

3

Goals and Objectives



Edinburg Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The goals and objectives for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan are outlined in this chapter. These goals and objectives are foundational elements for the Plan. Their purpose is to:

- ◆ Provide direction for policy development and decision-making to support the parks and recreation system to the Year 2020, and beyond;
- ◆ Identify priorities for ongoing development of the parks and recreation system, including annual and five-year revisions to the plan; and,
- ◆ Provide benchmarks for implementation and evaluation.

One of the guiding principles for this plan is public participation. As such, the goals and objectives were developed through public involvement in the planning process. Central to the identification of the public’s goals and objectives was the Citizens’ Congress that was held on December 9, 2004. Consultation with the Citizens’ Delegation, Parks Board, Economic Development Stakeholders, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council, local clubs, organizations, activity groups and associations, and the general public also assisted in identifying goals and objectives for this plan.

3.1 DEFINITION & PURPOSE



Goals are broad, general intentions that express the desires of a community through policy statements. Goals are important because they allow diverse community interests to be articulated in such a way that they identify the needs and priorities of the community. Identifying community goals is a means to engage the public, communicate needs and interests, and facilitate a participatory and collaborative approach to plan development and implementation.

Objectives are precise, well-defined ways to attain the desired outcomes identified by goals. Objectives typically respond to the question of how goals are to be achieved.

The difference between goals and objectives: Goals are broad; 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.

3.2 OVERALL GOAL ■ ■ ■

The overall goal for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is:

To improve existing parks and recreation facilities through intensification, maintenance, and development of parks and facilities that are spatially balanced and meet the needs of diverse interests, and to provide ongoing and continuous management and coordination to ensure that parks and recreation facilities contribute to a sustained livability of Edinburg.

3.3 PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES ■ ■ ■

The following identifies the goals and related objectives for the City’s parks and recreation system to the Year 2020:

Intensification and Maintenance of Existing Parks

GOAL 1.0: Improve the City’s parks and recreation facilities through intensification and maintenance of the existing parks.

Objective 1.1: Review the inventory and assessment of park equipment and recreation facilities to determine improvement and maintenance requirements (see [Chapter Four, Environmental Scan](#), and [Appendix B, Park Assessment](#)).

Objective 1.2: Review the user rates of each park and recreation facility to identify those with low utilization and subsequently, determine the improvements that are desired by users and the assigned priority to maximize community benefit (refer to [Appendix C, User Assessment](#)).

Objective 1.3: Review the parkland dedication requirements (Section 155.12, Standards and Specifications, of the Subdivision Rules) to consider establishing a formula for distributing



The condition and appearance of parks and facility improvements contributes to usage rates.

money collected in lieu of land for the acquisition, development and/or improvement of neighborhood parks within the respective park zone, as delineated in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, with a certain portion - decided concurrent with ordinance adoption - set-aside for distribution across all park zones for the purpose of acquiring, developing and/or improving community parks. A portion of the funds may also be earmarked for park revitalization and enhancement. The above provisions are intended to ensure that fees-in-lieu of land are invested to improve the identified areas of need, considering, among other things, the condition of the existing parks and recreation facilities, user rates, population densities, and current and projected community needs (refer to [Chapter Six, Needs Assessment](#), and [Appendix B, Park Assessment](#)).

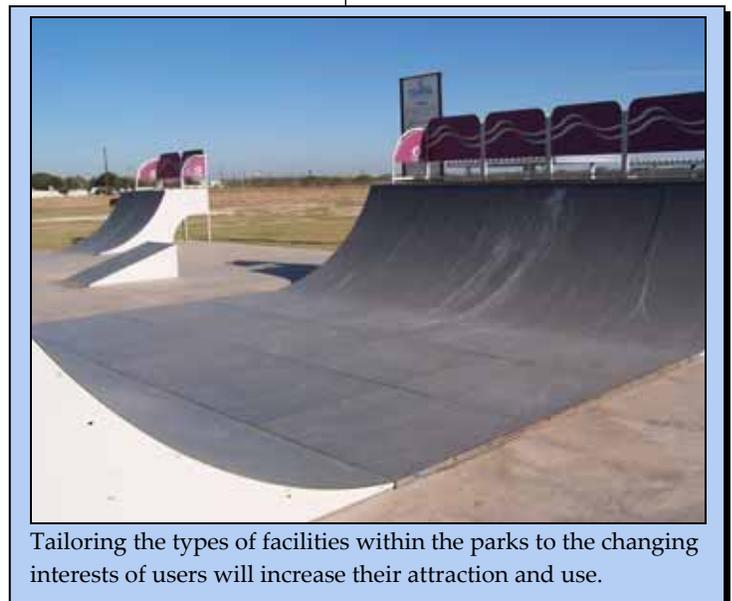
Objective 1.4: As an alternate to a proportional set-aside of the fee-in-lieu of land collections, consider a park excise tax for nonresidential development on a square footage of gross floor area basis, which would be used for revitalization and rejuvenation of existing parks and public spaces.

Objective 1.5: Establish an ad hoc committee of the Parks and Recreation Board to annually identify improvements to the existing parks and recreation facilities, create links with the community to raise awareness and interest, and establish partnerships for a user-based maintenance program.

Objective 1.6: Improve existing parks by diversifying the range of activity opportunities as a means to attract a greater number of park users, including persons of all ages, abilities, and interests.

Objective 1.7: Create and implement a preventative maintenance program that is funded by an adequate operating and maintenance budget. Such budget may be subsidized by a proportional set-aside of the fee-in-lieu of land collections or the proposed park excise tax.

Objective 1.8: Organize an adopt-a-park program to solicit the participation of neighborhoods, schools, local clubs, and



civic groups to maintain and police public parks, with resources and support from the City.

Objective 1.9: Refurbish the existing park areas, facilities, and equipment to include cosmetic enhancements such as painting and re-establishing lawn areas as well as functional improvements of worn equipment and surfaces.

Objective 1.10: Establish a routine inspection program to regularly identify and schedule repairs, on-going maintenance and cleaning, and other necessary improvements.

Acquisition and Development of a Balanced System

GOAL 2.0: Strategically and efficiently acquire and develop land to provide a more geographically balanced distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the city limits and developing areas of the extraterritorial jurisdiction to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Objective 2.1: Evaluate the parkland dedication requirements (Section 155.12, Standards and Specifications, of the Subdivision Rules) to determine whether the requirement for parkland dedication is commensurate with the unique local demands and whether the location of dedicated land is within the identified need areas (refer to [Chapter Six, Needs Assessment](#)).

Objective 2.2: Design the parkland dedication and fee-in-lieu requirements to ensure that land is being dedicated or fee accepted in areas of the community that are deficient in the availability of parks and recreation facilities, rather than accepting land or fees in areas that have sufficient park and recreation improvements.

Objective 2.3: Continuously monitor the community’s growth in population and adjust the capital budget and parkland dedication requirements as needed to maintain pace with the standards established in [Chapter Five, Facility Standards](#).

Objective 2.4: Establish a program and acceptance criteria for donations of land for parks and recreation purposes or public open space, which complements the overall system.

Objective 2.5: Coordinate the parkland acquisition program to occur in advance of ensuing development to ensure the availability of suitable land at reasonable acquisition costs.

Objective 2.6: Plan for the development of new facilities, such as a community center, concurrent with the growth of the community to allow sustenance and expansion of recreational programs and community activities/events.

Objective 2.7: Create activities and make improvements within the parks and recreation system that appeal to both young and mature adults, including seniors, such as ADA accessible trails and sidewalks, nature observance and bird watching, community gardens, activity areas for lawn bowling, shuffle board, and other activities.

Improved Safety, Accessibility, and Aesthetic Value

GOAL 3.0: Establish an improvement program to revitalize the current parks and recreation facilities to achieve improved safety, accessibility, and aesthetic value.

Objective 3.1: Provide sidewalks, paths, and trails in each park to offer passive recreation opportunities, enhance pedestrian safety, and improve park accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Objective 3.2: Install cross-walks, appropriate roadway signage, and perimeter sidewalks at each park, with priority given to community parks, followed by neighborhood parks and mini-parks, to provide safe access.

Objective 3.3: Review Section 155.12, Standards and Specifications, of the Subdivision Rules, (B)(16) relating to the requirements for the provision of sidewalks on one or both sides of all minor streets, whether or not connected to a minor residential collector street. Review the procedures for building inspection and issuance of occupancy certificates to ensure compliance with the City's sidewalk requirements.





Consistent and attractive signage of the municipal park system is important to create an identity for public spaces.

Objective 3.4: Perform safety inspections to identify potentially harmful or dangerous conditions and create an itemized list of necessary repairs and improvements (refer to [Appendix B, Park Assessment](#)).

Objective 3.5: Improve wayfinding to parks and public spaces by installing directional signage along adjacent collector and arterial roadways and at every park entrance so that users and passers-by can easily identify public facilities.

Objective 3.6: Replace or construct new park signs that are uniform in appearance (e.g. include City logo) with xeriscaped landscaping around their bases.

Objective 3.7: Improve accessibility for persons with disabilities by adding sidewalk curb cuts and ramps, wheelchair accessible sidewalks and trails, and providing other accessible facilities and equipment.

Objective 3.8: Review Section 155.10, Preliminary Plat and Accompanying Data (D), to consider a requirement to indicate the exact locations of all existing and proposed sidewalks on preliminary plats to allow pre-development review and post-construction inspection of conformance.

Objective 3.9: Conduct a citywide sidewalk inventory and subsequently develop a municipal sidewalk improvement program to repair, replace, and/or install sidewalks, with priority given to high pedestrian use areas around parks, schools, public buildings, and other activity areas.

Objective 3.10: Establish a theme for each park to create a distinct identity, aesthetic value, and unique function with a purpose of generating park interest and use.

Community Connectivity

GOAL 4.0: Develop an interconnected system of ADA accessible paths and trails to connect City parks with neighborhoods, schools, and other community activity areas, and to provide non-vehicular access to the parks and recreation system.

Objective 4.1: Seek 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.

Objective 4.2: Establish development incentives, such as density bonuses, and regulations for public access to secure use of easements, rights-of-way, and/or other semi-public or private linear corridors as trails, greenbelts, and open space.

Objective 4.3: Consider the use of abandoned railroad rights-of-way for rail-to-trail opportunities. Subsequently pursue agreement with the railroad owner/operator for transfer of ownership or long-term lease of such rights-of-way.

Objective 4.4: Develop a comprehensive network of on- and off-street trail and bikeway segments to form a complete pedestrian system throughout the community.

Objective 4.5: Coordinate with the utility companies to capitalize on opportunities for joint access and use of their overhead powerline easements as linear trails and crossings.

Objective 4.6: Coordinate with the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC) to solicit funding for non-motorized pedestrian and bikeway/trail improvements, consistent with the Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan for Hidalgo County.

Objective 4.7: Consider adoption of a policy by the City Council making sidewalks a priority



Striped on-street bicycle-only lanes and sidewalks as displayed above are an integral part of a comprehensive trail and bikeway network requiring a collaborative effort in the acquisition of adequate rights-of-way and design of roadway facilities.

improvement to be included with every new roadway or reconstruction process.

Environmental and Cultural Conservation and Enhancement



Integrating sensitive lands into the development of parks offers opportunities for public education and nature observance.

GOAL 5.0: Promote and engage in the conservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources.

Objective 5.1: Identify environmentally sensitive areas (e.g. floodplains, wetlands, lands with scenic and/or wildlife values) and encourage conservation and enhancement through public education and initiatives, development incentives, regulations and/or development policies, acquisition of land through purchase or donation, and conservation easements.

Objective 5.2: Enhance the environmental quality of waterways (e.g. creeks, rivers, lakes) by requiring adequate separation of potentially harmful uses, appropriate site engineering standards, and provision of suitable buffer strips to filter erosion and pollutants.

Objective 5.3: Enhance the environmental quality of waterways (e.g. creeks, rivers, lakes) by creating and protecting buffer strips as a regulatory requirement.

Objective 5.4: Incorporate interpretive signage as a feature of the park system to identify natural and cultural attributes and describe the historic and cultural significance unique to the site or area.

Objective 5.5: Build environmental and cultural value into parks and public open spaces through programs, festivals, and activities held within local parks.

Efficiencies through Partnerships

GOAL 6.0: Develop partnerships to achieve greater efficiencies in parks and recreation facility acquisition, maintenance, and development.

Objective 6.1: Establish cooperative and joint use/purchase/maintenance arrangements with Hidalgo County, local churches, neighborhood associations, utility districts, sports associations, and other governmental or private entities to gain cost efficiencies in park acquisition and management.

Objective 6.2: Regularly review the standing agreements with the Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District (ECISD) for shared use of facilities and make adjustments, as necessary, to accommodate the increasing needs for additional space and facilities.

Objective 6.3: Establish programs for lease/purchase, tax incentives, and public maintenance to entice private sector participation in park system development and maintenance.

Objective 6.4: Review the parkland dedication requirements (Section 155.12, Standards and Specifications, of the Subdivision Rules) relating to provisions allowing improvement of existing or new parks by developers of master planned communities and significant neighborhood developments, pursuant to design criteria, development standards, and construction specifications established by the City.



Cooperative partnerships to achieve joint use and maintenance of school grounds is highly cost efficient. Such cooperation avoids unnecessary duplication of facilities and services and allows savings in municipal maintenance costs.