



# 2014 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan Update

City of Forney, Texas



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# Acknowledgements

## **Citizens of Forney**

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# OVERVIEW

## MASTER PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is to address the City of Forney's short-term and long-term recreational needs and to develop a vision for preservation of the City's environmental, cultural and open space resources. This plan is based on recognized park planning principles and standards and reflects the input received from the Citizens of Forney, the City Council, the Parks & Recreation Board and the City's Administrative Staff.

In the Fall of 2013, the City initiated this project to update its existing Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. This Plan will provide guidance for creating a sustainable, interconnected system of parks, recreation facilities, open space and trails that responds to community needs as Forney grows. These are integral elements of a livable community. This plan focuses on the City's needs analysis through current, five-year and ten-year needs and initiatives. It is a community-based plan that will aid City Staff and City Decision-Makers in providing recreational facilities for the citizens of Forney and in preserving the City's floodplains and other open space areas in an orderly and economical way.

This plan has been prepared in compliance with the guidelines for park and recreation system master plans as established by Texas Parks & Wildlife (TP&W). Texas Parks & Wildlife provides a variety of matching grant programs that can provide cities with additional financial resources, and master plans consistent with the TP&W Guidelines have a greater chance of qualifying for those matching grants.

### **City's Role in Providing Parks and Recreation Services**

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining and operating the parks in Forney. The department is also responsible for planning and funding park projects with assistance from the Parks and Recreation Board and the City Council. The City provides traditional park and recreational facilities, including nine (9) developed parks and two (2) undeveloped parks for future development.



## Planning Process Overview

The Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan was developed with a four (4) phase approach. This process began in September, 2013, with a meeting of the City of Forney Parks and Recreation Board to review the project, process and data needed.



The initial phase of the process was to determine “Where are we now?” and began with creating an inventory of the City of Forney’s existing parks and recreation facilities along with evaluating the use(s) and condition of those parks and facilities. A demographic analysis of the City was also performed to determine how Forney was developing, based on past growth.

The second phase of the process was to determine “Where do we want to be?” in which public involvement was critical. A successful parks plan depends on accurate identification and inclusion of the needs and desires of the citizens it is intended to serve. This phase of the process included two (2) focus group meetings, an online/mail survey, benchmarking, recreational trend analysis and a Community Needs Assessment. The Community Needs Assessment was a key element that identified community recreation needs now and in the future. It evaluated on a 5 and 10-year planning horizon and provided a foundation for the recommendations to be written in Phase 3 of the planning process.

The third phase of the process was to determine “How do we get there?” This phase involved looking at the City’s vision and goals for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space system, revising them as necessary and crafting recommendations that addressed the community’s recreation needs and achieved the vision and goals set forth by this plan. This phase also involves the creation of a 10-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and a proposed Parks, Open Space and Trails Map to assist in achieving these recommendations.

The fourth and final phase of the process was “Documentation and Adoption,” and was quite simply the process of compiling all of the information that was gathered and created during the previous three phases of the process into an easy-to-use document that will assist City leaders as they continue to develop the City of Forney’s Parks, Recreation and Open Space system.

# Phase 1

## WHERE ARE WE NOW

The initial phase of the planning process for the 2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is to determine “Where are we now?” This process began by looking at Forney’s history, gaining an understanding of the City, analyzing the demographics of the City and creating an inventory of the City of Forney’s existing parks and recreation facilities. We then began evaluating the use(s) and condition of those existing parks and facilities to better gain an idea of how they are serving the community. The information gathered during this phase will tell the story of the existing parks and recreation system, and lead us into finding out where the City of Forney wants to be.

### Community History and Profile

The Forney area was occupied by pioneer settlers in 1846 and was originally known as “Brooklyn”, possibly after the pioneering Brooks Family who settled there in the 1860’s from Brookville, Mississippi.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the pioneer settlement, various Native Americans inhabited the area, including Caddoes and Cherokees. The prairies that surrounded the city were covered with a native grass that was found to produce sweet, nutritious hay when cut and baled.<sup>2</sup> This hay, known as Forney Prairie Hay, was a leading export in Forney for fifty (50) years. The Texas and Pacific Railroad came through Brooklyn in 1873, bringing with it many settlers who established a farm and residential community. On December 29, 1873, the city was renamed Forney in honor of John Wein Forney, a Pennsylvania journalist, politician and member of the board of directors for the Texas and Pacific Railroad Company.<sup>3</sup> Forney was first incorporated in 1884, unincorporated in 1890 and reincorporated in 1910.

Forney is located in Kaufman County in northeast Texas, approximately twenty miles east of Dallas.<sup>4</sup> It is a rapidly growing community, both in population and land area. The City includes 13.16 square miles of land, which has increased in size from 7.8 square miles since the last Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan was completed in 2004.<sup>5</sup> The region consists of level to gently rolling terrain and generally well-drained soils within the Blackland Prairie soil region of Texas. The primary drainage areas in the Forney area include the East Fork of the Trinity River, Mustang Creek and Buffalo Creek. The City is accessible by U.S. Highway 80 and the Missouri Pacific Railroad and is situated within a larger Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), which is the unincorporated land within one mile of Forney’s city limits. While outside of the City’s service area, residents within the ETJ are likely to take advantage of City amenities such as parks, recreation facilities and programs.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.forney-texas.com/history.html>; “The History of Forney”.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.forney-texas.com/history.html>; “The History of Forney”.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hjf5>; “Forney Texas”.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hjf5>; “Forney Texas”.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census

City leaders note that the Forney community is defined less by boundaries on a map than by the sense of shared values held by residents. Forney strives to balance its pioneering past with forward-thinking vision of the future, maintaining a vibrant family-centered lifestyle, helping entrepreneurs reinvent its historic downtown, continuing to invest in new parks, trails and roads, and attracting the amenities its growing population demands.

## Demographics

Population growth is a key component of increased demands for parks and recreation services. Additionally, demographic characteristics influence recreation interests and levels of participation. For example, age and income affect an individual's ability to participate in recreational activities. To a lesser extent, employment, education, and ethnicity also play a role in recreation preferences.

Forney's population nearly tripled between 2000 and 2012. This increase can be attributed to the City's inclusion of an additional 5.8 square miles of land area within its city limits (an increase of nearly 75%), as well as an influx of new residents due to its close proximity to Dallas' urban fringe. Forney's population in 2012 was 15,877, an increase of 184.13% since 2000. Forney's population growth for this same period is much faster than both the state's growth of 24.98% and the national growth of 11.53% (Table 1).

**TABLE 1. FORNEY, TEXAS AND U.S. PERCENT OF POPULATION GROWTH, 2000-2012**

Year	Forney	Texas	United States
2000	5,588	20,851,820	281,421,906
2012	15,877	26,060,796	313,873,685
Percent Growth	184.13%	24.98%	11.53%

*Source: U.S. Census 2000, American Community Survey 2012 estimate, MIG Calculated Projections*

Forney's Economic Development Corporation projects that the Forney population will continue to grow by a rate of approximately 3% per year.<sup>6</sup> If Forney follows this trajectory, the City's population will increase by more than 80% within twenty (20) years. Table 2 and Figure 1 illustrate the numbers and trajectory of this growth. This rate and level of growth presents a sizeable increase in demand for parks and facilities, events and programs, trails and open space, as well as for the personnel needed to manage and support these recreation opportunities.

<sup>6</sup> Forney Economic Development Demographic Detail Report



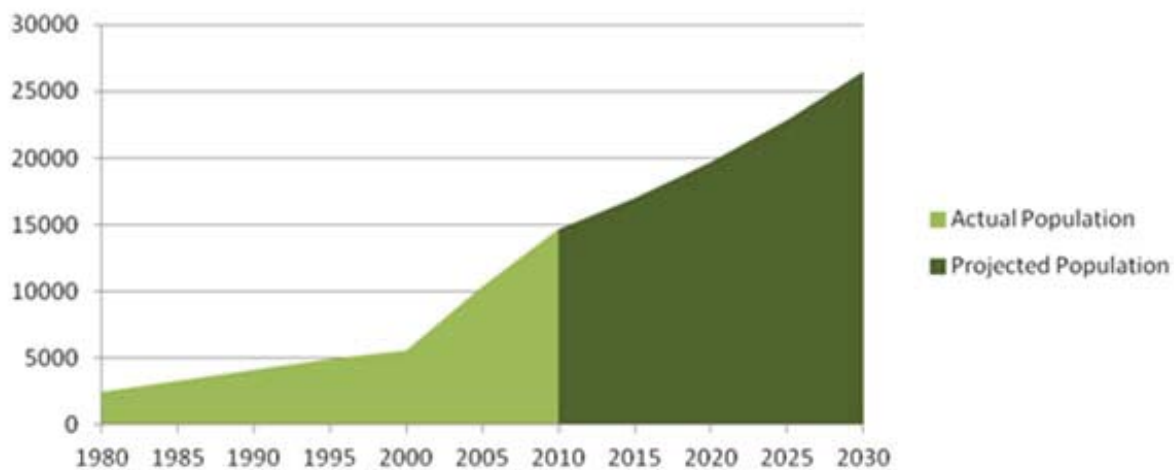
**TABLE 2. FORNEY PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH: 5, 10, 15 AND 20 YEARS**

Year	2012	2017 (5 years)	2022 (10 years)	2027 (15 years)	2032 (20 years)
Projected Population	15,877	18,406*	21,337*	24,736*	28,676*
Percent Growth Since 2012	--	16%	34%	56%	81%

Source: American Community Survey, Forney Economic Development Demographic Detail Report, MIG Calculated Projections

\* Projected using a 3% compound annual growth rate.

**FIGURE 1. FORNEY PAST AND PROJECTED POPULATION, 1980-2030**



Source: American Community Survey, Forney Economic Development Demographic Detail Report, MIG Calculated Projections. \* Projected using a 3% compound annual growth rate.

As noted in Table 3, Forney's 2012 median household income is \$82,606, showing an increase of 58.81% since 2000. Forney's income growth rate for this period is much higher than both the state's rate of 29.42% and the national rate of 25.86%. This is significant because newer residents in Forney may have more disposable income to spend on recreation, and they may have higher expectations for services that enhance the quality of life, such as parks and programs.

**TABLE 3. COMPARISON OF FORNEY, TEXAS AND U.S. INCOME LEVELS, 2000-2012**

Median Household Income	Forney	Texas	United States
2000	\$52,014	\$39,842	\$42,148
2012	\$82,606	\$51,563	\$53,046
Percent Increase	58.81%	29.42%	25.86%

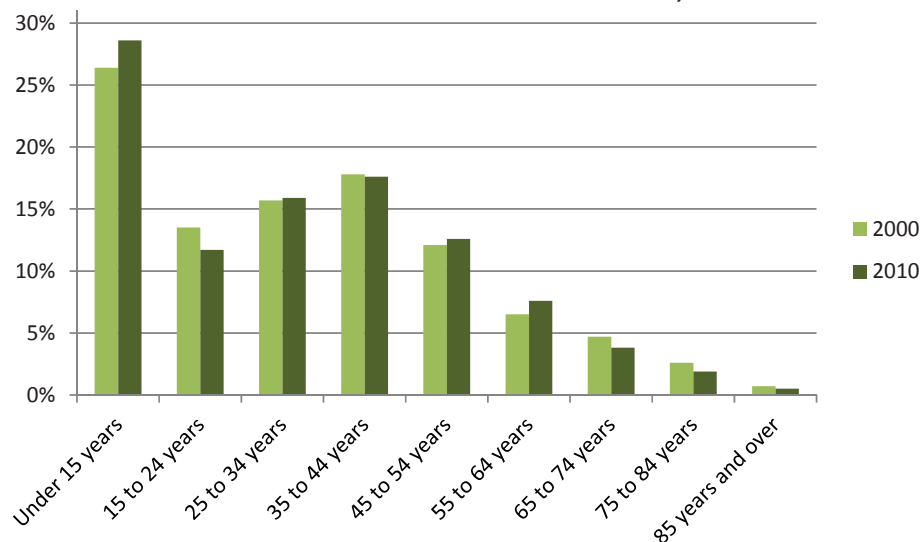
Source: U.S. Census 2000, American Community Survey 2005-2012

Forney has a young population. The City's median age of 31.7 (in 2010) is below both the state median of 33.6 and the national median of 37.2. Between 2000 and 2010, Forney's median age decreased slightly (see Table 4). This shift is contrary to state and national trends of an aging population, reflecting the influx of young families to the area. As noted in Figure 2, Forney saw significant rises in the percentage of residents under the age of 15 during this same period. Youth under age 15 represent more than one-fourth of the City's population.

**TABLE 4. FORNEY, TEXAS AND U.S. MEDIAN AGES, 2000-2010**

Year	Forney	Texas	United States
2000	31.9	32.3	35.3
2010	31.7	33.6	37.2

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010

**FIGURE 2. FORNEY AGE GROUPS BY PERCENT OF POPULATION, 2000-2010**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010

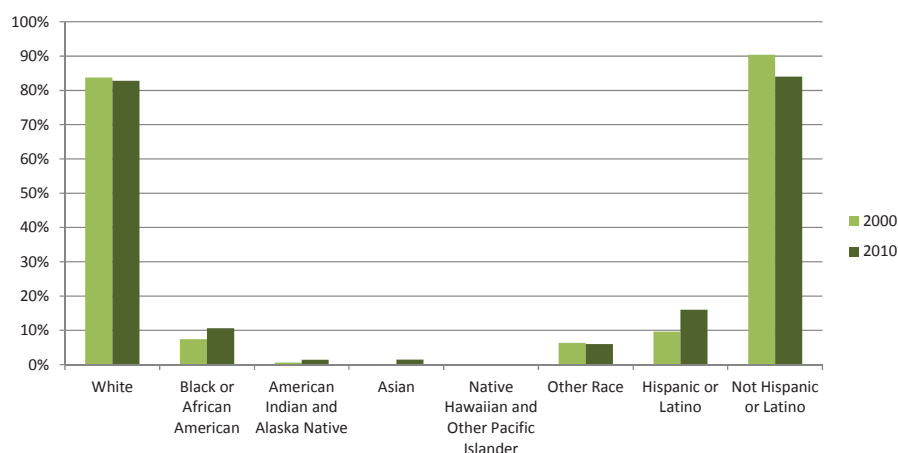
In addition to becoming younger, Forney's population is becoming more diverse. Between 2000 and 2010, Forney residents identifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino grew from 10% of the total population to 16%, and the City's Black or African American population grew from 7% of the total population to 11%. Forney's Asian population grew from less than 1% (11 residents) in 2000 to 2% (227 residents) in 2010 (Table 5 and Figure 3).

**TABLE 5. FORNEY RACE/ETHNIC GROUPS BY PERCENT OF POPULATION, 2000-2010**

Population by Race/Ethnicity	2000	Percent	2010	Percent
Total Population	5,588	100%	14,661	100%
White	4,678	84%	12,132	83%
Black or African American	413	7%	1,561	11%
American Indian and Alaska Native	31	1%	201	1%
Asian	11	0%	227	2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	8	0%	16	0%
Other Race/Ethnicity	352	6%	873	6%
Hispanic or Latino	537	10%	2,342	16%
Not Hispanic or Latino	5,051	90%	12,319	84%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010

**FIGURE 3. FORNEY RACE/ETHNIC GROUPS BY PERCENT OF POPULATION, 2000-2010**



Source: U.S. Census, 2000 and 2010



## Overview of Existing Resources

Parks and recreation opportunities in Forney are supported by a mix of parks, recreation facilities and events.

### PARKS

Forney's park system includes 242 acres of parkland and four (4) different types of parks, as noted in Table 6. Parks are classified according to a park classification system presented in Appendix A. The existing park system includes mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks and undeveloped parkland. The locations of these sites are illustrated in Map 1: Existing Recreation Resources. (page 10)

As noted in Table 6, the majority of the City's park acreage (84%) is provided at one site, Forney Community Park. There are two (2) other sites of substantial size, Mulberry Park (33-acre site) and McCurry Parkland (30-acre site). Additional parks are distributed around town, of which four (4) sites are small mini-parks with limited recreation amenities. Additional details about the City's parks, including the amount of undeveloped acreage, are provided in Appendix B.

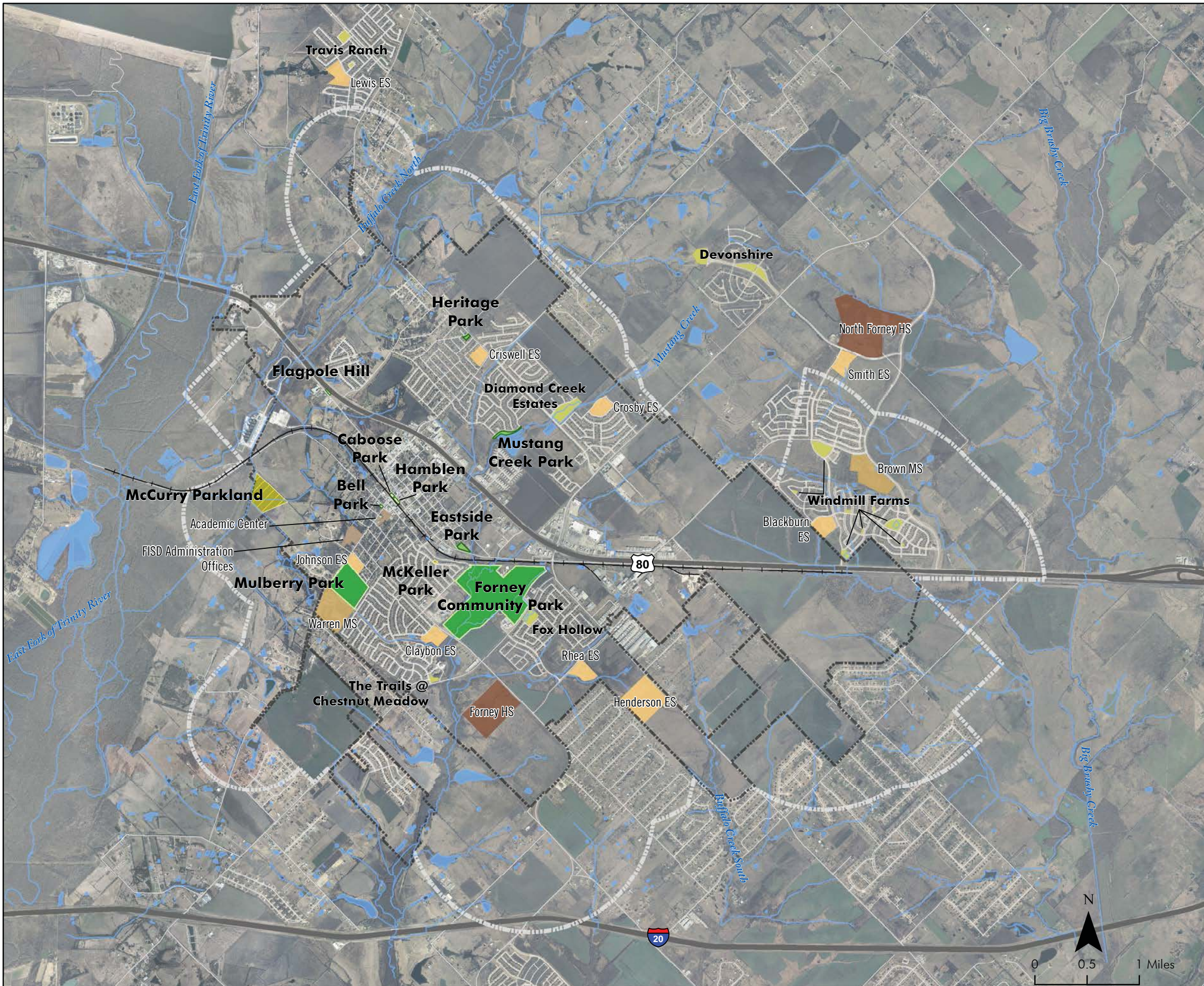
**TABLE 6. FORNEY EXISTING PARK INVENTORY BY TYPE**
















PARK CLASSIFICATION	Number of Parks	Bell Park	Caboose Park	Eastside Park	Flagpole Hill	Forney Community Park*	Hamblen Park	Heritage Hill Park	McCurry Parkland	McKellar Park	Mulberry Park	Mustang Creek Park	Acreage Totals for Park Classification
Mini-Park	4	0.4	1.3		0.5		0.9						3.1
Neighborhood Park	3			2.5				0.75				2.5	5.75
Community Park	2					170.0					33.0		203.0
Undeveloped Parkland	2								30.0	0.5			30.5
Park Totals	11												242.35

Source: City of Forney

Note: Currently 87 acres of Forney Community Park is undeveloped but is planned for future development.





- City Parks**
-  Mini Park
  -  Neighborhood Park
  -  Community Park
  -  Undeveloped Park
- Other Features**
-  HOA Parks
  -  Elementary School
  -  Middle School
  -  High School
  -  Other School Facility
  -  Water Feature
  -  Highways
  -  Streets
  -  Railroad
  -  City Limit
  -  Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

**Map 1: Existing  
Recreation Resources**



## Parks and Recreation Space Provided by Others

In addition to the park acreage noted previously, other providers are helping meet local park and recreation needs. The City of Forney maintains 9.9 acres of school sports fields as per the intergovernmental joint use agreement with the Forney Independent School District (FISD). This includes fields for youth baseball, softball, soccer and PeeWee football. Another 59.3 acres are provided by Homeowners Associations (HOAs). Four (4) of these sites (approximately 40.7 acres) are located within the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), and two (2) of these sites (approximately 18.6 acres) are located just beyond the ETJ. The FISD and HOA sites are included in the inventory in Appendix B.

## RECREATION FACILITIES

The City of Forney provides a variety of recreation amenities and facilities, as noted in Table 7. Appendix B provides a full inventory of amenities and facilities by site, including details on the types of sports fields provided. The City is strongest in providing sports facilities (fields and courts) and traditional recreation facilities (playgrounds and picnic shelters). It provides two (2) important specialized facilities at Forney Community Park: the 5,000-seat Spellman Amphitheater and a splash pad/sprayground.

**TABLE 7. SUMMARY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

RECREATIONAL FACILITY	NUMBER OF FACILITIES
Amphitheater	1
Baseball/Softball Field	18
Basketball Court	3
Football Field	1
Gazebo	2
Picnic Shelter/Pavilion	7
Playground	8
Volleyball Court	3
Soccer Field	19
Splash Pad/Sprayground	1
Tennis Court	5

*Source: City of Forney*



## EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

The City's current role in supporting events and programs is strongest as a facilitator. The City of Forney provides many of the sports fields, sports courts, specialized facilities and park spaces that are used for organized sports leagues, community festivals, holiday celebrations, parades, races, large group events, and amphitheater programs – and in some cases, specialized uses such as law enforcement training. Forney's role as a direct provider is limited, with efforts focused mainly on a few community-wide special events.

Table 8 provides examples of the types of programs provided or supported at City parks and recreation facilities.

**TABLE 8. SUMMARY OF FORNEY AREA EVENTS AND PROGRAMS**

EVENT	LOCATION	SPONSOR
Forney Liberty Fest	TBD	Chamber Tourism Committee
Trail of Treats	Forney Community Park	City of Forney
Christmas on Main	Downtown	City of Forney
Movies in the Park	Spellman Amphitheater	City of Forney/FYBA
Recycling Round-Up	Spellman Amphitheater Parking Lot	Community Development
Turkey Trax	Downtown	EDC
2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday	Downtown/Bell Park	FAC
High School Softball Tournament	Forney Community Park	FISD
Impact Change	Spellman Amphitheater	FISD
Cross Country Meet	Forney Community Park	FISD
Soccer Tournament	Forney Community Park	FSA
Baseball Tournament	Mulberry Park	FYBA
Community Easter Egg Hunt	Mulberry Park	Lake Pointe Church
Softball Tournament	Forney Community Park	MESA
USSSA Tournament	Forney Community Park	MESA
Saint Bernard Fun Day	Heritage Hill Park	N. Texas St. Bernard Club
Relay for Life	Forney Community Park	Relay for Life Forney
Kroger Fan Fest	Kroger	Retail Sports Marketing
Quickfoot	Forney Community Park	FSA

Source: City of Forney

## Previous Park Service Standards and Existing Park Service Levels

In 2004, park standards and guidelines were developed to determine the type of parks to be provided as well as the amount of each type of park to be provided for the Citizens of Forney taking into consideration what was provided at that time (existing service level) and what was desired for the future. This section will compare the 2004 standards to Forney's current park service levels.

### PREVIOUS PARK STANDARDS

Forney's 2004 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan proposed standards and guidelines for the amount of parkland to be provided (acres/1,000 residents) as well as the maximum distance residents should have to travel to reach a mini-park, neighborhood park or community park (service distance). As shown in Table 9, these standards and guidelines call for the provision of 17.25 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

**TABLE 9. 2004 PARK STANDARDS BY CLASSIFICATION**

Park Classification	Adopted Standard (acres/1,000)	Service Distance	Common Facilities/Uses
Mini-Park	0.25	0.25	Informal play and picnic areas
Neighborhood Park	2.00	0.50	Playground, picnic, flexible open space, multi-purpose courts
Community Park	10.00	1.00/1.50	Lighted sports fields, recreation center, large-group facilities
Regional Park	N/A	N/A	Varies...May include hiking, biking fishing, camping, event space, unique natural features, etc.
Special Use Park	2.00	N/A	Single type of use, such as cultural/historical site, stand-alone recreation facility, etc.
Linear Park/Greenway	3.00	N/A	Trails, connectivity, natural resource protection
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17.25</b>		

*Source: 2004 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*

## EXISTING PARK SERVICE LEVELS

Today, the City of Forney provides an existing level of service of 13.34 developed acres per 1,000 residents.<sup>7</sup> This is over twenty (20%) percent less than the targeted park service levels noted in the 2004 standards. Table 10 compares existing service levels to both the 2004 standard and 2004 service levels. Existing park service levels have dropped from 26.10 acres per 1,000 residents to 13.34 acres per 1,000 residents. This change can be attributed to the rapid population growth paired with a low rate of new park land acquisition. It also reflects the fact that Forney Community Park was counted in the 2004 service levels, even though the site was undeveloped at the time.

**TABLE 10. COMPARISON OF PAST AND EXISTING LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) TO ADOPTED STANDARDS**

Park Classification	2004 Level Of Service	2004 Standard	Current Level Of Service
Mini-Park	0.10	0.25	0.19
Neighborhood Park	0.10	2.00	0.36
Community Park	25.00	10.00	12.79
Regional Park	0.00	N/A	0.00
Special Use Park	0.00	2.00	0.00
Linear Park/Greenway	0.90	3.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26.10</b>	<b>17.25</b>	<b>13.34</b>

*Source: 2004 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*

<sup>7</sup> LOS calculations are based on 2012 population numbers and the amount of developed park acreage provided by the City. McCurry Park-land, McKellar Park and 87 acres of Forney Community Park are counted as undeveloped in these calculations.



## General Impressions and Observations on Forney's Parks

The City of Forney has a total of eleven (11) parks currently, of which nine (9) parks are developed. On the whole, these parks are clean and well maintained. A general description of each of the eleven City parks follows:

### Bell Park

Classification: Mini-Park

Size: Approximately 0.4 acres

Location: Corner of Bois D' Arc Street and Trinity Street

Bell Park is a small park located in downtown Forney, south of U.S. Highway 80. Because of its proximity to downtown, Bell Park is easily accessible to employees and patrons of area shops and businesses, as well as surrounding residential neighborhoods. It is considered a passive park in that it does not contain "active" recreational facilities. Bell Park is beautifully landscaped and well maintained. It is a comfortable location for relaxing, reading, photography, eating lunch, etc.

Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Bell
- Historical Marker
- Sidewalks
- Benches
- Fountain
- Site Lighting
- Gazebo with attached seating
- Landscaping



## **Caboose Park**

Classification: Mini-Park

Size: Approximately 1.3 acres

Location: Corner of Bois D' Arc Street and Pacific Street

Caboose Park is a small park located in downtown Forney, south of U.S. Highway 80 beside the railroad tracks. This park is dedicated to the railroad that runs through the heart of Forney's historic downtown. It is considered a passive park in that it does not contain "active" recreational facilities, and it's primary attraction is the old Missouri Pacific Railway Caboose. Caboose Park is well maintained and gives recognition to the role that the railroad played in Forney's development.

Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Missouri Pacific Caboose
- Sidewalks
- Trash Receptacle
- Site Lighting
- Landscaping



## **Eastside Park**

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: Approximately 2.5 acres

Location: Corner of Aimee Street and Broad Street

Eastside Park is a neighborhood park located east of downtown Forney and south of U.S. Highway 80 in a single family residential area. It is a relatively level site within a wooded natural setting. The park includes a playground, picnic shelter with tables, a lighted basketball court, benches, trash receptacles, grills and parking. The park's primary point of access is from Aimee Street, but it also has access from Buffalo Street, which dead-ends at the rear of the park. The park also abuts Mustang Creek, which is one of two major creeks that run through the City of Forney.

Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Lighted Basketball Court
- Playground
- Picnic Shelter
- Benches
- Picnic Tables
- Grills
- Trash Receptacles
- Parking



## **Flagpole Hill**

Classification: Mini-Park

Size: Approximately 0.5 acres

Location: U.S. Highway 80, just south of the Broad Street/FM 688 Exit

Flagpole Hill is a small park located adjacent to U.S. Highway 80 at the Broad Street/FM 688 Exit. This piece of parkland is used as a gateway to the City of Forney. Flagpole Hill is landscaped and well maintained.

Existing Development Includes:

- City Gateway
- Flags (United States, Texas, City of Forney)
- Replica of the Statue of Liberty
- Retaining Wall
- Site Lighting
- Landscaping





## Forney Community Park

Classification: Community Park

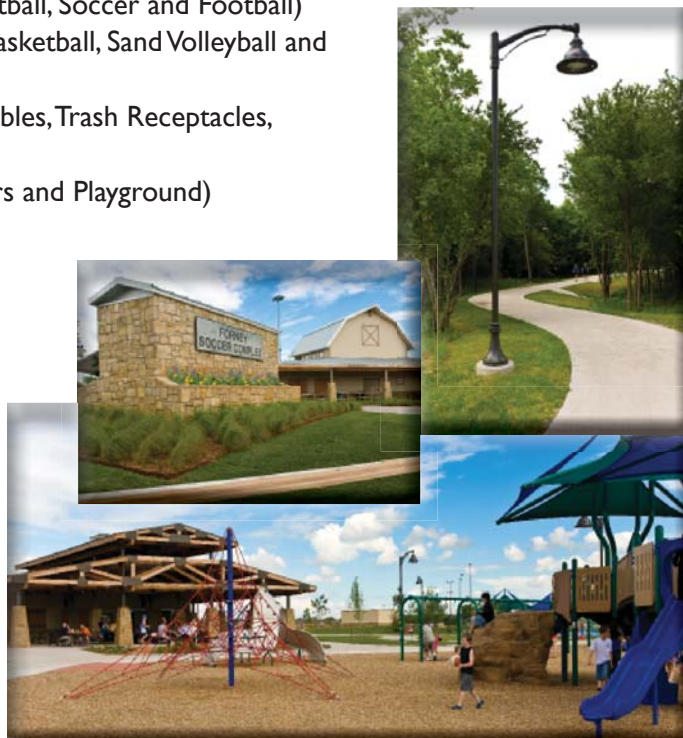
Size: Approximately 170 acres

Location: 241 South FM 548

Forney Community Park is Forney's largest park and contains a wide variety of amenities for the citizens of Forney. The park functions as a sports complex for Girls Softball and Soccer, but also contains a Family Recreation Area, 40-plus acres of wooded area, several miles of trail and the Spellman Amphitheater. The Family Recreation Area contains the City's largest playground, two (2) lighted basketball courts, two (2) lighted sand volleyball courts, a splash pad, three (3) lighted tennis courts, horse shoe pits and a large, rentable pavilion with restrooms. The park is home to many of the City's events and programs, as well. The Parks Administration Building and the City's primary maintenance facility are also located within Forney Community Park. The park is beautifully landscaped, well maintained and easily accessible from the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

### Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Lighted Athletic Fields (Softball, Soccer and Football)
- Lighted Athletic Courts (Basketball, Sand Volleyball and Tennis Courts)
- Site Amenities (Benches, Tables, Trash Receptacles, Drinking Fountains)
- Shade Structures (Bleachers and Playground)
- Spellman Amphitheater
- Concession/Restroom Buildings
- Pavilion/Restroom Building
- Administration Building
- Maintenance Facility
- Playgrounds
- Sidewalk/Trail
- Pedestrian Bridges
- Parking
- Site Lighting
- Landscaping



## Hamblen Park

Classification: Mini-Park

Size: Approximately 0.9 acres

Location: Corner of Bois D' Arc Street and Pacific Street

Hamblen Park is a small park located in downtown Forney, south of U.S. Highway 80 beside the railroad tracks. It is considered a passive park in that it does not contain “active” recreational facilities. The park is landscaped and well maintained. Hamblen Park’s location makes it accessible to employees and patrons of area shops and businesses and, along with Caboose Park at the intersection of Bois D’ Arc Street and Pacific Street, creates a beautiful “entry feature” as one crosses the railroad tracks into Downtown Forney. While passing trains and vehicular traffic can make this a noisy environment, the gazebo and benches provide a nice location for lunch and train watching.

Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Lighted Gazebo with benches
- Flagpoles
- Site Lighting
- Pedestrian Bridges
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles
- Ornamental Fencing





## Heritage Hill Park

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: Approximately 0.75 acres

Location: Corner of Heritage Hill Drive and FM 740 North

Heritage Hill Park is a small park located at the corner of Heritage Hill Drive and FM 740 North, within a single-family residential area. The park functions as both a passive and active park and contains a fair amount of open space. It is an open and inviting park that is easily accessible from the surrounding neighborhood, and is well maintained.

Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Playground
- Sidewalk
- Lighted Picnic Shelter
- Picnic Tables
- Benches
- Trash Receptacles
- Landscaping



## **McCurry Parkland**

Classification: Undeveloped Parkland

Size: Approximately 30.0 acres

Location: West Forney, South of U.S. Highway 80

McCurry Parkland is a large tract of undeveloped property that currently is not accessible by a public road. The property is located within the Trinity River flood plain, and there is not a vehicular roadway (public or private) that adjoins the property. The parkland consists largely of a wooded area with two small areas of grassland prairie. An electrical easement borders the property to the west and an elevated pathway bisects the southern portion of the property.



## **McKellar Park**

Classification: Undeveloped Parkland

Size: Approximately 0.5 acres

Location: 200/300 Block of Stanford Street

McKellar Park is a small undeveloped piece of parkland located between E. Main Street and Stanford Street, within the McKellar subdivision. This property is bordered by public streets on both the north and south side and is bisected by a concrete drainage channel.





## Mulberry Park

Classification: Community Park

Size: Approximately 33.0 acres

Location: South Bois D' Arc Street adjacent to Warren Middle School

Mulberry Park is Forney's second largest park and is located between Johnson Elementary School and Warren Middle School. The park's location between the two schools allows for joint use of some facilities, such as parking. Mulberry Park functions as a sports complex for the City with soccer, baseball and softball fields. The City of Forney has an interlocal agreement with the Forney Independent School District, who owns the property, for development, use and maintenance of the park.

Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Lighted Athletic Fields (Baseball, Softball and Soccer)
- Tennis Courts
- Concession/Restroom Buildings
- Playground
- Site Amenities (Benches, Tables, Trash Receptacles, Drinking Fountains)
- Picnic Shelters
- Sidewalk/Trail
- Bleachers (Covered)
- Sand Volleyball
- Parking



## Mustang Creek Park

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: Approximately 2.5 acres

Location: South side of Longhorn Drive between Bowie Street and Wandering Drive

Mustang Creek Park is a beautiful, well-maintained park located within a single-family residential area. It is an open, inviting park that is easily accessible from the surrounding neighborhood. With its location along Mustang Creek, it is an ideal link within the future Mustang Creek Trail Corridor on the north side of U.S. Highway 80.

Existing Development Includes:

- Park Sign
- Picnic Shelters
- Site Amenities (Benches, Tables, Trash Receptacles, Drinking Fountain, Grills)
- Playground
- Site Lighting
- Sidewalk/Trail
- Pond/Creek



## Phase 2

### WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO

The second phase of the planning process for the 2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is to determine “Where do we want to be?” in which public involvement is critical. A successful parks plan depends on accurate identification and inclusion of the needs and desires of the citizens it is intended to serve. This phase of the process included two (2) focus group meeting, an online/mail survey, recreational trend analysis, benchmarking and a Community Needs Assessment. The Community Needs Assessment is a key element that identifies community recreation needs now and in the future. It evaluates on a 5 and 10-year planning horizon, and provides the foundation for the recommendations for how the City of Forney gets to where it wants to be.

#### Overview of Public Involvement

As previously stated, public involvement is critical in providing a successful Plan, and can be provided in various ways.

#### FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

In November 2013, the Parks Board scheduled two focus group meetings to which key groups of stakeholders were invited to participate in a guided discussion designed to elicit their perceptions, opinions and priorities about current and future park and recreation needs. The summary of these meetings is included in Appendix C.

#### CITIZEN SURVEY (MAIL/ONLINE SURVEY)

In January 2014, National Service Research conducted a mail/online survey of the Forney residents and citizens living within the Forney Independent School District (FISD). A total of 648 fully completed surveys were compiled, and provide a margin of error of + 3.8% at a 95% confidence level. The data from the survey has been incorporated into the Plan, and the Citizen Survey Report is included in Appendix C.

#### COMMUNITY-WIDE MEETINGS

A total of three community-wide meetings were scheduled by the Parks Board and City Council to which all citizens were invited. The purpose of these meetings was to obtain perception, opinions and priorities from the citizens of Forney about current and future parks and recreation needs. At each meeting, the consultant provided the audience with a basic review of the project to date, an update on the project findings and questions in order to obtain feedback. This information can be acquired from the City of Forney in the form Meeting Minutes on the following dates:

- February 25, 2014 – Park Board Meeting Minutes
- April 23, 2014 – City Council Meeting Minutes
- June 3, 2014 – City Council Meeting Minutes



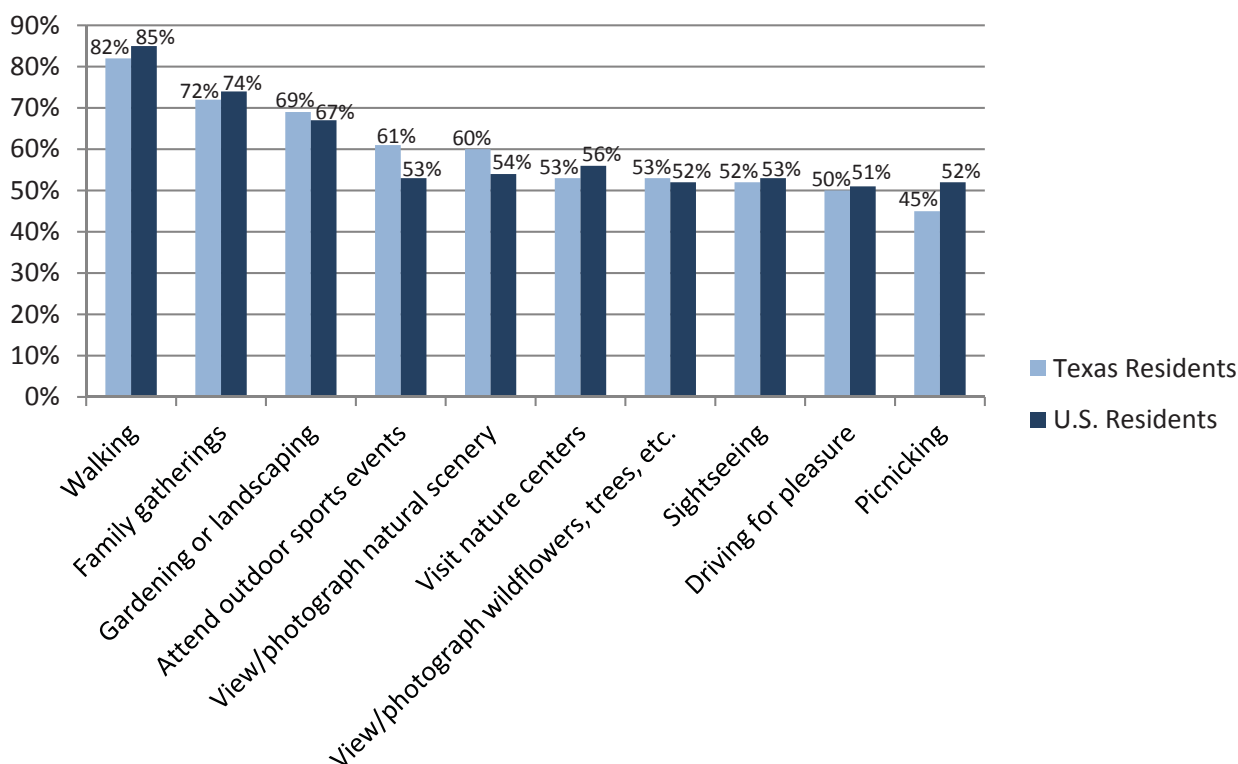
## Recreation Trends

Across the country, park and recreation providers are reinventing their programs and service delivery to meet the demands of the 21st Century American lifestyle. These changing trends affect needs for parks, recreation facilities, recreation programs and other opportunities provided by the City of Forney. To forecast recreation needs, this section discusses major trends that are anticipated to influence recreation demand.

The USDA Forest Service (USFS) conducts a national survey approximately every five years to assess outdoor recreation participation patterns of adults in the United States. The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) evaluates participation for about 80 outdoor recreation activities and includes a large enough sample size to extract data on state recreation trends.

Figure 4 illustrates the percent of Texans participating in the ten most popular outdoor recreation activities in the state and nation.

**FIGURE 4. TOP TEN OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATED IN BY TEXAS RESIDENTS (2006-2009) AND U.S. RESIDENTS (2005-2009)**



Source: Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2012

The data illustrates the trends that parks and recreation professionals are recognizing across the state and nation. There is strong participation and interest in...

- Trail-Related Activities
- Sports (participation and attendance/watching)
- Nature/Outdoor Activities (including gardening, nature viewing and interpretation)
- Family Activities and Social Gatherings (often with an extended definition of family)

It is important to realize that different cultural groups have different interests and participation rates in recreation activities. As thirty-eight (38%) percent of the total population in Texas is Hispanic or Latino. Table 11 provides a breakdown of participation levels for this demographic group in comparison to White/Non-Hispanic for the top ten recreation activities.

**TABLE 11. TOP TEN OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATED IN BY WHITE/NON-HISPANIC AND HISPANIC/LATINO (2005-2009)**

Activity	White/ Non-Hispanic	Hispanic/ Latino	% Difference
Walking for Pleasure	81.1%	83.4%	2.3%
Family Gatherings	66.6%	75.8%	9.2%
Gardening or Landscaping	66.3%	76.3%	10.0%
Attend Outdoor Sports Events	57.3%	68.4%	11.1%
View/Photograph Natural Scenery	63.3%	57.2%	-6.1%
Visit Outdoor Nature Centers	49.8%	58.4%	8.6%
View/Photograph Wildflowers	59.3%	49.0%	-10.3%
Sightseeing	54.1%	49.6%	-4.5%
Driving for Pleasure	53.6%	49.4%	-4.2%
Picnicking	43.4%	47.7%	4.3%

*Source: Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2012*

As shown in the table, Hispanic/Latino residents are significantly more likely than White/Non-Hispanic residents to attend outdoor sports events, visit outdoor nature centers, pass their time gardening or landscaping, and attend outdoor family gatherings. Generally speaking, recreation trends associated with Hispanic/Latino residents nation-wide include the tendency to recreate in groups and participate in culturally popular activities, such as soccer. While fewer Hispanic/Latinos have been associated with participation in nature-based outdoor recreation activities (e.g. hiking, backpacking, camping and fishing), studies suggest that there is a growing interest among Hispanic/Latino youth in these types of activities.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Hispanic Community and Outdoor Recreation, 2006, produced by the UCLA Anderson School of Management for the Outdoor Foundation.*

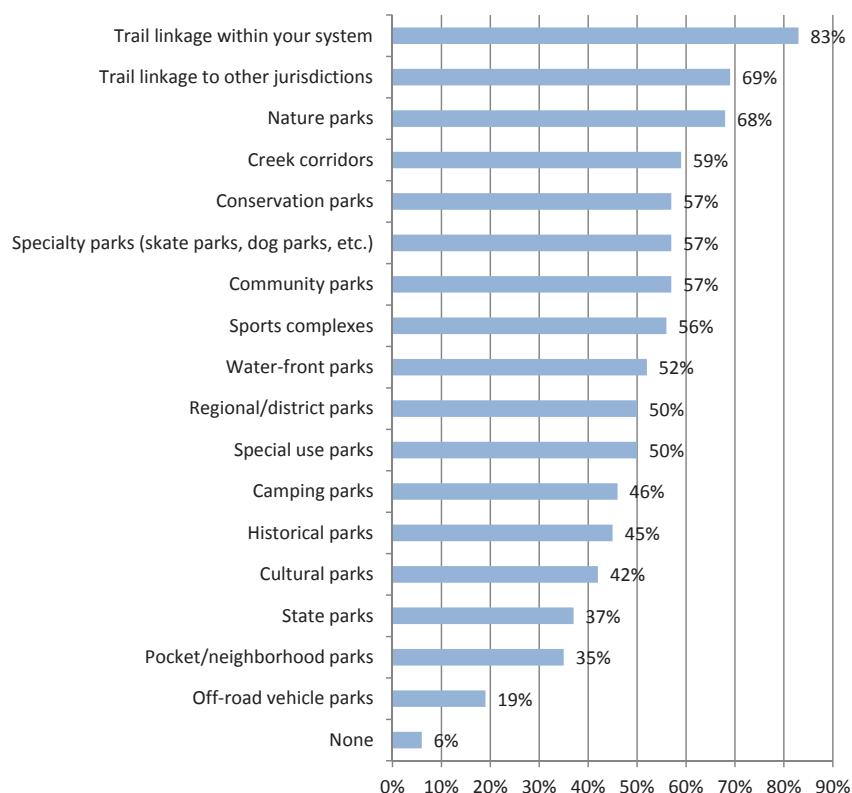
In 2011, the Recreation Grants Branch of the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife conducted online surveys that sought input from the general public and recreation service providers.<sup>9</sup> Texans were asked to rate the level of need for recreation facilities. As shown in Table 12, respondents indicated strong need for a variety of types of trails, as well as natural area parks/nature observation areas. These results are consistent with the needs identified by park and recreational providers (Figure 5).

**TABLE 12. FIVE FACILITIES MOST NEEDED IN LOCAL PARKS, AS RATED BY TEXAS CITIZENS**

Type of Facility	Percent of Participants Rate in Top 5
Unpaved Trails for Walking and Hiking	43.6%
Natural Park Area/Open Space	31.8%
Mountain Bike Trails	31.4%
Paved Trails for Walking, Hiking, Biking, Skating, etc.	30.1%
Wildlife/Nature Observation Sites	27.8%

Source: Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2012

**FIGURE 5. IMPORTANT PARK TYPES AS RATED BY TEXAS RECREATION PROVIDERS**



<sup>9</sup> Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2012.

Specifically, Figure 5 shows the results when recreation providers were asked to rate the level of importance of seventeen (17) types of parks that are in demand in Texas. “Trail linkage within your system” was the highest rated park type and scored significantly higher at eighty-three (83%) percent than the next two (2) highest park types, “trail linkage to other jurisdictions” (69%) and “nature parks” (68%).

It is important to recognize that the top five responses are similar to some of the needs identified in Forney’s 2004 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

- City-wide Trail Connectivity
- Regional Trail Connectivity
- Nature Parks
- Creek Corridors
- Conservation Parks

Local demand and needs for trails, open space, parks and recreation facilities were cross-checked through a mail/online City of Forney Park and Recreation Citizen Survey. The findings of this survey are available in Appendix C.

## **Park Service Levels and Access**

### **PARK SERVICE LEVELS**

Service level standards and guidelines for parks and facilities are a way of measuring “how much” or “how many” (land/facilities) should be provided to support the recreational experiences desired by the community. For parkland, standards and guidelines are often expressed in terms of number of acres per 1,000 residents. Facility guidelines are often expressed in terms of one facility per number of people served. These quantitative measurements do not address distribution or “how far” people have to travel to reach certain types of recreation opportunities. Neither do they address the condition and maintained quality of the land and facilities or “how well” services are provided.

This Master Plan looks at the park and recreation services in a variety of ways to ensure that we are accurately describing the level of service to be provided in the future. This section of the document looks at the amount of park acreage, as well as park access and distribution, to identify service level guidelines and needs for park land. By establishing a standard or guideline, the City can apply this to populations projected five years and ten years into the future in order to plan for needed land acquisition and facility development.

## BENCHMARKING

Another way to evaluate the park level of service provided in Forney is to compare the amount of parkland the City provides to the amount of parkland provided by other comparable communities. For this analysis, Terrell, Rockwall, Mansfield and Keller were identified by the City Manager as good comparables.

Table 13 compares service levels by park type for Forney and the four (4) benchmark cities. The last column presents the average service levels of the communities for comparison. To keep the focus on sites that are fully/significantly developed, it separates out undeveloped sites. Details regarding the numbers of parks in each community (by

**TABLE 13. LEVELS OF SERVICE COMPARISON WITH BENCHMARK COMMUNITIES**

Park Classification	Terrell	Rockwall	Keller	Mansfield	Forney	Average L.O.S. of Benchmark Communities Per 1,000 Residents
Mini-Park	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.19	<b>0.01</b>
Neighborhood Park	2.87	2.45	0.51	0.83	0.36	<b>1.66</b>
Community Park	6.19	7.15	5.31	1.89	12.79	<b>5.14</b>
Regional Park	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>
Special Use Park	0.00	2.06	0.01	7.93	0.00	<b>2.50</b>
Linear Park/Greenway	0.00	0.00	0.70	0.45	0.00	<b>0.29</b>
Natural/Open Space	0.00	0.00	0.10	5.72	0.00	<b>1.45</b>
<b>TOTAL PARKLAND</b>	<b>9.06</b>	<b>10.54</b>	<b>6.62</b>	<b>16.80</b>	<b>13.34</b>	<b>10.76</b>

Source: 2004 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, City of Forney; Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2010-2020, City of Rockwall; City of Terrell Parks: <http://www.cityofterrell.org/parks.htm>; Keller Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, City of Keller, 2007; 2009 Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan, City of Mansfield

Forney's overall level of service for parkland (13.34 acres per 1,000 residents) is higher than the average level of service of the four (4) benchmark communities combined (10.76 acres per 1,000 residents). Forney provides more park acreage per capita than the City of Terrell (9.06 acres per 1,000 residents), which has the most similar population to that of Forney. Forney and Terrell are also similar in that they both provide the majority of their parkland in one large community park. In contrast, the larger cities provide a better mix of park types and more specialized recreation facilities (most do not provide Mini-Parks). Rockwall, Keller and Mansfield have, or are developing, linear park systems that can be used to create trail connections throughout the city. Keller and Mansfield also protect natural areas as part of their park systems.

Since these communities are all growing, it is important to note the amount of acreage held in reserve for future park development. While Forney has approximately 31 acres of undeveloped parkland, three (3) of the benchmark cities have far more: Rockwall (578 acres), Keller (80 acres) and Mansfield (126 acres).<sup>10</sup>

## **PARK DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS**

The City of Forney's existing park system is built around two (2) large community parks in west-central Forney and a number of smaller parks distributed around town. Unlike many other communities, the City has not played a strong role in providing neighborhood parks – with playgrounds, open turf play space, sports courts and/or picnic facilities – within a short distance of most residents. Currently, the City only provides three (3) neighborhood parks, and Homeowners Associations (HOAs) are meeting those needs in newer developments. As the City plans parks for the future, it will need to clarify its goals and roles for providing and distributing parks, recreation facilities and event/programs around town.

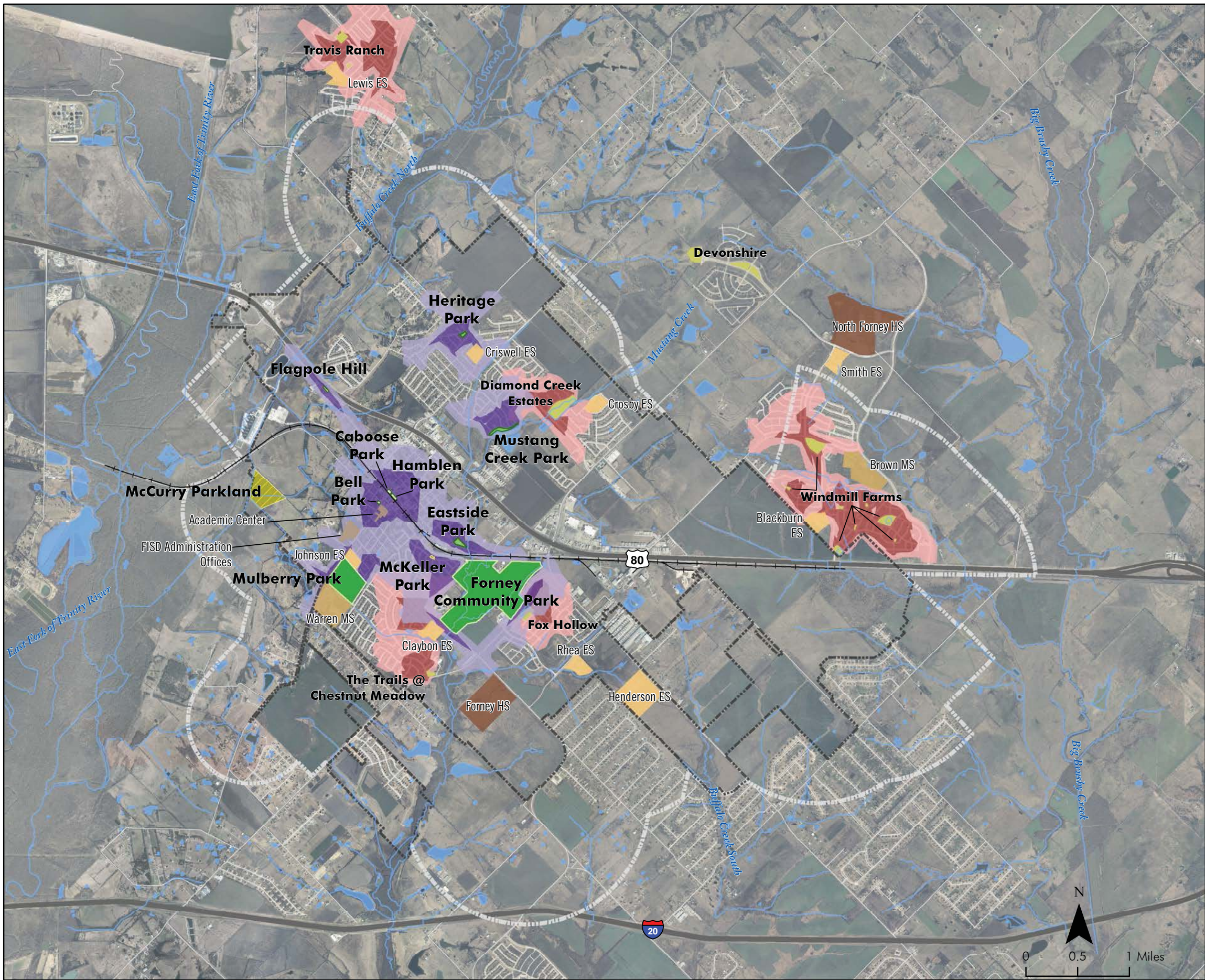
### **Local Park Service Patterns and Gaps**

Map 2: Local Park Services Area (page 33) shows the areas served by parks providing close-to-home park opportunities. Existing residential areas on the southwest side of Forney are relatively well served at a 1/2-mile travel distance, but less so at a 1/4-mile. The dilemma is that many of the parks in this area are underdeveloped mini-parks, which typically attract pedestrians and bicyclists from shorter distances, such as a 1/4-mile.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Note: No dates were available on the amount of undeveloped parkland in Terrell.

<sup>11</sup> Service area distances are based on the distance (1/2 mile) most people are willing to walk, bike or otherwise travel to reach a small park. It also recognizes that most people will not make the same effort to reach parks that have limited facilities or recreation opportunities, such as many of the City's Multi-Parks.





## Forney Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

### City Park Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile
- 1/2 Mile

### HOA Park Service Areas

- 1/4 Mile
- 1/2 Mile

### City Parks

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Undeveloped Park

### Other Features

- HOA Parks
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other School Facility
- Water Feature
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroad
- City Limit
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Map 2: Local Park  
Service Areas



Data Sources: City of Forney  
GIS, ESRI Data and Maps

4.3.2014



The northwest section of the City (north of Highway 80) is not fully served, showing three (3) significant service gaps:

- North of Highway 80 near Flagpole Hill.
- North of Highway 80 and south of Criswell Elementary.
- South of Crosby Elementary.

There are a few smaller underserved areas which could warrant local park development as these areas continue to grow, depending on Forney's policy direction on local parks. In addition, there are many locations within the City limits where local parks would be needed if they are developed as residential areas – especially on the north and east side. Further, the City's Land Use Plan (presented in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan) projects that several areas beyond the Highway 80 corridor will develop as low or low/medium density residential areas.

### **Community Park Service Patterns and Gaps**

Map 3: Community Park Service Areas (page 35) shows the areas served by community parks that provide a wider variety of recreation opportunities. The central core area of Forney is well served by Mulberry Park and Forney Community Park, at a travel distance of 2-miles. It is important to realize that park service for these two (2) sites will extend into newly developed areas, as long as street connectivity is continued and access to the parks is maintained when new residential areas are developed with housing.

### **Open Space Service Levels and Access**

Parkland is provided and assessed primarily for its recreation value, however, in the case of open land, it also provides benefits such as enhancing community aesthetics, protecting significant or fragile natural resources, preserving landscapes that reflect the local cultural and agricultural heritage, and providing ecological functions such as filtering storm water and protecting water quality. Trends favor providing open space to meet the increasing demand for nature-based recreation, as well as these environmental functions.





## Forney Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

### Community Park Service Areas

- 1 Mile
- 1.5 Miles
- 2 Miles

### City Parks

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Undeveloped Park

### Other Features

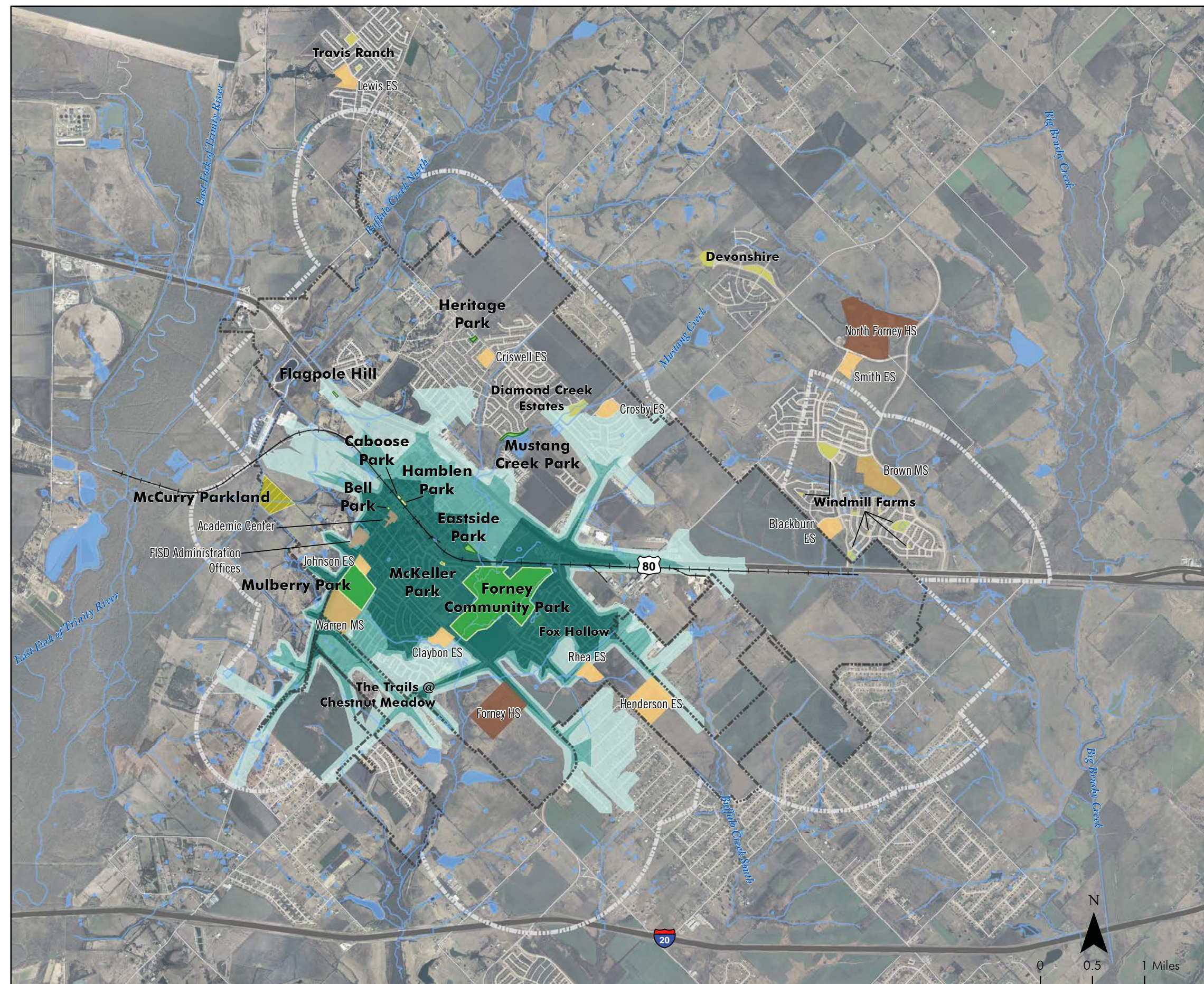
- HOA Parks
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other School Facility
- Water Feature
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroad
- City Limit
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

### Map 3: Community Park Service Areas



Data Sources: City of Forney  
GIS, ESRI Data and Maps

4.3.2014





## **OPEN SPACE RESOURCES**

The 2004 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan identifies open space needs based on goals of protecting three (3) different types of resources: natural resources, cultural resources and visual resources. These resources are identified on Map 4: Open Space & Trail Opportunity Areas. (page 37)

### **Natural Resources**

Natural resource areas suitable for acquisition and preservation as open space in Texas may be described as follows:

- A natural area that has valuable or vulnerable natural resources, ecological processes or threatened vegetative/wildlife species.
- Wetlands recognized by Texas Parks and Wildlife, which are usable for recreation and meet at least one “threshold criteria” as defined by the Natural Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan.
- Open space land or a body of water that is relatively free of structures, such as a creek/river corridor, pond/lake or floodway/floodplain suitable for human use. Examples of this type of land include wooded areas with or without understory growth, grasslands, and bodies of water (i.e. pond, lake or waterway).





# Forney Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

## Opportunity Areas

- 100-year Floodplain
- Agricultural Lands
- Railroad Corridor
- Green Connections
- Corridor Enhancements

## City Parks

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Undeveloped Park

## Other Features

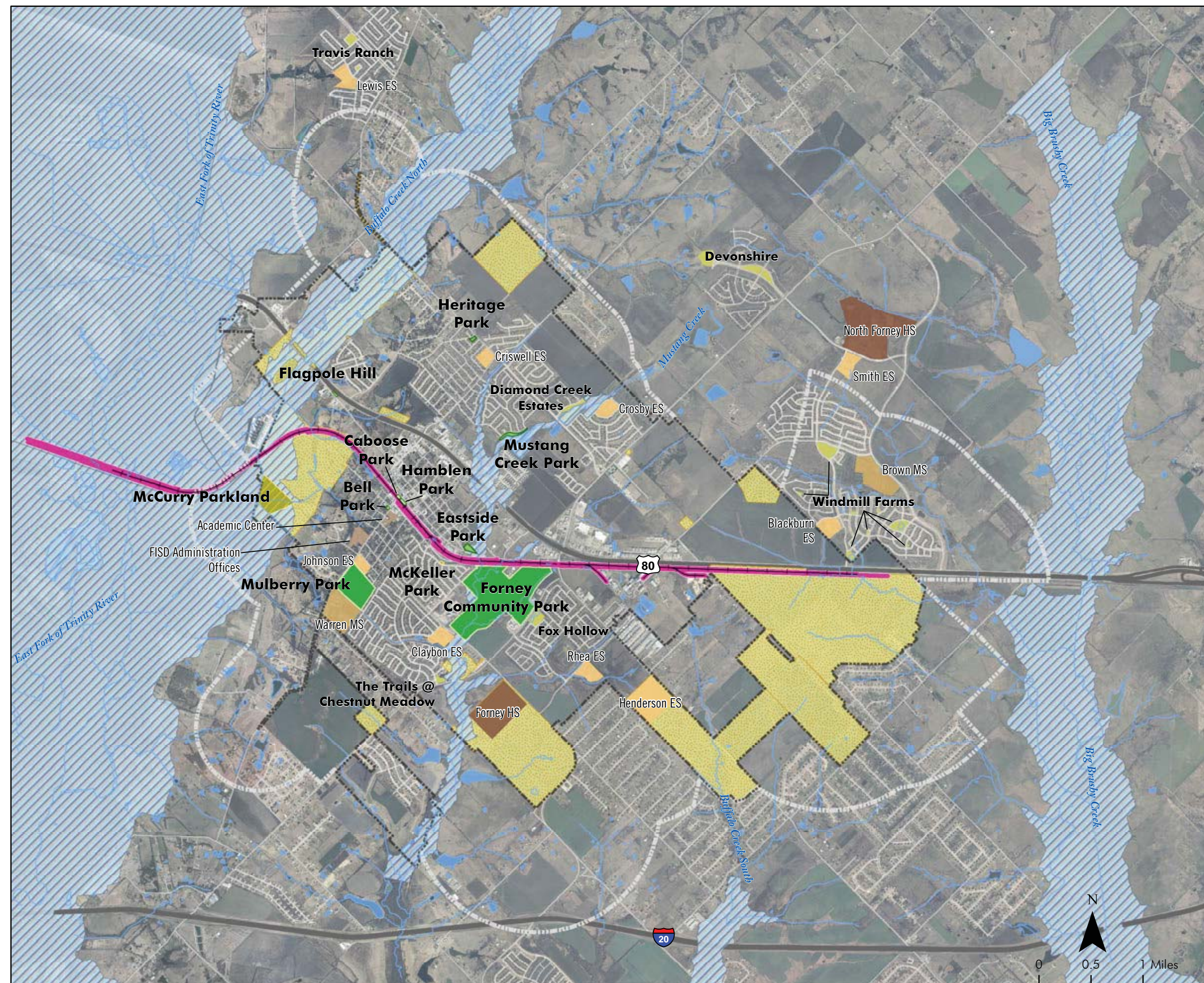
- HOA Parks
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other School Facility
- Water Feature
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroad
- City Limit
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Map 4: Open Space &  
Trail Opportunity Areas



Data Sources: City of Forney  
GIS, ESRI Data and Maps

4.3.2014





## **Cultural Resources**

Forney's cultural resources are typically features such as historic/archeological sites and structures, educational environments and constructed landscapes including farms, ranches, railroads, ponds and lakes. Forney's historic downtown reflects its late 19th Century to early 20th Century heritage. Other structures of the same era are scattered throughout the older areas of the City.

## **Visual Resources**

Forney's visual resources represent landmarks, scenic views and/or areas of significant visual impact and quality within the natural or built environment. Some examples of visual resources in Forney include entry features into the City, parks and trails, and various natural or built scenic landscapes. Visual resources, if preserved or enhanced properly, can help establish an identity for the City that projects a positive image.

## **OPEN LANDS DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS**

Open space protection is opportunity-based, depending on where natural, cultural and visual resources are located. For this reason, the analysis of needs for open lands looks at five (5) different types of opportunity areas for protection:

- Agricultural Lands
- Floodplain
- "Green Connections" Planned Corridors
- Proposed "Corridor Enhancement" Areas
- Railroad Corridors

Map 4 (page 37) illustrates these opportunity areas in the context of other important open lands features, such as water bodies and existing parkland. The map overlay on the aerial photo also makes it easy to compare these opportunities to different land use patterns and areas of development.

It should be recognized that many of the open lands opportunity areas are elongated features that could support trail development, where trail development does not conflict with the goal of resource protection. For this reason, open lands needs are discussed in terms of protecting significant sites and landmarks (defined parcels), as well as in terms of providing elongated and interconnected corridors for wildlife, recreation and buffers between different land uses.

## **Distributions of Opportunity Areas**

Map 4 (page 37) shows several significant opportunity areas for acquisition:

- **Mustang and Buffalo Creek Corridors:** These creek corridors have been identified as green connections and are in the floodplain, making them less than ideal for infrastructure development but valuable for resource protection.
- **Agricultural Parcels:** There are four (4) key agricultural parcels within the City Limits. One is located in north Forney where joint acquisition and protection with community parkland may be an option. A second is adjacent to McCurry Parkland. Another is in south Forney, adjacent to Forney High School, which creates an interesting opportunity for education, recreation and open space protection. The final is in east Forney where joint acquisition and protection with community parkland again may be an option.
- **McCurry Parkland:** While targeted for future park development, this undeveloped property is adjacent to both floodplains and agricultural areas and currently is constrained so that access is very difficult. Instead of a community park, this site may be more valuable as a future natural area park.
- **Additional east/west and north/south Green Corridors:** The City has already identified opportunities to set aside green connections that link key destinations such as Forney High School, North Forney High School, Forney Community Park, Mulberry Park, Criswell Elementary, Mustang Creek Park, Eastside Park, Heritage Park and key HOA parks. These linkages not only could support trail related recreation, but would provide important buffers or breaks in development.

## **Service Gaps and Needs**

As with parkland, there are more opportunities for acquisition than Forney is likely to undertake. The 2004 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, for example, identifies many needs for open space protection. However, no open space areas have been acquired and inventoried as part of the park system.

## Integrated Approach

Instead of considering needs for open lands separately from parkland, these sites can be considered in an integrated way. When viewed on a development continuum, highly developed parkland is a one end of the spectrum (left image in the graphic below), whereas sites with high natural resource values and limited development represent the other end of that spectrum (right image in the graphic below). While sensitive natural resource areas may have limited or no public access, many of these sites can be planned for and acquired as landscapes to support different types of recreation opportunities.



## Recreation Opportunities

While land acquisition is an important component of providing parks and open space services, the land inventory is only part of the story of what's needed to provide recreation opportunities in Forney.

### DIVERSE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Forney is home to a mix of long-time residents and newer residents who often have different demands and expectations for recreation services. Overall, Forney is a younger community with a large percentage of youth under age 15 and a high percentage of families, which often suggests a need for multi-generational recreation opportunities. The community is growing in diversity, as well. These factors point to a need for a variety of recreation opportunities to serve the varied interests of residents within the City limits, as well as residents immediately surrounding the City.

This City of Forney is strongest in providing sports facilities (fields and courts) and traditional recreation facilities (playgrounds and picnic shelters), but has few other types of facilities. Currently, Forney's recreation system does not include several popular community recreation options such as a swimming pool, indoor recreation/community center, skate park, dog park, nature center or hiking/biking trails.

Table 14 compares the number of recreation facilities in Forney to those of the benchmark communities. While these communities are not the same size, in terms of population or amount of park acreage provided, these communities are providing a wider variety of recreation facilities than are available in Forney. In comparison, Forney offers few specialized or diverse facilities.

**TABLE 14. BENCHMARK COMPARISON OF RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

	Forney	Terrell	Rockwall	Keller	Mansfield
<b>RECREATIONAL FACILITIES</b>					
Amphitheater	1	-	-	-	1
Baseball/Softball Field	18	6	18	15	38
Basketball Court	3	3	7	6	12
Football Field	1	1	-	2	2
Gazebo	2	1	-	-	2
Picnic Shelter/Pavilion	7	1	-	-	15
Playground	8	>5	16	9	12
Volleyball Court	3	4	3	6	3
Soccer Field	19	1	15	6	12
Splash Pad	1	-	4	-	-
Tennis Court	5	6	-	-	3
<b>OTHER SPECIALIZED FACILITIES</b>					
Golf Course	-	-	-	-	1
In-line Hockey Rink	-	-	-	1	-
Indoor Arena	-	-	-	1	-
Gymnasium	-	-	-	-	1
Indoor Recreation Center	-	-	2	-	1
Community Center	-	1	-	-	-
Stadium	-	1	-	-	-
Pool	-	1	2	-	-
Regional Water Park	-	-	-	-	1
Trails/Greenway (in miles)	-	0.75	-	14.60	4.00

Source: 2004 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, City of Forney; Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan 2010-2020, City of Rockwall; City of Terrell Parks: <http://www.cityofterrell.org/parks.htm>; Keller Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan, City of Keller, 2007; 2009 Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan, City of Mansfield



This lack of specialized and diverse facilities noted in benchmarking is corroborated by the community feedback provided in the 2014 Park and Recreation Citizen Survey. According to the survey results, the top four facility needs desired by Forney residents in the next five years<sup>12</sup> are:

- Aquatic Center
- Outdoor Pool (leisure, non-competitive)
- Community Center
- Trails

Instead of needs for park renovation, maintenance, special events/programs or land acquisition, the top three community funding priorities reflect similar facility needs:

- Build an Aquatic Center
- Build a Community Center
- Develop new Parks and Facilities

Table 15 shows the top facility needs, based on an average of all responses scaled from 1 to 4 (“1” equals “not needed at all” and “4” equals “definitely needed”). This data also confirm that an aquatic center is the greatest need and that a community center is seen as very important, as well. However, the results also call attention to the fact that simple additions, such as shade and park lighting, are needed to support the use of outdoor facilities. Similar needs were noted by focus group participants convened for this planning process.

**TABLE 15. TOP TEN MOST NEEDED AMENITIES AND FACILITIES**

Rank	Facility/Amenity (N=689)	% Definitely Needed	Mean Score
1	Aquatic Center	58.5%	3.40
2	Add Shade to Park Playgrounds	51.7%	3.37
3	Lighting in Parks	47.6%	3.35
4	Shade in Parks	46.6%	3.30
5	Community Center	40.6%	3.18
6	Leisure Outdoor Pool	48.8%	3.16
7	Hike/Bike/Walk/Jog Trails	38.5%	3.16
8	Playgrounds for Children	35.1%	3.04
9	Picnic Areas/Pavilions	32.1%	3.02
10	Spraygrounds/Splash Pads	31.5%	2.87

Source: NSR 2014

<sup>12</sup> This finding is based on write-in responses for the top three facilities most needed.

## SPORTS FIELDS AND COURTS

Communities like Forney, with a high percentage of youth, often show a strong demand for organized sports and athletic opportunities. With the development of Forney Community Park, the City is playing a much stronger role in the provision of sports fields than it did in the past. A quick comparison with benchmark communities on numbers of fields per population shows that Forney provides more total sports fields per capita than Terrell, Rockwall, Keller and Mansfield

(Appendix D). For Forney, many of its sports fields are game-quality dedicated youth fields (predominately for soccer, baseball and softball), and the City also relies on school district (FISD) fields to support sports. Far fewer fields are regulation size for adult play, and very few are dedicated fields designed to support football or non-traditional sports such as lacrosse. There also is very little practice space.

Community feedback provided in the 2014 Park and Recreation Citizen Survey provides similar observations. Based on write-in responses regarding the type of athletic facilities most needed in Forney, practice fields emerged as the top need. Practice fields also emerged as the top need based on the percentage of people noting that facilities are definitely needed, and the average number of respondents who noted this facility need (see Table 16).

**TABLE 16. MOST NEEDED ATHLETIC FACILITIES IN RANKED ORDER**

Rank	Athletic Facility (N=648)	% Definitely Needed	Mean Score
1	Practice Athletic Fields	25.8%	2.86
2	Baseball Fields	25.3%	2.71
3	Competitive Natatorium	16.5%	2.49
4	Football Fields	14.5%	2.42
5	Basketball Courts	11.1%	2.42
6	Skate Park	11.9%	2.23
7	Soccer Fields	11.0%	2.22
8	Tennis	10.2%	2.20
9	Softball Fields	13.0%	2.18
10	Racquetball Courts	8.0%	2.08
11	Sand Volleyball Courts	7.1%	2.07
12	Lacrosse Fields	2.6%	1.56
13	Rugby	1.2%	1.45

Source: NSR 2014

A few other athletic facility needs are noteworthy in Table 16. Consistent with earlier community-wide findings of needs for swimming pools and aquatic facilities, opportunities for competitive swimming ranked highly here as well. Football field needs have been called out by sports league representatives who indicate that sufficient space is lacking to meet the demand for league play.

## **ORGANIZED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS**

Currently, the City of Forney provides some special events. It also supports athletics and other programs by providing facilities where leagues and programs are offered by other providers. According to the results of the 2014 Park and Recreation Citizen Survey, nearly seventy-five (75%) percent of participants in City of Forney programs were age 19 and under. Program participation is strongest (42.9%) among children age 10 and under. However, there are many age groups with needs that are not being met and there are many types of programs that are not being provided, where needs are likely not being met.

To identify the top needs for special events and programs, survey respondents were given a list of thirty (30) activities, events and programs, then asked which ones they (or household members) would be most interested in participating. Table 17 ranks the top activities, according to the percentage of respondents selecting this activity. Top needs include:

- Aquatic Programs: This result is consistent with the strong community demand for aquatic facilities.
- Festivals: Community-wide festivals often attract families and are a service area where the City has made an effort to address demand. The City is providing a valued service, and additional festivals are desired.
- Fitness Classes/Events: A demand for fitness programs is consistent with the demand in Forney for indoor recreation facilities, as well as nation-wide trends reflecting an increased interest in health, fitness and wellness.

**TABLE 17. TOP ACTIVITIES, EVENTS AND PROGRAMS OF MOST INTEREST**

Rank	Activity, Event or Program (N=812)	Percent Interest
1	Aquatic Programs	54.2%
2	Festivals	47.5%
3	Fitness Classes/Events	46.7%
T4	Summer Youth Programs	45.6%
T4	Events at Spellman Amphitheater	45.6%
6	Walking/Hiking	40.1%
7	Youth Camps	36.5%
8	Health/Wellness Classes	32.5%
9	Arts and Crafts	32.3%
10	Music/Dance/Drama	27.5%
11	Baseball	25.2%
12	Biking	25.0%
13	Archery Range	22.3%
14	Soccer	20.4%
15	Softball	20.3%

Source: NSR 2014

Programming findings such as these help provide direction about the types of indoor and outdoor opportunities that are needed, as well as the facilities needed to support these types of programs.

## **COMMUNITY-SCALE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES**

Community demands for programs and facilities associated with sports, indoor and outdoor aquatics, indoor recreation and outdoor events/festivals show a need for large-scale recreation opportunities. In addition, survey results indicate the most desired type of park in Forney is a community park, where large-scale facilities and group events/programs are typically held (Table 18).



**TABLE 18. MOST DESIRED TYPE OF PARK**

Park Type (N=652)	All Respondents	Inside City (N=423)	Outside City (N=229)
Community Parks (30 to 175 acres)	59.8%	56.5%	66.4%
Neighborhood Parks (up to 30 acres)	51.3%	52.5%	49.8%
Athletic Complex	41.5%	38.5%	47.2%
Protected Habitat/Natural Area	23.6%	25.1%	21.0%
Open Space/Passive Park	20.9%	22.7%	17.0%
Linear Park/Greenway Corridor	17.9%	19.4%	16.2%
None	2.9%	3.5%	0.9%
No Opinion	10.8%	11.6%	8.7%

Source: NSR 2014

*Note: It is unclear how to interpret the neighborhood park findings. These types of parks, especially in Forney, are typically five (5) acres or less in size. A park up to 30-acres in size could provide the community-scale recreation opportunities found in community parks, such as Mulberry Park.*

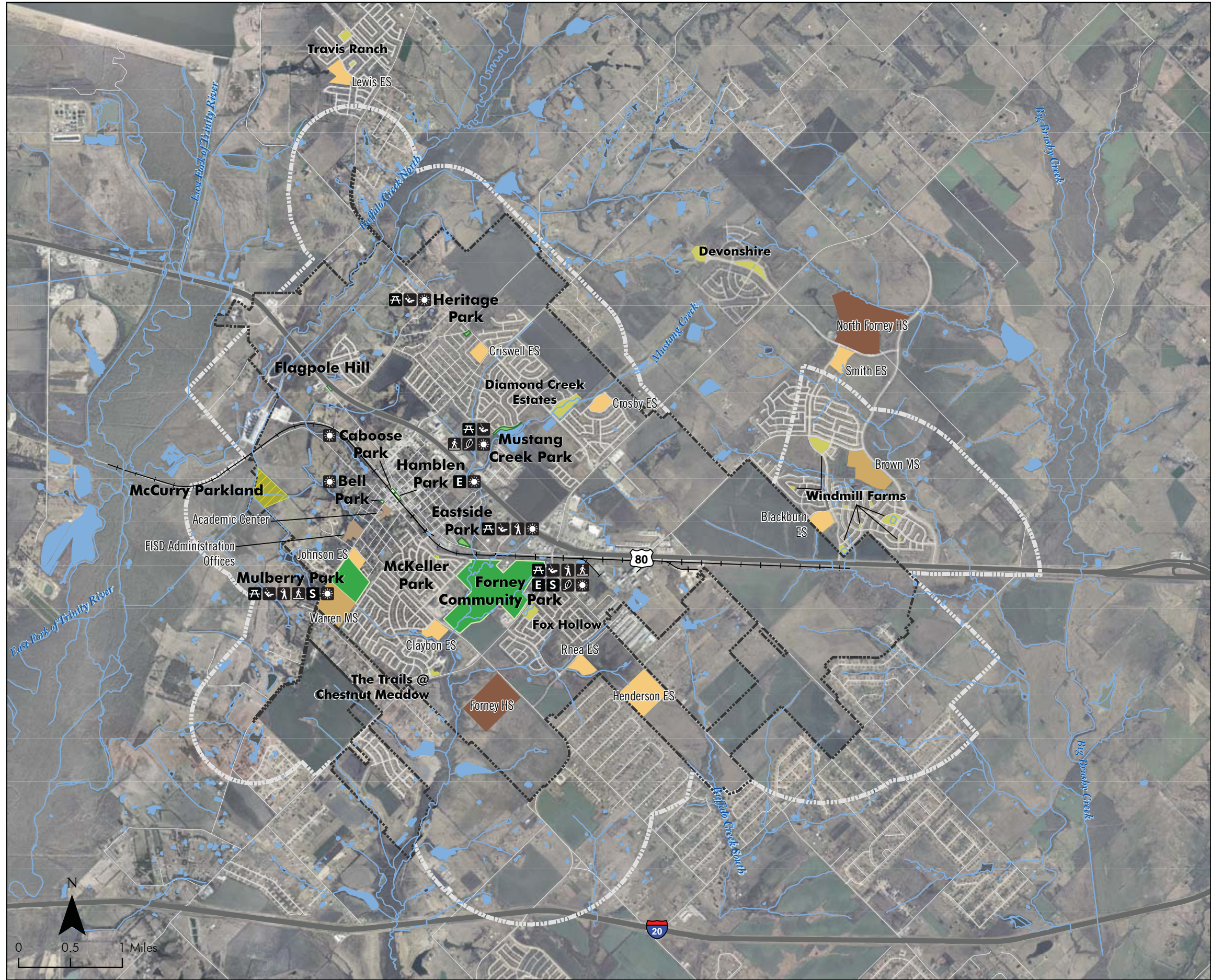
Survey ratings of all city parks, recreation facilities, programs and events show highest levels of satisfaction rating (based on the percentage of people rating these items as above average) include:

- Spellman Amphitheater (53.5%)
- Forney Community Park (51.3%)
- City of Forney Special Events (28.3%)

In Forney's existing park and recreation system, the majority of recreation opportunities are consolidated in recreation hubs. Parks such as Forney Community Park and Mulberry Park support many different recreation opportunities. While many smaller sites provide open space for relaxing or passive recreation, there are only a few moderately-sized sites providing basic recreation opportunities close to the residents they served (e.g. Mustang Creek Park, Eastside Park and Heritage Hill Park).

To show where recreation activities are provided, Map 5 (page 47) illustrates the distribution of recreation activities at parks, including playgrounds, picnicking, relaxing, playing or watching sports, using trails, participating in events/programs, engaging in nature-based recreation and participating in some type of specialized recreation activity. In contrast to the local park service area map (Map 2), Map 5: Distribution of Recreation Activities highlights the fact that most-many city recreation opportunities are concentrated at only a few sites rather than dispersed community-wide. Survey results show support for this approach and suggest that the City of Forney should continue this emphasis on large-scale park and facility development in the next five to ten years.





## Forney Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

### City Parks

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Undeveloped Park

- HOA Parks
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other School Facility

- Water Feature
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroad
- City Limit
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

### Supported Recreation Activities

- Playground
- Picnicking
- Relaxation
- Sports (Field or Court)
- Trail Use
- Events and Programming
- Nature-based Recreation
- Specialized Recreation

### Map 5: Distribution of Recreation Activities



Data Sources: City of Forney  
GIS, ESRI Data and Maps

01.31.2014



## TRAIL ACTIVITIES

With many recreation opportunities consolidated in recreation hubs, providing access to these sites via a variety of transportation modes will be needed to best serve City residents and those people immediately outside of Forney. Trails will become an increasingly important part of Forney's park and recreation system, both for the role they can play in enhancing park access and in providing opportunities for walking, biking, hiking, jogging and other trail uses.

Statewide recreation trends show that walking is the top recreation activity with the greatest amount of participation. Trail corridors are considered the most needed park type, according to Texas Recreation Providers. Unpaved trails, mountain bike trails and paved trails account for three of the top five facilities most needed in local parks (e.g. neighborhood and community parks). In addition, the desire of local residents for an expanded local trail system was noted in focus group findings, as part of this planning process.

While local survey findings do not emphasize trail development over other types of facility development, recreation providers know that it is much easier to acquire trail corridors (either through easements or purchase) prior to land development for other uses. In addition, there is a local demand for protected habitat/natural areas and open space, plus many open space opportunities coincide with linear features, such as creeks, that could support trail development.

The desire for different types of trail-related recreation activities suggest a need for variety of trails and trail corridors:

- **Community Connectors:** Hard-surfaced, multi-purpose, off-road trails are needed to link key destinations in the community, including parks, schools, downtown historic areas and any new specialized recreation facilities (e.g. aquatic facility, recreation center) developed in the future.
- **Loop Trails in Parks:** Loop trails in large community parks provide trail-related recreation opportunities for a variety of ages, including families with young children who are not comfortable using trails near automobile traffic. These can be hard and/or soft-surface trails and are often paired with amenities such as outdoor fitness equipment, parcourses, viewpoints and seating areas.
- **Nature Trails:** In many communities where open space protection is a priority, there is also a desire for increased access to open space to connect people to the outdoors and to the resources/landmarks associated with the natural and cultural heritage of the community. Low-impact soft surface trails are well suited to provide access while, at the

same time, avoiding sensitive areas. These trails are often supported by amenities, such as interpretive signage or kiosks, viewpoints, wildlife viewing blinds and boardwalks that help protect and interpret the natural and cultural resources.

## **Park and Recreation Needs**

### **KEY FINDINGS**

The following key findings emerged from the during the Community Needs Assessment:

- Forney is a rapidly growing community. Population growth is driving a great demand for different types of recreation opportunities and services. The City is serving people within the City Limits, plus others within the Forney Independent School District (FISD) boundaries and the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ).
- There is a strong demand and need for community-scale recreation facilities, such as an indoor/outdoor aquatic facility and an indoor recreation center.
- There is a strong demand and need for aquatics programs, indoor recreation center programs and festivals/events that target families and groups.
- Forney is strong in providing youth facilities for traditional sports, but needs remain for sports and athletic facilities to serve all ages, provide practice space and venues for football and other emerging sports.
- Large community parks are preferred and needed in the future. These sites support a greater variety of recreation opportunities, as well as the large-scale recreation facilities and programs desired by the residents.
- Amenities such as shade, lighting, trails and access pathways are needed to increase the usefulness of new and existing facilities, especially where programming will occur.
- Homeowners Associations (HOAs) are meeting most needs for neighborhood parks in new developments. Policies can be strengthened to continue this provision.
- There is an opportunity and demand for protecting natural, cultural and visual resources in Forney through open space acquisition to preserve the City's small-town character and sense of community.
- The 2004 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan identified needs to acquire trail corridors and open space, but little progress was made toward this end (many resources were invested in park development). Acquiring trail corridors and open space corridors before key opportunities are lost are important in this rapidly growing community.
- The City of Forney is unlikely to meet all recreation needs alone and will have to identify priority needs based on a future vision for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space System. HOAs and the FISD will also play key roles in meeting these needs.



## PARK AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS

Based on the above noted key findings, land needs are assessed based on the role the City of Forney will play in achieving the Community Park and Open Space system most strongly desired by residents. Table 19 identifies parkland standards and needs to be met by the City of Forney.

An overall parkland standard of 15 acres per 1,000 residents is proposed. This is higher than the current level of service, but lower than adopted standards. It is based on an emphasis for community parks, trail corridors and protected open space over the next five to ten years. To meet these standards, approximately 109 acres of new park land is needed.

**TABLE 19. PROPOSED PARK STANDARDS AND DEVELOPED ACREAGE NEEDS**

Park Classification	Adopted Standard	Current LOS	Proposed Standard	Additional Acreage Needed		
				Current Population (2012)	Projected Population (2017)	Projected Population (2022)
				15,877	18,406*	21,377*
Mini-Park	0.25	0.19	0.15	--	--	--
Neighborhood Park	2.00	0.36	0.35	--	0.70	1.70
Community Park	10.00	12.79	11.50	--	--	42.80
Special Use Park	2.00	0.00	0.00	--	--	--
Linear Park/Greenway	3.00	0.00	2.00	31.80	36.80	42.80
Natural/Open Space	N/A	0.00	1.00	15.90	18.40	21.40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17.25</b>	<b>13.34</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>47.70</b>	<b>55.90</b>	<b>108.70</b>

Source: American Community Survey, Forney Economic Development Demographic Detail Report, MIG calculated projections.

\* Projected using a 3% compound annual growth rate.

Assumptions include the following:

- Mini-Parks: Few cities are continuing to provide mini-parks because of their limited recreational value and high per-acre maintenance costs. No needs for additional mini-parks are noted.
- Neighborhood Parks: Neighborhood parks provide access to nearby recreation opportunities. However, Homeowners Associations (HOAs) are anticipated to meet many of these needs in new residential areas. A guideline based on the City's current LOS is proposed, but it suggests the City's role in meeting neighborhood park needs is limited in the next ten years. McKellar Park, which has already been acquired, may be developed to address neighborhood park needs in the next five years.

- **Community Parks:** One new community park (40+ acres) will be needed in the next ten years, and recreation facility development will be needed at Forney Community Park (Phase 2) as well. Both sites will play an important role in addressing a variety of facility, programming and event needs.
- **Special Use Parks:** No needs are identified for stand-alone special use parks, and the 2004 Standard is eliminated. Specialized facility development needs will be addressed at community parks, congregated programming in recreation hubs for efficiencies.
- **Linear Parks/Greenways:** The City needs to strongly position itself in acquiring corridors for trail development. The proposed standard for linear parks and greenways had been reduced from the 2004 Standard to make it more achievable. This land acquisition may include creek corridors.
- **Natural/Open Space:** Additional open space is needed based on a standard of 1 acre per 1,000 residents. Restoration and redevelopment of the McCurry Parkland could meet this need, or other valued resources could be acquired.

## THE CITY'S SERVICE ROLE

The level of service (LOS) standards for parkland noted above are based on a different role in providing parkland than envisioned in 2004. These standards are set to allow a greater investment in needed recreation facilities and programs/events. The City of Forney will not be able to meet all the recreation needs in the community alone. Other agencies and providers will also have to play a role. Table 20 notes the City's service role in providing parks, recreation facilities and programs/events in the context of other providers. A check mark indicates which entities may support or partner to support these recreational needs.

**TABLE 20. POTENTIAL FUTURE ROLES IN MEETING PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS**

Service	City of Forney	Forney I.S.D.	Homeowners Association	Other Providers
Providing Community Parks	✓			
Providing Neighborhood Parks and Mini-Parks			✓	
Providing Community-Scale Recreation Facilities	✓			
Providing Sports Fields and Courts (game or practice)	✓	✓	✓	
Providing Trails	✓		✓	
Preserving Natural Areas and Open Lands	✓			
Providing Organized Sports				✓
Providing Community-wide Events	✓	✓		✓
Providing Aquatics Programs (competitive or recreation)	✓	✓		
Providing Other Types of Programming	✓			✓

## Phase 3

### HOW DO WE GET THERE

The third phase of the planning process 2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan is to determine “How do we get there?” This phase involves looking at the City’s vision, goals and policies for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space system, revising them as necessary and crafting recommendations that address the community’s recreation needs and achieve the vision and goals set forth by this plan. This phase also involves the creation of a 10-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and a proposed Parks, Open Space and Trails Map to assist in achieving these recommendations.

#### **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Vision**

The preferred future for parks, recreation and open space can be summarized in a vision statement to guide the provision of services. Through community feedback provided during the planning process, the following vision emerged:

***Forney provides and promotes an interconnected system of parks, open spaces, recreation facilities and trails to preserve and protect its local heritage, natural resources and community character and to enhance quality of life.***

#### **Parks and Recreation Department Goals**

The goals of the Parks and Recreation Department guide the provision of parks, recreation facilities, open space, trails, programs and events. They reinforce the community’s vision for parks and recreation and provide a framework for the design and development of a livable, active, interconnected community. The overall goals for future parks and open space decisions in Forney are based on the following principles:

- Provide
- Promote
- Protect
- Preserve

In order to guide development in the best manner possible, several goals are identified below:

#### **PROVIDE**

**Provide parks and recreation facilities:** Provide large-scale parks and recreation facilities to serve the entire community.

**Provide quality recreation opportunities:** Provide events, programs and drop-in recreation opportunities to encourage the community to participate in targeted indoor and outdoor activities.

**Provide a trail system:** Provide trails that support recreation and enhance access to city parks, recreation facilities, open spaces and other key destinations.

## **PROMOTE**

**Promote interconnectivity:** Involve relevant City departments, Homeowners Associations, the School District, developers and others in connecting pathways, trails and transit routes so that Forney residents have multiple ways to reach schools and other destinations in the community.

**Promote sports and recreation:** Facilitate league sports, programs and events organized by other providers using the City's parks, recreation facilities and trails.

**Promote collaboration:** Create partnerships to work with the School District, organized sports providers, special interest groups, volunteers and others in achieving community goals for parks, recreation and open space.

## **PROTECT**

**Protect natural features:** Acquire creek corridors and unique natural features to protect these resources for future generations.

**Protect heritage areas:** Where appropriate within parks and open space retain agricultural areas, historic sites and structures.

**Protect current assets:** Maintain and steward existing recreation assets to provide safe opportunities to plan and sustain resources for future use.

**Protect future park land:** Ensure that lands are available for future park development as the community continues to grow.

## **PRESERVE**

**Preserve natural areas:** Safeguard sensitive ecological areas and wildlife habitat within Forney.



**Preserve open space:** Preserve open space areas that provide ecological benefits such as floodplains protection, water quality enhancement, storm water filtration, etc.

## Policies

The Parks and Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan contains policies outlined below. Parks and open space provide a number of benefits to the community. If these policies are implemented consistently with the directives outlined here, they will enhance the quality of life for the Forney community now and for future generations, as well. The following policies represent guidelines to assist the City as it enhances and supports its Parks and Open Space planning:

**Policy 1.** Regularly update and evaluate the City's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

**Policy 2.** Adopt parks and open space level of service standards appropriate for Forney's size and context, as defined in the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

**Policy 3.** Develop a five-year action plan that includes a list of priority projects and an implementation plan to acquire and develop additional parks, recreation facilities and open spaces. Identify and plan for operations costs and staffing needs for priority projects in advance of construction.

**Policy 4.** Ensure equitable geographic distribution of community parks and recreational facilities.

**Policy 5.** Update development requirements regarding the provision of parks and open space to address local and neighborhood park needs.

**Policy 6.** Develop a city-wide trail system that includes the following trail types:

- a. Community connectors: Hard-surfaced, multi-purpose, off-road trails that link key destinations in the community, including parks, schools, downtown historic areas and specialized recreation facilities.
- b. Loop trails in parks: Hard and/or soft-surfaced recreation trails to support a variety of recreation opportunities in parks.
- c. Nature trails: Low-impact soft-surfaced trails that provide access to open space and natural areas where appropriate (avoiding sensitive areas).

**Policy 7.** Incorporate floodplains and creek corridors into an interconnected open space and trails network that preserves the natural flow of floodwaters while providing a potential recreation amenity to residents. Allow low-impact recreation development where appropriate.

**Policy 8.** Protect natural, cultural and visual resources in Forney through open space acquisition to preserve the City's small-town character and sense of community.

**Policy 9.** Increase the diversity of local recreation opportunities through the addition of facilities, programs, classes and special events.

**Policy 10.** Serve a variety of needs by balancing the provision of traditional recreation activities, such as sports (games and practices), with unique or non-traditional recreation activities.

**Policy 11.** Recognize the special needs of youth, teens, adults, the elderly and disabled when designating and providing parks, recreational facilities and open space.

**Policy 12.** Evaluate options to provide large-scale community facilities, such as a community recreation center, aquatic center or swimming pool, based on financial feasibility. Complete a financial feasibility study and market analysis for each facility prior to construction, including a business plan that defines a programming strategy to maximize revenue-generation and cost recovery.

**Policy 13.** Explore various funding sources to expand the City's parks and recreational opportunities, including, but not limited to, sales taxes, general bonds, recreation impact fees, utility fee transfers and recreation park tax districts.

**Policy 14.** Identify and implement revenue-generating policies and strategies to offset operations costs and reinvest in the park and recreation system. These include sponsorships, signage/advertising fees, facility lighting and reservation/scheduling fees.

**Policy 15.** Ensure that sufficient support and administrative staff are available to provide necessary operations for a growing park and open space system, including maintenance, programs and event support.

**Policy 16.** Regularly update the parkland dedication requirement policy, or payment of fees in lieu of parkland dedication, that requires developers/owners of residential

subdivisions and lots to provide for parkland and park facilities at the time of development approval.

**Policy 17.** Recognize the broader economic impacts of parks, recreation and open space in Forney, including their role in economic development, tourism and attracting new residents.

**Policy 18.** Strategically seek the donation of specific parcels of land for parks, open space, greenways and floodplains. Avoid accepting undevelopable lands, small parcels or lands that do not fit the goals and guidelines of this plan.

**Policy 19.** Develop and implement a capital replacement and improvement program with funds set aside annually to upgrade parks, athletic facilities and playgrounds as needed to provide a safe and accessible environment, including amenities such as shade, lighting, trails and access pathways.

**Policy 20.** Administer development and construction guidelines that identify appropriate park development and uses while protecting native plant communities, wildlife habitat and creek corridors.

## **Parks, Recreation and Opens Space System Recommendations**

The recommendations are organized into four (4) categories to address community recreation needs and achieve the vision and goals of this master plan.

- New Park and Facility Development
- Open Space and Trails
- Park Renovations and Improvements
- Programs and Events

As part of the capital development strategy, these recommendations will be divided into short-term and long-term actions, recognizing that funding availability and partnerships will affect the actual timing of implementation.

### **NEW PARK AND FACILITY DEVELOPMENT**

The following projects are recommended for the acquisition and development of new parks and specialized facilities in the next ten years. New parks and new development at existing parks are illustrated on Map 6: Proposed Parks, Open Space and Trails (page 58). This plan is based on the policy direction that newly developed areas will include neighborhood parks that will be provided and maintained by the developers/Homeowners Associations (HOAs).

### **A-1. Complete Phase 2 Development of Forney Community Park.**

Finish the development of Forney Community Park. As per the park master plan, consider new sports facilities, natural areas and trails as noted below:

Develop a T-Ball/Coach Pitch Complex for ages 4 through 8 that includes five (5) playing fields, covered bleachers and a concession/restroom building. Note: If another new community park is acquired, consider developing the T-Ball/Coach Pitch Complex at CP-1 (see recommendation A-2) to minimize traffic congestion and crowding at Forney Community Park.

- Develop a Baseball Complex for ages 9 through 14 that includes two (2) mustang fields for ages 9-10, two (2) bronco fields for ages 11-12, one (1) pony field for ages 13-14, covered bleachers and a concession/restroom building. Note: If another new community park is acquired, consider developing the Baseball Complex at CP-1 (see recommendation A-2) to minimize traffic congestion and crowding at Forney Community Park.
- Provide a large, multi-purpose field (360'x225') and concession/restroom/activities building.
- Provide thematic playgrounds to serve the field complexes.
- Provide a trailhead with parking, an information kiosk, restroom building and signage where the site connects to the Mustang Creek South Trail Corridor (T-3 on Map 6, page 78) and internal park trails (also see recommendation B-1).
- Provide trails (hard-surface and soft-surface loop trails) that connect to the trailhead and other site facilities.
- Preserve natural areas along Mustang Creek.
- Facilitate auto access to this site, developing a third park entrance on west side of the park property. Work with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to provide a stop light at the park's main entrance on FM 548.

### **A-2. Acquire and Develop One (1) New Community Park in North Forney.**

The City should acquire acreage, plan and develop a new community park (see CP-1 on Map 6, page 58) to the north of US Highway 80.

- Acquire 40-50 acres for a new community park. Consider sites north of US Highway 80 beyond the service area of existing community parks and connected to the proposed trail system. Recommended site location as shown on Map 6: Proposed Parks, Open Space & Trails (page 58).
- Create a park master plan, involving residents and special interest groups in the planning process.





## Forney Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

### Potential New Sites

- Proposed Trails
- Neighborhood Park Development
- Community Park Development
- Open Space

### City Parks

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Undeveloped Park

### Other Features

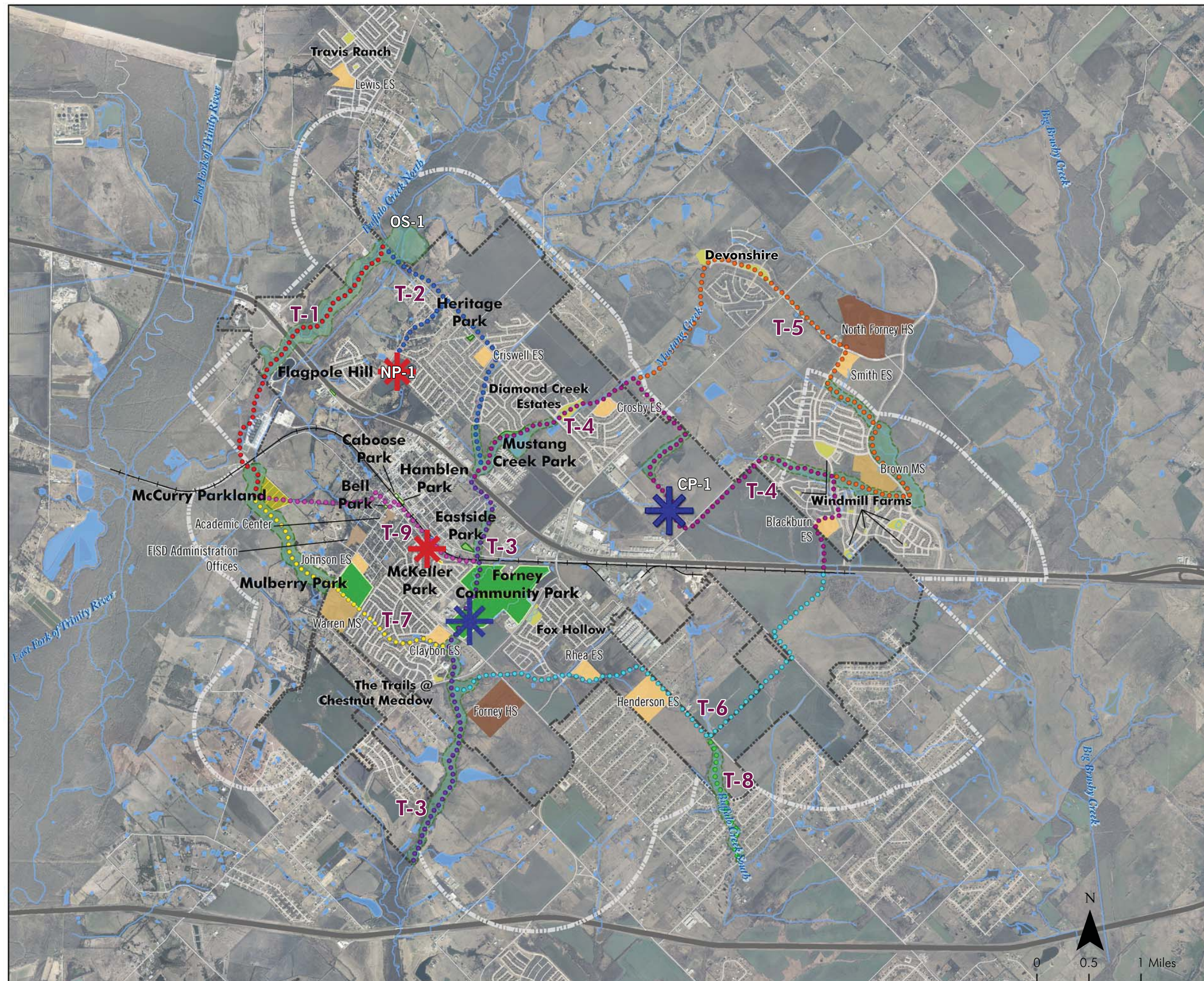
- HOA Parks
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other School Facility
- Water Feature
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroad
- City Limit
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

### Map 6: Proposed Parks, Open Space & Trails



Data Sources: City of Forney  
GIS, ESRI Data and Maps

10.16.2014





- Include or consider the following facilities at this site: lighted, multi-purpose sports fields (e.g. football, soccer, lacrosse), sports practice space, family oriented facilities (e.g. destination playground, picnic area, sports courts, loop trail) and specialized facilities (e.g. dog park, aquatic facility).
- Depending on the timing of the site development, consider developing the Baseball Complex and/or the T-Ball/Coach Pitch Complex proposed for the 2nd Phase of Forney Community Park at this site.
- Provide a trailhead, connecting this park to the new off-street trail system (see recommendation B-1).

### **A-3. Develop McKellar Park as a Neighborhood Gathering Place.**

This Plan recommends that the City move away from developing new mini-parks and neighborhood parks in low density residential areas where houses have large lot sizes. However, McKellar Park was acquired and planned for park development prior to this planning process. Given the site's small size, McKellar Park should not be developed as a full neighborhood park.

- Develop a small picnic shelter/pavilion and barbecue grill(s) to support neighborhood gatherings.
- Provide a small open turf play space, using landscaping to separate the play area from adjacent drainage channel and roadway.
- Develop underground storm drainage to replace the drainage channel that currently divides the park site.
- Avoid acquiring and developing small parks of this size in the future.

### **A-4. Acquire and Develop One (1) New Neighborhood Park in an Existing Underserved Area.**

Though this Plan recommends that the City move away from providing new neighborhood parks, there are several existing residential areas that currently do not have a park and will not be served by nearby development in the future. The City should identify a location outside of planned development areas to acquire and develop one (1) neighborhood park to serve these unserved neighborhoods. A site north of US Highway 80 is recommended (see NP-1 on Map 6, page 58).

- Acquire at least 2.5 acres for a new neighborhood park as per the Park Development Standards and Guidelines. If possible, acquire additional acreage at this site to provide sports practice space.
- Create a park master plan, involving nearby neighbors in the planning process.
- Follow the Park Development Standards and Guidelines (Appendix E) to develop this site as a neighborhood park.

#### **A-5. Update Developer Requirements for the Provision of Parks, Open Space and Trails.**

The City of Forney will focus the majority of its future investment on the provision of community parks and community-scale specialized facilities. In doing so, the City would like developers to meet neighborhood park needs, establishing Homeowners Associations (HOAs) for park management and maintenance. The City will need to review and update existing policies regarding residential development, determining where parks and open space requirements should be strengthened and where incentives can be provided for neighborhood park development. This may include setting parameters for the City's role in development approval.

- Update neighborhood park land dedication and in-lieu fee requirements for new developments. Take into consideration new requirements for the provision of neighborhood parks, open space and trails.
- Require City involvement and approval in park master planning and design.
- Provide Park Development Standards and Guidelines (Appendix E) for the provision of neighborhood parks. Encourage the development of open space for sports practice.
- Encourage developers to set aside trail corridors as part of their dedication requirements. Avoid accepting or counting non-developable floodplain areas toward land dedication requirements.
- Avoid accepting additional lands from developers that are not consistent with the goals of this Plan. Also, avoid parcels with extreme topography or other characteristics that substantially increase maintenance costs or reduce development options for recreation.

#### **A-6. Strive to Develop an Aquatic Facility, Considering Financial Feasibility and Partnership Opportunities.**

City residents would like to have several major new recreation facilities, with an aquatic facility at the top of the list. This type of facility is often funded and supported through partnership and not by the City alone. When the timing is right and depending on partner interests, the City should move forward with the planning and development of an indoor/ outdoor aquatic facility. City efforts will focus on providing leisure (non-competitive) swimming, water play, swim lessons and aquatics programs. The Forney I.S.D. may desire a natatorium suitable for competitive swimming. A private partner could also be involved in providing more extensive water play opportunities, such as a lazy river, wave pool, water slides and other aquatic entertainment options.

Whether phased as an outdoor or indoor/outdoor facility, the City should consider future opportunities to co-locate this facility with a multi-purpose recreation center (see recommendation A-7). Given the programming requirements of these facilities, the City



should not bring both facilities online at the same time. Instead, a first facility should be planned and evaluated as a pilot project to test the City's success in developing and operating a fully-programmed, revenue-generating facility.

- Identify primary or equity partners, and involve them in the planning, funding, design and development process.
- Conduct a financial feasibility study, market study and operating pro forma for an aquatic facility to identify the optimal size and mix of recreation facilities and programming options that would provide the highest revenue-generating potential to meet City cost recovery targets. Ensure that the City is not subsidizing facility development and/or operations that are not consistent with the goals of this plan.
- Recognize the role this facility would have in economic development and attracting visitors regionally. Consider using Economic Development Funds for construction, as appropriate.
- Develop the facility, ensuring easy access by foot, bicycle and vehicle. Avoid construction or phasing in facilities that cannot meet targeted financial performance goals (see programming recommendation D-2).

#### **A-7. Continue to Investigate Options to Provide a New Multi-Purpose Recreation Center.**

As noted in outreach findings, City residents would like to have a large, multi-purpose recreation and community center. Financial feasibility, partnership opportunities and the increasing demands of a growing community will all play a role in determining when the City should move forward with this project. Currently, indoor recreation needs are met at a variety of locations, such as the Forney Sports Center, City Hall, schools and private fitness clubs. In the short term, the City should work with existing entities to meet needs for indoor programming space, even taking into account the role that Homeowners Associations (HOAs) may play in providing small-scale community rooms and neighborhood facilities. In the long term, however, the City will need a new multi-purpose recreation center as the community continues to grow. Trends favor building large, multi-use indoor facilities (40,000+ SF) that would serve City residents as well as visitors from beyond the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ).

- Continue monitoring needs for indoor recreation space, giving the City time to ramp up programming to enhance cost recovery at existing large facilities before proceeding. For example, when a new aquatic facility and the Spellman Amphitheater are operating successfully and meeting target cost recovery rates, re-assess demand and consider developing a new recreation center.
- Identify primary or equity partners and involve them in the planning, funding, design and development process.

- Conduct a financial feasibility study, market study and operating pro forma for a large, multi-purpose recreation center. Identify the optimal size and mix of recreation facilities and programming options that would provide the highest revenue-generating potential and meet City cost recovery targets.
- Provide programming space for all ages, but also include dedicated space for older adults and seniors to incorporate the programming currently provided at City Hall.
- In the long term, beyond the planning horizon for this plan, develop and operate a recreation center in accordance with the pro-forma.

#### **A-8. Provide a Mix of Traditional and New Facilities to Support a Variety of Recreation Activities.**

Forney is strong at providing traditional recreation amenities (e.g. playgrounds, sports fields, sports courts) but currently offers little in the way of unique or specialized facilities. When the City is master planning new parks or approving development plans for private parks, staff should vary the types of recreation amenities and facilities provided by including facilities such as dog parks, skate parks, disc golf, BMX/pump tracks, fishing ponds, nature centers, etc. New facilities should fit the character and landscape of the park but provide diverse opportunities distributed across town. Each community park should have something special that differentiates it from others.

#### **A-9. Follow Park Development Standards and Guidelines for the Provision of New Parks and Facilities.**

The City should adopt the Park Development Standards and Guidelines (Appendix E) provided as part of the updated Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan and apply these to the development of new parks.

### **OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS**

As noted earlier, there are overlaps in acquisition opportunities (creek corridors) for open lands and trails. For this reason, recommendations for open space and trails are presented jointly. As shown on Map 6 (page 58), recommendations are built around acquiring trail corridors and providing open space buffers, viewpoints and spur nature trails in high value natural areas as part of the trail network. In addition, other open space parcels should be developed as nature parks to connect people to nature while protecting significant natural areas.

#### **B-1. Develop an Interconnected Trail System.**

The City has long planned various trail corridors to connect both North and South Forney to key destinations in the community. This Plan updates earlier proposals, recommending a

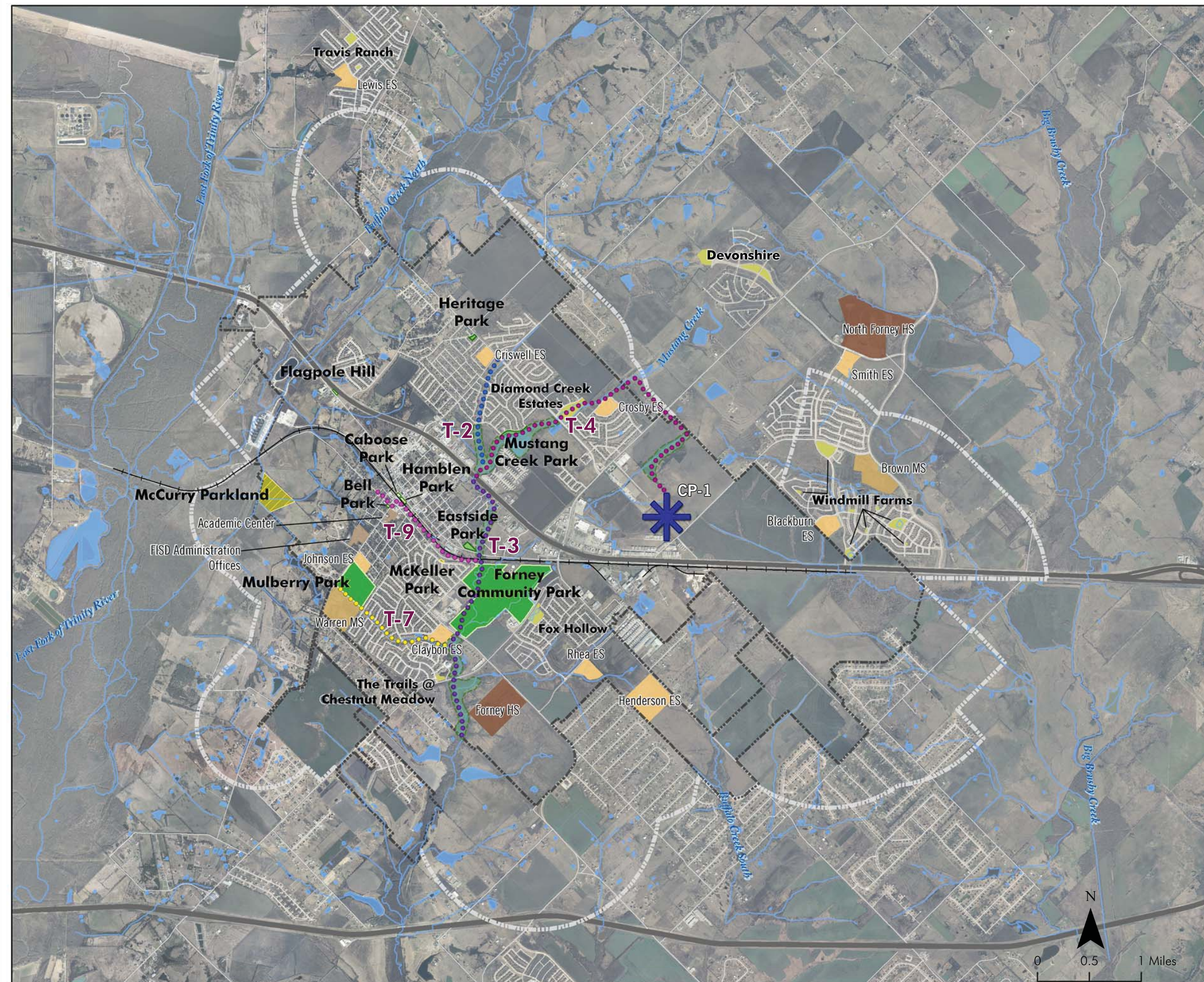
looped, multi-purpose trail system that maximizes recreation and connectivity to parks and schools while protecting creek corridors as community resources.

The recommended trail system includes hard-surfaced, accessible trails with open space buffers along select trails, trail waysides at appropriate resting intervals and nature interpretation. Trail corridors may be acquired through easement or ownership. Some of these corridors may provide ecological services, such as water quality enhancement and floodplain protection along Mustang Creek and Buffalo Creek.

The following trail segments below describe the proposed trail system, even though they represent more than the City will likely acquire and develop in the next ten years. Trail corridors are divided into segments for planning. Reference letter and number combinations (e.g. T-1) match the labels shown on Map 6 (page 58). The City will need to prioritize the acquisition and development of trail corridors based on the growth patterns in the future (see Map 7: Recommended Open Space & Trails, page 64). In the short term, the City should focus acquisition and development efforts on the spine along Mustang Creek, including T-3, T-4 and T-7 connecting Forney Community Park to the proposed new community park (CP-1) when a location is officially identified (Note: Map 6 highlights an overall proposed trail corridor system and Map 7 highlights priority trail corridors for development). Trail corridors should be developed according to the Park Development Standards and Guidelines (Appendix E) created for this planning process.

- **T-1. Buffalo Creek North Trail and Open Space:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor extending north from McCurry Parkland. Acquire an open space buffer along the trail as well as adjacent natural areas for interpretive waysides and viewpoints. Ensure appropriate crossings for the railroad and US Highway 80. (Estimated length = 2.7 miles)
- **T-2. Heritage Hill – Criswell Trail:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor connecting to T-1, Heritage Hill Park and Criswell Elementary School, then following the Brooklyn Branch to T-4 and the Mustang Creek Corridor. This corridor is adjacent to OS-1 (see recommendation B-4). Also, includes a separate spur to the proposed neighborhood park, NP-1. (Estimated length = 2.3 miles which does not include the spur length)
- **T-3. Mustang Creek South Trail and Open Space:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor along Mustang Creek, south of US Highway 80 and T-4, connecting Eastside Park, Forney Community Park, Claybon Elementary School, The Trails at Chestnut Meadow, Forney High School and then extending south along Mustang Creek. Provide pedestrian/ bike bridge to cross US Highway 80. (Estimated length = 3.3 miles)
- **T-4. Mustang Creek North – Blackburn Connector and Open Space:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor along Mustang Creek, north of US Highway 80 and T-3,





## Forney Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

### Potential New Sites

- ..... Proposed Trails
- ✱ Community Park Development
- Open Space

### City Parks

- Mini Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Undeveloped Park

### Other Features

- HOA Parks
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other School Facility
- Water Feature
- Highways
- Streets
- Railroad
- City Limit
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

### Map 7: Recommended Open Space & Trails



Data Sources: City of Forney  
GIS, ESRI Data and Maps

10.16.2014



connecting Mustang Creek Park, Diamond Creek Estates, Crosby Elementary School, Brown Middle School and T-5. This corridor is adjacent to the proposed community park, CP-1. Acquire an open space buffer along portions of the trail, as well as adjacent natural areas for interpretive waysides and viewpoints. (Estimated length = 5.2 miles)

- **T-5. Northeast Loop Trail and Open Space:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor beyond the northern City Limit and ETJ connecting T-4 (at Crosby Elementary School) to the Devinshire residential development, North Forney High School, Smith Elementary School and Brown Middle School. Acquire an open space buffer along portions of the trail, as well as adjacent natural areas for interpretive waysides and viewpoints. (Estimated length = 5.2 miles)
- **T-6. Southeast Loop Trail:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor south of US Highway 80, connecting T-3, Forney High School, Rhea Elementary School, Henderson Elementary School, T-8 and T-4. Ensure that the overpass across US Highway 80 and the railroad is suited for pedestrian/bike use. (Estimated length = 4.1 miles)
- **T-7. Southwest Loop Trail and Open Space:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor south of US Highway 80, connecting T-3 at Claybon Elementary School to Warren Middle School, Mulberry Park, McCurry Parkland and T-1. Acquire an open space buffer along portions of the trail, as well as adjacent natural areas for interpretive waysides and viewpoints. (Estimated length = 2.2 miles)
- **T-8. Buffalo Creek South and Open Space:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor extending south of T-6 along Buffalo Creek. Acquire an open space buffer along portions of the trail, as well as adjacent natural areas for interpretive waysides and viewpoints. (Estimated length = 1.0 miles)
- **T-9. Downtown Connector:** Acquire and develop a trail corridor extending from T-3 at Forney Community Park westward, connecting McKellar Park, Hamblen Park, Caboose Park, Bell Park, McCurry Parkland and T-1/T-7. Planning and development should concur with plans for the Downtown Historical Area. Much of this corridor will include sidewalks rather than off-street trail. (Estimated length = 2.1 miles)

## **B-2. Hold McCurry Parkland in Reserve for Later Development as a Natural Area Park and Trailhead.**

McCurry Parkland (30 acres) has been held in reserve for a future community park. However, the site is relatively small, difficult to access, located in a floodplain and in the same general area as Forney's two (2) other community parks. The City should reclassify this site as open space with the future intent of developing it as a natural area park and trailhead when it is less costly to provide access.

- Continue to monitor options for providing site access to McCurry Parkland as the surrounding area develops.

- Revise city code to allow the development of gravel parking lots and low impact (semi-improved) features in open space and flood prone areas. This policy affects development of this site, as well as other potential trailheads along the proposed trail system.
- In the long term, when access is available and when community funding priorities support site development, create a master plan for the site. Identify wetlands and significant natural areas that should not be developed, as well as floodplain areas that may be suited for limited low-impact recreation development, such as trails or unimproved playfields. Also, identify elevated areas that are better suited for parking, restrooms, picnic shelters/pavilions, etc. Consider the following:
  - o Address site access for pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles and even buses (e.g. school field trips).
  - o Develop a trailhead that serves multi-purpose trails T-1 to the north, T-7 to the south and T-9 to downtown, as well as soft-surfaced nature trails at the site.
  - o Provide opportunities for environmental education and nature interpretation. Consider interpretive signage, information kiosks, outdoor classroom space, viewpoints, observation blinds, etc. To support school events or programs, provide restrooms, sufficient parking and bus parking/drop-off.
  - o Consider whether unimproved playfields are suitable for sports practices. Do not provide lighting at this site.
  - o Provide boardwalks, restrictive use signage and other elements to protect significant natural resources and wetlands from impact.
- Restore natural areas where needed.

### **B-3. Develop Trailheads at Parks and Schools.**

There are many parks and schools along the proposed trail system route. While some residents may walk or bike to the trails, others will drive and park at trailheads or other locations, such as schools.

- Develop trailheads at Forney Community Park, CP-1, McCurry Parkland and OS-1. Also, see recommendations A-1, A-2, B-2 and B-4.
- Improve Eastside Park to address increased use when connected to the proposed trail system (see recommendation C-1).
- Through the Interlocal Agreement with the Forney Independent School District (FISD), address the use of school parking lots on weekends and evening for trail parking.

### **B-4. In Conjunction with Trail Corridor Acquisition, Acquire Additional Open Space as a Trailhead and Natural Area.**

The City should acquire acreage at OS-1 as a trailhead and natural area. This acquisition should be considered in conjunction with trail corridor acquisition through this area as part of the recommended trail system.

- **OS-I. Open Space Trailhead:** Acquire 3 acres of open space adjacent to the T-1/T-2 trail corridors on Map 6 (page 58). Develop as a trailhead. Restore and protect as a natural area.

## **PARK RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS**

Improvements or enhancements are needed at existing parks, facilities and sports fields managed by the City. In addition, as new parks, facilities and trails are brought online, the City will need to consider future capital reinvestments to replace old or worn facilities, when needed. This section addresses those types of improvements.

### **C-I. Upgrade and Improve Existing Parks and Facilities as Recommended.**

Improvements are planned at several existing sites, and others will be needed as demand increases and uses change. These range from adding minor features to renovating the site, as noted below:

- **Bell Park:** Renovate the park. Remove the fountain and make the centerpiece of the park a town plaza that can support small events. Move the bell to a pathway and provide interpretive signage to explain the namesake of the park.
- **Mulberry Park:** Replace the shade covers and tennis court windscreens. In the long-term, renovate the park connecting the site to the proposed trail system by providing a trailhead, and updating sports fields and practice facilities, etc.
- **Forney Community Park:** Replace the tennis court windscreens and complete the park maintenance building addition. (Note: See A-I with regard to Phase 2 development).
- **Eastside Park:** Renovate this site to address older or dilapidated features. Maintain the tree cover, but improve the undeveloped portion of the site to better connect park features to the proposed trail system (T-3). Provide interpretive signage to explain the history of nearby cemeteries. Also, evaluate options at this park to develop adjacent City-owned land (approximately 3 acres) as a dog park, utilizing both shaded and open areas.
- **East Fork Bridge:** Consider relocating this bridge to a park, if financially feasible to do so. Provide interpretive signage to note the origin and history of the bridge.
- **School Sport Fields:** Work with the Forney Independent School District (FISD) to improve the skinned infields at Lewis and Blackburn Elementary Schools, if the outfields can be properly maintained, as well.



### **C-2. ADA Transition Plan.**

As new national standards apply to access requirements for parks, recreation facilities and trails, the City should complete an ADA Transition Plan to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **C-3. Create and Fund an Asset Preservation and Capital Replacement Program.**

An Asset Preservation Program involves allocating funds for annual preventive maintenance and reinvestment in existing sites to maintain their functionality and prolong their life. Asset preservation funding levels are typically based on a percentage of the total replacement value of the assets. A capital replacement program involves setting aside funds to replace worn or aged facilities, equipment and vehicles at the end of their lifecycle. A fund can be created for asset preservation and capital replacement to ensure that the City has sufficient funding to improve facilities when needed.

- Begin developing asset preservation and capital replacement schedules as part of the process for any park capital improvement.
- Include the cost of asset repair and replacement in event and program fees to offset wear and tear and to fund regular refreshment/replacement.

## **PROGRAMS AND EVENTS**

The City of Forney's direct role in providing programs and events has focused primarily on providing a few community-wide special events. The City has functioned more as a program and event facilitator, providing the sports venues and recreation facilities used by others to support organized programs and events. These roles will change as the City brings new parks and facilities online.

### **D-1. Gradually Expand Programs and Events.**

The City does not have a well-developed programs division and should expand programming and event services gradually. Additional staffing (administrative, supervisory, direct staff and support staff) will be needed. The following is recommended for initial program expansion. Initiate and test pilot programs using existing facilities before developing new facilities with significant programming and cost recovery needs.

- Identify cost recovery and financial targets for all programs and events, and manage recreation services to achieve these targets.
- Collect and track cost and revenue data, user feedback data and participation rates to inform programming decisions.
- Establish an online reservation system for sports fields and facilities that can be upgraded to include online program/event registration and data tracking.

- Avoid expanding program areas that are well-served by other providers, whether public, private or non-profit.
- Recruit recreation user groups (bike groups, hiking groups, sports organizations, etc.) to develop recreation events and programs (including classes and drop-in activities).
- Contract with outside instructors to provide a variety of programs at City sites.

#### **D-2. Provide Programming in Key Program Service Areas.**

Survey results show a community interest in aquatic programs, festivals, fitness classes/events, summer youth programs and events/programs at the Spellman Amphitheater. In addition, new parks, trails and open space areas provide opportunities to enhance programs in new directions. The City will not be able to meet all needs at once. This plan recommends focusing on the following program areas:

- **Special Events:** Strengthen events programming at the Spellman Amphitheater and other existing sites to improve opportunities for families, youth and other residents. Consider additional concerts, holiday festivals, races, health/fitness challenges and drop-in tournaments (e.g. 3-on-3 Basketball) to meet fitness, festival and event needs.
- **Outdoor Recreation Programs:** Initiate pilot recreation programs utilizing existing parks and facilities. For example, provide or partner to provide week-long summer camps or drop-in play activities at Forney Community Park where shelters are available for shade and cover during storms.
- **Aquatics:** When an aquatic center is developed, program a new swimming pool to support a variety of aquatics programs and events. An operations plan will be needed to identify the activities, classes, events and drop-in programs that will generate revenue to contribute to facility operations costs. The City should identify a range of aquatics programs, including recreational swim, learn to swim, water fitness, water safety, parties/rentals and pool events (e.g. movies at the pool).
- **Indoor Recreation:** When an indoor recreation facility is developed, program the facility to support a variety of indoor or indoor/outdoor programs and events. An operations plan will be needed to identify the activities, classes, events and drop-in programs that will generate revenue to contribute to facility operations costs. The City should identify a range of active and passive activities, social opportunities and classes/programs to support youth development, lifelong learning, senior services, health, wellness and fitness. This will include both sport and non-sport activities.

#### **D-3. Update and Strengthen the Interlocal Agreement with Forney I.S.D.**

The City and the Forney Independent School District (FISD) already have an agreement in place for joint use of some facilities and city maintenance of some school sports fields that are used by local sports leagues. As the community grows, the City and FISD should

continue collaborating to identify the best ways to address needs for sports field game and practice space, indoor recreation space and trailheads to the proposed trail system. The Interlocal Agreement should be updated to reflect any new policies moving forward, including policies regarding fee-based activities and revenue generation to invest in facility maintenance.

#### **D-4. Reconsider Policies and Operations at the Spellman Amphitheater to Maximize Revenue-Generation.**

The Spellman Amphitheater is a regional-quality facility that currently offers city-wide and community based programs, for the most part. A variety of circumstances and city policies have limited the type of programming and events held at the site. Facilities like this need available event support staff (often temporary or seasonal staff to handle setup, clean-up, etc.) and a special events coordinator or promoter to recruit, organize and publicize programs. Policies need to be in place to ensure that direct costs associated with any city staff time and/or materials provided for each event are covered by facility-use fees. These fees should be set appropriately to cover facility wear and tear, as well as use.

The amphitheater needs a business plan, marketing and staffing strategy to determine ways to generate revenue at this site. The plan likely will include strategies such as charging all groups (including non-profits) who host or organize programs at the amphitheater. It may involve reconsidering the provision of alcohol in parks, defining the types of events where alcohol is allowable in order to maintain the park's family atmosphere. What is most important is that the City increase revenues to reinvest in park services, plus increase economic impacts to city businesses by attracting out-of-town visitors.

- Identify optional policies to increase revenues at the Spellman Amphitheater as part of a new business plan, marketing and staffing strategy.
- Test a pilot program to implement selected new policies, defining the types of events that are allowable at the site.
- Identify staffing needed to support, recruit, promote and monitor new events and programs, as well as the maintenance impacts of increased facility use.
- Ensure that appropriate fees and a pricing structure are in place to recover costs for event support and facility use.

Table 21 details the Capital Improvements Projects which are shown on Map 6 (page 58). The projects are divided into three categories: New Parks and Facilities, Open Space and Trails, and Park Renovations and Improvements. Within the list each project has been assigned a priority of 0-5 years, 5-10 years and beyond 10 years based on responses to the Citizen Survey Report, City Staff, the Parks and Recreation Board and City Council. The



“New Parks and Facilities” are the park/facility recommendations for the Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space system over the next 5 to 10 year period. The “Open Space and Trails” category maps out costs for the City’s proposed trail system beyond the next 10 years. The “Park Renovations and Improvements” category details the existing parks and facilities needing enhancements in order to achieve the standard level of quality that the City has set for its park system. The table in its entirety briefly touches on the highlights of each project, the type of project it is, an opinion of probable cost, and prioritizes them accordingly over the next ten years and beyond in some cases.

Table 21: Capital Improvements Project List (10 Year Plan)

Map Reference No.	SITE/PROJECT	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TYPE							Estimated Cost <sup>2</sup>	Priority <sup>3</sup>
			Estimated Acreage	Acquisition	Planning <sup>1</sup>	Development	Renovation / Restoration	Added Facility	Other		
New Parks and Facilities											
	Forney Community Park	Phase 2 development	87.0				•			\$21,500,000	A
CP-1	North Forney Community Park	Acquire land (minimum 40 acres) and develop site.	40.0	•	•	•				\$12,500,000	A/B
	McKellar Park	Neighborhood park development	0.5		•	•				\$275,000	B
NP-1	New Neighborhood Park	New neighborhood park	2.5	•	•	•				\$2,500,000	B
	Indoor Pool/Outdoor Pool/Aquatic Facility	Develop a new indoor/outdoor aquatic facility or pool in a community park.			•	•				\$12,250,000	B
	Recreation center	Feasibility Study and Market Analysis			•					\$200,000	B
Subtotal										\$49,225,000	
Open Space and Trails											
T-1	Buffalo Creek North Trail and OS	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 2.7 miles in length). Acquire an open space buffer along trail and adjacent natural areas for interpretive waysides and viewpoints.	13.1	•	•	•			•	\$1,510,000	C
T-2	Heritage Hill - Criswell Trail	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 2.3 miles in length).	11.1	•	•	•				\$1,225,000	B
T-3	Mustang Creek South Trail and OS	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 3.3 miles in length). Develop pedestrian/bike bridges to cross the railroad and Hwy 80.	16.0	•	•	•			•	\$1,715,000	A
T-4	Mustang Creek North Trail - Blackburn Connector and OS	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 5.2 miles in length)	25.2	•	•	•				\$2,900,000	A/B
T-5	Northeast Loop Trail and OS	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 5.2 miles in length).	25.2	•	•	•				\$2,900,000	C
T-6	Southeast Loop Trail	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 4.1 miles in length). Ensure that the overpass across the railroad and Hwy 80 is suited for hike/pedestrian use.	19.9	•	•	•				\$2,270,000	C
T-7	Southwest Loop Trail and OS	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 2.2 miles in length).	10.6	•	•	•				\$985,000	A/B
T-8	Buffalo Creek South Trail and OS	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 1.0 miles in length).	4.8	•	•	•				\$565,000	C
T-9	Downtown Connector Trail	Acquire and develop trail corridor (approx. 2.1 miles in length).	10.2	•	•	•				\$1,160,000	A/B
	McCurry Parkland	Reclassify this site as open space. Restore and develop 15 acres as a natural area park and trailhead.	15.0		•	•	•			\$2,500,000	C
OS-1	Open Space Trailhead	Acquire 3 acres of open space and develop as a trailhead.	3.0	•	•	•	•			\$350,000	A/B
Subtotal										\$18,080,000	
Park Renovations and Improvements											
	Bell Park	Renovate site.	0.4					•	•	\$65,000	A
	Mulberry Park	Replace shade covers and tennis court windscreens; renovate park.	33.0						•	\$2,074,000	A
	Forney Community Park	Replace tennis court windscreens; complete park maintenance building addition.	170.0						•	\$161,000	A
	Eastside Park	Renovate site and develop a trailhead.	2.5					•		\$750,000	A
	East fork bridge	Relocate and refurbish bridge.							•	\$125,000	A
	School sport fields	Improve skinned infields at Lewis and Blackburn Elementary Schools.							•	\$150,000	A
	ADA transition plan	Create plan			•					\$100,000	A
	Asset preservation and replacement	Set aside funds for future use at all parks							•	\$500,000	A
Subtotal										\$3,925,000	
Total										\$71,230,000	

<sup>1</sup> Site master plan, open space management plan, or financial feasibility and market analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Costs are estimated in 2014 dollars not accounting for inflation.

<sup>3</sup> Priority A = 1-5 years; Priority B = 6-10 years; C = Beyond 10 years. A/B refers to project done in phases, such as acquiring the land first and developing the park later.

## Phase 4

### DOCUMENTATION AND ADOPTION

The fourth and final phase of the planning process 2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan... "Documentation and Adoption". This phase of the process compiles all of the information that was gathered and created during the previous three phases into a single document. The final phase creates an easy-to-use document which reflects the needs of the citizens of Forney, and will assist City leaders as they continue to develop the City of Forney's Parks, Recreation and Open Space system.

Below is a timeline of the master planning process for the 2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

- September 4, 2013    Project Kick-off Meeting with City Staff & Park Board.
- November 14, 2013    Hold Focus Group Meetings (2 meetings to be held on the same evening)
- December 2, 2013    Begin Mail/Internet Survey (Approx. 8 weeks)
- December 5, 2013    Progress Meeting with City Staff (Review of Focus Group Meetings & Base Maps)
- February 19, 2014    Progress Meeting with City Staff (Review of Survey & Needs Assessment)
- February 25, 2014    1<sup>st</sup> Community-wide Meeting
- April 23, 2014    Progress Meeting with City Staff (Review of Vision, Goals and Recommendations)
- April 23, 2014    2<sup>nd</sup> Community-wide Meeting
- May 2, 2014    Review Meeting with City Staff (Review of 2<sup>nd</sup> Community-wide Meeting)
- June 3, 2014    3<sup>rd</sup> Community-wide/Park Board Meeting
- July 29, 2014    City Council and Parks & Recreation Board Workshop.
- October 20, 2014    Draft version of the *2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* sent to City Staff for Review.
- November 19, 2014    Parks & Recreation Board Meeting for *2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* recommendation to City Council.
- December 2, 2014    City Council Meeting for *2014 Forney Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* approval.

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*Forney Economic Development Demographic Detail Report*

*National Service Research, Two Focus Groups conducted November 14, 2013, November 2013*

*National Service Research, City of Forney Park and Recreation Citizen Survey Report, January 2014*



# Appendix A

## PARK CLASSIFICATION

The 2004 Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Master Plan defined park classifications for six types of parks, including mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, linear parks and special use facilities. As part of the 2014 Plan update, park classifications are refined and noted below. Parks are inventoried according to these classifications, unless otherwise noted. Future parks are to be classified as noted below.

### **PARK CLASSIFICATIONS**

In 2014, the City of Forney provides four different types of parkland. These primary park classifications are defined below. In addition, this plan recognizes four other park and open space categories to be able to discuss future needs for parks, trails and open space more specifically. Parks are classified by their primary function, even if they play a secondary role. For example, Mustang Creek Park is classified as a neighborhood park, although it is linear in shape and may connect to a future trail corridor someday.

#### **Mini-Park**

Typically less than an acre in size, mini parks are small parks that provide manicured open space in the city or basic recreation amenities for nearby residents in a specific subdivision. The mini-park has limited utility because of its size. Although the greenspace may be an asset, mini parks typically provide few or no recreation facilities. Bell Park, Caboose Park, Flagpole Hill and Hamblen Park are examples of mini parks.

#### **Neighborhood Park**

Typically 2.5 to 10 acres in size, neighborhood parks are medium-size parks that provide recreation opportunities within walking or biking distance of residents in one or more neighborhoods. The site often includes a playground, picnic area, and an open turf play area. Larger sites may include a sports court(s), trails, or even practice space for sports. Forney currently provides three relatively small neighborhood parks, including Eastside Park, Heritage Hill Park and Mustang Creek Park. While Heritage Hill Park is less than an acre in size, its playground, picnic shelter, and trail distinguish it from other mini parks.

#### **Community Park**

Typically 30 to 100 acres in size, community parks are large parks that include a mix of passive and active recreation amenities to serve a substantial portion of the City. Community parks accommodate large numbers of people and offer a wide variety of facilities, such as sports fields or complexes, sports courts, large group picnic shelters, program or event space. They often include specialized facilities that provide unique recreation opportunities, such as recreation center, swimming pools, amphitheaters, skate parks, and dog parks. Community parks often include natural open space and trails and will include the necessary support amenities (e.g., concessions, restrooms, parking) for the level and type of use it receives.

Forney currently provides two community parks, Forney Community Park and Mulberry Park. At 170 acres, Forney Community Park is larger than most community parks and attracts people from throughout the entire city.

### **Undeveloped Parkland**

Undeveloped parkland includes properties that have been acquired for future park development. These “parks” have not been designated or developed for a specific park use. The type of park of development (future classification) will depend on community needs. Undeveloped parks include McCurry Parkland and McKeller Park.

In addition to these four park classifications, the City may introduce and provide different types of parks and open space as the community continues to grow. These include the following:

- **Regional Park:** Regional parks are very large parks (150 acres +) that provide regionalscale recreation facilities and often provide access to unique natural, cultural or recreational features. A regional park may draw residents and visitors from the city and beyond, including a number of surrounding communities. These sites typically include revenue-generating facilities that enhance the City’s economic vitality and/or unique landscapes and opportunities that contribute to the City’s image and identity.
- **Special Use / Special Purpose:** Special use parks typically supports a single type of use or stand-alone recreation facility not located in another type of park. Their size and service area depend on their use, but they may serve the entire local community. Examples include historical/cultural/social sites, such as downtown plazas and ornamental gardens and facilities such as recreation centers, aquatic facilities, golf courses, tennis centers, stadiums and arenas.
- **Linear Park/Greenbelt:** These linear-shaped parks often follow or protect natural or cultural linear features in the community, such as rivers, streams, railroads, transportation, utility or drainage rights-of-way. They often include hard or soft surfaced trails and may support a variety of benefits, such as non-motorized transportation, buffers between communities, preservation of wildlife corridors, preservation of significant or sensitive natural features, flood zone protection, recreation use, and connectivity to destinations in the community.
- **Open Space:** Open space includes valuable lands set aside for the preservation or protection of natural, cultural and/or visual resources. Their size, shape and service area vary depending on function and use. Open space includes sensitive lands vulnerable to development impacts (e.g., sensitive habitats and wetlands), lands that provide ecological functions for the community (e.g., water quality protection, stormwater filtration), and natural areas that contribute to community aesthetics, as well as significant landmarks and landscapes. These sites may or may not allow public access.

# Appendix B

## FORNEY PARK AND RECREATION INVENTORY

This appendix provides details about the City's current inventory of parkland and recreation facilities. This includes school district facilities (sports fields) maintained by the city and parks provided by Homeowners Associations (HOAs) that serve local residents inside or just beyond Forney's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

### City Parks and Facilities

**TABLE B-1. INVENTORY OF CITY PARK LAND**

PARK	ESTIMATED ACREAGE		
	DEVELOPED	UNDEVELOPED	TOTAL
Bell Park	0.39	0.00	0.39
Caboose Park	1.30	0.00	1.30
Eastside Park	2.50	0.00	2.50
Flagpole Hill	0.52	0.00	0.52
Forney Community Park	83.00	87.00	170.00
Hamblen Park	0.87	0.00	0.87
Heritage Hill Park	0.75	0.00	0.75
McCurry Parkland	0.00	30.00	30.00
McKellar Park	0.00	0.50	0.50
Mulberry Park	33.00	0.00	33.00
Mustang Creek Park	2.50	0.00	2.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124.83</b>	<b>117.50</b>	<b>242.33</b>



TABLE B-2. INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL &amp; SUPPORT FACILITIES

	Park Name											
	Bell Park	Caboose Park	Eastside Park	Flagpole Hill	Forney Community Park	Hamblen Park	Heritage Hill Park	McCurry Parkland	McKellar Park	Mulberry Park	Mustang Creek Park	Totals
Recreational Facilities												
Amphitheater	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Baseball Field (Lighted)												9
50ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
60ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	
65ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	
70ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
80ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
90ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
Baseball Field (Unlighted)												2
50ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	
60ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
65ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
70ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
80ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
90ft. Base Paths	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Basketball Court (Lighted)	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Basketball Court (Unlighted)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bench/Picnic Table	✓	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	
Football Field (Lighted)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Football Field (Unlighted)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Gazebo	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Grill	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	
Picnic Shelter/Pavilion	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	3	1	7

TABLE B-2. INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL &amp; SUPPORT FACILITIES (CONTINUED)

	Park Name											
	Bell Park	Caboose Park	Eastside Park	Flagpole Hill	Forney Community Park	Hamblen Park	Heritage Hill Park	McCurry Parkland	McKellar Park	Mulberry Park	Mustang Creek Park	Totals
Recreational Facilities (Continued)												
Playground (2yrs.-5yrs.)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Playground (5yrs.-12yrs.)	-	-	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	1	1	6
Sand Volleyball (Lighted)	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Sand Volleyball (Unlighted)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Soccer Field (Lighted)												13
Age: 5yrs.-6yrs.	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age: 7yrs.-8yrs.	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age: 9yrs.-10yrs.	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age: 11yrs.-12yrs.	-	-	-	-	1 Shared	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age: Under 14yrs.	-	-	-	-	1 Shared	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age: Under 16yrs.	-	-	-	-	1 Shared	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soccer Field (Unlighted)												6
Age: 5yrs.-6yrs.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Age: 7yrs.-8yrs.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Age: 9yrs.-10yrs.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Age: 11yrs.-12yrs.	-	-	-	-	1 Shared	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Age: Under 14yrs.	-	-	-	-	1 Shared	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Age: Under 16yrs.	-	-	-	-	1 Shared	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Softball Field (Girls-Lighted)	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	3	-	7

TABLE B-2. INVENTORY OF EXISTING RECREATIONAL &amp; SUPPORT FACILITIES (CONTINUED)

	Park Name											
	Bell Park	Caboose Park	Eastside Park	Flagpole Hill	Forney Community Park	Hamblen Park	Heritage Hill Park	McCurry Parkland	McKellar Park	Mulberry Park	Mustang Creek Park	Totals
Recreational Facilities (Continued)												
Softball Field (Girls-Unlighted)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Softball Field (Adult-Lighted)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	?	-	?
Softball Field (Adult-Unlighted)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Splash Pad	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Tennis Court (Lighted)	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	5
Tennis Court (Unlighted)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Trail (Multi-purpose, Paved)	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	
Support Facilities												
Concession Building	-	-	-	-	3+	-	-	-	-	2	-	5+
Creek/Pond/Water Feature	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	
Drinking Fountain	-	-	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	
Historical Marker	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Maintenance Building	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1+	-	2+
Parking Spaces (Paved)	✓	-	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	-	
Parking Spaces (Unpaved)	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	-	
Restroom Building	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	2+	-	6+
Trash Receptacles	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	



**Parks and Facilities Provided by Others**  
**SCHOOL-DISTRICT FACILITIES (MAINTAINED BY CITY)**

**TABLE B-3. CITY MAINTAINED FISD PROPERTY**

<b>FORNEY ISD SITE</b>	<b>PRIMARY USE</b>	<b>ESTIMATED ACREAGE – CITY MAINTAINED</b>
FISD Administration Football Field	Peewee Football Practice	3.7
Henderson Elementary Soccer Complex	Youth Soccer Practice	5.0
Johnson Elementary Playground	Youth Soccer Practice	0.0
Claybon Elementary Playground	Youth BB/SB/Soccer Practice	0.3
Criswell Elementary Playground	Youth BB/SB/Soccer Practice	0.3
Crosby Elementary Playground	Youth BB/Peewee FB/SB/Soccer Practice	0.3
Rhea Elementary Playground	Peewee Football Practice	0.0
Forney High School Softball Field	Youth BB/SB Practice	0.3
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>		<b>9.9</b>

Source: City of Forney

**PARK LAND PROVIDED BY HOMEOWNER’S ASSOCIATIONS**

**TABLE B-4. HOMEOWNER’S ASSOCIATIONS PARK LAND PROPERTY**

<b>Sites in ETJ</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Diamond Creek Estates HOA Rec Facilities	13.35
Fox Hollow HOA Rec Facilities	7.27
The Trails @ Chestnut Meadow HOA Rec Facilities	1.65
Windmill Farms HOA Rec Facilities	18.43
Subtotal	40.70
<b>Sites Outside ETJ</b>	
Devinshire	14.73
Travis Ranch	3.85
Subtotal	18.58
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>59.28</b>

Source: City of Forney

## **Appendix C**

### **CITIZEN SURVEY REPORT**

To garner the opinions of the Citizens of Forney and surrounding area, two(2) focus group meetings were held and a mail /internet survey was conducted. This appendix provides summaries of those information gathering tools.

## **Appendix D**

### **BENCHMARKING**

To help assess park land needs, the park system provided by the City of Forney was compared to the types of parks and amount of land provided in three benchmark communities: Terrell, Rockwall, Mansfield and Keller. Findings of this analysis are summarized in Phase 2 of this Master Plan and in Section 4 of the Community Needs Assessment.

TABLE D-1. BENCHMARK COMMUNITY LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) COMPARISON

City: 2012 Population:	Forney			Terrell*			Rockwall*			Keller*			Mansfield*			Average LOS for Benchmark Communities
	Count	Acres	LOS per 1000 Residents	Count	Acres	LOS per 1000 Residents	Count	Acres	LOS per 1000 Residents	Count	Acres	LOS per 1000 Residents	Count	Acres	LOS per 1000 Residents	
PARKS																
Mini	4	3.08	0.19	0	0.0	0.00	3	1.95	0.05	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.01
Neighborhood	3	5.75	0.36	4	46.3	2.87	9	88.05	2.45	3	21.34	0.51	4	49.10	0.83	1.66
Community	2	203.00	12.79	1	100.00	6.19	3	257.00	7.15	3	222.73	5.31	5	112.40	1.89	5.14
Regional	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Special Use / Special Purpose	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	5	74.00	2.06	3	0.30	0.01	7	470.60	7.93	2.50
Linear Park / Greenbelt	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	2	29.20	0.70	1	26.40	0.45	0.29
Natural Open Space / Preserve	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	1	4.00	0.10	2	339.50	5.72	1.45
TOTAL**	9	211.83	13.34	5	146.3	9.06	20	421.00	10.54	12	277.57	6.62	19	998	16.8	10.76
Other	0	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	1	10.00	0.28	10	24.46	0.58	0	0.00	0.00	0.22
Undeveloped Park Sites***	2	30.50	1.92	0	0.00	0.00	11	578.90	16.10	7	79.40	1.89	3	126.06	2.13	5.03
SPORTS FIELDS																
Baseball/Softball, Soccer/Football TOTAL	38	-	2.39	20	-	1	26	-	0.72	28	-	0.67	53	-	0.89	0.88

\* Benchmark cities confirmed data to be most recent inventories available.

\*\* Includes complete acreage of park sites that are developed or partially developed.

\*\*\* Includes complete acreage of parks sites that are wholly undeveloped.

School/Park

HOA parks



# Appendix E

## PARK DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

### Park Development Standards and Guidelines

The following park development standards and guidelines have been created for park classifications in order to reinforce the Community’s vision for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space System over the next ten years.

#### MINI-PARK

- **Purpose:** These parks provide a “small oasis” of green space for relaxation, small group interaction, informal play and/or picnicking. A mini-park typically serves residents within a ¼-mile radius.
- **Current Mini-Parks:** Bell Park, Caboose Park, Flagpole Hill and Hamblen Park
- **Development Standards:** While there is currently no need for additional mini-parks, below are the proposed minimum standards for a Mini-Park within the City of Forney:
  - o Park shall be designed to meet the current Texas Accessibility Standards.
  - o Park shall be designed to be easily accessible to nearby retail, municipal, commercial and residential areas.
  - o Park sidewalks shall connect to the City-wide Trails System where applicable.
  - o Park shall provide an appropriate amount of shade/shelter for users to escape the elements.
  - o Park amenities shall meet/match the City of Forney standards.
- **Development Guidelines:** The following table shows the proposed minimum guidelines for a Mini-Park within the City of Forney:

Development Guidelines for Mini-Parks			
Minimum Desirable Size	Minimum Amenities/ Recreational Facilities		Optional Support Facilities
0.25 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focal Feature <sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Informal/Open Space</li> <li>• Park Bench</li> <li>• Trash Receptacle</li> <li>• Paved Walkway</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Connection to City-Wide Trails System (if applicable)</li> </ul>	1 1 2 1 1  1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garden Area <sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
Notes:	<sup>1</sup> “Focal Feature” is the primary viewing element of the site (i.e. water feature, namesake amenity, gazebo, etc.) <sup>2</sup> Butterfly garden, Wildflower Garden, Community Garden, etc.		

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

- **Purpose:** These parks provide a “close-to-home” green space where varied age groups can relax and enjoy both passive and active recreational opportunities. A neighborhood park typically serves residents within a ½-mile radius.
- **Current Neighborhood Parks:** Eastside Park, Heritage Hill Park and Mustang Creek Park (Currently Homeowners Associations provide several other neighborhood park opportunities with the City of Forney and its ETJ.)
- **Development Standards:** Below is the list of proposed minimum standards for a Neighborhood Park within the City of Forney. With the suggestion that the City’s role in meeting neighborhood park be limited over the next ten years, these standards will assist the City and Developers in creating neighborhood parks within new residential areas:
  - o Park shall be designed to meet the current Texas Accessibility Standards.
  - o Park shall be easily accessible to surrounding residential areas and schools.
  - o Park sidewalks and/or trail shall connect to the City-wide Trails System or provide for a future connection where applicable.
  - o Park shall be located centrally to the residential development to be served, whenever possible.
  - o Park shall be located adjacent to Elementary Schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA’s, Day Care Facilities, etc., whenever possible.
  - o Park shall have fencing or walls along the property line of adjacent residences, as deemed necessary by the City.
  - o Park shall not be divided by roadways, drainage channels or other manmade barriers.
  - o Park site shall be selected to allow public streets along a minimum of two sides for ingress and egress.
  - o Park shall have full improvements including, but not limited to, curbs, gutters, drainage system, utilities, irrigation, turf, sidewalks/trails, lighting, paved streets/parking, landscaping (including trees) and traffic control signage/devices deemed appropriate by the City.
  - o Park shall have fully paved parking area(s). The following development guidelines provide for a minimum amount of parking; however, this amount may be increased depending on the acreage and use of the park.
  - o Park shall provide an appropriate amount of shade/shelter for users to escape the elements.
  - o Park amenities shall meet/match the City of Forney standards.
- **Development Guidelines:** The following table shows the proposed minimum guidelines for a Neighborhood Park within the City of Forney.

Development Guidelines for Neighborhood Parks			
Minimum Desirable Size	Minimum Amenities/ Recreational Facilities		Optional Support Facilities
2.5 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground <sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Informal/Open Space <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Pavilion <sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Open Picnic Table</li> <li>• Park Bench</li> <li>• Barbecue Grill</li> <li>• Drinking Fountain</li> <li>• Trash Receptacle</li> <li>• Paved Walkway/Trail</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Lighting (parking &amp; security)</li> <li>• On-Site Parking (15-20 spaces)</li> <li>• Connection to City-Wide Trails System (if applicable)</li> </ul>	1 1 1 2 6 4 1 3 1   1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Restrooms</li> <li>• Water Spray Park</li> <li>• Sand Volleyball</li> <li>• Basketball Court</li> <li>• Tennis Courts</li> <li>• Backstop(s)</li> <li>• Water Feature <sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Garden Area <sup>5</sup></li> </ul>
Notes:	<sup>1</sup> Playgrounds shall be designed to accommodate play areas/equipment for the following age groups: 2-5yr. old & 5-12yr. old. Playground shall incorporate shade features into overall design. <sup>2</sup> Open space areas shall be provided in a manner to accommodate sports practices (as necessary) and at a maximum gradient of 2%. <sup>3</sup> Pavilions shall accommodate a minimum of four to six picnic tables. <sup>4</sup> Pond, Fountain, etc. <sup>5</sup> Butterfly garden, Wildflower Garden, Community Garden, etc.		

## COMMUNITY PARK

- **Purpose:** These parks provide specialized and elaborate facilities that can only be provided within large, fairly open spaces. These parks can also provide both the passive and active recreational opportunities of a neighborhood park for the surrounding residential areas. A community park typically serves residents within a 2-mile radius.
- **Current Community Parks:** Mulberry Park and Forney Community Park
- **Development Standards:** Below is the list of proposed minimum standards for a Community Park within the City of Forney. These standards will assist the City as they continue to develop community parks in order to meet the needs of their residents over the next ten years:
  - o Park shall be designed to meet the current Texas Accessibility Standards.
  - o Park shall be easily accessible to surrounding residential areas and schools.
  - o Park sidewalks and trail systems shall connect to the City-wide Trails System, and/or provide for future connections.
  - o Park shall be located adjacent to a major public street for the main point of access and is preferably adjacent to another public street for additional access. The park shall have a minimum of two points of ingress and egress.
  - o Park shall be located adjacent to school sites or other public facilities when possible.
  - o Park shall provide an appropriate amount of shade/shelter for users to escape the elements.
  - o Park shall be designed to provide either one large playground (minimum square footage of 15,000), multiple smaller playgrounds, or both.
  - o Park shall provide restroom facilities on site.
  - o Park shall have fencing or walls along the property line of adjacent residences, retail property, municipal land uses, commercial property and/or industrial property, as deemed necessary by the City.
  - o Park shall be designed with lighted sports fields and hard-court facilities for evening use.
  - o Park shall have full improvements including, but not limited to, curbs, gutters, drainage system, utilities, irrigation, turf, sidewalks/trails, lighting, paved streets, paved parking, landscaping (including trees) and traffic control signage/devices.
  - o Park shall be designed to reduce possible downstream flooding, where applicable.
  - o Park shall be designed in a manner that preserves natural and environmentally sensitive areas.



- o Park irrigation system shall be designed to avoid the use of City water (i.e. well water, raw water, storm water run-off, etc.).
  - o Park shall have fully paved parking area(s). The guidelines below provide for a minimum amount of parking; however, this amount may be increased by the City depending on the acreage and use of the park.
  - o Park shall be designed to promote public security and facilitate surveillance by law enforcement.
  - o Park amenities shall meet/match the City of Forney standards.
- **Development Guidelines:** The following table shows the proposed minimum guidelines for a Community Park within the City of Forney:

Development Standards & Guidelines for Community Parks			
Minimum Desirable Size	Minimum Amenities/ Recreational Facilities		Optional Support Facilities
30 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground <sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Informal/Open Space <sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Public Restroom Building <sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Concession Building <sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Pavilion <sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Sports Field <sup>6</sup></li> <li>• Sports Court <sup>7</sup></li> <li>• Open Picnic Table</li> <li>• Park Bench</li> <li>• Barbecue Grills</li> <li>• Drinking Fountain</li> <li>• Trash Receptacle</li> <li>• Paved Walkway/Loop Trail</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Lighting for roadway, parking, trails &amp; security</li> <li>• On-Site Parking (300-400 spaces)</li> <li>• Connection(s) to City-Wide Trails System</li> </ul>	1 1 2 1 3 4 4 12 24 18 4 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance Bldg.</li> <li>• Water Spray Park</li> <li>• Skate Park</li> <li>• Dog Park</li> <li>• Recreation Center</li> <li>• Aquatics Center</li> <li>• Sand Volleyball</li> <li>• Basketball Court</li> <li>• Tennis Courts</li> <li>• Disc Golf Course</li> <li>• Water Feature <sup>8</sup></li> </ul>
Notes: <sup>1</sup> Playgrounds shall be designed to accommodate play areas/equipment for the following age groups: 2-5yr. old & 5-12yr. old. Playground shall incorporate shade features into overall design. <sup>2</sup> Open space areas shall be provided in a manner to accommodate sports practices (as necessary) and at a maximum gradient of 2%. <sup>3</sup> Restroom numbers may be increase by City depending on size and use of park. <sup>4</sup> Concession numbers may be increase by City depending on size and use of park. <sup>5</sup> Pavilions shall accommodate a minimum of eight to ten picnic tables. <sup>6</sup> Soccer, Baseball, Softball, Football, etc. <sup>7</sup> Basketball, Sand Volleyball, Tennis, etc. <sup>8</sup> Pond, Fountain, etc.			

## LINEAR PARK/GREENWAY

- **Purpose:** These parks provide a corridor of green space into the fabric of urban development. They preserve valuable vegetation and habitat, and limit erosion and flooding. These parks can provide linkage between neighborhoods, schools, parks and other community facilities. Although they may be very narrow, these parks can provide the appearance of an expansive open space.
- **Current Linear Parks/Greenways:** There are currently no linear parks/greenways within the City of Forney.
- **Development Standards:** Below is the list of proposed minimum standards for a Linear Park/Greenway within the City of Forney. These standards will assist the City as it begins to develop the linear park/greenbelt system over the next ten years.
  - o Park shall be designed to meet the current Texas Accessibility Standards.
  - o Park shall be designed to be easily accessible from surrounding areas.
  - o Park trail system shall connect to the City-wide Trails System and/or provide for future connections.
  - o Park shall be designed in a manner that preserves natural and environmentally sensitive areas.
  - o Park shall promote education and observation of the natural environment.
  - o Park shall be designed to promote public security.
  - o Park amenities shall meet/match the City of Forney standards.
- **Development Guidelines:** The following table shows the proposed minimum guidelines for a Linear Park/Greenway within the City of Forney:

Development Guidelines for Linear Parks/Greenway			
Minimum Desirable Width	Minimum Amenities/ Recreational Facilities		Optional Support Facilities
40 feet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paved Walkway/Trail (8ft. min. width, preferably 10ft. width)</li> <li>• Informal/Open Space</li> <li>• Park Bench</li> <li>• Trash Receptacle</li> <li>• Landscaping</li> <li>• Connection to City-Wide Trails System</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Signage</li> <li>• Observation Blind</li> </ul>
Notes: * Reference Map 6: Proposed Parks, Open Space & Trails for possible Linear Park/Greenway locations.			

## NATURAL/OPEN SPACE PARK

- **Purpose:** These parks provide opportunities to interact with local nature and protect/preserve valuable vegetation and habitat within a growing community.
- **Current Natural/Open Space Parks:** McCurry Parkland
- **Development Standards:** Below is the list of proposed minimum standards for a Natural/Open Space Park within the City of Forney. These standards will assist the City as they begin to develop the natural/open space parks over the next ten years:
  - o Park shall be designed to meet the current Texas Accessibility Standards.
  - o Park shall be designed to have at least one identifiable entrance from a public street.
  - o Park shall serve as a Trailhead for the City-wide Trails System.
  - o Park trail system shall connect to the City-wide Trails System and/or provide for future connections.
  - o Park shall be designed in a manner that preserves natural and environmentally sensitive areas.
  - o Park shall promote education and observation of the natural environment.
  - o Park amenities shall meet/match the City of Forney standards.
- **Development Guidelines:** The following table shows the proposed minimum guidelines for a Natural/Open Space Park within the City of Forney:

Development Guidelines for Natural/Open Space Parks			
Minimum Desirable Size	Minimum Amenities/ Recreational Facilities		Optional Support Facilities
3 acres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural/Open Space</li> <li>• Paved Walkway/Trail</li> <li>• Pavilion <sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Park Bench</li> <li>• Picnic Table</li> <li>• Trash Receptacle</li> <li>• On-Site Parking (15-20 spaces)</li> <li>• Connection to City-Wide Trails System</li> </ul>	1 4 4 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Restroom</li> <li>• Educational Signage</li> <li>• Observation Blind</li> </ul>
Notes: <sup>1</sup> Pavilions shall accommodate a minimum of four to six picnic tables. * Reference Map 6: Proposed Parks, Open Space & Trails for possible Natural/Open Space Park locations.			



## **SPECIAL USE PARK**

- **Purpose:** These parks are usually limited to one or two uses, and the development standards and guidelines are dictated by the desired function. Examples of Special Use Parks include: Aquatics Centers, Arboretums, Golf Courses, Nature Preserves, Skate Parks, Recreation Centers, Tennis Centers, etc.
- **Current Special Use Parks:** There are currently no special use parks within the City of Forney.
- **Development Standards & Guidelines:** Based on the Community Needs Assessment, any specialized facility development needs will be addressed within Community Parks.