

# V. EXISTING & FUTURE RECREATION LAND USES

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### INTRODUCTION

Many different variables influence park and recreation needs, causing quantifying those needs to be a difficult task. Participation patterns and community values vary greatly from one city to another. A problem that arises with determining need is that there is a danger in overstating demand, leading to underutilization of facilities, or conversely the underestimating of needs, resulting in overused facilities and a general lack of parkland and open space. Some approaches to estimating needs include the use of national standards, measurement of participation levels, input from public meetings, and goal setting, all of which were used in this Master Plan.

## DEFINITIONS OF PARK TYPES

The classification of park types can aid both in planning and design decisions and in land acquisition. Park classifications are typically determined by characteristics such as size, service area, typical facilities offered, and distribution within the community. Standards and guidelines drawn from The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) were used to determine the following park type classifications and descriptions.

### MINI PARK

The Mini Park is the smallest park classification, usually comprising only one acre or less\* of land. It should be considered an alternative when providing a typical neighborhood park is impractical or when open space is limited, such as in a densely populated urban neighborhood. When located in residential areas, mini parks can include tot lots and playground areas, picnic tables, and benches. When located in urban or commercial environments,

mini parks are often used for more passive purposes, such as plazas, venues for public art, or memorials. Elements of the mini park should meet the needs of the immediate neighboring uses, whether commercial or residential. The service area is usually a ¼ mile or less. \*

### NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Neighborhood parks serve the specific needs of the surrounding neighborhood and are typically the recreational focus of these neighborhoods, providing activities for families within walking distance of their home. These parks tend to be 5 to 10 acres\* in size, depending on facilities provided. Common facilities include play structures, picnic areas, shelters, sports courts or lawns, pavilions, tennis courts, and volleyball courts, as well as elements often included in mini parks. Many neighborhood parks also often provide public restrooms. Playgrounds, trails and useable open spaces are among the most important elements commonly provided.

\* National Recreation and Parks Association Standards

The typical service area for a neighborhood park is a half-mile radius\*, and they are typically connected to residential areas through trails, sidewalks, bikeways, and greenways. The general standard for determining demand for Neighborhood Park land is .25 acres per every 100 people. \* A centrally located, highly visible site for the park is desirable to promote use, stewardship, and safety. Parking is optional, but not usually necessary, and can lead to problems with overuse, noise, and street congestion.

#### COMMUNITY PARK

Community parks serve a broader range of citizens and provide for more uses and facilities than do neighborhood or mini parks. The focus is to meet recreational needs of the greater community, as well as preserve some of the area's natural resources. These parks tend to be larger than 15 acres, and are typically between 30 and 50 acres\* in size. When designating land for Community Parks, the standard to

use is .25 acres per 100 people. \* In a small town, the service range of these parks can reach a significant amount of the city's population. Due to the larger size of these parks, they should strive to meet both the active and passive needs of the community, incorporating many varied uses. Community parks typically include play areas, sport fields, equipment and maintenance storage areas, picnicking facilities such as tables, grills and shelters, and public restrooms. These parks can also include concession stands, other sports facilities such as tennis or BMX, community centers, amphitheaters, and large community pools. Community parks are also often a great setting for nature trails and general natural open space areas.

Connection of community parks to the surrounding area is very important, and whenever possible jogging trails and walking paths within the park should connect to a greater greenway system. Community parks usually serve an area within a half to 3-mile radius\*, and citizens should be able to drive, bike,

\* National Recreation and Parks Association Standards

or walk from nearby neighborhoods, schools, or other civic areas. Therefore, it is important to have good public access from streets, greenways, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

#### REGIONAL PARK

Regional parks address a broader base of recreational needs in addition to those covered by smaller parks. These parks are large, covering 100 to 200 acres or more, and draw visitors from longer distances with activities such as boating, hiking, camping, fishing, golfing, and competitive sports. The increased size allows development of both passive and active recreation at a large scale, and sizeable areas of undeveloped land with natural vegetation and water features should be included. Establishment of these parks often requires a partnership between the city, landowners and neighboring jurisdictions, and can necessitate substantial funding sources. Public input and good coordination between landowners and city officials are also crucial to the success of the park. A regional park would reach beyond the

limits of the City of Lakeland and serve many of the surrounding communities as well. Most regional parks are provided by large municipalities or are state and federally owned.

#### ATHLETIC COMPLEX

Athletic complexes seek to concentrate sports fields onto fewer sites within the community. The centralization of athletic fields of common uses encourages tournament play, which can serve to boost the local economy. These parks often incorporate heavily programmed facilities for sport and league play such as softball, baseball and soccer. Good planning is essential to the success of these parks, ensuring proper traffic circulation, adequate parking, and buffering and mitigation of noise and lighting from the complex to neighboring uses. The development of athletic complexes allows the community to focus the heavier maintenance responsibility to one location and at the same time allow their community park system to develop in a more passive nature.

### SPECIAL USE PARK

Special use parks serve a wide variety of functions and therefore can be a varying range of sizes. Examples of special use parks include parks devoted to a particular sport or other recreational activity, festival sites, water parks, performing art venues, nature parks or wildlife refuges, farmers' markets, dog parks, BMX parks, skate parks, and many other uses. These can be established to create revenue for the city or simply to fill a need for a specific recreational activity. Many special use parks like farmers' markets and performing arts venues can stand alone, while others such as water parks or skate parks are easily incorporated into community parks.

### GREENWAY

Greenways are interconnected swaths of land set aside for recreational use or the preservation of natural resources such as forests, wetlands, rivers and streams, and wildlife habitats. They often include the land around these natural features to ensure a buffer between the resource and

adjacent uses. Greenways can function as a linear park connecting two points and providing connectivity between parks, neighborhoods, schools, and other points of interest. Greenways can include land that is ecologically, historically, or culturally significant, and often work well in conjunction with an interpretive educational system. These lands serve both to preserve land and create a great opportunity for passive recreation. The development of interpretive facilities, environmental centers, and nature trails is a great way to involve and educate the community and increase use. The incorporation of greenways in the overall park master plan for a city can serve to wrap the community with green space, creating both aesthetic and natural value.

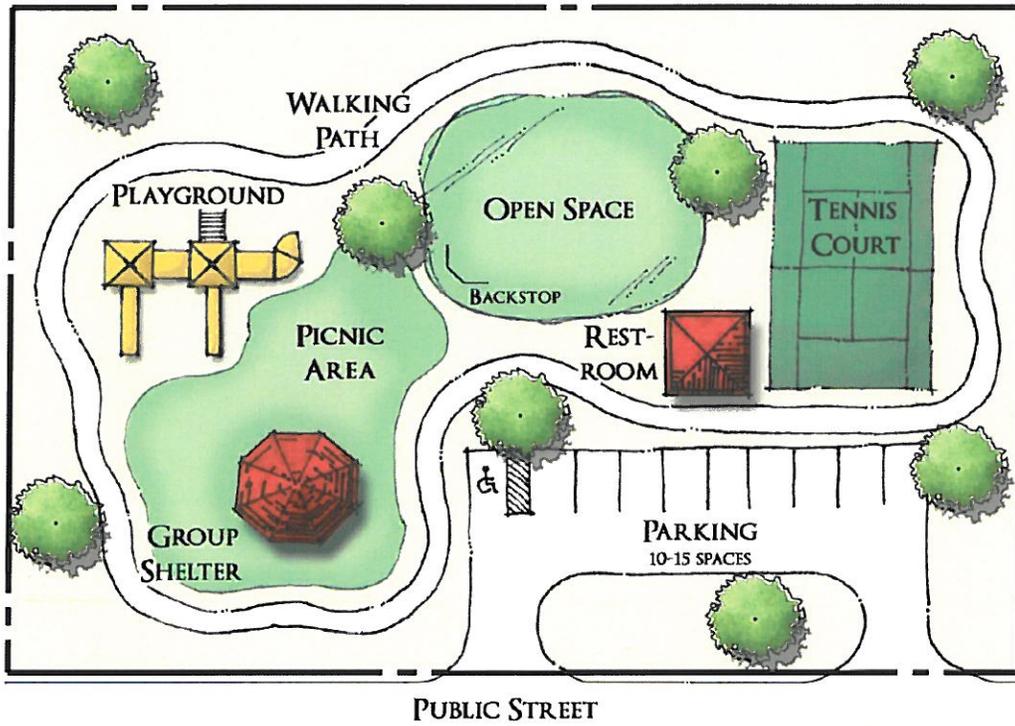
The City of Lakeland has attained and upheld "Tree City USA" recognition for four years, and received the Tree City USA Growth Award from The Arbor Day Foundation in recognition of environmental improvement and higher

levels of tree care. The City's Tree Board plays an essential role in the stewardship and preservation of important trees and forests within the community and its greenways.

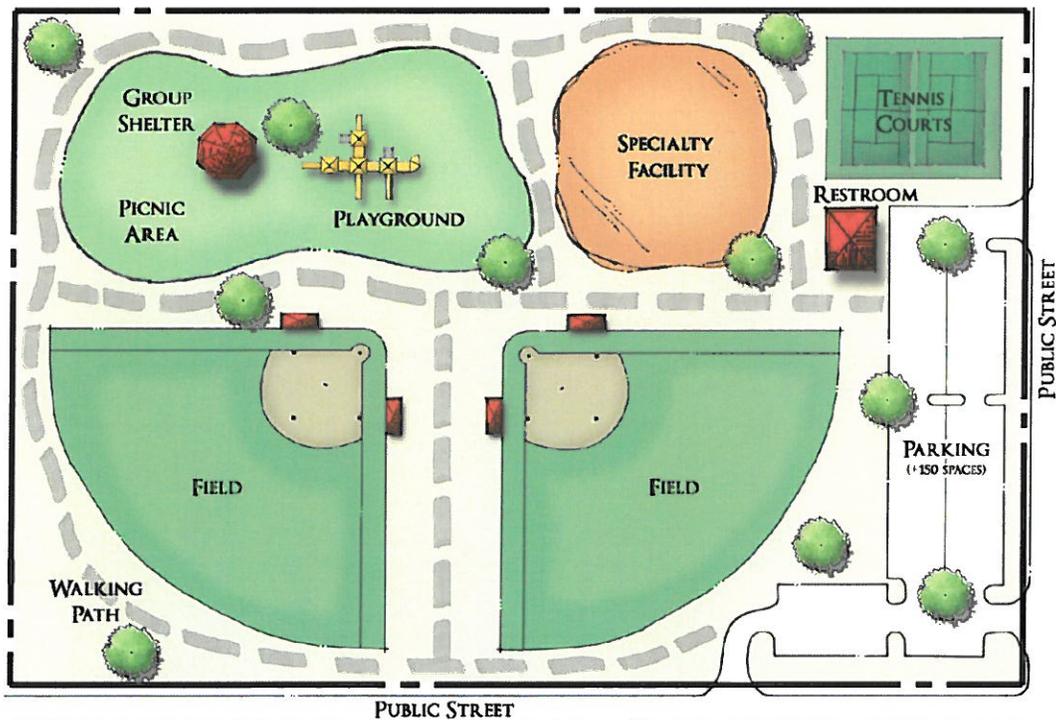
TABLE 1: PARK CLASSIFICATIONS & CHARACTERISTICS				
PARK TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	FEATURES	TYP. SIZE	SERVICE AREA
<b>Mini Park</b>	Small public spaces in special or limited sites; can be plazas, memorials, gardens, places for public art, etc.	Tot lots and playground areas, picnic tables, benches	1 Acre or less	Less than 1/4-mile radius
<b>Neighbor-hood Park</b>	Focused on needs of surrounding neighborhood; often includes open space and trails; is recreational centerpiece to development; offers activities close to home	Play structures, picnic areas, shelters, sports courts or lawns, pavilions, tennis courts, volleyball courts, restrooms	5 to 10 Acres	A neighborhood; 1/4 to 1/2-mile radius
<b>Community Park</b>	Focused on recreational needs of greater community as well as preservation of some of the area's natural resources; can serve entire city or area of city	Play areas, trails and walking paths, sport fields, equipment and maintenance storage areas, picnicking facilities such as tables, grills and shelters, public restrooms, concession stands, other sports facilities such as tennis or BMX, community centers, amphitheaters, large community pools	30 to 50 Acres	2 or more neighborhoods; 1/2 to 3-mile radius
<b>Regional Park</b>	Allows development of both passive and active recreation at a large scale; allows for sizeable areas of undeveloped land; serves beyond the extent of the city's limits	Boating, hiking, camping, fishing, golfing, competitive sports, in addition to features listed for smaller parks	100-200 Acres	Several communities; 1 hour driving time
<b>Athletic Complex</b>	Centralized fields of common uses; heavily programmed facilities; often operates at regional scale	Any sport requiring several fields for tournament play, such as baseball, softball, and soccer	Variable	Variable
<b>Special Use Park</b>	Created to meet a specific recreational need of the community	A particular sport or other recreational activity, festival site, water park, performing art venue, nature park or wildlife refuge, farmer's market, BMX or skate park, many other possible uses	Variable	Variable
<b>Greenway</b>	Swaths of land set aside for recreational use or the preservation of natural resources; serves to connect points of interest within a park system	Natural resources such as forests, wetlands, rivers and streams, and wildlife habitats; nature and walking trails; interpretive facilities and environmental centers	Variable	Variable

Source: National Recreation and Parks Association Standards

CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS

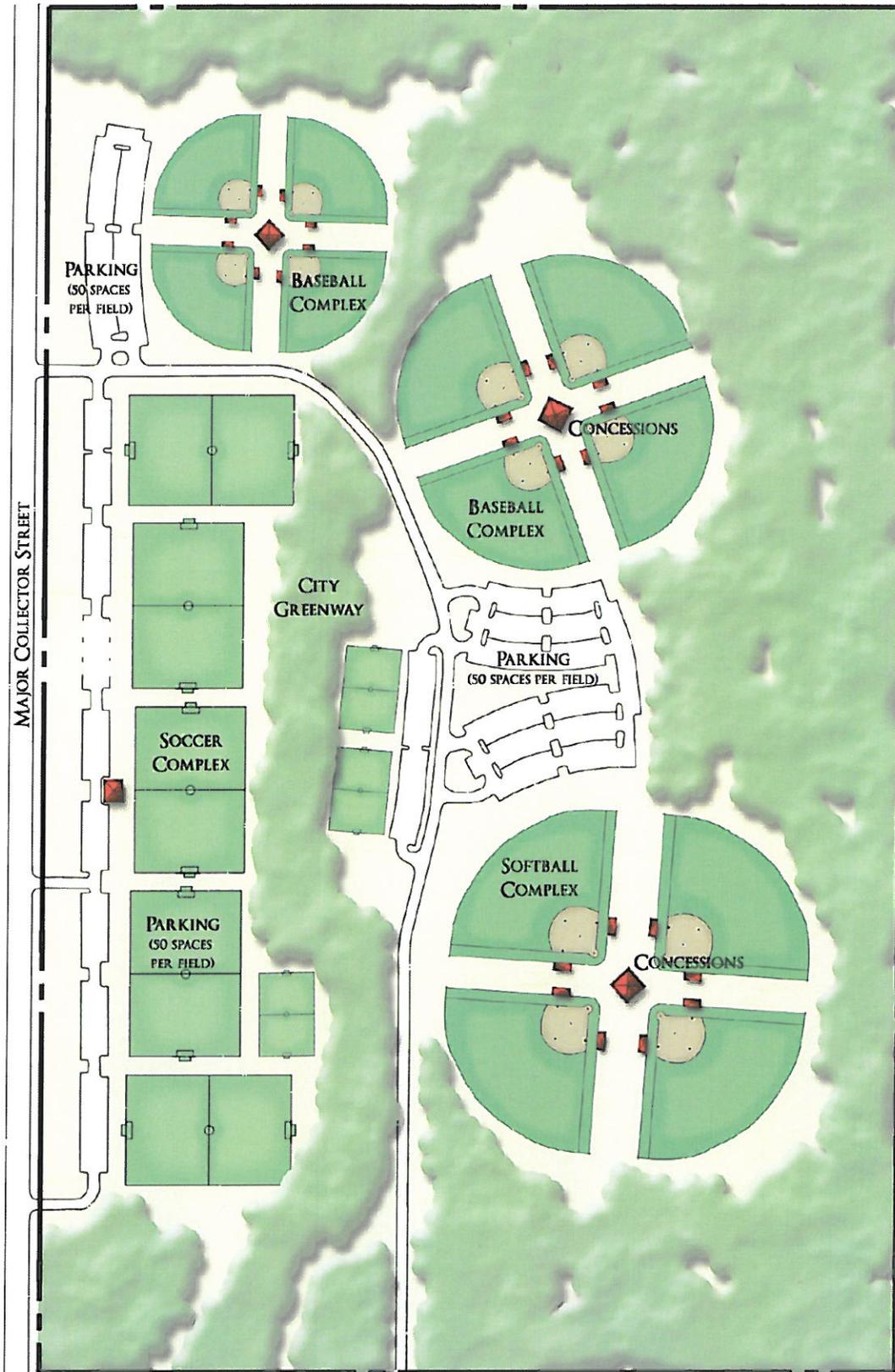


NEIGHBORHOOD PARK  
5-10 ACRES



COMMUNITY PARK  
30-50 ACRES

CONCEPTUAL SITE PLANS



ATHLETIC COMPLEX

## CLASSIFICATION OF LAKELAND'S EXISTING CITY PARKS

Of the City of Lakeland's six public parks, most of them fall into the classification of a neighborhood park. The exceptions to this are I.H. Park, which has been classified by this study as a special use park that is primarily a nature reserve, and Plantation Hills Park, which is too small to be considered a neighborhood park and is therefore classified as a mini park with a ¼-mile service area. City Hall Park, El Hill Park, Oak Ridge Park, Windward Slopes, and Zadie E. Kuehl Park are all classified as neighborhood parks, with a service area of a ½-mile.

As stated above, the Lakeland Park System consists primarily of Neighborhood Parks. This is clearly indicated in the Land Demand and Land Need Projections in Tables 5 and 6. Lakeland has sufficient Neighborhood Park Land through 2009. However, it will begin to have a negative result over the next five years, if no additional neighborhood parkland is acquired. With the city's present Park Land

Dedication Regulation, future acquisition of Neighborhood Park Land to sustain this supply should not be a problem.

The Community Park Land needs are much the opposite. The city presently does not have any property that can be defined as a Community Park, leaving a large need in the city's park system. Again, this is clearly indicated in Tables 5 and 6. The Land Need Projections (Table 6) show the need for 32 acres of Community Park Land at present and a need over the next 10 years of 52 acres. As stated in the definition section of the study, a Community Park should contain between 30 to 50 acres. Basically, one Community Park will serve the needs of the city for the next 10 years. The need for this type of park was also echoed at the Citizens Focus Group Session and ranked among the highest type of facilities needed. The size of this park could exceed 50 acres, if the city decided to incorporate all of the City's athletic field needs all within one park. Based upon the results shown in

the Facility Need Projections (Table 9), one Community Park incorporating the Athletic Field needs could easily need to be more in the 75 to 100-acre range, depending upon the land configuration and restraints.

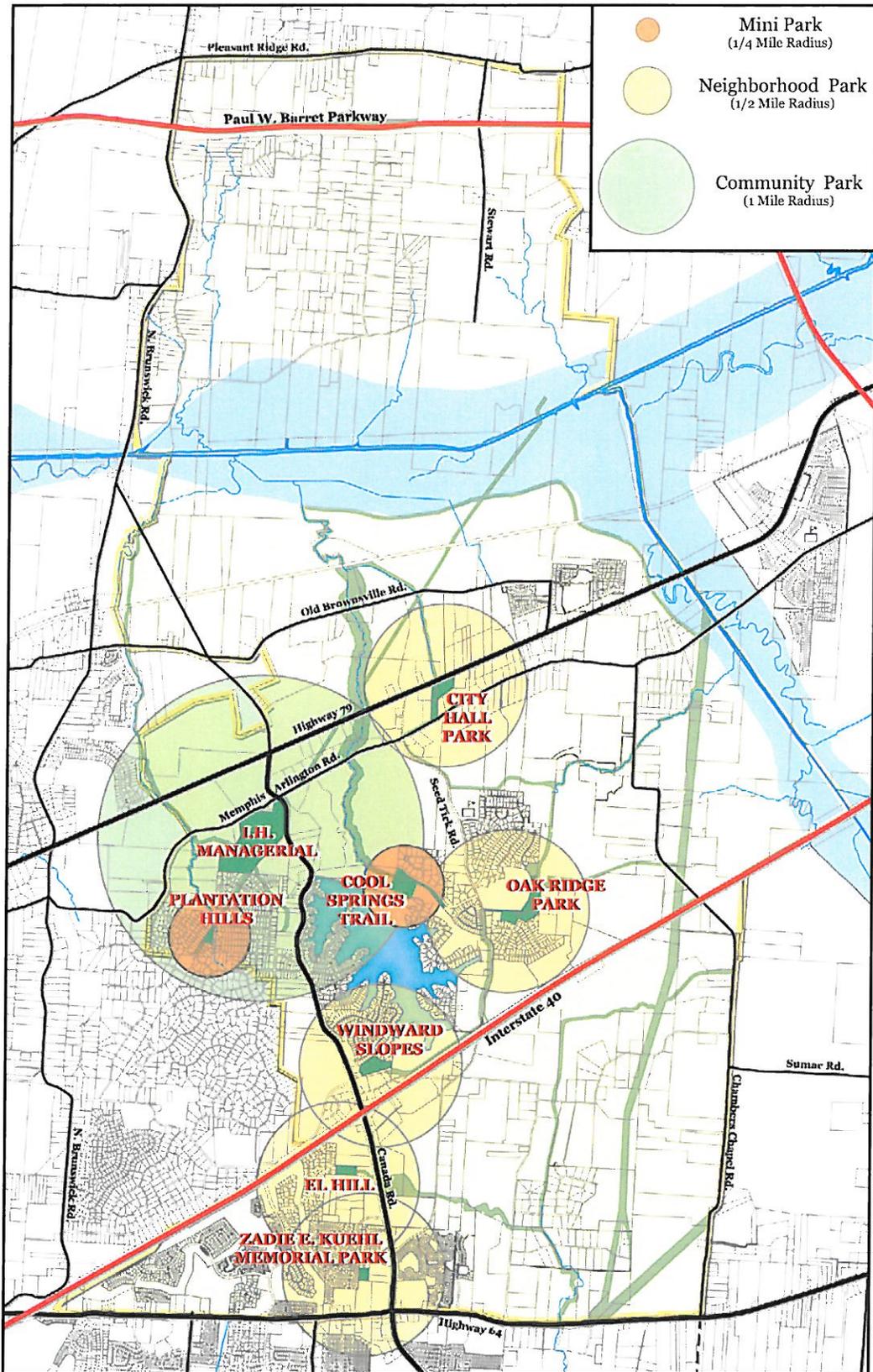
The city's Existing Park and Proposed Park Service Areas have been indicated in Exhibit III. The locations of the proposed neighborhood parks were originally identified in the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update and were re-examined and found to be favorably located. The proposed Neighborhood Park service areas are shown at 1/2-mile radius.

Two possible Community Park locations are indicated with one in the southeastern portion of the city and the other in the middle-eastern portion of the city. Even though one Community Park can serve the city's needs for the next 10 years, two smaller parks may be desirable, one on either side of the interstate. These locations form a triangular serves area coverage using IH Managerial Park as part of the Community Park system. The

passive facilities at IH Managerial Park do serve the city need for a Community Park facility. The Community Park on the north side of the interstate could be combined with an athletic complex facility. An athletic complex is recommended in this general area for several major reasons. The location is in close proximity to the interstate and a future interchange, and is in a location that will be as conducive as possible to the city's dark sky regulations.

EXHIBIT II:

EXISTING CITY-OWNED PARKS SERVICE AREAS





POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The City of Lakeland provided population projections made by Dugan Design Group in 2005 while preparing an update of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The Dugan Design Group projected a population change of 9.08% between 2009 and 2010 and 27.62% from 2010 to 2015 and 2015 to 2020. These percentages of change were then used with the most current available data to determine the estimated 2009 population and new 5 and 10-year population

projections. The percentage of change in a year was doubled to 18.17% to estimate the two-year change from 2007 to 2009. The base data for the projections was gathered from the 2007 Special Census, provided by the City of Lakeland. It is assumed that this has or will be verified by the TN Department of Economic and Community Development.

The results of the population projections are as follows:

TABLE 3: LAKELAND POPULATION ESTIMATES & PROJECTIONS			
YEAR	TYPE	POPULATION	% CHANGE
2007	Census	10,848	-
2009	Estimated	12,819	18.17%
2014	Projected	16,360	27.62%
2019	Projected	20,880	27.62%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, City of Lakeland Planning Department, Dugan Design Group, Lakeland Comprehensive Plan Update, 2006.

TABLE 4: LAKELAND LAND STANDARDS		
PARK TYPE	UNIT	STANDARD
Neighborhood Park	Acre	.25 per 100 *
Community Park	Acre	.25 per 100 *

\* National Recreation and Park Association

TABLE 5: LAKELAND LAND DEMANDS				
PARK TYPE	PROJECTION YEAR	POPULATION	STANDARD	DEMAND (IN ACRES)
Neighborhood Park	2009	12,819	.25 acres per 100	32
	2014	16,360		41
	2019	20,880		52
Community Park	2009	12,819	.25 acres per 100	32
	2014	16,360		41
	2019	20,880		52

TABLE 6: LAKELAND LAND NEED PROJECTIONS				
PARK TYPE	PROJECTION YEAR	SUPPLY	DEMAND	RESULTANT
Neighborhood Park (.25 AC. per 100 people) *	2009	33	32	1
	2014		41	-8
	2019		52	-19
Community Park (.25 AC. per 100 people) *	2009	0	32	-32
	2014		41	-41
	2019		52	-52

\* National Recreation and Park Association

LAND ACQUISITION

Information gathered from the Memphis Area Association of Realtors and other local realtors was used to determine estimated cost of raw land per acre. While prices vary greatly depending on many factors such as location, availability of utilities, floodplain issues, etc., the average cost

of raw land in Lakeland was determined to be around \$20,000 per acre. It should be noted, however, that the time in which this study was written was not normal economic conditions. The figures in Table 10 represent actual listings on the market at the time of the study, which indicate an average listing of \$36,000 per acre.

TABLE 10: LAKELAND 2008 COST OF RAW LAND			
LISTING	SIZE	TOTAL COST	COST PER ACRE
1	43.18 Acres	\$1,000,000	\$23,159
2	21 Acres	\$550,000	\$26,190
3	13.18 Acres	\$350,000	\$26,555
4	16.33 Acres	\$759,000	\$46,479
5	26.49 Acres	\$1,600,000	\$60,400
Source: Memphis Area Association of Realtors		<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$36,557</b>