

# LEE HIGH PARK

Master Plan Amendment



Approved June 23, 2004



# Lee High Park

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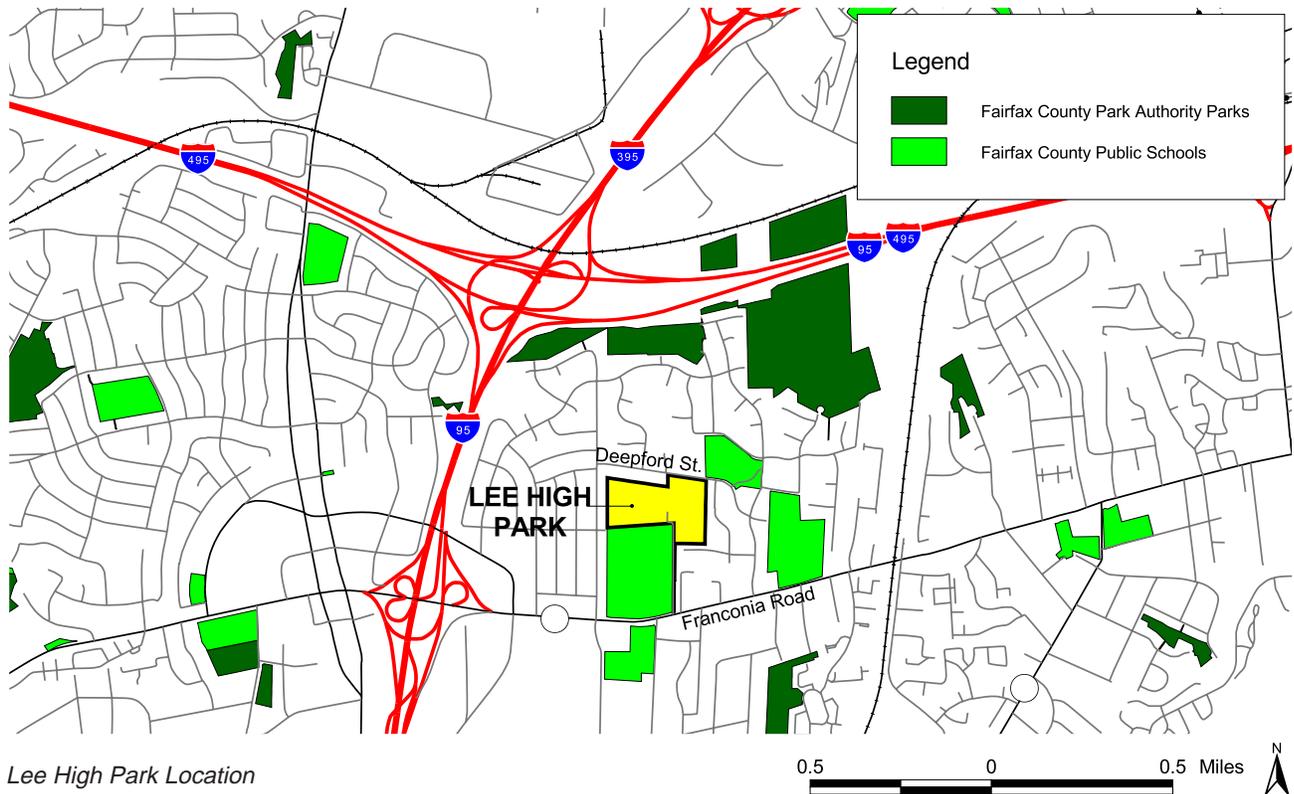
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Lee High Park Location

## Plan Purpose

### *Purpose of Plan Amendment*

Master Plan Amendments are a method to update Fairfax County Park Authority’s Master Plans. The Amendment process is designed to make changes to a master planned facility or use without reconsideration and revision of the entire plan.

This amendment focuses on changing the existing plan to add irrigation and lighting to Diamond Field #1 and to update the plan to show existing and planned amenities associated with this field. The field is heavily used by the Lee High School girls’ softball team. Additional playing opportunities for girls’ softball are needed at this site.

## Park Description and Significance

### *Park Location*

Lee High Park is located at 6501 Deepford Street in Springfield, just southeast of the I-95, I-395, I-495 interchange. The park is 23.6 acres in size and identified as Parcel 80-4 ((1))29 on Fairfax County Tax Maps. Lee High Park abuts Lee High School, a Fairfax County Public School located on Franconia Road in the Springfield area of the County. The entrance to Lee High Park is from Deepford Street. The park is located in the Lee Supervisory District.



Entrance to Lee High Park from Deepford Street

*Acquisition Timeline*

1961 16 acres acquired by FCPA  
1961 11.1632 acres acquired by FCPA  
1962 3.5714 acres sold by FCPA  
Total Acreage = 23.6

*Construction Timeline*

mid 1960's Lee High School built  
1966 Park Shelter built  
mid 1970's Athletic Fields built  
1984 Tennis Courts built

*Administrative History*

Lee High Park was acquired by the Fairfax County Park Authority in September 1961. Over the course of several transactions, a total of 23.6 acres was set aside for use as a community park.

The original Master Plan is dated October 1962, and was revised in July of 1979. Park development was incremental. Lee High School was built in the mid-1960's, and the park shelter was constructed in 1966. The athletic fields were built in the mid-70's, and the tennis courts were added in 1984.

*Park Classification*

Fairfax County Park Authority organizes its sites into four primary park classifications: Neighborhood, Community, District, and Countywide. Lee High Park is designated as a Community Park (Classification 2.0). The definition of a Community Park follows.

*“Community Parks provide a variety of individual and organized recreation activities conveniently located for short term visits. These parks may be located in residential neighborhoods or Suburban Centers. Wherever feasible, these parks should be located adjacent to elementary or intermediate schools to maximize co-location of recreation facilities; in mixed-use developments proximity to retail/office areas is desirable for co-location of parking and minimum impact on residences. Access should be via secondary road where possible. Parking is provided on-site or co-located with appropriate adjoining development. Community Parks primarily support active recreation including organized sports and may be intensely developed, in part, while still providing for a moderate amount of vegetated open space. Facility development may include, but is not necessarily limited, to the following:*

- 2 picnic units
- 2-4 court facilities (tennis, basketball, and/or volleyball)
- playground and tot lot
- garden plots
- fitness stations
- 2-3 athletic fields
- trails
- parking

*Courts and athletic fields may be lighted or unlighted. On-site parking is required for athletic field development (if site accommodates development of 4 or*



Trail through the woods

*more fields, restroom facilities should be provided). Community Parks will typically be 10-50 acres in size serving several neighborhoods. The service area is measured by a 5 to 10 minute drive or 15 to 20 minute bicycle trip. Depending on the density of surrounding communities, the service area generally extends up to three miles.”*

### *Planning Context*

Lee High Park is located in Planning Area IV, Springfield Planning District and Monticello Woods (S8) Community Planning Sector. The County Comprehensive Plan Map shows this property planned for public park use. The specific recommendation in the current Comprehensive Plan text for Lee High Community Park is to “complete development as per the approved 1962 master plan”.

The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan recommendation is outdated and should be updated at such a time as the Area Plan Park Charts are amended.

### *Park and Recreation Need*

The need for park and recreation facilities is determined through long-range planning efforts. The Park Authority tracks inventory of facilities and land, looks at industry trends, surveys County citizen recreation demand, and compares itself with peer jurisdictions to determine reasonable need. This needs assessment process was most recently conducted in 2002/2003.

Findings from the citizen demand survey conducted as part of this process show that County parks are heavily used by County residents for a variety of active and passive recreation activities. Small community parks such as Lee High Park are ranked in the citizen demand survey as the most used park facility.

The 2003 Needs Assessment Report indicates that 2.4% of residents aged 12-17 participate in fast pitch softball an average of 84 days per year. The adopted facility service level for 60’ skinned diamond fields is 1 field per 8,800 residents.

### *Strategic Plan Initiative Elements*

The FCPA Strategic Plan identifies seven values for the agency. The following value specifically relates to the purpose of this Master Plan Amendment as developing a partnership between FCPA and the Fairfax County Public Schools:

*“Developing Partnerships - We believe seeking and maintaining active partnerships with neighborhood and community organizations and individuals is essential to becoming a vital and treasured component of the communities we serve.”*



*Residential neighborhood along Deepford Street*

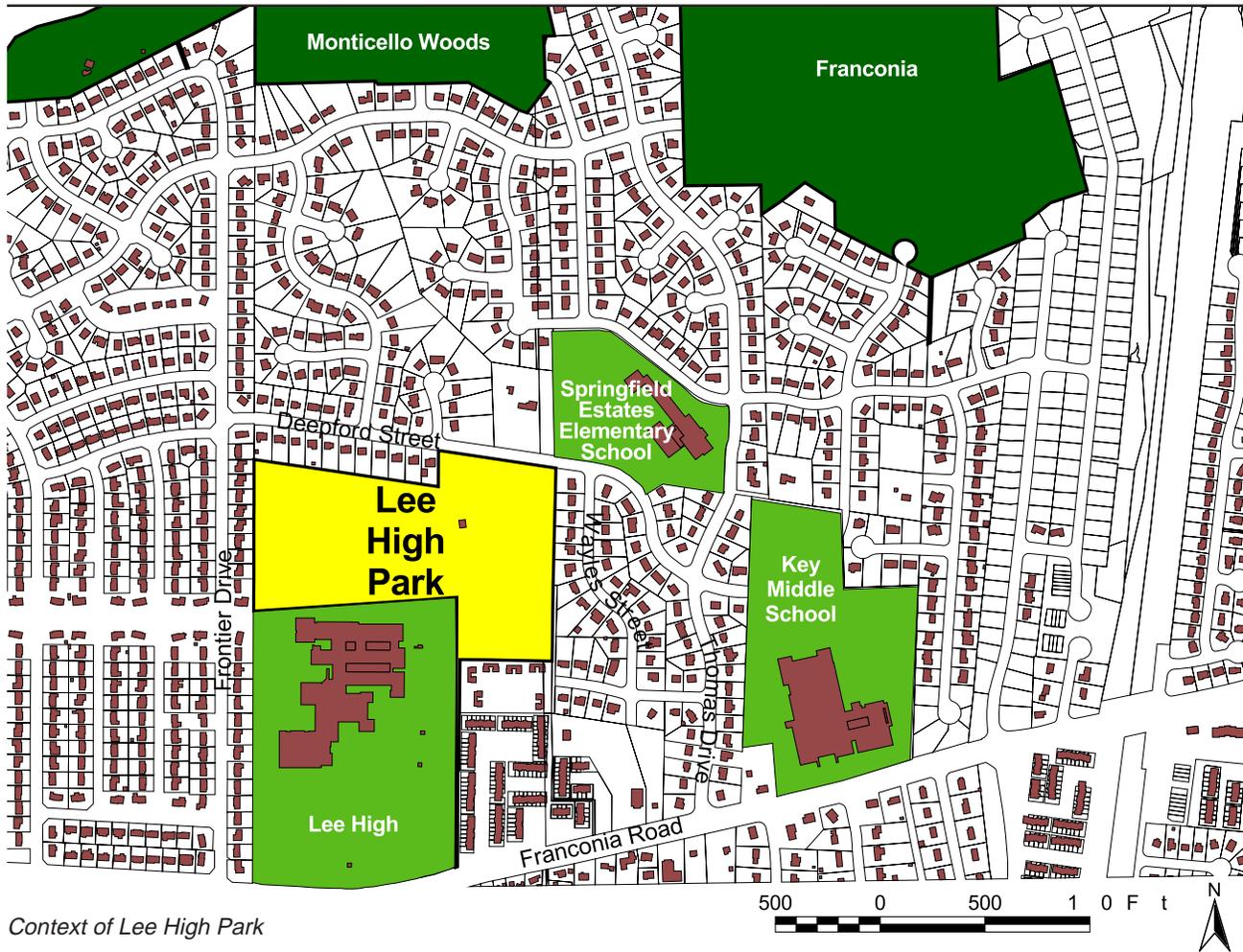


*Entrance to Lee High School, at the southwestern corner of the Park*



*Private swim club across Deepford Street from the Park*

# Lee High Park



Context of Lee High Park



View of southern boundary of Park, with Lee High School in the background



View of northern boundary of Park abutting residential neighborhood along Deepford Street

## Site Analysis

### Park Context

Lee High Park is surrounded by residential neighborhoods on its eastern, western and northern sides. Lee High School abuts the southern edge of the park, and the school students use the park facilities during the day. Springfield Estates Elementary School is across Deepford Street, and Key Middle School is east of the park on Franconia Road. All three are Fairfax County Public Schools. A private swim club is located across the street from the main entrance to the park and abuts Springfield Estates Elementary School.

Lee High School is the nearest neighbor to the park's diamond and rectangular fields. The closest residential neighbor is approximately 150 feet from the non-lighted fields, and about 400 feet from the field proposed to be lighted.

Existing vegetation buffers the athletic uses on the site and the residential neighbors. Mature deciduous woodlands mixed with a few pines cover the eastern section of the park. The understory in the eastern woodlands provides a dense buffer between the residential neighborhood to the east and the park facilities. Deciduous woodlands also abut the western and northwestern

edges of the site. Mature trees abut the residential properties to the north, although the woodlands are not as dense or deep as elsewhere on the site.

*Existing Site Conditions*

Existing site conditions are examined to learn about valuable resources as well as potential problems. Analysis of existing site conditions includes review of the park setting, built facilities, and natural resources.

*Natural Features*

The natural features of the site include soils, slopes, vegetation, and other environmental aspects of the site.

Topography, Hydrology, and Soils

The majority of the site is fairly flat. There is a slight slope around the wooded area on the southwest corner of the park. The area with the steepest slopes is on the eastern side of the site, particularly within the wooded areas. There is also a drainageway leading into a culvert just east of the main park entrance.

No Resource Protection Areas were identified on the site. No soil mapping has been done for this site.

Flora

Much of the site is vegetated, with mature woodlands and large grassy areas. The southeastern edge and the southwest corner of the site are home to a densely vegetated understory and overstory, primarily consisting of oak and maple. Pines are found along the southern perimeter of the woodlands. The northeast corner is somewhat less densely vegetated, but retains a dense understory and is intermixed with pine. The woodlands have been cleared in small areas for trails and a picnic area. The northwest and north central portion of the site has a relatively dense tree canopy, without an understory. It appears as if the trees, a mixture of maple, oak, cedar and holly, have been pruned up to a height of ten to fifteen feet. Grass grows under the trees. Some shrubbery is clustered along the northern boundary adjacent to the residential units.

Fauna

No specific fauna inventory has been completed. Indications of a large goose population were evident on the open ball fields in winter 2004.

Green Infrastructure

The Fairfax County Park Authority has developed a modeling tool to identify significant natural and cultural resources in the County. Using the County’s geographic information system (GIS), the FCPA has produced a countywide “Green



*Drainageway and culvert*



*Woodlands along the northern perimeter cleared of understory*



*Dense woodlands with an understory on the southeastern perimeter and eastern boundary of the site*



*Dense woodland on southwestern portion of site*

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 indicates that the vicinity around Lee High Park has a very low resource value. Though the site does not rank high within the Green Infrastructure Model, the site is important to the local community as an area of open space, with areas of passive and active recreation.

### Cultural Features

The Cultural Features of the site have not been researched or documented.

### Infrastructure

This section describes built facilities at Lee High Park and how they are used. Built facilities are those elements that people have added to the park. They include buildings, trails, and athletic fields.



*Overhead utility lines behind Lee High School, adjacent to the ballfield*



*Tennis Courts at Lee High Park*



*Existing bleachers and dugouts*

### Utilities

Overhead electrical lines exist along Cimarron Street and terminate behind Lee High School adjacent to the ballfield. Two utility poles abut the school’s northwestern corner. It is anticipated that power can be supplied from that point. The school’s parking lot is lit with freestanding fixtures along the park and school boundary line. The existing scoreboard adjacent to the ballfield is electric and has a power source already.

### Access

There are no roads within the park boundaries. Deepford Street abuts the park’s northwestern corner along the northern perimeter. Public access is available from a pedestrian entrance located on Deepford Street and via Lee High School.

### Parking

There is no on-site parking within the park boundaries. A small lot is shown on the 1979 Master Plan, with access from Deepford Street. On-street parking is available on Deepford Street, and parking is available in the Lee High School parking lots to the south.

Recreation Facilities

Athletic Fields and Courts

Lee High Park is home to two diamond fields - one a 60' skinned diamond (#1), and the other a 65' skinned diamond (#2). The 60' diamond has dugouts, a scoreboard, bleachers, and a temporary batting cage associated with it. There is one 180' X 300' rectangular field (#3) that is in an overlay configuration over the two diamond fields. A second rectangular field is partially located in the park, but is primarily located on Lee High School's grounds northeast of the high school building. The park also includes two tennis courts. The sports facilities are used by students at Lee High School as well as residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.



*Rectangular field shared with Lee High School*

The fields are primarily used and allocated to the Lee High School teams. Diamond Fields #1 and #2 are also used by a local youth sports league and church softball team. Rectangular Field #3 is used primarily by Lee High School teams in the fall when the diamond field sports are not in season. Rectangular Field #3 is also allocated to a youth league on the weekends in the Fall. Because of the overlay design of the fields, the diamond fields and rectangular field cannot be used simultaneously.



*Existing playground*

Playground

The playground is home to several play structures, including a swing set.

Open Play Area

An open area near the athletic fields provides additional flexible flat play area. Additional open area for flexible play is located southeast of the playground and shelter complex.



*Existing picnic area*

Paths/Trails

Several paths lead towards Lee High School from the surrounding residential neighborhoods. One path starts midway along the length of the park and travels from north to south. Another starts in the woods in the northeast corner of the park and continues southwest. A fork from this path leads south and makes for a more rustic hike through the woods. Except for the rustic woodland trail (which consists of compacted earth), trails are surfaced with crushed gravel.

Picnic Area

A large picnic area is located within a mature woodlands in the northeastern portion of the park. The area has numerous picnic tables and several charcoal grills.



*Existing shelter/restroom facility*

Structures

An existing park structure serves both as a picnic shelter and a restroom.



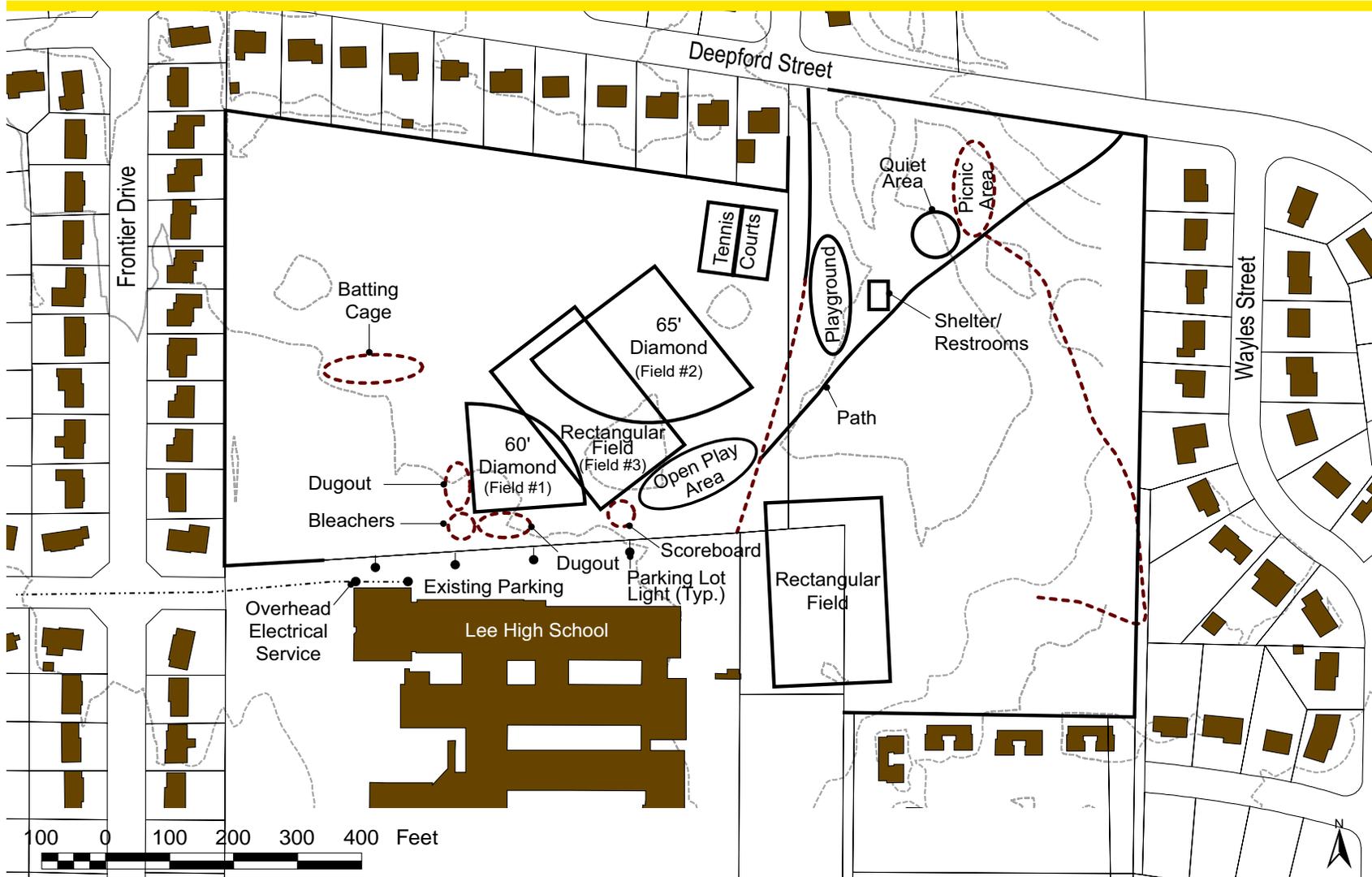


# Built Facilities Inventory

## Lee High Park

Prepared by Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.  
March 4, 2004

- - - Existing Uses Not on 1979 Master Plan
- Existing Uses on 1979 Master Plan



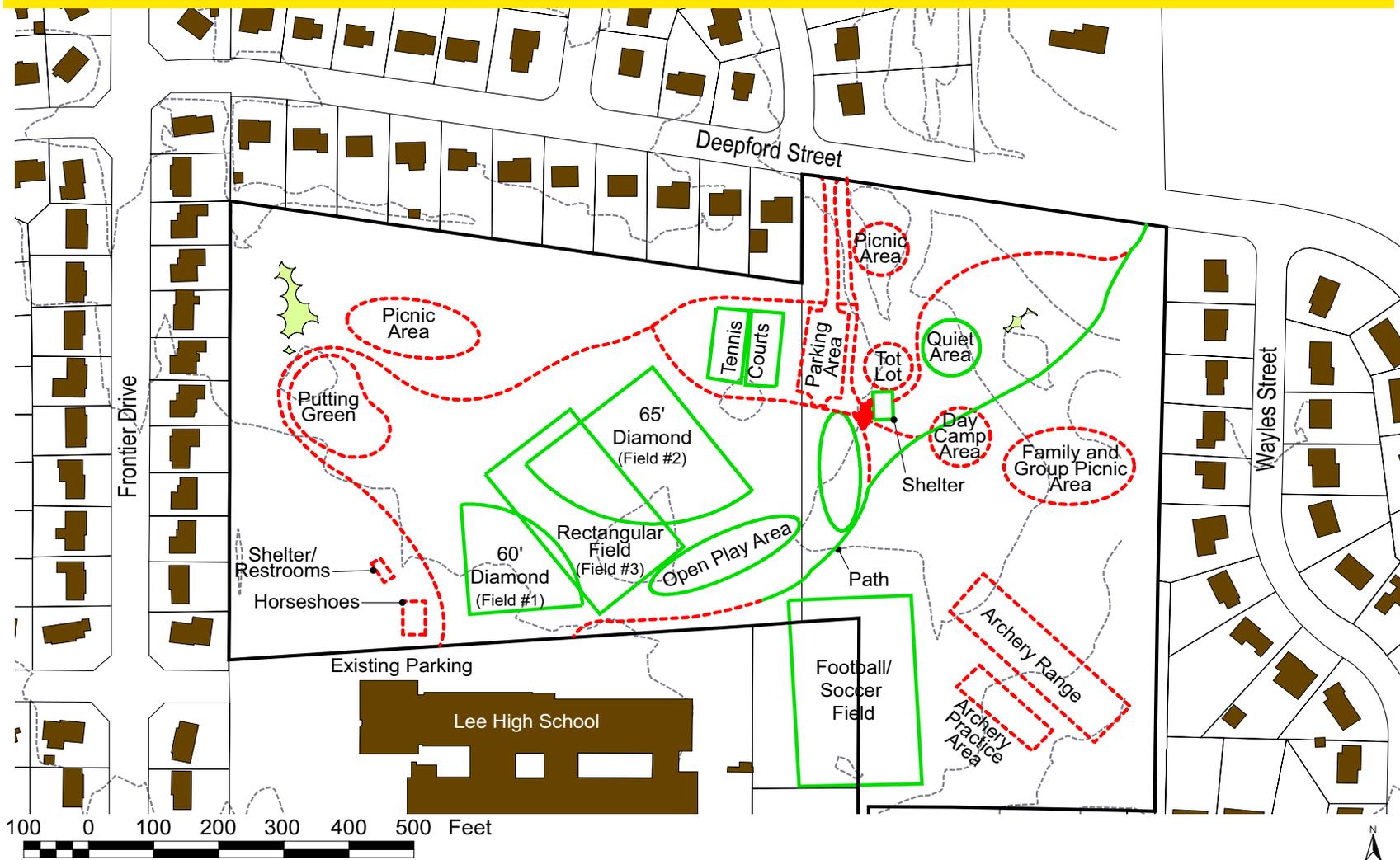


# Unbuilt and Built Facilities Lee High Park

Prepared by Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.  
March 4, 2004

Uses and Facilities  
on 1979 Master Plan:

- - - - - Not Built
- Built



## Other Amenities

A Quiet Area defined on the original Master Plan is located northeast of the Shelter/Restroom complex and west of the picnic area.

### How 1979 Master Plan and Built Facilities Differ

A Master Plan was created for Lee High Park in 1962 and revised in 1979 (See 1979 Master Plan Graphic, page 8). Comparing the Master Plan with Lee High Park today, some elements as shown on the plan are built, while others not shown on the plan have been developed over time at the park. The sidebar on this page classifies uses according to how they relate to the 1979 revised Master Plan.

### Built Facilities Inventory

The Built Facilities Inventory graphic shows the existing uses and facilities at Lee High Park. The uses and facilities are coded in two symbols to distinguish between existing uses that are not on the 1979 Master Plan and uses that are on the 1979 Master Plan.

Some of the uses and facilities on the Master Plan were built in different locations than shown on the Plan (such as the picnic area). These have been categorized as built facilities that are not included on the 1979 Lee High Park Master Plan.

### Unbuilt and Built Facilities

The Unbuilt and Built Facilities graphic shows which facilities on the 1979 Master Plan have been built or remain unbuilt. Unbuilt facilities are indicated by dashed lines and built facilities are shown with solid lines.

### Regulatory Conditions and Adjacent Property Impacts

Proposed changes to the Master Plan are affected by the various regulations such as zoning.

### Zoning

Lee High Park is within the R-3 zoning district that permits residential development up to three dwelling units/acre. This zoning district also allows public uses, such as a park. The properties around the park lie in zoning districts in R-3, R-4 (residential district, four dwelling units/acre), and R-8 (residential district, eight dwelling units/acre) as indicated on the map above.

Article 14, Part 9 of the Fairfax County Zoning ordinance describes the County's Outdoor Lighting Standards. Specifically, Section 14-904 addresses outdoor recreation facilities lighting standards and seeks to limit glare and light trespass onto adjacent properties from light fixtures. These

## *Master Plan Elements*

*Built Facilities at Lee High Park Included on the 1979 Master Plan (See Built Facilities Inventory, page 9)*

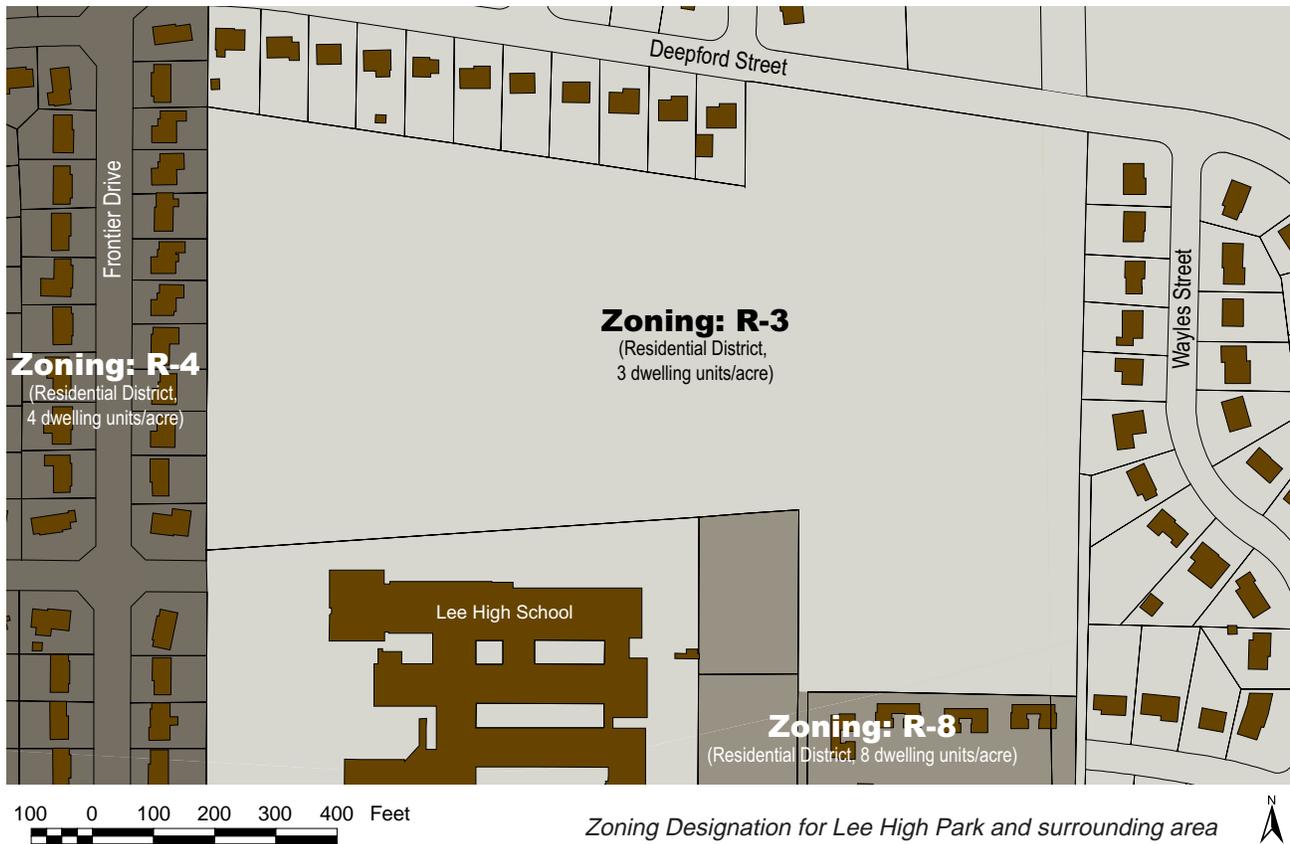
- 65' Diamond Field
- 60' Diamond Field
- Open Play Area
- Rectangular Field as overlay
- Football/Soccer Field
- Shelter/Restrooms
- Tennis Courts
- Playground
- Quiet Area
- Open Play Area
- Paths (at NE corner and at north central entrance)

*Built Facilities that are Not Included on the 1979 Lee High Park Master Plan (See Built Facilities Inventory, page 9)*

- Scoreboard
- 2 Dugouts
- Bleachers
- Batting Cage
- Paths (different alignment)
- Picnic Area (different location)
- Trail through woods
- Path leading to Lee High

*Unbuilt Facilities at Lee High Park, included on 1979 Plan (See Unbuilt and Built Facilities, page 10)*

- Picnic Areas
- Putting Green
- Shelter (west of sports fields)
- Horseshoes
- Paths (throughout the site)
- Archery Range
- Archery Practice Area
- Day Camp Area
- Tot Lot
- Parking Area for 50 Cars



standards apply to the design of the field lighting and as such, any proposed field lighting will comply with this County ordinance.

Adding lights to an athletic field increases the hours of usage for the facility and the park’s capacity to meet field demands. Due to the potential impacts to the surrounding residential areas and roads, extreme care is required when adding lights to a field. All issues related to lighting should be evaluated carefully. To reduce light spillage and glare onto the adjacent residences and roads, state-of-the-art athletic field lights should be used. Light use should also be limited to no later than 11:00 PM so as to not disrupt the adjacent neighborhoods.



60' Diamond Field #1 in need of improvement

The public facilities, specifically the field lighting, described in this Master Plan Amendment require a review process in accordance with Section 15.2-2232 of the Code of Virginia. This process includes detailed review by County staff and could be determined a "feature shown" through an administrative process. If the athletic field lighting is not deemed a "feature shown" a public hearing will be required for Planning Commission approval.



*Plan Amendment Area: This Master Plan Amendment deals only with the area surrounding Diamond Field #1.*

### Master Plan Amendment Area

As stated previously, this Master Plan Amendment addresses only the specific area of the park near the southernmost diamond field (Diamond Field #1). The Amendment concerns existing and proposed amenities associated with the field.

Diamond Field #1 meets general athletic field design standards. This field is primarily used by the Lee High School girls' softball team. This facility is one of two remaining unlit girls' softball fields used by Fairfax County high school teams. Field lighting is needed to enhance this field's competitive quality and provide equitable facilities for County teams in accordance with Title IX requirements. Further lighting will ensure that the field use is maximized for scheduled games and practices. Park athletic field lighting has been installed in similar community settings across the County.

Additional support facilities are also necessary for Diamond Field #1 to function at an optimal level and include a permanent batting cage, a press box, and field irrigation. These support facilities, as well as the existing built support facilities

(bleachers, dugouts, and scoreboard) are proposed to be added to the Conceptual Development Plan and designated as support facilities.

## Conceptual Development Plan

This section describes elements from the 1979 Master Plan that will remain on the Plan and those that will be deleted from the plan. The section also describes new elements to be added to the plan. Because this Master Plan Amendment's purpose addresses a specific area of the park and focuses on changes to the existing plan related to Diamond Field #1, it does not address built and unbuilt items in other areas of the Park's Master Plan, nor does it make any recommendations for changes to other areas of the park. The following discussion on recommended changes is focused on the area around the ballfields. Refer to the Conceptual Development Plan Graphic, page 15.

### *1979 Plan Features, To Remain* Sports Fields and Courts

The two diamond fields, rectangular overlay field, tennis courts, and rectangular field have all been built and will remain on the plan.

### Trails and Paths

The path system on the 1979 plan will largely remain the same. Some minor changes will be necessary to accommodate the facilities that have been built or will be built near the diamond.

### Shelter/Restroom/Pressbox

A shelter/restroom is shown on the 1979 Master Plan near Diamond Field #1. A shelter/restroom facility is built near the picnic area at the edge of the woods. The structure designated for shelter/restroom located adjacent to Diamond Field #1 will remain on the plan and will also serve as a pressbox for the field.

### *Additions to Plan*

#### Improvements and Support Facilities to Diamond Field #1

Bleachers, two dugouts, and a scoreboard have been built and will be added to the Conceptual Development Plan and designated as support facilities to Diamond Field #1. Additional support facilities for Diamond Field #1 will also be added and include lights, irrigation, a batting cage, and a press box/shelter/restroom structure.

### Vegetated Buffer

A buffer is proposed on the north central portion of the park to help shield adjacent properties from the diamond fields. Planting additional evergreen trees such as American Holly or



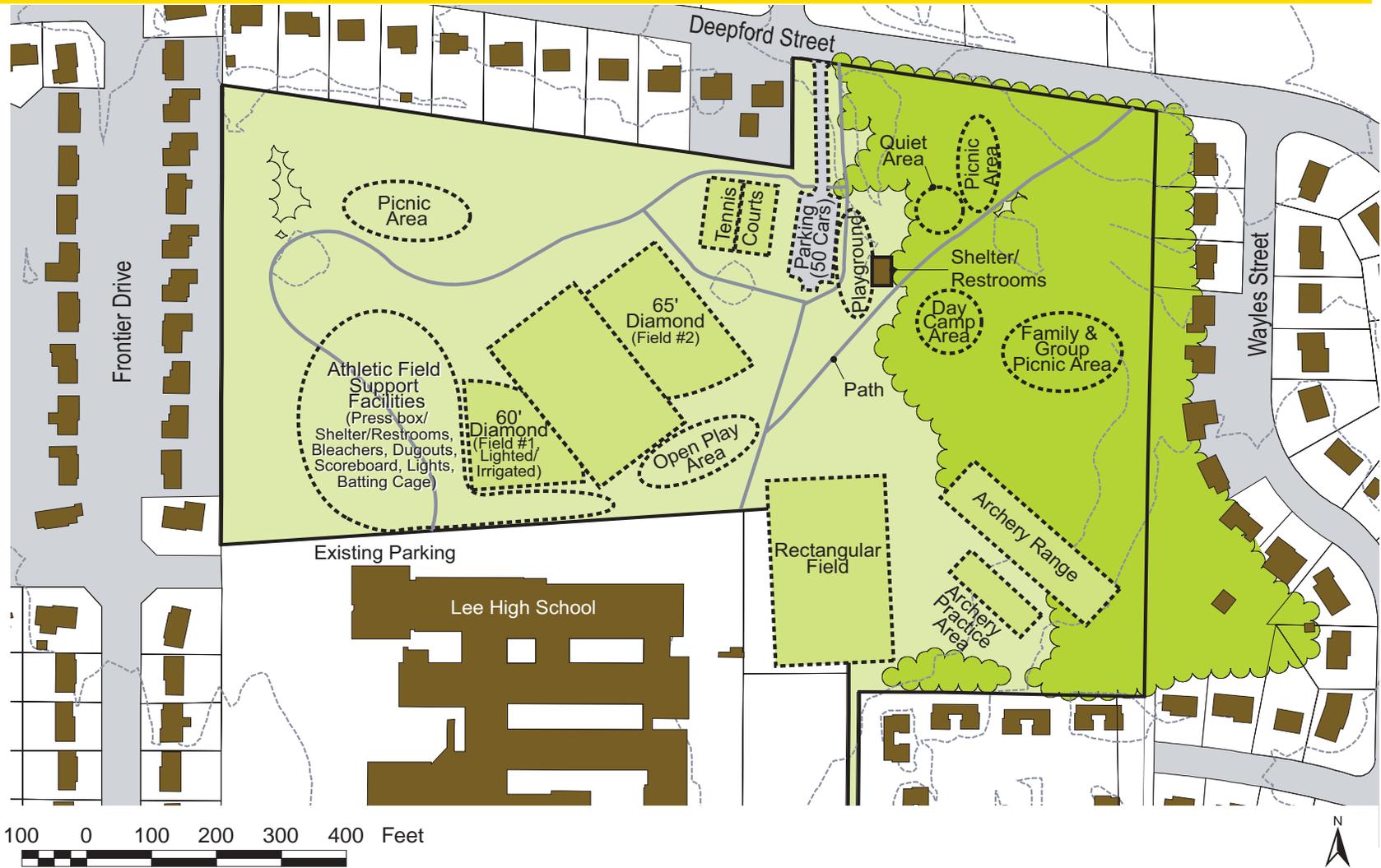
View towards batting cage



# Conceptual Development Plan

## Lee High Park

Prepared by Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C.  
June 23, 2004



Virginia Cedar for year-round screening is proposed. If security is an issue as evidenced by the limbed up existing trees with no understory, evergreen hedges could be planted along the northern perimeter of the park adjacent to the residential neighborhood.

*Deletions from Plan*

Horseshoes

The horseshoe pit areas have been removed from the plan. The designated location for this facility is now proposed to be used for improvements to the diamond fields. No significant need has been demonstrated for this type of facility.

Putting Green

The putting green has been removed from the plan because it occupies the location of the proposed batting cage. This park is an inappropriate location for this proposed facility. Since this plan was improved in 1979, the number of public and private golf courses across the County has increased dramatically and provide higher quality facilities than might be conceived or developed at this location.

End of Report