

# open space and recreation

This element is concerned with open space and recreation which may seem somewhat superfluous when compared with housing, transportation and utility systems. While these issues may or may not be fundamental to the health, safety and welfare of residents, they are vital to maintaining the happiness of residents and the desired image of the city.

An open space and recreation system consists of sites, facilities and programs which perform several functions. The most basic function is the provision of recreational services to residents. An effective system can also provide a wide range of leisure time experiences, help protect sensitive environmental resources, and be an important visual feature in the community.

There are several entities which provide recreational facilities and opportunities to Prattville residents, however, these entities can easily be grouped into two categories: public (not for profit) and private (for profit). The public providers include the City of Prattville Parks and Recreation Department

(PARD); county, state and national facilities; Alabama Power impoundments; and the U.S. Corps of Engineers resources. Private recreation providers might include the YMCA, privately owned clubs, and privately owned businesses. Recreational resources and facilities provided by all of these entities are included in the following review of open space and recreation resources which are available to Prattville residents.

## service area

The service area of the Prattville Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) encompasses the City of Prattville as well as the surrounding area. At this point, participants who are Prattville residents are not given any preference in activities over participants from areas outside Prattville's corporate boundaries. The Prattville PARD offers a variety of programs for all ages. In the past two years, youth programs have included organized sports, instructional classes, and social functions. Although athletic programs have had the greatest

participation rates in the last few years, participation in the department's non-athletic programs, such as the summer youth program and kindercamp, is steadily increasing. Adult programs include some organized sports and a variety of classes and activities. The PARD also offers programs specifically geared for senior adults, including both active and passive activities as well as field trips. The PARD also maintains Doster Memorial Community Center, which houses the parks and recreation department offices and is used as a meeting place and for some recreational programs.

### ***park resources***

Along with recreational programming, the Prattville PARD maintains twelve parks, of varying sizes and character, encompassing approximately 138 acres of land. According to the National Parks and Recreation Service (NPRS), a city should have 8.5 acres of park land per 1,000 persons. Based on the 1990 population estimate of 20,420 people, Prattville should have 174 acres (an additional 36 acres) of park land. The NPRS has also established definitions and standards for various parks. The following is a review of each of the park types and the related facilities in Prattville. An inventory of the park system is summarized in Figure 41.

#### ***playground, playlot, or pocket park***

The playground or playlot is a small, often creatively landscaped, area primarily

used by elementary age children. The playground is often developed in conjunction with an elementary school or neighborhood park, and is usually developed for about 90 percent to 100 percent active use. The playground usually serves one neighborhood. Generally, features might include traditional as well as imaginative play apparatus, minimum seating accommodations, walks for access, seating, multi-use courts, and open space. A drinking fountain is recommended. A pocket park is a small area which is usually landscaped open space for passive relaxation and enjoyment. These parks are often found within neighborhoods or districts and usually only serve the residents of that area.

Prattville has five playgrounds located at Kiwanis, Newton, North Highland, Spinners and Spring Hill Parks. In total, these playground areas encompass approximately four acres of land. Of these parks, only Kiwanis Park is solely used for playground purposes. The other playgrounds are incorporated into neighborhood parks or playfields.

#### ***neighborhood park***

A neighborhood park is usually landscaped open space found at various points within a city that are not suitable for other types of developments. It serves as a place to meet the passive leisure interests and relaxation needs of a neighborhood. Usually no more than 50 percent of the area is developed for active use, with the remainder being primarily open space. Features include landscaped open space, walks, and seating accommodations.

Figure 41

<b>Inventory of the Prattville Park System</b>			
<b>Park</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Facilities</b>
Autauga Creek Canoe Trail	Open Space	.2 acres	canoe trail, restrooms, tables
Bell Park	Playfield	11 acres	2 baseball fields, restrooms, concessions, lighting
Heritage Park	Open Space	.13 acres	plaza seating
Kiwanis Park	Playground	.8 acres	seating
Mac Gray Park	Playfield	23 acres	3 softball fields, restrooms, concessions
Newton Park	Playfield	10 acres	4 baseball fields, 1 basketball court, 5 tennis courts, playground, walking trail, restroom, concessions, lighting
North Highland Park	Neighborhood Park	2 acres	3 basketball courts, playground, recreation building, restrooms, tables pavilion, grills, BBQ pit
Pratt Park	Neighborhood Park	21 acres	stadium, pool, waking trail, open space, restrooms, pavilion, stage, BBQ pit, pond, gazebo, horseshoe pit, senior center, entrance to canoe trail
Spinners Park	Neighborhood Park	11 acres	2 youth softball fields, playground, open space, tables, pavilion, concessions, lighting
Spring Hill Park	Neighborhood Park	8.9 acres	4 basketball courts, playground, open space, pavilion
Upper Kingston Park	Playfield	26.7 acres	3 soccer fields, walking trail, open space restrooms pavilion, exercise stations, lighting
Wilderness Park	Open Space	23 acres	walking trail, open space, oriental bamboo forest
<b>Total</b>		<b>137.73 acres</b>	

There are four parks in Prattville which classify as neighborhood parks: North Highland Park, Pratt Park, Spinners Park and Spring Hill Park. These four parks total approximately 43 acres. All of these parks are located on the west side of Prattville. Therefore, there are no neighborhood parks serving residents in East Prattville. The shortage of neighborhood parks in all parts of Prattville has been noted by the Prattville Parks and Recreation Department Director, as well as other citizens.

### *playfield*

The playfield is usually developed to serve several neighborhoods comprising a community. This area should accommodate the various field and competitive sports that form a large portion of the active outdoor recreational desires of youth and adults. The playfield is usually developed so that about 90 percent of the area may be used for active, organized recreation with the remaining 10 percent used for buffer. A playfield may be developed in conjunction with a Junior or Senior High school. Features include courts and open areas for sports, landscaping and buffer zones, walks, service buildings, parking and occasionally night lighting. Concession space is optional.

Bell Park, Mac Gray Park, Newton Park and Upper Kingston Park encompass approximately 71 acres of playfield park area in Prattville. Like the neighborhood parks, all of the playfield parks are located on the west side of Prattville. Sports facilities available at the playfield parks include six baseball fields, three softball fields, three soccer fields, one basketball

court, and five tennis courts. Walking trails are available at Newton and Upper Kingston Parks, and three of the four playfields have concession facilities and night lighting.

### *community park*

Developed to serve several residential areas, the community park should accommodate a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities, both active and passive. This park should provide a center building, field areas, hard surface areas, apparatus, open space and landscaped areas. The community park should be developed with 75 to 90 percent of the area usable for active recreation. Features include various hard surface courts and turf fields, a center building, traditional playground area, provisions for parking and night lighting. A pool and picnic areas are optional. Unfortunately, none of the existing Prattville parks classify as community parks.

### *city-wide park*

The city-wide park, usually located within or just outside of an urban area, is similar to the community park but developed at a larger scale. It provides more diversified recreational opportunities such as nature walks and interpretation, summer day camps, and a pool or access to a body of water. Approximately 70 to 90 percent of the area is developed for active use, usually in the daytime or early evening. Features include a quantity of game and sport fields and courts, accommodations for water-related activities, recreation center and special use buildings, and trails through

undeveloped natural areas. None of the existing parks in Prattville classify as city-wide parks.

### *county/district park*

The district park may serve one or more non-urban communities, a subregion of several municipalities, or any combination of the two. There are two types of district parks: intensive development and extensive development. Both types, however, are usually located away from urban centers. The intensive development type of district park usually accommodates a variety of indoor and outdoor, and active and passive, recreational opportunities. Primary use times are day and early evening, with 75 to 90 percent of the park developed for active use. Features generally include various hard surface courts and turf fields, a recreation center, a pool and/or playground, trails through undeveloped natural areas and provisions for parking and night lighting. Picnic areas are optional.

The second type of district park, extensive development, accommodates the more extensive passive and active outdoor recreation desires of people, such as camping, picnicking, water activities, hiking, and nature appreciation, for day and weekend use. These parks are commonly developed so that 50 percent is usable for active recreation and the remaining 50 percent is left in its natural state. Features include interpretive facilities, water-related and enhanced areas, natural areas, and open field areas.

There are no facilities in Prattville or in the surrounding area which might meet the description of an intensively developed

district park. Cooter's Pond which is located just southwest of Prattville does, however, qualify as an extensively developed district park. Cooter's Pond, which is maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is approximately 420 acres in size, of which about 105 acres are developed park space. The park includes a boat landing which accesses an inlet of the Alabama River, several picnic areas, basketball courts, a playground, a paved walking trail and nature trail, and a scenic overlook. Cooter's Pond is open to the public, however, there is a small fee for boat launching. The park is open from dawn to dusk every day, and overnight camping is not allowed.

### *open space*

Open spaces, or urban green spaces, are passive areas in landscaped or natural state in or near urban areas. These areas provide environmental quality or act as buffers. Their main recreational purpose is to break-up atmospheres of congestion and to provide aesthetic experience. Open spaces may be used for recreational uses when needed or planned for conversion to more intensive recreational uses at a later date. Characteristics of open spaces may vary greatly within a community. They may be natural lands, a waterfront, a forest, downtown parks or plazas, parkways or boulevards, or medians. The primary accessibility for open spaces is visual as opposed to pedestrian or vehicular. Some open spaces may provide bicycle, hiking, nature or bridle trails as a feature, or have a part of a larger system of trails in a community.

There is a variety of open space within the Prattville park system encompassing approximately 54 acres of park land which is incorporated into other parks. Pratt Park, Spinners Park, and Spring Hill Park each have a portion of the park left as undeveloped open space, while the majority of Upper Kingston Park and Wilderness Park is open space. The open space at Upper Kingston Park is the three soccer fields. At Wilderness Park, however, the open space includes the bamboo forest and an undeveloped area. Heritage Park is a downtown plaza with a fountain. Open space which is not accounted for in the park system includes buffer zones between varying land uses throughout the city.

### ***recreational resources***

The National Parks and Recreation Service has also established standards for recreational resources and facilities based on population. These standards are shown in Figure 42: Recreation Resources and Facilities and are compared with the existing facilities in Prattville based on the 1990 population estimate. It is important to remain cognizant of the fact that these are recommended standards and must be used in concert with the actual conditions and situations which currently exist in Prattville.

The results of the comparison between the National Parks and Recreation Service standards and existing facilities show that, overall, Prattville has a good open space and recreation system in place. There are, however, several improvements to be made -- some major and some minor. Areas of deficiency include a lack of playground facilities; the absence of a

community and city-wide park; a shortage of basketball courts and softball fields; insufficient areas for picnicking, hiking, camping, horseback riding and nature study; and a need for at least two indoor recreation centers. According to the National Parks and Recreation Service standards, Prattville has sufficient playfield, extensive district park and open space facilities, as well as sufficient resources to meet the swimming, boating, and passive water sports needs of residents.

In discussions with the Open Space, Recreation and Education Committee and the Prattville Parks and Recreation Department, some discrepancies were found between the recommended facilities and the needs of Prattville residents. According to the National Parks and Recreation Service standards, Prattville has sufficient neighborhood park space. In reality, however there are no neighborhood parks on the east side of Prattville where much of the recent residential growth has occurred. It has also been observed that many of the neighborhoods in the western portion of Prattville are not served by a neighborhood park. In Map 20 the location of existing parks is shown in relationship to general neighborhood areas. As you can see, several of the existing parks are congregated in the northwest part of Prattville, leaving many areas without convenient access to park facilities.

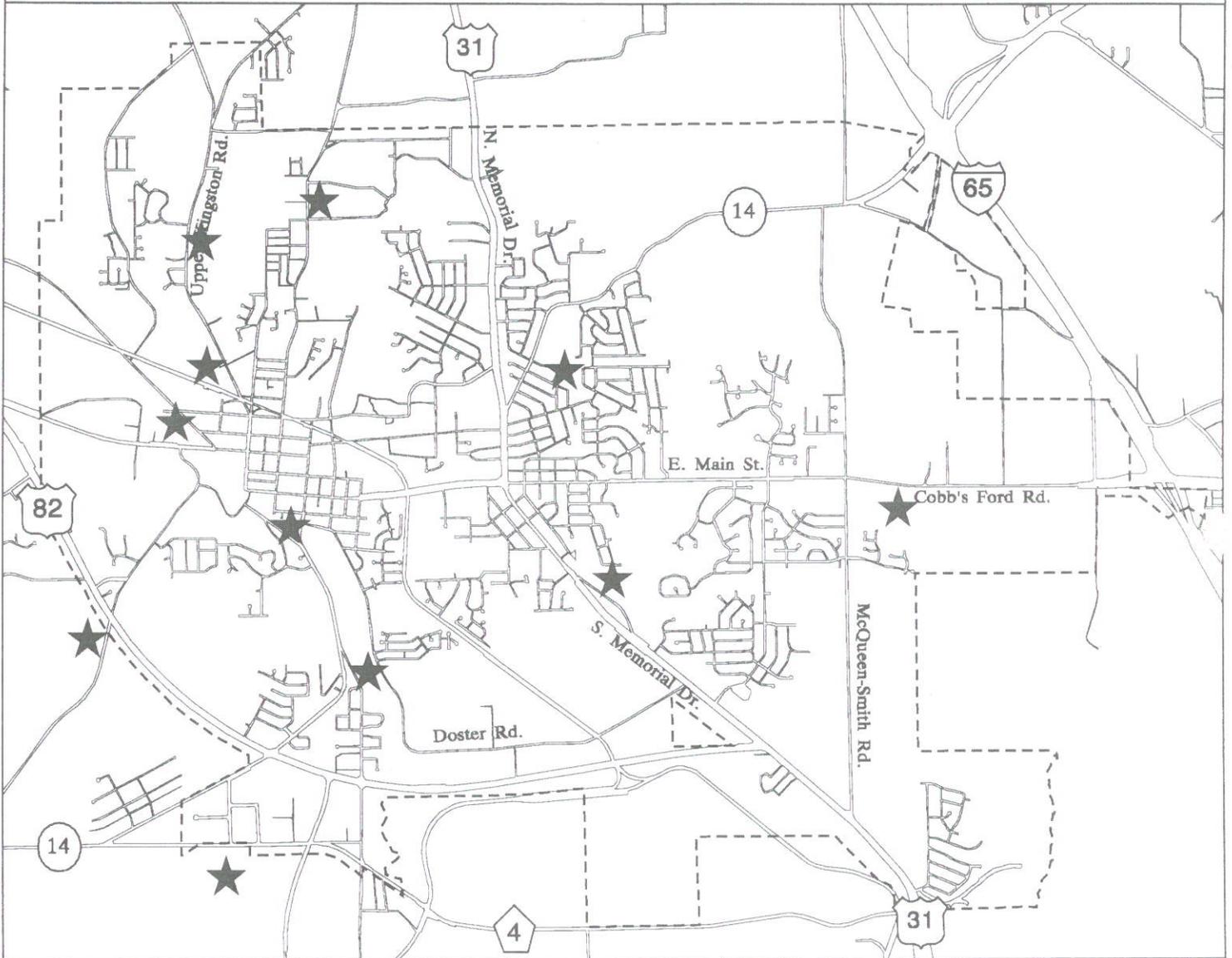
The National Parks and Recreation Service standards also show that Prattville has a surplus of baseball fields and a shortage of only two softball fields. According to the Parks and Recreation Department Director, the demand for these two facilities is much greater than reflected

Figure 42

Recreational Resources and Facilities						
Type of Facility	Suggested Size (Acres)	Space Requirements Per 1,000 Persons	Prattville Facilities	Total Area of Prattville Facilities	1990 Population	
					20,420	+/-
Playlot/Playground	.25 to 5	.25 to 1.5 ac. per 1,000	Kiwanis, Newton, N. Highland, Spinners, Spring Hill	3.7 acres	5 to 31 ac.	-1 to -27 ac.
Neighborhood Park	5 to 10	2 ac. per 1,000	N. Highland, Pratt, Spinners, Spring Hill	42.9 acres	41 ac.	+ 1.9 ac.
Playfield	6 to 20	1.5 ac. per 1,000	Bell, Mac Gray, Newton, U. Kingston	70.7 acres	31 ac.	+ 40 ac.
Community Park	20 to 50	2 ac. per 1,000	--	0	41 ac.	-41 ac.
City-wide Park	50 to 100	5 acres per 1,000	--	0	102 ac.	-102 ac.
District Park (Intensive)	20 to 50	20 ac. per 1,000	(Not Applicable)	0	408 ac.	--
District Park (Extensive)	100 to 500	20 ac. per 1,000	Cooter's Pond	approx. 420 acres	408 ac.	+ 14 ac.
Open Space	1 to 25	1 acre per 1,000	Autauga Creek Canoe Trail, Spring Hill, Wilderness Park	30.7 acres	20 ac.	+ 10.7 ac.
Baseball	3 per 6,000	1 field	6 fields	--	3 fields	+ 3 fields
Basketball	varies	1 court per 1,000	8 courts	--	20 courts	-12 courts
Soccer		1 field per 3,000	3 fields	--	14 fields	-11 fields
Softball	2		5 fields	--	7 fields	-2 fields
Tennis	2	1 facility (4 courts) per 2,000	5 courts	--	10 fac./40 cts	-35 cts
Pool	5	1 per 40,000	1 pool	--	1 pool	0
Boating Activities	100 +	2 acres per 1,000	Alabama River, Cooter's Pond	approx. 150 acres	41 ac.	+ 109 ac.
Hiking, Camping, Riding, Nature Study	500 to 1,000	10 acres per 1,000	Wilderness Park, Cooter's Pond	approx. 175 acres	204 ac.	-29 ac.
Picnicking	varies	4 acres per 1,000	13 tables at various parks, Cooter's Pond	approx. 40 acres	82 ac.	-42 ac.
Passive Water Sports	20 acre water area	1 lake per 25,000	Cooter's Pond	approx. 65 acres	1 lake	+ 45 ac.
Environmental Areas	1/8 acre per facility	1 acre per 1,000	Wilderness Park	23 acres	20 ac.	+ 3 ac.
Indoor Rec Center	1 to 2 acres	1 acre per 10,000	--	0	2 ctrs	-2 ctrs

# PARK RESOURCES

Prattville, Alabama



## LEGEND

★ Park



Miles



by the recommended standards. The adult and youth baseball and softball programs are using the existing fields on a nightly basis and games are running late into the night. Part of this demand might be attributed to the service area which is considerably larger than the Prattville population.

Discrepancies were also found in the reported shortage of soccer fields and tennis courts. The National Parks and Recreation Service standards recommend an additional 11 soccer fields and an additional 35 tennis courts. While the soccer program is active, it is doubtful that even with future growth would Prattville residents utilize a total of 14 soccer fields. The same is true with tennis. There is, however, a need to repair and improve existing tennis courts and to build additional courts as opportunities arise. The Open Space, Recreation and Education committee also noted that although the Prattville Country Club does have an 18-hole private golf course, there are no municipal golf facilities available within the city. Instead many Prattville residents go to Montgomery for this purpose.

### *park and recreation demand*

To make long-range plans for recreational facilities, the National Parks and Recreation Service standards were compared to projected population estimates for the years 2000 and 2010. Figure 43: Projected Demand for Recreational Facilities shows the areas in which the city has sufficient facilities, as well as those areas which are expected to be deficient based on

population. The projections show that without continued growth and development of parks and recreational resources, the City of Prattville will be deficient in almost all areas, with the exception of open space and water resources.

Every ten years, the State of Alabama conducts a study of recreational resources and demands which is called the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). In the plan, the state is divided into regions for analytical purposes. The region in which Prattville is located includes Autauga, Elmore and Montgomery Counties. According to the 1991 SCORP, the top five items in demand by 2010 will be:

1. walking;
2. bicycling;
3. baseball/softball;
4. basketball; and
5. jogging.

Also, according to the SCORP, the outdoor recreation needs most commonly cited by Central Alabama residents in 1990 were:

1. Walking Trails	21%
2. Parks and Land	16%
3. Swimming Pools	16%
4. Playgrounds	13%
5. Bicycle Trails	11%
6. Softball Fields	11%
7. Better Maintenance	8%
8. Baseball Fields	7%
9. Basketball Courts	6%
10. Public Hunting Land	5%
11. Picnic Areas	5%
12. Tennis Courts	5%

When compared to the statewide study it is clear that Prattville has a need for additional walking and bicycling facilities, as

Figure 43

Projected Demand For Recreational Facilities								
Type of Facility	Space Requirements Per 1,000 Persons	Total Area of Prattville Facilities	1990 Population		Projected 2000 Population		Projected 2010 Population	
			20,420	+/-	23,411	+/-	26,685	+/-
Playlot/Playground	.25 to 1.5 ac. per 1,000	3.7 acres	5 to 31 ac.	-1 to -27 ac.	6 to 35 ac.	-2 to -31 ac.	7 to 40 ac.	-3 to -36 ac.
Neighborhood Park	2 ac. per 1,000	42.9 acres	41 ac.	+1.9 ac.	47 ac.	-4.1 ac.	53 ac.	-10.1 ac.
Playfield	1.5 ac. per 1,000	70.7 acres	31 ac.	+40 ac.	35 ac.	+36 ac.	40 ac.	+31 ac.
Community Park	2 ac. per 1,000	0	41 ac.	-41 ac.	47 ac.	-47 ac.	53 ac.	-53 ac.
City-wide Park	5 acres per 1,000	0	102 ac.	-102 ac.	117 ac.	-117 ac.	134 ac.	-134 ac.
District Park (Intensive)	20 ac. per 1,000	0	408 ac.	--	468 ac.	--	534 ac.	--
District Park (Extensive)	20 ac. per 1,000	approx. 420 acres	408 ac.	+14 ac.	468 ac.	-48. ac.	534 ac.	-114 ac.
Open Space	1 acre per 1,000	30.7 acres	20 ac.	+10.7 ac.	23 ac.	+7.7 ac.	27 ac.	+3.7 ac.
Baseball	1 field per 6,000	--	3 fields	+3 fields	4 fields	+2 fields	4 fields	+2 fields
Basketball	1 court per 1,000	--	20 courts	-12 courts	23 courts	-15 courts	27 courts	-19 courts
Soccer	1 field per 3,000	--	14 fields	-11 fields	16 fields	-13 fields	18 fields	-15 fields
Softball		--	7 fields	-2 fields	8 fields	-3 fields	9 fields	-4 fields
Tennis	1 facility (4 courts) per 2,000	--	10 fac./40 cts	-35 cts	12 fac./48 cts	-43 cts	13 fac./52 cts	-47 cts
Pool	1 pool per 40,000	--	1 pool	0	1 pool	0	1 pool	0
Boating Activities	2 acres per 1,000	approx. 150 acres	41 ac.	+109 ac.	47 ac.	+103 ac.	53 ac.	+97 ac.
Hiking, Horseback Riding, Nature Study	10 acres per 1,000	approx. 175 acres	204 ac.	-29 ac. Can	234 ac.	-59 ac.	267 ac.	-92 ac.
Picnicking	4 acres per 1,000	approx. 40 acres	82 ac.	-42 ac.	94 ac.	-54 ac.	107 ac.	-67 ac.
Passive Water Sports	1 lake per 25,000	approx. 65 acres	1 lake	+45 ac.	1 lake	+45 ac.	1 lake	+40 ac.
Environmental Areas	1 acre per 1,000	23 acres	20 ac.	+3 ac.	23 ac.	0	27 ac.	-4 ac.
Indoor Recreation Ctr	1 acre per 10,000	0	2 centers	-2 centers	2 centers	-2 centers	3 centers	-3 centers

well as park land. It also becomes clear that the demand for organized sports, particularly baseball and softball, will remain high and should be considered in long-range plans.

### other recreational resources

As stated earlier, there are several entities which provide recreational opportunities to Prattville residents. So far, only the City's Parks and Recreation Department has been discussed. Other major recreation providers are the Autauga County School System, the Prattville Country Club and the Prattville YMCA. The National Parks and Recreation Service suggests that one-half of facilities provided by schools or private institutions may be used to meet the recreational needs of the

population. In Figure 44: Non-Municipal Recreational Resources, the available facilities are listed along with recommended usable amount. This inventory reveals that while these facilities can help meet the needs for additional basketball and tennis courts, they still will not accommodate the overall demand for facilities.

It is worthwhile to note, however, that when compared with other cities of comparable size, the Prattville YMCA currently has the highest participation rate in the nation. This fact, combined with the high participation rate of the Parks and Recreation Department, makes a strong statement about the emphasis that Prattville residents place on recreation and expected quality of life standards.

Within a 50-mile radius, Prattville residents have access to a variety of water resources and national forests. Water resources include the Alabama River,

Figure 44

<b>Non-Municipal Recreational Resources</b>		
<u>Organization</u>	<u>Facilities</u>	<u>Recommended Usable Amount</u>
Autauga County Schools	92.6 acres of open space 4 gymnasiums 4 basketball courts	46.3 acres of open space 2 gymnasiums 2 basketball courts
Prattville Country Club	1 pool 18-hole golf course driving range (practice area) 2 tennis courts (not open) junior programs	n/a n/a n/a 1 tennis court n/a
YMCA	6 tennis courts track athletic field 2 pools 2 racquetball courts basketball gym (2 courts)	3 tennis courts n/a n/a 1 pool 1 racquetball court 1 basketball court

Cooter's Pond, Jackson Lake, Lake Martin, Lake Jordan, Speigner Lake and Mitchell Lake. Two national forests, Tuskegee National Forest and Talladega National Forest, are within the 50-mile radius.

## *open space and recreation analysis*

As part of the study of open space and recreation, an analysis was made of Prattville's existing resources and recreation potential. For simplification and compatibility with the rest of this comprehensive plan, this analysis will take the form of a listing of open space and recreation assets, liabilities, opportunities and constraints.

### *assets and opportunities*

There is a surplus of playfield space currently and through 2010. It is possible that some of the playfield areas may be transformed into other types of parks, while still meeting the needs of organized sports.

The City should work with, and/or petition, other governments to develop a regional district park.

Cooter's Pond adequately meets the City's needs for a passive district park, however, additional acreage will be needed by 2010.

The open space requirements are adequately met through 2010. Even so, the expansion of existing parks and the construction of new parks should provide quality and usable open space.

Pool facilities are adequate through 2010.

Boating facilities are more than adequate through 2010.

Hiking and camping needs may be met through acquisition of additional open space and through the development of an intensive district park.

Picnicking needs should be addressed through the development of community and city-wide parks and open space.

Like boating, the Alabama River and Cooter's Pond meet the needs of passive water sports. One exception, however, may be the lack of available space for swimming and beach area.

The need for environmental area is being met and only a small shortage is estimated by the year 2010.

Prattville has a strong parks and recreation program. The opportunity does exist, however, to expand and improve both the park system and recreational programming to further insure quality of life standards.

The opportunity exists for Prattville to use recreational resources as a source of economic growth.

The provision of municipal golf facilities may help in keeping existing recreational dollars in Prattville and may attract additional residents.

### *liabilities and constraints*

There is a marked shortage of playground facilities and area. These facilities should be incorporated into existing and additional parks, and school facilities as opportunities arise.

Prattville has adequate neighborhood park space to meet the needs

of the 1990 population. Most of these parks, however, are located in the western half of the city, leaving east Prattville with no park space. The City will need at least one additional neighborhood park by the year 2010.

Prattville needs at least one, if not two community parks immediately, and possibly a third park by 2010. The City should look into expanding some of the playfield parks into community parks.

Prattville needs one city-wide park currently and will probably need another by 2010, or at least plans for a second park should be underway by then. This will need to be a new park, as it is unlikely that any existing parks can be transformed into a city-wide park.

According to National Parks and Recreation Service standards, Prattville has a surplus of baseball fields. There appears to be a much higher usage of baseball facilities in Prattville than estimated by the National Parks and Recreation Service, since the Parks and Recreation Department is having difficulty meeting the present demand. Therefore, the development of additional baseball fields should be considered.

There is a marked shortage of basketball courts, however, there has not been a strong demand for courts in recent years. It is possible that if courts were available they would be used.

It is doubtful that Prattville will use an additional 11 soccer fields presently. Demand for soccer should be reviewed to determine if additional fields are needed.

Like baseball, Prattville has a higher demand for softball than the national standards. Therefore it is possible that

Prattville will need a slightly higher number of fields than the two additional suggested by National Parks and Recreation Service.

The City of Prattville needs at least two recreation centers which should coincide with the immediate need of community and city-wide parks.

The walking and bicycling facilities do not exist to meet the needs cited in the 1991 SCORP.

Park development has been secondary to recreational programming in recent years, resulting in deficient park areas to serve residents.

Lack of a municipal golf course is causing residents who are not members of a private facility to leave Prattville to find that resource and spend money elsewhere.

## *issues and conclusions*

As a result of the study and discussion of open space, and recreation facilities and conditions, it was possible to define issues with which the City of Prattville is now confronted, or may be confronted with in the future. In the following section, each of these issues is recognized, along with a summary of findings related to the issue.

### *issue: recreation service area*

The Prattville Parks and Recreation Department has a primary service area within an approximate five-mile radius of the city.

It appears that Prattville residents are generally active and place a great deal of emphasis on recreational opportunities.

The Parks and Recreation Department attracts participants in a

secondary service area within a seven-mile radius, and in a tertiary service area within a ten-mile radius.

No differentiation is made between participants from within or outside the corporate boundaries of Prattville, either in fees or priority.

The administration of the City of Prattville does feel that the Parks and Recreation Department's first responsibility is to provide recreational facilities and parks to meet the demands of Prattville residents.

The extended service area of the Parks and Recreation Department places a higher demand on park and recreation facilities than would be expected for the city's population.

*issue: adequate and appropriate park space*

The City of Prattville needs an additional 36 acres of park space just to meet the basic standards of park land based on the 1990 population. If no park space is added by 2010, it is estimated that Prattville will need an additional 89 acres of park land.

In an effort to provide organized sports programs and facilities, the need for more passive parks has been placed near the bottom of the priority list during the last five to ten years.

The concentration of parks in the northwest part of Prattville has left large portions of the population without convenient access to park areas.

Prattville has a shortage of playground facilities and there are no community or city-wide parks in the city.

There is a need for more neighborhood parks, especially in the eastern part of Prattville.

Prattville has adequate playfield-type parks, as well as adequate open space resources. There appears, however, to be a shortage of picnicking facilities.

Prattville has not placed an emphasis on preserving open space for aesthetic purposes.

*issue: meeting recreation needs*

Prattville has adequate facilities and resources to meet the swimming, boating, and passive water activities for the next 20 years. In fact, these resources can be used to build recreational activity.

The 1991 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan states that among the top items in demand by Central Alabama residents are walking and bicycling facilities, along with increased park land. At the present, the City of Prattville does not come close to meeting the demand for these activities, nor are there any immediate plans to do so.

Prattville has several unique recreational resources, such as Wilderness Park and Cooter's Pond, that could be enhanced to attract more recreational participation.

More emphasis is usually placed on meeting the needs for organized sports rather than on individual recreational activities, due to the mass participation rates. Even so, this does not mean that passive or individual recreational activities are less important. To the contrary, these resources will help build a better quality of life for residents.

***issue: meeting demand for organized sports***

Both the Prattville Parks and Recreation Department and the Prattville YMCA have very high participation rates in sports programs.

The Parks and Recreation Department, as well as the YMCA, offers a full range of organized sports for all age groups and genders.

The demand for baseball and softball programs in Prattville cannot be adequately met with the present facilities.

The tennis facilities in Prattville are somewhat lacking, however, there has not been a heavy demand for additional tennis courts or programs.

Prattville needs additional basketball courts at parks or recreation centers. The possibility also exists for Prattville PARD to share some facilities with the Autauga County Schools.

***issue: recreation as a tool for economic growth***

Because of Prattville's large service area, the City has developed a regional presence in the provision of recreational opportunities.

The high participation rates in organized sports provides Prattville with the opportunity to host tournaments that could spur economic growth. Unfortunately, the City does not presently have the facilities to do so.

An active recreation program and available resources improve the City's image and raise the quality of life factor, which in turn attracts residential growth for Prattville employees, as well as commuter employees.

By providing a region with recreational opportunities, Prattville has the potential to turn the Parks and Recreation Department into a profit center, rather than just a service provider.

## **goals and objectives**

After defining the issues, it was possible to establish goals and objectives to direct the City's plans for recreation. The last part of this section provides specific recommendations to help the City of Prattville attain its goals and fulfill its purpose and vision statements.

### ***goal***

**Establish a progressive and far-sighted approach that provides the highest standard of quality in recreational facilities and environments by promoting fitness, relaxation and sportsmanship.**

### ***objectives***

Preserve and plan adequate open space for aesthetic and/or functional purposes.

Continue to improve and expand existing facilities and services.

Develop new facilities and services to meet recreational needs and expectations.

Pursue economic growth by attracting and hosting quality recreational events.

### *recommendations*

Continue to provide recreational opportunities to areas outside of Prattville so that the city is able to build and maintain its regional presence. At some point, however, priority should be given to Prattville residents.

Require that a certain percentage of new developments be dedicated for open space and/or park use.

Plan for and emphasize quality park development to insure high activity levels.

Work with the Autauga County Board of Education to further develop shared recreational facilities.

As opportunity arises, Prattville should pursue development of a multi-use city-wide sports complex that is capable of meeting recreational demand as well as providing an opportunity to host sports tournaments.

Take advantage of opportunities as they arise to develop neighborhood and community parks. Place emphasis on development of larger parks (neighborhood type) as opposed to smaller, pocket parks to increase recreational opportunities and decrease maintenance.

Include walking trails in the development of new parks. Also, take advantage of natural resources, such as flood plains, to develop linear parks and trails.

Whenever possible, develop trails with destination points, to promote use and long-range activity.

Develop a tennis program to build participation and attract another source of recreational supporters.

Continue to promote and expand the existing soccer program for both youths and adults.

Promote a marriage between park development and program development so that an equal emphasis is placed on both. Balanced development of the two together will increase user compatibility among resources and enhance the recreational image and lifestyle of Prattville residents.

Continue to provide maintenance to existing parks and facilities.

Discourage vandalism in Prattville parks through community participation and civic awareness programs for all age groups.

Increase public awareness of recreational facilities and resources, and public involvement in the existing and planned programs.

The City and YMCA should work together to continue recreational programming to provide role models for children and youths, and to build respect.