





## NEEDS ASSESSMENT TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## 1.0 OVERVIEW

This report presents the results of an assessment of the present and future needs of Atlanta's citizens for parks and recreational facilities. It includes the following sections:

- Section 2.0 summarizes and prioritizes Atlanta's needs for different types of parks and recreational facilities based on the results of a random, statistically valid citizen survey conducted for Project Greenspace.
- Section 3.0 provides a basis for comparative benchmarking of Atlanta's needs and priorities through analysis of the following:
  - The current provision of selected park and recreational facilities by peer cities in comparison to Atlanta
  - Park and recreational facility standards used by other communities
  - Park and recreational facility standards published by leading national organizations engaged in open space resource issues
- Based on the analyses in Sections 2.0 and 3.0, Section 4.0 recommends population-based<sup>1</sup> standards to guide the provision of selected park and recreational facilities by the City and other public and private sector providers through the year 2030. It then compares the current supply of these parks and recreational facilities to the demand generated by Atlanta's present (2005 estimated) and future (2030 projected) population based on the standards. This comparison is calculated in two ways:
  - For the City's park and recreational facility inventory without open space and recreational facilities owned by Atlanta Public Schools
  - For the City's park and recreational facility inventory with open space and recreational facilities owned by Atlanta Public Schools

In addition, Sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 recommend goals for the overall provision of greenspace within the City. The recommended standards and goals are summarized in Figures 1 and 2. Shown are the current (year 2005) and projected year 2030 targets for the provision of facilities based on the recommended standard and projected population data.

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<sup>1</sup> A population-based standard calls for the provision of a specified number of facilities or acreage of parkland for a subset of the City's overall population. Examples include one outdoor tennis court per 5,000 residents or 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.



**Figure 1: Recommended Park and Greenspace Standards and Goals**

Park/Greenspace Type	Recommended Standard/Goal	Current Inventory	2030 Target
Public Parkland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 acres per 1,000 residents</li> <li>All residents should be located within a ½ mile walk of publicly accessible greenspace</li> </ul>	3,682 ac <sup>1</sup>	7,783 ac
Environmentally Sensitive Lands	Protect 75% of the City's environmentally sensitive lands <sup>2</sup>	8,677 ac	13,876 ac

<sup>1</sup> Excludes the potential acreage of BeltLine parks and Atlanta Public Schools. See Section 4.1.2 for a description of the acreage each of these would contribute to Atlanta's future greenspace system.

<sup>2</sup> Sensitive lands include the 100-year floodplain, the 75-foot buffer required around rivers and streams, steep slopes, wetlands, and vacant land of high-environmental quality (as defined by the "Greenspace Acquisition Support System Report", 2002 prepared by the GIT Center for GIS)

**Figure 2: Recommended Recreational Facility Standards**

Facility Type	Level of Service Standard	Current Inventory	2030 Target
Walking/Biking Trails	1 mile per 3,000 residents	15 miles	261 miles
Rentable Picnic Pavilions	1 site per 7,500 residents	27 sites	104 sites
Outdoor Pool (50 meters)	1 pool per 35,000 residents	3 pools	22 pools
Outdoor Pool (25 yards)	1 pool per 25,000 residents	12 pools	31 pools
Natoria	1 pool per 50,000 residents	5 pools	16 pools
Spray Pads (stand alone)	1 pad per 10,000 residents	1 pad	78 pads
League Play: Youth Baseball/Softball (5 fields)	1 complex per 75,000 residents	3 complexes	10 complexes
League Play: Adult Softball (4 fields)	1 complex per 200,000 residents	1 complex	4 complexes
League Play: Football/Soccer/Track	1 complex per 120,000 residents	0 complexes	7 complexes
League Play: Informal Open Practice Fields	1 field per 5,000 residents		
Playgrounds	1 site per 4,000 residents	105 sites	196 sites
Outdoor Basketball Courts	1 court per 7,500 residents	63 courts	104 courts
Off-Leash Dog Parks	1 site per 50,000 residents (min. 2-acre site)	1 site	16 sites
Tennis Centers	1 center per 100,000 residents	5 centers	8 centers
Outdoor Tennis Courts (informal, pick-up play only)	2 courts per 7,500 residents (group courts in pairs)	114 courts	209 courts
Special Events/Festival Site	1 50-acre (min.) site		
Recreation Centers	1 square foot per resident (min. 30,000 sf per facility)	468,906 sf	782,952 sf
Cultural Centers	1 center per 250,000 residents		
Golf	1 course per 80,000 residents	5.5 courses	10 courses



The standards are intended as flexible guidelines for use in planning for the provision of future parks and recreational facilities to meet citizens' needs. The standards should be used in conjunction with other planning criteria such as accessibility and the geographic distribution of parks and facilities throughout the City.

It is not intended that all identified needs for parks and recreational facilities be met by the City of Atlanta. For example, the inclusion of Atlanta Public Schools in the comparison of existing supply to demand is intended to demonstrate the potential for an enhanced partnership with the school system to meet a portion of the demand. A strategy to satisfy existing and future needs should include partnerships with a variety of public and private sector providers of parks, open space, and recreational facilities to achieve the standards. Examples of these providers include the Atlanta Youth Soccer Association, Boys and Girls Club, Police Athletic League, and YMCA.

This report is intended to be used in conjunction with the *State of Atlanta's Greenspace* report, published separately, to provide a complete assessment of the City's existing parks and greenspace and future needs. The analysis of park distribution, proximity, and accessibility in Section 4.1 of that report is particularly relevant to park and greenspace needs.

## 2.0 PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES ANALYSIS

This section analyzes Atlanta's needs and priorities for parks and recreation facilities based on the results of a statistically valid citizen survey conducted in February 2007 by consultant team member ETC Institute/Leisure Vision.<sup>2</sup> The analysis provides a foundation for identifying standards and guidelines specific to the City of Atlanta that will direct the provision of these facilities through the year 2030 (see Section 4.0). Section 2.1 describes two types of needs for parks and recreational facilities:

- **Expressed needs** are the types of parks and recreational facilities that citizens say they have a need for.
- **Latent needs** are needs for types of parks and recreational facilities that citizens say are not being met.

Section 2.2 prioritizes these needs based on the importance placed on them by survey respondents.

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<sup>2</sup> The survey's results have been summarized in greater detail in the State of the Atlanta's Greenspace Report. This report, as well as the complete survey, is available at the Atlanta Bureau of Planning offices.



## 2.1 Expressed and Latent Needs

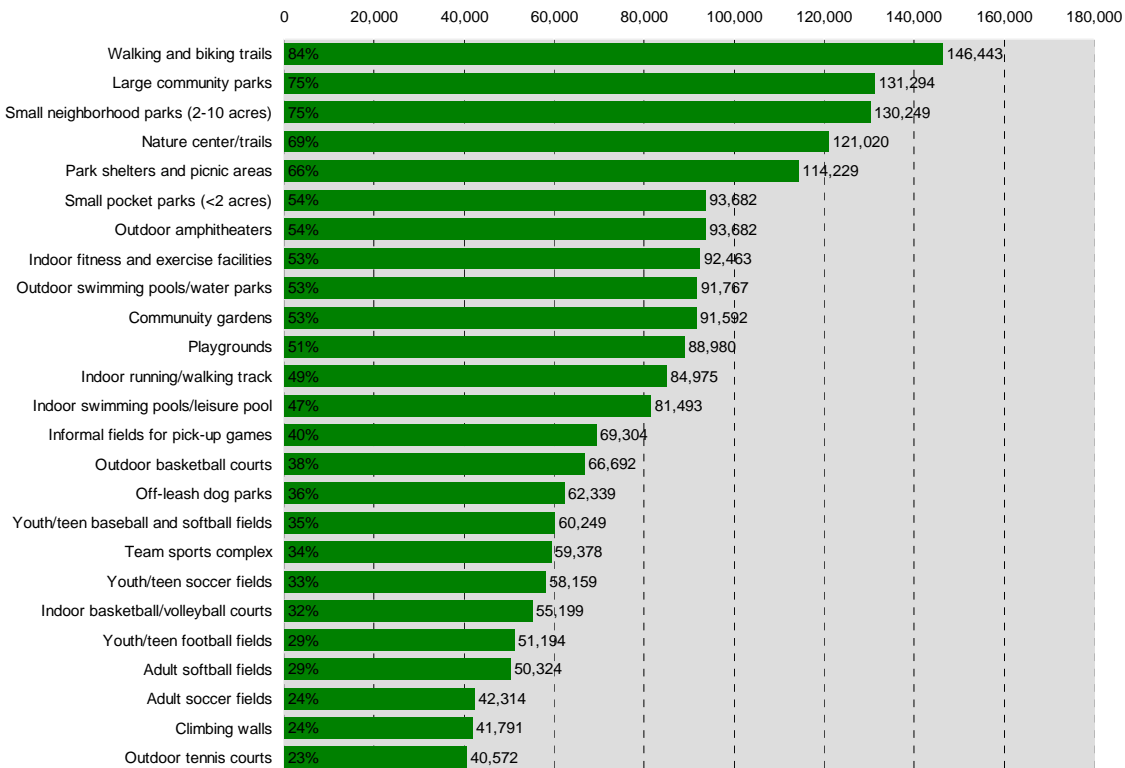
The citizen survey was conducted during February and March of 2007. Surveys were mailed to a random sample of 7,000 households throughout Atlanta. The goal was to obtain a total of at least 1,200 completed surveys, including a statistically valid sample from each of seven planning areas within the City. This goal was accomplished, as a total of 1,219 completed surveys were received, including at least 120 in each of the seven planning areas. The results of the random sample of 1,219 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of +/-2.8%. Needs for 25 different types of parks and facilities were evaluated through the survey.

### 2.1.1 Expressed Needs

From the list of 25 parks and recreation facilities, survey respondents were asked to identify those facilities for which their household has a need. Figure 3 illustrates the extrapolated percentage of the total number of households in Atlanta (estimated at 174,130) assumed to have an expressed need for these recreational facilities based on the survey results. Survey respondents clearly expressed walking and biking trails as the most significant need (146,433 Atlanta households or 84%), followed by large community parks (131,294 or 75%), and small neighborhood parks (130,249 or 75%).

In addition to parks and recreational facilities, needs for 21 types of recreational programs such as art education and fitness were evaluated in the citizen survey. Though programs are not included in this needs assessment, one particular type of program – special events and festivals – has significant physical space implications and therefore is addressed herein. Based on the survey results, 111,443 (64%) Atlanta households have a need for special events and festivals – the number one expressed need of the 21 program types. This places special events and festivals just after park shelters and picnic areas (114,229 or 66%) on the list of expressed parks and recreational facility needs in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Expressed Needs**



It should be noted that a ranking further down the list is **not** an indication that facilities such as adult soccer fields (42,314 or 24%) and climbing walls (41,791 or 24%) are not needed. Rather, these facilities may simply be more popular among smaller ethnic, age, or special interest groups yet less popular among city residents as a whole.

The expressed needs of Atlanta citizens for parks and recreation facilities can be compared to communities from across the country. Figure 4 shows how the expressed needs for parks and recreational facilities expressed by Atlanta households compared to the national average. The percentage of Atlanta households is based on the citizen survey responses summarized in Figure 3, while the national average is based on an extensive database of responses from similar surveys conducted across the country.<sup>3</sup> As Figure 4 shows, Atlanta residents express

<sup>3</sup> The consultant team member, ETC Institute/Leisure Vision has conducted household surveys for parks and recreation issues in more than 100 communities in over 30 states across the country. The data collected from these surveys has resulted in an extensive database of parks and recreation information. The survey responses from residents in Atlanta have been compared to the national average of similar responses from this database.



greater needs than national peers for almost all applicable facilities.<sup>4</sup> Large community parks, outdoor amphitheaters, and community gardens exceed the national averages by 20% or more. The exception is outdoor tennis courts, which Atlanta residents rated below the national average by 2%.

**Figure 4: Expressed Needs Compared to National Averages**

Facility	Citizen Survey <sup>1</sup>		
	Atlanta	National Average	% Above/Below Nat. Average
Walking and biking trails	84%	68%	16%
Nature center/trails	70%	57%	13%
Park shelters and picnic areas	66%	54%	12%
Outdoor amphitheaters	54%	33%	21%
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	53%	47%	6%
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	53%	43%	10%
Community gardens	53%	33%	20%
Playgrounds	51%	43%	8%
Indoor running/walking track	49%	40%	9%
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pool	47%	45%	2%
Informal fields for pick-up games	40%	n/a	n/a
Outdoor basketball courts	38%	26%	12%
Off-leash dog parks	36%	25%	11%
Youth/teen baseball and softball fields	35%	25%	10%
Team sports complex	34%	n/a	n/a
Youth/teen soccer fields	33%	21%	12%
Indoor basketball/volleyball courts	32%	27%	5%
Youth/teen football fields	29%	15%	14%
Adult softball fields	29%	16%	13%
Adult soccer fields	24%	n/a	n/a
Climbing walls	24%	n/a	n/a
Outdoor tennis courts	23%	25%	-2%
<b>Parkland</b>			
Large community parks	75%	54%	21%
Small neighborhood parks (2-10 acres)	75%	60%	15%
Small pocket parks (<2 acres)	54%	n/a	n/a
Developed park total	n/a	n/a	n/a
Natural area/corridor preserves	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup> Percentage of Atlanta households compared to the national average of survey respondents that have a need for parks and recreational facilities.

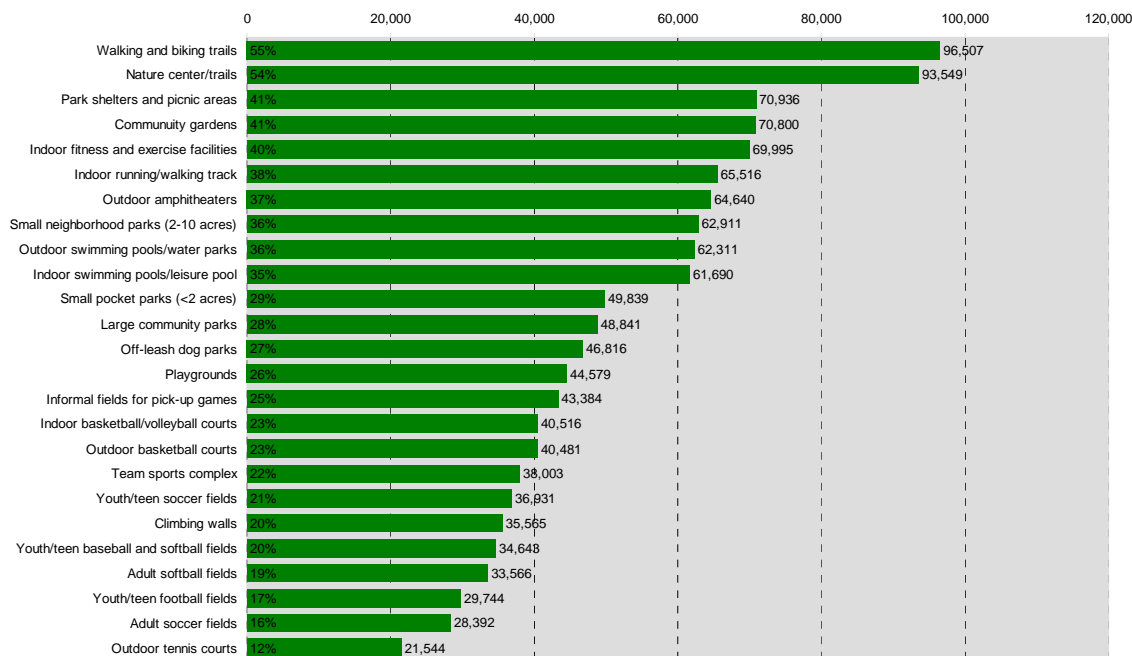
### 2.1.2 Latent Needs

For each of the parks and recreational facilities described above, survey respondents were asked to indicate how well their needs are being met. Based on the results, Figure 5 illustrates the estimated number of Atlanta households (and percentage of total) that identified park and recreational facility needs being met at 50% or less. In other words, the latent needs for these park and recreational facilities are the greatest because they are not readily available. Walking and biking trails (55% or 96,507 Atlanta households), followed closely by nature centers and nature trails (54% or 93,549 Atlanta households), were identified as the greatest unmet need. Though not shown in Figure 5, 66,612 or 38% of Atlanta households identified special events and festivals needs as being met at 50% or less. This places special events and

<sup>4</sup> Several of the parks and recreation facilities shown in Figure 4 are unique to the citizen survey for Atlanta. National averages, therefore, do not exist for comparison purposes. These facilities are identified accordingly (n/a) in the chart above.

festivals between indoor fitness and exercise facilities (69,995 or 40%) and indoor running/walking track (65,516 or 38%) on the list of latent needs in Figure 5.

**Figure 5: Latent Needs**



Of the parks and recreational programs, youth/teen football fields (29,744 or 17%), adult soccer fields (28,392 or 16%), and outdoor tennis courts (21,544 or 12%) are three facilities where latent needs are less pronounced. As with expressed needs, the latent needs for these facilities may simply be greater among smaller ethnic, age, or special interest groups but not as great among city residents as a whole. Alternatively, the satisfactory provision and distribution of existing facilities throughout the City may cause a facility to be lower on the list. The low expressed need for outdoor tennis courts (40,572 or 23%) is one example. The City has been very active in building tennis courts in partnership with a private recreation provider. Analysis suggests that the City has an adequate number of tennis courts in its inventory through the year 2030 (see Section 4.2.10).

## 2.2 Park and Recreation Facility Importance and Prioritization

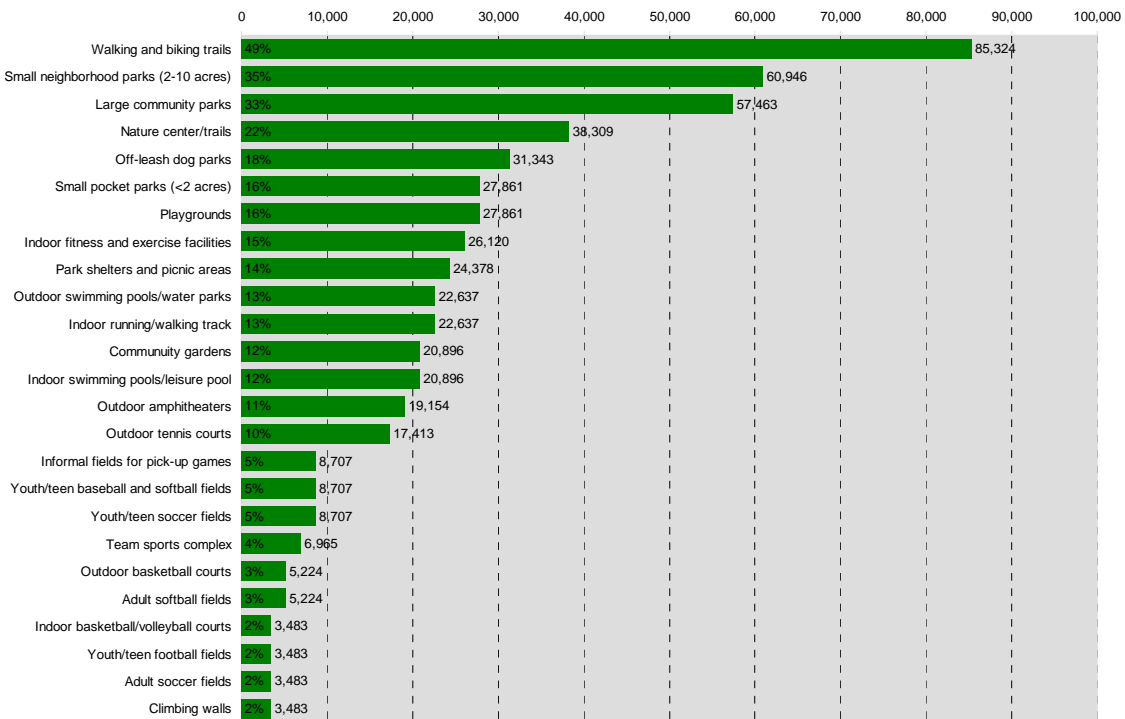
The importance of park and recreation facilities to Atlanta residents relative to the needs described in Section 2.1 provides a basis for identifying park and recreational facility priorities. Section 2.2.1 summarizes the importance placed by survey respondents on the different types of park and recreational facilities addressed by the survey. Section 2.2.2 synthesizes the needs and importance data in the form of park and facility priorities based on survey results.



## 2.2.1 Importance

Survey respondents were asked to select the four facilities that are most important to their household. Figure 6 illustrates the estimated number of Atlanta households (and percentage of total) that identified the facility as one of their top four choices. Walking and biking trails were identified as the most important (49% or 85,324 Atlanta households), followed by small neighborhood parks (35% or 60,946 Atlanta households) and large community parks (33% or 57,463 Atlanta households). Though not shown in Figure 6, 64,428 (37%) Atlanta residents identified special events and festivals as one of their top four most important programs. This places special events and programs second behind walking and biking trails in Figure 6.

**Figure 6: Importance**



## 2.2.2 Prioritization

Based on the citizen survey responses concerning expressed needs, unmet needs, and their importance, each of the 25 facilities were prioritized both to inform the development of appropriate population-based standards and other guidelines for the provision of recreational facilities (see Section 4.0), and to guide the City and other recreational providers in planning for the provision of these facilities over time. The result is a prioritization of parks and facility development based on the facilities needed most and the values Atlanta's residents place on them.

Figure 7 illustrates the prioritization process. For each facility, the estimated number of Atlanta households that identified the facility’s need as met at 50% or less (see Figure 5), and the estimated number of Atlanta households that selected the facility as one of their top four choices (see Figure 6) were added together to establish an overall numerical ranking. Those facilities that ranked between one and nine were assigned a high-priority rating; facilities that ranked between 10 and 18 were assigned a medium-priority rating; and those that ranked between 19 and 25 were given a low-priority rating. Based on this rating system, the provision of parkland – large community parks and small neighborhood parks – received a high priority. Small pocket parks, however, received a low priority. It should be noted that special events and festivals also received a high priority in a separate analysis developed for

**Figure 7: Prioritization**

Facility	Unmet Needs <sup>1</sup>		Importance <sup>2</sup>		Total Households	Overall Rank	Priority <sup>3</sup>		
	Households	%	Households	%			High	Medium	Low
Walking and biking trails	96,507	55%	85,324	49%	181,831	1	●		
Large community parks	48,841	28%	57,463	33%	106,304	4	●		
Small neighborhood parks (2-10 acres)	62,911	36%	60,946	35%	123,857	3	●		
Nature center/trails	93,549	54%	38,309	22%	131,858	2	●		
Park shelters and picnic areas	70,936	41%	24,378	14%	95,314	6	●		
Small pocket parks (<2 acres)	49,839	29%	27,861	16%	77,700	13		●	
Outdoor amphitheatres	64,640	37%	19,154	11%	83,794	10		●	
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	69,995	40%	26,120	15%	96,115	5	●		
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	62,311	36%	22,637	13%	84,948	9	●		
Community gardens	70,800	41%	20,896	12%	91,696	7	●		
Playgrounds	44,579	26%	27,861	16%	72,440	14		●	
Indoor running/walking track	65,516	38%	22,637	13%	88,153	8	●		
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pool	61,690	35%	20,896	12%	82,586	11		●	
Informal fields for pick-up games	43,384	25%	8,707	5%	52,091	15		●	
Outdoor basketball courts	40,481	23%	5,224	3%	45,705	16		●	
Off-leash dog parks	46,816	27%	31,343	18%	78,159	12		●	
Youth/teen baseball and softball fields	34,643	20%	8,707	5%	43,350	20			●
Team sports complex	38,003	22%	6,965	4%	44,968	18		●	
Youth/teen soccer fields	36,931	21%	8,707	5%	45,638	17		●	
Indoor basketball/volleyball courts	40,516	23%	3,483	2%	43,999	19			●
Youth/teen football fields	29,744	17%	3,483	2%	33,227	24			●
Adult softball fields	33,566	19%	5,224	3%	38,790	23			●
Adult soccer fields	28,392	16%	3,483	2%	31,875	25			●
Climbing walls	35,565	20%	3,483	2%	39,048	21			●
Outdoor tennis courts	21,544	12%	17,413	10%	38,957	22			●

<sup>1</sup> Estimated number of Atlanta households and % of total that identified the facility's need as met at only 50% or less (based on 174,130 total households).

<sup>2</sup> Estimated number of Atlanta households and % of total that selected the facility as one of their top four choices (based on 174,130 total households).

<sup>3</sup> 1-9 = High Priority  
10-18 = Medium Priority  
19-25 = Low Priority

recreational programs (not included in this needs assessment). In general, recreational facilities that have a physical fitness component, like walking and biking trails and indoor fitness and exercise facilities, received a higher priority while field sports generally received a lower priority.



## 3.0 BENCHMARKING

This section presents the results of benchmarking research undertaken to inform the development of park and recreational facility standards to meet the recreational needs and priorities identified in Section 2.0. Section 3.1 compares the current provision of park and recreational facilities by Atlanta and seven peer cities. Section 3.2 identifies population-based standards used by other communities around the country to guide the provision of parks and recreational facilities (**comparative standards**). Section 3.3 summarizes population-based standards recommended by two leading national organizations engaged in open space resource issues (**normative standards**).

### 3.1 Peer City Comparisons

Seven cities have been identified by the City of Atlanta as peer cities for benchmarking purposes. These cities are: Charlotte, Cleveland, Denver, Kansas City, Miami, Saint Louis, and Seattle. Data available from the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for Fiscal Year 2006 was used to benchmark Atlanta's provision of parkland acreage and selected recreational facilities compared to these cities. Figure 8 presents the results of the TPL research for parkland. Figure 9 presents the results for selected recreational facilities. Averages for all cities surveyed by TPL are also presented in Figures 8 and 9.

**Figure 8: Peer City Comparisons: Park Acreage**

Benchmark City	Park Acreage as % of Land Area	Park Acreage/1,000 Residents
Atlanta	4.5	7.9 <sup>1</sup>
Charlotte/Mecklenburg County	5.2	22.0
Cleveland	6.3	6.9
Denver	8.2	14.5
Kansas City	8.6	38.6
Miami	6.0	3.5
St. Louis	8.5	9.6
Seattle	11.3	10.5
<b>Average, all cities</b>	<b>9.8</b>	<b>18.8</b>

Source: Trust for Public Land

<sup>1</sup> Based on up-to-date population estimates and parkland acreage figures, Atlanta currently has 7.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.



**Figure 9: Peer City Comparisons: Recreational Facilities**

Benchmark City	Baseball Diamonds / 10,000 Residents	Dog Parks / 100,000 Residents	Playgrounds / 10,000 Residents	Soccer Fields / 10,000 Residents <sup>1</sup>	Swimming Pools / 100,000 Residents	Tennis Courts / 10,000 Residents
Atlanta	0.9	0.2	2.4	0.4	4.6	3.8
Charlotte <sup>2</sup>	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.7	0.5	1.7
Cleveland	3.2	0.2	2.6	0.2	8.8	4.4
Denver	2.4	1.1	2.6	3.8	7.2	2.6
Kansas City	3.5	0.2	2.0	0.6	5.2	5.2
Miami	0	0.5	1.4	0	2.6	1.3
St. Louis	3.2	0.3	2.0	1.3	2.6	3.1
Seattle	0.4	1.9	2.3	1.3	1.7	2.9
<b>Average, all cities</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>

Source: Trust for Public Land

<sup>1</sup> Figures for soccer fields based on FY 1995 data.

<sup>2</sup> Charlotte includes Mecklenburg County (a unified city/county government).

The results indicate that Atlanta ranks low compared to the other peer cities and to all cities surveyed by TPL in the amount of city park acreage provided as a % of total land area and per 1,000 residents. The results for the provision of recreational facilities are mixed. Of the eight peer cities, Atlanta ranked third in the provision of playgrounds and tennis courts and fourth in the provision of swimming pools. However, the City placed in the bottom half for the three other facilities surveyed (baseball diamonds, dog parks, and soccer fields). Of the five recreational facility types for which averages for all cities surveyed by TPL were available, Atlanta ranked above the average for three (playgrounds, swimming pools, and tennis courts) and below the average for two (baseball diamonds and dog parks).

### 3.2 Comparative Standards

Population-based standards for parks and recreational facilities were assembled from eight other cities from around the country to inform the development of similar standards for the City of Atlanta.<sup>5</sup> The cities range in population size from 50,000 (Chapel Hill, NC) to 1.5 million (Philadelphia, PA) people. As shown in Figure 10, not all cities have developed population-based standards for all 25 of the parks and recreational facilities described throughout this document. Of the eight cities identified for this analysis, most maintain

<sup>5</sup> Population-based standards were not available from the seven peer cities addressed in Section 3.1, with the exception of Kansas City. It should be noted that in 2005 that Kansas City discontinued use of quantitative, population-based standards in favor of qualitative standards. Nevertheless, Kansas City's previous population-based standards are shown in Figure 10.



population-based standards for only the most popular of facilities like parks, playgrounds, soccer fields, etc. Population-based standards for outdoor amphitheaters, community gardens, and climbing walls are not used by any of the eight cities.

Population-based standards for developed parkland and natural areas/corridor preserves were included as separate items for purposes of this comparative needs analysis. Most of the eight cities maintain standards for developed parkland that exceed Atlanta’s current provision of 7.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The most significant of these is Kansas City, MO, one of the peer cities, which has an established standard of 30 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents. Louisville, KY and Virginia Beach, VA have each developed a standard of 15 acres per 1,000 residents. Owensboro, KY is close behind at 12 acres per 1,000 residents.

**Figure 10: Comparative Needs – Standards from Other Communities**

Facility	Other Standards							
	Owensboro, KY	Kansas City, MO	Virginia Beach, VA	Louisville, KY	Philadelphia, PA	Arlington, TX	Santee, CA	Chapel Hill, NC
Walking and biking trails	n/a	1 mi / 2,000	0.4 mi / 1,000	n/a	1 mi / 5,000	1 mi / 12,200	1 mi / 5,000	0.3 mi / 1,000
Nature center/trails	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 site / 300,000	n/a	n/a	n/a
Park shelters and picnic areas	n/a	n/a	1 site / 5,000	n/a	1 site / 15,000	n/a	1 site / 5,000	1 site / 2,500
Outdoor amphitheaters	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 site / 25,000
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	1 pool / 20,000	1 pool / 30,000	1 pool / 20,000	1 pool / 40,000	1 pool / 20,000	1 pool / 59,400	1.5 sf / person	1 pool / 10,000
Community gardens	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Playgrounds	1 site / 2,500	1 site / 3,000	1 site / 1,250	1 site / 5,000	1 site / 2,500	1 site / 8,000	1 site / 3,030	n/a
Indoor running/walking track	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pool	1 pool / 20,000	n/a	0.5 sf / person	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Informal fields for pick-up games	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 field / 3,000
Outdoor basketball courts	1 court / 2,500	n/a	1 court / 2,500	1 court / 5,000	1 court / 5,000	1 court / 11,600	1 court / 3,448	1 field / 5,000
Off-leash dog parks	n/a	n/a	1 site / 50,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 site / 20,000	n/a
Youth/teen baseball and softball fields	n/a	n/a	1 field / 5,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 field / 7,692	1 field / 4,000
Team sports complex	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 / 25,000**	n/a	n/a	n/a
Youth/teen soccer fields	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 field / 7,692	n/a
Indoor basketball/volleyball courts	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1 court / 5,000
Youth/teen football fields	n/a	n/a	1 field / 5,000	n/a	n/a	1 field / 47,000	n/a	1 field / 3,000
Adult softball fields	1 field / 4,000	1 field / 1,500	1 field / 7,000	1 field / 5,000	1 field / 7,000	1 field / 35,000	1 field / 5,263	1 field / 20,000
Adult soccer fields	1 field / 4,000	1 field / 4,000	1 field / 4,000	1 field / 10,000	1 field / 6,000*	1 field / 12,900	1 field / 10,000	1 field / 3,000
Climbing walls	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Outdoor tennis courts	1 court / 4,000	1 court / 2,000	1 court / 5,000	1 court / 4,000	1 court / 10,000	1 court / 3,900	1 court / 7,692	1 court / 2,000
<b>Parkland</b>								
Large community parks	n/a	7.5 ac / 1,000	3 ac / 1,000	n/a	2 ac / 1,000	n/a	3.5 ac / 1,000	5 ac / 1,000*
Small neighborhood parks (2-10 acres)	n/a	3.5 ac / 1,000	1 ac / 1,000	n/a	1 ac / 1,000	n/a	2.5 ac / 1,000	2 ac / 1,000*
Small pocket parks (<2 acres)	n/a	n/a	2 ac / 1,000	n/a	0.25 / 1,000	n/a	n/a	0.25 ac / 1,000*
Developed park total	12 ac / 1,000	30 ac / 1,000	15 ac / 1,000	15 ac / 1,000	8 ac / 1,000	n/a	6 ac / 1,000	
Natural area/corridor preserves	n/a	n/a	1 ac / 1,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	

### 3.3 Normative Standards

Population-based standards have also been assembled from two leading national organizations engaged in open space resource issues. Figure 11 illustrates standards developed by:

- The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), a private non-profit organization that represents professionals in the parks and recreation field and that advises municipalities on the provision of parks and recreation facilities.
- The Urban Land Institute (ULI), a private non-profit organization that represents the interests of the development community.

NRPA last published population-based standards in 1996; these standards are shown in Figure 11. The ULI standards focus on parks; playgrounds are the only recreational facility for which ULI has developed a standard. ULI's standard is based on size (acreage of the playground site per 1,000 residents), not the number of playground sites per 1,000 residents like the NRPA standard.

**Figure 11: Normative Needs – National Standards**

Facility	National Standards	
	ULI	NRPA (1996)
Walking and biking trails	n/a	0.4 miles / 1,000
Nature center/trails	n/a	n/a
Park shelters and picnic areas	n/a	1 site / 5,000
Outdoor amphitheaters	n/a	n/a
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	n/a	1 site / 30,000
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	n/a	1 pool / 20,000
Community gardens	n/a	n/a
Playgrounds	3 ac / 1,000	1 site / 1,250
Indoor running/walking track	n/a	1 site / 30,000
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pool	n/a	0.5 sf / person
Informal fields for pick-up games	n/a	1 field / 5,000
Outdoor basketball courts	n/a	1 court / 2,500
Off-leash dog parks	n/a	1 site / 50,000
Youth/teen baseball and softball fields	n/a	1 field / 7,000
Team sports complex	n/a	n/a
Youth/teen soccer fields	n/a	n/a
Indoor basketball/volleyball courts	n/a	1 site / 30,000
Youth/teen football fields	n/a	1 field / 5,000
Adult softball fields	n/a	1 field / 7,000
Adult soccer fields	n/a	1 field / 4,000
Climbing walls	n/a	n/a
Outdoor tennis courts	n/a	1 / 5,000
<b>Parkland</b>		
Large community parks	3.5 ac / 1,000	3 acres / 1,000
Small neighborhood parks (2-10 acres)	2 ac / 1,000	2 acres / 1,000
Small pocket parks (<2 acres)	3 ac / 1,000	n/a
Developed park total	n/a	15 ac / 1,000
Natural area/corridor preserves	n/a	1 ac / 1,000

#### 4.0 RECOMMENDED STANDARDS

Recommended standards for both parkland and recreational facilities have been developed based on the findings of the expressed and latent needs analysis; benchmarking against peer cities and comparative and normative needs; and the facility prioritization process. These standards are intended as general guidelines for the future development of the Atlanta



greenspace system rather than absolute requirements. The following information is provided for each type of parkland/greenspace resource and recreational facility:

- Current acreage or number of facilities provided in the City of Atlanta, including facilities managed by the City (based on available data) and by Atlanta Public Schools (based on available data)
- Current distribution of parkland and facilities within the City (if known)
- Designated priority as determined by the citizen survey
- Recommended standard to guide planning for future needs
- Existing and projected deficiencies derived by applying the recommended standard to 2005 and 2030 population projections (assumes the number of existing facilities does not change), with and without the consideration of schools
- A series of diagrams that illustrates these deficiencies<sup>6</sup> (if sufficient data is available)

Current park and facility information was derived from two primary sources. Information on parks and facilities managed by the City of Atlanta was derived from a geographic information systems (GIS) database. A detailed inventory of specific Atlanta Public School facilities was not available for this analysis. Therefore, information on facilities maintained by the public school system was derived from a visual assessment of 2005 aerial photography only. In addition, since the contribution of public school facilities remains in question, the data presented below both includes and excludes the impact of school property and facilities where applicable.

Certain private recreation facilities such as tennis and swimming clubs do make significant contributions to the overall recreational provision available to Atlanta residents. However, data from private recreation providers was not available for this analysis. City officials will need to consider the presence of these facilities on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis as new facilities are located.

#### **4.1 Park and Greenspace Classifications and Standards**

The standards for the provision and preservation of parks and greenspace are described below. Section 4.1.1 provides an overview of Atlanta's park classification system. Sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 describe the standards and goals that have been developed for dedicated greenspace and environmentally sensitive lands, respectively. The City has an established goal to protect 20% of the City's total land area that was adopted by City Council in 2000 as a requirement of the Georgia Community Greenspaces Program. The standards and goals presented in Sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 are intended to supplement the 20% goal.

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<sup>6</sup> Each diagram shown throughout this Section was generated using the same analysis process. The polygons shown on each map are defined by a facility's midpoint to the next closest facility (known as Thiessen polygons). The polygon areas were then overlain with population projection data to calculate the demand on each facility based on the recommended standard. The range of colors – from red to green – indicates the percentage range above or below the standard that the demand is being met in that particular polygon.

## 4.1.1 Park Classifications

The City categorizes its parks into nine separate classifications based on the types of resources and facilities present within each. Comprising approximately 2,760 acres of the City's parkland; regional, community, neighborhood, and block parks represent the core of the City's parkland and host most recreational opportunities for Atlanta's residents. Garden spots, nature preserves, conservation parks, special facilities, and community parks are other types in the City's classification system and comprise about 838 acres. A description of each park classification follows below.

### Citywide Park (Formerly Regional Park)

City-wide parks are major park sites that draw users from throughout the City. They generally contain facilities that generate revenue, like the Chastain Arts Center or golf courses. Citywide parks should be 100 acres or greater in size with a service area comprising the entire City. There are 1,498 acres of City-Wide Parks in Atlanta.

### Community Park

Community parks support organized programming with staff. They typically contain such facilities as recreation centers, pools, large picnic shelters, or programmed athletic complexes. A small fee for the use of some of these facilities may be charged in order to partially offset operating costs. Community Parks should be a minimum of 35 acres in size with a drive-to service area radius of 2 miles. Sixty-five acres is recommended for park sites with athletic complexes. There are 705 acres of Community Parks in Atlanta's park system.

### Neighborhood Park

Comprising 516 acres, Neighborhood Parks serve local informal recreational needs. Typical amenities include picnic shelters (small to medium for family gatherings), open fields for informal sports and recreation activities, play grounds/tot lots, basketball and tennis courts, and wooded natural areas. Neighborhood parks should be a minimum of 10 acres in size with a 0.5-mile service area radius. Five acre neighborhood park sites are acceptable in constrained, densely populated areas. To ensure maximum accessibility by neighborhood residents, neighborhood parks should be easily accessible by pedestrians via the street network.

### Block Park

Block parks are small park sites containing limited amenities such as a play grounds and tot lots. There are 41 acres of Block Parks in the City of Atlanta. Block parks should be 2 to 5 acres in size with a 0.25-mile service area radius. To ensure maximum accessibility by neighborhood residents, block parks should be easily accessible by pedestrians via the street network.

### Garden Spot



Garden spots are very small landscaped areas – typically traffic islands. These areas generally do not have amenities. 81 acres of Atlanta’s Parks are categorized as Garden Spots.

### **Nature Preserve**

Nature preserves, comprising 418 acres, are primarily natural areas with amenities that facilitate environmental interpretation.

### **Conservation Park**

Conservation parks, comprising 178 acres, are areas managed for environmental protection purposes. Conservation parks are publicly accessible.

### **Special Facility**

Special facilities are park sites that contain amenities and facilities not typically associated with parks, such as historic cemeteries. They can also include stand-alone athletic complexes, recreation centers, large event venues, and community gardens. Existing special facilities include Oakland Cemetery, Roseland Cemetery, the City’s emergency shelter, Adamsville Recreation Center, Avery Park, and the Inman Park Trolley Barn. Parks of this type total 165 acres.

### **Neighborhood Center (Formerly Community Center)**

Neighborhood centers are stand-alone facilities leased to a community service organization providing social services. Neighborhood Centers occupy 7 acres in Atlanta.

## **4.1.2 Dedicated Greenspace**

Dedicated greenspace is land that is permanently dedicated for greenspace purposes through ownership or deed restriction. It includes lands used for active recreation, lands used for informal or passive recreation, and natural areas. Natural areas should protect environmentally sensitive resources while also providing public access for the enjoyment of these resources. The recommended overall goal or standard for dedicated greenspace is 20 acres per 1,000 residents.

To most fully meet the needs of Atlanta’s residents, dedicated greenspaces should be publicly accessible (i.e., accessible to the general public without restriction) wherever possible. Therefore, a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 residents of dedicated greenspace should be publicly accessible and all residents should be located within a ½ mile walk of such greenspace. Existing dedicated greenspaces that are publicly accessible include city parks (as described above), county and state parks, NPS sites, consent decree greenways, nature preserves, and conservation parks.

A portion of the total standard of 20 acres per 1,000 residents can also be met by greenspaces that are semi-publicly accessible (i.e., open only to residents of developments or



open to the general public with restrictions). A comprehensive inventory of semi-publicly accessible land was unavailable for this analysis. Greenspace associated with Atlanta Public Schools is the only semi-publicly accessible land area that could be quantified. Therefore, the total calculated needs would need to be updated as more detailed data becomes available.



### Current and/or Planned Provision

- **Publicly Accessible**
  - City parks: 3,054 acres
  - Other parks: 322 (city parks, county and state parks, NPS sites)
  - Natural areas: 1,295 acres (publicly accessible consent decree greenways: 685 acres, nature preserves, conservation parks, garden spots)
  - Proposed BeltLine parks: 602 acres
- **Semi-Publicly Accessible**
  - Atlanta Public Schools: 1,116 acres (considers only public school sites with one acre or greater of contiguous, useable greenspace)
- **Totals**
  - Publicly accessible: 5,273 acres
  - Semi-publicly accessible: 1,116 acres
  - Publicly and semi-publicly accessible: 6,389 acres

### Current Distribution

- Parks and natural areas are distributed throughout the City, though a concentration of parkland is evident in the eastern portion.

### Priority Ranking

- High (parks less than two acres in size ranked medium)

### Recommended Standards

- 20 acres per 1,000 residents, of which 10 acres / 1,000 residents minimum is publicly accessible and 10 acres / 1,000 residents maximum is semi-publicly accessible.
- All residents should be located within a ½ mile walk of publicly accessible greenspace.

### Estimated 2005 Deficiency

- **All Dedicated Greenspace:** Based on the recommended standard of 20 acres per 1,000 residents, an additional 3,227 acres is needed (assumes the total of publicly and semi-publicly accessible described above).
- **Publicly Accessible Greenspace:** Based on the recommended standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents, an additional 137 acres is needed based on the existing inventory and excluding the Beltline Parks.

### Projected 2030 Deficiency

- **All Dedicated Greenspace:** Based on the recommended standard of 20 acres per 1,000 residents, an additional 9,176 acres is needed (assumes the total of publicly and semi-publicly accessible described above).
- **Publicly Accessible Greenspace:** Based on the recommended standard of 10 acres per 1,000 residents, an additional 3,112 acres is needed based on the existing inventory and excluding the Beltline Parks. If the planned BeltLine parks are considered, an additional 2,510 acres is needed.

### 4.1.3 Environmentally Sensitive Lands

In addition to the existing city goal to protect 20% of the total land area referenced above in Section 4.1, a goal to protect 75% of Atlanta's environmentally sensitive areas is recommended for Project Greenspace. Excluding sensitive areas in existing parks and consent decree greenways, environmentally sensitive areas include the 100-year floodplain, the 75-foot buffer required around rivers and streams, steep slopes, vacant land of high environmental quality (i.e. forest cover, habitat, etc.), and wetlands. Together, these constitute approximately 15,906 acres or 18.63% of the City's total land area. (See the *State of Atlanta's Greenspace Report, July 2007* for a more detailed description of environmentally sensitive lands). Of this acreage, about 6,450 acres is protected per regulations and ordinances (i.e. the 100-year floodplain, the 75-foot stream buffer, and wetlands). Therefore, an additional 5,480 acres of these environmentally sensitive areas would need to be protected through regulations, incentives, acquisition, or easements to achieve the 75% goal.

## 4.2 Recreational Facilities

Recommended standards for selected recreational facilities are presented in this section. It should be noted that recommended standards are not provided for each of the 25 park recreational facilities evaluated in the citizen survey. For some facilities, a lack of available or accurate inventory data prevented the development of appropriate recommendations. Anecdotal evidence suggests a need for conveniently located athletic complexes with multiple facilities to host tournament or league play for certain sports (e.g., football, soccer, softball/baseball, and tennis). Though specific standards for athletic complexes are not a part of this analysis, such complexes could be implemented to satisfy particular recreational facility needs.

### 4.2.1 Walking/Biking Trails

There is a need for a citywide network of walking and biking trails. The network should include hard-surfaced, multi-use paths to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists. Informal trails designed for pedestrians only could also be incorporated into the system. The network should encompass trail systems within parks (like Chastain Park), trails along future greenways, connections to streets and sidewalks in adjacent developed areas, and to the on-street bike network. It is assumed that trail facilities are not provided by public schools.

#### Current Provision

- Approximately 15 miles of trails have been constructed in the City.
- An additional 19 miles are in development.
- The BeltLine system of trails will add an additional 22 miles of trails.
- In total, a system of 244 miles of trails is planned.

#### Current Distribution

- Existing trails are located primarily in existing parks like Freedom Park and Chastain Park.



- Existing trails are scattered throughout the City and do not link to create an interconnected network.
- The build-out of the master plan for trails will distribute trails throughout the City.

#### **Priority Ranking**

- High

#### **Recommended Standard**

- One linear mile per 2,000 residents
- Based on the recommended standard, the City requires in 2005 a total of 240 miles of walking/biking trails, and a total of 389 miles in 2030.

#### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- An additional 207 miles of trails are needed above the 15 mile of existing and 19 miles in development in accordance with the recommended standard.

#### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- An additional 145 miles of additional trails above the 244 miles existing and planned are needed through 2030 in accordance with the recommended standard.

### **4.2.2 Park Shelters and Picnic Areas**

The City of Atlanta does not maintain a database of designated picnic areas or sites. Only the number of large picnic pavilions rented for a fee and the number of individual picnic tables within parks is known, limiting the accuracy of a comprehensive analysis of needs for this facility. Of parks with facilities, 63 parks have picnicking facilities. It is assumed that shelters and picnic facilities are not provided by public schools. The recommended standard for picnic areas is appropriate given the citizen survey results (see Section 2.0) and the comparative standards identified in Section 3.2. However, a surplus of picnic areas results when this standard is applied to 2005 and 2030 population projections (see Figure 14). A more accurate way of determining what constitutes a picnic area is necessary. The distribution and current and projected deficiencies are illustrated in Figure 14.

#### **Current Provision**

- Approximately 269 sites<sup>7</sup>

#### **Current Distribution**

- Picnic areas are scattered throughout the City, though there appears to be a lack of picnic areas in the western and northern portions of the City and a surplus of picnic areas in other locations of the City.

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<sup>7</sup> A database of individual picnic area sites is not maintained by the City. A single picnic area site was assumed to include: 1 small picnic shelter, 250 square feet of a large picnic pavilion or gazebo, 2 individual picnic tables (in parks with multiple tables but no shelters or pavilions, 1 individual picnic table (in parks with just one table).

**Priority Ranking**

- High

**Recommended Standard**

- One site per 4,000 residents
- Based on the recommended standard, the City requires in 2005 a total of 120 playground sites and a total of 195 sites in 2030.

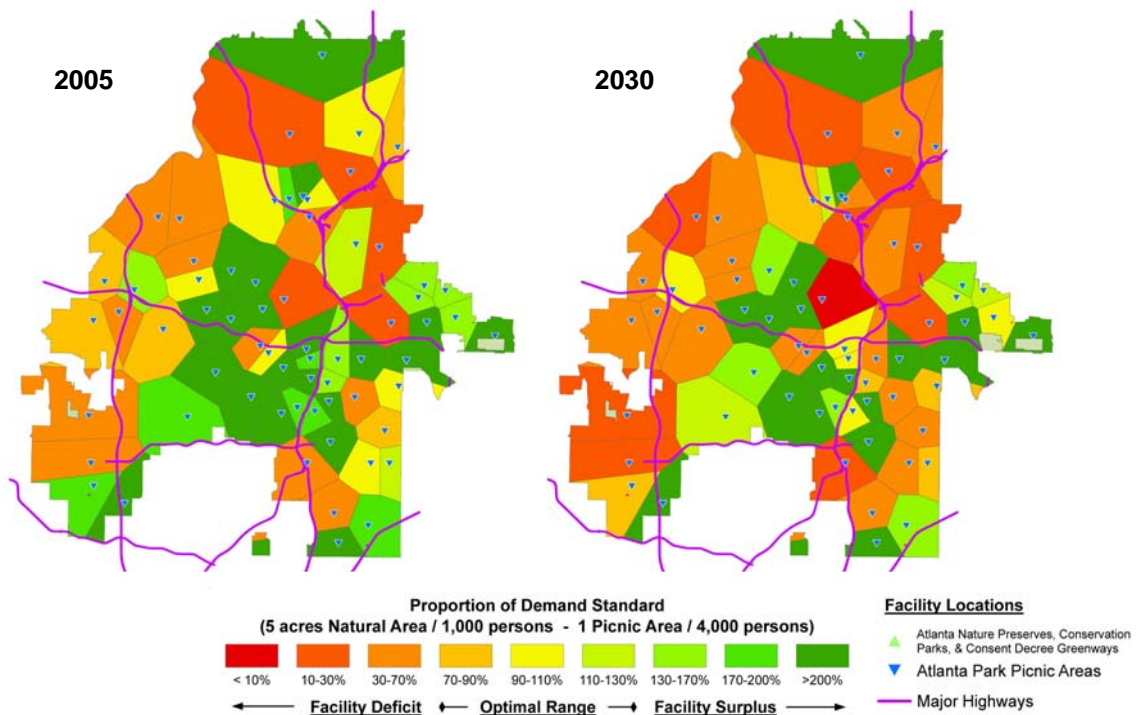
**Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- Based on the recommended standard, no additional picnic areas are necessary – a surplus of 149 sites existed in 2005.

**Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Based on the recommended standard, no additional picnic areas are necessary through the year 2030. The City will still retain a surplus of 74 sites.

**Figure 12: Park Shelters and Picnic Areas**





### 4.2.3 Outdoor Swimming Pools and Spray Fountains

There is conflicting evidence concerning the need for outdoor pools. The citizen survey results indicate that the need is very high, and the prioritization process has revealed that pools should be given a high priority ranking. Yet according to city officials, attendance at pools is limited. The problem is exacerbated by the high maintenance cost of these facilities. The perceived demand for outdoor pools could be satisfied by implementing spray fountains (like that at Centennial Olympic Park) at strategic locations throughout the City. For this analysis, it is assumed that Atlanta's public schools do not provide outdoor pool facilities. The distribution and current and projected deficiencies are illustrated in Figure 15.

#### **Current Provision**

- Outdoor pools: 22
- Spray Fountains: 4 (at Grant and Powell Parks. Another is planned in Piedmont Park)  
The State of Georgia maintains a separate spray fountain at the Centennial Olympic Park.

#### **Current Distribution**

- Many existing outdoor pools are clustered in the central and south-central part of the City. Only a few pools are located in the north. The north- and south- western portions of the City lack outdoor pool facilities.

#### **Priority Ranking**

- High

#### **Recommended Standard**

- Outdoor pools: one pool per 25,000 residents is a typical population-based standard. However, the provision of spray fountains at strategic locations based on a recommended standard of one fountain per 10,000 residents would offset the need to provide additional outdoor pool facilities. Based on this recommended standard for spray fountains, the City requires in 2005 a total of 44 fountains and a total of 74 fountains in 2030.

#### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- Outdoor pools: based on the recommended standard, additional pools are not needed. There is a surplus of 3 pools in Atlanta.

#### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Outdoor pools: An additional 9 pools would be needed through 2030 in accordance with the recommended standard. However, 74 strategically located spray fountains would offset this need through the year 2030.

## 4.2.4 Indoor Swimming Pools

Atlanta residents ranked indoor swimming pools 13th in order of importance of the 25 parks and recreation facilities included in the citizen survey. In addition, the prioritization process resulted in a medium priority ranking for indoor pools. However, anecdotal evidence from City staff suggests that these facilities are in very high demand. Due to high implementation and maintenance costs, the level of service for these facilities should be provided at the regional level. It is not feasible to provide indoor pool facilities at the neighborhood level. Perceived demand for these facilities can be offset by partnering with private facility providers, such as the YMCA or Boys and Girls Clubs.

### **Current Provision**

- 5 indoor pools

### **Current Distribution**

- Three facilities are located in the central area of the City. One facility is in the west-central area, and one facility is in the southeast. The northern portion of the City lacks indoor pool facilities.

### **Priority Ranking**

- Medium

### **Recommended Standard**

- Indoor pool facilities should be provided at the regional level with a level of service radius of about 5 miles and be based on proven economic feasibility.

### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- Based on the current distribution of indoor pool facilities only, an additional indoor pool may be needed in the northern portion of the City.

### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Not applicable, though the perceived demand for indoor pool facilities will increase as the City's population and density increase.

## 4.2.5 Playgrounds

A recreational focus for families and children, playgrounds should be readily accessible to all residents and are a particularly important facility at the neighborhood level. Playgrounds serve a function as part of the family “trip to the park” for activities such as picnicking and walking. This facility's traditional form as a collection of equipment such as swings, slides, and play structures is being rethought by contemporary designers who are expanding the definition of playground to encompass ideas such as interactive play environments, natural habitat gardens, and learning landscapes. Special consideration should be given to the provision of “boundless playgrounds”, or playgrounds that meet the needs of children with



physical and learning disabilities. The distribution and current and projected deficiencies are illustrated in Figure 16. While the figures illustrate a deficiency, it should be noted that a portion of the demand is being met by providers such as the Atlanta Housing Authority.

#### **Current Provision**

- Playground sites in parks: 113 sites
- Playground sites in public schools: 60 sites
- Playground sites in parks and public schools: 173 sites

#### **Current Distribution**

- Playground sites are scattered throughout the City, though seem to be concentrated primarily in the city center. Additional playgrounds are needed in the north and southwest portions of the City.

#### **Priority Ranking**

- Medium

#### **Recommended Standard**

- One playground site per 2,500 residents. Based on this standard, the City requires 192 playground sites in 2005 and 311 sites in 2030.

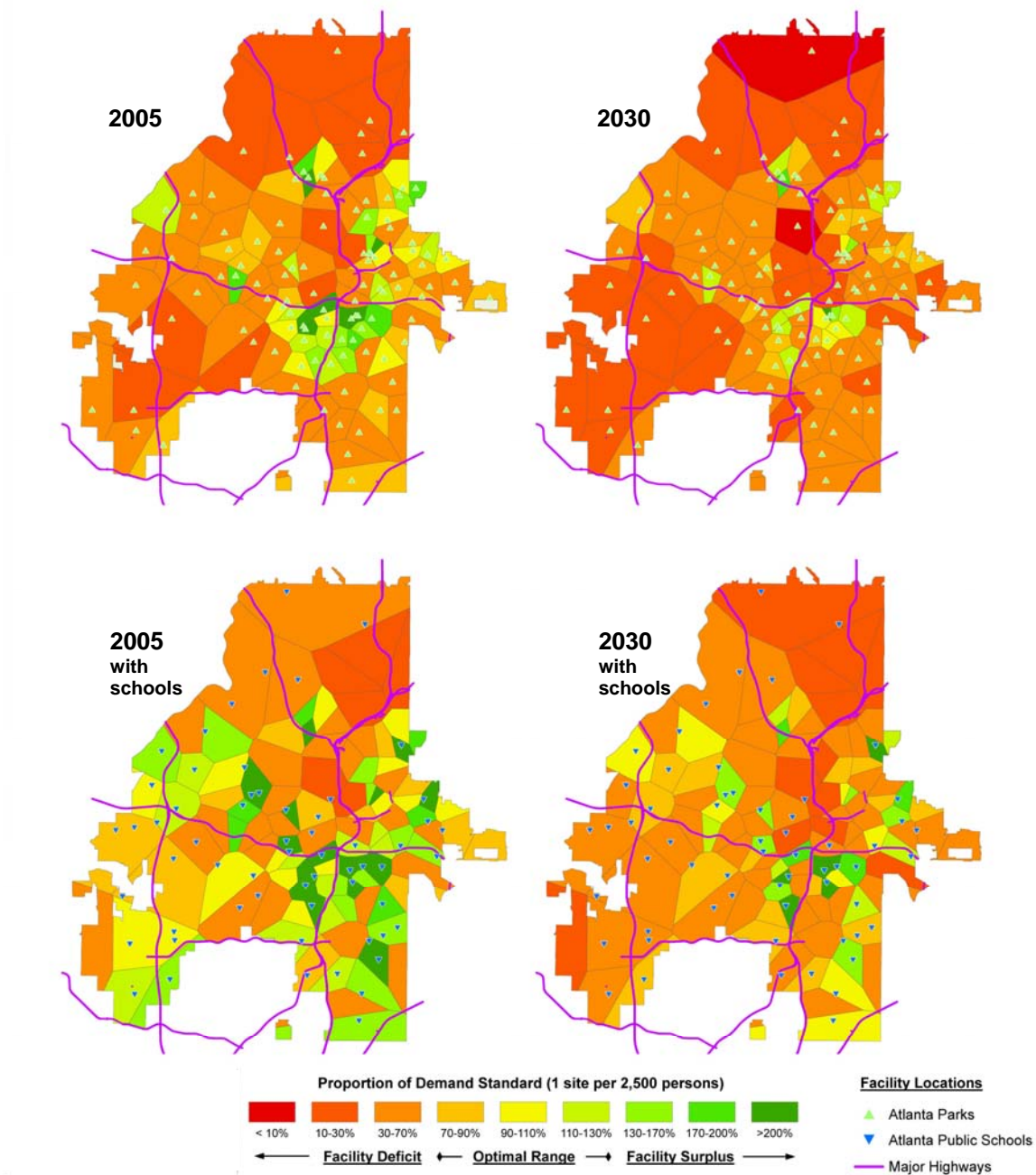
#### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- Excluding public schools, an additional 79 sites are needed
- Including playground sites of public schools, only an additional 19 sites are needed

#### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Excluding public schools, an additional 198 sites are needed through 2030
- Including playground sites of public schools, an additional 138 sites are needed

**Figure 13: Playgrounds**



#### 4.2.6 Outdoor Basketball Courts

Although assigned a medium priority, basketball remains a popular sport in Atlanta. Anecdotal evidence suggests that outdoor basketball courts covered by a roof structure (i.e., a pavilion) are more frequently used than those exposed to the hot sun. Additional costs associated with providing these structures should be considered as additional basketball



facilities are constructed. No more than two outdoor basketball courts are clustered together in any one location throughout the City. This severely limits the opportunity for desired basketball tournaments to occur. A minimum of four (4) courts clustered together on one site is recommended to host a basketball tournament. For purposes of this analysis, half-courts are counted as one full court. The distribution and current and projected deficiencies are illustrated in Figure 17.

#### **Current Provision**

- Courts in parks: 64 courts
- Courts in public schools: 18 sites
- Courts in parks and public schools: 82 sites

#### **Current Distribution**

- Basketball courts are scattered throughout the City, although seem to be concentrated primarily in the east central part of the City. The current distribution indicates that additional courts are needed in the north and southwest portions of the City. However, the location of outdoor basketball courts should be based on the specific needs and desires of each neighborhood.

#### **Priority Ranking**

- Medium

#### **Recommended Standard**

- One court per 5,000 residents. Based on this standard, the City requires 96 basketball courts in 2005 and 156 courts in 2030.

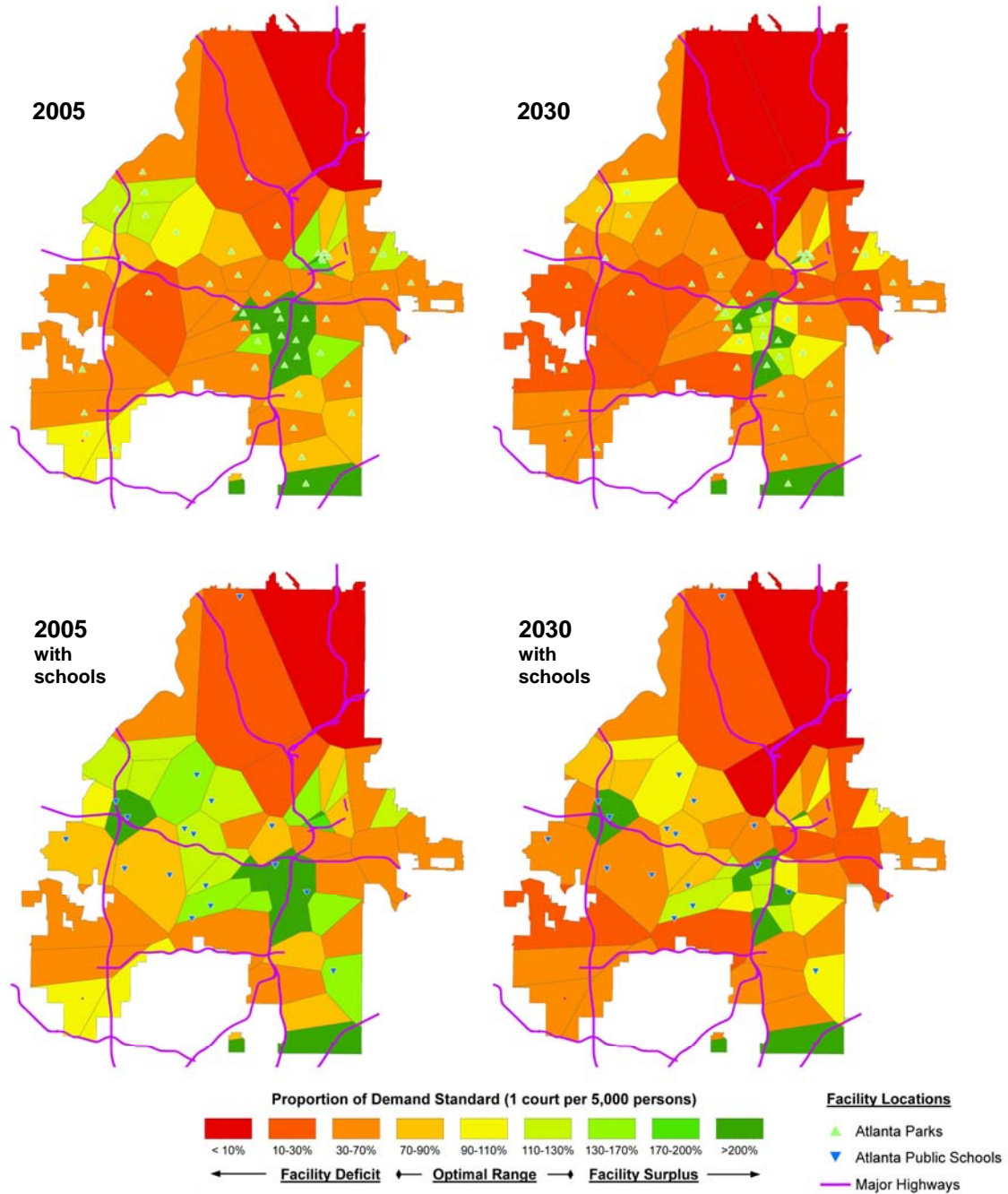
#### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- Excluding public schools, an additional 32 courts are needed.
- Including basketball courts of public schools, an additional 14 courts are needed.

#### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Excluding public schools, an additional 92 courts are needed through 2030.
- Including playground sites of public schools, an additional 74 courts are needed .

**Figure 14: Outdoor Basketball Courts**





#### 4.2.7 Off-Leash Dog Parks

Only one official off-leash dog park exists in the City of Atlanta. These facilities will become increasingly important as the City's population and density increases. Off-leash dog parks should be a minimum of five acres in size. They can be accommodated in areas that aren't parks, such as utility rights-of-way or similar types of open spaces.

##### **Current Provision**

- One (1) off-leash dog park exists in the City of Atlanta.

##### **Current Distribution**

- The City's only off-leash dog park is located in Piedmont Park.

##### **Priority Ranking**

- Medium

##### **Recommended Standard**

- One park per 50,000 residents (based on 5 minimum acres per park).
- Based on this standard, the City requires 10 off-leash dog parks in 2005 and 16 parks in 2030.

##### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- Based on the recommended standard, an additional nine (9) off-leash dog parks should be provided.

##### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Based on the recommended standard, an additional fifteen (15) dog park facilities will be required through the year 2030.

#### 4.2.8 Baseball/Softball Fields

The citizen survey asked respondents to evaluate the need and importance of both adult and youth/teen baseball and softball facilities. Due to the limitations of available inventory data, the differentiation of age-specific facilities could not be adequately determined. Nor could a differentiation be made between baseball and softball. Therefore, the inventory of existing facilities is based on the total number of all ballfields without regard to the type of facility. A recommended standard for youth and adult facilities is provided below, but a general population-based standard has been used to calculate the projected needs for 2005 and 2030. The distribution and current and projected deficiencies are illustrated in Figure 18. Much of the need described below should be accommodated in baseball/softball field complexes to provide tournament or league play opportunities.



### **Current Provision**

- Ballfields in parks: 72 fields
- Ballfields in public schools: 33 fields
- Ballfields in parks and public schools: 105 fields

### **Current Distribution**

- Most ballfields are distributed throughout the east-central portion of the City. Due to the presence of a tournament facility in Southside Park, ballfield distribution is greater in the southeast than any other area of the City. In general, tournament facilities for baseball are needed. These facilities should be as centrally located as possible.

### **Priority Ranking**

- Adult fields: Low
- Youth/teen fields: Low

### **Recommended Standard**

- Adult fields: one field per 6,000 residents. Based on this standard, the City requires 80 total ballfields in 2005 and 130 ballfields in 2030.
- Youth/teen fields: one field per 3,500 residents (60-foot bases), and one field per 15,000 residents (90-foot bases)
- Recommended general standard: one field per 3,500 residents

### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

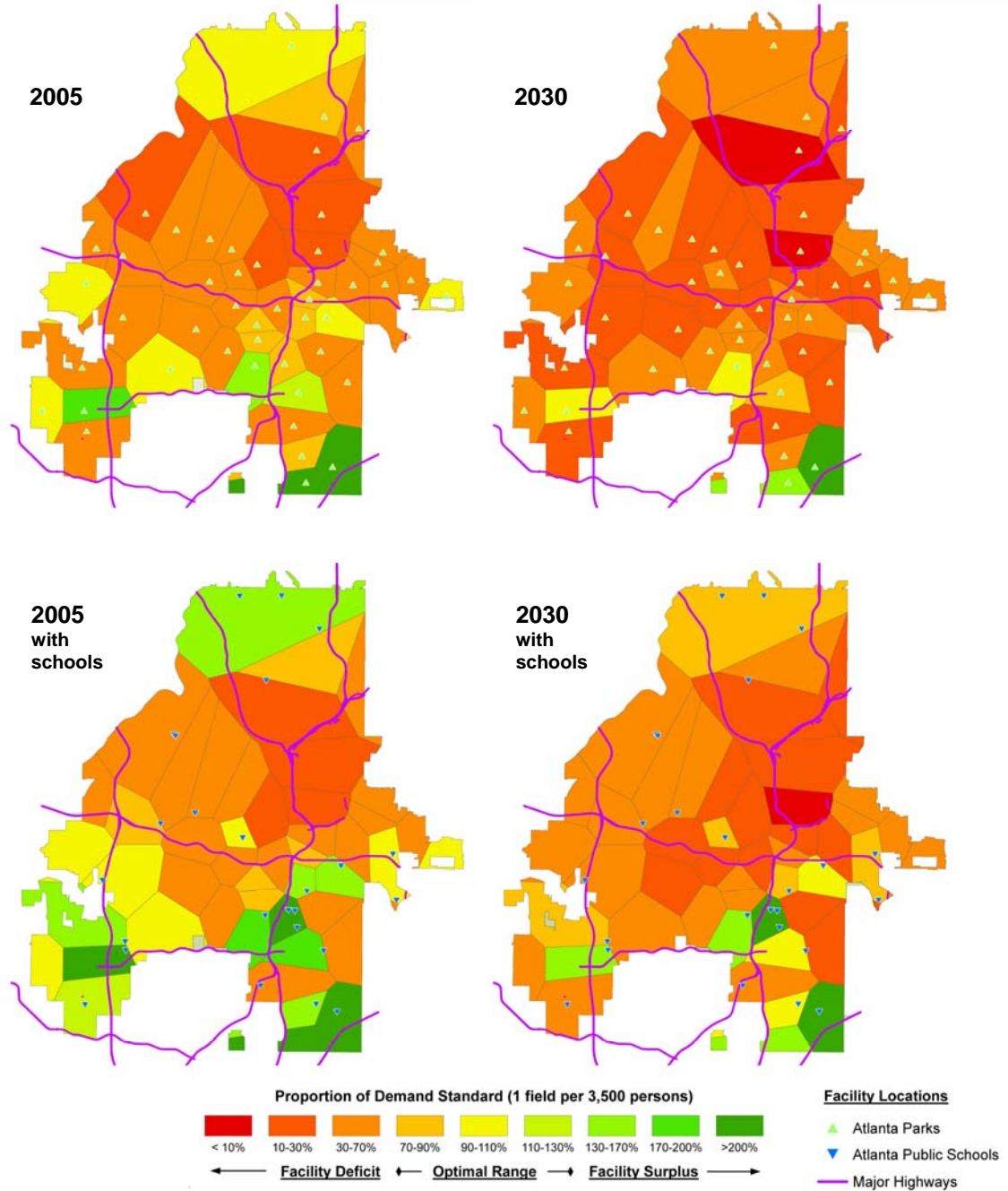
- Excluding public schools, an additional 65 fields are needed based on the blended standard.
- Including ballfields of public schools, an additional 32 fields are needed based on the general standard.

### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Excluding public school facilities, an additional 150 fields are needed through 2030.
- Including public school facilities, 117 additional fields are needed.



**Figure 15: Baseball / Softball Fields**



## 4.2.9 Soccer Fields

Like ballfields, the citizen survey asked respondents to evaluate the need and importance of both adult and youth/teen soccer facilities. Due to the limitations of available inventory data, the differentiation between these two types of facilities could not be determined. Therefore, the inventory of existing facilities is based on the total number of all soccer fields without regard to the type of facility. A recommended standard for youth and adult facilities is provided below, but a general population-based standard has been used to calculate the projected needs for 2005 and 2030. The distribution and current and projected deficiencies are illustrated in Figure 19. Much of the need described below should be accommodated in soccer field complexes to provide tournament or league play opportunities.

### Current Provision

- Soccer fields in parks: 31 fields
- Soccer fields in public schools: 38 fields
- Soccer fields in parks and public schools: 69 fields

### Current Distribution

- Soccer fields are generally distributed evenly throughout the City, though a small cluster exists in both the east-central and west-central part of the City.

### Priority Ranking

- Adult fields: Low
- Youth/teen fields: Medium

### Recommended Standard

- Adult fields: 1 field per 7,000 residents. Based on this standard, the City requires a total of 69 soccer fields in 2005 and a total of 111 fields in 2030.
- Youth/teen fields: one field per 4,000 residents
- Recommended general standard: 1 field per 7,000 residents

### Estimated 2005 Deficiency

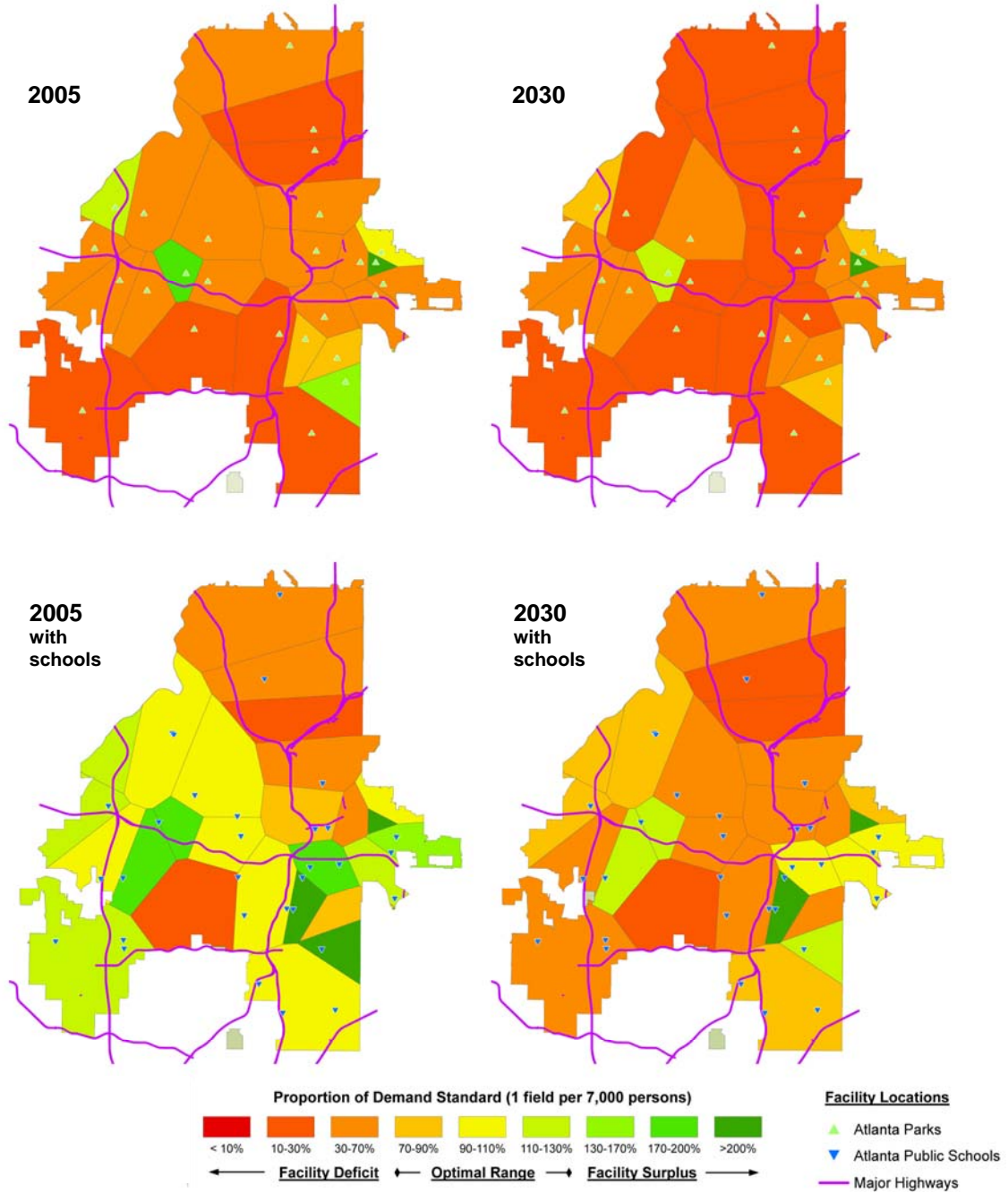
- Excluding public schools, an additional 38 fields are needed based on the blended standard.
- Including ballfields of public schools, no additional fields are needed based on the blended standard.

### Projected 2030 Deficiency

- Excluding public school facilities, an additional 80 fields are needed through 2030.
- Including public school facilities, 42 additional fields are needed.



**Figure 16: Soccer Fields**





#### 4.2.10 Outdoor Tennis Courts

The City has actively developed tennis court facilities in association with a private recreation provider. The information below suggests that no additional facilities are required (a surplus of tennis courts exists in Atlanta), even through the year 2030. However, tennis courts could be better distributed at the neighborhood level to provide more equitable access. This public/private partnership has been extremely successful and could serve as a model for the provision of other recreational facilities. Though individual courts exceed needs, 6 to 8 courts should be located where possible together to accommodate tournaments. The distribution and current and projected deficiencies are illustrated in Figure 20.

##### **Current Provision**

- Tennis courts in parks: 184 courts
- Tennis courts in public schools: 40 courts
- Tennis courts in parks and public schools: 224 courts

##### **Current Distribution**

- Tennis courts are scattered throughout the City, though the provision of additional or the relocation of surplus courts could be accommodated in the northwest part of the City.

##### **Priority Ranking**

- Low

##### **Recommended Standard**

- One court per 5,000 residents
- Based on this standard, the City requires a total of 96 tennis courts in 2005 and a total of 156 courts in 2030.

##### **Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

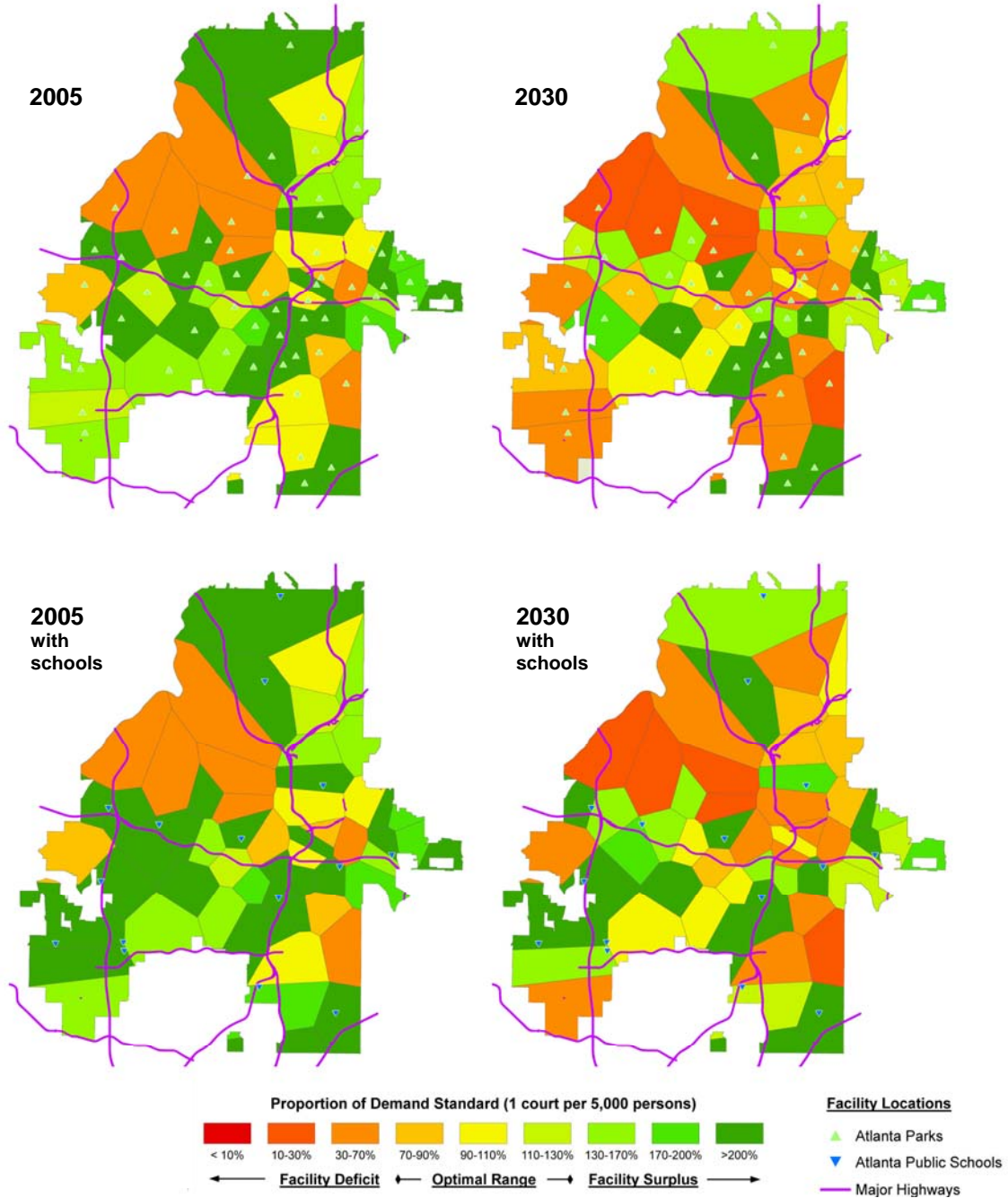
- Excluding public schools, no (0) additional courts are needed based on the recommended standard. The City has a surplus of 88 courts.
- Including tennis court facilities of public schools, no (0) additional courts are needed based on the recommended standard. The City would have a surplus of 128 courts if school facilities were included.

##### **Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Excluding public school facilities, no (0) additional courts are needed through 2030. The City will have a surplus of 28 courts.
- Including public school facilities, no (0) additional courts are needed. The City would have a surplus of 68 courts.



**Figure 17: Outdoor Tennis Courts**





#### 4.2.11 Special Events and Festivals

As described in Section 2.0, special events and festivals ranked very high in importance and priority among Atlanta residents. Very few venues exist within the City that could host the large crowds associated with outdoor concerts, sporting events, or festivals. Currently, the parking lot of the Georgia Dome is one of the few places where special events occur.

**Current Provision**

- Not applicable

**Current Distribution**

- Not applicable

**Priority Ranking**

- High

**Recommended Standard**

- A 50 acre site (minimum) is recommended for a special event venue in Atlanta. This size would accommodate 50,000 to 100,000 people and parking. The selection of a specific site should consider ease of access for vehicles from the street and highway network, as well as convenient MARTA access for those arriving via transit.

**Estimated 2005 Deficiency**

- Not applicable

**Projected 2030 Deficiency**

- Not applicable, though the perceived demand for special events and festival venues will increase as the City's population and density increase.