



F. NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

The City of Friendswood used a combination of three approaches in determining parks and recreation needs: (1) demand-based, (2) standard-based and (3) resource-based.

By employing the demand-based approach, the city used participation rates, league usage data, public survey's and input at town hall meetings to determine how much the population uses and desires certain types of recreation facilities.

By employing the Standard-based approach, the city used standards established by the local jurisdiction. Friendswood looked at the quantity of park facilities required to meet the city's needs at a given population both currently and as projected for the future. Standards are usually expressed as the quantity of park facilities needed to adequately serve every 1000 residents of the city. Standards are established to provide the level of service that the particular jurisdiction believes is most responsive to the amount of use and the interests of its residents. This plan establishes individual standards for Friendswood.

By employing the Resource-based approach, the city looked at the usefulness of available physical resources to provide recreation opportunities.

Demand-based Approach

Information was requested from sources with specific interest in certain type of recreational activity such as local sports associations to help identify needs. Youth groups representing soccer, football, and baseball are all active in Friendswood. These groups were invited to discuss their programs and general needs.

Survey



During the March 2009, an online survey was posted on the city website. Residents were notified of the survey by notice in the local newspapers, during town meetings and at city council meetings.

Respondents on the survey placed a high level of priority on the following:

1	PROVIDE MORE PARK FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS	71%
2	DEVELOP MORE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	65%
3	DEVELOP MORE HIKE AND BIKE TRAILS	64%
4	BUILD LARGER COMMUNITY PARKS	55%
5	PROVIDE MORE OPEN SPACE	55%
6	DEVELOP MORE PLAYGROUNDS	55%
7	PROVIDE AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS	52%
8	ESTABLISH NATURE STUDY AREAS	49%
9	BUILD A COMMUNITY CIVIC CENTER	48%
10	PROVIDE MORE LIGHTED BASEBALL FIELDS	47%
11	PROVIDE MORE BASKETBALL COURTS	43%
12	PROVIDE MORE LIGHTED FOOTBALL FIELDS	42%
13	BUILD AN INDOOR AQUATICS CENTER	42%
14	BUILD SMALLER NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	40%
15	BUILD MORE PAVILIONS	38%
16	BUILD MORE LIGHTED SOFTBALL FIELDS	33%
17	PROVIDE MORE TENNIS COURTS	32%
18	DEVELOP A SKATE PARK	30%

- a. The needs and desires of the community were communicated with crystal clarity. The citizens of Friendswood want more parks, green space and trails. Opportunities outdoors is what the citizen desire. Without delving too deeply into resource based needs, the development of Lake Friendswood would aid to satisfy the demand for more parks, outdoor recreation and trails, while adding activities such as kayaking and fishing. The trails that would surround the lake would help satisfy the demand for more trails, especially when used to connect other parks.
- b. Youth soccer in Friendswood has a long-standing and well-respected presence and continues to thrive for boys and girls ages 4 to 18 years old. Friendswood Soccer Club (“FSC”) was founded in 1972 and provided youth soccer competition for



recreational play as a constituent of United States Youth Soccer Association (USYSA). Over the years, as the community grew, so did the number of participants. FSC volunteers worked hard to create new fields, irrigation, equipment and outdoor lighting throughout the available space in Friendswood. In 2006, FSC collaborated with Clear Lake Soccer Club and League City Soccer Club to form Space City FC. Space City FC now provides recreational youth soccer programs, which play locally, and competitive youth soccer, which play regionally and nationally. Space City FC involves 15 age-based levels for both boys and girls. The soccer club is made up of approximately 70 recreational teams and 52 competitive teams, encompassing nearly 3,000 players, in a spring and fall seasons.

Presently, Space City FC in Friendswood has three large size 11v11 fields, three medium 8v8 fields, three 6v6 fields, six 4v4 fields, and eight small 3v3 fields. Each field is utilized according to the age appropriate location. Recent expansion of new school facilities has caused the loss of three large 11v11 fields. New youth football and lacrosse organizations in Friendswood have caused soccer fields to be repurposed. The projected need for soccer-only facilities is 20 lighted fields with additional space for practice.

- c. Friendswood youth football is comprised of multiple organizations that meet the communities need for 750 elementary and intermediate school children. Local participation consists of thirty teams in three leagues. Practice is currently held with as many as three teams per field, three nights per week. Games are played on Saturdays. Projected needs for competitive play indicate four fields needed. These game fields would be in addition to practice spaces. Additional practice fields will be available in future neighborhood parks and school sites. The existing organizations are comprised solely of Friendswood residents. There are not enough lighted fields currently. Lighted fields would provide additional practice capacity and alleviate safety concerns.

- d. There are eight age levels of play for boys' baseball and four levels for girls' softball. In addition, girls' high school softball utilizes municipal facilities for play. The associations use space for practice throughout the community and competitive play on Renwick Park fields. During fall and spring seasons all available facilities are used. There are identified needs for additional fields to include those for adult use and expanded space for girls' participation. Currently, girls participation occurs every





week night on two fields. There are not enough lighted fields and children have to play late hours.

- e. Friendswood Youth Lacrosse (FYLAX) is the greater Houston area's only self-sufficient youth lacrosse league. This youth league is in its first year. Currently, all of the players are boys ages 9, 10, and 11, and they are residents of the City. All of the regular season games are played with its teams opposing each other. The FYLAX regular season practices start at the beginning of December with regular season games and scheduled from January through the middle of March. Each team practices twice a week and play one game a week on Saturday. FYLAX started in the winter of 2009/10 with a single boys division of 105 youth participants and 8 teams. The league anticipates adding another boys division during the next winter season. Also, there are plans to support a girls team during the next winter season as well if the number of participants allow. FYLAX expects to support a total of 10-12 teams across all divisions beginning the winter 2010/11 regular season. Based on this growth, the lacrosse league will require 3 lighted sports fields for practices and a single lighted sports field for games during the 2010/11 regular winter season. Possible projected growth over the next 3-4 years could require 3-5 lighted fields for practice and 2 lighted fields for games for the long term.

Demand for other facilities included: Tennis Courts, Basketball courts, skate parks, dogparks, aquatics center, pavilions, and playgrounds.

Standard-based Approach

The NRPA's *Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* recommend an average of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of pocket, neighborhood, and community parks per 1,000 persons.

Friendswood began with a review of the standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The NRPA recommends 1-2 acres per 1,000 population for Neighborhood Parks and 5-8 acres per 1,000 for larger Community Parks. Friendswood currently has 114.8 acres of neighborhood parks and 117 acres of Community Parks. For the small pocket parks, NRPA recommends .25-.50 acres per 1000 population. These park acres will be supplemented by school and private facilities, as well as county and regional facilities.



Given current population figures of better than 36,000 individuals, Friendswood (using the 2 acre recommendation) should have 72 acres for neighborhood parks and (using the 8 acres recommendation) 288 acres for community parks. Projected population figures for 2020 of 57,400 would require 114.8 acres for neighborhood parks and 342.2 acres for community parks.

Equipment Standards

For existing and future parks and facilities

Sport Courts: Tennis, Basketball

Bicycle Rack

Drinking fountain

Exercise Circuit

Grills/BBQ pits

Park Bench

Parking Spaces for larger community parks because these parks serve several neighborhoods and often non-residents especially for team sport activities

Parking lot Landscape

Pavilion Covered

Picnic Table

Playground Equipment

Restrooms

Trash cans

Neighborhood park facilities and improvements

Park identification signs

Street signs for “Children-at-play”

ADA curb cuts and pedestrian crosswalks

Sidewalks and walking paths around park perimeter

Trees for Shading

Landscaping and natural vegetation

Drinking fountains

Lighting

Playground equipment for 15-20 children

Tot lot

Benches

On-street parking is recommended because park visitors are expected to walk to the neighborhood parks.



Trash bins
Recycle bins
Picnic Tables
Picnic shelter with lighting
Perimeter fencing
Irrigation system
Restrooms

Outdoor Recreation needs

Fishing piers
Floating docks
Boating piers
Trail construction
Campground facilities
Lights for sports fields
Additional real estate for sports fields
Bleachers
Scoreboards
Equipment storage facilities

Indoor recreation needs

Community center
Hobby programs
After school programs for students

Activity per population

Outdoor Basketball Court	1/5,000 persons
Tennis Courts	1/2,000 persons
Sand Volleyball Court	1/5,000 persons
Baseball	1/5,000 persons
Soccer	1/3,000 persons
1/4 Mile Track	1/3,000 persons
Softball	1/5,000 persons



Park and open spaces that are developed for recreation use as a part of residential subdivisions and not generally open to the public include approximately 78.8 acres. Many of the private parks include small pools and play equipment.

Resource-based Approach

Friendswood is close to being built out and must identify new ways to meet the park, recreation, open and green space needs of its residents. The limited resources of available land will need to be addressed through land acquisition, easements, and careful planning of the natural resources.

Friendswood has worked over the past several years to develop a lake that is located within the city as a way to develop additional trail space, green space, and recreation space. This lake, currently undeveloped, has the potential to add miles of trail, which as proposed, would be connected to other city parks within Friendswood. Additionally, recreation would be emphasized though the use of the lake for non-motorized boating, fishing, and swimming. The lake property is already in possession of the City of Friendswood, except for a small portion currently in acquirement talks. The development of Lake Friendswood uses city resources at highest and best use.

Community Park needs were identified

1. Old City Park (Arena Park)

PARK NEEDS

- Survey
- Re-locate horse arena
- Bridge across Cowards Creek to link with Stevenson Park
- Professionally redesigned to enhance usage and appeal
- Land Acquisition on Winding Way
- Paved Parking would serve both parks

2. Stevenson Park

PARK NEEDS



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- Acquire residential properties on Shadwell
 - Bridge from Old City Park
 - Paved parking lot acquired 12 years ago
 - Acquire Fire Station for an indoor basketball court
 - Recycling trash cans with weekly pick-up
 - Better maintenance of all toilet facilities
 - Signage

3. 1776 Memorial Park

PARK NEEDS

- Signage on FM2351
- Add Creek Portage
- Create Hike & Bike trail on Buyout properties with parking at 1776
- Paved Parking
- Install Canoe launch

4. Friendswood Sports Parks

PARK NEEDS

- Relocate Soccer to Baker Rd Detention
- Upgrade facilities in Softball Complex
- Pave and Light Parking
- Design Friendswood Sports Park (Moore Rd.) fields to house youth football
- Goal Posts
- Equipment Building
- Score Boards
- Bleachers

5. Leavesley Park Hanger-Neighborhood Park

PARK NEEDS

- Signage
 - Trail around perimeter
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- Tables
 - BBQ pits

6. Renwick Park

PARK NEEDS

- Acquisition of land on Stadium Drive for additional parking
- Signage
- Additional trees and landscaping
- Recycling cans with pickup every 4 days during season

7. Centennial Park

PARK NEEDS

- Signage
 - Complete field renovation to 1.5 acre track
 - Light four additional soccer fields
 - Continue hike & bike trail and loop complex
 - Light trail completely
 - Additional trees and landscaping
 - Soccer storage building
 - Basketball pavilion
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