



Town of La Plata Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Adopted February 22, 2011



Acknowledgements

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Municipal Finance Services Group, Annapolis, Maryland

Oasis Design Group, Baltimore, Maryland

Thanks to the Charles County Departments of Community Services, Public Facilities, and Planning and Growth Management

COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LA PLATA
Ordinance 11-1

Introduced By:	Mayor Roy G. Hale
Date Introduced:	January 25, 2011
Planning Commission Public Hearing:	N/A
Town Council Public Hearing:	January 25, 2011
Date Adopted:	February 22, 2011
Date Effective:	March 9, 2011

1 **An Ordinance** concerning

2
3 **Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

4
5 **FOR** the purpose of adopting a new comprehensive parks and recreation master plan (CPRMP)
6 for the Town of La Plata; and all matters relating to said plan.

7
8 * * * * *

9
10 **WHEREAS**, the Town recognizes the key contribution that high quality parks and open
11 spaces make to community health, wellness and quality of life; and

12
13 **WHEREAS**, the Town enlisted the services of Environmental Resources Management
14 (“ERM”) in conjunction with Municipal Financial Services Group, and Oasis Design Group for
15 the development of the Town’s Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan; and

16
17 **WHEREAS**, beginning in October 2010, in addition to the numerous discussions of the
18 Parks and Recreation Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning
19 Commission, and Town Council held a joint meeting, where each element of the Plan was
20 carefully reviewed and considered; and

21
22 **WHEREAS**, the community was invited and encouraged to participate and comment;
23 and

24
25 **WHEREAS**, the Council of the Town of La Plata has determined that it is in the public
26 interest that the Plan be adopted as the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the
27 Town of La Plata.

28
29 **NOW THEREFORE:**
30

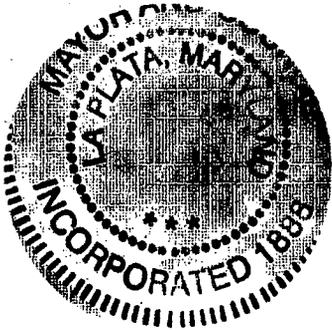
31 **SECTION 1: BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF**
 32 **LA PLATA** that the Town of La Plata Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a copy
 33 of which is attached to this Ordinance, is hereby adopted. The Plan shall be known as the "Town
 34 of La Plata Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, February, 2011.
 35

36 **SECTION 2: AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED** that this Ordinance shall become
 37 effective at the expiration of fifteen (15) calendar days after its approval by the Council.
 38

ADOPTED AND APPROVED by the Council of the Town of La Plata on February 22,
 2011.

SEAL:

COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LA PLATA



Roy G. Hale

 Roy G. Hale, Mayor

R. Wayne Winkler

 R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman

C. Keith Back

 C. Keith Back, Councilman

Paretta D. Mudd

 Paretta D. Mudd, Councilwoman

ATTEST:

Danielle Mandley

 Danielle Mandley, Town Clerk
 Date 2/22/11

Joseph W. Norris

 Joseph W. Norris, Councilman

EXPLANATION:

CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
 ((Double Parenthesis)) indicate matter deleted from existing law.
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.
 Strike Out indicates matter stricken from bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

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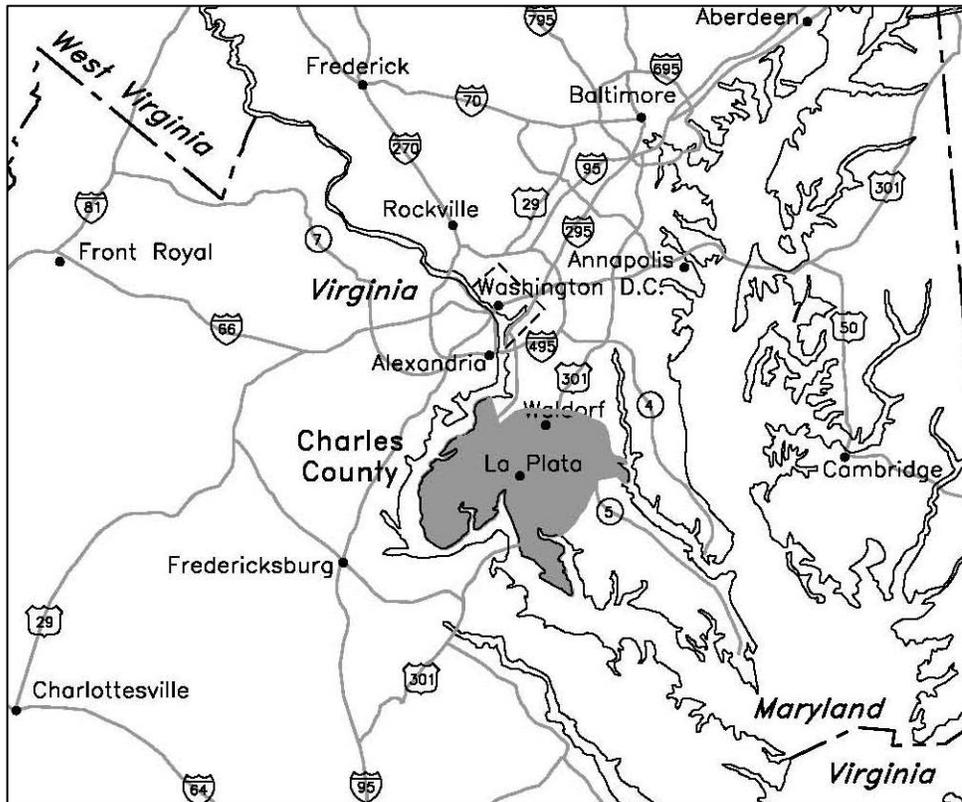
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Introduction and Purpose

This Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan (CPRMP) sets overall policy and direction for parks, recreation, and open space in the Town of La Plata (the Town) for the next 20 years. The Town is the county seat of Charles County, and is located approximately 30 miles southeast of Washington, D.C. (Map 1)

Map 1 Town of La Plata Location



The Town is on the cusp of significant change. Four large developments are projected, at build-out, to increase the Town's population from its current total of approximately 10,000 people to approximately 25,000. The Town recognizes the key contribution that high quality parks and open spaces make to community health, wellness and quality of life. It has undertaken this CPRMP to chart a course to transform the Town's small number of parks and recreation areas into a high quality, fully-developed parks system that will be a major contributor to the Town's quality of life in its vision as one of Maryland's premier communities.

Key questions addressed in this CPRMP include:

- What new parks and open spaces will be needed to serve the Town's projected population?
- What new recreation facilities such as community centers, ball fields, basketball courts, and playgrounds will be needed?
- How can the new developments best help meet the Town's future parks and recreation needs?
- What will it cost to create and maintain the parks and recreation system the Town envisions? Will the system be affordable to the Town?

- How will the Town manage its parks? Should the Town have a parks and recreation department? How should it share responsibilities with Charles County government?

This CPRMP updates and replaces the Town of La Plata Parks & Recreation Capital Expansion Plan, 2009, and supplements the Town of La Plata 2009 Comprehensive Plan, Open Space & Recreation Element.

Plan Organization

Chapter 1 contains an inventory and description of existing parks and recreation land in the Town and its environs. Chapter 1 also describes recreation programming, staffing and funding.

Chapter 2 contains a broad-based recreation needs and demand analysis. The Chapter analyzes needs and demands by considering demographic trends, national and local parks and recreation trends, and inputs from various sources including public meetings and a citizens' survey.

Chapter 3 contains the Master Plan's recommendations for parks and recreation.

Chapter 1 Inventory and Framework

This chapter describes existing and planned recreation and open space resources in and around the Town of La Plata. The chapter also describes recreation programming, staffing and funding.

1.1 Inventory

The areas within and around the Town have an inventory of public parks, recreation and open space (PROS) opportunities totaling approximately 800 acres. The inventory inside the Town totals approximately 340 acres of which the Town provides 138 acres, with the remaining 202 acres owned by Charles County Public Schools.

For purposes of the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan (CPRMP) an area outside the town was defined as the area within which non-town residents would be attracted to use the Town's PROS, just as Town residents now use PROS outside the Town. Map 2 shows the Town as well as this "outer La Plata" area (OLPA).

Table 1-1 lists the names and acreages of PROS inside and outside the Town and includes a map number showing the location of the site or facility on Map 2. Table 1-2 provides a more detailed inventory including a list of the amenities at each PROS site.

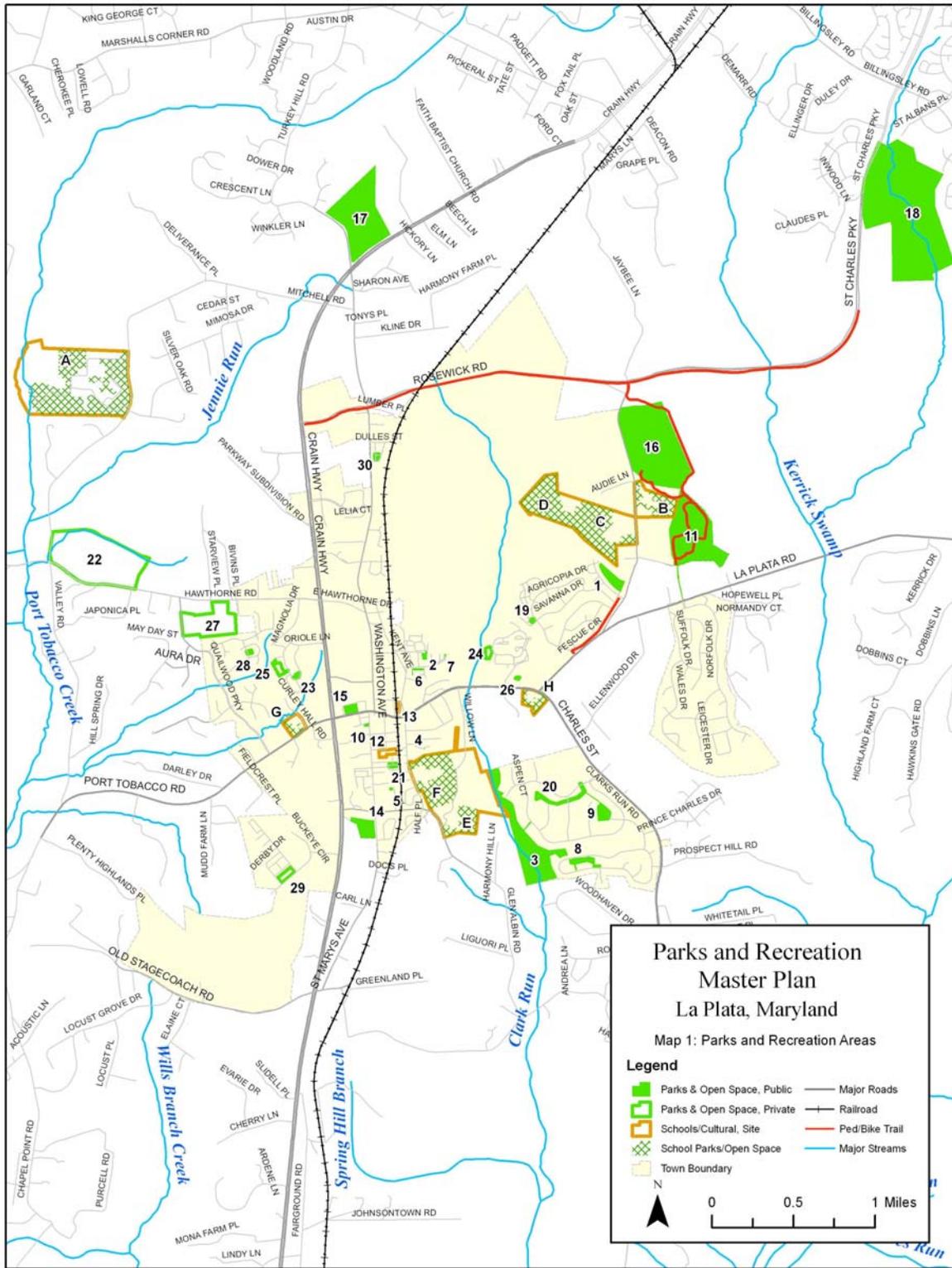
Table 1-1 Parks, recreation and open space (PROS) in and near the Town

Map #	Park/Facility	Acres	Map #	Park/Facility	Acres
Town of La Plata			Public near the Town		
1	Agricopia Park	6	A	College of Southern MD	91
2	Carroll La Plata Village	1	16	Laurel Springs Regional Park	103
3	Clark Run Natural Area	42	17	Turkey Hill Park	57
4	Hemlock Court	0.1	18	White Plains Regional Park	204
5	Patuxent Court	0.3		Total public near the Town	455
6	Phoenix Run Park I	0.7			
7	Phoenix Run Park II	0.2			
				Private near the Town (Contributing to public recreation and with some public access)	
8	Redwood Lake	5	27	La Plata Park	32
9	Silver Linden Park	5	22	Hawthorne Country Club	80
10	Star Memorial Garden	0.1		Total private near the Town	112
11	Tilghman Lake Park	61			
12	Town Hall Park	2			
13	Train Station	0.7			
14	Wills Memorial Park	14			
	Total Town of La Plata	138			
Non-Town of La Plata (with public access)					
15	Courthouse Soccer Field	2			
B	Gwynn Educational Center	7	(10)*		
C, D	La Plata HS & Matula ES	54	(21)*		
E	Mitchell ES	9	(6)*		
F	Somers MS	38	(56)*		
	Total Non-Town of La Plata	109	93	202 (109+93)	
	Total inside the Town	247	93		
	Total inside the Town		340		
Private, Commercial and Non-profit (Contribute to recreation need but with limited or no public access)					
19	Agricopia Tot Lot	0.3			
G	Archbishop Neale School	4			
20	Chestnut Court Natural Area	2			
21	Edelen Station	0.6			
H	Grace Lutheran Church	6			
23	Hawthorne Green	0.5			
24	Hickory Ridge	1			
25	Jamestowne	0.2			
26	La Plata Manor	2			
28	Quailwood Park	0.4			
29	Steeplechase	~2			
30	Washington Square	0.4			
	Total Private	20			

Total public PROS within and near the Town (340+455)	795
---	------------

* (#) Denotes natural resource acreage in school recreation areas.

Map 2 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Areas



Outer La Plata Area is the area outside Town within the map border.

See Table 1-1 for map key.

1.2 PROS Classification

This CPRMP uses the following PROS classification system based upon each resource's primary function. Table 1-3 summarizes the PROS within the Town.

- **Community parks.** Community parks serve a community-wide function, attracting users from all over the Town. Size varies.
- **Neighborhood parks.** Neighborhood parks primarily serve local neighborhoods. The existing neighborhood parks range in size from five to eight acres. These parks typically include playgrounds, ball fields and/or courts though they can also be more passive in nature.
- **Mini parks.** Mini parks are a type of neighborhood park but are smaller, typically one acre or less, with a smaller number of amenities such as a playground, field or court.
- **School recreation parks.** School recreation parks are land at school facilities owned by the Charles County Public Schools. The general public may use these parks outside of school hours, and the Charles County Parks and Recreation Division programs the fields, gymnasiums, and other facilities for events or recreation programs.
- **Natural resource areas.** Natural resource areas comprise open space with few if any recreation facilities other than trails. These lands are intended for conservation such as forests, wetlands, or floodplains. Size varies.
- **Regional parks.** Regional parks are large parks, typically over 100 acres. They provide a wide variety of recreation opportunities including field sports, trails, tennis or golf. There are no regional parks inside the Town but there are two in the outer La Plata area.

Table 1-3 Summary of PROS within the Town

	Town Owned		Non-Town Owned		Total Acres
	Number of sites	Acres	Number of sites	Acres	
Parks and Recreation					
Community Parks	2	64			
Neighborhood parks	4	30			
Mini Parks	7	3			
School Recreational Parks			5	109	
Sub Total	13	97	5	109	206
Natural Resource Areas	1	42	4	93	
Total	14	139	9	202	340

Note: Subtotals may not equal total due to rounding.

1.3 PROS within the Town

Community Parks

Tilghman Lake Park is the Town's largest park (62 acres). Located on the east side of town and adjoining the county-owned Laurel Springs Regional Park, the land was acquired from the federal government and was once envisioned as a potential water supply facility. The park is a beautiful, largely wooded site surrounding an approximately seven-acre lake. Developed facilities are currently limited to a large picnic pavilion and a trail around the lake. This park has great potential as a resource for the entire town, but access, parking, and additional developed facilities are currently lacking. The Town plans to install bathroom facilities and parking in 2011.

Town Hall Park is located adjacent to the Town Hall. The park is used for civic and entertainment events, including concerts, performances, and movies.

Neighborhood Parks

Wills Memorial Park (14 acres) is the most developed park in town with a ball field (used only for practice play because of proximity to homes), a basketball court, volleyball court, community building, playground, parking and woods.

Silver Linden Park (5 acres) located in the Clark Run neighborhood, has a playground, tennis court and unimproved multi-purpose field.

Redwood Lake Park (5 acres) off Redwood Circle is a passive park focused on a 2.5 acre lake which also functions as a storm water management facility. The park has a pavilion at the water's edge, benches, picnic tables and a walking trail on two sides of the lake.

Agricopia Park is located in the Agricopia subdivision by Radio Station Road. Under development as of 2010, the major feature of the park is a large multi-purpose playing field and a playground including a low (6 to 7-foot tall) rock climbing wall.



*Redwood Lake
Neighborhood Park*

Mini Parks

The Town has seven mini parks located primarily in the central part of Town:

Park	Features
Carroll La Plata Village	Basketball courts
Hemlock Court	Tot lot
Patuxent Court	Play equipment
Phoenix Run Park I and II	Play equipment/tot lots
Train Station	Train museum
Star Memorial Garden	Meditation garden, firehouse museum

School Recreation Parks

Charles County Public Schools has five sites/facilities within the Town which, combined, account for approximately 200 acres of land, much of which is undeveloped.

- La Plata High School
- Matula Elementary School
- Gwynn Education Center
- Somers Middle School
- Mitchell Elementary School

Because this large amount of land could skew the PROS inventory, this CPRMP counts the active recreation land (ball fields, courts) component of these areas separately from the natural resource areas, recognizing that portions of these areas could be developed in the future. The active recreation land totals approximately 109 acres of the total (see Tables 1-1 and 1-2).



Train Station Mini Park and museum on Kent Avenue

The school recreation parks contain baseball/softball fields, soccer/multi-purpose fields, football fields and gymnasiums that are important in meeting local recreation need. La Plata High School has an outdoor pool that is the only pool in Town open to the general public.

Somers Middle School is operated during non-school hours as a school-based recreation center by Charles County Parks and Recreation. The center offers a variety of social, education and recreation programs (see Section 1.5).

The two-acre Courthouse Soccer Field on Baltimore Street is also classified as a school recreation park. A remnant of the former high school that is now the Charles County government office complex, the field is maintained by Charles County Parks and Recreation.

Natural Resource Areas

The PROS inventory includes five natural resource areas. The Town owns the 42-acre Clark Run Natural Area in the southeast part of town. The area comprises the stream valley and floodplain of Clark Run, a stream that runs north-south through the entire town. The area is managed primarily to conserve open space and environmentally sensitive areas associated with Clark Run. The Natural Area is undeveloped but nearby residents have created some informal trails traveling east-west through it. This CPRMP envisions the entire length of Clark Run as a greenway (see Chapter 3).

The other four natural resource areas are those associated with school recreation parks, as described above. The largest area is 56 acres associated with Somers Middle School.

Private, commercial, and non-profit PROS

Private commercial and non-profit PROS help meet the recreation needs of Town residents, workers and visitors. All or portions of these PROS may be open to the public, sometimes for a fee. The PROS inventory includes 13 sites on approximately 18 acres in the Town. These include:

- Mini parks, tot lots and playgrounds managed by homeowner Associations (e.g., Quailwood Park, Jamestowne Park)
- Community centers which may include swimming pools, meeting rooms or fitness facilities (e.g. Edelen Station)
- Recreation areas as part of a private school facility (e.g. Grace Lutheran Church School).

Some commercial businesses in and near La Plata provide recreation services. These include La Plata Fitness and Iron Works Gym, both on Drury Drive, and World Gym now on US 301 at MD 6.

1.4 PROS outside the Town

As described above, this CPRMP defines an “outer La Plata” area (OLPA) which is the area outside the town with PROS resources that are close to the Town in Charles County, and are readily accessible to town residents. County residents from this area may also use PROS in the Town. PROS in this area include:

- Laurel Springs Regional Park is a large, active 103-acre park on Radio Station Road adjacent to the Town limits operated by Charles County Parks and Recreation. The park has 10 baseball/softball fields, seven soccer/multi-purpose fields, a football field, and 1,000 parking spaces. Most of these fields are lighted. A trail around the park connects to Tilghman Park.



Playground at Laurel Springs Regional Park

- White Plains Regional Park is a 200-acre county-owned park northeast of Town with sport fields and an 18-hole golf course, picnic areas and a skate park.
- College of Southern Maryland, La Plata Campus. The college's recreation facilities (indoor swimming pool, courts, and fitness center) are open to the public either through enrollment in classes/summer camps, or by membership.
- Turkey Hill Park. Charles County operates this park north of Town on US 301. It has five soccer/multi-purpose fields and a two-acre dog park. Charles County leases the property from the State Highway Administration, which acquired the land as a potential southern terminus of the US 301 bypass.
- La Plata Park. This is a privately owned tract of land on Hawthorne Road with two baseball fields, and is sometimes referred to as Rainbow Construction Field. One of the baseball fields was recently constructed by the La Plata Youth League.
- Hawthorne Country Club. Located immediately west of the Town on Hawthorne Road, the Club has an 18-hole, par 72 golf course (18 tees, 9 greens each with two holes) a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a clubhouse available for social and recreational events.

The Town is also within close proximity to St. Charles and the Waldorf area. Many town residents travel to the Robert Stethem Memorial Sports Complex for baseball and softball athletic league play, or to other nearby park and recreation areas including the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs Stadium.

1.5 Recreation Programs

The Town does not currently offer recreation programs. Charles County Parks and Recreation, the College of Southern Maryland, as well as non-profit youth leagues run several strong programs, host athletic leagues, educational classes, and recreational classes.

Charles County

Charles County Parks and Recreation offers programs at Somers Community Recreation Center, Laurel Springs Regional Park, White Plains Regional Park, and La Plata outdoor pool. Programs include:

- Aquatic programs, such as swimming lessons/clinics, water aerobics, and lap swimming by daily admission or membership;
- Day camps of all types, such as arts and crafts, gymnastics, tennis, basketball, and computer game design, among others;
- Adult programs such as arts and crafts, dance, and dog obedience;
- Senior trips and tours; and
- Special olympic programs for athletic conditioning and training.

Most County parks and recreation programs in the La Plata area are provided at Somers Community Recreation Center (located within Somers Middle School). The County operates the center year round on weekdays from 2:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., and Saturdays from 10:00 to 2:00 p.m. The center is normally closed the week before school opens, as well as during the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter Holidays. In FY 2010 over 70 programs were offered. Examples include:

- After school program from 2:30 – 6:00 pm.
- Summer Day Camp Program (Weekdays, June to August);
- Belly dancing;
- Scrapbooking;
- Cheerleading camp;
- Tae kwon do;
- Parents Night Out! A program on Friday evenings where kids aged 5-12 make crafts, play games, or watch movies;

- Dog obedience classes; and
- Youth and teen drop in programs
- Father daughter dances

Prices charged for programs can run from free to \$100.

Somers busiest period is December 1 through the end of March to host youth basketball practices and games. Saturday hours during this time period are extended to open at 8:00am and close at 6:00 pm to accommodate the high demand.

Total program attendance including responses to information requests totaled over 30,000 in FY 2010 (Table 1-4).

Table 1-4 Attendance Report for Somers Community Recreation Center FY 2010

	July 2009	August	September	October	November	December	January 2010	February	March	April	May	June	Total
Classes/ Programs	30	0	33	222	131	30	150	172	385	274	363	181	1,971
Drop-In, Teen, Pre-Teen	0	0	48	88	51	6	142	99	196	161	173	64	1,028
Drop-In, Adult	110	12	70	65	54	23	120	80	68	83	81	27	793
Special Events	0	0	0	10	219	0	28	0	50	36	0	0	343
Sports Program	576	0	0	159	237	422	889	1,035	860	1,398	214	141	5,931
Sports Program Spectators	1,774	0	0	81	124	435	1,623	1,424	1,585	933	707	85	8,771
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	74	94	0	168
After School Programs (P&R)	0	51	234	217	177	158	147	89	146	142	192	72	1,625
After School Programs (non P&R)	0	0	0	0	0	0	121	1,119	922	444	941	0	3,547
Summer Camps	837	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	72	24	0	167	1,100
Information/Public Request	40	144	110	360	424	220	207	370	603	467	499	272	3,716
Facility use Approved	0	0	111	9	188	20	230	947	144	61	28	0	1,738
Facility use Denied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Monthly Total:</i>	3,367	207	606	1,211	1,605	1,314	3,657	5,335	5,031	4,097	3,292	1,009	30,731

Source: Charles County Parks & Recreation

Youth Leagues and Organizations

Four non-profit youth leagues operate in the La Plata area. The leagues cover Charles County or the Southern Maryland area depending upon the size and scale of the organization. Teams are based on geographic location with the La Plata home team using Laurel Springs Regional Park for most events. Membership varies but has historically ranged between 500 and 750 children per each league. The four leagues are:

- Charles County Youth League (baseball and softball)
- Blue Knights Football
- La Plata Youth Soccer
- Charles County Lacrosse League

College of Southern Maryland

The College of Southern Maryland offers a variety of programs at its campus west of La Plata that are available to La Plata residents. Most of the indoor programs are housed in the physical education building which offers an indoor pool, gymnasium, and fitness center with cardiovascular and strength training activities. Recreation and community-based programs include:

- Little Kids College, offering art, reading, science, and dance classes, among others;

- All-day sports camps during the summer months for baseball, tennis, softball, field hockey, volleyball, soccer and basketball;
- Adult classes such as arts and crafts, culinary, fitness, gardening, dance;
- Adult and youth aquatic exercise and swimming clinics; and
- Fitness classes such as cycling, kickboxing, pilates and yoga.

1.6 Staff and Organization

The Town of La Plata does not currently have a recreation department. Responsibility for the Town's parks and recreation functions are shared by the Town Manager and the Departments of Planning (planning) and Public Works (maintenance).

The elected La Plata Town Council is ultimately responsible for parks and recreation in the Town through its role in adopting policy plans and operating and capital budgets.

The Town has a volunteer Parks and Recreation Commission whose mission is to advise the Town Council concerning immediate and long-range recreational programs and policies.

The Town's Planning Commission helps prepare the Town's Comprehensive Plan and decides on subdivisions and site plans which may have recreation issues.

Other commissions with a role in parks and recreation issues are the Beautification Commission, created to promote the beautification of the Town, and the Design Review Board which considers many aspects of development proposals, including building siting, size, shape and materials, parking, landscaping and signage.

Volunteers are important to the Town including the La Plata Community Garden Club which maintains the Star Memorial Garden.

Budget

Although the Town does not have a recreation department, the Town's operating budget has a line item for recreation, drawing from the effort of the Department of Public Works that is dedicated to recreation functions. In FY 2011 the operating budget for recreation was approximately \$195,000. This is approximately three percent of the Town's total operating budget (\$5.89 million) or 2 cents of the tax rate¹.

The Town subdivision code requires that new subdivisions provide recreation opportunities or pay fees-in-lieu (Town Code § 173-11). The fee per dwelling unit is currently \$7,500. Some of these recreation opportunities are dedicated to the Town (such as Silver Linden park or Agricopia park), whereas others remain private under the ownership of the subdivision homeowners' association. Since 2002 through the fee-in-lieu alternative the Town has received approximately \$390,000 of which approximately \$215,000 has been spent on a variety of growth-related projects.

¹ \$195,000 is derived from Ordinance 10-4 Town of La Plata FY 2010-2011 Tax Rate p. 17 PRC-Parks. Another way to look at the \$195,000 is that it is 5.5 percent of the Town's revenues from property taxes (\$3.573 million) or close to 2 cents of the Town's property tax rate of 32 cents per \$100 of assessed value. Property (32 x .055= 1.76)

1-7 Population, Growth and Development

Town of La Plata

The Town of La Plata estimates its population in 2010 at 10,000 people. Detailed data will be available from the 2010 census held in April 2010, but unfortunately for this plan process these data will only become available beginning in April 2011.

The most recent detailed population data are from the 2000 census. Table 1-5 shows some characteristics of the population compared to Charles County. In 2000, compared to Charles County the Town had a somewhat older population, with a slightly higher share of white persons. The Town had a lower median household income, a higher proportion of renter occupied housing, and higher housing values.

Table 1-5 Demographic and Socio-Economic Data from the 2000 Census

	Town of La Plata	Charles County
Population	6,551	120,546
Under 5 years	7%	7%
65 years and over	12%	8%
White	73%	69
Black or African American	24%	26
Total housing units	2,308	43,903
Owner-occupied housing units	68	78
Renter-occupied housing units	32	22
Median household income in 1999 \$	\$56,490	\$62,199
Median housing value (single-family owner-occupied homes)	\$174,900	\$153,000

Source: 2000 Census

Since 2000 the Town has grown quite rapidly. According to the Town's 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the Town added over 2,100 people between 2000 and 2007 in new developments such as Martins Crossing, Agricopia, and Hawthorne Greene.

Pipeline Development

"Pipeline" development is development at various stages of approval that is anticipated to occur during the planning period. Four large pipeline developments are located within the town limits (Table 1-6, Map 3). These developments at final build-out are anticipated to more than double the population of the town, and result in increased supply of and demand for PROS. Note that the future southern villages of the large planned community of St. Charles are outside the Town but are close and adjoin Laurel Springs Regional Park and Tilghman Lake Park.

Agricopia

Agricopia is located on Radio Station Road. This neighborhood when fully complete will contain nearly 600 dwelling units. As part of Phase I, in addition to private PROS to serve residents, the developer is developing Agricopia Park which will be dedicated to the Town as a town park.

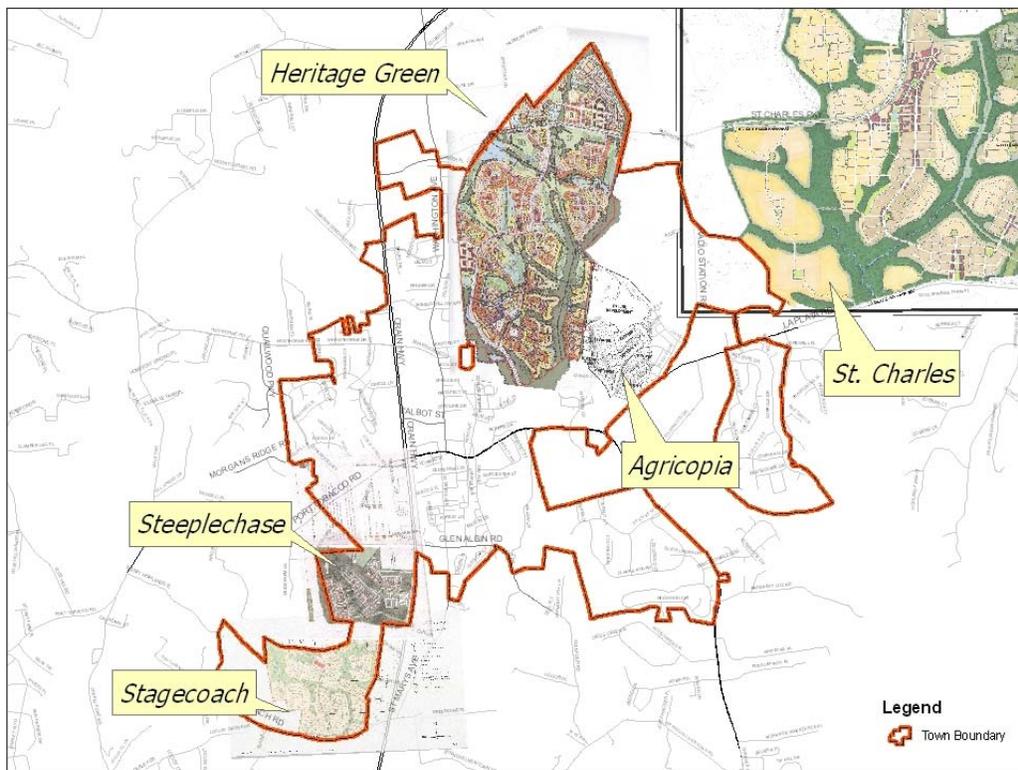
Steeplechase

Steeplechase is located on the east side of US 301 on Quailwood Parkway. Phase I is under development. At final buildout approximately 486 units are envisioned. The developer is developing private PROS to serve residents of the community including a clubhouse and pool.

Table 1-6 Pipeline Development

Development	Housing Units		Status
	Existing	Estimated Future	
Agricopia	~200	600	Phase I under development. Phase II does not have preliminary plan approval.
Heritage Green	0	3,000	Concept plan approval granted in 2006
Steeplechase	~50	436	Phase I under development.
Stagecoach Crossing	0	1,200	Concept plan approval granted in 2005, but has expired.
Total		~5,200	

Map 3 Pipeline Development



Heritage Green

Heritage Green is located north of Agricopia and east of Washington Avenue. Annexed into the Town in 1990, it is envisioned as a large approximately 800-acre mixed-use community with approximately 3,000 dwelling units as well as retail and employment areas. The Heritage Green annexation agreement provided that 35 percent of the development be open space including specified recreation facilities. The Town granted the project Traditional Neighborhood Development Plan approval for the first two phases in 2006.

Stagecoach Crossing

This development received traditional neighborhood development plan approval in 2005 for up to 1,225 units, but the approval expired and a new plan would have to be approved before development could begin. The Stagecoach Crossing annexation agreement provided for the conveyance to the Town of a 31-acre parcel for recreation.

Outer La Plata area

As noted above, it is important for this plan to consider the area around the Town of La Plata. This CPRMP estimates the population of this Outer La Plata Area (OLPA) in 2010 at approximately 5,400².

Population projections.

Population projections for this CPRMP are shown in Table 1-7. They forecast an approximate doubling of the Town’s population from 10,000 in 2010 to approximately 25,000 in 2030, and an increase in the population of the Town and the Outer La Plata Area from approximately 15,400 in 2010 to approximately 33,600.

Projections for the Town are drawn from the Town’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan. These projections were prepared prior to the recession that began in 2008 and they anticipated rapid development of the Town’s development pipeline (Table 1-6). From the vantage point of late 2010 and the continued slow demand for new housing, these projections appear unlikely to be realized. However, for consistency purposes it was decided that the CPRMP should use the same projections as the Comprehensive Plan. If the projections are not realized, this will not invalidate the Plan’s recommendations, and the only material effect on them would be to push the implementation time frame out further into the future.

Projections for the Outer La Plata Area were developed for the CPRMP. The main driver for the population increase here is the anticipated future development of the village of Wooded Glen, the part of St. Charles to the north east of La Plata.

Table 1-7 Population Projections

	2010	2020	2030
Town of La Plata	10,000	20,884	25,000
Outer La Plata Area	5,384	7,040	8,636
Total Town and Outer La Plata Area	15,384	27,924	33,636

Sources: Town of La Plata - Town of La Plata Comprehensive Plan; Outer La Plata Area-ERM.

² Based on approximately 5,400 total housing units in Town and the Outer La Plata Area (Maryland PropertyView). Outer La Plata is the area outside Town within the map border of Map 1.

Chapter 2 Needs Assessment

The needs assessment is an important part of the CPRMP providing the basis for the Plan’s recommendations in Chapter 3. The needs assessment incorporated a broad range of inputs, both quantitative and qualitative. This type of assessment, sometimes called triangulation, ensures that all perspectives are considered in a balanced way.

To ensure that the Plan included a broad perspective, the process included analyses of supply, demand, and need for PROS in the Town including consideration of the Outer La Plata Area, benchmarking against other towns, and a public input process that included meetings and surveys.

2.1 PROS Land Needs

The amount of PROS land needed to satisfy the existing and future demand is an important question for the CPRMP to ensure that as the town grows it provides adequate PROS to meet the needs of future residents. Guidelines exist to help communities determine how much land they will need, but ultimately the decision rests with the community. Some communities will wish to have relatively more PROS, others will feel they need relatively less. Economics is a consideration; more PROS may mean less taxable land and more maintenance and upkeep costs. Ultimately the decision comes down to values; how green, in terms of PROS, does a community wish to be?

A starting point is the State of Maryland which has a longstanding goal for counties of 30 acres of PROS per 1,000 population. Counties, of course, are expected to provide a wider variety of PROS than towns including regional parks and agricultural and natural resource preservation. Municipalities, being more urban, generally have lower acreage goals. The City of Rockville, for example, has a goal of 18 acres per 1,000 population. Towns surveyed as part of the CPRMP benchmarking process ranged widely in terms of how PROS acreage they provide from a low of seven acres per 1,000 population to a high of 34 acres per 1,000 (La Plata and Elkton).

What then is an appropriate future goal for the Town of La Plata? To move towards an answer to this question the Town’s current and future resources can be reviewed from different perspectives (see Table 2-1).

Table 2-1 Acreage goal analysis

Town of La Plata Acres of PROS per 1,000 Population			
	2010	2020	2030
1. All PROS	34	28	24
2. All parks and recreation sites (Town and Non-Town owned)	20	22	18
3. Town-owned PROS	14	19	16
4. Town-owned parks and recreation sites	9	10	9
5. Goal of 20 acres/1000 of Town PROS	200	418	500
Additional Need	61	279	361
6. Goal of 30 acres/1000 of Town PROS	300	627	750
Additional Need	161	488	611

Source: Table 1-2.

Note: Rows 1, 2 and 3 assume the addition of approximately 250 acres of PROS by 2020; Heritage Green 220 acres and Stagecoach 31 acres. Row 4 assumes the addition of approximately 125 acres of parks and recreation sites by 2020 (half of 250).

- Table 2-1 (row 1) shows that counting all PROS in the Town³, by 2030 there will be 24 acres of PROS per 1,000 population. The number goes down from the 34 acres per 1,000 in 2010 because while the Town will add approximately 250 acres of PROS by 2020 (see table note) demand for PROS will increase due to the growing population (25,000 in 2030).
- Table 2-1 (row 2) shows that counting only the parks and recreation sites, that is excluding natural resource areas such as Clark Run (to which there is currently very little access), there will be 18 acres per 1,000 population in 2030.
- Table 2-1 (row 3) shows that counting only Town-owned PROS, that is excluding the 202 acres owned by Charles County Public Schools, there will be 16 acres per 1,000 population in 2030.
- Table 2-1 (row 4) shows that counting only Town-owned parks and recreation sites, there will be nine acres per thousand in 2030.

Table 2-1 row 5 shows that were the Town to adopt a goal of 20 acres per 1,000 population of Town owned PROS (parks and recreation sites and natural resource areas), there would be a current need of 61 acres to meet the goal and a 2030 need of 361 acres.

Table 2-1 row 6 shows that were the Town to adopt a goal of 30 acres per 1,000 population of Town owned PROS (parks and recreation sites and natural resource areas), there would be a current need of 161 acres to meet the goal and a 2030 need of 611 acres. Note that these need numbers exclude land that could be dedicated to the Town in developments such as Heritage Green, so if 250 acres were dedicated per Table 2-1, the additional 2030 need would be reduced to 361 acres.

Based on the discussion above, this CPRMP recommends the Town adopt a goal of providing 20 acres per 1,000 population of Town owned PROS (parks and recreation sites and natural resource areas), of which at least half (10 acres per 1,000) should be parks and recreation sites. This goal is quite aggressive but is also achievable. It will put the Town in the upper end of towns with respect to their recreation acreage goals, and will be consistent with a vision of a town that is, overall, relatively low density and green.

³ 344 acres of which the Town provides 142 acres, with the remaining 202 acres owned by Charles County Public Schools (Table 1-1).

2.2 Facilities Needs

The CPRMP included a supply versus demand needs analysis to evaluate the number of facilities needed to satisfy the existing and future demand for 16 types of recreational facilities and activities. The analysis used three time frames: current (2010), mid-range (2020), and long-range (2030). Two analyses were conducted; one for facilities within the Town, and one that included facilities both in the Town and in the Outer La Plata Area (OLPA), since these facilities are accessible to Town residents and help meet demand.

The supply comprised existing facilities in the Town's PROS inventory including facilities in public schools in the Town that are available for public recreation (Table 1-2). Daily carrying capacity and season length data for each facility/activity were defined by ERM based on past studies.

Demand was derived from the population projections and from recreation participation rates among the general population for different activities⁴. Detailed tables showing the results for the supply, demand, and needs analyses are provided in Appendix A. The electronic version of the supply and demand tables (available from the Town) includes explanatory comments indicating and explaining where changes were made to baseline demand, season length or daily carrying capacity data.

Table 2-2 summarizes the results of the supply versus demand analysis. It lists the supply of existing facilities and shows the calculated facilities surplus or deficit for 2010, 2020 and 2030.



La Plata High School outdoor pool is the only pool in Town open to the general public. The supply versus demand analysis shows strong demand for swimming.

⁴ Participation rates were initially derived from Donald F. Norris and Royce Hanson, *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland A Survey of Households in Maryland and Seven Sub-State Regions*, Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, 2003. ERM modified some participation rates based on local knowledge and experience to better represent the actual/expected participation in these activities in the Town.

Table 2-2- Summary of PROS Facilities Needs

Note: A positive demand number (without parenthesis) indicates a facility surplus. A number in parenthesis indicates a facility deficit. For example, 2030 demand in the Town shows a deficit of three indoor basketball courts.

Activity	Facility Type	Existing Facilities (1)	Facilities Surplus or (Deficit)		
			2010 (2)	2020 (3)	2030 (4)
Baseball/ Softball	Diamonds	12	7	3	1
Basketball (indoor)	Courts	4	1	(2)	(3)
Basketball (outdoor)	Courts	9	7	5	4
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	Acres	0	(0.3)	(1)	(1)
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	Multi-Purpose fields	10	6	2	0
Field Sports (football)	Football fields	1	1	0	0
Golf	Courses	0	(0.3)	(1)	(1)
Indoor sports/fitness	Gyms/Fitness Rooms	4	0.5	(3)	(5)
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	Playgrounds	15	13	12	11
Picnic Pavilions	Shelters	4	2	(1.1)	(2)
Skateboarding	Skateboard Courts	0	(1)	(1.6)	(2)
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	Pools	1	0.34	(0.37)	(0.6)
Swimming Pools (indoor)	Pools	0	(0.2)	(0.4)	(0.4)
Tennis	Courts	9	7	6	5
Trails: hike, bike, nature	Trail miles	1.8	(3)	(8)	(10)
Volleyball (outdoor)	Courts	0.5	(0)	(1)	(1)

Summary Needs - Town of La Plata and Outer La Plata Area

Activity	Facility Type	Existing Facilities (1)	Facilities Surplus or (Deficit)		
			2010 (2)	2020 (3)	2030 (4)
Baseball/ Softball	Diamonds	29	22	17	15
Basketball (indoor)	Courts	5	1	(3)	(5)
Basketball (outdoor)	Courts	9	6	4	2
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	Acres	3	3	2	2
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	Multi-Purpose fields	25	19	14	12
Field Sports (football)	Football fields	3	2	2	2
Golf	Courses	2	2	1	1
Indoor sports/fitness	Gyms/Fitness Rooms	5	(0)	(5)	(7)
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	Playgrounds	18	16	14	13
Picnic Pavilions	Shelters	9	5	2	1
Skateboarding	Skateboard Courts	1	(0)	(1)	(2)
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	Pools	1	(0.0)	(1)	(1)
Swimming Pools (indoor)	Pools	1	0.2	(0.4)	(0.7)
Tennis	Courts	23	21	19	18
Trails: hike, bike, nature	Trail miles	5.3	(2)	(7)	(10)
Volleyball (outdoor)	Courts	1.5	1	(0)	(0)

(1) Town of La Plata PROS Inventory.

(2) Needs Report Column 4. (3) Needs Report Column 7. (4) Needs Report Column 10.

Notes in the electronic version of the spreadsheets explain the assumptions behind the numbers in each report.

A sample calculation for indoor basketball is as follows: Four courts in 2010 provide a total supply of 25,600 annual play occasions (based on 160 day season and daily court capacity of 40 players; 160x40x4). Demand in 2010 was 18,417 play occasions based on participation rate of 10.5% (survey derived) of the town's population and an annual participation frequency of 17.54 occasions (10,000x0.105x17.54). Supply minus demand divided by annual carrying capacity per court gives the 2010 surplus of 1.12: (25,600-18,417)/6,400.

In summary the results show the following:

- High future demand**
 - Basketball indoor** (by 2030 3 courts in Town, 5 courts in Town plus OLPA)
 - Sports fitness indoor** (by 2030 5 rooms in Town, 7 rooms in Town plus OLPA)
 - Skateboard courts** (by 2030 2 courts in Town)
 - Swimming pools** (by 2030 0.6 outdoor pools in Town plus 0.4 indoor pools; in Town plus OLPA 1 outdoor pool, 0.7 indoor pools).
 - Trails** (by 2030 10 miles in Town and in Town plus OLPA)
- Moderate future demand**
 - Dog parks** (by 2030 one acre in Town, 2 acres in Town plus OLPA)
 - Volleyball outdoor** (by 2030 zero court demand in Town and in Town plus OLPA)
 - Picnic pavilions** (by 2030 2 shelters in Town)
- Little future demand**
 - Basketball outdoor** (by 2030 4 courts surplus in Town)
 - Field sports** (by 2030 zero field demand in Town, surplus in Town plus OLPA)
 - Golf** (by 2030 one course surplus in Town plus OLPA)
 - Playgrounds/tot lots** (by 2030 11 playgrounds surplus in Town)
 - Tennis** (by 2030 5 court surplus in Town)

The results are incorporated into the recommended PROS development program in Chapter 3.



Above left, dog park at Turkey Hill Park. Right golf course at White Plains Regional Park. The supply versus demand analysis shows moderate demand for a dog park but low demand for golf.

2.3 Recreation Surveys

Two surveys are relevant to the CPRMP, a 2009 Town of La Plata National Citizen Survey™, conducted independent of the CPRMP, and a recreation survey conducted in 2010 especially for the CPRMP.

2.3.1 2009 National Citizen Survey™

The 2009 National Citizen Survey™ was a scientific town-wide mail survey and asked questions across a very broad range of matters including overall community quality, community design, transportation, health and wellness, civic engagement, as well as parks and recreation. 1,200 households, randomly selected, received the survey, and 409 households completed it, providing a response rate of 35%, which is within the response rates generally obtained on local government resident surveys. One interesting element of the 2009 National Citizen Survey™ is that it benchmarks the Town on each response against other comparable communities nationwide.

Recreation opportunities in the Town of La Plata were rated moderately and services related to parks and recreation were rated somewhat positively. Town parks and recreation centers or facilities were rated similar to the benchmark. Recreation opportunities received the lowest rating. Given the relatively modest level of development of PROS in the Town, these findings are probably not surprising:

- 41% of respondents ranked recreational opportunities as good. 9% ranked them as excellent.
- 58% of respondents ranked ease of walking in La Plata as either fair or poor.
- 71% of respondents ranked ease of bicycle travel as either fair or poor.
- 67% of respondents ranked availability of paths and walking trails as either fair or poor.
- 81% of respondents had visited a neighborhood park or Town park at least once in the prior 12 months.
- 48% of respondents had not participated in a recreation program or activity in the prior 12 months.

Survey participants were asked the following policy question relevant to PROS: to what extent do you support or oppose La Plata developing a downtown square to enhance opportunities for community events and resident-oriented downtown business? 42% strongly supported this and 45% supported this somewhat.

2.3.2 Recreation Survey

The CPRMP recreation survey was conducted during the summer of 2010. The survey was conducted over the internet and respondents to the survey were self selected. The survey was, therefore, not a scientific survey like the 2009 National Citizen Survey™, but the results of the survey are interesting and provide useful input into the CPRMP.

The survey was hosted by SurveyMonkey an online survey firm (SurveyMonkey.com). The survey opened in June 2010 and remained open till August 27th. The survey was advertised in Town Notes, the Town newsletter, which is mailed to every home and business in Town. In addition a link to survey was on the Town's website home page for the duration of the survey. The following section describes the key findings from the survey. The actual questionnaire and a more detailed summary of the results are in Appendix B.

Respondents

90 persons responded to the survey. 67 respondents (78% of the total) were town residents. Of these, 62% had lived in the Town for 10 or fewer years. 99% of respondents owned their own home; one respondent only was a renter. 89% were white and 6% were black or African American. 95% of

respondents reported their household income in 2009 at \$50,000 or higher. 62% of respondents reported their household income in 2009 at \$100,000 or higher.

The profile of respondents is somewhat different from the actual demographics in the Town. The data in the preceding paragraph may be compared to Table 1-5 in Chapter 1 (Demographic and Socio-Economic Data from the 2000 Census). While the two datasets are not directly comparable, they show that more of the respondents to the recreation survey were white, they had a higher rate of homeownership, and had higher household incomes. That said, the responses are valuable, and not least because they are the responses of people who care sufficiently about recreation to complete the survey, and their views should be valued.

Results

Questions 1 and 2. 77% of respondents had visited a Town park in the prior 12 months. The most visited parks were Wills Park and Town Hall Park, followed by Tilghman Lake and Silver Linden.

Questions 3 and 4. 87% of respondents had visited a non-Town park in or near the Town in the prior 12 months. The five most visited parks were, from highest to lowest, Laurel Springs Regional, La Plata High School / Matula Elementary School, White Plains Regional, Somers Middle School, and Turkey Hill.

Questions 5 and 6. Respondents were asked to indicate which parks or recreation facilities they thought would be most needed now or in the future and which ones would not be needed. The following were indicated as needed or not needed now:

Strong need

- Community/recreation center
- Playgrounds, tot lots
- Swimming indoor
- Swimming outdoor
- Walking/biking trails

No need

- Ballfields
- Dog park
- Fitness/weight room
- Golf course
- Parking
- Skateboarding



Walking path along Redwood Lake. The CPRMP envisions an interconnected townwide trail system (see Chapter 3)

Comments

The survey input is generally consistent with the facilities needs analysis (Section 2.2 above).

The “strong need” identified for a community/recreation center is somewhat contradicted by the “no-need” identified for a fitness/weight room. Community/recreation centers frequently contain fitness/weight rooms. While 38% of respondents identified no need for a fitness/weight room, 28% identified “strong need”. The presence of private gyms in Town may have influenced these results.

The “strong need” identified for playgrounds, tot lots is somewhat contradicted by the little future demand identified in the facilities needs analysis. This may reflect the current locations of playgrounds/ tot lots in relation to neighborhoods or their perceived lack of quality (see open end response comments in Appendix B).

39% of respondents identified “no need” for skateboarding. This is inconsistent the facilities needs analysis (Section 2.2 above) and may reflect that nearly all respondents to the survey were adults.

51% of respondents identified “no need” for golf. This is consistent with the facilities needs analysis and is noteworthy in light of the golf course contemplated as part of the Heritage Green development.

Many respondents provided additional comments to this question (see Appendix B).

Questions 7 and 8. Respondents generally (30% to 40%) rated programs provided by Charles County or by volunteer/non-profit recreation associations as good. Many respondents provided additional comments to this question (see Appendix B).

Questions 9 -11. 82% of respondents reported feeling safe when using parks and recreation facilities in the Town. The 2009 National Citizen Survey™ also asked about safety and La Plata ranked generally above the benchmarks on this measure. Nevertheless, this is a number the Town should try to increase. Many respondents provided additional comments to this question (see Appendix B), and several respondents recommended more lighting.

Questions 12 and 13. 61% of respondents supported the future creation of a Town recreation department. 33% wanted more information. Many respondents provided additional comments to this question (see Appendix B).

Questions 14 and 15. 80% of respondents agreed that availability of recreation classes, parks and facilities was important to their satisfaction with living in La Plata. 25% agreed that they were not familiar with the parks, facilities, and recreation programs available in La Plata. 75% felt that additional parks were needed in La Plata. 62% said they would pay reasonable user fees to maintain/improve parks and recreation areas in La Plata (note that the term “reasonable” was not defined).

2.4 Benchmarking

Since La Plata is transitioning from a smaller to a larger town with additional responsibilities and resident/business expectations, the Town felt it would be valuable to hear firsthand other towns’ experience in starting and managing a Recreation and Parks department. The Town convened a half-day round-table focus group meeting to which representatives from towns similar in size to what La Plata will be were invited. The following towns were invited: Elkton, Wicomico County (Salisbury), Takoma Park, Hyattsville, Aberdeen, Easton, Greenbelt, Laurel, and Westminster.

The meeting, held on July 26, 2010 comprised an open discussion of how these towns are responding to current challenges, what innovations their departments are using, how they are responding to fiscal and other constraints, and what standards or benchmarks they use.

The meeting was valuable and yielded a number of insights for the CPRMP:

1. Budgets are tight and facilities need to be self-supporting to the greatest extent possible. It has become harder to support subsidies for recreation programs. Recreation departments must not be seen as a drain on the tax base.

2. Towns want departments but must find models of working cooperatively with counties. A dedicated department gives more control and staff that are fully responsible and dedicated to the Town's recreation assets.
3. Towns are generally too small to provide "special facilities" such as civic centers; these are provided by or in coordination with counties.
4. Cooperation and coordination with outside organizations and entities must be the name of the game going forward.
5. Having a clear vision is vital. A program that the public can be excited about and rally around should have short, medium and long-range options for implementation.

A summary of the meeting is in Appendix C.

2.5 Conclusions

Based on the needs assessment the following conclusions may be drawn. These form the basis for the recommendations in Chapter 3.

1. The Town has the potential for an excellent parks and recreation system:
 - There are a lot of PROS in the Town, especially counting both Town and non-Town PROS
 - There is development interest in the Town; the four large developments (Agricopia, Heritage Green, Steeplechase, and Stagecoach) can make a significant contribution to the Town's future PROS needs.
 - Tilghman Lake Park is a beautiful, underutilized site with unusual potential to be a very special space for the community.
 - The Town has shown its interest and commitment to an excellent parks and recreation system by i) adopting robust dedication and reservation of park land requirements including a high fee-in-lieu requirement and, ii) commissioning this Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Town is planning proactively before major development overwhelmingly commits the Town.
 - Charles County and Charles County Public Schools PROS in and near the Town, such as Laurel Springs Park, supplement Town owned PROS.
 - Survey data show that residents value recreation opportunities as important to their satisfaction with living in La Plata and believe that additional parks are needed.
2. A larger parks system means higher capital, operating and maintenance costs which may be offset by growth. This CPRMP gives the Town a tool to understand the budgetary and fiscal consequences of a larger system (see discussion in Chapter 3).
3. The Town's existing parks do not constitute a true system of "public" parks.
 - There are only two community parks, Tilghman Lake and Town Hall Park. Tilghman Lake has limited accessibility and is largely undeveloped⁵. Town Hall Park has proven popular as a public gathering place, but is small and has few facilities.
 - Wills Memorial Park was "the" town park when La Plata was a small town. With the Town's geographic expansion, it is an important neighborhood park but is not well located to serve a community-wide role.
 - The other neighborhood parks (Silver Linden, Redwood Lake and Agricopia) are on the east side of Town. There are no neighborhood parks west of US 301 or west of Clark Run north of MD 6.

⁵ Though the Town plans to add parking and restrooms in 2011.

4. Carroll La Plata Park and Phoenix Run Parks I and II are mini parks, but play an important role in serving the Town's denser, lower income neighborhoods.
5. The Town lacks land near the center of Town that can serve as a large community park for existing and future residents.
6. Town spending on parks is relatively low. In FY 2011, the operating budget for recreation was approximately \$195,000 or three percent of the Town's total operating budget. The Town has been quite successful in obtaining grants for park upgrades, but grant funds are insufficient to meet all capital needs.
7. Somers recreation center, is an asset to the Town, but the Town does not own or manage it, so it does not contribute as much to Town life as it could if it were a Town facility.
8. The Town's dedication and reservation of park land requirements have been applied somewhat inconsistently:
 - Agricopia Park is a well-located park that will be an asset to the Town as a whole as well as to the Agricopia community.
 - Silver Linden Park was dedicated to the Town through the development process but it essentially serves residents of the subdivision. It does not feel like a public park, though it is Town-maintained and few non-residents have been observed using it.
 - Steeplechase is providing open space for residents, but it will be private. As such Steeplechase has not contributed to the Town's "public" parks and recreation system.
 - Dedication and reservation requirements have not always been carefully evaluated to ensure they equate in value to the fee-in-lieu paid by developments that do not dedicate or reserve PROS.
9. The major PROS needs are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community parks • Indoor basketball • Skateboard courts • Swimming pool, indoor and outdoor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community recreation center • Indoor sports fitness • Trails; walking, biking • Playgrounds, tot lots in select locations
--	--
10. The Town needs to work cooperatively with Charles County to deliver PROS facilities and services. The Town should provide the facilities and services the Town is best suited to provide, leaving other services to be provided by the County. The Town is not suited to provide, manage and schedule field complexes for baseball/softball, soccer, football or lacrosse.



Town Hall Park located adjacent to Town Hall. The park has proven popular as a public gathering place, but is too small to serve as a multi-functional community park.

Chapter 3 Recommendations

This chapter contains the recommendations for parks, recreation and open space (PROS) for the Town of La Plata.

3.1 Vision, objectives

This CPRMP proposes the following vision for Town of La Plata's Parks and Recreation system:

An interconnected system of high quality, public parks and open spaces linked to neighborhoods and the downtown by continuous pedestrian and bicycle connections

Objectives

1. Create strategically located, community and neighborhood parks.
2. Meet identified facilities needs especially for indoor recreation and sports fitness, walking and swimming.
3. Meet the full range of recreational needs of Town residents including the young, the elderly, and the disabled.
4. Ensure that new development in Town provides on-site recreation and open space, but also contributes its fair share to the public PROS system.
5. Create a natural resource area/ greenway along Clark Run as a spine through the heart of Town.
6. Attend to the Town's existing parks as well as develop new parks.
7. Work cooperatively with Charles County to deliver PROS facilities and services. Provide the facilities and services the Town is best suited to provide.
8. Ensure that the recommended PROS system is one the Town can afford to build, manage and maintain.

The physical components of the vision are shown on Map 4, summarized in Table 3-1, and described in more detail in the following sections.

3.2 Recommended PROS program

3.2.1 New Parks /Recreation Areas

a. Community Park 1

Community Park 1 would be on the east side US 301, north of MD 6. It is envisioned as a 20 to 25 acre town-owned park that would serve as a neighborhood park for residents/employees of Heritage Green as well as a community park for the town as a whole, meeting the need for a large park near La Plata's geographic center. The tentative location shown on Map 4 is in the southern portion of Heritage Green, off Heritage Green Parkway. The current approved Heritage Green Development Plan does not show a park in this location. As part of a redesign of the Development Plan an alternative location could be proposed, but it is important that this park be close to MD 6 where it will be readily accessible from all parts of Town by car, bicycle or on foot.

Community Park 1 is envisioned as an active multi-use park with an open grass area suitable for outdoor events, fairs or festivals, picnic pavilions, a playground, parking, and special uses such as an outdoor skate spot. The park should have trail/sidewalk links to the townwide walking/biking trail system including the Clark Run greenway (see below) and Kent Avenue so that the park can help serve the underserved area between Heritage Green and Washington Avenue that currently lacks a neighborhood park.

The tentative location shown on Map 4 is in Heritage Green Development Plan Area 1D, east of the elementary school site. If this location is selected (which would require relocation of a few townhouse lots on the current Development Plan) there could be synergies between the school site and the park.

Community Park 1 is also envisioned as the location for a community recreation center as identified in the needs assessment. The size and scale details of this center are yet to be determined but preliminarily it might contain: a medium/large gymnasium (large enough for 2-3 basketball/volleyball courts); indoor fitness rooms/studios (for meetings, yoga, dance); meeting rooms; a lounge; an arts studio space (e.g. for pottery). See Chart 1 for a discussion of community recreation centers.

Community Park 1 is also envisioned as the location an indoor/outdoor pool as identified in the needs assessment. As with the community recreation center the size and scale details of this pool are yet to be determined. It could be a pool that would be open air in the summer and covered with a bubble for winter use. There is a pool like this in Great Mills in St. Mary's County. It could be like the aquatics center that opened in 2010 in Prince Frederick that has a retractable roof.



The Edward Hall Aquatic Center in Prince Frederick opened in 2010.



Skate park at White Plains Regional Park. There are no other skate parks in or near La Plata, and the CPRMP recommends one to two skate spot in Town.

Map 4 Parks Recreation and Open Space Improvements

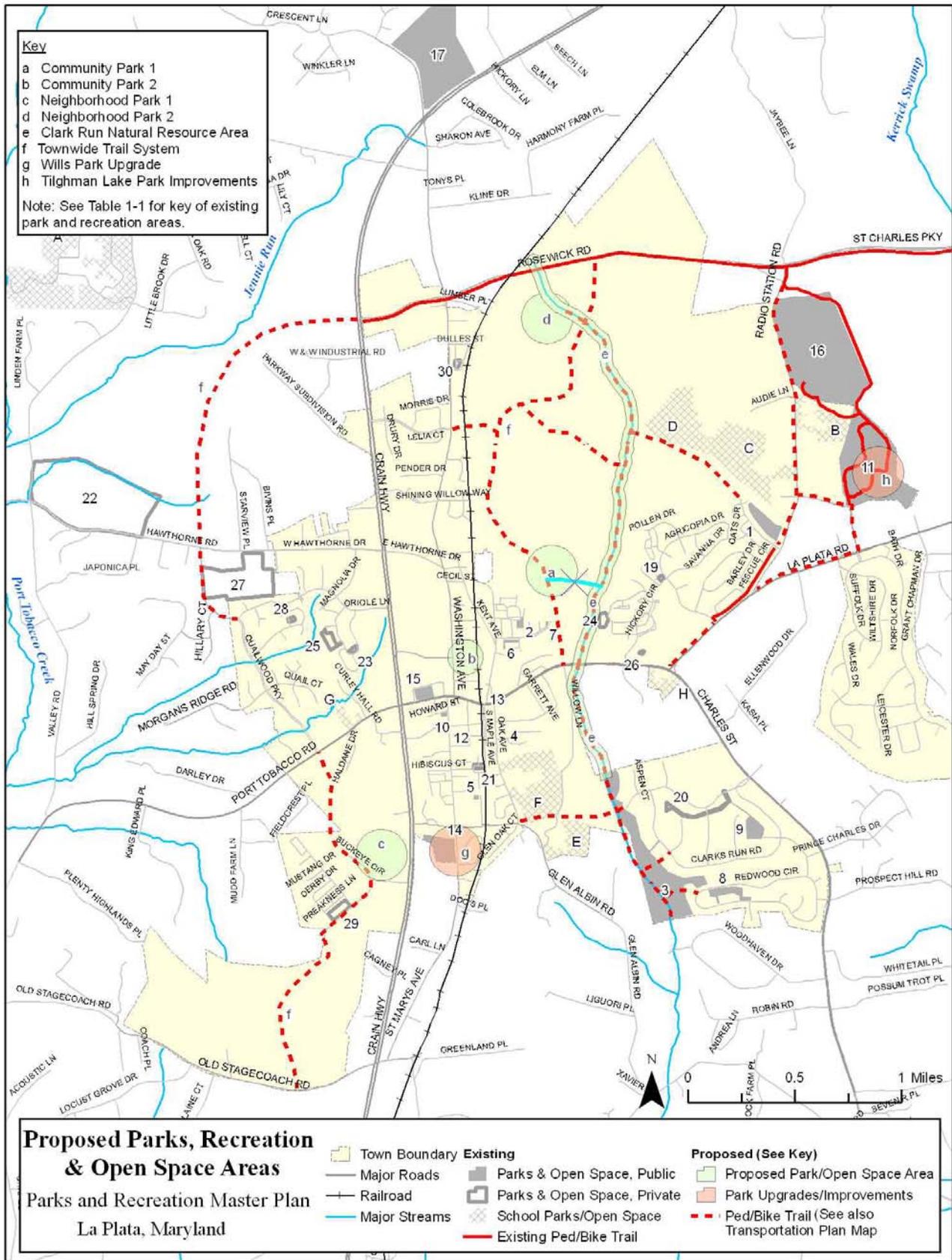


Table 3-1 PROS Improvement Plan Summary

	PROS Type	Location		Acres	Key elements	Development time frame
New Parks/Recreation Areas						
a	Community Park 1	East side US 301, north of MD 6	Heritage Green, south central area. Potential desirable location: Development Plan Area 1D, on Heritage Green Parkway across from elementary school site.	20 to 25	Active town park close to the center of town to serve residents/employees of Heritage Green as well as the town as a whole. Potential location for community recreation center.	Pre 2020
b	Community Park 2	Town Center	Northern terminus of La Grange Avenue extended	2 to 3	Downtown Park to serve the town as a whole including downtown businesses. Urban square/plaza for community events with fountain/water feature; (a spray ground?); covered structure (pergola);	Pre 2020
c	Neighborhood Park 1	West side US 301, on or close to Quailwood Parkway	Ideal location would be close to MD 6. Other potential locations: north parcel of Steeplechase, or in Stagecoach.	10 to 15	Town park to serve existing and future residents west of US 301.	Pre 2020
d	Neighborhood Park 2	East side US 301, north of MD 6, near Rosewick Road	Potential desirable location: Development Plan Area 2D, Rosewick Road at Heritage Green Parkway	20 to 30	Town park to serve residents/employees of Heritage Green Possible future fields	2020 to 2030
e	Natural Resource Area/ Greenway	Clark Run	Rosewick Road south to existing Clark Run natural area	+/- 100	Natural, wooded area serving as a north-south spine through the town. Possible natural surface trail.	By 2030
f	Townwide walking/biking trail system	Townwide	On-road and off-road trails (approximately 15 miles -80,600 linear feet). See map.		Walking/biking	Ongoing
Existing Parks/Recreation Areas						
g	Wills Park	St. Mary's Avenue			Upgrade, redevelop to improve use, functionality as neighborhood park, with potentially some community-wide functions	By 2020
h	Tilghman Lake Park	Box Elder Road			Upgrade for community-wide use with focus on passive, natural resource based activities	By 2030
Other						
i	Town center pocket parks	Town center			Pocket parks/open spaces to enhance downtown	
j	Community Park 3	West side US 301	Hawthorne Rd (MD 225). Existing La Plata Park (private)	30-40	Potential future community park west side US 301, in collaboration with Charles County. (opportunity site) Help meet future regional demand for fields, active recreation	Post 2030
k	Courthouse Soccer Field				Maintain	

Chart 1 Community Recreation Centers

The CPRMP found strong need and support for a community recreation center in La Plata. Communities around the country continue to develop community centers as a focus for community life. Research conducted for the CPRMP found that capital development costs for centers vary very widely (from \$2 to \$3 million up to \$18 million) depending on size and features. Operating cost recovery from users also varies but is an important consideration in determining affordability. To make a La Plata center affordable the Town will likely need to form partnerships with Charles County and business and non-profit organizations (see plan affordability discussion, Section 3.3).

Left: Community Recreation Center and Library, Glenwood (Howard County)

Right: Community Recreation Center, Truxtun Park, Annapolis



b. *Community Park 2*

Community Park 2 is envisioned as a 1.5 to three-acre, downtown park to serve the town as a whole including downtown businesses. The tentative location is the northern terminus of La Grange Avenue extended, a site identified in the Town’s 2001 Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata. This CPRMP envisions the park as, in part, an urban square/plaza for community events and gatherings. Since La Plata is the County seat, some of these events could have a countywide function.

The park might include features such as a plaza, a fountain/water feature, shaded/covered areas, a band shell, and cultural elements. During the CPRMP planning process several people suggested building a children’s spray ground in La Plata, and this downtown park could be great location for this. If an area as large as three acres could be obtained, the park could include lawn or wooded areas. It may also be possible to site a relocated La Plata library with the park, which would offer great synergy (see photo of the City of Rockville on this page).

In 2009 42% of Town of La Plata National Citizen Survey™ survey participants strongly supported La Plata developing a downtown square (see above Section 2.3).



Popular spray ground at Nicolet Park in Lexington Park. During the CPRMP process some plan participants expressed strong support for a spray ground in La Plata.

c. *Neighborhood Park 1*



The redevelopment of Rockville’s Town Center in 2004 created a popular new, central, and multi-use location for residents, workers and visitors. Rockville library in background



Neighborhood Park 1 would be a town park on the west side US 301 to serve the needs of current and future residents on that side of Town. A specific location has not been identified. The current need is for residents north of MD 6, but future development will be largely south of MD 6 (Steeplechase and Stagecoach). The ideal location would be where it could serve the whole west side, on or close to Quailwood Parkway (and the town-wide walking/biking trail system) and close to MD 6 (possibly as part of Phase II of Steeplechase).

The park is envisioned as a 10 to 15 acre neighborhood park similar in function to Wills Memorial Park. The focus would be passive with an open field/lawn area, playground, picnic areas/pavilions, and possibly a community building. Special features might include a fitness course or a multi-generational playground.

d. *Neighborhood Park 2*

Neighborhood Park 2 would be on the east side of US 301, north of MD 6, near Rosewick Road. It is intended as a Town neighborhood park, similar in function and facilities to Wills Park and Neighborhood Park 1, to serve residents/employees of Heritage Green, especially towards its northern end. A potential desirable location is off Heritage Green Parkway in Heritage Green Development Plan Area 1D close to the Clark Run Greenway. This location is also close to existing lakes near the railroad tracks that could be connected to the park for water-oriented recreation. The Heritage Green Development Plan shows a golf driving range in this vicinity. Even if the Heritage Green golf course is not developed, a driving range might be retained as an adjunct facility to the park.

Heritage Green is currently expected to develop from south to north. Therefore, Neighborhood Park 2 is not expected to be needed until the out years of this CPRMP, after 2020. It is envisioned as a 20 to 30 acre park, larger than the other neighborhood parks. This additional acreage would provide additional potential area for ball fields or multi-purpose fields, if demand for these increases above that envisioned in this CPRMP.



As the population ages, multi-generational playgrounds are being developed. These pictures are from the Britain's first playground for the over-60s which opened in 2008 in Manchester. A similar park opened in Berlin, inspired by fitness parks in Beijing.

e. *Clark Run Natural Resource Area Greenway*

Clark Run flows from just north of Rosewick Road south through the entire town before turning east towards Zekiah Swamp Run. The Town owns an approximately 42-acre portion of the Clark Run floodplain and adjoining environmentally sensitive areas on the south side of Town.

This CPRMP envisions the entire length of Clark Run through the Town as a Town-owned natural area/greenway, a wooded north-south spine through the town. It would be managed primarily to conserve open space and environmentally sensitive areas of Clark Run, the only active recreation being a possible north-south natural surface trail, and one or two hard-surface east-west crossings to complete portions of the Townwide walking/biking trail system. These crossings might need to be elevated to protect environmentally sensitive areas. A natural trail along Clark Run would complement the on-road trail envisioned to be built along Heritage Green Parkway.

f. *Town-wide walking/biking trail system*

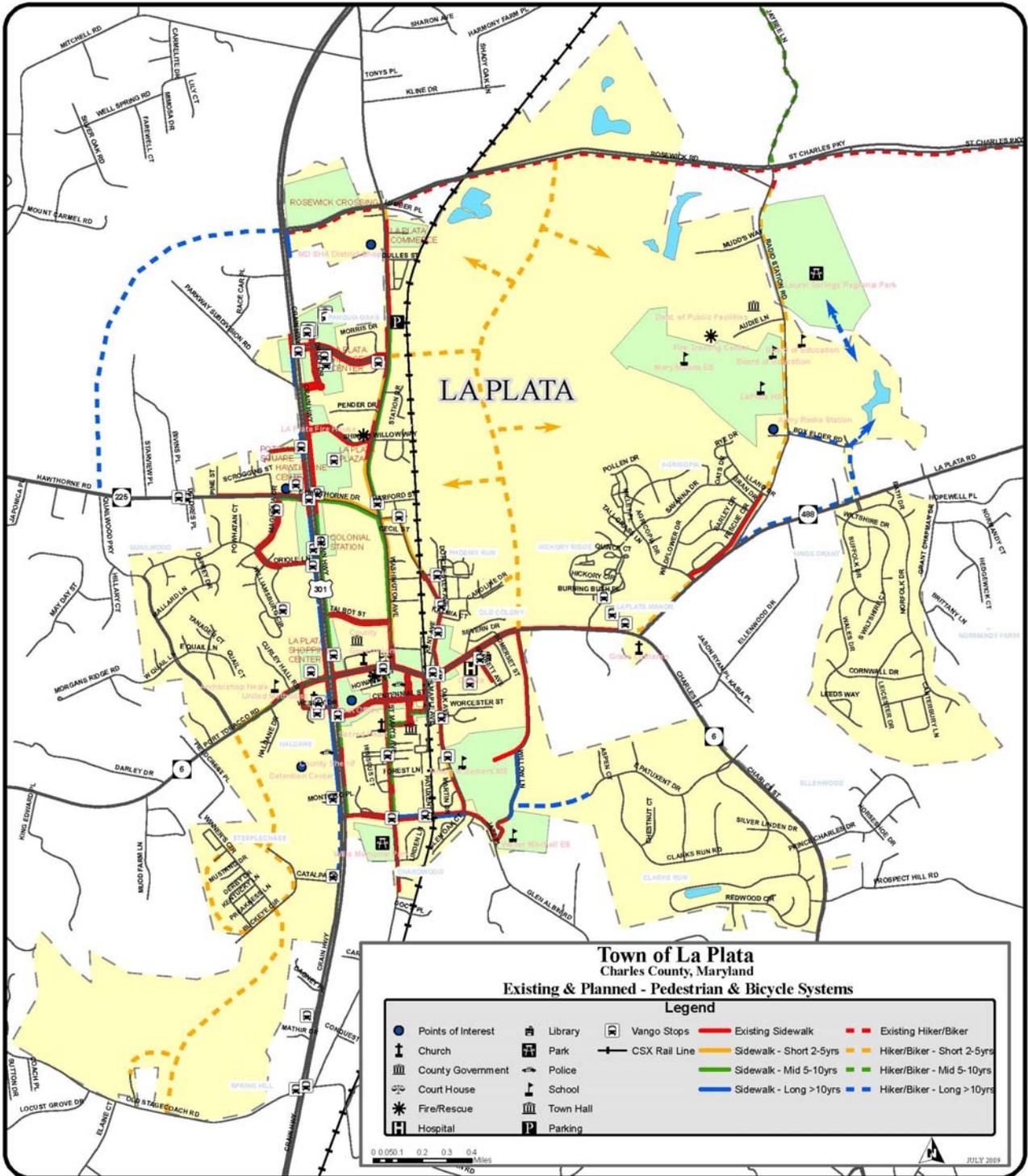
This CPRMP recommends a Town-wide walking/biking trail system, as shown on Map 4. The system responds to the needs assessment which indicates a strong need/desire for safe places to walk and bike. The recommended system builds on the existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle system map in the Town's 2009 Transportation Plan, but also includes connections to the parks and open space system described in this CPRMP. Recreational trail components of the system are shown on Map 4. The map from the Transportation Plan is presented as Map 5⁶. The two maps need to be read together.

Key additions to the Transportation Plan's pedestrian and bicycle system map in this CPRMP are:

⁶ Note that this map was revised in 2010.

- Trail between Agricopia Park, the Clark Run greenway, and Heritage Green.
- Trail (soft, natural surface) along Clark Run. Connections to Heritage Green, Community Park 1 and Neighborhood Park 2.
- Trail between Redwood Lake, through Clark Run Natural Area, to East Patuxent Drive (thence to Mitchell Elementary /Somers Middle, and Wills Park).

Map 5 Existing and Planned Pedestrian and Bicycle System



Source: Town of La Plata Transportation Plan.

The townwide system is envisioned as a combination of mostly on-road trails and sidewalks, plus some off-road trails. Some segments of the system already exist such as the trails along Rosewick Road and through Laurel Springs and Tilghman Lake parks, and sidewalks in portions of the town center. Map 4 includes approximately 15 miles (80,600 linear feet) of new trails that combined would create a system connecting La Plata’s neighborhoods – east and west of US 301 with the Town center and all the major proposed parks. Sidewalks rather than trails are proposed in the town center, except perhaps the natural trail along Clark Run. Unfortunately there are no good options for safe, east-west, pedestrian-bicycle crossings of US 301. An elevated or tunnel crossing is theoretically possible but the level of use would likely not justify the cost. This CPRMP recommends that crossings be at the signals at Rosewick Road and at MD 6, as well as at Old Stagecoach Road, and that over time, as trail system use increases, the crossings be made more visible to traffic on US 301 by means such as signage, lights, and pavement treatment (such as color or rumble strips).

The CPRMP envisions that portions of the system would be built as part of developer recreation opportunities requirements. Others would be built by the Town using fees-in-lieu or other capital or grant funds.



Walking/biking trail around Tilghman Lake Park. The CPRMP envisions an interconnected townwide trail system.



Hiker-biker trail along Rosewick Road and St. Charles Parkway on the north side of Town.

3.2.2 Existing Parks/Recreation Areas

While much of the focus of this CPRMP is on new PROS to serve the Town’s future growth areas, continued attention to and investment in existing PROS is very important so that they continue to contribute to their neighborhoods and to Town life.

g. Wills Memorial Park

Wills Memorial Park is currently the most developed park in town. The Town completed some minor upgrades in 2010 including resurfacing the tennis and basketball courts, and a new volleyball court and play equipment, but the park needs a major upgrade. It is envisioned to remain a neighborhood park, but could potentially have some community-wide functions.

As part of the CPRMP a “concept” redevelopment plan was prepared for Wills Park, see Figure 1. The plan is a concept intended to show potentials, stimulate ideas and discussion, and get order of magnitude costs. Before a specific plan is adopted as a basis for construction it should be reviewed and discussed with the local community and revised as appropriate. It is unlikely that all ideas in the concept would be incorporated into the final plan.

The following ideas are incorporated into the concept:

- Creation of a central, more functional entrance road and parking area
- Conversion of existing practice ball field into a “great lawn” suitable for informal play, as well as neighborhood events and picnics
- Dog park
- Amphitheater for performance events.
- Upgraded, expanded community building.
- Five picnic pavilions
- Retention of woods on west side. Trails through the woods.
- Retention of existing basketball court, volleyball courts and play equipment

To assist in discussions with the community, Appendix D contains a detailed cost estimate for the Wills Park concept plan. The total cost estimate is approximately \$2.5 million. This is on its face a high figure, but note that it includes a 30% contingency, and, as noted above, the concept contains features that might not be incorporated into a final plan. One final cost observation, fee-in-lieu funds from new development could not be used for Wills Park except for any portions of the upgrade that could be clearly demonstrated to be serving new growth.

h. Tilghman Lake Park

As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, Tilghman Lake Park is a large, beautiful site with unusual potential to be a very special space for the community. During the CPRMP process it was described on several occasions as a “hidden jewel”. The Town plans to install bathroom facilities and parking in 2011.

Tilghman Lake Park is envisioned to be a natural-resource oriented community park focusing on its forest assets and seven-acre lake.

A master plan should be developed for the park addressing the following matters:

- Access from the surrounding neighborhoods – automobile and pedestrian/bicycle
- Development areas, preservation areas
- Use of the lake
- Programs, management and security and safety



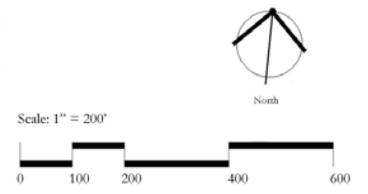
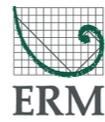
*Right: View of the lake at Tilghman Lake Park.
Above existing picnic pavilion.*



Figure 1 *Wills Memorial Park Redevelopment Concept*



- Picnic Pavilion
- Building Service
- Ex. Volleyball Court
- Ex. Basketball Court
- Building Expansion
- Sidewalk at St. Mary's Ave.
- Ex. Community Center
- Drop-off
- Picnic Pavilions
- Paved Trail System Approx. 1 M
- Property Line



Other Existing Town Parks

Other existing town parks will need routine maintenance, management and upgrades to keep them fresh, and interesting, novel, and attractive to users and to their neighborhoods. To stay relevant, PROS have to adapt to changing needs or people stop using them. Recommendations for specific parks are as follows:

- Carroll La Plata Village, Phoenix Run Parks I and II, and Hemlock Court serve the Town's denser neighborhoods and need continued care and attention, over and above what might be expected given their small size. Wherever possible work with the local neighborhood so that residents have a sense of ownership and pride in these parks and their contribution to neighborhood life.
- Redwood Lake is quite heavily used. The lakeside path currently runs along one side only of the lake. This CPRMP recommends investigating the potential to extend the pathway, perhaps around the entire lake, with property owner agreement.



Patuxent Court, a mini park serving an older neighborhood. Such parks will need continued care and attention, over and above what might be expected given their small size.

3.2.3 Other PROS

Three other specific PROS merit discussion.

i. Town center mini parks

The town has three small public parks in the center of Town: Train Station, Star Memorial Garden, and Town Hall Park. In addition town center has spaces such as the one on Centennial Street (pictured below) that are private but quasi-public in function. These spaces provide special functions and enhance the town center. As town center continues to grow and develop the Town should take opportunities to add such spaces.



Private, quasi-public, mini park on Centennial Street

j. La Plata Park

La Plata Park is the 32-acre privately-owned tract of land on Hawthorne Road containing two baseball fields. The property owner may be interested in developing the site. However, were the property to become available in the future, it could be a valuable future site for active recreation, ball fields/ field sports. The CPRMP needs analysis does not indicate need for additional fields before 2030 (see Table 2-2), which is why this CPRMP does not identify the need for fields. However, sports league directors and county representatives indicated in interviews that they do see demand for fields increasing from teams from other parts of Charles County and also from lacrosse which is growing in popularity.

As noted above, the Town is not suited to provide and manage large numbers of sports fields. The County provides this service effectively. That said, if demand does increase above that projected in the CPRMP, La Plata Park could be a true, strategically located opportunity site that the Town and/or County might acquire to meet future regional demand for active recreation. An active park, located on the west side of US 301 it would help counterbalance the active recreation sites that are located on the east side of US 301.

The site could possibly serve as the west side of US 301 neighborhood park recommended above in Section 3.2.1, though a neighborhood park and an active sports park have different needs, and ideally are separate.

k. Courthouse Soccer Field

Courthouse Soccer Field is a two-acre school recreation park on the Charles County government office complex maintained by Charles County Parks and Recreation. This CPRMP incorporates the recommendations of the 2001 Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata that the site remain as an open space gateway to downtown, possibly incorporating additional uses as the Town's and County's needs change and evolve over time.

3.2.4 Department of Recreation and Parks

As La Plata grows it should consider creating its own Department of Recreation and Parks. A dedicated department would give more control to the town and trained staff that would be fully responsible and dedicated to the Town's recreation assets. Department staff could also develop and organize recreation programs for residents. Currently all programs are provided by Charles County or private organizations. Research conducted for the CPRMP found that all towns in Maryland with populations greater than 14,000 had a recreation department, even if small.

Approximately 60% of respondents to CPRMP recreation survey the supported the future creation of a Town recreation department. 33% of respondents wanted more information before being able to answer the question. Many respondents provided additional, thoughtful comments to this question addressing the costs and benefits (see Appendix B).

The fiscal model developed for the CPRMP (see Section 3.3) included, for the affordability assessment, the creation of a town recreation department beginning in 2014 with one staff member and growing to five staff in 2030.

There are alternative models for the town to consider. As noted in Section 2.4 (Benchmarking) budgets today are tight and recreation departments must not be seen as a drain on the tax base. Towns may want departments but must find models of working cooperatively with counties. Salisbury MD is a particularly interesting model with its parks and facilities being jointly managed by Wicomico County (see Appendix C).

3.3 *Plan Affordability*

A larger, improved parks system will bring multiple benefits, but will also mean higher capital, operating and maintenance costs. It is very important to understand the fiscal consequences of a larger system so that the CPRMP makes recommendations that are realistic and will be affordable to the Town. Therefore, as part of the CPRMP, a customized, spreadsheet-based fiscal model was developed for the Town.

3.3.1 **Fiscal model**

The following summarizes the highlights of the analysis and the model. Appendix E contains a more detailed description in the form of a powerpoint presentation. The model considered:

- Capital investments in land and infrastructure
- Available revenue sources to fund capital investments
- Annual operating expenses resulting from the parks plan, and
- Available revenue sources to fund operating expenses

The analysis took the following steps:

1. Identify current “baseline” parks operations (annual capital and operating expenses and annual revenues).
2. Estimate capital and operating costs associated with a range of parks system plans.

Three PROS system plans (scenarios) were developed – referred to as small, medium and large. The parks described in Table 3-1 formed the basis for all three plans. The differences between the three plans involved the acreages of the parks and the size and scale of the facilities at each park. The capital costs were \$17.7 million for the small, \$21.6 million for the medium, and \$36 million for the large system. Capital and operating costs are summarized in Table 3.

3. Develop estimated capital and operating revenues associated with each park system.
4. Create a financial model to:
 - Forecast capital investments and operating costs over a 40 year planning period (2011 – 2050).
 - Evaluate the ability of existing revenues to fund the range of parks plans.
 - Identify and evaluate the required additional revenues to fund any “funding gap”.

All models incorporate assumptions that try to reflect future conditions as realistically as possible. The key assumptions in the La Plata model involve:

- The year each park would be constructed.
- Park capital and operating costs.
- Available revenues for capital investments – especially from dedications or fees-in-lieu.
- Share of capital costs that can be attributed to meeting needs from new growth versus existing needs. This affects the use of dedications or fees-in-lieu (impact fees).
- Revenues for operating expenses including taxes and user fees.
- Pace and timing of development, which affects capital and operating revenues.

The assumptions in the model can be adjusted so that the Town can use the model as a tool on an ongoing basis.

Figure 2 shows the results of the model runs in three rows of two charts; the small system is modeled on the top row, the medium system in the middle and the large system on the bottom. The capital costs analyses are on the left, and operating costs are on the right. Note that the scales vary from chart to chart.

On the capital side the blue bars indicate the years when capital costs would be spent. The red line shows capital revenues from dedications or fees. The green bars show the year by year capital cash balance.

On the operating side, the blue line shows year by year expenses and the red line shows revenues. The blue bars show the hypothetical increase in the property tax rate that would be needed to fund the gap between expenses and revenues.

3.3.2 Results and Conclusions

1. On the capital side the model shows Town could afford to build the small, medium or large park systems. This is shown by the green bars in positive territory in all three cumulative capital cash balance charts. The cash balance is lower in the larger parks system because that system is more costly. The balances fluctuate over time as major capital expenses (blue bars) are made.

These capital side cash balance conclusions are based on a key assumption in the model that new housing units would contribute recreation opportunities of or equivalent to the current fee-in-lieu of \$7,500.

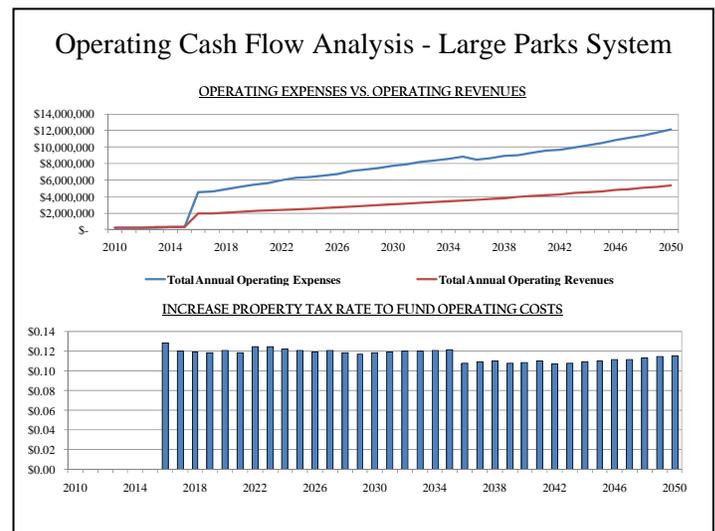
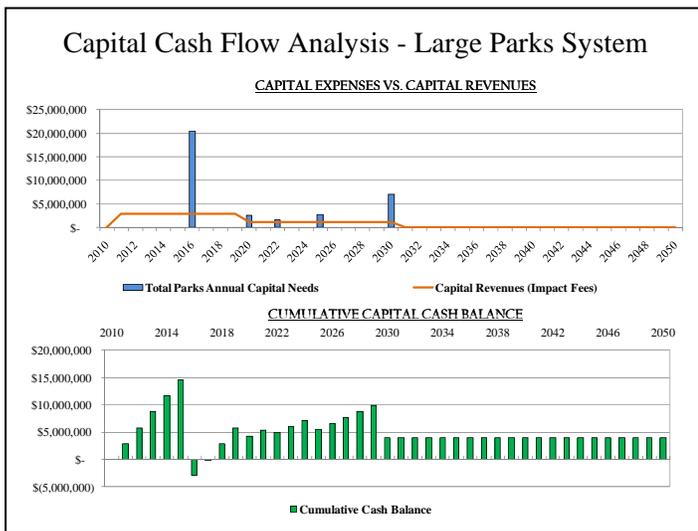
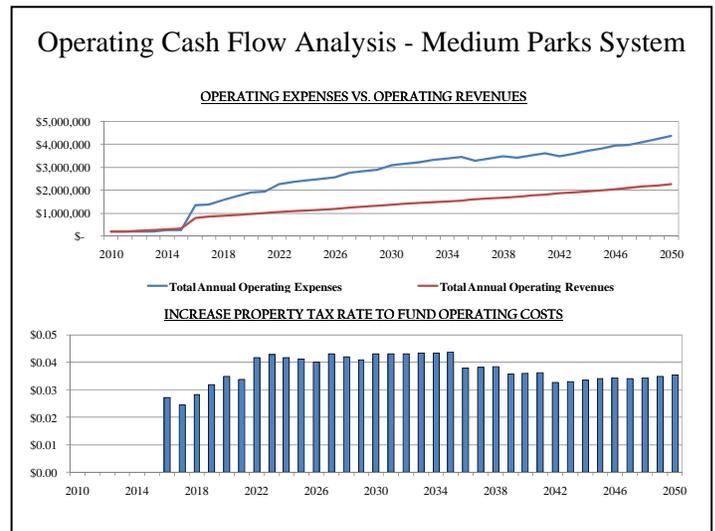
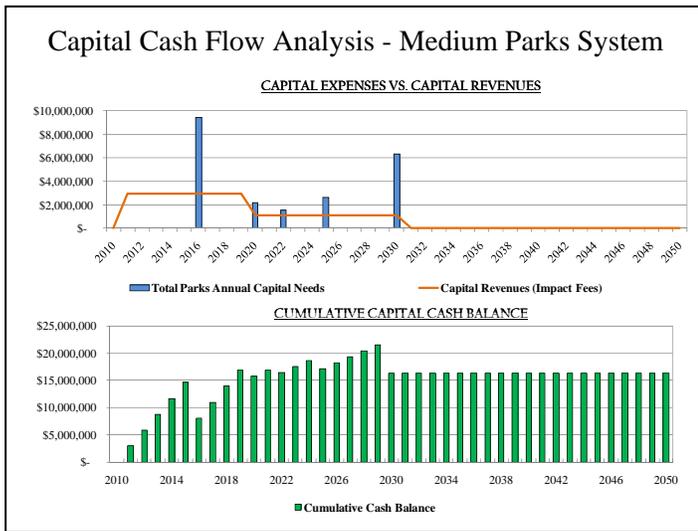
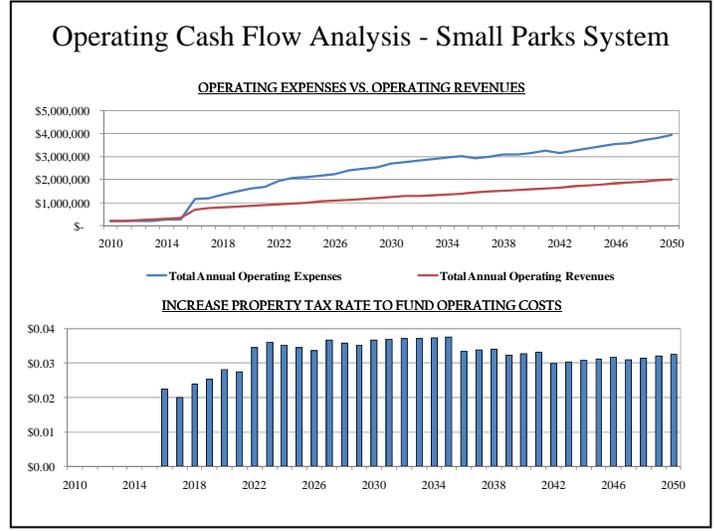
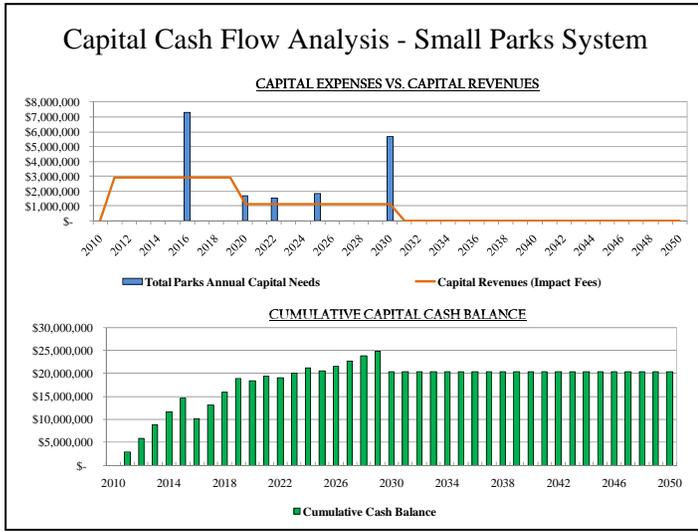
2. The cash balances in the small and medium parks systems are large (over \$15 million). This indicates that the recreation opportunities or fees provided by new housing units are significantly greater than required by the small or medium parks systems. If the Town opted for the small or medium parks system, the recreation opportunities or fee requirements should be lowered to more accurately reflect the true cost of the system (so that new housing units do not make contributions for which they receive no benefit).
3. The current fee-in-lieu of \$7,500 is appropriate for the large parks system, indicated by the relatively low capital cash balance in the out years (approximately \$4 million). However, operating costs would be high (see # 6 below).
4. The capital projects or portions of projects that benefit existing residents (such as Wills Park and Tilghman Lake Park) are funded with operating revenues. The fee-in-lieu can only be used to fund projects serving growth in the Town. For modeling purposes it was assumed that these projects would be funded with debt (20 year debt at 5% interest rate) which would be retired over the life of the debt using operating revenues. The repayment of the debt is reflected in the blue line on Figure 2 operating expenses.
5. On the operating side all three parks systems have funding gaps that would require increased revenues. This is shown on the operating expenses versus operating revenues charts by the gap between the blue line and the red line. The blue line incorporates property tax revenues from new growth. While revenues could come from a range of sources, to illustrate the scale of the gap the model translates the entire gap into increases to the property tax rate as shown in the blue bars. The necessary increases would range from 3 to 4 cents for the small or medium parks system to 10 to 12 cents for the large parks system (the current property tax rate is 32 cents per \$100 of assessed value).
6. The result that all three parks systems have operating funding gaps that would require increased revenues shows that the Town's current spending on parks is relatively low.
7. The operating funding gap for the large parks system is significant (10 to 12 cents on the tax rate, or 30%) and not affordable to Town residents. Much of the operating gap difference between the small/medium parks systems and the large system is due to the higher cost community recreation center annual operating cost of (\$3.2 million versus \$0.43 million). These costs could potentially be reduced through means such as cost sharing, partnerships, and higher cost recovery through user fees.

Table 3-2 Capital and Operating Cost Summary

Project			Capital Cost by Size		
	Growth	Non-Growth	Small	Medium	Large
Neighborhood Park 1	100%	0%	\$2,300,000	\$2,600,000	\$3,000,000
Neighborhood Park 2	100%	0%	\$1,600,000	\$1,800,000	\$2,000,000
Community Park 1	100%	0%	\$1,300,000	\$1,600,000	\$2,000,000
Community Recreation Center	70%	30%	\$5,800,000	\$5,800,000	\$18,700,000
Swimming Pool	70%	30%	\$725,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Community Park 2	70%	30%	\$1,700,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000
Townwide walking / biking system	70%	30%	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000
Wills Park Upgrade	0%	100%	\$900,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000
Tilghman Upgrade	50%	50%	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000
Total			\$17,725,000	\$21,600,000	\$36,000,000

Project	Small		Medium		Large	
	1st Year Operating Costs	Cost Recovery*	1st Year Operating Costs	Cost Recovery*	1st Year Operating Costs	Cost Recovery
Neighborhood Park 1	\$90,000	2%	\$113,000	2%	\$135,000	2%
Neighborhood Park 2	\$30,000	2%	\$37,000	2%	\$45,000	2%
Community Park 1	\$50,000	2%	\$67,000	2%	\$84,000	2%
Community Recreation Center	\$430,000	40%	\$430,000	40%	\$3,200,000	40%
Swimming Pool	\$226,000	80%	\$339,000	80%	\$339,000	80%
Community Park 2	\$8,000	25%	\$9,800	25%	\$12,000	25%
Town-wide walking / biking system	\$9,000	0%	\$9,000	0%	\$9,000	0%
Wills Park Upgrade	\$63,000	2%	\$79,000	2%	\$95,000	2%
Tilghman Upgrade	\$49,000	2%	\$49,000	2%	\$49,000	2%
Parks Department	\$56,000	0%	\$56,000	0%	\$56,000	0%

Figure 2 Fiscal Model Results

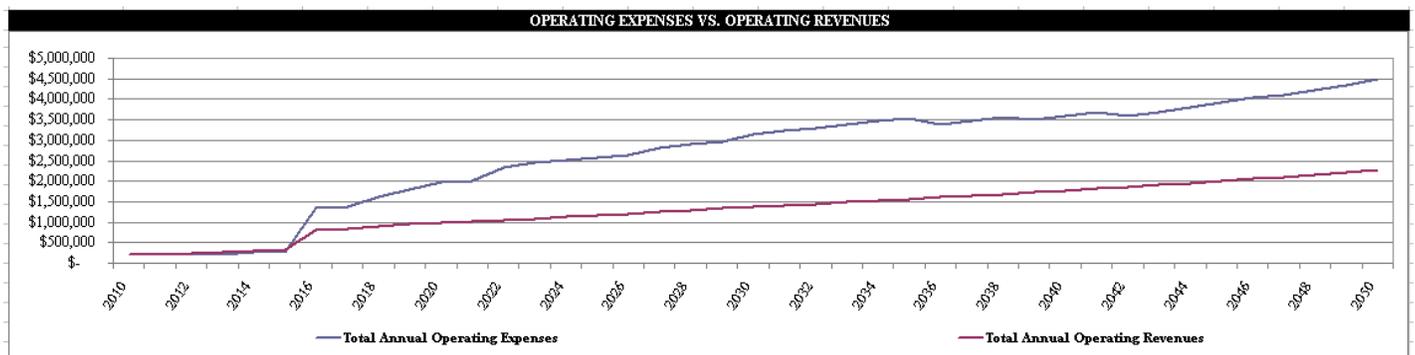
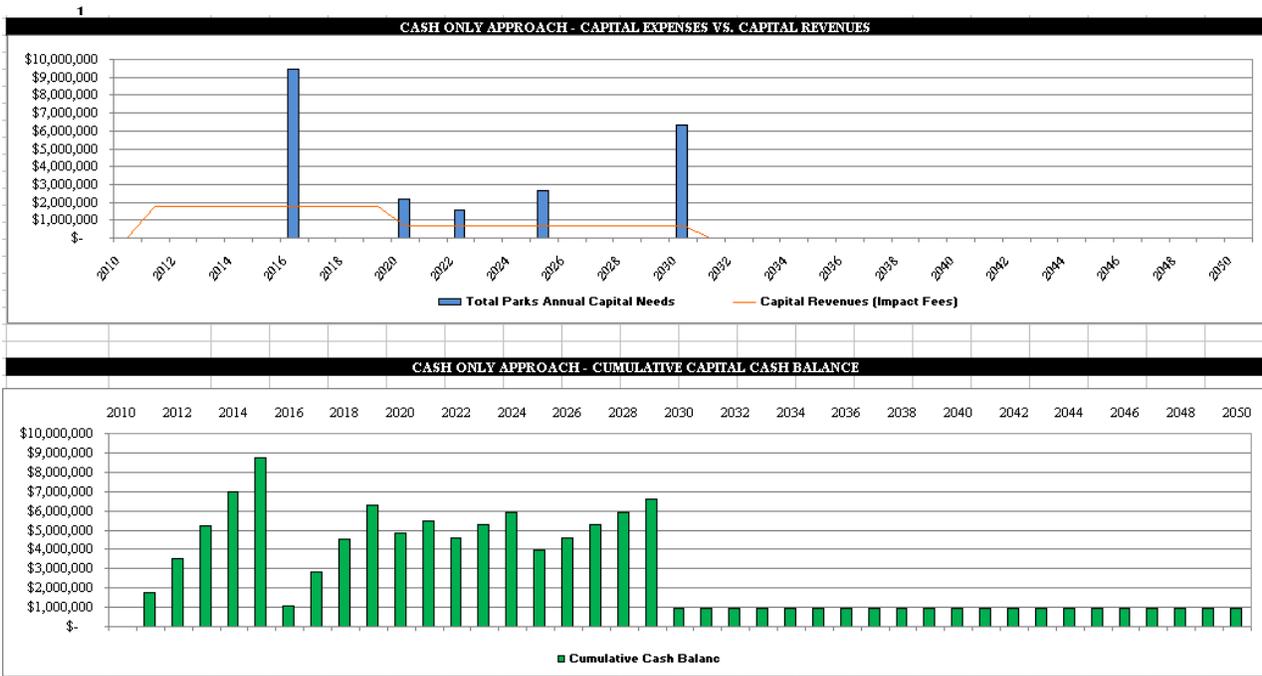


Note that in the above line charts the upper line represents expenses, the lower line represents revenues.

3.3.3 Plan Implications

1. The current fee-in-lieu is set at a level that supports the large park system however the resulting operating costs associated with this size system would require significant increases in the Town's property tax rate. The increases that would be required are not affordable for Town residents. As a result, for general planning purposes, the Town should pursue the medium parks system.
2. The Town should restructure its recreation opportunities fee requirements (Town Code § 173-11) based on the medium parks system. This will mean reducing the recreation opportunity or fee equivalent requirement. Examining the recreation opportunity or fee equivalent requirement for the medium park system over the planning horizon (40 years) would result in an average fee of approximately \$4,500. The charts below show the fiscal model results of a \$4,500 fee and a medium parks system. It should be noted that the \$4,500 fee is based on a 40 year projection period which is well beyond the planning horizon that should be used to calculate an impact fee for implementation. This point is discussed in further detail in item 3 below.

The Town should consider restructuring its recreation opportunities fee requirements as an impact fee. Under an impact fee system a set fee would be established for new housing units. However, new development would be allowed to meet the fee by providing PROS, in the form of land or facilities equivalent in value to the impact fee. The PROS provided would have to be consistent with this CPRMP as implemented through capital improvements plan.



3. The Town must comply with Maryland law when evaluating and calculating the fee. Maryland law requires that the facilities that are included in the calculation of the fee be made available to those paying the fee within a reasonable amount of time (5 to 10 years). The facilities included in the fee should be included in a formal capital improvements plan. The fee should be calculated based on the number of equivalent residential units that will be served by the new park.

It is quite possible, indeed likely, that the fee will need to be adjusted up or down periodically over time in response to changes in growth and in the timing of delivery of parks in the capital improvements plan.

Thus the figure of \$4,500 cited above should be read as a guide, not as an absolute number that would be adopted and not change.

4. The Town should not abandon as totally unaffordable the more expensive elements of the larger parks system (community and neighborhood park elements, recreation center, pool). These are the elements that will distinguish La Plata as having a high quality parks system. On a case by case basis these elements may be affordable through cost sharing, partnerships, or higher cost recovery through user fees.

The community recreation center is the most significant case in point. The costliest single item in the plan, it is unaffordable were the Town to “go it alone”. However, in partnership with Charles County and other private and public entities, and with careful operating cost structuring it could be affordable.

5. The Town should carefully monitor the need for increased operating revenues for PROS. Tax increases are difficult to contemplate, especially in the current (2010) fiscal climate. However, the current level of spending (1.76 cents of the 32 cents tax rate, or 5.6 percent) will be insufficient to operate the PROS system the Town desires.

3.4 Action Plan

This section of the Plan summarizes the key action items necessary to implement the Plan recommendations, and identifies key lead and support bodies.

Other groups will be important in plan implementation including the Beautification Commission, Design Review Board La Plata Community Garden Club and business, neighborhood and community organizations.

Recommendation	Town Council	Planning Commission	Parks & Recreation Commission	Staff
<p>1. Use the recommended PROS program as described in Section 3.2 and shown on Map 4 as the vision and policy guide for the Town’s future PROS system.</p> <p>The recommended program (new parks, upgraded parks, open space, trails, existing parks, recreation department) should be used in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions, negotiations with new development • Capital improvement program projects • Town operating budget • Grant, financial assistance applications • Discussions, negotiations with property owners, Charles County, neighborhood and community organizations, other interest groups. <p>Experience shows that a champion will be needed to push for implementation of the vision including gaining public support. This CPRMP recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission take on this role.</p> <p>The CPRMP and comments from the public contain a number of design recommendations such as the need for shade, lighting, and safety and security. These should be incorporated into the designs for new and upgraded PROS.</p>	Support	Support	Lead	Co-Lead
<p>2. When approving new development, consider both i) the public PROS system needs and ii) the recreation and open space needs internal and private to the development. Meeting the public PROS system needs should be the first priority.</p>		Co-Lead	Lead	Co-Lead
<p>3. Reduce the recreation opportunity or fee equivalent requirement to a level that is supported by the actual planned parks system improvements over the next 5 to 10 years included in a formal capital improvements plan. Consider calling the fee an “impact fee”. Evaluate the fee on an annual basis considering revisions to capital plans and Town growth.</p>	Lead			Support
<p>4. Use the needs analysis (Table 2-2) and associated discussion when considering the recreation opportunities to be provided in new development under the Town’s development regulations.</p>		Lead	Support	Support

Recommendation	Town Council	Planning Commission	Parks & Recreation Commission	Staff
<p>5. Work with the major developments in Town (Heritage Green, Agricopia, Steeplechase, and Stagecoach) to acquire land for the community and neighborhood parks and trails identified in the recommended PROS program.</p> <p>Land should be in the general locations shown on Map 4 and described in Section 3.2, though adjustments may be necessary based on further study.</p>	Lead	Support	Support	Co-Lead
<p>6. Explore options for a community recreation center. This is one of the CPRMP's key recommendations. There are many decision points including scale, affordability, and partners, (see section 3.2.1 and Chart 1).</p>			Lead	Co-Lead
<p>7. Acquire land for a Town center park. Work with the Town's Vision Implementation Team (reestablished in 2009) to flesh out the concept for this park (described above as Community Park 2).</p>	Support	Support	Lead	Co-Lead
<p>8. Develop a master plan for Tilghman Lake Park. As described in this CPRMP, this park is a hidden jewel. A master plan should be developed for the park addressing access, development areas, preservation areas, use of the lake, programs, management and security and safety.</p>		Support	Lead	Co-Lead
<p>9. Develop a plan for Wills Park based on the concept in Figure 1.</p>	Support	Support	Lead	Co-Lead
<p>10. Continue to pay attention to mini-parks serving the Town's older neighborhoods.</p>	Support		Lead	Co-Lead

Appendices

Appendix A Recreational Facilities Needs Analysis Tables

Appendix A Recreational Facilities Needs Analysis Tables (PROS Inventory, Summary, Supply, Demand, Needs)

The following three tables show the detailed calculations for the supply versus demand needs analysis.

The first table is the Summary of Needs Report with the results of the analysis for 16 PROS activities. This table is derived from the Needs Report. The top section contains the results for the Town and the bottom section gives the results for the Town plus the Outer La Plata Recreation Area.

The first table is the Supply Report for 16 activities. Numbers of facilities are from the recreation inventory. Daily carrying capacity and season length data for each facility/activity were defined by ERM based on past studies including the Charles County LPPRP. The electronic version of the supply and demand tables (available from the Town) includes explanatory comments indicating and explaining where changes were made to season length, daily carrying capacity or demand.

The second table is the Demand Report for 2010, 2020, and 2030. Population projections for the Town were from the Comprehensive Plan. Projections for the Outer La Plata Area were by ERM. Individual participation rates and frequency of participation rates were from *Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland A Survey of Households in Maryland and Seven Sub-State Regions* by Donald F. Norris of the Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research and Royce Hanson of the Center for Urban Environmental Research and Education University of Maryland, Baltimore County in 2003. This survey included responses from 400 households in each of the seven regions of Maryland. For the Town of La Plata, in some instances the demand numbers from the survey were raised or lowered to better represent the actual participation in these activities in the Town. See electronic version of the supply and demand tables (available from the Town) for explanatory comments.

The third table is the Needs Report based on the numbers in the previous tables.

Supply Report- La Plata						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Activity	Facility type	Number of Facilities 2010 (1)	Season Length (2)	Daily Carrying Capacity per Facility (2)	Annual Carrying Capacity (3)	Total Supply of all Facilities (4)
Baseball/ Softball	Diamonds	12	150	45	6,750	77,625
Basketball (indoor)	Courts	4	160	40	6,400	25,600
Basketball (outdoor)	Courts	9	235	40	9,400	84,600
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	Acres	0	335	400	134,000	-
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	Multi-Purpose fields	10	200	28	5,600	56,000
Field Sports (football)	Football fields	1	180	120	21,600	21,600
Golf	Courses	0	220	360	79,200	-
Indoor sports/fitness	Gyms/Fitness Rooms	4	220	100	22,000	88,000
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	Playgrounds	15	270	64	17,280	259,200
Picnic Pavilions	Shelters	4	180	40	7,200	28,800
Skateboarding	Skateboard Courts	0	180	70	12,600	-
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	Pools	1	80	1,000	80,000	80,000
Swimming Pools (indoor)	Pools	0	335	900	301,500	-
Tennis	Courts	9	220	18	3,960	35,640
Trails: hike, bike, nature	Trail miles	1.8	300	128	38,400	69,120
Volleyball (outdoor)	Courts	0.5	180	64	11,520	5,760

Supply Report- La Plata and Outer La Plata Area						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Activity	Facility type	Number of Facilities 2010 (1)	Season Length (2)	Daily Carrying Capacity per Facility (2)	Annual Carrying Capacity (3)	Total Supply of all Facilities (4)
Baseball/ Softball	Diamonds	29	150	45	6,750	192,375
Basketball (indoor)	Courts	5	160	40	6,400	32,000
Basketball (outdoor)	Courts	9	235	40	9,400	84,600
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	Acres	3	335	400	134,000	402,000
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	Multi-Purpose fields	25	200	28	5,600	140,000
Field Sports (football)	Football fields	3	180	120	21,600	64,800
Golf	Courses	2	220	360	79,200	158,400
Indoor sports/fitness	Gyms/Fitness Rooms	5	220	100	22,000	110,000
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	Playgrounds	18	270	64	17,280	311,040
Picnic Pavilions	Shelters	9	180	40	7,200	64,800
Skateboarding	Skateboard Courts	1	180	70	12,600	12,600
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	Pools	1	80	1,000	80,000	80,000
Swimming Pools (indoor)	Pools	1	299	340	101,660	101,660
Tennis	Courts	23	220	18	3,960	91,080
Trails: hike, bike, nature	Trail miles	5.3	300	128	38,400	203,520
Volleyball (outdoor)	Courts	1.5	180	64	11,520	17,280
(1) From Recreation Inventory						

(2) Defined by the Town based on past experience and examples from other towns/counties (especially Charles County) Notes in the electronic version of the spreadsheet explain the assumption for each capacity. Note: Carrying capacity means the number of users the facility can support in a day.

(3) Annual Capacity derived by multiplying Columns 3 and 4.

(4) Total supply (derived by multiplying Columns 2 and 5) represents the total number of occasions/users per year that a facility can serve.

Demand Report La Plata								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Activity	2010 Population	Individual Participation Rate (%) (2)	Frequency of Participation Rate (2)	2010 Demand	2020 Population	2020 Demand	2030 Population	2030 Demand
Baseball/ Softball	10,000	0.141	19.4	27,354	20,884	57,126	25,000	68,385
Basketball (indoor)	10,000	0.105	17.54	18,417	20,884	38,462	25,000	46,043
Basketball (outdoor)	10,000	0.105	17.54	18,417	20,884	38,462	25,000	46,043
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	10,000	0.160	25.76	41,216	20,884	86,075	25,000	103,040
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	10,000	0.101	21.74	21,957	20,884	45,856	25,000	54,894
Field Sports (football)	10,000	0.046	15.56	7,158	20,884	14,948	25,000	17,894
Golf	10,000	0.136	17	22,535	20,884	47,063	25,000	56,338
Indoor sports/fitness	10,000	0.29	27	77,082	20,884	160,978	25,000	192,705
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	10,000	0.388	7.12	27,626	20,884	57,693	25,000	69,064
Picnic Pavilions	10,000	0.385	4.54	17,479	20,884	36,503	25,000	43,698
Skateboarding	10,000	0.04	24	9,468	20,884	19,773	25,000	23,670
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	10,000	0.457	11.48	52,464	20,884	109,565	25,000	131,159
Swimming Pools (indoor)	10,000	0.457	11.48	52,464	20,884	109,565	25,000	131,159
Tennis	10,000	0.070	8.89	6,223	20,884	12,996	25,000	15,558
Trails: hike, bike, nature	10,000	0.788	22.08	173,990	20,884	363,362	25,000	434,976
Volleyball (outdoor)	10,000	0.038	16.3	6194	20,884	12,936	25,000	15,485
La Plata and Outer La Plata Area								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Activity	2010 Population	Individual Participation Rate (%) (2)	Frequency of Participation Rate (2)	2010 Demand	2020 Population	2020 Demand	2030 Population	2030 Demand
Baseball/ Softball	15,384	0.141	19.4	42,082	27,924	76,384	33,636	92,009
Basketball (indoor)	15,384	0.105	17.54	28,333	27,924	51,428	33,636	61,948
Basketball (outdoor)	15,384	0.105	17.54	28,333	27,924	51,428	33,636	61,948
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	15,384	0.160	25.76	63,408	27,924	115,093	33,636	138,635
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	15,384	0.101	21.74	33,780	27,924	61,315	33,636	73,857
Field Sports (football)	15,384	0.046	15.56	11,011	27,924	19,987	33,636	24,076
Golf	15,384	0.136	17	34,669	27,924	62,928	33,636	75,800
Indoor sports/fitness	15,384	0.29	27	118,585	27,924	215,246	33,636	259,275
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	15,384	0.388	7.12	42,500	27,924	77,143	33,636	92,922
Picnic Pavilions	15,384	0.385	4.54	26,890	27,924	48,809	33,636	58,793
Skateboarding	15,384	0.04	24	14,566	27,924	26,439	33,636	31,847
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	15,384	0.457	11.48	80,712	27,924	146,501	33,636	176,468
Swimming Pools (indoor)	15,384	0.457	11.48	80,712	27,924	146,501	33,636	176,468
Tennis	15,384	0.070	8.89	9,574	27,924	17,377	33,636	20,932
Trails: hike, bike, nature	15,384	0.788	22.08	267,672	27,924	485,856	33,636	585,239
Volleyball (outdoor)	15,384	0.038	16.3	9,529	27,924	17,296	33,636	20,834
(1) "Participation in Local Park and Recreation Activities in Maryland; A Survey of Households in Maryland and Seven Sub-State Regions", Maryland Institute for Policy Analysis and Research, May 2003. Key tables provided below in this spreadsheet.								
Note: Demand for 2010 (Column 4) is derived by multiplying Columns 1, 2 and 3. Demand for 2020, 2030 and Buildout is derived by multiplying respectively Columns 5, 7 and 9 by Columns 2 and 3.								

Needs Report La Plata											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Activity	Facility type	2010 Supply	Annual Carrying Capacity	2010 Demand	2010 Unmet Need (1)	2020 Demand	2020 Unmet Demand (2)	2020 Unmet Need (3)	2030 Demand	2030 Unmet Demand (4)	2030 Unmet Need (5)
Baseball/ Softball	Diamonds	77,625	6,750	27,354	7	57,126	20,499	3	68,385	9,240	1
Basketball (indoor)	Courts	25,600	6,400	18,417	1	38,462	(12,862)	(2)	46,043	(20,443)	(3)
Basketball (outdoor)	Courts	84,600	9,400	18,417	7	38,462	46,138	5	46,043	38,558	4
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	Acres	-	134,000	41,216	(0.3)	86,075	(86,075)	(1)	103,040	(103,040)	(1)
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	Multi-Purpose fields	56,000	5,600	21,957	6	45,856	10,144	2	54,894	1,107	0
Field Sports (football)	Football fields	21,600	21,600	7,158	1	14,948	6,652	0	17,894	3,706	0
Golf	Courses	-	79,200	22,535	(0.3)	47,063	(47,063)	(1)	56,338	(56,338)	(1)
Indoor sports/fitness	Gyms/Fitness Rooms	88,000	22,000	77,082	0.5	160,978	(72,978)	(3)	192,705	(104,705)	(5)
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	Playgrounds	259,200	17,280	27,626	13	57,693	201,507	12	69,064	190,136	11
Picnic Pavilions	Shelters	28,800	7,200	17,479	2	36,503	(7,703)	(1)	43,698	(14,898)	(2)
Skateboarding	Skateboard Courts	-	12,600	9,468	(1)	19,773	(19,773)	(2)	23,670	(23,670)	(2)
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	Pools	80,000	80,000	52,464	0	109,565	(29,565)	(0)	131,159	(51,159)	(1)
Swimming Pools (indoor)	Pools	-	301,500	52,464	(0.2)	109,565	(109,565)	(0.4)	131,159	(131,159)	(0.4)
Tennis	Courts	35,640	3,960	6,223	7	12,996	22,644	6	15,558	20,083	5
Trails: hike, bike, nature	Trail miles	69,120	38,400	173,990	(3)	363,362	(294,242)	(8)	434,976	(365,856)	(10)
Volleyball (outdoor)	Courts	5,760	11,520	6,194	(0)	12,936	(7,176)	(0.6)	15,485	(9,725)	(0.8)

Needs Report La Plata and Outer La Plata Area											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Activity	Facility type	2010 Supply	Annual Carrying Capacity	2010 Demand	2010 Unmet Need (1)	2020 Demand	2020 Unmet Demand (2)	2020 Unmet Need (3)	2030 Demand	2030 Unmet Demand (4)	2030 Unmet Need (5)
Baseball/ Softball	Diamonds	192,375	6,750	42,082	22	76,384	115,991	17	92,009	100,366	15
Basketball (indoor)	Courts	32,000	6,400	28,333	1	51,428	(19,428)	(3)	61,948	(29,948)	(5)
Basketball (outdoor)	Courts	84,600	9,400	28,333	6	51,428	33,172	4	61,948	22,652	2
Dog Activities / dog park (off-leash)	Acres	402,000	134,000	63,408	2.5	115,093	286,907	2	138,635	263,365	2
Field Sports (soccer, multi-use)	Multi-Purpose fields	140,000	5,600	33,780	19	61,315	78,685	14	73,857	66,143	12
Field Sports (football)	Football fields	64,800	21,600	11,011	2	19,987	44,813	2	24,076	40,724	2
Golf	Courses	158,400	79,200	34,669	1.6	62,928	95,472	1	75,800	82,600	1
Indoor sports/fitness	Gyms/Fitness Rooms	110,000	22,000	118,585	(0.4)	215,246	(105,246)	(5)	259,275	(149,275)	(7)
Playgrounds/ Tot-Lots	Playgrounds	311,040	17,280	42,500	16	77,143	233,897	14	92,922	218,118	13
Picnic Pavilions	Shelters	64,800	7,200	26,890	5	48,809	15,991	2	58,793	6,007	1
Skateboarding	Skateboard Courts	12,600	12,600	14,566	(0)	26,439	(13,839)	(1)	31,847	(19,247)	(2)
Swimming Pools (outdoor)	Pools	80,000	80,000	80,712	(0)	146,501	(66,501)	(1)	176,468	(96,468)	(1)
Swimming Pools (indoor)	Pools	101,660	101,660	80,712	0.2	146,501	(44,841)	(0.4)	176,468	(74,808)	(0.7)
Tennis	Courts	91,080	3,960	9,574	21	17,377	73,703	19	20,932	70,148	18
Trails: hike, bike, nature	Trail miles	203,520	38,400	267,672	(2)	485,856	(282,336)	(7)	585,239	(381,719)	(10)
Volleyball (outdoor)	Courts	17,280	11,520	9,529	1	17,296	(16)	(0)	20,834	(3,554)	(0.3)

(1) 2010 Unmet Need derived by subtracting Column 3 from Column 1 and dividing by Column 2. Parenthesis indicates a facility/activity deficit. A number without parenthesis indicates a facility surplus (e.g., 2010 unmet need indicates an 7 baseball/softball diamond surplus and a 0.3 acre dog park deficit.

(2) 2020 Unmet Demand derived by subtracting Column 5 from Column 1.

(3) 2020 Unmet Need derived from subtracting Column 5 from Column 1 and dividing by Column 2.

Appendix B Recreation Survey Materials

Town of La Plata Recreation Survey-Summer 2010

1. Facility Use

The Town of La Plata would like to know your views and opinions about existing and future recreation in the Town. This survey will be important input into the Town's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan (CPRMP) that is intended to guide the Town as it moves from its existing parks and recreation system to the desired parks system of La Plata's future that can be a major contributor to the Town's quality of life.

1. Did you or any other members of your household visit a Town of La Plata owned park or open space area in the past 12 months?

Yes

No

2. If yes which park or open space area did you visit and approximately how many times?

	1-2	2-5	5-8	8+
Carroll La Plata Village	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clarks Run Natural Area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hemlock Court	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Patuxent Court Mini-Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phoenix Run Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Redwood Lake	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Silver Linden Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tilghman Lake Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Town Hall Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wills Memorial Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Did you or any other members of your household visit a school park in the Town, or a park/open space area near the Town in the past 12 months?

Yes

No

Town of La Plata Recreation Survey-Summer 2010

4. If yes which park or open space area did you visit and approximately how many times?

	1-2	2-5	5-8	8+
Courthouse Soccer Field	jn	jn	jn	jn
Gwynn Educational Center	jn	jn	jn	jn
La Plata High School / Matula Elementary School	jn	jn	jn	jn
Somers Middle School	jn	jn	jn	jn
Mitchell Elementary School	jn	jn	jn	jn
College of Southern Maryland	jn	jn	jn	jn
Laurel Springs Regional Park	jn	jn	jn	jn
Turkey Hill Park (Turkey Hill Rd)	jn	jn	jn	jn
White Plains Regional Park	jn	jn	jn	jn
La Plata Park (Hawthorne Rd)	jn	jn	jn	jn

Town of La Plata Recreation Survey-Summer 2010

5. The Town of La Plata is expected to grow considerably over the next 20 years, increasing in population from approximately 9,000 to over 20,000 people. What parks or recreation facilities do you think are most needed now or will be needed in the future? Please select one (1) option (No need, Moderate Need, or Strong Need) for NOW and one (1) option for FUTURE.

	No Need NOW	Moderate Need NOW	Strong Need NOW	No Need in the FUTURE	Moderate Need in the FUTURE	Strong Need in the FUTURE
Amphitheater (outdoor)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Arts/cultural facilities	€	€	€	€	€	€
Ballfields (baseball, softball)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Basketball (outdoor)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Community/recreation center	€	€	€	€	€	€
Dog park	€	€	€	€	€	€
Facilities for the disabled	€	€	€	€	€	€
Fitness trail	€	€	€	€	€	€
Fitness/weight room	€	€	€	€	€	€
Gardens (gazebos, plantings, fences/paths)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Golf course	€	€	€	€	€	€
Handball/racquetball court (outdoor)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Indoor gymnasium (basketball, volleyball)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Multi-purpose fields (soccer, football)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Open fields (casual use, un-programmed)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Parking (please note location under Additional Comments)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Pavilions/shelters	€	€	€	€	€	€
Picnic areas	€	€	€	€	€	€
Playgrounds, tot lots	€	€	€	€	€	€
Restrooms	€	€	€	€	€	€
Skateboarding	€	€	€	€	€	€
Swimming (indoor)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Swimming (outdoor)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Tennis (outdoor)	€	€	€	€	€	€
Walking/biking trails	€	€	€	€	€	€
Volleyball (outdoor)	€	€	€	€	€	€

Town of La Plata Recreation Survey-Summer 2010

6. Additional comments to question 5

7. Today most recreational programming (sports leagues, classes) in and near La Plata are provided by Charles County or by volunteer/non-profit recreation associations.

Please rate these programs.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Number of Programs	<input type="radio"/>				
Diversity of Programs	<input type="radio"/>				
Quality of Programs	<input type="radio"/>				
Cost of Programs	<input type="radio"/>				

8. Additional comments to question 7

9. Do you and members of your household feel safe when using parks and recreation facilities in the Town?

Yes

No

10. If no, why not?

- Too isolated
- Poor lighting
- Not enough people around
- Suspicious looking people
- Too far to walk from parking area
- Not well maintained
- Hiding places (bushes, trees, walls, etc.)
- Don't know

11. Additional comments to question 10

Town of La Plata Recreation Survey-Summer 2010

12. Most Towns with over 10,000 population have a department that coordinates and manages parks and recreation services and provides recreation programs. The alternative would be a continuation of current practice where recreation is provided by a mix of Town, County, and volunteer departments and associations. Would you support the future creation of a Town recreation department?

Yes

No

Don't know / Need more information

13. Additional comments to question 12

14. What could be done encourage you or members of your household to use parks and recreation facilities in the Town of La Plata more often?

15. For the following statements please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
The availability of recreation classes, parks and facilities is important to my satisfaction with living in La Plata.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am not familiar with the parks, facilities, and recreation programs available to me in La Plata.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think additional parks are needed in La Plata.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would pay reasonable user fees to maintain/improve parks and recreation areas in La Plata.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Town of La Plata Recreation Survey-Summer 2010

2. About Yourself

Please tell us a little about yourself. The following information is anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

1. Do you live in the Town of La Plata?

Yes

No

2. If yes, how many years have you lived in the Town?

0 to 5 years

6 to 10 years

11 to 20 years

20+ years

3. How many people are in your household?

4. What are their ages?

5. Do you rent or own your home?

Rent

Own

6. What is your race?

White/Caucasian

Black or African American

Asian or Pacific Islander

American Indian or Alaskan Native

Other

7. If other, please specify.

8. What is your age?

Town of La Plata Recreation Survey-Summer 2010

9. What was your household's total annual income before taxes in 2009?

less than \$25,000

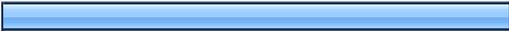
\$25,000 - \$49,999

\$50,000 - \$99,999

\$100,000 - \$149,999

\$150,000+

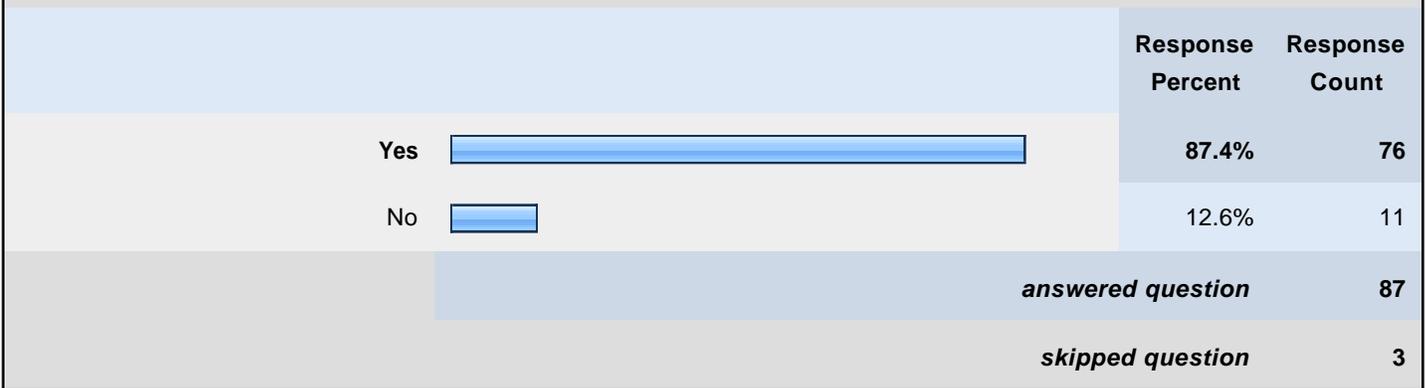
1. Did you or any other members of your household visit a Town of La Plata owned park or open space area in the past 12 months?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes 	77.3%	68
No 	22.7%	20
answered question		88
skipped question		2

2. If yes which park or open space area did you visit and approximately how many times?

	1-2	2-5	5-8	8+	Response Count
Carroll La Plata Village	100.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	1
Clarks Run Natural Area	47.4% (9)	31.6% (6)	5.3% (1)	15.8% (3)	19
Hemlock Court	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (1)	2
Patuxent Court Mini-Park	0.0% (0)	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	2
Phoenix Run Park	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (1)	2
Redwood Lake	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	22.2% (2)	44.4% (4)	9
Silver Linden Park	22.2% (4)	0.0% (0)	11.1% (2)	66.7% (12)	18
Tilghman Lake Park	50.0% (9)	27.8% (5)	16.7% (3)	5.6% (1)	18
Town Hall Park	20.7% (6)	31.0% (9)	27.6% (8)	20.7% (6)	29
Wills Memorial Park	40.0% (12)	46.7% (14)	6.7% (2)	6.7% (2)	30
answered question					65
skipped question					25

3. Did you or any other members of your household visit a school park in the Town, or a park/open space area near the Town in the past 12 months?



4. If yes which park or open space area did you visit and approximately how many times?

	1-2	2-5	5-8	8+	Response Count
Courthouse Soccer Field	57.1% (4)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	7
Gwynn Educational Center	0.0% (0)	16.7% (1)	33.3% (2)	50.0% (3)	6
La Plata High School / Matula Elementary School	11.4% (4)	20.0% (7)	14.3% (5)	54.3% (19)	35
Somers Middle School	15.4% (4)	38.5% (10)	15.4% (4)	30.8% (8)	26
Mitchell Elementary School	11.8% (2)	29.4% (5)	23.5% (4)	35.3% (6)	17
College of Southern Maryland	17.6% (3)	47.1% (8)	5.9% (1)	29.4% (5)	17
Laurel Springs Regional Park	5.8% (4)	17.4% (12)	11.6% (8)	65.2% (45)	69
Turkey Hill Park (Turkey Hill Rd)	26.3% (5)	31.6% (6)	10.5% (2)	31.6% (6)	19
White Plains Regional Park	32.3% (10)	32.3% (10)	19.4% (6)	16.1% (5)	31
La Plata Park (Hawthorne Rd)	50.0% (4)	37.5% (3)	0.0% (0)	12.5% (1)	8
answered question					79
skipped question					11

5. The Town of La Plata is expected to grow considerably over the next 20 years, increasing in population from approximately 9,000 to over 20,000 people. What parks or recreation facilities do you think are most needed now or will be needed in the future? Please select one (1) option (No need, Moderate Need, or Strong Need) for NOW and one (1) option for FUTURE.

	No Need NOW	Moderate Need NOW	Strong Need NOW	No Need in the FUTURE	Moderate Need in the FUTURE	Strong Need in the FUTURE	Response Count
Amphitheater (outdoor)	29.4% (20)	27.9% (19)	10.3% (7)	14.7% (10)	41.2% (28)	16.2% (11)	68
Arts/cultural facilities	16.9% (11)	41.5% (27)	23.1% (15)	6.2% (4)	29.2% (19)	21.5% (14)	65
Ballfields (baseball, softball)	37.5% (21)	25.0% (14)	17.9% (10)	10.7% (6)	30.4% (17)	19.6% (11)	56
Basketball (outdoor)	32.1% (18)	35.7% (20)	7.1% (4)	25.0% (14)	26.8% (15)	16.1% (9)	56
Community/recreation center	10.1% (7)	37.7% (26)	42.0% (29)	4.3% (3)	15.9% (11)	27.5% (19)	69
Dog park	39.3% (24)	18.0% (11)	13.1% (8)	31.1% (19)	27.9% (17)	14.8% (9)	61
Facilities for the disabled	6.8% (4)	52.5% (31)	28.8% (17)	3.4% (2)	35.6% (21)	16.9% (10)	59
Fitness trail	18.8% (12)	40.6% (26)	31.3% (20)	6.3% (4)	20.3% (13)	26.6% (17)	64
Fitness/weight room	37.9% (22)	15.5% (9)	27.6% (16)	20.7% (12)	19.0% (11)	22.4% (13)	58
Gardens (gazebos, plantings, fences/paths)	17.9% (12)	40.3% (27)	23.9% (16)	10.4% (7)	31.3% (21)	16.4% (11)	67
Golf course	50.8% (31)	9.8% (6)	16.4% (10)	27.9% (17)	29.5% (18)	9.8% (6)	61
Handball/racquetball court (outdoor)	35.2% (19)	22.2% (12)	18.5% (10)	16.7% (9)	38.9% (21)	14.8% (8)	54
Indoor gymnasium (basketball, volleyball)	12.1% (7)	46.6% (27)	24.1% (14)	6.9% (4)	27.6% (16)	25.9% (15)	58

Multi-purpose fields (soccer, football)	26.3% (15)	36.8% (21)	19.3% (11)	10.5% (6)	28.1% (16)	22.8% (13)	57
Open fields (casual use, un-programmed)	25.0% (13)	36.5% (19)	19.2% (10)	9.6% (5)	44.2% (23)	7.7% (4)	52
Parking (please note location under Additional Comments)	35.6% (16)	20.0% (9)	28.9% (13)	24.4% (11)	20.0% (9)	24.4% (11)	45
Pavilions/shelters	10.0% (6)	48.3% (29)	26.7% (16)	1.7% (1)	45.0% (27)	15.0% (9)	60
Picnic areas	6.6% (4)	45.9% (28)	31.1% (19)	0.0% (0)	44.3% (27)	21.3% (13)	61
Playgrounds, tot lots	11.9% (8)	35.8% (24)	37.3% (25)	3.0% (2)	26.9% (18)	26.9% (18)	67
Restrooms	9.7% (6)	37.1% (23)	35.5% (22)	6.5% (4)	37.1% (23)	19.4% (12)	62
Skateboarding	39.3% (22)	26.8% (15)	14.3% (8)	33.9% (19)	26.8% (15)	8.9% (5)	56
Swimming (indoor)	14.3% (9)	30.2% (19)	41.3% (26)	12.7% (8)	17.5% (11)	27.0% (17)	63
Swimming (outdoor)	19.0% (12)	23.8% (15)	41.3% (26)	12.7% (8)	20.6% (13)	23.8% (15)	63
Tennis (outdoor)	14.8% (8)	44.4% (24)	22.2% (12)	9.3% (5)	33.3% (18)	22.2% (12)	54
Walking/biking trails	6.8% (5)	34.2% (25)	45.2% (33)	2.7% (2)	23.3% (17)	31.5% (23)	73
Volleyball (outdoor)	28.3% (15)	34.0% (18)	22.6% (12)	13.2% (7)	30.2% (16)	17.0% (9)	53
answered question							88
skipped question							2

6. Additional comments to question 5

	Response Count
	54
<i>answered question</i>	54
<i>skipped question</i>	36

7. Today most recreational programming (sports leagues, classes) in and near La Plata are provided by Charles County or by volunteer/non-profit recreation associations. Please rate these programs.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Response Count
Number of Programs	10.0% (8)	48.8% (39)	18.8% (15)	3.8% (3)	18.8% (15)	80
Diversity of Programs	12.5% (10)	38.8% (31)	27.5% (22)	2.5% (2)	18.8% (15)	80
Quality of Programs	12.5% (10)	46.3% (37)	18.8% (15)	1.3% (1)	21.3% (17)	80
Cost of Programs	13.8% (11)	42.5% (34)	17.5% (14)	3.8% (3)	22.5% (18)	80
					<i>answered question</i>	81
					<i>skipped question</i>	9

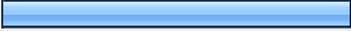
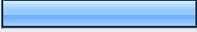
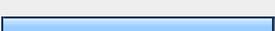
8. Additional comments to question 7

	Response Count
	17
<i>answered question</i>	17
<i>skipped question</i>	73

9. Do you and members of your household feel safe when using parks and recreation facilities in the Town?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes 	82.1%	69
No 	17.9%	15
<i>answered question</i>		84
<i>skipped question</i>		6

10. If no, why not?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Too isolated 	47.1%	8
Poor lighting 	47.1%	8
Not enough people around 	41.2%	7
Suspicious looking people 	52.9%	9
Too far to walk from parking area 	29.4%	5
Not well maintained 	29.4%	5
Hiding places (bushes, trees, walls, etc.) 	41.2%	7
Don't know 	5.9%	1
<i>answered question</i>		17
<i>skipped question</i>		73

11. Additional comments to question 10

	Response Count
	17
<i>answered question</i>	17
<i>skipped question</i>	73

12. Most Towns with over 10,000 population have a department that coordinates and manages parks and recreation services and provides recreation programs. The alternative would be a continuation of current practice where recreation is provided by a mix of Town, County, and volunteer departments and associations. Would you support the future creation of a Town recreation department?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes 	60.9%	53
No 	5.7%	5
Don't know / Need more information 	33.3%	29
<i>answered question</i>		87
<i>skipped question</i>		3

13. Additional comments to question 12

	Response Count
	25
<i>answered question</i>	25
<i>skipped question</i>	65

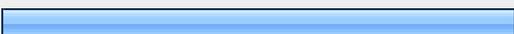
14. What could be done encourage you or members of your household to use parks and recreation facilities in the Town of La Plata more often?

	Response Count
	42
<i>answered question</i>	42
<i>skipped question</i>	48

15. For the following statements please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Response Count
The availability of recreation classes, parks and facilities is important to my satisfaction with living in La Plata.	3.5% (3)	3.5% (3)	12.9% (11)	47.1% (40)	32.9% (28)	85
I am not familiar with the parks, facilities, and recreation programs available to me in La Plata.	25.9% (22)	31.8% (27)	17.6% (15)	21.2% (18)	3.5% (3)	85
I think additional parks are needed in La Plata.	6.0% (5)	9.5% (8)	9.5% (8)	42.9% (36)	32.1% (27)	84
I would pay reasonable user fees to maintain/improve parks and recreation areas in La Plata.	17.9% (15)	2.4% (2)	17.9% (15)	39.3% (33)	22.6% (19)	84
				<i>answered question</i>		86
				<i>skipped question</i>		4

16. Do you live in the Town of La Plata?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		77.9%	67
No		22.1%	19
answered question			86
skipped question			4

17. If yes, how many years have you lived in the Town?

		Response Percent	Response Count
0 to 5 years		31.3%	21
6 to 10 years		31.3%	21
11 to 20 years		14.9%	10
20+ years		22.4%	15
answered question			67
skipped question			23

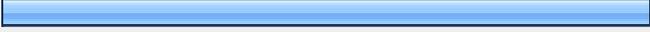
18. How many people are in your household?

		Response Count
		82
answered question		82
skipped question		8

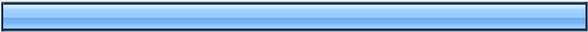
19. What are their ages?

	Response Count
	82
<i>answered question</i>	82
<i>skipped question</i>	8

20. Do you rent or own your home?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Rent 	1.2%	1
Own 	98.8%	84
<i>answered question</i>		85
<i>skipped question</i>		5

21. What is your race?

	Response Percent	Response Count
White/Caucasian 	88.9%	72
Black or African American 	6.2%	5
Asian or Pacific Islander	0.0%	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.0%	0
Other 	4.9%	4
<i>answered question</i>		81
<i>skipped question</i>		9

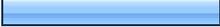
22. If other, please specify.

	Response Count
	5
<i>answered question</i>	5
<i>skipped question</i>	85

23. What is your age?

	Response Count
	71
<i>answered question</i>	71
<i>skipped question</i>	19

24. What was your household's total annual income before taxes in 2009?

	Response Percent	Response Count
less than \$25,000	0.0%	0
\$25,000 - \$49,999 	5.1%	4
\$50,000 - \$99,999 	32.9%	26
\$100,000 - \$149,999 	49.4%	39
\$150,000+ 	12.7%	10
<i>answered question</i>		79
<i>skipped question</i>		11

Additional comments to question 5

in the town proper near the bakery, Casey's, shops in that area. More behind offices on Centennial St. Less parallel parking; near Christ Church, Tea Room, Voting Office, Bernies. Much more is needed at the Clark Senior Center.

Strong Need for a Community Center which will offer cultural activities for all ages.

outdoor volleyball on sand would be great (possibly beside Town Hall. YMCA needed NOW....there's nothing affordable for young families) Sprayground with covered tables for lunch Shade in our current parks would be nice & scattered seating (preferably shaded) Nice...well lit... bike trails (keep safety in mind when thinking location - nothing too remote) Dog parks are a big NO!! take care of our PEOPLE 1st!!! I cannot stress this enough!!!!!! AND, take care of your disabled population as well. they are not 2nd class citizens and should not be treated as an afterthought.

Most of the things that I felt were "NO need now" I feel that we already have now, like dog park, fields (most at schools), skateboarding and such.

Think the town should look into opening a water park.

Parking around Railroad Tracks so people can walk around town. Recommend year around indoor pool/fitness/2 racketball courts/2 side by side basketball court, 200 capacity community center with outdoor 1/4 mile running track/trails for outdoor fitness with work out stations every 300 feet along the track. The town would charge fees for yearly/summer months; discounts for Senior Citizens/Veterans. The town could expand in the future with multiple outdoor activities tennis courts/picnic areas/dog park from this idea. The Community Center would turn into FEMA/Emergency during public officials need place to manage area emergencies

SIDEWALKS on Washington Avenue and all other feeder street to town to include use of bikes and wheelchairs/strollers

Indoor pool like the Edward T. Hall Aquatics Center in Calvert County. Splash playground or outdoor waterpark. Not happy with La Plata getting bigger. Why do builders keep building? Our schools are crowded as it is and they are still building townhomes/houses/apartments. The schools are getting over crowded. We live in La Plata and my children have to go to school in Waldorf. Does anyone not see this. We can't keep piling kids up in schools like sardines. I'm upset that Charles County, Waldorf, and La Plata don't seem to care about the children in this area. All they care about is their money in their pockets.

all over town and the court house

LMore shade is needed at Laurel Springs playground. The slides and other equipment is too hot. Not only did we have to leave after 15 minutes it is a burn hazard for the kids.

LMore shade is needed at Laurel Springs playground. The slides and other equipment is too hot. Not only did we have to leave after 15 minutes it is a burn hazard for the kids.

At least a continuous walking/running path along Rt. 6/Charles Street from neighborhoods that lead into and through town continuing to Rt. 301 with no breaks is needed badly for numerous reasons, preferably for bikes as well.

I think we have adequate facilities now.

Would love to see an outdoor community pool (pay for entry/membership) as well as an indoor pool/rec center. Love the PG County Sportsplex and have heard about a neat center in Prince Frederick. Have also traveled to some other indoor facilities through my children's sports that have indoor soccer fields, basketball courts, multipurpose fields, etc for indoor use during the winter. All paid entry. Think one would be great for this area.

There is no parking except street parking at Redwood Lake and very little at Silver Linden

In Town. If the town will double, then parking will become quite difficult.

Will's Memorial Park can use more parking

Addition of Radio control car track

courthouse area parking, SIDEWALKS on Washington!!

Charles County is very short of youth softball fields & youth baseball fields that have 50 foot pitching & 70 foot bases (those fields can be converted to 46/60 too). 50/70 is growing very fast. Charles County Youth League (CCYL) doesn't have enough & Little League is likely going to them very soon & we don't have enough of those fields. I strongly suggest turning Bensville Park Field #1 into a 50/70 field & allow youth leagues to use it (not just a community field)! Also, lacrosse just started 2 years ago & is growing extremely fast. Next spring it will be a SMAC sanctioned high school sport. We definitely need more lacrosse fields for practices and games!

There is a strong need now for SHADED playgrounds for toddlers and preschoolers. The one at Laurel Springs is very nice but so terribly hot in the summer months. The children cannot even use the slides because the plastic can burn them it is so hot.

I believe an artificial surface all-purpose field would be invaluable in developing our athletes in La Plata.

Would LOVE some type of spray ground or water park in the area.

Splash park

We need a public pool with slides and water toys now.

You really need an aquatic center, with safe zero depth pools for little kids, spray parks (similar to Cove Point). Also, playgrounds that are shaded and enclosed by fences. It is very hard to keep an eye on multiple children when at your existing playgrounds. Bensville is unshaded, White Plains is TOO shaded and wooded and feels unsafe, Laurel Springs is unshaded, it's impossible to see your children when they climb into the play structure and the woods next to the playground are open (no fence) so someone could easily wander into the trees or be snatched. Gilbert Run is nicely shaded at various times, but there is not a fence between the playground and the water, making it very difficult to keep kids away from the water's edge.

Centralized, structured parking needed in town, in the vicinity of courthouse/townhall, or thereabouts

A water park would be great. I also like the idea of a sprayground.

I would love to see sprayground/splash park...similar to Nicolette Park in St. Mary's or smaller, free, and more locations as those spread throughout Arlington, VA

ADD A Splash park!!!

A spray ground and an outdoor waterpark would be amazing in LaPlata, because we have to travel so far to get to one. It also would increase business all over LaPlata, by bringing in people from all over, possibly future residents.

This Town is FILLED with many moms with young children. A playground to satisfy the needs of these moms would be great. Sprayparks are wonderful for these hot days and to contain small children. Most of the moms have more than one child and it hard to keep an eye on more than one when they are going in different directions at other larger parks. It would be nice to have a park that would be easier for moms to "keep an eye" on their kids and built with little children in mind.

YMCA-Bpys and Girls Club---multi purpose rec center for all ages!

The town itself has sidewalks for walking. I feel any trails will cause a security issue like Waldorf's neighbor trails. We really enjoy Wills Park. It is in the open which is great but a restroom and shade would be wonderful!

My husband and I have an infant and we take frequent walks with her in the stroller. I would love to have someplace pretty to walk with her, but there are no trails within walking distance, so instead we have to take walks through our neighborhood (Phoenix Run) or into the town center, or we need to drive to some other place. I'm not sure whether there are any opportunities to develop safe and scenic places to walk near the town center, but it's one of the big things I feel is missing from that part of town. I am also in full support of any plans to bring a community/recreation center to the area of Phoenix Run. The kids in this neighborhood would really benefit!

It would be great to have a swimming pool in the Clarks Run neighborhood. Also indoor tennis facility

no golf course, dog parks or pool we already have access to these opportunities near our community. We must coordinate facilities and programs with the county so not to duplicate facilities and opportunities as well as contain costs.

Parking is needed in Downtown La Plata when events are held at Town Hall. In addition, parking is needed at the library.

I have two young children (under 5) and I am always looking for activities to take them to. I frequently use programs through Charles County Parks and Rec but feel that more programs could be offered (and closer to La Plata). During the summer, we frequent the spraygrounds in St. Mary's County and Cove Point Pool in Calvert (great pool for all ages). If La Plata had something similar, I would be spending money inside the county rather than looking outside the county for activities.

Would love to see a sprayground for kids or community pool come to La Plata

I have three under the age of 5 and we often find ourselves visiting sites out of the county such as Nicolette Park's Sprayground and Cove Point Pool during the summer months. It would really wonderful to have something like that here to enjoy.

Extreme need for Spraygrounds!!!!!! Laurel Springs is great but the equipment gets so hot..... really a strong need for spraygrounds at multiple county and town of Laplata parks and rec areas.

The more people that live in La Plata, or visit La Plata, the more need we will have for additional parking facilities.

It would be nice to have something family oriented. There was talk about a "sprayground," that would be nice and it could use "recycled water."

I do understand why La Plata doesn't have an outdoor pool well suited for kids and families. A splash pool, like Cameron Run in Calvert, would be wonderful. Little kids can't enjoy the current pools because they start out over three feet.

Parking badly needed at library, especially for families with small children for story time. Also, why do we not have a Sprayground like St. Mary's County, or something like Cove Point Park pool in Calvert. It's time we had something like that. I would think you could get the plans from either of those counties and implement them here. Especially with the Sprayground using recycled water, and you could have it manned by kids fulfilling community service credits, and collect a fee for non-La Plata residents. Allow La Plata residents free or a discounted rate access. I don't want all of the county using it for free if only La Plata residents are paying for it. Also, you MUST work with the county to get some type of shade (awning, etc.) at Laurel Springs Park. It gets so hot and sunny there that people can't stay and they leave.

I would like to see the sidewalks extended further out from the downtown area so more people could walk or bike to downtown LaPlata.

The space for parks and recreation areas needs to be included now, before growth happens.

Would LOVE to see a YMCA in LaPlata. Have been a member of several with gym facilities/pool/weightrooms and it is a wonderful organization that provides camps in the summer and many programs for all ages!

Town Hall, Matula

Need A YMCA facility in the county. La Plata would be a good central location.

Downtown/"main street" area, such as a municipal or municipal/private partnership parking garage on the old Posey's Market lot on Charles St. (just north of the Rescue Squad property.)

Downtown/"main street" area, such as a municipal or municipal/private partnership parking garage on the old Posey's Market lot on Charles St. (just north of the Rescue Squad property.)

Lake Tilghman

Additional comments to question 10

Life in our county overall has become frightening and often it feels unsafe to be in the areas mentioned without a strong male person.

I am a woman 70 but very active. We all feel this way. Even the new walking trail along Rosewick. It is frightening to bike or walk there. So maybe we need more police on motobikes, bikes, Segos.

need more lighting and more patrolling

definitely need more lighting -- times are changing and we need to be more proactive

the jungle gyms at laurel springs are too hard to watch children at. Should be fenced in and it is just hard to follow children. Plus not enough shade.

Certain parks I would NOT visit after full daylight, Wills Pk for example, for the very reasons stated above.

I currently feel safe at the parks but I'm hearing about more & more crimes being committed at them so am not as comfortable for my wife & daughters.

My family spends a lot of time at the parks in La Plata. I have had to call the police for indecent exposure and have witnessed, or had friends witness, disobedient teenagers on the equipment, as well as teenage drug use at the playgrounds.

Only use parks during the day.

I have been approached by a group of teenagers who appeared to be under the influence. In addition, I have felt unsafe due to suspicious looking men hanging around the parks. More police patrols would be appreciated.

The La Plata Police Department does an excellent job of keeping our recreational facilities safe, and show an excellent presence in the town.

I only use the parks where I feel safe. ***HEMLOCK is a mess. I happen to know someone on the street and wondered why the town paid for this "playset" for the few kids on the street to destroy with ~NO~ supervision ! This is not a community location at ALL! This should be relocated to the Town Grounds for use when the Town has events. The street is not safe and the resident throw trash in the woods behind the park equipment.

The question didn't let me answer anything other than a complete yes or a complete no. I generally feel safe when using the town's parks, but some of them are isolated enough that I do feel a bit uneasy (even if I don't think I'm in any danger).

This is not on all the parks and not all the time but there are times that we are uncomfortable with the people that are hanging around enve the park in our own neighborhood.

Need more shaded areas at Laurel Springs

I feel unsafe when using the White Plain bike trail by myself and/or with my children because it is isolated.

We do not feel safe at White Plains park for reasons listed above. We no longer go there.

Probably just don't think of it often enough--tendency to use the recreation area around planned events

Additional comments to question 12

Cost -- effect on taxes. We pay so much now. The water/sewage rates are high. Perhaps more of the county taxes should go to incorporated towns.

where would the money come from to have a separate department?

if was maintained under the current taxes

Funds would be better spent elsewhere within the community.

I think the mix is nice, but there needs to be coordination and communication between the agencies.

I would keep it simple. Ensure they have defined goals/jobs/frequency of the tasks to accomplish the goals.

yes, but it needs to be managed under the current tax rate with NO increases in our taxes or fees imposed to cover said dept.

what we have now works. why create another department and have to fund it through higher taxes.

there seems to be a lack of cohesiveness currently. It all needs to connect, literally and figuratively starting with a walk/run path on both sides of street. This is fundamental for foot traffic, the success of retail and enjoyment of citizens. Benches, landscaping, etc. Some redevelopment is needed of storefronts to bring them to the sidewalk is desperately needed as well, again, cohesiveness.

Having one department would organize the youth sports more cohesively.

The cost would always have to be weighed.

start paying the police department on par with other agencies first.

The Public Facilities (outdoor sports) folks are fantastic (& I think deserve a raise!). The Recreational (indoor) folks seem to be as well. But creating a separate department to handle the growing need seems like a good idea to me.

I think that implementing a Town recreation department may provide us with more safety and better equipment.

How about you slow the growth down, and don't let our small down turn into a urban dump?

as the town grows we need our own P&R dept. however is some dovetail with the county's program and facilities.

Tie with county programs.

It would depend on the budget.

I think a recreation building (like a YMCA) would be great and allow you to offer a wide range of programs.

Yes, I would love to see more activities and parks for kids and families in the La Plata area. There seems to be alot of kid friendly activities and places in St Mary's and Calvert, I think Charles Co is missing out and it would be great for La Plata to take charge for our community.

Laplata taxes are already so high.... if the budget could remain intact without a substantial increase I would be all for it.

Be smart and reasonable about it. Don't let the position just be another way to pay someone for not doing any work. And why not encourage people in the town to volunteer to help with some things around town? Couldn't it help save some money, and allow people to have some direct impact on their community by helping?

With our taxes going up and our home values falling the town of La Plata needs to up the ante and make this a more appealing place to live. A strong Parks/Rec program is key to that image.

Ideally, the Town would have its own recreation department - properly staffed and funded - and also work in partnership with the County when such partnership would be advantageous to all.

Ideally, the Town would have its own recreation department - properly staffed and funded - and also work in partnership with the County when such partnership would be advantageous to all.

What could be done encourage you or members of your household to use parks and recreation facilities in the Town of La Plata more often?

More parkland in the center of Town that is accessible from other points in town by walking.

A feeling of being safe first of all. It is not safe in Waldorf either. Maybe no where. One has to use common sense -- don't go out alone or even just a group of women. We are too close to DC and lower PG County. Generation Y is upon us -- Lord help us when Generation Z hits the area and it won't be long! We have to plan for being unsafe -- it is a way of life now. So our governments should do all they can to keep our neighborhoods safe..

More variety. More options for children under 2. Parks/Facilities in nice areas that are not in neighborhoods.

If more cultural and recreational activities were provided within the Town of La Plata.

more shade water lighting

Put some trees at Laurel Springs!! More shade would be nice if possible.

Increase police presence, continually cleanliness, promote the parks/hours operations

planned activities

provide more shade at playgrounds

restrooms, some kind of beverage machines to get a cool drink.

There are enough parks, e.g., Gilbert Run, to use. They are wonderful.

marketing and advertising. Signage would help. add paths that connect park, town services, stores, etc. Need to look at other towns as examples.

located in better areas plus didn't ever realize where some of them are located

Need bicycle/walking trails that connect our neighborhoods (Clarks Run),with Downtown La Plata and with the bicycle trail on Roswick Road.

Safe Hiker/Biker paths. More gardens & picnic area therein. Possibly low-cost fitness classes; yoga, cardio-classes, etc.

I'm not sure because we always try to rent Will's Park when we have little parties like birthdays, baby showers, etc.

having events at them.

We use them a LOT already so I'm not sure you could do more to encourage us further, but I would like to see more softball, baseball, & lacrosse fields as discussed that are good quality.

Advertise them more...hold some events. Make it fun.

Playgrounds that are completely fenced in. Some type of security to ensure that the rules and age appropriateness of the playgrounds are being followed.

Shade and water in the summer. Too hot and kids cannot cool off. Equipment is too hot.

Build an aquatic center and a community center with indoor and outdoor meeting rooms, especially for children. Now, the only option I know of in town to meet with a large group of small children is the building at Wills Park and the basement room in the library. Neither of these spaces are welcoming or safe for little kids.

Sponsored activities at the parks

Having more shade for hot days and a place to cool off when extremely hot.

Sidewalks to parks so I could ride my bike or walk to them. And also keep safety in mind (lighting, police patrols, etc)

indoor facilities with air/heating provided and organized activities for youth and adults

A sprayground would be amazing!!

more shade, sometimes it's difficult to watch multiple kids in such a big space.

Police patrolling to KEEP trouble makers away;

Signs pointing to parks and indicating whether/when they are open for use would encourage my family and other newcomers to enjoy the area's facilities. Tighman Lake park is an example of a park that could benefit from clearer signs. There are no signs pointing to the park; if you happen to discover that it exists, you might drive up only to see a sign that says only authorized vehicles may drive up to the park; but then there are signs that indicate the park is open for use at one's own risk! It's very confusing. We love that park but are not sure whether we're really allowed to go and enjoy it! I'd like to know where other parks are located and which are open to the public. I also would like signs guiding me to the Clarks Run Nature Area (if it's meant for public enjoyment) and other parks. If playgrounds at some areas (such as schools) are available for public use only at certain times, signs indicating that would also be helpful.

Better/easier to use community website

Hook the town to the Rosewick Bike trail and hook the Rosewick trail to the Indian head trail. Programs at the lake parks. Coordinate school gyms with town programs. partnership with local private gym/fitness facilities in area to get town residents a better reduced rate.....instead of building a town fitness center or community center.....let's not compete with the private business community.

We use Laurel Springs a few times a week already.

More advertising of events and more events held at facilities.

Plan for activities

Sprayground areas.... more planned activities at the parks.

Include a spraygrounds! More children oriented programs as well.

A swim club/splash pool would be an ideal summer activity and we would use it all the time.

Put some shade at Laurel Springs near the playground, install a Sprayground-like area for kids to cool off during the summer, ensure the bathrooms are always open (little kids ALWAYS have to go), and maybe the town should host events at each of the parks. I don't know where a lot of the parks listed above are, and I've lived in the county for 34 years and have 3 small children. And if the town builds parks for which the town taxpayers pay, I think town residents should get a discount or free use, and non-town residents (by photo ID and address verification) should have to pay a fee.

Events planned and promoted that are located at these venues, easier to get there by walking or cycling, and updated facilities at the sites.

Planned events

Flyers , announcements on govt tv channel

Appendix C Benchmarking Meeting

MEETING SUMMARY

Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan Town of La Plata Round Table Meeting July 26, 2010

Location: ERM, 200 Harry Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD
Meeting Attendees: Dan Mears, Town of La Plata
Dave Jenkins, Town of La Plata
Jim Goldsmith, Town of La Plata (Parks and Recreation Board)
Debra Haiduven, City Takoma Park
Gary Mackes, Wicomico County
Phyllis Grover, Town of Aberdeen
Clive Graham, ERM
Derek Meyers, ERM
Dave Hyder, Municipal and Financial Services Group
Scott Scarfone, Oasis Design

Mr. Clive Graham convened the meeting at approximately 9:30 a.m. for a discussion of the La Plata Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He welcomed the attendees and distributed the agenda (Attachment I) and attendee contact list. He referred the attendees to the contact list and indicated that a representative from the Town of Elkton was unable to attend the meeting due to illness, and Hyattsville may arrive a few minutes late.

Clive continued to explain the geography of the town and the location of its parks facilities.

Mr. Dan Mears discussed the Town's purpose for undertaking a parks and recreation master plan. These included the Town's pressure for growth and the desire to evaluate recreational needs and associated costs of providing such services. He noted that one outcome of the study is to relate it to the Town's recreation impact recreation fee (\$7,500).

Ms. Phyllis Grover joined the meeting at approximately 9:45 a.m.

Dan noted that the FY2011 budget was the first budget to include a breakdown of expenditures and costs associated with parks and recreation. He stated that parks and recreation maintenance responsibilities were conducted by public works personnel.

Mr. Dave Jenkins discussed the study and how it will help determine future needs in each of the annexation areas.

Clive asked representatives of the local governments to share some background about their role and community. He distributed a profile of each community to the attendees (Attachment 2).

Mr. Gary Mackes explained the differences between his department and La Plata. He noted that Salisbury parks and facilities are jointly managed by Wicomico County. He questioned the Town's relationship with Charles County.

Mr. Goldsmith noted staff from the Town and the County work cooperatively, but political pressures sometimes create conflict between the elected officials.

Gary described his department and explained how Wicomico County achieves a sixty-percent cost recovery by operating with a staff of 25 full time and 300 part time employees. He stated that Wicomico County is nearly complete its thirty year program achieving such milestones as operating a civic center and seeking to acquire final park lands. The likeliness of repeating the County's model today is difficult because of budget pressures. He also discussed ways he has avoided political pressures to trim budgets through creating a vested interest in parks and recreation from all parties in the County (i.e. Police Commissioner, Delegates, non-profits).

Ms. Debra Haiduven explained Takoma Park and its urban setting within an area served by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Due to these factors her department's role is primarily focused on recreation programming. She noted that residents from outside of Takoma Park commonly participate in the City's programs. This has resulted in a resident and non-resident fee structure.

Phyllis discussed Aberdeen's relationship with Harford County and the Town's park facilities. These include a swimming club run by the Boys and Girls Club (maintained by the City), and community/senior center. She also discussed problems with the Town's skatepark and inline hockey facility which has seen little use.

Mr. Scott Scarfone discussed the impacts of the economy on parks and recreation budgets. He mentioned community center closures in Baltimore City.

Clive stated one of the key needs for La Plata is a swimming pool. He asked Phyllis on the particulars of Aberdeen's pool.

Phyllis indicated the pool is jointly operated by the Town and Boys and Girls Club but maintained by the City.

Gary suggested the Town carefully examine the finances of a pool. He indicated pools can be a financial burden. He mentioned Wicomico County's feasibility study results which found that the only profitable type of pool would be an aquatics center with a wave pool, and slides.

Debra added that the only pools built today are aquatics centers as they can charge a reasonable entry fee.

Mr. Dave Hyder and Mr. Jenkins discussed the pool offerings in Calvert County. These include a privately operated pool in Chesapeake Beach and a new pool in Prince Frederick.

Debra questioned the Town about its school facilities and suggested partnership with the school board on future facilities.

The meeting attendees discussed the background on the Town's recreation impact fee. They also discussed the potential for litigation and what facilities revenues from the fee may be used for.

Clive asked the meeting attendees for some last thoughts or recommendations for the Town.

Phyllis suggested the Town build bridges with the County and partner on programming activities. Debra concurred and reiterated her thoughts on working with the local schools.

Gary offered three approaches for management of the Town's parks and recreation facilities. He suggested a Town department might not be the most desirable option. He stressed the need to create a shared vision with the County. He liked the idea of parks and recreation facilities being operated as an enterprise fund or from a separate tax similar to Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Lesson Learnt – Insight for the La Plata Master Plan

1. Budgets are tight and facilities need to be self-supporting to the greatest extent possible. It has become harder to support subsidies for recreation programs. Recreation directors must not be seen as a drain on the tax base.
2. Towns want departments but must find models of working cooperatively with counties. A dedicated department gives more control and staff that are fully responsible and dedicated to the Town's recreation assets.
3. Towns are generally too small to provide "special facilities" such as civic centers; these are provided by counties.
4. Cooperation and coordination with organization and entities must be the name of the game.
5. Having a clear vision is vital. A program that the public can get activated about and rally should have short, medium and long-range options for implementation.

Comparison of Recreation and Parks Characteristics for Selected Local Governments in Maryland											
	La Plata	Elkton	Wicomico County (Salisbury)	Takoma Park	Hyattsville	Aberdeen	Easton*	Greenbelt*	Laurel*	Westminster*	Charles County
Population, 2009 estimate ⁽¹⁾	8,944	14,746	28,327	18,027	16,022	14,130	14,829	21,439	22,672	17,996	142,226
Population white alone (1999), % ⁽²⁾	73%	86%	61%	49%	40%	64%	72%	40%	52%	91%	69%
Median household income (1999), \$ ⁽²⁾	\$ 56,490	\$ 38,174	\$ 29,191	\$ 48,490	44,133	39,190	36,464	46,328	49,415	40,477	62,199
Population with 1999 income below the poverty level (percent) ⁽²⁾	10%	12%	24%	10%	11%	12%	12%	10%	6%	10%	6%
City/town area (square miles)	7.3	8.0	11.1	2.1	2.7	6.4	10.3	6.0	3.8	5.7	461.0
Density (persons per square mile)	1,225	1,843	2,552	8,584	5,934	2,208	1,440	3,573	5,966	3,157	309
Park and Open Space Land (acres)	344	503	550	122	185	120					2,884
Year acreage calculated	2010	2005	2009	2010	2010	2009					2005
Park and open space land per 1,000 population (acres)	38	34	19	7	12	8	-	-	-	-	20
Responsible Agency	Shared: Administration, Planning, Public Works	Parks & Recreation Department	Wicomico County Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism	Recreation Department	Recreation & the Arts Department	Planning & Community Development	Parks & Recreation Department	Recreation & Parks Department	Parks & Recreation Department	Recreation & Parks Department	Parks & Recreation Division, Department of Public Facilities
Parks and Recreation Budget breakdown (YEARS)	FY2010	FY2011	FY2010	FY2010	FY2006	FY2011	FY2006	FY2006	FY2006	FY2006	FY2006
Total	\$ 309,000	\$ 564,545	\$ 3,443,000	\$ 1,665,211	465,789	400,090	263,521	4,673,866	1,109,341	886,065	8,975,707
Operating Total	\$ 195,000	\$ 452,695	\$ 1,808,000	\$ 1,225,578	462,522	54,500	263,521	4,588,809	1,109,341	751,931	5,463,501
Operating Expenses	\$ 195,000	\$ 109,775	\$ 441,000	\$ 305,530	462,522	54,500	263,521	4,588,809	1,109,341	751,931	5,463,501
Personnel		\$ 342,920	\$ 1,367,000	\$ 920,048							
Capital	\$ 114,000	\$ 6,560			3,267	-		85,057		134,134	903,558
Revenues from programs (\$)		\$ 105,290	\$ 1,087,000	\$ 439,633							
Enterprise Operations			\$ 548,000			345,590					2,608,648
Cost recovery (%)	0.0%	23.3%	60.1%	35.9%							
Recreation spending per capita, FY (FY budget/2009 population)	\$ 22	\$ 31	\$ 64	\$ 68	\$ 29	\$ 4	\$ 18	\$ 214	\$ 49	\$ 42	\$ 38
Total Expenditures (Entire Town/City Budget), Fiscal Year	\$ 5,648,664	\$ 10,642,924	\$ 41,386,949	\$ 20,513,330	11,593,588	12,172,880	76,129,301	21,810,068	19,941,093	21,618,561	601,637,401
Recreation spending percent of operating budget	3.5%	4.3%	4.4%	6.0%	4.0%	0.4%	0.3%	21.0%	5.6%	3.5%	0.9%
Recreation and Parks Staff											
Full	0	4		10							
Temp											
Seasonal		1		10							
Part-Time (FTE)		8		10							
Total	0	13.0	-	30.0	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
Full time staff per 1,000 population	0	0.01	-	0.03	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
Sources:											
(1) Maryland Department of Planning Population Estimates, 2009.											
(2) U.S. Census Bureau											
(*) Towns invited to round table, unable to attend. Data from: Local Government Finances in Maryland, Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2006. Department of Legislative Services, 2009											

Appendix D Wills Park Concept Plan Cost Estimate

<i>Preliminary Estimate of Costs</i>						9.10.10
Wills Park - La Plata, MD						
Prepared by: Oasis Design Group						
Phase	Item	Unit	Qty.	Unit Price	Total Cost	
Demo	Existing Road	SF	16500	\$1.25	\$20,625	
	Parking lot	SF	4500	\$1.25	\$5,625	
	Ball field (Fence and Backstop)	LS	1	\$15,000	\$15,000	
					Subtotal	\$41,250
Picnic Area	Grading	LS	1	\$15,000	\$15,000	
	Large Picnic Shelters	EA	1	\$60,000	\$60,000	
	Small Picnic Shelters	EA	6	\$20,000	\$120,000	
	Entrance Drive (6" base, 3" wearing)	SY	4,700	\$29	\$136,300	
	Bioswales	LS	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	
	Entrance sign	LS	1	\$8,000	\$8,000	
	Seeding	SY	1,400	\$4	\$5,600	
	Trees/Shrubs	LS	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	
	Benches (30)/Trash Cans (10)/Tables	LS	1	\$37,100	\$37,100	
	Security Lights @ Pavilions	LS	1	\$15,000	\$15,000	
					Subtotal	\$457,000
Parking Lot	Clearing and Grading	LS	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	
	Parking Lot (6" base, 3" wearing)	SY	9,333	\$29	\$270,657	
	Turn around	SY	1,963	\$29	\$56,927	
	Trees/Shrubs	LS	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	
				Subtotal	\$357,584	
Trail Network	Asphalt Trails (7' width includes prep.)	SY	24,222	\$3	\$72,666	
	Remove Vegetation	LS	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	
	Site Furniture	LS	1	\$20,000	\$20,000	
				Subtotal	\$112,666	
Amphitheater	Remove Vegetation	LS	1	\$10,000	\$10,000	
	Concrete Seating	LS	1	\$55,000	\$55,000	
	Seeding	SY	20,000	\$1	\$20,000	
	Signage	LS	1	\$5,000	\$5,000	
				Subtotal	\$90,000	
Dog Park	Clearing and Grading	LS	1	\$15,000	\$15,000	
	Chain link fencing and gates	LF	1,300	\$27	\$35,100	
	Site Furniture - benches (4)/trash	LS	1	\$12,600	\$12,600	
	Water Fountain	LS	1	\$4,000	\$4,000	
	Seeding and Planting	SY	1,000	\$4	\$4,000	
				Subtotal Phase 5	\$70,700	
Building addition	Nature Center Building	SF	3,000	\$250	\$750,000	
	Patio/Outdoor Classroom Paving	SF	2,500	\$8	\$20,000	
				Subtotal	\$770,000	
					Total All Phases	\$1,899,200
					Design (12% Construction)	\$227,904
					20% Contingency	\$379,840
					Grand Total	\$2,506,944

Appendix E Fiscal Analysis Presentation



Municipal & Financial
Services Group



Town of La Plata

Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan Fiscal Analysis

Presented by:
Clive Graham, ERM
David Hyder, MFSG

October 13th 2010



Contents

- Scope of Work
- Approach and Key Assumptions
- Parks and Recreation Plan Overview
- Capital Expenditures and Revenues
- Operating Expenditures and Revenues
- Observations and Conclusions



Scope of Work

Conduct a fiscal analysis of the parks and recreation master plan considering:

- Capital investments in land and infrastructure
- Evaluation of available revenues sources to fund capital
- Annual operating expenses resulting from the parks plan
- Evaluation of current and additional revenues available for funding
operating expenses



Approach

- Identify current “baseline” parks operations (annual capital and operating expenses and annual revenues)
- Develop estimated capital and operating costs associated with a range of parks plans
- Develop estimated revenues associated with each new park
- Create a financial model to:
 - ✓ Forecast capital investments and operating costs over a 40 year planning period (2011 – 2050)
 - ✓ Evaluate the ability of existing revenues to fund the range of parks plans
 - ✓ Identify and evaluate the required additional revenues to fund the “funding gap”



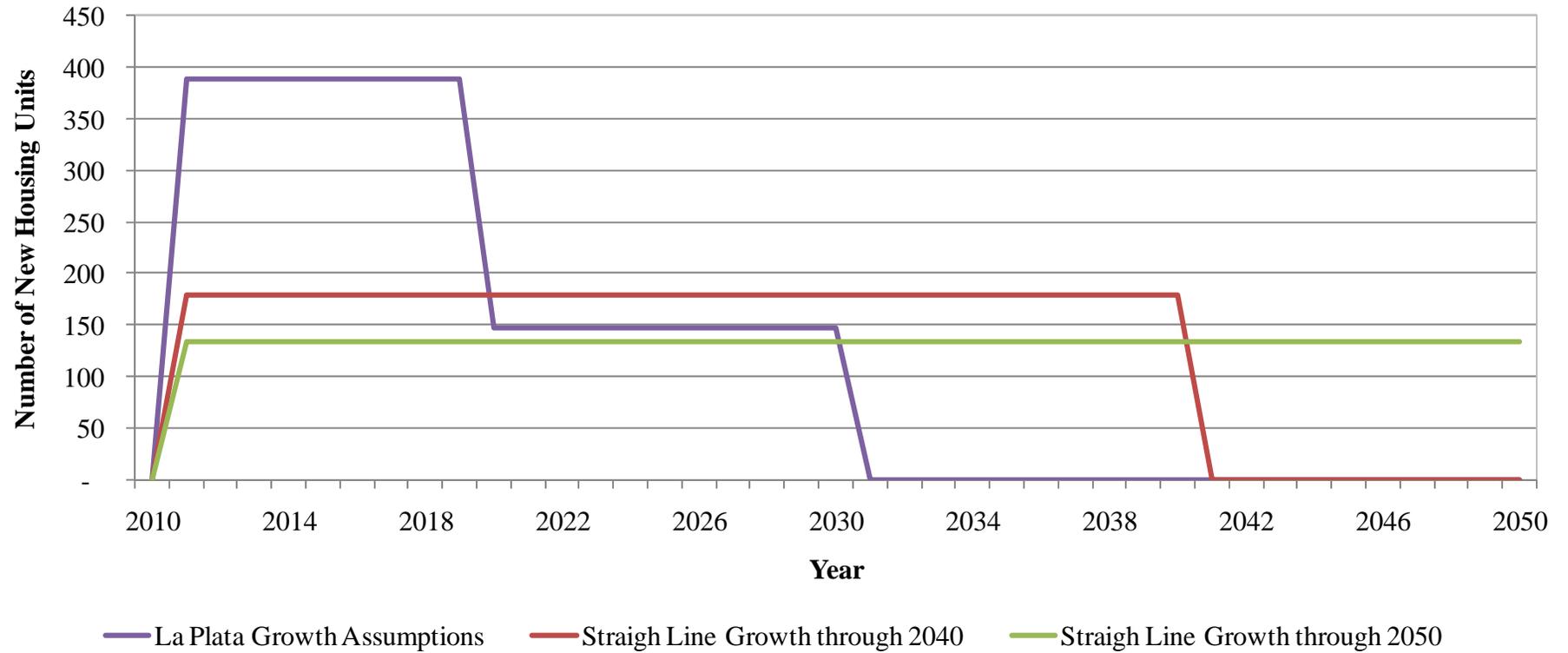
Key Assumptions

- Year of Park Construction
- Size of Parks
- Level of Impact Fee
- Pace of development



Pace of Development

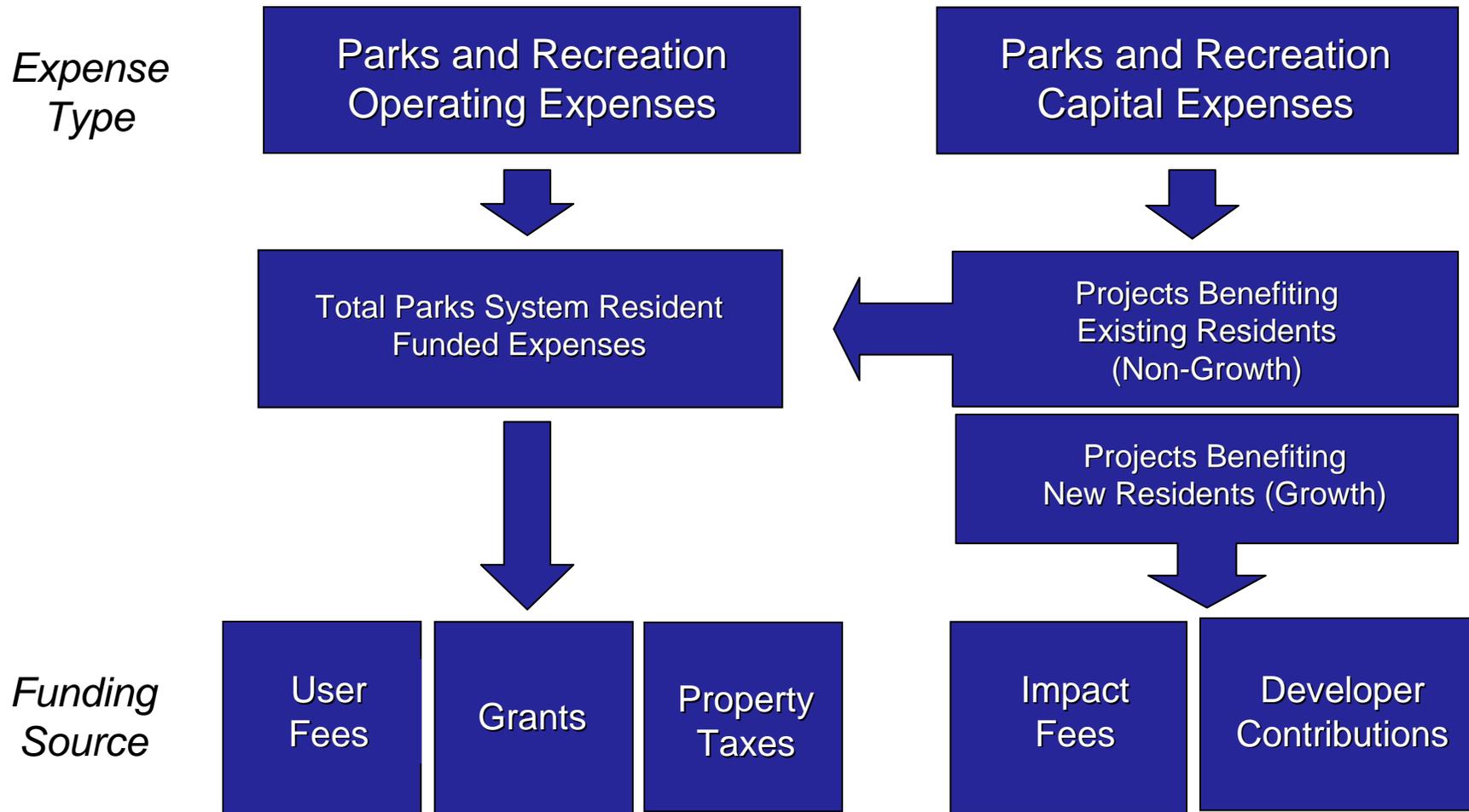
Annual New Housing Units





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Flow of Funds





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Current Parks and Recreation Fiscal Overview FY2011

Operating Expenses	Sources of Funds
Parks Maintenance - \$195,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• User Fees - \$5,000• Property Tax Revenues - \$190,000 (Represents about \$0.02 of property tax rate)

Capital Expenses	Sources of Funds
One-Time Capital Improvements - \$240,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grants - \$100,000• Impact Fees - \$140,000



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Parks and Recreation Plan Summary

Project	Year of Construction	Description	Size (Acreage)		
			Small	Medium	Large
New Parks and Recreation Facilities					
Neighborhood Park 1	2030	North of Route 6 (Rosewick Road at Heritage Green Parkway)	20	25	30
Neighborhood Park 2	2016	West side US 301, on or close to Quailwood Parkway	10	12.5	15
Community Park 1	2020	Heritage Green (Area 1D across from elementary school site)	15	20	25
Community Recreation Center	2016	Small or Large			
Swimming Pool	2016	Indoor or Indoor/Outdoor Pool			
Community Park 2	2025	Town Center	2	2.5	3
Townwide walking/biking system	2030	80,600 linear feet of new/upgraded trails			
Existing Parks / Recreation Areas					
Wills Park	2018	Upgrades and Improvements			
Tilghman	2022	Upgrades and Improvements			



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Parks Plan Capital Costs Summary

Project			Capital Cost by Size		
	Growth	Non-Growth	Small	Medium	Large
Neighborhood Park 1	100%	0%	\$2,300,000	\$2,600,000	\$3,000,000
Neighborhood Park 2	100%	0%	\$1,600,000	\$1,800,000	\$2,000,000
Community Park 1	100%	0%	\$1,300,000	\$1,600,000	\$2,000,000
Community Recreation Center	70%	30%	\$5,800,000	\$5,800,000	\$18,700,000
Swimming Pool	70%	30%	\$725,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Community Park 2	70%	30%	\$1,700,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000
Townwide walking / biking system	70%	30%	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000
Wills Park Upgrade	0%	100%	\$900,000	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000
Tilghman Upgrade	50%	50%	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000
Total			\$17,725,000	\$21,600,000	\$36,000,000



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Parks Plan Operating Costs and Revenues Summary

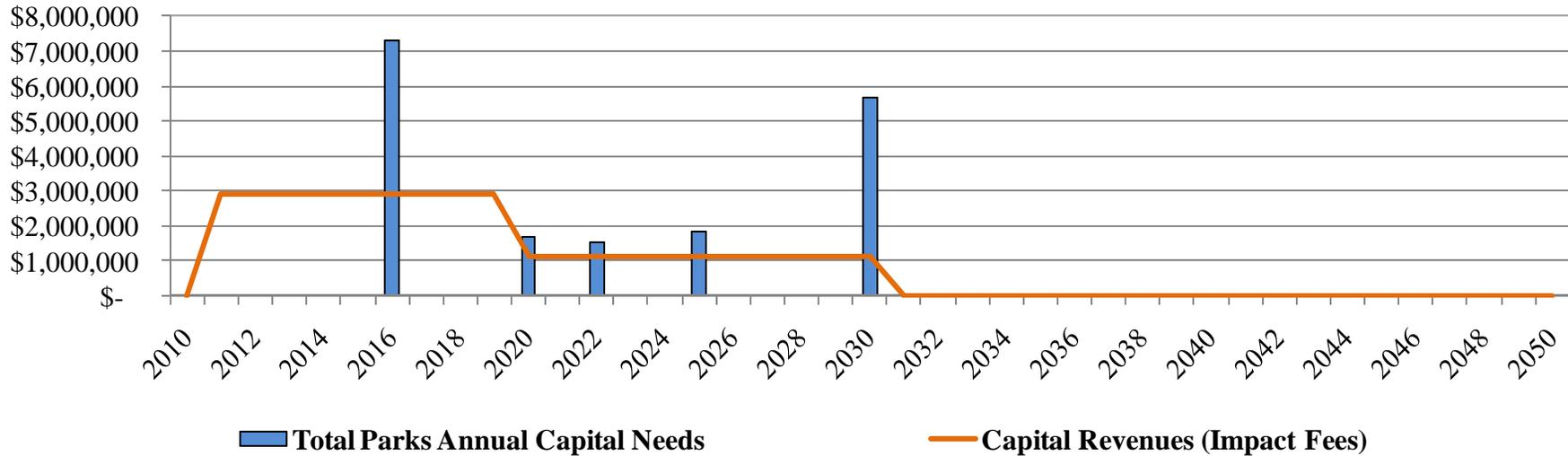
Project	Small		Medium		Large	
	1st Year Operating Costs	Cost Recovery*	1st Year Operating Costs	Cost Recovery*	1st Year Operating Costs	Cost Recovery*
Neighborhood Park 1	\$90,000	2%	\$113,000	2%	\$135,000	2%
Neighborhood Park 2	\$30,000	2%	\$37,000	2%	\$45,000	2%
Community Park 1	\$50,000	2%	\$67,000	2%	\$84,000	2%
Community Recreation Center	\$430,000	40%	\$430,000	40%	\$3,200,000	40%
Swimming Pool	\$226,000	80%	\$339,000	80%	\$339,000	80%
Community Park 2	\$8,000	25%	\$9,800	25%	\$12,000	25%
Town-wide walking / biking system	\$9,000	0%	\$9,000	0%	\$9,000	0%
Wills Park Upgrade	\$63,000	2%	\$79,000	2%	\$95,000	2%
Tilghman Upgrade	\$49,000	2%	\$49,000	2%	\$49,000	2%
Parks Department	\$56,000	0%	\$56,000	0%	\$56,000	0%

*Cost recovery from fees and charges at park location

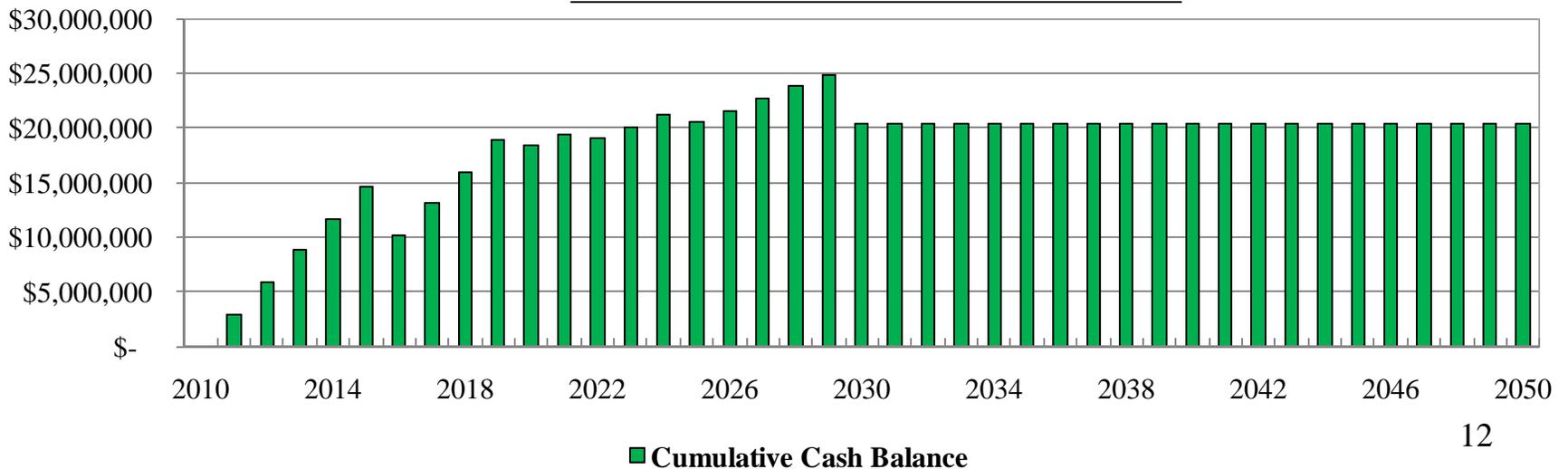


Capital Cash Flow Analysis - Small Parks System

CAPITAL EXPENSES VS. CAPITAL REVENUES



CUMULATIVE CAPITAL CASH BALANCE

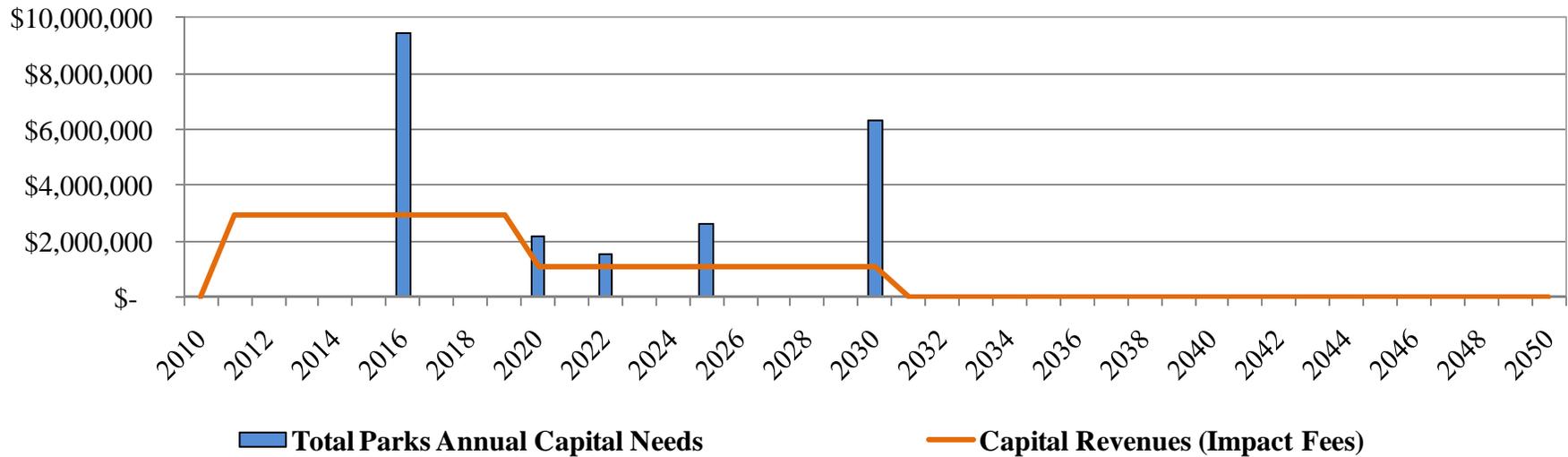




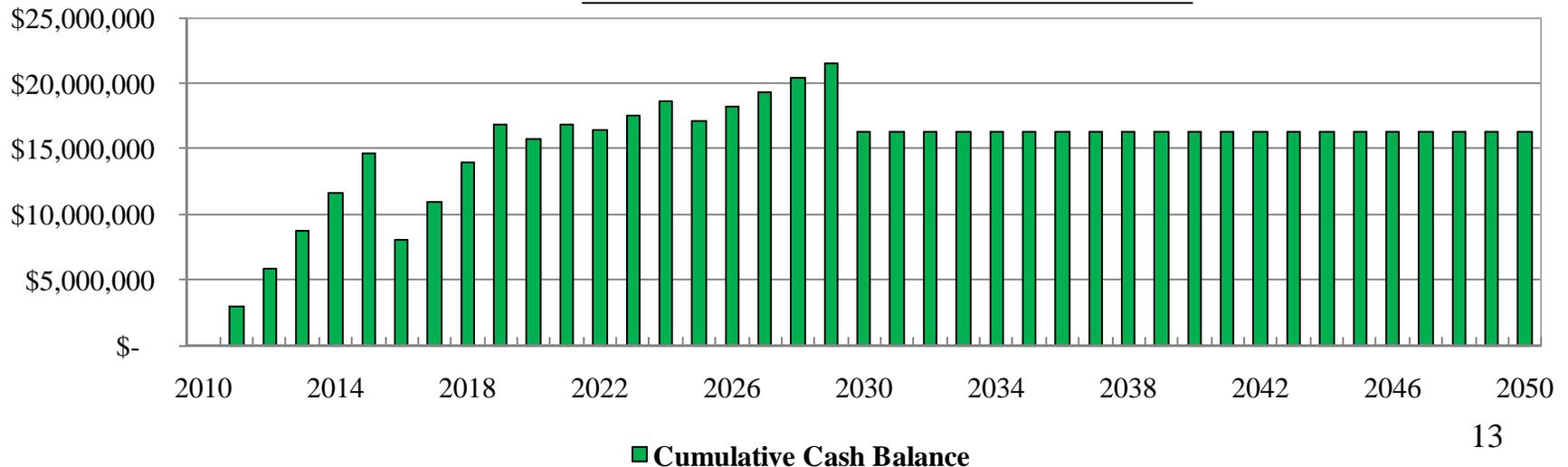
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Capital Cash Flow Analysis - Medium Parks System

CAPITAL EXPENSES VS. CAPITAL REVENUES



CUMULATIVE CAPITAL CASH BALANCE

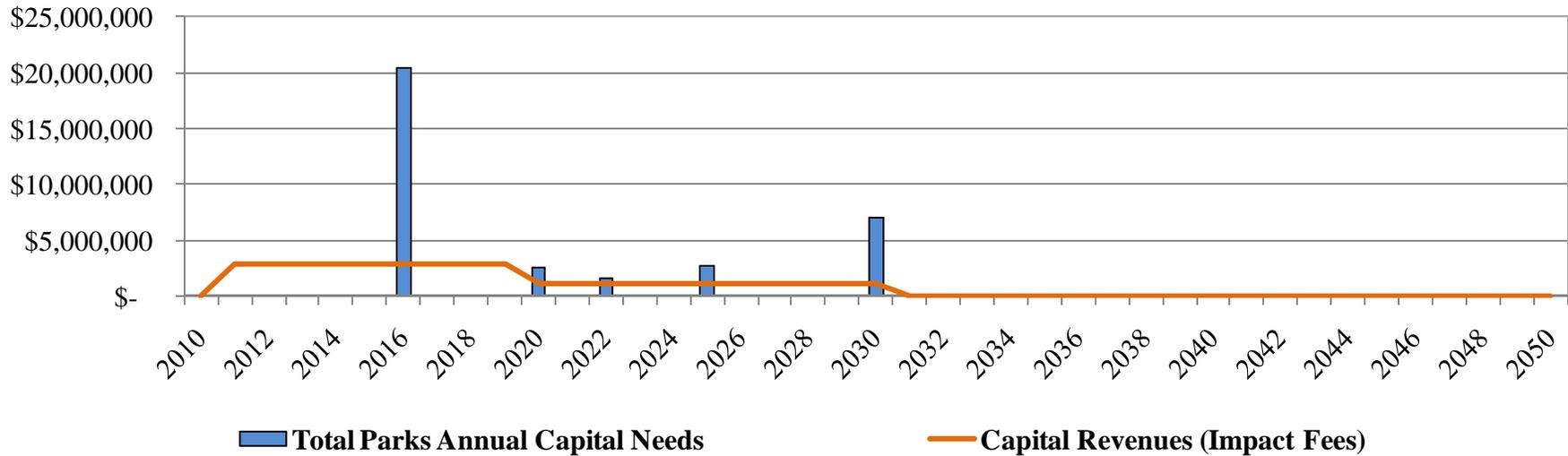




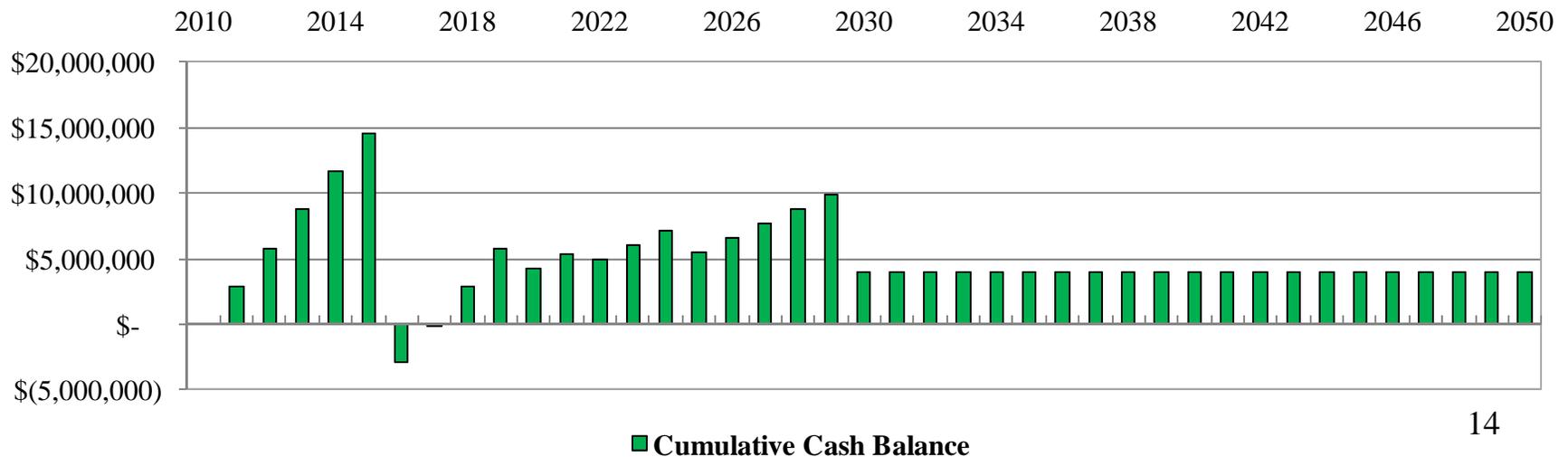
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Capital Cash Flow Analysis - Large Parks System

CAPITAL EXPENSES VS. CAPITAL REVENUES



CUMULATIVE CAPITAL CASH BALANCE

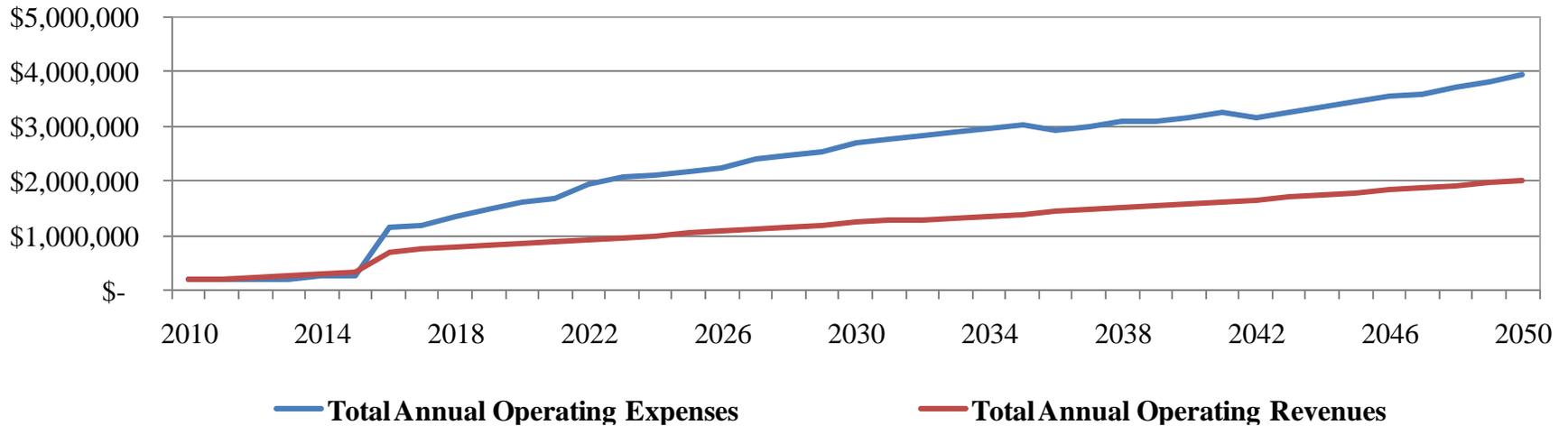




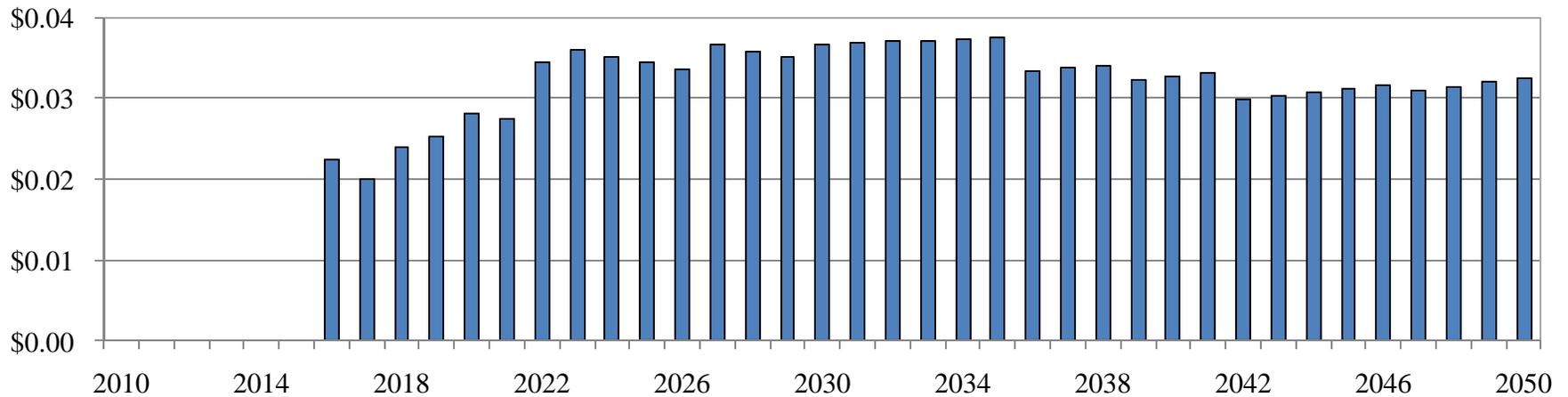
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Operating Cash Flow Analysis - Small Parks System

OPERATING EXPENSES VS. OPERATING REVENUES



INCREASE PROPERTY TAX RATE TO FUND OPERATING COSTS

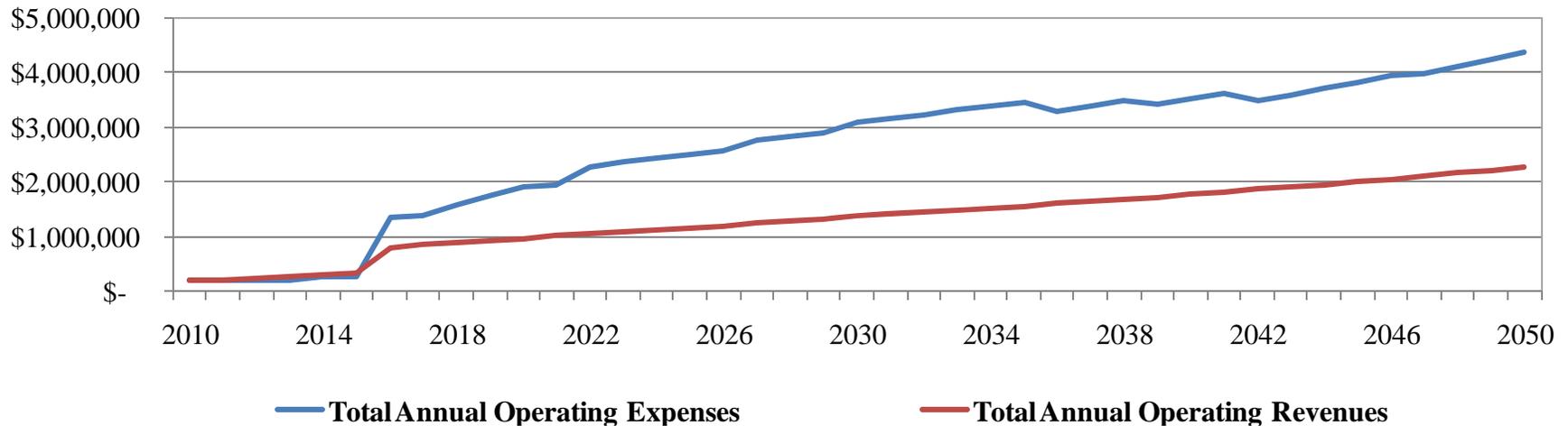




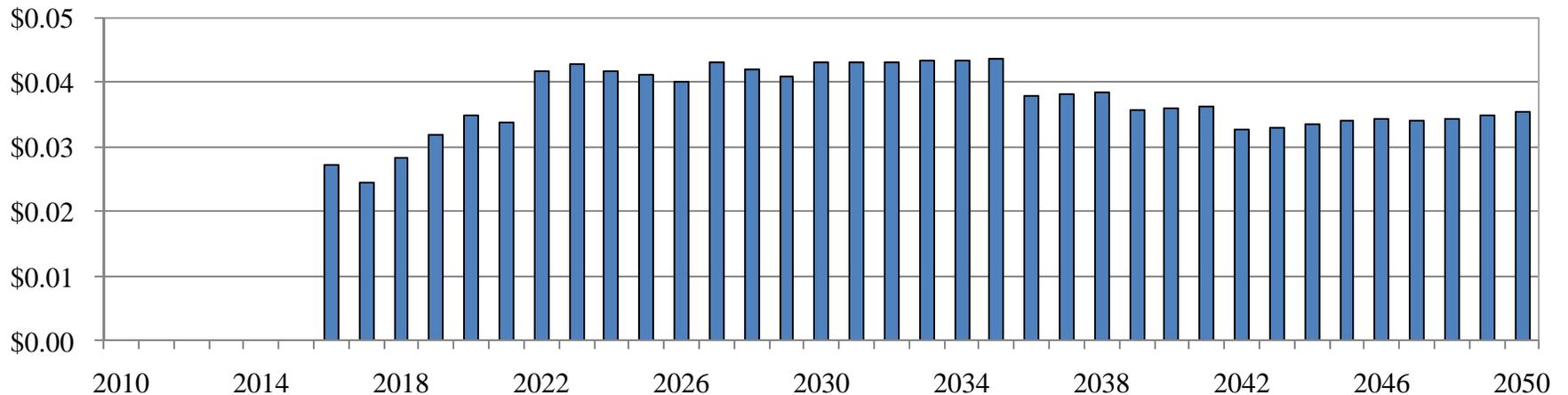
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Operating Cash Flow Analysis - Medium Parks System

OPERATING EXPENSES VS. OPERATING REVENUES



INCREASE PROPERTY TAX RATE TO FUND OPERATING COSTS

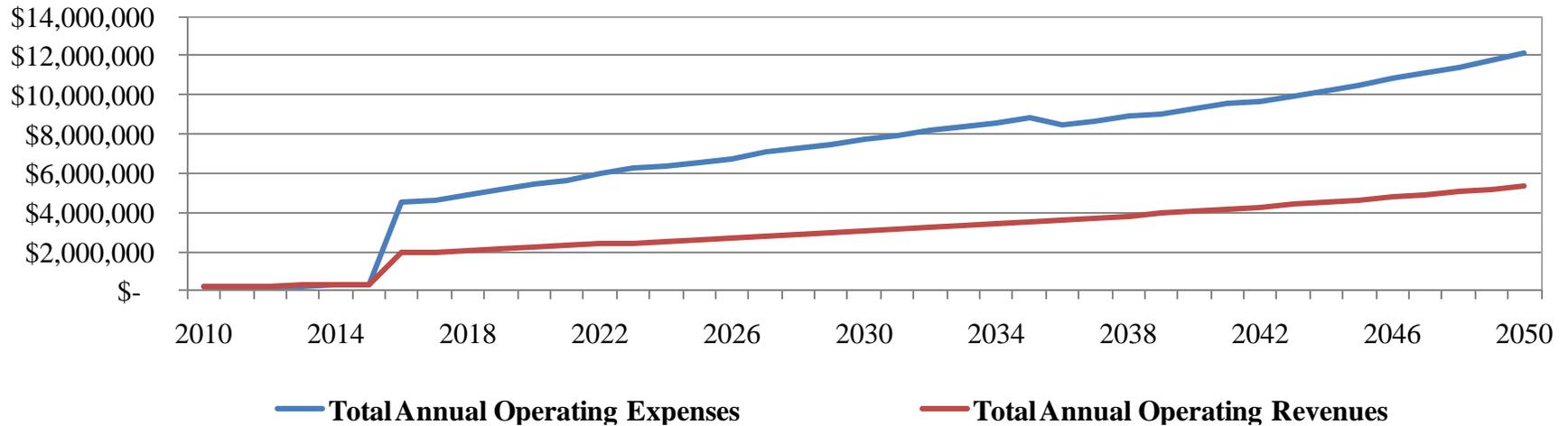




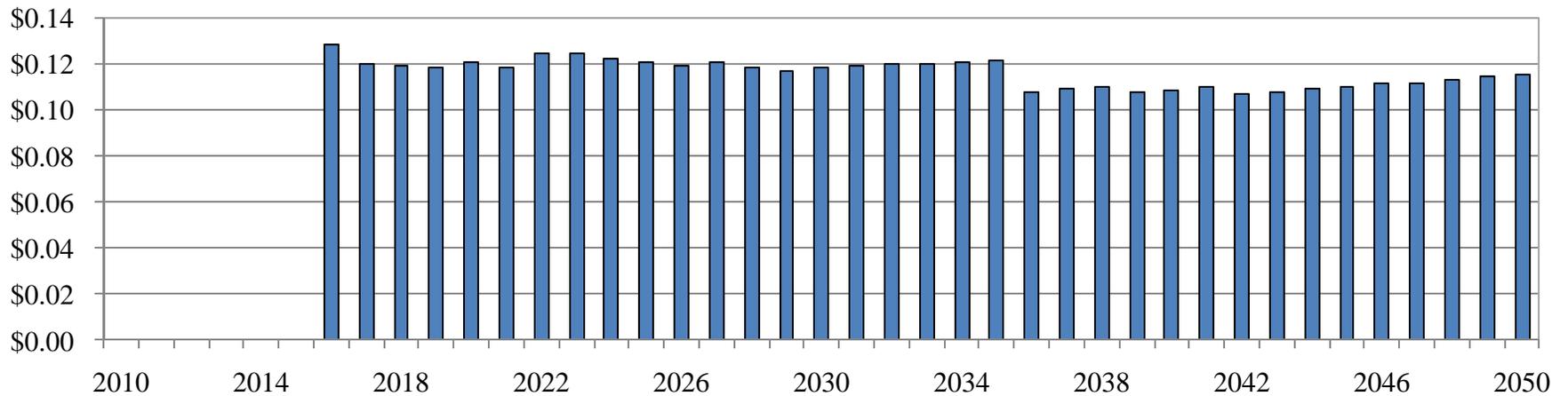
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Operating Cash Flow Analysis - Large Parks System

OPERATING EXPENSES VS. OPERATING REVENUES



INCREASE PROPERTY TAX RATE TO FUND OPERATING COSTS





Observations and Conclusions

- The size and scale of the parks system will have a significant impact on the Town's finances.
- The current impact fee supports a large parks system but the operating costs associated with this plan will require additional revenues or reduced operating costs.
- The small and medium parks systems do not support the current impact fee (\$7,500).
- All three park systems will require a larger share of the Town's budget.
- Future operating costs could be reduced through means such as cost sharing , partnerships, creativity.