



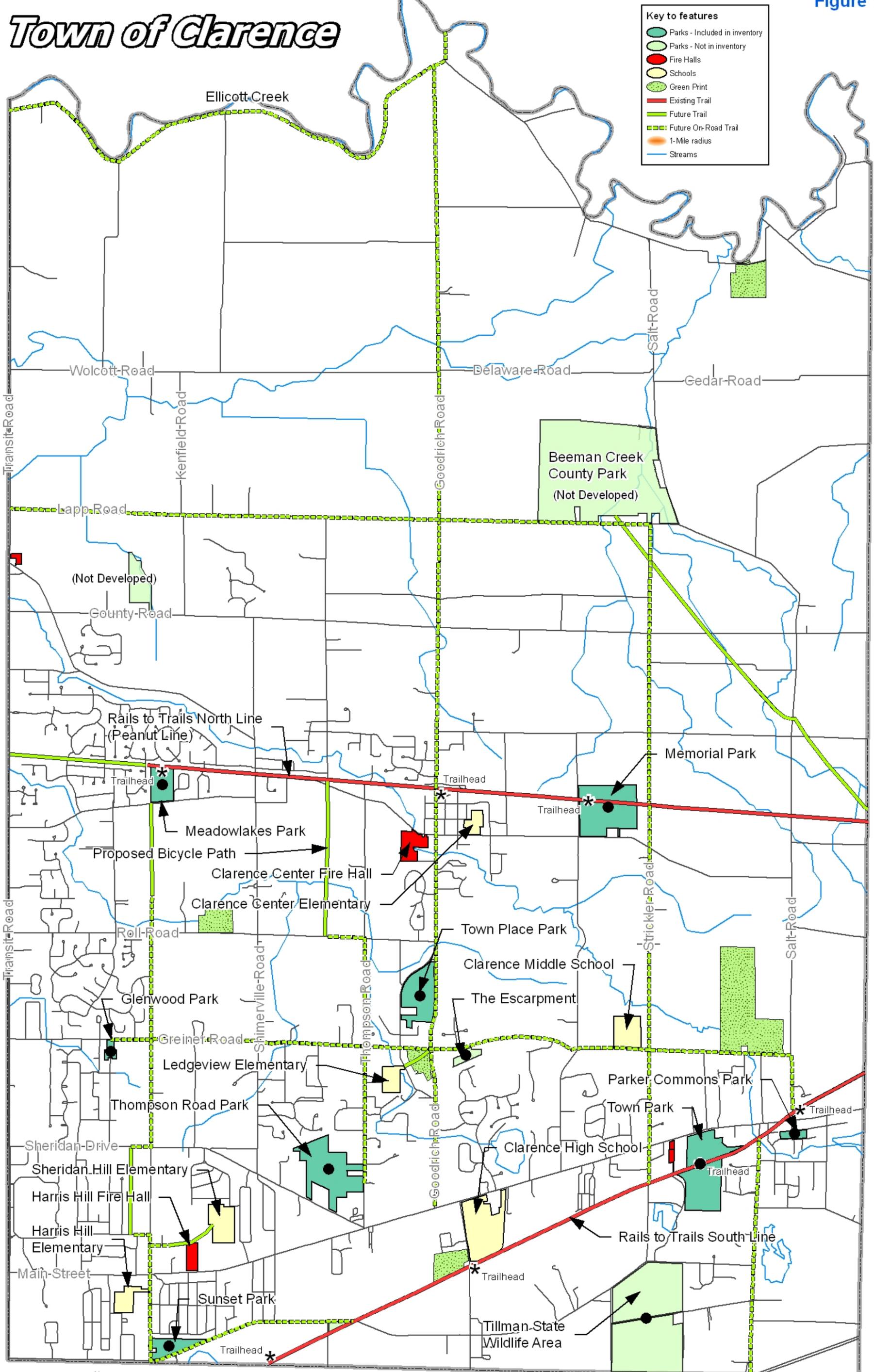
Clarence Parks & Recreation Master Plan 2005

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Town of Clarence

Figure 1



1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report provides an Action Plan for the Town of Clarence Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The goal of this Action Plan is to provide the Town with a strategy for parks and recreation planning that sets forth findings, policies and programming recommendations to address current and future needs.

1.1 Inventory and Analysis

As summarized below and shown on Figure 1 and Table 1, the Town of Clarence owns a number of parks that provide recreational benefit to Town residents. A primary source of data for the analysis of these parks is the Clarence Parks Inventory (contained under separate cover). Direct input from Town officials, recreational program providers, clubs and organizations, and from the general public was also incorporated into the analysis. Additional information was obtained from secondary sources, such as existing plans and reports for the Town of Clarence, census data, and national recreational standards.

Municipal Parkland Town of Clarence

Park	Developed	Undeveloped	Total Parkland
Town Place Park	48.8 acres	1.3 acres	50.1 acres
Memorial Park	72.7 acres	12.5 acres	85.2 acres
Meadowlakes Park	25.1 acres	--	25.1 acres
Glenwood Park	4.5 acres	1.5 acres	6.0 acres
Sunset Park	17.2 acres	--	17.2 acres
Thompson Road Park	20.3 acres	73.3 acres	93.6 acres
Parker Commons Park	6.4 acres	--	6.4 acres
Town Park (Main Street)	34.3 acres	50.4 acres	84.7 acres
Escarpment Conservation Area*	--	14.1 acres	14.1 acres
County Road property*	--	26.5 acres	26.5 acres
Creek Side Park*	--	1 acre	1 acre
Rails to Trails (north line)*	49.8 acres	--	49.8 acres
Rails to Trails (south line)*	57.5 acres	--	57.5 acres
Total	336.6 acres	180.6 acres	517.2 acres

* Not included in Part A Inventory
Source: Town of Clarence

With a population of 26,123 in 2000 (U.S. Census), the Town of Clarence has an average of approximately 13 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 people.¹ Population projections for 2010 at current growth rates suggest the projected population in 2010 could be approximately 29,000 to 30,000. If population figures reach 30,000 and no additional parklands are developed by 2010, parks acreage would be slightly over 11 acres per 1000 persons.

¹ Varies from figure in Town Master Plan due to the addition of the Thompson Road Park property and the Rails to Trails south line to Town park inventory. Also, figure is based on “developed” parkland only.

Parks in the Town of Clarence are generally located to serve the more populated southern portion of the Town. Most of the developed parks in the Town of Clarence would be classified as community parks. These parks serve a broad population base drawn from the entire community. They generally are at least 15 acres in size, and provide a wider range of facilities for both active and passive recreation. While these parks may function as neighborhood parks for residents within a one-mile radius, they are not used primarily by local residents. Many of the parks contain a number of amenities that are utilized by different aspects of the community for various recreational purposes. As a general rule of thumb, the Town parks serve a 0.5 to 3-mile radius. Parks in the Town of Clarence that would be classified as community parks include Town Place Park, Memorial Park, Sunset Park, Meadowlakes Park, Thompson Road Park and Town Park (Main Park). If a three-mile radius is drawn surrounding these parks, their combined service areas encompass the entire Town, south of Lapp Road. The northern part of the Town falls outside the service area of any Town parks.

Glenwood Park and Parker Commons are neighborhood parks (5 to 10 acres in size, serving primarily residents living within 0.5 to 1 mile); and the Rails to Trails (hike-bike) facilities, which are essentially trails, are categorized as linear parks. When schools and other available recreational facilities are included as neighborhood resources, much of the Town south of the Peanut Line Rails to Trails facility is situated within a half-mile of some recreational facility, although there are areas that are not within an easy walking distance to a neighborhood park (see Figure 1).

As the chart on the previous page indicates, there are additional undeveloped lands owned by the Town that could become available for parkland development, although some of the lands, such as the wooded lands behind Town Park, would not be used for active recreational facilities. These figures in the chart also do not include major facilities owned by New York State (Tillman Wildlife area), Erie County (Beeman Creek) or the school district, which would further increase the ratio of available land for recreational use in the Town.

The Town also owns additional open lands that will not be developed as parklands. Although these lands are not available for recreational use, they do serve as an open space asset to the Town. Some of these lands are “greenprint” lands. They were purchased primarily with bond money for open space preservation purposes and public access to these lands for active recreation is prohibited under the terms of the bond. The greenprint program was established as a means of preserving certain lands that possess significant resource and habitat value as forever wild for public benefit. Although the intention of these lands is preservation, a portion of the monies used was from the recreation fund so that public access could be provided to certain of these sites. Whenever a “greenprint” site is studied for purchase, the committee examines it for recreational value as well as connectivity to other recreational facilities.

The generally accepted national standard for parks planning is frequently cited as 10 acres per 1,000 persons², and by these standards, the Town of Clarence has adequate park lands. However, recent parks planning methodologies have shifted away from absolute standards in terms of suggested acreage of parks per population, focusing more on local standards to determine what the appropriate amount of parks and recreation lands should be within a particular community. Given population growth rates in the Town of Clarence, as well as

² National Recreation and Parks Association

evidence of high expectations in terms of the provision of public services, including recreational facilities, the Town of Clarence is being proactive in looking at parks and recreation needs.

As is the case for national standards on the recommended amount of parkland, national standards for recreational facilities are also no longer used as prescriptive recommendations for assessing recreational demand. The national recreational standards are generally based on a per capita average. They do not reflect differences due to local demand or participation rates. They are best used only as benchmarks to indicate whether a community has achieved minimum standards. However, these standards provide a useful reference, and serve as an indicator to assess likely demand for facilities from a community.

With these caveats, the Town of Clarence does compare favorably to national minimum standards for recreational facilities, as the following table indicates (also see Table 1).

**Recreational Standards and Supply
Town of Clarence**

Activity/ Facility	Units per Population	National Standard	Clarence Actual*
Baseball/softball (unlit)	1 per 5,000	5	13*
Baseball (lit)	1 per 30,000	1	1
Ice Hockey (indoor)	1 per 100,000	0.3	0
Football	1 per 20,000	1	1* + 1 practice field
Soccer	1 per 10,000	3	20*
Multi-use Court**	1 per 10,000	3	3*
Trails	1 per region	1	2 primary
Basketball	1 per 5,000	5	5
Public Golf- 18 hole***	1 per 50,000	0.5	0
Swimming Pools	1 per 20,000	1	1*
Tennis	1 per 2,000	13	14
Volleyball	1 per 5,000	5	13

* Town-owned facilities only; additional facilities are located at schools, fire halls, etc.

** Paved surface suitable for a variety of sports and recreation activities

*** There are two private golf courses open to the public in the Town: both are 9-hole "executive" style clubs. In addition, there is a private country club open to members only.

Source: National Recreation and Parks Association, 1996.

As noted, the inventory of facilities includes only recreational assets under Town control; additional facilities are available to Town residents at local schools and, in the case of ball diamonds, the Clarence Center and Harris Hill Fire Departments. The Town has a cooperative relationship with the Clarence Central School District. At the end of the school year, the Town maintains the school's fields for use by Town recreational leagues. The exception is the varsity football field at the High School, which is not used by the Town.

The Town of Clarence also has numerous other recreational facilities available for its residents. These facilities offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities throughout the year, such as fishing ponds, horseshoe pits, picnic areas, play structures, sledding hills, a club house and a

band shelter. The detention basin at Meadowlakes Park is also used for ice skating. The Town's network of hike-bike (multi-use) trails is a recreational resource that gets high usage, both for transportation (access to recreation or other destinations) and recreational purposes (biking, rollerblading, hiking for fun or cross-country skiing). There are two areas dedicated for passive recreation (relaxing, enjoying nature), such as the Tillman State Wildlife Area and the Escarpment Wildlife Sanctuary, which are important recreational assets to Town residents. In addition, Erie County owns Beeman Creek Park, which is undeveloped parkland in the northwestern portion of the Town that offers opportunities for passive recreation. It should also be noted that the Town offers summer recreational programs at some of the Town parks that are very popular.

Based strictly on generic national standards, the Town meets or exceeds standards for the provision of recreational facilities. There are only two instances where the Town does not meet national standards with Town-owned facilities: indoor ice rinks and golf course. A strict interpretation of national standards suggests that the Town is not large enough to support these facilities. According to the national standards, the Town has demand, based on a per capita basis, for less than one of each facility. Currently, residents who use these types of facilities are using facilities in adjacent communities. Furthermore, as noted above, there are two private golf courses and one private country club in the Town.

As previously noted, the national recreational standards do not reflect differences due to local demand or participation rates. They are best used only as benchmarks to indicate whether a community has achieved minimum standards. In the case of the Town of Clarence, there are large numbers of youths and young adults, and a very high participation rate in recreational activities. Many residents have selected the community based on its excellent services, and expectations in regard to recreational facilities and programs are high. Based on local standards, a high level of service is expected on the part of local residents.

It is clear from observation that there is strong usage of park facilities for passive and informal recreation. Many residents enjoy visiting the parks for unorganized sports activities, such as picnicking, tennis, swimming, fishing, sledding, hiking, etc. Demand for picnic shelters is also very high, and sometimes exceeds the available supply. Participation rates in organized sports are relatively high in the Town. Participation in casual recreational activities is also very high. The next section of this report assesses local participation rates to provide a better sense of recreational demand.

1.2 Participation in Recreational League Activities

Participation figures and other input were obtained from the Clarence Sports Coalition. The Clarence Sports Coalition includes representation from the softball, baseball, hockey and soccer leagues in the Town. Input was also obtained from the Clarence Little League Football group. In general, there has been a strong increase in participation in all of the sports organizations in the Town. Growth trends were provided in the report *Town of Clarence Recreation Needs Assessment*, which was prepared by the Town's Recreation Advisory Committee in 1997.

The figures in the following table show steady increases in the numbers of Town residents participating in active sports. League and program representatives, who are volunteers, report strong demand for their programs, which is primarily limited by the number of facilities available.

Football, for example, has to turn away participants, because the league is capped in order to ensure teams are of a reasonable size. The league size is expected to increase from 135 participants (2004) to 170 participants due to the decision to field an additional two to three teams in 2005. They are able to accommodate this need by using the game field at Sunset Park for some practices and leasing space at the Epic Center on Wehrle Drive in the Town of Lancaster. However, they indicate a need for additional practice space. Parking at Sunset Park is also an issue.

Recreational Participation Sports Leagues

Participants in Leagues:	1994	1996	1998	2005	Change: 1994-2005
Soccer	1,170	1,300	1,583	1,553	+32.7%
Little League Football	120	145	119	170 (est.)	+41.7%
Girls Softball	556	729	775	792	+42.4%
Little League Baseball	871	827	950	957*	+9.9%
Adult Softball	585	640	705	448	-23.4%

Source: Figures 1994 – 1998: *Town of Clarence Recreational Needs Assessment*, 1997
Figures for 2005: Town of Clarence Recreation Department

Recreational participation in leagues since 1994 has shown a general increase; however, the percentage of increase has not been as extreme between 1998 through 2005.

Figures on facility usage support the contention that recreational facilities in Clarence are highly utilized. For soccer fields, usage at 20 fields (including fields at schools) show 1,069 games were played in 2004, not including practices. This represents over 50 official uses per field, on average, with some fields being used over 100 times in 2004. These figures include 36 tournament games for the Clarence Travel Soccer League, which drew teams from outside the Town.

For the softball/baseball diamonds in the Town, a total of 2,007 games were played, plus 580 practices, for a total of 2,587 events sponsored by the Clarence Baseball Association. These numbers include games and practices at the schools and fire hall fields. With 25 diamonds, this equates to an average of over 100 official events per diamond in 2004.

The Town addressed growth in the baseball, softball and soccer programs with new fields at Memorial Park, which will be fully available in 2006. The addition of these new fields is viewed by representatives from both sports programs as meeting immediate program demands. They note, however, that both the baseball and soccer facilities remain heavily utilized. They have expressed a desire for additional facilities in order to alleviate scheduling pressures, to enable “resting” periods for the fields, and to accommodate continued program growth. Demand for indoor practice space is also increasing.

Continued growth is anticipated by all the sports, including hockey, which was not yet operational at the time of the previous study and, therefore, did not have participation figures. The Town’s hockey program has grown extensively since its inception four years ago, growing

from two to 11 teams during that time period. It currently accommodates approximately 200 youth, ranging in age from 8 to 17.

The league uses, and hockey players all must play at, facilities outside of the Town, such as Leisure Rinks in Orchard Park. This limits participation in the local program. While 200 youths participate in Clarence hockey, Clarence's league representatives note that national registration figures indicate that an additional 600 youths from Clarence zip codes participate in hockey. These youths are enrolling in programs offered through other municipalities, where there are local ice hockey facilities available.

While the Town has no hockey facility, a private non-profit organization, the Clarence Community Recreation Corporation (CCRC), is exploring options for developing one, which would include one indoor rink and an indoor turf practice field. It is anticipated that this facility would be used jointly by hockey, soccer, softball and baseball. School sports programs are also viewed as potential tenants. While the plan is for this facility to be privately operated, some involvement by the Town, such as the donation of the land for a site or a favorable taxing structure, would be necessary to make this facility financially feasible.

2.0 Public Input

In 1996, the Town conducted a public interest survey to gauge the interest and demand for various sports programs. While data from this survey are somewhat dated, they still provide a good indication of demand. The most popular recreational activity in the Town was picnicking, cited by 44 percent of the respondents. Walking and/or running were the second most common activity, with a 41 percent participation rate. Slightly more than one-third of respondents participated in golf and swimming (35 percent and 34 percent, respectively). A variety of active sports (baseball, soccer, ice skating, cross-country skiing and tennis) each had participation rates in the range of 25 percent. These participation rates reflect *household* data - - in other words, 41 percent of households had at least one person who participated in running or walking as exercise, and 24 percent had at least one baseball player in the household. This survey data did not reveal how many *individuals* are participating in these activities.

In general, the survey indicated that residents were satisfied with the available recreational resources. Six out of ten respondents felt that existing recreational facilities were adequate. When asked what recreational facilities were needed in the Town of Clarence, the top answer was walking and running trails (26 percent). The development of the trail system in the Town has helped meet that expressed need. Golf course was the second most popular response (22 percent). While there are no public golf courses within the Town of Clarence, there are two private 9-hole courses open to the public and one private country club. There are also a number of public and private golf courses in adjacent communities. New golf courses have recently opened in Akron and Lancaster, and new public courses are being built in Cheektowaga and on the Orchard Park-West Seneca border.³

As a part of this study, a public input meeting was held on April 11, 2005 to obtain more current information on public demand for recreational services. The meeting was attended by

³ All golf facilities referenced above are open to the public. There are also several private country clubs, including one in the Town of Clarence, which are available to members only.

approximately 30 people. In general, residents indicated that they are satisfied with the quality and quantity of parks and recreation facilities available, but also indicated that there is room for enhancements. The trail system is very popular, and residents would like continued development of trails in the Town. Linking commercial areas, parks, schools and other Town facilities is seen as a benefit, with particular need for additional north-south routes. A desire to have the trail system connect into a wider regional network of trails, both to the west into Amherst and to the east into Newstead was also expressed.

Several residents indicated support for a skateboard park. It is a popular activity in the Clarence Center area, but there are no suitable facilities and local youth are skateboarding in local parking lots. Private property owners are sympathetic, but cannot allow this activity for liability reasons. If a skate park is developed, it should be centrally located, easily accessible by bicycle or on foot, and preferably convenient to where this activity is presently occurring.

Representatives from the Clarence Community Recreation Corporation reiterated their desire for an indoor ice and multi-purpose practice facility. Persons associated with the sports leagues reiterated their appreciation for the park expansions that have occurred, but remain concerned about future demand for play fields. Many of the comments received at this public input meeting were in support of less traditional recreational amenities, such as creek access, a dog-friendly area, winter activities, an area for remote-control vehicle use, and an outdoor ice rink.

Responses to a questionnaire that was distributed at the meeting echoed the verbal comments (a copy of the questionnaire is attached to this report). Although the results are not statistically significant, they provide a sense of some public sentiment. Overwhelmingly, respondents (87.5 percent) feel there is a need for additional recreational programs and new facilities. At the same time, the highest priorities were for ensuring the safety, cleanliness and maintenance of existing facilities. Making improvements to existing facilities was rated as a medium priority, perhaps due to satisfaction with existing quality.

There was strong interest in activities for active adults, such as trails and nature areas. Respondents to the survey were not in favor of pools or spray parks, and generally rated new facilities for youth as a moderate priority. Write-in comments indicated strong interest in an indoor facility for recreational use in the winter months.

3.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

With a wide range of recreational space, including approximately 336 acres of developed parkland and additional undeveloped lands, the Town of Clarence is well serviced with parkland. The Town has been very proactive in terms of providing quality recreational services and amenities for its residents. The general consensus is that the current system is outstanding, but there is room for improvement. Primarily, there is a need to ensure that the parkland that exists effectively serves the needs of all users, including children, seniors, wildlife enthusiasts, those seeking physical fitness, etc. Although one park need not provide services and amenities for all such users, the fact that the varying recreational needs of the community are being met in and around the more highly developed areas is the Town is important.

A geographic assessment of the existing parks facilities in the Town of Clarence shows that there is a lack of developed parkland resources north of the Rails to Trails North (Peanut) line. As Figure 1

indicates, most residents located south of the Peanut line multi-use trail live within one-half mile of a Town park. When recreational facilities owned by other jurisdictions (State, County and School District) are included, nearly all residents in the southern portion of Town live within close proximity to recreational facilities. Residents north of the Peanut line trail have fewer options. New housing development has been especially strong in the southern and central portions of the Town, and there are more residents moving into these areas. Between 1980 and 2000, the central portion of the Town (roughly south of Lapp Road, north of Roll Road) gained more than 3,500 new residents. Meadowlakes Park is the only multi-purpose park close to many of these residents, since Memorial Park (which is east of the Clarence Center hamlet) is largely used for organized field sports only. While the Town's Master Plan calls for limited development in the northern portion of the Town, additional development is likely to occur in the central area noted above, as well as in the vicinity of the Swormville hamlet. Therefore, opportunities for parks development north of the Peanut Line multi-use trail should be assessed.

Although Beeman Creek County Park is located north of the Peanut Line trail, this park is undeveloped. While there is some informal use of this facility, Beeman Creek Park is not technically open to the public. For recreational purposes, it is more akin to the greenprint lands, which are the discrete preservation of open space, with no public access. However, the potential for the use a portion of this park for passive recreational use (picnicking) should be examined. The Town of Clarence also owns a large parcel of undeveloped land off County Road, in the Swormville area, which could be utilized for recreational purposes. The future use of this site must be evaluated.

Recreational demand is very high in the Town of Clarence. Participation in organized sports is very strong, representing literally hundreds of games being played at existing facilities over the course of a single play season. This has placed significant pressure on the Town's recreational resources and increases the need to provide adequate space for recreational use. The consensus is that the recent park expansions, particularly at Memorial Park, have helped to accommodate existing demand. However, there is a desire on the part of the sports organizations to have some excess capacity, in order to rest fields, ease scheduling, enable more practice time and accommodate future growth in enrollment.

Cooperative relationships with the school district should be continued. Existing school facilities are being used to the maximum capacity. The school district indicated that the possibility of providing one additional diamond at Ledgeview Elementary school may be feasible, if developed collaboratively between the school and the Town. The Town Board currently has a liaison working with the school district.

In addition to the continued demand for facilities for organized sports, based on input received from the public, other desired recreational enhancements include:

- Additional trail connections—particularly along north-south routes, and also to interconnect major attractions and destinations (hamlets, schools, parks, etc.)

- Picnic space and shelters—demand currently exceeds the available supply at existing Town park facilities.

- Additional non-programmed space— open areas that can be used for a variety of purposes, such as flying radio-controlled planes, Frisbee or pick-up sports games.

- Additional park space and facilities in the north-central portion of the Town.

A skateboard park— particularly in the the Clarence Center area of the Town where youth frequent a local church parking lot.

Glenwood Park - The Town should encourage Scout program to once again identify and label existing trees in this park.

3.1 Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the parks data and the input received from the public and the various sports organizations, the following recommendations were developed.

1. The Town should undertake master planning for many of the existing Town parks. Individual site plans would outline park enhancements and improvements, such as landscaping, passive use areas, active use areas and the additional of other recreational facilities that may not currently exist at the site. Site specific master plans would allow the Town to better program the use of existing recreation space. There are opportunities for providing additional picnic shelters, multi-use fields, small skate parks and other recreational facilities on undeveloped lands within existing parks. Possible options are shown on Figure 1 and discussed further in Section 4.0 of this report.
2. The Town has a variety of recreational lands and parks, but they are largely concentrated in the southern portion of the community. The Town-owned land off County Road appears to be ideally located to fill this gap. This approximate 26-acre property is situated near the Swormville hamlet and other growth areas in the north-central portion of the Town, and could potentially provide additional recreational opportunities. The Town should investigate how these lands could be utilized for passive and active recreational use (walking trails, picnic area, play fields, etc.), as well as the potential for obtaining access easements or for purchasing the adjacent parcel, which is owned by National Fuel Gas. The National Fuel Gas parcel is in the range of 150 acres and could significantly increase opportunities for recreational development in this area of the Town.
3. Another option for providing additional passive recreational land in the northern portion of the Town is Beeman Creek Park. This County-owned park is undeveloped and currently designated by Erie County as a “Conservation Park” (undeveloped open space). The County has no plans to develop any recreational facilities at this park in the near future. However, the Erie County Parks System Master Plan notes that there is potential for the development of a small informal parking area (approximately 20 to 25 cars) on either Lapp Road or Salt Road. This parking area would provide a trail head facility, including proper trail head signage and rules for appropriate use of the Conservation Park. The Town should consider initiating discussions with Erie County regarding the potential for developing additional passive recreational opportunities at Beeman Creek Park, as appropriate, to accommodate picnicking and nature studies (preferably in the southwestern corner of the park, where more open land exists and there is the least potential for habitat disturbance).
4. The Town should investigate whether lands that were not rated as high priority for greenprint preservation purposes would be appropriate for use as parkland. Such lands could be purchased with recreational fee monies, because all lands purchased with Greenprint bond monies must remain undeveloped and unutilized for recreation. It is likely that there are a number of properties that were evaluated for the greenprint program that do not have high

conservation value, but that would be appropriate for active recreational use and parkland development. In evaluating such parcels, first priority would be for properties located in the more rapidly developing areas of the Town, where there is less parkland and greater demand. Other properties to strongly consider include lands with frontage along Tonawanda Creek and lands that could either be used to help complete linkages in the trail system or that are situated in proximity to that trail system or other recreational amenities.

5. There is strong demand for additional trail connections. Suggested new trail connections are shown on Figure 1. The proposed new trails provide connections between major community features, particularly parks, schools and hamlets. Many of these connections tie through to trail systems in adjoining communities, such as Akron and the Town of Lockport.
6. While the public indicated a preference for separated bike trails, an integrated bike path system can be more quickly implemented if some sections consist of clearly marked, designated bike lanes along the shoulder of the road. In either case, the trails should be designed to ensure safety and accessibility.
7. Trails in the Town should be improved with locational signage to enable the user to know where they are along the trail and enhance personal safety. Roadway signs at major intersections and road crossings are recommended.
8. Where necessary, the Town should initiate efforts to acquire necessary easements or land to complete the Town's trail system as soon as possible, before additional development eliminates options for trail development. Subdivision and site plan reviews should take into consideration proposed trails and connections and capitalize on any opportunities to extend or enhance the trail system. For example, where trails can be moved off busy streets by going through adjacent subdivisions, developers should be encouraged to incorporate trails into their development plans.
9. The Town is in the process of developing an Official Map. All recommended future trails should be designated on this map. This will help inform the public where the Town supports trails, and help support efforts to have developers provide trail access across subdivisions where relevant. It will also facilitate coordination with other jurisdictions (especially Erie County) with regard to trail development.
10. The Town should ensure that all County road work take into consideration the Town's planned trail system. Proposed trails should be incorporated into the County's future capital improvement projects on County-owned roads in the Town where trail access is recommended.
11. The Town should investigate opportunities for developing small skate parks. It is important to place such facilities close to where users are, so multiple smaller locations may be preferable to a larger, consolidated skate park. Clarence Center is one location where local youth are utilizing the parking lots at the church and other establishments for this activity. In addition to Clarence Center, other potential locations include Meadowlakes, Parker and/or Sunset Parks.
12. The Town is in the process of purchasing land along Tonawanda Creek for recreational access. The Town's Recreational Advisory Committee should continue to explore the

potential for acquiring additional property along the creek for recreational use, especially lands adjoining the parcel currently being purchased. Once in Town ownership, the Town should develop plans for the site that facilitate creek access including docks, launch ramp, ancillary facilities, etc.

13. When subdivisions are proposed with Homeowners' Associations, the Town should strongly encourage the provision of small mini-parks within the subdivision. The mini-parks would be non-programmed open space, appropriate for a variety of informal recreational activities. They would function like a "Village Green" for the development. It is recommended that ownership and maintenance responsibility reside with the Homeowners' Association, to foster local pride in the pocket parks and ensure local suitability. For example, in an area with many young children, lands may be used as play space, while in subdivisions populated by older residents, lands may be reserved for passive uses. In most cases, the recreational areas would be small and not suitable for use and access by large numbers of people outside of the community (whereas, if they were Town-owned, access could not be controlled). It would be difficult for the Town to take on the maintenance responsibilities for a wide number of small, scattered sites. In most cases, ownership and accountability by the local residents would be the most appropriate management mechanism for these small, local recreational areas.
14. In cases where a proposed subdivision has no Homeowners' Association to take responsibility for parkland, the Planning Board and Recreation Advisory Committee should make a determination regarding the need for recreational lands within the subdivision. There may be cases where the Town should strongly encourage the provision of recreational lands, even if the park would become the Town's responsibility. This would include areas where there are no available recreational lands in proximity to the development and where demand is likely to be strong, or where there are lands within the site that have significant recreational potential.
15. A "Wayfinding Study" could be utilized by the Town to develop a signage scheme with consistent signage standards and logo for use in all Town parks and trails.

4.0 Action Plan

In the process of analyzing the various Town park facilities it was determined that there is a need to further evaluate each facility to establish measures for better public use and enjoyment. Many of the parks have unutilized or under-utilized space that could be programmed for public use. This should be accomplished by preparing site specific master plans for each park to identify locations for the addition of new amenities, such as skateboarding facilities, dog walks, multi-use or discrete play fields, picnic shelters, etc., or the better orientation of playfields or other facilities. It is evident that many of the parks require the re-evaluation of their use to better accommodate recreational needs and provide greater benefit to the residents who use these sites. The following Action Plan sets forth a number of site specific recommendations to help improve the use and enjoyment of the Town parks.

1. Sunset Park

Sunset Park offers a variety of active recreational opportunities. This park serves as the primary location for the Clarence Little League Football, with practice and game fields. The park is triangular in shape and essentially split in half by a utility substation. Due to heavy use that occurs at the west end of the park during baseball and football season, parking has become a serious concern. The park as a whole warrants master planning, with consideration given to better ways to make use of the extreme eastern portion of the site. A few elements that could be added as potential enhancements include (see Figure 2):

- A walking trail to connect the parking area, located on the western portion of the site, to the court sports and parking located East of the utility substation.
- Two new picnic shelters for additional passive recreation use on the eastern half of the site.
- A walking trail to connect the eastern parking area with a future on-road trail along Wehrle Drive.
- This eastern portion of this park could also serve as an ideal location for a skate park and/or a dog park.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$194,870

2. Thompson Road Park

Thompson Road Park (the former Girl Scout camp) offers Town residents the best opportunity to experience the natural environment. The large park remains almost completely undeveloped with the exception of a baseball diamond and a small parking area near Thompson Road. Several nature trails extend through the wooded areas and eventually lead to a small nature center deep in the park, which is reserved for educational use. The park remains almost entirely unprogrammed and should remain so to offer residents the opportunity to enjoy the natural setting. The only potential recommendation for this park would be the addition of a second ball field located in the already cleared area along Thompson Road, adjacent to the existing ball field (see Figure 3).

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$141,000

3. Town Place Park

Town Place serves the entire Clarence community because it is the location of the Clarence Town Hall, Clarence Public Library and the Arboretum (which is under development). There are two large ponds on the northern portion of the site, surrounding the Town Hall and Library, and partially implemented arboretum. The Park also offers a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities. There are many activities and facilities located throughout the Park, with the majority of the recreational activities occurring on the southern portion of the site, including sports fields, tennis courts and picnicking facilities. This park is in need of a master planning effort. An overall master plan could allow for the reorientation of the athletic fields, as well as improving circulation throughout the site, helping the park to function better as a whole. Some additional elements that could be incorporated into the park plan include (see Figure 4):

- a multi-use field and possibly a sledding hill, in the open area at the southern portion of the park;
- additional picnic shelters in the central area of the site; and
- a Dog Park.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$176,250

4. Parker Commons Park

The Parker Commons neighborhood park offers a variety of uses ranging from the ball field on the western side of the site, to the tree grove and play area located to the east. Potential additions to this park could include (see Figure 5):

- a walking trail through the grove of trees connecting adjacent neighborhoods,
- two new picnic shelters, and
- a skate park.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$166,550

5. Memorial Park

The recently developed Memorial Park serves the community as a center for sports recreation. There are several existing soccer fields adjacent to recently constructed multi-use fields and ball diamonds. The site is well programmed and the existing facilities are densely located, taking full advantage of the available space. There is still some land available on the northeast portion of the site that could be developed with additional play fields, picnic area or some other form of active or passive recreational use to supplement or enhance existing park facilities and adjacent multi-use trail (the Peanut Line).

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$296,100

6. Meadow Lakes Park

Meadow Lakes Park serves a number of passive and active recreational needs. It is located in the western portion of the Town and is surrounded by a densely populated residential community. Due to the number of residents located nearby, and the considerable use of the ball fields by the Clarence Baseball Association, this park experiences extensive use. This park also includes one soccer field for active play and practice, along with other recreational amenities. The park connects to the Rails to Trails North Line (Peanut Line), an off-road multi-use trail that runs from Thompson Road, just west of the park, all the way to Akron. It also provides trailhead parking lot for trail users. Meadow Lakes Park is fairly well programmed and the site layout seems adequate for the services it provides. A few improvements that could be added to the park include (see Figure 7):

- a home run fence around the northern baseball field,
- two new picnic shelters and possibly another tennis court,
- a sledding hill, and
- a skate park.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$164,270

7. Glenwood Park

Glenwood Parks is a passive park situated on a partially wooded lot, south of Greiner Road. This park offers a shelter and picnic area, and some play equipment for children. Most of the equipment is ADA accessible and the site has been well programmed. A few recommendations for the park include (see Figure 8):

- having a scout troop establish a program to identify and label the existing trees in the park (which are protected) to provide an educational opportunity for public benefit,
- establishing a walking trail through the wooded area to increase plant identification awareness and to improve access (the trail could connect to Glenwood Drive to improve neighborhood access to the park as well), and
- two additional picnic shelters in the developed area of the park, near the play equipment.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$20,310

8. Town Park

Town Park is a well developed park that offers a variety of active and passive activities. It has several ball fields and court sports. There are also several pavilions, the Town pool and the Town Parks Department maintenance facility. The northern portion of the site is densely developed with recreational amenities and fairly well programmed, but the park is in need of a master plan to ensure optimal use of available space and facilities. In addition to a master plan for the park as a whole, the southern and mostly undeveloped portion of the site could be improved to include nature trails through the wooded areas behind the ball fields, with the provision of interpretive kiosks along the trail (see Figure 9). The Town has recently provided a game field for the Youth Football league in the southern portion of the site.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$162,150

9. Creek Side Park

The Town recently acquired a small parcel of land, north of Rapids Road, with Town recreation fee monies. This narrow piece of land is immediately adjacent to Ellicott Creek and will provide Town residents with an opportunity to have access to the water. The parcel is also adjacent to a larger tract of "greenprint" land. A survey and master plan should be developed to best layout future recreational facilities on the site. Recommended elements for the site include:

- a small parking lot,
- car-top boat launch/ dock, and
- site amenities such as signage, trash receptacles, picnic tables, benches, etc.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$42,870

10. County Road Site

The Town owns a large parcel of undeveloped land just north of County Road, near the Swormville hamlet (Figure 11). This 26.5-acre parcel is currently undeveloped and offers great potential for recreational use. The southern portion of the site is heavily wooded while the northern portion is open fields; there is a centrally-located pond on the site. A master plan should be developed for this property, considering the proper location and orientation of conservation areas, passive recreation space and active play activities. Nature trails with interpretive signage may best fit this location, particularly the southern portion where dense woodlands exist. This site may be appropriate for the development of some additional sports fields on the lands north of the pond as well. This site is located in an area of the Town where parkland is less abundant and, therefore, a combination of recreational uses, similar to Town Park, may be best. A site analysis would determine how to most effectively capitalize on this resource. It should be noted, that the potential to acquire additional land to the north (which is owned by National Fuel Gas) should also be investigated.

Opinion of Probable Cost: \$ unknown pending programming

Figure 2

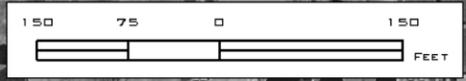
Sunset Park



KEY TO FEATURES

●	EXCELLENT
●	GOOD
●	FAIR
●	POOR
●	N/A
○	PARK BOUNDARY
○	PARCELS

The information on this document is based on data gathered from the following data sources and should not be used for design or construction purposes.
 Data Sources: NYSGIS Clearinghouse, Town of Clarence, ECDEP



1 inch equals 150 feet

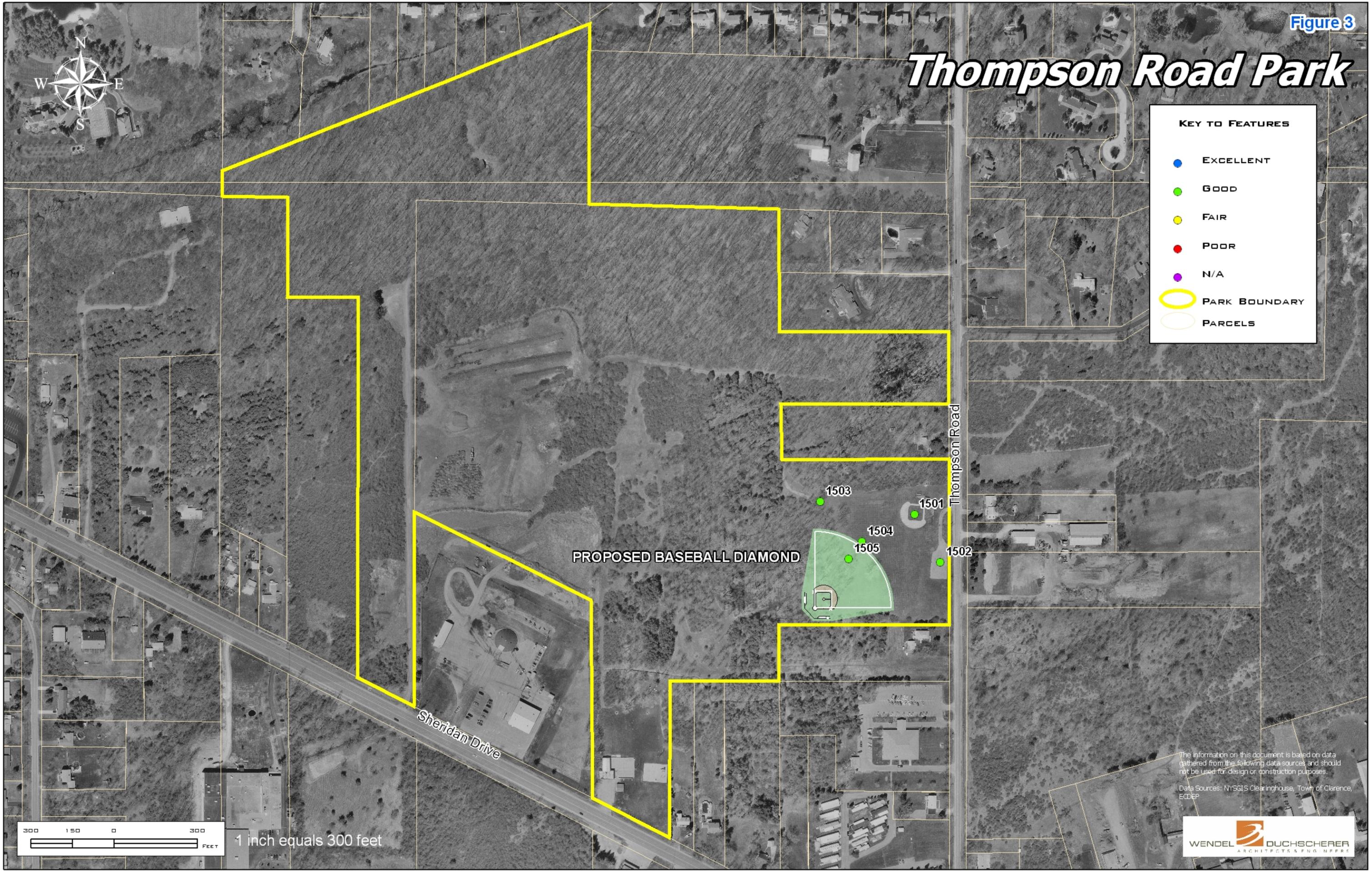
Figure 3

Thompson Road Park



KEY TO FEATURES

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- POOR
- N/A
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARCELS



PROPOSED BASEBALL DIAMOND

Sheridan Drive

Thompson Road

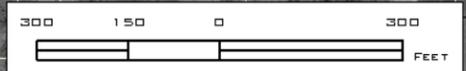
1503

1501

1504

1505

1502



1 inch equals 300 feet

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Data Sources: NYSGIS Clearinghouse, Town of Clarence, ECODEP

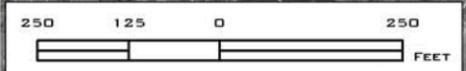
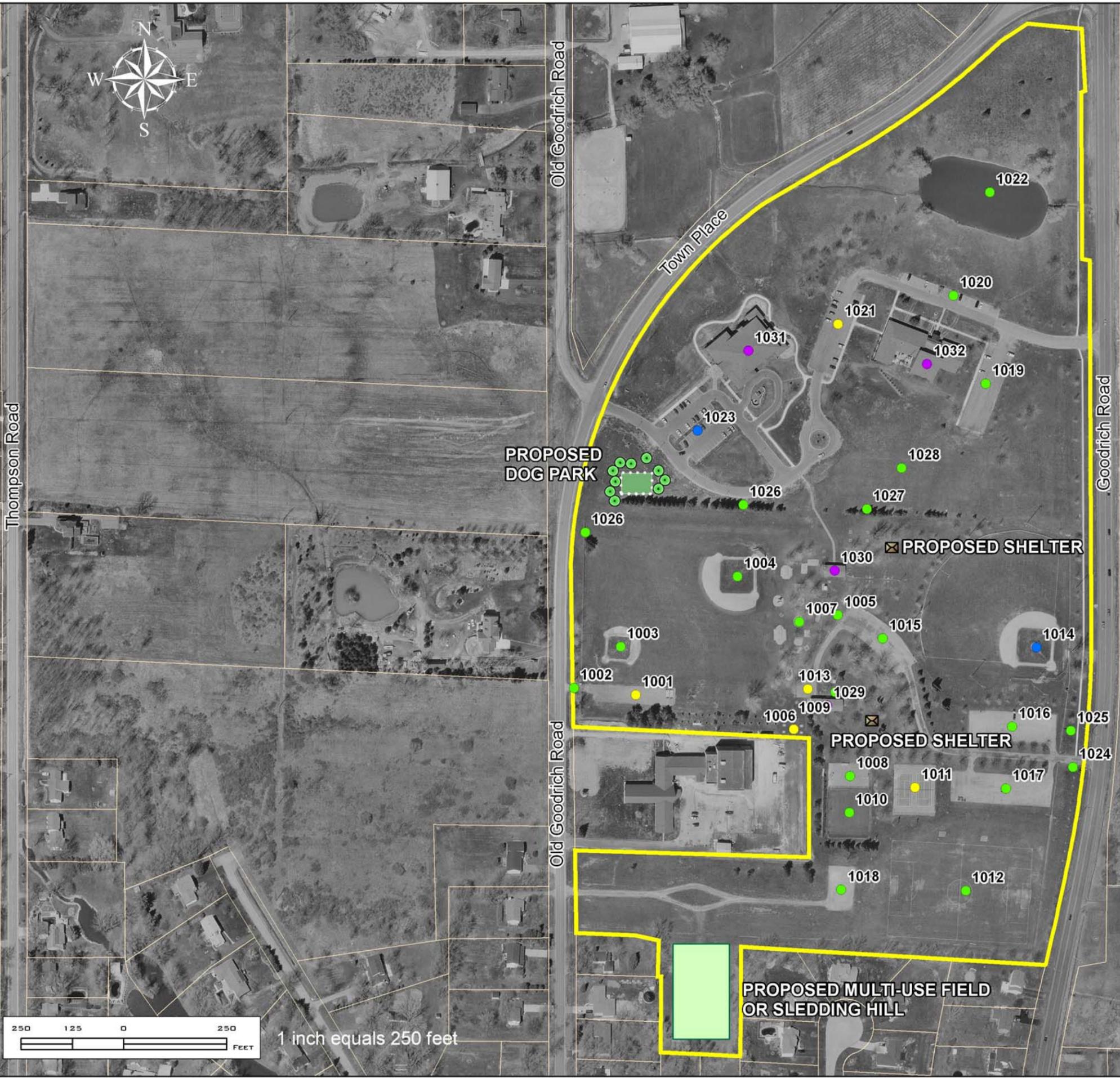


Figure 4

Town Place Park

KEY TO FEATURES

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- POOR
- N/A
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARCELS



1 inch equals 250 feet

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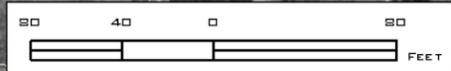
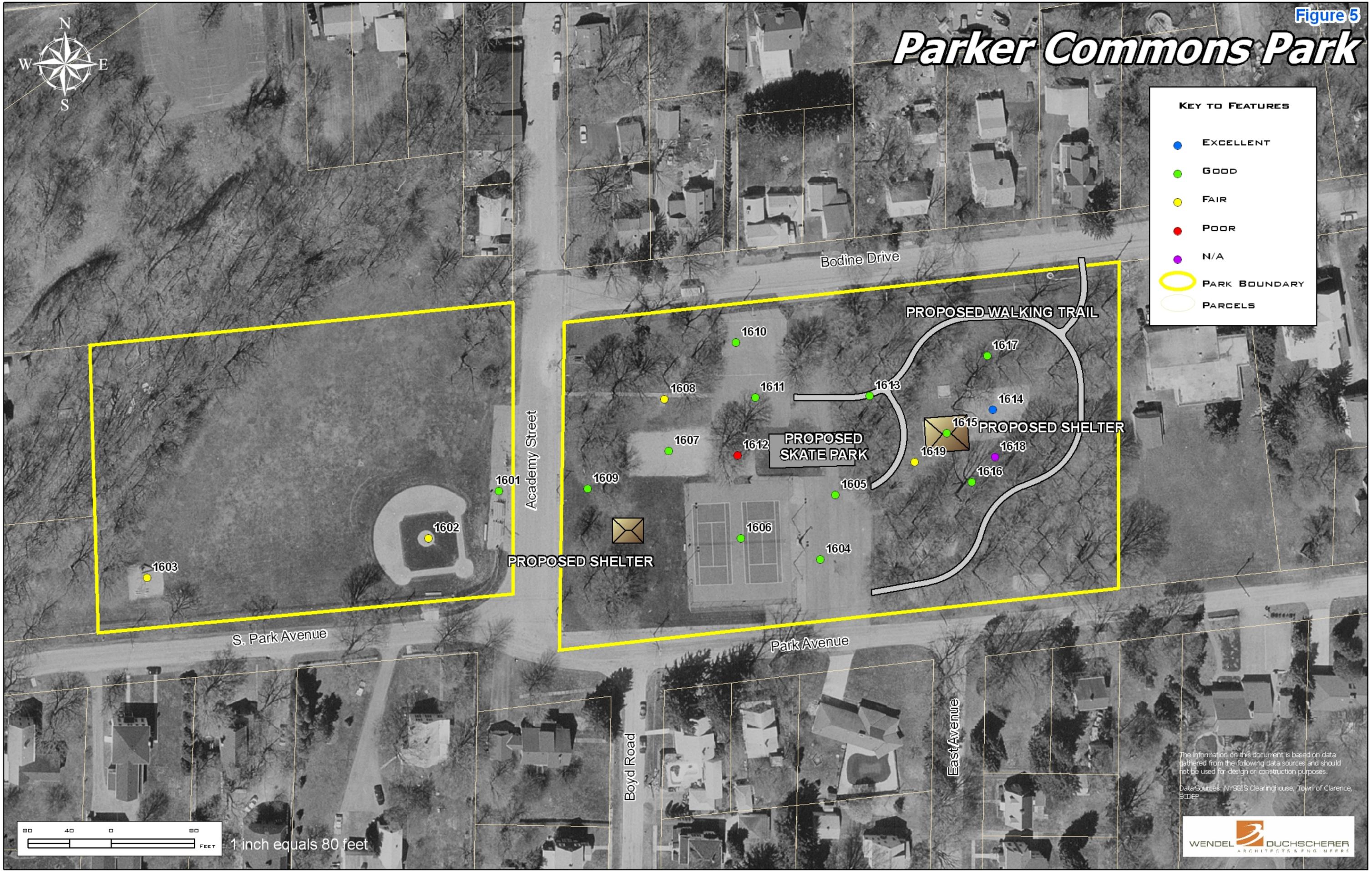
Figure 5

Parker Commons Park



KEY TO FEATURES

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- POOR
- N/A
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARCELS



1 inch equals 80 feet

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Data Sources: NYSGIS Clearinghouse, Town of Clarence, ECODEP



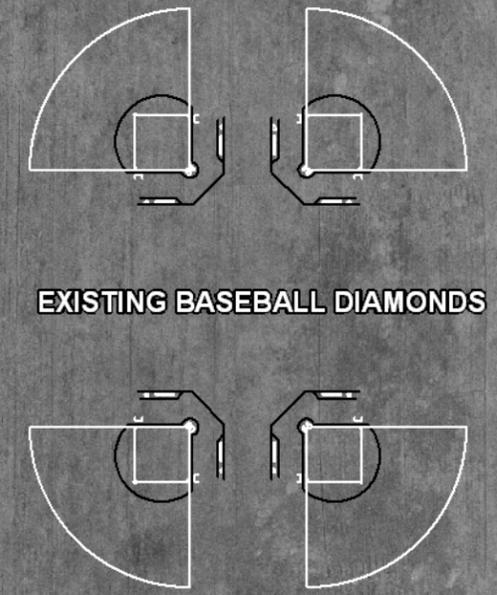
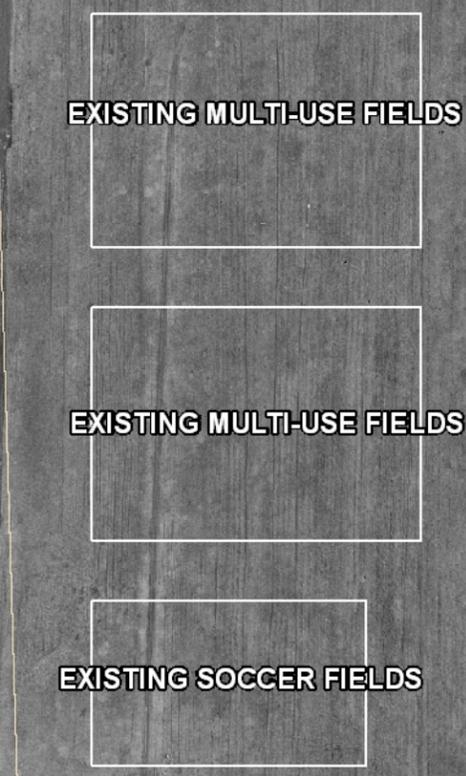
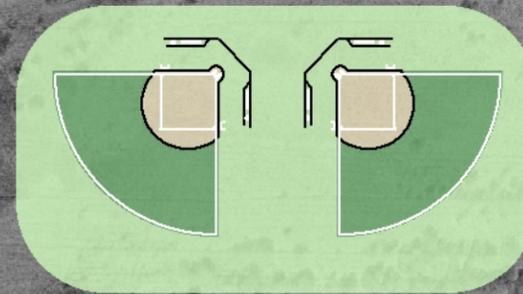
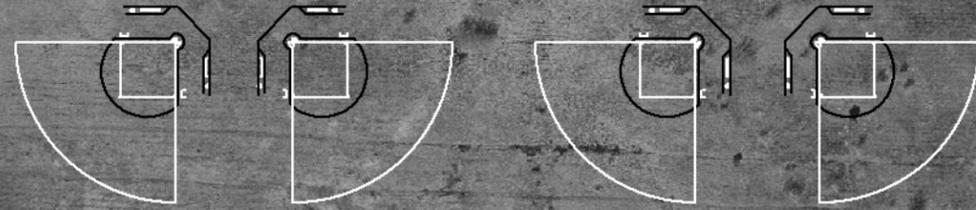
Figure 6

Memorial Park



KEY TO FEATURES

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- POOR
- N/A
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARCELS



Kraus Road

Strickler Road

Clarence Center Road



1 inch equals 200 feet

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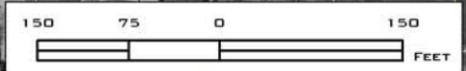
Figure 7

Meadow Lakes Park



KEY TO FEATURES

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- POOR
- N/A
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARCELS



1 inch equals 150 feet

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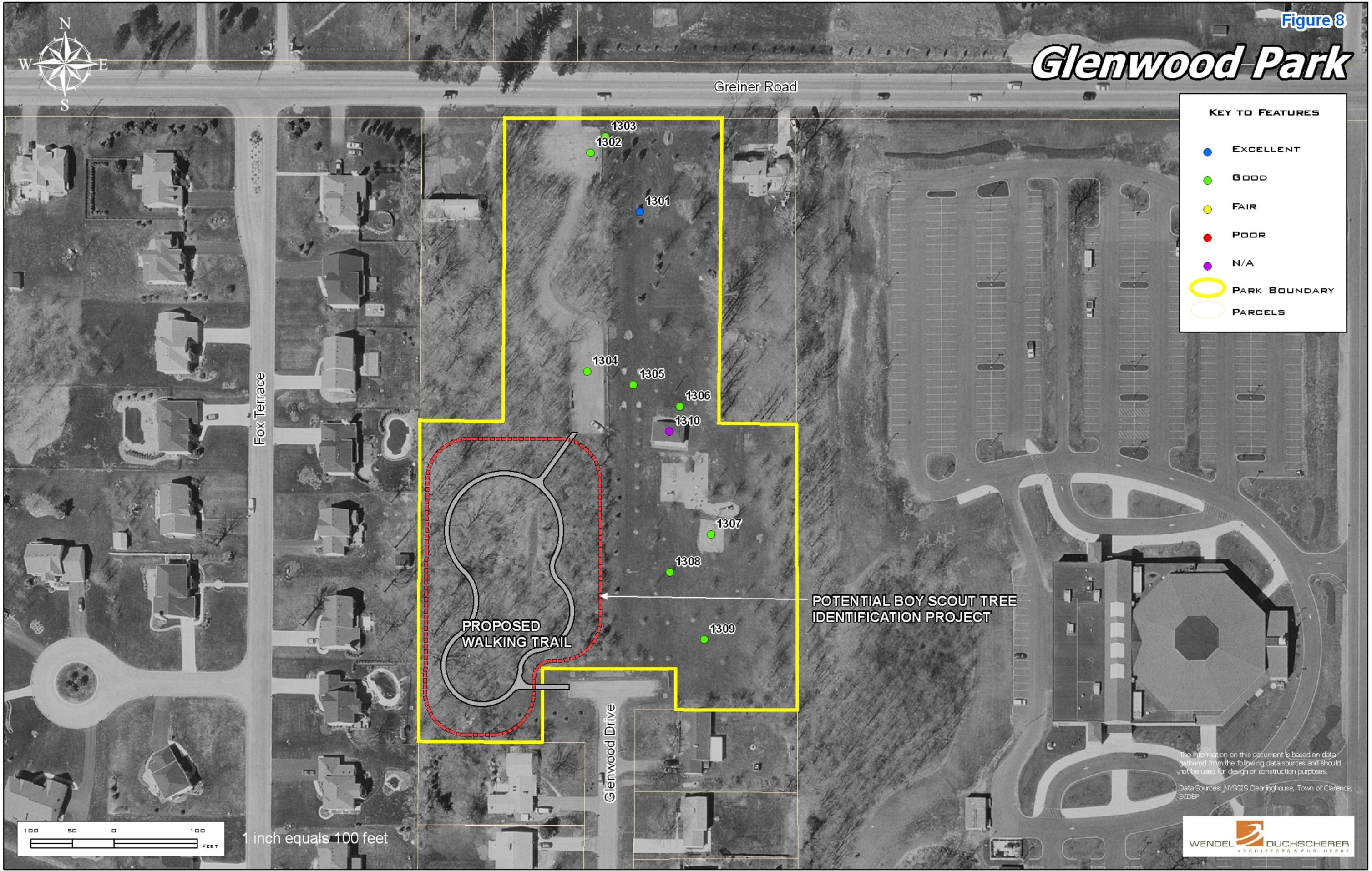
Figure 8

Glenwood Park



KEY TO FEATURES

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- POOR
- N/A
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARCELS



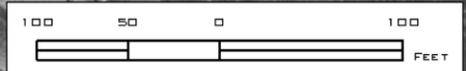
Greiner Road

Fox Terrace

Glenwood Drive

PROPOSED WALKING TRAIL

POTENTIAL BOY SCOUT TREE IDENTIFICATION PROJECT



1 inch equals 100 feet

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Data Sources: NYGIS Clearinghouse, Town of Clarence, ECODEP



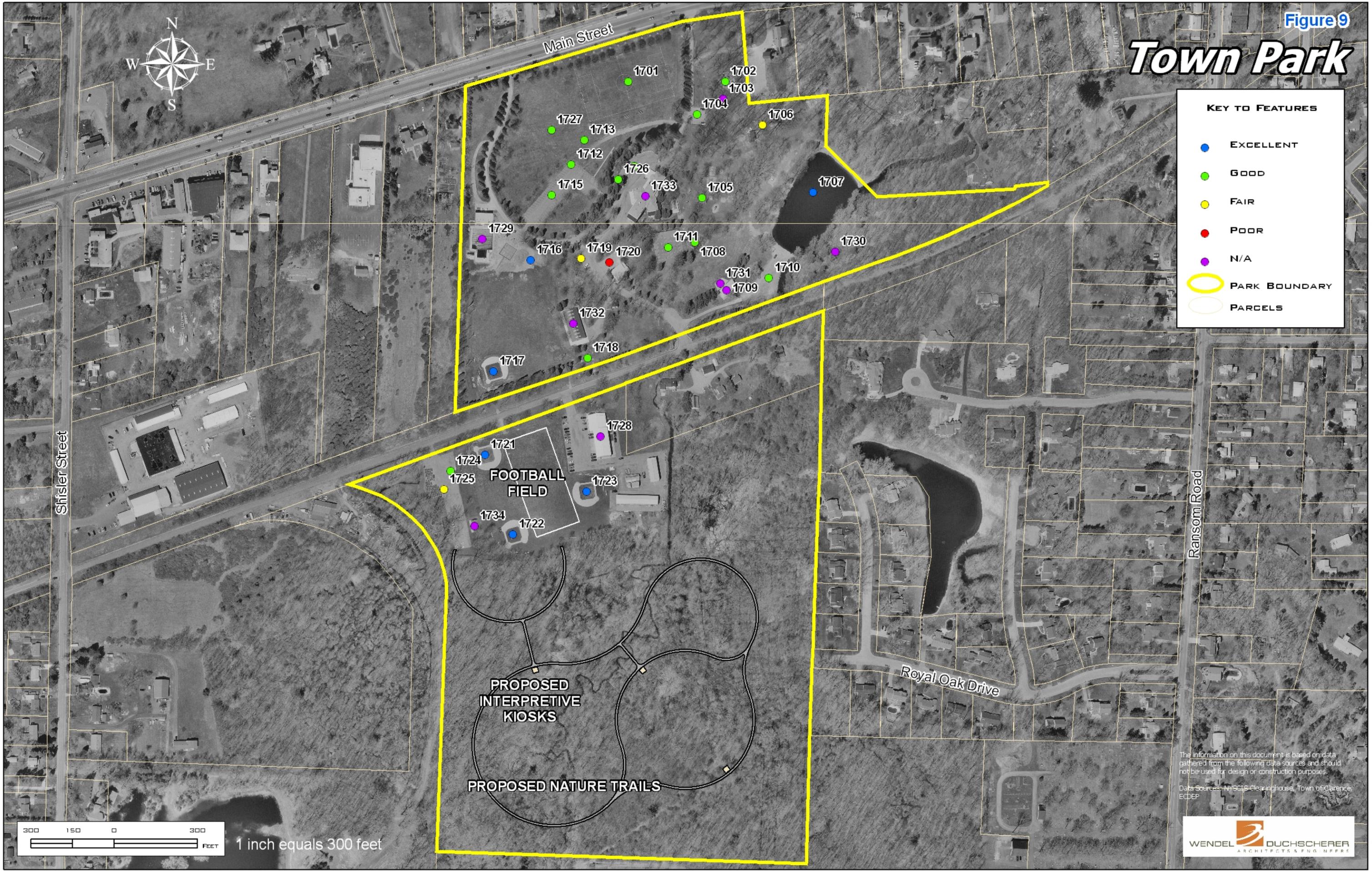
Figure 9

Town Park



KEY TO FEATURES

- EXCELLENT
- GOOD
- FAIR
- POOR
- N/A
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARCELS



Shisler Street

Main Street

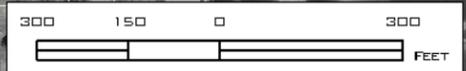
Ransom Road

Royal Oak Drive

FOOTBALL FIELD

PROPOSED INTERPRETIVE KIOSKS

PROPOSED NATURE TRAILS



1 inch equals 300 feet

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Data Sources: NYGIS Clearinghouse, Town of Clarence, EODEP

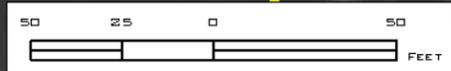


Creek Side Site



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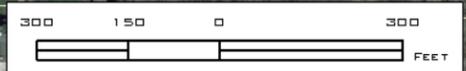
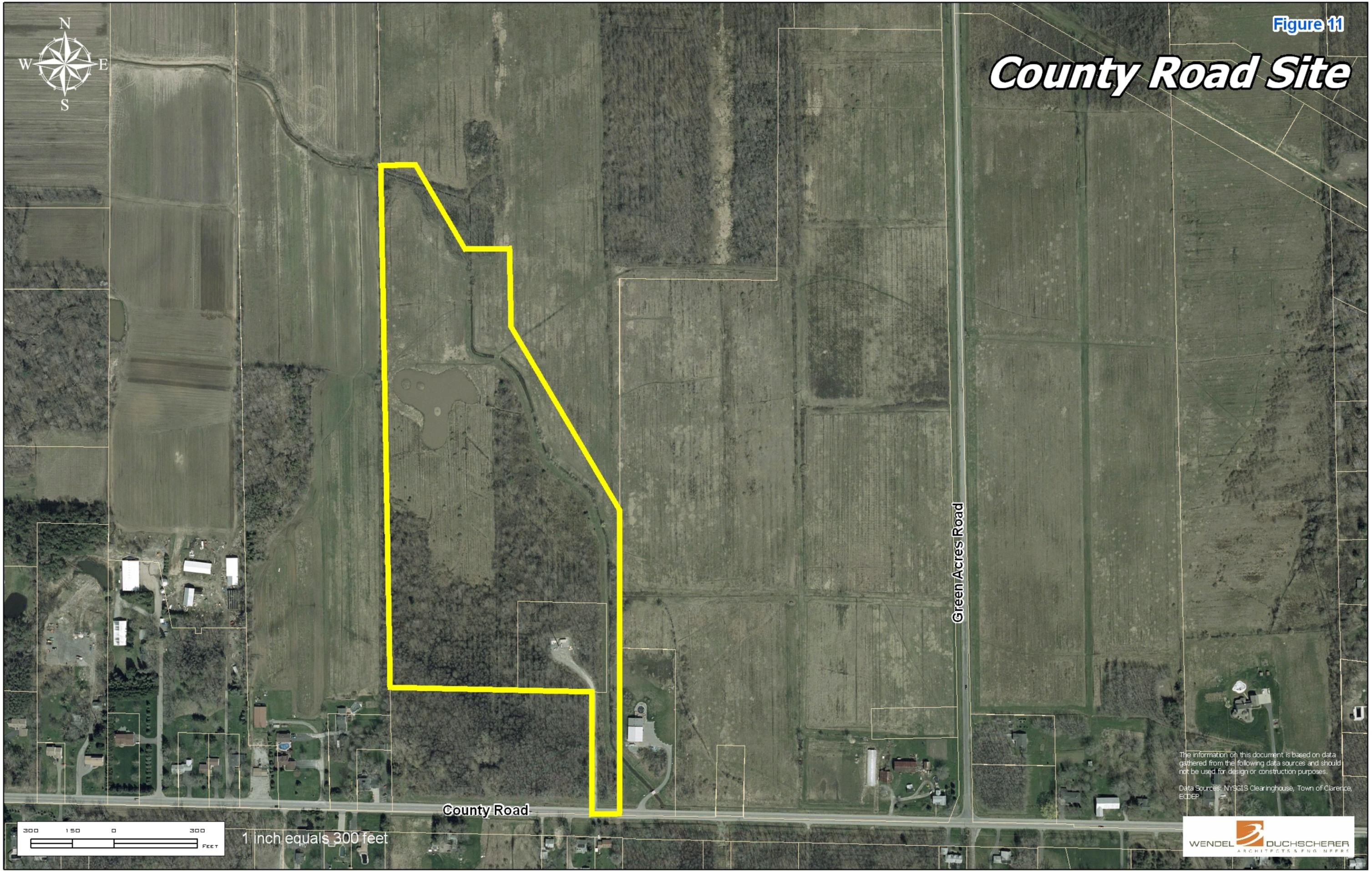
Data Sources: NYGIS Clearinghouse, Town of Clarence, ECODEP



1 inch equals 50 feet



County Road Site



1 inch equals 300 feet

Green Acres Road

County Road

The information on this document is based on data gathered from the following data sources and should not be used for design or construction purposes.
Data Sources: NYGIS Clearinghouse, Town of Clarence, EODP



**Table 1
Parks Facility Inventory**

Park	Sports Facilities	Other	Amenities	Comments
Town Place Park 50.1 acres	Baseball/softball (3) Soccer (1) Tennis (4 courts) Basketball (1) Horseshoe pits (4)	Playground equipment	Picnic tables (9) Grills (4) Pond Parking	Centrally located, adjacent to Town Hall, Town Library. Excellent location for passive/ non-structured recreational opportunities. Limited room for expansion of facilities. Facilities generally in good condition. Could use reorientation.
Memorial Park 85.2 acres	Soccer (8 + Youth fields) 8 baseball / softball	Trailhead	Parking	All facilities in good condition. Sports fields are not properly oriented.
Meadow Lakes Park 25.1 acres	Baseball/softball (4) Soccer (1) Volleyball Horseshoe pits (4) Street hockey (1) Basketball (1) Tennis (4 courts)	Trailhead Playground equipment (2) Sand box Walkways	Picnic tables (19) Bleachers/benches Parking Bike rack	Multi-use facility adjacent to Peanut Line trail. Public indicated some demand for more amenities (shelter, winter activities, pool). There is available space for additional facilities. Facilities mostly in good to excellent condition.
Glenwood Park 6.0 acres	Horseshoe pits (2)	Playground equipment	Picnic tables (8) Memorial Picnic pavilion	Neighborhood park. Western portion of park is nicely wooded. Opportunity for trail system in woods. Facilities all in good to excellent condition.
Sunset Park 17.2 acres	Baseball (1) Volleyball (1) Horseshoe pits (2) Football game field (1) Football practice field (1) Basketball (1) Tennis (4 courts)	Playground equipment Skating pond	Picnic tables (29) Bleachers/benches Grills Parking (2 lots)	Neighborhood park in densely populated southeastern part of Town. Football league uses this site; would prefer alternative location. Wooded area divides park into two areas: eastern portion is tennis, basketball and open space; western portion is football, baseball and picnic areas.
Thompson Road Park 93.6 acres	Baseball (1)	Nature trail	Parking for ballfield	Recently acquired former girl scout camp. Nicely wooded. Frontage on Sheridan, but primary access is Thompson Road. Large undeveloped area (73.3 acres).
Parker Commons Park 6.4 acres	Baseball (1) Tennis (2) Volleyball (1) Basketball (1) Street hockey (1) Horseshoe pits	Playground equipment (3) Walkways Kickwall	Picnic tables Grills Parking Memorial	Also known as Academy Street Park. In densely populated Clarence Hollow area. Wooded areas and open areas. Divided into two portions by Academy Street.
Town Park 34.3 acres (north) + 50.4 acres undeveloped (south)	Baseball (4) Soccer (1) Horseshoe pits (12) Basketball (1) Tennis (2) Swimming pool (outdoor)	Playground equipment (several)	Picnic tables (111) Grills Pond Bandstand Parking Clubhouse	Main community park with variety of facilities. Open areas with space for expansion of facilities. Southern wooded area has environmentally sensitive areas (creek, wetlands).

OPINION OF PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST WORKSHEET



Project Title: Clarence Parks and Recreation Master Plan
 Location: Erie County, NY
 Owner: Town of Clarence
 Estimated by: GMR
 Reviewed by: RJB

Project No.: 2742.11
 Revision Date:
 Orig. Date: 02/10/06
 Drawing No.:
 File Name:

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE MAT.& LAB.	ESTIMATED AMOUNT
1.0	Sunset				
	Asphalt walking trails (6' width)	1,450	lf	\$16.00	\$23,200
	Shelter w/ concrete pad (24'x32')	2	ea	\$20,000.00	\$40,000
	Dog Park(approx. 1 acre)	1	allow	\$75,000.00	\$75,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$138,200
	20% Cont., 5% Gen., 4% Mob., 2% Surv., 10% Design Fee				\$56,670
	TOTAL				\$194,870
2.0	Thompson Road Park				
	New Baseball Diamond w/ benches, fence, backstop, etc.	1	allow	\$100,000.00	\$100,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$100,000
	20% Cont., 5% Gen., 4% Mob., 2% Surv., 10% Design Fee				\$41,000
	TOTAL				\$141,000
3.0	Town Place Park				
	Multi-use field or Sledding hill(free fill, topsoil, grade & seed)	1	ls	\$10,000.00	\$10,000
	Shelter w/ concrete pad (24'x32')	2	ea	\$20,000.00	\$40,000
	Dog Park(approx. 1 acre)	1	allow	\$75,000.00	\$75,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$125,000
	20% Cont., 5% Gen., 4% Mob., 2% Surv., 10% Design Fee				\$51,250
	TOTAL				\$176,250
4.0	Parker Commons Park				
	Asphalt walking trails (6' width)	820	lf	\$16.00	\$13,120
	Shelter w/ pad (24'x32')	2	ea	\$20,000.00	\$40,000
	Skate Park(approx. 8,000sf)	1	allow	\$65,000.00	\$65,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$118,120
	20% Cont., 5% Gen., 4% Mob., 2% Surv., 10% Design Fee				\$48,430
	TOTAL				\$166,550
5.0	Memorial Park				
	New Softball Diamond w/ benches, backstop, fence, etc.	2	ea	\$100,000.00	\$200,000
	Sledding hill(assume free fill, topsoil, fine grade & seed)	1	ls	\$10,000.00	\$10,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$210,000
	20% Cont., 5% Gen., 4% Mob., 2% Surv., 10% Design Fee				\$86,100
	TOTAL				\$296,100
6.0	Meadow Lakes Park				
	Fence Around Baseball Diamond(4' ht. vinyl coated chain link)	500	lf	\$23.00	\$11,500
	Shelter w/ concrete pad (24'x32')	2	ea	\$20,000.00	\$40,000
	Skate Park(approx. 8,000sf)	1	allow	\$65,000.00	\$65,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$116,500
	20% Cont., 5% Gen., 4% Mob., 2% Surv., 10% Design Fee				\$47,770
	TOTAL				\$164,270

