

## **PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES**

The Mission Statement for the Houston Parks and Recreation Department is “to enhance the quality of urban life by providing safe, well-maintained parks and offering affordable programs for the community.” This mission is accomplished through the maintenance, operation and expansion of the Houston Park System. Consequently, the Department’s overall strategy for capital improvements and the use of all available funding, including bond funds, is to improve the quality of life for individual neighborhoods and the city at large.

The Department is focused on upgrading existing parks, expanding and developing existing park properties, adding new community centers and renovating existing centers, providing linkages to parks and continual development of a linear park system.

In 2007 HPARD undertook an update of the Parks Master Plan completed in 2001. The Master Plan update is intended to support decision making for HPARD to guide future park and recreation operations and development aligned with the values and direction of an evolving city. Specifically, the focus of the update is intended to serve as a tool and guide for HPARD to determine how to allocate 2006 and future bond proceeds.

Park classifications and facility standards were reviewed and updated to assist in establishing a balanced system throughout the city by assuring that parks are developed with appropriate amenities. These standards help guide HPARD’s development and renovation plans for the duration of the Master Plan scope.

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Equity maps apply the standards to population densities for each type of park and park amenity. These maps clearly identify gaps within the system that need to be addressed. The prioritization of needs is a culmination of needs expressed through input received from the community input process and the assessment of the park system's ability to meet these needs.

Various methods were used to obtain input from the general public, user groups and community leaders including elected officials from both the City and Harris County. Input from the general public included random telephone surveys within the City's nine council districts and twenty public forums. Adoption by City Council was achieved on April 2, 2008.

### Master Plan Findings

- Create equity and balance in the System
- Create Connections

- Demonstrate Environmental Leadership
- Improve Recreation Programming by addressing needs of the users
- Add Signature Parks to the System
- Improve Active Sports Facilities
- Establish a Regional Greenspace and Recreation Approach

The FY 2010-2014 Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Program totals \$84.5 million and is funded by several funding sources. The significant funding sources include: \$37.3 million in authorized available bond funds; \$19.5 million in undetermined funding as preparation for the next bond election; and \$27.7 million in resources leveraged from other agencies and/or private contributions.

This five-year program continues implementation of the adopted Houston Parks & Recreation Department 2007 Master Plan Update.