

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN 2017 - 2027



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A Charming Past. A Soaring Future.



CITY OF RICHMOND, TEXAS



CITY OF RICHMOND, TEXAS
PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE
MASTER PLAN
2017 – 2027

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is intended to provide the City of Richmond with an information base to help guide decisions related to parks, recreation, and open space. The plan will set guidelines for future park and open space development that are feasible for Richmond in accordance with the desires of its citizens and assist in the implementation of those decisions. This plan includes the area within the incorporated limits of Richmond as well as property outside of the City limits which is owned by the municipality. The plan provides parks and open space project recommendations and detailed cost projections through 2027.

This Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan consists of:

- Richmond’s Community Profile
- Goals and Objectives
- Methodology of the Plan Development
- Inventory of Existing Facilities
- Citizen Input
- Local Needs
- Recommendations
- Implementation Program
- Potential Funding Sources

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The City of Richmond is situated within the Houston metropolitan area and is the seat for Fort Bend County. The City is comprised of approximately 4.3 square miles and the current population is estimated to be 12,408. The demographic breakdown within the City is as follows:

White – 60.6%
Afro-American (Black) – 18.0%
Asian – 1.0%
American Indian – 0.9%
Other – 17.0%
Two or More Races – 2.5%

Hispanic / Latino – 55.4%

Over the past several years, the US Census has changed how people of Hispanic and Latino origins are classified. Due to this change, Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in any/all of the applicable race categories above.



II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following Goals and Objectives are provided to give direction for future community decisions regarding parks, recreation, trails, and open spaces. These goals and objectives were established based on input from both the citizens and the professional staff of the City of Richmond.

Park and Recreation Goal:

To ensure the provision of a balanced park and open space system that meets the recreational needs of the citizens of Richmond.

Objectives:

- To continue to renovate and enhance the existing park system as the City and demographics continue to evolve.
- To develop a trail system that connects parks, residential areas, commercial areas, schools and historic downtown Richmond.
- To continue to partner with the local youth sports organizations in order to provide athletic facilities for organized youth baseball, softball, football, and soccer.
- To acquire land along the Brazos River and its tributaries that targets the preservation and enhancement of the natural assets of the land while allowing public use.
- To forge partnerships with public and private organizations for the development, operation and maintenance of the existing and future park system of Richmond.
- To ensure that all park facilities meet the most current safety guidelines and accessibility standards.
- To provide new and different recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities throughout the community.



Wessendorff Park



Open Space Goal:

To identify, protect, and preserve quality natural open spaces for unstructured recreational activities, inherent aesthetic value, and protection of valuable ecosystems.

Objectives:

- To address natural open space needs when developing active recreational facilities to provide citizens with well-balanced recreational experiences that include both active and passive opportunities.
- To continually research the viability of developing trail systems along creeks, flood ways, and utility easements that will link public and private recreational facilities, neighborhoods, and school campuses.
- To be proactive in the acquisition and protection of unique natural open spaces along the Brazos River Corridor and its contributing tributaries.
- To limit development in natural open spaces and encourage environmentally responsible private development in order to minimize adverse effects on valuable ecosystems.



George Park

III. METHODOLOGY

The planning process officially began in January 2016 when the City of Richmond began to address the parks and open space opportunities throughout the City. The Parks and Recreation Board, representing a cross section of the community, was selected to guide the development of a master plan for future park and recreation opportunities. The Parks and Recreation Board and City staff were involved in each major step of the planning process and provided the local insight needed to produce a successful master plan. Several steps were taken in order to create a successful and realistic Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.

- The initial step in evaluating the parks and open space system in Richmond was to inventory the existing parks, open space, and recreational resources.
- The developed park acreage was compared to the existing population in order to establish the current level of service.
- The existing parks were evaluated against national standards published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) to allow for an objective review of the park system.
- Surveys were mailed out to Richmond residents and available online. A total of 204 surveys were received and tabulated.

Focus group meetings were conducted to obtain more information from specific groups such as Lamar Consolidated ISD, community leaders, and local non-profits.

Based on the citizen input, existing inventory and available resources, potential park projects were developed that included additional parks and recreational facilities and the renovations of existing parks. Once the master project list was developed and refined, members of the Parks and Recreation Board prioritized every project based on local demand and their perception of needs. Budget estimates were generated for each project and possible funding sources were identified.

It should be noted that the professional staff of the City of Richmond was involved throughout the planning process to insure the plan resulted in a feasible and balanced park program for the City that once implemented, will fully serve the active and passive recreational needs of the community. With this in mind, standards for the different types of parks for the Richmond Park System were developed.



IV. **PARK CLASSIFICATION & INVENTORY**

The City's park classification system is broken down into seven major categories. These park categories are as follows:

Pocket/Ornamental Park

A Pocket or Ornamental Park is a small (usually less than 1 acre) park developed with passive elements such as sidewalks, monuments, fountains, gazebos, plazas, benches, and landscaping.

Neighborhood Parks

A Neighborhood Park is a site of approximately 5 to 15 acres and serves the area within a one-half mile radius with both active and passive recreational opportunities. Facilities typically found in neighborhood parks include play apparatus, picnic areas, shelters, play courts, unlighted play fields, restrooms, walking/jogging trails, natural open space, parking, spraygrounds, and tennis courts.

Community Parks

A Community Park is a site of approximately 30 to 150 acres with a service radius area of two miles. Facilities usually included in such a park are tennis courts, shelters, separate or multi-purpose sports fields, play apparatus, picnic areas, walking/jogging trails, recreation centers, spraygrounds, swimming pools, open spaces, parking lots, and restrooms.

Regional Park

A Regional Park is normally a site of 200 to 1,000 acres, which typically serves the area within a 10-mile radius of the park with a wide range of recreational opportunities. Although the list of facilities that are suitable for location in regional parks is endless, some of the most common facilities are sports fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, swimming pools, campgrounds, bicycle and hiking trails, nature areas, a golf course, recreation center,



restrooms, and ample parking. As indicated by the broad range of facilities, a good balance of both active and passive recreational opportunities should be provided by such a park.

Special Use Park

The Special Use Park classification covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities that focus on one or two specific recreational uses. Facility space requirements are the primary determinants of site size and location. For example, a golf course may require 150 acres, whereas a community center with parking may only require 10 or 15 acres. Potential special uses may include baseball/softball complexes, soccer complexes, tennis centers, sports stadiums, performing arts facilities, amphitheaters, community centers, and golf courses.

Greenbelts

Greenbelts or greenbelt parkways are linear parks usually developed around a natural resource such as a creek, river, utility easement, or lake shore. The potential benefits of a greenbelt system are numerous. Not only can a greenbelt system preserve valuable open space and natural habitat, it can provide a natural environment for walking, jogging, and bicycling trails, provide a transportation corridor linking neighborhoods to parks, schools, and shopping areas and provide a variety of passive recreational opportunities free, or relatively free, from automobile interference. Greenbelts also serve as natural buffers between land uses, serve as utility (underground) easements, and can usually be acquired at a relatively inexpensive price due to the restrictions on development. Design standards for greenbelts are relatively loose in order to allow the maximum use of the natural environment in the design. Greenbelt corridor widths are often determined by the existing topography, severity of flooding, and other unique natural features. Greenbelt corridors of less than 50 "useable" feet should be avoided and narrow corridor sections kept to a minimum. One-hundred foot corridor widths and wider give flexibility in design and are encouraged wherever possible.



Natural Areas

Natural Areas are spaces containing ecosystems in a non-disturbed state with minimal man-made intrusions. Natural areas lend a certain aesthetic and functional diversity to a park network and urban landscape. Although the benefits of natural areas are hard to quantify, they are numerous and include preservation of wildlife habitat and opportunities for nature study. When flood plains are preserved as natural areas they offer a resource to aid in the protection from flooding. A resource based approach to natural area planning should be used in Richmond, due to the unique character and availability of natural resources. This approach enables the City to identify the natural resources unique to Richmond, such as the Brazos River Corridor, and define how those areas will be integrated into the parks system in order to best satisfy the needs of the citizens. There are no national standards for natural areas within a city due to the extreme variations found in natural resources from region to region. Richmond should adopt open space policies which reflect the unique natural resources of the community. Natural areas or open lands with environmental significance should be included in the level of service standard only to the extent to which they provide users with passive and active recreational opportunities. Natural areas or open lands, such as perennial wetlands and/or inaccessible areas, which do not provide users with recreational opportunities should not be included in the level of service standard.

The following table contains the types of parks proposed for the Richmond Parks System and associated development information.

TABLE I

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

Classification	Service Area	Size	Population Served	Typical Facilities	Development Cost*
Pocket / Ornamental Park	½ Mile	1 acre to 3 acres	500-2,500	Playground, pavilion with hard surface, monuments, play court, drinking fountains, landscaping, fenced perimeter, walks and benches	\$50,000 - \$80,000 Per Acre



Classification	Service Area	Size	Population Served	Typical Facilities	Development Cost*
Neighborhood Park	½ Mile	5 acres to 15 acres	2,000-10,000	Playground apparatus, picnic area(s), sprayground, benches, pavilion, play courts, play fields, restroom, landscaping & parking	\$95,000 - \$150,000 Per Acre
Community Park	2 Miles	40 acres to 150 acres	10,000-50,000	Tennis courts, sports fields, playground apparatus, picnic area(s), pavilions, walking/jogging trails, swimming pools, open space, landscaping, recreation centers, restrooms & parking	\$70,000 - \$185,000 Per Acre
Regional Park	10 Miles	200 acres to 3,000 acres	Entire urban area	Tennis courts, sports fields, rivers/lakes, golf courses, equestrian trails, swimming complexes, hunting areas, campgrounds, hike/bike trails, picnic area(s), pavilions, open space, recreation centers, restrooms & ample parking	\$2,000,000 & up
Special Use Park	Varies	Determined by primary use	Varies - dependent on primary use	Concentration of one or two of the following: baseball/softball complex, soccer fields, tennis centers, sports stadiums, golf courses, performing arts parks, amphitheaters & ornamental gardens	Varies - dependent on primary use
Greenbelts	Varies	Varies	5,000 to entire community	Landscaping, multi-purpose trails, benches, information kiosks, telephones, exercise courses & drinking fountains	\$250,000 - \$500,000 per mile
Natural Areas	Varies	Determined by resource	Entire community	Nature trails, multi-purpose trails, benches, picnic areas, wildlife viewing stations, educational components, information kiosks, interpretive signs, exercise courses & drinking fountains	Varies

*Development costs do not reflect land acquisition



EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The parks in Richmond are classified in the Existing Parks and Open Space Inventory shown in Table II. In order to illustrate the geographic distribution and areas of the City currently served by the park system, the service area of each existing park has been shown on the Existing Parks and Open Space Map. Ideally, all developed residential areas of the City should fall within the service area of both a community park and a neighborhood park.

TABLE II

EXISTING PARKS & OPEN SPACES

	Name	Type of Park	Owned/Maintained	Total Acres	Facilities
1	City Hall Park	Pocket/Ornamental	City	.25	Native Landscaping Benches
2	Clay Park	Neighborhood	City	2.4	Play Equipment Basketball Court Pavilion Benches Picnic Areas Landscaping Walking Trail
3	Crawford Park	Pocket/ Ornamental	City	.50	Monuments Benches Picnic Areas
4	George Park	Special Use	City	217 (60 Developed)	Soccer Fields Baseball Fields Softball Fields Multi-Purpose Trails Open Lawn Areas Pavilions Playgrounds Volleyball Courts Restroom Facilities Concession Stand Bench Stations Natural Open Spaces Parking Lots
5	Wessendorff Park	Special Use	City	2.2	Gazebo Multi-Purpose Trails Open Lawn Areas Restroom Facility Bench Stations Landscaping
6	Lamar Homestead Park (County Park)	Regional	County	7.3	Walking Trails Workout Stations Open Lawn Areas Picnic Areas Benches Landscaping



	Name	Type of Park	Owned/ Maintained	Total Acres	Facilities
7	TW Davis Family YMCA	Regional (Privately Owned & Operated)	Private	22	Baseball Fields Softball Fields Soccer Fields Sand Volleyball Courts Lighted Tennis Courts Skate Park Open Lawn Areas Play Equipment Natural Areas Swimming Pool Gymnasium Fitness Center Racquetball Courts Aerobic Rooms
Total Park Acres			251.65		
Total Developed Park Acres (Not Including YMCA Property)			72.65		
Level of Service (Developed Park Acres Per 1,000 Residents)			5.9		

2017 Estimated Population – 12,408

Level of Service based on the number of DEVELOPED park acres per 1,000 population.

It is important to note that the TW Davis Family YMCA is not included in the total Level of Service because it is not open to the general public and requires a membership, however, it is a benefit to the community and provides recreational opportunities to many of the residents.



YMCA Playground



-  EXISTING PARKS
-  2 MILE RADIUS
-  1/2 MILE RADIUS
-  CITY LIMITS

-  EXISTING TRAILS
-  PRIVATE OWNED LANDS

**EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACES MAP
CITY OF RICHMOND, TEXAS**

V. LEVEL OF SERVICE

Level of service is the term used to describe the importance or the role of a park system in a community and is expressed in acres of useable park land per 1,000 persons. In the past, the targeted level of service for communities nationwide has been 10 acres of park land for every 1,000 residents.

In recent years, the standard has been modified to more specifically reflect the unique characteristics of each community and a range of levels of service has been more widely utilized. Based on the specific needs of a community, levels of service ranging from 5 acres of developed park land per 1,000 people to 15 acres or more of developed park land per 1,000 people are typically targeted.

It is important to note that the level of service for parks and open space is based on useable space and, therefore, undeveloped or unusable park land should not be a factor in the level of service calculation. Although private recreational facilities and golf courses should be considered when establishing the desired level of service for that activity to be provided by a community, the actual acreage is not typically used in the level of service calculation. The current level of service for **City & County owned** public parkland is 5.9 acres per 1,000 population. When the 22 acre YMCA property is considered, the level of service increases to 7.4 acres per 1,000 population.



Clay Park

VI. ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND CONCLUSIONS

Recreational needs are determined using the following planning approaches:

- Demand Based – what citizens want
- Standard Base – what the standards call for
- Resource Based – what the local natural resources offer

This combination allowed the desires for recreational opportunities expressed by citizens with different interests to be compared with NRPA standards while at the same time recognizing the unique natural attributes of the area.

TABLE III
POPULATION PROJECTIONS

2017	2022	2027
12,408	13,041	13,076

Based on 1.0% population growth per year.

The Needs Assessment integrates supply and demand.

- The Supply: Existing park and recreation facilities and the natural resources of the area.
- The Demand: Identified through the stated goals and objectives, the concept of level of service, national standards, and most importantly, input from local citizens.

Local input was obtained through:

- City Staff
- Focus Group Meetings
- Parks and Recreation Board
- Community Leaders
- Citizen Survey

The result is a balanced analysis which reflects the parks and recreation needs and desires of Richmond residents through 2027.



Survey Results

The Citizen Survey was mailed to all citizens with utility connections and was available on-line for the entire community for input on existing and future park development. A total of 204 surveys were received and tabulated; 119 mailed surveys were returned and 85 online surveys were received. The results provided valuable insight into the citizens' opinions on the existing conditions of the park system and the desired future development. Appendix I contains the complete survey results from the residents. Important information related to local desires for parks in Richmond was obtained from the survey and follows:

- **Eighty percent (80%)** of the survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that that existing parks should be upgraded and/or improved to include additional facilities.
- **Seventy-seven percent (77%)** of the survey respondents stated that additional parks and recreational facilities were needed in Richmond.
- **Seventy percent (70%)** of survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that more neighborhood parks are needed.
- **Thirty-three percent (33%)** of the survey respondents rated the existing parks and recreational facilities in Richmond as excellent or good.
- **Fifty-three percent (53%)** of the survey respondents rated the level of maintenance of parks and recreational facilities in Richmond as excellent or good.
- **Seventy-two percent (72%)** of the survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that residential neighborhoods, schools, and parks should be connected with linear parks such as trails along creeks and other corridors.
- **Seventy-seven percent (77%)** of the survey respondents strongly agreed or agreed that parks in Richmond are well worth the cost to taxpayers.
- **Seventy-four percent (74%)** of the survey respondents stated that municipal bonds should be used to assist in funding the future development and maintenance of parks in Richmond.

It is apparent, based on the survey results, that many of the residents of the City of Richmond are unsatisfied with the current park system but have a strong desire for upgraded and renovated existing parks, the construction of new parks and nearly three quarters of the respondents support municipal bonds for the development of a better park system.



In addition to the citizen survey, focus group meetings were conducted in order to better understand the needs of the citizens of Richmond. Six different groups were selected to meet and discuss the existing and future parks and open spaces in the City of Richmond. The groups consisted of Lamar Consolidated ISD staff, community leaders, local churches, local non-profits, garden clubs and City staff. The following list is a summary of the findings from the broad base of citizens:

- Spraygrounds are needed in neighborhood parks
- Multi-purpose walking trails are needed for easy access to parks from residential areas
- George Park is the highlight of the park system but needs renovating and upgrades
- Pavilions / picnic shelters are needed throughout the park system
- The City needs to focus on updating the existing parks before developing new parks
- Maintenance is a high priority for many residents
- More neighborhood parks are needed throughout the City
- The City should partner with local non-profits and businesses to develop the park system
- Additional parks should be acquired and developed in the City Limits and should be easily accessible
- The City should try to inform the residents more directly and more often about parks, events, and programming
- Additional programming and events are needed to keep the community engaged
- More restrooms are needed in the parks and need to be maintained
- Safety needs to be a high priority in parks

New Parks - Needs

Many citizens stated that there is a need for new parks in Richmond. Many residents stated that the new parks need to be more accessible and within walking distance from neighborhoods. A total of seventy-seven percent (77%) of the survey respondents stated that additional parks and recreational facilities were needed in Richmond. The majority of the respondents desired more neighborhood parks (10 acres); with a total of 70% ‘strongly agreeing or ‘agreeing.’



If the City of Richmond wishes to attract more people to their community and grow in the future, the City must focus on the future residential growth patterns throughout the community. Planning will enable the City to utilize a proactive approach for future park development, ensuring the parks contain the desired natural open space and physical attributes defined earlier in the plan.

Existing Parks – Needs

According to a majority of the citizens in the focus group meetings and survey respondents, Richmond needs to enhance the existing park system. Eighty percent (80%) of the survey respondents stated that existing parks in Richmond should be upgraded and/or improved to include additional facilities. A large portion of citizens stated that George Park was a great asset to the City but needed to be renovated. One of the questions on the citizen survey asked ‘what the most important consideration regarding parks in Richmond is:’ and the results are as follows:

- 1 - Quality of Facilities in Design/Construction
- 2 – Maintenance after Construction
- 3 - Preservation of Natural Areas
- 4 - Number of Facilities

The citizens of Richmond desire a high quality park system that is highly maintained rather than a large number of mediocre facilities. The City needs to focus on upgrading and enhancing the existing parks.

Athletic Facilities – Needs

The City of Richmond is currently partnered with the Richmond Youth Organized Athletics Group to ensure that youth athletics in Richmond are provided with high quality game and practice fields. This partnership has been on-going for several years and needs to continue into the future to keep up with the growing demand of youth athletics.



Trails - Needs

In January 2015, the City of Richmond adopted a Trail Master Plan to ensure the walkability and connectivity of the City. The City currently provides some walking trails, but it does not offer much connectivity between parks, schools, neighborhoods, and commercial areas. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the surveyed residents responded that residential neighborhoods, schools, and parks should be connected with linear parks such as trails along creeks and other corridors. In addition, nature trails ranked number one and multi-purpose trails ranked as the number two priority on the citizen survey. The City needs to continue to follow the Trail Master Plan for future trail projects linking parks, schools, and neighborhoods while providing passive recreational opportunities such as benches and picnicking areas. The City needs to continue to develop multi-purpose trails in existing parks, future parks, and historic downtown.

Natural Open Space - Needs

The City currently offers mostly active recreational facilities such as playgrounds and youth athletic fields with minimal natural open space. The City should focus on acquiring and preserving lands with unique topography, character or other natural features, especially along the Brazos River Corridor and its tributaries. Future park land acquisition should allow for natural open space in both neighborhood parks and community parks to provide opportunities for primitive recreation.

The development of natural open space is critical and an overall development plan should ensure diversified, compatible recreational opportunities on the site while preserving, protecting, and enhancing the sensitive ecosystem.



VII. RECOMMENDATIONS / PRIORITIES

Based on results from the Needs Analysis, Citizen Survey, Focus Group Meetings, Parks and Recreation Board, City staff and available resources, the following Parks and Recreation Facility Priorities, which are depicted in descending order, are adopted and should be pursued.

TABLE V
PARKS & RECREATION FACILITIES PRIORITIES

1	Multi-Use Paved / Nature Trails
2	Picnic Shelters / Pavilions
3	Playgrounds
4	Fishing Piers / Docks*
5	Spraygrounds
6	Nature Areas
7	Water Features
8	Dog Parks
9	Botanical Flower Gardens
10	Basketball Courts
11	Community Gardens
12	Lawn Areas for General Play
13	Swimming Pools*
14	Indoor Recreation
15	Adult Softball Fields
16	Baseball Fields
17	Skate Parks
18	Sports Practice Fields
19	Sand Volleyball Courts
20	Tennis Centers

Fishing Piers and Swimming Pools both ranked in the top 20 of the priorities list but it is important to note the feasibility of constructing these facilities in Richmond. Due to flooding and the high currents of the Brazos River, fishing piers and docks would continually be damaged and be in need of repair. Swimming Pools are expensive facilities to build and maintain and the City should focus on the higher ranked spraygrounds facility to satisfy the need for water based recreation within the community.



Recommendations

The following actions are recommended to be implemented within the next 10 years to ensure that the parks and open space system in Richmond continues to meet the recreational needs of the citizens.

New Parks

Develop new park in Freeman Town (Intersection of Burnett & 7th Street)

Completed During the Planning Process

- Picnic Shelter/Area
- Playground
- Basketball Court
- Landscaping

Develop Existing Square Block of Preston St, S 4th St, N Calhoun St & N 5th St.

- Walking Trails
- Picnic Shelter/Pavilion
- Playground
- Sprayground
- Enhanced Landscaping

Partner with Lamar Consolidated Independent School District and Helping Hands to Develop a Neighborhood Park (Property west of Seguin Elementary School)

- Enhance the existing covered basketball court
- Enhance existing baseball field
- Enhance open lawn areas
- Construct playground
- Construct multi-purpose trails
- Construct Sprayground
- Install site furniture
- Install landscaping



Park Upgrades

Upgrade George Park

- Pavilions
- Sprayground
- Playgrounds
- Basketball Courts
- Restroom Facilities



George Park

Wessendorff Park

- Water Feature
- Natural Play Elements
- Multi-Purpose Trails
(Under Construction May 2017)
- Site Furniture



Wessendorff Trail Construction – Summer 2017

Bicycle Lanes

Introduce bicycle lane requirements into the City of Richmond's Unified Development Code (UDC) and the Infrastructure Design Manual.

Natural Open Space

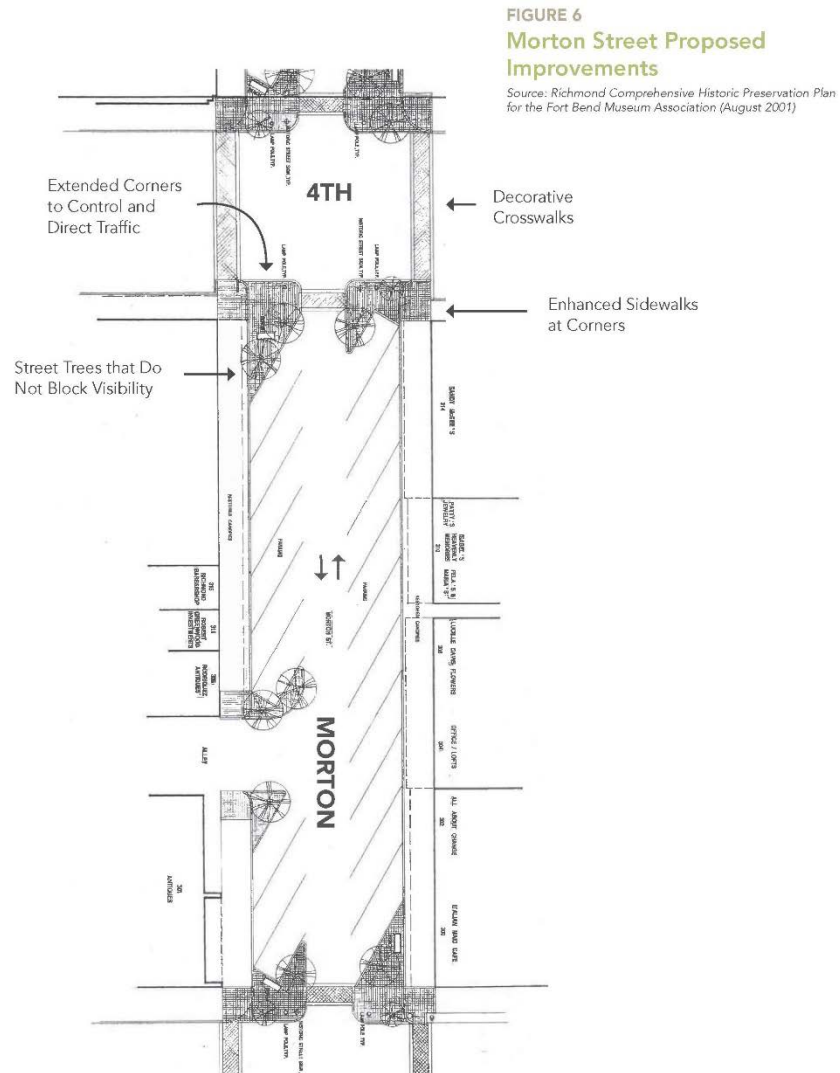
Acquire and preserve natural areas, especially along the Brazos River and its tributaries in Richmond for passive and primitive recreational opportunities as well as for trail corridors.



Trails

Construct trails and sidewalks throughout Richmond to connect parks, schools, neighborhoods, and commercial areas.

- The City is currently constructing trails throughout Wessendorff Park as part of the overall Trail Master Plan.
- Review and follow the trail routes depicted in the 2015 City of Richmond Trail Master Plan: Specifically the sidewalk along the 100-500 Block of Morton Street.



Overall Park System

Develop Partnerships with Other Interested Community Groups

- YMCA
- Boys & Girls Club
- Catholic Charities
- Wessendorff Foundation
- Friends of North Richmond
- Local Schools
- The George Foundation
- Etc



Plan Events and Develop Marketing Packages and Tools to Inform and Encourage the Public to Participate in Recreational Events

Develop a Maintenance & Operations Plan and Budget for the Park System as it Continues to Grow

Continually Review and Adhere to the Goals and Objectives of the City of Richmond Comprehensive Master Plan Adopted in July 2014

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The following table depicts the project priorities with estimated costs and potential funding sources. It is important to note that the following schedule is in no particular order and is intended to be a flexible guide for development of parks and recreational facilities over the next 10 years for the City of Richmond. The City should evaluate and take advantage of any unforeseen opportunities that may arise that are not identified in the schedule.

Table V

Parks and Recreation Implementation Schedule

Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source
Develop Pocket Park In Freeman Town - Construct basketball court - Construct pavilion - Install site amenities CONSTRUCTION COMPLETED SUMMER 2017	\$150,000	General Fund General Obligation Bond
Upgrade/Renovate George Park A. Renovate Existing Restrooms B. Construct Sprayground C. Construct Playground D. Construct Disc Golf Course E. Construct Basketball Court F. Construct Pavilion G. Enhance Landscaping H. Upgrade Site Furniture	A. \$150,000 ea. B. \$200,000 C. \$75,000 D. \$10,000 E. \$65,000 F. \$120,000 G. \$20,000 H. \$25,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant Private / Public Partnership General Fund General Obligation Bond
Partner with LCISD & Helping Hands to Develop Existing Property as a Neighborhood Park - Construct Sprayground - Enhance Basketball Court - Construct Pavilion - Enhance Existing Baseball Field - Construct Multi-Purpose Trails - Construct Playground - Install Site Furniture & Landscaping	\$800,000	Private / Public Partnership TPWD Outdoor Grant General Fund General Obligation Bond
Partner With YMCA To Develop Existing Property as Neighborhood Park - Construct Sprayground - Construct Pavilion - Construct Multi-Purpose Trails - Construct Playground	\$650,000	TPWD Outdoor Grant Private/Corporate Donations General Fund General Obligation Bond

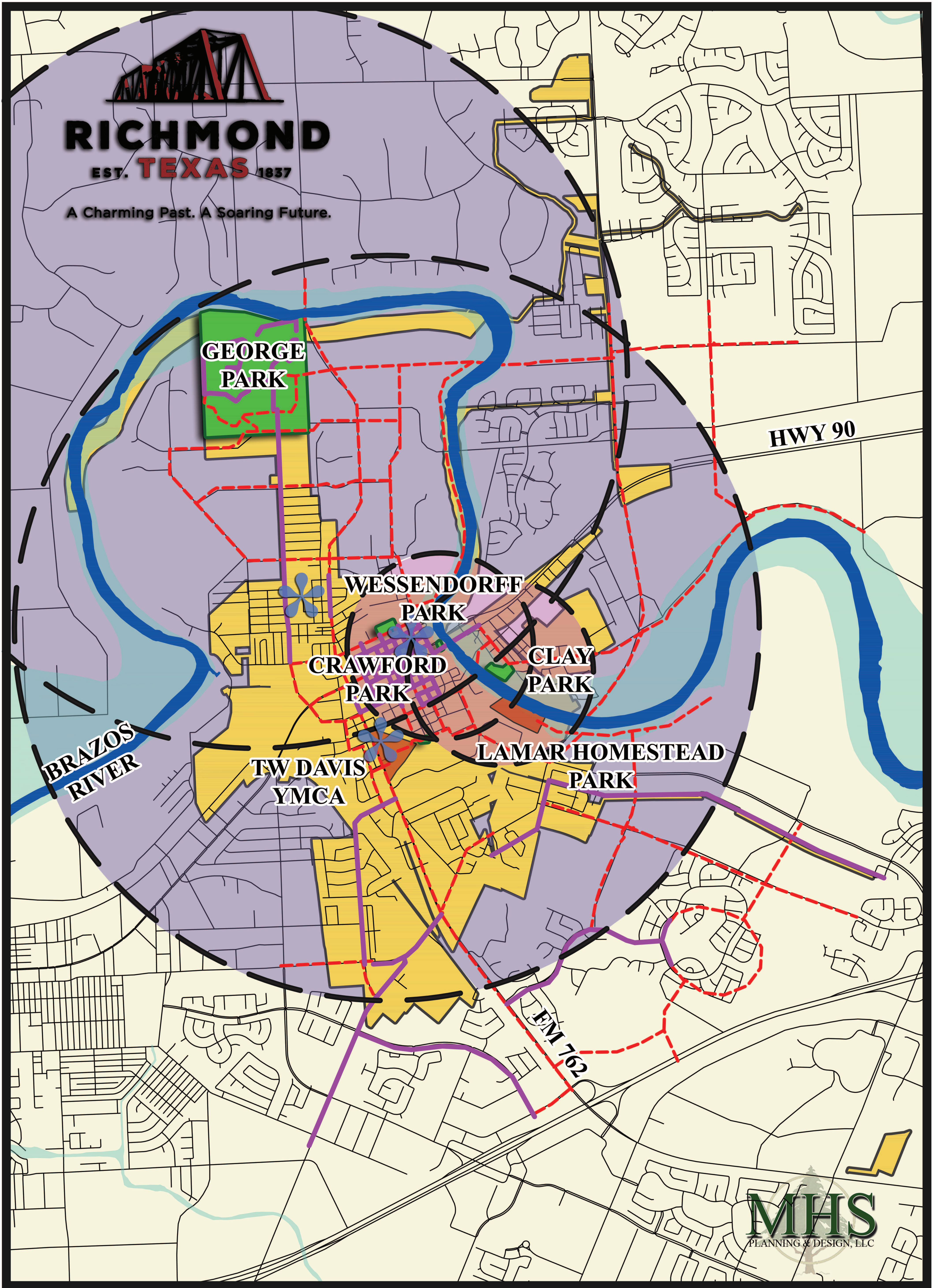


Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source
Expand Wessendorff Park A. Add Site Furniture B. Construct Water Feature C. Construct Playground D. Construct Multi-Purpose Trails (Under Construction)	A. \$10,500 B. \$175,000 C. \$85,000 D. \$900,000	Wessendorff Foundation General Fund General Obligation Bond
Construct Pavilion on Southwest Corner of 2 nd Street and Preston Avenue	\$150,000	General Fund General Obligation Bond
Construct Sidewalks and Enhance Streetscape along the 100-500 Block of Morton Street	+/- \$275,000	General Fund General Obligation Bond
Annually Review & Increase Park's Budget for Maintenance		General Fund General Obligation Bond





Note: Costs are preliminary estimates only and prepared without the benefit of detailed engineering data. All costs shown are based on 2017 dollars and do not include fees associated with planning, engineering, and/or architectural work that may be required. Final construction costs will vary.



Crawford Park



-  EXISTING PARKS
-  2 MILE RADIUS
-  1/2 MILE RADIUS
-  CITY LIMITS

-  PRIVATE OWNED LANDS
-  EXISTING TRAILS
-  FUTURE TRAILS
-  FUTURE PARKS

FUTURE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES MAP CITY OF RICHMOND, TEXAS

IX. EXISTING AND AVAILABLE MECHANISMS

In order to implement this park and open space plan update, there are a variety of funding mechanisms and tools available for use by the City of Richmond. These include:

SENATE BILL 376-4B - SALES TAX REVENUES - Funds generated by this special sales tax can be used for developing and maintaining public recreational facilities.

TEXAS RECREATION & PARKS ACCOUNT PROGRAM - This program, administered by Texas Parks and Wildlife, is a matching grant program which may be used to aid communities in acquisition and development of parks and open space. The Texas Recreation & Parks Account Small Grants Program is a matching grant program which may be used to aid communities with a population less than 20,000 in the development of parks and open space. The Outdoor Recreation Park Grant Program provides 50% matching fund grants to local governments in order to create large, intensive-use recreation areas, regional systems of parks, and conservation areas with trail linkages, as well as linear greenways between parks and other community amenities in Texas' urban areas. Another important element of these grants is to encourage partnerships and leverage development between the private sector, non-profit organizations, and among local governments. Outdoor Recreation Park Grant applications will be given priority if the proposed project: acquires large tracts of land to be set aside as parkland, has local matching funds from multiple political jurisdictions as well as non-profit organizations/private donations, project is listed on local park master plan, park will be used in a multiple jurisdictional manner, project provides water-based recreation, links multiple jurisdictions with trails or greenbelts, and the project has a direct link to the mission of Texas Parks & Wildlife.

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION - The national Fish and Wildlife Foundation promotes healthy populations of fish, wildlife, and plants by generating new commerce for conservation. The foundation leverages public dollars with corporate, private, and other non-profit funds. Funds are available on an as-need basis.

USER FEES - This method of financing requires the eventual user of each park to pay a fee for the use of each facility. Fees to be charged users can be established to pay for debt service, maintenance, and operation of the park system.

TEXAS RECREATIONAL TRAILS FUND - The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department administers the National Recreational Trail Fund through a provision in the Federal Highway Bill. The National Recreational Trail Grants provides 80% matching funds (maximum \$200,000) for both motorized and non-motorized trail projects in local communities for hikers, cyclists, horseback riders, off-road motor vehicles, and nature enthusiasts. Funds can be utilized to



construct new recreational trails, improve/maintain existing trails, develop/improve trailheads or trailside facilities, and acquire trail corridors. Eligible sponsors include city and county governments, state agencies, river authorities, water districts, MUDs, school districts, federal land managers, non-profit organizations, and other private organizations.

PAY AS YOU GO - This method of financing park improvements involves budgeting for land acquisition, development, and maintenance of park facilities through the City's annual budget process. Allocations for park improvements are made and spent annually through the standard budget process.

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS - These bonds are issued by the City following an election in which the voters authorize their issuance for specific stated purposes, as well as the necessary tax increases to support them. These bonds pledge the property or ad valorem taxing power of the City.

CERTIFICATES OF OBLIGATION - These certificates have basically the same effect as general obligation bonds except they do not require an election to authorize them. An election can be petitioned by five percent of the registered voters of the City. These certificates are issued on the authorization of the City Commission. Repayment is based on the property taxing power of the City, utility system revenues, or a combination of the two.

PRIVATE OR CORPORATE DONATIONS - Donations from foundations, corporations, and/or private individuals are often used to acquire and develop parks. The City should constantly identify and pursue opportunities to receive such funding for parks. One avenue for receiving donations is through the use of the Texas Parks & Recreation Foundation. This foundation has been developed to help all communities in the State of Texas to maximize the benefits of donations of land, property, and money.



IX. SUMMARY

For years, the park system has been a low priority but the City has recognized the importance of outdoor recreation. The residents of the City of Richmond desire for the City to continue to enhance and develop the existing park system. It is apparent that the residents want a better trail system and new and renovated parks that are maintained at a high level. The current Level of Service in the City of Richmond is 5.9 acres of developed park land per 1,000 residents.

This plan is to be utilized as a flexible tool, which should be reviewed annually and updated every two to five years to continue to reflect the unique recreational needs of the area. The City should take advantage of any unforeseen opportunities not identified in the plan that may arise, such as donations of land and/or facilities as long as the actions meet the intent of the goals, objectives, and recommendations of this plan.

In order to provide the high quality park system that the residents of Richmond desire, it is imperative that the City focuses on partnerships with local organizations such as: the YMCA, the Boys & Girls Club, Catholic Charities, Friends of North Richmond, and local schools.



*Wessendorff Park
Photo Credit: Laura Scarlato*

With the proposed additions to the park system that are outlined in this plan will come additional maintenance and operational needs in order to best utilize, manage, and care for both the new facilities and those that exist today. The proposed improvements contained in this plan will enhance the quality of life in the region and help ensure that the City of Richmond is able to keep pace with the growing recreational needs of the citizens. The resulting benefits include increased quality of life, tourism potential, economic value, increasing property values, and pride in the residents of the area.

APPENDIX I

Citizen Survey Results

City of Richmond Parks & Recreation Survey Results
(119 mail-in surveys - 85 on-line surveys = 204 Total)

Rank	Facility	Weighted Score
1	Nature Trails	270
2	Multi-use paved Trails	224
3	Picnic Shelters/Pavilions	190
4	Fishing Piers/Docks	185
5	Playgrounds	174
6	Dog Parks	179
7	Nature Areas	141
8	Water Features	138
9	Spraygrounds/Small Water Parks	125
10	Botanical Flower Gardens	123
11	Basketball Courts	96
12	Community Gardens	93
13	Swimming Pools	84
14	Indoor Rec Centers	81
15	Lawn Areas for General Play	79
16	Adult Softball Fields	33
17	Baseball Fields	32
18	Skate Parks	31
19	Sports Practice Fields	26
20	Sand Volleyball Courts	22
21	Tennis Centers	17
22	Horseshoe Pits/Washer Courts	16
22	Football Fields	16
23	Soccer Fields	15
24	Disc Golf Courses	14
25	Youth softball	13
<p>Other: Need Boat Launches, access to the river, access to river for bank fishing, lighted fishing piers on the river, outdoor stages, bike trails, running drinking water, need more sidewalks, lighted river front boardwalk</p>		

How would you rate the existing parks and recreational facilities in Richmond?

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	No Response
7%	26%	34%	16%	12%	5%

How would you rate the maintenance level of parks and recreational facilities in Richmond?

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	No Response
13%	40%	22%	5%	15%	5%

Are additional parks and recreational facilities needed in Richmond?

Yes	No	No Response
77%	13%	10%

Can you reasonably walk to a City park in Richmond from your home?

Yes	No	No Response
16%	77%	7%

More pocket or ornamental parks are needed. (2,500 sq. ft. to 1 acre in size)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
24%	36%	22%	5%	13%

More neighborhood parks are needed. (10 acres in size)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
32%	38%	17%	3%	10%

More community parks are needed. (40 to 150 acres in size)

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26%	36%	21%	6%	11%

Existing parks in Richmond should be upgraded and/or improved to include additional facilities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
35%	45%	8%	1%	11%

Residential neighborhoods, schools and parks should be connected with linear parks such as trails along creeks and other corridors.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
34%	38%	13%	3%	12%

The City of Richmond provides most citizens with information regarding local parks and recreational opportunities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
6%	25%	41%	17%	11%

The role of parks, recreation and open space in Richmond today compared to ten years ago is:

More Important	The Same	Less Important	Don't Know	No Response
46%	21%	7%	16%	10%

Parks & recreation facilities are well worth the cost to taxpayers.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
38%	39%	9%	4%	10%

The acquisition of parkland and the development & maintenance of park facilities can be expensive. In addition to state grants, municipal bonds should be used to assist in funding the development and maintenance of parks in Richmond.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
26%	48%	11%	3%	12%

The most important consideration regarding future parks in Richmond is:

Rank	
1	Quality of Facilities in Design/Construction
2	Maintenance after Construction
3	Preservation of Natural Areas
4	Number of Facilities
Other Suggestions: Security, more restrooms in parks, drinking fountains, developing river front, location, piers for fishing, boat launches, docks	

How should the Parks Department inform the public of upcoming events?

Rank	
1	Insert in Water Bills
2	Social Media
3	Newspaper Articles
4	Website
5	Email
6	Banners in Parks
Other: Signs in stores, text campaigns, a city park app with notifications	