

4.0 Park Purpose and Guiding Principles

4.1 Park Purpose

Fairfax County Park Authority is committed to protecting Laurel Hill Park as an asset for the county, and a unique place to be enjoyed by the public both as an open space and recreation amenity. Laurel Hill Park is strategically positioned in a regional context as a key parcel for shaping the County's open space network and guiding the preservation of natural and cultural resources. The Park will also provide recreation facilities to help meet the needs of County residents. The land at Laurel Hill Park is part of a series of histories of local and national importance. Fairfax County Park Authority is committed to honoring the history and celebrating the prospects for the future of the site.

4.2 Guiding Principles

A set of guiding principles have been developed to serve as a framework for the Laurel Hill Park Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) that reflect the property's unique elements. The objective of the Fairfax County Park Authority is to optimize the value of Laurel Hill Park as a natural resource, a cultural resource, and a County focal point for leisure activities. The following principles have been formulated in keeping with the ideals of sustainability and sense of community that were rooted in the Progressive Era. Using these as a guide, the objective is to celebrate the various legacies born from the former prison property through education and stewardship. These principles provide structure to the Conceptual Development Plan and a set of criteria by which to evaluate future development opportunities.

Promote Sustainability

The Conceptual Development Plan promotes principles of sustainability. Sustainability is reflected in the balance between protecting sensitive natural areas and meeting the recreation needs of Fairfax County citizens. These should be incorporated in a manner that promotes a sense of community through access to informal gathering spaces and a variety of activities that would attract a diverse range of visitors.

Fairfax County has identified several key Sustainability Principles:

- Maintain safe and caring communities
- Practice environmental stewardship
- Build livable spaces
- Maintain healthy economies
- Connect people and places
- Create a culture of engagement

Environmental sustainability in the construction and maintenance of structures, trails, landscaped areas and open space should be encouraged to minimize negative impacts on the local ecology. Standards that promote sustainability have been developed by organizations such as the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). The USGBC's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design

(LEED) program promotes sustainable design and construction, including solar energy, recycled materials, site design, drainage, and accessibility.

Public spaces should be inclusive to all visitors. The park should offer activities and facilities that promote education of the Park's history as well as its natural resources through an arrangement of active and passive features. The goal is to develop Laurel Hill with a holistic view of the park and its relationship to its surroundings and visitors.

Interpret the History

The identity of the land can be redefined by interpreting its historic and cultural legacies. This can be done through a unique mix of museums, cultural uses, active agriculture, and interpretation of architecture and former land uses. The cultural identity of the site can be integrated through themed recreation and environmental activities that reflect events and characters from Laurel Hill's social, cultural, political, penal and military past.

Create a Unique Character

Laurel Hill has been inaccessible to the community for decades. Today, Fairfax County has the opportunity to redefine the character of Laurel Hill as a special amenity. The open space is made up of various characteristics which are distinctive within the county, such as the gently undulating topography, woodland patterns and agrarian landscape. The design and preservation of these features can be integrated with the park's history for themed recreational and educational uses. This can be enhanced through the integration of cultural and environmental resources in a physical and programmatic model. The distinct character will help to create a long-term amenity.

Protect Natural Resources

Laurel Hill is one of the largest undeveloped parcels in the region and is replete with delicate wildlife and natural systems. A priority for Laurel Hill is to preserve open space, woodlands, distinctive agrarian lands, and protect wildlife and natural habitats. This is to be accomplished in part by adhering to environmental quality through sustainable park and facilities design. A plan that promotes nature-based recreation such as wildlife observation, hiking, and agriculture can work to protect natural areas. Educational programs that promote awareness and stewardship can enhance the environmental quality for future generations.

Serve the Needs of Fairfax County

As the population of Fairfax County continues to grow, residents have an increasing demand for recreational space (see Section 4.4 for more details on the Needs Assessment). These could include athletic fields, picnic areas, and supporting public facilities for a range of activities. Such elements contribute to the quality of life of existing and future residents, and can contribute to the long-term health of the community. Using the results from county-wide analyses and needs assessments, the Park Authority aims to balance the historic, environmental and regional significance of Laurel Hill with the objectives for active recreational facilities.

Provide Access and Transportation

In the near future, the Laurel Hill property will be accessible to the public for the first time in almost a century. While an existing network of roads provides access to the property, some existing roadways do not meet current standards and are not constructed to accommodate current or future transportation needs of the region. The Park Authority Board has expressed interest in reviewing the transportation needs of the Laurel Hill property, inclusive of all proposed transportation impacts, to determine the scope and timing of roadway improvements. As part of that review, impacts to park resources and proposed uses should also be considered in determining roadway alignments, intensity and design.

Develop a Greenway and Trail Network

Trail systems and greenway corridors provide aesthetic, environmental, health and recreational benefits. Laurel Hill Greenway is a key component of the Cross County Trail that will ultimately extend from the Occoquan River in the south to the Potomac River in Great Falls National Park in the north (see Figure 13). In linking a system of trails throughout the county, the Laurel Hill Greenway will help provide a well-developed and interconnected network of pedestrian, hiking, bicycle and equestrian trails that will enhance access to and around the site while providing a much-desired form of recreation. Trails should be designed in a sustainable manner with minimal impact on the land using ecologically-sensible materials to the extent practicable.

4.3 Comprehensive Plan Guidance

Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan includes guidelines for the redevelopment and allowable future land uses within the Laurel Hill Community Planning Sector (LP1). The Laurel Hill Park Master Plan strives to optimize natural resource areas to preserve open space and set forth adaptive reuses which will be compatible with community needs and surrounding areas. The Conceptual Development Plan for Laurel Hill was oriented around components of the Comprehensive Plan as a framework. The following guidelines are provided in the Comprehensive Plan.

Environmental Quality Corridor System (EQC)

The site includes a series of Environmental Quality Corridors including the Rocky Branch EQC and the Giles Run EQC. These corridors contain significant heritage resources and biologically sensitive areas, particularly in the northern portion of the park, and are envisioned to be protected as major resources by being incorporated into the County parks for preservation.

The EQC areas and associated stream valleys should be preserved as open space with clearing and grading on abutting areas done in a manner to minimize the negative impacts of erosion and siltation on adjacent EQCs and the associated streams.

The Laurel Hill Greenway Trail

This major greenway trail is planned to use much of the old rail bed that crosses the park from the northeastern corner and continues into the Occoquan Regional Park. This trail, as discussed above, will be a major link in the countywide trail system and provide the southern component of the Cross County Trail.

Open Space and Pedestrian System

A pedestrian and bicycle circulation system (i.e., trails and sidewalks) should be provided adjacent to all arterial and collector roads within the property (i.e., Silverbrook Road, Hooes Road, Lorton Road, Ox Road and Furnace Road). This system of trails and sidewalks will provide links between residential areas, the stream valley parks, other recreation areas, and the Laurel Hill Greenway. The following is a set of guidelines and recommendations to be used in conjunction with the Countywide Trails Plan to develop the open space and non-motorized transportation system:

- The abandoned railroad bed running through LP1 should be developed as a major linear open space.
- The Laurel Hill Greenway, which is planned to be the major linear open space feature within the LP1, should be developed in phases as the redevelopment of the former D.C. Department of Corrections property occurs.
- The EQC areas and associated stream valleys such as Pohick Creek, South Run, Rocky Branch, Silverbrook Run, Giles Run and Mills Branch should be preserved as open space with public access.
- An 18 hole public golf course and related facilities should be provided.
- Pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems (trails and sidewalks) should be provided adjacent to all arterial and collector roads within the property, thus becoming an integral element of the overall transportation network.
- The pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems should be constructed with private and public resources.
- Grade-separated trail crossings should be provided for some major roads, such as Lorton Road.
- Along the major commuter routes, separate bicycle lanes or trails should be encouraged to accommodate bicycle commuters and high speed recreation cycling.
- Schools should be encouraged to co-locate with park uses to further integrate recreational amenities and the utilization of open space.
- Within the proposed residential neighborhoods, recreational facilities should be provided that are sufficient to serve the neighborhood recreational needs of the residents.
- The two Nike sites should be incorporated into Community or Countywide Parks as heritage resource sites to ensure that these heritage resources are adequately conserved and protected.
- The former Dairy Farm facility site should become a County Park with special purpose areas; for example, a farm park, horticultural center, athletic field complex, or other recreation facilities, or equestrian center.
- An equestrian trail link from the proposed equestrian trail in Occoquan Regional Park to the former Dairy Farm facility site should be considered compatible with other recreation uses in this area.

4.4 Needs Assessment

The 2003 Fairfax County Park Authority Needs Assessment was developed to address park, recreation and open space needs in Fairfax County, and to define the Fairfax County Park Authority's role in future land acquisition and capital improvements designed to meet those needs.

The Process

Extensive data collection and analysis resulted in the adoption of needs-based facility standards by the Park Authority Board. The standards provided a basis to compare citizens' demand with facility supply to determine facility service level deficiencies. Following this step, the Park Authority Board determined its share of service delivery responsibility vis-à-vis other area service providers and endorsed contribution level goals for the next decade. Finally, using the standards, contribution levels and existing facility assessments, a needs-based 10-year phased Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and funding strategies were developed as the capstone to the process.

Findings

The needs assessment identifies a total of \$377 million in recreation need, \$226 million of which is identified as current need for new facilities. Park Authority Board adopted contribution levels for various facility types are shown in Table 3 on the following page. This data highlights two important outgrowths of the needs study that are relevant to the Laurel Hill planning process.

1. Extensive need for certain high demand facility types. In many instances the level of need for new facilities is daunting. The Park Authority Board has committed to contributing large numbers of rectangular athletic fields, reservable picnic areas, trail mileage, nature centers and indoor gymnasium square footage, and an equestrian facility, for example, to meet the current need for new recreation facilities.
2. Need for new types of countywide facilities. The study also revealed needs for new types of larger scale recreation facilities that did not exist at the time of the Park Authority's last needs assessment in the early 1990s. This new breed of facilities includes the need for several countywide playgrounds and skateparks, and a countywide dog park. These facilities represent larger versions of more familiar recreational amenities that provide the expanded entertainment value that much of today's recreating public has come to expect. Because of their scale, these facilities are best suited for larger sites.

Laurel Hill, by virtue of its size, character, site characteristics and location in the community, represents a unique opportunity to meet some of both types of need. As one of the few remaining large tracts of land to be master planned in the near future, Laurel Hill must play a role in satisfying its share of community need for facility types where that need is extensive. Similarly, Laurel Hill represents one of the few opportunities the Park Authority will have in the near term to absorb the current need for new types of countywide facilities that emerged from the needs assessment process.

Table 3: Fairfax County Park Authority Facility Standards and Contribution levels

Facility Type	Current Public Facility Service Level (# of Public facilities/2000 population)	Adopted Countywide Service Level Facility Standard	FCPA Contribution Level Number of Facilities to be Contributed through 2013
Playgrounds	1 site/3,400	1 site/2,800	2 Countywide Playgrounds
Multi-use Courts	1 court/2,500	1 court/2,100	12
Reservable Picnic Areas	1 site/16,800	1 site/12,000	55
Neighborhood Dog Parks	1 site/165,000	1 site/86,000	6
Countywide Dog Parks	N/A	1 site/400,000	1
Neighborhood Skate Parks	1 site/991,000	1 site/106,000	9
Countywide Skate Parks	N/A	1 site/210,000	2
Golf (Holes)	1 hole/4,600	1 hole/3,200	0
Trails (in miles)	1.17 miles/1,000	Consistent with Adopted Trails Plan	75
Nature Centers (in Sq Ft)	0.015 sf/person	0.04 sf/person	13,070 s.f.
RECenters (in Sq. Ft.)	0.8 sf/person	1.1 sf/person	152,118 s.f.
Indoor Gyms (in Sq Ft)	2.6 sf/person	2.8 sf/person	101,741 s.f.
Neighborhood and Community Parks (in acres)	4.2 Acres/1,000	5 Acres/1,000	40 acres
District and Countywide Parks (in acres)	11 acres/1,000	13 acres/1,000	236 acres
Outdoor Family Aquatics	1 site/991,000	1 site/570,000	Expand Existing Water Mine
Horticulture Parks	1 site/496,000	1 site/350,000	Maintain existing Countywide horticulture park and develop horticultural themed community parks
Equestrian Facilities	1 site/991,000	1 site/595,000	1
Waterfront Parks	1 site/99,000	1 site/90,000	2
Rectangle Fields	1 field/4,100	1 field/2,500	95
Diamonds with Skinned Infields (Type 300S)	1 field/30,000	1 field/22,000	4
Diamonds with Skinned Infields (Type 200S)	1 field/9,300	1 field/8,800	0
Diamonds with Grassed Infields (Type 200G)	1 field/6,300	1 field/6,500	0
Diamonds with Grassed Infields (Type 350G)	1 field/43,000	1 field/28,000	9

5.0 General Management Plan

Management Framework

The management framework integrates the research, site analysis and data presented in this document. Management zones have been defined to provide a framework for decision-making (see Figure 15). Existing conditions and recommendations from the community 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 potential uses stated for each zone describes what uses are acceptable for that zone. The potential uses are intentionally general to allow flexibility when making future decisions.

5.1 Resource Management Zones

The Resource Management zones include the northern portion of the site, the area adjacent to the pond along Silverbrook Road west of the High School and several areas associated with Giles Run Environmental Quality Corridor. This north area includes steep slopes, several streams and significant wooded areas. These wooded areas include a good biological diversity with excellent wildlife habitat. The area adjacent to the pond includes rolling topography, meadows, wooded areas that support a good biological diversity with excellent wildlife habitat. Human impact in this zone will be kept to a minimum. The areas adjacent to Giles Run are wooded and include some steeper slopes. Management of the natural resources will be allowed, however environmental degradation within this zone shall be prohibited.

Potential Uses

- Limited trail and trail support facilities
- Wildlife and habitat management
- Research, interpretation and education of natural and cultural resources

5.2 Recreation Zones

There are several recreation zones within the Laurel Hill Park. These include the recreation adjacent to the high school site near Silverbrook Road, the recreation zones east of the Nike Launch site along Lorton/Furnace Road and an area just north of the Resource Recovery facility including the Diary Farm.

These areas are characterized by flatter terrain and minimal existing wooded areas. These areas can support development of recreation areas and are intended to provide a variety recreation experiences. Natural resources within the recreation zone should be managed and new development should be carefully planned to minimize grading and other major changes to the areas.

Potential Uses

- Trails and trail support facilities
- Meadows and wildlife and habitat management
- Cultural and natural resource interpretation
- Picnic areas

- Rectangular fields
- Diamond fields
- Restrooms
- Equestrian facilities and trails
- Access road
- Parking lot(s)

5.3 Greenway Zone

The Laurel Hill Greenway is a zone that ranges from approximately 50 feet wide within the Redevelopment and Reuse Area to approximately 350 feet wide within the park areas. The Greenway traverses a number of different landscape environments from the urbanized zone around the Reuse and Redevelopment area to rolling meadow areas to wooded areas to stream corridors. This variety of landscape environment will make the greenway a unique experience for the trail users. In addition, the trail provides connections between the various zones along the greenway.

Potential Uses

- Multi-purpose trails (hiking, jogging, biking, equestrian)
- Interpretive and directional signs
- Small seating areas
- Other trail support facilities.

5.4 Entrance Zone

Entrance zones occur along Lorton Road, Furnace Road and the Reuse Area Access Road. These roads provide the initial impressions when entering Laurel Hill Park. The entrance zones should be designed to highlight the unique qualities of this important area by providing views of the rolling landscapes and park facilities. Gateways into the park should be designed to meet the park needs and reflect the unique character of the site.

Potential Uses

- Roads and road improvements
- Parking
- Park buildings
- Directional signage
- Entry signage
- Utilities
- Multi-purpose trails
- Specialize landscape treatment

Figure 15: General Management Plan



Site Management Recommendations :

Until the development of more detailed implementation plans, the following recommendations will be used to provide guidance for land management matters.

Natural Resources:

- Conserve and where consistent with the park planning, enhance designated natural areas.
- Foster attitudes and practices that support conservation of the natural resources and responsible environmental stewardship

Cultural Resources

- Where appropriate, renovate the houses within the park land for tenant / caretaker apartments.
- Ensure that adaptive reuse of the structures is consistent with preservation standards and park purpose and with the Secretary of Interiors Standards Guidelines for adaptive reuse of contributing resources.
- Preserve and protect the park's historic and archaeological resources
- Foster attitudes and practices that support conservation of historic resources
- Interpret the cultural resources and history of the property.

Horticultural Management

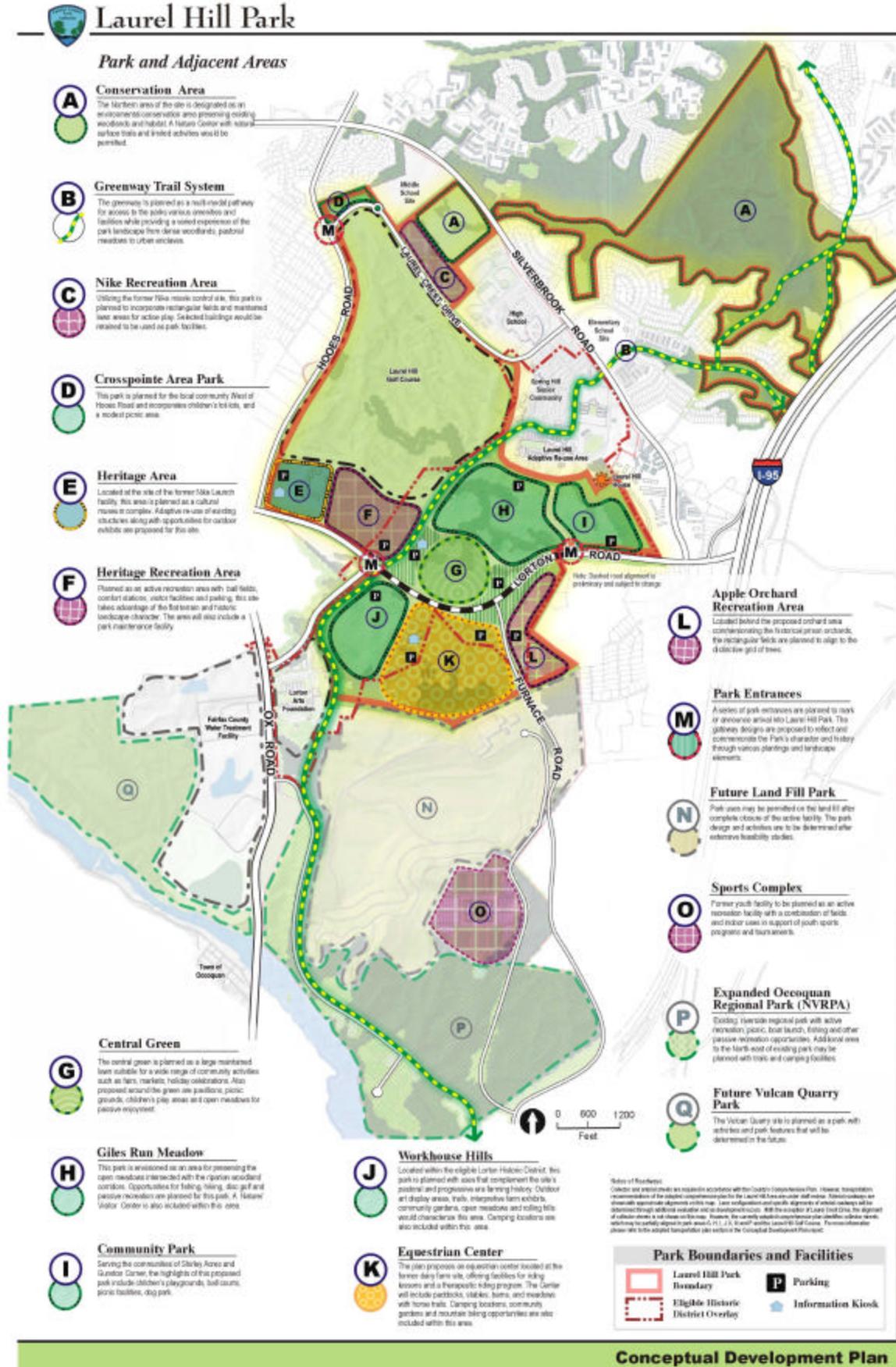
- Manage meadow areas to ensure they do not revert to wooded areas.

Educational and Interpretation

- Provide a small education and interpretive program / exhibit to improve the knowledge and appreciation of the county's natural and historic heritage.

6.0 Conceptual Development Plan

The Conceptual Development Plan for Laurel Hill was produced during the planning process in which a series of public meetings and workshops were held with community members, special interest groups, and public agency officials. Three alternative concept plans emerged from the ideas that developed during the planning process. The alternative concept plans emphasized three themes: culture and history; environment; and recreation. Using stakeholder input, the preferred elements from the alternative concept plans were combined into a refined Conceptual Development Plan (see Figure 16). The following sections describe the Conceptual Development Plan and its sub-components in detail.



6.1 Description of Overall Park Plan

The Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) incorporates the principles of providing opportunities for active and passive recreation, environmental conservation, and celebration of historic and cultural resources.

With over 1,200 acres, the size of the parkland is notable. During the analysis of alternative concept plans, key areas were identified as opportunity sites for redevelopment, while conserving critical natural features. Of the 1,200 acres only approximately 360 can be used for recreation activities with the remaining 840 acres being the golf course (280) and areas that will be protected as Resource Management Areas. The Plan is designed to provide areas for a variety of uses, combined in a way that creates a unique amenity for the region.

The CDP includes areas for recreation, environmental zones and cultural activities integrated throughout the park and is consistent with the park purpose and guiding principles. This plan acts as a framework to guide the location of recreational uses. However, depending upon engineering results, uses may be moved to another area.

6.2 Interpretation of the History of the Site

The following episodes should be interpreted through various interpretive devices, such as signage, kiosks, brochures and wall mount exhibit panels in selected buildings. Creating an “historic linkage” for the various areas of Laurel Hill Park is important to the park’s overall development.

- A. Prehistoric (Native American)
 - Overview of Native America Habitation throughout Fairfax County
 - Paleo-Indian
 - Archaic
 - Woodland
 - Native American Habitation at Laurel Hill
 - Archaic
 - Woodland
- B. European Contact
- C. Colonial Period – Laurel Hill
- D. Civil War
- E. Progressive Era/Establishment of prison on site/Stoney Lonesome Cemetery
- F. Suffragettes
- G. 19th-20th Century Agriculture
- H. Post-Progressive Era Prison
- I. Cold War/Nike Missile sites
- J. Property transfer from GSA to Fairfax County/National Register Historic District
- K. Parkland

6.3 Transportation

Access to Laurel Hill Park from the surrounding region should be effectively accommodated by Interstate 95, Route 1 and Route 123. Directional signage from these nearby facilities should be considered to help direct residents to this countywide park. Local transportation access however within the former correctional facility is limited, and while perhaps suitable for access to park facilities, existing roadways are not adequate to accommodate projected local and through traffic demands.

The existing local transportation network consists mainly of rural, two (2) lane roadways that in many cases do not meet current design standards. In addition, due to the site's proximity to the Vulcan quarry and private landfills, existing roads are subjected to significant volumes of commercial truck traffic. This combination of factors has contributed to a number of accidents, particularly along Lorton Road which currently accommodates approximately 5,200 vehicles per day. By VDOT projections, Lorton Road traffic is projected to increase to over 43,000 vehicles per day by the year 2020.

While it is clear that the local roadway network should be improved to serve regional transportation needs, the Park Authority is concerned that the current Comprehensive Plan guidance on transportation may be outdated and does not consider the impact that transportation improvements have on parks. The Park Authority recommends that a transportation study be done and that the Comprehensive Plan be updated to reflect the findings of the new transportation analysis.

As the County's parkland steward, and advocate for park patrons, the Park Authority advocates a review of the current Comprehensive Plan for transportation to assure that impacts to parkland are adequately addressed. Based upon the findings of the study, appropriate amendments to the Comprehensive Plan should be considered.

Given that a large portion of the Lorton Road and Furnace Road arterials are warranted by regional traffic needs and not the needs of patrons to Laurel Hill Park and given the desire of the Park Authority to preserve limited Park Bond funds for recreation improvements at Laurel Hill Park, funds needed to implement all transportation improvements at Laurel Hill recommended by the Comprehensive Plan should be identified from other sources of public funds at the County, State and Federal levels.

6.4 Description of Plan Elements / Areas

The following sections describe the Conceptual Development Plan in sub-area detail. The objective of the sub-areas is to provide focus-areas for the range of activities proposed at the park. The sub-areas are linked together through the philosophy that although they each provide a unique experience, together they work toward the over-arching themes of community, culture and nature.

6.4.1 Conservation Area

The northern section of the plan highlights the primary conservation area on the site. The conservation area extends to the pond just south of Silverbrook road. This zone is dedicated to

natural and wildlife habitat protection and historic interpretation, and can be accessed through the trail network linked to the rest of the park. The plan preserves the dense woodland character of this section of parkland as part of the Environmental Quality Corridor (EQC).

This Conservation Area section of the plan offers the opportunity for environmental education and stewardship through interpretative trail signage and markers. The uses within this area are limited to passive recreation, such as natural surface trails and nature observation. In addition, this area could include a nature center for interpretation of the natural resources.

6.4.2 Greenway Trail System

The CDP identifies a trail system that links the park internally from north to south. The primary corridor within the trail system is referred to as the Laurel Hill Greenway; a major trail that links the park regionally to an external trail network leading from Great Falls National Park in the north and the Occoquan Regional Park in the south. The Greenway is planned to be located on the original railroad bed which still exists in some areas of the park. This railroad originally served as a transportation system within the site linking the brick kiln near the Occoquan River with the prison complexes north of Lorton Road. The Greenway is planned with facilities designed for a variety of trail users. The Greenway Trail becomes the spine of the internal trail system within the entire site, with trail connections to the various amenities and facilities within Laurel Hill Park.

The Greenway and trail network serve as a recreational amenity with opportunities for education through interpretive signage and marked points of interest. A tour on the Greenway would be a varied experience, moving from dense woodland in the northern conservation area, to urban in the re-use and redevelopment areas, to pastoral, through the formerly agricultural meadowlands. In the non-urban stretches, the Greenway reflects a buffer of natural landscape in a band of vegetation.

The Greenway and internal trail system offer opportunities for education tools in history and ecology. One such element could be a History Walk as a means to connect significant historic, cultural and environmental features by trail as a tool for education, passive and active recreation, cultural awareness, and environmental stewardship.

6.4.3 Nike Recreation Area

Active recreation is distributed in different sections throughout the park. The northern most recreation area is located north of the golf course, situated between the planned high school and middle school. Within this park, the plan proposes lighted and irrigated rectangular fields and maintained lawn areas for active play. The athletic fields will serve local community athletic groups and periodic countywide tournament areas.

6.4.4 Crosspointe Area

The Crosspointe Area is located north of the golf course. It is planned as a local park within walking and biking distance from neighborhoods to the north and south. The plan proposes that this park be a small scale pocket park that primarily serves the local community and provides children's play equipment, a modest picnic area and open space.

6.4.5 Heritage Area

Heritage Park currently houses the former Nike Launch facility. The existing structures offer an opportunity for adaptive re-use as a cultural museum complex for education about site and national history. In addition it is possible that the existing gymnasium could offer opportunities for adaptive reuse within the park development.

6.4.6 Heritage Recreation Area

The Heritage Recreation Area encompasses the land adjacent to the Heritage Park. This concept takes advantage of the flat terrain to preserve the historic landscape character of the site. This recreation area could provide space for lighted and irrigated recreation through the placement of ball fields, comfort station, visitor facilities and parking. The former Barrett Farm residence is also located within this area and could potentially be integrated as a historic attraction for visitors. This area will include a maintenance facility to serve Laurel Hill Park and the surrounding park areas.

6.4.7 Central Green

Southeast of the golf course, the plan highlights a Central Green. The Central Green is envisioned as a vast maintained lawn suitable for a wide range of community activities such as fairs, markets and special events. This area also provides opportunities for various sports such kite flying, hiking and periodic use of model rocketry. (Model rocketry is subject to Park Regulation 1.17 governing model rocketry in parks and will be monitored by the National Association of Rocketry). Within the Central Green are additional opportunities for pavilions, an amphitheater for community events and picnic grounds. The picnic grounds will have reservable shelters that can be used for large gatherings such as family reunions or corporate picnics. Trails will provide connectivity to the Laurel Hill Greenway and other elements of the park. They will also allow controlled access into the meadow preservation areas. This open green area is one of the few large open play spaces for informal recreation in the park system.

6.4.8 Giles Run Meadow

A visitor/ nature center is proposed to be located in this area; the center will serve local and countywide park visitors. Services would include site orientation and natural and cultural resource interpretation. The plan also proposes opportunities for fishing, hiking and disc golf.

6.4.9 Community Park

This community park can be accessed from Lorton Road and serves residents located to the east and south of the park. The plan highlights a children's playground, ball courts, picnic facilities, in-line skating and skateboarding, and a dog park within this area. The Community Park has a direct link to the historic Laurel Hill house which is part of the Reuse Area as well as links to the park-wide trail system.

6.4.10 Workhouse Hills

The Workhouse Hills is located within the Lorton Prison Historic District due to its former use for agriculture, which was part of the prison's progressive era ideals. The undulating hills and meadows are characteristic of the park's pastoral history. The plan proposes uses that would complement the adaptive re-use of the Occoquan Workhouse such as an exhibit area for various art and sculpture displays, ornamental garden areas, a periodic market and picnic shelters. Recreation is proposed through a variety of trails that traverse the open meadows and hills, as well as designated locations for tent and RV camping. These trails will connect to the Laurel Hill Greenway and other elements of the park.

6.4.11 Equestrian Center

The plan highlights an equestrian center to be included within the historic dairy area of the park. This use celebrates the site's historic industry in agriculture and husbandry. The equestrian center is proposed as a full-service resident horse facility for classes, stabling, riding and a therapeutic riding program. The center also includes show rings, paddocks, stables, barns and meadows for horse trails. The concept also provides for parking of visitors to the equestrian center. The historic dairy and its associated buildings are currently located within this area and could potentially contribute to a new equestrian use.

A restored woodland area is proposed near the horse pasture. A portion of this area is located within the Lorton Prison Historic District; the goal is to return the landscape to a former condition and preserve the historic character. The areas outside the Historic District, adjacent to the Landfill offer opportunities for more rugged trails for use as mountain bikes trails.

A feasibility study for an equestrian center within the Laurel Hill Park was completed in the fall of 2003. The study concluded that there is adequate need within the county to support the construction of an equestrian center, and that Laurel Hill Park would be an appropriate location for such a center in comparison with other sites on which the study was based.

A community garden is also proposed at this location as a use that serves the local community. The objective is to further celebrate the history of this area and promote recreation through interpretive activities such as community-scale agriculture and gardening. Within this area, the plan also allows for designated camping locations for tent and RV camping. The camping and garden uses are envisioned as a way to preserve the land's pastoral character.

6.4.12 Apple Orchard Recreation Area

The Apple Orchard Recreation Area celebrates the park's historic agriculture by restoring the theme of apple orchards. This can be done as a design element reflecting the traditional orchard grid pattern through lighted and irrigated fields.

The plan proposes rectangular sports fields within this area to create a local community park. This contributes to the creation of a unique park entry experience through a commemorative gateway inspired by former agricultural uses. The athletic fields will serve local community athletic groups and periodic countywide tournament use.

6.4.13 Park Entrances

A series of park gateways are proposed in the site, and have been identified because of their existing location, accessibility or visibility. The gateways are proposed as marked entrance points for visitors arriving by foot, bicycle, horse or vehicle.

The major entrances are placed around the periphery of the site in a way that links to the surrounding community, inviting visitors and encouraging public use. The plan proposes a minimum of seven gateways that provide access from all sides of the park.

Park gateways should be designed in a way that is reflective of the park's history. This can be done through design treatments that visually announce entrance to the park and celebrate the character. This can be accomplished through special planting treatments emulating an orchard concept near the former agricultural sections, and with brick piers and arches representing the historic architectural character of the former prison buildings.

6.5 Adjacent Areas

The following section is a description of areas which are adjacent to Laurel Hill Park and are intended for future recreational or public use. These descriptions are based on guidance from the Comprehensive Plan.

I-95 Resource Recovery Facility and Landfill

This area is currently active and operating as a Resource Recovery Facility. Portions of the I-95 Landfill are currently under closure procedures, which have a 30 year duration. Future use of these areas for park uses as recreation after closure of the facility could be determined after extensive studies. The Fairfax County Park Authority is currently working with Virginia Tech to research design opportunities for the landfill after the closure is complete.

Sports Complex

The former youth facility is to be planned as an active recreation complex to include a range of facilities for the region. The sport complex may include championship size diamond and rectangular fields to be used for youth sports programs and tournaments. The complex would also include concessions, ticket booths, comfort facilities and visitor parking. The sports complex would serve as a county and regional facility. Prior to development of the sports complex an interim use for model aviation should be permitted.

Laurel Hill House

The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Laurel Hill House and its gardens should be designated as a heritage resource area within the Countywide Park with a minimum of 20 acres to ensure that these resources are adequately conserved and protected. While the house is not currently on Park Authority property, the Park Authority's position on the house is that to reconstruct the Laurel Hill house to the period of significance, would be the least desirable of the FCPA's preservation policies. Such a preservation program for the house and immediate grounds should be pursued through a public – private partnership where the Park Authority provides technical support in developing a Historic Structures Report, Cultural Landscape Report and a phased historic preservation plan and a privately held organization obtains funding to implement the program including its future operations and maintenance.

Occoquan Regional Park

The Occoquan Regional Park has a number of park facilities such as ball fields, boat ramps, batting cage, and amphitheatre. The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) will continue to operate the Occoquan Regional Park and plans to expand the park to the north. NVRPA is developing a plan for their existing and future park areas.

Fairfax County Occoquan Water Treatment Facility

The Fairfax County Occoquan Water Treatment Facility has been expanded northward to the northern boundary of LP1 in order to meet the long term water treatment needs for Fairfax County. As an interim use, land not needed for the expansion should be used by Fairfax County Park Authority for athletic fields.

Vulcan Quarry

Approximately 115 acres of land located west of Route 123 and north of the Occoquan River is to be conveyed to the Fairfax County Park Authority. A portion of this property is currently being used for extraction by Vulcan Quarry. Upon completion of the operations, the land should be left in a safe and stabilized condition so that the area can be developed for recreation uses.

6.6 Park Management

Visitor Experience

For the first time in 90 years Laurel Hill will be open to the public. During the time that Laurel Hill was inaccessible, many important historic events occurred on the property. From the incarceration of the Suffragists to the development of a Nike Missile site, it is the intention of the Park Authority's master plan to celebrate and interpret the site's multi-faceted history. With the development of the Park master plan the goal of interconnectivity within the Laurel Hill site will be achieved. Laurel Hill will change from a place that had limited public access to one of total connectivity. Laurel Hill Park is designed to complement and allow for visits to the entire Laurel Hill site. Trails will connect the adjacent uses and allow the visitor to experience the whole site. The Laurel Hill Greenway will

extend the length of the site and will connect all of the elements of the site. The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority's Occoquan Park, the Lorton Arts Foundation project at the Occoquan Facility, the Fairfax County Park Authority's parkland and the Adaptive Re-Use site at Central Maximum will be interconnected and accessible by a series of trails.

The size and diversity of Laurel Hill will allow it to serve many roles in the county's park system. It will provide extensive natural and cultural resource areas as well as recreation facilities. It will provide facilities that cater to a local community market and include some facilities not currently found in the park system. These local elements include picnic areas, community gardens, playgrounds and community meeting space. Unique facilities such as the equestrian center, sports complex and RV campground have countywide appeal as well as appeal to tourists visiting the Washington DC area. Because of the wide range of facilities proposed for Laurel Hill, a visit to the park would range from a short visit to watch an athletic event or play on a playground, to a longer visit enjoying the variety of trails (hiking, biking, equestrian) that connect the many elements of the park. The multi-purpose character of Laurel Hill makes it an important component in the Park Authority leisure service and open space preservation system.

Park Management

The Park Authority offers a variety of services with respect to the daily operations, improvement and expansion of parks, sports fields, and green spaces. These services help enable the public to have a sense of pride within their community.

The administration and operation of Laurel Hill will be consistent with the policies, goals and objectives of the Park Authority. Operational policies and procedures shall consider and accommodate to the greatest extent possible the needs of the citizens who use the park and recreational facilities and shall comply with appropriate standards and good management practices. Changes in operational policies may be made by the Authority as appropriate. Established Park Authority maintenance standards will be applied consistently throughout the park, and managed through accepted lifecycle management practices.

The Park Authority will provide oversight and management of active and revenue fund facilities in a manner consistent with Park Policy while focusing on customer needs and services. Revenue and business opportunities will be sought and managed in a manner to support and strengthen the Authority's fiduciary responsibilities.

Planning for infrastructure and facility development will be predicated on the responsible stewardship of all natural, archaeological and built resources within Laurel Hill Park. Funding authorizations and appropriations to develop, expand and/or upgrade facilities shall take into account fiscal requirements over the estimated life cycle of the facilities to ensure sustainable operations, visitor safety and enjoyment, and perpetuation of significant natural and cultural resources in accordance with program criteria and standards.

The Fairfax County Park Authority will provide leadership for establishment and management of an integrated network of Greenways and trails within Laurel Hill to conserve open space, to protect sensitive environmental and cultural resources including wildlife habitat, riparian corridors, water

quality, archaeological and historic sites and aesthetic values, to control flooding and erosion, and to provide continuity of non-motorized access between places where citizens and visitors live, work and play.

Natural resource management strategies may range along a continuum from outright preservation, in which natural processes are allowed to predominate with little or no human intervention, to intensive management, where overt actions are taken to manipulate populations of animals or plants, or their habitats, toward a desired level.

Under certain conditions, consideration may be given to interim levels of development and operations in partnership with community groups, where such agreements would facilitate the timely provision of recreation opportunities not otherwise available and would meet minimum safety standards.

The diverse active and passive recreational uses of Laurel Hill as well as the combination of both General Fund supported and revenue producing facilities provide opportunities for a management structure that is atypical to current operations. The management structure will be designed to maximize resource opportunities and management efficiencies.