

## CHAPTER IV: OPEN SPACE PLAN

### Introduction – Open Space Plan

Parks, greenways and open space are crucial components to a community – providing spaces for rest, relaxation and recreation for community members, while establishing a sense of place in the community. The Antioch-Priest Lake Community Plan provides guidance on the design of open spaces, through the Open Space and Potential Open Space Community Character Policies, which are applied to various properties throughout the community that are now or could become open space resources.

The Antioch-Priest Lake community members enjoy their existing parks, greenways, and other open space areas, which vary considerably in size, character, and programming. However, several areas do not have nearby access to parks and greenways. To further enhance the open space system, there were several ideas for additions and improvements to the network of parks and open spaces within the community.

The Antioch-Priest Lake community also expressed difficulty in locating some of the J. Percy Priest Lake public recreation areas and greenway trailheads. To address this, recommendations for directional signage to these areas are made for various locations throughout the community and are denoted by the green signs on Figure 31, the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Open Space Plan.

Detailed guidance on the design and character of each open space is found in Chapter II, in the Open Space and Potential Open Space Policies for each Transect Category. Further guidance on the implementation of the open space improvements needing significant citizen involvement and partnerships to succeed is discussed in detail in Chapter V, in the Implementation strategies. The guidance in Chapter II and Chapter V is supplemented by the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Plan's Open Space Plan – see Figure 31 on page 218.

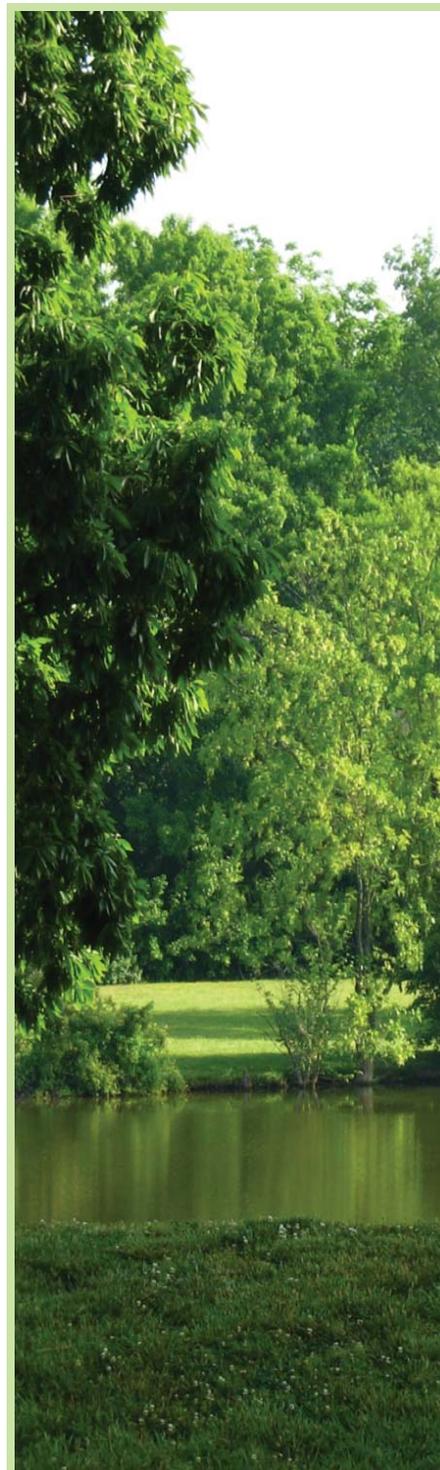
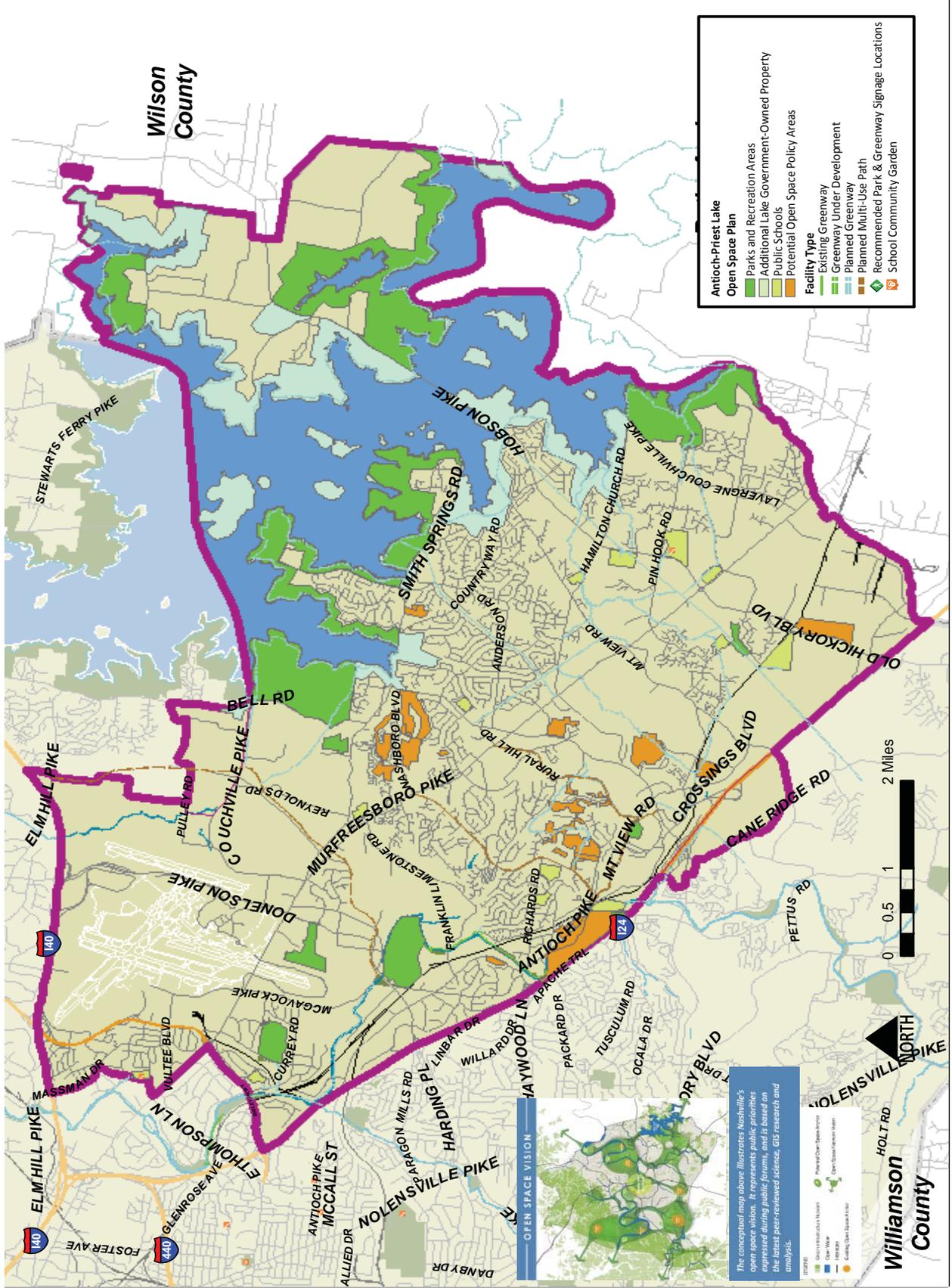


Figure 31: Antioch - Priest Lake Open Space Plan



### Nashville Naturally - Nashville's Open Space Plan

In 2009, the Mayor's Green Ribbon Committee on Environmental Sustainability recommended the creation of a comprehensive open space plan for Nashville/Davidson County. A public/private partnership was formed and the planning process, "Nashville: Naturally," inventoried, evaluated and developed, with community input, a vision for conserving and enhancing Nashville's natural resources and green infrastructure, including parks, greenways, community gardens, tree-lined streets, farmland, forests, waterways and bluffs. The Nashville Open Space Plan was released in April 2011.

The Nashville Open Space Plan contains four main themes:

- Connect wildlife and water networks;
- Support urban and rural farming;
- Connect people to the green infrastructure network; and
- Preserve historic and iconic resources.

The catchphrase from the Nashville Open Space Plan is – "Four Corners, Nine Bends and a Heart of Green." Envisioned in each of the four corners of Nashville/Davidson County are large reserves of protected open space, serving as anchors for the open space network. In southeast Nashville, this includes land along Mill Creek, land around J. Percy Priest Lake, open space anchors in underserved areas, and connections between open space areas and to the larger open space network in the adjacent Rutherford and Williamson Counties. Also envisioned are protected lands in each of the Cumberland River's nine bends, rich in agricultural soils and river access, which serve as buffers against floodwaters and help improve water quality by filtering water runoff. In the center is Nashville's Downtown, envisioned as a heart of green, with a revitalized riverfront, an increase in open spaces and tree canopy, and green roofs and rain gardens. All these resources should be connected by filling in gaps, creating links through greenways and protecting additional land.

The graphics below, included in the Nashville Open Space Plan, show the breakdown of Nashville's currently conserved open space.

The Nashville Open Space Plan's short- and mid-term goals that could impact Antioch-Priest Lake include:

- Add 3,000 acres of parkland in the next ten years. Add another 3,000 acres of parkland by 2035.
- Privately conserve a minimum of 3,000 acres of Nashville's green infrastructure network in the next ten years, and an additional 3,000 acres by 2035.
- Protect an additional 10,000 acres of floodplain and other sensitive natural areas via low impact development, land swaps and regulatory innovations in the next ten years.
- Of these 22,000 preserved acres, protect at least 1,500 acres for sustainable agricultural uses.
- Improve key park and greenway linkages by adding 25 miles of new greenways in the next five years.
- Double the amount of local food produced in Davidson County and triple the number of Davidson County farms selling directly to consumers in the next five years.

A conceptual vision, included in the Nashville Open Space Plan, shows Nashville's green infrastructure network (shaded in light green on Figure 33 below). In Antioch-Priest Lake, this includes the floodplains of Mill Creek, its tributaries and J. Percy Priest Lake, and areas of steep slopes. It also includes connecting the open spaces to create a more comprehensive network (illustrated with the green arrows) by building off of key parks (shown in bright green ovals). The plan places a high priority on creating a series of parks throughout southeastern Davidson County.

As the Nashville Open Space Plan states: "Together the private and public sectors can implement these recommendations and make Nashville a greener, healthier, more prosperous place to work, live and visit."

Figure 32: Nashville Naturally (Open Space Plan) - Inventory of Land Resources

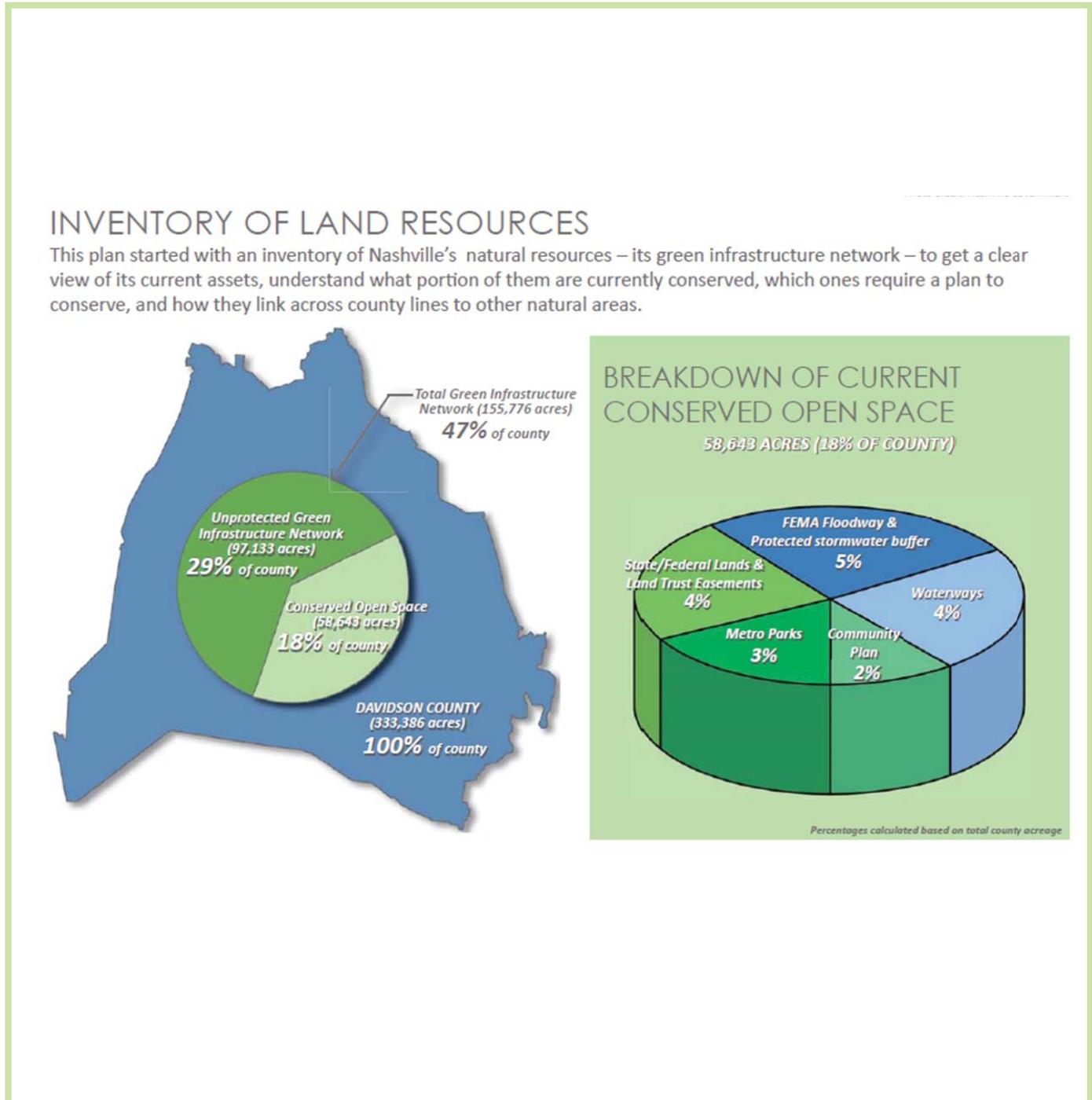
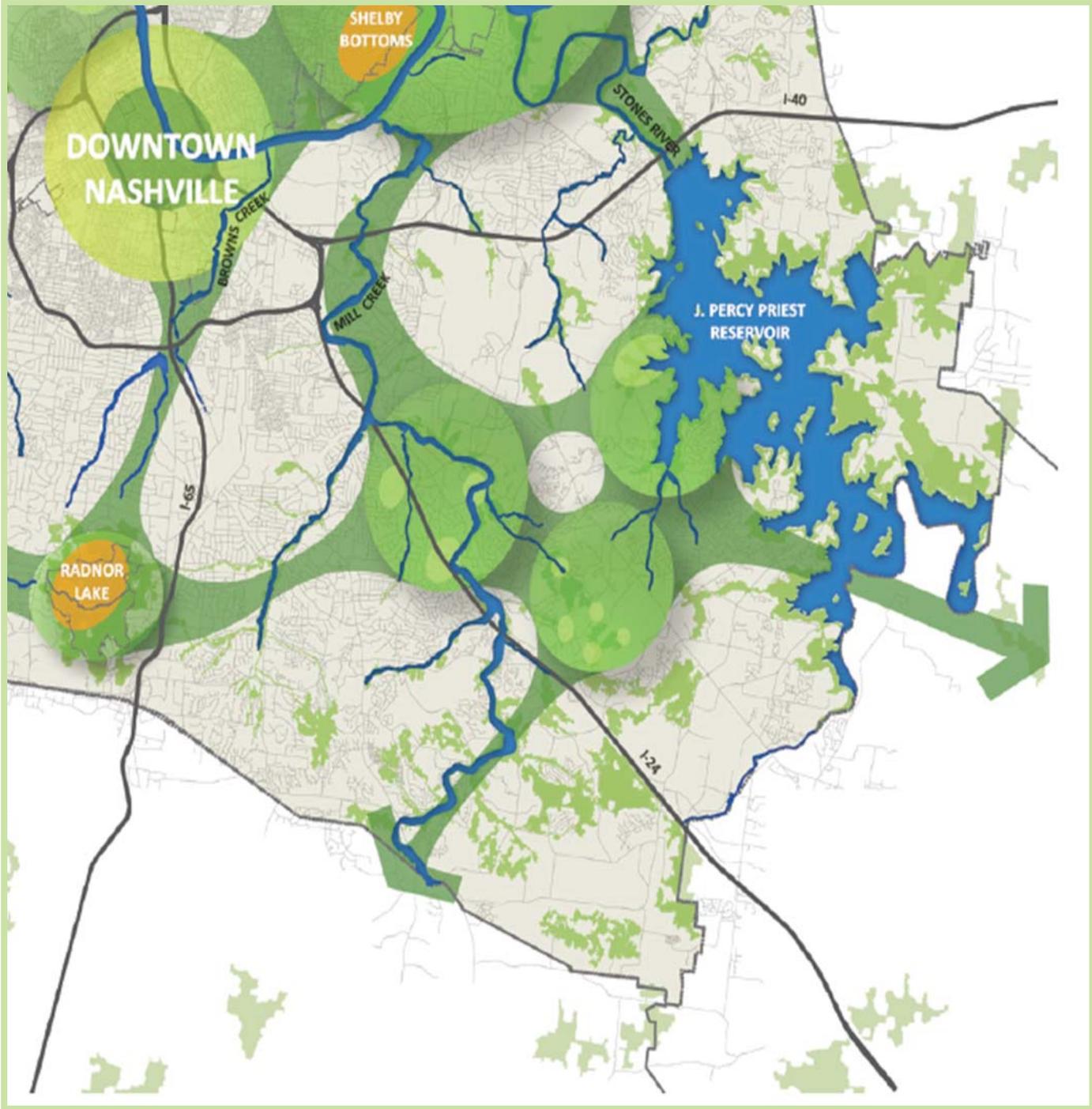


Figure 33: Nashville Naturally (Open Space Plan) - Open Space Concept for Southeast Davidson County



# Antioch - Priest Lake Community Plan: 2012 Update

## Chapter 4 - Open Space

### Metropolitan Parks and Greenways Master Plan

The guidance provided in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Plan is also intended to complement the Metropolitan Park and Greenways Master Plan (“Parks Master Plan” adopted in November 2002 and updated in July 2008), which describes Nashville’s existing parks and greenways and establishes the goals, objectives, policies and plans for parks and greenways throughout the County. This document can be found at [www.nashvillegov/parks/master\\_plan.asp](http://www.nashvillegov/parks/master_plan.asp). It should be consulted for more detailed information about existing parks, parkland needs, and the vision for parks and greenways in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community.

The majority of Nashville’s planned greenway systems are based on existing networks of rivers, lakes and streams. In these locations, greenways provide a vegetative buffer that protects water quality and conserves open space and, in some cases, creates wildlife habitats and corridors. By locating greenway corridors along these water features, communities may utilize land that would otherwise be unused because of flooding hazards. In addition to those environmental benefits, greenways also provide recreational and transportation benefits. As a recreational benefit, greenways provide non-vehicular connections to parks, neighborhoods, and retail areas, thus encouraging healthier and more active lifestyles through walking and biking. Greenway networks offer increased transportation opportunities by providing bicycle and pedestrian friendly routes between schools, homes, shopping, dining, employment and other destinations.

The existing greenway corridors identified in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Plan follow the floodplains of the Mill Creek, its tributaries, and J. Percy Priest Lake; therefore they are located within Conservation (CO) policy. Conservation policy is a Community Character Policy designed for areas with environmentally sensitive features such as steeply sloping terrain, unstable soils, floodplains or other environmental features that need to be protected and are not suitable for development. Planned future greenways are also found in other policy categories such as T3 Suburban Neighborhood Maintenance (T3 NM) and T3 Suburban Neighborhood Evolving (T3 NE) where non-vehicular connections between neighborhoods are encouraged.

In Nashville, identified greenways may be a protected natural area that is preserved from any development, but does not have a trail built in it. Alternately, the natural area may eventually

include a paved or unpaved trail – the trail that is called the “greenway.” In either form, the identified greenway will maintain natural areas and protect the river and its floodway from future building development.

### Existing Greenways in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Area

The majority of the constructed greenways in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community are located along Mill Creek. According to Metro Parks, two main segments have been constructed as part of the Mill Creek Greenway (as of August 2012):

- Mill Creek Greenway – Blue Hole Road – Greenway segment from the Antioch Community Center along Mill Creek north to Reeves Road, including a loop around Antioch Middle School. The entire length is approximately 1.8 miles.
- Mill Creek Greenway – Ezell Park – Greenway segment around Ezell Park from McGavock Pike to the southern end of Ezell Park. The entire length is approximately 1.3 miles.
- Greenway trailheads are located at the Antioch Community Center and at Ezell Park.

In addition to Metro greenways, there are also other trails in the community (as of August 2012):

- Hamilton Creek Park – Two mountain bike trails, totaling over 10 miles, which hikers can also use.
- Anderson Road Recreation Area – Fitness trail, 1.2 miles.
- Long Hunter State Park – Several trails, including short walks, two four-mile trails, one six-mile trail, and an 18-mile mountain bike trail.



Greenways facilitate recreation, and travel...



# Antioch - Priest Lake Community Plan: 2012 Update

## Chapter 4 - Open Space

### Planned Greenways in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Area – Parks Master Plan for Parks and Greenways

In Nashville, identified greenways are protected natural pathways that are preserved from any development. The pathways may stay in a natural state or eventually include a paved or unpaved trail. In either form, the identified greenway will maintain natural areas and protect the river and its floodway from future building development.

In the Antioch-Priest Lake area, Metro Parks has planned the following greenway project (as of August 2012):

- Greenway segment connecting the Mill Creek Greenway from the existing trail at the Antioch Community Center to the existing trail at Ezell Park. Greenway easements are in place for this segment with the exception of two properties.

Future long-term greenway plans include additional greenway segments along Mill Creek; greenway segments along Hurricane Creek and Savage Branch; and a greenway system around J. Percy Priest Lake providing additional access to the lake's recreation areas.

### Recommended Greenways in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community

In addition to the proposed greenways identified in the Parks Master Plan, the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Plan makes several additional greenway recommendations gleaned from community comments and Planning staff's analysis of the community's greenway and trail networks. The recommendations are greenway connections throughout the Antioch-Priest Lake community, including greenway corridors along Mill Creek and J. Percy Priest Lake, to connect neighborhoods, schools, shopping, and parks. These greenways would be constructed by a combination of Metro Parks and private developer funding. These proposals can be seen on Figure 31: Open Space Plan on page 218.

The following greenway segments are recommended to complement the existing Mill Creek Greenway system:

- A system of connections throughout the area that would connect area schools, parks and neighborhoods with each other, with corridors, and with the larger greenway and bikeway systems.
- Greenway segments that would connect the new community center at Hickory Hollow Mall with the Crossings area and the larger greenway and bikeway systems.

- Greenway segments that would connect the area east of the airport with the larger greenway and bikeway systems, and with the Murfreesboro Road corridor.
- A greenway along the planned Southeast Parkway that would connect to the larger greenway system.

### Recommended Multi-Use Trails in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Area

In addition to the greenways discussed above, which serve the dual purpose of providing a path and protecting natural features, several multi-use paths which are not associated with specific natural features are proposed for the Antioch-Priest Lake area. A multi-use path is a path that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by an open space or barrier, and is shared by bicyclists, pedestrians, joggers, skaters, and other non-motorized travelers. The separation from the roadway should be at least six feet. A multi-use path can be a good alternative when providing sidewalks and/or bikeways on both sides of a street is unfeasible.

The following multi-use paths are recommended for Antioch-Priest Lake along various roadways:

- A multi-use path along the new Harding Place extension.
- A multi-use path along Una Antioch Pike from Blue Hole Road to Murfreesboro Pike.
- A multi-use path along Rural Hill Road from Mt. View Road to Murfreesboro Pike.
- A multi-use path along Mt. View Road from Una Antioch Pike to Rural Hill Road with a small portion on Mt. View Road from Baby Ruth Lane to Crossings Boulevard.

These multi-use paths, while they do connect with the parks and greenways system, serve pedestrian and bicycle transportation needs in the Antioch-Priest Lake area because they are recommended in areas that lack these facilities. As such, they are discussed in detail with respect to their connection to the rest of the transportation system in Chapter III, Transportation Plan. The Antioch-Priest Lake Plan recommends that these additional non-vehicular pathways be added to the Parks Master Plan. See Figure 31 for all planned and recommended multi-use greenways and multi-use paths.

*Utility Line Easement Opportunities in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community Area*

Utility line easements in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community present further opportunities for trail system development. Cooperative efforts with the easement owners are needed to develop such trail systems, which exist in other parts of the country. Further study of the opportunities presented in these easements is recommended as an ongoing implementation effort and is discussed further in Chapter V, Implementation.

**Parks and Open Space**

As of August 2012, there are six existing public parks within the Antioch-Priest Lake area, including the new park and community center at Hickory Hollow, that cover approximately 935 acres and range from small neighborhood parks to large regional parks. There are also additional recreational facilities, including soccer parks, mountain bike trails and state parks, in the area that provide over 2,500 additional acres of park space.

The Parks Master Plan establishes a park Level of Service (LOS) for each planning community in Nashville, including the Antioch-Priest Lake Community. The LOS is based on the standards established by the National Recreation and Park Association. The recommended LOS for neighborhood parks in the Parks

Master Plan is two acres for every 1,000 residents; mini-parks are one-half acre for every 1,000 residents; and for community parks a maximum of five acres for 1,000 residents. In establishing LOS, the Parks Master Plan identifies the Current LOS (based on the year 2000 population figures) and the Future LOS for parks (based on projected population figures for the year 2020). Much of the Antioch-Priest Lake area has been identified as having a park deficit of being located greater than one-half mile from an existing park facility. Based on 2006 population estimates, Antioch-Priest Lake had a deficit in neighborhood, mini, and community parks and a surplus in regional parks. It is projected that by the year 2020, Antioch-Priest Lake will continue to have a deficit in neighborhood, mini, and community parks and will also have a deficit in regional parks.

The Parks Master Plan also has established a service radius standard that addresses the area that the park is intended to serve (see Figure 34 below).

**Figure 34: Metro Parks Master Plan Service Radius Standards**

Facility	Service Radius Standard
Regional Park	30 Minute Drive
Community Park	½ to 3 miles
Neighborhood Park	¼ to ½ mile
Mini-Park	<¼ mile
Greenway	2 miles
Special Facility	Variable

# Antioch - Priest Lake Community Plan: 2012 Update

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In the Parks Department's update to the Parks Master Plan in 2008, amendments were included to provide a community center and two neighborhood centers in the southeast portion of the county as well as mountain bike development and additional skate facilities.

### Existing and Planned Parks and Open Space in the Antioch-Priest Lake Community – Parks Master Plan

#### *Mini-Parks/Pocket Parks*

Mini-parks are generally located in denser urban settings where there is limited acreage for park or open space development. These types of parks are typically less than five acres and may include urban plazas, playgrounds, and other small-scale open spaces. As of August 2012, there are no mini-parks in Antioch-Priest Lake, which creates a deficit. It is estimated that by the year 2020, the Antioch-Priest Lake area will continue to have a deficit of mini-parks. The appropriate amount of land dedicated to mini-parks is determined by measuring how much parkland is available in relation to the number of people living in the Antioch-Priest Lake area. Therefore, there are opportunities for additional mini-parks in Antioch-Priest Lake. The recommendation for mini-parks is that they be provided as part of new residential and mixed-use developments that are built in the Antioch-Priest Lake area.

#### *Neighborhood Parks*

Neighborhood Parks are generally designed to serve immediate surrounding neighborhoods and are between five and 20 acres. These types of parks typically include playgrounds, tennis or basketball courts, ball fields and sitting areas for passive recreation.

Antioch Park, located on eight acres along Blue Hole Road, includes a neighborhood community center with a playground and picnic areas, and a segment of the Mill Creek Greenway along with a trailhead. Trails loop around the park, along Mill Creek, and around the adjacent Antioch Middle School which is across the street. No additional improvements to the existing park are currently planned.

There is a 22-acre property referred to as "Southeast Park". The proposed park is located on Preserve Boulevard, just north of the subdivision The Preserve at Old Hickory on Old Hickory Boulevard. The property was given to Metro Parks by the subdivision developer. The property contains steep slopes and woods. In the future, Metro Parks expects to create hiking trails on the property as a neighborhood amenity.

#### *Community Parks*

Community Parks are designed to serve several neighborhoods and typically focus on providing intensive active recreational facilities. They are typically between 20 and 50 acres and may include tennis and basketball courts, soccer or football fields, and community centers that include indoor gyms.

Una Recreation Park is located on Smith Springs Road. Its 25 acres contain two football fields, two multi-purpose fields, two baseball/softball fields, a playground, a picnic shelter, and a skateboarding area. The park also houses the Una Recreation Center (URC), a non-profit corporation dedicated to the development of community youth, which provides cheerleading and football recreational opportunities. URC also owns a building containing offices, meeting rooms and equipment storage.

The Hickory Hollow Park and Community center, is the community's most recent park development, and was underway during the Antioch – Priest Lake Community Plan Update. The park and community center is located in the former J.C. Penney's building on the north side of the Hickory Hollow Mall. The project includes a regional community center and 2.6 acre park as well as a new, larger library. The 30,000 square foot regional community center is expected to include a gymnasium, fitness center, multi-purpose room, and other amenities.

#### *Regional Parks*

Regional Parks provide large undisturbed tracts of land that are important for the protection of wildlife habitats and ecological communities. They also provide active and passive use recreation experiences including hiking, cycling, horseback riding and picnicking.

Seven Oaks Park is a large 73-acre park located in the heart of the neighborhood at McGavock Pike and School Lane. The park offers picnic areas, youth and adult baseball fields, a softball field, three tennis courts, a playground, a disc golf course, and both wooded and grassy areas.

Hamilton Creek Park, located off Bell Road adjacent to J. Percy Priest Lake, is owned by the state but is leased by Metro Parks. It is 790 acres and contains access to the lake, boat launches, hiking trails, a playground, picnic areas, a beach area, and a popular sailboat marina. Hamilton Creek Park also maintains a BMX race track and an extensive system of mountain bike trails for more experienced riders. The trails go under Bell Road to other sections of the park, where additional trails traverse 3.3 miles of cedar glades and limestone rock outcroppings, and 7 miles of trails that climb through woods and meadows.



**Pocket Parks**



**Neighborhood Parks**



**Community Parks**



**Regional Parks**



# Antioch - Priest Lake Community Plan: 2012 Update

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Ezell Road Park is located along Harding Place. All together, the property is approximately 163 acres, but that includes land used for the Sheriff's facilities and Metro Animal Control. There is a greenway segment and trailhead located at the park. There are some grassy, open areas but most of the park land is used for soccer by the Metros Soccer, the city's Premier Development League soccer team.

The Metro Soccer Complex, located on Donelson Pike, provides 64 acres for soccer league play. There are five adult soccer fields and four youth soccer fields that are used for organized league play and are not open for general recreation.

### *Metro Schools - Parks*

Metro Parks, in partnership with Metro Public Schools, often utilize the open space that is part of existing elementary school properties as a cost efficient method to improve community access to parks in underserved areas. In the Antioch-Priest Lake area, five Metro School sites with green space are designated as park land for public use; Glenview Elementary, J.E. Moss Elementary, Lakeview Elementary, Mt. View Elementary, and Una Elementary Schools. Glengarry Elementary School is planned to become a joint park-school use facility in the third phase of the Parks Master Plan. Currently, Metro Schools is seeking land in the southeast for new schools. Metro Schools should coordinate with Metro Parks as there may be additional opportunities to accommodate school and park functions on shared land.

### *State Parks*

The Antioch-Priest Lake area also has portions of J. Percy Priest Lake, three of the lake's recreation areas, and Long Hunter State Park. The recreation areas, including Anderson Road, Four Corners and Smith Springs, contain over 700 acres with lake access, swimming areas, boat ramps, marinas, camping, picnic areas, grilling areas, and trails.

The Anderson Road Recreation Area, considered the most popular day use area at Priest Lake, includes a campground, a swim beach, boat ramp, picnic facilities, a gazebo, play areas and a 1.2 mile paved fitness trail that traverse a cedar glade area beside the lake. When all available parking spaces are full, it is necessary to close the park to additional users until parking spaces are available.

The Smith Springs Recreation Area receives a large amount of boat launch traffic due to its proximity to nearby residents who visit the lake. The area also includes picnic facilities and grills.

The Four Corners Recreation Area contains the Four Corners Marina. The area used to also contain 30 picnic sites, a picnic shelter, and parking spaces for public shore access. However, this portion of the area was closed to the public in 2004 due to low public usage and needed infrastructure repairs.

Long Hunter State Park, comprised of 2,600 acres, is located along the eastern shore of J. Percy Priest Lake and contains swimming, boating, picnic areas, fishing, and several hiking trails. Trails include self-guided nature trails, popular short walks, two four-mile trails, a six-mile trail, and an 18-mile mountain bike trail. The park also provides recreational programs and environmental education programs.

The Mt. View Cedar Glade Natural Area, along Mt. View Road, includes a short trail that allows people to view the unique habitat of Middle Tennessee's cedar glades. Limestone cedar glades are endangered ecosystems, many of which have been severely damaged by human habitation. According to Middle Tennessee State University's Center for Cedar Glade Studies, cedar glades support highly specialized plant communities, some of which are found nowhere else in the world. Cedar glades are characterized by very thin soil and exposed, rocky patches that are surrounded by red cedar trees. Limestone rock, which allows water to penetrate, forms part of the topography of cedar glades. Over time, erosion forms sinkholes on the surface along with subterranean waterways. Beneath the glades, the underlying cave network is also home to several extraordinary cave organisms.

### **Recommended Parks and Open Space for the Antioch-Priest Lake Community**

Metro Parks is committed to acquiring land, building and programming new open space facilities in the Antioch-Priest Lake community. One important project underway (as of August 2012) is the new community center and park at the Hickory Hollow Mall. The project is expected to be open in late 2013 and will contain a regional community center and a 2.6 acre park (converted from parking areas). Metro Parks is also working to acquire land in the Smith Springs Road area to build another community center and park in coming years.

The Antioch-Priest Lake Community Plan recommends several properties that may be suitable for the area's open space network. These properties are shown in orange on Figure 31, the Open Space Plan Map, and total over 600 acres. Some of these properties are suitable for neighborhood parks because they are smaller properties that generally serve the immediate neighborhood within a quarter-mile walking distance to a short

half-mile driving distance. The neighborhood parks should be designed to contain activity generating components (i.e. playground, community garden, etc.) and should be located near active uses to provide safety for users and to encourage continuous use of the park. Larger properties are suitable for community parks. Community parks are generally drive-to facilities so their specific locations need to be accessible to users arriving on foot, by bicycle, and by motor vehicle.

Dog parks were mentioned by participants during the plan update process. Specific locations discussed as potential places for dog parks are the new park at Hickory Hollow, a potential open space area in Nashboro Village adjacent to the pond, and as part of any new community center on the east side of Murfreesboro Road.

### **Additional Open Space – Community Gardens and Civic Land Uses**

Antioch-Priest Lake community members also expressed interest in community gardens in addition to traditional open space and parks. Community gardens are generally an ideal use for underutilized land in urban communities; a community garden repurposes vacant and often blighted property and provides access to healthy food. Vacant and blighted properties are not prevalent in suburban communities; therefore other appropriate settings for community gardens include schools, churches, or as amenities within planned residential and mixed use communities. In these suburban contexts, community gardens can still provide greater access to healthy food.

In Antioch – Priest Lake, existing community gardens are part of the Glenview Elementary School campus and the Antioch High School campus. The Parks Master Plan recommends identifying vacant parcels in densely populated neighborhoods and working with residents, non-profits, and other grassroots organizations to develop and maintain community gardens. The Parks Master Plan also recommends utilizing portions of existing or future neighborhood parks as community gardens.

In addition to Metro Parks and Metro School park land, which are labeled with Open Space Community Character Policy (OS) in the community plan, there are civic uses such as libraries and cemeteries that are also labeled OS. If the uses on these properties were to cease, it is recommended that all or a section of the property remain in public use as open space. Meanwhile, areas that may be appropriately used as open space in the future are labeled Potential Open Space (POS). Guidance for each of these areas is found by reading the Open Space and Potential

Open Space Community Character Policies and by reading the specific Community Character Policy Areas in Chapter II.

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