

# Parks & Open Space Plan

Winston-Salem and Forsyth County  
2015





# Parks & Open Space

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## Plan

Winston-Salem and Forsyth County  
2015

Prepared for the Citizens of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County  
By the City-County Planning Board



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# Executive Summary

The residents of Forsyth County and Winston-Salem currently enjoy a high quality of life; however, increased growth and development can result in a reduction in this quality of life if steps are not taken now to protect and expand the community's outdoor recreational and environmental resources. The community must ensure that our parks, recreational facilities and open space keep pace with population growth and land development.

## VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The vision of Forsyth County residents for their community for the year 2015 was articulated in *Legacy*, Winston-Salem's and Forsyth County's Comprehensive Plan. Residents envisioned a community in which they enjoy a system of community parks, significant natural areas and preserved open space, all connected by a green network of trails and streams, providing opportunities for recreation and relaxation for all.

The goal of the *Parks and Open Space Plan* is to provide a system of parks, preserved natural areas and recreational opportunities that improve the quality of life of residents. The objectives of this Plan are:

- To provide park land, open space areas and recreational facilities that meet the current and future needs of a diverse population;
- To increase coordination and cooperation between governmental jurisdictions, institutions, and recreation providers to efficiently meet these needs;
- To establish a system of open space and corridors throughout Forsyth County that provides recreational opportunities, environmental protection, enjoyment of nature, enhancement of community character, and links to community resources; and,
- To develop a sense of community involvement and ownership in the parks and open space system by allowing citizens to have input in decisions regarding the system.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Plan proposes to expand the countywide park and open space system by adding park acreage where there are existing and projected deficiencies of park land; identifying areas for natural resource preservation; and, expanding recreational facilities to meet identified needs. Proposed additions to the park system are based on a community needs assessment that takes into consideration existing and projected demand derived from surveys and the location of existing and projected population; recommended standards for the provision of parks and facilities; and existing plan proposals.

Proposals to meet the needs of the county's projected 2015 population include:

- Major new regional parks on the Yadkin River, at Belews Lake and at the Hanes Mill Road Landfill site.
- 2048 acres of new or expanded district parks. The major new Parks proposed are at Old Salisbury Road, the former landfill site located in southeast Winston-Salem at Old Milwaukee Lane, and a site at Abbotts Creek in the southeast Forsyth County/ Union Cross area.
- 1285 acres of community parks to be located mainly in municipalities lacking them and to service major new areas to be annexed by municipalities.
- 590 acres of neighborhood parks to be located mainly to service new neighborhoods and areas identified as needing them in local Area Plans.

Specific categories of land identified for inclusion in Forsyth County's open space system include public parks and community gardens; Natural Heritage Inventory sites; Farmland Preservation Program sites; floodplains and stream restoration areas; lakes and wetlands; greenways; and land possessing special scenic, historic or archeological value.

Recommendations for developing and managing the parks and open space system include:

- Utilizing this Plan to identify areas where parks, open space and facilities are needed.
- Securing multiyear, dedicated funding sources to implement the plan.
- Establishing a park and open space land acquisition program.
- Encouraging developers/large land holders to work with residents and elected officials to improve the availability of parks and open space to the community's residents, where needed.
- Ensuring that park and open space sites are included in planning for community facilities in Area Plans, new developments and brownfield redevelopment sites.

- Actively pursuing State, federal and private funding for projects.
- Seeking intergovernmental and interagency cooperation to implement the plan.
- Undertaking a maintenance assessment and preparing an upgrading plan for existing recreational facilities in Winston-Salem.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Success in improving the county’s park and open space system to meet existing and future needs depends on the degree to which this Plan’s recommendations are implemented. County and municipal agencies dealing with recreation, land use planning, finance, natural resource and farmland preservation and related areas all have roles to play in ensuring effective plan implementation. An implementation schedule establishes a timetable for action and identifies those groups that have primary responsibility for initiating action.

Some priority projects identified for development in the short to medium term include:

- Continued implementation of the master plan for Triad Park.
- Completing the upgrade of Tanglewood Park.
- Expanding facilities at Horizons Park.
- Expanding C.G. Hill Memorial Park.
- Implementing the master plan for Jamison Park in Winston-Salem.
- Completing and implementing master plans for Jefferson, Salem Lake and Winston Lake Parks in Winston-Salem.
- Establishing one community park each in Clemmons and Lewisville.
- Expanding facilities at Fourth of July Park and Beeson Park in Kernersville.
- Providing more soccer facilities.
- Constructing recreation centers in Winston-Salem, Clemmons, Rural Hall, Walkertown and Kernersville.
- Completing feasibility studies for the Old Salisbury Road Landfill; the former landfill site at Old Milwaukee Lane; and the Hanes Mill Road Landfill site in Winston-Salem.



Canoeing at Tanglewood.



Softball practice.



Children at play.



Enjoying the outdoors.



Fishing along the greenway.

# Introduction

Our community has many parks, recreational facilities and natural areas for active and passive recreation that help make it a desirable place to live. These range from the Yadkin River and parks such as Salem Lake Park, Tanglewood Park, and Triad Park, to wetlands, forest stands, historic sites, areas of natural beauty and wildlife habitat. However, increased growth and development can result in a reduction in this quality of life if steps are not taken to expand and protect the community's outdoor recreation and environmental resources and to ensure that our recreational facilities keep pace with population growth and land development.

The loss of Forsyth County's rural landscape is already apparent. The county lost 38,632 acres or forty-three percent of its farmland between 1976 and 1997. There was a fourteen percent decline in mature stands of trees between 1987 and 1997. Coupled with this is a growing demand for parks, open space and recreational facilities and a community vision for increased recreational facilities by the year 2015. Recognizing this, *Legacy*, Winston-Salem's and Forsyth County's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2001, recommended that priority be given to the completion of a comprehensive plan for parks, open space and greenways for Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. The *Greenway Plan – Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2015*, adopted in 2002, was the first phase of implementing this recommendation. The *Parks and Open Space Plan – Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2015* is the second phase. Following this Plan, the City of Winston-Salem will undertake a plan for upgrading and maintaining existing facilities.

## PURPOSE

The main purpose of this Plan is to enhance the recreational opportunities and the quality of life for all the citizens of Forsyth County by guiding the location and development of new parks and recreational facilities, and preserving additional open space. The Plan is intended to provide governments within the county with a framework that facilitates decision-making and action in developing a countywide system of parks and open space that serves the entire community. It assesses the existing system of parks and open space in the county and its municipalities and makes recommendations for the future development of the system.

It identifies goals and objectives, actions and strategies for making the community's vision a reality. This Plan is intended to be a working document that will evolve over time. Its focus is the provision of park land, recreational facilities and open space to meet the community's needs to the year 2015. The Plan will therefore:

- Assess the adequacy of existing parks, recreational facilities and open space;
- Make recommendations for new and improved parks and open space;
- Make proposals for new and expanded recreational facilities; and
- Suggest strategies for plan implementation.

## DEFINITIONS

### Parks

*Parks* are publicly owned spaces developed with facilities for active and/or passive recreation use. Parks provide a place to play and to enhance physical and mental well-being. They can also be a focus of community identity and character. Parks within the county have been classified according to categories identified in **Appendix A**.

### Open Space

*Open Space* can be defined as natural landscapes that remain relatively undisturbed. They can range from pristine preserves of high ecological significance to greenways. The broadest definition of open space includes land that does not have structures for residential, commercial, institutional or industrial use. These lands may be in a natural state (e.g., nature preserves, floodplains and wetlands) or in a developed state (e.g., playing fields, plazas, cemeteries). They may also be in the public domain (e.g., municipal parks, plazas), or in the private domain (e.g., residential common areas, golf courses, farms, woodlots, etc.).

A more restricted definition for open space is used in this Plan. Open space is defined for purposes of this Plan as land that is preserved and protected by environmental regulations or by purchase, conservation easements, dedication and/or donation to a public agency or land trust. These categories of open space may be under public or private ownership and may or may not be open for public access and use. Protected

open space serves many purposes including recreation, protecting our water quality and wildlife, buffering neighborhoods, and providing visual relief and contrast from our built environment.

## **BENEFITS OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

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Parks, open space and recreational facilities provide many complementary benefits necessary for a healthy, livable and economically thriving community. They benefit individuals, the community, the economy and the environment. The 1999 survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Association of Counties revealed that 98% of Americans feel that parks and green space improve quality of life. Benefits are broadly classified below.

### **ECONOMIC BENEFITS**

Communities can derive a range of economic benefits from having a well-developed system of parks, recreational facilities and open space, sometimes called green infrastructure. Commercial real estate executives report that quality-of-life resources such as parks, playgrounds and open lands have become as important as location costs in attracting new businesses. A study cited in the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration, an Empirical Study of the Role of Recreation, Parks and Open Space in Companies' Location Decision* showed that owners of small companies rank recreation, parks and open space as among the highest priorities in choosing a new location for their businesses. A 1995 study by the National Park Service reports that corporate CEOs list quality of life for employees as the third most important factor in locating businesses following access to domestic markets and the availability of skilled labor. Green infrastructure, therefore, can create a good business climate motivating businesses to locate or expand in a community. The 1999 Survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Association of Counties revealed that 80% of Americans feel that parks and green space benefit economic stability and property values.

Recreational facilities and open space are also essential ingredients of the tourism industry. Outdoor recreation is one of the fastest growing industries nationwide. A study done by North Carolina State University found that 25% of all visitors come to North Carolina for outdoor recreation and entertain-

ment and more than 40% to see historic and heritage sites.

Studies done in other cities indicate that economic development follows the creation of well-designed and maintained parks and open space. In Baltimore, San Antonio, New Orleans and elsewhere, investments in park and open space development have succeeded in helping attract new businesses and boosting tourism, with subsequent increases in tax revenues. Parks and green spaces also help to revitalize downtowns. Chattanooga, Tennessee, attributes much of its success in downtown revitalization to its extensive network of greenways and parks in the downtown.

Proximity to parks and open space has also been shown to increase real estate values. A 1998 survey by American LIVES Inc. for the real estate industry revealed that home buyers identified natural open space and walking/biking paths among the top four factors in their home purchasing decisions. Good neighborhood parks have been shown to increase property value of residences located within a radius of about two-fifths of a mile.

Investing in community open space and using open space policies in guiding the location of development can also contribute to community cost savings by reducing infrastructure and public service costs. Open space areas such as floodways, wetlands, riverside parks and greenways minimize the need for expensive infrastructure to handle drainage, flooding, water supply and water quality. Keeping water clean is less expensive than treating contaminated water. Protection of a floodplain is a cost-effective alternative to expensive flood control projects, flood insurance premiums and disaster relief.

### **SOCIAL BENEFITS**

The social benefits of parks, open space, and recreational facilities are widely recognized. A major 1992 study by the Carnegie Corporation, *A Matter of Time-Risk and the Non-school Hours*, concluded that forty percent of a schoolchild's waking hours are discretionary. Adolescents identified safe parks and recreation centers as priorities for non-school hours. The 1999 Survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Association of Counties revealed that 74% of Americans believe that parks and green space can help prevent juvenile crime and delinquency.

Social benefits are not limited to the youth but extend to other family members and age groups. Seniors, for example, who have an increased amount of leisure time, benefit from the recreational opportunities and social interaction that are possible with a good recreation infrastructure.

Many studies have shown that crime drops when parks and recreational activities are available in city neighborhoods. The U.S. Conference of Mayors has added recreation programs to its list of weapons to fight crime. A healthy infrastructure of safe parks, recreational facilities and open space facilitates community involvement and family activities.

## HEALTH BENEFITS

The link between parks, open space, recreational facilities and healthy communities has been well documented. Recreation and open space contribute to a high quality of life by providing for both active and passive forms of healthy activity. Healthy activity in turn leads to improved physical and mental health. There is growing concern among public health professionals about the prevalence of reduced physical activity and the resulting obesity, diabetes, and poor cardiovascular health among both children and adults. Federal health statistics show that nearly 65% of Americans are overweight and 31% obese. The American Academy of Pediatrics estimates that 25% of children are overweight. The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion recommends that communities provide opportunities for physical activity. Providing and promoting these opportunities will contribute to a healthier community and save dollars spent on health care.

Numerous studies highlight the basic need in humans to connect with nature. A consistent finding in over one hundred studies of recreation experiences in



Strolling on a greenway trail.

wilderness and urban nature areas has been reduction in stress. The benefits of green spaces in and around urban communities are therefore significant to the psychological as well as the physical well-being of humans.

## ENVIRONMENTAL/ ECOLOGICAL BENEFITS

Parks and open space provide many environmental benefits to the community. These green vegetated areas can help filter pollution from drinking water sources; protect our drinking water by providing undeveloped land for the recharge of aquifers; protect plant and wildlife habitats, biodiversity and rare and endangered species of plants and animals; preserve steep slopes, unstable soils and wetlands; protect natural landscapes, scenic beauty and cultural resources; mitigate floods; play a role in reducing air pollution; facilitate environmental education; and, provide for the enjoyment of nature. Priority needs to be given to providing parks and preserving open space if our community is to remain habitable and sustainable for people, plants and animals in spite of increasing population, economic growth and development.

## VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### OUR VISION

Citizen Focus Groups participating in a visioning process for *Legacy*, adopted in 2001, were asked to envision their community in the year 2015. Their vision is articulated in the community vision Statement called “Forsyth County Tomorrow,” which is part of *Legacy*. Their vision included a community in which:

residents enjoy a vast regional system of community parks, significant natural areas and preserved open space all connected by a green network of trails and streams. A well-maintained park system provides opportunities for fun and relaxation for all and recreational opportunities are located just minutes from every resident’s home. Local governments in Forsyth County come together with each other and private providers to efficiently meet the diverse recreational needs of residents.

The *Parks and Open Space Plan – Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2015* is intended to put forward a plan of action to translate the community’s vision into reality.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

*Legacy* identifies an overall goal for the development of parks, open space and greenways within Forsyth County based on residents' vision for their community. This overall goal is: "Forsyth County residents enjoy an extensive system of parks and preserved natural areas connected by a network of open space and greenways."

The objectives of this Plan are:

- To establish a system of open space and corridors throughout Winston-Salem and Forsyth County that provides recreational opportunities, environmental protection, enjoyment of nature, enhancement of community character, and links to community resources;
- To provide park land and open space areas that meet the needs of current and future generations;
- To provide parks and recreational facilities at accessible locations throughout Winston-Salem and Forsyth County to meet the needs of a diverse population;
- To increase cooperation between governmental jurisdictions, institutions, and recreation providers to efficiently meet the recreation and open space needs of citizens;
- To develop a sense of community involvement and ownership in the parks, recreation and open space system by allowing citizens to have input in decisions regarding the system; and
- To provide facilities that promote health related activities (Lewisville Town Council, April 12, 2007).

## THE PLANNING CONTEXT

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### HISTORY, STRUCTURE, MISSION

The City-County Planning Board and the respective County and municipal parks and recreation departments share responsibilities for planning the community's parks, open space and recreational facilities.

The City of Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department is responsible for the development, operation and maintenance of all public parks and recreational facilities in Winston-Salem. The Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Commission consists of eleven members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. The Commission is an advisory board responsible for setting policy and providing overall direction for the City Recreation and Parks Department. The mission of the Recreation and

Parks Department is to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Winston-Salem by providing a variety of indoor/outdoor leisure and cultural activities through a professionally trained staff in facilities that are physically attractive, conveniently located, accessible, safe and well maintained.

The Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department, which reports directly to the County Manager, is responsible for County-owned parks. The mission of the County Parks and Recreation Department is to develop, acquire, operate and maintain a park system and to provide comprehensive recreation programs for the use and enjoyment of Forsyth County residents. Its focus has been to provide basic recreational opportunities for residents of the County's unincorporated areas and special facilities for all county residents.

The Kernersville Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for Kernersville's parks and facilities. The Director works through the Recreation Advisory Board to develop programs that meet Kernersville's recreation needs. Kernersville conducted a community parks needs assessment survey in 2001 and completed a parks and recreation master plan for the Town in 2002.

The other smaller municipalities in the county do not have recreation departments but most do have parks and recreation boards or advisory committees of citizens who make recommendations to town managers and elected officials on parks and recreation matters. There is an increasing awareness by these communities of the need to provide a range of recreational opportunities to meet the needs of their residents.

### TRENDS INFLUENCING PARKS, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE

#### Demographics and Development Patterns

An understanding of the characteristics of the population and patterns of development in our community are important to successfully plan for and develop recreational facilities that meet the needs of residents. Significant demographic data include the following: In 2000, the U.S. Census counted 306,067 persons in Forsyth County, with 185,776 persons living in Winston-Salem (**Table 1**). Forsyth County's population is projected to increase by 62,097 persons to 368,164 persons by the year 2015. The population of

Winston-Salem is projected to be 216,635 by 2015.

- The percentage of 18-to-34 year-olds in Forsyth County is currently 24.5%. This percentage is projected to decline to 23.5% in 2015.
- The median age in Forsyth County is 36.0 years. By 2015 the median age is projected to be 36.8 years.
- The percentage of the population 5-19 years old is 20%.
- The percentage of households headed by single females is 8.2%.
- Approximately 13% of the county’s population is 65 years or older. An estimated 14.19% of the population will be 65 years or older by 2015.
- The Hispanic population counted as 19, 577 in 2000, representing an 831% increase since 1990. The 2000 Asian population of 3,172 is a 95% increase since 1990.
- The percentage of the population living in the urban areas of the county is 76.6%.

This data suggests that we need to provide recreational facilities for a growing population that is increasingly diverse, older, more urban, and characterized by both married couples and single-parent families. Demographic data of a proposed park’s service area should be considered when identifying needed park facilities.

**Table 1. 2000 Population Forsyth County and Municipalities**

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Forsyth County (total)</b> | <b>306,067</b> |
| Bethania                      | 354            |
| Clemmons                      | 13,827         |
| Kernersville                  | 17,126         |
| Lewisville                    | 8,826          |
| Rural Hall                    | 2,464          |
| Tobaccoville                  | 2,209          |
| Walkertown                    | 4,009          |
| Winston-Salem                 | 185,776        |

Source: Census Bureau – United States Department of Commerce.

Of significance to recreational facilities planning and development is not only the demographics of population growth, but population distribution (Table 1) and the location of growth and development. Growth patterns in Forsyth County show a marked concentration of new development in the western part of the county particularly in the Lewisville/Clemmons area and the western fringes of Winston-Salem. Another growth area is in the easternmost part of the county focused around Kernersville. Annexations and new development resulted in a 17% and 13% population increase in Clemmons and Kernersville, respectively, between 2000 and 2001. This compares to a 1.4% population increase for the entire county. Kernersville has projected that its population will grow to 26,203 by 2010 to approximately 33,000 by 2015.

Lewisville completed an annexation process in 2004, adding 1,354 acres of land with a population of 2,800 to the 234 acres with a population of 305 annexed in 2001. Proposals by Winston-Salem in 2004 to annex approximately 20 sq. miles (14,386 acres) of land could add approximately 17,500 persons to the existing city population. The largest sub-areas of Winston-Salem proposal with populations of 5,750 and 4,620 persons are located on the west and southeast of the city. The need for additional recreational facilities to serve these new city residents was recognized in the annexation plan. Proposals to locate new recreational facilities must, therefore, take into consideration the need to service the existing and future population of newly annexed areas.

A significant proportion of new development has occurred as low-density, single-family, green field subdivisions, resulting in loss of farmland, forests and open space. As we lose private open space to development, we need to examine ways to expand public open space, parks and greenways. *Legacy* recommends that we create more compact development patterns that accommodate growth yet help maintain our open space, rural areas and environmental quality. This means utilizing the land at the urban fringe more efficiently, at higher density levels than we have done to date. It also means making more efficient use of land in the older urban areas by encouraging reuse and infill development. The availability of parks and open space will be key components in providing a quality living environment in the more compact, higher density development advocated in *Legacy*.

## The Economy

The economy of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County has undergone dramatic changes over the last two decades. Traditional industries such as tobacco and textiles, once the foundation of the economy, are being replaced by a more service-based economy. Unfortunately, many service-oriented jobs do not pay as well as their manufacturing counterparts. An increase in relatively low-paying service sector jobs will create an economic class limited in its ability to afford private recreational activities. Public parks and recreational facilities will play an increasingly important role in providing inexpensive recreational activities for these sectors of the population.

Winston-Salem and Forsyth County must compete with other communities for quality jobs and economic stability. A community's quality of life has become a factor in the competition to attract economic development. High-tech industries attract a more affluent and cosmopolitan population. Instant electronic communications allow employers greater flexibility in the location of their businesses. Employers must, therefore, offer employees a desirable place to live and work in addition to good salaries if they are to attract and retain the highly educated and skilled workers they need. Further, employees migrating from more urban states bring higher expectations for public parks and recreation services. The ready availability of high-quality public and private recreational facilities and open space greatly contributes to the quality of life in the community and is, therefore, an asset in attracting high-tech employers and employees.

## National and Statewide Trends in Recreational Activities and Open Space Conservation

Surveys of individuals have been conducted on a national and State level to determine the demand for parks, open space and recreational facilities. A nationwide survey sponsored by the National Recreation and Parks Association and conducted by Pennsylvania State University found that 75% of those surveyed said that they used parks. The survey also found that public parks were heavily used by children, and even more so by senior citizens between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-four. The 1999 Survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Association of Counties reported that 92% of Americans believe that all levels of government should expand park and green space systems for future generations.

The North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Survey conducted in 1989 identified some of the most popular outdoor activities in the State as walking for pleasure, viewing scenery, beach activities and visiting historical sites. Eight activities were rated as having a high future demand. These were walking for pleasure, freshwater fishing, beach activities, camping, bicycling for pleasure, picnicking, swimming in pools and attending outdoor cultural events.

There have been changes in citizens' sporting needs in the last decade with the growing interest in physically challenging sports such as mountain biking, rollerblading, skateboarding, challenge courses, BMX racing, etc. Skateboarding, for example is one of the fastest growing sports with a 101% increase in participants in the period 1995-2000. The demand to remove skateboarders from city streets and other public places has resulted in the establishment of skateboard parks in many communities. Parks for hobby and extreme sports are increasingly in demand.

The increasing importance of home-based and privately-provided recreational facilities is another nationwide trend in recreation. Changes in technology and consumer preferences are making the home an increasingly important source of leisure activities. Home-based active and passive recreation includes the use of home gyms, hot tubs, audio/video centers, video exercise programs, computers and other high-tech equipment. There is also an ever-widening range of private recreational facilities available to the public on a commercial basis or through churches and civic clubs.



Action on the greenway.

Trends in open space conservation are illustrated by the fact that a 1999 nationwide survey by the Trust for Public Land showed that the protection of open space and natural lands is a high priority with the public, on par with such important issues as education. Poll numbers have translated into high levels of support at the ballot box for conservation measures.

At the State level, the North Carolina Million Acre Initiative demonstrates the increasing importance of preserving open space Statewide. This is a State-led, collaborative endeavor meant to accelerate the rate at which land is protected in North Carolina. The goal is

to permanently protect by December 2009, through private and public actions, an additional million acres of open space. This includes working landscapes, historic and cultural areas, floodplains, areas essential for water quality protection, natural areas, species habitat and recreational lands. In order to qualify, land must be permanently protected through the purchase or donation of a conservation easement or fee simple interest. A public or private conservation organization must hold the easement or deed. One Carolina Naturally is a Statewide initiative to develop a master plan for guiding the State's land and water conservation efforts over the next 25 years.



Open space.



Skateboard park – Kernersville.



Water play area.



Lewisville Square – A gathering place in downtown Lewisville.

# Parks and Recreational Facilities

## INVENTORY OF EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

One of the first steps in determining the need for new or improved public parks, recreational facilities and open space is to assess what exists and where these are located in relation to the population to be served.

Recreation areas and facilities countywide fall into three categories: public areas/facilities owned and operated by government for public use; quasi-public areas/facilities owned and operated by private or non-profit organizations but open to the public; and, private areas/facilities for use by members only. The City-County Planning Board completed an inventory of public recreation areas and facilities for this report with the assistance of the County and its municipalities. No similar comprehensive inventory has been done for quasi-public and private facilities. However, it is recognized that facilities provided by other groups play a significant role in providing supplementary and complementary recreational opportunities to residents of our community. Schools, YMCAs and some private facilities are included in the assessment of available facilities where they contribute critical assets.

## EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS

There are, at present, a total of 99 public parks countywide totaling approximately 5,818 acres (**Map 1, and Table 2**). These include parks owned by Forsyth County and all its municipalities. Seventy-five of these parks, totaling 3,349 acres, are located in Winston-Salem. They range in size from small, neighborhood parks to larger, urban parks. Eleven parks, totaling 2,114 acres, are owned by Forsyth County. The other municipalities own the remaining parks. Table 10 summarizes countywide parks by jurisdiction. These parks have been classified according to their size and function. See **Appendix A** for the countywide park classification system.

## EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There is a wide range of recreational facilities located in our community's public parks. Facilities for active recreational uses include 147 ball fields of all types, 127 tennis courts, 8 swimming pools, 18 recreation

centers, and many other facilities. Many of the existing facilities in Winston-Salem are 20-30 years old and are in need of maintenance and upgrading (**Appendix I**).

There are also facilities for more passive uses such as picnicking, fishing, and nature-based uses such as hiking and bird-watching. There are a total of approximately 20 miles of nature, walking and fitness trails at 17 parks and a combined total of 16 miles of trails on 6 greenways. The 365-acre Salem Lake, located at Salem Lake Park in Winston-Salem, is the focus of fishing and boating in Winston-Salem. Additional opportunities for fishing and/or boating are available at Winston Lake in Winston-Salem, Kernersville Lake Park in Kernersville, C.G. Hill Memorial Park east of Lewisville, Tanglewood Park south of Clemmons, and the Old U.S. 421 River Park, a public access point on the Yadkin River.

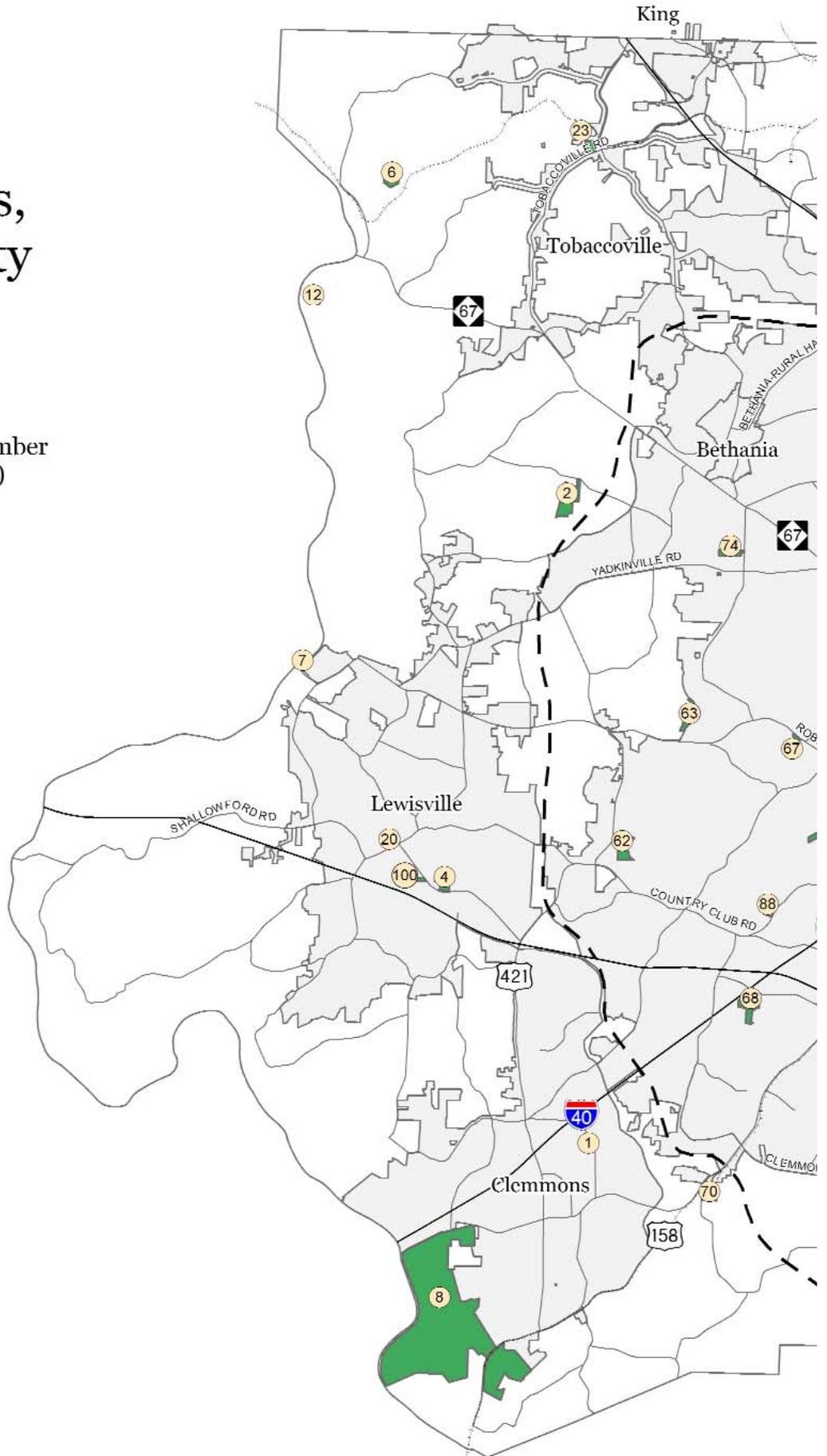
Generally, Winston-Salem has focused more on providing active recreational facilities in its extensive park system. Forsyth County has provided more passive recreational opportunities and special facilities. Many residents of some of the smaller and newer municipalities rely on County, City of Winston-Salem, and private parks and facilities to meet some of their needs rather than facilities offered by the municipality in which they live.

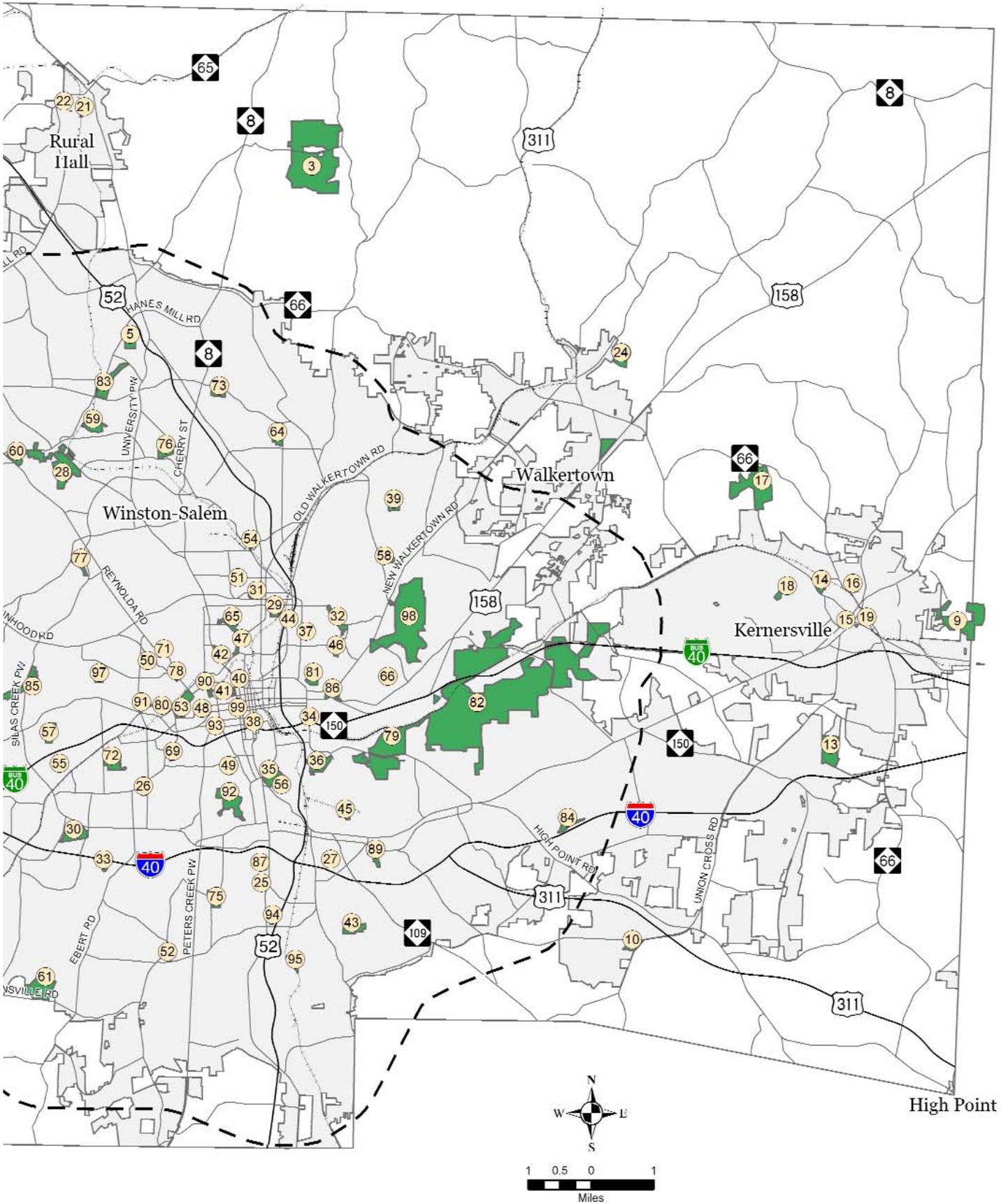


Walkertown Community Park.

# Map 1. Existing Parks, Forsyth County

- Existing Parks
- Proposed Beltway
- 1 Park Reference Number  
(See Table 2 for list)





**Table 2. Parks in Forsyth County by Type, Acreage and Jurisdiction**

| Park Name                   | Acres          | Type               | Map 1 # | Park Name                 | Acres         | Type            | Map 1 # | Park Name                    | Acres        | Type            | Map 1 # |
|-----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------|
| <b>Clemmons Parks</b>       |                |                    |         | <b>Kernersville Parks</b> |               |                 |         | <b>Walkertown Parks</b>      |              |                 |         |
| Greendale                   | 1.19           | Mini/Ornamental    | 1       | Beeson Road               | 75.60         | Community       | 13      | Whickenham                   | 25.15        | Community       | 24      |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>1.19</b>    |                    |         | Fourth Of July            | 17.70         | Neighborhood    | 14      | <b>Total</b>                 | <b>25.15</b> |                 |         |
| <b>Forsyth County Parks</b> |                |                    |         | Harmon                    | 1.70          | Neighborhood    | 15      | <b>Winston-Salem Parks</b>   |              |                 |         |
| C.G. Hill Memorial          | 73.27          | District           | 2       | Kernersville Civitan      | 8.20          | Neighborhood    | 16      | Anderson Drive-Luther Street | 1.75         | Open Space      | 25      |
| Horizons                    | 506.68         | District           | 3       | Kernersville Lake         | 160.00        | District        | 17      | Ardmore                      | 4.02         | Neighborhood    | 26      |
| Joanie Moser                | 18.21          | Community          | 4       | Old Kernersville Lake     | 13.90         | Neighborhood    | 18      | Belview                      | 6.34         | Neighborhood    | 27      |
| Nature Science Center       | 28.82          | Special Purpose    | 5       | Town Hall Plaza           | 1.00          | Mini/Ornamental | 19      | Bethabara                    | 30.97        | Community       | 28      |
| Old Richmond Courthouse     | 22.00          | Special Purpose    | 6       | <b>Total</b>              | <b>278.10</b> |                 |         | Blum-Blanding                | 18.90        | Community       | 29      |
| Old US 421                  | 1.58           | Special Purpose    | 7       | <b>Lewisville Parks</b>   |               |                 |         | Bolton                       | 38.99        | District        | 30      |
| Tanglewood                  | 1200.00        | Regional/Multifuse | 8       | Shallowford Square        | 2.67          | Special Purpose | 20      | Bon Air                      | 0.60         | Mini/Ornamental | 31      |
| Triad                       | 213.00         | Regional Park      | 9       | Jack Warren*              | 15            |                 | 100     | Bowen Blvd./Hansel B. Thomas | 18.86        | Community       | 32      |
| Union Cross                 | 17.49          | District           | 10      | <b>Total</b>              | <b>2.67</b>   |                 |         | British Woods                | 11.56        | Open Space      | 33      |
| Walkertown Community        | 28.00          | District           | 11      | <b>Rural Hall Parks</b>   |               |                 |         | Brushy Fork                  | 4.36         | Neighborhood    | 34      |
| Wright Courthouse           | 5.00           | Special Purpose    | 12      | Covington Memorial        | 33.50         | Community       | 21      | Central                      | 4.91         | Neighborhood    | 35      |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>2114.05</b> |                    |         | Pla-Mor                   | 0.50          | Neighborhood    | 22      | Civitan                      | 37.10        | Community       | 36      |
|                             |                |                    |         | <b>Total</b>              | <b>34.00</b>  |                 |         | Clark/Mickens                | 1.75         | Mini/Ornamental | 37      |
|                             |                |                    |         | <b>Tobaccoville Parks</b> |               |                 |         | Corpening Plaza              | 2.39         | Special Purpose | 38      |
|                             |                |                    |         | The Village               | 14.00         | Community       | 23      | Crawford                     | 21.24        | Neighborhood    | 39      |
|                             |                |                    |         | <b>Total</b>              | <b>14.00</b>  |                 |         | Crystal Towers               | 2.94         | Mini/Ornamental | 40      |

**Table 2. Parks in Forsyth County by Type, Acreage and Jurisdiction (Continued)**

| Park Name                                | Acres  | Type            | Map 1 # | Park Name       | Acres  | Type            | Map 1 # | Park Name               | Acres          | Type             | Map 1 # |
|--|--------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|---------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|---------|
| <i>(Winston-Sale Parks Continued...)</i> |        |                 |         |                 |        |                 |         |                         |                |                  |         |
| Downtown                                 | 0.81   | Mini/Ornamental | 41      | Hobby           | 93.53  | District        | 61      | Salem Lake              | 1455.37        | Regional/Reserve | 82      |
| Drayton Pines                            | 8.13   | Mini/Ornamental | 42      | Jamison         | 36.80  | Community       | 62      | Sara Lee Soccer         | 46.63          | District         | 83      |
| Easton                                   | 26.90  | Neighborhood    | 43      | Jefferson       | 22.20  | District        | 63      | Sedge Garden            | 21.03          | Neighborhood     | 84      |
| Fairview                                 | 2.13   | Neighborhood    | 44      | Jerry King      | 20.10  | Community       | 64      | Shaffner                | 55.97          | Community        | 85      |
| Forest                                   | 9.18   | Community       | 45      | Kimberly        | 26.66  | Community       | 65      | Skyland                 | 14.97          | Neighborhood     | 86      |
| Fourteenth Street                        | 6.90   | Community       | 46      | Kingston Greens | 0.70   | Neighborhood    | 66      | South                   | 5.43           | Neighborhood     | 87      |
| Gateway Commons                          | 10.51  | Community       | 47      | Leinbach        | 9.48   | Neighborhood    | 67      | South Fork              | 14.14          | Community        | 88      |
| Grace Court                              | 1.22   | Mini/Ornamental | 48      | Little Creek    | 33.83  | Neighborhood    | 68      | Sprague                 | 20.03          | Community        | 89      |
| Granville                                | 6.09   | Neighborhood    | 49      | Lockland        | 1.80   | Mini/Ornamental | 69      | Spring                  | 3.80           | Mini/Ornamental  | 90      |
| Greenbriar                               | 1.39   | Open Space      | 50      | Marvin Ward     | 5.80   | Neighborhood    | 70      | Stratford Road          | 4.60           | Mini/Ornamental  | 91      |
| Greenway                                 | 3.23   | Mini/Ornamental | 51      | Meadowbrook     | 0.60   | Mini/Ornamental | 71      | Washington              | 76.43          | District         | 92      |
| Griffith                                 | 6.80   | Community       | 52      | Miller          | 39.44  | District        | 72      | Watkins Street          | 0.54           | Mini/Ornamental  | 93      |
| Hanes                                    | 34.92  | District        | 53      | Oak Summit      | 15.00  | Neighborhood    | 73      | West Clemmonsville Road | 4.71           | Open Space       | 94      |
| Hanes Hosier                             | 6.28   | Community       | 54      | Old Town        | 16.21  | Neighborhood    | 74      | Weston                  | 14.30          | Neighborhood     | 95      |
| Hanes Town                               | 2.40   | Neighborhood    | 55      | Park Land       | 24.25  | Community       | 75      | Westview                | 5.84           | Open Space       | 96      |
| Happy Hill                               | 26.73  | Neighborhood    | 56      | Piney Grove     | 15.30  | Neighborhood    | 76      | Whitaker                | 10.16          | Community        | 97      |
| Hathaway                                 | 17.27  | Neighborhood    | 57      | Polo            | 19.87  | Community       | 77      | Winston Lake            | 383.55         | District         | 98      |
| Helen Nichols                            | 8.32   | Community       | 58      | Reynolda Road   | 2.63   | Mini/Ornamental | 78      | Winston Square          | 1.08           | Special Purpose  | 99      |
| Hine                                     | 38.59  | District        | 59      | Reynolds        | 232.50 | District        | 79      | <b>Total</b>            | <b>3347.00</b> |                  |         |
| Historic Bethabara                       | 145.21 | Special Purpose | 60      | Runnymede       | 4.19   | Mini/Ornamental | 80      | <b>Grand Total</b>      | <b>5816.16</b> |                  |         |
|  |        |                 |         | Rupert Bell     | 17.84  | Community       | 81      |                         |                |                  |         |

\* Note: This park acreage not included in acreage calculations.  
 Added after adoption of the Plan by County Commissioners.

**Table 3. Forsyth County and Municipal Parks, Number and Acreage by Jurisdiction**

| Jurisdiction  | Parks     | Acres       | Acres/1000 Persons <sup>1</sup> |
|---|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Unincorporated Forsyth County<sup>2</sup></b>                  | 11        | 2114        | 6.9                             |
| <b>Municipalities</b>   |           |             |                                 |
| Bethania  | 0         | 0           | 0                               |
| Clemmons  | 1         | 1.1         | 0                               |
| Kernersville  | 7         | 278         | 16.2                            |
| Lewisville  | 1         | 2.7         | 0.3                             |
| Rural Hall  | 2         | 34          | 13.8                            |
| Tobaccoville  | 1         | 14          | 6.3                             |
| Walkertown  | 1         | 25          | 6.2                             |
| Winston-Salem   | 75        | 3349        | 18                              |
| <b>Total:<br/>Forsyth County<sup>2</sup> &amp; Municipalities</b> | <b>99</b> | <b>5817</b> | <b>19</b>                       |

Notes: 1. Calculations based on 2000 Census population.  
2. County-owned facilities including 2 historic sites not open to the public.

**School Facilities**

Forsyth County residents also have some access to a wide range of mostly active recreational facilities located at County schools. These include track and tennis facilities, ball fields and gymnasiums. The widest range of facilities is located at high schools. However, most high school facilities are not widely available for use by the general public because of the high demand for their use for school activities. Elementary and middle school recreational facilities are generally more available for public use, in particular, those facilities at schools designated by the school system as community schools. It is estimated that approximately 184 acres at elementary and middle schools are used for outdoor recreational facilities. Municipalities and sports organizations often arrange with school authorities to use specific facilities, as needed. Some cooperative planning efforts between the School System and recreation departments have resulted in the establishment of public parks and facilities adjacent to schools facilitating joint use of facilities.

**Quasi-Public**

In addition to the parks and facilities provided by municipalities, the County, and schools, residents also have access to a wide range of mostly active quasi-public and private recreational facilities.

Quasi-public organizations, such as the YMCAs, churches, civic clubs, nonprofit organizations, and community organizations, have provided recreational facilities to the community for many years. Their facilities and programs play an important role in helping to meet the recreational needs of the community, complementing and supplementing public offerings. They play a major role in the provision of recreation opportunities to residents in some of the smaller and more recently incorporated municipalities that do not have long-established recreational facilities and programs.

At present, there are five YMCAs and one YWCA providing a range of recreational facilities and programs. Facilities include indoor pools, basketball courts, racquetball courts, gymnasiums and running tracks. The Village of Clemmons provides funding to the West Forsyth YMCA for outdoor recreational facilities. The only community pool/water park in Kernersville, partially funded by the Town, is located at the local YMCA and is available for public use at specified times. In addition, the Clemmons, Lewisville, and West Central Civic Centers provide valuable services in the areas where they are located. Although the smaller municipalities will be expected over time to provide more public facilities for their residents, quasi-public organizations will continue to play a supporting role in the provision of recreational facilities throughout the entire community.

**Private Facilities**

Commercial operators, the corporate community, and developers provide a range of private recreational facilities and programs that public or quasi-public organizations have been unable or unwilling to provide or cannot afford to provide adequately. Because their main goal is profit making rather than providing a public service, commercial recreation providers' pricing and operating policies differ from those of public or quasi-public organizations. A wide range of recreational facilities is provided by the private sector; among the most widespread are golf courses, swimming pools, tennis courts, gymnasiums and bowling facilities.

There are, at present, 18 golf courses located throughout the county. Four of these are publicly owned with

the remainder being privately owned. Swimming pools are increasingly being included in larger, high-quality residential developments, particularly multi-family developments. Approximately half of the baseball fields are privately owned and there are also a small number of private soccer and softball fields.

Large corporations such as RJ Reynolds, Sara Lee, and Baptist Hospital that have large numbers of employees often have their own recreational facilities for employees or sponsor the provision of public facilities and programs. These corporate-sponsored recreational facilities, which are often open to the public, supplement and enhance public facilities. For example, walking trails located on the Sara Lee Corporation's campus are available for use by county residents. The opportunities for partnerships with private industries and private contributions and sponsorship of recreational facilities and programs could be further explored when considering strategies designed to meet the community's recreation and open space needs.

Developers' role in the provision of recreational facilities has been in the inclusion of private facilities, mainly pools, clubhouses and, sometimes, pedestrian paths, in higher-end developments. They also dedicate greenway easements, mostly along creeks, through the development approval process. New developments are increasingly placing a burden on local governments to provide new parks, open space and recreational facilities. The municipalities may need to consider options for park land and open space dedication to meet future needs. The State of North Carolina recognized the responsibility of new developments to share part of the costs of providing these facilities. The State's 1974 subdivision regulation enabling law has authorized local governments to require new subdivisions to dedicate or reserve a portion of land to provide for the recreational needs of their residents. Where the size, location or nature of the land is not appropriate for dedication, a payment equivalent to the value of the required land may be made toward provision of more appropriate land and facilities elsewhere. The dedication of open space or compensation in lieu of open space has become the responsibility of developers of residential subdivisions or commercial and industrial business parks in many communities, including some in North Carolina. The financial burdens now being placed on existing residents to meet the growing demand for recreation areas and facilities in newly developed areas may necessitate requiring developers to assume responsibility for providing for the recreation needs of their clients relative to the size and magnitude of their development.

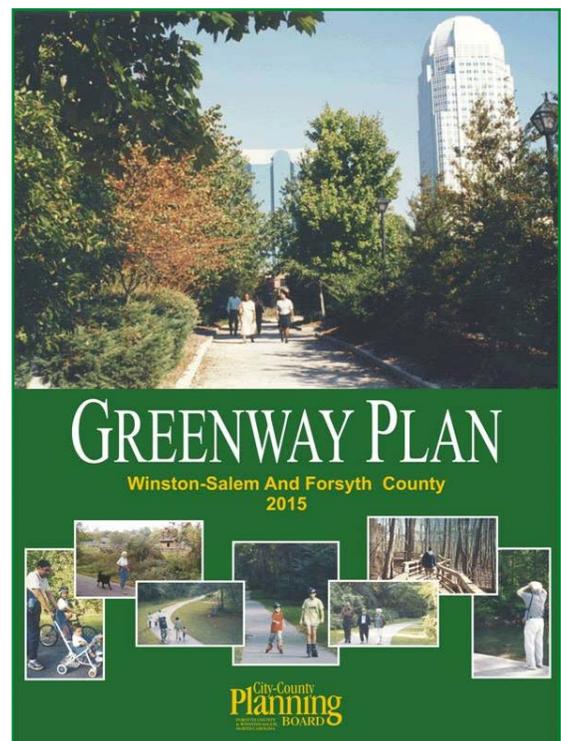
## EXISTING PLANS AND POTENTIAL PROJECTS

### RECREATION PLANNING

A *Recovery Action Plan* was prepared in 1994 for the U.S. Department of the Interior to seek federal funding for parks and recreational facilities in Winston-Salem. The major elements of that plan have been implemented. *Legacy*, prepared by the City-County Planning Board, made general recommendations on parks, open space and greenways and recommended preparation of a more comprehensive parks, greenways and open space plan. The *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, adopted in 2002, replaces a 1983 plan and makes specific recommendations for parks and recreational facilities in that community.

### THE GREENWAY PLAN

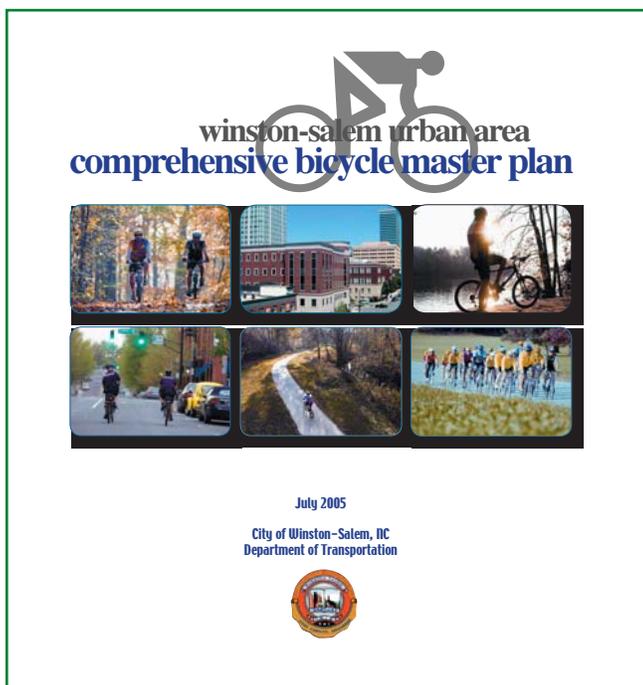
The *Greenway Plan*, adopted in 2002, makes recommendations for expanding the existing greenway system and creating a countywide greenway system. One of the key objectives of the *Greenway Plan* is to establish a greenway system that provides safe and inviting connections between neighborhoods and parks, schools, institutions, shopping and other points of interest.



## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLANS

In addition to the *Greenway Plan*, other planning efforts in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County seek to increase pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to recreation resources.

The *Winston-Salem Urban Area Comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan*, adopted in 2005, integrates bicycle planning into the long-range growth management of the community. The Plan is intended to make the community more bicycle-friendly and create an extensive network of on-road and off-route bicycle routes. A new Bicycle Map with bike routes and road suitability information is being produced and should be available in late 2006. Parks, greenways, schools and other destinations where people want to ride are included on the map.



The *Winston Salem Urban Area Sidewalk and Pedestrian Facilities Plan* is currently being drafted by City-County staff. An overall goal of the plan is to enhance and encourage connectivity. One of the key objectives is to connect neighborhoods to resources, such as, schools, parks, libraries, greenways, bike-ways and recreational facilities. As part of the Plan, a comprehensive inventory of sidewalks in Forsyth County has been developed and mapped so staff is now aware where sidewalks are needed. The

Pedestrian Plan should be considered by the City-County Planning Board and by the Winston-Salem Urban Area Transportation Advisory Committee by mid-2007.

Based on the Pedestrian Plan and local ordinances, project developers are or will be required to construct sidewalks in most new development projects in municipalities in Forsyth County. In Winston-Salem, funding for construction of new sidewalks in already developed areas is based on a funding priority system recently revised by City and County staff. The new Sidewalk Ranking Criteria point system encourages connectivity by giving points to projects that will provide connection to existing or planned sidewalks, greenways and/or bike trails. Points are also given to projects located near parks, schools and other pedestrian generators.

## AREA PLANS

One of the recommendations of *Legacy* is to prepare Area Plans for all of Forsyth County. These are detailed plans that apply the goals and policies of *Legacy* to specific areas of the community. Detailed land use recommendations are made for an area with the involvement of local neighborhoods. **Map 6** (page 92) indicates proposed Area Plans and the status of these plans. More detailed proposals for parks, recreational facilities and open space than is possible in this countywide Plan have been and will be considered in Area Plans. This Plan acknowledges the recommendations of recently adopted Area Plans. As plans in other areas are completed and adopted, the parks, recreational and open space recommendations of those plans will become part of this Plan.

## PLANS AND PROJECTS – FORSYTH COUNTY

The County has plans to improve existing facilities and add new facilities to existing parks over the next few years. Its priority for park development is Triad Park, a regional park, jointly financed by Forsyth and Guilford Counties. When the master plan, which includes thirteen phases, was approved in 1994, the park was projected to cost \$12.2 million dollars, not allowing for inflation. It is expected that Triad Park will continue to be funded over the next nine years and to be developed in accordance with its master plan. The master plan for this 426-acre park, which was opened in 1997, proposes a wide range of recreational facilities including an amphitheater, picnic facilities, disc golf course, lakes, trails, camping

areas, active play areas, equestrian area, mountain bike area and a multipurpose building. It emphasizes preservation of the park's natural state. Facilities already developed at the park include picnic shelters, horseshoe pits and volleyball courts, softball and soccer fields, two miles of paved walking trails and a children's playground. A 5,000 square foot multipurpose building was completed in 2004. This will be followed by the creation of fishing ponds. The most ambitious phase of the project involves building an amphitheater, which, as proposed, would have 350 permanent seats and a sloped, grassy area with room for up to 6,000 people. Each county has committed \$400,000 to build the amphitheater. A nonprofit group, Friends of Triad Park, began a \$3.2 million fundraising drive in 2001 to supplement the counties' contributions. It is hoped that the facility will be completed in about five years, but that time estimate is linked to the success of the fundraising drive.

A plan has been completed to upgrade the 1,320-acre Tanglewood Park which was recently returned to County management after being under contracted private management for a number of years. The focus of that Plan is to upgrade existing facilities. The County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes upgrades/projects for this park estimated at \$12 million. Improvements include: rebuilding the pool; renovating and reopening the campground; replacing picnic shelters, restrooms and maintenance facility; rebuilding six tennis courts; renovating both golf courses; undertaking various repairs to on-site lodging; and, upgrading utilities. The only new facilities to be considered by 2015 are walking trails, a tennis clubhouse and a new maintenance facility.

The County Parks and Recreation Department has also considered the continued development of the 492-acre Horizons Park and expanding the existing 62-acre C.G. Hill Memorial Park. Facilities proposed at Horizons Park could include two ten-acre lakes for fishing and paddle boating; additional picnic shelters; soccer and softball fields; additional hiking trails; amphitheater; camping area; disc golf course; asphalt paths for walking/in-line skating and bike riding; and, a maintenance complex. Facilities that could be considered for the expansion of C.G. Hill Memorial Park include picnic shelters; a restroom complex; sand volleyball courts; horseshoe pits; children's playground; hiking trails; additional asphalt trails; an open field area, and a maintenance building. At this time, no funding has been budgeted for the proposed improvements at these parks.

The only other proposed new parks and open space located outside of the municipalities are those proposed in the adopted *Union Cross/Southeast Forsyth County Area Plan* totaling approximately 330 acres. These are located:

- Adjacent to Glenn High School, along Glenn High Road;
- In the southern portion of Caleb's Creek, along Watkins Road;
- At the confluence of Abbotts Creek and Idlewild Road Branch, south of US 311 and north of Bear Run Lane; and
- Along Abbotts Creek, north of Ogden School Road.

As recommended in the Plan, facilities should range from active to passive recreational facilities and include preserved natural areas. Detailed feasibility studies need to be undertaken for these proposals and methods of securing the land investigated.

## **PLANS AND PROJECTS – CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM**

The City of Winston-Salem has plans to develop new parks and improve facilities at some existing parks. New parks are proposed adjacent to Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, Marvin Ward Elementary School, and Clemmons Middle School. These are intended to serve the growing population on the west and southwest sides of the city, which lack public recreational facilities.

A park master plan has been done for the newly acquired 37-acre Jamison Park at Meadowlark Road adjacent to the Meadowlark Elementary and Middle Schools. This park is intended to service the western fringes of the city and includes soccer fields, walking trails, tennis courts and a basketball court. Park plans have also been completed for Leinbach and Granville Parks as well as for a seven-acre parcel of land recently added to Shaffner Park. The *Southeast Gateway Public Spaces Master Plan* includes proposals for improving Happy Hill Park.

Projects identified as desirable by the Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department include:

- Implementation of the master plan for the expanded Shaffner Park.
- Improvement to facilities at Salem Lake Park. Proposed is the Salem Lake Marina Center, which will provide conference room rentals, workshops, classes, boat registrations and rentals, fishing licenses/passes, and restroom facilities, and will offer concessions and the opportunity to purchase equipment.

- Implementation of the Leinbach Park Master Plan.
- Improvements to Happy Hill Park.
- Initial development of a new or expanded park at Balsom Road adjacent to the existing C.G. Hill Park.
- Commencement of development of Jamison Park at Meadowlark Road based on the park master plan.
- Construction of a gymnasium at Sedge Garden neighborhood center.
- Renovations and repairs to recreation centers, swimming pools, tennis courts and other park facilities.
- Renovations to Granville Park based on Master Plan.
- Development of new parks adjacent to Jefferson Elementary School and Clemmons Middle School.

The recently adopted *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan* and the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan* propose that additional park and recreational facilities be provided for the southeast and south central areas of the city over the long term. More detailed feasibility studies of these proposals would need to be undertaken.

The *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*, adopted in May 2002, recommends:

- The creation of an active recreation area, possibly including a soccer field, south of the former Vulcan Quarry site and north of Waughtown Street.
- An additional active recreation area to possibly include soccer or baseball fields east of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and south of Argonne Boulevard.
- Addition of open space along Salem Creek between Civitan Park and Reynolds Park.

The *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*, adopted in 2003, recommends:

- Improvements to the Downtown Park and Granville Park.
- Public gathering spaces at Sunnyside and Holly Avenue.
- A Southeast Gateway Park, a combination of the existing Central and Happy Hill Parks extended westward along the Salem Creek floodplain.
- Expansion of Washington Park along the floodplain of Salem Creek.
- A linear park north of Stadium Drive along Bath Branch, a branch of Salem Creek.
- A linear park along I-40 Business west of Peters Creek Parkway.

The *Downtown Winston-Salem Plan* recommends:

- A civic plaza/green space in the core of downtown.
- A downtown sports stadium.
- More detailed planning for downtown green space.

## PLANS AND PROJECTS – OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

### Kernersville

The Town of Kernersville adopted the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan* in November 2002. The plan recommended that by the year 2020, Kernersville should make provisions for the following new park facilities and other improvements:

- Develop two new community parks. One would be located north of town in the Old Valley School Road/Kernersville Lake Park area; the other south of town in the Abbotts Creek/Ogden School Road area.
- Improve and expand facilities at Beeson Park to include additional community-level park amenities recommended in the master plan prepared for the park. These include two baseball/softball fields, a recreation center, small lake/pond, picnic areas/shelters, extensions of a walking trail system, and a championship miniature golf course. Acquisition of more property for future expansion is also proposed.
- Develop five new neighborhood parks at the following general locations:
  - Piney Grove/Linville Road area in the north
  - Regents Park/Bluff School Road area in the west
  - Wicker Road in the south central area
  - NC 66/Old Salem Road in the southeast
  - Watkins Ford/Teague Road (Caleb Creek) area in the south
- Improve existing neighborhood park sites (provide better pedestrian links and updated facilities).
- Prepare and implement a master plan for the Fourth of July Park.
- Prepare and implement a master plan for Old Kernersville Lake Park.
- Develop a minimum of 8 miles of linear park/greenway trails.
- Use existing undeveloped sites and public property to develop mini-park sites.
- Develop a recreation center at Beeson Park and provide more community meeting facilities at the Town Hall complex as it expands.
- Continue the lease agreement with Forsyth County for the management of Kernersville Lake Park.
- Develop recreational facilities at the Waste Management landfill site located three miles northeast of the town on Freeman Road.

The Town received a State grant for Century Lake Park, a new 9-acre neighborhood park project, located at Century Boulevard. The project includes a 6-acre lake, fishing piers, canoe/kayak launch, spray fountains and picnic sites.

## **Lewisville**

The Town of Lewisville in its *2005 Comprehensive Plan* proposed the development of community parks for team sports and other recreational facilities. Three potential park sites, including an expansion of the County-owned Old US 421 Park on the Yadkin River, are identified in the plan. The feasibility of acquisition and development of these sites for recreational uses needs to be undertaken. The Plan also recommended the development of specific strategies to effectively plan and manage parks and recreational facilities.

An approximately 15-acre site, located off Lewisville-Clemmons Road, was donated to the Town in 2005 for the establishment of a passive park, the Jack Warren Park.

## **Clemmons**

The Village of Clemmons in its 1998 *Clemmons Area Development Guide* identified a number of potential sites for park development including gateway parks, neighborhood parks, playgrounds and nature parks.

The *Guide* recommended the appointment of a Parks Committee to define the criteria for park sites, research potential sites, prioritize development of suitable sites, develop an acquisition strategy for selected sites, and define a development and maintenance program for parks.

## **Walkertown**

The Town of Walkertown has leased the 25-acre Walkertown Park located northeast of town to the Walkertown Little League. Five baseball fields and related facilities have been constructed. The long-term goal is to add an amphitheater, walking tracks and nature trails.

## **Tobaccoville**

The Village of Tobaccoville has developed its 15.7-acre Village Park with a range of recreational facilities, including a community center constructed in 2001. Although there are no plans for additional parks or facilities at this time, the Village's Parks Advisory Committee proposes identifying sites for early acquisition for future park development.

## **Rural Hall**

The Town of Rural Hall has a 25-acre site adjacent to the existing Covington Memorial Park reserved for future recreation use. No projects are proposed on the site at this time.



Recreation Center – Tobaccoville.

## **BROWNFIELD AND LANDFILL SITES AS RECREATION/ OPEN SPACE**

Brownfield sites are older, abandoned industrial sites which may contain pollutants or contaminants. Brownfield sites, which commonly bring blight to a community, are usually located in more populated urban areas where there may be a need for green space. Recreation and open space are among potential positive uses for existing brownfield sites. Converting brownfield sites into recreation space, therefore, transforms idle and derelict land into a resource that enhances the community. The environmental hazards that might exist on brownfield sites need not deter the use of the sites for recreation space. The use of these sites should be suited to the nature of the sites and the levels of cleanup undertaken, and can range from small green spaces/pocket parks to larger active or passive recreation areas. *Legacy* recommends a study identifying brownfield sites for revitalization. Consideration should be given to the use of some of these sites, including former landfill sites, for recreation uses.

The largest landfill site in the county is the City-owned Hanes Mill Road Landfill in Winston-Salem. The first phase of operations on a 140-acre site is to be completed by 2005. Gas is currently mined on site raising some concerns about its potential for recreational use. A second phase of this landfill is located adjacent to the existing one. The existing reclamation plan includes the construction of the Grassy Creek Greenway at the end of the 20-year life of the landfill. The plan does not identify other potential uses for the reclaimed site.

An additional 110 acres of City-owned land, located west of the new landfill site is not rezoned for use as a landfill. The suitability of that site and the long-term potential of the Hanes Mill Road Landfill site for park and open space uses should be explored.

The 140-acre Old Salisbury Road Landfill site, located in the southern part of Forsyth County, is likely to be operated as a landfill until 2008-2009 and could be available for recreation use at that time. That site appears to have good potential for development for recreational uses.

A 50-acre former construction and demolition landfill site located in southeast Winston-Salem at Old Milwaukee Lane also has good potential for development as a park. Kernersville has identified the Waste

Management landfill site located on Freeman Road for possible use as a park. Feasibility studies of all of these landfill sites need to be done to determine their suitability for a range of possible recreational opportunities.

## **COMMUNITY GREENS**

Community Greens are shared parks tucked away on the inside of residential blocks. They are collectively owned and managed by neighbors whose homes enclose this green space. They contribute to an improved quality of life for some community residents by increasing the amount of accessible green space, improving the physical fabric of their neighborhoods, building a sense of community, and increasing property values and property tax revenues. They bring neighbors together to care for and enjoy their Community Green. Community Greens can be developed in several ways:

- Residents merge parts of their backyards into a shared garden;
- Residents work with city government to transform low-value alleys or pockets of land into shared community spaces;
- Developers incorporate Community Greens into new housing developments;
- An existing block is redeveloped; and/or
- Existing shared spaces that are poorly designed and maintained are redesigned.

Successful Community Greens projects exist in cities such as Boston, San Francisco, Minneapolis, Baltimore, and Davis, California. The mission of a new initiative called *Community Greens: Shared Parks in Urban Blocks* is to encourage and facilitate the development of additional Community Greens in cities across the country. The feasibility of applying the concept of Community Greens in our community could be further explored. The concept can be more readily applied when an opportunity for redevelopment or infill development arises.

## **COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

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An assessment of the community's need for parks, open space and recreational facilities is important in establishing plan objectives. Needs assessment for this Plan was determined by using the following information:

- Results from a number of community surveys;
- Data on population distribution and location of development;

- Community input through workshops;
- Input from relevant organizations; and
- Recommendations contained in existing plans.

## LOCAL DEMAND FOR PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Some assessment of citizens' satisfaction with and their desire for various types of recreational facilities and open space can be obtained by examining the results of several community surveys conducted over the past few years. Survey respondents identified several common needs. Following are the results of these surveys.

The City-County Planning Board in cooperation with the City and Forsyth County Parks Departments conducted a countywide Public Parks and Recreational Facilities Survey in June/July 2002. The survey was completed by 534 respondents, almost equally divided between males and females. A summary analysis of the survey revealed the following:

- 73% of respondents visited public parks and recreational facilities 15 or more times a year.
- 51% of respondents lived less than 3 miles from the nearest public park, that is, within the service radii of neighborhood and community parks.
- The majority of respondents, 66.4%, rated their overall satisfaction with the community's parks and recreational facilities as good or excellent; 21.5% rated them as average and 12.1 % considered them fair or poor.
- The public recreational activities most enjoyed by residents and their families were walking/hiking/biking (25.5%), playing sports (22.8%), and watching sports (14.1%).
- The parks most frequently visited by residents were Hanes, Sara Lee, Tanglewood, Miller, Polo, Hine, and Bolton Parks.
- The five recreational facilities respondents feel are most needed are walking/biking trails, soccer fields, swimming pools, nature reserves and basketball courts. (See **Appendix B** for detailed survey results.)

Respondents were also requested to give additional comments on the community's parks and recreational facilities.

- 37% of the comments expressed concern about the lack of soccer fields to meet demand, and the condition of existing fields.
- 17% of comments about parks ranged from very favorable opinions on the community's parks to suggestions for improving selected ones.

- 12% of comments were on tennis facilities, mostly about the quality of these facilities.
- 8% of comments were about trails. Most expressed a desire to have more trails.

The Town of Kernersville completed *A Community Parks Needs Assessment Survey* in December 2001. Survey results revealed that:

- 82% of respondents said they visited at least one local park in the past year.
- 53% said the closest park was 1-3 miles from their residence.
- 83% rated the maintenance and cleanliness of the parks good or excellent.
- 78% rated park safety as good or excellent.
- 67% rated play facilities and open space as good or excellent.
- 45% rated as good or excellent how conducive the parks were to the physically challenged.
- 54% percent rated as good or excellent their feeling that their tax dollars were being well spent for recreational purposes.
- 74% rated overall satisfaction with the parks as good or excellent.
- 61% did not think that Kernersville needed more public neighborhood parks.
- 73% thought that Kernersville should include park land where the natural environment is not disturbed.
- With respect to facilities, 83% felt that the town most needed additional walking trails and bicycle paths. Other top recreation needs identified included a recreation center, miniature golf, an outdoor pool, a nature preserve, an amphitheater, botanical gardens and playgrounds.

The Lewisville Parks and Recreation Board conducted a recreation survey in 2003. Residents were asked to rate the outdoor recreational facilities they were most likely to use on a scale ranging from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 5 (extremely likely). Walking and jogging trails were rated most likely to be used by 66% of respondents. The next five facilities in order of importance were swimming pools, hiking trails, paved paths for bikes and rollerblades, playgrounds and nature reserves. These results were similar to those of a *1999 Citizen Survey* conducted by the Town of Lewisville.

## OTHER DATA

On a day-to-day basis, some limited data is collected on the use of selected recreational facilities. The Recreation and Parks Department of the City of Winston-Salem, for example, conducts user surveys at their facilities. These surveys, however, tend to focus

on the use of facilities and attendance at recreation center programs. Park and greenway users are not routinely surveyed.

The Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department uses traffic counter units that record daily the number of vehicles that enter County parks. These counts are used to estimate park usage. It is estimated that 535,164 persons visited County parks in 2003, a 55% increase over 3 years. Meanwhile, the demands for more facilities including picnic shelters, trails, soccer fields and softball fields have been growing. This is reflected in the fact that facilities are reserved by groups and individuals months in advance and many residents desiring reservations for facilities are consistently turned away.

Increased ongoing collection of data particularly at parks and greenways would facilitate planning for future recreation and open space needs. Volunteers and students can assist in surveys and other data collection efforts.

## PARK SYSTEM NEEDS ANALYSIS

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### METHODOLOGY

This section of the Plan evaluates the existing system of parks, open space and recreational facilities to determine its adequacy to meet the existing and future recreation and open space needs of the population. Using available data, it also attempts to identify areas of future potential need. The adequacy of existing park land and facilities and future demand are determined by considering the results from: recreation surveys; citizen input on Area Plans and other planning projects; and a level of service analysis using 2000 Census population data, population projections, and a range of recreation standards.

The State of North Carolina's projected 2015 population for Forsyth County of 365,000 persons has been used to calculate the total amount of park land needed countywide by 2015 and future facility needs. A 2015 population of 216,632 for Winston-Salem is used in this Plan to calculate the city's 2015 demand for parks and recreational facilities. Population projections for Kernersville for 2015 (33,147 persons) and 2020 were used in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan* to identify that town's future needs.

The possible future locations of park land and associated recreational facilities are based on a number of factors including:

- The size and location of existing recreation and open space assets;
- Locations identified in this analysis as having existing inadequate recreation opportunities and open space;
- Areas where new development proposals are concentrated and where future growth is anticipated over the Plan period;
- Areas earmarked for annexation where recreation services would need to be provided;
- The expectations of the community as indicated in surveys and workshops; and
- Recommendations made in existing Area Plans and other planned projects.

The locations, sizes and quantity of new parks and facilities can be refined to reflect more detailed population projections for different areas of the community when these become available. More detailed proposals should be included in municipal and other Area Plans to supplement the larger scale proposals made in this Plan.

### PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES STANDARDS

Park and recreational facilities standards and guidelines based on population to be served can be used as one tool to assess a community's existing recreational facilities and open space and to determine future needs. The City-County Planning Board and the Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Commission in 1997 adopted standards for park and recreational facilities. These standards were adapted from criteria developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association and *North Carolina's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*. Park standards include park size, population served, geographic area served and minimum recommended park acreage per 1000 population. Recreation facility standards were also adopted for major facilities such as recreation centers, ball fields, ball courts, playgrounds and swimming pools. Kernersville established standards for its parks and recreational facilities in its recreation master plan adopted in 2002. The 1997 community standards were reviewed as part of this study and amended, where necessary. The amended standards (**Appendices D & E**) are used as guidelines to evaluate the existing supply of parks and facilities throughout the community and to set goals for acquiring new park land and providing additional facilities.

## PARKS ANALYSIS

The assessment of the park system which follows was done using park categories defined in **Appendix A**. **Table 4** indicates the calculated additional acreage of land, in the main park categories, that each jurisdiction needs to provide for its 2000 population based on recommended standards. **Table 5** summarizes the projected additional park acreage needed countywide and in Winston-Salem by 2015. **Table 6** summarizes in selected categories the additional number and acreage of parks needed by municipalities. Municipalities, as well as the County, would need to take action to acquire and develop additional park acreage to provide for projected needs.

In the analysis that follows, using service radii standards for each park category to identify areas served by all parks, major underserved areas are determined in each park category. Community standards are used only as guidelines in determining needs in each category and the location of needs. The analysis also takes into consideration the multifunction purpose of some parks and the fact that an area may be served by more than one park of the same class or by a school or other public facilities. The size of the park serving an area is assessed relative to the population served. The results from a number of recreation surveys and local planning efforts are considered indicators of residents' demand for specific recreational opportunities. In some cases, the location of park facilities and are factored into the analysis.

### Regional Parks

Regional parks are very large parks (100 or more acres) that may be either resource-based parks mostly used for passive recreation or those offering a range of recreational opportunities or specialized facilities. Their users come from all over the county and even from surrounding counties.

The three regional parks in our community are Salem Lake Park, Tanglewood Park and Triad Park. There are proposals already being implemented to upgrade facilities at Tanglewood Park and to continue implementation of the master plan for Triad Park. Opportunities could be taken to expand Triad Park by acquiring suitable land that becomes available adjoining the park. The focus at Salem Lake Park is on conservation and natural resource-based recreation. Some park improvements are planned in the next few years. An updated park master plan could more fully explore the potential of this park.

A long-term possibility for a regional park is the City-owned Hanes Mill Road Landfill site located in northwest Winston-Salem. Although part of the landfill will be closed in the next couple of years, operations on the new section has a lifetime of twenty years and specific plans to reclaim the land for a park will be needed. The feasibility of converting this site to a regional park could be investigated in the near future. This would facilitate planned conversion to a park, since there is no existing recreation reclamation plan. The Grassy Creek Greenway trail proposed to run through this site has the potential of linking a park developed at this location with the existing Sara Lee Soccer Park and other parks along the greenway system.

There are no existing regional parks located to take advantage of the considerable potential recreation resources of the Yadkin River and Belews Lake and associated creeks. Attempts could be made by the County to assemble large acreages of land (in excess of 100 acres) at appropriate sites at each of these locations for future regional parks.

### District Parks

District Parks can serve urban and rural populations. They are typically large in size (50-250 acres) and can have specialized facilities or provide a wide array of recreational opportunities. The majority of district parks are located in Winston-Salem. Most of the city, with the exception of the western fringe areas, is located within the service area of a district park (**Map 3**). Most of the County-owned district parks are located in unincorporated areas. They are Horizons, C.G. Hill Memorial, and Union Cross Parks. Walkertown Community Park, a County-owned district park, is located in Walkertown. The County-owned district parks provide rural residents with some recreational facilities, urban residents with more passive recreation opportunities, and contribute to the community's open space. Kernersville's parks plan identified Triad Park as providing district-level recreational facilities for the town, although it is not owned by the Town. Although this park may function to some extent as a district park for Kernersville it is a regional park serving Forsyth and Guilford Counties. Kernersville Lake Park, owned by Kernersville but operated by the County, was identified in Kernersville's park plan as a special purpose park, however, it also functions as a district park.

There are existing plans for additional district park acreage. Plans for the proposed Jefferson Park (24 acres) located in western Winston-Salem are for a

**Table 4. Parks – Existing Needs 2000**

| Park Type<br>(Acres/1000<br>population) | Winston-Salem<br>(185,776 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     | Kernersville<br>(17,126 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     | Clemmons<br>(13,827 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     | Lewisville<br>(8,826 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     | Walkertown<br>(4,009 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     | Tobaccoville<br>(2,209 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     | Rural Hall<br>(2,464 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     | Forsyth County <sup>4</sup><br>(306,067 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |                     |
|---|--|---------------------|--|---------------------|--|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|--|---------------------|
|   | Acres  |                     | Acres                                      |                     | Acres                                  |                     | Acres                                   |                     | Acres                                   |                     | Acres                                     |                     | Acres                                   |                     | Acres  |                     |
|   | Existing                                     | Needed <sup>2</sup> | Existing                                   | Needed <sup>2</sup> | Existing                               | Needed <sup>2</sup> | Existing                                | Needed <sup>2</sup> | Existing                                | Needed <sup>2</sup> | Existing                                  | Needed <sup>2</sup> | Existing                                | Needed <sup>2</sup> | Existing   | Needed <sup>2</sup> |
| Regional <sup>3</sup>                   | 1455   | N/E                 | 0  | N/E                 | 0                                      | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 0   | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 2868   | N/E                 |
| # of sites                              | 1  |                     |  |                     |  |                     |   |                     |   |                     |   |                     |   | 4                   |  |                     |
| District<br>(10/1000)                   | 1007 <sup>5</sup>                            | 857                 | 0  | 171                 | 0                                      | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 0   | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 1632   | 1428                |
| # of sites                              | 10   |                     |  |                     |  |                     |   |                     |   |                     |   |                     |   |                     | 13   |                     |
| Community<br>(5/1000)                   | 389 <sup>5</sup>                             | 540                 | 76   | 10                  | 0                                      | 69                  | 18 <sup>6</sup>                         | 26                  | 25                                      | 0                   | 14  | 0                   | 33 <sup>5</sup>                         | 0                   | 555  | 975                 |
| # of sites                              | 20   |                     | 1  |                     |  |                     | 1                                       |                     | 1                                       |                     | 1   |                     | 1                                       |                     | 25   |                     |
| Neighborhood<br>(2.5/1000)              | 287 <sup>5</sup>                             | 177                 | 42   | 0                   | 0                                      | 35                  | 0                                       | 22                  | 0                                       | 10                  | 0   | 6                   | 1                                       | 5                   | 330  | 435                 |
| # of sites                              | 22   |                     | 4  |                     |  |                     |   |                     |   |                     |   |                     | 1                                       |                     | 27   |                     |
| Other Parks <sup>7</sup>                | 211  | N/E                 | 161 <sup>8</sup>                           | N/E                 | 1                                      | N/E                 | 3                                       | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 0   | N/E                 | 0                                       | N/E                 | 432  | N/E                 |
| # of sites                              | 22   |                     | 1  |                     |  |                     | 1                                       |                     |   |                     |   |                     |   |                     | 27   |                     |
| Total Acres                             | 3349   | 1574 <sup>9</sup>   | 279  | 181 <sup>9</sup>    | 1                                      | 104 <sup>9</sup>    | 21                                      | 48 <sup>9</sup>     | 25                                      | 10 <sup>9</sup>     | 14  | 6 <sup>9</sup>      | 34                                      | 5 <sup>9</sup>      | 5817   | 2838 <sup>9</sup>   |
| # of sites                              | 75   |                     | 6  |                     |  |                     | 2                                       |                     | 1                                       |                     | 1   |                     | 2                                       |                     | 96   |                     |

Notes: 1. 2000 Census population.

2. Defined as additional acreage needed using standard acres per 1000 population.

3. N/E: No established standards of provision. Proposals for additional acreage/areas for regional/special parks and open space included in plan recommendations.

4. Includes all park acreage in the county whether owned by the County or the municipalities.

5. Includes reserved undeveloped land.

6. County-owned.

7. Includes mini-parks, cultural/historic parks, mini-ornamental parks, other special parks.

8. Kernersville Lake Park owned by Kernersville and operated by Forsyth County.

Classified in the Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a

Special Use Park.

9. Does not include regional and special use parks with no established standards of provision.

**Table 5. Park Needs 2000 – 2015**

| Park Type<br><br>(acres/1000<br>population) | Forsyth County <sup>1</sup><br>2000<br>(306,067 pop.) |                         | Forsyth County <sup>1</sup><br>2010<br>(347,165 pop.) | Forsyth County <sup>1</sup><br>2015<br>(368,164 pop.) | Winston-Salem<br>2015<br>(216,632 pop.) |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|---|---|
|   | Acres   |                         | Acres   | Acres   | Acres                                   |
|   | Existing  | Needed <sup>2</sup>     | Needed <sup>2</sup>                                   | Needed <sup>2</sup>                                   | Needed <sup>2</sup>                     |
| Regional <sup>3</sup>                       | 2868  | N/E                     | N/E   | N/E   | N/E                                     |
| District<br>(10/1000)                       | 1632  | 1428                    | 1840  | 2048  | 1159                                    |
| Community<br>(5/1000)                       | 555   | 975                     | 1180  | 1285  | 694                                     |
| Neighborhood<br>(2.5/1000)                  | 330   | 425                     | 538   | 590   | 254                                     |
| Other Parks <sup>3</sup>                    | 432   | N/E                     | N/E   | N/E   | N/E                                     |
| <b>Total Acres</b>                          | <b>5817</b>   | <b>2838<sup>4</sup></b> | <b>3558<sup>4</sup></b>                               | <b>3923<sup>4</sup></b>                               | <b>2107<sup>4</sup></b>                 |

- Notes: 1. All of Forsyth County including its municipalities.  
 2. Obtained by subtracting existing acreage from total need based on acreage per population standards.  
 3. N/E: No Established standards of provision. Proposals for additional acreage/areas for regional/special parks and open space included in plan recommendations.  
 4. Does not include regional and special purpose parks with no established standards.

district park specializing in soccer. The existing 17.5-acre Union Cross Park is too small to serve the unincorporated future growth area in the southeast part of the county. Implementation of proposals in the *Union Cross/Southeast Forsyth County Area Plan* to establish a park, approximately 145 acres, in the Abbotts Creek/Idlewild Road Branch Area would ensure adequate park land to serve the area. Land, co-owned by the County and the City of Winston Salem, adjacent to the existing 73-acre C.G. Hill Memorial Park, has the potential to be developed either as a new park or as an expansion of the existing district park. Additionally, the Old Salisbury Road Landfill south of the city and the former construction and demolition landfill site located in southeast Winston-Salem at Old Milwaukee Lane have the potential to be developed as district parks. These proposals, if implemented, could result in an additional 530 acres of district park land. The other municipalities have insufficient population to justify development of this level of park and should focus on the development of neighborhood and community level parks.

### Community Parks

Community parks provide a range of active recreational facilities for a number of surrounding neighborhoods. They usually need to be 30-80 acres in size

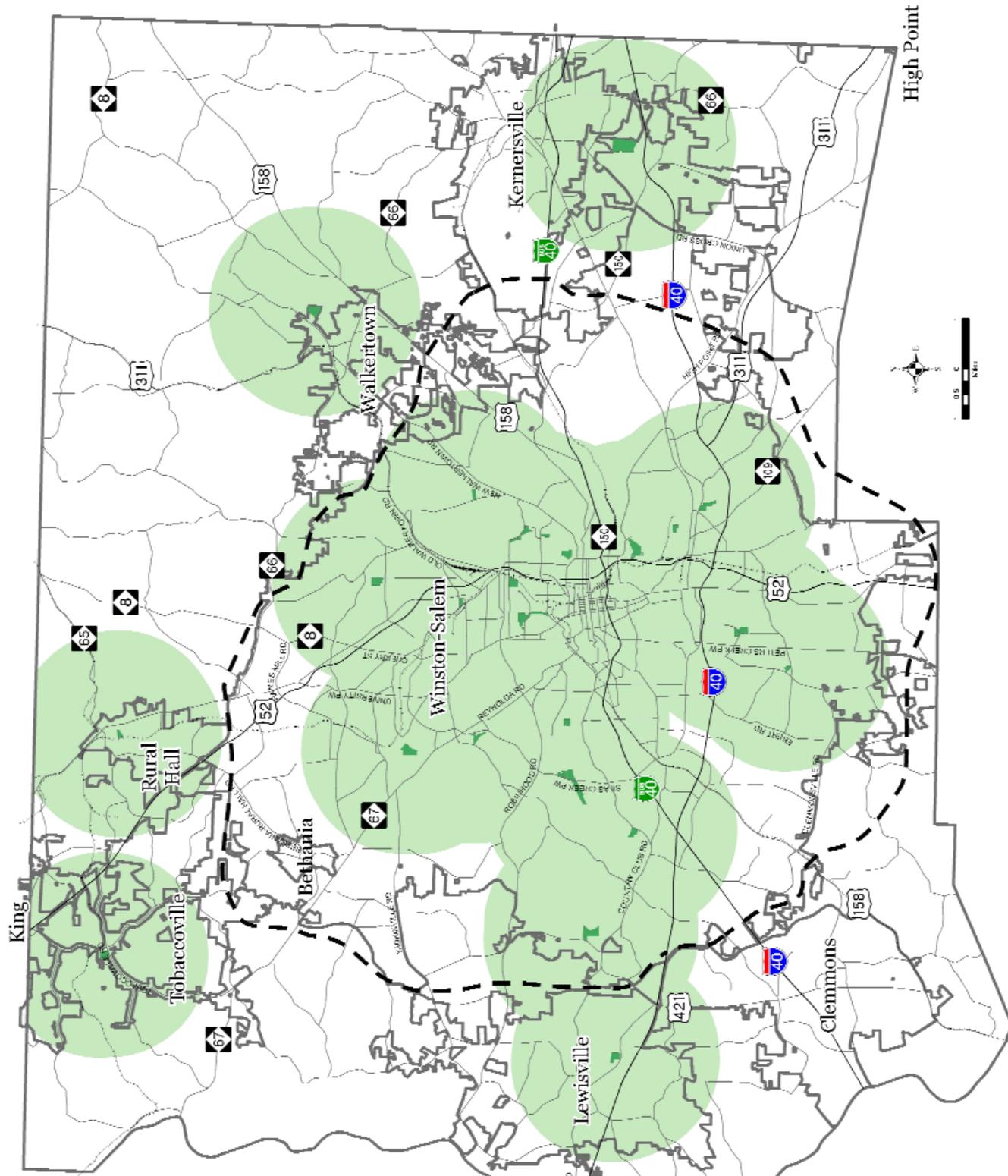
to provide for multipurpose use. Nineteen of the existing twenty-four parks classified as community parks are located in Winston-Salem.

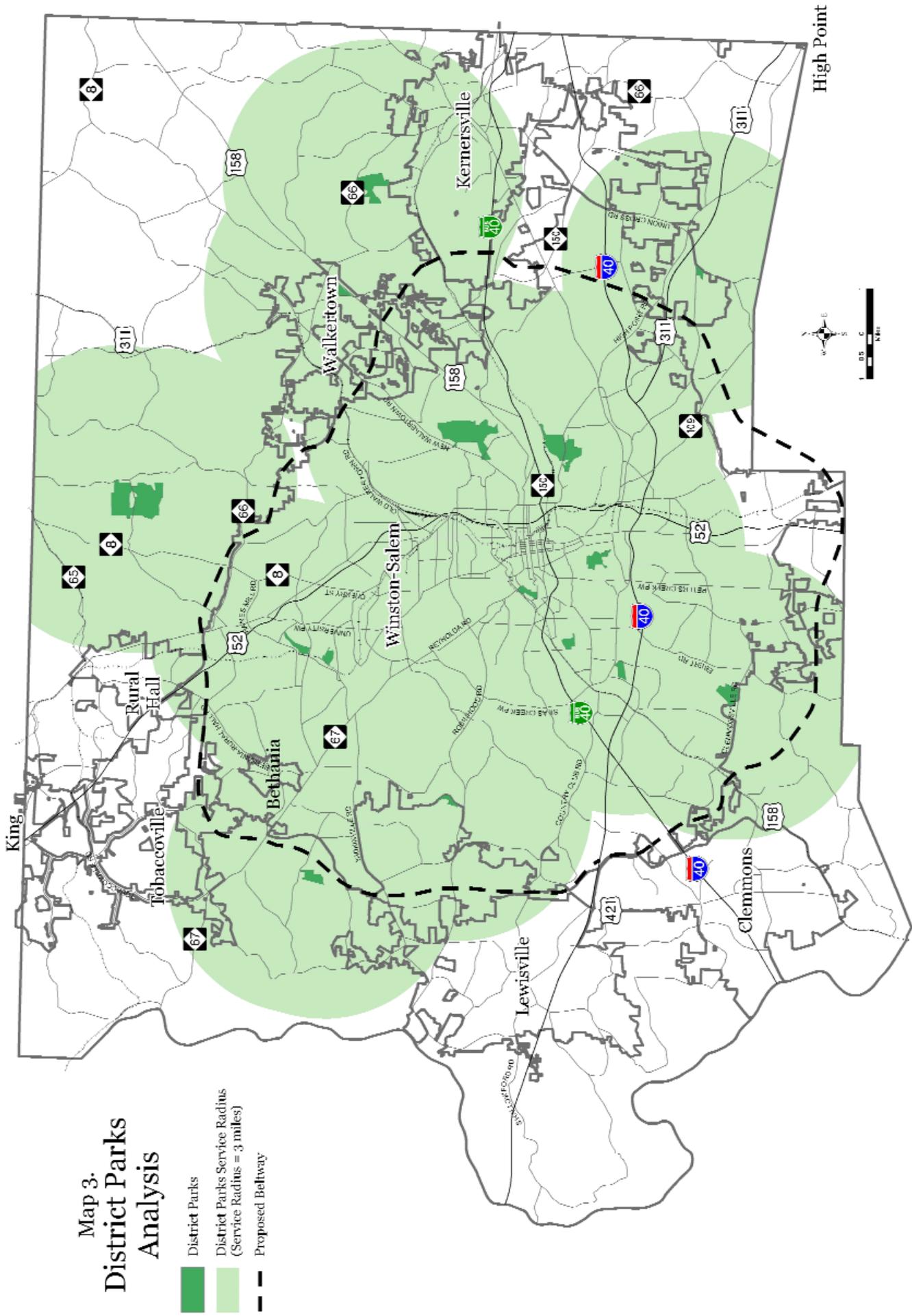
Most of Winston-Salem seems adequately served with community parks except for the city fringes (**Map 2**). Jamison Park is to be developed with community-level facilities to serve the western edge of the city. The possibility exists for the location of a community park adjacent to C.G. Hill Memorial Park, an existing County district park, or the expansion of this existing district park to include community park facilities. If developed, these parks should provide adequate community park facilities for the western edges of the city and any future annexed areas there.

The southeastern part of the city does not have a community park. *Legacy* proposes the US 311 South Metro Activity Center at US 311 and Ridgewood Road. Consideration could be given to establishing a new community park in this area, easily accessible to the proposed Metro Activity Center and capable of servicing future annexed areas in southeast Winston-Salem. A similar park located in northeast Winston-Salem could serve the future needs in that area. The Old Salisbury Road Landfill has the potential to be developed as a dual function community and district park to serve future annexed areas south of the city.

**Map 2.**  
**Community Parks**  
**Analysis**

-  Community Parks
-  Community Parks Service Radius  
(Service Radius = 2 miles)
-  Proposed Beltway





The two new community parks proposed in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan* to be located north and south of the town appear adequate to meet the town's need by 2015. Rural Hall and Tobaccoville appear to have adequately sized community parks to meet existing population needs. The reserved 25-acre site adjacent to Covington Memorial Park in Rural Hall, when developed, should adequately provide for residents' needs over the Plan period. Additional needs are dependent on population growth and whether annexation takes place over the Plan period.

Two of the larger potential park locations identified in the *Clemmons Area Development Guide* may satisfy the need for at least two community parks in Clemmons. The feasibility of these sites, one located on the west side of the village between the Yadkin River and the former Blumenthal Jewish Home, and the other on the east side of the village north of the proposed Idols Road east extension, could be further explored and, if appropriate, action taken to secure them for park development.

Implementation of a proposal to significantly expand Old US 421 Park would address the need for at least one new community park in Lewisville, whose community park needs are presently provided to a significant extent by the County-owned Joanie Moser park. This park was identified by residents in Lewisville's recent recreation survey as the most used facility not maintained by the Town.

The County-owned Walkertown Community Park, a district park, provides Walkertown with some community-level services. Walkertown Park, currently being developed, is intended to function as a community park for the town.

## **Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks provide for intense recreational activities at locations easily accessible to neighborhoods, usually within a half-mile radius. They usually range in size from five to twenty acres. Other types of parks can also have neighborhood-level facilities.

Data on existing neighborhood parks reveals that Winston-Salem has twenty-two neighborhood parks and twenty-four parks in other categories that also function as neighborhood parks. Analysis based on service radius standards indicates that the city appears well served with neighborhood parks in the older, central urban areas but is lacking in neighborhood parks on the city fringes. Additional neighborhood

parks will probably be needed to service future annexed areas. Two sites recently secured by the city are expected to function as neighborhood parks. The 5-acre park adjacent to Marvin Ward Elementary School is to be developed as a neighborhood park. The undeveloped 35-acre Jamison Park can be developed to serve the dual functions of a neighborhood and community park to serve the western fringes of the city. The City-County Planning Board has commenced work on the *North Central Winston-Salem Area Plan* and the *Northeast Winston-Salem Plan*. These plans will identify sites for additional neighborhood parks to meet future area needs. The analysis shows that consideration should also be given to locating a neighborhood park at the Peters Creek Parkway Metro Activity Center at Peters Creek Parkway and the Clemmons Road Extension to serve new developments in the area.

Additional neighborhood parks will most likely be needed to service annexed areas in the northeast, southeast and south areas of the city. Specific locations for future neighborhood parks in the city are not indicated in this Plan except if previously identified in Area Plans. It is considered more appropriate to identify these sites as part of local area planning for the different areas of the city.

With the exception of four neighborhood parks in the Town of Kernersville and a very small play lot in Rural Hall, there are no neighborhood parks in the other municipalities. Year 2000 population and adopted standards suggest the need for at least one neighborhood park (5-10 acres in size) in Walkertown, Rural Hall, and Tobaccoville and two in Lewisville and Clemmons. One neighborhood or mini-park could provide for the small population of Bethania to 2015.

The *Town of Kernersville Park and Recreation Master Plan* identified the need for four new neighborhood parks by 2015 and proposed possible locations for these parks. These should be adequate to meet projected needs.

Lewisville's land use plan identified two potential park sites, which if developed as dual function community/neighborhood parks, appear adequate to meet needs.

A number of potential park sites were also identified in the *Clemmons Area Development Guide*. Some of these sites are very small and the feasibility of developing them as neighborhood parks would need to be further investigated. However, the potential exists to

develop at least one park north of I-40 and another south of I-40 to serve these parts of the village.

The Tobaccoville land use plan did not identify sites for future park development. It appears, however, that a neighborhood park may be needed in the southeast part of the Village, which is located outside the service area of the existing community park located in the village center. Similarly, Rural Hall may need to develop a neighborhood park in association with the proposed Grassy Creek Greenway to service the southern part of Rural Hall since existing park facilities are located in the northern part of the town.

### Other Park Needs

Other needs include specialized parks not previously discussed and that are new to this community. The main ones under consideration are skateboard parks and dog parks.

There appears to be a demand for skateboard parks in the community. Skateboarding often takes place in areas where it is illegal to do so. The community could, therefore, consider providing legal venues for the sport in specialized parks or as a facility at existing or proposed parks.

The *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan* recommended that the feasibility of establishing an extreme sports/hobby park on a land-fill site north of the town be examined. The park could accommodate skateboarding, BMX racing, off-road/mountain biking, challenge/rope courses, flying remote controlled model planes, etc. The plan also proposed adding a skateboard facility at the Fourth of July Park. This facility has recently been completed.

**Table 6. Minimum Additional Park Acres Needed by Municipalities**

| Jurisdiction  | Park Categories  | Acres <sup>1</sup> |
|---------------|--|--------------------|
| Winston-Salem | 3-5 district parks;<br>6-8 community parks;<br>8-12 neighborhood parks | 370-2130           |
| Kernersville  | 2 community parks;<br>3 neighborhood parks <sup>2</sup>                | 90-125             |
| Clemmons      | 2-3 community parks;<br>3-5 neighborhood parks                         | 105-140            |
| Lewisville    | 1 community park;<br>2-4 neighborhood parks                            | 50-90              |
| Walkertown    | 2-3 neighborhood parks   | 20-45              |
| Tobaccoville  | 2 neighborhood park  | 20-30              |
| Rural Hall    | 2 neighborhood parks   | 20-30              |
| Bethania      | 1 mini or neighborhood park  | 2.5-5              |

Notes: 1. A range of acreage needed to service 2015 population. Calculated using standards of acre of park land needed per 1000 population in each category based on 2000 - 2015 population and desirable sizes for different categories of parks (Appendix C). The range of acreage allows for variation in park size depending on facilities provided and the multifunctional role of many parks.  
2. Identified in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.

Although Winston-Salem has Hobby Park, skateboarding is not accommodated there and consideration should be given to providing an appropriate venue for this activity.

The first dog park was recently established in Winston-Salem in Washington Park, a district park. The demand for this type of park is expected to grow. Where larger community parks exist or are planned, dog parks can be included in the master planning of these parks. Where this is not possible, alternative sites may need to be identified to accommodate them.



A regional park.

**Table 7. Public Recreational Facilities by Municipalities – Existing Need (2000 population)**

| Facility<br>(standard per 1000<br>population) | Winston-Salem<br>(185,776 pop.) |                     | Kernersville<br>(17,126 pop.) <sup>6</sup> |                     | Clemmons<br>(13,827 pop.) |                     | Lewisville<br>(8,826 pop.) |                     | Walkertown<br>(4,009 pop.) |                     | Tobaccoville<br>(2,209 pop.) |                     | Rural Hall<br>(2,464 pop.) |                     | Forsyth County<br>(306,067 pop.) |                     |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------|--|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
|   | Acres                           |                     | Acres                                      |                     | Acres                     |                     | Acres                      |                     | Acres                      |                     | Acres                        |                     | Acres                      |                     | Acres                            |                     |
|   | Existing                        | Needed <sup>5</sup> | Existing                                   | Needed <sup>5</sup> | Existing                  | Needed <sup>5</sup> | Existing                   | Needed <sup>5</sup> | Existing                   | Needed <sup>5</sup> | Existing                     | Needed <sup>5</sup> | Existing                   | Needed <sup>5</sup> | Existing                         | Needed <sup>5</sup> |
| Community Center<br>(1/25,000)                | 9                               | -2                  | 0  | 1                   | 0                         | 1                   | 1                          | 0                   | 0                          | 1                   | 0                            | 0                   | 0                          | 1                   | 11                               | 2                   |
| Neighborhood<br>Center<br>(1/10,000)          | 8                               | 11<br>2             | 1  | 1                   | 0                         | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 0                            | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 9                                | 12                  |
| Basketball Court<br>(1/5000)                  | 29                              | 8                   | 2  | 0                   | 0                         | 3                   | 0                          | 2                   | 0                          | 1                   | 2                            | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 34<br>44 <sup>2</sup>            | 27<br>17            |
| Volleyball Court<br>(1/5000)                  | 9                               | 28                  | 2  | 1                   | 0                         | 3                   | 1 <sup>3</sup>             | 1                   | 1 <sup>3</sup>             | 0                   | 0                            | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 23                               | 38                  |
| Tennis Court<br>(1/2000)                      | 10 <sup>2</sup>                 | -12                 | 6<br>16 <sup>2</sup>                       | 3                   | 9 <sup>3</sup>            | 0                   | 2                          | 2                   | 3                          | 0                   | 2                            | 0                   | 0                          | 2                   | 129                              | 24                  |
| Soccer Field<br>(1/3500)                      | 41<br>60 <sup>2</sup>           | 12                  | 5<br>11 <sup>2</sup>                       | 2                   | 4 <sup>2</sup>            | 0                   | 1 <sup>2</sup>             | 2                   | 1                          | 0                   | 1                            | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 48<br>77 <sup>2</sup>            | 39<br>10            |
| Baseball Field <sup>1</sup><br>(1/5000)       | 6<br>20 <sup>2</sup>            | 31<br>17            | 4<br>14 <sup>2</sup>                       | 0                   | 7 <sup>2</sup>            | 0                   | 5 <sup>2</sup>             | 0                   | 1<br>11 <sup>2</sup>       | 0                   | 0                            | 0                   | 4 <sup>2</sup>             | 0                   | 10<br>61 <sup>2</sup>            | 51<br>0             |
| Softball Field <sup>1</sup><br>(1/5000)       | 49<br>51 <sup>2</sup>           | -12<br>-14          | 4 <sup>1</sup>                             | 0                   | 0                         | 3                   | 1 <sup>3</sup>             | 1                   | 1 <sup>3</sup>             | 0                   | 1                            | 0                   | 1                          | 0                   | 61<br>63 <sup>2</sup>            | 0<br>-2             |
| Swimming Pool <sup>2</sup><br>(1/20,000)      | 8<br>11 <sup>2</sup>            | 1<br>-2             | 2 <sup>2</sup>                             | 0                   | 2 <sup>2</sup>            | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 0                            | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 8<br>14 <sup>2</sup>             | 7<br>1              |
| Picnic Shelters <sup>7</sup><br>(1/3000)      | 55                              | 7                   | 6  | 0                   | 0                         | 5                   | 1                          | 2                   | 1 <sup>3</sup>             | 0                   | 1                            | 0                   | 1                          | 0                   | 80                               | 22                  |
| Golf<br>(1/25,000)                            | 2<br>12 <sup>2</sup>            | 5<br>-5             | 2  | 0                   | 3                         | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 0                            | 0                   | 0                          | 0                   | 4<br>18 <sup>4</sup>             | 8<br>-6             |

Notes: 1. Some baseball fields used as softball fields.  
 2. Includes Park System facilities and facilities from schools, YMCA, and/or private facilities.  
 3. County-owned park facilities.  
 4. Includes privately-owned golf course.  
 5. Defined as additional need obtained by subtracting existing facilities from total need calculated using standards indicated.  
 6. Kernersville's need calculated in *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan* using standards that vary to some extent to standards used in this Plan.  
 7. Does not include uncovered picnic tables.

## Recreational Facilities

**Tables 7 and 8** show the range of recreational facilities which exists in all the municipalities as well as the future needs to 2015 of all of Forsyth County and Winston-Salem. Existing need is calculated by applying recommended facility standards (**Appendix D**) to the existing populations of the county and municipalities. The existing populations of some of the smaller municipalities are less than those recommended for provision of some facilities. These municipalities should determine the local demand for such facilities and determine the best way to meet those demands.

The calculated need for specific facilities is compared to the known existing facilities. Existing facilities include all County-owned and municipal-owned park facilities, school facilities, YMCA facilities, as well as private facilities for selected sports. Many golf courses are privately owned but nevertheless are included in calculations to determine existing supply. Baseball fields located at high schools or privately owned, which are open to the public, are also included in calculations. Using projected Forsyth County and Winston-Salem population, data obtained from surveys, recreation departments, and other sources, some conclusions have been made on existing and future recreational facilities needs.

## Recreation Centers

The distribution of recreation centers countywide is uneven. Eight of the nine neighborhood recreation centers and nine of the eleven community recreation centers are located in Winston-Salem. In Winston-Salem, the larger community centers also serve as neighborhood centers for the neighborhoods in which they are located. Most of the city, with the exception of fringe areas, is located within the service area of either a neighborhood or community center. However, additional centers may be needed to provide for the projected population and to provide services to existing and new development at the city fringes and in the future annexed areas. Consideration should also be given to upgrading facilities and services at existing centers as the need arises. The City has proposed upgrading the Sedge Garden Neighborhood Center to a community center with a gymnasium to service the southeastern part of the city. A new center has been built to replace the old Hanes Hosiery Recreation Center. This analysis shows that consideration should be given to a new center to serve newly developing and future annexed areas in the south. New centers should also be considered in the master planning process for new parks, particularly new community

parks. There appears to be a demand for recreation centers with gymnasiums and fitness equipment usually available at community-level centers. It is proposed that new centers should either be community-level centers with gymnasiums that function also as neighborhood centers, or that neighborhood centers be designed to allow for addition of gymnasiums, when feasible. Increased access to school facilities to supplement recreation center services should be further explored with the school system to provide for the projected need for additional centers by 2015. This approach could significantly reduce the number and costs of new facilities at the city's edges.

Tobaccoville's community center serves the needs of existing residents of the village and is expected to meet needs for the next ten years. Programs, services and building improvements can be added over time as the need arises.

Lewisville has a community center but it is expected that a new center will be needed over the life of this Plan.

Kernersville has recognized the need for recreation centers for its residents and its recreation plan has recommended that a community recreation center be built at Beeson Park. The plan's facility needs analysis also indicates the need for two neighborhood centers by 2015.

Clemmons, Rural Hall, and Walkertown have no centers at this time. It is recommended that each of these municipalities considers providing a facility within the time period of this Plan. Walkertown is currently seeking land and funding to build a community center. When built, this facility should meet the town's needs for the life of this Plan.

## Tennis Courts

Public tennis courts, including school facilities, are concentrated in central Winston-Salem with some facilities serving other municipalities. The availability of public courts in Winston-Salem appears to be adequate relative to its population. However, there have been complaints about the quality of courts. Facilities are lacking in the suburban areas and areas proposed for annexation. Some of these areas may be served by private facilities that were not inventoried. Three new tennis courts proposed at Jamison Park are intended to service the western part of the city. Additional facilities will probably be needed particularly in proposed annexed areas in the south, southeast and northeast of the city. These should be considered

within the context of park recommendations for these areas. Kernersville has identified the need for one additional tennis court by 2015. Lewisville is currently deficient in tennis facilities. Further, significant population increases due to annexations would suggest the need for additional facilities in Lewisville over the next decade. Tennis facilities can be considered together with other needed facilities for proposed new parks to serve Lewisville's growing population.

## **Ball Courts**

Public basketball courts located in parks are concentrated in Winston-Salem and Kernersville. There are many basketball courts in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School system but these are not widely available to the general population and have not been inventoried. There are also many private courts and goals. However, there appears to be a deficiency in facilities as reflected in the fairly large gap county-wide between existing facilities and calculated need as well as the fact that residents ranked basketball courts fifth among most needed facilities. New facilities need to be added to the system to alleviate this deficiency and provide for future needs. One court is proposed at Jamison Park but other courts appear to be needed in Winston-Salem and most of the other municipalities over the next decade. Indoor courts can be designed to serve dual functions.

Public volleyball courts appear to be fairly evenly scattered throughout the county. There is a big gap between existing facilities and the calculated need for facilities. However, this does not appear to be a high-demand sport and should, therefore, be included as part of planned new facilities if demanded by area residents. Two volleyball courts are planned for Jamison Park in Winston-Salem. Multipurpose courts can serve to accommodate this sport particularly where indoor facilities are planned.

## **Ball Fields**

Existing baseball and softball fields appear to meet standards relative to the county's population if private baseball league and school facilities are recognized as available for public use. The existing need for these facilities was not identified as a priority in any of the surveys conducted. According to existing standards, an additional 13 baseball fields and 11 softball fields will be needed countywide by 2015.

Most of the existing softball fields are located in central Winston-Salem and in most of the other municipalities. New facilities will mostly be needed in sub-

urban communities and future annexed areas. One soccer/softball field is proposed for the new Jamison Park. Other fields could be added to the system as new parks are developed and as they are needed and requested. Multiuse fields that combine softball/youth baseball or soccer/softball could be adequate to meet future demands, particularly in the smaller municipalities. Kernersville has identified the need for one adult softball/youth baseball field by 2015. Clemmons could consider similar facilities for any proposed new parks since it does not have any fields at this time. Lewisville and Walkertown would probably need to construct additional fields to supplement existing ones.

Most of the existing baseball fields are either school or private facilities fairly evenly distributed throughout the county. It is assumed that the majority of future adult baseball facilities will continue to be provided by schools or privately, in partnerships with municipalities, where necessary.

All the major football fields are associated with schools and colleges. It is expected that this will continue and new facilities will be built as new schools are built throughout the county.

## **Soccer Facilities**

The results of recreation surveys and demands made on recreation departments indicate that the need for additional, high-quality soccer fields is a top priority for residents. Residents consider existing soccer fields inadequate in quantity and quality to meet their needs. This demand can be attributed to the increasing popularity of the sport especially among girls and the growing Hispanic population. The existing number of fields appears inadequate to meet the existing demand and will need to be increased to meet future demand. The quality and maintenance of existing fields also need to be improved.

Consideration could be given to the inclusion of soccer fields in master plans for new community and district parks to meet existing and proposed demand for these facilities. Winston-Salem has plans for seven soccer fields, including multiuse fields, at Jamison and Jefferson Parks to serve the western fringes of the city. Similar facilities could be considered for new community and district parks that are developed over the Plan period to improve the level of service to other parts of the city. The development of soccer complexes to attract and host state/national events could be considered. The cost-benefit of this standard of facility needs to be determined.

Rural Hall, which has no facility at this time, and Lewisville, which appears to have an existing deficit in facilities, should assess the demand for facilities over the time period of the Plan.

## Swimming Pools

There appears to be fairly widespread coverage of swimming pools/water play areas in Winston-Salem and none of the City-owned pools are at capacity usage. Countywide, the areas lacking coverage are the city fringes and the smaller municipalities. A new County-owned pool/water play area recently constructed at Tanglewood Park should meet some of the need in the southwest part of the county. The YMCA and other quasi-public organizations provide access to swimming pools. Private pools also serve many suburban areas and multifamily developments.

Existing standards indicate the need for at least four additional public swimming pools countywide by 2015. Kernersville has identified the need for one additional pool. A public pool or water play area may be needed in Lewisville during the plan period. Fifty-two percent of its residents in a recent survey ranked a swimming pool as an outdoor facility they would be most likely to use, second only to walking/jogging trails. Annexations and new developments in Lewisville should also add to the demand over the time period of this Plan.

The growing popularity of water play areas suggests the need to consider their construction as an alternative to or in combination with swimming pools at some locations. Private/public partnership to establish these facilities and sharing arrangements for their use may be necessary for some of the smaller municipalities because building and maintaining these types of facilities are very costly.

## Picnic Shelters/Tables

There are 80 picnic shelters and 179 uncovered picnic tables countywide. An additional 22 picnic shelters are needed countywide to meet existing needs and 43 to meet 2015 projected population needs based on existing standards. Consideration could be given to the inclusion of picnic shelters in the master planning for new parks, particularly parks planned to include more passive recreation uses and serving the fringe areas of the City of Winston-Salem, future annexed areas, and the smaller towns that are lacking in these facilities (**Tables 7 and 8**).

## Walking and Biking Trails

Walking and biking were identified in recent surveys as among the top recreational activities most enjoyed by residents and their families. Walking and biking trails were also identified as among the most urgently needed facilities. In addition to walking/fitness trails in existing parks, walking trails are included in some existing master plans for undeveloped park sites. The *Greenway Plan* identified 34 miles of trails countywide for priority development by 2015. Further details on proposed greenway trails can be obtained from the *Greenway Plan*.

In addition to proposed greenway trails, consideration should be given to the establishment of walking and biking trails in existing and proposed parks, where this is desirable. Trails developed within parks should be linked to greenway trails, where feasible.

## Other Facilities

The publicly-owned golf courses together with existing privately-owned courses appear adequate to meet demand. Additional public golf courses do not appear to be a priority in the next decade.

When designing proposed new parks, consideration can be given to a much wider range of facilities than those discussed above, based on extensive public input determining the facilities most desired by area residents. These could include facilities for more established sports as well as others of growing interest. Potential facilities include racquetball, shuffleboard, squash, track, field hockey, lacrosse, skateboarding, disc golf, wall climbing, rope courses, equestrian areas and aquatic facilities. Multipurpose fields should be considered, wherever possible. This is particularly significant for the municipalities with small populations where it may not be feasible to provide separate facilities for each sport. Sharing of facilities should also be investigated. Further investigation is needed to determine the feasibility of national standard sports complexes.

**Table 8. Public Recreational Facilities – Projected Need**

| Facility Type<br>(standard per<br>1000 population) | Forsyth County <sup>1</sup><br>2000<br>(306,067 pop.) |                      | Forsyth County <sup>1</sup><br>2010<br>(347,165 pop.) | Forsyth County <sup>1</sup><br>2015<br>(368,164 pop.) | Winston-Salem<br>2015<br>(216,632 pop.) |
|--|---|----------------------|---|---|---|
|  | Existing  | Needed <sup>2</sup>  | Needed <sup>2</sup>                                   | Needed <sup>2</sup>                                   | Needed <sup>2</sup>                     |
| Community Center<br>(1/25000)                      | 11  | 2                    | 3   | 4   | 0                                       |
| Neighborhood<br>Center (1/10000)                   | 9   | 12                   | 26  | 28  | 14<br>5 <sup>6</sup>                    |
| Basketball Court<br>(1/5000)                       | 34<br>44 <sup>4</sup>                                 | 27<br>17             | 35<br>25  | 44<br>34  | 14                                      |
| Volleyball Court<br>(1/5000)                       | 23  | 38                   | 46  | 51  | 34                                      |
| Tennis Court<br>(1/2000)                           | 129   | 24                   | 45  | 55  | 3                                       |
| Soccer Field<br>(/3500)                            | 48<br>77 <sup>4</sup>                                 | 39<br>10             | 51<br>22  | 57<br>28  | 21                                      |
| Baseball Field <sup>3</sup><br>(1/5000)            | 10<br>61 <sup>4</sup>                                 | 51<br>0 <sup>4</sup> | 59<br>8 <sup>4</sup>                                  | 64<br>13 <sup>4</sup>                                 | 37<br>23 <sup>4</sup>                   |
| Softball Field <sup>3</sup><br>(1/5000)            | 61<br>63 <sup>4</sup>                                 | 0<br>-2 <sup>4</sup> | 8<br>6 <sup>4</sup>                                   | 13<br>11 <sup>4</sup>                                 | -6<br>-8 <sup>4</sup>                   |
| Swimming Pool <sup>4</sup><br>(1/20000)            | 8<br>14 <sup>4</sup>                                  | 7<br>1 <sup>4</sup>  | 9<br>3 <sup>4</sup>                                   | 10<br>4 <sup>4</sup>                                  | 3<br>0 <sup>4</sup>                     |
| Picnic Shelters <sup>7</sup><br>(1/3000)           | 80  | 22                   | 36  | 43  | 17                                      |
| Golf<br>(1/25000)                                  | 4<br>18 <sup>5</sup>                                  | 8<br>-6 <sup>5</sup> | 10<br>-4 <sup>5</sup>                                 | 11<br>-3 <sup>5</sup>                                 | 7<br>-3 <sup>5</sup>                    |

- Notes: 1. All of Forsyth County, including municipalities.  
 2. Defined as additional need, calculated using standards per 1000 population.  
 3. Some baseball fields are also used as softball fields. These are included in totals in both categories.  
 4. Calculations include Park system, school, YMCA and/or private facilities.  
 5. Calculations include privately-owned golf courses.  
 6. Assuming that Winston-Salem's community centers serve a dual function as neighborhood centers.  
 7. Does not include uncovered picnic tables of which there are 179.



Picnic shelter – Tobaccoville.



Recreation Center – Winston-Salem.

# Open Space

## EXISTING OPEN SPACE

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The main areas of preserved open space in the county have resulted from the successes of the County's Farmland Preservation Program, the efforts of the recreation departments, and programs administered by the nonprofit Piedmont Land Conservancy (PLC). Privately-owned open space also contributes to community character but is not included in our public open space calculations because, without use restrictions, it can be taken out of open space at any time. Existing open space falls into the categories which follow.

### PARKS

Parks are generally considered part of the open space system. They provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation and meet other open space objectives. If facilities are developed in a manner that is sensitive to the environment, they can also meet wider-reaching open space needs. Generally, jurisdictions in Forsyth County have focused on acquiring land for active recreational use, not environmental quality or natural resource protection. There are some exceptions, however. Two of Winston-Salem's largest parks, Salem Lake (1455 acres) and Historic Bethabara (160 acres), have the primary purpose of protecting environmental and historic resources, respectively. The City also has approximately 61 acres of its parks classified as open space and mini-ornamental. These parks are mostly very small in size and unsuitable for active recreational facilities. Linear parks along stream corridors also effectively serve as open space for environmental protection. Additional linear parks can be developed over time in conjunction with our greenway system.

Most of the County's larger parks (1992 acres) used mainly for passive recreation, such as Horizons, C.G. Hill, Tanglewood, and Triad Parks, contribute significantly to the community's open space. Additionally, the County owns two historic courthouse sites, consisting of 27 acres, which are not currently open to the public.

The larger lakes in the community are located in public parks and form part of the community's open space system. They include Salem Lake, Winston Lake and Kernersville Lake. However, Belews Lake,

located in the rural northeast part of the county and owned by Duke Power has significant additional potential as a recreational and open space resource. The lake and surrounding area have been identified in *The Piedmont Triad Regional Open Space Strategy* as a potential open space focus area. Alternative approaches to bringing parts of this area into our open space system need to be explored.

### FLOODPLAINS

Streams and their adjoining floodplains have some development restrictions and can serve as open space and linear green buffers in development areas. Floodplains temporarily store excess surface water runoff during intense or prolonged rainfall when the capacity of stream channels is exceeded. Mapped floodplains comprise over 12,000 acres in Forsyth County. These lands are environmentally important because, if properly managed, they minimize damage caused by flooding, improve the quality and quantity of our water supply resources, and preserve wildlife habitats. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulates floodplains for the safety of individual properties and flood insurance purposes. The *Unified Development Ordinances* used by Forsyth County and its municipalities further limits the nature and extent of development in flood-prone areas. Development is restricted to half the distance between the 100-year floodway fringe and the floodway. Development activity may not cover more than 50% of the floodway fringe area. These restricted areas, although in private ownership, contribute to the county's open space system.

### FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The Forsyth County Farmland Preservation Program is a voluntary program in which Forsyth County purchases the development rights from farmland owners. This prohibits the future development of their land for nonfarm purposes, such as subdivisions and shopping centers. The Forsyth County Commissioners created the program in 1984 because Forsyth County was experiencing a rapid loss of the best agricultural lands to nonagricultural uses. The intent of the program is to provide economic incentive to farmland owners to keep their land in agriculture or open space uses in perpetuity. The first development rights were purchased in 1987. The program helps to curb the rapid loss of good farmland to urban development, control

sprawl development, preserve open space, reduce public infrastructure costs, and maintain a vital link to our community's past. The landowner is compensated for the sale of the development rights and retains title and all other rights to his or her land. Farming activities continue. The development rights are held in trust, thus assuring that areas with good soils and active farms will remain in agricultural uses.

There are currently 1,605 acres of protected farmland on 29 farms in Forsyth County. The majority of these farms are located in the northeastern part of the county. This acreage is far below the County's goal of 30,000 acres set when the program was established. The main obstacle to bringing more land into the program has been inconsistent and inadequate funding. There are more farmers interested in putting their land into the program than there are funds to purchase development rights. Currently, there is a priority list of 30 farms with owners willing to sell the development rights of 1,346 acres of farmland if funding becomes available. Additional farmland can be added to the system as they are brought into the program.

*The Piedmont Triad Regional Open Space Strategy* identified three areas, in the extreme northeast, northwest, and an area west of Lewisville and east of the Yadkin River, as future focus areas for agricultural open space.

## **SITES PROTECTED BY THE PIEDMONT LAND CONSERVANCY**

A major player in preserving open space in Forsyth County is the Piedmont Land Conservancy (PLC), a nonprofit land trust that serves Forsyth County and eight surrounding counties. The mission of the PLC is to protect natural and scenic lands, farms and open space in Piedmont North Carolina to enrich the quality of life for Piedmont communities and for future generations. To date, PLC has protected approximately 275 acres of land at eleven locations throughout the county. These are as follows:

- Camerille Farms – A conservation easement on 55.69 acres of a mixture of forests, meadows, and riparian areas in the Mill Creek Basin.
- Emily Allen Wildflower Preserve – A 6.38-acre woodland garden, home to more than 500 wildflowers and ferns
- Friedburg Marsh – A 51.43-acre wetland site, habitat to significant populations of birds and other wildlife.
- Haw River Headwaters – 3.68 acres that are the headwaters of the Haw River.

- Spach Farm – 58.40 acres located off Silas Creek Road.
- Black Walnut Bluffs – 25.46 acres located on a bluff at the edge of Bethania with a significant natural plant community over 200 years old.
- Black Walnut Bottoms – 30 acres of floodplain that extends north from the base of Black Walnut Bluffs which has been farmed since colonial times.
- Myers Tract – A 6.6-acre parcel north of Walnut Bottoms donated to the PLC in 2002.
- Muddy Creek Bluffs – 9.77 acres, which protects the water quality of the Muddy Creek and is an important scenic buffer to the National Landmark Area of Bethania.
- The Old Apple Orchard – 9.53 acres. Restoration of The Old Apple Orchard is considered crucial to the agricultural characteristics of Bethania's unique identity.
- Martin Mill Muddy Creek Floodplain – conservation easement obtained on 17.83 acres.

## **OTHER OPEN SPACE**

In addition to the main areas of open space described above, there are smaller areas of open space located throughout the community. These include greenways or linear open space that can connect parks and other open space to form a network of open space. There are approximately 140 acres of open space already preserved as greenway trails and/or easements along the floodplains of major creeks in the county. The *Greenway Plan* proposes expanding the county's greenway system, thereby increasing the quantity of this category of open space.

There is also a fairly significant acreage in open space and landscaped areas located along the major thoroughfares in the county. At present the Vegetation Management Division of the City of Winston-Salem maintains approximately 450 acres of landscaped open area along major thoroughfares such as University Parkway, US 52, Business 40, Silas Creek Parkway, and Peters Creek Parkway. Additional open space along the Interstate Highways in the county is maintained by the State Department of Transportation.

## **PRIVATE OPEN SPACE**

The largest amount of privately-owned open space in the community is associated with the privately-owned golf courses located throughout the county. Additionally, there is the 127-acre Reynolda Gardens, owned by Wake Forest University and located in Winston-Salem. Smaller areas of open space are also

located in residential developments throughout the community. However, there is no complete record of the quantity of privately-owned open space.



Having fun!

## OPEN SPACE NEEDS

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The Piedmont Triad Council of Governments and the City-County Planning Department held an Open Space Planning Workshop on January 22, 2003. The purpose of the workshop was to identify key county resources to be protected or managed as part of a State open space plan. Participants felt that the need to achieve multiple conservation objectives was the most important factor in assessing the significance of open space areas within a regional green space network. They identified the two top priorities for conserving open space in the county as:

- Protecting stream corridors and floodplain areas throughout the county; and
- Preserving farmland areas.

Participants recommended countywide 50-foot minimum stream buffers, better protection of all floodplains, utilization of low-impact design guidelines for developments, and more stringent regulation and enforcement of water quality standards. Several creeks were identified for protection. The workshop survey results are included in **Appendix E**.

The report from the workshop, *Piedmont Triad Regional Open Space Strategy*, includes recommendations for open space preservation in Forsyth County. Areas identified as future focus areas for preservation include:

- Areas identified in the Forsyth County Growth Management Plan as Rural Areas.
- Creek corridors, including the South Fork, Salem, Kerners Mill, and Lowery Mill Creeks, and the Yadkin River, especially north of the water intake.
- The Belews Lake area.

## POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE

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A more comprehensive countywide open space system can be created if, in addition to existing open space areas identified above, steps are taken to explore the potential of adding other areas to the community's open space. Areas that have the potential to be components of the county's open space system follow.

## NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY SITES

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NHP) inventories, catalogues, and supports conservation of the rarest and the most outstanding elements of the natural diversity in our state. The NHP has completed or assisted with the completion of inventories for most counties in the state. The main purpose of county inventories is to facilitate protection of important natural resources when making land use decisions, locating developments, and building roads, sewer, waterlines and other infrastructure. The inventories provide landowners with information that may encourage them to protect their property. Inventories allow informed evaluations of the trade-offs associated with biological diversity and development projects before plans have been finalized. The inventory can also be used to provide information to citizens about the significant natural resources in our county.

The NHP inventory is not considered an exhaustive listing of all significant natural areas. Some potential sites are not surveyed due to lack of permission from land owners. The NHP encourages field investigations by both amateur and professional biologists to identify other significant areas. New sites can be added as more information becomes available. Conversely, sites can also be removed from the listing if the significant natural resources on a site are lost or removed.

A *Natural Heritage Inventory for Forsyth County* was completed in 1997 by the Piedmont Land Conservancy in conjunction with the NHP. Although much of Forsyth County's natural landscape has been lost due to urbanization, 23 sites were identified in the 1997 study. Total acreage was estimated at approximately 3000 acres (a little over 1% of the county). The majority of sites were in the northern half of the county with a significant concentration in northeast quadrant. The sites range in size from several hundred acres for some of the forested tracts to less than an acre for one of the smaller wetlands. Natural features identified on the sites include important wetlands and/or forests, special habitats of plants and animals, rare species occurrences, and significant rock outcrops. Three of the sites were identified as regionally significant and twenty of countywide significance.

In 2007, the NHP updated the Forsyth County inventory based on a review of the 1997 data and an analysis of recent aerial photography. Using computer-based mapping technology, more precise boundaries were identified and more accurate acreage was calculated for each site. Four previously identified sites were removed from the Forsyth inventory; two of these due to clear-cutting and development impacts. The Forsyth County inventory now includes a total of 21 sites: 19 natural heritage sites and 2 dedicated nature preserves, totaling approximately 4,000 acres. The currently identified Forsyth County Natural Heritage Program sites are shown on **Map 5**, the Proposed Open Space System Map.

Six of the Forsyth County NHP sites, totaling almost 1000 acres, are under some measure of protection, either through public ownership or voluntary conservation restriction. The remaining sites, amounting to approximately 3,000 acres, are privately owned and not presently under any form of protection.

Strategies should be pursued to purchase or secure some measure of protection for the most significant of the unprotected sites. Forsyth County NHP sites are included in the proposed open space system as potential open space sites. Future proposals to develop any of the Natural Heritage sites need to be carefully evaluated, taking into consideration on-site resources identified in the inventory. Experts should be sought to determine which parts of the site qualify for preservation and the type and form of development that may be most appropriate for other portions. In cases where outright acquisition is not justified for all or part of a site, a number of strategies can be used

to preserve identified resources while maintaining the property in private ownership. These could include conservation easements, management agreements, lease agreements, limited development techniques, and technical assistance programs. More details on these approaches are described in **Appendix F**.

## WETLANDS

Included in this category are wetlands protected under the national Clean Water Act and other wetlands of local significance. The most significant of these sites is the Friedburg Marsh, a 3-4 acre site already under the protection of the Piedmont Land Conservancy. An additional seven sites were identified in the *Natural Heritage Inventory for Forsyth County* as containing a significant wetland component and should be included in policy decisions made with respect to inventory sites. Additional appropriate sites may be added to the system.

## FLOODPLAINS AND STREAM RESTORATION AREAS

Protecting the county's stream corridors and floodplain areas was identified as the top conservation priority in the regional open space workshop held in 2003. The main corridors identified for protection were the Yadkin River, Salem Creek, South Fork Creek, Kerners Mill Creek, and Lowery Mill Creek corridors. Stream buffers a minimum of fifty feet wide were recommended to be incorporated in floodplain development regulations countywide. Forty-foot greenway easements are already obtained along most of these streams through the development approval process. More detailed studies may be needed along the identified corridors to determine the level of protection needed in each case. Streams already identified for stream restoration such as sections of Salem Creek, Brushy Fork Creek, Silas Creek, the Deep River and Abbotts Creek, together with other future projects, could result in restored lands being added to the open space system.

## SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

Some of these sites have already been identified and some are already owned or managed by public or nonprofit organizations. The most significant of these, Historic Bethabara, the Richmond Courthouse site, and the Wright Courthouse site, are included either in the City or County park system. An update of the county's archaeological inventory was completed in 2002 and can be used as a basis for identifying

specific sites for further study for inclusion in the county's open space system. The inventory identified a significant number of sites along the Yadkin River to be placed on a study list for further investigation.

A study of the County Congregations of Wachovia identified the Friedland and Hope Moravian Congregations as significant historic/archeological resources that are threatened by existing and future development. Further consideration should be given to the potential of including sites within these areas in our open space system. *Legacy* also recommended the establishment of historic districts in rural areas and for significant rural landscapes. It is expected that when these studies are completed, additional sites may be added to the county's open space system.

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens, created and maintained by neighborhood residents on a voluntary basis, have the potential to contribute to the county's open space network, provide recreational opportunities, increase community cohesion, contribute to healthy living, and promote environmental awareness and education. They have increased in popularity in urban areas in recent years. This increase is due to higher density of development, reduction of private open space and an upsurge in interest in gardening and healthy eating. They are often located on previously vacant, derelict or underutilized land that may be publicly owned or leased from private landowners.



Historic Bethabara – a significant historic site.

The Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department operates Earth Touch, a horticultural therapy program. The purpose of the program, started in 1991, is to provide opportunities for clients to garden, to be more involved in the natural world, and to stimulate the five senses by using nature activities. The objectives include increasing physical fitness through gardening activities; developing an appreciation for the environment; promoting cooperation; increasing socialization; developing new skills; increasing self-reliance; relieving stress; using natural materials to create crafts; and increasing awareness of gardening resources. Activities include outdoor and indoor gardening, nature walks, plant identification, bird watching, nature crafts and garden tours. The program, using donated supplies, is presently carried on at twenty-two locations, including group homes, nursing homes, retirement centers and housing sites with on-site gardens. Although resources are very limited, there is interest in expanding the program to include community gardens at locations that are easily accessible to urban residents who may be interested in gardening but do not have opportunities to do so at their locations.

Winston Grows is a community gardens program begun in 1992 and sponsored by the *Winston-Salem Journal*, the Garden Club Council, and the Forsyth County Cooperative Extension Service Department. The program oversees fifteen gardens at several sites in Winston-Salem, targeting areas where gardens would not otherwise exist. It has positively impacted these limited resource areas. Demand for the program exceeds the available personnel and financial resources. Nonprofit funding has recently been obtained to expand the program.



Community gardens – Winston-Salem.

The existing community garden programs are small. The programs, if funded and expanded, can contribute more significantly to green space particularly in the higher density residential areas of our community. At present, there is minimum coordination between the two community garden programs. An opportunity appears to exist to restructure these programs either by combining them into one countywide program or coordinating certain aspects of the program to more effectively use the limited resources of both programs and to seek additional funding.

### **SPECIAL SCENIC SITES**

These are sites/areas with special scenic qualities that contribute to community character. They can be visible from roads, parks, greenways, streams, rivers and hilltops. Some of these sites are already included in existing parks and greenways. Plans have been com-

pleted for a couple of scenic corridors in Winston-Salem, and potential scenic corridors have been identified in the adopted *Union Cross/Southeast Forsyth County Area Plan*. However, there is need for a countywide scenic corridors plan that would identify the major scenic corridors in the county for inclusion in the open space plan and make recommendations for preserving their scenic quality.

### **CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISIONS**

These are sites designated for open space/parks in Conservation/Open Space Subdivisions. Most of these will be retained in private ownership and managed by homeowners associations or other groups, such as a nonprofit conservation organization. Those dedicated for public use will become part of the county's open space system.



Emily Allen Wildflower Garden – Scenic area protected by the Piedmont Land Conservancy.



The Village Park, Tobaccoville – town center park and open space.



Salem Lake – a significant recreation and conservation asset.

# Funding and Managing Parks, Facilities, and Open Space

Providing adequate parks, recreational facilities and open space to meet the needs of the community involves acquiring land, identifying adequate funding sources, and developing, managing and maintaining facilities.

## LAND ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION

### LAND ACQUISITION

Acquisition methods can be classified into two categories: methods where landowners retain ownership of the land and preserve a resource through an easement or other mutual agreement; and methods involving a transfer of title from the owner to a local government, land trust, or preservation organization that is in land management. Acquisition through purchase is the surest means of protection but is usually the most costly and public funds for land acquisition are limited. There are techniques that may be employed to secure land for parks and open space without having to purchase it at market value. Some of these may be employed more frequently than others. However, it is necessary for the community to have a toolbox of techniques and strategies in order to be creative in tailoring the acquisition or protection method to the goals of the individual landowner, the nature of the resource, or the agency interested in acquiring or preserving the desired land. Details on some relevant techniques can be found in **Appendix F**.

A strategy that is useful in obtaining suitable land for parks, recreational facilities and open space is to identify areas of projected future need and acquire land in these areas in advance of need when large tracts can be acquired at reasonable costs. In the case of Natural Heritage Sites, priorities must be identified for the acquisition or protection of the most significant and threatened of these and protection proceed before the pressure for development builds in those areas. Local governments, under pressure to upgrade and maintain existing facilities, have often failed to be proactive in acquiring land and protecting resources. The acquisition of park land is often considered separate from acquisition of land for other public uses, such as new

schools and roads. Cost savings for land acquisition and even land development can be achieved if consideration is given to the acquisition of parks and open space during the planning and land acquisition for other public projects. This approach has been utilized to a limited extent in the county by acquiring land at some locations to be used for schools and parks. The county and its municipalities need to consider also securing land for parks and open space when acquiring land for fire stations and other community facilities and obtaining greenway easements, as multiple use easements, together with sewer easements.

### PRESERVATION THROUGH DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

Locally, the *Unified Development Ordinances* (UDO) include restrictions on development in flood-prone and water supply watershed areas that result in some measure of open space retention and protection. Additionally, the *Greenway Plan* stipulates that greenway easements be obtained for developments along creeks with identified floodplains.

The Yadkin River Conservation District is a low-density residential zoning district, located along the Yadkin River. This district is intended to protect the community's main water supply, preserve the historic features of this area, maintain rural character, protect the sensitive natural, recreational and visual resources of the area, and preserve the natural beauty along the Yadkin River.

Common recreation areas and common open space are required in Planned Residential Developments (PRDs) and a density bonus is applicable for retaining steep slopes in an undeveloped state in these developments. The density bonus provisions, however, have not been widely used in the past.

Clemmons, in April 2003, amended the *Clemmons Area Development Guide* to include open space standards. The *Guide* requires that open space be provided in residential and mixed-use subdivisions at the rate of 130 square feet per person expected to live in the development.

*Legacy* recommended the adoption of conservation or open space subdivision regulations for inclusion in the UDO to retain open space and rural character, particularly in the county's Rural Growth Management Area. If the Rural Area develops according to the existing zoning and subdivision regulations, little farmland, open space or rural character would be preserved. Conservation Subdivision design allows more compact design by allowing more intense development on a portion of the site while reserving the remainder of the site undeveloped. The undeveloped acreage can include steep slopes, wildlife habitat, wetlands, scenic views, floodplains, stands of mature trees, and other environmentally sensitive areas. The same number of units can be built on the site as are permitted by conventional subdivision regulations. The undeveloped acreage can be preserved in privately held open space or protected by an easement to a land trust.

The City-County Planning Board is developing Conservation Subdivision design regulations for inclusion in the UDO. These subdivisions should be considered not only in terms of how they apply to particular properties, but also how they effectively reach beyond these borders to form interconnected open space in an area and in the greater community. Conservation Subdivisions benefit everyone. They support growth while still protecting the community's natural resources; provide open space for residents of the subdivision and the community; reserve usable land for active or passive recreation; provide residents a neighborhood with natural scenic beauty and increased property values; reduce developers' infrastructure costs because shorter roads and other associated infrastructure are needed; and, provide a very desirable product. This form of subdivision provides an alternative to the existing types. Conservation Subdivisions can be applied not only in the Rural Area, as proposed in *Legacy* but also where development is proposed on sites as having natural or cultural resources worthy of preservation.

## LAND BANKING

Many communities use land banking to facilitate securing land for recreation and preservation purposes. A land bank is a designated funding source that acts as a bank with the power to buy and sell parcels of land. It, therefore, facilitates the securing of land in advance of need. In some communities, developers are required to set aside sensitive land to lessen the adverse impact of development and they may be allowed to contribute to a land bank in lieu of such dedication. This gives the community the ability to

protect a single, larger open space area rather than smaller, scattered tracts of land. Land trusts, which are privately supported, nonprofit land conservation organizations, often act as land banks. Land trusts buy and protect scenic lands, open space, farms, sensitive natural areas and historic resources. There are private land trusts that serve the local community. However, municipalities can also use land banking to secure land for future parks, open space, and recreational facilities.

## LAND MANAGEMENT

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Lands secured as public lands need to be managed to achieve their intended objectives. Responsibility for public land management in Forsyth County rests mainly with local governments, although some management is undertaken by land trusts.

Management of our local parks has been the responsibility of various local government bodies, with the City of Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department and the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department managing the majority of them. Kernersville and the other towns usually manage the parks and recreational facilities that they own, although in some cases there are management agreements between towns and the County with respect to management of specific facilities. To date, the greenway system has been managed solely by the City of Winston-Salem and all of the existing trails are located within the city.

Private organizations or individual property owners manage most community open space, with the exception of park land. The Piedmont Land Conservancy has played a significant role in managing the County's public open space resources. It is assumed that private bodies will continue to acquire and manage many of these resources. If, however, local governments are to play a greater role in acquiring and maintaining land mainly for resource and open space preservation, there will be new management challenges and costs. These will vary depending on the size, accessibility and intended use of the open space. As the community seeks to protect more open space, while at the same time providing for the active recreational needs of its residents, the benefits of an active land management program become evident. A land management program seeks to balance the protection of natural resources with recreational and other public uses, while ensuring public safety. The purposes for which property will be managed must be clearly

defined, management plans must be developed, property development issues resolved, public access determined and management funds secured. Developing and implementing a management plan for any property is complex and once developed, the plan continues to evolve with changes to the natural systems on the property or the recreational uses and other public uses.

Citizens can play an active role in planning and managing the community's recreational facilities and natural resources. The Winston-Salem Recreation Commission assists in managing that City's parks and recreational facilities and so do citizen recreation committees in some of the towns. However, similar management initiatives have not been undertaken throughout the county with respect to the preservation of open space and the establishment of greenways. *Legacy*, therefore, recommended that consideration be given to the establishment of a City-County Greenway and Open Space Advisory Committee. The *Greenway Plan* further considered this recommendation and proposed that such a body be established. This committee would represent the diverse interests of the community and ensure that consideration is given to the community's priorities. It would provide links between public service staff, legislative bodies, and the public. Where such committees have been established in other communities, their powers and duties vary significantly. The *Greenway Plan* proposed alternative structures and identified possible responsibilities for this proposed advisory body (**Appendix G**).

## FUNDING SOURCES

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Identification of adequate funding is critical to implementation of this Plan. *The North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* identified inadequate funding for recreational facilities as a key issue to be addressed by communities throughout the State. Parks, open space and recreational facilities are often a low priority for limited public funds. However, available data suggests that there is a growing commitment to funding parks and open space in many communities throughout the United States. Nationally over the last few years there has been an 85% success rate for 250 local and State ballot initiatives authorizing public spending for parks and open space. The Trust for Public Land reported that in the year 2000 total conservation dollars raised nationwide reached \$7.5 billion.

Identifying resources to provide adequate parks, recreational facilities and open space for the residents of Forsyth County remains a major challenge. A significant decrease in federal funding support of outdoor recreation occurred during the 1980s and 1990s. The assumption was that states would take greater responsibility for recreation funding. Low statewide funding levels and recent State budget deficits are not encouraging. In an era of limited governmental resources, funding for parks, open space and recreational facilities has to compete with funding for a range of other priorities for government spending and are often disproportionately affected by budget cuts. A Pennsylvania State University survey found, however, that the vast majority of people feel that providing funds for public parks is money well spent. Local governments must, therefore, seek out alternative sources of funding. Both traditional and innovative methods of funding land and facilities need to be explored. The revenue generating options available to local governments take many forms from bonds to sales, property and real estate transfer taxes to impact and user fees. Each community in the county must assess its priorities and determine how much money residents are willing to spend on recreation and open space conservation.

## BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

Commitment to funding for parks, open space and recreational facilities varies throughout this community. In recent years funding allocated in the County's annual budget for parks and recreation has covered mainly daily park maintenance needs and the development of Triad and Tanglewood Parks.

The budget for the City of Winston-Salem includes allocations for operations of the Parks and Recreation Department and some ongoing maintenance of recreational facilities. The Department also has a five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) which totaled approximately \$4.6 million for the period 2003-2008.

Some of the smaller municipalities, with their relatively low tax base, have not been very aggressive in funding parks and recreational facilities. The *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan* recommended that the Town establish annual budgets for the Parks and Recreation Department. Budgets would be based on the projected capital improvements of \$29.5 million and staffing needs and operating costs projected over the life of the plan. Key potential sources of capital funding were identified for exploration including some of those identified here.

## **BONDS**

Bonds are an attractive financing mechanism for parks, open space and recreational facilities because they provide large sums of up-front cash. The various types of bonds are, therefore, common tools used by local governments to finance recreation improvements.

Unfortunately, recreation projects were not included in Winston-Salem's 2000 approved bond referenda. No major infusion of voter approved bond funding has, therefore, been available for the City's recreational facilities, parks, and open space projects since the 1987 Bond Referendum. Other communities in the State, including the City of Greensboro, have funded major parks and open space projects as a result of successful bond referenda. It is hoped that two-thirds bond funding will be available for implementing some of the projects already planned but funds available from this source are very limited and additional funds will be required for major new projects identified in this Plan.

In March 2001, the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners approved approximately \$3 million in two-thirds bonds for County parks and recreation projects. About \$1.75 million of the bonds were for improvements and renovations to Tanglewood Park. Another \$800,000 was allocated to projects at Triad Park and the remaining \$430,000 for improvements to other County-owned parks. Funding is not available at this time for providing new facilities in parks other than Triad Park.

To ensure implementation of this Plan and projects identified in completed park master plans, priority will need to be given to including recreation and open space projects in future bond referenda.

## **FEES**

Recreation user fees are mainly used to fund operating costs for parks and recreational facilities. They are generally intended to cover the cost of providing a particular service but often they do not. User fees contribute about one-third of the operating budget of Winston-Salem's and Forsyth County's recreation and parks departments and less than 15% of the operating budget of the Kernersville Parks and Recreation Department. Continual review of user fees is required to help offset the rising costs of providing and maintaining high quality services to the public. The fees structure should be designed, however, to assure equitable access for those who are unable to pay. This

would involve utilizing alternatives such as scholarships, fee free hours or days, and volunteer work. Eighty percent of the residents of Lewisville in a recent survey said they were willing to pay up to \$5 for recreational events if the Town could no longer provide them for free.

## **LAND DEDICATION OR PAYMENT IN LIEU OF DEDICATION**

Alternatives for obtaining additional park land and open space or funding recreational facilities are needed because of the limited ability of the community to fund needed parks and facilities to service new developments out of existing local tax revenues. Nationwide, some local governments require that developers and property owners dedicate land for parks and open space as part of the development approval process. Frequently, these dedication requirements include alternative requirements for payment in lieu of dedication in cases where the land is not suitable in terms of size or location for a public park. Other governments assess fees to fund municipal trusts for parks and open space. These fees are one-time charges assessed on developments to offset the cost of providing parks and recreational facilities to serve new residents. The intention is that those who create the need for additional facilities should pay for it rather than imposing the costs on current taxpayers. Fees are a common tool used by local governments to help pay for the acquisition, construction and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities near new residential, commercial and industrial developments. Fees for parks and recreational facilities have not been used in Forsyth County though they have been used in many communities around the country and in some communities in North Carolina. In Raleigh, park/open space facility fees are imposed on new residential construction to help finance parks and greenways.

The Town of Kernersville, recently faced with the demand for additional recreational facilities from a proposed new development of 2,334 homes with an estimated 6,000 people, levied a recreation land fee on the development under the special use district process. All funds are to be used for the acquisition and development of recreation, park or open space sites to serve the development or developments within the immediate area.

A comprehensive policy that addresses the provision of recreational facilities and open space in new developments throughout the county is needed. Encourage

developers/large land holders to work with residents and elected officials to improve the availability of parks and open space to the community's residents, where needed.

## TAXES

Tax revenues are necessary to support park, open space and recreational facilities development. The major source of operating funds for the community's recreation and parks programs is the general fund, derived principally from property taxes. There are other sources of tax revenue used by communities across the country that can be considered for funding projects. These include:

- A tax on prepared food used by some communities in North Carolina to fund community facilities.
- Sales taxes used by Boulder and surrounding communities in Colorado. These communities dedicate sale taxes varying from 0.25% - 1% to fund parks and open space.
- Real estate transfer taxes levied on the sale of certain categories of property. The tax can be imposed on either the seller or buyer. Several states and communities, including Maryland and Florida, use the proceeds of this tax to establish dedicated funds for parks, open space and natural resource protection. North Carolina cities need to get special legislative approval for the tax. Since the tax can inflate real estate values, in some communities properties of a specified value are exempted to protect middle-income and first-time homeowners. Revenue generated can be spent on projects in any part of the community collecting the tax.

## FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING

Some funding is available at the federal and State level for parks and open space projects. These are, however, limited in size and scope and usually require matching funds. They cannot be relied upon as the main funding sources for capital projects. See **Appendix H** for funding sources.

## PRIVATE FUNDING

Cooperation with nonprofit and for-profit recreation providers affords many opportunities to efficiently meet the community's recreation needs when public funding is limited. In some communities, nonprofit groups have had great success in raising significant amounts of funding for public parks, recreation and open space projects. In Houston, for example, the Friends of Hermann Park raised \$13 million in capital and maintenance funds between 1995 and 1999 to implement improvements identified as needed for that

park. In Denver, The Parks People, a private fundraising group, brings in between \$500,000 and \$1 million a year to repair and refurbish parks. The nonprofit Friends of Triad Park has embarked on a fundraising drive for Triad Park projects.

## OPEN SPACE FUNDING

A variety of methods have been used to raise funds for open space programs across the country. These include, for example, expenditures from the general and discretionary funds of counties in Vermont and Pennsylvania; bond referenda for agricultural easement programs in New Jersey and California; real estate transfer taxes in Maryland and Florida; dedicated local sales taxes in Sonoma County, California; cellular phone taxes in Virginia Beach, Virginia; and a property tax increase in Routt County, Colorado.

Approaches to funding open space in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County vary depending on the type of open space. The Forsyth County Farmland Preservation Program has historically been funded out of the County's general fund. Since the program began, the total cost of purchasing the development rights of farms amounts to \$2.96 million. The 1996 Federal Farm Bill included \$35 million in matching funds for state and local farmland protection programs nationwide. The Forsyth County Soil and Water Conservation Service Board of Supervisors, which administers the Farmland Preservation Program, received several matching grants under this program. However, no additional purchases were made since 2002 because County funds were not available to take advantage of federal or State matching funding. Sources of matching funds, including private nonprofit organizations, could be actively sought out to continue funding this program.

Nonprofit organizations play a significant role in funding open space acquisition throughout the county. The Piedmont Land Conservancy has worked with the North Carolina National Heritage Trust Fund and other State and private funding sources to fund many County projects.

## COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

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A range of public, quasi-public and private organizations provide parks, open space and recreational facilities in the community. Cooperation and coordination among these recreation providers and conservation

organizations are, therefore, necessary to ensure efficient provision of these facilities countywide. Intergovernmental partnerships and joint venture partnerships are most effective in achieving this coordination.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS**

Intergovernmental partnerships are agreements between federal, state, local or regional government agencies that own and manage land and facilities. Sharing the responsibilities and costs of acquisition and management can facilitate development of more or larger recreational facilities, the protection of additional open space, and regional projects. Triad Park, jointly owned and operated by Forsyth and Guilford Counties, is an example of governments working together regionally to jointly provide recreational facilities and open space for their residents.

Within Forsyth County, there is ongoing cooperation between the schools and recreation departments for the use of some schools' recreational facilities for public recreation. The Winston-Salem Recreation Department, for example, uses school gymnasiums in areas without community recreation centers. The schools also have access to public parks and recreational facilities located adjacent to or in proximity to schools. Although there is a long history of schools and parks sharing facilities, and the school administration has provided greenway easements and public recreational facilities at several new school sites, there has been no established system in place to assure that the recreation needs of an area are considered when new school sites are acquired. Cooperation often tends to take place after school sites are selected and facilities constructed. Cooperative acquiring, planning, development and use of sites for both school construction and recreational uses will maximize the use of tax dollars. Consideration should be given to acquiring sites for multiple uses. This has become increasingly important as land costs rise and fiscal resources diminish. Increasing partnerships with the school system could make more recreation opportunities available to the community, particularly at the neighborhood level.

Cooperation also involves local recreation departments or committees working together to jointly develop new or expand existing recreational facilities to serve local residents. Smaller municipalities without parks departments or maintenance staff can contract with other jurisdictions to operate or maintain

their facilities. The City-County Utilities Commission can work with Winston-Salem Recreation Department on the reclamation and possible reuse of landfill sites for parks, open space and other recreational facilities. The Utilities Commission should also coordinate with municipalities and property owners in obtaining greenway easements along with water and sewer easements.

## **PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**

Partnerships are also desirable between government and private and nonprofit organizations. Cooperation can take the form of joint venture partnerships and other formal arrangements or more informal relationships. Private groups can share benefits, responsibilities and costs of acquisition and management. They can also create support for and bring diverse expertise to projects. They can provide support in the areas of fundraising, organizing volunteers, marketing and public outreach, advocacy, programming, design, planning and construction of capital improvements, routine and remedial maintenance, and security. Partnerships can take place with foundations and corporations as well as churches, garden clubs and sports teams. Their roles can vary from catalysts for specific projects to partners in development of a countywide park system. They bring with them advantages that include greater flexibility in what can be done; freedom to advocate for parks and open space; the ability to attract private donors; credibility with residents and local institutions; and an ability to focus on particular projects. In communities where significant partnerships have been developed, such as Philadelphia, Portland, San Francisco, Indianapolis and Baltimore, the outcomes uniformly exceed the sum of what has been put into the project.

In Forsyth County, there is some ongoing cooperation between municipal providers and quasi-public agencies to try to ensure that specific facilities, particularly those not provided by public agencies, are made available to residents. The arrangements between the municipalities of Clemmons and Kernersville with YMCAs for the provision of specific recreational facilities are examples of such cooperation.

There is also ongoing cooperation between public agencies and nonprofit agencies in protecting open space and natural resources in Forsyth County. Partnerships with the Piedmont Land Conservancy, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Lands, and other major nonprofit agencies need to be further developed. There is also the need to explore other

avenues for partnerships, particularly in the development of parks and recreational facilities in order to provide a higher level of service to the community. Partnerships with the gas and electric companies, for example, could result in expansion of the greenway system along utility easements.

## CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Successful implementation of this Plan requires the support of residents of the community. It is important, therefore, to ensure ongoing participation by residents in the planning, design, development and maintenance of the community's system of parks, recreational facilities and open space. Increasing awareness of the community's recreational facilities will also stimulate usage by residents. There is a range of options for securing citizen awareness and involvement.

## VOLUNTEERS

The best park and open space systems often have aggressive volunteer programs since government agencies usually cannot handle all that needs to be done. Volunteers can range from advisory committee members to community groups that do cleanup operations. They can be organized either by local parks and recreation departments or private/nonprofit organizations and participate in activities such as remedial maintenance activities, organizing and staffing park events, producing newsletters, doing organizational mailings, soliciting donations, providing visitor information, security, conducting user surveys, planting vegetation, building trails, monitoring wildlife, and performing cleanup activities. If volunteers are to be successful they must be properly trained and managed.

Many of the successful volunteer programs have paid volunteer coordinators who manage the program. The volunteer program in Dane County, Wisconsin, which has a paid coordinator, is regarded as a model of a successful volunteer program providing a wide range of services. The mission of the program is to support the mission of the parks department and to provide volunteer opportunities that give the community a sense of ownership of the park system. There is a manual for the program; a database to track volunteers, projects and hours worked; and, a quarterly newsletter created and edited by the volunteers. Most training is on-the-job.

Opportunities in our community for volunteer involvement in park planning, development, maintenance and outreach have, to date, been somewhat

limited. The Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department established an Adopt-A-Park program in 1989. The program provides an opportunity for the community to become involved in the beautification and enhancement of the City's parks. Through the program, individuals, families or community groups can perform a range of duties by taking responsibility for a park, greenway or other designated green space. Participants are recognized for their efforts with a sign at the park or green space and Certificates of Appreciation. Some neighborhood associations also have park cleanup days.

The County does not have an Adopt-A-Park program but does have a program that uses volunteers to do some routine maintenance including planting, weeding and mulching. Volunteers consist mainly of high school students and persons performing required community service. Prisoners also help to maintain the County's parks and facilities.

There is a need to revisit the scope and management of the existing volunteer programs. A strong network of park and open space "friends" groups would be a real asset to the community serving not only as volunteers but also as activists, partners and stewards of our park and open space system.



Citizen involvement in wetland restoration.



## OUTREACH AND MARKETING

Effective marketing programs attract and educate users, encourage stewardship, and create political, financial and volunteer support for parks and open space. They enhance the image and credibility of recreation providers. A variety of measures can be adopted to successfully reach the community ranging from newsletters and media coverage to meetings with local community organizations and special events.

Local outreach efforts include publication of park and recreation program brochures; meetings with neighborhoods and other groups with an interest in recreation; special events; and media coverage, including WePLAY, a newsletter and monthly television show highlighting the City's recreational facilities and programs. The City of Winston-Salem also has a

Memory Tree Program through which residents can honor loved ones or friends by purchasing trees of their choice to be planted in the City's parks and open space.

There are other ongoing outreach efforts throughout the community. Further efforts countywide are needed to increase awareness, promote widespread use of facilities, and obtain support for projects and programs. Open space and natural resources protection in the county could be enhanced with improved dissemination of information to landowners and other potential partners in preservation efforts. This could be achieved by making resource kits of relevant information available and more effectively utilizing media opportunities. Residents should also be encouraged, through the local area planning process, to designate land for parks and open space.



Volunteers – wetland restoration.



Greenway dedication.

# Plan Recommendations

The recommendations of this Plan include proposals for expanding and improving the community's existing system of parks, recreational facilities and open space. They are intended to:

- Provide a road map to achieving the community's vision for its park, recreation and open space system and accomplishing the goals and objectives of the Plan;
- Build upon existing programs and facilities and take into account identified needs for the future;
- Provide a basis for prioritization of parks, recreation facility and open space needs; and
- Identify ways in which the County and municipalities can enhance community stewardship and partnership opportunities.

The focus in this Plan is on identifying general locations for parks and open space in areas identified as having existing or projected deficiencies or with natural/open space resources to be preserved. Park and facility proposals will be further reviewed and refined as more specific population projections and demand forecasts become available; more frequent surveys of park and recreation facility users are undertaken; and master planning proceeds for specific parks.

The exact locations for new or expanded parks and facilities are generally not provided except in cases where these have been identified in adopted local Area Plans. It is acknowledged that this Plan reflects more detailed park proposals – particularly for neighborhood parks, mini-ornamental parks and linear parks – in areas with existing local Area Plans. However, the completion of local Area Plans for other areas in the city and county will result in the identification of more specific park sites and needed facilities in those areas.

The following sections include recommendations for:

- New parks and improvements to existing parks;
- New and improved recreational facilities;
- An expanded open space system;
- Planning, funding, developing and managing the community's system of parks and open space; and
- Increasing citizen awareness and involvement.

## PARK PROPOSALS

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Proposals for development of new parks or improvement of existing parks are based on needs analysis. These proposals are summarized by park categories; potential locations are indicated on **Map 4**. In most cases, general locations are identified. More detailed studies are needed to identify specific sites. Following site identification and acquisition, a site-specific master plan should be completed for the development of each park with input from potential users. Parks should be linked to greenway trails and pedestrian/bike routes, and have access to public transportation, where possible.

## REGIONAL PARKS

Recommendations for regional parks include expansion and improvement of existing parks and identification of potential locations for new parks. Detailed studies are needed to identify specific sites where available land, ideally in excess of 100 acres, is suitable for regional-level active and passive recreational facilities. Proposals for regional parks include:

- Developing a new park at the City-owned Hanes Mill Road Landfill site, in northwest Winston-Salem. This is a long-term project that is not likely to be developed during the life of this Plan. However, the feasibility of developing all or portions of this site for recreation needs to be determined and this feasibility study should be undertaken in the near future.
- Completing a master plan and facility improvements at Salem Lake Park, Winston-Salem.
- Developing a new park at a site along the Yadkin River located, if possible, between the Old US 421 Park and Highway 67. The search for suitable land should begin in the near future to facilitate land assembly and development in the long term.
- Developing a new park at a site with access to Belews Lake. The availability of land owned by Duke Power should be explored.
- Expanding Triad Park if adjacent sites become available.
- Developing regional-level facilities at Horizons Park.
- Improving facilities at Tanglewood Park.

## DISTRICT PARKS

District parks are expected to increasingly function either as parks providing specialized facilities to a large service area or as providing more passive recreation opportunities to a rapidly urbanizing population. Proposals for new parks and expansion of existing district parks include:

- Developing a new park at the Old Salisbury Road Landfill. (Feasibility study and reclamation plan to be completed.)
- Developing a new park at the former construction and demolition landfill site located in southeast Winston-Salem at Old Milwaukee Lane.
- Expanding Washington Park, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Development of Jefferson Park in Winston-Salem.
- Developing a new park in northwest Winston-Salem, north of Bethania.
- Exploring the feasibility of developing district-level facilities at the proposed regional park at the Hanes Mill Road landfill site in Winston-Salem.
- Completing master plans for Winston Lake Park.
- Completing master plans for an expanded Kernersville Lake Park.
- Developing a new park at the landfill site north of Kernersville, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Park and Recreation Master Plan*.
- Expanding C.G. Hill Memorial Park as a district park that could include community-level facilities or development of a new park adjacent to the existing park to serve newly developing areas west of Winston-Salem.
- Developing a new park in southeast Forsyth County south of US 311 to serve southeast Forsyth County, as proposed in the *Union Cross/Southeast Forsyth County Area Plan*.
- Identifying additional parks, as needed, in the area planning process.

## COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks should provide additional facilities not typically available at neighborhood parks. They should provide for more structured and programmed activities. Facilities should include a community center, with or without a gymnasium, when feasible, multipurpose ball fields and courts, walking trails and recreational open space, including picnic areas. Specific facilities may differ depending on demand, facilities available nearby, and the desirability of offering a systemwide balance of recreational opportunities that allows residents to participate in varied activities. These parks should be designed, where appropriate, as multifunctional parks that can serve as neighborhood parks in the neighborhoods where they

are located. Facility choices can be made in the master planning process for each park. These parks should ideally be located along major transportation routes to facilitate easy access from several neighborhoods or the population of a small town.

Proposals for the location of community parks are not intended to be exhaustive but to satisfy minimum needs for community parks either in newly developing areas or areas with a significant lack of park facilities. Additional community park sites should be identified as future growth patterns emerge.

Proposed new and expanded community parks include:

- Expanding and improvement to Happy Hill Park in Winston-Salem, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan* and the *Southeast Gateway Public Spaces Master Plan*.
- Developing a new park at the Vulcan Quarry site in Waughtown, as proposed in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Considering a park, which could include soccer or baseball fields, east of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and south of Argonne Boulevard, as proposed in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Developing a new park in northeast Winston-Salem at a site to be identified.
- Developing a new park at a site to be identified in the vicinity of the proposed US 311 South Activity Center to serve southeast Winston-Salem.
- Implementing a master plan for Jamison park to serve the western edge of Winston-Salem.
- Developing two new parks in Kernersville, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Park and Recreation Master Plan*:
  - North in the general area of Old Valley School Road and Kernersville Lake Park.
  - South in the general area of Abbotts Creek and Ogden School Road.
- Expanding Beeson Road Park in Kernersville.
- Developing a community park in Clemmons.
- Expanding existing undersized parks if land becomes available adjacent to them.
- Identifying additional parks, as needed, in the area planning process.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The location of new neighborhood parks should be determined by local community needs and future patterns of growth and development. Convenience, safety and ease of access are important in identifying suitable sites. Minimum facilities typically include playgrounds, picnic areas and open space for active and/or

passive recreation. Additional facilities may vary depending on neighborhood demand and the availability of other nearby facilities.

The following recommendations are for a minimum number of new and improved neighborhood parks to serve identified community needs or remedy a significant deficiency. It is expected that these will be supplemented by neighborhood input during the local area planning process. Proposals for new and expanded neighborhood parks include:

- Developing a new park adjacent to Marvin Ward Elementary School to service future annexed areas in southwest Winston-Salem (site already secured).
- Renovating Granville Park in Winston-Salem based on the completed master plan.
- Improving Happy Hill Park in Winston-Salem to serve the dual functions of a neighborhood park and a community park.
- Developing the undeveloped 35-acre Jamison Park, which can be developed to perform the dual functions of a neighborhood and community park, to serve the western fringes of Winston-Salem.
- Developing a new park in the vicinity of the Peters Creek Parkway Metro Activity Center at Peters Creek Parkway and Clemmons Road in Winston-Salem to serve new and proposed developments in the area (site to be determined).
- Developing additional neighborhood parks to service future annexed areas in the northeast, southeast and south areas of Winston-Salem at sites to be determined based on more detailed plans for these areas.
- Developing five new parks in Kernersville, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Park and Recreation Master Plan*:
  - West in the general area of Regents Park Road and Bluff School Road.
  - North in the general area of Piney Grove Road and Linville Springs Road.
  - South-central in the general area of Wicker Road.
  - Southeast in the general area of NC 66 and Old Salem Road.
  - South in the general area of Watkins Ford Road and Teague Road (Caleb Creek area).
- Completing and implementing a master plan for Old Kernersville Lake Park.
- Developing three new parks in Clemmons. The locations can be selected from potential sites identified in the *Clemmons Area Development Guide*.
- Developing two new parks in Lewisville (sites to be determined).
- Completing and implementing a master plan for Old Kernersville Lake Park.

- Developing a new park to serve southeast Tobaccoville (site to be determined).
- Developing a small park in Bethania (site to be determined).
- Developing a new park in Walkertown (site to be determined).
- Developing a new park to serve the southern part of Rural Hall (site to be determined).
- Identifying additional parks, as needed, in the area planning process.

## LINEAR AND SPECIAL PARKS

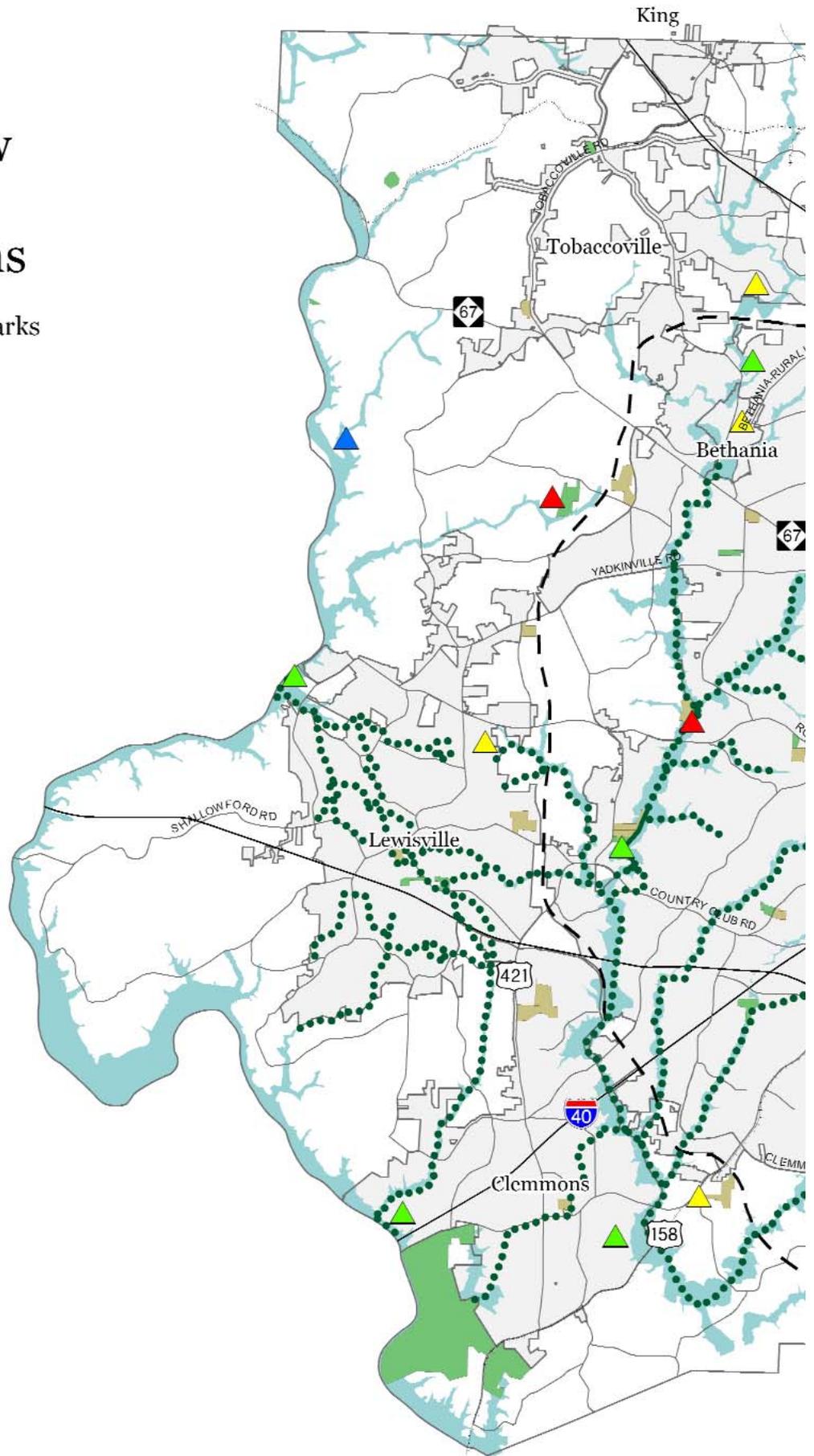
Linear parks are linear in shape and often link parks, other recreation areas and open space. They are often located along creeks and usually developed with trails for walking, hiking and biking. Other recreational facilities can be located within these parks. Special parks include mini-ornamental parks, civic plazas and public gathering places. The following proposals are mostly limited to those identified in area plans. The feasibility of establishing or improving these proposed parks needs to be determined. Additional parks are to be identified in future Area Plans and in more detailed studies of creek corridors. Proposed linear and special parks are as follows:

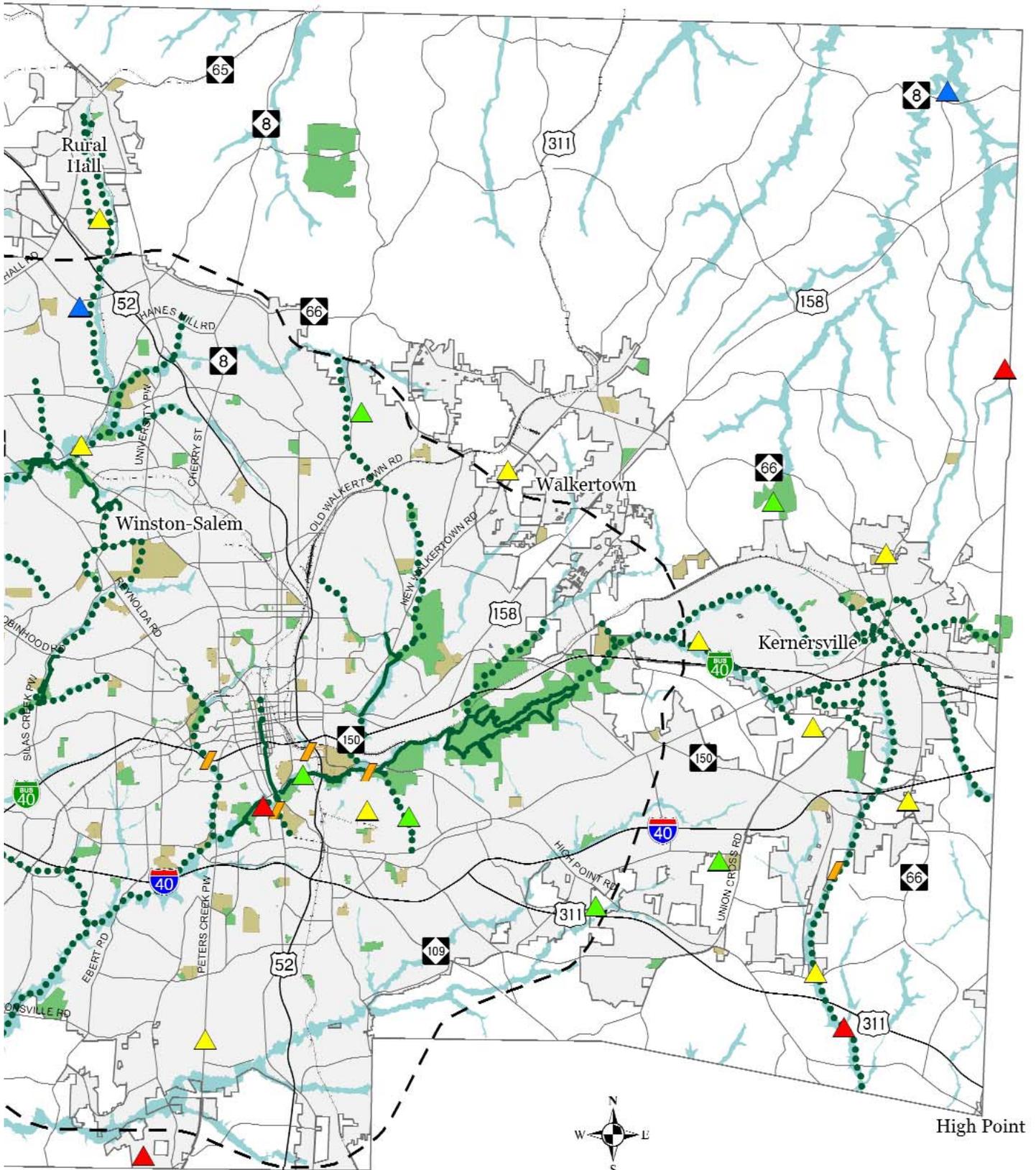
- Along Salem Creek between Main and Broad Streets, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Along I-40 Business in the West End neighborhood and Bath/Clover Leaf Branch Creek, north of Stadium Drive in Winston-Salem, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Reynolds Park expansion along Salem Creek, as proposed in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Along Abbotts Creek in southeast Forsyth County, as proposed in the *Union Cross/Southeast Forsyth County Area Plan*.
- Along sections of the Yadkin River.
- Along with greenway trails, where feasible. Priorities for trail development are identified in the *Greenway Plan*.
- A civic plaza/green space in the core of downtown Winston-Salem, as proposed in the *Downtown Plan*.
- Public gathering spaces at Sunnyside and Holly Avenues, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Improvements to the Downtown Park, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- A skate park in Winston-Salem, if feasible (site to be determined).
- Dog parks to be considered in master plans for new or existing community or district parks.

# Map 4. Potential New or Expanded Park Locations

Potential New or Expanded Parks  
(Approximate Locations)

- ▲ Regional
- ▲ District
- ▲ Community
- ▲ Neighborhood
- / Linear
- Existing Parks
- Schools / Colleges
- Flood Zones
- Existing Greenway Trails
- Proposed Greenway Trails
- Proposed Beltway





## RECOMMENDED RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

By the year 2015, our community should have several new and improved parks. These parks would allow for a range of new or expanded recreational facilities. Recommended facilities are based on the community needs assessment done in this Plan and should be considered when planning future parks or making improvements to existing ones. However, since residents of communities may have differing demands for specific facilities, it is important that each community have a process for public input to determine its priorities before undertaking major investment in facilities. Suggested new or expanded recreational facilities include:

### RECREATION CENTERS

- An upgraded Sedge Garden Center to serve southeast Winston-Salem.
- A new center at an expanded C.G. Hill Memorial Park or at a new adjacent community park to service the westward growth of Winston-Salem.
- A new center to service the southward growth of Winston-Salem.
- A center at a new park proposed to serve proposed annexed areas northeast of Winston-Salem.
- A center to serve each of the municipalities of Lewisville, Clemmons, Walkertown and Rural Hall. In each case, residents should be surveyed to determine their needs.
- A center at Beeson Park with a gymnasium, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.
- At least one recreation center without a gymnasium at one of Kernersville's proposed parks, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.
- Improved access to school facilities to supplement recreation center services.

### SOCCER FIELDS

- New soccer fields as part of the master planning process for all new district/community parks.
- Soccer/multiuse fields at Jamison and Jefferson Parks in Winston-Salem.
- Soccer fields east of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and south of Argonne Boulevard, as proposed in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*.

- Facilities in the southern part of the Winston-Salem that lacks City-provided facilities.
- Two soccer/multipurpose fields in Kernersville, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.
- Soccer/multipurpose fields in Rural Hall and Lewisville.

### PEDESTRIAN/ BICYCLE TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

Walking and biking trails within parks provide much desired recreation facilities which can often be developed at limited cost. Greenways, sidewalks and bike routes can also serve as recreation facilities, as well as provide connectivity from neighborhoods to parks and recreation resources.

- Continue implementation of the *Greenway Plan*, adopted in 2002.
- Develop walking trails proposed in the existing master plans for Triad, Tanglewood, Jamison, Beeson, and Fourth of July Parks.
- Prioritize consideration of additional walking and biking trails in existing parks such as Horizons, C.G. Hill, and Winston Lake Parks.
- Consider walking and biking trails as part of the development of all new parks, including those at Union Cross, the Vulcan Quarry, the Old Salisbury Road Landfill, and the Hanes Mill Road Landfill site.
- Link trails in parks with external sidewalks, bike routes and greenway trails, where feasible.



Civic Plaza concept for downtown Winston-Salem.

- Improve pedestrian access to parks by adding all missing sidewalks within a half-mile of parks to the sidewalk construction list, recognizing that sidewalk projects are prioritized for funding based on the Sidewalk Ranking Criteria.

## BALL FIELDS

- New softball/multipurpose fields associated with new parks (including proposed soccer/softball fields at Jamison Park) to serve future annexed areas in the southern, western, northeastern and southeastern edges of Winston-Salem.
- New softball/multipurpose fields in Clemmons, Lewisville and Walkertown to address existing deficiencies and future growth.
- One softball/youth baseball field in Kernersville, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.
- Adult/Regulation baseball fields to be provided by colleges, schools and privately.

## TENNIS COURTS

- New tennis courts in Winston-Salem (including those proposed at Jamison Park) to meet future needs at the city's edges, including future annexed areas, if surveys of these areas indicate a demand for these facilities.
- 2-4 tennis courts in Lewisville to address existing deficiencies, serve areas to be annexed in 2004, and meet future needs if demand exists.
- A minimum of one tennis court in Kernersville, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.
- Additional courts at County-owned parks if there is a demand by county residents.
- Improvement of existing tennis facilities, where needed.

## BALL COURTS

- One basketball court, as proposed in the approved master plan for Jamison Park.
- 8-14 additional basketball courts in Winston-Salem to address existing deficiencies and provide for future needs, if supported by community demand.
- 1-3 basketball courts for Clemmons, Lewisville, Walkertown, and Rural Hall to address existing deficiencies and provide for future growth if demand exists.
- 2 volleyball courts proposed in the approved master plan for Jamison Park.
- 5 volleyball courts proposed for Kernersville, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.

- Additional ball courts (including County-owned facilities), for a range of sporting activities, based on public demand and input into park master plans. Multipurpose courts can be used, where appropriate. They are particularly useful for small towns or where demand for a particular sport is low.

## SWIMMING POOLS

- One swimming pool serving Kernersville's residents, as recommended in the *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan*.
- One swimming pool/water play area serving Lewisville's residents.
- Pool renovation or construction of a water play area at Happy Hill Park, as proposed in the Public Spaces Master Plan for the Southeast Gateway.
- Additional pools/water play areas in Winston-Salem if demand increases as usage reaches capacity and new parks are developed to serve growing populations in the south, southeast and west.

## OTHER FACILITIES

- Picnic shelters and tables in new multiuse parks.
- Walking trails and fitness courses in new parks, where needed. Trails should connect to the greenway trail system where feasible.
- Playground areas in new parks serving areas with populations of children.
- At least one location with skateboarding facilities.
- Consider trails for off-road motorized vehicles.
- Specialized facilities at some parks based on demand established during the master planning process.

## RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS OF A PROPOSED OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

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Our native wildlife, streams, woodlands, natural areas, and farmlands contribute to the character and quality of life in this community. These assets have been dwindling as Forsyth County becomes increasingly urban. A successful open space program can assist in protecting and managing the most significant of these resources. Preserving new open space must become a priority because opportunities to do so are rapidly disappearing as these lands are lost to development. This Plan, therefore, recommends that specific categories of land be included in a proposed Forsyth County open space system. The proposed system will protect environmentally-sensitive land and ecological resources; preserve rural character, and natural landscapes; provide recreational open space;

create a healthy environment; and generally improve the community's quality of life. Some of these lands will need to be considered for acquisition and preservation. Other lands may be retained in private ownership with all, or portions of sites, managed for preservation purposes or developed in an environmentally-sensitive manner. **Map 5** shows the major elements of a proposed open space system for Forsyth County. Following are recommendations for a community open space system:

## PARKS

- Include all existing and proposed parks.
- Design proposed or expanded parks, whether for active or passive recreation, to respect and value natural resources and environmental quality.
- Explore approaches to bringing parts of Belews Lake into the public park and open space system.

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Revitalize existing community gardens and add new gardens, as needed.
- Identify opportunities for establishing community gardens:
  - In Area Plans, if residents desire to establish community gardens in their neighborhoods;
  - When vacant tax-delinquent lots become available at suitable locations;
  - As part of public housing projects, when possible;
  - In the redevelopment of brownfield sites, if appropriate; and
  - On other suitable community-owned open space.

## AGRICULTURAL OPEN SPACE

- Include existing and future Forsyth County Farmland Preservation Program farms.
- Include farms conserved under other conservation programs to help preserve rural character.
- Focus conservation efforts in the extreme northeast and northwest of the county, and an area west of Lewisville and east of the Yadkin River.
- Complete an inventory of active farms and farms in the preferential assessment/deferred taxation program as part of a rural development policy for rural areas identified in *Legacy*. This inventory should also identify potential agriculture priority areas to be targeted for future farmland preservation.

## CREEK CORRIDORS/STREAM RESTORATION AREAS

- Protect major creek corridors, in particular the Yadkin River, Salem Creek, South Fork Creek, Kerners Mill Creek, and Lowery Mill Creek corridors. More detailed studies are needed along the identified corridors to determine the level of protection needed in each case.
- Include restored lands resulting from existing and future stream restoration projects in the open space system.

## WETLANDS

- Protect wetlands under the national Clean Water Act.
- Preserve wetland sites identified in the Natural Heritage Inventory for Forsyth County; and
- Pursue preservation of other wetlands of local significance.

## HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

- Further study of potential historic and archeological sites should be undertaken to determine which are suitable as public open space.

## SCENIC SITES

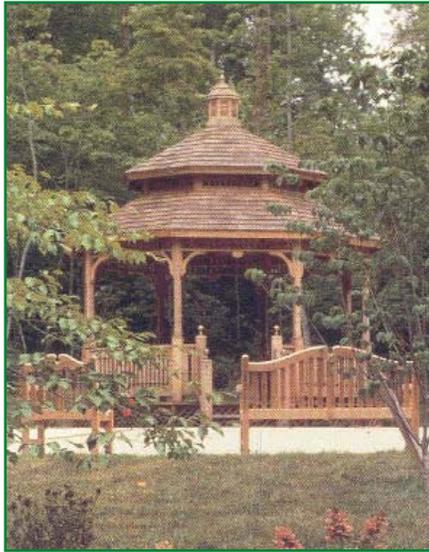
- Carry out a countywide scenic corridors plan to identify the major scenic corridors in the county for inclusion in the open space plan.
- Make recommendations for preserving scenic quality.

## GREENWAY TRAILS/EASEMENTS

- Secure Greenway Trails and easements as part of the City/County Greenway System. Most of these easements would be located along creeks but could also include utility corridors, abandoned rail corridors, or other suitable trail corridors.
- Develop linear parks in conjunction with greenways.

## CONSERVATION/OPEN SPACE SUBDIVISIONS

- Designate sites for public open space/parks in Conservation/Open Space Subdivisions.



C.G. Hill Memorial Park –  
a County-owned district park.

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are recommendations on planning, design, funding, cooperation and public involvement that could facilitate implementation of projects.

### POLICY AND PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Undertake a comprehensive maintenance assessment and prepare an upgrading plan for existing recreational facilities in Winston-Salem.
- Utilize this Plan to identify areas where parks, open space and recreational facilities are needed and take appropriate action to acquire suitable land, obtain easements or develop facilities when opportunities arise to do so.
- Consider pedestrian and bike access when selecting new park sites.
- Ensure that parks, open space and recreational facilities are addressed in Area Plans.
- Ensure that park and open space sites are included in planning for community facilities in new developments and brownfield redevelopment sites.
- Undertake a ranking of potential open space/ Natural Heritage Sites based on identified criteria such as site significance (local, county, regional, state), resources, level of threat, and site readiness for protection.
- Develop a park and open space land acquisition program based on identified priorities for park development and preservation ranking. Ensure that any land banking program is flexible enough to take advantage of unique acquisition opportunities and respond to threats to priority areas.

- Prepare feasibility studies and master plans prior to developing major parks and recreational facilities.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing national standard soccer and/or other sport complexes.
- Prepare natural resources stewardship plans for conservation areas.
- Complete feasibility studies and master plans for reclamation and development of the Hanes Mill Road Landfill and the Old Salisbury Road Landfill for recreational purposes.
- Identify opportunities for establishing community gardens and restructure existing programs to more effectively meet community needs.
- Explore the feasibility of establishing Community Greens programs.
- Inventory active farms and farm tax exempt properties and explore strategies to preserve the more significant farms.
- Maintain an inventory of all parks, recreational facilities and open space including Natural Heritage, Farmland Preservation and identified rural historic and archeological sites.
- Complete a countywide scenic corridors plan.
- Reinvest in existing parks to maintain and expand facilities.
- Carry out a five-year review of the *Parks and Open Space Plan – Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2015*.

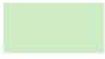
### FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

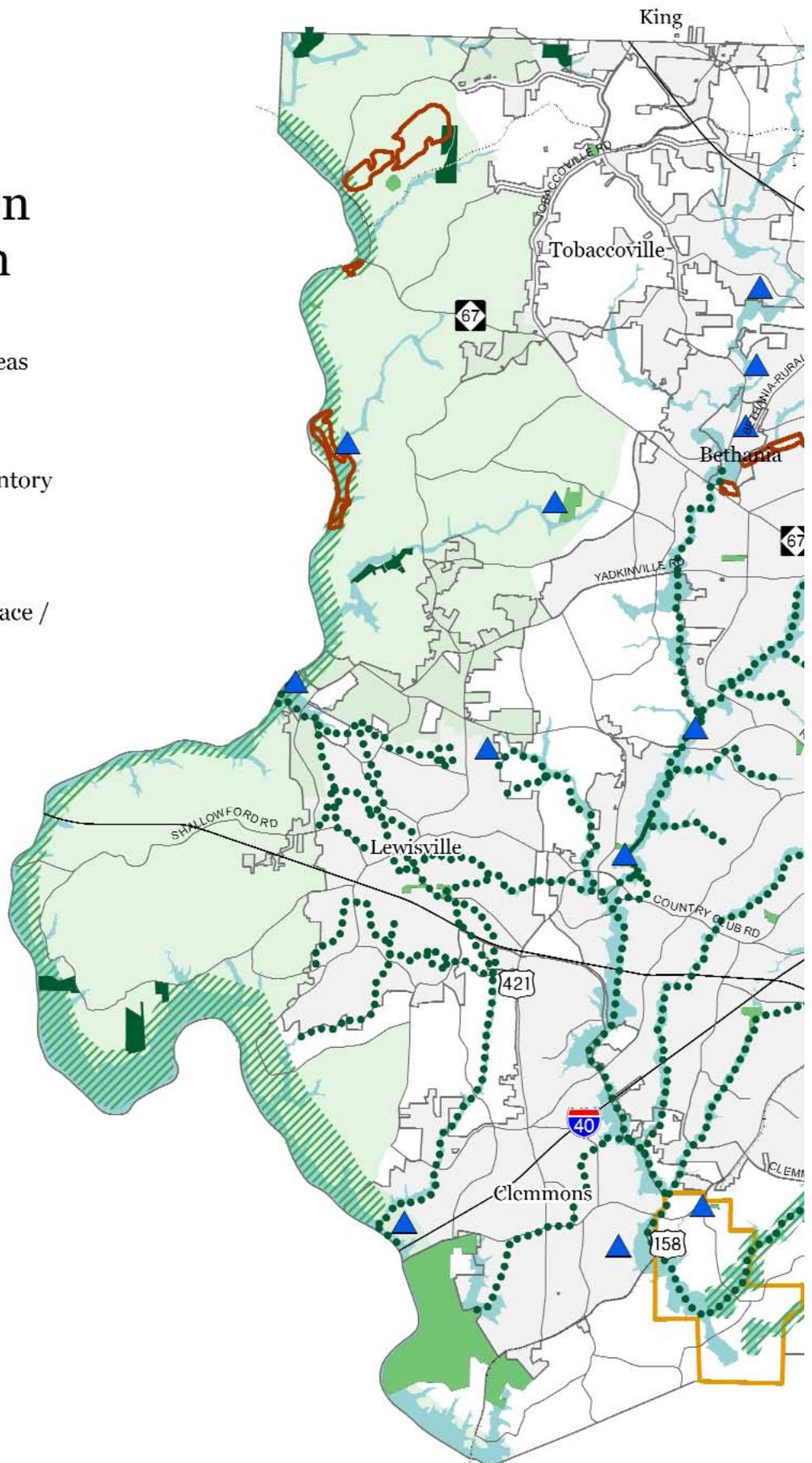
- Ensure yearly allocations from each jurisdiction's general fund for the operation and maintenance of the parks and open space system.
- Secure a multiyear dedicated funding source, a bond funding or a dedicated tax revenue for land acquisition and capital development for new or expanded parks, open space and recreational facilities.
- Identify additional funding sources for the Farmland Preservation Program.
- Actively pursue State, federal and private grant funding for land acquisition and capital development (See **Appendix H** for possible sources).
- Encourage and support effective complementary private fund-raising efforts.

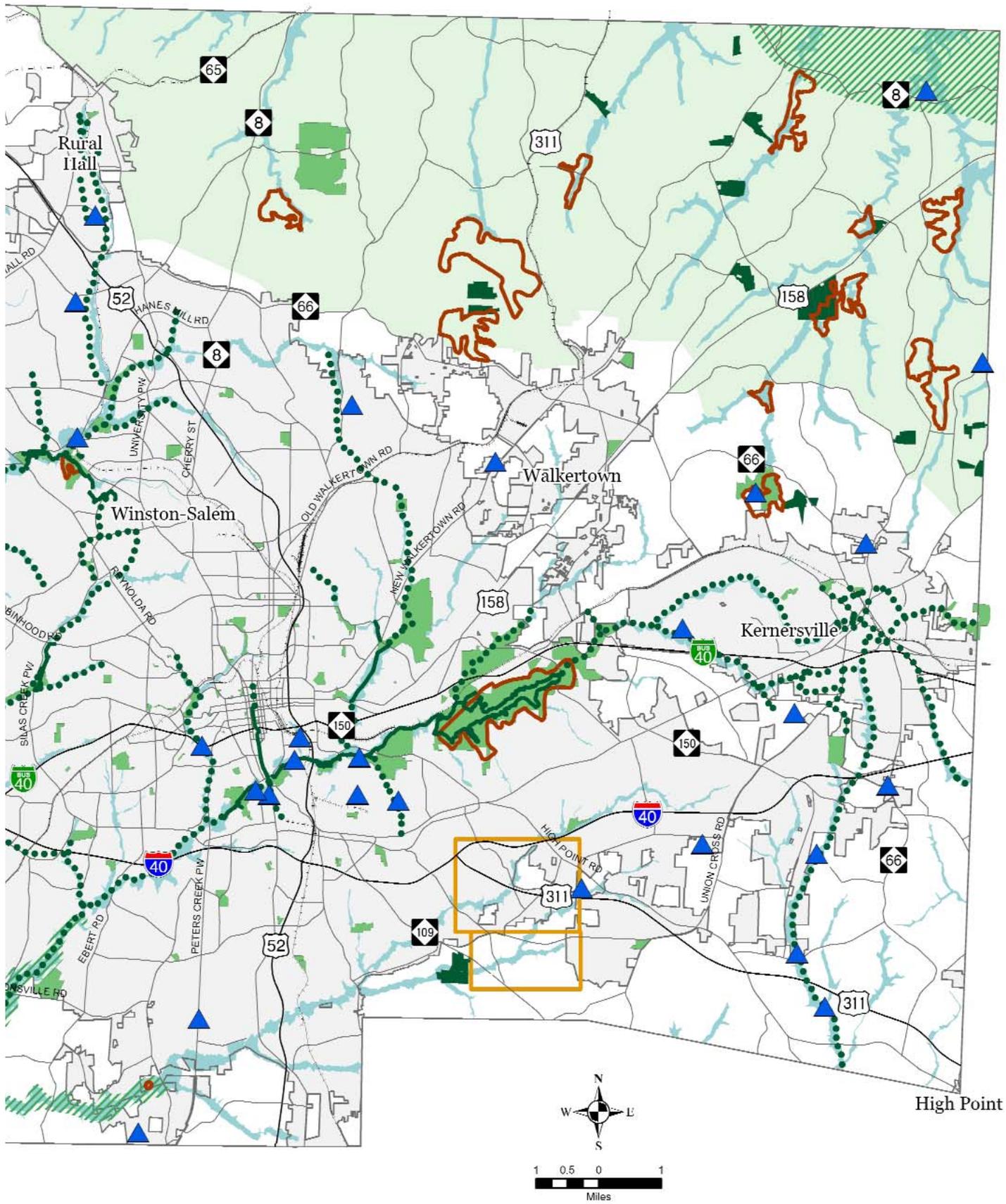
### PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Pursue cooperation between Forsyth County and its municipalities in identifying, funding and implementing projects.
- Collaborate with agencies involved in neighborhood, housing, education, health, and economic development projects in providing parks and recreational facilities and allocating land for open space.

# Map 5. Proposed Open Space System

-  Key Agricultural / Rural Preservation Areas
-  Existing Farmland Preservation Sites
-  Natural Heritage Inventory Sites / Areas
-  Rural Historic Areas
-  Other Future Open Space / Focal Areas
-  Existing Parks
-  Flood Zones
-  Existing Greenway Trails
-  Proposed Greenway Trails
-  Potential Parks





- Continue collaboration with surrounding counties to develop regional parks and open space.
- Increase collaboration with nonprofit, corporate and other private organizations in providing community recreational facilities and open space. Continue working with the Piedmont Land Conservancy in protecting open space.
- Encourage voluntary land dedications for parks and open space.

## DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider Conservation Subdivisions in prime resource areas including Natural Heritage Inventory sites.
- Encourage developers/large land holders to work with residents and elected officials to improve the availability of parks and open space to the community's residents, where needed.
- During the rezoning and subdivision processes, where appropriate, encourage the design of developments that minimize impact on sensitive environments and increase the availability of park land and open space.
- Utilize sustainable design principles, Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), and best management practices in the design, development and maintenance of parks and recreational facilities.
- Ensure that all facilities comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Consider obtaining greenway easements on all utility easements.

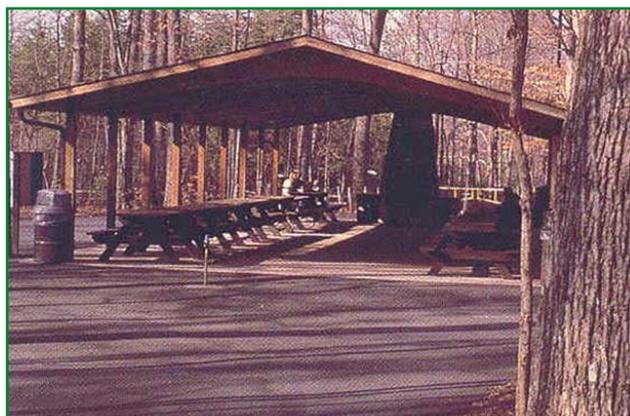
## PUBLIC AWARENESS AND INVOLVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a strategy to publicize this Plan and promote its implementation targeting the public; potential donors; partners and users, including citizen groups; the development community; and recreation, environmental, education and open space preservation interests.
- Establish a citizen-based greenways and open space organization to provide leadership and oversight of the greenways and open space programs, as recommended in the *Greenway Plan (Appendix G)*.

- Compile and distribute informational packages to landowners, developers and other interested parties on land preservation opportunities, designing for parks and open space, tax benefits, and other incentives to preserve natural areas.
- Involve residents in park master planning.
- Offer opportunities for users and supporters to volunteer in the planning, programming and stewardship of the community's recreational facilities and natural areas. Expand the existing Adopt-a-Park Program to a countywide program that includes natural areas and greenways.
- Conduct user and recreation participation preference surveys on a regular basis. These would assist in determining level of demand for facilities and programs, types of users, user satisfaction with recreational facilities and community satisfaction with the management of natural areas.
- Provide environmental education facilities and programs that promote stewardship.
- Continue to inform citizens of the recreation services available for their use.



Get involved in your neighborhood. Adopt A Park.



Horizons Park – recommended for upgrading.

# Implementation

Improving the community's park and open space system to meet its existing and future needs depends on the degree to which this Plan's recommendations are implemented. This involves:

- financing needed park and recreation projects and the acquisition of open space over the life of the plan; and
- acting on recommendations that further the goals and objectives of the Plan.

Implementation is approached from two perspectives. The first is a summary of recommended park, facility and open space projects and their estimated capital costs. Priority projects proposed for implementation in the short to medium term are identified. The second focuses on implementation of recommended policies. A schedule and responsibility for implementation of those policies are identified.

## CAPITAL COSTS

This section identifies the minimum capital costs of proposed new or expanded park development recommended in this Plan to meet key identified needs. Estimates are not intended to be a complete assessment of funding needed to implement all aspects of the plan. No attempt has been made to include operations, maintenance and administrative costs for new and expanded parks and facilities. Land acquisition costs for park and open space vary significantly throughout the county. Land costs are included for Winston-Salem projects but excluded for other jurisdictions.

**Table 10** summarizes estimated costs in 2005 dollars for some identified projects. Inflation is not factored into these costs. These estimates include capital costs of minimum new park development to meet key identified needs, some major park improvements and special facilities, and some major feasibility studies. They exclude costs of greenway trails already identified in the *Greenway Plan*. An estimated average cost is given for development of each park category. However, there is a wide range of facilities that can be developed for each class of park. The actual facilities developed at each site will depend on available resources and on demand reflected in the master plan for each park completed with citizen input.

Estimates are not included for proposed new regional parks for which the county should begin to assemble land in the short term with development occurring over the long term. When an adequate quantity of land is assembled for the proposed regional parks at the Yadkin River and Belews Lake, master plans should be completed for the sites and costs detailed in a process similar to that used for Triad Park.

## PRIORITY PROJECTS

Potential priority projects identified could include:

- Continue implementation of the master plan for Triad Park.
- Complete upgrading of Tanglewood Park.
- Expand facilities at Horizons Park.
- Expand facilities at C.G. Hill Memorial Park.
- Implement the proposed Salem Lake Marina Center in Winston-Salem.
- Implement master plans for Jamison and Marvin Ward Parks in Winston-Salem.
- Complete and implement master plans for Jefferson Park and Winston Lake Park in Winston-Salem.
- Implement the Public Spaces Master Plan for the Happy Hill/Southeast Gateway area in Winston-Salem.
- Conduct feasibility studies of the Old Salisbury Road Landfill site, the Hanes Mill Road Landfill site, and the Vulcan Quarry site in Winston-Salem and the Waste Management Landfill site in Kernersville.
- Implement master plans for Beeson Park and the Fourth of July Park in Kernersville.
- Complete and implement master plans for Kernersville Lake Park and Old Kernersville Lake Park.
- Develop one community park each in Clemmons and Lewisville.
- Complete development of a community park in Walkertown.
- Develop one neighborhood park in Kernersville, Rural Hall, Tobaccoville, Bethania, Lewisville, Walkertown and Clemmons.
- Construct recreation centers at Clemmons, Rural Hall, Walkertown and Kernersville.

**Table 9. Estimated Capital Costs of Countywide Park and Open Space Projects**

| <b>Projects<sup>1</sup></b>   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Regional Parks<sup>3</sup></b>   | <b>Cost<sup>2</sup><br/>(\$ million)</b> |
| Forsyth County – Triad Park development; Tanglewood Park upgrade  | 13.0                                     |
| <b>District Parks<sup>4</sup></b>   |  |
| Forsyth County – 1 new park (Union Cross); Horizons & C.G. Hill upgrades                                    | 7.5                                      |
| Winston-Salem – 4 new parks (includes Jefferson Park)   | 15.5                                     |
| <b>Community Parks<sup>5</sup></b>  |  |
| Winston-Salem – 7 new and upgraded parks<br>(includes Jamison park; upgrades in the Southeast Gateway area) | 11.2                                     |
| Clemmons – 2 new parks  | 2.6                                      |
| Lewisville – 1 new park   | 1.3                                      |
| <b>Neighborhood Parks<sup>6</sup></b>   |  |
| Winston-Salem – 10 parks  | 5.5                                      |
| Clemmons – 4 new parks  | 2.0                                      |
| Lewisville – 3 new parks  | 1.5                                      |
| Walkertown – 2-3 new parks  | 1.5                                      |
| Tobaccoville – 2 new parks  | 1.0                                      |
| Rural Hall – 2 new parks  | 1.0                                      |
| Bethania – 1 new mini/neighborhood park   | 0.5                                      |
| <b>Special Facilities/Studies</b>   |  |
| Salem Lake Marina – Winston- Salem  | 0.7                                      |
| Skate Park – Winston- Salem   | 0.5                                      |
| Recreation Centers <sup>7</sup> – Winston-Salem (3 centers)   | 5.0                                      |
| Recreation Centers (1 each – Clemmons, Lewisville, Rural Hall, Walkertown)                                  | 6.4                                      |
| Feasibility Studies and park plans – 2 landfill sites and other park studies                                | 0.3                                      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>77.0</b>                              |

- Notes: 1. Kernersville projects not included. The *Town of Kernersville Parks and Recreation Master Plan* estimates capital improvement costs for all proposed projects through 2020 as approximately \$29.5 million.  
2. Estimated park costs include land acquisition costs for Winston-Salem and exclude land costs for other jurisdictions.  
3. Excludes proposed Yadkin River and Belews Lake Parks.  
4. Estimated cost of a district park - \$3.5 million.  
5. Estimated cost of a community park - \$1.3 million.  
6. Estimated cost of a neighborhood park - \$0.5 million.  
7. Estimated cost of a center - \$1.6 million.

# Implementation Schedule

| ACTION/PROJECT   | RESPONSIBLE AGENCY <sup>†</sup>                                       | TIMING*                        |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Policy and Planning Recommendations (page 61)</b>   |   |                                |
| Take action to acquire land, obtain easements or develop facilities as opportunities arise.  | Recreation Departments, CCPB, local governments                       | Ongoing                        |
| Undertake a maintenance assessment and prepare an upgrading plan for existing recreational facilities in Winston-Salem.                                    | WSRPD   | Short Term                     |
| Consider pedestrian and bike access when selecting new park sites.   | Recreation Departments, local governments                             | Ongoing                        |
| Rank potential open space/Natural Heritage Sites based on identified criteria.   | CCPB, PLC   | Short Term                     |
| Develop a parks/open space land acquisition program.   | Forsyth County, municipalities  | Medium Term                    |
| Ensure that park and open space sites are included in Area Plans, new developments and brownfield redevelopment sites.                                     | CCPB, Winston-Salem Development Office, WSHND                         | Ongoing                        |
| Prepare feasibility studies and master plans prior to developing major parks and facilities .  | Recreation Departments, local governments                             | Ongoing                        |
| Prepare natural resources stewardship plans for designated conservation areas.   | FCCNR, local governments  | Ongoing                        |
| Complete feasibility studies and master plans for development of landfill sites for recreation. Identify opportunities for establishing community gardens. | Recreation Departments, WSFCUC<br>Recreation Departments, CCPB, NCCES | Medium to Long Term<br>Ongoing |
| Explore the feasibility of establishing community greens programs.   | Recreation Departments, CCPB  | Long Term                      |
| Inventory active farms and explore strategies to preserve the more significant ones.   | FCCNR, CCPB   | Medium Term                    |
| Maintain an inventory of all parks, recreational facilities and open space.  | Recreation Departments, CCPB  | Ongoing                        |
| Complete a countywide scenic corridors plan.   | CCPB  | Long Term                      |
| Reinvest in existing parks.  | Local governments   | Ongoing                        |

\*Timing: Short Term: 0-5 years Medium Term: 3-5 years Long Term: 5 years or more

### *(Policy and Planning Recommendations continued...)*

|  |                              |         |
|--|------------------------------|---------|
| Carry out a five-year review of the Parks and Open Space Plan. | Recreation Departments, CCPB | 5 years |
|--|------------------------------|---------|

#### **Funding Recommendations (page 61)**

|  |   |            |
|--|---|------------|
| Secure a multiyear dedicated funding source for land acquisition and capital development.        | Recreation Departments, local governments | Short Term |
| Pursue yearly allocations from general fund to operate and maintain the park/open space system.  | Recreation Departments, local governments | Annually   |
| Actively pursue State, federal and private funding for land acquisition and capital development. | Recreation Departments, local governments | Ongoing    |
| Identify additional funding sources for the Farmland Preservation Program.                       | FCCNR                                     | Short Term |
| Encourage and support effective complementary private fundraising efforts.                       | Recreation Departments, local governments | Ongoing    |

#### **Partnership Opportunities (pages 61, 64)**

|  |   |             |
|--|---|-------------|
| Evaluate the establishment of a joint City-County parks, recreation and open space program.          | Recreation Departments, local governments       | Medium Term |
| Ensure cooperation between Forsyth County and its municipalities in carrying out projects.           | Recreation Departments, local governments       | Ongoing     |
| Collaborate with other agencies in providing parks, recreational facilities and open space.          | Recreation Departments, local governments       | Ongoing     |
| Continue collaboration with surrounding counties to develop regional parks and open space.           | Recreation Departments, local governments, COGs | Ongoing     |
| Increase collaboration with nonprofit, corporate and private groups to provide parks and open space. | Recreation Departments, local governments       | Ongoing     |
| Continue working with the Piedmont Land Conservancy in protecting open space.                        | Recreation Departments, local governments       | Ongoing     |
| Encourage voluntary land dedications for parks and open space.                                       | Recreation Departments, local governments, CCPB | Ongoing     |

#### **Design and Development (page 64)**

|   |                         |            |
|---|-------------------------|------------|
| Encourage developers/large land holders to work with residents and elected officials to improve the availability of parks and open space to the community's residents where needed. | Local governments, CCPB | Short Term |
| Consider Conservation Subdivisions in prime resource areas.   | CCPB                    | Short Term |

*\*Timing: Short Term: 0-5 years Medium Term: 3-5 years Long Term: 5 years or more*

*(Design and Development continued...)*

|   |  |            |
|---|--|------------|
| Encourage development designs that minimize impacts on the environment and provide open space.  | CCPB   | Ongoing    |
| Utilize sustainable design principles and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design practices in the design of recreational facilities. | CCPB, Police Departments, Recreation Departments | Ongoing    |
| Ensure that all recreational facilities comply with ADA Requirements.   | Recreation Departments                           | Ongoing    |
| Consider obtaining greenway easements on all utility easements.   | CCPB, Real Estate Departments                    | Short Term |

**Public Awareness/Involvement (page 64)**

|   |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| Develop a strategy to publicize this Plan and promote its implementation.                               | Recreation Departments, CCPB, WSMCD       | Ongoing    |
| Establish a citizen based greenways and open space organization/committee.                              | Recreation Departments, local governments | Short Term |
| Distribute information to interested parties on land preservation opportunities and open space designs. | CCPB, FCCNR                               | Ongoing    |
| Offer opportunities for volunteer in the stewardship of parks and open space.                           | Recreation Departments, local governments | Ongoing    |
| Expand the existing Adopt-a-Park Program countywide and include open space and greenways.               | Recreation Departments, local governments | Short Term |
| Carry out community preference and user surveys.  | Recreation Departments, local governments | Ongoing    |
| Provide environmental education opportunities.  | Recreation Departments                    | Ongoing    |
| Involve residents in park master planning.  | Recreation Departments                    | Ongoing    |
| Continue to provide information on services.  | Recreation Departments                    | Ongoing    |

*\*Timing: Short Term: 0-5 years Medium Term: 3-5 years Long Term: 5 years or more*

**† Abbreviations Used**

CCPB: City-County Planning Board  
 COG: Council of Governments  
 FCCNR: Forsyth County Department of Conservation of Natural Resources  
 NCCES: North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service  
 PLC: Piedmont Land Conservancy

WSFCUC: Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Utilities Commission  
 WSHND: Winston-Salem Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development  
 WSMCD: Winston-Salem Marketing and Communications Department  
 WSRPD: Winston-Salem Recreation & Parks Department



Joggers on the Salem Lake Greenway.

## Appendix A. Park Classification — Forsyth County

The community's parks have been classified according to their size and function as follows:

**Mini Parks.** Small parks or open space that may include facilities designed to serve a specific segment of the population, such as tot lots, or may be primarily ornamental with limited facilities.

**Neighborhood Parks.** Parks that provide areas for intense recreational activities at locations easily accessible to neighborhoods. Facilities may include ball fields and courts, playgrounds, picnic tables and shelters. Occasionally, a neighborhood park will include a recreation center, usually without a gym.

**Community Parks.** Parks that provide a wide array of active recreational opportunities that draw people from multiple neighborhoods. Facilities may include recreation centers, ball fields and courts, playground and picnic areas, swimming pools, fitness courses and natural areas for passive recreation. Community parks also function as neighborhood parks for portions of some service areas. They should be located near to major thoroughfares that serve several neighborhoods.

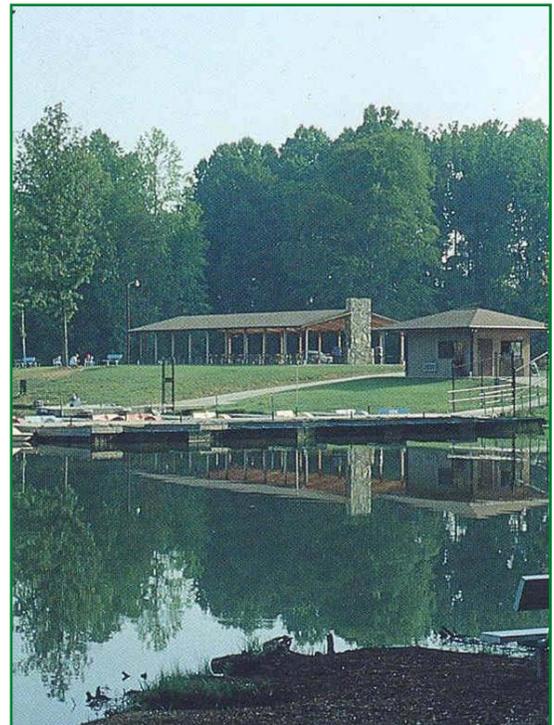
**District Parks.** Large parks that offer a wide array of recreational opportunities or focus on one or more specialized activity, such as tennis, soccer or golf. They often include natural areas for passive recreation, walking and biking. If located in rural areas or unincorporated areas, they may also function as neighborhood and community parks. The area and population served is highly variable, based on the surrounding population density and transportation system, as well as the facilities offered at the park. District parks often draw users from throughout the entire community and should be located close to major thoroughfares.

**Regional Parks.** Large areas for natural resource-based outdoor recreation or very large parks offering a wide array of recreational opportunities or very specialized recreational activities such as golf courses, zoos and sports stadiums. Resource-based recreational opportunities may include nature study, hiking trails, picnicking, swimming, camping, fishing and boating. These parks should be easily accessible to the entire community.

**Linear Parks.** Areas developed for one or more modes of recreational travel such as walking, hiking or biking. Often they are developed to connect recreational facilities, as well as schools and residential neighborhoods. In some cases, the primary function of a linear park is resource protection, with recreation as a secondary use. Greenway trails are often located in linear parks. None of our existing parks are classified as linear parks.

**Historic/Cultural Parks.** Parks that serve to protect a unique historic or cultural resource or provide specialized functions, such as gardens. Their size depends on the resource being protected or the function provided.

**Multifunctional Parks.** Parks that, although classified in one category, also perform the function of another category of park. Many community parks, for example, also serve as neighborhood parks in the neighborhoods in which they are located. Existing parks are not classified as multifunctional but may be identified as such for assessing the level of service in an area.



Kernersville Lake Park – a district park.

# Appendix B. Results of City-County Planning Board Parks and Recreational Facilities Survey

The survey was printed in the three newspapers, put on the City of Winston-Salem Parks and Recreation Department's web site, and distributed at City recreation centers and County parks. A total of 534 persons completed the survey. Of these, 68.35% completed the form on the web site, 24.16 % at recreation centers and parks, and 7.49% from the newspaper.

## Question 1. How many times a year do you visit public parks or use public recreational facilities in our community?

The percentage of respondents who visit public parks or use recreational facilities are:

- 72.9% - 15 or more times a year
- 14.1% - 6-15
- 12.0% - 1-5
- 1.0% - 0

## Question 2. Name the public parks in our community that you visited most frequently in the past year.

490 persons responded to this question many naming more than one park resulting in a total of 1,043 responses. The parks most frequently visited were:

- Hanes Park (9.9%),
- Sara Lee Soccer Park (9.85%),
- Tanglewood Park (9.5%),
- Miller Park (6.7%),
- Polo Park (6.5%),
- Hine Park (5.9%) and
- Bolton Park (5.9%)



Tanglewood Park – a frequently visited regional park.

## Question 3. How far from your home is the nearest public park?

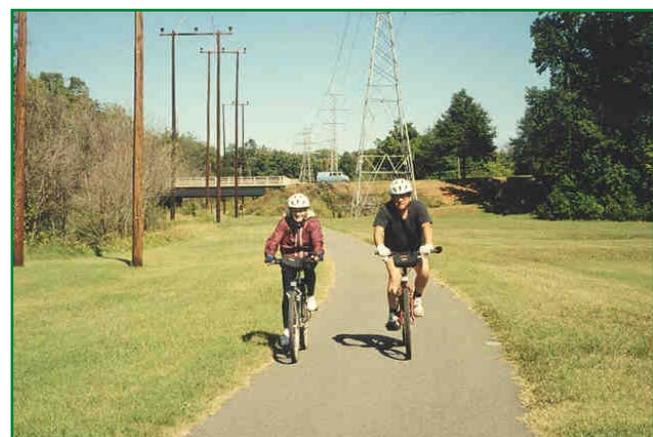
- 30.2% - 3-5 miles
- 26.2% - Less than 1 mile
- 24.8% - 1-2 miles
- 18.8% - 5 or more miles

## Question 4. What public recreational activities do you and your family currently enjoy?

- 22.8% - Playing sports
- 16.3% - Walking and hiking
- 14.1% - Watching sports
- 11.1% - Picnicking
- 10.5% - Using a playground
- 9.2% - Biking
- 8.0% - Viewing nature
- 8.0% - Other. A wide range of activities was identified in the 132 responses. The most frequently occurring activities in this category were soccer, swimming and tennis.

## Question 5. Rate overall satisfaction with our parks and recreational facilities.

- 45.6% - Good
- 21.5% - Average
- 20.8% - Excellent
- 9.0% - Fair
- 3.1% - Poor



Biking on the Salem Creek Greenway.

**Question 6. Check 3 types of recreational facilities you feel are most urgently needed in our community.**

- 14.4% - Walking/biking trails
- 13.5% - Soccer fields
- 10.4% - Swimming pools
- 8.4% - Nature preserves
- 7.4% - Basketball courts
- 6.6% - Recreation centers
- 6.4% - Public parks
- 6.4% - Picnic areas
- 6.0% - Playgrounds
- 6.0% - Skateboarding/rollerblading
- 5.4% - Tennis courts
- 3.2% - Softball
- 2.7% - Volleyball
- 3.2% - Other. There was a wide range of facilities identified in the 46 responses categorized as “other” needed facilities. Dog parks were identified 7 times, the most for any one type of facility. All other facilities were identified less than 3 times.

**Question 7. Additional Comments**

- 37% - Expressed concern about the lack of soccer fields to meet demand, and the poor quality and the lack of adequate maintenance of existing fields.
- 12% - Focused on tennis facilities, mostly expressing dissatisfaction with the quality and maintenance of tennis courts with the exception of the Tanglewood courts.
- 17% - Focused on parks. These ranged from very favorable opinions on the parks to suggestions for improving selected ones.
- 8% - Focused on trails. Most expressed a desire to have more trails.



Soccer facilities are in demand.

**Demographic Information**

**Male**

50.6% - male respondents

**Age Groups**

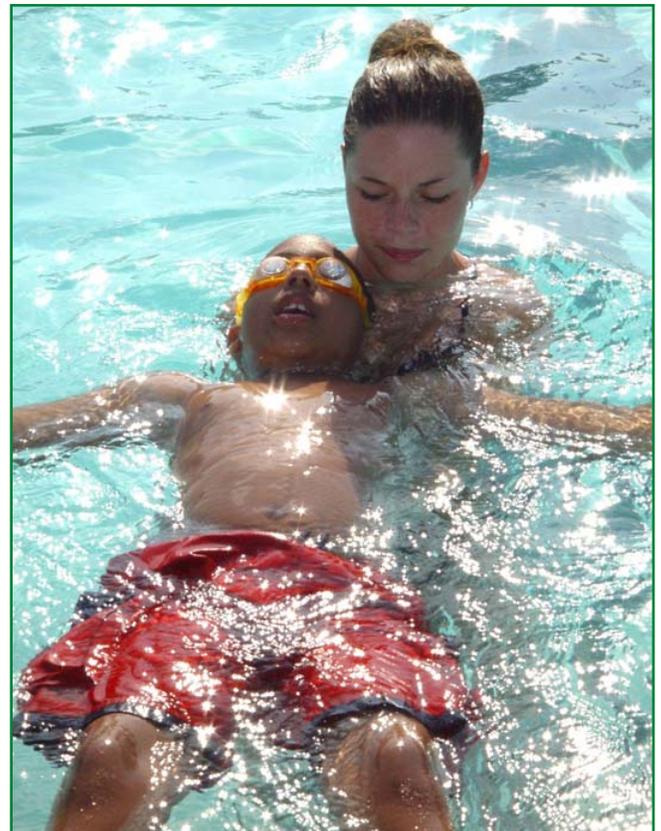
- 37.9% - 35-60 age group
- 34.9% - 6-18 age group
- 16.8% - 19-34 age group
- 8% - 1-5 age group
- 2.4% - 61 or more age group

**Female**

49.4 % - female respondents

**Age Groups**

- 35.6% - 35-60 age group
- 30.4% - 6-18 age group
- 18.1% - 19-34 age group
- 11.1% - 1-5 age group
- 4.8% - 61 or more age group



Learning to swim.



Gardening in the city.

## Appendix C. Recommended Forsyth County Park Standards

| Park Classification    | Desirable Size (acres) | Acres/1000 Population | Population Served | Service Radius (miles) |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Mini-Park              | Under 5                | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Neighborhood Park      | 5 to 20                | 2.5                   | Up to 5,000       | 0.5                    |
| Community Park         | 30 to 80               | 5                     | Up to 10,000      | 2                      |
| District Park          | 50 to 250              | 10                    | Up to 40,000      | 3-5                    |
| Regional Park/Reserve  | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Special Use Park       | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Linear Park            | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Historic/Cultural Park | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |

Note: N/E - Not Established. These classes of parks have no standards for size, level of service or service area because of their special nature and the fact that they serve the entire community.

## Appendix D. Recommended Forsyth County Facilities Standards

| Facility                                  | Number per Population | Service Radius  |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Community Center (with gym)               | 1 per 25,000          | 2 miles         |
| Neighborhood Center (with gym)            | 1 per 10,000          | 1 miles         |
| Ball Court (Volleyball, Basketball, etc.) | 1 per 5,000           | 0.5 mile        |
| Ball Field (Baseball, Softball, etc.)     | 1 per 5,000           | 0.5 mile        |
| Tennis Court                              | 1 per 2,000           | 0.5 mile        |
| Soccer Field                              | 1 per 5,000           | 2 miles         |
| Swimming Pool                             | 1 per 20,000          | 2 miles         |
| Playground/Tot Lot                        | 1 per 1,000           | 0.25 mile       |
| Picnic Shelter                            | 1 per 3,000           | 0.5 mile        |
| Fitness Course                            | 1 per 15,000          | 2 miles         |
| Golf Course                               | 1 per 25,000          | 15 minute drive |

# Appendix E. Open Space Planning Workshop – Survey Results

Workshop participants responded to a “Priority Survey.” Participants indicated which types of open space should be given the greatest emphasis within their county, which factors are most important in assessing the significance of all open space resources, and which factors are most important in assessing the significance of specific farm and forest resources. Results of this survey are summarized in the three tables below.

### Question 1. Open Space Types:

Distribute 100 points among the following open space types, with more points giving greater weight to an issue:

**Table E-1. Open Space Types - By Rank**

| Category            | Points Awarded | %    |
|---------------------|----------------|------|
| Water Quality Areas | 420            | 22.1 |
| Natural Areas       | 315            | 16.6 |
| Farmland            | 295            | 15.5 |
| Greenways           | 270            | 14.2 |
| Parks               | 245            | 12.9 |
| Historic/Scenic     | 180            | 9.5  |
| Forest Land         | 175            | 9.2  |



Preserving farmland.

### Question 2. Regional Green Space Network:

Distribute 100 points among the following factors, giving more points to the factors you feel are more important in assessing the significance of areas within the regional green space network:

**Table E-2. Factors of Significance to Regional Network - By Rank**

| Factor                       | Points Awarded | %    |
|------------------------------|----------------|------|
| Achieves Multiple Objectives | 600            | 31.6 |
| Promotes Connectivity        | 460            | 24.2 |
| Rare or Unique Sites         | 400            | 21.1 |
| Located in Underserved Area  | 380            | 20.0 |
| Other                        | 60             | 3.2  |

**Question 3.** Distribute 100 points among the following factors, giving more points to the factors you feel are more important in assessing the significance of farm and forest land within the region:

**Table E-3. Factors of Significance to Farm and Forest Land - By Rank**

| Factor          | Points Awarded | %    |
|-----------------|----------------|------|
| More Threatened | 570            | 31.7 |
| Current Use     | 425            | 23.6 |
| More Stable     | 370            | 20.6 |
| Resource Based  | 340            | 18.9 |
| Other           | 95             | 5.3  |

## Appendix F. Land Acquisition and Protection Strategies

### Acquisition through Title Transfer

A fee-simple acquisition occurs when there is a title transfer. Local governments have traditionally relied on fee-simple acquisition of land for recreational and conservation purposes. When property is acquired in fee-simple, all the rights associated with the property are transferred to the acquiring party. Although fee-simple acquisition gives the new owner the most flexibility with regard to use of the property, unless the land is donated, it is usually the most expensive method of land acquisition. Fee-simple acquisition methods include:

**Outright donation.** Donation of land is the simplest way to arrange outright transfers of title of land for parks and open space. Although the donor is not directly compensated for the donation, there can be significant tax benefits when the recipient is a government agency or a private charity with public support. In addition to tax benefits, the financial advantages of property donation include elimination of real estate taxes, possible reduction in income taxes, and reduction in estate taxes.

**Donation with life estate.** A property owner donates a tract of land and retains use of all or part of the donated land during his/her or other immediate family members' lifetime. If the gift of land qualifies for treatment as a charitable deduction, the donor may take the value of what was actually donated as an income tax deduction.

**Sale with a reserved life estate.** Property owner sells land to a landholding agency so that owner and family may continue to use the land during his/her or other immediate family members' lifetime.

**Fee-simple purchase.** Property owner sells property to a government agency or nonprofit organization at a fair market value.

**Bargain sale.** A property owner sells the property to a government agency or charitable conservation organization for a price less than the fair market value. The property owner can deduct as a charitable contribution the difference between the bargain price and the fair market value. The cash benefit of the deduction can help compensate for the monetary loss sustained by selling at less than fair market value.

**Option of First Refusal.** An agreement can be established with a property owner to provide the right of first refusal on a parcel of land that is to be sold. This form of agreement can be used to protect land in the short term. This can provide an agency with sufficient time to obtain capital to purchase the property.

**Eminent Domain.** A public agency takes property for a public use, paying the landowner fair market value. If the landowner is unwilling to sell, the public agency can condemn the land, providing fair market value compensation. This is usually viewed as a policy of last resort in acquiring land for recreation and open space.

### Purchase of Development Rights

A public agency or private group purchases the development rights from a private property owner at a fair market value. The landowner retains all ownership rights under current use, but exchanges the rights to develop the property for cash payment. Forsyth County's Farmland Preservation Program is such a program.

### Tax Incentives for Donations

Federal income tax deductions and State of North Carolina tax credits can be obtained by a property owner if the donation of land is made to a governmental body, the land is given "exclusively for conservation purposes" such as open space conservation, and easements are granted for perpetuity.

**Federal income tax.** A conservation donation is deductible as a charitable contribution, reducing the donor's taxable income. Property owners may be able to deduct the fair market value of the donated land up to 30% of their adjusted gross income. Any value of the donated property over this limit can be applied for a deduction to income in subsequent years for up to five years.

**North Carolina income tax credit.** The North Carolina Conservation Tax Credit Program provides credits against individual and corporate income taxes for donations of real property for conservation purposes. The State allows State income tax credits equal to 25% of the fair market value of conservation donations. The donations must be certified by the State as

having qualified conservation purposes. The maximum conservation credit allowed is \$25,000 per donation in the tax year with any unused credits carried forward for the next succeeding five years.

### The Land Development Process

There are a range of specific federal, State and local regulatory measures, as well as incentive driven measures, that require or encourage landowners to provide land for parks and open space. North Carolina State statutes allow for cities and counties to make provision in their ordinances for the provision of recreational areas in subdivisions or payment in lieu as part of the permitting process. Payment in lieu must be commensurate with the cost that would be incurred in providing a recreation area within the subdivision. Some local governments have Conservation Overlay Zoning where additional or stricter development standards are established to protect particular features of an existing zone, such as historic districts, landscape features, scenic views, agricultural areas or watersheds.

### Ownership Retention Strategies

Methods of preserving open space resources while keeping land in private ownership include:

**Conservation Easements.** A legal agreement between the landowner and a government agency or conservation organization to voluntarily restrict the use and development of the property or part of the property. An easement may be in effect for a specified period of time but is usually perpetual. The landowner retains ownership and use of the land. There are

potential property, income and estate tax benefits for donation or bargain sale of an easement. Easements run with the land even with changes in ownership.

**Management Agreement.** An agreement between the landowner and a conservation organization to manage property to achieve resource conservation goals. A management plan is usually developed based on the owner's preservation aims. These agreements are not permanent.

**Lease Agreement.** An agreement between an agency and a landowner for the agency to rent the land in order to protect and manage a resource. This is usually a low-cost, short-term protection strategy.

**Limited Development Technique.** The landowner prepares a conservation plan for the environmentally significant portions of the property, develops a less sensitive part to finance the plan and obtain income. Tax advantages may be obtained from recording an easement over the conserved land.

**Technical Assistance Programs.** Landowners can participate in a number of federal, State and local programs to restore or enhance the resources on their property. Technical and financial assistance may be available to enhance the resource value of their property. Land can be sold and developed, however, unless protected by another method.

**Present Use Value Programs.** These programs promote the continuation of agricultural and forestry uses by assessing property based on its actual rather than potential use.



Camarille Farms – protected with conservation easements.

## Appendix G. Excerpt from the Greenway Plan — Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2015

### Citizen Based Organizations

*Legacy* proposed the establishment of a City and County Greenway and Open Space Advisory Committee to facilitate implementation of a county-wide greenway system. This proposed Committee can take one of a variety of forms including (1) an advisory committee appointed by the elected bodies with representation from all the municipalities and the County; (2) a subcommittee of the City Recreation and Parks Commission together with citizen representation from the County and the other municipalities; or (3) a volunteer organization of citizens from throughout the County.

Whatever the final structure, members should represent a wide variety of interests including, environmental conservation, recreation, transportation, developers, other business development, tourism, neighborhood groups, land trusts, health organizations, local governments and citizens. This advisory body would serve as a liaison between citizens and recreation departments and commissions on greenway and open space issues. It would bring together people from throughout the County to develop a coordinated approach to planning, developing and managing a countywide system of greenways and open space. It would work with staff of recreation departments and municipalities to facilitate completion and implementation of countywide greenways/open space policies and projects.

Responsibilities of this advisory body could include:

- Advising Recreation Commission members or elected officials of the City of Winston-Salem, the County and the other municipalities on the acquisition, development and management of greenways and other open space used for environmental preservation, recreation and transportation;
- Assisting in implementation of recommendations of greenway/open space plans and projects; Identifying specific greenways and types of open space to be included in our longterm greenways and open space program;
- Suggesting yearly Greenway/Open Space Programs that reflect the desires and concerns of the community;

- Building support with citizens and community organizations for greenways and open space and seeking their input on design, development and maintenance issues;
- Facilitating cooperation among jurisdictions in greenway/open space planning and development;
- Recommending standards for design and construction;
- Pursuing public/private partnerships for the acquisition of land for greenways and open space and for trail development;
- Identifying and soliciting resources to accelerate land acquisition and trail development;
- Encouraging property owners to donate easements, conserve open space and build greenway trails;
- Working with neighborhoods on neighborhood greenway projects;
- Coordinating activities of volunteers, organizations and businesses in developing and maintaining greenways and open space;
- Initiating public information programs;
- Conducting surveys or holding workshops to obtain citizen input; and
- Cooperating with surrounding counties to establish regional greenways.

An alternative to appointing a citizen committee or task force is the incorporation of a nonprofit citizens organization dedicated to establishing a countywide system of greenways. This organization would consist of volunteer advocates for greenways that would compliment the work of recreation departments. It could assist in the identification of greenway projects, educate the community on greenways, assist in raising funds for greenway projects and programs, attend public hearings to support greenways, conduct community support campaigns and muster the support of volunteers to work on greenway volunteer projects. Connect Gaston is an example of such a group that has been instrumental in building public support and raising funds for the establishment of Gastonia's first greenway trail.

# Appendix H. Financial and Technical Assistance

## Federal Sources/Programs

### *U.S. Department of Agriculture*

- Forest Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service Wetlands Reserve Program
- NRCS Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program

## U.S. Department of the Interior

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- The American Heritage Trust
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- National Park Service

## Federal Emergency Management Agency

- Flood Mitigation Assistance Program

## State Sources/Programs

### *N.C. Department of Agriculture*

- Farmland Preservation Program
- Plant Conservation Program

### *N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources*

- N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation
- N.C. Heritage Trust Fund
- N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund
- Million Acre Initiative
- N.C. Trails Program
- Resource Management Program
- N.C. Conservation Tax Credit Program
- N.C. Division of Soil and Water Conservation
- N.C. Division of Forest Resources
- Clean Water Management Trust Fund
- Water Resources Development Grant Fund
- N.C. Division of Water Quality

### *N.C. Department of Cultural Resources*

- N.C. Office of Archives and History

### *N.C. Department of Transportation*

- Wetlands and Stream Mitigation Program
- Wetland Restoration Program
- Transportation Enhancement Grant

## Private Sources/Programs

- American Farmland Trust
- Audubon North Carolina
- Ducks Unlimited
- The Conservation Fund
- The Nature Conservancy
- Trust for Public Land
- National Recreation and Park Association
- Local Foundations



Environmental protection of wetlands.



Watershed protection.

# Appendix I. Parks and Open Space Plan — Winston-Salem Summary

## INTRODUCTION

This is a summary of the major issues and recommendations of the *Parks and Open Space Plan – Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2015* that are specific to the City of Winston-Salem.

## VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Winston-Salem has many parks, recreational facilities and natural areas for active and passive recreation that help make it a desirable place to live (**Map 1 and Table I-2**). However, increased growth and development can result in a reduction in this quality of life if steps are not taken to protect and expand the community's outdoor recreation and environmental resources and ensure that recreational facilities keep pace with population growth and land development.

The vision of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County residents for the year 2015 was articulated in the *Legacy*, Forsyth County's comprehensive plan. Residents envisioned a community in which they enjoy a system of community parks, significant natural areas and preserved open space all connected by a green network of trails and streams providing opportunities for recreation and relaxation located just minutes from every resident's home.

The goal of the *Parks and Open Space Plan* is, therefore, to provide a system of parks, preserved natural areas and recreational opportunities that improve the quality of life of residents. The objectives of this Plan are:

- To provide park land, open space areas and recreational facilities that meet the current and future needs of a diverse population;
- To increase coordination and cooperation between governmental jurisdictions, institutions, and recreation providers to efficiently meet the recreation and open space needs of citizens;
- To establish a system of open space and corridors throughout Forsyth County that provides recreational opportunities, environmental protection, enjoyment of nature, enhancement of community character, and links to community resources; and
- To develop a sense of community involvement and ownership in the parks, recreation and open space

system by allowing citizens to have input in decisions regarding the system.

- To determine the need for maintaining and upgrading existing facilities (see section - **Maintenance of Existing Facilities, page 89**).

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

### ASSESSMENT

A survey conducted by the City-County Planning staff in June/July 2002 revealed that:

- The majority of city and county residents (66.4%) rated their overall satisfaction with the community's parks and recreational facilities as good or excellent.
- Walking/biking trails, soccer fields, swimming pools, nature reserves and basketball courts are the most needed facilities.
- There is significant concern about the lack of soccer fields and the condition of existing fields.

The future demand for parks, recreational facilities and open space was determined by combining the results from recreation surveys, citizen input on Area Plans and other projects, and a level of service analysis using 2000 Census population data, population projections and a range of recreation standards as guidelines.

The possible future locations of park land and associated recreational facilities in Winston-Salem are based on a number of factors including:

- The size and location of existing recreation and open space assets;
- Locations identified in this analysis as having existing inadequate recreational opportunities and open space;
- Areas where new development proposals are concentrated, where future growth is anticipated over the plan period, and areas eligible for future annexation by the City; and
- The expectations of residents as indicated in surveys, workshops, and Area Plans.

## PARKS ANALYSIS

The assessment of the park system is done by park categories. Requirements are determined using the 2000 Census population, the projected 2015 population, and recommended level of service standards (**Table I-1**). **Table I-3** indicates the additional acreage of park land required to meet the future needs of the population of Winston-Salem. Major underserved areas are determined by using service radii standards for each park category. Standards are used as guide-

lines in determining deficiencies of park land and their locations. The analysis and recommendations take into consideration the multifunctional purpose of some parks and the fact that an area may be served by more than one park or by a school or by other public facilities. The size of the park serving an area is also taken into consideration. The results from a number of recreation surveys and local planning efforts are considered indicators of residents' need for specific recreational opportunities and are factored into the analysis. **Map 4** of the Plan identifies potential major new or expanded park locations.

**Table I-1. Park Classification and Standards**

| Park Classification     | Desirable Size (acres) | Acres/1000 Population | Population Served | Service Radius (miles) |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Mini-Park               | Under 5                | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Neighborhood Park       | 5 to 20                | 2.5                   | Up to 5,000       | 0.5                    |
| Community Park          | 30 to 80               | 5                     | Up to 10,000      | 2                      |
| District Park           | 50 to 250              | 10                    | Up to 40,000      | 3-5                    |
| Regional Park/Reserve   | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Special Use Park        | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Linear Park             | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |
| Historic/ Cultural Park | N/E                    | N/E                   | N/E               | N/E                    |

Note: N/E - Not Established. These classes of parks have no standards for size, level of service or service area because of their special nature.



Helen Nichols Park – a community park in Winston-Salem.

**Table I-2. Winston-Salem Parks**

| Park Name                    | Acres  | Type            | Map 1 # | Park Name               | Acres          | Type             | Map 1 # |
|------------------------------|--------|-----------------|---------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------|---------|
| Anderson Drive-Luther Street | 1.75   | Open Space      | 25      | Jamison                 | 36.80          | Community        | 62      |
| Ardmore                      | 4.02   | Neighborhood    | 26      | Jefferson               | 22.20          | District         | 63      |
| Belview                      | 6.34   | Neighborhood    | 27      | Jerry King              | 20.10          | Community        | 64      |
| Bethabara                    | 30.97  | Community       | 28      | Kimberly                | 26.66          | Community        | 65      |
| Blum-Blanding                | 18.90  | Community       | 29      | Kingston Greens         | 0.70           | Neighborhood     | 66      |
| Bolton                       | 38.99  | District        | 30      | Leinbach                | 9.48           | Neighborhood     | 67      |
| Bon Air                      | 0.60   | Mini/Ornamental | 31      | Little Creek            | 33.83          | Neighborhood     | 68      |
| Bowen Blvd./Hansel B. Thomas | 18.86  | Community       | 32      | Lockland                | 1.80           | Mini/Ornamental  | 69      |
| British Woods                | 11.56  | Open Space      | 33      | Marvin Ward             | 5.80           | Neighborhood     | 70      |
| Brushy Fork                  | 4.36   | Neighborhood    | 34      | Meadowbrook             | 0.60           | Mini/Ornamental  | 71      |
| Central                      | 4.91   | Neighborhood    | 35      | Miller                  | 39.44          | District         | 72      |
| Civitan                      | 37.10  | Community       | 36      | Oak Summit              | 15.00          | Neighborhood     | 73      |
| Clark/Mickens                | 1.75   | Mini/Ornamental | 37      | Old Town                | 16.21          | Neighborhood     | 74      |
| Corpening Plaza              | 2.39   | Special Purpose | 38      | Park Land               | 24.25          | Community        | 75      |
| Crawford                     | 21.24  | Neighborhood    | 39      | Piney Grove             | 15.30          | Neighborhood     | 76      |
| Crystal Towers               | 2.94   | Mini/Ornamental | 40      | Polo                    | 19.87          | Community        | 77      |
| Downtown                     | 0.81   | Mini/Ornamental | 41      | Reynolda Road           | 2.63           | Mini/Ornamental  | 78      |
| Drayton Pines                | 8.13   | Mini/Ornamental | 42      | Reynolds                | 232.50         | District         | 79      |
| Easton                       | 26.90  | Neighborhood    | 43      | Runnymede               | 4.19           | Mini/Ornamental  | 80      |
| Fairview                     | 2.13   | Neighborhood    | 44      | Rupert Bell             | 17.84          | Community        | 81      |
| Forest                       | 9.18   | Community       | 45      | Salem Lake              | 1455.37        | Regional/Reserve | 82      |
| Fourteenth Street            | 6.90   | Community       | 46      | Sara Lee Soccer         | 46.63          | District         | 83      |
| Gateway Commons              | 10.51  | Community       | 47      | Sedge Garden            | 21.03          | Neighborhood     | 84      |
| Grace Court                  | 1.22   | Mini/Ornamental | 48      | Shaffner                | 55.97          | Community        | 85      |
| Granville                    | 6.09   | Neighborhood    | 49      | Skyland                 | 14.97          | Neighborhood     | 86      |
| Greenbriar                   | 1.39   | Open Space      | 50      | South                   | 5.43           | Neighborhood     | 87      |
| Greenway                     | 3.23   | Mini/Ornamental | 51      | South Fork              | 14.14          | Community        | 88      |
| Griffith                     | 6.80   | Community       | 52      | Sprague                 | 20.03          | Community        | 89      |
| Hanes                        | 34.92  | District        | 53      | Spring                  | 3.80           | Mini/Ornamental  | 90      |
| Hanes Hosiery                | 6.28   | Community       | 54      | Stratford Road          | 4.60           | Mini/Ornamental  | 91      |
| Hanes Town                   | 2.40   | Neighborhood    | 55      | Washington              | 76.43          | District         | 92      |
| Happy Hill                   | 26.73  | Neighborhood    | 56      | Watkins Street          | 0.54           | Mini/Ornamental  | 93      |
| Hathaway                     | 17.27  | Neighborhood    | 57      | West Clemmonsville Road | 4.71           | Open Space       | 94      |
| Helen Nichols                | 8.32   | Community       | 58      | Weston                  | 14.30          | Neighborhood     | 95      |
| Hine                         | 38.59  | District        | 59      | Westview                | 5.84           | Open Space       | 96      |
| Historic Bethabara           | 145.21 | Special Purpose | 60      | Whitaker                | 10.16          | Community        | 97      |
| Hobby                        | 93.53  | District        | 61      | Winston Lake            | 383.55         | District         | 98      |
|                              |        |                 |         | Winston Square          | 1.08           | Special Purpose  | 99      |
|                              |        |                 |         | <b>Total</b>            | <b>3347.00</b> |                  |         |

**Table I-3. Winston-Salem Parks - Projected Need 2015**

| Park Type<br>(acres per 1000 population)  | Winston-Salem 2000<br>(185,776 pop.) <sup>1</sup> |            | Winston-Salem 2015<br>(216,632 pop.) |
|---|---|------------|--------------------------------------|
|   | Existing<br>Acreage                               | # of sites | Additional Acreage<br>Needed         |
| Regional Parks/Open Space NE <sup>2</sup> | 1455  | 1          | N/E <sup>2</sup>                     |
| District Parks (10/1000)                  | 1007  | 10         | 1159                                 |
| Community Parks (5/1000)                  | 400   | 20         | 683                                  |
| Neighborhood Parks (2.5/1000)             | 274 <sup>3</sup>                                  | 22         | 267                                  |
| Other Parks <sup>4</sup>                  | 211   | 22         | N/E <sup>2</sup>                     |
| <b>Total Acres</b>                        | <b>3347</b>                                       | <b>75</b>  | <b>2109<sup>5</sup></b>              |

- Notes: 1. 2000 Census population.  
 2. No established standards of provision. Proposals for additional acreage/areas for regional/special parks and open space included in plan recommendations.  
 3. Includes reserved undeveloped land. Acreage of community parks with neighborhood function not included.  
 4. Includes cultural/historic parks, mini-ornamental parks, linear and other special parks.  
 5. Does not include regional and special use parks with no established standards of provision.

## REGIONAL PARKS

Regional parks are very large parks (100 or more acres) suitable for regional level active and passive recreational facilities. Users come from all over the county. Improvements are planned for Salem Lake Park, the City’s only regional park. It is recommended that the City explore the feasibility of converting, in the long term, the Hanes Mill Road Landfill site located in northwest Winston-Salem to a regional park that could include district or community level facilities. It is proposed that most of the additional acreage in regional parks and large-scale open space be provided by the county with the cooperation of the municipalities since most of the potential areas are located outside of the city.

## DISTRICT PARKS

District Parks are typically large in size (50-250 acres) and have specialized facilities or provide a wide array of recreational opportunities. There are ten district parks (including an undeveloped one – Jefferson Park) totaling 1007 acres in Winston-Salem. Based on recommended level of service standards, an additional 1159 acres are needed to meet projected 2015 needs (Table I-3). However, most of the city, with the exception of the western fringe areas, is located within the service area of a district park. New or expanded district parks will be needed to provide

for increase in demand over the plan period, particularly in the newly developing areas west and south of the city.

Proposals for new district parks and expansion of existing ones include:

- A new park at the Old Salisbury Road Landfill to serve newly developing areas and future annexed areas south of the city. A feasibility study and reclamation plan needs to be completed. The site will probably be available for development in 8 years.
- A new park at the former construction and demolition landfill site located in southeast Winston-Salem at Old Milwaukee Lane.

- Development of Jefferson Park. Plans for the proposed Jefferson Park located in western Winston-Salem are for a district park specializing in soccer. The acreage of land available is small for a district park.
- Expansion of Washington Park, an existing district park, along the floodplain of Salem Creek east to Broad Street, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Exploring the feasibility of developing district-level facilities at the proposed regional park at the Hanes Mill Road Landfill site.
- The City and County could cooperate to expand the existing County-owned district park to include community-level facilities to serve newly developing areas west of the city. Alternatively, the City could develop a community park at Balsom Road, adjacent to C.G. Hill Memorial Park.
- Identification of additional parks, as needed, in the local area planning process.

## COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks (30-80 acres) provide a range of active recreational facilities, not typically available at neighborhood parks, for a number of surrounding neighborhoods. They should be designed, where appropriate, as multifunctional parks that can serve as neighborhood parks in the neighborhoods where they are located.

There are twenty designated community parks (including undeveloped Jamison Park) totaling 400 acres in Winston-Salem. An additional 683 acres are required to meet projected 2015 needs (**Table I-3**) based on recommended level of service standards. Most of Winston-Salem is located within the service area of a community park except for the city fringes. However, several of the designated community parks are well below recommended size standards.

Proposals for new and expanded community parks are intended to address existing deficiencies, provide parks for newly developing and proposed annexed areas and respond to demands identified in the area planning process. Major proposals include:

Expansion and improvement to Happy Hill Park in Winston-Salem, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan* and the *Southeast Gateway Public Spaces Master Plan*.

- A new park at the Vulcan Quarry site, Waughtown, as proposed in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- A possible park, which could include soccer or baseball fields, east of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and south of Argonne Boulevard, as proposed in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- A new park in northeast Winston-Salem, at a site to be identified.
- A new park in the vicinity of the proposed US 311 South Activity Center to serve southeast Winston-Salem.
- Development of Jamison Park to serve the western edge of the city.
- A proposed park in northwest Winston-Salem, north of Bethania.
- Possible development of the Old Salisbury Road Landfill as a dual function community and district park to service areas south of the city.
- Expansion of existing undersized parks if land becomes available adjacent to them; and
- Identification of additional parks, as needed, in the local area planning process.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks (5-20 acres) provide for intense recreational activities at locations easily accessible to neighborhoods, usually within a half-mile radius. Other types of parks can also have neighborhood-level facilities. Winston-Salem has twenty-two neighborhood parks (274 acres) and twenty-four parks in other categories that also function as neighborhood parks. The city appears well served with neighborhood parks in the older central urban areas

but is lacking in neighborhood parks on the city fringes.

The location of new neighborhood parks should be determined by local community needs and future patterns of growth and development. Convenience, safety and ease of access are important in identifying suitable sites. The following recommendations are for a minimum number of new and improved neighborhood parks to serve identified community needs or remedy a significant deficiency in level of service. It is expected that sites for additional neighborhood parks will be identified during the local area planning process.

Proposed new or improved neighborhood parks include:

- A new park adjacent to Marvin Ward Elementary school. It will service annexed areas in southwest Winston-Salem (site already secured).
- Renovations to Granville Park based on the completed master plan.
- Improvements to Happy Hill Park, as proposed in the *Southeast Gateway Public Spaces Master Plan*. This improved park can serve the dual functions of neighborhood and community parks.
- A new park in the vicinity of the Peters Creek Parkway Metro Activity Center at Peters Creek Parkway and Clemmonsville Road to serve new and proposed developments in the area (site to be determined).
- The undeveloped 35-acre Jamison Park that can be developed to serve the dual functions of a neighborhood and community park to serve the western fringes of the city.
- Additional neighborhood parks to service future annexed areas in the northeast, southeast and south areas of the city at sites to be determined based on more detailed plans for these areas.
- Identification of additional parks, as needed, in the local area planning process.

## LINEAR PARKS/SPECIAL PARKS

Linear parks often link parks, other recreation areas and open space. They are often located along creeks and usually developed with trails for walking, hiking and biking. Other recreational facilities can be located within these parks. Special parks include mini-ornamental parks, civic plazas and public gathering places. The following proposals are mostly limited to those identified in Area Plans. Additional parks are to be identified in future Area Plans and more detailed studies of creek corridors. The feasibility of establish-

ing or improving the following parks needs to be determined:

- A linear park, Southeast Gateway Park, along Salem Creek between Main and Broad Streets, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- A linear park along I-40 Business in the West End neighborhood, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- A linear park along Bath/Clover Leaf Branch Creek, north of Stadium Drive incorporating the Falls of Bath Branch, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.

- Public gathering spaces at Sunnyside and Holly Avenues, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Expansion of Reynolds Park along Salem Creek, as proposed in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- Improvements to the Downtown Park, as proposed in the *South Central Winston-Salem Area Plan*.
- A civic plaza/green space in the core of downtown, as proposed in the *Downtown Plan*.
- A skate park at a site to be identified.

## NEW AND EXPANDED RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The new parks recommended would allow for a range of new or expanded recreational facilities. Recommended facilities, based on the existing deficiencies and projected need, should be considered when planning future parks or making improvements to existing ones. However, since residents of communities may have differing demands for specific facilities, it is important that each community has a process for public input to determine its priorities before undertaking major investment in facilities.

**Table I-4** identifies the existing and projected need for a range of facilities using recommended standards for the provision of these facilities.

### RECREATION CENTERS

Eight neighborhood recreation centers and nine community recreation centers are located in Winston-Salem. The larger community centers also serve as neighborhood centers for the neighborhoods in which they are located. Most of the city, with the exception of fringe areas, is located within the service area of either a neighborhood or community center. However, additional centers may be needed to provide for the projected population (**Table I-4**) and to provide services to existing and new development at the city fringes. Consideration should also be given to upgrading facilities and services at existing centers as

**Table I-4. Public Recreational Facilities  
Winston-Salem – Projected Need 2015**

| Facility<br>(standard per<br>1000 population) | Winston-Salem 2000<br>(185,776 pop.) |            | Winston-Salem 2015<br>(216,635 pop.) |                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
|   | Existing                             | Total Need | Total Need                           | Additional Need      |
| Community Center<br>(1/25000)                 | 9                                    | 7          | 9                                    | 0                    |
| Neighborhood Center<br>(1/10000)              | 8<br>17 <sup>4</sup>                 | 19         | 22                                   | 14<br>5 <sup>4</sup> |
| Basketball Court<br>(1/5000)                  | 29                                   | 37         | 43                                   | 14                   |
| Volleyball Court<br>(1/5000)                  | 9                                    | 37         | 43                                   | 34                   |
| Tennis Court<br>(1/2000)                      | 105                                  | 93         | 108                                  | 3                    |
| Soccer Field<br>1/3500                        | 41<br>60 <sup>2</sup>                | 53         | 62                                   | 21                   |
| Baseball Field<br>1/5000                      | 6<br>20 <sup>2</sup>                 | 37         | 43                                   | 37<br>23             |
| Softball Field <sup>1</sup><br>1/5000         | 49<br>51 <sup>2</sup>                | 37         | 43                                   | - 6<br>- 8           |
| Swimming Pool <sup>2</sup><br>1/20000         | 8<br>11 <sup>2</sup>                 | 9          | 11                                   | 3<br>0               |
| Picnic Shelters <sup>5</sup><br>1/3000        | 55                                   | 62         | 72                                   | 17                   |
| Golf<br>1/25000                               | 2<br>12 <sup>3</sup>                 | 7          | 9                                    | 7<br>- 3             |

Notes: 1. Some fields used for youth baseball and softball fields.  
 2. Includes school, YMCA facilities and/or private facilities.  
 3. Includes privately-owned golf courses/par courses.  
 4. Assuming that community centers serve a dual function as neighborhood centers.  
 5. Does not include uncovered picnic tables of which there are 44.

the need arises. The City has proposed upgrading the Sedge Garden Neighbor-hood Center to a community center with a gymnasium to service the southeastern part of the city. A new center has been built to replace the old Hanes Hosiery Recreation Center.

Consideration should be given to a new center to serve newly developing and future annexed areas in the south. New centers should also be considered in the master planning process for new parks, particularly new community parks. There appears to be a demand for recreation centers with gymnasiums and fitness equipment usually available at community-level centers. It is proposed that new centers should either be community-level centers with gymnasiums that function also as neighborhood centers, or that neighborhood centers be designed to allow for addition of gymnasiums, when feasible. Increased access to school facilities to supplement recreation center services should be further explored with the school system to provide for the projected need for additional centers by 2015. This approach could significantly reduce the number and costs of new facilities at the city's edges.

## SOCCER FIELDS

The results of recreation surveys and requests to the Recreation and Parks Department indicate that the need for additional, high-quality soccer fields is a top priority for residents. Residents consider existing soccer fields inadequate in quantity and quality to meet their needs. This demand can be attributed to the increasing popularity of the sport especially among girls and the growing Hispanic population. The existing fields are inadequate to meet the existing demand and will need to be increased to meet existing and future demand. The former standard for providing soccer fields has been revised to more adequately reflect demand. The quality and maintenance of existing fields also need to be improved. Soccer fields also have the potential to be used for lacrosse and field hockey, sports in which there is growing interest.

Consideration should be given to the inclusion of soccer fields in master plans for new community and district parks to meet existing and proposed demand for these facilities. Winston-Salem has plans for seven soccer fields, including multiuse fields, at Jamison and Jefferson Parks to serve the western fringes of the city. Similar facilities should be considered for other new community and district parks that are developed over the time period of this Plan to improve the level of service to other parts of the city. The possibility of locating soccer fields east of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and south of Argonne Boulevard, as proposed

in the *Southeast Winston-Salem Area Plan*, should be explored because of the high demand for such facilities in this area, which has a concentration of Hispanics/Latinos.

## WALKING/BIKING TRAILS

Walking and biking were identified in recent surveys as among the top recreational activities most enjoyed by residents and their families. Walking and biking trails were also identified as among most urgently needed facilities. The *Greenway Plan – Winston-Salem and Forsyth County 2015*, adopted in 2002, identified 22 miles of trail in Winston-Salem for priority development by 2015. Priority projects are the Muddy Creek, Brushy Fork, Salem Lake North, and Mill Creek trails; the Strollway Extension and the Waughtown Connector; and Phase I of the Piedmont Greenway, linking Winston-Salem to Greensboro. Other connector trails are expected to link developments to the major trails. Further details on proposed greenway trails can be obtained from the adopted plan.

In addition to proposed greenway trails, consideration should be given to the establishment of walking and biking trails in existing and proposed parks, where feasible. Walking trails are included in existing master plans for Jamison Park. Priority park feasibility and development studies for several proposed parks (**Table I-6**) should include consideration of walking and biking trails. Trails developed within parks should be linked to greenway trails, where feasible.

## TENNIS COURTS

The availability of public tennis courts in Winston-Salem appears to be adequate relative to existing population (**Table I-4**). However, facilities appear to be lacking in the suburban areas. Three new tennis courts proposed at Jamison Park are intended to service the western part of the city. Additional facilities should be provided to meet future needs particularly in future annexed areas in the south, southeast and northeast of the city. These should be considered within the context of park recommendations for these areas. Existing courts should be upgraded, as needed.

## BALL COURTS

There appears to be a deficiency in public basketball courts (**Table I-4**). Residents ranked basketball courts fifth among most needed facilities. One court is proposed at Jamison Park. Additional courts (8-14 courts) appear to be needed to address existing deficiencies and provide for future needs. Provision of

additional courts should be considered in master plans for proposed new community and district parks if supported by community demand. Some courts can be designed to serve dual functions.

Public volleyball courts appear to be fairly evenly distributed throughout the city. There is a big gap between existing facilities and the calculated need for facilities based on level of service standards (**Table I-4**). Since the need for additional facilities was not identified as a citywide priority in the recreation survey, courts should be included as part of planned facilities only if there is a demand by area residents. Two courts are planned for Jamison Park. Multi-purpose courts can serve to accommodate this sport.

## BALL FIELDS

Existing softball fields appear to meet level of service standards relative to the city's existing population if private league and school facilities are recognized as available for public use (**Table I-4**). There appears to be a shortage of baseball fields within the city but the availability of fields countywide appears adequate. The provision of these facilities was not identified as a priority in any of the surveys conducted.

Most of the existing softball fields are located in central Winston-Salem. New facilities, therefore, will mostly be needed in suburban communities and areas proposed for future annexation. One soccer/softball field is proposed for the new Jamison Park. Other fields should be added to the system, based on demand, as new parks are developed. They would serve future annexed areas in the southern, western, northeastern and southeastern edges of the city. Multiuse fields that combine softball/youth baseball or soccer/softball could be built to meet future demands.

## SWIMMING POOLS/WATER PLAY AREAS

There appears to be fairly widespread coverage of swimming pools in Winston-Salem (**Table I-4**) and none of the City-owned pools are at capacity usage. The *Southeast Gateway Public Spaces Master Plan* proposes pool renovation or construction of a water play area at Happy Hill Park. Additional pools/water play areas should be considered if demand increases as usage reaches capacity and new community or district parks are developed to serve growing populations in the south, southeast and west.

## LAKES

The major assets of the two largest parks in Winston-Salem, Salem Lake Park (1455 acres) and Winston Lake Park (383 acres), are their existing lakes. The potential of these valuable assets need to be more fully utilized.

There are existing plans to improve facilities at Salem Lake. Proposed is the Salem Lake Marina Center that will accommodate conference room rentals, workshops, classes, boat registrations and rentals, fishing licenses/passes, offer concessions, the opportunity to purchase equipment, and restroom facilities. These improvements will enhance activities at both Salem Lake Park and the Salem Creek Greenway. Completion in the long term of the Piedmont Greenway Trail linking Salem Lake Park to Kernersville and Greensboro has the potential of significantly increasing usage of park and greenway facilities. More detailed plans, which consider the longer-term impact of the proposed regional trail, should be completed for the park.

A master plan also needs to be completed for Winston Lake Park to better utilize its potential and to accommodate the new school and other planned developments in the vicinity.

## PICNIC SHELTERS/TABLES

There are 55 picnic shelters and 44 uncovered tables in City parks. Existing standards suggest the need for 17 additional picnic shelters to meet 2015 population projections. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of picnic shelters in the master planning for new parks, particularly those serving the fringe areas of the city and future annexed areas.

## OTHER PROPOSED FACILITIES

When designing proposed new parks, consideration should be given to a wide range of facilities based on extensive public input. Playground areas should be provided in all new parks serving areas with significant populations of children. Facilities for more established sports as well as others of growing interests should be considered. Potential additional facilities include racquetball, shuffleboard, squash, track, field hockey, lacrosse, skateboarding, disc golf, wall climbing, equestrian areas and aquatic facilities. Multipurpose fields should be provided, wherever possible.

## MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING FACILITIES

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Of the 21 main recreation facilities, four were built in the 1960s, one in the 1970s, and four in the 1980's. Seven of the eight pools and bathhouses were constructed in the 1960's and many of our shelters, park playgrounds, restrooms and basic park amenities are of comparable age causing maintenance and operational concern.

The existing recreational infrastructure is in acute need of updating, retrofitting, and renovation to ensure our system of parks and recreational facilities conforms to the standards and specifications needed to meet the City's current and future needs. The City's current system has not had a substantial infusion of funds, other than Capital Improvement Project funds since the 1987 Bond Referendum.

To date, the Winston-Salem Recreation Department has managed the present system at efficient and effective levels, keeping all facilities as safe and attractive as possible using budgeted annual operational funds.

Based on changes in the American Disability Act (ADA) requirements, Consumer Product Safety Commission Guidelines, Playground Safety and Technology, plus local, State and federal agency mandates, additional funding will be required to meet these standards while maintaining the current level of service. While the City hopes to accomplish some of these upgrades through grant funding, increased budgetary appropriations and bond financing may also be required as part of the future financing needs. By addressing these concerns, the Recreation and Parks system will be able to meet community goals set forth in the City's parks and open space plan.

At this point, the City stands at a crossroads and has determined that a systemwide maintenance assessment is necessary to determine the present condition of our facilities and the financial commitment required for needed improvements to comply with expected standards.

The Winston-Salem Recreation and Parks Department, therefore, proposes to seek a Request for Qualifications from established firms to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the condition of all recreational facilities. This assessment will include location, accessibility, and safety, satisfaction of current and consideration of future recreational trends.

Through a shared vision of the Recreation and Parks Department and the citizens of Winston-Salem, established goals can be met, funds managed effectively, the safety of existing facilities improved and their appeal maintained for decades to come.

## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

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Improving the City's system of parks, recreational facilities and open space to meet existing and future needs requires not only identifying needed land and facilities but addressing the issues of planning, funding, developing and managing the system. Following are recommendations that could facilitate expansion and improvement of the existing system.

- Undertake a comprehensive maintenance assessment of and prepare a maintenance and upgrading plan for existing recreational facilities in Winston-Salem.
- Establish a park and open space land acquisition program based on identified priorities for park development and preservation ranking.
- Reinvest in existing parks to maintain, improve and expand facilities.
- Secure a multiyear dedicated funding source, bond funding or some other form of dedicated tax revenue, for land acquisition and capital development for new or expanded parks, open space and recreational facilities.
- Actively pursue State, federal and private grant funding for land acquisition and capital development.
- Increase collaboration with nonprofit, corporate and other private organizations in providing community recreational facilities and open space.
- Consider enactment of a parks and open space dedication ordinance, similar to what exists in several other communities. The ordinance would require dedication of land for parks and open space by developers of residential projects or payment of cash in lieu.
- Ensure that park and open space sites are included in planning for community facilities in Area Plans, new developments and brownfield redevelopment sites.
- Consider pedestrian and bike access when selecting new park sites.
- Explore the feasibility of national standard soccer and/or sport complexes to host national/state events.
- Identify opportunities for establishing open space in the form of community gardens. Restructure

existing community gardens programs to more effectively meet community needs.

- Ensure that all facilities comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Develop a strategy to publicize this Plan and promote its implementation targeting the public, potential donors, partners and users, including citizen groups, the development community, recreation, environmental, education and open space preservation interests.
- Offer opportunities for users and supporters to volunteer in the planning, programming and stewardship of the recreational facilities and natural areas.
- Conduct user and recreation participation preference surveys on a regular basis to collect data that would improve recreation planning.

## CAPITAL COSTS

**Table I-5** summarizes estimated costs for development of different types of parks with a range of facilities recommended for Winston-Salem. Inflation is not

factored into the costs. These estimates are not intended to be a complete assessment of funding needed to implement the plan or provide all facilities needed by 2015. Estimates include minimum capital costs for new park development to meet key identified needs and some major park improvements. No attempt has been made to include operations, maintenance and administration costs. Land costs vary throughout the city depending on location, topography, potential land use and demand. An assumption is therefore made of average land costs. The number of additional parks needed is based on the additional acreage needed and the recommended park sizes in each category. Estimated costs for each park type reflect the typical range of facilities for the park type. The actual facilities developed at each site will depend on demand and on available resources. These estimates are only a preliminary guide to development costs. More accurate estimates, including land costs, would need to be done when sites are acquired and master plans are completed for each park.

**Table I-5. Estimated Capital Costs of Park and Recreation Projects – Winston-Salem**

| <b>Projects - Winston-Salem</b>   | <b>Costs<sup>1</sup></b>    |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>Regional Parks</b><br>Hanes Mill Road Landfill site feasibility study                      | \$50,000                    |
| <b>District Parks</b><br>Old Salisbury Road Landfill site feasibility study                   | \$50,000                    |
| 4 Parks (includes Jefferson Park)   | \$15.5 million <sup>2</sup> |
| <b>Community Parks</b><br>7 parks<br>(includes Jamison Park; Southeast Gateway Park upgrades) | \$11.2 million <sup>3</sup> |
| <b>Neighborhood Parks</b><br>10 parks   | \$5.5 million <sup>4</sup>  |
| <b>Special Facilities</b><br>Salem Lake Marina  | \$0.7 million               |
| Skate Park  | \$0.5 million               |
| Recreation Centers - 3  | \$5.0 million <sup>5</sup>  |
| Greenway Trails – 22 miles  | \$6.0 million               |
| <b>Total</b> \$44.5 million   |                             |

Notes: 1. Estimated park costs include land acquisition costs estimated on average at \$10,000 per acre and construction costs, which vary by park type.

2. Estimated construction cost of a district park \$3.5 million.

3. Estimated construction cost of a community park \$1.3 million.

4. Estimated construction cost of a neighborhood park \$0.5 million.

5. Estimated cost of a center is \$1.6 million. Can be used to upgrade an existing neighborhood center to a community center.

## PHASE I PRIORITY PROJECTS

Several projects have been identified as Phase I projects. The capital costs of these projects, identified in **Table I-6**, are estimated at approximately \$9 million. Priority should be given to funding these projects.

Criteria used to determine priority projects include:

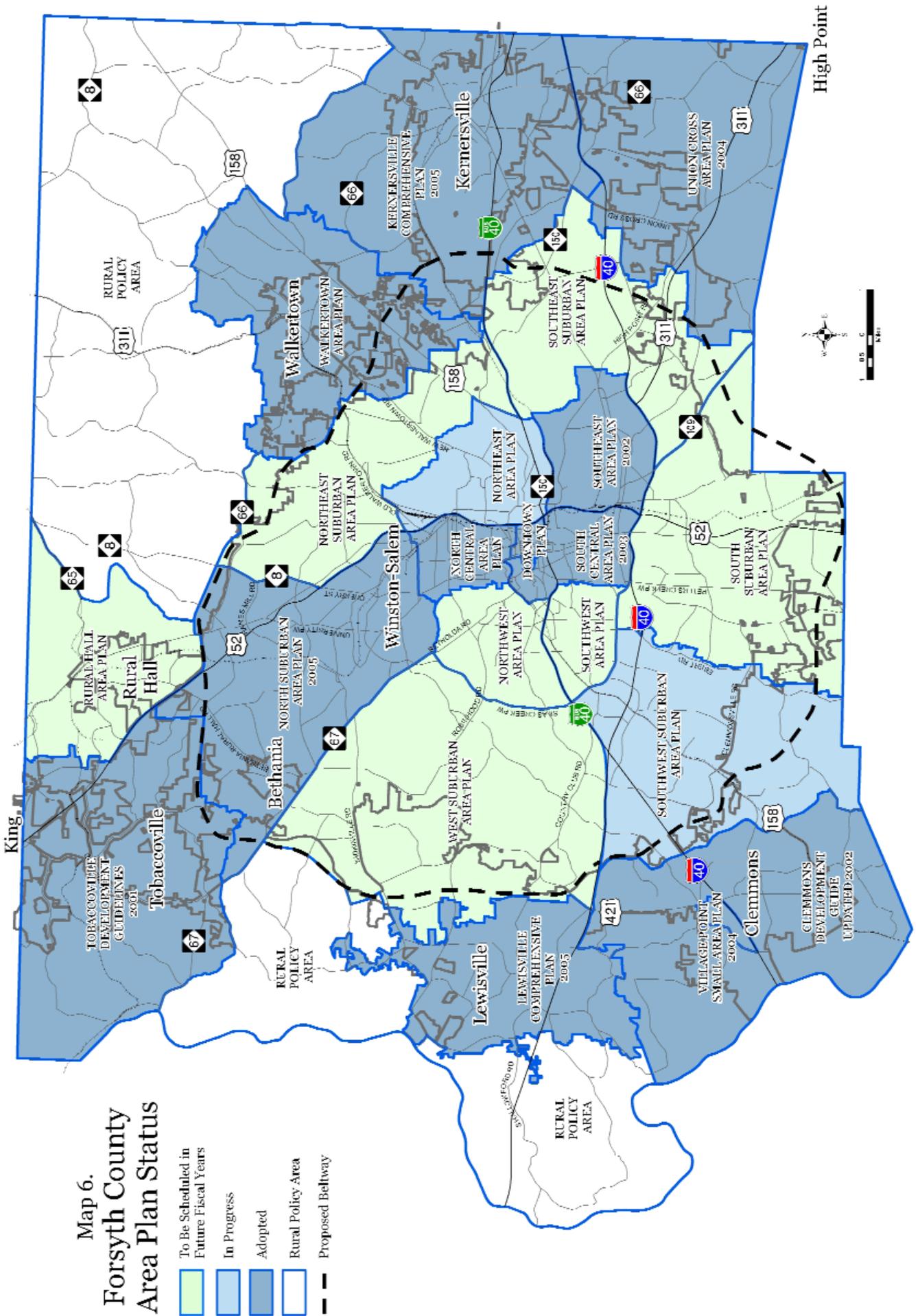
- Facilities most desired by residents;
- The availability of publicly-owned land designated for recreational uses or with potential for recreational use;
- Completed park master plans to be implemented;
- The lack of parks and facilities in rapidly developing areas;
- The need to expand/improve existing parks and facilities;
- The need for feasibility/development studies of potential/existing sites; and
- The importance of land acquisition for future projects.

**Table I-6. Proposed Phase I Priority Capital Projects**

| <b>Project</b>   | <b>Estimated Cost</b> |
|--|-----------------------|
| New Park Development<br>- Jamison Park<br>- Jefferson Park<br>- Ward Elementary  | \$2,750,000           |
| Park land Acquisition (250 acres)  | \$2,000,000           |
| Greenways/Trails (6 miles)<br>- Muddy Creek (Phase II)<br>- Little Creek Trail<br>- Salem Lake North   | \$1,230,000           |
| Expansion/Renovation of Existing Parks<br>- Happy Hill Park<br>- Winston Lake<br>- Granville Park  | \$1,350,000           |
| Salem Lake Marina/Operations Center  | \$750,000             |
| Sedge Garden Center Gymnasium Addition   | \$750,000             |
| Park Feasibility/Development Studies<br>- Hanes Mill Road Landfill<br>- Old Salisbury Road Landfill<br>- Jefferson Park<br>- Ward Elementary School<br>- Winston Lake<br>- Vulcan Quarry | \$250,000             |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>\$9,080,000</b>    |

Map 6.  
**Forsyth County  
 Area Plan Status**

- To Be Scheduled in Future Fiscal Years
- In Progress
- Adopted
- Rural Policy Area
- Proposed Beltway



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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