

# Prioritization and Cost Estimates

## Land Acquisition and Facility Development Recommendations

To meet the facility and open space needs desired by Suwanee citizens, the city will have to make a concerted effort to acquire and develop parkland over the next 10 years. The primary needs are in the area of small neighborhood parks within walking distance to residential developments, small parcels to serve as access points to a community-wide greenway system, open space and buffer zones that protect tree canopy throughout the city, and the development of at least one large open area to serve multiple user groups for practice of team sports and community-wide special events.

In developing recommendations to meet these needs, the planning team looked at the service area of existing city, county and homeowner association facilities as well as proposed county recreation facilities to determine those areas that are underserved at present. In addition, analysis was completed of the goals of the city's comprehensive plan, alternative transportation plan and zoning ordinance with respect to protection of natural systems and tree canopy. The recommendations were prioritized based on these factors, public input and the citizen surveys results and are listed below starting with the highest priority facilities.

### Neighborhood Parks and Greenways

The desire to have small parks throughout the city that citizens can walk to is the highest priority. The neighborhood parks would supplement facilities offered by the county at George Pierce Park and protect open space at the same time. To provide pedestrian access to these parks, the city should continue to develop the greenway system.

Development of neighborhood parks and greenway connections will require the acquisition of right-of-ways and additional land throughout the city. The parkland can be acquired through fee simple purchases by the city or through zoning revisions that would require developers to set aside land for public parks and greenways. The greenway right-of-ways can be acquired through fee simple purchase, purchase of easements, and zoning revisions that require developers to construct those sections of trails that are included in the city's greenway master plan when they develop property adjacent to the greenway.

### Mini Parks and Greenway Access Points

As greenways will serve as the primary means of pedestrian and bicycle access to parks throughout the city, mini park access areas will be needed. Unlike the neighborhood parks that have playgrounds, picnic areas and other support facilities, the primary purpose of these mini parks would be to provide a location to park and access the trail for residents living outside a one-half mile radius. These parks would have a greenway system map, rules for using the greenway and support facilities such as a water fountain, trash can, bike rack and benches. These access points could be as small as an acre or could be the only developed area of a large open space purchase.

Acquisition of park land for mini parks and trail access points can include fee simple purchases by the city or through zoning revisions that would require developers to set aside land for public parks and greenways.

## Open Space

Open space is a component of the aforementioned park categories but can also stand alone as a category. The acquisition of open space to protect the scenic quality of the city and to protect the tree canopy was a high public priority. Several key areas of open space were described during the input process. These included the protection of properties near the City Hall, protection of river and stream edges, forested areas along the major roadways through Suwanee and undeveloped upland tracts dispersed throughout the city. Areas that were identified as needing visual improvements included the main access points to the city and along the major roadways.

Open space needs can be met through both acquisition and regulatory processes. The rapid growth of Suwanee over the past decade and the projected continuation of rapid growth necessitates acting quickly to purchase open space. Purchasing property will be the most rapid method for protecting undeveloped land. As a piece of property is identified for acquisition, the City can make an offer to purchase. The City will be competing with the development community and will be subject to fair market pricing. While this will be an expensive method of acquiring property, the need to protect open space before it is lost to development will justify the purchases.

The use of regulatory processes to acquire and or slow down the consumption of desired open space and sensitive habitats will also be a very effective acquisition tool. Modifications to the zoning ordinance to require the set aside of public open space in all development districts, rather than only in the mixed-use zone district, is one change that will provide public open space. Other changes include increasing the buffer requirements along all streams and the prohibition of developing impervious surfaces in wetland zones. These changes will keep critical open space corridors available for greenways and later fee simple acquisition by the city; as well as the purchase of conservation easements that would provide permanent protection to the buffers and wetlands.

In addition to buffer requirements along streams, buffers should be required on major roadways. Many of the major roadways have a contiguous tree canopy remaining. In some sections where the tree canopy is not contiguous there are large tracts that remain undeveloped. Protection of the tree canopy along these roads will buffer development impacts when they occur and maintain the desired rural character rather than the strip look so prevalent in other areas of Gwinnett County. The City should explore increased buffers or landscape strips along major roadways. A standard that is acceptable by the development community should be established that, at a minimum, offers incentives for the preservation of larger specimen trees within the proposed landscape roadway buffer. These actions will help to preserve the green tree canopy that is prevalent in the community.



## Town Center Development

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***“The residents and individuals interviewed all stated that there is no current downtown area or business district that gives Suwanee a point of reference when you enter the city.”***

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An issue related to open space preservation and park development that was brought up during the research for this plan was the desire to create a Town Center that would serve as the center point of public activities in Suwanee. The residents and individuals interviewed all stated that there is no current downtown area or business district that gives Suwanee a point of reference when you enter the city. The development of an area within the city that houses the primary municipal services, i.e. City Hall, Library, Police and Fire services, Human and Health Care services and postal services, inter-mixed with public open space, residential and commercial services would create a Town Center. If centrally located, this type of development could become a hub for daily business activities of the city, special music and recreation programs, the location of public gatherings and community-sponsored special events.

The development of a Town Center does not have to be fully funded by the city. The city could purchase the property and develop an overall master plan for the municipal facilities, parkland and open space, and identify areas where commercial services and residential areas would be developed. The city could then sell the tracts identified for development and use the proceeds to retire debt on land. The city would need to develop specific design guidelines and a site plan review process for all development within the Town Center.

Suwanee is currently in the process of developing a master plan for the Old Town section of the city. The location of a Town Center near the Old Town area and the existing City Hall would serve to enhance both projects. The Old Town area is the historical commercial center for Suwanee and there are several large undeveloped tracts adjacent to both the Old Town area and City Hall. The county owns property and is planning to develop a new branch library in this area that will add another major public building. The combination of the history, existing and proposed buildings and the central location within the city make this area the logical choice for developing a Town Center.

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***“The location of a Town Center near the Old Town area and the existing City Hall would serve to enhance both projects.”***

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The planning team has identified two potential Town Center sites. Each needs to be evaluated and studied extensively by Suwanee’s elected policymakers prior to selecting one option as the desired town center. There are advantages and disadvantages to each option that will be addressed in greater detail in the City’s Old Town Master Plan process. However, we recommend that the City purchase one of these parcels for a new town center.

If Town Center 2 is chosen, the City should purchase a portion of the proposed Town Center 1 (approximately 24 acres) for a neighborhood park to supplement the City’s park inventory. This property has great access to Main Street, Suwanee Dam Road, and the new Suwanee Branch Library. The site is heavily wooded and has been identified by numerous participants in the public process as a desirable property to preserve.

If Town Center 1 is selected, the City should purchase a small portion of the Town Center 2 property as a mini-park. Approximately 7 to 10 acres should be acquired to protect a valuable corner, which serves as an entry to the community. This area was also identified by the community as a key parcel to preserve.



***“The combination of the history, existing and proposed buildings and the central location within the city make this area the logical choice for developing a Town Center.”***

Each parcel will compliment the other once pedestrian access is improved via a tunnel under the railroad linking City Hall with the new library and the Old Town area.

## **Funding and Acquisition Recommendations**

In figures 7.1 and 7.2 we have identified the general location of undeveloped tracts that are potential sites for open space acquisition, park development and the development of a Town Center. On figure 7.1 we have shown existing service areas of both public and private recreation facilities and proposed facilities. We have also identified the classification of each acquisition. On figure 7.2 we have shown where buffers along streams and roadways should be required and the potential greenway routes that will provide desired pedestrian and bicycle connectivity throughout the city.

A summary of the recommended acquisitions is provided in the following table.

### **Neighborhood Parks**

| <b>Park Identification Number</b> | <b>Size</b> | <b>Current Land Use Category</b> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|
| NH #1                             | 62 acres    | R140                             |
| NH #2                             | 10 acres    | R100                             |
| NH #3                             | 10 acres    | R100                             |
| NH #4                             | 160 acres   | M1, C2                           |
| NH #5                             | 30 acres    | County                           |

Neighborhood Park #1 is located on Suwanee Dam Road in the northwest section of the city. This is an area that lacks a large public park and requires residents to cross both Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Buford Highway to access George Pierce Park. The property identified for acquisition is a 61-acre site with a large lake and single family residence. The property is surrounded by residential development and could serve passive recreation needs. Facilities that would be suitable for this site include a community playground, walking trails, picnic facilities and fishing. The home, which is located on the edge of the lake, could be renovated to accommodate space for rental or future recreation programming.

Neighborhood Park #2 is located in the northwest section of the city off of Settles Bridge Road. The proposed park should be in the five to ten acre range. The proposed site is part of a much larger undeveloped tract that is currently served by Settles Bridge. As plans for the larger tract are developed, the city should identify the land they want to purchase for a park as the road system is planned. This site would be a good area for walking path, picnic and playground facilities.

Neighborhood Park #3 is located in the central-most part of the city on Buford Highway. The property is currently under agricultural use but offers excellent opportunities as a destination for passive recreation via the expanded city trail system. Recommendations for this site include minimal disturbance with the exception of picnic and playground facilities.



Neighborhood Park #4 is located in the south-central section of the city adjacent to Buford Highway. It contains a large area of flood plain and wetlands and offers some upland area that is suitable for the development of a large multi-use public green space. The area would serve many passive recreation uses and active uses including practice fields for team sports. The wetland area offers the opportunity for interpretive panels on the environmental benefits of wetlands. This site is on the city's existing greenway master plan and would be accessible throughout the city via the greenway.

Neighborhood Park #5 is currently owned by the state of Georgia Department of Transportation and is being used as a rest area for travelers along interstate 85. A feasibility study is currently underway which may recommend closing the rest stop. Acquisition by the city would provide an excellent opportunity to provide a neighborhood park for residents on the east side of I-85. In addition, the park could serve as a possible link for pedestrians on Smithtown Road from the west side of the interstate via a possible bridge or tunnel across the interstate.

### Mini Park Sites

| Park Identification Number | Size     | Current Land Use Category |
|----------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| MP #1                      | 5 acre   | R140                      |
| MP #2                      | 1.7 acre | County                    |
| MP #3                      | 4 acre   | C2                        |
| MP #4                      | 10 acre  | M1                        |
| MP #5                      | 2 acre   | M1                        |
| MP #6                      | 5 acre   | M1                        |

Mini Park #1 is located in the northwestern section of the city on Settles Bridge Road. This site would serve as a mini-park/trailhead access facility. A greenway would connect this park with a proposed greenway along the Chattahoochee River. Facilities that would be located at this site include a parking area, trailhead map and rules, and support trailhead facilities.

Mini Park #2 is located just outside the city limits along Moore Road across from the River Moore subdivision. This property would provide a destination for users of the proposed city trail system.

Mini Park #3 is located on Moore Road north of the Peachtree Industrial Boulevard intersection. Approximately 4 acres in size, this site would provide another possible trailhead connection to the city wide trail system as well as offer a point of destination complete with picnic facilities and a playground.

Mini Park #4 is located central to the city along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. The property is ten acres in size, contains a pond, and would provide an access point to the trail system and would also serve to maintain some of the last remaining green space along Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.



Mini Park #5 is located adjacent to the Suwanee Sports Academy property and is approximately 2 acres in size. Its location is ideal for offering connection to the proposed city trail system as well as providing a potential access point to the trail.

Mini-Park #6 is located in the eastern section of the city on Satellite Boulevard. This site would serve as a mini-park/trailhead access facility. A greenway would connect this park with George Pierce Park and the citywide greenway system. Facilities that would be located at this site include a parking area, trailhead map and rules, and support trailhead facilities.

## Town Center Sites

| Town Center Identification Number | Size    | Current Land Use Category |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------------------------|
| TC #1                             | 24 acre | M1, O1, R100              |
| TC #2                             | 10 acre | C2                        |

Town Center #1 is located adjacent to the Old Town area and is bordered by Stonecypher Road and Lawrenceville Suwanee Road. This site is located directly behind the proposed library and has good vehicular access from throughout the city. Both a stream corridor and overhead power lines bisect the site, creating great potential for greenways. The site contains open pastures and areas of thick tree canopy. This mix of vegetation would allow for development with limited loss of tree canopy. Lying on the same side of the railroad as Old Town and the proposed library, pedestrian connections to these facilities can be easily developed. Access to City Hall should be achieved by providing a pedestrian tunnel under the railroad.

Town Center #2 is located across Buford Highway from City Hall. It is a wooded site that is bisected by a stream corridor. The site is one of the few remaining wooded sites along Lawrenceville Suwanee Road and is a very nice relief from the development that characterizes the corridor. Development of this site will require care to protect the tree canopy while achieving the goals for the Town Center. The property will also serve to provide connection between the Gwinnett County Greenway, City Hall and the Town Center sites.

Discussions from the City’s Old Town Master Plan process suggest that a “town commons” or “town green” may be recommended for the Buford Highway/Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road corner. This could provide valuable open space and recreation opportunities in an urban/town center setting.

## Greenway Routes

Routes that connect the proposed park facilities and George Pierce Park are the highest priority in the greenway system. Greenway connections that provide access under Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and Buford Highway are also a high priority. In looking at providing east-west greenway connections under the roadways, it appears that existing drainage corridors offer the greatest potential for crossings. The deep stream valleys most likely have required large box culverts or clear span bridges for the road-



ways. Our analysis of topographic maps of the city indicates at least two potential crossing points under Peachtree Industrial Boulevard. These same structures can serve as greenway underpasses and provide safe crossings for both pedestrians and bicyclists. These same crossing opportunities exist near the railroad in several locations.

Modifications of the existing drainage structures to meet pedestrian and bicycle design standards will very likely be needed, but the cost of these modifications is small compared to the cost to bore new crossings under these roadways and the railroad. The greenway corridors proposed would total 9.5 miles.

## **Funding**

Funding that is currently in-place includes approximately \$1 million dollars from the city's portion of the county's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) over the next four years and approximately \$63,000 annually from the Georgia Greenspace Program. With the current cost of property and the cost of park and greenway facility development, the city will need to develop additional funding in order to implement the recommendations of this master plan.

The projected cost for implementation of the recommendations is outlined on the following pages.



### Neighborhood Park Development Opinions of Probable Cost

| Parcel Number            | Unit | Unit Cost    | Units | Cost                  |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|-------|-----------------------|
| <i>NH #1</i>             |      |              |       |                       |
| Land Cost                | Ac.  | \$45,225.00  | 62    | \$2,803,950.00        |
| Walking Path             | LF   | \$25.00      | 5000  | \$125,000.00          |
| Playground               | LS   | \$100,000.00 | 1     | \$100,000.00          |
| Restroom                 | LS   | \$150,000.00 | 1     | \$150,000.00          |
| Pavilion                 | LS   | \$200,000.00 | 1     | \$200,000.00          |
| Parking                  | Each | \$400.00     | 75    | \$30,000.00           |
| Picnic Facilities        | LS   | \$50,000.00  | 1     | \$50,000.00           |
| Structure Renovation     | LS   | \$250,000.00 | 1     | \$250,000.00          |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |      |              |       | \$3,708,950.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |      |              |       | \$556,342.50          |
| <b>Total</b>             |      |              |       | <b>\$4,265,292.50</b> |

| Parcel Number            | Unit | Unit Cost   | Units | Cost                  |
|--------------------------|------|-------------|-------|-----------------------|
| <i>NH #2</i>             |      |             |       |                       |
| Land Cost                | Ac.  | \$72,000.00 | 10    | \$720,000.00          |
| Walking Path             | LF   | \$25.00     | 2500  | \$62,500.00           |
| Playground               | LS   | \$50,000.00 | 1     | \$50,000.00           |
| Parking                  | Each | \$400.00    | 25    | \$10,000.00           |
| Picnic Facilities        | LS   | \$50,000.00 | 1     | \$50,000.00           |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |      |             |       | \$892,500.00          |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |      |             |       | \$133,875.00          |
| <b>Total</b>             |      |             |       | <b>\$1,026,375.00</b> |

| Parcel Number            | Unit | Unit Cost   | Units | Cost                |
|--------------------------|------|-------------|-------|---------------------|
| <i>NH #3</i>             |      |             |       |                     |
| Land Cost                | Ac.  | \$65,000.00 | 10    | \$650,000.00        |
| Playground               | LS   | \$50,000.00 | 1     | \$50,000.00         |
| Parking                  | Each | \$400.00    | 25    | \$10,000.00         |
| Picnic Facilities        | LS   | \$20,000.00 | 1     | \$20,000.00         |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |      |             |       | \$730,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |      |             |       | \$109,500.00        |
| <b>Total</b>             |      |             |       | <b>\$839,500.00</b> |

| Parcel Number            | Unit | Unit Cost    | Units | Cost                  |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|-------|-----------------------|
| <i>NH #4</i>             |      |              |       |                       |
| Land Cost                | Ac.  | \$9,000.00   | 160   | \$1,440,000.00        |
| Playground               | LS   | \$100,000.00 | 1     | \$100,000.00          |
| Restroom                 | LS   | \$150,000.00 | 1     | \$150,000.00          |
| Practice Fields          | LS   | \$200,000.00 | 1     | \$200,000.00          |
| Pavilion                 | LS   | \$200,000.00 | 1     | \$200,000.00          |
| Boardwalk                | LS   | \$100,000.00 | 1     | \$100,000.00          |
| Parking                  | Each | \$400.00     | 75    | \$30,000.00           |
| Interpretive Panels      | LS   | \$50,000.00  | 1     | \$50,000.00           |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |      |              |       | \$2,270,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |      |              |       | \$340,500.00          |
| <b>Total</b>             |      |              |       | <b>\$2,610,500.00</b> |



| <b>Parcel Number</b>     | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>         |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <i>NH #5</i>             |             |                  |              |                     |
| Land Cost                | Ac.         | \$5,000.00       | 30           | \$150,000.00        |
| Playground               | LS          | \$50,000.00      | 1            | \$50,000.00         |
| Parking                  | Each        | \$400.00         | 10           | \$4,000.00          |
| Picnic Facilities        | LS          | \$10,000.00      | 1            | \$10,000.00         |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |             |                  |              | \$214,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |             |                  |              | \$32,100.00         |
| <b>Total</b>             |             |                  |              | <b>\$246,100.00</b> |

**Total for all five Neighborhood Parks** **\$8,987,767.50**

**Mini Park Development Opinions of Probable Cost**

| <b>Parcel Number</b>     | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>         |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <i>MP #1</i>             |             |                  |              |                     |
| Land Cost                | Ac.         | \$50,000.00      | 5            | \$250,000.00        |
| Site Preparation         | LS          | \$10,000.00      | 1            | \$10,000.00         |
| Amenities                | LS          | \$40,000.00      | 1            | \$40,000.00         |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |             |                  |              | \$300,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |             |                  |              | \$45,000.00         |
| <b>Total</b>             |             |                  |              | <b>\$345,000.00</b> |

| <b>Parcel Number</b>     | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>         |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <i>MP #2</i>             |             |                  |              |                     |
| Land Cost                | Ac.         | \$50,000.00      | 1.7          | \$85,000.00         |
| Site Preparation         | LS          | \$10,000.00      | 1            | \$10,000.00         |
| Amenities                | LS          | \$40,000.00      | 1            | \$40,000.00         |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |             |                  |              | \$135,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |             |                  |              | \$20,250.00         |
| <b>Total</b>             |             |                  |              | <b>\$155,250.00</b> |

| <b>Parcel Number</b>     | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>         |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <i>MP #3</i>             |             |                  |              |                     |
| Land Cost                | Ac.         | \$150,000.00     | 4            | \$600,000.00        |
| Site Preparation         | LS          | \$10,000.00      | 1            | \$10,000.00         |
| Amenities                | LS          | \$40,000.00      | 1            | \$40,000.00         |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |             |                  |              | \$650,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |             |                  |              | \$97,500.00         |
| <b>Total</b>             |             |                  |              | <b>\$747,500.00</b> |



| <b>Parcel Number</b>     | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>           |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| <i>MP #4</i>             |             |                  |              |                       |
| Land Cost                | Ac.         | \$200,000.00     | 10           | \$2,000,000.00        |
| Site Preparation         | LS          | \$20,000.00      | 1            | \$20,000.00           |
| Amenities                | LS          | \$80,000.00      | 1            | \$80,000.00           |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |             |                  |              | \$2,100,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |             |                  |              | \$315,000.00          |
| <b>Total</b>             |             |                  |              | <b>\$2,415,000.00</b> |

| <b>Parcel Number</b>     | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>        |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| <i>MP #5</i>             |             |                  |              |                    |
| Land Cost                | Ac.         | \$10,000.00      | 2            | \$20,000.00        |
| Site Preparation         | LS          | \$20,000.00      | 1            | \$20,000.00        |
| Amenities                | LS          | \$40,000.00      | 1            | \$40,000.00        |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |             |                  |              | \$80,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |             |                  |              | \$12,000.00        |
| <b>Total</b>             |             |                  |              | <b>\$92,000.00</b> |

| <b>Parcel Number</b>     | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>         |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| <i>MP #6</i>             |             |                  |              |                     |
| Land Cost                | Ac.         | \$125,000.00     | 5            | \$625,000.00        |
| Site Preparation         | LS          | \$10,000.00      | 1            | \$10,000.00         |
| Amenities                | LS          | \$40,000.00      | 1            | \$40,000.00         |
| <i>Subtotal</i>          |             |                  |              | \$675,000.00        |
| <i>Contingency @ 15%</i> |             |                  |              | \$101,250.00        |
| <b>Total</b>             |             |                  |              | <b>\$776,250.00</b> |

**Total for all six Mini Parks** **\$4,531,000.00**

**Town Center Development Opinions of Probable Cost**

| <b>Parcel Number</b>        | <b>Unit</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Units</b> | <b>Cost</b>           |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Town Center 1 &amp;2</i> |             |                  |              |                       |
| Land Cost                   | Ac.         | \$75,000.00      | 24           | \$1,800,000.00        |
| Land Cost                   | Ac.         | \$300,000.00     | 10           | \$3,000,000.00        |
| <b>Total</b>                |             |                  |              | <b>\$4,800,000.00</b> |



## Greenway Development Opinions of Probable Cost

The development of greenway costs is much more site-dependent. Costs vary greatly due to the special conditions required to work in flood plains and low, wet areas. Based on other greenway projects, we estimate that greenways, including a reasonable number of small bridges and boardwalks for stream crossings, can be developed for \$750,000 per mile. We have identified 9.5 miles that we feel are critical greenway corridors, for a total opinion of probable cost of \$7,125,000.

## Development and Land Acquisition Cost Summary

|                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Neighborhood Parks       | \$8,987,767         |
| Trailhead and Mini Parks | \$4,531,000         |
| Town Center Land         | \$4,800,000         |
| <u>Greenway</u>          | <u>\$7,125,000</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>\$25,443,767</b> |

Funding the acquisition and development of the proposed improvements will be a difficult task for the City of Suwanee. But possibly more difficult will be acquisition of property before it is lost to the private development sector. Priority should be given to acquiring parcels that are the greatest assets to the community. The following represents a priority schedule based on three tiers of acquisition and development.

### Tier One – 1st Priority

|       | <u>Land Cost</u> | <u>Acreage</u> |
|-------|------------------|----------------|
| NH #1 | \$2.8 Million    | 62 acres       |
| TC #1 | \$1.8 Million    | 24 acres       |
| TC #2 | \$3.0 Million    | 10 acres       |
| NH #4 | \$1.2 Million    | 160 acres      |
| MP #5 | \$20,000         | 2 acres        |

### Tier Two – 2nd Priority

|       | <u>Land Cost</u> | <u>Acreage</u> |
|-------|------------------|----------------|
| MP #3 | \$600,000        | 4 acres        |
| MP #6 | \$625,000        | 5 acres        |
| MP #1 | \$250,000        | 5 acres        |
| MP #2 | \$85,000         | 1.7 acres      |
| NH #2 | \$720,000        | 10 acres       |
| NH #5 | \$125,000        | 30 acres       |
| NH #3 | \$650,000        | 10 acres       |

### Tier Three – 3rd Priority

|             | <u>Land Cost</u> | <u>Acreage</u> |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| MP #4       | \$2,000,000      | 10 acres       |
| Greenway    |                  |                |
| Development | \$7,125,000      | 9.5 miles      |



### Other Parcels to Consider:

|    |  |          |
|----|--|----------|
| 1. | McGinnis Ferry/Burnette Road                   | 10 acres |
| 2. | Martin Farm Road at Suwanee Creek              | 20 acres |
| 3. | Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road/Satellite Boulevard | 5 acres  |

## Park Land Maintenance

With the acquisition of new property, the City of Suwanee will be required to consider the maintenance needs of park land. It is the recommendation of the planning team that a parks and recreation maintenance division be placed under the direction of the Public Works and Inspections Department. The task of planning for the maintenance needs of various park types is difficult. However, using standards established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and analyzing maintenance practices of existing park departments provides a basis for determining required manpower and funding.

In 1986, the NRPA developed and published park maintenance standards. The association established standards for five “modes” of maintenance. Site visits to existing parks in Suwanee determined that the current maintenance level meets mode II—high level maintenance associated with well-developed park areas with reasonably high visitation. Per the NRPA standards, Mode II requires the following:

- Turf—lawns are cut once every five working days and aerated as required. Grass is repaired (reseeded or sodded) when bare spots occur. Weeds are removed when visible or when they occur on about five percent of the turf areas.
- Fertilizer—adequate fertilizer is applied to all plant material, as needed, to ensure healthy, vigorous plants.
- Irrigation—some type of irrigation system is available and is used, as needed, to ensure healthy and vigorous turf and plants.
- Litter control—trash is removed a minimum of once per day.
- Pruning—at least once per season unless particular species require more frequent pruning.
- Disease control—as needed, when disease or insects create noticeable damage to plant material.
- Snow removal—snow is removed from parking lots by noon the day following a snowfall.
- Lighting—fixtures are repaired or replaced when it is reported that they are malfunctioning.
- Surfaces—cleaned, repaired, repainted or replaced when appearance is deteriorated.
- Repairs—completed as soon as possible when safety, function or appearance is in question.
- Inspection—facilities are inspected by a staff person at least once per day.
- Floral plantings—rotate blooms twice per year, water, fertilize and keep weed free.
- Restrooms—maintained at least once per day when open to public use. More



frequent cleaning and maintenance is required in times of especially high use such as tournaments, special events, etc.

- Special features—maintained for safety, function and appearance.<sup>1</sup>

Following NRPA standards and the planning teams experience with similar communities, we have developed basic formulas for determining the required maintenance cost and personnel for Suwanee Parks. Maintaining the current high level of maintenance will require a great deal of labor intensive hours. The following are projected hours for each park classification proposed for Suwanee.

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| • Mini-Park                   | 20 hours per week   |
| • Neighborhood Park           | 40 hours per week   |
| • Town Center/Community Park* | 160 hours per week<br>plus an additional 128<br>hours per week on a seasonal basis<br>(32 weeks per year) |

\*assumes 100+ acres of developed land

Costs for maintenance of the parks can be derived in two ways.

One is to use an annual typical per-acre price for park maintenance. Statistics for maintenance costs available from the Conservation Fund website revealed typical per acre costs for various types of parkland. Using the reported maintenance costs for Boulder, Colorado with a price index translation to Suwanee Georgia, the cost for undeveloped or open park land is approximately \$77/acre/year. Developed park land costs approximately \$2,500/acre/year. Based on these figures, the city could expect to spend approximately \$5,000 per year to maintain a 60-acre undeveloped parcel and \$25,000 per year to maintain ten acres of more highly developed and used park land.

<sup>1</sup> National Recreation and Park Association. Park Maintenance Standards. Arlington, Virginia, 1986



Another way to analyze park maintenance costs is by the manhours required, multiplied by the salary of the employee performing the work. Using the required hours for each park (see above) and using the hourly rate for a typical Suwanee public works employee of \$17.55/hr (includes 35% for cost of benefits), the following chart diagrams typical costs associated with the different parks.

| <b>Park</b> | <b>Size Category</b>            | <b>Acres</b> | <b>Costs</b> |
|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| NH #1*      | Mini                            | 61           | \$ 18,252    |
| NH #2       | Mini                            | 10           | \$ 18,252    |
| NH #3       | Mini                            | 10           | \$ 18,252    |
| NH #4       | Community                       | 160          | \$ 217,900   |
| NH #5       | Neighborhood                    | 25           | \$ 36,504    |
| TC #1       | Community (intense maintenance) | 24           | \$ 217,900   |
| TC #2       | Mini                            | 10           | \$ 18,252    |
| MP #1       | Mini                            | 5            | \$ 18,252    |
| MP #2       | Mini                            | 2            | \$ 18,252    |
| MP #3       | Mini                            | 4            | \$ 18,252    |
| MP #4       | Mini                            | 10           | \$ 18,252    |
| MP #5       | Mini                            | 2            | \$ 18,252    |
| MP #6       | Mini                            | 5            | \$ 18,252    |

\*NH #1 should be calculated at a lower rate, since the majority of the site is to remain natural.

These two methods of maintenance cost calculation are guidelines only. The costs for each park's maintenance will probably fall within the range of the two methods. Since every site is different, and the actual level of maintenance will vary with differences in development, use, and site conditions, an individual park assessment should be made prior to determining costs and budgets.