IMPLEMENTATION

STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

Prioritization

Specific priorities would be established annually by the Parks Board after a realistic evaluation of the current financial, political and logistical climate with the following priority.

- Mandates
- Focus on (general guidelines):
  - District and community parks and greenways more than neighborhood and pocket parks.
  - Specialty parks to be decided on a case-by-case basis.
  - Greatest needs more than lesser needs.
  - Existing more than future needs.
  - Adequate maintenance and support more than acquisition, and acquisition more than development.
  - Encourage private sector provision of facilities more than public/private partnership, and public/private partnership more than public venture.

During application of these guidelines other factors need to be considered, and those include:

- Potential for non-County funding
- Revenue producing potential/self-sufficiency
- Cost
- Consequences of delay
- Public visibility and acceptance
- Accessibility
- Environmental impact
- Existence of operational funds and ongoing budget
- Ease of acquisition/availability
- Ease of development

Obviously, priorities will shift and should be maintained as a very flexible ordering of projects and programs knowing that many factors will influence the order in which implementation occurs.

Acquisition

Site and facility acquisition is a very elusive strategy to plot. There obviously must be a balance of spending between acquisition and development so that we don't end up with an overabundance of land and no facilities and programs. However, a general strategy of purchasing land and potential facilities early should be employed because a definite pattern can be identified in almost any municipality that has experienced measurable growth, and that is that they did not acquire property early enough when it was affordable and when needs became critical, acquisition became extremely expensive and therefore limited. In Northern Virginia this has resulted in a strategy of more densely populated areas actually looking for land in more rural areas and proposing transporting people to those areas to provide recreational opportunities. There should definitely be a certain amount set aside each annual budget for acquisition, and flexibility should be maintained in funding to shift funds to acquire property at opportune times. Unfortunately, during times of slow economic growth and depressed land prices, there is also fewer municipal funds available to acquire property. Expert advise should be sought and the timing of acquisitions to take advantage of the economic cycles to properly leverage available funds to maximize funds.

Development Strategy

The strategy for development should include the following steps:

- Select facility to be developed from priorities.
- Appoint Citizens Advisory Committee.
- Either by consultants or with consultants and staff input:
  - Determine acceptable geographic range of the facilities.
  - Examine resource inventory and compatibility within the selected area.
  - Evaluate existing facilities, determine compatibility and holding capacity.
  - Examine potential new sites (suitability, availability, cost, etc.)
  - Select preferred alternative (new or old site).
  - Prepare site master plan/cost estimate.
  - Present master plan at public meeting.
  - Prepare preliminary design/cost estimate.
  - Present to public/receive input/gain preliminary governmental approvals.
  - Prepare final design/cost estimate.
  - Present to public/receive input/obtain final governmental approvals.
  - Prepare construction documents/final estimate.
  - Receive final permits, approvals, etc.
  - Put project to bid.
  - Select contractor.
  - Construct project.
  - Final acceptance.
  - Occupancy.
  - Programs/Maintenance.

Funding

It was stated earlier that when Fauquier recognized the need to provide recreational services and facilities to its citizens, it found itself in a game of catch up. The fact is that expenditures for the Parks and Recreation operating budget have increased from $7.94 per capita in 1985 to $15.34 in 1990. Fauquier is falling farther behind the state average of $19.10 to $66.61 over the same time period representing a deficit in increased expenditures as compared to the state. In terms of capital budgets, the picture is even more bleak as Fauquier's budget for 1988 to 1993 ranged between 60 to 90 percent less per capita than counties such as Stafford, Spotsylvania, Prince William and Loudoun.

Funding a program of improvement in Parks and Recreation is the ultimate test of the public will for such facilities. There is no free lunch available to Fauquier citizens, as anywhere else.

The term "proffer" has been used recently as a much hoped for source of facilities for a strapped municipality. However, to require a proffer of property or cash from a developer, the municipality must first show that the standards imposed on that developer are scheduled in the county's capital improvements program.

Thus, if Fauquier should fail to set and achieve a standard of available parks and recreation facilities, the proffer as a funding tool is useless for parks and recreation.

Achieving the agreed upon standards of this study will mean the infusion of dollars from Fauquier's citizens and other sources. The taxpayers, directly or indirectly, will largely decide if these improvements will be possible.

A possible source of funding for parks and recreation facilities could be through the passage of a bond referendum. This, of course, is a highly political course of action. There would be strong support and equally strong opposition to a park and recreation bond. The County should consider a combined bond referendum that would include Parks and Recreation, Library, Jail, etc.

Once the most pressing deficiencies are addressed, the county could vest its Department of Parks and Recreation with a percentage of its total operating funds and capital improvement funds. This would permit the Department to engage in substantive long-range planning. The deficiency in facilities having been made up, a significant portion of operating funds could come from user fees. Proffers would then be available from developers for further developments, providing the capital for future facilities.

The county planning department in its proposed "guidelines for implementation of proffer legislation" has indicated a per capita cost and proffer amount of $829 allocated for parks and recreation which would appear to be adequate in today's dollars. Proffers from smaller developments of less than 500 units which will not construct their own recreational facilities should be in cash contributions to a parks and recreation trust account only for use by parks and recreation. Where proffers are being met by land and constructed facilities, the facilities standard used in this study should apply. Such facilities should be constructed in the early rather than the latter stages of the project.

The Parks and Recreation Department should always pursue potential, creative funding sources. However, these sources should always be viewed as in excess of obligations of general funds, bonds, etc. Some of these potential sources are as follows:

- Benefit Assessment Districts. Taxes levied on individual parcels of property that benefit from improvements that will be made.

- Community Rehabilitation Districts. Financing the rehabilitation of public capital facilities including recreational facilities.

- Municipal Lease Purchase Financing. An alternative to conventional bond financing; finding an installment sale of a lease purchase contract with the principle and tax free interest payable over time.

- Privatization. Selling or leasing formerly public enterprises to private sector to operate on a profit making basis.

- Parks and Recreation Foundation. A non-profit organization set up to raise funds and accept private donations.

- Adopt A Park Program. For a fee, have individuals and businesses adopt parks or parks facilities as part of their public relations program.

- Investigate as possible funding sources a real estate transfer tax, lottery proceeds, earmarked motel, "sin" or sales tax revenues, land acquisition revolving fund.

- Promote donations of land, open space dedications.

- Recommend slight increase in tipping fees to be set aside for development of the landfill for recreation upon closing.

- Consider all options when facility development, including private development and operation of the facility, lease-purchase arrangement, sale-leaseback, revenue bonds, general obligation bonds, sale of underutilized assets, tax increment financing, incentives for private enterprise, gifts, bargain sale, donation with life reserved estate, bequest, easement, lease, purchase-resale, tax delinquent property, life insurance policy programs.

- Develop a catalog of needs or gift catalog.

- Contribute 50% of increased recycling proceeds to the Dept. in return for the Dept. promoting recycling in the programs, publications, and at facilities.

- Entrepreneurial operations: not-for-profit subsidiary, for profit subsidiary, and joint venture companies.

- Grants

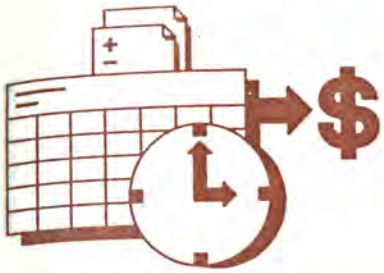
PROPOSED SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

	*FACILITIES DEFICIT DEMAND	*FACILITIES FUTURE DEMAND	OPERATIONS/ PROGRAMS
COUNTY SOURCES			
• % of operating budget	0%	0%	67%
• % of capital improvements	20%	10%	
• bonds	50%	5%	
• special assessments			
• proffers	0%	70%	
• fines	2%	2%	
• tipping fee at landfill			
• % of County recycling proceeds			
PARKS & RECREATION DEPT. INCOME			
• Fees (entrance, rental, permits, etc.)	0%	0%	27%
• Sales/concessions	0%	0%	2%
• Interest on investments			
• Leases			
• Facilities surcharges	2%	2%	
• Operations surcharges	0%	0%	1%
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (Primary Sources)	5%		
• National Park Service			
• National Endowment for the Arts			
• National Endowment for the Humanities			
• Any current program			
STATE GOVERNMENT (Primary Sources)	5%		
• Division of Parks & Recreation			
• Division of Game & Inland Fisheries			
• Administration of Aging			
• Virginia Commission of the Arts			
• Department of Social Services			
• Department of Transportation			
• Division of Historic Resources			
OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (financial, land, other resources, contributions)	10%	5%	
• Town of Warrenton			
• Town of Remington			
• Town of The Plains			
CORPORATIONS (gifts, grants, sponsorships)	1%	1%	1%
PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS (gifts, grants, sponsorships, loans)	2%	2%	1%
FOUNDATIONS (gifts, grants, loans, program sponsorships)	2%	2%	
CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS	1%	1%	1%
TOTAL FUNDING	100%	100%	100%

*** Just for those functions for which the Parks and Recreation Department is responsible.**

CONCLUSION

This plan is intended to serve as a guide for the protection and/or development of resources and facilities as needed to meet the existing and future needs of the citizens of Fauquier County. While these elements are the most important and compose the greatest segment of a comprehensive services plan for parks, recreation, and open space, the other elements of recreation programming, recreational services, technical assistance, administration, and so forth should likewise be planned to foster efficient and effective use of available resources.



It is obvious both from the plan and to the community that Fauquier citizens, for the most part, are lacking accessibility to a variety of recreational facilities. The strategic nature of the plan lays the groundwork for meeting those needs based on the actual growth in population instead of a rigid annual program that is proposed irregardless of the actual population.

The achievement of this plan is accomplished through recommendations that require a concerted effort of cooperation between all constituent elements of the community. By working together, whether non-duplication of services, actual cooperation, or creating an environment for the most appropriate provider to function better, the community will benefit from the leadership offered by the plan and from the efficiencies it can offer.

The major findings of the plan include a recommendation for a guideline for funding sources, a proposed bond referendum for the most needed recreational facilities such as ballfields, a swimming pool, etc., establishment of priorities for lands and facilities, specific environmental, greenway, facility, programming, and administrative recommendations, proposed facility standards, and identification of possible existing resources and recreation site, and recommendation of facility needs for each service district/magisterial district.

As with any plan, the value of this one will be gauged by the extent to which it is used and implemented. The value of individual site plans for school lands has already saved the County large sums of money through better reorganization of facilities. Those efficiencies can reach greater proportions with sincere dedication to a county wide plan such as this that delineates needs and satisfiers of those needs and provides the leadership in addressing these needs.