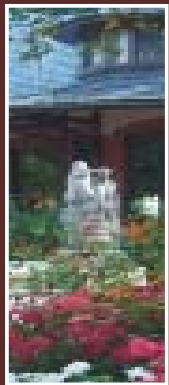
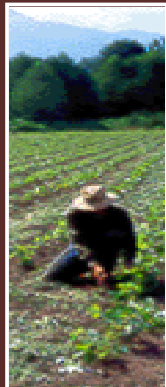


## FINAL REPORT



## RECREATION & PARKS COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN (Through the Year 2020)



**NORTH CAROLINA**  
January 2007

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

It has been more than 35 years since Alamance County truly updated its 1971 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Many changes have occurred over that time in terms of expanded development and increased population. This new development has created more demand for public services such as schools, sewer, water, and roads—along with recreational opportunities. Demand for recreational opportunities has increased throughout the State of North Carolina; dramatically changing the role of county and municipal governments as providers of recreational services. In 2005, there were 219 recognized county, city, or joint county/city recreation departments in North Carolina. Whereas in 1999, there were 209; in 1991, there were 187; and in 1978, 142 departments. The increase in the number of recreation departments is directly attributed to new development and population growth.

**Planning for recreational services and open space is as significant for a community as planning for transportation systems, utilities, and education.** Continued urbanization of Alamance County will make it very difficult to find affordable large parcels for new parks and the preservation of open space.

The importance of recreation as a part of our everyday lives has never been more critical to the development of our society. National trends indicate that expectations and demands for diverse and quality recreation services will only increase as our population expands.

This document summarizes the major findings and recommendations of the Alamance County Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan (Master Plan). The main purpose of this document is to provide the County with an accurate, usable plan to guide its actions and decisions concerning park and recreation facility development through the year 2020.

## Master Plan Purpose and Process

### Why is a Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan Needed?

Alamance County Recreation and Parks Department (ACRPD), became the first “County offered” park and recreation provider in North Carolina in 1971. A Master Plan was completed that year and no other official plan has been performed since.

In 2002, the *Alamance County Destination 2020 Strategic Plan* described efforts by the county to fund a park and recreation master plan. The 2020 study discussed the need for the plan and some important benefits of having a plan in place. Three identified benefits listed in the plan are as follows:

- A needs assessment is performed and locations are determined for future parks, programs and facilities.
- Identifying recreation areas in advance allows the County to use the plan to confirm whether possible land offerings or dedications are located properly.
- Preparing a plan allows for the County to more readily secure grant monies in support of parks.

Recognizing the need for an updated plan the County looked to start the process. They could not fund the plan in 2002 or 2003 due to budget restraints caused by a state government budget crisis. Funding was made available for the plan in 2004/05 through joint efforts of Alamance County and the Conventions and Visitors Bureau and a request for proposals was issued.

Other reasons a parks and recreation facilities plan is needed:

- To assure maximum benefit for each dollar spent for facilities
- To avoid duplication and overlapping of services, use areas, and facilities

- To expedite action on development of park facilities when funding is available
- To serve as a guide for acquiring sites for parks, greenways, and open space areas
- To attract economic development and smart growth development into the community
- To assist and guide county officials and planners with future decisions concerning recreation facilities

## Master Plan Purpose & Process

The objective of the planning process is to provide Alamance County and the Burlington-Alamance County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) with an accurate, usable plan to guide its action and decisions concerning the park system, and identify challenges and opportunities that exist with developing a tourism action plan.

The planning process emphasizes recreation facility needs through the planning period (year 2020). ACRPD, County Visitors Bureau, and Woolpert *developed and adapted* the following planning approach to meet the specific needs of the community. The plan is organized into five major components:

1. Introduction – Review of Demographic Information & Existing Planning Efforts: Includes a description of the master plan process
2. Inventory of Existing Park and Recreation Facilities: Provides a review and inventory of existing recreation and tourism facilities
3. Community Needs Assessment: Assesses recreation and park facilities including development of local standards and consideration of national trends
4. Proposals and Recommendations: Provides recommendations related to park types, land needs, existing facility improvements and individual facility needs
5. Action Plan Implementation: Suggests methods and means of addressing capital costs, operating costs, and funding

## Department History

- In 1971, Alamance County became the first County Parks and Recreation Department in North Carolina and a master plan was prepared.
- The 1971 Alamance County Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommended the following:
  - Role – Serve the non-incorporated citizenry of Alamance County
  - Parks – Establish two (2) 300 acre district parks — one to serve the northern region and the other to serve the southern region of the county
  - Recreation – Provide a comprehensive listing of recreational opportunities both indoor and outdoor
  - Implementation – Partner with the schools for sharing indoor facilities; and the churches and civic clubs for outdoor facilities
  - Leadership – Hire a Director

Bo Foster owned a large plantation in southern Alamance County and he supported the recommendations of the 1971 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He eventually provided his land to the county, and it became Cedarrock Park and Historical Farm.

## Review of Demographic Information and Existing Planning Efforts

In order to obtain knowledge on the population make-up of the area, a review of demographic information included the following areas:

- Population Projections
- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Workplace Commuting/Migration
- Economy
- Education
- Income
- Households

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## Population:

- Population of Alamance County is estimated to be as follows:
  - 130,800 people in 2000 (US Census)
  - 152,136 people by 2010
  - 176,293 people by 2020
- The Growth rate for the County from 1990-2000 was 20.87%; slightly lower than the State at 21.4%, but well over the National rate at 13.2%.
- The growth rate projected for the County population is 16.3% (2000-2010) and 15.8% (2010-2020).

## Previous planning efforts reviewed for the plan include:

The Department made the following information available for review during the planning process:

- Alamance County Destination 2020 Strategic Plan (2002)
- Alamance County Recreation and Parks Annual Reports for 2004/05 and various previous years
- City of Burlington Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan through 2010 (1994)
- City of Graham Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan (1998)

## Existing Facility Inventory

ACRPD staff and Woolpert performed the inventory of existing recreation facilities in the County and site visits were made to over 15 locations. The purpose of the site visits was to review the number of facilities provided and determine how effectively the facilities are serving the public.

The facilities are divided into two categories, Public and Private. All the facilities inventoried are identified in Table 2-1, "Existing Public Facilities", Table 2-2, "Existing Private Facilities", and Table 2-3, "Existing Historic and Cultural Sites".

- Public sites = Facilities/areas owned or operated by public agencies open to the public on an unlimited basis (county, city, town, school, state and federal sites)

- Private sites = Facilities/areas that are privately owned and are open to the public on a limited basis or for members only (i.e., churches, athletic associations, civic clubs, swim/golf clubs, etc.)

## Overview of County–Owned Park and Recreation Sites

- (7) - Park/Recreation Sites
- (527.12 Acres) - Parkland
- (3) - Community Centers
- (5) - Playgrounds
- (11) - Picnic Shelters
- (5) - Baseball/Softball Fields
- (3) - Multi-Purpose Fields
- (9) - Basketball Courts
- (10) - Horseshoe Pits
- (2) - 1/8 Mile Tracks
- (2) - Disc Golf Course
- Living Historic Farm
- Hiking, Biking and Equestrian Trails

## Overview of Countywide Inventory

- Alamance County (527.12 acres)
  - Administration Office – 1
  - Recreation Centers\*- 3
  - Special/District Park – 1
  - Neighborhood Parks – 2

*\*All three of the recreation centers are located on leased property with the Alamance County Board of Education.*

- Other City and Town Parks (38 sites for 742.84 acres)
  - Burlington - 22
  - Elon- 2
  - Gibsonville – 2/3
  - Graham - 8
  - Haw River - 2
  - Mebane - 3
  - Swepsonville- 1
- Community Ball field Facilities (public, quasi-public, private)(±11 sites for 160 acres)
- Community Pools and Golf Course Facilities (public, quasi-public, private)(±23 sites)
- Schools (32 sites)
  - Elementary – 19

- Middle Schools – 7
- High Schools – 6
- Alamance Community College- 1
- Elon University - 1
- Heritage Inventory and Cultural Sites (over 50 references in data base)
- Nearby Federal Properties
  - Uwharrie National Forest
- Nearby State Facilities & Lake Sites
  - NC Zoo
  - Eno River State Park
  - Jordan Lake
  - William B Umstead State Park
  - Falls Lake Rec. Area

## Community Needs Assessment

Community needs for recreation programs and park facilities were determined by using four assessment techniques that included the following:

- Community input from public forums/workshops
- Focus group interviews with various groups, organizations, and individuals representing a varied cross section of the community
- Community input from questionnaires
- Review of recreation standards for parkland acreage and facilities

## Community Workshop Meetings

The community workshops were held between November 30, 2003 and March 7, 2006 at the following locations:

- November 30, 2005 – May Memorial Library (Downtown Burlington)
- February 7, 2006 – Pleasant Grove Recreation Center (additional meeting on March, 2, 2006- as part of the County Land Development Plan)
- March 7, 2006 – Eli Whitney Recreation Center (per Land Development Plan)

The meetings gave the public an opportunity to help guide the draft proposals for the master plan in a “roundtable” setting. During the meeting, each attendee was assigned to a group of 6-10 individuals. With assistance from a County Staff member or Woolpert team member the group

developed need statements and funding recommendations.

- The following list summarizes facility needs as most commonly mentioned or brought forward at the workshops as the “top five”:
  - Use greenways to connect existing facilities & attractions (recreation-commercial-residential-tourism-heritage-schools etc) and promote as “Alternative Transportation Routes” (TEA-21)
  - Develop and maintain outdoor recreation facilities and programs — “River”, Greenways-Walkways etc.
  - Preserve open space
  - Provide passive parks with plenty of open space preservation
  - Modernize existing facilities (facelift, ADA etc.)
  - Improve public relations/ marketing campaign to market existing facilities (Cedarock Park in particular) and tie into state initiative
  - Expand offerings/facilities at Cedarock Park while conserving natural character (Improved meeting/entertaining facility)
  - Develop canoe & camping offerings at Glencoe (including livery)
  - Provide a senior facility for rural residents
  - Cooperative partnerships among government agencies—Funding
  - Promote that money spent on recreation is more productive than spending in other areas like jails (prevention vs. policing)
  - Recreation is an Essential Service that allows for a community to “Be the Best”
  - Sports Fields and courts (multi-purpose for practice and competition)
  - County support for Local/Municipal projects that provide benefit to all County residents
  - Open green space areas and picnic areas
- The following list summarizes implementation and funding ideas as brought forward at the workshops:
  - Partnerships (public/private, school/park, city/county, etc.)
  - Bonds
  - User fees and revenues

- Grants (foundations, public, private)
- Create a parks foundation
- Designate tax for recreation (1/2¢ to 1¢)
- Private donations and contributions including “Sweat equity” (provide tax incentives)
- Corporate sponsorship
- Long Term leases
- Mandatory development fees
- Hospitality Sales Tax
- Raise taxes (property)

## Focus Group Meetings

Twelve (12) separate meetings were scheduled with focus groups to discuss recreation and park issues on November 30, 2005. Each group focused on discussing its own special needs and interests but members also contributed comments as individuals concerning issues or needs they felt were important to the entire community

The following list summarizes the most common facility needs as brought forward at the focus group meetings:

- The Haw River is key to connecting the County (already have some items started along the river)
  - Glencoe
  - Saxapahaw
  - Mountains to Sea trail
  - NCDENR property search/purchase in southeast Alamance
- Use Greenway Connections and trails to link to towns, communities and neighboring county trails.
- Cedarock Park needs improvements and facilities expanded without losing its natural character. Do more festivals/programs and possibly provide a new interpretive facility to expand on heritage and history offerings.
- Lack of identity for the ACRPD – need to educate the public and advertise (too often confused with other providers). There is confusion of who provides programs and why county leagues have different fees for different teams/locations.
- Existing Centers need improvement or consolidation.
- Athletic facilities are lacking and need improvement.

- Need to review funding policy for programming/scheduling of Athletics (pay-to-play, let the towns schedule/run them, concentrate on “County Teams”)
- Image of the community along I-40/I-85 needs improvement to promote Alamance-Burlington in a new light. Can this plan be part of a tag line or promotional campaign (such as “Home of Haw River”, “Mid Point of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail”, or “Where Nature and History are One”)?
- Can current park sites be expanded to provide for the future? Is other County land available?
- The future of ACRPD will depend heavily on cooperative agreements with other departments and agencies.
- Many partnership opportunities exist in the community (other County departments, schools, towns, civic groups, etc.).
- Joint use with schools for development and use of school facilities should be emphasized.

## Questionnaires & Independent Responses

In addition to the public workshop input, the questionnaire used at the workshops was provided online at the County’s website and published in the local newspaper. The local Chamber of Commerce also distributed questionnaires throughout the county. They were reviewed and incorporated into the public involvement process. The following information summarizes the most common facility related statements from these comments:

- Preserve open space and develop greenway/trail connections.
- Need sports fields and courts for practice and competition.
- Employers rely on “good” recreation and other “Quality of Life” components when selecting sites and count on them for retaining workers- we need parks.
- Look at joint ventures with local private providers for recreation along the river.

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## National and State Assessments

Surveys designed to determine the demand for outdoor recreation have been conducted on the national level by the President's Commission on Americans Outdoor (1985), National Sporting Goods Association (1997-2005), and the United States Forest Service (1984-1995). Additionally, the State of North Carolina conducted a statewide survey in 1989 that can also shed light on similar needs from within the region.

The importance of reviewing these surveys is to identify trends in participation for specific recreational activities or facilities. A brief review of the above-mentioned surveys indicates there are a few common activities that people found popular and should be taken into consideration when developing new parks or programs.

- **Common activities from the surveys:** The following 10 activities were found within the top 15-activities of the four surveys:
  - Walking (for pleasure or exercise)
  - Swimming (pool or non-pool)
  - Biking
  - Attending sporting events
  - Playing sports
  - Picnicking
  - Visiting natural sites (for scenery, sightseeing, etc.)
  - Exercise/Workout at club/center
  - Fishing
  - Boating

## Recreation Standards

The Master Plan preparation process includes reviewing recreation standards developed by organizations including the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), the North Carolina Department of Environment Health and Natural Resources (NCDEHNR), and master plans for communities of similar size.

- **Recommended standards for park classifications and land area requirements:**

These are itemized in Table 3-1, “Alamance County Park Classifications & Area Requirements”.

- **The park classifications used in the plan are briefly described below:**
  - Regional Park –  $\pm 1,000$  Ac., 1 hr. service radius ( $\pm 50$ -60 mi.), serves  $\pm 50$ -100,00 people (10Ac./1,000)
  - District Park –  $\pm 200$ -400 Ac., 8 mi. service radius (15-20 min commute), serves 20-50,000 people (5Ac./1,000)
  - Community Park –  $\pm 40$ -80 Ac., 2-3 mi. service radius, serves 5-15,000 people or an entire community (4Ac./1,000)
  - Neighborhood Park Neighborhood Parks –  $\pm 5$  -10 Ac.,  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  service radius, serves 1,000-5,000 people (2Ac./1,000)
  - Special Use & Unique Areas – No Std.
  - Greenway/Linear Park – Std. Varies, .2-.4 mi. per 1,000 population

## Evaluation of Parkland Needs

- **Land/Acreage Needs for 2020:** (when taking into account existing park sites’ acreage)
  - Regional Parkland —Existing acreage provides adequate service (standards identify 1,763 acres while over 50,000 acres are available).
  - District Parkland — Need 420 acres. One existing site, Cedarock Park, equals 461acres. (Note: Mackintosh & Cammack are primarily lake access sites with special facilities (the  $\pm 70$  acres at these sites could reduce the need to 350 acres)
  - Community Parkland — Need 238-acres (standards identify 705 acres while 467.5 acres presently exist).
  - Neighborhood Parkland — Need 287-acres, (standards identify 353 acres while 66.1 acres presently exist).
  - Linear Parks/Greenway Trails — Need 51mi., (standards identify 71 mi.,  $\pm 20$  mi. presently exist).

## Evaluation of Individual Facility Needs

The number of individual public facilities needed in Alamance County through 2020 is identified in Table 3-4, “Public Facilities Needs Analysis”. Some school and quasi-public sites have been taken into account. Using standards, the following individual facility needs were

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identified for 2020 and should be considered when planning future parks or improvements to existing sites:

- (1) - Adult Baseball
- (7) - Youth Baseball Adult Softball (due to availability and conditions)
- (6-8) - Soccer / Multi-purpose athletic field (due to availability and conditions)
- (0) - Tennis Courts (school sites overcome shortfall)
- (27)- Volleyball courts
- (40) - Picnic shelters / facilities
- (39) - Playground areas
- (63mi.) - Trails (walking, jogging etc.)
- (1-2) - Swimming pool / facility
- (13) - Neighborhood Recreation centers (with meeting facility space, no gym)

## Proposals and Recommendations

Alamance County is recognized in North Carolina for its natural surroundings and heritage. ACRPD, was the first “County offered” park and recreation provider in North Carolina in 1971 and has been providing recreation services by offering programs at one large countywide facility/park (Cedarock Park), numerous former school sites, and contracted or leased facilities. As one might determine, “Countywide” facilities have been lacking and the citizens of the County have grown accustomed to having recreational opportunities made available to them at school system sites, facilities offered by towns, and local recreation groups from throughout the County. The challenge for the future is to provide improved facilities that accommodate growth and satisfy public demand.

- As identified in previous sections of the report it is a fore gone conclusion that the County’s population will continue to grow. This growth will definitely place additional burden on the existing facilities within Alamance County.
- Public input brought forward during the planning process suggests that the citizens’ interest and demand for “quality leisure services” will only increase as time passes,

and they have stated a need for more facilities to be developed.

- Additionally, the citizens expect local government to be a major provider of recreational services at a price that will accommodate as many people as possible.

Master plan scenarios were developed “in-house” by the consultant as part of the overall planning process. This was done to present realistic alternatives for meeting the recreational needs of the future. Additionally, the preliminary recommendations of the master plan were presented and reviewed with County staff and Advisory Team members. The purpose of each meeting was to refine the proposals for inclusion in this final report and final public presentation to the County Commissioners.

The recommendations have been divided into the following categories:

- Roles of Providers
- Park Proposals and Recommendations
- Facility Proposals and Recommendations

## Roles of Recreation Providers

- Meeting all the recreational needs of the community will require a joint effort between the various government agencies and the private sector. The following recommendations describe the roles that each recreational provider should take during the planning period.

### Alamance County

- Concentrate on providing ‘District Park Service’.
- ACRPD take a lead role in planning and coordinating greenway and trail efforts throughout the county.
- Continue to build upon its expertise in providing recreation services/programs for special populations and partner with other agencies in providing service.
- Hire an experienced recreation planner as a staff member of either ACRPD or the Planning Department. This person would be responsible for assisting the commission and ACRPD Director with



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the day-to-day planning responsibilities required to implement the proposals of the Master Plan. The position of “County Recreation/Trail Coordinator” or “Recreation Planner/Trail & Open Space Coordinator” should be a “New” position within County government so that the quality of services performed by current staff is not diminished.

- Investigate creating a formalized community “Funding/Grant Program” to assist in the development of recreation on a local level. Any funding program must be based on need, local participation, financial commitment, or other defined criteria similar to the North Carolina-PARTF grant program.
- Develop a formalized joint use agreement with Alamance-Burlington School System. This agreement should be used to standardize the use of school facilities by local groups.

### Towns/Municipalities

Historically, the Cities of Burlington, Graham, Mebane, Haw River and Elon have served both municipal residents and those living in Alamance County. Through the planning period, it will be increasingly more difficult to follow this trend. It is anticipated that the towns will not be in a financial position to offer recreation programs and park facilities for a large population of citizens living in the county.

- The Master Plan is based on the premise that municipalities should concentrate on improving their facilities to serve their general populations unless a joint use facility is proposed with the County or another provider.
  - Cooperate on possible joint ventures or partnerships (for providing large sites & programs)
  - Provide Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Greenways and special facilities
  - Maintain and improve existing facilities

### School System (ABSS)

- Become a formal partner in providing recreation by entering into a joint use agreement with ACRPD
- Look at developing facilities jointly with the commission

### State & Federal:

- The state should be the major provider of State Parks and resource management sites
- Assist the community with funding through grant programs such as, ISTEA(TEA21), CDBG, Clean Water Act, and NCDOT-Bikeways/Enhancement Funds
- The U.S. Forest Service manages sites in the region that are used for recreational activities that will be maintained past 2020 (Uwharrie National Forest)
- Federal agencies will assist & protect, preserve, conserve & manage public lands that are deemed appropriate and necessary for all the United States

### Private Sector

- Provide commercial/for-profit recreation when public sector cannot.
- Partner in providing recreation or securing open space for the community. Support the public sector through gifts and donations.
- Developers need to assist the County in the dedication or reservation of future park sites as part of the overall land development process. The County Land Development Plan must address zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations necessary to promote and secure open space and recreation areas.
- Zoning regulations & subdivision ordinances should encourage developers responsible for dedication of open space & parkland.

### Partnership Opportunities

ACRPD has very limited partnerships in place with various entities in the community to provide

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special events, and programs such as the NC-Envirothon, Special Olympics and the Fish Rodeo. It is the recommendation of the master plan to create even more partnerships between other government agencies and the non-profit sector in the County. This master plan will need the support of the entire community. Increased use of partnerships will extend the delivery of services to more people in the area; create more options for all partners; and develop opportunities to extend public funding beyond current levels.

### **Partnership Issues**

- A partnership agreement is essential to demonstrate the commitment of each party and identify the resources each will contribute. Regardless of what a partner contributes, (land acquisition, development, operational, maintenance, or other resource), the goal is to track these contributions and strive for a 50%-50% cost sharing venture over the life of the project.
- Negotiations for these contributions should focus on demonstrating the advantages and disadvantages of each partner's participation. Key issues to be incorporated into the agreement are included in Section 4 of the Master Plan.

### **Immediate Partnership Considerations**

- School partnerships
- Neighborhood partnerships
- Church partnerships
- Non-Profit or Not-for-profit program development
- Private sector partnerships
- Private sector service contracts
- Hospital partnerships
- Trail partnerships
- County/Town partnership

### **Parks and Facility Recommendations**

As previously stated, Alamance County should focus on developing and operating district parks and special facilities as needed (special facilities such as bikeways/greenways, recreation/nature centers etc). Additionally the county should assist local communities with developing community recreation sites. The towns should be

concentrating on community parks, neighborhood parks and specialized facilities.

- It is recommended that by the year 2020 Alamance County make provisions for the following "New park facilities":
  - Develop one (1) New District Park site at the Turner Road Property (PD2) or an Alternate site (PD2-ALT).
  - Develop a special facility/large park ( $\pm 1,000$ -acre) that can also provide District Park services in cooperation with NCDENR.
  - Develop the Glencoe River Access Park in conjunction with the cultural and historical facilities that are underway.
  - Develop Haw River Multi-use Trail (Greenway & Pedestrian/Paddle/Bike trails).
  - Provide support facilities for a river access point at the Glen Raven site.
  - Develop Haw River access point at the current landfill property in southeastern Alamance.
  - Develop a school/ACRPD gym facility at a school site to replace Eli Whitney Ctr.
  - Replace programming at Pleasant Grove by jointly providing services with Mebane or developing a facility at the proposed District Park.
  - Local communities will need to develop five (5) community parks and neighborhood park facilities. The County should explore providing an assistance/grant program for helping communities to provide facilities.
  - Develop an environmental education center in cooperation with private interests and/or other recreation providers at Cedarock Park, the proposed District Park, or Glencoe.
- Cost for the proposals are provided in Table 5-1 "Capital Improvement/Development Program" and they are graphically represented on the "Master Plan Proposals Map" (provided at the end of see Section 4).

- *Details of each Recommendation or Park Proposal are grouped below by park category/type.*

## Parks Recommendations

### Regional Parks:

Existing sites and acreage provided in the area offer ample service for Alamance County. Park renovations or new parks/facilities planned by NCDENR should further improve service.

- The County must support initiatives for funding state parks and programs such as PARTF.
- Collaborate with State and Federal Agencies/ Land Holders in developing potential projects such as trails and heritage sites.
- Support efforts of Piedmont Triad COG on open space preservation and conservation.
- Collaborate with the state in providing a regional special facility/large park in Southeast Alamance (±1,000-acres). NCDENR is looking to acquire land near the confluence of Haw River and Cane Creek. The State considers this an important location for completing the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, and ACRPD would like to offer more opportunities in that part of the county. A partnership could benefit both parties (see Special Facility Recommendations below).

### District Parks:

The development of district parks assists in providing open space and facilities to meet the needs of the County throughout the planning period. County governments typically have the responsibility of developing District Parks while cities and towns focus on providing community and neighborhood parks. Standards from the community needs assessment identify a shortfall of 420 acres in district parkland or a need for one (1) or two (2) park sites.

- Each proposed park should have a site-specific master plan prepared for its development and determine what facilities are to be programmed for the site. Local

users should be made part of the planning process.

- Where feasible, the parks **should be linked to other parks and recreation areas** by bikeways and pedestrian routes.
- This master plan recommends the following scenario for providing District Park service:
  - Upgrade and improve facilities Cedarrock Park and revise/update its master plan.
  - Develop a new park at the 172-acre Turner Road property or an alternate site.
  - Develop a special facility/large park (±1,000-acre) in cooperation with NCDENR in southeast Alamance. The State is looking for a potential recreation site at the confluence of the Haw River and Cane Creek. A partnership would allow the County to offer district level recreational opportunities in that part of the county (see Special Facility recommendations).
- **Proposed District Parks:**
  - **Turner Road Site (PD2)** – Develop a 172-acre site in conjunction with the Agricultural Extension Service.
  - **Alternate District Park Site (PD2-ALT)** – Acquire and develop a 200+ acre District Park if the Turner Site cannot be secured.
  - **Confluence Park Site** (confluence of Haw River and Cane Creek) – Develop in cooperation with NCDENR a ±1,000 acre special facility that includes district park offerings (see Special Facility recommendations this section).
- **Existing District Parks:**
  - **Cedarrock Park:**
    - Acquire property along the entry road for facility expansion and revise the site Master Plan
    - Add camping sites, possibly RV sites
    - Add more picnic facilities
    - Pave some parking areas
    - Improve the picnic facilities at the falls
    - Create a reception/interpretive center at the historical homestead

- Establish a Frisbee golf tourney on the circuit and develop a clubhouse area
- Extend trails

### **Community Parks & Neighborhood Parks:**

This Master Plan proposes that Community & Neighborhood Parks be developed by local communities (towns & municipalities) with possible assistance through a County administered funding/grant program for providing service to unincorporated areas of the County.

- The funding program should be based on need, local participation/commitment, and other defined criteria (similar to NC-PARTF).
- Existing community park facilities are provided at Cities of Burlington, Graham, Mebane, Elon, and Haw River. In addition the county should offer to partner at proposed sites where they can provide program or operating experience

The standards from the community needs assessment identify no shortage of community park sites. However, acreage dedicated to this type of park is short by 237 acres. Various towns, Mebane, Graham, and Elon have plans for expanding existing parks or developing new sites. These planned parks will provide adequate park service. General improvements to existing community and neighborhood recreation sites are listed in Section 4 of the report.

- The County has commitments in place to provide citizens with community-level recreation services. They have done this at most of the recreation center sites they currently operate. However, three community sites should be offered to other towns/recreation providers because they do not provide countywide service. They are as follows:
  - Morgan Place Park - offer this property to the Town of Elon to possibly link with Eva Barker Park.
  - Ray Street Center - offer this facility to the City of Graham, it provides an opportunity for them to consolidate programming in the area.

### **Pleasant Grove and Eli Whitney Recreation Centers**

- These former school sites need major repairs and must be renovated if they are to continue their mission.
- These sites should be phased-out of service and replacement alternatives explored as follows:
  - **Pleasant Grove** — replace programming at Pleasant Grove by jointly providing services with Mebane or developing a new facility at the proposed District Park.
  - **Eli Whitney** — develop a School/ACRPD gym facility at a school site (B. Everett Jordan) to provide for programs currently run at the center.
- In addition to the existing county sites, ACRPD should explore how inter-local cooperative agreements can provide community recreation services by collaborating on program offerings or developing facilities.
- The proposal map has indicated potential collaborative service at the following community locations:
  - **Elon 70-acre site** — collaborate in developing a community park.
  - **Green Level** — entertain partnering with them in providing athletic programs at proposed town sites/fields.
  - **Ossipee** — collaborate with this community in offering facilities that compliment the Glen Raven site.
  - **Sweepsonville** — partner with them in providing support for athletic programs at proposed town sites/fields. Possibly assist with trail connections to the proposed Haw River Trail.
  - **Saxapahaw** — collaborate with them in supporting athletic programs at existing sites/fields. Possibly assist with developing facilities and connections to the proposed Haw River Trail.
  - **Alamance planned park site** — similar to Elon, partner with programming and development assistance on a community park.

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## **Greenways, Bikeways & Special Use Facilities:**

### **Greenway Trails and Bike Paths**

This Master Plan recommends that:

- The County should be a facilitator of trail development in the county. Hiring a “Recreation Planner/Trail & Open Space Coordinator is a necessity.
- Developing a Haw River Paddle-Pedal-Pedestrian Trail that runs the entire length of the county should be the ultimate goal for implementation.
- Standards indicate 51 miles of trails by the year 2020, the end of the planning period. Two stretches of the Haw River Greenway Trail are identified as a priority for development as follows:
  - Glencoe to Glen-Raven
  - Alamance Creek/Swepsonville to the County Line along Chatham County
- The trails should be multi-purpose where possible and do not need to be paved in most locations.
- Multi-purpose Trails should provide for equestrian access and equestrian support facilities should be planned where feasible.
- The Master Plan Proposals Map identifies various corridors for trails / greenways along the major tributaries of the County as follows:
  - Haw River (paddle/pedal/pedestrian)
  - West=Big & Little Alamance Creeks,
  - Northeast=Quaker/Back Creeks,
  - North=Stony Creek Toms Creek, Jordan Creek, Buttermilk Creek,
  - South-Southeast-Cane Creek, Haw Creek

### **Special Facilities:**

#### **Regional/ District Park**

- **Confluence Park Site** (confluence of Haw River and Cane Creek) – Develop in cooperation with NCDENR a ±1,000 acre special facility that includes district park offerings. The State is looking for a potential recreation site at the confluence of Haw River

and Cane Creek. A partnership would allow the County to offer district level recreational opportunities in that part of the county. The site has enormous potential to fit into initiatives by the state to develop trails along the Haw River and connect the Mountains-to-Sea Trail with large passive parklands. A partnership could benefit both parties.

#### **Glencoe River Access Park**

- **Develop a river park of 70+ acres**—ACRPD received a CWMTF grant for \$157,960 to purchase a ±23-acre site on the Haw River at the historic Glencoe Mill Village. Another ±40-acre property bordering the Glencoe location is currently under purchase. A Site Master Plan for a park was provided by Piedmont-Triad Council of Governments.

#### **Glen Raven River Access Site**

- **Develop a River Access park** — near Ossipee. Develop this site as a passive park for access to the Haw River. Site improvements should support canoe/boat access, parking, and day-use activities such as picnicking, fishing, observation areas and restrooms. This site has potential partnering opportunities with the town of Ossipee.

#### **River Access at Current Landfill Site**

- Similar to the Glen Raven site, this County facility can be developed as a passive park for access to the Haw River.
- The active landfill will continue for another 20 years so it is imperative that permanent access to recreation facilities be made part of the landfill operations plan.
- A master plan should be prepared for reclaiming the landfill to ensure the property can be used efficiently and effectively for its current and future use.

#### **Environmental Education Center**

- Develop an environmental education center in cooperation with private industry, the agricultural extension service (NCSU), Alamance Community College and other potential parties.

- Potential locations for developing this facility include Cedarrock Park, Turner Road proposed District Park and the Glencoe River Access Park.
- There may be support from the ABSS and local businesses such as Carolina Biological.

## Individual Facility Proposals and Recommendations

In Section 3 “Recreation Standards and Community Needs Assessment”, specific facility needs were identified through the community public involvement process and by using recreation standards. Facility needs described in Section 3 (Table 3-4) identify the number of facilities for the entire county. The following individual facility improvements should be considered when programming future park sites:

- Baseball/softball fields
- Soccer fields
- Volleyball courts
- Picnic shelters
- Playground activities
- Trails (including hiking, interpretive, and equestrian)
- Camping areas
- Swimming pools
- Bicycling routes

## TDA/CVB/SDC Involvement:

The Alamance County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) as administered by the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) has an interest in supporting the recommendations of this Master Plan to promote the area. The TDA/CVB supports appropriate tourism events, facilities, initiatives, and industries that provide valuable economic impact for the community and demonstrate a return on local investment. The following information identifies how the TDA/CVB and Sports Development Council (SDC) can be advocates of the proposals presented in the plan.

### Haw River/Greenways

- ACRPD and TDA/CVB should work together on developing and promoting the Haw River Paddling and Land Trail. The CVB will be

critical in assisting with marketing this amenity and tracking economic impact.

- The CVB should help ensure the coordination of this Haw River Trail effort with existing businesses including wineries, outfitters, clubs and associations that will see a benefit from the effort.
- The CVB will be able to help with uniform signage, brochures, and attracting events/activities that will utilize the paddle/land trail.

### Facilities:

The Master Plan process has identified the need and desire for several types of facilities that would certainly involve the input of the CVB. These potential recommendations have come from the public and focus group meetings. The CVB can support the proposed facilities in the following manner:

- **Civic Center**
  - Provide assistance with a detailed study for programming and siting of a facility.
  - Identify potential partners for implementing a center.
- **Confluence Site Potential**
  - Assist in evaluating and negotiating an agreement with State representative(s) to attain a site.
  - Promote any results of a master plan for the site (distribute and create promotional materials).
  - Identify potential partners for implementing proposed individual facilities.
- **New District Park (Turner Road Site or Northern Alternate Site)**
  - Assist in identifying potential partners for implementing facilities such as an Environmental Center, Aquatics/Water Park Facility, Botanical Gardens, ATV Park, Special Population Enrichment Center and Athletic Complex etc.
  - Promote any results of a master plan for the site (distribute and create promotional materials).

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### **ACRPD/ABSS Joint Use of Facilities:**

- ACRPD needs to work with the Alamance-Burlington School System (ABSS) to attain a formal joint-use agreement that is system wide and can be uniformly enforced.

The Schools and the County should also work together to:

- Identify additional programs that can take place on school or park properties.
- Determine how they can mutually approach property acquisition.
- Jointly construct sports fields, gyms, and aquatic facilities when possible.
- **The ACRPD and the SDC/CVB should work together with ABSS to provide the following:**
  - Detailed data describing available athletic/auditorium facilities at ABSS sites.
  - Standardized fees and staff policies for use of ABSS sites for SDC/CVB events.
  - Inclusion of activities either recruited and/or hosted by the SDC/CVB in the formalized joint-use agreement.
  - Joint review of construction/renovation plans for new and existing ABSS facilities. If the CVB is given a chance to review plans, it can provide input on needs for hosting activities. If joint access is achieved, grants could be made available through ACRPD or the SDC/CVB to help offset construction costs.

### **Community Grant/Assistance Program:**

- The County should consider establishing a fund to assist with recreation facility construction by municipalities. Jointly developing facilities through negotiated Town/County partnerships or possibly through a County administered “Funding/Grant” program.
- The TDA/CVB should play a role in evaluating projects submitted by municipalities to determine what the tourism value might be.

## **Priorities for Development**

The park and facility proposals have been prioritized into separate time frames for implementation. The prioritization was influenced by the evaluation of existing facilities, the community needs assessment and the financial ability of Alamance County to implement the overall Capital Improvement/Development Projection presented in Section 5 of this plan (see Table 5-1). The capital projections for implementing the proposals reflect these priorities (*see detailed description in Section Four- Priorities for Development*).

## **Action Plan Implementation**

The Alamance Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan is based upon a review of the community, an analysis of existing facilities, the identification of user needs, the development of recreation standards, and an adherence to stated proposals and recommendations. The plan is intended to be “action-oriented” and is designed to provide a framework from which the County can enhance recreation and parks service to its citizens. Implementing the recommendations will help the County to provide for future parks and recreation services needs, as well as preserving open space.

- For the plan to succeed the County must establish annual budgets for providing Park and Recreation Services.
- Budgets should include the projected capital improvement costs, and projected staffing and operating costs presented in the plan.

## **Master Plan Capital Improvement/Development Cost Projection**

- The proposed capital improvement projection for the acquisition and development of parks and facilities was prepared with input from County staff (see Section 5, Table 5-1 for details).
- All proposed costs are shown in 2006-dollar values. The capital improvement/development costs include funds for land acquisition, site development and

renovation/improvements. The costs also include a design contingency for associated planning and design fees.

- The Capital Improvement/ Development Program is summarized in the table below by project type.
- As noted in the table below, there are \$31,628,000 of projects to fund during the planning period for meeting the park and recreation needs identified in this Master Plan.

## Capital Funding

The total of \$31,628,000 represents the cost of the projects in 2006 dollars and does not take into account any savings to the County if the projects are funded through partnership structures. The County should use a combination of funding sources from various means to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan. There are numerous combinations of funding strategies that could be explored and implemented to reduce the County's share for funding. Most of these would necessitate the use of partnerships of some type.

## Potential Key Sources of Capital Funding:

- General Fund Allocations
- General Obligation Bonds
- Limited Option or Special Use Tax
- Revenue Bonds
- Park Foundation
- General Foundations
- Federal and State Assistance
- Payments In Lieu of Dedication
- Grants/Contributions and Partnerships

## Staff Needs

The structure and number of personnel in the ACRPD is below that of comparable sized communities in the state. This is primarily because only one major facility, Cedarrock Park, in the system requires more than 1-2 people to operate. Even taking this into consideration the number of personnel at Cedarrock Park is less than at parks of comparable size or that offer comparable services/facilities.

- Proposed park facilities and associated programs will require additional staff.
- The following six (6) key staff additions are identified for supplementing the current staff of fifteen (15) through the planning period (see "Proposed Organization Chart", Section-5, Exhibit 5-1):

### Proposed New Staff Positions

- (1) - Asst. Director/Parks Superintendent: (oversee all facilities and coordinate work of area managers/supervisors.
- (1) - Recreation Planner/Trails & Open Space Coordinator to provide oversight and planning coordination for all county parks, trails and open space policies.

### Additional staff fitting existing classifications

- (1) - Park Area Manager/Superintendent to oversee proposed District Park -PD2.
- (2) - Park Technicians/ Program Assistants to provide support for the proposed District Park.
- (1) - Program Assistant: to provide program support and assist the Grant Coordinator.

## Summary of Capital Improvement/Development Cost: (see table 5-1 at end Section5 for details)

Project Type	Amount
Renovation/Maintenance Program	\$2,278,000
Land Acquisition Program	\$3,500,000
Park Development Program	\$14,300,000
Special Use Facilities Program	\$11,550,000
<b>Total Capital Improvement Cost (through 2020)</b>	<b>\$31,628,000</b>

*\* All costs are in current (2006) dollars*



## Operating Budgets

Proposed operating budgets for facilities identified in the master plan should include costs for staffing, operations, and general maintenance. Operation budgets from previous plans and various recreation departments from around the state were used in support of the following information. The exact operating cost will be dependent on the final design of each site on a case-by-case scenario. However, general ranges for Annual Operating Cost are provided below for the type of facilities recommended in the plan.

Type of Facility	Annual Operating Cost
District Park – (majority of development is “Passive”)	\$400,000 - \$600,000
District Park (majority of development is “Active”)	\$600,000 – \$1,000,000
Sports Complex (8 fields min with support amenities)	\$600,000 – \$1,000,000
Greenway Trails (paved)	\$6,000 – \$8,000 per mile
Greenway trails (undeveloped) -	\$2,500 – \$4,000 per mile

- Special Use Facilities, as recommended in the Master Plan, can generate considerable revenues. The table below identifies potential recovery costs for facilities proposed in the plan. National trends for cities of similar or larger size demonstrate special facilities of this type can be 100% self-supporting, or in other words, generate revenue to cover 100% of their operating cost.

## Funding Ideas / Strategy

Over the planning period, Alamance County will not be able to support the proposed capital improvements and associated operating costs solely through the current level of contributions from the General Fund (approximately \$1.4-million annually). **The County must use a combination of revenue sources to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan.**

There are numerous combinations of funding strategies that can be explored and implemented by the County. Upon review of past budget documents, current practices, available resources, national trends, and standards, a funding strategy is presented for consideration with the following funding sources. **(It must be noted that general obligation bonds are still the most common funding source utilized to finance park projects in North Carolina.)**

### General Fund:

- Assuming allocations from the General Fund remain at the current level per person ( $\pm$ \$9 per capita for operations only); the total funds generated will be  $\pm$ \$24-\$25million during the planning period (Assumes minor budget increase of 3%-5% annually).
- This \$24-million covers 76% of the proposed capital improvement costs for the planning period (Total Capital = \$31.63-million per Table 5-1 attached at the end of Section 5).
- The County should try to maintain this level of funding throughout the planning period.
- Based on FY06 property valuation figures, 1¢ of the current property tax rate (57.5¢/\$100) produces about \$1-million annually. This amount generates approximately \$15-million.
- Increasing property tax by 1¢ would require a \$100,000 property to pay an additional \$5.75 per year or less than 1.6¢ per day.

### Summary of Revenues for Special-Use Facilities:

Special-Use Facility	Annual Expenses	Annual Revenues	Cost Recovery	Revenue for Life of Master Plan
Athletic Complex	\$400,000–\$600,000	\$240,000–\$360,000	60%	\$1,200,000–\$1,800,000
Special-Use/District Parks	\$400,000–\$600,000	\$200,000–\$300,000	50%	\$1,000,000–\$1,500,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$800,000–\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$440,000–\$660,000</b>	<b>55%–56%</b>	<b>\$2,200,000–\$3,300,000</b>

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## General Obligation Bonds

- **General Obligation Bonds should be used in acquiring and developing new parks and recreation facilities as well as renovating existing facilities.**
- This master plan proposes that the County evaluate the use of bonds to raise funds for land acquisition and facility development of large ticket items listed in Table 5-1– Capital Improvement/Development Program.
- The total funds used from the bonds for developing these facilities should include an additional 1½%-2% for debt service and administrative cost associated with the bonds.
- Funds are needed early in the process to repair/replace outdated and poor facilities. A bond campaign should be started as soon as possible.
- If bonds are to be used, a plan for promoting their acquisition should be brought forward in 2007. This would possibly allow a referendum to be held in 2008 or 2009.

## User Charges

- Currently, revenues from user charges provide a very small amount of the Department's total operating budget to the County general fund.
- A goal of the plan should be to increase this dramatically through the planning period by improving facilities that can support higher fees.
  - To assist with this goal, special use facilities identified within the plan could provide over \$2.0-million from user charges.
  - ACRPD needs to update their pricing policies to reflect the value of the services provided to County residents.
  - ACRPD must change how funding for athletic programming services is provided. The plan identifies how to evaluate the cost and make changes based on the County's subsidy philosophy or system of values.

## Open Space Dedication and Payment in Lieu of Dedication:

- The Development Ordinance should be re-worked to include open space and recreation requirements that affect land development and require dedication of land for recreation.
- The requirements should allow for payment in lieu of land dedication, and substitution of off-site land for dedication. These options allow the County and developers some flexibility in meeting recreational goals of the community. They also allow the County to "bank" payments for larger projects.

## Partnerships, Grants, and Gifts

(Federal/State Assistance, Partnerships & Contributions)

A combination of grants, gifts, or other revenue sources will need to account for a percentage of the costs for capital improvements, operations and programs but the County cannot rely upon these sources as mainstream funding.

- There are opportunities in the State to support this funding. In particular, North Carolina Park and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grants, LWCF, if Congressional funding is expanded, private sector foundations, and non-profit groups should be aggressively approached by the County.
- Partnerships will become a large component in funding the improvements. Public/Private partnerships offer the best opportunity for the County to minimize development and operating expenses. However, partnerships with other public agencies, such as the Cities of Burlington and Graham, can also reduce costs depending on the assets brought forward and the structure of responsibilities negotiated in the partnership.

## Partnership Considerations

As stated previously in this report, all types of partnerships can be formed with local public, quasi-public, or private entities. Alamance County, through ACRPD, has the following potential partnership opportunities (see Section 4 for detailed descriptions):

- School partnerships
- Neighborhood partnerships

- 
- Church partnerships
  - Non-Profit or Not-for-profit program development
  - Private sector partnerships
  - Private sector service contracts
  - Hospital partnerships
  - Trail partnerships
  - County/Town partnership

## Revenue Plan

Upon adoption of the Master Plan, the County must continue establishment of a complete revenue plan/strategy. A revenue plan incorporates all available funding resources in a community, prioritizes them, and incorporates each option into a funding strategy. The plan must also evaluate each funding alternative or resource and its appropriate use for funding capital improvements, operations and programs.

## Alternative Funding / Revenue Sources

Historically traditional funding sources, such as general fund allocations, have not been able to keep up with the needs of growing communities and the management of park assets. The County will need to create a combination of new revenue sources to meet the future needs of Alamance County residents.

The County has made great progress in generating this Master Plan and the same progress must be shown for funding and implementing the recommendations.

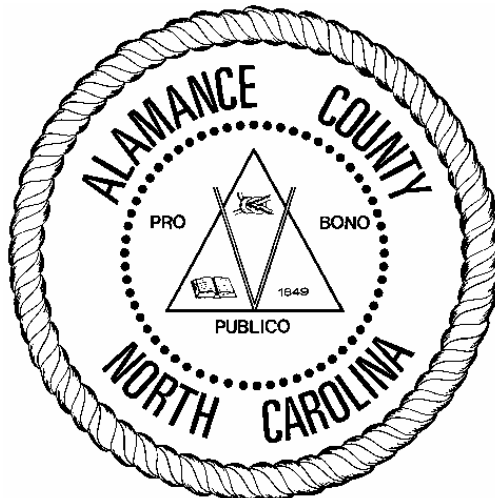
The following information identifies examples of alternative funding sources. The County and the proposed Recreation Commission should evaluate these sources when preparing a revenue plan for the master plan recommendations.

- Hospitality Tax
- Capital Projects Sales Tax
- General Obligation Bonds
- Revenue Bonds
- Corporate Sponsorships
- Partnerships
- Foundation/Gifts
- Intermodal Transportation and Efficiency Act (Former ISTEA = TEA21)
- Federal Grants
- State Grants
- Recreation Service Fees
- Annual Appropriation/Leasehold Financing
- Interlocal Agreements
- Private Concessionaires
- Land Trust
- Establish a Linear Park / Greenway Utility
- Naming Rights
- Cell Towers
- Private Developers
- Licensing Rights
- Capital Improvement Fees
- Merchandising Sales
- Concession Management
- Friends Associations / “Friends of the Park”
- Advertising Sales
- Easements
- Irrevocable Remainder Trusts
- Life Estates
- Permits (Special Use Permits)
- Catering Permits and Services

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# **ALAMANCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

Prepared For:  
Alamance County Recreation & Parks Department  
and  
Alamance County Tourism Development Authority  
In conjunction with  
Burlington-Alamance County Convention & Visitors Bureau



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## SECTION 1

# INTRODUCTION - REVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND EXISTING PLANNING EFFORTS FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY

### What is a Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan?

It is the determination of the essential recreation needs of the people in a community. Recreation and park comprehensive master plans can review both programs and facilities in a recreation department and develop new strategies in meeting the future recreation needs of the community. The steps needed to complete the comprehensive master plan are described in simple terms as answering simple questions:

1. Who are we?	• Demographic and Existing Planning Effort Review ( <i>who are we as a community and where are we headed</i> )
2. What do we have?	• Inventory and Evaluation of Facilities ( <i>before we can determine our needs we must know what is offered</i> )
3. What do we need?	• Needs Assessment Development ( <i>review of park standards, survey information, and public input</i> )
4. What to do?	• Recommendations and Proposals ( <i>what should be done to address the needs</i> )
5. How to do it?	• Action Plan ( <i>how should we implement the recommendations</i> )

### Why is a Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan Needed?

As described in subsequent text pertaining to the history of the department; Alamance County Recreation and Parks Department (ACRPD), became North Carolina's first "County offered" park and recreation provider in 1971. A Master Plan was completed that year and no other official plan has been performed since.

In 2002, the *Alamance County Destination 2020 Strategic Plan* described efforts by the county to fund a recreation and park master plan. The 2020 study discussed why the plan is needed and some important benefits of having a plan in place. Three identified benefits were described as follows:

- A needs assessment is performed and locations are determined for future parks, programs and facilities
- Identifying recreation areas in advance allows the County to use the plan to confirm whether possible land offerings or dedications are located properly.

- Preparing a plan allows for the County to more readily secure grant monies in support of parks.

The County recognized the need for the plan but did not attempt to fund it in 2002 and 2003 due to budget restraints caused by a state government budget crisis. The crisis caused the Governor to withhold certain tax reimbursements to local governments, creating serious funding shortfalls for most, if not all local governments in North Carolina.

Funding was made available for the plan In 2004/05 through joint efforts of Alamance County and the Conventions and Visitors Bureau and a request for proposals was issued.

The County hired Woolpert Inc., a professional park-planning firm in August of 2005, to assist in preparing this document and to make proposals

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and recommendations for meeting the future recreation needs through the planning period. Meeting citizen's increased demand for additional recreation programs and facilities seems to be an ever-increasing challenge for communities throughout the United States. The County's population has grown significantly in the past 20 years and projected growth in the county is expected to continue.

Other reasons a parks and recreation facilities plan is needed:

- To assure maximum benefit for each dollar spent for facilities
- To avoid duplication and overlapping of services, use areas, and facilities
- To expedite action on development of park facilities when funding is available
- To serve as a guide for acquiring sites for parks, greenways, and open space areas
- To attract economic development and smart growth development into the community
- To assist and guide county officials and planners with future decisions concerning recreation facilities

The importance of recreation as a part of our everyday lives has never been more critical to the development of our society. National trends indicate that expectations and demands for diverse and quality recreation services will only increase as our population expands and matures. The elderly segment of our population will likely expand faster than any other segment of our society due in part to longer life expectancy and the aging of the "baby boomer" generation. As the elderly segment of the population increases in size, and affluence, so will their influence on attitudes and perceptions of what recreation entails. Another indicator of how important recreation is to our society is the increased demand for recreation professionals to provide more programs involving elderly activities and childcare. Programs such as senior sports leagues, exercise classes, after-school activities, and expanded summer camps. This is a direct result of demographic influences caused by an aging population and the increase of two income households and single parent households who have children at home less than 18 years old.

## Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Purpose and Process

### Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Purpose and Process

The objective of the planning process is to provide Alamance County and the Burlington-Alamance County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) with an accurate, usable plan to guide its action and decisions concerning the improvement, and development of its park system, and identify specific challenges and opportunities that exist with developing a tourism action plan. The planning process emphasizes recreation facility needs for the planning period. The ACRPD, County Visitors Bureau, and Woolpert ***developed and adapted*** the following planning approach to meet the specific needs of the community. The plan is organized into five major components:

1. Introduction – Review of Demographic Information & Existing Planning Efforts: Includes a description of the master plan process
2. Inventory of Existing Park and Recreation Facilities: Provides a review and inventory of existing recreation and tourism facilities
3. Community Needs Assessment: Assesses recreation and park facilities including development of local standards and consideration of national trends
4. Proposals and Recommendations: Provides recommendations related to park types, land needs, existing facility improvements and individual facility needs
5. Action Plan Implementation: Suggests methods and means of addressing capital costs, operating costs, and funding

The proposals and recommendations for the plan address the following:

- The future role of the County in providing recreational facilities and opportunities and roles or other partnerships and local municipals.
- Number, type and generalized locations for existing and proposed new parks and facilities (indoor and outdoor).



- Identify open space and potential land acquisition for addressing specific items.
- Recommendations for recreation programs, staffing and maintenance standards.
- Proposals are to identify recreation tourism opportunities as it pertains to sporting events.
- Outline of the challenges and opportunities that exist with developing a tourism action plan.

Furthermore the Action Plan identifies cost data for proposals and recommendations (Capital and Operational), a priority schedule for implementing the proposals and methods of funding/financing their implementation. Marketing strategies and partnership strategies will also be reviewed.

The plan was conducted in a "team approach" with Woolpert (the planning consultant) responsible for organizing the project and directing team members in completing their tasks. Team members included a "Advisory Committee."

## Overview of the History of the State's First County Parks and Recreation Department

In 1971, Alamance County became the first County Parks and Recreation Department in North Carolina. At that time, the population of Alamance County was just over 96,000. Up until that point, municipalities held the role of providing parks and recreation services, and counties focused on cooperative farming programs.

In 1970, the City of Burlington changed their service policy for parks and recreation services to focus specifically on serving their own citizenry. This placed pressure on County officials to begin forming their own parks and recreation resources. Alamance County brought in two outside experts from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program—Harold Moses and Jim Stevens, to provide guidance. They recommended that the County develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to help articulate a vision, mission, and direction for a potential new department. An outside consultant, Charles

Stott, helped write the 1971 Alamance County Parks and Recreation Master Plan due to his planning expertise. This Master Plan was completed and it recommended the following:

- Role – Serve the non-incorporated citizenry of Alamance County
- Parks – Establish two (2) 300 acre district parks — one to serve the northern region and the other to serve the southern region of the county
- Recreation – Provide a comprehensive listing of recreational opportunities both indoor and outdoor
- Implementation – Partner with the schools for sharing indoor facilities; and the churches and civic clubs for outdoor facilities
- Leadership – Hire a Parks and Recreation Director

In 1971, Dean Coleman was hired as the first County Parks and Recreation Director within North Carolina, serving Alamance County. The newly formed Alamance County Parks and Recreation Department started off with virtually no budget. Up until 1973, county governments were prohibited by the state to use public tax dollars for parks and recreation. The limited numbers of staff were initially paid through outside resources (Emergency Employment Act). County staff shared offices with the City of Burlington Parks and Recreation staff.

The first recreation programs focused on socializing opportunities, such as "Rook Tournaments", a card game. As far as facilities, they started off with limited recreation facility resources:

- An old ball field in Graham
- Sharing of facilities with the schools, churches, civic clubs, and textile companies

Bo Foster owned a large plantation in southern Alamance County and was supportive of the recommendations from the 1971 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He would eventually provide his land to the county, and it became Cedarrock Park and Historical Farm.

Alamance County Parks and Recreation Department got off to a tremendous start in the 1970's, and during the next 30 years it would obtain two additional park sites, and acquire three existing recreation centers. During the mid 1970's, Alamance County would also begin to focus on strategies to attract the tourists and travelers moving along I-85. This is when the Factory Outlet Stores emerged and became a major "drawing card" in the state.

In 1987 the State ratified a bill to allow Alamance County to create a Tourism Development Authority (TDA). A year later, the TDA would become the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) to market and promote Alamance County. Since 1992, the CVB and the Chamber of Commerce has managed the operations of the CVB and it is funded with a 3% occupancy tax.

Dean Coleman retired in the late 1990's, and Huston Sally would become the second Director to lead the Alamance County Parks and Recreation Department into the 21st century. In turn, Bryan Hagood would be the third Director beginning in 2005.

## Review of Demographic Information

A review of demographics information was conducted to obtain knowledge of the Alamance County recreation users. The estimated 2004 population is 137,126; a 4.8% growth from 2000.

### Population:

- The 2000 population for Alamance County was 130,800; North Carolina was 8,046,813.
- Growth rate for the County from 1990-2000 was 20.87%.
- The State grew 21.4% and the Nation grew 13.2 % between 1990 and 2000.

- Natural growth (births/deaths) increased by 3,936.

### Migration:

Person moving into and out of Alamance County:

- Into the County from within North Carolina: 10,861
- Into the County from outside of North Carolina: 11,521
- Out of the County inside of North Carolina: 10,422
- Out of the County outside of North Carolina: 7,033

**Conclusion:** Alamance County and North Carolina are growing faster than the Nation.

### Population Projections:

Population projections can be based on several different factors (i.e. historical growth rate, permitted construction, mortality and births) that can result in a range of estimates. For the purposes of this report, two sources were identified, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments and the North Carolina Office of Budget and Management, and that data was averaged and used to determine the projected population for the County.

The population of Alamance County is projected to be:

- By 2010, an estimate of 152,136, a projected growth rate of 16.3%.
- By 2020, an estimate of 176,293, a projected growth rate of 15.87%.

**Conclusion:** Alamance County growth rate is projected to decline over the next 15 years but at a slightly higher rate than anticipated for entire state.

County Population Projections					
	2000	2010 Projection	% Growth 2000-2010	2020 Projection	% Growth 2010-2020
Alamance County	130,800	152,136	16.3%	176,293	15.8%
North Carolina	8,046,813	9,315,141	15.8%	10,682,217	14.7%

Source: 2000 population from US Census and State projections from NC-State Data Center.

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The following text provides a snapshot of the County population makeup in 2000.

#### Age:

- Median age of the County in 2000 was 36.3 years.
- North Carolina and United States median age in 2000 were both 35.3 years.
- 27% of the population under the age of 19 years.
- 14% of the population over the age of 65 years.
- Average of 480 additional children per year (1993 – 2003) enrolled in schools.

**Conclusion:** As a whole, the population is aging in Alamance County, but a significant number of children are being born or moving into the County.

#### Gender:

- Overall: Females, 52%; Males, 48%.
- Over 18 years of age (total 76.2%): Females, 40.3%; Males, 35.9%.
- Over 65 years of age (total 14.1%): Females, 8.6%; Males, 5.5%.

**Conclusion:** Females consisted of a slightly larger percentage of the overall County population and each age group in the year 2000.

#### Race:

- The 2000 racial makeup of the County was:
  - White: 72.5%
  - Black or African American: 18.8%
  - Hispanic or Latino: 6.8%
  - Asian: .9%
  - All others: 1%
- Population growth estimates by race from 2000 to 2003
  - White: 5.2%
  - Black or African American: 5.8%
  - Hispanic or Latino: 49.7%
  - Asian: 26.6%

**Conclusion:** The population is becoming more diverse with the faster growing sectors being Hispanic or Latino and Asian.

#### Workplace Commuting/Migration:

In 2000, the commuting patterns for Alamance County are:

- In-commuters (those coming into the County to work): 9,557
- Out-commuters (those leaving the County to work): 15,964
- Municipal daytime population variances:
  - Burlington: 25.7% gain
  - Elon: 9.7% loss
  - Mebane: 19.9% gain
  - Graham: 15.7% gain

#### Economy:

- Labor Force (2000): 66.5%
- Unemployment Rate (2000): 3.4%
- Unemployment Rate (2003): 6.7%
- Largest Employers (2000):
  - Manufacturing: 27.8%
  - Education, Health/Social Services: 19.4%
  - Retail: 10.9%
  - Construction: 7.2%

**Conclusion:** With the higher unemployment rates for 2000 to 2003, the local workforce has had to leave the County to work. The urban areas within the County hold the majority of employment opportunities.

#### Education:

- High School Graduates: 76.5%
- College Graduates: 19.2%

#### Income:

- Alamance County Median Family Income (1999): \$39,168
- North Carolina Median Family Income (1999): \$46,335
- United States Median Family Income (1999): \$47,800
- Alamance County Per Capita Income (1999): \$19,391
- Alamance County Per Capita Income (2001): \$26,160
- North Carolina Per Capita Income (2001): \$27,308

**Conclusion:** Alamance County has a lower income level than the State and the Nation.

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## Households:

In 2000, households in the County are:

- Total number of Households: 51,584
- Average Household Size: 2.46 persons
- North Carolina Average Household Size: 2.49 persons
- United States Average Household Size: 2.61 persons
- Owner Occupied: 70.1%
- Renter Occupied: 29.9%

**Conclusion:** The County household size is lower than the State and the Nation, however reflects a trend of single head of households. The rate of owner-occupied homes reflects a healthy balance.

## Review of Previous or Current Planning Efforts

The Department made the following information available for review during the planning process:

- Alamance County Destination 2020 Strategic Plan (2002)
- Alamance County Recreation and Parks Annual Reports for 2004/05 and various previous years
- Burlington Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan through 2010 (1994)
- Graham Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan (1998)

Information from the Alamance County 2020 Strategic Plan is highlighted below as it pertains to development of a plan recreation plan for Alamance County. This information and information from the other plans are useful in coordinating services and maintaining continuity when applicable.

### Alamance County Destination 2020 Strategic Plan (2002)

The planning group concentrated on six main focus areas, each with a mission statement:

- Orderly Growth
- Economic Development
- Transportation

- Education
- Utility Infrastructure
- Quality Of Life

The study addressed recreation and parks services under the focus area of “Quality of Life”

The mission statement for this focus area follows:

*Attention to other factors which make living and visiting Alamance County attractive safe, clean, enjoyable and rewarding: adequate parks, recreation and open spaces an active cultural arts, athletic and entertainment community, quality health care and elderly care, excellent institutions of higher learning , and appreciation of history and tradition.*

### Top issues identified:

- Of some two dozen issue categories identified in the process, both and the public agreed on the top three
  - Growth Management
  - Transportation
  - Education
- Within these categories specific concerns included:
  - Preserving farmland and green spaces
  - Encouraging mixed use development
  - Building New Roads
  - Providing for better mass transit
  - Putting discipline back in school
  - Improving schools and building new

### Plan Parts:

- There are four major parts to plan
  - Growth Factors Analysis
  - Vision Statements
  - Policy Statements (including supporting text)
  - Implementation Actions
- The vision statement pertaining to Recreation Parks and Open Space states the following information. *Please Note: The statements were written as though the year 2020 has come and the results of actions identified in the study have come to fruition.*

- We see a variety of recreation and park facilities in all areas of Alamance County to meet the needs of citizens of all ages.
- We see more County parks with active recreation facilities for youth such as soccer fields and multi-purpose fields.
- We see a well developed system of walking and biking trails adjacent to the Haw River and its tributaries and certain utility corridors. A greenway system connecting schools, parks, open spaces and neighborhoods.
- Many greenway trails have been made possible by generosity of benefactors who donated conservation easements for tax incentives/benefits.

### **Policies:**

The Policy Section of the report addressed 20 major issues brought forward at numerous public meetings. Many of the issues affect recreation:

1. Preferred Growth Pattern
2. Agricultural and Rural Area Preservation
3. Housing and Neighborhood Development
4. Commercial and Office Development
5. Industrial Development
6. Transportation
7. Water and Sewer Services
8. School Facilities
9. Solid Waste management
10. Parks and Recreation
11. Paying for infrastructure and Services
12. Air quality
13. Water Quality
14. Heath Care
15. Public safety
16. Health care
17. Services for Senior Citizens
18. Community Appearance
19. Historic Preservation
20. Cultural Diversity

### **Parks and Recreation Policy Information:**

The following information was identified in the policy section of the plan:

- Park development and open space preservation shall be planned to provide for the proper distribution of recreation and open space opportunities within the planning area.

- In determining future sites for park, recreation and water access facilities, multiple objectives for natural area conservation, visual enhancement, promotion of cultural and historic preservation, watershed and flood prone area protection shall be considered.
- Alamance County shall continue to work cooperatively with the County school system to maximize the use of recreation facilities located at existing public school sites, and to foster the joint development of additional public park facilities at new public school sites.
- Identifying, planning for and developing a system of open space greenways and hiking trails within the county shall be supported. The use of (1) natural corridors such as streams and floodplains, and (2) man-made corridors such as utility and transportation rights-of-way and easements, shall be emphasized.
- Alamance County shall work proactively with other local and state governments, utility companies, industries and other major landowners in the development of walking and bicycling trails for the public,
- Land acquisition for new park, recreation, and open space sites in advance of need shall be encouraged to achieve desirable locations at cost effective levels.
- All new residential development shall provide for adequate open space and recreation area, or funding to purchase such areas, in proportion to the demand created by the development. This may be determined according to the number of dwelling units in the development and/or by a percentage of the total acreage in the development.

### **Policy Information Pertinent to Parks and Recreation from other issue headings:**

- **Agricultural and Rural Area Preservation:**
  - Farms and woodland shall be recognized as an integral part of the planning area's open space system
  - County action concerning infrastructure (parks etc) and regulations shall serve to direct new development first to compact, targeted growth areas near existing towns,

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rather than leapfrogging to actions in the midst of farmland and green space.

- **Transportation:**

- The development of bikeways, sidewalks, trails, and other means of transportation shall be encouraged. Particular attention should be given to the priority bicycle and pedestrian needs as submitted for inclusion in the State Transportation improvement Program.

- **Economic Development:**

- The continued growth of the areas tourism industry shall be supported through expansion of traditional travel and tourism facilities, and focus on the historic, cultural and natural features the county, including for example the Haw River corridor.

- **Services to Senior Citizens:**

- The County supports the long range planning for services and facilities for the elderly particularly in anticipation of the aging baby boom generation.

- **Community Appearance:**

- The important economic, tourism, and community image benefits of attractive major highway corridors shall be recognized.

- **Historic Preservation:**

- Development of the tourism and educational potential of the areas architectural, historic, and cultural resources shall be encouraged.

**Implementation Action Statements for Parks and Recreation issues:**

- Consider supporting the efforts of the YMCA to develop a new facility in partnership with the Alamance Regional Medical Center, and other area partners.
- Consider having school administrators develop formal policies and written agreements with local government recreation departments, including the County's, concerning the joint use of the County's school facilities.
- Consider authorizing the preparation of a Master Parks and Recreation Plan, to include a needs assessment, proposed locations for

future parks, and estimates of funding needed for park development.

- Consider authorizing the preparation of a Greenway Master Plan, identifying (1) natural corridors such as streams and floodplains, and (2) man-made corridors such as utility and transportation rights-of-way and easements for incorporation into a greenway and trails system.
- Consider amending the County's subdivision regulations, as allowed by State law, to require land dedication for open space and parks in proportion to the size of the development or number of housing units being created. Provide for the collection of a fee in lieu of land dedication for the purpose of parkland acquisition.
- Consider an educational program increasing public awareness among property owners as to the tax benefits of donating conservation easements. Property owners along the Haw River corridor should be particularly targeted for this information.

**Implementation Information pertinent to park and recreation from other categories:**

- **Paying for infrastructure and Services:**

- Consider avoiding tax policies which burden rural area and farming residents with responsibility for paying for schools, parks and other facilities required by new residents migrating into the county.
- Consider adopting development impact fees tied to new growth, and determined by the specific demand for schools and parks created by that new growth.

- **Cultural Diversity Acceptance:**

- Consider continued support for Parks and Recreation Department efforts to respond to the recreational needs of the Latino community including, but not limited to, soccer fields.

- **Economic Development**

- Consider strengthening support to promote Alamance County as a destination for heritage tourism, particularly involving the history and culture of the textile industry.
- Consider continued support for the promotion and use of the Haw River

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Corridor for paddle boating and recreational development.

- **Historic Preservation**

- Consider supporting continued improvements to the Cedarock Historical Farm, as well as other significant historic and educational facilities in the area.
- Consider supporting, with approval of the family, the designation of the Scott family farm and home place as a state historic site.

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## SECTION 2 - INVENTORY OF EXISTING FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

### Introduction

This section of the report provides an inventory of existing parks, recreation facilities, programming, and tourism elements/attractions available in Alamance County. It also inventories the cultural and historic sites in the county. Sites include town and municipal locations, schools facilities, community sites, state facilities, federal facilities and some heritage site locations. Inventory information such as the size of the site and the number of individual facilities (fields, courts etc.) is presented in three tables: Table 2-1 “Existing Public Facility Inventory”, Table 2-2 “Existing Private Facility Inventory”, and Table 2-3 “Existing Historic, Cultural & Tourism Site Inventory.” These tables are at the end of this section. This information was provided to the consultant by County staff for comparison with standards and for use in gathering more specific information during individual site visits performed in September 2005. All of the sites are shown on the Existing Recreational Facilities Map at the end of this section of the report.

### Overview of County–Owned Park and Recreation Sites

- 7 Park/Recreation Sites
- 527.12 Acres of Park Land
- 3 Community Centers
- 5 Playgrounds
- 11 Picnic Shelters
- 5 Baseball/Softball Fields
- 3 Multi Purpose Fields
- 9 Basketball Courts
- 10 Horseshoe Pits
- 2 , 1/8 Mile Tracks
- 2 Disc Golf Course
- Living Historic Farm
- Hiking, Biking and Equestrian Trails

### Existing Park Facility Assessment

County staff (ACRPD) and Woolpert performed the inventory of existing recreation facilities in the County and site visits were made to over 15 locations. The purpose of the site visits was to review the number of facilities provided and determine how effectively the facilities are serving the public. In general the park visits can be characterized as follows:

- Items Reviewed:
  - Site Furnishings (benches, tables, signs, etc.)
  - Visual character
  - Overall condition (turf, furnishings, materials, etc)
  - Accessibility
  - Vandalism or lack of maintenance
  - Programming
  - New Opportunities

The facilities are divided into two categories, Public, and Private. All the facilities inventoried are identified in the text that follows as “Existing Public Facilities” (listed in Table 2-1), “Existing Private Facilities” (listed in Table 2-2), and “Existing Historic, Cultural and Tourism Sites”

- Public sites = Facilities/areas owned or operated by public agencies open to the public on an unlimited basis (county, city, town, school, state and federal sites)
- Private sites = Facilities/areas that are privately owned and are open to the public on a limited basis or for members only (i.e., churches, athletic associations, civic clubs, swim/golf clubs, etc.);



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## Overview of Countywide Inventory

- Alamance County (527.12 acres)
  - Administration Office – 1
  - Recreation Centers\*- 3
  - Special / District Park – 1
  - Neighborhood Parks – 2
- \*All of the 3 recreation centers are located on leased property with the Alamance County Board of Education.*
- Other City and Town Parks (38 sites for 742.84 acres)
  - Burlington - 22
  - Elon- 2
  - Gibsonville – 2/3
  - Graham - 8
  - Haw River - 2
  - Mebane - 3
  - Swepsonville- 1
- Community Ball-field Facilities (public, quasi-public, private) ± 11 sites (160 acres)
- Community Pools and Golf Course Facilities (public, quasi-public, private) ± 23 sites
- Schools Sites (32)
  - Elementary – 19
  - Middle Schools – 7
  - High Schools – 6
  - Alamance Community College- 1
  - Elon University - 1
- Heritage Inventory and Cultural Sites (over 50 references in data base)
- Nearby Federal Property's
  - Uwharrie National Forest
- Nearby State Facilities & Lake Sites
  - NC Zoo
  - Eno River State Park
  - Jordan Lake
  - William B Umstead State Park
  - Falls Lake Rec. Area

## Existing Public Facilities (Listed in 2-1)

### Alamance County Facilities/Parks

P4	Morgan Place Park
P5	Cedarock Park
P6	Glen Raven Park
P7	ACRPD Office
P1	Pleasant Grove Recreation Center

P3	Ray Street Recreation Center
P49	Eli Whitney Recreation Center

### City of Burlington Facilities/Parks

P11	Lake Mackintosh
P24	Kernodle Senior Center
P27	Burlington Aquatic Center
P28	Burlington Tennis Center
P8	Lake Cammack
P9	Joe Davidson Park
P10	South Neighborhood Park
P12	Town & Country Park
P13	Willowbrook Park
P14	Burlington City Park
P15	Indian Valley Golf Course
P16	Mayco Bigelow Recreation Center
P17	Northwestern Park
P18	Robinson Park
P19	Elmira Street Recreation Center
P20	Eva Barker Park
P21	Fairchild Center
P22	Broad Street Gym
P23	Dothan Park
P25	Petersburg Park
P26	Forest Hills
P29	Thataways

### Town of Elon Facilities/Parks

P30	Elon Park
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### City of Graham Facilities/Parks

P32	Oakley Street Park
P33	Bill Cooke Park
P34	Maple Street Center
P35	Greenway Park
P36	Graham River Access
P37	South Graham Park
P38	Marshall Street Playground
P39	Graham Recreation Center

### Town of Haw River Facilities/Parks

P41	Haw River Civic Center
P40	Haw River Park

### Town of Mebane Facilities/Parks

P42	Mebane Arts & Community Center
P43	Mebane Youth Field
P44	Mebane Recreation Center

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### Town of Swepsonville Facilities/Parks

P49 Swepsonville River Park

### Alamance-Burlington Schools

S2 Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary  
S10 Elon College Elementary  
S21 Pleasant Grove Elementary  
S7 E.M. Yoder Elementary  
S24 South Mebane Elementary  
S15 Haw River Elementary  
S20 North Graham Elementary  
S23 South Graham Elementary  
S22 R. Homer Andrews Elementary  
S9 Eastlawn Elementary  
S14 Harvey R. Newlin Elementary  
S13 Grove Park Elementary  
S17 Hillcrest Elementary  
S19 Marvin B. Smith Elementary  
S1 Alexander Wilson Elementary  
S6 E.M. Holt Elementary  
S27 Sylvan Elementary  
S4 B. Everett Jordan Elementary  
S3 Audrey W. Garrett Elementary  
S30 Western High School  
S8 Eastern High School  
S11 Graham High School  
S18 Hugh M. Cummings High School  
S29 Walter M. Williams High School  
S25 Southern High School  
S31 Western Middle School  
S32 Woodlawn Middle School  
S12 Graham Middle School  
S5 Broadview Middle School  
S28 Turrentine Middle School  
S26 Southern Middle School  
S16 Hawfields Middle School  
S33 Alamance Community College

### Existing Private Facilities (Listed in 2-2)

#### Private Community Ball-field Facilities

C11 Sylvan  
C3 Eli Whitney  
C1 AO  
C4 EM Holt  
C2 Belmont  
C6 Lakeview  
C8 Mt Hermon  
C7 McCray  
C9 Saxapahaw  
C10 St Marks

C5 Hawfields

### Private Community Pools and Golf Course Facilities

SP13 Olde Forest Raquet Club  
SP1 Alamance County Club Pool/ Golf  
SP7 Gold's Gym  
SP15 YMCA Pool  
SP4 Camp Frontier  
SP11 Moose Lodge  
SP12 North Park Pool  
SP8 Graham Swimming Pool  
SP5 Camp Greenleaves  
SP14 Quarry Hills Pool/ Golf  
SP3 Camp Deer Lake  
SP9 Hidden Lake  
SP6 Dogwood Swimming Pool  
SP10 Mill Creek Golf Club  
SP16 Indian Valley Golf Course (public)  
SP17 Quaker Creek Golf Course  
SP18 The Challenge at Hideaway Farm  
SP19 I-85 Golf Range and Baseball  
SP20 Arrowhead Golf Course  
SP21 Ticks Golf Range  
SP22 Shamrock Golf Course  
SP23 Southwick Golf Course  
SP24 Sourwood Forest Golf Club

### Existing Historic and Cultural Sites

(Listed in 2-3)

#### Historic Sites

H32 Snow Camp  
H1 Alamance Battleground Historic Site  
H14 Glen Raven Transportation/Ossipee Mill  
H3 Alamance County Historical Museum  
H11 Elon University  
H12 Elon University-State Historic Marker  
H8 Cedarrock Historical Farm/Garrett Homestead  
H10 Dentzel Menagerie Carousel  
H25 Paramount Theatre  
H4 Burlington Depot  
H26 Sellars-Gunn School  
H7 Carolina Mill  
H9 Copland Fabrics Inc./High Falls Mill  
H29 Textile Heritage Museum  
H15 Glencoe Mill/Village  
H6 Captain White House

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H17	Graham Historical Museum
H27	Sesquicentennial Park
H2	Alamance County Courthouse
H16	Graham Cinema
H24	Old Central High
H22	Henderson Scott House
H20	Haw River NC RR Bridge Piers
H19	Haw River Historical Museum
H18	Granite Mill
H30	Uncle Eli's Quilting Party Historic Marker
H21	Hawfields Church - NC Historic Marker
H31	Woodlawn School
H23	Iron Gate Winery
H13	Eno-Occaneechi Indian Tribe Pow Wow Site
H28	Texas Community

#### Cultural Sites

CH14	Bass Mountain Music Park
CH17	Sword of Peace/Snow Camp Outdoor Drama
CH16	Grove Winery
CH7	Colonial Mall
CH9	Elon University
CH4	YMCA
CH19	Women's Resource Center
CH13	Iseley, Jane Iseley Farm (Produce)
CH12	Burlington Artist's League Gallery
CH5	May Memorial Library
CH6	North Park Library
CH3	Southern States/Mr. B's Educational Experience
CH11	Graham Public Library
CH10	Graham Cinema
CH2	N.C. Cooperative Extension/Alamance County Center
CH20	Creek Side Winery
CH21	Benjamin Vineyards & Winery
CH8	GlenMarie Vineyards & Winery
CH15	Mebane Public Library
CH18	Inro Gate Vineyards/Winery at Iron Gate Farm

### Existing Park Programming Assessment

ACRPD provide inventory information to Woolpert on existing recreation programming for review while performing facility assessments.

The following list identifies programs offered at the County's administration office and the three recreation centers:

- Administration Offices (2 class rooms)
  - Aerobic Classes
  - Hispanic Soccer League
- Pleasant Grove Recreation Center (2004-05 attendance 20,376- avg. 59 a day)

#### Adult / Family

- Aerobic Classes
- Hispanic Soccer League
- Oil Painting / Craft Classes
- Woodcarving
- Basket Weaving
- Piano Classes
- Bingo
- Field Trips
- "Big Daddy's" Dance and Entertainment
- Bluegrass / Gospel Nights
- Potluck Lunches

#### Youth

- Open Gym
- Youth basketball
- Youth Baseball and Softball
- Teen Dance Nights
- Summer Camps

- Eli Whitney Recreation Center (2004-05 attendance 17,917- avg. 49 a day)

#### Adult / Family

- Rook tournament
- Aerobic / Yoga / Exercise Classes
- Hispanic Basketball League
- Line Dancing Classes
- RC Racing
- Uncle Eli's Quilting Bee
- Bingo
- Family Movie Night
- Field Trips
- Potluck Lunches
- Historic Apple Program
- Volleyball

#### Youth

- Open Gym
- Youth basketball
- Youth Baseball and Softball
- Parents Night Out
- Break Time -K-12 games
- Summer Camps

- Ray Street Recreation Center  
(2004-05 attendance 10,011- avg. 27 a day)

Adult / Family

- Aerobic / Exercise Classes
- Dog Obedience Classes
- Special Olympics Training and Tournaments
- Santa’s Workshop and Shopping
- Line Dancing Classes
- Theater Workshop

Youth

- Open Gym
- Youth Basketball / Tournaments
- Youth Indoor Soccer
- Break Time -K-12 games
- Summer Camps

- Athletic Programs

Baseball (19 parks / 27 fields)

- 145 teams
- 1885 players

Basketball (9 gyms / 10 courts)

- 234 teams
- 2340 players

Football (8 fields)

- 22 teams
- 673 players

Indoor Soccer ( 3 gyms)

- 9 teams
- 90 players

Softball (17 parks / 23 fields)

- 97 teams
- 1261 players

- Special Olympic Program

13 various sports

- 145 teams
- 1885 players

- Cedarock Park

(2004-05 attendance 125,000- avg. 342 a day)

- “Preserving our Heritage” Festival
- Farm to Table Program
- Junior fishing rodeo
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Fish Stock Program
- Pro-Am / Sneaky Pete Disc Golf Tournaments
- Sanctioned Horseshoe Tournaments
- NC State Envirothon

## Existing Tourism Assessment

The inventory of existing recreation and tourism attractions identifies over 70 sites. The listing not only includes recreation sites such as golf courses, lakes and parks, but also includes historical and cultural attractions such as museums, theatres galleries/exhibits, and historical sites/markers

The Burlington-Alamance Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) tracks attendance for various events and facilities located in the area. Twenty sites are identified in the following table that includes visitors to site such as parks libraries, wineries, and museums. Over 1.26—million visitations were recorded in 2004 and the level of attendance has remained relatively constant for the past three year.

<b>Attendance/Visitation Information:</b>	
<b>Attraction</b>	<b>2004 Attendance</b>
Ace Speedway	(n/a for 2004)
Alam. Battleground	10,233
Alam. Arts Council	12,960
Alam. Co Hist Museum	13,922
Benjamin Winery	850
Burlington City Park	250,000
Burlington Downtown	34,684
Burlington Indians	35,600
Cedarock Park	117,441
The Challenge	22,396
Craftique Furniture Tour	200
Graham Hist. Museum	336
Haw River Museum	450
Iron Gate Winery	900
May Memorial Library*	232,242
Libraries	504,340
Occaneechi Tribal Office	400
Paramount	23,000
Snow Camp OT	4,293
Textile Heritage Museum	1,419
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,265,666</b>

The Tourism Development Authority (TDA) and CVB believe and support appropriate sport events that are valuable economic generators for the community and demonstrate a return on

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investments from local governments and businesses.

The CVB staff, with the assistance of the Sports Development Council (SBC), Burlington Recreation & Parks, local lodging properties, and participants, collects data from sporting events that take place in our community.

The following list identifies events or attractions that the SBC has financially supported through partnerships and/or has successfully hosted.

- Amateur Softball Association (ASA) National Tournament Modified Pitch and Seniors
- Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) National Baseball Tournament
- Collegiate Softball Tournament organized by Elon Athletics
- Cycle North Carolina hosted in Mebane
- Junior Putters of America National Championship
- Mission Man Triathlon
- NC and Burlington Youth Soccer Association Tournaments
- Professional Bowlers Association (PBA) Tournament – Tar Heel Tour
- Professional Women’s Bowlers Association (PWBA) Tournament
- Regional Chapter of the National Football Foundation – scholarship sponsor
- US Tennis Association 10 & under
- Equipment Investments – City of Graham-Temporary Fencing, Hurricane Wrestling Club, Marketing Banners for Burlington Indians
- Corrigan-Faircloth Chapter of the National Football Foundation
- Recently landed USA South Conference Spring sports festival for 2006 & 2007

Using tools such as participant surveys, hotel room pick up reports, and an economic impact worksheet (approved by a professional organizations) the SBC has estimated the direct spending and total dollar impact of an event on the area.

Below is a summary of findings and projections for recent events. *Please note: Bid*

*investments\*are paid from occupancy tax collections after the event has been evaluated and approved by the SBC with oversight from the Alamance County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) as administered by the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).*

- **Amateur Athletic Union(AAU) National Baseball Championship (13:u 80)**  
July 17-22, 2005
  - Total economic impact of \$308,578
    - A 5-day event hosted at Springwood Park in Burlington.
    - Included 15 teams from 8 different states with an estimated attendance of 576 participants and visitors
    - Total overnight hotel pick-for the event duration = 1,271 rooms for a regional direct spending of \$220,413.
    - Identified challenges include, 6 of the possible 14 out of town teams chose to stay in communities outside of Alamance County; several hotels reported poor conduct, lack of supervision and some property damage.
    - Bid Investment - \$2,500\*
- **Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Senior National Softball Tournament**  
September 2-5, 2005
  - Total economic impact of \$311,714
    - Hosted at Burlington City Park and Springwood Park
    - 59 teams from 18 states with an estimated attendance of 1,335.event participants and visitors
    - Total overnight hotel pick-up for the event duration = 1,367 rooms for a direct spending of \$222,653
    - Surveys reflected a positive experience in our community and they are looking forward to their return in 2006.
    - Bid Investment - \$4,000\*

### **USA South Conference Spring Sports Festival**

April 12-15, 2006 & 2007

- Estimated total impact of \$197,361
  - The event will bring six sports tournaments to five venues

- Projected to deliver 514 athletes and coaches with estimated spectators of 1,860 people.
- Lodging pick up will be approximately 411 total overnight rooms with a direct spending of \$140,972
- Bid Investment - \$0\*

- The active facilities provided by the municipalities are more uniformly designed / maintained
- Most if not all the sites visited do not meet new ADA policies for recreation sites. The County however has made good efforts in providing improvements

## Findings / Observations of Existing Facilities, Programs and Tourism Components

### County Facilities and Programming

- The County Park Department has currently three major focuses:
  - Programming for the County's Youth Athletic Programs
  - Programming for the special population
  - Cedarock Park (historical farm and passive site)
- Current (3) Recreation Centers
  - Centers are very old and worn (inherited old school facilities – 1930's)
  - Centers are very small and have very limited space for any expansion of new programs
  - The centers have many deficiencies with regards to access, security, operating systems, inadequate space for current programming.
  - The Centers are older than 85 years, and are in desire need of replacement rather than proposed additions or renovations
- The department is not facility driven, except for the centers and Cedarock Park.
- Cedarock Park has great potential for more use and programming.
- The urban recreation needs of the county are being met at the local municipal community level, not through the County.
- Confusion of the identity of County's Recreation Department from other municipal providers (currently the public does not identify that recreation is provided by the county, most think its Burlington)
- Schools, other municipalities and private community ball fields provide many of sites for sports fields in the County for community use

### Tourism

- Good historical fabric of the County (i.e. Burlington's Train Depot, Haw River, Mebane and Graham downtowns)
- The TDA and CVB has taken the opportunity to take advantage of the new wineries and branding "The Haw River Wine Trail"
- The TDA and CVB has an excellent website and promotes the county many attractions and events
- The Haw River is a natural resource that needs to be marketed. Many opportunities along the river are being explored and developed (i.e. Saxapahaw Jordan Properties, restoration and development of the historic mill village of Saxapahaw) Many other points of interest exist along the river
- The SBC has been proactive in recruiting and attracting sports attractions to the area. New facilities have helped tremendously.

Table 2-1 Existing Public Facility Inventory

MAP #	NAME	acres	REC. / SR. CENTER	GYM	AUDITORIUM	Meeting Rm/ Rooms	PLAY	SHELTER	PICNIC TABLE	GRILLS	BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL	FOOTBALL	Multipurpose Field/Soccer	VOLLEYBALL	BASKETBALL	TRACK	TENNIS	HORSESHOE PIT	RESTROOM LOCATIONS	RESTROOM/C CONCESSION	CONCESSION	SWIMMING POOL	AMPHI- THEATRE	TRAILS	MARINA/ BOAT RAMP	LAKE /POND	Fishing Pier/ Access	Equestrian Trails	Mt. Bike Trails	PARKING LOT
Alamance County Facilities/Parks																														
P1	Pleasant Grove Recreation Center	28.0	1	1		2	1	1	x		2		1			1														1
P3	Ray Street Recreation Center	17.1	1	1		2																								1
P49	Eli Whitney Recreation Center	10.9	1	1		2	1	1	x		2		1			1														1
P4	Morgan Place Park	3.1					1	1		x					6															
P6	Glen Raven Park	4.3					1		x						1															
P7	ACRPD Office	2.8				1					1				1															1
P5	Cedarock Park	461.0					1	8	x	x			1	1	1			10	2				1	x		x	x	x	x	6
	total acres	527.1																												
City of Burlington Facilities/Parks																														
P24	Kernodle Senior Center	21.12	1			2													1											1
P19	Elmira Street Recreation Center	4.6					1						1		1	1		1												1
P16	Mayco Bigelow Recreation Center	25	1	1		2					1		1	6	1				1			1								1
P9	Joe Davidson Park	42.5					1	2	x		2		4	1		1	2													1
P12	Town & Country Park	50																					x					x		
P14	Burlington City Park	64.83					1	6	x		5		1			1			2		2								5	
P21	Fairchild Center / Ballpark/BMX	41.83	1	2		1	1				2			1		1	3						x					x	3	
P22	Broad Street Gym	0.97		1															1											1
P10	South Neighborhood Park	0.29																												
P25	Petersburg Park	0.19																												
P13	Willowbrook Park	0					1	1																						
P17	Northwestern Park	1.55									1				1															1
P18	Robinson Park	2.48					1								1	1														2
P20	Eva Barker Park	1.33																												
P23	Dothan Park	3					1								1															
P26	Forest Hills	5.96				2	1				1		1			1														1
P27	Maynard Aquatic Center	21.12							x										3			1								1
P28	Burlington Tennis Center	21.12															12													
P29	Thataways	64.83	1																1											1
P2	Springwood (?Guilford location)	78					1	2			4		4			1				2										2
P15	Indain Valley Golf Course	65.74																		1	1				x					1
P11	Lake Mackintosh	20.76	1				1	1	x										1						x	x	x			1
P8	Lake Cammack	54							x	x					1				2						x	x	x			1
	total acres	591.22																												
Town of Elon Facilities/Parks																														
P30	Elon Park (Beth Schmidt Park)	15.76	1				1	1	x	x									1				x							1

Table 2-1 Existing Public Facility Inventory

MAP #	NAME	acres	REC. / SR. CENTER	GYM	AUDITORIUM	Meeting Fac/ Rooms	PLAY	SHELTER	PICNIC TABLE	GRILLS	BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL	FOOTBALL	Multipurpose Field/Soccer	VOLLEYBALL	BASKETBALL	TRACK	TENNIS	HORSESHOE PIT	RESTROOM LOCATIONS	RESTROOM/C CONCESSION	CONCESSION	SWIMMING POOL	AMPHI- THEATRE	TRAILS	MARINA/ BOAT RAMP	LAKE /POND	Fishing Pier/ Access	Equestrian Trails	Mt. Bike Trails	PARKING LOT	
City of Graham Facilities/Parks																															
P33	Bill Cooke Park	45.1				1	2	x	x	3		3		1	1	6	2	1	1				x								2
P37	South Graahm Park	22.98				1	2	x	x				2	1		4	1	1				x							x	1	
P34	Maple Street Center	0.59	1		1													1												1	
P38	Marshall Street Playground	0.4				1		x				1																			
P32	Oakley Street Park	3.33						x				1																			
P36	Graham River Access	100																1					x	x	x	x			x	1	
P35	Greenway Park	5				2		x				1																			
P39	Graham Recreation Center	3.09	1	2	1	1							2				2	2		1										1	
	Zacahry Field	3								1								1												1	
	Goley Street/Johnson Street Field	5										2			1																
	Apollo Field	3										1							1												
	Graham Mebane Lake	650					1													1			x	x		x				1	
	total acres	841.5																													
Town of Gibsonville (? GuilfordCo.)																															
P31	Moricle	50				1																									
P32	Edward G murrell	10				1																									
P50	Garden Railway	0.25																													
	Northeast Park	395				1				2		3			1			2					x		x		x			5	
	total acres	60.25																													
Town of Haw River Facilities/Parks																															
P41	Haw River Civic Center	1.05																													
P40	Haw River Park	24.64				1	1			1	1				1			1					x							1	
	total acres	25.7																													
Town of Mebane Facilities/Parks																															
P42	Mebane Arts & Community Center	19.11	1	1	2	1				3		4		3	1			2	1				x							1	
	Lake Michael - Orange County	100					1											1					x	x	x	x				1	
P43	Mebane Youth Field	9.25								2		1			1				1											1	
P44	Mebane Recreation Center	0.61		1												3		1												1	
	total acres	129.0																													
Town of Swepsonville Facilities/Parks																															
P49	Swepsonville River Park	7.67																					x							1	



Table 2-1 Existing Public Facility Inventory

MAP #	NAME	acres	REC. / SR. CENTER	GYM	AUDITORIUM	Meeting Rm/ Rooms	PLAY	SHELTER	PICNIC TABLE	GRILLS	BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL	FOOTBALL	Multipurpose Field/Soccer	VOLLEYBALL	BASKETBALL	TRACK	TENNIS	HORSESHOE PIT	RESTROOM LOCATIONS	RESTROOM/C ONCESSION	CONCESSION	SWIMMING POOL	AMPHI- THEATRE	TRAILS	MARINA/ BOAT RAMP	LAKE /POND	Fishing Pier/ Access	Equestrian Trails	Mt. Bike Trails	PARKING LOT
SCHOOLS (County)																														
S1	Alexander Wilson Elementary	26.50		1			1								1				x											x
S10	Elon College Elementary	18.35		1			1				2								x											x
S13	Grove Park Elementary	9.90		1			1				1								x											x
S14	Harvey R. Newlin Elementary	9.00		1			1												x											x
S15	Haw River Elementary	13.40		1			1												x											x
S17	Hillcrest Elementary	18.40		1			1				1								x											x
S19	Marvin B. Smith Elementary	18.69		1			1				1								x											x
S2	Altamahaw-Ossipee Elementary	16.59		1			1				2								x											x
S20	North Graham Elementary	n/a		1			1												x											x
S21	Pleasant Grove Elementary	16.38		1			1												x											x
S22	R. Homer Andrews Elementary	20.00		1			1				1								x											x
S23	South Graham Elementary	14.30		1			1				1								x											x
S24	South Mebane Elementary	26.00		1			1								1				x											x
S27	Sylvan Elementary	28.90		1			1												x											x
S3	Audrey W. Garrett Elementary	60.00		1	1		1								2				x											x
S4	B. Everett Jordan Elementary	30.60			1		1												x											x
S6	E.M. Holt Elementary	30.20		1	1		2								1				x											x
S7	E.M. Yoder Elementary	15.40		1			1												x											x
S9	Eastlawn Elementary	13.80		1			1												x											x
S11	Graham High School	42.20		1							2	1	1		1				x											x
S18	Hugh M. Cummings High School	73.50		1							2	1	1		1				x											x
S25	Southern High School	89.50		1							2	1	1		1				x											x
S29	Walter M. Williams High School	13.00		1							2	1	1		1				x											x
S30	Western High School	38.94		1							2	1	1		1				x											x
S8	Eastern High School	50.06		1							2	1	1		1				x											x
S12	Graham Middle School	31.00		1								1	1		1				x											x
S16	Hawfields Middle School	n/a		1								1	1		1				x											x
S28	Turrentine Middle School	4.00		1								1	1		1				x											x
S26	Southern Middle School	n/a		1								1	1		1				x											x
S31	Western Middle School	40.97		1								1	1		1				x											x
S32	Woodlawn Middle School	n/a		1								1	1		1				x											x
S33	Alamance Community College	82.60																												
S5	Broadview Middle School	n/a		1								1	1		1				x											x
S34	Elon University (all facilities)	543.28																												
		3577.9	12	42	3	16	49	31	0	0	54	14	44	8	38	21	30	16	29	7	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	54

Table 2-2 Existing Private Facility Inventory

MAP #	NAME	acres	REC. CENTER	GYM	AUDITORIUM	MEETING	FAC./Room	PLAY	SHELTER	PICNIC	TABLE (s)	BBQ	BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL	FOOTBALL	Multipurpose Field/Soccer	VOLLEYBALL	BASKETBALL	TRACK	TENNIS	HORSESHOE	PIT	RESTROOM LOCATIONS	RESTROOM/ CONCESSION	CONCESSION	SWIMMING	POOL	AMPHI- THEATRE	TRAIL	MARINA/BOA T RAMP	LAKE	GOLF	ZOO	PARKING	LOT
Private Community Ballfields Facilities																																		
C11	Sylvan	28.98										1										1											1	
C3	Eli Whitney	6.07										1										1											1	
C1	AO	14.79										2																					1	
C4	EM Holt	30.2										1		1								1											1	
C2	Belmont	10.47										1										1											1	
C6	Lakeview	6.1										1									1		1										1	
C8	Mt Hermon	4.7										1									1		1										1	
C7	McCray	4.3						1				1									1												1	
C9	Saxapahaw	30.66										2										1											1	
C10	St Marks	5.41										1									1		1										1	
C5	Hawfields	19										1									1		1										1	
	Swepsonville	18.4										1									1		1											
	total acres	179.08		0	0	0	0	1	0	0		14	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	
Private Community Pools & Golf Courses																																		
SP13	Olde Forest Raquet Club	15																																
SP1	Alamance County Club Pool/ Golf	151.57																																
SP7	Gold's Gym	1.83																																
SP15	YMCA Pool	64.83																																
SP4	Camp Frontier	215.46																																
SP11	Moose Lodge	3.93																																
SP12	North Park Pool	25																																
SP8	Graham Swimming Pool	0.47																																
SP5	Camp Greenleaves	54																																
SP14	Quarry Hills Pool/ Golf	169.65																																
SP3	Camp Deer Lake	143.72																																
SP9	Hidden Lake	77																																
SP6	Dogwood Swimming Pool	2.05																																
SP10	Mill Creek Golf Club	191.58																																
SP16	Indian ValleyGolf Course	65																																
SP17	Quaker Creek Golf Course	140.0																																
SP18	The Challenge at Hideaway Farm	140.0																																
SP19	I-85 Golf Range and Baseball	25.0																																
SP20	Arrowhead Golf Course	140.0																																
SP21	Ticks Golf Range	10.0																																
SP22	Shamrock Golf Course	140.0																																
SP23	Southwick Golf Course	140.0																																
SP24	Sourwood Forest Golf Club	140.0																																
	Deep Creek Disc Golf Course	?																																
	Belmont-Massey Disc golf Course	?																																
	total acres	2056.09																																

Table 2-3 Existing Historic, Cultural & Tourism Sites Inventory

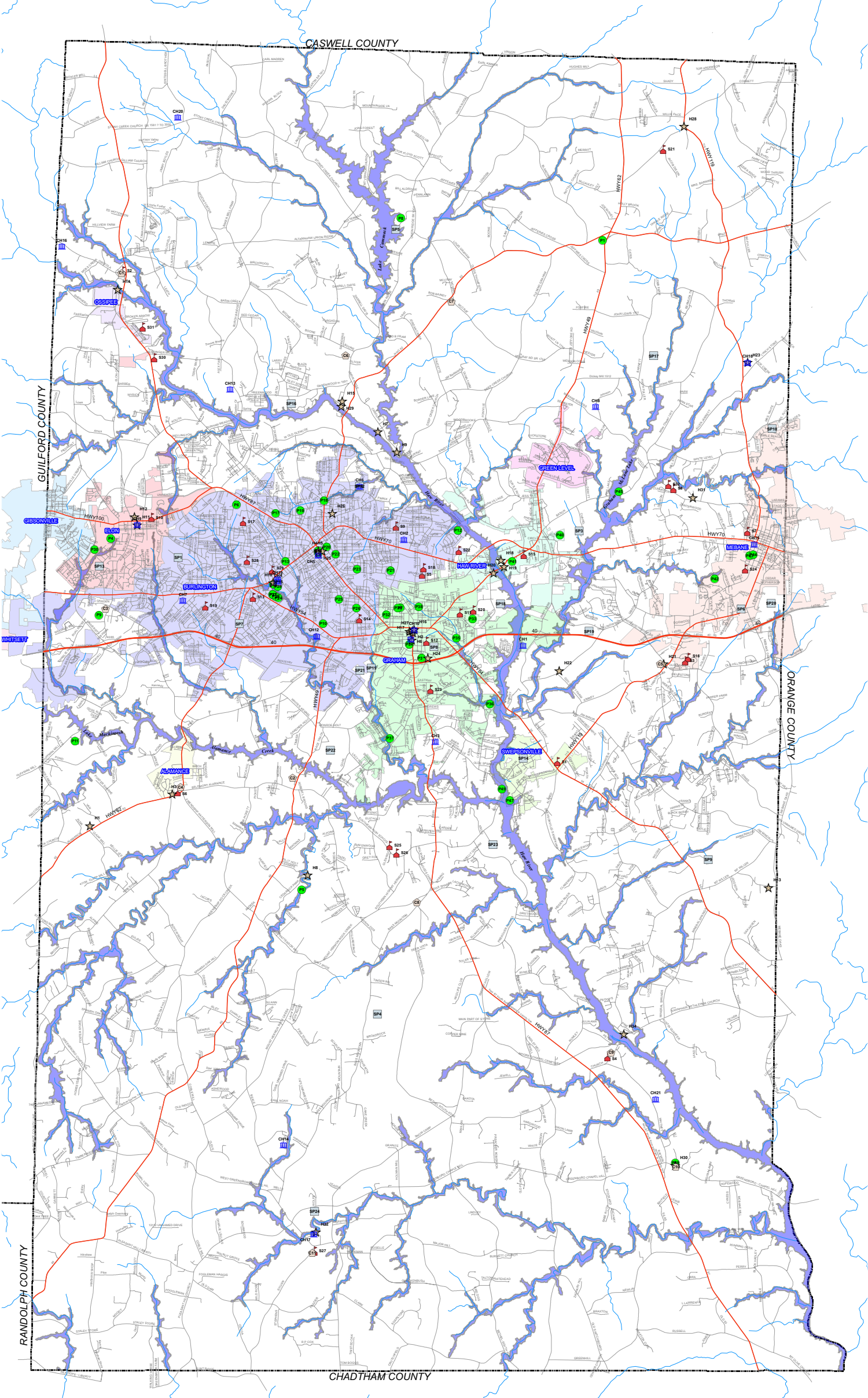
MAP #	NAME	acres	REC. CENTER	GYM	AUDITORIUM	MEETING FAC./Room	PLAY	SHELTER	PICNIC TABLE (s)	BBQ	BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL	FOOTBALL	Multipurpose Field/Soccer	VOLLEYBALL	BASKETBALL	TRACK	TENNIS	HORSESHOE	PIT	RESTROOM LOCATIONS	RESTROOM/ CONCESSION	CONCESSION	SWIMMING POOL	AMPHI- THEATRE	TRAIL	MARINA/BOA T RAMP	LAKE	GOLF	ZOO	PARKING LOT
Historic Facilities																														
H1	Alamance Battleground Historic Site	18																												
H10	Dentzel Menagerie Carousel	64.83																												
H11	Elon University	21.26																												
H12	Elon University-State Historic Marker	0																												
H13	Eno-Occaneechi Indian Tribe Pow Wow Site	10																												
H14	Glen Raven Transportation/Ossipee Mill	12.81																												
H15	Glenceo Mill/Village	64.52																												
H16	Graham Cinema	0.15																												
H17	Graham Historical Museum	0.07																												
H18	Granite Mill	36.83																												
H19	Haw River Historical Museum	0.09																												
H2	Alamance County Courthouse	0.19																												
H20	Haw River NC RR Bridge Piers	25																												
H21	Hawfields Church - NC Historic Marker	19																												
H22	Henderson Scott House	209.05																												
H23	Iron Gate Winery	59.49																												
H24	Old Central High	17.06																												
H25	Paramount Theatre	0.21																												
H26	Sellars-Gunn School	0																												
H27	Sesquicentennial Park	0.07																												
H28	Texas Community	0.43																												
H29	Textile Heritage Museum	64.52																												
H3	Alamance County Historical Museum	5.46																												
H30	Uncle Eli's Quilting Party Historic Marker	10.86																												
H31	Woodlawn School	4.36																												
H32	Snow Camp	6.62																												
H4	Burlington Depot	2.59																												
H5	Burlington Historic Depot (Passenger Station)	0.42																												
H6	Captain White House	3.18																												
H7	Carolina Mill	22.06																												
H8	Cedarock Historical Farm/Garrett Homestead	461																												
H9	Copland Fabrics Inc./High Falls Mill	3.8																												
?	Oconeechi Band Saponi Nation tribal Center																													

Table 2-3 Existing Historic, Cultural & Tourism Sites Inventory

MAP #	NAME	acres	REC. CENTER	GYM	AUDITORIUM	MEETING FAC./ Room	PLAY	SHELTER	PICNIC TABLE (s)	BBQ	BASEBALL/ SOFTBALL	FOOTBALL	Multipurpose Field/Soccer	VOLLEYBALL	BASKETBALL	TRACK	TENNIS	HORSESHOE	PUT	RESTROOM LOCATIONS	RESTROOM/ CONCESSION	CONCESSION	SWIMMING POOL	AMPHI- THEATRE	TRAIL	MARINA/BOA T RAMP	LAKE	GOLF	ZOO	PARKING LOT
	Cultural Facilites																													
CH14	Bass Mountain Music Park																													
CH17	Sword of Peace/Snow Camp Outdoor Drama																													
CH16	Grove Winery																													
CH7	Burlington Square Mall																													
CH9	Elon University																													
CH4	YMCA																													
?	Cane Creek RV Park																													
CH13	Iseley, Jane Iseley Farm (Produce)																													
CH12	Burlington Artist's League Gallery																													
CH5	May Memorial Library																													
CH6	North Park Library																													
CH3	Southern States/Mr. B's Educational Experience																													
CH11	Graham Public Library																													
CH10	Graham Cinema																													
CH2	NC Coop. Extension/Alamance County Center																													
CH1	Alamance Coummunity College																													
CH20	Creek Side Winery																													
CH21	Benjamin Vineyards & Winery																													
CH8	GlenMarie Vineyards & Winery																													
CH15	Mebane Public Library																													
CH18	Iron Gate Vineyards/Winery at Iron Gate Farm																													
	Alamance Arts Council/Capt. James White House																													
	Cane Creek RV Park																													



existing facilities



Parks & Recreation

- Pleasant Grove Recreation Center
- South Neighborhood Park
- Lake Mackintosh
- Town & Country Park
- Willowbrook Park
- Burlington City Park
- Indian Valley Golf Course
- Mayco Bigelow Recreation Center
- Northwestern Park
- Robinson Park
- Elmira Street Recreation Center
- Eva Barker Park
- Fairchild Center
- Broad Street Gym
- Dothan Park
- Kennedy Senior Center
- Petersburg Park
- Forest Hills
- Burlington Aquatic Center
- Burlington Tennis Center
- Thataways
- Ray Street Recreation Center
- Elon Park
- Paramount Theater
- Oakley Street Park
- Bill Cooke Park
- Maple Street Center
- Greenway Park
- Graham River Access
- South Graham Park
- Marshall Street Playground
- Graham Recreation Center
- Morgan Place Park
- Haw River Park
- Haw River Civic Center
- Mebane Arts & Community Center
- Mebane Youth Field
- Mebane Recreation Center
- Graham-Mebane Lake
- The Depot
- Sweepsonville Ball Park
- Sweepsonville River Park
- Eli Whitney Recreation Center
- Cedarock Park
- Glen Raven Park

Public Schools

- P1 Alexander Wilson Elementa
- P10 Elon College Elementary
- P11 Graham High School
- P12 Graham Middle School
- P13 Grove Park Elementary
- P14 Harvey R. Newlin Elementa
- P15 Haw River Elementary
- P16 Hawfields Middle School
- P17 Hillcrest Elementary
- P18 Hugh M. Cummings High School
- P19 Marvin B. Smith Elementar
- P20 Alamahaw-Osipee Element
- P21 North Graham Elementary
- P22 Pleasant Grove Elementary
- P23 R. Homer Andrews Elementa
- P24 South Graham Elementary
- P25 South Mebane Elementary
- P26 Southern High School
- P27 Southern Middle School
- P28 Sylvan Elementary
- P29 Turrentine Middle School
- P30 Walter M. Williams High School
- P31 Audley W. Garrett Element
- P32 Western High School
- P33 Woodlawn Middle School
- P34 B. Everett Jordan Element
- P35 Broadview Middle School
- P36 E.M. Holt Elementary
- P37 E.M. Yoder Elementary
- P38 Eastern High School
- P39 Eastlawn Elementary

Community Ballfields

- AO St Marks
- C10 Sylvan
- C2 Belmont
- C3 EM Holt
- C4 Hawfields
- C5 Lakeview
- C6 McCray
- C7 Mt Hermon
- C8 Saxapahaw

Recreational Pools & Golf Courses

- P4 Alamahaw County Club Pool
- SP1 Mill Creek
- SP10 Moose Lodge
- SP11 North Park Pool
- SP12 Old Forest Raquet Club
- SP13 Quarry Hills
- SP14 YMCA Pool
- SP15 Indian Valley Golf Course
- SP16 Quaker Creek Golf Course
- SP17 The Challenge at Hideaway
- SP18 IBS Golf Range & Baseball
- SP19 Arrowhead Golf Course
- SP20 Ticks Golf Range
- SP21 Shamrock Golf Course
- SP22 Southwick Golf Course
- SP23 Sourwood Forest Golf Club
- SP24 Camp Deer Lake
- SP5 Camp Greenleaves
- SP6 Dogwood Swimming Pool
- SP7 Gold's Gym
- SP8 Graham Swimming Pool
- SP9 Hidden Lake

Cultural Historic Sites

- Alamance Community College
- Graham Cinema
- Graham Public Library
- Burlington Artists' League Gallery
- Iseley, Jane Iseley Farm (Produce)
- Basin Mountain Music Park
- Mebane Public Library
- Grove Winery
- Sword of Peace/Snow Camp Outdoor Drama
- Iron Gate Vineyards/Winery at Iron Gate Farm
- Women's Resource Center
- N.C. Cooperative Extension/Alamance County Center
- Creek Side Winery
- Benjamin Vineyards & Winery
- Southern States/Mr. B's Educational Experience
- YMCA
- May Memorial Library
- North Park Library
- Colonial Mall
- GlenMare Vineyards & Winery
- Elon University

- CH1 Alamance Community College
- CH10 Graham Cinema
- CH11 Graham Public Library
- CH12 Burlington Artists' League Gallery
- CH13 Iseley, Jane Iseley Farm (Produce)
- CH14 Basin Mountain Music Park
- CH15 Mebane Public Library
- CH16 Grove Winery
- CH17 Sword of Peace/Snow Camp Outdoor Drama
- CH18 Iron Gate Vineyards/Winery at Iron Gate Farm
- CH19 Women's Resource Center
- CH20 N.C. Cooperative Extension/Alamance County Center
- CH21 Creek Side Winery
- CH2 Benjamin Vineyards & Winery
- CH3 Southern States/Mr. B's Educational Experience
- CH4 YMCA
- CH5 May Memorial Library
- CH6 North Park Library
- CH7 Colonial Mall
- CH8 GlenMare Vineyards & Winery
- CH9 Elon University

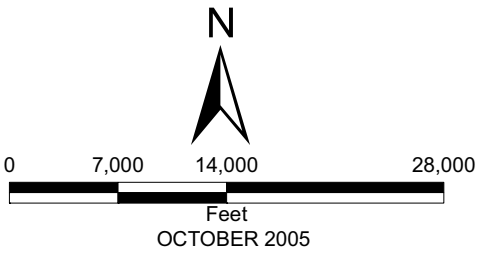
Historical Sites

- Alamance Battleground Historic Site
- Dentzel Menagerie Carousel
- Elon University
- Elon University-State Historic Marker
- Eno-Occaneechi Indian Tribe Pow-Wow Site
- Glen Raven Transportation/Ossipee Mill
- Glencoe Mill/Village
- Graham Cinema
- Graham Historical Museum
- Granite Mill
- Haw River Historical Museum
- Alamance County Courthouse
- Haw River NC RR Bridge Piers
- Hawfields Church - NC Historic Marker
- Henderson Scott House
- Iron Gate Winery
- Old Central High
- Paramount Theatre
- Sellers-Gum School
- Sesquicentennial Park
- Texas Community
- Textile Heritage Museum
- Alamance County Historical Museum
- Uncle Eli's Quilting Party Historic Marker
- Woodlawn School
- Snow Camp
- Saxapahaw Village
- Burlington Depot
- Burlington Historic Depot (Passenger Station)
- Captain White House
- Carolina Mill
- Cedarock Historical Farm/Garrett Homestead
- Copland Fabrics Inc./High Falls Mill

- H1 Alamance Battleground Historic Site
- H10 Dentzel Menagerie Carousel
- H11 Elon University
- H12 Elon University-State Historic Marker
- H13 Eno-Occaneechi Indian Tribe Pow-Wow Site
- H14 Glen Raven Transportation/Ossipee Mill
- H15 Glencoe Mill/Village
- H16 Graham Cinema
- H17 Graham Historical Museum
- H18 Granite Mill
- H19 Haw River Historical Museum
- H2 Alamance County Courthouse
- H20 Haw River NC RR Bridge Piers
- H21 Hawfields Church - NC Historic Marker
- H22 Henderson Scott House
- H23 Iron Gate Winery
- H24 Old Central High
- H25 Paramount Theatre
- H26 Sellers-Gum School
- H27 Sesquicentennial Park
- H28 Texas Community
- H29 Textile Heritage Museum
- H3 Alamance County Historical Museum
- H30 Uncle Eli's Quilting Party Historic Marker
- H31 Woodlawn School
- H32 Snow Camp
- H34 Saxapahaw Village
- H4 Burlington Depot
- H5 Burlington Historic Depot (Passenger Station)
- H6 Captain White House
- H7 Carolina Mill
- H7 Cedarock Historical Farm/Garrett Homestead
- H9 Copland Fabrics Inc./High Falls Mill

Legend

- Parks and Rec Sites
- School Locations
- Community Ballfields
- Recreational Pools & Golf Courses
- Historic Sites
- Cultural Historic Sites
- Street Centerline
- Major Roads
- Rivers
- floodplain
- County Boundary



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## SECTION 3: COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Introduction

A thorough needs assessment is a critical step that should be completed prior to establishing goals and objectives for future recreation plans. The assessment can also be used to support decisions related to the allocation of resources for development of programs and facilities, and provide information needed for develop strategies for implementing allocation decisions. Community needs for recreation programs and park facilities were determined by using four assessment techniques that included the following:

- Community input from public forums/workshops
- Focus group interviews with various groups, organizations, and individuals representing a varied cross section of the community
- Community input from questionnaires
- Review of recreation standards for park land acreage and facilities

### Community Input

One of the most important elements in the preparation of a comprehensive master plan is the solicitation of public comments concerning the perceived recreation and parks needs of the community. The input gathered from the community involvement process can then be cross-checked with established recreation standards and survey approaches.

It is imperative that a master plan be community-driven if it is to truly identify the unique recreation needs of the citizens it is intended to serve. Community input can identify both needs and priorities that would be missed by surveys or standards. Knowing that Alamance County is composed of citizens who represent a wide range of recreational needs, an effort was made to involve as many citizens as possible in the planning process. The public involvement process was formatted into two major efforts

- Public workshops at five separate locations

in the County.

- Two days of focus group meetings, held with representatives from various groups and organizations (12 meetings total).

### Community Workshop Meetings

The community workshops were held between November 30, 2005 and March 7, 2006 at the following locations:

- November 30, 2005 – May Memorial Library (Downtown Burlington)
- February 7, 2006 – Pleasant Grove Recreation Center (additional meeting on March, 2, 2006- as part of the County Land Dev. Plan)
- March 7, 2006 – Eli Whitney Recreation Center (per Land Dev. Plan)

The meetings gave the public an opportunity to help guide the draft proposals for the master plan in a “roundtable” setting. During the meeting, each attendee was assigned to a group of 6-10 individuals. With assistance from a County Staff member or Woolpert team member the group developed need statements and funding recommendations. The exercise consisted of the following instructions:

- *Work in roundtable discussion groups of 10 or less if possible*
- *Appoint a ‘note taker’ and ‘spokesperson’ for each group*
- *Begin by documenting all thoughts regarding the needs for parks and recreation facilities. Discuss the needs for preserving existing parks, along with ideas for new sites and facilities (30-minutes).*
- *Each group will then prioritize your top-5 need statements. Be as specific as possible regarding the park, facility type trail/greenway, generalized location, new development , or renovation, etc. (15 minutes)*
- *Finally, provide ideas for funding or implementing your top-5 need statements. Be as specific as possible and consider some of the following: donations, partnerships, grants, foundations, general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, non-tax generated revenue from user fees and charges, additional tax set aside for park development, etc. (10 minutes)*
- *Be prepared to present your ideas to the rest of the audience*

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The following list summarizes facility needs as most commonly mentioned or brought forward at the workshops as the “top five”:

- Use greenways to connect exiting facilities and attractions (recreation-commercial-residential-tourism-heritage-schools etc.) Promote as Alternative Transportation route (TEA-21)
- Develop and maintain Outdoor Rec. facilities and programs — “River”, Greenways-Walkways etc.
- Preserve open space
- Provide Passive Parks with plenty of open space preservation
- Modernize existing facilities (facelift, ADA etc.)
- Improve Public Relations/ Marketing Campaign to market existing facilities (Cedarock Park in particular) Tie into state initiative
- Expand Offerings/facilities at Cedarock while conserving natural character (Improved meeting entertaining facility)
- Develop canoe & camping offerings at Glencoe (including livery)
- Provide a senior facility for rural residents
- Cooperative partnerships among government agencies—Funding
- Promote that Money spent on Recreation is More productive than spending in other areas like jails (prevention vs. policing)
- Recreation is an Essential Service that allows for a community to “Be the Best”
- Sports Fields and courts (multipurpose for practice and competition)
- County support for Local/Municipal projects that provide benefit to all County residents
- Open green space areas and picnic areas

The following list summarizes implementation and funding ideas as brought forward at the workshops:

- Partnerships (public/private, school/park, city/county etc)
- Bonds
- User fees and revenues
- Grants (foundations, public, private, )
- Create a parks foundation
- Designate tax for recreation (1/2¢ to 1¢)

- Private donations and contributions including “Sweat equity” (provide tax incentives)
- Corporate sponsorship
- Long Term leases
- Mandatory development fees
- Hospitality Sales Tax
- Raise taxes (property)

### Focus Group Meetings

Twelve (12) separate meetings were scheduled with focus groups to discuss recreation and park issues on November 30, 2005. Each group focused on discussing its own special needs and interests but members also contributed comments as individuals concerning issues or needs they felt were important to the entire community(see Appendix for complete information). Invited interest groups included representatives from the following:

- Minorities/Seniors/Special Populations
- Private Recreation Providers
- County Department Heads
- Special Events/Community Groups
- Schools and Education
- Business Community
- Other Municipalities
- Civic Groups
- Sports Development Council
- Athletic Groups/Associations
- Public Recreation Providers
- Environmental/Outdoor/Youth

During the one-hour long sessions, each group was asked to identify pressing or important issues pertaining to recreational services, programs, and facilities provided in the area. A summary identifying the most consistently mentioned items is provided below:

- The Haw River is key to connecting the County (already have some items started along the river)
- Glencoe
- Saxapahaw
- Mountains to Sea trail
- NCDENR property search/purchase in southeast Alamance

- Use greenway connections and trails to link to towns, communities and neighboring county trails.
- Cedarrock Park needs improved and facilities expanded without losing its natural character. Do more festivals/programs and possibly provide a new interpretive facility to expand on heritage and history offerings.
- Lack of identity for the ACRPD – need to educate the public and advertise (too often confused with other providers). There is confusion of who programs and why county leagues have different fees for different teams /locations.
- Existing Centers need improved or consolidated
- Athletic facilities are lacking and need improved
- Need to review funding policy for programming/scheduling of Athletics (pay-to-play, let the towns schedule/run them, concentrate on “County Teams”)
- Image of the community along I-40/I-85 needs improved to promote Alamance-Burlington in a new light. Can this plan be part of a tag line or promotional campaign (such as “Home of Haw River”, “Mid Point of the Mts.-to-Sea Trail”, or “Where Nature and History are One”)
- Can current park sites be expanded to provide for the future? Is other County land available?
- The future of ACRPD will depend heavily on cooperative agreements with other departments and agencies.
- Many partnership opportunities exist in the community (other County departments, schools, towns, civic groups, etc.).
- Joint use with schools for development and use of facilities should be emphasized.

### **Questionnaires & Independent Responses**

In addition to the public workshop input, the local newspaper published a questionnaire used at the workshops and the local Chamber of Commerce distributed questionnaires throughout the county. This was done to solicit written statements from citizens or groups that did not attend the meetings. They were reviewed and incorporated into the public involvement

process. The following information summarizes the most common facility related statements from these comments:

- Preserve open space and develop greenway/trail connections.
- Need sports fields and courts for practice and competition.
- Employers rely on “good recreation and other “Quality of Life” components when selecting sites and count on them for retaining workers. We need parks.
- Look at joint ventures with local private providers for recreation along the river.
- Coordination and cooperation between public entities through partnerships or joint use agreements will be necessary to reduce costs.

### **County Land Development Plan Meetings**

The Alamance Planning Board with assistance from the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments (PTCOG) held six community meetings to gather citizen input on issues and preferences concerning the development of a countywide Land Use Plan. Approximately 300 people attended the meetings. Approximately 270 of the attendees completed Land Use Preference Surveys and many of the “Key Issues” identified through the process/survey have direct implications to park and recreation planning. The issues were summarized in the report as follows:

#### **Key Issues Exercise Findings:**

- 8 out of the 8 “Core” Townships voted for “Much More” Open Space/ Natural Area Protection.
- 8 out of the 8 “Core” Townships voted for “Much More” Farmland &/or Agricultural Area Protection.
- 8 out of the 8 “Core” Townships voted for “More” or “Much More” Protection from Noxious or Unwanted Land Uses.
- 8 out of the 8 “Core” Townships voted for “More” or “Much More” Parks/Recreation/ Greenway Opportunities.
- 7 out of the 8 “Core” Townships voted for “More” or “Much More” Land Development Regulations.



- 5 out of the 8 “Core” Townships “Disagree” with the statement that “No one has the right to tell another person how they should or should not use their land”
- 5 out of the 8 “Core” Townships voted for “Less” or “Much Less” Residential Growth in Rural Areas.

#### **Land Use Preference Survey Findings:**

- 8 out of the 8 “Core” Townships responded that they would like to see “Less” Apartments, Town-homes/Condominiums, Duplexes, and Multi-Family Dwellings in their immediate community.
- 8 out of the 8 “Core” Townships responded that they would like to see “More” Traditional Farmland (Pasture, Cropland) in their immediate community and in Alamance County as a whole.
- 7 out of the 8 “Core” Townships responded that they would like to see “Less” Manufactured Homes (on individual lots) and Manufactured Homes (in mobile home parks) in their immediate community and in Alamance County as a whole.
- 7 out of the 8 “Core” Townships responded that they would like to see “Less” Commercial/Offices/Retail/Services/ Shopping in their immediate community.
- Other comments from the land plan process

**Likes:** Farmland Preservation, Greenways, Parks, Open Space, Conservation Programs.  
**Dislikes:** Manufactured Home Parks, Clear Cutting of lots, Junk Cars, Trash, and Landfills.

**Dreams:** No Zoning, Impact Fees, Managed Growth, Preservation of Northern and Southern portions of the County.

**Other Key Issues:** Public Transportation, Need for Zoning, Protecting Rural Areas

## **National and State Assessments**

The President’s Commission on Americans Outdoor (1985), National Sporting Goods Association (1997-2005), and the United States Forest Service (1984-1995) has conducted surveys designed to determine the demand for outdoor recreation on the national level. Additionally, the State of North Carolina conducted a statewide survey in 1989 that can

also shed light on similar needs from within the region.

The importance of reviewing these surveys is to identify trends in participation for specific recreational activities or facilities. A brief review of the above mentioned surveys indicates there are a few common activities that people found popular and should be taken into consideration when developing new parks or programs. Overall, the trends for outdoor recreation participation observed in the four surveys indicate continued growth in the demand of outdoor recreation opportunities, facilities, and services.

**Common activities from the surveys:** The following 10 activities were found within the top 15-activities of the four surveys:

- Walking (for pleasure or exercise)
- Swimming (pool or non-pool)
- Biking
- Attending sporting events
- Playing sports
- Picnicking
- Visiting natural sites (for scenery, sightseeing, etc.)
- Exercise/Workout at club/center
- Fishing
- Boating

#### **Activities that appear to be gaining in popularity:**

Trend identification is based on an activity’s participation rate growing faster than the population growth rates depicted in the four surveys:

- Bird watching
- Hiking/backpacking
- Downhill skiing
- Attend outdoor concert and plays
- Off-road driving
- Walking
- Motor boating
- Swimming (non-pool)
- Attend sports event
- Golf
- Camping (primitive & developed sites)

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## Recreation Standards

Local and national standards can be useful in determining minimum requirements. However, it is recommended that Alamance County establish its own standards to reflect the expressed needs of County citizens and the County's economic, administrative, operational, and maintenance capabilities.

Traditionally, the recommended quantity and distribution of recreation land and facilities within a community, or for a specific user group, can be determined by standards established by the recreation and park industry.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), in their publication *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*, edited by R. A. Lancaster (1995) defines recreation and park standards in this manner:

"Community recreation and park standards are the means by which an agency can express recreation and park goals and objectives in quantitative terms, which in turn, can be translated into spatial requirements for land and water resources. Through the budget, county ordinances, cooperative or joint public-private efforts, these standards are translated into a system for acquisition, development and management of recreation and park resources."<sup>1</sup>

The publication further describes the role standards have in establishing a baseline or minimum for the amount of land required for various types of park and recreation facilities. In addition, standards correlate recreational needs into spatial requirements and provide justification for recreational expectations and needs.

## Park Classifications and Land Requirements

The Master Plan preparation process included reviewing recreation standards developed by

organizations including the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), North Carolina Department of Environment Health and Natural Resources (former NCDEHNR now NCDENR), and master plans for communities of similar size. In addition, specific characteristics such as local natural resources, economic conditions, land use availability, cultural preferences and community needs contributed to the formation of recreation standards for the County.

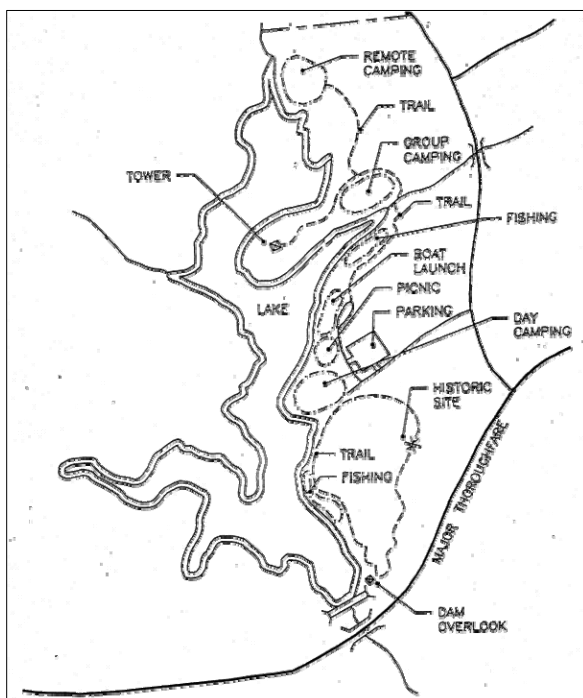
The recommended standards for park classifications and land area requirements are described below and itemized in Table 3-1. The park classifications conform to one of three general categories: places for active recreation, resource-oriented areas, and specialized facilities. Space requirements, typical facilities and programs, and unique environmental features further define the park types.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: NRPA Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, 1983 edition.

## Regional Parks (State Parks & Conservation/Resource Management Sites)

A regional park serves several communities or a multi-county region within a one-hour driving distance. Approximately 10 acres per 1,000 population is served and the park is generally 1,000 acres or more. The park provides diverse and unique natural resources for outdoor recreation such as nature viewing and study, wildlife habitat conservation, hiking, camping, canoeing, and fishing. Usually 80% of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management with less than 20% of the site developed for active recreation. Active recreation areas could consist of play areas, open fields for informal use, golf, boating, hiking, lodging, and a conference center. It is common for these types of parks to become specialized in their offerings to the public. Many regional parks can be considered “destination parks.” Typical Regional parks in the area are the NC Zoo, Uwharrie National Forest, Jordan Lake State Recreation Area Recreation and Morrow Mt. State Park. All are located within one-hour of Alamance County. Exhibit 3-1 illustrates a typical regional park or conservation/resource management site.

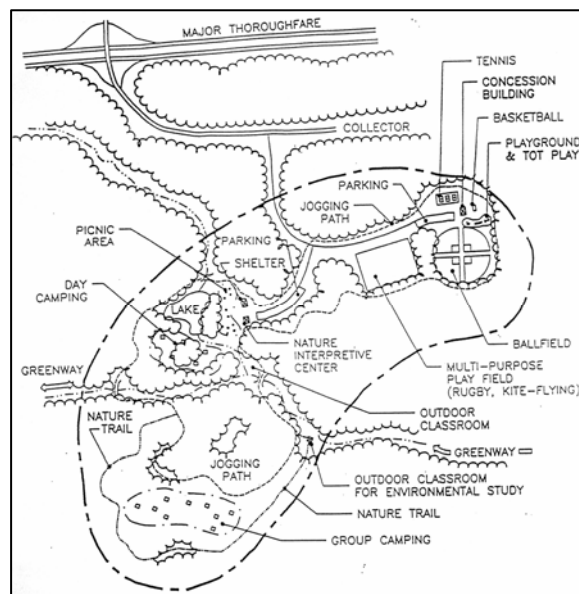


**Exhibit 3-1—Regional Park (State Parks / Resource Sites)**

## District Park

A district park typically provides recreational opportunities similar to a regional park or resource management site on a much smaller parcel of land. As with regional parks, district parks emphasize passive recreational opportunities, but they may also include or be limited to active recreational facilities. This park usually serves a 5-8 mile service area, contains a minimum of 5 acres per 1,000 population, and contains more than 200 acres of land. Cedarock Park is a local example of a district park. Additionally, Burlington provides activities commonly found at district parks at Lake Mackintosh and Lake Cammack. It is important to note that a district facility can be very specialized in its offerings or be relatively small in size, but still have significant influence on recreation within a region.

District parks normally include indoor recreation facilities or an interpretive center that reflects the character of the park. Active recreational



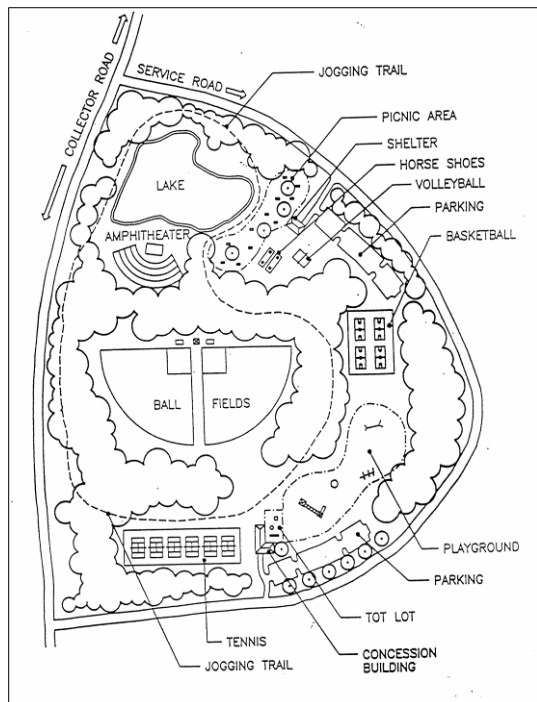
**Exhibit 3-2—District Park**

facilities located in a district park can include active play areas, ball fields, hard surface courts, golfing, swimming, boating, multi-purpose play fields, picnic facilities, and various types of trails. Many district parks are specialized in their offerings to the public and draw participants from throughout the community. Exhibit 3-2 illustrates a typical district park.

## Community Park

A Community park is usually accessible to several neighborhoods, depending on local needs and the population distribution at the time it was developed. When possible, the park may be developed adjacent to a school. Community parks can provide recreational opportunities for the entire family and typically contain areas suited for intense recreational purposes such as recreation center buildings, athletic fields, swimming pools, tennis courts, and walking/jogging trails. These parks may also possess areas of natural interest for outdoor activities such as viewing, sitting and picnicking.

Community parks have an average service area of 2-3 miles and require a minimum of 3-5 acres per 1,000 people served. Community parks should be 40-80 acres in size. Exhibit 3-3 illustrates a typical community park. Municipal governments typically provide community parks. However, county governments sometimes provide parks of this nature. Local examples for this type of park are the County's Pleasant Grove facility; Burlington's City Park and Davidson Park, Mebane's Center/ Youth Recreation Park; and Graham's Bill Cooke Park.

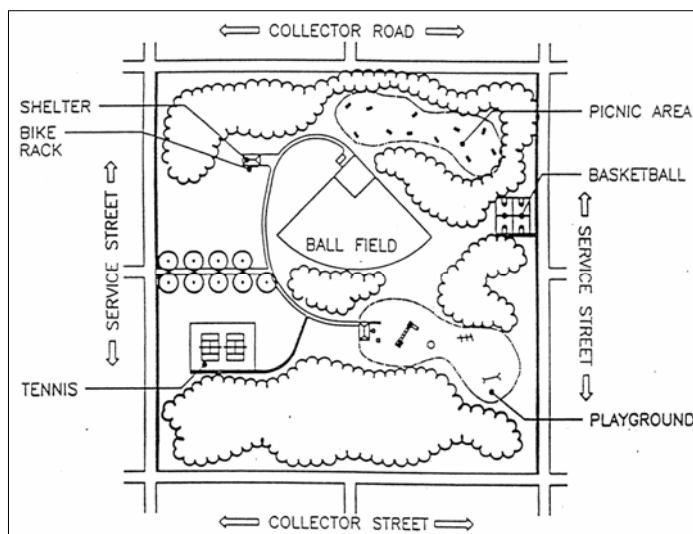


**Exhibit 3- 3—Community Park**

## Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks are usually designed to serve a population of up to 5,000, but in many instances, even more people are served. These parks require 1 to 2 acres per 1,000 population served, and should be 5-15 acres in size, although many times they are smaller. A neighborhood park typically offers recreational facilities such as courts, craft facilities, playground apparatus, picnic tables /shelters, and space for quiet/passive activities.

The service radius for neighborhood parks is one-half to one mile. Sites should be easily accessible from a neighborhood or community by way of safe walking and biking routes. Parking may or may not be required. Where feasible, activity areas are balanced between quiet/passive activities and active play. This type of park may be developed as "school/parks" or a neighborhood center facility. Exhibit 3-4 illustrates a typical neighborhood park. Municipal governments normally provide these parks. Robinson Park in Burlington, Oakley Park in Graham, and Swepsonville River Park are examples of a neighborhood parks.



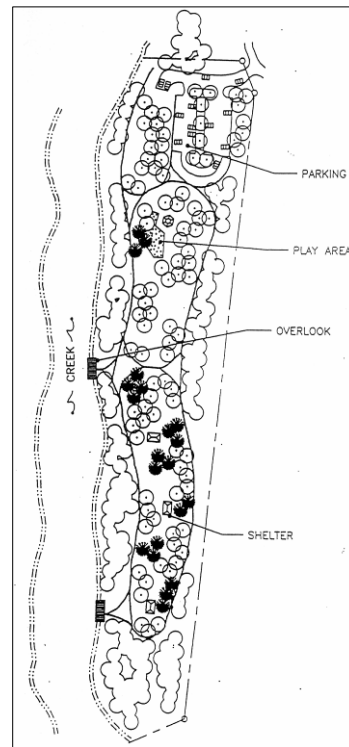
**Exhibit 3- 4—Neighborhood Park**

## Greenway/Linear Park

A linear park is an area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel such as hiking and biking. Often, linear parks will be developed to connect recreational facilities, as well as schools and residential neighborhoods. The acreage and service area of a linear park is variable and subject to existing natural and man-made features, the existence of public right-of-way, and the public demand for this type of park. Many times linear parks are developed within a larger land area designated for protection and management of the natural environment and recreational use a secondary objective. Exhibit 3-6 illustrates a typical linear park. All levels of government can provide these parks. Local examples include trails at Cedarrock Park, Burlington's City Park and Northwest Park, and Graham Greenway Park.

## Unique or Special Areas

Unique or special areas exist to enhance or utilize a special man-made or natural feature. They can include beaches, parkways, historical sites, sites of archeological significance, arboretums, conservation easements, flood plains, etc. Minimum standards relating to acreage or population have not been established by the park and recreation industry for this category. A size that is sufficient to protect and interpret the resource, while providing optimum use is considered desirable. All levels of government can provide special use parks. An example is Burlington Athletic Stadium, Kernodle Senior Center, and Haw River Civic Center.



**Exhibit 3- 6—Greenway/Linear Park**

Classification of Existing Public Sites
<b>Regional Parks:</b> (4- sites) = Uwharrie National Forest (+50,000 ac.), Morrow Mountain State Park (+4,600 ac.) NC-Zoological Park (+500 ac.), Lake Jordan (+2,500 ac.),
<b>District Parks:</b> (1- sites) = Cedarock Park (±461ac.),
<b>Community Parks:</b> (14 - sites) = <b>County</b> —Pleasant Grove (28 ac.), Ray Street Recreation Center (17.1 ac.), Eli Whitney Recreation Center (10.9 ac.), <b>Mebane</b> =Mebane Arts & Community Center (19.1 ac.), Mebane Youth Field/Recreation Center (9.9 ac.), <b>Burlington</b> = Mayco Bigelow Recreation Center (25 ac.), Joe Davidson Park (42.5 ac.), Town & Country Park, Burlington City Park (50 ac.), Fairchild Center / Ballpark/BMX (41.8 ac.), <b>Elon</b> = Elon Park (Beth Schmidt Park 15.8 ac.); <b>Graham</b> = Bill Cooke Park, (45.1 ac.) South Graham Park (23 ac.), <b>Gibsonville</b> = Moricle (50 ac.); <b>Haw River</b> =Haw River Park (24.6 ac.)
<b>Neighborhood Parks:</b> (17-sites) = <b>County</b> = Morgan Place Park (3.1 ac.), Glen Raven Park (4.3 ac.), ACRPD Office (2.8ac.), <b>Burlington</b> = Elmira Street Center (4.6 ac.), Willowbrook Park (.1 ac.), Northwestern Park (1.5 ac.), Robinson Park (2.5 ac.), Eva Barker Park (1.3 ac.), Dothan Park (3 ac.), Forest Hills(6 ac.), <b>Graham</b> = Greenway Park (5 ac.), Oakley Street Park (3.3 ac.), Zachary Field (3 ac.), Goley Street/Johnson Street Field (5 ac.), Apollo Field(3 ac.), <b>Gibsonville</b> = Edward G. Murrell(10 ac.), <b>Swepsonville</b> River Park (7.7 ac.)
<b>Special Use Sites:</b> (- sites) = <b>Burlington</b> = Kernodle Sr. Center, Broad Street Gym, Maynard Aquatic Center, Burlington Tennis Center, Thataways, Lake Mackintosh, Springwood (?Guilford location) Indian Valley Golf Course Lake Cammack, <b>Graham</b> = Graham River Access, Graham Mebane Lake, Graham Recreation Center, <b>Mebane</b> = Lake Michael - Orange County <b>Haw River</b> = Haw River Civic Center

## Evaluation of Park Land Needs

The minimum parkland requirement (in acres) for the total population of Alamance County is provided in Table 3-2 “Total Park Site and Acreage Requirements” (located at the end of this section). The acreage requirements are based upon the population ratio method (acres of parkland per 1,000 population) established for each park classification in Table 3-1. Total population figures and projections used for the evaluation are from tables presented in Section 1 of this report.

The types of parks that will be needed by the end of the planning period (year 2020), based upon the acreage standards provided in Table 3-1, includes Regional Parks, District Parks, Community Parks, and Neighborhood Parks. The recommended total acreage for these parks is shown in Table 3-2 (located at the end of this section) and can be described in general as follows:

- District Parks: 881 acres or approximately 3-4 parks for the total population of County
- Community Parks: 705 acres for the County population or approximately 12- total community parks
- Neighborhood Parks: 353 acres for the total population or approximately 35 neighborhood parks

Table 3-2 further identifies 2020 land acreage needs for individual park types when taking into consideration existing park sites within each category. These land needs are described as follows:

### Land/Acreage Needs for 2020 (when taking into accounting existing park sites acreage)

- Regional Park land —Existing acreage is adequate (over 50,000 acres available).
- District Park Land — Need 420 acres. One existing site, Cedarock Park, equals 461acres. (Note: Mackintosh & Cammack are primarily lake access sites with special facilities (the ±70 acres at these sites could reduce the need to 350 acres).
- Community Park Land — Need 238-acres (standards identify 705 acres, presently 467.5 acres exist).
- Neighborhood Park Land — Need 287-acres, (standards identify 353 acres, presently 66.1-acres exist).

## Summary of Table 3-2 - Park Acreage Needs for Year 2020

### 2020 Total Park Acreage Identified by Standards:

- Regional Parks: 1,763 acres dedicated to the population of the Alamance County study area

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## Open Space

While it is feasible and appropriate to adopt population-based standards for parkland and facilities, it is not as easy to calculate open space standards. Perhaps the most appropriate standard is a determination by the community that certain open space areas are necessary to protect significant natural areas.

Public open space is defined as any land acquired for the purpose of keeping it in a permanent undeveloped state. The functions of such land include protection of the following:

- Drainage areas for water supplies and wetlands (watersheds)
- Flood plain areas
- Areas that are particularly well suited for growing crops (farmland preservation)
- Attractive waterways (wild and scenic waterways)
- Unique Wildlife habitats (sanctuaries) and Natural areas (preservation of unique fauna)
- Scenic vistas
- Spaces between communities to prevent urban sprawl (greenbelts/rural buffer)
- Approach and take-off areas near airports (clear zones)
- Undevelopable land (landfills, hazardous sites)

While these are some of the more common open space functions, many others exist. The majority of open space in Alamance County is comprised of publically owned or protected property (held in trust or easement), privately held preservation lands (held in trust or easement) and privately held agricultural and watershed land. Alamance County, State authorities and the City of Burlington own the majority of public open space in the area. Private land conservation agencies such as the Piedmont Land Conservancy and Heritage LLC Land Trust hold some tracts. However, a vast amount of potential open space areas is privately held and could eventually be developed.

The Alamance County Heritage Site Inventory identified over 300 locations of significant value. The committee has prioritized 29 top sites (typically include various locations) as “priority projects” for preservation and protection. These

29 projects were identified in the inventory section of this report.

## Facility Standards

Minimum standards for recreational facilities (i.e. ball fields, courts, outdoor areas, etc.) have been developed for Alamance County in accordance with industry guidelines established by the NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) and the NCDEHNR (North Carolina Department of Environment Health and Natural Resources). Identified in Table 3-3, “Standards for Public Facilities”, are the minimum recreation facility standards that may be used to compare Alamance County to other public entities in North Carolina and the United States.

## Evaluation of Individual Facility Needs

The number of individual public facilities needed in Alamance County through 2020 are identified in Table 3-4, “Public Facilities Needs Analysis”. Some school and quasi-public sites have been taken into account. Using standards, the following individual facility needs were identified for 2020 and should be considered when planning future parks or improvements to existing sites:

- (1) - Adult Baseball
- (7) - Youth Baseball Adult Softball (due to availability and conditions)
- (6-8) - Soccer / Multi-purpose athletic field (due to availability and conditions)
- (0) - Tennis Courts (school sites overcome shortfall)
- (27)- Volleyball courts
- (40) - Picnic shelters / facilities
- (39)- Playground areas
- (63mi.) - Trails (walking, jogging etc.)
- (1-2) - Swimming pool / facility
- (13) - Neighborhood Recreation centers (no gym with meeting facility space)

**Table 3-1**  
**Alamance County**  
**Park Classification and Land Area Requirements**  
(Standards for the Alamance County)

Park Type Standard	Acres/1000 Population	Acres	Population Served	Service Area
<b>Regional Park</b>				
National	10	1000	Sev. Communities	1 hr. drive
State	20	1000	Sev. Communities	1 hr. drive
Recommended	10	1000	100,000	50-60 mi. radius
<b>District Park</b>				
National	5-10	200	Sev. Communities	1/2 hr. drive
State	10	200	Sev. Communities	15-20 mi. radius
Recommended	5	200-400	20-50,000	8-10 mi. radius
<b>Community Park</b>				
National	5-8	25+	Sev. Neighborhoods	1-2 mile radius
State	8	25+	20,000	1-3 mile radius
Recommended	3-5	40+min	5 – 15,000	2-3 mile radius
<b>Neighborhood Park</b>				
National	1-2	15+	5,000	¼-½ mile
State	2	6-8	4,000	¼-½ mile
Recommended	2	5-15	5,000	½ mile
<b>Special -Use or Linear Park</b>				
National	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies
State	30	Varies	Varies	Varies
Recommended	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies



<p align="center"><b>Table 3-2</b>  <b>Alamance County</b>  <b>Total <u>Park Sites</u> and Acreage Requirements</b></p>							
<b>PARK TYPE</b>	<b>YEAR &amp; POPULATION</b>						
<i>Population</i>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>2020 Need</b>
<b>Regional Parks</b> (10 Ac/1000) +1000 Acre Parks	1,308	1,420	1,521	1,650	1,763	10,000 +	0
<i>Sites</i>	1	1	2	2	2	3	0
<b>District Parks</b> (5 Ac/1000) +/- 150 Acre Parks	654	710	761	825	881	461.0	420
<i>Sites</i>	3	3	3	3-4	0	1	1-2
<b>Community Parks</b> (4.0 Ac/1000) 40-80 Acre Parks (60ac avg)	523	568	609	660	705	467.5	238
<i>Sites</i>	9	9	10	11	12	14	3-4
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b> (2.0 Ac/1000) +/- 10 Acre Parks	262	284	304	330	353	66.1	287
<i>Sites</i>	26	28	30	33	35	17	20-28
<b>Special Use Parks</b> (no std. Acreage)	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	Varies	n/a
<b>Linear Parks / Greenway Trails</b> (.4 mile/1000) <i>Miles</i>	52.3	57	61	66	71	20.0	51
<p><b>Regional Parks:</b> (4- sites) = Uwharrie National Forest (+50,000 ac.), Morrow Mountain State Park (+4,600 ac.) NC-Zoological Park (+500 ac.), Lake Jordan (+2,500 ac.),</p> <p><b>District Parks:</b> (#- sites) = Cedarrock Park (+461),</p> <p><b>Community Parks:</b> (14sites) = County= Pleasant Grove Recreation Center, Ray Street Recreation Center, Eli Whitney Recreation Center --- Mebane= Mebane Arts &amp; Community Center, Youth Field &amp; Recreation Center --- Burlington= Mayco Bigelow Recreation Center, Joe Davidson Park, Town &amp; Country Park, Burlington City Park, Fairchild Center / Ballpark/BMX --- Elon= Elon Park (Beth Schmidt Park) --- Graham= Bill Cooke Park, South Graham Park --- Gibsonville= Moricle --- Haw River= Haw River Park</p> <p><b>Neighborhood Parks:</b> (18-sites) = County= Morgan Place Park, Glen Raven Park, ACRPD Office --- Burlington= Elmira Street Center, Willowbrook Park, Northwestern Park, Robinson Park, Eva Barker Park, Dothan Park, Forest Hills --- Graham= Greenway Park, Oakley Street Park, Zazahry Field, Goley Street/Johnson Street Field, Apollo Field --- Gibsonville= Edward G. Murrell Swepsonville River Park</p> <p><b>Special Use Sites:</b> (-sites) =Burlington= Kernodle Sr. Center, Broad Street Gym, Maynard Aquatic Center, Burlington Tennis Center, Thataways, Lake Mackintosh Springwood (?Guilford location) Indain Valley Golf Course Lake Cammack ---Graham = Graham River Access, Graham Mebane Lake, Graham Recreation Center, ---Mebane= Lake Michael - Orange County Haw River= Haw River Civic Center</p> <p><b>Linear Parks /Greenways Trails:</b> Cedarrock Trails, Burlington Trails at Citypark, Northwest and River</p>							

**Table 3-3**  
**Alamance County**  
**Standards for Public Recreation Facilities**

Facility	National (State) Standard/ 1000 pop.	Alamance Standard/ 1000 pop.
<b>Play Fields</b> Adult Baseball Youth Baseball/Adult Softball Athletic/Soccer (lacrosse, football, soccer)	1/20,000 N/A 1/4,000	1/25,000 1/4,000 1/4,000
<b>Courts</b> Basketball Tennis Volleyball Racquetball Shuffleboard Horseshoe	1/5,000 1/2,000 1/5,000 1/10,000 1/ 2,000 1/ 2,000	1/5,000 1/5,000 (lit) 1/5,000 1/10,000 1/ 10,000 1/ 2,000
<b>Outdoor Areas</b> Picnic Tables Picnic Shelters Playground Activities Trails - Hiking/Nature/Interpretive - Fitness/Jogging Tracks Archery/Shooting Area Amphitheater	1/125 1/ 2000 N/A - 1/region 1/region 1/ 20,000 1/ 50,000 1/ 20,000	1/500 1/ 2,500 1/ 2,000 combined trails (.4mile/1,000 or 1mi./4,000) 1/ 20,000 1/ 50,000 1/20,000
<b>Specialized</b> Recreation Center w/gym Recreation Center w/o gym Swimming Pool (min. 25yd) Competition Pool Gymnasiums Auditoriums Golf Course Bicycling Canoeing - Stream Mileage - Access points	1/25,000 1/10,000 1/20,000 1/75,000 1/ 20,000 1/ 20,000 1/25,000 1 mile/2,000 N/A N/A	1/25,000 1/10,000 1/20,000 1/75,000 1/ 10,000 1/ 20,000 1/25,000 1 mile/2,000 .2 mile/1,000 1/10 miles

**Table 3-4**  
**Alamance County**  
**Public Recreation Individual Facilities Needs Analysis**

FACILITY TYPE				YEAR AND POPULATION					Existing	2020 Need
<i>Population</i>				2000 <i>130,800</i>	2005 <i>142,000</i>	2010 <i>152,136</i>	2015 <i>165,000</i>	2020 <i>176,293</i>		
<b>Fields</b>										
Adult Baseball (90 ft bases)	1/	25,000		5	6	6	7	7	6	1
Baseball/Softball	1/	4,000		33	36	3	41	44	37/51*	7/0 <sup>1</sup>
Football (stand alone)	1/	15,000		9	9	3	11	12	14	0
Soccer (shared/athletic field)	1/	4,000		33	36	38	41	44	44	0
<b>Courts</b>										
Basketball (Indoor & Outdoor)	1/	5,000		26	28	30	33	35	38**	0
Tennis	1/	5,000		26	28	30	33	35	30***	5
Volleyball	1/	5,000		26	28	30	33	35	8	27
Racquetball	1/	10,000		13	14	15	17	18	0	18
Shuffleboard	1/	10,000		13	14	15	17	18	0	18
<b>Outdoor Areas</b>										
Picnic Shelters	1/	2,500		52	57	61	66	71	31	40
Playground Areas	1/	2,000		65	71	76	83	88	49	39
Greenway Trails (miles)										
-Walking/Fitness/Jogging	1/	2,500		52	57	61	66	71	8	63
Tracks/ Walking Areas	1/	20,000		7	7	8	8	9	21	0
<b>Specialized</b>										
Rec./Community Center w/gym	1/	25,000		5	6	6	7	7	7	0
Rec. Neighborhood Center w/o gym	1/	10,000		13	14	15	17	18	5	13
Gymnasiums	1/	10,000		13	14	15	17	18	42	0
Swimming Pool (25m/25yd)	1/	20,000		7	7	8	8	9	8****	1
Swimming Pool (50m)	1/	75,000		2	2	2	2	2	2	0
Golf Course	1/	25,000		5	6	6	7	7	7*****	0
Bicycling route	1/	2,000		65	71	76	83	88	75	13
Canoeing										
- Stream Miles	1/	5,000		26	28	30	33	35	20	15
- Access points	1/	10		3	3	3	3	4	2	2
* Includes private and school ballfield sites used by the County										
** Includes middle and high school gym sites										
*** Does not include school locations/sites										
**** Includes privately owned facilities open to the public										
***** Includes privately owned courses open to public play										

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## SECTION 4

# MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Introduction

Alamance County is recognized in North Carolina for its natural surroundings and heritage. The ACRPD, became the first “County offered” park and recreation provider in North Carolina in 1971 and has been providing recreation services by offering programs at one large county-wide facility/park (Cedarock Park) and numerous former school sites, and contracted or leased facilities. As one might determine “County-wide” facilities have been lacking and the citizens of the County have grown accustomed to having recreational opportunities made available to them at school system sites, and facilities offered by towns, and local recreation groups from throughout the County. The challenge for the future is HOW to provide improved facilities to accommodate growth and satisfy public demand.

As identified in previous sections of this report, it is a foregone conclusion that the County’s population will continue to grow. This growth will definitely place additional burden on the existing facilities within Alamance County. Public input brought forward during the planning process suggests that the citizen’s interest and demand for “quality leisure services” will only increase as time passes, and they have stated a need for more facilities to be developed. Additionally, the citizens expect local government to be a major provider of recreational services at a price that will accommodate as many people as possible.

With future growth, it is also anticipated that Alamance County will be pressed to meet the demands placed on its other public services such as police and fire protection, sewer and water services, and education to name a few. Balancing the budgets for all County operations while providing adequate services will continue to be an enormous challenge.

In order to present a realistic plan of meeting the recreational needs of the future, master plan

scenarios were developed “in-house” by the consultant as part of the overall planning process. Additionally, the preliminary recommendations of the master plan were presented and reviewed with County staff, and Advisory Team members. The purpose of each meeting was to refine the proposals for inclusion in this final report and final public presentation.

The recommendations have been divided into the following categories:

- Roles of Providers
- Park Proposals and Recommendations
- Facility Proposals and Recommendations

### Roles of Recreation Providers

Meeting all the recreational needs of the community will require a joint effort between the various government agencies and the private sector. No one group can be held solely responsible for providing all the programs and facilities for the entire county. The following recommendations describe the roles that each recreational provider should take during the planning period.

#### Alamance County

The Master Plan is based on the premise that the County will need to be responsible for developing and maintaining future park and recreation facilities for use by all County residents. Facility and parkland needs were identified for the planning area, based on the anticipated 2020 population of 176,293 (Section Three of the report). If these increased needs are to be met, Alamance County must begin providing new and improved park sites and facilities.

The County's primary role should be to offer facilities on a countywide basis. Typically, county government provides these facilities at district parks and at specialized facilities. District parks are approximately 200-400 acres in size and serve multiple townships or communities. Currently the county has only one park, Cedarock Park, that fits this classification. *Based on recreation standards for park acreage, three (3) 250+ acre district parks are needed in the County by 2020. Therefore the County*

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should concentrate efforts on providing District Parks.

District parks should include a combination of active and passive recreation facilities such as picnic areas, water access, trails, ball fields, and court activities. New district parks will serve all the citizens of Alamance County and should be promoted and operated as the primary facilities for extending “county wide” recreation services.

Another primary service recommendation is that ACRPD take a lead role in planning and coordinating greenway and trail efforts throughout the county.

Additionally, the County should continue to build upon its expertise in providing recreation services/programs for special populations. Staff has a good history of providing these services and they can extend them into cooperative programs with other local agencies, municipal recreation providers and private industry to reduce costs and duplication of service.

In order to develop the proposals of this plan it is imperative that the County hire an experienced recreation planner as a staff member of either ACRPD or the Planning Department. This person would be responsible for assisting the commission and the ACRPD Director with the day to day planning responsibilities required to implement the proposals of the Master Plan. The position of “County Recreation/Trail Coordinator” or “Recreation Planner/Trail & Open Space Coordinator” should be a “New “position within County government so that the quality of services performed by current staff is not diminished.

There is also a need for community park and neighborhood park facilities in the county, where more active forms of recreation are typically provided. To handle active recreation needs at the community level, the County should investigate creating a formalized community “Funding/Grant Program” to assist in the development of recreation on a local level. A program like this must be developed through detailed evaluation of available funding and can be divided among user groups such as athletic associations and towns. The funding program must be based on need, local participation,

financial commitment, or other defined criteria similar to the North Carolina-PARTF grant program.

In addition to operating and developing district parks and cooperating with local communities on smaller parks; the County should develop a formalized joint use agreement with Alamance-Burlington School System for use of school sites. This agreement should be used to standardize the use of school facilities by local groups. Many school sites are instrumental in providing facilities commonly found at community and neighborhood parks. Without access to school sites it is unrealistic to envision Alamance County or municipal governments will be able to support/fund the development of these smaller parks. Currently, local recreation associations determine/negotiate access to school facilities with a school principal. A formal agreement could centralize the communication process and standardize how access is determined (see Roles of Providers – School System).

## Federal

The US Government provides park facilities within close proximity to the county. These facilities are located at Uwharrie National Forest located in Stanly and Alamance counties. This large federal land holding offers various facilities for activities such as camping, fishing, hunting, biking, hiking, boating, off-road vehicles, and environmental/conservation education. The federal government is primarily charged with the protection, preservation, conservation and management of public lands that are deemed appropriate and necessary for all the United States. The U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture manage lands in western North Carolina that are used for these purposes as well as for recreation. The federal government will continue to provide facilities of this nature, and for the most part, will continue to be a major provider of regional type national facilities.

## State of North Carolina

Alamance County is fortunate to have State recreation facilities located within close proximity. These sites include Morrow Mountain State Park, Eno River State Park, a

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proposed New State Park in Guilford County and the NC Zoo in Asheboro.

North Carolina should offer a variety of recreational facilities and programs on a regional basis. The states should be the provider of regional state parks that include opportunities for camping, fishing, biking, and special facilities such as zoos and preservation of historic sites. The state of North Carolina has plans and funding in place to enhance and expand some of these facilities which should improve service through the planning period.

The state of North Carolina should also financially assist the County with acquiring land for parks, developing new parks, and renovating existing parks through the North Carolina PARTF grant program, ISTEA/TEA21, North Carolina DOT Bikeways Program, Community Development Block Grants, and the Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Each of these grant programs is described in more detail in Section Five of this report.

## **Municipalities/Towns with Park & Recreation Departments (Burlington, Graham, Mebane, Haw River, Elon)**

As their primary focus, the towns should continue to operate the sites that are directly under their control. Historically, the towns have served both municipal residents and those living in Alamance County. Through the planning period, it will be increasingly more difficult to follow this trend with only the existing facilities and parks in the system. It is anticipated that the towns will not be in a financial position to offer recreation programs and park facilities for a large population of citizens living in the county. The Master Plan is based on the premise that municipalities should concentrate on improving their facilities to serve their general populations unless a joint use facility is proposed with the county or another provider. Making improvements to their existing sites will only enhance service. Additionally the improvements can be used to accommodate facility needs from throughout the county.

For the future, the towns and municipalities will need to continue offering a variety of

recreational activities. The towns should continue providing community, neighborhood, and special-use parks or facilities. The extent of programming and offering recreation facilities will ultimately be determined by what they can afford for leisure services. Additionally, the towns should search for teaming opportunities with other governmental agencies and the private sector to share programming and development cost.

## **Other Towns/Municipalities**

Similar to Burlington, Graham and Mebane the other towns in the county will need to enhance their programs and facilities for their own communities. Currently the towns of Gibsonville, Green Level, Swepsonville, and Alamance offer recreational sites. It is anticipated that newly incorporated towns will need to provide leisure services for their citizens at some point in time. Joint development of facilities between towns and County government is strongly suggested. Projects can potentially be created through a County administered “Funding/Grant” program and/or negotiated agreements. Additionally, joint planning and development of facilities will become more important as the population in the area increases and the borders between the towns become less distinct.

## **School System**

The Alamance Burlington School System (ABSS) has cooperated in the past in making school property available for recreational use where possible. Currently, most of the recreational programs taking place at school sites are associated with programs offered through local athletic associations/foundations. The associations have individual agreements for use of some school facilities but typically on a limited basis. ACRPD needs to work with the school district to attain a formal joint-use agreement that is system wide and can be uniformly enforced.

The agreement would:

- Deal with all facilities on a uniform system wide basis.

- Reduce or eliminate fees for facility rental that each entity charges one another.
- Provide a fair and effective method of sharing maintenance and repair responsibilities.

The Schools and the County should also work together to:

- Identify additional programs that can take place on school or park properties.
- Determine how to mutually approach property acquisition.
- Jointly construct sports fields, gyms, and aquatic facilities when possible.

Constructing sports fields, gymnasiums, and aquatics facilities are examples of projects that the school system and the department should investigate developing jointly. During the public input process of this Master Plan citizens expressed a desire for the school system to make recreation facilities more accessible or available to the public after school hours. Comments suggested that school sites be “designed” to accommodate joint use and that County Commissioners help bring this to fruition when appropriating money for schools and parks.

Key issues that need to be considered in developing an agreement are outlined under Partnership Opportunities within this section.

## Quasi-Public Sector

The development of many facilities in the area are due in part to the strong support that came from the quasi-public/private sector. Through the years quasi-public organizations in Alamance County have provided or supported vital recreational activities in the community. Quasi-public organizations such as recreation foundations/associations, Optimist, Rotary, Civitans, Ruritans, and churches have a unique role of complementing or providing the programs and facilities offered in the area. It will be important through the year 2020 for the quasi-public sector to maintain its strong supporting role in providing recreation facilities and programs. Saxapahaw, and St Mark’s fields are fine examples of how various groups have assisted in providing recreational facilities for the entire county. Coordination of new facilities

should occur between the quasi-public sector and the county to avoid duplication of facilities. It is also anticipated that the quasi-public sector, especially the Athletic Associations, will have a major role in carrying out athletic programming at new county park facilities. In turn, the Recreation Commission should consider cooperative use agreements for use of quasi-public facilities.

## Private Sector

### Commercial Recreation Providers

Generally the private sector has provided recreational facilities and programs that the public or quasi-public organizations have chosen not to provide or have been unable to afford. Examples of commercial outdoor recreation providers include golf courses, swimming pools, tennis facilities, and amusement facilities. Additionally, there are private commercial providers of bowling facilities and fitness/work-out gyms. The commercial providers are in the recreation business to make a profit and thus their pricing and operation policies will reflect this mission. These private facilities still help to complement recreation offered by the County and other public sector providers.

### Corporate Community

Large corporations and employers in the county such as LabCorp, Alamance-Burlington Schools, Alamance Regional Medical Center, Elon University, Gold Toe Brands, and Honda Power Equipment can play a vital role in assisting the County with providing leisure services. Large employers often have their own facilities—This can help to reduce some of the demands placed on the public sector. Good corporate citizens usually desire to become an integral part of the community and are willing to assist in the development of facilities. In the future, the County will need to target private industries in helping to mutually develop new recreation facilities. Additionally, corporations without a large presence in Alamance County, companies such as Wachovia, Bank of America, J.R. Reynolds, Ford, Chiquita Banana, and AMF, offer financial assistance through corporate donations. There are many partnerships being formed and private contributions given in the

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support of public leisure services will be important to attain.

## Developers

Developers need to assist the County in the dedication or reservation of future park sites as part of the overall land development process. The County Land Development Plan must address Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations needed to promote and secure open space and recreation areas.

As noted previously in this report the Citizens of Alamance County are concerned with losing open space. They would like to see “Much More” Open Space/ Natural Area Protection.; “Much More” Farmland &/or Agricultural Area Protection Open Space/ Natural Area Protection. “Much More” Parks/Recreation/ Greenway Opportunities. However they do not agree on how “more” Land Development Regulations should be implemented.

Typically zoning and subdivision ordinances have requirements that affect development of land and require dedication of land for open space and recreation. If requirements are implemented they should also allow for payment in lieu of land dedication, which will allow the County to have funds for developing future parks and recreation facilities. Additionally, dedication and payment in lieu of dedication have the ability of the park and recreation commission to decide on the acceptance of dedicated land. The general locations for parks and facilities described by this master plan should provide adequate guidance for this to occur.

In as much as dedication requirements typically focus on providing open space through the development process, the land that is typically dedicated is on steep slopes or low-lying areas where a developer would normally not be placing buildings. The land is typically not well suited for recreation buildings, ball fields, or large playgrounds normally associated with park development. If good recreation sites were identified on an adopted master plan, reserving property for a determined time period could be required. This would allow public

acquisition to possibly occur at lower costs and through joint efforts, either public or private.

As an alternative, Alamance County and the towns could introduce a parkland dedication requirement, enabled by state law, in order to produce sites with more usefulness for active recreation, while granting credit for required open space dedications. Also, developers still need to provide payment in lieu of dedication when the property does not fit the master plan for park or greenway development. As another alternative, or in conjunction with any new dedication requirement, developers could be granted density bonuses in exchange for park dedication and/or playground construction.

Additional concepts to consider with any requirements of a development ordinance may include the following:

- Make payments-in-lieu affordable to encourage payments that help find fair recreation solutions for infill and/or redevelopment projects.
- Increase open space requirements if floodplain or steep slope areas are counted toward open space requirements.
- Encourage clustering and transfer of development rights to promote more effective open space dedications.

## Partnership Opportunities

Recreation and park opportunities are provided in contemporary societies through a diverse collection of organizations that exist at the neighborhood, state, and national level. Leisure service organizations meet the needs of the community by operating within a broad range of missions, motivations, structures, resources, and techniques. With such a large number of organizations (public, private, and non-profit) playing vital roles in the community, coordination and cooperation between providers is crucial. This does not mean that competition is counterproductive to the process of cooperation. Controlled competition among public, non-profit, and private sectors is beneficial because there are only so many resources to draw upon in any one community. Operating in tandem,



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competition and coordination allows the community to be able to participate in the greatest number of leisure experiences in a variety of settings under different philosophies.

Historically, these three leisure providers (public, private, and non-profit) were distinct and easily recognized. The public sector relied almost exclusively on taxes to accomplish their mission for a well-defined segment of the population. The non-profits operated on funds from local and national fund-raisers and fees, while the private sector sold goods and services to those able and willing to purchase them. However, over the past five to ten years there has been a blending of these three sectors with the public sector increasingly turning to earned-income opportunities in the delivery of services; non-profits taking on other roles previously delegated to the public sector; and the private sector taking on missions that were formerly the exclusive domain of the public and non-profit sectors.

The relaxation of the boundaries in these three sectors has been partly responsible for the rise of partnerships in the delivery of leisure services. The word partnership is an umbrella term that includes agreements, cooperative ventures, joint agreements, collaboration, coalitions and work forces. It is the sharing of resources between two or more parties to achieve collaborative goals. This practice is occurring throughout the United States in similar size communities at an ever-increasing rate.

This Master Plan recommends the creation of more partnerships between other government agencies and other non-profit entities in Alamance County. The master plan will need the support of the entire community and increased use of partnerships will extend the delivery of services to more people in the area, create more options for all parties, and develop opportunities to extend funding beyond current levels.

A working partnership model has been included in Appendix A, for partnering with local schools and should be referenced to when considering these agreements.

## Partnership Issues

A partnership agreement is essential to demonstrate the commitment of each party and identify the resources each party will contribute to the community. Regardless of which party (or combination) contributes acquisition, development, operational, maintenance, replacement or other resources, tracking these contributions to strive for a 50% - 50% cost sharing between partners over the life of the project is the goal. Negotiations for these contributions should focus on demonstrating the advantages and disadvantages of each partner's participation.

In a partnership agreement between two parties, issues need to be identified between both parties and solutions to overcome them need to be demonstrated. These are some of the key priority issues that need to be incorporated into the agreement:

- Liability issues that both parties face.
- Addressing how both parties will try to reach an equity position of 50/50 cost sharing during a specific time frame.
- Land use and management needs to be addressed so neither parties' environmental concerns are compromised.
- Joint capital cost development and how both parties need to be involved in the design component, equipment needs, and storage needs.
- It is important that each party share with the other what their mission statement is so there is a greater appreciation of what each party desires to achieve. The key is to get both parties to think on behalf of the overall community first, and their respective needs second.
- In the partnership agreement, each party needs to make a decision on how they will resolve conflicts with each other. In all situations each party needs to create an ongoing communication process that exceeds the boundaries of their normal communication process with a quarterly review of how the partnership is working.

- The partnership agreement is a living document and needs to change in time based on the needs of the community. Facility usage and contribution philosophy will remain consistent in the agreement, but the conditions of the agreement may change.
- Contributions by each partner need to be tracked and shared with all parties while trying to achieve the 50%-50% cost-sharing goal within the time frame agreed upon.
- If both parties jointly develop a facility or park, a capital enhancement fund needs to be established for ongoing maintenance and facility upgrades.
- Usage within facilities, pricing of activities, schedule of events, equipment, operational issues, tracking process of partner contributions, and review sessions need to be evaluated periodically by both governing bodies.

## Immediate Partnership Considerations

All types of partnerships can be formed with local public, quasi-public, or private entities. Alamance County, through the proposed Recreation Commission, has the following potential partnership opportunities:

- **County/school partnerships** for joint development of gyms, game fields pools, and recreational facilities. The Commission should seek an alliance with the Alamance-Burlington school system to help provide these types of projects.
- **County/neighborhood partnerships** in managing and developing community or neighborhood parks through the creation of a park ambassador program, adopt-a-park program, and park amenity investment by neighborhood associations. Use local civic organizations (Optimist, Kiwanis, Civitans, Rotary, etc.) to identify neighborhoods or neighborhood associations with possible projects. The Planning Departments, local housing authority, United Way and local churches can act as the facilitators/brokers for putting these partnerships together.

- **County/church partnerships** in maintaining parks next to church properties and joint program development.
- **County/non-profit or not-for-profit program development.** This partnership moves away from duplication and into segments of specific program areas with each agency developing a niche in the total program area. Contact local recreation foundations, Boys/girls clubs etc. to create strategic alignments for services.
- **County/private sector partnership.** Typically a private developer can use private funds to develop a special use facility County property with the public agency leasing it to the developer on a long-term basis. During the period of the lease the developer returns a portion of the revenue to the public agency and at the end of the lease the facility revert to the public agency's ownership. Examples are golf courses, golf academies, restaurants, ice rinks, aquatic parks, marinas, concession facilities, gift shops, conference centers, campgrounds, preschool, daycare facilities, and qualified day camps.
- **County/private sector service contracts** for managing parks and recreation services. These partnership services can include management of museums, recreation facilities, mowing, landscaping, tree maintenance, construction management, marketing, information technologies, restroom cleaning, trash removal, and special use facility management.
- **County/hospital partnership** in development of health-related facilities such as fitness areas in recreation centers, game field facilities, and therapy pools. The Department should seek partnerships with the local hospital
- **County/trail partnerships** in the development of trails for walking, horseback riding, inline skating, bicycling, and running. Partnerships are created with each entity that assists the County in developing a mile of trail. The partners can include a

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neighborhood association, a school, another non-profit business, or a college.

- **Alamance County/City & Towns partnerships** that works for the benefit of both partners for providing parks and recreation services. In order for this partnership to work it is imperative that both partners share the same vision. The vision needs to be developed based on the values each other hold for the community and how the vision for the development of a facility or a program benefits both partners. The vision is created from history, values, and common themes each agency is striving to achieve. This vision is developed in the form of a recital that is stated in the very first paragraph of a partnership agreement. This enables all future managers of the partnership to understand why the partnership was created and the spirit in which it was created.

## Park Proposals and Recommendations

As previously stated, Alamance County should focus on developing and operating district parks and special facilities as needed. (special facilities such as bikeways/greenways and a recreation center/park) Additionally the county should assist local communities with developing community recreation sites. The towns should be concentrating on community parks, neighborhood parks and smaller specialized facilities such as mini parks. Section 3, “Community Needs Assessment of Recreation and Facilities”, identified the existing and future parks needed in the area through the planning period. It is recommended that by the year 2020 Alamance County make provisions for the following “New park facilities”:

- Develop one (1) New District Park site at the Turner Road Property (PD2) or an Alternate site (PD2-ALT).
- Develop a special facility/large park (±1,000-acre) in cooperation with NCDENR that can also provide District Park services. The State is looking for land in southeast Alamance County for a potential recreation

site associated with the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. A partnership could benefit both parties.

- Develop the Glencoe River Access Park in conjunction with the cultural and historical facilities that are underway.
- Develop Haw River Multi-use Trail (Greenway & Pedestrian/Paddle/Bike trails ).
- Provide support facilities for a river access point at the Glen Raven site.
- Develop Haw River access point at the current landfill property in southern Alamance County.
- Local communities will need to develop five community parks and neighborhood park facilities the county should explore providing an assistance/grant program for helping communities to provide facilities.
  - Partner with towns that do not provide recreation services to develop facilities (places such as Alamance, Green Level, Ossipee, Saxapahaw, Swepsonville).
  - Replace programming at Pleasant Grove by jointly providing services with Mebane or developing a facility at the proposed District Park.
- Develop a school/ACRPD gym facility at a school site to replace Eli Whitney Center.
- Develop an environmental education center in cooperation with private interests and/or other recreation providers at Cedarrock Park, the proposed District Park, or Glencoe.

An overall summary of the park proposals and recommendations is provided in the text that follows. Park proposals are grouped by park category type. In addition the proposals and recommendations are graphically shown at the end of this section, on a “Master Plan Proposals Map”.

### Regional Parks

The County and Towns should support and encourage efforts by other agencies, and neighboring Counties or municipalities to develop larger parks. Partnerships in the development of larger parks should be explored

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as opportunities arise. This master plan recommends that the County partner with the state in providing a regional special facility/large park in Southeast Alamance ( $\pm 1,000$ -acres). NCDENR is looking to acquire land near the confluence of Haw River and Cane Creek. The State considers this an important location for completing the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, and the county would like to offer more recreational opportunities in that part of the county. A partnership could benefit both parties (see Special Facility recommendations this section).

The State and Federal Government currently supply adequate recreation land necessary to meet land and service area standards without establishing any new facilities.

There is a state park facility, a national forest and a zoo within an hour drive of the County. These facilities include Morrow Mountain State Park, the NC Zoological Park, Eno State Park, proposed Guilford County State Park location, Lake Jordan, and Uwharrie National Forest. These facilities provide adequate regional recreation land necessary to meet land and service area standards without establishing any new facilities. In addition parks such as Oak Hollow, Piedmont Environmental Center, Bryan Park and Tanglewood Park also provide regional service to the Alamance County area.

- The state of North Carolina will continue to offer a variety of recreational facilities and programs on a multi- regional basis. The state should continue to improve their facilities as money is made available from PARTF monies.
- Most of the facilities provided by the State will center on providing locations for camping, fishing, biking, and special facilities such as zoos and preservation of historic sites. Other sites such as Uwharrie National Forest offer recreational opportunities that are typically found in regional parks that attract visitors from a large service radius of  $\pm 50$ -60 miles. It is anticipated that these facilities will continue to be maintained and improved by their providers throughout the planning period.

## District Parks

The recreation standards established for the plan recommended that the County provide two (2) new locations for offering District Park service by 2020. This total is based upon population and current facility needs.

Standards identify a total need of 881 acres or three to four (3-4) District Parks (200 acres minimum). by the year 2020. The County currently provides a 461 acre District Park at Cedarock Park. This creates a shortfall of 420 acres or one (1) to two (2) sites.

This master plan recommends using the following scenario to provide District Park service:

- Upgrade and Improve facilities Cedarock Park
- Develop a new park at the 172 acre Turner Road property located in east-central Alamance County.
- Develop a special facility/large park ( $\pm 1,000$ -acre) in cooperation with NCDENR in southeast Alamance. This park could also provide District park facilities and services. The State is looking for a potential recreation site at the confluence of the Haw River and Cane Creek. A partnership would allow the County to offer district level recreational opportunities to a part of the county that currently lacks service (see Special Facility recommendations this section).

County governments typically have the responsibility of developing District Parks while cities and towns focus on providing community and neighborhood parks. The development of district parks assists in providing open space and facilities to meet the needs of the County throughout the planning period

Ideally, District Parks should connect to other recreational sites in the area by a greenway/trail. The parks should also preserve natural open space and provide active facilities such as sports fields and courts. A site-specific master plan should be developed for all proposed District Parks to determine what facilities are to be located on the site. Facilities to consider include

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a day use picnic area, play areas, open play fields, sports fields and courts, camping facilities, an educational/instruction center, preserved vegetation areas with trails and walks, and water/lake access. The service radii for the proposed district parks are identified on “Master Plan Proposals Map.”

### Proposed District Parks

- **Turner Road Site (PD2)** – Develop a 172-acre site in conjunction with the Agricultural Extension Service. The land is made available through an estate dedication and could possibly qualify as match money for other grants or funding. The site has potential to connect to a river trail via bikeways and routes. There has been interest in building an environmental education center through a private-public partnership and this location could work for this purpose.
- **Alternate District Park Site (PD2-ALT)** – Acquire and develop a 200+ acre District Park if the Turner Site cannot be secured. A general location for this park is shown Master Plan Proposals in the Pleasant Grove (PG) area of the county. The park should be developed to attract more countywide participants and would replace deteriorating facilities at the existing PG-Center site.
- **Confluence Park Site (confluence of Haw River and Cane Creek)** – Develop in cooperation with NCDENR a ±1,000 acre special facility that includes district park offerings. The State is looking for a potential recreation site at the confluence of the Haw River and Cane Creek. A partnership allows the County to offer a district level recreational opportunity to a part of the county that currently lacks service. The site has enormous potential to fit into initiatives by the state to develop trails along the Haw River and connect the Mountains-to-Sea Trail with large passive parklands. A partnership could benefit both parties. (See Special Facility recommendations this section).

### Existing Parks

- **Cedarrock Park:** This site is in need of updating and renovation. The following park recommendations are made to expand and improve facility offerings that in turn will enhance service and increase revenues.
  - Acquire property along the entry road for park facility expansion and revise the site Master Plan.
  - Add camping sites, possibly RV camping
  - Add more picnic facilities
  - Pave some parking areas
  - Improve the picnic facilities at the falls
  - Create a reception/interpretive center at the historical homestead
  - Establish a Frisbee® disc golf tourney on the circuit and develop a clubhouse area
  - Extend trails

### Community Parks

Community parks will continue to house a majority of the active facilities such as sports fields and courts in the area. New community parks should be 40-80 acres to provide for multi-purpose use that enables more diverse participation. Community parks can also be used for locating special-use facilities such as a sports complex, community center, pools, recreation center, or other large-scale single facility.

This Master Plan proposes that Community Parks be developed by local communities (towns & municipalities) with possible assistance through a County administered funding/grant program for providing service to unincorporated areas of the County. The funding program should be based on need, local participation/commitment, and other defined criteria (similar to NC-PARTF) Existing community park facilities are provided at Burlington, Graham, Mebane, Elon, and Haw River. In addition the county should offer to partner at proposed sites where they can provide program or operating experience

The master plan recognizes that the County has commitments in place to provide citizens with community-level recreation services. They have done this at most of the Recreation center sites they currently operate. However, three community

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sites should be offered to other towns/recreation providers because they do not provide countywide service. The following County operated sites should be offered to local providers:

- **Morgan Place Park**- offer this property to the Town of Elon to possibly link with Eva Barker Park. It could be part of a partnership arrangement with the Town to assist with programming and development of a 70-acre property it is considering for Community Park.
- **Ray Street Center**- offer this facility to the City of Graham—they have facilities in the neighborhood and the site offers more potential for them to consolidate operations programs.

**Pleasant Grove and Eli Whitney Recreation Center sites** offer community park service such as sports fields, play area and walking paths and recreation center space. These sites have historically been providing recreation programs to rural residents of the County. Both sites predominantly serve senior populations and youth sport activities that rely on gymnasium and sport field space for providing programs. These former school sites need major repairs and must be renovated if they are to continue their mission. The recreation department has estimated costs for minimally improving the facilities so that they are not closed due to unsafe conditions. These sites should be phased-out of service and replacement alternatives explored as follows:

**Pleasant Grove** — replace programming at Pleasant Grove by jointly providing services with Mebane or developing a facility at the proposed District Park.

**Eli Whitney** — develop a School/ACRPD gym facility at a school site (B. Everett Jordan) to provide for programs currently run at the center.

In addition to the existing county sites, ACRPD should **explore how inter-local cooperative agreements can provide community recreation services by collaborating on program offerings or developing facilities. The proposal map has indicated potential service at the following locations:**

**Elon 70 -acre site** — the Town of Elon has approached the County to collaborate in

developing a community park. The county could offer to provide funding to build facilities that can be used equally by County residents.

**Green Level** — partner with them has been entertained in providing athletic programs at proposed town sites/fields

**Ossipee** — partner with this community in offering facilities that compliment the Glen Raven site.

**Swepsonville** — has entertained partnering with them in providing support for athletic programs at proposed town sites/field. The County may also want to assist with developing trail connections to the proposed Haw River Trail.

**Saxapahaw** — has entertained partnering with them in supporting athletic programs at existing sites and assist with developing facilities and connections to the proposed Haw River Trail.

**Alamance planned park site** — similar to Elon, the town has some property they are looking to develop as a park and have approached the County to partner with them in this endeavor.

Other municipalities in the County such as Haw River, Graham, Mebane and Burlington offer additional potential for partnering in providing recreation opportunities to County residents as long as partnerships arrangements provide for equitable fee structures.

The standards from the community needs assessment identify no shortage of community park sites. However acreage dedicated to this type of park is short by 237 acres. Various towns, Mebane, Graham, and Elon have plans for expanding existing parks or developing new sites. These planned parks will provide adequate park service

- Additional sites may be needed as communities incorporate or incorporated places expand more rapidly than expected.
- Community parks should have a combination of active and passive recreation facilities that serve approximately a 3-mile radius. If a special facility is incorporated into any of the proposed parks, the site will need to be larger to accommodate more participants from throughout the area. Each new park site should have a site-specific

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master plan prepared for its development and local users should be made part of the development process. Where feasible, the parks should be linked with other parks and recreation areas by greenways/trails.

### **Recommendations for Existing Community Park Facilities**

The existing park facilities will require improvements and repairs. General improvements to community and neighborhood recreation sites may include the following list of items:

- Expand and improve play fields and play equipment areas.
- Renovate and improve play equipment areas to current standards.
- Improve parking areas where offered.
- Add more picnic and seating spaces.
- Improve restroom accessibility and security at sites that offer facilities.
- Improve overall disabled accessibility within parks.
- Improve signage and landscaping
- Link parks to existing neighborhood walkways, where feasible to proposed greenways/trails.
- Remove or reuse under utilized tennis courts or multi-purpose courts for other recreation opportunities such as basketball, skateboarding, or in-line skating.

Regardless of the suggested improvement, site plans should be prepared for any major park change or renovation and the public should be involved with the development process.

Community recreation proposals with potential County involvement are shown on the “Master Plan Proposals Map”.

### **Greenways Bikeways and Special Use Facilities**

#### **Greenway Trails and Bike Paths (greenway trail/path)**

Greenways can serve a number of important functions such as linking parks together to make for a cohesive park system, allowing for safe pedestrian/bike access within a community,

emphasizing how nature can interact with the built environment, and enhancing property values. In many respects greenways can also enhance protected open space or natural resource areas. They can preserve natural resources and provide corridors for wildlife habitat and provide buffers at developed areas. The primary difference between a greenway and natural areas is that greenways emphasize use. The location of a greenway within a particular urban area could easily make it a light traffic corridor. Important aspects of developing greenway corridors is to link parks together, provide access to natural resources, and provide safe easy access to other use areas such as schools or public facilities.

This Master Plan recommends that:

- The County should be a facilitator of trail development in the county. Hiring a “Recreation Planner/Trail & Open Space Coordinator is a necessity.
- Developing a Haw River Paddle-Pedal-Pedestrian Trail that runs the entire length of the county should be the ultimate goal for implementation
- Standards indicate 35 miles of trails by the year 2020, the end of the planning period. Two stretches of the Haw River Greenway Trail are identified as a priority for development as follows
  - Glencoe to Glen-Raven
  - Alamance Creek/Swepsonville to the County Line along Chatham County
- The trails should be multi-purpose where possible and do not need to be paved in most locations.
- Multi-purpose Trails should provide for equestrian access and equestrian support facilities should be provided where feasible.
- The Master Plan Proposals Map identifies various corridors for trails / greenways along the major tributaries of the County as follows:
  - Haw River (paddle/pedal/pedestrian)
  - West: Big & Little Alamance Creeks
  - Northeast: Quaker/Back Creeks

- North: Stony Creek, Toms Creek, Jordan Creek, & Buttermilk Creek
- South-Southeast: Cane Creek, Haw Creek
- Use trails to connect many of the parks and heritage sites in the area and when possible provide for equestrian use.
- Use TEA-21, NC-Trail Fund, NCDOT Enhancement Funds, and Bikeway Funds and possibly develop greenways in cooperation with Clean Water Fund projects, sewer expansions, and FEMA monies.
- Additional connections should be entertained to link use-areas or sites such as schools, shopping, parks, natural features and other recreation sites.
- During the planning period an emphasis should be placed on development of paths and trails already underway along the Haw River
- Developers and utility providers should be approached, as partners for developing trails and a cooperative agreement (letter of understanding) should be developed to facilitate the process.
- Use of existing rights of way, easements and publicly owned land is suggested as the way to begin the greenway system. Donation of land by property owners, reservation of land, exchange of land, purchase of easement, purchase of land in fee, or requirement of greenway development by developers in return for higher density are also methods of developing the greenway.

## Special Facilities –

### Regional/ District Park

- **Confluence Park Site (confluence of Haw River and Cane Creek)** – Develop in cooperation with NCDENR a ±1,000 acre special facility that includes district park offerings. The State is looking for a potential recreation site at the confluence of the Haw River and Cane Creek. A partnership would allow the County to offer district level recreational opportunities in that part of the county. The site has enormous potential to

fit into initiatives by the state to develop trails along the Haw River and connect the Mountains-to-Sea Trail with large passive parklands. A partnership could benefit both parties (see Special Facility recommendations this section).

### Glencoe River Access Park

**Develop as a 70+ acre River Parks** —ACRPD received a grant for \$157,960 by CWMTF to purchase approximately 23 acres on the Haw River at the historic Glencoe Mill Village. There is an additional ±40-acres property bordering the 23 acres site that is currently under purchase. A site Master Plan for a park on this property has been done by PTCOG.

- This property is to be developed as a passive river park, with canoe accesses, fishing points, picnicking areas and a trail connecting property owned by the City of Burlington. A trail of ±3-miles is planned along the Haw River from this location. The development is proposed as a joint effort with the City of Burlington. This will be the ACRPD's initial foray into the overall Haw River Trail project. Grant money for trail development is available from the State as part of the MTS.
- Funding is currently planned for the project by converting the sale of the Glen Raven Park facility through the National Park Service thus creating funds for developing the 23-acre river access site.

### Glen Raven Site

**Develop a River Access park** — near Ossipee, develop this site as a passive park for access to the Haw River. Site improvements should support canoe/boat access, parking, and day-use activities such as picnicking, fishing, observation areas and restrooms. This site has potential partnering opportunities with the town of Ossipee.

### Develop Haw River Multi-use Trail (Greenway & Pedestrian/Paddle/Bike trails)

This trail is the “Interstate” or main corridor for Alamance County. Most communities in the County can connect to this trail in some manner. The trail also has the potential to bring tourist to the area since it will be part of, or at least connect to, a nationally recognized trail the



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“North Carolina - Mountains to Sea Trail. Another link can be made to promote the trail as part of the “Alamance Wine Trail (see Greenway Trails recommendations previously in this section).

### **River Access at Current Landfill Site**

Similar to the Glen Raven site, this county facility can be developed as a passive park for access to the Haw River. The active landfill will continue for another 20 years so it is imperative that permanent access to recreation facilities be made part of the landfill operations plan. A phased completion schedule for completing the landfill cells should accommodate and benefit reclamation of the property for recreation. Access to the river and any proposed facilities should be maintained throughout the life of the filling process to reduce inherent problems caused by constructing facilities over or near landfills. A master plan should be prepared for reclaiming the landfill to ensure the property can be used efficiently and effectively for its current and future use.

### **Environmental Education Center**

Develop an environmental education center in cooperation with private industry, the agricultural extension service (NCSU), Elon University, Alamance Community College and other potential parties. Potential locations for developing this facility include Cedarrock Park, Turner Road proposed District Park and the Glencoe River Access Park.

The ACRPD has been made aware of the interest in an environmental education center in Alamance County. There may be support from the ABSS and local businesses such as Carolina Biological.

## **Individual Facility Proposals and Recommendations**

As previously stated, by the year 2020 the County should contain (2-3) District Parks. These park sites and any new community or neighborhood parks will allow for expansion of needed recreation facilities. All new facilities will need to comply with federal, state, and local building codes. This includes the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act, which

requires access to all public services. In Section 3 “Recreation Standards and Community Needs Assessment”, specific facility needs were identified through the community public involvement process and by using recreation standards. Facility needs described in Section Three (Table 3-4) identify the number of facilities for the entire county. The following individual facility improvements need to be considered at future park sites:

- Baseball/softball fields
- Soccer fields
- Volleyball courts
- Picnic shelters,
- Playground activities
- Trails (including hiking, interpretive, and equestrian)
- Camping areas
- Swimming pools
- Bicycling routes

## **TDA/CVB/SDC Involvement:**

The Alamance County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) as administered by the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB). Has an interest in supporting the recommendations of this Master Plan to promote the area The TDA/CVB believe in supporting appropriate tourism events, facilities, initiatives, and industries that provide valuable economic impact for the community and demonstrate a return on investment. The following information identifies how the TDA/CVB and Sports Development Council (SDC) can be advocates of the proposals presented in the plan

### **Haw River/Greenways**

- A primary service recommendation is that ACRPD take a lead role in planning and coordinating greenway and trail efforts throughout the county and hire a Recreation Planner/Trail& Open Space Coordinator to oversee trail development and planning.
  - ACRPD and TDA/CVB should work together on developing and promoting the Haw River Paddling and Land Trail. The CVB will be critical in assisting

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with marketing this amenity and tracking economic impact.

- The CVB should help ensure the coordination of this Haw River Trail effort with existing businesses including wineries, outfitters, clubs and associations that will see a benefit from the effort.
- The CVB will be able to help with uniform signage, brochures, and attracting events/activities that will utilize the paddle/land trail.

### **Facilities**

The Master Plan process has identified the need and desire for several types of facilities that would certainly involve the input of the CVB. These potential recommendations have come from the public and focus group meetings with city, county, school staffs and special interest groups.

The CVB can support these in the following manner

- **Civic Center**
  - Provide assistance with a detailed study for programming and siting of a facility.
  - Identify potential partners for implementing a center.
- **Confluence Site potential**
  - Assist in evaluating and negotiating an agreement with State representative to attain a site.
  - Promote any results of a master plan for the site (distribute and create promotional materials).
  - Identify potential partners for implementing individual facilities proposed at the location.
- **New District Park (Turner Road Site or Northern Alternate Site)**
  - Assist in identifying potential partners for implementing facilities such as an Environmental Center, Aquatics/Water Park Facility, Botanical Gardens ATV Park, Special Population Enrichment Center and athletic complex etc.

- Promote any results of a master plan for the site (distribute and create promotional materials).

### **ACRPD/ABSS Joint Use of Facilities:**

- ACRPD needs to work with the Alamance-Burlington School System (ABSS) to attain a formal joint-use agreement that is system wide and can be uniformly enforced.

The agreement would:

- Deal with all facilities on a uniform system wide basis.
- Reduce or eliminate fees that both entities charge each other for rental of facilities.
- Provide a fair and effective method of sharing maintenance and repair responsibilities.

The Schools and the County should also work together to:

- Identify additional programs that can take place on school or park properties.
- Determine how to mutually approach property acquisition.
- Jointly construct sports fields, gymnasiums, and aquatic facilities when possible.

During the public input process of this Master Plan, citizens expressed a desire for the school system to make recreation facilities more accessible or available to the public after school hours. Comments suggested that school sites be “designed” to accommodate joint use and that County Commissioners help bring this to fruition when appropriating money for schools and parks.

- **The ACRPD and the SDC/CVB should work together to provide the following:**
  - Detailed information describing available athletic/auditorium facilities at ABSS sites.
  - Inclusion of activities either recruited and/or hosted by the SDC/CVB in the formalized joint-use agreement between the ACRPD and ABSS.

- Standardized fees and staff policies for use of ABSS sites for SDC/CVB events.

#### **Community Grant/Assistance Program:**

- The County should consider establishing a fund to assist with recreation facility construction by municipalities. Jointly developing facilities through negotiated Town/County partnerships or possibly through a County administered “Funding/Grant” program.
- The TDA/CVB should play a role in evaluating projects submitted by municipalities to determine what the tourism value might be.

## **Priorities for Development**

The park and facility proposals have been prioritized into separate time frames for implementation. The prioritization was influenced by the evaluation of existing facilities; the community needs assessment and the financial ability of Alamance County to implement the overall Capital Improvement/Development Projection presented in Section 5 of this plan (see Table 5-1). The capital projections for implementing the proposals reflect these priorities.

### **Years 2008-2010**

- Finalize staff moves to Cedarrock Park and Glencoe.
- Perform ongoing renovations at existing sites.
- Hire a Recreation Planner/Trail Coordinator to begin work on the Haw River trail
- Acquire Property for Cedarrock Park expansion.
- Develop Updated Master Plan for Cedarrock Park
- Acquire property for a District Park (if Alternate site is needed).
- Acquire land, or easements for Greenway Trails.
- Work with the ABSS on planning and developing a concept for a joint-use facility.
- Develop the Phase 1 of Glencoe site project.

- Acquire a lease agreement for the Confluence Site and Develop Phase1- River Access Point.
- Develop Phase 1 of New District Park (PD2 or PD2-Alt.).
- Develop Phase 1 Master Plan Improvements at Cedarrock Park.
- Develop Phase 1-Haw River Trail Projects (Section of North trails & Section of South Trails).

### **Years 2011-2015**

- Perform ongoing renovations at existing sites.
- Continue acquiring land, or easements for Greenway Trails.
- Develop the Phase 2 of Glencoe site project.
- Develop Phase 2 of Confluence Site (Day Use & Visitor Center Facilities).
- Develop Phase 2 of New District Park (PD2 or PD2-Alt.).
- Develop Phase 2 Master Plan Improvements at Cedarrock Park.
- Develop Phase 2-Haw River Trail Projects (Section of North trails & Section of South Trails).

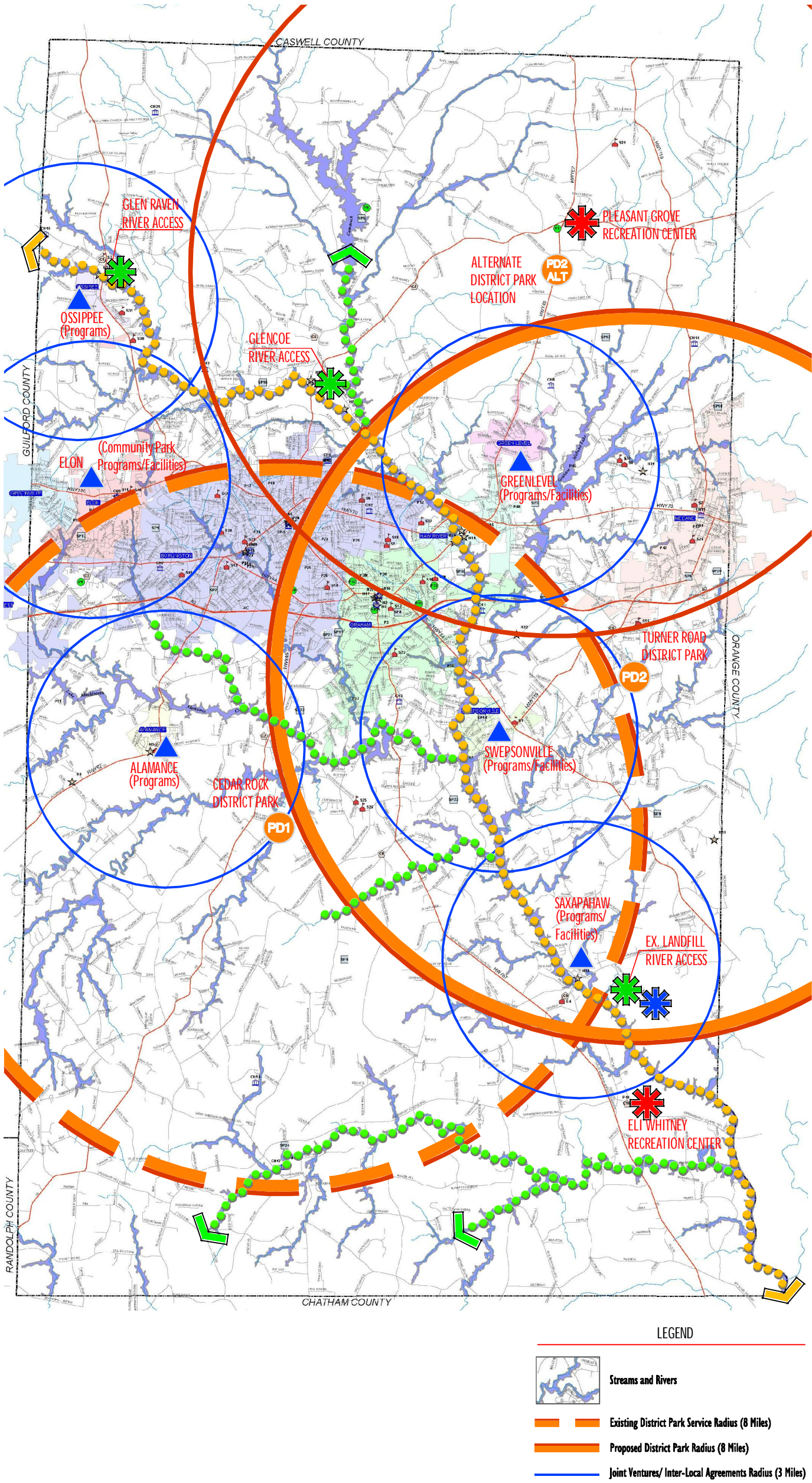
### **Years 2016-2020**

- Perform ongoing renovations at existing sites.
- Continue acquiring land, or easements for Greenway Trails.
- Develop Phase 3 of New District Park (PD2 or PD2-Alt.).
- Develop Phase 3 Master Plan Improvements at Cedarrock Park.
- Develop the Phase 3 of Glencoe site project.
- Develop Phase 3 of Confluence Site (Day Use & Visitor Center Facilities).
- Develop Phase 2-Haw River Trail Projects (Section of North trails & Section of South Trails).



master plan proposals map

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<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	P1	<b>Public Schools</b>	S1
Pleasant Grove Recreation Center	P10	Alexander Wilson Elementary	S10
South Hightower Park	P11	Eon College Elementary	S11
Lake Macintosh	P12	Graham High School	S12
Willetts Park	P13	Graham Middle School	S13
Butterfly Park	P14	Grove Park Elementary	S14
Indian Valley Golf Course	P15	Harvey R. Nowlin Elementary	S15
Mayco Bigelow Recreation Center	P16	Haw River Elementary	S16
Northwestern Park	P17	Hawfields Middle School	S17
Robinson Park	P18	Hickory Elementary	S18
Elmira Street Recreation Center	P19	Hugh M. Cummings High School	S19
Cave Darter Park	P20	Marvin D. Smith Elementary	S20
Fairchild Center / Springwood Park	P21	Atamogrow-Ossipee Elementary	S21
Birch Street Gym	P22	North Graham Elementary	S22
Dolan Park	P23	Pocant Elementary	S23
Korrodie Senior Center	P24	R. Homer Andrews Elementary	S24
Petersburg Park	P25	South Mebane Elementary	S25
Forest Hills	P26	Southern High School	S26
Magnolia Aquatic Center	P27	Southern Middle School	S27
Burlington Tennis Center	P28	Sylvan Elementary	S28
Thalway	P29	Turnstone Village School	S29
Key Street Recreation Center	P30	Water W. Williams High School	S30
Beth Schmidt Park	P31	Audrey W. Garrett Elementary	S31
Parliament Theater	P32	Western High School	S32
Osley Street Park	P33	Western Middle School	S33
Mill Creek Park	P34	Woodward Middle School	S34
Maple Street Center	P35	Woodward Middle School	S35
Graham River Access	P36	Woodward Middle School	S36
South Graham Park	P37	Woodward Middle School	S37
Marshall Street Playground	P38	Woodward Middle School	S38
Graham Recreation Center	P39	Woodward Middle School	S39
Morgan Pice Park	P40	Woodward Middle School	S40
Haw River Civic Center	P41	Woodward Middle School	S41
Melba Arts & Community Center	P42	Woodward Middle School	S42
Melba Youth Field	P43	Woodward Middle School	S43
Melba Recreation Center	P44	Woodward Middle School	S44
Graham Mobile Lake	P45	Woodward Middle School	S45
The Depot	P46	Woodward Middle School	S46
Swantonville Ball Park	P47	Woodward Middle School	S47
Swantonville River Park	P48	Woodward Middle School	S48
Eli Whitney Recreation Center	P49	Woodward Middle School	S49
Older Haven Park	P50	Woodward Middle School	S50
ALUMINUM	P51	Woodward Middle School	S51
Lake Carmichael	P52	Woodward Middle School	S52
Lee Davidson Park	P53	Woodward Middle School	S53
	P54	Woodward Middle School	S54
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## SECTION 5 – ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### Introduction

The Alamance County Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan is based upon a review of the community, an analysis of existing facilities, the identification of user needs, the development of recreation standards, and an adherence to stated proposals and recommendations. The plan is intended to be “action-oriented”—designed to provide a framework from which the County can enhance recreation and parks service to its citizens.

A critical step toward implementing the Master Plan is the identification of adequate funding, at a time when balancing budgets throughout the state has become harder. The North Carolina Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan has regularly identified inadequate funding for park facilities and recreation programs as a key issue for government to address when maintaining basic services. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, per capita funding for parks and recreation services throughout the State of North Carolina, including local government is 33% below the national average. However, low statewide funding levels do not reflect the high value citizens’ place on parks and recreation.

Implementing the recommendations will help the County to provide for future parks and recreation services needs, as well as preserving open space. For the plan to succeed the County must establish annual budgets for providing Recreation Services. The budgets should include the projected capital improvement costs, and projected staffing /operating costs presented in the plan.

### Master Plan Capital Improvement / Development Cost Projection

The proposed capital improvement cost projection for the acquisition, and development of parks and facilities was prepared with input from County staff. All proposed costs are shown in 2006-dollar values. The capital improvement/development costs include funds for land acquisition, site development and renovation/improvements. The costs also include a design contingency for associated planning and design fees. The Capital Improvement/ Development Program is summarized below by project type

### Capital Funding

Based on the information from Table 5-1 and the following summary table, there are \$31,628,000 of projects to fund during the planning period for meeting the park and recreation needs identified by this Master Plan. The total represents the cost of the projects in 2006 dollars and does not take into account any savings to the County if the projects are funded through partnership structures. The County should use a combination of funding sources from various means to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan. There are numerous combinations of funding strategies that could be explored and implemented to reduce the County’s share for funding. Most of these would necessitate the use of partnerships of some sort.

### Summary of Capital Improvement/Development Cost: (see table 5-1 at end of this section for details)

Project Type	Amount
Renovation/Maintenance Program	\$2,278,000
Land Acquisition Program	\$3,500,000
Park Development Program	\$14,300,000
Special Use Facilities Program	\$11,550,000
<b>Total Capital Improvement Cost (through 2020)</b>	<b>\$31,628,000</b>

*\* All costs are in current (2006) dollars*

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## Potential Key Sources of Capital Funding:

- General Fund Allocations
- General Obligation Bonds
- Limited Option or Special Use Tax
- Revenue Bonds
- Park Foundation
- General Foundations
- Federal and State Assistance
- Payments In Lieu of Dedication
- Grants/Contributions and Partnerships

## Staff Needs:

The structure and number of personnel in the Alamance County Recreation & Parks Department (ACRPD) is below that of comparable sized communities in the state. This is primarily because only one major facility, Cedarock Park, in the system requires more than 1-2 people to operate. Even taking this into consideration the number of personnel at Cedarock Park is less than at parks of comparable size or that offer comparable services/facilities.

Proposed additional park facilities and associated programs will require additional staff. Six (6) key staff additions are identified for supplementing the current staff of fifteen (15) through the planning period. The positions are shown in the “Proposed Organization Chart” (Exhibit 5-1 found below)

Four (4) of the staff additions fit into position classifications that exist in the current structure of the Department. Two (2) however, are “New Staff Positions” that are further described below. All six staff additions shown in the “Proposed Organization Chart” are described as follows:

### Proposed New Staff Positions:

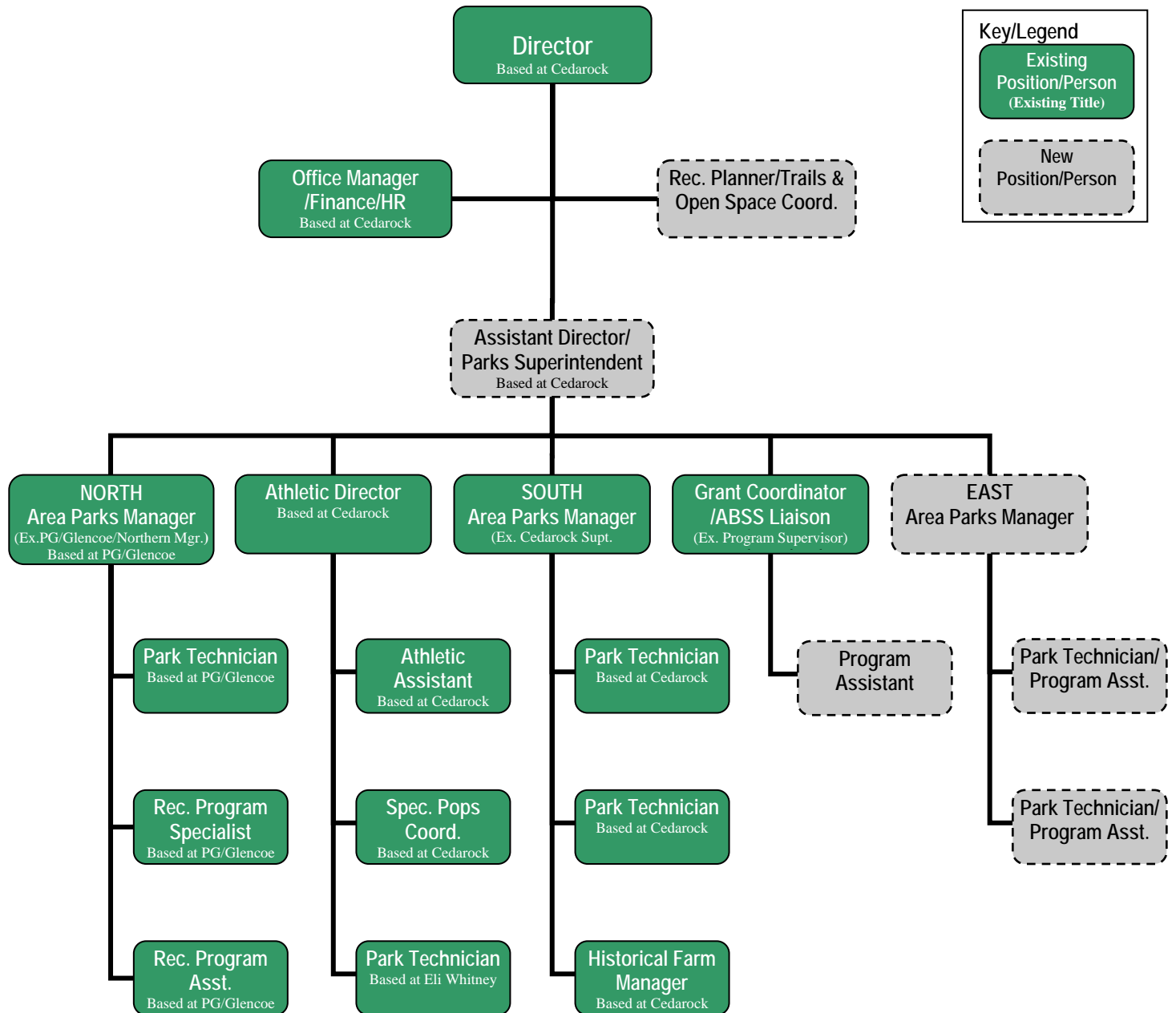
- (1) Assistant Director/Parks Superintendent: this position is to report directly to the Director and be responsible for management and maintenance of current and future facilities. The position requires direct interaction and coordination with area managers and supervisors.

- (1) Recreation Planner/Trails & Open Space Coordinator: Will report directly to the Director and provide technical oversight for the planning and coordination parks, trails and open space policies in the county. The position requires direct interaction with the Planning Department, TRC, Towns/Municipalities, state agencies, other public recreation providers and private landowners/developers.

### Additional staff fitting existing classifications:

- (1) Park Area Manager/Superintendent: to oversee the operations of the proposed District Park (Turner or PD2-Alternate) and any other proposed facilities in the southeastern part of the county.
- (2) Park Technicians/Program Assistants: to provide technical and/or specialized program support at the proposed District Park (Turner or PD2-Alternate) and other proposed facilities in the southeastern part of the county.
- (1) Program Assistants: to provide specialized program support where applicable and provide day-to-day assistance to the Grant Coordinator/ABSS Liaison position.

Exhibit 5-1: Proposed Organization Chart — Alamance County Recreation & Park Department



## Operating Budgets

Proposed operating budgets for facilities identified in the master plan should include costs for staffing, operations, and general maintenance. Operation budgets from previous plans and various recreation departments from around the state were used in support of the following information. The exact operating cost will be dependent on the final design of each site on a case-by-case scenario. However, general ranges for Annual Operating Cost are provided below for the type of facilities recommended in the plan.

Type of Facility	Annual Operating Cost
District Park – (majority of development is “Passive”)	\$400,000 - \$600,000
District Park (majority of development is “Active”)	\$600,000 – \$1,000,000
Sports Complex (8 fields min with support amenities)	\$600,000 – \$1,000,000
Greenway Trails (paved)	\$6,000 – \$8,000 per mile
Greenway trails (undeveloped) -	\$2,500 – \$4,000 per mile

- Special Use Facilities, as recommended in the Master Plan, can generate considerable revenues. The table below identifies potential recovery costs for facilities proposed in the plan. National trends for cities of similar or larger size demonstrate special facilities of this type can be 100% self-supporting, or in other words, generate revenue to cover 100% of their operating cost.

### Summary of Revenues for Special-Use Facilities:

Special-Use Facility	Annual Expenses	Annual Revenues	Cost Recovery	Revenue for Life of Master Plan
Athletic Complex	\$400,000–\$600,000	\$240,000–\$360,000	60%	\$1,200,000–\$1,800,000
Special-Use/District Parks	\$400,000–\$600,000	\$200,000–\$300,000	50%	\$1,000,000–\$1,500,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$800,000-\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$440,000–\$660,000</b>	<b>55%-56%</b>	<b>\$2,200,000–\$3,300,000</b>

## Funding Ideas / Strategy

Over the planning period, Alamance County will not be able to support the proposed capital improvements and associated operating costs solely through the current level of contributions from the General Fund (approximately \$1.4-million annually). **The County must use a combination of revenue sources to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan.**

There are numerous combinations of funding strategies that can be explored and implemented by the County. Upon review of past budget documents, current practices, available resources, national trends, and standards; a funding strategy is presented for consideration with the following funding source. **It must be noted that general obligation bonds are still the most common funding source utilized to finance park projects in North Carolina.**

### General Fund:

Assuming allocations from the General Fund remain at the current level per person ( $\pm$ \$9 per capita for operations only); the total funds generated will be  $\pm$ \$24-\$25million during the planning period. (Assumes minor budget increase of 3%-5% annually)

This \$24-million covers 76% of the proposed capital improvement costs for planning period (Total Capital = \$31.63-million per Table 5-1 attached at the end of this Section)

The County should try to maintain this funding level through the life of the planning period.

Based on FY06 property valuation figures, 1¢ of the current property tax rate (57.5¢/\$100) produces about \$1.-million annually. This amount generates approximately \$15-million over the planning period with only minor increases in the property valuation (2% annually).



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An increase of property tax by 1¢ would require a \$100,000 property to pay an additional \$5.75 per year in taxes or less than 1.6¢ per day.

### General Obligation Bonds

- General Obligation Bonds should be used in acquiring and developing new parks and recreation facilities as well as renovating existing facilities.
- This master plan proposes that the County evaluate the use of bonds to raise funds for land acquisition and facility development of large ticket items listed in the Capital Improvement/Development Program (Table 5-1).
- The total funds used from the bonds for developing these facilities should include an additional 1½%-2% for debt service and administrative cost associated with the bonds.
- Funds are needed early in the process to repair/replace outdated and poor facilities and a bond campaign will need to be started as soon as possible.
- If bonds are a means that the County decides to use for funding projects, a plan for promoting the acquisition of bonds should be brought forward in 2007. This would possibly allow a referendum to be held in 2008 or 2009.

### User Charges

- Currently, revenues from user charges provide a very small amount of the Department's total operating budget to the County general fund.
- A goal of the plan should be to increase this dramatically through the planning period by improving facilities that can support higher fees. To accomplish this goal, special use facilities identified within the plan could provide over \$2.0 - million from user charges. Alamance County needs to update the pricing policies within the Department to accurately reflect the value of the services provided to County residents.

There are three different types of consumptive services provided by parks and recreation

agencies that must be identified and priced accordingly.

— A public service is a service that has high public benefit (equal benefit to everyone), should be free, and supported by taxes.

— The second type of service is a merit service, which provides some public benefit. The person receiving the service benefits more from the service than the general taxpayer, and should pay an equitable share of the cost to receive the service.

— The third type of service is a private benefit service. This type of service benefits the user totally, not the general taxpayer. Therefore, the user should pay the total cost to receive the service.

The pricing policy should reflect three levels of pricing for services. Recreation by its nature is a consumptive service. It is within this mindset that services are broken down into a public service, a merit service, and a private benefit service.

The County needs to establish an activity based costing model to track the true cost of all program services. This will help make informed decisions on whether some costs for a program should be passed onto the user because of the merit or private benefits the user receives. Additionally, the Department can make an informed decision to subsidize some program costs as part of policy within a Department revenue plan.

Using the above methods should make it very easy for ACRPD to come to a decision concerning pricing and the value of providing athletic programming services at community facilities that are operated by others.

The recommendations for pricing for ACRPD services are the following:

1. Over the next two years, establish a costing program that evaluates direct and indirect cost for each aspect of program and park services.
2. Once these costs have been identified, evaluate if any merit or private benefit is being provided and determine at what level of public subsidy support the County wants to contribute for each activity reviewed.

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3. The County then can determine if they would like to find a sponsor or grant to support the program cost or to bring down the cost to a minimum level. If so, establish a strategy to seek out those opportunities through a formal request process.
  4. Depending on whether the County seeks to find outside private or public sources to fund a portion of the program, they will need to communicate to the users what percentage of monies the County is contributing to the experience and what level the outside sources are contributing. From this strategy, the Department over time can make appropriate adjustments according to willingness to pay and market elasticity in the area.
  5. All new program services provided in the future should be priced at appropriate levels of public subsidy that is in tune with the County's value system for the program provided.

#### **Open Space Dedication and Payment in Lieu of Dedication:**

- The Development Ordinance should be reworked to include open space and recreation requirements that affect land development and require dedication of land for recreation.
- The requirements should allow for payment in lieu of land dedication, and substitution of off-site land for dedication. These options allow the County and developers some flexibility in meeting recreational goals of the community and allow the County to "bank" payments for larger projects."

#### **Partnerships, Grants, and Gifts**

(Federal/State Assistance, Partnerships & Contributions)

Federal funding sources necessary to help finance the Master Plan have historically been available from the U.S. Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF funds distributed to the states for local program funding has been severely minimized the past few years but it may return to former levels depending on legislative approval. Potential funding through the U.S. Department of

Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program is also available given certain conditions. State funding is available from the NC-PARTF Grant Program.

A combination of grants, gifts, or other revenue sources will need to account for a percentage of the costs for capital improvements, operations and programs but the County cannot rely upon these sources as mainstream funding.

- There are opportunities in the State to support this funding. In particular, North Carolina Park and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grants, LWCF if Congressional funding is expanded, private sector foundations, and non-profit groups should be aggressively approached by the County.
- Partnerships will become a large component in funding the improvements. Public-Private partnerships offer the best opportunity for the County to minimize development and operating expenses. However, partnerships with other public agencies such Burlington and Graham can also reduce cost depending on the assets brought forward and the structure of responsibilities negotiated in the partnership.

#### **Partnership Considerations**

As stated previously in this report all types of partnerships can be formed with local public, quasi-public, or private entities. Alamance County, through ACRPD, has the following potential partnership opportunities: (See Section 4 for detailed descriptions)

- School partnerships
- Neighborhood partnerships
- Church partnerships
- Non-Profit or Not-for-profit program development
- Private sector partnerships
- Private sector service contracts
- Hospital partnerships
- Trail partnerships
- County/Town partnership

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## Revenue Plan

Upon adoption of the Master Plan, the County must continue establishment of a complete revenue plan/strategy. A revenue plan incorporates all available funding resources in a community, prioritizes them, and incorporates each option into a funding strategy. The plan must also evaluate each funding alternative or resource and its appropriate use for funding capital improvements, operations and programs.

## Alternative Funding / Revenue Sources

Historically traditional funding sources, such as general fund allocations, have not been able to keep up with the needs of growing communities and the management of park assets. New facilities and their operations only add to the need for funding from a variety of sources. The County will need to create a combination of new revenue sources to meet the future needs of Alamance County residents. Upon adoption of the Master Plan, the County will need to establish a revenue plan for implementing service. A revenue plan incorporates all available resource in a community, priorities them, and puts each option into a funding strategy.

The County has made great progress in generating this Master Plan and the same progress must be shown for funding and implementing the recommendations.

The following information identifies examples of alternative funding sources. The County and the Recreation Commission should evaluate these sources when preparing a revenue plan for the master plan recommendations.

### Hospitality Tax

In addition to property taxes, the County could use or expand a hospitality tax (placed on prepared meals/beverages served) to generate funds for recreation. The funds must be used for promotion of tourism and many communities in the state are using the tax for park and recreation projects.

### Capital Projects Sales Tax

This sales tax is enacted by approval of a referendum and must be approved by the State legislature. The tax must be used for a specific purpose, must not last for a stipulated time period, and may collect a limited amount of revenue. This sales tax can be used for recreational facilities.

### General Obligation Bonds

As noted previously, general tax revenue for parks and recreation are usually devoted to current operation and maintenance of existing facilities. Therefore communities often issue bonds for funding capital improvements or special projects. For the purpose of paying the debt on these bonds, the local government is empowered to levy a special tax. Total bonding capacities for local government is limited to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

### Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds have become a popular funding method for financing high-use specialty facilities like golf courses, aquatic centers, ice rinks, tennis centers, and complexes for softball and soccer. The user and other revenue sources on-site pay revenue bonds.

### Corporate Sponsorships

This revenue-funding source allows corporations to invest in the development or enhancement of new or existing facilities in park systems. Sponsorships are also highly used for programs and events.

### Partnerships

Partnerships are a joint development funding source or an operational funding source between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a County department, or a private business and a County agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner.

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## **Foundation/Gifts**

These dollars are raised from tax-exempt, non-profit organizations established with private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gift catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, sales of items, etc.

## **Intermodal Transportation and Efficiency Act**

This funding program, commonly called TEA-21 Grants was authorized by the Federal Government in 1991. Funds are distributed through the state. There are several million dollars in enhancement revenues available for transportation related projects, including bicycle and pedestrian trails, rail depot rehabilitation, landscaping, and beautification projects.

## **Federal Grants**

A variety of special grants either currently exist through the Federal and State governmental systems or will be established through the life of current and proposed facilities. Potential funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is also available given certain conditions. Other potential sources for recreational funding are available through the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and Better America Bonds.

## **State Grants**

North Carolina State government manages several existing grant programs from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant program, North Carolina Recreational Trails Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and the former Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) now known as TEA-21. In addition, the State also makes funds available for development of facilities and programs through the Community Development Block Grant system (CDBG).

## **Recreation Service Fees**

This is a dedicated user fee, which can be established by local ordinance or other government procedure for the purpose of

constructing and maintaining recreation facilities. The fee can apply to all organized activities, which require a reservation of some type, or other purposes as defined by the local government. Examples of such activities include adult basketball, volleyball, and softball leagues, youth baseball, soccer, and softball leagues, and special interest classes. The fee allows participants an opportunity to contribute toward the upkeep of the facilities being used.

## **Annual Appropriation/Leasehold Financing**

This is a more complex financing structure that requires use of a third party to act as issuer of the bonds, construct the facility and retain title until the bonds are retired. The County enters into a lease agreement with the third party, with annual lease payments equal to the debt service requirements. The bonds issued by the third party are considered less secure than general obligation bonds of the County and therefore, more costly. Since a separate corporation issues these bonds, they do not affect the County's debt limitations and do not require a vote. However, they also do not entitle the County to levy property taxes to service the debt. The annual lease payments must be appropriated from existing revenues.

## **Interlocal Agreements**

Contractual relationships entered into between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.

## **Private Concessionaires**

Contract with a private business to provide and operate desirable recreational activities financed, constructed, and operated by the private sector with additional compensation paid to the County.

## **Land Trust**

Many counties have developed land trusts to help secure and fund the cost for acquiring land that needs to be preserved and protected for greenway purposes. This could be a good source to look to for acquisition of future lands.

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## **Establish a Linear Park / Greenway Utility**

Linear park/greenway utilities are used to finance acquisition of greenways and development of the greenways by selling the underground development rights for the fiber optic types of businesses.

## **Naming Rights**

Many cities and counties have turned to selling the naming rights for new buildings or renovation of existing buildings and parks for the development cost associated with the improvement.

## **Cell Towers**

Cell towers attached to existing light poles in game field complexes is another source of revenue the County could seek in helping support the system.

## **Private Developers**

These developers lease space from County-owned land through a subordinate lease that pays out a set dollar amount plus a percentage of gross dollars for recreation enhancements. These could include restaurants, sports complexes, equestrian facilities, recreation centers and ice arenas.

## **Licensing Rights**

This revenue source allows the County to license its name on all resale items that private or public vendors use when they sell clothing or other items with County's name on it. The normal licensing fee is 6% to 10% of the cost of the resale item.

## **Capital Improvement Fees**

These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as golf, recreation centers and pools to support capital improvements that benefit the user of the facility.

## **Merchandising Sales**

This revenue source comes from the public or private sector on resale items from gift shops and pro shops for either all of the sales or a set gross percentage.

## **Concession Management**

Concession management is from retail sales or rentals of soft goods, hard goods, or consumable items. The County either contracts for the service or receives a set of the gross percentage or the full revenue dollars that incorporates a profit after expenses.

## **Friends Associations / "Friends of the Park"**

These groups are formed to raise money typically for a single focus purpose that could include a park facility or program that will better the community as a whole and their special interest.

## **Advertising Sales**

This revenue source is for selling tasteful and appropriate advertising on park and recreation related items such as in the County's program guide, on scoreboards, dasher boards and other visible products or services that are consumable or permanent that exposes the product or service to many people.

## **Easements**

This revenue source is available when the County allows utility companies, businesses or individuals to develop some type of an improvement above ground or below ground on their property for a set time and a set dollar amount to be received by the County on an annual basis.

## **Irrevocable Remainder Trusts**

These trusts are set up with individuals who typically have more than a million dollars in wealth. They will leave a portion of their wealth to the County in a trust fund that allows the fund to grow over a period of time and then is available for the County to use a portion of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.

## **Life Estates**

This source of money is available when someone wants to leave their property to the County in exchange for them to live on their property until their death. The County usually can use a portion of the property for park purposes and then all of it after the person's

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death. This revenue source is very popular for individuals who have a lot of wealth and their estate will be highly taxed at their death and their children have to sell off their property because of probate costs. This allows the person to receive a good tax deduction yearly on their property while leaving a life estate. It is good for the County because they do not have to pay for the land.

### **Permits (Special Use Permits)**

These special permits allow individuals to use specific park property for financial gain. The County receives either a set amount of money or a percentage of the gross service that is being provided.

### **Catering Permits and Services**

This is a license to allow caterers to work in the park system on a permit basis with a set fee or a percentage of food sales returning to the County. In addition, many cities have their own catering service and receive a percentage of dollars off the sale of their food.

**TABLE 5-1**  
**ALAMANCE COUNTY RECREATION & PARKS DEPARTMENT**  
**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**  
2006 UPDATE  
(COST SHOWN ARE FOR PROJECTS PLANNED FROM 2007/08 THROUGH 2020)

Capital Improvement/Acquisition Description	2020 Total Cost Projection	Time Frame of Improvement		
		2008-2010	2011-2015	2016-2020
<b>Renovation/Maintenance Program</b>				
Existing Parks				
Cedarock	\$1,300,000	\$300,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Pleasant Grove	\$100,000	\$50,000		\$50,000
Eli Whitney	\$200,000	\$100,000		\$100,000
Glencoe	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Cedarock Master Plan Update	\$100,000	\$100,000		
Admin. Hardware & Equipment	\$30,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
New parks (once online)	\$200,000		\$100,000	\$100,000
Planning & Design	\$198,000	\$51,000	\$66,000	\$81,000
<b>Renovation/Maintenance Program Total</b>	<b>\$2,278,000</b>	<b>\$661,000</b>	<b>\$726,000</b>	<b>\$891,000</b>
<b>Land Acquisition Program</b>				
Regional/State Facility Proposal (Austin Quarter Property)	\$0			
District Parks				
Cedarock (40-50 ac along entry)	\$500,000	\$500,000		
PD2 Alternate Site (±200ac. if Turner site not workable)	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	
Greenway/Trails (Haw River Pilot Projects)	\$1,000,000	\$100,000	\$400,000	\$500,000
<b>Land Acquisition Program Total</b>	<b>\$3,500,000</b>	<b>\$1,600,000</b>	<b>\$1,400,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>
<b>Park Development Program</b>				
District Parks				
Cedarock Park (\$8-mil. total)				
Meeting Center/ImpFacility/Offices	\$2,000,000	\$500,000		\$1,500,000
Maintenance Facility	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	
Picnic & Camping Areas	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	
Entry/Historic Farm/Trails/Parking	\$1,500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Mill Pond Complex	\$1,500,000		\$500,000	\$1,000,000
PD2-District Park Development (Turner Site or Alternate-PD2 site)	\$5,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Planning and Design	\$1,300,000	\$300,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
<b>Park Development Program Total</b>	<b>\$14,300,000</b>	<b>\$3,300,000</b>	<b>\$5,500,000</b>	<b>\$5,500,000</b>
<b>Special Use Facilities Program</b>				
Confluence Park Site (along Haw River at Cane Creek)				
River Access Point	\$500,000	\$300,000	\$200,000	
Day Use Facilities	\$1,000,000		\$500,000	\$500,000
Visitors Center (mid Point of Mt-Seas Trail connection)	\$2,000,000		\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Glencoe Park (River Access, Day-Use Area & Exhibit Spaces)	\$3,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Greenway/Trails (Haw River Pilot Projects)				
Haw River North 8-10 Mile (Glen Raven to Glencoe)	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
Haw River South 8-10 Mile (Alamance Creek to County Line)	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
Gym at B. Everett Jordan (ACRPD-share of partnership w/schools)	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000		
Turner Park - Ed/Nature Center (in cost above)	\$0			
Visit/Meeting Center at Cedarock (in cost above)	\$0			
Planning & Design	\$1,050,000	\$290,000	\$390,000	\$370,000
<b>Special Use Facilities Program Total</b>	<b>\$11,550,000</b>	<b>\$3,190,000</b>	<b>\$4,290,000</b>	<b>\$4,070,000</b>
<b>Total Capital Budget Cost</b>	<b>\$31,628,000</b>	<b>\$8,751,000</b>	<b>\$11,916,000</b>	<b>\$10,961,000</b>

Proposed costs are presented in 2006 dollar values and makes no allowance for inflation.