

Executive Summary

City of Baytown
**Parks, Recreation, Trails,
and Open Space Master Plan**

ADOPTED 08-12-2021





Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan - Executive Summary

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City of Baytown

Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan

As an update to Playbook 2020 (adopted in November 2010), the 2021 Baytown Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan (hereinafter referred to as Master Plan) provides the foundation and rationale for the identification and implementation of capital projects, operational and programmatic changes, and policy considerations that will further enhance a cohesive and high-quality parks, recreation, and trails system for the City of Baytown. The community engagement and comprehensive needs assessment this plan has undertaken, including an assessment of nature-based recreation opportunities and methods through which to make the parks system more resilient, ensures the plan adheres to the community's vision and is aligned with the best practices in parks and recreation facilities management and operation.

Approach

The Master Plan is subdivided into three volumes, consisting of seven chapters, and supported by a series of appendices. The following is a summary of specific Plan elements:

Volume 1

- Chapter 1** Introduction
- Chapter 2** Baytown Parks Today
- Chapter 3** Needs Assessment

Volume 2

- Chapter 4** Baytown Parks Tomorrow
- Chapter 5** Baytown Trails
- Chapter 6** Nature-Based Recreation and Tourism
- Chapter 7** Implementation

Volume 3

- Appendix A** Public Engagement
- Appendix B** Community Needs Survey Results
- Appendix C** Conditions Assessment
- Appendix D** Funding for Implementation
- Appendix E** Baytown Recreation Center Feasibility Study

Volume 1

Chapter 1, Introduction, sets the stage for the Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan by detailing the benefits of a community's parks, trails, and open spaces; which include opportunities for enhancing civic life, socialization, and community identity; improved quality of life and health; environmental resilience; and economic development. Chapter 1 provides population projection estimates as well as demographic and psychographic profiles of Baytown's residents. These profiles describe the overall community characteristics with regard to socio-economic and health indicators and geographic mobility. This chapter includes details of the Parks and Recreation Department accomplishments achieved since the adoption of Playbook 2020. Two strategies in Playbook 2020 remain outstanding and have been included in this Master Plan; the development of: 1) a Recreation Center; and 2) Gene and Loretta Russell Park.

The specific components of the Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan include:

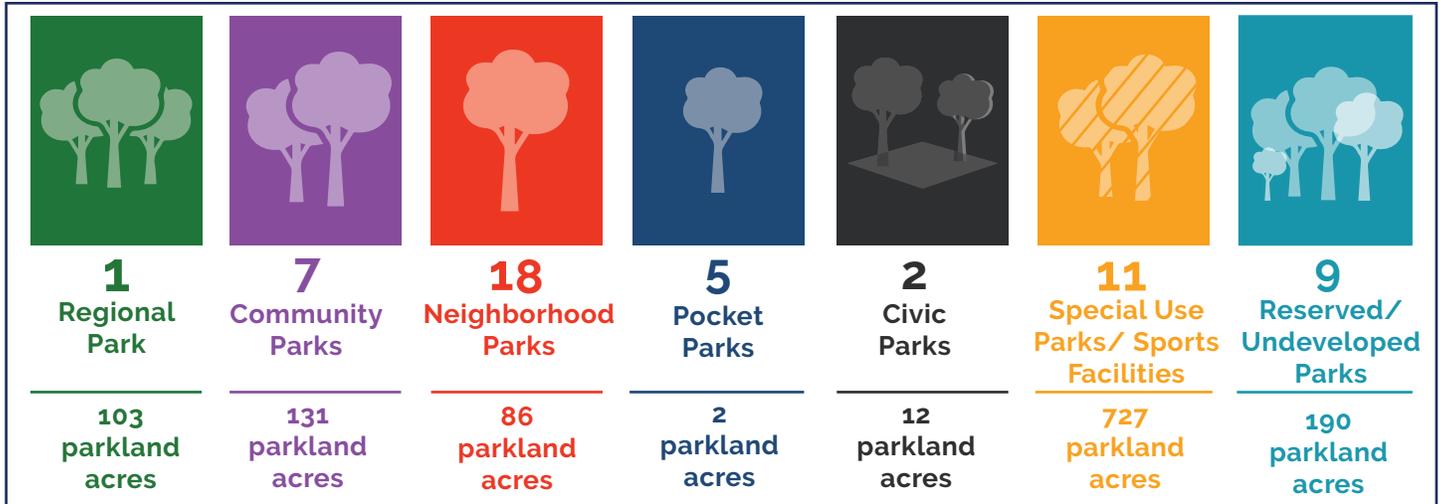
- **Evaluating** and analyzing existing conditions;
- **Conducting** a robust public engagement program;
- **Developing** appropriate goals and objectives;
- **Assessing** needs based on community engagement, growth estimates, and available resources;
- **Identifying** strategies and actions through which to implement the Master Plan's recommendations and priorities.

Benefits of Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces

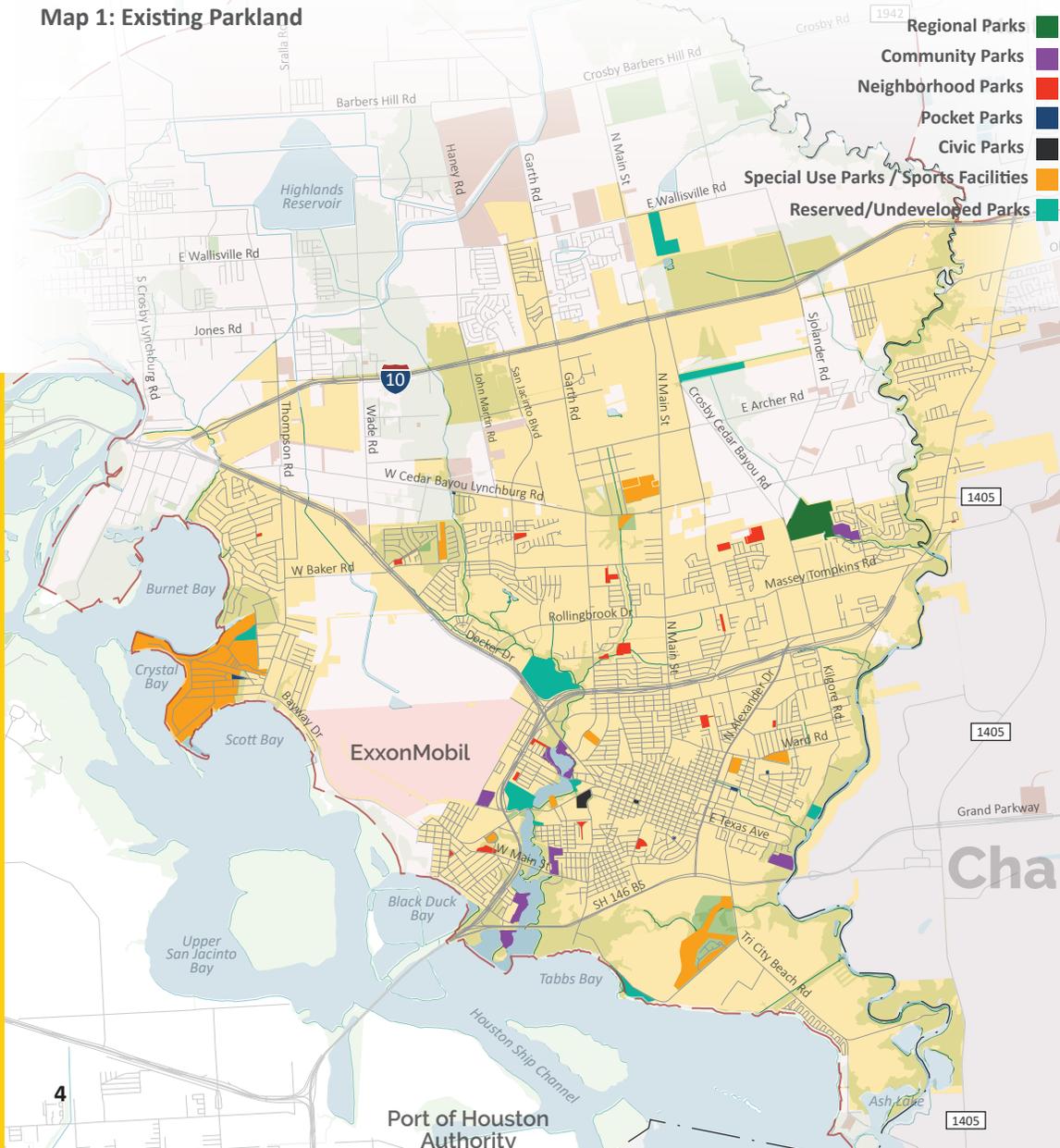
A community's parks, trails, and open spaces represent an important infrastructural system, that is as critical to a healthy, thriving community as other public infrastructure such as streets, water, and wastewater utilities. The subsequent pages will discuss the following **benefits** below:

- Parks systems provide shared benefits in shared locations by providing **civic opportunities and community connectedness** which enhances a sense of **community identity**.
- Parks contribute to an **improved quality of life, improved public health and well-being outcomes**, (i.e., **education and development for children**).
- Parks also contribute to the economy by **increasing property values, and promoting tourism and economic development**).
- Parks have **environmental benefits** which can serve a protective function, including providing ecosystem services; improving water quality, and enhancing the social resilience of a city.

The Existing Parks System



Map 1: Existing Parkland



**A total of
53 Parks.**
1,061 Parkland
Acres

**A total of
5 Trails.**
31.7 Trail Miles

Baytown's aquatic facilities include:

- 6 spray/splash pads
- 2 outdoor water parks, Pirates Bay and Calypso Cove

The parks system offers two disc golf courses and a foot golf facility

Over five percent of Baytown's land area is comprised of parkland

There are 13.7 park acres per 1,000 residents

Chapter 2, *Baytown Parks Today*, provides an overview of existing conditions in Baytown’s parks system by describing the distribution of parkland, recreational facilities, sports/athletics fields, trails, and open space resources. It further lays out a system of classification and standards for parks, parks facilities, and parks equipment. The chapter also provides a detailed inventory of Baytown’s parks and recreational facilities as well as third-party parks and facilities, such as those operated and maintained by homeowners associations and Harris County. The chapter also provides a snapshot of the recreational programming administered by the Parks and Recreation Department. This analysis of the existing conditions in the City’s parks and recreational programs establishes the groundwork for determining the system’s needs in Chapter 3, *Needs Assessment*.

Current Recreation Programs	
19	Recreational Programs
7	Athletics Programs
9	3rd Party Athletic Programs
13	City of Baytown Events
8	3rd Party Events

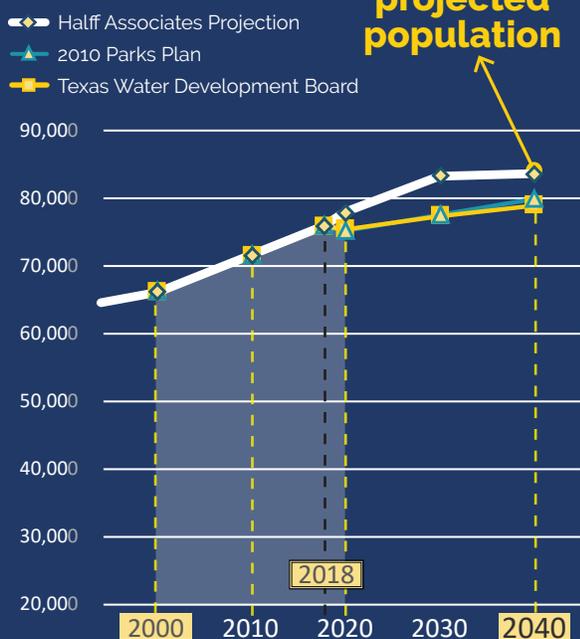
Existing Trails



Increase in Recreational Programs and Events	
% change 2015-2019	: 2019 participation
+730%	Salute to Service : 300
+678%	Community Yard Sale : 288
+300%	Summer Camp : 400
+300%	Farmers Market : 600
+225%	Letters to Santa : 325
+166%	Self Defence : 200
+108%	Easter Egg Hunt : 2,000

By 2040, there will be a need for an additional 37 acres of community parks and 40 acres of pocket parks

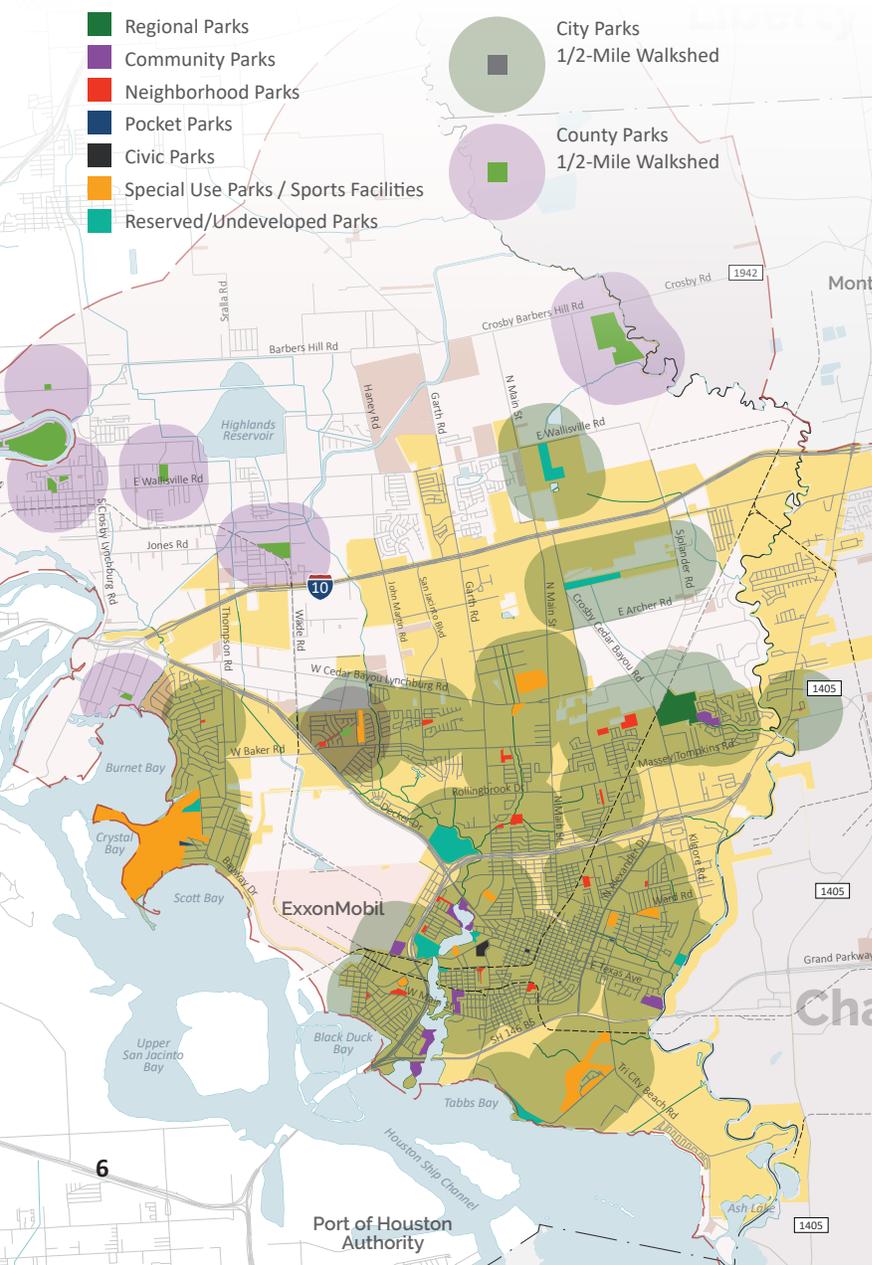
Population Projections



Baytown's population grew 16% between 2000 and 2018.

The eight types of needs assessments carried out in **Chapter 3, Needs Assessment**, provide a broad understanding of the adequacy of Baytown’s parks system and recreation programming in meeting the needs of the community. The Demand-based, Standards-based, and Health Assessments employ quantitative and qualitative techniques through which information was gathered on community needs and priorities; as well as gaps in park service areas and recreational programming. The Operations-based and Resource-based Assessments summarize available funding, staffing, and resource needs as well as opportunities for augmenting the parks system with additional resources. The Conditions-based Assessment identifies the need for improvements to parks and park facilities in Baytown. The Nature-based Tourism and Recreation Assessment reviews Baytown’s nature tourism potential by identifying key nature tourism attractions and identifying areas worthy of habitat restoration for a long-term nature-based recreational programming strategies. The Resilience-Based Assessment examines the risks facing Baytown’s parks system.

Map 2: Parkland Service Area



Demand-Based Assessment

Stakeholder Listening Sessions & Community Needs Survey



Standards-Based Assessment

Level of Service and Park Service Area Analysis



Health Assessment

Public Health Outcome Analysis for Parks Programming



Operations-Based Assessment

Operating Budget, Revenue, & Staffing



Resource-Based Assessment

Natural & Built Resource Analysis



Park Conditions Assessment

Assessment of Parkland Grounds & Facilities



Nature-Based Tourism and Recreation Assessment

Coordinated Nature-Based Recreation & Tourism Strategies



Resilience-Based Assessment

Flood Risk Analysis & Future Park Planning



Percent Change in Parkland Acres and Operational Budget, 2016-2020

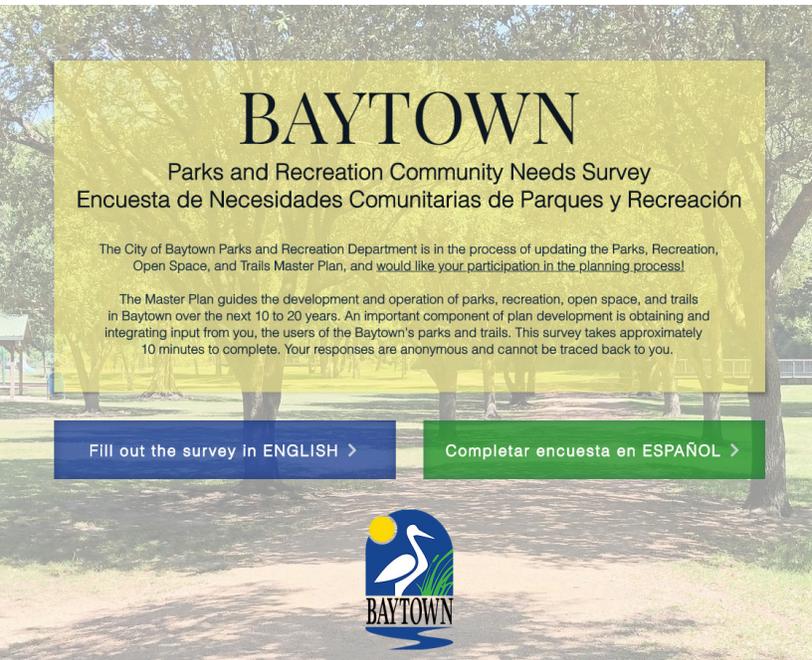
	2016	2020	Change
Parkland Acres*	943	1,061	13%
Total Operating Budget	\$4,025,028 (without water parks)	\$6,981,277 (without water parks)	73%
Maintenance Budget	\$325,635 (without water parks)	\$685,510 (without water parks)	111%

Increase in Recreational Programming and Events

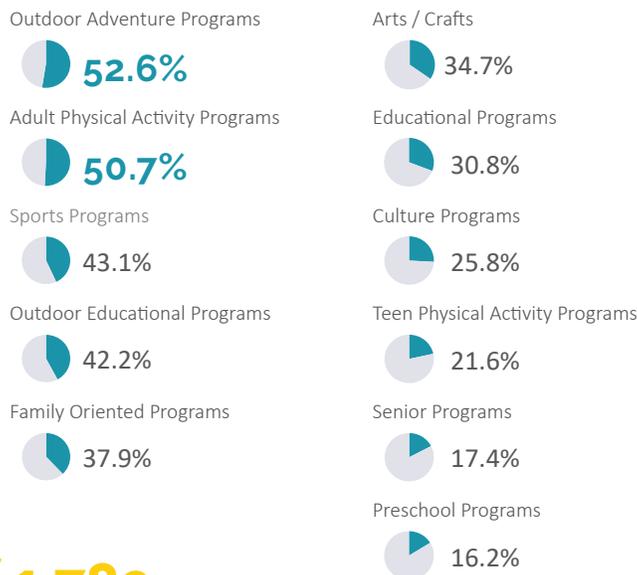
	Percent Change 2015-2019	
Programs	+	88%
Events	+	213%

Note 1: As summarized in Table 3.18 (page 3.37), the Baytown Parks and Recreation Department’s operating budget per acre is \$1,166 below the median operating budget for benchmark communities.

Community Needs Survey



Programs of Interest to Survey Respondents



1,789
responses received

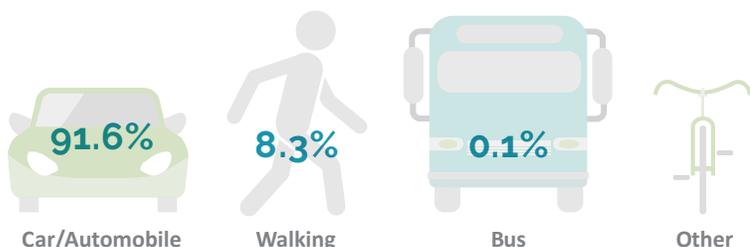
Community Needs Survey Questions (July 2020 - September 2020)

- Existing park amenities and programs;
- Strategies for park development and improvement
- Recreational needs for the future

Survey disseminated through:

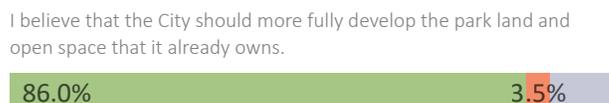
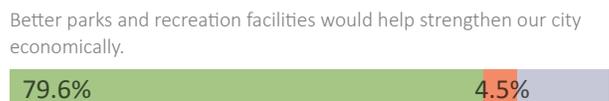
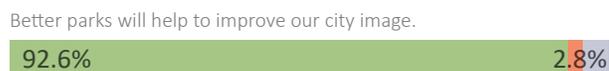
- Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) website
- PARC social media sites
- Posters at local businesses
- Signage at Baytown Parks
- Signage at PARC facilities
- Magnetic signs on city vehicles and trash cans
- Signage at athletic programs and sporting events
- Staff-conducted live surveys with local businesses

Mode of Travel to Baytown Parks



Responses to Park Activities and Programs

Agree Disagree Unsure/No Opinion



Volume 2

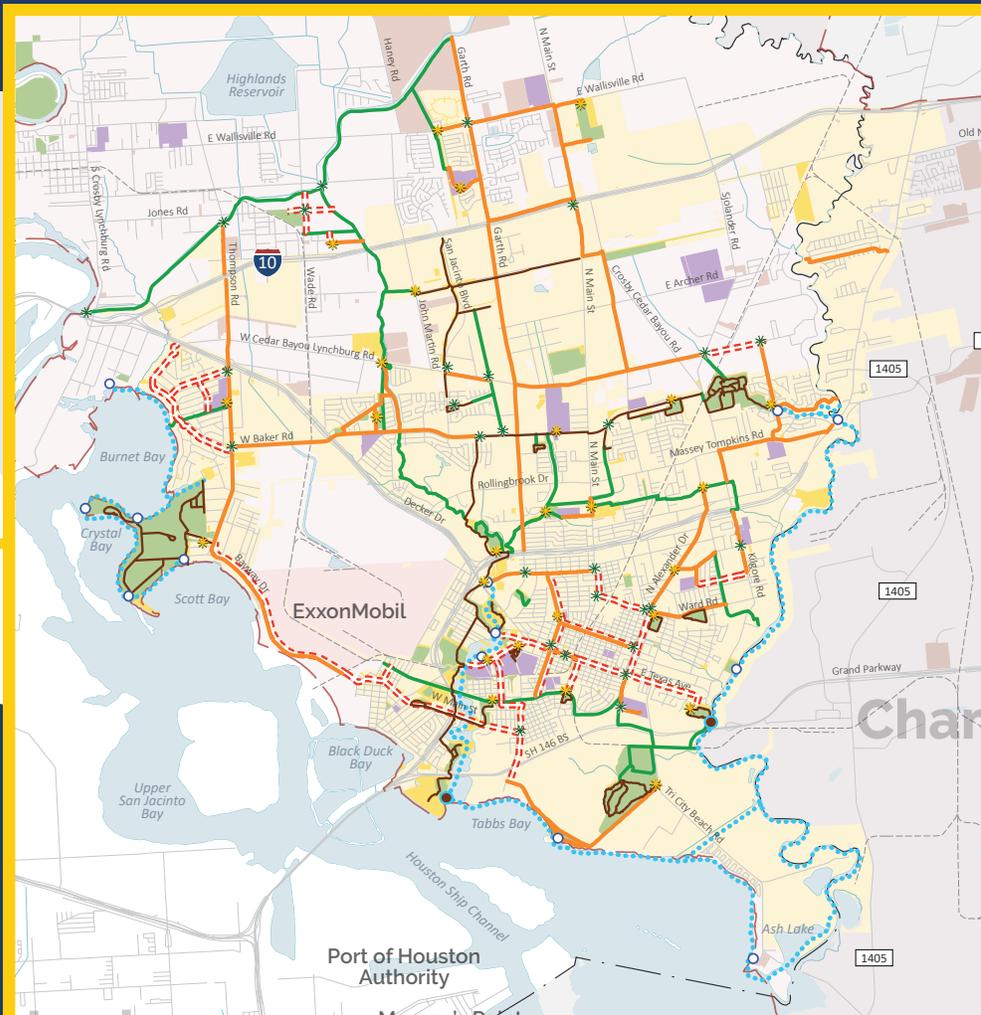
Volume 2 is comprised of four chapters - **Chapter 4, Baytown Parks Tomorrow, Chapter 5, Baytown Trails, Chapter 6, Nature-Based Recreation and Tourism, and Chapter 7, Implementation** - within which strategies and actions are proposed to address the issues identified in the needs assessment. These recommended strategies and actions are tied to the goals and objectives identified at the beginning of the master planning process; and address the development and improvement of parkland, trails, recreational facilities, and programming in Baytown.

Strategic Perspectives: Goal 1-6

- 1 Distribution and Access:** A balanced and equitable distribution of parks and recreational facilities throughout the City provides **convenient and safe access** for all of Baytown’s residents.
- 2 Nature-Based Tourism:** Baytown’s unique ecology and **heritage** contributes to its **sense of place** and economic well-being.
- 3 Programs and Events:** Recreational and athletic programs serve **multiple generations** of Baytown residents while attracting larger **regional events**.
- 4 Resilience:** Baytown’s system of parks, trails, and open spaces contribute to community resilience by **providing multiple functions**.
- 5 Active Transportation Network Throughout Baytown:** A Comprehensive Trails program that has **active transportation connections** between neighborhoods and neighborhood destinations.
- 6 Departmental Excellence In Parks System Operations and Maintenance:** Baytown’s Parks and Recreation Department is well-positioned to **achieve excellence** in the provision of a **high-quality parks system**.

Map 3: Proposed Active Transportation Network

- Existing Trails
- Existing Boat Launches
- Off-Street Recreational Trails
- Off-Street Multi-Use Paths
- On-Street Bike Lanes
- Blueways
- Kayak Launches
- Major Trailheads
- Minor Trailheads
- County Boundaries
- ETJ
- Baytown City Limits
- City Owned Land
- Parks
- GCCISD Owned Land



Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Actions

This Master Plan proposes a set of objectives, strategies, and actions tied to the strategic perspectives laid out in Goals 1 - 6. These objectives, strategies, and actions address the issues identified in the needs assessment.

6 Goals **17** Objectives **84** Strategies **+150** Actions

Nature-Based Recreation and Tourism

Focus of Nature-Based Programming:

- Blueway program for Baytown's waterways
- Interpretive amenities across the parks system
- Fishing, birding, and boating events and competitions
- Outdoor educational programs
- George and Freda Chandler Arboretum
- Parks stores with nature-based merchandise
- Guided tours at the Baytown Nature Center

Nature-Based Opportunities:

- Diverse ecosystem
- Variety of aquatic and upland habitats
- Waterfront parks and open spaces
- Network of parks and trails
- Network of blueways and in-land streams

Master Plan Improvement Priorities

Actions Leaders

CC City Council
 CM Office of the City Manager
 LD Baytown Legal Department
 PARD Baytown Parks and Recreation Department
 PWE Baytown Public Works and Engineering Department
 PD Baytown Planning and Services Department
 FD Baytown Finance Department
 CCAD Chambers County Appraisal District

HCAD Harris County Appraisal District
 HCFCDD Harris County Flood Control District
 GCCISD Goose Creek Consolidated Independent School District
 LC Lee College
 VB Visit Baytown
 DAD Downtown Arts District
 EDF Baytown-West Chambers County Economic Development Foundation

Ongoing / TBD	1-3 Years	3-10 Years	10+ Years	Capital Projects	Policies and Programs	Regulations and Standards	Partnerships and Coordination	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Estimated Order of Magnitude Cost

STRATEGY 2.2.1: Improve facilities at Jenkins, Wayne Gray, Evergreen, and Baytown Soccer Parks to enhance the overall quality of these park and increase their capacity for large events.												
1. Create educational programming for elementary-age children and families visiting the Baytown Nature Center during weekdays and weekends.		X							X	X	PARD	N/A
STRATEGY 5.2.2: Relocate the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center to the Baytown Nature Center to improve the alignment of educational programs and remove logistical impediments.												
1. Relocate the Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center to the Baytown Nature Center location to improve the alignment of educational programs and remove logistical impediments.			X		X	X			X	X	PARD, CM	\$5 million
STRATEGY 5.2.5: Develop George and Freda Chandler Arboretum at the Baytown Nature Center site.												
1. Develop the George and Freda Chandler Arboretum on the previous Westwood Park site adjacent to the Baytown Nature Center, as illustrated in Figure 6.4, <i>George and Freda Chandler Arboretum Conceptual Design</i> .		X			X					X	PARD	\$17.5 million
STRATEGY 1.1.5: Implement improvements in undeveloped parks and prioritize the development of waterfront parks.												
1. Develop the recently acquired waterfront property on Highway 146 at Cedar Bayou and Tompkins Road known as Lannie Park offering passive recreational amenities.		X			X					X	PARD	TBD
2. Develop the Bayland Park site in accordance to the conceptual design illustrated in Figure 5.1, <i>Bayland Marina Park Conceptual Design</i> (pages 5.6 and 5.7).		X			X						PARD	\$7 million
3. Develop the Gene and Loretta Russell Park to increase access to parkland and recreation facilities in the neighborhoods to the north of Interstate 10.		X			X						PARD	\$18 million (w/out recreation center)
STRATEGY 1.1.4: Update and improve all neighborhood parks.												
1. Update and improve all neighborhood parks.		X			X					X	PARD	TBD
2. Embrace the Be Well Baytown program by adding shade structures over playgrounds, exercise areas, picnic tables, and basketball courts, wherever possible.		X				X					PARD	N/A
3. Provide enclosures for all portable restrooms within parks.		X			X						PARD	TBD
STRATEGY 1.1.2: Formulate a Parkland Dedication Ordinance to require the dedication of neighborhood park space as part of new development.												
1. Development of a parkland dedication ordinance.		X							X		BLD; CM; PD; PARD	N/A
STRATEGY 2.2.5: Improve facilities at Pirate's Bay to enhance visitor experience.												
1. Expand the parking area to reduce conflicts between Pirates Bay and the Wayne Gray Sports Complex.		X			X					X	PARD	TBD
7. Construct an additional staff room to accommodate 60 lifeguards and staff members for staff training and meetings between shifts.			X		X					X	PARD	\$50,000 - \$75,000
STRATEGY 4.1.1: Construct 10-foot wide off-street multi-use paths along key major and minor streets throughout Baytown to create an interconnected network of trails for cyclists and pedestrians connecting homes, neighborhood facilities, and recreational destinations.												
1. Develop off-street multi-use pathways throughout Baytown, as described in Chapter 5, <i>Baytown Trails</i> .		X			X					X	PARD; CC; PWE; CM	\$22,427,054
STRATEGY 4.1.5: Utilize the Goose Creek corridor segment between Lynchburg Reservoir Canal and West Cedar Bayou Lynchburg Road to connect neighborhoods north of Interstate 10 to Baytown Soccer Park and other recreational facilities.												
1. North Goose Creek Corridor.		X			X					X	PARD; CM; PWE; CM	\$1,236,000
STRATEGY 2.2.10: Develop full-sized rectangle fields with lighting for soccer.												
1. Re-purpose underutilized fields in Missy Davidson Park for soccer practice and games.			X		X					X	PARD	TBD

Actions Leaders

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 CCAD Chambers County Appraisal District

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	Ongoing / TBD	1-3 Years	3-10 Years	10+ Years	Capital Projects	Policies and Programs	Regulations and Standards	Partnerships and Coordination	More Targeted Planning	Action Leaders	Estimated Order of Magnitude Cost
	Initiate	Action Type									
2. Audit the use of all rectangle fields to identify parks that are underutilized.	X				X					PARD	N/A
3. Install fencing around all competition level fields.	X				X				X	PARD	TBD
4. Create a City-sponsored or City-led soccer league.	X					X		X		PARD	N/A
STRATEGY 5.1.2: Develop a blueway program for Baytown’s waterways.											
1. Develop one kayak launch each at J.C. Hollaway Park and Goose Creek Park to provide access to Cedar Bayou and Goose Creek, respectively.		X				X				PARD	N/A
2. Develop four kayak launches around the Baytown Nature Center to access the various bays surrounding the park.	X				X				X	PARD	\$100,000 (4 @ \$25,000 ea.)
3. Utilize the Dittman Family Park site and the proposed Lannie Park site to develop additional kayak launches on Cedar Bayou.		X			X				X	PARD	\$25,000
4. Install wayfinding and interpretive signage on the blueway.	X					X				PARD	\$37,500 (25 @ \$1,500 ea)
STRATEGY 2.2.3: Conduct a site selection study to determine the location of a proposed recreation center and natatorium with an eight-lane competition swimming pool.											
1. Conduct site selection study to determine the appropriate location for the recreation center and natatorium within the City.	X				X				X	PARD	\$24 - \$33 million
STRATEGY 2.2.4: Conduct a feasibility study for the development of a golf course in Baytown.											
1. Prepare a golf market competitive analysis based on the previous golf course feasibility study that was previously developed for the City of Baytown to determine the financial and real estate feasibility for a regional golf course.	X				X				X	PARD	\$50 - 75,000
STRATEGY 5.1.5: Develop nature-based recreational programming at Baytown Nature Center and proposed George and Freda Chandler Arboretum, Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center, Goose Creek Park, Evergreen Bluff Park site, Roseland Park, and Dittman Family Park.											
1. Develop nature-based recreational programming at Baytown Nature Center, George and Freda Chandler Arboretum, Eddie V. Gray Wetlands Center, Goose Creek Park, Evergreen Bluff Park site, Roseland Park, and Dittman Family Park.	X				X					PARD	N/A
STRATEGY 1.1.1: Formulate a comprehensive parkland acquisition program to ensure that all areas in Baytown are within a 10-minute walking distance to a park.											
1. Formulate a comprehensive plan to acquire park space to ensure that all areas in Baytown are within a 10-minute walking distance to a park.	X				X					PARD	N/A
2. Consider adding additional parkland north of Interstate 10 and east of Cedar Bayou (Chambers County) for future parks.	X								X	PARD	N/A
STRATEGY 2.2.6: Upgrade existing sports facilities, including constructing additional parking, upgrading playing fields to artificial turf, and improving spectator areas.											
1. Upgrade existing sports facilities, including constructing additional parking, upgrading playing fields to artificial turf, and improving spectator areas.	X				X				X	PARD	TBD
STRATEGY 2.1.5: Continue to celebrate Cultural Diversity Celebrations, such as the Juneteenth Celebration and the Grito Fest; and partner with other organizations for cultural diversity celebrations, such as ACE District’s Caribbean Fest.											
1. Continue to celebrate Cultural Diversity Celebrations, such as the Juneteenth Celebration and the Grito Fest; and partner with other organizations for cultural diversity celebrations, such as ACE District’s Caribbean Fest.	X				X					PARD; CC; PWE; CM	N/A
STRATEGY 2.2.12: Continue to explore innovative solutions for park issues and challenges through the use of pilot programs.											
1. Continue to explore innovative solutions for park issues and challenges through the use of pilot programs.	X				X					PARD	N/A

Implementation Plan & Order of Magnitude Costs

Chapter 7, *Implementation*, provides an Implementation Action Plan, regarding the prioritization of the recommended strategies and actions described in Chapters 4–6. The Implementation Action Plan categorizes Plan recommendations by implementation time frames: ongoing, short-term (1-3 years), mid-term (3-10 years), and long-term (10+ years) strategies and actions. The Implementation Action Plan specifies the type of actions warranted, including whether the action is considered a capital project (requires funding to complete); whether the action requires modification to existing (or new) policies and programs; the principal, secondary, and tertiary Action Leaders required to take the lead on implementing the specific action; whether the action requires revisions or amendments to municipal regulations; and whether the action requires additional planning or design before it can be implemented. The Implementation Action Plan also includes order-of-magnitude costs associated with prioritized strategies and actions; all of which can be incorporated into the City of Baytown’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

In order to estimate **order of magnitude costs** for park capital improvements projects and an active transportation network, including off-street multi-use paths, trails, and bike lanes, development costs for construction were compiled. Construction and material costs for current (2021) projects within Baytown and the Houston metropolitan area were used to determine order of magnitude (planning level) construction costs for the City’s proposed active transportation network, development of four parks (Bayland Marina Park, Evergreen Bluff Park, Gene and Loretta Russell Park, and George and Freda Chandler Arboretum), and development of a recreation center and sports complex. Capital Improvement Project costs for future phases of these parks are also included in these order of magnitude costs.

\$22,427,055 of *Off-Street Multi-Use Path Programs*

\$14,280,725 of *Off-Street Recreational Trails Programs*

\$14,280,725 of *Bike-Lane Programs*

\$9,746,325 of *Trailhead Improvement and Development Programs*

\$92,684,493 of *Parks Capital Improvement Projects*



Bayland Park and Waterfront Conceptual Design



Evergreen Bluff Park Conceptual Design



George and Freda Chandler Arboretum and Park Conceptual Design



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