

Chapter 6

An Assessment of Georgetown's Needs

“Natural objects themselves, even when they make no claim to beauty, excited the feelings, and occupy the imagination. Nature pleases, attracts, delights, merely because it is nature.”

KARL WILHELM HUMBOLDT

Assessing Georgetown's Needs

Cities evolve over time. They increase in size, change directions, and the population's characteristics shift. These changes have a direct impact on the needs of open space and recreation. The Needs Assessment evaluates the current condition of Georgetown's parks and recreation facilities and programs; and identifies what deficiencies exist so that actions can be developed to address them. The existing conditions analysis coupled with future population projections also helps to determine future needs and develop actions to address these needs. Additionally, based on public input, the need assessment analysis identifies what facilities are most needed or desired by the residents of Georgetown, helping to prioritize those that are most important.

Three techniques were used in evaluating the City of Georgetown's current and future park needs. This methodology follows that accepted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department method for local park master plans. These methods include:

- Level of Service-based assessment, using locally developed standards for facilities;
- Demand-based assessment, using participation rates and public input; and
- Resource-based assessment, using assessment of unique physical features in Georgetown.



Level of Service-Based Approach

Uses target levels of service established by the local jurisdiction, the City of Georgetown, to determine the quantity of park facilities required to meet the city's needs at a given population. These target levels of service usually are expressed as the quantity of park facilities needed to adequately serve every 1,000 citizens of the city, or at a given ratio of each facility to a certain number of residents of Georgetown.

These targets are established to provide the level of service that the particular jurisdiction believes is most responsive to the amount of use and the interests of its citizens. This plan establishes individual city-specific standards for Georgetown.



Demand-Based Approach

Uses participation rates, league usage data, and citizen input to determine how much the population uses and desires different types of recreation facilities.



Resource-Based Approach

Based on the usefulness of available physical and natural resources to provide recreation opportunities. For example, Lake Georgetown is an excellent example of key physical and natural resource in Georgetown.

Individually, each approach does not represent the entire story; however, each assessment identifies something unique. Combining results from the assessments highlights what recreation facilities are needed in Georgetown. After close scrutiny by the citizens of Georgetown, they ultimately represent the needs and desires of the city.

"Nature is painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty if only we have the eyes to see them."

JOHN RUSKIN



Level of Service-Based Assessment

Many recreation needs assessments use national guidelines and standards to determine what their facility needs should be. It is important to recognize that national standards are simply guidelines or benchmarks that are intended to serve as a starting point for park planning. Each city has its own unique geographic, demographic, and socio-economic composition, and as such, the arbitrary application of national standards, as is often done in other park plans, would not necessarily meet the needs of that particular community. These "standards" are typically no longer used to project facility needs since they are based on a "one size fits all" type of evaluation.

Rather, this master plan methodology utilizes the existing level of service in the city as a starting point and determines whether that level of service is adequate, or whether it needs to be increased or decreased. Extensive public input is used to determine how to adjust the current level of service. Local needs and desires are used as the guiding criteria to mold these guidelines to meet the expectations of the citizens of Georgetown in a realistic manner.

Types of Level of Service Determinations

Spatial or Park Acreage Level of Service

Defines the acres of park land needed, and is usually expressed as a ratio of park acreage to population.

Facility Level of Service

Defines the number of facilities recommended by serving each particular recreation need. Facility standards are usually expressed as a ratio of unit of a particular facility per population size. For example, a facility standard for a recreation center might be 1 square foot for every resident of the city.

Development Guideline Standards

Define the exact spatial and dimensional requirements for a specific recreation area or facility. A neighborhood park, for example, might be required to have a playground, a basketball court, and a picnic pavilion.

Target Park Acreage Levels of Service

The purpose of spatial levels of service for parks and recreational areas is to ensure that sufficient area is allocated for all the outdoor recreation needs of a community. They allow a city to plan ahead so that parkland can be targeted and acquired before it is developed. These spatial standards are expressed as the number of acres of park land per 1,000 inhabitants. The existing spatial levels of service for Georgetown and Texas cities in general are shown below.

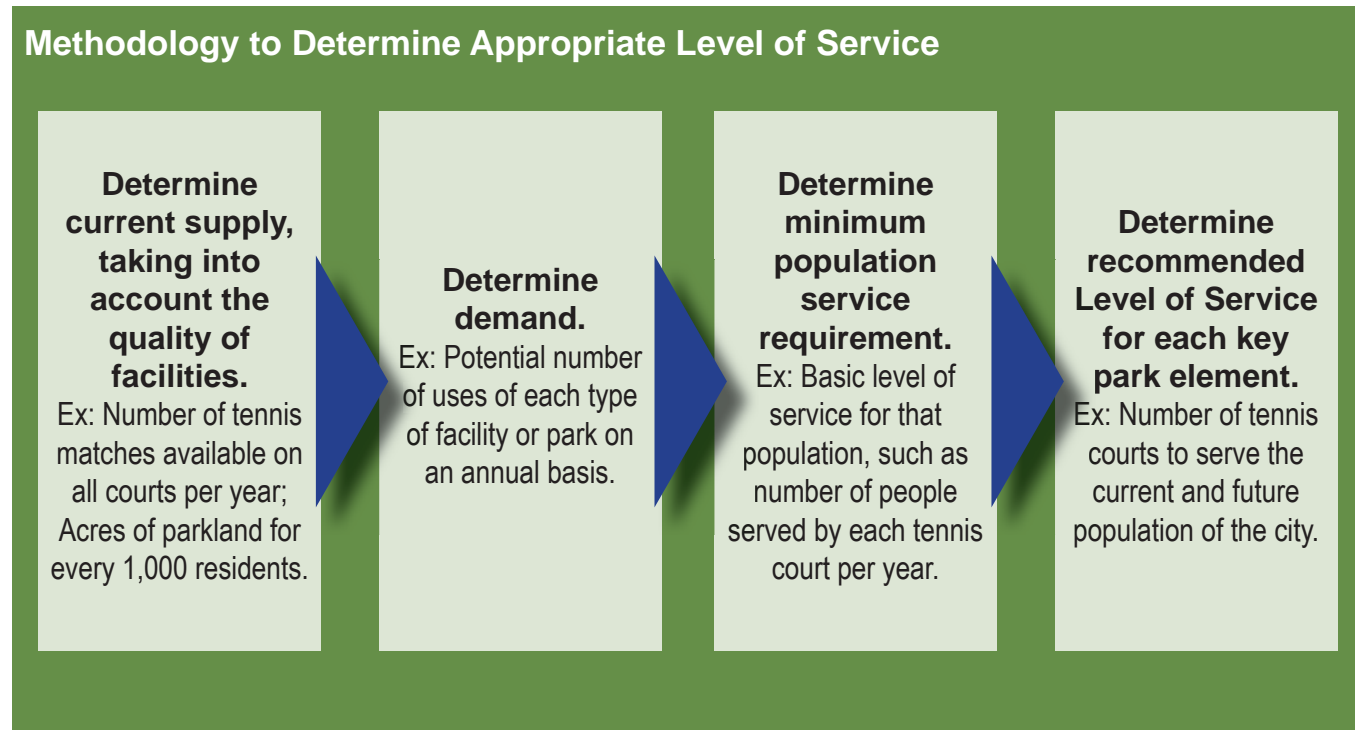
Typical Levels of Service for Texas Parks

Home-Based Parks

- **Neighborhood Parks** - Varies from 0.5 acre for every 1,000 residents to over 4 acres per 1,000 citizens in cities that focus extensively on small park network.
- **Community Parks** - Varies from less than 2 acres per 1,000 residents to over 8 acres per 1,000 population. Typical range in Texas is between 3 and 4 acres for every 1,000 residents.
- **Close to Home Parks** - Varies from less than 3 acres for every 1,000 residents to over 12 acres per 1,000 population in a few cities. The typical average in Texas is approximately 4 to 5 acres.

Other Parks / Open Space

- **Metropolitan / Regional Parks** - Varies from 5 to over 30 acres per 1,000 residents. In some cities, large greenbelts or open space areas may distort this number.
- **Special Purpose Parks** - These vary greatly depending on the characteristics of each city, and typically have no general target level of service.
- **Linear Parks / Linkage Parks** - Vary considerably from less than 1 acre to over 20 acres per 1,000 residents.
- **Open Space Preserves** - Vary considerably from less than 1 acre to over 50 acres per 1,000 residents, depending on how open space is classified. For example, the surface area of a lake, while not accessible to anyone without a boat, could alter the ratio of open space in a city.



In Georgetown, the overall existing level of parks service is approximately 28.66 acres for every 1,000 residents. This includes a total of 1,360.21 acres of developed and undeveloped land dedicated as parkland (excluding water).



Neighborhood Parks in Georgetown

Neighborhood parks are typically centrally located in a neighborhood or central to the several smaller neighborhoods it serves. Ideally, a neighborhood park would be 2 to 10 acres in size and serve no more than 2,000 to 4,000 residents. They should be integrated into the community in a prominent manner and not layered in as an afterthought.

A pocket park is a type of neighborhood park that serves a smaller number of residents and is therefore smaller in size. They are typically less than an acre in size and provide public gathering places for residents.

Prominence of neighborhood parks reflects the importance of having nearby parks as centerpieces of a neighborhood. The recommended target level of service goal is 3 acres of neighborhood parks for every 1,000 residents.

Georgetown currently has 118.8 acres of city-owned neighborhood and pocket parks, yielding an existing level of service of 2.5 acres of neighborhood park for every 1,000 residents, or 1 acre for every 400 residents of the city.

Existing Level of Service

The recommended level of service for neighborhood parks is 3 acres per 1,000 residents.

City Parks Only

- 118.8 acres of city-owned parks
- Current level of service - 2.5 acres for every 1,000 residents
- Achieving 83% of recommended level of service.

All Neighborhood Parks in Georgetown

- 119.23 acres of neighborhood parks, including 118.8 acres of city parks and 0.43 acres of private neighborhood park
- Current level of service - 2.51 acres for every 1,000 residents
- Achieving 84% of recommended level of service.

Future Needs

The recommended level of service for neighborhood parks is 3 acres per 1,000 residents.

Current 2008 Need

- Estimated Population - 47,466
- Target - 142 acres
- Deficit - 23 acres

Projected 2010 Need

- Projected Population - 53,412
- Target - 160 acres
- Deficit - 41 acres

Projected 2020 Need

- Projected Population - 131,602
- Target - 395 acres
- Deficit - 276 acres



The Georgetown Village neighborhood has 9 pocket parks throughout the subdivision, ranging in size from 0.21 acres to 1.33 acres.



Georgetown Village Pool and Park is an excellent example of a neighborhood park with significant amenities to attract neighborhood users.

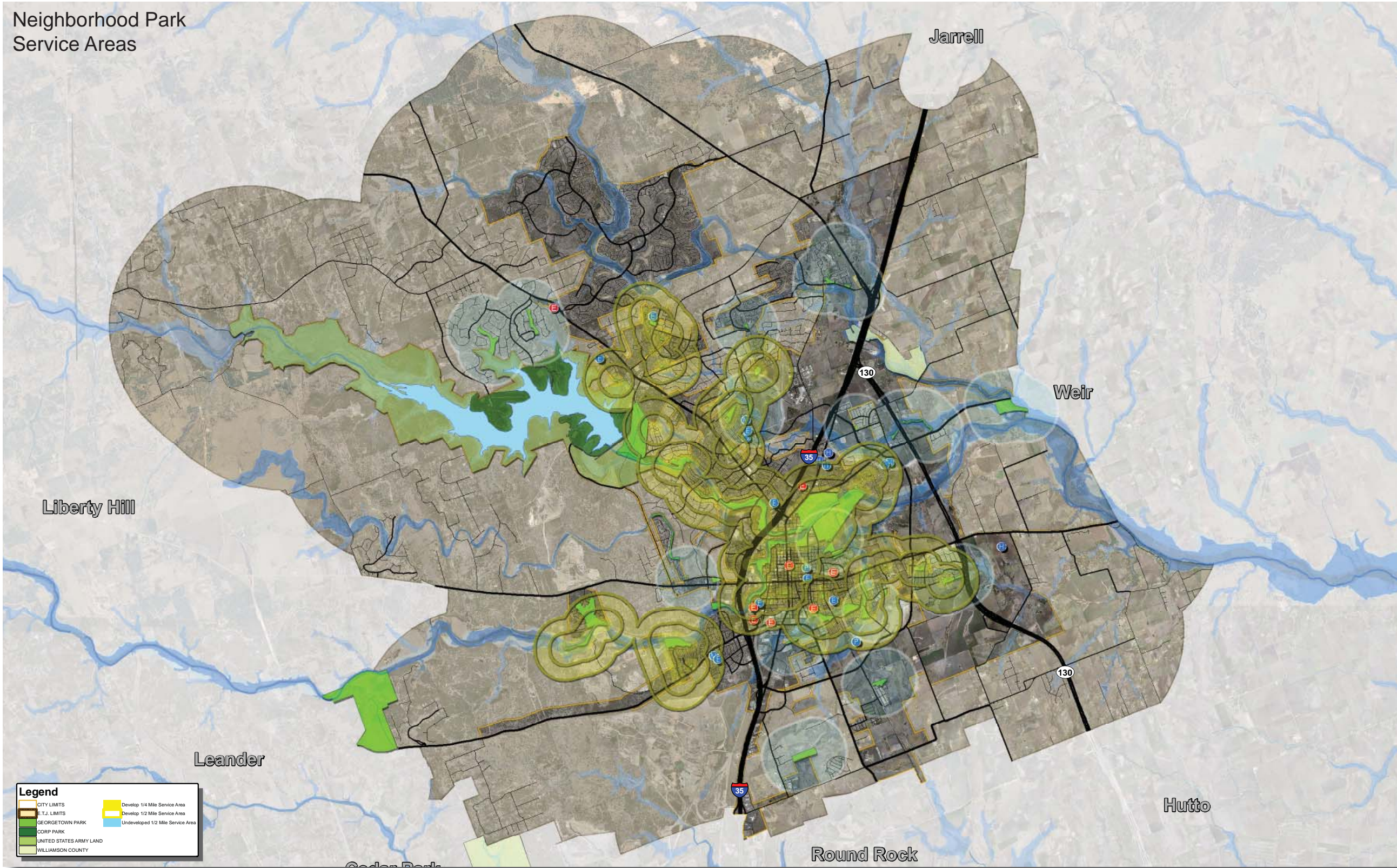
Neighborhood Park Distribution

Since neighborhood parks serve as a central gathering place for neighborhood residents, accessibility is a critical component of neighborhood park, perhaps more so than any other type of park. As discussed earlier, the service area for a neighborhood park is 1/2 mile, excluding areas opposite a major collector or arterial road.

The map on the following page illustrates the distribution and service areas for neighborhood parks in Georgetown.



Neighborhood Park Service Areas



Community Parks in Georgetown

Community parks are large parks that serve several neighborhoods or a portion of a city. They serve as locations for larger community events, sports, and activities and therefore contain many popular recreation and support facilities. Because of the larger service area and additional programs, community parks are more heavily used, increasing the potential for facility deterioration.

The additional facilities associated with a community park increase the spatial requirements necessary for a community park. The recommended standard for community parks is 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents. To achieve well programmed community parks, Georgetown should seek to achieve the upper end of this range.

Georgetown currently has 291.79 acres of city-owned community parks, yielding an existing level of service of 6.15 acres of community park for every 1,000 residents, or 1 acre for every 163 residents of the city. Based on the recommended standard, the City is close to meeting the recommended 8 acres per 1,000 residents.

Existing Level of Service

The standard level of service for community parks is 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents (or 1 acre for every 125 to 250 residents of the city). The recommended target level of service for Georgetown is 8 acres per 1,000 residents.

City Parks Only

- 291.79 acres of city-owned parks
- Current level of service - 6.15 acres for every 1,000 residents
- Achieving 76.8% of recommended level of service.

Future Needs

The recommended level of service for community parks is 8 acres per 1,000 residents.

Current 2008 Need

- Estimated Population - 47,466
- Target - 380 acres
- Deficit - 88 acres.

Projected 2010 Need

- Projected Population - 53,412
- Target - 427 acres
- Deficit - 135 acres

Projected 2020 Need

- Projected Population - 131,602
- Target - 1,053 acres
- Deficit - 761 acres



Rivery Park and Trail is one example of a community park in Georgetown.



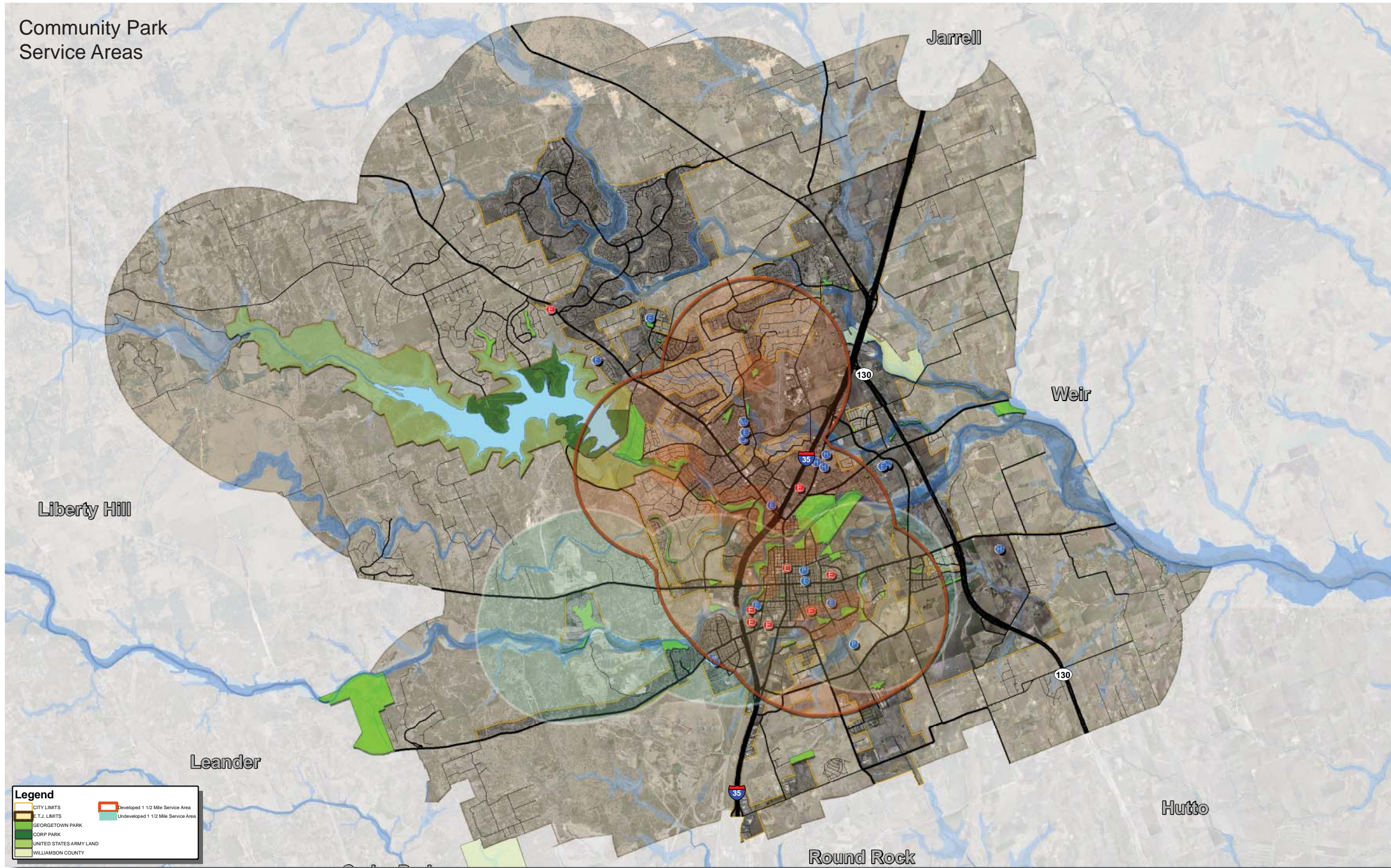
Chautauqua Park

Community Park Distribution

As mentioned, community parks serve a larger portion of the community. While they are typically accessed by car, a typical service area for a community park is 2 miles.

The map on the following page illustrates the distribution and service areas for community parks in Georgetown.





Regional Parks in Georgetown

Regional parks are larger parks within driving distance that serves the entire regional and surrounding communities. Like community parks, they serve as locations for larger community events, sports, and activities.

There are two regional parks in Georgetown that are city-owned and one that is leased from the Corps. These are San Gabriel Park and the undeveloped Garey Park. Booty's Crossing is leased parkland at the base of Lake Georgetown. In addition to the city-owned regional parks there is a county park, Berry Springs, in Georgetown. Further more, Lake Georgetown has four regional parks surrounding it that are Corps operated and owned parks.

Existing Level of Service

The standard level of service for regional parks is 5 to 10 acres per 1,000 residents (or 1 acre for every 100 to 200 residents of the city). The recommended target level of service for Georgetown is 5 to 10 acres per 1,000 residents.

City Parks Only

- 344.97 acres of city-owned parks is developed, 512.94 acres is undeveloped
- Current level of service for developed acreage only - 7.27 acres for every 1,000 residents
- Achieving 73% to 146% of recommended level of service.

Corps, County, and City Parks

- 1,339.59 acres of developed regional parks
- Current level of service for developed acreage only - 24.01 acres for every 1,000 residents
- Achieving 282% to 565% of recommended level of service.

Future Needs

The recommended level of service for regional parks is 5 to 10 acres per 1,000 residents.

Current 2008 Need

- Estimated Population - 47,466
- Target - 237 acres to 475 acres
- Deficit of 130 acres to surplus of 108 acres

Projected 2010 Need

- Projected Population - 53,412
- Target - 267 acres to 534 acres
- Deficit of 189 acres to surplus of 78 acres

Projected 2020 Need

- Projected Population - 131,602
- Target - 658 acres to 1,316 acres
- Deficit - 313 acres to 971 acres

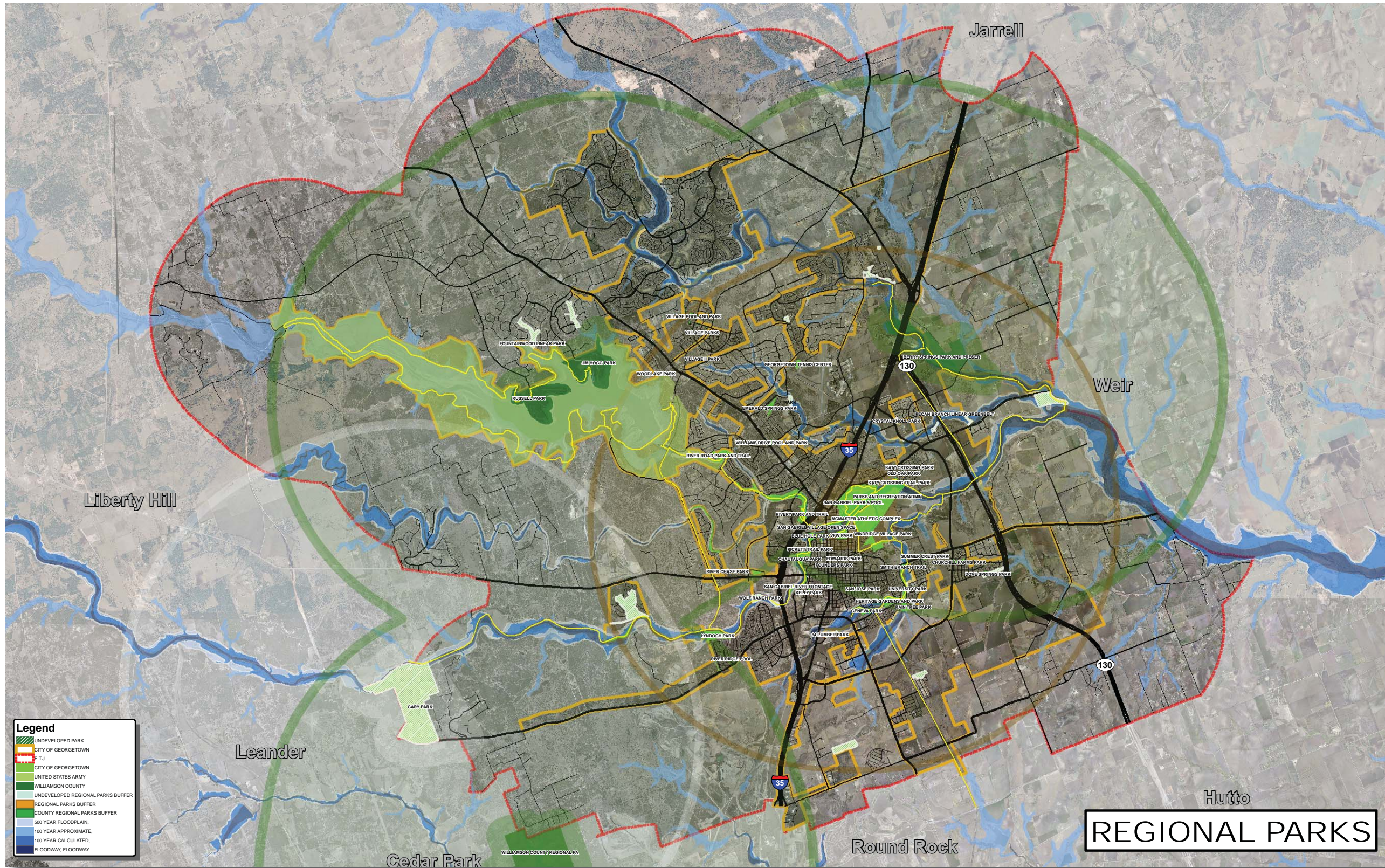


Regional Park Distribution

As mentioned, regional parks serve a larger portion of the community. While they are typically accessed by car, a typical service area for a regional park is 5 miles.

The map on the following page illustrates the distribution and service areas for regional parks in Georgetown.







Swimming Pools

Current Number of Pools: 5 public city-owned pools. Private pool facilities in Georgetown include: 1 pool at Sun City, 1 pool at the Georgetown Country Club, 1 pool at the Berry Creek Country Club, 1 PUD pool in the Churchill Farms subdivision and 1 PUD pool in the Summer Crest subdivision.

Assumptions:

- Average pool size in Georgetown is 543 square yards.
- There is a total of 1,634 square yards of swimming pool space in Georgetown.

Current Level of Service:

1 pool per 9,493 residents (or 0.03 square yards per resident).

Target Level of Service:

1 to 2 square yards per participant, or 1 pool per 20,000 residents.

- Current 2008 need for 47,466 population - 1,424 square yards, or 2 pools.
- Year 2010 need for 53,412 population - 1,602 square yards, or 2 pools.
- Year 2020 need for 131,602 population - 3,948 square yards, or 6 pools.

Key Issues:

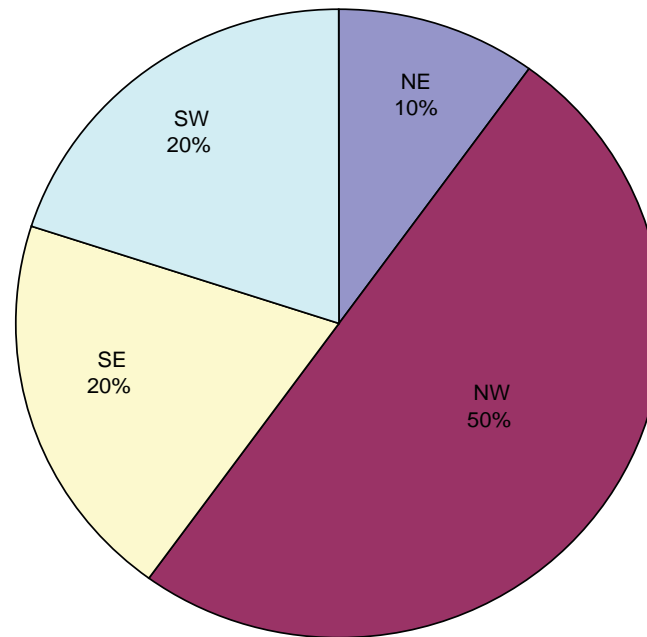
Pools are well distributed throughout the city, with each sector having at least one pool. However, the northwest sector contains the highest share of pools.

Eighty percent of the pools are in good or excellent condition. The former San Gabriel Pool is planned for demolition and a new indoor pool and an outdoor water sprayground features were constructed as part of the Recreation Center expansion. The indoor pool is now open for use and the outdoor spraygrounds area will be open for the 2009 summer season.

Level of Need - Low



Sector Distribution: Swimming Pools



Spray Grounds

Current Number of Spray Grounds: 1 outdoor sprayground area (the spray grounds at the Village Pool have been removed)

Target Level of Service:

1 spray ground per 25,000 residents.

- Current 2008 need for 47,466 population - 2 spray grounds
- Year 2010 need for 53,412 population - 2 spray grounds
- Year 2020 need for 131,602 population - 5 spray grounds

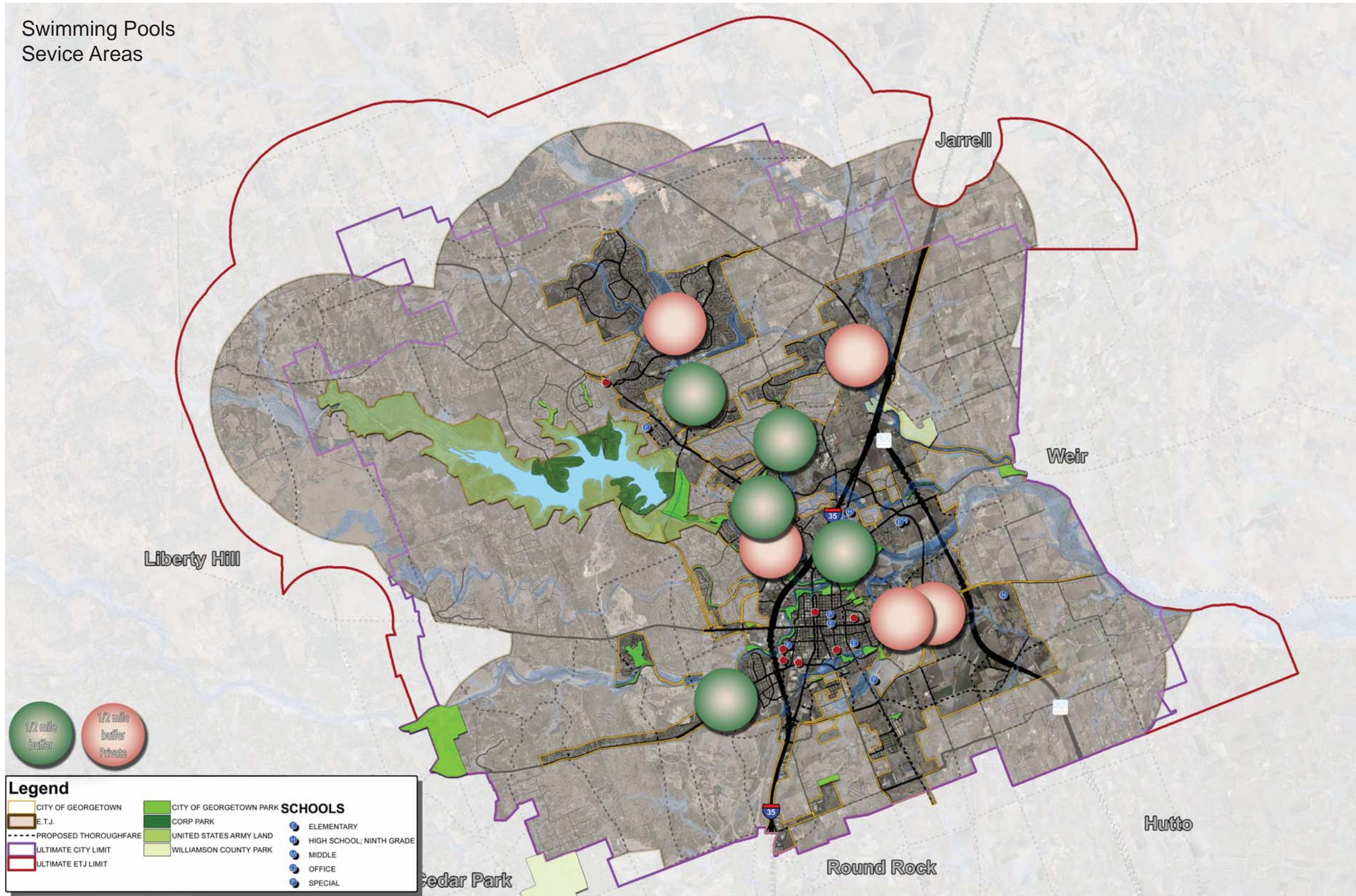
Key Issues:

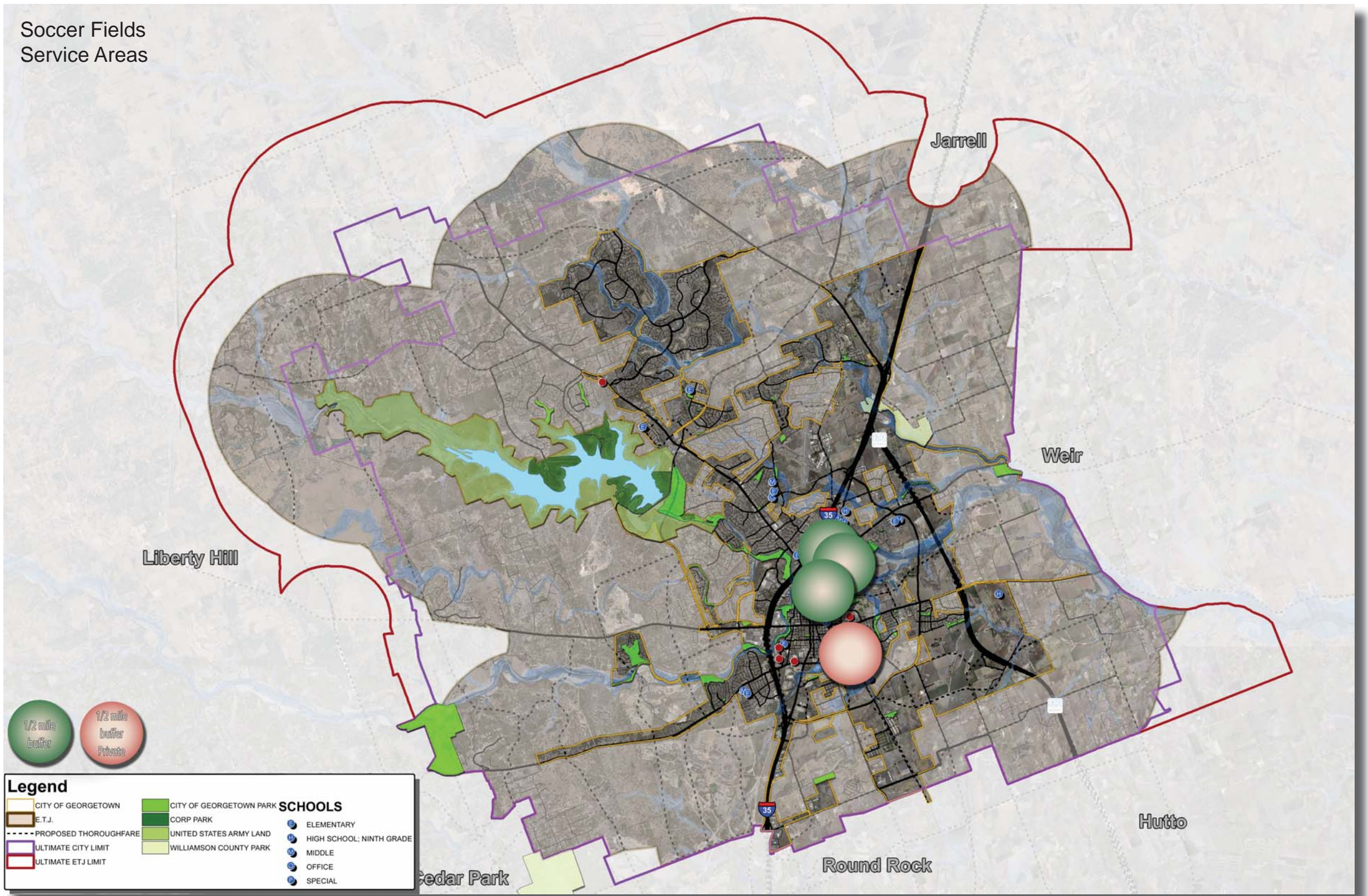
Spray grounds provide a lower cost aquatic facility for cities. They can be built free standing or as part of an aquatic complex. The only outdoor spraygrounds area is now located in San Gabriel Park as part of the recent Recreation Center expansion and will open for the summer 2009 season.

Level of Need - Very High



Swimming Pools
Sevice Areas







Soccer Fields

Current Number of Soccer Fields: 10 public fields and 14 private fields at the Georgetown Soccer Complex.

Assumptions:

- Exclude Georgetown Soccer Complex because paid membership required.

Current Level of Service (city-owned only):

1 soccer field per 4,747 residents.

Target Level of Service:

1 field per 5,000 residents.

- Current 2008 need for 47,466 population - 9 fields.
- Year 2010 need for 53,412 population - 11 fields.
- Year 2020 need for 131,602 population - 26 fields (deficit of 16 fields)

Key Issues:

Currently, city-owned soccer fields are meeting the demand for soccer facilities, but by 2010 will be at a deficit. More pressing is the condition of the fields. Only half of the city's soccer fields are in good or excellent condition. All of the soccer fields are located in the northeast sector of the city, illustrating inequity in the distribution of soccer fields across the city.

Since the soccer fields at the Georgetown Sports Complex are available only to those with membership to the sports club, they are excluded from the level of service analysis.

Level of Need - High





Baseball Fields

Current Number of Baseball Fields (various sizes): 8 city-owned fields at San Gabriel Park.

Current Level of Service:
1 baseball field per 5,933 residents.

Target Level of Service:
1 field per 4,000 residents.

- Current 2008 need for 47,466 population - 12 fields (deficit of 4 fields)
- Year 2010 need for 53,412 population - 13 fields (deficit of 5 fields)
- Year 2020 need for 131,602 population - 33 fields (deficit of 25 fields)

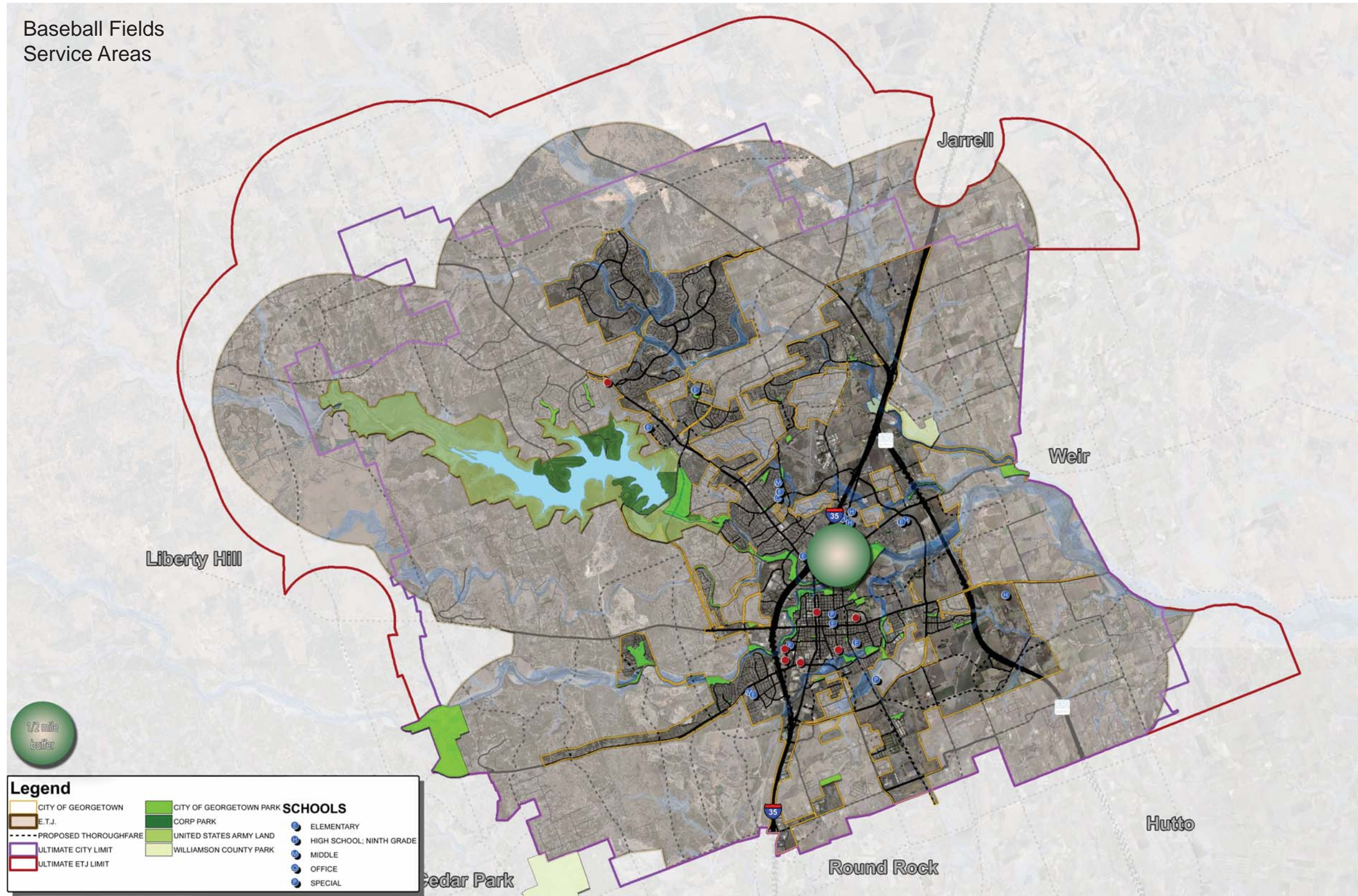
Key Issues:
Currently, city-owned baseball fields are not meeting the demand for baseball facilities, and by 2020 there will be a significant deficit. Only 60% of the city-owned baseball fields are in good or excellent condition, indicating a need for stronger maintenance on the existing facilities and oversight of continued strong maintenance as additional baseball fields are built in the future. The existing fields are maintained and operated by the Georgetown Youth Baseball Association.

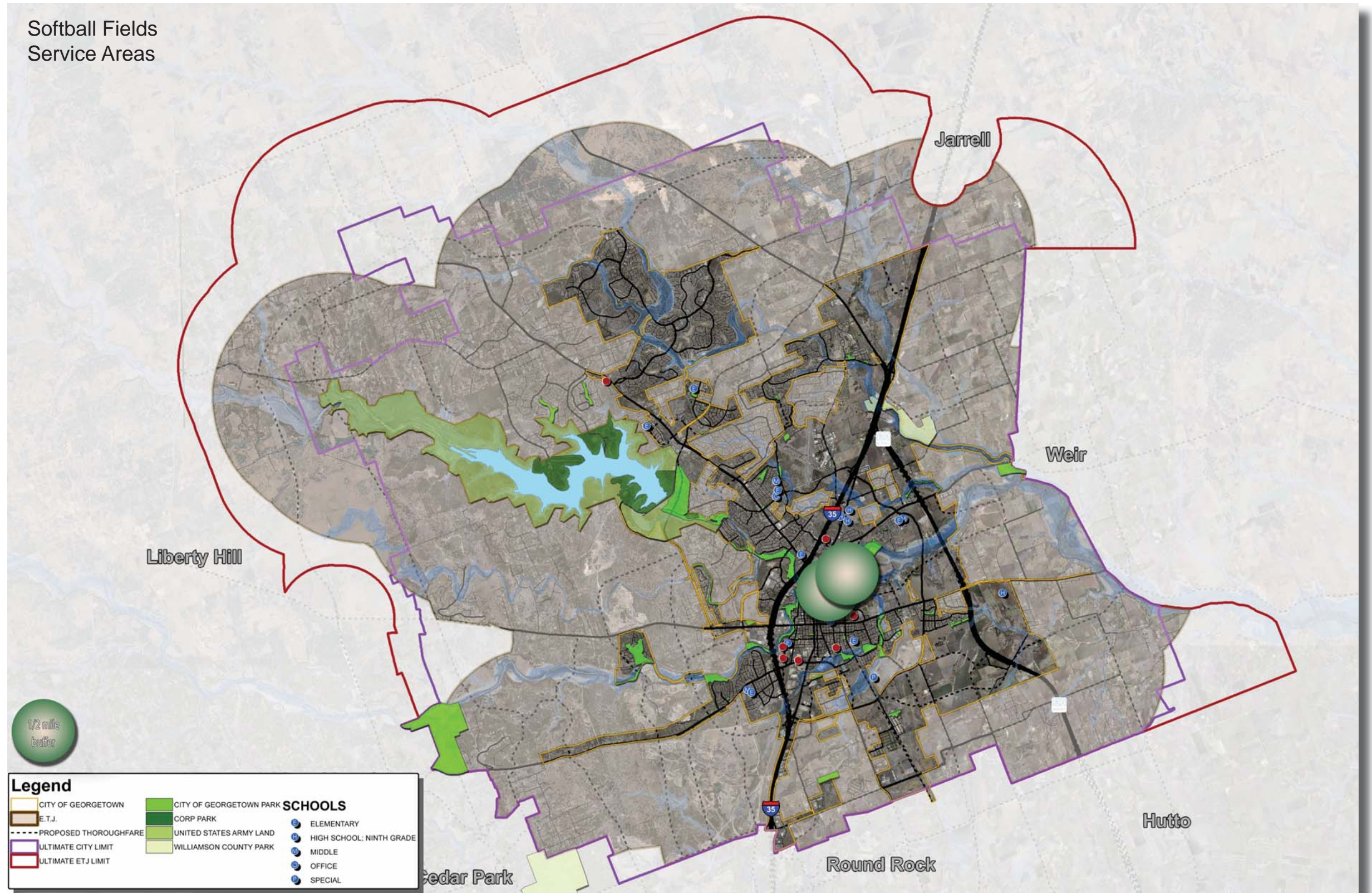
Additionally, there are currently no fields on the west side of IH-35. As the city continues to grow, commute time to the baseball fields on the east side of the town will become an inconvenience for some. Georgetown should develop field on both sides of the city.

Level of Need - High, construction of fields on the west side of IH-35 is very high.



Baseball Fields
Service Areas







Softball Fields

Current Number of Softball Fields: 7 city-owned fields at McMaster Athletic Complex and VFW Park.

Current Level of Service:
1 softball field per 6,781 residents.

Target Level of Service:
1 field per 8,500 residents.

- Current 2008 need for 47,466 population - 6 fields
- Year 2010 need for 53,412 population - 6 fields
- Year 2020 need for 131,602 population - 15 fields (deficit of 8 fields)

Key Issues:

Currently, city-owned softball fields are meeting the demand for softball facilities. Based on 2020 population projections, the city will need 15 softball fields. All existing city-owned softball fields are in good or excellent condition suggesting that the current level of maintenance of softball fields is good.

All softball fields are located at either McMaster Athletic Complex or VFW Park (northeast sector), resulting in an inequitable distribution of softball field facilities.

Level of Need - High





Practice Fields

Current Number of Practice Fields: 4 practice fields.

Current Level of Service:
1 field per 11,867 residents.

Target Level of Service:
1 field per 5,000 residents.

- Current 2008 need for 47,466 population - 9 fields
- Year 2010 need for 53,412 population - 11 fields
- Year 2020 need for 131,602 population - 26 fields (deficit of 22 fields)

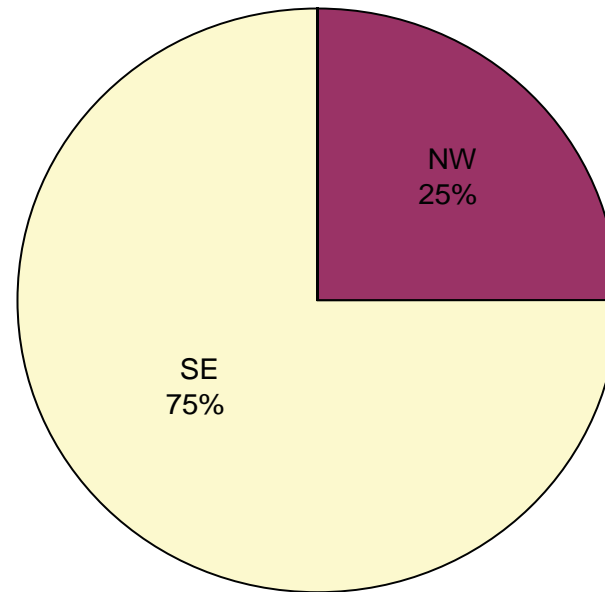
Key Issues:

Practice fields are essential to a community to ensure the quality of game fields are maintained at a higher level. Teams should not practice on the same fields as they play games on if at all possible.

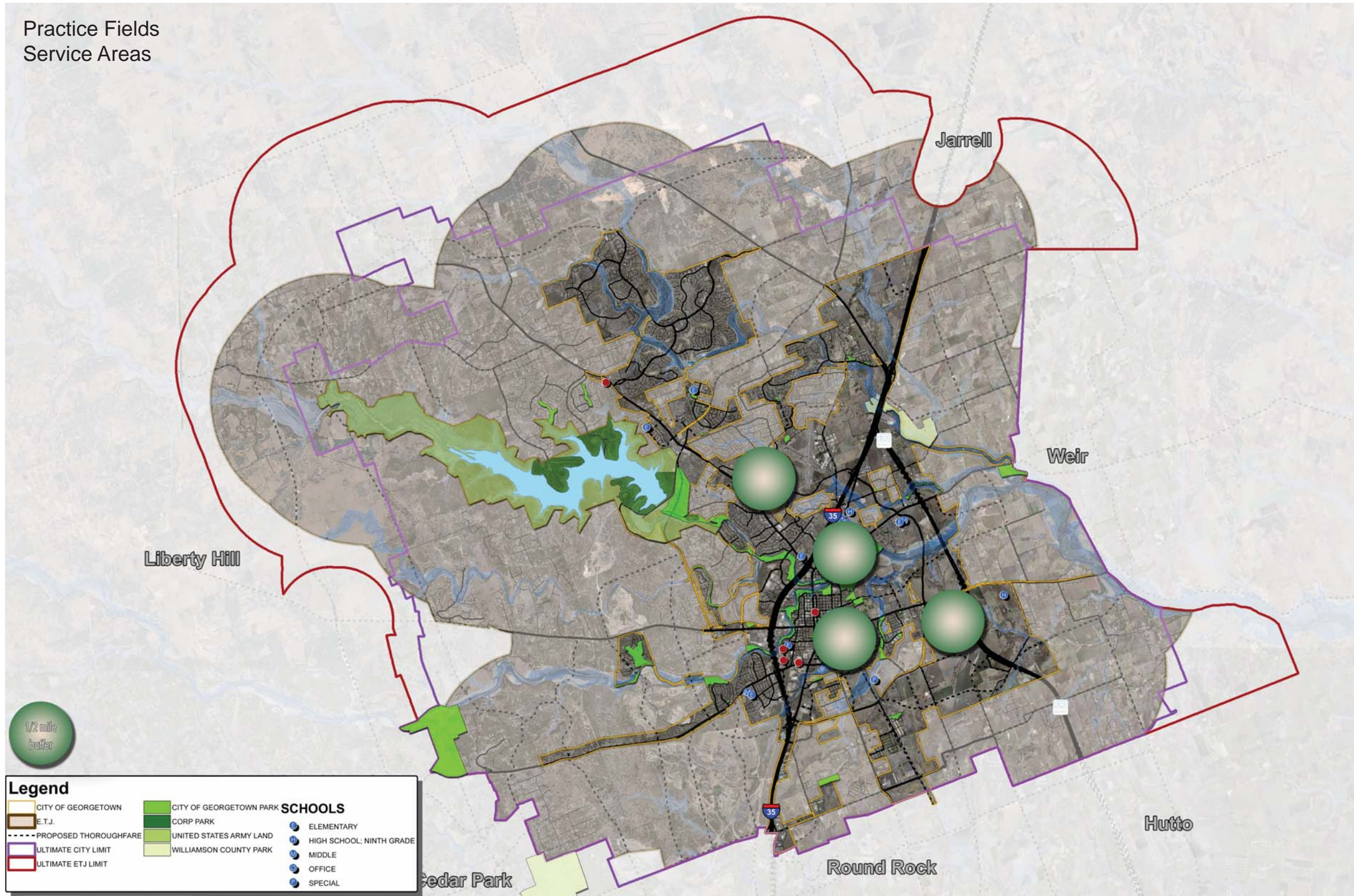
Level of Need - Very High, practice fields for softball / baseball and football / soccer need to be added to all parks where feasible.



Sector Distribution: Practice Fields (Backstops)



Practice Fields
Service Areas





Basketball Courts

Current Number of Basketball Courts: 11 city-owned basketball courts.

Current Level of Service:
1 basketball court per 4,315 residents.

Target Level of Service:
1 court per 7,000 residents.

- Current 2008 need for 47,466 population - 7 courts
- Year 2010 need for 53,412 population - 8 courts
- Year 2020 need for 131,602 population - 19 courts (deficit of 8 courts)

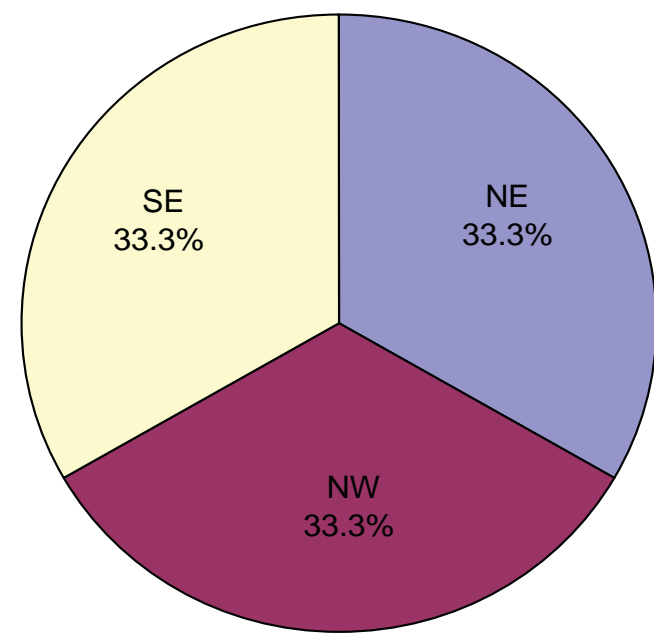
Key Issues:
Basketball courts are well distributed throughout the city, with three sectors containing basketball courts. Many of the existing basketball courts are in poor or adequate condition. Replacement of backboards and netting has been ordered and installation will occur soon.

By 2020 there will be an eight court deficit.

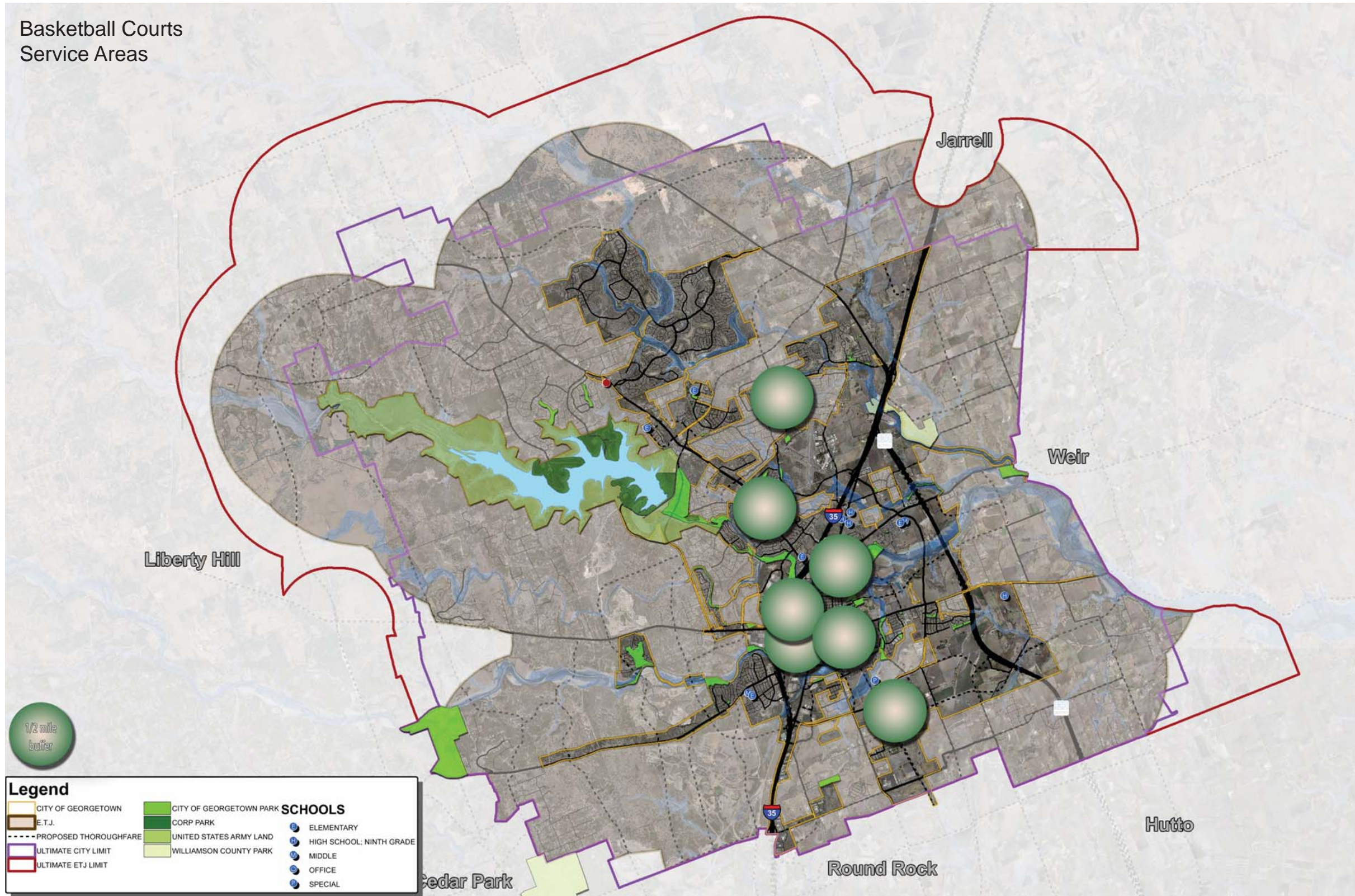
Level of Need - High, as development occurs. Include basketball courts in all neighborhood parks.



Sector Distribution: Basketball Courts



Basketball Courts
Service Areas



Volleyball Courts
Service Areas

