



# Lee District Park

Master Plan Revision  
**APPROVED 5/24/06**



**Fairfax County Park Authority**

# Lee District Park

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## FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY LEE DISTRICT PARK Master Plan Revision

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**FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY**  
**LEE DISTRICT PARK**  
**Master Plan Revision**

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# Lee District Park

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## I. Introduction

### A. Park Master Plan Purpose, Goal, and Description

Master Plans are used by the Park Authority to guide the development, protection, and use of park sites in the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) system. Lee District Park was originally master planned in 1974 (see page 7). Since that time portions of the park have been developed in accordance with the adopted Master Plan while other planned uses have not been built. The purpose of this document is to revise the 1974 Master Plan. A Master Plan Revision process allows citizens and planners to examine the park as a whole in order to address deficiencies or missed opportunities throughout the park.

The goal of this plan revision is to update the 1974 Conceptual Development Plan to show existing conditions as well as to create a more usable, robust and flexible framework for future planning and development. Lee District Park should continue to be a focal point for park patrons within Lee District, but should also begin to serve as an important park for the entirety of Fairfax County. Finally, this plan should provide a framework for protecting and managing the natural resources located within the park. These goals can be met by adding new features to the park, updating existing features, and designing the park to better meet user demands now and in the future.

This plan is divided into three parts. The first section, Background and Existing Conditions, provides a basic overview of the historical and organizational context in which the park exists and highlights the areas of opportunity and constraint within the park. The second part is the General Management Plan (GMP). The General Management Plan provides guidance for current and future planning and development efforts. The GMP acts as an overall guide to management as well as a vision for long-term park development. The third part, the Conceptual Development Plan (CDP), describes specific land uses and identifies and explains target areas for future

development, their location, and extent within the park.

## II. Background and Existing Conditions

### A. Park Description and Significance

Lee District Park, in the Lee Supervisory District, is located at 6601 Telegraph Road in Franconia, between Telegraph Road to the north and South King's Highway to the south as shown in Figure 2. The park consists of 137.9 acres and is identified as parcels 92-1 ((1)) 21, 14A, 16, and 16A on Fairfax County Tax Maps. The park is bordered on the north and south by residential neighborhoods, on the west by a U.S. Government Facility, and to the east by the Virginia Hills Education Center. The park is accessed through the entrance on Telegraph Road.

#### 1. Administrative History

Land acquisition for Lee District Park occurred in phases from 1967 to 1976. Parcel 92-1 ((1)) 21, consisting of 118 acres was acquired in October of 1967. This site was known as the Rose Hill District Park. That acquisition was followed in December of the same year with the acquisition of the 4.12 acre parcel 92-1 ((1)) 22. In May of 1974, the Board of Supervisors approved the addition of parcel 92-1 ((1)) 14A. The final 2.2 acre addition to the park took place in February of 1976 when parcels 92-1 ((1)) 16 and 16A were added to the park.

#### 2. Park Classification

Within Fairfax County's system of parks, Lee District Park is designated a District Park. Parks with this designation provide a variety of recreation services to a large section of the County. District Parks often contain facilities that serve the entire County. Lee District contains a RECenter as well as an amphitheater that serve the broader community.

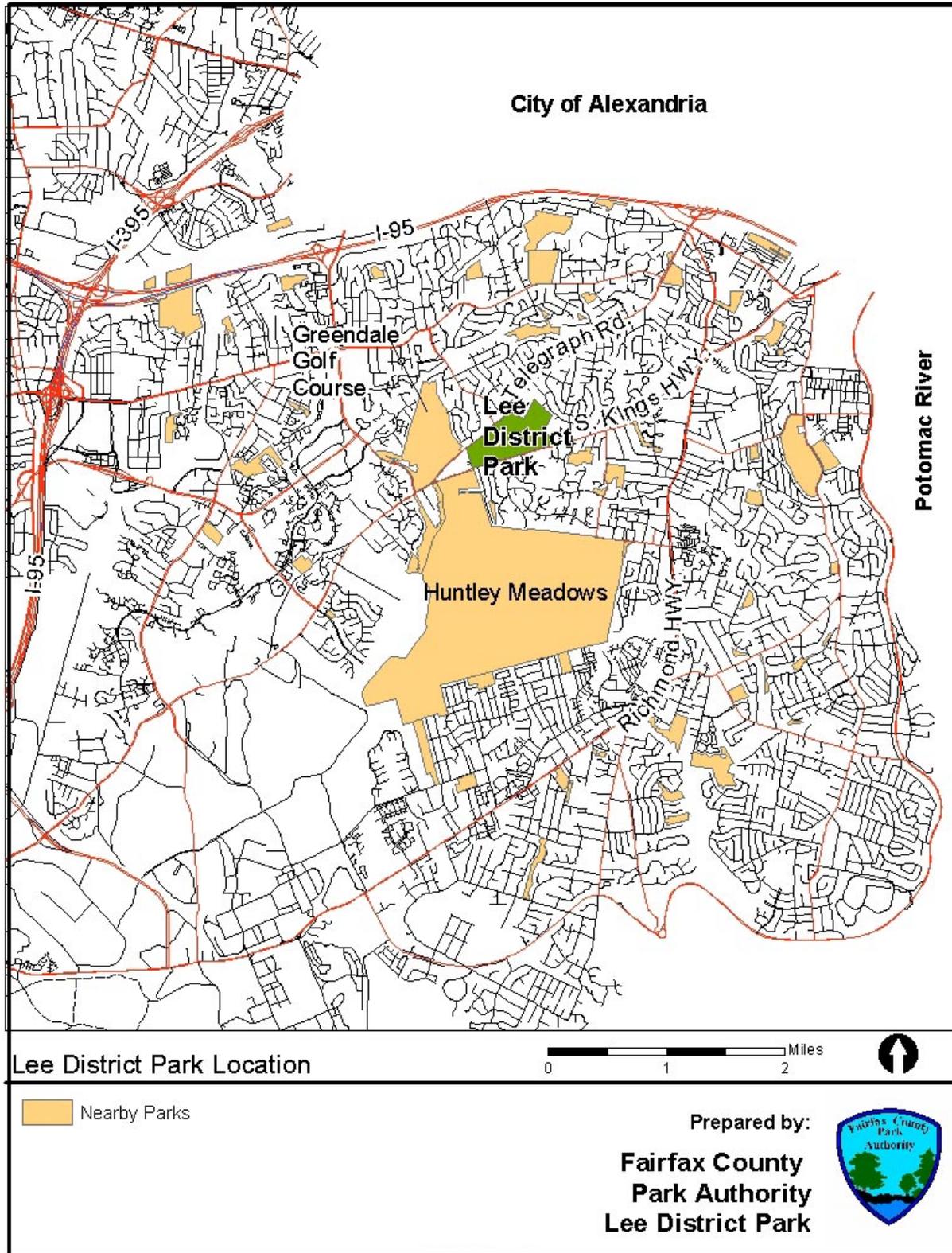
#### 3. Planning Context

The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan designates Countywide land uses and employs a special geography of Planning Areas,



# Lee District Park

Figure 2. Lee District Park Location



# Lee District Park

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Districts, and Sectors. Lee District Park is located in Planning Area IV, Rose Hill Planning District, and Mount Comfort Community Planning Sector (RH6). The Comprehensive Plan land use designation for Lee District Park is public park. The Park is classified as a District Park. Specific park recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan state, “Any additional development at Lee District Park should carefully consider steep slopes and forested areas.”

The concept for future development in the Mount Comfort Planning Sector states that the area should develop as suburban neighborhoods. Infill development in the neighborhoods should be of a similar type to the already extant stable residential communities.

Lee District Park is located within the R-1 zoning district (residential district, one dwelling unit/acre) and is surrounded by areas in the R-1, R-3, and R-4 zoning districts. These districts allow public uses such as parks. The zoning districts in the vicinity of Lee District Park are indicated on Figure 3 (see page 10).

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 standards apply to the design of 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 light to a field. All issues related to lighting should be evaluated carefully. To reduce light spillage and glare onto the adjacent residences and roads, technology useful for limiting light impacts

should be used. Light use should also be limited to no later than 11:00 PM so as to not disrupt the adjacent neighborhoods.

The public facilities described in this Master Plan Revision 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.

## **B. Site Analysis**

### **1. Park Context and Adjacent Properties**

Existing uses surrounding the park (see Page 11) are dominated by residential development; however, a number of properties directly adjacent to the park are institutional or other non-residential uses. Malton, Rose Hill, Mission Heights subdivisions, and Virginia Hills Baptist Church border the park on the northwest. To the northeast, the park is bordered by the Virginia Hills subdivision, the Virginia Hills Education Center and Country

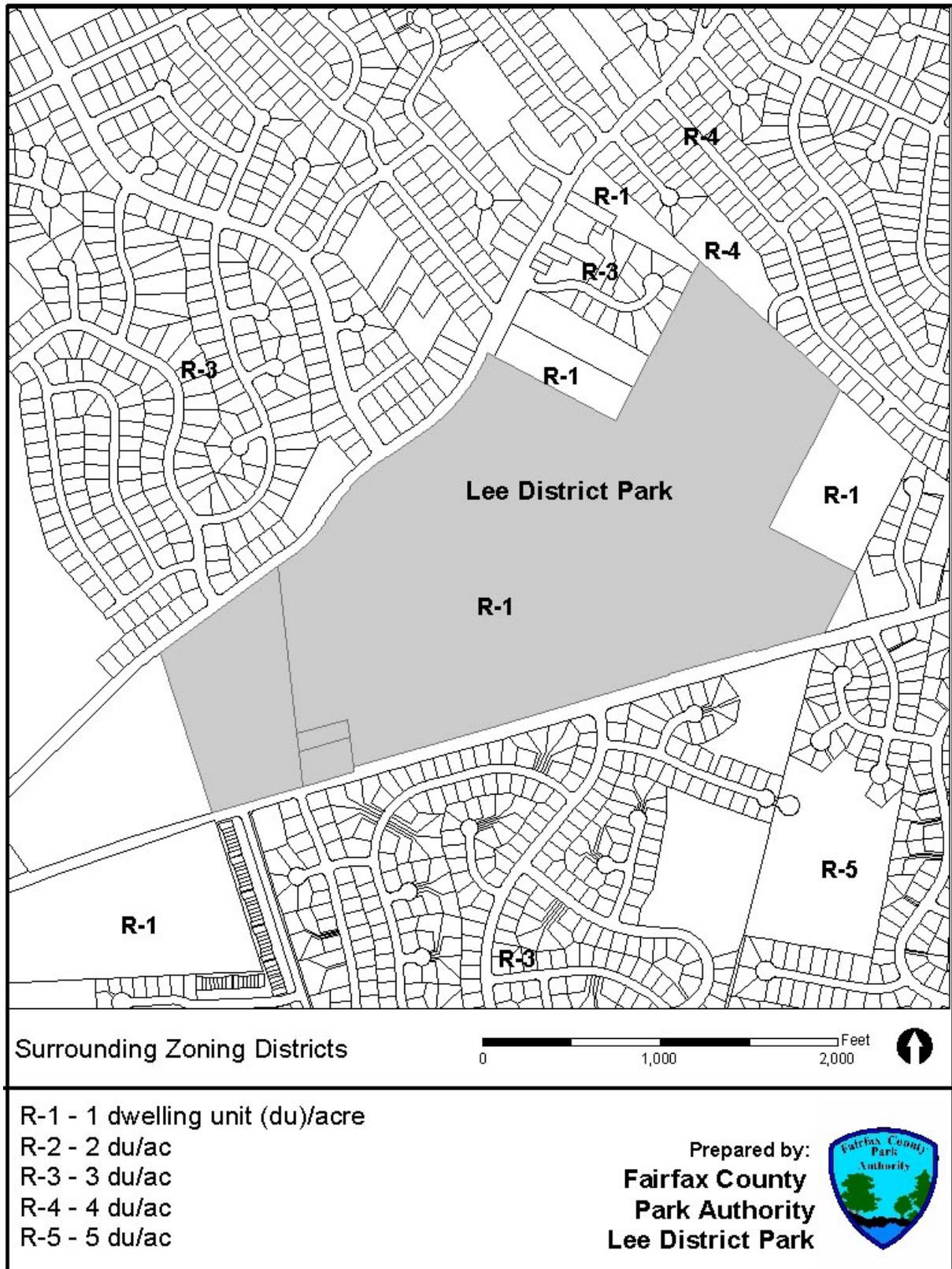


Club Estates subdivision. To the south, across South Kings Highway, is the Stoneybrooke subdivision. The Leiber U.S. Army Reserve Center is located to the west.

The southern portion of the park is located within the Dogue Creek watershed while the northeastern reaches of the park are located in the Cameron Run watershed. The watershed

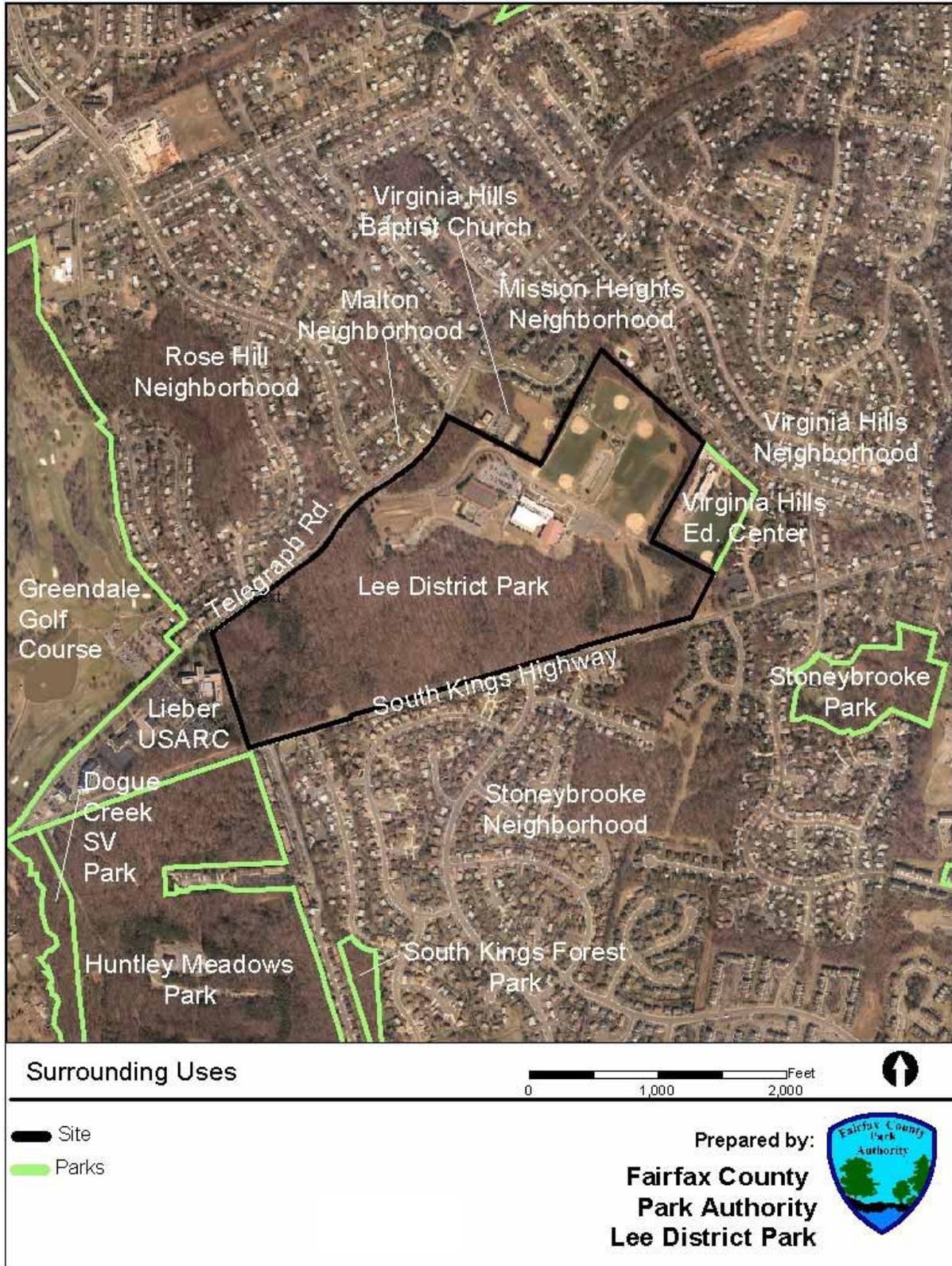
# Lee District Park

Figure 3. Surrounding Zoning Districts



# Lee District Park

Figure 4. Surrounding Uses



# Lee District Park

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split generally follows the high point in the park, which is a wooded ridge south of the RECenter.

The park's southern half is forested with a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees. The park's northern portion is largely developed for active recreation with nine athletic fields, all of them in an overlay condition, (four rectangles and five diamonds); the RECenter; tennis courts; basketball courts; a playground; and an open play area. An amphitheater and four group picnic areas are located near the park entrance.

The connections between parks, especially large parks with special functions, are an important part of the Fairfax County Park system. Lee District Park is located only a short distance from Huntley Meadows Park and Greendale Golf Course.

Huntley Meadows Park serves both resident and migratory bird species. The park has been subject to limited development in order to preserve its unique natural character and to provide passive recreational opportunity for Fairfax County residents. The park provides bird walks, educational material, and staff in order to meet the educational needs of the public.

Lee District Park is not connected to Huntley Meadows Park or Greendale Golf Course by a designated trail route. Lee District Park's role as a locus for active recreation, however, should be managed in concert with Huntley Meadows' role as a destination for passive recreation. Furthermore, the large undisturbed forest on the south side of Lee District Park serves as an extension to the services provided by the landscapes of Huntley Meadows Park. These three parks serve a diverse set of needs and are geographically close. Establishing and maintaining stronger ties between the parks will provide a long-term benefit. This strategy may include such elements as interpretive signs and non-motorized access between Lee District Park and Huntley Meadows.

## 2. Existing Site Conditions

The existing site conditions are studied to determine the opportunities and challenges located on the site. Using the existing conditions data allows for more focused planning and development.

### *a. 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 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 combines the value of various resources within the three general categories of environmental, cultural, and open space areas, but does not rank the 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 lack or incompatibility of the data.

The Green Infrastructure model indicates that Lee District Park and surrounding areas have a low natural and cultural resource value. However, the natural resource areas in the park continue to play an important ecological role for the park and surrounding undisturbed natural areas, including Huntley Meadows Park and are important to the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

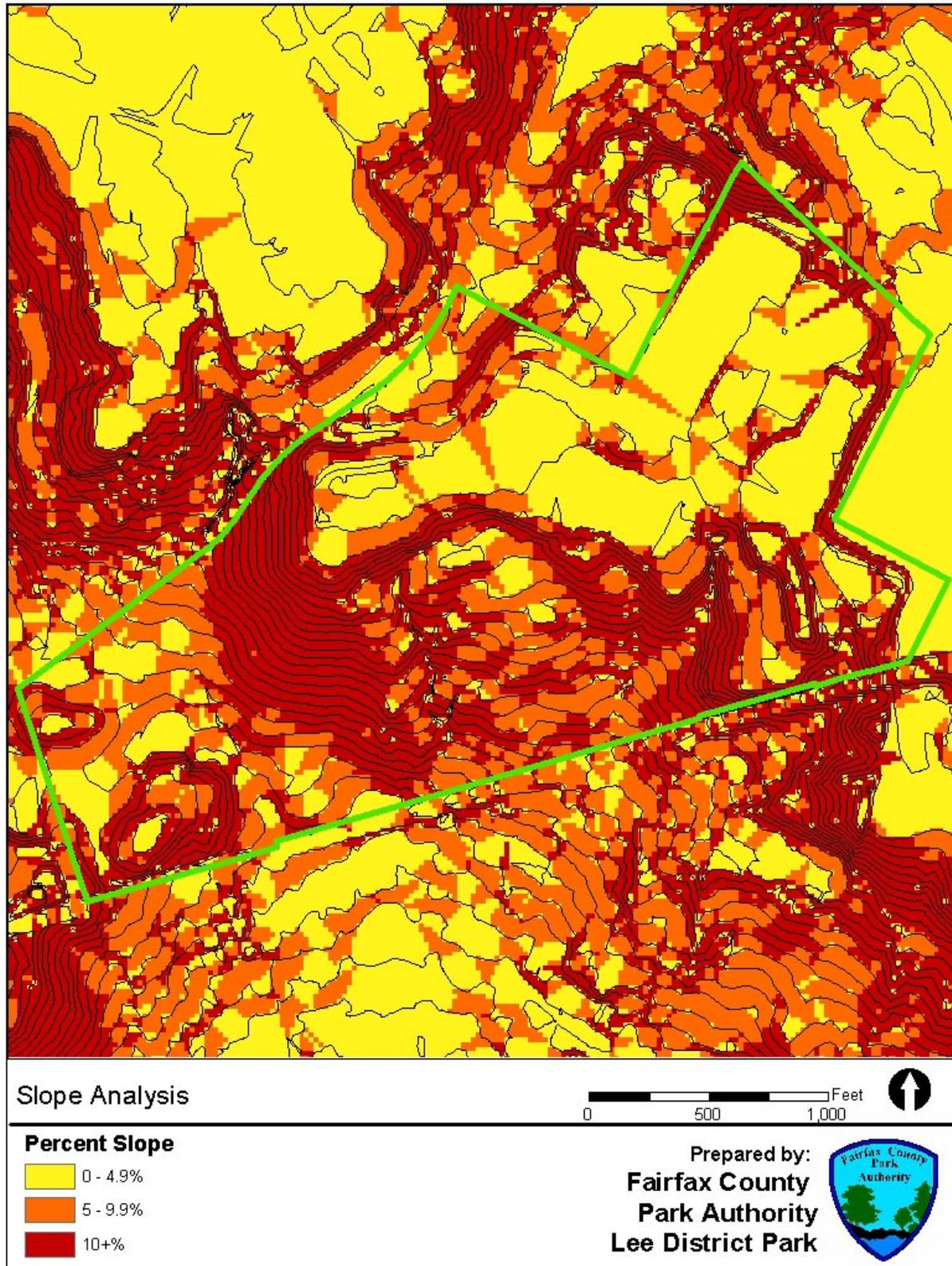
### *b. Natural Resources*

#### *1) Surface Hydrology*

Lee District Park is located on the divide between the Cameron Run watershed to the north and the Dogue Creek watershed to the south. There are several intermittent streams located within the central part of the forested portion of the site. These intermittent streams are not indicated on watershed maps.

# Lee District Park

Figure 5. Slope Analysis



# Lee District Park

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## *2) Topography*

The site topography (see slope analysis, page 13) is dominated by a plateau area where the RECenter and ballfields are located. Forested slopes of greater than 10% surround this flat open area. The aspect is generally south to southwest with several ridges and intermittent drainages running from north to south and combining to flow east to west along the southern boundary. These drainages flow to Huntley Meadows Park, located across South Kings Highway at the extreme southwestern corner of the park. A forested slope and small drainage also flow to the north in the northwestern tip of the property.

## *3) Geology & Soils*

Fairfax County's land area is generally divided into three distinct geologic regions. The eastern part of the County is the Coastal Plain, the central part of the County is Piedmont Upland and the western edge of the County is the Triassic Basin.

Lee District Park is located within the Coastal Plain portion of the county and has soils that consist of unconsolidated sand, silt, clay and gravel strata deposited by ancient oceans and rivers. Lee District Park Soils (page 15) illustrates the specific soil types in and around the park.

The undeveloped portions of the site are dominated by marine clay soils. These soils generally occur in areas of 0-2% slope, and they have a high potential for erosion. Marine clay soils provide a poor foundation for the development of permanent structures and generally have a high shrink-swell potential meaning that their volume expands and contracts significantly in the presence and absence of water.

The soils in the site's developed central portion have not been mapped; however, the undeveloped northern portion of the site is dominated by Beltsville soils. Beltsville soils are characterized by gravelly and silty soils that drain poorly and have moderately good foundation support. Subsurface drainage is usually required to eliminate wet yards and

basements placed on these soils.

There are small areas of Hyattsville soils in the northwestern point of the park as well as on the southern edge of the site. Hyattsville soils are the result of erosion from higher slopes and are thus a mix of clay, silt, sand, and gravel. Permeability is moderate but foundation support is poor on Hyattsville soils.

Along the southern edge of the site a small area of Elkton soils occurs in a bottomland. Elkton soils drain poorly and are poor for foundations, are hydric, and may indicate the existence of a non-tidal wetland.

## *4) Forest Delineation*

The forest in Lee District Park is described as upland forest which, while not rare globally, is becoming rare within Fairfax County. It is also important to note that the majority of forest stands within the park have been rated "priority" for preservation and protection. Table 1 (page 16) provides basic information obtained during the Forest Delineation study conducted at Lee District Park and corresponds to the Forest Delineation Map (see page 17). A detailed description of each of the Forest Stands can be found in Appendix 1.

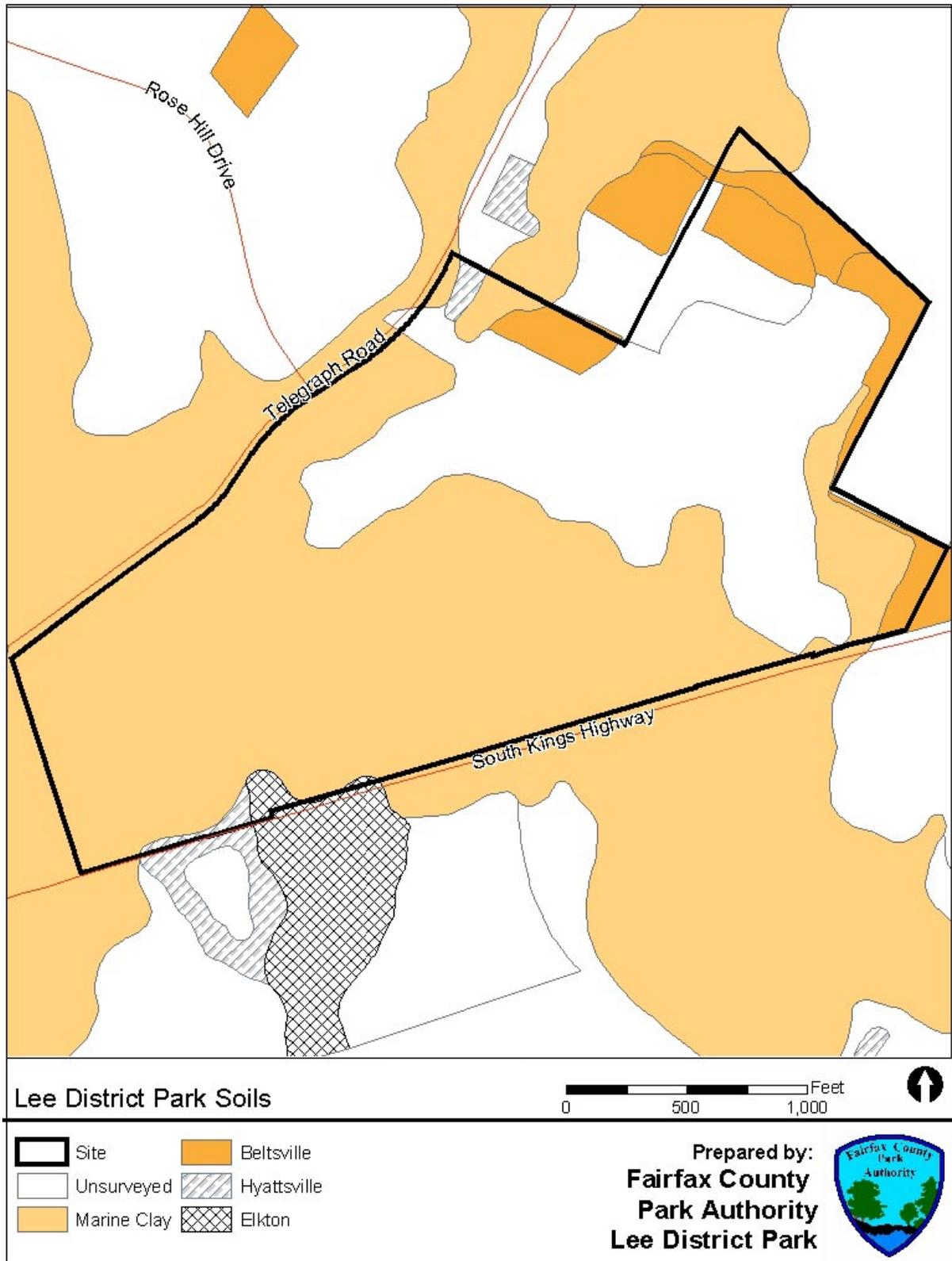
## *5) Wildlife*

Thanks to past and present conservation efforts, residents of increasingly urban Fairfax County still have a rich diversity of wildlife in their parks, including river otter, bald eagle, fox, deer, beaver, reptiles, amphibians and birds. The Park Authority's mission and adopted policies require preservation and protection of this legacy. This protection currently takes many forms including monitoring and best management practices. However, 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.

The Park Authority's Wildlife Conflict Resolution Policy requires the agency to "practice an attitude of acceptance of, and

# Lee District Park

Figure 6. Lee District Park Soils



# Lee District Park

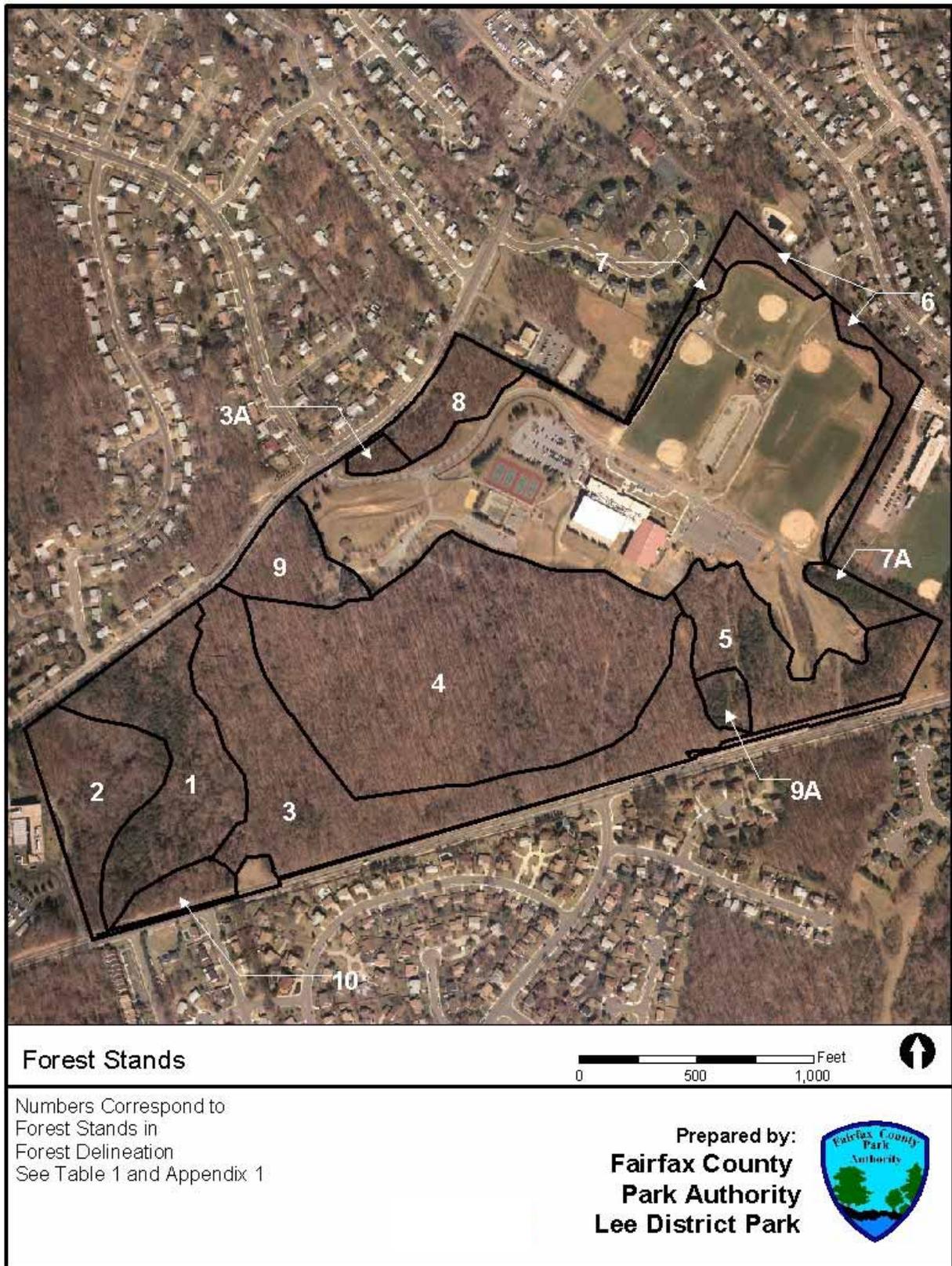
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**Table 1. Forest Delineation**

<b>Forest Stand</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Major Species</b>
1	Fair to Good	Virginia Pine
2	Good	Sweetgum, Red Maple, Tulip Poplar, Willow Oak, Southern Red Oak, Black Gum
3	Priority for Preservation	Sweetgum, Red Maple, Willow Oak
3A	Good to Priority	Sweetgum, Red Maple, Willow Oak
4	Priority	Chestnut Oak, White Oak, Tulip Poplar
5	Poor to Good	Virginia Pine
6	Priority for Preservation	Chestnut Oak, White Oak
7	Good	Virginia Pine
7A	Good	Virginia Pine
8	Priority	Chestnut Oak, White Oak
9	Priority	Chestnut Oak, Virginia Pine
9A	Priority	Chestnut Oak, Virginia Pine
10	Poor	Red Maple, Sweetgum, Elm, Black Cherry

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Figure 7. Forest Stands



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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 employed in a humane manner.

While no formal wildlife surveys have been conducted for Lee District Park, the park provides a refuge for wildlife as it contains a large undeveloped area and is accessible to other undeveloped tracts in the area. There are no known wildlife concerns in the park. Citizens often volunteer to keep lists of wildlife sightings in parks and such activities are welcome at Lee District Park. Lee District Park should be considered for future management activities.

## c. Existing Improvements and Facilities

### *1) Recreational Facilities*

The following facilities are currently located at Lee District Park:

- Robert E. Lee RECenter
    - Olympic size pool
    - Gymnasium (w/track)
    - 3 squash/racquetball courts
    - 2 dance studios
    - Fitness center
    - 2 classrooms
  - Parking (360 spaces)
  - 60' /65' diamond fields
  - Rectangular fields
  - Lighted tennis courts
  - Practice tennis court
  - Batting cages (temporary use of tennis courts)
  - Basketball courts
  - Carousel
  - Outdoor amphitheater
  - Reservable group picnic areas
  - Picnic shelter
  - Playground
- Natural surface trails
  - Auxiliary structures
  - Concession stand
- a) Athletic Fields and Courts  
Lee District Park provides a variety of active recreation opportunities. Athletic fields are located at the northern end of the site and include diamond and rectangle fields. All of these fields are configured in an overlay design that allows for alternating field use depending on the sport season. Use permits for the fields are allocated to local sports organizations and the community by the Department of Community and Recreation Services (CRS) in accordance with the County's adopted field allocation policy.
- In the central portion of the site, east of the RECenter, there are two basketball courts. To the west of the RECenter is a complex of four tennis courts. A temporary batting cage area is located on the site of a former tennis court and is now used by special agreement between a local sports organization and the RECenter. The tennis courts are lit to provide for evening and night play.
- b) Playground  
A playground is located to the west of the RECenter. This play area has two separate play structures, both consisting of a number of slides, platforms, and walkways. One is considered a Tot-lot for children aged 2-5; the other is a school age playground, for children aged 5-12. A super-structure has been constructed surrounding the play area in order to provide sun protection.
- c) Open Play Area  
The open play area at Lee District Park is located near the entrance, close to the picnic areas and the amphitheater and consists of a large grassed open area.
- d) Paths/Trails  
Within the park, asphalt trails and sidewalks provide access to facilities and connect park activity areas. There is an asphalt trail parallel to the entrance road from Telegraph Road to

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the RECenter. Several natural surface or woodchip trails cross the wooded portion of the park.

## e) Picnic Areas

There are three reservable group picnic areas at Lee District Park. One is located south of the amphitheater in the woods. The other two are located adjacent to the open play area, also to the south of the amphitheater. None of the picnic areas is covered. Each area contains 8 to 10 tables.

## f) Picnic Shelter

There is one reservable picnic shelter in the Athletic Field Area in the northern portion of the park. This shelter provides a picnic site primarily used by athletic field users.

## g) Amphitheater

The outdoor amphitheater at Lee District Park seats approximately 200 and is accessible to patrons with disabilities. The amphitheater includes a stage area, a backstage for performers, and is wired to accommodate a sound system. The amphitheater plays host to a summer event series that is popular with area residents.

## h) RECenter

The 83,600 square foot Lee RECenter is comprised of three major areas: Natatorium, Gymnasium, and Fitness Center. The Natatorium features an indoor 50 meter by 25 yard pool with diving boards and slides, a spa, spectator seating, locker rooms, saunas, and an outdoor sundeck. The Fitness Center features a wide selection of cardiovascular equipment, free weights, and equipment linked to the Countywide FitLinxx network. The 20,400 square foot gymnasium features a regulation size basketball court that is convertible to two half courts or two volleyball courts, and a 1/10 mile running track.

The RECenter provides an opportunity for residents to take fitness classes or use the facilities on their own. Classes offered include aquatics, dance, arts, fitness, and team sports. The RECenter also offers youth summer camps.

## i) Auxiliary Structures

Several auxiliary structures exist in the Athletic Field Area. One structure serves as an equipment storage shed for the athletic organizations that use Lee District Park's fields.



A Virginia Department of Environmental Quality air monitoring station is located in an open area east of the RECenter. This facility was added to the park in 1997. The station monitors ground level ozone and ozone precursor emissions and contributes to data collected on general air quality within the Washington metropolitan area.

## j) Concession Stand

An unused concession stand is located in the athletic field area. This structure is serviced by water, sewer, and electricity. It currently serves as a restroom facility for users of the athletic fields. It is no longer equipped or used for food service or vending. This structure has potential for reuse as an auxiliary location for other indoor programs, classes, or functions.

## k) Carousel

A carousel featuring traditional colorful horse figures is located adjacent to the open play area near the park entrance at the west end of the park. The carousel is operated during the summer and attracts families with small children.

## l) Other Amenities

A full-size train caboose visually anchors the

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picnic and open play area west of the amphitheater and is used as a ticket booth for carousel ticket sales during the summer months when the carousel is operational.

## 2) Infrastructure

Lee District Park is a part of the fabric of the surrounding district. This is true in social terms, but also in terms of infrastructure. As a key public facility Lee District Park needs to be supported by public infrastructure such as utilities, access and circulation for existing and future development.

### a) Utilities

Lee District Park is served by public water, sewer, and electricity. A water line serves both the RECenter and the athletic fields area. Sewer lines extend to the RECenter and to the unused concession stand/restrooms in the athletic field area. Any expansion of water and sewer lines should maximize opportunities for future expansion. Electrical lines are buried on the site and enter the park from Telegraph Road. Not all development proposed in this plan will occur at the same time, thus, utilities should be designed so as to facilitate future planned expansion.

### b) Access and Vehicular Circulation

Though Lee District Park is well located for vehicle access within Lee District, it's location between two major roads makes pedestrian access difficult.

#### *Vehicular Access*

Public vehicular access to the park is from Telegraph Road. From the Telegraph Road entrance, the internal park access road and parallel asphalt trail lead to the RECenter. Short spurs from the RECenter lead to a parking lot for the ball fields, an upper auxiliary parking lot next to the RECenter, and two parking lots that serve the amphitheater, picnic areas, and the carousel.

An auxiliary vehicular access point is located in the southeastern corner of the site providing access onto South Kings Highway. This access point is used for special events such as the 4<sup>th</sup>

of July fireworks display and should continue to be used only for special events, when vehicular traffic flow can be coordinated with Fairfax County Police.

Telegraph Road has a functional classification of Type A Minor Arterial.

This two lane road currently operates at Level of Service (LOS) C. (See sidebars.) Telegraph Road provides vehicular access to the park through the main entrance. According to the Fairfax County Transportation Plan, this road is planned for four lanes along its shared border with the park. Any improvements to this intersection or within the park in this area should consider improved pedestrian access from Rose Hill Drive to the park entrance.

South Kings Highway has a functional classification of Type B Minor Arterial and an LOS of C. This two-lane road is the location of the auxiliary vehicular access point. The Fairfax County Transportation Plan shows South Kings Highway planned for four lanes east of the park. As part of future road improvements, park entrance

Level of Service (LOS) is a qualitative measure of the impacts of congestion that describes the flow of vehicles along freeways and arterials, and the ease of vehicular movement through an intersection. A scale ranging from A to F indicates the degree of congestion. For example, an LOS of C indicates free-flow speeds along a road, moderate congestion, and restricted maneuverability.

Minor Arterials carry an even mix of local and through traffic. They link lower street classes to higher street classes. The varying character in minor arterials, between long rural roads and high volume suburban roads, led to the creation of Type A and B. Type A Minor Arterials are an important part of the transportation network because of their length and/or design. While access to these roads is not limited, the speed and volume of traffic makes interchanges with other roads more difficult. Type B Minor Arterials are usually shorter in length, exist in more rural areas, or because they are in older parts of the County cannot be expanded or upgraded sufficiently to meet the standards of Type A.

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enhancements should be considered to address vehicular and pedestrian safety issues.

## *Pedestrian Access*

Pedestrian access exists at the northern end of the park near the athletic fields. This access point primarily serves the nearby community.

Though the park is close to both Greendale Golf Course and Huntley Meadows Park, it is isolated by Telegraph Road and South Kings Highway which have few safe crossing areas near the park. At this time, a series of sidewalks through neighborhoods south of South Kings Highway offer an unmarked connection between Lee District Park and Huntley Meadows Park. Communities which surround the park to the east, north, and south must drive to the site or cross at inhospitable crossing points along both South Kings Highway and Telegraph Road. Opportunities to improve pedestrian access to the park should be further considered and developed where feasible.

## c) Parking

There are five parking areas that accommodate 360 vehicles. These parking areas primarily serve the athletic fields, the RECenter, and the picnic facilities. The community and staff note that additional on-site parking would provide better opportunities for park patrons to use park facilities, especially during peak use periods and special events.

## *3) ADA Adaptations*

Lee District Park's RECenter building is fully accessible by elevator and ramp. The natatorium features ramps into and out of the pool as well as family changing areas that provide a full series of features for disabled users. The RECenter also features a fully accessible gymnasium and an accessible racquetball court.

The outdoor amphitheater is also accessible to disabled park patrons. A platform above the seating area is connected to the nearby parking area by an eight-foot wide accessible asphalt trail.

## *d. Park and Recreation Need*

The Fairfax County Park Authority's long range planning helps determine park and recreation needs for the County. The Park Authority determines recreation needs, tracks its inventory of facilities and land, and conducts additional research and analysis to determine how to meet the needs of Fairfax County as a whole and on a local service area basis.

Findings from the Needs Assessment process show that residents use parks for a variety of different recreational activities. Furthermore, as the population expands so does the demand for alternative recreational activities. Larger parks, such as Lee District, offer greater opportunities to meet the need for a diverse mix of recreation facilities.

The results of the Needs Assessment included recommendations for RECenter growth. As part of the assessment, the Park Authority committed to the expansion of existing RECenters in order to meet growing demand. The need for fitness and aquatics opportunities is growing steadily. Lee District RECenter already contains facilities for users interested in both aquatics and fitness; therefore, expansion of these areas would be a wise use of resources. The Needs Assessment also illustrated the need for expanded opportunities in other areas at Fairfax County RECenters. Staff at Lee District RECenter have identified the unused concession stand in the park as an ideal location for expanded classrooms or studios. This conversion will help to alleviate over-crowding in the RECenter's current classrooms and studios while also taking advantage of existing facilities on the site.

Athletic field use is changing in the County. While the need for athletic fields is growing the types of fields required is changing. In order to reflect the needs of users, the Park Authority examines how fields are being used at each park during the master planning process. Changes in field type, size, and configuration may result from this analysis

# Lee District Park

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and input from the community.

As part of the Needs Assessment process, the Park Authority Board adopted a County service level standard for District park land at 13 acres for every 1,000 residents. Lee District Park has 138 acres. Based on the District park land standard, the park serves approximately 10,000 people. Facility standards were similarly adopted for many of the facility types at Lee District Park. These facility standards and the population size served are shown in Table 2 (see page 23). All of these facilities contribute to the total park experience but are used by different portions and numbers of the resident population as well as different numbers of users.

The varying service level standards and population served by the many facilities at Lee District Park make it a challenge to describe a geographic “service area” for the park. In order to create a foundation for analysis, however, the Park Authority establishes general service area boundaries based on several factors. District Parks generally serve an area of 3 to 6 miles. Within this general area, physical barriers, such as major roads, housing developments, and even other parks that may restrict easy access to the park are considered. These physical boundaries shape the area from which patrons will generally travel. The Capital Beltway, I-95 and Richmond Highway are major road barriers that define the Lee District Park service area.

Another important factor to consider is the specific park facilities use patterns. The Lee District RECenter is the major park feature that draws the largest number of users at the park from the farthest distance. Because the RECenter is more market-based, the area from which users originate is known as a market area and the area from which the RECenter draws approximately 80% of its patrons. This area is affected by use and preference patterns of county residents and has less to do with the proximity of the park.

Examination of these factors results in the

definition of two separate geographic areas as shown in the Lee District Park Market and Service Areas (see page 24). The smaller outlined service area is the area constrained by the Capital Beltway to the north, Richmond Highway to the east and south, and Interstate 95 to the west. The larger solid market area reflects actual users at the RECenter.

Using the current population for the service area and market area and the adopted service level standards for each relevant facility at Lee District Park, facility deficiencies are identified as shown in Table 3 (see page 23). This table highlights the facility deficits that exist in both the market and service areas. It also reflects that although both the George Washington and Mount Vernon RECenters are located within the market area and included in the Public Facility Inventory, a need for future RECenter expansion is necessary at Lee District in order to meet the needs of the existing and future population of the area. The table also reflects deficiencies in rectangle fields, multiuse courts, skate facilities, adult softball and adult baseball fields for both the service and market areas.

## e. Programs

The RECenter provides programs and classes for children and adults throughout the year. Classes are loosely divided into Aquatics, Dance, Fitness, Children's Programs, Fine Arts, Pets, Sports, and Martial Arts. These classes are taught by qualified staff and may take place in and around the RECenter. Efforts are made to offer programs that accommodate the specific needs of a wide variety of age groups.

During the summer months youth camps are held that utilize the entire park area. These camps are part of the Park Authority's larger summer camp program.

## f. Special Events

Each July 4<sup>th</sup>, Lee District Park hosts a community party that includes music and fireworks. Each year the celebration attracts thousands to the park. This special event requires the use of the auxiliary entrance from

# Lee District Park

**Table 2. Population Served by Existing Facilities at Lee District Park**

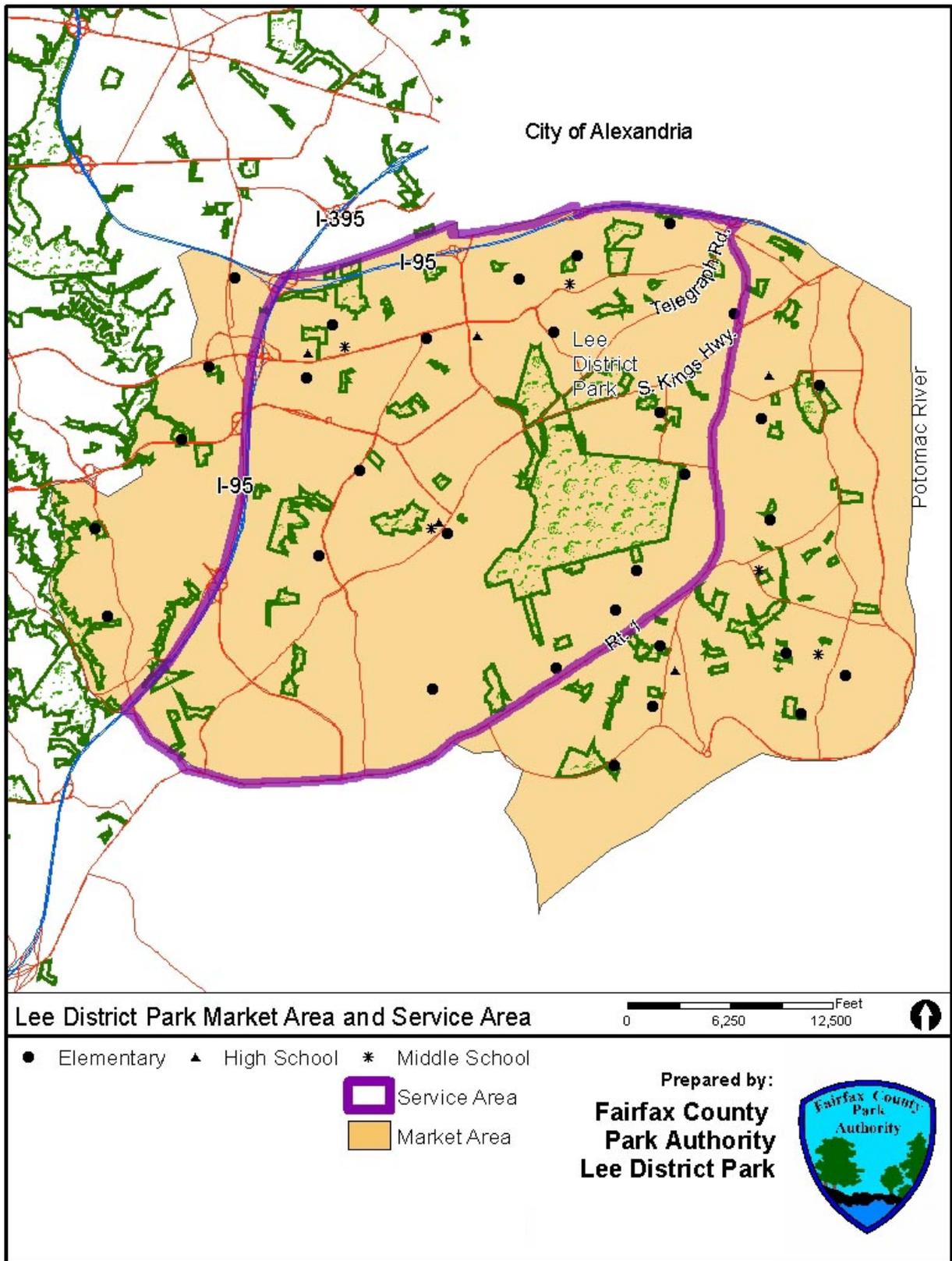
Facility Type	Facility Quantity	Adopted Service Level Standard	Current Population Served
RECenter	83,500 s.f.	1.1 sq. ft./person	76,000
Indoor Gym	1	2.8 sq. ft./person	7,285
Playground	1	1 / 2,800	2,800
Multi-use courts	2	1 / 2,100	4,200
Reservable picnic areas	5	1 / 12,000	60,000
Rectangle fields	4 (all overlay)	1 / 2,700	6,750
Youth baseball diamonds	5 (all overlay)	1 / 7,200	10,800

**Table 3. Service Levels for Lee District Park Market and Service Areas**

Market Area					
Facility Type	2004 Population	Standard (per population)	Facility Need (Population x Std)	Public Inventory	Facility Deficiency
Rectangle Fields	179,251	1/2,700	66	39	27
Playground	179,251	1/2,800	64	68	None
RECenters	179,251	1.1 sf/person	197,176	189,541	7,635
Youth Baseball	179,251	1/7,200	25	40	None
Multiuse Courts	179,251	1/2,100	85	21	64
Neighborhood Skate	179,251	1/106,000	2	0	2
Indoor Gyms	179,251	2.8 sf/person	501,903	517,367	None
Adult Softball	179,251	1/22,000	8	4	4
Youth Softball	179,251	1/8,800	20	23	None
Adult Baseball	179,251	1/24,000	7	4	3
Service Area					
Facility Type	2004 Population	Standard (per population)	Facility Need (Population x Std)	Public Inventory	Facility Deficiency
Rectangle Fields	103,469	1/2,700	38	19	19
Playground	103,469	1/2,800	37	37	None
RECenters	103,469	1.1 sf/person	113,816	83,617	30,199
Youth Baseball	103,469	1/7,200	14	25	None
Multiuse Courts	103,469	1/2,100	49	10	39
Neighborhood Skate	103,469	1/106,000	1	0	1
Indoor Gyms	103,469	2.8 sf/person	289,713	323,617	None
Adult Softball	103,469	1/22,000	5	4	1
Youth Softball	103,469	1/8,800	12	12	None
Adult Baseball	103,469	1/24,000	4	2	2

# Lee District Park

Figure 8. Lee District Park Market and Service Areas



# Lee District Park

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South Kings Highway.

The RECenter can also be rented for special events. For instance, an annual Lee District Antique Show is held in the gymnasium. Such events require special arrangements, staffing, and fees.

Athletic fields can also be reserved for special events through CRS. These events are organized through CRS and coordinated with Lee District Park management staff to mitigate the impact on parking and conflicts with other Lee District Park activities.

During the summer months, the amphitheater is the location for scheduled musical performances known as the “Family Concert Series.” The events frequently attract a capacity crowd to the amphitheater.

*g. Staffing*

The Park is regularly staffed by approximately 80 full- and part-time employees. These employees operate the RECenter that is open seven days a week and 18 hours a day. During the summer, seasonal staff is added. Volunteers also perform a varied number of tasks to support the park’s operation.

# Lee District Park

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## III. General Management Plan

The General Management Plan (GMP) shown on page 27 serves as a guide to long-term management and planning at Lee District Park. The GMP for Lee District Park identifies the opportunities and constraints posed by existing conditions, outlines goals for park development, and provides a broad and basic division of space within the park. The GMP will also provide an overview of the desired user experience as well as “management zones” or focal points for specific types of development. The GMP is organized through a management framework.

### A. Management Framework

The management framework is developed using the background data gathered through research, site analysis and the plan goal stated earlier within this plan. The framework is used to describe character areas and themes and to develop broad management zones within the park. These management zones serve as a guide for future planning efforts by identifying areas within the park where certain improvements would help achieve the desired user experience, reduce the impact of development on natural systems and surrounding users, and provide the best services possible.

#### 1. Management Issues

Planning and management at Lee District Park are complicated by the diverse needs of the different resources available within the park and the diverse groups of users. Some of these issues are addressed through this planning process. Others will be addressed through effective management practices based on site use experience. Some may take longer than this plan can forecast.

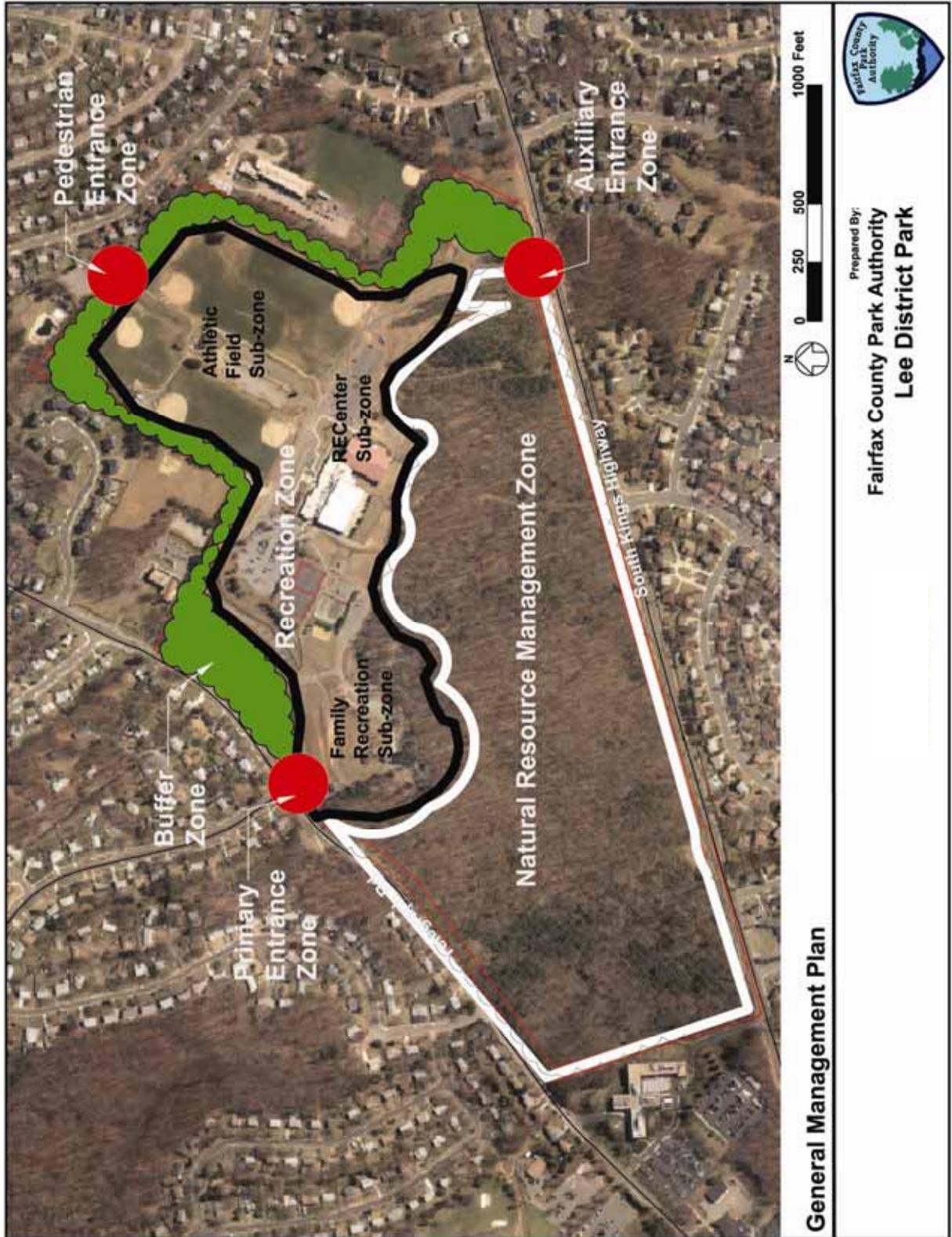
- Available parking on-site is limited and inadequate. The park hosts a number of large events throughout the year that require special planning by the RECenter staff. However, this problem also exists during many weekends when fields and the

RECenter are operating at the same time. Additional parking is needed to accommodate increased visitorship from existing and proposed facilities. Consideration should be given to using Low Impact Design methods when designing parking in order to protect natural resources.

- The size of Lee District Park affords the opportunity to provide different character areas within the same park. The Recreation Zone provides a very different user experience from the Natural Resource Management Zone and these two areas must be managed to maximize the benefits of both while still maintaining their viability.
- The development of a Family Recreation Area will enhance an underutilized area with attractive new multi-age oriented facilities that will result in increased usage. As these new facilities and amenities are added to Lee District Park, additional staff may be needed to accommodate the growth in park users.
- The changing demographics of Lee District will support the variety of uses and facilities at this park and should be used as a guide in programming decisions.
- Users and staff at Lee District Park have noted significant changes in the use of diamond fields and rectangle fields. An increased need for competition-level rectangle fields and a decreased need for diamond fields support a reconfiguration of field types.
- The lighting of fields will result in extended use times for those fields. There will be a corresponding increase in the number of users and the length of stay for users at the park. These changes must be managed in order to

# Lee District Park

Figure 9. General Management Plan



# Lee District Park

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maximize this public investment while minimizing the impacts on the surrounding communities as well as the public infrastructure.

- Access and facilities for disabled park patrons is limited within Lee District Park. With the inclusion of more accessible features within the park, future improvements should be made to improve the accessibility of existing features and integrate the accessibility between areas of the park.
- There is currently no safe pedestrian connection between Lee District Park, Huntley Meadows, and Greendale Golf Course.

## 2. Management Objectives

In order to address the management issues in the context of the park purpose it is important to identify general management objectives.

- Active recreation should continue to be a cornerstone of the Lee District Park experience. Whether park patrons are using the RECenter or the athletic fields, an optimal multi-generational recreation experience should be provided.
- Preservation, protection, and enjoyment of natural resources are important parts of the Lee District Park experience. Every effort should be made to balance the stewardship of natural resources with active recreational needs. Trees, removed or damaged during any stage of development at Lee District Park, should be replanted or replaced so as to maintain tree cover within the park. If trees are replaced they should be replaced by the same type of tree or a higher value tree if possible and all replacement trees should be native species.
- Lee District Park should remain an

integral part of the Lee District community. Facility uses should minimize impacts on park neighbors.

- Park programming decisions should be responsive to changing demographics in the area and ensure that local interests and needs are reflected.
- Park users should have full access to any facility to which access is possible. This includes improved accessibility to athletic fields, access to new features, and improved connections between different areas of Lee District Park.
- The proximity of Huntley Meadows Park and Greendale Golf Course should be viewed as an opportunity. Connecting these parks through County-maintained trails will enable patrons to more easily access and enjoy the diverse park experiences available in Lee District.

## 3. Desired Visitor Experience

Lee District Park is currently a destination for active recreation participants of all ages in Lee District. The RECenter provides facilities such as an indoor pool, gymnasium, fitness center, and multi-use rooms. The athletic fields and courts at Lee District Park support organized sports play as well as casual unscheduled uses. The carousel and amphitheater provide family-oriented uses and focal points for the park. A number of natural surface trails extend throughout the wooded area of the park offering opportunities to experience areas that remain in a natural state.

Lee District Park should continue to serve as a major recreation destination for Lee District residents. New, innovative, and appealing facilities should be added to continue to make this park attractive to the diversifying population in Lee District. New development within the park should also be used as an opportunity to bolster the connections between

# Lee District Park

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the different areas of the park. Currently the RECenter, in its central location, divides the athletic fields from the family-oriented recreation area. Changes to the athletic fields and the family-oriented recreation area make it imperative that improved connections be designed to create a unified park experience.



Lee District Park also currently serves as a destination for 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations as well as a number of other community-wide activities. This focus should continue and should be bolstered by

additional features. The special events at Lee District Park help make visitors aware of its diverse features.

A visitor's first impression of the park is very important. Park users who enter through the main park entrance from Telegraph Road are greeted by a large electronic sign that scrolls through future events at Lee District Park as well as RECenter offerings. The sign serves as the first indicator that Lee District Park provides a unique visitor experience.

Within the park the first area future visitors will see is the proposed Family Recreation Area where a combination of different uses will coalesce to create an area that is inviting to all ages and activity levels. This area will provide recreation for young children and adolescents as well as entertainment for adults. The Family Recreation Area will be safe for children but allow space for parents to supervise and watch children. The area will be designed to provide fully accessible recreational opportunities.

The Family Recreation Area should be linked, functionally and visually, to the RECenter using a number of different pathways and coordinated landscaping. The RECenter itself should continue to provide superior facilities while the surrounding basketball and tennis courts should be maintained so as to provide the best recreational opportunities possible.

The Athletic Field Area should provide both rectangle and diamond fields for users interested in field sports. The addition of lights will allow longer evening use of this area, increase the field capacity and better serve the needs of the youth and adult sports community.

The southwestern part of the Recreation Zone is currently isolated from the northeastern portion of the park due to a lack of paths as well as the presence of large parking areas. This condition will be exacerbated with increased usage of the Family Recreation Area. This should be alleviated with multiple trails that travel different paths between the three areas of the active recreation areas of the park. These trails should enable users to travel easily between the Family Recreation Area and the Athletic Field Area. The trail location and design shall be coordinated with the Park Authority Trails Coordinator.

Lee District Park also offers residents the opportunity to walk through the woods in a natural setting away from the active recreation areas of the park. The southern portion of the park provides many small footpaths that cross the wooded portion of the site and allow for nature study and enjoyment.

## 4. Management Zones

The management framework is developed to guide the broad provision of services within the park and results in a system of management zones. These zones serve as general locations for similar types of existing and future activities. Management zones are used as tools for future planning and development.

# Lee District Park

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## *a. Entrance Zones*

There are three entrance zones in the park. Each entrance zone serves a different purpose and has a different character. These points should be managed so as to maintain the character that currently marks them.

The main entrance is a vehicular and pedestrian entrance on the northwestern border of the site. This entrance is located across from Rose Hill Drive at the intersection of Rose Hill Drive and Telegraph Road and is controlled by a traffic light. There is also a paved pedestrian trail leading into the park from this entrance. A large electronic sign is located at this entrance. This unique feature calls attention to the park and should remain in place. The electronic sign should be used to capitalize on activities within the park. Any changes to this entrance should be designed so as to improve vehicular and pedestrian access for users of diverse ability levels while retaining a welcoming feel.

The vehicular traffic generated by the addition of lights to fields in the Athletic Field Sub-zone, will have an impact on the roads surrounding Lee District Park as well as on the availability of parking within the park. However, for a number of reasons this impact should be minimal. First, lighting fields allows Community and Recreation Services to schedule games at later times during the day, thus reducing the need to heavily schedule the fields during the peak of vehicular traffic periods. Second, a proposed reduction in the number of fields will reduce the number of field users within the park at any one time.



The Family Recreation Area will also have an impact on vehicular traffic in and around the park. However, due to the nature of the facility, it is likely that this area will be most heavily used on holidays and weekends. Use of the Family Recreation Area during peak vehicular traffic periods is likely to be minimal as this will be evenings and early mornings.

The Park Authority should closely monitor changes in vehicle use resulting from these planned features. If impacts on vehicular traffic flow on roads surrounding the park clearly result from these changes, the Park Authority will make every effort to work with the Fairfax County and Virginia Departments of Transportation to manage recognized impacts.

On the southeastern border of the site an auxiliary entrance is located on South Kings Highway. This entrance is used only during special events such as 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations. During such special events the entrance should be managed and coordinated in concert with the Fairfax County Police Department. Outside of special events this entrance should remained closed and gated for security and safety reasons.

The third entrance is a pedestrian entrance and path located at the northern end of the park, between two diamond fields. The entrance and path are largely unimproved. A stonedust trail leads into the park providing neighborhood users easy access to the many park features. There is a small sign marking it as the entrance to Lee District Park.

The importance of the proximity of Huntley Meadows Park and Greendale Golf Course to Lee District Park was noted earlier in this plan. Also noted is the difficulty inherent in creating a direct Park Authority-maintained trail between these three parks. A connection is possible, however, based on the adopted Countywide Trails Plan that shows a trail planned along both sides of Telegraph Road between Rose Hill Drive and South Van Dorn Street (see page 31). The adopted Trails Plan

# Lee District Park

Figure 10. Proposed Trail Connections



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also shows a planned trail through Lee District Park that crosses South Kings Highway from the southern border of Lee District Park connecting to an existing trail on the south side of South Kings Highway. The Park Authority supports both options and will work with transportation officials to create safe pedestrian ways that seek to connect the parks in this area. To reinforce the connection interpretive features, such as signs or a kiosk, should be placed near the RECenter and/or on the site once the trails are complete. Features should include a map of the route between the three parks as well as information about Huntley Meadows Park, Lee District Park, Greendale Golf Course and the importance of connecting parkland in Fairfax County. A travel route between the parks has been identified and should be included in the interpretive feature.

## *b. Recreation Zone*

The central portion of the site is the Recreation Zone. The RECenter, athletic fields, courts, playground, open play area, and parking are all located within the recreation area. These areas are combined into one management zone because they provide similar user experiences and they are intensively managed to provide superior recreational opportunities. Three sub-zones comprise the Recreation Zone and include the Athletic Field sub-zone, the RECenter sub-zone, and the Family Recreation sub-zone.

### *1) Athletic Field Sub-Zone*

The nine athletic fields (5 diamond fields and 4 rectangle fields) located in the northern portion of the site provide an intensive active recreation opportunity and make up the Athletic Field sub-zone. These fields are configured as overlays. This area of the park should be managed to accentuate the active recreation aspect of the park. Field usage should be managed to primarily serve the needs of organized sports groups and maximize the amount of playing time available to field users. This may include closing damaged fields, limiting use during off seasons, and repairing damaged or overused fields.

An unused concession stand in this sub-zone should be adapted for reuse as an alternative RECenter studio space. This area should be managed and maintained by RECenter staff as a reservable auxiliary space for RECenter activities.

### *2) RECenter Sub-Zone*

The RECenter sub-zone, including the RECenter and surrounding courts, should be managed so as to maximize access to its diverse facilities. The RECenter currently attracts users throughout the week and is heavily used on weekends. This sub-zone should be managed to continue this trend. The outside tennis and multi-use courts should be managed in order to maximize playing time by a diverse group of users.

### *3) Family Recreation Sub-Zone*

Southwest of the RECenter is the Family Recreation sub-zone currently consisting of group picnic areas, a carousel, an open play area and an amphitheater. This sub-zone should be enhanced to provide a multi-experience recreation area that is fully accessible and designed for multiple age groups. The Family Recreation sub-zone should provide a safe location in which to mingle activities that appeal to different ability and age groups for half a day or more. As such, it should include restroom facilities. This feature would provide a south County counterpart to Clemyjontri Park which serves disabled users in the northern portion of the County.

The diversity of activities in the Family Recreation sub-zone will complement the RECenter sub-zone and some activities will take place across both sub-zones, thus creating needed connections between activity areas. A series of connecting trails will serve to integrate activities within a particular area while connecting different areas together. These trails should be designed so as to be clearly differentiated from parking areas which dominate the center of the site. These trails should stretch from the pedestrian entrance to the park to the Family Recreation sub-zone.

# Lee District Park

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Management of these trails will depend on the type of trail surface used in each area as well as the intensity of use in that area.

## c. Natural Resource Management Zone

The Natural Resource Management Zone is located in the southern portion of the park and comprises approximately 79 acres or 57% of the site. It is bordered on the north by the RECenter area, on the west by the Family Recreation sub-zone, and to the east by the auxiliary entrance zone. The Natural Resource Management Zone includes a network of existing trails used for passive recreation. This area has also been identified as having natural resource value. Development should be avoided in this area in order to protect the existing resources. Maintenance should reflect best management practices for the forest stands identified within this area such as, but not limited to, removal of invasive species, trail maintenance including temporary closure to protect from overuse, erosion and/or spider trail development; trash removal; forest management; and wildlife management. Management actions should be consistent with maintaining a dense native vegetative cover, wide buffers around stream channels and active erosion control measures.

Lee District Park is of sufficient size and vegetative diversity that interior forest dwelling species may thrive. Forest stands 3 and 4 have been cited as significant and deserving of protection during the Natural Resource Inventory. These forest stands (within the Natural Resource Management Zone) should be subject to the least amount of disturbance possible. Any activities in these two stands should be limited to the edges and not support daily intrusions. Trees at the edges of the forest stands should be maintained and efforts should be made to eliminate any damaging practices, including: inappropriate landscaping, excessive clearing and encroachments on the park land. Management activities (such as invasive species removal, dangerous tree removal, and wildlife habitat enhancement) should be limited in protected areas.

Invasive vegetative species (invasives) management should become an important part of any management scheme in the Natural Resource Management Zone. Invasive vegetative species should be removed after consultation with the Resource Management Division of the Park Authority. When removal is complete, areas that require replanting due to steep slopes or poor soil conditions should be replanted with native species. In areas less threatened by erosion or in which smaller areas of invasive plants are removed, the areas should be allowed to re-grow naturally. Control methods differ depending on species, habitat, reproductive method, extent of infestation, etc. Management of invasives should reflect current best control techniques given the amount and type of labor used.

## d. Buffer Zone

The trees surrounding the Recreation Zone, particularly those surrounding the Athletic Field Area should be managed as a Buffer Zone. This vegetative strip should be managed so as to maintain visual, physical, and noise separation from surrounding properties and the use zones within the park. Removal of any portion of the vegetative buffer should be carried out only to protect users and surrounding properties. Additional plantings should be carried out if deemed necessary by the Park Authority and surrounding land owners on their respective properties.

## **B. Management and Development**

### **1. Natural Resource Management**

Resource Management within the Recreation Zone should be carried out in order to enable active recreation within the Recreation Zone without compromising the surrounding ecosystem. All development should be subject to Resource Management Division review and based, if feasible, on a Management Plan developed under the guidance of the Natural Resource Management Plan. The designated Natural Resource Management Zones would require site specific management plans to be developed prior to the implementation of

# Lee District Park

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active management of the areas. Neither the development of the plans or active management at the site is funded at this time.

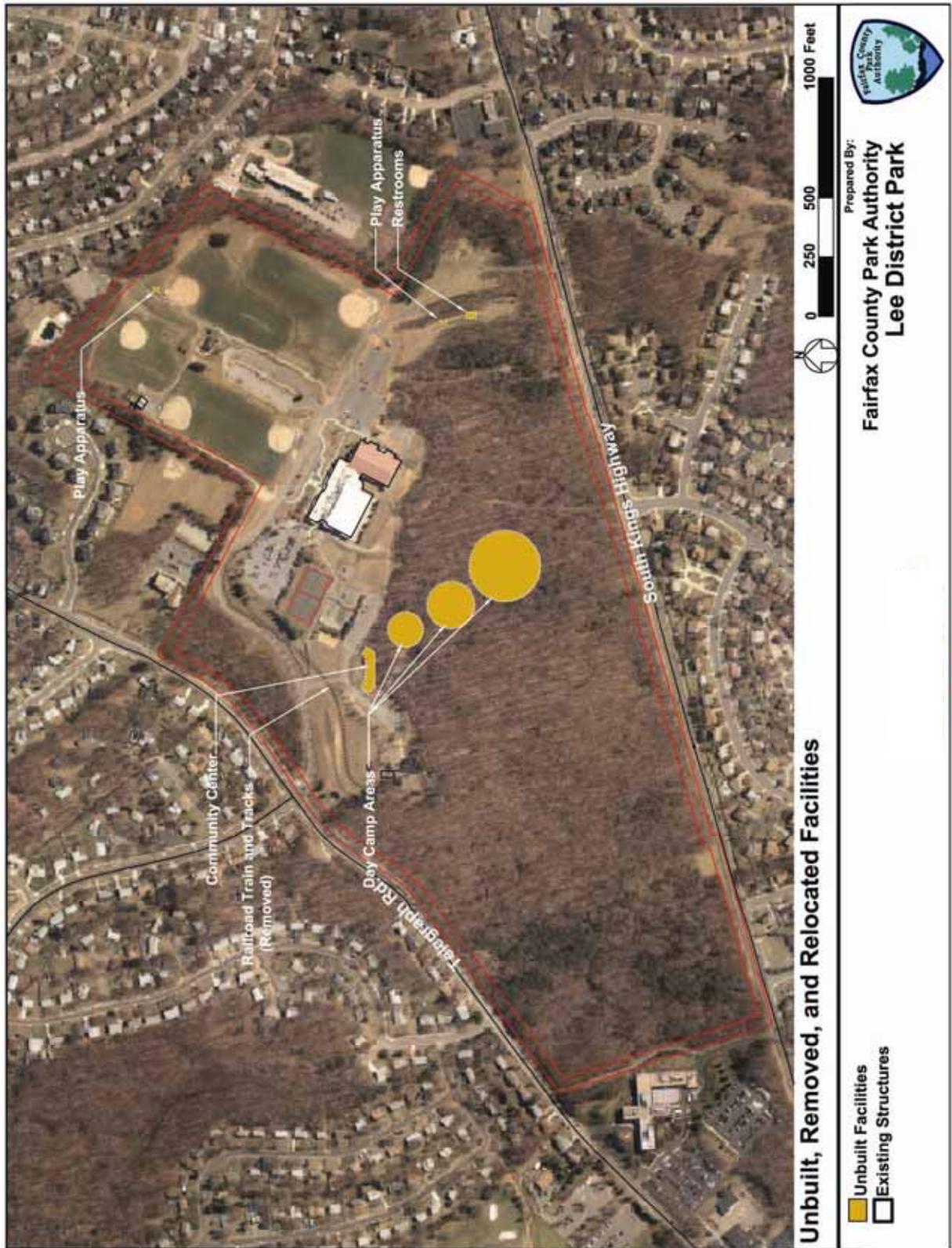
Planting regimens within the park should avoid the use of invasive plant species as dictated by Park Authority Policy. Planting of non-native ornamental plants should be avoided except when a suitable native alternative cannot be found.

## **2. Recreation Management**

Recreation on site should be managed in such a way as to maximize recreation opportunities for all ages while minimizing impact on surrounding property and natural resources within the park. Lee District Park should be a focal point for active recreation within Lee District.

# Lee District Park

Figure 11. Unbuilt and Removed Facilities from the 1974 Plan





## IV. Conceptual Development Plan

The Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) provides recommendations for future development within the park using the management framework developed in the GMP. The CDP provides descriptions of development opportunities in the park and shows the desired location of possible features. The CDP is not a construction plan or a final development plan.

### A. Changes to Previously Approved Master Plan Facilities

In 1974 the Park Authority completed the first CDP for Lee District Park. The plan showed many features that now exist in the park. However, some features illustrated in the 1974 plan have been removed or moved since that time. Furthermore, some features on the plan were never built. The relationship between built, unbuilt, relocated, and removed features are shown in Figure 11 (see page 35).

#### **1. Unbuilt Facilities**

A number of facilities included on the 1974 Master Plan have never been built. Chief among these is a community center planned for development near the current site of the amphitheater. Other small omissions include a shuffle-board court near the RECenter (not shown), a play apparatus and restroom in the southeastern corner of the park, and a day camp area south of the RECenter. These facilities are removed from the revised CDP as these uses are obsolete or provided elsewhere in the park or in the community.

#### **2. Removed Facilities**

At one time, a small recreation train ferried passengers from the life-sized train caboose near the amphitheater to a point adjacent to the current parking area west of the RECenter. The train became mechanically unreliable and obsolete and was removed along with its track. However, the caboose remains as the ticket vending location for the Carousel.

A play apparatus was located near the current picnic shelter in the athletic field area. The play area was removed due to aging equipment and unsafe conditions.

#### **3. Relocated Facilities**

The 1974 Master Plan included a play apparatus in the northeastern portion of the site near the current location of the athletic fields. This feature should remain but be relocated to a site adjacent to the current picnic shelter in order to serve the families of the athletic field users.

### B. New Plan Elements

New plan elements and the changes to the 1974 Master Plan are combined and shown in the Conceptual Development Plan shown in Figure 12 (see page 36).

#### **1. Rectangle and Diamond Field Reconfiguration and Lighting**

The diamond and rectangle fields, currently in an overlay condition, on the eastern side of the Athletic Field area should be redesigned to eliminate the overlay condition. The four fields (two diamond fields and two rectangle fields) should be redesigned in a standalone condition with lighting planned for all four fields. This would extend the time allowed for play on all fields and improve the general user experience. All efforts should be made to minimize impacts to neighboring residents. In accordance with Park Authority policy to protect its investment in lit fields and maintain them in the highest quality, these fields will be irrigated.

#### **2. Lit Full Size Rectangle**

Currently two diamond fields overlay a rectangle field in the southwestern corner of the athletic field area. The two diamond fields should be removed to eliminate the overlay condition. The stand alone rectangle field should be improved with irrigation, lighting, and artificial turf to provide a full size competition-level rectangle field. By lighting and enlarging the field, the Park Authority can provide a better playing surface for more games. The proposed field location is adjacent

# Lee District Park

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to an institutional use. The closest residence is 193 feet from the nearest corner of the proposed field. The Park Authority configures lighting that conforms to applicable lighting ordinances, minimizes impacts on adjacent uses and on the night sky.

### 3. Lit 90-foot Diamond Field

The Diamond and rectangle overlay located in the northwestern corner of the Athletic Field Area should be replaced with a single lighted 90 foot diamond. This will provide another higher quality athletic field for older youth and adults.

### 4. Permanent Batting Cage

To replace the temporary batting cage located on the unused tennis court, the existing supply shed on the western side of the Athletic Field Area should be removed, relocated, or redesigned to allow space for a permanent batting cage. The batting cage should be designed in order to permit use by both baseball and softball users.

### 5. Picnic Shelter

A pavilion with hardscape paving, picnic tables, and trash receptacles is proposed to accommodate families and other social gatherings. The picnic shelter should be located close to the existing picnic area in the Family Recreation Area. This will help alleviate crowding at the current picnic areas as well as add capacity to support the uses in the Family Recreation Area.

### 6. RECenter Expansion

The 2004 Needs Assessment shows growth in the need, importance, and usage of fitness, aquatic, program, and indoor gym space in RECenters. Population growth will also factor into increased demand. The Park Authority currently plans to accommodate this increased need through expansions at existing RECenters due to cost and service effectiveness. Lee RECenter may be expanded based on future needs analyses and feasibility studies.

### 7. Additional Parking

Currently the park does not provide enough parking for users during peak use times.

Parking should be added at several locations in the park, as shown on the Conceptual Development Plan. In total 255 spaces will be added; 80 additional parking spaces are needed for existing uses and an additional 170 spaces should be provided for proposed new uses. New parking area opportunities were sought where existing areas could be expanded close to zones of need on site and to minimize additional cost, amount of new impervious surface, and impact to existing facilities or resources areas. These proposed areas include:

- Existing parking areas near the amphitheater should be expanded with 40 new spaces. An additional parking area with 50 spaces should be located across the Park Entrance Road from the Family Recreation Area.
- An additional special event parking area, located on the north side of the park road opposite the RECenter's western lot, should be paved and converted to a permanent parking area that will mostly be used during high volume periods. This should accommodate about 60 vehicles.
- A large parking area for 105 vehicles should be created along the access road from South Kings Highway.

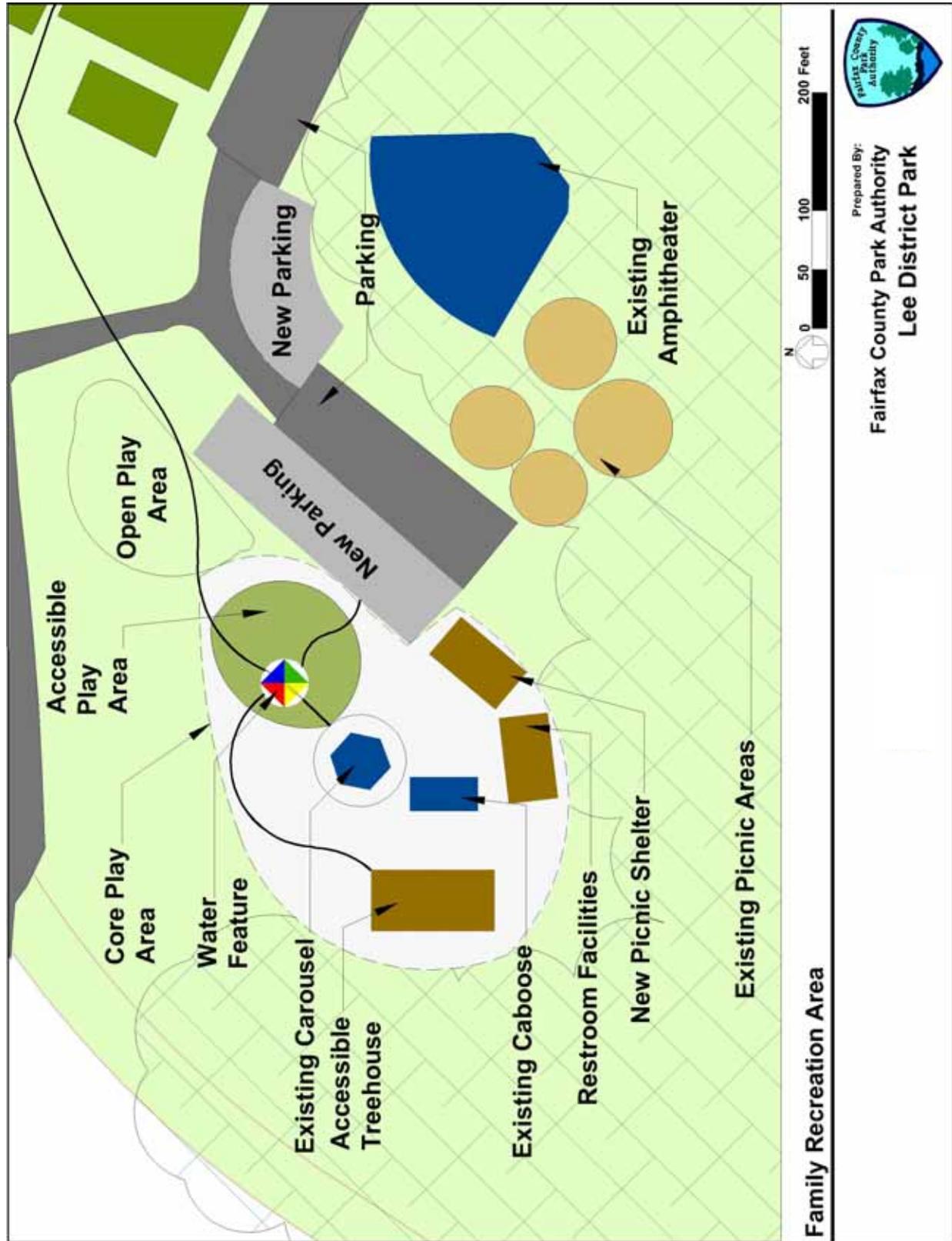
Special event parking currently occurs in an open area south of the RECenter and is only used during special events. Every effort is made to minimize the impact of this special event parking on the site; however, impacts may occur. In order to alleviate some of the impacts, an access road should be built that loops behind the RECenter and links the two parking areas east and west of the RECenter. This will improve on-site vehicle circulation by allowing staff to use the special event area without severely impacting the open area during the entrance and exit of large volumes of vehicles.

### 8. Telecommunications Monopole

The location, in the park, of a telecommunications monopole was approved

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Figure 13. Family Recreation Area



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by the FCPA Board on March 9, 2005 in accordance with Park Authority Policy 303. It will be sited south of the air monitoring station within the park. The antenna will be surrounded by a privacy fence and a maintenance cabinet encompassing an area of 1,000 square feet.

## **9. Trail Kiosk**

Huntley Meadows Park is designated a Natural Resource Park thus providing an opportunity to observe a largely intact ecosystem in the middle of a heavily urban portion of Fairfax County. Huntley Meadows Park's undeveloped open space balances the primarily active recreation use of Lee District Park. The two parks are part of the Dogue Creek Watershed.

Lee District Park is located one mile north of Huntley Meadows Park and is in close proximity to Greendale Golf Course. A direct trail connection between the three parks is somewhat difficult due to traffic flow and existing trail locations. However, a trail connection is possible based on the Countywide Trails Plan. In order to publicize this connection once it is in place, interpretive options should be explored. One option is an interpretive Trail Kiosk located near the RECenter. This kiosk would provide a map of a walking route between Greendale Golf Course, Lee District Park, and Huntley Meadows Park. The kiosk could also provide a short narrative on the features of Huntley Meadows and on the Dogue Creek Watershed and explain the diverse ecological features of the area.

## **10. Courts Re-use/Skate Area**

The underused tennis courts west of the RECenter should be re-planned to provide alternative recreation opportunities. The area should be designed with uses that adapt to changes in the young adult recreation preferences. Examples of possible features include a small skate area with moveable elements or a setting for organized after-school programs and activities. Opportunities for

redeveloping this area to support various summer camp activities should also be considered including revenue generating programs and/or facilities.

## **11. Concession Re-use**

An unused concession stand is currently located north of the athletic field parking lot. This structure could be used for community or park functions. The structure is already served by water, sewer, and electricity. This would create an auxiliary location for some RECenter programs.

## **12. Accessibility of Athletic Fields**

The athletic fields, as currently designed, are not accessible for disabled park patrons. During efforts to upgrade, improve, or redesign the athletic fields, every effort should be made to bring the fields into compliance with accepted accessibility standards. Along with field improvements, the restroom facilities near the athletic fields should be upgraded to provide accessible facilities.

## **13. Family Recreation Area**

The Park Authority recognizes the importance of providing a variety of user experiences for our disabled patrons. Clemyjontri Park, a park designed specifically for disabled children, was the Park Authority's first effort to create a fully integrated park for disabled patrons. In an effort to expand facilities available to disabled patrons in all parts of the County, a fully accessible Family Recreation Area should be designed and constructed at Lee District Park. The Family Recreation Area (see page 39) will provide an opportunity to develop a number of different accessible recreation features that will provide cross-over appeal for both able-bodied and disabled users across multiple age ranges.

The Family Recreation Area seeks to provide an activity area that appeals to families and those using the group facilities. By grouping these facilities, efficient use of support amenities such as parking, trails, and restrooms can be accomplished. Proposed

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facilities will build on the family-oriented foundation of the existing picnic areas, amphitheater, carousel, and caboose.

The focal point of the new Family Recreation Area could be a water feature that allows users to play in and experience the water and is designed to be attractive and safe for children. In addition to the water feature, a themed accessible play area should be designed with creative play features that may include a fully accessible play structure, sand tables or other experiential structures that are compatible with the core play area. Any designs should take into account the limitations of physically- and emotionally-disabled users and how they use their supporting aids such as wheelchairs, crutches, prosthetics, etc and creatively explore the opportunities for all users.

Another important planned feature of the Family Recreation Area is a fully accessible enclosed structure such as a large tree house with ramps built in the wooded area near the carousel. This elevated feature will provide children with the opportunity to play in the trees of Lee District Park and gather in large groups under adult supervision. This feature could be used by families or small groups of friends, youth groups, or as a reservable setting. This feature would be a unique addition to the Fairfax County Park system.

The entire core play area should feature fully accessible paving of interesting and colorful patterns in order to visually identify different areas and features, create interest, provide safe access, maximize durability, and minimize maintenance. In order to connect the core play area with other areas of the park a paved trail should be constructed. This trail could be paved in concrete or asphalt. It is important to both connect this area with other areas of the park using a trail system and also to alter the trail system within the Family Recreation Area in order to set it apart and create a unique and identifiable area within the park.

A coordinated landscape design should be provided to include attractive seating areas

throughout the Family Recreation Area. The plants for landscaped areas should be selected for ease of maintenance as well as textural and sensory changes over three seasons. This feature will add yet another layer to the experience of the Family Recreation Area. To the extent possible, plants selected should be native and non-invasive to the area. Seating should be designed in such a way as to maximize the ability of parents and guardians to watch children within the area.

The key design elements in this zone will provide interesting activities and complementing uses for different age groups and ability levels that will attract a variety of users.

## **C. Design Concerns**

### **1. Intensity of Additional Uses**

The additions to the Conceptual Development Plan will intensify the use of Lee District Park while addressing citizen needs over the long term. As new facility engineering and development takes place, it should include adequate support facilities, sound site management, and proper scheduling efforts to ensure a quality park experience.

### **2. Family Recreation Area**

The development of the Family Recreation Area should be carried out in concert with the community in order to ensure a usable and attractive recreational space. In order to reduce the likelihood of misuse of the accessible tree house or play area, this area of the park should be fenced in order to allow for controlled access and use only during operational hours and seasons.

### **3. Parking**

Parking should be carefully sited in the park to minimize removal of existing trees and established turf. The addition of non-porous surface area may create the need for storm water management areas. Low impact development techniques, including demonstration models, should be implemented

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to the extent practicable to mitigate any possible environmental harm.

#### **4. Stormwater Management**

Stormwater should be managed using Low Impact Development methods. Every effort should be made to minimize the impact of stormwater on the Natural Resource Management Area. It is anticipated that stormwater will best be managed in the southeastern portion of the site. Development at Lee District Park should be viewed as an opportunity to use Low Impact Design methods and other stormwater management innovations. Upon the completion of Watershed Plans for the surrounding watersheds, the Park Authority should complete retro-fits and redesigns where feasible and responsible.

#### **D. Plan Revision**

Lee District Park plays an important role in the Lee District community. This plan revision will allow the park to continue this vital role while improving services for the whole community. The addition of parking will help alleviate over-crowding in the existing parking areas during peak facility usage and special events. The reconfiguration and lighting of the diamond and rectangle athletic fields will more effectively meet the needs of the athletic community.

This plan also includes new uses that broaden Lee District Park's community appeal. The creation of the Family Recreation Area and the planned re-use of an existing underutilized tennis court make Lee District Park a unique park within the Fairfax County Park system. The Family Recreation Area will provide activities in the spring, summer, and fall that will attract users of many different ages to play in the water feature, take in a show at the amphitheater, or have a picnic at the tree house. This area will provide safe and interesting recreation opportunities for residents in Lee District as well as residents of the whole County.

## **Appendix 1. Forest Stand Delineation**

### **Forest Stand 1, Virginia Pine, SAF Forest Cover Type 79**

This ±8.6 acre stand is located in the stream valley, but is dominated by Virginia pine (*Pinus virginiana*) which is transitioning to bottomland hardwoods. The hardwoods include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*) and willow oak (*Quercus phellos*). Several areas in this stand are affected by invasive species as well. Plot sample SD101804-14 is dominated by wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*) growing up the trees. Plot sample SD101804-13 also exhibits a high percentage of invasives such as pawlonia (*Pawlonia tomentosa*) and mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*). A trail leading 300' from the road has been used to dump yard waste and grass clippings. It is likely that this activity has provided the seed source. The general health of this stand ranges from fair to good and the forest structure analysis rates the stand as good forest structure.

### **Forest Stand 2, Sweetgum-Willow Oak, SAF Forest Cover Type 92**

This ±6.4 acre stand occupies the gentle slopes and flat stream valley along the western boundary of the park. The stand is dominated by sweetgum, red maple, tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), willow oak, southern red oak and black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*). The dominant size class ranges from 16-20" dbh. A few scattered specimens exceed 24" dbh. Early successional species, including Virginia pine, black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) are also codominants in the scattered canopy openings. Invasive species were noted with greater frequency closer to the border with the US Military Reservation; as noted at plot sample SD101804-10. The invasive species that are most abundant include sweet cherry (*Prunus avium*), Norway maple (*Acer platanus*), mimosa (*Albizia*

*julibrissin*), oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculata*) and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*). The general health of this stand is fair. The forest structure analysis rates the stand as good forest structure.

### **Forest Stand 3, Sweetgum-Willow Oak, SAF Forest Cover Type 92**

This ±18.9 acre stand encompasses the toe of the slope and bottomland areas along the southern boundary by South Kings Highway and extending northward up the two major tributary valleys which flow from north to south. The stand is dominated by sweetgum, red maple and willow oak. The codominant species represented are tulip poplar, white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), willow oak, southern red oak, pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*) and black gum. White oak is occasionally codominant. The understory consists of overstory regeneration and ironwood (*Carpinus carolina*), flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), mapleleaf viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), arrowwood viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum*). American beech can also be found overtaking some areas of the understory, especially around plot sample SD101404-20 in the eastern portion of the stand. American beech may be the climax species in these areas. Remnant old field species, such as standing dead black locust and sassafras are also present in this area. The dominant size class ranges from 16-20" dbh. However, a few notably large specimens, 38" willow oak and 45" pin oak, were recorded within this stand. The 45" pin oak is located in the stream valley in the eastern portion of the stand below Stand 9A. This tree exceeds 120' height, yet exhibits a broader open crown indicating that it was probably present when the surrounding area was field. The tree is in good condition, with minimal signs of decay and large deadwood, given its size and age. The tree should be officially measured as it may qualify as a county champion. The general health of the stand is good. The forest structure analysis rates this stand as priority for forest stand preservation.

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## **Forest Stand 3A, Sweetgum-Willow Oak, SAF Forest Cover Type 92**

This +.7 acre stand located in the flat area at the head of the draw, which flows northward out of the park. The stand is similar in composition to forest stand 3. Red maples are codominant with the sweetgums and oaks in this area. The understory is comprised of greenbrier and patches of Japanese stilt grass. The general health of the stand is good and the forest structure analysis rates this stand as good or priority for forest stand preservation.

## **Forest Stand 4, Chestnut Oak, SAF Forest Cover Type 44**

This +31.7 acre stand is dominated by chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*), white oak (*Quercus alba*) and tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). The stand occupies the south central section of the park on the middle to upper slopes of the southern drainage. The associated species that are codominant and found in the understory include pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*), southern red oak (*Quercus falcata*), black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*), American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). The dominant size class ranges from 24-30" dbh. Individual trees exceeding 30" dbh are scattered throughout the stand. The understory also includes stands of azalea (*Rhododendron sp.*), especially near the entrance to the park around plot sample SD102704-1. Arrowwood viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum*), blackhaw viburnum (*Viburnum prunifolium*), greenbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*) and blueberries (*Vaccinum sp.*), christmas ferns (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) were also noted in some locations. American beech and red maple are prevalent codominants and understory species in the area around plot sample SD102704-2. These shade tolerant species may become dominant in parts of the stand if left undisturbed. The extreme southeastern portion of the stand exhibits nearly flat topography. Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) and trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*) were found in the understory around plot sample SD102704-3; indicating a higher moisture level. The invasive exotic Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*)

has formed stands in the southeastern corner as well. The general health of the stand is good. The forest structure analysis rates this stand as priority for forest stand preservation.

## **Forest Stand 5, Virginia Pine-Oak, SAF Forest Cover Type 78**

This +7.9 acre stand is located in the southeastern portion of the property and wraps around the field edge. The stand is comprised of Virginia pine (*Pinus virginiana*) and early successional species, such as, black locust and black cherry. Mixed hardwoods, such as, willow oak, red maple, sweetgum, white oak and southern red oak are beginning to reach co-dominance in some areas. The stand is located on the upper slope and in the flat plateau area at the top of the slope. This stand is not in good condition. The soil appears to be fill with old roads and garbage in some areas. The understory is dominated by invasive vines and trees especially near the field edges. There are gaps in the canopy scattered throughout where invasives are present as well. Mimosa and ailanthus are found in this stand. Japanese honeysuckle and oriental bittersweet are also prevalent. The dense vine growth is slowing, if not preventing the natural succession of hardwoods in these areas. The general health of the stand is fair to poor. The forest structure analysis rates this stand as good to poor.

## **Forest Stand 6, Chestnut oak-white oak**

This ± 3.2 acre stand extends along the northeastern boundary of the park. It wraps around the ball field areas and is generally 30-60' wide. The stand occupies a well drained ridge line and is dominated by upland oak species. Chestnut oak and white oak are dominant. The associated codominant species include white ash, black gum, Virginia pine, and red maple.

Virginia pine is primarily found scattered along the field edge. A healthy native understory exists throughout the stand. Overstory hardwood regeneration is joined by fringetree (*Chionanthus virginiana*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*), (*Vaccinum sp.*) and pinxterflower azaleas (*Rhododendron periclymenoides*). Deer browse was evident in several locations of this stand. The

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general health of the stand is good. The forest structure analysis rates this stand as priority for forest stand preservation.

## **Forest Stand 7 and 7A, Virginia Pine SAF Forest Cover Type 79**

These small stands are  $\pm 0.8$  acres (Stand 7) and  $\pm 1.2$  acres (Stand 7A). Virginia pines comprise 80-90% of the dense canopy in these stands. The dominant size class ranges from 10-14" diameter in both stands. A few young hardwoods, less than 8" diameter, are interspersed. The understory seedling, shrub and herbaceous growth are very sparse due to the dense canopy coverage. Stand 7 is well trafficked by children from the adjacent school and voluntary paths have formed in the stand. The general health of these stands is fair to good. The forest structure analysis rates these stands as having good forest structure. This rating was due to the lack of understory and overstory diversity.

## **Forest Stand 8, Chestnut Oak SAF Forest Cover Type 44**

This  $\pm 3.07$  acre stand is located on a steep well drained slope in the northwestern portion of the park. The slope has a northwest aspect and is dominated by chestnut oaks and white oaks in the 22-28" size class. Invasives were rarely noted. The understory included (*vaccinum spp.*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) and azaleas (*Rhododendron spp.*). Young red maples, less than 10" diameter, are also present in the understory. The majority of the species represented are often associated with dry well drained slopes with a potential fire regime in the past. The fire intolerant red maples are likely a new addition. An intermittent stream flows to the north at the toe of the slope on the far western boundary of the stand. Chestnut oak and white oak remain dominant but are associated with post oak and sweetgum in the overstory and fringetree and greenbrier in the understory. The general health of the stand is good. The forest structure analysis rates this stand as priority for forest stand preservation.

## **Forest Stand 9 and 9A, Chestnut Oak SAF Forest Cover Type 44**

Stand 9 and 9A occupy steep well drained slopes with dry southwestern aspect. Stand 9 covers  $\pm 4.1$  acres and stand 9A  $\pm 1.0$  acre. Remnant Virginia pine and black locust are present in both stands with many dead standing snags scattered throughout. The stands are evenly aged and many of the chestnut oaks are multi-trunk stump sprouts. The dominant size class ranges from 18-22" diameter. Decay and scars were noted on the downhill sides of the trees in Stand 9. These scars were probably caused by fire within the last 15-20 years. Other fire associated species are also present in the understory including *Vaccinum spp.* and pinxterflower azaleas, spotted wintergreen (*Chimaphila maculata*), sedge (*Carex spp.*). Chestnut oak may represent the edaphic climax for stand 9 with well drained soil, steep slope and western aspect. American beech is present in the understory of stand 9A. Beech may be the climax species in this stand in the absence of fire. The general health of these stands is good. The forest structure analysis for both stands rates them as priority for forest stand preservation.

## **Forest Stand 10**

Stand number 10 is located on a small knoll along the southern boundary. The stand has high percentages of invasive species. The dominant species; red maple, sweetgum, elm and black cherry; are similar to the adjacent bottomland. Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*), wisteria, oriental bittersweet and Japanese honeysuckle cover extensive areas. This area appears to be an old homesite or dump site, with trash and tires scattered throughout. The forest structure analysis rating is poor for this stand.