

## CHAPTER TWO: RECREATION, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

### OVERVIEW

This chapter is the focal point of the LPPRP, presenting a broad range of materials related to the County's recreation, parks, and open space efforts. The emphasis of this chapter is Baltimore County's park system and recreational infrastructure, which provide the platform through which the majority of organized recreational programs and general public recreational opportunities are provided to the citizens and visitors. Thus, the primary focus will be upon parks and facilities and associated capital resources that are used to purchase sites to serve as parks, to develop new parks, to make enhancements to existing parks and recreation sites, and to perform critical ongoing large scale maintenance and rehabilitation projects at existing parks and recreation site.

This chapter is broken into the following sections:

- Overview
- Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Goals, and Associated Implementation Programs
- Inventory of Parklands and Recreational Facilities
- Recreational Demand
- Level of Service Analysis
- Conclusions and Capital Improvement Program



*Towson Manor Park: An oasis within the rapidly developing core of Towson*

*WHY ARE PARKS AND RECREATION SITES IMPORTANT?* Countless studies and analyses have evaluated the importance of recreation and parks, and concluded numerous and substantial benefits result from public investment therein. First and foremost are the impacts upon public health, both physical and mental. Public parks and recreational facilities ensure that all segments of society have access to quality recreational opportunities at little or no cost, and help to guarantee that an individual's economic wellbeing does not prevent them from having safe places to participate in recreational pursuits. The link between physical health and exercise has long been well established, but more and more studies have shown that parks and green spaces support mental health in numerous ways, from providing opportunities for relieving stress, to the role green space and nature play in supporting and enhancing cognitive functions, to increased opportunities for personal enrichment through social contact.

Quality parks, recreational facilities, and access to recreational opportunities also have substantial economic impacts. A 2007 research study by the American Planning Association concluded that parks positively impact property values, increase municipal revenues, and retain and attract affluent retirees, "knowledge workers," and potential homebuyers. Many studies have concluded that parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces are essential components of a successful environment—particularly in urbanized and densely-developed areas. The importance of sufficiently maintaining and – where needed – enhancing existing parts cannot be underestimated, as neglected parks and recreational facilities can also contribute to blight and community degradation. Park development and rehabilitation projects themselves contribute to the economy by helping to employ designers, engineers, construction contractors, landscaping company workers, and many other individuals employed in the private sector.

Parks likewise offer many environmental benefits. The majority of parks and open spaces aren't as densely developed and feature less impervious surface than most surrounding land uses, thereby having a positive impact on water quality. Substantial forested tracts are preserved within parks, and woodlands, stream valleys, meadows, and other natural areas in parks conserve invaluable wildlife habitat, among their other environmental benefits. Interpretive facilities and parks also educate the public about the importance of protecting nature, and help to enhance an appreciation for the natural environment.

Finally, parks offer a place for the community to gather and interact. Children learn to play together at public playgrounds and tot lots. Friends and family come together at picnic pavilions and areas, or events such as festivals and concerts. Individuals participating in team or group activities are offered opportunities to learn valuable lessons in teamwork, responsibility, sportsmanship, fair play, and leadership.

The diverse system of parklands and recreational opportunities within Baltimore County is a product of a multi-tiered approach to meeting the equally diverse recreational needs of the citizenry. Multiple agencies and entities work cooperatively and/or independently to provide virtually limitless options for recreation. The State Parks within Baltimore County offer predominantly natural

resource-based recreational opportunities, utilizing the forests, rivers, streams, coastal areas, and other natural environments within over 22,000 acres of State parks. The Baltimore County DRP also provides numerous venues for nature-based activities. DRP likewise provides a large network of facilities dedicated to forms of recreation that are more facility based than natural resources based—indoor facilities including community and recreation centers, indoor activity rooms, theaters and indoor performing arts areas, indoor sports fields, indoor pools (through an agreement with the YMCA), and an indoor ice rink (through an agreement with the Baltimore County Revenue Authority); and outdoor facilities including ball diamonds, athletic fields, sports courts, playgrounds and tot lots, picnic pavilions, paved paths, dog parks, skate parks, amphitheaters, and more. These facilities are provided at a variety of sites, including County-owned parks, public school recreation centers, and properties leased by the County for recreational purposes.

Other quasi-public, non-profit, and private/for-profit entities supplement the public recreational opportunities provided through State and County parks. The Baltimore County Revenue Authority operates five public golf courses throughout the County, while the Baltimore Municipal Golf Corporation operates Pine Ridge Golf Course on the Loch Raven Reservoir Watershed property. Over a dozen private golf courses and country clubs also make their home in Baltimore County. Long established organizations like YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Greater Baltimore, and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America provide a broad range of recreational opportunities and facilities including some (such as fitness centers and camping areas) that the County either does not offer or provides on a very limited basis. Outdoor clubs and gun or archery clubs and ranges similarly provide forms of recreation not available through the County's recreational facilities and affiliated recreation council programs. Other private entities such as swim clubs and fitness clubs/centers offer substantial specialized facilities, some of which their members may utilize virtually around-the-clock. Dozens of marinas offer citizens with boats and personal watercraft opportunities to keep their boat on-site, and to launch from rented or leased slips or from their launching facilities. Some such marinas offer other amenities including swimming pools and picnic areas, for the enjoyment of members and their guests.

The Baltimore County 2016 Recreation and Park (Online) Public Survey included a question that sought to gain information on the most common places citizens participated in various types of recreational activities. The results, from the survey report (available online at the DRP web site), are presented on the following page, with green shading indicating the most frequent response by recreational activity. See survey description on page 99 for important information about survey methodology

QUESTION 9: Please select the place at which you most frequently participated in the recreational activities you selected.

Answer Options	PLACE OF MOST FREQUENT PARTICIPATION INDICATED BY						SHADING	Response Count
	Public Park or Rec Center	Public School	Private or Comm. Club or Area	Home	YMCA, Boys or Girls Club or Church	In the street, on sidewalks or other		
Played baseball, softball or tee-ball	38.7%	53.4%	2.0%	4.3%	0.4%	1.2%		253
Played soccer outdoors	38.2%	46.5%	6.5%	6.2%	1.8%	0.9%		325
Played soccer indoors	55.3%	17.4%	25.3%	0.5%	0.5%	1.1%		190
Played lacrosse outdoors	48.0%	28.7%	18.7%	4.1%	0.0%	0.6%		171
Played lacrosse indoors	64.3%	2.4%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		84
Played football outdoors	34.4%	39.8%	6.5%	16.1%	1.1%	2.2%		93
Played football indoors	37.5%	12.5%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		8
Played other field sport outdoors	30.6%	43.5%	8.1%	12.1%	0.8%	4.8%		124
Played other field sport indoors	21.1%	42.1%	31.6%	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%		38
Played tennis outdoors	21.7%	52.7%	24.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%		129
Played tennis indoors	22.2%	3.7%	70.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%		27
Played basketball outdoors	26.2%	34.1%	3.2%	27.8%	1.6%	7.1%		126
Played basketball indoors	17.7%	64.5%	14.9%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%		141
Played volleyball outdoors	26.9%	11.5%	26.9%	34.6%	0.0%	0.0%		26
Played volleyball indoors	11.1%	55.6%	25.9%	0.0%	7.4%	0.0%		27
Swam in a pool outdoors	3.9%	0.0%	67.5%	23.9%	2.4%	2.4%		335
Swam in a pool indoors	6.6%	1.7%	54.1%	1.1%	32.0%	4.4%		181
Swam at a beach	61.5%	0.6%	21.2%	2.9%	0.0%	13.8%		340
Walked or hiked for pleasure	56.9%	2.0%	2.3%	3.6%	0.0%	35.1%		643
Jogged or ran for pleasure or fitness (not on treadmill)	29.2%	4.7%	3.8%	5.9%	0.6%	55.8%		339
Mountain biked	69.0%	0.0%	3.6%	2.4%	0.0%	25.0%		84
Bicycled for pleasure (road or bike lane or path)	29.8%	0.6%	1.3%	5.8%	0.3%	62.1%		309
Visited a playground or tot lot	67.6%	27.6%	3.1%	0.3%	1.0%	0.5%		392
Visited a dog park	79.2%	2.1%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%		96
Boated on canoe, kayak or row boat	55.6%	0.0%	18.0%	10.6%	0.5%	15.3%		189
Boated on motor boat	41.1%	1.6%	23.3%	17.1%	0.0%	17.1%		129
Boated on jet ski	25.0%	0.0%	21.4%	39.3%	0.0%	14.3%		28
Boated on sail boat	48.3%	0.0%	37.9%	3.4%	0.0%	10.3%		29
Gone fishing on a boat	45.4%	0.9%	24.1%	13.0%	0.0%	16.7%		108
Gone fishing from a pier or shoreline	55.3%	1.9%	23.9%	13.2%	0.0%	5.7%		159
Picnicked in picnic pavilion	92.5%	1.6%	4.0%	0.4%	0.8%	0.8%		253
Picnicked on grass, table or elsewhere	77.4%	3.8%	6.3%	9.2%	0.4%	2.9%		239
Worked out using fitness equipment	3.3%	0.8%	49.2%	29.6%	15.0%	2.1%		240
Participated in Yoga program	6.5%	3.7%	61.1%	18.5%	9.3%	0.9%		108
Participated in dance program	31.4%	20.0%	34.3%	1.4%	8.6%	4.3%		70
Participated in cheerleading program	33.3%	58.3%	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%		12
Participated in gymnastics program	16.7%	3.3%	66.7%	3.3%	10.0%	0.0%		30
Participated in other formal fitness program	9.2%	10.1%	62.4%	8.3%	6.4%	3.7%		109
Participated in a formal nature program	85.9%	3.3%	7.6%	1.1%	0.0%	2.2%		92
Skateboarded	19.4%	0.0%	6.5%	19.4%	0.0%	54.8%		31
Ice skated, including playing ice hockey	50.0%	1.5%	47.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%		66
Gardened	3.6%	0.0%	3.3%	90.6%	0.7%	1.8%		276
Participated in performing arts program	20.6%	23.5%	47.1%	1.5%	2.9%	4.4%		68
Participated in other formal arts program	31.0%	9.5%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.5%		42
Participated in hobby or club program	28.2%	17.9%	29.9%	13.7%	3.4%	6.8%		117



The responses to the survey's question about where citizens participated in the 45 listed recreational activities reinforced the prevailing thought that recreational opportunities are enjoyed at and supported by a wide range of venues, from public sites, to clubs, to homes. The following summarizes some of the results captured through the survey question:

- Public parks and recreation centers were the venue for the largest number of activities (17), with private or community clubs or areas being the second-most (12).
- The important role that public school recreation centers play in Baltimore County was emphasized by the fact that 10 of the 45 activities took place most often at those sites. While it is likely that some of the participation was associated with scholastic sports and activities (though respondents were asked to exclude scholastic activities within the survey), the heavy use of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities at public school recreation centers by the programs of the local recreation councils is well documented and established.
- The survey did not include separate answers for County parks versus State parks, largely because many citizens often do not differentiate between types of public parks. For instance, the County's Oregon Ridge Park is often mistakenly called or believed to be a State park.
- A surprisingly large number of water-based activities featured parks as the most common venue response, indicating strong public use of the County's and State's waterfront recreation facilities, including boat ramps and piers.
- Another surprising response was the large percentage of respondents who indicated the most common place they walked or hiked for pleasure was at parks, rather than along streets and sidewalks. This displays the important recreational and public health roles that both State and County parks play for the single most popular recreational activity, and reflects the success of the State's efforts to expand and publicize State park hiking trails, and the County's efforts to provide walking paths in most of its modern era parks, and to promote more use of the hiking trails at its larger and more nature-focused parks.
- Out of the top 20 most popular recreational activity (in terms of percentage of the public who participated at least once), parks were the most frequent venue for 9 (45%), and public school recreation centers for 4 (20%).

## ***GOALS AND ASSOCIATED IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS***

This section presents the State and County goals relating to recreation, parks, and open space, and describes the associated implementation programs and progress made in recent years. The listed State goals are from the *Maryland Land Preservation and Recreation Plan 2014-2018*, while the County's continue to be based upon the goals and objectives identified within Baltimore County Master Plan 2020 and the prior County LPPRP.

### **Implementation Programs/Funding Sources**

A variety of implementation programs and funding sources are utilized within efforts to achieve the County and State goals and objectives for parks, recreation, and open space. These include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Program Open Space (and Land and Water Conservation Fund State Program): POS funding, which derives from State of Maryland real estate transfer tax revenues, is shared between the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the counties, including Baltimore City. Unless a county has reached its parkland acreage goal, a minimum of 50% of the county's annual POS funding allocation must be utilized for parkland acquisition, with the remainder available to be spent on park development or rehabilitation. In most cases, POS funding may be requested for 100% of the appraised value of most parkland purchases, and may be used to fund up to 75% of the cost of park development and capital rehabilitation projects.

Because POS funding is based upon the amount of incoming real estate transfer tax revenues, the amount of funding is variable and fluctuates with economic conditions. Transfer tax revenues grew precipitously during the real estate boom, with Baltimore County's apportionment (as established by a State formula) being over \$6 million in FY'06, nearly \$18.2 million in FY'07, and just under \$13 million in FY'08. However, annual revenues have dwindled substantially as a result of the downturn in the housing market and economy. Compounding the problem of reduced transfer tax revenues are the numerous legislated diversions from land preservation programs to help correct State budget shortfalls. The County's annual allocation since FY'10 has dropped to just under \$3.1 million per year.

The amount of POS funding and federally-derived Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) – State Assistance funding allocated to DNR has likewise dwindled in recent years, challenging DNR's ability to fund their own acquisitions, as well as local acquisitions for which the agency sometimes provides funding assistance on a "pass-through" basis.

- b) County Bond Dollars: During even-numbered election years an assortment of County bond referendums are placed on the ballot, including a borrowing question for parks, preservation and greenways. These questions ask Baltimore County voters to approve the issuance of general obligation bonds to fund County capital projects, generally spent over a two-year budget cycle that begins in the even-numbered fiscal year two numbers higher than the election year (e.g., the recent 2016 bond referendum authorized borrowing for FY'18). In the case of parks, preservation and greenways, the bond funding is for general recreation and parks capital projects rather than one or more *specific* projects/jobs. These bond referendum questions for parks, preservation and greenways have ranged from a low amount of \$500,000 in 1958 to a high of \$10,029,000 in 2000. Each has been approved by the County's voters with high approval ratings (the 2016 referendum issue for parks, recreation and greenways was the 4<sup>th</sup> highest of nine County bond issues, garnering an approval rating in excess of 77.9%). This perfect record for approval attests to the citizens' strong support for parks and recreation in Baltimore County. The approved County bond dollar amount for each two-year capital budget period since fiscal year 2006 has ranged from \$2 million to \$8.32 million, with the average being just over \$4.8 million.

It is important to note that funding from other bond referendum issues (e.g. general government buildings, community improvements, waterway improvement program) sometimes contributes to parks and recreation projects, thereby supplementing the bond funding dedicated to parks, preservation, and greenways.

- c) “PAYGO” Funds: “Pay-As-You-Go” (PAYGO) funds derive from various types of tax revenues and other special forms of revenue brought in by the County (such as various fees). These are the primary source of operating funding, but are also made available for capital projects when sufficient revenues are available. PAYGO funds are sometimes utilized to provide a required match for various types of State and federal funding. PAYGO funds are typically allocated each fiscal year, with the average apportionment since fiscal years 2014 through 2017 being a little over \$2.35 million per year. The funding is used for park acquisition, development and rehabilitation.

One type of PAYGO funding unique to DRP and its capital budget is local open space (LOS) waiver funding, which derives from fees-in-lieu of open space that are sometimes paid by developers via the County’s development process. Such funds must be used for park purposes, including park acquisition, development, and rehabilitation. A portion of LOS waiver revenues must, by law (LOS sections of the County Code) go to NeighborSpace of Baltimore County to support their conservation efforts.

- d) Other Sources: A number of less predictable funding sources are sometimes utilized to implement capital projects. These include State capital grants (sometimes known as “bond bills”) secured through the State’s legislative process, Maryland Waterway Improvement Fund (not utilized as much as in the past, after program eligibility/prioritization changes placed more emphasis on boating facilities and steered away from fishing piers), the Maryland Bikeways Program, and various forms of donations including some substantial donations from the affiliated recreation and parks councils.

## **State Goals for Recreation, Parks and Open Space**

Within the State of Maryland, the following overriding goals are in place to help define the State’s parks and recreation vision, providing a framework from which State and local parks and recreation departments work together to provide quality leisure opportunities for Maryland’s citizens and visitors.

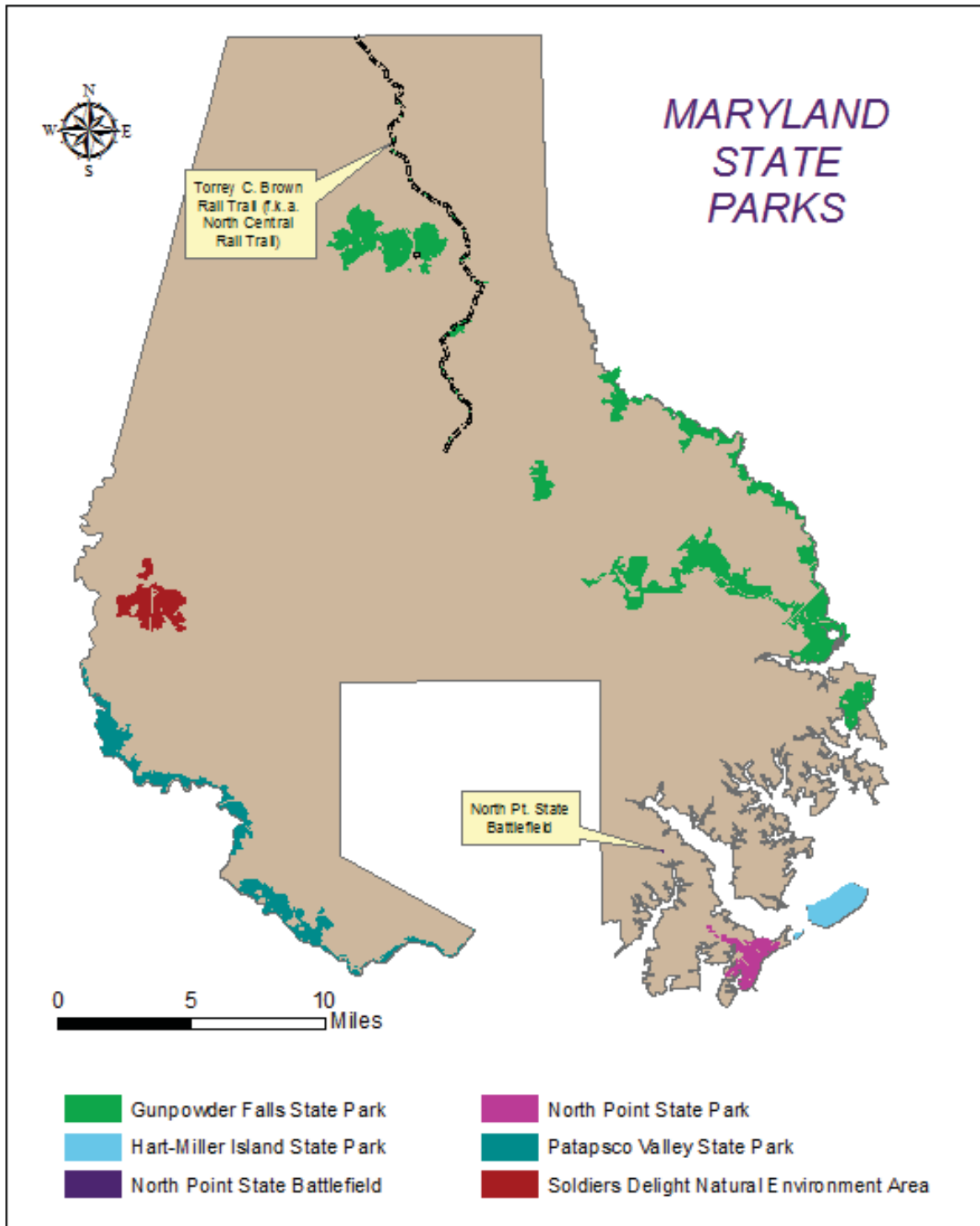
- Make a variety of quality recreational environments and opportunities readily accessible to all of its citizens, and thereby contribute to their physical and mental well-being.
- Recognize and strategically use parks and recreation facilities as amenities to make communities, counties, and the State more desirable places to live, work, and visit.
- Use State investment in parks, recreation, and open space to complement and mutually support the broader goals and objectives of local comprehensive / master plans.
- To the greatest degree feasible, ensure that recreational land and facilities for local populations are conveniently located relative to population centers, are accessible without reliance on the automobile, and help to protect natural open spaces and resources.

- Complement infrastructure and other public investments and priorities in existing communities and areas planned for growth through investment in neighborhood and community parks and facilities.
- Continue to protect recreational open space and resource lands at a rate that equals or exceeds the rate that land is developed at a statewide level.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) State Parks system has its foundation in natural resource-based forms of recreation and preservation of key natural resources and environments. DNR administers state parks, forests, natural resource areas, wildlands, and a variety of other public lands, the majority of which are nature-focused. The DNR properties within Baltimore County include the following sites, which are displayed on the map on the following page:

- Patapsco Valley State Park (including all or parts of the Halethorpe, Avalon, Glen Artney, Hilton, Pickall, Daniels, Woodstock, and McKeldin areas of the park)
- Gunpowder Falls State Park (including all of the Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail, and all or parts of the Hereford, Sweet Air, Central, Hammerman, and Dundee Creek Marina areas of the park)
- Hart-Miller Island State Park
- North Point State Park
- North Point State Battlefield
- Soldiers Delight Natural Environment Area.





While certain State parks include recreational facilities that are not reliant upon the presence of natural resources, the vast majority of DNR's holding in Baltimore County support natural resource-based forms of recreational such as hiking, swimming, hunting, camping, and boating. The State parks within the County all support the Maryland LPRP's goals and objectives pertaining to expanding trail and path access statewide. The nature of the State park trails varies widely, ranging

from the less than 0.4-mile commemorative path at North Point State Battlefield, to hundreds of miles of natural surface trails through woods and meadows, climbing slopes, and along streams, rivers, and ridgelines, to the 19.7-mile Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail (former North Central Rail Trail), which connects with its more northerly sister, the Pennsylvania Heritage Rail Trail, at the Maryland-Pennsylvania state line.

Supporting its acquisition goals, Maryland DNR continues to purchase key parcels to expand its parks within Baltimore County, with tax records indicating that over 330 acres of property have been procured since the start of 2010. DNR continues to work cooperatively with Baltimore County to achieve mutual goals, as witnessed by two additions totaling approximately 71 acres that have been added to the County's lease of State park lands at Cromwell Valley Park.

A number of the State goals for recreation, parks, and open space require County action to achieve. The County's goals clearly support the State goals, and the following section on County goals, implementation programs/actions, and progress made by the County support both the State's and the County's goals.

## **County Goals and Objectives for Recreation, Parks and Open Space, and Associated Progress**

This section identifies the County's goals and objectives for recreation, parks, and open space, and describes recent progress that has been achieved for each. The goals and objectives are well established, with most carrying over from Baltimore County Master Plan 2020 and the prior County LPPRP. However, significant refinement and simplification has taken place to reduce redundancy and more concisely reflect the mission of DRP. The following format applies to this section:

# - Goal

❖ Objectives

*Italics:* Description of Associated Progress

1. Acquire a variety of parklands and recreation sites in order to meet the needs of County citizens and provide a park system that contributes to the County's quality of life and overall land preservation efforts.

**\*\*\* See acquisitions map at end of this goal for depiction of sites acquired since the start of 2010\*\*\***

- Utilize Program Open Space (POS) as a key funding source for the acquisition of parkland. Support efforts to secure the utilization of 100% of State real estate transfer tax for land preservation programs, as was the intent when the tax was enacted.

*Four sites totaling approximately 350 acres were acquired with the assistance of just over \$4.5 million in POS acquisition funds since the start of 2010. As of the drafting of this plan, acquisition efforts for three additional sites were nearing completion, involving a total of 16.5 acres of land and expected POS expenditures in the range of \$2.75 million.*

- Strategically target available park acquisition funding resources to areas of existing and projected future needs, and to protect and preserve key environmental and natural resource lands.

*There were five POS-assisted acquisitions that took place since the start of calendar year 2010. The sites were purchased for a number of purposes, with two (Reisterstown Regional Park Addition and Lake Roland Addition) acquired to expand existing parks, one (Granite Bethel AME Church Property) purchased predominantly for conservation purposes on a designated greenway, one (Belfast Road Archdiocese Property) procured to provide a rural park site adjacent to an existing school recreation center, and one (Spring Grove Park Site) acquired to serve a heavily developed suburban area (Catonsville).*

- Employ the Baltimore County development process to provide quality local open space, obtain fees-in-lieu where appropriate (to help fund park acquisition and development), and to secure vital greenway connections.

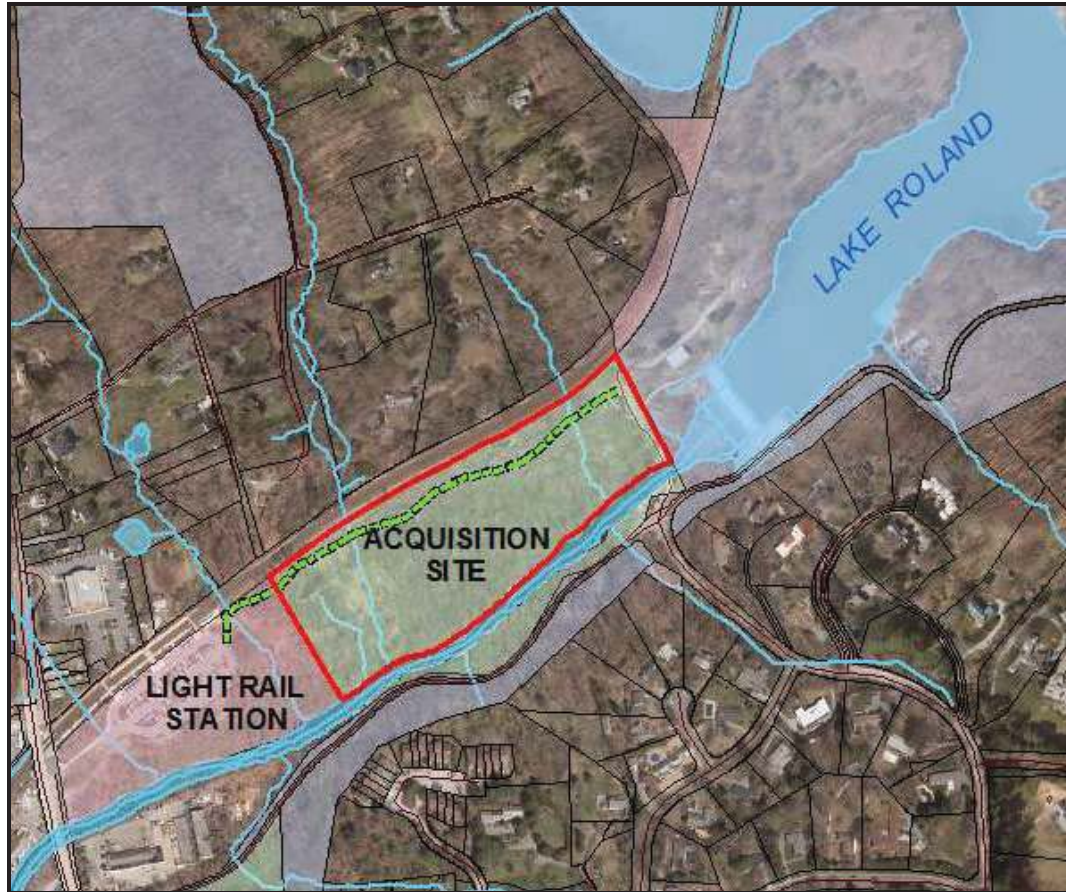
*A total of 36 local open space and greenway sites totaling over 310 acres have been procured through the development process since the start of calendar year 2010. Additionally, according to reports from the Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspection, the average amount of LOS fee-in-lieu payments over the past five years has averaged approximately \$570,000 per year. A limited amount of LOS waiver revenues have been used for acquisition in recent years, with the majority instead being used for park development and enhancement projects, as well as ongoing grants to the non-profit conservation organization NeighborSpace of Baltimore County.*

- Work cooperatively with partner agencies to provide additional parks, recreation sites, and green spaces for the use of the citizenry.

*DRP has long participated in a number of partnerships with other agencies and entities such as the Baltimore County Board of Education and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Since the start of 2010 DRP has been the beneficiary of the transfer of the former Southeast Tech High School Recreation Center Site, which has undergone numerous improvements and now serves as a community recreation site named the Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center. Meanwhile, the Lyons Mill Elementary School Recreation Center has been developed to serve both recreational and educational functions on property acquired through the County's development process (acreage included in the prior summary of local open space and greenway lands). In 2014-2015 DRP and DNR worked together to target the acquisition of additional 20 acres of property for Cromwell Valley Park, amending the County's lease of the property from DNR to incorporate that property into the park. Finally, a 2011 cooperative effort between DNR, DRP, and EPS resulted in the acquisition of the County's first combined conservation and public recreation access easement at the nearly 250-acre BeeTree Preserve, situated along the Torrey C. Brown Trail in northern Baltimore County (identified as the northernmost "County land conservation acquisition" on the map on the following page).*

- Exercise all means necessary for the acquisition of key prospective park sites, up to and including the powers of master plan conflict and condemnation.

*A single condemnation proceeding was initiated since 2010, involving the acquisition of a key parcel of property to serve as an addition to Lake Roland. Acquisition of this site allowed for the construction of a boardwalk access between the park and a nearby light rail station, expanding access to the park via both public transportation and extra parking.*



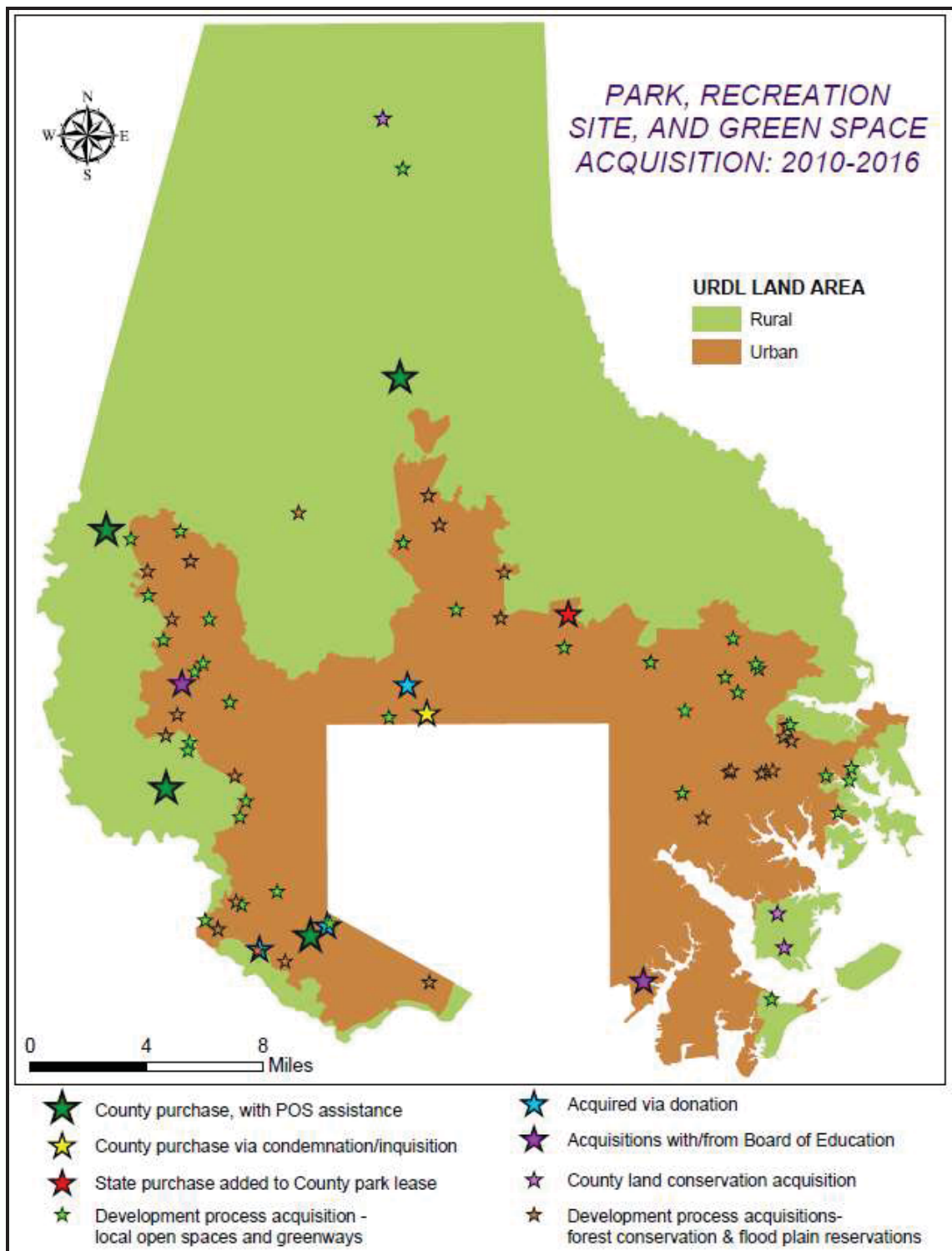
*The site outlined in red was acquired to both expand Lake Roland and allow for the construction of a boardwalk (green dashed line) to connect the park to the nearby light rail station*

- Pursue other avenues for the acquisition of parkland and green space, such as land donations, cooperative ventures with non-profits and other organizations with similar missions, recreation site leases and access easements, and tax sale opportunities.

*Significant success has occurred in this area in the recent past. Partnerships have resulted in three significant park acquisitions. A cooperative venture with Catonsville Rails to Trails resulted in the acquisition of the former Catonsville Short Line through donation, with a subsequent long-term lease with that organization to enable them to make trail improvements to the site. A long-planned no-cost property transfer from the Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) added almost 19 acres of land to Lake Roland Park, the vast majority of which is operated by the County under a long-term agreement with Baltimore City. Another City-*



owned property, on Maple Avenue in Catonsville, was donated to the County largely through the efforts of NeighborSpace of Baltimore County.



*The prior map displays park, recreation site, and green space acquisitions within Baltimore County from the start of calendar year 2010 to early November of 2016. State park acquisitions are not displayed, with the exception of the Cromwell Valley Park Addition (leased by the County). “Development process acquisitions – forest conservation & flood plain reservations” are not owned or managed by DRP, and are instead green spaces owned and administered by other County agencies.*

2. Develop, enhance, and rehabilitate parks to meet the recreational needs and demands of citizens of all ages and abilities, to attract visitors, and to support the organized recreation programs of the partner recreation and parks councils.
  - Provide a sufficient quantity of traditional outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, sports courts, playgrounds and picnic areas.

*The County continues to construct traditional recreational facilities, particularly in areas with known recreational needs that are not sufficiently served by existing parks and facilities. Since the start of 2010, seven new parks have been developed (including the Spring Grove Park Site in Catonsville, which was in the process of being constructed as of the writing of this plan), with four of the seven sites featuring traditional outdoor recreation facilities. The Spring Grove Park Site in Catonsville will include two lighted athletic fields, one of which shall have an artificial turf surface. Sweet Air Park in Jacksonville features two athletic fields, a picnic pavilion, and a large commemorative playground that was partially funded with private donations, in addition to indoor facilities described below. Gough Park in Perry Hall is improved with ball diamonds, athletic fields, and a picnic pavilion. The nearly completed Angel Park, also in Perry Hall is a small park site that features an extensive “all-inclusive playground” and small community stage. The park is a unique community-driven project for which the community and the Perry Hall Recreation Council not only raised the majority of capital funding for site development, but constructed many of the recreational amenities. See map on page 52 for location of the above sites.*



*Perry Hall’s Angel Park, constructed through a community-driven effort*

- Provide sufficient indoor facilities to meet expanding demands for year-round recreation, to serve recreation council programs that require indoor space, and to facilitate use by community and civic organizations.

*Five new community or recreation centers have been constructed since the start of 2010—Arbutus Recreation Center, Cockeysville Community Center (on the grounds of Padonia International Elementary School Recreation Center), the Jacksonville Community Center at Sweet Air Park, Soukup Arena in Perry Hall – White Marsh, and the Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center in Turner Station. Additionally, new indoor recreation facilities were included within new SRC projects at Mays Chapel and Lyons Mill ESRCs.*

- Construct additional trails and paths to meet growing demands for linear-based recreation (walking, jogging, bicycling, etc.), and work with County and State agencies to establish pedestrian and bicycle connections between parks, residential areas and other points of interest.

*Since the start of 2012, trail construction projects have taken place at Indian Rock Park in Perry Hall (part of the Northeast Trail), Marshy Point Park (the paved “Katie and Wil Brady Trail,” made possible through substantial donations from the Katie and Wil Brady Memorial Foundation, Inc., as well as the Marshy Point Nature Center Council), Catonsville Community Park (paving an existing dirt path to enhance accessibility and provide a formal trail connection within a network of area bicycle and pedestrian routes), and the Catonsville Short Line Trail (through the efforts of the non-profit Catonsville Rails to Trails). Additionally, a number of segments of the paved Northeast Trail were constructed by developers as part of their open space and public benefit requirements within the County’s development process.*

- Provide new types of recreational facilities, where appropriate, and where sufficient demand has been expressed by County citizens.

*Demand for dog parks has continued to grow, with three additional dog parks having been constructed since 2010, at Lake Roland, Honeygo Run Regional, and Saint Helena Parks. The popularity of artificial turf fields continues to increase as well. Synthetic field surface and their associated drainage systems allows the fields to be used during and after rainy weather, and are – unlike grass surfaced fields – more durable and resistant to wear. Whereas grass surface fields frequently become de-vegetated by use and sometimes require time to be shut down while grass regrows, synthetic fields have a relatively long and continual use period/life. Since the start of 2010, DRP has fully or partially funded new artificial turf fields at Milford Mill, Carver, and Towson High School Recreation Centers, as well as the replacement of the indoor field surface at Southeast Regional Recreation Center. An additional synthetic field was under construction at the Spring Grove Park Site as of the formulation of this plan.*

- Seek out opportunities to provide recreational facilities through the local open space and greenway regulations of the County’s development process, and utilize LOS waiver fees to support capital development and enhancement projects.

*As mentioned above, under “trails and paths,” substantial lengths of the Northeast Trail have been constructed by developers as a result of development requirements for local open space and/or to provide “public benefit” enhancements in conjunction with planned unit*

*developments (PUDs). Smaller scale site amenities such as playgrounds and sidewalks and paths have likewise been provided on both County and homeowner/condo owner open spaces. Two developments featuring former quarries (Greenspring in Pikesville, and Delight in Owings Mills) have included lengthy paved paths encircling quarry-formed lakes as community recreation amenities situated on homeowner/condo owner open space, with the latter also scheduled to transfer an adjoining small field area called “Kiwanis Field” to the County as part of their development requirements. Meanwhile, since 2010 millions of dollars in LOS fee-in-lieu/waiver revenues have been utilized within DRP’s capital budget for park acquisition and construction, and for grants to NeighborSpace of Baltimore County. In some cases, fees deriving from waivers and community benefit payments are specifically targeted to park projects. Such is the case with the underway Towson Manor Park enhancement project, which involves site enhancements requested by area residents.*



*Developer-constructed portion of the Northeast Trail, along Perry Hall Blvd.*

- ❖ Renovate, rehabilitate, and enhance parks and recreational facilities to address issues such as facility aging and wear, outdated recreational infrastructure, and changes in recreational demands.

*The County continues to invest significant capital funding into both recreational facility renovations and site redesign and redevelopment. Over \$10 million in DRP capital funds were expended to transform the former Sollers Point Technical High School Recreation Center site from a school to a large scale community center with associated outdoor recreation facilities. The site, now called the Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center, features a 28,000+ square foot community center with recreational and other public facilities, baseball diamond, athletic field, track, playground, gazebo, and multi-purpose courts. A newer project at Oregon Ridge Park involves the redevelopment of the former beach area, transforming it into a more natural setting with enhancements that will complement the recreational facilities and opportunities at the adjacent Oregon Ridge Nature Center. Among the general larger scale facility renovation jobs completed since 2010, parking lot and entry*

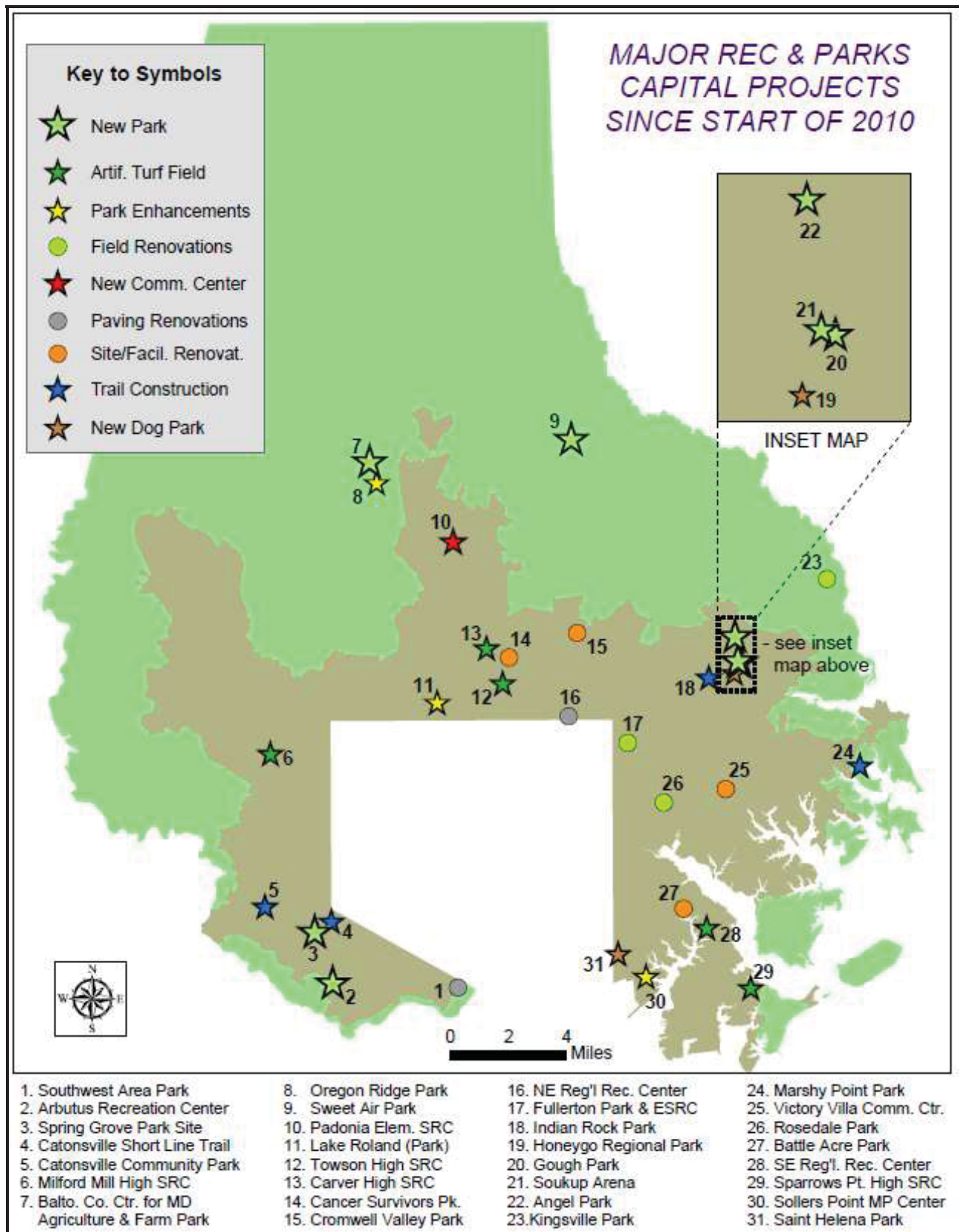


*road repaving took place at Southwest Area Park and the Northeast Regional Recreation Center, lighting renovations or expansions were completed at four sites, and substantial building renovations occurred at the Victory Villa Community Center and multiple structures at Cromwell Valley Park. Battle Acre Park and its associated monument were also rehabilitated in conjunction with the bicentennials of the War of 1812 and the Battle of North Point.*

- ❖ Continue to invest in older, established communities, and support community revitalization programs and initiatives.

*A substantial proportion of the major capital projects displayed on the map on the following page are situated in older, established communities, most of which are in close proximity to the Baltimore Beltway (I-695). Communities supported by these projects include but are not limited to: Baltimore Highlands, Arbutus, Catonsville, Milford Mill, Towson, Overlea-Fullerton, Rosedale, Middle River, and Dundalk. Additionally, the vast majority of capital funding dedicated to the rehabilitation and enhancement of parks and recreational facilities is expended within the older, established communities.*

A map of most major (cost of \$100,000 or more) capital development, enhancement, and rehabilitation project sites appears on the following page, with the page after providing more details about the projects that have taken place.



***\*\*See project matrix on the following page for details about projects by site\*\****

Site #	Site Name	Project(s) Description
1	Southwest Area Park	Paving renovations
2	Arbutus Recreation Center	Center construction, gymnasium floor upgrade
3	Spring Grove Park Site	Park construction (underway as of drafting of plan)
4	Catonsville Short Line Trail	Trail construction (by Catonsville Rails to Trails)
5	Catonsville Community Park	Trail construction
6	Milford Mill Academy High School Recreation Center	Artificial turf field construction
7	Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture & Farm Park	Park construction, planned therapeutic equestrian facilities
8	Oregon Ridge Park	Nature center pavilion, underway beach area redevelopment
9	Sweet Air Park	Park and community center construction
10	Padonia Int'l. Elementary Sch. Rec. Ctr.	Community center construction (Cockeysville Comm. Ctr.)
11	Lake Roland (Park)	Major park enhancements, constr. of dog park & nature center
12	Towson High School Rec. Ctr.	Artificial turf field construction
13	G.W. Carver High School Rec. Ctr.	Artificial turf field construction
14	Cancer Survivors Park	Major facility rehabilitation
15	Cromwell Valley Park	Structural and trail renovations; lime kiln reconstruction (by park council)
16	Northeast Regional Rec. Center	Paving renovations, renovations to racquetball rooms
17	Fullerton Park and Elementary SRC	Field and erosion renovations, field house renovations
18	Indian Rock Park	Trail construction (segment of Northeast Trail)
19	Honeygo Run Regional Park	Dog park construction
20	Gough Park	Park construction
21	Soukup Arena	Park and community center construction
22	Angel Park	Park construction (by rec council and associated group)
23	Kingsville Park	Field and erosion renovations
24	Marshy Point Park	Trail construction (Brady Trail)
25	Victory Villa Community Center	Building renovations
26	Rosedale Park	Field, erosion, and parking renovations
27	Battle Acre Park	Site rehabilitation
28	Southeast Regional Rec. Center	Indoor artificial turf field replacement
29	Sparrows Point High School Rec. Ctr.	Installation of field lighting
30	Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center	Site reconstruction, including new community center
31	Saint Helena Park	Dog park construction, ball diamond renovations

3. Enhance public access to the natural environment, including the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and seek to increase public knowledge of and appreciation for nature.

- Provide an assortment of recreational facilities at the County's waterfront parks, ranging from water-specific facilities such as boat ramps, fishing piers, and canoe/kayak launches, to general amenities including picnic pavilions, playgrounds and paths.

*Waterfront specific projects since the start of 2010 include the previously mentioned Brady Trail at Marshy Point Park, which served to expand that park's trail network and improve access from the northeast entrance to the park. A number of smaller scale pier renovation jobs also took place, but are not marked on the prior map.*

- Utilize the County's interpretive centers to not only provide recreational opportunities, but to help educate visitors about the natural environment.

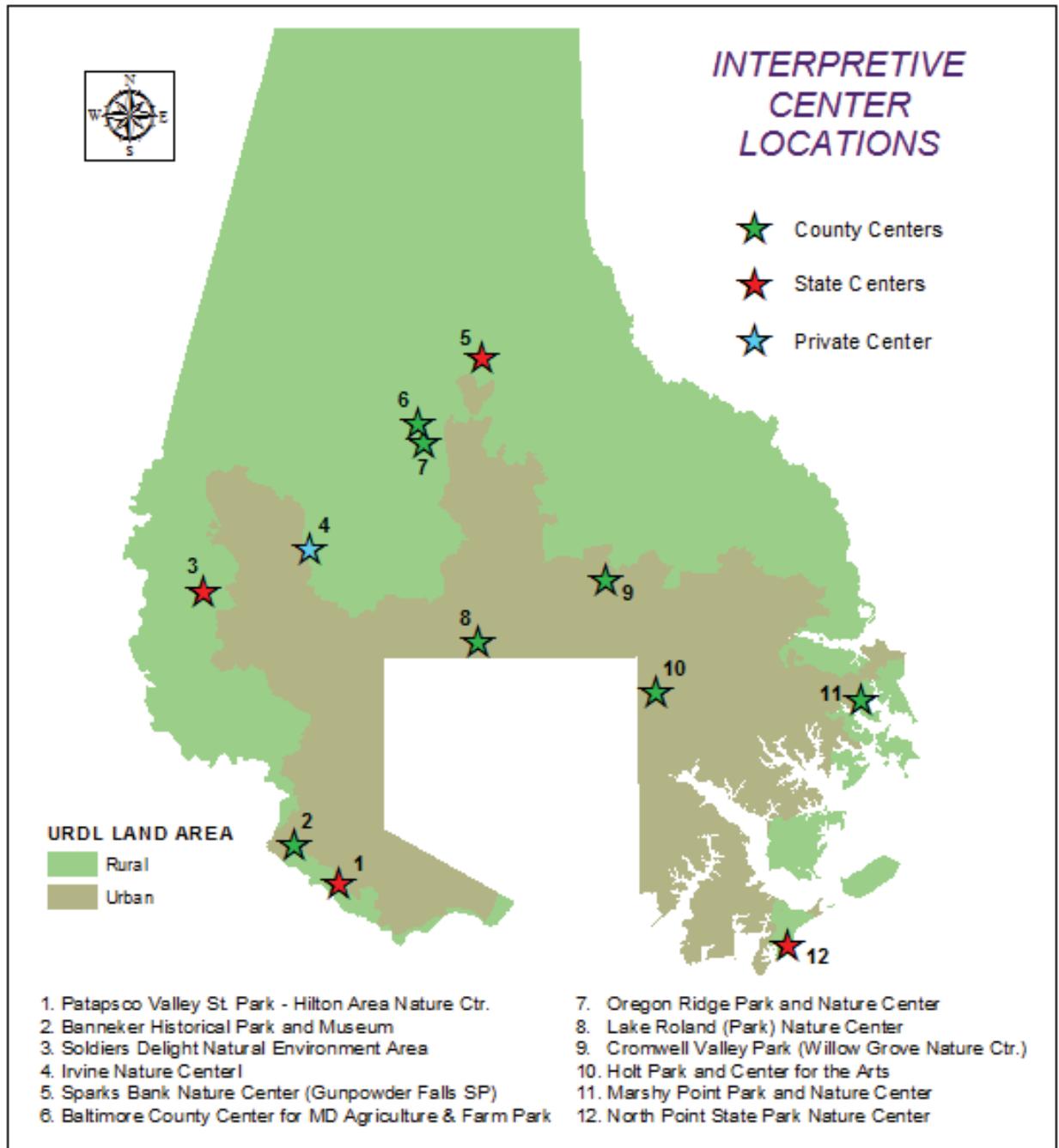
*The County's interpretive facilities combine with other interpretive centers throughout the County to provide a variety of interpretive opportunities from historical, to natural/environmental, to agricultural. Two of the centers – the County's Marshy Point Nature Center, and the State's nature center at North Point State Park – enjoy coastal locations that allow them to educate park visitors about the Bay and tidal ecosystems. The County's latest addition to its list of centers is the Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agricultural (commonly known as "the Ag Center") in north-central Baltimore County. The center and the surrounding farm park provide visitors with an opportunity to learn about the County's rich agricultural heritage, and hosts numerous agriculture-focused special events, programs and activities. The map on the next page shows the distribution of centers across the County, in both urban and rural areas.*

*In some circumstances the interpretive centers and parks serve as venues for formal scholastic environmental education through a cooperative effort between Recreation & Parks and Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS). This supports both the State's Environmental Literacy Graduation Requirement and BCPS's Outdoor Science (Education) Program. The latter program includes:*

- ❖ *The Grade Five Eco-Trekkers curriculum, at Marshy Point and Miami Beach Parks*
- ❖ *The Grade Seven Living Environment Ecosystem Study, at the State's Days Cove Area of Gunpowder Falls State Park*
- ❖ *The Environmental Science Canoe-Based Ecology Study (various grades), at the State's Days Cove and Dundee Creek Marina sections of Gunpowder Falls State Park*
- ❖ *The Environmental Science Freshwater Ecosystem Study, at the County's Oregon Ridge, Cromwell Valley, and Sparks Parks, and at Patapsco State Park*
- ❖ *The Advanced Placement (AP) Environmental Science Stream Team, at Oregon Ridge, Cromwell Valley, and Sparks Parks*

*The educational opportunities afforded both to students and the general public directly support the statewide Partnership for Children in Nature (more information available at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/cin/Pages/partners-gov-initiative.aspx> ).*

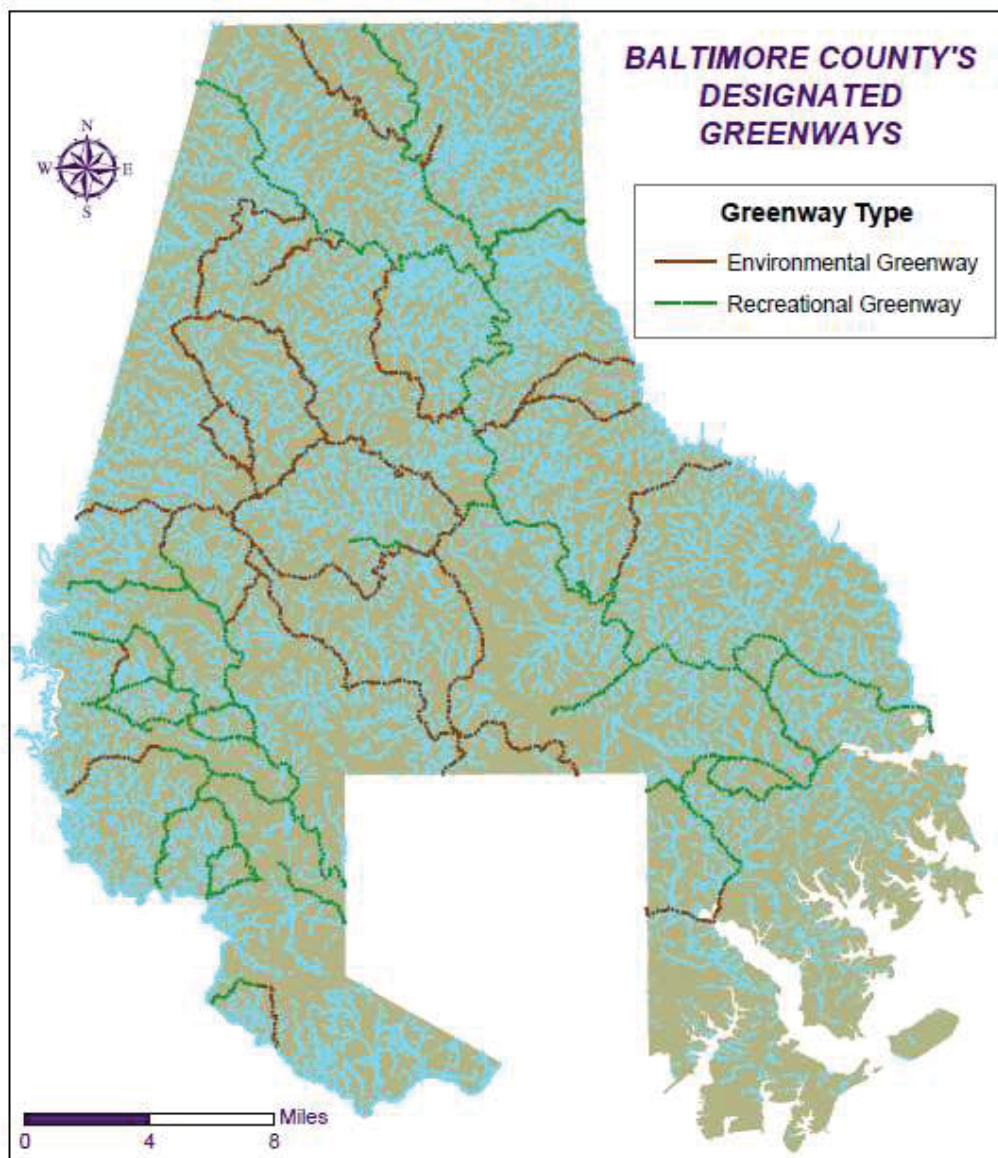




- Continue to procure greenway reservations and easement through the County's development process or other means such as purchase, and – where appropriate – make improvements such as trails within the greenways.

*There have been 19 properties along designated greenways transferred to the County since the start of 2010, totaling 530 acres. All but five have been dedicated through the County's development process as greenway, flood plain, drainage, and forest buffer reservations. Four of the remaining five sites were park acquisitions— Granite Park Site (Brice Run Greenway), Maple Avenue Park Site (Soapstone Branch Greenway), an addition to Lake Roland (Jones Falls Greenway), and the Belfast Road Park Site (Piney Creek Greenway).*

*The map below displays the County's designated Greenways network. Environmental greenways are intended primarily for environmental purposes such as protecting streams and providing wildlife corridors, and are usually preserved through easements. Recreational greenways are designated for potential public access, including trails, and are usually acquired as reservations within the development process.*



4. Work with Baltimore County's Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (EPS) to improve environmental conditions at the County's parks and recreation sites, and to help protect and preserve the natural environment.
  - Work with Baltimore County's Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (EPS) to improve water quality, protect tidal areas and public waterfront lands and facilities, and make progress towards Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas associated mandates.

*DRP works hand-in-hand with EPS on a wide range of projects that protect and enhance water quality. Numerous EPS-managed stream restoration projects, including underway*

*efforts at Overlook Park, West Hills Park, and Catonsville Community Park both improve the integrity of the streams and help to correct potentially damaging problems such as erosion and flooding. EPS has also initiated a number of recent shoreline restoration projects, with one (a “living shoreline” project at Stansbury Park) completed and three (at Cox’s Point Park, Watersedge Park, and Fort Howard Park) under design as of the drafting of this plan. Such projects help to minimize the damage that can result from both sporadic coastal flooding and the continual impact of wave action and water drainage/flow.*

- Work with Baltimore County’s Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability (EPS) to expand and improve the health of forest resources within parks and other recreation sites.

*Throughout the County, dozens of tree and forest planting projects from small to large have taken place at parks and recreation sites since the start of 2010, including substantial recent and underway projects at Cromwell Valley, Cloverland, Lake Roland, and Marshy Point Parks. Such projects have numerous environmental benefits, including proven positive impacts on air and water quality. Forest health assessment projects have likewise been initiated. See the Natural Resource Conservation chapter of this plan for further details.*

5. Pursue alternative means for providing recreational opportunities through partnerships with other agencies and organizations.

- Aggressively pursue grant opportunities.

*Numerous State of Maryland capital grants, approved as part of the State’s annual legislative sessions, have been procured through the efforts of the County’s legislative staff and the State Senators and Delegates representing the County. These include a \$2.25 million grant for site rehabilitation and enhancements at Lake Roland (formerly Robert E. Lee Park), a \$750,000 grant for the construction of the Soukup Arena, a \$200,000 grant for the Lake Roland Nature Center, a \$215,000 grant for the Acorn Hill natural playground at Lake Roland, \$200,000 in grants to the County and Perry Hall Recreation Council for Angel Park, \$450,000 in grants for recreational facility enhancements including artificial turf at Milford Mill High School Rec. Center, and \$205,000 for the two park sites in Towson. The County also received and utilized a \$126,000 Maryland Bikeways Program grant for the Northeast Trail segment at Indian Rock Park and Perry Hall High School Rec. Center. Finally, since the start of 2010 the County has had over \$11 million in Program Open Space (POS) grant applications approved, with more than \$6 million in applications submitted and pending as of the drafting of this plan.*

- Solicit businesses and citizens for donations, enabling them to contribute to the quality of life in the jurisdiction in which they live and do business.

*Private donations have contributed to numerous projects in recent years, including more than \$1.5 million donated by the Perry Hall Recreation Council for the construction of Soukup Arena, a total of \$200,000 from the Towson Rec. Council and Towson Sports Boosters for the artificial turf field at Towson High School Rec. Center, \$150,000 from the Towsontowne Rec. Councils for the synthetic turf field at Carver High School Rec. Center, \$150,000 from the Edgemere-Sparrows Point Rec. Council for an upcoming artificial turf field at Sparrows Point High School Rec. Center, \$127,000 from the Brady Foundation and*

*Marsh Point Nature Center Council for the Brady Trail at Marshy Point Park, \$65,000 from the Parkville Recreation Council for improvements to the racquetball rooms/courts at Northeast Regional Rec. Center, \$52,000 raised by local citizens for the playground at Sweet Air Park, \$25,000 donated by the Arbutus Recreation Council toward an enhanced gymnasium floor at the Arbutus Rec. Center, \$20,000 from the Back River Recreation Council for playground enhancements at Back River Center. A number of donations less than \$20,000 each were also contributed by multiple recreation councils and other parties for various capital projects. An undocumented amount of funding, labor, and services totaling well over \$1 million was also contributed to the construction of Angel Park through the Perry Hall Rec. Council and an associated group of citizens and businesses. Finally, substantial amounts of funding has been contributed by developers and private companies in recent years, in the form of donations, or development process agreements. These funds contributed towards the construction of fields at Towson High School Rec. Center (\$200,000) and G.W. Carver High School Rec. Center (\$200,000).*

- Enter into appropriate manage-lease agreements to provide citizens with recreational opportunities that are outside the scope of what may feasibly be offered by the County.

*Three significant manage-lease agreements continue to provide facilities that DRP is not in a position to administer. Two indoor swimming pools – one at the Randallstown Community Center and the other at the rehabilitated Dundalk Center – have been opened for public use under the management of the YMCA. The Reisterstown Sportsplex at Reisterstown Regional Park was jointly constructed by DRP and the Baltimore County Revenue Authority, providing an indoor sports field operated by DRP and an indoor ice rink administered by the Revenue Authority. These agreements help to provide diversified public recreational opportunities to the citizens without significant impacts upon Recreation and Parks' funding resources.*

- Continue to work cooperatively with Baltimore County Public Schools and the Board of Education through the long established joint-use agreement to provide recreational opportunities at all public school recreation centers with recreational facilities.

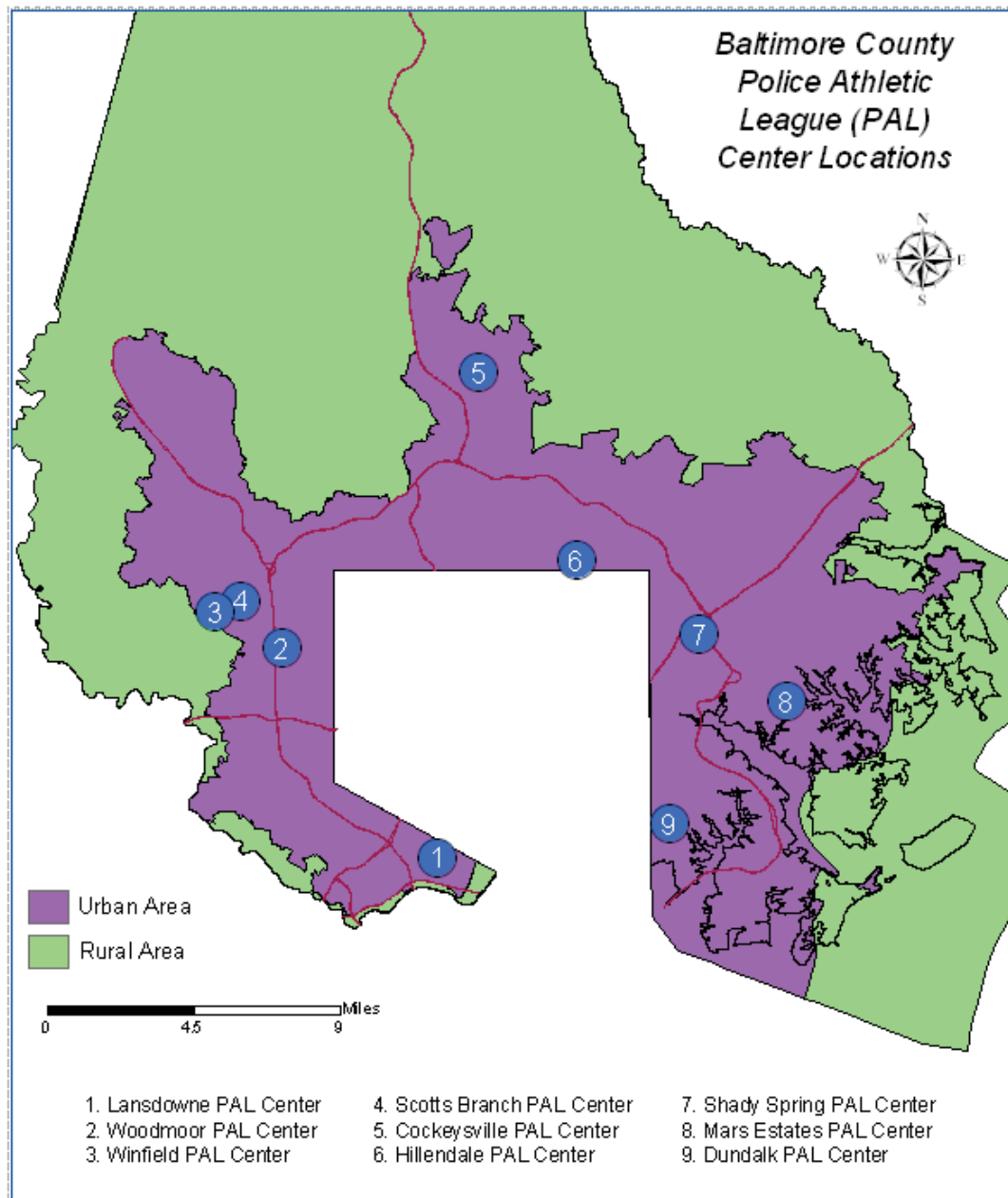
*Efforts continue to be exerted to make the joint-use agreement and the shared function of school recreation centers as seamless as possible. Close coordination takes place between DRP and Baltimore County Public Schools at multiple levels to seek to avoid and resolve any use disputes or problems that may arise, with BCPS recently implementing a facility scheduling system through which various school recreation center-based facilities are managed. The special use agreement for synthetic and grass athletic fields at high school recreation centers was recently updated, with new artificial turf fields at Towson, Carver, Milford Mill, and Dundalk High School Rec. Centers added. Two new school recreation centers have been added in recent years, with the recreational facilities at Mays Chapel and Lyons Mill Elementary School Recreation Centers helping to support public recreational programs and use.*

- Work with the Baltimore County Police Department to combine resources to staff and operate Police Athletic League (PAL) Centers, complementing recreational opportunities offered through the traditional programs of local recreation councils.

*DRP staff works hand-in-hand with the officers of the Police Department to offer both recreation and guidance to youths between the ages of 8 and 17 at the nine PAL centers*



situated throughout the County. The map below displays the PAL Center locations, all of which are situated within the urban portion of the County's URDL.



6. Expand opportunities for citizens to participate in and experience arts and cultural programs and events, and work to preserve historically and culturally significant sites for the appreciation and enjoyment of County citizens and visitors.
  - Rehabilitate and upgrade the County's arts facilities.

*Multiple renovations to the Lurman Woodland Theater in Catonsville have taken place in recent years, and repairs to the amphitheater at Oregon Ridge have likewise been completed.*

  - Provide additional strategically sited venues for the arts throughout the County.

*New performing arts theaters/auditoriums were included as part of the construction of the Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center, which was designed to be multi-purpose in nature so that it may be used for both the arts and other recreational activities. The recent development of Angel Park features a stage for community events, and a small stage was also constructed as part of the Acorn Hill natural playground project at Lake Roland.*

- Provide arts and cultural programs and special events at local, regional and countywide levels.

*The County continues to achieve this objective, with activities, programs and events ranging from local arts programs offered by the recreation and parks councils, to regional festivals and events such as ethnic festivals and concert series at venues such as Lurman Woodland Theater and Dundalk Heritage Park, to larger events such as the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and other major concerts and music events at Oregon Ridge Park, which draw concert-goers from throughout the County and beyond.*



*The amphitheater at Oregon Ridge Park, prior to Fourth of July Fireworks*

- Help protect sites of cultural and historical significance, and provide applicable interpretive facilities, displays and programs.

*The County continues to invest substantial resources into the preservation and protection of sites and structures that have historical and/or cultural significance. Some examples from recent years include structural renovations to a number of structures at Cromwell Valley Park, jointly funded (State and County) cooperative rehabilitation projects at the Todd House on the North Point Peninsula, and the rehabilitation project at Battle Acre Park. The latter project was completed as a part of local efforts to enhance sites associated with the War of 1812 and the Battle of North Point, whose bicentennials were celebrated in 2012 and 2014. Through a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service three interpretive signs were erected at County parks (Battle Acre, Fort Howard Veterans, and Lake Roland) as part of this effort. Maryland DNR, which developed its North Point State Battlefield with*

*approximately \$100,000 County funding assistance, was also a partner in the efforts that took place on the North Point peninsula. The County's Agricultural Resource Center and Farm Park continues to evolve, helping to preserve and interpret the County's strong rural and agricultural heritage. Other facilities recently developed at County sites include the Hubert V. Simmons Museum of Negro Leagues Baseball at the Owings Mills government complex, and the Turner Station History Museum at the Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center. Finally, Baltimore County helps to support numerous cultural institutions within the Baltimore metropolitan area, such as the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture, and the Walters Arts Gallery.*

7. Continue to partner with affiliated citizen organizations, and participate in various partnerships in an effort to enhance public recreation access for Baltimore County citizens and visitors.

- Partner with the volunteer-based recreation and parks councils to provide quality recreational opportunities.

*The recreation and parks councils continue to be essential to the delivery of recreation services to the citizens of Baltimore County, offering the majority of organized recreation programs that in FY'2016 drew nearly 231,000 registrants and over 3.65 million program and special event attendees. In FY'16 alone the volunteers of the recreation councils and park councils contributed over 935,000 hours of volunteer service. The councils also raise funds to support their programs, helping to keep program affordable and contributing towards part-time leadership to staff parks and recreational facilities during programs. As has been documented previously within this section of the plan, numerous councils have also contributed significant amounts of capital funding through donations. Finally, a recent initiative built upon the partnership between the County and the councils is the background check program. The program is funded by the County for the purpose of ensuring that many types of council volunteers (those working with children, coaches, program chairs, board members, instructors, and individuals with access to confidential information) undergo annual background checks. Approximately 10,500 such checks have taken place since the start of the program in July of 2015.*

- Utilize the Board of Recreation and Parks as an integral link between the citizens of Baltimore County, the recreation and parks councils, the County Council, and DRP.

*The Baltimore County Board of Recreation and Parks continues to serve as an important medium for the citizens and councils to voice their thoughts and concerns, and which DRP consults for a wide range of issues.*

- Participate in committees, workgroups, and other partnership opportunities that may result in enhanced public recreation access.

*DRP and its staff regularly participate in a wide range of committees, workgroups, and other partnerships. Current examples include the participation of DRP's Planner on the County's Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC), and the Maryland Association of Counties Parks and Recreation Administrators (MACPRA), and the participation of various staff in the professional organizations Maryland Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA) and National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).*

## ***INVENTORY OF PARKLANDS AND RECREATION FACILITIES***

Baltimore County citizens and visitors to the County have access to a very diverse park system that includes public parks and recreation sites owned by the County (agencies including the Department of Recreation and Parks, the Board of Education, the Department of Public Works, and the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability), the City of Baltimore (the City Department of Public Works-administered reservoirs), the State (Department of Natural Resources), and the federal government (National Park Service). Additional parks and recreation sites are owned by civic and community associations, home and condo owner associations, private companies (e.g., recreational amenities at apartment complexes, private pools, golf courses, and fitness clubs), and non-profit land conservation groups such as NeighborSpace of Baltimore County. The size, nature, and type of parklands varies greatly, ranging from small, unimproved green spaces of less than a tenth of an acre, to developed parks and recreation sites between less than an acre and thousands of acres in size, to vast natural tracts whose primary role is natural resource conservation.

Prior versions of the County's LPPRP have featured park and facility summaries based on methodologies no longer promoted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Parklands were described and quantified based on a detailed and sometimes confusing process associated with the long-existing parkland acreage goal of providing 30 acres of *creditable* parkland per thousand citizens. Not all site acreage could be counted on an acre-for-acre basis towards the goal—for example, unimproved open/green spaces could only be counted at a rate of one-third of their acreage, while only 60% of the acreage of a public school recreation center property were creditable. Over the course of multiple plans the methodology was revised at times, with certain properties such as homeowner and condo-owner open space at one time being ineligible to count towards the acreage goal, but later deemed eligible. The methodology sometimes led to confusion when it came to questions such as “how many parks are there in the County?” or “how much parkland acreage is there within Baltimore County?”

The requirements for the present version of the LPPRP changed substantially in terms of the promoted methodologies for identifying the amounts of parkland and recreational facilities, and the associated needs (or lack of need) for more. The State-formulated plan guidelines encourage the counties to discontinue the use of the “30 acres of parkland per thousand population” methodology, for which their research found no sound basis. Instead, DNR promotes a geography-based “level of service” approach that would apply both to the availability of and need for both parklands and recreational facilities. No mandatory standards have been set by the State for this process, as DNR has instead allowed the counties to employ methods that are sensible to them and best reflect their ideology for delivering a quality recreation and parks system to their respective citizens. Such an approach allows more urbanized counties such as those in and around the City of Baltimore and Washington D.C. to assess supply and demand in a way that may be quite different than that employed by more rural counties or the counties in Western Maryland that feature vast amounts of State park and forest acreage, or an entirely urbanized area such as the City.

The following presents a summary of the types of parklands and recreational sites and facilities that exist within Baltimore County. This data is used in other parts of this chapter for assessments of relative needs, on the basis of the revised recreational geography that is described starting on page 10 of this plan. A complete list of parklands is included in this plan's Appendices A and B.



## PARKLANDS

1. **COUNTY PARKS:** This category includes parks owned and/or operated by the Department of Recreation and Parks. It includes only sites improved with some form of permanent or semi-permanent recreational facility(s), and does not include unimproved parklands such as open spaces and park sites that have been acquired but are as yet undeveloped. Established sites leased by the County and DRP for recreational purposes are also included in this category, and may – for the sake of simplicity – include lands that could otherwise be counted under other parkland categories. For example, Cromwell Valley Park includes both County-owned property and State-owned property, the latter of which could be counted as part of Gunpowder Falls State Park if not leased as part of the County Park.

The following is a summary of the types of County parks, followed by a table that shows the quantity of such parks countywide. The classification of parks is an imprecise process, and in numerous cases the class of individual sites has been revised on occasion. This reflects the diverse nature of the County's parks, and the wide range of recreational facilities that may be available. At one point in time DRP, like many jurisdictions throughout the nation, used a static acreage-base classification. However, this method did not accurately reflect the roles and nature of many parks. For instance, a 5-10 acre site that is developed with numerous recreational facilities may better serve the public (including recreation council programs) than a 60-acre site that is mostly natural and has few facilities. A facility such as the Randallstown Community Center, which is classified as a community park/recreation site, may also draw patrons from well outside the community as a result of its special facilities such as the pool and indoor walking track.

- **Countywide Parks:** This classification pertains to the County parks with the largest overall service areas, extending to the entirety of the County and beyond. The majority of the larger County park sites, such as Oregon Ridge Park (1,100 acres), Cromwell Valley Park (455 acres), and the Revenue Authority-operated County golf courses, fall within this category. This classification would also include a specialized site such as the Loch Raven Fishing Center, which provides anglers with access to Loch Raven Reservoir. Most of the County's interpretive centers and parks, including Marshy Point, Banneker, and the Ag. Center and Farm Park, are also considered countywide parks. A commonality of the countywide parks are the major facilities that draw park visitors from far and wide—interpretive centers, golf courses, concert facilities such as those at Oregon Ridge Park, large networks of hiking trails, etc.
- **Regional Parks:** This park class includes sites with the next largest service areas, with the included parks and recreation sites each serving substantial portions of the County. In some cases the regional parks or certain facilities at the parks will have a designated primary and secondary service area that defines the priority of use provided for the recreation councils in their service area. Such is the case with sites such as Honeygo Run Regional Park, Reisterstown Regional Park, Eastern Regional Park, and the Northeast Regional Recreation Center, among other parks. The majority of regional parks feature numerous and/or specialized recreational facilities, such as indoor and outdoor sports complexes. One, the Reisterstown Sportsplex at Reisterstown Regional Park, features both an indoor sports field

and an indoor ice rink (the latter operated by the Revenue Authority). Some of the regional parks, such as Northwest, Meadowood, Honeygo, and Eastern Regional Parks, also feature substantial paved paths (and in the case of Honeygo, nature trails) that have proven to be very popular and utilized year-round.

- ❖ **Community Parks:** This classification of parks is considered to have service areas that are generally associated with a community or one or more local recreation councils. The facilities are of a type and scale as to draw regular use by recreation council programs, or are of a nature that draws visitors from beyond the immediate neighborhood—a boat ramp or picnic pavilions, for example. Most of the County’s community and recreation centers are situated at sites classified as community parks, with a few examples being the Banneker Community Center, Jacksonville Community Center (at Sweet Air Park), Fullerton Community Center, and Watersedge Community Center. In some instances, such as with the Woodlawn Community Center and the Soukup Arena, the center is the sole recreational facility situated at the site. Community centers, together with public school recreation centers (described later in this section), provide the venues for the vast majority of organized programs of the recreation councils.
- ❖ **Neighborhood Parks:** This is the most numerous of the park classifications, with the most local and limited of service areas. The line between the community and neighborhood park classifications is sometimes very fine, with the overall deciding factor being whether or not the park features facilities regularly utilized by the local recreation council, or which frequently draw users from beyond the immediate neighborhood. In some cases a neighborhood park could be classified as a community park, or vice-versa, as classification of sites is not a precise science. The most common type of facility found in a neighborhood park is playground/tot lot equipment. In many cases playgrounds are the only recreational facility at a neighborhood park. Some other common facilities found at this class of park includes multi-purpose courts and relatively small ball diamonds and athletic fields that are not large enough to support most recreation council programs, but are perfect for local pick-up ball games. Very few of the neighborhood parks include on-site parking, as the expectation is that most visitors will live or work nearby, and will not use motorized transportation to travel to such parks.
- ❖ **Special Parks:** This classification covers an assortment of park sites that do not truly fit well within the prior classification of parks. This category includes the historical sites Aquila Randall Monument, Battle Acre Park and Monument, Fort Garrison, and Perry Hall Mansion, all of which are sites where a historical feature is the focal point. Major stand-alone trails are also included—the Catonsville Short Line Trail, the Milford Mill Trail at Villa Nova Park, the Number Nine Trolley Line Trail, and the Red Run Trail and Greenway. Two memorial-focused parks in Towson are likewise included—Olympian Park and Cancer Survivors Park. Finally, this classification includes the BeeTree Preserve in northern Baltimore County, a nearly 250-acre site owned by the Towson Presbyterian Church, for which a conservation and public recreation access exists.

The following table summarizes the quantity and acreage of the various County park types, with the map on the following page displaying the sites geographically. Maps of each of the twelve RPD Groups are included in Appendix A, along with corresponding lists of parks, recreation sites, and recreational facilities.

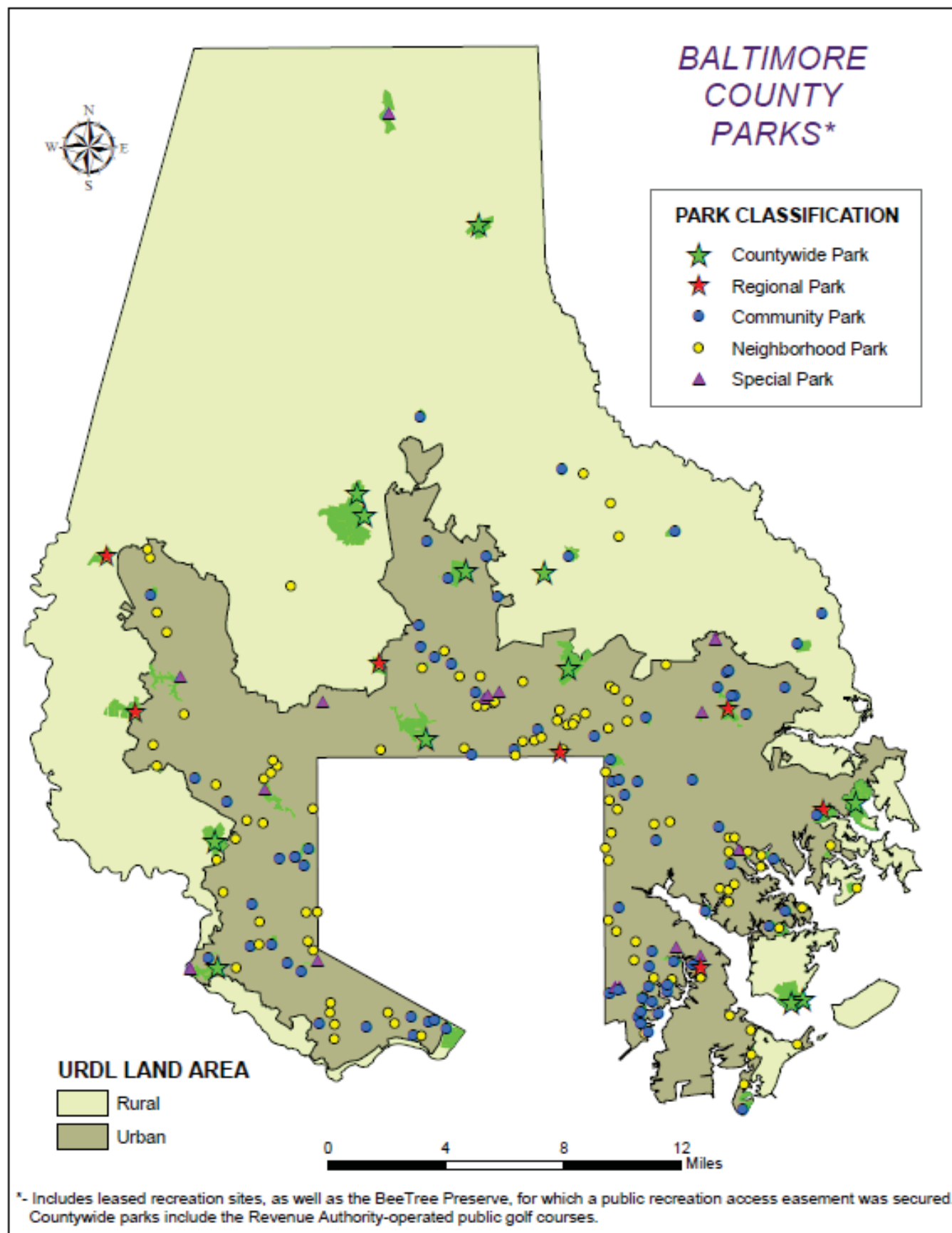
<b>TYPE OF COUNTY PARK</b>	<b># OF SITES</b>	<b>ACRES</b>	<b>AVERAGE SIZE (AC.)</b>
Countywide Parks*	12	3,849.6	320.8
Regional Parks	7	852.9	121.8
Community Parks	80	2,008.2	25.1
Neighborhood Parks	99	719.5	7.3
Special Parks#	16	643.5	40.2
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>214@</b>	<b>8,073.7</b>	<b>37.7</b>

\*- Includes Revenue Authority-operated public golf courses; Rocky Point, which features both a public golf course and a swimming beach, is counted as two sites.

#- Includes the BeeTree Preserve site, which features a conservation and public recreation access easement.

@ - In some circumstances the same park/site may be counted as multiple sites as a result of the split role of the site. For example, County Home Park includes both a public golf course (Fox Hollow) and a community park.

The above chart shows a distinct relationship between the size of the parks and their classification, with the average size dropping from countywide parks, to regional parks, to community parks, to neighborhood parks. The average size of the special parks varies widely, from the nearly 250-acre BeeTree Preserve to the less than 0.1-acre Acquilla Randall Monument.



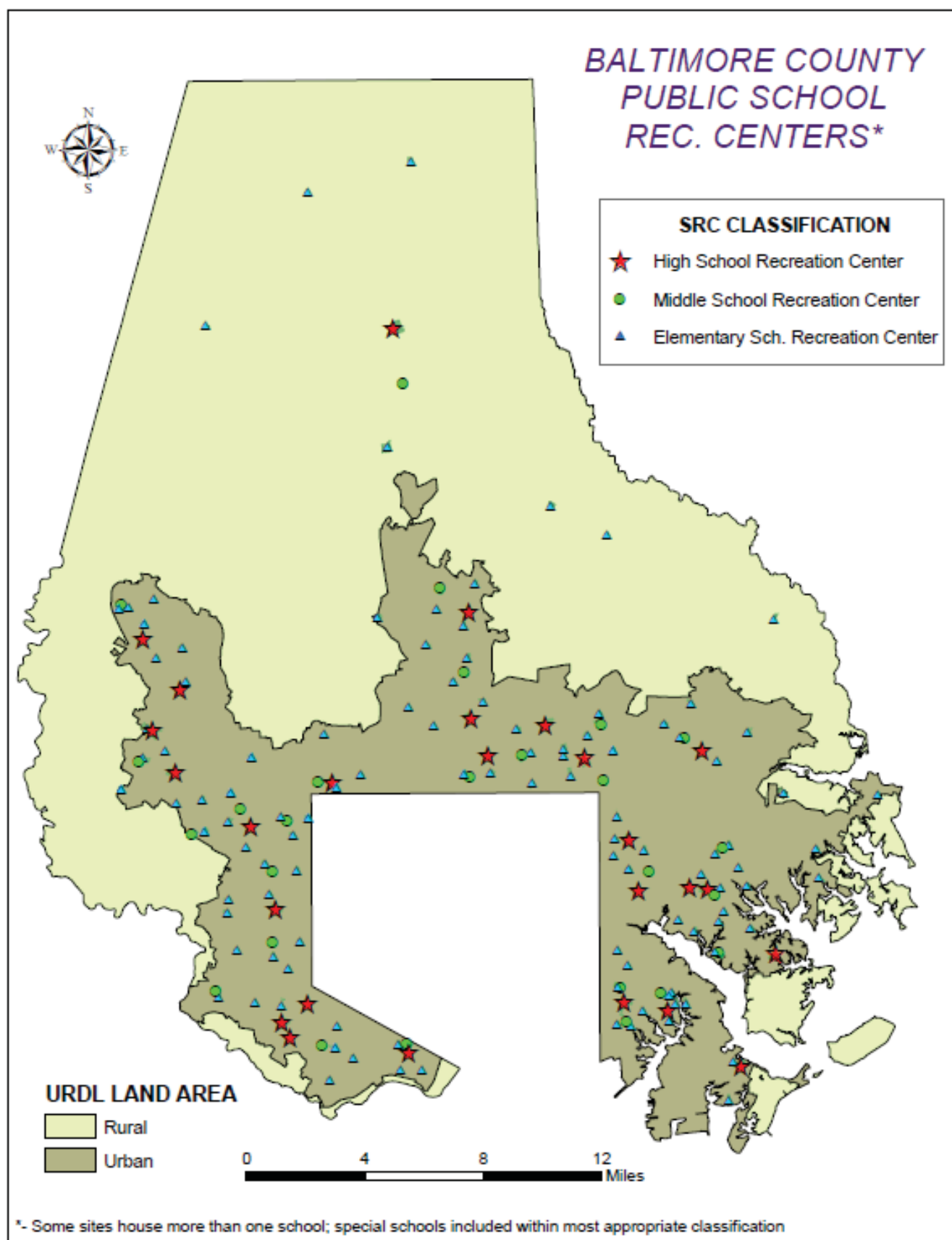


2. **PUBLIC SCHOOL RECREATION CENTERS (SRCs) SITES:** As mentioned previously, the County's public schools serve as dual-use school recreation centers under a joint-use agreement between DRP and the Baltimore County Board of Education. This essentially allows the SRCs to function as parks when school is not in session, whether through scheduled use to support recreation council programs, or for general use by citizens. The SRC sites feature extensive indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. Commonplace indoor facilities at SRCs include gymnasiums, auditoriums/theaters, and activity rooms, and in some instances local recreation offices are situated within the school structure. Outdoor recreation facilities often found at SRCs vary more by school type. Elementary SRCs usually feature a small number of ball diamonds and athletic fields, playground equipment areas, and one or more multi-purpose courts. Some will also have tennis courts (usually two). Middle SRCs will typically have more fields and diamonds than elementary SRCs, and both tennis and multi-purpose courts. High SRCs usually have the same outdoor facilities as middle SRCs, but with a larger quantity of most such outdoor facilities, and with many more illuminated with facility lighting systems. Another increasingly more common facility at high SRCs are artificial turf fields, which are operated under a specialized use agreement. Many such fields were funded through DRP, and in some cases substantial donations from local recreation councils and the school sports booster groups contributed towards field funding.

Following is a count of the public SRC *sites* in Baltimore County. In a few situations two SRCs will exist at the same physical sites, in which case they are symbolized on the map as the larger school class but are counted as only one site in the table below. As an example, Sparrows Point Middle and High SRCs are situated on the same site, as are West Towson Elementary SRC and Ridge Ruxton School. Special schools are placed into the most suitable of the three primary school categories.

TYPE OF SCHOOL REC. CENTER	# OF SITES	ACRES	AVERAGE SIZE
High SRC	26	1,062.0	40.8
Middle SRC	26	767.8	29.5
Elementary SRC	110	1,825.8	16.6
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>3,655.6</b>	<b>22.6</b>

As with the progression of types of parks, the associated average acreage at SRCs increases, from elementary to middle to high school rec centers. However, in many instances middle SRCs provide a higher level of service for general public recreation than high school recreation centers, largely because of the amount of use reserved at the latter for scholastic sports programs and other school activities. The distribution of the SRCs is displayed on the following map. As can be expected, the majority of SRCs are situated within the urban portion of the County. Two sites utilized under a special artificial turf field joint-use agreement are not displayed on the map—CCBC-Essex and CCBC – Dundalk (CCBC being the Community Colleges of Baltimore County).



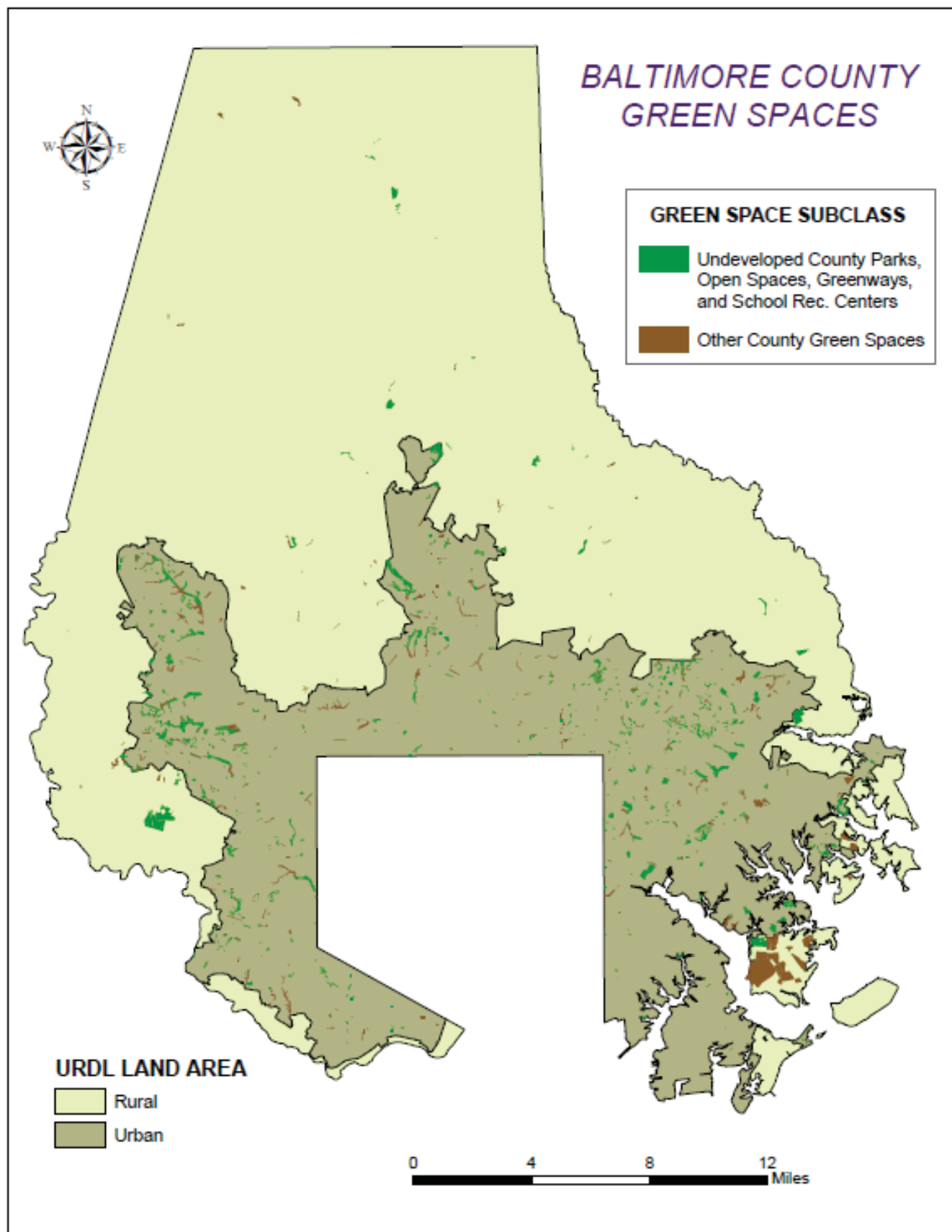
3. **COUNTY GREEN SPACES:** This grouping of sites encompasses numerous types of County-owned property, which for the sake of this exercise have been grouped into a single category of “County Green Space.” The types of sites have been broken into two general categories:

- **Undeveloped County Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways, and School Recreation Centers:** This sub-category includes undeveloped local open spaces and greenways procured through the County’s development process, undeveloped park sites and other unimproved green spaces administered by DRP, and undeveloped SRCs. There are many sites within this sub-category that are highly conducive for park (or SRC) development.
- **Other County Green Spaces:** This sub-category includes green spaces owned and administered by other County agencies such as DPW (primarily flood plain and drainage reservations) and EPS (predominantly forest conservation reservations). Environmental easement areas such as flood plain and forest conservation easement areas are not included, as public access to such areas is not always provided.

The nature and role of such properties varies widely. Relatively flat, grassy open spaces are often usable for many forms of recreation, generally supporting the immediate neighborhood and/or residential development in which they are situated. Stream valleys, wooded tracts, and steeply sloped natural areas, meanwhile, have a primary role of conservation and community “greening.” Such natural areas may also offer some recreational opportunities, predominantly associated with nature, regardless of the sub-category in which they fall. It should be noted that the *quantity* of green space sites and their individual *sizes* are not as significant as the overall acreage, as in many cases multiple green spaces parcels within the same residential development are grouped into a single site record. Additionally, many flood plain parcels are often grouped under a smaller number of site records, each of which features multiple parcels. This above being the case, the table below and map that follows show only the associated green space land, rather than locational points.

<b>COUNTY GREEN SPACE TYPE</b>	<b>ACRES</b>
Undeveloped County Parks, Open Spaces, Greenways, and SRCs	3,323.1
Other County Green Spaces	2,235.9
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>5,559.0</b>

The relatively small acreage amount for the majority of green spaces result in a widespread, scattered pattern on the following map. Most of the green space sites are situated within the urban portion of the URDL, though some substantial green spaces such as the preserved lands on the Back River Peninsula and the undeveloped Granite, Belfast Road, and Days Cove Park Sites are situated in the URDL’s rural areas.

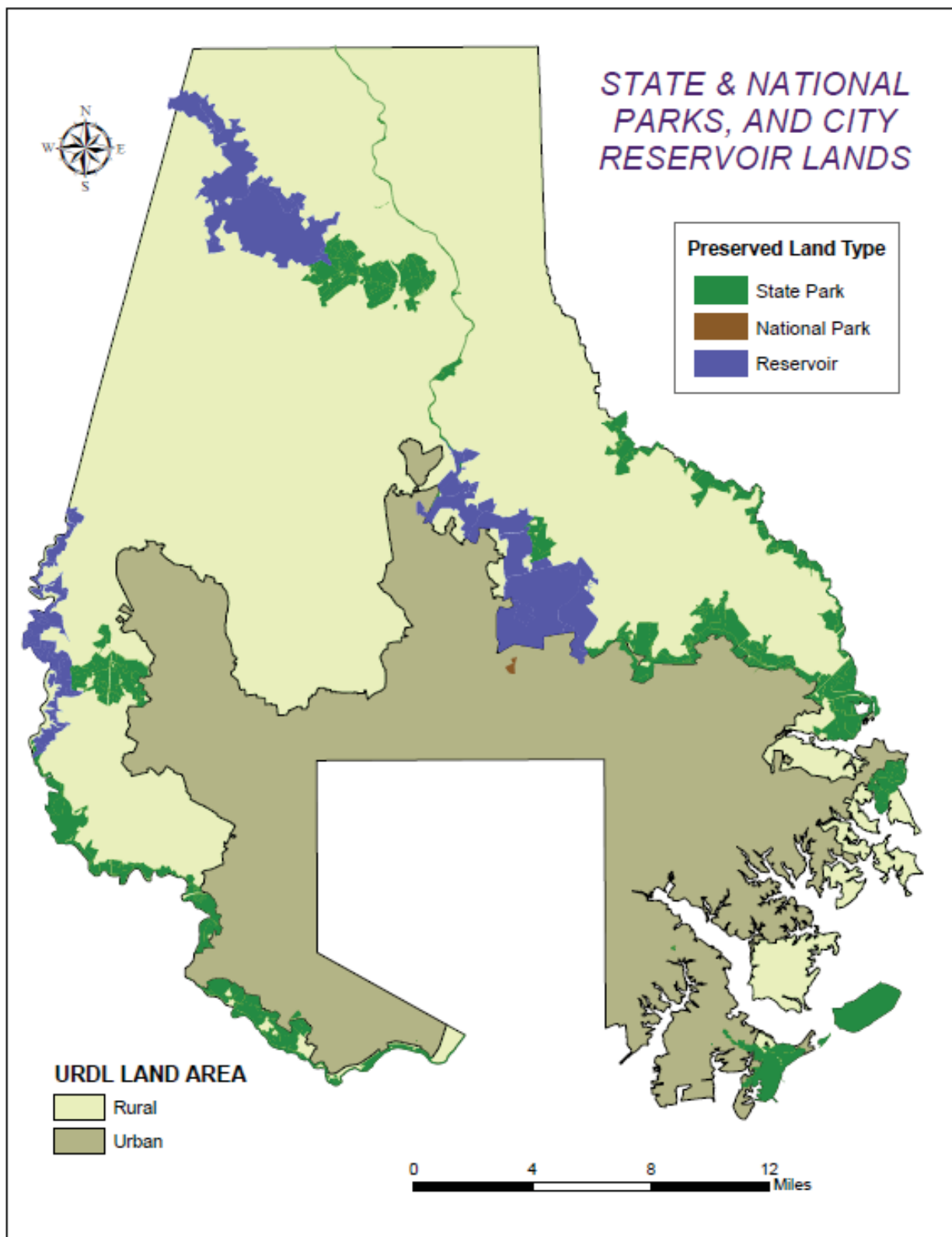




4. NATIONAL, STATE, AND CITY PARKLANDS: This category of sites includes public lands owned and administered by non-County entities such as the National Park Service (NPS), Maryland DNR, and Baltimore City. As with green spaces, the quantity of sites is not particularly relevant, especially in the case of the State parklands and the broad and widespread lands encompassing sites such as Gunpowder Falls and Patapsco Valley State Parks. Rather, the significant amount of acreage preserved within these sites, as well as the recreational opportunities they afford, are most significant. Following is a summary of each, along with associated amount of acreage. The map on the following page shows these sites.

- National Parklands (one site, 61.5 acres): The Hampton National Historic Site, sometimes referred to as Hampton Mansion, is the sole national park within Baltimore County. The park is dedicated primarily to historical interpretation, though its location in a suburban setting allows some nearby residents to use its grounds for other recreational purposes.
- State Parklands (six sites, 22,105.7 acres): Maryland DNR owns and administers six sites within the County-- Patapsco Valley State Park, Gunpowder Falls State Park, Hart-Miller Island State Park, North Point State Park, North Point State Battlefield, and the Soldiers Delight Natural Environment Area. The acreage identified is for State parcels situated at least partially within Baltimore County, not including the acreage of State parklands leased by Baltimore County as all or part of County parks (Cromwell Valley Park, Kingsville Park, Miller Island Park/Tot Lot). The State's parks within the County play an integral role in meeting the recreational demands of the citizens, and drawing visitors from the City and other counties and states. Hundreds of miles of trails within the State Parks provide countless opportunities for such activities as hiking, walking, jogging/trail running, mountain biking, birdwatching and wildlife viewing, and more. Natural resource-based recreational opportunities such as picnicking, camping, fishing, hunting, canoeing, kayaking, boating, and environmental and historical interpretation are likewise provided extensively within the State parks. DNR's nearly 20-mile long Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail is a particularly popular destination for both County and non-County citizens, supporting many of the activities identified above in addition to its role as a major cycling facility and an access way for tubing, kayaking, canoeing, and other water-based activities along adjoining rivers.
- City Parklands (three reservoir properties, 18,180 acres): Though not technically classified as parks, the three Baltimore City-owned reservoir watershed properties situated partially or fully within the County – Liberty, Loch Raven, and Prettyboy – offer exceptional recreational opportunities, often in conjunction with neighboring County and State parklands. Hundreds of miles of trails exist within each of the three reservoir properties, and limited water-based forms of recreation are offered. The County-leased and operated Loch Raven Fishing Center provides regulated boating access to Loch Raven Reservoir, offering patrons an opportunity to canoe, kayak, paddle, boat (restricted to electric motors) or fish within certain portions of the reservoir. Other recreational amenities at Loch Raven Reservoir include a public golf course and a skeet and trap gun range, and portions of Loch Raven Drive within the reservoir watershed property are closed to vehicles on weekends to promote recreational uses of the road. Regulated forms of boating, canoeing and kayaking are likewise offered at Prettyboy and Liberty Reservoirs, with access to the latter being situated in the Howard County portion of the reservoir. Maryland DNR helps to ensure environment

and people-safe recreational uses of the reservoir watershed properties, including hunting, through Cooperative Wildlife Management Area agreements.



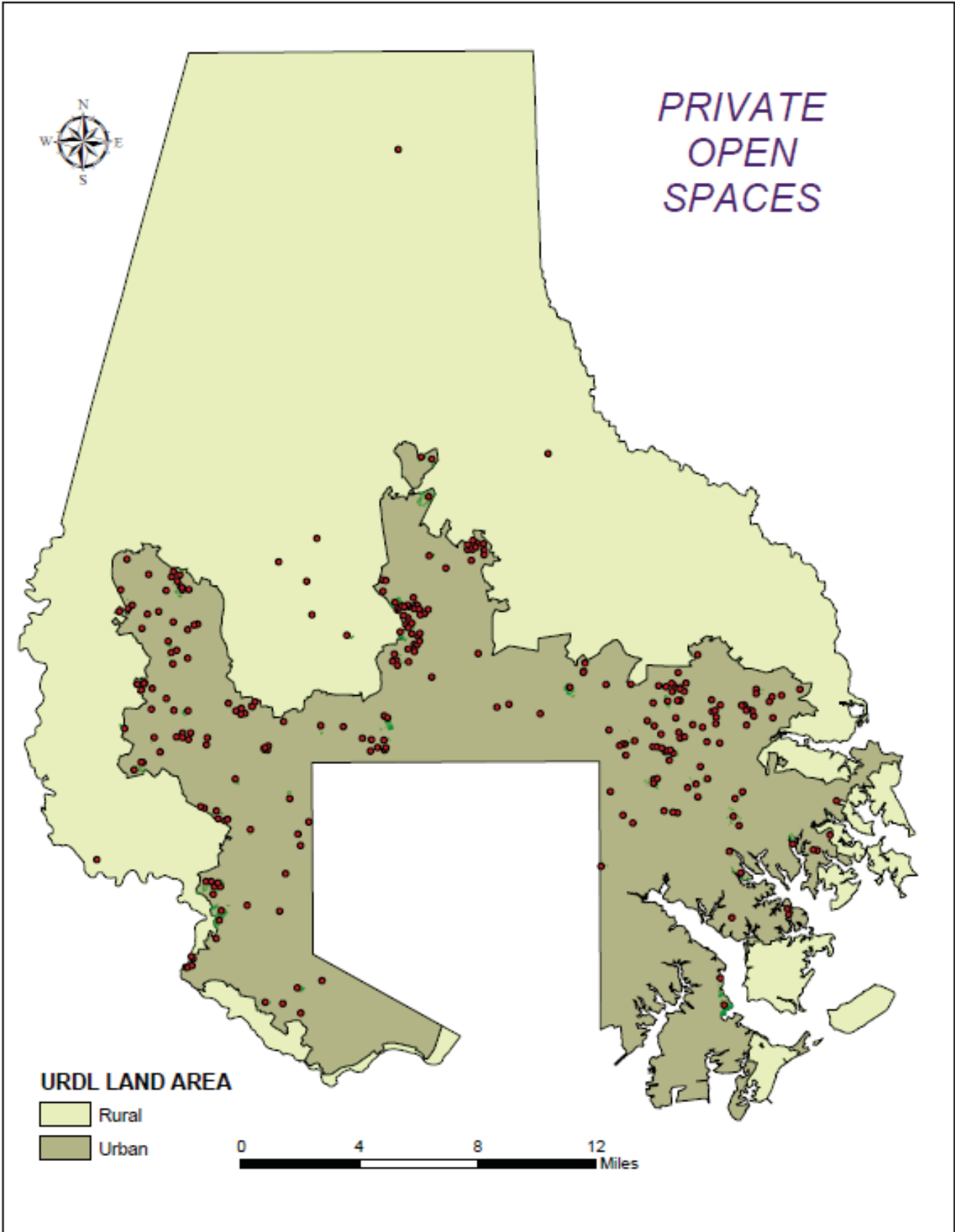
5. **PRIVATE OPEN SPACE:** This category of inventoried sites includes various types of open space lands that are owned by non-governmental entities such as homeowner and condo-owner associations and the non-profit conservation organization NeighborSpace of Baltimore County. DRP's present inventory of such lands is incomplete and remains in production, but presently includes 279 sites totaling approximately 1,163 acres. The quantity of open spaces is not as significant as the acreage preserved, as in many cases multiple open spaces within the same subdivision have been combined into one point/record.

The type and nature of open spaces varies widely, with some being predominantly natural, other being open and grassy, and still others improved with some form(s) of recreational amenity that serves the residential subdivision and/or neighborhood. NeighborSpace of Baltimore County has improved a number of its sites, providing additional recreational opportunities for citizens within multiple urbanized neighborhoods.



*NeighborSpace of Baltimore County's Ridgely Manor Park  
(photo courtesy of NeighborSpace of Baltimore County)*

The map on the following page displays the location of private open spaces inventoried to date. The map does not include other private or non-profit recreation sites such as YMCA's, Girls and Boys Clubs, Boy and Girl Scout camps, private pools, fitness clubs, private golf courses, etc. Nor is HOA/COA "common area" included, as such lands are not a formal open space designation and may include facilities such as parking lots and structures and amenities available only to residents.

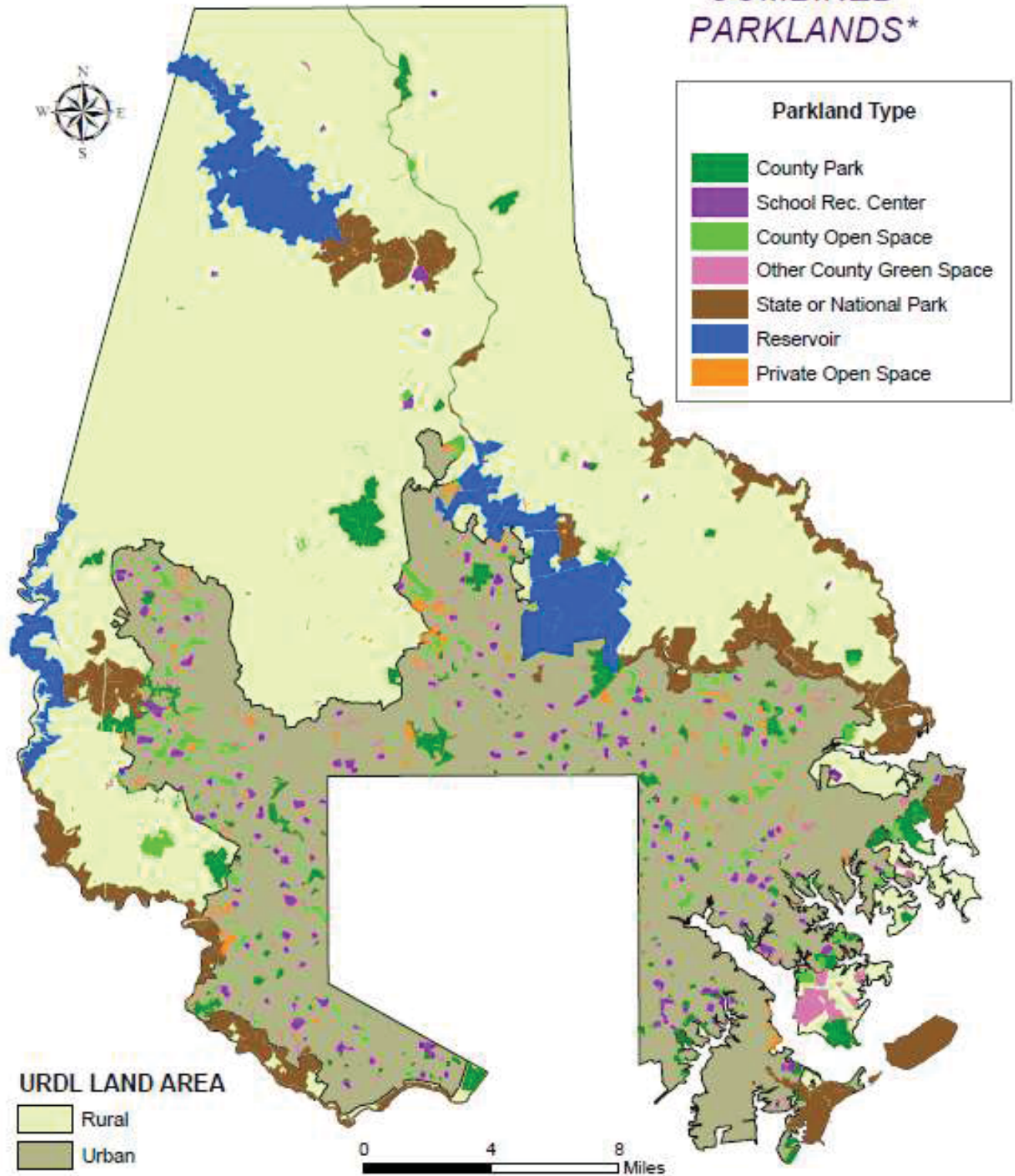




The next map shows all combined parklands identified in preceding #'s 1-5. The term "parklands," in this context, refers to types of public and non-public lands where public access for parks and recreational purposes is available. The map does not include agricultural land preservation easements or other lands preserved under easements and other mechanisms that preserve lands but do not provide some level of public access.

The map bears witness to the breadth and diversity of parklands available throughout Baltimore County, from County, State, and National parks, to the public school recreation centers, to the reservoir watershed properties, to numerous types of open space and green spaces. These lands combined comprise nearly 92 acres, representing approximately 15% of the County's land area. A full listing of all sites is included within the plan appendix, organized by RPD Group map for all parks and recreation sites including school recreation centers.

## COMBINED PARKLANDS\*



\*- Includes only sites with public access, and does not include agriculture preservation areas or similar sites protected under easements that do not guarantee public access

## RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The following is a synopsis of the types of recreational facilities provided throughout the County, as well as counts and maps of most such facility types. The “primary provider” for each type of facility is included within the facility descriptions. In cases where “Baltimore County” is listed as a provider, the facilities may be situated at parks, school-recreation centers, and leased recreation sites. Facilities at non-County sites such as State parks and private open spaces are not included in the facility counts.

- **Ball Diamonds and Athletic Fields (Primary Provider: Baltimore County):** “Ball diamond” is the generic term that refers to facilities designed with infield and outfield areas, a pitcher’s mound, three bases, and home plate, and used for sports including baseball, softball and t-ball. Diamonds can be built with grass or “skinned” (i.e. dirt) infields, and are constructed to support one or more distances between bases. The County typically constructs 60’ diamonds, 60’/75’ diamonds (which can be set up for any distance between bases of 60’ to 75’), and 90’ diamonds. The difference in base path distances varies by sport, age group and league type/rules.

“Athletic fields” are rectangular multi-purpose fields constructed to support such activities as soccer, football, lacrosse, field hockey, rugby, etc. Baltimore County does not construct athletic fields for one express sport, but rather to accommodate many types of field sports. Some athletic fields have been enhanced with synthetic/artificial turf surfaces, which support a greater amount of play than grass fields since they may be used in most types of inclement weather, and after rain events that would shut down most grass fields.

The configuration of ball diamonds and athletic fields varies widely by site and greatly impacts the manner in which these facilities may be utilized. A relatively small number of diamonds and fields are “stand alone,” which means that they are single physical entities that are not overlaid by other fields or diamonds. The majority of diamonds and athletic fields in Baltimore County are “overlays.” This means that the diamond(s) and athletic field(s) intersect, so that they may not be used concurrently in most cases. The image below shows an overlay layout.



Other factors impact the usability and functionality of ball diamonds and athletic fields. Many diamonds situated on the same site, particularly those built decades ago, are arranged in a manner that could restrict the use to one diamond or the other at any given time. The prime considerations are the sport being played, the age group of the participants, and the distance between the home plates of the diamonds. When this distance is short, there would be few options to use both diamonds at the same time -- perhaps only if younger age groups and/or t-ball were taking place on each.

Athletic fields offer a different set of challenges and opportunities. In some cases full-sized athletic fields are not needed to support an activity—lacrosse games for younger age groups, for example. Rather than having one such game occupy a full athletic field, two or more smaller “temporary” fields are sometimes laid out atop a single “regulation” athletic field. Athletic fields are also prone to becoming de-vegetated much more quickly than ball diamonds, especially if used heavily for lacrosse and/or football. Clear wear patterns develop around the goal areas for lacrosse, and lengthwise in the middle of football fields. Such wear can lead to a need to reconfigure the field boundaries (where possible), or even result in the field being taken out of service for a period of time so that it may be rehabilitated. This problem does not plague fields with synthetic/artificial surfaces, and are another reason why synthetic surfaces have become increasingly more popular.



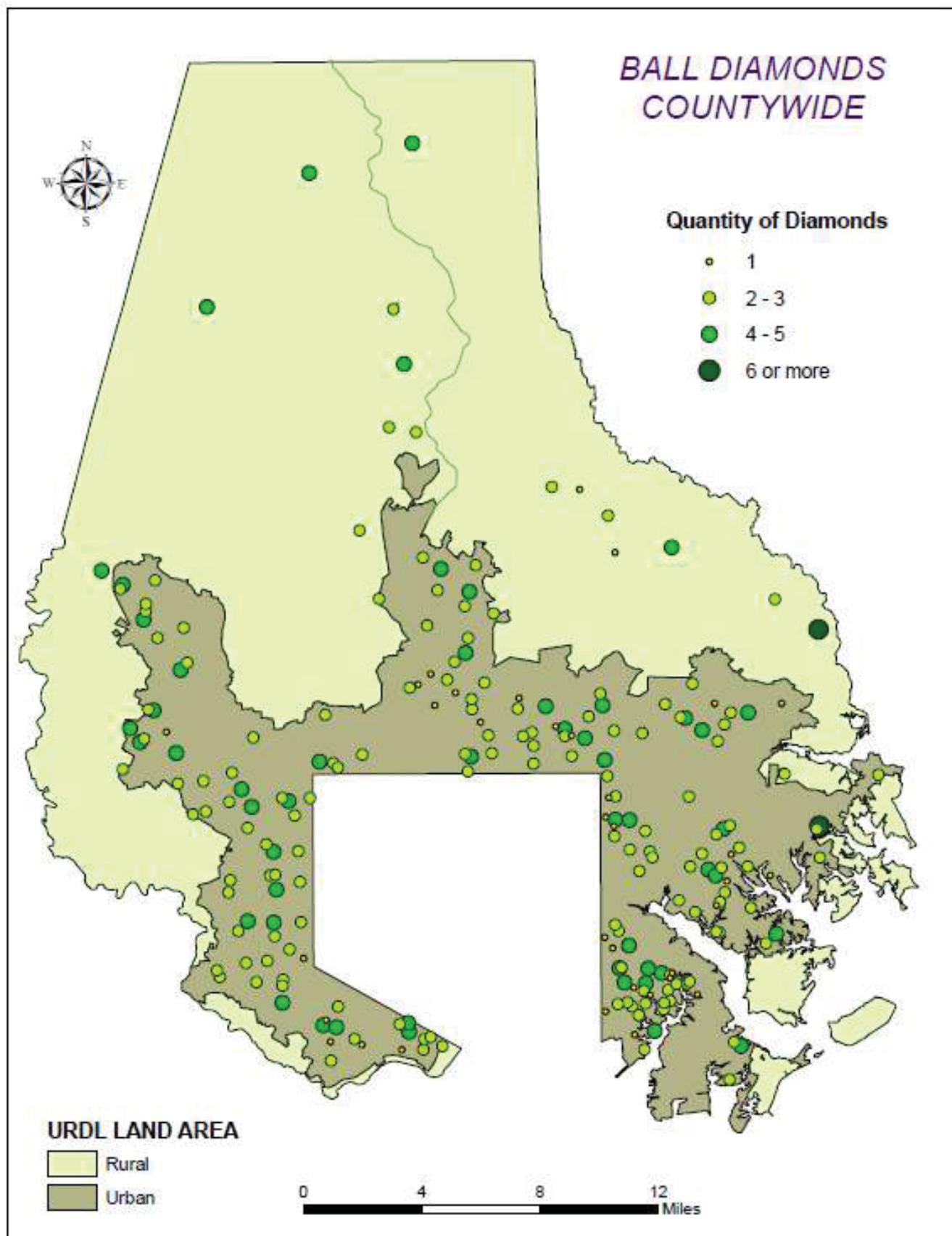
*These two fields at Meadowood Regional Park display one of the reasons the demand for synthetic turf fields has increased. The grass field on the left is worn from heavy use, while the synthetic turf field on the right can support heavy use for extended periods before requiring resurfacing.*

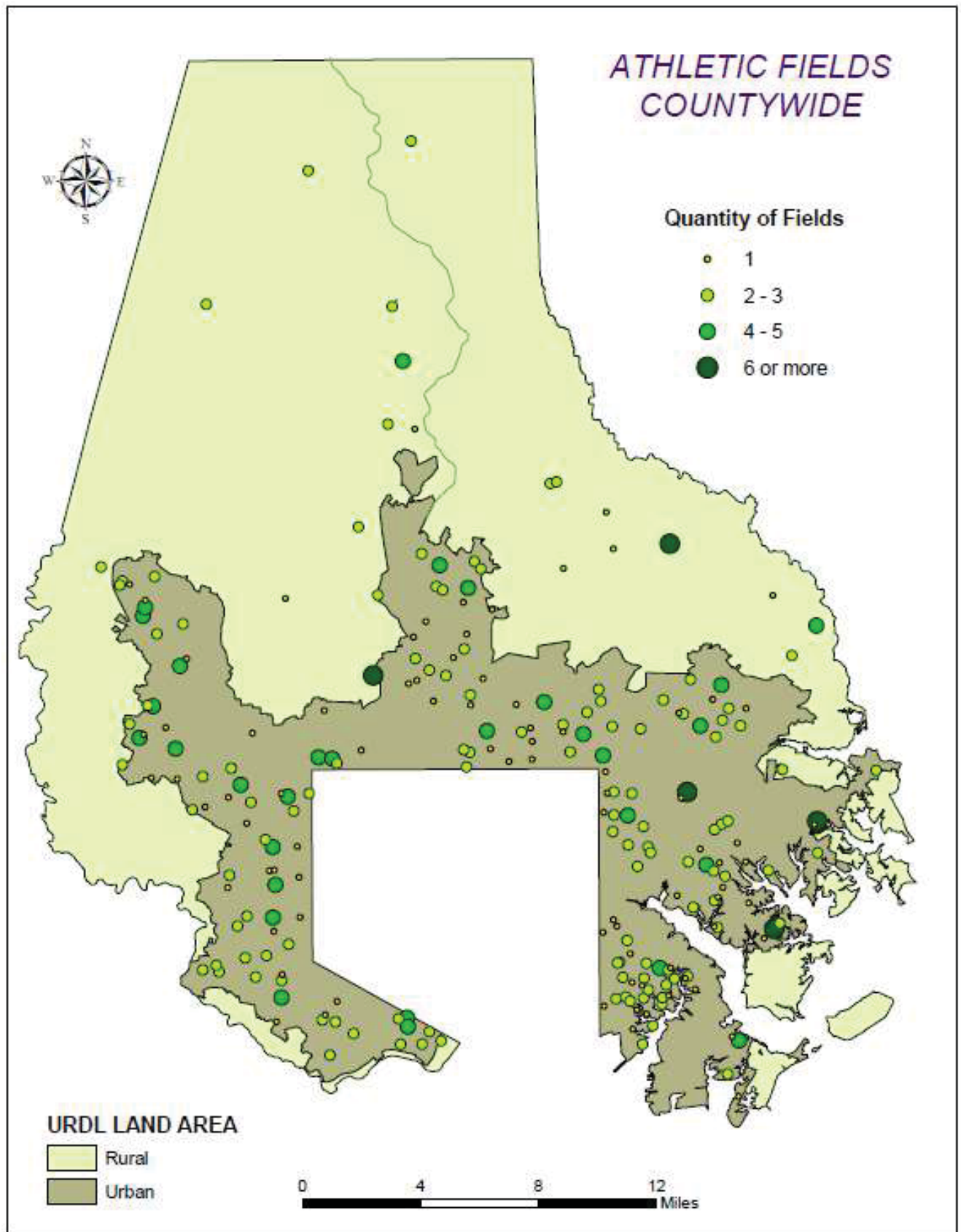


Another factor impacting level of use is facility lighting. Diamonds and athletic fields with lighting systems can be used for an extended period of time, past daylight hours, and are particularly useful in early spring and late fall when daylight hours are shorter. Such diamonds and fields can thus support many more games than unlit sites each year.

Both ball diamonds and athletic fields are essential to the programs offered by the local recreation councils. In some cases, certain programs of the councils have leased private land on which to operate as a result of an inadequate number of County-owned facilities. Nearly all diamonds and athletic fields also receive unscheduled use for informal recreation. The table below provides a count of the diamonds and fields countywide, and the maps on the following two pages display the distribution of these facilities countywide.

Quantity Countywide	
Ball Diamonds	592
Athletic Fields	514





- Outdoor Courts (Primary Provider: Baltimore County): Traditionally, DRP has provided two basic types of outdoor courts at parks and school recreation centers-- tennis courts and multi-purpose courts. These courts are supplemented by those provided by BCPS. While multi-purpose courts are intended to be used for a variety of purposes, their main feature has long been basketball goals. Multi-purposes courts also frequently feature other type of game lines for activities such as hopscotch, four-square, and even kickball. A small number of courts have been converted to other specialized uses, such as soccer courts.

The table below displays the quantity of tennis courts, as well as the number of multi-purpose court *sites*. It is difficult to quantify the number of multi-purpose courts, being that their size and use varies widely. A seemingly simple approach for doing so would be to count the number of basketball courts (or associated basketball goals) within a court area. However, in many case basketball goals and courts are no longer in use, or have been reconfigured to be half-courts only. It is for these reasons that the count for multipurpose courts in the table, and their depiction on the map that follows, represents the number of *sites* with courts, rather than an overall count of the number of courts.

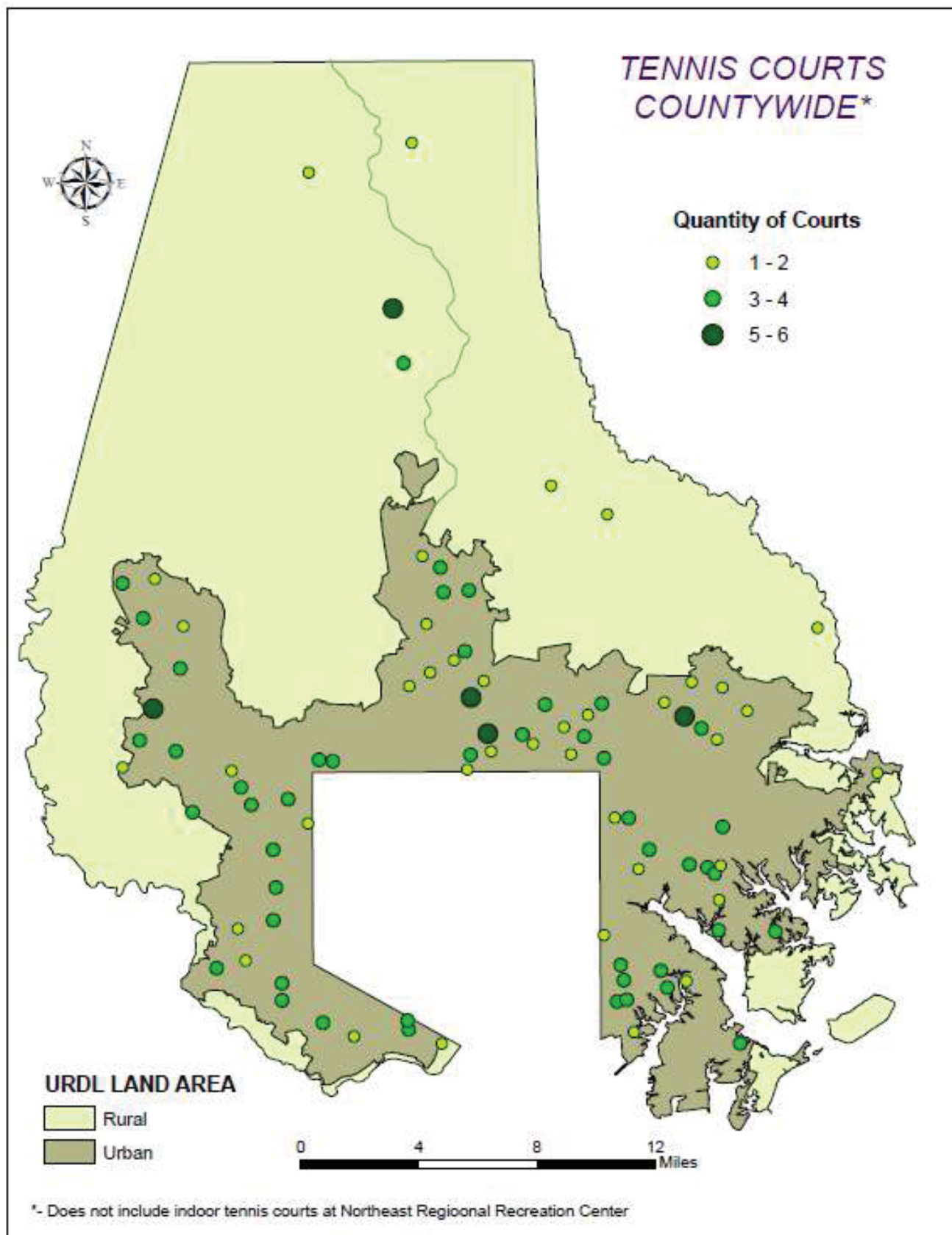
The following counts do not include the indoor tennis courts at the Northeast Regional Recreation Center, which also features indoor racquetball courts.

	Quantity Countywide
Tennis Courts	265
Multi-Purpose Court <b><i>Sites</i></b>	210

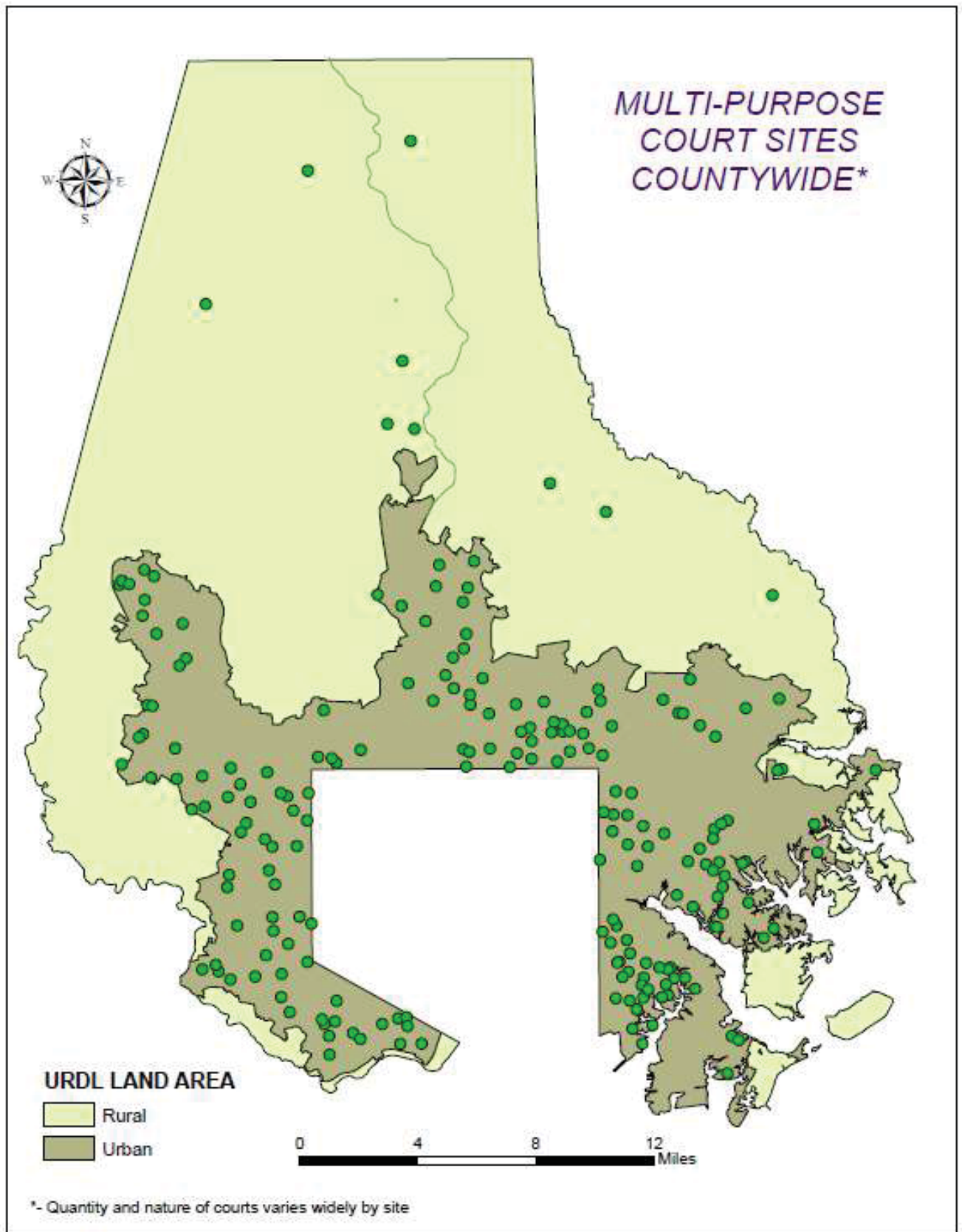


*Left: Wide multi-purpose court with one small basketball court and other game lines;  
Right: Multi-purpose court converted to outdoor soccer court*









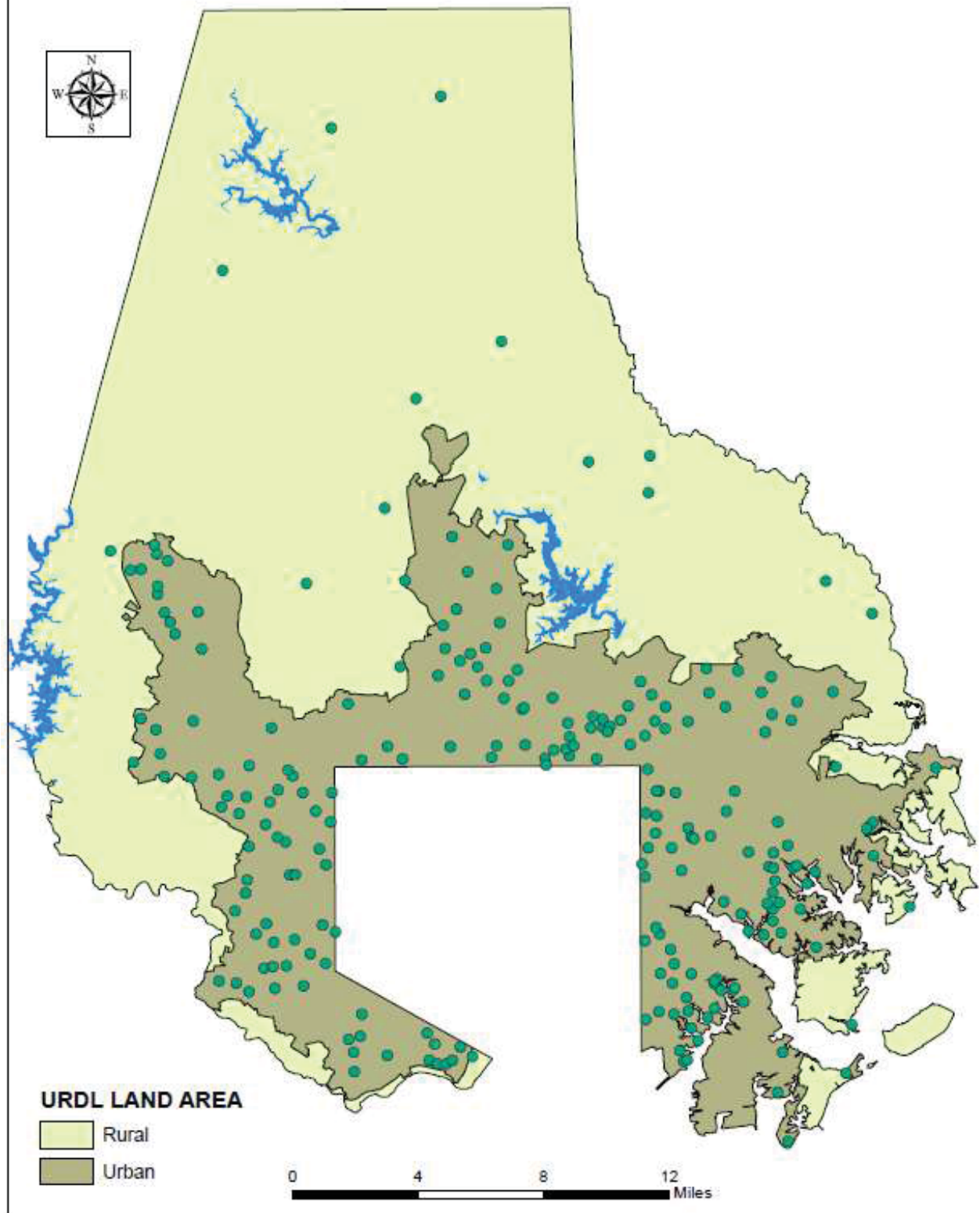
- Playgrounds/Tot Lots (Primary Provider: Baltimore County): “Playground” or “tot lot” are generic terms used to describe areas with apparatus such as swings, climbers, spring-toys and slides. These areas are designed for a number of different youth age groups. The County’s comprehensive playground safety program ensures that all of the County’s playgrounds meet current safety standards, which are regularly updated on a national basis. While most of the playgrounds at parks and school recreation centers are relatively basic and figure one or more play areas with assorted components, a number of larger and/or specialized playgrounds have been constructed at sites including Oregon Ridge Park, Rockdale Park, Sweet Air Park, and the County’s newest playground site at Angel Park.

The quantity of playgrounds is, like multi-purpose courts, difficult to accurately calculate. The layout of playground area varies widely, with some sites featuring a single large “box” with multiple types of playground apparatus. Other sites will have various pieces of equipment separated into multiple boxes, especially if they are grouped by appropriate age groups. It is entirely possible for a site with a single box to have more playground apparatus than a site with numerous boxes of equipment. As such, the map that follows shows the 243 parks and SRCs that feature some form of playground equipment, rather than a depiction of quantities by site.



*The main playground at Oregon Ridge Park is larger than typical, and features a pour-in- place rubberized surface that enhances accessibility.*

## PLAYGROUNDS/TOT LOTS COUNTYWIDE

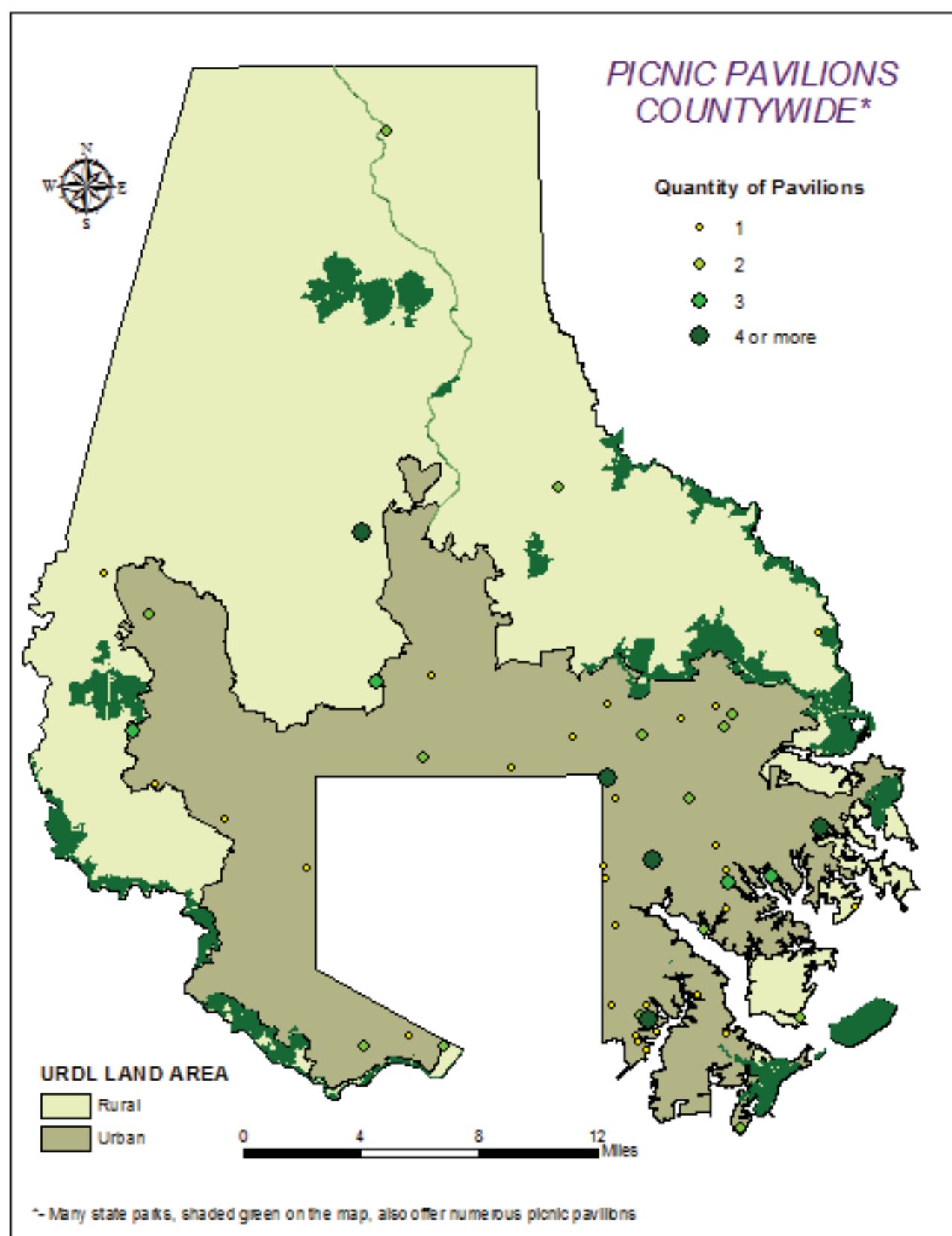




- Picnic Facilities (Primary Provider: Baltimore County and Maryland DNR): Baltimore County offers picnic areas at dozens of parks throughout the County, each featuring a collection of picnic tables and grills, with some sites also including picnic pavilions/shelters. These areas are often available for reservations through various DRP offices. Additionally, the majority of parks feature one or more picnic table for general public use. Picnic areas and pavilions are in great demand during “picnicking season,” with weekend reservation schedules for many sites filling up quickly each year. Picnic areas provide excellent venues for gatherings of friends, families and groups, offering an opportunity to cook out and enjoy a day in a park. Where possible, pavilions – whose size varies substantially - are constructed at parks with other recreational amenities so as to offer additional recreational opportunities. The map on the following page shows the locations for 91 pavilions countywide, but does not display the substantial number of pavilions on non-county sites such as the state parks. The state parks are displayed on the map, but the presence or quantity of pavilions is not marked thereupon.



*Picnic pavilions at Northwest Regional Park*



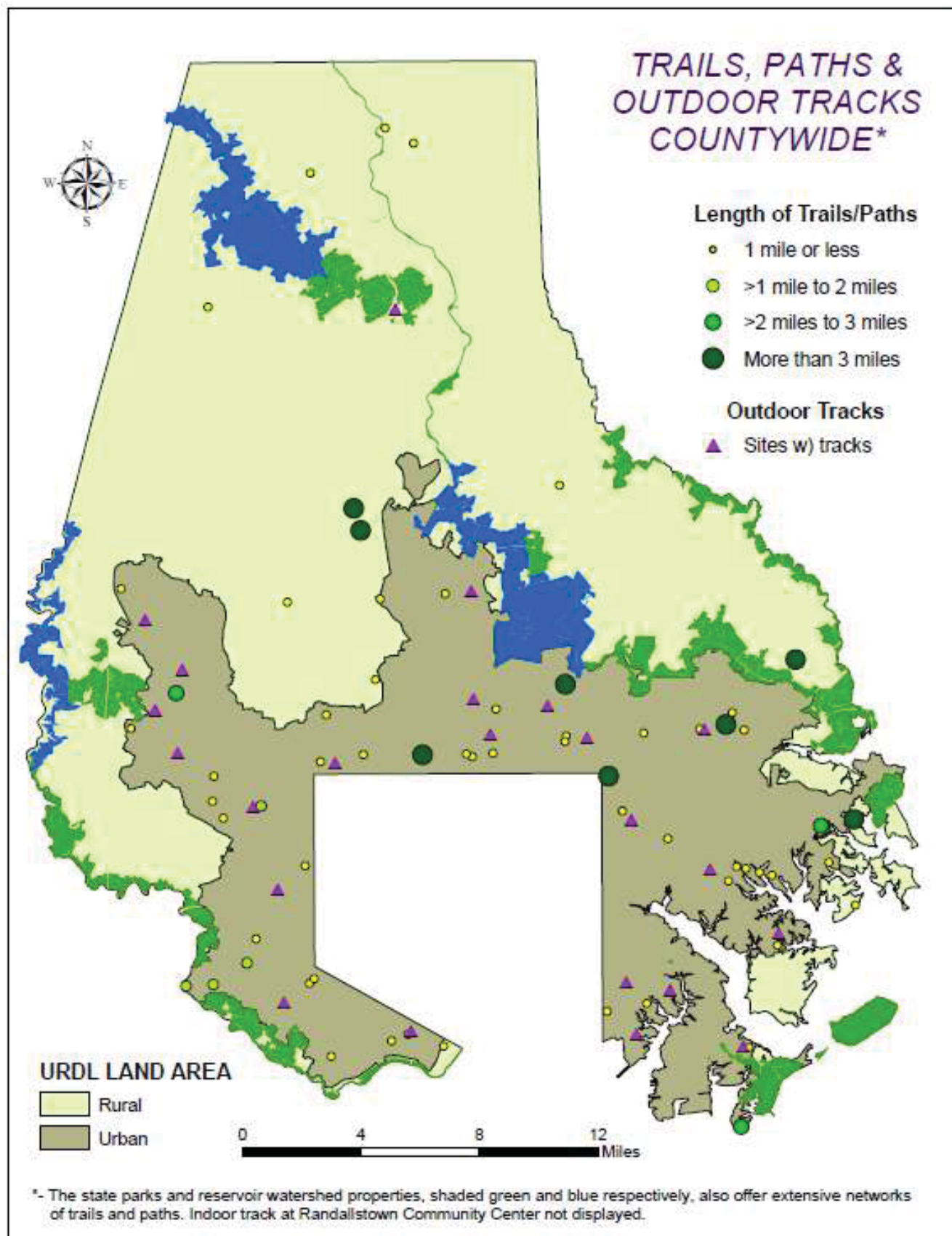


- Trails and Paths (Primary Providers: Maryland DNR and Baltimore County): A wide variety of trails and paths may be found at parks throughout the County. Trail and path surfaces vary, and include natural/unimproved trails, semi-pervious paths and trails with woodchip and stonedust surfaces, and paved paths. The types of activities that are permitted or are appropriate also varies, and generally depend upon the type of surface and character of the trail or path. Uses supported on various trails include walking, jogging, hiking, roller skating/blading, skateboarding, bicycling, horseback riding, and wheelchair touring, though some of the listed activities are prohibited on certain trails. The largest trail networks within the County are generally situated within the State's parks, though a number of County parks including Oregon Ridge, Cromwell Valley, Mount Vista, Lake Roland, Marshy Point, Eastern Regional, Honeygo Regional, Double Rock, Fort Howard, and the Red Run Greenway Park and Trail feature paths and trails of two miles or more.

Other paved paths or path sections are situated along roadways such as the Route 43 extension, Perry Hall Boulevard, and Owings Mills Boulevard, while there are dozens of miles of natural surface trails at the three reservoir watershed properties. Efforts to better map and classify trails, and produce associated trail maps, remain underway. The map on the following page displays County park sites with trails and paths, with symbols indicating approximate lengths available by site. The current estimate of total length of trails and paths at County parks is approximately 78 miles. This map does not include trails at other locations, though the state parks and reservoir properties are displayed for the sake of reference, with nearly all of the displayed State (park) and City (reservoirs) properties featuring extensive trail networks. Also displayed are outdoor tracks, most of which are situated at high school recreation centers, and are often heavily utilized by local citizens when scholastic activities do not preclude general public use.



*Red Run Greenway Park features two types of trail—a wide, paved trail atop a closed section of Dolfield Road, and a predominantly natural surface trail that runs from the paved trail to Lakeside Boulevard.*



- Indoor Recreation Facilities (Primary Provider: Baltimore County): The demand for indoor recreational facilities such as gymnasiums and activity rooms has seen a marked increase over years. This increased demand may be attributed to a number of factors. Some of the activities that have long taken place in these facilities—basketball, volleyball, dance, aerobics and fitness, etc.—have substantially grown in popularity. Certain sports that traditionally take place outdoors have developed indoor variations (e.g., indoor soccer or indoor lacrosse) that allow participants to play their sport of choice virtually year-round. Some recreation and parks councils have extremely popular cheerleading and dance programs that use indoor facilities either year-round or seasonally. Tot centers and camps also often utilize indoor recreation space. The size, nature, and activities supported by the community centers varies widely, with some of the smaller facilities such as the Oella Community Center, Victory Villa Community Center, and Bengies Community Center being structures that date back fifty years or more and whose functions are limited by their size. On the other end of the spectrum are the Randallstown Community Center and Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center, which are much larger than the County’s other modern community centers and support a broader range of recreational and community activities.

The County continues to invest in indoor facilities in an effort to better meet the needs of the recreation councils and the general public. New public school construction projects provide indoor recreation facilities such as gymnasiums, auditoriums/stages, and recreation activity rooms. A number of new community centers have also been constructed in recent years, including the Soukup Arena, Cockeysville Community Center, and Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center.



*The Sollers Point Multi-Purpose Center Gymnasium,  
during the facility’s ribbon-cutting ceremony*

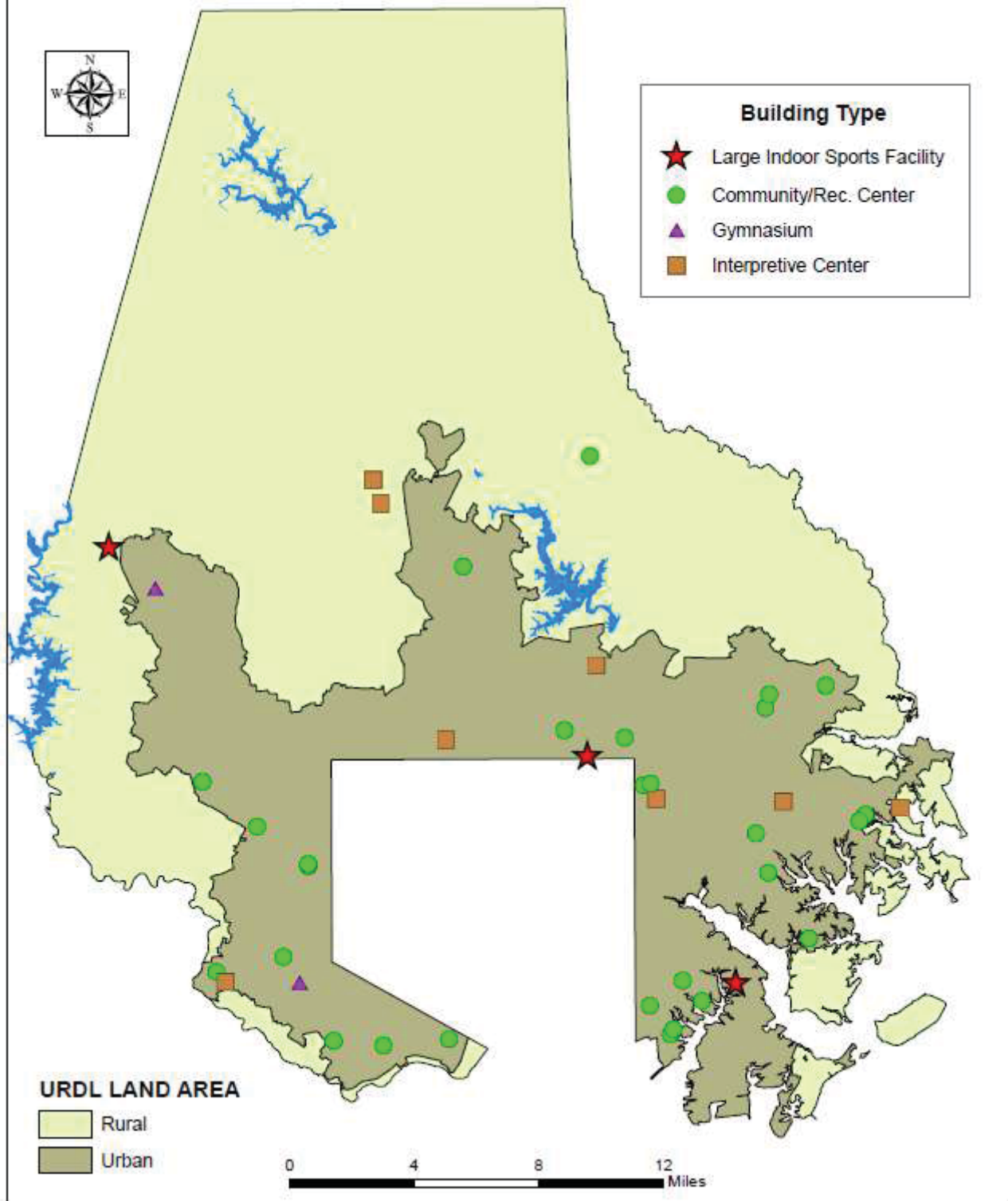
Larger scale indoor facilities have also proven to be popular, and allow the County to offer forms of recreation not fully supported by community centers or school recreation centers. Three regional indoor sports facilities - the Southeast Regional Recreation Center, the Northeast Regional Recreation Center, and the Reisterstown SportsPlex (which also features a Baltimore County Revenue Authority-operated indoor ice rink) – feature one or more indoor sports fields. Indoor swimming pools, operated by the YMCA, are available at the Dundalk Community Center and Randallstown Community Center.

The County's interpretive centers, meanwhile, help meet different forms of public recreation. These centers focus upon various forms of interpretation including environmental/natural, historical, and agricultural. Such sites regularly host school groups and thereby play a role in helping to educate students about the natural environment and the County's history and heritage. Two such facilities opened in recent years—the Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture and Farm Park, and the Lake Roland Nature Center. The former has a unique role in helping to interpret agricultural practices and educate visitors about the County's rural heritage, while the latter provides much needed indoor space for nature programs at Lake Roland. Maryland DNR likewise operates a number of interpretive center at the state parks, though those sites are not displayed on the map of indoor recreation facilities on the following page.

The first map that follows displays the County's 28 community centers, 8 interpretive centers, 3 large indoor facilities, and 2 stand-alone gymnasiums. The second map displays the 162 school recreation center sites countywide, some of which house more than one school structure.

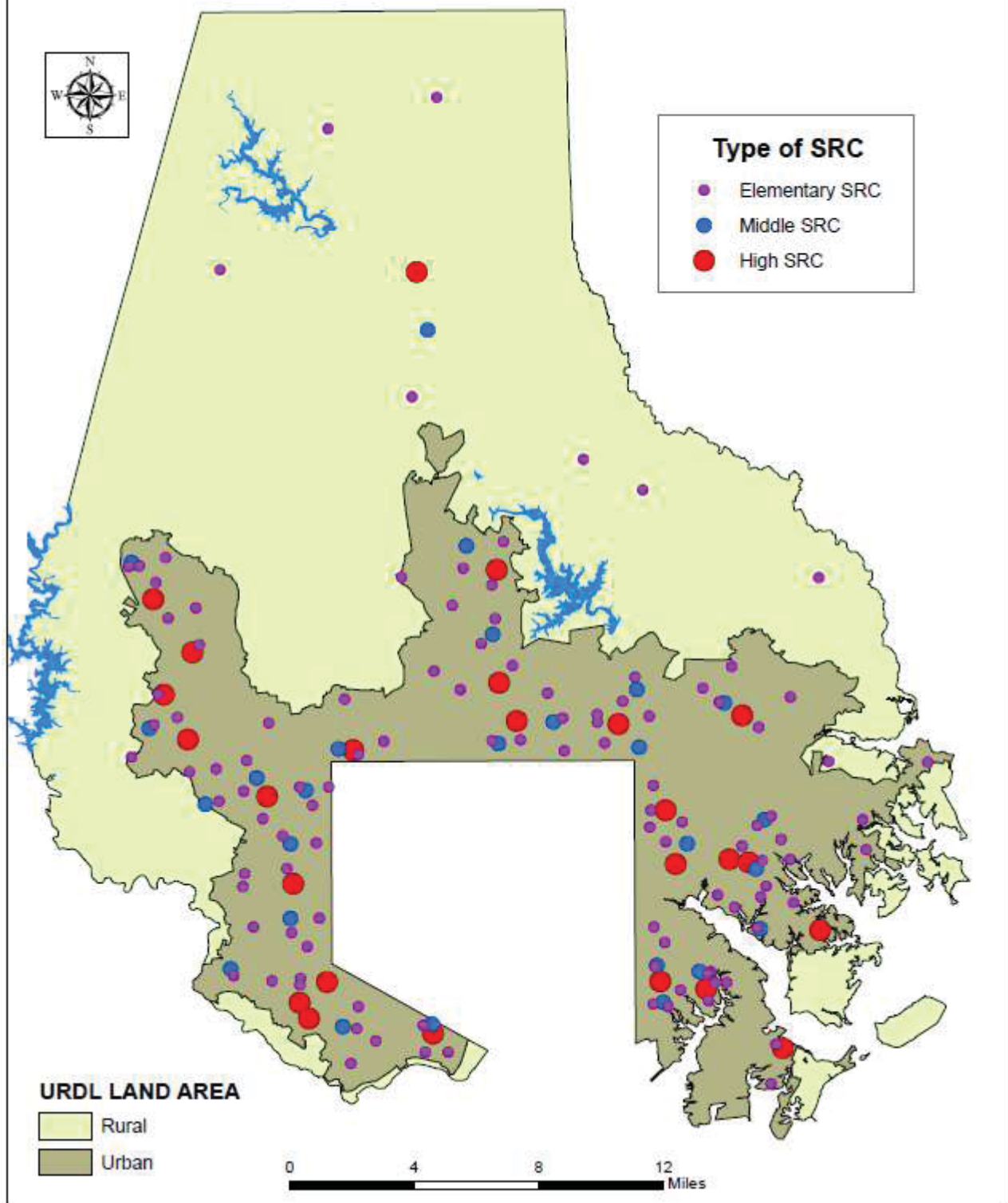


## MAJOR INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES (NOT INCLUDING SCHOOL RECREATION CENTERS)





## PUBLIC SCHOOL RECREATION CENTERS



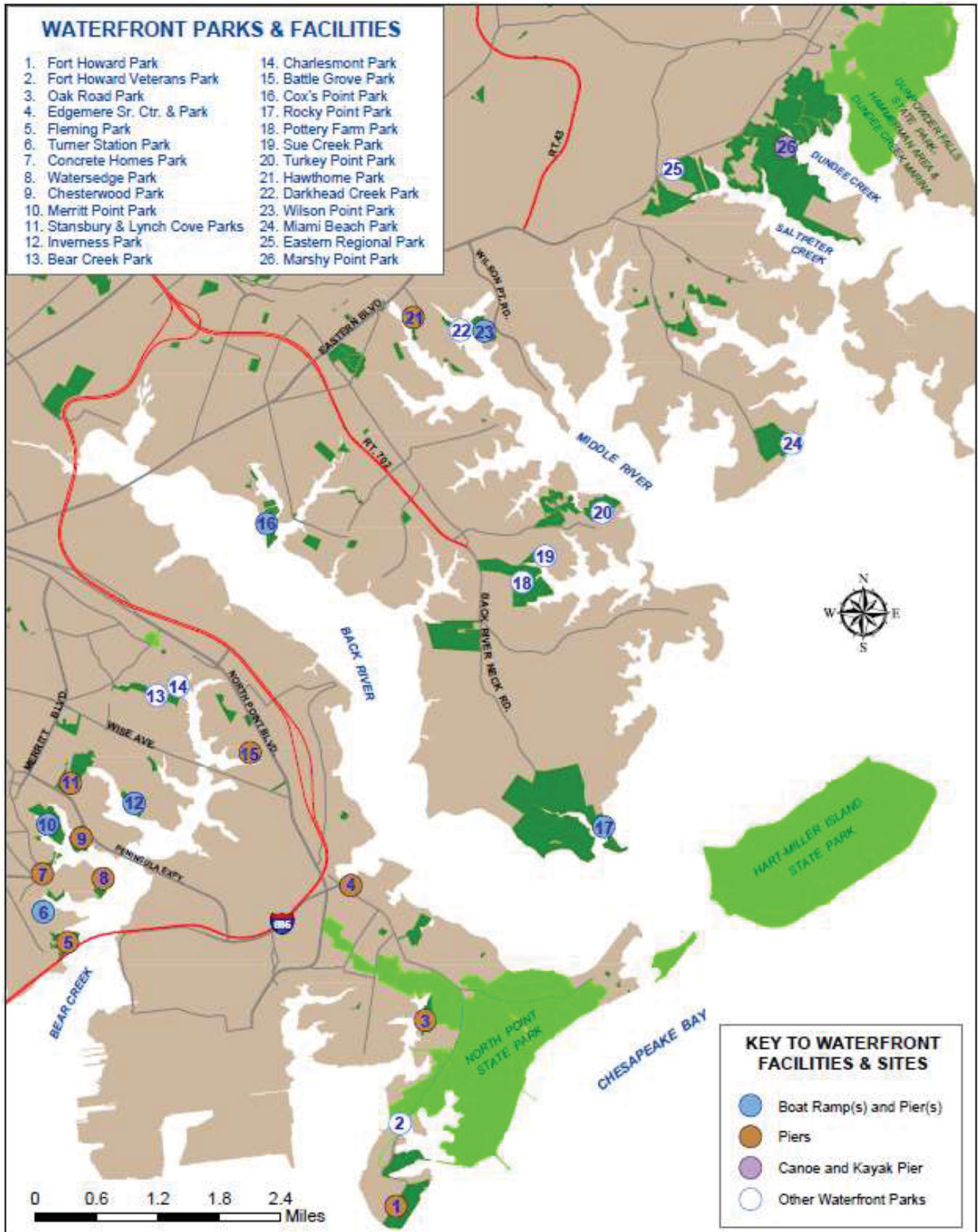
- Waterfront Facilities (Primary Providers: Baltimore County and Maryland DNR): One of the most valuable aspects of Baltimore County's park system is the number and diversity of waterfront parks providing public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its numerous tributaries. The waterfront parks feature water-dependent facilities including boat ramps, fishing piers, canoe launches, and public beaches. Additionally, miles of shoreline are available for fishing, viewing waterfowl and other wildlife, or for simple enjoyment of waterfront vistas. Marshy Point Park and Nature Center utilizes its coastal location as the setting for educating the public about the Chesapeake Bay and its ecosystem. In addition to the water-based recreational opportunities afforded by County parks, the State of Maryland offers public access to the waterfront at Hart-Miller Island State Park, North Point State Park, and the Hammerman and Dundee Creek Marina areas of Gunpowder Falls State Park. Many private marinas provide assorted boating services for a fee, and thousands of piers and docks are situated on private properties and provide residents with easy access to the Bay and its tributaries. Other water-based recreational opportunities are provided inland, within the reservoir watershed properties (including through the County-operated Loch Raven Fishing Center), at lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams in County and State parks, and at private sites such as the Beaver Dam Swim Club (swimming lake). The map on the following page shows the majority of the County's waterfront parks and facilities, with color coding to indicate the presence of the 10 public boat ramps and 21 fishing piers, as well as the canoe and kayak pier at Marshy Point Park. This map does not display non-county facilities other than the State's waterfront parks, and does not show Southwest Area Park on the Patapsco River (pier and shallow-draft boat ramp), or inland water-based amenities such as Loch Raven Fishing Center or lakes and ponds at sites including Lake Roland, Hillcrest Park, Oregon Ridge, County Home Park, and Golden Ring Park.



*Public boat ramps, such as this one at Rocky Point Park, offer boat owners without access to private docks or marinas an opportunity to launch their watercraft*

## WATERFRONT PARKS & FACILITIES

- |                                  |                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Fort Howard Park              | 14. Charlesmont Park      |
| 2. Fort Howard Veterans Park     | 15. Battle Grove Park     |
| 3. Oak Road Park                 | 16. Cox's Point Park      |
| 4. Edgemere Sr. Ctr. & Park      | 17. Rocky Point Park      |
| 5. Fleming Park                  | 18. Pottery Farm Park     |
| 6. Turner Station Park           | 19. Sue Creek Park        |
| 7. Concrete Homes Park           | 20. Turkey Point Park     |
| 8. Watersedge Park               | 21. Hawthorne Park        |
| 9. Chesterwood Park              | 22. Darkhead Creek Park   |
| 10. Merritt Point Park           | 23. Wilson Point Park     |
| 11. Stansbury & Lynch Cove Parks | 24. Miami Beach Park      |
| 12. Inverness Park               | 25. Eastern Regional Park |
| 13. Bear Creek Park              | 26. Marshy Point Park     |





The following types of recreational facilities are not mapped, and are not included in the facility needs analyses that take place later in this chapter. Some are relatively scarce facility types, others are dependent upon the presence of a pre-existing feature (e.g., a historical structure), and some are types of facilities most frequently provided by some entity other than the County.

- Swimming Pools (Primary Providers: Homeowners, Private Pools/Swim Clubs): DRP does not provide outdoors swimming pools, though two County-owned indoor swimming pools run by the YMCA are available at the Dundalk Community Center and at Randallstown Community Center. Public swimming programs are offered by a few recreation councils, and hosted at the County's community colleges. Other opportunities for pool swimming are provided by YMCA's and private swim clubs and marinas, and many citizens have constructed pools on their own property.
- Golf Courses (Primary Providers: Private Golf Clubs, Baltimore County Golf/Revenue Authority): Five public golf courses are provided for County citizens by Baltimore County Golf, functioning as part of the quasi-public Baltimore County Revenue Authority. One of the courses, Fox Hollow, also features a golf training facility. The Baltimore City-owned Pine Ridge Golf Course at Loch Raven Reservoir is likewise a public course. These public courses supplement the golfing opportunities provided by private courses and driving ranges, which are the primary providers of golf within the County.
- Other Facilities: A variety of other facilities that provide recreational opportunities are provided within Baltimore County recreation sites and parks, including:
  - Amphitheaters
  - Community Gardens
  - Disc Golf Courses
  - Dog Parks
  - Horseshoe Pits
  - Historical and Interpretive Areas
  - Model Aircraft/Car Facilities
  - Fishing Ponds
  - Jogging Tracks
  - Sand Volleyball Courts
  - Indoor Fitness Facilities

In addition to recreational facilities, a wide range of support amenities are provided at parks and recreation sites, including: access roads and parking lots, park benches, bleachers and other types of seating, comfort stations, concessions and storage buildings, drinking and ornamental fountains, fencing, security lighting, trash receptacles, and landscaped areas.

A complete inventory of parks, recreation sites, and green spaces in Baltimore County (not including easement properties) is included in Appendices A and B.

## ***RECREATIONAL DEMAND***

There are numerous means for seeking to identify recreational demand, though no single method is perfect. Recreational demand is a perpetually moving target, with public recreational preferences continually waxing and waning. In past versions of the LPPRP formulas that used data extracted from a “demand survey” was compared with “supply” data based on the quantities of recreational facilities to estimate the need for additional recreational facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, tennis courts, playground, trails, etc. There were known flaws to the methodologies employed. For instance, the demand data was predominantly participation data, and thus related to the current supply of facilities— few facilities offer limited opportunities to participate, and so the participation rates for some activities could be artificially low. Meanwhile, recreational demand varies widely by community/area, and can greatly impact the actual need in a given part of the County. Finally, the survey process utilized could skew results, especially in cases where the majority of survey respondents were individuals who regularly utilized recreational facilities and thereby had an interest or stake in the matter.

On the supply side of the equation, estimating the amount of recreational opportunities provided by the various facilities has always been a challenge. Generic counts of ball diamonds and athletic fields could not accurately portray the actual amount of use opportunities provided by each, as other factors such as their size, layout (stand-alone or overlay), whether or not they are lighted, their overall availability (particularly in the case of school rec centers, where scholastic activities frequently limit general or programmed public use), and other factors impact the recreational opportunities the diamonds and fields provide. Estimating supply for a sport such as basketball was likewise challenging, as indoor gymnasiums serve multiple uses that vary by site, the gymnasiums at school recreation centers have varying availability, and outdoor multi-purpose courts do not always have basketball goals in place or may be used for other recreational activities. The contribution of non-county recreational facilities was also typically not quantified, and thereby left out of the equation.

Such past analyses of facility supply, demand, and needs typically featured caveats that the resultant numeric data was a rough estimation of need, and emphasized the need to also apply input provided by the general public, the recreation and parks councils, and the professional DRP staff assigned to serve the various communities, councils, and parks. The disclaimers for the data also reiterated the changing nature of recreational demand overall, and the associated challenges faced in seeking to meet demand through park site acquisition, facility construction, facility retrofit, and other means. The need to apply *qualitative* analysis to *quantitative* analysis was particularly emphasized, and the same holds true regardless of the methodology used to estimate recreational demands and needs.

This iteration of the Baltimore County LPPRP utilizes a different methodology for identifying recreational demands and needs, combining a variety of data with other forms of input, and applying a greater level of geography-based analysis. This approach complies with and supports the State’s guidelines for the plan. Input utilized within this section of the plan derives from a number of sources, including an online countywide recreation and parks survey that took place in 2016, recreation and parks related public input from the County’s community input meetings for its most recent capital improvement programs, public input solicited and received via emails and letters, and staff capital project requests (most of which pertain to requests voiced by the recreation and parks



councils and other park and facility user groups with whom they work and/or interact). The recreational demand information that follows is combined and compared with “level of service” data to draw the conclusions that are presented at the end of this chapter.

### Recreation and Parks Survey

An online public recreation and parks survey was offered in August through September, 2016. The survey did not feature restrictive security features such as zip code verification or measures to limit the number of surveys completed from the same IP address. Additionally, no critical inspection of survey results took place to verify the accuracy of responses or eliminate survey responses that may have been incomplete or potentially inaccurate.

A total of 943 responses to the 14-question survey were gathered. The key geography-based question within the survey asked respondents to indicate the zip code in which they resided. 915 of the 943 respondents provided their zip code, equating to just over 97% of those who completed the survey. A total of 97.2% of the survey’s respondents indicated that they had visited a Baltimore County park or recreation site within the past year.

In order to utilize the survey data for analytical purposes within this plan, a list of zip codes was compiled for each of the twelve RPD Groups. Generally speaking, if approximately one-third or more of a zip code’s geography was situated within a RPD Group, it was included within that group. As such, some zip codes are included within one or more of the RPD Groups. The survey data from each of the applicable zip codes was then combined and applied to the associated RPD Group. The following table indicates the zip codes that were included within each of the RPD Groups:

<b>RPD GROUP</b>	<b>ASSOCIATED ZIP CODES*</b>
Central	21204, 21210, 21212, 21239, 21286
East	21220, 21221
East Central	21206, 21234, 21236, 21237
North	21053, 21074, 21102, 21111, 21120, 21131, 21152, 21161
North Central	21030, 21031, 21093
Northeast	21013, 21051, 21057, 21082, 21085, 21087, 21128, 21156, 21162, 21236
Northwest	21117, 21136
Southeast	21052, 21219, 21222, 21224
Southwest	21043, 21225, 21227, 21228, 21229, 21230
West	21104, 21133, 21163, 21244
West Central	21093, 21117, 21208, 21209, 21215
West Southwest	21043, 21207, 21228, 21229, 21244

\*- The data for certain zip codes was included within multiple RPD groups, primarily in cases where substantial portions of the zip code’s geography were overlapped with more than one RPD Group.

The regionalized survey results produced some interesting insight on public opinions for various aspects of recreation and parks, as well as overall recreational trends. The following pages present a variety of the survey results, in both tabular and mapped formats.

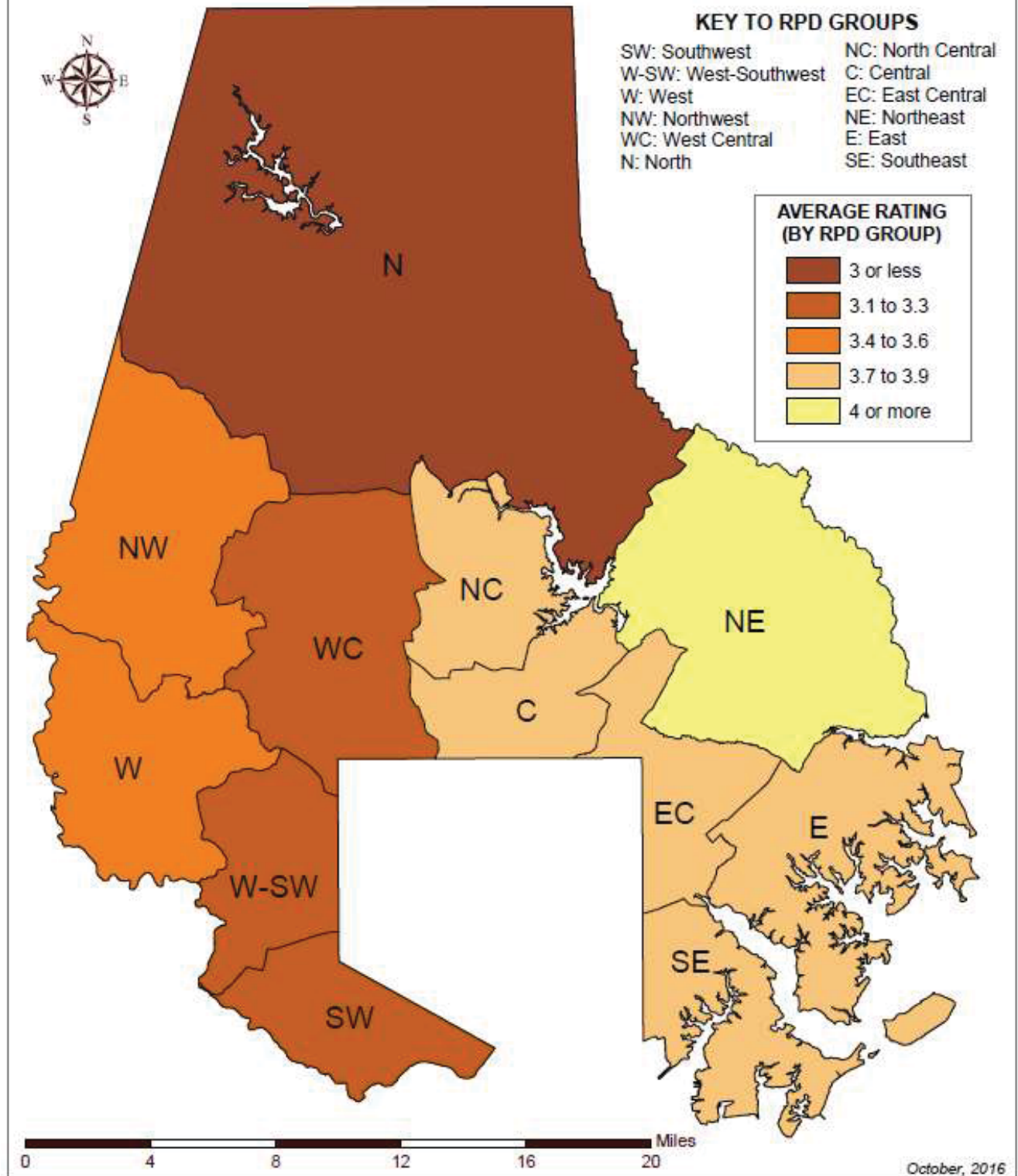
*SURVEY QUESTION 4* asked respondents to rate five general factors to indicate their satisfaction about the availability of parks and recreational facilities, the condition of parks and recreational facilities, the amount of open and green space, the diversity of recreational facilities and opportunities, and the availability of safe places to walk, jog, and bicycle.

- **AVAILABILITY OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES** Respondents were asked to rate the “availability of County parks and recreation facilities near where you live,” and were given the choices of: very poor, poor, average, good, and excellent. A numeric value of 1 through 5 was then assigned to each response, from 1 for very poor through 5 for excellent. The points were then summed and divided by the number of responses to develop an average (mean) value. The average countywide rating was 3.42, rounded to 3.4, with a low rating of 2.4 (North) and a high rating of 4.0 (Northeast). Of the five questions where respondents were asked to rate factors from very poor through excellent, the question of availability of parks and recreation facilities had the widest variation in regional response (variation of 1.6).

<b>RPD GROUP</b>	<b>Availability</b>
Northeast	4.0
East Central	3.9
Southeast	3.7
East	3.6
North Central	3.6
Central	3.6
Northwest	3.5
West	3.4
West Central	3.2
West Southwest	3.2
Southwest	3.2
North	2.4

The map on the following page depicts the ratings by RPD Group.

# **RATED AVAILABILITY OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES** (ON SCALE OF 1 TO 5, 1 BEING VERY POOR AND 5 BEING EXCELLENT)



- **CONDITION OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES:** Respondents were asked to rate the “condition of County parks and recreation facilities you’ve visited,” and were given the choices of: very poor, poor, average, good, excellent. A numeric value of 1 through 5 was then assigned to each response, from 1 for very poor through 5 for excellent. The points were then summed and divided by the number of responses to develop an average (mean) value. The average countywide rating was 3.46, rounded to 3.5, representing the highest average rating of the five factors respondents were asked to rate. The low rating was 3.2 (North and Southwest) and the high rating was 3.7 (North Central). The variation of ratings from 3.2 to 3.7 was the smallest for any of the five ratings-based questions.

<b>RPD GROUP</b>	<b>Condition</b>
North Central	3.7
Central	3.6
East	3.5
Northwest	3.5
Northeast	3.5
West	3.5
East Central	3.5
West Central	3.5
Southeast	3.4
West Southwest	3.3
Southwest	3.2
North	3.2

Fully half of the RPD Groups rated the condition an average of 3.5, representing a strong level of consistency overall.



*Correcting vandalism-based damage, such as the displayed ruts at Mt. Vista Park, adversely impacts fiscal resources*

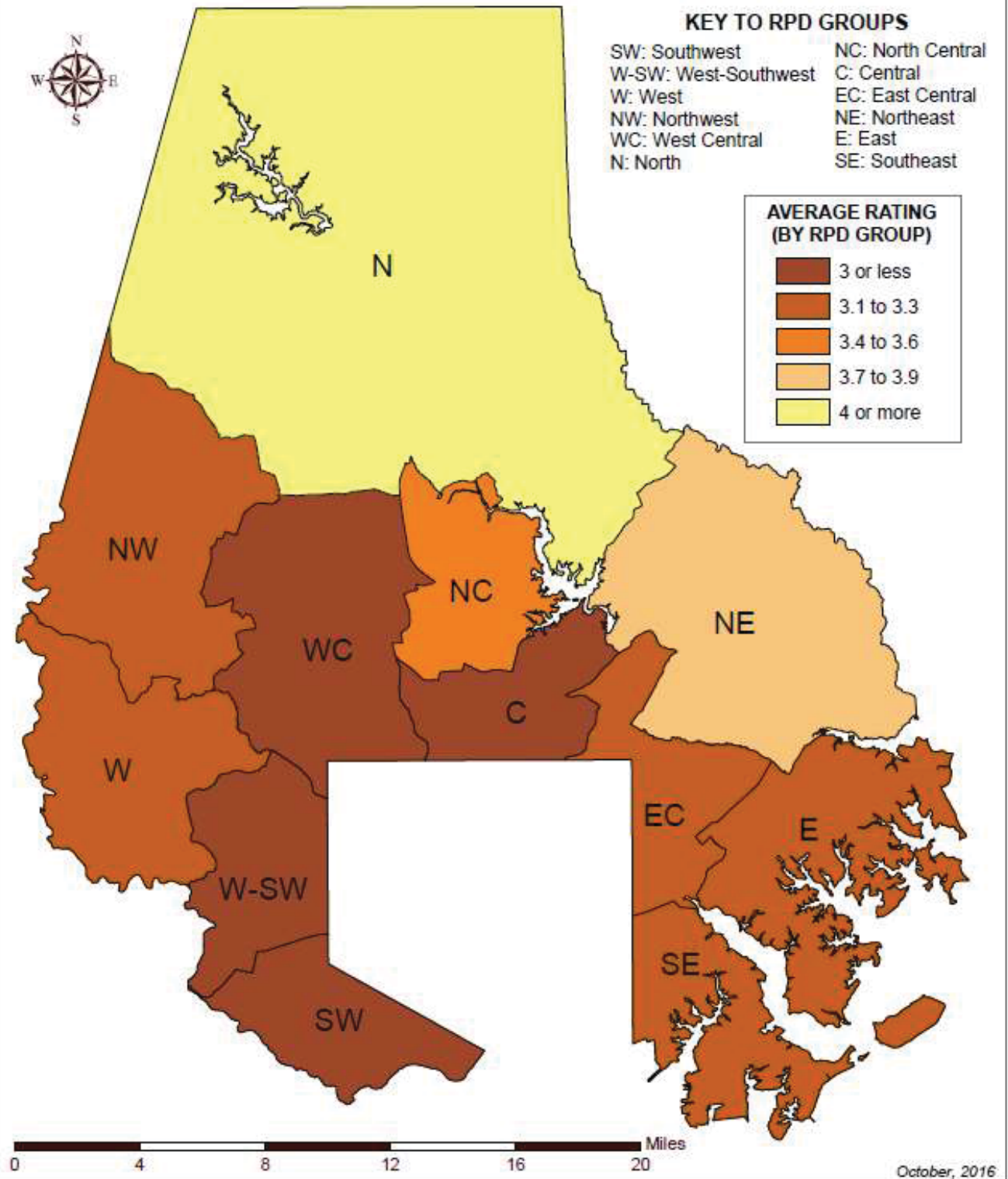


- **AMOUNT OF PRESERVED OPEN/GREEN SPACE:** Respondents were asked to rate the “amount of undeveloped or preserved open space and green space near where you live,” and were given the choices of: very poor, poor, average, good, and excellent. A numeric value of 1 through 5 was then assigned to each response, from 1 for very poor through 5 for excellent. The points were then summed and divided by the number of responses to develop an average (mean) value. The average countywide rating was 3.27, rounded to 3.3, with a low rating of 2.7 (Central) and a high rating was 4.1 (North). This represented the second largest variation of the five ratings-based questions.

<b>RPD GROUP</b>	<b>Amount Undeveloped</b>
North	4.1
Northeast	3.7
North Central	3.5
Southeast	3.3
Northwest	3.3
East	3.3
West	3.2
East Central	3.1
West Central	2.9
West Southwest	2.9
Southwest	2.9
Central	2.7

The map on the following page depicts the ratings by RPD Group, showing a relatively high level of satisfaction in the North and Northeast. The former features vast amounts of farmlands and natural areas protected through agricultural land preservation programs and other land preservation initiatives such as Rural Legacy, while the latter features many parks (many of which are relatively modern) and many local open spaces preserved through the County’s development process. Nine of the RPD Groups registered less envious ratings, ranging from 3.3 down to 2.7, with the Central, West Central, West Southwest and Southwest each having a mean rating under 3.

**RATED AMOUNT OF UNDEVELOPED OPEN/GREEN SPACE**  
 (ON SCALE OF 1 TO 5, 1 BEING VERY POOR AND 5 BEING EXCELLENT)



- **DIVERSITY OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES:** Respondents were asked to rate the “diversity of recreational facilities and opportunities offered at the County parks you’ve visited,” and given a choices of: very poor, poor, average, good, or excellent. A value of 1 through 5 was then assigned to each response, from 1 for very poor through 5 for excellent. The points were then summed and divided by the number of responses to develop an average (mean) value. The average countywide rating was 3.26, rounded to 3.3, the second lowest of the ratings-based questions. The ratings ranged from 2.8 (North) to 3.6 (Northeast, North Central).

<b>RPD GROUP</b>	<b>Facility Diversity</b>
Northeast	3.6
North Central	3.6
East Central	3.5
Central	3.4
East	3.4
Southeast	3.3
Northwest	3.3
West Central	3.2
West	3.1
Southwest	2.9
West Southwest	2.9
North	2.8

Seven of the twelve RPD Groups registered average ratings of 3.3 or below, with four of those seven also having received average ratings of 3.3 or less for “availability of parks and recreational facilities.” All three of the RPD Groups with average ratings of 3.5 or higher received ratings of 3.6 or higher within the park and facility availability questions. This displays a fairly consistent link between satisfaction for the quantity and diversity of parks and facilities.



*Dog parks such as this one at Lake Roland have become increasingly popular*

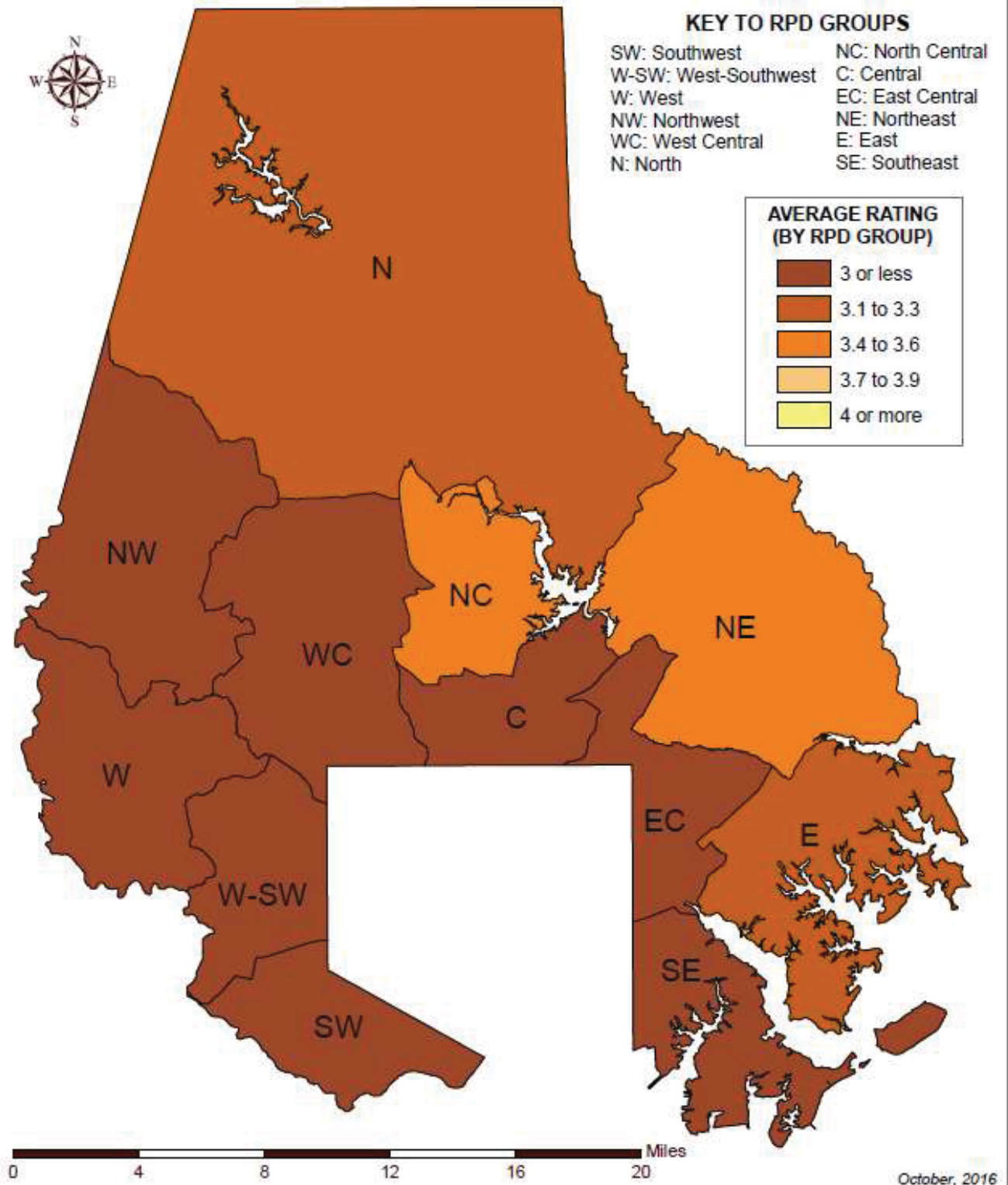
- **SAFE PLACES TO WALK, JOG, AND BICYCLE:** Respondents were asked to rate the “opportunities to safely walk, jog, or bicycle near where you live,” and were given the choices of: very poor, poor, average, good, and excellent. A numeric value of 1 through 5 was then assigned to each response, from 1 for very poor through 5 for excellent. The points were then summed and divided by the number of responses to develop an average (mean) value. The average countywide rating was 3.05, rounded to 3.1, representing the lowest overall score of all five ratings-based questions. The low rating was 2.8 (Central, West Central, West Southwest), and the high rating was 3.5 (North Central). The high rating of 3.5 was the lowest top mark for the five ratings-based questions.

<b>RPD GROUP</b>	<b>Safe Places to Walk/Bike</b>
North Central	3.5
Northeast	3.4
East	3.2
North	3.1
Northwest	3.0
Southeast	3.0
East Central	3.0
West Central	2.9
Southwest	2.8
West	2.8
West Southwest	2.8
Central	2.8

The map on the following page displays the ratings geographically. As the map indicates, none of the RPD Groups had an average rating within the top two ratings ranges of “3.7 to 3.9” and “4 or more.” Ten of the twelve registered average ratings in the bottom two ranges of “3.1 to 3.3” and “3 or less.” The only regions with ratings over 3.3 were the North Central RPD Group, which has direct or nearby access to trail-rich parks/sites such as Cromwell Valley Park, Oregon Ridge Park, Gunpowder Falls State Park’s Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail (a.k.a. North Central Trail), Loch Raven Reservoir, and Lake Roland Park, and the Northeast RPD Group, which has access to the plentiful trails at Gunpowder Falls State Park, to the segments of the Northeast Trail, and to the paved paths situated at a number of more modern County parks in the area.



# **RATING OF SAFE PLACES TO WALK, JOG, AND BICYCLE** (ON SCALE OF 1 TO 5, 1 BEING VERY POOR AND 5 BEING EXCELLENT)



*SURVEY QUESTION 5* provided respondents with an imaginary “budget” of \$100 to spend, as they saw fit, on various aspects of recreation and parks. The budget items for which respondents were asked to assign the imaginary money were as follows:

- Improved maintenance and repair of existing parks and recreation facilities
- Acquire additional sites on which to construct parks
- Acquire additional sites for the sole purpose of preserving more green or open space
- Provide additional indoor recreation facilities such as recreation centers, gymnasiums and indoor sports fields
- Provide additional traditional outdoor sports facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields and sports courts
- Provide additional small-scale park amenities such as playgrounds, tot lots, picnic pavilions and picnic areas
- Provide additional diverse recreational facilities such as dog parks, skateboard parks and community gardens
- Provide additional places to walk, jog or bicycle, including trails and paved paths
- Provide more facilities dedicated to nature, the arts, history and culture, such as nature centers, theaters and outdoor stages

The table and pie chart on the following page shows the overall countywide results, with the color-code linking the table and chart:

	Answer Options	Response Average
	Improved maintenance and repair of existing parks and recreation facilities	\$18.76
	Provide additional traditional outdoor sports facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields and sports	\$15.08
	Provide additional places to walk, jog or bicycle, including trails and paved paths	\$14.96
	Provide additional indoor recreation facilities such as recreation centers, gymnasiums and indoor sports fields	\$14.17
	Acquire additional sites for the sole purpose of preserving more green or open space	\$10.05
	Provide additional diverse recreational facilities such as dog parks, skateboard parks and community gardens	\$8.21
	Acquire additional sites on which to construct parks	\$7.32
	Provide more facilities dedicated to nature, the arts, history and culture, such as nature centers, theaters and outdoor stages	\$6.62
	Provide additional small-scale park amenities such as playgrounds, tot lots, picnic pavilions and picnic areas	\$4.83

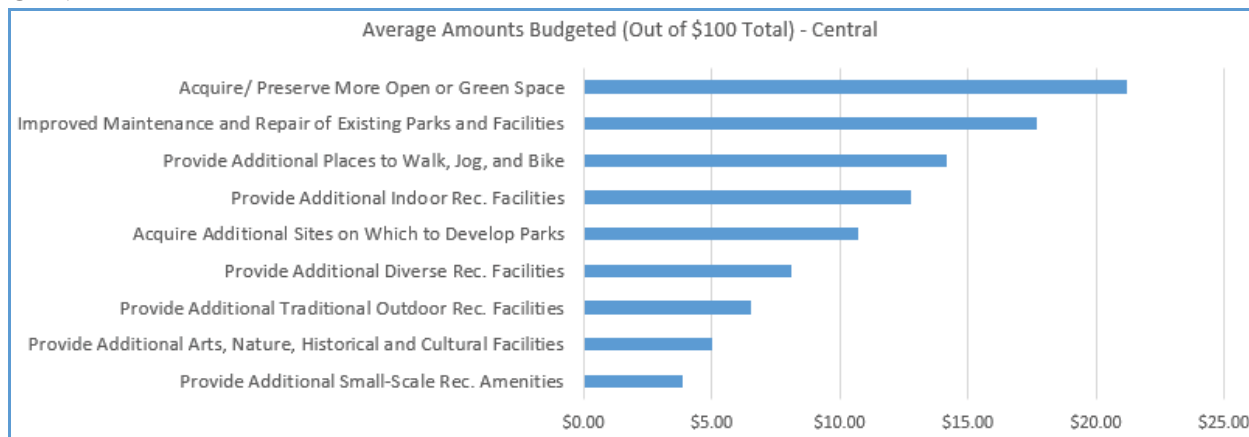


The results by RPD Group varied significantly, displaying very clearly the differing priorities that exist in various area of the County. The table below displays the average amount budgeted by survey respondents within each of the twelve RPD Groups. Green shading indicates the largest amount budgeted for each of the groups, while red shading indicates the smallest amount.

RPD GROUP	Improved Maintenance and Repair of Existing Parks and Facilities	Acquire Additional Sites on Which to Develop Parks	Acquire/ Preserve More Open or Green Space	Provide Additional Indoor Rec. Facilities	Provide Additional Traditional Outdoor Rec. Facilities	Provide Additional Small-Scale Rec. Amenities	Provide Additional Diverse Rec. Facilities	Provide Additional Places to Walk, Jog, and Bike	Provide Additional Arts, Nature, Historical and Cultural Facilities
Central	\$17.70	\$10.69	\$21.21	\$12.77	\$6.51	\$3.84	\$8.13	\$14.16	\$4.98
East	\$20.47	\$8.21	\$12.02	\$16.55	\$12.04	\$5.62	\$9.68	\$10.57	\$4.85
East Central	\$22.67	\$6.91	\$12.61	\$11.59	\$7.35	\$6.47	\$11.41	\$10.49	\$10.49
North	\$10.14	\$9.53	\$4.96	\$19.29	\$35.81	\$2.97	\$3.73	\$10.76	\$2.80
North Central	\$16.82	\$7.18	\$11.94	\$12.36	\$20.82	\$2.47	\$8.86	\$11.80	\$7.74
Northeast	\$30.11	\$4.23	\$12.82	\$18.88	\$7.42	\$3.91	\$4.68	\$9.33	\$8.61
Northwest	\$20.04	\$7.67	\$8.36	\$11.65	\$9.44	\$6.58	\$6.28	\$21.91	\$8.07
Southeast	\$23.34	\$4.87	\$9.60	\$14.61	\$13.90	\$5.06	\$9.71	\$14.40	\$4.51
Southwest	\$15.25	\$6.76	\$9.31	\$11.63	\$11.82	\$5.26	\$11.34	\$18.72	\$9.90
West	\$12.86	\$7.62	\$4.76	\$20.95	\$15.00	\$7.38	\$6.19	\$18.57	\$6.67
West Central	\$13.91	\$9.42	\$11.87	\$10.95	\$17.27	\$5.70	\$7.88	\$15.37	\$7.62
West Southwest	\$13.62	\$6.92	\$8.48	\$12.39	\$12.29	\$6.28	\$11.13	\$19.91	\$8.98

The following presents the average amounts budgeted by respondents by region, and includes comparisons and contrasts to both the countywide results and results for other RPD Groups. Note: In this section the terms “region” or “area” are interchangeable with, and refer to, Regional Planning District (RPD) Groups.

## CENTRAL

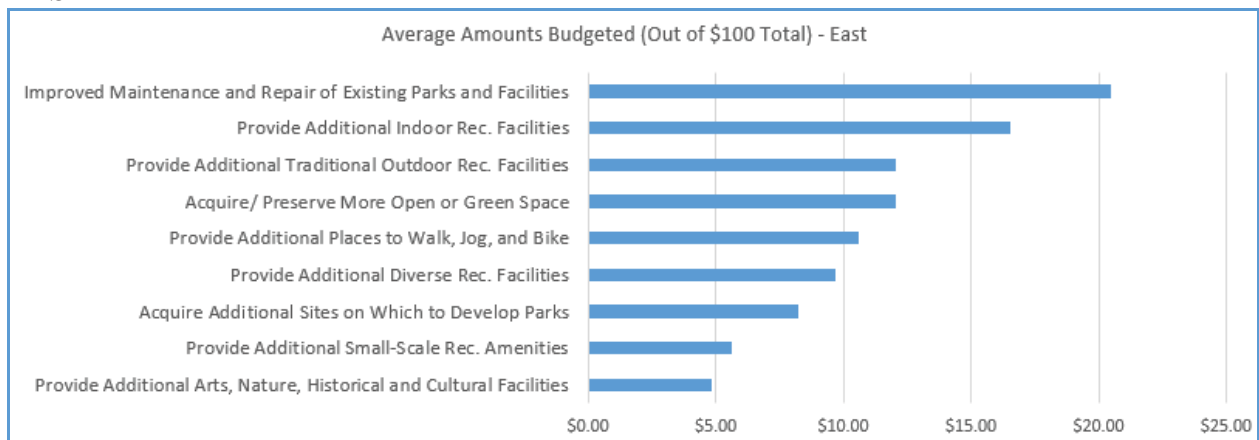


- The Central RPD Group was the only group of respondents that identified the acquisition and preservation of additional green/open space as their #1 budgetary priority (average of \$21.21, more than double the countywide average).



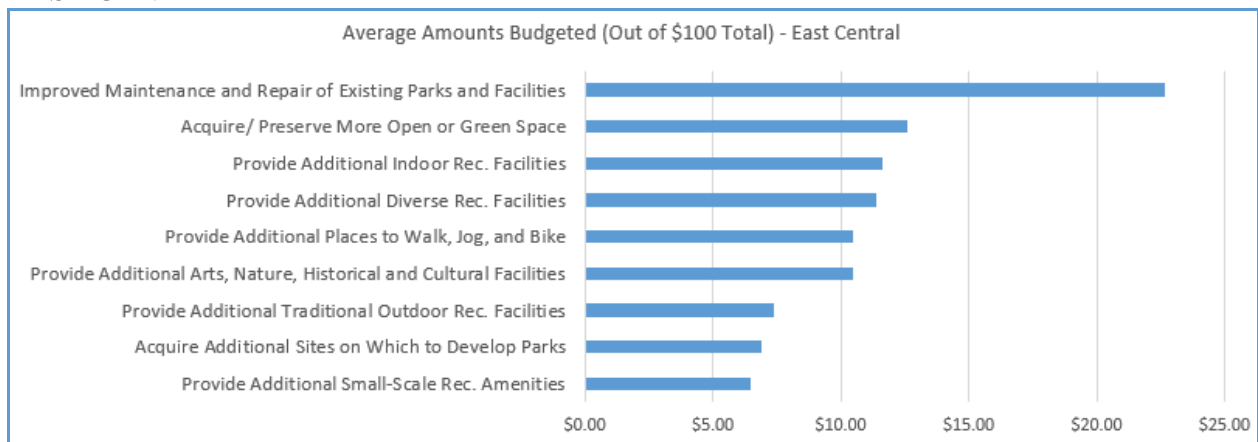
- The group also had the single highest budget amount for acquisition of additional sites to serve as parks (\$10.69), which added to the budget amount for green/open space totals \$31.90.
- The combined budget amount of \$31.90 for the two forms of acquisition is by far the largest of any of the RPD Groups, amounting to 31.9% of the overall budget. The next largest such figure is in the West Central RPD Group, which budgeted a total of 21.3% for the two forms of acquisition.
- The \$6.51 budgeted for traditional outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, and sports courts is the lowest of any RPD Group, and \$8.57 less than the countywide average.
- The amount budgeted for additional small scale recreational facilities such as playgrounds/tot lots and picnic pavilions and areas (\$3.84) was the third lowest of all RPD Groups.

## EAST



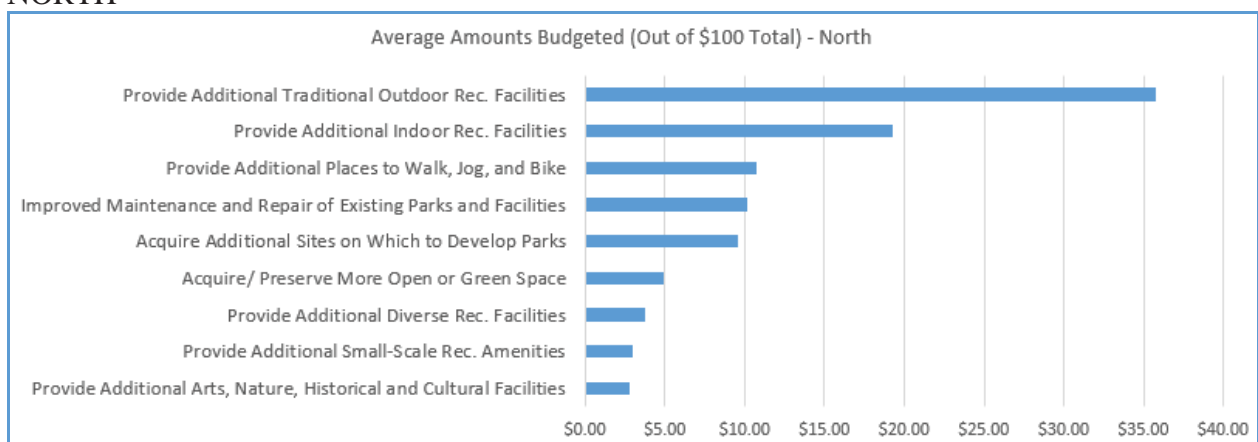
- The respondents in the East RPD Group were among four groups who assigned the most funding to enhanced park and recreation facility maintenance and repair, budgeting \$20.47.
- The second largest budgeted amount, \$16.55, was for additional indoor recreation facilities. This was the fourth highest amount of the twelve RPD Groups.
- The \$10.69 budgeted for additional trails and paths was the third lowest of all of the twelve RPD Groups.
- Only two other RPD groups budgeted a lower amount for additional arts, nature, historical, and cultural facilities.
- The total combined funding budgeted for the two types of acquisitions (parks and green/open spaces) was \$20.23, the third highest among the regions.

## EAST CENTRAL



- The respondents in the East Central RPD Group were the only who budgeted \$10.00 or higher to more than five of the nine priority options.
- The \$22.67 budgeted for enhanced park maintenance was the third largest of any RPD Group.
- The East Central budgeted more (\$11.41) than any other RPD Group to additional diverse recreational facilities such as dog parks, skateboard parks, and community Gardens.
- Only one other RPD Group budgeted a smaller amount to additional indoor facilities than did the East Central (\$11.59, which is over 18% less than the countywide average).
- The East Central area also had the second lowest amount (\$7.35) budgeted for additional traditional outdoor facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, and sports courts. That figure is less than half of the countywide average of \$15.08.
- The average budget of \$10.49 for additional nature, arts, historical, and cultural facilities was the highest of any of the RPD Groups, and nearly 60% larger than the countywide average.

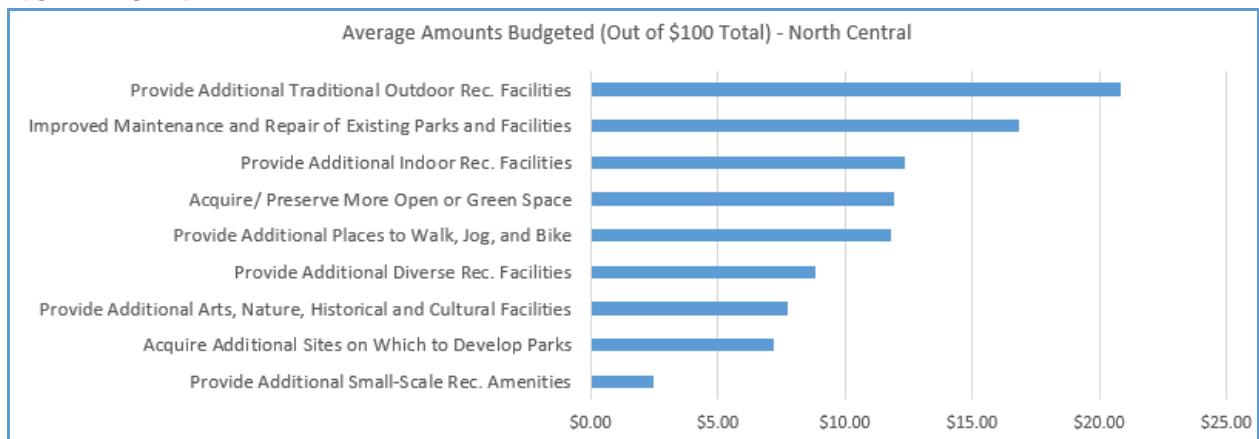
## NORTH



- The North RPD Group had the largest variation in budget amounts from the lowest to the highest, with a total difference of \$33.02.

- The \$35.81 budgeted by the areas respondents for additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities was, by far, the largest single budgetary amount of any assigned through the survey question. The amount is more than double the countywide average of \$15.08.
- The North's \$19.29 budgeted to additional indoor recreation facilities was the second highest of any of the twelve RPD Groups.
- The region's respondents budgeted only \$2.80 to additional arts, nature, cultural, and historical facilities, by far the lowest amount of any of the RPD Groups, and nearly 60% lower than the countywide average.
- Only \$4.96 was assigned to the acquisition and preservation of additional green/open space. This represents the second lowest amount of any of the RPD Groups.

## NORTH CENTRAL



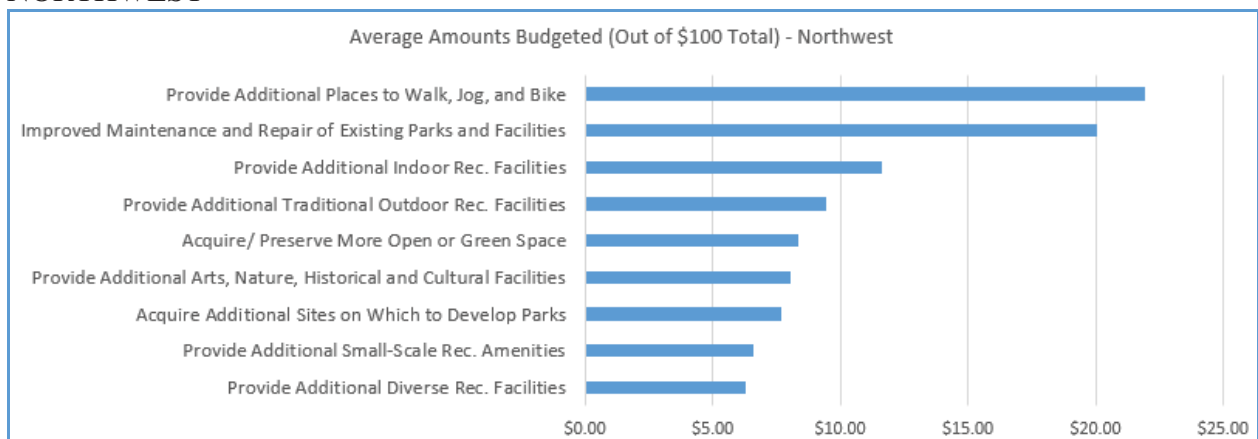
- The respondents of the North Central RPD Group budgeted the largest amount (\$20.82) to additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, and sports courts. That amount is the second highest of all of the RPD Groups.
- The North Central RPD Group budgeting of \$11.94 for the acquisition and preservation of additional green/open space was the fifth highest of the twelve regions.
- The area registered the fifth largest combined amount (\$19.12) budgeted to the two forms of acquisition (parks and green/open spaces).
- The \$2.47 budgeted for additional small scale amenities such as playgrounds/tot lots and picnic facilities was the lowest of any single amount within the survey's budget question. That amount is about half of the countywide average.

## NORTHEAST



- The Northeast RPD Group assigned an average of \$30.11 to improved maintenance and repair of existing parks and recreation facilities, which was the highest amount budgeted by any of the regions for maintenance and repair. That figure was also the second largest amount for any single purpose within the survey's budget question.
- The area is one of only two RPD Groups with three or fewer budget amounts of \$10.00 or more.
- The \$18.88 assigned to additional indoor recreation facilities was the third highest of all RPD Groups, and about 25% higher than the countywide average.
- The area registered the lowest budgetary amount (\$4.23) of any of the twelve RPD Groups for the acquisition of additional land on which to construct parks. That figure is more than 40% lower than the countywide average of \$7.32.
- An average of \$12.82 was assigned to the acquisition and preservation of additional green/open space, which represents the second largest response of all RPD Groups.
- Only \$9.33 was budgeted by the region's respondents for providing additional places to walk, jog, and bicycle. This made the Northeast the only RPD Group to assign less than \$10.00 for that purpose.

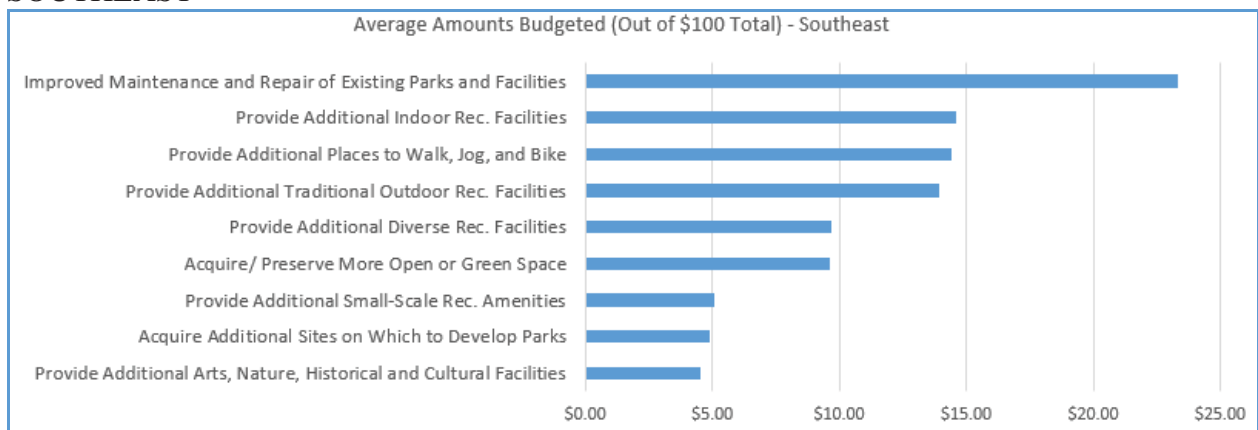
## NORTHWEST





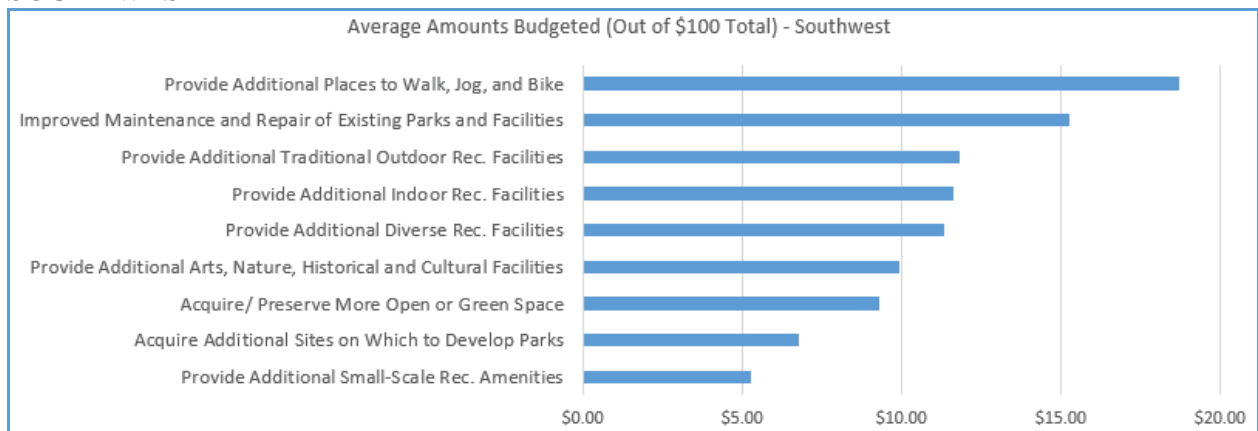
- The respondents in the Northwest RPD Group assigned the largest amount (\$21.91) to additional places to walk, jog, and bike of any of the twelve regions. That amount is nearly 50% higher than the countywide average of \$14.96.
- The area was one of five RPD Groups who budgeted more than \$20.00 to enhanced park maintenance and repair.
- The Northwest budgeted the second largest amount (\$6.58) of any RPD Group to additional small scale recreational facilities such as playgrounds/tot lots and picnic areas.
- Only two other RPD groups assigned less to the acquisition and preservation of additional green/open space than the Northwest's \$8.36.
- The Northwest is one of only two RPD Groups with three or fewer budget amounts of \$10.00 or more.
- Only three other RPD Groups assigned less funding to additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, and sports courts.

## SOUTHEAST



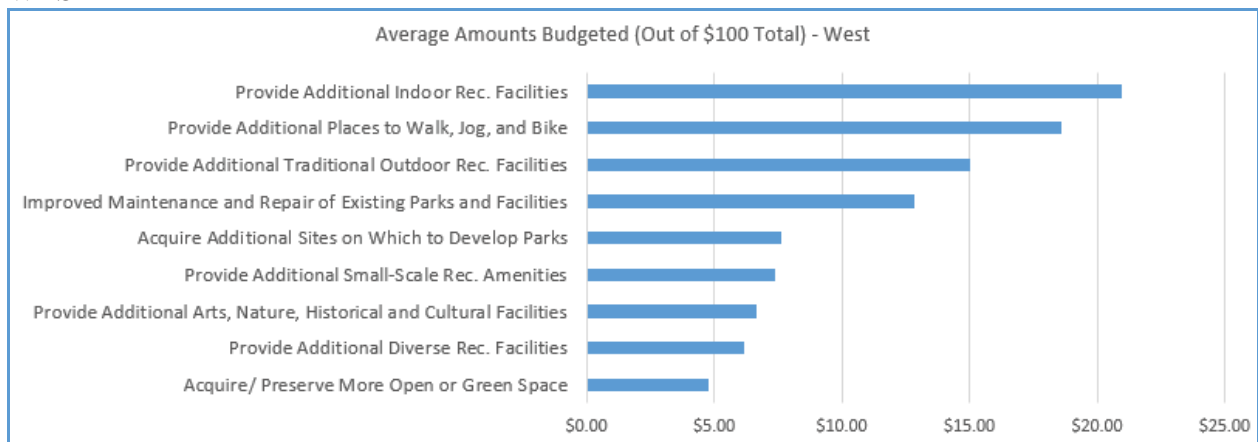
- The largest budget amount assigned by respondents in the Southeast RPD Group was \$23.34 for improved park maintenance and repair. This is the second largest rating for this purpose of the twelve RPD Groups, and approximately 25% higher than the countywide average.
- The Southeast assigned the fifth highest amount (\$14.61) of all RPD Groups to additional indoor recreation facilities.
- Only one other RPD Group assigned a lower amount to acquiring additional sites to serve as parks than the Southeast's \$4.87.
- The combined amount of funding (\$14.47) the region assigned to the two park acquisition items (acquisition of additional parks and open/green spaces) was the second lowest of all RPD Groups.
- The Southeast registered the fifth lowest budget amount (\$5.06) of the twelve RPD Groups for additional small scale facilities such as playgrounds/tot lots and picnic facilities.
- The \$4.51 budgeted by the area's respondents for additional arts, nature, historical, and cultural facilities was the second lowest of all RPD Groups, and over 30% lower than the countywide average.

## SOUTHWEST



- The largest amount budgeted by respondents in the Southwest RPD Group was \$18.72 for additional places to walk, jog, and bicycle. This was the third highest of any of the twelve RPD Groups, and about 25% more than the countywide average.
- Only one other RPD Group budgeted a larger amount than did the Southwest (\$9.90) to providing additional arts, nature, historical, and cultural facilities. That amount is approximately 50% higher than the countywide average.
- The Southwest budgeted the second-most amount (\$11.34) of all RPD Groups to additional diverse recreational facilities such as dog parks, skateboard parks, and community Gardens.
- The RPD Group was one of only three that did not have a single budget amount of \$20.00 or more amongst its \$100 budgeted.
- The \$9.31 assigned for acquisition and preservation of additional green/open space was the fifth lowest of all of the RPD Groups.
- The respondents within the Southwest RPD Group assigned only \$6.76 to the acquisition of additional land for park development, the third lowest amount of any region.

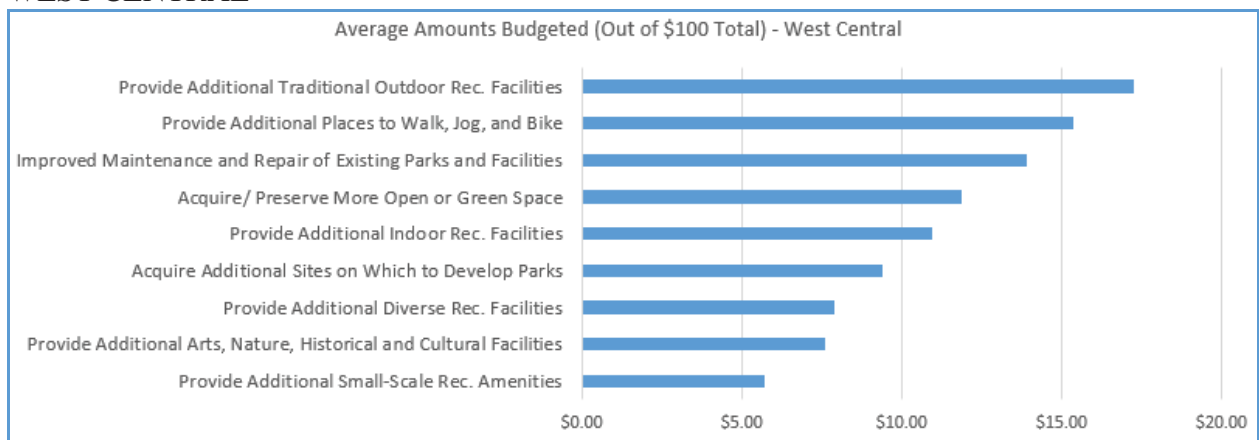
## WEST



- The West RPD Group had the highest budgeted amount (\$20.95) of any region for additional indoor recreation facilities, nearly 50% higher than the countywide average.

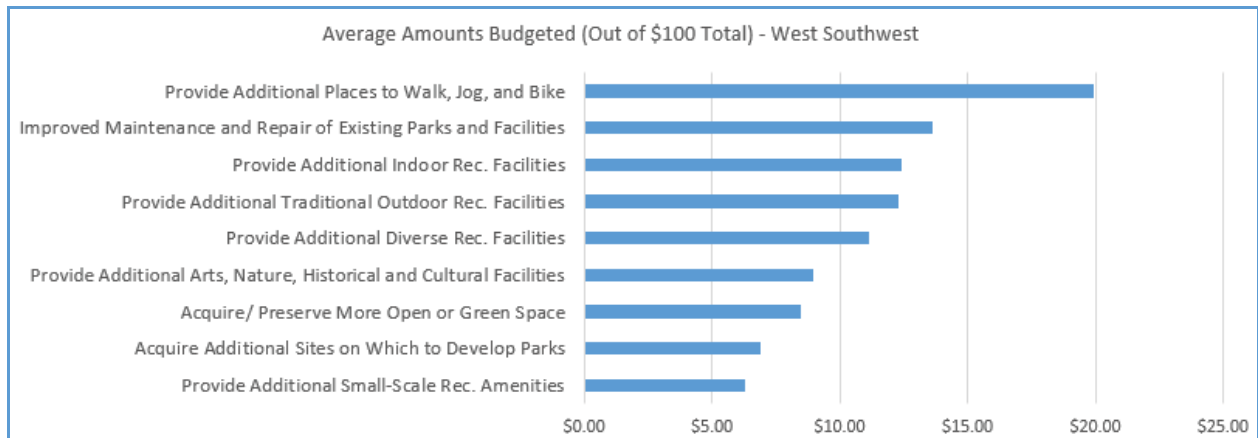
- The \$18.57 budgeted by the West's respondents for additional places to walk, jog, and bicycle was the fourth largest amount of the twelve RPD Groups.
- The West assigned the largest amount of funding of any of the RPD Groups (\$7.38) to additional small scale recreational amenities such as playgrounds/tot lots and picnic facilities. That amount is over 50% higher than the countywide average of \$4.83.
- The \$4.76 assigned to the acquisition and preservation of additional green/open space was the lowest of all of the RPD Groups, and more than 50% lower than the countywide average.
- Only two other RPD Group's budgeted a smaller amount to additional diverse recreational facilities such as dog parks, skate parks, and community gardens than did the West (\$6.19).
- The respondents within the West region budgeted only \$12.38 to the two acquisition items (park and green/open space acquisition), the lowest of any RPD Group.

## WEST CENTRAL



- \$17.27 was budgeted by the West Central's respondents for additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities such as ball diamonds, athletic fields, and sports courts. This is the third highest amount of the twelve RPD Groups.
- Only two other RPD Groups budgeted more for acquisition of land on which to build parks, than did the West Central (\$9.42). This amount was nearly 30% higher than the countywide average.
- The West Central region also assigned the third highest amount of funding (\$9.42) to the acquisition and preservation of additional green/open spaces.
- Respondents in the West Central region assigned \$15.37 to additional places to walk, jog, and bicycle. That amount was the fourth highest of any of the RPD Groups.
- The RPD Group was one of only three that did not have a single budget amount of \$20.00 or more amongst its \$100 budgeted.
- The \$10.95 budgeted by the West Central area for additional indoor recreation facilities was the lowest of all RPD Groups, and over 20% lower than the countywide average of \$14.17.

## WEST SOUTHWEST



- The \$19.91 budgeted by the respondents in the West Southwest was the third highest amount for additional places to walk, jog, and bicycle among the twelve RPD Groups, and more than 30% higher than the countywide average.
- The West Southwest budgeted the third-most amount (\$11.13) of all RPD Groups to additional diverse recreational facilities such as dog parks, skateboard parks, and community Gardens. This amount is more than 35% higher than the countywide average.
- Only two other RPD Groups assigned more funding than the West Southwest's \$8.98 to additional arts, nature, historical, and cultural facilities.
- The RPD Group was one of only three that did not have a single budget amount of \$20.00 or more amongst its \$100 budgeted.
- Only regions budgeted less to enhanced park and facility maintenance than the West Southwest RPD Group's \$13.62, which is more than 25% lower than the countywide average.
- The combined amount of funding (\$15.40) the region assigned to the two park acquisition items (acquisition of additional parks and open/green spaces) was the fourth lowest of all RPD Groups.



*SURVEY QUESTION 6* asked respondents to “Choose up to five types of public parks or recreational facilities that you'd like to have provided at a level greater than presently available. If you believe none are needed, please select "none" at the end of the list of facilities.” A total of 30 options were provided, including “other” (to allow other facilities to be written in) and “none.” The 30 choices were:

Athletic fields for sports such as soccer, lacrosse, football and field hockey	Indoor swimming pools	Outdoor swimming pools
Baseball or softball diamonds	Indoor tennis courts	Outdoor tennis courts
Bicycle lanes or paths on or along roadways, for both recreational and transportational purposes	Mountain bike trails	Paved paths for walking and jogging
Boat ramps	Nature centers	Picnic pavilions and picnic areas
Canoe and kayak launches	Nature trails for hiking and bird-watching	Playgrounds and tot lots
Fenced dog parks (areas where dogs can run and play off-leash)	None	Recreation or community centers (typically include gymnasium and recreation activity rooms)
Fishing piers and fishing areas	Open, grassy areas for free play activities	Skate parks
Indoor arts facilities, including theaters, auditoriums, dance rooms and arts rooms	Other (please specify)	Specially designed or adaptive recreation facilities to serve individuals with disabilities
Indoor ice rinks	Outdoor amphitheaters and stages	Swimming beaches
Indoor sports fields	Outdoor basketball courts	Undeveloped, natural green spaces

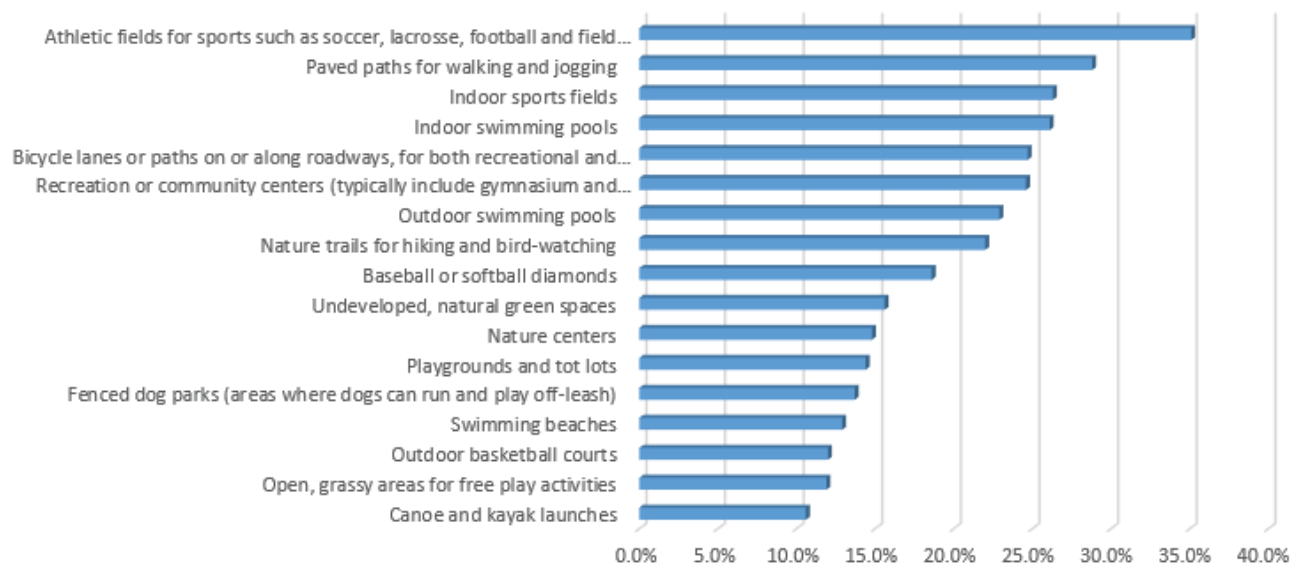
Of the 943 survey responses, only 7 (or 0.7%) selected “none” as their answer. 60 (or 6.4%) of the respondents included an “other” facility type, with the following generating three or more write-in responses:

- Places to hunt (4)
- Indoor/outdoor tracks (4)
- Indoor dance facilities (3)
- Indoor/outdoor swimming pools (3)

The countywide results for this survey question are displayed in both tabular and chart format on the following page. The “response percent” column indicates what percentage of respondents listed each answer option as a top five choice.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Athletic fields for sports such as soccer, lacrosse, football and field hockey	35.1%
Paved paths for walking and jogging	28.8%
Indoor sports fields	26.3%
Indoor swimming pools	26.1%
Bicycle lanes or paths on or along roadways, for both recreational and transportational purposes	24.7%
Recreation or community centers (typically include gymnasium and recreation activity rooms)	24.6%
Outdoor swimming pools	22.9%
Nature trails for hiking and bird-watching	22.0%
Baseball or softball diamonds	18.6%
Undeveloped, natural green spaces	15.6%
Nature centers	14.8%
Playgrounds and tot lots	14.4%
Fenced dog parks (areas where dogs can run and play off-leash)	13.7%
Swimming beaches	12.9%
Outdoor basketball courts	12.0%
Open, grassy areas for free play activities	11.9%
Canoe and kayak launches	10.6%
Indoor arts facilities, including theaters, auditoriums, dance rooms and arts rooms	9.9%
Fishing piers and fishing areas	9.0%
Outdoor tennis courts	8.1%
Picnic pavilions and picnic areas	8.0%
Indoor ice rinks	7.7%
Outdoor amphitheaters and stages	7.6%
Specially designed or adaptive recreation facilities to serve individuals with disabilities	7.4%
Mountain bike trails	6.9%
Other (please specify)*	6.4%
Indoor tennis courts	6.2%
Skate parks	5.0%
Boat ramps	3.9%
None	0.7%

Answer Options Selected as a Top Five Choice in 10% or More of the Responses



The prior chart displays all options that were selected as a top five choice within 10% or more of the survey responses. These 17 options include a wide range of parks and recreational facility types, ranging from traditional outdoor recreation facilities for organized sports programs, to facilities and spaces where individuals and groups can recreate in a non-programmed manner in their free time, to a number of indoor recreation facilities, to nature and environment-oriented areas and facilities.

The following table displays the results for question 6 for each of the twelve RPD Groups. The column in gray shows the overall countywide response. Green shading indicates responses of 20% or greater within the given RPD Group.

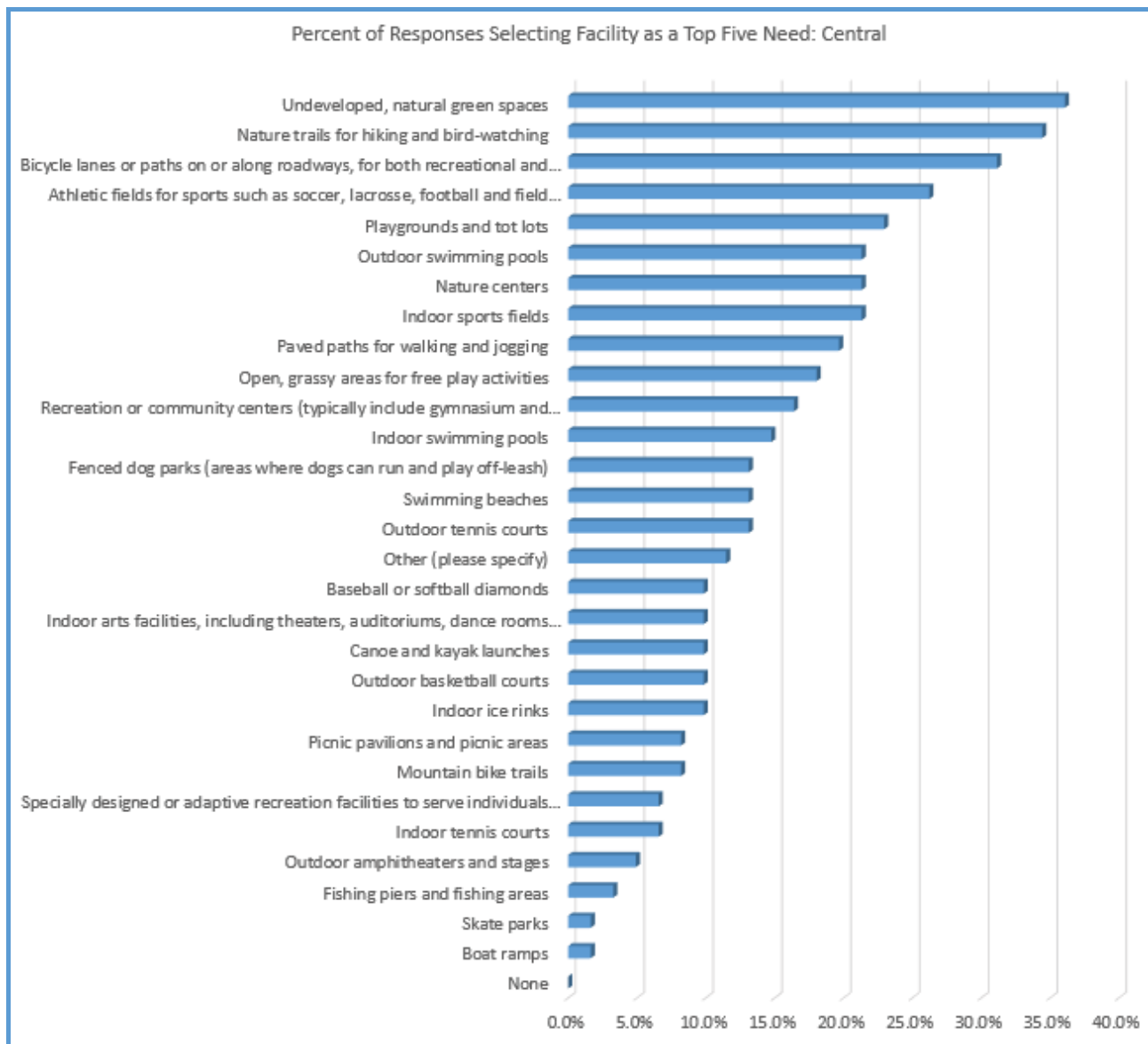
Options	County	Central	East	East Central	North	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	West	West Central	West Southwest
Athletic fields for sports such as soccer, lacrosse, football and field hockey	35.1%	26.2%	21.1%	21.7%	67.3%	44.9%	26.2%	23.2%	39.5%	31.1%	28.6%	47.5%	28.8%
Paved paths for walking and jogging	28.8%	19.7%	28.1%	16.9%	21.2%	29.2%	18.0%	43.5%	27.3%	38.7%	38.1%	40.0%	39.4%
Indoor sports fields	26.3%	21.3%	17.5%	18.1%	47.8%	27.0%	26.2%	21.0%	34.9%	17.0%	19.0%	22.5%	16.3%
Indoor swimming pools	26.1%	14.8%	42.1%	27.7%	25.7%	22.5%	24.6%	23.2%	25.6%	22.6%	42.9%	20.0%	23.1%
Bicycle lanes or paths on or along roadways, for both recreational and transportation purposes	24.7%	31.1%	31.6%	14.5%	14.2%	32.6%	16.4%	31.2%	18.0%	27.4%	28.6%	37.5%	31.7%
Recreation or community centers (typically include gymnasium and recreation activity rooms)	24.6%	16.4%	17.5%	19.3%	29.2%	15.7%	27.9%	21.7%	30.2%	25.5%	66.7%	17.5%	32.7%
Outdoor swimming pools	22.9%	21.3%	15.8%	18.1%	31.9%	13.5%	8.2%	21.0%	30.8%	22.6%	33.3%	15.0%	23.1%
Nature trails for hiking and bird-watching	22.0%	34.4%	17.5%	27.7%	8.0%	19.1%	26.2%	29.7%	18.6%	26.4%	23.8%	20.0%	25.0%
Baseball or softball diamonds	18.6%	9.8%	7.0%	14.5%	36.3%	15.7%	19.7%	16.7%	14.0%	20.8%	28.6%	22.5%	22.1%
Undeveloped, natural green spaces	15.6%	36.1%	10.5%	21.7%	3.5%	14.6%	23.0%	12.3%	14.5%	23.6%	0.0%	17.5%	19.2%
Nature centers	14.8%	21.3%	12.3%	25.3%	8.8%	6.7%	23.0%	16.7%	12.2%	22.6%	14.3%	5.0%	18.3%
Playgrounds and tot lots	14.4%	23.0%	7.0%	20.5%	13.3%	9.0%	6.6%	20.3%	12.2%	17.0%	9.5%	7.5%	16.3%

(continued on the next page)

Options	County	Central	East	East Central	North	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	West	West Central	West Southwest
Fenced dog parks (areas where dogs can run and play off-leash)	13.7%	13.1%	19.3%	14.5%	3.5%	15.7%	8.2%	10.9%	17.4%	17.0%	23.8%	20.0%	18.3%
Swimming beaches	12.9%	13.1%	17.5%	9.6%	4.4%	12.4%	9.8%	10.9%	25.6%	4.7%	9.5%	12.5%	6.7%
Outdoor basketball courts	12.0%	9.8%	22.8%	14.5%	9.7%	5.6%	13.1%	20.3%	6.4%	6.6%	28.6%	2.5%	11.5%
Open, grassy areas for free play activities	11.9%	18.0%	8.8%	16.9%	5.3%	14.6%	11.5%	12.3%	9.9%	13.2%	9.5%	15.0%	12.5%
Canoe and kayak launches	10.6%	9.8%	17.5%	7.2%	8.8%	9.0%	6.6%	10.9%	11.0%	14.2%	4.8%	7.5%	12.5%
Indoor arts facilities, including theaters, auditoriums, dance rooms and arts rooms	9.9%	9.8%	8.8%	13.3%	7.1%	5.6%	19.7%	8.7%	8.7%	15.1%	9.5%	2.5%	13.5%
Fishing piers and fishing areas	9.0%	3.3%	8.8%	12.0%	6.2%	11.2%	13.1%	5.1%	15.7%	7.5%	4.8%	15.0%	4.8%
Outdoor tennis courts	8.1%	13.1%	7.0%	3.6%	4.4%	12.4%	6.6%	13.0%	6.4%	5.7%	0.0%	15.0%	5.8%
Picnic pavilions and picnic areas	8.0%	8.2%	8.8%	9.6%	8.0%	0.0%	3.3%	8.0%	9.3%	11.3%	14.3%	0.0%	12.5%
Indoor ice rinks	7.7%	9.8%	17.5%	8.4%	5.3%	9.0%	3.3%	3.6%	7.6%	10.4%	9.5%	15.0%	10.6%
Outdoor amphitheaters and stages	7.6%	4.9%	5.3%	9.6%	6.2%	5.6%	14.8%	10.9%	7.0%	7.5%	9.5%	0.0%	8.7%
Specially designed or adaptive recreation facilities to serve individuals with disabilities	7.4%	6.6%	3.5%	10.8%	6.2%	10.1%	11.5%	5.8%	5.2%	9.4%	9.5%	10.0%	9.6%
Mountain bike trails	6.9%	8.2%	5.3%	4.8%	4.4%	11.2%	9.8%	10.9%	5.8%	2.8%	4.8%	12.5%	4.8%
Other (please specify)	6.4%	11.5%	17.5%	8.4%	2.7%	5.6%	8.2%	5.1%	4.7%	3.8%	9.5%	2.5%	2.9%
Indoor tennis courts	6.2%	6.6%	3.5%	3.6%	7.1%	9.0%	9.8%	7.2%	4.7%	3.8%	4.8%	5.0%	5.8%
Skate parks	5.0%	1.6%	3.5%	12.0%	4.4%	0.0%	9.8%	0.7%	7.0%	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%
Boat ramps	3.9%	1.6%	5.3%	2.4%	1.8%	5.6%	3.3%	2.2%	7.0%	3.8%	4.8%	7.5%	1.9%
None	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	1.1%	1.6%	0.7%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The following is a summary of the question six results by RPD Group.

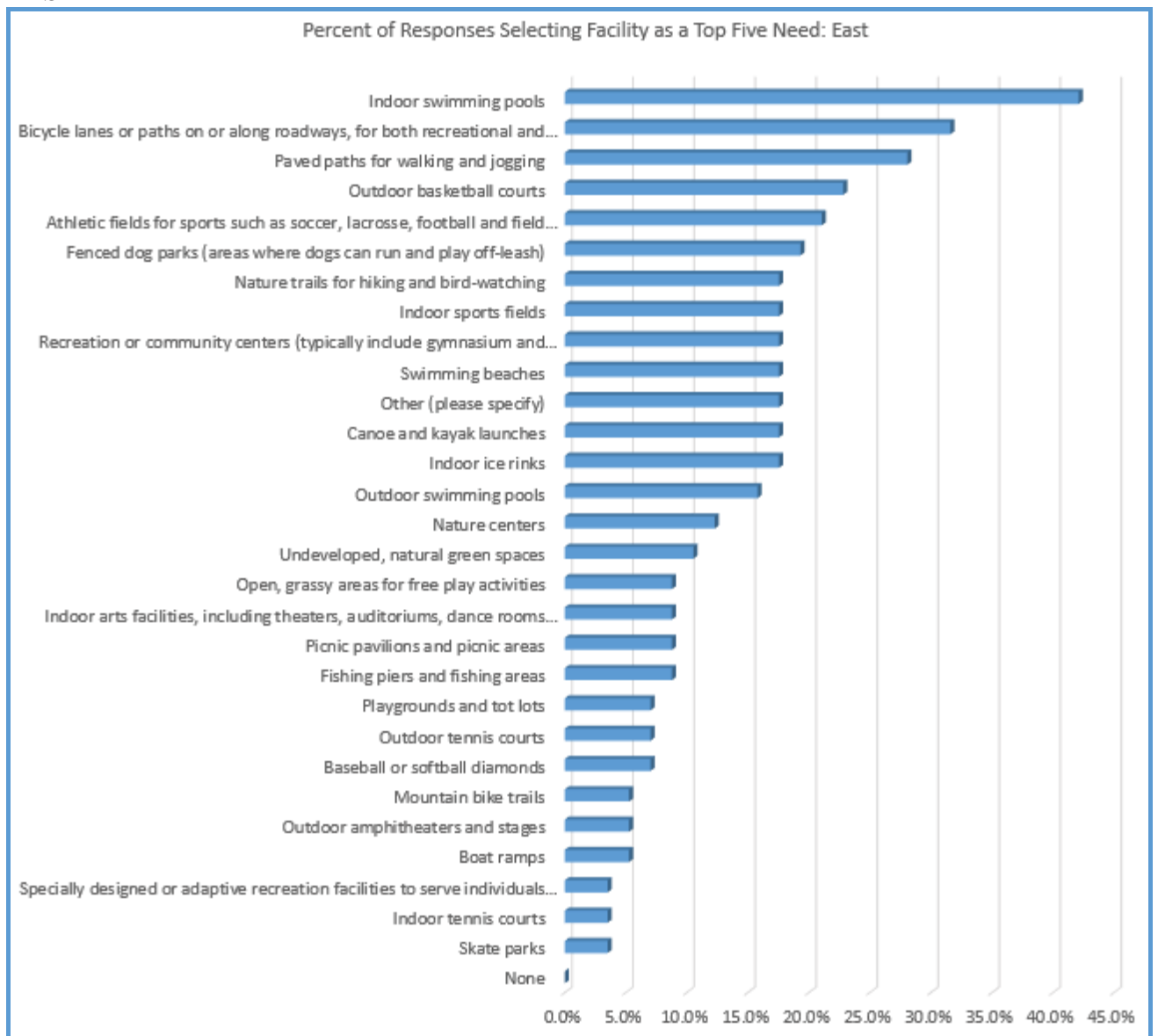
## CENTRAL



- The Central area was one of four RPD Groups with undeveloped, natural green spaces as the number one choice, with a response rate of more than double the countywide average.
- The 34.4% response rate for trails for hiking and bird watching was the highest countywide.
- The Central was one of six RPD Groups that had an average of over 30% for bicycle lanes and paths along roadways.
- While 26.2% of respondents identified athletic fields as a top five demand, that figure was tied for the third lowest of all RPD Groups.
- The Central had the highest response (23.0%) of all RPD Groups for playgrounds/tot lots.
- At just 9.8%, the area's desire for ball diamonds was the second lowest of all RPD Groups, and nearly half of the countywide average.

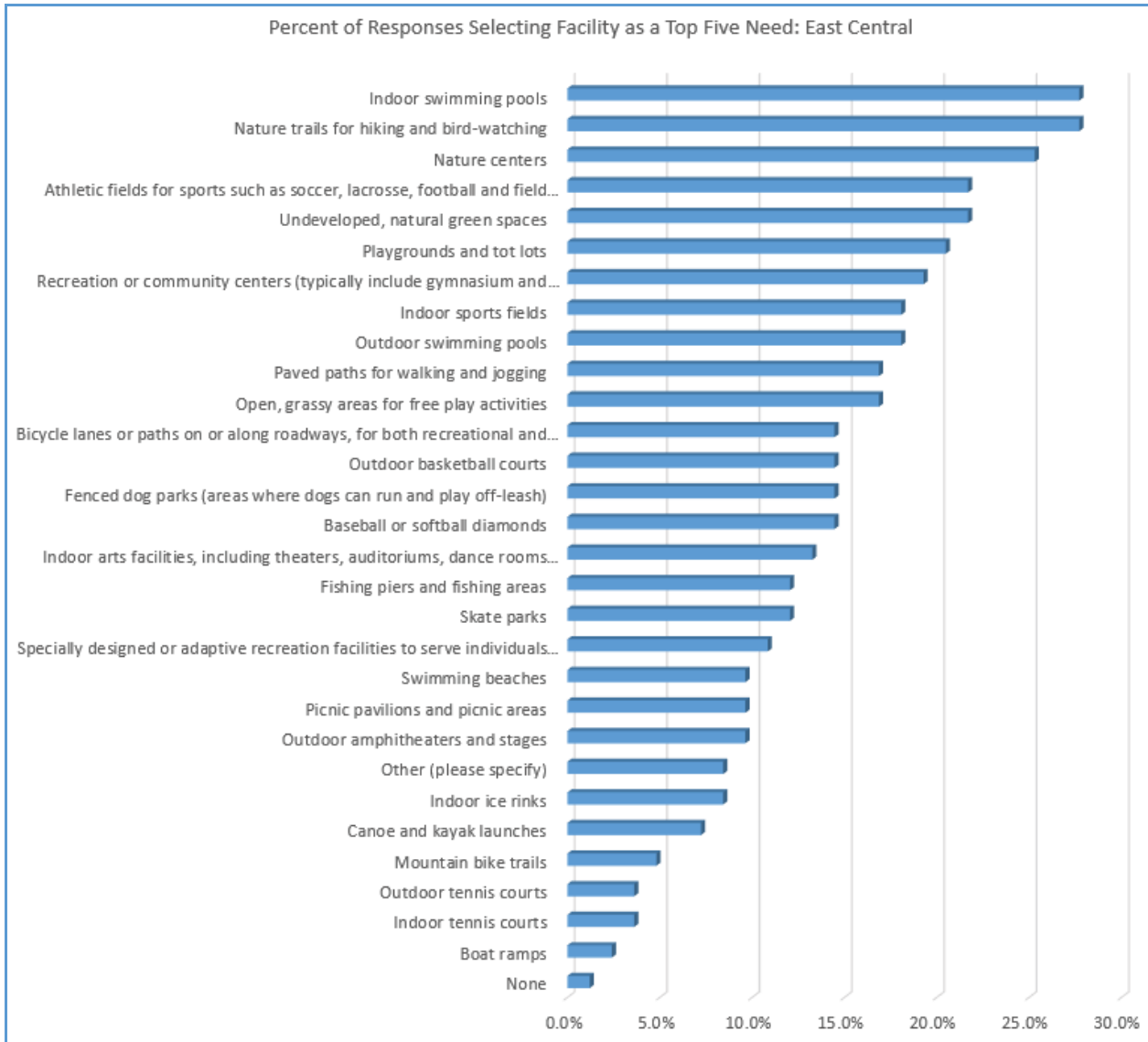


## EAST



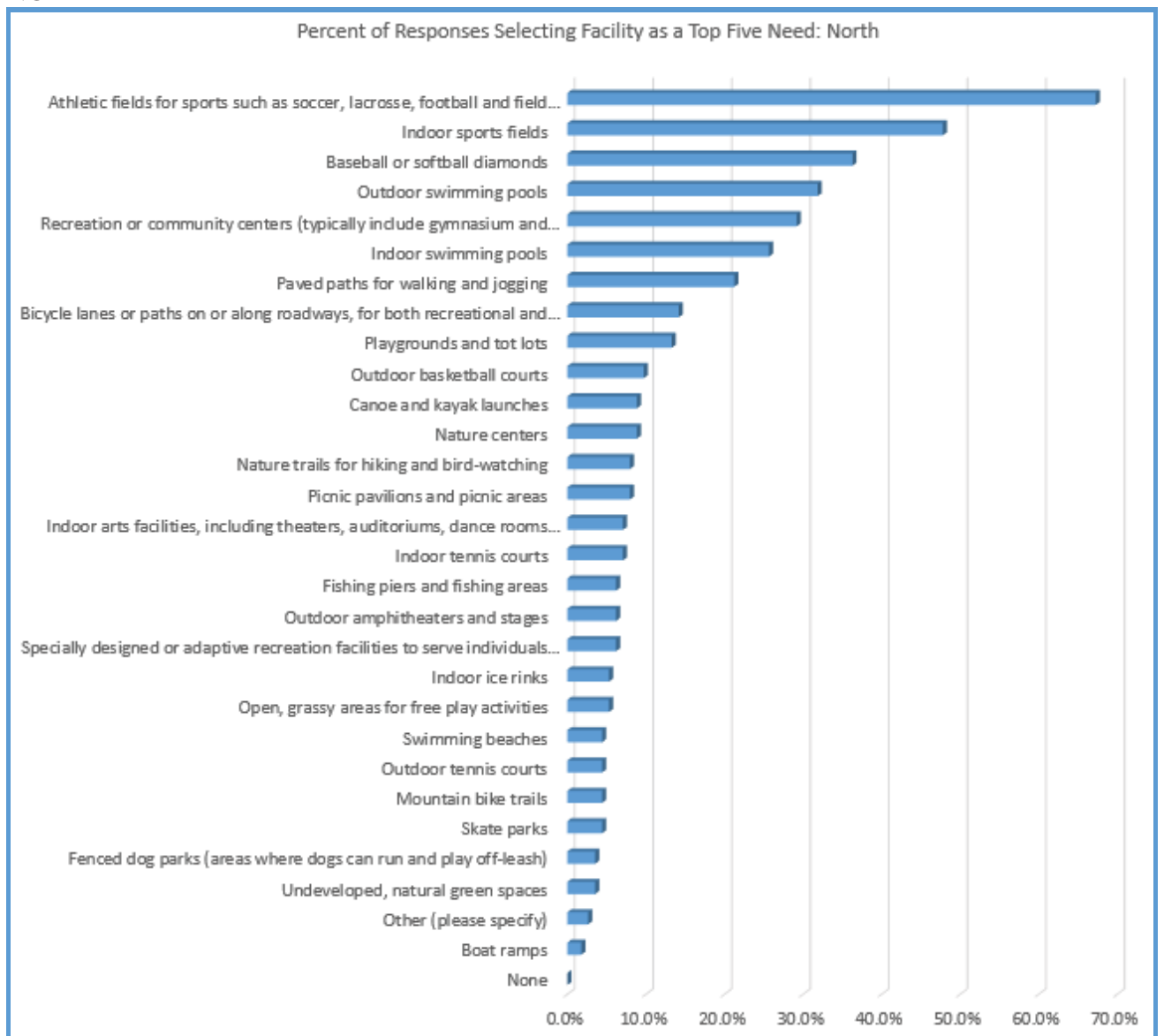
- The East's 42.1% demand level for indoor swimming pools was one of only two responses among RPD Groups to exceed 40%, with the remaining ten RPD Groups having response rates of between 14.8% and 27.7%.
- The East was one of six areas with a 30%+ response for bike lanes and paths along roads.
- 22.8% of respondents expressed a desire for outdoor basketball courts, the second highest rate of any RPD Group and nearly double the countywide average.
- The East had the lowest response (21.1%) of all RPD Groups for athletic fields.
- The respondents registered a rate of 19.3% for fenced dog parks, the third highest rate of all RPD Groups.
- The East's 17.5% rate for canoe and kayak launches was the highest of all RPD Groups.

## EAST CENTRAL



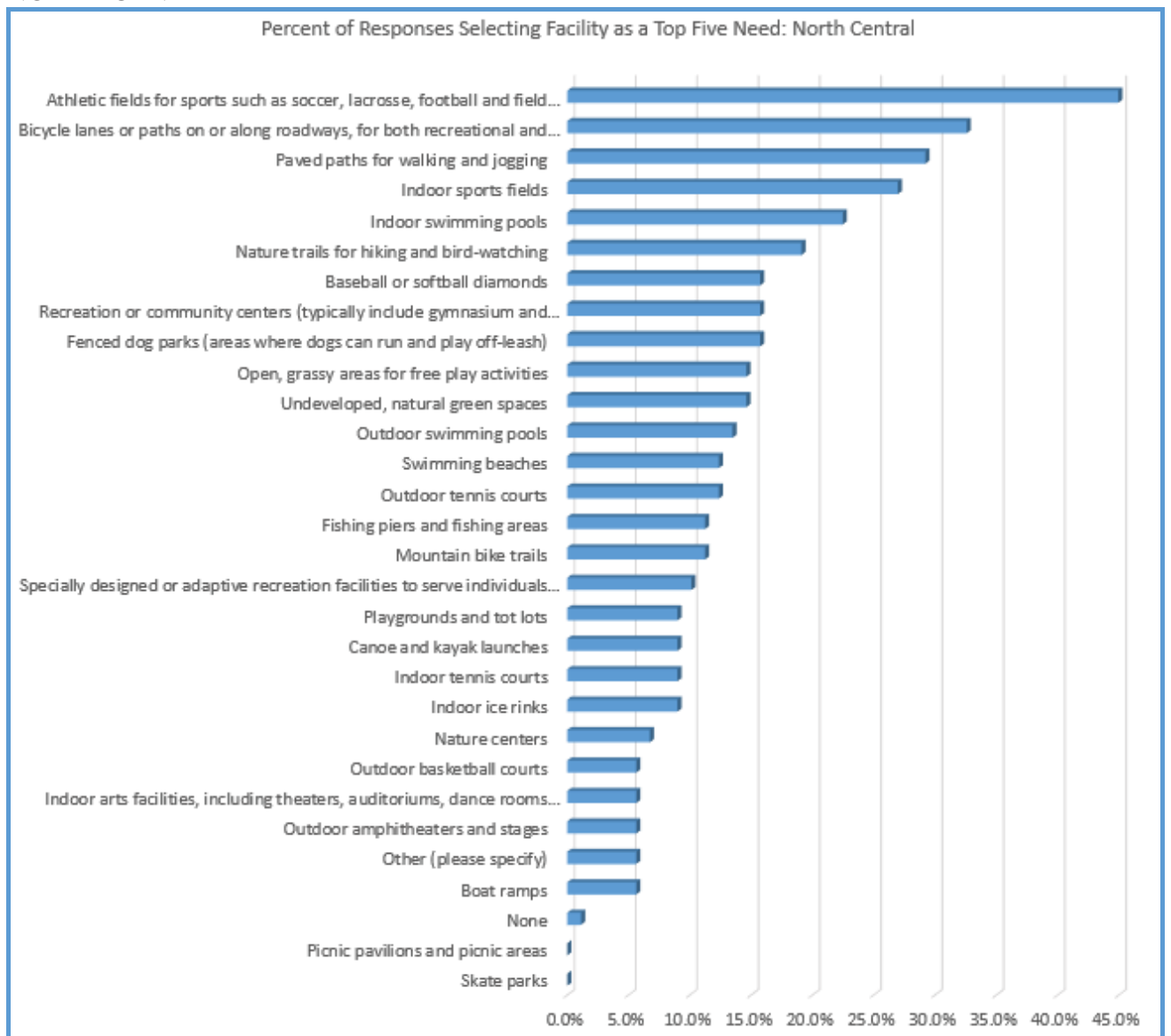
- The East Central was one of only two RPD Groups whose top choice (Indoor Swimming Pools, at 27.7%) was a response rate of less than 30%.
- The region's 27.7% response rate for nature trails was the third highest among all areas.
- The selection rate of 25.3% for nature centers was the largest of all of the twelve RPD Groups, and one of only four with a rate over 20%.
- The East Central had the second lowest percentage of responses (21.7%) of all RPD Groups for athletic fields.
- The demand for playgrounds/tot lots (20.5%) was second highest of any RPD Group.
- Respondents in the East Central selected skate parks at a rate of 12.0%, by far the highest rate of all RPD Groups, and seven-and-a-half times larger than the countywide average of 1.6%.

## NORTH



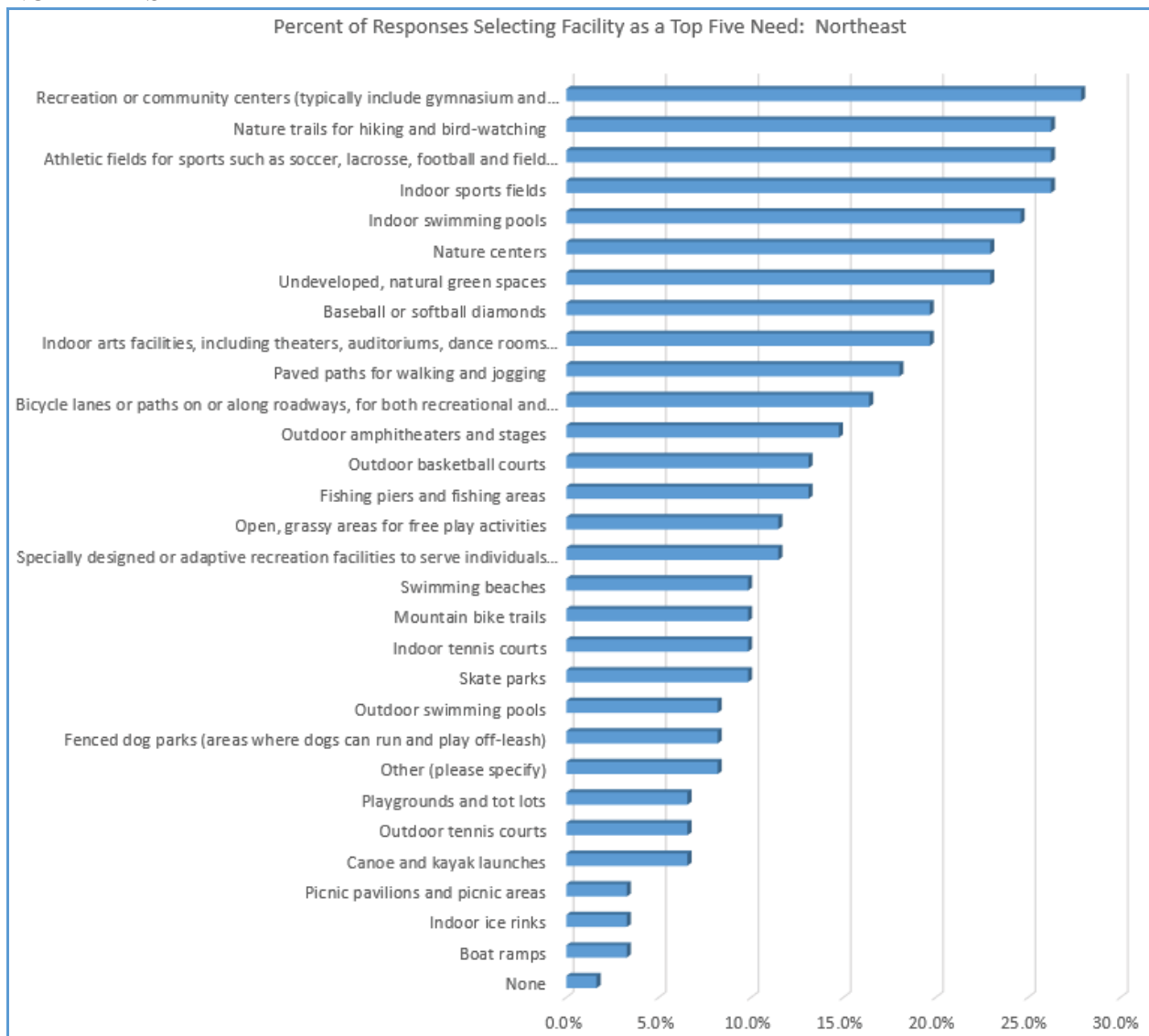
- The North area's 67.3% demand for athletic fields was the highest single rate within question 6 responses, and nearly double the countywide average.
- The North registered the largest demand for indoor sports fields, at a rate of 47.8%.
- This area also had the highest response for ball diamonds, with the rate of 36.3% being nearly double the countywide average.
- The North RPD Group had the fourth highest demand for recreation/community centers of all regions, with a demand rate of 29.2%.
- The respondents within the North had the lowest response rate (14.2%) for bike lanes and paths along roadways, more than 10% lower than the countywide average.
- Only one other RPD Group had a lower response rate for undeveloped, natural green spaces than the North's 3.5%. The countywide rate was nearly 4.5 times as high.

## NORTH CENTRAL



- The highest response rate for the North Central was its 44.9% for athletic fields, which represented the third highest such rate of the twelve RPD Groups.
- The North Central area had the second highest demand rate for bicycle lanes and paths along roads, at a rate of 32.6%.
- Respondents in this area demanded indoor sports fields at a rate of 27.0%, the third highest of any of the RPD Groups.
- Only 15.7% of the respondents listed recreation/community centers as a top five request, the lowest rate of an RPD Group.
- The demand for mountain bike trails (11.2%) was the second highest of all regions, and the North Central was one of only three RPD Groups that rated this need more than 10%.
- The North Central area had the second lowest rating (5.6%) of any RPD Group for outdoor basketball courts.

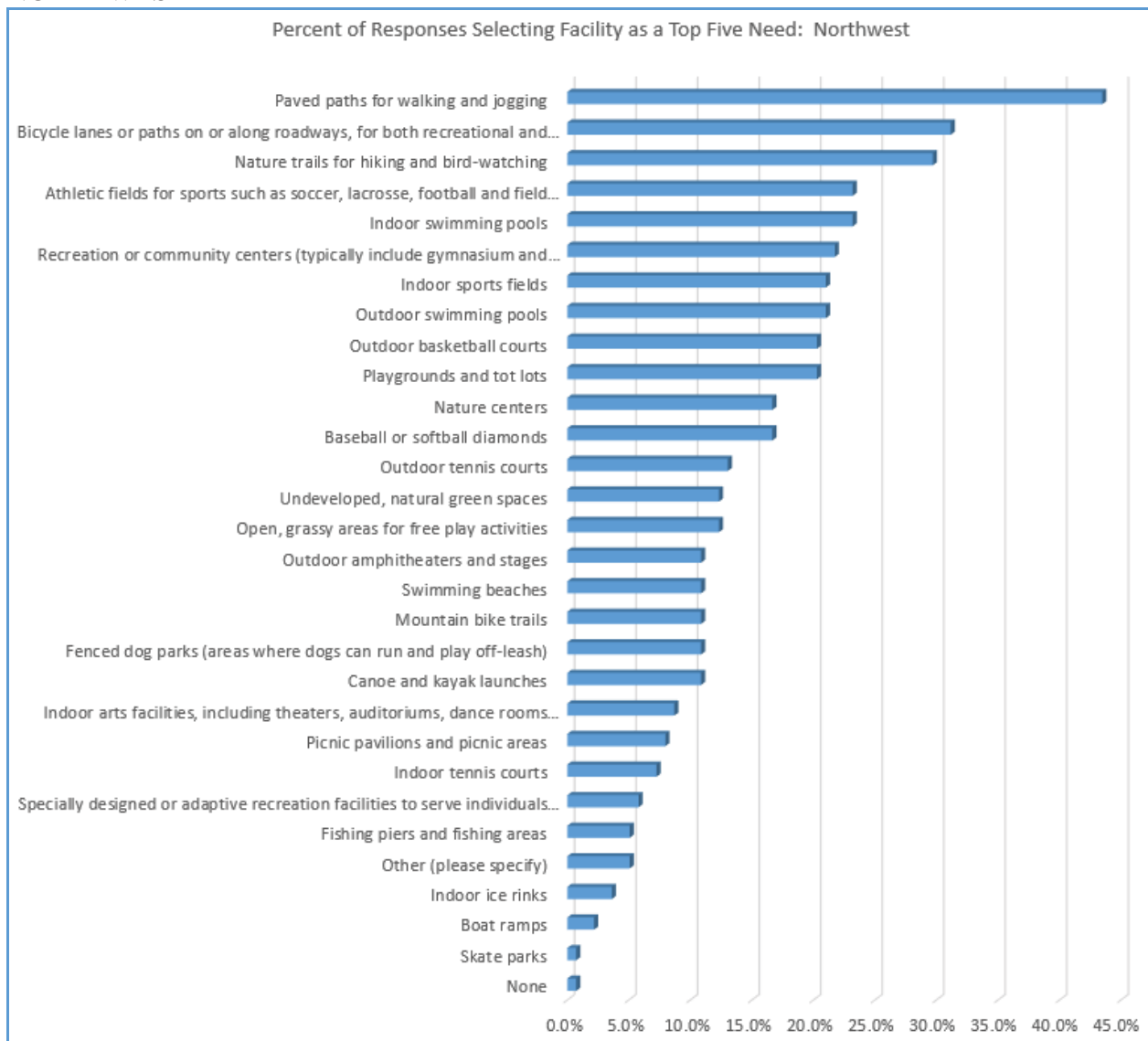
## NORTHEAST



- The Northeast's highest response rate, 27.9%, for recreation/community centers, was the fifth highest of all RPD Groups for that facility type.
- Though athletic fields were identified as the second-most demanded facility, the rate of 26.2% was the fourth lowest of the twelve CPD Groups and well below the countywide average of 35.1%.
- The region's 26.2% demand for indoor sports fields is the fourth highest of all regions.
- 23.0% of the area's respondents listed nature centers as a top five priority, representing the second highest rating among the RPD Groups.
- The northeast was the RPD Group that had the largest percentage of demand (19.7%) for indoor arts facilities, nearly 10% higher than the countywide average. The area also had the highest demand rate (14.8%) for outdoor amphitheaters and stages.
- The region had the second largest amount of interest in skate parks (9.8%), nearly double the countywide demand rate.

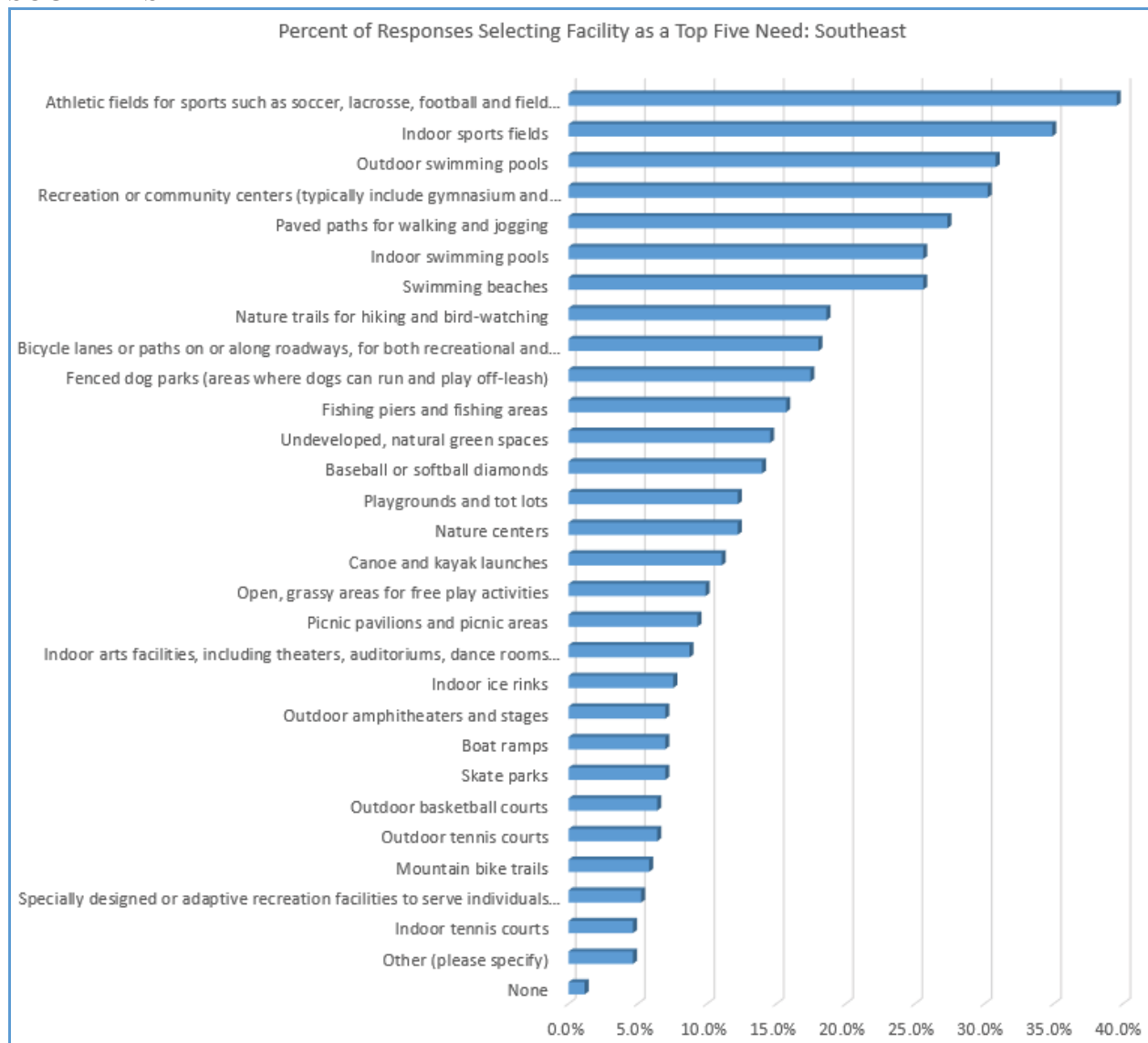


## NORTHWEST



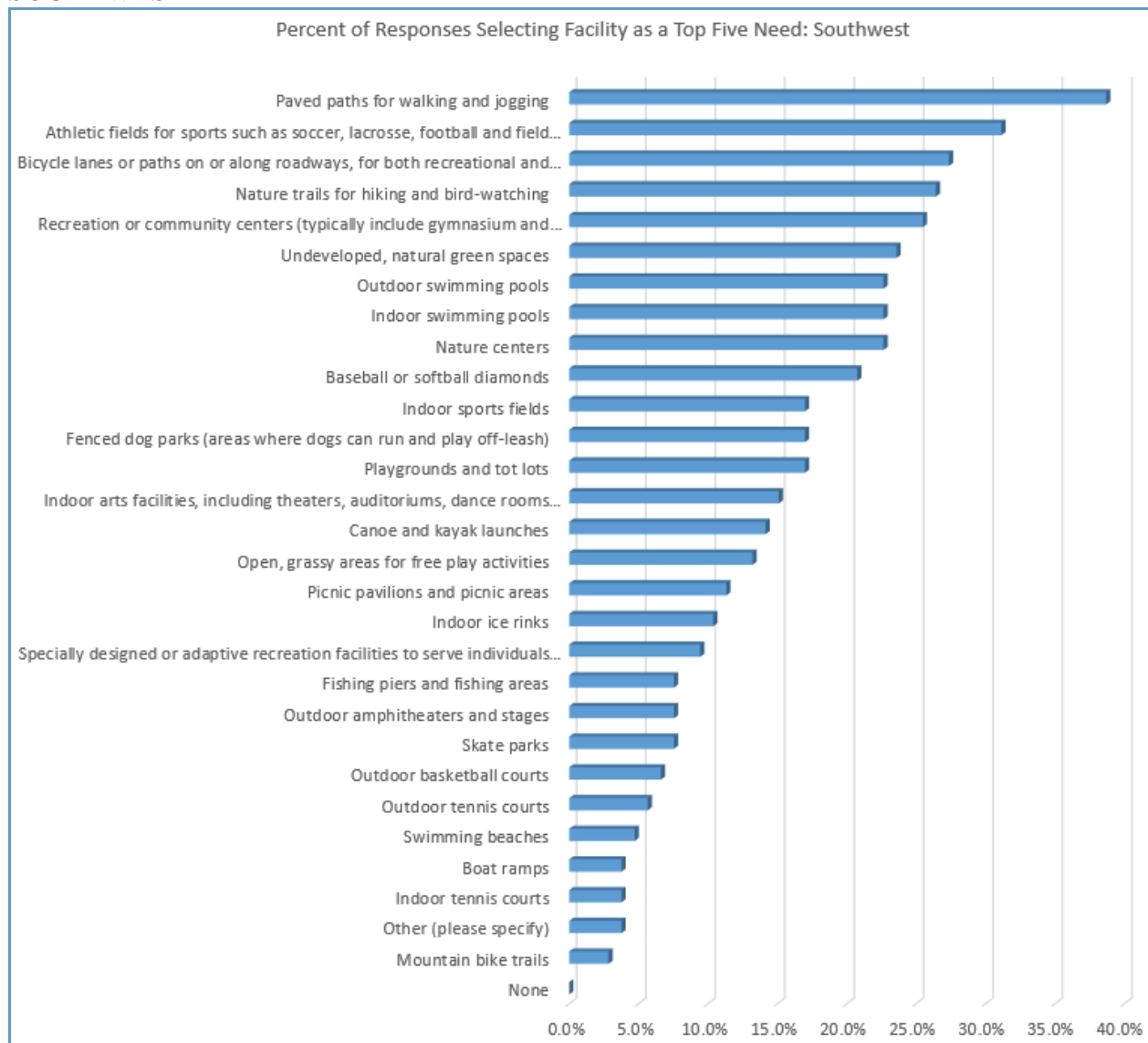
- The Northwest region had the largest demand rate (43.5%) for paved paths of the twelve RPD Groups, more than 15% higher than the countywide average.
- The area was also one of six RPD Groups that had an average of over 30% for bicycle lanes and paths along roadways.
- Completing a trifecta of interest in linear forms of recreation (walking, jogging, hiking, bicycling, etc.), the Northwest had the second most interest of the RPD Groups for nature trails.
- Only two other RPD Groups registered lower percentages in demand for athletic fields than did the Northwest (23.2%).
- The respondents within the Northwest region had the third-most interest in outdoor basketball courts (20.3%) of the RPD Groups.
- The Northwest RPD Group had the third highest rating for playgrounds/tot lots (20.3%).

## SOUTHEAST



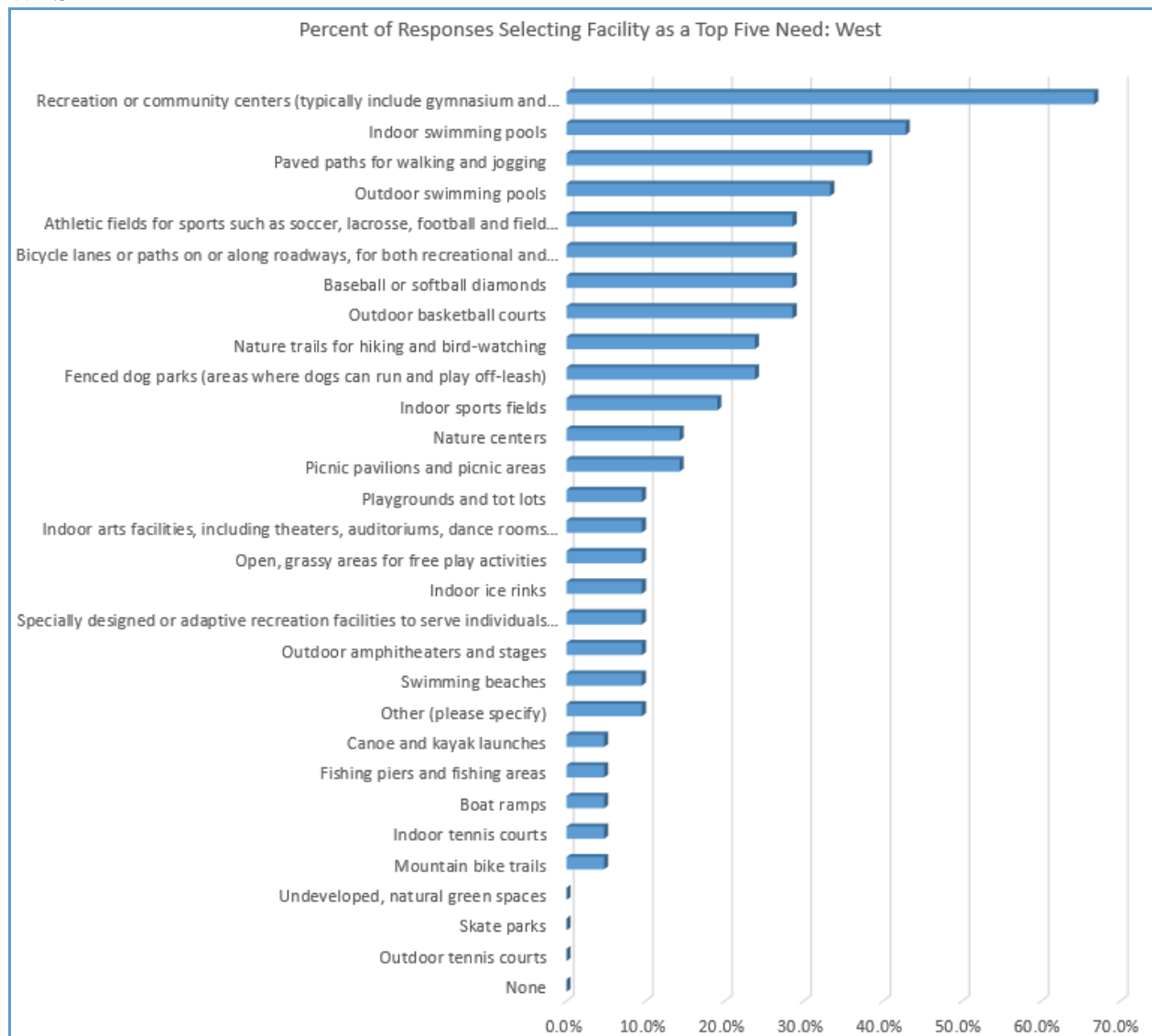
- The Southeast region had the fourth highest response rate (39.5%) of the twelve RPD Groups for athletic fields as a top five desired facility.
- The 34.9% demand rate for indoor sports fields was the second largest among all RPD Groups.
- Demand for recreation/community centers (30.2%) was the third highest of all regions.
- 25.6% of area respondents selected swimming beaches as one of their top five choices for additional facilities, the highest such rating of all RPD Groups, and almost double the countywide average of 12.9%.
- Southeast respondents had the highest demand of all RPD Groups for fishing piers and area, at a rate of 15.7%.
- The area registered the third lowest demand level among the RPD Groups for nature trails (18.6%).

## SOUTHWEST



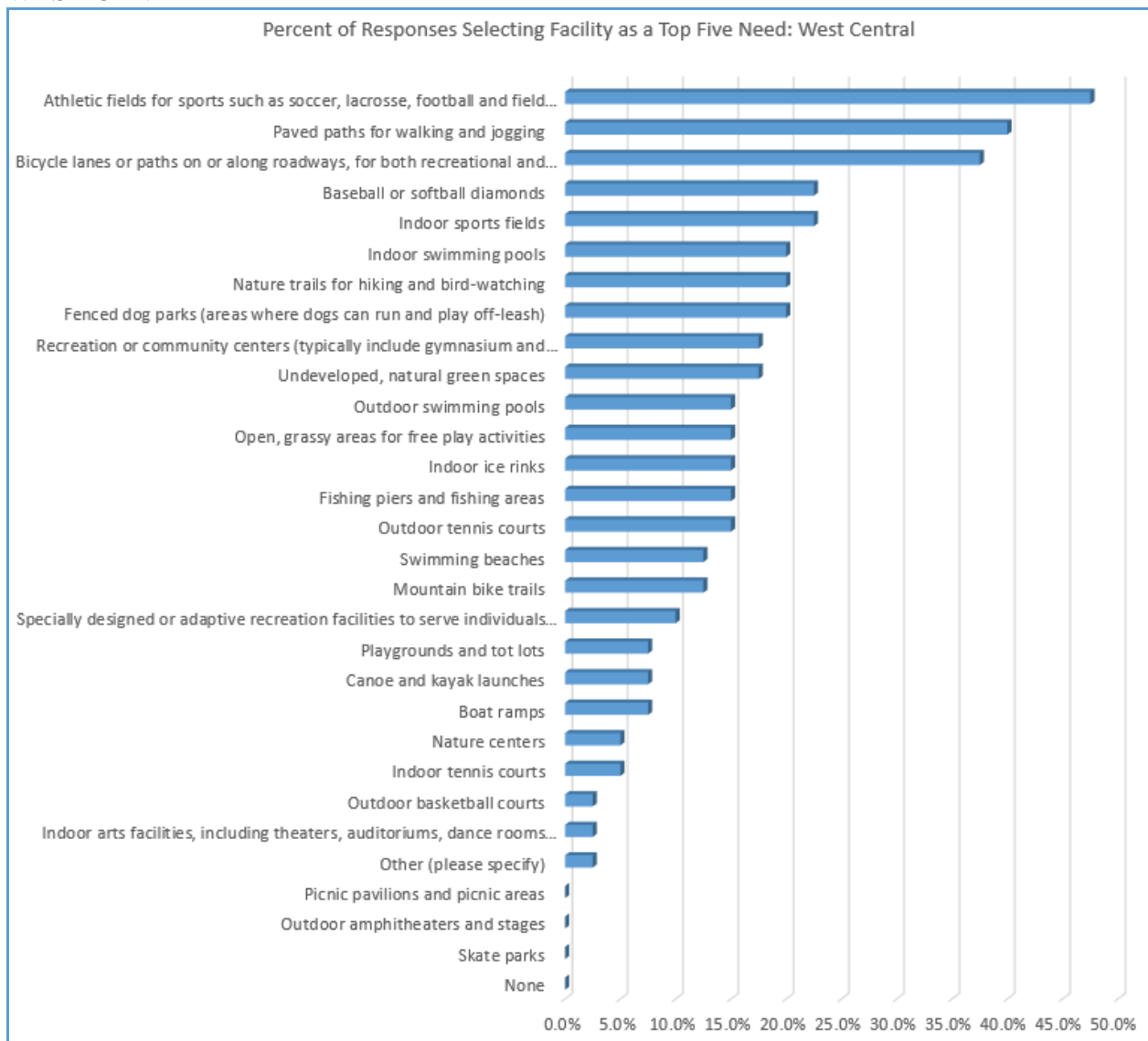
- The highest demanded top five facility for the Southwest was paved paths, at 38.7%. This was the third highest amount of all RPD Groups.
- The region's 31.1% response for athletic fields was the fifth highest of the twelve RPD Groups.
- Respondents within this area registered the second highest demand for undeveloped, natural green spaces (23.6%) of all RPD Groups.
- The Southwest area registered the second highest demand rate (15.1%) for indoor arts facilities of the RPD Groups.
- Only two other RPD Groups had higher demand levels for picnic pavilions and areas than did the Southwest (11.3%).
- The Southwest area had the second lowest response rate for indoor sports fields (17.0%) of all RPD Groups.

## WEST



- The West RPD Group's 66.7% demand rate for recreation/community centers was the second highest individual percentage of all question 6 ratings, and 2.7 times larger than the countywide average.
- The area also had the highest demand rate of any RPD Group for indoor swimming pools (42.9%), and the highest rate for outdoor swimming pools (33.3%).
- Respondents within this area registered the fourth highest response (38.1%) for paved paths.
- The 28.6% response rate for ball diamonds was the second highest of all RPD Groups.
- The same percentage of demand (28.6%) was registered by the West area for outdoor basketball courts, the highest such figure of the twelve RPD Groups.
- The West area likewise had the highest demand level of all RPD Groups for fenced dog parks, with its 23.8% demand rating being about 10% higher than the countywide average.

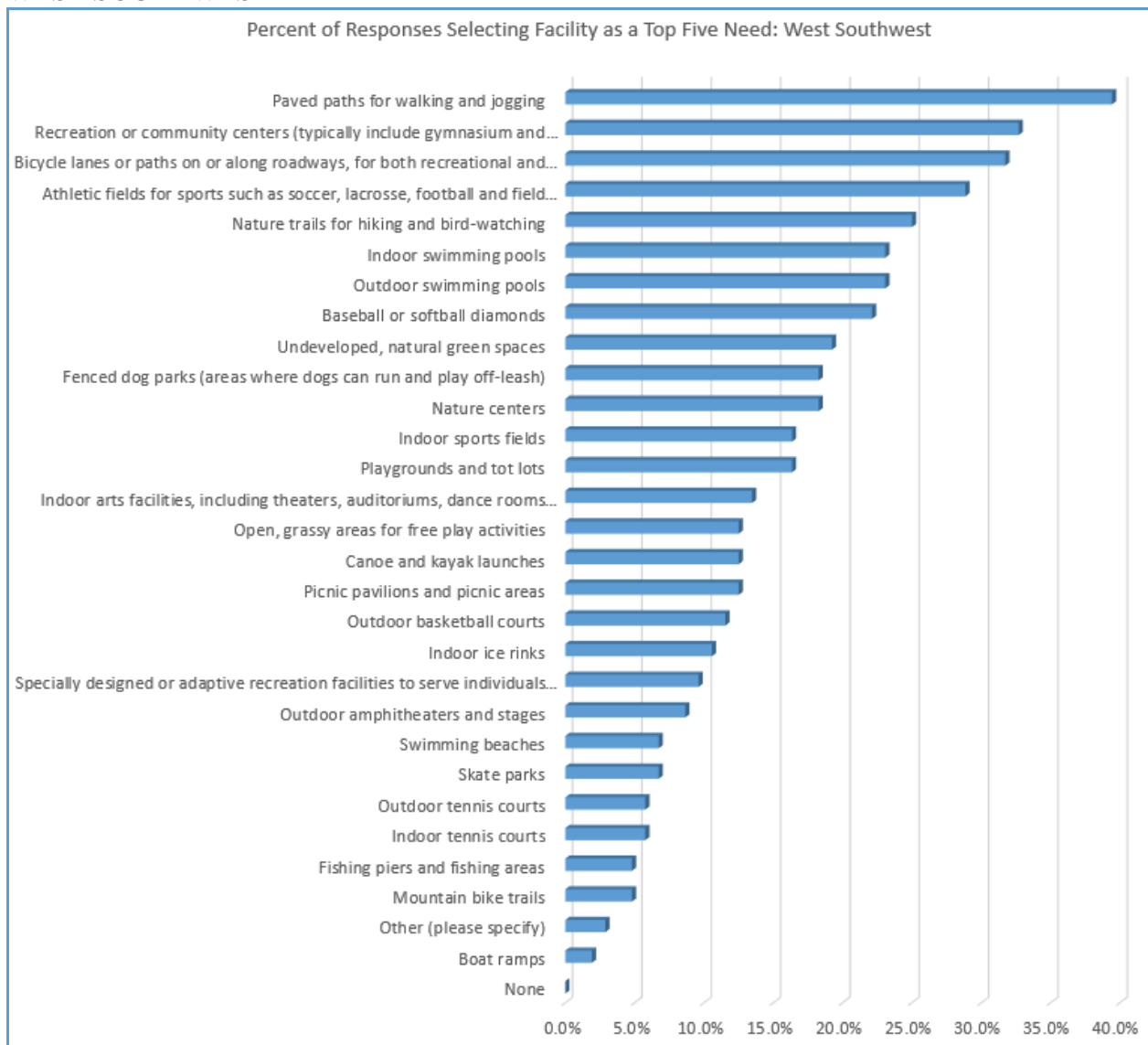
## WEST CENTRAL



- The West Central area had the second highest demand rate (47.5%) of all RPD Groups for athletic fields.
- The region also had the second highest response rate (40.0%) of the twelve RPD Groups for paved paths.
- The 37.5% demand rate for bicycle lanes and paths along roadways was the highest rate of any of the RPD Groups.
- Only two other RPD Groups registered higher percentages of interest in ball diamonds than the West Central's 22.5%.
- The respondents in this area had the second highest amount of demand (20.0%) among all RPD Groups for fenced dog parks.
- This area registered a demand rate of 15.0% for outdoor tennis courts, the largest percentage of any of the RPD Groups and nearly double the countywide average.



## WEST SOUTHWEST

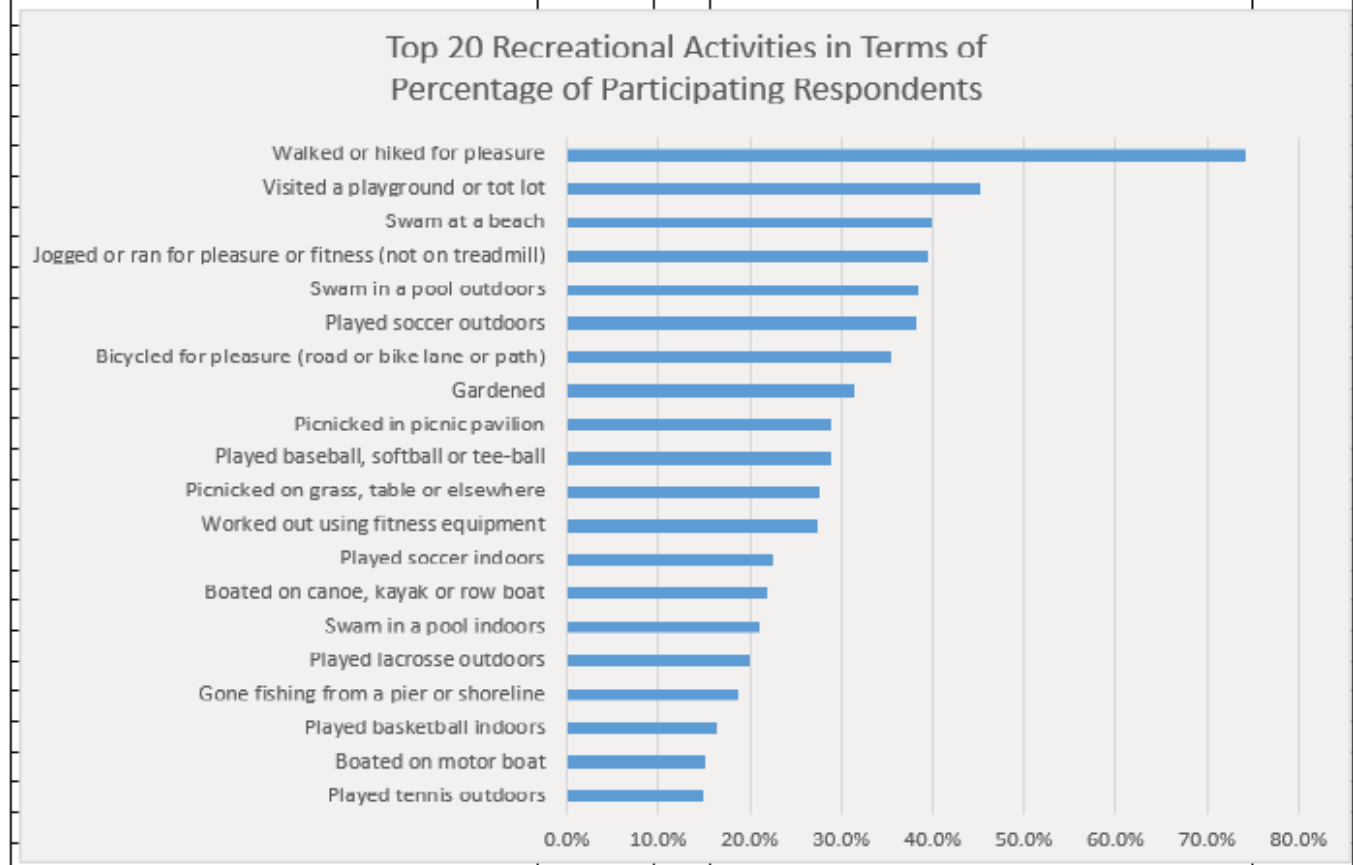


- The most frequently requested facility in the West Southwest was paved paths, with a demand rate (39.4%) that was the third highest of all RPD Groups.
- The West Southwest had the second largest demand rate (32.7%) of all RPD Groups for recreation/community centers.
- Respondents in the West Southwest area registered the third highest level of demand (31.7%) for bicycle lanes and paths along roadways, and were one of four RPD Groups that had 20% or higher demand rates for the three types of facilities that provide the most opportunities for linear forms of recreation such as walking, hiking, jogging, and cycling.
- The region also registered the fourth highest demand of all RPD Groups for dog parks (18.3%).
- The region's respondents expressed the lowest demand of the twelve RPD Groups (16.3%) for indoor sports fields, some 10% lower than the countywide average.

*SURVEY QUESTION 7* asked respondents to “Please select the recreational activities you’ve participated in within the past 12 months, not including scholastic sports or activities.” This question has long been utilized in recreation demand surveys, and though the responses pertain to actual estimated participation, the data extracted is often used as a means for displaying recreational demand. However, as mentioned previously, a county’s or area’s facility supply – or lack thereof – can have major impacts on participation. The chart and graph on the following page display the overall countywide results for question 7. Regionalized results are not provided since the data compiled at RPD Group level did not appear to be sufficiently reliable.

Question 7: Average overall participation rate responses countywide

Answer Options	Resp. %	Answer Options	Resp. %
Walked or hiked for pleasure	74.2%	Gone fishing on a boat	12.8%
Visited a playground or tot lot	45.2%	Participated in other formal fitness program	12.5%
Swam at a beach	39.8%	Participated in Yoga program	12.1%
Jogged or ran for pleasure or fitness (not on treadmill)	39.4%	Visited a dog park	11.7%
Swam in a pool outdoors	38.4%	Played football outdoors	10.6%
Played soccer outdoors	38.2%	Played lacrosse indoors	10.3%
Bicycled for pleasure (road or bike lane or path)	35.5%	Participated in a formal nature program	10.3%
Gardened	31.5%	Mountain biked	10.2%
Played baseball, softball or tee-ball	28.9%	Participated in dance program	8.3%
Picnicked in picnic pavilion	28.9%	Participated in performing arts program	8.3%
Picnicked on grass, table or elsewhere	27.7%	Ice skated, including playing ice hockey	7.2%
Worked out using fitness equipment	27.5%	Participated in other formal arts program	4.8%
Played soccer indoors	22.5%	Played other field sport indoors	4.5%
Boated on canoe, kayak or row boat	21.9%	Skateboarded	3.6%
Swam in a pool indoors	21.1%	Participated in gymnastics program	3.5%
Played lacrosse outdoors	19.9%	Played volleyball indoors	3.4%
Gone fishing from a pier or shoreline	18.7%	Boated on jet ski	3.4%
Played basketball indoors	16.3%	Boated on sail boat	3.2%
Boated on motor boat	15.2%	Played volleyball outdoors	3.1%
Played tennis outdoors	15.0%	Played tennis indoors	3.0%
Played basketball outdoors	14.8%	Participated in cheerleading program	1.3%
Played other field sport outdoors	14.4%	Played football indoors	0.9%
Participated in hobby or club program	13.5%		



Linear forms of recreation, which are typically enjoyed in one's free time, accounted for three of the ten most popular recreational activities. The most popular team/competitive sport was outdoor soccer, at number 6 overall, followed in the top 20 activities by baseball/softball/tee-ball (#9), indoor soccer (#13), outdoor lacrosse (#16), indoor basketball (#18), and outdoor tennis (#20). Numerous of the top 20 activities included nature or natural-resource based pursuits such as hiking, beach swimming, picnicking, canoeing and kayaking, fishing, and motor boating, with the number of water-based activities reflecting Baltimore County's coastal location.

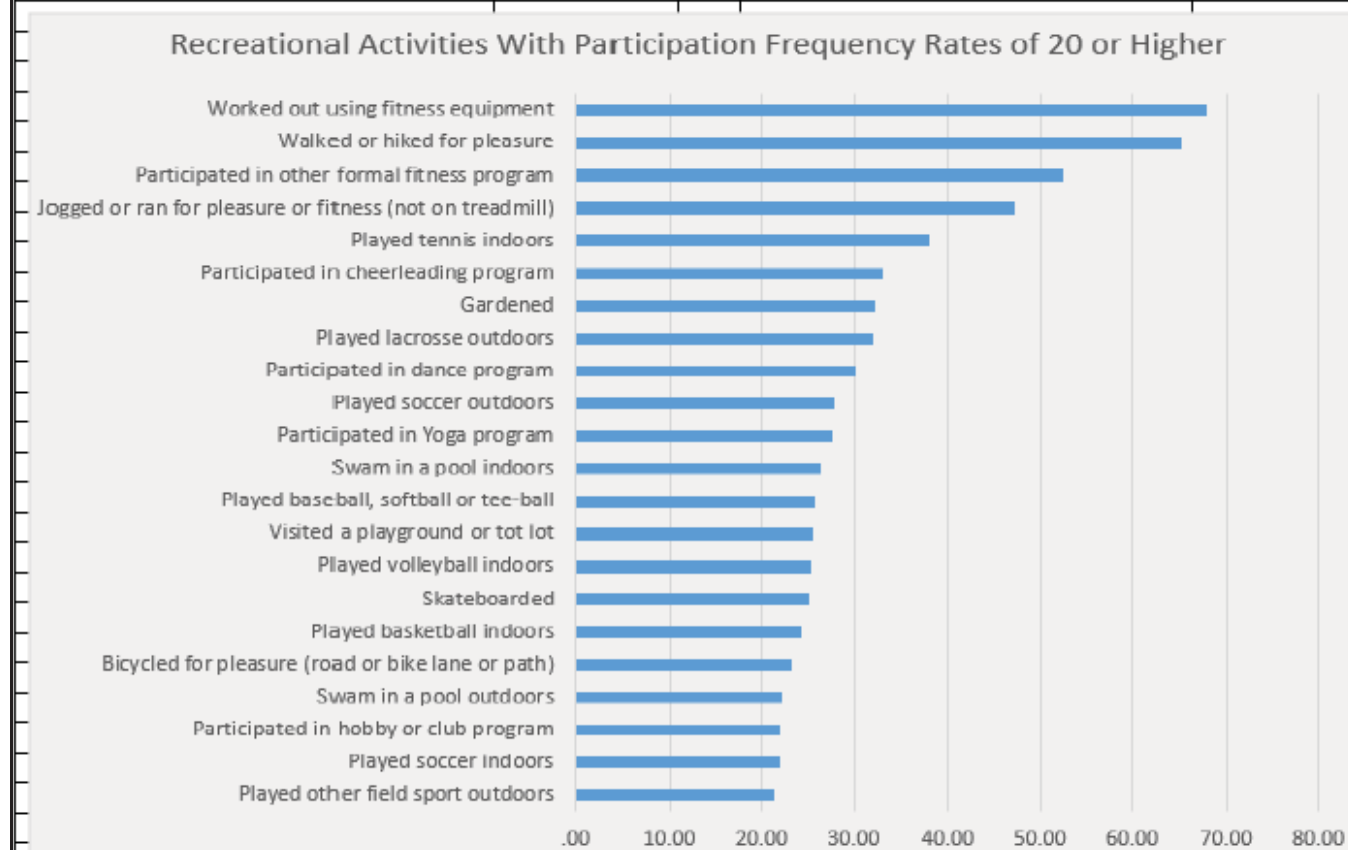


*Hiking and walking was the most popular activity. Photo location: Patapsco Valley State Park*

*SURVEY QUESTION 8* followed up on question 7 by asking respondents to “Please estimate the number of times you participated in the past 12 months, not including scholastic sports or activities.” The survey allowed respondents to indicate their estimated participation amount/frequency for only the activities in which they identified participation in question 7. Like question 7, this question has long been utilized in recreation demand surveys, with the purpose being the calculation of a “frequency rate” (i.e., the average number of times that individuals who participated in a given activity did so over the period of a year). The countywide response to this question is displayed on the following page.

Question 8: Average overall frequency rate responses countywide

Answer Options	Response Average	Answer Options	Response Average
Worked out using fitness equipment	67.78	Played basketball outdoors	16.81
Walked or hiked for pleasure	65.04	Visited a dog park	16.19
Participated in other formal fitness program	52.51	Played football outdoors	15.36
Jogged or ran for pleasure or fitness (not on treadmill)	47.22	Played other field sport indoors	14.97
Played tennis indoors	38.08	Mountain biked	14.92
Participated in cheerleading program	33.18	Participated in performing arts program	14.79
Gardened	32.22	Played lacrosse indoors	13.84
Played lacrosse outdoors	32.07	Participated in other formal arts program	12.89
Participated in dance program	30.13	Played tennis outdoors	12.06
Played soccer outdoors	27.79	Boated on motor boat	11.10
Participated in Yoga program	27.56	Gone fishing from a pier or shoreline	10.68
Swam in a pool indoors	26.31	Ice skated, including playing ice hockey	10.52
Played baseball, softball or tee-ball	25.76	Played football indoors	10.50
Visited a playground or tot lot	25.56	Picnicked on grass, table or elsewhere	8.48
Played volleyball indoors	25.33	Boated on jet ski	8.45
Skateboarded	25.24	Participated in a formal nature program	8.40
Played basketball indoors	24.33	Swam at a beach	7.65
Bicycled for pleasure (road or bike lane or path)	23.34	Gone fishing on a boat	7.50
Swam in a pool outdoors	22.13	Boated on canoe, kayak or row boat	7.21
Played soccer indoors	21.99	Played volleyball outdoors	6.80
Participated in hobby or club program	21.99	Boated on sail boat	5.14
Played other field sport outdoors	21.41	Picnicked in picnic pavilion	4.77
Participated in gymnastics program	18.93		





### Other Input Pertaining to Recreational Demand

Following is a summary of all pertinent recreation and parks related input that was received through the various forms of input opportunities previously described. The input originates from individuals, civic organizations, recreation and parks councils, conservation organizations, and DRP staff. The latter offer their recommendations based on input from the recreation and parks councils and/or their knowledge of local recreation and parks needs. The pertinent RPD Group(s) associated with the input have been identified for each. **This listing of input should not be construed as a commitment to complete the various recommendations. This information is presented for the purpose of presenting the thoughts and opinions of the public, citizen groups including recreation and parks councils, and local DRP staff.** Where feasible, the input has been grouped by area, but is not in any particular order.

Continue to preserve and utilize the recreation and green space at Rodgers Forge Tot Lot, Rodgers Forge Elementary School Recreation Center, and Dumbarton Middle School for public recreation purposes. (Central)

Reconstruct the existing ball diamond at Campus Hills Park to create a 90' baseball diamond. (Central)

Construct a new, expanded storage and concessions building at Dumbarton Middle SRC in Towson. (Central)

Make enhancements to Towson Manor Park, including expansion and modernization of playground equipment, in conjunction with community-initiated effort. (Central)

Continue to make enhancements and renovations to Lake Roland (park), including parking expansion(s), culvert repairs, erosion control measures, and canoe and kayak access improvements. (Countywide site, situated in Central)

Make enhancements to Cromwell Valley Park, including expansion and improvement of trails, and construction of an education pavilion in/by the Sherwood section of the park. (Countywide site, situated in Central)

Preserve additional sidewalks and paths for safe non-vehicular forms of transportation, and lands for park and open space uses in the Greenspring and East Pikesville communities (including "pocket parks" that are easily accessible to older citizens and to young families with strollers), as per the recommendations of the Greenspring-East Pikesville Community Action Plan. (Central and West Central)

Construct a modern community center in the Middle River community, to replace or supplement the outdated Victory Villa Community Center. (East)

Construct education pavilion at Marshy Point Park and Nature Center. (Countywide site, situated in East)

Make enhancements to Harford Park, including the installation of additional benches and trash cans, enlarging the playground and providing additional equipment (particularly for older elementary aged children), and installing pet waste stations. (East Central)

Expand field lighting at Linover Park in Overlea-Fullerton. (East Central)

Expand the parking lot at Rosedale Park to support the heavy use of the park's many facilities. (East Central)

Enhance existing trails at Holt Park and the undeveloped Overlea Middle SRC Site, to provide an expanded trail network and connect Holt Park to Overlea High SRC. (East Central)

Construct a community center to serve the Rosedale Recreation Council and community. (East Central)

Conduct a needed stream restoration project at Double Rock Park, and provide additional access including a new parking area for the "back" part of the park near Belair Road. (East Central)

Continue to construct the Northeast Regional Trail, including segments that may be developed through agreements and obligations associated with the County's development process. (Regional facility, situated in East Central and Northeast)

Provide additional sports fields in the Hereford Zone, and construct an additional gymnasium at Hereford High School Recreation Center to serve both scholastic and recreation programs and uses. (North)

Reconstruct an existing ball diamond at Sparks Park to create a 90' baseball diamond. (North)

Reconstruct an existing ball diamond at a recreation site in the Carroll Manor community to create a 90' ball diamond. (North)

Construct additional outdoor recreation facilities including ball diamonds and athletic fields (including a lighted artificial turf field), as well as a community center, to serve the programs of Herford Zone Recreation Council. This may be accommodated at one or more sites, including the park property acquired by the County next to Sparks Elementary SRC. (North)

Construct therapeutic and standard equestrian facilities, including arenas, paddocks, and horse trails, at the Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture and Farm Park. Install new well in east front fields to facilitate demonstration fields. (Countywide site, situated in North)

Construct a community center to serve the Lutherville-Timonium Recreation Council and community. (North Central)

Construct artificial turf field(s) in place of existing grass athletic field(s) at County Home Park in Cockeysville. (North Central)

Provide field lighting for multiple ball diamonds and athletic fields at Belmont Park in Parkville, and expand the paved path to create a loop path. (Northeast)

Construct artificial turf fields in place of two grass fields at Perry Hall Park. (Northeast)

Make enhancements to Mount Vista Park in Kingsville, including needed parking lot renovations, construction of at least three full-sized athletic fields, construction of picnic pavilion(s), and renovations to the walking paths. (Northeast)

Make improvements to Gray Manor Park, including a community center, a replacement, modern storage building, additional walkways, benches and trees, playground modernization/enhancements, picnic grills, and lighted tennis courts. (Southeast)

Construct a community center to serve the Colgate community. (Southeast)

Support NeighborSpace of Baltimore County's efforts to provide more green spaces and local parklands, as well as pedestrian and bicycle connections within the older communities inside of the URDL, including the development of the 1.3-mile "Maryland Line Trail" spur of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. (Countywide, with trail in Southeast)

Conduct a feasibility study for the purpose of exploring the potential for constructing a lighted artificial turf field at the Patapsco High SRC stadium. (Southeast)

Increase public access to Bear Creek by providing canoe/kayak launches at Stansbury Park, Charlesmont Park, and Bear Creek Park. (Southeast)

Provide field lighting to serve the recreation programs at Watersedge Park. (Southeast)

Complete the planned second phase of park enhancements at Fort Howard Veterans Park, including field renovations, and playground and pier construction. (Southeast)

Complete improvements to Battle Acre Park and provide additional interpretive opportunities and facilities associated with the Battle of North Point, including an overlook at Bear Creek Park. (Southeast)

Construct a community center to serve the Edgemere-Sparrows Point Recreation Council and communities. (Southeast)

Make enhancements to Stansbury Park, including pond and stream bank stabilization, wildlife habitat restoration, addition of a second picnic pavilion with electrical service, additional benches and picnic tables, and improved lighting and security measures. Seek out opportunities to expand park if adjacent property becomes available. (Southeast)

Improve the building and recreational amenities at Lynch Cove Park. (Southeast)

Make improvements to and modernize the playground at Berkshire Park in the Berkshire-Eastwood community. (Southeast)

Implement environmental protection and enhancement programs such as shoreline restoration, expanding tree canopy, wetland enhancements, and eradication of invasives at parks along the shoreline of Bear Creek. (Southeast)

Construct a picnic pavilion at Catonsville Community Park. (Southwest)

Provide additional facilities to support the programs of the Arbutus Recreation Council, including expansion of the Arbutus Recreation Center, lighting for the Halethorpe Elementary SRC softball diamonds, a comfort station with concessions area at Arbutus Elementary SRC, and needed field and diamond renovations throughout the community. (Southwest)

Construct a community center to serve the Catonsville Recreation Council and community. (Southwest)

Construct a bike-only bowl/ramp area at Sandy Hills Skate Park in Lansdowne. (Southwest)

Construct a community center to serve the Greater Pikesville Recreation Council and community. (West Central)

Install athletic field lighting at Sudbrook Middle SRC and/or Pikesville Middle SRC. (West Southwest and West Central)

Construct picnic pavilion to replace semi-permanent tents at the Pecos and Timber areas of Oregon Ridge Park; construct accessible path to the nature center picnic pavilion. (Countywide site, situated in West Central)

Expand parking at Western Hills Park, to alleviate the severe parking shortage at the park. (West Southwest)

Continue to make improvements to and expand park trails and paths, in an effort to achieve goals and objectives of the Eastern and Western County Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Plans, and the County's Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee (PBAC). (Countywide)

Replace artificial/synthetic turf field surfaces that have come to the end of their use life cycle. (Various sites countywide)

## ***LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS***

As indicated previously in this plan, Maryland DNR's LPPRP guidelines encourage the counties to utilize other approaches to analyzing and estimating the "level of service" for parklands and recreational facilities. Geography-based methods such as proximity analysis and park equity analysis, similar to what DNR has recently implemented within their planning processes, are promoted. The section that follows presents a basic geography-based approach that compares the level of service for parks and facilities by RPD Group.

At the RPD Group level, the key factors analyzed are:

- Availability of "local" parks and recreation sites such as neighborhood parks, community parks, and school recreation centers;
- Acreage of general green space including County and non-County open spaces, undeveloped park and school recreation center sites, and other County green spaces such as those administered by EPS and DPW; and
- Availability of select types of recreational facilities.

Other factors such as availability of other recreational opportunities at regional parks, countywide parks, state and federal parks, and reservoir watershed properties can have significant impacts upon the actual level of service, but are not enumerated within this section. Numerous statistics will be provided for "X population served per park/facility." Generally speaking, the smaller the number the better served the population, particularly when compared with the countywide average. Conversely, a larger number than the countywide average indicates that an area has fewer parks or facilities to serve its populace.

It is important to understand that the RPD groups vary widely from one to another, and in a variety of ways. Many factors impact analyses of park and recreational facility needs, including:

- Overall size of the RPD group, and the relative amounts of urban and rural lands, as defined by the URDL;
- Population density;
- The amount of developed land versus undeveloped land, and presence of substantial land areas such as airports, colleges and universities, military bases/facilities, industrial parks and areas, and expansive commercial areas;
- The presence and extent of non-county parks and green spaces including state and national parks and the reservoir watershed properties;
- The nature – particularly the density – of residential development; and more.

The level of service data that follows is used in conjunction with previously presented demand data to draw conclusions and recommendations that appear at the end of this chapter.



## 1. PARKLAND LEVELS OF SERVICE - LOCAL

The following series of tables and charts/graphs display the amount of parkland by RPD Group, for a number of types of land including local parks, school recreation centers, and green spaces.

- Local Parks: The table that follows identifies – by RPD Group and countywide – the quantity of combined neighborhood, community, and local special parks, the total acreage of those parks, the average size of such parks within the RPD Group, and the population served per park. The type of park within this category can vary widely and impact the average park size. For instance, a predominantly natural 50+ acre park with minimal recreational facilities would be classified as a neighborhood park, whereas a 5-acre site with a community center would be classified as a community park.

RPD Group	Est. 2015 Population	Neighb. Parks	Neighb. Park Acreage	Commun. Parks	Commun. Park Acreage	Special Parks (local)	Special Park (local) Acreage	Total Local Parks	Total Local Park Acreage	Pop. Served per Local Park
Central	75,121	15	43.7	4	44.4	3	6.7	22	94.8	3,415
East	85,352	14	249.4	7	133.8	1	0.6	22	383.8	3,880
East Central	78,477	15	86.2	8	218.3	0	0.0	23	304.5	3,412
North	38,118	2	5.7	3	179.2	0	0.0	5	184.9	7,624
North Central	52,564	2	32.4	8	144.7	0	0.0	10	177.1	5,256
Northeast	76,368	4	7.5	11	350.4	2	20.4	17	378.3	4,492
Northwest	58,029	4	5.9	1	63.0	1	159.8	6	228.7	9,671
Southeast	73,194	13	99.7	18	350.1	4	10.7	35	460.5	2,091
Southwest	72,780	11	43.6	11	376.6	1	22.5	23	442.7	3,164
West	55,894	3	23.6	1	7.0	0	0.0	4	30.6	13,974
West Central	59,996	2	4.5	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	4.8	19,999
West Southwest	101,172	14	117.3	8	140.7	2	174.8	24	432.8	4,216
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>719.5</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>2,008.2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>395.8</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>3123.5</b>	<b>4,263</b>

In terms of access to local parks, the Southeast RPD is the best served, with its 35 local parks serving just under 2,100 population each. At the other end of the spectrum is the West Central RPD, which has only two neighborhood parks and no community parks. Its nearly 20,000 population served per local park is almost five times higher than the countywide average. Overall, the five least served RPD Groups in terms of local parks are the West Central, West, Northwest, North, and North Central.



*Gough Park, with its lighted ballfields, is a classic example of a community park*

The quantities of community versus neighborhood parks varies widely. There is a relative proliferation of community parks in the North Central, Northeast, and Southeast, the only three RPD Groups with more community parks than neighborhood parks. Conversely, no community parks exist in the West Central, and the North, Northwest, and West have three or fewer community parks each. In terms of neighborhood park availability, half of the RPD groups have 11 or more neighborhood parks within their bounds, whereas the other half have four or fewer. Finally, there is a wide range of local park acreage by RPD group, from a low of 4.8 acres in the West Central to a high of 460.5 in the Southeast.

- School Recreation Centers (SRCs): As mentioned in other parts of this plan, SRCs and the associated joint-use agreement represent a key strategy employed by the County for providing local recreational opportunities. Elementary SRCs have facilities such as playgrounds and multi-purpose courts that make them akin to neighborhood parks, but – like middle and high SRCs – also usually have indoor and outdoor recreation facilities commonly found in community parks. Many recreational facilities at SRCs - ball diamonds, athletic fields, tennis courts, gymnasiums, recreation activity rooms, auditoriums, and stages - are particularly integral to the local recreation councils in their efforts to provide organized public recreation opportunities. Most High SRCs also feature outdoor tracks, which are often very popular destinations for local walkers and runners. The table that follows counts the number of sites with SRCs. In some cases a single site will be home to two SRCs, but for the purposes of the table only a site count of one and a single acreage amount for the entire site is utilized.

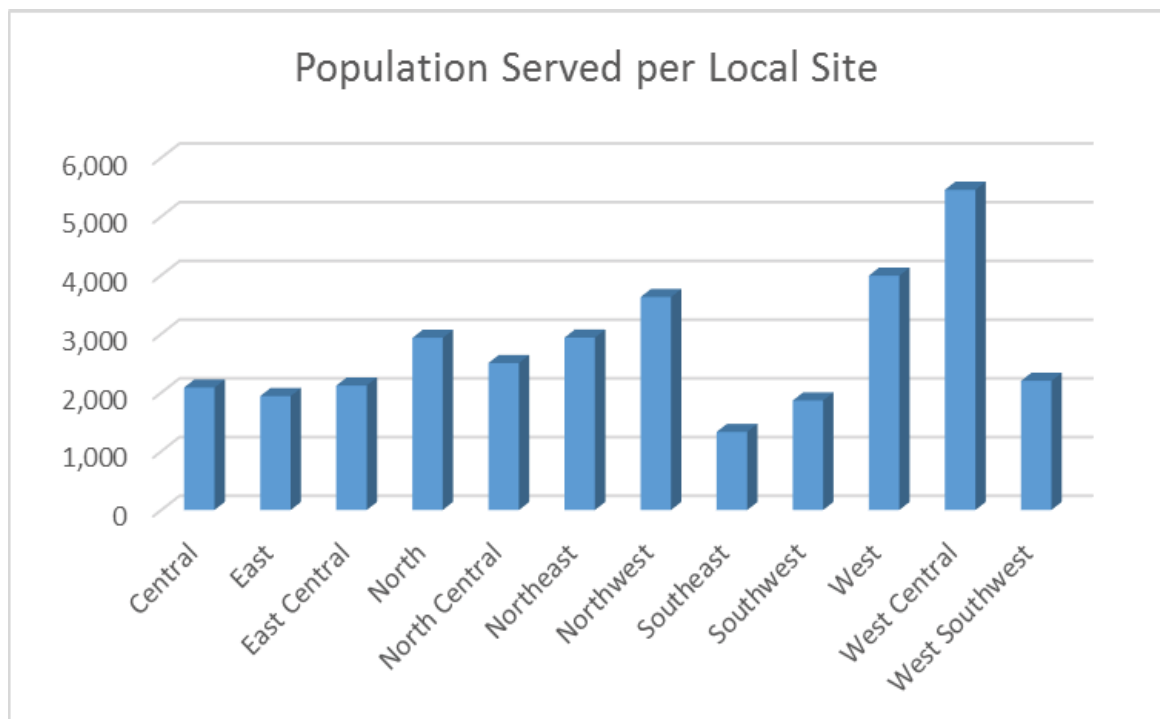
RPD Group	Est. 2015 Population	Elem. School Rec. Centers	Middle School Rec. Centers	High School Rec. Centers	Special School Rec. Centers	Total School Rec. Centers	Total SRC Acreage	Pop. Served per SRC Site
Central	75,121	7	2	3	2	14	290.4	5,366
East	85,352	16	3	3	0	22	446.5	3,880
East Central	78,477	8	3	2	1	14	324.8	5,606
North	38,118	6	1	1	0	8	298.8	4,765
North Central	52,564	8	2	1	0	11	228.6	4,779
Northeast	76,368	7	1	1	0	9	208.5	8,485
Northwest	58,029	7	1	2	0	10	213.1	5,803
Southeast	73,194	12	4	3	1	20	352.2	3,660
Southwest	72,780	9	2	3	2	16	325.6	4,549
West	55,894	7	1	2	0	10	286.2	5,589
West Central	59,996	6	1	1	0	8	177.6	7,499
West Southwest	101,172	13	6	2	1	22	503.3	4,599
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>3655.6</b>	<b>5,043</b>

The population served per SRC site does not vary as drastically as it does for local parks, representing the school aged population approach that has long been used by Baltimore County Public Schools to identify school needs. In terms of population served per SRC site, two RPD Areas – the Southeast and the East – serve less than 4,000 population per site, well below the countywide average of 5,043. Meanwhile, the Northeast and West Central have substantially larger figures for population served per site, so that comparably fewer recreational opportunities would be available at SRCs in those areas. While high school recreation centers have the most facilities overall, access to those facilities for public recreation purposes is somewhat limited as a result of high school scholastic sports and activities that likewise utilize facilities such as athletic fields, ball diamonds, gymnasiums, and auditoriums. It is not unusual for a higher level of organized, program-based public recreation opportunities to be afforded at middle school recreation centers. Meanwhile, elementary school recreation centers in particular often provide convenient close-to-home recreational opportunities including one or more playgrounds/tot lots.

- Combined Local Parks and SRCs: Since SRCs function in some ways as community and/or neighborhood parks, combining them with local parks provides a useful snapshot of the overall level of service offered to the RPD Groups at the local level. Other types of parks and recreation sites will also contribute to the available recreational opportunities, and will be included within the individual RPD Group assessments that appear later in this section.

RPD Group	Est. 2015 Population	Local Parks	Local Park Acreage	School Rec. Centers	School Rec. Center Acreage	Total Local Site	Total Local Site Acreage	Pop. Served per Local Site
Central	75,121	22	94.8	14	290.4	36	385.2	2,087
East	85,352	22	383.8	22	446.5	44	830.3	1,940
East Central	78,477	23	304.5	14	324.8	37	629.3	2,121
North	38,118	5	184.9	8	298.8	13	483.7	2,932
North Central	52,564	10	177.1	11	228.6	21	405.7	2,503
Northeast	76,368	17	378.3	9	208.5	26	586.8	2,937
Northwest	58,029	6	228.7	10	213.1	16	441.8	3,627
Southeast	73,194	35	460.5	20	352.2	55	812.7	1,331
Southwest	72,780	23	442.7	16	325.6	39	768.3	1,866
West	55,894	4	30.6	10	286.2	14	316.8	3,992
West Central	59,996	3	4.8	8	177.6	11	182.4	5,454
West Southwest	101,172	24	432.8	22	503.3	46	936.1	2,199
Countywide:	827,065	193	3,104.6	164	3,647.1	357	6,751.7	2,317

Combining the local park sites and SRC sites results in an overall countywide average of 2,317 population served per site. The three RPD Groups with the most local sites per population – represented by lower populations served by site – are the Southeast (1,331), Southwest (1,866), and East (1,940). Meanwhile, three RPD Groups have service levels of over 3,000 population per local site—the West Central, West, and Northwest. The graph below displays the total population served per local site for each of the 12 RPD Groups.



- Green Space/Open Space: This category includes undeveloped open spaces (whether County-owned or privately-owned), undeveloped parks and school recreation center sites, unimproved greenway reservations, and other open space lands such as flood plain and forest conservation reservations owned and managed by Baltimore County EPS or DPW. Preservation easements areas are not included, nor are the reservoir watershed properties nor any form of developed park regardless of ownership. As indicated previously, this category can be difficult to enumerate as a result of the very wide array of green/open spaces, and thus a simple count of the number of green/open spaces is not as effective as identifying their overall acreage. Some single green spaces may be hundreds of acres in size, and encompass a larger geographic area than multiple adjoining residential subdivisions in which there are over a dozen local open spaces that total less than 10 combined acres.

The table and associated chart that follow display the amount of green space acreage per RPD Group, including the equivalent amount per 1,000 population within the area.

<b>RPD Group</b>	<b>Estimated 2015 Population</b>	<b>Green Space Acreage - County</b>	<b>Green Space Acreage- Private</b>	<b>Green Space Acreage- Total</b>	<b>Green Space Acreage per 1,000 population</b>
Central	75,121	75.3	3.1	78.4	1.0
East	85,352	1578.3	72.6	1650.9	19.3
East Central	78,477	472.3	119.4	591.7	7.5
North	38,118	318.8	67.5	386.3	10.1
North Central	52,564	299.8	223.0	522.8	9.9
Northeast	76,368	680.5	141.2	821.7	10.8
Northwest	58,029	467.2	73.5	540.7	9.3
Southeast	73,194	23.6	78.2	101.8	1.4
Southwest	72,780	147.4	15.2	162.6	2.2
West	55,894	879.0	85.0	964.0	17.2
West Central	59,996	280.7	137.0	417.7	7.0
West Southwest	101,172	336.1	147.0	483.1	4.8
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>5,559.0</b>	<b>1,162.7</b>	<b>6,721.7</b>	<b>8.1</b>

The amount of green space varies widely, with some areas (East and West) having more than double the countywide average of 8.1 acres per thousand population, while three (Central, Southeast, and Southwest) have approximately one-fourth or less than the countywide average. There are many factors associated with the disparities. In the East the numerous large Back River Neck Peninsula acquisitions through the Rural Legacy program and other means of procurement are the primary reason for the large green space amount. In the West the nearly 260-acre Granite Park Site, a recently acquired and as yet undeveloped site, is larger than the total amount of green space in three of the RPD Groups. Development



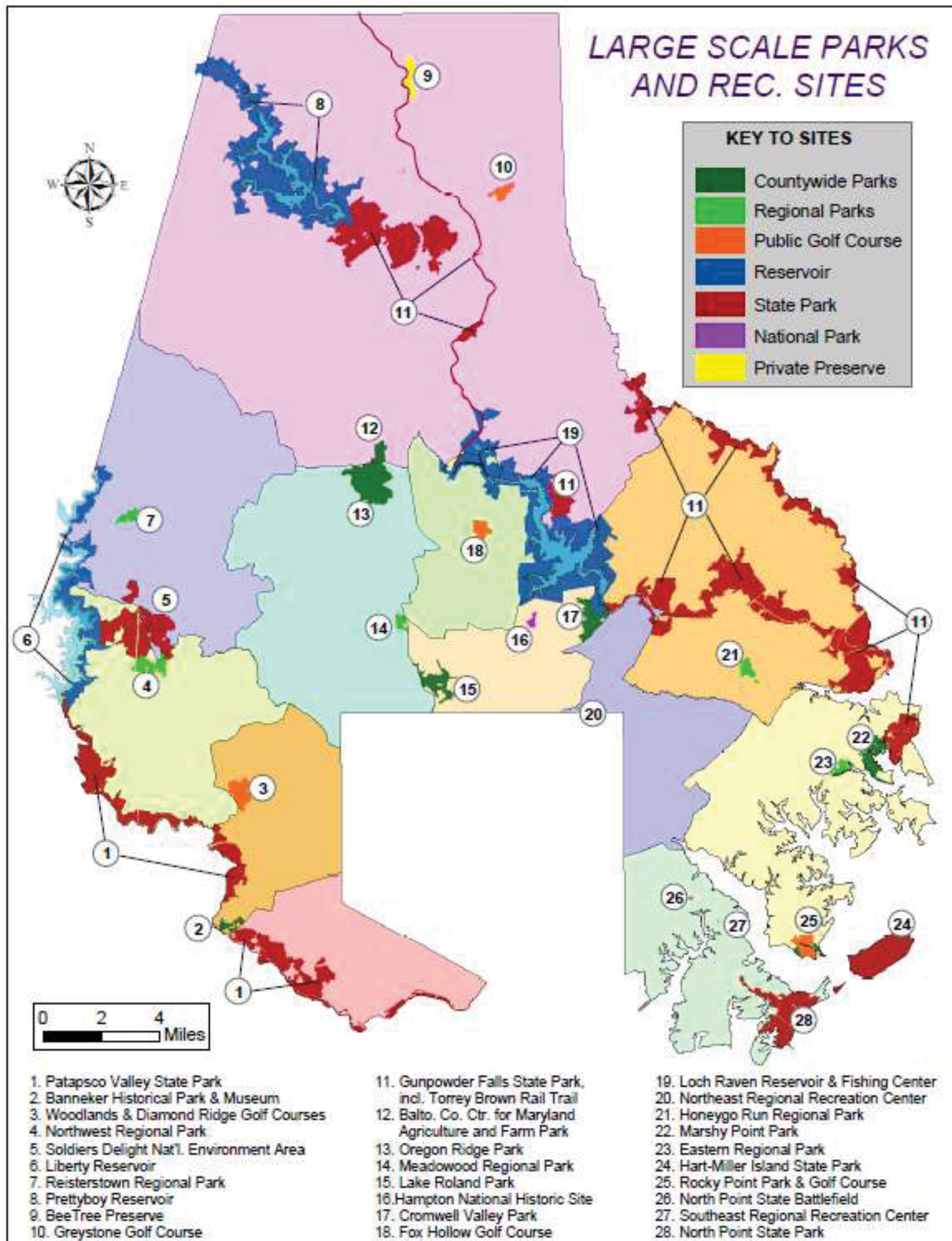
patterns also play a large role. As an example, the Southeast, Southwest, and Central RPD Groups features numerous long established communities and neighborhoods that were largely developed before the existence of local open space requirements. Some RPD Groups such as the Northeast, West, and Northwest, feature large numbers of green spaces as a result of the era when much of their growth took place, after local open space requirements were established. The impact of the Owings Mills and Honeygo Growth Areas is especially reflected by the figures for those areas, each of which feature abundant local open space and greenway properties.

## 2. PARKLAND LEVELS OF SERVICE – LARGE SCALE PARKS & RECREATION SITES

Large scale parks and recreation sites include County-owned countywide and regional parks and facilities, County golf courses, the state parks, one national park, the reservoir properties, and one private land preserve. These parks and recreation sites feature not only substantial amounts of preserved lands, but a diversity of recreational facilities that complement or supplement facilities found at local parks and recreation sites. The regional parks and facilities generally feature active and passive recreational facilities that help to support the recreation programs and activities of multiple recreation councils and communities near where they are situated. Countywide parks are generally the largest of the County's parks and tend to feature the natural environment as their centerpiece attraction, though they may also have some facilities that are traditionally found at the local level—playgrounds and picnic pavilions, for instance. Specialized facilities such as golf courses, indoor sports complexes/fields, a swimming beach, a fishing center, and interpretive centers are also available at regional and countywide parks and the Revenue Authority-operated public golf courses.

Substantial natural resource-based recreational opportunities are likewise provided at the state parks, reservoir properties, and the BeeTree Preserve, while Hampton National Historic Site preserves an invaluable piece of the County's heritage. Each of these non-County sites also features trail and path networks that provide the majority of opportunities for activities ranging from hiking, to mountain biking, to bird and wildlife viewing, to cross country skiing.

The map and charts that follow provide a snapshot of the overall level of service provided by the large scale parks and recreation facilities. Rather than having specific amounts of associated parkland acreage assigned by RPD Group, this section identifies the general impact of the various large scale sites for each of the groups. This more generalized approach reflects the fact that the large scale parks and facilities are not intended to serve just a single RPD group or community, but rather a much broader geographic area.



As the map shows, each of the RPD Groups has one or more large scale park or recreation site within its bounds. Some large scale sites, such as Gunpowder Falls & Patapsco State Park and Liberty & Loch Raven Reservoirs, traverse more than one RPD Group area. The table on the following page provides a quantitative analysis of the relative access to large scale sites by RPD Group, using a basic “scoring” system based on the location of the sites and the RPD Groups’ proximity to the sites. The scoring system is based on the following, with distance measurements based upon whether approximately half or more of the RPD Group’s land area is within the given distance:

Type of Site	Site is Situated Within the RPD Group's Bounds	Site is Within 5 Miles of RPD Group	Site is Within 10 Miles of RPD Group	Site is more than 10 Miles from RPD Group
Countywide Park	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Regional Park	4 points	3 points	1 point	none
Reservoirs, State or National Parks, Private Reserve	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
County Golf Course	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point

The scoring system is the same for each type of site except regional parks, which have a more limited geographic service area. Once points have been assigned, various totals may be extracted by RPD Group to extract a basic snapshot of how accessible the types of large scale facilities are to the various RPD Groups—the higher the number, the more available large scale sites are to the RPD Group.

The type and size of the site, its geographic extent (for example, as shown on the prior map Gunpowder Falls State Park and its Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail are quite extensive and widespead, while North Point State Battlefield is less than 10 acres and in a single location), the nature of the site including what recreational facilities and opportunities are offered, and other factors impact the prospective usefulness or appeal the sites may have. For instance, the regional parks feature many active recreational facilities, while the golf courses offer only one formal form of recreation, and the countywide parks, state and national parks, reservoir lands, and the BeeTree Preserve offer predominantly nature-based forms of recreation.

RELATIVE ACCESS TO LARGE SCALE PARKS AND RECREATION SITES BY RPD GROUP

Map Site Number	Site	Acres	Relative Access Score by RPD Group											
			Central	East	East Central	North	North Central	Northeast	Northwest	Southeast	Southwest	West	West Central	West Southwest
	Countywide Parks													
2	Banneker Historic Park	126.6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	4
12	B.C. Ctr. For MD Ag. & Farm Park	149.3	2	1	1	4	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
13	Oregon Ridge Park	1,099.5	2	1	1	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	4	1
15	Lake Roland Park	448.7	4	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	2	2	3	2
17	Cromwell Valley Park	455.0	4	2	3	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	2	1
19	Loch Raven Fishing Center	5.0	2	1	2	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
22	Marshy Point Park	403.4	1	4	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
25	Rocky Point Park (park & beach)	63.6	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1
		2,751.1	17	15	14	15	18	12	10	11	11	11	16	12
	Regional Park													
4	Northwest Regional Park	322.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	4	1	1
7	Reisterstown Regional Park	130.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	1	0
14	Meadowood Regional Park	96.2	3	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	4	1
20	NE Regional Recreation Center	6.4	3	1	4	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
21	Honeygo Run Regional Park	160.5	1	3	3	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	Eastern Regional Park	133.9	0	4	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
27	SE Regional Recreation Center	3.2	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
		852.9	7	11	10	0	4	6	8	6	0	6	7	2
	Total Countywide and Regional:	3,604.0	24	26	24	15	22	18	18	17	11	17	23	14
	Reservoirs, State Parks, National Park, Private Reserve													
1	Patapsco Valley State Park	4,572.8	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	4	4	2	4
5	Soldiers Delight Nat'l. Env. Area	2,014.5	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	4	2	2
6	Liberty Reservoir	2,686.7	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	4	2	2
8	Prettyboy Reservoir	7,291.1	1	1	1	4	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
9	BeeTree Preserve	247.5	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
11	Gunpowder Falls State Park, incl. Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail	12,930.5	3	4	4	4	4	4	2	1	1	1	2	1
16	Hampton National Historic Site	61.5	4	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
19	Loch Raven Reservoir	8,202.3	See Loch Raven Fishing Center											
24	Hart-Miller Island State Park*	1,311.8	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1
26	North Point State Battlefield	7.9	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1
28	North Point State Park	1,268.2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1
		40,594.8	15	18	17	19	15	15	18	19	13	19	15	15
	Golf Course (County only)													
3	Woodlands and Diamond Ridge (2)	360.8	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	4
10	Greystone	217.3	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
18	Fox Hollow	202.2	3	1	2	2	4	2	1	1	1	1	2	1
25	Rocky Point	63.6	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1
		843.9	7	7	6	8	7	5	5	6	5	6	6	7
	All Large Scale Sites Combined	45,042.7	46	51	47	42	44	38	41	42	29	42	44	36
*- Hart-Miller, accessible only by boat, is considered directly accessible to both the East and Southeast														



Based on the table the RPD Groups with the best access to countywide parks are the North Central, Central, West Central, East, and North, each with access scores of 15 or higher. Regional park access is highest in the East Central and East, with those RPD Groups having access scores of 10 or more. In terms of combined access to the County's countywide and regional parks, five RPD Groups have access scores of 20 or higher—the East, Central, East Central, West Central, and North Central.

Access to the reservoirs, state and national parks, and the BeeTree Preserve is fairly well balanced overall, ranging from scores of 13 (Southwest) to 19 (North, Southeast, and West). So too is access to the County's golf courses, with scores ranging from 5 (Northeast, Northwest, and Southwest) to 8 (North).

Overall, access to the combined large scale sites ranges from a low of 29 (Southwest) to a high of 51 (East), with eight of the twelve RPD Groups having access scores between 41 and 47.

### 3. RECREATIONAL FACILITY LEVEL OF SERVICE

The following series of tables and charts display the quantitative level of service for a variety of recreational facility types typically offered at the County level. The facility counts are for facilities at site types including County parks and leased recreation sites, and at public school recreation centers. Facilities situated at state and federal parks, or on private open spaces and parklands for which there is no associated lease or similar agreement that grants public recreation access, are not included. For the sake of simplicity, facilities within regional and countywide parks are included within the facility counts, though it should be noted that many such facilities serve a wider area than a single RPD Group.

It is important to understand that the facility counts provided are very simplified, and do not take into account a wide range of factors that may impact the overall recreational functionality and level of use offered by each facility. For example, the figures for ball diamonds and athletic fields do not take into account their size (which impacts the types of recreational uses and the suitable user group ages), surface type (grass or synthetic), whether or not they have associated field lighting systems, or layout; the quantities for playgrounds do not reflect the size of the playgrounds or extent of equipment available; the numbers associated with multi-purpose courts do not reflect how many usable basketball courts are present, or if the courts feature lights; the picnic pavilion data does not reflect the widely varying size of the pavilions; the miles of trails do not indicate the trail or path surface type (paved, natural, surface such as stone dust or boardwalk); the numbers for SRCs and community centers do not indicate the nature or quantity of indoor facilities situated with such structures.

For each of the facility types that follow, the smaller the “population served by facility,” the better served the area would be.



- Ball Diamonds: The table below displays the basic level of service for ball diamonds, which are used for such sports as baseball, softball, tee-ball, and even kickball. The size of the diamonds varies, ranging from those with 60' base paths, to 90' diamonds suitable for adult baseball. The demand for the latter has increased over the years, partially as a result of changing standards for certain teen age groups, with certain leagues now requiring longer base paths than in the past.

RPD	Est. 2015 Population	Ball Diamonds	Population Served per Ball Diamond
Central	75,121	43	1,747
East	85,352	71	1,202
East Central	78,477	55	1,427
North	38,118	29	1,314
North Central	52,564	40	1,314
Northeast	76,368	44	1,736
Northwest	58,029	34	1,707
Southeast	73,194	90	813
Southwest	72,780	58	1,255
West	55,894	32	1,747
West Central	59,996	22	2,727
West Southwest	101,172	74	1,367
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>1,397</b>

The Southeast RPD Group, by far, is best served in terms of total diamonds available for the area population, and has the largest overall quantity of diamonds. Conversely, the West Central RPD Group has very few diamonds, none of which are situated at local parks. That area's supply of diamonds would equate to about half of the countywide average.



*“Wagon wheel” layout ball diamonds at Northwest Regional Park*

- Athletic Fields: The next table shows the basic facility counts for athletic fields, which are used for a wide range of activities including soccer, lacrosse, football, field hockey, rugby, and more. Athletic field sizes vary widely, and many are overlaid with one or more ball diamonds, with most of the field area on the grassy outfield areas of the diamond(s). The manner in which athletic fields are used for organized programs may change based on the activity and the playing age group. For activities such as clinic soccer or soft-stick lacrosse, a single full-sized athletic field could be temporarily sectioned off into multiple fields to accommodate young age groups.

RPD	Est. 2015 Population	Athletic Fields	Population Served per Athletic Field
Central	75,121	30	2,504
East	85,352	61	1,399
East Central	78,477	52	1,509
North	38,118	25	1,525
North Central	52,564	38	1,383
Northeast	76,368	46	1,660
Northwest	58,029	28	2,072
Southeast	73,194	73	1,003
Southwest	72,780	46	1,582
West	55,894	31	1,803
West Central	59,996	28	2,143
West Southwest	101,172	56	1,807
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>514</b>	<b>1,609</b>

The Southeast is the best supplied in terms of athletic fields, while the Central, West Central, and Northwest have substantially fewer fields than the countywide average.



*This soft stick lacrosse practice utilizes only a half of one of the park's athletic fields*

- Tennis Courts: As with other counts for outdoor sports facilities, the below figures do not reflect whether or not the tennis courts are lighted. The demand for tennis varies widely throughout the County, with some communities having sufficient demand for leagues to operate, while in others the courts are used for other activities as much as for tennis.

<b>RPD</b>	<b>Est. 2015 Population</b>	<b>Tennis Courts</b>	<b>Population Served per Tennis Court</b>
Central	75,121	29	2,590
East	85,352	27	3,161
East Central	78,477	25	3,139
North	38,118	16	2,382
North Central	52,564	26	2,022
Northeast	76,368	20	3,818
Northwest	58,029	15	3,869
Southeast	73,194	30	2,440
Southwest	72,780	23	3,164
West	55,894	17	3,288
West Central	59,996	7	8,571
West Southwest	101,172	30	3,372
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>3,121</b>

The West Central RPD Group has few tennis courts compared with the rest of the County. The Northeast and Northwest likewise have significantly fewer courts per population than the countywide average. Four areas – the North Central, North, Southeast, and Central – have substantially more courts than on average.

- Multi-Purpose Courts: Many multi-purpose courts provide outdoor basketball courts, while others do not feature basketball goals and are instead used for a wide variety of recreational purposes. In a few cases the courts have been converted to special uses such as outdoor soccer courts. The court quantities are estimations of the approximate number of basketball courts that could be situated within the court areas of the parks and SRCs.

RPD	Est. 2015 Population	Multi- Purpose Courts	Population Served per Multi-Purpose Court
Central	75,121	47	1,598
East	85,352	65	1,313
East Central	78,477	49	1,602
North	38,118	23	1,657
North Central	52,564	35	1,502
Northeast	76,368	24	3,182
Northwest	58,029	24	2,418
Southeast	73,194	75	976
Southwest	72,780	51	1,427
West	55,894	24	2,329
West Central	59,996	17	3,529
West Southwest	101,172	62	1,632
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>1,667</b>

Once more, the West Central has the poorest facility supply, with the Northeast also having far fewer multi-purpose courts than the countywide average. The Southeast is once again far better supplied than the average.



*Courts, such as this one at Edgemere Elementary SRC, require occasional resurfacing in order to maintain a safe, functional play surface*



- Playgrounds: The difficulty of enumerating playgrounds has been described previously. Generally speaking the counts that follow are based on the number of distinct clusters of playgrounds at the local sites. A cluster would be a grouping of equipment, whether in a single area, or in multiple “boxes.” Some sites such as Oregon Ridge Park and Double Rock Park have playgrounds in two distinct clusters/locations.

RPD	Est. 2015 Population	Playgrounds	Population Served per Playground
Central	75,121	25	3,005
East	85,352	34	2,510
East Central	78,477	31	2,532
North	38,118	8	4,765
North Central	52,564	14	3,755
Northeast	76,368	18	4,243
Northwest	58,029	14	4,145
Southeast	73,194	34	2,153
Southwest	72,780	26	2,799
West	55,894	11	5,081
West Central	59,996	13	4,615
West Southwest	101,172	31	3,264
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>3,193</b>

The Southeast, East, and East Central RPD Groups have a better-than-average supply of playgrounds per population, whereas the West, North, West Central, Northeast, and Northwest have fewer than the countywide average.



*This new playground at Towson Manor Park reflects the local residents' desire for a more modern and innovative playground*



- Picnic Pavilions: The distribution of picnic pavilions varies greatly throughout the County. Some areas, such as the waterfront communities of eastern and southeastern Baltimore County, have many parks where picnicking is one of the primary recreational activities.



Many picnic pavilions and area, including the one previously pictured (at Chesterwood Park in Dundalk), are also equipped with picnic grills. The following counts are for picnic pavilions only, and exclude general picnic areas/groves since the tables can sometime be transient and moved from park to park—especially for special events such as local festivals.

<b>RPD</b>	<b>Est. 2015 Population</b>	<b>Picnic Pavilions</b>	<b>Population Served per Pavilion</b>
Central	75,121	3	25,040
East	85,352	18	4,742
East Central	78,477	16	4,905
North	38,118	4	9,529
North Central	52,564	1	52,564
Northeast	76,368	9	8,485
Northwest	58,029	3	19,343
Southeast	73,194	18	4,066
Southwest	72,780	5	14,556
West	55,894	4	13,974
West Central	59,996	8	7,499
West Southwest	101,172	2	50,586
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>9,089</b>

The Southeast, East, and East Central, each of which feature one or more parks with numerous pavilions, lead the way in terms of pavilion supply per population. On the other

end of the scale, the North Central and West Southwest have very few local pavilions. The impact of regional and countywide parks is significant for this facility category. For example, all of the picnic pavilions in the West Central are within regional or countywide parks (Oregon Ridge and Meadowood Regional Parks). Conversely, all 18 of the pavilions in the Southeast are situated within local parks. Many additional pavilions and picnic areas are situated within the State's parks, particularly sections of Patapsco Valley and Gunpowder Falls State Parks, thereby complementing those available at County parks and sites. These facilities are not included in the above table.

- **Trails:** The lengthiest of the trail networks serving County citizens are situated at the state parks and reservoir properties, while the largest trail networks operated by the County are generally located at the countywide and regional parks. Shorter paths and trails available at many local parks are very well utilized by local citizens and other park visitors, and easily accessible to nearby residents. The chart below does not include trails situated at the state parks and reservoir properties, and likewise does not include paths along County and State roadways within Baltimore County. Neither do the counts include basic sidewalk networks used predominantly for facility access.

<b>RPD</b>	<b>Est. 2015 Population</b>	<b>Trail Miles</b>	<b>Population Served per Trail Mile</b>
Central	75,121	22.9	3,288
East	85,352	15.4	5,552
East Central	78,477	4.0	19,750
North	38,118	6.3	6,075
North Central	52,564	0.6	84,873
Northeast	76,368	8.5	8,989
Northwest	58,029	2.1	27,504
Southeast	73,194	4.2	17,579
Southwest	72,780	3.2	23,087
West	55,894	0.8	68,633
West Central	59,996	8.8	6,826
West Southwest	101,172	5.5	18,300
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>82.1</b>	<b>10,068</b>

The Central, East, North, West Central, and Northeast each have a greater supply of trails and paths than the overall average, largely attributable to the lengthy trail networks at parks such as Lake Roland, Cromwell Valley, Marshy Point, the Ag Center-Farm Park, Oregon Ridge, and Honeygo. The least supplied areas are the North Central and West, though both these areas have direct access to trail networks at state parks and/or reservoir properties.



*Paths such as this one at Sudbrook Park are sometimes found at local sites. The recreational opportunities offered by local trail and path complement the recreational options at lengthier trails at larger state and county parks and the reservoir watershed properties.*

- Indoor Recreation Facilities: These facilities, which are essential for providing year-round public recreation, are another type of facility that is difficult to simplify numerically. The quantity, nature, and availability of indoor recreation facilities at community centers, recreation centers, PAL centers, and school recreation centers vary widely. Some community/recreation centers – especially older ones – are small and may only offer one or more activity rooms. Others include large gymnasiums, in addition to one or more activity rooms. In the case of SRCs, elementary SRCs feature either smaller elementary-level gyms, while others were constructed with expanded middle SRC-sized gyms that support expanded recreational uses. In many cases the indoor recreation facilities at high SRCs provide less overall public indoor recreation opportunities than Middle SRCs, as a result of the use demands of scholastic sports programs and activities. The figures below are a basic enumeration of community/recreation centers and SRCs, rather than a count of their indoor facilities.

RPD	Est. 2015 Population	Comm. & Rec. Centers, SRCs and PALs	Pop. Served per Indoor Rec. Site
Central	75,121	17	4,419
East	85,352	28	3,048
East Central	78,477	19	4,130
North	38,118	9	4,235
North Central	52,564	12	4,380
Northeast	76,368	12	6,364
Northwest	58,029	12	4,836
Southeast	73,194	27	2,711
Southwest	72,780	21	3,466
West	55,894	11	5,081
West Central	59,996	8	7,499
West Southwest	101,172	29	3,489
<b>Countywide:</b>	<b>827,065</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>4,034</b>

As was the case for many of the prior recreational facilities, the Southeast and East have the greatest supply in comparison with population served, with the Southwest and the West Southwest also served at a better level than average. The West Central and Northeast are the least supplied, with the figure for the latter significantly impacted by the area's below average number of school recreation centers.



## CONCLUSIONS AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Baltimore County continues to invest substantial fiscal resources into meeting the recreational needs of its citizens, as described in the section earlier in this chapter that describes recent progress. Efforts to provide and maintain sufficient quality parks and recreational facilities are ongoing. Following are conclusions that have been generated through the analysis of the data associated with the recreation and parks survey results, public input, and level of service analyses. The consistency between the survey results, input, and level of service figures was the key test employed to determine what to include in the recommendations that follow. In some cases perception, as presented in the survey results, is not necessarily consistent with existing conditions. For example, a large percentage of respondents who reside within a RPD Group may have expressed a desire for additional recreational facilities of one type or another despite the area being very well supplied with those facilities in comparison to local and countrywide supply levels. Finally, it is essential to understand that achieving the recommendations that follow is a long term proposition, and that capital spending priorities for park projects must be regularly evaluated to best utilize available capital funding.

1. Overall Countywide Priority: While survey respondents rated the condition of parks and recreational facilities average to good overall (3.46 countywide average, on a scale of 1 to 5), survey question five's results indicate that "improved maintenance and repair of existing parks and facilities" was the highest priority overall of nine recreation and parks items for which the respondents were asked to assign a hypothetical \$100 budget. The countywide average of \$18.76 was nearly \$4 higher than the next highest amount the respondents "budgeted," and nine of the twelve RPD Groups assigned the first or second-largest dollar amounts to enhanced maintenance. This reinforces the County's belief that a substantial portion of available capital resources – in addition to regular, ongoing park and facility maintenance performed through the operating budget – must be invested in large scale renovations, repairs, and capital renewal. This priority also addresses regular, ongoing input that DRP and the County have received from the recreation and parks councils, particularly associated with recreational facilities utilized by their organized public recreation programs.



*Roof replacements at picnic pavilions (such as this one at Southwest Area Park) are an example of a recurring capital renovation need*



2. Greater Need for Park Development and Rehabilitation Versus Park Acquisition: Overall the need for additional park acquisition has diminished in most areas of the County. In many cases there are quality park sites that have been acquired in the past, but have not been developed as a result of a lack of need or park development funding. Such sites are “land banked” until there is both sufficient need/demand and funding. The survey results support this conclusion, with the hypothetical budgetary amount assigned to “acquire additional sites on which to develop parks” (\$7.32) being the third lowest of the nine budgetary items to which respondents could assign a hypothetical \$100 budget. The \$7.32 amount is approximately half the amount respondents assigned to “improved maintenance and repair of existing parks and facilities,” “provide additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities,” and “provide additional places to walk, jog, and bike.” Additionally, in question four the “availability of parks and recreational facilities” was the second highest rated of five facets of the existing recreation and parks system. Meanwhile, the importance of expanded maintenance (as described in #1, above) and providing additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities and places to safely walk, jog, and cycle are emphasized in the survey results for questions four, five, and six. General input from the public also supports a diminished need for park acquisition, with relatively few comments received for park acquisition. Future park acquisition efforts should be restricted to strategic efforts, where merited, with the majority of capital funding resources being dedicated to park and facility rehabilitation, development, and enhancement. The County’s development process should remain the key tool for acquiring and/or providing additional green space, through the mandatory dedication of local open space and greenways, and requirements for preservation of sensitive environmental areas either by dedication or easement.
3. Conclusions and Recommendations by RPD Group: Below are conclusions and recommendations by individual RPD Group. As indicated previously, available capital funding for recreation and parks dictate that meeting these recommendations is a long term proposition, and many factors may impact the validity of these recommendations over time.

**Central:** A consistent demand for additional public green spaces and safe places to walk, jog, and cycle was expressed within the survey. However, available land in this highly developed area is extremely scarce, and there is convenient access to vast green spaces at Cromwell Valley Park and Lake Roland Park. The County’s plans for creation of public green space at the recently acquired Radebaugh Property and the planned reinvention of the County Courts plaza (to create significantly expanded green space in place of the nearly 100% paved area between the two courts buildings), combined with remaining enhancements to Towson Manor Park, will help to address the demand for green space. Continued efforts to improve bicycle and pedestrian access in and around the Towson core will help to meet the demands for those associated activities, and recent artificial turf field projects at Carver and Towson High School Recreation Centers significantly help to offset the below average supply of athletic fields compared to the countywide average.

**East:** There is very little unmet recreational need in this area, which has a strong supply of parklands and recreational facilities per population. The exception to this supply level strength is tennis courts, though the lower than average demand for more (as expressed in survey question six) shows little demand for additional courts. The largest priority for this area, according to survey results, is park and facility maintenance.

six) shows little demand for additional courts. The largest priority for this area, according to survey results, is park and facility maintenance.

**East Central:** Respondents in the East Central RPD Group also expressed a strong desire for expanded park and facility maintenance. Overall this area is relatively well served in terms of available parks and recreational facilities, and received the second highest rating for park and facility access in survey question four. The area registered the highest percentage of respondents interested in a skatepark (in question six), and the largest theoretical dollar amount budgeted to providing additional diverse recreation opportunities (in question five), though no specific recommendation for such a skatepark was received within the public input process. There are a number of undeveloped park sites that would be suitable for development of recreational facilities.

**North:** The North, which is almost entirely within the rural section of the County's URDL, registered very strong demand for athletic fields, indoor recreation facilities, and ball diamonds within survey question six, had by far the largest hypothetical budget amount assigned to additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities (in question five), and in question four had low ratings for availability of parks & facilities and diversity of recreation and parks opportunities. Park and facility supply numbers show that area also has below average access to local parks, though the relative supply of most recreational facility types is about average. The latter is largely attributable to the recreational facilities at school recreation centers in the area. North area respondents meanwhile had the highest rating (in question 4) of all RPD Groups for the amount of green space, reflecting the success of the County's growth management policies and the area's easy access to Gunpowder Falls State Park, Prettyboy and Loch Raven Reservoirs, Baltimore County Center for Maryland Agriculture and Farm Park, Oregon Ridge Park, and the BeeTree Preserve. A relatively recent acquisition of a property next to Sparks Elementary School Recreation Center was made to help address local needs, though the extensive lands preserved under agriculture preservation easements in this area actually reduce opportunities for the acquisition of sites suitable for park development.

**North Central:** This RPD Group has average access to local parks and recreation sites, and generally average to good access to recreational facilities, based on population level. This is reflected in the area's response to survey question four, for which ratings between 3.5 and 3.7 (on a scale of 1 to 5) were registered for each of the five recreation and parks factors. In question five the area's respondents assigned \$20.82 of a hypothetical \$100 budget to additional traditional outdoor recreation facilities, the second highest of any RPD Group. In question six a strong demand for additional athletic fields was expressed, despite the fact that the area has a better than average supply of athletic fields per population. This reflects the strong demand for field-based sports in this area of the County.

**Northeast:** The Northeast has one of the largest local park and recreation site acreage amounts, and benefits from a relatively large number of modern park and recreation sites that were provided in response to planned area growth. Thus, there is no need for additional park acquisition at this time. In survey question four area respondents assigned the largest dollar amount (\$30.11) out of a hypothetical \$100 to enhanced park maintenance, expressing little need for most other types of recreational facilities and the lowest amount (\$4.23) for park site

acquisition. Geographically, the area is largely split between urban and rural by the Gunpowder Falls, with most of the parks concentrated in the urbanized southern portion of the area. Mount Vista Park and the neighboring former Schmidt Property, feature significant amounts of space that could be developed with suitable recreational facilities in the future if and when there is sufficient demand and funding. Likewise, the presently undeveloped Days Cove Park Site is suitable for future park development that could serve both the Northeast and East RPD Groups.

**Northwest:** The Northwest RPD Group is split between urban and rural. The area's supply of local parks and recreation sites is less than the countywide average. However, there is convenient access to two regional parks - Reisterstown and Northwest – that provide many recreational facilities. The area's respondents assigned more than \$20 of their hypothetical \$100 budget to two items—enhanced park and facility maintenance, and additional places to safely walk, jog, and cycle. The most consistent survey demand was for additional pedestrian and bicycle opportunities/facilities, with the area registering the largest demand in question six for paved walking paths and trails. The presently undeveloped Reisterstown Regional Park addition, pictured below, offers an excellent opportunity for future park development/enhancements.



**Southeast:** This area is by far the best supplied in terms of parks, recreation sites, and recreational facilities per population. The Southeast's survey respondents rated availability of parks and recreational facilities (in question four) the third highest of any RPD Group, at 3.7. Enhanced park maintenance was the highest item budgeted by the area out of the hypothetical \$100, at an amount of \$23.34. The survey respondents saw little need for park acquisition, budgeting only \$4.87 out of the \$100 to that purpose. Area athletic field capacity will be improved by the enhancement of the Sparrows Point High School Recreation Center's stadium field with an artificial turf surface.

**Southwest:** Based on parks and facilities per population, the Southwest has strong access to local parks and to most recreational facilities despite not having a nearby regional park. Area respondents rated access to safe places to walk, jog, and cycle the lowest of five aspects of recreation and parks, assigned the largest amount of the hypothetical budget to that same need,

and had comparatively strong demand levels in question six for recreational facilities for bicycles and pedestrians. The County will continue to work with and support local advocacy groups such as Catonsville Rails to Trails, and support the State's trail and path efforts at Patapsco Valley State Park, with their efforts to expand pedestrian and bicycle access.

**West:** The West, another area with a substantial portion of rural lands, is among the least served in terms of local parks and recreation sites, as well as access to indoor recreation facilities, playgrounds, and local trails and paths (the latter of which is largely offset by the presence of the Soldier's Delight NEA, Patapsco Valley State Park, and Liberty Reservoir). Survey questions four, five, and six show a strong interest in having expanded access to indoor recreation facilities and trails & paths, and the area registered the strongest demand for a dog park (in survey question six) of any RPD Group. Some local park acquisition may be necessary in this area, though some of the demand – especially for additional trails – could be satisfied at the recently acquired Granite Park Site.

**West Central:** This RPD Group, which is split nearly in two by rural lands in the north and urban lands in the south, has considerable access to regional and countywide parks, while having the least overall access per population to local parks, recreation sites, and most recreational facilities. The regional and countywide park access helps to offset some of the recreational needs of the area and is likely to have impacted why the area respondents' rated (in survey question four) availability of parks and recreation facilities slightly above average, at 3.2. The West Central had high demands in question six for athletic fields, paved paths, and bicycle lanes/paths. Availability of land, particularly in the urbanized portion of the area where park sites would serve the most nearby population, is somewhat scarce.

**West Southwest:** The West Southwest is relatively well served by local parks and recreation sites, and has average or better recreation facility access per population. Respondents from this area rated the amount of preserved green space, diversity of recreational facilities and opportunities, and safe places to walk, jog & cycle just below average. They likewise budgeted (in question five) the largest amount out of their hypothetical \$100 budget to additional places to walk, jog, and cycle, and in question six identified paved paths and bicycle lanes/paths as their top two requested recreational facilities. The numbers associated with bicycle and pedestrian facilities and activities is likely attributable to the strong bicycle culture in the greater Catonsville area, which straddles both the Southwest and the West Southwest RPD Groups. As such, the same bicycle and pedestrian access recommendations as in the Southwest apply.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The capital improvement program (CIP) provides the budgetary framework for the capital resources that are utilized to make progress towards achieving the park, recreation, and open space goals identified earlier in this plan, as well as the previously listed general recommendations. The majority of funding for recreation and parks capital projects is included within the "parks, preservation and greenways" section of the CIP, though this funding is sometimes supplemented by other budgetary resources. Most funding within the CIP is budgeted for two-year periods starting in even numbered

years, so that the funding allocated for FY’18 would be intended to be utilized in fiscal years 2018 and 2019. A total of \$34.2 million was allocated in the FY’17 CIP for fiscal years 2018-2023, split into three allocations of \$11.4 million for FY’s 2018, 2020, and 2022. Funding not expended within a given fiscal year is often reallocated to address the greatest needs from year to year. An example would be reallocating unexpended funds from the “neighborhood and community park development” project (budget category) to the “recreation facility renovations” project during the annual capital budget process because of a greater need for park renovations/rehabilitation.

The CIP is connected to and has relationships with multiple documents, as displayed below. The County Master Plan is the primary advisory guide that impacts both the County CIP and LPPRP. The CIP and LPPRP are themselves closely related, and support one another. Finally, the CIP and LPPRP, combined, are utilized to craft the County’s POS Annual Program. The Annual Program presents Baltimore County’s anticipated POS-assisted projects for the upcoming fiscal year, and is prepared each year after the County’s budget formulation process is complete. Public input significantly impacts the preparation of the top three of the documents, with formal input processes associated with each.



A summary of the parks and recreation portions of the present CIP, organized by project number, is presented on the following page. In some cases the funding could be used for either renovations/rehabilitation or park and facility development or enhancements. For the purpose of the summary the most commonplace type of job funded under the project is indicated in the “type” column.

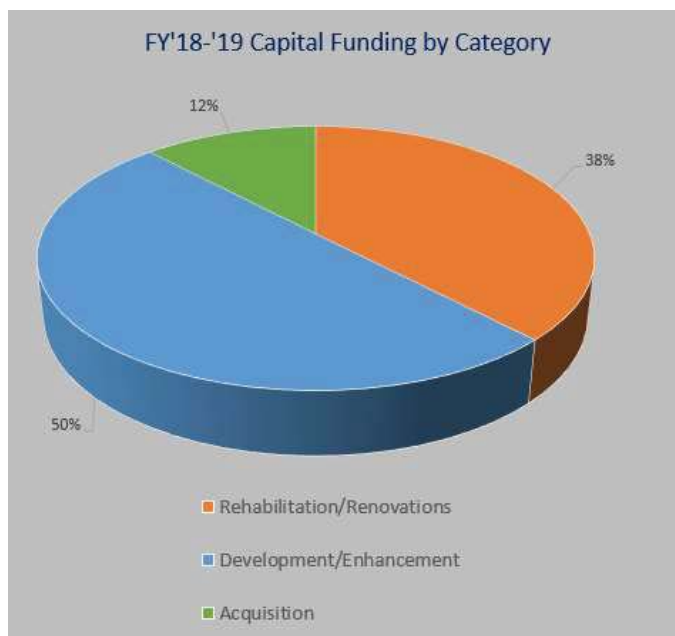


Project Name and Associated Jobs	FY'18-'19 Amount*	FY'20-'23 Amount	Type#
<b><i>NeighborSpace</i></b>			
NeighborSpace of Baltimore County Grants	\$75,000	\$150,000	All
<b><i>Recreation Facility Renovations</i></b>			
Tennis and Multi-Purpose Ct. Rehab. - FY'18-'19	\$690,370	\$1,200,000	R
Kingsville Park Erosion Renovations - Phase 2	\$500,000	\$0	R
General Renovations & Enhancements - FY'18-'19	\$859,630	\$1,800,000	R
	<u>\$2,050,000</u>	<u>\$3,000,000</u>	
<b><i>Athletic Field Reconstruction / Renovation</i></b>			
Field and Diamond Renovations, Incl. Backstops	\$2,473,500	\$5,000,000	R
Field and Diamond Construction & Enhancements	\$1,014,211	\$1,500,000	D
Indoor Fields Surface Replacement: NE Reg'l. Rec. Center	\$500,000	\$0	R
New Artificial Turf Field: Perry Hall High SRC	\$800,000	\$0	D
New Artif. Turf Field w) Lights: Randallstown High SRC	\$1,100,000	\$0	D
Artificial Turf Field Replacements	\$0	\$3,500,000	R
Artificial Turf Replacement: Hereford High SRC*	\$500,000	\$0	R
Artificial Turf Replacement: Lansdowne High SRC*	\$500,000	\$0	R
Artificial Turf Replacement: Woodlawn High SRC*	\$500,000	\$0	R
New Artificial Turf Field: CCBC-Catonsville*	\$800,000	\$0	D
	<u>\$8,187,711</u>	<u>\$10,000,000</u>	
<b><i>Community / Neighborhood Park Development</i></b>			
Double Rock Park Enhancements and Renovations%	\$500,000	\$0	D
Towson Manor Park	\$30,000	\$0	D
Towson Courthouse Plaza Enhancements and Renovations*	\$4,500,000		D
Park Construction and Enhancements	\$0	\$4,500,000	D
	<u>\$5,030,000</u>	<u>\$4,500,000</u>	
<b><i>Greenways/Stream Valleys/Trails Development</i></b>			
Trail Construction and Rehabilitation	\$0	\$1,000,000	D
<b><i>Park &amp; Recreation Facility Acquisition</i></b>			
Park & Recreation Facility Acquisition	\$2,100,000	\$4,000,000	A
<b><i>Park &amp; Recreation Center Accessibility</i></b>			
Park & Recreation Facility Access Renov. & Enhancements	\$75,000	\$150,000	R
	<u>\$17,517,711</u>	<u>\$22,800,000</u>	
* Funded outside of Recreation & Parks CIP			
#- Type Codes: A-Acquisition, D-Development/Enhancements, R-Rehabilitation/Renovations			
% - Includes prior available funding needed for grant match			

It is important to recognize that each fiscal year parks and recreation jobs may be funded out of multiple parts of the County's CIP. The "parks, preservation and greenways" portion of the CIP typically features the vast majority of such funding. However, as the FY'18-'19 column of the CIP summary attests, substantial funding may also come from other sources. In the case of FY'18-'19,

three artificial turf field surface replacement jobs at school recreation centers are expected to be funded with approximately \$1.5 million in funds outside of the parks, preservation and greenways budget, as is the reconstruction of the Towson Courthouse Plaza (a.k.a. Patriot Plaza) to transform it into a greener, more functional public plaza. Decisions to utilize the other funding sources are made from budget year to budget year, and as such are not identified for fiscal years '20-'23. Other recreational benefits may derive from larger jobs which feature some sort of public recreation component. One example would be the “streets and highways” funded Owings Mills Boulevard Extension, which included a wide side path intended to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access for both transportation and recreation purposes. Another example is the underway County effort to construct new and replacement public school recreation centers, each of which shall feature more functional and/or expanded indoor recreation space.

The capital funding dedicated in FY's '18-'19 to projects benefiting public recreation totals just over \$17.5 million. The pie chart below provides a glimpse of the funding by project category, with the NeighborSpace grant program (outgoing grant that can be used for local park open space and park acquisition, development, and rehabilitation) excluded. The two largest portions of the FY'18-'19 CIP are the approximately 50% dedicated to park development and enhancements, and the 38% budgeted for park and facility rehabilitation/renovations. It should be noted that portions of jobs classified as park enhancements may involve facility renovations.



The CIP supports many of the goals, objectives, conclusions, and recommendations of this plan, though it is again essential to recognize that there are many priorities and capital resources are not unlimited. The need for parks and facility rehabilitation funding will, in particular, remain perpetual. The following provides highlights of how the present CIP supports this plan's findings.

**Bulk Renovation Categories:** The two largest bulk renovation programs, for the rehabilitation of recreation courts and ball diamonds & athletic fields, involve nearly \$3.2 million in FY'18-

'19 and \$6.2 million for FY'20-'23. This supports the first countywide priority of enhanced maintenance of existing recreational facilities.

**Large Scale Park Renovations:** The renovation and enhancement jobs at Kingsville and Double Rock Parks are examples of larger scale rehabilitation jobs that are sometimes needed, especially at older parks. These jobs likewise support goals, objectives, and conclusions pertaining to enhanced park and facility maintenance.

**Artificial Turf Field Renovations and Construction:** The FY'18-'19 portion of the CIP features \$2 million budgeted for three outdoor and one indoor artificial turf field surface replacement projects, again supporting the priority of rehabilitating existing facilities. Additionally, the construction of new artificial turf fields at Perry Hall High SRC, Randallstown High SRC, and CCBC-Catonsville represent partnership projects that will enhance facility access for both scholastic sports and public recreation programs offered by the local recreation councils, each of which have very strong field sports programs. Another \$3.5 million is budgeted in FY'20-'23 for additional artificial turf field replacements, and still other fields could be provided or renovated through the "field and diamond construction & enhancements" general job.

**Towson Area Projects:** The core of Towson continues to undergo strong, concentrated, high density growth, with the proposed and ongoing projects at the Towson Courthouse Plaza, Towson Manor Park, and the recently acquired Radebaugh Property site providing essential green space and recreational opportunities in and near "downtown" Towson. These projects not only address strong public input associated with providing additional green space in the Central RPD Group area, but support a number of plan objectives including those associated with site enhancements and community revitalization.

**Trails and Paths:** Public demand for safe places to walk, jog, cycle, and partake of other various forms of linear recreation, continues to be very strong. While no funding is presently budgeted in FY'18-'19 specifically for greenways, stream valleys, and trail development, there are several recent and ongoing trail and path capital renovation jobs that were/are funded through the "general renovations and enhancements" budget category. Further, the County continues to employ the private development process and local open space and greenway requirements to secure key trail and path segments, many of which are constructed by developers as part of their subdivision plan requirements.

**Park Acquisition:** Only 12% of the FY'18-'19 funding is budgeted for park acquisition, reflecting the limited overall need for park acquisition (which is restricted to just a few of the RPD Groups overall) and greater need for rehabilitation and development/enhancements. This reflects public input received through the online recreation survey and is consistent with the limited number of public comments pertaining to park site acquisition. The POS Annual Programs shall continue to serve as the means for geographically identifying where park acquisition efforts will be taking place. Acquisition efforts remain in place for both areas with strong public demands, and for other purposes such as natural resource conservation—especially along or near the County's waterfront areas. The availability of suitable lands, competition for same, and difficulty meeting the price expectations of some land owners all impact the County's ability to acquire quality park sites and green spaces.