

**JOHNSON CITY PARKS AND RECREATION
MASTER PLAN, 2000 - 2020**

PREPARED BY: CITY OF JOHNSON CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



JOHNSON CITY TENNESSEE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Duffie Jones, Mayor

Steve Darden, Vice-Mayor

Dr. Ricky Mohon

C. H. Charlton

Pete Paduch

Charles L. Harmon, Interim City Manager

JOHNSON CITY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Dr. Phil Roe, Chairman

Danny Matthews

Mary Alexander, Vice-Chairman

G. Robert Owens

Dr. Michael Marchioni, Secretary

Mark Sizemore

Bobby Jobe

Gerald Thomas

David Lefemine

JOHNSON CITY PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Mark Durkee, Chairman

Eugene Gillespie

Lee Miller, Vice-Chairman

C.B. Kinch

James Smith, Secretary

Grant Trivette III

Lt. Col. Harry Gibson (Ret.)

Clem Wilkes

M. Denis Peterson, Assistant City Manager

Thomas E. Alexander, CPRP, Director of Parks and Recreation

Prepared By

The Johnson City Planning Department

601 East Main Street, PO Box 2150, Johnson City, Tennessee 37605-2150

Staff Responsible

James D. Moody, Planning Director

Monie Honeycutt, Graphics Tech III

James R. Donnelly, Comprehensive Planning Coordinator

David Ollis, Graphics Tech I

Brad Price, GIS Technician

Tina Millsaps, Clerical Specialist I

Sherry Vandeventer, Administrative Coordinator

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Introduction.....	ES 1
Master Plan Purpose	ES 1
Demographic Information.....	ES 2
Inventory of Existing Recreation Resources.....	ES 2
Assessment of Existing Recreation Programs.....	ES 3
Community Needs Assessment.....	ES 4
Master Plan Proposals and Recommendations.....	ES 4
Park Recommendations	ES 6
Maintenance.....	ES 8
Master Plan Funding Strategy.....	ES 8
Conclusion	ES 9

Introduction

Purpose of the Plan	1
Report Structure	2
National Accreditation	3
History of Park Development	3
Review of the 1976 Plan.....	5

Section One – Influencing Factors

Demographic Characteristics	6
Growth Trends	13
Environmental Considerations.....	15

Section Two – Inventory of Existing Recreation Resources

Park and Recreation Department Facilities.....	17
Other Key City Facilities	30
School Facilities.....	31
Housing Authority Facilities	34
State and Federal Facilities	35
Key Private and Quasi-Public Facilities	36
Deficiencies/Findings	37

Section Three – Assessment of Existing Recreation Programs

Specific Program Areas	41
Recreation Centers.....	55
Overview of National and Local Trends.....	58
Deficiencies/Findings	60

Section Four – Community Needs Assessment

Citywide Surveys	61
State Recreation Plan	63
National Trends Assessment.....	64
Planning Guidelines	65
Recreation Types	66
Facility Classification System.....	66
Major Components of the Park System	68
Facility Guidelines.....	71

Evaluation of Parkland Needs.....	72
Evaluation of Study Areas	73
Section Five – Recreation Providers	
Roles of Providers.....	78
Partnership Opportunities	81
Partnership Issues.....	82
Partnership Considerations	82
Section Six – Plan Recommendations	
Goals, Objectives, and Policies.....	83
Facility Recommendations/Improvements.....	87
Program Recommendations	102
Facility Maintenance and Design.....	107
Section Seven – Implementation Strategies	
Methods of Financing Parkland Acquisition and Development.....	109
Acquisition and Development Methods.....	110
Continuing the Plan Process	113
Conclusion	114

LIST OF TABLES

Section One – Influencing Factors

Table I. Population Trends, Johnson City, 1960-1999	6
Table II. Population Projections, Selected Areas, 2000-2020	7
Table III. Percent of High School Graduates, Persons 25 and Older, Selected Areas, 1950-1990	8
Table IV. Distribution of Family Income, Johnson City and Washington County, 1979-1989	9
Table V. Employment by Industry, Johnson City, Persons 16 years and older, 1960-1990	10
Table VI. Population by Age and Sex, Johnson City, 1990	11
Table VII. Projected Population by Age, Johnson City, 2000-2020	12
Table VIII. Residential Building Activity, Johnson City, 1970-1999	13

Section Four – Community Needs Assessment

Table IX. Classification of Recreation Facilities	67
Table X. Guidelines for Public Facilities.....	71
Table XI. Parkland Requirements, 2000-2020	72
Table XII. Evaluation of Study Areas	73

Section Six - Recommendations

Table XIII. Park Facility Improvement Program, 2000-2020	100
--	-----

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Follows Page</u>
1. Existing and Anticipated Growth Areas	14
2. Existing School and Park Facilities.....	40
3. Existing Playground Facilities	40
4. Location of Study Areas	77
5. Existing and Proposed Community Park Service Areas	98
6. Plan Recommendations.....	99

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2000-2020 is based upon a review of the entire community, an analysis of the existing park system, the identification of citizen needs and concerns, and the development of recreation guidelines. The plan is intended to provide a framework from which the city can enhance its parks and recreation system through the year 2020.

Statistics indicate that the city's population will continue to grow moderately, placing an additional burden on the existing park system. Meeting the citizen's increased and changing demand for recreation facilities and programs is an ever-increasing challenge for the Parks and Recreation Department. This is coupled with the fact that many of the existing facilities in the recreation system have outlived their design intent and will need to be replaced, significantly renovated, modified, and/or expanded.

The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department must be proactive in its approach to providing recreation services. A well-defined master plan developed with broad-based citizen input is one part of the city's approach to providing recreation facilities and programs that will address Johnson City's needs for the future.

MASTER PLAN PURPOSE

The main purpose of this document is to provide the city with a plan to guide its actions and decisions concerning:

- Renovations and improvements to existing recreation facilities;
- Recreation programming needs;
- Acquisition and development of new recreation facilities;
- Maintenance concerns for current and proposed facilities;
- Citizen concerns and needs;
- Partnerships in the provision of recreation services; and
- Accreditation by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).

The Master Plan report is organized into the following major components:

1. Introduction, including history of park development in the city, and a review of the 1976 Open Space Land and Recreation Study;
2. Influencing Factors, including demographics, growth trends, and environmental considerations;
3. Inventory of Existing Recreation Resources;
4. Assessment of Existing Recreation Programs;
5. Community Needs Assessment;
6. Recreation Providers;
7. Plan Recommendations; and
8. Implementation Strategies.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The demographic information relating to Johnson City has been reviewed to gain an understanding of the characteristics and trends of the community and to identify factors that will have an influence on recreation facility and program planning. The following, highlights the findings of the plan:

- The planning area for this plan includes the July 1, 1999 corporate limits boundary, and selective areas surrounding the city. The planning area encompasses approximately 110 square miles and is divided into 27 study areas.
- The city's population is projected to be approximately 72,435 in the year 2020 representing an increase of approximately 22 percent over the next 20 years.
- Like many communities in the United States, Johnson City's population will continue to age placing new demands on facility and program planning.
- Median family income in Johnson City continues to increase as a percentage of the U.S. median.
- During the 1970-1990 period, the number of families in Johnson City below the poverty level increased 12.5 percent.
- In 1990, 23 percent of all families in the city were headed by a single parent with female heads of household accounting for 83 percent of the total.
- The number of persons per household in the city has decreased from 3.29 in 1960 to 2.30 in 1990.
- The ratio of males to females in the city has remained constant. In 1990, males accounted for approximately 48 percent of the population and females 52 percent.
- Since 1960, the city's corporate limits have expanded from 7.6 square miles to 38.8 square miles, an increase of 410 percent.
- Conversely, the city's population density has decreased from 3,933 persons per square mile in 1960 to 1,372 persons per square mile in 1999.
- The 1990's have witnessed the most explosive period in residential development in the city's history, with an average of over 400 new residential dwelling units per year.
- A review of 1980 and 1990 census data reveals that the older residential neighborhoods in the city's center are losing population while areas in north Johnson City including Boones Creek are experiencing population growth.
- Corresponding to the shift of population growth to the north is a loss of residents under age 18 in the inner city areas and an increase of elderly and families without children.

INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATION RESOURCES

- The Parks and Recreation Department currently operates facilities located on approximately 1085 acres of property including 25 parks, ballfields, and special use facilities, four recreation centers, and two swimming pools.
- A detailed inventory of existing recreation facilities in the planning area was conducted. These facilities fall under the jurisdiction of the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department (JCPRD), Johnson City Board of Education (JCBE), Johnson City Housing

Authority (JCHA), East Tennessee State University, the Veterans Administration, U.S. Forest Service, and numerous private and quasi-public entities.

- Major findings of the inventory include the following:
 - Parks appear to require routine and structured maintenance.
 - The majority of facilities are deficient in landscaping which would improve overall visual quality and compatibility with surrounding residential areas.
 - Several parks lack adequate open space and informal play areas.
 - There is a lack of standardization and uniformity regarding building design, signage, park furnishings, color identity, and other amenities.
 - Many parks pose safety hazards resulting from poor design, substandard maintenance, and deteriorated facilities.
 - The need exists for increased security to address problems of vandalism and illicit behavior.
 - The distribution of park facilities is not consistent with areas of recent and projected population growth.
 - Vacant land suitable for future park development is a major deficiency in several areas of the city.
 - Changing demographics and needs have resulted in limited use of several existing park facilities.
 - The use of the school/park concept has not been implemented to the extent possible.
 - The city has not taken full advantage of two of the community's greatest assets, the Watauga River and Buffalo Mountain.
 - The development of a bicycle/walking/hiking trail system has only recently been initiated to provide interconnection between facilities.

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING RECREATION PROGRAMS

A program analysis was conducted on the department's individual program offerings. Local and national trends for certain programs were identified and program needs were developed. Visits were made to program sites and staff, volunteers, organizations, and citizens were interviewed to determine issues, concerns, and needs. The following summarizes the findings of the assessment:

- The department offers a variety of program services for residents with an emphasis on athletics at all age levels.
- There is a need for improved record-keeping regarding program participation, financial accountability, and maintenance performance records.
- The implementation of a user/participation fee should be considered, particularly for non-city residents.
- A program evaluation process should be implemented to ensure programs are meeting the needs and expectations of program participants.
- Recreation centers are outdated in terms of: space, distribution within the city, facilities/programs offered, and structural amenities.
- Additional programs should be targeted for specific segments of the population, specifically the senior citizen and families.

- Locally, during 1995-1999 adult basketball and youth soccer have experienced the greatest increases in participation, while girls youth softball, adult softball, and girls tee-ball have experienced declines in participation. These trends, for the most part, follow national trends.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The future recreation needs and concerns of Johnson City residents, as they pertain to recreation, have been determined through: public comment; interviews with user groups; a review of national trends; and a comparison of existing facilities with nationally recognized park and recreation facility guidelines. The following summarizes the findings of the community assessment:

- Citizen input was solicited from 5,700 households in the planning area; 350 middle school and high school students; 200 senior citizens; and 225 park users.
- Major findings of the surveys included:
 - Activities/programs/facilities that the city should expand include: walking trails, bikeways, picnic facilities, swimming facilities, cultural events, tennis courts, soccer fields, and programs for teenagers and senior citizens.
 - Programs/activities desired but not provided include: ice-skating, in-line skating, nature study areas, camping, and fitness programs.
 - Senior citizens indicated a strong preference for more passive recreation activities and facilities.
 - Approximately 70 percent of the respondents stated they did not live within safe walking distance of a park.
 - 66 percent of the respondents felt city recreation facilities are well maintained; however, areas of need include cleaner and more accessible restrooms, water fountains, shade trees, benches, and landscaping.
 - 83 percent of the respondents felt that city parks were safe while 52 percent of senior citizens felt that they were not.
 - 40 percent of the respondents were unaware of recreation programs and/or the location of recreation facilities provided by the city.
 - 81 percent of the respondents indicated that the city should provide more passive park and open space areas.
 - 65 percent of the respondents felt that the city did not have sufficient parkland.
 - The types of parks that will be needed by the end of the planning period (2020) are based upon the guidelines provided in Table IX. They include neighborhood parks, community parks, and district parks.
- The following summarizes land needs by park type for 2020:
 - Neighborhood Parks – approximately 143 acres.
 - Community Parks – approximately 97 acres.
 - District Park – approximately 163 acres.

MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Master Plan presents the conceptual and factual framework for the preparation of both facility and program recommendations. Implementation of the plan will depend on the availability of funds and the extent to which taxpayers are willing to pay for new and improved facilities. The recommendations of the plan are summarized below:

- The most recent problems for the department to resolve have been primarily in the area of facility deficiencies. Facilities are lacking due to age and outdated design. As these facilities continue to age they will need to be replaced or significantly renovated and/or expanded.
- In addition, population growth and the lack of new facility development in specific areas of the city require the provision of new facilities and the improvement of existing facilities. Corresponding with this need will be a commensurate increase in operating and maintenance costs.
- Johnson City's citizens are accustomed to the city's provision of diverse recreation activities and will expect the same in the future. Public input during the planning process suggests that the citizens' interest and demand for quality leisure services will only increase with time. Additionally, citizens expect the city to be a main provider of recreation services especially for the economically disadvantaged and senior citizens.
- Meeting all the recreation needs of the community will require a joint effort between the various government agencies and the private sector. For a detailed discussion please refer to Section Five of the plan.
- It is important that there be strong coordination and cooperation between the city and surrounding local governments, particularly Washington County in the delivery of recreation services and facilities. This Master Plan should be presented to the county, following city adoption, to identify potential coordinated efforts for joint programming and development of facilities.
- As its primary focus, Johnson City should offer recreation programs and park facilities for city residents. Historically, the city has been servicing Johnson City residents and those living in the surrounding areas outside the city. It is anticipated that with the projected city growth, the city will not be in a financial position to offer recreation programs and park facilities for a large population of users living outside the corporate limits unless partnerships with surrounding local governments are established.
- Similar to Johnson City, other surrounding local governments will need to offer recreation programs and facilities for their own residents.
- The Johnson City Board of Education has cooperated in making school facilities available for recreational use where possible. The JCBE and the JCPRD should increase cooperative efforts in identifying additional programs that may take place on school or park properties. A formal joint use agreement should be developed to identify responsibilities and resources to support a common purpose. The JCBE and the JCPRD should participate jointly in the provision of new sites and the renovation/expansion of existing sites to meet both their needs.
- Through the years quasi-public organizations such as churches, civic clubs, and community organizations in Johnson City have provided or supported recreation activities in the community. It will be essential, through the year 2020, for the quasi-public sector to maintain and increase its strong supporting role in providing facilities and programs.
- A virtually untapped resource regarding the provision of recreation facilities is the development sector. Developers should be encouraged to assist the city through the dedication of future parkland or payments in lieu of dedication when the property is not consistent with the Master Plan's recommendations for recreation and/or greenway development.

PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Master Plan recommends by the year 2020 that Johnson City make provisions for several new park facilities including: neighborhood parks, community parks, and a district park. It should be emphasized that the number and location of new parks is dependent upon the extent and direction of population growth.
- The sites have been generally located to best serve the planning area. Regardless of the sites identified in the plan, the city should be prepared to adjust and adapt locations based on market conditions and availability of land. In order to be cost effective, JCPRD must be able to act quickly to secure land as it becomes available. This may require that parks or facilities be placed in locations other than originally proposed. The department will then have to analyze the overall suitability of the new site to determine if its development capabilities or use can overcome its location.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

- In addition to new neighborhood parks, several existing sites require renovation and improvements to accommodate facilities, improve service, and increase visual quality. Improvements to existing neighborhood parks may include the following:
 - Update play equipment to current standards (new equipment and fall-zone material);
 - Improve (resurface and stripe) and landscape parking areas where offered;
 - Improve overall handicap accessibility;
 - Install, upgrade, or renovate items such as walkways, water fountains, benches, picnic facilities, lighting, and other park amenities;
 - Increase landscaping and improve signage;
 - Increase sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood; and
 - Provide linkage to existing sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and greenways.
- New neighborhood parks are recommended for areas within the planning area where facilities are lacking and in developing residential areas where the need will become more pronounced as growth intensifies. The following summarizes need by Study Area:

<u>STUDY AREA</u>	<u>POTENTIAL NEED</u>
1- Central	No additional parks are anticipated
2- Gilmer Park/Millercrest	No additional parks are anticipated
3- Y-Section	No additional parks are anticipated
4- Tree Streets	No additional parks are anticipated
5- Oak Park	No additional parks are anticipated
6- Carnegie	No additional parks are anticipated
7- Towne Acres	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed community park
8- Asbury/Westwood Gray	Provide facilities at Woodland Elementary School
9- Midway	No additional parks are anticipated
10- Cherokee	Dependent upon future development/annexation
11-Seminole Dr./Ashely Rd.	Investigate demand/interest in neighborhood park; also expand potential at Cherokee Elementary School
12- Southeast/Martindale	Dependent upon future development/annexation
13- Keystone	Develop neighborhood park

14- Cash Hollow	Greenway park along Watauga River
15- Pine Ridge	Provide park as demand dictates need
16- Timberlake Rd./E. Mountainview	Neighborhood park to serve rapidly developing residential area
17- West Mountainview Rd.	Dependent upon future development/annexation
18- Carroll Creek Rd. – West	Dependent upon future development/annexation
19- The Ridges	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed district or community park
20- Hales Chapel	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed district or community park
21- Gray Station Rd.	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed community park
22- Pickens Bridge Rd.	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed community park
23- Piney Flats/Rocky Mount	Dependent upon future development/annexation
24- Cedar Creek	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years
25- Oak Grove	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years
26- Gray East	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years
27- Gray West	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years

- Priorities are based on population growth and rate of annexation, both of which are subject to change requiring a continuous monitoring of the plan to ensure its responsiveness to citizens needs.

COMMUNITY PARKS

- The acceptance of the community park concept is critical in meeting the recreation and program needs of the city’s residents. Many of the plan’s recommendations regarding recreation centers and programs requires a community park system as discussed in the Community Needs Assessment of the Master Plan. Improvements to existing community parks may include the following:
 - Re-designate Rotary, Civitan, and Lions parks as one community park complex with future improvements designed to support the community park concept;
 - Complete facility development at Willow Springs Park;
 - Install, upgrade, or renovate items such as walkways, water fountains, benches, picnic facilities, and other park amenities;
 - Increase landscaping and improve signage;
 - Increase sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood;
 - Provide linkage to existing sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and greenways; and
 - Improve overall handicap accessibility.
- Three new community parks are recommended for acquisition and development by 2020. The areas recommended include:
 - Study Area 7 (Towne Acres area);
 - Study Areas 21/22 (Gray Station Road area); and
 - Study Areas 19/20 (The Ridges/Hales Chapel area).
- Regardless of the suggested improvements contained in the Master Plan, site master plans should be developed for any new or expanded facility with an emphasis on public input in the design process.

DISTRICT PARKS

- The existing district park (Winged Deer) requires continued facility improvements/expansion to keep pace with changing needs and to accommodate and attract additional users. Proposed improvements to Winged Deer Park are discussed in the plan.
- One new district park is recommended to serve the western portion of the planning area. Johnson City should take the lead in developing this facility with partnerships with Washington County and the town of Jonesborough a possibility.

MAINTENANCE

- A major concern identified in the plan through facility inventories and citizen response to surveys is the need for an increased level of maintenance of existing parks. The following steps have been recommended for implementation during 2000-2005 to address maintenance management:
 - Inventory and mapping of all park facilities;
 - Development of maintenance standards for each facility;
 - Determination of maintenance requirements (elements);
 - Development of a maintenance schedule for each facility;
 - Development of standard work methods and procedures;
 - Determination of personnel, equipment, and material needs based on maintenance standards to be applied;
 - Development of an effective and efficient system of organizing and assigning maintenance personnel;
 - Development of an adequate maintenance management system to measure success of the program; and
 - Development of an ongoing evaluation procedure to consistently improve the maintenance management system.
- Adoption and implementation of standards for maintenance is a necessary step toward resident acceptance and national accreditation of the Parks and Recreation Department and one that will ensure a park system that is maintained at an acceptable and efficient level.

MASTER PLAN FUNDING STRATEGY

- Over the 20-year planning period, the city of Johnson City will not be able to support the proposed capital improvements of approximately 35-40 million dollars solely through the current level of contributions from the General Fund.
- Plans for the addition of new facilities during the 20-year planning period should be accompanied by an analysis of operating and maintenance costs. The method of financing these additional expenses should be identified prior to new facility development.
- The city must use a combination of revenue sources to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan including: (1) General Fund appropriations; (2) general obligation bonds; (3) revenue bonds; (4) state and federal grants; (5) user charges; (6) partnerships; and (7) gifts.
- Other methods available to Johnson City for acquiring/developing parkland include:

- **Fee Simple Purchase** – The outright purchase is perhaps the most widely used method of obtaining parkland though this method is the most difficult to reconcile with limited public resources.
- **Installment Purchase** – The owner and the city agree to a price for the land and the payments are spread over a number of years.
- **Life Estate** – A life estate is a deferred gift. Under this plan, a donor retains use of his land during his lifetime and relinquishes title to such land upon his death. In return for this gift, the owner is usually relieved of the property tax burden on the donated land.
- **Long-Term Option** – A long-term option is frequently used when a particular piece of land is seen as having potential future value though it is not desired or affordable to the city at the time. Under the terms of a long-term option, the city agrees with the landowner on a selling price for the property and a time period over which the city has the right to exercise its option.
- **First Right of Purchase** – This approach to acquiring parkland eliminates the need for fixing the selling price of a parcel of land yet alerts the city of any impending purchase which might disrupt the parkland acquisition goals. The city would be notified that a purchase is pending and would have the right to purchase the property before it is sold to the party requesting the purchase.
- **Local Gifts** – A significant and most often untapped source of providing funds for acquisition and development of local park projects is through a well-organized local gifts program. The pursuit of land, money, construction funds, or donated labor can have a meaningful impact on the development of a well-rounded system.
- **Easement** – The most common type of less-than-fee interest in land is an easement. Since property ownership may be envisioned as a bundle of rights, it is possible for the city to purchase any one or several of these rights. An easement seeks to compensate the property owner for the loss of one of the privileges to use the land.
- **Zoning/Subdivision Regulations/Mandatory Dedication** – Zoning ordinances, subdivision regulation, and mandatory dedications may be utilized to create new parkland at no cost to the community.

CONCLUSION

Developing and maintaining a high quality park system, in response to projected population growth, is an opportunity for the city of Johnson City to enhance its image and quality of life and to continue its leadership role in the Tri-Cities Region. The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2000-2020, represents the first step in ensuring continued improvement and development of park facilities and services for the next 20 years. The plan provides a guide for officials making decisions about recreation needs and for citizens interested in the city's commitment to the provision of recreation services.

The Master Plan is designed to be proactive and recommends a program of facility improvements as well as the addition of new facilities before citizens needs and demands become an issue and existing land resources are at a minimum. Through proactive planning and development of parks and recreation facilities, the city can budget needed funds over a period of time and develop a planned program of facility renovation and expansion.

INTRODUCTION

As Johnson City enters the 21st century, the city is being challenged to provide responsive, equitable, and high quality public facilities and services to the residents of the city. The construction of the Johnson City Public Library, the Adelphia Centre at Millenium Park, the school building program, Iris Glen Environmental Center, expansion of water and sewer facilities, downtown revitalization, and major road improvements are all examples of the city's commitment to meet this challenge.

Population projections indicate that the next 20 years will be a period of unprecedented growth in the city's history. The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2000 - 2020, represents the city's response to increasing citizen demand for additional parks, recreation facilities, and programs. Meeting this increasing demand combined with the fact that many of the existing facilities in the park system are now 35-40 years old and require major renovation to meet today's demands represent a major challenge to the city's Parks and Recreation Department. This is an appropriate time for Johnson City to reassess its existing recreation facilities and programs and to formulate a plan of action that will address future needs in a proactive manner. A well-defined master plan is one part of Johnson City's continuing commitment to providing the highest quality of services to the residents of the community.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

To many residents, the recreation opportunities and activities offered in the city represent a vital part of their daily lives and a reflection of the quality of life offered by the city. These opportunities are provided by an array of organizations and come in many forms. To some, they involve a leisurely walk through their neighborhood; participating in aerobics or fitness classes; participating in a basketball or softball game; or enjoying a picnic at one of the city's parks. All of these choices, no matter how much or how little activity is involved, are an important part of their lives.

Johnson City may not yet have the social problems associated with older more developed urban areas; however, this situation could change in the future unless the city's continuing efforts are more defined in order to maintain and to provide needed parks, recreation facilities, and programs. The value of recreation to the health and welfare of an individual and community has been recognized for some time, as has the lack of adequate leisure facilities and programs been a major contributing factor to the problems of many of the nation's urban areas.

Park facilities are also an economic asset to the city. A well-designed and managed park system is an important factor in attracting new industry and commerce to the city and in encouraging the expansion of existing industry. Finally, a park system affects the growth and form of a neighborhood, community, and ultimately the city and does much toward determining whether the city is an attractive or unattractive place to live, work, and play.

Johnson City must make certain that it has sufficient parkland and that it is located properly and provided with adequate and well-maintained facilities. Not only growth in absolute numbers of population, but also changes in the age composition and the distribution of the population within the city affect the type and location of recreation facilities that must be provided.

Since development pressures tend to encroach on some of the land ideally suited for parks, the city must locate and secure adequate parkland in advance of development or structure policy to require land dedication by developers to compensate for recognized needs. This has to be accomplished early in the

development process before acquisition costs increase beyond the city's ability to purchase the land. Many local governments often consider the acquisition of parklands to be beyond their fiscal capabilities and the advance acquisition of parkland is too often considered a low priority.

The adoption of the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2000 - 2020 represents the official statement of the city regarding the provision of recreation facilities and programs projected for the next 20 years.

The purpose of the plan can be summarized as follows:

- To provide a basis for decision-making regarding short-range and long-range actions by the city in the development of parks and recreation facilities;
- To provide an inventory and evaluation of existing facilities and programs;
- To ensure adequate land is available for recreation purposes commensurate with the growth of the city;
- To identify the general location, type, and timing of new or expanded facilities; and
- To ensure the needs of all segments of the population are met through facility and program development.

REPORT STRUCTURE

For convenience and ease of handling both data and maps, the Master Plan's area of consideration has been divided into several geographical areas. The terms assigned to these areas are:

Planning Area – includes land within the corporate limits, areas expected to experience growth within the next 20 years, and areas due to their proximity to the city. The planning area encompasses approximately 110 square miles with 38.8 square miles (35.2 percent) located within the corporate limits.

Johnson City - City – consist of all land located within the corporate limits on July 1, 1999.

Study Areas/Neighborhoods- consist of homogeneous areas bounded by major streets and railroads, natural features, political boundaries, and/or divisions of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. For recreation planning purposes, the Master Plan has designated 27 study areas with populations ranging from 490 to 7,085. Many of these study areas when fully developed will contain several neighborhoods.

Community – comprises a group of contiguous related study areas/neighborhoods, separated from other study area/neighborhood combinations by natural or man-made physical features. Ideally, a community contains a population of 15,000 to 20,000 and includes a variety of residential areas, employment centers, shopping facilities, and public facilities.

These distinctions are important in terms of the development of a system of leisure facilities that are responsive to the needs of all the residents of the city. Within each of the component areas different types of action and facilities are required, depending upon: population density; natural features; physical constraints; nonresident population; and rate of growth. The Master Plan recognizes the neighborhood unit concept as the building block of the park system and it forms the basis for the determination of existing and future needs.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

The achievement of a responsive and well-managed Parks and Recreation Department is not an easy task. This plan represents one step in that direction; however, total success may be measured through accreditation by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). Through February 1998, only 16 agencies throughout the United States (one in Tennessee) were accredited by the NRPA.

Public park and recreation agencies should be concerned with the efficiency, effectiveness, and professionalism of their total system of delivery of facilities, programs, services, and benefits. National accreditation provides the process for evaluating the quality of the system that delivers these services. Agencies accredited by the NRPA have demonstrated not only that they meet the standards for a quality operation but also that they have the professional competence, commitment, and community support to complete the accreditation process and are prepared to renew their accreditation every five years. During the accreditation process the following aspects of the Parks and Recreation Department are evaluated: (1) agency authority, role, and responsibility; (2) planning; (3) organization and administration; (4) human resources; (5) fiscal policy and management; (6) program and services management; (7) facility management; (8) safety and security; (9) risk management; and (10) evaluative research.

The Master Plan responds to the planning requirement and where possible addresses other aspects of the accreditation process in some detail. Accreditation, however, requires the continuing commitment to excellence achieved only through effective management of the city's Parks and Recreation Department.

HISTORY OF PARK DEVELOPMENT

The provision of city parks and recreation programs has been a public service in Johnson City since the establishment of the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in 1944. Since the acquisition in 1889 of Powell Square, a 1.4-acre park, the Parks and Recreation Department's inventory of parks and recreation facilities has evolved and today encompasses 25 separate facilities totaling approximately 1085 acres of developed and undeveloped land. Recreation facilities and programs in the city have developed over the years to meet the demand for leisure activities and expanding special interest programs.

Prior to the formation of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the city already had the beginnings of a park system. As previously mentioned, Powell Square Park, in the Tree Streets Neighborhood, was the first park in Johnson City. The Johnson City Real Estate Company donated the 1.4 acres to the city in December 1889 for use as a neighborhood park and the park was later developed in the 1920's. In the early 1940's, the second city park, now known as Rotary Park, was donated to the city by the Carnegie Realty Company. A portion of the 14-acre park site was designated for use for a juvenile home in 1953. The park was formally dedicated as Rotary Park in 1956, in honor of two principals in the Carnegie Realty Company, Louis and Harry Gump, who were Rotarians. Sur Joy Pool, a community pool operated by a private sector group, was located on the site later developed as Carver Park. The pool facility was donated to the city by Louis Gump in the 1940's for development as a park site. Another community improvement that preceded the establishment of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was the football stadium known as Roosevelt Memorial Stadium. It was constructed over a period of three years (1933-35) and funded in part by President Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the city.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was established by Ordinance 1004 on May 18, 1944, for the purpose of directing recreation facility and program development in Johnson City. City funding of \$12,000 was supplemented by donations from individuals, businesses, and civic clubs, and Mr. Howard Johnson was named as the first director of the Parks and Recreation Department. The area around Memorial Stadium included several fields known as the Keystone Fields and was the Board's first base of operations.

The following, highlights major accomplishments since establishment of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in 1944:

- During the 1940's, Kiwanis Park and Carnegie Park (formerly Jaycee Park) were established and improvements in the form of additional land and playground equipment were added to the present Carver Park site.
- In the 1950's, the following facilities were added to the city's park system: (1) Legion Street Recreation Center and pool; (2) Cardinal Park; (3) Joy-Rutherford Field; (4) Carver Recreation Center; (5) the first picnic shelter (London Pavilion) at Rotary Park was constructed; and (6) Lions Park was established.
- During the 1960's, Civitan Park was developed as a softball complex on a former landfill site. Pine Oaks Golf Course was also established through the efforts of the Parks and Recreation Department.
- The 1970's was a period of rapid facility development including: the purchase of land with federal funds of Optimist Park, Neighborhood Park, and Metro-Kiwanis Park; the indoor pool at Freedom Hall was built as part of Freedom Hall Civic Center; Veterans Park was established; improvements were added to the Legion Street Center, Carver Park, and Metro-Kiwanis Park; the soccer program was established; the Open Space Land and Recreation Study was completed; property was purchased on Car-mol Road for a joint school/park site; and the Robert Young Cabin was moved to Optimist Park.
- Continued facility development occurred during the 1980's including: the development of Paul Christman Park; Friendship Gardens; the acquisition of the Arney Farm (later renamed Winged Deer Park); the development of Spring Street Park in the central business district; the operation of Buffalo Mountain Park through a special use permit with the U.S. Forest Service; the development of a master plan for Winged Deer Park; and the donation to the city of Beeson Hall by Calvary Presbyterian Church.
- The 1990's experienced a continuation of facility expansion and renovation with improvements and additional facilities that included: Phase I improvements to Winged Deer Park including relocation of the Parks and Recreation Department's offices to the park; renovation of Carver Park and Recreation Center; acquisition and development of Willow Springs Park; acquisition of Buffalo Mountain Park; improvements to Carnegie Park (formerly Jaycee Park), Civitan Park, Cardinal Park, Joy-Rutherford Field, Kiwanis Park, Metro-Kiwanis Park, Powell Square Park, and Lions Park; relocation and restoration of the Robert Young Cabin at Winged Deer Park; development of the indoor soccer facility at Buffalo Valley Golf Course; and the establishment of the Bikeway/Greenway Committee and the beginning of a system of bikeways and multi-purpose trails.

REVIEW OF THE 1976 PLAN

The city's last effort in providing direction for the future expansion of parks and recreation facilities occurred in 1976 with the completion of the Open Space Land and Recreation Study. The study prepared by the city's Planning Department, presented recommendations concerning the extent, type, and location of future recreation facilities. The goal of the study was:

“To satisfy the recreational needs of every age and income group by providing adequate parks, recreational areas, and neighborhood playgrounds throughout the area in order that present and future generations may enjoy a healthful and active life.”

The 1976 study identified the need for an additional 113 acres of parkland to serve a projected 1980 population of 50,000 that was not realized, and an additional 216 acres to serve a projected 1990 population of 70,000 that fell short by over 20,000 residents. Despite the population projections, that were well in excess of census counts, the city has added a total of approximately 961 acres of parkland since 1976. The 961 acres consist of the following: Paul Christman Park (one-half acre); Winged Deer Park (200 acres); Buffalo Mountain Park (725 acres); and Willow Springs Park (36 acres).

Although the 961 acres that were added since 1976 exceed the recommended total by 848 acres for a city of 50,000, the type of facilities added were, for the most part, large natural areas and citywide serving facilities (Buffalo Mountain Park and Winged Deer Park). The 1976 study emphasized the need for neighborhood facilities located primarily in north and south Johnson City, the Y-Section, and Piney Grove. Specific recommendations in the study identified the following areas for facility development: (1) neighborhood playgrounds on Mountain View Road, Buckley Court, Kipping Street, and Lovelace Road; (2) neighborhood parks on Ashley Road, Cherokee Road, and Lakeview Drive; and (3) community parks on Indian Ridge Road, Antioch Road, and Swadley Road. With the exception of Willow Springs Park, developed in 1998, and the development of Winged Deer Park during the 1990's, the study's recommendations were generally ignored.

The rapid growth of the city and the surrounding area, including in-fill development, will require an emphasis on the acquisition and development of neighborhood and community serving facilities. Failure to respond to this need will ultimately result in the inability of the city to provide these facilities due to the lack of properly located and available land resources and exorbitant land costs that will preclude their acquisition and development.

SECTION ONE - INFLUENCING FACTORS

There are essentially three factors influencing the supply and demand of recreation facilities and programs: demographic characteristics; growth trends; and environmental considerations. Demographics include such factors as population change, education, income, age, and family composition, all of which assist in determining the users of the city’s recreation resources and the personal motivations that affect recreation demand. Growth trends including population change and development patterns have a substantial influence in determining the availability and future location of parkland resources. Environmental considerations such as topography and floodplains establish practical limitations and identify opportunities regarding the use of land resources for parks and recreation facilities.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Understanding the characteristics of the population to be served provides a means of customizing recommendations concerning facilities and programs for specific needs and segments of the population. It also provides a framework for the development of recommendations designed to recognize achievements, correct identified deficiencies, and provide facilities and programs for future growth.

POPULATION CHANGE

One of the primary factors in planning for any public facility including parks, recreation facilities, and programs is population. Increases in population replace vacant/agricultural land with urban development (residential, commercial, and industrial or employment generating uses) resulting in: (1) a corresponding increase in the demand for parks and recreation facilities; and (2) a decrease in available land resources for future park sites.

**Table I. Population Trends, Johnson City
1960-1999**

Year	Population	Number Change	Percent Change
1960	29,892	-	-
1970	33,770	3,878	+12.9
1980	39,753	5,983	+17.7
1990	49,493	9,740	+24.5
1999	53,226	3,773	+7.6

Source: 1960-1990, U.S. Bureau of the Census
1999, Certified population - July 1, 1999

During the 1960-1990 period, the city experienced an increasing rate of population growth primarily as a result of an active annexation program. During this period, the city’s population increased by 19,601 residents representing an increase of 65.6 percent. The rate of population growth during the 1990’s however, has decreased to 7.6 percent with an increase of only 3,773 residents. This lower rate of growth reflects a reduced emphasis on the annexation of developed residential areas. Since 1990, the city has experienced its greatest period of residential building activity that will eventually result in a substantial

increase in the city's population in the next few years. The city's September 1, 1999 population is estimated at approximately 56,385 as a result of studies conducted as part of the master planning process.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The city of Johnson City is projected to experience continued population growth during the next 20 years with the rate of growth primarily dependent on the city's annexation policy. For purposes of the plan, annexation is projected to occur at a moderate rate, and when combined with natural increase (births minus deaths) and in-migration (people moving into the city) the city is projected to gain over 16,000 residents by the year 2020.

**Table II. Population Projections, Selected Areas
2000-2020**

Area	1990 (Actual)	2000	2010	2020
United States	248,709,873	274,634,000	297,716,000	322,742,000
Tennessee	4,877,185	5,657,000	6,180,000	6,529,000
SMSA	436,047	467,780	491,170	517,810
Washington County	92,315	104,505	114,920	126,095
Johnson City Census Division	64,495	70,970	74,730	78,180
City of Johnson City	49,381			
a. slight annexation		55,400	60,790	66,540
b. moderate annexation		56,120	63,910	72,435
c. active annexation		56,835	66,250	76,650

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.
Johnson City Planning Department, Vision 2020

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The level of educational attainment has a direct influence on occupation and thereby, income. The level of recreation participation of persons with elementary, high school, college, and graduate levels of education has been shown to differ significantly in terms of both frequency and type of involvement. Typically, the higher the level of education, the greater the amount of time spent pursuing recreation interests. Higher education levels typically result in an increased level of exposure to a variety of recreation opportunities creating a diversity in interest and desired levels of participation. The result is a wide-range of leisure time pursuits. Participation in sports, swimming, walking, hiking, golf, and tennis generally increases as the level of education increases.

Table III. Percent of High School Graduates, Persons 25 and Older, Selected Areas 1950 to 1990

Area	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
United States	34.3%	41.1%	52.3%	66.3%	75.2%
Tennessee	27.7%	30.4%	41.8%	56.2%	67.1%
SMSA	21.8%	28.5%	39.1%	51.6%	63.1%
Counties					
Washington (TN)	25.8%	31.0%	42.7%	57.1%	68.4%
Sullivan	27.8%	33.6%	46.1%	57.0%	66.8%
Carter	20.1%	24.4%	36.9%	47.0%	57.5%
Cities					
Johnson City	32.4%	36.2%	47.4%	57.2%	71.1%
Bristol (TN)	36.0%	39.3%	43.9%	55.4%	66.4%
Elizabethton	36.5%	37.2%	46.9%	52.3%	60.6%
Kingsport	39.7%	43.2%	54.1%	59.5%	67.9%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

As depicted in Table III, educational attainment has increased significantly for all geographic areas since 1950. In 1990, Johnson City was below the United States level of 75.2 percent of persons 25 and older with high school diplomas, but exceeded the state and SMSA levels. The city surpassed other cities in the region in the percentage of high school graduates living within the city and also experienced the largest increase in the percent of high school graduates, 13.9 percent between 1980 and 1990. This increase compares favorably with the change at the state (8.9 percent), and national (20.3 percent) levels. This is due to the location of East Tennessee State University (ETSU), Siemens, and a large number of medical employers. Corresponding with this increase in education will be an increase in the demand for parks, recreation facilities, and programs due to a greater awareness of recreation as a beneficial use for leisure and social time for an improved quality of life.

INCOME

Recreation demand studies have depicted a significant relationship between family income and the preference for outdoor recreation activities. With increases in discretionary family income (income available after expenditures for food, housing, and other necessities) recreation activity increases proportionately. In addition to influencing the frequency of recreation participation, income plays a major role in determining specific recreational pursuits. Generally, the higher the level of income, the greater the likelihood of participation in activities requiring an initial or continuing investment in equipment, i.e. tennis, golf, or boating.

**Table IV. Distribution of Family Income, Johnson City and Washington County
1979 to 1989**

Number of Families								
Income Level	Johnson City				Washington County			
	1979	1989	% change	Percent of Total	1979	1989	% Change	Percent of Total
\$ 0 to \$4,999	870	602	-30.8%	4.8%	1,855	1,022	-44.9%	4.0%
5,000 to 9,999	1,941	987	-49.1%	7.8%	4,198	2,063	-50.9%	8.1%
10,000 to 14,999	1,808	1,191	-34.1%	9.5%	4,555	2,546	-44.1%	10.0%
15,000 to 24,999	2,606	2,095	-19.6%	16.6%	7,572	4,943	-34.7%	19.5%
25,000 to 49,999	2,096	4,518	115.6%	35.9%	4,944	9,668	95.6%	38.1%
50,000 or more	564	3,203	467.9%	25.4%	810	5,159	536.9%	20.3%
Total Families	9,885	12,596	27.4%	100.0%	23,934	25,401	6.1%	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Historically, median family income in Johnson City, Washington County, the SMSA, and the state have been below the United States; however, the gap has been closing. In 1989, median family income in the United States was \$35,225 representing a 76.9 percent increase since 1979. Median family incomes in Johnson City (\$31,421) and Washington County (\$29,701) experienced increases of 95.7 percent and 80.1 percent respectively during the same period. In the city, incomes over \$50,000 experienced the largest increase, 468 percent, in the distribution of family income while family incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999 increased approximately 116 percent. Conversely, income ranges below \$25,000 decreased in the number of families in each income level.

The primary negative trend associated with the rates of increased income is that overall purchasing power will likely decline in the future due to escalating costs of living associated with housing and transportation costs. As a result, the average family may find it increasingly difficult to find discretionary money for recreation activities. In addition, as family incomes approach \$50,000 or more, park use generally declines as families may choose other recreation alternatives away from their place of residence.

POVERTY STATUS

The federal government maintains an official definition of “poverty level” based on the amount of income for a family, the number of persons in the family or household, and whether or not the residence is on a farm. In Johnson City during the 1970-1990 period, the number of families below the poverty level increased from 1,306 to 1,470 representing an increase of 12.5 percent. This increase follows national, state, and local trends. Increases were also experienced by families with children under 18 years of age (24.1 percent), by female-headed households (49.4 percent), and an increase of less than one percent for elderly households.

The segment of the population which falls below the poverty level generally has recreation needs that deserve special attention by the city’s Parks and Recreation Department. These needs may include access to facilities, childcare services, and exemption from fees charged to participants in program activities.

OCCUPATION

Occupation is a major consideration in the demand for parks, recreation facilities, and programs largely because of its close association with income. Occupation has been found to influence frequency, type, and duration of leisure time participation. In general, the higher a person's occupation status, the more and varied are his/her recreational pursuits. The degree of manual labor has also been shown to affect activity choice. Passive recreation activities are generally preferred by persons whose occupations are physically demanding, and conversely, people whose work is sedentary or less strenuous are more likely to engage in more active recreational pursuits.

**Table V. Employment by Industry, Johnson City
Persons 16 years and older, 1960 to 1990**

Category	1960		1970		1980		1990		Percent Change, 1980-1990
	Number of Employed Residents	% of all Employed Residents	Number of Employed Residents	% of all Employed Residents	Number of Employed Residents	% of all Employed Residents	Number of Employed Residents	% of all Employed Residents	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining	136	1.4%	119	1.0%	120	0.7%	144	0.6%	-13.2
Construction	635	6.3%	869	7.3%	938	5.8%	1,015	4.5%	+78.3
Manufacturing									
Non Durable Goods	1,314	13.1%	1,461	12.3%	1,454	9.0%	1,858	8.2%	+64.7
Durable Goods	872	8.7%	1,120	9.4%	2,107	13.0%	2,526	11.2%	+68.2
Transportation	318	3.2%	329	2.8%	551	3.4%	541	2.4%	+34.0
Communication and Utilities	297	3.0%	263	2.2%	449	2.8%	576	2.6%	+67.5
Wholesale Trade	454	4.5%	547	4.6%	770	4.8%	1,063	4.7%	+79.6
Retail Trade	1,887	18.9%	2,029	17.0%	3,117	19.3%	4,846	21.5%	+88.5
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	429	4.3%	451	3.8%	654	4.0%	1,126	5.0%	+89.6
Business & Repair Services	184	1.8%	259	2.2%	440	2.7%	920	4.1%	+131.5
Personal, Entertainment, and Recreation Services	1,091	10.9%	802	6.7%	622	3.8%	961	4.3%	+96.6
Health Services	788	7.9%	1,127	9.5%	1,851	11.4%	2,647	11.7%	+83.9
Educational Services	837	8.4%	1,533	12.9%	1,930	11.9%	2,433	10.8%	+47.1
Other Professional & Related Services	457	4.6%	560	4.7%	660	4.1%	1,331	5.9%	+114.8
Public Administration	303	3.0%	435	3.7%	526	3.2%	546	2.4%	+47.4
Total	10,002	100.0%	11,904	100.0%	16,189	100.0%	22,533	100.0%	+78.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Projected employment for Johnson City indicates increases in all categories with the exception of agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining. The leading categories in terms of numbers of additional workers are expected to be retail trade, health services, and other professional and related services. Construction employment is projected to increase at a moderate rate with manufacturing of both durable and non-durable goods increasing at a slower rate. Employment in educational services is forecasted to increase primarily due to a projected increase in enrollment at ETSU. As a whole, all service industries are expected to experience substantial increases in employment.

AGE AND SEX

The composition of an area's population regarding age and sex presents significant demand factors due to effects on physical capacity, interests, and opportunities for participation in leisure activities. Age groupings present different opportunities and interests while participation by gender is fairly equal suggesting relative parity between males and females in the total amount of recreation activity pursued.

**Table VI. Population by Age and Sex, Johnson City
1990**

Age	Male	Female	Total	Percent of Total
0 to 4	1,383	1,302	2,685	5.4%
5 to 9	1,459	1,304	2,763	5.6%
10 to 14	1,458	1,256	2,714	5.5%
15 to 19	1,855	2,118	3,973	8.0%
20 to 24	2,506	2,723	5,229	10.6%
25 to 34	3,849	3,864	7,713	15.6%
35 to 44	3,318	3,388	6,706	13.6%
45 to 54	2,396	2,516	4,912	9.9%
55 to 64	2,263	2,573	4,836	9.8%
65 to 74	1,964	2,431	4,395	8.9%
75 & over	1,069	2,386	3,455	7.0%
Totals	23,520	25,861	49,381	100.0%
Percent of Total	47.6%	52.4%	100.0%	
Median age (years)	32.9	35.9	34.5	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
Johnson City Planning Department

Table VI presents the 1990 age and sex composition of the city's population. An examination of this data shows a median age of 34.5 years, with the largest percentage of the population found in the age cohorts 15 through 54. The population in these cohorts comprise approximately 58 percent of the total city population. This age grouping places the greatest demands on a city's recreation services and facilities. The 15-19 year-olds require participation in team sports; people 20-34 utilize adult-sized sports fields but with some emphasis on requiring opportunities for individual escape when desired, and facilities for individual activities suitable for concurrent use by both sexes (tennis, golf, etc.); individuals 35-54 utilize fewer team-oriented facilities with their recreation needs met by more passive services and facilities, and facilities for the young children of those in this age group. In Johnson City, the 5-14 age group is a major user of many of the city's facilities due to the emphasis by the Parks and Recreation Department on youth-oriented athletic programs. The 55 and over age group represents a growing segment of the population and, for the most part, demands passive activities such as picnic facilities, walking trails, and social interaction programs.

**Table VII. Projected Population by Age, Johnson City
2000-2020**

Age	2000		2010		2020	
	Population	Percent of total	Population	Percent of total	Population	Percent of total
0 to 4	2,860	5.1%	3,050	4.8%	3,450	4.8%
5 to 14	6,390	11.4%	6,570	10.3%	7,355	10.2%
15 to 24	9,795	17.5%	11,500	18.0%	11,880	16.4%
25 to 34	6,835	12.2%	7,285	11.4%	8,485	11.7%
35 to 44	8,190	14.6%	7,320	11.5%	7,805	10.8%
45 to 54	7,410	13.2%	9,060	14.2%	8,125	11.2%
55 to 64	5,630	10.0%	8,610	13.5%	10,600	14.6%
65 to 74	4,525	8.1%	5,410	8.5%	8,425	11.6%
75 & over	4,485	8.0%	5,105	8.0%	6,310	8.7%
Totals	56,120	100.0%	63,910	100.0%	72,435	100.0%
Median age (years)	37.1		38.7		39.1	

Source: Johnson City Planning Department

A review of the information reveals a continuing decline in the percentage of population in all age cohorts between 0-44 and an increase in the percentage of all age groupings over the age of 45. Although the younger age groups reflect a decrease in the percentage of the total population, they continue to experience an increase in actual numbers. The result is a continuing demand for facilities and programs serving the younger age groups and an increasing demand for facilities and programs for the senior segment of the population.

FAMILY COMPOSITION

Closely interrelated with age in affecting recreation participation is family composition, for an individual's recreational preferences are influenced not only by his/her age, but by the ages of family members as well. It has been determined, through city surveys, that families with children are the most active users of recreation facilities and programs in the city. **Approximately 86 percent of the respondents to a citywide survey in 1997 indicated a need for additional parks and recreation facilities oriented toward children and families.** Families with children participate more frequently and in a greater variety of recreational pursuits than unrelated individuals or families without children.

In 1990, 9,960 families or 79 percent of the city's 12,596 families were comprised of children under the age of 18. In addition, 7,700 families or 61 percent of the total were headed by persons 25-54 years of age, generally considered the largest user group of recreation facilities and services.

Related to family composition is household size. Between 1960 and 1990, the number of households in Johnson City increased 147.6 percent or more than double the population growth rate of 65.6 percent for the same period. This implies that family composition changes have occurred due to social trends and also reflects the impact that ETSU has on the number of households. During the 1960-1990 period, the number of persons per household in the city decreased from 3.29 to 2.30. This decrease followed national, state, and regional trends with implications regarding programs offered by recreation departments. The decline in household size can be attributed to changes in attitudes toward marriage, family size, and the increase in non-family households. A high divorce rate has resulted in an increase in single-parent households, both male and female. In Johnson City in 1990, 2,851 families or 23 percent of all families were headed by a

all families were headed by a single parent with females accounting for 83 percent of the total.

A major nationwide trend in parks and recreation departments associated with the increase in single-parent households is the provision of child care or child activity based services that allow single parents to participate in various recreation programs and activities.

GROWTH TRENDS

Johnson City may be considered fortunate in one respect: it has not experienced growth that is unmanageable. Since 1960, the city has increased in population from 29,892 to 53,266 in July 1999, an increase of 78 percent or an average of approximately 800 residents per year. During the same period, the city's corporate limits have expanded from 7.6 square miles to 38.8 square miles, an increase of 410 percent. Correspondingly, the city's density of population has decreased from 3,933 persons per square mile in 1960 to only 1,372 persons per square mile in 1999, a decrease of 186 percent. This growth in population, is consuming land at an alarming rate with the result being an increasingly low density urban sprawl pattern of development that is becoming expensive to service with public facilities and services. While the need for parks, recreation facilities, and open space will grow with, or surpass the projected increase in population, available land resources will decline as additional land is committed to urban development. This low density of population will require an inordinate number of parks to provide a facility within walking distance (generally considered to be ¼ to ½ mile) of residential areas.

Residential building permits and subdivision activity are primary sources of information on population and growth trends. They indicate not only total growth in the city, but to an extent the distribution of this growth among various neighborhoods. A review of building permits indicates that fluctuations in housing construction are common with the overall trend increasing in recent years.

**Table VIII. Residential Building Activity, Johnson City
1970 to 1999**

Year	Residential Permits	Highest Number/Year	Average Per Year
1970-1979	2303	408/1978	230
1980-1989	2125	307/1982	212
1990-1999	4037	537/1997	403

Source: Johnson City Building Division

During the 1990's, the city experienced its greatest period of new residential growth, averaging 403 new dwelling units per year. This growth accelerated in 1996 with the city averaging 519 new residential units during the 1996-1998 period. In 1999, growth moderated with the construction of 311 new residential dwelling units. Commensurate with building activity, subdivision development in the city during the 1990's also reached an all-time high with approximately 2,500 residential lots created within the corporate limits. The above two indices of residential growth, building permits and subdivision activity, indicate that during the 1990's the city experienced residential growth unparalleled in its history.

Although the annexation of developed residential areas decreased during the 1990's, the city maintained an active annexation policy resulting in 184 annexations during the period of January 1, 1990 through July 1, 1999. These annexations added 9.2 square miles to the corporate limits with approximately 7.4 square

square miles consisting of developed or planned residential areas.

For Johnson City, it is still possible to realize that available recreation resources are important in determining a community's quality of life and to seize this opportunity to ensure the protection and development of these resources. This is not to suggest the possibility that all undeveloped land in the city and surrounding area will suddenly become developed, or even that development is necessarily detrimental to the city's provision of recreation facilities and services. A much greater concern is the evolving, haphazard, low density, and piecemeal pattern of land development that is difficult to serve with public facilities and services. All too often, strategically located parcels of land, irreplaceably unique in character and natural amenities, are permanently lost for public enjoyment because of budgetary constraints or preemption by existing development patterns.

The loss of recreation land has unfortunately been experienced by many urban areas throughout the country. In Johnson City, urban development has resulted in a decreasing amount of available land within the corporate limits for future park development. An analysis of vacant land zoned residential or agricultural by the city's GIS Division indicates a total of 90 tracts of land consisting of five acres or more and totaling an estimated 1,250 acres. This land has not been reviewed for development constraints or its potential for future park sites. A cursory review of the analysis does reveal that it may be difficult to find appropriate park sites within the developed area of the city. In Johnson City, the opportunities for saving and/or acquiring prime park sites are continually diminishing. The city must realize that at every Planning Commission or City Commission meeting decisions are being made, either by design or by default, regarding recreation areas. To default is to encourage unplanned urban sprawl and its associated problems. To plan for future recreation needs is to make a commitment that the reservation of lands for future parks and recreation facilities is a fundamental and integral part of the process of city government.

CHANGES IN POPULATION DISTRIBUTION

In addition to an increasing and sprawling population, changes are also occurring in the historical distribution of the city's population. A comparison of 1980 and 1990 census data reveals that the older residential areas located around the city's downtown area are losing population. These areas include the Carnegie, Davis Park, Gilmer Park, Keystone, King Springs, Piney Grove, Tree Streets, and Y-Section neighborhoods. Unfortunately, a large number of the city's existing parks and recreation facilities serve these areas. Areas experiencing population growth are located in north Johnson City and the Boones Creek area where recreation facilities and parkland are noticeably deficient. The expanding residential areas of the city generally located north of Sunset Drive contain only one city park - Winged Deer with limited recreation facilities available at city schools.

Changes in the distribution of children are also reflected in 1980 and 1990 census data. Areas of the city located in the southwest, north Johnson City, and Boones Creek contain the largest increases in the percentage of residents under 18 years of age. In contrast, the inner city areas contain an increasing number of elderly and families without children.

The implications regarding these trends and the provision of parks, recreation facilities, and programs by the city are obvious. New parklands and facilities will be required to serve areas experiencing population growth, and the development of programs and the redevelopment of existing facilities will be required to respond to the changing demographics of the city.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The natural environment of Johnson City and the surrounding area affords many opportunities for outdoor recreation activities and the enjoyment of scenic landscapes, natural areas, nature study, and related uses and activities. The natural environment also conditions man's use of the land due to the presence of natural constraints to development such as topography, flooding, and soil composition.

What the city once took for granted, an abundance of vacant land, is rapidly diminishing. A 1963 land use survey indicated that approximately 50 percent of the land in the city was vacant or undeveloped. Thirty five years later, a 1998 land use survey revealed that only 26 percent of the land within the corporate limits was undeveloped. In addition, much of the vacant land that now exists is in the form of scattered, vacant residential lots of 15,000 square feet or less or land that is generally unsuitable for urban development or difficult to assemble for recreational use.

When determining land use capabilities, the following environmental factors play a major role. With an ever decreasing land resource-topography, flood hazard areas, and soil conditions become more important in the determination of the evolving pattern of development and the resources that are available for recreation uses.

TOPOGRAPHY

The manner in which land is developed and the type of uses permitted should be, in part, based on topographic constraints. The ability to accommodate water runoff and the capability to provide water and sewer services are both impacted by topography. The location and quantity of sinkholes and rock outcroppings in an area also impact the type, location, intensity, and cost of development. The surface and internal drainage patterns of an area are other important considerations in determining development suitability.

The type and intensity of development that is proposed in any given area is determined largely by topography. Property located in the valleys and lowlands with minimal slope is more suited for urban development including residential, commercial, and industrial uses. The location of parks is not restricted to a specific type of topography and they may be located in a variety of settings dependent on function and the recognized user need and convenience of park users. Parks can be designed to utilize topography in the most natural, functional, and efficient manner.

The Johnson City area is located in a region characterized by ridges, stream valleys, and sinkhole concentrations. The area comprising the planning area is typical of this region, having steep mountain slopes, sinkholes, rock outcroppings, shale knobs, and flood prone lowlands interspersed with level and gently rolling topography. The major ridges that impact development include: Buffalo Ridge, located west of I-181 and north of Hales Chapel Road; and Indian Ridge located between Carroll Creek Road and the Bristol Highway. Masters Knob, Tannery Knob, and Bogart Knob also limit development along portions of Johnson City due to the steep terrain. Development to the south is restricted by Buffalo Mountain. Buffalo Mountain also offers a natural recreation resource for passive and self-directed recreation opportunities.

SOIL COMPOSITION

A second factor that impacts development potential is soil type and rock composition. The majority of recent growth the city has experienced and will experience in the future will occur to the north and the west. The gentle rolling landscape and soil composition of north and west Johnson City are suited for urban development with few limitations. Soil types in the area include: Cumberland, Dunsmore, Holston, Nolichucky, and Sequatchie, characterized as deep and well-drained soils conducive to all types of urban development.

The soil composition in south Johnson City is characterized by scattered rock outcroppings and moderate to steep slopes which limit the type of development in the area to low intensity developments and open space use of steep-sloped areas. Allen, Jefferson, Dunsmore, and Litz soils are located within the southern portions of the city. In many instances, limitations to development imposed by soil conditions can be overcome through engineering and construction techniques.

Development potential along Buffalo Mountain and the eastern portion of Johnson City is limited due to the combination of soil composition and steep topography resulting in low intensity use. The Dandridge, Litz Loam, Whitesburg, and Ramsy soils located in this area combined with numerous rock outcroppings and moderate to steep topography limit the area's development potential.

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

The location of flood hazard areas is another constraint to development and also an opportunity for recreation planning. Areas along streams and rivers are classified as flood hazard areas by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which restricts development in these areas. Flood control along the Watauga River is also controlled by TVA through the construction of impoundment facilities (Watauga and Boone Lake dams). Flood hazard areas are located along the following FEMA studied waterways: Cedar Creek, Carroll Creek, Boones Creek, Knob Creek, Cobb Creek, Brush Creek, Sinking Creek, Buffalo Creek, and Catbird Creek. Studied and nonstudied streams are required by the city's floodplain regulations to be evaluated prior to proposed construction along the stream. The location of floodplains provides an opportunity for recreation uses in the form of greenways and amenities in the design of residential and commercial areas.

The above environmental considerations are limiting factors in the development of any area. However, in any area, with proper planning and development methods, walking, hiking, picnicking, bicycling, and nature study facilities can be developed that will further enhance the recreation opportunities available to the community.

SECTION TWO - INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATION RESOURCES

The inventory of existing recreation resources available to Johnson City residents provides a basis for determining the adequacy of the city's recreation system. The information provides an inventory and assessment of recreation facilities provided by the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department (JCPRD) and other agencies and organizations serving the community including the Johnson City Board of Education (JCBE), the Johnson City Housing Authority (JCHA), state and federal agencies (ETSU, VA, and U.S. Forest Service), and key private and quasi-public organizations. The JCPRD operates and maintains 25 facilities including parks, fields, recreation centers, etc. consisting of approximately 1,085 acres. In addition, JCPRD utilizes and maintains various school facilities (ballfields, tennis courts, etc.) that are described in detail in this section of the plan.

The facility assessment was developed through on-site inspections by Planning Department, JCPRD, and Facility Administration staff. The assessments, conducted in 1998 and 1999, included park facilities and buildings operated/maintained by JCPRD. In the rating of JCPRD facilities, a subjective rating of good, fair, and poor was used to determine the overall condition of the facility, site furnishings, visual appeal, handicap accessibility, and degree of vandalism. Buildings were evaluated regarding electrical, plumbing, roofing, heating, air conditioning, and general structural integrity and function. Ratings of good, fair, and poor were based on the following criteria:

- Good - requires routine maintenance or minor repairs.
- Fair - requires a combination of minor and major repairs.
- Poor - requires extensive major repairs and/or replacement and upgrading of a combination of major and minor facilities.

Information pertaining to recent improvements (within the past two years) and planned improvements (items contained in the department's CIP) were provided by JCPRD staff. The JCPRD is a dynamic organization that continually responds to community needs through facility and program modifications. As a result of this continuing change, the assessment was updated to the extent possible during the plan's development; however, it may contain discrepancies regarding what existed at the time of the inventory and what exists at the present time.

The classification of the various park facilities was also evaluated during the inventory, and classification changes were made where appropriate. These changes resulted from a review of acreage recommendations, amenities provided, user group, and primary function of the park.

PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT FACILITIES

Buffalo Mountain Park - JCPRD

Buffalo Mountain Park is a 725-acre natural resource area obtained in a land swap with the U.S. Forest Service in 1994. The park is located on the north slope of Buffalo Mountain and consists of steep topography and densely forested land. The park functions as a nature preserve for self-directed activities, primarily hiking, picnicking, and nature programs. The overall condition, visual appeal, and site furnishings are good. Handicap accessibility is inadequate and vandalism is minimal.

AMENITIES

- Grills (2)
- Picnic tables (13)
- Trash receptacles (7)
- Woodland hiking trails (14 miles)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Not developed to its fullest potential, need additional security, provide area for tent camping.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Signage providing descriptions of the hiking trails.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Construct entrance structure and parking area.

Buffalo Valley Soccer Complex - JCPRD

Buffalo Valley Soccer Complex is owned by JCPRD and is leased from the city by the East Tennessee Soccer Federation (ETSF) for \$5,000 per year with utilities paid by the city. The building was converted into a soccer facility through a partnership between the city and the Soccer Federation. However, there was never a long-range plan formulated when the conversion began and there is only a facility use agreement. The complex is currently functional, but needs improvements for year-round, multi-purpose utilization. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are fair, vandalism is minimal, and handicap accessibility is adequate. JCPRD and the ETSF perform needed maintenance.

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Paved parking lot and improvements to the interior of the building

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Carnegie Park - JCPRD

Carnegie Park, formerly Jaycee Park, is a 5-acre neighborhood park, established in 1945, that is in the renovation process. The park is bordered by North Broadway Street and Unaka and Watauga avenues, city arterial streets carrying large volumes of traffic.

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: At the time of the survey, the park was in a deteriorated condition. Users indicated a need for updated playground area, increased maintenance, new basketball goals, restroom facilities, and landscaping.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Comprehensive renovation of the park initiated in 1999 and completed in 2000.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Add amenities as needed.

Carver Park - JCPRD

Established in 1958, Carver Park is a 6-acre neighborhood park. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are good. The surrounding area consists of industrial, commercial, and mixed residential development. Handicap accessibility is good and vandalism is minimal.

AMENITIES

- Basketball courts (2), basketball goals (4), lighted
- Benches (4)
- Fitness/walkway (1,310 feet)
- Multi-use court (1), basketball goal (1)
- Multi-use field (1)
- Off-street parking spaces (55)
- Patio/deck area
- Pavilion (1)
- Playground areas (2)
- Picnic tables (3)
- Recreation Center (gymnasium with basketball court (1), basketball goals (4), weight room, library, meeting room, teen room, offices, restrooms, storage areas, and kitchen area)
- Trash receptacles (3)
- Volleyball court (1), sand

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: At the time of the survey, the park was in the process of being renovated. Respondents indicated a need for total facility improvement.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Comprehensive renovation of the park initiated in 1992 with additional improvements planned.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Acquire all property in city block to convert facility to a true urban park environment. Develop additional volleyball court, improve landscaping and lighting, and reconstruct multi-use field.

Civitan Park - JCPRD

Established in 1963 on the site of a former city landfill, Civitan Park is a 33-acre community park undergoing major renovation for primary use as a soccer facility in a park setting. Located on North Broadway Street, the park is surrounded by single-family residential development with Lions Park and the Johnson City Country Club located to the east and adjacent to the park. Rotary Park is located on the west side of North Broadway Street opposite Civitan Park.

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Park was under renovation during the survey period.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Civitan Park is currently under construction involving a total renovation of the facility.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Following completion of the renovation project, the park will feature five lighted regulation soccer fields. Other planned improvements include: concession area with restrooms, playground areas, multi-use courts, volleyball courts, off-street parking, and a walking trail connecting Lions, Civitan, and Rotary parks.

Earth Day Park - JCPRD

Earth Day Park was established in 1991 and is a ¼-acre special use park. The park's primary function is a pedestrian route between Main Street and the Downtown Square parking lot. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are fair. Handicap accessibility is acceptable and vandalism is minimal.

AMENITIES

- Architectural sculpture
- Walkway (150 feet)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Friendship Gardens - JCPRD

Established in 1982, Friendship Gardens located within Metro-Kiwanis Park, is a 3-acre special use area whose primary purpose is for self-directed activities. Sister Cities International is the sponsor and oversees the installation of memorial trees and plaques. The overall condition, visual quality, and site amenities are good, handicap accessibility is inadequate, and there is minimal vandalism. The surrounding area consists of middle to high income residential neighborhoods adjacent to Metro-Kiwanis Park.

AMENITIES

- Benches (2)
- Flag court
- Landscaped gardens
- Memorial trees
- 20-foot carved wooden sculpture
- Water feature

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Construct gazebo.

Howard Johnson Field - JCPRD

Established in 1950, Howard Johnson Field is a 5-acre sports field primarily used for the St. Louis Cardinals' Appalachian League farm club, Science Hill High School, and ETSU home baseball games. The overall condition and visual quality are good, site furnishings are good, vandalism is minimal, and handicap accessibility warrants improvement.

AMENITIES

- Bleachers
- Club house consisting of locker rooms, umpires' room, and coaches' office
- Concession area
- Minor league baseball field, lighted
- Off-street parking (436 spaces)
- Press box
- Restrooms

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Stands for increased capacity, field house, picnic pavilion, additional storage, and improvements to concession area.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Mandated improvements by Major League Baseball Association, storage area, fencing, entrance improvements, souvenir shop, irrigation system, and signage.

Joy-Rutherford Little League Field - JCPRD

Established in 1950, Joy-Rutherford Little League Field is a 1.5-acre sports field primarily used for little league play. The field is surrounded by Stadium Field to the north, moderate income residential development to the east and south, and Memorial Stadium/Howard Johnson Field Complex to the west. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are poor, vandalism is minimal, and handicap accessibility is inadequate.

AMENITIES

- Batting cages and bull pen
- Little league field (1) with bleachers, lighted
- Picnic table (1)
- Restrooms, storage area, press box, and concession area
- Trash receptacles (4)
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Keystone Instructional Baseball Field - JCPRD

Keystone Instructional Baseball Field is a facility consisting of approximately 2.8 acres classified as a sports field located in a low/moderate income neighborhood. The primary use is for instructional league baseball. The overall condition, visual appeal, and site furnishings are poor, vandalism is minimal, and handicap accessibility is inadequate.

AMENITIES

- Little league field (1) with bleachers, lighted
- Multi-use field with backstop (1)
- On-street parking
- Trash receptacles (3)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Kiwanis Park - JCPRD

Kiwanis Park, established in 1949, is classified as a 9-acre neighborhood park. The park is primarily used for league play and summer playground programs. The surrounding neighborhood consists of low to medium income residential development and commercial uses. Kiwanis Park is located between West Market Street and West Main Street. The overall condition and visual quality of the park is fair, site

furnishings are fair to poor, handicap accessibility is adequate but could be improved, and vandalism is minimal.

AMENITIES

- Bandshell (1) with restrooms
- Baseball field (1) with bleachers and dugouts, lighted
- Basketball courts (2) with basketball goals (4), lighted
- Batting cages (2)
- Bullpen (1)
- Off-street parking spaces (approximately 83)
- Picnic shelter (1)
- Picnic tables (5)
- Playground area (1)
- Press box (1) with concession area and restrooms
- Recreation center with restrooms, kitchen, office space, and concession area
- Softball field (1) with bleachers and dugouts, lighted
- Trash receptacles (18)
- Volleyball court (1), sand
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Improve maintenance, add new playground apparatus, picnic facilities, and landscaping.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Reorientation of the girls softball field with new fencing and dugouts, addition of maze, new bridge installed over creek, renovated restrooms and band shell roof, closed Main Street to increase off-street parking.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Renovate recreation center building, playground area, and increase landscaping.

Lions Park - JCPRD

Lions Park, established in 1958, is an 8-acre neighborhood park used primarily for little league baseball. The surrounding area consists of single-family residential development and the Johnson City Country Club. The overall condition and visual quality is fair and site furnishings are fair. The park is not adequately developed for handicap accessibility, there is inadequate off-street parking during peak use, and minimal vandalism.

AMENITIES

- Batting cages (2)
- Baseball fields (2) with bleachers and dugouts, lighted
- Benches (2)
- Bullpens (2)
- Concessions area and restrooms
- Covered pavilion (1) with restrooms and kitchen area
- Grills (2)
- Off-street parking lots (2 with a total of 40 spaces)
- Picnic tables (13)
- Playground area (1)
- Trash receptacles (11)

- Water fountains (2)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Need for shade trees and landscaping, picnic tables, and improved maintenance (new playground equipment was identified as a need and has been added).

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: New restrooms and concession area, installation of new playground equipment, and fencing.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Connect Lions Park, Civitan Park, and Rotary Park via a walking trail, expand off-street parking, relocate one ballfield, and increase landscaping.

Memorial Park - JCPRD

Established in 1958, Memorial park is a 1/2-acre special use park located on East Main Street. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are fair, vandalism is minimal, and handicap accessibility is adequate.

AMENITIES

- Limited off-street parking
- Picnic table (1)
- Statue
- Ticket booths (2)
- Trash receptacle (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Memorial Stadium - JCPRD

Established in the mid 1930's, Memorial Stadium was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was originally independently operated as "Roosevelt Memorial Stadium". A portion of the concrete bleachers were capped with aluminum seating in the late 1980's. The stadium came under the jurisdiction of the Parks and Recreation Department in 1961 and consists of a 6-acre football stadium used primarily by Science Hill High School for home football games, the JCPRD soccer program, and Pop Warner football. The overall condition and site furnishings are fair, visual quality is fair, handicap accessibility is adequate, and vandalism is minimal.

AMENITIES

- Concession areas (2)
- Football field, lighted
- Off-street parking spaces used concurrently with Howard Johnson Field (436 spaces).
- ¼ mile track
- Restrooms (2)
- Spectator seating for 7500

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: New scoreboard and press box.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: New restrooms and concession area.

Metropolitan Kiwanis Park - JCPRD

Established in 1972, Metro-Kiwanis Park is a 15-acre community park used primarily for softball league play. The park is surrounded by moderate to high income low density residential development and is within ½ mile of the Science Hill Campus. The overall condition and visual quality are fair and site furnishings are poor. The park is not adequately equipped for handicap accessibility and there is minimal vandalism.

AMENITIES

- Benches (4)
- Concession area/shelter with restrooms (1)
- Grills (2)
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) basketball goals (3)
- Off-street parking spaces (122)
- Picnic tables (17)
- Playground area (1)
- Shelters without restrooms (2)
- Softball fields (2) with bleachers and dugouts, lighted
- Tennis courts (5), not lighted
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Improve picnic facilities, additional playground apparatus, landscaping, and more open play area.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Resurfaced tennis courts, replaced fencing at tennis courts, playground equipment area was modified to improve drainage, fencing was replaced around softball field, and dugouts were reconstructed.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Neighborhood Park - JCPRD

Established in 1972, Neighborhood Park is a 2-acre baseball field used primarily for youth baseball. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are poor, handicap accessibility is inadequate, and vandalism appears minimal. The park is surrounded by low/moderate income residential development and is located adjacent to Kiwanis Park.

AMENITIES

- Baseball field (1) with bleachers and dugouts, lighted
- Trash receptacles (3)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP

Optimist Park - JCPRD

Originally established in 1972, as a community park on a site of 30 acres, Optimist Park has been gradually allocated to other uses (Boys and Girls Club, electrical substation, the Johnson City Animal Shelter, and commercial uses) and currently consists of 10 acres. The park's present classification as a neighborhood park is debatable since its primary function is a softball facility serving city-wide leagues.

The construction of State of Franklin Road and commercial development along the road's corridor has resulted in the park's isolation from its intended service area. The park's location and the intensification of commercial development in the area continues to reduce the site's desirability for neighborhood serving recreation activities. However, the State of Franklin multi-purpose trail is located along the park's west periphery and will increase accessibility and possible future use of the facility.

The overall condition, visual quality, site furnishings, and handicap accessibility are poor. Vandalism is a major problem as are undesirable and illicit activities that occur at the park due to its limited visibility and usage. The park is seldom used except for organized league activities.

AMENITIES

- Benches (3)
- Concession stand/shelter with restrooms (1)
- Softball fields (2) with bleachers and dugouts, lighted
- Off-street parking (not striped, approximately 155 spaces)
- Picnic table (1)
- Playground area (1)
- Trash receptacles (8)
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Automobile transportation is the primary means of transportation to the park. Identified needs included: cleaner restrooms, increased security, increased maintenance, working water fountains, additional picnic facilities, playground apparatus, and landscaping.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: State of Franklin multi-purpose trail.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Facility was identified in the department's CIP for conversion to Med-Tech use.

Paul Christman Park - JCPRD

Developed in 1983, Paul Christman Park is a ½-acre sub-neighborhood park located on North Boone Street. The park is a minimal use facility serving a low/moderate income residential area. The site is bordered by high density single-family development on three sides and Central Shopping Center on the east. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are poor, handicap accessibility is adequate, and vandalism is high.

AMENITIES

- Benches (8)
- Grill (1)
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goals (2)
- On-street parking
- Picnic shelter (1)
- Picnic table (1)
- Playground area (1)

- Trash receptacle (1)
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: During the survey period, no park users visited the facility.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Signage, fencing, landscaping, removed old playground equipment, installed new water fountain, re-roofed shelter.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department’s CIP.

Powell Square Park - JCPRD

Powell Square Park, established in 1889, is a 1.4 acre sub-neighborhood park located on West Poplar Street. The facility is the oldest in the city’s park system and is surrounded by single-family residences. The overall condition and visual quality of the facility is good, however, its location in a residential area warrants aesthetic improvements in the form of additional landscaping. The park’s use is minimal, primarily the result of limited facilities. Handicap accessibility is adequate, site furnishings are fair, and vandalism is moderate.

AMENITIES

- Benches (4)
- Grill (1)
- ½ basketball court with basketball goal (1)
- Multi-purpose field with backstop (1), not lighted
- On-street parking spaces (5)
- Picnic tables (2)
- Playground area (1)
- Shelter with restrooms (1)
- Trash receptacles (3)
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Additional landscaping/trees, poor maintenance, additional lighting for nighttime use, personal safety concerns.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Improved handicapped accessibility, removed tennis court which was in a state of disrepair, provided on-street parking, installed new fencing/backstop, re-roofed pavilion, added sidewalks, new playground equipment, and landscaping.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department’s CIP.

Rotary Park - JCPRD

Rotary Park was donated to the city in 1908 for park purposes by the Carnegie Realty Company. The park consisting of 10.4 acres is classified as a special use park and is located on North Broadway Street. This is one of the most popular parks in the city with an annual attendance of approximately 40,000. The park is open April through October and is primarily used as a picnic facility maintained in a natural setting in the middle of a residential area. The majority of use is by reservation of picnic areas. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are fair, handicap accessibility requires improvement, and vandalism is high.

AMENITIES

- Benches (15)
- Grills (8)
- Informal ballfield/open space play area (1), not lighted
- Off-street parking spaces (111)
- Picnic areas without shelters (20)
- Picnic shelters with restrooms (2), picnic tables (9)
- Picnic shelters without restrooms (4), picnic tables (12)
- Playground areas (2)
- Trash receptacles (15)
- Water fountains (2)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Provide updated playground equipment, basketball court, additional benches, and picnic grills.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Expanded off-street parking area, replaced pavilion roofing, fencing, and walkways.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Improve handicap accessibility and park lighting.

Spring Street Park - JCPRD

Spring Street Park, located in the central business district, is a ½-acre green space facility surrounded by commercial buildings and parking. The overall condition, visual quality and site furnishings are poor, handicap accessibility is adequate, and vandalism is minimal.

AMENITIES

- Brick patio area with landscaping and benches, lighted

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None

Stadium Field - JCPRD

Established in the 1950's, Stadium Field is a 1.5-acre sports field used for softball league play. The field is located at the intersection of East Main Street and Bert Street. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are poor, vandalism is minimal, and handicap accessibility requires improvement.

AMENITIES

- Softball field (1) with bleachers, lighted

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Veterans Park - JCPRD

Established in 1973, Veterans Park is a ¼-acre special use park which has been incorporated into the new South Side Elementary School campus. The park is surrounded by moderate density single-family

residential development. The overall condition and visual quality is good, site furnishings are fair, handicap accessibility is adequate, and vandalism appears minimal.

AMENITIES

- Benches (2)
- Picnic tables (2)
- Trash receptacles (2)
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: None.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: None.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: None identified in the department's CIP.

Willow Springs Park - JCPRD

Established in 1998, Willow Springs Park is classified as a 36-acre community park. The park is surrounded by agricultural land and low density, moderate to high income residential development. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are good, handicap accessibility is adequate, and vandalism is minimal.

AMENITIES

- Benches (4)
- Nature trail
- Off-street parking spaces (115) – paved parking lot at southern end of park has not been completed, is gated and locked, and is not accessible.
- Open green space (approximately 30 acres)
- Picnic tables (2)
- Playground area (1), lighted
- Shelter with restrooms (1)
- Trash receptacles (11)
- Walking/fitness trail (1.8 miles), lighted
- Water fountain (1)

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Need for picnic facilities, additional benches, fencing around drainage areas, access to Antioch Road parking lot, and additional activity areas.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Shelter with restrooms, shade trees.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Volleyball court, basketball court, observation deck over retention pond.

Winged Deer Park - JCPRD

Established in 1991, Winged Deer Park is a 200-acre district park. The park is located on the Watauga River with access provided by the Bristol Highway and Carroll Creek Road. The facility serves city residents as well as residents from surrounding counties. The site's natural amenities offer a wide-range of development possibilities. The overall condition and visual appeal are good, site furnishings are fair to good, vandalism is moderate, and handicap accessibility is adequate.

AMENITIES

- Administrative office building
- Basketball goal (1)
- Batting cage (privately owned)
- Benches (14)
- Championship level softball fields (5) with bleachers and dugouts, lighted
- Concession buildings (2) with restrooms
- Fitness walkway around softball complex (1/2 mile)
- James H. Quillen historic tree museum
- Maintenance facility
- Massengill Monument
- 9-hole disc golf course
- Off-street parking spaces (489)
- Picnic shelters (6)
- Picnic tables (19)
- Playground areas (2)
- Robert Young Cabin with adjacent restrooms
- Soccer fields (3) with bleachers, lighted
- Softball scorers tower (1) with office and restrooms
- Trash receptacles (43)
- Volleyball court (1), sand
- Walking trail (2 miles), paved and lighted
- Water fountains (8), several have been vandalized and are not in working order

Winged Deer Lakefront

- Boat ramp
- Boardwalk (710 feet), lighted with gazebo, trash receptacles (20)
- Off-street parking spaces (approximately 45 spaces)
- Open green space (approximately 70 acres)
- Volleyball courts (2), sand

USER SURVEY COMMENTS: Additional restrooms particularly in lakefront area, additional picnic areas, landscaping, water fountains, swimming and boating facilities, and improved maintenance and security.

RECENT IMPROVEMENTS: Restrooms at Robert Young Cabin, renovation of cabin, trails to the cabin, reconstructed dugout covers at softball complex, constructed softball field, and installed batting cage in partnership with private sector.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS: Lakefront stabilization and construction of boat ramp in partnership with TWRA.

OTHER KEY CITY FACILITIES

Beeson Hall

Beeson Hall, located on Crescent Street adjacent to Neighborhood Park and Kiwanis Park was donated to the city in 1988 by Calvary Presbyterian Church. The structure was used for youth basketball and other activities until 1992 when the Road Company, a locally-based touring theater company, assumed use of

the building. The Road Company moved out of the structure in 1998 and it is presently planned for use as a multi-activity recreation facility in partnership with the Johnson City Housing Authority. The building contains numerous cosmetic deficiencies as well as the need for major repairs that include: repair or replacement of mechanical equipment, electrical system, plumbing, roofing and guttering, heating and air conditioning, and windows. Other needs include: additional off-street parking, improved security, landscaping, and improvements to handicap accessibility.

Buffalo Valley Golf Course

Buffalo Valley Golf Course, purchased by Johnson City in 1994, is an 18-hole par 71 golf course situated on 124 acres in the town of Unicoi. The course has a total length of 6,700 yards, not including the driving range and putting green. Rates vary depending on the time of year, memberships, and leagues. This course is open to the public and a pro-shop is available at the site.

Freedom Hall Civic Center

Freedom Hall Civic Center is a multi-purpose facility located on the Science Hill Campus providing services to the Johnson City School System, the entertainment industry, and the community at large. Since its opening in 1974, Freedom Hall has served more than 3.5 million patrons. Freedom Hall is a facility used by the physical education department, cafeteria services, sports and cultural events, and school assemblies. The facility dedicates over 180 days each year to education, cultural, and athletic events for Science Hill students. During the school year, 85 percent of Freedom Hall's use is related to public school activity. Freedom Hall has a capacity for 8,500 spectators and the yearly attendance is estimated between 150,000 and 175,000. In addition, Freedom Hall includes a 25 meter, 6 lane, 150,000 gallon indoor swimming pool used for various aquatic activities.

Keystone Community Center

Keystone Community Center, a former elementary school located on Bert Street, was recently renovated and converted to a community center. The building, in addition to its community center function, houses office space for ETSU, adult education, and city personnel. The overall condition, visual appeal, and site furnishings are good. The building and mechanical equipment are in good condition, parking is adequate, and there is no problem with vandalism. The entire building is handicap accessible and security is satisfactory. The gymnasium has cosmetic deficiencies and the floor needs to be refinished. Development of the site would improve/expand facility programmability.

Pine Oaks Golf Course

Pine Oaks Golf Course is an 18-hole par 71 golf course situated on 143 acres. The course was dedicated in 1963 and is operated by Johnson City. The course has a total length of 6,300 yards, in addition to a putting green and practice area. Rates vary depending on the time of year, memberships, and leagues. This course is open to the public and there is a restaurant and club house at the site.

Seniors' Center

The Johnson City Seniors' Center offers a unique combination of enrichment programs, health services, personal growth opportunities, and activities for adults over the age of 55. The Seniors' Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:30-5:00. Classes and activities are held at the center as well as other locations and are coordinated through the Seniors' Center with various organizations. The center currently has three pool tables, exercise room with fitness equipment, computer room, two shuffle board courts, open hardwood floor area, kitchen area, stage, art room, and an activity room. Examples of activities offered,

either by or through the center, include: arts and crafts, computer classes, aerobics classes, singing and bible study, cooking classes, safety classes, story telling, defensive driving classes, dancing, bingo, bridge, swimming and water fitness, billiards, and shuffle board.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Cherokee Elementary – JCBE

AMENITIES

- Benches (4)
- Gymnasium (JCPRD uses for league play)
- Multi-use fields (2), not lighted
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goal (1), not lighted
- Nature trail
- Playground areas (2)
- Picnic tables (3)
- Trash receptacles (3)

Fairmont Elementary - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Benches (2)
- Gymnasium with stage (JCPRD uses for league play)
- Multi-use field (1), not lighted
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goals (2), not lighted
- Picnic table with shelter (1)
- Picnic tables (6)
- Playground areas (2)
- Trash receptacles (3)

Henry Johnson - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Multi-use field (1), not lighted
- Multi-use outdoor court (1), not lighted
- Playground area (1)
- Trash receptacle (1)

Indian Trail - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Baseball field, lighted (JCPRD maintains and uses for league play)
- Football/soccer field, lighted (JCPRD maintains, possible future league play)
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goals (2), not lighted
- Softball field, lighted (JCPRD maintains and uses for league play)
- Gymnasium
- Picnic table (1)

- Track
- Trash receptacles (6)
- Water fountains (2)

Lake Ridge Elementary - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Gymnasium
- Undeveloped multi-use field
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goals (2), not lighted
- Water fountain (1)

*JCPRD will use the gymnasium during the 1999 season and will maintain and use fields for league play when they are constructed.

Mountain View Elementary - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Benches (4)
- Gymnasium (JCPRD uses for league play)
- Multi-use field (1), not lighted
- Multi-use/basketball court (1), not lighted
- Playground area (1)

North Side Elementary - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Benches (6)
- Gymnasium (JCPRD uses for league play)
- Multi-use field (1), not lighted
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goals (2), not lighted
- Picnic tables (6)
- Playground area (1)
- Trash receptacles (2)

Science Hill Campus - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Benches (36)
- Football practice/multi-use field (1) (JCPRD maintains)
- Freedom Hall Civic Center/Auditorium
- Gymnasiums (2)
- Baseball fields (3), lighted (JCPRD maintains and uses for league play)
- Tennis courts(14), lighted (JCPRD uses and maintains)
- Track with soccer field/track event use (1), lighted (JCPRD maintains field)
- Multi-use court (1)
- Picnic tables (11)
- Practice football field with grass track (1) (JCPRD maintains field)
- Trash receptacles (21)
- Soccer/football/multi-use fields (4), not lighted (JCPRD maintains and uses for league play)
- Water fountains (5)

* JCPRD mows all banks adjacent to baseball fields

South Side Elementary - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Benches (3)
- Gymnasium (JCPRD uses for league play)
- ½ multi-use/basketball court with basketball goal (1), not lighted
- Multi-use field (1), not lighted
- Picnic tables (3)
- Playground areas (2)

Town Acres Elementary - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Benches (5)
- Gymnasium (JCPRD uses for league play)
- Multi-use field (1), not lighted
- Multi-use/basketball court with basketball goals (4), not lighted
- Picnic tables (4)
- Playground area (1)
- Trash receptacle (1)

Woodland Elementary - JCBE

AMENITIES

- Bench (1)
- Gymnasium (JCPRD uses for league play)
- Undeveloped multi-use field
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goals (2), not lighted
- Picnic tables (10)
- Playground area (1)
- Trash receptacle (1)
- Water fountains (2)

* JCPRD will maintain and use fields when they are constructed

Boones Creek Middle School - Washington County School (WCS)

AMENITIES

- Softball field (JCPRD maintains and uses for league play), lighted
- Football field (JCPRD maintains), not lighted

Milligan College

AMENITIES

- Softball field (1) (JCPRD maintains and uses field for league play), not lighted

The term “maintains” includes mowing and/or turf maintenance or both from the JCPRD turf management personnel.

HOUSING AUTHORITY FACILITIES

Carver Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- Bench (1)
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goals (2), not lighted
- Playground area (1)
- Trash receptacle (1)
- Volleyball court (1)

Dunbar Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- None

Fairview Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- Playground area (1)
- Picnic tables (1)
- Benches (2)
- Trash receptacle (1)

Keystone Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- Playground areas (3)
- Gymnasium with ½ basketball court
- Benches (3)
- Trash receptacles (2)

Lake Terrace Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- Playground area (1)
- Multi-use/basketball court (1) with basketball goal (1), not lighted
- Picnic table (1)

Memorial Park Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- Playground areas (2), lighted
- Bench (1)

Parkway Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- Playground area (1)
- Benches (2)
- Trash receptacle (1)

Pinecrest Apartments - JCHA

AMENITIES

- Playground area (1)
- Picnic table (1)

Keystone Recreation Center

The Public Housing Authority offers recreation programs to the housing authority residents seven days a week at the Keystone Recreation Center. The programs are offered to children ages 6-18 years old, and the residents of the Keystone Community are the primary user group of the center. The programs are targeted toward the housing authority residents and are sports-oriented with an emphasis on drug elimination programming. The current program schedule includes activities such as arts and crafts, Boy Scouts, youth programs, children-first day care, and Keystone family resource center. The facility is also open for open basketball (pick-up games) and future activities will include Tae Kwon Do, cheering/gymnastics, cultural dance, and 3-on-3 basketball tournaments. The center consists of a half-court basketball gym with three basketball goals, and an open recreation area. The facility has an office area and an arts and crafts room is planned. An Activities Director provides programming direction and coordination.

STATE AND FEDERAL FACILITIES

East Tennessee State University

ETSU Campus Recreation offers programs for the students and faculty of the school. The programs consist of intramural sports, fitness, personal training, sports clubs, outdoor adventure, pool programs, noncredit instruction, open gym time, and weight training. The programs are designed primarily for the students and faculty of ETSU, however ETSU offers a recreation pass to the public for use of the facilities and programs at Brooks Gym and the Mini-Dome. The cost of the recreation pass is \$50.00 per year for all the programs including intramural participation. Use of the facilities or participation in the programs are during designated times scheduled by the Campus Recreation Department. The track and fields are also available to the public when the school's athletic teams or the Campus Recreation Department are not using them. The Center for Physical Activity scheduled for completion in 2002 will include three indoor basketball courts, a fitness area, three racquetball courts, a natatorium, an aerobics/dance area, and an elevated 1/8 mile walking/jogging track.

Veterans Administration

The Veterans Administration provides recreation programs for the staff and residents of the VA. The programs and facilities are not open to the public. The VA has one ½ court basketball area and a lake for fishing. The only facilities which are available for public use are Memorial Theatre and a gazebo which is used for weddings. City residents walk or jog around the grounds of the VA; however, there is no designated fitness course or trail. The VA grounds also provide a well-groomed open space area within a densely developed area of the city.

U.S. Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service has a total of 633,542 acres in the Cherokee National Forest including 195,178 acres in the counties of Carter, Sullivan, Unicoi, and Washington. Facilities in the National Forest provide opportunities for numerous outdoor activities including but not limited to: camping, picnicking, hiking, biking, swimming, boating, and fishing. These activities complement the programs offered by the city and provide the residents of the area with an abundance of outdoor experiences.

KEY PRIVATE AND QUASI-PUBLIC FACILITIES

Johnson City Country Club

Johnson City Country Club is a private club and includes an 18-hole par 72 golf course located on 75 acres. The club was established in 1913 and the golf course was developed prior to World War II. The course has a total length of 6,402 yards, not including the driving range and putting green. The Country Club has a club house, three swimming pools, three clay tennis courts, two asphalt tennis courts, covered facilities with two handball courts, and two practice walls.

Ridges Golf Course

The Ridges Golf Course is a private, 18-hole, par 72 golf course with a total length of 7,147 yards. Also included is a driving range and putting green, a swimming pool, four tennis courts, and a pro shop, and when fully completed will include two additional tennis courts, a clubhouse, and a restaurant.

The Boys and Girls Club of Johnson City

The Boys and Girls Club, located on West Market Street, offers recreation activities to children ages 6 through 18. The athletic programs include football for ages 6-12, basketball for ages 6-18, T-ball for ages 6 and 7, and a coach pitch baseball league for 8-year olds. The facility has two basketball gymnasiums, a swimming pool, a game room, a library, TV/activity room, and an art room. In addition, the club has three fields suitable for T-ball and an 80 yard football field. The Boys and Girls Club does not rent the facility to the public and the gymnasiums or fields are not available for public use. The annual cost for participation is \$35.00 including a \$15.00 membership fee, entitling the children use of the facilities for a year. The remaining \$20.00 is used to operate the athletic program.

Girls Inc.

Girls Inc. of Johnson City/Washington County is located on Library Lane and has served the community for 50 years. The programs provide information, skills, and resources to assist today's youth in developing a capacity to be self-sufficient, responsible members of the community and to overcome the effects of all types of discrimination attitudes, whether it be gender, race, or social class. The club hours are: after school 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.; summer 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; and the office hours are 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. The programs at the center are for girls 6 - 11 years old. The facilities at Girls Inc. are used by other groups such as: boys and girls basketball team practices, men and women basketball team practices, girls and adult soccer team practices, Munsey youth group activities, Johnson City Judo Club, Rotary Club, etc.

Coalition for Kids

Coalition for Kids, located on Watauga Road, is a nonprofit organization with funding provided by donations from churches, private industry and business, and individuals. Established in 1998, in response to a need for services for youth in the area, Coalition for Kids opened its facility on February 27, 1999. The building includes approximately 8,500 square feet with offices, an arts and crafts room, a multi-purpose area, and a gymnasium. Program activities involve recreation and counseling/tutoring assistance for approximately 60 – 80 youth of all ages. Activities are provided 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday during the summer with evening programs and activities during the school months.

Johnson City Area Arts Council

Johnson City Area Arts Council (JCAAC) is a regional arts council dedicated to preserving and nurturing the traditional arts and cultural communities of Johnson City and the surrounding five-county area of Carter, Greene, Johnson, Unicoi, and Washington. For 18 years, the JCAAC has been the official local arts agency of the Tennessee Arts Commission, serving these five counties through: support of area artists and art organizations; development of educational programs, workshops, and technical assistance service; and promoting and advocating the arts through interaction with and among federal, state, and local agencies. The JCAAC is a public membership organization dependent upon the support of volunteers to

assist with the programs. The annual budget relies on memberships, individual and corporate contributions, admissions, program revenues, and fund raising. JCAAC also receives financial support from the Tennessee General Assembly through the Tennessee Arts Commission, the city of Johnson City through its Parks and Recreation Department, and donations from area businesses.

Other

The city has numerous private organizations and businesses that provide varying levels of recreation services and activities to the residents of the area. These facilities and services are extensive and include private clubs, churches, apartment complexes, and commercial businesses. They assist in providing leisure time activities and complement the city's recreation facilities and programs.

DEFICIENCIES/FINDINGS

The inventory of existing facilities provided by the JCPRD revealed several problem areas that are exhibited at numerous facilities and require special attention. The following problems were identified through interviews with JCPRD staff and site inspections:

1. Parks appear to have been neglected due to the lack of routine and structured maintenance, insufficient scheduling of staff to maintain the parks properly, inadequate maintenance of staff levels, and lack of sufficient funding to purchase proper equipment and supplies.
2. The majority of parks are deficient in aesthetics and appealing landscaping which would improve their overall visual quality and compatibility with surrounding residential areas. The addition of trees, shrubs, flowers, and ground covers has been discouraged and landscaping has been described as labor intensive in terms of maintenance demands. Nevertheless, landscaping is a necessary and major component of any park system and maintenance needs should be adequately provided in order to enhance the visual appeal of all JCPRD facilities. **Approximately 66 percent of the respondents to the citizen surveys identified additional landscaping of parks as a priority.**
3. Many parks lack adequate open space or informal play areas. For the most part, they are intensely developed facilities with little, if any, space consisting of open green space areas with landscaping, benches, walking paths, or other passive or unstructured uses/areas. The need for athletic fields and facilities has been well documented; however, the role of parks in the provision of open space and relief from urban development has been neglected.
4. There is a lack of standardization and uniformity regarding signage, park furnishings, shelter design, color identity, bleachers, lighting, restroom design, fencing, and other amenities. The adoption of uniform and complementary standards regarding site furnishings and design would reduce costs while at the same time improve the recognition and appearance of city-owned and operated facilities.
5. Many parks pose potential safety hazards to users, which increase the risk of injury and liability to the city. These hazards are prevalent throughout the park system and include but are not limited to: (1) substandard electrical wiring practices; (2) broken or unsafe bleacher seating; (3) fencing that is in disrepair; (4) tripping hazards; (5) sharp edges, objects, and exposed nails; (6) splintered wood on various facilities; (7) unsafe playground apparatus and areas with insufficient fall zone material; and (8) areas of uneven grade or depressions in open play areas. A routine inspection program of parks should be established to ensure adherence to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's guidelines and the American Society for Testing and Materials standards.

6. Vandalism is a constant problem at many city parks and is often difficult to distinguish from neglect and a lack of routine maintenance. The addition of security lights, security cameras, and increasing security patrols are necessary to deter vandalism and illicit behavior occurring at city facilities.
7. Clear distinctions between turf management and maintenance responsibilities require addressing to ensure essential tasks are performed and completed in a satisfactory manner. An example involves the pick-up of trash at city parks. There appears to be no established schedule or responsibility regarding this function. The establishment of a structured maintenance program will remedy this concern.
8. A common problem at the majority of parks involves the storage of various materials, i.e. sand and mulch, which is stored in visible locations throughout the park system. This material, in many instances, is stored adjacent to or on parking lots resulting in loss of parking spaces and during periods of rain, results in unsightly material run-off into the parking lots.
9. In addition to the storage of the above materials, several parks also contain areas where discarded landscape materials, playground apparatus, construction materials, and other items are stored. In addition to their unsightliness, they pose health and safety problems to park users.
10. According to JCPRD staff, the various ball fields cannot be properly maintained due to overuse from the large number of participants in the numerous programs (i.e. soccer is played on baseball fields and T-ball is played on soccer fields). The large number of participants is attributable to the success of the programs and participation by nonresidents of Johnson City. Without a structured maintenance program for facilities, existing facilities will continue to deteriorate from overuse and inadequate maintenance.
11. Proper equipment and facilities for equipment storage is needed throughout the system. Presently, equipment is rented when needed and city-owned equipment is left outside and exposed to the weather and vandalism.
12. The historical development of the park system indicates a lack of facility development based upon population served and park functions. Many areas of the city are not within safe walking distance of recreation facilities, while other areas are over-developed with facilities.
13. There is a serious lack of vacant land suitable for park development in several of the more intensely developed residential areas.
14. Several parks experience limited use due to poor location with respect to intended service area, changing growth patterns and demographics, inadequate facilities, and an overall uninviting park environment.
15. A missing element in the existing development of facilities is a bicycle and walking/hiking trail system. Existing plans are being developed and implemented to correct this deficiency.
16. The city has not taken advantage, to the extent possible, of two of its greatest assets – the surrounding mountains and the water based recreation potential of the Watauga River.

17. Only a small beginning has been made in a program of combined school and park facilities, particularly at the neighborhood/elementary school level. Improvement in this area will reduce duplication of future costs of both acquisition and development of recreation facilities.
18. There is a less than desirable coordination between the planning and implementation functions for parklands including the absence of a continuing program of acquisition and development that is commensurate with population growth.

Summary of Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department Facilities - 1999

Section Two – Inventory of Existing Recreation Resources

	No. of Acres	Baseball	Basketball	Batting Cages/Bull Pen	Benches	Bleachers	Board Walk	Boat Ramp	Concession Area	Disc Golf	Fitness Trail	Football	Hiking Trails	Horseshoes	Lighted Area	Multi-use Field	Off-Street Parking	On-Street Parking	Pavilion	Picnic Tables	Playground Area	Recreational Center	Restrooms	Soccer	Softball	Swimming	Tennis	Volleyball	
Buffalo Mountain Park	725.0												●			●				●									
Buffalo Valley Soccer Complex	2.0					●										●	●						●	●					
Carnegie Park	5.0		●					●							●			●	●		●								
Carver Park	6.0		●			●					●					●	●			●	●	●	●						●
Civitan Park	33.0																												
Earth Day Park	0.5																												
Friendship Gardens	3.0				●																								
Howard Johnson Field	5.0	●				●			●						●		●			●			●						
Joy-Rutherford Field	1.5	●		●		●			●						●		●			●			●						
Keystone Instructional Field	2.8	●				●									●	●		●											
Kiwanis Park	9.0	●	●	●		●			●					●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●		●				●
Lions Park	8.0	●		●		●			●						●		●		●	●	●		●						
Memorial Park	0.5																			●									
Memorial Stadium	6.0										●				●		●			●			●						
Metro-Kiwanis Park	15.0		●			●									●		●		●	●	●		●		●		●		
Neighborhood Park	2.0	●				●									●					●									
Optimist Park	10.0				●	●			●						●		●		●	●	●		●		●				
Paul Christman Park	0.5		●		●													●	●	●	●								
Powell Square Park	1.4		●		●											●			●	●	●		●						
Rotary Park	10.4				●										●	●			●	●	●		●						
Spring Street Park	0.5				●										●														
Stadium Field	1.5					●																	●		●				
Veterans Park	0.25				●															●									
Willow Springs Park	36.0										●		●		●	●	●			●	●		●						
Winged Deer Park	200.0		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●			●	●		●	●	●				●
Total	1084.85																												

SECTION THREE - ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING RECREATION PROGRAMS

The information in this section of the Master Plan provides an inventory and assessment of the various programs, activities, and services provided by the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department (JCPRD). The JCPRD provides a variety of programs for residents of all ages in the city of Johnson City and surrounding area. The department's strengths are found in its athletic programs, special events, and the use of sponsors and partnerships.

The assessment was developed in 1999 through interviews with JCPRD staff, user groups, volunteers, and various agencies and organizations throughout the community that are involved with specific programs or activities. The program needs identified by the above organizations are not substantiated by statistical data that allows the formulation of trends. The lack of data limits the formulation of specific recommendations that reflect local needs. On-site visits were also made to facilities where programs are provided. The information collected was assembled into an outline format that included general information regarding the program/activity, costs, strengths and weaknesses, program needs, and local and national trends. The data was then compared to national guidelines and trends to identify potential areas of need. National guidelines and trends were extracted from the National Recreation and Parks Association and American Sports Data, Incorporated respectively, organizations that provide comprehensive data of leisure time activities. The JCPRD is a dynamic organization that continually responds to community needs including programs and facilities. As a result, there is constant change and the assessment may contain discrepancies regarding facilities, staffing, activities, etc.

SPECIFIC PROGRAM AREAS

Program Area - Aquatics/Swimming

Program Notes:

- Programs offer recreation and competitive swimming for children and adults.
- Facilities include Legion Street Pool (Memorial Day to Labor Day only) and Freedom Hall Pool.
- Examples of facility use include: open swimming, Barracuda Swim Club, Science Hill Swim Team, water aerobics, senior games, scuba lessons, Johnson City Search and Rescue, swimming lessons, school aquatic classes, special events, and private parties.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- Fees are charged for open swim times and program fees for various users of the facilities.

Program Strengths:

- Facilities are centrally located and accessible to the public.
- Facilities are utilized for multiple purposes to meet the needs of the community.

Program Weaknesses:

- Age and deteriorated condition of Legion Street Pool and inadequate off-street parking.
- Overuse of Freedom Hall Pool thereby restricting maintenance and growth of program activities.

- Need to review staffing levels and pay structure for personnel in order to attract and retain qualified and responsible staff.

Program Needs:

- Facilities require major repairs/renovation (Freedom Hall Pool) and repairs/replacement (Legion Street Pool).
- Review of staffing levels including lifeguard scheduling and the need for a Certified Pool Operator at each aquatic facility.
- Additional pool facilities to accommodate recreation needs resulting from population growth and growth in the interest of aquatic programs.

Program Trends:

- Therapeutic pool programs are becoming increasingly popular according to the National Recreation and Parks Association.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, aquatic exercise has increased 6.9 percent nationally over the past 10 years.
- Nationally, family-oriented aquatic facilities are becoming increasingly popular according to the National Recreation and Parks Association.

Program Area - Adult Basketball

Program Notes:

- Adult basketball is available from November through March for adults of all ages including men and women.
- Games are played at Legion Street Recreation Center, Keystone Community Center, Cherokee Elementary School, Woodland Elementary School, Mountain View Elementary School, Southside Elementary School, Fairmont Elementary School, Science Hill Campus, Antioch Christian Church, Tri-Cities Christian School, and Indian Trail. School gyms that do not meet standards for league play are used for practice.
- There were 648 participants in 1999 comprising 54 teams and three leagues including industrial, church, and women's open.
- Teams play twice a week with a total of 16 games culminating in a single elimination tournament at the end of the season.
- Program coordination is provided by JCPRD that adheres to the rules of the Tennessee State Secondary Athletic Association (TSSAA) modified to accommodate specific needs of the league, community, and JCPRD. A church athletic board oversees the church league.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- JCPRD pays for school maintenance personnel assigned to school facilities during operation of the program.
- Teams are sponsored by either a business or church with the women's teams raising their own funds.
- The cost for the men's industrial and church leagues is \$330.00 per team. Two officials are paid \$11.50 each per hour and one scorekeeper per game is paid \$5.15 per hour.
- The women's league plays an eight game schedule and is assessed \$165.00 per team. Officials are paid the same as the men's leagues.
- Teams provide their own uniforms and equipment and JCPRD provides the game balls and gymnasiums.

Program Strengths:

- Program provides a structured winter activity for men and women in the city.
- Leagues assist in attracting coaches and referees for the youth leagues through an increased interest and experience in the sport.

Program Weaknesses:

- Inadequate number of available gyms resulting in an inadequate amount of time and facilities for games and practice.
- JCPRD has to coordinate practices and games with school schedules resulting in decreased availability of gyms for games and practice.
- JCPRD has difficulty recruiting referees as a result of competition for services and higher pay offered to referees by high schools and middle schools.
- Continued disrespect and abuse toward referees is a contributing factor in a decreased interest in officiating.

Program Needs:

- Additional facilities to alleviate scheduling problems and to accommodate future program growth.
- Commensurate with facility expansion JCPRD should consider the establishment of a three-on-three league (would allow additional participation and is consistent with national trends).

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation has increased approximately 25.6 percent during 1995-1999.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, basketball participation has increased 26.2 percent nationally during the past 10 years.

Program Area - Youth Basketball

Program Notes:

- Participants include boys and girls ages 6-13, totaling approximately 1475 children and 134 teams in 1999.
- Teams are organized by school district and leagues are divided by age groups and gender (6-7, 8-9, 10-11, and 12-13).
- Games are played at Legion Street Recreation Center, Keystone Community Center, Cherokee Elementary School, Woodland Elementary School, Mountain View Elementary School, Southside Elementary School, Fairmont Elementary School, Science Hill Campus, and Indian Trail. School gyms that do not meet standards for league play are used for practice.
- Program is affiliated with the Charlotte Hornets.
- JCPRD follows the Tennessee State Secondary Athletic Association (TSSAA) rules and guidelines modified to accommodate specific needs of the league, community, and JCPRD.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- JCPRD pays for school maintenance personnel assigned to school facilities during operation of the program.
- Charlotte Hornets provide participants with a reversible jersey, gym bag, and water bottle. JCPRD reimburses the Charlotte Hornets \$9.95 for each participant.
- Officials are paid \$9.00 per hour and scorekeepers \$5.15 per hour.
- Funds are raised by a Hornets/Sting booster club, Coca-Cola, and team photographs.
- No registration fee is charged to participants.

Program Strengths:

- Affiliation with the Charlotte Hornets.
- Provides area youth an opportunity to participate in organized league play.
- Interest and ability of volunteer coaches resulting in an increased level of participation.
- Fund-raising capability of booster club with funds donated to JCPRD.

Program Weaknesses:

- Inadequate gym space resulting in scheduling difficulties.
- Difficulty in recruiting referees due to higher pay offered by middle and high schools.
- Disrespect toward referees resulting in a decreasing interest in officiating.

Program Needs:

- Additional facilities to alleviate problems associated with scheduling game play, practice, and to accommodate future program growth.
- Additional JCPRD staff to coordinate activities.
- Additional corporate sponsors as program continues to expand.

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation has increased approximately 9.8 percent during 1995-1999.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, basketball has increased 26.2 percent nationally over the past 10 years.

Program Area - Adult Softball

Program Notes:

- Fall league operates August through October with a total of 39 teams for men's open and coed participation in 1999.
- Adult softball in 1999 consisted of the following leagues: (women's open (0 teams), men's open (50 teams), men's industrial (16 teams), men's church (24 teams), coed church (17 teams), coed open (44 teams), and senior (7 teams). The leagues are open to participants 18 years of age or older with the exception of the senior league which is open to participants 40 and over.
- Summer league operates during May, June, and July and averages 31 games per night, Monday through Thursday nights.
- Open leagues play a 16 game schedule and coed leagues play an eight game schedule with teams competing in district, state, and national tournaments.
- Facilities are provided at Optimist Park, Winged Deer Park, and Boones Creek Middle School.
- Leagues follow the rules of the Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) with modifications to accommodate specific needs of the leagues, community, and JCPRD.
- Adult softball tournaments are held throughout the year. Sanctioning associations are NSA, ASA, ISA, and USSSA.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- Teams are individually sponsored with a registration fee of \$350.00 per team. The registration fee for coed leagues is \$175.00 per team.
- Each game requires two umpires and one scorekeeper paid \$11.50 and \$5.15 respectively.

Program Strengths:

- Provides adults an organized and structured summer and fall recreation activity.
- Quality of officials as a result of experience at regional, state, and national levels.

- Strong sponsorship support.
- Diversity of league compositions.
- Ability of JCPRD to schedule and coordinate league activity.
- Association with ASA sanctioning organization providing information regarding tournaments, rulings, etc.

Program Weaknesses:

- Inadequate number of facilities for league play and practice.
- Insufficient number of umpires and scorekeepers.

Program Needs:

- Additional facilities to accommodate existing leagues and future program growth.
- Recruit additional umpires and scorekeepers.

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation in adult softball summer leagues has decreased approximately 6.3 percent during 1995-1999.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, slow pitch softball has decreased 16.5 percent nationally over the last 10 years.

Program Area - Girls Senior Softball

Program Notes:

- Facilities are provided at Metro-Kiwanis Park (two fields), Kiwanis Park (one field), and Indian Trail School (one field).
- Participants include girls ages 16 - 19, comprising 25 teams (20 middle and high school teams and 5 open teams) with an average of 15 players per team.
- Organization and supervision is provided by a board of directors composed of interested residents.
- League play begins at the end of the high school softball season and consists of 10 games per team.
- JCPRD follows the Tennessee State Secondary Athletic Association (TSSAA) rules modified to accommodate specific needs of the league, community, and JCPRD.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD supplies the fields, umpires, scorekeepers, maintenance, and program staff.
- Umpires are paid \$13.50 per game and scorekeepers \$7.72 per game.
- Sponsors provide uniforms, entry fees, and other equipment and supplies.

Program Strengths:

- Operations of leagues are administered by a board of directors relieving JCPRD of certain responsibilities.

Program Weaknesses:

- Inadequate number of facilities to support practices and games (currently four fields accommodate 25 teams).

Program Needs:

- Additional facilities to accommodate existing leagues and future program growth.

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation has increased approximately 6.0 percent during 1995-1999.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, fast pitch softball has decreased 5.7 percent nationally over the past 10 years.

Program Area - Girls Youth Softball

Program Notes:

- Girls youth softball is co-ventured with Girls Incorporated and is divided into three divisions by age: 9-10 year-olds play slow pitch, and the 11-12 and 13 -15 year-olds play fast pitch.
- The 9-10 year-olds play two games per week on Monday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday morning at Kiwanis Park and Stadium Field. In 1999, there were 11 teams, divided by school district, averaging 15 players on each team.
- The 11-12 year-olds consist of two divisions, National and American, with players selected on a random basis. Teams play two games per week on either Tuesday, Friday, or Saturday at Kiwanis Park. In 1999, there were 7 teams, divided by school district, averaging 14 players on each team.
- The 13-15 year-olds play two games per week on Monday evenings and Saturday mornings at Metro-Kiwanis Park. In 1999, there were 8 teams, divided by school district, averaging 15 players on each team.
- JCPRD follows the rules of the Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) modified to accommodate specific needs of the league, community, and JCPRD.
- Carnegie Park, presently under renovation, will be available for games in 2000.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides the fields, schedules for practice, league, and tournament play, umpires, scorekeepers, maintenance, and program staff. Teams are responsible for securing their own sponsors, equipment, and coaches.
- Umpires are paid \$13.50 per game and scorekeepers \$7.72 per game.
- There is no cost to participants of the program.

Program Strengths:

- Teams are responsible for their own sponsors, thereby reducing costs for JCPRD.
- High school and college coaches periodically schedule clinics and practice sessions to assist in developing the participants' skills.
- Teams are organized by school district which eliminates recruiting.
- Affiliation with the Amateur Softball Athletic Association (ASA) allows teams to participate regionally and nationally, and also allows JCPRD to host tournaments.
- Increased professionalism of coaches resulting from attendance at high school and college clinics.

Program Weaknesses:

- Previous weakness (inadequate number of fields) will be alleviated with the addition of Carnegie Park fields.

Program Needs:

- Provide additional facilities commensurate with program growth.

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation has decreased approximately 11.6 percent during 1995-1999.

- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, fast pitch softball has decreased 5.7 percent nationally over the past 10 years.

Program Area - Youth Baseball

Program Notes:

- Program participants include boys and girls, ages 8 - 18 with teams selected by a draft system.
- There are three separately chartered Little League organizations: Major League, National League, and American League (Little League guidelines allow one league per 20,000 population).
- There are two divisions within each league: Major Division and Instructional Division.
- Babe Ruth League is a separate, independently chartered, organization operating two age divisions.
- Little League comprises the American, National, Major, and Instructional leagues consisting of 26 teams with 15 players on each team. The leagues are governed by the Little League Board and play a 16 game schedule with a single elimination tournament at the end of the season.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides: officials, scorekeepers, facilities, maintenance, and program staff.
- Umpires are paid \$15.50 per game and scorekeepers are paid \$7.78 per game.
- A \$25.00 participation fee is charged by the league to cover the cost of insurance.
- Concessions are operated by the leagues and revenues are retained for league expenditures.

Program Strengths:

- Teams are responsible for obtaining sponsors which provide uniforms for participants.
- Strong volunteer support provides coaches and supplies.

Program Weaknesses:

- Inadequate record keeping by the leagues regarding employees and number of hours worked.
- Insufficient parking at youth baseball facilities.
- Need for increased training of umpires.

Program Needs:

- Expand parking and improve seating at youth baseball facilities.
- Instructional leagues need dug-outs, restrooms, and concession areas.
- Construct additional facilities to accommodate existing leagues and future program growth.

Program Trends:

- Locally, data is not available to establish trends.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, participation in structured baseball has declined 12.1 percent nationally over the last 10 years.

Program Area - Youth Soccer

Program Notes:

- Youth soccer league play is provided for boys and girls, ages 3 - 13 during the months of September, October, and November.
- Leagues are divided by age and gender and include: 3 - 4 and 5 year instructional league, 6 - 7, 8 - 9, 10 - 11, and 12 - 13 year-old recreational leagues.

- Program participation in 1999 was approximately 1,720, comprising 110 teams grouped by school district.
- Facilities are provided at Winged Deer Park (three regulation fields), Science Hill Campus (8 non-regulation fields), and Civitan Park (currently under renovation).
- No fee is charged to participants and the program is operated through sponsorship and volunteer coaches.
- Program follows the general rules of the Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) modified to accommodate specific needs of the league, community, and JCPRD.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance of fields, program staff, and the salaries of officials.
- A registration fee is not charged to participants, and operating funds are derived from the JCPRD budget.

Program Strengths:

- Program stresses participation and provides the fundamentals of a structured activity.
- Strong degree of cooperation between the sponsors, community, and JCPRD.
- Experienced and dedicated staff comprising 110 volunteer coaches and the JCPRD.
- Equality of teams and leagues resulting from organization by school district.

Program Weaknesses:

- Inadequate number of facilities resulting from program growth (completion of Civitan Park will provide five additional regulation fields).
- Approximately 21 percent (362) of the participants are non-city residents (this is not considered a weakness; however, it is a concern that results in an overloading of city facilities).
- Continuing need for volunteer coaches and paid referees.
- Continuing need for increased training for coaches and referees (coaches meetings are poorly attended).

Program Needs:

- Additional facilities to accommodate existing leagues and future program growth.
- Investigate the feasibility of a registration fee for non-city residents.
- Investigate a partnership with ETSF to provide training for coaches and referees.

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation has increased approximately 20.8 percent during 1995-1999.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, soccer has increased 18.4 percent nationally over the past 10 years.

Program Area - Girls Teeball

Program Notes:

- Girls teeball is co-ventured with Girls Incorporated with participant ages 6, 7, and 8. The season begins the last Saturday in April and runs for 8 weeks.
- In 1999, there were 15 teams averaging 18 players per team. Games are played Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights with Saturday available for make-up games. Games last 1 hour and 15 minutes with teams ending the inning that they are playing.

- There are 12 league games and a single elimination tournament at the end of the season. Games are played at Winged Deer Park on one of the soccer fields, which was converted to two tee ball fields.
- Program was initiated six years ago to provide an activity for girls, teach fundamentals, and expose them to sports. Program sponsors pay for jerseys and caps in return for uniform advertising.
- Program operates with volunteer coaches and assistants, with JCPRD providing equipment (balls, batting tees, bats), umpires, scorekeepers, and scheduling.
- Teams are divided by school district.
- JCPRD follows the ASA (Amateur Softball Association of America) rules modified to accommodate specific needs of the league, community, and JCPRD.
- Program is advertised by JCPRD and Girls Inc.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- No cost to participants of the program.
- The umpires are paid \$13.50 per game and the scorekeepers are paid \$7.72 per game.

Program Strengths:

- Sponsors pay the cost of jerseys and caps, saving JCPRD and Girls Inc. approximately \$2,000.00 annually.
- Participants are introduced to the sport providing skills and fundamentals for participation in softball leagues in the future.
- Without volunteer coaches and assistants the program would not be possible.
- Girls, Inc. assists with administrative and public relations functions.

Program Weaknesses:

- Lack of facilities does not allow adequate time for practice, organized games, and tournament activities.

Program Needs:

- Investigate the feasibility of developing a tee ball complex with four tee ball fields (would also allow the bidding and hosting of tee ball tournaments).
- Add program sponsors commensurate with program growth.
- Investigate the feasibility of a registration fee for non-city residents.

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation has decreased approximately 5.9 percent during 1995-1999.

Program Area - Adult Tennis Lessons

Program Notes:

- Adult tennis lessons are provided for participants over the age of 16.
- Instructional facilities are located at Science Hill tennis center.
- Annual participation in the program for the past five years has averaged 20 adults.
- Classes are Monday and Thursday evenings for 1 ¼ hours during a four week period in June.
- Program instruction is provided by a tennis supervisor and instructors who also supervise youth tennis lessons.

Program Cost:

- Funding for program is derived from fees charged to participants (\$35.00 for 4-week period).
- Program costs include \$8.00 per hour for tennis supervisor and \$5.15 for each instructor.

Program Strengths:

- Program provides fundamental instruction in tennis for area adults.
- Tennis supervisor has been in existing capacity for 15 years and has strong community support as a result of his expertise and administrative abilities.
- Facilities are centrally located and accessible to participants in the program.

Program Weaknesses:

- Difficulty in securing qualified instructors due to low rate of pay (minimum wage).

Program Needs:

- Additional courts to encourage program growth.
- Investigate increasing program fees to enable program to attract more qualified and experienced instructors.
- Renovate tennis center facilities at Science Hill including the improvement of spectator seating and the resurfacing of existing tennis courts, as needed.

Program Trends:

- Local participation has remained consistent at approximately 20 adults per year during the past five years.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, tennis has decreased 17.3 percent nationally over the past 10 years.

Program Area - Youth Tennis Lessons

Program Notes:

- Lessons are provided for children ages 6 through 16.
- Instructional facilities are located at Science Hill tennis center.
- Annual participation in the program for the past five years has averaged 300 - 400 students.
- Classes are Monday through Friday for 1 ¼ hours for a six-week period during the months of June and July.
- Program coordination and instruction is provided by a tennis supervisor and ten instructors.

Program Cost:

- Funding for program is derived from fees charged to participants (\$25.00 for six-week period).
- Program costs include \$8.00 per hour for tennis supervisor and \$5.15 per hour for each instructor.

Program Strengths:

- Program provides fundamental instruction in tennis for area youth.
- Tennis supervisor has been in existing capacity for 15 years and has strong community support as a result of his expertise and administrative abilities.
- Facilities are centrally located and accessible to participants in the program.

Program Weaknesses:

- Difficulty in securing qualified instructors due to low rate of pay (minimum wage).
- Limited number of tennis courts at Science Hill tennis center resulting in scheduling problems.

Program Needs:

- Additional courts to encourage program growth.
- Investigate increasing program fees to enable program to attract qualified and experienced instructors.
- Renovate tennis center facilities at Science Hill including the improvement of spectator seating and the resurfacing of existing tennis courts, as needed.

Program Trends:

- Local participation has averaged between 300 - 400 students the past five years with a decrease in teenage participation and an increase in the 6 - 12 year age group.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, tennis has decreased 17.3 percent nationally over the past 10 years.

Program Area - Summer Playgrounds Program

Program Notes:

- Program provides supervised activities, social interaction, and educational programs encompassing a variety of recreational experiences for children ages 5 - 12.
- Program operates from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday during the months of June and July.
- Participation in 1998 was 6,278, a daily average of 179.
- In 1999, program was operated at Kiwanis, Metro-Kiwanis, Carver, and Lions parks.
- Lunch is provided by Washington County Food Services through a federal grant.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance, program staff, supplies, and transportation.
- No registration fee or cost to participants in the program.

Program Strengths:

- Community interest and involvement.
- Quality of JCPRD staff, whose career choices are education or recreation related.
- Program provides a diversity of activities throughout the summer.

Program Weaknesses:

- Facilities (restrooms, shelters, etc.) at some parks are inadequate and require renovation.
- Need for additional staff to encourage and accommodate program growth and increase ratio of staff to participants.
- Insufficient funds for program activities, staff, and supplies.
- Limited hours of operation that conflict with working parents (10 a.m. - 4 p.m.).
- Lack of facilities in specific geographic areas of the city.

Program Needs:

- Expand program sites, participation, program hours, program offerings, and staffing.
- Renovate park equipment with updated play apparatus and areas.
- Expand hours to provide childcare services (consider fee for parents desiring this service).
- Investigate the feasibility of a registration fee for non-city residents and for users desiring pre- and post program services.

Program Trends:

- Locally, participation decreased in 1998, possibly due to construction activities at two program sites.
- According to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), the provision of expanded hours of service to accommodate working parents is a popular and increasing national trend.

Program Area - Pavilion Rentals

Program Notes:

- Pavilion rentals are available to the public and organizations for picnics and outdoor functions at Rotary Park (6 pavilions) and Metro-Kiwanis and Lions parks (one pavilion at each park).
- Rentals are provided between April 1st and October 31st, 7 days a week from 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. (half day rentals are available).
- Capacities at various pavilions range from 24 to 125 people with a variety of cooking facilities, electricity, water, fireplaces, and tables with seating provided.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and administrative staff.
- Revenue is generated from daily rental fees ranging from \$12.00 to \$45.00 depending on the size of the pavilion, length of time of the rental, and amenities available.

Program Strengths:

- Program fulfills an identified resident priority in terms of passive/social recreation preferences.
- Pavilion rental cost is low which encourages maximum use of facilities.
- Pavilions are located in several areas of the city providing ease of access by residents.

Program Weaknesses:

- Inadequate and outdated facilities at various pavilion sites.
- Unauthorized use of pavilions resulting in a need for increased maintenance.
- Vandalism at pavilion sites detracts from visual appeal of facilities.
- Pavilion scheduling currently does not require a deposit at time of rental arrangement to ensure scheduled use (deposit is required within 10 days of reservation).

Program Needs:

- Restrooms at pavilion sites require improvements to provide handicap accessibility.
- Pavilions are in various stages of disrepair, requiring new roofs, guttering, paint, kitchen facilities, tables and chairs, barbecue grills, and water fountains.

Program Trends:

- Number of users has decreased 15.6 percent (34,790 - 29,358) between 1996 and 1999, and rentals have decreased 14.6 percent (616 to 526), during the same period.
- Revenue generated from rentals has decreased from \$13,070 in 1996 to \$10,486 in 1999, a decrease of 19.7 percent.
- Rotary Park accounts for 77 percent of pavilion rental revenue, and Metro-Kiwanis and Lions parks account for 13.3 percent and 9.7 percent respectively.

Program Area - Outdoor Recreation Programs

Program Notes:

- Program provides an appreciation for nature, conservation, and environmental education for people of all ages.

- Activities are coordinated by JCPRD's Park Naturalist and consist of subjects including the environment, ecology, biology, and natural history of the East Tennessee area.
- Programs include oral and slide presentations to schools, civic organizations, clubs, and the general public.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- Sponsors of various programs/activities may charge a fee to participants.

Program Strengths:

- Provides a variety of environmental programs of special interest to residents of the community.
- Program consistency assists in developing long-term relationships and community support.
- Encourages park awareness and care by users.
- Develops a volunteer base to assist with future programs.

Program Weaknesses:

- Park vandalism resulting in the need for additional security.
- Inadequate scheduling of manpower to maintain and provide security for nature trails and related areas.
- Limited use of Buffalo Mountain Park, a natural resource facility with extensive programming possibilities.

Program Needs:

- Increased maintenance of nature trails, natural areas, and related facilities.
- Increased funding consideration for informational and resource materials and qualified personnel.
- Provide maintenance and security staff commensurate with program growth and facility expansion.
- Development and promotion of multi-use trails, natural areas, and historic sites as resources permit.
- Development of programs/activities that encourage participation by area youth and service organizations.

Program Trends:

- Locally, data is not available to establish trends.
- According to American Sports Data, Incorporated, mountain biking, camping, rock climbing, and hiking have increased nationally over the past 10 years.

Program Area - Special Events

Program Notes:

- Special events are generally family-oriented activities with specific social interests. Occasionally, activities are targeted for a specific age group or social group.
- Activities are sponsored by JCPRD and/or co-sponsored community events open to the public encompassing all specific age and social groups.
- Events are held at specific times of the year for seasonal or annual occasions.
- Special events include but are not limited to: Art in the Park, Autumn Day at Princeton, car shows, C.A.R.E. Fair, Christmas in the Park, Earth Day Celebration, ETSU Pride, fishing

tournaments, Freaky Forest, Halloween Festival, Indian Pow-Wow, Just Say Yes to Fishing and No to Drugs, Petting Zoo, Renaissance Fair, Spring Fest, Teen Classic Car Show, Tri-Cities Dog Jog, Wacky Olympics, You Can Canoe, and sporting events/tournaments.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- The majority of the programs are free to the public with costs funded through sponsorship and/or JCPRD.

Program Strengths:

- Diversity of events, providing activities and programs for residents of all ages and interests.
- Promotes JCPRD allowing staff interaction with residents and an opportunity to educate residents regarding facilities and programs provided by JCPRD.
- Provides an economic impact to the city estimated at 1.5 million dollars annually.
- Promotes and provides an opportunity for volunteer participation.
- Availability of facilities that will accommodate special events.

Program Weaknesses:

- Budget constraints restricting the growth of special event activities.
- Restrictions/limitations on public relations and advertising.
- Limited sponsorship base and revenue generation.

Program Needs:

- Funding for increased promotional capability.
- Part-time staff to assist in special event activity planning and implementation.
- Structured system of appreciation for sponsors and volunteers to ensure their continued interest and support.

Program Trends:

- Locally, statistics are not available for specific events; however, it is the perception of JCPRD that attendance fluctuates depending upon factors such as weather, publicity, interest, etc.

RECREATION CENTERS

The JCPRD operates programs and provides services at several facilities owned and maintained by the department. The programs and services are described below:

Carver Recreation Center

Carver Recreation Center located at Carver Park, was established in 1958 and serves several inner city neighborhoods. A major renovation of the structure has been completed and the overall condition, visual appeal, and site furnishings are good, parking is adequate, and the building is handicap accessible. Additional needs include renovations to the former Valley Seal building for recreation program use.

Program Notes:

- Facility provides programs and activities for participants of all ages.

- Programs include, but are not limited to: Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Party, tutoring services, boxing, sports clinics, dance parties, baseball and basketball tournaments, Unity Day, arts and crafts, community festivals, etc.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- Center is available for rent at a cost of \$10.00 per hour during business hours (8 a.m.-5 p.m.) and \$15.00 per hour after business hours and on weekends. The non-profit rate is one-half the regular rental fee with fee waivers granted on special occasions.

Program Strengths:

- Facility meets the needs of the community through the provision of family-oriented programs and activities for the community.
- Facility has been recently renovated to allow for a diverse range of programs and increased participation.
- Strong relationship between the staff and community.
- Increased use of sponsors such as local businesses, service clubs, and churches.

Program Weaknesses:

- Programs offered to the youth are canceled when the center is rented for special events.

Program Needs:

- Increase the number of staff to accommodate program and maintenance needs.
- Addition of new or updated office equipment.
- Continue to encourage participation by all age groups in programs offered at the center.
- Improve scheduling/programming of center activities

Program Trends:

- As facility renovations and additions are completed, program participation is expected to increase. Participation data is not available to establish trends.

Kiwanis Recreation Center

Kiwanis Recreation Center was constructed in 1945 and is located in Kiwanis Park between West Market Street and West Main Street. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are poor. Specific deficiencies include: mechanical equipment in need of repair or replacement; inadequate parking during peak-use times; replacement of electrical service, roofing, and guttering; increase handicap accessibility; improvements to meet Fire Marshall requirements; and improvement of security.

Program Notes:

- Facility provides space for a variety of activities including: art classes, clogging, baby showers, weddings, birthday parties, and a variety of special events and activities.
- Hours of operation are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., with varying hours on the weekends to accommodate special events and activities.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- Center is available for rent at a cost of \$10.00 per hour during business hours (8 a.m.-5 p.m.) and \$15.00 per hour at other times. The non-profit rate is one-half the regular rental fee with fee waivers granted on special occasions.

Program Strengths:

- Location and accessibility of the center.

Program Weaknesses:

- Deteriorated condition of the facility resulting from age, vandalism, and the need for increased maintenance.
- Proximity to the Carver Recreation Center.
- Limited programming capability and use as a result of the center's construction and amenities.

Program Needs:

- Renovation of the facility including kitchen, restrooms, office area, roof, mechanical equipment, etc.
- Additional program and storage space.

Program Trends:

- Participation data is not available to establish trends.

Legion Street Recreation Center

Legion Street Recreation Center, located on Legion Street was established in 1950 and the pool was constructed in 1958. The site's location is central to the community; however, the age of the center and the pool will require major capital expenditures to continue service. The overall condition, visual quality, and site furnishings are poor.

Program Notes:

- Facility provides space for multiple uses and activities such as birthday parties, church parties, baby showers, weddings, and various athletic events.
- The facility is open to the public 365 days a year and is available on a rental basis providing the rental does not conflict with scheduled activities.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance and program staff.
- Rental costs are \$20.00 per hour for use of the full court, \$10.00 per hour for use of one-half of the court, and no fee is charged for informal use.

Program Strengths:

- Central location and accessibility to the public.
- Family-oriented facility open to the public with nominal rental fees.

Program Weaknesses:

- Facility is outdated and requires major renovation or replacement.
- Inadequate off-street parking.

Program Needs:

- Major renovation or replacement of the facility is required to accommodate diversified program use.

Program Trends:

- The facility has provided services and facilities to the public on a consistent basis since its construction; however, participation data is not available to establish trends.

Princeton Arts Center

Princeton Arts Center was established in 1986 with a formal lease agreement with Washington County. The building, constructed in 1926, is owned by Washington County and is presently used by the county as a polling site. The overall condition, visual appeal, and site furnishings are poor. Deficiencies include: repair/replacement of mechanical equipment and improvements to the electrical system to meet NEC requirements; upgrading of the heating and air conditioning systems; major structural repairs to walls resulting from water damage; floor repairs and stabilization; handicap accessibility improvements; improvements to security system; and the provision of additional off-street parking. In addition, office and storage space is inadequate as a result of program growth. Future plans are to relocate this facility to eliminate the need for capital expenditure for major renovation of the structure.

Program Notes:

- Princeton Arts Center, established by JCPRD in 1986, provides programs for all ages such as: art workshops, kids crafts, wood carving, violin and piano lessons, yoga classes, and kindermusik.
- Hours of operation include Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 9 p.m., varying hours on Saturday, and Sunday.

Program Cost:

- JCPRD provides maintenance, capital funding, and program staff.
- Fees charged by JCPRD vary depending on the class and nature of organization (for profit vs. non-profit)
- Revenue generated in 1997 was \$3, 368.00

Program Strengths:

- Diversity of activities offered meets the needs and interests of various age groups and skill levels in the community.
- Classes offer continuing education allowing participants to expand and enhance their skills and interest.
- Strong staff/instructor relationship resulting in continuance of programs offered and enhanced community relations.

Program Weaknesses:

- Deteriorated condition and limited space of the existing building and off-street parking area.
- Inadequate pay for instructors.
- Competition from other service providers within the community offering similar programs.

Program Needs:

- Facility requires major renovation/expansion including new office equipment.
- Investigate partnerships with other providers and sponsorships to help offset cost and avoid duplication of activities.

- Investigate increasing program fees to enable program to attract qualified and experienced instructors.
- Relocation to the former Dawn of Hope facilities will eliminate space and structural deficiencies in the existing building.

Program Trends:

- Program participation experienced a period of increasing interest; however, inadequate space has resulted in a leveling of interest in recent years.

OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL TRENDS

National program trends as identified by the National Recreation and Parks Association and American Sports Data, Incorporated that have been developing and/or have been in place that should be considered for inclusion into the JCPRD program planning strategy for delivering services may include, but are not limited to:

1. Nationally, fitness and wellness programs in the form of weight conditioning and cardiovascular programs are becoming increasingly popular and in demand. As the population ages, people are becoming more health conscious regarding diet and exercise. This trend is evidenced by the fact that hospitals are creating more health and fitness programs; the increase in fitness facilities; and businesses are encouraging employees to participate in programs including stress and weight control and fitness. At the same time, schools are reducing physical education programs resulting in youth becoming overweight and physically unconditioned.

Locally, JCPRD does not have structured programs in the areas of free weights (may be questionable in terms of liability) and would not be considered without trained supervision. Weight machines and cardiovascular programs are worthy of consideration. JCPRD does provide various aerobic programs for adults and should consider the feasibility of additional programs/facilities for cardiovascular and conditioning training.

2. Nationally, parks and recreation agencies are developing more earned income opportunities to support operating budgets and are pricing services based on benefits received against an established subsidy level for various segments of the populations being served. More programs are pricing both direct and indirect costs associated with providing the service.

Locally, the department does not have a formal pricing policy for resident and nonresident participants.

3. Nationally, program standards with measurable outcomes are being developed for the delivery of services. These include customer service standards for facilities, programs, operation practices for quality and quantity of hours, equipment provided, ratio of instructor-to-participant, and evaluating cost per program activity.

Locally, there are no standards or performance measures in place for the review of JCPRD programs.

4. Nationally, many departments are developing marketing plans for facilities and programs to create an evaluation process of services delivery and managing capacity of facilities and program trends. Staff is trained on how to manage commensurate with the marketing plan and measurable outcomes are developed and incorporated into the evaluation process for employees. In addition, evaluations of

programs by pre- and post-evaluations and focus groups are key evaluation processes being used by various departments around the country.

Locally, the department does not have a facility or program marketing plan in place for the staff to focus on and utilize as a management tool.

- Nationally, the provision of children’s services by recreation departments to allow parental participation in recreation activities is becoming increasingly popular.

Locally, JCPRD does not offer services for childcare to the participants of recreation activities/programs.

- Nationally, recreation centers are targeting programs for people of all ages incorporating areas within centers for designated groups such as seniors and teens. This allows for more community-wide intergenerational programming versus special interests. Recreation centers are providing expanded operational hours to targeted groups and are open seven days a week to meet the varied needs of the community.

Locally, JCPRD recreation centers are not focused on multi-dimensional programming involving several programs offered simultaneously in one setting. The primary reason for this is due to the lack of space at center sites, equipment, and personnel constraints.

- Nationally, with the exception of basketball and soccer, most team sports have experienced a decline or only a modest increase in participation rates during the past 10 years according to information obtained from American Sports Data, Incorporated.

Locally, during the 1995-1999 period, the city has experienced increases in participants in adult and youth basketball, girls senior softball, and youth soccer. During the same five years, decreases in participation have occurred in adult softball, girls youth softball, and girls tee ball. Information was not available to establish trends in youth baseball. The following summarizes national and local trends for specific athletic programs:

Program	10 Year National Trend	JCPRD Trend, 1995-1999
Adult Basketball	+26.2 percent	+25.6 percent
Youth Basketball	+26.2 percent	+9.8 percent
Adult Softball (Summer)	-16.9 percent	-6.3 percent
Girls Senior Softball	-5.7 percent	+6.0 percent
Girls Youth Softball	-5.7 percent	-11.6 percent
Youth Soccer	+18.4 percent	+20.8 percent
Youth Baseball	-12.1 percent	Data Not Available
Girls Teeball	Data Not Available	-5.9 percent

Source: Local Trends – JCPRD

National Trends – American Sports Data, Incorporated, 1988-1998

DEFICIENCIES/FINDINGS

During the development of the Program Assessment, several areas of need were identified that generally transcend the full-range of programs and activities. Several of these needs deserve special comment in an effort to improve overall management of the programs. These findings include the following:

1. There is a need for children's services to allow adult participation in program activities.
2. There is a need for attendance/participation reports for all programs and activities. An accurate record of participation would help justify additional maintenance needs, equipment, staff, and facility needs, as well as monitor trends and anticipate future usage.
3. A system of record-keeping should be implemented including accountability of cash receipts, maintenance performance records, frequency of equipment rental, issuance of work orders, etc.
4. **Forty percent of citizen survey respondents indicated that they were unaware of recreation programs and/or the location of recreation facilities provided by JCPRD.** An information brochure is needed to identify and describe programs and activities the department offers throughout the year. The brochure should be attractive and updated on a quarterly basis.
5. Athletic programs offered by JCPRD require an adequate amount of facilities to ensure the scheduling of events and practices.
6. The addition of a qualified person(s) should be considered to identify and develop programs and activities for families, teens, and senior citizens.
7. There is a need for a user/participation fee for certain programs/activities offered by JCPRD. This is particularly true for nonresident participants.
8. A program evaluation process is needed to ensure that programs are managed properly and meet the needs and expectations of program participants.
9. Several recreation centers are outdated and inadequate in terms of distribution within the city, space for program development/use, facilities offered, and structural condition.

SECTION FOUR - COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The future recreation needs of Johnson City have been determined through: public comment; interviews with recreation user groups; a review of national trends for select recreation activities; and a review of nationally recognized park and recreation facility guidelines. An extensive effort was made to involve as many citizens and segments of the population as possible, early in the planning process, in order to identify and prioritize the unique recreation needs of the city's residents. Community input can identify both needs and priorities that a comparison with standards cannot normally provide.

CITYWIDE SURVEYS

A series of public opinion surveys were conducted during the 1997-1999 period by the Planning Department. The surveys were designed to assess the needs and attitudes of residents and to gain a citywide perspective of their values regarding recreation as an essential part of their daily life. Several groups were surveyed including: (1) a randomly selected survey of 5,700 households in the city and the Master Plan's planning area (response rate of 13.1 percent or 750 households); (2) a survey of 350 middle school and high school students coordinated through the Board of Education; (3) a survey of 200 senior citizens conducted through the city's Senior Citizens Center; and (4) a survey of 225 park users utilizing an on site survey. The following summary of the survey results provides an insight into the needs and expectations of the city's residents concerning the provision of recreation opportunities:

- Respondents indicated strong preferences for developing two separate groups of interrelated activities, which were divided between structured and unstructured interests. The greatest emphasis was on essentially unstructured activities. Included in this group were the following, ranked in order of importance:
 1. picnicking
 2. fitness walking/jogging/hiking/rock climbing
 3. swimming
 4. bicycling
 5. fishing
 6. outdoor water sports (i.e. water skiing, boating)
 7. in-line skating/skateboarding
 8. tennis
 9. nature walks/study
 10. ice skating (either indoor or outdoor)

- Respondents also indicated support for more formal sports activities as indicated in the following ranking:
 1. baseball/softball
 2. basketball
 3. soccer
 4. exercise/aerobics
 5. tennis
 6. golf
 7. football
 8. track and field

- There was also support for other activities such as:
 1. attending sporting events
 2. drama/music
 3. cultural arts activities
 4. arts/crafts
- Activities/programs/facilities that the city should expand or improve include: walking trails, bikeways, picnic facilities, swimming facilities, cultural events and programs, tennis courts, soccer fields, and activities for teenagers.
- Activities/programs/facilities that are desired, but not provided include: ice skating, in-line skating, skateboarding, nature study areas, camping, and aerobics/exercise programs.
- Facilities/activities enjoyed most by middle school and high school students include: basketball, baseball/softball, playground equipment, picnic facilities, soccer, walking trails, and open space areas for informal activity.
- Senior citizens indicated a strong preference for passive recreation activities such as walking, picnicking, and indoor activities i.e. dancing and card games.
- When asked how important recreation was to members of the household 82 percent of the respondents viewed recreation as “very important” or “important”, 16 percent considered recreation as “somewhat important”, while only 2 percent viewed recreation as “not important.”
- In terms of satisfaction with recreation opportunities provided by the city 85 percent of the respondents were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” and only 15 percent were “dissatisfied.”
- Approximately 54 percent of the respondents indicated that they visited city parks on a regular basis while 46 percent stated that they rarely or never used city recreation facilities.
- Major reasons for non-participation in recreation activities include: insufficient time, facilities are not accessible from home, facilities are unsafe, unaware of facility locations, and personal health and/or disability.
- Approximately 70 percent of the respondents did not live within safe walking distance of a city park and 93 percent of park users surveyed used an automobile as the method of transportation to the parks, 4 percent used a bicycle, and only 3 percent walked.
- 47 percent of the respondents indicated a need for additional recreation facilities for children, 39 percent stated a need for family-oriented facilities, and 14 percent indicated a need for facilities oriented toward senior citizens.
- Other pertinent survey results include:
 - 66 percent of the respondents felt city recreation facilities are well maintained, however areas of need include cleaner and more accessible restrooms, water fountains, shade trees, benches, and landscaping.
 - 83 percent of the respondents felt that city parks were safe while 52 percent of senior citizens felt that they were not.
 - 40 percent of the respondents were unaware of recreation programs and/or the location of recreation facilities provided by the city.
 - 81 percent of the respondents indicated that the city should provide more passive park and open space areas.
 - 65 percent of the respondents felt that the city did not have sufficient parkland.
- 32 percent of the respondents offered additional comments. Their comments have been consolidated into expressions that have a common concern and are listed in a descending order of the number responding:
 1. Concern for personal and children’s safety while using park facilities (equipment is not properly

- installed and maintained which could cause injury).
2. Picnic facilities are not maintained, grills and benches are damaged, need for shade trees at picnic locations.
 3. Need for security presence to eliminate undesirable activities.
 4. More landscaping to improve the appearance of parks.
 5. Trash receptacles should be emptied more frequently.
 6. Information concerning activities and facilities offered by the Parks and Recreation Department should be publicized and updated on a continuing basis.
 7. Outdoor basketball facilities need improvement (goals, netting, backboards, and court surfacing).
 8. Provide more facilities and security at Buffalo Mountain Park.
 9. Playground apparatus at parks needs updating and/or repair.
 10. Provide water-oriented activities/facilities at Winged Deer Park.
 11. Provide more walking/bicycling trails throughout the city.
 12. Provide more parks for children.
 13. Provide camping and additional swimming facilities.
 14. Provide more parks within walking distance of home.

STATE RECREATION PLAN

In addition to citizen surveys conducted by the Johnson City Planning Department, a review of findings pertaining to recreational preferences contained in the Tennessee State Recreation Plan were analyzed. Tennessee's recreation plan for the 1995-1999 period is a continuation of the state's planning process initiated in 1965. The plan provides direction on recreation issues by reflecting current efforts and public needs.

During the preparation of the plan, surveys were conducted and public workshops were held to identify recreation needs, concerns, and priorities of the state's residents. During the planning process, the state was divided into eight planning regions. The city of Johnson City is located within the Upper East Tennessee Planning Region comprising Hancock, Hawkins, Greene, Sullivan, Johnson, Carter, Unicoi, and Washington counties. The plan provides a detailed profile of the identified recreation needs within each region addressing needs and priorities for various facilities and programs.

The following were prioritized by activity and facility in terms of needs in the Upper East Tennessee Planning Region:

<u>Activities</u>	<u>Priority</u>
Youth programs	High
Senior programs	Medium
Diversity in programs	Medium

<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Priority</u>
Community centers	High
Nature areas	High
Camp sites	High
Tennis	High
Archery	Medium
Golf	Medium
Picnic areas	Medium

<u>Trails</u>	<u>Priority</u>
Bicycle	High
Greenways	High
Multi-use	High

<u>Management & Planning</u>	<u>Priority</u>
Maintenance and Security	High

Activities and facilities that received a low priority rating in the plan included several activities that are of interest in Johnson City including: wellness programs/activities, in-line skating, and skateboarding.

NATIONAL TRENDS ASSESSMENT

American Sports Data, Incorporated conducts an annual survey of sports participation. The 1997 survey listed the following activities per million participants. A participant is defined as someone six years of age or older who participates in a sport more than once within a year for all sports except aerobic exercising, bicycle riding, calisthenics, exercise walking, exercising with equipment, running/jogging, and swimming. For these seven fitness sports, participation is defined as six times or more during the year. The research is based on an annual nationwide survey of 15,000 households. By weighing the research sample according to the most recent U.S. Census data, the study attempts to project participation levels for the nation's population.

Participation (in millions) in 1997 for various sports/activities include the following:

<u>Fitness Activities</u>	<u>Percent Change 1987-1997</u>
Free weights (43.2)	+76.3
Treadmill exercise (36.1)	+722.4
Stationary cycling (34.8)	+4.1
Walking (33.2)	+43.1
Running/jogging (32.3)	-1.8
Swimming (21.8)	-4.4
 <u>Individual Sports</u>	
Bowling (53.3)	+11.4
Billiards (42.2)	+19.6
In-line skating (29.1)	+848.9
Golf (26.3)	+18.1
Tennis (17.5)	-17.3
Skateboarding (8.2)	-24.3
 <u>Team Sports</u>	
Basketball (45.1)	+26.2
Volleyball (hard surface) (23.6)	-27.6
Softball (22.1)	-28.6
Soccer (18.2)	+18.4
Football (touch) (18.2)	-10.5
Baseball (13.3)	-12.1

Outdoor Activities

Fishing (42.1)	-12.4
Camping (tent) (41.2)	+17.0
Hiking/Backpacking (20.0)	+0.7
Target shooting (15.7)	-0.6
Hunting (15.6)	-29.4
Mountain biking (8.4)	+458.0

Of particular interest in the development of priorities in the Master Plan, is the declining interest and participation nationwide in skateboarding and softball and the increased interest in in-line skating, fitness walking, basketball, soccer, mountain biking, and camping. These are facilities and activities of local interest that will be addressed in the plan's recommendations.

PLANNING GUIDELINES

In order to analyze and evaluate the existing system of recreation resources and develop a plan for future facilities, a classification system is needed that identifies and specifies the various types of park facilities. Such a system categorizes recreation areas by type, primary functional use, size, population service radius, and degree of facility development. When combined with guidelines that define acceptable levels of services through quantifiable and qualifiable criteria the classification system becomes an important tool in determining facility needs.

The quantity and distribution of recreation land and facilities within Johnson City as proposed in this plan are derived in part from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), in their publication Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. The NRPA further defines recreation and park guidelines as the following:

“Community recreation and park standards are the means by which an agency can express recreation and park goals and objectives in quantitative terms, which in turn can be translated into spatial requirements for land and water resources.”

For the purpose of this plan, the emphasis on the application of guidelines in the city of Johnson City is placed on public recreation facilities with the major concerns being the type, location, size, and timing of facilities that must be provided. The guidelines presented are to be used as a general guide and each new facility that is developed should reflect the demand requirements of the various segments of the population of Johnson City. They must be adjusted to meet the specific conditions that are particular to each service user area. To make the guidelines work in the formulation of a facility development program that is responsive to the needs of the city's residents, the following factors should be considered:

- growth and development pressures that may or may not be occurring within the service area of a specific facility;
- demographic characteristics of the population to be served;
- unique environmental features of a site;
- the expressed needs and desires of the residents to be served, obtained through public input during the planning of the facility; and
- the quantity and quality of the existing facilities within a given area.

It should be noted that all guidelines are designed to estimate needs subject to evaluation of user needs. What constitutes need, can range from what residents will accept, to that which will satisfy total demand at any given time. Ideally, guidelines should reflect the level of service of facilities that should be provided to meet as much of the demand as possible within existing limitations and financial constraints.

RECREATION TYPES

It is recognized that various forms of recreation meet positive human needs both psychological as well as physical, and that recreation facilities, alone or in combination with programs, contribute significantly to an area's quality of life. The multitude of recreation activities that people pursue and expect to be provided can be classified into either active or passive activities. A recreation system that does not provide a balance between the two essentially does not provide a well-rounded recreation experience for its users.

Active Recreation - Active recreation involves a certain degree of physical exertion often associated with organized or team sports such as basketball, softball, and soccer. Active recreation also encompasses a broad range of more individual recreation pursuits for all ages including jogging, hiking, swimming, a variety of playground activities, golf, and tennis, among others. The most positive contribution active recreation facilities make to our society is the opportunity for much needed exercise for physical fitness and socialization. Active recreation also promotes mental health by furnishing a physical outlet for the release of energies and tensions.

Passive Recreation - The term passive implies inactivity, which is not entirely accurate when applied to passive recreation. Passive recreation activities are those which require a small amount of physical effort to derive pleasure, bodily refreshment, and socialization. Such activities include picnicking, walking, passive water activities such as boating and fishing, visiting zoos, arboretums and botanical gardens, historical and archeological sites, theater and bandshell events, and a variety of spectator activities.

Passive recreation facilities, many times forgotten in the process of planning recreation areas, provide a means to appreciate and enjoy the aesthetic and stress-relieving qualities of the natural environment, while at the same time furnishing relief from the ever-increasing man-made environment.

FACILITY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The Master Plan preparation process involved reviewing NRPA facility classifications and guidelines and proposing modifications to meet the specific needs of Johnson City. Table IX provides a summary of the various classifications for parks, recreation areas, open spaces, and pathways with recommended acreage guidelines, where applicable, for facilities that provide the basis for the system's development.

Table IX. Classification of Recreation Facilities

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria	Acres per 1,000
Sub-Neighborhood Park	Used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreation needs.	Less than a ¼ mile distance in a residential setting.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Neighborhood Park	The neighborhood park is the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreation and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation with children as the primary users	¼ to ½ mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential uses and other physical barriers.	One acre is considered a minimum size; 5 to 15 acres are considered desirable.	2.5
School-Park	Depending on circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as neighborhood, community, sports complex/field, and special uses.	Determined by location of school property. Usually serves residential areas served by the school.	Variable-depends on function and land availability.	Not Applicable
Community Park	Serves a broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and ½ to 2-mile radius.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. A minimum of 30 to 50 acres is desirable.	2.5
District Park	District parks serve a broader purpose than community parks. Focus is on meeting citywide recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves the entire city.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. A minimum of 50 acres, with 100 or more acres considered desirable.	5.0
Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for the preservation of significant natural resources and open spaces.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.	Not Applicable
Greenways	Effectively connects park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.	Not Applicable
Sports Complex/Field	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the city.	Strategically located citywide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. A minimum of 10 acres, with 40 to 80 acres considered optimal.	Not Applicable

**Table IX.
Continued**

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria	Acres per 1,000
Special Use/Green Space Park	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use i.e., golf courses.	Variable-dependent on specific use.	Variable.	Depends on type of use.
Trails	Multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Bikeways	Facilities serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.	Designated portions of roadway or off-road designations	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Source: National Recreation and Park Association
Johnson City Planning Department

The classification of recreation facilities recommends 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This guideline represents the total acreage requirement of the three major components of the park system: (1) neighborhood parks; (2) community parks; and (3) district parks. The city’s 1976 study recommended a total of 7.25 acres per 1,000 residents using a similar classification of facilities. The increase of 2.75 acres per 1,000 residents is recommended to encourage the acquisition of additional land, in each of the three major park classifications, in order that additional land can be provided to accommodate passive recreation needs. The absence of informal open space at a majority of city parks is a recreation need that was identified in city surveys, but is not currently provided at an adequate level (**81 percent of survey respondents indicated that the city should provide more passive park and open space areas**).

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE PARK SYSTEM

This plan is primarily concerned with three basic park categories: (1) neighborhood; (2) community; and (3) district that are the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department. Sub-neighborhood parks are discussed only as a category of neighborhood serving facilities; however, they are not proposed in the plan. Space requirements, typical facilities and programs, and activities of each are described below:

Sub-Neighborhood Park - Sub-neighborhood parks or mini-parks are characterized by their relatively small size with location and size determined by the availability of land. To be effective, minimum size should be one-half acre. This park is typically located within close proximity to more densely populated neighborhoods where a need exists for recreation facilities to serve a specific segment of the population such as the elderly or young children. Sub-neighborhood parks usually feature a children’s play area and benches for passive recreation where adults may relax in pleasant and safe surroundings. While sub-neighborhood parks fulfill certain recreation needs, the facilities are limited and they should be considered complementary or supportive rather than a substitute for neighborhood parks. An example of a sub-neighborhood park in Johnson City is Paul Christman Park on North Boone Street. This plan does not propose the extensive use of sub-neighborhood facilities except in unique circumstances where the need exists and other options, such as schools, are not available.

Neighborhood Park - A neighborhood park is designed to serve a population of up to 5,000 people within a maximum service radius of one-half mile. The park requires 2.5 acres per 1,000 population served with a desirable size of 5 - 15 acres. When possible, the park should adjoin an elementary school.

The function of the neighborhood park is to meet the distinctive recreation needs of a neighborhood. Since recreation needs vary depending on demographics, the involvement of neighborhood residents in the planning of facilities is essential if the park is to meet the users' needs. Typical facilities may include: a small play area for the exclusive use of pre-school children; an apparatus area for children in the 6 to 11 year-old age group; an area for free play; multi-purpose, hard surface courts; an area with picnic facilities and benches for passive recreation; and other facilities to serve the specific needs of the neighborhood. Where feasible, the activity use areas are divided equally between quiet/passive activities and active play areas. This type of park should be located near the center of the neighborhood for easy access. Neighborhood parks should be located on local streets so users can walk or bicycle to the facility without competing with thoroughfare traffic. As a result of the park's location with respect to existing residential development, it should be appropriately landscaped to complement the neighborhood and maintained at a level where it provides an aesthetic benefit to the surrounding area. Carver Park located on West Market Street is an example of a neighborhood park.

School-Park - It would be to the advantage of all city residents to utilize, to the maximum extent, existing public facilities that are available and suitable for recreation activities and programs. Facilities of the Johnson City Board of Education are probably most suited to this type of utilization. Although not all school sites will lend themselves appropriately for use as joint education-recreation facilities, joint use should be pursued to the fullest extent possible. Keeping in mind that the school facility serves foremost an educational function, some duality of use of the facility is in the best interest of all city residents.

Although it is desirable to maximize the use of school facilities, it is necessary to realize that rarely will an existing school site be of sufficient size to accommodate fully both the education needs and the recreation needs of an area. The dual use of existing school sites, therefore, should be considered as an interim measure to provide some level of service until more adequate facilities become available. Schools are oriented to special age groups, while recreation facilities should be provided for all age groups. Therefore, school site use for leisure time activities would be oriented mainly toward children, and the adult needs may receive only minimal attention.

In the future, sufficient land should be acquired which would allow the development of a joint education-recreation facility. Economics result in the beginning, since a school-park site does not require as much land as do separate sites for schools and parks. The savings which can accrue are particularly appreciable at the elementary school - neighborhood park and at the secondary school - community park levels. Large district parks, and specialized recreation sites usually do not lend themselves to this kind of development.

Community Park - A community park is typically a "drive-to" or "commute-to" park designed to meet the needs of a single or several neighborhoods depending on area needs. The park requires 2.5 acres per 1,000 population served with a minimum size of 30 to 50 acres. If feasible, community parks should be located adjacent to a school since both require many similar facilities and a large percentage of park users are school students.

A community park is larger and contains more facilities than a neighborhood park, and is primarily intended to meet the programmed recreation needs not met by the neighborhood park. Essentially, community parks are family recreation centers with programs and facilities for all age groups. At the community park, activities for teenagers and adults are introduced on a broader scale, such as organized sports including baseball, soccer, and tennis. Typical facilities at the community park level include: a neighborhood park component, athletic fields, tennis courts, a swimming pool, and a community recreation center building suitable for meetings, indoor sports, and other activities. Certain areas of the

park should be lighted for night use, and adequate off-street parking should be provided. Landscaped acreage for passive activity is recommended at a ratio of one acre of passive use to two acres for active use to maintain a “park-like” atmosphere. As with neighborhood parks, programs and facilities in the community park should be adapted to meet the particular needs of the community it is serving. Willow Springs Park, located on Antioch Road, is an example of a community park although it is not fully developed.

District Park - District parks are designed for diversified use by large numbers of people, serving several communities within a city or the entire city. District parks should be within 15 minutes driving time and located on an arterial street for easy access. A district park requires a minimum of 5.0 acres per 1,000 population served with a minimum size of 50 acres and a desirable size of 100 acres or more.

A district park emphasizes passive recreation opportunities, but includes active recreation facilities. Desirable features of the park include: a neighborhood and community park component; natural areas including nature trails; athletic fields; picnic facilities; multi-purpose play fields; tennis facilities; swimming and boating facilities (if available); and other activities and facilities that are appropriate to the site and needs of the city’s residents. District parks are specialized in their offerings to the public and draw participants from throughout the city and surrounding area. A typical district park located within the city is Winged Deer Park. Buffalo Mountain Park is an example of a specialized district park or natural resource area.

Greenway - A greenway is a designated open space corridor intended for conservation, recreation, and transportation purposes involving walking and bicycling. Often times, the greenway will be developed to connect recreation facilities as well as schools, residential areas, places of work, and shopping areas.

The acreage and service area of a greenway are variable and subject to existing natural and man-made features, the existence of public right-of-way, and the demand for this type of facility. Recommendations for greenways are included in the Bikeways and Greenways Plan prepared by the city’s Bikeway/Greenway Committee.

Special Uses - The special uses are unique or special parks, green spaces, or facilities that exist to enhance or utilize man-made or natural features. They can include historical sites, museums, sites of archeological significance, river access, etc. Minimum guidelines relating to acreage or population have not been established by the park and recreation industry for this category. A size that is sufficient to protect and interpret the resource while providing optimum use is considered desirable for special uses that are natural in character. Other specialized facilities require sufficient space to accommodate the activity or feature planned for the site. Special use areas are usually developed in response to a specific demand or need. Friendship Gardens Park located on Knob Creek Road and Memorial Park located on East Main Street are examples of special use areas.

FACILITY GUIDELINES

In addition to guidelines for park classifications, guidelines for various recreation facilities (i.e. soccer fields, tennis courts, etc.) have been developed for Johnson City in accordance with guidelines established by the NRPA. Table X identifies the recommended recreation facility guidelines that may be used to compare Johnson City’s facilities with accepted guidelines used throughout the United States.

Table X. Guidelines for Public Facilities

Activity Format	Recommended Guideline	Location Notes	Level of Service	
			Need	Have
Badminton	1/5,000 population	Neighborhood, Community, and District parks	11	0
Baseball	1/5,000 population	Part of Neighborhood Park. Lighted fields part of Community and District parks.	11	11
Basketball	1/5,000 population	Indoor only No standard for outdoor facilities	11	9
Football	1/20,000 population	Located in Community Park or Sports Complex	2.5	1
Golf	1-18 hole/50,000 population	Special Use Facility	1	2
Horseshoe	1/2,000 population	Neighborhood, Community, and District parks	28	0
Multiple Use Court	1/5,000 population	All Park Locations	11	8
Picnic Shelters	1/2,000 population	All Park Locations	28	22
Picnic Tables	1/125 population	All Park Locations	448	121
Playground Activities	N/A	All Park Locations	---	10
Racquetball/Hand ball	1/10,000 population	Community and District parks	5	0
Recreation Center with gym	1/25,000 population	District Park	2	3
Recreation Center without gym	1/10,000 population	Community and District parks	5	0
Shuffleboard	1/2,000 population	Neighborhood, Community, and District parks	28	0
Soccer	1/4,000 population	Neighborhood, Community, and District parks	14	8
Softball	1/6,000 population	Neighborhood, Community, and District parks	10	12
Swimming Pool	1/20,000 population	Community and District parks	2	2
Tennis	1/2,000 population	Neighborhood, Community, and District parks	28	16
Volleyball	1/5,000 population	Neighborhood, Community, and District parks	11	4

Source: National Recreation and Park Association
Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department

The above guidelines are not all inclusive and do not reflect the entire spectrum of facilities that may be included in a park. The guidelines are similar to the acreage recommendations in that they are based on meeting an optimal goal. Each neighborhood and community has specific needs and the guidelines should be modified to meet local priorities and needs in terms of facility development. Also, the table introduces guidelines for facilities that are absent from city parks; however, if they were provided, they would increase the number of activity choices available to park users. This, in turn, would increase the use of parks through the provision of informal activities that represent a broader range of interests than what is currently provided.

EVALUATION OF PARKLAND NEEDS

The recommended parkland requirements, in acres, for the city of Johnson City are described below. The acreage requirement is based upon the population ratio method (acres of parkland per 1,000 population) established for each park classification.

The types and acreages of parks that will be required by the end of the planning period (2020) are based upon the acreage recommendations contained in Table XI. They include the major park classifications that are provided by the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department. The recommended total acreage for parks by the year 2020 is approximately 725 acres. Presently, the city parkland inventory consists of approximately 1,085 acres; however, the distribution, development, and classification of parkland creates serious facility deficiencies in several areas of the city. The Master Plan recommends a ratio of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents summarized by park classification as follows:

**Table XI. Parkland Requirements
2000-2020**

Park Classification	Total Acres Recommended By			
	Existing	2000	2010	2020
Sub-Neighborhood Park	1.9	(no standard-provide facilities as opportunities permit)		
Neighborhood Park	38	140	160	181
Community Park	84	140	160	181
District Park	<u>200</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>320</u>	<u>363</u>
Total	323.9	560	640	725

Source: Johnson City Planning Department

A review of the existing inventory of parkland results in the following determination of need by facility type. When acreage included in Buffalo Mountain Park, ballfields, and special use facilities is subtracted from the total inventory a substantial deficiency in the major park classifications is obvious. The acreage devoted to the major park classifications totals approximately 324 acres (6 acres per 1,000 population) resulting in a 2000 deficiency of an estimated 236 acres. Based on this review, the Master Plan recommendations are based on the following finding of need:

Land Needs for 2020

- Sub-Neighborhood Parkland - provide facilities as needed.
- Neighborhood Parkland - need approximately 143 additional acres.
- Community Parkland - need approximately 97 additional acres.
- District Parkland - need approximately 163 additional acres.

The recommendations of the Master Plan identify specific needs for facility development and renovation of existing parklands to meet park classification guidelines. The recommendations propose a planned approach to provide the additional land and facilities identified above for the year 2020. This additional recommended acreage requires the development of: one district park; two to three community parks; and an undetermined number of neighborhood parks during the next 20 years, provided the projected population is achieved and population density would support park development. A periodic review of the plan’s recommendations is proposed to ensure that park and recreation needs are consistent with population change and development trends and patterns.

EVALUATION OF STUDY AREAS

The preceding section identified generalized park needs by type based on existing and projected population. Translating these needs to locations within the planning area requires a review by study area of existing facilities, expected rate of growth/annexation, and population density. This review provides a preliminary framework within which to formulate specific park proposals throughout the planning area.

Table XII. Evaluation of Study Areas

Study Area	Area Square Miles	Percent in Corporate Limits	Dwelling Units Inside/ Outside	Population Inside/ Outside	Population Density per square mile	Comments
1	1.2	100	1762/0	3560/0	2966	Location of Paul Christman Park, Carver Park, and North Side Elementary School. Urban area with mixture of land uses. Minimal, if any, population growth is expected. Low/moderate income area, with a substantial percentage of senior citizens. Recommendation: No additional parks are anticipated.
2	1.1	100	1382/0	2890/0	2627	Served by Kiwanis Park, Optimist Park, Metro-Kiwanis Park, and Science Hill campus. Urban area with mixture of land uses. Low/moderate income area that experienced a 9 percent population loss between 1980-1990. No significant population change is expected. Recommendation: No additional parks are anticipated.
3	1.6	100	823/0	4845/0	3028	Location of ETSU and the VA. Served by Kiwanis Park and Optimist Park. Minimal population growth is expected. Recommendation: No additional parks are anticipated.
4	.9	100	1492/0	2955/0	3283	Served by Powell Square Park, Veterans Park, and South Side Elementary School. Densely developed neighborhood consisting of mixed income families and ETSU students. Minimal population growth is expected. Recommendation: No additional parks are anticipated.

Study Area	Area Square Miles	Percent in Corporate Limits	Dwelling Units Inside/ Outside	Population Inside/ Outside	Population Density per square mile	Comments
5	2.5	100	2041/0	4735/0	1894	Served by Civitan, Carnegie, Lions, and Rotary parks and Fairmont Elementary School. Moderate to high income residential neighborhood with a declining school-age population and a significant number of senior citizens. Recommendation: No additional parks are anticipated.
6	.8	100	1362/0	3160/0	3950	Area is served by Civitan, Carnegie, Lions, and Rotary parks. Population decline of the 1980's has stabilized. Low to moderate income neighborhood with an increasing percentage of senior citizens. Recommendation: No additional parks are anticipated.
7	3.4	96.5	1952/2	4685/5	1379	Served by Metro-Kiwanis Park and Towne Acres School. Moderate to high income, low density residential area with several large commercial developments. Limited growth expected in the future due to decreasing land availability. Recommendation: A need exists for additional park facilities.
8	2.8	49.3	801/225	1995/560	913	No existing park facilities. Woodland Elementary School provides limited recreation space in the area. A low density, moderate income, residential area expected to experience moderate population growth in the future. Recommendation: Expand facilities, at Woodland Elementary School.
9	5.7	41.7	2056/788	5120/1965	1243	Willow Springs Park serves the area with neighborhood and community park facilities. The area has, and will continue, to experience a moderate increase in population. Recommendation: No additional parks are anticipated.
10	5.3	6.6	103/525	260/1310	296	Served by Willow Springs Park and Cherokee Elementary School. Low density residential development characterized by tracts of agricultural land. The recent extension of sewer service will encourage future development. Recommendation: Acquire neighborhood parkland commensurate with future development and annexation.
11	9.4	42.8	2378/187	5350/420	613	Buffalo Mountain Park is located in the area providing self-directed, nature-oriented facilities. This is a large study area characterized by steep mountain slopes, densely developed residential areas, and commercial and industrial uses. Recommendation: Neighborhood park facilities are needed to serve the area.

Study Area	Area Square Miles	Percent in Corporate Limits	Dwelling Units Inside/ Outside	Population Inside/ Outside	Population Density per square mile	Comments
12	2.9	37.2	901/316	2175/1295	555	No existing park facilities. Moderate growth, primarily dependent on future annexation is a possibility. Recommendation: A neighborhood park is needed to serve the area as future development/annexation occurs.
13	5.9	59.4	1057/156	2560/380	525	Served by the Legion Street Recreation Center complex, Keystone Community Center, and Mountain View Elementary School. With the exception of the Keystone Area, a low/moderate income residential area, residential development is scattered. Several commercial and industrial uses are located throughout the area. Future population growth is projected to be minimal. Recommendation: A neighborhood park is needed to serve the Keystone Area.
14	9.0	24.7	545/397	1400/1020	157	No existing park facilities. Area is characterized by low density development resulting from steep topography. Minimal development is expected during the next 20 years. Recommendation: A potential for park/greenway development exists along the Watauga River.
15	2.8	81.2	1082/194	2510/450	1057	No existing park facilities. Limited population growth potential. Recommendation: Provide facilities as dictated by demand.
16	4.7	65.1	1888/72	4380/170	968	Facilities include Winged Deer Park, Lake Ridge Elementary School, and Indian Trail School. Rapidly developing moderate to high income residential area. Recommendation: The need exists for neighborhood park facilities.
17	3.3	50.1	404/162	1130/455	480	No existing park facilities. Washington County's Boones Creek Elementary School is located in the area. Low density, high income residential area with intensive commercial development. Limited residential growth potential. Recommendation: Future park facilities are contingent upon population growth and annexation.
18	3.4	14.7	70/173	140/350	144	No existing park facilities. The area has recently experienced high income low density residential development. During the next 20 years the area is expected to experience continued residential development of a similar character. Recommendation: Future park facilities are contingent upon population growth and annexation.

Study Area	Area Square Miles	Percent in Corporate Limits	Dwelling Units Inside/ Outside	Population Inside/ Outside	Population Density per square mile	Comments
19	7.1	16.5	72/257	145/515	93	No existing park facilities. The Ridges Golf Community provides recreation facilities on a membership basis. The recent extension of sewer service will encourage future development. Recommendation: A district park with a community park component should be developed in Study Area 19 or 20 as future development and annexation occurs.
20	5.7	2.7	0/473	0/1230	220	No existing park facilities. Area is characterized by low density residential and agricultural development. Low to moderate residential development is projected. Recommendation: A district park with a community park component should be developed in Study Area 19 or 20 as future development and annexation occurs.
21	3.0	50.0	332/510	930/1425	785	No existing park facilities. Existing development is a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Moderate residential development is expected north of Boones Creek Road. Recommendation: A community park with a neighborhood park component should be developed as residential growth and annexation occurs.
22	5.1	18.7	451/964	1260/2690	775	No existing park facilities. Washington County's Boones Creek Middle School is located in this area. Existing development is low density residential interspersed with agricultural uses. Recommendation: Continued residential growth is expected along with annexation creating the need for future neighborhood park facilities.
23	4.9	5.0	77/370	190/960	235	Served by a park on Weaver Branch Road and facilities at Mary Hughes Elementary School. The recent extension of sewer service will encourage future development. Existing development is low density residential and agriculture. Low to moderate rate of growth and annexation is expected. Recommendation: Future park facilities contingent upon population growth and annexation.
24	4.5	4.2	0/1060	0/2760	613	No existing park facilities. Existing development is low density residential and agriculture. Low to moderate rate of growth and annexation is expected. Recommendation: No park facilities are anticipated during the planning period.

Study Area	Area Square Miles	Percent in Corporate Limits	Dwelling Units Inside/ Outside	Population Inside/ Outside	Population Density per square mile	Comments
25	3.1	0	0/898	0/2505	808	No existing park facilities. Scattered low density residential development pattern. Low to moderate rate of growth is expected. Recommendation: No park facilities are anticipated during the planning period.
26	5.2	9.4	0/1241	0/3105	597	No existing park facilities. Washington County's Gray Elementary School and the Appalachian Fairgrounds are located in the area. Existing development consists of commercial, industrial, low density residential, and agriculture. Area has experienced moderate residential development activity, which is expected to continue. Recommendation: No park facilities are anticipated during the planning period.
27	4.1	9.8	1/691	2/1730	422	No existing park facilities. Scattered low density residential development pattern. Low to moderate rate of growth is expected. Recommendation: No park facilities are anticipated during the planning period.
Total	109.4	35.4	23,032 9,661	56,377 25,300		

Source: Johnson City Planning Department

SECTION FIVE - RECREATION PROVIDERS

It is a foregone conclusion that Johnson City's population and corporate limits will increase during the next 20 years. This growth will put a continuing demand on the existing park system and create a need for new facilities and programs. Additionally, residents from Washington and surrounding counties will continue to participate in programs and use existing facilities offered and provided by the city. As these facilities continue to age, they will need to be replaced or systematically renovated, modified, and/or expanded.

The citizens of Johnson City are accustomed to having the Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department (JCPRD) provide diverse recreation activities and will expect the same in the future. Results of citizen surveys conducted during the planning process suggest the citizens' interests and demands for quality recreation facilities and programs will increase and the demands on the JCPRD will intensify to meet these future needs. Additionally, the citizens expect the city to be a main provider of recreation services in a manner that will accommodate the varying needs of the city including the economically disadvantaged and the physically challenged.

ROLES OF PROVIDERS

Meeting all the recreation needs of the community will require a joint effort between the various government agencies and the private sector. No one group can be held solely responsible for providing all the programs and facilities for the community. The following describes the roles that each recreation provider should take during the 20 year planning period.

FEDERAL

The federal government is primarily charged with the protection, preservation, conservation, and management of public lands that are deemed appropriate and necessary in the United States. The U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Department of Interior, and the Tennessee Valley Authority all manage lands in Washington and surrounding counties that are used for recreation activities such as camping, fishing, biking, hiking, and boating. These facilities are located in the Cherokee National Forest and also include Boone and Watauga lakes which provide a diversity of recreation opportunities on TVA reservoirs and adjoining lands. The federal government will continue to provide facilities of an outdoor nature, and for the most part, will continue to be a provider of regional serving facilities.

STATE OF TENNESSEE

The State of Tennessee should continue to offer a variety of recreation facilities on a multi-county regional basis. The state should be the provider of regional type state parks that include opportunities for camping, fishing, hiking, and special facilities such as the preservation of historic sites. State parks in proximity to Johnson City include: Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park in Washington County, Warriors Path State Park in Sullivan County, and Roan Mountain State Park in Carter County. Other sites include Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site and Rocky Mount State Historic Site in Johnson City, and Sycamore Shoals Historic Park in Elizabethton. Additionally, East Tennessee State University is a state-operated facility that should mutually and cooperatively provide facilities and services to the students and residents of the community.

The State of Tennessee should also financially assist Johnson City with acquiring land for parks, developing new parks, and renovating existing parks through the Local Parks and Recreation Fund

(LPRF) grant program, TEA-21, Tennessee Recreation Trail Grant Program, and Community Development Block Grants.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Currently, Washington County does not provide recreation facilities and services beyond what is provided by county school facilities. By the year 2020, it is projected that there will be 128,700 people living in Washington County with 48,120 (37.4 percent) residing in the unincorporated area. In considering the proper role of Washington County in the provision of recreation land and facilities, three major functions are appropriate: (1) the preservation of natural resources and scenic or historical areas; (2) the development of a countywide system of trails and bikeways involving linkage with city facilities; and (3) the acquisition and development of parks and recreation areas serving all the residents of the county with particular emphasis on the unincorporated areas. In essence, county facilities should combine the functions of intensively developed parks and resource-based facilities.

It is imperative that there be strong coordination and cooperation between Washington County and Johnson City in the provision of recreation facilities and services. The city and the county should continue to maximize on the opportunities for joint development, programming, and sharing of facilities.

CITY OF JOHNSON CITY

As its primary focus, Johnson City needs to emphasize the provision of recreation programs and park facilities for its own citizens. Historically, the city has been serving both Johnson City residents and those living in Washington County and surrounding areas. During the next 20 years, it will become increasingly more difficult to continue this service. The projected population growth for the city will require the acquisition and development of approximately 400 acres of additional parkland. This demand for new facilities combined with the need to renovate and expand existing facilities and the associated increase in operation and maintenance costs will result in a need to evaluate the city's priorities in terms of population served. The Master Plan's recommendations are based on the premise that the city of Johnson City's park system will be structured to primarily serve the approximately 72,435 people anticipated to be living within the city by the year 2020. The city's system of recreation facilities, primarily funded by the city's taxpayers, should not be expected to serve the surrounding region to the extent they have in the past.

In the future, the JCPRD's role should be to continue to offer a variety of recreation activities that meet the diverse needs of the city. The city should also redirect its emphasis to providing district, community, and neighborhood facilities in developed areas and areas projected to develop in the future. The proposed facilities will not, and should not, be expected to accommodate county participants as it has in the past, except for those using district, special use, sports facilities, or natural resource area facilities. The extent of program offerings and the availability of recreation facilities will ultimately be determined by what Johnson City can afford. The city should investigate expanding opportunities with Washington County and the private sector in the sharing of costs for program and facility development including operation and maintenance costs.

QUASI-PUBLIC SECTOR

The development of facilities in the city's park system are due, in part to support from the quasi-public sector. Through the years, these organizations in Johnson City have provided or supported vital recreation activities in the community. Civic organizations and clubs have had a unique and major role in complementing the programs and facilities offered by the city of Johnson City. It will be important through the year 2020 for these organizations, and others to maintain and even increase their supporting role in providing facilities and programs through the development of partnerships with the city.

JOHNSON CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Johnson City Board of Education (JCBE) has cooperated in the past in making school property available for recreation use where possible. The JCPRD uses facilities owned by the JCBE with examples including: tennis courts and soccer and baseball fields at the Science Hill Campus, softball and baseball fields at Indian Trail, and various gymnasiums at school sites throughout the city.

The current verbal agreement between the JCPRD and the JCBE regarding the maintenance, supervision, and usage priority brings to question the fairness and equitability of this agreement for both parties. However, without the cooperation of JCBE in making school facilities available, many of the recreation programs provided by the JCPRD would not be able to exist at their current level of service to the community.

The Master Plan recommendations include investigating the feasibility of establishing a written partnership in the form of a mutual use agreement between JCBE and JCPRD regarding the priority of use, maintenance, personnel, and budgetary allocations that are fair and equitable to both parties. Both organizations should continue to cooperate in the future, as they have in the past, so as to meet the recreation needs of the community through the year 2020.

COMMERCIAL RECREATION PROVIDERS

Generally, the private sector has either provided complementary facilities and programs or activities that the public or quasi-public organizations have chosen not to or have been unable to afford. Examples of commercial outdoor recreation providers include golf courses and marinas. Additionally, there are private commercial providers of bowling facilities, shooting ranges, roller skating rinks, fitness/work-out facilities, martial arts, outdoor/adventure instruction and sports. The commercial providers are in the recreation business to make a profit and their operational policies and user charges reflect this mission. These private facilities provide a vital resource and service to the community and complement recreation activities provided by the city of Johnson City. The city should continue to encourage and support the development of commercial recreation activities.

CORPORATE COMMUNITY

Corporations, both large and small, can play a vital role in assisting the city with the provision of leisure services. Corporations with a large number of employees often have their own facilities and programs aimed primarily at the fitness or family participation of the employee. This is a nationwide trend that can assist in reducing some of the demands placed on the public sector. In addition, good corporate citizens usually desire to become an integral part of the community and are willing to assist in the development of facilities or sponsor youth programs and activities. The city should continue to encourage and expand the private sector support of facility and program development during the planning period.

DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

Historically, the development community contributed to the beginnings of the city's parkland inventory. In 1889, the Johnson City Real Estate Company donated 1.4 acres known today as Powell Square Park. Other development related parks include: a land donation by Louis Gump in the 1940's for the site of Carver Park; and a donation of approximately 10 acres in the early 1950's by the Carnegie Realty Company for the development of Rotary Park. The city's early developers recognized the value of parkland and the role that parks played in the livability of residential areas.

Since residential development results in an increase in the demand for public facilities and services it is reasonable to assume that residential developments should assist in the acquisition of future park sites. Presently, the city does not require a land dedication for park purposes as a part of the subdivision process; however, this requirement is common in many areas of the country and should be considered as one

one method of obtaining land for future parks. As an alternative to land dedication, a fee in-lieu-of dedication should be considered to assist the city in the purchase of land in areas experiencing substantial residential/population growth. As an incentive to any land dedication requirement for park purposes, the city should consider granting developers density bonuses in exchange for park dedication and/or facility development. This area of parkland acquisition and development has not been utilized in recent years, and efforts should be made to encourage participation by the development community in the future.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Recreation and park facilities are provided in Johnson City and the surrounding area through a diverse number of organizations that exist at the city, state, and national level. At the city level, leisure service organizations meet the needs of the community by operating within a broad range of purposes, structures, resources, and techniques. With a large number of organizations (public, private, and non-profit) playing vital roles in the community, coordination and cooperation between organizations is essential to the effective and efficient delivery of services. This does not mean that competition is counterproductive to the process of cooperation. Controlled competition among the public, private, and non-profit sectors is beneficial and operating in tandem, competition and coordination provides the community the opportunity to be able to participate in the greatest number of recreation activities in a variety of settings operating under different objectives.

In Johnson City, the three major leisure providers are distinct and easily recognized. The public sector (JCPRD) relies almost exclusively on the general fund to accomplish their purpose of providing recreation services to the city's population through facility and program development. The non-profit organizations operate on funds from donations, fees, and fundraisers, while the private sector sells goods and services to those willing and able to purchase them.

In many communities, in recent years, there has been a blending of the three major recreation providers with the public sector increasingly turning to fee-based programs/activities as a method of financing the delivery of services; non-profit organizations assuming activities previously delegated primarily to the public sector; and the private sector providing services that were formerly the exclusive responsibility of the public and non-profit sectors. This blending of services has been partly responsible for the increase of partnerships in the delivery of leisure services. The term "partnership" includes agreements, cooperative ventures, and joint use agreements. It involves the sharing or combination of resources between two or more organizations to achieve a common goal. This practice is occurring throughout the country as fiscal and physical resources become limited.

In Johnson City, the JCPRD does have some existing partnerships in place mainly in the form of joint use of facilities with the JCBE. It is a recommendation of the Master Plan to encourage more partnerships between other public agencies and the non-profit sector in Johnson City. This will extend local resources and expand the delivery of services in the city.

PARTNERSHIP ISSUES

For a partnership to work, it should be mutually beneficial to the parties involved and ultimately to the community. A partnership must also include a written agreement which is essential to demonstrate the commitment of each party, and to identify the resources each party will contribute. Regardless of which party (or combination) contributes acquisition, development, operational, maintenance, or other resources the ultimate goal should be to achieve a 50/50 cost sharing between the parties involved in the partnership.

In any partnership, issues need to be identified and resolved during the formulation of the agreement. The following identifies some of the key issues that need to be incorporated into any partnership agreement:

- A mission statement describing what is to be achieved and priority of needs.
- A method of communication and conflict resolution with a periodic review of how well the partnership is working.
- A process for amending the agreement based on changing conditions and needs of the community.
- Degree of involvement of both parties in joint capital cost development.
- Liability issues faced by both parties.
- Addressing how both parties will share costs equitably during a specific time frame.
- Usage of facilities, fee schedules, scheduling of events, equipment, operational costs, and the accountability of contributors.

PARTNERSHIP CONSIDERATIONS

Numerous partnerships can be formed with local public, quasi-public, or private entities to provide recreational services to the community. The city of Johnson City has potential partnership opportunities in the following areas:

- City/school mutual agreements for joint development and use of ballfields, gymnasiums, tennis courts, and other recreation facilities. The JCPRD should develop and maintain an alliance with the Johnson City Board of Education and Washington County schools to provide activities and facilities for the community's benefit and needs.
- City/private sector partnerships with a private developer developing a special use facility on city property through a lease arrangement. During the period of the lease, the developer returns a portion of the revenue to the city. An example of this arrangement would be the batting cage facility at Winged Deer Park.
- City/private sector service contracts for managing parks and recreation services. These partnership services can include: mowing, landscaping, tree maintenance, restroom cleaning, trash removal, and other essential services. The mowing of grass at park facilities is a recent example of this type of arrangement. With the projected increase in facilities this partnership should be fully explored.
- City/church partnerships in maintaining parks adjacent to church properties and involving joint facility and program development.
- City/neighborhood partnerships in managing and developing parks through investment by neighborhood associations.
- City/not-for-profit partnerships reducing duplication of services with each agency identifying specific missions in the total program area.
- City/county partnerships that benefit both parties in the provision of parks and recreation services with both parties sharing equally in the costs where applicable.

SECTION SIX - RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous sections of the Master Plan have presented the conceptual and factual framework for the preparation of recommendations. Implementation of the plan requires that the land and facilities required to provide the recreation needs of the city of Johnson City be identified as to desired levels of service, priorities, location, acreage, type of improvements, and approximate cost of development. This section of the plan is divided into several specific areas: goals, objectives, and policies; facility recommendations/improvements; program recommendations; and facility maintenance and design.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

GOALS

TO ACQUIRE AND DEVELOP PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES TO MEET THE ESTABLISHED LEVELS OF SERVICE DETERMINED BY THE CITY'S PRESENT AND FUTURE POPULATIONS, AND INCORPORATING DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY, ELEMENTS OF QUALITY, DESIGN, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, AND COST EFFECTIVENESS.

TO DEVELOP AND PROVIDE RESPONSIVE RECREATION PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF ALL SEGMENTS OF THE CITY'S POPULATION.

OBJECTIVE

TO MAINTAIN THE PLAN AS AN EFFECTIVE POLICY IN THE PROVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND FACILITIES.

POLICIES

1. The city shall develop a five-year process for periodic review of the plan involving changing demographics, growth patterns, and user needs.
2. The following organizations shall be involved in maintaining the Plan: Board of Commissioners; Parks and Recreation Advisory Board; Planning Commission; Department of Education; and community organizations and individual user groups.
3. The Plan shall be consistent with other elements of the city's General Plan.
4. Facilities and programs shall be provided in the most cost effective manner.

OBJECTIVE

TO PROVIDE RECREATION FACILITIES THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CITY'S RESIDENTS.

POLICIES

1. The city shall strive to achieve accreditation by the National Recreation and Park Association.
2. A level of service of 10 acres per 1,000 residents shall be established to guide the city in the provision of adequate parkland for recreational use.

3. Recreation areas shall be provided to serve neighborhood, community, and citywide needs.
4. In the acquisition and development of new facilities and the expansion/renovation of existing facilities, the city shall actively solicit citizen comment on user needs and expectations.
5. Facilities shall be designed and developed to serve the specific recognized needs of the intended service area.
6. The city shall provide a system of recreation facilities that is available to city residents through the use of an interconnected system of walkways, bikeways, greenways, and safe streets.
7. The city shall encourage continual citizen involvement and innovation in the provision of high quality parks and recreation services.
8. The city shall provide parks and recreation opportunities for all residents regardless of socio-economic background, age, location of residence, or disabilities.

OBJECTIVE

TO IMPROVE THE CITY OF JOHNSON CITY’S PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION OR ACQUISITION OF NEW FACILITIES AT APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS.

POLICIES

1. In areas experiencing rapid growth, priority shall be given to the acquisition of land for future park development.
2. In developed areas, neighborhood parks shall be considered appropriate where service areas contain a minimum population density of 2,500 persons per square mile.
3. The city shall preserve the area’s natural and historic resources through integration of these resources into the overall framework of parks and recreation facility development.

4. SITE SELECTION

The following policies shall be used by the city in the selection of sites for future park facilities:

Neighborhood Park

- a. Site acreage shall be based on a minimum level of service of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population served with a minimum park size of one acre and 5 to 15 acres desirable.
- b. Neighborhood parks shall be located on local streets or low volume collector streets.
- c. Parks shall be centrally located and within walking distance of the intended service area. A location adjacent to an elementary school shall be encouraged where land is available.
- d. The user population shall consist of pre-school and school-age children; however, activities and amenities for adults shall be included.

Community Park

- a. Site acreage shall be based on a minimum level of service of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population served with a minimum park size of 30 to 50 acres.
- b. Community parks shall be located on collector streets or in certain instances arterial streets in order to provide ease of access to community residents.
- c. Parks shall be designed primarily as drive-to-facilities and shall be located central to the intended service area.
- d. The user population shall consist of all age groups with a balance of active and passive facilities.

District Park

- a. Site acreage shall be based on a minimum level of service of 5.0 acres per 1,000 population served with a minimum park size of 50 acres.
- b. District parks shall be located on arterial streets in order to provide access to the entire city and to minimize the impact on residential areas.
- c. Facility development shall maximize the use of natural features and amenities and provide for a balance between active and passive recreation.

Natural Resource Areas

The city shall conserve and effectively utilize the area’s natural resources with attention to:

- a. Creation of an extensive public open space system of local and regional significance that includes greenways, parks, natural preserves, and other related areas.
- b. Assuring the long-term protection and enhancement of natural resource areas through proper planning and the designation of compatible adjacent land uses.

Special Use Parks

The city shall protect and adaptively reuse areas of historic significance, underutilized urban spaces, and other such areas deserving of special interest and focus.

Sports Complex/Field

The city shall promote the development of sports complexes/fields involving the consolidation of athletic facilities in community and district parks throughout the city with particular attention to residential compatibility, existing and future needs, and user group.

Linear Parks

The city shall develop a system of bikeways and greenways in accordance with the Johnson City Bikeways and Greenway Plan.

OBJECTIVE
TO IDENTIFY NEEDS FOR ROUTINE MAINTENANCE, REHABILITATION, AND RENOVATION OF EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES.

POLICIES

1. The city shall provide adequate maintenance to existing facilities through the annual operating budget of the Parks and Recreation Department and through a capital replacement program.
2. The city shall provide a continuing program of structural and infrastructure improvements to all parks and recreation facilities.
3. The city shall adopt an appropriate variation of the Park Maintenance Standards of the National Recreation and Park Association as a guide in its maintenance program of facilities.
4. Recommended improvements shall be designed to bring existing facilities into compliance with city codes and other requirements regulating safety and construction.
5. The city shall incorporate a standard of design and quality through increased emphasis on architectural and site design, maintenance, landscaping, and park amenities (benches, lighting, water fountains, trash receptacles, playground equipment, picnic facilities, etc.) for renovation of existing facilities to assure long-term low maintenance facilities.

OBJECTIVE

TO DEVELOP AND PROVIDE RECREATION PROGRAMS WHICH WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY.

POLICIES

1. The city shall institute a program evaluation process to ensure that programs are properly managed and meet the needs and expectations of program participants.
2. The use of user fees shall be encouraged where possible to offset program costs.
3. A variety of programs shall be made available and coordinated with other providers to ensure all segments of the population are provided with opportunities for participation including the elderly and handicapped.
4. Program facilities shall be continually evaluated to ensure program requirements can be met.
5. Program offerings shall be family-oriented to the extent possible.
6. The Parks and Recreation Department shall maintain an organizational structure that is efficient and responsive to the provision of programs and facilities for all segments of the city's population.

OBJECTIVE

TO PROVIDE A SAFE PARK ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL PARK USERS.

POLICIES

1. The city shall strive to eliminate opportunities for violence, vandalism, and other unsafe conditions or unlawful behavior through a structured program of security and citizen awareness and involvement.
2. The design of facilities (i.e. increased/improved lighting) shall be directed to reducing unsafe conditions, unlawful actions, and vandalism.

OBJECTIVE

TO PROVIDE A SYSTEM OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES THAT ADDRESSES THE CHANGING POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND LIFESTYLES OF JOHNSON CITY AND ITS NEIGHBORHOODS.

POLICIES

1. The city shall develop a system of monitoring and evaluating the needs of city neighborhoods as they pertain to recreation demand and needs.
2. Changing population characteristics, lifestyles, and user demands shall be essential components of the ongoing recreation planning process.
3. The acquisition and disposal of property for the purpose of providing park and recreational facilities is strictly at the sole discretion of the Johnson City Board of Commissioners. However, the Park and Recreation Advisory Board and the city staff shall provide a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners prior to a final decision by the Board of Commissioners. The proceeds from any sale of existing park property shall be reinvested in the acquisition and/or development of park and recreation facilities in accordance with the adopted Recreation Element of the city's General Plan.

OBJECTIVE

TO PROMOTE A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND COMMERCIAL RECREATION PROVIDERS.

POLICIES

1. The Parks and Recreation Department and Department of Education shall develop programs for joint acquisition, development, and use of facilities.
2. The city shall actively pursue the utilization of partnerships with civic clubs and organizations, the private sector, quasi-public organizations, and government entities in the development of recreation facilities and programs.

FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS/IMPROVEMENTS

It is evident from the analyses contained in the preceding sections that the existing and future recreation needs and demands are, and will continue to be, great in the city. The city's attention to the equal distribution of park facilities throughout the city has been inadequate in the past. The elimination of existing deficiencies and the provision of additional facilities necessary to accommodate projected growth (fix-up, catch-up, and keep-up) will require a substantial increase in allocated funds. A commitment by the city to the development and maintenance of facilities and programs is critical to a continuing effort in the improvement in the quality of life of city residents and as an essential element in future community economic development efforts. As previously stated, the Master Plan focuses on the development of neighborhood, community, and district parks. Section Four "Community Needs Assessment" identified in general terms the existing and future park needs of the city.

Although the plan provides recommendations for a 20-year period, its primary emphasis is on the next five years. Changing conditions will dictate the degree to which long-range recommendations are valid.

Accordingly, the plan's recommendations are presented in three phases with Phase I considered as short-range and first priority:

- Phase I – 2000-2005
- Phase II – 2006-2010
- Phase III – 2011-2020

Estimated acquisition costs have been developed using typical costs per acre throughout the planning area. Actual costs will vary depending on zoning, specific location, and timing of acquisition. Development costs have been derived from existing projects that have been master-planned or included in the Parks and Recreation Department's Capital Improvements Program. Development costs for new parks are estimates based on typical costs experienced in Johnson City and surrounding areas. As new parkland is acquired and master-planned more detailed and specific cost estimates can be developed.

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES

Several park improvement projects are in varying stages of completion including the following:

CARNEGIE PARK RENOVATION

The following improvements are included:

- Two girls' regulation softball fields (lighted) with bleachers and dugouts;
- Shelter with restrooms;
- ½ multi-use court with basketball goal;
- Playground area;
- Off-street parking (27 spaces);
- Landscaping and fencing; and
- Park amenities (benches, water fountains, etc.).

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development - \$500,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
Status – Completed

CIVITAN PARK RENOVATION

Following completion of the environmental remediation phase of the project, the following improvements will be included:

- Five regulation soccer fields (lighted);
- Two multi-use courts with basketball goals;
- Two volleyball courts;
- Two playground areas;
- Concession/administrative area with restrooms;
- Off-street parking (approximately 465 spaces);
- Trail system connecting Rotary, Civitan, and Lions parks;
- Four picnic shelters;
- Landscaping; and
- Park amenities (benches, water fountains, etc.).

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development - \$2,800,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
- Status – Planned for completion in 2002.

LIONS PARK RENOVATION

Although classified as a neighborhood park, Lions Park has few characteristics of a neighborhood facility. The following improvements are currently proposed:

- Relocation of the little league instructional ballfield (lighted) with bleachers and dugouts;
- Expansion of off-street parking spaces; and
- Construction of a walking trail linking the park with Civitan and Rotary parks.

In addition, the park requires master planning, renovation, and upgrading including:

- Upgrade picnic tables, benches, and lighting;
- Remove deteriorated restroom facility (replaced with new facility in 1999);
- Improve signage and park entrance;
- Install or improve walkways and handicap accessibility;
- Replace existing concrete bleachers at ballfield;
- Where necessary, replace old fencing; and
- Upgrade landscaping to improve visual appearance.

ESTIMATED COST:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development - \$290,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
- Status – Planned for completion in 2005.

WILLOW SPRINGS PARK IMPROVEMENTS

The following improvements are recommended:

- Picnic areas and pavilions (2);
- Basketball court (1);
- Volleyball court (1);
- Complete Antioch Road off-street parking area; and
- Add park amenities and upgrade landscaping.

In addition to the above improvements, consideration should be given to the possible construction of a recreation center to serve the southwest portion of the city. Suggested recreation center facilities are discussed in the program recommendations section of the plan.

ESTIMATED COST:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development - \$200,000 (does not include recreation center)

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
- Status – Planned for completion in 2003.

WINGED DEER PARK IMPROVEMENTS

The following improvements are proposed to the Winged Deer Park lakefront as presented in the Winged Deer Park Conceptual Master Plan. This plan updates The Landing at Winged Deer Master Plan prepared

in 1997 by Lose & Associates, Inc. The update was prepared to address concerns of the Park and Recreation Advisory Board regarding: the preservation of open space; inclusion of a public beach area; location of an amphitheater; and inclusion of active and passive recreation areas on the lakefront. The Winged Deer Park Conceptual Master Plan addresses these concerns with the following recommended improvements:

- Pedestrian linkage allowing a user to walk from one end of the lakefront to the other without crossing a roadway or parking area;
- Provision of picnic areas of varying size to anchor the preservation of open space;
- Development of two playground areas;
- Preservation of passive open/green space at the south end of the lakefront;
- Development of an active program space at the north end of the lakefront; and
- Provision for future development of a public-private sector development including a family aquatics center and a restaurant.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development – no cost estimate available

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development – Phases I and II (2000-2010)

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES

Sub-Neighborhood Parks/Facilities

Although the Master Plan does not advocate the development of sub-neighborhood parks, in certain instances they may be the only alternative regarding the provision of park facilities in a given area. Johnson City presently provides two such facilities, Paul Christman Park and Powell Square Park. In addition, the facilities provided at the city's eight elementary schools provide facilities primarily directed to elementary school-aged children and are equipped with playground equipment, picnic tables, multi-use courts, benches, and open space play areas. In several instances, the school facilities may be the only recreation facilities available to serve a surrounding residential neighborhood. In these cases, a cooperative effort between the JCPRD and the JCBE should be developed to ensure maximum development and use of school facilities.

The following improvements to the one existing sub-neighborhood park are recommended:

PAUL CHRISTMAN PARK

- Update playground equipment to current standards (new equipment and fall-zone material);
- Install, improve, or renovate items such as walkways, water fountains, benches, and picnic shelter;
- Upgrade landscaping, fencing, and site lighting; and
- Renovate multi-use court.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development - \$25,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
Status – Planned for completion in 2003.

Neighborhood Parks

There are several neighborhood serving parks provided within the city with the majority of these sites providing a variety of facilities atypical of neighborhood parks. The most apparent needs at the existing parks include: improvements/upgrading of facilities; adherence to safety standards; and landscaping and enhancement of the parks' visual appeal and compatibility with surrounding residential areas.

EXISTING PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to existing neighborhood parks may include the following:

- Redesign and re-orientation to the neighborhood park concept and function as described in Section Four of the plan;
- Update play equipment to current standards (new equipment and fall-zone material);
- Improve (resurface and stripe) and landscape parking areas where offered;
- Improve overall handicap accessibility;
- Install, upgrade, or renovate items such as restrooms, walkways, water fountains, benches, picnic facilities, lighting, and other park amenities;
- Increase landscaping and improve signage;
- Increase sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood; and
- Provide linkage to existing sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and greenways.

KIWANIS PARK

Kiwanis Park is one of the more heavily used parks in the city's park system. Its location between West Main Street and West Market Street at the intersection of Knob Creek Road also makes it one of the most visible parks. The park functions not only as a neighborhood park but also as a primary provider of sports fields with one softball field and one little league field that receive extensive use in the summer months. The Master Plan recommends the following improvements:

- Master plan entire site including Neighborhood Park and relocated landscape materials storage facility.
- Update playground equipment and fall-zone material;
- Resurface multi-use courts and install new basketball goals;
- Install, improve, or renovate items such as walkways, water fountains, benches, picnic facilities, lighting, and fencing;
- Upgrade landscaping and signage; and
- Remove existing recreation center use.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property

Development - \$710,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property

Development – Phases I and II (2000-2010)

Status – Planned for completion in 2006.

OPTIMIST PARK

Classified as a neighborhood park, Optimist Park functions as a provider of sports fields consisting of two adult softball fields and a poorly equipped playground area. The park's location does not meet criteria established in the plan for a neighborhood park and the Master Plan recommends investigating the feasibility of the sale of the land consistent with Med-Tech, ETSU, and Medical School needs or master-planning of the site for recreation use more suitable to the Park and Recreation Department's needs.

POWELL SQUARE PARK

Powell Square Park is the city's oldest neighborhood park serving the Tree Streets Neighborhood with a variety of facilities located within a true residential environment. The Master Plan recommends the following improvements:

- Install, improve, or renovate walkways, multi-use court, water fountain, picnic tables, and benches; and
- Upgrade landscaping and improve erosion control.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development - \$15,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
Status – Planned for completion in 2003.

Community Parks

The development of a community park system represents one of the major challenges facing the Parks and Recreation Department. The current inventory of parks, classified as community parks, is inadequate in terms of acreage provided and/or facilities offered. The acceptance of the community park concept is critical in meeting the recreation and program needs of the city's residents. The community park represents the focal point for meeting the recreation needs of all age groups and interests at one facility. Many of the plan's recommendations regarding recreation centers and programs require a community park system as discussed in the Community Needs Assessment Section of the Master Plan.

The city must develop larger sites, than currently provided, that allow for multi-purpose activities. New community parks should typically be 30 to 50 acres to provide for multi-purpose use that encourages and enables more diverse activity and user participation. The Master Plan recommends the development of three new community parks.

EXISTING PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to existing community parks may include the following:

- Redesignate Rotary, Civitan, and Lions parks as one community park complex with future improvements designed to support the community park concept;
- Complete facility development at Willow Springs Park;
- Install, upgrade, or renovate items such as walkways, water fountains, benches, picnic facilities, and other park amenities;
- Increase landscaping and improve signage;
- Increase sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood ;
- Provide linkage to existing sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and greenways; and
- Improve overall handicap accessibility.

METRO-KIWANIS PARK

Classified as a community park, Metro-Kiwanis Park functions more as a sports complex/field with two softball fields receiving the majority of the park's use. To increase park usage, the Master Plan recommends the following improvements:

- Update and add playground equipment;
- Investigate feasibility of lighting for tennis courts;
- Resurface multi-use court and install new basketball goals;

- Install, improve, or renovate items such as walkways, water fountains, benches, and picnic facilities; and
- Upgrade landscaping and signage.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition - city-owned property
 Development - \$200,000

IMPLEMENTATION

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
 Development – Phase II (2006-2010)
 Status – Planned for completion in 2006.

ROTARY PARK

Used primarily as a picnic facility, Rotary Park requires improvements designed to improve its visual appeal and accommodate usage. Specifically, the Master Plan recommends the following improvements:

- Update playground equipment and fall-zone material;
- Routine and minor repairs to picnic pavilions;
- Clean-up of grounds including stump removal, etc.;
- Improve park lighting; and
- Install, improve, or renovate items such as walkways, lighting, benches, water fountains, picnic facilities including grills, park entrance, and parking lot.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
 Development - \$265,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
 Development – Phases I and II (2000-2010)
 Status – Planned for completion in 2007.

Recreation Centers

The improvement of existing recreation centers is a major component in the development of a year-round recreation program. Renovation of existing centers and the establishment of new centers, as new parks are developed, is critical to providing programs and facilities for all age groups and interests throughout the city.

CARVER RECREATION CENTER

The center has received major improvements as part of a total renovation of Carver Park. Improvements remaining involve renovating the former Valley Seal building for recreation center use.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
 Development - \$50,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
 Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
 Status – Planned for completion in 2005.

KIWANIS RECREATION CENTER

The Kiwanis Recreation Center is approximately 55 years old and outdated in terms of space, needed improvements, and ability to offer program activities. The recent improvements to the Carver Recreation Center (located approximately five blocks to the east) provides expanded facilities for program offerings. The plan recommends discontinuing the Kiwanis Recreation Center. An adaptive reuse of the building, i.e.

i.e. picnic pavilion should be considered.

ESTIMATED COST:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – no cost estimate available

IMPLEMENTATION

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – Phase I (2000-2005)

LEGION STREET/KEYSTONE AREA IMPROVEMENTS

A focal point of the city’s recreation system for the past 50 years, the Legion Street Recreation Center and pool has approached the point where replacement or major renovation is required. The site’s limited size (approximately 2.9 acres) severely restricts use of the property; however, its central location serves a large portion of the city’s low/moderate income families. The long-term development of additional recreation centers and pools will relieve the pressure on the Legion Street facility; nevertheless a facility will still be necessary to serve the surrounding low/moderate income residential areas. The plan recommends a feasibility study/master plan to determine the alternatives available for the site including the recreation center, Howard Johnson Field, Joy Rutherford Field, Memorial Park, Memorial Stadium, Stadium Field, and Keystone Instructional Field.

ESTIMATED COST:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – \$2,200,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – Phases I and II (2000-2010)
- Status – Requires master planning.

PRINCETON ARTS CENTER

The Princeton Arts Center is proposed for relocation to the Dawn of Hope building on East Millard Street. Minor improvements and renovations are anticipated to accommodate the center’s needs.

ESTIMATED COST:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – \$45,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – Phase II (2006-2010)
- Status – Planned for completion in 2007.

BEESON HALL

Beeson Hall, has been renovated and houses the Johnson City Athletic Club, an individual sports and skills development center in partnership with the Johnson City Housing Authority.

ESTIMATED COST:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development - \$260,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Land Acquisition – city-owned property
- Development – Phase I (2000-2005)
- Status – Completed

Natural Resource Area

BUFFALO MOUNTAIN PARK

Buffalo Mountain Park, a natural resource area, requires improvements to increase use activities and family appeal. The Master Plan recommends the following improvements:

- Construct entrance structure to include signage;
- Construct parking lot at entrance to the park; and
- Investigate feasibility for primitive tent camping area with restroom facilities and other uses/facilities appropriate and complementary to the park.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development - \$430,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property
Development – Phase II (2006-2010)
Status – Planned for completion in 2008.

PROPOSED PARKS

Sub-Neighborhood Parks/Facilities

The guidelines from the Community Needs Assessment do not identify a need for additional sub-neighborhood park acreage through the plan’s 20-year planning period. However, a review of existing neighborhood serving facilities by study area suggests a need for additional sub-neighborhood parks may be necessary where existing facilities are non-existent and land is not available for neighborhood park development. This Master Plan has not identified specific sites for these parks. Sub-neighborhood parks will vary in size depending on available land to provide a setting capable of accommodating facilities and activities. Recreation facilities that may be found in a sub-neighborhood park include play equipment, multi-use court, informal play field, picnic facilities, and sitting area. As a general rule, the park should be developed to meet the needs of the intended population it is designed to serve.

Neighborhood Parks

Johnson City currently provides neighborhood park sites of varied size and character. The guidelines from the needs assessment identify a current shortage of approximately 93 acres of neighborhood parks and a projected deficiency of 143 acres by 2020. During the next 20 years, additional elementary schools will also be required to serve the projected increase in population. Neighborhood parks should be developed in conjunction with new elementary schools, wherever possible.

As indicated, in citizen surveys, a major deficiency in the city’s current park inventory is the number of neighborhood parks. This need was also identified in the 1976 plan; however, minimal progress was made in fulfilling the need and the deficiency still exists and is becoming more acute in specific areas of the city. The Master Plan proposes new neighborhood parks located to best serve the city within the constraints of available land, citizen demand, and available funding. Each proposed park should have a site-specific master plan prepared for its development and local neighborhood users should be an integral part of the planning process.

The following summarizes the potential need for neighborhood serving parks by study area during the next 20 years:

STUDY AREA

- 1- Central
- 2- Gilmer Park/Millercrest
- 3- Y-Section
- 4- Tree Streets

POTENTIAL NEED

- No additional parks are anticipated

5- Oak Park	No additional parks are anticipated
6- Carnegie	No additional parks are anticipated
7- Towne Acres	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed community park
8- Asbury/Westwood Gray	Provide facilities at Woodland Elementary School
9- Midway	No additional parks are anticipated
10- Cherokee	Dependent upon future development/annexation
11- Seminole Drive/Ashely Road	Investigate demand/interest in neighborhood park; also expand potential at Cherokee Elementary School
12- Southeast/Martindale	Dependent upon future development/annexation
13- Keystone	Develop neighborhood park
14- Cash Hollow	Greenway park along Watauga River
15- Pine Ridge	Provide park as demand dictates need
16- Timberlake Rd./E. Mountainview	Neighborhood park to serve rapidly developing residential area
17- West Mountainview Rd.	Dependent upon future development/annexation
18- Carroll Creek Rd. – West	Dependent upon future development/annexation
19- The Ridges	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed district or community park
20- Hales Chapel	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed district or community park
21- Gray Station Rd.	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed community park
22- Pickens Bridge Rd.	Neighborhood park as a component of a proposed community park
23- Piney Flats/Rocky Mount	Dependent upon future development/annexation
24- Cedar Creek	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years
25- Oak Grove	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years
26- Gray East	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years
27- Gray West	No park facilities are anticipated during the next 20 years

Study Areas 1-6 are presently served with neighborhood park facilities provided by the JCPRD and playground facilities provided by the JCBE. Study Areas 10, 14, 15, 19, 20, and 23-27 are areas of low density development with varying degrees of growth potential and/or minimal land area within the corporate limits. The direction and extent of future annexations and new residential growth during the next 20 years in these areas will determine the level of need for neighborhood parkland acquisition and development. As development patterns change revisions to the Master Plan will be required.

Community Parks

The proposed community park sites have been located to provide an equitable distribution of facilities designed to serve the developed and developing portions of the planning area. The parks have been identified by their location within a particular study area and to the extent possible identified as to general location. Each proposed park should have a site-specific master plan prepared for its development and the intended users should be an integral part of the planning process.

Specific recommendations include:

1. STUDY AREA 7 – The acquisition and development of a community park to serve this north Johnson City area is a major need and a first priority in the plan’s list of new park recommendations. Specifically, the plan recommends the acquisition and development of the Miller property located on Peoples Street. The site provides a central location to serve an area with moderate to high growth potential and an existing service area population estimated at 17,000. Total acreage proposed consists

of a minimum of 30 acres with topography and natural features offering a full-range of development opportunities. Suggested improvements include:

- Neighborhood park component;
- Recreation/community building;
- Tennis, handball, racquetball courts;
- Picnic facilities;
- Ballfields;
- Soccer field;
- Walking trail; and
- Open space/passive play area.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – \$1,100,000

Development - \$3,000,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – Phase I (2000-2005)

Development – Phases II and III (2006-2020)

2. STUDY AREAS 19 AND 20 – Presently, these areas are low density, sparsely developed study areas characterized by large agricultural tracts. The area is expected to experience moderate residential development during the next 20 years resulting in the potential need for a community park. This need is predicated upon the rate of residential development and annexation. As the rate of growth and annexation increases, a community park site of 30-50 acres should be acquired with facility development similar to Study Area 7. This park could be incorporated into a district park proposed for the western portion of the planning area and future elementary school to serve the area.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – \$1,000,000

Development - \$5,000,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – Phase III (2011-2020)

Development – Phase III (2011-2020)

3. STUDY AREAS 21 AND 22 – The rapidly developing Boones Creek area east of I-181 will require community park facilities during the planning period. The extent of development and annexation will dictate to a large degree the timing of facility development. The plan recommends the acquisition of a minimum of 30-50 acres in the study area with facility development similar to the community park proposed in Study Area 7. The proposed park should be developed in conjunction with future school facilities.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – \$1,000,000

Development - \$5,000,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – Phase II (2006-2010)

Development – Phase III (2011-2020)

District Parks

Population projections and park acreage guidelines established for the plan identify the need for approximately 163 acres of additional district parkland by the year 2020. This equates to a need of one additional district park by the end of the planning period. Currently, Winged Deer Park is the city's only district park that provides a range of recreation activities. The new recommended district park should serve the western portion of the planning area and an opportunity exists for a partnership with Washington

Washington County and the town of Jonesborough since the facility will benefit all county residents. The park should preserve natural open space and provide both passive and active facilities.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – \$2,200,000

Development - \$8,000,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – Phase III (2011-2020)

Development – Phase III (2011-2020)

Other Facility Recommendations

SPORTS COMPLEX/PARK

The potential conversion of Optimist Park to an office park requires the relocation of the two existing adult softball fields at Optimist Park. A site of approximately 30 acres would accommodate the development of a four-field softball facility, parking for 300 automobiles, and other athletic and park facilities. A 60-acre site located on Fairridge Road should be considered for acquisition and development. This would also provide land for other athletic needs i.e. girls teeball and little league facilities. The property on Fairridge Road contains several sinkholes and a creek; however the property provides numerous development options for both athletic and park facilities.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – \$600,000

Development – \$3,000,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – Phase II (2006-2010)

Development – Phases II and III (2006-2020)

SKATEBOARD PARK

A skateboard park located on the Science Hill Campus is planned for completion in 2001.

ESTIMATED COST:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property

Development – \$220,000

IMPLEMENTATION:

Land Acquisition – city-owned property

Development – Phase I

STATUS - completed

ICE SKATING/IN-LINE SKATING FACILITY

There was considerable interest voiced during the community surveys for an ice skating and/or in-line skating facility. The Master Plan recommends that a feasibility study be conducted to determine the extent of interest, capital cost, operating and maintenance costs, etc. of both facilities. The emergence in popularity of ice skating and in-line skating in the United States warrants consideration by the city of pursuing the potential of these activities.

GREENWAY/TRAILS

The city should consider the development of additional water-based recreation activity. The Watauga River provides a natural resource with potential for the development of a greenway/trail system. The Bikeway and Greenway Advisory Council should address this potential as well as other bikeways/greenways and trails in the revision of the Bikeways and Greenways Plan.

Table XIII summarizes the recommended park facilities improvement program for the 2000-2020 planning

planning period. All costs are based on estimates of today's land prices and current dollar value. The plan recommends: (1) the renovation/expansion of existing facilities estimated at \$7,990,000 (exclusive of Winged Deer Park improvements); (2) a 20-year land acquisition program estimated at \$6,100,000; and (3) a 20-year new park development program estimated at \$19,620,000. Total known costs are estimated at \$33,710,000 with additional costs associated with Winged Deer Park and the development of neighborhood parks as the need and opportunities are identified

It should be emphasized that the recommended program of improvements, acquisitions, and development of new facilities is contingent upon the willingness of the city's taxpayers to fund the program. The plan is also predicated upon a continuing expansion of the city's population.

Throughout the United States in 1999, the importance and willingness of the public to support the acquisition and development of recreation facilities and open space was evident. According to the Land Trust Alliance, during 1999, 102 local elections to provide public funding for park and open space projects were held. Ninety-two projects, representing 90 percent of the total, were approved totaling approximately 1.9 billion dollars. The various issues included sales tax increases, property tax increases, and bond issues.

**Table XIII. Park Facility Improvement Program
2000-2020**

Action	Cost Estimate	Time Phase for Action		
		2000-2005	2006-2010	2011-2020
Planned Improvements to Existing Facilities				
		Completed		
• Carnegie Park Renovation	\$500,000	\$500,000		
• Civitan Park Renovation	\$2,800,000	\$2,800,000		
• Lions Park Renovation	\$290,000	\$290,000		
• Willow Springs Park Improvements	\$200,000	\$200,000		
• Winged Deer Park Improvements	No cost estimate available			
• Total	\$3,790,000	\$3,790,000		
Recommended Improvement to Existing Facilities				
• Paul Christman Park Improvements	\$25,000	\$25,000		
• Kiwanis Park Improvements	\$710,000	\$490,000	\$220,000	
• Optimist Park	Evaluate need and best use of property			
• Powell Square Park Improvements	\$15,000	\$15,000		
• Metro-Kiwanis Park Improvements	\$200,000		\$200,000	
• Rotary Park Improvements	\$265,000	\$225,000	\$40,000	
• Carver Recreation Center Improvements	\$50,000	\$50,000		
• Legion Street/Keystone Area Improvements	\$2,200,000	\$700,000	\$1,500,000	
• Princeton Arts Center Relocation	\$45,000		\$45,000	
		Completed		
• Beeson Hall Renovation	\$260,000	\$260,000		
• Buffalo Mountain Park Improvements	\$430,000		\$430,000	
Total	\$4,200,000	\$1,765,000	\$2,435,000	

		Time Phase for Action		
--	--	------------------------------	--	--

Action	Cost Estimate	2000-2005	2006-2010	2011-2020
Land Acquisition Program				
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS				
• Study Area 7 Part of community park	Cost to be included in community park acquisition			
• Study Area 10 Dependent on growth/annexation	Timing/cost to be determined			
• Study Area 11 Investigate demand	Timing/cost to be determined			
• Study Area 12 • Dependent on	Timing/cost to be determined			
• Study Area 13 Develop Neighborhood Park	City owned land			
Study Area 16 Acquire Land	\$200,000		\$200,000	
• Study Area 17 Dependent on growth/annexation	Timing/cost to be determined			
• Study Area 18 Dependent on growth/annexation	Timing/cost to be determined			
• Study Areas 19/20 Part of community park	Cost to be included in community park acquisition			
• Study Areas 21/22 Part of community park	Cost to be included in community park acquisition			
COMMUNITY PARKS				
• Study Area 7	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000		
• Study Areas 19/20	\$1,000,000			\$1,000,000
• Study Areas 21/22	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	
DISTRICT PARK				
• No specific site determined	\$2,200,000			\$2,200,000
OTHER FACILITIES				
• Sports Complex/Park	\$600,000		\$600,000	
• Skateboard Park	City-owned			
• Ice Skating/Inline Skating Fac.	Conduct feasibility/need study			
Land Acquisition Total	\$6,100,000	\$1,100,000	\$1,800,000	\$3,200,000

		Time Phase for Action
--	--	------------------------------

Action	Cost Estimate	2000-2005	2006-2010	2011-2020
New Parks Development Program				
• Study Area 7 Community Park	\$3,000,000		\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
• Study Area 13 Neighborhood Park	\$100,000	\$100,000		
• Study Area 16 Neighborhood Park	\$300,000			\$300,000
• Study Areas 19/20 Community Park	\$3,000,000			\$3,000,000
• Study Areas 21/22 Community Park	\$5,000,000			\$5,000,000
• District Park	\$5,000,000			\$5,000,000
• Sports Complex/Park	\$3,000,000		\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000
• Skateboard Park	\$220,000	\$220,000		
• Ice Skating/In-Line Skating Facility	Conduct Feasibility/Need Study			
New Park Development Total	\$19,620,000	\$320,000	\$2,500,000	\$16,800,000

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The formulation of program recommendations were developed using the following process:

- On-site inspections were conducted to view where the programs were occurring and to determine the quality of the facilities;
- Existing reference materials for each program were reviewed. The material included program descriptions, promotional brochures and flyers, and other related and available program information. This information was then compared to that of other agencies and guidelines of the NRPA;
- Volunteers, citizens involved with specific programs, and JCPRD staff responsible for each program area were interviewed. These groups identified the strengths, weaknesses, and short and long-term needs of each program area. These items are discussed in detail in Section Three – Assessment of Existing Recreation Programs;
- A community survey was conducted soliciting comments from city and county residents, senior citizens, program participants, and middle school and high school students; and
- A comparison of existing programs and program needs to national trends and guidelines was conducted and from this comparison, recommendations both general and specific, were developed.

OVERALL PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The following listed items are included for implementation during Phase I (2000-2005). The list is a combination of program, policy, procedural, and funding recommendations. The list is not in a priority order of importance and implementation of the items may occur simultaneously and are not dependent upon each other.

1. Nationally, people have less time for participation in recreation activities. This trend should be considered by the JCPRD staff through the development of recreation programs that reduce the length of the program activity. Locally, the desired length of programs should be identified through surveys and interviews with participants. This will assist the department in the determination of the amount of time participants are willing or able to commit to an activity and allow the staff to develop cost effective programs accordingly.
2. Currently, the department does not track the lifecycle of its program offerings. Every recreation program is in a lifecycle stage – emerging, growing, maturing, or declining. Knowledge of a program’s lifecycle stage is essential to producing cost effective results. Many organizations continue to fund declining programs rather than implement new and emerging programs. The development of a lifecycle tracking system will assist in: ensuring interest, increasing participation in department programs, evaluation of program funding, and directing staff efforts.
3. The recreation center concept in Johnson City should be re-evaluated with facilities, programs, and hours of operation expanded to provide activities for all segments of the population. The traditional recreation center concept in use in Johnson City consisting of a gymnasium, office space, and multi-use rooms has been replaced nationally by multi-purpose centers. The multi-purpose center offers a variety of services and activities such as art programs, seniors activities, youth programs, athletics, aerobic and fitness activities, instruction rooms, computer facilities, swimming, etc. These new centers incorporate new design elements within the building to provide a more appealing environment and the ability to accommodate numerous activities simultaneously. A major image change in terms of architectural style, color schemes, signage, lighting, and amenities is needed for existing and new centers to enhance visual appeal and participant use.
4. Associated with the new concept in recreation center design is a corresponding increase in the hours of operation. Nationally, the hours of operation have increased to 80-90 hours per week, offering programs and activities seven days a week to meet the needs and time constraints of all residents. The expanded hours of operation for recreation centers in Johnson City will become necessary in the future as new programs and facilities are provided. Related to participant time constraints, JCPRD should consider offering/providing childcare programs to encourage family participation and to allow parents to participate in recreation programs.
5. The reprioritization of the duties of the city’s recreation centers coordinators is paramount if the expansion of program activities is to occur. Currently, their primary focus and emphasis is on performing maintenance tasks with the programming of center activities becoming secondary. This is due, in part, to the absence of a proportionate increase in maintenance staff versus facility growth over the past 10 years. This has resulted in center coordinators assuming maintenance responsibilities which, in turn, has adversely affected program development. Maintenance tasks are less challenging and time consuming and from an employee viewpoint justify the number of hours worked. In addition, with an emphasis placed on athletics, diversified programming has not been a department priority in the past.
6. The educational training of the center coordinators requires upgrading to meet future programming needs. The lack of programming expertise has resulted in many activities remaining unchanged and in the declining lifecycle stage.
7. The development of policies and procedures relative to JCPRD operations and the duties of programming is essential to the effective management of programs offered by the department. The following areas are examples where policies and procedure are needed: (1) financial accountability; (2) record keeping; and (3) program performance evaluation. Development and implementation of policies and procedures is necessary to comply with NRPA national accreditation guidelines and to provide expectations and operating standards for JCPRD staff. Accurate record keeping regarding participation is also essential for the purpose of establishing user trends, residency, etc. and identifying program deficiencies and future needs.

8. Currently, JCPRD is deficient in the marketing of programs, activities, and events. **Approximately 40 percent of the respondents to the citizen surveys indicated that they were unaware of recreation programs or the location of facilities offered by the department.** Through the creation of additional interest in programs, the department can improve the quality and effectiveness of programs offered in addition to increasing the utilization of facilities. In the past, insufficient funding has limited the department's marketing capabilities. The department should consider establishing a full-time position for public relations/marketing and the use of marketing techniques such as: a quarterly brochure that identifies the benefits and advantages of programs as well as program details; establishing a web page; distribution of flyers; and newspaper and radio/TV advertising of programs, class locations, registration, fees, etc.
9. JCPRD recreation programs are generally organized around specific individual activities such as sports, special populations, and festival events. Nationally, more agencies are moving away from specific program segments to demographic segments in program delivery. These new segments in demographic areas include: youth programs, teens, adult programs, seniors, and family or communitywide activities. This trend should be incorporated into JCPRD programming to the extent possible.
10. The city should address a rapidly growing trend in recreation centers by providing fitness programs for adults and seniors utilizing cardiovascular and weight training equipment. **This need/trend was identified in citywide surveys and in information obtained from American Sports Data, Incorporated in the National Trends Assessment section of the Master Plan.**
11. Each recreation center should consider the establishment of a set core of programs that match the demographics of the area that the center serves. These programs should be designed to meet the identified needs of the neighborhood through surveying the needs of the intended users of the center.
12. Recreation center facilities should be available to all geographic areas of the city. Existing centers are concentrated to serve the central portion of the city. As new community parks are developed, a multi-purpose center should be incorporated into the park's facilities.
13. JCPRD has partnerships with various organizations and agencies throughout the community, primarily with the intent of meeting the needs of the area's youth. In the future, partnerships should be in the form of written agreements focusing on equal levels of contributed resources and with a common objective.
14. JCPRD should review its current fee structure and institute actions to assist in offsetting department expenditures. Any new fee structure should be sensitive to the philosophy of the department, elected officials, and needs of the residents. In the past, JCPRD policy has been to provide activities for youth with a minimal, if any charge, to participants. The participation by non-city residents in athletic programs (estimated in some instances to be 30-40 percent) necessitates a re-evaluation of participant fees, particularly for non-city residents including both youth and adults.
15. JCPRD should consider the development of customer service standards regarding the provision of programs. These standards should be in written form and include the following: safety, instructor knowledge, equipment, skills learned, etc. Customer service standards can also be extended into program standards that include: standard name tags, uniforms, signage, customer greetings, etc. These standards can then be evaluated to ensure that customer expectations are being met in program services and facilities.

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based upon: facility evaluations; interviews with participants, volunteers, and JCPRD staff; and NRPA guidelines where they are applicable.

Aquatics

- Investigate the development of a family aquatic center at Winged Deer Park that includes water slides, zero depth entry, spray pools, etc. in lieu of traditional facilities;
- Add a Certified Pool Operator (CPO) to ensure each pool facility is properly staffed;

- Construct one 50-meter indoor swimming/lap pool to meet the needs of various user groups and enhance the ability to host regional swim meets;
- Renovate or replace Legion Street Pool and concurrently expand the hours of operation and develop an efficient schedule for all user groups.
- Renovate the entrance, lighting, office space, storage, and drainage of the pool deck and bathrooms at Freedom Hall Pool;
- Expand swim lessons through partnerships and/or contractual agreement when time and space become available; and
- Investigate implementing additional programs such as water basketball, volleyball, polo, underwater hockey, aqua kickboxing, etc. when pool time, space, or facilities become available.

Adult/Youth Basketball

- Develop a policy regarding disrespect and abuse toward referees;
- Promote 3-on-3 tournaments for adults and youth when time and space become available;
- Establish a non-resident fee for participation; and
- Provide facilities for existing programs and future program growth.

Adult Softball

- Provide facilities capable of accommodating league play, practice, tournaments, and future growth of the program;
- Investigate offering leagues during the day for 3rd shift workers; and
- Establish a non-resident fee for participation.

Girls Senior/Youth Softball

- Provide facilities capable of accommodating league play, practice, tournaments, and future growth of the program; and
- Establish a non-resident fee for participation.

Youth Baseball

- Develop facilities for instructional league baseball fields such as restrooms, dugouts, bleachers, concessions, etc; and
- Provide facilities capable of accommodating league play, practice, tournaments, and future growth of the program.

Youth Soccer

- Complete the renovation of Civitan Park;
- Develop additional facilities commensurate with program growth;
- Establish a non-resident fee for participation; and
- Develop a policy and equitable facility use agreement regarding the use of Buffalo Valley Soccer Complex with the East Tennessee Soccer Federation.

Girls TeeBall

- Provide facilities capable of accommodating league play, practice, tournaments, and future growth of the program; and
- Establish a non-resident fee for participation.

Adult and Youth Tennis Lessons

- Develop tennis courts, as new parks are developed to meet program growth;

- Resurface existing tennis courts as needed;
- Promote qualified instruction through competitive instructor compensation;
- Increase participation fees to a comparable level with other agencies;
- Improve lighting at Science Hill Tennis Center (SHTC) and investigate the feasibility of lighting at Metro-Kiwanis Park; and
- Renovate tennis center facilities at Science Hill including the improvement of spectator seating and the resurfacing of existing tennis courts, as needed.

Summer Playgrounds

- Investigate partnerships with schools in order to provide appropriate shelter and facilities enabling the program to expand its locations, hours, and activities;
- Establish a non-resident fee for participation comparable with other agencies;
- Expand the hours of the program to provide pre-and post-program services and establish a fee for the service;
- Implement pre-registration and camp capacities for different camps such as sports camp, high adventure camp, aquatic camp, arts camp, etc.;
- Lengthen the duration of the program from 7 weeks to 10 weeks;
- Institute a counselor in training program or a mentoring program for children ages 13-16 to provide youth the opportunity to learn valuable job skills; and
- Increase staff commensurate with program development and growth.

Pavilion Rentals

- Renovate and maintain all pavilions and amenities;
- Update policies regarding rental fees, times, maintenance, scheduling, deposits, etc;
- Increase handicap accessibility; and
- Standardize equipment such as picnic tables, grills, trash receptacles, water fountains, etc. as items need replacement.

Outdoor Nature Recreation Programs

- Implement alternative programs such as family camping, single-parent camping, backpacking, mountain biking, environmental camps, high adventure camps, etc.;
- Continue to seek co-ventured events and programs to help provide instructors, training, resource materials, etc.; and
- Increase personnel commensurate with program development and growth.

Special Events

- Increase funding for promotional capability;
- Acquire part-time staff to facilitate events/festivals, etc.; and
- Establish requirements for groups wanting to co-sponsor events with the department.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE AND DESIGN

MAINTENANCE

The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance of all property and facilities that are located within the designated park areas of the city and also certain facilities used by the department including facilities owned by the Johnson City Board of Education, Washington County, and

Milligan College. Maintenance responsibilities are currently separated within the department according to the following functions: turf management, general maintenance, and building maintenance. However, there appears to be no specifically designated areas of responsibility for each of these operation units' functions, within the department.

Based on maintenance levels observed at the parks and interviews with department personnel, existing resources are spread too thin and supervision is inadequate. As previously mentioned, staffing has not kept pace with maintenance responsibilities resulting in low staff morale, an exorbitant amount of accumulated compensatory time, and a reduced level of maintenance. A substantial increase in the level of maintenance at recreation facilities above current levels is recommended through adoption and adherence to an acceptable level of service, policies, and procedures. The Master Plan recommends the adoption of the Park Maintenance Standards of the National Recreation and Park Association, or similar standards to meet the needs of the city.

The following steps are identified for implementation during Phase I (2000-2005):

- a. Inventory and mapping of all park facilities;
- b. Development of maintenance standards for each facility;
- c. Determination of maintenance requirements (elements);
- d. Development of a maintenance schedule for each facility;
- e. Development of standard work methods and procedures;
- f. Determination of personnel, equipment, and material needs based on maintenance standards to be applied;
- g. Development of an effective and efficient system of organizing and assigning maintenance personnel;
- h. Development of an adequate maintenance management system to measure success of the program; and
- i. Development of an ongoing evaluation procedure to consistently improve the maintenance management system.

Adoption and implementation of applicable NRPA standards for maintenance is a necessary step toward resident acceptance and national accreditation of the Parks and Recreation Department and one that will ensure a park system that is maintained at an acceptable and efficient level. In addition, NRPA accreditation requires compliance with standards regarding: facilities management; building security; preventative maintenance; fleet management; department-owned equipment and property; depreciation and replacement of facilities and equipment; and maintenance personnel assignment. For complete information regarding NRPA guidelines for national accreditation JCPRD should adhere to standards contained in the 1998 Self-Assessment Manual for Quality Operation of Park and Recreation Agencies.

DESIGN

With few exceptions, existing parks appear to have evolved over time and developed as financial resources became available. Parks are a measure of the quality of life enjoyed by the city's residents, and their design and appearance are a statement of the city's commitment to the enhancement of that quality of life.

The future development of new parks and the renovation of existing facilities requires an increased level of design to ensure facilities are user friendly, safe, and compatible with surrounding development. The NRPA addresses the issue of design in its accreditation process through the requirement of a plan for each individual park site, delineating areas of activity, circulation patterns, building locations, parking areas, and other components of the facility's overall development.

The inventory of existing parks in the city revealed a need for increased attention to facility planning with an emphasis on: the interrelationships between program activities; landscaping; and the need for standardization and uniformity of features such as signs, picnic tables, benches, water fountains, trash receptacles, shelter and restroom design, lighting, fencing, and other components that comprise the total park environment.

The Master Plan recommends that the position of landscape architect/park planner be created within the JCPRD. This position would be responsible for the implementation of conceptual master planning of all existing parks; design of new parks; and the renovation of existing facilities. This position would be cost effective and should reduce the need for the employment of consultants in facility design and ensure that good design criteria becomes an integral and common function of park development in Johnson City.

SECTION SEVEN – IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2000-2020 is based upon the identification of user needs and concerns, an analysis of the existing park facilities and programs, the development of guidelines to assist in the formulation of facility recommendations, an adherence to stated goals, objectives, policies, and facility and program recommendations. The plan is designed to provide a framework within which the city can correct existing deficiencies and also provide the necessary facilities to accommodate future growth.

Instrumental to implementation of the plan's recommendations is the identification of funding strategies/options at a time when balancing municipal budgets throughout Tennessee has become increasingly difficult. The Tennessee State Recreation Plan identified inadequate funding for park facilities and recreation programs as a key issue that must be addressed if local governments are to maintain basic services. According to a 1992 report from the U.S. Census Bureau, per capita funding for parks and recreation services throughout the State of Tennessee, including local governments, were 17 percent below the national average (\$53.14 compared to \$64.34). In Washington County, including Johnson City, local per capita expenditure was 30 percent below the national average (\$44.88 compared to \$64.34). A review of the city's Parks and Recreation Department budgets for the five years (1994-95 through 1998-1999) reveals that the level of per capita funding has remained fairly constant. The amount of per capita expenditure in the city during this period increased from \$44.00 to \$46.00, an increase of 4.5 percent. A study of Tennessee cities, 25,000-100,000 in population, by Dr. Peter Cunningham, Middle Tennessee State University, and sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation revealed a per capita spending for recreation of \$110.44 for 1997-1998. Even though funding is currently low locally, it does not reflect the high value Johnson City residents place on park facilities and programs. However, it does indicate that local per capita spending is substantially lower than other Tennessee cities of a comparable size.

METHODS OF FINANCING PARKLAND ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL FUND REVENUES

General fund revenues have traditionally provided the principle source of funds for the general operations and maintenance of the city's parks and recreation system. Recreation as a public service is scheduled along with public works, fire and police protection, schools, and many other functions of the city government in annual budgets adopted by the city. General fund revenues typically cover operation and maintenance needs of the Parks and Recreation Department with a limited amount of funds (annual average of \$186,845 during the 1992-1997 period) available for capital improvements. During the fiscal year period of 1994-95 through 1998-99 the department's total budget increased from \$2,150,583 to \$2,632,096 representing an increase of approximately 22 percent. For information purpose, the Dr. Cunningham study revealed cities in the 25,000-100,000 population range derived their revenue for parks and recreation from the following sources: (1) general fund, 61 percent; (2) bonds, 18 percent; (3) federal grants, 16 percent; (4) state grants, 3 percent; and (5) other, 2 percent.

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS

General fund revenue for parks and recreation are usually devoted to current operations and maintenance of existing facilities. In view of the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, borrowing of funds to acquire new lands and develop and renovate facilities will be necessary. The State of Tennessee gives municipal governments the authority to accomplish this borrowing of funds for parks and recreation facilities through the issuance of bonds. For the purpose of paying the debt on these bonds, the city is empowered to levy taxes. Total bonding capacity of local governments is limited to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

REVENUE BONDS

Nationally, revenue bonds have become a popular funding method for financing high use specialty facilities that generate income such as aquatic centers, golf courses, ice rinks, tennis centers, and sports complexes/fields. The city's use of this source of funding would require an evaluation of the city's fee practices and would be limited to certain revenue producing facilities. Used in combination with other funding methods, it can be effective and should be used whenever possible.

FEDERAL AND STATE ASSISTANCE

Federal funding sources necessary to assist in the financing of the Master Plan's recommendations have historically been available from the U.S. Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). This funding source was discontinued in 1995; however, efforts are underway to reinstitute the program. In addition, funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Block Grant (CDBG) Program is also available and may be used in low/moderate income neighborhoods of the city for land acquisition and development of recreation facilities.

The State of Tennessee, through the enactment of the 1991 Partnership Act, created the Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF). LPRF funds are available, on a competitive basis, providing grants requiring a 50 percent match by the city for acquisition and development of outdoor or indoor recreation facilities.

Additionally, the state funds projects such as bikeways and pedestrian facilities through the federally funded Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) administers the program, and the city can apply for these funds for the development of bikeway/greenway systems.

Other grant sources include:

- Tennessee Recreation Trail Grant Program for use toward the construction of multi-use trails;
- Grants to Artists and Arts Organizations administered by the Tennessee Arts Commission through funds from the National Endowment for the Arts for programs that enhance cultural programs in the city;
- Tree Planting Grants for projects involving tree planting on public lands; and
- Urban Forestry Grants for a variety of projects related to trees in the urban environment (program partially funds the city's City Forester position).

ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT METHODS

Methods available to Johnson City for acquiring and developing parks as recommended in the Master Plan include the following:

FEE SIMPLE PURCHASE

The most common method of parkland acquisition is to purchase the fee simple or full-ownership of the land. This may be accomplished by negotiated purchase, condemnation, donations, or direct transfer of the title. It is anticipated that this method will continue to be the primary device for acquiring land for public parks. Fee simple purchase has the advantage of being relatively simple to administer and to explain to the public in terms of justifying a particular public expenditure. However, this method is the most difficult to reconcile with limited public resources.

INSTALLMENT PURCHASE

Under the installment purchase approach, the land owner and the city agree to a price for the land and the payments are spread over a number of years. This method of purchase presents several benefits to the owner: (1) the full title to the land would be transferred to the city and the owner would not have to pay property taxes; (2) the owner could spread his increased income and capital gains over a longer time period; and (3) the agreement could allow the owner to continue to occupy his property for life. This approach also returns two major benefits to the city: (1) it insures that the land will not be pre-empted by development; and (2) the price will be fixed so that future speculation or development patterns will not increase the price.

LIFE ESTATE

Another approach to acquiring parkland is the “life estate”. This method is basically the same as buying the fee simple except that the owner retains the right to live on the land during his lifetime and to have the private use of a reasonable amount of property surrounding the residence. The life estate adds considerable flexibility to the parkland acquisition program by recognizing a very basic concern of many elderly land owners. In addition to permitting the immediate protection and public use of the land, this approach avoids the problems that may arise from estate settlements and negotiating with heirs. Because the public acquires full title to the entire property, the owner does not have to pay property taxes. This approach can be effectively combined with the installment purchase method to produce a variety of additional income and tax advantages for the property owner.

LONG-TERM OPTION

The long-term option is frequently used when a particular piece of land is seen as having potential future value though it is not desired or affordable to the city at the time. Under the terms of a long-term option, the city agrees with the landowner on a selling price for the property and a time period over which the city has the right to exercise its option. The first benefit of this protective method is that the land use of the property is stabilized. Secondly, the city does not have to expend large sums of money until the land is purchased. Thirdly, the purchase price of the land is settled upon. The disadvantage of this method lies in that a price must be paid for every right given by the property owner. In this case, the cost of land use stabilization and a price commitment comes in the form of the cost of securing the option.

FIRST RIGHT OF PURCHASE

This approach to acquiring parkland eliminates the need for fixing the selling price of a parcel of land yet alerts the city of any impending purchase which might disrupt the parkland acquisition program. The city would be notified that a purchase is pending and would have the right to purchase the property before it is sold to the party requesting the purchase. This method is useful in long-range acquisitions.

LOCAL GIFTS

A significant source of providing funds for acquisition and development of local park projects is through a well-organized local gifts program. The solicitation of land, money, materials, or donated labor, can and has had, a meaningful impact on the development of park facilities in Johnson City.

The most frequently used type of gift by local governments involves the donation to the city of land to be used for a park. The timing of such a donation could correspond with a Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF) grant application, thereby providing all or a significant portion of the local 50 percent matching requirement associated with this fund.

The development of a gifts catalog should be considered by the city as a tool for emphasizing an organized and effective gifts program. The catalog should explain the role and importance of the gifts program, describe its advantages, define the tax advantages that may occur to the donor, and identify various gifts (land, labor, play equipment, materials, trees, etc.) that are needed to meet park development needs. The gifts catalog should be prepared in a format that can be distributed effectively and inexpensively and should employ a clear statement of needs, typical costs associated with various gifts, and be advertised and made readily available to the public. To aid this type of gift program, a strategy for contacting potential donors (individuals, businesses, foundations, service clubs, etc.) should be developed.

EASEMENTS

The most common type of less-than-fee interest in land is an easement. Since property ownership may be envisioned as a bundle of rights, it is possible for the city to purchase any one or several of these rights. An easement seeks to either compensate the landholder for the right to use his land in some manner or to compensate him for the loss of one of his privileges to use the land. One advantage of this less-than-fee interest in the land is the private citizen continues to use the land while the land remains on the tax records continuing as a source of revenue for a city. Perhaps the greatest benefit lies in the fact that the city purchases only those rights that it specifically needs to achieve its recreation objectives. By purchasing only rights that are necessary to the system, the city is making more selective and efficient use of its limited financial resources. An example of this would be the purchase of easements for the development of a trail system.

REGULATION OF LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

The use of cluster or planned residential development zoning should be considered by the city as a mechanism for providing open space and land used for recreation purposes. This method has the advantage of providing public or private land for open space and neighborhood recreation facilities without cost to the public. Incentives could be incorporated into the city's zoning ordinance to encourage such development.

A primary device used for open space and recreation land acquisition in communities throughout the country is the city's subdivision regulations. Tennessee state legislation states "such regulations may provide for the harmonious development of the region and its envisions; for adequate open spaces for traffic light, air, and recreation;". The extent to which this method may be used is questionable. Its primary purpose should be based on providing recreation land for neighborhood use in which the proposed subdivision is located. An alternative to land dedication, used in other areas of the country, is payment of a fee in lieu of land dedication. The fee payment would be placed in a special fund specified for parkland acquisition and development. The benefits of this method for park development in evolving neighborhoods are many and include:

- The city is financially able to purchase parks in accordance with a predetermined plan.
- The money is available when needed.
- The residents/developer involved directly see the benefit of the park fee.

CONTINUING THE PLAN PROCESS

The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2000-2020 does not represent a final product or an end result toward which all actions must inevitably lead. Rather, the plan represents a beginning and must continually be reviewed to respond to changes which occur daily within the planning area.

For the Master Plan to be effective, it is necessary that various community groups and organizations participate on an ongoing basis in its implementation, evaluation and updating. During the next 20 years, the city will experience constant change in terms of population, land use activity/trends, and citizen demands. These changes require a continuing planning process in order to provide parks and recreation facilities and programs in a timely and responsive manner. Components of the continuing process include but are not limited to:

- Maintenance of the current park inventory by recording changes as they occur;
- Development of trend analyses and establishment of criteria to measure costs and benefits of decisions;
- Development of a citizen participation process regarding immediate and long-range needs; and
- Initiation of a three-year review process regarding the plan's recommendations for the purpose of maintaining a responsive five-year parks and recreation capital improvements program.

Community groups and organizations that must be involved in the continuing process and their degree of involvement include the following:

1. Board of Commissioners – Following adoption of the Master Plan, the allocation of fiscal resources and the determination of priorities for parkland acquisition and development becomes the primary responsibility of the Board of Commissioners. The effectiveness of these decisions will be assisted through an up-to-date Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
2. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board – Responsibilities involve advising the Board of Commissioners as to the parks and recreation needs of the city including: the identification of areas where new parks or recreation facilities and programs may be required; the review of existing parks and recreation facilities and the recommendation of future improvements; the review and evaluation of the Parks and Recreation Department's budget requests; the encouragement of citizen involvement; and the identification and solicitation of revenues for parks and recreation purposes. The Master Plan's role in carrying out these responsibilities requires a plan that represents current policies and needs of the city in terms of facilities and programs. The periodic review of the plan's recommendations should become a primary function of the Board.
3. Planning Commission – Tennessee Planning Legislation Annotated, specifically Section 13-4-104, requires that the acquisition and/or construction of any park within the city shall first be submitted to and approved by the Planning Commission. Failure to do so may be overruled by a majority vote of the Board of Commissioners. The need for an up-to-date Master Plan is apparent in this legislative directive, and the Planning Commission's role is clear in the provision of such a plan and the development of park facilities.
4. Board of Education – The provision of school recreation facilities should be in harmony with the Master Plan to avoid the costly duplication of facilities. The coordination of new/expanded school facilities and the need for parks and recreation facilities and programs can be accomplished with a Master Plan that is current with existing development trends.
5. Community Organizations – Community groups, organizations, agencies, and individuals involved with or interested in park facilities and programs should be provided with a mechanism and/or offered an opportunity to provide comment during the plan review period.

It is essential that periodic reviews of the plan occur every three years and that all of the above groups are involved in the process. Maintaining the plan in a manner that reflects changing conditions and recreation

demands and preferences will assist in ensuring its acceptance by the community and ultimately its implementation.

CONCLUSION

Beginning in 1889, with the donation by the Johnson City Real Estate Company of land for the development of Powell Square Park, the city's park system has evolved and today includes 25 facilities and over 1,000 acres. Recent population projections predict that the city will experience continued growth and will surpass 72,000 residents by the year 2020. This continued growth translates into a need for improved and additional recreation facilities.

Developing and maintaining a high quality park system, in response to this growth, is an opportunity for the city of Johnson City to enhance its image and quality of life and to continue its leadership role in the Tri-Cities Region. The Johnson City Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2000-2020, represents the first step in ensuring continued improvement and development of park facilities and services for the next 20 years. The plan provides a guide for officials making decisions about recreation needs and for citizens interested in the city's commitment to the provision of recreation services.

The Master Plan is designed to be proactive and recommends a program of facility improvements as well as the addition of new facilities before citizens needs and demands become an issue and existing land resources are at a minimum. Through proactive planning and development of parks and recreation facilities, the city can budget needed funds over a period of time and develop a planned program of facility renovation and expansion.

The plan proposes a 20-year program of : (1) existing facility improvement; (2) new parkland acquisition and development; and (3) actions designed to improve and expand recreation program planning services. The plan recommends the expenditure of 7.9 million dollars to facilitate the completion of planned and needed park improvements (excluding Winged Deer Park improvements) as well as the investment of 25.7 million dollars in new park facilities. The plan's proposed new parks are designed to serve existing areas of the city where facilities are lacking and areas where future growth is anticipated.

A few short years ago, Johnson City residents lived a less complicated life surrounded by farmland framed by a scenic mountain backdrop. There was no apparent need for public concern regarding the preservation of land for recreation activities. Today, the farmland has retreated before the advance of urban sprawl and the relationship between the city and the natural environment continues to change with each development.

We must not regard the acquisition and development of land for recreation activity as a luxury to be purchased out of surplus funds. The city must make a commitment now to provide the necessary resources, both fiscal and physical, to ensure that the quality of life of the city's residents continues to be a top priority.

Summary of Johnson City Parks and Recreation Department Facilities - 1999

	No. of Acres	Baseball	Basketball	Batting Cages/Bull Pen	Benches	Bleachers	Board Walk	Boat Ramp	Concession Area	Disc Golf	Fitness Trail	Football	Hiking Trails	Horseshoes	Lighted Area	Multi-use Field	Off-Street Parking	On-Street Parking	Pavillion	Picnic Tables	Playground Area	Recreational Center	Restrooms	Soccer	Softball	Swimming	Tennis	Volleyball
Buffalo Mountain Park	725.0											●								●								
Buffalo Valley Soccer Complex	2.0					●										●	●						●	●				
Carnegie Park	5.0		●					●							●				●		●							
Carver Park	6.0		●			●					●					●	●			●	●	●	●					●
Civitan Park	33.0																											
Earth Day Park	0.5																											
Friendship Gardens	3.0				●																							
Howard Johnson Field	5.0	●				●			●						●					●			●					
Joy-Rutherford Field	1.5	●		●		●			●						●					●			●					
Keystone Instructional Field	2.8	●				●									●			●										
Kiwanis Park	9.0	●	●	●		●			●					●	●		●	●		●	●	●	●		●			●
Lions Park	8.0	●		●		●			●						●				●	●	●		●					
Memorial Park	0.5																			●								
Memorial Stadium	6.0											●			●					●			●					
Metro-Kiwanis Park	15.0		●			●									●				●	●	●		●		●		●	
Neighborhood Park	2.0	●				●									●													
Optimist Park	10.0				●	●			●						●				●	●			●		●			
Paul Christman Park	0.5		●		●													●	●	●	●							
Powell Square Park	1.4		●		●										●				●	●	●		●					
Rotary Park	10.4				●										●		●		●	●	●		●					
Spring Street Park	0.5				●										●													
Stadium Field	1.5					●																	●		●			
Veterans Park	0.25				●															●								
Willow Springs Park	36.0										●		●		●		●			●	●		●					
Winged Deer Park	200.0		●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●			●	●		●	●	●			●
Total	1084.85																											