



*William M. Hargraves Center*

## Section Three

# Recreation Standards & Needs Assessment

### Introduction

This section contains the analysis and assessment on which the recommendations of this Comprehensive Parks Plan is based. It begins with a brief review of previous planning efforts conducted by the Town, and how the documents developed from these studies have shaped the current system. Next, we review how other communities are working to provide park and recreation facilities to their constituents, and national and state trends in park and recreation preferences. This review of previous planning studies and similar agencies is followed by a description of the park types that typically make up a park system. Using these park types as a backdrop, standards from the Town's 2002 Master Plan are reviewed and, where appropriate, revised. The new standards are then used as a basis for establishing a park and recreation facility needs assessment for Chapel Hill.

It should be noted that the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), in its 1995 report "Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines", determined there are no "national standards" for park development. Instead, the latest NRPA study recommends that each community is unique, and that standards reflecting the local "uniqueness" should be established.

This study looks at two types of development standards. The first analysis looks at total acreage of parkland within the system and how this acreage is broken into park types. From this study it is possible to see how Chapel Hill's existing parks compare with other communities, both in overall park acreage and park types within this overall acreage.

The second analysis looks at recreation activities and the facilities required to program these activities. By establishing a population-based standard for various recreation activities, this study establishes the type and quantity of facilities the Department should develop in the future.

The design standards used in this study were derived from citizen input and input from the Parks and Recreation Department staff. The development of these standards is perhaps the most important step in this planning process.

## Previous Planning Efforts

### 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

In 2002 the Town went through a similar planning process to develop a comprehensive master plan. This effort was the first major planning effort for parks since the 1970s. Much like the process undertaken for this planning effort, the 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan included a detailed inventory of existing facilities, several public meetings, and much public involvement. The plan set direction for the Department for a ten year period.

The 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan included recommendations for the following park improvements:

- Complete the Homestead Aquatics Center
- Complete the first phase of Southern Community Park
- Complete Meadowmont Park
- Improve existing neighborhood park sites at Hargraves, Umstead, Community Center, North Forest Hills, Oakwood, Jones, and Burlington
- Purchase two new neighborhood park sites

- Designate the 34 acre Springcrest property as a neighborhood park site
- Develop three new neighborhood parks
- Use existing undeveloped sites and public property to develop mini park sites
- Develop a minimum of 6-7 miles of greenway trails
- Continue acquisition of open space property

The park development and improvements recommendations found in the plan represented a capital improvements program of over \$21 million for the ten year planning period. The 2002 plan recommended park improvement bonds be considered for capital improvement and a one cent increase to the City's property tax be considered to increase operating funds. The report also suggested exploration of joint-use development (schools, county, etc.) of facilities.

### Chapel Hill Greenways Master Plan 2006

Chapel Hill's original greenway master plan was developed in 1998. In 2006, the Town updated the 1998 plan. Planning recommendations were based on input received from five public workshops. The 2006 Greenway Master Plan validated many of the decisions made in the original plan and proposed new greenway corridors for areas of the city that had developed since the 1998 plan.

The major changes recommended in the Comprehensive Greenways Master Plan Update were:

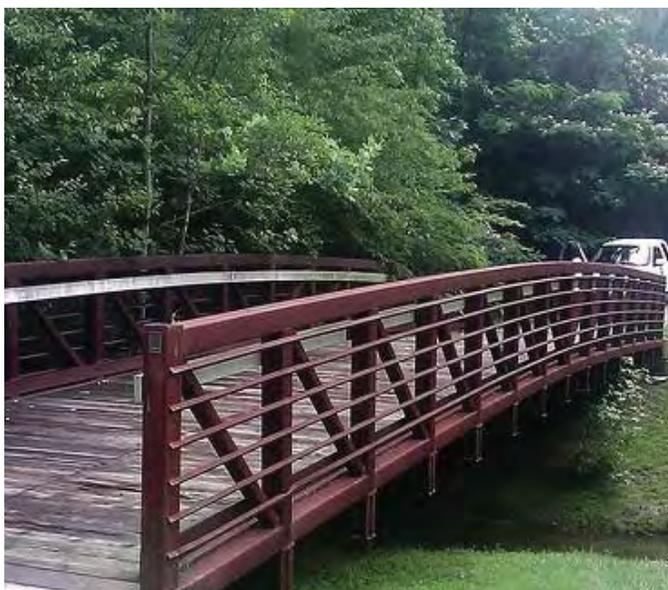


Lower Booker Creek Trail

- Addition of recently annexed areas, new schools, planned Town parks, greenway land acquisitions and recent and planned private land developments.
- Addition of newly identified trail segments to the greenways program.
- Recommendations to change the alignments of several trails.
- New list of high priority trails that could be built in the next seven years.
- New maps based on the adopted 2004 Bicycle and Pedestrian Action Plan.
- Identification of key trail intersections with NCDOT roads and suggested solutions for allowing pedestrians and bicyclists to cross these roads in a safe manner.

The 2006 Greenways Master Plan identified the following paved greenways as a priority:

- Bolin Creek, Phase III (Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to Estes Drive Extension)
- Dry Creek (Perry Creek Road to Eastowne)
- Fan Branch Trail (Scroggs School to southern tip of Southern Community Park)
- Morgan Creek (Merritt Pasture to Smith Level Road)
- Upper Booker Creek (Weaver Dairy Road to Homestead Park with a spur to Horace Williams trail Corridor)



*The Fan Branch Trail was listed as a priority in the 2006 Greenways Master Plan*



*Locally Grown event at Wallace Plaza*

## 2020 Vision Plan

The Town recently completed a community-wide vision plan to prepare for 2020. Public parks, greenways, and open space were important components of the 2020 Vision Plan. The plan identifies 6 themes that are critical to maintaining the Town's vibrancy and ensure people will continue to want "to live, work, and play" in Chapel Hill. These themes were as follows:

- A Place for Everyone
- Community Prosperity and Engagement
- Getting Around
- Good Places and New Spaces
- Nurturing Our Community
- Town and Gown

Facilities and programs offered by the department are an important aspect of each of these 6 themes and are an integral part of the Vision Plan. Recommendations in the 2020 Plan directly related to Parks and Recreation include:

### **Theme 1: A Place for Everyone: Diversity, Cultural Vibrancy and the Arts**

- Provide public art and community programs that celebrate and enhance local culture.
- Create a community wide initiative to promote healthy lifestyles.
- Create a community garden program.
- Incorporate fruit trees into the Town's landscape planting.
- Expand greenways, bike and pedestrian routes.
- Create a downtown arts district.
- Create neighborhood parks with playgrounds.

- Improve collaboration with UNC.
- Use arts to address social issues.

**Theme 2: Community Prosperity and Engagement**

- Foster economic impact with a focus on community events in the downtown district.
- Create attractive gathering spots (University Square).
- Partner with Carrboro, Orange County and other community agencies.
- Create festivals that attract tourist and provide economic impact.
- Provide pedestrian connectivity to retail establishments through greenways.

**Theme 3: Getting Around and Transportation**

- Use existing bikeways, walkways, and transit to connect neighborhoods and commercial districts.
- Create an active network of citizens available to volunteer for advisory boards.
- Provide bus service to all Town parks.

**Theme 4: Good Places and New Spaces**

- Integrate open space into neighborhoods.
- Encourage land use that balances low and high density use with green space.
- Develop district codes for different areas of town.
- Protect, acquire, and maintain natural spaces, green spaces for parks, greenways and environments to protect wildlife corridors and to provide recreation and connections to schools.
- Develop a physical and fiscal plan.

**Theme 5: Nurturing Our Community**

- Use “best practices” in park/facility design for stormwater runoff, etc.
- Raise community awareness for the benefits of resource protection.

**Theme 6: Town and Gown Collaboration**

- Create access to the arts, culture, and intellectual pursuits.
- Develop a public spaces master plan that identifies locations, resources, and partnerships to maintain spaces over time.



*Greenways are an important component of the 2020 Vision Plan*

**2011 Community Survey**

The Town commissioned a community survey in late 2011 to assess citizen satisfaction with the quality of services. The purpose of the study was to assist town leaders in setting budgeting priorities and establishing policy decisions. A similar survey was conducted in 2009. Responses from the two surveys were compared.

Eighty-four percent (84%) of the residents expressing an opinion were satisfied with the maintenance of town parks. Almost three fourths (73%) expressed satisfaction with the number of parks. Likewise, almost three fourths (73%) were satisfied with the landscaping and appearance of public areas along streets (a maintenance responsibility of Parks and Recreation).

When asked which parks and recreation service should receive the most emphasis from the Town over the next two years, the following results were received:

Number of walking/biking trails	40%
Maintenance of town parks	28%
Special events/festivals	18%
Youth athletic programs	17%
Availability of program information	16%
Number of town parks	16%
Cultural arts programs	12%
Public art	11%
Quality of outdoor athletic fields	10%
Number of outdoor athletic fields	10%

Adult athletic programs	7%
Appearance of cemeteries	6%
Therapeutic recreation	6%

See Appendix 3-A (Question 11) for additional breakdown on this issue.

When asked to rate various community features as to the importance to the decision to live in Chapel Hill, availability of parks and recreation opportunities was listed as the fifth of fourteen factors. Eighty-five percent (85%) of those responding listed it as an important factor in the decision. Safety and security, quality of public schools, access to entertainment and the University community ranked higher. Availability of parks ranked higher than factors associated with housing, transportation, shopping or employment opportunities. See Appendix 3-A (Question 18) for additional information.

Eighty-eight percent (88%) responded that their needs were being met by the availability of parks and recreation opportunities. Likewise, eighty-five (85%) said their needs for available cultural activities and arts were being met. See Appendix 3-A (Question 29) for additional information.

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of those who listed additional bicycle lanes and off road paths felt improvements to bike lanes and off road paths was the most important capital improvement for the Town to make. This was the second highest capital improvement identified (second only to development of downtown). Twenty-nine percent (29%) of respondents felt trail and greenways were most important. Trail and greenways, open space acquisition (14%) and park renovations (12%) were lower on the list of improvements.

The community survey uses the information gathered to create an Importance-Satisfaction Analysis (ISA). The ISA is determined to assist community officials allocate limited resources to the activities and programs that are most beneficial to the citizens. The two most important criteria for decision making are (1) expend resources toward services that are of the highest importance to citizens and (2) to direct resources toward services where citizens are the

least satisfied. The Importance-Satisfaction Rating is based the concept that citizens or towns will maximize overall citizen satisfaction by making improvements where the level of satisfaction is relatively low and the perceived importance of the service is relatively high.

Based on public input, the study calculated the Importance-Satisfaction Rating for 13 services or programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department. A detailed assessment of the Importance-Satisfaction Ratings for Parks and Recreation is provided in Appendix 3-A. Based on that rating system, adding to the number of walking and biking trails should be the highest priority of the Town.

### **National and State Studies on Outdoor Recreation Demand**

Surveys designed to determine the demand for outdoor recreation have been conducted on the Federal level by the President’s Commission on Americans Outdoors, the State of North Carolina, and various other organizations and associations.

Findings from these studies can be found in Appendix 3-B: National and State Studies on Outdoor Recreation Demand.

### **Benchmarking Relative to Other North Carolina Communities**

The Recreation Resources Service at North Carolina State University conducts an annual study of municipal and county spending on parks and recreation services throughout North Carolina. This study reviews both operational and capital spending of these municipal and county agencies. The results of this study can be found in Appendix 3-C: Benchmarking.

### **Gold Medal Winners**

Another way of benchmarking the Town’s parks and recreation facilities/programs is to compare Chapel Hill with other outstanding communities from across the nation. Appendix 3-C contains information on recent National Gold Medal Award winners.



*Playgrounds improve neighborhood parks*

## **Classifications For Parks, Open Space And Greenways**

A well balanced park system is made up of a variety of park types that range from very large regional parks (often encompassing hundreds of acres) to very small mini parks (sometimes less than one acre). The descriptions on the following pages define the parks that typically comprise a community's park system. Numerous agencies (federal, state, county, and municipal) play a role in providing this system. Looking at the entire system helps identify the roles of the various agencies.

The following park descriptions are based on park classifications outlined in the 1995 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) publication "Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines". They are not intended to serve as park standards, but instead are used as a framework for describing the components found in a park system. Communities should structure their park types based on individual community needs. Table 3A-Park Acreage (PA) and Table 3B-Park Acreage (PA) reflect the standards for development that are recommended for the Town of Chapel Hill. The recommended standards vary slightly from NRPA guidelines listed on the following pages.

## Regional Parks

Regional parks are typically very large sites, encompassing unique qualities that exemplify the natural features, diverse land formations, and the variety of vegetation and wildlife found in the region. Examples of the types of facilities provided in a regional park include environmental centers, camping, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas. Open fields for non-structured activities, such as frisbee throwing or kite flying, are also generally found in these parks.

Land chosen for future preserves or the expansion of existing sites should contain the previously mentioned characteristics accompanied with natural water features such as beach areas, rivers, and creeks. The majority of the site should be reserved for passive recreation, with the remaining acreage used for active recreation.

NRPA's guidelines for developing regional parks are as follows:

Service Area:	Typically serve the entire county
Acreage/Population Ratio:	10 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	Sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed. Typically a minimum of 200 acres; up to 1,000 acres.

### Typical Facilities:

Environmental Center	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Equestrian Center	Restrooms/Vending
Primitive Camping	Beach
Group Camping	Swimming
Recreational Vehicles Camping	Boating
Nature Trails	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks
Observation Deck	Parking
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Caretaker's House

**Regional Parks** are typically provided by federal, state and/or county agencies.



200 + Acres

Typical Regional Park

## District Parks and Sports Complexes

Sports complexes function as the major source of active recreation in many communities. Activities are similar to those found in community parks, but are developed to support tournament level competition. Passive recreation opportunities are usually limited, but may be found in undisturbed areas, often within surrounding buffers.

Sites for sports complexes should be relatively flat to minimize the need for excessive grading. Since most of the land will be developed for athletic fields, sites without significant vegetation or natural features are acceptable, and in some cases may be preferred. Sites should be reasonably accessible from major thoroughfares. Direct access to residential areas should be limited. Buffers should be provided adjacent to residential areas.

Listed below are NRPA's guidelines for developing sports complexes:

Service Area:	Typically serve the entire community
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.0 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	40-80 acres

### Typical Facilities:

Playground	Picnic Shelter with Grills
Basketball Courts	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Tennis Courts (lighted)	Nature Trail
Tournament Level Tennis Facilities	Benches or Bench Swings
Volleyball Courts	Restroom/Concessions
Multi-purpose Fields	Parking
Tournament Level Soccer Fields	Service Yard
Tournament Level Baseball/Softball Fields	

### Alternate Facilities:

Recreation Center	Amphitheater
Tennis Center	Observation Decks
Running Track	

Development of **district parks and sports complexes** typically falls within the responsibility of county or municipal agencies.



40-80 Acres

# Typical Sports Complex

## Community Parks

Community parks provide for the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community. A range of facilities is typically provided and may support tournament competition for athletic and league sports or passive recreation. These parks also present opportunities for nontraditional types of recreation. Fifty percent of community park sites should be developed for passive recreation. These relatively undisturbed areas may serve as buffers around the park and/or act as buffers between active facilities.

Community park sites should have varying topography and vegetation. Forested areas should have a variety of tree species. Cleared areas should be present for siting active recreational facilities. One or more natural water feature(s), such as a lake, river, or creek, are desirable. Parkland should be contiguous and strategically located in order to be accessible to all users within the neighborhoods it serves.

Listed below are NRPA's guidelines for developing community parks:

Service Area:	.5 - 3 mile radius
Acreage/Population Ratio:	3 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	30-50 acres

### Typical Facilities:

Recreation Center	Picnic Tables with Grills
Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Tennis Court (lighted)	Nature Trails
Baseball/Softball Fields (lighted)	Restroom/Concessions
Multipurpose Fields	Parking
Soccer Fields (lighted)	Playgrounds
Swimming Pool	Volleyball Courts
Amphitheater	Disc Golf
Observations Decks	Lakes
Picnic Shelters	Paddle Boat/Canoe Harbor
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks

Specialty facilities may be added to or substituted for other facilities depending on community need or special site characteristics.

Development of **community parks** may fall within the responsibility of municipality or county agencies.



Typical Community Park 30 - 50 Acres

## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks provide the basic unit of most park systems. These parks are usually located within walking distance of the area serviced and provide a variety of activities of interest to all age groups. While their small size requires intense development, fifty percent of each site should remain undisturbed, if possible, to serve as a buffer between the park and adjacent land users.

The NRPA guidelines for neighborhood park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.25 to .75 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	1.5 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	5-10 acres
Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Shelters with Grills
Court Games	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Informal Play Field	Benches or Bench Swings
Volleyball	50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped
Trails/Walkways	Parking (7-10 spaces)

**Neighborhood parks** are typically developed by municipalities.



Typical Neighborhood Park 5 - 10 Acres

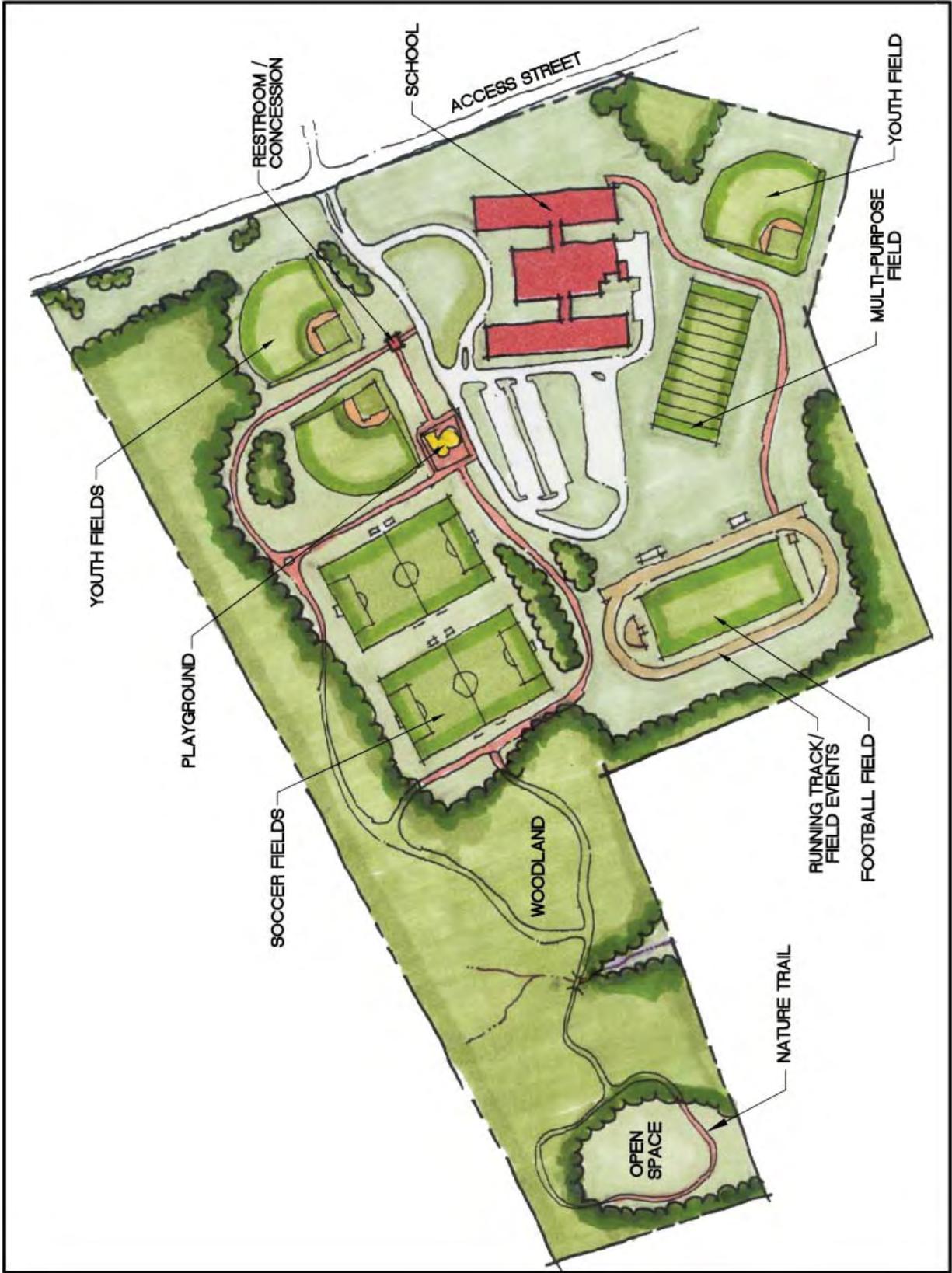
## School Parks

Joint use is a mechanism that public agencies use to maximize resources. Through joint use, both the school system and the parks and recreation department benefit from shared use of facilities and valuable land resources. School park facilities typically go beyond the simple joint use of school facilities. The parks and recreation agency will become a partner in the development of a school site and fund recreational facilities beyond those typically built with a stand-alone school. These facilities may be indoor spaces (gymnasiums, classrooms, meeting rooms, etc.) or outdoor recreation facilities (ballfields, playgrounds, picnic shelters, etc.). The cost of developing and operating these additional facilities is minimized when constructing them in partnership with school development. Savings are also found in shared infrastructure (parking, restrooms, etc.) and shared maintenance and operational cost.

The school park concept maximizes the joint use objective and provides a planned facility that maximizes public funds. The school park concept typically varies depending on the school. Elementary and middle schools provide the ideal setting for a neighborhood park, while middle and high schools follow the function of a community park or sports complex. Access to school sports facilities at high schools and middle schools can be difficult based on team sports needs. This concept only works if there is a mutually agreed upon joint use agreement to define roles, responsibilities, and use of facilities.

Service Area: Varies depending on school type and park type  
Desirable Size: Varies depending on school type and park type  
Typical Facilities: Varies depending on school type and park type

Development of **school parks** usually fall within the responsibility of municipalities, county agencies, or school districts.



± 50 Acres

# Typical School Park

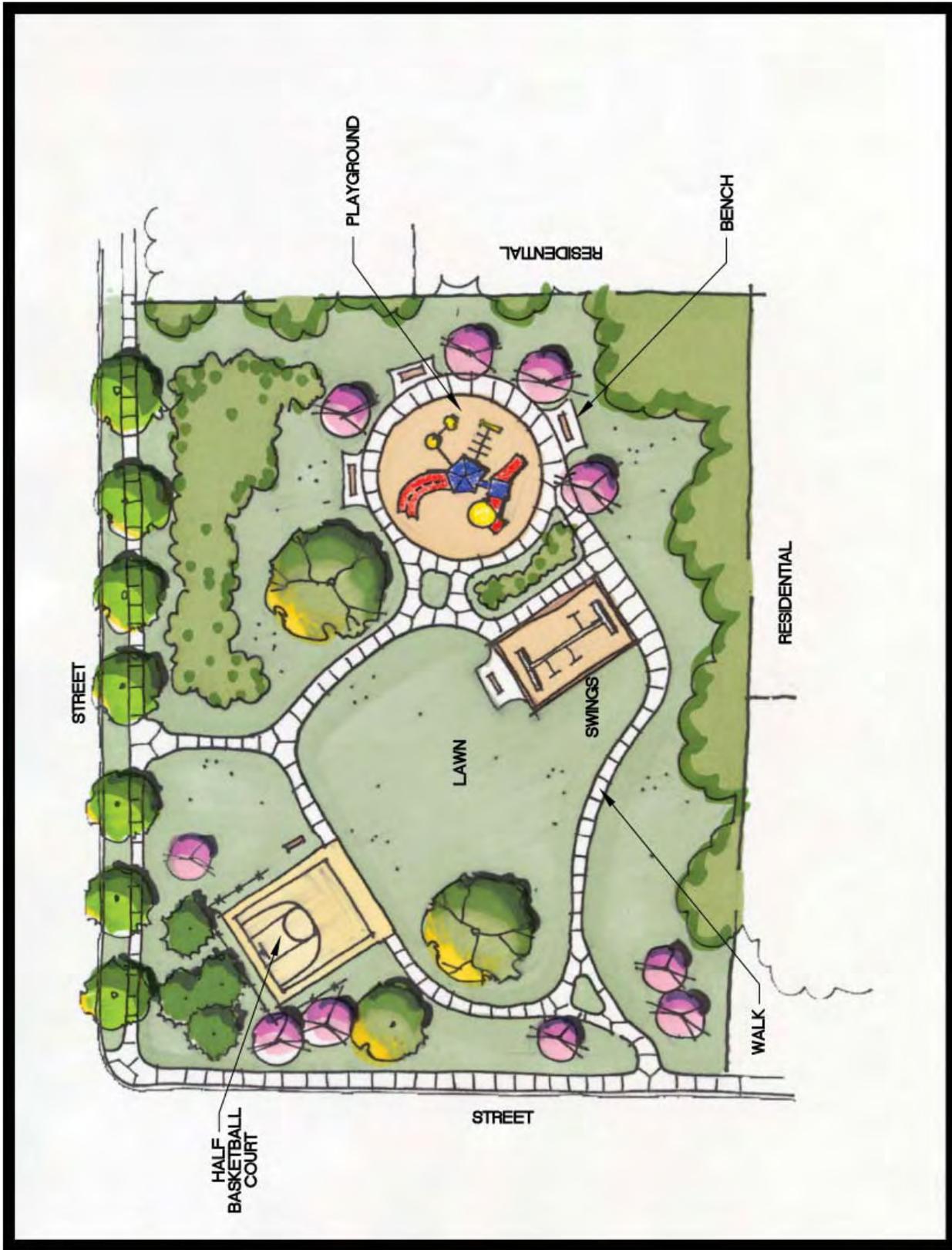
## Mini Parks

Mini parks are the smallest park classification. These parks are located within walking distance of the area serviced, and they provide limited recreational needs. The small amount of land associated with mini parks usually results in intense development with little to no buffer between the park and adjacent properties.

NRPA's guidelines for mini park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.25 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	.25 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	.25 - 1 acres
Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
½ Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Open Play Area	Landscaped Public Use Area

**Mini parks** are typically developed by municipalities.



Typical Mini Park

.25 - 1 Acres

## Greenway Trails

Greenways provide an important component of the overall park system. They:

- Serve as alternative non-motorized transportation facilities.
- Provide links between parks, schools, neighborhoods, and commercial areas.
- Emphasize harmony with the natural environment.
- Provide safe pedestrian movement.
- Provide resource based outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Enhance adjacent property values.
- Provide linear parks and open spaces.

Greenways are very similar to natural resource sites; the primary difference is the emphasis on pedestrian trails found in the greenway system.

Desirable Size: Greenways form corridors that vary considerably in length and width. A 50' width is generally considered a minimum.



*Bolin Creek Trail*

# STANDARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The first step in developing a recreation and park needs assessment is to establish standards for park and facility development. Tables 3A - Park Acreage (PA) on page 3-24 and 3A - Facilities (FAC) on page 3-26 provide an overview of standards used for both park acreage (PA) and facilities (FAC). Each of these tables provide standards used by other North Carolina municipalities in establishing park and recreation needs. These tables also include the standards that were adopted by Chapel Hill as part of their 2002 Comprehensive Plan.

A review of the standards indicates that while the standards adopted by the Town in 2002 had slight variations from other published standards, the 2002 standards had many similarities with other communities across North Carolina.

Closer review of Tables 3A - Park Acreage (PA) and 3A - Facilities (FAC) also indicates that based on staff and consultant review and input received from the public, many of the standards adopted in 2002 remain valid. However, a number of the standards have been revised in this document to more accurately reflect community demand.

## Development of Standards

Standards are useful, but imprecise tools that can be used to help a community determine its ultimate goals in park and trail development. Standards can be developed using a number of inputs including:

- Population projections
- Usage patterns from outside the core population center
- Projected changes in demographics
- Changes in usage of facilities and activities

## Standards for Park Acreage

The final column (in yellow) on Table 3A-Park Acreage (PA) identifies the standards to be used by the Town as it develops its park system. The new standards reflect minor changes in park acreage standards from those used in 2002. These changes include:

## Mini Parks

The standard for development of mini parks was reduced from .25 acres/1,000 to .1 acres/1,000. This change was made because the limited size and recreational opportunities typically found in mini parks results in inefficiencies in the delivery of recreational services for the recreational value provided. Because mini parks are expensive to build and maintain, many agencies have strategically decided to minimize their use.

Chapel Hill has two existing mini parks. These parks will remain; but in the future, the Town should not focus efforts on the development of this park type. Instead, the Town should concentrate its efforts on developing neighborhood and community parks.

## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are large enough (5-20 acres) to offer a wider variety of recreation opportunities than mini parks, and provide a more efficient delivery of recreational opportunities. With a service area up to one mile, neighborhood parks are also easily accessible; often within walking or biking distance for users.

The importance of creating strong neighborhoods was expressed in the 2020 Vision Plan Theme One. Further, the 2020 Vision Plan recommends neighborhoods should be served by neighborhood parks. With this elevated emphasis on neighborhood parks, and the understanding that several areas of the town are currently underserved (see Exhibit 1-ENP in Section One), the standards for development of neighborhood parks has been increased from 1-2 acres/1,000 to 2.5 acres/1,000

## Community Parks

Community parks are typically the “backbone” of municipal park systems. With an ideal size of 20-50 acres, these parks are large enough to provide both active and passive recreation. The Town currently has four community parks. However, one of these (Community Center Park) is extremely small by community park standards, leaving much of the eastern area of the Town underserved by this park type.

The standard for community parks has been increased from 3 acres/1,000 to 4 acres/1,000. Utilizing the 2002 standard of development for community parks will result in some areas of the Town being underserved by this park type. Raising the standard will result in highlighting the need for a community park in the eastern area of the Town.

### **District Parks and Sports Complexes**

District Parks, or Sports Complexes, are typically provided by county or municipal agencies. These parks are larger than community parks and provide more opportunities for active recreation, including team sports, tournament play, and other forms of recreation that require more land. There is a need for a district park to serve Chapel Hill residents, but the scarcity of available land make the 2002 standard for 10 acres/1,000 for district park development unlikely. The standard for development for district parks has been reduced to 2 acres/1,000. Even with this reduced acreage standards, there remains a need for a district park to serve the Town.

### **Regional Parks**

Regional parks are the largest park type. Usually they are passive in nature and often have been established to protect natural features or environmentally sensitive lands. As the name implies, these are often “drive-to” parks, and are not necessarily located in the jurisdictional areas of the people they serve. State parks often serve as a community’s regional park. The 2002 standard for regional parks was extremely high (10 acres/1,000). This standard has been reduced to 5 acres/1,000.

### **Standards for Facility Development**

Table 3A - Facilities (FAC) reflect standards of other similar size municipal agencies in North Carolina, and the standards for facility development adopted as part of the 2002 Plan. The final column (in yellow) reflects the new standards for facility development. Many of the standards have been revised based on input gathered for this planning report. The following changes have been made:

#### **Youth Baseball**

The standard for development of youth baseball facilities was reduced slightly. The new standard brings the Town’s standard closer to standards used by other similar communities.

#### **Softball**

There appears to be little demand for additional softball fields in the community. The standard for softball has been reduced to reflect this lack of demand.

#### **Football**

The popularity of soccer and lacrosse have greatly impacted the demand for football. The standards for football have been reduced to reflect this trend.

#### **Horseshoes**

The 2002 master plan had a very high standard (1 court/2,000) for developing horseshoe courts. This standard was reduced to 1 court/15,000 to more closely reflect the local demand for horseshoes.

#### **Volleyball**

The Town currently does not have a volleyball court. The 2002 standards for development (1 court/5,000) will be changed to 1 court/15,000, greatly reducing the stated need for future courts. This new standard leaves an opportunity to construct a court or courts if future demand for volleyball should increase.

#### **Shuffleboard**

The 2002 master plan had a high standard (1 court/5,000) for developing shuffleboard courts. This standard was reduced to 1 court/15,000 to more closely reflect the local demand for shuffleboard.

#### **Racquetball**

The 2002 plan included a standard for development of racquetball courts. There does not appear to be a demand for the sport from the public. Therefore, this activity has been removed from the 2012 document.

#### **Playgrounds**

Playgrounds are an important aspect of any community park system. This need was emphasized in the Town’s 2020 Plan (Theme One, A Place For Everyone). The 2002 plan proposed a very high standard (1 playground/2,000) for development. This standard would result in a need for 14 additional playgrounds. The standard for playgrounds has been reduced to 1 playground/ 3,000. This new standard results in a need for additional playgrounds, but significantly less than the old standard.

### Recreation Center with Gym

Utilizing the 2002 standard (1 gym/25,000) implies there is not a need for additional gym space. Input from the public and staff indicates there is demand for an additional gymnasium. The 2012 standard (1 gym/15,000) has been increased accordingly.

### Recreation Center Without Gym

There is a need for a recreation center with programmable space; however, the standard that was established in 2002 was extremely high (1 recreation center/10,000) and was probably based on an old national (NRPA) standard. Reducing this standard significantly (1 recreation center/20,000) still results in the need of a new recreation center, but will set the standard to more accurately reflect actual demand.

### Golf Course

The 2002 standard for golf courses was probably also based on old NRPA standards. There are public golf courses available to Chapel Hill residents. It is highly unlikely the Town would ever buy or develop a golf course.

### Disc Golf, Skateboard Parks, and Dog Parks

Disc golf, skateboard parks and dog parks are relatively new activities that public agencies now provide. Standards for these activities have been added.

See Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations for more detailed description of recreation facility needs.

## Park Needs

Table 3B-Park Acreage (PA) illustrates the park acreage requirement for the Town of Chapel Hill's Parks and Recreation Department service area. The acreage requirement is based on the population ratio method (acres of park land per 1,000 population) established for each park. The current population for the Town is approximately 47,500 and the 2020 projected population is 55,000 (see Section Two).

Based on this projected population, the Parks and Recreation Department will need to add over 175 acres of additional parkland over the planning period

(2013-2022) as outlined in Table 3B-PA Total "Park Sites and Acreage Needs Assessment" (page 3-25). During that period, the Town should develop the following additional parks:

- 4 Neighborhood Parks
- 1 Community Park
- 1 District Park

Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations defines the Town's need for new parks in greater detail.



*There is a need for additional trails like Battle Branch Trail*

## Facility Needs

Minimum standards for recreational facilities (i.e., ballfields, courts, picnic shelters, etc.) proposed for the Department were developed in accordance with industry guidelines established by NRPA, the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and from input gained during the public input process. These standards, identified in Table 3A-FAC Recreation Facility Standards, and discussed in greater detail in Section 4: Proposals and Recommendations, are the minimum recreation facility standards for the Town.

Based on these standards, the number of public facilities needed in the park system through the planning period (2013 to 2022), are identified in Table 3B-Facilities (FAC), "Current/10 Year Facility Needs" (page 3-27) and summarized on the following page:

The “Existing Facilities” column indicates the number of existing recreation facilities the Town currently provides. The “2022 Need” column identifies the total number of additional facilities needed by 2022 (ten year need). The “Current Need” column further refines the Town’s recreation facility needs by identifying the number of new facilities currently needed (this number is included in the “2022 Need” column).

Current and ten year demand is established by multiplying the standard for facility development by the current and ten year service population. Facility needs (2022 Need and Current Need columns) represent additional facilities that need to be constructed.

As an example of how the needs assessment is presented; consider playgrounds. Currently the Town has 10 existing playgrounds. Based on the Standards for Facility Development that have been recommended for the Town (one playground for every 3,000 people in the service population), there is a current demand for 16 playgrounds ( $47,500 \div 3,000 = 16$ ); therefore the Town should construct 6 additional playgrounds (demand of 16 – 10 existing playgrounds) to meet the current demand. By 2022, with the increase in population, the demand will grow to 18 playgrounds ( $55,000 \div 3,000 = 18$ ); therefore by 2022, the Town will need to build a total of 8 new playgrounds.

	Existing Facilities	Current Need	2022 Need
Adult Baseball Fields	2	-	-
Youth Baseball Fields	4	4	5
Softball Fields	2	-	-
Football Fields	1	1	1
Soccer Fields	8	8	10
Basketball Courts	8	2	3
Tennis Courts	21	3	6
Volleyball Courts	0	3	4
Shuffleboard Courts	0	3	4
Horseshoe	0	3	4
Picnic Shelters	8	11	14
Playground	10	6	8
Miles of Hiking/ Jogging Trails	11.4	5.7	8.5
Rec. Center w/Gym	3	-	1
Rec. Center w/out Gym	1	1	2
Outdoor Swimming Pool	1	1	2
Competition Pool/Indoor	3	-	-
Amphitheater	0	1	1
Disc Golf	1	1	1
Skateboard Park	1	-	-
Dog Park	2	1	2

**Table 3A-Park Acreage (PA)  
Town of Chapel Hill  
Standards for Acreage by Park Classification**

**Comparison of Standards**

<b>Park Types</b>	<b>High Point</b>	<b>Rocky Mount</b>	<b>Greenville</b>	<b>Chapel Hill Master Plan 2002</b>	<b>Chapel Hill 2013 Proposed Standards</b>
<b>Mini Parks</b>	<5 Acres/Park (.25 acres/1,000)	1-3 Acres/Park (.5 acres/1000)	1-4 Acres/Park (.25 acres/1,000)	.25 Acres/Park (.25 Acres/1,000)	1-4 Acres/Park (.1 Acres/1,000)
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	5-15 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)	10-20 Acres/Park (2.5 acres/1000)	5-15 Acres/Park (1.5 acres/1,000)	5-15 Acres/Park (1-2 acres/1,000)	5-20 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)
<b>Community Parks</b>	40-100 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)	30-50 Acres/Park (3 acres/1000)	20-75 Acres/Park (3 Acres/1,000)	25-30+ Acres/Park (3 Acres/1,000)	20-50 Acres/Park (4 Acres/1,000)
<b>District Parks</b>			+200-400 Acres/Park (8 acres/1,000)	200 Acres/Park (10 Acres/1,000)	50-100 Acres/Park (2 Acres/1,000)
<b>Regional Parks</b>	100-400 Acres/Park (20 Acres/1,000)	100-250 Acres/Park (2.5 acres/1000)	+1,000 Acres/Park (10 Acres/1,000) *	+1,000 Acres/Park (10 Acres/1,000)	Over 100 Acres/ Park (5 Acres/1,000)

**Table 3B-Park Acreage (PA)**  
**Town of Chapel Hill**  
**Park Sites and Acreage Needs Assessment**

**Current and 10 Year Needs**

<b>Park Types</b>	<b>2011 Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Chapel Hill Standards 2013</b>	<b>Current Demand *</b>	<b>Current Need*</b>	<b>2022 Demand**</b>	<b>2022 Need**</b>
<b>Mini Parks</b>	2 Parks ± 4 acres	1-4 Acres/Park (.1 Acres/1,000)	3 Parks 4.75 Acres	Needs Met	3 Parks 5.5 Acres	Needs Met
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	7 Parks 100 Acres	5-20 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)	± 10 Parks 118.75 Acres	3 Parks 20 Acres	11 Parks 137.5 Acres	4 Parks 39.5 Acres
<b>Community Parks</b>	4 Parks 194.7 Acres	20-50 Acres/Park (4 Acres/1,000)	±4 Parks 190 Acres	Needs Met	5 Parks 222 Acres	1 Park 27.3 Acres
<b>District Parks</b>	Town/County Partnership	50-100 Acres/Park (2.0 Acres/1,000)	1 Park 95 Acres	1 Park 95 Acres	1 Park 110 Acres	1 Park 110 Acres
<b>Regional Parks</b>	By State Parks	Over 100 Acres/ Park (10 Acres/1,000)	1 Park 475 Acres	Needs Met By State Parks	1 Park 550 Acres	Needs Met By State Parks

\*Current demand and need based on a service population of 47,500.

\*\* 2022 demand and need based on a projected service population of 55,000.

**Current Demand** is derived by applying the standard for acreage by park classification (Table 3A-Park Acreage) to the Town's current population.

**Current Need** is the difference between the current demand for park acreage in each classification and the existing parks the Town currently offers.

**2022 Demand** is derived by applying the standards for acreage by park classification (Table 3A-Park Acreage) to the Town's 2022 projected population (55,000).

**2022 Need** is the difference between the Town's existing parks and the 2022 Demand.

Current Need increases to 2022 Need. The current park acreage need and the 2022 need are not added together. For example, currently there is a need for three additional neighborhood parks. By 2022 the need will increase by one additional park. Between 2013 and 2022, the Town will need to build four neighborhood parks.

**Table 3A - Facilities (FAC)  
Town of Chapel Hill  
Recreation Facilities Standards**

**Comparison of Standards**

	NRPA Guidelines	State Standard	High Point	Rocky Mount	Greenville	Chapel Hill 2002	Chapel Hill 2013 Standards
<b>Fields</b>							
Adult Baseball	1/20,000	1/15,000	1/15,000	1/12,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000
Youth Baseball	N/A	N/A	1/6,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/4,000	1/6,000
Softball	N/A	N/A	1/6,000	1/5,000	1/6,500	1/4,000	1/20,000
Football	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/3,000	1/30,000
Soccer	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/4,000	1/6,000	1/3,000	1/3,000
<b>Courts</b>							
Basketball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Tennis	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/2,500	1/2,000	1/2,000
Volleyball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/15,000
Shuffleboard	1/2,000	N/A	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/15,000
Racquetball	1/10,000	N/A				1/10,000	N/A
Horseshoe	1/5,000	N/A	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/2,000	1/15,000
<b>Outdoor Areas</b>							
Picnic Shelter	1/2,000	N/A	1/3,000	1/3,000	1/3,000	1/2,500	1/2,500
Playground Activities*	N/A	1/1,000	1/3,000*	1/2,500	1/1,000	1/2,000	1/3,000
<b>Trails</b>							
Hiking/Fitness/Jogging	1/region	.4 mile/1,000	.4 mile/1,000	1 mile/5,000	.25/1,000	.3 mile/1,000	.4 mile/1,000
<b>Specialized</b>							
Rec. Center w/Gym	1/25,000	N/A			1/17,000	1/25,000	1/15,000
Rec. Center w/out Gym	1/10,000	N/A			1/20,000	1/10,000	1/20,000
Outdoor Pool	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/30,000	1/20,000	1/30,000	1/10,000	1/20,000
Indoor Pool	1/50,000	N/A			1/75,000	1/50,000	1/25,000
Gymnasium	1/20,000	N/A				1/20,000	1/25,000
Golf Course	1/25,000	1/25,000	1/50,000	1/50,000	1/Community	1/25,000	1/50,000
Bicycling/Urban	1 mile/2,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/2,000	1 mile/2,000	1 mile/2,000
Amphitheatre	1/20,000	N/A			1/60,000	1/20,000	1/20,000
Auditoriums	1/20,000					1/20,000	1/20,000
Disc Golf	N/A	N/A			1/35,000		1/25,000
Skateboard Park	N/A	N/A			1/Community		1/50,000
Dog Park	N/A	N/A			1/30,000		1/12,000

**Table 3B-Facilities (FAC)**  
**Town of Chapel Hill**  
**Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment**

**Current and 10 Year Needs**

	Chapel Hill 2002	Existing Facilities	2013 Proposed Standards	Current Demand*	Current Need*	2022 Demand**	2022 Need**
<b>Fields</b>							
Adult Baseball	1/20,000	2	1/20,000	2	-	2	-
Youth Baseball	1/4,000	4	1/6,000	8	4	9	5
Softball	1/4,000	2	1/20,000	2	-	2	-
Football	1/3,000	1	1/30,000	1	-	1	-
Soccer	1/3,000	8	1/3,000	16	8	18	10
<b>Courts</b>							
Basketball	1/5,000	8	1/5,000	10	2	11	3
Tennis	1/2,000	21	1/2,000	24	3	27	6
Volleyball	1/5,000	0	1/15,000	3	3	4	4
Shuffleboard	1/5,000	0	1/15,000	3	3	4	4
Racquetball	1/10,000	0	N/A	-	-	-	-
Horseshoe	1/2,000	0	1/15,000	3	3	4	4
<b>Outdoor Areas</b>							
Picnic Shelter	1/2,500	8	1/2,500	19	11	22	14
Playground Activities	1/2,000	10	1/3,000	16	6	18	8
<b>Trails</b>							
Hiking/Fitness/Jogging	.3 mile/1,000	11.4	.36 miles/1,000	17.1	5.7	19.8	10.6
<b>Specialized</b>							
Gymnasium	1/25,000	3	1/15,000	3	-	4	1
Rec. Center w/out Gym	1/10,000	1	1/20,000	2	1	3	2
Outdoor Pool	1/10,000	1	1/25,000	2	1	2	1
Indoor Pool	1/50,000	2	1/25,000	2	-	2	-
Golf Course	1/25,000	-	N/A	-	-	-	-
Bicycling/Urban	1 mile/2,000		1 mile/2,000	22 miles	-	-	-
Amphitheatre	1/20,000	1	1/20,000	2	1	2	1
Auditoriums	1/20,000	1	1/20,000	2	1	2	1
Disc Golf	-	1	1/25,000	2	1	2	1
Skateboard Park		1	1/50,000	1	-	1	-
Dog Park		2	1/15,000	3	1	4	2

\*Current demand and need based on a service population of 47,500.

\*\* 2022 demand and need based on a projected service population of 55,000.

**Current Demand** is derived by applying the Standards for Facility Development (Table 3A-Facilities) to the Town's current population.

**Current Need** is the difference between the current demand and existing facilities.

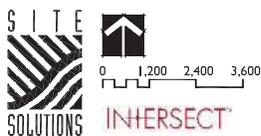
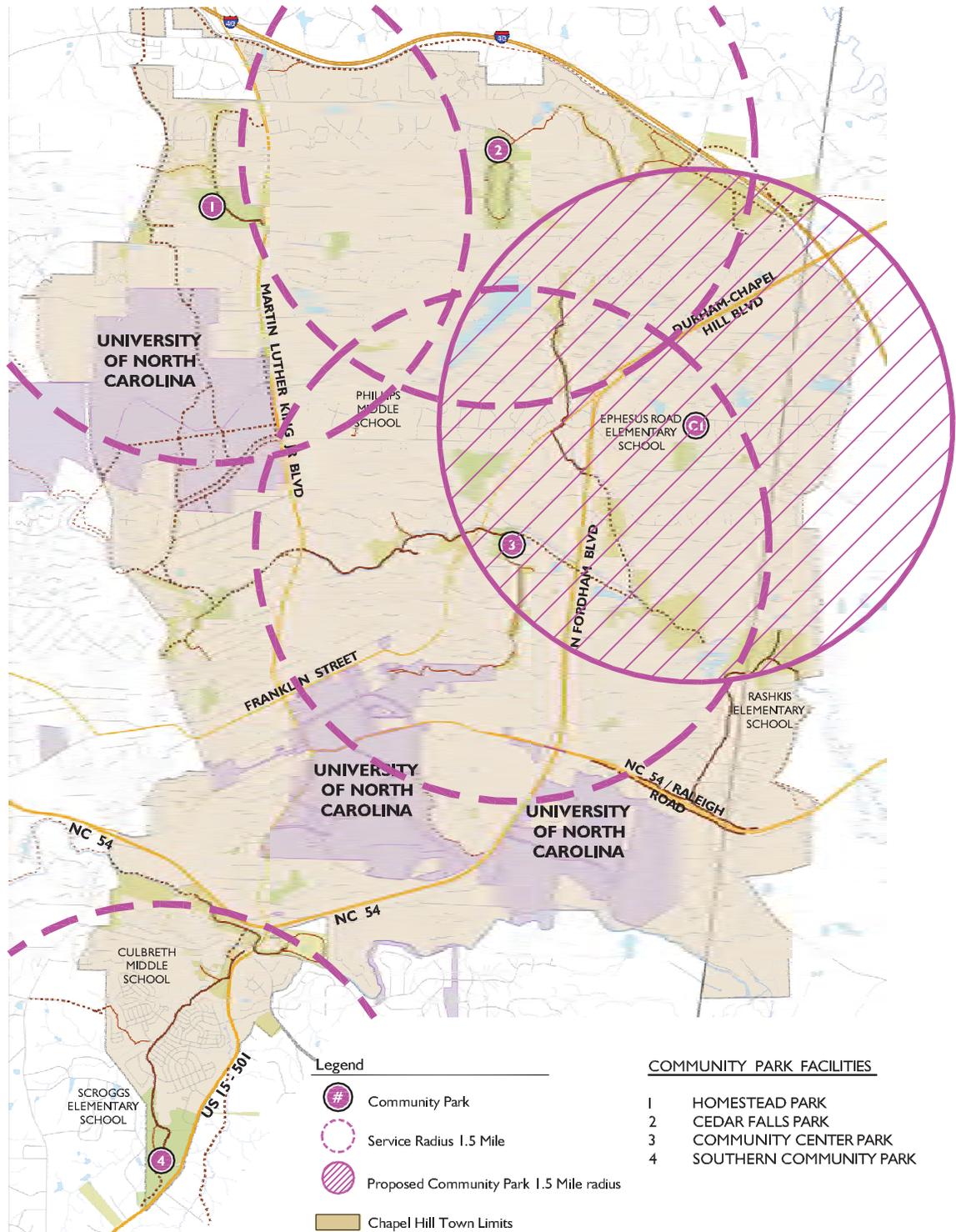
**2022 Demand** is derived by applying the Standards for Facility Development (Table 3A-Facilities) to the Town's 2022 projected population (55,000).

**2022 Need** is the difference between existing facilities and 2022 demand.

Current need increases to 2022 need. The current need and 2022 need are not added together. For example, there is a current need for six additional playgrounds. That need increase to eight additional playgrounds by 2022.



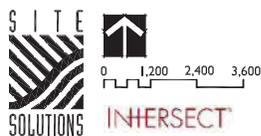
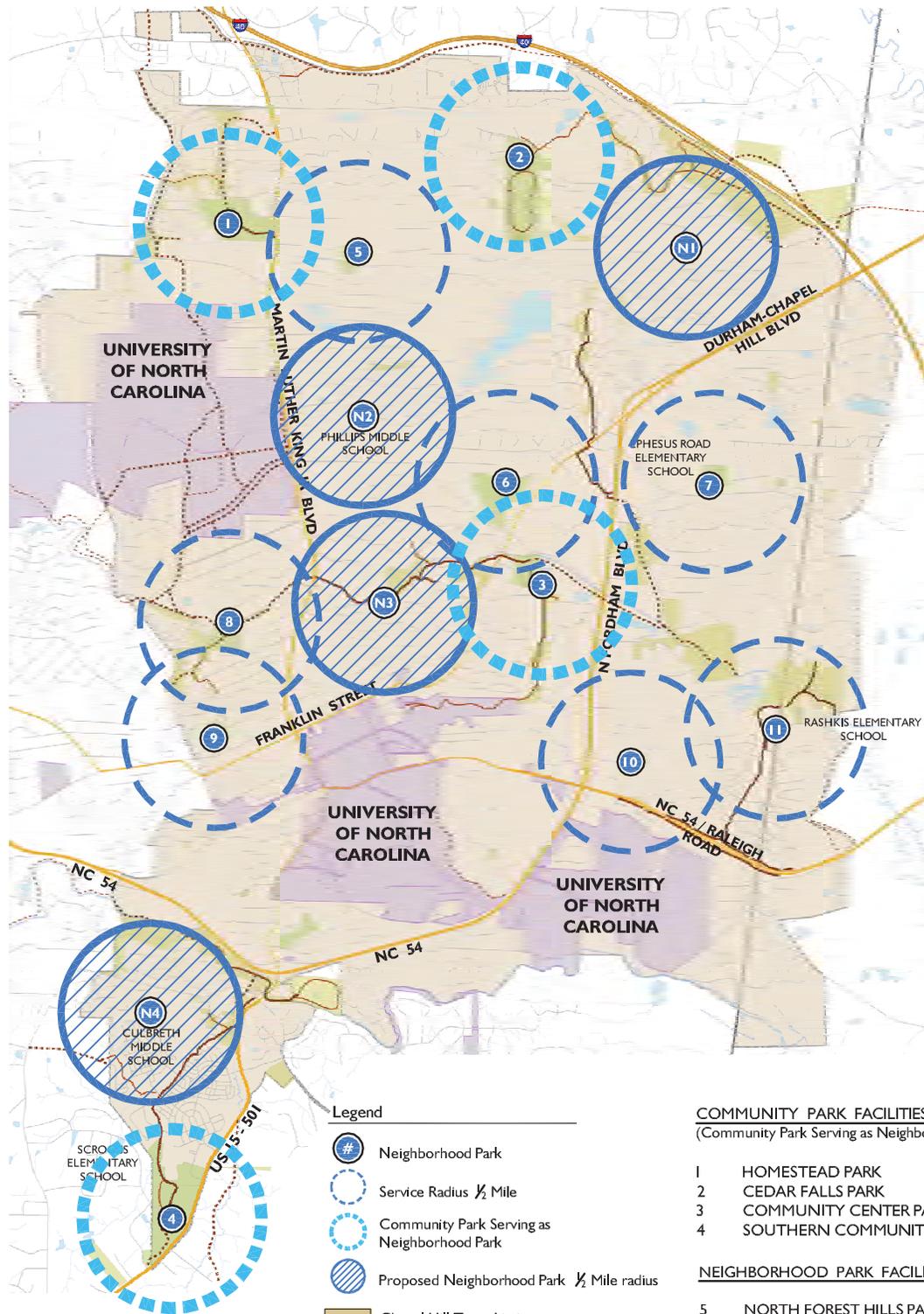
Town of Chapel Hill  
Parks and Recreation Department  
**Parks and Recreation Master Plan**



**Exhibit 3-PCP**  
**Proposed**  
**Community Parks**



Town of Chapel Hill  
Parks and Recreation Department  
**Parks and Recreation Master Plan**



**Exhibit 3-PNP**  
**Proposed**  
**Neighborhood Parks**