





E. INVENTORY OF AREA AND FACILITIES

Park development in Friendswood has not kept pace with urban growth, but the status of the present residential development patterns will allow this course to be corrected if the opportunity is taken within the near future. The status of development influencing the park system is represented by the pattern of residential development. Some developed areas currently have recreational space available while in developing areas space can be made available for park purposes. Coordinating existing recreational spaces and facilities with the opportunities for future spaces is an important factor in developing the community’s park system.

The City operates and maintains seven park sites and one sports park. Of those seven sites, five of them are developed for active use and one for passive use. The city also owns 42 acres at Lake Friendswood and Friendswood Development has donated a 47 acre park. In addition to the city-owned sites there are several other neighborhood, community, mini, private and school parks, as well as, sports complexes that provide additional recreation activities.

To deliver a variety of recreational features in an efficient manner, some type of relationship-defining system must be established among those spaces used for recreation. Guidelines and standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) have been followed by cities for many years to define a hierarchy for their park systems. The NRPA developed the publication, Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, published in 1995 to assist entities in designing recreational facilities. In **Table 5.1 – Park and Recreation Classification System**, parks are classified according to the size of population they are able to serve and accordingly, the size of park land and facilities available. These standards are developed by the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) and serve as a guide for providing appropriately sized and equipped park facilities to a community. This table describes the different types of parks, site characteristics, radius served, desirable size of park, and local examples of these types of parks within the City.







Table 5.1 Park and Recreation Classification System

Park Category	Description	Site Characteristics	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 Residents	Local Examples
Pocket or Mini park	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.	Close proximity to medium/high density residential areas.	Immediate neighborhood	.25 to 1 acre	0.25 to 0.50 acre	Autumn Creek
Neighborhood park	Provides recreational opportunities within walking distance of residential neighborhoods. Facilities are for local active recreation and playground use, i.e. athletic courts, fields, playground equipment, as well as	Evenly distributed throughout the community with easy, safe pedestrian access for nearby residents. Joint school/park	¼ to ½ mile radius to serve up to 5,000 persons.	Minimum 5 acres, evenly distributed.	1 to 2 acre(s)	Friendswood Lakes



	passive use such as walking trails, park benches, etc.	facilities are suitable.				
Community Park	Facilities for active and passive recreation and leisure, including athletic fields and courts, swimming pools, picnic areas, walking/jogging paths, open play areas, playgrounds, exercise stations. Provides a venue for community festivals and celebrations.	Geographically located to provide equitable coverage throughout the City.	Primarily for residents within a 1 mile radius, but available to persons throughout the community.	Ranges from 10 to 50 acres, with at least 25 acres being optimal.	5 to 8 acres	Centennial Park
School Parks	Intended to serve the recreational needs of school students, but when shared with the broader community can fulfill neighborhood park requirements.	Typically well distributed to serve neighborhoods throughout the community. Accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.	¼ to ½ mile radius to serve up to 5,000 persons (same as Neighborhood Parks).	Variable, depends on function	Variable, depends on function	Westwood Elementary
Private Parks	Parks and recreation	To be determined	Variable	Variable,	Variable,	Timber Creek



	facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park system and recreation system.	by developer or private enterprise.		depends on function	depends on function	Golf Course
Sports Complex	Accommodate the specific needs of user groups and athletic associations based on demands and program offerings.	Strategically located community-wide.	Located within reasonable and equal driving distance from population served.	40 acres, with 80-150 being optimal	Variable	Friendswood Sportspark



The following identifies the NRPA classification of parks, their description, location criteria within the community and criteria size. Only the park classifications selected specifically for the City of Friendswood are defined in this section. Once established, these guidelines are then applicable for structuring the city's park system in an orderly manner responsive to the recreational demands being generated by the present and future population.

Park Classification

For the purposes of this plan, the parks and public spaces are classified as follows:

- Mini parks
- Neighborhood parks
- Community parks
- School parks
- Private parks
- Sports parks

Each of the parks are displayed in the map attached to this section labeled Figure 1.

Mini or Pocket Parks

Mini parks are the smallest park classification and are used to address limited or isolate recreational needs. The service area is usually less than $\frac{1}{4}$ in radius in a residential area and the size would be less than five acres. Figure 5.2 is an example of a mini park. Some features of the parks are restrooms, play structures, walking paths and picnic tables. The City has 4 mini parks that include active and passive uses.

Neighborhood Parks

There are seven municipal parks with the City. National standards recommend a minimum park size of 5 acres, however, 7 to 10 acres is considered optimal. The neighborhood park should be centrally located within its service area which encompasses a $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile distance uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers. The site itself should exhibit the physical characteristics appropriate for



both active and passive recreational uses. Neighborhood parks should be designed for informal active recreational activities and should not be used for programmed activities that result in overuse. The City has 53 neighborhood parks with active and/or passive uses. As a general rule, active recreational facilities should consume roughly 50% of the park's acreage. The parks have a variety of active facilities including play structures, open space and volleyball courts. The passive facilities encompass picnic areas, walking/hiking trails, fishing ponds and pavilions.

Community Parks

Community parks provide for the needs of the community at-large and, therefore, are the largest parks within the municipal system. These larger areas have a broad variety of facilities and intended uses including both passive and active recreation, such as walking and jogging paths, athletic courts, ball fields, picnic areas, activity centers, and swimming pools that draw residents primarily within a distance of one mile. The City community parks total approximately 117 acres. A GIS map of the community parks is attached in Section VIII. The community parks in the City adequately serve the community's needs, but future growth will make additional parks necessary. Below detailed list of the seven community parks within the City.

1. Old City Park (Arena Park)

On July 27, 1954 the Friendswood Volunteer Fire department paid the back taxes on a two acre strip of land which became "Old City Park" for the purposes of hosting a celebration on the 4th of July each year. (Document attached) This tract of land was the same two acres Friendswood Oil Co. "wildcatted" for oil in the 1920's. The Friends Church had hosted earlier celebrations. In 1959, the Volunteer Fire Department gave the reins of the celebration to the Chamber of Commerce which was newly created, and the park passed into the City's hands. A census taken in 1960, showed a population of 960 persons. The first city taxes were collected in 1964. Later called Arena Park, additional land was acquired totaling 11.9 acres. This 11.9 acre park has 3 soccer fields, one of which serves for a ball field. It also has restroom facilities, picnic tables with BBQ pit, play structures, and nature area.

2. Stevenson Park

Stevenson Park became a reality in 1973 when the city bought 10.5 acres from the Vincent Stevenson estate for \$95,000.00 the family donated another 2 acres, asking that the park bear the



family name. The acquisition was partially funded by a Texas Parks and Wildlife grant of \$47,500.00.

The total developed area in Stevenson is approximately 16.5 acres. An additional 2.1 acres located on the south side of Shadwell adjacent to Cowards Creek was acquired in 1991. Among the more significant features is the swimming pool located in the western section of the park. The main fire station occupies frontage on Friendswood Drive. Active play facilities include four lighted tennis courts, a basketball court, three volleyball courts, numerous picnic tables, covered pavilion, playground apparatus, and a walking/jogging path, and the center of the park a replica 19th century gazebo. It is also the site for six “Concerts in the Park” beginning in May each year until the last week of June and attended by an average of 1,500 people per Friday night.

3. 1776 Memorial Park

1776 Memorial Park was donated to the city by Mary Louise Fitch Soule and husband Harold M. Soule “for and in consideration of the love and affection which we have and bear unto and toward the City of Friendswood”. This Park is located on Edgewood Drive and Clear Creek, and is in a natural wooded condition. The park contains approximately 12.6 acres and has a nature trail meandering through the wooded area. Parking is provided at the entrance.

4. Friendswood Sports Parks

This 27 Acre Park is located in the southwestern corner of the city, it services the girls’ softball association with 4 lighted fields, restroom facilities, and concession stands. The property was initially acquired thru a lease purchase agreement. Adjacent is the Moore Rd. complex with 7 lighted soccer fields. There is no lighted paved parking for either facility.

5. Leavesley Park Hangar-Neighborhood Park

Leavesley Park was donated by Dr. & Mrs. William Jones and named in honor of their grandchildren. This 3.0 acre park is principally used for recreational activities which are held in the old airplane hangar. The on-site parking lot provides a hard surfaced area utilized for basketball. The land has many shade trees with play apparatus and outdoor seating. This park, limited by its physical size is used as a special facility offering indoor recreational services, family reunions, and square dancing.

6. Renwick Park

Renwick park, originally purchased from the Friendswood School District, consists of 19 acres with 9 total fields, lighted fields and batting cages, concession stand, and restrooms.



7. Centennial Park

A 55 acre park with 2 multipurpose fields, 6 soccer fields, playground structure, concession stands, jogging trail, restrooms, amphitheater, 3.5 acre stocked retention pond for catch and release fishing, and a football field. This complex has an additional 22 acre campus for the new Friendswood Junior High School. The entire site was developed under the philosophy that the school district and the City of Friendswood could share parking and fields.

School Parks

School parks often complement other community open lands. By combining the resources of two public agencies, the school parks allow for expanding the recreation, social and educational opportunities available to the community in an efficient and cost effective manner. School parks should be surrounded by neighborhood street and include While there is no formal agreement with Clear Creek ISD or Friendswood ISD on the use of their facilities, all the schools within the City contribute to public open space and recreational areas. A collaborative approach to parks and recreation planning requires communication and coordination among interested parties. Through joint agreements created between public agencies, as well as partnerships with the private sector, the parks and recreation system benefits in its quality and affordability. **Table 5.2 – City of Friendswood School Parks** below identifies a list of school parks. The City has six schools within the Friendswood ISD and four schools within the Clear Creek ISD.

Table 5.2 – City of Friendswood School Parks

School Name	School District
Friendswood High School	FISD
Friendswood Junior High	FISD
Bales Intermediate	FISD
Windsong Intermediate	FISD
Westwood Elementary	FISD
Cline Elementary	FISD
Wedgewood Elementary	CCISD
P.H. Greene Elementary	CCISD
Brookside Intermediate	CCISD



Clear Brook High School	CCISD
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Private Parks

Private parks recognize the contribution of private providers to the community park and recreation system. It also encourages greater cooperation between private and public sector towards meeting growing park and recreation needs. They are not a substitute for public recreational space. Private parks facilities generally have swimming pools, tennis courts and party houses. Private recreation facilities are for-profit enterprises, such as health and fitness clubs, golf courses and water parks. Often, private parks fulfill certain voids which the public sector cannot. This frees up limited public funds to meet high priority needs for land and facilities.

Sports Parks

The sports park consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities at larger fewer sites strategically located throughout the community. This allows for higher quality facilities, improved management/scheduling, improved control of facility use, greater control of negative impacts to the neighborhood and community parks. Sports parks should be developed to accommodate the specific needs of user groups and athletic associations based on demands and program offerings. The sports park provides a variety of facilities to accommodate more participants simultaneously, including softball fields, soccer fields, basketball and volleyball courts, skating areas and play structures. Internal trails should provide access to all facilities as well as connection to the pathway system. The City has one dedicated sports park, Friendswood Sports Park, and other parks such as Renwick, and Centennial with sports fields. Friendswood Sports Park includes lighted softball fields, concession facilities and open space.