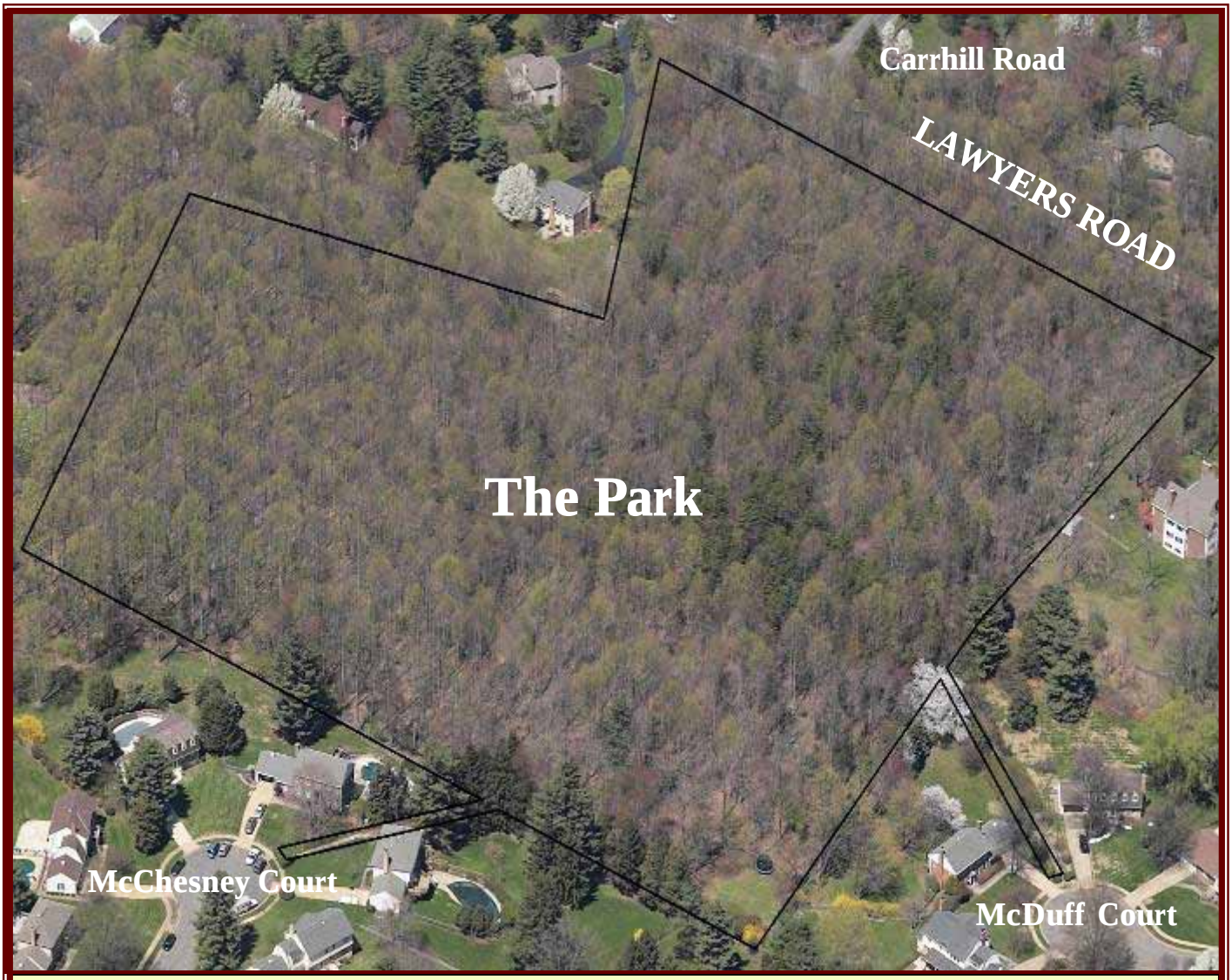

Lawyers Road Park

General Management Plan and Conceptual Development Plan

Fairfax County Park Authority
Approved April 26, 2006

FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY
LAWYERS ROAD PARK
General Management Plan and Conceptual Development Plan

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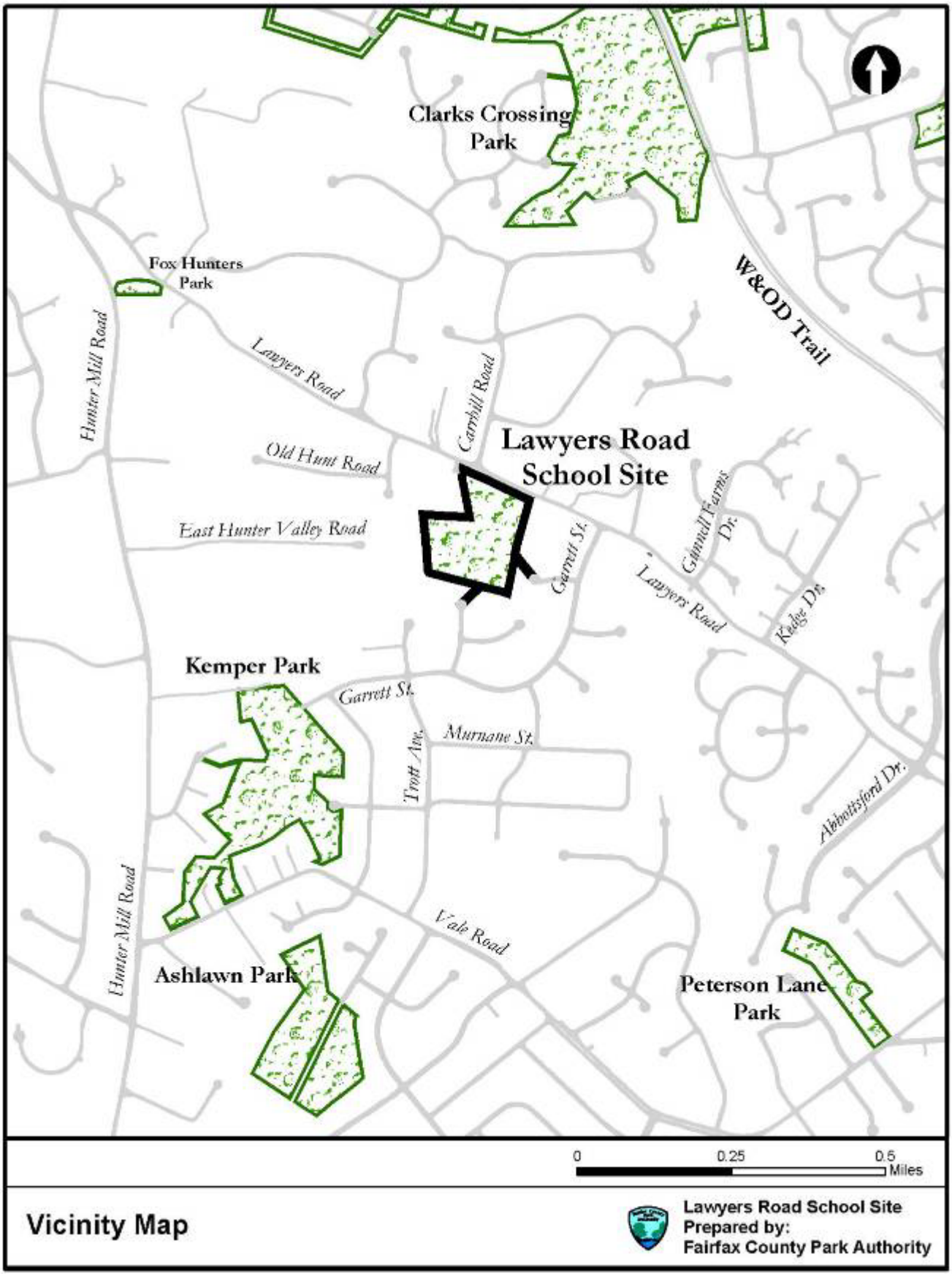


Vicinity Map

Lawyers Road School Site
Prepared by:
Fairfax County Park Authority

GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose and Description of the Plan

The purpose of this General Management Plan (GMP) is to serve as a guide for all future planning and programming. The GMP establishes park purpose and classification, describes existing conditions and constraints, details the desired visitor experience and identifies "management zones." Uses are described in general terms, so that as visitor needs change, the uses provided can change. This document should be referred to before future planning and design projects are started. General Management Plans are meant to be flexible to accommodate the changing needs of park visitors.

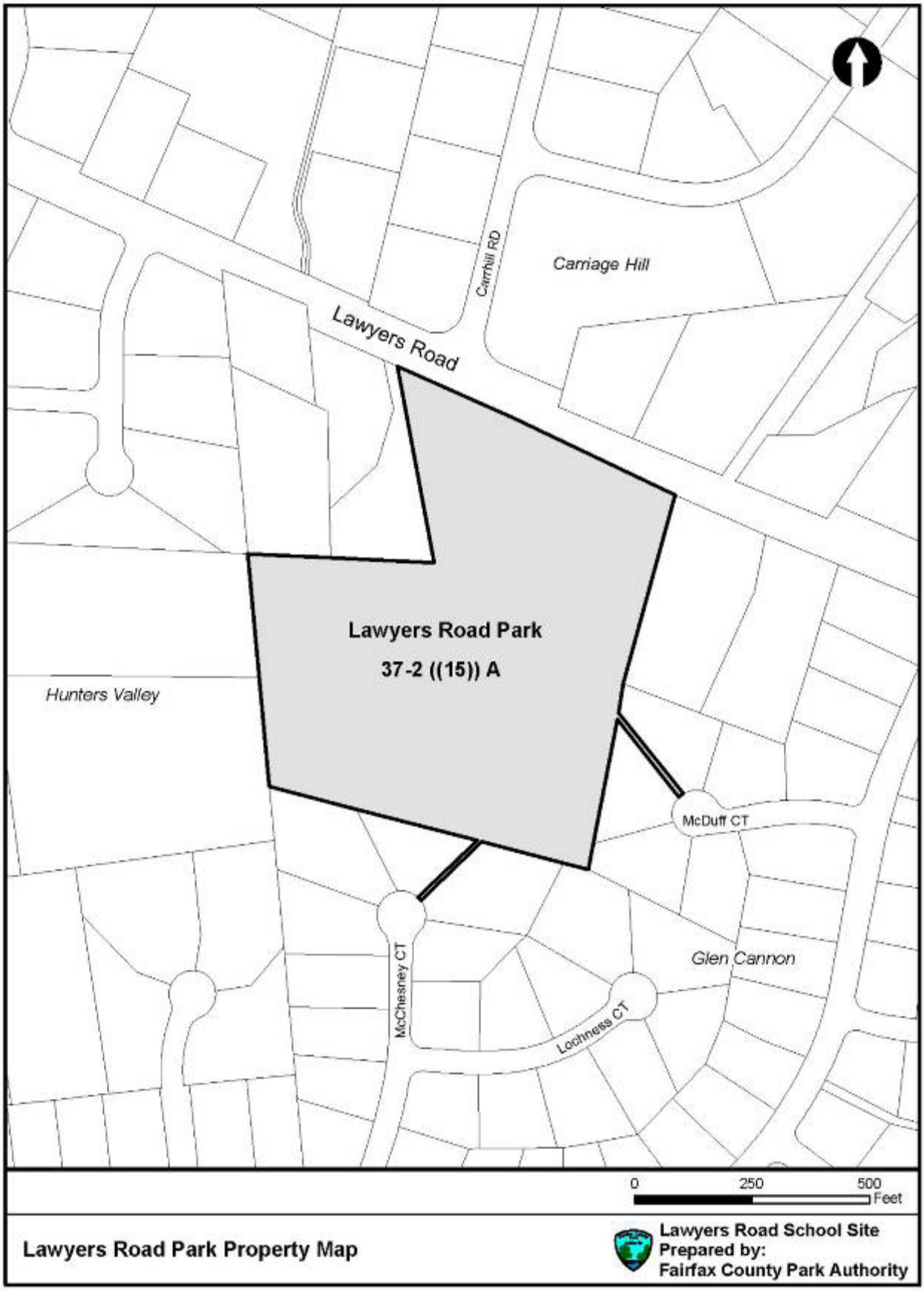
B. Public Process

On May 17, 2005, the Park Authority held a public information session to initiate the park planning process. The information gathered at the session was used in combination with site analysis research to develop three alternative scenarios for park use and development. The Park Authority presented these alternative concepts at a planning workshop held on July 12, 2005 to gather public input on the three alternative scenarios. A draft master plan was developed based on public input provided throughout the process and local park and recreation needs. A public hearing was held on January 26, 2006. The plan was revised following the public hearing and presented to the Park Authority Board for adoption on April 26, 2006.

C. Site Description

Lawyers Road Park is a parcel owned by the Fairfax County School Board and operated by the Fairfax County Park Authority under an interim use agreement. The park is designated as a Local Park. The site is located in the Hunter Mill Supervisory District on the west side of Lawyers Road approximately one mile south of Hunter's Mill Road (see vicinity map, page 5).

The address of the park site is 10049 Lawyers Road on Tax Map 37-2 ((15)) A. The parcel is 13.7 acres in size (see property map on page 7). The site consists of young woodland. There are no existing structures or facilities on the site.


Carriage Hill
Carrhill RD
Lawyers Road
Lawyers Road Park
37-2 ((15)) A
Hunters Valley
McDuff CT
Glen Cannon
McChesney CT
Lochness CT
0
250
500
Feet
Lawyers Road Park Property Map
Lawyers Road School Site
Prepared by:
Fairfax County Park Authority

D. Administrative History of the Site

This site was dedicated to the School Board in 1968 as part of the Glen Cannon residential development. Through an agreement dated September 2, 1988, the School Board granted use of the site to the Park Authority for recreation purposes for a period of thirty years in exchange for use of Park Authority lands adjacent to Centreville High School by the School Board.

II. Park Classification and Purpose, Significance, Visitor Profile, Strategic Initiatives

A. Park Classification

Lawyers Road Park is designated as a Local Park in the County's classification system. Local parks offer a variety of active or passive recreation opportunities, or a combination of both, in close proximity to County residents and employment centers. Areas designated for natural and/or cultural resource protection may also be included within these parks.

Local parks primarily provide facilities for active or passive recreation, or both; areas for scheduled and unscheduled recreation activities and social gathering places; and serve residential, employment and mixed-use centers. In suburban settings, park size will typically be at least two and one-half acres and less than 50 acres, but some local parks may range up to 75 acres. In urban areas, park size is typically less than five acres and often less than one-half acre. Visits to local parks will typically be less than two hours.

The character of local parks may vary depending on their location within the County. In residential settings, local parks will generally be larger than in urban parts of the County. Local parks offer open space to those with little or no yards. Typical facilities may include open play areas, playgrounds, courts, athletic fields, game areas, trails, trail connections, natural areas, picnic facilities and facility lighting. In a suburban setting and depending on the park size and facilities, the local park service area may be up to 3 miles.

The user experience at local parks may be casual and informal geared toward social interaction, play and outdoor enjoyment, or may be more structured to support organized sports and park programs. Collocation of a mix of park uses and facilities that support both informal and structured activities is increasingly necessary to meet the County's diverse and varied recreation and leisure needs where available land is diminishing. To the extent possible, facilities will be planned so that areas that address different needs are compatible.

B. Park Purpose

Park purpose statements are intended to guide decision making regarding all plan recommendations, resource allocation, and management issues. As park development progresses from conceptual master planning to site specific design, decisions can be continually tested against the park purpose for appropriateness. If a proposed use conflicts with any one of the purposes listed, it will be considered an incompatible use. By establishing park purposes, future plans can remain flexible, as legislative and regulatory requirements and park user preferences change. Park significance statements capture the attributes that make the park valuable and important to the community and within the park system. Like park purpose statements, the significance of a park may shift over time in response to the surrounding context or user needs and desires. The purpose of Lawyers Road Park is two-fold:

- To provide active and passive recreation opportunities for a range of interests and ages.
- To preserve and enhance natural and cultural resources.

C. Park & Recreation Need

The need for parkland and recreation facilities is determined through long range planning efforts. The Park Authority tracks park facilities and land inventories, recreation and leisure trends, surveys citizen demand and compares itself to peer jurisdictions to determine reasonable need. The most recent Needs Assessment process was completed in 2004.

As part of the Needs Assessment process, the Park Authority Board adopted Countywide service level standards for park land and park facilities. The standard for Local park land is 5 acres for every 1,000 residents. Lawyers Road Park has 13.7 acres. Based upon the local park land standard, the park serves approximately 3,000 people.

Facility standards were similarly adopted for typical park facilities such as playgrounds (1 per 2,800 population), multi-use courts (1 per 2,100 population), neighborhood skate parks (1 per 106,000 population), dog parks (1 per 86,000 population), rectangle fields (1 per 2,700 population), youth baseball fields (1 per 7,200 population), and youth softball fields (1 per 8,800 population).

On a Countywide basis, the most deficient types of local park facilities are rectangle fields, neighborhood skate parks, and neighborhood dog parks. Youth diamond fields are generally well served. Neighborhood skate parks and dog parks are generally more appropriate in parks near more densely developed residential areas with better regional access than exists near Lawyers Road Park. Playgrounds are fairly well served Countywide but deficient in this area of the County. In addition, playgrounds are a typical and highly desirable feature in most local parks.

A more localized examination of needs around Lawyers Road Park can be conducted using the planning district geography from the County Comprehensive Plan. Lawyers Road Park is located within the Vienna Planning District. Based on the adopted service level standards, this District has a current deficiency of 66 acres of local parkland, nine rectangle fields, 11 multi-use courts, one playground, and two youth diamond fields and one adult softball field. As the population grows in the future, these deficiencies will increase.

D. Relationship to Park Authority Mission

The Park Authority Strategic Plan is the guiding document to focus resources on the most critical work of the agency. As identified in the Strategic Plan, the dual goals of the Park Authority mission are to protect and enhance natural and cultural resources and to provide quality recreational services and facilities. The recommendations established in Lawyers Road Park's master plan are based on the Park Authority's mission to offer citizens opportunities for recreation, while also setting aside public spaces for the protection and enhancement of environmental values, diversity of natural habitats, and cultural heritage to guarantee that these resources will be available for both present and future generations.

III. EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. Setting and Description of Adjacent Properties

The site is located in the Hunter Mill Supervisory District on the west side of Lawyers Road approximately one mile south of Hunter's Mill Road. The Glen Cannon subdivision is located to the east and south of the park site (see property map on page 7). Lots in the Glen Cannon subdivision average about one-half acre in size and the subdivision was completely developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The subdivision is served by public sewer and water and the park has access to these services adjacent to this subdivision.

Two ten-feet wide extensions of the park site extend between residential lots of Glen Cannon to the public roads of McChesney and McDuff Courts. These extensions of the park site were developed with concrete walkways probably at the time of development in the 1960s in anticipation of providing pedestrian access to what was then envisioned as a future elementary school. The walkway from McDuff Court ascends a fairly significant slope and includes steps. Today, the pedestrian extensions are covered with leaves and organic debris. The walkways are also partially blocked with shrubs, tree limbs and other litter most likely placed there by neighboring or nearby property owners.

To the west of the park site is the Hunters Valley Subdivision. Lots in the original part of this subdivision average approximately five acres in size while lots in the portion of the Hunters Valley subdivision addition to the north average approximately one acre in size. This subdivision is not served by public

sewer, although some lots have public water while others are on wells. Four individual lots not part of any subdivision are located directly to the northwest of the park site (a division of tax map 37-2((1)) parcel 10). The driveway for lot 10C runs very near the northwest property line of the park site.

The site is bounded by Lawyers Road to the north. Lawyers Road in this vicinity is primarily constructed as a rural section two-lane road with narrow unpaved shoulders. The exception to this is occasional road frontage improvements in front of some subdivisions (Carriage Hill for example). In these locations, road improvements include extend lane width, turn lanes, and/or curb and gutter. Vehicle trips on Lawyers Road average approximately 11,000 trips daily. Sight distance is limited due to extensive topographic variation along the road. During public planning meetings for this park, the safety of vehicles and pedestrians on Lawyers Road was a primary issue of concern.

Across Lawyers Road to the north of the park site is the Carriage Hill Subdivision and Carrhill Road. Carriage Hill Subdivision lots average about one to two acres in size and are not served by public sewer. Some of the lots are served by public water and others have individual wells. Four individual lots not part of any subdivision are located directly to the northeast of the park site (tax map 37-2((1)) parcel 8, and tax map 38-1((1)) parcels 1, 8A, & 8B). These lots average one to two acres each.

B. Existing and Planned Land Use, Zoning

In the County's Comprehensive Plan, the site is located in the Piney Branch Community Planning Sector of the Vienna Planning District. This portion of the planning sector is planned for residential use at a density .5 – 1 dwelling units per acre. The existing land use onsite and in the surrounding area is in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan. While the park site remains undeveloped, the surrounding properties are developed with single family detached residences.

Principal park and recreation guidelines for the Planning District and Sector include:

- Acquire and develop at least three additional Community Parks to address deficiencies of active recreation facilities.
- Plan and develop stream valley trails to facilitate non-vehicular travel.
- Preserve and protect significant natural and heritage resources.
- Consider acquiring the school site on Lawyers Road if it becomes available for development of active recreational facilities.

As evidenced by the last item above, the comprehensive plan clearly supports development of a park at this site. The site is zoned R-1 which allows among other things, parks and residential uses at a density of up to one unit per acre.

The Countywide Trails Plans shows a major paved trail (eight-foot width or greater) on the south side of Lawyers Road. A large portion of this trail, including the portion of it that fronts the park site, has been constructed as planned within the VDOT right-of-way for Lawyers Road. The trail is in poor condition in front of the park site and the Park Authority has notified VDOT of needed trail maintenance.

Virginia land use law requires that public and utility uses demonstrate compliance with the local comprehensive land use plan in terms of location, character, and extent. The process is commonly referred to as a "2232-Permit" consistent with the Code of Virginia §15.7-2232. Typically, parks uses require a 2232-Permit prior to opening to the public. Following adoption of this park master plan, the Park Authority will apply for 2232-Permit approval from the County Planning Commission if it is determined to be necessary.

C. Natural Resources

1. Topography and Slopes

The site is dominated by a west-to-east ridgeline. It slopes to the southeast toward McDuff Court and to the north toward Lawyers Road (see topography map on page 15). There are no water features on site and no erosion issues. There is a high level of disturbance from past and current human activity. There is trash strewn here and there, and the current encroachments include dumping of yard debris, clearing, digging holes, and building play forts.

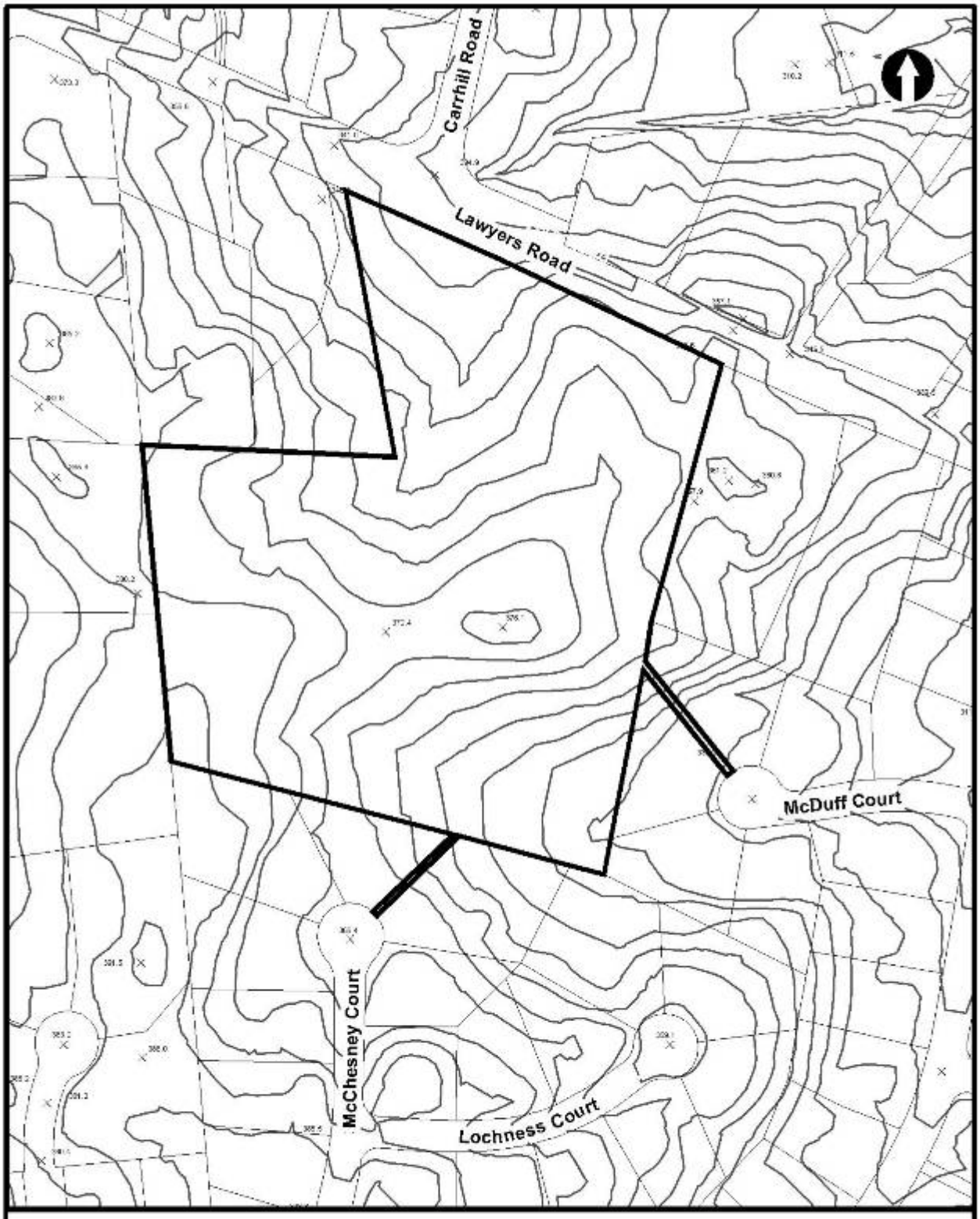
Topography ranges from gently sloping to rolling onsite. A small north-south ridge located in the middle of the property directs drainage toward the northwest and the southeast corners of the park. No streams or wetlands are present on the property. Slopes range generally from 2% to approximately 15% grade. The steepest slopes of 10% to 15% grade are found most notably just west of McDuff Court.

2. Soils and Geology

The site is located in the Piedmont Upland Physiographic Province. The province is underlain by metamorphic rocks, predominately schist, granite, gneiss, and greenstone. Approximately fifty-six percent of the County (the middle portion) falls within this geologic setting.

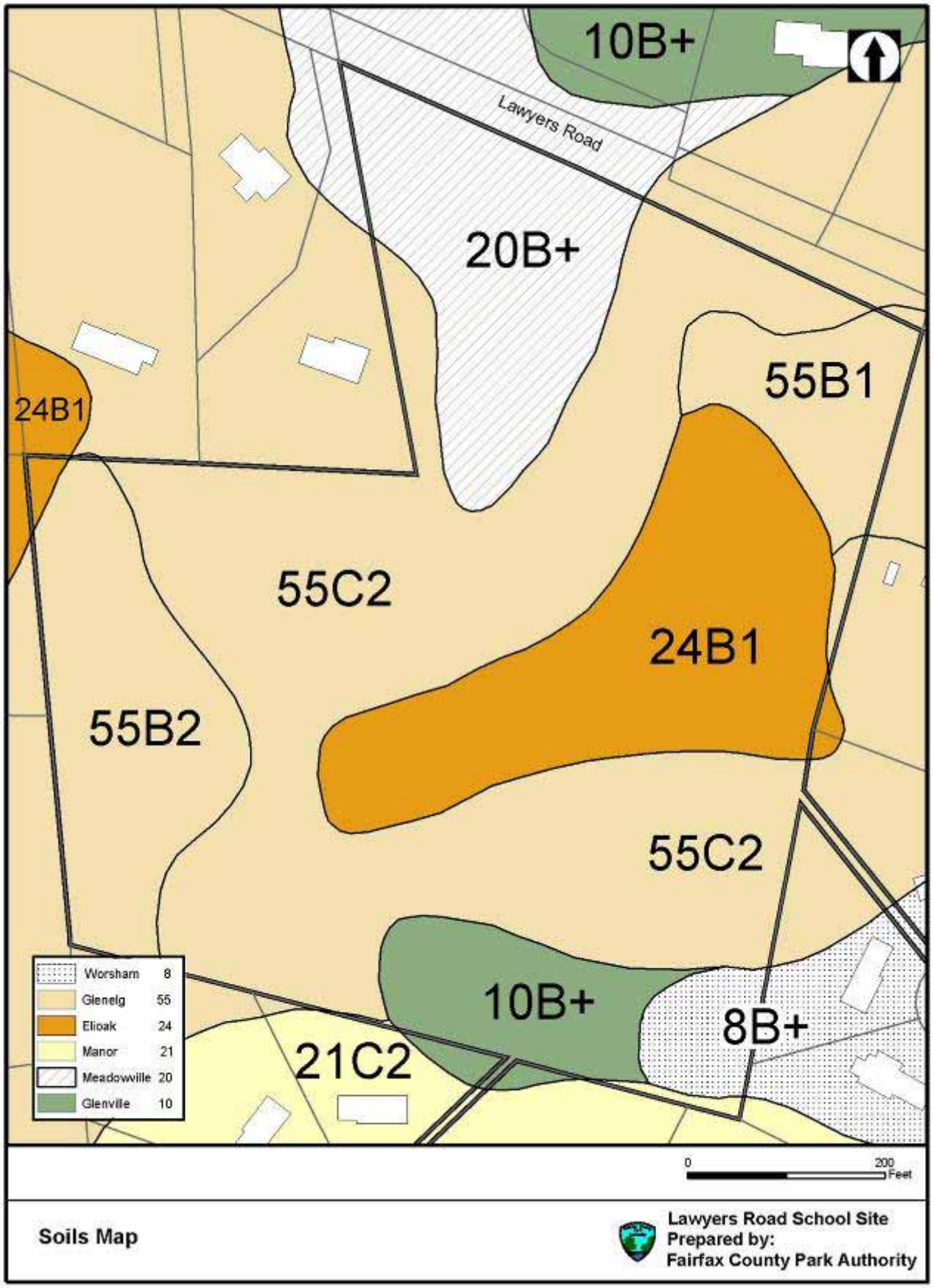
The predominate soil types on the site are Glenelg Silt Loam (soil type 55), and Elioak (soil type 24) with a minor area of Glenelg Silt loam (soil type 55), in the northeast corner of the site (see soils map on page 16). These soils generally occur on hilltops and side slopes underlain by micaceous schist. Silts and clays overlie silty and sandy decomposed rock. Permeability is moderate to moderately rapid. Erosion potential for this soil type is high.

There are smaller areas of Meadowville (soil type 20B) and Glenville (soil type 10B) and Worsham (soil type 8B) along the swales in the northwestern and southeastern corners of the site. These soils occur generally on 2-7% slope in drainageways and at the foot of slopes. The soils are typically derived from schists, granites and alluvium. Permeability is slow to moderately slow and there is often a high seasonal groundwater table in drainage ways and low lying areas. Erosion potential of this soil type is moderate.



Topographical Map

Lawyers Road School Site
Prepared by:
Fairfax County Park Authority


10B+
Lawyers Road
20B+
55B1
24B1
55C2
24B1
55B2
55C2
10B+
8B+
21C2
Worsham 8
Glenelg 55
Elioak 24
Manor 21
Meadowville 20
Glenville 10
0
200
Feet
Soils Map
Lawyers Road School Site
Prepared by:
Fairfax County Park Authority

3. Green Infrastructure Statement

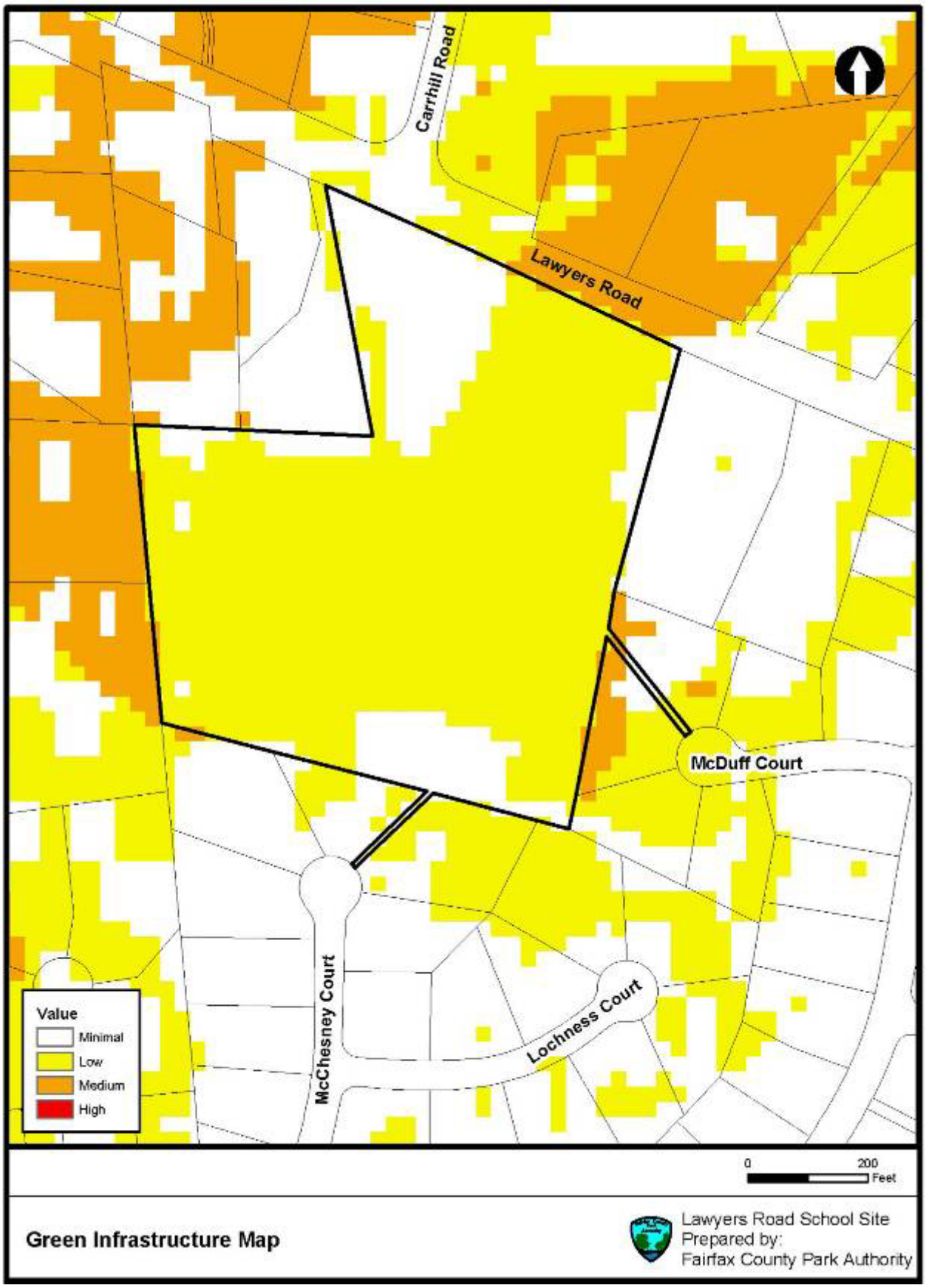
The Fairfax County Park Authority has developed a modeling tool to help identify significant natural and cultural resources in the County. Using the County's geographic information system (GIS), the Park Authority has produced a countywide "Green Infrastructure" model and resultant map based on a weighted analysis of significant environmental and historic features.

The weighted analysis produces a general resource value that recognizes the combination in value of various resources within the three general categories of environmental, cultural, and open space areas, but does not rank importance between categories. The model is limited by the extent, accuracy, and resolution of the source data used. Several important resources, such as rare, threatened, and endangered species and Environmental Quality Corridors (EQCs) are not considered in the analysis due to the unavailability or incompatibility of the data.

The Green Infrastructure Map (see map on page 18) indicates that compared to other parcels in the County, the Lawyers Road Park has a low to moderate combination of natural and cultural resource values. Since the purpose of the Green Infrastructure Model is largely to rank properties based on a combination of different resources, one can not assume the absence of a single specific resource based on a "minimum," "low," or "medium" Green Infrastructure rating.

4. Flora

The vegetation is dominated by tulip tree (Liriodendron tulipifera) and Virginia pine (Pinus virginiana) (see forest delineation map on page 19). The tree stand seems to be about 30 years old across the property. The forest has low-diversity with a high degree of invasive coverage. The most notable invasive is the shrub amur honeysuckle (Lonicera maackii) that covers approximately fifty to


Carrhill Road
Lawyers Road
McDuff Court
McChesney Court
Lochness Court
Value
Minimal
Low
Medium
High
0
200
Feet
Green Infrastructure Map
Lawyers Road School Site
Prepared by:
Fairfax County Park Authority

Forest Delineation Map

Lawyers Road School Site
Prepared by:
Fairfax County Park Authority

sixty percent of the site. Japanese honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica) also has extensive coverage. Unexpected aspects of the site ecology includes low tree species diversity with a virtual monoculture of tulip tree on the western half of the parcel (this despite the presence of oaks and hickories on adjoining parcels) and high mortality among pine trees on the eastern portion of the parcel.

A search of the Virginia Department of Conservation, Division of Natural Heritage records for the area revealed two possible rare, threatened or endangered flora species located near the property:

- *Pyrola chlorantha* Greenish-flowered Wintergreen (H) SH G5 G: This ranking notes this species being reported as historic for the state, if it were found to be present it would automatically be state rare. The record type indicates that the species was found previously within 5 miles of the park site. This species was not surveyed for or encountered during a site visit. There is a low probability that the species occurs on the property. A formal rare species survey should be conducted prior the final planning of any features on the property.

- *Quercus prinoides* Dwarf Chinquapin Oak (H) S1 G5 M: This is a state rare species. The record type indicates that the species could occur within 1.5 miles of the park site. This species was not surveyed for or encountered during a site visit. There is a low probability that the species occurs on the property.

5. Fauna

Based on a recent site assessment, the site has a typical array of common urban wildlife activity. A herd of deer was observed during our survey, and there is excessive deer browse and scat. Deer herd management would be difficult at this location, but the number of deer is clearly far above sustainable levels. Woodchuck dens are present and could also act as dens for foxes (both red and gray are possible). A number of bird species were noted.

A search of the Virginia Department of Conservation, Division of Natural Heritage records for the area revealed one possible rare, threatened or endangered fauna species located near the property:

Stygobromus phreaticus Northern Virginia Well Amphipod (H) S1 G2G3 federal species of concern G: Note that this is a federally listed species of concern as well as a state rare species. The record type indicates that this species was found previously within 5 miles of the park site. Given the lack of water features on the property, it seems unlikely that this species would be found there. However, any land disturbing activity should be preceded by a search for any records or features that would indicate a well on the property and appropriate action taken to inspect any well sites found.

D. Cultural Resources

On a recent site reconnaissance, archaeologists found no significant features to suggest need for further archaeological investigations. Historically, this site was farmed but no remnant structures appear to have been located on this site. There is a high level of disturbance from recent human activity including dumping of yard debris, clearing, digging holes, litter and play forts.

E. Park Access

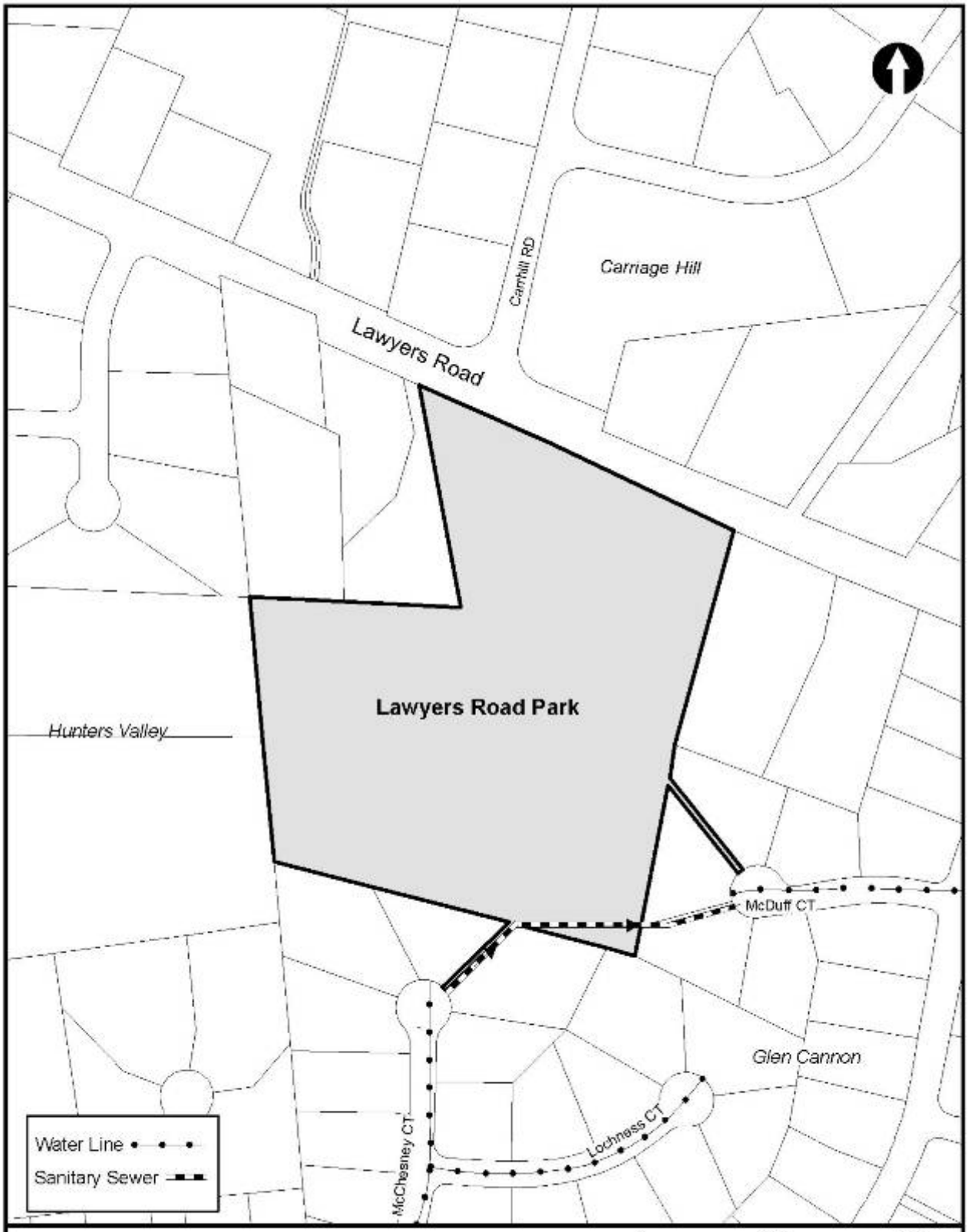
There currently is no vehicular entrance to the site. There are two existing ten-foot wide pedestrian points of access with existing concrete sidewalk (one from McChesney Court and the other from McDuff Ct.) both of which are significantly overgrown. The most logical place to locate vehicular access for the site is from Lawyers Road across from Carrhill Road.

F. Existing Facilities

There are no existing structures or facilities on the site.

G. Utilities

The surrounding area is developed. As a result, utilities are available. A sewer line runs through the southeast corner of the park site (see utility map on page 22). Water service is available from the Town of Vienna. The water lines are located within McDuff and McChesney Courts. Electricity and telephone service are readily available also.



Utility Map

Lawyers Road School Site
Prepared by:
Fairfax County Park Authority

IV. Management and Development

A. Visitor Profile and Desired Visitor Experience

Lawyers Road Park is envisioned to draw users from the adjacent neighborhoods and the larger community within the service area (roughly defined as a two-mile radius). The intention is to create a park offering a balance between active and passive recreation opportunities attracting a wide-range of users including soccer teams, children and families who want to use the creative playground and individuals interested in a walk through the woods. A typical user visitation duration would be in the thirty minute to two-hour timeframe.

B. Resource Management

1. Natural Resource Management

Although the current forest condition is poor, the site has mature vegetation that is protecting headwaters for Difficult Run. The Park Authority should develop a treatment plan and identify funding for invasive species removal and forest improvement in the tree protection areas. The buffer areas along the perimeter of the park should be managed to remove invasive plants and add native vegetation appropriate for screening. The plantings should be "deer-resistant" (such as red cedar, little bluestem and Christmas fern).

The primary county-wide threat to the ecological value of Fairfax County parkland is non-native, invasive species. The most notable invasives on the Lawyers Road site are shrub amur honeysuckle (Lonicera maackii) that appears to cover up to 60 % of the site and Japanese honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica). The Park Authority does not currently have a dedicated program to treat the threat in Lawyers Road School Site. Invasive species control has

generally been the effort of organized volunteers or eagle scouts. Volunteer labor should only be used in coordination with Park Resource Management staff to ensure no undue disturbance of the landscape. Control methods differ depending on habit, reproductive method, extent of infestation, etc. Management should reflect the current best control technique given the amount and type of labor used.

Strong natural resource stewardship will be enhanced by education. Interpretive signs may assist long-term natural resource management by reducing dumping, off-trail access, and incompatible landscaping and by increasing the volunteer labor force.

Innovative development techniques to treat and detain stormwater runoff should be used to the greatest extent possible to help protect the Difficult Run watershed from impacts of the developed portion of the park site. These techniques should intercept water and allow it infiltrate whenever feasible. These techniques could include rain gardens, infiltration trenches around athletic fields, extra storage capacity built under athletic fields, detention facilities collocated under facilities such as playgrounds and for any parking areas, porous pavement, etc.

While the Park Authority has not done any formal wildlife surveys in the park, it is certainly a refuge for some common urban wildlife species. Woodchuck dens are abundant and could also act as dens for foxes (both red and gray are possible). A number of bird species were noted; the most significant was a red-tailed hawk that is nesting on the property. A herd of deer is also known to inhabit the site. It is inevitable in an urban county that conflicts will occur between wildlife and human residents. The Park Authority adopted a Wildlife Conflict Resolution Policy (Policy 202) in 1998 which guides the agency in mitigating such conflicts.

A formal rare species survey should be conducted prior the final planning of any features on the property.

Deer, geese and beaver are examples of wildlife that can be beneficial species in natural communities and thrilling to see in the wild but, when overabundant or when in proximity to humans, can cause significant impact on natural resources and human environments. The Park Authority's Wildlife Conflict Resolution Policy requires the agency to "practice an attitude of acceptance of, and tolerance for, wildlife activity as part of the county's natural environment" and to "foster this attitude among the public through education." If tolerance of wildlife activity is not successful, the

policy requires progressive steps from exclusion (such as fences, screens and repellants), to harassment (such as removal of nests or homes). Only when all other means are exhausted and a compelling need is demonstrated, can lethal force be considered in a humane manner.

2. Cultural Resource Management

At this time, there are no known cultural resources onsite. If significant resources are discovered, the Park Authority's Resource Management Division should be contacted for guidance on appropriate management recommendations.

C. Site Amenities/Visitor Services

This is a local park where visitation times are expected to be less than two hours. As such, the park will be unstaffed and not include any major service facilities. An orientation area/kiosk should be sited adjacent to the parking area to provide general information about park and recreational opportunities at the site. Portable toilet facilities (or other self-supporting system such as composting toilets) should be provided near the parking area for the site.

D. Site Considerations

The Park Authority's Area maintenance crew will provide periodic maintenance to the site. Interior to the site itself, there are no significant issues related to its use as a park. There are moderate slopes (generally less than 10 percent) that may require grading for use of the site but these types of slopes are routinely engineered as necessary. The primary site issues are along the perimeter and external to the site; most notably, vehicle and pedestrian safety along Lawyers Road, preventing parking in surrounding residential neighborhoods, and buffering and screening of visual impacts. These issues are addressed in detail within the Conceptual Development Plan section of this report.

LAWYERS ROAD
ENTRANCE AND ORIENTATION ZONE
RECREATION ZONE
TREE PROTECTION ZONE
MCDUFF COURT
MCCHESNEY COURT
LAWYERS ROAD SCHOOL SITE
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
ENTRANCE AND ORIENTATION ZONE
RECREATION ZONE
TREE PROTECTION ZONE
AUGUST 2005

V. MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The management framework integrates research, site analysis, and basic data presented in this document. Management zones have been defined to provide a framework for decision-making. Existing uses, existing conditions and recommendations from Park Authority staff were considered in the development of the management zones. The framework provides broad flexibility within a range of potential uses for each management zone. The General Management Plan Map on page 26 depicts the areas for each of the three management zones. While these boundaries should not be interpreted as hard lines, the acreage comprising each management zone is approximately as follows:

Entrance and Orientation Zone:	1.4 ac.
Recreation Zone:	5.4 ac.
Tree Protection Zone:	6.9 ac.
Site Total	13.7 ac.

The "Potential Uses" stated for the zone describe acceptable uses for each zone. If a use is not listed for a zone, by its omission it is considered an incompatible use for that zone. The potential uses are intentionally general to allow flexibility when making decisions. The management zones provide the foundation for future decision making in the park.

1. Entrance and Orientation Zone

Located in the northern part of the park adjacent to Lawyers Road, the entrance zone consists of a park sign, paved vehicular entrance, parking lot, interpretative signage and/or architectural features such as a covered pavilion to help create an identity for the park. Potential uses for this zone include parking, entry signage, road frontage improvements, pedestrian connections, portable or self-contained toilets, plaza, pavilion, benches, tables, visitor amenities such as seating, trash can, and/or drinking fountain, stormwater management including low-impact development facilities, and landscaping.

2. Recreation Zone

The recreation zone is intended to support the development of recreation facilities and amenities to provide a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities. This zone consists of primarily open, non-treed areas but opportunities should be sought to minimize tree removal where possible. Potential uses for this zone include an athletic field and associated support structures such as bleachers and irrigation equipment and/or shed, open play area, playground, play courts, pavilion, creative play areas, picnic area, visitor amenities, and trails.

3. Tree Protection Zone

This zone includes the forested area along the perimeter of the property and ranges generally between fifty and two-hundred feet in width. The purpose of this zone is to protect native vegetation, improve habitat for native flora and fauna, and provide passive recreation and wildlife viewing opportunities for the public. Development in this area will be minimal and limited to trails, natural resource and habitat management, stormwater management as necessary, interpretation and education, and archaeological exploration.

End GMP

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

The Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) describes the planned park elements; identifies design concerns; and illustrates the general location of the recommended facilities (see Conceptual Development Plan Map on page 30) based on the guidance of the General Management Plan.

II. PARK ELEMENTS

A. Vehicle Access and Parking

NEWLY PLANTED RAIN GARDEN

The primary vehicle access and parking area will be located on Lawyers Road across from Carrhill Road. Lawyers Road currently averages over 11,000 trips per day and local residents have expressed concern about the safety of the existing road. Preliminary discussions with Fairfax County Department of Transportation regarding the driveway entrance indicate a preference for the driveway to align across from Carrhill Road. Based on traffic projections for other similar park sites (ones with a single athletic field), the Lawyers Road Park may generate between 100 and 150 trips per day. This is a "worst-case" scenario analysis that assumes peak usage that may actually only occur on fifty to one-hundred days per year (based on seasonal use and typical field scheduling). At the time of site engineering, the entrance driveway for the park should be designed in the safest manner possible including successfully dealing with issues of sight-lines, need for turn lanes, etc.

MATURE RAIN GARDEN

The parking area adjacent to the Lawyers Road entrance should accommodate seventy vehicles. The periphery of the parking area should be set back at least fifty-feet from neighboring properties. This fifty-foot wide area should be maintained as a vegetative buffer. Where necessary, the existing vegetation should be supplemented to provide neighbors with adequate screening. Supplemental plantings should be native species including evergreen trees and shrubs to offer buffering year-round. A well-screened portable restroom, composting toilet, or other such self-contained facility should be located adjacent to the parking area.

Stormwater management should be provided within one or more vegetated swales of the parking lot as well as in rain-garden(s) adjacent to the parking lot. These

LAWYERS ROAD SCHOOL SITE

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 60'

SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

areas will feature attractive, functional, native landscaping over an engineered subsoil to effectively function as low-impact design stormwater management areas.

Local residents have expressed concern that users of the park may park their cars along McDuff and McChesney Courts and walk into the park using the pedestrian access from these courts. Provision of the seventy-space parking lot at the park's Lawyers Road entrance should be sufficient so that park users will not need the option of using street side parking within the Glen Cannon subdivision. The trail connections at McDuff and McChesney should not be marked with a park sign but rather with a discreet trail marker to allow neighborhood access without encouraging other users to park on the adjacent residential streets.

B. Pedestrian Access

A significant public concern expressed at public planning meetings for this project was pedestrian access to the park across Lawyers Road from the residential neighborhoods to the north (such as Carriage Hill). Suggestions at public meetings included providing a pedestrian overpass, signalized crossing, or crosswalk. Considering that there are no sidewalks across from the park on the north side of Lawyers Road (or within the adjacent neighborhoods), an overpass or signalized crosswalk does not seem appropriate or warranted. However, a striped crosswalk between the park site and Carrhill Road is recommended similar to those recently established on Vale Road and at another location further west on Lawyers Road to accommodate the Cross County Trail. These crossings are broadly striped crosswalks with pedestrian signs at the crosswalk and additional signs stating "300 feet ahead" with the pedestrian symbol posted 300 feet on either side of the crosswalk as motorists approach. Sight lines are more than adequate for a marked crosswalk near Carrhill Road at Lawyers Road. Crossings of secondary roads require care on the part of both pedestrians and motorists.

TYPICAL CROSSWALK

Two narrow extensions of the park site, each ten-foot in width with existing concrete sidewalks, extend between residential lots of Glen Cannon to the public roads of McChesney and McDuff Courts. These pedestrian entrances provide essential park access for the local neighborhood and should remain open.

C. Trails

A key experience at Lawyers Road Park will be to walk or jog within the park. A main trail circuit approximately one-third mile in length is proposed in the southern portion of the site. Connections to this trail will be provided from the parking area as well as via pedestrian entrances on McDuff and McChesney Courts to the east and south. The main circuit trail will provide the primary access to the natural area of the park. Expressed user preference is for a flexible surface to minimize shock impact on joggers and runners. However, most shock-absorbing surfaces are either easily eroded (woodchip or stonedust) or prohibitively expensive (poured or formed rubber surfacing). Asphalt is the most cost-effective alternative. Other trails should be provided as necessary to ensure connectivity between parking, visitor amenities, park and recreational components within the park, and surrounding neighborhoods. Benches should be provided at a few key locations along the trail.

The trail loop should be ADA accessible if practical but slopes onsite may prohibit ADA design without significant tree clearing and re-grading. If the loop trail is not accessible, there should be other trails within the park that are accessible so that all will have opportunity to use trails at the park.

There is an existing asphalt trail located within the VDOT right-of-way on the south side of Lawyers Road. The trail is in poor condition. The Park Authority has requested that VDOT repair and improve the trail. A short “stub” connection will be needed between the park entrance crosswalk on Lawyers Road and this trail.

D. Fitness Cluster

An exercise area should be provided along the loop trail. The exercise area should consist of one strategically placed fitness cluster. The fitness cluster will offer an opportunity for several (perhaps three or four) different exercises at one location. This equipment should be placed far enough away from the major activities to give a sense of privacy, yet close enough to give a sense of security and to discourage unintended uses. The fitness cluster will offer loop trail users an additional type of exercise beyond walking or jogging. Seating may be provided near the station.

E. Plaza and Picnic Pavilion

A plaza is proposed for the area adjacent to the parking lot. This area will act as a gateway to the other amenities of the site. This is the appropriate location for an information kiosk to provide park users with an orientation to the site. A seating wall can double as a retaining wall for grading that may be necessary for the plaza or adjacent play area. This wall can define the edge between paving and planted areas while providing additional seating, closer to some activities than a centralized seating area.

BALL PLAY IN THE COURT

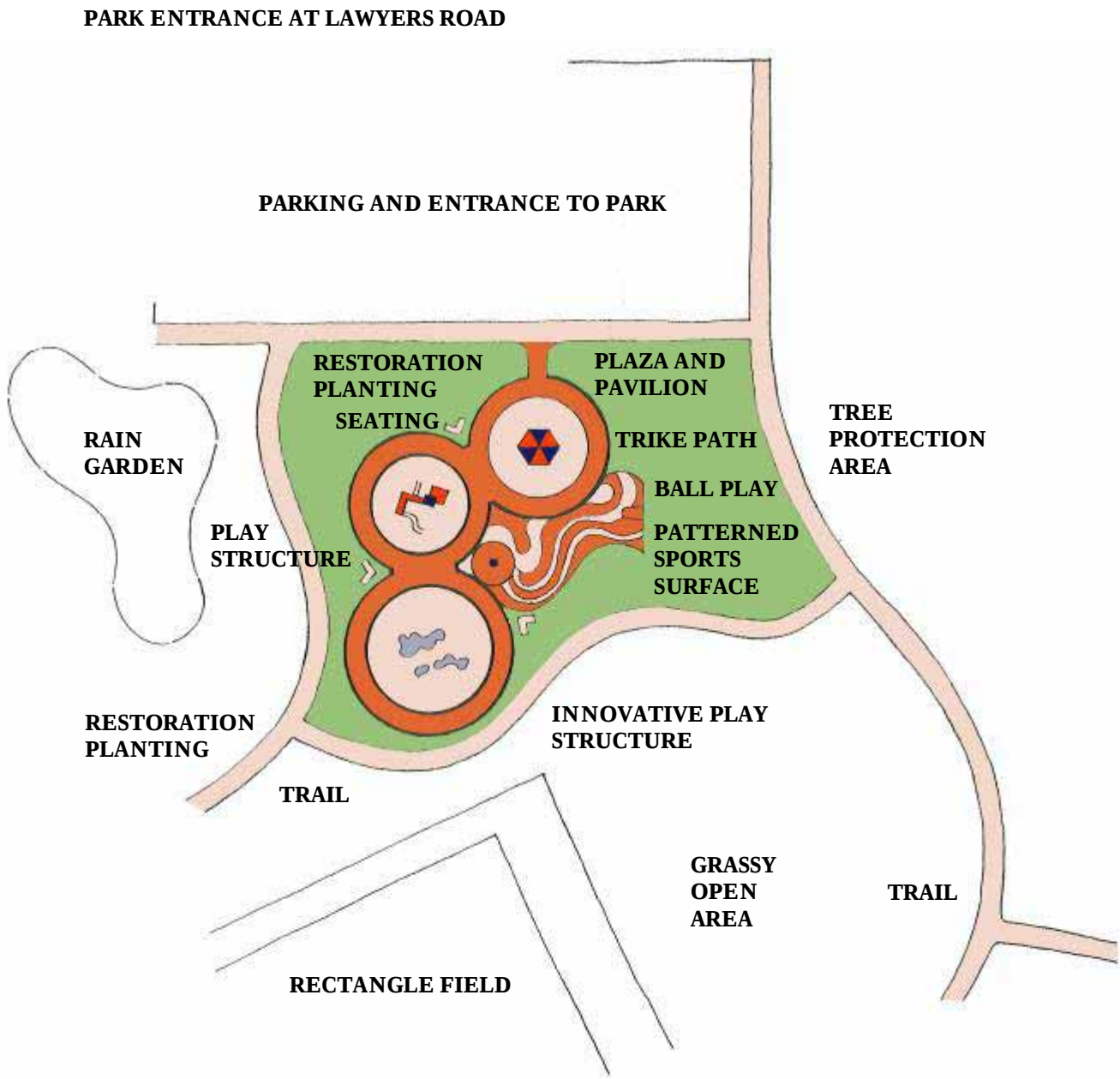
This area should also include a modest size picnic pavilion. A pavilion here will be convenient to parking and close enough to the playground to provide a central location for parents to monitor children. The pavilion will protect park visitors from the sun and rain. The pavilion should be of a size and scale appropriate for a local park with at least two picnic tables to accommodate small group and family-oriented activities.

F. Creative Play/Court Area

One of the primary attractions of this park will be a creative play area to encourage exploration and discovery through play. (See conceptual drawings on pages 34 and 35).

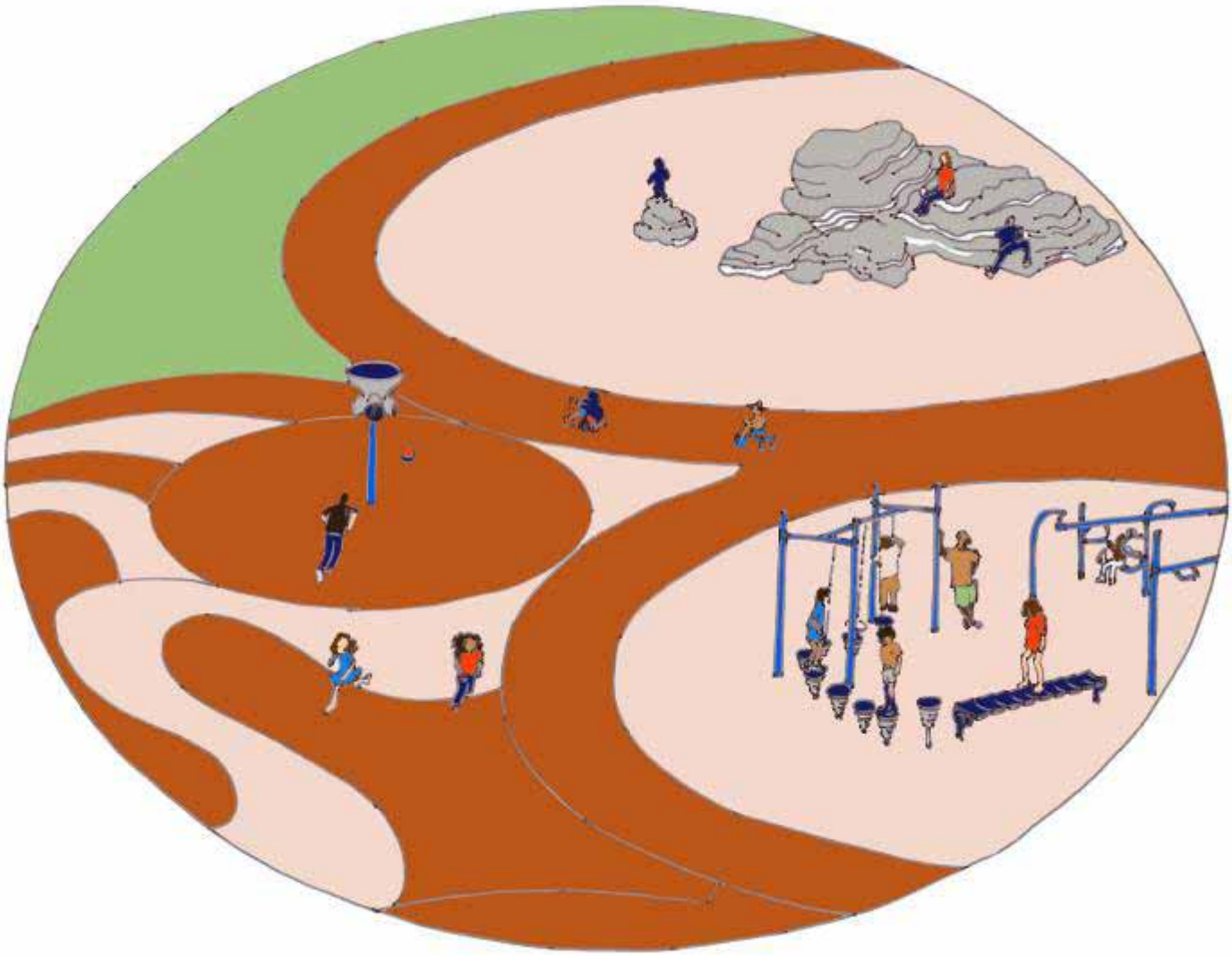
This area is meant to appeal to children's need to invent and create. The opportunity for a variety of experiences will be supported in this play complex. The key components of this area should include some traditional playground equipment (such as a structure and/or swings), an innovative alternative play or climbing structure (such as artificial rocks), play-oriented hardscape, and a court surface with ball skill challenges.

The playground should be accessible and consist of a combination of traditional play apparatus enclosed in one circle and an alternative play space for a different type of experience enclosed in an adjacent circle. The equipment should encourage the development of physical, social, and cognitive skills by offering a variety of surfaces, textures, colors, and changes in level of difficulty. Permanent resilient surfacing should be installed to ensure safety and accessibility for all users. Loose material can be used where accessibility is not an issue, to maximize pervious surface area.



PLAN VIEW

PLAZA AND PICNIC PAVILION AND CREATIVE PLAY / COURT AREA



BIRD'S EYE VIEW

CREATIVE PLAY AREA CONCEPT

A tricycle path/mini-track is envisioned in a figure-eight or oval pattern surrounding the play areas. The "trike-path" can tie the pavilion area, the play structure area, and the climbing structure area together, while providing another play feature. The paving materials and pattern on should link the plaza to the other paved areas, providing an incentive to explore all parts of this high-activity area.

A court-surface area should be integrated into the design of the play complex. The area will promote a mix of basketball (on a half-court), a "Drop-Shot" or "Four Play" type ball toss feature, and more free-form activities. The court surface should accommodate different ages and skill levels while providing space for multiple users simultaneously without interference from each other.

The entire innovative play/court area should be an integrated, visually pleasing whole. Paving patterns and variation in surface can help define the flow of movement through the area. Attractive, coordinated colors and materials should be used for pavement, play equipment, trike path, and site furniture. This will tie the elements of the park's structured activity area together. If the paving patterns indicate movement, a vital and athletic dynamic can be generated. There may be a free-standing seating wall, or benches, at the edge of the plaza, the play area, or the innovative play/court surface to help define the area and provide places to observe and rest. The park elements and facilities should be accessible to the greatest extent possible.

G. Lawn/Open Play

A gently sloping, open grassed area is planned adjacent to the creative play complex. This area can be used for unscheduled play such as ball or frisbee tossing, general running around, tag, and other open field games.

H. Rectangle Field

A full-sized, irrigated multi-use rectangle field is proposed for the area in the south central portion of the site. The field should not be lighted. It should be located to minimize grading of the site and to preserve as much of the existing woods as possible. Areas of tree removal for grading outside of the playing field should be replanted, using native trees and understory plants.

TYPICAL RECTANGLE FIELD USE

Benches and/or bleachers may be provided for players and spectators. If necessary, a small irrigation structure could be located at the edge of the field, in a location that will not interfere with open play areas or trail users, but will allow easy access for maintenance.

I. Visitor Amenities/Comfort

The park may provide an array of visitor amenities/comfort features. While not all of these features are specifically identified on the CDP, the park may include minor comfort amenities such as park benches/seating areas, trashcans, and/or a drinking fountain.

III. DESIGN CONCERNS

Having multiple activities grouped closely together will bring design challenges. These challenges can be addressed by ensuring a flow of movement within and between the elements, by providing enough area for each use, and through appropriate landscaping. The positive result of concentrating a creative mix of activities together will be to make this park unique and exciting for visitors.

Where there is no pavement or trails in the area near the parking lot, re-vegetation can occur. This planting can be coordinated with the Rain Garden/SWM design. Views to the activity area and into the park from the parking lot should be maintained for security.