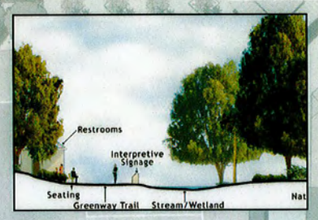
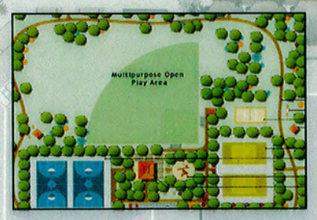
Mount Dora

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan





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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The City of Mount Dora hired the RMPK Group, Inc. to solicit public input regarding the city's parks, recreation facilities and programs and to prepare this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. This Master Plan identifies the recreational needs of the citizens of Mount Dora, and it recommends strategies and actions for meeting those needs.

The City of Mount Dora Leisure Services staff, the CRA staff and the consultant team, working together with community leaders and the general public, prepared this Master Plan to serve as the strategic planning tool for making parks, open space, facility and recreational program decisions over the next twenty years. The Master Plan identifies the actions that the city will be required to implement to satisfy the expectations of the community. It includes recommendations that give guidance for improving programs and services, creating a financially responsible organization, making land acquisitions and protecting open spaces, improving and establishing new facilities and instituting continuous improvement processes. Through these processes, the department will constantly and consistently review community input and proactively make the necessary changes that will help create an attractive and livable city.

The City of Mount Dora is experiencing unprecedented growth. With this increase in development come new issues, expectations and demands for expansion and protection of park lands and open spaces. The anticipation of these changes has led to the research and design of this Master Plan in the hopes that every one of the demands are met, and that the City of Mount Dora will continue to find itself among the best communities in the country.

The City of Mount Dora is growing and becoming more diverse in its economic development. In Mount Dora, parks and recreation services have become an integral part of establishing and sustaining a higher quality of life while highlighting an image and character that is unique to Mount Dora. To this end, parks and recreation services can affect the city by their ability to:

- Provide social benefits by connecting people within the community regardless of income, background and ability.
- Provide economic benefits by improving the quality of life in the community and helping to attract businesses and residents to the city.
- Provide protection of the environment by establishing greenways, natural areas and open spaces managed by the city.
- Provide benefits to individuals and the community by promoting physical fitness and self-improvement.

The process used to shape this Master Plan included the following tasks:

- Evaluating current services and operations of the Leisure Services and Public Works Department.
- Evaluating current and future needs for parks, recreation services, recreation facilities, open space and trails.
- Creating equity access maps to visualize and determine gaps of services.
- Developing recommendations and an implementation plan for the future that will provide the greatest benefits to the residents.

The Master Plan is divided into two parts:

1. Volume 1
   - Inventory
   - Analysis
   - Public Meetings
   - Survey Results
2. Volume 2
   - Introduction
   - Summary of Issues
   - Goals and Objectives
   - Park Standards
   - The Master Plan
   - The Implementation Plan
   - Concept Plans

GOALS OF THE MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan has been developed to address the issues that Mount Dora's residents feel are important to a viable and accessible parks and recreation system. It is intended to achieve realistic goals for the enhancement of the community's social, cultural and environmental well-being. This Master Plan has the following goals:

A. Generally

GOAL:
Ensure Mount Dora's Park and Recreation Legacy for Future Generations

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop fully programmed, fully operational and well-maintained parks, facilities and programs that meet both current and future park and recreation needs.
- Keep the public and local leaders informed about the value, benefits, conditions and needs of Mount Dora's park system.
- Coordinate the planning, management, development and funding of parks, natural resources, trails and recreation needs and concerns with other Mount Dora departments and city, county, and regional planning efforts.
- Engage the residents to become stewards of Mount Dora's parks and recreation system to help preserve the legacy for future generations.

B. Park Land and Facilities

GOAL:
Design, Build and Maintain Excellent Parks and Recreation Facilities

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop a park system that adequately serves the citizens' current and future needs in an efficient and affordable fashion.
- Develop a set of park design standards that preserve the quality of the parks and recreation system for future generations
- Develop each park, natural area and open space to respect the unique attributes of each site and its neighbors and according to its role in the overall park and recreation system.
- Develop parks and facilities that are accessible and available to all residents. Meet and, where possible, exceed that requirements for the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Use environmentally friendly, sustainable methods to build and care for parks, natural resources and recreation facilities.
- Protect Mount Dora's parks, natural resources and facilities by developing a set of low maintenance design standards for the park system.

GOAL:
Create an Interconnected Regional and Local System of Paths and Walkways and Trails to Make Mount Dora a "Walkable Community."

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide a safe and convenient trails system between parks, natural areas and recreation facilities, and connect them with residential areas, civic institutions and businesses.
- Coordinate the development of a regional trails system with surrounding municipalities and counties.
- Integrate the parks, community centers and trails into the neighborhoods.

GOAL:
Provide equal access to parks and recreation programs for all residents in the City

OBJECTIVES:

- Pursue all opportunities to provide park and recreation services in new developments, throughout the community and along natural areas.
- Provide developed Neighborhood Park and Community facilities within a reasonable distance of every resident.
- Provide recreational programs for all ages of the citizenry.
- Provide a geographic distribution of parks and recreation facilities that offer equal access and opportunity for all residents.

GOAL:

Preserve, Protect and Restore Mount Dora's Natural Resources

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify environmentally sensitive areas and conservation sites, including lands outside of the existing city limits for future acquisition and preservation.
- Preserve open space and natural areas for the protection of habitat and biological diversity, to provide recreational opportunities, to enhance Mount Dora's image and community identity and to buffer the impacts of urban development.
- Protect, expand and restore interconnected ecosystems and wildlife corridors.

GOAL:

Develop Parks and Recreation Facilities and Programs that Promote "Community in the City."

OBJECTIVES:

- Build public plazas and "green connections" in neighborhoods and along main streets.
- Provide unique public spaces that give Mount Dora a special and attractive identity that reinforces the existing character of the City.
- Develop a beautification strategy to visually tie the city together with streetscape continuity, beauty, and character.
- Partner with other public agencies, schools and private organizations to maximize parks and recreation opportunities, facilities and programs.
- Provide a wide diversity of arts, culture, historical and civic amenities in the system.

C. Land Use and Policy Planning

GOAL:

Provide an appropriate set of land management regulations to accomplish the long range needs of the park system.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop a long-range strategic plan for the city that enables the city to plan and develop specific future park sites and greenways within the context of a well-orchestrated land development scenario.
- Provide language in the Land Development Regulations that requires the set-aside and dedication of land in new developments to be used for parks, trails and open space.
- Adopt new standards in the Comprehensive Plan that will assure an adequate and appropriate parks, recreation and open space system.
- Establish regulations that require new development to provide pedestrian and bicycle access into and through the new developments.

D. Administration and Management

GOAL:

Provide Adequate Park Maintenance and Management

OBJECTIVES:

- Establish appropriate maintenance standards to upgrade and enhance the level of maintenance for parks and recreation areas.
- Implement a parks and recreation improvement program, including redevelopment of existing areas, and maintenance, improvement and renovation of all public areas and facilities.
- Maintain, secure and manage existing and future parks and open space in a manner that encourages appropriate use.

GOAL:

Encourage and Promote a Variety of Recreational Opportunities including Cultural Activities, Community Activities and Special Events to Enhance Recreation and Educational Opportunities for Residents and Tourists

OBJECTIVES:

- Provide public recreation facilities and programs that promote tourism and cultural activities such as interpretive historic signage and trails.

- Expand and enhance youth and teen recreation programs and facilities to meet current and future needs of the community.

- Develop recreation programs and facilities based on the changing needs of the city residents with respect to socio-demographic characteristics of the population including age, income, family and household composition.

- Coordinate programs with other jurisdictions to provide comprehensive and efficient programming.

GOAL:

Strive to provide funding to maintain or exceed the minimum level of service standards and create a sustainable economic base for parks and recreation.

OBJECTIVES:

- Seek monies from a wide variety of funding sources including grants and joint public-private partnerships.

- Explore various funding sources including general bond issues, increased recreation impact fees, utility fee transfers and recreation park tax districts.

- Devise a funding system whereby future development pays its own way for the necessary parks and recreation facilities.

RESOURCE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The estimated population in Mount Dora is 12,000 people. By 2015, the population is projected to exceed 19,500 and by 2015, the population is expected to be over 31,000. Most of the growth will occur in the east and north portions of the city.

The city's current system includes over 200 acres. The park system has a deficient of 11 acres for community parks, 28 acres for neighborhood parks and over 200 acres for open space and greenways. Additionally, the system does not have sufficient recreation facilities such as athletic fields, courts, and picnic areas.

A gap in the distribution pattern for neighborhood parks occurs in the western portion of the city in both neighborhood and community parks. There are no trails that connect parks to the neighborhoods.

The city's greatest needs are for the following:

- Acquisition of open space and environmental lands
- Urban and greenway trails
- Neighborhood parks and playgrounds
- Multi-purpose indoor recreational space for use by all age groups
- Athletic fields and courts
- Renovations to existing parks including upgrades to meet ADA standards

Several special use facilities are also needed, including the following:

- Dog Park
- Skate Park
- Frank Brown Park
- Roseborough Center
- Mamie Gilbert Community Center
- Renovated City Docks
- Renovated Martin Luther King Center

Programs for all age groups are needed. The level of service of maintenance needs to be increased. Manpower needs to be increased.

The City of Mount Dora has a very high subsidy rate for its programs. Program fees should be increased to offset the cost of programs.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to work with the city and consultants in the development of the Master Plan. Stakeholder meetings were conducted with members of the Parks and Recreation Board, the Northeast CRA, the Downtown CRA, the Chamber of Commerce, community leaders, elected officials, agency heads, key department staff local schools, and several focus groups.

The public was asked to provide input through a citizen survey, 24 focus groups and 3 public hearings. Survey results indicated that residents of Mount Dora have a need for additional open space and greenways, a trails system, neighborhood parks, more recreation programming, neighborhood parks and enhanced maintenance.

Stakeholders expressed that land should be acquired for the preservation and protection of open space and greenways, maintenance of parks and facilities should be raised to a higher level, development of a trails system is a priority, a dog park is needed, redevelopment of the waterfront is strongly desired, and an indoor recreation center is needed.

PARK STANDARDS

Park standards that indicate the appropriate types, size and the location of parks were developed. Standards were developed that determine the type and number of park facilities. These standards will be used to determine current deficiencies in the existing park system and future needs based on the rate of population growth.

MASTER PLAN

The City of Mount Dora Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan contains two major components: the physical plan and the implementation plan. The Master Plan focuses on the physical plan. The physical master plan sets forth a phased planning approach to the parks and open space system and is broken down into three phases.

The first phase is called the 2005 Master Plan. This phase focuses on adding necessary parks and open space improvements to correct the deficits in the current parks and recreation system. In other words, this plan shows new improvements that are needed in order to meet the recommended level of service standards for its existing population. This plan requires significant in-fill parks planning in order to achieve the required levels of service for today.

The second phase is a plan designed to accommodate the expected population growth for the year 2015. This plan anticipates growth of the city based on the new housing developments that have been approved to the east and northeast of the City.

The third phase is a plan reflects the park needs as projected for the expected population for the year 2025. This plan anticipates future demand for housing development and proposes a park, trails, and open space plan to address these expected demands.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan is the most important aspect of the master planning process. This phase of the plan proposes a set of strategies for the City of Mount Dora to put in place in order to realize the various elements of the plan. The implementation plan is divided into three sections: 1. Park Land and Facilities Development, 2. Land Use Policy, and 3. Management and Administration. The Park Land and Facilities Development section is essentially a capital improvements plan. As such, it includes the projected costs of the needed improvements as well as a funding strategy to pay for the desired improvements. The second section, Land Use Policy, proposes a series of changes and adjustments to the City's current land use plans and regulations. These proposed changes would help the City of Mount Dora plan for and fund the new park facilities that will be needed as the city grows. The third section of the implementation plan proposes adjustments to the departmental structure, operations organization, and the financial planning of the parks and leisure services delivery system.

CONCLUSION

The City of Mount Dora's park and recreation system, including its park lands, facilities and recreational programs, is striving to meet the needs of the city's growing population and expanding service area. Citizen input obtained as part of the Master Plan focuses on the need for additional neighborhood parks, a trails system, preservation of open space, additional athletic fields, an indoor multi-purpose center and renovation of existing parks. Other important needs include special use facilities such as a dog park, a skate park, renovation of the Roseborough Center, the Martin Luther King Center and the 4th St. Docks, and the development of Frank Brown Field.

This Master Plan defines a new set of guidelines related to the number of parks required to meet current and future needs of the growing population. Guidelines are defined for recreation facilities. In addition, this plan addresses future planning, programming, development, management, maintenance, marketing, and funding. This plan also outlines a land acquisition program related to land use policies. Implementation of the plan's recommendations will ensure that the parks, recreation, and open space, within Mount Dora, will meet the needs and demands of its citizens while becoming one of the best park systems in Lake County and the State of Florida.

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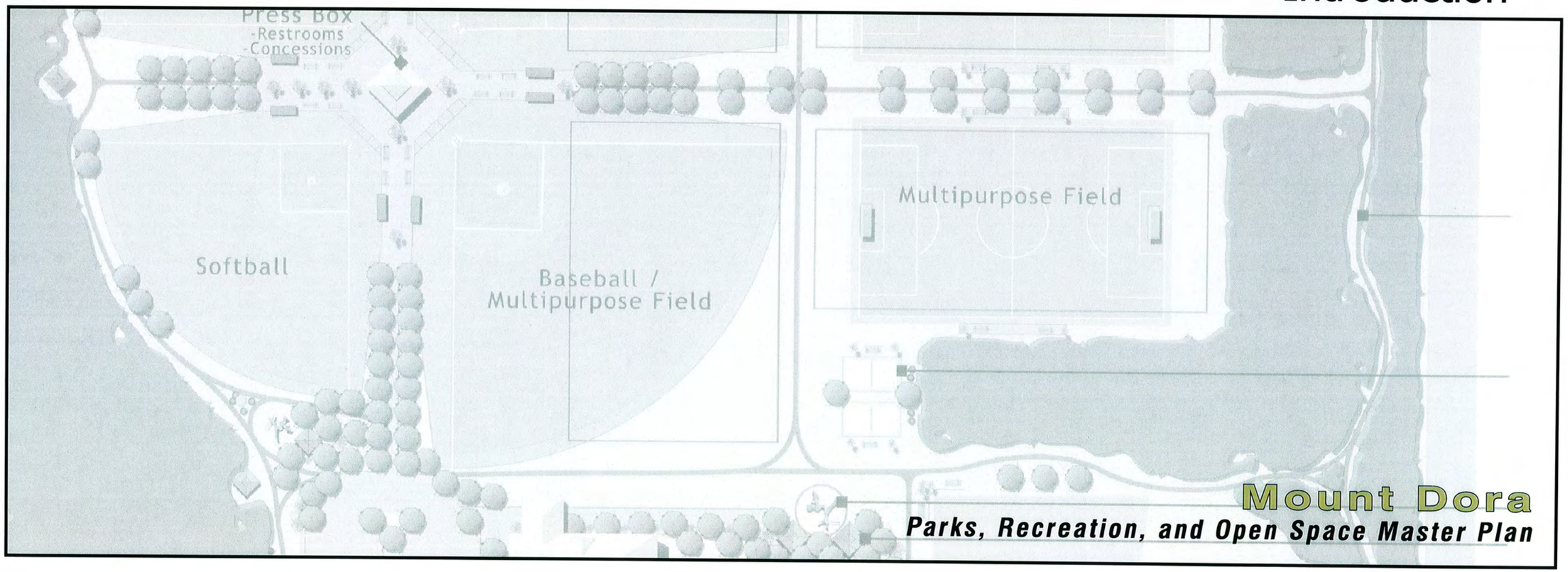
Volume 2

Chapter: I

Introduction



Chapter 1- Introduction

A. OVERVIEW

Throughout time, parks and open spaces have provided a unifying community structure and an aesthetic identity to our urban environments as well as providing recreational opportunities. While it is difficult to place a precise value on our parks and open space systems, it is clear to all that they provide a variety of benefits that contribute to the "liveability" of our cities, such as:

- Accommodate recreational activities,
- Attract recreation enthusiasts,
- Increase property values,
- Provide public access to natural recreation areas and significant sites,
- Provide and enhance animal and plant habitats,
- Conserve, preserve and protect historic character,
- Contribute to the city's identity and marketability,
- Enhance aesthetic quality, and
- Contribute to clean air and water.

Parks and recreation opportunities contribute to the health of residents, provide a variety of recreational and educational activities for all ages, and preserve and enhance the quality and integrity of the natural environment. Parks and recreational opportunities are also significant in attracting visitors to the community and, thus, contribute to local tourism and economic development. When a community has a comprehensive and interrelated system of parks and recreation opportunities that responds to the needs and values of local residents, the residents support their local governments, become involved in their community activities, and reap the benefits of a "quality-of-life" community.

The City of Mount Dora is known throughout the state as a leader in community pride due to the high quality of their urban amenities. The Mount Dora downtown area is continually praised for its appropriateness in scale, the quality of shops and restaurants and the quality of the public spaces and parks. In recent years, the community has attracted the attention of numerous "would be" residents. This "desirability" factor has put pressure on the existing park facilities and forced the community to consider ways to provide for the influx of many new residents. These growth pressures have caused many of the parks to fall into disrepair. In addition, fierce arguments have developed in the community over how these parks should be used and by whom.

Fearing the degradation of their most valuable and cherished community assets, the citizens initiated a series of community visioning workshops to pull the community together addressing these pressing needs. As a result of the workshops and many special work sessions, the City Council of Mount Dora realized that something needed to be done to save their great park assets and to set an agenda for creating new park resources for the future residents of the city. The City Council determined that the best way to develop this road map for the future park system was to prepare a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan for the Mount Dora community. This plan would assure that the great legacy of parks and open spaces in the community would continue into the future. In the summer of 2003, the City Council commissioned this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. The master plan documents the existing parks and recreation facilities, analyzes the assets and constraints in the system, identifies standards for future development, assesses current and future needs and priorities, recommends a framework for a comprehensive parks and recreation system, and outlines the steps to implement the plan.

Working with community leaders, focus groups, the general public, and the parks and recreation staff, the consultant team prepared this Master Plan to serve as the strategic planning tool for making Mount Dora's parks, open space, facility and recreational program decisions for the next twenty years. The Master Plan identifies the actions necessary to implement the plan in order to satisfy the expectations of the community. It includes recommendations that give guidance for improving programs and services, creating a financially responsible organization, making land acquisitions and protecting open spaces, improving and establishing new facilities and instituting continuous improvement processes. This plan will enable the city to make the necessary changes that will help sustain an attractive and livable city.

B. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

To develop the Master Plan, a 6-tiered methodology was developed that examines the existing parks and recreation system and projects recreation needs for the future based on the identification of desired levels of service. The following is a summary of this approach.

Project Inventory

- Inventory of the existing Mount Dora park and recreation system
- Inventory of cultural and natural resources
- Identification of important land use factors
- Inventory of the existing park management and administration structure

Inventory of Regional Influences

- Inventory of surrounding areas' parks and recreation opportunities
- Inventory of surronding cultural and natural resources
- Identification of land use planning influences
- Inventory of the management and administration policies of the surrounding cities and counties

Analysis

- Demographic analysis
- Park needs and conditions analysis
- Park location and service analysis
- Administrative and management analysis
- Identification of future park opportunities and constraints

Conceptual Park System and Standards

- Development of park system concepts
- Development of standards

Long Range Master Plan

- Master plan concepts
- Master plan

Implementation Plan

- Cost estimates
- Administration and Management
- Funding alternative
- Implementation plan

C. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Master Plan has been prepared to address the following key goals:

1. **Assess current needs for park and park facilites for the citiizens of Mount Dora.**

2. **Assess the future needs for parks and park facilities for the citizens of Mount Dora.**

3. **Prepare a long range, phased plan for the provision of current and future park needs.**

4. **Preservation of important natural and cultural facilities.**

5. **Provide a system of connected greenways and trails for the city.**

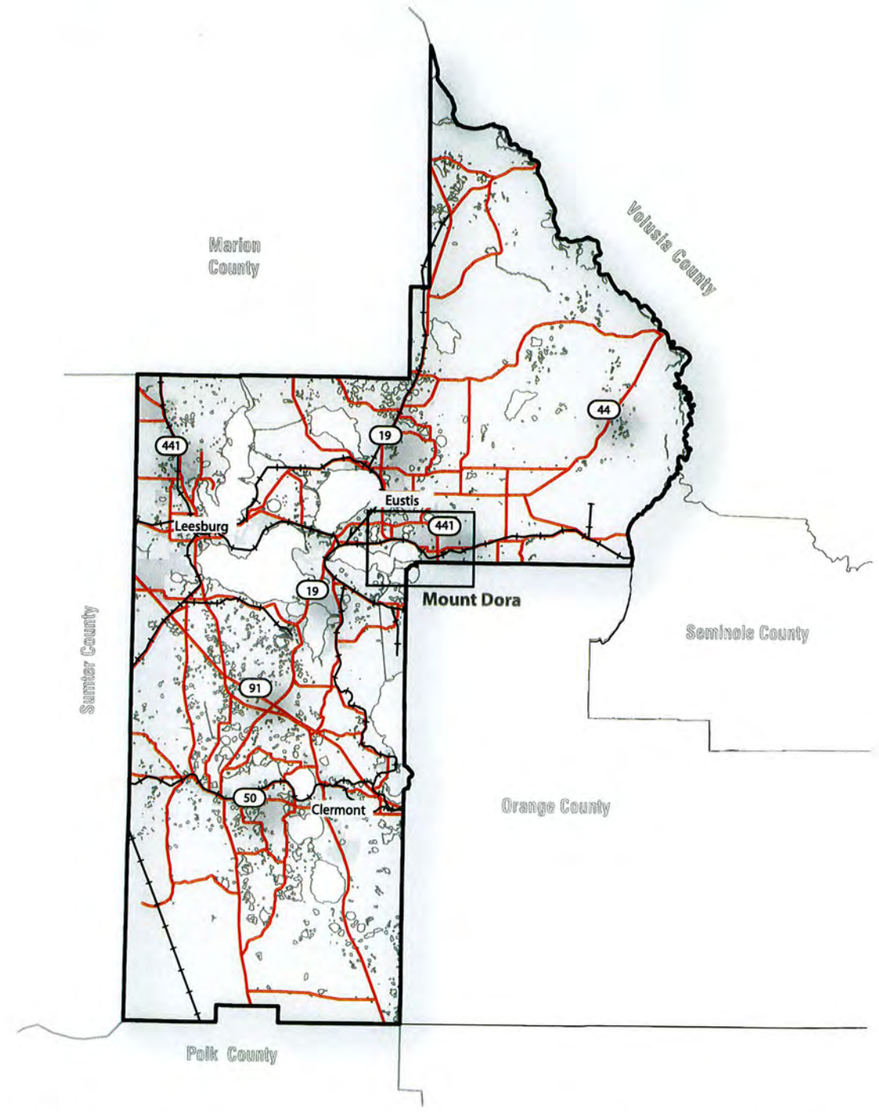
6. **Provide an effective Parks and Recreation services delivery system for the citizens:**

   - Effective management/administrative/departmental structure;
   - Effective mainteance system;
   - Responsive recreational programs venue;
   - Land Development Regulations to provide for future park needs;
   - Appropriate funding program for future capital improvements;
   - Creation of appropriate multi-jurisdictional partnerships for the provision of parks and open space services.

D. PROJECT LOCATION

The City of Mount Dora is located approximately 25 miles northwest of Orlando in central Lake County, Florida. Mount Dora can be reached from US Highway 441, County Road 44B and State Route 46. The city is Located on the shores of Lake Dora.

Map 1- County Location: The City of Mount Dora is located in Lake County which is centrally located in the state.



Map 2- City Location: Mount Dora lies within close proximity to Seminole County and, especially, Orange County.

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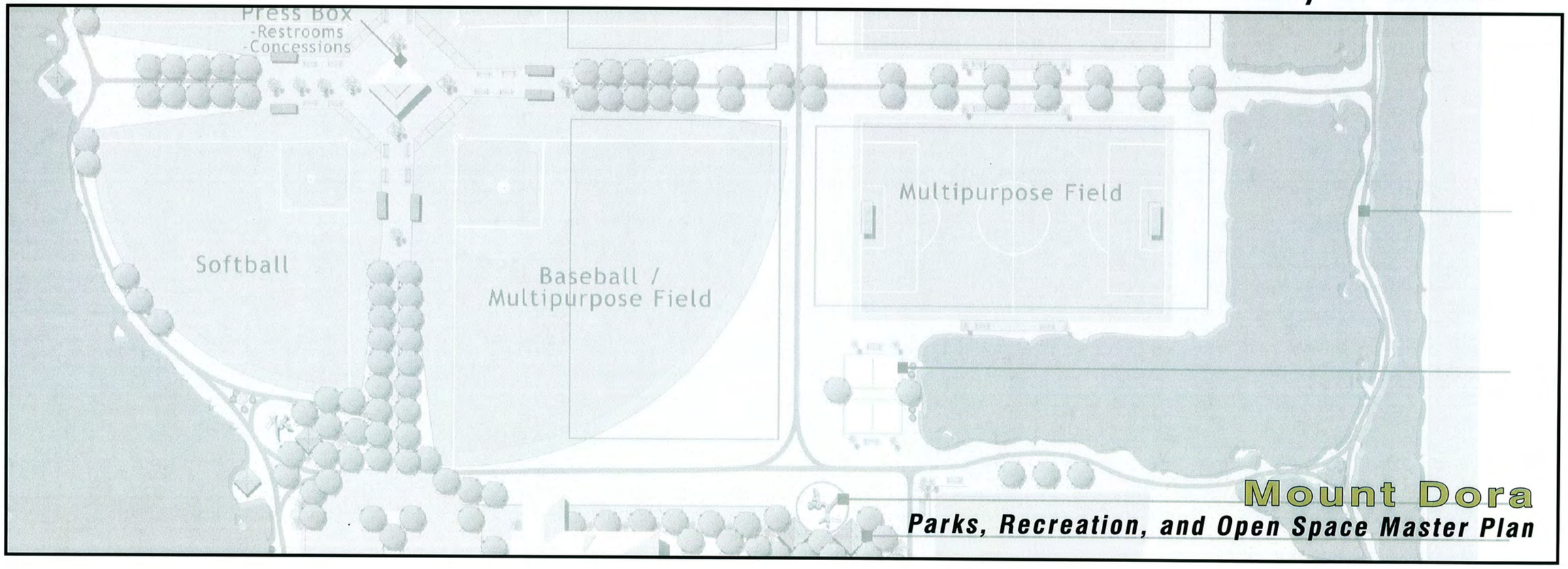
Chapter: II

Summary of Issues



II. Summary of Parks and Recreation Issues and Needs

A. Overview

The first phase of the master planning process entailed the development of a comprehensive database for the Mount Dora Parks and recreation system. The consultant team prepared a GIS mapping system to locate all existing park land and to record the park facilities in each park. In addition, all of the adjacent municipal and county facilities were located and recorded. A citizen survey was conducted and a series of public workshops were held to develop a collective vision for future park and recreation needs. This information is available in Volume #1 of this report.

After the inventory was completed, the consultant team proceeded to analyze all of the data to determine the nature and extent of deficiencies and assets in the park system. This analysis process entailed evaluating the Mount Dora park system against the standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association. The analysis was divided into the three major sectors of the park system: 1. The parks and park facilities; 2. The land use planning policies and procedures; and 3. The administration, management and budgetary aspects of the system. This analysis formulated the basis for developing the goals and objectives for the plan, the recommended standards for the park system, and the plan and its implementation. The comprehensive record of this analysis process is contained in Volume #1 of this document.

The following is a summary of the major issues and challenges that were discovered in the analysis process:

B. Facility Planning and Design Analysis

1. Park Land Analysis

a. Overall Park Land Issues

- The City of Mount Dora has no regional parks.
- The City has only one community park - Lincoln Avenue Park. It currently does not meet the standards of a well-rounded community park. It is not centrally located and does not adequately serve the entire community.
- There are currently only two neighborhood parks in the City - Cauley Lott and Gilbert Parks. These two neighborhood parks only service 30% of the neighborhoods in the City.
- There are too many small pocket parks in the City. These do not serve to provide the needed recreation for the neighborhoods in which they are located.
- There are very few environmental lands set aside for preservation and greenways.
- The City currently enjoys a larger than average amount of urban park acreage in the downtown and the waterfront. This is an extremely positive aspect of the park system.

b. Current Park Land Needs for the Existing Population

- The National Recreation and Parks Association has developed guidelines to assist communities like Mount Dora to evaluate how well they are servicing their citizens. Based upon these criteria, the following is a list of current park **land** needs in Mount Dora.
  - 11 acres for community parks
  - 19 acres for neighborhood parks
  - 11 acres for neighborhood playgrounds
  - 1 – 2 acres for playlots
  - 1 trail system

c. Future Park Land Needs

- The National Recreation and Parks Association has developed guidelines to assist communities like Mount Dora to evaluate how well they are servicing their citizens. Based upon these criteria, the following is a list of current park **land** needs in Mount Dora.
  - By 2005, 23 acres for community parks, 16 acres for neighborhood parks and 1-4 acres for playlots.
  - By 2015, 61 acres for community parks, 31 acres for neighborhood parks, and 2 – 6 acres for playlots
  - By 2025, 123 acres for community parks, 50 acres for neighborhood parks, and 3 – 10 acres for playlots

2. Park Facilities Analysis

b. Overall Park Facilities Issues

- Mount Dora has a large deficit of athletic fields in the City.
- There is a deficit of neighborhood playground, picnic, and open field play facilities in the City.
- There is a strong need for a major recreation center in the City.
- Overall, there is a lack of restroom facilities in the parks.
- There are no dog parks in the City.
- There are no trails in the City
- There is no teen center in the City.
- There is a lack of developed urban civic park amenities in the downtown and waterfront parks (ie, festival events site, esplanade, sculpture gardens, etc.)

c. Current Needs

- Based upon NRPA guidelines, the survey and public input, the City of Mount Dora has the following facility deficits:
  - 1 tennis court
  - 4 softball fields
  - 2 multipurpose fields
  - 1 recreation center
  - 1 dog park
  - 1 trail
  - 1 teen center
  - 4 neighborhood picnic facilities
  - 4 neighborhood playgrounds
  - 4 neighborhood playfields

c. Future Facility Needs

- Based upon NRPA guidelines, the City of Mount Dora has the following future facility needs:
  - By 2005, 5 tennis courts, 3 softball fields, 7 picnic areas,
  - By 2015,13 tennis courts, 4 softball fields, 15 picnic areas, 9 basketball courts, 2 racquetball courts, 4 multipurpose fields,
  - By 2025, 25 tennis courts, 6 softball fields, 1 baseball fields, 27 picnic areas, 1 swimming pools, 3 basketball courts, 4 racquetball courts.

3. Park Location Analysis

a. Overall Issues:

- The parks system in Mt. Dora has been on hold for many years. The parks that are in place today are the same ones that have been in place for many years. 80% of the park usage is focused in four locations: Cauley Lott, Gilbert, and Lincoln Ave, and Donnelly Parks. For the most part, these parks have done a great job addressing the needs of the community; however, over the last 30 years, new development has occurred and the recreational needs of these newer residents have not been addressed.
- In the last 30 years the new growth in the City has been to the west and north. The new growth areas have not been provided with new parks to service them.
- Newer developments are coming on line and being annexed into the City. The development agreements with these developers are being negotiated without the recommendations of this plan.

b. Current Demographic Composition of the City

- 23% of the population is under 18.
- 52% of the population is between 18 and 64.
- 23% of the population is 65 and over.
- Between 1990 and 2000, the population grew from 7,198 to 9.418 for a total of 2,200 or 31%
- The City is attracting a more even demographic mix than in the past. The community is attracting young couples and young families as well as new retirement citizens. This shift in demographics will require a shift in the types of recreation services provided by the City. There will be a stronger demand for neighborhood-oriented park facilities in addition to the great cultural and passive parks in the City today.

c. Neighborhood Structure Analysis

- Currently there are 11 self-defined neighborhoods in the City. Theoretically, each of these neighborhoods should have a park of their own. From a financial standpoint, this is not always possible. The goal of the plan should be to provide a park in close proximity to each neighborhood or group of neighborhoods. The following are the current neighborhoods and their existing populations:
  - South Mount Dora – population 550
  - Southeast Mount Dora – population 2,000
  - Central Business District – population 300
  - Downtown – population 1,800
  - East Mount Dora – population 1,000
  - Northeast Mount Dora – population 1,600
  - Loch Leven – population 300
  - County Club of Mount Dora – population – 550
  - Brookfield – population 700
  - West Mount Dora – population 1,250
  - Spring Harbor – population 300

d. Park Location Analysis

- The following is a list of the neighborhoods that are currently under served by parks:
  - Loch Leven does not have a City park in the neighborhood.
  - Brookfield does not have a City park in the neighborhood.
  - Spring Harbor does not have a City park in the neighborhood.

e. Future Service Area Analysis

- There are several new developments coming on line to the east of the City. The developments are being annexed into the City. As a result, the City will be required to provide adequate park, recreation, and open space services to these new residents.
- Currently there is no mechanism or plan in place to evaluate these new proposals to see if they are adequately servicing their new residents.

4. Existing Park Conditions Assessment

a. Parks Conditions Assessment

- As a part of the inventory and analysis process, each existing park was analyzed to determine its physical conditions and functionality for the neighborhood and community. The following is a summary of the issues of concern for each park site:

- Community Parks
  - **Lincoln Avenue Recreation Park** is not a master-planned park. The various facilities in the park have been added to the site in a piecemeal fashion when funds were available. The park does not have a central unifying design theme today. The park is missing a unifying walkway system. The physical condition of the park furnishings is poor. There is a pool facility in the park. The park has some ball-fields that are heavily used. These fields are in poor condition with severe drainage problems. The fields have been located in a fashion that will minimize the additional quantity of new fields that can be added. There are adjacent parcels of land that can be used to add to the park to make it a more "Full-Service" community park. The park is missing some key elements to make it a true community park, such as a community center building. The overall park condition is fair to moderate.

- Neighborhood Parks
  - **Cauley Lott Park** is beautiful park facility in the northeast neighborhood. There are some safety issues that need to be addressed. Consideration should be given to installation of the larger play structure, and relocating the basketball courts so that they are adjacent to each other. There are current conflicts between user age groups in the park. Another site should be found to accommodate the older youth basketball demand. The overall park condition is good to fair.
  - **Gilbert Park** is currently plagued with a serious issue concerning boat trailer parking. Currently, the park is being used for boat trailer parking for users of the waterfront boat launch. This usage is causing erosion and takes up valuable park space. Resolution of this issue is critical to the future success of the park and the waterfront. The playground is old and has some safety issues. The park currently has two croquet courts. These are under utilized and could be reduced to one or eliminated. The park is lacking a small children's play area or tot lot. The park is currently used for all major events, festivals, and performances. The park is inadequately designed to handle these uses. Gilbert Park is the most heavily used park in the City. As such, it has suffered serious deterioration over time. The overall park condition is fair to poor.

- Urban Open Space
  - **Child's Park** is located downtown and is very well maintained by the Men's Garden Club and the City. The park contains the old railroad station which houses the Chamber of Commerce. This is a very key park site in the downtown / waterfront chain of parks. The site is strategically located next to the railroad and has good opportunities to become a trailhead orientation station. Childs Park needs to be integrated into a wholistic waterfront park system.
  - **Donnelly Park** serves as a citywide civic park. The park was originally designed as the main "central park"

for Mount Dora. Over time, many new facilities have been added to the park. As a result, the park has become quite cluttered and has lost its original "urban open space" purpose. Some of the uses should be relocated to bring back the park to its original character. The park is also used for performances. The facilities are inadequate for these events. The park is an extremely beautiful park in an extremely beautiful location and is in very good condition.

- **Elizabeth Evans Park** is located on the waterfront. The park has wonderful lake views but is currently underutilized. There is a drainage problem during rain events. The park needs to be integrated into a wholistic waterfront park system.
- **Grantham Point** is a peninsular park that extends out into Lake Dora and is terminated with a lighthouse structure. The water edges have deteriorated over time and are safety hazards. This park is currently undergoing renovations of the water's edge and construction of new boat docks. The park needs to be integrated into a wholistic waterfront park system.
- **Simpson Cove** is a linear waterfront park with wonderful views of Lake Dora. Due its linear nature and views to the lake, this park has excellent opportunities to become a major elegant esplanade for the City. The picnic facilities, the pedestrian facilities, and exercise equipment are deteriorating. This park is fair condition. The park needs to be integrated into a wholistic waterfront park system.

- Open Space
  - **Forrest Park** is undeveloped and was slated to become a cemetery. The development of a cemetery on this site would seriously damage the ecology. The park is an excellent natural area and should be integrated into a citywide greenways system. A portion of this park could be utilized for a neighborhood park to service this under-served area of the City. This beautiful natural area park is in excellent condition.
  - **Frank Brown Fields 1 and 2** are largely undeveloped. The land preservation and open space value of these properties is marginal. Consideration should be given to using this land as a neighborhood park to service a strong demand for active sports fields in the neighborhood.
  - **Lion's Memorial Park** is an undeveloped natural area park with excellent views to Lake Franklin. The property has important ecological significance and should become part of a larger greenways system when combined with adjacent properties.

- Pocket Parks
  - **Blair Park** has great views of Lake Gertrude and is in fair condition.
  - **Chautauqua Park** is heavily wooded and is in good condition.
  - **Lake Franklin** is undeveloped and surrounded by houses. The property should be sold to the neighbors.
  - **Pinecrest Park** is undeveloped. This property should be sold to the neighbors.
  - **Stein Park** is a well-maintained park in good condition.
  - **Sylvan Park** is a gateway to the sidewalk that circles the southern edge of Lake Gertrude. There is no parking area. This property should be sold to the neighbors.

- Open Space/Greenbelt
  - **Palm Island Park** is a largely undeveloped beautiful natural area park. The existing boardwalk is in marginal condition and is scheduled for replacement. Consideration should be given to the relocation of the historic Boy Scout House away from prime waterfront. The scout house location is a gateway to the Palm Island natural area. This location would work perfectly for an eco-tourism center for the City.

- Special Use Facilities
  - **The City Docks** are located downtown and are in fair condition. Stormwater runoff has created an invasive vegetation problem, which prevents boats from getting to one half of the docks. This area is prime waterfront and should be integrated into a wholistic waterfront plan.

- **The Leisure Services Office** is located on Lake Dora. Currently this building houses the recreation staff. The staff is going to relocate to the City Hall Annex. When this relocation occurs, the site should be redesigned and integrated into the wholistic waterfront plan.
- **Mount Dora Golf Course** is a privately managed 18-hole facility in good condition.
- **Heim Field** is used primarily by the Mount Dora High School for baseball. The park is located in the middle of an under-served neighborhood. There may be an opportunity to redevelop the park into a neighborhood park if the ball field can be relocated.
- **Mount Dora Lawn Bowling** is located at the entrance to Elizabeth Evans Park and is open to members only. This is a very valuable waterfront site. The lawn bowling activities are a wonderful historic use on the waterfront; however, over time, the site should be integrated into a wholistic waterfront plan.

▪ Community Centers
- The Community Building is in fair to poor condition. This historic / civic building is very prominent in the downtown urban landscape. Its location adjacent to Donnelly Park offers many future opportunities. The building should be renovated to house important civic activities.
- The Donnelly Building (in Donnelly Park) is fairly new, heavily used and in good condition.
- The Martin Luther King Center is a community center in fairly good condition. The building is heavily used and cannot handle the demands being put on it at this time. A new and larger site should be found for this use that is integral with a major park area.

▪ Trails and Greenways
- There is a .5-mile urban trail located at Simpson Cove. This trail needs to be extended in order to create a citywide trails system.
- There is a .5-mile greenway trail located at Lake Gertrude and at Palm Island. This trail needs to be added to in order to create a citywide trails system.

5. Future Park Land Opportunities Analysis

a. Environmental Lands

A map of environmentally significant lands, undeveloped land, watershed areas, sink areas, wetlands and riverine habitat has been developed for this master planning effort (see Volume #1). This map identifies the areas in the City and around the City that have excellent potential to become a system of conservation, preservation, and greenway open space lands. These lands should be protected from future development. An open space acquisition program needs to be developed to assemble these properties.

b. Trail Connection Opportunities

Orange, Seminole and Lake Counties either have or are planning extensive trail systems. There are numerous opportunities to connect Mount Dora's proposed trail system to these regional systems. There is also the possibility of using the railroad bed for a Rails-to-Trails connection. The above-mentioned open space opportunities map can also be a resource to locate areas of connectivity to develop a long-range trails plan.

c. In-fill Land Purchase Opportunities

There are several opportunities to purchase land in the City of Mount Dora. These sites have been mapped. The City can use this map as a resource for property acquisition. Some of the prime opportunity sites are the following:

a. An orange grove located on 11th Avenue
b. An orange grove located in the northwest section of the City
c. A shopping center located on Old Highway 441 and Eldora Rd.

d. Future Park Lands

A map of probable land development areas was developed as a part of the analysis. This map identifies the areas in and around the City that have excellent potential to become growth areas due to their road access and limited environmental conflicts. These lands will be consumed in the coming years for future residential development. Knowing this reality, a map has been prepared to show prime sites to set aside for parks to service this coming population growth.

C. Land Use and Policy Planning

1. Future Land Use Planning

a. Strategic Plan

- It appears that there is a need to develop a strategic plan for all of the lands surrounding Mount Dora that are in the designated planning region for the City. Such a strategic plan would allow the City to plan the new growth to a fashion that is to the best advantage of the current and future citizens of the City.
- Such a strategic plan would address land use, transportation, water, sewer, and important parks and recreation issues.
- The strategic plan could be used to determine future park and open space lands and then be incorporated into the comprehensive plan for the City.
- The strategic plan could identify the acquisition and protection of environmentally sensitive land and natural areas.

b. Comprehensive Plan

- Currently, the Comprehensive Plan does not include all of the types of park categories and facilities that Mount Dora seems to desire and need for the future.
- Currently, the Comprehensive Plan does not include an element that specifically addresses the incorporation of environmentally sensitive lands and greenways.
- Currently, the City is not meeting its current requirements for parks and recreation services.
- The comprehensive plan should be up-dated to include the recommendations from this parks and open space master plan as well as the strategic plan.
- The comprehensive plan should be up-dated to include policies for the financing of the desired parks and open space needs.

c. Land Development Regulations

- Regulations that require new developments to dedicate land and greenways are not included in the current Land Development Regulations.
- Specific requirements requiring the set-aside of land, development of parks and inclusion of greenways and trails by new development are not included in the Land Development Regulations.
- The current impact fees will probably need to be revised to include the increased cost of parks, open space, greenways and trails.

d. Agency and Jurisdictional Coordination

- The City needs to revisit their inter-local agreements with Lake County and the City of Eustis to incorporate the recommendations from this plan.
- The City needs to coordinate with the Environmental Protection Agency for the protection of wetlands and air quality.
- The City needs to coordinate with the State of Florida for the designation of new development protection of wetlands, HRS requirements, and identification of historical resources.
- The City needs to work with St. John's Water Management District to incorporate the recommendations of this plan into it review of developments that affect their jurisdiction.

D. Administrative and Infrastructure Analysis

1. Operations and Management

a. Department Structure

- Park facilities and recreational programs should have a symbiotic relationship. Having two departments creates challenges to the delivery of effective services. One department's priority may not be the same as the other department's. A unified department should be investigated.

b. Planning Department Liaison

- The Director of Recreation currently serves as the liaison to the Planning Department. Currently, there is no review of proposed land development projects by the Parks Division or the Parks and Recreation Board.

c. Public Work Liaison

- The Director of Recreation serves as the liaison to the Public Services Department. Currently, there is little joint planning effort to combine master drainage planning and greenways planning.

d. Staffing Structure

- An increase in programs will mean an increase in programming staff.
- The continuance of the special events may require additional staff.
- Administrative staff assists in programming.

e. Park and Recreation Board

- The Park and Recreation Board reviews the policies and procedures and issues confronting the parks department.
- The Parks and Recreation Board has no long-range parks master plan to use as a yardstick to measure departmental policy.

f. In-House Planning and Design

- Currently, there is no in-house parks planner and designer to oversee the development of park facilities and the master plan recommendations.

2. Maintenance

a. Staffing

- The number of employees compared to the amount of park land acreage seems to be low for the level of maintenance that is expected by the residents. Funding and staffing will be required to handle the improvements expect to result from this plan.

b. Costs

- Major maintenance is not an annually scheduled or budgeted item. It is reactive, rather than proactive.
- There is no preventive maintenance process that is tied to the budget.

c. Equipment

- Having maintenance equipment stored in two locations places additional demands on time.

d. Scheduling

- There does not appear to be sufficient time each week to do detailed maintenance in the parks. There may be a need for additional manpower or full dedication of existing manpower to parks only. Contracting out some maintenance should be explored.

e. Construction and Repairs

- Facilities Management needs to have input on renovation or construction of facilities in the design phase to assure consistency in materials and low maintenance design.

3. Programs

a. Youth Programs

- The youth programs are offered in only a couple of locations.
- Not all of the children in Mount Dora have access to after-school programs.
- There are no city-run athletic programs that could serve as feeder programs into middle and high schools.
- There are few programs offered specifically for teens.

b. Adult Programs

- There are a few programs offered for age group 21 to 60. Some of the programs are during the workday making it impossible for working citizens to attend.
- There are no programs offered specifically for seniors.
- There is a strong tennis program. The employment of a tennis professional should be considered.

c. Aquatics

- The pool is a wonderful resource that not all communities have; however, it is under-utilized. While it is open all year, the weekly and daily schedules are limited.

d. Art and Culture

- There is no year-round arts and cultural programming; however, the resources for instructors in Mount Dora are wonderful.

e. Special Events

- Mount Dora offers a number of special events during the year; however, the staff position that was in place to organize and produce these events was eliminated for FY 2004.

4. Budget

a. Comparative City Analysis

- Mount Dora spends $103.51 on parks and recreation per capita, which is higher than Eustis and comparative with Tavares; however, compared to comparable cities throughout the county, the budget appears low.

b. Program Costs

- Each program should be tracked to determine the actual cost including staff hours, facility costs, material costs, etc.
- Adjustments to the program fees should be made based on actual costs.

c. Maintenance Costs

- Maintenance costs for parks and recreation facilities should be tracked on each facility.
- Determinations for a proactive maintenance cost budget could be made based on the maintenance history of a facility.

d. Repairs Costs

- Repair costs for parks and recreation facilities should be tracked on each facility.
- Determinations for a proactive repair cost budget could be made based on the repair history of a facility.
- Determinations for replacement of equipment and facilities could be made based on the repair history and cost.

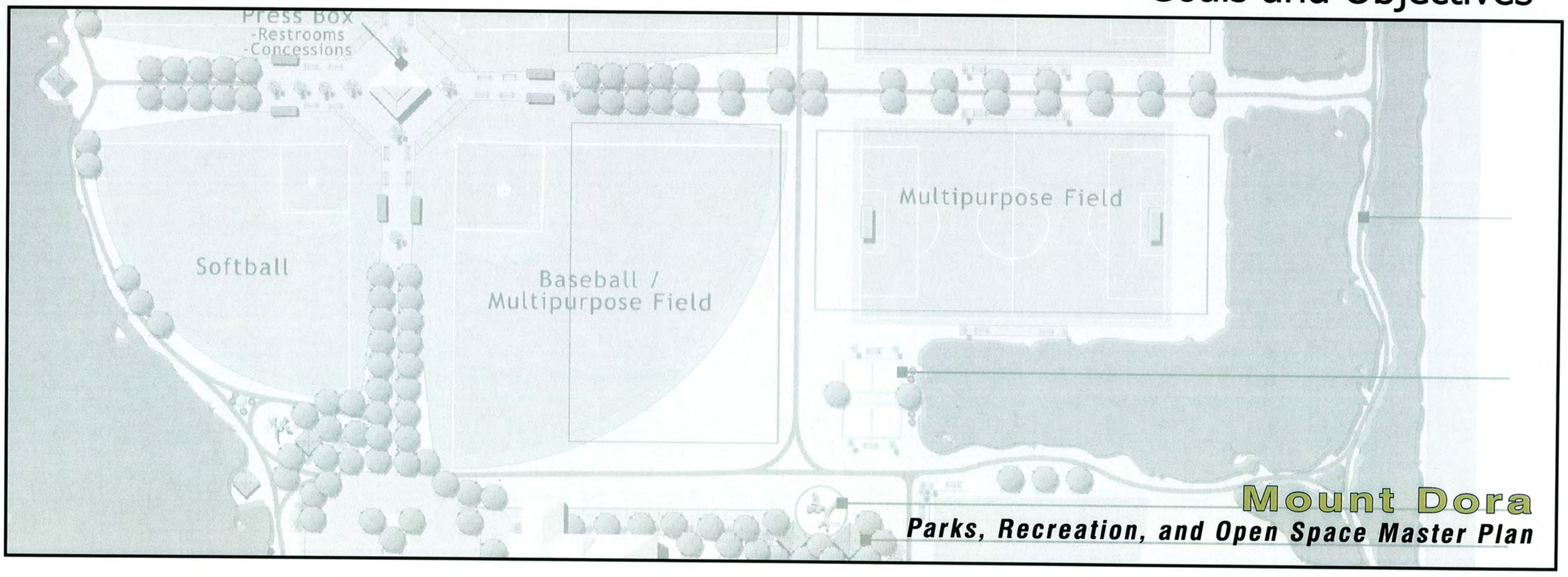
e. Revenue Generation

- Revenues generation makes up 10% of the recreation budget. Fees for adult programs should be at a level to produce revenue or break even.
- Cost cutting maintenance programs could be implemented such as contracting out of services, computerized irrigation systems, and computerized maintenance tracking.
- The use of referendums and bonds should be considered for capital projects.
- The sale of unwanted properties would increase revenues but only on a one-time basis.
- The cost of future parks and recreation needs should be 100% born by the new residents.

Volume 2

Chapter: III

Goals and Objectives



III. Goals and Objectives

A. Generally

GOAL:
Ensure Mount Dora's Park and Recreation Legacy for Future Generations

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop fully programmed, fully operational and well-maintained parks, facilities and programs that meet both current and future park and recreation needs.
- Keep the public and local leaders informed about the value, benefits, conditions and needs of Mount Dora's park system.
- Coordinate the planning, management, development and funding of parks, natural resources, trails and recreation needs and concerns with other Mount Dora departments and city, county, and regional planning efforts.
- Engage the residents to become stewards of Mount Dora's parks and recreation system to help preserve the legacy for future generations.

B. Park Land and Facilities

GOAL:
Design, Build and Maintain Excellent Parks and Recreation Facilities

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop a park system that adequately serves the citizens' current and future needs in an efficient and affordable fashion.
- Develop a set of park design standards that preserve the quality of the parks and recreation system for future generations
- Develop each park, natural area and open space to respect the unique attributes of each site and its neighbors and according to its role in the overall park and recreation system.
- Develop parks and facilities that are accessible and available to all residents. Meet and, where possible, exceed that requirements for the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Use environmentally friendly, sustainable methods to build and care for parks, natural resources and recreation facilities.
- Protect Mount Dora's parks, natural resources and facilities by developing a set of low maintenance design standards for the park system.

GOAL:
Create an Interconnected Regional and Local System of Paths and Walkways and Trails to Make Mount Dora a "Walkable Community."

OBJECTIVES:
- Provide a safe and convenient trails system between parks, natural areas and recreation facilities, and connect them with residential areas, civic institutions and businesses.
- Coordinate the development of a regional trails system with surrounding municipalities and counties.
- Integrate the parks, community centers and trails into the neighborhoods.

GOAL:
Provide equal access to parks and recreation programs for all residents in the City

OBJECTIVES:
- Pursue all opportunities to provide park and recreation services in new developments, throughout the community and along natural areas.
- Provide developed Neighborhood Park and Community Park facilities within a reasonable distance of every resident.
- Provide recreational programs for all ages of the citizenry.
- Provide a geographic distribution of parks and recreation facilities that offer equal access and opportunity for all residents.

GOAL:
Preserve, Protect and Restore Mount Dora's Natural Resources

OBJECTIVES:
- Identify environmentally sensitive areas and conservation sites, including lands outside of the existing city limits for future acquisition and preservation.
- Preserve open space and natural areas for the protection of habitat and biological diversity, to provide recreational opportunities, to enhance Mount Dora's image and community identity and to buffer the impacts of urban development.
- Protect, expand and restore interconnected ecosystems and wildlife corridors.

GOAL:
Develop Parks and Recreation Facilities and Programs that Promote "Community in the City."

OBJECTIVES:

- Build public plazas and "green connections" in neighborhoods and along main streets.
- Provide unique public spaces that give Mount Dora a special and attractive identity that reinforces the existing character of the City.
- Develop a beautification strategy to visually tie the city together with streetscape continuity, beauty, and character.
- Partner with other public agencies, schools and private organizations to maximize parks and recreation opportunities, facilities and programs.
- Provide a wide diversity of arts, culture, historical and civic amenities in the system.

C. Land Use and Policy Planning

GOAL:
Provide an appropriate set of land management regulations to accomplish the long range needs of the park system.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop a long-range strategic plan for the city that enables the city to plan and develop specific future park sites and greenways within the context of a well-orchestrated land development scenario.
- Provide language in the Land Development Regulations that requires the set-aside and dedication of land in new developments to be used for parks, trails and open space.
- Adopt new standards in the Comprehensive Plan that will assure an adequate and appropriate parks, recreation and open space system.
- Establish regulations that require new developments to provide pedestrian and bicycle access into and through the new development.

D. Administration and Management

GOAL:
Provide Adequate Park Maintenance and Management

OBJECTIVES:

- Establish appropriate maintenance standards to upgrade and enhance the level of maintenance for parks and recreation areas.
- Implement a parks and recreation improvement program, including redevelopment of existing areas, and maintenance, improvement and renovation of all public areas and facilities.
- Maintain, secure and manage existing and future parks and open space in a manner that encourages appropriate use.

GOAL:
Encourage and Promote a Variety of Recreational Opportunities including Cultural Activities, Community Activities and Special Events to Enhance Recreation and Educational Opportunities for Residents and Tourists

OBJECTIVES:
- Provide public recreation facilities and programs that promote tourism and cultural activities such as interpretive historic signage and trails.
- Expand and enhance youth and teen recreation programs and facilities to meet current and future needs of the community.
- Develop recreation programs and facilities based on the changing needs of the city residents with respect to socio-demographic characteristics of the population including age, income, family and household composition.
- Coordinate programs with other jurisdictions to provide comprehensive and efficient programming.

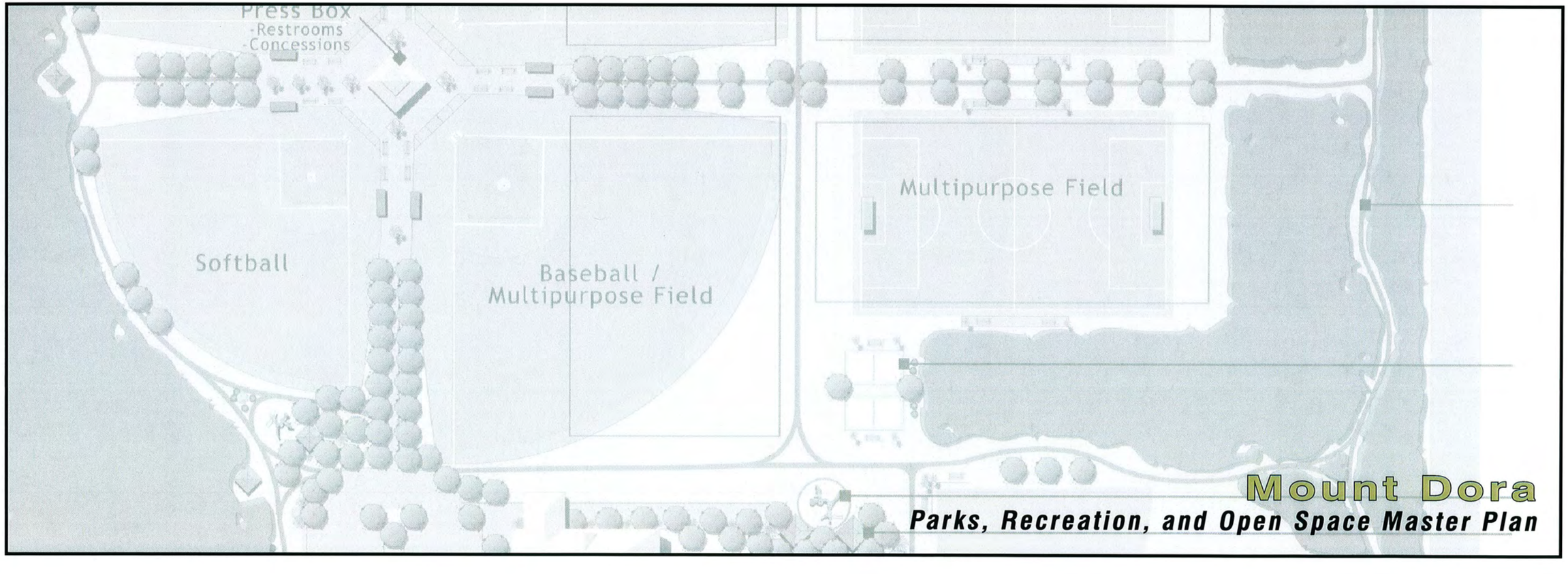
GOAL:
Strive to provide funding to maintain or exceed the minimum level of service standards and create a sustainable economic base for parks and recreation.

OBJECTIVES:
- Seek monies from a wide variety of funding sources including grants and joint public-private partnerships.
- Explore various funding sources including general bond issues, increased recreation impact fees, utility fee transfers and recreation park tax districts.
- Devise a funding system whereby future development pays its own way for the necessary park and recreation facilities.

Volume 2

Chapter: IV

Park Standards



IV. Park Standards

A. Introduction

Each community is unique. Every City has its own "personality" that differs because of its demographic makeup. Due to differing geographical, cultural, social, economic and environmental characteristics, each community must select a set of standards, which best serves them for the cost of delivering those services..

The parks and recreation system of a given City needs to reflect the needs of the residents of that City by setting standards for appropriate service. The standards are an expression of the essential facilities needed to provide the level of park and recreation services desired by the residents in each community. These standards are typically expressed as ratios such as acres of park per 1,000 residents or numbers of tennis courts per 1000 residents. The ratios are very useful in order to quickly assess the quantities and cost of the projected needs. Standards should be practical and achievable, and provide for equitable allocation of parks and recreation resources throughout the community.

We have seen in our prior analysis that the City of Mount Dora is primarily deficient in neighborhood parks. Neighborhood parks are the backbone of any park system.

B. The City-wide Park System

1. Park System Description

a. Overview

- The City of Mount Dora has developed a wonderful set of parks over the years. The majority of the City's parks are located in the or near the historic downtown center. Some of the most dramatic and well-used parks are the waterfront parks. Over the years, however, the City has grown out to the west, north and east. As the City grew, parks were not added in these growth areas. This master plan proposes a method to "in-fill" parks into these under-served areas. In addition, the plan proposes a method to locate parks in areas of future "as-yet" undeveloped areas. In order to prepare these plans, it is important to first create a set of idealized park templates. Once these park templates are developed, then they can be located in the existing City and the future development areas based upon their siting criteria. In the developed areas of the City, the templates and their location will have to be modified fit the existing land constraints. In the undeveloped park of the City, the optimal site can be selected ahead of time and negotiated into existence with each development as they come on line.
- The development of these park standard templates is a critical stage in the park planning process. The park types must be chosen to match the citizens' desires for recreation venue opportunities. An equally important criterion for the development of these standards is fiscal impact. Once a set of park standards is developed, then it is import for each community to determine if the resulting annual cost of park capital improvements is an amount of money that the City can afford on an annual basis. The City of Mount Dora engaged in a series of community workshops to evaluate and determine the appropriate standards for their community. The following is a description of the parks system that has been developed for the City of Mount Dora.

b. Background

- The park system that has been developed for the City of Mount Dora directly reflects the results of the recreation survey and the public workshops that were conducted in the community. There were four (4) very strong park planning recommendations that came out of the sessions: 1. There is a strong demand for renovating, enhancing and expanding the lakefront parks; 2. There is a strong desire to preserve environmentally sensitive lands in and around the City; 3. There is a strong desire for the development of a comprehensive regionally interconnected trails system for the City; and, 4. There is a strong desire to develop a neighborhood based park system. These citizen recommendations are also reinforced

by the findings of the project analysis (see vol. #1 Analysis). The analysis revealed several important trends: 1. The waterfront parks were falling into disrepair; 2. The City has no program for the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands; 3. The City has no trails development program; and, 4. 60% of the City is not currently served by neighborhood parks.

- As a result of these findings, the Mount Dora Park Standards have been developed to integrate these important concerns.

c. Description of the System

Neighborhood Parks:

The Mount Dora system of parks is based upon a backbone system of neighborhood parks. The neighborhood parks will serve the citizens at the smallest geographic scale. These neighborhood parks will provide direct walkable access to them by all residents in each neighborhood. The neighborhood parks will provide the basic recreational needs of each neighborhood.

Community Parks:

The second major element of the park system will be the community parks. The more intensive and expensive recreational activities will be concentrated in the community parks. The community parks will serve larger populations and deliver major recreation elements such as community center programs, aquatic facilities and sports fields.

Special-Use Parks:

The third component of the park system will be the special-use parks. These parks consist of the one of a kind facilities such as dog parks, theaters, arboretums, sports fields, water parks, museums, etc. A series of special use facilities have been developed for Mount Dora. These specialized park facilities have been developed to satisfy the unique needs for the community as determined in the public workshops.

Urban Parks:

The fourth components of the system will be the urban parks. The urban parks will consist primarily of the existing downtown and waterfront parks. These parks will serve the entire community and continue to provide the specialized urban amenities that are associated with the historic civic center of the community. These park facilities are integral to the economic and social vitality of the City.

Greenways:

The fifth component of the park system will be the greenways parks. The greenways will be a relatively new element of the park system. The green ways will consist of two types of parklands. One type will be land that will be set aside to be wildlife habitat corridors. These areas will have no access to humans. The second type will be active recreation greenways. These greenways will wind through the neighborhoods and act as neighborhood buffers and connectors. The greenways will be natural in character and provide the physical venue for the trails system.

Trails:

The sixth component of the park system will be the development of a comprehensive trails system for the City. The trails element of the parks system will be the newest element to the City since there is no trails system in the community. There will be two types of trails in the system: urban trails and greenway trails. The urban trails will be concentrated in the older / developed areas of the City. They will serve to connect the various civic, commercial and residential elements of the community. The urban trails will be primarily on-street bikeways combined with dedicated off-street routes where land is available. The greenway trails will be integrated into the greenway lands program. These trails will be set in a more natural setting along riverine corridors and water body buffers between land developments. The greenway trails will serve as recreation trails as well as connectors between residential areas and the active parks. The greenway lands will take a while to acquire. As a result, the greenway trails will be incorporated as land linkages are completed.

Regional / District Parks:

The regional park needs (competition sports, fairgrounds, equestrian centers, etc.) are too expensive to be provided by the City. These kinds of facilities need to be delivered by the County with a larger tax bas to support such facilities.

C. Description of the Park and Open Space Classifications

1. Community Parks

a. Community parks will be the largest active parks in the City and serve the largest population base. The community parks will be the most comprehensive in terms of recreation activities provided. These parks will be the most expensive to build and maintain.

b. The optimum service area for a community park in Mount Dora should be 1 mile. Community park sites should be serviced by arterial and collector streets and be easily assessable from throughout the service area by way of interconnecting trails. While community parks should be strategically located throughout the community, their locations can be significantly impacted by other types of parks, most notably regional parks, which can contain some of the same recreational opportunities provided in community parks.

c. Demographic profiles, population density, resource availability and recreation demand within its service area are the primary determinants of a community park's size. Although the optimal size of a community park for Mount Dora is 40 acres, its actual size should be based on the land area needed to accommodate the desired uses. Ease of access from throughout the service area, geographically centered and relationship to other park areas are also key concerns in site selection.

d. Neighborhood and community input through the public input process should be the primary determinant of development of a park. The guidelines presented in this document should be used as a framework to guide program development and ensure consistency with other park system components. They should not be used as an impediment to creative and unique design concepts.

e. Community parks will become the major civic and social focus for each community in addition to their recreational emphasis. As such, they should be designed as a true reflection of the spirit of the citizens of each community.

f. **Community Park Standards:**

Population Served
- 1 park/10,000 population

Land to Population Ratio
- 4 acres/1,000 population

Service Area
- 1 mile radius

Optimal Park Size
- 40 acres

Recreational Facilities
- Playground
- Game courts
- Athletic / Sports fields
- Tennis courts
- Open field play areas
- Gardens
- Pool or Aquatic Playground
- Community Center
- Exercise Trails
- Picnic Areas
- Performance Venues
- Restrooms
- Parking

Community Park Standards:

Population Served

- 1 park/10,000 population

Land to Population Ratio

- 4 acres/1,000 population

Service Area

- 1 mile radius

Optimal Park Size

- 40 acres

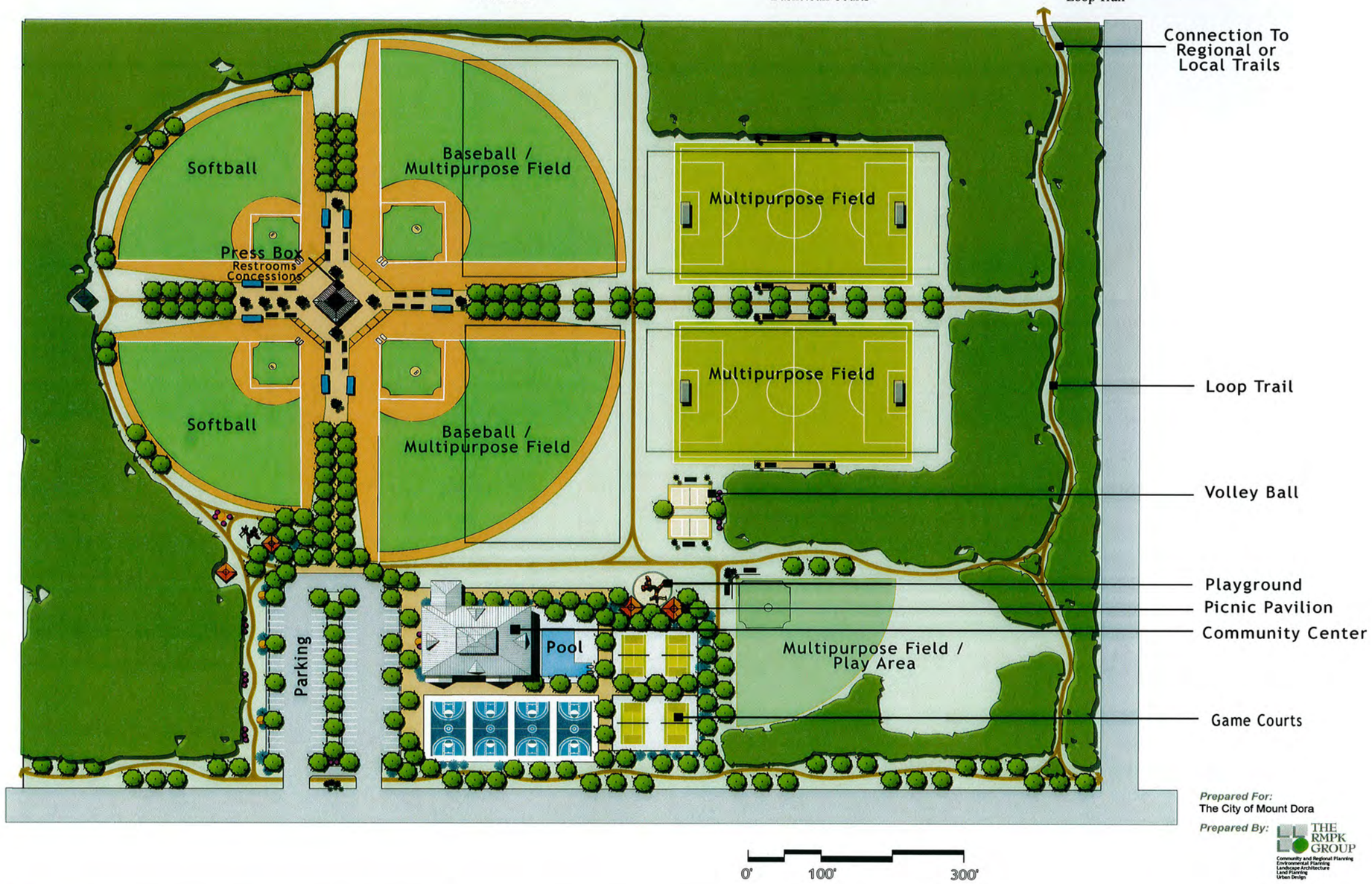
Recreational Facilities

- Playground
- Game courts
- Athletic / Sports fields
- Tennis courts
- Open field play areas
- Gardens
- Pool or Aquatic Playground
- Community Center
- Exercise Trails
- Picnic Areas
- Performance Venues
- Restrooms
- Parking

Pavillion

Basketball Courts

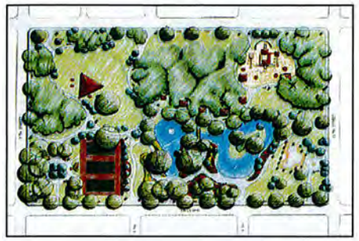
Loop Trail



Prepared For:
The City of Mount Dora
Prepared By: THE RMPK GROUP

2. Neighborhood Parks

a. Neighborhood parks will be the basic unit of the Mount Dora park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of each neighborhood. They should be developed for both active and passive activities geared specifically for those living within the neighborhood service area. These parks should accommodate a wide variety of age and user groups, including children, adults, seniors, family groups, and special populations. Creating a sense of place in each park by bringing together the unique character of each site with the social character of the neighborhood will be vital to creating a successful design.



b. Neighborhood parks should be centrally located within each service area, which should encompass a ½ mile distance, and if possible, uninterrupted by non-residential streets or other physical barriers. Each site should be accessible from throughout its service area by way of interconnecting trails, sidewalks or low-volume streets. Ease of access and walking distance are critical factors in locating a neighborhood park. A person's willingness to use a neighborhood park is greatly reduced if they perceive it to be difficult to access or not within a reasonable walking distance. Ease of access, central location and linkage to greenways are the key concerns when selecting a site.

The site itself should exhibit the physical characteristics appropriate for both active and passive recreational uses. Since one of the primary reasons people go to a park is to experience a pleasant outdoor environment, the site should have some innate aesthetic qualities. "Left-over" parcels of land that are undesirable for development area generally undesirable for neighborhood parks as well and should be avoided. Additionally, it is more cost effective to select a site with inherent aesthetic qualities, rather than trying to create them through extensive site development. Given the importance of location, neighborhood parks should be selected before a subdivision is platted and acquired as part of the development process.

c. It is recommended that 5 acres be the generally accepted minimum size necessary to provide space for a menu of activities.

The site should have well-drainage and suitable soils and level topography. Ideally, it should be connected to other park system components such as natural areas, lakes, ponds, and greenways. Land within a flood plain should only be considered if the facilities are constructed above the appropriate flood elevation. Although a park size of 5 acres is recommended, the actual size should be based on the land area needed to accommodate the desired uses.

d. Since each neighborhood is unique, input from neighborhood residents should be used to determine the development program for the park. The guidelines presented here should be used as a framework to guide program development and ensure consistency with other park system components. They should not be used as an impediment to creative design possibilities.

e. Development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between active and passive uses. Active recreational facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner. Neighborhood parks are not intended to be used for programmed activities that result in overuse, noise, parking problems and congestion.

f. <u>Neighborhood Park Standards:</u>

<u>Population Served</u>
- 1 park/2,500 population

<u>Land to Population Ratio</u>
- 3 acres/1,000 population

<u>Service Area</u>
- 1/2 mile radius

<u>Optimal Park Size</u>
- 5 acres

<u>Recreational Facilities</u>
- Playground
- Open field play area
- Volleyball Court
- Basketball Court
- Tennis Courts
- Picnic Areas
- Drinking Fountains
- Restrooms
- Parking

Neighborhood Park Standards:

Population Served

- 1 park/2,500 population

Land to Population Ratio

- 3 acres/1,000 population

Service Area

- 1/2 mile radius

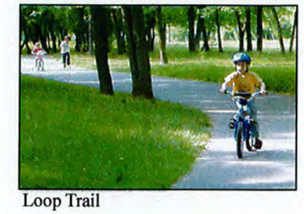
Optimal Park Size

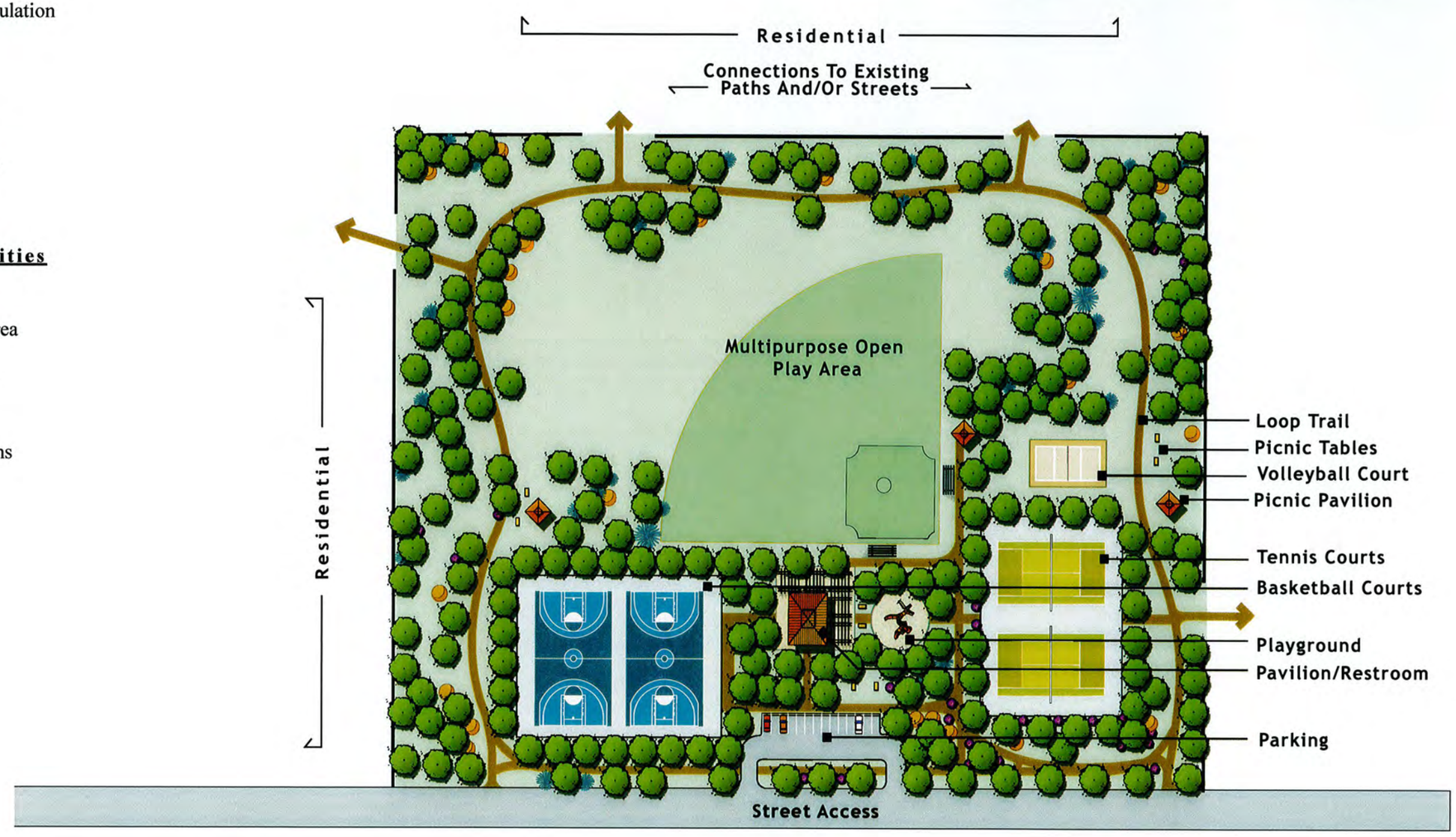
- 5 acres

Recreational Facilities

- Playground
- Open field play area
- Volleyball Court
- Basketball Court
- Tennis Courts
- Picnic Areas
- Drinking Fountains
- Restrooms
- Parking

Playground


Loop Trail



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Prepared For:
The City of Mount Dora
Prepared By: THE RMPK GROUP

3. Urban Parks

a. Urban parks will provide civic open space in the downtown area for the enjoyment of all the residents of the City as well as visitors to Mount Dora. They serve as elegant public spaces that are designed to complement the historic urban patterns of downtown Mount Dora. These parks will serve as urban oases amongst the bustle of downtown activity.

b. Urban parks should be located according to traditional town planning principals and good urban design. In Mount Dora, the urban parks will be of two types: 1. downtown plazas, and 2. waterfront parks. The downtown plazas will build on the original town plat with Donnelly Park as its central park. Additional urban pocket parks will be added to complement the historic urban framework. All of the urban parks should be tied together with a network of streetscaped pedestrian walkways and urban trails. The waterfront park system will build upon and enhance the existing waterfront park network in the downtown. The waterfront park system will create a connected system of urban park amenities along the waterfront and provide direct access to the activities of the downtown. The park facilities and program of the park spaces should complement the objectives of the Community Redevelopment Agency. The park experience should embrace the legacy of Mount Dora as a quality-of-life destination with a quaint traditional hometown feel.

c. **Urban Park Standards:**

Population Served
- All residents of the City and downtown visitors

Land to Population Ratio
- As needed

Service Area
- The City of Mount Dora

Optimal Park Size
- As appropriate

Facilities
- Urban gardens
- Shaded seating areas
- Esplanade
- People watching spaces
- Public gathering areas
- Festival spaces
- Market spaces
- Café's
- Sculpture gardens
- Plaza fountains
- Interactive fountains
- Performance pavilions
- Amphitheaters
- Arboretum
- Marina
- Mixed-use retail
- Concessions
- News stands
- Open field play
- Picnic spaces
- Memorials
- Historic elements
- Ecological elements
- Interpretation / education venues

4. Open Space / Greenbelt Parkland

a. The function of an Open Space Park or Greenbelt is to provide space where people can engage in passive and active recreation, provide preservation and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas and habitat for wildlife, and to serve as corridors to effectively link park system components together to form a continuous park environment.

b. These parks should be located in areas of significant natural resources, aesthetic landscapes, and open space. There are no specific standards for how much conservation land a community should have. Instead, it is dependent on the number and quality of natural and historical resources in the area, the public desire to preserve these valuable sites, and the willingness of the citizens to provide funds for their preservation. To establish a goal for acquisition, the standard of 25 acres / 1000 residents has been set.

c. Currently, the City of Mount Dora has several environmental properties that have been acquired for preservation and open space purposes. These will form the beginning of a citywide interconnected system of open space lands. This plan has identified areas of environmental significance that would be good candidates for incorporation in the greenway system. This plan recommends that the City should have a more detailed environmental lands survey prepared to identify and prioritize sites and develop acquisition strategies.

d. Open Space / Greenway Standards:

Population Served
- The City of Mount Dora

Land to Population Ratio
- 25 acres / 1000

Service Area
- City-wide

Optimal Park Size
- As appropriate

Facilities
- Trails
- Trail head
- Restrooms
- Picnic areas
- Seating areas
- Interpretive features
- Natural resource access and crossings
- Parking

5. Urban Trails

a. Urban Trails are paved segments of roadways that serve to safely separate cyclists and pedestrians from traffic. Urban Trails are those trails through the City that connect significant pedestrian destinations such as schools, parks, neighborhoods, the library, the downtown and the waterfront.

b. There are two types of urban trails – those that are incorporated into existing roadways and those that are separate from the roadway and designated for non-motorized use only. The decision to use one over the other is based on application and opportunity. It is desirable to use separated facilities where traffic volumes are heavy, where possible. Although adequate right-of-way may not always be available in existing transportation systems, proper planning in evolving systems will preclude this from happening in the future.

c. The urban trails system is primarily designed for the bicycle. It is important to recognize that the bicycling community is made up of three distinct user groups.

- Commuters – those who use their bicycle as a means to get from point A to point B as expeditiously as possible.
- Fitness enthusiasts – those who cycle for fitness as well as recreation.
- Competitive athletes – those who cycle competitively.

Other user groups include walkers and joggers, rollerbladers, skateboarders and other methods of non-motorized transportation. Given this, it is important that the inherent differences in use groups be recognized and incorporated into the design of the trails system.

d. <u>Urban Trails Standards:</u>

<u>Population Served</u>
- City-wide

<u>Miles to Population Ratio</u>
- .5 miles/1,000 population

<u>Service Area</u>
- City-wide

<u>Facilities</u>
- Paved trails
- Seating / rest areas
- Restrooms
- Directional and informational kiosks
- Signage

Urban Trail Standards:

Population Served

- City-wide

Land to Population Ratio

- .5 miles/1,000 population

Service Area

- City-wide

Facilities

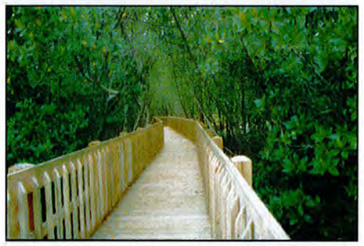
- Paved trails
- Seating / rest areas
- Restrooms
- Directional and informational kiosks
- Signage

Urban Park Trail

Sidewalk

Biking/Jogging

6. Greenway Trails



a. Although natural resource areas are resource rather than user based, they can provide some passive recreational opportunities such as nature viewing and greenway trails. Development of greenway trails should be kept to a level that preserves the integrity of the resource.

b. Greenway trails serve several functions:
- They tie park components together to form a cohesive park, recreation and open space system.
- They emphasize harmony with the natural environment.
- They allow for uninterrupted and safe pedestrian movement between parks throughout the community.
- They provide residents with a resource-based outdoor recreational opportunity and experience.
- They provide access to the regional trails system.

c. Land availability and opportunity are the primary factors determining location. "Natural" greenways generally follow suitable natural resource areas. "Man-made" greenways are corridors that are built as part of development projects or during renovation of older development areas. Man-made greenways include residential subdivisions, revitalized waterfronts, abandoned railroad beds, safe power line right-of-way, pipeline easements, etc. Since greenways are the preferred way to get people from their home and into parks, adjacency to development areas and parks is important. The best way to develop the greenway trail system is to have new developments incorporate and contribute these facilities as they are approved. In anticipation of this process, planning and design standards need to be developed and incorporated into the land development regulations.

d. Greenway Trails Standards:

Population Served
- City-wide

Miles to population ratio
- .5 miles/1,000 population

Service Area
- City-wide

Park Facilities
- Trails
- Trailhead
- Restrooms
- Picnic areas
- Seating areas
- Interpretive features
- Natural resource access and crossings
- Parking

Greenway Trail Standards:

Population Served

- City-wide

Land to Population Ratio

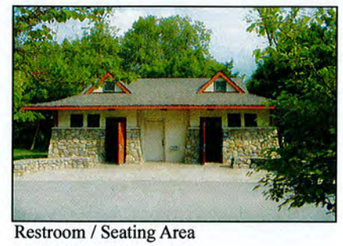
- .5 miles/1,000 population

Service Area

- City-wide

Facilities

- Trails
- Trailhead
- Restrooms
- Picnic Areas
- Seating Areas
- Interpretive Features
- Natural Resource Access and Crossing
- Parking


Restroom / Seating Area

Multi-Purpose Trail

Mountain Biking Trail

D. Summary of Park Land Standards

1. The following table summarizes the new standards for parkland in Mount Dora.

PARK LAND STANDARDS FOR MOUNT DORA

Park Category	Population Served	Acres & Miles/ 1,000	Service Area
Community Park	1 park/10,000	4 acres/1,000	1mile
Neighborhood Park	1 park/2,500	3 acres/1,000	½ miles
Urban Park	(1)	(1)	(1)
Open Space/Greenbelt	(1)	25 acres/1,000	(1)
Urban Trails	N/A	.5 mile/1,000	N/A
Greenway Trail	N/A	.5 mile/1,000	N/A

(1) As appropriate

E. Proposed Park Facility Standards

1. The following table summarizes the new park facility standards for Mount Dora.

PARK FACILITY STANDARDS FOR MOUNT DORA

Amenity	Proposed Standards
Tennis Court	1 / 1,500
Softball	1 / 3,500
Baseball	1 / 5,000
Picnic Area	1 / 1,000
Swimming Pool	1 / 20,000
Aquatic Park	1 / 20,000
Basketball	1 / 2,500
Racquetball	1 / 5,000
Multipurpose Field	1 / 2,5 00
Golf Course	1 18-hole/25,000
Boat Ramp	1 / 10,000
Shuffleboard	1 / 3,000
Croquet	1 / 10,000
Community Center	1 / 10,000
Recreation Center	1 / 50,000
Skateboard Park	1 / 10,000
BMX Park	1 / 30,000
Dog Park	1 / 15,000
Volleyball Court	1 / 5,000

- Restrooms as need dictates

2. Facilities Standards

a. The planning process for this parks master plan entailed the evaluation of the City's current park facilities service levels for their appropriateness to the current community demographics and citizen desirability. As a result of this analysis, several changes were made to the level of service standards. The following is a description of these changes as summarized in the above chart.

b. The standard for tennis courts changes to 1/1,500 residents.

c. The standard for softball changes to 1/3,500 residents. The standard for baseball fields changes to 1/5,000 residents.

d. The standard for picnic tables was changed to picnic areas and is now 1 picnic area per 1,000 residents.

e. The standard for swimming pools was changed to the NRPA standard of 1 per 20,000 residents. Because of the popularity and growing demand for aquatic play facilities, a new category of aquatic park was added at the standard of 1 facility per 20,000 residents.

f. The basketball standard was increased due to the increased popularity of basketball and the strong need reflected in the community workshops and survey.

g. The existing standard for racquetball remains at 1 court per 5,000 residents.

h. The current Mount Dora Comprehensive Plan maintains a standard for "football/soccer" field at 1 per 4,000 residents. It is recommended that the designation be changed to "multipurpose" field and the standard be set at 1 per 2,500 due to the increasing demands for soccer and football.

i. The standard for golf courses remains at 1 per 25,000; however, it is recommended that any future golf courses be provided by private development because of the high cost to build and maintain.

j. The standard for boat ramps has been lowered from 1 per 4,000 residents to 1 per 10,000 residents. It is felt that there are adequate facilities at this time and into the future. Additionally, it is not anticipated that land will be available in the future for the provision of additional ramps.

k. The standard for shuffleboard has been changed from 1 per 700 residents to 1 per 3,000 residents. It is felt that the existing 11 courts will be sufficient in the future due to the changing demographics of Mount Dora.

l. A new standard for croquet has been established at 1 court per 30,000 residents.

m. Community centers should be situated throughout the City and act as focal points for the activities and interests of the local community. They are used to provide a variety of recreational, educational and human services programs. The programs are designed to meet the diverse needs of the City residents, with offerings that are tailored to specific age groups, interests and abilities. These should be located in a community park or large neighborhood park. The standard has been set at 1 per 50,000 residents.

n. Recreation centers are larger, multi-community based facilities offering program opportunities to a regional population. They can be joint-use facilities operated by several agencies with a center coordinator. The standard has been set at 1 per 30,000 residents.

o. Skateboard parks and BMX parks should be built as a single facility; however, the skateboarding and cycling activities must not occur at the same time. The standard for a skateboard park has been set at 1 per 10,000 residents. The standard for BMX is 1 per 30,000 residents

p. Dog parks are an increasingly popular concept occurring all over the United States. The simplicity or complexity of the park will depend on the needs and desires of the community. It is felt that one park per 30,000 residents is sufficient for future use.

q. The standard for volleyball courts has been set at 1 per 5,000 residents.

D. The Cost of Park Standards

1. Currently, the City of Mount Dora is has a deficit in park lands and facilities based upon its existing population. As a result, there will be costs involved in upgrading and adding parks to get the City to an adequate level of service. Once this has been attained, then the City will be in a position where it will only need to fund and deliver the park facilities needed to serve the residents that are added each year. At the present time, the City is averaging about 700 new residents a year. Based on this number, the following is a summary of the average cost per year and per resident of the standards that have been set for the community (current dollars):

a. Community Parks
$4,000,000.00 @7% = $280,000.00 / yr.
= $400.00 / resident

b. Neighborhood Parks
$350,000.00 @28% = $98,000.00 / yr.
= $140.00 / resident

c. Greenway Land
$250,000.00 @70% = $175,000.00 /yr.
= $250.00 / resident

d. Greenway Trails
$200,000.00/mi. @ 35% = $70,000.00 / yr.
= $100.00 / resident

e. Totals = $ 623,000.00 / yr.
= $ 890.00 / resident or
= $ 2403.00 / dwelling unit

E. Current Park Needs Assessment

1. Park Lands

a. Community Parks:
Park Land Need: 11 acres
Number of Parks: .2 new community parks – no current need

b. Neighborhood Parks:
Park Land Need: 28.5 acres
Number of Parks: 2.8 new neighborhood parks

c. Greenway Land:
Park Land Need: 213 acres
Number of Parks: NA

d. Greenway Trails:
Park Miles Need: 5. miles
Number of Parks: NA

e. Urban Trails:
Park Miles Need: 5.5 miles
Number of Parks: NA

f. Other Park Needs:
The above needs have been developed based upon new park needs. These do not include the renovation needs to existing parks. These needs are incorporated into the 2005 physical master plan, see chapter 5.

CURRENT MOUNT DORA NEEDS BASED ON NEW STANDARDS

Amenity	Current Quantity	Proposed Standards	Need 2005
Population			***12,020***
Community Park	37.00	4 acres/1,000	48.08
Neighborhood Park	7.64	3 acres/1,000	36.06
Urban Parks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space/Greenbelts	87.3	25 acres/1,000	300
Urban Trails	.5	.5 mile/1,000	6.01
Greenway Trails	1.0	.5 mile/1,000	6.01
Special Use	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vacant	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL ACRES	**131.94**		**384.14**
TOTAL MILES	**1.5**		**12.02**

- Does not include special use parks, pocket parks or play lots

ADDITIONAL ACREAGE NEEDED BASED ON STANDARDS

Amenity	Current	Proposed Standards	Need 2005
Population			***12,020***
Community Park	37.00	4 acres/1,000	11.08
Neighborhood Park	7.64	3 acres/1,000	28.42
Urban Parks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space/Greenbelts	87.3	25 acres/1,000	212.7
Urban Trails	.5	.5 mile/1,000	5.51
Greenway Trails	1.0	.5 mile/1,000	5.01
TOTAL ACRES	**131.94**		**252.5**
TOTAL MILES	**1.5**		**10.52**

- Does not include special use parks, pocket parks or play lots

2. Park Facilities

a. Current Additional Park Facility Needs

- Tennis Courts - 1 court
- Softball - 4 fields
- Picnic areas - 7 areas
- Basketball courts - 2 courts
- Racquetball courts - 2 courts
- Multi-purpose fields - 4 fields
- Community center - 1 center
- Skate park - 1 park
- Volleyball - 3 courts
- Restrooms - 3 restrooms

TOTAL CURRENT NEEDS BASED ON NEW STANDARDS

Amenity	Actual	Proposed LOS	Need 2005
Population			*12,020*
Tennis Court	7	1 / 1,500	8
Softball	0	1 / 3,500	4
Baseball	5	1 / 5,000	3
Picnic Area	5	1 / 1,000	12.02
Swimming Pool	1	1 / 20,000	0
Aquatic Park	0	1 / 20,000	0
Basketball	3	1 / 2,500	4.81
Racquetball	2	1 / 5,000	2.41
Multipurpose Field	1	1 / 2,500	4.81
Golf Course	1	1 18-hole / 25,000	0
Boat Ramp	4	1 / 10,000	1.02
Shuffleboard	11	1 / 3,000	4.01
Croquet	2	1 / 30,000	0.40
Community Center	0	1 / 10,000	1.20
Recreation Center	0	1 / 50,000	0.24
Skateboard Park	0	1 / 10,000	1.02
BMX Park	0	1 / 30,000	0.40
Dog Park	0	1 / 30,000	0.81
Volleyball Court	0	1 / 5,000	3

- Restrooms as demand dictates

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES NEEDED BASED ON PROPOSED LEVELS OF SERVICE

Amenity	Actual	Proposed LOS	Need 2005
Population			*12,020*
Tennis Court	7	1 / 3,5000	1
Softball	0	1 / 5,000	4
Baseball	5	1 / 2,500	0
Picnic Area	5	1 / 1,000	7.02
Swimming Pool	1	1 / 20,000	0
Aquatic Park	0	1 / 20,000	0
Basketball	3	1 / 2,500	1.81
Racquetball	2	1 / 5,000	0
Multipurpose Field	1	1 / 2,500	3.81
Golf Course	1	1 18-hole / 25,000	0
Boat Ramp	4	1 / 10,000	0
Shuffleboard	11	1 / 3,000	0
Croquet	2	1 / 30,000	0
Community Center	0	1 / 10,000	1.20
Recreation Center	0	1 / 50,000	0
Skateboard Park	0	1 / 10,000	1.02
BMX Park	0	1 / 30,000	0
Dog Park	0	1 / 15,000	0
Volleyball Court	0	1 / 5,000	3

- Restrooms as demend dictates

F. Projected Needs Assessment

1. Analyzing Mount Dora's population trends and geographic concentration helps to understand how many parks are needed and where they need to be located. Over the next 20 or so years, the population is expected to rise from approximately 10,000 in 2003 to approximately 31,000 by 2025. This translates to over 21,000 additional residents who will be using Mount Dora's park and recreation system. Additionally, the population in surrounding Lake County and adjacent Orange County is expected to grow dramatically. These residents are also potential visitors to Mount Dora's parks.

   The developments of the Lakes of Mount Dora, the Simpson's Property and the Batson Property will include 4,382 housing units to be developed over the next few years. Using a multiplier of 2.3 persons per household, that equals 10,079 persons over the next few years, or about a 5% growth rate per year.

PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	9,418	12,020	15,341	19,579	24,988	31,892

2. Using the projected growth and the proposed levels of service, the following table indicates the amount of land required for each type of park, greenway and trail that will be needed to provide an adequate parks and recreation system for the residents of Mount Dora.

3. Park Lands

FUTURE PARK NEEDS BASED ON NEW STANDARDS

Amenity	Current	Proposed Standards	Need 2015	Need 2025
Population			*19,579*	*31,892*
Community Park	37.00	4 acres/1,000	78.28	127.56
Neighborhood Park	7.64	3 acres/1,000	57.71	95.67
Urban Parks	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space/Greenbelts	87.3	25 acres/1,000	489.48	797.3
Urban Trails	.5	.5 mile/1,000	9.79	N/A
Greenway Trails	1.0	.5 mile/1,000	9.79	**15.95**
TOTAL ACRES	**131.94**		**625.47**	**1020.5**
TOTAL MILES	**1.0**		**9.79**	15.95

Does not include special use parks

ADDITIONAL ACREAGE NEEDED BASED ON NEW STANDARDS

Amenity	Current	Proposed Standards	Need 2015	Need 2025
Population			*19,579*	*31,892*
Community Park	37.00	4 acres/1,000	41.28	90.56
Neighborhood Park	7.64	3 acres/1,000	50.07	88.03
Urban Parks	N/A	1 acres/1,000	N/A	N/A
Open Space/Greenbelts	87.3	25 acres/1,000	402.18	710
Urban Trails	.5	.5 mile/1,000	4.28	6.16
Greenway Trails	1.0	.5 mile/1,000	4.78	6.16
TOTAL ACRES	**131.94**		**493.53**	**888.59**
TOTAL MILES	**1.0**		**9.06**	**13.95**

Does not include special use parks, pocket parks or play lots

4. Park Facilities

PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	9,418	12,020	15,341	19,579	24,988	31,892

Using the projected growth and the proposed levels of service, the following table indicates the amounts of each facility that will be needed to provide an adequate parks and recreation system for the residents of Mount Dora.

FUTURE PARK FACILITY NEEDS BASED ON NEW STANDARDS

Amenity	Actual	Proposed LOS	Need 2015	Need 2025
Population			*19,579*	*31,892*
Tennis Court	7	1/1,500	13.06	21.27
Softball	0	1 /3,500	5.60	9.12
Baseball	5	1 /5,000	3.92	6.38
Picnic Area	5	1/ 1,000	19.59	31.91
Swimming Pool	1	1/20,000	0	1.60
Aquatic Park	0	1/20,000	0	1.60
Basketball	3	1 /2,500	7.84	12.76
Racquetball	2	1/5,000	3.92	6.38
Multipurpose Field	1	1 /2,500	7.84	12.76
Golf Course	1	1 18-hole/25,000	0	1
Boat Ramp (4 slots)	1	1 /10,000	1.96	3.19
Shuffleboard	11	1/3,000	6.53	10.64
Croquet	2	1/30,000	.65	1.06
Community Center	0	1/10,000	1.95	3.19
Recreation Center	0	1/50,000	.39	.64
Skateboard Park	0	1/10,000	1.96	3.19
BMX Park	0	1/30,000	.65	1.06
Dog Park	0	1/30,000	1.3	2.12
Volleyball Court	0	1 /5,000	3.92	6.38

- Restrooms as demand dictates

ADDITIONAL PARK FACILITIES NEEDED BASED ON NEW STANDARDS

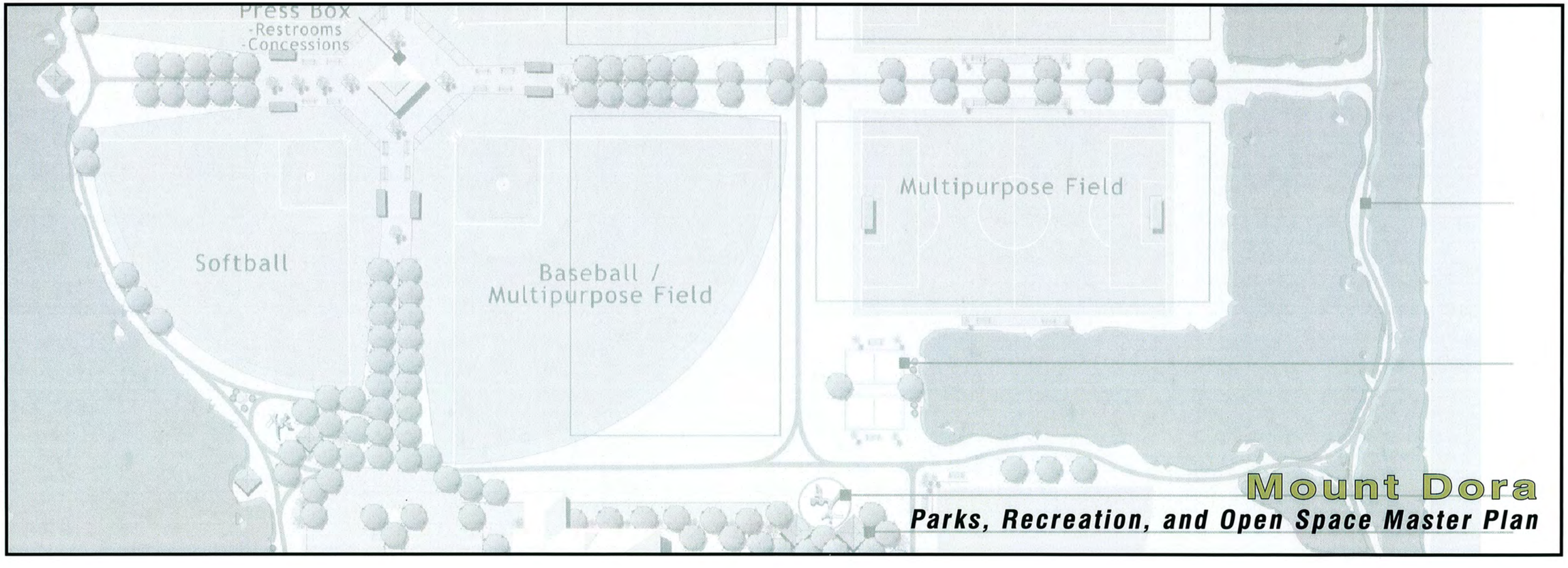
Amenity	Actual	Proposed LOS	Need 2015	Need 2025
Population			*19,579*	*31,892*
Tennis Court	7	1 / 1,500	5.06	8.27
Softball	0	1 / 3,500	1.06	2.46
Baseball	5	1 / 5,000	0	1.38
Picnic Area	5	1 / 1,000	7.57	12.32
Swimming Pool	1	1 / 20,000	0	0
Aquatic Park	0	1 / 20,000	0	0
Basketball	3	1 / 2,500	3.03	4.92
Racquetball	2	1 / 5,000	1.51	2.46
Multipurpose Field	1	1 / 2,500	3.03	4.92
Golf Course	1	1 18-hole / 25,000	0	0
Boat Ramp (4 slots)	1	1 / 10,000	0	0
Shuffleboard	11	1 / 3,000	0	0
Croquet	2	1 / 30,000	0	0
Community Center	0	1 / 10,000	0	1.23
Recreation Center	0	1 / 50,000	0	0
Skateboard Park	0	1 / 10,000	0	1.23
BMX Park	0	1 / 30,000	0	0
Dog Park	0	1 / 15,000	1.3	2.12
Volleyball Court	0	1 / 5,000	.92	1.00

- Restrooms as demand dictates

Volume 2

Chapter: V

The Master Plan



Mount Dora

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

V. THE MASTER PLAN

A. Overview

1. The City of Mount Dora Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan contains two major components: the physical plan, and the implementation plan. This chapter focuses on the physical plan. The implementation aspects of the plan are found in Chapter VI. The physical master plan, described in this chapter, sets forth a phased planning approach to the parks and open space system. The physical plan is broken down into three phases.

2. The first phase is called the 2005 Master Plan. This phase focuses on adding the necessary parks and open space improvements to correct the current deficits in the Mount Dora parks system. In other words, this plan shows the new improvements that are needed today in order that the City meet its current level of service standards for its existing population. This plan requires significant in-fill parks planning in order to achieve the required levels of service.

3. The second phase of the plan is a plan designed to accommodate the expected population growth for the year 2015. This plan anticipates the development of the new projects that have been approved to the east of the City.

4. The third phase of the plan reflects the park needs as projected for the expected population for the year 2025. This plan anticipates future development project approvals and proposes a park plan to address these expected demands.

B. 2005 Master Plan

1. The 2005 Master Plan is primarily designed to remedy the current deficits in the park system. There are four (4) major strategies employed in this phase: 1. The addition of neighborhood parks to service the under-served neighborhoods; 2. To provide renovation to the existing parks that have fallen into disrepair; 3. To begin the formation of the greenways system; and, 4. To begin the formation of the trails system. The plan description is organized by each park category: Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Urban Parks, Open Space / Greenbelt Parks, Urban Trails, and Greenway Trails.

   The 2005 plan will be subject to the preparation of the City's 5-year capital improvements plan and available funding each year. The standards will also be adjusted to reflect the current needs and maintain the sense of place and character of the Mount Dora core.

2. The following are the recommendations for 2005 based on a population projection of 12,020.
3. **Park Land**

Amenity	Current	Proposed Standards	Need 2005
Population			***12,020***
Community Park	37.00	4 acres/1,000	11.08
Neighborhood Park	7.64	3 acres/1,000	28.42
Urban Parks	N/A	N/A	N/A
Open Space/Greenbelts	87.3	25 acres/1,000	212.7
Urban Trails	.5	.5 mile/1,000	5.51
Greenway Trails	1.0	.5 mile/1,000	5.01
TOTAL ACRES	**131.94**		**252.5**
TOTAL MILES	**1.0**		**10.52**

Does not include special use parks, pocket parks or play lots

4. Park Facilities

Amenity	Actual	Standard	Need 2005
Population			***12,020***
Tennis Court	7	1 / 1,500	1
Softball	0	1 / 3,500	4
Baseball	5	1 / 5,000	0
Picnic Area	5	1 / 1,000	7
Swimming Pool	1	1 / 20,000	0
Aquatic Park	0	1 / 20,000	0
Basketball	3	1 / 2,500	2
Racquetball	2	1 / 5,000	0
Multipurpose Field	1	1 / 2,500	4
Golf Course	1	1 18-hole / 25,000	0
Boat Ramp (4 slots)	1	1 / 10,000	0
Shuffleboard	11	1 / 3,000	0
Croquet	2	1 / 30,000	0
Community Center	0	1 / 10,000	1.2
Recreation Center	0	1 / 50,000	0
Skateboard Park	0	1 / 10,000	1
BMX Park	0	1 / 30,000	0
Dog Park	0	1 / 30,000	0
Volleyball Court	0	1 / 2,500	3

- Restrooms as demand dictates

* The above standards are subject to yearly budget allocations.

Community Parks

1. Strategy:

Currently there is one community park serving the City – Lincoln Avenue Park. According to the park standards (1 community park / 10,000 residents), there will not be a need for another community park in 2005. As a result, there are no new community parks proposed at this time; however, Lincoln Avenue Park is in disrepair and needs some up-grades. In addition, there are many park facilities that are needed for 2005. Some of them are to be allocated to Lincoln Avenue Park.

2. New Community Parks:

No new parks.

3. Existing Community Parks:

Lincoln Avenue Park:

1. Lincoln Avenue Park needs to have a master site plan prepared to ensure that all the required park elements can fit onto the site in a compatible and organized fashion.
2. Lincoln Avenue Park will be renovated to include the following additional facilities:

Standard Facilities

- 2 additional softball fields
- 1 new baseball field
- 1 picnic facility
- 1 basketball
- 1 skateboard park
- 1 restroom / concession / press box
- 1 playground
- Existing pool facilities to be expanded

Ancillary Facilities

- 2 renovated baseball fields
- 2 renovated racquet ball courts
- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation upgrades
- Site improvements

Neighborhood Parks

1. Strategy:

Currently the City of Mount Dora has several neighborhoods in the city that are not served by a neighborhood park. This plan proposes to address this deficiency by developing two (2) new neighborhood parks and retrofitting another site, Heim Park, into a neighborhood park. The baseball field in Heim Park will be relocated into Lincoln Avenue Park (see community parks above). With the baseball field relocated, the site will be perfect for a neighborhood park to service the southeastern portion of the City. A new neighborhood park, Eudora Park, will serve the western portion of the City of Mount Dora. Eudora Park will be located along Eudora Road between 441 and Northland Road. Another neighborhood park will be developed at a location near Eleventh Avenue and Annie St. This park will serve the residents in the middle of the city between Lake Gertrude and downtown.

2. New Neighborhood Parks:

Eudora Park:

1. Eudora Park will serve as a major neighborhood park to service the western portion of the City. As such, it will be larger than the standard neighborhood park and have some community park facilities. The park will be 10 acres in size and have the following facilities:

Standard Facilities

- 1 tennis courts
- 1 softball fields
- 1 multi-purpose field
- 2 picnic facilities
- 1 basketball courts
- 1 multi-purpose field
- 2 volleyball courts
- 1 restroom
- 1 playground

Ancillary Facilities

- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

Eleventh Avenue Park:

1. Eleventh Avenue Park will serve as a standard neighborhood park to service the western portion of the City. The park will be 7.5 acres in size and have the following facilities:

Standard Facilities

- 2 picnic facilities
- 1 restroom
- 1 playground

Ancillary Facilities

- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

Heim Park:

1. Heim Park will serve as a standard neighborhood park to service the southeastern portion of the City. The park will be 4 acres in size and have the following facilities:

Standard Facilities

- 1 tennis courts
- 1 picnic facility
- 1 multi-purpose field
- 1 basketball court
- 1 volleyball court
- 1 restroom
- 1 playground

Ancillary Facilities

- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

3. ***Existing Neighborhood Parks:***

Cauley Lott and Lillie Parks:

1. Cauley Lott Park and the land across the street, Lillie Park, will be renovated to create, in combination, a revitalized neighborhood park. Cauley Lott Park will be the main family-oriented facility and Lillie Park will be designed for young children. The renovation will include the following additional facilities:

Standard Facilities

- 1 volleyball court
- 1 playground (Lillie Park)

Ancillary Facilities

- Renovate existing playground
- Renovate existing restroom
- Remove small shelters
- Remove basketball courts
- Construct new basketball court (for children)
- Amphitheater renovation
- Traffic calming
- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation upgrades
- Site improvements

Urban Parks

1. Strategy:

The urban park system is composed of two types of parks: 1. the downtown urban parks and 2. the waterfront parks. The downtown urban parks will be a system of small urban parks nestled in among the mixed-use buildings of the downtown. Most of these parks exist today and will be maintained and up-graded over time as needed. The central park of the city is Donnelly Park. It will be renovated to act more like a central park than it does today. These urban parks will be tied together with a system of streetscape walkways that create an aesthetically pleasing pedestrian network.

The waterfront parks will become a system of interconnected waterfront park amenities that are all tied into the downtown and adjacent residential areas via urban trail connections. Currently, there are five (5) parks along the waterfront: Gilbert, Simpson Cove, Grantham, Elizabeth Evans, and Palm Island. The master plan proposes a master site plan for the acquisition of new parkland areas in addition

to the renovation of the existing parks into one unified park – the Mount Dora Waterfront Park. Some of the renovations can occur immediately while others will need to occur over time.

These urban parks serve to enhance the quality of life of the downtown and create the unique character of the City of Mount Dora. As such, they provide a fabulous citywide recreational amenity. In addition, these parks provide a major attraction for visitors to the community. The attraction of visitors and the resultant economic benefit is a major objective of the downtown CRA. The evolution and design of these parks should dovetail with the objectives of the CRA plan and come under the auspices of their management and development.

2. ***Downtown Parks:***

Donnelly Park:

1. Donnelly Park serves as the major town square or central park for the heart of the City. As such, it will be renovated to act more like a traditional town square facility. Over time, numerous active facilities have been added to the park and have taken away the original open central park character of the space. The following are the recommendations for the park:

Facilities Improvements

- Remove shuffleboard courts
- Upgrade performance area lighting
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

3. ***Waterfront Parks:***

Overall:

The waterfront parks will be combined to form one majestic system of waterfront amenities. The redevelopment of these parks will be accomplished in two phases. The first phase will consist of the renovations to Gilbert, Simpson Cove, Grantham Point, and Palm Island. The phase II will entail the acquisition of Pineapple Point. The phase II will involve the development of a major waterfront festival market place destination at the end of Edgerton Court. The assembly of this property and the development of this site will take a long time. As a result, the phase II developments are slated for the 2015 to 2025 time frame. In the meantime, the renovation of the existing park areas can be pursued.

Gilbert Park:

1. Gilbert Park will serve as a downtown family-oriented park with active recreational amenities. In addition, the park will be the center for festivals and events. A new picnic pavillion will be constructed with a drop off area. If a new pavillion is deemed cost-prohibitive, the Shipley pavilion will be renovated. New restrooms and picnic facilities will be constructed. New playground equipment appropriate for small children will be installed adjacent to the existing equipment. The existing playground equipment will be secured with a fence. The area between the picnic facilities and the restrooms will be designed as an open lawn with views to the waterfront. Alexander Creek will be planted with native vegetation One croquet court will remain. The design of the park will address drainage issues. Diagonal parking will be accommodated on Grandview St., on the east side of the park. Surrounding the amphitheater will be a walkway. On the outside edge of the walkway will be picnic sites for the park visitors.

Facility Improvements:

- Construct new large group picnic pavilion or renovate existing one
- Construct new restrooms
- Construct new playground for toddlers
- Parking on east side of park
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

Palm Island Park:

1. Palm Island Park will serve as an eco-tourism center. A trailhead to the boardwalk and trail will be constructed. A kayak and canoe launch will be included. The future of the Boy Scout Pavillion will be determined at a later date. The old Leisure Services building will be demolished to provide boat trailer parking.

Facility Improvements:

- Kayak/canoe launch
- Waterfront boardwalk / fishing docks
- Trailhead
- Nature trails
- Picnic facilities
- Construct new boat trailer parking lot
- Construct a new boat ramp
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

Grantham and Simpson Cove Parks:

1. Grantham and Simpson Cove Parks are the main waterfront parks. These areas will be renovated to create an attrative waterfront walkway to view Lake Dora. The already-approved Grantham Point renovations should contribute to the aesthetic value of the esplanade. Adjacent to the walkway will be a seating areas to relax and enjoy the setting. Grantham Point is being renovated at the current time to allow for new dock facilities. These docks will be available for daily tie-ups for visitors to the downtown. The area between Tremain St. and the waters edge will be for a picnicking. Picnic sites with views to the water will be developed.

Facility Improvements:

- Seating areas
- Picnic facilities
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

Elizabeth Evans Park:

1. The park will be left as is for the immediate futere. Consideration will be given for use as a performance area in the future. Any future renovation should include drainage improvements.

Special Use Parks

1. Strategy:

Throughout the City, several facilities will be developed that are categorized as special use parks and facilities. These facilities are necessary for a well run parks system and deemed necessary by the citizens. These parks do not have specific standards and are only developed as the needs arise. The city survey and citizen workshops unveiled the need for several special use facilities such as a dog park at Spring Park, an athletic complex at Frank Brown Fields, a community center at Roseborough, renovations at the City Docks, and a new community center at Frank Brown Field to expand upon the use at the Martin Luther King Center.

2. Special Use Parks:

Spring Park Dog Park:

1. Spring Park (located adjacent to US441)

Facilities Improvements

- Restrooms
- Picnic facilities
- Parking
- Fenced dog run area
- Dog watering area
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

Frank Brown I and II Park:

1. Frank Brown Park

Facilities Improvements

- 2 combination fields – softball and multi-purpose field
- 1 large multi-purpose fields
- 2 basketball courts
- Exercise trail
- Picnic sites
- Playground
- Water play area
- Community Center
  - Weight room, classrooms, game rooms.
- Parking lot
- On-street parking
- Landscape and irrigation
- Site improvements

Roseborough Community Center:

1. Roseborough Community Center

Facilities Improvements

- Renovation of existing building to act as community center.
- Provisions made for active uses such as indoor basketball, aerobics, etc.

MLK Community Center:

1. MLK Community Center

Facilities Improvements

- Renovate the building

City Docks:

1. City Docks

Facilities Improvements

- Remove exotic vegetation
- New Docks

Open Space/Greenbelt

1. Strategy:

The city survey and community workshops revealed that the highest priority park need for the City of Mount Dora is a system of protected preservation lands and recreational greenways. The long range parks and open space master plan identifies areas of environmentally significant lands within the city as well as lands surrounding the city. This plan calls for a phased acquisition strategy to acquire the significant properties over time. Acquisition can occur via various methods such as grants, purchase, conservation easements, transfer of development rights, and developer land dedications. The details of this strategy are in the implementation section of the plan (Chapter 6). These important lands will provide numerous assets for the community. The lands will provide visual and physical buffers between developments, provide corridors for bikeways and trails, preserve important eco-systems, protect land values, and create quality-of-life in the community. It is recommended that a detailed survey of environmentally significant lands be prepared to identify the acquisition priorities. The following is a list of properties that have been identified for early acquisition as a part of this 2005 phase.

2. Open Space / Greenbelt:

Spring Park – Matsche-Kurras Property:

1. Spring Park

Facilities Improvements

- 20 acres
- No improvements this phase

Waite Property:

1. Waite Property

Facilities Improvements

- 40 acres
- No improvements this phase

Urban Trails

1. Strategy:

The second highest priority identified by the citizens of Mount Dora was the need for a trails system in the city. The long-range master plan identifies a system of interconnected urban trails for the city. (See Long Range Plan map). It will take a while to build these trails. The following trails have been identified for the first phase of the plan.

2. First Phase Urban Trail:

On-street bikeway:

1. Downtown bikeway

Facilities Improvements

- 5.5 miles of striped bikeway on downtown streets to connect downtown residential areas to downtown facilities. (See map)

Greenway Trail

1. Strategy:

The long-range master plan also identifies a system of interconnected greenway trails for the city. (See Long Range Plan map). The following trails have been identified for the first phase of the plan.

2. First Phase Greenway Trail:

Rails-to-Trails:

1. Downtown rails-to-trails

Facilities Improvements

- 5 miles of paved trail on the railroad right-of-way in the downtown and waterfront (see map).

C. Cost Estimate for 2005 Park Improvements

1. The park improvements identified for the phase I of the plan are very extensive. This is because the city has postponed the addition of new parks for several years thus creating a large deficit. As a result, the cost to build these facilities is very large. It would be impossible to construct all of these improvements in one year; therefore, it is recommended that these improvements be built over the next ten years. This will provide the appropriate time for construction and allow for a reasonable approach for financing this massive under-taking. The details of this funding and phasing plan are in the implementation chapter of this document. (Chapter 6).

2. **Cost Estimate for Phase I**

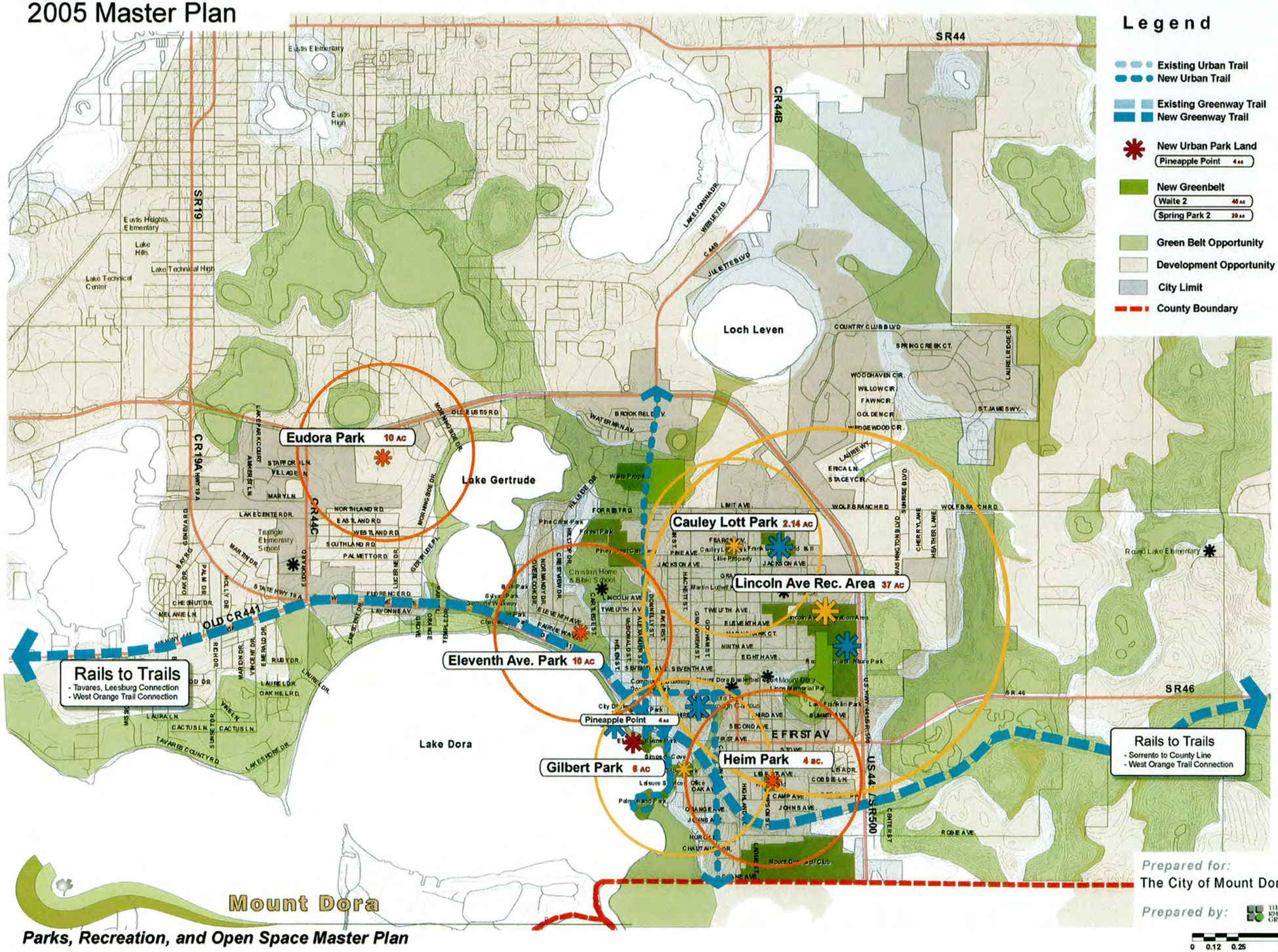
A. Community Parks	
▪ Lincoln Park	$2,250,000.00
B. Neighborhood Parks	
▪ Eudora Park	$ 400,000.00
▪ Eleventh Ave. Park	$ 250,000.00
▪ Heim Park	$ 200,000.00
▪ Cauley Lott Park	$ 200,000.00
Sub-total	$1,050,000.00
C. Urban Parks	
▪ Gilbert Park	$ 450,000.00
▪ Palm Island Park	$ 650,000.00
▪ Simpson /Grantham	$ 400,000.00
▪ Donnelly Park	$ 50,000.00
Sub-total	$1,550,000.00
D. Special Use Parks	
▪ Spring Dog Park	$ 150,000.00
▪ Frank Brown Fields	$2,000,000.00
▪ Roseborough Center	$ 500,000.00
▪ Mamie Gilbert Com. Center	$ 500,000.00
▪ City Docks	$ 75,000.00
▪ Renovattions to MLK Com. Center	$ 150,000.00
Sub-total	$3,375,000.00
E. Green Belt Parks	
▪ Spring Park	$ 200,000.00
▪ Waite Park	$ 400,000.00
Sub-total	$ 600,000.00
F. Urban Trails	
▪ Phase I Trail	$ 50,000.00
G. Greenway Trails	
▪ Phase I Trail	$ 250,000.00
TOTAL PHASE I – 2005 NEEDS	**$9,225,000.00**

Funding Plan

1. Urban Parks-	**1,550,000.00- from (TIF)**
2. Community, Neighborhood- 6,675,000.00	**3,337,500.00- from grants**
Special Use Parks	**3,337,500.00- from sales tax**
3. Green Belt-	**600,000.00- from grants**
4. Trails-	**300,000.00- from grants**

If, in the future, a referendum is undertaken to assist in the development of parks and open space, it should be a binding referendum.

2005 Master Plan



Legend

- Existing Urban Trail
- New Urban Trail
- Existing Greenway Trail
- New Greenway Trail
- New Urban Park Land
  - Pineapple Point 4 AC
- New Greenbelt
  - Waite 2 40 AC
  - Spring Park 2 20 AC
- Green Belt Opportunity
- Development Opportunity
- City Limit
- County Boundary
- Existing Park Location

Existing Neighborhood Park

Cauley Lott Park 2.14 AC
Proposed Facilities
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 1 Playground (Lillie Park)

Gilbert Park 6 AC
Proposed Facilities
- Connected to waterfront redevelopment

New Neighborhood Park

Eudora Park 10 AC
Proposed Facilities
- 1 Tennis Courts
- 1 Softball Fields
- 1 Multi Purpose Field
- 2 Picnic Facilities
- 1 Basketball Courts
- 1 Multipurpose Field
- 2 Volleyball Courts
- 1 Restroom
- 1 Playground

Eleventh Ave. Park 10 AC
Proposed Facilities
- 2 Picnic Facilities
- 1 Restroom
- 1 Playground

Heim Park 4 AC
Proposed Facilities
- 1 Tennis Courts
- 1 Picnic Facility
- 1 Multi-purpose Field
- 1 Basketball Court
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 1 Restroom
- 1 Playground

Existing Community Park

Lincoln Ave. Rec. Area 37 AC
Proposed Facilities
- 2 Additional Softball
- 1 New Baseball
- 2 Renovated Baseball Fields
- 2 Renovated Racquet Ball Courts
- 1 Picnic Facility
- 1 Basketball
- 1 Skateboard Park
- 1 Restroom/Concession/ Press Box
- 1 Playground

New Community Park

Special Use Park

Spring Park Dog Park 12 AC
Proposed Facilities
- Restrooms
- Fenced Dog Run Area
- Picnic Facilities
- Dog Watering Area
- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation

Frank Brown I & II 14.85 AC
Proposed Facilities
- 2 Combination Softball and Multi-purpose Field
- 1 Large Multi-purpose Field
- 2 Basketball Courts
- Exercise Trail
- Picnic Sites
- Playground
- Water Play Area
- Community Center
  - Weight Room
  - Class Rooms
  - Game Rooms

Roseborough Community Center
Facilities Improvements
- Renovation of existing building to act as community center
- Provisions made for active uses such as indoor basketball, aerobics, etc.

City Docks - 4th Avenue
Facilities Improvements
- Remove exotic vegetation
- Research new dock layout

Prepared for:
The City of Mount Dora

Prepared by: THE RMPK GROUP

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Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

D. 2015 Master Plan

1. The 2015 Master Plan is primarily designed to accommodate the new growth that will occur to the east of the city in the newly annexed and approved developments. There are four (4) major strategies employed in this phase: 1. Add one new community park to service the additional 10,000 residents; 2. Add four (4) new neighborhood parks to service the new neighborhoods in the new developments; 3. Acquire new open space / greenway lands to add to the city network; and, 4. Build new urban and greenway trails to add to the citywide network. The plan description is organized by each park category: Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Urban Parks, Open Space / Greenbelt Parks, Urban Trails, and Greenway Trails. See accompanying map for locations.

2. The following recommendations are for 2015 based on a population projection of 19,579.

Community Parks

1. Strategy:

Currently there is one community park serving the City, Lincoln Avenue Park. According to the park standards (1 community park / 10,000 residents), there will be a need for another community park in 2015. As a result, a new community park is proposed at this time. The new community park has been located in the center of the new approved developments to the east. The exact location would be determined upon development negotiations.

2. New Community Parks:

Community Park – (CP #1):

- 40 acres of land
- Community Park (CP #1) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

Standard Facilities

- 4 Tennis courts
- 2 softball fields
- 3 baseball fields
- 2 picnic areas
- 4 basketball courts
- 2 racquetball courts
- 2 multi-purpose fields
- 1 community center
- 1 skateboard park
- 1 restroom / concession / press box
- 1 dog park
- 1 playground

Ancillary Facilities

- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation upgrades
- Site improvements

Neighborhood Parks

1. Strategy:

The 2015 plan will require four (4) new neighborhood parks according to the Mount Dora park standards. The new neighborhood parks will be located equal distance from each other to achieve a ½ mile service radius for each. They are located in the neighborhood areas expected by the approved development growth. They will be named NP #1, NP #2, NP #3, and NP #4.

2. New Neighborhood Parks:

Neighborhood Park (NP #1):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #1) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis court
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Neighborhood Park (NP #2):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #2) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis court
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Neighborhood Park (NP #3):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #3) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis court
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Neighborhood Park (NP #4):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #4) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis courts
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Urban Parks

Not applicable

Special Use Parks

Not applicable

Open Space/Greenbelt

1. Strategy:

This phase of the plan recommends the acquisition of a series of open space lands to connect Lincoln Avenue Park with the new community park to the east. There are a series of environmentally sensitive lands that are attached to the Wolf Branch riverine network. These properties should be targeted for acquisition in this phase. This network can also tie into the environmental lands that have been set aside for conservation in the newly approved developments adjacent to the Wolf Branch drainage. The Mount Dora park standards will require 200 acres of land to be acquired by this time.

2. Open Space / Greenbelt:

Wolf Branch Environmental Property:

1. Open Space

Facilities Improvements

- 200 acres
- See Greenway Trails for proposed improvements

Urban Trails

1. Strategy:

This phase of the plan recommends the construction of a on-street trail to provide access across the city from Lake Gertrude to the new development to the east. This trail would follow the alignment of Wolf Branch Road. This trail can also tie into the urban trails network that was developed in the first phase. The Mount Dora park standards will require 4 miles of trail to be built by this time.

2. Open Space / Greenbelt Trail:

Wolf Branch Road Bikeway:

1. Urban trail

Facilities Improvements

- 4 miles of trail
- Signage

Greenway Trail

1. Strategy:

This phase of the plan recommends the construction of a new trail to connect Lincoln Avenue Park with the new community park to the east and to connect to the rails-to-trails network to the south. This trail would follow the environmentally sensitive lands that are attached to the Wolf Branch riverine network. This trail can also tie into the environmental lands that have been set aside for conservation in the newly approved developments adjacent to the Wolf Branch drainage. The Mount Dora park standards will require 6 miles of trail to be built by this time.

2. Open Space / Greenbelt Trail:

Wolf Branch Greenway Trail:

1. Greenway trail

Facilities Improvements

- 6 miles of trail
- 1 restroom
- 2 parking facilities
- 4 trail head kiosks
- 12 picnic areas

E. Cost Estimate for 2015 Park Improvements

1. The park improvements identified for Phase II of the plan are a function of the population growth expected for this time period. It is recommended that these improvements be built over the next ten years. These improvements should be phased in concurrently with the development of the new residential projects. The cost of these improvements should be borne by the developers and the new residents. The details of this funding and phasing plan are in the implementation chapter of this document (Chapter 6).

2. **Cost Estimate for Phase II**

A. Community Parks

▪ CP #1	$4,600,000.00

B. Neighborhood Parks

▪ NP #1	$ 287,500.00
▪ NP #2	$ 287,500.00
▪ NP #3	$ 287,500.00
▪ NP #4	$ 287,500.00
Sub-total	$1,150,000.00

C. Urban Parks

▪ NA

D. Special Use Parks

▪ NA

E. Green Belt Parks

▪ Wolf Branch Open Space	$2,300,000.00

F. Urban Trails

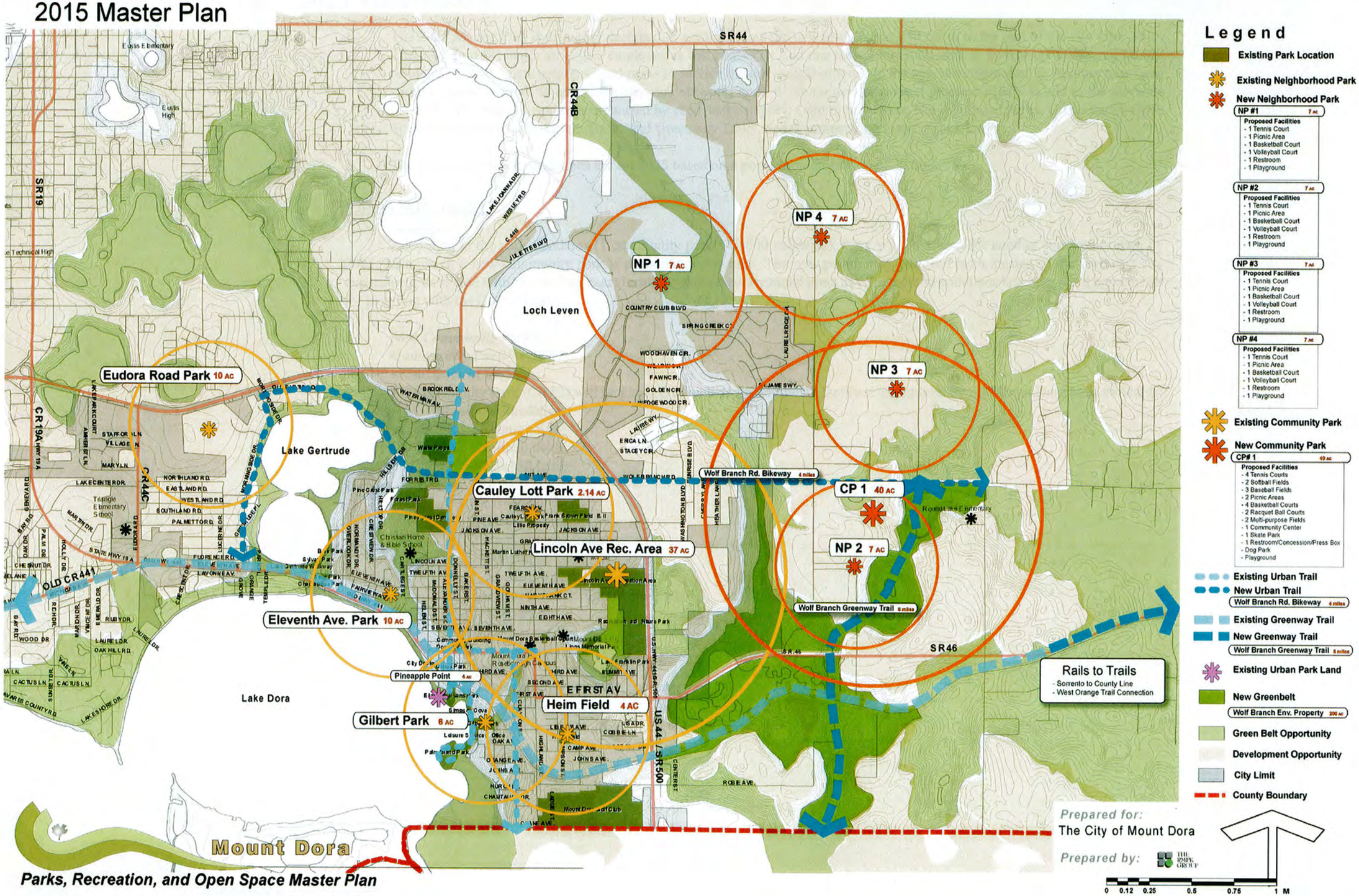
▪ Wolf Branch Bikeway	$ 287,500.00

G. Greenway Trails

▪ Wolf Branch Trail	$ 575,000.00

TOTAL PHASE II – 2015 NEEDS	**$ 8,912,500.00**

2015 Master Plan



F. 2025 Master Plan

1. The 2025 Master Plan is primarily designed to accommodate the new growth that will occur to the east of the city after 2015. There are four (4) major strategies employed in this phase: 1. Add one new community park to service the additional 12,000 residents; 2. Add 5 new neighborhood parks to service the new neighborhoods in the new developments; 3. Acquire new open space / greenway lands to add to the citywide network; and, 4. Build new urban and greenway trails to add to the citywide network. The plan description is organized by each park category: Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Urban Parks, Open Space / Greenbelt Parks, Urban Trails, and Greenway Trails. See accompanying map for locations.

2. The following recommendations are for 2025 based on a population projection of 32,000.

Community Parks

1. Strategy:

According to the park standards (1 community park / 10,000 residents), there will be a need for another community park by 2025. As a result, a new community park is proposed at this time. The new community park has been located in the northeast city expansion area shared with Eustis. The exact location would be determined upon development negotiations and inter-local agreements for planning with the City of Eustis.

3. New Community Parks:

Community Park – (CP #2):

- 40 acres of land
- Community Park (CP #2) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

Standard Facilities

- 4 Tennis courts
- 2 softball fields
- 3 baseball fields
- 2 picnic areas
- 4 basketball courts
- 2 racquetball courts
- 2 multi-purpose fields
- 1 community center
- 1 skateboard park
- 1 restroom / concession / press box
- 1 dog park
- 1 playground

Ancillary Facilities

- Parking
- Landscape and irrigation upgrades
- Site improvements

Neighborhood Parks

1. Strategy:

The 2025 plan will require five (5) new neighborhood parks according to the Mount Dora park standards and an additional 100,000 residents. The 5 new neighborhood parks will be located equal distance from each other to achieve a ½ mile service radius for each. They are located in the neighborhood areas expected to be created by the development pressures to the northeast. They will be named NP #5, NP #6, NP #7, NP #8, and NP #9.

2. New Neighborhood Parks:

Neighborhood Park (NP #5):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #5) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis courts
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Neighborhood Park (NP #6):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #6) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis courts
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Neighborhood Park (NP #7):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #7) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis courts
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Neighborhood Park (NP #8):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #8) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis courts
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Neighborhood Park (NP #9):

- 7 acres of land
- Neighborhood Park (NP #9) will be planned to include the following facilities as required by the Mount Dora park standards:

  Standard Facilities
  - 1 tennis courts
  - 1 picnic area
  - 1 basketball court
  - 1 volleyball court
  - 1 restroom
  - 1 playground

  Ancillary Facilities
  - Parking
  - Landscape and irrigation
  - Site improvements

Urban Parks

Not applicable

Special Use Parks

Not applicable

Open Space/Greenbelt

1. Strategy:

This phase of the plan recommends the acquisition of a series of open space lands to connect the community park (CP #1) created in the 2015 phase with the new community park (CP #2) developed in this phase. There are a series of environmentally sensitive lands in the northeast portion of the growth area that can be connected to the Wolf Branch riverine network. These properties should be targeted for acquisition in this phase. This network of greenways should be tied to a greenway system for Eustis to the north. The Mount Dora park standards will require 300 additional acres of land to be acquired by this time.

2. Open Space / Greenbelt:

Northern Connection Environmental Property:

1. Open Space

Facilities Improvements

- 300 acres
- See Greenway Trails for proposed improvements

Urban Trails

1. Strategy:

This phase of the plan recommends the construction of an on-street trail to continue the cross-city trail to the east. This trail would follow the alignment of Wolf Branch Road. The Mount Dora park standards will require 6 additional miles of trail to be built by this time.

2. Open Space / Greenbelt Trail:

Wolf Branch Road Bikeway:

1. Urban trail

Facilities Improvements

- 6 miles of trail
- Signage

Greenway Trail

1. Strategy:

This phase of the plan recommends the construction of a new trail to connect the two eastern community parks to Eustis to the north and Loch Leven to the west. This trail would follow the environmentally sensitive lands that would be acquired at this time. The Mount Dora park standards will require 6 additional miles of trail to be built by this time.

2. Open Space / Greenbelt Trail:

Wolf Branch Greenway Trail:

1. Eustis and Loch Leven Connector

Facilities Improvements

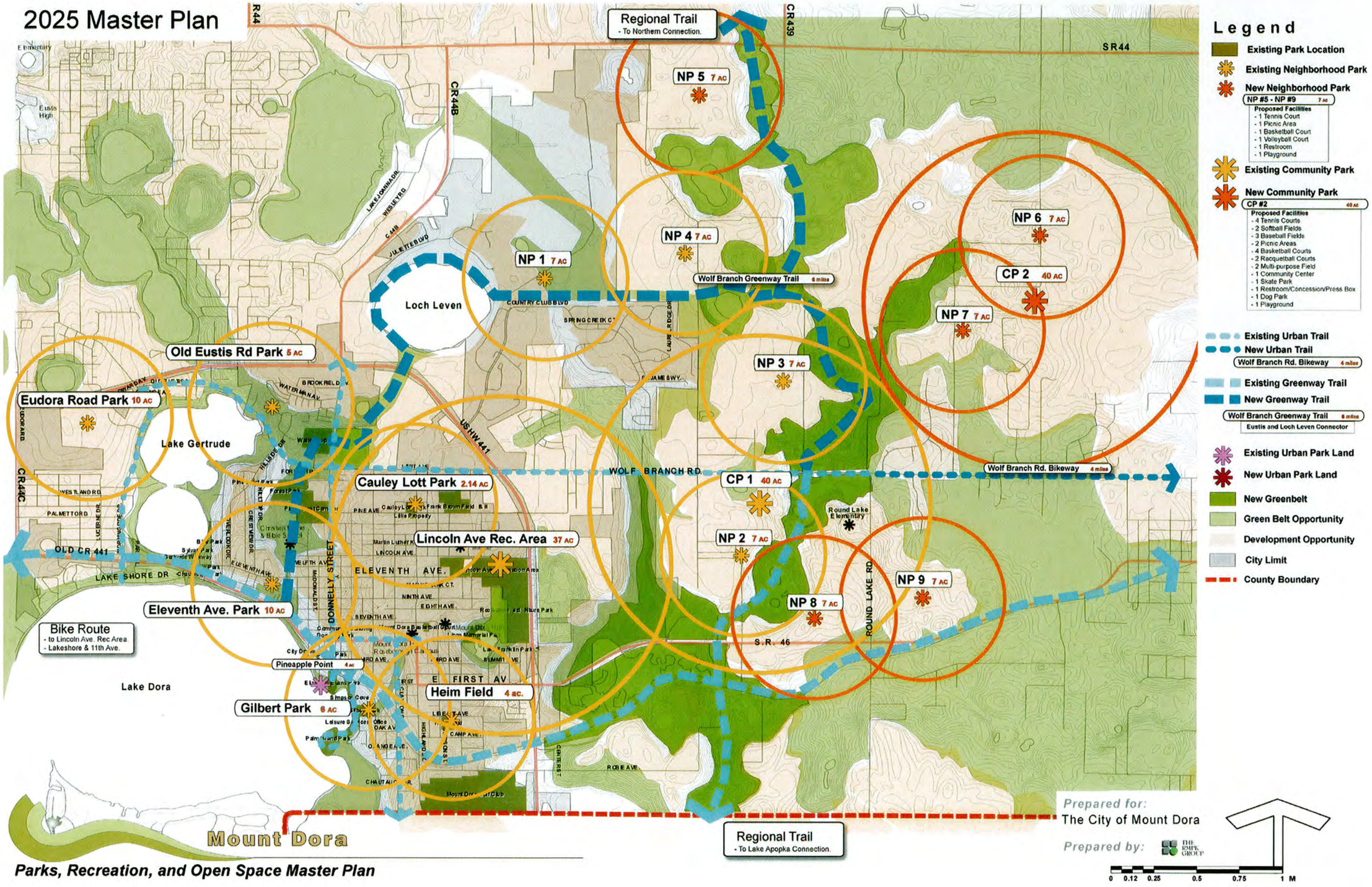
- 6 miles of trail
- 1 restroom
- 2 parking facilities
- 4 trail head kiosks
- 12 picnic areas

G. Cost Estimate for 2025 Park Improvements

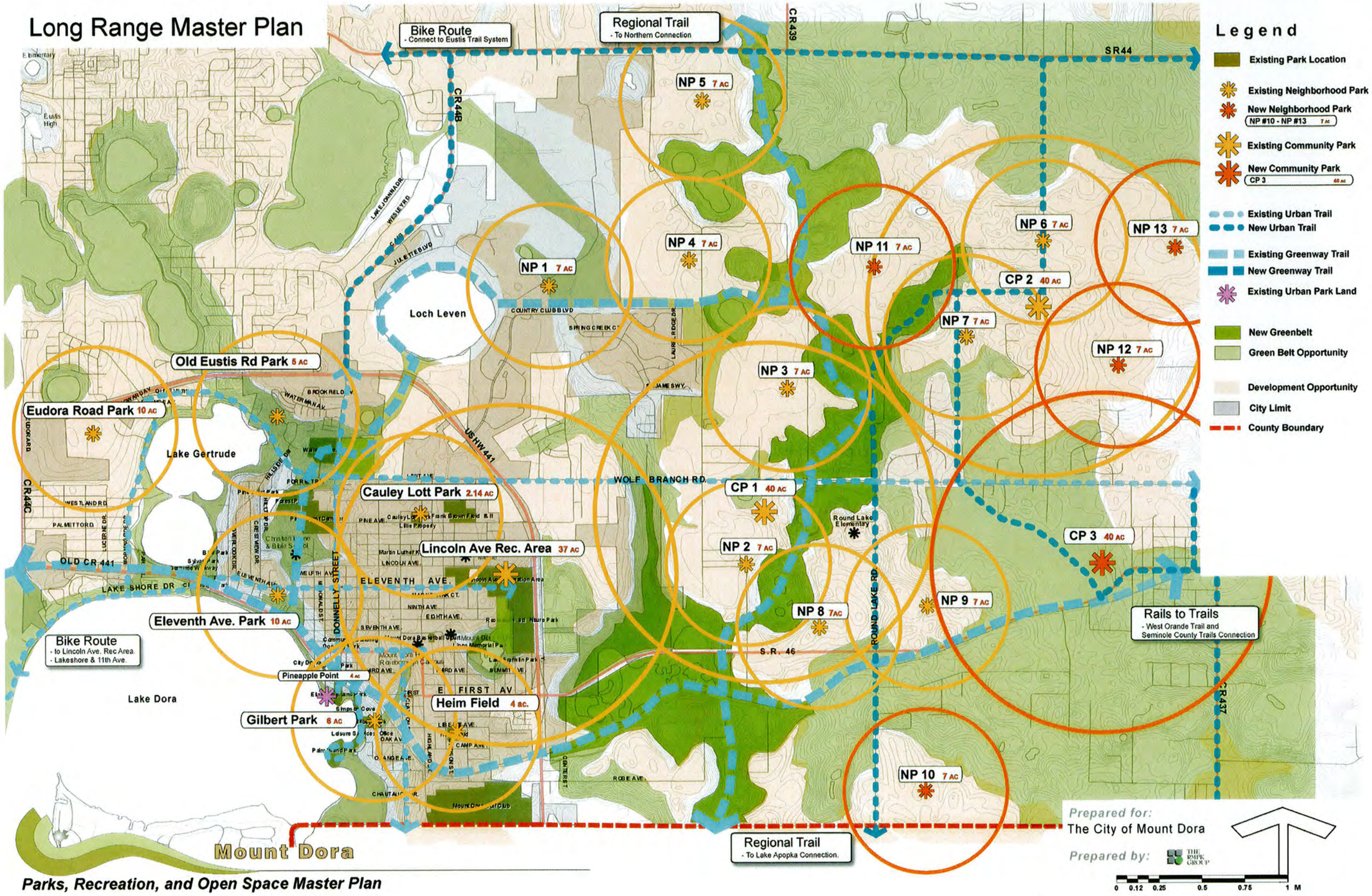
1. The park improvements identified for the Phase III of the plan are a function of the population growth expected for this time period. It is recommended that these improvements be built over the next ten years. These improvements should be phased in concurrently with the development of the new residential projects. The cost of these improvements should be borne by the developers and the new residents. The details of this funding and phasing plan are in the implementation chapter of this document (Chapter 6).

2. **Cost Estimate for Phase III**

A.	**Community Parks**	
	▪ CP #2	$5,290,000.00
B.	**Neighborhood Parks**	
	▪ NP #5	$ 330,625.00
	▪ NP #6	$ 330,625.00
	▪ NP #7	$ 330,625.00
	▪ NP #8	$ 330,625.00
	▪ NP #9	$ 330,625.00
	Sub-total	$1,332,500.00
C.	**Urban Parks**	
	▪ NA	
D.	**Special Use Parks**	
	▪ NA	
E.	**Green Belt Parks**	
	▪ North Connector Open Space	$3,967,500.00
F.	**Urban Trails**	
	▪ Wolf Branch Bikeway	$ 396,750.00
G.	**Greenway Trails**	
	▪ Eustis / Loch Leven Trail	$ 925,750.00
TOTAL PHASE III – 2025 NEEDS		**$12,233,125.00**



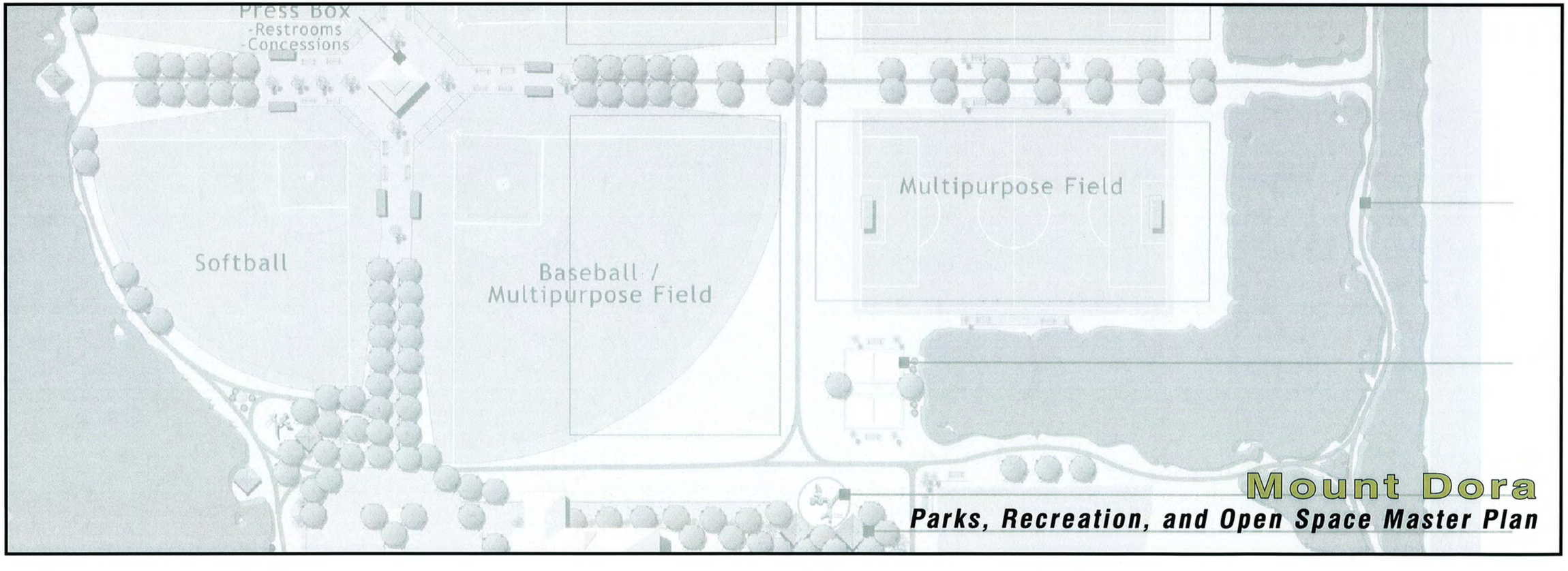
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan


Long Range Master Plan
Bike Route
- Connect to Eustis Trail System
Regional Trail
- To Northern Connection
CR 439
SR44
CR 44B
NP 5 7 AC
NP 4 7 AC
NP 1 7 AC
NP 11 7 AC
NP 6 7 AC
NP 13 7 AC
CP 2 40 AC
NP 7 7 AC
NP 12 7 AC
NP 3 7 AC
Loch Leven
COUNTRY CLUB BLVD
Old Eustis Rd Park 5 AC
Eudora Road Park 10 AC
Lake Gertrude
CR 44C
WOLF BRANCH RD.
CP 1 40 AC
Cauley Lott Park 2.14 AC
Lincoln Ave Rec. Area 37 AC
NP 2 7 AC
CP 3 40 AC
OLD CR 441
LAKE SHORE DR
ELEVENTH AVE.
DONNELLY STREET
NP 8 7AC
NP 9 7 AC
Eleventh Ave. Park 10 AC
Bike Route
- to Lincoln Ave. Rec Area.
- Lakeshore & 11th Ave.
Rails to Trails
- West Orande Trail and
Seminole County Trails Connection
S.R. 46
ROUND LAKE RD
Pineapple Point 4 AC
Lake Dora
E. FIRST AV
Heim Field 4 ac.
Gilbert Park 6 AC
NP 10 7 AC
CR 437
Regional Trail
- To Lake Apopka Connection.
Mount Dora
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan
Prepared for:
The City of Mount Dora
Prepared by:
0 0.12 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 M
Legend
Existing Park Location
Existing Neighborhood Park
New Neighborhood Park
NP #10 - NP #13 7 AC
Existing Community Park
New Community Park
CP 3 40 AC
Existing Urban Trail
New Urban Trail
Existing Greenway Trail
New Greenway Trail
Existing Urban Park Land
New Greenbelt
Green Belt Opportunity
Development Opportunity
City Limit
County Boundary

Volume 2

Chapter: VI

The Implementation Plan



Mount Dora

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

VI. The Implementation Plan

A. Overview

The implementation plan is the most important aspect of the master planning process. This phase of the plan proposes a set of strategies for the City of Mount Dora to put in place in order to realize the various elements of the plan. The implementation plan is divided into three sections: 1. Park Land and Facilities Development, 2. Land Use Policy, and 3. Management and Administration. The Park Land and Facilities Development section is essentially a capital improvements plan. As such, it includes the projected costs of the needed improvements as well as a funding strategy to pay for the desired improvements. The second section, Land Use Policy, proposes a series of changes and adjustments to the City's current land use plans and regulations. These proposed changes will help the City of Mount Dora plan for and fund the new park facilities that will be needed as the City grows. The third section of the implementation plan proposes adjustments to the departmental structuring, operations organization, and the financial planning of the City's parks and leisure services delivery system.

B. Park Land and Facilities Development Plan

1. Capital Improvements Plan

a. The following is a summary of the capital improvements and related costs for the park development needs called for in the park system master plan. The first section is a summary for the current needs (2005), the second section is for the next ten year phase (2015), and the last is for the second ten year phase (2025).

b. A cost escalator has been used to anticipate the inflation that will occur in the coming years.

2. Capital Needs for Phase I - 2005

a.	**Community Parks**	
	▪ Lincoln Park	$2,250,000.00
b.	**Neighborhood Parks**	
	▪ Eudora Park	$ 400,000.00
	▪ Eleventh Ave. Park	$ 250,000.00
	▪ Heim Park	$ 200,000.00
	▪ Cauley Lott Park	$ 200,000.00
	Sub-total	$1,050,000.00
c.	**Urban Parks**	
	▪ Gilbert Park	$ 450,000.00
	▪ Palm Island Park	$ 650,000.00
	▪ Simpson /Grantham	$ 400,000.00
	▪ Donnelly Park	$ 50,000.00
	Sub-total	$1,550,000.00
d.	**Special Use Parks**	
	▪ Spring Dog Park	$ 150,000.00
	▪ Frank Brown Fields	$2,000,000.00
	▪ Roseborough Center	$ 500,000.00
	▪ Mamie Gilbert Com Center	$ 500,000.00
	▪ City Docks	$ 75,000.00
	▪ Renovated MLK Center	$ 150,000.00
	Sub-total	$3,375,000.00
e.	**Green Belt Parks**	
	▪ Spring Park	$ 200,000.00
	▪ Waite Park	$ 400,000.00
	Sub-total	$ 600,000.00
f.	**Urban Trails**	
	▪ Phase I Trail	$ 50,000.00
g.	**Greenway Trails**	
	▪ Phase I Trail	$ 250,000.00
	TOTAL PHASE I – 2005 NEEDS	**$ 9,225,000.00**

3. Cost Estimate for Phase II - 2015

a. Community Parks

▪ CP #1	$4,600,000.00

b. Neighborhood Parks

▪ NP #1	$ 287,500.00
▪ NP #2	$ 287,500.00
▪ NP #3	$ 287,500.00
▪ NP #4	$ 287,500.00
Sub-total	$1,150,000.00

c. Urban Parks

▪ Pineapple Park	$5,000,000.00

d. Special Use Parks

▪ N/A

e. Green Belt Parks

▪ Wolfe Branch Open Space	$2,300,000.00

f. Urban Trails

▪ Wolfe Branch Bikeway	$ 287,500.00

g. Greenway Trails

▪ Wolfee Branch Trail	$ 576,000.00

TOTAL PHASE II – 2015 NEEDS $ 13,912,500.00

These figures represent a 15% increase from 2005 to allow for inflation.

4. Cost Estimate for Phase III - 2025

a. Community Parks

▪ CP #2	$5,290,000.00

b. Neighborhood Parks

▪ NP #5	$ 330,625.00
▪ NP #6	$ 330,625.00
▪ NP #7	$ 330,625.00
▪ NP #8	$ 330,625.00
▪ NP #9	$ 330,625.00
Sub-total	$1,322,500.00

c. Urban Parks

▪ NA

d. Special Use Parks

▪ NA

e. Green Belt Parks

▪ North Connector Open Space	$3,967,500.00

f. Urban Trails

▪ Wolfe Branch Bikeway	$ 396,750.00

g. Greenway Trails

▪ Eustis / Loch Leven Trail	$ 925,750.00

TOTAL PHASE III – 2025 NEEDS $12,233,125.00

These figures represent a 15% increase from 2015 to allow for inflation.

5. Funding and Phasing Strategy

a. Current Needs (2005) - $9,225,000.00

(1) Overview:
Currently, the City of Mount has a large deficit of park facilities based upon the new park standards. Clearly, the City will not be able to overcome this deficit overnight. It will take a well-planned phasing strategy to get the City "caught up" with its current needs. It is expected that it will probably take the City 10 years to finance, design, and build the projected improvements; therefore, these improvements will be under construction at the same time that the new park needs (2015) will be under construction. The following is a three-tiered approach to financing the immediate needs (2005).

(2) Community, Neighborhood, and Special Use Parks - $6,675,000.00
These parks are the backbone parks of the system and form the largest portion of the deficit. The funding strategy for these facilities is to utilize sales tax for 3,337,500.00. These monies should be matched with FRDAP and Land and Water Grants ($3,337,500.00 or approximately $400,000.00 per year for 8 years) to fund the total needed for these important facilities.

(3) Downtown and Waterfront Parks - $1,550,000.00
The Downtown and Waterfront Parks are located in and adjacent to the Downtown Community Redevelopment District of Mount Dora. Tax increment financing should be used for the improvements to leverage the development of these parks. The total funding required for the phase 1 waterfront park improvements is $1,550,000. The CRA can bond its tax increment projections to pay for these improvements as well as make monies available to purchase the Pineapple Point lands and the Marina. These tax increment monies can be matched with grants to achieve the necessary funds for the project.

(4) Greenbelt Parks - $600,000.00
There are two sites identified for acquisition for greenbelt lands, Spring Park and the Waite site. These two sites should be acquired by matching grant funding through the Florida Forever or Florida Communities Trust. These monies are available for acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.

(4) Urban and Greenway Trails - $300,000.00
There are two trails identified for construction in the near term (2005). The greenway trail is the proposed Rails-to-Ttrails through the downtown. This trail should be funded through the Rails-to-Trails grants program as well as the Department of Environmental Protection Recreation Trails grants program. Trails are a high priority for State funding currently.

b. Future Needs – 2015 - $8,912,500.00

(1) It is a proposal of this plan that the park needs for future residents be paid for by the new residents. The phasing and funding plan for the future needs is predicated upon this premise. The City will need to adopt changes in its land development regulations in order to have the tools available to implement these recommendations. (see Land Use Policy in this chapter).

(2) Community and Neighborhood Parks - $5,750,000.00

Future development will increase the need for more neighborhood and community parks. The land for these future parks will be negotiated as the need arises. The lands that have been designated as future park sites will be purchased with monies generated from the development agreements for future development projects. Developers will be required to contribute $200.00/unit for the future acquisition of parkland. These fees would be due upon approval of each site plan and put into a land acquisition fund to be used for neighborhood and community parkland acquisition only. The parks themselves will be constructed with park impact fees. The new proposed impact fee is $ 1,500.00 per unit. This fee will be assessed at the time a building permit is pulled. These funds will go into a pool to be only used for the construction of community and neighborhood parks.

(2) Open Space and Greenbelts - $2,000,000.00

During the 2005 to 2015 time period, environmental open space and greenways can be acquired by using a combination of three funding mechanisms. The majority of these lands can be acquired by requiring developers to deed over environmental lands to the City during the development agreement process. An environmental lands inventory should be prepared by the City to designate environmentally critical lands in the Mount Dora region. In addition, land development regulations should be developed to set buffer area dimensions for developments adjacent to the environmental lands. It is also recommended that a system of transfer development rights be developed to facilitate the acquisition of these environmental lands without being a "taking" of private property. The environmental maps and land development regulations can be utilized by the planning department to determine the conditions of development approval for each project.

Another strategy for environmental lands acquisition should be grants. Most grants require some percentage of matching funds from the City. Grant stacking can provide a method of leveraging grant monies to acquire other grants, thus increasing the amount of funds available for the purchase of open space and greenbelts. The monies created by the environmental assessment and the developer-contributed lands can be used to leverage the grant monies. These environmental lands should be acquired by matching grant funding through the Florida Forever or Florida Communities Trust.

(3) Greenways Trails - $750,000.00

The greenways trails projected to be constructed at this time period will be funded by the same three sources that were identified for the open space and greenways lands. Developers should be required to construct collector trails. These collector trails will tie into the citywide trail system. The Greenways assessment monies will be matched with Department of Environmental Protection Recreation Trails grant monies to pay for the main trail construction.

6. Capital Improvements Summary

2005 PROJECTS	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Community Parks												
1. Lincoln Park Renovation			$2,250,000.00									
Neighborhood Parks												
1. Eudora Park					$400,000.00							
2. Eleventh Ave. Park				$250,000.00								
3. Heim Park			$200,000.00									
4. Cauley Lott Park		$200,000.00										
Urban Parks												
1. Gilbert Park		$450,000.00										
2. Palm Island Park					$650,000.00							
3. Simpson / Grantham Park		$400,000.00										
4. Donnelly Park		$50,000.00										
Special Use Parks												
1. Spring Park Dog Park		$150,000.00										
2. Frank Brown Fields				$2,000,000.00								
3. Roseborough Center				$150,000.00								
4. MLK Renovations						$150,000.00						
5. City Docks		$75,000.00										
6. Mamie Gilbert Community Center				$500,000.00								
Greenbelt Parks												
1. Spring Park	$200,000.00											
2. Waite Park	$400,000.00											
Urban Trails												
1. Bikeway striping	$50,000.00											
Greenway Trails												
1. Rails to Trails			$250,000.00									
2015 PROJECTS												
Community Parks												
1. CP #1									$4,600,000.00			
Neighborhood Parks												
1. NP #1							$287,500.00					
2. NP #2								$287,500.00				
3. NP #3										$287,500.00		
4. NP #4											$287,500.00	
Urban Parks												
1. Pineapple Park							$2,500,000.00	$2,500,000.00				
Special Use Parks												
Greenbelt Parks												
1. Wolfe Branch Open Space			$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00	$230,000.00
Urban Trails												
1. Wolfe Branch Bikeway					$287,000.00							
Greenway Trails												
1. Wolfe Branch Trail										$192,000.00	$192,000.00	$192,000.00
TOTALS	**$650,000.00**	**$1,325,000.00**	**$2,705,000.00**	**$3,130,000.00**	**$1,567,000.00**	**$,380,000.00**	**$3,017,500.00**	**$3,017,500.00**	**$4,830,000.00**	**$709,500.00**	**$709,500.00**	**$422,000.00**

7. Funding Sources

A significant challenge for the City of Mount Dora in meeting public recreation demands is funding. Significant financial investment is necessary for physical development, land acquisition, maintenance and programming. Implementing the recommendations of the Master Plan hinges on the ability to secure funding from multiple sources and responding with effective management of parks and recreation facilities and programs.

The major impediment to the implementation of the plan is the lack of adequate dedicated funding sources for both capital and land acquisitions, and for ongoing park management. Currently, significant funding deficiencies exist. The following funding sources are a comprehensive listing of funding options that the City should consider.

(a) Grants

The following table identifies a number of grant sources that are available for land acquisition, park improvements, recreation facilities, greenways and trails, and conservation land.

AGENCY	DUE	TYPE	AMOUNT	REQUIRED MATCH	CONTACT	NUMBER
Florida Forever - Florida Communities Trust	August	Land Acquisition	1.5% of Florida Forever	0% - 60%	DCA	850-922-2207
Florida Recreation Development and Assistance Program (FRDAP)	October	Land Acquisition,, Development, Renovation	$200,000 max.	0% - 100%	Division of Design and Recreation Services	850-488-7896
Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program	October	Land Acquisition	Varies	No minimum, but required	DEP, Office of Greenways and Trails	850-488-3701
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	July	Land Acquisition, Development, Renovation	$150,000	100%	Florida D.E.P.	850-488-7896
Recreation and Trails Program (RTP)	January	Development or Maintenance of Trails	$100,000	20% - 60%	DEP	850-488-3701
Community Development Block Grants	January	Acquisition, Development, Renovation	Varies	No, but encouraged	Federal Through Lake County Community Services	352-343-1864

(b) Debt Financing

This method essentially requires a community to sell bonds or otherwise borrow money to be repaid from an annual automatic lien on the general fund. Or a community can pay for its infrastructure in the same way a person borrows money to purchase a home. In both instances, the capital need is immediate and high, the equity appreciation reasonably assured, and the monthly or annual principal and interest payments generally fixed. Like all forms of infrastructure financing, there are some disadvantages and risks. One major risk is voter aversion to approving bond issues, which means an increase in their property taxes.

(c) Reserves

Reserves are those surplus funds in a local government coffer that are either intentionally built up for a "rainy day" or accrue because the budget requirements were less than the revenues collected. By having sufficient reserves, a municipality does not have to try to sell bonds or borrow capital improvement funds. Reserves are difficult to project.

(d) Advance Acquisition of Park and Open Space Land

In this approach, a municipality maps out its future parks, recreation and open space through the comprehensive planning process. It then negotiates with landowners to purchase the property at a fair price, ideally before the land boom prices begin to rise. This approach can work to the advantage of developers and new residents by assuring that the parks and greenways will be there to increase property values and make new subdivisions more attractive to homebuyers. The cost of the property can be repaid back to the city by the developers of the property.

(e) Lease-Purchase Contracts

These contracts allow a community to begin use of a tract of land without acquiring all of the money to needed to purchase the property. Sometimes, the lease fee is higher than the interest on bonds; however, it does provide a means to convince citizens that unless the community comes up with the money to purchase the land, the recreation opportunities enjoyed on the land will be foregone.

(f) Sale of Park Land

The sale of underutilized land should be considered. Reduction of acreage would have a direct impact on the cost for maintenance.

(g) Real Estate Transfer Fees

As cities expand, the need for infrastructure improvements grows. Since parks add value to neighborhoods and communities, some cities have turned to real estate transfer fees to fund parks and recreation needs. Usually transfer fees amount to ¼% to ½% on the total sale of the property.

(h) Naming Rights

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

(i) Cell Towers

Cell towers in remote park areas or attached to existing light poles on athletic fields is another source of income.

(j) Partnerships

Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two governmental entities, a non-profit and the City, or a private entity and the City. The partners develop park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities and asset management based on the strengths and weakness of each partner.

(k) Special Taxing Districts

Taxing districts are established to provide funds for certain types of improvements that benefit a specific group of affected properties. Improvements may include landscaping, park furnishing, public art, supplemental services for improvements and promotions and cultural enhancements.

C. Land Use Planning Recommendations

1. Future Land Use Planning

a. Strategic Land Use Plan

- A strategic land use plan should be created for all of the lands surrounding Mount Dora that are in the designated planning region for the City. Such a strategic plan will allow the City to plan the expected new growth outside the City in a fashion that is to the best advantage of the current and future citizens of the city.
- The strategic plan should address land use, transportation, water, sewer, and important parks and recreation needs.
- The strategic planning process will be used to determine the locations of future parks land. The designated lands should then be incorporated into the comprehensive plan for the City.

b. Environmentally Significant Lands Plan

- An environmental lands plan should be prepared. An inventory of connected eco-systems and endangered habitats should be prepared. The plan should identify the acquisition and protection of environmentally sensitive land and natural areas.
- This environmental lands map and the associated protection criteria should be incorporated into the comprehensive plan.

c. Comprehensive Plan

- The Comprehensive Plan should be up-dated to include the new standards for park development that have been established in this parks plan. Since the City may not want to commit itself to too large of a financial commitment, the standards should be modified to a level of service that is financially achievable. Then, this parks master plan will be utilized as a guideline to towards which to work.
- The Comprehensive Plan should be up-dated to incorporate the environmentally sensitive lands and greenways that are proposed in this plan and as modified by the environmental lands assessment.
- The comprehensive plan should be up-dated to include policies for the financing of the desired parks and open space needs.

d. Land Development Regulations

- ***Environmental Lands Protection:***
  The Land Development Regulations should be revised to require new developments to provide 100' buffer areas adjacent to designated environmental lands. The LDRs should provide for transfer of development rights to move development rights out of environmental lands and onto developable land. This would allow for the preservation of these important lands.
- ***Park Land Acquisition Fee:***
  The Land Development Regulations should be revised to require each approved development to pay a fee of $200.00 per unit in the project. These monies can be set aside to be used to acquire park land from developers at the locations designated in this plan.
- ***Park Construction Impact Fee:***
  The current impact fees will need to be revised to include the new cost of park construction as a result of the new park standards. The new impact fee should be $1,500.00 per dwelling unit.

e. Agency and Jurisdictional Coordination

- The City needs to coordinate with Lake County for the planning, design, construction, and funding of a regional sports complex.
- The City needs to coordinate with Lake County the strategic planning of the unincorporated areas adjacent the City.
- The City needs to coordinate with the City of Eustis about the planning of the unincorporated lands to the north and northeast. Coordination concerning the future parks in these areas and their overlapping service areas will be very important.
- The City needs to coordinate with Eustis, Tavares, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and Lake, Seminole, and Orange Counties concerning the regional trails systems in the area.
- The City needs to coordinate with Seminole County concerning the Wekiva watershed preservation issues and land protection priorities.
- The City needs to coordinate with Orange County concerning the new development to the south of the city. The City needs to make sure that the County develops a park in the northern part of this development so that Mount Dora's parks are not over used by non-residents.
- The City needs to coordinate with the Environmental Protection Agency for the protection of wetlands and air quality.
- The City needs to coordinate with the State of Florida for the designation of new development protection of wetlands, HRS requirements, and identification of historical resources.
- The city needs to work with St. John's Water Management District to incorporate the recommendations of this plan into its review of developments that affect their jurisdiction.

D. Management and Administration Recommendations

(a) Administration

At the current time, recreation services and park maintenance are in two different departments. At times, this can create challenges to the delivery of effective services. Traditional departmental organization dictates that these services are usually combined and managed by one director. It is apparent from the public comments and the survey that the residents of Mount Dora believe that a strong parks and recreation system is a priority and contributes to the quality of life. It stems to reason that the City of Mount Dora would want to give the delivery of these services a high priority. Having one department with one director dedicated solely to the department would create more effective and efficient services, and give the parks and recreation system the attention that the residents expect. It is recommended that the parks and recreation divisions be combined into one department and a new position be created for the Parks and Recreation Director.

The Director of Parks and Recreation, as well as the Parks and Recreation Board, need to serve in an official capacity during the review process of planning and development of proposed parks as well as the acquisition of park land and open space, to assure that the appropriate park and recreation elements are included in the development.

The results of the survey and the public workshops indicate an increased expectation for more recreation programs. Additional programs are needed for adults and seniors. There is a need for a number of athletic programs. A Community Center and a Skate Park are being recommended. The Recreation Division in Leisure Services has a small staff of 4 full time personnel and 22 part time personnel; therefore, the opportunities for increased programming by the existing staff is unrealistic.

(b) Maintenance

Currently, the maintenance of parks and public is done by a staff of 10 employees. These employees also maintain the 60-acre cemetery and other public spaces. Additionally, they respond to various work orders on a case-by-case basis. There is only enough manpower to operate on a "mow-and-blow" basis.

The public comments and survey indicated that the residents of Mount Dora have an expectation for a higher level of maintenance than is being done currently. The survey indicated that the most important function that could be performed by the City of Mount Dora was to "operate parks that are clean/well maintained."

The City of Mount Dora simply does not have enough staff to perform at a higher level of maintenance based on current staffing levels relative to the amount of parks and public areas. Additionally, numerous athletic fields, picnic areas, restrooms and site improvements are being recommended which will require additional manpower needs.

A survey of other municipalities indicated that the average maintenance person per acre is .12. Mount Dora is at a .05 level. The existing maintenance staff of ten maintains 124 acres, including the cemetery, but not including the Matsche-Kurras or Waite properties. Using this as a standard, the existing maintenance staff should be augmented with 5 additional personnel as soon as possible.

(c) Staffing Requirements

The following are recommended staffing levels for each facility to be built:

(1) Community Center
1 Center Supervisor
4 Recreation Programmers
2 Clerical/Receptionists

(2) Skate Park
2 Full Time Skate Park Workers
3 Part Time Skate Park Workers

(3) Water Play Area
1 Head Life Guard
8 Part Time Life Guards

(4) Citywide
1 Department Director
3 Recreation Programmers
1 Custodian

The following indicates the required additional positions over the next ten years. The salaries will need to be adjusted based on Mount Dora's cost of living adjustments and inflation.

2005

Park Improvements:
Cauley Lott, Gilbert, Simpson, Grantham, Donnelly, Spring Park Dog Park, City Docks

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Director of Recreation	20.64	40	47,340	46,340
5	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	84,970
				TOTAL	**326,830**

2006

Park Improvements:
Lincoln Avenue Renovation, Heim Park Improvements, Rails to Trails, Wolfe Branch Open Space

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
2	Skate Park Worker	7.75	40	16,120	32,240
3	Skate Park Worker	7.75	20	8,060	24,180
2	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	33,988
1	Turf Specialist	10.18	40	21,174	21,174
				TOTAL	**211,342**

2007

Park Improvements:
11th Avenue Park, Frank Brown Fields, Roseborough Center, Wolfe Branch Open Space

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Center Supervisor	16.00	40	33,280	33,280
3	Recreation Programmer	13.64	40	28,371	85,113
1	Custodian	8.87	40	18,450	18,450
1	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	16,994
2	Maintenance Worker	10.18	40	21,174	42,348
				TOTAL	**196,185**

2008

Park Improvements:
Eudora Park, Palm Island Park, Wolfe Branch Open Space

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	16,994
				TOTAL	**16,994**

2009

Park Improvements:
Replacement of Martin Luther King Center, Wolfe Branch Open Space

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	16,994
				TOTAL	**16,994**

2010

Park Improvements:
Neighborhood Park #1, Pineapple Park, Wolfe Branch Open Space

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Maintenance Supervisor	16.00	40	33,280	33,280
1	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	16,994
1	Environmentalist	13.64	40	28,371	28,371
				TOTAL	**268,715**

2011

Park Improvements:
Neighborhood Park #2, Pineapple Park, Wolfe Branch Open Space

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	16,994
				TOTAL	**16,994**

2012

Park Improvements:
Community Park #1, Wolfe Branch Open Space

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Center Supervisor	16.00	40	33,280	33,280
4	Recreation Programmer	13.64	40	28,371	113,484
2	Clerical/Receptionist	10.41	40	21,653	43,306
2	Skate Park Worker	7.75	40	16,120	32,240
3	Skate Park Worker	7.75	20	8,060	24,180
1	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	16,994
1	Maintenance Worker	10.18	40	21,174	21,174
				TOTAL	**284,658**

2013

Park Improvements:
Neighborhood Park #3, Wolfe Branch Open Space, Wolfe Branch Trail

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
2	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	33,988
				TOTAL	**33,988**

2014

Park Improvements:
Neighborhood Park #4, Wolfe Branch Open Space, Wolfe Branch Trail

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
2	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	33,988
			TOTAL		**33,988**

2015

Park Improvements:
Wolee Branch Open Space, Wolfe Branch Trail

#	POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
1	Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994	16,994
				TOTAL	**16,994**

The following chart shows how the salaries and hours were determined.

POSITION	HOURLY SALARY	HOURS PER WEEK	ANNUAL PER POSITION
Director of Recreation	20.64	40	47,340
Head Lifeguard	16.00	40	33,280
Lifeguard	7.75	20	8,060
Center Supervisor	16.00	40	33,280
Recreation Programmer	13.64	40	28,371
Clerical/Receptionist	10.41	40	21,653
Skate Park Worker	7.75	40	16,120
Skate Park Worker	7.75	20	8,060
Custodian	8.87	40	18,450
Maintenance Supervisor	16.00	40	33,280
Grounds Maintenance Worker	8.17	40	16,994
Maintenance Worker	10.18	40	21,174
Turf Specialist	10.18	40	21,174
Environmentalist	13.64	40	28,371

Salaries do not include benefits, equipment, etc.

(d) Budget

	2005	2015
Existing Maintenance Personnel	247,000	247,000
Existing Recreation Personnel	298,000	298,000
New Personnel	425,000	1,038,000
Operating Budget	317,000	990,000
TOTAL	1,287,408	2,573,000

These 2015 figures do not reflect any cost of living raises based on inflation. The salary figures for new personnel were increased by 30% to reflect the cost of benefits, etc. and have been rounded.

The operating budget was increased yearly by 5% if there were no new facilities being added to the system and by 10% for each facility added. Facilities include centers, aquatic areas, trails, etc.

(e) Cost-Cutting Maintenance Programs

The following actions will, over time, cut overall costs for maintenance to the Mount Dora Parks and Recreation system.

Maintenance Guidelines

Maintenance Guidelines should be developed in order to monitor the cost and efficiency of maintenance of park structures and park areas. Creating activity-based costing models for each area will assist in determining efficiencies in the department, eliminating duplication of processes and identifying areas for contracting services.

Contracting of Maintenance

Because of the high cost of employee benefits, it is often more cost-effective to contract the routine maintenance. Certainly some staff is needed for emergencies or for areas that require a higher level of maintenance. It is likely that the parks will receive a higher level of maintenance because the contracted staff will not be utilized for other jobs. They will maintain a strict schedule. Additionally, the cost of purchasing and maintaining equipment becomes the responsibility of the contractor.

Computerized Irrigation Systems

Mount Dora has a number of parks that have irrigation systems. There are also a number of parks without irrigation systems. Certainly, it can be said that green space is more aesthetically pleasing when irrigated on a regular basis. The landscaping remains healthy and the park is more appealing; however, irrigation systems can be a maintenance-intensive problem, especially with older systems.

Standardizing and computerizing the irrigation systems in Mount Dora will result in a reduction in water costs, immediate identification of breaks and leaks, electrical problems, broken irrigation heads and more. Additionally, many systems can adjust water usage based on plant stress, moisture depletion at the root zone, site microclimate, soil type, slope, root zone depth, plant type and precipitation rate. There is an initial capital cost. Amortization depends of the type of system and the cost savings.

Computerized Maintenance Tracking

Computerized tracking of man-hours, equipment costs and material costs can indicate if one area is costing more than other areas so that the situation creating that higher cost can be identified and rectified.

(f) Programs

According to the telephone survey, only 19% of Mount Dorians have participated in some type of program offered by Recreation in the past year. Comments made during the public workshops indicated that residents would like to see more programs for adults, more sports programs offered for adults and children and specific programming for seniors.

Specific programs that are needed include:

- Programs for seniors
- Programs for adults between the ages of 21 to 65
- Athletic programs for adults
- Athletic programs for children and teens
- Exercise programs
- Social programs such as card games, board games, and dances
- Community gardening
- Arts and crafts
- Family-oriented programs

Hours of operation of facilities and programs affect the number and type of participants. The changing demographics in Mount Dora indicate that the age group 21 to 65 is growing. Programs that target this group need to be offered in the evenings. School age children and teen programs need to be offered in the afternoon, in the evening and on Saturdays.

Programs can be offered in two ways. City staff can lead the program or programs can be contracted out to persons who have special expertise in a certain area, such as pottery, tai chi, dance, etc. Traditionally, park and recreation departments use both methods. Mount Dora operates under this method and its continuance is recommended.

It is also recommended that Mount Dora conduct a survey every two or three years to keep track of the changing needs for types of programs.

(g) Revenue Generation

Increase User Fees for Programs

Unfortunately but understandably, when budgets have to be cut, parks and recreation is one of the first victims. Since the downturn in the national economy, numerous parks and recreation systems have to consider raising user fees to continue to offer quality-programming opportunities. While this is not initially popular with users, a proper marketing and information effort should help users understand the necessity of this strategy.

Additionally, many municipalities believe that adult programming should not be subsidized but pay its own way, and in some cases, produce revenue. It is recommended that Mount Dora track the true costs of each program, including maintenance and facility costs, staff costs, advertising costs, etc, and adjusts the cost for participating in the program so that there is no cost to the City of Mount Dora.

Most municipalities believe that children's and teen's programs be partially subsidized, and that reduced cost for participation be given to the financially disadvantaged. The choice of how much the program is subsidized is a philosophical decision to be made by Mount Dora. It is recommended that Mount Dora track the true costs for each program and make adjustments so that one program is not subsidized more than another.

Facility Rentals

As the new community centers and neighborhood parks are added to the system, a fee plan for rental facilities should be developed. The fees should be set to cover true cost of the facility including utilities, personnel costs and clean up, and produce revenue for the City. Picnic shelters can be used on a first come-first served basis; however, guaranteed used can be made through a reservation program that includes a rental and clean-up fee.

Facility rental should be competitive with private facilities.

Athletic facilities should also be rented. They are quite costly to maintain so the fees should cover the cost of maintenance and upkeep.

Equipment Rental

This revenue source is available through the rental of equipment such as tables, chairs, tents, stages, bicycles, roller blades, canoes, kayaks, sports equipment, etc.

Special Fundraisers

Many park and recreation agencies have special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover the costs of specific programs and/or capital projects.

Utility Round-up Programs

Some park and recreation agencies have worked with the local utilities on a round-up program whereby a consumer can pay the difference between their bill up to the even dollar amount and they then pay the parks and recreation department the difference.

Corporate Sponsorships

This revenue-funding source allows corporations to invest in the development or enhancement of additional programs in the City. Sponsorships are also used for special events.

Foundations

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, gifts, fundraisers, endowments, etc.

Advertising

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

Signage Fees

This revenue source taxes citizens and businesses with signage fees at key locations with high visibility for short term events. Signage fees typically run from $25.00 per sign up to $100.00 per sign based on the size and location.

Scholarship Program

This program allows the City to set across-the-board subsidy rates but offer financial assistance to those residents who cannot afford to pay the full amount. In this way, the program subsidy level is maintained and equitable access to the programs is maintained. The scholarship program can be a formal program through which businesses and individuals can donate money specifically to the program. Or the program can be funded with monies from the City, either from the general fund or other designated source.

Adopt-A-Park Program

This program was brought up in the focus group meetings. Childs Park has been adopted by the Mount Dora Men's Garden Club and is well landscaped and maintained. The development of a formal Adopt-A-Park program would establish rules and guidelines of responsibilities for the adoptee. It would be recommended that the adopters be a formal organization such as a neighborhood organization, homeowners association, business, civic group, etc. There is strength in numbers making burn-out less likely.

Wish List

This method of raising funds or getting materials has proven to be a successful method of augmenting the budget. Each year, the department establishes a "wish list" of items that they need, such as landscaping materials that are wanted, play equipment, art supplies, even vehicles and equipment. The list is published to the public. The downside is that the results can vary greatly from year to year, depending on the economy's performance. It is suggested that the list not contain any items necessary for the day-to-day operation.

Volunteer Program

The use of volunteers to do clerical work and programming can be a useful tool in augmenting the staffing levels. Volunteer programs should be formalized and include background checks, regular schedules, job descriptions and evaluations to assure the safety of the clientele and the quality of the volunteers. It should be recognized that the development of a formalized process would require considerable work by the Leisure Services and Human Resources staff; however, in the long run, it would be a useful tool in helping augment recreation staff. It should be remembered that a volunteer program should only augment the appropriate staff and never be substituted for required staff members.

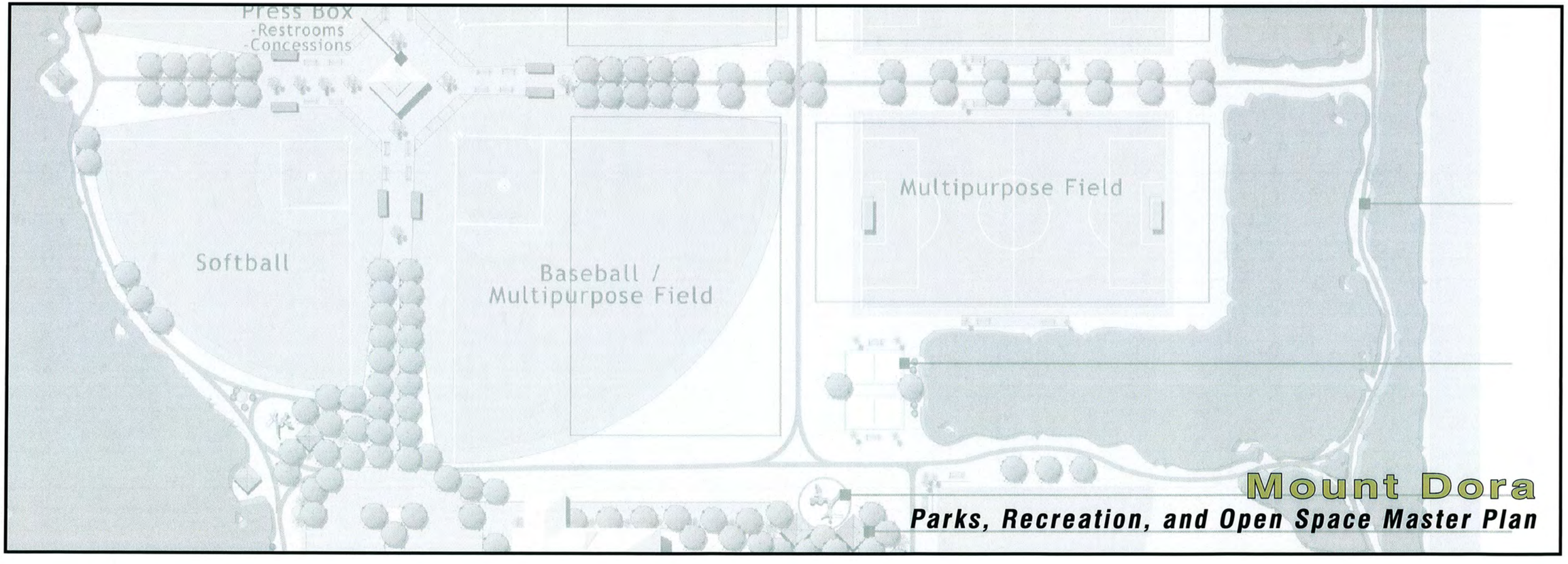
Cost Avoidance

The City should take a position of not being everything for everyone. It must be driven by the market and stay with the Department's core business. By shifting its role as direct provider, the City will experience savings by deciding whether or not to provide that facility or program. This is cost avoidance.

Volume 2

Chapter: VII

Concept Plans



Mount Dora

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

Mount Dora Waterfront

Prepared For : The City of Mount Dora

North

0' 150' 300' 500'

Prepared By: THE RMPK GROUP

Waterfront Concept Plan

Frank Brown Field I & II-Design Concept Plan

Cauley Lott Park & Lillie Property- Design Concept Plan

Cauley Lott Park Design Concept

Prepared For : The City of Mount Dora

North

0' 30' 60' 120' 180'

Prepared By: THE RMPK GROUP