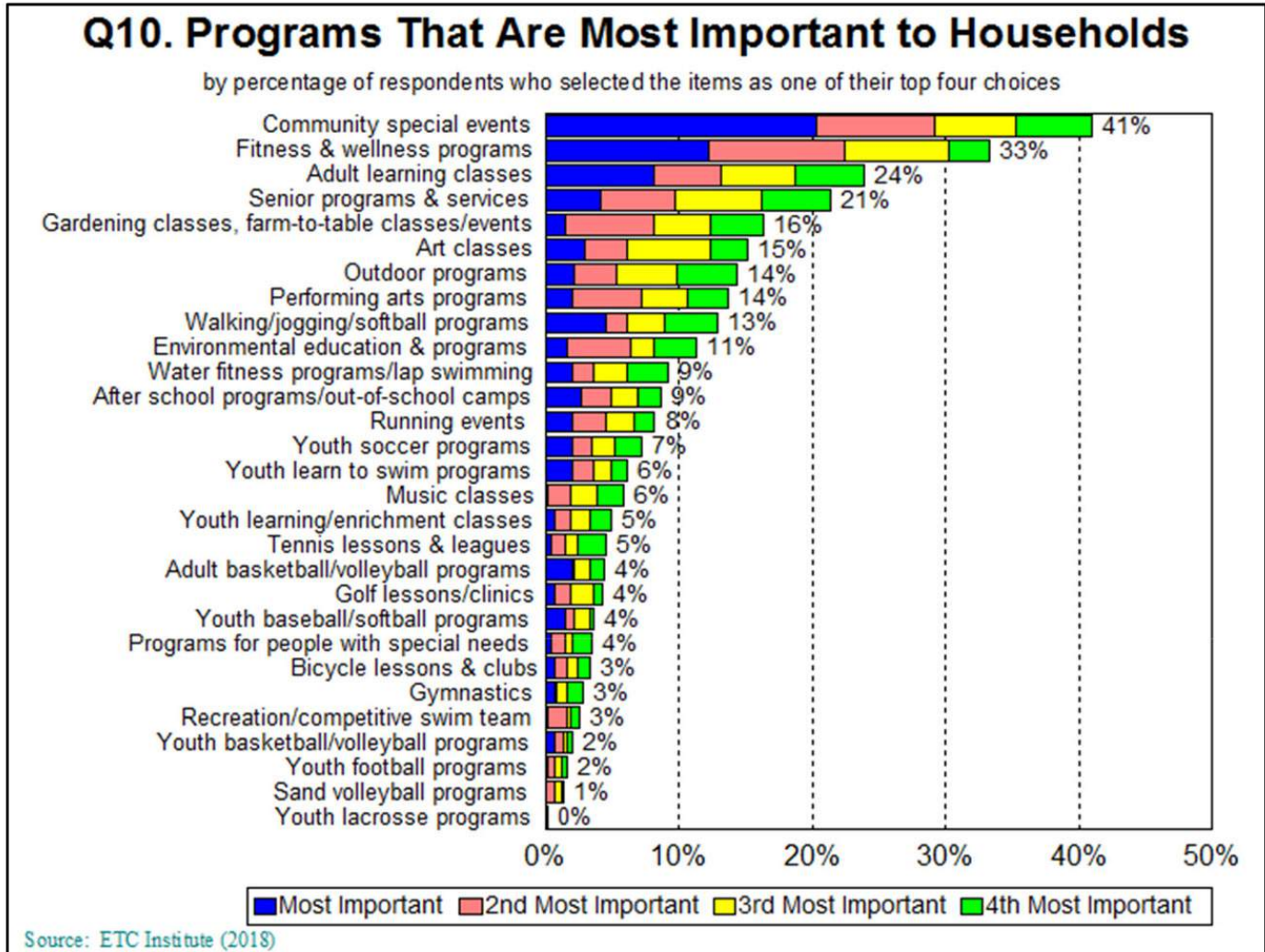


Figure 3.8: Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Programs Are Being Met 50% or Less (ETC, 2018).

**Program Importance.** In addition to assessing the needs for each program, the consultant team also assessed the importance that residents placed on each program. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the four most important programs to residents were:

1. Community special events
2. Fitness and wellness programs
3. Adult learning classes
4. Senior programs and services (21%)

The percentage of residents who selected each program as one of their top four choices is shown in Figure 3.9.



**Figure 3.9:** Programs that are Most Important to Households (ETC, 2018).

Priorities for Programming Investments. Based on the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following seven programs were rated as “high priorities” for investment:

- Community special events (PIR=200)
- Fitness and wellness programs (PIR=178)
- Adult learning classes (PIR=138)
- Senior programs and services (PIR=123)
- Gardening classes, farm-to-table classes/events (PIR=113)
- Art classes (PIR=106)
- Outdoor programs (PIR=100)

\*More information about Priority Investment Rating (PIR) can be found in the appendix of this document.

Figure 3.10 shows the Priority Investment Rating (PIR) for each of the 29 programs that were rated.

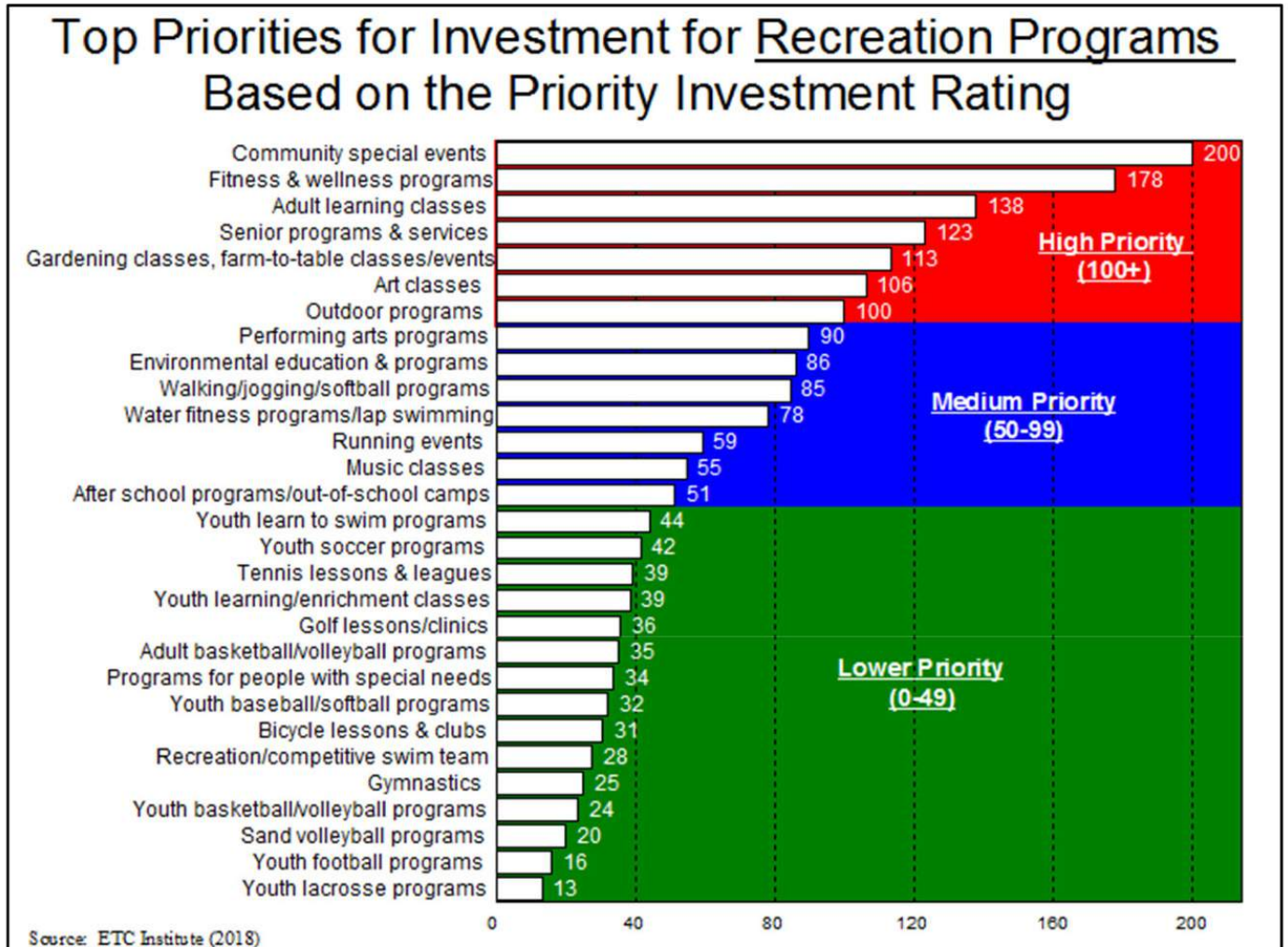


Figure 3.10: Top priorities for investment for recreation programs based on the PIR

### 3.2.8 ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

The highest level of agreement for various statements concerning potential benefits from the Parks and Recreation system, based on the sum of “strongly agree” and “agree” responses among residents who had an opinion, were: makes Tucker a more desirable place to live (92%), preserves open space and protects the environment (90%), provides clean/aesthetically pleasing landscaping (81%), and helps to attract new residents and businesses (80%). The highest rated benefits that are most important to responding households, based on the sum of their top four choices, were: makes Tucker a more desirable place to live (60%), improve household’s physical health and fitness (49%), preserves open space and protects the environment (48%), and increases household’s property value (38%).

The highest level of support for various actions that could be taken to improve parks, trails, and the recreation system, based on the sum of “very supportive” and “somewhat supportive” responses among residents who had an opinion were: repair parks (86%), improve existing trail system (84%), add trails/walking loops in existing parks (81%), and develop new walking and biking trails (80%). The highest rated actions that respondents indicated they would be the most willing to fund, based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, were: repair parks (39%), develop new walking and biking trails (32%), add trails/walking loops in existing parks (31%), and improve existing trail system (26%).

Eighty-three percent (83%) of responding households indicated that they would be willing to walk or bike to a park if the path was safe and well-maintained.

The levels of support for connecting east and west sides of Henderson Park, with a paved trail, were: 57% were “very supportive,” 20% were “supportive,” 15% were “neutral,” 4% were “not supportive,” and 4% were “not at all supportive”.

The levels of satisfaction that respondent households have with the overall value they receive from the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department were: 6% were “very satisfied,” 30% were “somewhat satisfied,” 46% were “neutral,” 12% were “somewhat dissatisfied,” and 6% were “very dissatisfied”.

### **3.2.9 RECOMMENDATIONS**

To ensure the City of Tucker to meet the needs and expectations of the community, it is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Department sustain and/or improve the performance in areas that were identified as “high priorities” by the Priority Investment Rating (PIR). The facilities and programs with the highest PIR ratings are listed below.

#### Facility Priorities

- Multi-use walking and biking trails (PIR=200)
- Natural surface walking and hiking trails (PIR=170)
- Restroom buildings (PIR=113)
- Dog parks (PIR=110)
- Indoor pool/natatorium (PIR=107)

#### Programming Priorities

- Community special events (PIR=200)
- Fitness and wellness programs (PIR=178)
- Adult learning classes (PIR=138)
- Senior programs and services (PIR=123)
- Gardening classes, farm-to-table classes/events (PIR=113)
- Art classes (PIR=106)
- Outdoor programs (PIR=100)

Full results the survey can be found in the Appendix.

## 4.0 Recommendations

This section brings the research and analysis and community outreach phases together to present the recommendations for the future of Tucker Parks and Recreation over the next 10 years. Using the results of the needs assessment, a level of service standard is set, as are priorities for improvements to the parks and trails over the planning period. This section includes summaries of the recommendations for parks, facilities, and trails, programming and services findings and recommendations, operational and financial findings and recommendations, provides a capital improvement plan, a potential funding profile, and a basis for increases in operations and maintenance costs as new and upgraded parks and facilities are added to the system.

### 4.1 Benefits of Parks

The quality life in Tucker is one of the cornerstones to the City’s vision for the future and is a primary draw for residents moving into the area. Local parks can play a large role in the quality of life and attracting new residents and businesses to Tucker.

Dr. John Crompton has conducted significant research on how local parks contribute to the quality of life and economic development in a community. Dr. Crompton is a Distinguished Professor in the Recreation Park and Tourism Sciences department at Texas A&M University, as well as the leading researcher in parks and recreation in the world. Through his research, he has found that when people are asked to write down the place they would like to live, given their “druthers” (i.e., their preferred place, ignoring practical concerns such as a job, family, language, and heritage) and are asked to write in one sentence, why they picked that place, more than 80% of participants will cite park, recreational, cultural, or environmental ambiance dimension in their responses.

Dr. Crompton’s research notes that there are more than 10,000 economic development groups competing to attract businesses, and the most sought-after new businesses were “information factories” whose main asset is highly educated professional employees. An increased quality of “place” is extremely important to retain and attract highly-skilled workers and new companies. Other key factors are:

- Beyond a threshold salary level, people are persuaded to relocate by quality of life factors rather than money.
- No matter how “quality of life” is defined, parks, recreation, and open space are part of it.
- There are no great cities in this world that do not have a great park (recreation and culture) system.
- “Disamenity compensation” – companies located where there is only mediocre quality of life have to pay higher wages to attract the same quality worker (and vice-versa).

Tucker’s vision for the future and Dr. Crompton’s research align: parks, trails and open space are a key factor in keeping residents happy and healthy and convincing new businesses to locate in the City of Tucker. The recommendations in this section will align with these findings, as well as by focusing on the parks, facilities, and trails that are most in demand by the City’s residents.

### 4.2 Park Classifications and Design Principles

Park classifications are categories developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) publication called, *Park, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines* by James D. Mertes, Ph.D, CLP, and James R. Hall, CLP. The park classifications in the book provide a basic guideline, although they have not been updated since publication in 1995. Given the need to provide additional information to describe each classification, definitions of each category are provided in this section along with the designated classifications of each park in the Tucker system.

Park classifications existing in or recommended for Tucker include Mini Park, Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Natural Resource Park, Special Use Parks, Sports Complex Facility, and Greenway. Each park classification category serves a specific purpose, and the features and facilities in the park must be designed for the age segments the

park is intended to serve, the desired length of stay deemed appropriate, and the uses it has been assigned. Recreational needs and services require different design standards based on the age segments that make up the community that will be using the park. A varying number of age segments will be accommodated with the park program depending on the classification of the park. Every park, regardless of type, needs to have an established set of outcomes. Park planners/designers design to those outcomes, including operational and maintenance costs associated with the design outcomes.

#### 4.2.1 DEFINITIONS USED IN PARK CLASSIFICATION

**Land Usage:** The percentage of space identified for either passive use or active use in a park. A Parks and Recreation Master Plan should follow land usage recommendations.

**Programming:** Can include active or passive programming. Active means it is organized and planned with pre-registration by the user. Examples of active programming include sports leagues, day camps, and aquatics. Passive programming is self-directed by the user at their own pace. Examples of passive programming include playground usage, picnicking, disc golf, reading, or walking/jogging.

**Revenue Facilities:** These include facilities that charge to play on them in the form of an access fee, player fee, team fee, or permit fee. These could include pools, golf courses, tennis courts, recreation centers, sport field complexes, concession facilities, hospitality centers, reservable shelters, indoor or outdoor theater space, and special event spaces.

**Signature Facility/Amenity:** This is an enhanced facility or amenity which is viewed by community as deserving of special recognition due to its design, location, function, natural resources, etc.

Design Principles for each park classification are described in the following section.

#### 4.2.2 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

##### Mini Park

According to the NRPA, a mini park, sometimes called a pocket park, is a small outdoor space, usually less than a quarter acre up to one (1) acre, most often located in an urban area surrounded by commercial or residential buildings. Mini parks are small, urban open spaces that are used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs. They serve a variety of functions, such as: small event space, play areas for children, spaces for relaxing and socializing, taking lunch breaks, and other similar activities. Examples include isolated development areas, unique recreational opportunities, landscaped public use areas, scenic overlooks, canoe access points, or play areas adjacent to downtown shopping districts. In general, mini parks offer minimal amenities on site and are not designed to support programmed activities. The service area for mini parks is usually less than a quarter-mile and they are intended for users within close walking distance of the park.

- Size of park: Typically between 2500 sq. ft. and one acre, but no more than 5 acres
- Service radius: 1/4-mile radius or less in a residential area, but it can vary based on location of the park; generally they are located within walking distance of dense residential and commercial developments
- Site Selection: Servicing a specific recreation need, ease of access from the surrounding area, and linkage to the community pathway system are key
- Amenities:
- Landscape Design: Vegetation should be used to enhance the park's aesthetic qualities rather than impede development
- Revenue facilities: None
- Programming: Mini parks can be programmed for active and passive use, including play areas or picnic areas
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest-level maintenance with available funding



- Signage: Wayfinding/directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience
- Parking: Not required
- Lighting: Security only

Tucker Parks and Recreation Department Mini Parks include: Westwood Drive Park.

### **Neighborhood Park**

Neighborhood Parks are the basic unit of the park system, which serve as a recreational and social focus of a neighborhood with both passive and active activities. They are not intended to be used for programmed activities that result in overuse, noise, parking problems, and congestion. They should be geared for those living within the service area and should have safe pedestrian access for surrounding residents. Neighborhood Parks accommodate a variety of ages, including children, adults, and seniors. A Neighborhood Park should be three to 10 acres; however, some neighborhood parks are determined by use and facilities offered and not by size alone. The service radius for a neighborhood park is one mile. Parking may or may not be included, but if it is included, it should account for less than ten cars, should not be located internally, and should provide ADA access. Neighborhood Parks primarily facilitate recreational activities including play structures, sitting areas, and open space. Ideally, these parks are linked to the neighborhood and to each other by a pathway or walk system and respond to the need for basic recreational amenities close to home. Neighborhood Parks serve the recreational and social focus of the adjoining neighborhoods and contribute to a distinct neighborhood identity.

- Size of park: five acres is considered minimum size; five (5) to ten (10) acres is optimal
- Service radius: 1.0-mile radius
- Site Selection: On a local or collector street. If near an arterial street, provide natural or artificial barrier. Where possible, next to a school. Encourage location to link subdivisions and linked by trails to other parks
- Length of stay: One-hour or less
- Amenities: One signature amenity (e.g. playground, spray ground park, sport court, gazebo); no restrooms unless necessary for signature amenity; may include one non-programmed sports field; playgrounds for ages 2-5 and 5-12; no reservable shelters; loop trails; one type of sport court; benches, small picnic shelters next to play areas
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience
- Revenue facilities: None
- Land usage: Generally, 85 percent active and 15 percent passive
- Programming: Typically, none, but a signature amenity may be included which is programmed
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest-level maintenance with available funding. Seek a goal of Level 2 maintenance standards. Some amenities may require Level 1 maintenance.
- Signage: Wayfinding/directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience.
- Parking: Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to park. Goal is to maximize usable park space. As necessary, provide 5-10 spaces within park including handicap spaces. Traffic calming devices encouraged next to the park
- Lighting: Security only

Tucker Parks and Recreation Department Neighborhood Parks include: Montreal Park and Peters Park. Smoke Rise Park and Smoke Rise Crossing may be developed into Neighborhood Parks.

## Community Park

Community Parks generally range from 10 to 75 acres depending on the community, and are typically designed to serve residents in a larger area (radius of a half mile to three miles). They are generally larger in scale, contain more recreational amenities than a Neighborhood Park, and are intended to be accessible from multiple neighborhoods. Community Parks should focus on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. When possible, the park may be developed adjacent to a school. They allow for group activities and offer other recreational opportunities not feasible, nor desirable, at the neighborhood level. As with neighborhood parks, they should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities. Community Parks provide recreational opportunities for the entire family and often contain facilities for specific recreational purposes: athletic fields, tennis courts, extreme sports amenity, loop trails, picnic areas, reservable picnic shelters, sports courts, restrooms with drinking fountains, large turf areas, landscaped areas, and a playground or sprayground/interactive fountain. Passive outdoor recreation activities such as walking/jogging, Tai Chi, and wildlife watching also take place at Community Parks.

Design features might include large play structures, informal fields for youth play, tennis courts, volleyball courts, horseshoe areas, swimming pools, disc golf, trails, group picnic areas, open space and unique landscapes/features, nature study areas, ornamental gardens, and facilities for cultural activities such as plays and concerts in the park.

- Size of park: Typically, 10 to 75 acres
- Service radius: Varies based on desired uses; ideally between thirty (30) and fifty (50) acres.
- Site Selection: On a minimum of two collector streets and preferably one arterial street. If near an arterial street, provide a natural or artificial barrier. Minimal number of residences abutting site. Preference is streets on four sides, or three sides with school or municipal use on fourth side. Encourage trail linkage to other parks
- Length of stay: Two to three hours
- Amenities: Four signature amenities at a minimum (e.g., trails, sports fields, large shelters/ pavilions, community playground for ages 2-5 and 5-12 with some shaded elements, recreation center, pool or family aquatic center, sports courts, water feature, etc.); public restrooms with drinking fountains, ample parking, and security lighting. Amenities must be ADA compliant. Sport fields are typical at this park.
- Revenue facilities: One or more (e.g. pool, sports fields, pavilion)
- Land usage: 65 percent active and 35 percent passive
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest-level maintenance with available funding. Seek a goal of Level 2 maintenance standards. Some amenities may require Level 1 maintenance.
- Parking: Sufficient to support the amenities; occupies no more than 10 percent of the park. Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to park. Goal is to maximize usable park space. Traffic calming devices encouraged within and next to the park.
- Lighting: Amenity lighting, includes sport field light standards.
- Signage: Wayfinding/directional signage and facility/amenity regulation signage to enhance user experience. May include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at park entrances and throughout park
- Other: Strong appeal to surrounding neighborhoods; loop trail connectivity; linked to other parks within and outside the City, trail, or other recreation facility.

Tucker Parks and Recreation Department Community Parks include: Henderson Park and Kelley C. Cofer Park & Pool. Lord Park may be developed as a Community Park.

### **Sports Complex**

Sports Complexes are developed to provide 4 to 16+ fields or courts in one setting. Sports Complexes are sometimes located within Community Parks. A sports complex may also support extreme sports facilities, such as BMX and skateboarding. Sports Complexes can be single focused or multi-focused and can include indoor and outdoor facilities to serve the needs of youth and adults. Outdoor fields should be lighted to maximize value and productivity of the complex. Agencies developing sports complexes focus on meeting the needs of residents while also attracting sport tournaments to the community for economic purposes. Sport field design includes appropriate field distances for each sport's governing body and support amenities designed to produce revenue to offset operational costs.

Signature sports complexes include enhanced amenities, such as artificial turf, multipurpose field benches and bleachers, scoreboards, amplified sound, and scorekeeper booths. Enhanced amenities would be identified through discussion between the City, local schools, and/or sports associations and are dependent upon adequate funding.

- Size of park: Preferably 20 or more acres for stand-alone complexes
- Service radius: Determined by community demand
- Site Selection: Stand-alone sports complexes are strategically located on or near arterial streets. Refer to community or regional Park sections if sport complex located within a park. Preference is streets on four sides, or three sides with school or municipal use on fourth side.
- Length of stay: Two to three hours for single activities. Can be all day for tournaments or special events
- Amenities: Four to sixteen or more fields or sports courts in one setting; restrooms, ample parking, turf types appropriate for the facility and anticipated usage, and field lighting.
- Revenue facilities: Four or more (e.g. fields, concession stand, picnic pavilion)
- Land usage: 95 percent active and 5 percent passive
- Programming: Focus on active programming for all amenities
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest-level maintenance with available funding. Plan for Level 1 and sometimes 2 level of maintenance standards at signature facility
- Parking: Sufficient to support the amenities. Traffic calming devices encouraged within and next to park
- Lighting: Amenity lighting includes sport field light standards.
- Signage: Wayfinding/directional signage and facility/amenity regulation signage to enhance user experience. May include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at entrances and throughout complex

There are currently no Sports Complexes within the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department system, though needs exist. As of April, 2019, the City was in the process of acquiring a private sports field complex in the City of Tucker.

### **Special Use Park**

Special Use Parks are outdoor spaces that do not fall within a typical park classification. A major difference between a Special Use Park and other parks is that they usually serve a single purpose whereas other park classifications are designed to offer multiple recreation opportunities. It is possible for a Special Use facility to be located inside another park. These parks are designed to serve the entire community with specialized facilities such as a golf course or aquatic facility. Size is determined by the demand for the facilities located there and their space requirements. A golf course may require 150 acres, an athletic complex may require 100 acres, and so on. Location of special use parks has to be carefully planned to ensure that access, traffic control, lighting issues, and noise issues do not negatively impact neighborhoods.

Special Use Parks generally fall into one of five categories:

- **Cemeteries:** Burial-ground that is generally viewed as a large public park or ground laid out expressly for the interment of the dead, and not being the 'yard' of any church. Cemeteries are normally distinct from churchyards, which are typically consecrated according to one denomination and are attached directly to a single place of worship. Cemeteries can be viewed as historic sites.
- **Historic/Cultural/Social Sites:** Unique local resources offering historical, educational, and cultural opportunities. Examples include historic downtown areas, commercial zones, plaza parks, performing arts parks and facilities, indoor theaters, arboretums, display gardens, churches, and amphitheaters. Frequently these are located in Community or Regional Parks
- **Golf Courses:** Nine- and 18-hole complexes with ancillary facilities such as club houses, driving ranges, and program spaces. These facilities are highly maintained and support a age segments. Programs are targeted for daily use play, tournaments, leagues, clinics, and special events. Operational costs come from daily play, season pass holders, concession stands, driving range fees, and sale of pro shop items
- **Indoor Recreation Facilities:** Specialized or single purpose facilities. Examples include community centers, senior centers and community theaters. Frequently these are located in Community Parks
- **Outdoor Recreation Facilities:** Examples include aquatic parks, disc golf, skateboard, BMX, and dog parks, which may be located within a park

Special Use Park design standards include:

- **Size of park:** Depends upon facilities and activities included. Their diverse character makes it impossible to apply acreage standards
- **Service radius:** Depends upon facilities and activities included. Typically serves special user groups, but can serve the entire population of a community
- **Site Selection:** Given the variety of potential uses, no specific standards are defined for site selection. As with all park types, the site itself should be located where it is appropriate for its use.
- **Length of stay:** varies by facility
- **Amenities:** varies by facility
- **Revenue facilities:** Due to nature of certain facilities, revenue may be required for construction and/or annual maintenance. This should be determined at a policy level before the facility is planned and constructed
- **Land usage:** varies by facility
- **Programming:** varies by facility
- **Maintenance Standards:** Provide the highest-level maintenance with available funding. Seek a goal of Level 2 maintenance standards. Some amenities (i.e., rose gardens) will require Level 1 maintenance
- **Parking:** On-street or off-street parking is provided as appropriate. Goal is to maximize usable park space. As necessary, provide a minimum of five to 10 spaces within park including handicap spaces. Traffic calming devices are encouraged next to park
- **Lighting:** Security or amenity only.
- **Signage:** Wayfinding/directional signage and facility/amenity regulation signage should be used to enhance user experience
- **Landscape Design:** Appropriate design should be used to enhance the park theme, use, and/or experience

Tucker Parks and Recreation Department Special Use Parks include: Tucker Recreation Center

## Natural Resource Area

Natural Resource Areas are properties designated as parks that have few or no built amenities but provide natural areas or open space that can be utilized for passive recreation. These parks may have parking areas, restrooms, small playgrounds, hard-surface and natural trails and greenways, picnic tables, benches and other passive use amenities. However, Natural Resource Areas are primarily open areas used for the enjoyment of nature, fishing, birdwatching, or other similar activities. Sometimes, these parks are created to preserve land as undeveloped green corridors for use as wildlife habitat and natural areas that can include trails in and around communities. These parks often follow natural drainage ways or utilize land that is not developable (such as floodways/floodplains), thus they require minimum maintenance and capital improvement dollars. Trails are a great addition to these parks and are a great way to link neighborhoods within the community. Ideally these parks are interconnected by either paved or natural trails and greenways, ultimately providing a contiguous network of greenspace throughout the community. Linking neighborhoods, parks, recreation facilities, attractions, and natural areas with multi-use trails fulfills two guiding principles simultaneously: to protect natural and open space areas and provide residents with a way to access and enjoy them. Multi-use trails also offer a safe alternative to vehicular transportation, provide substantial health benefits, enhance habitat for plants and wildlife, and create unique opportunities for outdoor education and cultural interpretation.

- Size: For trails, minimum of 50 feet wide, unless in unique situations where the corridor must narrow to 25 feet in urban conditions. May include a trail to support walk, bike, run, and equestrian type activities. Typically, a paved trail is 10-12 feet wide to support pedestrian and bicycle uses. Trailheads should incorporate signage to designate where a user is located and where the trails connects to local attractions.
- Site Selection: Located consistent with open space and trail/greenway plans
- Amenities: Parking areas, restrooms, small playgrounds, natural and hard-surface trails/greenways, picnic tables, benches and other passive use amenities
- Maintenance standards: Demand based maintenance with available funding. Biological management practices observed.
- Lighting: Security lighting at parking areas is preferred.
- Signage: Wayfinding signage, trail mileage markers at ¼ mile intervals. Interpretive kiosks at all trailheads and where deemed necessary.
- Landscape Design: Coordinated planting scheme in urban areas. Limited or no planting in open space areas
- Other: Connectivity to parks or other City attractions and facilities is desirable

Tucker Parks and Recreation Department Natural Resource Areas include Tucker Nature Preserve. Large areas of natural resources also exist within Henderson Park and Johns Homestead.

## Greenways

Greenways are areas that are developed for one or more varying modes of recreational use such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, canoeing, etc. Greenways preserve natural resources and mediate between larger habitat areas, open space, and corridors for wildlife, similar to Natural Resource Areas. However, the primary focus of a Greenway is the active use of trails, unlike a Natural Resource Area. The primary function of a Greenway is to create a cohesive greenspace network throughout a community by connecting a variety of parks and open spaces. Additionally, Greenways emphasize harmony between the built world and the natural world by providing uninterrupted and safe pedestrian movement between parks throughout a community. Greenways can all increase community residents' access to resource-based recreational opportunities and experiences, as well as increase property values along its path. For the purpose of this, it is assumed that a Greenway is man-made. Natural greenways would fall under the Natural Resource Area classification.

- Size of park: Variable; however, a greenway should be a minimum of 25' in width (primarily in residential areas), though 50' width is preferable and 200' width is optimal.
- Service radius: Variable

- Site Selection: The primary factors for determining location are resource availability and the trail system plan. Proximity to neighborhoods and other developed greenspace is critical, as well.
- Length of stay: Variable
- Amenities: Parking areas, restrooms, small playgrounds, natural and hard-surface trails/greenways, picnic tables, benches and other passive use amenities
- Maintenance standards: Demand based maintenance with available funding. Biological management practices observed.
- Lighting: Security lighting at parking areas is preferred.
- Signage: Wayfinding signage, trail mileage markers at ¼ mile intervals. Interpretive kiosks at all trailheads and where deemed necessary.
- Landscape Design: Coordinated planting scheme in urban areas. Limited or no planting in open space areas
- Other: Connectivity to parks or other City attractions and facilities is desirable

### 4.3 Level of Service Standards

Level of Service (LOS) standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population that support investment decisions related to parks, facilities and amenities. LOS standards change over time: as the population increases, the need to acquire additional land and develop parks also increases. The costs of acquiring additional land and developing parks will also increase. Additionally, the LOS standards should be viewed as a guide. The standards should be utilized with conventional wisdom and judgment related to the particular situation and needs of the community. These standards should be used to inform decisions when planning to develop new parks, facilities, and amenities.

The Consulting Team evaluated LOS standards using a combination of resources. These resources included: National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines; recreation activity participation rates reported by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2018 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation as it applies to activities that occur in the United States and the City of Tucker; community and stakeholder input; and general observations. This information allowed standards to be customized to the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department.

The standards include a recommended service level based on acreage for each type of park (except for Greenways/Preserves), for total park acreage, and for important outdoor amenities (pavilions, baseball fields, multi-purpose fields, etc.) based on quantity. The standards include a current level of service based on 2018 population and a recommended service level in 2023 and 2028 based on population growth projections.

By applying the LOS standards to the population of Tucker, gaps and surpluses in park and facility/amenity types are revealed. Currently, there are multiple needs to be met within Tucker to properly serve the community now, as well as in the future. Tucker currently provides a **total LOS of 15.11 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents based on the City's population**. Developed parkland describes any park that is open to users of all abilities and that has infrastructure in place to support safe park use. Those uses may include, but are not limited to, parking area(s), restrooms and basic park amenities such as trails, open play space, etc.

Tucker is fortunate to have a sizable amount of parkland, primarily in the form of Community Parks. After much consideration, the **consultant team recommends increasing the LOS standard from 15.11 to 17.00 acres/1,000 population** as a goal. This means that currently, the City is deficient by 11 acres of developed parkland. To keep up with the projected population growth, the City will need to add a total of 32 acres of developed parkland to the parks and recreation system by the year 2028 to achieve the recommended standard. However, just adding land is not the intent of the recommendation. The key is adding certain types of parks in strategic locations.

Park Type	2018 Park Inventory			Service Levels		
	City of Tucker Inventory	Other Inventory	Total Inventory	Current Service Level		
Mini Park	-	-	-	-	acres per	1,000
Neighborhood Parks	12.62	-	12.62	0.36	acres per	1,000
Community Parks	151.70	-	151.70	4.31	acres per	1,000
Sports Complex	-	-	-	-	acres per	1,000
Special Use Parks	-	-	-	-	acres per	1,000
Natural Resource Areas	12.00	355.73	367.73	10.44	acres per	1,000
<b>Total Developed Park Acreage</b>	<b>176.32</b>	<b>355.73</b>	<b>532.05</b>	<b>15.11</b>	<b>acres per</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Undeveloped Park Acreage</b>	<b>88.60</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>88.60</b>	<b>2.52</b>	<b>acres per</b>	<b>1,000</b>

Figure 4.1: Current level of service - park acreage.

Park Type	Service Levels			2018 Standards		2028 Standards	
	Current Service Level	Recommended Developed Park Service Levels; Revised for Local Service Area		Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Developed Parks/Facilities/ Amenities Needed	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Developed Parks/Facilities/ Amenities Needed
Mini Park	- acres per 1,000	0.05 acres per 1,000	0.05 acres per 1,000	Need Exists	2 Acre(s)	Need Exists	2 Acre(s)
Neighborhood Parks	0.36 acres per 1,000	0.75 acres per 1,000	0.75 acres per 1,000	Need Exists	14 Acre(s)	Need Exists	16 Acre(s)
Community Parks	4.31 acres per 1,000	5.75 acres per 1,000	5.75 acres per 1,000	Need Exists	51 Acre(s)	Need Exists	67 Acre(s)
Sports Complex	- acres per 1,000	0.75 acres per 1,000	0.75 acres per 1,000	Need Exists	26 Acre(s)	Need Exists	29 Acre(s)
Special Use Parks	- acres per 1,000	0.20 acres per 1,000	0.20 acres per 1,000	Need Exists	7 Acre(s)	Need Exists	8 Acre(s)
Open Space/Conservation Parks	10.44 acres per 1,000	9.50 acres per 1,000	9.50 acres per 1,000	Meets Standard	- Acre(s)	Meets Standard	- Acre(s)
<b>Total Developed Park Acreage</b>	<b>15.11 acres per 1,000</b>	<b>17.00 acres per 1,000</b>	<b>17.00 acres per 1,000</b>	<b>Need Exists</b>	<b>100 Acre(s)</b>	<b>Need Exists</b>	<b>121 Acre(s)</b>
<b>Undeveloped Park Acreage</b>	<b>2.52 acres per 1,000</b>	<b>0.00 acres per 1,000</b>	<b>0.00 acres per 1,000</b>				
<b>Recommended Land Acquisition (Needs Exist less the Current Undeveloped Park Land)</b>				<b>Needs Exists</b>	<b>11 Acre(s)</b>	<b>Needs Exists</b>	<b>32 Acre(s)</b>

Figure 4.2: Recommended level of service - park acreage.

It is important to highlight that simply adding acres to the system will not address the recommended goals. As the table shows, the type of park matters. There is a shortage of Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Sport Complexes, and Special Use Parks. The undeveloped park land currently owned by the city may be appropriate for Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, but probably not for Sports Complex fields. As of April 2019, the City was in the process of acquiring Fitzgerald Fields. The acquisition of this property would add 18 acres that include 4 fields with multi-purpose configuration options up to eight fields to the City of Tucker’s parks system, thereby fully satisfying the athletic field needs of the City based on the level of service recommended in the table above. This acquisition was not completed and the acreage is not included in the Level of Service Standards. But consideration of this acreage becoming available to the City is included in the budget summary matrix, Figure 4.7.

The City’s trail system master plan will address the City’s need for Greenways. These types of parks play an important role for all residents, as well as visitors to the City of Tucker, by allowing access to green space. These parks will provide users the opportunity for passive and active recreation needs, as well as the chance for daily exercise and social engagement.

As can be seen in table 4.2, the “Facility Standards” column identifies whether a park type or outdoor amenity “Meets Standard” (in black) or “Need Exists” (in red) based on the recommended service level. “Need Exists” is

Park Type	2018 Park Inventory			Service Levels		
	City of Tucker Inventory	Other Inventory	Total Inventory	Current Service Level		
<b>OUTDOOR AMENITIES</b>						
Outdoor Basketball Courts	3.00		3.00	1.00	court per	11,739
Multi-Purpose Fields	2.00		2.00	1.00	field per	17,609
Soccer Fields	8.00		8.00	1.00	field per	4,402
Youth Baseball/Girls Softball Fields	2.00		2.00	1.00	field per	17,609
Sand Volley Ball Courts	-		-	1.00	court per	n/a
Tennis Court	4.00		4.00	1.00	field per	8,804
Reservable Picnic Pavilion	8.00		8.00	1.00	site per	4,402
Playgrounds	7.00		7.00	1.00	site per	5,031
Off Leash Dog Park	-		-	1.00	site per	n/a
Skateboard Areas	-	-	-	1.00	site per	n/a
Outdoor Pool	1.00	-	1.00	1.00	pool per	35,217
<b>INDOOR RECREATION CENTER</b>						
Indoor Rec/Community Center (square feet)	37,980	0	37980	1.08	SF per	person

**Figure 4.3:** Current level of service - amenities

AMENITIES	Service Levels			2018 Standards		2028 Standards	
	Recommended Developed Park Service Levels; Revised for Local Service Area			Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Developed Parks/Facilities/ Amenities Needed	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Developed Parks/Facilities/ Amenities Needed
<b>OUTDOOR AMENITIES</b>							
Outdoor Basketball Courts	1.00	court per	15,000	Meets Standard	- Court(s)	Meets Standard	- Court(s)
Multi-Purpose Fields	1.00	field per	10,000	Need Exists	2 Field(s)	Need Exists	2 Field(s)
Soccer Fields	1.00	field per	5,000	Meets Standard	- Field(s)	Need Exists	1 Field(s)
Youth Baseball/Girls Softball Fields	1.00	field per	12,000	Need Exists	1 Field(s)	Need Exists	1 Field(s)
Sand Volley Ball Courts	1.00	court per	25,000	Need Exists	1 Court(s)	Need Exists	2 Court(s)
Tennis Court	1.00	field per	10,000	Meets Standard	- Field(s)	Need Exists	1 Field(s)
Reservable Picnic Pavilion	1.00	site per	3,500	Need Exists	2 Site(s)	Need Exists	3 Site(s)
Playgrounds	1.00	site per	5,500	Meets Standard	- Site(s)	Meets Standard	- Site(s)
Off Leash Dog Park	1.00	site per	50,000	Need Exists	1 Site(s)	Need Exists	1 Site(s)
Skateboard Areas	1.00	site per	50,000	Need Exists	1 Site(s)	Need Exists	1 Site(s)
Outdoor Pool	1.00	pool per	50,000	Meets Standard	- Pool(s)	Meets Standard	- Pool(s)
<b>INDOOR RECREATION CENTER</b>							
Indoor Rec/Community Center (square feet)	1.5	SF per	Person	Need Exists	14,846 Square Feet	Need Exists	19,024 Square Feet

**Figure 4.4:** Recommended level of service - amenities



shown for all park classifications, except Natural Resource Areas. This table provides a guide for the type of parks that should be developed in the future.

In terms of Outdoor Amenities, needs exist currently in a little more than half of the categories. In the short-term, the largest need appears to be multipurpose fields and reservable picnic pavilions. In terms of Indoor Amenities, the need exists for additional indoor recreation/community center space. The City currently needs an additional 14,846 square feet of indoor recreation space and will need another 4,178 square feet of indoor recreational space by 2028.

Below is a summary of the outdoor and indoor amenities needed in the City of Tucker:

Current LOS Need	2028 LOS Need
2 Multipurpose Fields	2 Multipurpose Fields
1 Youth Baseball/Girls Softball Field	1 Soccer Field
1 Sand Volleyball Court	1 Youth Baseball/Girls Softball Field
2 Reservable Picnic Pavilion Sites	2 Sand Volleyball Courts
1 Off-Leash Dog Park	1 Tennis Court
1 Skateboard Area	3 Reservable Picnic Pavilion Sites
	1 Off-Leash Dog Park
	1 Skateboard Area

**Table 4.1:** Summary of current and future LOS needs.

The Level of Service Standard does not consider for the need for relocation or expansion of existing outdoor amenities at existing parks that are not operating or functioning properly due to poor design, intensive use pressure, lack of lighting, and other factors. There are also sub-sets of the Outdoor Amenities categories that could be underserved even though the primary category meets the standard. An example of this is the various field sizes required for sports play on a rectangular multi-purpose field. High school lacrosse cannot be played on a field sized for U10 soccer while a properly sized high school lacrosse sized field could accommodate several youth soccer fields. If sports fields are not lit, their use is limited in the evening hours which reduces their capability to meet demand. Likewise, categories could be met even though the primary category shows that a need exists. For example, girls’ softball can be played on a 200’-250’ baseball field if portable mounds are brought in for baseball and the infields skinned. Lighted synthetic turf fields can accommodate a variety of sports and can withstand almost constant use pressure. Such dual use of facilities and the availability of synthetic turf fields can reduce the need for the number of facilities specifically reserved for a certain sport. Again, the Level of Service Standards should serve as a guide for future development of parks and outdoor amenities; the LOS standards are not required to be taken verbatim and should be used as a guide and utilized with conventional wisdom and judgment related to the particular situation and needs of the community.

Please note that Greenway/trail parks and trails were not calculated in this population-based service level analysis because they are based on connected networks rather than population.

#### 4.4 Service Areas Analysis

Figure 4.5 illustrates the service radii around all the existing City owned developed parks used for recreation. Given that much of the City is more urban or suburban residential in character and could have a pedestrian network, it is a reasonable goal to locate a park within a short walking distance of all the homes in Tucker. Much of this will be accomplished through the implementation of the Trail and Greenway Plan. Park space within walking distance is an important element in providing quality recreation experiences and in increasing the health and fitness of the community residents. People will walk down the street to a park after dinner to exercise or let their children play but are much less likely to do so if they must get in a car. Generally accepted standards for how far people are comfortable walking to a park indicate 1/4 mile is acceptable and 1/2 mile is the maximum distance

people are typically willing to walk. This assumes that there is a safe sidewalk or trail that can be used; otherwise the distance does not matter as people will not walk when it is not safe. When analyzing the service area, it is important to consider where homes are located. In less populated areas, having gaps in service is acceptable. In more populated areas with gaps, the planning team recommends adding parks.

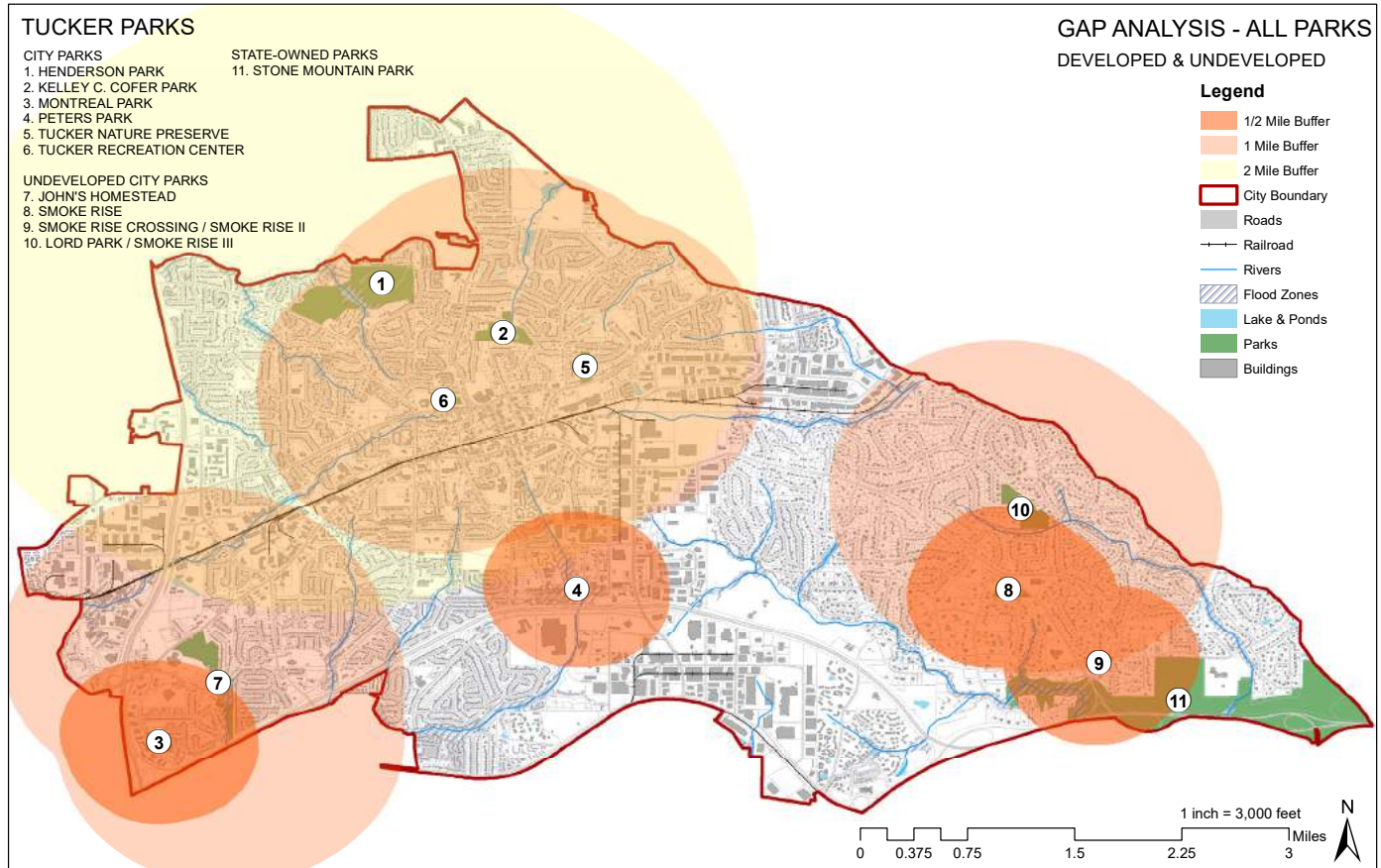


Figure 4.5: Service area analysis.

## 4.5 Parks, Trails Facilities, Programming, and Operational Plan

### 4.5.1 LAND ACQUISITION

As mentioned earlier, there is a need to acquire and develop an additional 32 acres over the next 10 years to meet the 17.00 acres per 1,000 population level of service goal. Most of the park facilities needed can be provided within the 88.6 acres of Undeveloped Park Acreage that Tucker currently owns. However, there is an identified need for 29 acres of Sports Complex acreage or land suitable for ballfields and multipurpose fields. Very little of the existing Undeveloped Park Acreage is appropriate for Sports Complex facilities, so the City will need to purchase land on which to build athletic fields, or acquire existing sports facilities and update them to current city standards as needed.

### 4.5.2 DETERMINING LOCATIONS FOR NEW PARKLAND

The areas of the city that are currently being served by the existing park land is shown graphically in Figure 4.5 Service Area Analysis. Acreage for new park land would best serve the city in areas of the city that are currently not within an existing park service area and in densely residential or pedestrian commercial areas of the city. Filling in the “gaps” in the service area map with park facilities will create an environment in which most residents are within a 1/4 - 1/2 mile walking distance from a park.

### 4.5.3 NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES

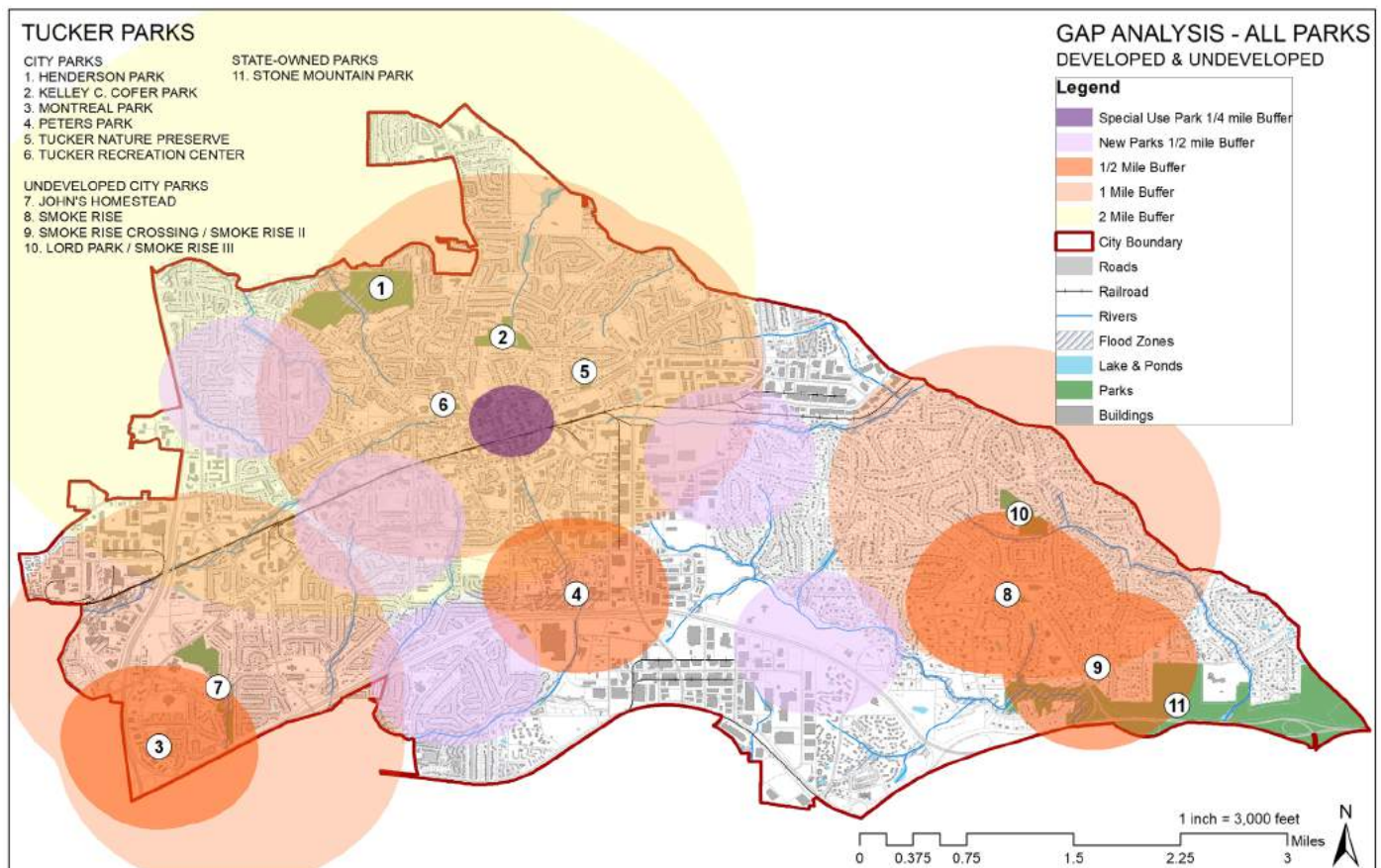
As noted in the LOS standards and recommendations, the current developed park acreage in the City of Tucker is 176.32 acres. By 2028, the City will need an additional 32 acres of parkland, bringing the total park acreage to 208.32 acres needed. The recommendations are further broken down by what type of park classification is needed, where these parks should be located, and what facilities should be in these parks.

Types of parks recommended, based on the LOS in the near-term:

Park Type	Acreage per Park	Total Acres	Number of Parks
Mini Parks	2,500 SF - 1 acre	2 acres	2 to 4 new parkland
Neighborhood Parks	5 - 10 acres	14 acres	1 to 3 new parkland or develop existing parkland
Community Parks	30 - 50 acres	51 acres	1 to 2 new parkland or develop existing parkland
Sports Complex	40 - 80 acres (minimum 25 acres)	26 acres	1 new parkland
Special Use Parks	Variable	7 acres	1 new parkland
Open Space/ Conservation Parks	Variable	None	No need exists

**Table 4.2:** Types of parks recommended, based on the LOS in the near-term.

See figure 4.6 for the proposed new park locations. A larger 11 x 17 version of the plan is provided in the Appendix of this document, along with figure 4.6 that includes both the existing and proposed service areas.



**Figure 4.6:** Existing and proposed service areas.

### **Mini Parks**

Mini Parks play an important role in the overall park system for the more urban areas. Providing these types of parks should be a priority for the community and the Department should work to create two to eight mini parks in areas of the city with moderate to high pedestrian activity.

### **Neighborhood Parks**

Between three and eight neighborhood parks should be added to the system, depending on acreage of the site. Recommended locations include the area north of the Smoke Rise Country Club, between Peters Park and Montreal Park, west of Downtown south of Lavista Road, and west of Henderson Park north of Lavista Road.

### **Community Parks**

Up to three new community parks are recommended. Two of these could be added to the system by developing Johns Homestead Park and Lord Park in Smoke Rise. The third community park should be located in the central south area of the city.

### **Natural Resource Areas**

Tucker is fortunate to be located adjacent to the 355-acre Stone Mountain Park, which is primarily a Natural Resource Park. Tucker has just 12 acres of parkland that is designated as a Natural Resource Area in the Tucker Nature Preserve. But the City will meet its natural resource area needs as long as it maintains the existing urban conservation areas in its existing parks, including Henderson Park, Lord Park, and Johns Homestead.

### **Sports Complex**

It is recommended that land be acquired for the development of a new park that would include a variety of active uses such as additional soccer, multi-use, and baseball/softball fields, as well as passive uses that could serve community park needs; or, the City should acquire land that includes existing recreation fields that can be updated for City use. Specific uses in the park should strive to reduce the deficit in the various outdoor amenities as shown in table 4.4, particularly sports fields. Finding a central location that is convenient for all residents in the area is key. Once the land is acquired, a master plan or renovation plan should be developed for the facility.

### **Special Use Parks**

One of the highest ranked park facilities by the citizens of Tucker is a community gathering space for concerts, festivals, and special events. This kind of park can be a natural economic catalyst and is most successful if it is located in downtown or a densely developed area of the city. It is important that the site is easily accessible by walking or biking as well as vehicle, with connections to businesses, government, schools, and high or medium density residential. The park spaces must be highly flexible and programmable. A five to ten acre site can work for this facility.

### **Indoor Recreation Center**

The Proposed LOS indicates a 2018 deficit of indoor space of 14,846 square feet and projects a 2028 deficit of 19,024 square feet. Therefore, it is recommended that the City undertake a feasibility study regarding the renovation, expansion, or replacement of the existing Tucker Recreation Center. The feasibility study would conduct a facility specific needs assessment to determine the recommended uses/program for the facility, the required square footage, estimated construction cost, and operations and maintenance costs. Given the cost of land and other City priorities, it is acknowledged that acquisition of a different site will be difficult to accomplish over the planning period without partnerships.

#### **4.5.4 TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS**

During the public input process, many residents expressed a strong desire for more trails. The development of new greenways and trails should be a priority for the city with both qualitative and quantitative data showing that paved and unpaved trails are within the top five most important and most desired recreation facility. These paved

and unpaved trails need to be inside the parks as well as provide connections between the parks. To address this need all of the parks should include an interior trail loop, as well as connection to the city overall greenway plan. The city trail and greenway plan, being developed separately but during period of development of this plan, connects directly to many of the parks in the system. Additional trail spurs, sidewalks or bike lanes should be developed to insure that all of the parks are connected to the trail and greenway network.

#### 4.5.5 IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS

This section describes recommended improvements to existing developed parks.

##### **Henderson Park**

- Add restroom building on eastside of the park
- Install playground on eastside of the park
- Install artificial turf field
- Install playground on the northeast side of Lake Erin
- Construct fishing docks on the east and west sides of Lake Erin
- Construct a boardwalks on the south end of Lake Erin
- Create a birding area west of Lake Erin
- Connect trails within the birding area to adjacent existing park trails
- Install a playground on the westside of the park
- Construct ADA-accessible trail throughout the entire park
- Connect park trails to City Trail System
- Improve woodland areas throughout park

##### **Kelley C. Cofer Park and Pool**

During the community input process, there was a strong desire for an indoor pool and recreation center. An indoor pool and water fitness/lap swimming are all listed as high priorities in the desired facilities (section 3.3). One way to provide that facility within the current park system facilities is to convert the pool at Kelly Cofer Park to allow for a temporary dome cover to be erected over the pool during the off season months and removed during the summer. A study would need to be conducted to determine the feasibility of this approach at this park.

- Enhance existing parking lot
- Add pedestrian entrances on N. Park Road near the existing parking lot and at the intersection of Angie Drive
- Connect to City Trail System Segment #2 on the south side and east side of the park
- Create ADA-accessible trails throughout the park with pedestrian bridges where necessary
- Construct two fishing docks off the ADA-accessible trails around the lake
- Construct two lake overlook pavilions, accessible by the ADA-accessible trails
- Create woodland trails in the natural areas of the park
- Enhance existing sidewalks and connect to new park trail system
- Construct a restroom building adjacent to the existing playground on the eastern side of the park
- Build a new playground near the existing parking lot, northeast of the pool
- Upgrade the pool house/restroom facility and expand the splash pad
  - Rebuild pool house
  - Resurface pool
  - Repair pump house
- Upgrade the existing ballfields:
  - Improve scorekeeper's box access and add railings
  - Add new site furnishings, including bleachers

- Construct a new maintenance building and yard
- Repair and re-open the concession stand/snack bar and restroom building

### **Montreal Park**

- Add parking lot on Alcan Way
- Construct restroom building
- Install 1.5-acre dog park
- Install playground along Alcan Way
- Install play meadow along Alcan Way
- Construct picnic pavilion along Alcan Way
- Construct ADA-accessible trails throughout the site
- Enhance existing and construct new woodland trails throughout the site
- Install playground near Montreal Road
- Install picnic pavilion near Montreal Road and Alcan Way
- Create pedestrian entrances at multiple access points

### **Peters Park**

- Improve existing parking
- Add a restroom facility to existing pavilion
- Add a sand volleyball court
- Install a pavilion overlooking the stream
- Replace existing parking
- Perform repairs on existing pavilion
- Add a pedestrian entrance on the north side of the park, connecting to Herbert Drive
  - Purchase trail easement
- Extend existing pedestrian path across stream in southwest area of the park
- Add a pedestrian bridge over the stream
- Add a trailhead park/pedestrian entrance at the end of Sentry Drive
- Purchase lot directly west of Peters Park, expanding the park
- Use park expansion to create a “Senior Park”
  - Add a second parking lots
  - Install a bocce ball/horseshoe court area
  - Install a pavilion
  - Expand trail system, add a second walking loop connecting existing walking loop via pedestrian bridge
- Connect trails to City Trail System Segment #5

### **Tucker Nature Preserve**

- Improve and expand existing parking lot
- Install a nature playground
- Add an outdoor amphitheater/classroom
- Add pavilions throughout the site
- Add nature education center
- Install community garden plots
- Construct ADA-accessible trail loop
- Realign and enhance woodland paths

- Connect park trails to City Trail System
- Improve woodland area

#### **Tucker Recreation Center**

- Relocate Browning Courthouse to downtown historic site or other civic site, following a feasibility study
- Conduct a feasibility study on the existing building to determine if it should be renovated or demolished
- Construct new 60,000 square-foot recreation center (dependent on feasibility study)
- Should old building stay, convert current gym to a conventional basketball gym to aid with programming
- Enhance existing north parking lot
- Add additional parking lot to south side of new recreation center
- Enhance existing entrance drive to connect parking lots; add drop-off in front of recreation center
- Add a multi-use field
- Install an iconic play structure/"tween" playground

#### **4.5.6 IMPROVEMENTS TO UNDEVELOPED PARKS**

This section describes recommended improvements to existing undeveloped parks.

##### **Johns Homestead**

It is recommended the City use the master plan designed by Root Design Studio for Johns Homestead. Additionally, it is recommended that several small additions be incorporated into the master plan:

- Add a restroom building at the south end of the park, near the entrance at Stapp Drive
- Add a parking lot at the south end of the park, near the entrance at Stapp Drive
- Add a restroom building on the eastside of the park, in the park expansion area near Edinburgh Drive
- Add a parking lot on the eastside of the park, in the park expansion area near Edinburgh Drive
- Connect to City Trail System Segment #5 the eastside of the park, in the park expansion area near Edinburgh Drive
- Make the trail along the western edge of the park (connecting the lake trail to the northern amenity area) ADA accessible
- Add a restroom building at the north end of the park, near the proposed parking lot off Lawrenceville Highway
- Connect to City Trail System Segment #1 at the north end of the park, near the historic homestead site off Lawrenceville Highway

##### **Smoke Rise Park**

- Add a parking lot parallel to Hugh Howell Road
- Add a trailhead near the proposed parking lot, connecting to Smoke Rise Elementary School and City Trail System Segment #4
- Add a parking lot at the south of the park off Hugh Howell Road
- Add another trail near the proposed south parking lot
- Install an ADA-accessible trail connecting the proposed trailheads
- Install a pavilion along the ADA-accessible trail
- Install new woodland trails
- Install a boardwalk along woodland trail near the wetland area; install a pavilion on the boardwalk to overlook the wetland area
- Purchase parcel west of park for park expansion

- Add a third parking lot
- Add a restroom building
- Install a pavilion
- Add a pedestrian entrance off Silver Hill Road
- Connect proposed pedestrian entrance to woodland trail system

### **Smoke Rise Crossing**

- Add parking lot parallel to Lilburn-Stone Mountain Road
- Add pedestrian trail entrance east of the proposed parking lot
- Add a second pedestrian trail entrance near the southwestern portion of the park
- Install an ADA-accessible trail connecting the two proposed pedestrian trail entrances
- Add a new woodland trail loop throughout the park, including pedestrian bridges over the stream
- Add a pavilion overlooking the stream
- Improve the intersection at Lilburn-Stone Mountain Road and Old Stone Mountain Road
  - Add Crosswalk
  - Improve existing traffic light

### **Lord Park**

- Construct an entrance drive and parking lot connecting Smoke Rise Drive to Militia Drive
- Add pedestrian trail entrance at Smoke Rise Drive
- Add pedestrian trail entrance at Militia Drive
- Install ADA-accessible trail loops connecting the two proposed pedestrian trail entrances
- Add woodland trails throughout the park
- Add workout stations along the woodland trail loop in the southwestern corner of the park or install an outdoor gym/workout area adjacent to the playground
- Add a restroom building in the central area of the park
- Add a 12,600 square-foot playground in the central area of the park
- Add a picnic shelter in the central area of the park
- Add a 2-acre dog park in the northern area of the park

### **Westwood Drive Park**

- Install a bench or small picnic shelter in the northeastern corner of the park

## **4.5.7 IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **New Parks and Facilities**

Roughly 2 acres of mini parks are recommended as part of the goal to increase green space within walking distance of every resident. A pocket or mini park is generally 2,500 SF to 1 acre in size, which means 2 to 4 or more additional mini parks are recommended. Mini parks should be developed in dense areas and may have small event space, play areas for children, spaces for relaxing and socializing, taking lunch breaks, etc. To fill the large void of pocket parks in the community, the City should look for partnerships with businesses, housing complexes and others to provide these much-needed park spaces.

The recommendation for Neighborhood Parks is approximately 16 acres. These parks are generally 5 to 10 acres in size. Some of the existing undeveloped parcels that the Parks and Recreation Department already owns will help fill this need. Additional needs could be met by partnering with schools.



Based on the LOS results, the City needs to acquire approximately 67 acres for Community Parks. For Tucker, one or two community parks of around 30 to 50 acres would be desirable. Developing two of the existing undeveloped parks that the Parks and Recreation Department already owns, Johns Homestead and Lord Park, will help fill this need. These community parks should provide areas for both passive and active, non-sports field, recreation activities. Community Parks could also be on acreage associated with recreation centers. Renovation/expansion of the existing recreation center is recommended in this plan, following a feasibility study.

In addition to non-sports field active recreation at the community parks, we recommend a Sports Complex with athletic fields. Participating in organized sports can play an important part of physical, mental, social, and emotional health of children and adults. These benefits are not gender specific, yet we often see lower participation rates in girls than boys. Providing adequate field space for boys and girls is critical to foster space where they can benefit from physically activity that could positively influence them throughout their lives. The LOS shows 29 acres are needed for a sports complex. One option to meet this need is to purchase and convert a light industrial land parcel. Another option would be to acquire school property, or a private athletic facility.

Throughout the input process, the community expressed a strong desire for more passive park opportunities and connections to wilderness parks. Based on the current level of service, no new Open Space/Conservation Park acres are recommended. While the City has only 12 acres of Open Space/Conservation Park land, it has immediate access to Stone Mountain Park's 356 acres. Also, many of the City's other parks have Open Space/Conservation Park qualities. These acres are important for wildlife conservation and for residents to enjoy nature. These parks should be interconnected through the community to provide a network of trails and open space that link neighborhoods, parks, recreation facilities, attractions, and natural areas.

The community input process revealed a strong desire for a community events outdoor space. We categorize that as a Special Use Park and the LOS standard for Tucker recommend 8 acres. This need could be provided for within the downtown area and may result from the Downtown Master Plan that is being developed concurrent to this plan. Our maps show a downtown location for this facility so that it is very accessible and have adjacency to businesses, restaurants, schools, government offices, and residential areas. None of the parks meet those requirements as well as a downtown location would.

### **Multi-use Trails and Connections**

Throughout the public input process, the residents expressed a strong desire for more trails throughout Tucker. The development of new greenways and trails should be a high priority for the City. The community needs assessment qualitative and quantitative data show that greenways and trails are the most important and most desired recreational facility in the City. A City Trail System Master Plan was being developed concurrent to this plan. This plan recommends that all parks on the trail system network in that master plan include improvement plans for connections to the trail system and through the parks as needed to complete the city trail network.

### **Existing Park General Recommendations**

The consulting team conducted a park evaluation at each park in Tucker. Overall, the condition of the parks can be characterized as fair to good, with some new facilities in the system that were ranked excellent. However, the team found several older facilities that need attention in the short-term due to potential safety concerns or items that, if addressed now, could be less expensive to fix than in the future. Common items found at most of the parks are summarized below.

### ADA Compliance

The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law in 1990. It requires that all facilities open to the general public provide reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities and make their programs, services, and activities accessible to individuals with disabilities. Within most community park systems, there are facilities that may not comply; however, communities should be working toward compliance each year. The Department

should conduct a detailed inspection the parks and provide a recommendation report. While some items were noted in this study during site observations, the Department should rely on the detailed assessment for parks for compliance.

#### Safety and Security

Designing for parks should incorporate techniques to promote Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). These techniques include layers of security, such as the use of physical design, lighting, cameras, and other methods. In addition, having citizen participation in decisions about parks and providing a range of activities through the day in parks is key. Citizen involvement with parks and recreation can lead to passionate support and use of parks. Maintenance is also crucial. Litter, broken equipment, etc., can contribute to a perception that a park is possibly unsafe. These issues should be addressed quickly. For example, painting over graffiti immediately, even if it happens numerous times, will help deter future vandalism because they eventually move to areas where it stays. Keeping parks safe and feeling safe requires a combination of techniques. Successful approaches will have a direct relationship on park usage.

#### Playground Safety

Playgrounds provide a great way for kids to exercise, breathe fresh air, and socialize with others, but injuries on the playground can ruin the fun. A Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) should monitor playgrounds on a regular schedule. Each playground should be inspected and maintained regularly to prevent hazardous conditions. High-use areas during peak times could require daily maintenance. Equipment and safety surfaces should be frequently inspected for damage.

#### Branding and Signage

Park signage plays an important part in helping visitors find the park and understanding who owns the park. The Department should develop complete sign standards for a variety of signs including wayfinding, monument, rules and mile markers. This effort should be part of a branding effort, and the Department has an opportunity to integrate parks with Community Arts Plan to create a unique and memorable park system. The City should also standardize the Open Data site for the parks, available at <http://data-coss.opendata.arcgis.com>, to help increase the ability of web app developers and app users to locate parks and find out about facilities and programs available in the park.

#### Maintenance for Paved Surfaces

While many deferred maintenance items were noticed, Tucker has a lot to be proud of when assessing their park system. Regular inspections and maintenance are needed in the park beyond mowing and cleaning. For example, concrete sidewalks and asphalt parking lots will last longer if properly maintained. By resealing concrete expansion joints and sealing any cracks in the asphalt, these improvements will last longer. If the maintenance continues to be deferred, water and vegetation can get into the cracks and worsen the issue.

## ACTION PLAN

### Short-term Action Items (1 to 5 Years):

- Conduct recreation center feasibility plan
- Update and/or replace recreation center following feasibility study
- Implement general upgrades to existing developed parks (1 – 3 years):
  - Henderson Park
  - Kelly Cofer Park
  - Peters Park
  - Smoke Rise Park
  - Smoke Rise Crossing
  - Tucker Recreation Center
- Produce master plans for undeveloped parks as needed and phase one construction plans
- Implement phase one improvements (3-5 years):
  - Lord Park
  - Tucker Nature Preserve
  - Johns Homestead Park
  - Montreal Park
  - Smoke Rise Park
- Include trail heads and/or city trail connections within parks that are on the city trail system network as part of park improvements
- Study feasibility of seasonal pool enclosure for winter use at Cofer Park
- Implement park staff growth strategies per staffing recommendations in this plan as park system and programs grow
- Begin to identify park land acquisition opportunities in or near areas identified on the park service area gap analysis map

### Long-term Action Items (6 to Ten years):

- Purchase or acquire appropriate park lands to maintain recommended Level of Service goals for park acreage
- Produce master plans for new park lands as needed and phase one construction plans
- Implement capital improvements (6-7 years):
  - Henderson Park
  - Johns Homestead Park
  - Kelly Cofer Pool
- Implement phase one plans for top priority new parks (7-10 years)
- Include trail heads and city trail connections to and within new city parks lands
- Update City of Tucker Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan
- Continue to implement park staff growth strategies per staffing recommendations in this plan as park system and programs grow

### Implementation Recommendations Budget Summary

Below is a general budget and time frames for the recommendations for park renovations, new park land acreage, and design and implementation of new park improvements.

Table 6.1: Tucker Parks Budget Summary		Short-Term (1-5yrs)				Long-Term (6-10yrs)						TOTAL
Name	Condition	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	OPINION
<b>New Park and Trail Improvements</b>												
Land Acquisition		150,000				500,000	500,000	1,000,000	1,500,000	1,750,000	1,750,000	7,150,000
Planning and Design for Park Updates and New Parks		175,000	290,000	1,600,000	240,000	300,000	350,000	200,000	250,000	250,000	350,000	4,005,000
Recreation Center feasibility study		60,000										60,000
Update City of Tucker Parks & Recreation Master Plan									175,000			175,000
Implement Elements of New Park Plans								1,500,000	2,000,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	8,500,000
<b>Subtotal</b>											<b>\$19,890,000</b>	
<b>Existing Park Improvements</b>												
Westwood Drive Park	N/A	10,000										\$10,000
Hendson Park	Good	485,000					2,000,000					\$2,485,000
Kelley Cofer Park	Good	60,000										\$60,000
Cover for Pool at Kelly Cofer Park								2,000,000				\$2,000,000
Montreal Park	Fair					1,300,000						\$1,300,000
Peters Park	Fair	250,000										250,000
Tucker Nature Preserve	Good			1,500,000								\$1,500,000
Tucker Recreation Center	Fair	280,000			16,000,000							\$16,280,000
Johns Homestead	N/A			1,400,000			1,000,000					\$2,400,000
Smoke Rise Park	N/A	40,000				1,100,000						\$1,140,000
Smoke Rise Crossing	N/A	275,000										\$275,000
Lord Park			1,750,000									\$1,750,000
<b>TOTAL FUNDS:</b>		<b>\$1,785,000</b>	<b>\$2,040,000</b>	<b>\$4,500,000</b>	<b>\$16,240,000</b>	<b>\$3,200,000</b>	<b>\$3,850,000</b>	<b>\$4,700,000</b>	<b>\$3,925,000</b>	<b>\$4,500,000</b>	<b>\$4,600,000</b>	<b>\$49,340,000</b>
Note: Opinion of costs listed are a rough order of magnitude and takes into consideration only general top-level estimates. This chart and opinions should be updated often with more detailed information.												

Table 4.7: Budget Summary

# 5.0 Program & Services Assessment

## 5.1 Overview of Priorities and Core Program Areas

The Tucker Parks and Recreation Department has a professional staff that annually delivers sports, fitness, recreation and special event programs. Department staff are responsible for the management and implementation of a diverse array recreation programs, special community-wide events, and the operation of multiple facilities. Employees are engaged year-round in planning, implementing, conducting, and evaluating programs and events. All functions within the Department combine to provide hundreds of offerings in the areas of youth camps, outdoor adventure, aquatics, sports, health, fitness, senior services and special events. But in addition to the provision of services provided directly by the Department, partnerships with other organizations are utilized throughout the service area. Through formal and informal cooperative relationships with various school districts and nonprofit agencies, partners assist with delivering select programs and indoor space to provide limited access for program.

## 5.2 Core Program Approach

The vision of the Department is to be one of the premier park and recreation systems in the United States providing all residents access to high-quality programs and experiences. Part of realizing this vision involves identifying Core Program Areas to create a sense of focus around activities and outcomes of greatest importance to the community as informed by current and future needs. However, public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people, especially in a community such as Tucker. The philosophy of the Core Program Area assists staff, policy makers, and the public focus on what is most important. Program areas are considered as Core if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.
- The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the agency’s overall budget.
- The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.
- The program area has wide demographic appeal.
- There is a tiered level of skill development available within the programs area’s offerings.
- There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.
- There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
- The agency controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market.

## 5.3 Tucker Parks and Recreation Core Program Areas

The Department currently offers programs and services in seven Core Program Areas, identified in table 4.1.

Program Description		
Core Program Area	Brief Description	Internal Goals and/or Desired Outcome
After School Program	Provides after school program for students grades K through 8 in coordination/partnership with Wade Walker YMCA. After school operates dismissal-6:30pm during the school year. This allows for affordable programming for students.	The after school program provides a low cost positive after school option for 60 children each week (some with special needs). Financial assistance is available through an outside funding source. Provides snacks on a daily basis.

Athletics	Partners with athletic organizations to provide programs and classes for adults and youth. Also provides Parks and Recreation’s support for non-profit youth and adult program providers.	Maintain the current partnerships in kickball, mens basketball, soccer, and womens softball so they continue to thrive and provide a great program for the community. Establish partnerships for adult sports in womens and co-ed basketball, mens and co-ed softball, volleyball, dodgeball, pickleball, tennis, and flag football. Establish partnerships for all youth sports and continue relationships youth soccer and football. Establish partnership for gym usage with local schools or churches for all athletic programs.
Community Center	Provides various activities, classes, programs, and rental space for City of Tucker.	Maintain current partnerships and seek new partnerships to offer a broad range of activities for the citizens of Tucker. Increase rental opportunities and participation through the use of social media and printed media.
Senior Programs	Provides various activities, classes, and programs for City of Tucker seniors.	Maintain current partnerships and seek new partnerships to offer a broad range of activities for the senior citizens of Tucker.
Summer Camp	Provides summer camp for children ages 5 to 14 in coordination/ partnership with Wade Walker YMCA. Summer camp operates 7am-6:60pm during summer break. This allows affordable all day programs for students.	The summer camp program provides a low cost positive summer recreation option for 150 children each week (some with special needs). Financial assistance is available through outside funding sources. Provides lunches and snacks on a daily basis.
Summer Swim	Provides lifeguard supervision, swimming instruction, and fee collection at Kelley Cofer Pool during the summer months.	Provides supervised swim from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Establish aquatic programming including water aerobics, swim team, and swim instruction.

**Table 5.1:** Core Program Areas offered by the City of Tucker.

### 5.3.1 ENSURING THE RIGHT CORE PROGRAM MIX

The Core Program Areas provided by Tucker currently appears to meet some of the major needs of the Tucker community, but the program mix must be evaluated on a regular and reoccurring basis to ensure that the offerings within each Core Program Area – and the Core Program Areas themselves – align with changing leisure trends, demographics, and needs of residents. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends that six determinants be used to inform what programs and services are provided by the Department. According to NRPA, those determinants are:

- **Conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure** – Programs and services should encourage and promote a degree of freedom, choice, and voluntary engagement in their structure and design. Programs should reflect positive themes aimed at improving quality of life for both individuals and the overall community.
- **Organizational philosophy, mission, and vision** – Programs and services should support the Department’s mission and vision statements, values, goals, and objectives. These generally center on promoting personal

health, community well-being, social equality, environmental awareness, and economic vitality.

- **Constituent interests and desired needs** – Departments should actively seek to understand the recreational needs and interests of their constituency. This not only ensures an effective (and ethical) use of taxpayer dollars, but also helps to make sure that programs perform well and are valued by residents.
- **Creation of a constituent-centered culture** – Programs and services do reflect a departmental culture where constituents’ needs are the prime factor in creating and providing programs. This should be reflected not only in program design, but in terms of staff behaviors, architecture, furniture, technology, dress, forms of address, decision-making style, planning processes, and forms of communication.
- **Experiences desirable for clientele** – Programs and services should be designed to provide the experiences desirable to meet the needs of the participants/clients in a community and identified target markets. This involves not only identifying and understanding the diversity of needs in a community, but also applying recreation programming expertise and skills to design, implement, and evaluate a variety of desirable experiences for residents to meet those needs.
- **Community opportunities** – When planning programs and services, a Department should consider the network of opportunities afforded by other organizations such as nonprofits, schools, other public agencies, and the private sector. Departments should also recognize where gaps in service provision occur and consider how unmet needs can be addressed.

### 5.4 Survey Findings

As part of the process for developing a Park and Recreation Master Plan, the consulting team conducted a statistically valid citizen survey to identify satisfaction with park and recreation facilities, identify needed park and recreation facilities and programs, and gain input from citizens that will assist City officials in park and recreation resource allocation, budget and policy decisions. A total of 403 households participated in the survey. Participants rated the City of Tucker as having a current or anticipated need for the following recreation programs, ranked in order of importance (full results on this topic can be found in the appendix):

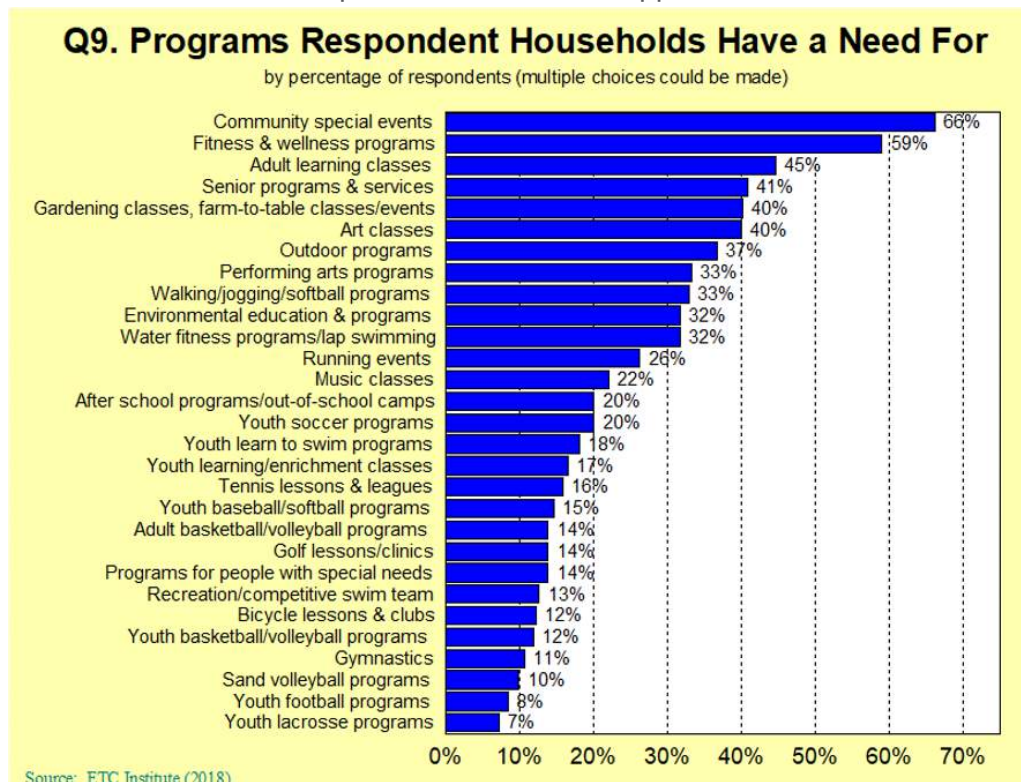


Figure 5.1: Program needs of Tucker residents.

## 5.5 Age Segment Analysis

The table below depicts each program along with the age segments they serve. Recognizing that many programs serve multiple age segments, Primary and secondary markets were identified.

### 5.5.1 AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS – CURRENT SEGMENTS SERVED

Findings from the analysis show that the Department provides a good balance of programs across all age segments. All segments are targeted as a primary market for multiple programs.

AGES SERVED							
Primary Market or Secondary Market							
Core Program Area	Preschool (5 and under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Young Adult (18-34)	Adult (35-54)	Active Adult (55-64)	Senior (65+)
After School Program		Primary	Primary				
Athletics	Secondary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Secondary	Secondary
Community Center	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
Senior Programs						Primary	Primary
Summer Camp Program		Primary	Secondary				
Summer Swim	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary

**Table 5.2:** Core programs and the ages they serve (primary market and secondary market).

This balance should be maintained moving forward, and the Department should update this Age Segment Analysis every year to note changes or to refine age segment categories. Given the growing population trend for residents ages 55 and over and the growing demand for services in this age bracket, it is also recommended that the Department further segment this group into 65-74 and 75+. These two sub-segments will have increasingly different needs and expectations for programs and services in coming years, and program planning will be needed to provide differing requirements.

Age Segment Analyses should ideally be done for every program offered by the Department. Program coordinators/managers should include this information when creating or updating program plans for individual programs. An Age Segment Analysis can also be incorporated into Mini Business Plans for comprehensive program planning.

## 5.6 Lifecycle Analysis

A lifecycle analysis involves reviewing every program identified by City of Tucker' staff to determine the stage of growth or decline for each as a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall recreation program portfolio. The various stages of program lifecycles are as follows:

- Introduction - New program; modest participation
- Take-Off - Rapid participation growth
- Growth - Moderate, but consistent participation growth
- Mature - Slow participation growth
- Saturated - Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition
- Decline - Declining participation



This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data, but rather is based on staff’s knowledge of their program areas. The table below shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the Department’s recreation programs. These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed by staff.

SYSTEM-WIDE LIFECYCLE STAGE ANALYSIS				
	Percentage	Number	Actual Distribution	Best Practice Distribution
<b>Introduction</b>	25%	13	50.9%	50-60%
<b>Take-Off</b>	2%	1		
<b>Growth</b>	25%	13		
<b>Mature</b>	47%	25	47.2%	40%
<b>Saturated</b>	2%	2	1.9%	0-10%
<b>Decline</b>	0%	0		
<b>Total</b>	100%	53		

**Table 5.3:** Recreation program Lifecycle Analysis– current distributions and recommendations.

Overall, the lifecycle analysis results indicate a balanced distribution of all programs across the life cycle. A combined total of 50.9% of programs fall into the Introduction, Take-off and Growth stages, primarily due to the creation of the Department in the last couple of years.

While it is important to provide new programs to align with trends and help meet the evolving needs of the community, it is also important to have a stable core segment of programs that are in the Mature stage. Currently, the Department has 47.2% of their programs in this category. The consulting team recommends this be approximately 40% so as to provide stability to the overall program portfolio, but without dominating the portfolio with programs that are advancing to the later stages of the lifecycle. Programs in the Mature stage should be tracked for signs they are entering the Saturation or Decline stages. There should be an ongoing process to evaluate program participation and trends to ensure that program offerings continue to meet the community’s needs.

A total of 1.9% of programs are saturated or declining. The consulting team recommends keeping as few programs as possible in these two stages, but it is understood that programs eventually evolve into saturation and decline. If programs never reach these stages, it is an indication that staff may be “over-tweaking” their offerings and abbreviating the natural evolution of programs. This prevents programs from reaching their maximum participation, efficiency, and effectiveness. For departments challenged with doing the most they can with limited resources, this has the potential to be an area of concern.

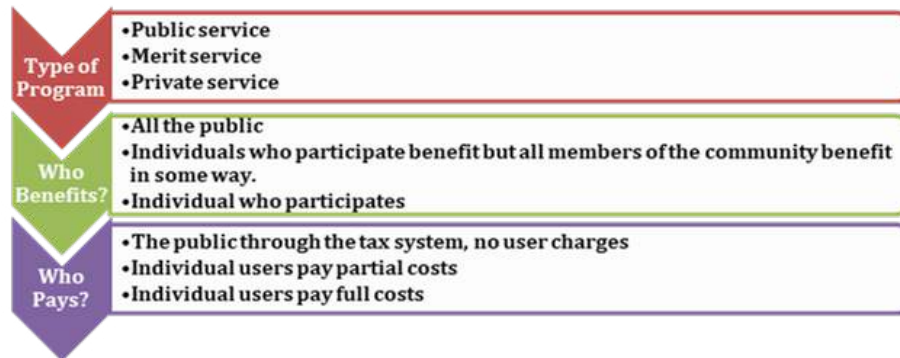
As programs enter into the Decline stage, they must be closely reviewed and evaluated for repositioning or elimination. When this occurs, the consulting team’s recommendation is to modify these programs to begin a new lifecycle with the introductory stage or to add new programs based upon community needs and trends.

Staff should complete a lifecycle review on an annual basis and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance.

### 5.7 Program and Service Classification

The Parks and Recreation Department currently does not classify its programs and services. Classifying programs and services is an important process for an agency to follow in order to remain aligned with the community’s interests and needs, the mission of the organization, and to sustainably operate within the bounds of the financial

resources that support it. The criteria utilized and recommended in program classification stems from the foundation’s concept detailed by Dr. John Crompton and Dr. Charles Lamb. In Marketing Government and Social Services, they purport that programs need to be evaluated on the criteria of type, who benefits, and who bears the cost of the program. This is illustrated in Figure 5.2.



**Figure 5.2:** Program and Services Classifications.

The approach taken in this analysis expands classifying services in the following ways:

- For whom the program is targeted
- For what purpose
- For what benefits
- For what cost
- For what outcome

### 5.7.1 PARAMETERS FOR CLASSIFYING PROGRAM TYPES

The first milestone is to develop a classification system for the services and functions of the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department. These systems need to reflect the statutory obligations of the agency, the support functions performed, and the value-added programs that enrich both the customer’s experience and generate earned revenues in mission-aligned ways to help support operating costs. In order to identify how the costs of services are supported and by what funding source, the programs are to be classified by their intended purpose and what benefits they provide. Then funding source expectations can then be assigned and this data used in future cost analysis. The results of this process are a summary of classification definitions and criteria, classification of programs within the City of Tucker Parks and Recreation Department and recommended cost recovery targets for each service based on these assumptions.

Program classification is important as financial performance (cost recovery) goals are established for each category of services. This is then linked to the recommendations and strategies for each program or future site business plan. These classifications need to be organized to correspond with cost recovery expectations defined for each category. In this section of the Master, each program area will be assigned specific cost recovery targets that align with these expectations.

### 5.7.2 SERVICE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

The service classification process consists of the following steps:

- Develop a definition for each program classification that fits the legislative intent and expectations of the Department; the ability of the Department to meet public needs within the appropriate areas of service; and the mission and core values of City of Tucker’ Parks and Recreation Department.
- Develop criteria that can be used to evaluate each program and function within the Department and determine the classification that best fits.

### 5.7.3 PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTIONS

The program classification matrix was developed as a guide for the Department staff to follow when classifying programs, and how that program needs to be managed with regard to cost recovery. By establishing clarification of what constitutes a “Core Public Service”, “Important Public Service”, and “Value Added Service” will provide the Department and its stakeholders a better understanding of why and how to manage each program area as it applies to public value and private value.

Additionally, the effectiveness of the criteria linked to performance management expectations relies on the true cost of programs (direct and indirect cost) being identified. Where a program falls within this matrix can help to determine the most appropriate cost recovery rate that should be pursued and measured. This includes being able to determine what level of public benefit and private benefit exists as they apply to each program area. Public benefit is described as, “everyone receives the same level of benefit with equal access”. Private benefit is described as “the user receives exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit.”

	ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS	IMPORTANT PROGRAMS	VALUE-ADDED PROGRAMS
Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment	High public expectation	High public expectation	High individual and interest group expectation
Financial Sustainability	Free, nominal or fee tailored to public needs; Requires public funding	Fees cover some direct costs; Requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target	Fees cover most direct and indirect costs; Some public funding as appropriate
Benefits (i.e., health, safety, protection of assets)	Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided)	Public and individual benefit	Primarily individual benefit
Competition in the Market	Limited or no alternative providers	Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need	Alternative providers readily available
Access	Open access by all	Open Access; Limited access to users	Limited access to users

**Table 5.4:** Program Classification Matrix.

### 5.7.4 CLASSIFICATION OF SERVICES - KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve the fiscal performance and delivery of programs and services, the consulting team makes the following recommendations.

- **Implement the Classification of Services and Cost Recovery Goals:** Through the program assessment analysis, the major functional program areas were assessed and classified based on the criteria established in the previous section of the plan. This process included determining which programs and services fit into each classification criteria. Then cost recovery goals were established based on the guidelines included in this plan. The percentage of cost recovery is based on the classification of services and will typically fall within these ranges, although anomalies will exist:
  - Core 0-35%
  - Important 35-75%
  - Value Added 75%+

Table 4.5 represents a summary of programs and services, the classification of those programs, as well as, recommended cost recovery goals to be achieved within 5 years.

CORE PROGRAM AREA	PROGRAM	BENEFIT LEVEL	CLASSIFICATION	PRICING STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED TOTAL COST RECOVERY
ATHLETICS	Adult Softball (womens, mens, and co-ed)	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Baseball (youth)	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
	Basketball (womens, mens, and co-ed)	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Dodgeball (co-ed)	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Flag Football (mens and co-ed)	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Kickball (co-ed)	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Pickleball	Community	Essential	Sponsorships/General Fund	up to 35%
	Soccer	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
	Tackle Football	Merit	Value-Added	General Fund/User Fees	50%
	Tennis	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
	Volleyball (co-ed)	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS	Jump Start Sports After School & Break Camps	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
	YMCA After School at Tucker Recreation Center	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAMS	Art Program	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Exercise	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Friends of Tucker Parks	Community	Essential	Sponsorships/General Fund	up to 35%
	Gymnastics (3-5yo)	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
	Home Schooling	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Main Street Theatre	Community	Essential	Sponsorships/General Fund	up to 35%
	Master Gardeners	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Meditation	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	
	People Making Progress	Community	Essential		up to 35%
	Rentals	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Tai Chi	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Taylor Academy of Dance	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Taylor Tucker Taekwondo	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Tucker Ballroom	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Tucker Cheerleading: Phoenix Blaze	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Tuckerciser	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Tucker Dance Studio	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Tucker Elite Gymnastics	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Tumble Pros: Cheerleading and Tumbling	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
	Windsong Sailing Academy	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
Yoga	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%	

<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	Scouts Eagle Projects	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Community Garden Plots	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Community Volunteering Projects	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Dlanor Studios, LLC	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Field Rentals (Cofer & Henderson)	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Girl Scout Store	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	NET Food Pantry	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Park Pavilion Rentals	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Special Event Rentals (Races, Classes, etc.)	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Volunteer Trail Maintenance Work Days	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
<b>SENIOR PROGRAMS</b>	Atlanta Woodcarvers Club and Tucker Clippers	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Bridge	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Canasta	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Ceramics	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Mahjong	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
	Richard Simons (Silver Fox)	Community	Essential	General Fund	up to 35%
<b>SUMMER CAMP</b>	YMCA Summer Camp at Tucker Recreation Center	Individual	Value-Added	User Fees	100%
<b>SUMMER SWIM</b>	Municipal Pool	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%

**Table 5.5:** Programs and Services, Classifications, and Cost Recovery Goals.

## 5.8 Understanding the Full Cost of Service

To properly fund all programs, either through tax subsidies or user fees, and to establish the right cost recovery targets, a Cost of Service Analysis should be conducted on each program, or program type, that accurately calculates direct (i.e., program-specific) and indirect (i.e., comprehensive, including administrative overhead) costs. Completing a Cost of Service Analysis not only helps determine the true and full cost of offering a program but provides information that can be used to price programs based upon accurate delivery costs. The figure below illustrates the common types of costs that must be accounted for in a Cost of Service Analysis.

The methodology for determining the total Cost of Service involves calculating the total cost for the activity, program, or service, then calculating the total revenue earned for that activity. Costs (and revenue) can also be derived on a per unit basis. Program or activity units may include:

- Number of participants
- Number of tasks performed
- Number of consumable units



**Figure 5.3:** Total Costs for Activity

- Number of service calls
- Number of events
- Required time for offering program/service

Agencies use Cost of Service Analyses to determine what financial resources are required to provide specific programs at specific levels of service. Results are used to determine and track cost recovery as well as to benchmark different programs provided by Tucker between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost of Service totals have been calculated. Department staff should be trained on the process of conducting a Cost of Service Analysis and the process undertaken on a regular basis.

Currently, the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department does track revenue, expenditures and cost recovery goals for each program, but is not consistent in doing so.

To more accurately track cost of service and cost recovery, the consulting team recommends the following:

**1. Develop New Pricing Policy Based on Classification of Programs and Services:** Given the recommended shift in philosophical approach, it is important to refocus the Department on cost recovery goals by functional program area or line of service. Pricing based on established operating budget recovery goals will provide flexibility to maximize all pricing strategies to the fullest. Allowing the staff to work within a pricing range tied to cost recovery goals will permit them to set prices based on market factors and differential pricing (prime time/non-prime time, season/off-season rates) to maximize user participation and also encourage additional group rate pricing where applicable.

To gain and provide consistency, a revised pricing policy must be adopted in order for the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department to operate effectively and efficiently to meet the program cost recovery goals identified above. In short, it is important that the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department state its policy in all publications, on its website, and in its reservation processes to describe how they establish a price for a service or use of a facility. Example:

“The Tucker Parks and Recreation Department’s funding that is derived from taxpayers is focused on mission-based facilities and services. The programs and facilities that are furthest from our mission, that provide an individual benefit, or that provide exclusive use will require higher fees from users or other sources to help offset operating costs.”

It is recommended that the Tucker City Council adopt the recommended cost recovery goals for the Parks and Recreation Department as presented in this Master Plan. In order to achieve the cost recovery goal, it is expected that the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department will strive to continue to meet the cost recovery goals established for each program area as recommended. In order to continue to meet these goals, efforts must be made to:

- Consistently deliver high quality programs and services
- Strategically price programs and services
- Solicit sponsorships and donations to develop a sustainable earned income stream
- Increase the utilization of volunteers to offset operational expenditures
- Expand marketing to increase the volume of participation in programs and services

The cost recovery goals are expected to be achieved over a 5-year period and there should be no expectation that they be realized immediately. It is expected that an iterative implementation process of introducing the classification methodology and a new pricing policy along with the refinement of department’s cost of service analysis will occur over the next 5 years. This process will have an impact on cost recovery as it will result in the

refinement of foundational business elements including but not limited to service levels, service delivery, pricing and the guidelines developed to secure external operational funding sources such as grants, donations and partnerships. Additionally, external factors such as economic conditions and changes to the City’s financial policies will have a bearing on achieving a cost recovery goal in which revenue offsets 50% of expenditures.

**2. Develop Pricing Strategies:** As the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department embarks on the implementation of a new pricing policy, it will be necessary to expand upon and implement pricing strategies that will not only increase sales but also maximize the utilization of the City of Tucker’ parks, programs and recreation facilities. By creating pricing options, customers are given the opportunity to choose which option best fits their schedule and price point. The consulting team recommends that the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department continue to explore pricing strategies that create options for the customer. Table 4.6 offers examples of pricing options.

Primetime	Incentive Pricing
Non-Primetime	Length of Stay Pricing
Season and Off-Season Rates	Cost Recovery Goal Pricing
Multi-Tiered Program Pricing	Level of Exclusivity Pricing
Group Discounting and Packaging	Age Segment Pricing
Volume Pricing	Level of Private Gain Pricing

**Table 5.6:** Pricing strategies.

### 5.9 Program Priority Rankings

The purpose of the Facility and Program Priority Rankings is to provide a prioritized list of facility/amenity needs and recreation program needs for the community served by Tucker Parks and Recreation. This model evaluates both quantitative and qualitative data.

- Quantitative data includes the statistically-valid community survey, which asked residents to list unmet needs and rank their importance.
- Qualitative data includes resident feedback obtained in community input, stakeholder interviews, staff input, local demographics, recreation trends, and planning team observations.
- A weighted scoring system is used to determine the priorities for recreation programs:

Data Source	Component	Weighting
Quantitative Data (measurable)	<b>Unmet Needs Reported by the Community Survey</b> — This is used as a factor from the total number of households stating whether they have a need for a facility/ program and the extent to which their need for facilities and recreation programs has been met. Survey participants were asked to identify this for 25 different facilities and 19 recreation programs.	35%
	<b>Importance Rankings Reported by the Community Survey</b> — This is used as a factor from the importance allocated to a facility or program by the community. Each respondent was asked to identify the top four most important facilities and recreation programs.	35%
Qualitative Data (subjective)	<b>Synthesis of Trends and Anecdotal Information</b> — This factor is derived from the planning team’s evaluation of program and facility priority based on survey results, community input, stakeholder interviews, staff input, local demographics, and recreation trends.	30%

**Table 5.7:** Data Source Weighting (by percentage).

These weighted scores provide an overall score and priority ranking for the system as a whole. The results of the priority ranking are tabulated into three categories: High Priority (top third), Medium Priority (middle third), and Low Priority (bottom third).

PROGRAM/SERVICES	PRIORITY
Community Special Events	<b>HIGH</b>
Fitness and Wellness Programs	
Adult/Senior Programs and Services	
Gardening/Farm-to-Table Classes	
Art Classes	
Outdoor Programs	
Socialization with Dogs	
Visiting Parks	
Performing Arts Programs	<b>MEDIUM</b>
Environmental Education Programs	
Walking/Jogging/Running Events and Clubs	
Water Fitness	
Running Events	
Music Classes	
After School/Out of School Camps	<b>LOW</b>
Youth Learn to Swim Programs	
Youth Sports	
Youth Enrichment/Learning Programs	
Golf	
Adult Sports	
Gymnastics	
Programs for People with Special Needs	
Competitive Swim Teams	
Bicycle Lessons and Clubs	

**Table 5.8:** Priority Ranking for Programs and Services.

### 5.9.1 KEY FINDINGS

- **Participation:** The department lacks a holistic tracking method for all programs and services offered under the guise of the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department.
- **Program Evaluation:** Assessment and evaluation tools to measure the success of programs and services are in place.
- **Customer Satisfaction and Retention:** The department currently tracks customer satisfaction ratings but not customer retention percentages.
- **Staff Training/Evaluation:** The department has a staff training program and solid evaluation methods in place.
- **Public Input:** The department does not utilize survey tools to continually gather feedback on needs and unmet needs for programming.
- **Marketing:** The department utilizes a number of marketing strategies to inform City residents of the offerings



of the community; however, it lacks a formalized Marketing Plan which can be utilized to create target marketing strategies.

- Volunteers: The department has strong foundational elements in place for its volunteer program.
- Partnerships: The Department utilizes a number of partner providers to deliver programs to Tucker residents and is in the process of developing a formal partnership policy.
- Competition: The Department has a general understanding of other service providers.

### 5.9.2 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Participation Data Collection: Formalize participation data for programs and services provided by partner organizations.
- Participation Data Analysis: Through ongoing participation data analysis, refine recreation program offerings to reduce low enrollment or canceled programs due to no enrollment.
- Expand programs and services in the areas of greatest demand: Ongoing analysis of the participation trends of programming and services in Tucker is significant when delivering high quality programs and services. By doing so, staff will be able to focus their efforts on the programs and services of the greatest need and reduce or eliminate programs and services where interest is declining. Specific efforts should be made to increase programming in the areas of greatest UNMET need as identified in the statistically valid survey.
- Customer Input: Develop tools as identified in the program assessment tool in an effort to continually gather feedback regarding the quality of programs offered.
- Evaluation: Implement the program assessment and evaluation tool as recommended. Assessment and evaluation tool is provided as an Excel spreadsheet as a stand-alone separate document.

## 5.10 Summary

The department is delivering quality programs, services and events to the community; however, there are opportunities for improvement. The chart below provides a summary of the recommended actions that the Department should implement in developing a program plan to meet the needs of residents. See table 4.9 for a list of action items ranked by priority.

PROGRAM	ACTION	TIMELINE
<b>HIGH PRIORITY</b>		
Community Special Events	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Fitness and Wellness Programs	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Adult/Senior Programs and Services	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Gardening/Farm-to-Table Classes	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Art Classes	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Outdoor Programs	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Socialization with Dogs	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM (dog park development)
Visiting Parks	FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (enhance parks)
<b>MEDIUM PRIORITY</b>		
Performing Arts Programs	DEVELOP/DIREST PROVIDE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Environmental Education Programs	DEVELOP/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Walking/Jogging/Running Events and Clubs	DEVELOP/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Water Fitness	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM (seasonal)

Running Events	DEVELOP/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Music Classes	DEVELOP/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
After School/Out of School Camps	EXPAND/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
<b>LOW PRIORITY</b>		
Youth Learn to Swim Programs	CONTINUE/DIRECT PROVIDE	SHORT-TERM
Youth Sports	CONTINUE/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Youth Enrichment/Learning Programs	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Golf	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Adult Sports	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Gymnastics	CONTINUE/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Programs for People with Special Needs	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)
Competitive Swim Teams	CONSIDER/FACILITATE	LONG-TERM (facility development)
Bicycle Lessons and Clubs	CONSIDER	SHORT-TERM (partnerships)

**Table 5.9:** Action plan timeline by priority.

## 5.12 Recreation Program Standards

Recreation program standards are developed to support core recreation services. The standards focus on delivering a consistent high-quality experience while achieving operational and cost recovery goals as well as marketing and communication standards that are needed to create awareness and customer loyalty. To assist staff in its continual pursuit of delivering high quality consistent programs to the community and in achieving the cost recovery goals, the following standards may be considered for implementation.

### 5.12.1 HIGH-QUALITY EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

For core services, the following standards must be in place to promote a high-quality experience:

- Instructor or program coordinators' qualifications are consistent with in-the-field experience in the program specialty for which they are responsible.
- The instructor-to-participant ratios are appropriate for the participant to feel safe and attended to.
- The program is provided in the appropriate safe and clean recreation space, either indoor or outdoor, designed for that program.
- Minimum and maximum numbers of participants are set for the program or class that will allow for a high-quality experience.
- Recreation equipment or supplies that are used by the participant are high quality, safe, and appropriate for the participants to use or consume.
- The length of the program is commensurate with the attention capability of the participants to respond effectively and enjoy themselves in the activity.
- Appropriate support staff or volunteers are in place to help guide participants and support teachers or program supervisors.
- Staff is trained in first aid and CPR. Volunteers are trained in first aid and CPR when appropriate.
- A first aid kit is readily available and accessible in less than a minute.
- Staff and volunteers are trained in customer service and diversity training to make all participants feel welcome and appreciated.
- Customer feedback methods are in place to seek input from participants on their expectations of the program and the results of their experience. This should include pre- and/or post-evaluation focus groups or trailer calls.

- Pricing of services is explained to participants and/or parents on the level of investment they are making in the program and the level that Tucker Parks and Recreation Department is investing in their experience.
- Each instructor or program supervisor will be provided a toolbox that includes their class or program roster, with phone numbers or email addresses, name tags for participants, customer evaluations for users, registration forms, a program guide, pertinent recreation information and emergency phone numbers, thank you cards for participants at the end of the class, and an introduction sheet of what will occur in the program or class, how it will be conducted, and what outcomes we hope to achieve.
- All class or program policies are available to the instructor or program supervisor to adequately explain policies to the user.
- Appropriate recognition and awards are given at the end of the program to participants based on outcomes achieved or skills learned.
- New staff, volunteers, and contract employees working with children will have background checks.
- Any disciplinary actions taken by an instructor or program supervisor with a program participant will be written and documented.
- Class, program curriculum, or work plans will be prepared by the instructor and program supervisor before the class or program begins and is signed off by the appropriate program staff within the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Staff will be dressed in the appropriate Tucker recreation uniform that includes a nametag.
- Drivers that transport participants must have the appropriate license, certifications, and authorization.
- Equipment or program space will be inspected prior to the class or program; noted by the instructor or program supervisor; and recorded daily, weekly, and monthly.
- Performance measures tracked will be shared with instructors or program staff at the end of each session.
- Exit interviews will be conducted with part-time staff before they leave each season and noted in their file as to re-hire or not.
- A class or program budget will be prepared for each activity and shared with the instructor or supervisor on how class monies are spent. Final budget results will be documented at the end of the program area and shared with the supervisor or manager.
- Appropriate required licenses and certifications set by law will be reviewed and filed before programs begin.

#### **5.12.2 OPERATIONAL AND PRICING STANDARDS FOR PROGRAMS**

- Pricing of services will be established based on cost-of-services and overlaid into programs or classes based on primetime and non-primetime rates, location, time, age segment, group, and level of exclusivity that users receive over and above use by general taxpayers. Staff will be trained in setting prices.
- Scholarship programs will be in place for those that require financial assistance in order to participate in Tucker Parks and Recreation Department recreation facilities and programs.
- Quarterly results of cost of service for programs will be posted and shared with staff on all services regardless of whether they are under-performing, meeting, or exceeding the recovery goals.
- Each year, competitor and other service providers will be benchmarked and evaluated for changes they are making and how they compare with division efforts in their core services provided.
- Partnerships with core program services will be updated yearly, their level of contribution will be documented, and tracking performance measures will be shared with each partner.
- Non-core services will be evaluated yearly and reduced, eliminated, or transferred to other service providers reducing the impact on staff time.
- Maintenance and recreation staff will discuss standards for programs taking place in recreation amenities in Tucker Parks and Recreation Department annually.

# 6.0 Operations & Funding Recommendations

## 6.1 Park Operations

Parks and amenities that are clean and functioning efficiently are a critical element to delivering high quality programs and services. The chart below illustrates the acreage that the City of Tucker’s Parks and Recreation Department has the responsibility for maintaining (not included Right of Way/Median acreage).

Park Type	City of Tucker Inventory
Neighborhood Parks	12.62
Community Parks	143.70
Open Space/Conservation Parks	12.00
Public Facility Grounds	9.00
<b>Total Developed Park Acreage</b>	<b>177.32</b>

### 6.1.1 KEY FINDINGS

**Staffing:** The City of Tucker contracts out to a third-party vendor the maintenance responsibilities of the city park system.

**Lines of Service:** The core lines of service (functions) performed by the third-party contractor in maintaining the City of Tucker’s parks system are numerous and are as follows:

<b>Parks Maintenance Lines of Service</b>
Athletic Field - Game Preparation
Athletic Field Maintenance (Diamond and Multi-Purpose Fields)
Citizen Inquiries
Equipment Maintenance
Facility Grounds Maintenance
Furniture, Fixtures, Systems Maintenance and Repair
Integrated Pest Management
Irrigation Systems
Landscape Beautification
Natural Resource/Open Space
Park Building Maintenance
Playground Maintenance
Restroom Custodial Services
Sport Courts (Basketball, Tennis, Sand Volleyball Courts)
Trails
Turf Management

**Maintenance Standards:** Through the review of the third-party contract, the consulting team determined that the Parks and Recreation Department does have strong maintenance standards in place.

**Asset Management:** Staff lacks the resources and staff to perform necessary preventative maintenance and repair/maintenance tasks on the assets (fencing, playground, benches, signage, etc.) in the park system.

**Third-party Contracting of Services:** Given the “varying” cycles of the economy, it is imperative that the department continually evaluates the capacity and cost of service in the private sector. Without this level of analysis, the department will not be able to determine if it is more effective and efficient to perform work “in-house” or to “contract it out”.

**Annual Park and Grounds Operation and Maintenance Funding:** Based on analysis conducted by PROS Consulting, unit costs are in alignment with best practice cost per acre.

- Annual Park Maintenance Budget = \$706,200
  - Park Landscape Services = \$446,200
  - Repair and Maintenance = \$250,000
  - Utilities = \$10,000
- Total Developed Park and Grounds Acres Maintained: 177.32 acres
- Actual Cost per Acre = \$3,983
- Best Practice Cost per Acre as defined by numerous costs of service projects that PROS Consulting has performed = \$10,000-\$15,000 per acre

Based on the analysis of the landscape maintenance standards provided in the scope of work and the cost provided by the third-party contractor as well as the additional expenditures allocated to parks maintenance, the City of Tucker is receiving an incredible bargain with the current services provided by third-party contractors.

### 6.1.2 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Systematic Approach to Contracting Services:** Through the development of management processes, the Department must continually evaluate the private sector to determine if the financial resources dedicated to parks maintenance are sufficient as well as effective and efficient. It should be expected that the cost for third-party contracted services

**Management of Contract Services Management:** Continue to provide the necessary resources for the management and oversight of all third-party contractors that provide maintenance services for the City of Tucker’s parks and grounds.

**Create Work Plans Based on Maintenance Standards:** Maintenance standards are based on a Level (1), (2) and (3) modes (tasks and frequencies of each task) and follow best practices as established by the National Recreation and Park Association. The department should update and customize the standards found in the third-party contract based on the park and recreation values of the Tucker community and need to be adopted and implemented regardless of whether work is performed by City staff or third-party contractors.

**Asset Management Staffing:** The City of Tucker is seeking to hire one staff person, in part, to manage the assets in the parks system. It is recommended that the City hire at least two additional staff to manage the assets (built environment) of the park system within the next 3 years.

## 6.2 Funding Recommendations

In order to continue to build and maintain the parks and recreation system, funding should be pursued for operations and capital improvement projects, such as those presented in this plan.

New, sustainable funding sources are essential to implementing a capital improvement plan. There is substantial potential for increasing revenues for the parks and recreation system while still providing affordable recreation opportunities. The following are funding options as specifically defined for the City of Tucker based on both the feasibility of implementing that should be vetted as it develops a one to ten-year capital improvement program in 2019.

### 6.2.1 EXTERNAL FUNDING

Funding Strategy	Funding Description	Implementation Feasibility	Implementation Risk
Corporate Sponsorship	This revenue-funding source allows corporations to invest in the development or enhancement of new or existing facilities in park systems. Sponsorships are also highly used for programs and events.	Low	Low
Crowdfunding	Fairly new web-based source which aggregates funds from a group of people who are willing to support a specific project, be it program related or facility related. Some sites that successfully do that are <a href="http://www.kickstarter.org">www.kickstarter.org</a> and <a href="http://www.razoo.com">www.razoo.com</a> etc.	Low	Medium
Partnerships	Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a City department, or a private business and a City agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities and asset management, based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner.	Low	Medium
Foundations/Gifts	These dollars are raised from tax-exempt, non-profit organizations established with private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gifts catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, sales of items, etc.	Low	Low

Private Donations	Private Donations may also be received in the form of funds, land, facilities, recreation equipment, art or in-kind services. Donations from local and regional businesses as sponsors for events or facilities should be pursued.	Low	Low
Friends Groups	These groups are formed to raise money typically for a single focus purpose that could include a park facility or program that will better the community as a whole and their special interest.	Medium	Low
Irrevocable Remainder Trusts	These trusts are set up with individuals who typically have more than a million dollars in wealth. They will leave a portion of their wealth to the City in a trust fund that allows the fund to grow over a period of time and then is available for the City to use a portion of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.	Low	Low
Volunteerism	The revenue source is an indirect revenue source in that persons donate time to assist the department in providing a product or service on an hourly basis. This reduces the City's cost in providing the service plus it builds advocacy into the system.	High	Medium
Special Fundraisers	Many park and recreation agencies have special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover specific programs and capital projects.	Medium	Low

### 6.2.2 CAPITAL FEES

Funding Strategy	Funding Description	Implementation Feasibility	Implementation Risk
Capital Fees	Capital fees are added to the cost of revenue producing facilities such as golf courses, pools, recreation centers, hospitality centers and sports complexes and are lifted off after the improvement is paid off.	Low	Low
Impact Fees	These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as golf courses, recreation centers and pool facilities to support capital improvements that benefit the user of the facility.		

### 6.2.3 USER FEES

Funding Strategy	Funding Description	Implementation Feasibility	Implementation Risk
Recreation Service Fees	This is a dedicated user fee, which can be established by a local ordinance or other government procedures for the purpose of constructing and maintaining recreation facilities. The fee can apply to all organized activities, which require a reservation of some type or other purposes, as defined by the local government. Examples of such activities include adult basketball, volleyball, tennis, and softball leagues, youth baseball, soccer, football and softball leagues, and special interest classes. The fee allows participants an opportunity to contribute toward the upkeep of the facilities being used.	Medium	Medium
Fees/Charges	The Department must position its fees and charges to be market-driven and based on both public and private facilities. The potential outcome of revenue generation is consistent with national trends relating to public park and recreation agencies, which generate an average 35% to 50% of operating expenditures.	High	Low
Ticket Sales/Admissions	This revenue source is on accessing facilities for self-directed activities such as pools, ice skating rinks, ballparks and entertainment facilities. These user fees help offset operational costs.	Low	Medium
Permits/Special Use Permits	These special permits allow individuals to use specific park property for financial gain. The City either receives a set amount of money or a percentage of the gross service that is being provided.	Low	High
Reservations	This revenue source comes from the right to reserve specific public property for a set amount of time. The reservation rates are usually set and apply to group picnic shelters, meeting rooms for weddings, reunions and outings or other types of facilities for special activities.	High	Medium
Equipment Rentals	The revenue source is available on the rental of equipment such as tables, chairs, tents, stages, bicycles, roller blades, boogie boards, etc. that are used for recreation purposes.	Low	High



### 6.2.4 GRANTS

Funding Strategy	Funding Description	Implementation Feasibility	Implementation Risk
Partnership Enhancement Monetary Grant Program	Partnership Enhancement Monetary Grant Program, administered by the National Tree Trust. Matching grants are available on a 50/50 cost share basis. Funds are available for projects which promote public awareness in support of tree planting, maintenance, management, protection and cultivation of trees in rural, community and urban settings. These are small grants ranging from \$500 to \$20,000.	Medium	Low
CDBG Funding	Funding received in accordance with the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Programs national objectives as established by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development. Funding may be applied to such programs as Infrastructure Improvements, Public Facility and Park Improvements, Human Service Enhancements, Lead-Based Paint Education and Reduction, Housing Education Assistance, and Economic Development and Anti-poverty strategies.	High	Low
Land Trust	Many systems have developed land trusts to help secure and fund the cost for acquiring land that needs to be preserved and protected for greenway purposes. This could be a good source to look to for acquisition of future lands.	Medium	Low

### 6.2.5 TAX SUPPORT

Funding Strategy	Funding Description	Implementation Feasibility	Implementation Risk
Bond Issues	Agencies typically seek park bonds to meet park-related needs. The key is to use debt financing through bonds to address needs that are both unmet and clearly a community priority. It is best to propose a capital-bond project that serves a variety of users and needs.	High	Low
Property Tax	Ad valorem taxes on real property	Medium	Medium
Lighting and Landscape District	Special property owner approved assessment	Low	High

Hotel, Motel, and Restaurant Tax	Tax based on gross receipts from charges and meal services, which may be used to build and operate sports fields, regional parks, golf courses, tennis courts, and other special park and recreation facilities.	High	Low
Special Improvement District/Benefit District	Taxing districts established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, the erection of fountains, and acquisition of art, and supplemental services for improvement and promotion, including recreation and cultural enhancements.	Low	Medium
Sales Tax	This existing revenue source has been very successful in funding the park system in Frisco, TX. This tax is very popular in high traffic tourism type cities and with City and state parks.	High	Medium
Food and Beverage Tax	The tax is usually associated with convention and tourism bureaus. However, since parks and recreation agencies manage many of the tourism attractions, they receive a portion of this funding source for operational or capital expenses.	Medium	Medium
Public Improvement District (PID)	New developments can establish a Public Improvement District (PID) when authorized by the City Council and legally set up according to state law. This taxing district provides funds especially for the operation and maintenance of public amenities such as parks and major boulevards.	N/A	N/A

### 6.2.6 FRANCHISES & LICENSES

Funding Strategy	Funding Description	Implementation Feasibility	Implementation Risk
Catering Permits and Services	This is a license to allow caterers to work in the park system on a permit basis with a set fee or a percentage of food sales returning to the City. Also many cities have their own catering service and receive a percentage of dollars off the sale of their food.	Medium	Medium

Pouring Rights	Private soft drink companies that execute agreements with the City for exclusive pouring rights within park facilities. A portion of the gross sales goes back to the City. The City of Westfield, IN just signed a 10 year, \$2 million pouring rights deal at their sports complex with Pepsi.	Medium	Low
Concession Management	Concession management is from retail sales or rentals of soft goods, hard goods, or consumable items. The City either contracts for the service or receives a set amount of the gross percentage or the full revenue dollars that incorporates a profit after expenses.	Medium	Low
Private Management	Contract with a private business to provide and operate desirable recreational activities financed, constructed and operated by the private sector, with additional compensation paid to the City.	Low	Medium
Greenway Utility	Greenway utilities are used to finance acquisition of greenways and development of the greenways by selling the development rights underground for the fiber optic types of businesses.	Medium	Low
Naming Rights	Many cities and counties have turned to selling the naming rights for new buildings or renovation of existing buildings and parks for the development cost associated with the improvement.	Low	Medium
Private Developers	These developers lease space from City-owned land through a subordinate lease that pays out a set dollar amount plus a percentage of gross dollars for recreation enhancements. These could include a golf course, marina, restaurants, driving ranges, sports complexes, equestrian facilities, recreation centers and ice arenas.	Low	High
Easements	This revenue source is available when the City allows utility companies, businesses or individuals to develop some type of an improvement above ground or below ground on their property for a set period of time and a set dollar amount to be received by the City on an annual basis.	Low	Low

Advertising Sales	This revenue source is for the sale of tasteful and appropriate advertising on park and recreation related items such as in the City's program guide, on scoreboards, dasher boards and other visible products or services that are consumable or permanent that exposes the product or service to many people.	Medium	Medium
Interlocal Agreements	Contractual relationships entered into between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.	Medium	Medium

# Appendix: Park Concept Plans & Henderson Park Trail Plans

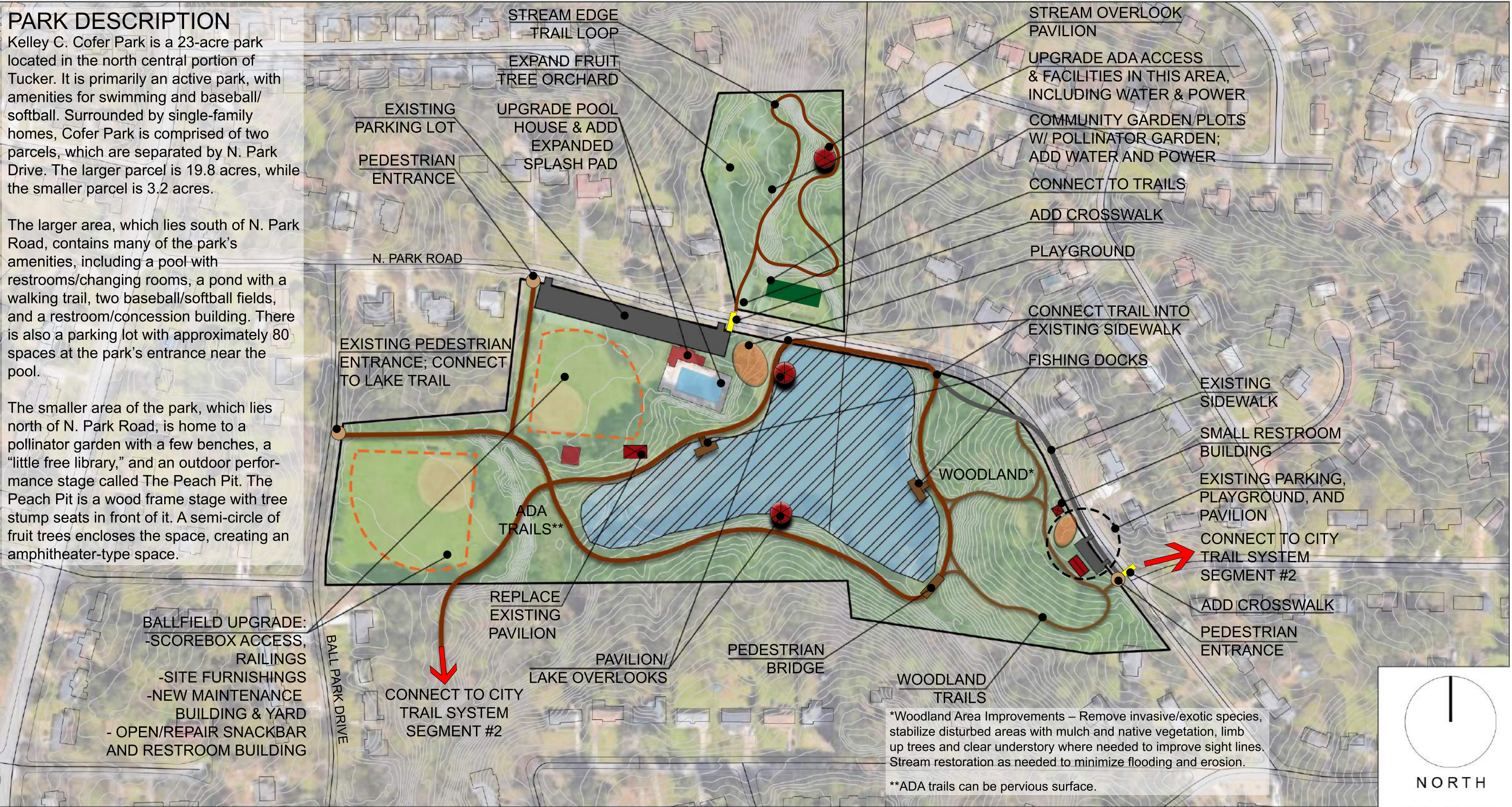
The following pages include concept plans depicting recommended improvements to Tucker's parks at a high level. Detailed master planning process are recommended for some of these parks based on accurate site information including topographic survey in order to generate reliable grading plans, plan configurations and cost estimates.

## PARK DESCRIPTION

Kelley C. Cofer Park is a 23-acre park located in the north central portion of Tucker. It is primarily an active park, with amenities for swimming and baseball/softball. Surrounded by single-family homes, Cofer Park is comprised of two parcels, which are separated by N. Park Drive. The larger parcel is 19.8 acres, while the smaller parcel is 3.2 acres.

The larger area, which lies south of N. Park Road, contains many of the park's amenities, including a pool with restrooms/changing rooms, a pond with a walking trail, two baseball/softball fields, and a restroom/concession building. There is also a parking lot with approximately 80 spaces at the park's entrance near the pool.

The smaller area of the park, which lies north of N. Park Road, is home to a pollinator garden with a few benches, a "little free library," and an outdoor performance stage called The Peach Pit. The Peach Pit is a wood frame stage with tree stump seats in front of it. A semi-circle of fruit trees encloses the space, creating an amphitheater-type space.



Prepared by:



# KELLEY COFER PARK

## TUCKER, GEORGIA

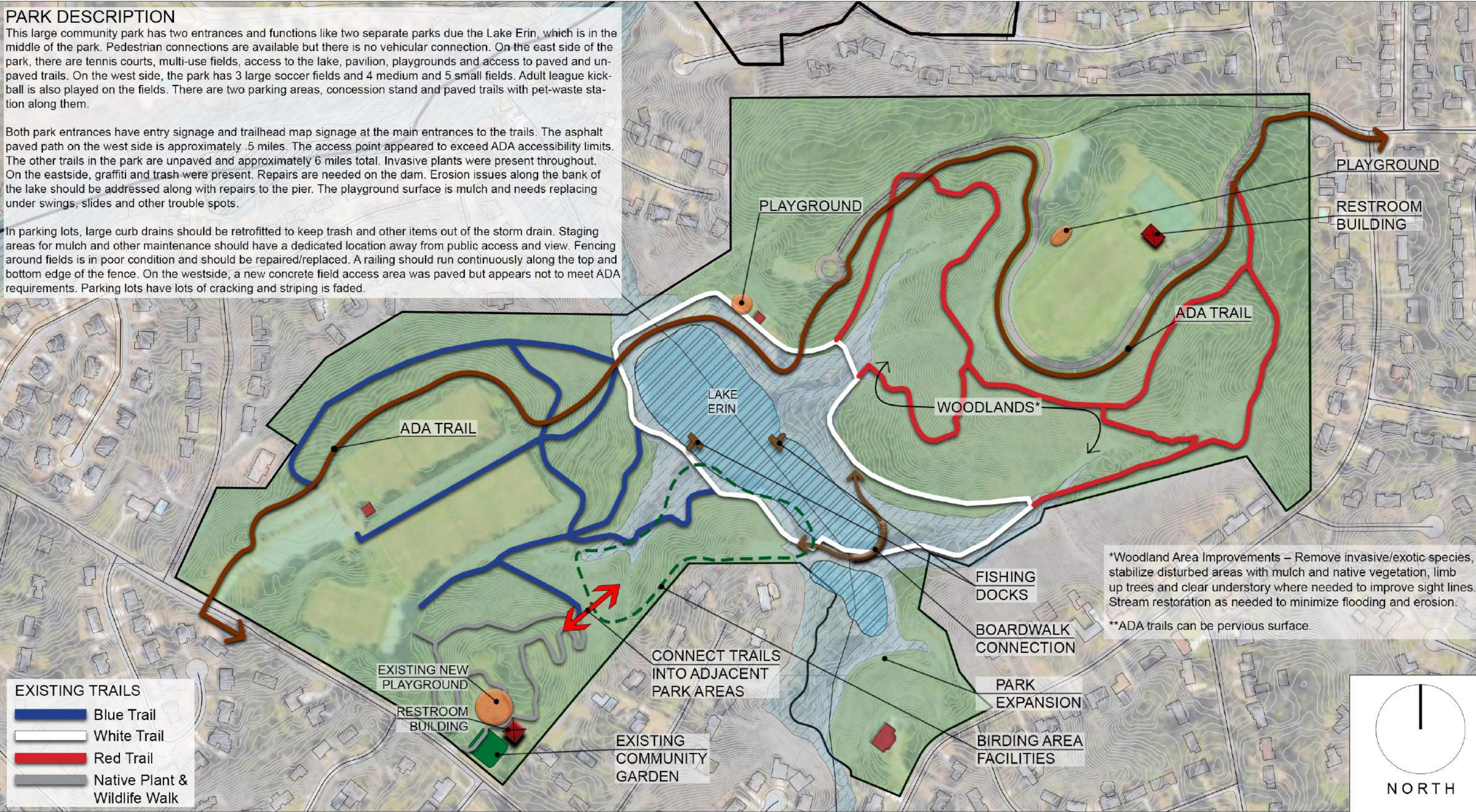
January 16, 2019

**PARK DESCRIPTION**

This large community park has two entrances and functions like two separate parks due the Lake Erin, which is in the middle of the park. Pedestrian connections are available but there is no vehicular connection. On the east side of the park, there are tennis courts, multi-use fields, access to the lake, pavilion, playgrounds and access to paved and unpaved trails. On the west side, the park has 3 large soccer fields and 4 medium and 5 small fields. Adult league kick-ball is also played on the fields. There are two parking areas, concession stand and paved trails with pet-waste station along them.

Both park entrances have entry signage and trailhead map signage at the main entrances to the trails. The asphalt paved path on the west side is approximately .5 miles. The access point appeared to exceed ADA accessibility limits. The other trails in the park are unpaved and approximately 6 miles total. Invasive plants were present throughout. On the eastside, graffiti and trash were present. Repairs are needed on the dam. Erosion issues along the bank of the lake should be addressed along with repairs to the pier. The playground surface is mulch and needs replacing under swings, slides and other trouble spots.

In parking lots, large curb drains should be retrofitted to keep trash and other items out of the storm drain. Staging areas for mulch and other maintenance should have a dedicated location away from public access and view. Fencing around fields is in poor condition and should be repaired/replaced. A railing should run continuously along the top and bottom edge of the fence. On the westside, a new concrete field access area was paved but appears not to meet ADA requirements. Parking lots have lots of cracking and striping is faded.

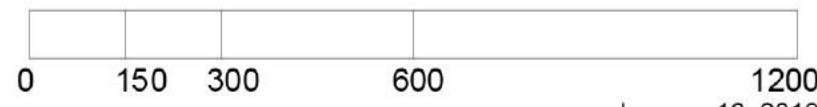


\*Woodland Area Improvements – Remove invasive/exotic species, stabilize disturbed areas with mulch and native vegetation, limb up trees and clear understory where needed to improve sight lines. Stream restoration as needed to minimize flooding and erosion.  
 \*\*ADA trails can be pervious surface.

- EXISTING TRAILS**
- Blue Trail
  - White Trail
  - Red Trail
  - Native Plant & Wildlife Walk



SCALE: 1"=300'



## PARK DESCRIPTION

Montreal Park is a 9-acre neighborhood park located in the southwest corner of Tucker, near the I-285 and US-78 interchange. A former Dekalb County park, the park is surrounded by single-family residential development and is accessed at the end of T-shaped double cul-de-sac. There is no dedicated parking available for Montreal Park. A chain-link fence surrounds the park.

The developed portion of the park includes a large grassy area, a swing set with two swings for older children, and a playground with a four-swing swing set for younger children. Both the playground and swing set are surrounded by mulch, which is enclosed within a timber frame. There is also a small, hexagonal open-air pavilion with six wood and metal picnic tables under it. There is a metal trash can near the pavilion. Much of the park is heavily wooded and undeveloped. Several trails meander through the woods.



# MONTREAL PARK

## TUCKER, GEORGIA



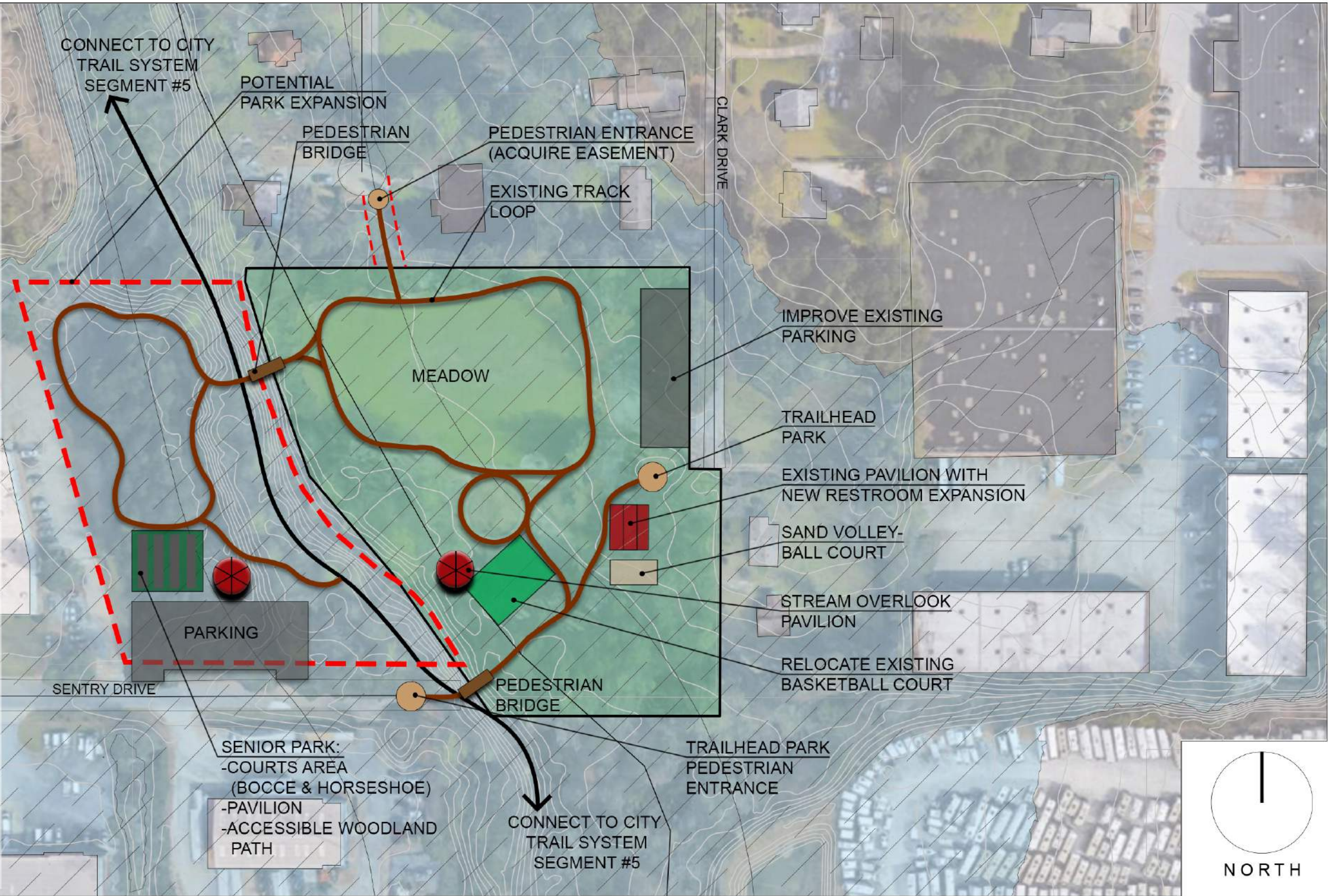
## PARK DESCRIPTION

William McKinley Peters Park (Peters Park) is a 3.6-acre neighborhood park located in the south-central portion of Tucker. Peters Park was formerly owned by DeKalb County and is now part of the Tucker park system. Situated at the dead-end of Clark Drive, Peters Park is denoted by a stone and wood sign. An asphalt drive leads to the parking lot. The parking lot is in fair condition, with some potholes and uneven surfacing. A large grassy field is located directly west of the parking lot. There is a concrete walking trail around the perimeter of the field, with benches and bench swings spaced periodically around the trail.

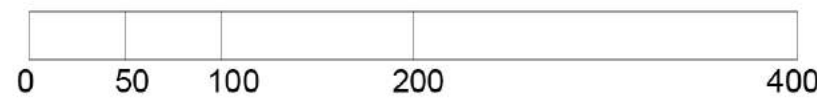
A concrete path leads from the parking lot to an open-air pavilion with ten wood and metal picnic tables, which is situated directly south of the parking lot. There are trash cans and a water fountain associated with the pavilion. There is a playground to the west of the concrete path leading to the pavilion. A basketball court is located behind the playground. The court has four basketball hoops. Adjacent to the basketball court and the playground, there is a swing set with four swings within a circular concrete path. This path connects to the walking trail around the grassy field, as well as a concrete path that wind its way through and around the other park elements.

Wooden table and benches, as well as metal benches, can be found throughout the park along the walking trail. Some of the benches are damaged and/or have graffiti on them. There are also several concrete pads with grills, trash cans, and hot ash receptacles located in the space between the pavilion and the basketball court. Some of the grills are missing or damaged.

While Peters Park is in a residential area, the park is nicely vegetated with abundant shade trees and mature vegetation, the grassy field is an exception, of course. The park is bordered by a small creek on its western edge.



SCALE: 1"=100'



# PETERS PARK TUCKER, GEORGIA

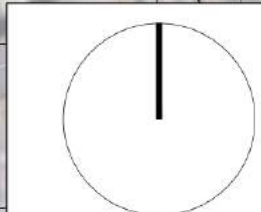
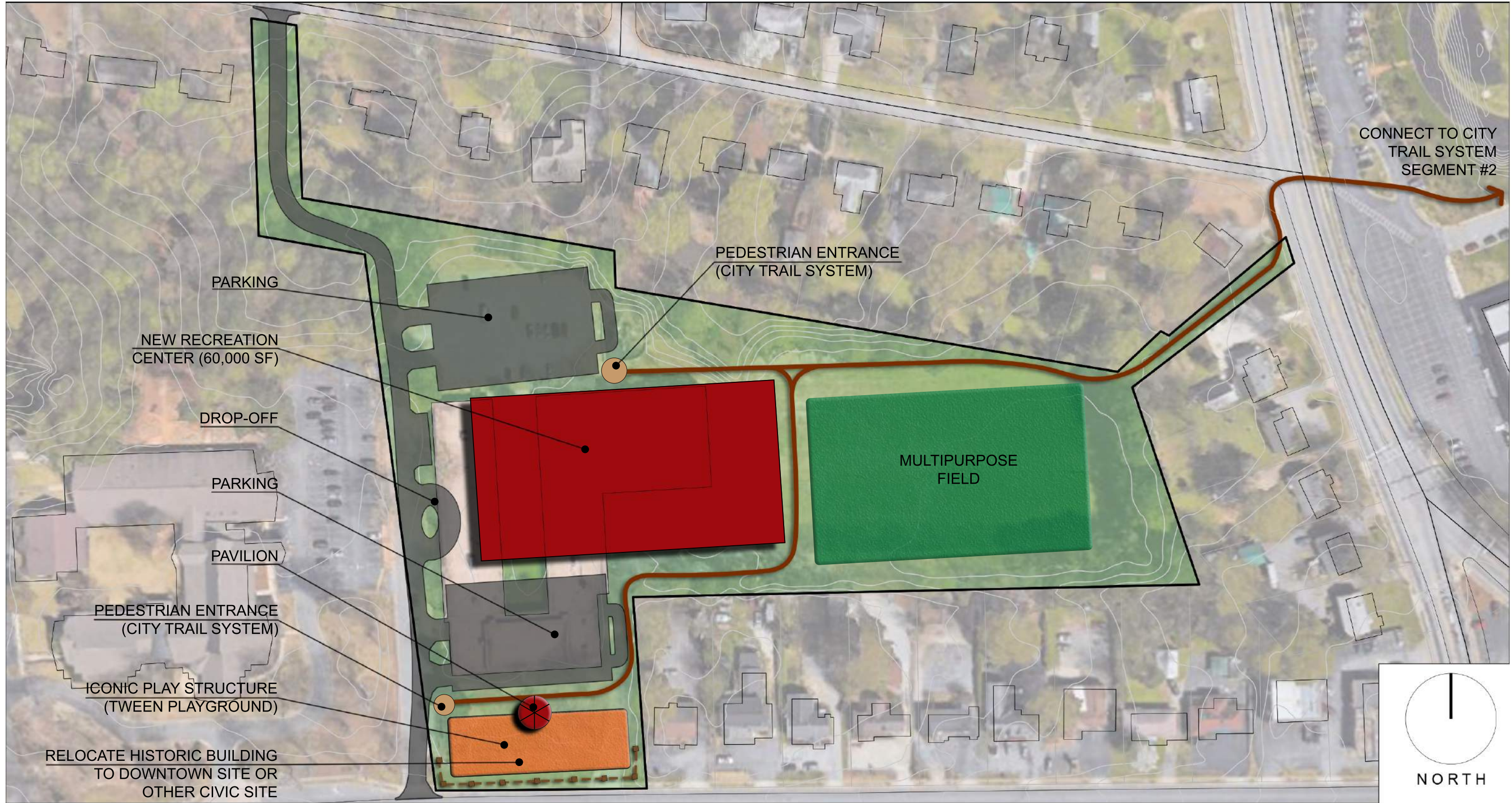
## PARK DESCRIPTION

Tucker Nature Preserve is a 12-acre park located near the intersection of Lawrenceville Highway and Old Norcross Road. It is a passive park with space for picnicking and nature walks. The park features a small gravel parking lot with about twelve spaces, a grassy knoll with shade trees, a raised concrete deck with picnic tables and a "little free library," benches, additional picnic tables, and a series of nature trails through the woods.

\*Woodland Area Improvements – Remove invasive/exotic species, stabilize disturbed areas with mulch and native vegetation, limb up trees and clear understory where needed to improve sight lines. Stream restoration as needed to minimize flooding and erosion.

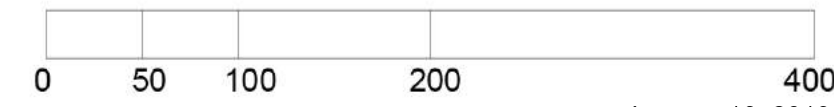
\*\*ADA trail can be pervious surface.





NORTH

SCALE: 1"=100'



# TUCKER RECREATION CENTER

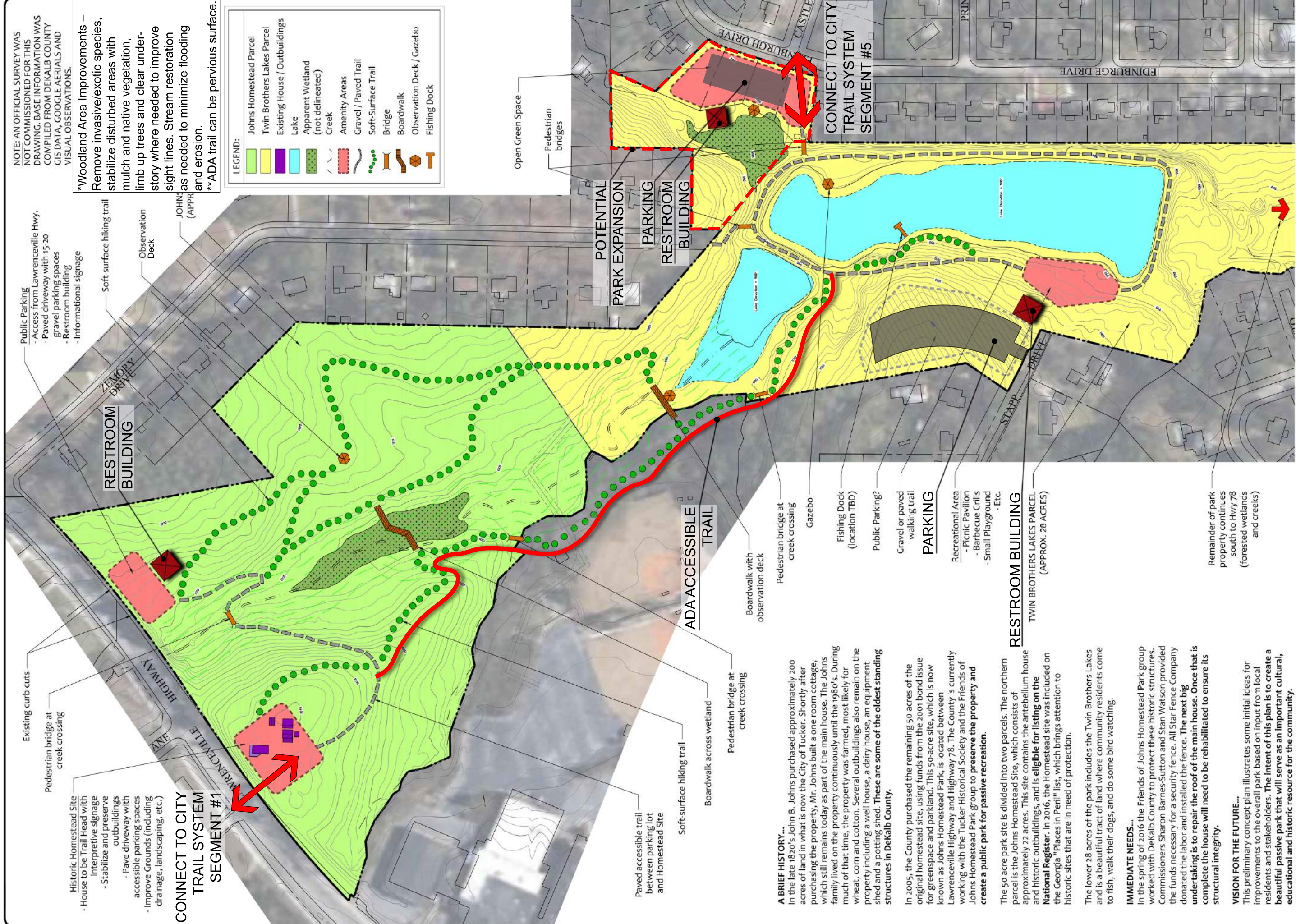
## TUCKER, GEORGIA

NOTE: AN OFFICIAL SURVEY WAS NOT COMMISSIONED FOR THIS DRAWING. BASE INFORMATION WAS COMPILED FROM DEKALB COUNTY GIS DATA, GOOGLE AERIALS AND VISUAL OBSERVATIONS.

**\*Woodland Area Improvements –**  
 Remove invasive/exotic species, stabilize disturbed areas with mulch and native vegetation, limb up trees and clear understory where needed to improve sight lines. Stream restoration as needed to minimize flooding and erosion.  
**\*\*ADA trail can be pervious surface.**

**LEGEND:**

	Johns Homestead Parcel
	Twin Brothers Lakes Parcel
	Existing House / Outbuildings
	Lake
	Apparent Wetland (not delineated)
	Creek
	Amenity Areas
	Gravel / Paved Trail
	Soft-Surface Trail
	Bridge
	Boardwalk
	Observation Deck / Gazebo
	Fishing Dock



**Public Parking**  
 - Access from Lawrenceville Hwy.  
 - Paved driveway with 15-20 gravel parking spaces  
 - Restroom building  
 - Informational signage

**Historic Homestead Site**  
 - House to be Trail Head with interpretive signage  
 - Stabilize and preserve outbuildings  
 - Pave driveway with accessible parking spaces  
 - Improve Grounds (including drainage, landscaping, etc.)

**CONNECT TO CITY TRAIL SYSTEM SEGMENT #1**

**A BRIEF HISTORY...**  
 In the late 1820's John B. Johns purchased approximately 200 acres of land in what is now the City of Tucker. Shortly after purchasing the property, Mr. Johns built a one room cottage, which still remains today as part of the main house. The Johns family lived on the property continuously until the 1980's. During much of that time, the property was farmed, most likely for wheat, corn and cotton. Several outbuildings also remain on the property including a well house, a dairy house, an equipment shed and a potting shed. **These are some of the oldest standing structures in DeKalb County.**

In 2005, the County purchased the remaining 50 acres of the original homestead site, using funds from the 2001 bond issue for greenspace and parkland. This 50-acre site, which is now known as Johns Homestead Park, is located between Lawrenceville Highway and Highway 78. The County is currently working with the Tucker Historical Society and the Friends of Johns Homestead Park group to **preserve the property and create a public park for passive recreation.**

The 50 acre park site is divided into two parcels. The northern parcel is the Johns Homestead Site, which consists of approximately 22 acres. This site contains the antebellum house and historic outbuildings, and is **eligible for listing on the National Register**. In 2016, the Homestead site was included on the Georgia "Places in Peril" list, which brings attention to historic sites that are in need of protection.

The lower 28 acres of the park includes the Twin Brothers Lakes and is a beautiful tract of land where community residents come to fish, walk their dogs, and do some bird watching.

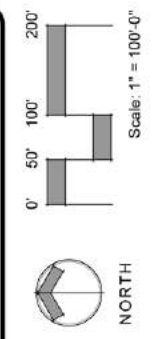
**IMMEDIATE NEEDS...**  
 In the spring of 2016 the Friends of Johns Homestead Park group worked with DeKalb County to protect these historic structures. Commissioners Sharon Barnes-Sutton and Stan Watson provided the funds necessary for a security fence. All Star Fence Company donated the labor and installed the fence. **The next big undertaking is to repair the roof of the main house. Once that is complete the house will need to be rehabilitated to ensure its structural integrity.**

**VISION FOR THE FUTURE...**  
 This preliminary concept plan illustrates some initial ideas for improvements to the overall park based on input from local residents and stakeholders. **The intent of this plan is to create a beautiful passive park that will serve as an important cultural, educational and historic resource for the community.**

# Johns Homestead Park

## Preliminary Concept Plan

May 2, 2016

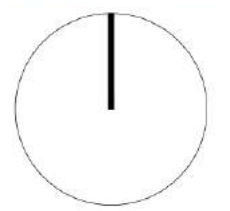


## PARK DESCRIPTION

Smoke Rise Park is a mostly undeveloped 10.5-acre park in the Smoke Rise area of Tucker, near Stone Mountain. Smoke Rise Park is on the southwest side of Hugh Howell Road, near the intersection at Silver Hill Road. Smoke Rise Park is heavily wooded and features a nature trail with steep topography. There are benches and picnic tables along the trail. There are several wooden bridges that cross streams along the trails. There is no parking at the park, but its entry is marked by stone piers and a stone walls with a sign. The park has characteristic wood fencing throughout.

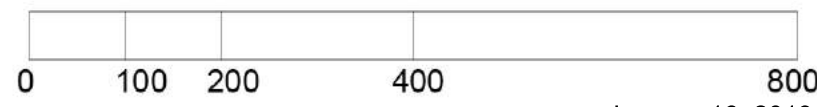
\*Woodland Area Improvements – Remove invasive/exotic species, stabilize disturbed areas with mulch and native vegetation, limb up trees and clear understory where needed to improve sight lines. Stream restoration as needed to minimize flooding and erosion.

\*\*ADA trail can be pervious surface.



NORTH

SCALE: 1"=200'



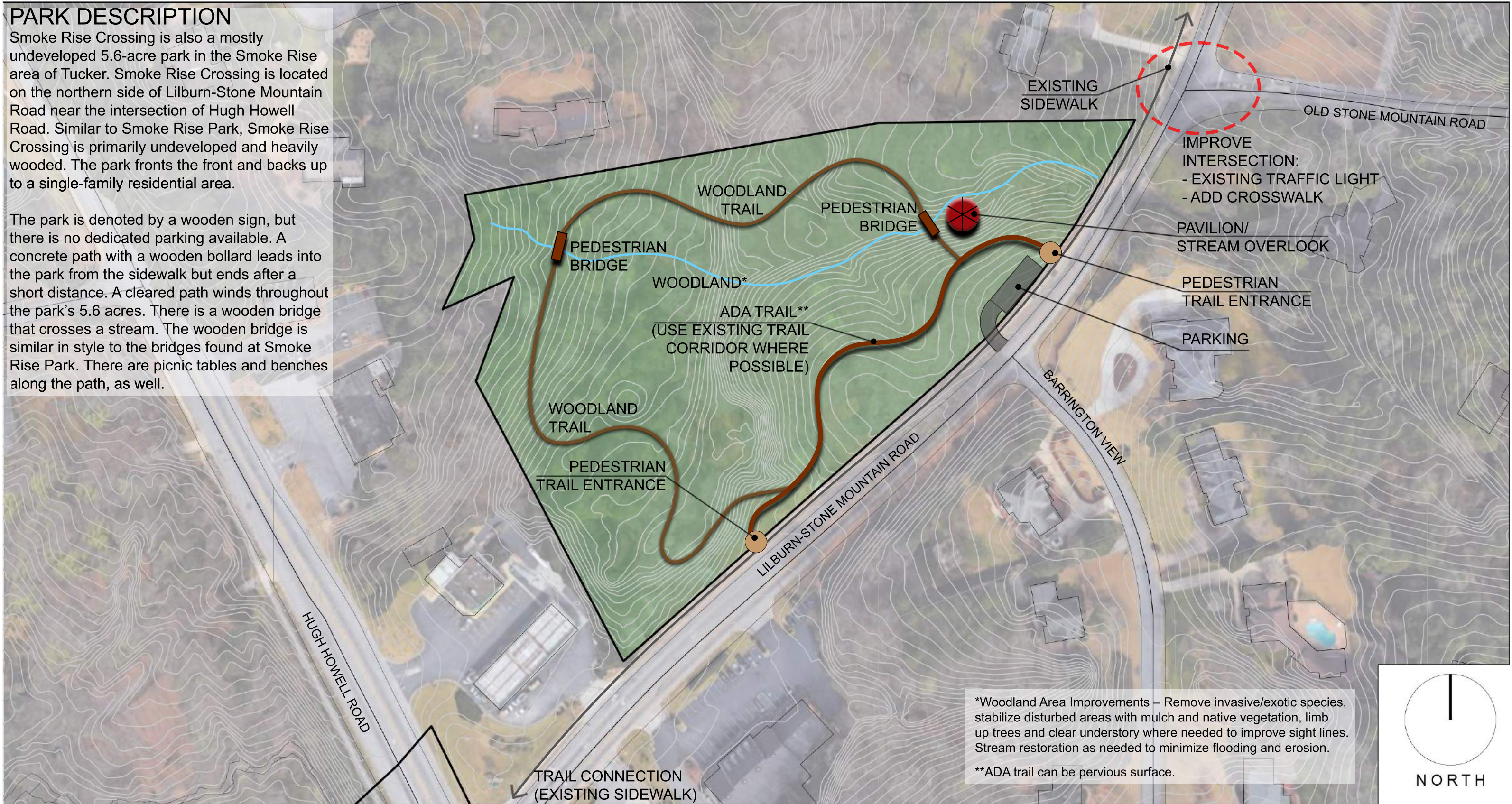
# SMOKE RISE PARK

## TUCKER, GEORGIA

## PARK DESCRIPTION

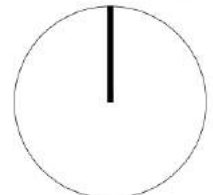
Smoke Rise Crossing is also a mostly undeveloped 5.6-acre park in the Smoke Rise area of Tucker. Smoke Rise Crossing is located on the northern side of Lilburn-Stone Mountain Road near the intersection of Hugh Howell Road. Similar to Smoke Rise Park, Smoke Rise Crossing is primarily undeveloped and heavily wooded. The park fronts the front and backs up to a single-family residential area.

The park is denoted by a wooden sign, but there is no dedicated parking available. A concrete path with a wooden bollard leads into the park from the sidewalk but ends after a short distance. A cleared path winds throughout the park's 5.6 acres. There is a wooden bridge that crosses a stream. The wooden bridge is similar in style to the bridges found at Smoke Rise Park. There are picnic tables and benches along the path, as well.



\*Woodland Area Improvements – Remove invasive/exotic species, stabilize disturbed areas with mulch and native vegetation, limb up trees and clear understory where needed to improve sight lines. Stream restoration as needed to minimize flooding and erosion.

\*\*ADA trail can be pervious surface.



NORTH

SCALE: 1"=100'

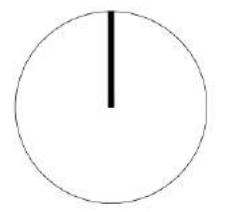
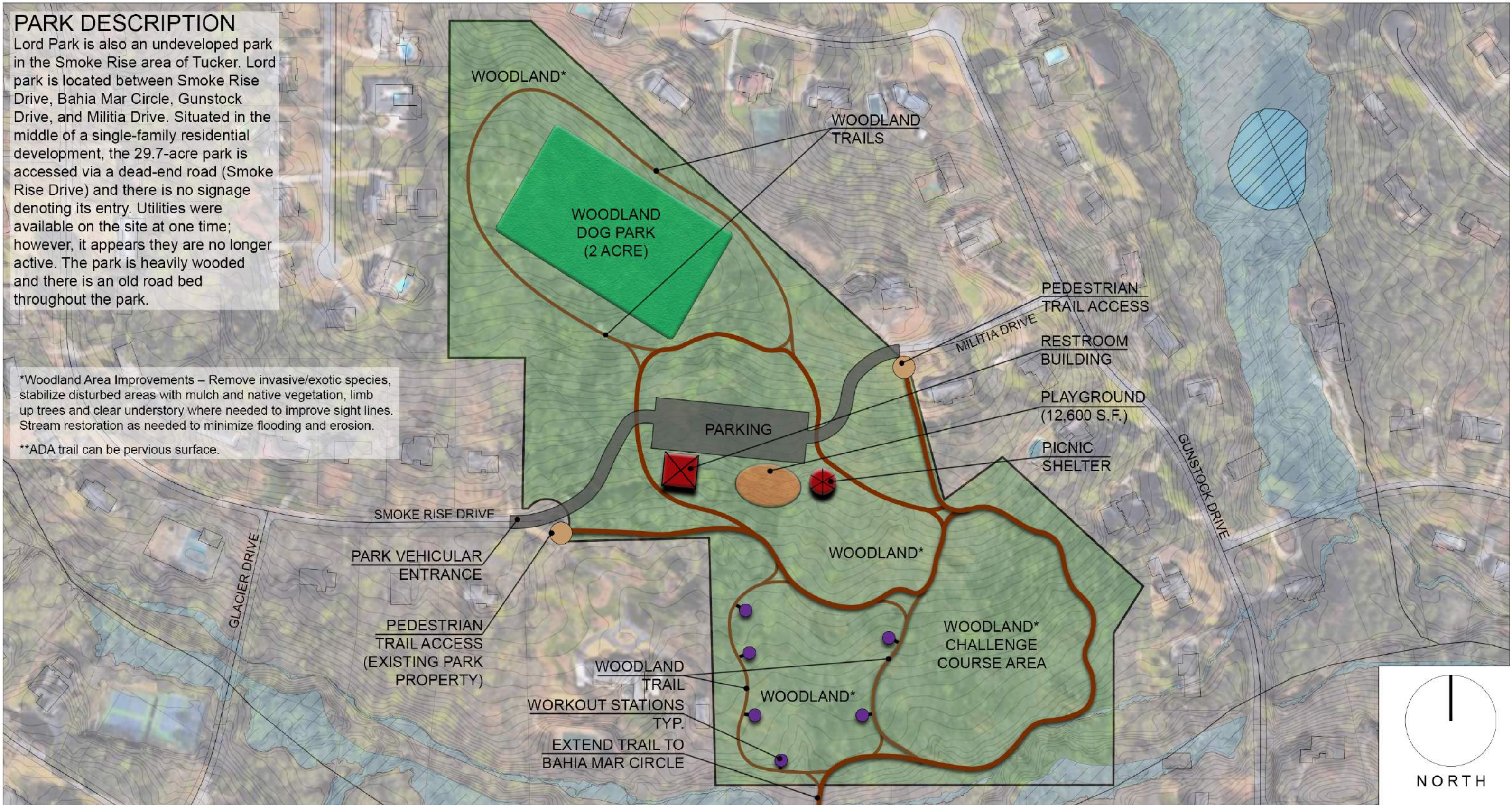


## PARK DESCRIPTION

Lord Park is also an undeveloped park in the Smoke Rise area of Tucker. Lord park is located between Smoke Rise Drive, Bahia Mar Circle, Gunstock Drive, and Militia Drive. Situated in the middle of a single-family residential development, the 29.7-acre park is accessed via a dead-end road (Smoke Rise Drive) and there is no signage denoting its entry. Utilities were available on the site at one time; however, it appears they are no longer active. The park is heavily wooded and there is an old road bed throughout the park.

\*Woodland Area Improvements – Remove invasive/exotic species, stabilize disturbed areas with mulch and native vegetation, limb up trees and clear understory where needed to improve sight lines. Stream restoration as needed to minimize flooding and erosion.

\*\*ADA trail can be pervious surface.



NORTH

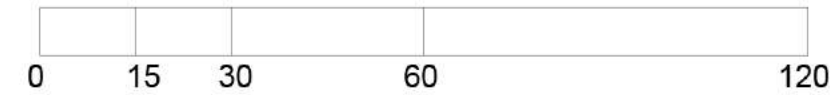
SCALE: 1"=200'





# WESTWOOD DRIVE POCKET PARK

TUCKER, GEORGIA



Prepared by:  
**BARGE**  
DESIGN SOLUTIONS

January 16, 2019



**General notes :**

All structures on drawing are drawn to approximate placement and are not drawn to scale. The design of the trails was done to put the trails in the best location to minimize impacts from use and erosion. The trails were also placed to meet the needs of the intended use. This should help minimize the creation of non-authorized trails.

Corridor clearing shall be completed as shown on the "Clearing Limits" detail. All clearing debris shall be used to cover non-used system trails designated for rehabilitation or dispersed a minimum of 15' from the tread location and placed in a manner as to appear natural. Invasive plant debris may be placed in piles to prevent spreading. All leaf litter shall be placed upslope of the tread.

All sections of the trail tread shall be constructed as full bench construction (see Tread Construction Profile). No fill material will be allowed as part of the trail tread.

All construction debris shall be placed down slope of the tread and spread in a manner to promote rapid regrowth of native vegetation. Construction debris shall not inhibit the natural flow of water across the trail tread. Once a section of tread is completed the back cut, trail tread and all spoil areas will be covered with leaf litter. All open soils are to be covered daily with leaf litter.

The tread width shall consist of native mineral soil (AKA natural surface). The average width shall be 36" to 40" wide, not to exceed 48". The finished surface shall be compacted. Compaction shall be accomplished using a vibratory plate compactor capable of putting down a minimum of 5000 psi to ensure a stable tread path and minimize maintenance. Sheep's foot or roller compactors are not acceptable. The trail shall be constructed using rubber tracked equipment measuring no wider than 48". Care should be taken to avoid scarring trees. Excessive scarring may require contractor to remediate.

The final tread surface shall be free of loose or broken roots and loose rocks. No root or rock shall protrude more than 2" vertically above the surface of the trail tread.

Care shall be taken during construction to ensure no materials or sediment are deposited in any waterways or drainage areas. All construction debris located within 20' of a riparian zone or water way during construction shall be removed from that area and dispersed in non-sensitive areas.

All existing trails sections that will NOT be utilized as system trails are to be closed to use and rehabilitated. This will be accomplished by using check dams to stop erosion, then covered with brush. Scarification of trail tread prior to check dam construction is recommended. See "Erosion Control Check Dams" for details

This design and all its components have been completed using the latest techniques for sustainable, low impact trail design and construction standards.

Near the park entrance, located on Henderson Park road, there are currently two access points. The access point nearest the entrance shall stay and the other shall be closed and rehabilitated. The park sign at located at the entrance to be closed shall be removed and reinstalled at the remaining access point.

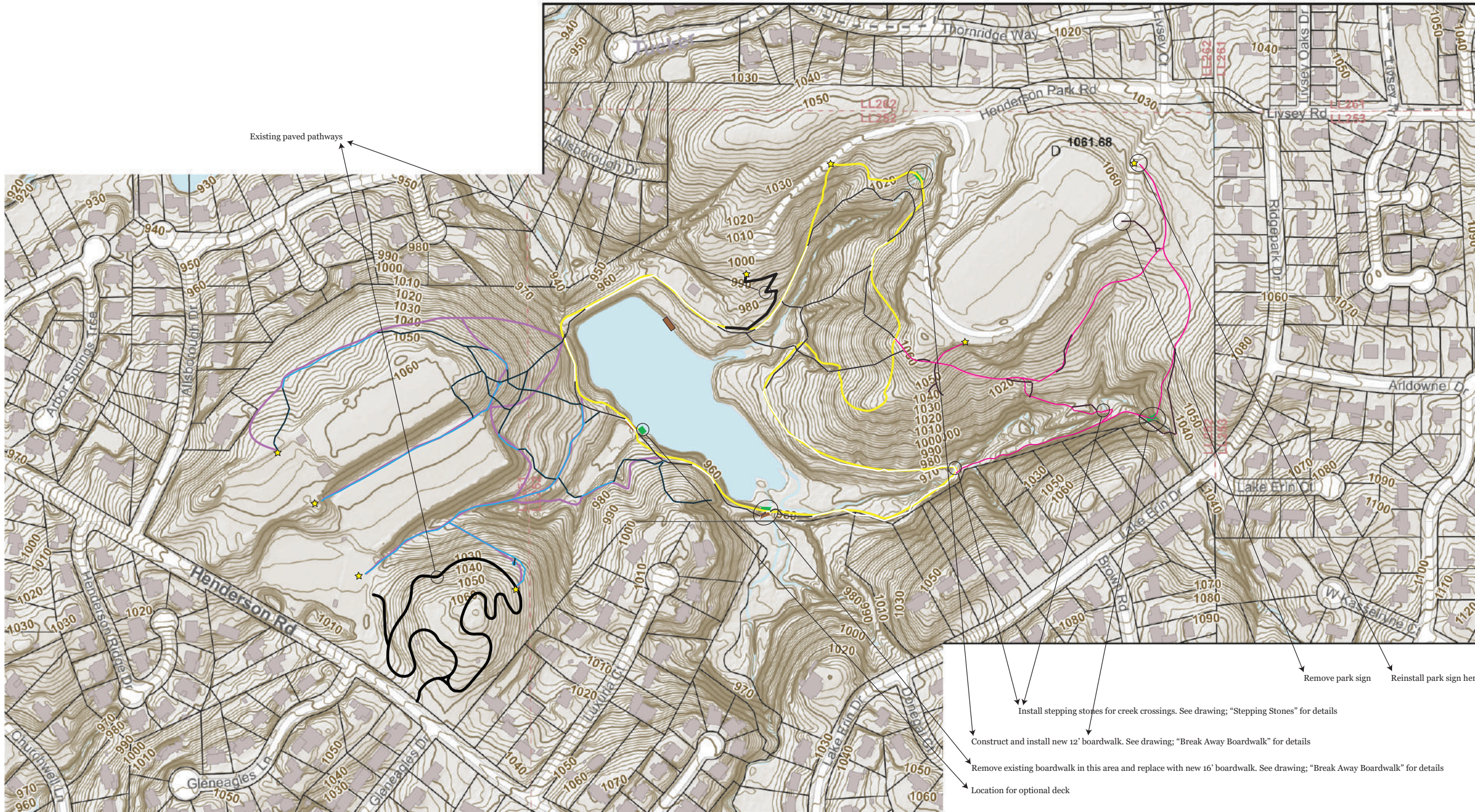
Two of the creek crossing (see sample areas on map) shall constructed using stepping stones. See drawing "Stepping Stones" for details.

The White trail has an existing 30' bridge on it. Both ends of the bridge are higher than the trail tread. As users step off the structure it creates an impact spot which holds water after a rain event causing a wet spot. Mineral soil ramps shall be added to the either end of the structure so movement onto and off the bridge is smooth and continuous. The grade on the ramps shall not measure more than 8%



**Henderson Park  
Trail Redesign**

Version - 1.2 04/25/2017



**LEGEND**

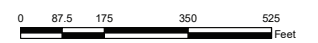
- Existing White trail
- New White trail
- Existing Blue trail
- New Blue trail
- Existing Red trail
- New Red trail
- Close and Rehab
- Existing accessible trail
- Trail access points
- Map contour line
- Existing bridges & boardwalks
- Additional boardwalks
- Sample area

Page 1

North



**MAP SCALE**



Trail Design Specialists, LLC  
 Email: trails@traildesign.com  
 Phone: 678-410-8021  
 www.traildesign.com



# HENDERSON PARK TRAILS



## Our Partners





**City of Tucker**  
**Recreation and Parks Master Plan**