



SAN BENITO, TX

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Supplement to
Comprehensive Plan

DRAFT
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Plan Introduction

The city of San Benito strives to create, maintain and grant a variety of park and recreational opportunities and services targeted at improving the quality of life of the community. Currently the city has a collection of key community park and recreation assets which include the Resaca and Resaca trails, community parks, constructed wetlands and nature refuge, and cultural amenities such as the Freddy Fender Museum and grave site memorial. While San Benito has a foundation for parks and recreation outlets in the city, there is a lot of opportunity for the city to use this plan to improve existing infrastructure, identify new park options and expand existing recreational programs to provide an adequate and easily accessible parks and recreation system that serves citizens young and old. Indeed, an increased focus on park and recreational assets can have synergistic effects in all aspects of the community. These could include improvements to the local economy through job creation, increased sales tax revenue, increased property values, and increased business transactions through lodging, food, and transportation by visitors. It could include social and intangible benefits such as improvements to quality of life for San Benito's citizens; physical, mental, and other health improvements for individuals and families; reduced crime; and an improved sense of community.

Introduction

The city's existing master plan, the *San Benito Parks Master Plan*, was prepared in 2003. In observance of the city's ongoing commitment to park and recreation development and enhancement of community livability, the city initiated this master plan update as part of the greater city of San Benito planning effort. As part of that overall effort, the *San Benito Parks and Recreation Master Plan* will become one of three key plans for the community; the others include the city's *Comprehensive Plan* as well as a *Downtown Revitalization Plan*.

Parks and recreation facilities and programs are an essential part of a healthy, quality environment. They provide very necessary components in human existence for activities beyond homes, schools, and work. Whether for passive or active pursuits, parks and recreation should be a part of everyday life. Therefore, like roads, water, or sewer lines and drainage, parks and related facilities should be considered an integral part of the infrastructure of a city. Increasing population requires planning for infrastructure and recreational systems, while considering the needs and desires of the residents of San Benito. A well-planned, funded, and operated parks and recreation system will serve to attract quality growth, enhance the quality of life of all citizens and the character of the environment. Parks and recreation facilities are also a significant attraction for visitors, and contributes to local tourism and economic development.

The city of San Benito *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (the Plan) is intended to clearly define the role of the city in providing parks and recreation facilities and services for the next 10 years, with an update to the Plan occurring every five years in accordance with the Texas Recreation and Parks Association (TRPA) program requirements.

ROLE OF CITY IN PROVIDING PARKS AND RECREATION

The role of Texas cities in the provision of parks and recreational facilities varies considerably from centralized control and management of these facilities to almost no city involvement. San Benito is one such city that provides parks and recreation facilities. Currently the parks are operated by the Parks and Recreation Department and maintained by the Public Grounds, Park, and Recreation Maintenance Department. The city has an established a Parks and Recreation Board (PRB).

The city is recognizing the need to develop a coordinated parks and recreation system that will meet the varying needs of their community. This includes enhancing and

maintaining existing facilities and increasing the quantity (in real and functional terms) of developed recreation areas. Consideration must be given to the location and size of recreation land. The city must also address the means by which to acquire park and open space, trails and linkages through public and private partnerships, land donation, monies in lieu of land, leases and land acquisition. Land acquisition should be targeted in areas where recreation facilities are lacking. As well as providing the needed parks and programs, the city should encourage direct volunteer and non-profit groups' efforts to initiate and develop both long- and short-term projects that have significant and visible results. Joint-use or lease agreements could be established with other governmental entities, individuals, civic groups, developers, sports associations, school districts, state agencies, railroads, and special districts to maximize recreational use of land.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

- Identify the **needs and desires** of residents for parks and recreational facilities;
- Identify ways the City can address those needs;
- Prioritize the **desired improvements** and developments;
- Establish **park and recreation facilities standards**;
- Continue the process of developing various types and levels of parks;
- Look for innovative ways to **fund new facilities and improve existing recreational sites**;
- Define the future role for the city of San Benito in providing programs and facilities;
- Establish **criteria for equipment, maintenance, staffing, budgeting, and infrastructure** to guide the park and recreation investments of the city for the next 10 years
- Provide the framework for **public/private and public/public (intergovernmental) efforts** to share in the development and maintenance facilities.

In defining the future role of the city of San Benito, this Plan provides recommendations for implementing actions to effectively and efficiently accomplish the desired results. It establishes the basis for the development of parks and recreation as well as the improvement and maintenance of existing parks. The Plan assesses the current and future population and the need to develop a park and recreation system and share the cost with other entities.

This Plan is a community-wide effort that encourages the development of specific park and recreation initiatives to target the needs of citizens. Local initiatives can involve city/community partnerships and cooperation. Within the framework of the Plan, the city, community-based sports leagues, recreation associations, civic organizations and the general public are encouraged to evaluate needs and share resources so that a coordinated system of programs and facilities can be planned, designed, constructed, and maintained. As needs and opportunities are discovered by these entities in the future, initiatives can be incorporated into the city's planning process and Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

This Plan is designed in a manner that follows the guidelines of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Grants-in-Aid Division, for the preparation of a master plan.

PURPOSE AND VALUE

Firstly, the purpose of this update is to comply with the local master plan standard requirements of the Texas Recreation and Parks Account (TRPA) program.

The overall purpose of this plan update is to provide **thoughtful guidance** and **sound direction** to the city in its commitment to acquire, develop, and manage a **an adequate and easily accessible system of parks and recreation facilities and programs** to serve the residents of San Benito.

Administered through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Guidelines for Administration of the Local Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Fund Program require new plans every five years.¹

Secondly, the focus of this update process is intended to accomplish the following:

- Update the demographics using the 2010 Census and American Community Survey data and project the population and park demand requirements to the Year 2035;
- Research and document the recreational programs, services, and resources of other providers within the city to better ensure a complimentary program of offerings to San Benito residents;
- Update and expand the inventories of park and recreation community assets;
- Re-examine and change the standards and prototypical facility improvements, as necessary, based upon the findings of the inventory update and the input of departmental staff;
- Update the current year (2015) and Year 2035 park facility requirements and service area needs;
- Incorporate and address the recommendations and directives found in the updated draft Comprehensive Plan; and,
- Create a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to include a detailed list of needed improvements for each existing park.

This master plan update enables the city to plan in advance for acquiring, developing, and improving individual properties in the context of the city's parks and recreation system, and how it relates to other semi-public or private organizations who also provide park and recreational programs. The benefit of adopting and implementing this Plan is the value it creates for the lives of the community residents. Parks and recreational programs offer opportunities for social interaction, physical fitness and activity, nature observance, and relief from the urban environment. Moreover, parks and recreation facilities are key elements in physically connecting the community. Parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation programs create physical and social links that connect the community, and in turn, enhance livability, and improve overall quality of life, and improve economic competitiveness.

While parks have traditionally been viewed only for their physical attributes, such as their beauty and provision of

¹ Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Local Park Grant Program. Appendix D, Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan Guidelines of the Outdoor Recreation Grant Application. Revised July 2011. http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/pwdforms/media/pwd_1069_p4000_outdoor_grant_application.pdf. Retrieved August 17, 2011.

space for outdoor activity, there is an increasing awareness as to their spin-off values, which include:

- Enhanced social ties and connections within and between neighborhoods, schools, and both formal and informal social networks;
- Improved aesthetic value for the immediate neighborhood and nearby environs by way of preserving natural features, adding amenities, and retaining open space and mature vegetation;
- Improved community identity offering value in attracting visitors and retaining residents;
- Opportunities for better parks and recreation programs and facilities for persons of all ages (youth, adults, and seniors), interests, and abilities;
- Improved health and fitness of community residents made possible by the provision of facilities and programs that promote active living, and offering therapeutic benefit by way of parks, trails, and public spaces;
- Increased fiscal responsibility and efficiencies gained through coordinated programming and shared use of facilities;
- Improved response to the needs of parks and recreation facility users, including the interests of recreation leagues and activity groups;
- Increased opportunities for partnerships and valued relationships with other providers - public, semi-public, and private - of recreation facilities and programs; and,
- Improved quality of life.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND TIMELINES

Parks and recreation facilities are important to the quality of life and health of any community. They provide opportunities for recreation, tourism and preservation of the natural environment. This Plan update is aimed at developing parks and recreation facilities for San Benito that will enhance the quality of life and meet the recreation needs of their residents.

Citizens were an essential part in developing the existing master plan and this update. Those involved in the plan development process included the city parks and recreation staff, who worked closely with the Parks and Recreation Board (PRB) and City Commission, as well as a number of local organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club, and members of the general public. This involvement is important not only in developing this Plan, but in implementing it too. The process was designed to open lines of communication and serve as a basis for improved coordination and collaboration in serving the

residents and visitors of San Benito. Further public input was gathered during public workshops and a survey that were administered during the overall comprehensive planning process. This input was compiled to assist in the formation of the goals and objectives for this Plan update.

CITY COMMISSION

Since the Plan update was part of the greater city of San Benito comprehensive planning effort, the City Commission was engaged from the outset. Accordingly, there was a joint workshop with the PRB to identify area and facility needs and establish implementation strategies and project priorities. The City Commission then held a public hearing at the conclusion of the process to accept public comments, before passing resolution of adoption for submittal to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). The resolution is an essential prerequisite for submitting grant applications to the state for priority projects.

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD

Since the Parks and Recreation Master Plan update was adopted as a supplement to the overall comprehensive plan, it was determined that the Planning and Zoning Board as well as the Board of Adjustment and Appeals would need to review and provide a recommendation to the City Commission. During the course of the project,

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- **67%:** Percentage of the U.S. workforce that is overweight or obese.
- **47%:** Increased likelihood that people who live in neighborhoods with sidewalks get at least 30 minutes of exercise per day.
- **50%:** Increased likelihood that people who live near trails meet physical activity guidelines.

Source: Public Health Institute: Active Living Research

THE VALUE OF PROXIMITY TO PARKS

\$2,262: Estimated sales price premium for homes located near parks.

\$4 Billion: Amount of private investment and development spurred by New York City's High Line Project.

103%: Increase in value for properties within a five-minute walk of the High Line from 2003 (before construction) to 2011

68%: Percentage of U.S. millennials (ages 18-34) who cite proximity to parks as an important community characteristic.

Source: Active Living Research; New York Times/City of New York City; New York City Economic Development Corporation; Urban Land Institute.

the Planning and Zoning Board was engaged during two joint meetings, including the meeting where a priority setting exercise was undertaken.

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD (PRB)

During the course of the project, the PRB met four times to review and offer input to the individual plan drafts, provide direction for recalibrating the facility standards, and to offer help to guide the selection of project priorities. Lastly, the PRB provided comment on the final draft plan and recommended it for consideration by the City Commission.

The PRB meetings held during the course of this Plan update were as follows:

1. **Meeting No. 1** (held August 12, 2014) to kick-off the project, as well as obtain information regarding the current parks and recreation system vision, community needs and issues, and lastly guiding principles.
2. **Meeting No. 2** (held November 10, 2014) to review and offer comment for Chapter 1, *Introduction, Context, and Vision*, and Chapter 2, *Existing Conditions*. In addition, a walking tour of each city park was also conducted.
3. **Meeting No. 3** (held March 17, 2015) to review and offer comment for Chapter 3, *Analysis and Recommendations*, as well as implementation priority setting.
4. **Meeting No. 4** (held June 15, 2015) to review and offer comment for Chapter 4, *Implementation*, and recommend draft of Parks and Recreation Master Plan update to the City Commission and the Planning and Zoning Board for consideration of adoption.

GENERAL PUBLIC

In keeping with a plan principle stating that the public will be involved in all stages of the planning process, there were a variety of opportunities for the community to be involved in this Plan update. The first public input opportunity was during the project kick-off where parks and recreation users and interest groups in the community were asked to participate in small group stakeholder interviews to identify citizen perceptions of parks and recreation deficiencies and needs. Those who attended were asked to offer improvement ideas and preferences, together with their own and collective priorities for the city's parks and recreation program. The input was useful

in developing the Plan's goals and objectives as well as relating the criteria used to prioritize the improvement projects. The meetings were held on August 11-12, 2014. The groups who were represented in these discussion sessions included the following:

- San Benito Parks and Recreation Board;
- Boys and Girls Club;
- Parks and Recreation Department;
- Public Works Department; and,
- Department of Community Grants & Programs.



MINDMIXER: ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM

As part of the comprehensive planning process, the city hosted a MindMixer site to extend additional outreach to its community members by launching a virtual town hall used as an online discussion forum to enable convenient public interaction. The goal of the online discussion forum was to comprehensively identify community needs, including parks and amenities as well as innovative approaches to improve San Benito's prosperity and quality of life. In addition, MindMixer was used to launch the community parks survey to document the needs and preferences of residents.



Promotional cards advertising online discussion forum, MindMixer.



LANDRUM PARK

THIS PLAY AREA
HAS BEEN DESIGNED
FOR CHILDREN 5-12
YEARS OF AGE.
ADULT SUPERVISION
STRONGLY RECOMMENDED
PLAY IT SAFE

landscape structures

“Parks are becoming a bigger part of peoples' lives.”

Socio-economic Snapshot

The following profile summarizes San Benito's demographic and socioeconomic data. These projections and trends pertain to population, race and ethnicity, educational attainment, housing, and employment. Although this summary is only a snapshot in time, it provides insights into the current issues and affirms many community perceptions.

COMPARISON COMMUNITIES

The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics for San Benito are compared to the State of Texas, Cameron County, and six similar communities that were selected for their size, location, and regional economy. These include: Rio Grande City, Donna, Mercedes, Alamo, San Juan, and Weslaco. The selection of data by which these communities have been compared can be found in **Figure 1.1, Population Projection**, **Figure 1.2, Health Behaviors**, and **Figure 1.3, General Characteristics**.

Population Projection

Population projections are an important component of a long-range planning process. They help determine and quantify the demands that will be placed on public facilities and services based on the potential pace and scale of the community's physical growth. Projections reflect local, regional and even national and international trends, and offer a basis to prepare for the future. However, forecasting population changes can be challenging, particularly for the long term, because it is often difficult to account for all circumstances that may arise. Therefore, it will be important for the city to monitor population and economic growth continually to account for both short- and longer-term shifts that can influence development activity and trends in the city and larger region.

The **Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Projection**. The TWDB makes its projections at the county level and then "steps down" these numbers to the city level based on the city share of county population. In 2010, San Benito had six percent of the Cameron County total of 406,220 people. The latest available TWDB projections were prepared before the 2010 Census and projected San Benito would grow to 35,764 persons in 2035.

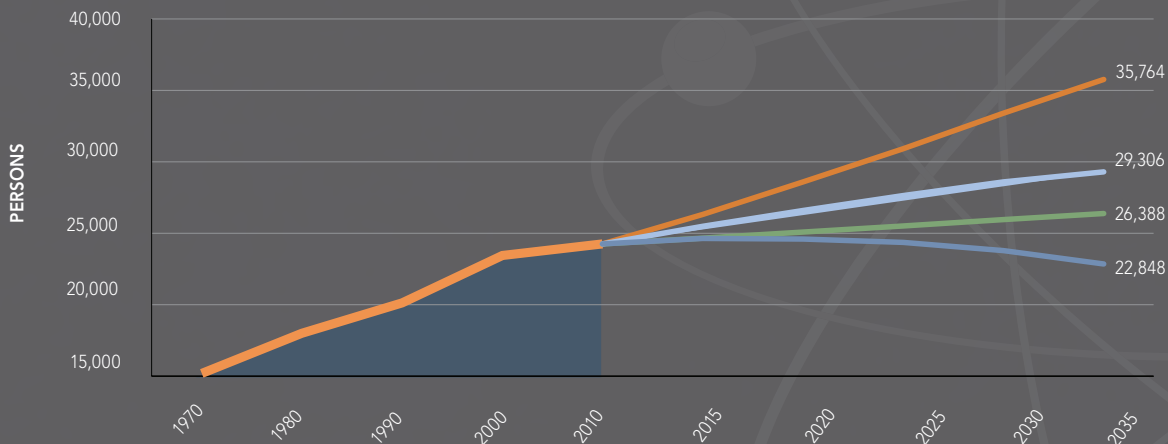
TARGET POPULATION LEVELS

Three potential scenarios illustrate similar or lesser growth than the TWDB projection. For each 2035 total, a growth rate is calculated that would produce that outcome:

- **Target Population of 22,800.** This 2035 population would represent a decrease of 1,400 residents than in 2010 by year 2035. This represents a negative growth scenario for San Benito with the average annual loss rate of a quarter percent (0.25%). This would mean the loss of 56 persons per year.
- **Target Population of 26,300.** This 2035 population would represent 2,100 more residents than in 2010. The average annual growth rate that would yield 26,300 residents is roughly a quarter percent (0.3%) per year. This would mean the addition of 83 persons per year.
- **Target Population of 29,300.** This 2035 population would represent 5,000 more residents than in 2010. The average annual growth rate that would yield 29,300 residents is roughly one percent per year. This would mean the addition of 200 persons per year.

The **Texas State Data Center (TSDC) Projection (Adjusted)**. The TSDC is another excellent resource for population estimates and projections. As with the TWDB, the latest available TSDC projections are from 2010 Census counts. In recent years, TSDC has disseminated four population scenarios for the State of Texas and all its counties that used the same set of birth and death rate (fertility and mortality) assumptions but differed in their assumptions regarding net migration (incoming versus outgoing population). The TSDC scenarios for Cameron County predicted growth that appears highly optimistic (to the 600,000 population range in 2035). The TSDC county predictions were then adjusted to apply to San Benito by determining the percentage of the county's growth that is attributed to the city. In 2010, San Benito's population was six percent of the total population in Cameron County. This methodology utilized a trending and fixed percentage of the county population that is attributed to San Benito. The trending percentage of the county showed a declining percentage of population from Cameron County (from 6 percent to 3.5 percent) that will reside in the city by 2035. On the other hand, the fixed percentage methodology used the six percent of the total Cameron County population from 2010, and held that constant until 2035. Due to such optimistic population growth predicted for Cameron County, the fixed six percent of the county's population for the city predicts substantial growth in population for San Benito.

Figure 1.1 Population Projection



Bottom Line

It is wise for cities to think in terms of a range of potential growth rather than an absolute number given the uncertainty of any small-area forecast that extends beyond a few years. It is assumed that for this Plan update that San Benito’s population will fall within a forecast range of 26,300 to 29,300 persons, which yields a midpoint of 27,800 persons. These population figures represent a potential average annual growth rate ranging from roughly one quarter to one percent through 2035 (from a base of 24,250 persons in 2010).

Figure 1.2 Health Behaviors



Almost 1/3 of San Benito’s adult residents are considered obese.

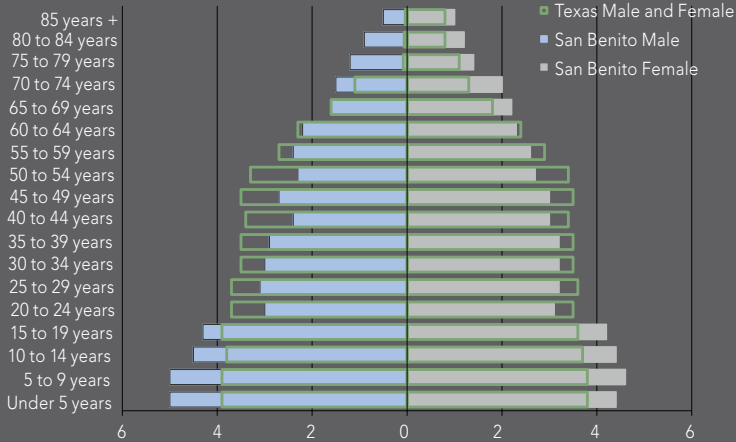
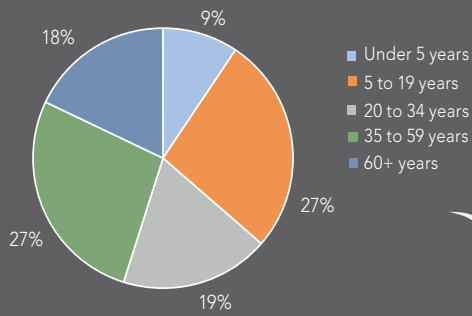
Compared to the state and the U.S., Cameron County has a slightly lower percentage of its population who is obese and is physically inactive; however, the county has a lower degree of access to exercise opportunities than the remainder of the State and the U.S. In order for Cameron County and in particular San Benito, to become a healthier home for its residents, the city must continue to invest in community infrastructure, such as parks and trails as well as the connections to that infrastructure and to increase access to recreational program offerings. Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

	U.S.	Texas	Cameron County
Adult Obesity	31%	29%	27%
Physical Inactivity	28%	24%	21%
Access to Exercise Opportunities	52%	74%	69%

Figure 1.3 General Characteristics

Age

The median age in San Benito is **31**.



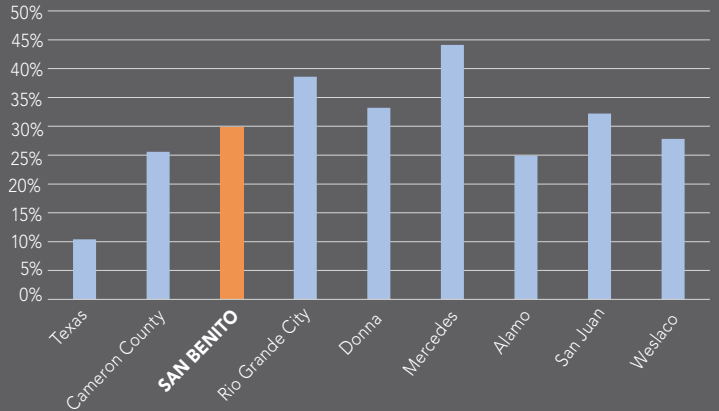
The City of San Benito has a median age (31) that is younger than the state (33.6), yet on par with the county (30.6) and in the middle among comparison communities. With respect to the Age and Gender Cohorts, there are four age cohorts in San Benito that stand out compared to the State; these age cohorts include the age groups of 19 years of age and younger. These age groups have higher numbers than the state average which results in the slightly younger median age for the city. The analysis of age cohorts is noteworthy because it contradicts the general trend of an aging population elsewhere in the county. The age cohort analysis for San Benito shows that there is a significantly higher number of young children and elderly compared to a reduced number of work force age groups compared to the State. This indicates that the city should emphasize the enhancement of services and programs that serve the elderly as well as the younger residents. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (DP1).

Financial Assistance and Poverty



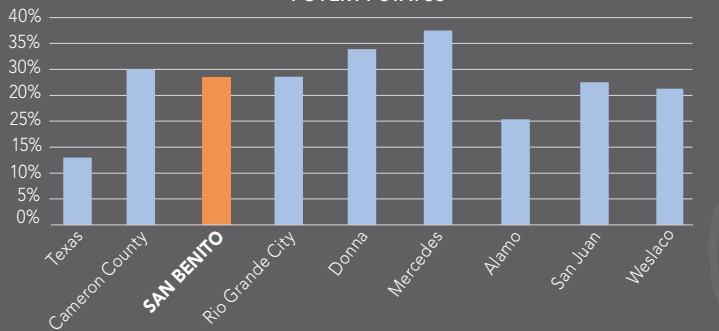
Families with Food Stamps: Almost 30 percent of San Benito's population receive food stamps which is greater than the county (25.6%) and the state (10.4%). Relative to the comparison communities, the city falls within the middle half of communities receiving financial assistance. San Benito is part of a region that has a lower median household income and relies on federal programs for its citizens. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (DP03, S2201).

FAMILIES WITH FOOD STAMPS



Poverty Status: As of the 2010 Census, roughly one third (28%) of the residents of San Benito were living in poverty, over twice the state average (13%). This data indicates that there is reliance on the city to provide programs and services that support impoverished residents, as well as provide outlets for future employment and community support. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (DP03, S2201).

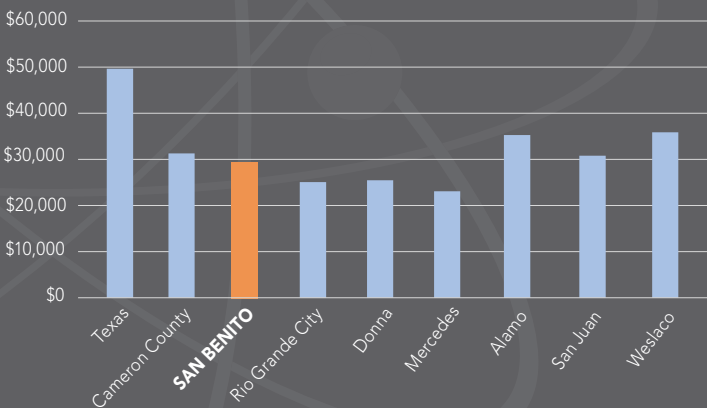
POVERTY STATUS



Household Income



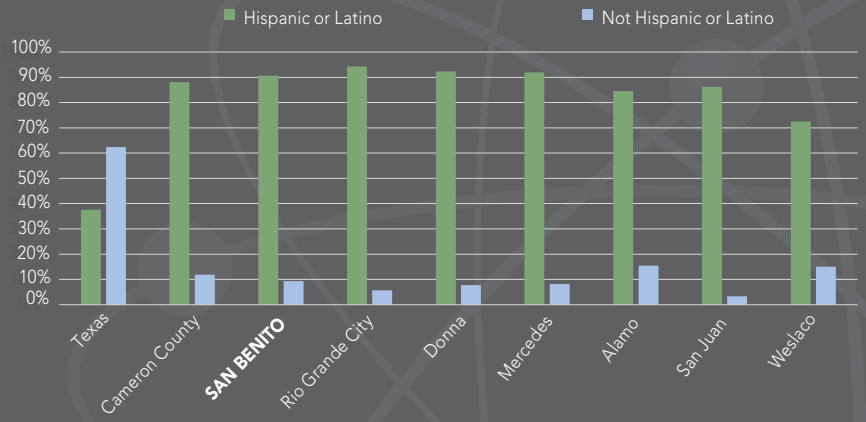
INTRODUCTION



San Benito falls in the middle of the comparison communities on median household income; yet, the city median household income is only 60 percent of the State median (\$49,646). As a result, San Benito and the region have a different standard of living compared to the State; however, the city and surrounding region can focus on avenues to keep housing costs in line with household income. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (DP03).

Hispanic Population

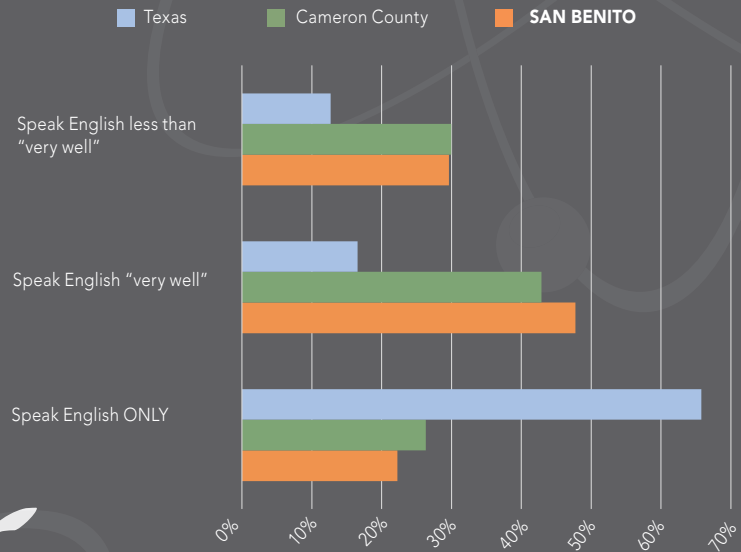
Consistent with the county, San Benito and its comparison cities have populations that are predominately Hispanic. As population is predicted to increase in the region in the coming years, the large presence of Hispanic and Latino residents will continue to create opportunities across cultural, educational and economic spheres. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (B02001)



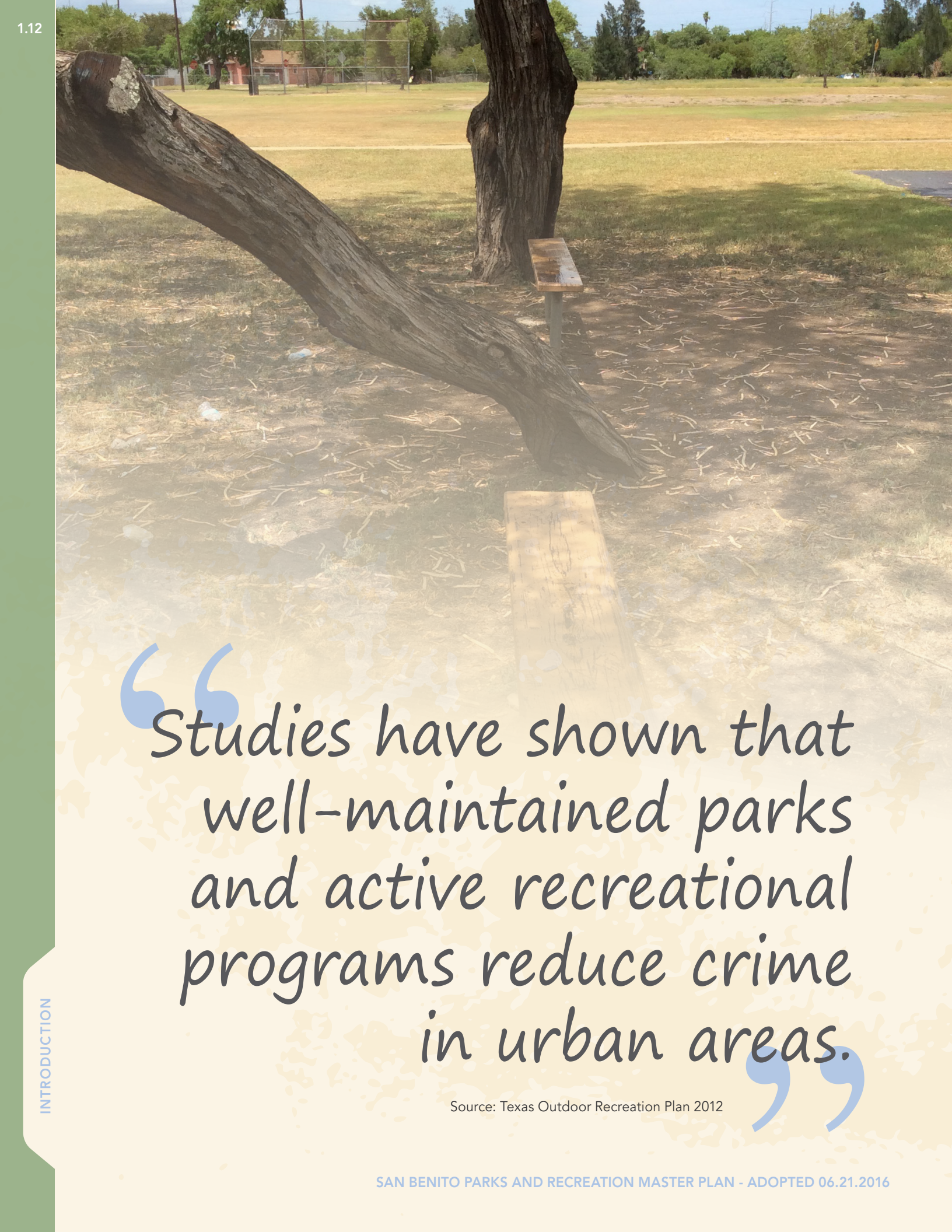
INTRODUCTION

Race	Texas	Cameron County	SAN BENITO
White Alone	70.4%	87%	76.2%
Black or African American	11.87%	0.5%	0.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%
Asian Alone	3.8%	0.7%	0.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0%	0%
Some Other Race Alone	10.5%	9.8%	20.5%
Two or More Races	2.7%	1.5%	2.4%

English Proficiency



In terms of English proficiency, nearly 30 percent of San Benito residents speak English less than "very well." This is important in the work of the parks and recreation department in the way its programs are communicated to the community, and also how parks are signed. This number is on par with the county, and more than double that of the state (13%). (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 ACS (B16001).



“Studies have shown that well-maintained parks and active recreational programs reduce crime in urban areas.”

Source: Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan 2012

Public Engagement Summary

The following list, included within **Table 1.1, Public Engagement Summary**, identifies key issues expressed by residents and stakeholders. They have been phrased as questions (in no specific order) to provide a structure for addressing these issues in each respective chapter. The solutions to these issues will have a dramatic effect on the city's sustainability and livability over the next 20 years and beyond.

Table 1.1 Public Engagement Summary

ISSUE	QUESTION
Park and Recreation Facility Maintenance	How can we ensure that annual maintenance of parks and recreation facilities be included within the city's overall budget?
Promoting Public Health	How can we continue to promote parks and trails, such as the Resaca trails for becoming a healthier community?
Creation of New Parks	What can we do to identify appropriate space for new parks throughout the City? In addition, how can we ensure that parks are distributed evenly throughout the city?
Connectivity	How can we continue to build a system of trails that connect parks, recreation facilities and important cultural spaces, such as the Freddy Fender museum and grave site, in the city?
Recreation	How can we promote and invest in local assets to increase recreational options in San Benito, such as the funding for a new community pool?
Pedestrian Safety	How can we improve walkability via sidewalks and crosswalks improvements to promote a safer and more connected San Benito?
Reuse and Re-purposing of Major Community Properties	What are the opportunities and constraints of potential reuse and re-purposing of existing communities facilities (e.g., old airport, decommissioned La Palma power plant)?
Multi-Use Community Center	How can the city form public-private partnerships to fund a multi-use, multi-event community center?
Regional Eco-tourism	How can we promote the local reconstructed wetlands to increase regional eco-tourism?

PARK AND RECREATION SURVEY RESULTS

As part of the overall San Benito comprehensive planning process, a simple opinion questionnaire was made available on MindMixer as well as in paper form during the "Big Picture" Outreach Workshop, which resulted in the completion of surveys by 148 residents. The survey was announced to the public via a press release, the city website, the city Facebook page, and email distribution.

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives form the foundation by which the city will manage and operate its park and recreation system. They represent the values of San Benito, achieved through the citizen participation and involvement process, and its vision for developing and most importantly sustaining a “first-class” system of accessible parks; passive and active recreation areas; public and private open space, trails, and greenways; and preserved natural resources. Goals and objectives also assist the parks and recreation department, PRB, and City Commission in making necessary decisions regarding the provision and improvements of parks and recreation areas and open space, and to identify priorities for ongoing development of a comprehensive parks and recreation system.

A Parks and Recreation Master Plan that is acceptable to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department requires that goals and objectives be established for the area-wide jurisdiction included in the plan. For San Benito, this includes the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The goals are intended to guide the development of parks and recreation facilities in the community over the next 10 years.

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE OF GOALS

Goals are the stated desires of a community, which serve to express the needs and priorities of the citizenry through broad statements of policy. Without goals, it is difficult for a community with diverse backgrounds, opinions, and interests to collectively agree on common ground in terms of direction the community should take to achieve its desired outcomes. An important purpose in establishing goals is to enhance the awareness of citizens as to the broad interests of the population and to encourage communication and collaboration in seeking a unified approach to implementation.

The goals should be based on a series of general planning principles to ensure that there is a balance between the interests of the public and private sectors; indoor and outdoor opportunities and the management of space, services and facilities. These principles include:

- There should be equal access to recreational areas, activities, services and facilities regardless of personal interest, age, gender, income, cultural background, housing environment, or disability;
- Public recreation should be highly coordinated with other public and private entities to encourage cooperation and avoid duplication;
- Facilities should be well planned and coordinated to ensure adequate adaptability to future needs and requirements;
- The availability of financial resources should be considered in all phases of planning, acquisition, development, operation and maintenance of spaces and facilities;
- Public participation is critical to the eventual success of the parks and recreation system, and should, therefore, be included in all stages of the process;
- The planning process should offer continuous opportunities for incremental evaluation and review;
- Existing plans that affect the area should be integrated into the final recommendations and ultimately in implementation;
- There should be established procedures for acquiring land and future park and recreation areas and facilities; and,
- The design of spaces and facilities should encourage the most efficient utilization of land and consider the needs, desires and opinions of the intended users.

OBJECTIVES - ACHIEVING THE GOALS

Objectives are the strategies to be used in attaining the desired outcomes envisioned by the goals. These strategies are not action steps or policies in and of themselves, but rather are means for achieving the stated ends. Objectives generally answer the question of “how” the goals are to be achieved. Typically, there are several avenues available to reach the same goal or a portion of a goal, although each may offer a different approach.

i GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Goals are broad while objectives are narrow.
- Goals are general intentions; objectives are precise.
- Goals are intangible; objectives are tangible.
- Goals are abstract; objectives are concrete.
- Goals can't be validated as is; objectives can be validated.
- Action recommendations are the step-by-step actions needed to implement and achieve the goals and objectives.

The following are the goals and objectives for the San Benito Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

GOAL 1 :

PROVIDE A RANGE OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES THAT WILL ACCOMMODATE THE CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY'S RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

Objective 1A: Assure an even geographic distribution of parks and recreation facilities that will provide equitable opportunity activities and access for all citizens.

Objective 1B: Provide parks and recreation opportunities for all persons including low income, elderly, youth-at-risk and handicap citizens, recognizing the importance of accessible public facilities.

Objective 1C: Provide a variety of recreational opportunities including cultural and community activities and special events that meet the passive and active recreational needs of the city.

Objective 1D: Provide facilities for active and passive recreation activities based on the local needs and desires identified in the parks and recreation needs assessment survey.

GOAL 2 :

PROVIDE APPROPRIATE NEW RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING.

Objective 2A: Incrementally acquire and develop parkland (through lease agreements, donations and/or partnerships) to meet local requirements and needs for park acreage for the projected population in 10 years.

Objective 2B: Incrementally acquire land (through lease agreements, donations and/or partnerships) in identified areas that are deficient in specific types of parks.

Objective 2C: Develop indoor recreation facilities as needed and desired by the community.

GOAL 3 :

PROMOTE AND ENGAGE IN THE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Objective 3A: Identify and acquire (through lease agreements, donations and partnerships) existing natural

resources which warrant protection, conservation and/or enhancement; provides habitats for wildlife and endangered species or provides natural open spaces suitable for parks, recreation and both environmental and historical preservation of sites.

Objective 3B: Encourage the preservation of open space by individuals, corporations, non-profits and public agencies to enhance the livability, aesthetic value and natural beauty of the city by providing development incentives, regulations and policies.

Objective 3C: Incorporate local natural features (e.g., the area around the Resaca) and cultural amenities (e.g., museums and memorials) into parks and recreation planning and development.

Objective 3D: Build historic and cultural value into parks and public open space through programs, festivals, and other special activities.

GOAL 4 :

DEVELOP A PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK OF SIDEWALKS, TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY-WIDE CONNECTIVITY.

Objective 4A: Develop greenbelt corridors, bicycle and pedestrian trails and routes, and linear parks that can provide a safe secure connection between homes and parks, recreation areas and facilities as well as schools, local businesses and activity centers.

Objective 4B: Appropriately develop floodways, drainage ways, railroad corridors, power line easements and other rights-of-way and easements for trails and walk ways.

GOAL 5 :

MAINTAIN, ENHANCE, AND OPERATE THE EXISTING PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM IN A COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER.

Objective 5A: Develop and implement a parks and recreation improvement program which identifies and prioritizes improvements for each of the current and future city facilities.

Objective 5B: Improve the maintenance of all parks and recreation areas and facilities by funding preventative maintenance schedules.

Objective 5C: Look for innovative ways to finance park improvements and activities through user fees, fundraising, sponsorships and other sound fiscal methods.

GOAL 6 :

ESTABLISH COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND COORDINATED EFFORTS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTAL JURISDICTIONS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND PRIVATE SECTOR ENTITIES.

Objective 6A: Develop mutually beneficial relationships with the school district to include not only joint acquisition of land, but also joint and effective use of both school and municipal buildings and facilities.

Objective 6B: Encourage other partnerships with local and regional entities to avoid duplication and capitalize on the synergistic benefits that could be realized through the combined efforts and resources of all of these organizations.

GOAL 7 :

ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE ORGANIZATION THROUGH THE CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE STAFF AND DEPARTMENT.

Objective 7A: Continue to support existing staff regarding their professional development.

Objective 7B: Consider expanding park and recreational department staff to increase recreational program offerings and increased maintenance.

GOAL 8 :

DESIGN NEW PARK AND RECREATION AREAS AND FACILITIES (AND REVITALIZE AND REDEVELOP EXISTING AREAS AND FACILITIES) IN A MANNER THAT IS SAFE, DURABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE LONG INTO THE FUTURE.

Objective 8A: Consider all first and long-term costs (e.g., construction and maintenance costs) when making all decisions in park acquisition, design, construction, maintenance, and operations.

Objective 8B: Consider how parks and recreation areas can be designed and used to reduce crime on-site and in surrounding areas.

Vision and Mission

A vision statement incorporates a shared understanding of the nature and the purpose of the community, and uses this understanding to move toward a greater purpose. This statement describes the community's preferred future, offering direction for the goals and objectives that provide a framework for future planning, development, and programmatic decisions.

The vision for the San Benito Parks and Recreation system is as follows:

BY THE YEAR 2035, SAN BENITO WILL BE KNOWN FOR A WELL-CONNECTED AND MAINTAINED PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM WHERE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS OF ALL AGES HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEALTHY, PHYSICALLY FIT, AND SOCIALLY CONNECTED.

SAN BENITO ENVISIONS ACHIEVING THIS BY BEING STRATEGIC WITH ITS LAND ACQUISITION AND FORWARD THINKING WITH NOT ONLY DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND INITIAL CAPITAL COSTS - BUT STAFFING, OPERATIONS, AND LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE AS WELL. THIS INCLUDES THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES ON AN ANNUAL BASIS AND A GREATER COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY BUILDING AND RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING.

To implement this vision, the Parks and Recreation Department staff utilize this mission to guide their daily decision making:

WE PLEDGE TO PROVIDE THE CITIZENS OF SAN BENITO AND THOSE WHO VISIT THE HIGHEST QUALITY SERVICE. IN ADDITION, WE WILL PROVIDE FUN, SAFE, PROPERLY-MAINTAINED PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO MEET THE SOCIAL, PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.

A photograph of a park area with a body of water, a bridge, and people fishing. The scene is set outdoors with a clear blue sky and some clouds. In the foreground, a grassy bank slopes down to the water. Three people are visible: one sitting in a folding chair on the left, one standing in the middle, and one sitting in a folding chair on the right. A bridge spans the water in the background, with trees and buildings visible on the far side. A large black cylindrical structure is on the right side of the image.

“ Parks are a vital component of the community and minimize long term avoidable costs associated with public safety, health and the local economy. ”

Source: Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan 2012



Existing Conditions

San Benito currently offers a range of park and recreational assets and facilities that allow for active and passive recreational opportunities for its residents and visitors. These include several well-established community parks (e.g., Stookey Park) and a highly-used linear trail system (e.g., Heavin Resaca Trail) in Kennedy Park, among others. This chapter identifies each existing park and recreation asset and categorizes it according to National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) classification criteria (e.g., community parks versus neighborhood parks). These classifications are important as they are then tied to an analytical needs assessment (located in Chapter 3, Analysis and Recommendations) identifying gaps and or overlaps in the distribution of park availability. In other words, they help to determine how accessible and viable the park and recreation system is for San Benito residents and visitors. In addition, a complete inventory and condition assessment is included identifying the quantity and quality of facility, amenity, and piece of equipment. This information is used to determine priority areas for improvements (e.g., addressing worst facility/equipment conditions first) and a park-by-park Capital Improvement Program (analyzed against facility and equipment standards found in Chapter 3, Analysis and Recommendations, and documented in a Capital Improvement Plan in Chapter 4, Implementation).

Introduction

While this chapter provides a breakdown of the various city-owned and maintained parks and recreation assets, it does not include additional city assets (e.g., rights-of-way, monuments, statues, esplanades, or other public spaces) that may be maintained by the parks and recreation department but do not have a recreational focus. See **Table 2.1, Existing Parks**, (next page), for a general overview of the city's park and recreation assets.

CITY PARK AND RECREATION ASSETS

The role of Texas cities in the provision of parks and recreational facilities varies considerably from centralized control and management of these facilities to almost no city involvement. The city of San Benito is one such city that provides parks and recreation facilities. Currently the parks are operated by the Parks and Recreation Department and maintained by the Public Grounds, Park, and Recreation Maintenance Department. The City has an established a Parks and Recreation Board (PRB).

PARKS AND RECREATION CLASSIFICATIONS AND STANDARDS

Standards provide measures to determine the amount of land needed for parks and recreation to meet the demands and desires of citizens and visitors. Parks and recreation standards are typically expressed in terms of acres of land dedicated for parks and recreation use per unit of population. While general standards are useful, it is important to establish standards that are based upon unique local considerations such as participation trends, user characteristics, demographics, socioeconomics, climate, natural environment, and other considerations. Leisure, recreation and health values are unique to each municipality; therefore, the standards should represent the interests and desires of the community.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) published the Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines to establish nationally applicable criteria for the provision of parks and recreation facilities and open space. These standards serve as a guide for parks and recreation planning, but do not replace reasonable judgment or specific local needs. The needs and desires of the citizens of San Benito justify continued development of parks, recreation, and open space to meet the specific needs and requirements of the community. The adopted standards reflect the values and interests of the city's parks and recreation users.

LOCAL PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND STANDARDS

A variety of sizes and types of parks and recreation facilities are recommended to satisfy diverse individual interests, ensure adequate and equal opportunity and to encourage use by all population groups.

Standards for parks and recreation areas and open space are helpful to identify the community's parks and recreation needs based upon its population. The population ratio method is commonly used to determine a level of standard for parks and recreation space. Using a standard that is based upon a unit of population, for example, "x" number of acres per 1,000 persons allows simple quantification of park area needs. The use of the current population determines the level of adequacy of the existing parks and recreation areas and facilities.



RESACA TRAILS

A huge success from the past parks master planning effort was the funding of the Heavin Resaca Trails, which run for 2.76 miles along the Resaca from Business-77 to Expressway 83. These linear trails have become a central park of the community, for the youth, elderly, and families of San Benito - all who come to the Resaca at all times of the day and into the night to socialize and get exercise using this great community asset.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM PREVIOUS PLAN

As a testament to the benefit of planning for parks and recreation improvement, the following are some of the successes that have been accomplished from the San Benito Parks Master Plan originally adopted back in 2003. The proposed improvements, which had a predominant focus on utilizing the city's natural resacas as a recreational amenity, have been developed over the course of the last decade, and include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Develop a trail through Kennedy Park within the Resaca easement (completed and widely used by the general public);
- ✓ Acquire land for additional trail access (completed and additional trail segments have been added to the system);
- ✓ Develop a play station (completed in several areas along the trail system);
- ✓ Provide benches, trash receptacles, and picnic tables along the trail (completed in several areas along the trail system);
- ✓ Seek funds for a Parks Director (hired);
- ✓ Consider the feasibility of a skateboard park (completed and under consideration for relocation and expansion due to high-use); and,
- ✓ Develop an amphitheater (completed).

Table 2.1
Existing Parks

PARK	ACRES	TYPE
Stookey Park	27.0	Community
Landrum Park	2.1	Neighborhood
Falligant Park	2.1	Neighborhood
Kennedy Park (with Heavin Resaca Trails)	30.2	Linear Parks and Greenways
Dick Welch Park	0.2	Pocket Park
Plaza de San Benito	2.0	Special Use
Valencia Park	0.1	Pocket Park
Veterans Memorial Park	0.5	Special Use
Skate Park	0.2	Special Use
Heavin Park	2.1	Special Use
TOTAL	66.5	

Note: The city has three developing properties that the parks department is working towards parkland status on. These properties include: Wetlands, Fairgrounds land, and obtained parcels behind Fire Station #1.

The development of standards for parks and recreation areas is dependent upon local population characteristics. For example, a community with a substantial portion of its population in younger age groups will require standards much different from a community with a more mature population. Young adults and youth require facilities for active recreation whereas mature adults are more interested in leisure activities and passive recreation. A well-designed parks and recreation system will account for the needs of all users including children and mature adults. The standards adopted should reflect the uniqueness of the population and represent the interests and desires of the park users.

San Benito has nine existing parks which occupy roughly 66.5 acres within the city. These parks include one community park, two neighborhood parks, one linear park and greenway, two pocket parks, and three special use parks. In addition to the existing parks, the city is in the process of developing three new parkland properties which include a man-made constructed wetlands park (used for tertiary wastewater treatment), a proposed neighborhood park (proximate to Fire Station #1), and lastly a potential community park on a little used fairgrounds property.

Park Classifications

As set out in **Table 2.2, Park Classifications**, are the criteria that generally establish how each park is classified in the park and recreation system. These classifications will be used to help determine the locations and needs for existing and future parks which is determined in **Chapter 3, Analysis and Recommendations**.

Table 2.2 Park Classifications

PARK TYPE	DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
Pocket Park	Use: Serves a concentrated or limited population within an immediate proximity. Examples are a tot lot in or near an apartment complex or a vacant lot developed as a passive park with sidewalks and benches.
	Service Area: Immediate development or neighborhood.
	Desirable Size: 0.25 to 1.0 acre.
	Acres/1,000 population: 0.25 to 0.50 acre.
Neighborhood Park	Site Characteristics: Close proximity to high-density developments.
	Use: For residents in neighborhoods within walking distance. Facilities are for active recreation and playground use, i.e., sport courts and fields, playscape areas, playground equipment, as well as use for such things as walking trails, etc.
	Service Area: 0.25 to 0.50 mile radius - 5,000 persons.
	Desirable Size: Minimum 5 acres, evenly distributed.
	Acres/1,000 population: 1.0 to 2.0 acres.
	Site Characteristics: Evenly distributed across city with easy, safe access for nearby residents. Joint school/park facilities are suitable.

Table 2.2 Park Classifications

PARK TYPE	DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
School Park	<p>Use: Combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for neighborhood and community parks.</p> <p>Service Area: Same as neighborhood - depends on use.</p> <p>Desirable Size: Variable - depends on function.</p> <p>Acres/1,000 population: Variable - depends on function.</p> <p>Site Characteristics: Typically well distributed to serve neighborhoods throughout the community.</p>
Community Park	<p>Use: Facilities for active and passive recreation and leisure, including sport courts and fields, swimming pools, picnic areas, walking/jogging paths, open play areas, playscapes, exercise stations, etc.</p> <p>Service Area: Primarily for residents within a 2 mile radius, but available to persons throughout the city.</p> <p>Desirable Size: Minimum 10 to 50 acres. Optimum 25 acres.</p> <p>Acres/1,000 population: 5.0 to 8.0 acres.</p> <p>Site Characteristics: Provide full coverage of the City.</p>
Regional Park	<p>Use: Serves regional parks and recreation needs with a broad range of facilities and activities. Typically includes areas of natural resources.</p> <p>Service Area: 50-mile radius</p> <p>Desirable Size: Minimum 150 acres.</p> <p>Acres/1,000 population: 5.0 - 10.0 acres.</p> <p>Site Characteristics: Planned to accommodate large numbers of visitors including regional special events such as fairs, concerts, exhibitions, etc.</p>
Linear Parks and Greenways	<p>Use: Developed for bicycling, hiking, walking and jogging and commonly used as a linkage between park areas.</p> <p>Service Area: Citywide.</p> <p>Desirable Size: Sufficient size to accommodate expected use and provide adequate travel distance, typically a minimum of 1/2 mile.</p> <p>Acres/1,000 population: No minimum standard.</p> <p>Site Characteristics: Typically follows a linear natural feature, such as a resaca, river, rights-of-way or easements.</p>
On Street Bikeways	<p>Use: Paved segments of roadways that serve to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.</p> <p>Service Area: Citywide.</p> <p>Desirable Size: Sufficient size to accommodate expected use and provide adequate travel distance, typically a minimum of 1/2 mile.</p> <p>Acres/1,000 population: No minimum standard.</p> <p>Site Characteristics: Bike Route: Designated portions of roadway for the preferential use of bicyclists. Bike Lanes: Shared portions of paved roadway that provides separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists.</p>
Special Use	<p>Use: For specialized or single purpose recreation activities, such as golf courses, nature centers, etc.</p> <p>Service Area: Citywide.</p> <p>Desirable Size: No minimum standard.</p> <p>Acres/1,000 population: No minimum standard.</p> <p>Site Characteristics: Typically developed around a significant local historic physical feature and often operated by private enterprise.</p>

OTHER RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAM PROVIDERS IN THE CITY

The San Benito Consolidated Independent School District (CISD) has nine elementary and middle schools with playscape equipment. Six of these elementary schools are located within the city limits and extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and include Dr. Cash Elementary, Ed Downs Elementary, Landrum Elementary, Sullivan Elementary, Frank Roberts Elementary, and Fred Booth Elementary. Additionally, San Benito High School has basketball hoops, and softball, baseball, and soccer fields. While these playscapes and sports fields are amenities, most of these facilities are fenced off from the community, meaning that outside of school hours, they cannot be utilized by San Benito residents. Currently there is no agreement between the city and the school district with regards to joint use of these facilities, despite them representing a lot of recreation potential for the community.

In terms of recreational programming, the Boys and Girls Club provides all structured recreation programs in the city outside of the independent sports leagues. Their

facilities include a community center, basketball courts, and a soccer field which is located adjacent to Stookey Park. Below are the list of sports leagues that the city coordinates with, which include:

- Youth NFL Flag Football League (FALL)
- Youth Soccer League (Winter/Spring)
- Jr. High 7 on 7 Football League (Summer)
- Adult Co-Ed Kickball (Winter)
- Adult Men's 5v.5 Flag Football League (Spring/Summer)
- Adult Co-Ed 7v.7 Soccer League (Spring/Summer)
- Summer Beautification Program (Summer)
- *Movies At The Park (Summer)
- Arbor Day (Feb)
- Trash Bash (Spring)
- Youth NFL Punt, Pass & Kick Competition (Fall)
- Hog Dash 5k Mud Obstacle (Summer)
- *Holiday Toy Drive (Fall)



CONSERVATION



HEALTH & WELLNESS



SOCIAL EQUITY

IMPACTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH:

CONSERVATION

The conservation pillar is aimed at protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and engaging communities in conservation practices. As such, central to the mission of public parks and recreation is the preservation of natural resources and the promotion of good conservation and stewardship practices.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

America continues to feel the strain of a serious health crises affecting adults and young alike. One in which the American public is plagued by poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyles, and unhealthy habits. The scientific evidence is mounting that parks and recreation help to build healthier communities, and top health officials in the country confirm that parks and recreation are a critical solution for the nation's health epidemic.

SOCIAL EQUITY

The social equity pillar is focused on ensuring that all people have access to the benefits of local parks and recreation. True to the very philosophy of public parks and recreation is the idea that all people, no matter the color of their skin, age, income level or ability - have access to programs, facilities, places and spaces that make their lives and communities great.

“South Texas bird or wildlife watching activities contribute over \$300 million to the Rio Grande Valley economy per year.”

Source: Texas A&M University: Survey conducted for South Texas Nature Marketing COOP.





Summary of Parks and Recreation Assets

As set out in **Table 2.3, Summary of Parks and Recreation Assets**, are the general overview of the recreation assets available in each park. Subsequent park inventory tables which are included later provide more information on the exact type and number of amenities.


Table 2.3 Summary of Parks and Recreation Assets

	PLAYSCAPES	SPORTS COURTS	SPORTS FIELDS	PASSIVE RECREATION AREA	PICNIC FACILITIES	WALKING TRAILS	RECREATION CENTER	POOL	OTHER
Community Parks									
Stookey Park	•	•	•		•				
Neighborhood Parks									
Landrum Park	•	•		•	•	•			
Falligant Park	•	•	•	•	•				
Linear Parks and Greenways									
Kennedy Park	•	•		•	•	•			
Pocket Parks									
Dick Welch Park									•
Valencia Park	•				•				
Special Use Parks									
Veterans Memorial Park				•					•
Skate Park									•
Heavin Park				•	•				

Park Inventories


As set out in **Table 2.4**, *Park Inventories*, are the exact details of each park and recreation asset. The inventories include information on the type and number of sports courts and fields (e.g., volley courts and soccer fields), as well as a complete list of all improvements (e.g., buildings, parking areas, benches, and trash cans) that are in each park and recreational area.

Table 2.4 Park Inventories



	STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK
Inventory Type	Community	Neighborhood	Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park	Special Use				
Sports Courts									
Basketball Courts	2	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benches (team)	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-
Covered	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	Yes	-	2	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Number of goals	4	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-
Tennis Courts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of nets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Volleyball Courts	1 - grass	-	1 - grass	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Covered	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of nets	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Covered	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of nets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-


Table 2.4 Park Inventories (continued)



Inventory Type	STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK
	Community	Neighborhood	Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park	Special Use				
Sports Fields									
Baseball Fields	-	-	1 - informal	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Backstops	Yes	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Concession stands	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dugouts	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sizes (Youth / Adult)	Adult	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scoreboards	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Football Fields	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Athletic building	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benches (team)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Concession stand	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sizes (Youth / Adult)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Softball Fields	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Backstops	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Concession stands	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dugouts	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sizes (Youth / Adult)	Adult	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scoreboards	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Soccer Fields	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA accessible	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bleachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Benches (team)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Concession stand	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of nets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-


Note: Stookey Park contains six individual fields which are all equipped with ADA accessibility, backstops, bleachers with ADA spots, concession stands, dugouts, field lighting, scoreboards, and adult-sized fields.

Table 2.4 Park Inventories (continued)



Inventory Type	STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK
	Community	Neighborhood	Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park	Special Use				
Playscapes									
Playscape - Activities	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
Climbing nets	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Climbing walls	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Free-play materials (e.g., blocks, etc.)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monkey bars	-	1	-	9 sets	-	-	-	-	-
Open play areas	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sandboxes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seesaws	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Slides	1	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
Spring animals	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Swings	1 set - 3 swings	1 set - 4 swings	1 set - 4 swings; 1 set - 2 swings (youth)	6 sets - 4 swings	-	1 set - 4 swings	-	-	-
Vertical climbing bars	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Playscape - Additional	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ADA (and stroller) accessibility to playground activities	-	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adult seating	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
Enclosure (e.g., fence)	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	-	Yes	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-
Playscape shade structures	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Separation from parking lot (e.g., fence)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Separation of play structures by age	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shade trees	-	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2.4 Park Inventories (continued)



Inventory Type	STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK
	Community	Neighborhood	Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park	Special Use				
Additional Site Amenities									
Barbecue pits / grills	2	6	5	24	-	3	-	-	-
Benches	-	3	11	15	5	-	5	-	2
Bike racks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Camping	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drinking fountains	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Fish cleaning station	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fishing pier	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Gazebo (sitting area)	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Natural areas	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Passive recreation areas	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Pavilions (large roof area with multiple picnic tables)	2	-	-	--	-	-	Yes	-	-
Picnic tables (un-roofed)	-	6	3	30	-	3	-	-	-
Picnic tables (roofed)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recreation center	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Restrooms (publicly accessible)	-	-	Yes: locked	-	-	-	-	-	Yes: locked
Senior center	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shade trees	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
Skate park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Yes: 4 metal ramps	-
Splash pad / spraypark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trails	-	-	-	Yes: asphalt, 8 ft. wide	-	-	-	-	-
ADA compliant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Connection to parking lot	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Connection to off-site areas	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
Directional signage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Exercise equipment	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Lighted	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trail restrictions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additional trail amenities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trash cans	6	5	10	20	3	1	2	-	3

Table 2.4 Park Inventories (continued)



Inventory Type	STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK
	Community	Neighborhood	Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park	Special Use				
Parking, Access, Lighting, and Signage									
ADA parking spaces	4	-	-	4	2	-	3	-	1
ADA access from parking lot to site amenities	4	-	-	-	Yes	-	4	-	9
On-street parking spaces	-	Yes	Yes	-	10	Yes	-	Yes	9
Off-street parking space	-	-	-	34	-	-	26	-	-
Parking lot landscaping	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-
Parking lot lighting	-	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-
Perimeter sidewalks	-	Yes	Partly	-	-	-	Yes	-	-
Off-site sidewalks	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-
Entrance sign	-	Yes	Yes	Yes: only along Bus. 77	Yes	-	Yes	-	Yes
Hours of operation signage	-	-	Yes	-	-	-	Yes	-	-
Maintenance contract sign	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Off-site directional signage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On-site directional signage	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Assessment of Existing Park Conditions

The condition of the existing parks, recreation facilities, public open space and buildings, equipment, and improvements is important relative to the perceived quality of the community's parks and recreation system. The quality of appearance and maintenance of the park system contributes to the image of the community and the perception of its livability. It is therefore essential for the city to maintain its facilities in quality repair and provide diligent care of its grounds and improvements.

An assessment of park conditions was conducted in August 2014. The scoring categories were as follows:

- Turf;
- Plantings and trees;
- Parking;

- Park sidewalks and trails;
- Basketball nets and playing surfaces;
- Tennis courts, fencing and nets;
- Park accessibility;
- Park amenities (benches, grills, sheltered/unsheltered picnic tables, play equipment);
- Buildings, shelters, pavilions;
- Playing fields and equipment;
- Signage;
- Fencing; and,
- Lighting.

The scores for each facility or improvement range from zero to four, with zero representing the improvements that are in the best condition. A ranking of four is for those buildings, facilities, or improvements that are in very poor condition and therefore, warrant replacement, rehabilitation, or reconstruction. The scores of one, two,

and three represent varying levels of condition. Where applicable, there is also an indication of improvements that do not exist in some parks. For each park there was a tabulation of the scores, divided by the total number scored to derive an overall composite value. The composite score indicates the overall condition of the park, and in turn, provides a means to compare the condition of each park relative to others in the parks and recreation system. This information is valuable to determine city-wide priorities and more specifically, to determine what improvements are warranted at each park. The average scores are displayed in the **Table 2.5, Assessment of City Park Conditions** on the following page. A brief overview of the condition assessment is as follows:

- Increasing park accessibility is the number one improvement needed in the city's parks. Many parks, including Stookey, Landrum, and Falligant, did not have adequate sidewalks allowing safe access to and from the greater neighborhood or area. In some cases, there were perimeter sidewalks but not crosswalks. Accessibility is among the highest priorities to ensure residents can access the city's parks safely and conveniently. The priority must extend beyond the design of individual parks to the design of streets and neighborhoods, which warrants amendments to the subdivision regulations and the city's street design standards and specifications.
- Turf represents the second highest improvement need. In general, most parks have turf that is in moderate condition; however, widespread maintenance is needed. In particular, Dick Welch Park struggles with the poorest condition of its turf.
- Park amenities represent the third highest needed improvements. As is the theme for most parks in San Benito, the park amenities often are in need of routine maintenance. Stookey Park is especially highlighted for the poor condition of its park amenities (outside of the excellent condition of the sports fields), in particular the playscape equipment.
- Lighting ranks as the fourth highest needed improvement. For most parks, especially along Kennedy Park, there is not enough lighting to ensure user safety. Parks with poor lighting allow for the parks to be locations of crimes, vandalism, and misuse. This is particularly important along the Heavin Resaca Trails as these areas are often frequently used well into the night.
- Signage for the city's parks remains moderate; however, there does exist a need for additional signage. Overall, there is a need for external directional and safety signage as well as internal way-finding signage.
- Most of San Benito's parks include some sort of on-street parking with a limited number of parks having an on-site off-street parking lot with ADA spaces and accessibility.
- The plantings and trees are generally in moderate to good condition; however, the city's residents using the parks would benefit from additional shade and aesthetic qualities of more tree planting and additional landscaping.
- There is limited fencing in most of the city's parks, excluding Falligant Park and Stookey Park. The use of fencing should be considered a key part of park design as it helps to delineate play space from sidewalks and roadways. Ultimately, fencing around parks provides an additional level of safety for park users.
- The sports fields and equipment are in good condition where they exist in the city.
- Basketball nets and playing surfaces are present in many of the city's parks, and in general are in moderate condition; however, routine maintenance and repair is in order to maintain the quality of these amenities.
- Currently, there are no parks that include tennis courts or a safe, commissioned swimming pool. Stookey Park used to house the city's community pool; however, the old pool has since been decommissioned due to drainage and structural issues.
- Where buildings and shelters exist, they are noted to be in relatively good repair; however, the need for routine, ongoing maintenance and repair is warranted at most parks.

In general, the best maintained parks are Veterans Memorial Park and Heavin Park (with composite scores of 0.0 and 0.7, respectively); while the quality of these parks is certainly worth noting, these parks are special use parks that get less daily recreation use. The second tier of best maintained parks include Landrum Park and Falligant Park (with composite scores of 0.8 and 0.9, respectively), which sponsor more daily recreation for San Benito residents. The parks that needs the most maintenance and improvement are the Skate Park and Valencia Park (with composite scores of 2.6 and 1.8, respectively).

ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAM

In order to enhance the quality of San Benito's parks, the City's Parks and Recreation Department encourages volunteers and donors to assist with the preservation and maintenance of landscaped areas and the general upkeep and

Table 2.5 Assessment of City Park Conditions



Condition Criteria	STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK
	Community	Neighborhood	Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park	Special Use				
Classification									
Turf	2	1	2	2	3	2	0	-	1
Plantings and trees	2	1	0	2	0	2	-	-	0
Parking	1	-	-	2	2	-	0	-	0
Park sidewalks and trails	2	1	0	2	-	-	0	-	0
Basketball nets and playing surfaces	0	-	0	0	-	-	-	-	-
Tennis courts, fencing and nets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Park accessibility	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	3	2
Park amenities (benches, grills, sheltered/unsheltered picnic tables, play equipment)	3	0	2	2	1	1	0	-	0
Buildings, shelters, pavilions	2	0	1	0	-	-	0	-	0
Playing fields and equipment	1	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-
Signage	2	1	1	2	2	-	0	-	1
Fencing	0	0	0	-	1	-	0	2	-
Lighting	0	2	0	-	0	2	0	3	3
Park Total Composite Score	1.5	0.8	0.9	1.5	1.3	1.8	0.0	2.6	0.7



“In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.”

- Margaret Atwood, Author.

EXISTING CONDITIONS



Park Profiles

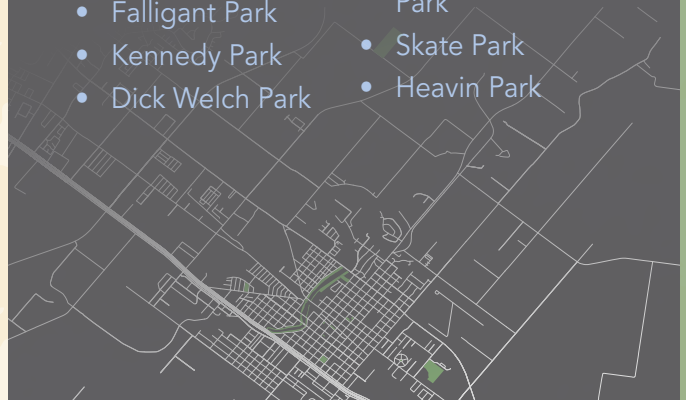
The following pages provide detailed profiles of each city-owned park and recreation asset. Each profile contains the following information:

- Size;
- Type;
- Location; and,
- Existing facilities.

In addition, each park profile contains one or more photos of the park and an aerial image, which helps to illustrate a few of the key issues affecting the park and the immediate surrounding area.

PROFILED PARKS

- Stookey Park
- Landrum Park
- Falligant Park
- Kennedy Park
- Dick Welch Park
- Valencia Park
- Veterans Memorial Park
- Skate Park
- Heavin Park



Stookey Park

SIZE

16 acres

PARK TYPE

Community Park

LOCATION

400 N. Stookey Road

EXISTING FACILITIES

Stookey Park includes five baseball fields, one softball field, four football/soccer fields, and one playscape. It is also the site of the decommissioned community pool.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Landrum Park

SIZE

2.1 acres

PARK TYPE

Neighborhood Park

LOCATION

500 S. Dick Dowling Street

EXISTING FACILITIES

Landrum Park includes one basketball court, one playscape, one gazebo, a perimeter walking trail, and several picnic areas.



Falligant Park

SIZE

2.1 acres

PARK TYPE

Neighborhood Park

LOCATION

1400 Combes Street

EXISTING FACILITIES

Falligant Park includes one basketball court, one volleyball court, one playscape, a perimeter walking trail, one softball field, open space play areas, and several picnic areas.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Kennedy Park

SIZE

30.2 acres

PARK TYPE

Linear Park and Greenway

LOCATION

400 Freddy Fender Lane

EXISTING FACILITIES

Kennedy Park includes the Heavin Resaca Trail, which is a linear trail along the Resaca. It also has one fishing pier, two basketball courts, six swing sets, nine monkey bars, two exercise stations, and picnic areas.



Dick Welch Park

SIZE

0.2 acres

PARK TYPE

Pocket Park

LOCATION

245 S. Sam Houston Boulevard

EXISTING FACILITIES

Dick Welch Park includes a mural as well as several benches, and acts as an urban pedestrian refuge in Downtown San Benito.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Valenica Park

SIZE

0.1 acres

PARK TYPE

Pocket Park

LOCATION

Victoria Circle

EXISTING FACILITIES

Valencia Park includes one swing set, one vertical climbing bar, and three picnic areas, located within the center of a roundabout.



Veterans Memorial Park

SIZE

0.5 acres

PARK TYPE

Special Use Park

LOCATION

151 E. Rowson

EXISTING FACILITIES

Veterans Memorial Park includes two pavilions and seating, as well as historical monuments associated with the San Benito Veterans War Memorial. This special use park provides an urban pedestrian refuge in Downtown San Benito.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Skate Park

SIZE

0.18 acres

PARK TYPE

Special Use Park

LOCATION

187 Rowson Street

EXISTING FACILITIES

Skate Park was originally located in a not-too-visible alley in Downtown San Benito, but is currently being moved to Stookey Park. The park consists of four metal skating ramps.



Heavin Park

SIZE

2 acres

PARK TYPE

Special Use Park

LOCATION

705 N. Bowie Street

EXISTING FACILITIES

Heavin Park includes an amphitheater, concession stand, and restroom facility, worked within and adjacent to Kennedy Park along the Heavin Resaca Trail.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

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Analysis & Recommendations

The purpose of the previous two chapters was to identify the goals and vision for the future, and to understand the current status of the city's park and recreation system as it exists today. This chapter creates a framework for implementation by focusing on a few key issues followed by action recommendations to address those issues. In this regard, this analysis is used to identify the parks and recreational programming needs of San Benito today and by the Year 2035. Need is measured by determining whether the parks and recreation facilities are in sufficient supply, and whether they are located in convenient and accessible areas in close proximity to their users. By applying the acreage standards as well as the facility and equipment standards to the current and projected population of San Benito, the acreage of new park demand and types of improvements needs are identified. Similarly, understanding what types of resources (e.g., staffing), policies (e.g., parks to standard program), or other standards (e.g., site selection criteria) helps to set the stage for successful implementation on a year-by-year, decision-by-decision, basis. Chapter 4, Implementation, provides guidance on responsible parties for implementation and the priority of which these action recommendations become initiated and completed.

Focus Areas, Goals & Actions

Throughout the planning process, a number of identified issues and concerns were expressed through the public engagement process. Some of these included such things as lack of diversity in amenities, lack of proximity, and therefore accessibility to most residents, and a lack of staffing and funding for maintenance. In addition, there was an identified disparity between the quality and appearance of some park and recreation assets compared to others in the same system.

These discussions formed the basis of the goals, objectives, and vision for San Benito's future park and recreation system as set out in Chapter 1, *Plan Introduction*. Potential solutions for these issues are further analyzed and captured in a series of focused analyses followed by recommended goals and actions for the 20-year planning horizon. The highest priority actions and next steps are then identified in Chapter 4, *Implementation*.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE A RANGE OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES THAT WILL ACCOMMODATE THE CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY'S RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

Objective 1A: Assure an even geographic distribution of parks and recreation facilities that will provide equitable opportunity to activities and access for all citizens.

Knowing and understanding the existing state of the parks and recreation system is the first step in the analysis of needs. To recap, the existing city parks and recreation inventory is documented in Chapter 2, *Existing Conditions* (see Table 2.1, *Existing Parks*), which includes two neighborhood parks (totaling 4.2 acres), one community park (27.0 acres), two pocket parks (totaling 0.30 acres), and four special use parks (totaling 4.8 acres). In addition, the city has a widely used linear trail system (totaling 30.2 acres). The city also currently manages two new undeveloped park properties. The first has been referred to as South Park, and is comprised of 16 acres of property located along Sam Houston Boulevard behind the city's fire station. The second park property is comprised of the San Benito constructed wetlands located off of County Line Road adjacent to the city's wastewater treatment plant. Both of these will be developed during the horizon of this plan. Overall, the city's developed park and recreation system includes 10 properties comprising 66.5 acres.

Beyond an evaluation of total acreage needs (see Goal 2), it is important to determine whether parks are adequately

distributed across the city to reflect patterns of current and planned development. By evaluating park service areas, the geographic areas that have sufficient parks available, and conversely, those that are in need of additional parks and recreation facilities may be identified. The following describes the service areas for each park classification.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks have a primary service area of a quarter mile and are intended to provide residents with ample opportunity for both passive and semi-active recreation activity within close proximity to their neighborhoods. The method of determining the need for neighborhood parks is quite different from an assessment of need for community parks. While community parks are designed for large-scale, community-wide events and activities, neighborhood parks are intended to meet the daily recreation needs of nearby residents. The level of activity is limited as a result of the size and location of these parks as well as the equipment and facilities available. Neighborhood parks should be within a short walking distance (typically one-half mile or less) for the residents of one or more neighborhoods thereby encouraging use and promoting convenience, ease of access, and safety for neighborhood children.

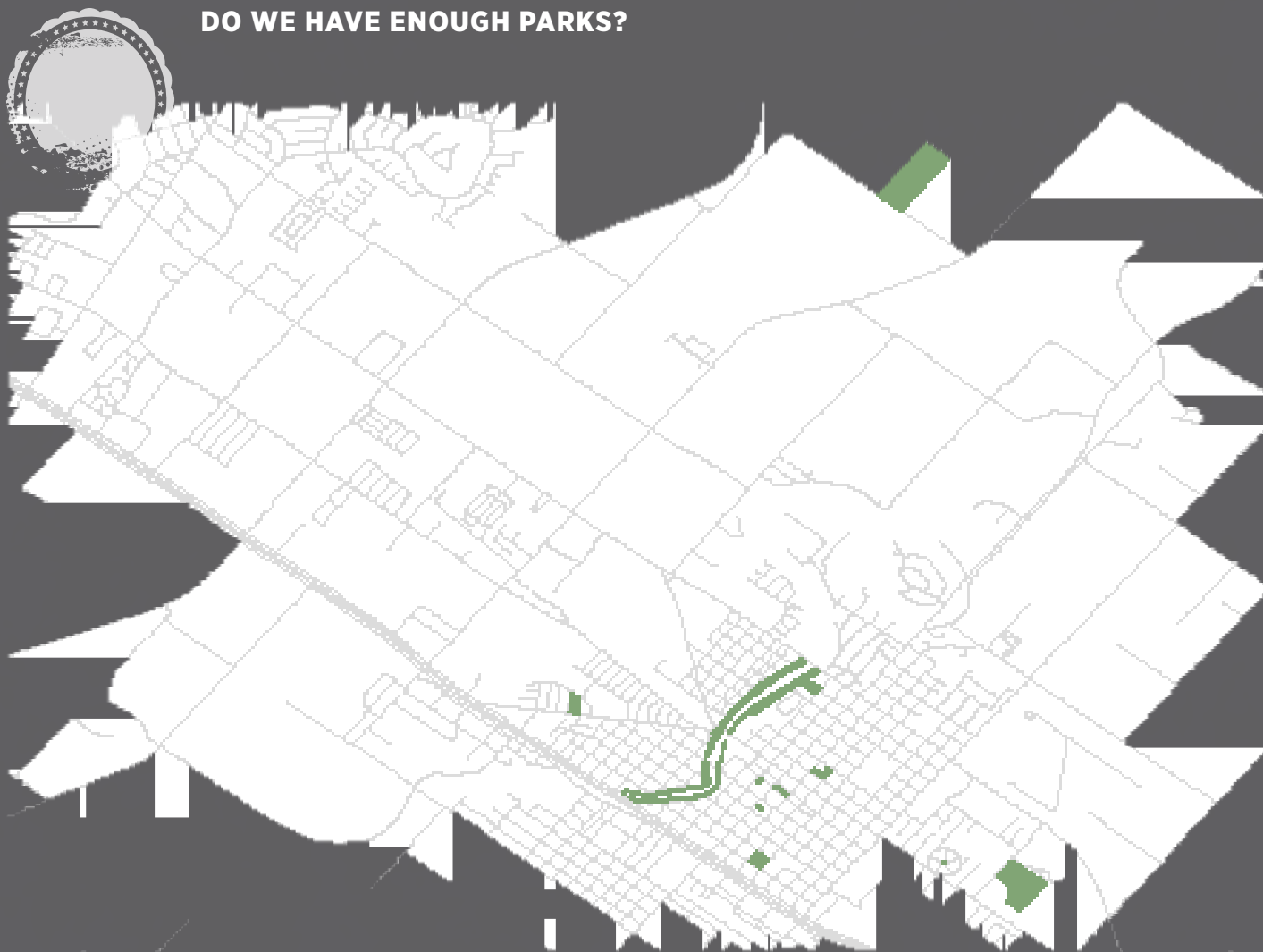
The size of neighborhood parks varies according to the availability of property, method and timing of acquisition, and intended use. One or two vacant lots or several acres may both adequately serve the needs of a neighborhood if there is an even distribution of parks and sufficient facilities and equipment available. National standards recommend a minimum neighborhood park size of five acres assuming an adequate and even distribution across the city. Although a 15-acre park may accommodate ball fields and larger recreation and open space areas, three parks that are five acres in size may equally and perhaps better serve the need while providing a broader distribution of neighborhood parks.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks have a primary service area of one mile, meaning that a majority of persons utilizing these citywide parks generally reside within one mile. The secondary service area extends two miles from the park to account for user patterns associated with the types of activities and facilities available in the community parks. For instance, little league athletic fields draw participation from throughout the community. For the purposes of this needs assessment, the Heavin Resaca Trails are classified as a community park.

Illustrated in Map 3.1, *Park Service Areas*, are the neighborhood and community park service areas in

DO WE HAVE ENOUGH PARKS?

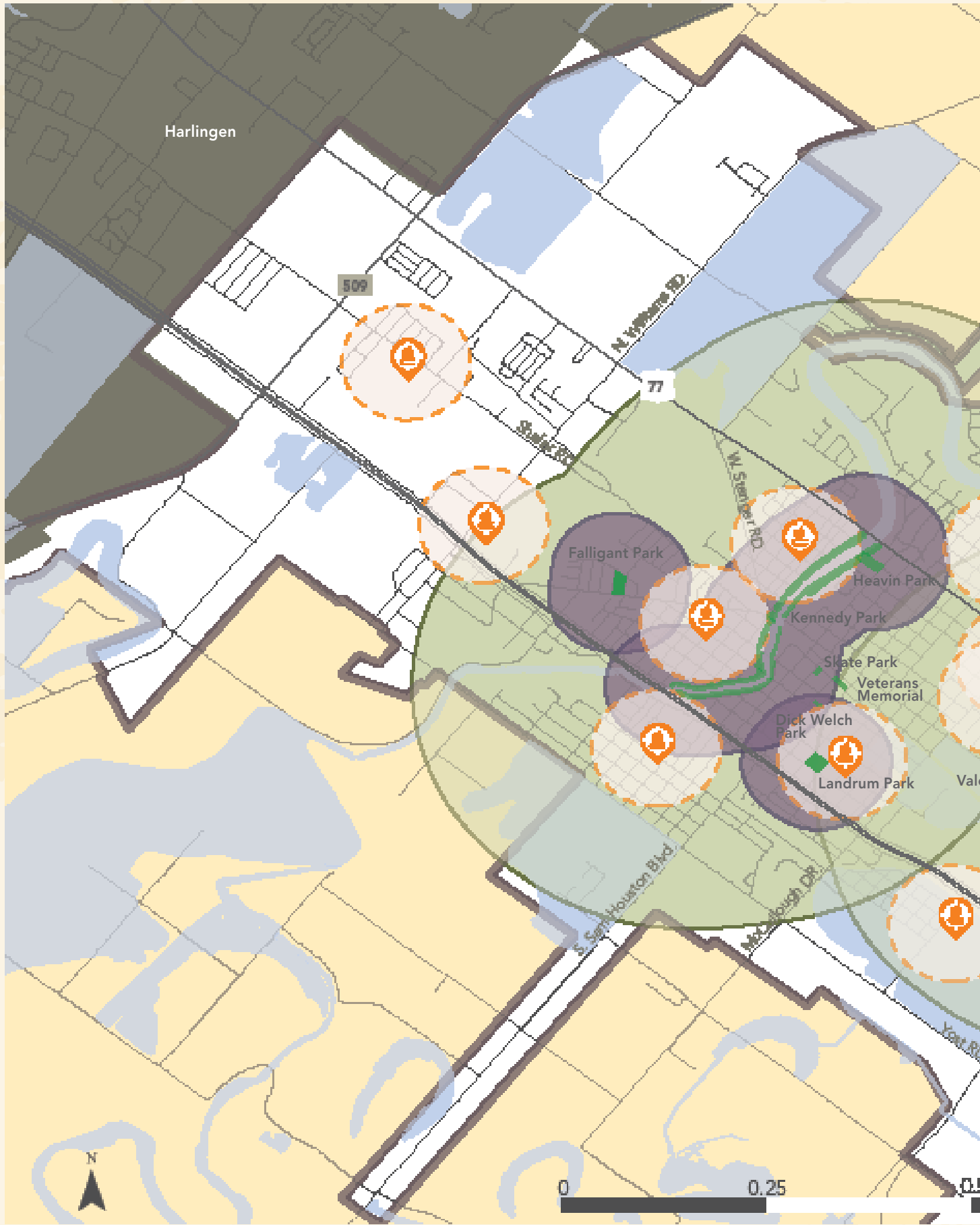


DEFINING PLAY DESERTS

Through the collaboration of Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA), Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA), there has been emphasis on understanding what improvements need to be made to our built environment to prevent the rise in obesity. What is known currently is:

- There has continued to be a dramatic increase in obesity in the U.S. and those rates continue to remain high;
- Adults and children are not achieving the recommended levels of physical activity a day; and
- The lack of opportunities for physical activities is a significant part of the obesity issue facing our nation.

Therefore, play deserts have been highlighted as an area of the built environment that needs more investigation. Ultimately, play deserts are not just about whether a park exists or not, but about the quality of the park, how accessible the park is, and whether the park is being used. As seen in the diagram above, there are large areas of San Benito that do not have adequate access to a neighborhood or community park, or linear trail connection.

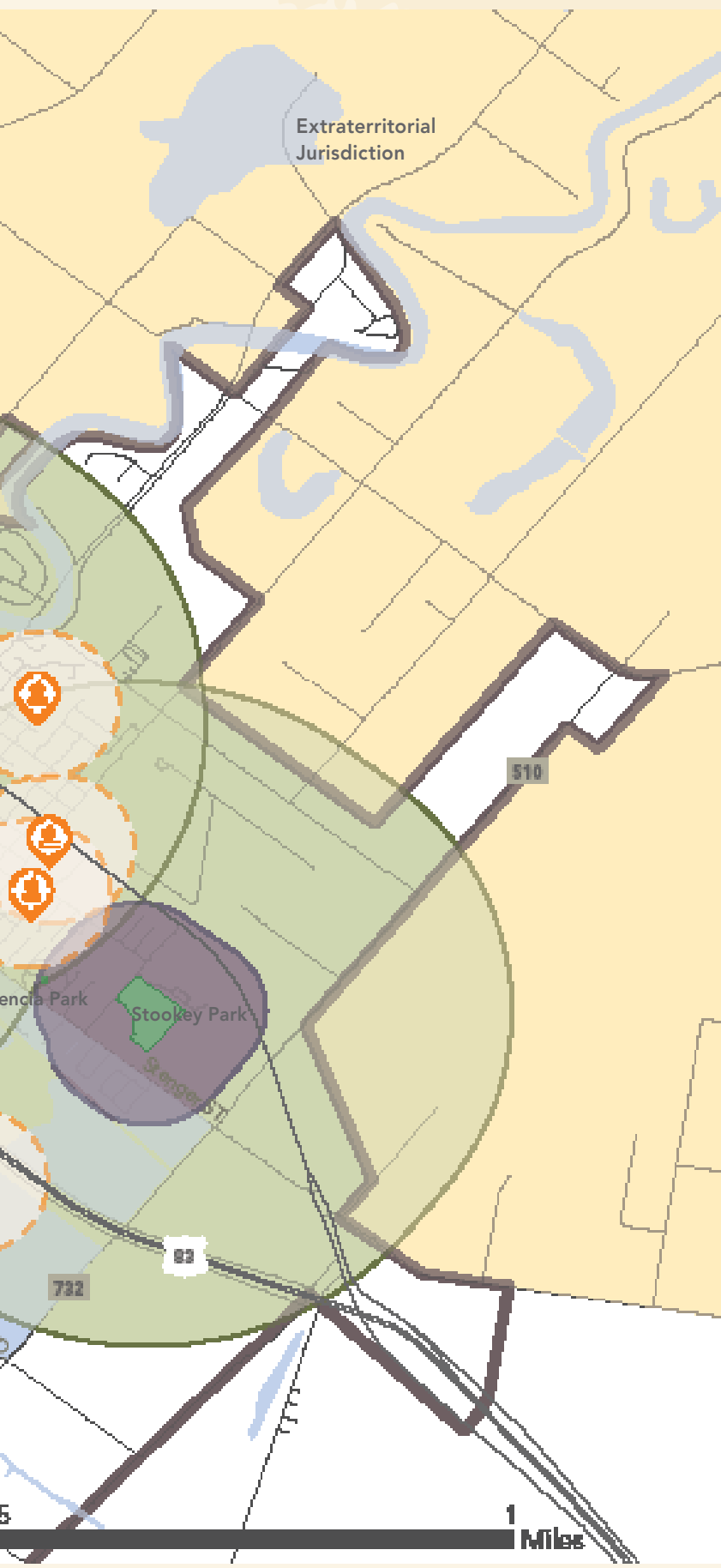


Map 3.1, Park Service Areas

LEGEND

-  School
-  Neighborhood Park Service Area (0.25 mile)
-  Community Park Service Area (1 mile)*
-  School Playground Service Area (0.25 mile)

*Although functionally classified as a linear special use park, the Heavin Resaca Trails serve the community in a similar fashion as a neighborhood/community park.



the city. A quarter mile service area is shown around all neighborhood parks. A one mile service area is shown around all community parks. Additionally, a quarter mile service area is also shown around all community parks and schools. Schools provide an assortment of playgrounds, athletic courts and fields, and open space, which, for all intents and purposes, help to meet the citywide demand. Community parks have a quarter mile service area because they serve as neighborhood parks for the adjacent residents. As shown there are several areas in the City and extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) that are underserved with neighborhood and community parks.

JOINT USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

An opportunity to significantly enhance the number and availability of neighborhood parks is to utilize, through joint agreement, property owned by the San Benito Consolidated Independent School District (CISD). Use of these properties increases the number and distribution of parks and recreation areas throughout the community, as shown in Map 3.1, *Park Service Areas*. Currently, the city has established an agreement to cross-utilize a gym to provide recreational activities to the broader community. A more formalized reciprocal agreement should be pursued to address joint purchase, use and maintenance of school grounds and equipment, which may be mutually beneficial to the school district and city.

EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION (ETJ)

Currently there are no developed parks within the City's ETJ. Depending on the extent of development and its ultimate density, neighborhood and community parks will also be needed in the ETJ to adequately serve the parks and recreation needs of these residents. The city currently does not require parkland dedication and has limited control over the development of parks in the ETJ, however as areas are annexed into the city there will be a need for parks and recreation facilities to serve these areas.

PARK SYSTEM PLAN

An important goal of the park and recreation system is to ensure broad distribution and accessibility. To develop a system of neighborhood and community parks that will adequately serve the existing and projected future parks and recreation needs of the community, the city needs to acquire and develop parks in areas of need identified on Map 3.2, *Park System Plan*. These parks will help to achieve full service area coverage of community parks and an even distribution of neighborhood parks. The general locations of future neighborhood and community parks in the ETJ are also shown in Map 3.2, *Park System Plan*.

Community service areas in the ETJ represent an area for which at least a community park would be needed as residential development occurs. Depending on the extent of development neighborhood parks would also be needed within each community park service area.

Actionable Objectives:

- Consider establishing the use of Site Selection Criteria set out in Goal 8 to prioritize decisions regarding new park property and/or acceptance of land donation.
- Identify available property within the city limits to establish new neighborhood and community parks in areas of need (see also Goal 2, regarding increasing the acreage of the parks system to meet minimum per capita standards).
- Identify available property within the city's ETJ to establish new neighborhood and community parks in areas of need. This could include revision to the city's subdivision regulations to require park property and development as new development occurs in the ETJ.

Objective 1B: Provide parks and recreation opportunities for all persons including low income, elderly, youth-at-risk and handicapped citizens, recognizing the importance of accessible public facilities.

Realizing that neighborhood parks are becoming default community gathering spaces is the first step towards re-purposing the use and activities normally associated with these areas. What was primarily viewed as a kids playground, neighborhood parks are becoming

PERIMETER WALKING TRAILS

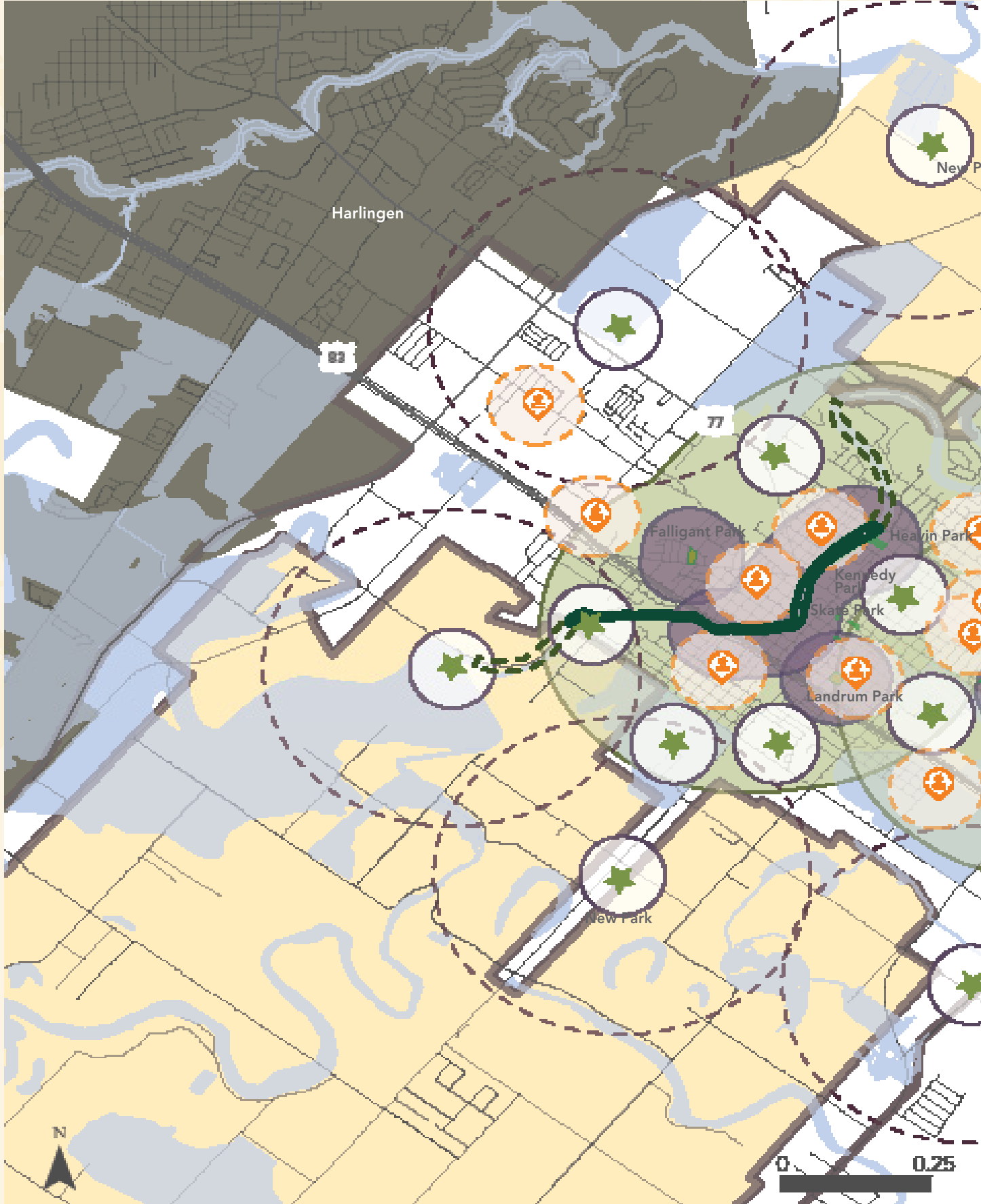
Perimeter walking trails, like the one in Landrum Park, provide a simple community gathering space for nearby residents (families, moms with strollers, seniors, etc.) to get physical activity in close proximity to their homes.



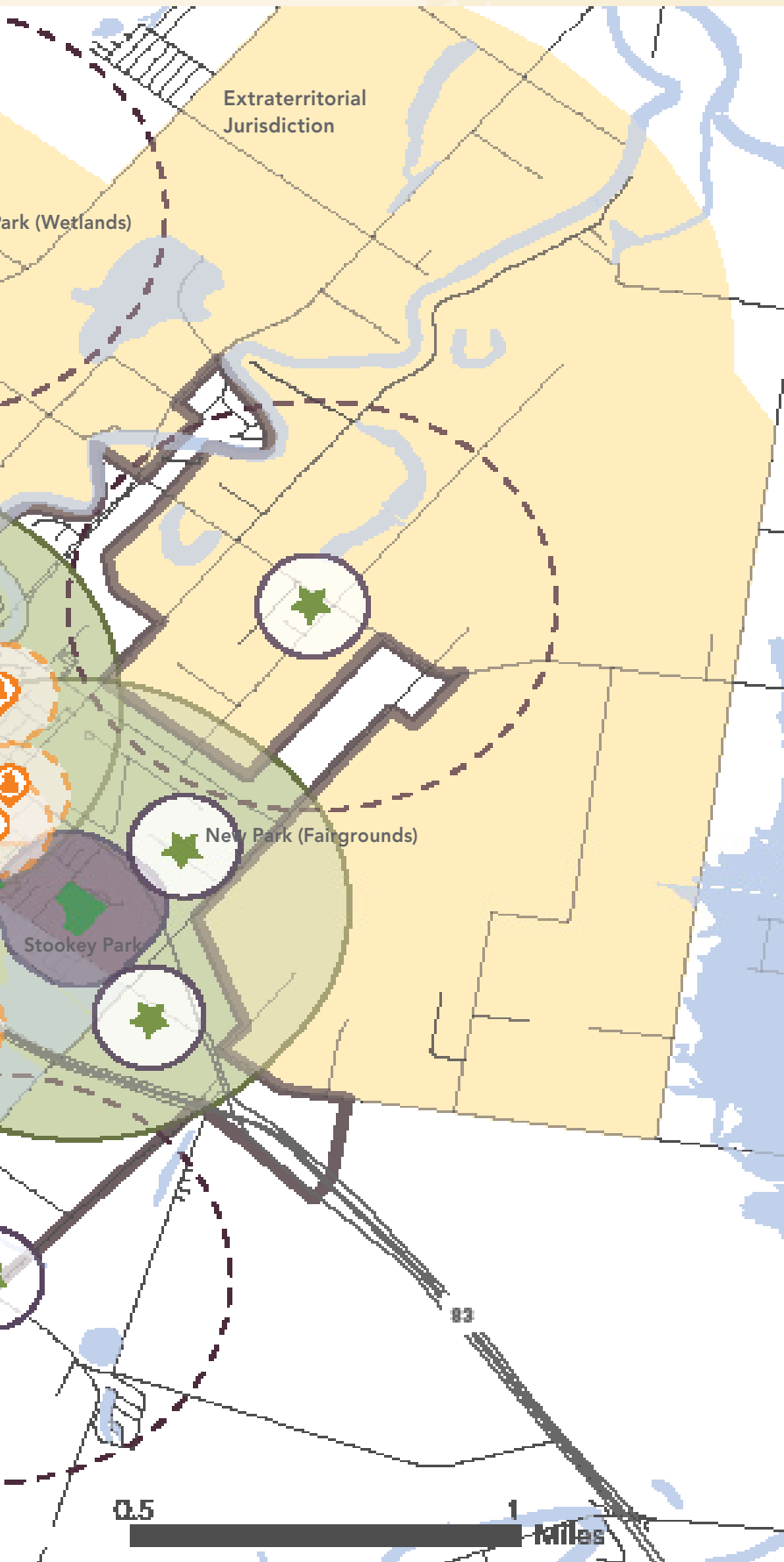


“Restrooms and water fountains are extremely needed at the Heavin Trail. There are a lot of people that go walking or jogging and need water. It is an inconvenience when we have children there. We have to leave.”










Quote Source: Respondent to the 2014 San Benito Parks Survey.



Map 3.2 Parks System Plan



LEGEND

-  School
-  Neighborhood Park Service Area (0.25 mile)
-  Community Park Service Area (1 mile)*
-  School Playground Service Area (0.25 mile)
-  Potential New Park Area, Not Parcel Specific
-  Potential New Neighborhood Park Service Area (0.25 mile)
-  Potential New Community Park Service Area (1 mile)
-  Resaca Trails (Existing)
-  Resaca Trails (Proposed)

*Although functionally classified as a linear special use park, the Heavin Resaca Trails serve the community in a similar fashion as a neighborhood/community park.

an important resource for people of all ages and backgrounds. This requires that each new park or existing park improvement be undertaken utilizing Americans with Disabilities (ADA) design features.

Actionable Objectives:

- Incorporate handicapped accessible walking trails, similar to the one at Landrum Park, that create a loop around the edge of each park, so that intergenerational users can utilize these trails for walking, running, biking, roller blading, pushing strollers, among other activities (see inset, below).
- Incorporate handicapped accessible ramps, play structures, and equipment in every park.
- Improve on-site accessibility for persons with physical disabilities, elderly, people with strollers, among others, so that one can travel from off-site (i.e., the neighborhood) or the parking lot, and into and through the park to each amenity.
- Work in coordination with the Public Works Department to improve off-site accessibility to each park by developing a sidewalk improvement program to repair, replace, or install new sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb cuts, in high pedestrian use neighborhoods immediately surrounding the parks, schools, and other community facilities.

Objective 1C: Provide a variety of recreational opportunities including cultural and community activities and special events that meet the passive and active recreational needs of the city.

As indicated in Chapter 1, *Plan Introduction*, there is an increasing awareness of the spin-off values that parks and recreation areas have on a city. One of the most important, especially in today's digital, self-absorbed world, is the value and benefit parks and recreation play in creating social ties and connections within and between neighborhoods, schools, athletic associations, etc. This is particularly advanced through informal play and organized team sports as part of the city's many recreational program offerings.

Actionable Objectives:

- Provide opportunities for individuals and groups (including low-income, minority, disabled, elderly, and youth at risk populations) to participate in cultural, recreational, and educational activities that foster health and wellness and strengthen body and mind.
- Continue to provide existing recreational programs, including the Jr. High 7on7 Football League, Adult Co-Ed Kickball League, Youth Soccer League, NFL

Youth Flag Football League, and the Baseball/ Softball League.

- Consider expanding the recreational program offerings (e.g., team sports) as funding and staffing allows.
- Require that each coach or team leader provide feedback via a post season survey to receive input on success and failures of the program.
- Track participant numbers to be able to quantify increased or decreased participatory numbers on an annual basis.
- Solicit volunteers during each application process to ensure adequate resources are available for season play. Consider soliciting volunteers for additional offerings provided by the city.
- Ensure the new Recreational Supervisor has adequate resources to continue to add new recreational program offerings to the city's program.
- Continue to provide, or help coordinate, special community recreational events, e.g., Hog Dash; NFL Punt, Pass & Kick; National Night Out, Miss Resacafest Pageant, and Christmas Parade.

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING

In 2014, the city added a new Recreational Supervisor and several new recreational programs which significantly increased the number of people participating in physical activity and team sports within the city.





“ Parks, trails, open spaces, recreation programs, and special events create physical and social links that connect the community, and in turn, enhance livability. ”

Photo Source: City of San Benito.

Objective 1D: Provide facilities for active and passive recreation activities based on the local needs and desires identified in the parks and recreation needs assessment survey.

A survey was conducted in the summer of 2014 via an on-line questionnaire that was available on the city's web site. A total of 148 responses were received providing a variety of park and recreation related feedback on such things as park visitation, preferred locations of new parks, the need for new facilities, etc. A copy of the survey is in the Appendix C, *Park Survey*.

The inset (pages 14-15) includes a summary of the survey results, some of which are broken down by zone (see Figure 3.3, *Park Survey Zones*).

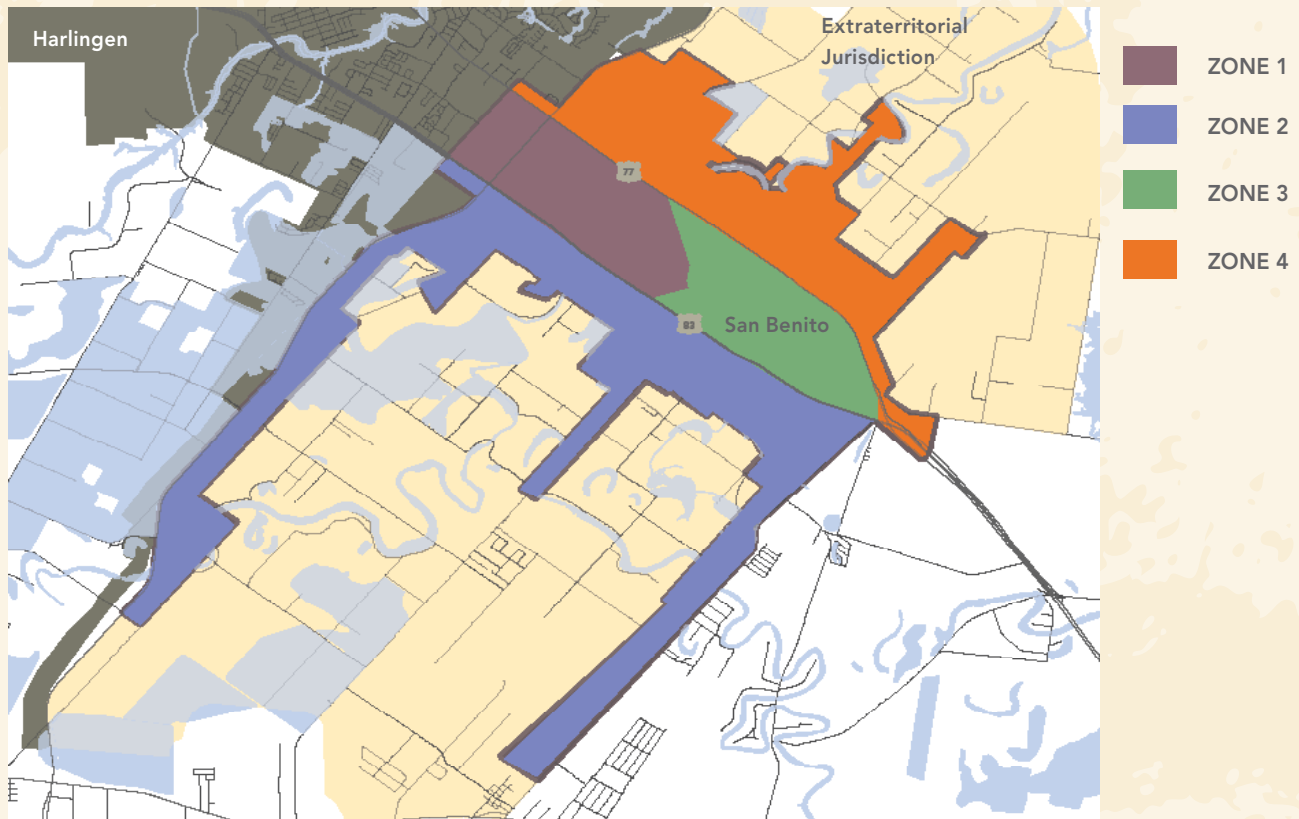
Out of all respondents, survey respondents identified the greatest park need areas to be located within Park Survey Zones 2 and 4. These areas were surprisingly also predominantly identified as a priority areas by the respondents who lived in the other Park Survey Zones. The highest priority need, identified by almost 97 percent of survey respondents, was for water related facilities such as a pool or splash pad. This is not surprising since the city's only community pool has been shut down for years.


Other high priority needs identified by survey respondents included more playgrounds (65.25 percent), better park beautification, i.e., improved landscaping and maintenance (58.21 percent), more walking/biking trails (54.86 percent), and more sport courts (54.35 percent).

Actionable Objectives:

- Conduct an analysis to see if there are additional park opportunities that could be added in Park Zones 2 and 4.
- Conduct a needs assessment, identify a location and/or partnerships (e.g., SBCISD or others), and pursue grant funding to construct a new community pool.
- After a location for a new community pool has been identified and when funding is available, consider locating one or more splash pads in existing or future parks in other Park Survey Zones.
- For recommendations for additional playgrounds, improved landscaping, more walking/biking trails, and more sports courts, see other actionable recommendations set out in Goals 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

Figure 3.3, Park Survey Zones





“About the only thing we do as a family is the use of the Resaca Heavin. We need more here in our City.”

Quote Source: Respondent to the 2014 San Benito Parks Survey.

Question 1: According to the map in Figure 3.1, Park Survey Zones, which zone do you reside in?

As shown in the table below, the distribution of survey respondents was fairly uniform across the city although the largest amount of survey respondents were located in Zones 2 and 4 (approximately 26.09 percent and 34.06 percent respectively) which are in the general areas north of Business 77 and south of U.S. Highway 83.

ZONE	COUNT	PERCENT
Zone 1	22	15.94%
Zone 2	36	26.09%
Zone 3	33	23.91%
Zone 4	47	34.06%
TOTAL	138	100%

Question 2: If a new park were to be built, what zone would you want it in?

As shown in the table below, survey respondents indicated that the areas of greatest need for new parks were in Zones 2 and 4. Different than what would normally be expected, a number of respondents in Zones 1 and 3 also indicated that the greatest need for new parks was in areas located in Zones 2 and 4.

ZONE	COUNT	PERCENT
Zone 1	19	12.84%
Zone 2	52	35.14%
Zone 3	24	16.22%
Zone 4	53	35.81%
TOTAL	148	100%

Question 3: In your opinion, rate the need for the following recreational facilities.

As shown in the table below, the greatest needs identified were for more water facilities, e.g., a swimming pool or splash pad (77.24 percent), playgrounds (65.25 percent), beautification, e.g., landscaping (58.21 percent), walking/biking trails (54.86 percent), and sport courts (54.35 percent). Listed as the highest priority, the need for more water facilities was indicated as "extremely needed," "needed," or "somewhat needed," by over 97 percent of respondents. Listed as the lowest priorities were more golf courses (33.08 percent) and camping (27.82 percent).

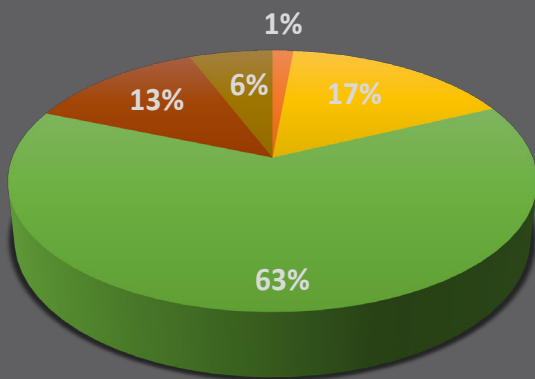
TYPE OF RECREATIONAL FACILITY	EXTREMELY NEEDED	NEEDED	SOMEWHAT NEEDED	NOT NEEDED	NO OPINION	COUNT
Ball fields	42.75%	24.64%	15.94%	13.77%	2.90%	138
Boating fishing, hunting facilities	31.62%	27.21%	22.06%	16.18%	2.94%	136
Picnic facilities	51.41%	36.62%	8.45%	2.82%	0.70%	142
Playgrounds	65.25%	28.37%	3.55%	2.13%	0.71%	141
Water facilities (swimming pools, splash pads parks, etc.)	77.24%	14.48%	5.52%	2.07%	0.69%	145
Walking/biking trails	54.86%	34.03%	8.33%	2.78%	0.00%	144
Facilities for elderly persons	46.10%	32.62%	14.89%	3.55%	2.84%	141
Camping facilities	30.83%	16.54%	22.56%	27.82%	2.26%	133
Beautification (landscaping)	58.21%	28.36%	11.94%	1.49%	0.00%	134
Community gardens	41.18%	35.29%	16.91%	6.62%	0.00%	136
Sport courts	54.35%	28.26%	11.59%	5.07%	0.72%	138
Golf courses	20.00%	20.77%	21.54%	33.08%	4.62%	130
Cultural & exhibit facilities (museums)	27.27%	33.33%	26.52%	11.36%	1.52%	132
Skate parks	24.82%	32.12%	25.55%	12.41%	5.11%	137
Facilities for disabled persons	44.60%	35.25%	14.39%	3.60%	2.16%	139

Question 4: In the past year, how often did you or your family visit the following parks?

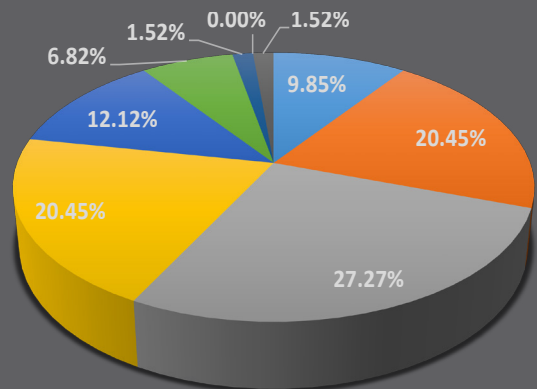
As shown in the table below, the respondents overwhelmingly indicated that the three segments of the Heavin Resaca Trails were the most frequently used (North: 20.98 percent; Center: 16.90 percent; and South: 15.38 percent, on a daily basis respectively). The next most frequented park was Kennedy Park (10.61 percent daily). Other parks, such as Stookey and the Fairgrounds property, were used infrequently on a daily and weekly basis, but were used more frequently 'monthly' or 'once per season or less,' which is not atypical regarding the types of uses available at those parks. The least frequented parks were Valencia and Dick Welch Parks.

PARK NAME	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ONCE PER SEASON OR LESS	NEVER	COUNT
Valencia Park	0.00%	0.81%	2.42%	8.87%	87.90%	124
Dick Welch Park	0.00%	0.81%	3.23%	13.71%	82.26%	124
Fairgrounds	0.00%	0.83%	12.40%	46.28%	40.50%	121
Falligant Park	0.00%	2.44%	15.45%	22.76%	59.35%	123
Heavin Resaca Trail (North - Amphitheater Area)	20.98%	32.87%	21.68%	16.78%	7.69%	143
Heavin Resaca Trail (Center)	16.90%	38.03%	19.01%	14.08%	11.97%	142
Heavin Resaca Trail (South)	15.38%	29.37%	16.08%	19.58%	19.58%	143
Kennedy Park	10.61%	17.42%	14.39%	17.42%	40.15%	132
Landrum Park	2.46%	5.74%	9.02%	27.05%	55.74%	122
Skate Park	1.63%	0.00%	4.07%	17.07%	77.24%	123
Stookey Park	3.91%	19.53%	21.09%	35.16%	20.31%	128

Question 5: What is your age?



Question 7: What is your average household income?



17 or younger 18 - 29 30 - 49 50 - 61 62 or older

\$0 - \$34,999 \$25,000 - \$ 49,999 \$50,000 - \$74,999
 \$75,000 - \$99,999 \$100,000 - \$124,999 \$125,000 - \$149,000
 \$150,000 - \$174,999 \$175,000 - \$199,999 \$200,000 and up

Question 6: How many people live in your current household?

The average household size of the respondents was 4.8 persons per house.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE APPROPRIATE NEW RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMMING.

Objective 2A: Incrementally acquire and develop parkland (through lease agreements, donations and/or partnerships) to meet local requirements and needs for park acreage for the projected population in 10 years.

Ensuring equitable opportunity and access to the city's park and recreation system and facilities is comprised of several different components. The first is ensuring that there is adequate availability of park and recreation lands and facilities in the San Benito park and recreation system. This requires an analysis of the city's current acreage compared to a National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standard of parkland acres per capita in the city. The results will show whether there is currently an excess or deficit in acres of parkland to meet the needs of today's population. Next, this same analysis is then applied to the 2035 projected population to determine the park acreage in 2035.

Once the current and 2035 park acreage needs are identified, additional park property acquisition and/or joint partnerships may be pursued in areas of identified need. These need areas were identified on Map 3.2, *Park System Plan*. If the process proceeds as intended, the Park System Plan will be used by the city's elected and appointed officials, and staff, to provide general, yet targeted areas, where future park property acquisitions and/or partnerships will provide the most benefits to city residents.

Finally, an analysis is undertaken to determine the adequacy of the current facilities to ensure the quantities and types of facilities and equipment are meeting today's standards and in the future.

DETERMINING NEED

There are a variety of methods that may be utilized to assess the need for parks and recreation areas and facilities. The two most common approaches are the standard-based and demand-based methods. The level of sufficiency of the existing parks and recreation system may be determined by applying standards (standard-based) and/or by soliciting community input (demand-based) to identify the needs and priorities of the community.

The method utilized to assess the need for parks and recreation areas and facilities in San Benito was a combination of the two approaches; utilizing both national standards and input from citizens and organized

groups. The demand-based approach entailed collection of citizen input through a survey, focus group interviews, and input from the Parks and Recreation Board (PRB). These results were detailed in Objective 1D, of this plan.

STANDARDS BASED DEMAND

To assess the adequacy of the existing parks and recreation supply using the standards based approach, it is necessary to look at existing population, the supply of parks provided by existing facilities including any planned improvements or expansions, and relate them to planning standards for desirable levels of service. In addition, it is necessary to consider forecasts in future population to determine future needs and to identify underserved areas of the system.

Standards provide measures to determine the amount of land needed for parks and recreation to meet the demands and desires of citizens and visitors. Parks and recreation standards are typically expressed in terms of acres of land dedicated for parks and recreation use per unit of population. While general standards are useful, it is important to establish standards that are based upon unique local considerations such as participation trends, user characteristics, demographics, socioeconomics, climate, natural environment and other considerations. Leisure, recreation and health values are unique to each municipality; therefore, the standards should represent the interests and desires of the community.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) published the *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* to establish nationally applicable criteria for the provision of parks and recreation facilities and have set forth standards for recommended acreage of parks per 1,000 persons. These national standards range from 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 persons for neighborhood parks, and 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 persons for community parks.

CURRENT PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS

Given that the planning period for this plan is 2015 to 2035, the 2015 population of 24,250 persons¹ was used to determine the current need. As indicated in Table 3.1, *Percent of Need Met, 2015*, the total recommended acreage of parks and recreation areas reveals that, overall; the city is currently meeting only 45.2 percent of the recommended acres of parkland. In order to meet the current needs of city residents, the City must plan to add an additional 15.5 acres of neighborhood parks and 64.0 acres of community parks (79.5 acres total). While this

¹ Based on the U.S. Census, 2010, Total Population number.

TABLE 3.1, PERCENT OF NEED MET, 2015

PARK CLASSIFICATION	EXISTING ACREAGE ³	RECOMMENDED ACREAGE ⁴	ACRES NEEDED	PERCENT OF CURRENT NEED MET
Neighborhood Park ¹	8.5 ac.	24.0 ac.	15.5 ac.	35.4%
Community Park ²	57.2 ac.	121.2 ac.	64.0 ac.	47.2%
TOTAL	65.7 ac.	145.2 ac.	79.5 ac.	45.2%

¹ Includes Landrum and Falligant Parks, the Skate Park, Plaza de San Benito, and Heavin Park.

² Includes Stookey Park, Kennedy Park, and the Heavin Resaca Trails.

³ Since the properties are not currently developed as parks, the new 16 acres of property acquired on Sam Houston Blvd. behind the Fire Station, the fairgrounds, or the San Benito Constructed Wetlands Park are not included in the calculation of existing acreage.

⁴ The recommended acreage is derived from multiplying the current population, 24,250 persons (latest Census data available is 2010) by the recommended per capita acreages for neighborhood (1.0 ac. per 1,000 persons) and community parks (5.0 acres per 1,000 persons).

TABLE 3.2, PERCENT OF NEED MET, 2035

PARK CLASSIFICATION	EXISTING ACREAGE ³	RECOMMENDED ACREAGE ⁴	ACRES NEEDED	PERCENT OF CURRENT NEED MET
Neighborhood Park ¹	8.5 ac.	27.8 ac.	19.3 ac.	30.6%
Community Park ²	57.2 ac.	139.0 ac.	81.8 ac.	41.1%
TOTAL	65.7 ac.	166.8 ac.	101.1 ac.	39.4%

¹ Includes Landrum and Falligant Parks, the Skate Park, Plaza de San Benito, and Heavin Park.

² Includes Stookey Park, Kennedy Park, and the Heavin Resaca Trails.

³ Since the properties are not currently developed as park, the new 16 acres of property acquired on Sam Houston Blvd. behind the Fire Station, the fairgrounds, or the San Benito Constructed Wetlands Park are not included in the calculation of existing acreage.

⁴ The recommended acreage is derived from multiplying the projected population, 27,850 persons (see Figure 1., *Population Projection*, of Chapter 1, *Plan Introduction*) by the recommended per capita acreages for neighborhood (1.0 ac. per 1,000 persons) and community parks (5.0 acres per 1,000 persons).

seems like a lot, the city is already moving forward with a plan of action to develop a new community park behind the fire station on Sam Houston Boulevard and the San Benito Constructed Wetlands park near the city's wastewater treatment plant. Each of these parks, once developed, will add significant acreage to the city's existing park and recreation system.

FUTURE PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS

Future need for park acreage was calculated using a Year 2035 population of 27,800 persons.² This increase in population will also increase the demand for parks and recreation facilities. Displayed in Table 3.2, *Percent of Need Met, 2035*, is the amount of park acreage required

² See Figure 1, *Population Projection*, of Chapter 1, *Plan Introduction*.

to meet the projected future demand of the city's neighborhood and community parks (based on the same locally determined standards used to determine current 2015 need). The results reveal that a total recommended acreage of 101.1 acres would be needed to meet projected per capita demand. Of this total, an additional 19.3 acres of neighborhood parkland and 81.8 acres of community parkland would be needed to meet the needs of the projected population. Overall, the city's parks system currently meets about 39.4 percent of the total park demand for 2035. Again, while this amount of acreage seems like a lot, several large properties already owned by the city are currently in various stages of being transitioned to the parks department. These additions will add a significant amount of acreage to the city's overall park system.

Actionable Objectives:

- Coordinate with the Department of Planning and Development to prepare a parkland dedication / fee-in-lieu ordinance. This would allow for the dedication of land and/or the collection of money for the acquisition, development, and improvement of neighborhood parks within respective park benefit zones. The ordinance could also allow a specific set aside for distribution across all park benefit zones for the acquisition, development, or improvement of community parks. A portion of the collected funds may also be dedicated for revitalization and/or enhancement of existing parks within the same park benefit zone. The above provisions are intended to allow new growth to contribute their fair share to the overall park and recreation system as growth occurs. New park acquisition and development should be considered in greatest areas of need and be planned, designed, and constructed in conformance with the other actionable objectives set out in this chapter (see also Goal 1A and Goal 8).
- Annually monitor the city's growth in population and adjust the capital budget and parkland dedication / fee in lieu requirements as needed to increase the acreage of the park and recreation system to meet the current and future projected per capita needs of the population.
- Concurrent with population growth, plan to acquire and develop an additional 19.3 acres of new neighborhood parkland in areas of deficiency by 2035.
- Concurrent with population growth, plan to acquire and develop an additional 81.8 acres of community parkland in areas of deficiency by 2035.
- Prepare a conceptual master plan of activities and improvements for the new 16-acre community park, sometimes called South Park, located on Sam Houston Boulevard behind the fire station.
- Continue to input San Benito Parks and Recreation Department data into the PRORAGIS™ system on an annual basis.
- Work with the city's Department of Planning and Development to input the park and recreation GIS shapefiles into the mapping function of the PRORAGIS™ system.
- On an annual basis, as part of the preparation of the annual budget, compare San Benito's level of service

NRPA'S PRORAGIS

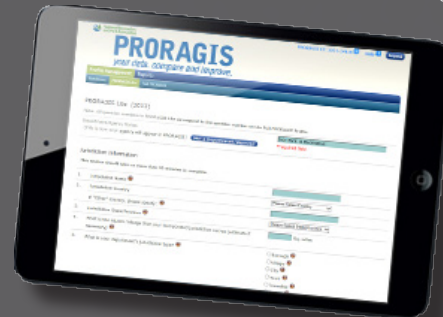


Image Source: NRPA

PRORAGIS™, which stands for *Park and Recreation Operating Ratio and GIS* system, is a tool intended to help agencies analyze and compare their performance and facilities to other similar agencies across the country.

Since its launch in 2010, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has worked hard to get all park and recreation agencies to utilize the tool to move beyond what was previously being used as a "one size fits all" comparison between agencies. Historically, park and recreation professionals simply compared themselves using a national benchmarking standard commonly found in most park plans. These level of service recommendations came directly from the *National Park, Recreation and Open Space Standards* which was published by NRPA and used from 1971 to 1995.

Although PRORAGIS™ is intended to allow comparisons between agencies of similar characteristics (e.g., jurisdiction area, capital and operating budgets, full-time employees, etc.), not enough smaller-sized and scaled agencies have participated to produce a valid comparison. Of the agencies that have participated (mostly larger), it showed that San Benito's per capita operating expenditures (\$20.94 per person) was significantly lower than even the lowest quartile of other responses (Lower Quartile – \$44.30 per person; Median – \$82.98 per person; Upper Quartile – \$149.52 per person.*

* Data obtained from PRORAGIS on March 16, 2015 regarding San Benito's summary effectiveness ratio with other agencies using 2014 data.

against other agencies of similar size and scale to better determine where San Benito is with regard to the provision of parks and recreation.

Objective 2B: Revitalize, redevelop, and provide new indoor and outdoor types of amenities and facilities to meet the needs of the park and recreation system.

Above and beyond the quantity and distribution of parks, the types of facilities and amenities, and quality thereof, also plays a critical role in the use of the park and recreation system.

FACILITY STANDARDS

Similar to determining needed park acreage, standards also help to identify the types of facilities and equipment desired for each new or revitalized park. Identifying these requirements allows the type and number of required facilities and equipment to be included in each proposed park, while also allowing for effective improvements to be made to existing parks to ensure that they are viable and attractive for their users. The information provided in Table 3.3, *Facility Standards*, details the recommended size and dimensions, facility ratios, orientations, service area, and location of the more significant recreation facilities.

This information is intended to be utilized by the city as a guideline for parks and recreation area development and

TABLE 3.3, FACILITY STANDARDS

ACTIVITY / FACILITY	SPACE REQs (sq. ft.)	SIZE & DIMENSIONS	ORIENTATION	UNITS PER POPULATION	SERVICE RADIUS	LOCATION NOTES
Basketball 1. Youth 2. High School 3. Collegiate	2,400 - 3,036 5,040 - 7,280 5,600 - 7,980	46' - 50' x 84' 50' x 84' 50' x 84'	Long axis north - south	1 per 10,000 persons	¼ - ½ mile	Outdoor courts in neighborhood and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings
Soccer	1.7 - 2.1 ac.	195' to 225' x 330' to 360' with a minimum clearance of 10' on all sides.	Fall season – long axis northwest to southeast. For longer periods, north to south.	1 per 10,000 persons	1 - 2 miles	Number of units depends on popularity. Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to schools or neighborhood parks
Tennis	Minimum of 7,200 sq. ft. for a single court. (2 acres for a complex)	36' x 78' Twelve foot clearance on both sides; 21' clearance on both ends.	Long axis north-south.	1 court per 2,000 persons	¼ - ½ mile	Best in batteries of 2-4. Located in neighborhood/ community park or adjacent to a school site
Volleyball	Minimum 4,000 sq. ft	30' x 60'. Minimum 6' clearance on all sides.	Long axis north-south	1 court per 5,000 persons	¼ - ½ mile	Same as other court activities (e.g. badminton, basketball, etc.)
Football	Minimum 1.5 ac.	160' x 360' with a minimum of 6' clearance on all sides	Fall season – long axis northwest to southeast. For longer periods, north to south.	1 per 20,000 persons	15 - 30 minutes travel time.	Usually part of baseball, football, soccer complex in community park or adjacent to high school

(Continued on page 3-21)

TABLE 3.3. FACILITY STANDARDS (CONTINUED)

ACTIVITY / FACILITY	SPACE REQs (sq. ft.)	SIZE & DIMENSIONS	ORIENTATION	UNITS PER POPULATION	SERVICE RADIUS	LOCATION NOTES
Open Space	Minimum of 40 percent undeveloped per park	N/A	N/A	5 acres per 1,000 persons	30 minute travel time.	Within neighborhood and community parks or stand-alone.
1/4 Mile Running Track	4.3 acres	Overall Width – 276' Length - 600.02' Track width for 8, 4' lanes is 32'	Long axis in sector from north to south to northwest to southeast with finish line at northerly end	1 per 20,000 persons	15 -30 minute travel time	Usually part of high school or in community park complex in combination with baseball, soccer, etc.
Baseball 1. Official	3.0 – 3.85 ac. min.	Baselines – 90' Pitching distance – 60-1/2' Foul lines – 320' min. Center field C 400'+ Baselines – 60' Pitching distance – 46' Foul lines – 200' Center field – 200'-250'	Locate home plate so pitcher throwing across sun and batter not facing it. Line from home plate through pitcher's mound runs east northeast.	1 per 5,000 persons	1/4 - 1/2 mile.	Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields should be part of a community park or sports complex.
2. Little League	1.2 ac. mini.	Baselines – 60' Pitching distance – 46' min. 40' – women Fast pitch field radius from plate – 225' between foul lines slow pitch – 275' (men) 250' (women).	Same as baseball.	Lighted – 1 per 30,000 persons.	1/4 - 1/2 mile.	Slight difference in dimensions for 16" slow pitch. May also be used for youth baseball.
Softball	1.5 - 2.0 acres.	Baselines – 60' Pitching distance – 46' min. 40' – women Fast pitch field radius from plate – 225' between foul lines slow pitch – 275' (men) 250' (women).	Same as baseball.	1 per 5,000 persons (if also used for youth baseball)	1/4 - 1/2 mile.	Slight difference in dimensions for 16" slow pitch. May also be used for youth baseball.
Trails	N/A	Maximum 10' width, maximum average grade 5% not to exceed 15%.	N/A	1 system per region	N/A	Located in greenways, natural areas and parks, and along drainage ways, levees and utility easements. Their purpose is to accommodate walkers, joggers and bicyclists away from traffic.

Continued on next page

TABLE 3.3, FACILITY STANDARDS (CONTINUED)

ACTIVITY / FACILITY	SPACE REQs (sq. ft.)	SIZE & DIMENSIONS	ORIENTATION	UNITS PER POPULATION	SERVICE RADIUS	LOCATION NOTES
Swimming Pools	Varies on size of pool and amenities. Usually ½ to 2-acre site.	Teaching – min. of 25 yards x 45' even depth of 3 to 4 feet. Competitive – min. of 25m x 16m. Minimum of 27 square feet of water surface per swimmer.	None – although care must be taken in siting of lifeguard stations in relation to afternoon sun.	1 per 20,000	15to 30 min. travel time	Pools for general community use should be planned for teaching, competitive, and recreational purposes with enough depth (3.4m) to accommodate 1m and 3m diving boards. Located in community park or school site.

Source: Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, National Recreation and Park Association, 1995.

improvement. Since each existing site and proposed new park sites are unique in terms of size, orientation, ingress and egress, abutting and nearby land uses, slope and current/anticipated use, it is prudent to make adjustments to the types of facilities and equipment that are provided below (and on the next few pages).

Moreover, since user characteristics tend to fluctuate by season and by type of user, the ratios may require adjustment to meet the needs of the users at each individual park. Guidelines must also be considered for playground design, equipment maintenance, safety, and injury prevention.

Based on the locally adopted facility standards set out in Figure 3.3, *Facility Standards*, the current and future

recreation facility needs for the community are presented in Table 3.4, *Current Citywide Facility Needs, 2015*. Note that the “existing units” include those provided within city parks and the base population uses the latest available from the U.S. Census: 24,250 persons from the 2010 Decennial Census. The analysis reveals that the need for addition recreation facilities is varied; but in general, the city is lacking needed recreational facility and amenity types. In particular, the greatest deficiencies are in soccer, tennis, football, softball, swimming, and a 1/4-mile running track. Incorporated into the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in Chapter 4, *Implementation*, is a sufficient number of facilities to meet the current needs of the city.

TABLE 3.4, CURRENT CITYWIDE FACILITY NEEDS, 2015

ACTIVITY / FACILITY	NRPA STANDARD	REC. UNITS	EXISTING UNITS	DEFICIT	% OF NEED MET
Basketball	1/5,000 persons	5 units	5 units	0 units	100%
Soccer	1/10,000 persons	2 units	0 units	2 units	0%
Tennis	1/2,000 persons	12 units	0 units	12 units	0%
Volleyball	1/5,000 persons	5 units	1 unit	4 units	20%
Football	1/20,000 persons	1 unit	0 units	1 unit	0%
1/4-mile running track	1/20,000 person	1 unit	0 units	1 unit	0%
Baseball	1/5,000 persons	5 units	6 units	(1 unit)	120%
Softball	1/5,000 persons	5 units	0 units	5 units	0%
Swimming pools	1/20,000 persons	1 unit	0 units	1 unit	0%

Note: The per capita NRPA standard used have been locally tailored to fit the needs of San Benito and are the same standards that were used in the previously adopted Park Master Plan. The existing population used was the latest available from the U.S. Census Bureau: 24,250 persons from the 2010 Decennial Census.

Standards alone, however, cannot be used to identify needs. Other recreational providers within the city must also be considered. For instance, the San Benito Consolidated Independent School District (CISD) has a 1/4-mile running track at its Berta Cabaza Middle School. Instead of the city trying to fulfill this need on its own, a cooperative agreement could be executed with the SBCISD for joint use of this facility outside of school

operating hours. This is similar to what many jurisdictions are doing across Texas and the country to fulfill park and recreational needs on limited budgets.

Presented in Table 3.5, *Future Citywide Facility Needs, 2035*, is the facility needs for the Year 2035. Significant needs exist for many facility types, with the greatest deficiencies being the same as what they are for the current year.

TABLE 3.5, FUTURE CITYWIDE FACILITY NEEDS, 2035

ACTIVITY / FACILITY	NRPA STANDARD	REC. UNITS	EXISTING UNITS	DEFICIT	% OF NEED MET
Basketball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	5 units	1 units	83%
Soccer	1/10,000 persons	3 units	0 units	3 units	0%
Tennis	1/2,000 persons	14 units	0 units	14 units	0%
Volleyball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	1 unit	5 units	17%
Football	1/20,000 persons	1 unit	0 units	1 unit	0%
1/4-mile running track	1/20,000 person	1 unit	0 units	1 unit	0%
Baseball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	6 units	0 units	100%
Softball	1/5,000 persons	6 units	0 units	6 units	0%
Swimming pools	1/20,000 persons	1 unit	0 units	1 unit	0%

Note: The per capita NRPA standard used have been locally tailored to fit the needs of San Benito and are the same standards that were used in the previously adopted Park Master Plan. See Chapter 1, Plan Introduction, for a breakdown of the future predicted population: 27,800 persons.

EQUIPMENT NEEDS

In addition to facility needs, there are also major equipment needs within each park. Displayed in Table 3.6, *Equipment Standards*, are the recommended minimum equipment improvements for the city’s neighborhood and community parks. Use of these standards will ensure comparable development standards among park and recreation areas across the city, and in turn, a quality parks and recreation system.

Displayed in Table 3.7, *Park Equipment Assets*, are the current needs of each individual property with the San Benito Park and Recreation system. The identified needs reflect what is required to meet the basic user needs while a user is on-site using the park and recreation facilities. The table reflects what is needed to meet the equipment standards set out in Table 3.6, *Equipment Standards*, less what is already on each individual property. Therefore, in some cases, there is already sufficient equipment serving a particular individual park and no more equipment is needed.

QUALITY EQUIPMENT

Once on-site at a city park, the availability quality of equipment (e.g., picnic tables, grills, trash cans, etc.) can make or ruin a user’s experience.



TABLE 3.6, EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

IMPROVEMENT	NUMBER OF UNITS	
	NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	COMMUNITY PARKS
Park bench	2 per acre	0.5 per acre
Picnic table/shelter	2 per acre	1 per acres
Covered pavilion	Optional	0.1 per acre
Drinking fountain	3 per park	5 per park
Park sign	1 at each major entrance	1 at each major entrance
Playground equipment	5 to 20 children	60 to 65 children
Garbage cans	1 per picnic table	1 per picnic table
Exercise stations	optional	1 per park
Security lighting	Yes	Yes
Perimeter sidewalk	Yes	Yes
Internal sidewalk to amenities	Yes	Yes
Trail	Preferred	1-mile+
Barbecue grills	1 per picnic table	1 per picnic table
Restroom	Preferred	2 per park
Parking	On-Street	Off-Street
Irrigation system	Yes	Yes

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative

The city needs to commit to establishing a durable design, construction, and maintenance mentality for all park and recreation assets. A perfect example are the Heavin Resaca Trails. Although just a few years old, much of the existing trail subbase and the trail surface have begun to completely breakdown. Today, instead of establishing new trail segments to provide access to more users, and to improve connectivity, the city is currently spending precious time and resources re-constructing the same project.

Establishing a parks-to-standard program and adopting a mindset that long-term durability needs to be factored into all decisions, the city would be moving towards a park and recreation system for everyone.

PARKS FOR PROMOTING HEALTH


Part of determining whether or not the park system is broadly distributed and serving the needs of the residents of San Benito, is to get a better understanding of how

DURABLE CONSTRUCTION

Committing to “doing it right” the first time, more often than not, pays off in the long-run. In the case of the Heavin Resaca trails, a poorly constructed trail is having to be replaced after only a few years of use.



TABLE 3.7, PARK EQUIPMENT ASSETS



INVENTORY TYPE	STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK (with Heavin Resaca Trails)	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK
	COMMUNITY	NEIGHBORHOOD	NEIGHBORHOOD	LINEAR PARKS AND GREENWAYS	POCKET PARK	SPECIAL USE			
Park bench	14	1	(7)	45	(4)	1	(4)	1	2
Picnic table/shelter	14	(2)	(7)	30	-	(2)	-	1	(4)
Covered pavilion	1	1 ¹	1 ²	3	-	-	-	-	-
Drinking fountain	5	3	3	5	-	-	-	-	-
Park sign	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
Playground equipment	1 ²	-	-	1 ³	-	-	-	-	-
Garbage cans	8	(1)	(6)	10	(2)	-	-	1	1
Exercise stations	-	-	-	(4)	-	-	-	-	-
Security lighting	Add	-	Add	Add	Add	-	-	Add	-
Perimeter sidewalk	Add	-	Expand	Add along street frontages	-	-	-	-	-
Internal sidewalk to amenities	-	-	Add	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trail	Add ⁴	-	Add ⁴	Expand / Recondition	-	-	-	-	-
Barbecue grills	12	-	(2)	6	-	-	-	-	-
Restroom	-	Add	Unlock	Add	-	-	-	-	Unlock

Notes:

¹ Landrum park has a gazebo that serves as the covered pavilion.

² Although picnic pavilions are optional for neighborhood parks, having a least one in each neighborhood park allows larger groups (e.g., family reunions, birthday parties, etc.) to rent or otherwise use the parks for planned social gatherings. Besides rental income, they are an effective way to increase use of these parks.

³ A larger-scale playscape capable of serving 60 to 65 children is needed.

⁴ Adding a multi-use perimeter trail around Stookey Park would increase the use of this park and fulfill some of the local residents' need for a neighborhood park. Similarly, a perimeter trail around Falligant Park would provide nearby residents to get exercise and would increase participation at this park.

the city's park and recreation system is being used to promote healthy outcomes in the city. In other words, is the park and recreation system sufficiently adequate to promote health outcomes for San Benito residents. Once on-site, parks can provide a multitude of options to promote healthy lifestyles and increase physical activity.

These could include running trails and exercise stations; pick-up basketball and volleyball courts; open play areas, playscapes, and other play structures; swimming and splash pads, etc. In addition, parks could also be used for

“Through a modest increase in daily activity, most Americans can improve their health and quality of life.”



HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DO CHILDREN, ADULTS, AND SENIORS NEED?

AEROBIC
ACTIVITY



MUSCLE
STRENGTHENING



BONE
STRENGTHENING



Children			
AEROBIC ACTIVITY	MUSCLE STRENGTHENING	BONE STRENGTHENING	
60+ minutes of physical activity each day. This can include moderate-intensity aerobic activity. Be sure to include vigorous-intensity aerobic activity for your child on at least 3 days per week.	Muscle strengthening activity, such as gymnastics or push-ups, should be included at least 3 days per week as part of your child's 60 or more minutes.	Bone strengthening activities, such as jumping rope or running, should be included at least 3 days per week as part of your child's 60 or more minutes.	
Adults			
150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity weekly.	Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups.	-	
Seniors			
150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity weekly	Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups.	-	

Sources: Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General Executive Summary; Center for Disease Control and Prevention: Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

structured exercise classes (e.g., running clubs, yoga, etc.), health fairs, and special events (e.g., running races).

Actionable Objectives:

- Evaluate existing park properties to determine if there is adequate space available to include new types, or additional types, of facilities in conformance with the specified need areas set out in Table 3.4, *Current Citywide Facility Needs, 2015*.
- In conformance with population growth, evaluate existing park properties and park acquisitions to determine if there is adequate space available to establish new facilities to meet the needs of the predicted population (see Table 3.5, *Future Citywide Facility Needs, 2035*). The types of facilities that are in the greatest need are soccer (3 units), tennis (14 units), football (1 units), softball (5 units), a swimming pool (1 unit), and a quarter-mile running track (1 unit).
- Explore opportunities to add a dog park along the Heavin Resaca trails.
- Explore opportunities for relocating and expanding the current skate park to a location that has greater visibility from public right-of-way. Since the current location is fairly secluded, there have been some expressed concerns about the safety of those that enjoy this recreational amenity. One potential relocation site near the public right-of-way on the new 16-acre park, sometimes referred to as South Park, near the city's fire station. This will allow the city's youth a place of their own, while still remaining in the public view.
- Explore opportunities to add new types of amenities that appeal to intergenerational users in existing and future parks, including climbing walls, bike trails, Frisbee golf, splash pads, running / walking trails, checkerboard tables, art walks, sandboxes, among others.

INCREASED USE OF SHADE

To increase the usability the city's playscapes, particularly during the hot summer months typical of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, consider adding shade structures to each play structure.



EXPANDED AND RELOCATED SKATE PARK

Relocating and expanding the skate park could provide an updated recreational "get away" for the city's youth, while still at the same time improving both safety and visibility for all users.



- Similar to the recent project at Falligant Park, consider adding lighting in parks and along trails where safety is a concern or where lights could increase park or trail usability via operating hours.
- Explore ways to open the existing restroom facilities at Falligant Park and along the Heavin Resaca Trails during all operating hours. This could include improved design (waterless urinals, washable paint, no mirrors) or increased security patrols, or a combination of both.
- Explore ways to install restroom facilities at other parks (e.g., Landrum) so that users can utilize the park system for greater lengths of time.
- Maintain the newly installed Bird and Butterfly garden and consider additional similar opportunities (utilizing willing partners) at other parks.
- Consider adding additional dog waste stations in larger parks and along the Heavin Resaca Trails.
- Consider adding bike racks in all parks and along the Heavin Resaca Trails.
- Consider adding additional community gardens in neighborhood parks if willing partners are identified.
- Evaluate ways to utilize the park and recreation system as a means to improve health outcomes in the city. This could include providing education to the community, improving facilities and equipment that support health outcomes in parks, adding recreational programs, community gardens, social and other special events, etc.
- To improve usability during the hot summer months typical of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, evaluate the feasibility of adding playscape shade structures at each existing and future park that has a multi-component playscape system.



SOUTHSIDE PARK (UNDER DEVELOPMENT)

The City is actively planning and programming its next community park, located to the south of the US Highway 83 (Interstate 69) expressway on a 15 acre parcel owned by the city, to the east and adjacent to Fire Station #1. The proposed Southside Park will enable the city to expand its parkland and recreational programs in Zone 2 and increase the number of participants involved

in sports leagues resulting from the availability of additional fields. The Parks Department will be able to increase the frequency of its recreational programs by adding at least one youth soccer league, and at least one adult soccer league. Additionally, the city's Community-Wide Campaign will periodically provide free exercise classes, health fairs, and nutritional presentations.

GOAL 3 : PROMOTE AND ENGAGE IN THE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Objective 3A: Identify and acquire (through lease agreements, donations and partnerships) existing natural resources which warrant protection, conservation and/or enhancement; provides habitats for wildlife and endangered species or provides natural open spaces suitable for parks, recreation and both environmental and historical preservation of sites.

There are a lot of natural and cultural resources within San Benito that warrant protection. With regard to the protection of natural resources, it not only provides necessary habitat for animals and plants (including threatened and endangered species), but it also provides a multitude of physical benefits to the health and well-being of the city's residents, including improved cognitive function, increased self-esteem, etc. With regard to cultural resources, people identify with their heritage and organize their lives based on our past experiences and beliefs.

Consequently, both natural and cultural resources can and should be a high priority component to the city's park and recreation system. One of the most important natural resources in San Benito are the resacas. Known as the

"Resaca City," the heart of San Benito basically straddles a 400 -foot wide resaca that bisects the city from north to south. Although historically, the term "resaca" referred to a dry river bed (formerly a tributary of the Rio Grande River), today, it acts as a large irrigation system consisting of canals and levees. But, more recently with the recent construction of the Heavin Resaca Trails, the resacas have become an active and passive recreation hub and social gathering place for both residents and tourists of San Benito.

Currently, the resacas are managed by the Cameron County Irrigation District # 2, with a sole purpose of storing and providing irrigation water for future use for municipal and other potable water sources. Due to its importance to the city, both historically and today, the city should continue to collaborate with the irrigation district to utilize the resacas for multiple purposes within the city. In addition to irrigation, rehabilitating and stabilizing the banks with native wetland plants can provide enhanced habitat for waterfowl and other important plants and animals, possible dredging could increase irrigation storage capacity and make it deep enough for additional fish and aquatic animals, and increased water access for recreational purposes could significantly increased tourism dollars and other economic benefits to the city.

There is a well-documented scientific connection between access to outdoor recreation and positive physical health outcomes. Direct access to green space and parkland has been shown to correlate with improved cognitive function, increased self-esteem and better self-discipline, decreased levels of depression, lower stress levels, reduced cases of obesity, and an increased sense of community and belonging.

Quote Source: 2012 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan (pg. vii)

Another semi-natural resource that brings multiple benefits to the city are the San Benito Constructed Wetlands. These “constructed wetlands” are located off of Line 20 Road (a.k.a., Mayfield Road), where they are sourced from the city’s wastewater treatment plants (WWTP). As part of the operation of the WWTP, the City provides tertiary treatment of wastewater utilizing the natural cleansing capabilities of wetland plants (see inset next two pages). Fortunately, this also allows the city to cross-utilize these wetlands for other purposes - including capitalizing on the economic benefits of nature tourism.

For several years, the San Benito Constructed Wetlands have consisted of four treatment cells that have been also providing a significant secondary benefit of creating important natural habitat. Currently, the city is working with the Arroyo Colorado Group, utilizing a \$100,000 grant to bring an additional 10 cells online, bringing the total number of treatment cells to 14. The grant should cover all work that is being performed at the site during pre-construction (planning and clearing the site), construction (equipment and man hours) and post construction (man hours and plants) for planting the vegetation). In addition, the city will supplement the grant funding with in-kind work, including city staff performing the work (i.e., construction man-hours, equipment, some bedding

material and some pipe, etc.), and for refurbishing the existing shed (man-hours, equipment and material) to the outdoor training facility, and for paying for the training instructor (at least two or three workshops) and training material (literature and signs). The initial phase of work should consist of expanding the number of treatment cells to 14, replacing the sheet metal on the barn/pavilion, creating some educational panel signage, and the construction of some observation decks.

Overtime, if this project is expanded and marketed, it could have significant tourism-related economic development implications for the city. Currently, San Benito and Lower Rio Grande Valley. As indicated in the 2012 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, nature tourism related to bird watching in South Texas has contributed over \$300 million to the Rio Valley economy per year.

Actionable Objectives:

- Promote recreational and interactive educational opportunities that will attract users in the region.
- Work with the EDC to create an economic development program, budget, and schedule to market, develop, and promote nature-based tourism (focused on the Heavin Resaca Trail system along

“Healthy ecosystems depend on careful and effective water management. The population of Texas is expanding rapidly, bringing incredible pressure to bear on all of the state’s natural resources, especially water.”

Quote Source: 2012 Texas
Outdoor Recreation Plan (pg. 6)

THE PUBLIC USE OF CONSTRUCTED WETLANDS

Located off of Line 20 Road (a.k.a. Mayfield Road), the city of San Benito operates one of its wastewater treatment plants (WWTP). As part of the operation of that plant, the City provides tertiary treatment of wastewater utilizing the natural cleansing capabilities of wetland plants (see inset map). In 2010, a Clean Water Act 319 grant provided funding for Phases I and II, which included restoring four of the fourteen outdated treatment ponds. 4,240,800 gallons of treated wastewater per month is piped from the new plant to filter through the ponds' wetland vegetation and rock berms. This project will see the remaining ten ponds restored and utilized to polish treated water and treat nearby agricultural runoff before entering the Arroyo Colorado. Evaporation and utilization by vegetation will reduce the amount of fresh water impacting the hypersaline seagrass ecosystem in the Laguna Madre. Fortunately, this also allows the city to cross-utilize these wetlands for other purposes - including capitalizing on the economic benefits of nature tourism.

Birdwatching is one example of nature tourism. It has been said that Texas is the number one bird-watching state/province in North America and the Lower Rio Grande Valley (in particular) is the number two bird-watching destination in North America.¹ Indeed, over 500 bird species have been recorded in Hidalgo, Starr, Willacy, and Cameron Counties. One study, from the South Texas Nature Marketing Coop, has indicated that nature tourism has led to a direct total county-level economic output of \$463 million and 6,613 full- and part-time jobs annually in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.²

San Benito, therefore, has a unique opportunity to utilize the San Benito constructed wetlands for more than just treating wastewater. In particular, the constructed wetlands can also be cross-utilized as park, recreation, and open space resources for the city, as well as an economic driver. Elsewhere in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, nine other communities partner together with each and the Texas Parks and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Departments to create the World Birding Center. While the city may not be able to officially participate in the World Birding Center, it can capitalize on the regional draw associated with it.

1.....
Mathis, M., & Matisoff, D. (2004). A characterization of ecotourism in the Texas Lower Rio Grande Valley. Discussion Paper VNT-04-01. Houston Advanced Research Center.

2.....
Department of Recreation, Park & Tourism Sciences and Department of Agricultural Economics Texas A&M University. Economic Impact of Nature Tourism on the Rio Grande Valley: Considering Peak and Off-Peak Visitation for 2011. Prepared for the South Texas Nature Marketing Coop. April 2012.

San Benito's Constructed Wetlands



Sufficient space and water are available for this multi-use project and the City is establishing a nature park. Grant funds can be used immediately for implementation because design and infrastructure exist for all wetland and educational components.

Phase 3 of the constructed wetlands project will add the retention capacity of three 10-acre settling/evaporation ponds. The City of San Benito will contribute labor, equipment, maintenance, monitoring, water, and operation costs. Grant funds can be used for immediate implementation because infrastructure exists for all project components.



ECOTOURISM POTENTIAL: A PHASED APPROACH

Just within the four counties of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, ecotourism is worth over \$463 million each year, and creates 6,600 jobs annually. While the city may not be able to immediately and fully develop an ecotourism-oriented nature park (e.g., a visitors center) at the constructed wetlands property, there are steps that can be taken to eventually lead there. Using a phased approach, the city is able to start small and incrementally expand as the facility becomes more popular over time.

The first and most important phase is to get people out to the wetlands. This requires minimal investment to establish a dedicated gravel parking area, signage, a stabilized pavilion with a picnic table, trash cans, and a bird viewing/photography blind. Gravel trails would allow visitors to move into and around the different wetland ponds. In addition, a web page should be created on the city's website and members from the local birding community should be approached about establishing an official bird checklist and an associated brochure which can be printed and taken to the site. A "siting" log book is sometimes provided to capture new bird species spotted on site. Through press releases, staff- or volunteer-led educational programs and word-of-mouth, these amenities would be enough to spur visitation to the site and to build community support for its expansion.

The second phase would be to increase the available use opportunities. This could include establishing a permanent parking area, an ADA accessible trail segment, boardwalks out into the wetlands, an expanded trail along the ravine providing connectivity to the Arroyo Colorado (for nature walking and/or a canoe/kayak access point), interpretative signage, additional bird viewing blinds, among other improved amenities. A "friends of" group could be established to support maintenance and tours.

The third and final phase (long-term and if support and interest is available) could include a more permanent visitor center, public restroom, off-site trail connections, etc.



Image Source: Google Earth

the resacas and bird-watching at the San Benito Constructed Wetlands project) within San Benito and the region.

- Inventory and analyze comparable successful nature-based tourism programs in Texas (e.g., the World Birding Center) and around the country.
- Identify key organizations that could help jump-start and maintain a nature-based tourism program.
- Create educational programs for all age groups that emphasize individual responsibility for conservation in the community, facilitate public participation, and provide healthy, safe, and active recreation.
- Continue to host recreational-based sporting events in the city park and recreation system.
- Consider partnering with others to expand the number and frequency of events in the city's park and recreation system.
- Initiate a discussion with the Cameron County Irrigation District # 2 to determine the feasibility and action steps to allow non-motorized recreation in the resacas. This could include paddle boats and boards, canoes, and kayaks.
- Continue working with the Cameron County Irrigation District # 2 to stabilize the streambanks of the resacas. Primary focus should be to provide stabilization through the use of natural bioengineering best practices and the use of native wetland plants, rather than rip rap. This will maintain the natural look and feel of the resacas and provide additional habitat for water-based plants and animals.
- Initiate discussion with the Cameron County Irrigation District #2 regarding possible grant funding to dredge the resacas along the Heavin Resaca Trails to improve irrigation storage capacity and to make the resacas more functional for other purposes (e.g., recreational enjoyment, canoe/kayak race events, etc.)
- Continue to work with the Arroyo Colorado Group to formally establish the public use component of the San Benito Constructed Wetlands.
- Pursue additional grant funding to formally establish a parking lot at the constructed wetlands site.
- Pursue additional grant funding to expand the trail system at the San Benito Constructed Wetlands project. This would include establishing a larger loop trail that provides pedestrian and canoe/kayak access to the Arroyo Colorado.
- Coordinate with others (e.g., the local branch of the Master Arborists, bird watching enthusiasts,

among others, to create a bird-watching checklist, web page, interpretative signage, and educational materials.

- Coordinate with the San Benito Consolidated Independent School District (SBCISD) to bring elementary school students out on field trips to the constructed wetlands.

Objective 3B: Encourage the preservation of open space by individuals, corporations, non-profits and public agencies to enhance the livability, aesthetic value and natural beauty of the city by providing development incentives, regulations and policies.

The preservation of open space does not happen by chance. To the contrary, it can oftentimes be expensive to acquire lands for protection as open space, or for park and recreational purposes. It has become even more difficult as federal and state dollars become increasingly limited, and such things as replacing aging infrastructure takes higher priority.

However, what many jurisdictions are doing is allowing new development to “pay its own way” when the development occurs, rather than using tax dollars after-the-fact. One of the ways this is primarily accomplished is through parkland dedication and development ordinances (see Goal 1, regarding action recommendations for establishing parkland dedication and development requirements). But, there are also additional incentives and regulations that can also be used.

Some jurisdictions have begun to implement more flexible lot size provisions where smaller lot sizes can be exchanged for greater set aside of commonly protected open space. This is a win-win for both the developer (because they pay less money for infrastructure and get the same return on investment based on density) and for the city (because the provisions are written to set aside the most sensitive natural resources first, like floodplains, as commonly owned and maintained property, and there is “less” street, water, wastewater, and drainage infrastructure to maintain after it is dedicated to the city).

Some jurisdictions take this step even further by providing density “bonuses,” or incentives, to reduce lot size in exchange for greater amounts of open space.

Actionable Objectives:

- Coordinate with the Department of Planning and Development to analyze the city's zoning, subdivision, and development related regulations to determine the feasibility of modifying provisions to offer more flexible lot size in exchange for commonly

protected natural resources, among other priorities (e.g., connection to off-site trail system, dedication of land, etc.).

- Coordinate with the Department of Planning and Development to ensure the city's zoning, subdivision, and development related regulations include provisions to facilitate the preservation and conservation of sensitive lands and other natural areas.
- Incorporate interpretative signage within parks and along trails to acknowledge natural features and to educate the public about local ecosystems.
- Coordinate with Cameron County to determine if areas along the Arroyo Colorado are in need of conservation and preservation.

Objective 3C: Build historic and cultural value into parks and public open space through programs, festivals, and other special activities.

Many cities across the country have begun to think differently about the role their parks and recreation system plays in the city. Where many cities have traditionally viewed their parks simply as a costly "quality of life" amenity for their residents, today, many have begun to realize that public parks can also be an economic contributor to their economy and a differentiator when businesses and prospective residents are considering relocating to the area. This can be accomplished just by hosting recreational events (e.g., triathlons, running races, etc.); though more and more are integrating the city's cultural heritage into the mix. Since the 1980s, there has been an unprecedented growth in the number of festivals and events where one of the primary purposes, in addition to being available for residents, is to promote tourism and bring outside dollars into the city.

While using parks for both resident enjoyment and tourism-related economic development can have significant impacts, it is also a lot of work. One way to spread the workload is to partner with other non-recreational partners, e.g., local museums, chamber of commerce, etc. That way, there are multiple organizations marketing and working together to make a successful event.

Actionable Objectives:

- Coordinate with the San Benito Historical Society and Museum, the Texas Conjunto Music Hall of Fame, Narciso Martinez Cultural Arts Center, the Freddy Fender Museum, among others, to create and publish a public art walking tour for viewing pieces on display in parks.
- Coordinate with the Texas Conjunto Hall of Fame to offer a live performance of Conjunto music at Heavin Park or along the Heavin Resaca Trails.
- Coordinate with the San Benito Historical Society and Museum to develop interpretative signage at area parks or along the resacas about the natural formation of the resacas, as well as about the Indians and Spanish land grant ranches that flourished prior to the arrival of the railroad, about what a "hog waddle" was, among other important cultural facts about the city.

GOAL 4 : DEVELOP A PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK OF SIDEWALKS, TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY-WIDE CONNECTIVITY.

Objective 4A: Develop greenbelt corridors, bicycle and pedestrian trails and routes, and linear parks that can provide a safe secure connection between homes and parks, recreation areas and facilities as well as schools, local businesses and activity centers.

In a very short duration of time, trails have become an important part of San Benito's physical and social framework. In fact, the city's original Park Master Plan, adopted as recent as 2003, was primarily focused on establishing a trail system along the resaca. Just over a decade later, the city has constructed a 2.75 mile trail that is so widely used (morning, day, and night), that it is in need of rehabilitation.

According to the 2012 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, "walking for pleasure" was the number one highest activity participated in by white/non-Hispanics (81.1%) and Hispanics (83.4%), which was 15 and eight percent higher, respectively, than the next highest activity participated in, which was "family gatherings." Overall, outdoor recreation by Hispanics in Texas is projected to increase to more than 53 percent of the total population by 2040.³

According to the San Benito 2014 Parks Survey, walking/ biking trails were also one of the highest identified needs by survey respondents, with over 54 percent indicating that they were "extremely needed," and another 34 percent indicating that they were "needed." It is no wonder the 2.75 mile trail in San Benito is so widely used.

As such, continued expansion of the trail system could result in significant changes to how many citizens recreate and socialize in San Benito. Providing increased safe

³ 2012 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan, citing the Texas State Data Center, 2008.

CELEBRATE LOCAL HERITAGE

Sponsoring events and activities is a great way to increase use of the city’s park and recreation system, create economic development opportunities, and celebrate the city’s local heritage. Murals celebrating local heritage is another way to utilize the park and recreation system for multiple purposes which contribute to the city’s unique, local character.



ResacaFest
LIVE MUSIC AND FIREWORKS
JULY 5TH SAN BENITO 4PM - 11PM
HEAVIN MEMORIAL PARK 705 N. ROWIE
ResacaFest 5-K Run/Walk
On the Resaca in San Benito
Register online at www.iruntexas.com
For 5K Sponsorship Information:
Israel Guajardo at 956-642-6766



ANALYSIS & RECOMMEND.

access points to additional neighborhoods; connecting to additional parks, schools, and downtown; and providing education about the health benefits associated with physical activity, the city could be making wholesale quality of life improvements that could eventually affect the entire cultural fabric of the city.

Actionable Objectives:

- Prepare a separate Trails Master Plan to identify and develop a comprehensive network of on- and off-street trail and bikeway segments to form a complete pedestrian and bicycle system throughout San Benito.
- On an annual basis, apply for grants or identify additional funding to develop new on- and off-street trail segments in priority areas. Priority should be in expending the Heavin Resaca Trails outward, making connections to it, and creating new inter-city connections so that all of San Benito can utilize the trail system for fun, exercise, commuting, and many other park and recreation, and non-park and recreation reasons.
- Coordinate with the Cameron County Irrigation District #2, and others as necessary, to obtain public access easements along key irrigation canal corridors. Conceptually, a citywide trail system could be created utilizing the Heavin Resaca Trails expanded outward along the resacas, connecting

through downtown along the Union Pacific Railroad, and connecting to other parts of the city via irrigation canals, etc. See Map 3.3, *Trail Opportunity Areas*, for areas within the city that could potentially make an interconnected trail system if funding was available and the city was able to identify willing partners.

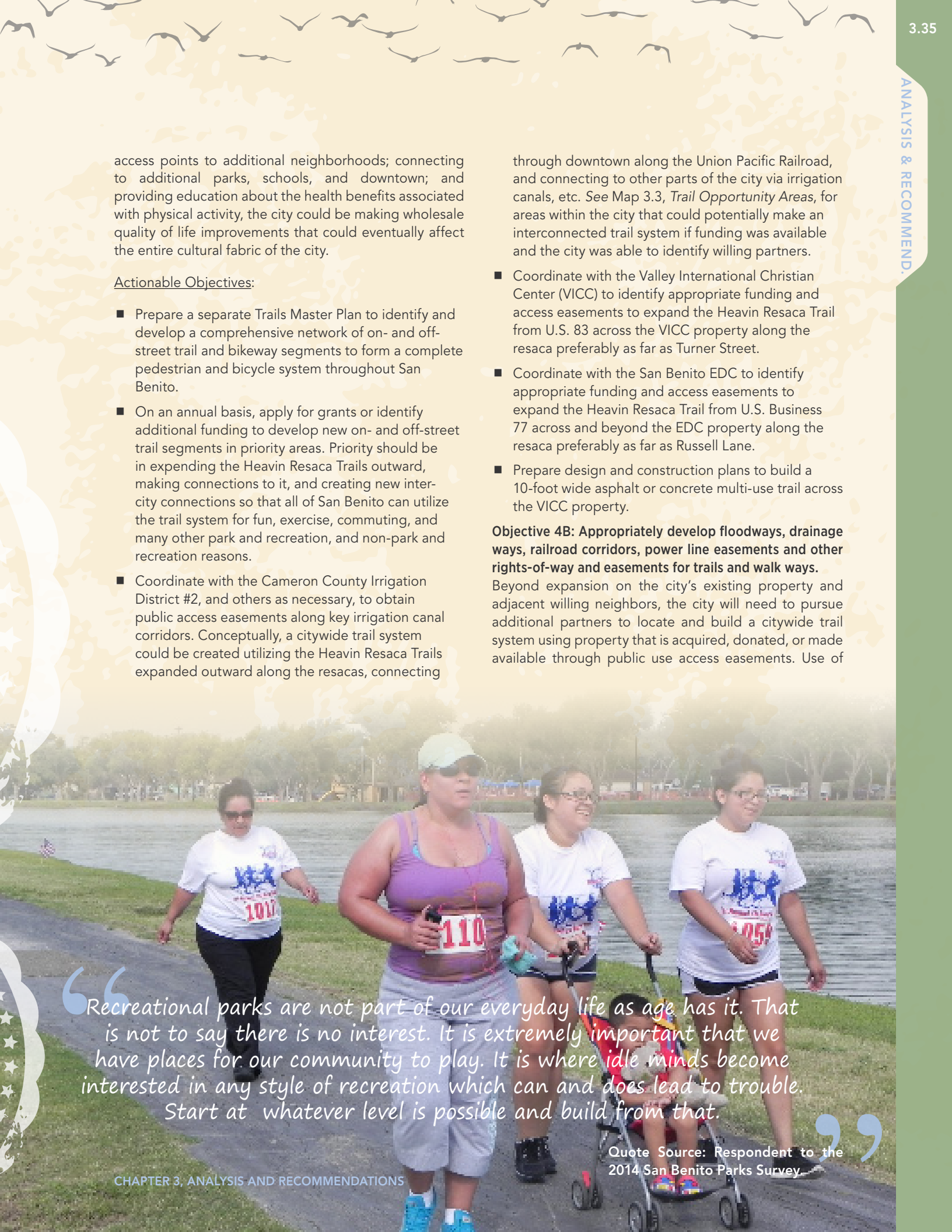
- Coordinate with the Valley International Christian Center (VICC) to identify appropriate funding and access easements to expand the Heavin Resaca Trail from U.S. 83 across the VICC property along the resaca preferably as far as Turner Street.
- Coordinate with the San Benito EDC to identify appropriate funding and access easements to expand the Heavin Resaca Trail from U.S. Business 77 across and beyond the EDC property along the resaca preferably as far as Russell Lane.
- Prepare design and construction plans to build a 10-foot wide asphalt or concrete multi-use trail across the VICC property.

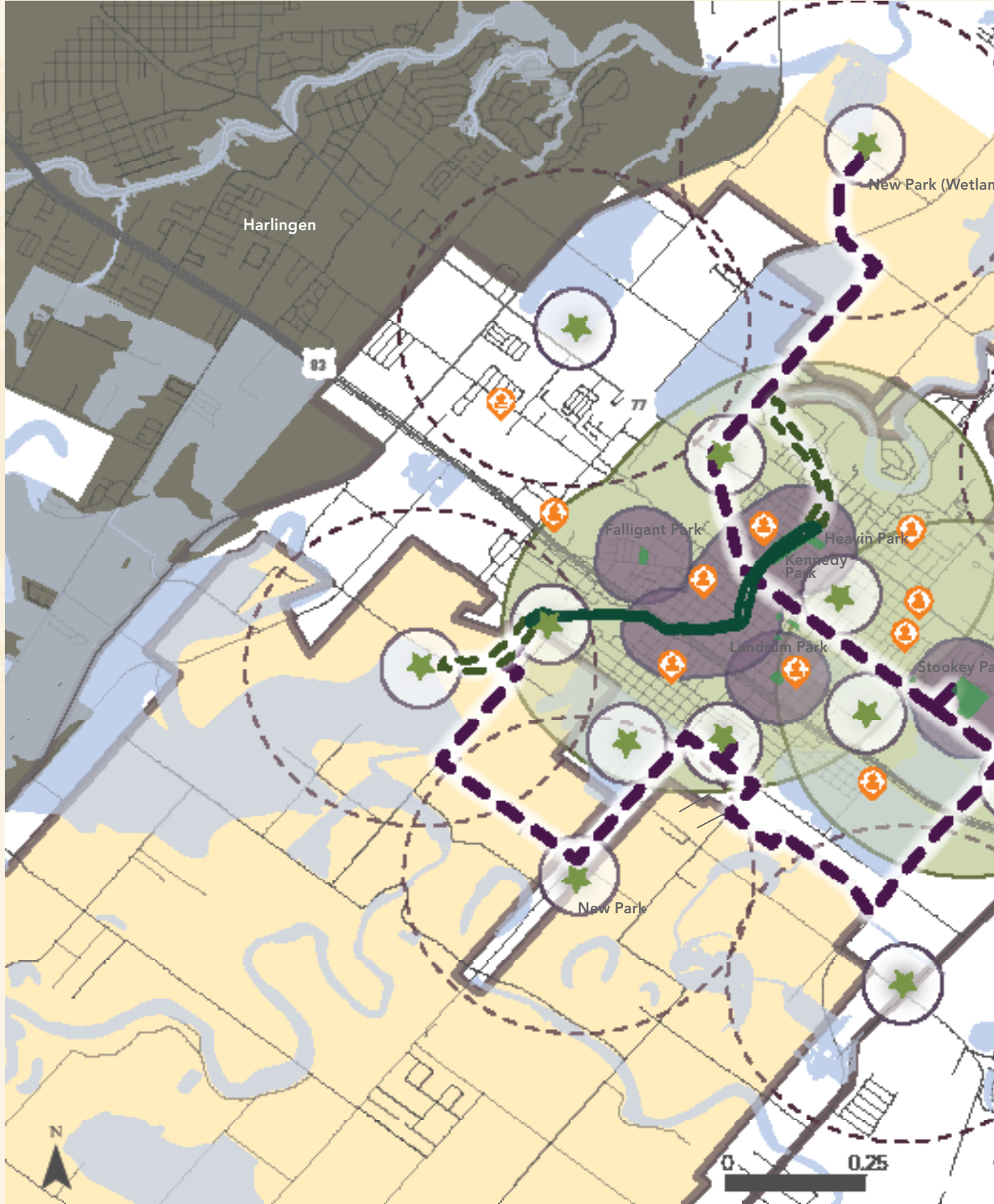
Objective 4B: Appropriately develop floodways, drainage ways, railroad corridors, power line easements and other rights-of-way and easements for trails and walk ways.

Beyond expansion on the city's existing property and adjacent willing neighbors, the city will need to pursue additional partners to locate and build a citywide trail system using property that is acquired, donated, or made available through public use access easements. Use of

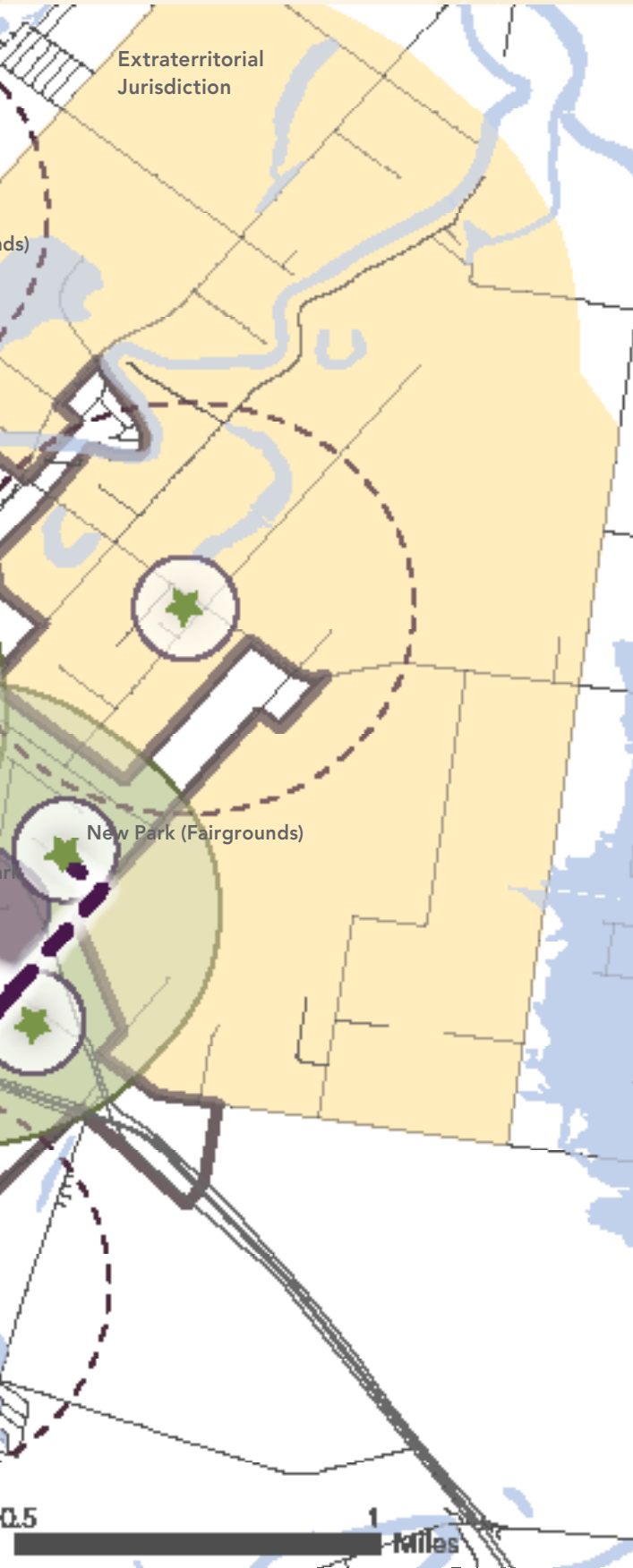
“Recreational parks are not part of our everyday life as age has it. That is not to say there is no interest. It is extremely important that we have places for our community to play. It is where idle minds become interested in any style of recreation which can and does lead to trouble. Start at whatever level is possible and build from that.”

Quote Source: Respondent to the 2014 San Benito Parks Survey














Map 3.3, Trail Opportunity Areas



LEGEND

-  School
-  Neighborhood Park Service Area (0.25 mile)
-  Community Park Service Area (1 mile)*
-  Potential New Park Area, Not Parcel Specific
-  Potential New Neighborhood Park Service Area (0.25 mile)
-  Potential New Community Park Service Area (1 mile)
-  Resaca Trails (Existing)
-  Resaca Trails (Proposed for Construction)
-  Future Trail Opportunity Areas

*Although functionally classified as a linear special use park, the Heavin Resaca Trails serve the community in a similar fashion as a neighborhood/community park.

non-city property (e.g., railroad rights-of-way, common areas of new subdivision development, along the banks of irrigation levees, etc.) for trails is common across Texas and the rest of the country.

Actionable Objectives:

- Seek the dedication of public use easements along creeks, drainage/irrigation canals, and other easements or rights-of-way as off-street trail segments that will contribute to an interconnected system of both on- and off-street non-motorized improvements.
- Coordinate with the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) to utilize their right-of-way to develop a connecting trail northwest to southeast connecting the Heavin Resaca Trails through Downtown (see below for an illustrated trail concept and separate *San Benito Downtown Revitalization Plan* for further recommendations).
- Coordinate with the Department of Planning and Development to determine if revisions are needed to the city's floodplain regulations to allow trails, trail access, and trail amenities in these areas.
- Coordinate with the local utility companies to capitalize on opportunities for joint access and use of their overhead or underground utility easements as linear trails or connecting segment spur trails.
- Consider adopting a policy by the City Commission making American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant sidewalks a priority improvement to be included with every new roadway and reconstruction process.
- Coordinate with the Department of Planning and Development to determine if revisions are needed to the city's zoning, subdivision, and other development-related regulations to establish development incentives (e.g., density bonuses) to ensure public access to greenbelts and open spaces via the use of easements, rights-of-way, and/or other semi-public or private linear corridors.



GOAL 5: MAINTAIN , ENHANCE, AND OPERATE THE EXISTING PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM IN A COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER.

Objective 5A: Develop and implement a parks and recreation improvement program which identifies and prioritizes improvements for each of the current and future city facilities.

The quality of facilities and equipment is equally as important as access, distribution, quantity and types of facilities/equipment discussed earlier in Goal 2. In fact, the quality of the park and recreation system could be the deterring factor even if all the other elements are in place and adequate. From a policy standpoint, the City should commit to ensuring an equal level of quality for each and every park in the San Benito Park and Recreation System. As was delineated in Table 2.5, *Assessment of City Park Conditions* (in Chapter 2, *Existing Conditions*), the various park and recreation assets within the city are in varied condition. The highest quality and best maintained parks were Veterans Memorial Park and Heavin Park. As pointed out, however, these are special use parks which do not get a lot of recreational focused visitation. Landrum and Falligant Parks were also very well maintained. However, the skate park, Valencia Park, and much of the equipment and facilities along the resacas are poorly maintained or our outdated.

Because of this, it is important to establish a formalized “parks-to-standard” program where the city commits to maintaining each park and recreation asset in the system in an equal level of quality, as well as providing similar level of services.

Actionable Objectives:

- Prepare a five year capital improvement plan or program (CIP) to revitalize and enhance the existing, well-established parks.
- Prepare park renovation plans for each well-established park. Plans should include projected equipment replacement and repair schedules and budgets, building / structure rehabilitation, new features / activities, and other refurbishments. Valencia and Kennedy Parks should be prioritized for short-term rehabilitation.
- Enhance landscape plantings and turf maintenance in all parks.
- Establish a “park watch” program – similar to a neighborhood watch program – in close coordination with surrounding neighborhoods and the city’s Police Department.
- Prepare an annual condition assessment of the park and recreation system and present to the PRB annually prior to the development of the budget for the following year.

A TALE OF TWO PARKS



While many of the city’s parks are in excellent condition and contain updated facilities (e.g., Falligant Park, left photo), other parks contain outdated equipment and are maintained in a less quality manner.

- Facilitate an annual walking tour of the park and recreation areas with the PRB so that they maintain familiarity with the system and to view the effectiveness of previous revitalization / improvement efforts and new construction.
- Establish a formalized parks-to-standard program to ensure all parks are brought up to, and maintained in, an equivalent quality standard. This program should include a general maintenance and repair schedule. The priority maintenance tasks include:
 - » Increasing park accessibility;
 - » Turf reconditioning;
 - » Repairing park amenities;
 - » Improved lighting;
 - » Improved landscaping; and
 - » improved signage.

WALKING TOUR

A walking tour was conducted with city staff and members of the PRB on December 1, 2014 to identify warranted improvements in many of the parks in the San Benito park system.



Objective 5B: Improve the maintenance of all parks and recreation areas and facilities by funding preventative maintenance schedules.

A plan for a city's park and recreation system should include standards for operation and maintenance of the improvements, as well as basic equipment criteria. Also important, is the recommended level of staffing that would be necessary to implement the priorities and activities set forth in the Plan. The following are recommendations for these areas.

PARK EQUIPMENT CRITERIA

Through careful design and selection of materials, attractive park facilities can be developed and maintained that require minimum staff attention. Standardized criteria facilitates maintenance and repairs, maximizes durability and longevity, and establishes a minimum quality level.

All park facilities and improvements should be in compliance with ADA, local building codes and all applicable restrictions and requirements. The following standards are presented as guidelines for park facilities and improvements:

- **Roads and Parking Lots:** All roads and parking lots should be concrete or asphalt, concrete preferred. Parking lots should be striped to delineate parking spaces, including appropriate handicapped space designations.
- **Gates and Fences:** Parks may be fenced and/or gated to control vehicular access. Fences and gates should be specifically designed for each park.
- **Park Buildings (Picnic Pavilions, Restrooms, Offices, Maintenance Buildings):** Buildings should be constructed of metal, wood, brick or concrete block, with metal or other appropriate roofs. Exterior painted finishes should be avoided. Structures should be designed to discourage birds from roosting, as in no exposed rafters.
- **Playground Equipment:** Equipment should meet Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Guidelines and American Society for Testing Materials Standards (ASTM). Play equipment should be galvanized or galvanized and powder-coated metal, plastics and plastic coated expanded metal or punched steel. No wood play equipment should be used unless it meets the requirements and would serve as an enhancement to the site.
- **Playground Fall Surfaces:** All play equipment should have a resilient fall surface in accordance with CPSC Guidelines and ASTM Standards. Acceptable materials are poured rubber, rubber tiles, sand, gravel and wood chips. No bark should be used. In play zones where the entire fall surface is not accessible in accordance with ADA requirements, the play structure should be made accessible in part through use of rubber fall surfacing within the loose fall surface material.
- **Picnic Tables:** All picnic tables and connected benches should be plastisol coated expanded metal, wood, aluminum or concrete. All picnic tables should be located on concrete pads or within pavilions. Handicapped accessible picnic tables should be provided at all facilities.

- **Benches:** All benches should be plastisol coated expanded metal, concrete or galvanized metal legs with treated wood slats. All wood benches should be the same in order to facilitate replacement of damaged slats.
- **Trash Receptacles:** All trash receptacles should be painted or powder-coated metal drums mounted on two treated wood posts or concrete containers. A concrete pad beneath the receptacle will facilitate mowing and edging.
- **Grills:** All grills should be cast iron, permanently mounted with concrete footings. Grills should not be placed in close proximity to play equipment.
- **Bleachers:** All bleachers should be aluminum.
- **Sports Facilities:** All sports facilities should meet standards for intended league play. All goals should be adequately anchored in place to prevent falling when climbed on or pushed.
- **Sidewalks:** All sidewalks should be concrete or asphalt, with concrete preferred.
- **Biking Trails:** Undeveloped trail surface should be of natural materials.
- **Walking/Jogging Trails:** All walking or jogging trails should be fly ash or decomposed granite. Accessible trails should be a minimum of six feet wide, optimum of eight to ten feet wide. Trails used as part of main segments to the citywide multi-use trail system should be ten feet wide and ADA accessible.

PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

In order for the parks to be perceived as an asset to the City of San Benito, they must be well maintained at all times. At meetings and in survey responses, citizens pointed out that they would like to see a higher level of maintenance to assure quality parks. It is essential to adopt maintenance budgets for new park facilities before they are developed and as older parks age and are redeveloped. If sufficient funds are not available, parkland should be held in reserve in its natural state until money can be dedicated for both construction and maintenance of facilities.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) provides estimates regarding the ratio between the number of acres of parkland maintained per staff FTE (full time equivalent), as identified within Table 3.8, *Acres of Parkland maintained per FTE*. Several factors must be considered, including equipment used, percentage of parkland that is developed, degree of maintenance required, and topography.

TABLE 3.8, 2013 ACRES OF PARKLAND MAINTAINED PER FTE

No. of Acres	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile
250 or less	2.7	5	9.8
251 to 1,000	6	8.7	19.6
1,001 tp 3,500	9	21.6	54.7
more than 3,500	18.4	32.8	66.3

“Also, year round ground maintenance is a must. Don’t let this south Texas heat make the landscape turn into dirt and weeds. Need to have people think “now this is where I want to be!”

Quote Source: Respondent to the 2014 San Benito Parks Survey.

Park Maintenance Standards, a publication of the National Park and Recreation Association, contains a Maintenance Standard Classification System, which outlines six general levels of maintenance:

- **Mode I - State of the Art Maintenance:** State of the art maintenance applied to a high quality, diverse landscape. Usually associated with high traffic urban areas such as public squares, malls, governmental grounds or high visitation parks.
- **Mode II - High Level Maintenance:** Maintenance associated with well-developed park areas with reasonably high visitation.
- **Mode III - Moderate Level Maintenance:** Maintenance associated with moderate to low levels of development, moderate to low levels of visitation, or with agencies that, because of budget restrictions, cannot afford a higher level of maintenance.
- **Mode IV—Moderately Low Level Maintenance:** Maintenance usually associated with low level of development, low visitation, undeveloped areas or remote parks.
- **Mode V—High Visitation Natural Areas:** Maintenance usually associated with large urban or regional parks. Size and user frequency may dictate maintenance staff. Road, pathway or trail systems relatively well developed. Other facilities at strategic locations such as entries, trail heads, building complexes and parking lots.
- **Mode VI—Minimum Level Maintenance:** Maintenance associated with low visitation natural area or large urban parks that are undeveloped.

The standards for these categories generally outline maintenance tasks and frequencies. Parks may have different levels of maintenance within them. Sports fields might be Mode II while natural areas might be Mode V. As individual parks within the system are programmed and developed, the classification plan should be utilized to budget maintenance costs for each park. Estimated man-hours per task and labor rates are included in *Park Maintenance Standards*.

MAINTENANCE TASKS

The following tasks have been identified through review of *Park Maintenance Standards*. They represent common maintenance tasks that must be accomplished routinely.

Mowing: In Texas, most turf areas must be mowed year-round, although the frequency and demand increases seasonally. Mowing is typically done in cycles: the mowers begin in one area and mow continually, cycling back to the same area at a regular interval. Park

Maintenance Standards suggests different mowing intervals for different levels of maintenance.

- **Weeding/Edging:** This task typically follows the same cycle as mowing and is accomplished by the same crew.
- **Fertilizing:** Fertilizing is typically done once every spring. The city should focus fertilizing efforts only at community centers or special memorial areas. Annual fertilizing on sports fields should be coordinated among the Parks and Recreation Department and the sports leagues. In many municipalities, leagues using sports facilities are responsible for fertilizing the fields they use.
- **Watering:** Typically only special memorial areas are irrigated in city parks. They are watered as required by the nature of the plantings. Hose bibs are located at sports fields. Leagues using the fields may be responsible for watering and turf care, but with oversight by the Parks and Recreation Department.
- **Trash Collection:** Trash collection from barrels and litter pick-up of heavily used areas is done daily.
- **Restrooms:** Permanent restrooms are cleaned daily, and hand towels and toilet paper are replenished. Port-a-cans rented for overflow crowds at special events or to replace closed restrooms are generally serviced by the leasing company twice weekly or more often, if necessary.
- **Picnic Pavilions:** Park staff schedule reservations for the facilities and make sure they are clean before guests arrive. In addition, pavilions must be cleaned daily and inspected for damage, vandalism, burned out lights, and associated maintenance requirements.
- **Picnic Grills:** Grills must be cleaned and replaced as necessary, particularly following weekends and holidays.
- **Lights:** Police or park personnel patrolling the parks after dark should note any broken or burned out lights. The city should replace light bulbs or have appropriate city electricians do so with bucket trucks.
- **Jogging Trails:** Asphalt trails must be re-topped every 4 or 5 years. Fly ash or decomposed granite trails must be re-topped every 2-4 years depending on usage.
- **Tree Work:** Trees in developed areas must be pruned to maintain their health, to improve their appearance, and to allow views into parks from surrounding streets for security. Particularly dense trees located near security lights should be Mode I pruned to allow light to penetrate the canopies. Dead, damaged or diseased trees in developed

areas and along trails in natural areas may need to be removed. Dead trees pose a hazard to visitors in that they may fall in high winds. Municipalities often contract with tree specialists for pruning and removal. The departments generally do their own cutting and chipping, using the resulting mulch in the parks.

- **General Repairs:** Painting and minor carpentry, etc. can be performed by park personnel on an as needed basis. Plumbing and electrical work can be done by qualified park personnel or by other city employees. Graffiti resistant surface treatments should be considered for building surfaces and facilities.
- **Insect Control:** Park personnel should be alert for fire ants and other hazardous insects as they perform their routine duties. Trained park personnel should eliminate hazardous insects as soon as they are discovered.
- **Sports Facilities:** In many cities sports facilities are developed for and leased to organized leagues. The City may develop a "Concessionaire Agreement" for that purpose. It may state that leagues are responsible for fertilizing, watering, mowing and litter pick-up, with the City paying water and electricity bills and emptying trash receptacles daily. The park superintendent should inspect all sports facilities every 30 days. It is particularly important to inspect the bleachers to make sure that they are structurally sound.
- **Tennis Courts:** Tennis courts must be cleaned daily with a leaf blower as needed.
- **Offices, Convention and Community Centers:** All buildings must be cleaned daily and inspected for any damage. Convention and community centers require personnel to make reservations and be present during open hours.

PERSONNEL

Although the titles vary from city to city, the positions required to run a city park system efficiently are fairly well defined. The positions described below indicate personnel that would be desirable in San Benito now. As the City grows additional staff positions may be needed.

- **Park and Recreation Department Director:** The Director manages the entire park system, hires program and maintenance staff, oversees daily operations and maintenance, develops new park facilities and reports to the City Commissioners.
- **Recreation Supervisor:** Responsibilities include coordinating and managing, and in some cases, running, recreational programs and park-related

events in the city.

- **Secretarial and Administrative:** Responsibilities include correspondence, reception, filing, program registration, reservations and other such office oriented duties.
- **Parks Maintenance Supervisor:** Responsible for directing the operation of city parks, including managing maintenance staff, leasing and inspecting sports facilities, and taking reservations for picnic pavilions.

Actionable Objectives:

- Conduct regular risk management inspections to identify and schedule repairs, address safety issues, and conduct routine maintenance and cleaning, and other necessary improvements to playground and park equipment that is funded by an adequate operating and maintenance budget.
- Use the National Program and Playground Safety guidelines and/or the United States Consumer Products Safety Commission standards in the design and replacement of playground equipment, all surface areas, and other recreational facilities and improvements.
- Install signs in prominent locations (e.g., in the parking lot or near the entrance) with a phone number, email address, and website address where visitors can report maintenance issues.
- Ensure that as the city's park and recreational resources and programs grow, there is adequate budget to hire appropriate staffing and maintain facilities and equipment.
- Develop Park Management Plans for each park property to identify replacement schedules and daily, weekly, monthly, and annual maintenance needs. This will help identify long-term needs and determining highest priorities during upcoming fiscal budget cycles.
- Ensure that the park and recreation staff are not over burdened with responsibilities from managing other departments / divisions. Alternatively, assign appropriate staffing so that the needs related to building maintenance and city cemeteries is accommodated without affecting the delivery of park and recreation related services.

Objective 5C: Look for innovative ways to finance park improvements and activities through user fees, fundraising, sponsorships and other sound fiscal methods.

Over the years, the city has been very successful at obtaining grant funding to fund park and recreation

related improvements. In addition to grant funding, the city could consider the use of user fees, fund-raising, sponsorships, and other means to raise funding to maintain the continued expansion of the city's park and recreation system.

Actionable Objectives:

- Review the user rates of each park and recreation facility to identify those with low utilization and subsequently, determine the improvements that may be desired by users.
- Establish more formalized responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Board (PRB), including the solicitation of sponsorships or funding to help run recreational program activities.
- Establish a program and acceptance criteria for donations of land for parks and recreation purposes or public open spaces, which compliments the overall system.
- Consider obtaining new property in distressed neighborhoods if the city establishes and enforces minimum building codes on dangerous and/or abandoned structures.
- Target grant applications that are related to parks and recreation, but are offered through non-traditional park programs (e.g., public health related grants; grants for low impact development, green building, transportation, etc.).
- Establish programs for lease/purchase, tax incentives, and public maintenance to entice private sector participation in park system development and maintenance.

GOAL 6: ESTABLISH COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND COORDINATED EFFORTS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTAL JURISDICTIONS, SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND

PRIVATE SECTOR ENTITIES.

Objective 6A: Develop mutually beneficial relationships with the school district to include not only joint acquisition of land, but also joint and effective use and maintenance of both school and municipal buildings and facilities.

Partnering with the San Benito Consolidated Independent School District (CISD) may be one of the cost effective ways to increase park and recreation related programs and facilities in the city. As seen on Map 3.1, *Park Service Areas*, earlier in this chapter, the CISD has 10 school playgrounds in fairly distributed locations around the city. In many cities across Texas (e.g., the City of Galveston) have established reciprocal agreements where the school district provides the property and, in some cases, help with equipment purchasing, and the city funds and handles maintenance responsibilities. During school hours, the parks are not available for public use, or portions are not available for public use. Outside of school hours, the grounds and equipment are available for public use and enjoyment. In this regard, the school and city partner to maximize limited resources. In other cities, where partnering has not either been explored or successful, the school grounds are fenced off and not available for public use.

Actionable Objectives:

- Formalize through interlocal agreement the authorization to utilize the San Benito Consolidated Independent School District's (CISD) 10 elementary and middle school properties with playscape equipment. In this regard, the city adds a significant amount of available playgrounds without having to acquire property. In some cases, the city agrees to provide signage and maintain and/or replace equipment in exchange for utilizing these properties

for open public access during non-school hours.

- Formalize through an intergovernmental agreement with the CISD to utilize the gymnasium, located at the Gateway Academy at 600 N. Austin, for use as general use sports court or league play.
- Pursue additional intergovernmental coordination with the CISD to utilize basketball courts and baseball, softball, and soccer fields for recreational programs.
- Continue to promote and partner with the CISD to participate in the annual Trash Bash each April. This is a good way to teach elementary school students to understand the importance of taking care of the park and recreation system.
- Continue to partner with the CISD on the Anti-Graffiti Project. This is a good opportunity for students to take responsibility, and more importantly, to subsequently exert peer pressure over others, for taking pride over and care of park property.
- Continue to partner with Texas AgriLife Extension and the CISD to take care of the 17 community garden pods that were installed on park property.
- Look for additional opportunities to partner to establish and maintain additional community garden opportunities on other park properties.

Objective 6B: Encourage other partnerships with local and regional entities to avoid duplication and capitalize on the synergistic benefits that could be realized through the combined efforts and resources of all of these organizations.

Beyond the CISD, there are many additional opportunities for partnering with other local entities and agencies to maximize the sharing of limited resources and to avoid duplication of effort.

Actionable Objectives:

- Formalize through reciprocal agreements the coordination of recreational programming with the Boys & Girls Club.
- Continue to participate in the citywide and neighborhood resources for the National Night Out each fall. This is a great way to bring attention to the city's park and recreation system.
- Continue to work with other city departments and others to participate in the city's Christmas Parade as this is another great opportunity to bring attention to the city's park and recreation system.

- Continue to participate in National Arbor Day as a means to plant new trees, and learn about tree planting and care, on park properties. Solicit donations of trees and or funding to purchase trees to plant on Arbor Day.
- Similar to the Leo Club adopting Kennedy Park, organize additional adopt-a-park opportunities through the marketing of the program to neighborhoods, schools, local clubs, and civic groups. This will require staff support and oversight to ensure they have adequate resources to maintain their commitment. Public recognition on the property, at community events, in public meetings and in local media goes a long way to generating new support and maintaining existing support over time.
- Consider partnering with the newly formed Chamber of Commerce or EDC to jointly produce a community leisure guide and interactive website that announces all special events, community festivals and activities, and provides access to online registration for any

PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

In 2014, the city was extremely successful at partnering with others to maximize limited resources (e.g., adopt a garden, National Night Out, anti-graffiti and community garden project, and Trash Bash, among others).



camps, lessons, workshops, or classes available through the city or its program partners.

- Solicit the participation of local clubs and groups to undertake park improvement projects (e.g., dog parks, community or memorial gardens, art projects, and even such things as decks or bird viewing blinds). Eagle Scouts are typically a good resource as they need to do community services projects as part of competing their program.

GOAL 7: ENSURE SUCCESS OF THE ORGANIZATION THROUGH CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF THE STAFF AND DEPARTMENT.

Objective 7A: Continue to support existing staff regarding their professional development.

One of the most important aspects ensuring a successful park and recreation system is the parks' employees themselves. Essentially, each and every parks and recreation employee is an ambassador of the city. They form the backbone of the system and keep it running efficiently and smoothly (or not). They cut the grass and maintain the grounds. They man the booths and run special events. They lead the recreational programs and answer the phones. In some cases, they lead or manage others; set the direction, plan for the future, establish and monitor budgets, and field questions and complaints. In some cases, a parks and recreation staff person may be the only "city" representative a resident or visitor to San Benito will ever see. As such, it is critical that the parks and recreation employees are adequately staff and professionally trained.

Professional development includes a multitude of learning opportunities. On one end of the spectrum, it includes more expensive and intensive certifications and degrees. While there are many certification-related training opportunities available, some of the most appropriate are the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE), Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) and Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO) certification programs. On the other end of the spectrum, professional development can include more simple things like professional memberships in job-specific associations, receiving and reading trade publications, local or on-line trainings in the latest best-management practices, etc.

Actionable Objectives:

- Develop and expect from staff a strong sense of personal service in connection with all recreational programs and other services in the Department.
- Encourage employee's membership and active participation in professional organizations.
- Provide training and outside educational opportunities for all members of the Parks and Recreation Department to keep them current with the latest standards and industry practices, including those related to maintenance issues, e.g., air conditioning, fire alarm, and plumbing systems.
- Support staff to obtain professional certifications such as the Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), the Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) program, among others.
- Obtain memberships and participate/attend the conferences and events of the Texas Recreation and Parks Society (TRAPS) and the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).

Objective 7B: Consider expanding park and recreational department staff to increase recreational program offerings and increase maintenance.

- Consider adding additional recreational programming staff to increase the diversity and availability of recreational programs.
- Establish a formal program of annually collecting park use statistics (e.g., observation surveys, trail and event counters, etc.) and feedback (e.g., intercept surveys or annual on-line surveys) to gain a better understanding of how, when, and where people are using the park and recreation assets; use this to help guide appropriate staffing levels, funding, and other managerial park-related decisions.
- Continue to encourage volunteer organizations to assist with the maintenance and up-keep of parks and recreational areas.

GOAL 8: DESIGN NEW PARK AND RECREATION AREAS AND FACILITIES (AND REVITALIZE AND REDEVELOP EXISTING AREAS AND FACILITIES) IN A MANNER THAT IS SAFE, DURABLE, AND SUSTAINABLE LONG INTO THE FUTURE.

Objective 8A: Consider all first and long-term costs (e.g., construction and maintenance costs) when making all decisions in park acquisition, design, construction, maintenance, and operations.

Parkland, facilities, and operations are inherently expensive. In times of decreasing budgets, and where available funding is becoming increasingly stretched it is important to consider the park location and the demographics of its users in its design. As identified in the adopted Comprehensive Plan and through sentiments expressed during the early public participation efforts of this plan, there is a general desire by the community to be more actively engaged in the physical design and development of their future. As a result, it is a recommendation of this plan for a design charrette to be facilitated with residents to tailor the design of parks to their needs and preferences. Essentially, each park should be unique in its own way. Therefore, the following facilities are considerations of park elements in the design process.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

Many park and recreation systems consist of property both acquired by the city and property that was donated or was in some other way given to the city. While it is initially cost efficient to obtain land using the latter type of acquisition, it does not always ensure that it is the best property to meet the long-term needs of the city. In some cases, the property might be locationally redundant with another existing or planned facility that is better positioned to meet the needs of users. In this case, the new park property can require increased staff and capital resources at the expense of another location that may have a deficiency in park accessibility or is need of new or redeveloped facilities. In the short-term, the new property may seem like a financial boon to the city, but when considering the long-term implications, it becomes less so. With that being said, all new park properties should include the following site selection criteria:

- All parks should be readily accessible to their users and convenient for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.
- Parks should be accessible from collector (secondary) streets rather than arterial (primary) roadways.
- Parks should be located adjacent to trails and greenways to provide linkage to neighborhoods and other areas of the community.
- Joint use of sites for public parks and school use is highly desirable to maximize the public benefit and to be efficient in the expenditure of public resources.
- Land of historic or cultural significance may be attractive for park areas as a conservation tool.
- The park should have a land surface configuration (relief) to accommodate its intended uses such as ball fields and open play areas.

- Some topography, even if created through cut and fill, is desirable to create visual interest and to offer additional opportunities for traveling through the property.
- The site should have a sufficient slope to allow for adequate storm water runoff from ball fields and other developed areas.
- Desirable views into and away from the site should be preserved and protected.

PARK DESIGN

Although neighborhood parks essentially serve neighborhoods within walking distance, they should be designed to serve the needs of more than one neighborhood. Ease of access from surrounding neighborhoods, central location, and pedestrian linkage are key factors in developing neighborhood parks. The site should be able to accommodate both active and passive recreation uses and accommodate the needs of all ages. It is recommended to include park users in the design process to ensure the park is compatible with the neighborhood and accounts for the needs and desires of its future users.

Community parks are intended for neighborhood residents within one mile, but they should also be available to persons throughout the community. As such, the facilities and improvements in community parks must be planned and designed for heavy use by persons of all ages and from all areas of the community. Community parks are intended for both active and passive recreational uses. These parks should have a suitable slope to accommodate ball fields and a variety of natural vegetation. Where feasible, community parks should be located adjacent to a greenway or linear connection so

PARKS SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO KEEP USERS ON-SITE

“Restrooms and water fountains are extremely needed at the Heavin Trail. There are a lot of people that go walking or jogging and need water. It is an inconvenience when we have children there. We have to leave.”

Source: 2014 San Benito Parks Assessment Survey

that residents in nearby neighborhoods may safely access the park by way of walking, jogging, and bicycling. While user participation is always preferred during the park design process, it is particularly critical in the case of a community park given the large area that it serves. As such, neighborhood and community input should be a primary determinant of the development program.

New and redeveloped parks should also be designed for long-term durability. The current status of the park and recreation system reflects a pattern of grant (or other source) funded capital improvements followed by limited amounts of improvement or maintenance funding support.

The following minimum park design guidelines should be considered for all new and redeveloped parks:

- All on- and off-site improvements should be designed to be compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). This includes sidewalks and crosswalks, and ramps; parking; equipment; restroom facilities; and any other improvement that may be constructed on the property.
- All active (and oftentimes passive) facilities, including neighborhood parks and trails, should include water fountains and restrooms so that users can spend increasing amounts of time at the city facilities. Lack of facilities causes reduced use and in some cases issues with neighboring residents.
- Each park and recreation area should be designed considering first- and long-term costs so that construction is durable and requires minimum amounts of maintenance due to limited amounts of maintenance and improvement funding on an annual basis.
- Establish a policy of master planning new/revitalized parks to develop a unique design theme for each park to broaden the types of facilities and activities that are available across the community and to better tie their identity to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Conduct neighborhood design charrettes to gather resident input to determine unique features, types of amenities, and overall theme. Ideas may include such things that are normally not associated with standard park design (e.g., incorporation of special events, arts and culture, heritage, eco-tourism, sustainability, etc.



Come walk with us!
Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays @ 8am



Implementation

The purpose of the implementation program is to provide an aggressive, yet realistic and achievable plan for implementing the recommendations of this master plan. This implementation program identifies the city's park improvement and recreation program priorities, together with other recommended initiatives and actions. It also underscores factors that will contribute to successful implementation, and lists strategic partners with whom the city may collaborate to offer diversity in its program offerings and to expand and enhance the availability and range of parks and recreation facilities.

The implementation program reflects the outcomes of the analysis outlined in Chapter 3, Analysis and Recommendations. The assessment quantifies the additional parkland, facilities, and improvements needed to keep pace with community growth and increasing demands. It also incorporates the needs and preferences resulting from the community survey. A principle of this plan is to involve the public in planning for its parks and recreation needs and preferences. This was accomplished through discussions with local organizations and programs providers; meetings with the Parks and Recreation Board; and through the community survey as previously mentioned. The success of this plan ultimately relies on its ability to meet the needs of a growing community. Ongoing outreach efforts and opportunities for community engagement will keep the plan focused on this objective.

Importance of this Master Plan

This master plan is an important step for the community to keep pace with its growth and continue to provide quality parks and recreational facilities, programs, and community events. There are many factors that influence this plan and its directions for implementation.

- A shortage of 79.5 acres to meet current needs for neighborhood and community parks.
- A need to acquire and develop an additional 101.1 acres of parkland by Year 2035.
- Needed coordination between the city and San Benito Consolidation Independent School District (CISD) for joint use of park facilities.
- Current and increasing deficiencies in the numbers of soccer and softball fields and tennis and volleyball courts; with a goal of hosting local, regional and statewide tournaments.
- New or replaced equipment items in each of the parks, including bike racks, playground equipment, perimeter sidewalk, and security lighting.
- Continued priority among residents for the continued construction and extension of trails for increased connectivity throughout the community.

IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS FACTORS

Several key factors will be integral to the success of the implementation program, including, first and foremost, the dedication of the city's leadership, as well as continued public involvement, acceptance and commitment by all city departments, reference and integration into other development and capital projects, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation, as described below.

DEDICATION OF THE CITY'S LEADERSHIP

Members of city staff, the Parks and Recreation Board, and the community must assume ownership of the plan in order for it to be successfully implemented over the short- and long-term. Of particular importance will be an annual review process to update and amend the plan, as warranted, and to keep the capital plan current. The capital plan should be regularly updated to reflect new improvements and needs for existing as well as new parks.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

As in the original master plan process, the city solicited the input and guidance of the community during the preparation of this plan to guide the prioritization of departmental projects and program initiatives. This input should continue by way of regular focus groups; an annual summit of commercial, educational, and non-profit organizations; and periodic community surveys focused solely on parks and recreation topics. Furthermore, residents should be engaged in design charrettes to aid in the process of park design and to weigh-in on new programs or proposed changes to existing programs.

DEDICATION, ACCEPTANCE, AND COMMITMENT

Many of the city's departments have roles in implementing this master plan. This may include, among others, the consideration of land proposed for parkland dedication as part of subdivision plat review by the Planning and Development Department, the provision by the Public Works Department of internal or external street and utility improvements serving parks, and coordination with Public Affairs Department and San Benito EDC in promoting and hosting community events and activities. For these reasons, each of these and other departments may support, through various avenues, the realization of this plan. It will be important to maintain communication and coordination between these departments and the Parks and Department to ensure ongoing success.

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The collaboration with local and regional partners is becoming increasingly important given fiscal constraints and considering the oftentimes common missions and objectives of each. This plan advises the city to actively promote strong partnerships through intergovernmental and/or cooperative agreements for the provision of public/semi-public open space, park facilities, and recreation programs. The programmatic assessment outlined in Chapter 3, *Analysis and Recommendations*, identifies multiple opportunities for mutually beneficial coordination in sharing parkland throughout the city, such as through a joint use agreement between the city and SBCISD.

EVALUATION

As with any plan, it must be kept up-to-date on a regular basis. This is essential as the Texas Parks and Wildlife

¹The cost estimates are in 2015 dollars. They require updating and individual estimates upon preliminary and final design

Department requires a five-year plan, meaning this update will be necessary again in 2020. During the interim, the plan will need to be reviewed annually and amended as needed to reflect changes in the mission and goals of the Parks and Recreation Department, and changing needs and attitudes of the community. Annual reviews will ensure that the recommended actions are viable and realistic, and reconciled with the capital and operating budgets. These reviews will also help the city to gauge its progress in meeting the vision, goals, and objectives of the plan.

ROLE OF THE CITY AND FUTURE PARTNERSHIPS

The city's role will be to increase its commitment of financial and human resources concurrent with the growth and development of the parks and recreation system. In other words, as more acreage is acquired and developed there will be additional staff, facilities, equipment, and operating budget warranted to effectively manage and efficiently maintain them.

There will certainly be challenges in implementing this plan, including escalating land acquisition and development costs, possible land assembly requirements, necessary ordinance amendments, increased fees commensurate with increasing costs, and many other challenges. One of the ways to lessen these challenges will be to form partnerships with other providers, agencies, and governments.

Higher orders of government, such as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, will likely continue to be a source of funding and technical assistance through their competitive grant programs. It is advisable to make maximum use of these financial assistance programs to leverage funding thereby allowing more significant projects and sizeable areas. A list of funding sources and programs is discussed in Appendix D, *Funding Sources*.

It is recommended that the city partner with other agencies and jurisdictions. Working with partners will enable the city to build on past successes and lessons learned through working with others that are involved in parks and recreation, leverage opportunities and achieve efficiencies, and ultimately, achieve a first-class parks and recreation system. Specific opportunities for partnerships include:

- Private and non-profit organizations;
- Cameron, Hidalgo and Willacy Counties;

- Cameron County Irrigation District 2;
- San Benito Consolidated Independent School District;
- University of Texas - Pan American and University of Texas - Brownsville; and
- Private sector entities.

The city is not limited to partnering with the aforementioned entities. The opportunity to build partnerships should be an ongoing process that continues throughout the duration of the planning period - and beyond.

Implementation Priorities

This section details the improvement priorities that have been identified for San Benito's parks and recreation system. These improvement priorities were determined, in part, by the condition assessment presented in Chapter 2, *Existing Conditions*; the recommended improvements based on current and projected needs for parks and recreation facilities presented in Chapter 3, *Analysis and Recommendations*, public input through consultation and stakeholder interviews, Park Survey, and guidance of the Parks and Recreation Board and Parks and Recreation Department.

CAPITAL PLAN

Displayed in Table 4.1, *Park and Recreation Capital Plan*, is the scheduled improvements for each of the existing parks. This same process should be completed for each new parks, especially the South Park and constructed wetlands that is created. The plan has been divided into line-item improvements and organizes park needs into the following categories:

- Courts and fields;
- Rehabilitation and maintenance;
- Furniture, lighting, and equipment;
- Signage;
- Landscaping and site work; and
- Facilities.

The organization of the capital plan allows park needs to be evaluated for each park or on a city-wide, individual improvement basis. The costs reflect order of magnitude plans and preliminary cost estimates of individual park improvement projects.¹ In addition to the preliminary project cost estimates, there are line-item unit costs for each of the improvements identified for each of the existing parks.

PRIMARY IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

The following list of improvements includes the city's highest priority projects, meaning they are planned for incorporation into the annual capital budgeting process. As this plan matures, each of these projects will need to be further divided into individual projects with their requisite priorities.

1. COMMUNITY POOL AND WATER FACILITIES

The need for a community pool and splash pad facilities were consistently discussed throughout the planning process as well as in the Park Survey.

2. REPAIR / REHABILITATION OF EXISTING PARKS

Improvements and maintenance of existing parks is a priority for the city to optimize resources and serve current users. Equipment and facilities need attention after years of use and should be continually evaluated for needed improvements. The individual improvement needs are detailed in Table 3.4, *Current Citywide Facility Needs, 2015*, Table 3.5, *Future Citywide Facility Needs, 2015*, Table 3.6, *Equipment Standards*, and Table 4.1, *Parks and Recreation Capital Plan*. Priorities should be based on a level of need and park utilization.

3. PLAN TO ACQUIRE NEEDED PARK ACREAGE IN AREAS OF NEED

According to Table 3.1, *Percent of Need Met, 2015*, the city is currently meeting only 45.2 percent of the recommended acres of neighborhood and community parkland. By 2035, the city will only be meeting 39.4 percent of the projected future demand of the neighborhood and community parks. More land must be acquired and dedicated to future park usage in order to meet the current and future demand. While the city will need to continue focusing on the maintenance of current parks, the importance of acquiring additional park acreage lies in providing more distribution, and therefore accessibility, to parkland for all city's residents. Acquisition of additional park acreage may be accomplished in different ways. One way would be to pursue additional joint City/School partnership with SBCISD to fill in areas of need.

4. CONTINUED EXPANSION OF TRAILS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE TRAILS MASTER PLAN

This master plan should be created to complement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Its focus should be on

tying together each of the existing and planned future parks, and building upon the success of the Heavin Resaca Trails. The need for expanding on walking and biking trails was indicated as an "extremely needed" recreational facility within question three of the Park Survey. Detailed in Map 3.3, *Trail Opportunity Areas* are potential areas within the city that could house a trail to provide connection among future and planned future parks throughout the city. A need for a trails master plan lies in ensuring advanced planning and coordination of comprehensive network of on-street and off-street trails to form a complete pedestrian and bicycle system throughout San Benito.

5. SPORTS FIELDS / COURTS

The analysis of facility needs in Chapter 3, *Analysis and Recommendations*, reveals that the city is lacking many needed facility and amenity types. As shown in Table 3.4, *Current Citywide Facility Needs, 2015*, the city meets none of its need for the following activities: soccer, tennis, football, quarter-mile running track, softball, and swimming. Further, Table 3.5, *Future Citywide Facility Needs*, illustrates that if no steps are taken, San Benito will remain deprived of most recreation types. The capital plan shows funds allocated to Stookey and Landrum parks. New parks must be designed to accommodate the remaining needs.

6. DOG PARKS

A dog park, generally fenced, has features such as water features and agility courses. It serves as a safe place for dogs to be unleashed and to socialize. The city can readily, and fairly inexpensively, meet this community need by designating a part of an existing park, such as along the Heavin Resaca trails, or could alternatively use undeveloped parkland, such as a detention basin.

7. ADA COMPLIANCE

The city is responsible for providing accessibility to parks for individuals with disabilities. Over half of the neighborhood and community parks are in need of handicap accessible accommodations. San Benito should seek available funding and organize ongoing improvement and funding program to bring all park buildings and facilities into full compliance.

PRIMARY IMPROVEMENTS FOR OUTDOOR FACILITIES

While an overview of all priorities gives the city an idea of the scope and magnitude of the park needs, an

evaluation of the needs of each park will be helpful for the distribution of limited resources. An inventory of all parks and their facilities is available in Chapter 2, *Existing Conditions*, which informs the improvements listed in Table 4.1, *Parks and Recreation Capital Plan*.

- 1. Development of South Park.** Currently, few park amenities exist on this side of town. The development of this park will add much needed acreage as well as community park amenities the portion of San Benito that is west of Expressway-83.
- 2. Development of Water Facilities at Stookey Park.** To accommodate a high priority need for a community water facility, a conceptual redesign of the existing decommissioned pool so that it could house a splash pad water facility should be considered.
- 3. Development of Additional Sports Fields and Courts at Stookey and Landrum Park.** To accommodate a high priority need of expanding on needed sports fields and courts, additional sports fields and courts should be built at Stookey and Landrum parks.
- 4. Improvements to Existing Older Parks.** Improvements and maintenance of existing parks is a priority for the city to optimize resources and serve current users. Equipment and facilities need attention after years of use and should be continually evaluated for needed improvements. The subsequent priorities will be further defined as individual concept plans are prepared, preliminary plans are designed and estimated, and projects are packaged. The specific planned improvements are reflected in more detail in the capital plan.


PRIMARY IMPROVEMENTS FOR INDOOR FACILITIES

Investment in new or existing indoor facilities can help to meet the city's need for community and cultural arts facilities while still meeting the other community needs, such as interpretive/educational education facilities and amenities.

- 1. Nature Center at Constructed Wetlands Property.** An environmental education pavilion should be considered for construction on this site, which could include educational displays and interpretive exhibits describing the function of the wetlands. A potential concept plan developed for this project could include both indoor and outdoor activities.




TABLE 4.1, PARKS AND RECREATION CAPITAL PLAN



Inventory Type	Unit Cost	Community		Neighborhood		Linear Parks and Greenways		Pocket Park		Special Use		Total Cost
		STOOKEY PARK	LANDRUM PARK	FALLIGANT PARK	KENNEDY PARK	DICK WELCH PARK	VALENCIA PARK	VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK	SKATE PARK	HEAVIN PARK		
Courts and Fields												
Basketball Court	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$12,000
Basketball Backboards/Rims/Goals	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$2,400
Sand Volleyball Court	\$12,000	\$24,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$24,000
Tennis Courts	\$35,000	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$75,000
Soccer Field	\$19,000	\$38,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$38,000
Soccer Goals	\$1,000	\$4,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$4,000
Softball Field (300 feet)	\$180,000	\$360,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$360,000
Rehabilitation and Maintenance												
Backstop Fencing Replacement	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$ -	\$30,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$60,000
Basketball Court Resurface	\$14,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$14,000	\$28,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$42,000
Court (Basketball/Tennis) Lighting Repair	\$6,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$0
Playground Equipment Replacement (for 15-20 kids)	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$324,000	\$ -	\$36,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$360,000
Playground Fall Surface Replacement (where equipment)	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$18,000
Renovation of Pool	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$2,000,000
Trail Repair (per linear foot)	\$9	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$100,953	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$100,953
Restroom Rehabilitation	\$60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$120,000
Sprinkler Replacement (each)	\$200	\$1,200	\$400	\$400	\$3,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$400	\$5,400

TABLE 4.1, PARKS AND RECREATION CAPITAL PLAN



Inventory Type	Unit Cost	Community		Neighborhood		Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park		Special Use		Total Cost
		Stookey Park	Landrum Park	Falligant Park	Kennedy Park	Dick Welch Park	Valencia Park	Veterans Memorial Park	Skate Park	Heavin Park	
Furniture, Lighting and Equipment											
Drinking Fountain	\$2,400	\$4,800	\$4,800	\$4,800	\$9,600	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$2,400	\$-	\$26,400
Bicycle Rack	\$900	\$3,600	\$900	\$900	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$900	\$-	\$900	\$7,200
Grill/BBQ Pit	\$250	\$500	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$500
Lighting (Basketball Courts)	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$5,000
Lighting (Parking Lot and/or Trail)	\$3,600	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$14,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$14,400
Park Bench	\$1,800	\$3,600	\$-	\$-	\$5,400	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$1,800	\$-	\$10,800
Pavilion, Covered	\$40,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$0
Picnic Table	\$1,500	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$1,500	\$-	\$1,500
Trash Can	\$265	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$265	\$-	\$265
Signage											
ADA Signage/ Accessibility (each park)	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$27,000
Children at play/ Off-site directional signs (2 per park)	\$375	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$-	\$750	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$3,750
Entrance Sign & Lightening (1/ neighborhood, 2/ community)	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$-	\$-	\$5,000	\$-	\$5,000	\$-	\$5,000	\$-	\$20,000
Parking Lot Handicap Signs	\$400	\$-	\$400	\$400	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$400	\$-	\$1,200
Landscaping and Site Work											
Crosswalk	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$3,750
Security Lighting	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$-	\$10,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$30,000
Sidewalks, Off-site (per linear feet)	\$9	\$4,500	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,500
Sidewalk Bollard Lighting	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$-	\$-	\$2,400	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,800
Trails (per linear foot)	\$9	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$0
Trees / Shrubs	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$-	\$-	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$24,000
Facilities											
Playground Shade Structure	\$48,000	\$-	\$48,000	\$48,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$96,000
Dog Park	\$8,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$8,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$8,000
Community Garden	\$4,000	\$-	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,000	\$16,000
Spray/Splash Pad (1,000 sq. ft.)	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$75,000

TABLE 4.1, PARKS AND RECREATION CAPITAL PLAN



STOOKEY PARK

LANDRUM PARK

FALLIGANT PARK

KENNEDY PARK

DICK WELCH PARK

VALENCIA PARK

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

SKATE PARK

HEAVIN PARK

Inventory Type	Unit Cost	Community	Neighborhood	Linear Parks and Greenways	Pocket Park	Special Use	Total Cost
Total Costs:							
Courts and Fields	-	\$490,400	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$515,400
Rehabilitation and Maintenance	-	\$2,085,200	\$400	\$104,400	\$515,953	\$0	\$2,742,353
Furniture Lighting and Equipment	-	\$17,500	\$5,700	\$5,700	\$29,400	\$900	\$66,065
Signage	-	\$8,750	\$4,150	\$4,150	\$8,750	\$3,000	\$51,950
Landscaping and Site Work	-	\$23,650	\$10,750	\$750	\$16,750	\$6,750	\$84,560
Facilities	-	\$75,000	\$52,000	\$52,000	\$12,000	\$0	\$195,000
Total Costs	-	\$2,298,500	\$98,000	\$167,000	\$513,253	\$9,750	\$3,655,418



TPWD Compliance Matrix

The following matrix compares the required plan contents from TPWD for a parks and recreation master plan to be considered for funding with the plan contents housed within the San Benito Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



TABLE A.1, TPWD COMPLIANCE MATRIX

TPWD Plan Contents	San Benito Parks and Master Plan Contents
Introduction	Chapter 1, Introduction, Context, and Vision
Goals and Objectives	
Plan Development Process	
Area and Facility Concepts and Standards	Chapter 2, Existing Conditions
Inventory of Areas and Facilities	
Needs Assessment and Identification	Chapter 3, Analysis and Recommendation
Illustrations, Maps, Surveys, ETC.	
Plan Implementation and Prioritization of Needs	Chapter 4, Implementation

Park and Recreation Board (PRB) Listening Session

The following sheet includes the public meeting notes from the PRB Listening Session on August 12, 2014.

FIGURE B.1, PRB LISTENING SESSION NOTES



Parks and Recreation Board (PRB) Listening
Session
08.12.14

- There is an interest in looking to incorporate TCEQ funding for LID and stormwater permitting with the State with Parks and Rec development
- Questions from board members as to whether the right approach is to fix facilities to attract kids or recruit individuals to reprogram
- The 3 biggest things the board is looking for is:
 - Participation
 - Help from the City
 - Marketing strategy to recruit and retain kids
- Lack of volunteerism in the City
- PRAB has recommended to the City that they need help especially with the programmatic aspect. There is interest in hiring a Program Coordinator to fill this void
- Currently PRAB relies on independent leagues to coordinate all aspects of the recreational sports leagues
- Art has requested for an assistant to help him with recreational programming in the recent budgeting talks
- “Not enough money to do it all”
- Currently there is limited communication between Parks Board, City Commission, and CBDG
- Matt requested that when we come back on site in November, we would like to walk around with the PRAB to see what each of them think each park needs and could have. Matt is interested in getting this documented so that the City can see a comprehensive list and consider these improvements within the Capital Improvements Plan
- There has been limited action by the City in general and the City Attorney to move forward on PRAB proposals including:
 - Adopt a Park Plan: submitted to the City 19 months ago and still not out of the City Attorney’s review
 - Naming system for parks/public facilities: submitted to the City 27 months ago
 - Park bylaws
- We suggested that the PRAB focus on recruiting sponsorship from Stripes, HEB, Walgreens and for them to develop a sponsorship plan
- Question: What do you want out of the new Parks and Recreation Master Plan?
 - Focus on getting a community pool back
 - “Kids can’t have fun here”
 - Introduce more pocket parks
 - Splash Park

Park and Recreation Listening Session

FIGURE B.1, PRB LISTENING SESSION NOTES



Parks and Recreation Listening Session
08.12.14

- There needs to be money available to maintain our current and new parks
 - Especially the potential new park in the south part of town
- There is a need for more distribution of parks throughout the City
- There is also a great need and interest for expanding the recreational options in San Benito
- Community pool was decommissioned in 2009 due to foundation issues. Engineers who have come to quote the repair of the pool have said that the repair of the current pool would cost more than building a new pool
 - Is Stookey Park, which currently houses the decommissioned pool, the right place for a new community pool when it can be built?
 - Landrum Park used to have a pool
- The City had gotten a grant to build a splash pad; however, there were too many interferences to follow through with building the splash pads. Splash pads could be a good alternative to a new pool right now due to the lower cost of maintenance
- Desire to create a dog park with a potential placement along the Resaca trails
- Issues/Needs
 - New stormwater permits
 - Need for dog “potty” stations at parks
 - Rain harvesting systems in parks
 - Reuse of water for irrigation of that park
 - Development of minimum standards for parks
 - Need for a system of parkland dedication
 - Use of LID practices (water/rain garden) in parks
 - Interlocal agreement with City – School
- In Los Indios, there is a community center that got rain gutters placed along the building for rain harvesting through a grant. The water collected through rain harvesting is used for vegetable gardens.
 - This effort has gotten residents interested in water conservation again
- Students from Kingsville and Brownsville come to view the wetlands project
 - Currently the City is working on a grant to put all 16 lagoons into operation; 4 of the 16 lagoons are up and running now.
 - This Parks department is responsible for the mowing and trimming around the lagoons
- Existing parks need an upgrade to their irrigation system. Most of the sprinklers are not on timers
- Falligant park has underground stormwater detention
 - Looking for additional use of LID techniques

Park and Recreation Listening Session (continued)

FIGURE B.1, PRB LISTENING SESSION NOTES



- Working with LUCHAS (sp?), a group from Austin that is providing additional funding for stormwater management techniques
- Flooding along McCollough Street
 - Efforts have been made to work with the school there to build a retention pond
- No real bonds exist for parks
- Falligant and Landrum park are only border-line ADA compliant
- There needs to be additional attention paid to safety, ADA compliance, security and lighting in parks
- Need for more shade structures in parks
 - Currently no shade structures in parks except for trees
- Need for more water fountains and restrooms
- Need for recreational sports leagues to be geared to a variety of ages, especially for the teens who are bored
- There has been vandalism from local residents; therefore, there needs to be a strategy to get the teens involved
 - IDEA: specify a space in the City for the kids to practice graffiti as a show of public art rather than public nuisance
- The highschool seniors who need community service hours could be an outlet for volunteerism

Park Condition Assessment Reports

The following sheet includes the Park Condition Assessment Reports and scores of the ten existing parks within San Benito.

FIGURE C.1, STOOKEY PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Park Name	Score	Date
STOOKEY PARK	18	8/11/14
<p>Turf</p> <p>0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance</p> <p>1 Good condition, few problem areas</p> <p>2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)</p> <p>3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning</p> <p>4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Plantings and Trees</p> <p>0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs</p> <p>1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required</p> <p>2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed</p> <p>3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.</p> <p>4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist</p> <p>— Limited or no vegetation exists</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Parking</p> <p>0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition</p> <p>1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance</p> <p>2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed</p> <p>3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay</p> <p>4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed</p> <p>— No off-street parking available</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Park Sidewalks and Trails</p> <p>0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible</p> <p>1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed</p> <p>2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns</p> <p>3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction</p> <p>4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed</p> <p>— No sidewalks/trails/paths exist</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces</p> <p>0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair</p> <p>1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed</p> <p>2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement</p> <p>3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing</p> <p>4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed</p> <p>— No nets/playing surfaces exist</p> <p>Comments: Covered</p> <p>Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets</p> <p>0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair</p> <p>1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs</p> <p>2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement</p> <p>3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing</p> <p>4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed</p> <p>√ No courts, fencing and nets exist</p> <p>Comments:</p>		

FIGURE C.1, STOOKEY PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS**Park Accessibility**

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 **Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs**
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments: On-site accessibility

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 **Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement**
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 **Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required**
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement
- No buildings or shelters

Comments:

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 **Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required**
- 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
- 2 **Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed**
- 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
- 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required
- No signage

Comments: Landscaping needs to be maintained

Fencing

- 0 **Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need**
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
- 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
- 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No fencing

Comments: Could use replacement of unnecessary parts of wire fencing

Lighting

- 0 **Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair**
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No lighting exists

Comments:


FIGURE C.2, LANDRUM PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

LANDRUM PARK
Park Name

8
Score

8/11/14
Date

Turf

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 Good condition, few problem areas
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist
- ___ Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed
- ___ No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed
- ___ No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments: Covered

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:

FIGURE C.2, LANDRUM PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS**Park Accessibility**

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments: On-site accessibility

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement
- No buildings or shelters

Comments:

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
- 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- √ No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
- 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
- 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
- 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required
- No signage

Comments: Could use additional signage

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
- 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
- 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No fencing

Comments: Only along the basketball court

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No lighting exists

Comments:

FIGURE C.3, FALLIGANT PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

FALLIGANT PARK	10	8/11/14
Park Name	Score	Date

Turf

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 Good condition, few problem areas
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist
- Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed
- No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed
- No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed
- No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments: Covered

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:


FIGURE C.3, FALLIGANT PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Park Accessibility

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments: On-site accessibility

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement
- No buildings or shelters

Comments: Bathrooms are closed

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
- 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
- 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
- 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
- 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required
- No signage

Comments:

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
- 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
- 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No fencing

Comments: Fencing is from playscape to street

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No lighting exists

Comments:


FIGURE C.4, KENNEDY PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

KENNEDY PARK

14

8/11/14

Park Name**Score****Date****Turf**

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 Good condition, few problem areas
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist
- Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments:

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

 No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:

FIGURE C.4, KENNEDY PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS**Park Accessibility**

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments:

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments:

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement
- No buildings or shelters

Comments:

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
- 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- √ No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
- 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
- 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
- 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required
- No signage

Comments: Entrance sign is okay; however, it needs significant landscaping

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
- 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
- 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- √ No fencing

Comments:

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- √ No lighting exists

Comments:

FIGURE C.5, DICK WELCH PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

DICK WELCH PARK

Park Name

9

Score

8/11/14

Date**Turf**

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 Good condition, few problem areas
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning**
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs**
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist
- Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed**
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed
- No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments:

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

 No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:


FIGURE C.5, DICK WELCH PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Park Accessibility

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments:

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement

No buildings or shelters

Comments:

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
- 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
 - 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
 - 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
 - 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
 - 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
 - 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required
- No signage

Comments: Landscaping needs to be maintained

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
 - 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
 - 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
 - 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
 - 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No fencing

Comments: Could use replacement of unnecessary parts of wire fencing

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
 - 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
 - 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
 - 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
 - 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No lighting exists

Comments:


FIGURE C.6, VALENCIA PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

VALENCIA PARK

11

8/11/14

Park Name**Score****Date****Turf**

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 Good condition, few problem areas
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist
- Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments: Covered

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

 No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:

FIGURE C.6, VALENCIA PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS**Park Accessibility**

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments: On-site accessibility

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement

No buildings or shelters

Comments: Bathrooms are closed

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
- 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- ___ No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
- 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
- 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
- 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required

No signage

Comments:

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
- 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
- 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

No fencing

Comments: Fencing is from playscape to street

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- ___ No lighting exists

Comments:


FIGURE C.7, VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK
Park Name

0
Score

8/11/14
Date

Turf

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 Good condition, few problem areas
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist
- Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments:

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:

FIGURE C.7, VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS**Park Accessibility**

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
 - 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
 - 3 Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs
 - 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments:

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
 - 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
 - 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
 - 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
 - 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
 - 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
 - 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement
- No buildings or shelters

Comments:

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
 - 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade

No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
 - 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
 - 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
 - 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required

— No signage

Comments: Landscaping needs to be maintained

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
 - 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
 - 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
 - 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

— No fencing

Comments:

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
 - 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
 - 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
 - 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No lighting exists

Comments:

FIGURE C.8, SKATE PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

SKATE PARK	10	8/11/14
Park Name	Score	Date

Turf

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 Good condition, few problem areas
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist

 Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

 No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments: Covered

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

 No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:


FIGURE C.8, SKATE PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Park Accessibility

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 **Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs**
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments: Limited On-site accessibility

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 **Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement**
- 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement

No buildings or shelters

Comments: Bathrooms are closed

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
- 2 **Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade**

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- ___ No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
- 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
- 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
- 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required

No signage

Comments:

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
- 2 **Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed**
- 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- ___ No fencing

Comments: Fencing is from playscape to street

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
- 3 **Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement**
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- ___ No lighting exists

Comments:

FIGURE C.9, HEAVIN PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

HEAVIN PARK
Park Name

5
Score

8/11/14
Date

Turf

- 0 Great condition, no problem areas or need for significant maintenance
- 1 **Good condition, few problem areas**
- 2 Moderate condition, maintenance needed, (aeration, over-seeding, re-establishment)
- 3 Poor condition, needs reconditioning
- 4 Very poor condition, requires re-seeding, re-grading and replacement

Comments:

Plantings and Trees

- 0 **Great condition, good coverage and healthy with no significant maintenance needs**
- 1 Good condition, additional coverage needed with minor maintenance required
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage and moderate maintenance needed
- 3 Poor condition, additional coverage needed as well as replacement, pruning, etc.
- 4 Very poor condition, dangerous conditions exist
- Limited or no vegetation exists

Comments:

Parking

- 0 **Great condition, good ingress/egress, striped and surface in good condition**
- 1 Good condition, faded striping and surface beginning to require routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, striping is faint and moderate surface maintenance is routinely needed
- 3 Poor condition, no striping, poor surface and needs reconstruction or an overlay
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

No off-street parking available

Comments:

Park Sidewalks and Trails

- 0 **Great condition, surface is in good condition and is ADA accessible**
- 1 Good condition, surface beginning to crack and heave with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface requires moderate maintenance with visible safety concerns
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface that requires replacement or reconstruction
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

No sidewalks/trails/paths exist

Comments:

Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition and nets are stable, level and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface and nets beginning to require maintenance with minor repairs needed
- 2 Moderate condition, surface and nets require moderate maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface and nets that require replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete reconstruction needed

No nets/playing surfaces exist

Comments:

Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets

- 0 Great condition, surface is in good condition, fencing and nets are in good repair
- 1 Good condition, surface, fencing and nets beginning to require minor repairs
- 2 Moderate condition, surface, fencing and nets require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, unsafe surface, fencing and nets requires replacement/resurfacing
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed

No courts, fencing and nets exist

Comments:


FIGURE C.9, HEAVIN PARK CONDITION ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Park Accessibility

- 0 Great accessibility, perimeter sidewalks are in place with striped and signed crosswalks
- 1 Good accessibility, an acceptable walking surface exists and street crossing signs exist
- 2 Moderate accessibility, improved walking surfaces are needed as are crosswalks and signs
- 3 Poor condition, no walking surfaces, crosswalks or street crossing signs
- 4 Very poor condition, unsafe conditions for children or disabled persons

Comments:

Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Sheltered/Unsheltered Picnic Tables, Play Equipment)

- 0 Great condition, all equipment and amenities are new and well maintained
- 1 Good condition, equipment is generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, equipment and amenities require routine maintenance or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, equipment and amenities require replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, equipment and amenities are unfit for use and require replacement

Comments: Restrooms closed

Buildings, Shelters, Pavilions

- 0 Great condition, structures are attractive, well-maintained and structurally sound
- 1 Good condition, structures are generally in good repair with some minor improvements needed
- 2 Moderate condition, structures require routine repair with moderate maintenance required
- 3 Poor condition, structures are in disrepair and require significant improvements or replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, structures are unfit for use and require reconstruction or replacement
- No buildings or shelters

Comments:

Playing Fields and Equipment

- 0 Great condition, turf is in great condition, fields are crowned and are well-drained
- 1 Good condition, turf is in acceptable condition with some minor grading required
- 2 Moderate condition, moderate maintenance is needed to re-establish turf and re-grade

- 3 Poor condition, poor turf, standing water and significant reconditioning/re-grading is required
- 4 Very poor condition, fields and areas require complete refurbishment of the turf and grade
- No playing fields

Comments:

Signage

- 0 Great condition, adequate in number, appropriately placed and well landscaped
- 1 Good condition, sign facing is weathered, landscaping is generally healthy
- 2 Moderate condition, facing requires maintenance, landscaping needs replaced and more signs are needed
- 3 Poor condition, lettering is not legible, additional signs needed and landscaping in poor condition
- 4 Very poor condition, new signage is required
- No signage

Comments: Landscaping needs to be maintained

Fencing

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, no rusting and adequately meets its need
- 1 Good condition, starting to require minimal maintenance, repair or replacement
- 2 Moderate condition, rusting/rotting, requires repair or replacement and more needed
- 3 Poor condition, unsound condition, undesirable appearance and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No fencing

Comments:

Lighting

- 0 Great condition, structurally sound, good coverage and in good repair
- 1 Good condition, adequate coverage, requires routine maintenance
- 2 Moderate condition, additional coverage is needed, requires repair or replacement
- 3 Poor condition, inadequate surface coverage, unsound condition and requires replacement
- 4 Very poor condition, complete replacement needed
- No lighting exists

Comments:

Funding for Implementation

Most capital investments involve the outlet of substantial funds; therefore, local governments often must pay for new facilities through appropriations in the annual operating budget. There are numerous techniques available to local governments to pay for capital improvements over a longer period of time. Some of the available techniques include:

CURRENT REVENUE

This technique is known as “pay-as-you-go” financing and is the financing of improvements from current revenues such as general taxation, service charges, special established funds, or special assessments.

RESERVE FUNDS

The use of reserve funds is made possible by accumulating funds in advance for capital acquisition or development. The accumulation may result from surplus or earmarked operational revenues, funds in depreciation reserves, or the sale of capital assets.

Funding Sources

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FEDERAL LANDS TO PARKS

The Federal Lands-to-Parks (FLP) enables states and local governments to establish park and recreation areas and adapt historic buildings for public uses. Through FLP, state and local agencies may acquire land and facilities once used for federal purposes at no cost to meet park and recreation needs. Information about the program is available at www.ncrc.nps.gov/programs/flp/.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

The Land and Water Conservation Fund was enacted in 1964 (Public Law 88-578) to “create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities.” LWCF provides funding for: (1) land acquisition for federal land managing agencies; and (2) matching grants to state and local governments for planning (states only), acquisition and development of park and recreation areas and resource based facilities. Specifics for federal land acquisition projects are determined each fiscal year by Congress and the Administration. Of the amounts appropriated in any given fiscal year for the state grants

program, 40 percent is divided equally between states and 60 percent is allocated to the states by a population/need-based formula. A list of state contacts is available at http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/contact_list.html.

All state and local grants require at least a 50 percent match by the non-federal partner. The grantee assumes all operation and maintenance costs in perpetuity. Information about the program is available at http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/fed_state.html.

RIVERS, TRAILS AND CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

The RTCA program offers local groups staff assistance and consultations for locally led conservation projects. Projects may include developing trails and greenways or protecting rivers and open space. Regional RTCA offices provide application information and assistance. A list of regional office contacts is available at http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/contactus/cu_offices.html. Information about the program is available at: www.nps.gov/programs/rtca.

URBAN PARK & RECREATION RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery (UPARR) program was authorized in November 1978 by Public Law 95-625, providing direct federal matching assistance to cities and urban counties for rehabilitation of existing recreation facilities. The law encourages systematic local planning and commitment to continuing operation and maintenance of recreation programs, sites, and facilities. Project proposals are submitted to the appropriate National Park Service Regional Office by eligible local units of government (selected cities and urban counties). Grants are awarded on a nationally

competitive basis with regional offices having the primary responsibility for monitoring progress and post-completion requirements.

****A revised and updated Handbook will be available for this program when funding is restored in future appropriations.*

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program (CMAQ) is to realign the

focus of transportation planning toward a more inclusive, environmentally sensitive, and multi-modal approach. The CMAQ program provides funding for programs and projects in air quality non-attainment and maintenance for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and small particulate matter (PM-10), which reduces transportation related emissions. Grants are provided through a reimbursement process that varies state by state. In general, however, a sponsor would submit expenses to the state department of transportation, which would then reimburse at 80 percent of the project cost. Applications and information about CMAQ grants are available at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

The Recreational Trails Program, also authorized by TEA-21, provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users. Eligible project categories as defined in the act are: maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new recreational trails (with restrictions on new trails on Federal land); acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; state administrative costs related to program administration (up to 7 percent of a state's funds); and operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection as these objectives relate to the use of recreational trails (up to 5 percent of a state's funds). Each state has its own procedures and timelines to solicit, select, and fund Recreational Trails projects. For more information about project funding contact your State Trail Administrator. For a list of administrators go to <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtpstate.htm>.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS

Transportation Enhancements (TE) activities are federally funded, community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure. TE projects must be one of 12 eligible activities and must relate to surface transportation.

For example, projects can include creation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscape improvements, refurbishment of historic transportation facilities, and other investments that enhance communities and access. The federal government provides funding for TE projects through our nation's surface transportation legislation. Applications and information about

Transportation Enhancement grants are available at www.enhancements.org.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION - COAST GUARD

RECREATIONAL BOATING SAFETY

The RBS grant program provides funding to assist states with program administration, law enforcement and search and rescue capability, boater education, vessel numbering and titling systems, aids to navigation, and public boating access sites. Allowable uses of the RBS Program funds include a wide spectrum of activities that fall into six broad categories – program administration, law enforcement and search and rescue capability, boater education, vessel numbering and titling systems, aids to navigation, and public boating access sites. States with approved boating safety programs that meet the participation requirements are eligible. Information about the program is available at <http://www.uscgboating.org/grants/default.aspx>.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps seeks to strengthen communities through projects that address education, public safety, the environment, and other unmet human needs. Learn more about how to apply for a grant at http://www.americorps.gov/for_organizations/apply/national.asp.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - FOOD NUTRITION SERVICE

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) offers funds for meals and snacks for children in low-income areas during after-school and summer hours. Through the Child and Adult Care Food Program, USDA administers Afterschool Snacks, a program that offers reimbursement for snacks to after-school care program providers. For eligibility, the after-school programs must offer educational or enrichment activities in an organized, structured, and supervised environment after school, on weekends or holidays during the school year. The organization will be reimbursed at the highest level, currently 55 cents a snack per child per day. For more information, go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>. State agencies responsible for this program are at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>.

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service administers a Summer Food Service Program that provides free meals to children throughout the summer months when school is not in session. Approved sponsors, including school districts, park agencies, nonprofit organizations, and camps, organize the program and provide the meals to a group of children (18 or under) at a central site(s). Children can receive either one or two reimbursable meals each day. To apply for either program, contact the state education agency at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>.

For more information on the program, go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/Default.htm> or contact USDA Food and Nutrition Service Public Information Staff.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE – FOREST SERVICE

URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

The Urban and Community Forestry program assists state forestry agencies, local and tribal governments, and private sector entities improve natural resource management of trees and forests in urban areas and community settings. The program encourages and facilitates the active involvement of volunteers in the management and protection of their community's natural resources. The program also analyzes, develops, disseminates, and demonstrates scientific information about protecting, managing, and maintaining community forest resources. States are encouraged to offer competitive grants that involve partnerships with local governments, non-profit organizations, and the private sector for the purpose of establishing effective community forestry programs. Information about the program is available at <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/urban/>.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE – NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

CONSERVATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The purpose of the program is to assist land-users, communities, units of state and local government, and other federal agencies in planning and implementing conservation systems. The purpose of the conservation systems are to reduce erosion, improve soil and water quality, improve and conserve wetlands, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve air quality, improve pasture and range condition, reduce upstream flooding, and improve woodlands. The program is also used as a means to collect, analyze, interpret, display, and disseminate

information about the condition and trends of the Nation's soil and other natural resources so that people can make good decisions about resource use and about public policies for resource conservation. Information collected through the program is used to develop effective science-based technologies for natural resource assessment, management, and conservation. For more information about the Conservation Technical Assistance program go to <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cta/>.

Technical assistance is provided at the state level by State Conservationists. Contact information for each State Conservationist is available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/about/organization/regions.html>.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program is to accelerate the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, improve economic activity, and enhance the environment and standard of living in authorized RC&D areas. The program assists state, tribal and local units of government and local non-profit organizations in rural areas to plan, develop, and carry out programs for resource conservation and development. Current program objectives focus on improved quality of life, achieved through natural resources conservation and community development; sustainable communities; practical use and the management and conservation of natural resources. The program also establishes or improves coordination systems in rural areas by assisting RC&D coordinators, who assist local area councils. These coordinators help the area councils develop plans and proposals to compete for financial assistance from other federal, state and private sources. A list of local Resource Development Conservation Councils is available at www.rcdnet.org.

Authorized RC&D areas are locally sponsored areas designated by the Secretary of Agriculture for RC&D technical and financial assistance program funds. The Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide grants for land conservation, water management, community development, and environmental needs in authorized RC&D areas. Information about the Resource Conservation and Development Program is available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rcd/>.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

As part of the department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the Technology

Opportunities Program (TOP) awards matching grants to non-profit organizations, state and local governments, and colleges and universities to administer projects that demonstrate innovative uses of network technology. TOP projects demonstrate how telecommunications

and information technologies can be used to extend services to all populations, particularly those in low-income or rural environments. An application kit along with other materials and information needed to apply can be found on the Department of Commerce's website after the program is announced in the Federal Register at www.ntia.doc.gov/otiahome/top/grants/application.htm.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program was first authorized by Congress [Part I, Title X (20 USC 8241) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act] "to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, or consortia of such schools, to plan, implement, or expand projects that address the education, health, social services, cultural and recreational needs of the community." The No Child Left Behind Act has changed the aims of this program (see Grant Info under Public Policy of www.nrpa.org). Public recreation and parks are now able to apply directly for 21st CCLC funds in 2002 pending passage of education legislation. To apply for 21st CCLC funds, you must contact your state educational agency for information on applications and deadlines. For a list of state contacts, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/contacts.html>.

More information on the program, including application materials, helpful resources, and examples of successful applications, can be found on the 21st Century Community Learning Centers website at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>.

GOVERNOR'S GRANTS FOR DRUG AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

This program provides support to governors for a variety of drug and violence prevention activities focused primarily on school-age youths. Governors use their program funds to provide support to parent groups, community-based organizations, and other public and private nonprofit entities for drug and violence prevention activities. For more information, contact your governor's office or the U.S. Department of Education.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR PROGRESS GRANTS

Grants are awarded to local educational agencies and community-based organizations to initiate, expand, and improve physical education programs (including after-school programs) for kindergarten through 12th grade students by providing equipment and support to enable students to participate actively in physical education activities, and by providing funds for staff and teacher training and education. For more information, go to <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/pep.html>.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

SPECIAL RECREATION PROGRAM

This program assists development of recreation and related services for individuals with disabilities to aid their employment, mobility, independence, socialization, and community integration. Projects must provide recreational activities for individuals with disabilities in settings with peers without disabilities when possible and appropriate. The program awards discretionary grants on a competitive basis to states, public agencies, and nonprofit private organizations, including institutions of higher education. For more information, go to <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/programs.html>.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES – ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

Grants for child care programs that serve children under the age 13 (or, at the option of the grantee, up to age 19, if disabled or under court supervision) who reside with a family whose income does not exceed 85 percent of the State median income for a family of the same size, and who reside with a parent (or parents) who is working or attending job training or educational program; or are in need of, or are receiving protective services. This grant is coordinated by a designated "lead agency" in each state that submits a two-year plan to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). Agencies seeking CCDBG funds are encouraged to communicate with the Regional Administrators. For more information, go to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/ccdf/index.htm>.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

This grant is intended to provide assistance to states and local communities, working through a network of community action agencies and other neighborhood-based organizations, for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become fully self-sufficient. Each fiscal year, each state is required to submit an application to the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS). The Chief Executive Officer of each state is also required to designate a lead agency to prepare and submit a plan to the Secretary of HHS. Public entities, including recreation and parks, can be partners in this block grant program. For more information, go to www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ocs/csbgi/index.htm.

HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START

Early Head Start (EHS) has a triple mission. It aims to promote healthy prenatal outcomes, enhance the development of infants and toddlers, and promote healthy family functioning. Head Start is designed to foster healthy development in low-income children. Grants for the operation of Head Start and Early Head Start programs may be awarded to either public or private, for profit or nonprofit organizations, or public school systems. For more information, contact the Head Start Information and Publication Center (HSIPC) by e-mail at askus@headsstartinfo.org. Grant announcements can be found at www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/grant/fundingopportunities/fundopport.htm.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES - CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

EXEMPLARY STATE PROGRAMS TO PREVENT CHRONIC DISEASE AND PROMOTE HEALTH

CDC supports a variety of programs to improve the nation's health by preventing chronic diseases and their risk factors. The CDC gives states guidelines, recommendations, and resources, helping state health and education agencies promote healthy behaviors. Park and recreation agencies can contract with public health and education agencies to provide these services. For more information on this program, go to www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/programs.htm.

To contact your state chronic disease director, go to www.chronicdisease.org/members.html.

PREVENTIVE HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

The PHHS Block Grant is the primary source of flexible funding that provides states the latitude to fund any of

265 national health objectives available in the nation's Healthy People 2010 health improvement plan. States invest their PHHS block grant dollars in a variety of public health areas. For a listing of Healthy People 2010 health improvement plans in your state, go to <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/blockgrant/stateselection.htm>.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES - SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN PROGRAM

The Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program provides Federal funds through grants to States, communities, and Native American tribes to develop and implement systems of care programs. The Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) administers 6-year Federal grants to implement, enhance, and evaluate local systems of care. Grantees are required to match Federal dollars with local and State monies. These grants to States, communities, and Native American tribes support a broad array of services designed to meet the multiple and changing needs of children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances and their families. They coordinate systems of care by developing partnerships with mental health, child welfare, education, juvenile justice, and other local, public and private agencies, including park and recreation agencies. Public park and recreation agencies can contract with grantees for services. Find out if there is a grantee in your community, search at <http://www.mentalhealth.org/cmhs/childrencampaign/grantcomm.asp>.

TARGETED CAPACITY EXPANSION - PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

The purpose of the initiative is to increase the capacity of cities, counties, and tribal governments to provide prevention and early intervention treatment services to meet emerging and urgent mental health needs of communities. Projects funded through this program must target services to children and adolescents and their families. For more information, go to <http://samhsa.gov/grants/grants.html>.

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD)

BROWNFIELDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) is designed to help cities redevelop abandoned, idled, or underutilized areas often on industrial or

commercial property, known as brownfields. The program provides funding to local governments to be used in conjunction with Section 108 loan guarantees to finance redevelopment of brownfield sites. This program is not limited to industrial and/or commercial property. Approximately \$25 million is available annually for eligible local communities. Information about the program is available at www.hud.gov/bedifact.cfm.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program awards grants to entitlement community grantees to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services. HUD awards CDBG funds directly to metropolitan cities and urban counties (entitlement communities), or to states for distribution to non-entitlement communities. Any activity undertaken using CDBG funds must benefit low and moderate-income persons, prevent or eliminate slums or blight or address conditions that present a serious and immediate threat to the health and safety of the community. Brownfields redevelopment and public recreation activities (especially for children) are eligible, but must be incorporated into local government priorities through the community's Consolidated Plan and annual action plan. Eligible entities include cities or urban counties. There are field offices in most states, cities or urban counties that accept these applications. There is also a state program that handles smaller communities. Each urban area is allocated a formula-derived amount of funds and must submit a consolidated plan to the field office. For more information about the program and eligibility requirements go to www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/cdbg.cfm.

To find about program opportunities in metro areas (entitlement zones) contact Sue Miller at <http://www.hud.gov/cpd/statefct.html#contact>. Also, for local government information, go to: www.hud.gov/fundsav/html.

HUD E-MAPS

The Department of Housing and Urban Development developed an application on HUD's website intended to help people learn about environmental matters that affect their communities throughout the U.S. HUD E-MAPS is a Web-enabled version of Community 2020™ software which, combines HUD data with EPA environmental databases. The Community 2020 CD-ROM software can be purchased by community groups and individuals at a cost of \$250.00 for a region or \$300.00 for the whole country. The software provides detailed, site-specific financial, managerial, demographic and program information for virtually every entitlement

or competitive grant awarded by HUD since 1992. Over 1,000 communities are required to submit a five-year Consolidation Plan for the expenditure of over \$7.0 billion federal funds for an array of community development activities. Copies of the Community 2020 software are provided to the Consolidation Plan communities to streamline the application and reporting procedures for HUD's major community development programs and to facilitate citizens having access to information on how funds are being spent in their community. The E-Maps software springs from HUD's strong conviction that every American has the right to know about the quality of the environment where they live, work, play and raise their families. Information about the E-Maps program is available at www.hud.gov/emaps.

HOPE VI REVITALIZATION GRANTS

The specific elements of public housing transformation that have proven key to HOPE VI include: Changing the physical shape of public housing; establishing positive incentives for resident self-sufficiency and comprehensive services that empower residents; lessening concentrations of poverty by placing public housing in non-poverty neighborhoods and promoting mixed-income communities; and forging partnerships with other agencies, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses to leverage support and resources. Only public housing authorities are eligible to apply for these funds, but park and recreation agencies can contract to develop recreation facilities at public housing sites and to provide community and supportive service programs for residents, including those relocated as a result of revitalization efforts. For more information, go to <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/grants/revitalization/>.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR – FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

AQUATIC RESOURCE EDUCATION

The Aquatic Resource Education Program helps people understand, enjoy and conserve the aquatic natural resources of the nation. States have the option of using up to 15 percent of their annual Sport Fish Restoration apportionment for aquatic resource education programs and outreach and communications projects. The Sport Fish Restoration Program, created in 1950, provides funding for fish management, conservation, restoration, aquatic education, and boating access. The program is funded by a 10 percent Federal excise tax on fishing rods, reels, creels, lures, flies and artificial baits and a 3 percent tax on electronic fishing motors and sonar fish finders; duties on imported fishing tackle, pleasure boats and yachts; and a portion of the Federal fuel tax receipts from motorboats and small gasoline engines. The funds are apportioned annually to the states and territories by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas

set forth in the Act. Apportionments are determined for each state by land area and number of fishing license owners. All funds are disseminated through State Fish and Wildlife Departments. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. To view FY 2002 state apportionments go to <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/apport/sfrprelimapporttable2002.pdf> or look at the Federal Aid State Apportionments category under Natural Resources on the NRPA website. Information about the Aquatic Resource Education program is available at <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/sfr/fasfr.html>.

NATIONAL COASTAL WETLANDS CONSERVATION GRANTS PROGRAM

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants Program is authorized by the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to grant funds to coastal states to carry out coastal wetlands conservation projects. Participants in the program include state, county, and municipal governments as well as non-government partners. Project review and selection are conducted by the Federal Aid Office and other Divisions in each Region and by a cross-program review in the Washington Office, led by the Division of Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance and Habitat Restoration. All Coastal States (except Louisiana) and the Trust Territories are eligible to submit project proposals to the appropriate Service Regional Office annually. Funds are made available by allocating 18 percent of the Sport Fish Restoration Account or 100 percent of the excise tax on small engine fuels - whichever is greater. Up to \$15 million is available annually. Information about the program is available at fa.r9.fws.gov/cw/cw_jul97.html.

SPORT FISH RESTORATION ACT

The Act, approved by Congress on August 9, 1950, provides funding for fish management, conservation, and restoration. The program is funded by a 10 percent Federal excise tax on fishing rods, reels, creels, lures, flies and artificial baits and a 3 percent tax on electronic fishing motors and sonar fish finders. The funds are apportioned annually to the states and territories (except Puerto Rico) by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas set forth in the Act. Apportionments are determined for each state by land area and number of fishing license owners. All funds are disseminated through State Fish and Wildlife Departments. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. Information about the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration program is available at <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/sfr/fasfr.html>.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROGRAM

The Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program provides funding for wildlife conservation projects,

wildlife conservation education, and wildlife-associated recreation activities. The program benefits the diverse array of wildlife and associated habitat, including species that are not hunted or fished, to fulfill the unmet needs of wildlife. State Fish and Wildlife Departments with a comprehensive plan approved by the Secretary of the Interior can participate in the program. Local and state agencies are encouraged to partner with their state Fish and Wildlife Departments. Contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department for more information on project eligibility. To contact the Fish and Wildlife Department in your state go to www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF.

WILDLIFE RESTORATION ACT

Approved by Congress on September 2, 1937, the Act provides funding for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation and improvement of wildlife habitat, wildlife management research and the distribution of information produced by the projects. Congress amended the Act on October 23, 1970, to include funding for hunter training programs and the development, operation and maintenance of public target ranges. Funds are derived from an 11 percent Federal excise tax on handguns. Funds are also collected from a 12.4 percent tax on archery equipment. A certain amount of funds (section 4) must be used on hunter education before additional funds (section 10) can be attained. The section 10 funds can be used for additional hunter education programs or for wildlife restoration. These funds are apportioned each year to the states and territories (except Puerto Rico) by the Department of the Interior on the basis of formulas set forth in the Act. Apportionments are determined for each state by land area and number of hunting license owners. All funds are disseminated through State Fish and Wildlife Departments. To contact your state Fish and Wildlife Department go to: www.iafwa.org/documents/StateandProvincesDirectory.PDF. Information about the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration program is available at <http://fa.r9.fws.gov/wr/fawr.html>.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

INCENTIVE GRANTS FOR LOCAL DELINQUENCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS (TITLE V)

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) requests applications for programs to address the problems of delinquency prevention, within communities that experience high crime rates. Each state receives block grants to distribute to local delinquency prevention programs; public recreation agencies are eligible to apply. Each state has either a designated Title V Coordinator or Juvenile Justice Specialist who oversees the Title V grant program in that state. To access contact information for your state coordinator or specialist, please go to <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/titlev/grant.html>.

GANG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) annually requests applications for programs to address the youth gang problem and one new evaluation program under its Gang-Free Schools and Communities Initiative. Once the program is announced each year, an application kit can be found on the website of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Prevention ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants/html. Additional information may also be found at ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm.

SAFE AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

The Drug-Free Communities Program is designed to strengthen community-based coalition efforts to reduce youth substance abuse. Currently, there are 307 Drug-Free Communities Support Program awards. The grants enable coalitions to design substance abuse initiatives that target the illegal use or abuse of a range of drugs, such as narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, cannabis, inhalants, alcohol, tobacco, or other related products that are prohibited by Federal, State, or local law. Go to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention website for more information at <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/grants/grants.html>.

WEED AND SEED

Operation Weed and Seed aims to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in targeted high-crime neighborhoods across the country. Law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cooperate in “weeding out” criminals who participate in violent crime and drug abuse. “Seeding” brings social and community services to the area, including Safe Havens for young people and economic development. Park and recreation departments that provide neighborhood restoration services, or prevention, intervention, or treatment for offenders may be eligible for funding. Potential sites must first gain “official recognition” from the EOWS. To do this they must develop a local strategy and plan for addressing crime consistent with Weed and Seed goals. The Office of Justice Programs suggests that each program have a coordinator. Go to www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

YOUNG OFFENDER INITIATIVE

This program is designed to enhance community safety by successfully reintegrating young offenders into the community by helping them become productive,

responsible, and law-abiding citizens, obtain and retain long-term employment, maintain a stable residence; and successfully address their substance abuse issues and mental health needs. Eligible applicants must be state or local agencies or units of government, tribal governments, public or private nonprofit entities designated as 501(c)(3) or local Workforce Investment Boards that have formed partnerships with state and local agencies. For more information go to <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry/apply.html>.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITY GRANTS

The Youth Opportunity Grants authorized in the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (www.usworkforce.org) offer a chance to make a significant impact on concentrated poverty and unemployment in this country. As a complement to Job Corps, School-to-Work, and formula-funded youth programs, Youth Opportunity Grants provide the Department of Labor with a means to saturate targeted high-poverty urban and rural communities with sufficient resources to cause a significant drop in youth unemployment and idleness in these communities. For more information, go to http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/yog.asp.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT STATE AND LOCAL FORMULA YOUTH PROGRAMS

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) authorizes funds to state and local communities to support workforce training and related activities for youth who are 14-21, low income, basic skills deficient, a school dropout, homeless, a parent or parenting, offender, or individuals including disabled youth that require additional assistance to complete educational program or hold employment. Local workforce investment boards (WIBs) must provide the following services to eligible youth: tutoring, study skills training, dropout prevention strategies, alternative secondary school services, summer employment opportunities, paid and unpaid work experiences, and occupational skill training. Under WIA, each local WIB must establish a Youth Council to develop, implement, and oversee strategic plans for providing these programs and enhancing youth connections to One-Stops. State contacts can be found at <http://www.doleta.gov/usworkforce/asp/statecon.asp>.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

BROWNFIELDS DEMONSTRATION PILOTS

ASSESSMENT

The Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots (BADP) are designed to empower states, local governments

and communities in economic and environmental redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, and safely cleanup brownfields to promote their sustainable reuse. The brownfields assessment pilots fund up to \$200,000 over a two-year period. These funds bring together community groups, investors, lenders, developers, and other affected parties to address site assessment and cleanup planning issues, such as green space. Acceptable green space redevelopment includes: parks, playgrounds, trails, gardens, habitat restoration, open space, and/or green space preservation. BADP are administered on a competitive basis and selected by evaluation panels consisting of EPA Regional and Headquarters staff and other federal agency representatives. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact and meet with their EPA Regional Brownfields Representative (RBR) early in the process of preparing a proposal. A list of RBR's and contact information can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/regcntct.htm>. Information about the program is available at <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/html-doc>.

BROWNFIELDS CLEANUP REVOLVING LOAN FUND PILOTS

The Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund (BCRLF) program allows states, local governments and Indian tribes to receive loan funds for environmental cleanup of brownfields. The BCRLF can provide up to \$1,000,000 over five years for each pilot. The purpose of the program is to enable states, local governments, and Indian tribes to make low interest loans to facilitate the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields properties. To contact your EPA Regional Brownfields Representative (RBR) go to: www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/regcntct.htm. Information about the program and eligible sites is available at www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf/rflfst.htm.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH PROTECTION

The EPA offers this grant program to enhance public outreach and communication; assist families in evaluating risks to children and in making informed consumer choices; build partnerships that increase a community's long-term capacity to advance protection of children's environmental health and safety; leverage private and public investments to enhance environmental quality by enabling community efforts to continue past EPA's ability to provide assistance to communities; and to promote protection of children from environmental threats. Eligible applicants include community groups, public nonprofit institutions/ organizations, tribal governments, specialized groups, profit organizations, private nonprofit institutions/ organizations, municipal and local

governments. For more information, go to http://www.epa.gov/ogd/how_to_apply.htm.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION GRANTS PROGRAM

The EPA Environmental grant program supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed and responsible decisions that affect environmental quality. The program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques. The EPA awards over 200 grants each year worth between \$2-3 million. Grants of \$25,000 or less are awarded in EPA's ten regional offices, and grants of more than \$25,000 are awarded at EPA Headquarters. Each year, EPA's Office of Environmental Education releases a solicitation notice in the Federal Register that provides instructions for obtaining a grant. Educational agencies at the state, local and tribal level, state environmental agencies, college and universities, not-for-profit organizations, and noncommercial educational broadcasting entities are eligible to apply. Individuals are not eligible to apply. Although government agencies cannot apply directly, they are encouraged to work with other entities on developing and implementing environmental education programs. For more information about the program and the application process go to www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE GRANTS TO COMMUNITIES

With these grants, the EPA aims to provide financial assistance to grassroots community-based groups to support projects to design, demonstrate or disseminate practices, methods or techniques related to environmental justice. Specifically, EPA will grant funding assistance to be used for: environmental justice education and awareness programs; environmental Justice Programs (for example, river monitoring and pollution prevention programs); technical assistance in gathering and interpreting existing environmental justice data; and technical assistance to access available public information. Community-based grassroots organizations, other incorporated nonprofit organizations and federally recognized Tribal Governments are eligible. Applications are usually due at the beginning of March each year. Awardees are notified in August of each year. For more information, go to http://www.epa.gov/ogd/how_to_apply.htm.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS PROGRAM

This EPA program seeks to provide financial assistance to States, Local agencies, and Indian Tribes for chemical accident prevention activities that relate to the Risk Management Program under the Clean Air Act Section 112(r). Additionally, through this program the EPA provides financial assistance to Tribes for chemical emergency planning, and community right-to-know programs, which are established to prevent or eliminate unreasonable risk to the health and environment of communities within the State. Eligible applicants include States, Local agencies in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Island, Northern Mariana Islands, and Federally Recognized Indian Tribes. Recipients must match 25 percent of the grant funds (including in-kind services). For more information, go to http://www.epa.gov/ogd/how_to_apply.htm.

FOUNDATION GRANTS

GENERAL MILLS CHAMPIONS: YOUTH NUTRITION AND FITNESS GRANTS

The American Dietetic Association Foundation, the President's Challenge, and the General Mills Foundation have partnered to improve youth nutrition and fitness in the United States. The new initiative, entitled "General Mills Champions," will provide grants to community-based groups. The initiative will also include sponsorship of the President's Active Lifestyle Awards, development of nutrition and fitness mentoring models, and sharing best practices. Through its funding component, the program will award fifty grants of up to \$10,000 each to encourage communities in the United States to improve the eating and physical activity patterns of young people, ages 2-20. Grants will be awarded to 501(c)(3) or 509(a) status not-for-profit organizations and agencies working with communities that demonstrate the greatest need and likelihood of sustainable impact on young people's nutrition and activity levels through innovative programs. Grants will be awarded to programs for demonstrating significant potential impact on youth groups with special needs or for having an impact on large populations of youth. (NRPA is checking to see if the foundation will accept proposals from local units of government.) For more information, go to http://www.generalmills.com/Responsibility/Community_Engagement/Grants.aspx.

TONY HAWK FOUNDATION FUNDING FOR SKATEBOARD PARKS

Through its grant program, the foundation seeks to fund the construction of skateparks that are designed and built by qualified and experienced skatepark contractors;

include local skaters in the design process; are in low-income areas, or areas with a high population of "at-risk" youth; can demonstrate grassroots commitment to the project; have a creative mix of street obstacles and transition/vert terrain; do not require skaters or their parents to sign waivers; encourage skaters to look after their own safety and the safety of others; are open during daylight hours throughout the year; are free of charge; and are in areas that currently have no skateboarding facilities. Grant amounts range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. To be eligible, applicants must be a 501(c)(3) public charity or a state or local agency (including public school systems or public projects). The foundation also will consider assisting start-up organizations. The foundation expects to approve grant requests quarterly. See the foundation website for complete application procedures and to download an application form. For more information, go to www.tonyhawkfoundation.org.

AETNA AND THE AETNA FOUNDATION: COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM

These grants are for improving the quality of life in communities in which the company works by addressing critical social issues aligned with the foundation's philanthropic focus areas. The foundation will consider applications for sponsorship of fundraising events such as galas and walks; outreach activities (e.g., health fairs); and other community-based health and wellness initiatives that are aligned with our priorities.

Additional information regarding the Regional Community Grants Program in each of Aetna's business regions can be found at the foundation's website at www.aetna-foundation.org/foundation/apply-for-a-grant/grantseeker-information/.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL: FREE SEEDS FOR PLANTING "FREEDOM GARDENS"

The America the Beautiful Fund is a national nonprofit organization started in 1965 to encourage volunteer citizen efforts to protect the natural and historic beauty of America. In response to the events of September 11th, ABF is providing \$1 million worth of flower, vegetable, and herb seeds to plant "Freedom Gardens" across America. Anyone who wants to sponsor or start a Freedom Garden in their community can receive a grant of 100 to 1,000 free seed packets. For further information and an application form, visit the program's website at http://www.america-the-beautiful.org/free_seeds/index.php.

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION: FACILITIES CAPITAL CHALLENGE GRANT

The Kresge Foundation awards grants for facility construction and renovation, capital equipment purchases and real estate acquisition. Grants range from \$100,000 to \$300,000 and are awarded to organizations that cater specifically to disadvantaged and disenfranchised in six program areas: health, environment, arts and culture, education, human services and community development. For further information, visit the program's website at www.kresge.org.

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION: GRANTS FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is dedicated to promoting conservation and sustainable use of natural resources through environmental education, natural resource management, habitat protection, ecosystem restoration, and public policy development. NFWF funds a variety of wildlife and habitat preservation projects: Bring Back the Natives, FMC Corporation Bird and Habitat Conservation Fund, National Wildlife Refuge Support Group Grant Program, Native Plant Conservation Initiative, The Pathways to Nature Conservation Fund, Pulling Together Initiative, Restore Our Southern Rivers. For further information, visit the organization's website at <http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=>

Grant Programs

PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS GRANTS

The Trusts make grants in the following program areas:

- The Culture program aims to assure that our nation's cultural resources are properly sustained and contribute to the health of our democratic society.
- The Education program seeks to raise the performance of students at all levels of education, especially the capabilities of students to learn for understanding and to acquire the literacies needed for productive employment and effective citizenship in our increasingly complex society.
- The Environment program aims to promote policies and practices that protect the global atmosphere and preserve healthy forest and marine ecosystems.
- The Health and Human Services program is designed to promote the health and well being of the American people and to strengthen disadvantaged communities.
- The Public Policy program advances and helps sustain improvements in America's democratic life by

strengthening the foundations of civic engagement and rebuilding Americans' confidence in government and the basic democratic process, primarily elections.

You should first review the information about the program whose interests most closely match those of your organization. The guidelines lay out concisely each program's goals and objectives and the kinds of activities it will and will not consider. The Trusts will respond to all specific letters of inquiry but not to general solicitations for funds. For more information, go to at www.pewtrusts.com/grants.

PUBLIC WELFARE FOUNDATION

This foundation is dedicated to supporting organizations that serve severely disadvantaged populations - including children and youth of all ages. This private foundation primarily funds general operating expenses, and looks for organizations that combine service with youth empowerment and advocacy for systemic change. First time grants can range between \$25,000 and \$50,000. For more information, visit the website at www.publicwelfare.org.

THREE GUINEAS: PROJECTS TO BENEFIT WOMEN AND GIRLS

The Three Guineas Fund welcomes proposals from tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations, or a fiscal agent with that status, for start-up projects as well as general operating support for established programs. The fund does not generally support direct service projects unless they are of strategic interest as models. For more information, go to at www.3gf.org.

TOSHIBA AMERICA FOUNDATION

The Toshiba America Foundation provides cash grants to classroom teachers to assist them in making improvements in the teaching of science and mathematics. Grants are available for teachers in grades K-6 and for grades 7-12. For more information, go to at <http://www.toshiba.com/taf/about.jsp>.

UPS FOUNDATION: COMMUNITY INVESTMENT GRANT PROGRAM

The Community Investment Grant Program allocates dollars directly to UPS region offices in an effort to offer flexibility by UPS regions to invest monies in local causes they know well and support. For more information, go to at <http://responsibility.ups.com/community>.

RESOURCES FOR PLAYGROUND SAFETY FUNDING

There are many unsafe, old and outdated playgrounds that our children are playing on. However, the replacement of playground equipment can be a costly enterprise for your organization.

Suggestions for possible contributors to your project include: local civic foundations (they may also have a list of businesses that contribute to community projects), the Junior League, Jaycees, Kiwanis, Lions and local business and industry foundations.

Many fundraising sources are listed at your local library. The best way to electronically identify state-related information is to consider looking at the home pages of your senators and representatives.

Listings of government funding and grants are available through various sources such as the Federal Register, the Annual Register of Grant Support and Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

Another terrific playground funding source comes from private funds. Over 43,000 private foundations are currently in the United States. Annually, their combined awards total more than \$10 million dollars. Community, corporate and family foundations are the best places to go for strictly local support. Private funding sources by state may be obtained through the Foundation Grants Index and other publications published by The Foundation Center, as well as other foundation sources such as Taft. Reference Collections operated by the Foundation Center are maintained in several locations in each state. You may contact the Foundation Center at (202) 331-1400 to find the location closest to you.

Besides networking with individuals in the community, a great way to find these foundations are to log onto the web. Websites available to disseminate grant-related information are www.fdncenter.org (Foundation Center) and www.cof.org (Council on Foundations).

The following are foundations that may be potential sources for playground equipment and playground safety based on passed giving as recorded in the 1994/95 Grants for Recreation, Sports and Athletics catalog by The Foundation Center.

Abell-Hanger Foundation (especially within the Permian Basin)

Amon G. Carter Foundation (Fort Worth, Tarrant County)

- Houston Endowment, Inc.
- Meadows Foundation, Inc.

- The Moody Foundation
- Rockwell Fund, Inc. (especially Houston)
- Shell Oil Co. Foundation (areas of company operations)
- The Wortham Foundation (Houston and Harris County)

Grants for Seniors' Programs

NATIONAL BLUEPRINT: INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG ADULTS AGE 50 AND OLDER

The goal of this program is to provide small grants in support of local community efforts designed to advance the goals of the National Blueprint: Increasing Physical Activity Among Adults Age 50 and Older. The National Blueprint: Increasing Physical Activity Among Adults Age 50 and Older was developed by 46 national organizations with a shared interest in promoting physical activity in the population over 50 years of age. The Blueprint, which was released in May 2001, is intended to serve as a guide for multiple organizations, associations and agencies to inform and support their planning work related to increasing physical activity among America's aging population. The Blueprint identifies barriers to physical activity in the older adult population and proposes a number of potential strategies that could be used to address these barriers. Nineteen grants of up to \$25,000 will be provided to organizations and/or coalitions in support of local community projects designed to advance the goals of the Blueprint. Applications are invited from local agencies wanting to improve the health, function and quality of life of adults aged 50 and older. Universities and research institutes can apply but only as part of a broader coalition of local agencies and organizations. For more information, go to <http://www.icaa.cc/>.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Department of Labor, Division of Older Worker Programs of the Employment Training Community Service Employment Program announces funds to promote part-time employment opportunities in community service activities for unemployed, low-income individuals who are age 55 and over, that will foster increased prospect for their economic self-sufficiency. Eligible applicants include public and private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based and community-based organizations. Approximately \$342 million will be available for 10-20 awards. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) will be available at: <http://www.doleta.gov/seniors/>.

Grants Links for Arts Programs

- American Arts Alliance: www.americanartsalliance.org
- American Association of Museums: <http://www.aam-us.org/>
- Americans for the Arts: <http://www.artsusa.org>
- Foundation Center's RFP Bulletin for Arts and Culture: http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/rfp/cat_arts.jhtml
- Fundsnet Arts Links: <http://www.fundsnet.com/arts2.htm>
- Institute of Museum and Library Services: <http://www.imls.gov>
- National Assembly of State Arts Agencies: <http://www.nasaa-arts.org>
- National Endowment for the Arts: <http://www.arts.gov>
- National Endowment for the Humanities: <http://www.neh.gov>
- Wallace Reader's Digest Fund for Arts: <http://www.wallacefoundation.org>