



# Parks and Recreation Master Plan Executive Summary September 2015



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# *Acknowledgements*

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# I. Executive Summary

## Purpose of this Plan

The Pearland Parks and Recreation Master Plan is intended to help meet the needs of current and future residents by positioning Pearland to build on the community's parks and recreation assets and identify new opportunities. The citizen-driven plan establishes a clear direction to guide city staff, advisory committees, and elected officials in their efforts to enhance the community's parks and recreation services and facilities.

## Related Planning Efforts and Integration

The City of Pearland has undertaken several planning efforts in recent years that have helped inform the planning process for this Plan. These documents include:

- City of Pearland Trails Master Plan, 2007
- City of Pearland Comprehensive Plan
- EDC Strategic Plan
- Safe Routes to School Plan

These documents were reviewed by the consultant team and have been endorsed and integrated into the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation master Plan where applicable with no conflicts within any of these existing planning efforts.

## Planning Process Summary

This project has been guided by a project team made up of city staff, with input from the Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board. This team provided input to the GreenPlay consulting team throughout the planning process. This collaborative effort creates a plan that fully utilizes the consultant's expertise and incorporates the local knowledge and institutional history that only community members can provide. The project consisted of the following tasks:

- Community Engagement
- Facility Inventory
- GRASP® Level of Service Analysis
- Needs Assessment
- Operational and Marketing Analysis
- Prioritized Recommendation Goals, Objectives and Actions for Strategic Implementation

## Key Issues Summary

Several general findings were revealed by the City of Pearland GRASP® Analysis. These may be summarized as follows:

### Organizational:

- Improve marketing and communication of activities
- Ensure social equity
- Update the Park Dedication Ordinance
- Promote public health
- Include successful Parks and Recreation industry trends in future offerings



### **Financial:**

- Utilize bond referendum for facility improvements
- Utilize equitable user fees
- Pursue grant opportunities
- Increase local partnerships
- Increase sponsorships

### **Programs and Service Delivery:**

- Increase programming for families
- Increase fitness and wellness programming
- Increase non-sports programming for youth
- Increase programming for teens
- Increase programming for seniors
- Increase intergenerational programming for teens and seniors
- Increase adult programming during non-working hours
- Increase programming for special needs
- Increase number of neighborhood and cultural special events

### **Existing Facilities:**

- Maintain and improve existing facilities and amenities including upgrades to outdated amenities that do not function well especially in areas of low current service
- Continue to improve level of service especially at “Neighborhood” Parks through upgrades or additional components
- Increase beautification of public spaces
- Improve availability of shade near park amenities
- Increase ADA accessibility at all facilities
- Add/improve security lighting at many park amenities
- Work with neighborhoods to create an individual identity for each neighborhood park
- Work with alternative providers to increase level of service in areas Pearland doesn’t have neighborhood parks but level of service is low

### **Additional or Future Parks and Amenities**

- Consider programming needs where adding or upgrading components at existing parks
- Expand trails and connectivity
- Become a Community Park oriented agency with destination parks and amenities
- Monitor sports field demands and needs
- Improve recreational connectivity through neighborhood trail connections and park “spurs”
- When considering new “Community” Parks look to no service and low service areas as priorities for the development or acquisition of future park land

### **When it comes to neighborhood access to park and recreation, Pearland offers:**

- A wide variety of well distributed recreational opportunities.
- An overall high level of service if accessed by an automobile.
- A majority of its level of service in large “Community Parks.”
- A high number of components and average score per site when compared to some other communities.
- Some large “pockets” of high level of service.

### **When it comes to walkable level of service:**

- “Neighborhood Parks” don’t often score high enough to meet the “threshold” or lack trail access, often needed for a park to reach the threshold mark.
- Several of Pearland’s “Neighborhood” Parks do not offer enough quality components.
- Alternative providers are an important supplement to Pearland’s “Neighborhood” level of service.
- There is heavy reliance on alternative providers at a walkable neighborhood level of service in many areas.
- The quality of parks provided by alternative providers varies greatly across the system.
- Demographic analysis shows good distribution of parks where people live, with over 75 percent of 0-19 age group having walkable access to some recreation service.
- There is a need to identify and collect inventory data on the remaining alternative provider parks/facilities.

### **When it comes to “Community” Parks or “Community Based” Facilities:**

- The current distribution is approximately a two mile radius.
- Offerings at Shadow Creek Ranch Sports Complex and Hickory Slough Sportsplex are primarily limited to the sports community and may lack other, non-athletic facilities often found in community parks.
- Community Parks with a large variety of components are primarily limited to southeast Pearland.

### **When it comes to Trails and Trail Access:**

- A variety of trails are available across the city, but they are not meeting the needs and demands of the community.
- A significant portion of these trails may have limited or restricted access based on locations within subdivisions.
- Trail access is notably absent from some Pearland residential neighborhoods.
- Based on projected population growth over the next 5-7 years, Pearland needs:
  - Additional park land and components added to the system to maintain current level of service.
  - To improve or upgrade existing components to system to maintain current level of service.

### **Recurring Themes**

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Upgrade outdated amenities
- Add trails and increase connectivity
- Increase awareness of programs
- Assess equitable user fees
- Increase programming for families, fitness, wellness, non-sports youth, teens, special events

## Recommendation Goals and Objectives

### **GOAL ONE: ENHANCE ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES**

*Objective 1.1 – Improve marketing and communication of activities*

*Objective 1.2 – Ensure Social Equity*

*Objective 1.3 – Update the Park Dedication Ordinance (UDC – Parks and Open Space 3.2.10.1)*

*Objective 1.4 – Promote Public Health*

*Objective 1.5 – Include successful Parks and Recreation trends in future program offerings*

### **GOAL TWO: IMPROVE FINANCIAL SITUATIONS**

*Objective 2.1 – Consider a bond referendum for facility improvements*

*Objective 2.2 – Implement equitable user fees*

*Objective 2.3 – Pursue grant opportunities*

*Objective 2.4 – Increase local partnerships*

*Objective 2.5 – Increase sponsorships*

### **GOAL THREE: INCREASE PROGRAMS AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

*Objective 3.1 – Explore increasing the number of program opportunities for families, youth, seniors, teens, and special needs*

*Objective 3.2 – Expand program opportunities in fitness, wellness, intergenerational, and non-sports activities*

*Objective 3.3 – Explore offering more programs at convenient times for citizens*

*Objective 3.4 – Increase the number of neighborhood and cultural special events*

### **GOAL FOUR: IMPROVE FACILITIES AND AMENITIES**

*Objective 4.1 – Maintain and improve existing facilities*

*Objective 4.2 – Expand trails and connectivity*

*Objective 4.3 – Ensure ADA accessibility at all facilities*

*Objective 4.4 – Add parks and amenities in areas currently without service or as population expands to new areas*

### **GOAL FIVE: IMPROVE SAFETY AND SECURITY**

*Objective 5.1 – Improve safety perceptions of parks*

*Objective 5.2 – Increase security lighting at many park amenities*

## Introduction

During the site visits and assessments, existing facilities were evaluated for their current level of service and quality of components. While component scoring may fluctuate slightly with regular or routine maintenance and upgrades, it is important for the City of Pearland to continue to monitor assets. The following lists of low scoring components and modifiers were extracted from the dataset as an example of level of service improvements that should be addressed in the short term.

## Staff Level Recommendations based on Inventory and Assessment

### List of Low Scoring Components

The following is a list of components that were identified during the inventory and assessment phase of this study. It is important for the department to develop its own set of criteria and schedule of monitoring assets throughout the system to plan for replacement and upgrades.

LOCATION	COMPONENT	GIS Map ID	COMMENTS	Preliminary Recommendations	Estimate of Probable Costs
Aaron Pasternak Park	Playground, Local	C001	Small structure with pea gravel. Needs ADA path and surfacing.	Update playground structure and add accessible safety surfacing	\$75,000
Aaron Pasternak Park	Shelter, Shade	C115	Not standard.	Replace structure with standard shade shelter	\$25,000
Creekside Park	Playground, Local	C027	Showing age.	Work with adjacent homeowners association on combining efforts to provide a quality park without duplication	TBD
Hyde Park	Playground, Local	C031	Showing age. Pea gravel surfacing.	Update playground structure and add accessible safety surfacing	\$75,000
Independence Park	Playground, Destination	C094	This really falls short of the destination play it deserves to be.	Implement Phase I	To be addressed in Phase I or future park updates (\$3,318,000)
Independence Park	Playground, Local	C096	Recently painted but probably should be updated to new structure.	Implement Phase I	
Independence Park	Loop Walk	C122	Drive loop is popular in evenings with walkers and runners. A loop trail might be more appropriate and reduce pedestrian and auto conflict.	Implement Phase I	
Shadow Creek Ranch NT	Trailhead	C049	Parking and info kiosk only. No restroom. Consider upgrades to trailhead.	Consider upgrades to trailhead.	\$100,000
Shadow Creek Ranch NT	Educational Experience	C100	Poor quality interpretive signs on the trail have faded and are virtually unreadable.	Upgrade existing interpretive signage	\$15,000
Woodcreek Park	Playground, Local	C070	Swingset only. Pea gravel surfacing.	Upgrades in progress	Upgrades in progress



**List of Low Scoring Modifiers**

The following is a list of low scoring modifiers and other park recommendations that were identified during the inventory and assessment phase of this study. It is important for the department to develop its own set of criteria and schedule of monitoring assets throughout the system to plan for replacement and upgrades. Low scoring modifiers are indicated by orange boxes but recommendations may include other suggestions as well. Note: a "0" entry suggests the modifier was not present. Credit is given for presence of a modifier but not implied that all parks must have each modifier.

LOCATION	GIS Map ID	DESIGN & AMBIENCE	DRINKING FOUNTAIN	SEATING	BBQ GRILLS	DOGSTATION	SECURITY LIGHTS	BIKERACK	RESTROOMS	SHADE TREES OR STRUCTURES	TRAIL CONNECTIONS	PARK ACCESS	PARKING	SEASONAL PLANTINGS	ORNAMENTAL PLANTINGS	PICNIC TABLES	COMMENTS	PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS	ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS
Aaron Pasternak Park	L014	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	2	Nice little pocket park with a trail connection.	In need of updates. See low scoring components.	NA
Centennial Park	L002	2	2	2	2	0	2	0	2	2	3	2	1	0	0	2	There are some really good amenities in the park but it just seems well loved and lacking in design and ambience to make this a signature park.	Consider park beautification efforts to increase design and ambience.	TBD
Corrigan Park	L007	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	Empty lot with playground.	Consider park beautification efforts to increase design and ambience. May be appropriate location for small shelter.	TBD
Creekside Park	L006	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	Adjacent to HOA park with similar components	Duplication of service. See low scoring components	NA
Cypress Village Park	L013	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	No sense of place for this park. Would be nice to have a sign or connection to trail on Magnolia. There is an existing sidewalk connection.	Consider park beautification efforts to increase design and ambience. May be appropriate location for small shelter.	TBD
Heritage Plaza	L106	2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	2	0	Nice little passive park.		

Hickory Slough Sportsplex	L111	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	Based on plans. Currently under construction. Modifiers assumed.		
Hyde Park	L004	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	2	1	0	1	2	Similar to Pine Hollow, but lacks the attention to detail.	Consider park beautification efforts.	TBD
Independence Park	L001	3	2	2	2	2	2	0	3	2	3	2	2	0	2	2	Signature park with character. Needs better entry and some updates but otherwise seems to be very popular for both active and passive uses. Includes expansion parcel.	Implement Phase I. See low scoring components	NA
John Hargrove Environmental Center	L114	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0		Planned and funded development	
Pine Hollow Park	L005	3	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	2	2	Probably the nicest neighborhood park in the system.		
Recreation Center	L107	2	2	2	0	0	2	2	3	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	Nice amenities but limited use unless rented.		
Shadow Creek Ranch Nature Trail	L012	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	3	2	2	0	0	0		See low scoring components	NA
Shadow Creek Ranch Sports Complex	L113	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	Field complex under construction. Scoring based plan drawings. Modifiers assumed.	Planned and funded development	
Sonny Tobias Park	L010	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	2	Basically an empty lot with two picnic tables.	Consider park beautification efforts or divest in property	TBD
Southdown Park	L011	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	0	2	2			
Southgate Park	L015	2	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	2	No shade in this park. Park lacks sense of place or ambience.	Consider park beautification efforts to increase design and ambience. May be appropriate location for small shelter.	TBD
Trail Corridor	L112	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	North trail currently developed.		
Woodcreek Park	L003	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	Not as nice as other parks in the system.	Consider park beautification efforts.	TBD

Woody Park	L008	1	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	With the right upgrades this has potential to be a pretty nice park.	Consider park beautification efforts. Also see proposed parks	TBD
Zyclinski Park	L009	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	2	2	0	2	2	Original Pearland Park. Has some historic character that gives it sense of place.	Consider permanent restroom in place of port-o-let	TBD

### List of Proposed Parks and Preliminary Prioritization

The following are parcels included in the original GIS and identified Pearland owned and listed as future/proposed parks. Initial prioritization is based simply on the current level of service in the immediate service areas of each park and the total number of residents potentially impacted by future park development on each parcel. Both current and projected populations are given for a walkable and drive to service area. Pedestrian barriers were factored into walkable service area.

Proposed Park Location	Proposed Park Class	No Service	Low Service	Adequate Service	2015 Total Population within 1/2 mile	2015 Total Population within 1 mile	2020 Total Population within 1/2 mile	2020 Total Population within 1 mile	Comments	Preliminary Priority
Clear Creek Park	Community	X			1974	8191	2054	8734	near Hyde Park	Moderate
Cullen Park	Community	X			487	5366	489	5737	North near Tom Bass Regional Park	Low
Friendswood Hastings Park	Neighborhood	X			256	5734	268	6243	Southeast Pearland	Low
Frug Pond Park	Unknown	X	x		22	5511	26	6385	may provide important trail connection but appears north of river	Moderate
Hastings Cannon Park	Community	X			1547	3188	1645	3388	south of Rec Center	Moderate
Hunter Park	Neighborhood	x	x	X	1353	10217	1532	11121	within threshold area but will impact low and no service areas	Low
Lakes At Highland Glen?	Community	X	X		1157	7053	1286	8000	Northeast of existing park of same name in low and no service area	Moderate

Oakbrook Estates Park	Neighborhood	x	x	X	4496	7478	4921	8134	within threshold area but will impact low and no service areas. Near Aaron Pasternak and Independence Park	Low
SCR Park Site 3	Unknown	x	x	X	1067	6823	1292	8258	may provide important trail connection	Moderate
SCR Park Site 4	Unknown	x	x	X	1081	5163	1309	6248	may provide important trail connection	Moderate
Unnamed (off Garden Rd behind water facility)	Unknown	x	X		2054	4521	2364	5268	near Woody Park	Low
Woody Park Expansion	Community		X	x	2686	7921	2944	8615	room within existing park for more amenities	Moderate

## II. Introduction of the Planning Context

### A. Purpose of this Plan

The Pearland Parks and Recreation Master Plan is intended to help meet the needs of current and future residents by positioning Pearland to build on the community's parks and recreation assets and identify new opportunities. The citizen-driven plan establishes a clear direction to guide city staff, advisory committees, and elected officials in their efforts to enhance the community's parks and recreation services and facilities.

### B. History of Pearland Parks and Recreation Department

The City of Pearland was founded in 1894, and a home rule charter was adopted by an election held in February of 1971.

The City purchased its first large piece of property, Independence Park, in 1975 utilizing funds from a Texas Parks and Wildlife Grant. Then in 1978 and 1982, the City earned further grant funds to develop the park. In 1987, Pearland acquired the parkland for Centennial Park with the same grant through Texas Parks and Wildlife with another grant awarded in 1993 funding the development of the park.



In 2000, there was a \$20 million dollar local bond election for making permanent public improvements regarding purchasing, acquiring, constructing, and improving land facilities and equipment for park and recreation purposes. That 2000 bond election failed. However, in 2007, there were two successful bond propositions related to parks and recreation on the election, and both of those propositions passed. The 2007 question included the Recreation Center and Natatorium for \$16,225,000 as well as multiple park projects, including some of those that had previously been unsuccessful for \$19,990,000.

Southdown Park, was acquired through annexation in January of 2006. One year later, the management and operations of the Westside Event Center, located in that park, also became the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department.

In late 1995, the department began operating a school-based recreation center after school hours at Jr. High East and then expanded to Jamison Middle School in 1998. Both of these school-based programs were discontinued in 2010 with the opening of the Recreation Center and Natatorium.

From an operations and organization perspective, the first time the Parks and Recreation Department appears to have existed as a department, separated from Public Works, is the early '90s. Since that time, the department has seen five directors to date.



In 2014, the City Charter was amended to include information related to the existence of the Parks and Recreation Department, in addition to the previous reference of only a Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board.

### C. Pearland Strategic Framework

Pearland City Council adopted a set of strategic priorities in February 2015. The framework provides staff with a vehicle to establish and communicate a long-term vision for the city focused on goals and objectives. Using these six priorities, the staff works across departments to compile a set of strategic objectives. These strategic objectives are actionable items tied to each priority and are designed to guide day-to-day decision making, budget requests, policy decisions and future efforts at establishing a comprehensive performance measurement program.

The concentric circles of the strategic priorities indicate that there is to be a balance of these priorities. Attention to all of these interlocking factors creates for the community the balanced, attractive, desirable, competitive, and sustainable place envisioned for the future. At the center of all of the priorities are the citizens and the community. This central focus on citizens, reminds staff that these priorities are centered our community members and citizenry. With the citizens at the center of service delivery, it becomes critical that members of the community are engaged and involved at all levels. The Parks Department goals have been shown indicating their alignment with these overall strategic priorities, the Parks' contributions to furthering some part of **all** of these priorities, and can be seen in the following table.



Pearland Parks Goals	City overall strategic priorities					
	Safe Community	Engaged Community	Parks, Recreation and Events	Fiscally Responsible	Sustainable Infrastructure	Healthy Economy
Ensure that all parks facilities are maintained efficiently, cost effectively, safely, and in accordance with all standards and codes.	X		X		X	X
Provide and maintain park land and recreation facilities that meet the present and future recreational needs of the community.		X	X			X
Ensure that recreation programs are accessible and meet the interests and needs of a variety of ages and abilities by providing programs independently and in cooperation with other community organizations or agencies.		X	X	X		X
Ensure the success of the organization through the continued development of the staff and department.			X			
Ensure that the operations of the department are effective, well-managed and customer-friendly.		X	X			
Exercise fiscal responsibility and prudence in all financial and business transactions.			X	X		
Preserve natural resources, conserve energy and protect and enhance the environment.			X		X	X
Proactively communicate and provide information, internally and externally to community residents, other public agencies, private sector organizations, and staff.		X	X			

### D. Parks and Recreation Department Overview

Pearland is located in the Texas Gulf Coast Region in northern Brazoria County with a small portion of the city in Fort Bend and Harris County. Pearland is approximately 20 minutes from downtown Houston and 8 miles from the Texas Medical Center.

- Current City Limit: 46.5 square miles
- Current Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ): 26.2 square miles
- Total Pearland area: 72.70 square miles

The City's Parks and Recreation Department, a **CAPRA accredited agency**, is a source of community pride and is responsible for the many parks, recreation facilities, and programs that are important factors in the quality of life in the community.

The city parks, trails, and community facilities, combined with amenities and facilities provided by other entities, create a comprehensive park system. The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of recreation programs from youth to seniors and covers areas such as health and fitness, outdoor recreation, athletics, aquatics, etc. In addition to ongoing recreation programs, the department co-hosts and/or participates in a number of special events including Winterfest, July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration of Freedom, Paws in the Park, Concerts in the Park, Hometown Christmas, and more.



The Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board, which is comprised of local citizens who have been appointed by City Council to serve three-year terms, support the Parks and Recreation Department. The Board's fundamental responsibilities include studying the recreation, park facilities, and beautification programs of the City and recommending use of and rules for the City's parks as well as being involved in recommendations related to services provided.

## E. Related Planning Efforts and Integration

The City of Pearland has undertaken several planning efforts in recent years that have helped inform the planning process for this Plan. These documents include:

- City of Pearland Trails Master Plan, 2007
- City of Pearland Comprehensive Plan
- PEDC Strategic Plan
- Safe Routes to School Plan

These documents were reviewed by the consultant team and have been endorsed and integrated into the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan where applicable with no conflicts within any of these existing planning efforts.

## F. Methodology of this Planning Process

This project has been guided by a project team made up of city staff, with input from the Parks, Recreation, and Beautification Board. This team provided input to the GreenPlay consulting team throughout the planning process. This collaborative effort creates a plan that fully utilizes the consultant's expertise and incorporates the local knowledge and institutional history that only community members can provide. The project consisted of the following tasks:

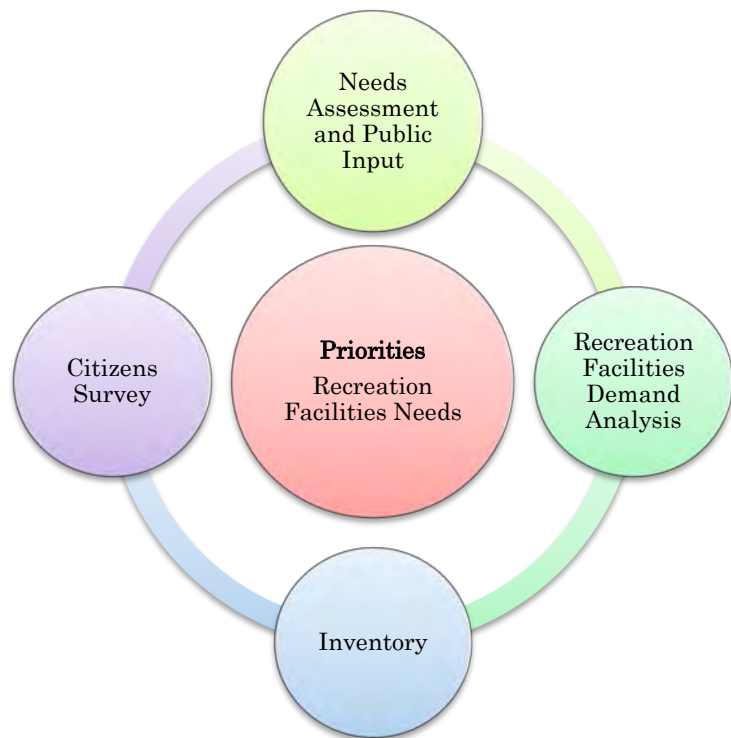
- 1. Community Engagement**
- 2. Facility Inventory**
- 3. GRASP<sup>®</sup> Level of Service Analysis**
- 4. Needs Assessment**
- 5. Operational and Marketing Analysis**
- 6. Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan**

## Community Engagement

- Review of previous planning efforts, city historical information.
- Extensive community involvement effort including focus groups, meetings with key stakeholders, and community-wide public meetings.
- Statistically-valid community interest and opinion survey.

## Facility Inventory

- Inventory of parks and facilities using existing mapping, staff interviews, and on-site visits to verify amenities and assess the condition of the facilities and surrounding areas.
- GRASP® Level of Service Analysis.
- Interviews with staff to provide information about parks and recreation facilities and services, along with insight regarding the current practices and experiences of the City in serving its residents and visitors.
- Identification of alternative providers of recreation services to provide insight regarding the market opportunities in the area for potential new facilities and services.
- Analysis addressing parks, recreation, and related services.



## Assessment and Analysis

- Review and assessment of relevant plans.
- Measurement of the current delivery of service for park and recreation facilities using the GRASP® Level of Service Analysis and allowing for a target level of service to be determined that is both feasible and aligned with the desires of citizens as expressed through the citizen survey. This analysis is also represented graphically in GRASP® Perspectives.
- Exploration of finance and funding mechanisms to support development and sustainability within the system.

## Needs Assessment

- Consideration of the profile of the community and demographics, including population growth.
- Research of trends related to American lifestyles to help guide the efforts over the next several years.

### **Operational and Marketing Analysis**

- Analysis of the Pearland programming and service delivery.
- An organizational SWOT analysis.
- Broad assessment of the overall Parks and Recreation Department operations.

### **Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan**

- Identification and categorization of recommendations into themes with goals, objectives, and an action plan for implementation.
- Development of an action plan for capital improvements including cost, funding source potentials, and timeframe to support the implementation of the plan.



### III. What We Want – Our Community and Identified Needs

#### A. The City of Pearland Population and Demographic Trends

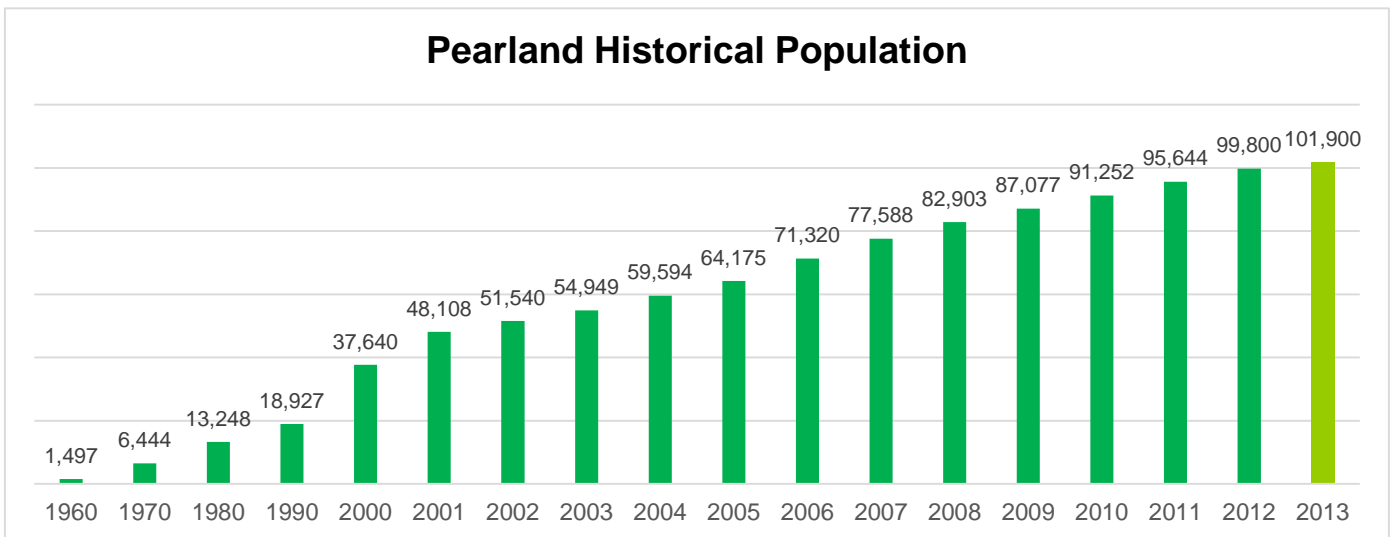
Pearland is located primarily in northern Brazoria County, with portions extending into Fort Bend and Harris Counties. The city is a fast growing suburban city 16 miles south of Houston. As of the 2010 census, the city's population was 91,252, up from a population of 37,640 at the 2000 census. Pearland's population growth rate from 2000 to 2010 was 142 percent. Growth is projected to follow this trend with 125,119 residents expected to call Pearland home by 2020. This rapid growth has created challenges in the ability of the department to keep pace with the increasing population. The department has met these challenges admirably providing parks, programs, and facilities in order to serve the recreational and quality of life needs of the citizens.

The city's recreational needs are served with 14 parks, 4 indoor facilities, and 49 miles of trails operated by the Parks and Recreation department. There are also 57 public schools with grounds and facilities available to serve the public. These features are augmented by 89 alternate provider park locations and 18 other indoor facilities. The Pearland City parks primarily serve as community parks, while there is a reliance on Home Owners Associations and other alternate providers to provide the neighborhood parks.

#### B. City of Pearland Demographic Profile

Understanding community demographics is an important component of preparing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This chapter provides a demographic overview of the City of Pearland with the highlights of the Pearland Economic and Demographic Profile 2013 Update that was prepared for the Pearland Economic Development Corporation by CDS Market Research. This entire report can be found in **Appendix A**.

Figure 1: Demographic Highlights



Pearland's population has grown rapidly since its incorporation, and especially in the past decade. The 2010 US Census counted the city's population at 91,252. This marks a 142.4 percent increase since the 2000 Census count of 37,640. The number of housing units also increased dramatically, from 13,895 to 33,169, a 138.7 percent increase. For 2011, according to the Census, Pearland added 4,392 net new residents. The 2013 estimate of 101,900 residents is from Nielsen/Claritas 2013 Demographic Data.

**Table 1: Pearland Census Demographics - 2000, 2010, 2011, 2013**

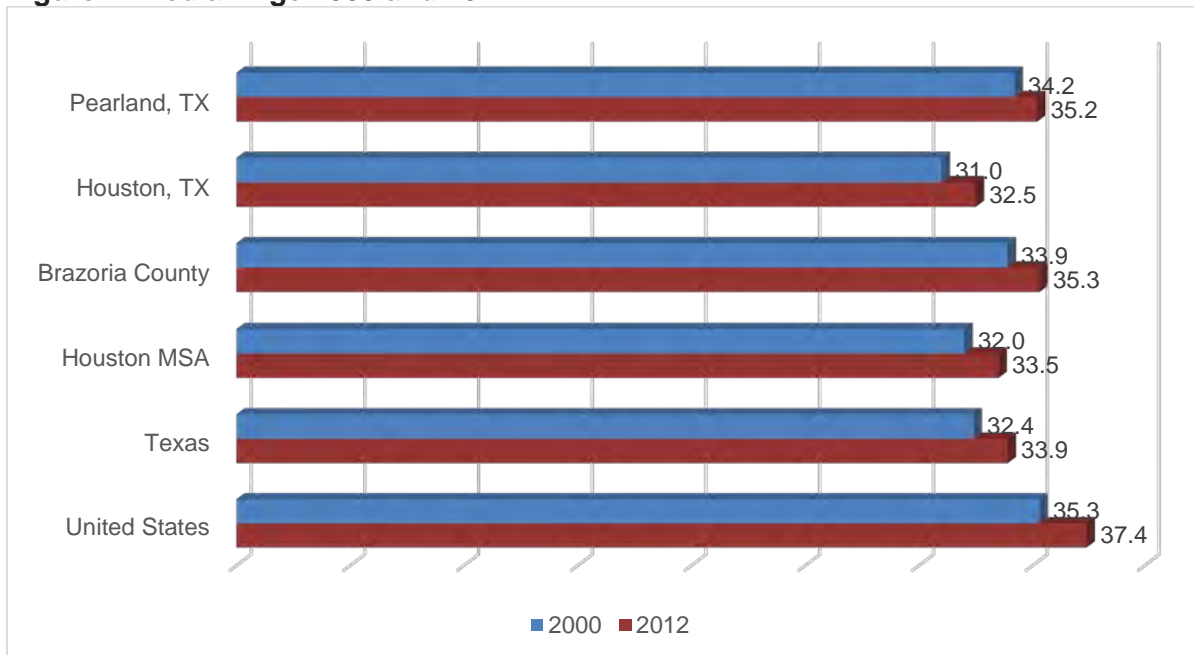
Pearland, TX	2000 Census		2010 Census		Change 2000-2010		2011 Census ACS1		2013 Claritas <sup>2</sup>	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Increase	Count	Share	Count	Share
White, not Hispanic	27,629	73%	44,522	49%	16,893	61%	47,066	48.7%	43,682	49%
Black or African American, not Hispanic	1,968	5%	14,709	16%	12,741	647%	12,564	13.0%	18,299	16%
American Indian/Alaska Native, not Hispanic	111	0.3%	255	0.3%	144	130%	290	0.3%	265	0.3%
Asian, not Hispanic	1,355	4%	11,206	12%	9,851	727%	13,530	14.0%	15,158	15%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, not Hispanic	14	0.0%	29	0.0%	15	107%	0	0.0%	32	0.0%
Some Other Race, not Hispanic	47	0.1%	194	0.2%	147	313%	0	0.0%	225	0.2%
Two or More Races, not Hispanic	409	1%	1,643	2%	1,234	302%	1,353	1.4%	1,997	2.0%
Hispanic or Latino	6,107	16%	18,694	21%	12,587	206%	21,841	22.6%	22,242	22%
Total Population	37,640		91,252		53,612	142%	96,644		101,900	
Occupied Housing Units/Households	13,192	95%	31,222	94%	18,030	137%	33,632	92.4%	33,393	93%
Total Housing Units	13,895		33,169		19,274	139%	36,385		35,920	

**Table 2: Pearland Age and Gender Demographics Comparison – 2000 to 2013**

Pearland, TX	2000 Census		2010 Census		2011 ACS		2013 Claritas	
	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share	Count	Share
Male	18,468	49.1%	44,354	48.6%	46,196	48.3%	49,681	48.8%
Female	19,172	50.9%	46,898	51.4%	49,448	51.7%	52,219	51.2%
Total Population	37,640		91,252		95,644		101,900	
Under Age 10	6,031	16.0%	16,002	17.5%	17,790	18.6%	17,835	17.5%
Age 10 to 17	4,824	12.8%	10,865	11.9%	10,865	11.4%	12,613	12.4%
Age 18 to 24	2,762	7.3%	7,816	8.6%	8,838	9.2%	7,843	7.7%
Age 25 to 34	5,681	15.1%	13,945	15.3%	14,155	14.8%	13,485	13.2%
Age 35 to 44	7,205	19.1%	15,775	17.3%	16,164	16.9%	17,084	16.8%
Age 45 to 54	5,164	13.7%	12,763	14.0%	14,060	14.7%	14,473	14.2%
Age 55 to 64	2,814	7.5%	8,540	9.4%	7,652	8.0%	10,184	10.0%
Age 65 and Over	3,159	8.4%	7,037	7.7%	6,026	6.3%	8,383	8.2%
Median Age	34.2		34.0		33.0		34.4	

Pearland's slight decrease in median age between 2000 and 2010 (**Figure 2**) stands in contrast to local, state, and national trends. Despite this, Pearland's population remains older than that in the city of Houston, the Houston MSA, and the entire state of Texas.

**Figure 2: Median Age 2000 and 2012**



As shown in **Table 3**, Pearland's rapid population increase has moved it from the tenth largest city in the Houston MSA to the third. Pearland passed several cities that also saw significant growth between 2000 and 2010, including League City, Sugar Land, Missouri City, and the Woodlands.

**Table 3: Houston MSA Largest Cities**

	City or CDP	2013 Estimate	2010 Population	2000 Population	2000 Rank
1	Houston	2,208,653	2,099,451	1,953,631	1
2	Pasadena	154,769	149,043	141,674	2
3	Pearland	101,900	91,252	37,640	10
4	The Woodlands	100,308	93,847	63,135	5
5	League City	89,158	83,560	45,444	7
6	Sugar Land	82,825	78,817	63,328	4
7	Baytown	75,649	71,802	66,430	3
8	Missouri City	70,401	67,358	52,913	7
9	Conroe	60,197	56,207	36,811	11
10	Galveston	47,492	47,743	57,247	5
11	Texas City	46,269	45,099	41,521	9

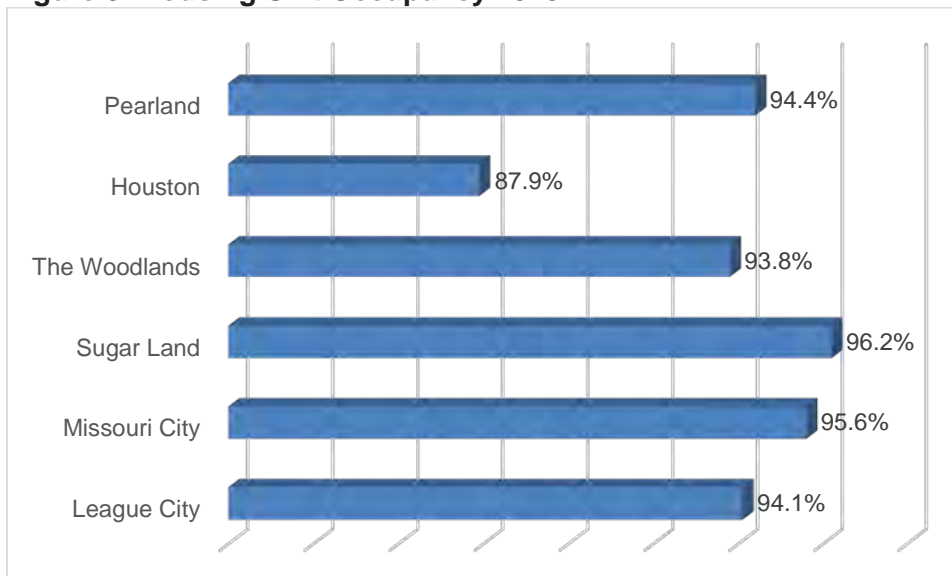
Pearland's population growth percentage between 2000 and 2013, as shown in **Table 4**, was the highest among large cities in the Houston MSA by a wide margin. According to the 2013 Claritas estimates, Pearland's eight percent average annual population and housing growth rate continues to lead other cities in the region.

**Table 4: Houston MSA Large City Growth Comparison**

	Pearland	Houston	The Woodlands	Sugar Land	Missouri City	League City	Pasadena
2000 Population	37,640	1,953,631	63,135	63,328	52,913	45,444	141,674
2010 Population	91,252	2,099,451	93,847	78,817	67,358	83,560	149,043
2013 Population	101,900	2,208,653	100,308	82,825	60,197	89,158	154,769
Population % Growth '00-'10	170.72%	13.05%	58.88%	30.79%	13.77%	96.19%	9.24%
Avg. Annual Pop Growth '00-'13	7.96%	0.95%	3.63%	2.09%	1.00%	5.32%	0.68%
<b>Housing Units</b>							
2000 Housing Units	13,895	782,378	21,008	21,159	17,439	17,244	50,229
2010 Housing Units	33,169	892,646	37,339	27,727	23,374	32,119	53,899
2013 Housing Units	35,920	937,412	40,272	29,792	24,578	33,583	55,904
Housing Unit % Growth '00-'10	158.51%	19.82%	91.70%	40.80%	40.94%	94.75%	11.30%
Avg. Annual HU Growth '00-'13	7.58%	1.40%	5.13%	2.67%	2.67%	5.26%	0.83%

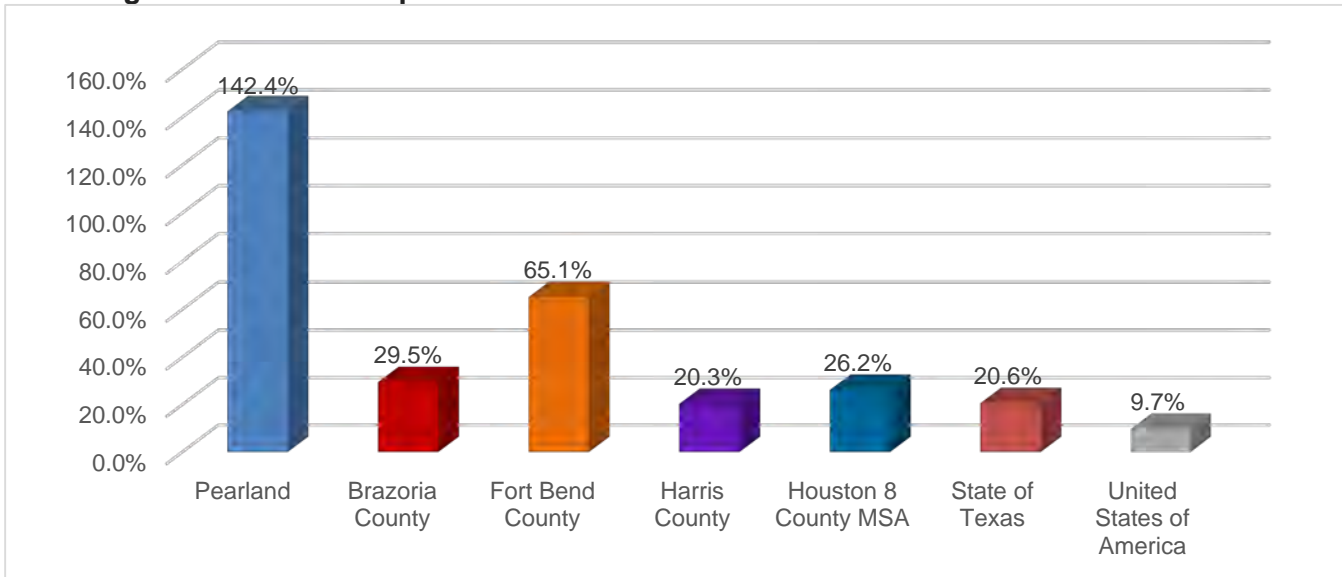
As shown in **Figure 3**, the housing unit occupancy in Pearland compares favorably with comparable cities in the Houston MSA.

**Figure 3: Housing Unit Occupancy 2013**



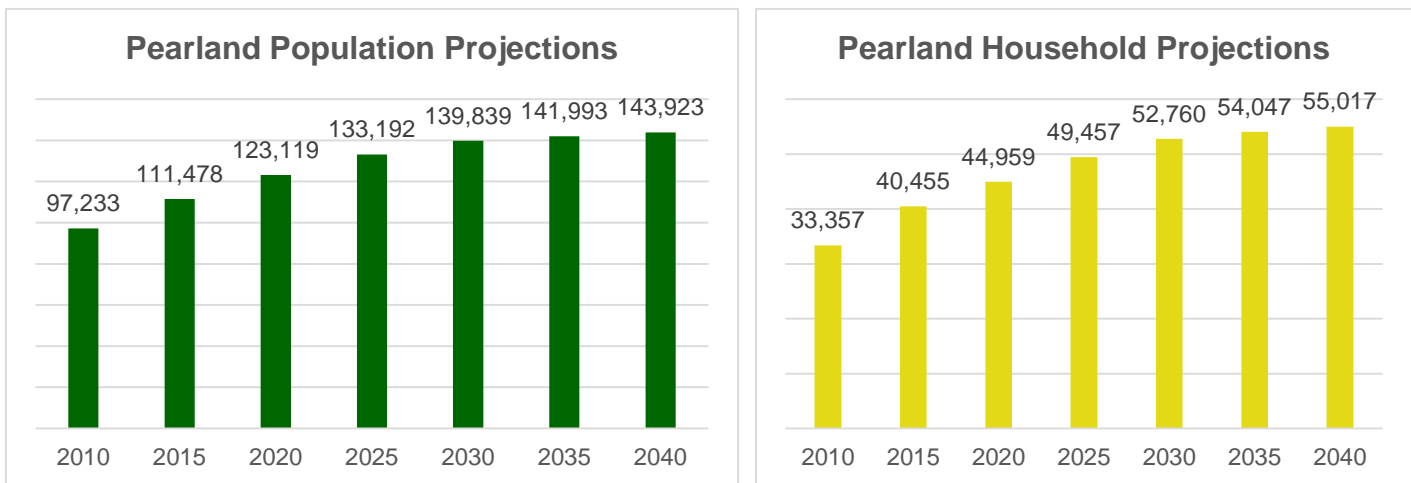
Pearland has grown at more than double the rate of any of the three counties that contain it (**Figure 4**). It has grown at nearly 6 times the rate of the Houston MSA, 8 times the rate of the State of Texas, and 14 times the rate of the United States as a whole.

**Figure 4: Pearland Population Growth 2000-2010**



Based on the current city limit boundaries, Pearland's population is forecast to grow by over 46,000 from 2010 to 2040 (**Figure 5**), coupled with an increase of 21,660 households. The overwhelming majority of this growth is forecast in the 15-year period of 2010 to 2025 with the largest percent and total number increases occurring in the first 5-year period (2010 to 2015). Overall growth rates of population and households during this 30-year period are 48.0 percent and 64.9 percent, respectively. The significantly higher rate of growth of households in the forecast illustrates the expectation that average household size will fall from 2.9 to 2.6 by 2040.

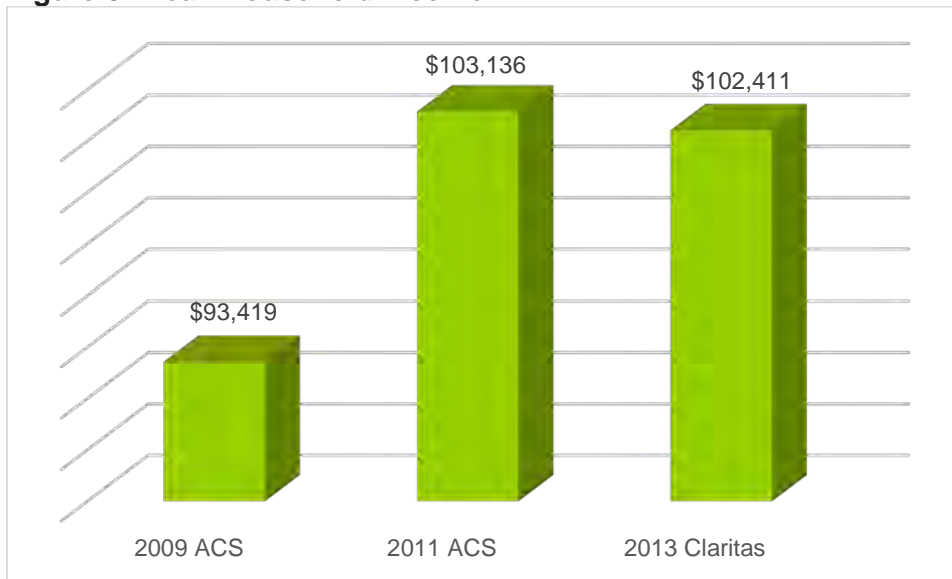
**Figure 5: Population and Household Projections**



**Figure 6** shows that the mean (average) household income in Pearland exceeds \$100,000 – one of the highest income communities in the Houston region.

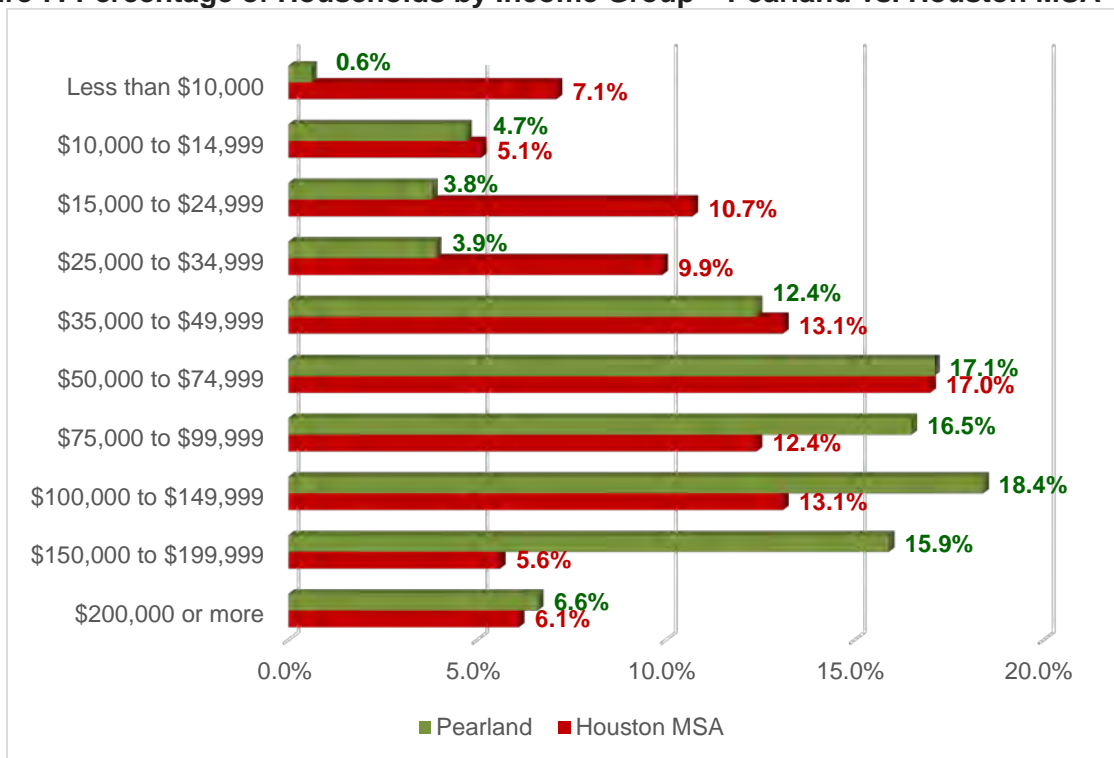


**Figure 6: Mean Household Income**



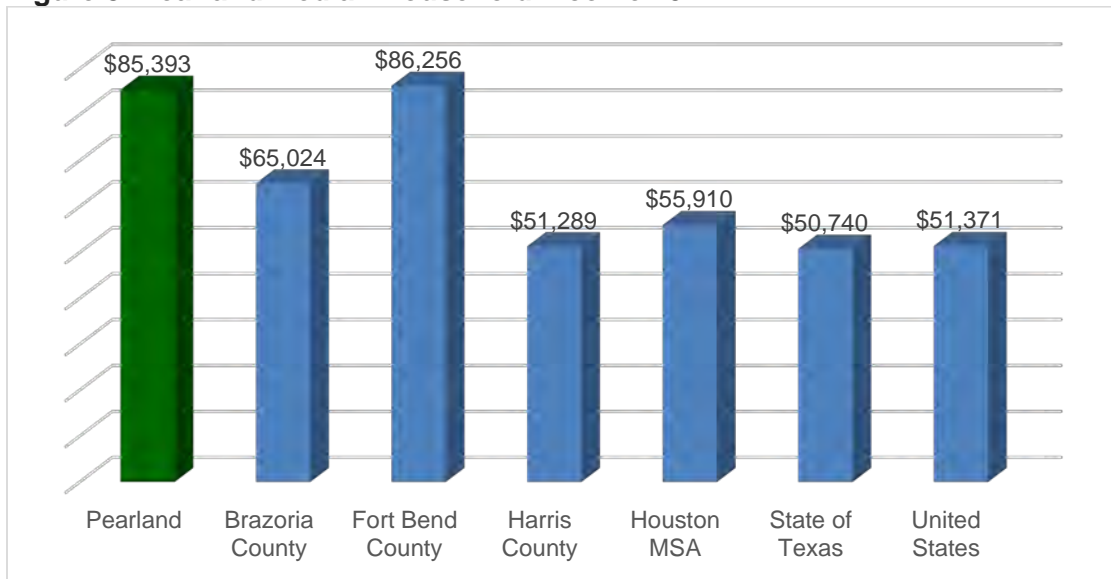
Forty-one percent (41%) of Pearland households have incomes greater than \$100,000, as compared with the Houston MSA percentage over \$100,000 of 23.8 percent. Only six percent of the households in Pearland have incomes below \$25,000, while 22.7 percent of MSA households are below \$25K (see **Figure 7**).

**Figure 7: Percentage of Households by Income Group – Pearland vs. Houston MSA**

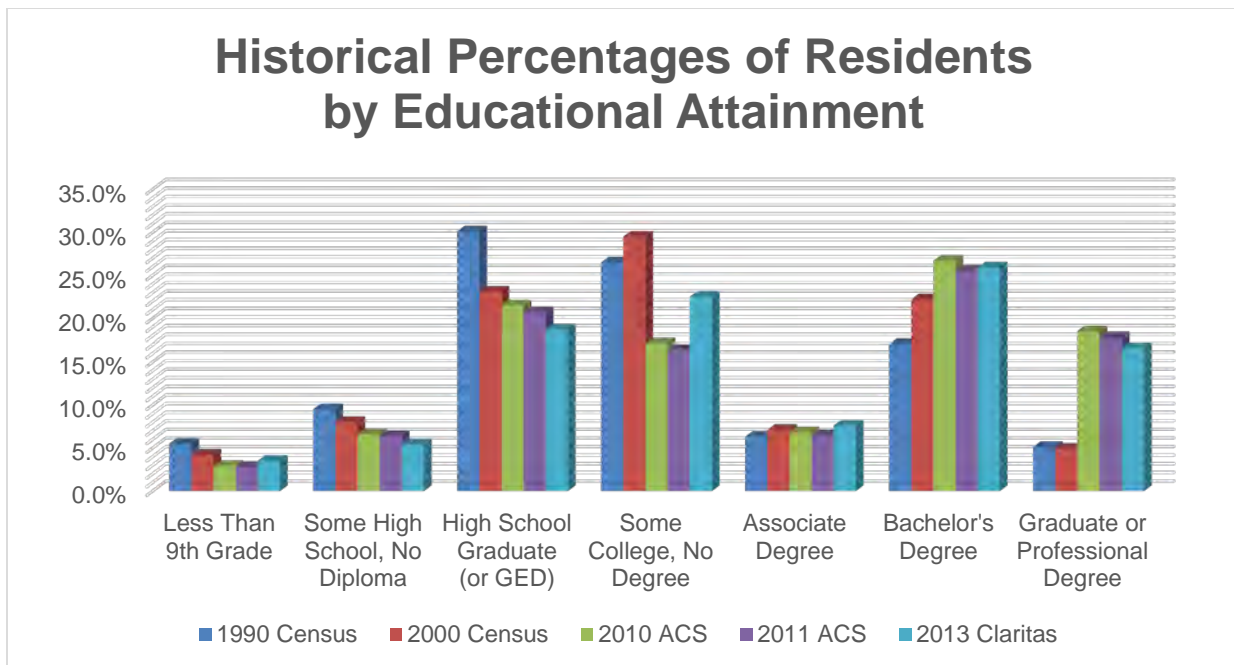


Pearland's median household income is 66 percent higher than the national median.

**Figure 8: Pearland Median Household Income 2012**



**Figure 9: Pearland Educational Attainment**



**Only 9.0% of Pearland residents do not have a high school diploma as compared to 14.6% for the U.S. as a whole.**

## C. Park and Recreation Influencing Trends

The following information highlights relevant regional and national recreational trends from various sources that may influence the City of Pearland recreation planning for the next several years.

### Demographic Trends in Recreation

The highest ranking age cohort in Pearland is 35-44 (17.3% of the population) followed by the 25-34 and 45-54 cohorts (each at 13.7%). Additionally, the 65-84 age range is expected to grow from 14 percent in 2010 to 15.9 percent in 2019. Planning for the next ten years suggests a growing demand for programs and services for Baby Boomers and seniors.

#### Adult – The Baby Boomers - Planning for the Demographic Shift

Baby Boomers are defined as individuals born between 1946 and 1964, as stated in *Leisure Programming for Baby Boomers*.<sup>1</sup> They are a generation that consists of nearly 76 million Americans. In 2011, this influential population began its transition out of the workforce. As Baby Boomers enter retirement, they will be looking for opportunities in fitness, sports, outdoors, arts and cultural events, and other activities that suit their lifestyles. With their varied life experiences, values, and expectations, Baby Boomers are predicted to redefine the meaning of recreation and leisure programming for mature adults.

In the July 2012 issue of *Parks and Recreation* magazine, published by NRPA, Emilyn Sheffield, Professor of Recreation and Parks Management at the California State University, wrote an article titled, “Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today.” In it, she indicated that Baby Boomers are driving the aging of America with Boomers and seniors over 65 composing about 39 percent of the nation’s population.<sup>2</sup>

In the leisure profession, this generation’s devotion to exercise and fitness is an example of its influence on society. When Boomers entered elementary school, President John F. Kennedy initiated the President’s Council on Physical Fitness; physical education and recreation became a key component of public education. As Boomers matured and moved into the workplace, they took their desire for exercise and fitness with them. Now, as the oldest Boomers are approaching 70, park and recreation professionals are faced with new approaches to provide both passive and active programming for older adults. Boomers are second only to Gen Y/Millennials (born between 1980 and 1999) in participation in fitness and outdoor sports.<sup>3</sup>

Jeffrey Ziegler, a past president of the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association identified “Boomer Basics” in his article, “Recreating retirement: how will Baby Boomers reshape leisure in their 60s?”<sup>4</sup> Highlights are summarized below.

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Cochran, Anne Roshchadl, and Jodi Rudick, *Leisure Programming For Baby Boomers*, Human Kinetics, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Emilyn Sheffield, “Five Trends Shaping Tomorrow Today,” *Parks and Recreation*, July 2012 p. 16-17.

<sup>3</sup> 2012 Participation Report, Physical Activity Council, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Jeffrey Ziegler, “Recreating Retirement: How Will Baby Boomers Reshape Leisure in Their 60s?” *Parks and Recreation*, October 2002.

## **Boomer Basics**

Boomers are known to work hard, play hard, and spend hard. They have always been fixated with all things youthful. Boomers typically respond that they feel 10 years younger than their chronological age. Their nostalgic mindset keeps Boomers returning to the sights and sounds of their 1960s youth culture. Swimming pools have become less of a social setting and much more of an extension of Boomers' health and wellness program. Because Boomers in general have a high education level, they will likely continue to pursue education as adults and into retirement.

The Pearland demographic profile indicates that close to 30 percent of the current population is within the 45-74 age demographic which includes the Baby Boomer age range (those approximately 50-68 years of age).

Boomers will look to park and recreation professionals to give them opportunities to enjoy many life-long hobbies and sports. When programming for this age group, a customized experience to cater to the need for self-fulfillment, healthy pleasure, nostalgic youthfulness, and individual escapes will be important. Recreation trends will shift from games and activities that Boomers associate with senior citizens, as Ziegler suggests that activities such as bingo, bridge, and shuffleboard will likely be avoided because Boomers relate these activities to being old.

Boomers will reinvent what being a 65-year-old means. Parks and recreation agencies that do not plan for Boomers carrying on in retirement with the same hectic pace at which they have lived during their years in employment will be left behind. Things to consider when planning for the demographic shift:

- Boomer characteristics
- Boomer drivers
- Marketing to Boomers
- Arts and entertainment
- Passive and active fitness trends
- Outdoor recreation/adventure programs
- Travel programs

## **Youth – Planning for the Demographic Shift**

Emilyn Sheffield also identified that the proportion of youth is smaller than in the past, but is still essential to the future. As of the 2010 Census, the age group under the age of 18 forms about a quarter of the U.S. population, and this percentage is at an all-time low. Nearly half of this population group is ethnically diverse, and 25 percent is Hispanic.

## **Multiculturalism**

Our country is becoming increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. In May 2012, the U.S. Census Bureau announced that non-white babies now account for the majority of births in the United States. "This is an important tipping point," said William H. Frey,<sup>5</sup> senior demographer at the Brookings Institution, describing the shift as a, "...transformation from a mostly white Baby Boomer culture to the more globalized multi-ethnic country that we are becoming." Cultural and ethnic diversity adds a unique flavor to communities expressed through distinct neighborhoods, multicultural learning environments, restaurants, places of worship, museums, and nightlife.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Adam Serwer, "The End of White America," Mother Jones, <http://www.motherjones.com/kevin-drum/2012/05/end-white-america>, May 17, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Baldwin Ellis, "The Effects of Culture and Diversity on America," [http://www.ehow.com/facts\\_5512569\\_effects-culture-diversity-america.html](http://www.ehow.com/facts_5512569_effects-culture-diversity-america.html), accessed on Sept. 20, 2012.

As the recreation field continues to function within a more diverse society, race and ethnicity will become increasingly important in every aspect of the profession. More than ever, recreation professionals will be expected to work with, and have significant knowledge and understanding

The Pearland demographic profile indicates that in 2014 17.8 percent of the population is African-American, and 13.7 percent is Asian. Additionally, 22.7 percent of the population is of Hispanic Origin (any race).

of, individuals from many cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

### **Multiculturalism and Marketing**

Today the marketplace for consumers has dramatically evolved in the United States from a largely Anglo demographic, to the reality that the United States has shifted to a large minority consumer base known as “new majority.”

The San Jose Group, a consortium of marketing communications companies specializing in reaching Hispanic and non-Hispanic markets of the United States, suggests that today’s multicultural population, or the “new majority,” is 107.6 million, which translates to about 35.1 percent of the country’s total population. The United States’ multicultural population alone could essentially be the 12<sup>th</sup> largest country in the world.<sup>7</sup> Parks and recreation trends in marketing leisure services continue to emerge and should be taken into consideration in all planning efforts, as different cultures respond differently to marketing techniques.

### **Facilities**

The current national trend is toward “one-stop” indoor recreation facilities to serve all ages. Large, multi-purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use. Agencies across the U.S. are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Multi-use facilities versus specialized space is a trend, offering programming opportunities as well as free-play opportunities. “One stop” facilities attract young families, teens, and adults of all ages.



### **Aquatics/Water Recreation Trends**

According to the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA), swimming ranked third nationwide in terms of participation in 2012.<sup>8</sup> Outdoor swimming pools are not typically heated and open year round. Swimming for fitness is the top aspirational activity for “inactives” in 6 of 8 age categories in the SFIA “2013 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report,” representing a significant opportunity to engage inactive populations. Nationally, there is an increasing trend toward indoor leisure and therapeutic pools. Additional indoor and outdoor amenities like “spray pads” are becoming increasingly popular as well.

<sup>7</sup> “SJG Multicultural Facts and Trends,” San Jose Group, <http://blog.thesanjosegroup.com/?p=275>, posted October 25, 2010.

<sup>8</sup> National Sporting Goods Association, “2012 Participation – Ranked by Total Participation,” 2013.



## **Dog Parks**

Dog parks continue to see high popularity and have remained among the top planned addition to parks and recreational facilities over the past three years. In 2014, the National Dog Park Association was founded – a new association dedicated to providing informational resources for starting and maintaining dog parks.

## **General Programming**

One of the most common concerns in the recreation industry is creating innovative programming to draw participants into facilities and services. Once in, participants recognize that the benefits and are likely return. In addition to traditional programs, many departments plan to add programs to emphasize health and wellness, active adults, education and enrichment programs, and nature/outdoor recreation.

## **Festivals and Events**

In the context of urban development, from the early 1980s, there has been a process that can be characterized as “festivalization,” which has been linked to the economic restructuring of towns and cities, and the drive to develop communities as large-scale platforms for the creation and consumption of “cultural experience.” There are also a growing number of smaller, more local community-based festivals and events in communities. These events are seen as community builders and provide additional economic benefit to the community as well.

## **Shade Structures**

Communities around the country are considering adding shade structures as well as shade trees to their parks, playgrounds, and pools as, “...a weapon against cancer and against childhood obesity”; without adequate shade, many play areas are simply too hot to be inviting to children. On sunny days, the playground equipment is hot enough to scald the hands of would-be users.

Trees help, as their leaves absorb about 95 percent of ultraviolet radiation, but they take a decade or more to grow large enough to make a difference. As such, many communities are building shade structures instead.

## **Natural Environments and Open Space Conservation**

The top ten recommendations of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Conservation Task Force were published in the November 2011 issue of *Parks and Recreation* magazine.<sup>9</sup> These recommendations are a compilation of best practices used by trend-setting agencies.

- 1) Take a leadership role in the community to promote conservation. Park and recreation agencies have a unique opportunity to bring governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, community leaders, and the public together for the cause of working together on community wide conservation objectives – clean water, wildlife habitat preservation, reducing energy use, and improving environmental quality. Park and recreation agencies must lead the way in promoting conservation to diverse and underserved audiences.

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<sup>9</sup> “Conservation Leaders in our Community,” National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), November 2011 Magazine, pages 85-101, <http://digital.parksandrecreation.org/launch.aspx?referral=otherandpnnum=andrefresh=Fj302M1i0bE7andEID=8201df86-57c9-428c-b31c-18125a54265candskip=>

- 2) Lead by example in employing best management conservation practices in parks. Park and recreation agencies should become the catalyst in the community for conservation by showing how best practices can be adopted (i.e. not mowing what you do not need to mow; stopping wasteful energy consumption; and reducing pesticide use). Show the public how conservation practices can benefit everyone.
- 3) Engage volunteers in conservation and stewardship. Create a sense of belonging and stewardship for parks by creating a personal sense of ownership and value. Enable people to identify with their parks and natural resources, and to care about their future. Sustain stewardship by creating meaningful public participation in implementation of conservation principles and practices.
- 4) Establish a strategic land acquisition strategy based on knowledge and awareness of significant natural and cultural resources (watershed protection, unique ecological characteristics, and sensitive natural areas deserving protection). As the largest owners of public land within most communities, park and recreation agencies should lead the way in developing a strategic vision for preserving open space and conserving important landscapes and natural features.
- 5) Engage youth in conservation. Get kids and teens outdoors and enjoying their parks. The experience of nature is inherently rewarding for youth. Set as a goal to connect kids in the community to nature and the outdoors. Children and youth will be fascinated by nature and will develop a lifelong affinity as well as a conservation ethic if they have early opportunities to enjoy nature and recreate outdoors in a safe, rewarding way.
- 6) Conserve energy in all ways. Park and recreation agencies must lead by example, showing the public how and why they should adopt practices that they can see demonstrated in parks and recreation facilities. Park and recreation agencies should adopt energy conservation measures that make sense and save public taxpayer funds.
- 7) Protect natural resources in parks and in the community. A core mission of public parks is to protect land and water resources and to be stewards of natural resources. This means committing personnel and resources to protect natural and cultural resources and creating sustainable long-term methods of funding this conservation mission. Parks and recreation agencies are entrusted with some of the most important public assets of a community, and the conservation and long-term protection of this public trust is and should be a core component of every parks and recreation agency's mission.
- 8) Create sustainable landscapes that demonstrate principles of conservation. Utilize sustainable landscape practices to save taxpayer funds, to measurably improve conservation benefits, and to educate the public about conservation. For example, agencies can reduce turf grass and mowing frequency, replace turf with native plants, manage floodplains for multiple uses including conservation and public recreation, enhance wetlands for water filtration and groundwater recharge, plant model landscapes of drought tolerant native plants adapted to climate and culture, and promote parks as food sources through edible landscapes and community gardens.

- 9) Forge partnerships that foster the mission of conservation. The greatest and most beneficial conservation successes most often occur as a result of collaboration. Park and recreation agencies should partner with non-profit and community service organizations, universities and colleges, school systems, other governmental agencies, and non-traditional partners for conservation outcomes. Promote health, education, and other goals while working toward a common mission of conservation.
- 10) Utilize technology to promote conservation. Park and recreation agencies need to embrace technology to promote conservation. This is not only in applications such as GIS, but in utilizing social media to engage the public, especially youth. Technology is not to be feared as something that detracts from the conservation mission of parks agencies, but rather, it is to be accepted as a means of sharing knowledge and connecting people to conservation and stewardship.

### Nature Programming

Noted as early as 2003 in *Recreation Management* magazine, park agencies have been seeing an increase in interest in environmental-oriented “back to nature” programs. In 2007, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) sent out a survey to member agencies in order to learn more about the programs and facilities that public park and recreation agencies provide to connect children and their families with nature.<sup>10</sup> A summary of the results follow:

- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of public parks and recreation agencies offer nature-based programming, and 61 percent have nature-based facilities.
- The most common programs include nature hikes, nature-oriented arts and crafts, fishing-related events, and nature-based education in cooperation with local schools.
- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful programs, agencies listed staff training as most important followed by program content and number of staff/staff training.
- When asked what resources would be needed most to expand programming, additional staff was most important followed by funding.
- Of the agencies that do not currently offer nature-based programming, 90 percent indicated that they want to in the future. Additional staff and funding were again the most important resources these agencies would need going forward.
- The most common facilities include: nature parks/preserves, self-guided nature trails, outdoor classrooms, and nature centers.

“There’s a direct link between a lack of exposure to nature and higher rates of attention-deficit disorder, obesity, and depression. In essence, parks and recreation agencies can and are becoming the ‘preferred provider’ for offering this preventative healthcare.”

**Fran P. Mainella**, former director of the National Park Service and Instructor at Clemson University.

<sup>10</sup> National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), “NRPA Completes Agency Survey Regarding Children and Nature,” [http://www.narrp.org/assets/Library/Children\\_in\\_Nature/nrpa\\_survey\\_regarding\\_children\\_and\\_nature\\_2007.pdf](http://www.narrp.org/assets/Library/Children_in_Nature/nrpa_survey_regarding_children_and_nature_2007.pdf), April 2007.

- When asked to describe the elements that directly contribute to their most successful facilities, agencies listed funding as most important followed by presence of wildlife and community support.

Figures from the Association for Interpretative Naturalists, a national group of nature professionals, demonstrate that nature-based programs are on the rise. According to Tim Merriman, the association’s Executive Director, the group was founded in 1954 with 40 members. It now boasts 4,800 members, with research indicating that about 20,000 paid interpreters are working nationally, along with an army of more than 500,000 unpaid volunteers staffing nature programs at parks, zoos, and museums. The growth of these programs is thought to come from replacing grandparents as the teacher about the “great outdoors.” It is also speculated that a return to natural roots and renewed interest in life’s basic elements was spurred as a response to September 11, 2001.<sup>11</sup>

In his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*,<sup>12</sup> Richard Louv introduced the concept of the restorative qualities of being out in nature, for both children and adults. This concept, and research in support of it, has led to a growing movement promoting connections with nature in daily life. One manifestation of this is the development of Nature Explore Classrooms in parks. Nature Explore<sup>13</sup> is a collaborative program of the Arbor Day Foundation and the non-profit organization, Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, with a mission of helping children and families develop a profound engagement with the natural world, where nature is an integral, joyful part of children’s daily learning. Nature Explore works to support efforts to connect children with nature.



### **Economic and Health Benefits of Parks**

There are numerous economic and health benefits of parks, including the following:

- Trails, parks, and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home.
- Research from the University of Illinois shows that trees, parks, and green spaces have a profound impact on people’s health and mental outlook.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Margaret Ahrweiler, “Call of the Wild – From beautiful blossoms to bugs and guts, nature programs are growing as people return to their roots” *Recreation Management* magazine, [Http://recmanagement.com/200310fe04.php](http://recmanagement.com/200310fe04.php), October 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 2005.

<sup>13</sup> “What is the Nature Explore Program,” [http://www.arborday.org/explore/documents/NE\\_FAQ\\_002.pdf](http://www.arborday.org/explore/documents/NE_FAQ_002.pdf), accessed on August 12, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> F.E. Kuo, “Environment and Crime in the Inner City: Does Vegetation Reduce Crime?” *Environment and Behavior*, Volume 33, pp 343-367.

- U.S. Forest Service research indicates that when the economic benefits produced by trees are assessed, the total value can be two to six times the cost for tree planting and care.<sup>15</sup>
- Fifty percent (50%) of Americans regard outdoor activities as their main source of exercise.<sup>16</sup>

The Trust for Public Land has published a report titled: *“The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space.”* The report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental, and social benefits of parks and open space<sup>17</sup>:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and physiological health.
- Residential and commercial property values increase.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and act as natural air conditioners.
- Trees assist with storm water control and erosion.
- Crime and juvenile delinquency are reduced.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.
- Stable neighborhoods and strong communities are created.

Researchers have long touted the benefits of outdoor exercise. According to a study published in the *Journal of Environmental Science and Technology* by the University of Essex in the United Kingdom, “...as little as five minutes of green exercise improves both mood and self-esteem.”<sup>18</sup> A new trend started in China as they prepared to host the 2008 Summer Olympics. Their aim was to promote a society that endorses physical fitness and reaps the benefits of outdoor exercise by working out on outdoor fitness equipment.

The United States is now catching up on this trend, as park and recreation departments have begun installing “outdoor gyms.” Equipment that can be found in these outdoor gyms is comparable to what would be found in an indoor workout facility, such as leg and chest presses, elliptical trainers, pull down trainers, etc. With no additional equipment such as weights and resistance bands, the equipment is fairly easy to install. Outdoor fitness equipment provides a new opportunity for parks and recreation departments to increase the health of their communities, while offering them the opportunity to exercise outdoors. Such equipment can increase the usage of parks, trails, and other outdoor amenities while helping to fight the obesity epidemic and increase the community’s interaction with nature.

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<sup>15</sup> Nowak, David J., “Benefits of Community Trees,” (Brooklyn Trees, USDA Forest Service General Technical Report, in review).

<sup>16</sup> “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2010,” Outdoor Foundation, 2010.

<sup>17</sup> Paul M. Sherer, “The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space,” The Trust for Public Land, San Francisco, CA, 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Cited in: Sally Russell, “Nature Break: Five Minutes of Green Nurture,” Green Nurture Blog, <http://blog.greennurture.com/tag/journal-of-environmental-science-and-technology>, Accessed on November 14, 2012.



## Trails and Health

That a connected system of trails increases the level of physical activity in a community has been scientifically demonstrated through the Trails for Health initiative of the (CDC).<sup>19</sup> Trails can provide a wide variety of opportunities for being physically active, such as walking/running/hiking, rollerblading, wheelchair recreation, bicycling, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, fishing, hunting, and horseback riding. Recognizing that active use of trails for positive health outcomes is an excellent way to encourage people to adopt healthy lifestyle changes, American Trails has launched a “Health and Trails” resource section in its website: [www.americantrails.org/resources/benefits](http://www.americantrails.org/resources/benefits).

The health benefits are equally as high for trails in urban neighborhoods as for those in state or national parks. A trail in the neighborhood, creating a “linear park,” makes it easier for people to incorporate exercise into their daily routines, whether for recreation or non-motorized transportation. Urban trails need to connect people to places they want to go, such as schools, transit centers, businesses, and neighborhoods.<sup>20</sup>

## Sports and Recreation Trends

### ***General Sports and Recreation Trends***

The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) survey on sports participation in 2012<sup>21</sup> found that the top five athletic activities ranked by total participation included: exercise walking, exercising with equipment, swimming, camping, and aerobic exercising. Additionally, the following active, organized, or skill development activities remain popular: hiking, running/jogging, bicycle riding, basketball, golf, and soccer.

The “Ten-year History of Sports Participation Report”<sup>22</sup> published by NSGA shows national trends in team sports and individual sports. Overall participation trends indicate a general increase in 2011 for most team sports. However, softball and volleyball show a decrease in participation through 2011. Over the decade, individual sports show a dramatic increase in aerobic exercising, exercise walking, exercising with equipment, hiking, kayaking, running/jogging, target shooting and target shooting with an air gun, tennis, weightlifting, and working out at a club.

### ***Youth Sports***

The 2013 SFIA sports participation report indicates that in 2012 youth (ages 6-12) participation was highest for outdoor (63.1%), team (53.1%) and individual sport (49.8%). Children in this age group have increased interest in camping, while young adults ages 18–24 are becoming more interested in running/jogging.

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<sup>19</sup> “Guide to Community Preventive Services” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/index.html>

<sup>20</sup> “Health Community: What you should know about trail building,” National Trails Training Partnership: Health and Fitness, <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/health/healthcombuild.html>, accessed on May 24, 2013.

<sup>21</sup> 2012 Sport/Recreation Activity Participation,” National Sporting Goods Association, 2013, <http://www.nsga.org>.

<sup>22</sup> Ten-Year History of Sports Participation (2001-2011), National Sporting Goods Association, 2012, <http://www.nsga.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3346>.



The NSGA *Youth Sports Participation Report* from 2001 – 2011 indicates that specific offerings for children’s fitness are slowly increasing in health and fitness facilities. They are offering more youth-specific exercise equipment, and individualized youth sports training opportunities are becoming more popular. In 2011, in-line roller skating experienced the largest percentage decrease in participation. For youth ages 7 to 17, exercise walking, exercising with equipment, and swimming, followed by overnight/vacation camping had the highest number of participants in 2011.<sup>23</sup>

In 2009, an article in the *Wall Street Journal* observed that in recent years, lacrosse has become one of the country’s fastest growing team sports. Participation in high school lacrosse has almost doubled this decade. An estimated 1.2 million Americans over age seven played lacrosse in 2009.<sup>24</sup> A 2011 report, “U.S. Trends in Team Sports,” finds that lacrosse and other niche team sports and volleyball are continuing to experience strong growth for youth and adults.<sup>25</sup>

### **Outdoor Recreation**

The Outdoor Foundation releases a “Participation in Outdoor Recreation” report annually. According to the 2013 report,<sup>26</sup> while there continues to be fallout from the recent economic downturn, participation in outdoor recreation outings reached an all-time high in 2012. The foundation reports that the top outdoor activities in 2012 were running, fishing, bicycling, camping, and hiking. Bird watching is also among the favorite outdoor activities by frequency of participation.

Outdoor recreation trends are a recurring topic of study by the United States Forest Service through the Internet Research Information Series (IRIS). An IRIS report dated January 2012<sup>27</sup> provides the following recent nature-based outdoor recreation trends: Participation in walking for pleasure and family gatherings outdoors were the two most popular activities for the U.S. population as a whole. These outdoor activities were followed closely in popularity by viewing/photographing wildlife, boating, fishing, snow/ice activities, and swimming. There has been a growing momentum in participation in sightseeing, birding, and wildlife watching in recent years.

### **Therapeutic Recreation (Special Needs)**

Nationally, therapeutic recreation as a service is experiencing many struggles and challenges. The changing face of health care is having a dramatic effect on therapeutic recreation (TR) services in many rehabilitation settings, and specifically in physical rehabilitation settings, thus affecting community recreation programs.

A secondary issue is the need for a clinical facility to promote community reintegration. In the past, clinical facilities provided programs such as wheelchair basketball, but due to the reduction of expenditures, facilities no longer provide such services and expect communities to address these needs.

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<sup>23</sup>“2011 vs 2001 Youth Sports Participation,” National Sporting Goods Association, 2012, <http://www.nsga.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3494>.

<sup>24</sup> Evans and Trachtenberg, “Lacrosse Muscles its Way West,” *Wall Street Journal*, May, 2009.

<sup>25</sup> “2011 Preview: U.S. Trends in Team Sports, Fall 2011,” SMGA, 2011.

<sup>26</sup> “Outdoor Recreation Participation Report 2013,” Outdoor Foundation, 2013.

<sup>27</sup> “Recent Outdoor Recreation Trends,” USDA Forest Service Internet Research Information Series (IRIS) Research Brief, January 2012, <http://warnell.forestry.uga.edu/nrrt/nsre/IRISRec/IRISRec23rpt.pdf>, accessed August, 2012.

The fundamental goal of TR services is to enable participants with disabilities to successfully return to their communities. This not only means they need to have the functional skill but also that they have physical and social environments in the community that are receptive to the individual.

Another trend is the renewed focus on serving people with psychiatric disabilities. In 2004, The National Council on Disability (NCD) issued a comprehensive report titled, *Livable Communities for Adults with Disabilities*.<sup>28</sup> This report identified six elements for improving the quality of life for all citizens, including children, youth, and adults, with disabilities. The six elements are:

1. Provides affordable, appropriate, accessible housing
2. Ensures accessible, affordable, reliable, safe transportation
3. Adjusts the physical environment for inclusiveness and accessibility
4. Provides work, volunteer, and education opportunities
5. Ensures access to key health and support services
6. Encourages participation in civic, cultural, social, and recreational activities

The right to enjoy services and programs offered to all members by both public and private entities is the essence of the elements. Unlike persons with physical disabilities, people with psychiatric disabilities often face attitudinal barriers of those around them. Attitudinal barriers are exemplified by policies, programs, and beliefs about psychiatric disabilities. Fortunately, the mental health system is moving toward a model based on recovery. This model believes that everyone with a mental health diagnosis is able and capable of living independently within the community with proper supports.

Across the nation, the current financial condition has also put constraints on community recreation programs. Staffs are cutting budgets, yet also trying to determine how to provide recreation services to people with disabilities.

### **Role and Response of Local Government**

Collectively, these trends have created profound implications for the way local governments conduct business. Some local governments are now accepting the role of providing preventative health care through parks and recreation services. The following concepts are from the International City/County Management Association.<sup>29</sup>

- Parks and Recreation departments should take the lead in developing communities conducive to active living.
- There is growing support for recreation programs that encourage active living within the community.
- One of the highest priorities is a cohesive system of parks and trails and accessible neighborhood parks.

The United States of America, its states, and its communities share the enormous task of reducing the health and economic burden of obesity. While numerous programs, policies, and products have been designed to address the problem, there is no magic bullet to make it go away. The role of public parks and recreation as a health promotion and prevention agency has come of age. What matters is refocusing its efforts to ensure the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of communities and citizens.

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<sup>28</sup> National Council on Disability, "Livable Communities for Adults with Disabilities," December 2004, <http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2004/12022004>.

<sup>29</sup> [www.ICMA.org](http://www.ICMA.org), Accessed in 2012.

## **Administration Trends for Recreation and Parks**

Municipal parks and recreation structures and delivery systems have changed, and more alternative methods of delivering services are emerging. Certain services are being contracted out, and cooperative agreements with non-profit groups and other public institutions are being developed. Newer partners include the health system, social services, justice system, education, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. These partnerships reflect both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health agencies is vital in promoting wellness.

The traditional relationship with education and the sharing of facilities through joint-use agreements is evolving into cooperative planning and programming aimed at addressing youth inactivity levels and community needs.

Listed below are additional administrative national trends:

- Level of subsidy for programs is lessening and more “enterprise” activities are being developed, thereby allowing subsidy to be used where deemed appropriate.
- Information technology allows for better tracking and reporting.
- Pricing is often determined by peak, off-peak, and off-season rates.
- More agencies are partnering with private, public, and non-profit groups.

## **Agency Accreditation**

Pearland Parks and Recreation is a leader among Parks and Recreation agencies that are affirming their competencies and value through accreditation. This is achieved by an agency’s commitment to 150 standards. Currently, Pearland is one of the 116 agencies around the nation that have received the **Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation**.

**Additional benefits of CAPRA accreditation include:**

- Boosts staff morale
- Encourages collaboration
- Improves program outcomes
- Identifies agency and cost efficiencies
- Builds high level of trust with the public
- Demonstrates promise of quality
- Identifies best management practices

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - Compliance**

On September 14, 2010 the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an amended regulation implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA 2010 Standards).<sup>30</sup> On March 15, 2011, the amended Act became effective, and for the first time in history, it includes recreation environment design requirements. Covered entities were to be compliant with design and construction requirements and the development of three-year transition plan by March 15, 2012. Implementation of the three-year transition plan must be complete by March 15, 2015.

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<sup>30</sup>U.S. Department of Justice, Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA Home Page, <http://www.ada.gov/>, accessed on November 15, 2012.

## Funding

According to *Recreation Management* magazine's "2014 State of the Industry Report," survey respondents from parks and recreation departments/districts reporting about their revenues from 2011 through 2013 reveals the beginning of a recovery from the impact of the recession of 2008. From 2011 to 2012, 82.6 percent of respondents reported that their revenues had either stabilized or had increased. This number grew to 84.8 percent of respondents when reporting on the 2012 to 2013 time frame, and by 2015, 95 percent of parks and recreation department respondents are expecting revenues to either increase (49.7 percent) or remain stable (45.4 percent).

## Marketing by Parks and Recreation Providers

Niche marketing trends have experienced change more frequently than ever before as technology affects the way the public receives information. Web 2.0 tools and now Web 3.0 tools are a trend for agencies to use as a means of marketing programs and services. Popular electronic marketing and social media tools include:

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- Twitter
- You Tube
- Instagram

Mobile marketing is a trend of the future. Young adults engage in mobile data applications at much higher rates than adults in age brackets 30 and older. Usage rates of mobile applications demonstrate that chronologically across four major age cohorts, Millennials tend to get information more frequently using mobile devices such as smart phones. For example, 95 percent of 18-to-29-year-old cell phone owners send and receive text messages, compared to 82 percent of 30-to-49-year-olds, 57 percent of 50-to-64-year-olds, and 19 percent of 65 and older.

It is also a fact that minority Americans lead the way when it comes to mobile internet access. Nearly two-thirds of African-Americans (64%) and Latinos (63%) are wireless internet users, and minority Americans are significantly more likely to own a cell phone than are their white counterparts (87 percent of Blacks and Hispanics own a cell phone, compared with 80 percent of whites).<sup>31</sup> By 2015, mobile internet penetration is forecast to grow to 71.1 percent for Hispanics compared to 58.8 percent for whites.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Aaron Smith, "Mobile Access 2010," Pew Internet and American Life Project, Pew Research Center, July 7, 2010, <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2010/Mobile-Access-2010/Summary-of-Findings.aspx>, Accessed on November 15, 2012.

<sup>32</sup>Erik Sass, "Minority Groups Heaviest Users of Mobile Net," *Media Daily News*, Nov. 18, 2011, <http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/162699/minority-groups-heaviest-users-of-mobile-net.html#axzz2CK9zYGFw>, Accessed on November 15, 2012.

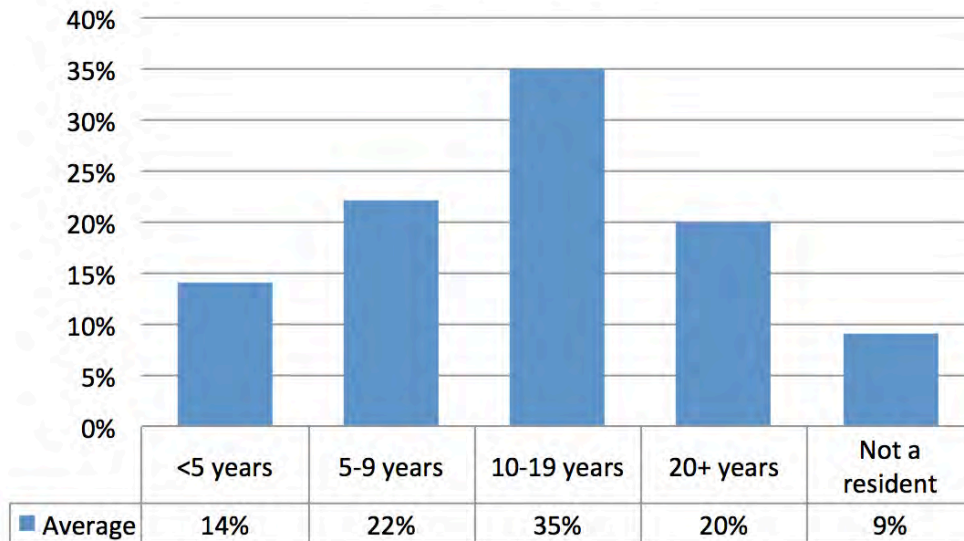
## D. Community and Stakeholder Input

More than 150 citizens participated in nine focus groups to provide information regarding the Pearland Park and Recreation Department (PPRD). Focus group meeting participants were asked a series of questions in regard to the programs and facilities offered by PPRD in Pearland. Responses to questions about the current conditions and issues/needs/problems that the Department can address are in the boxes that follow.

In order to get a feel for the groups that were providing input, the respondents were asked how long they had been a resident of Pearland, or if they weren't a resident, whether or not they used the services of PPRD.

Figure 10: Length of Residency in Pearland

## How long have you been a resident of Pearland?



### Satisfaction Levels

As part of the process, the meeting attendees and web responders were asked to rate several items on a 1 to 5 Likert scale with **1** representing **Poor**, **2** for **Fair**, **3** for **Good**, **4** for **Very Good** and **5** for **Excellent**. The combined results are displayed on the following pages.



## How satisfied are you with the overall quality of existing park and recreation facilities?



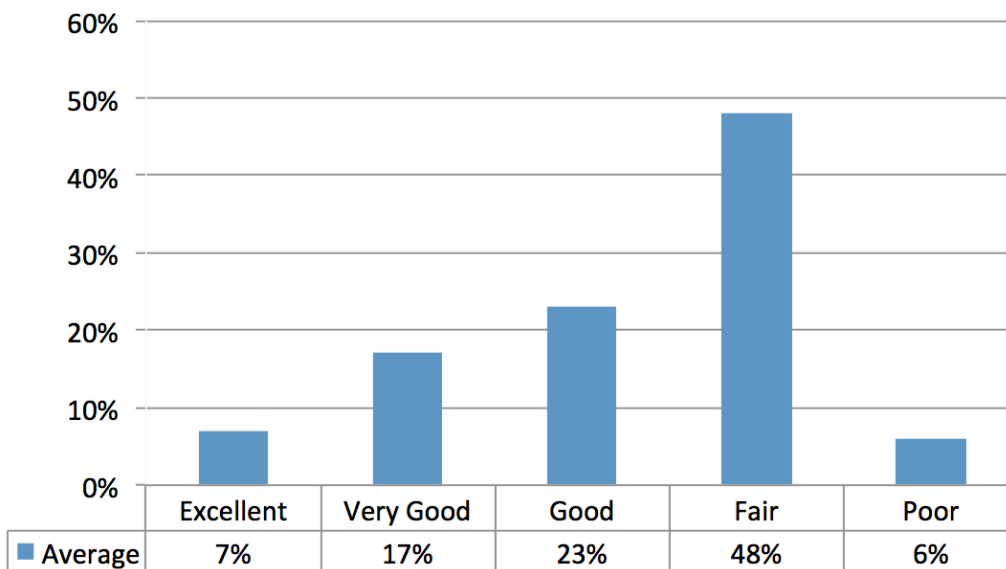
## Rate the overall level of maintenance at the facilities owned or operated by the department?



## How would you rate the quality of customer service proved by Parks & Recreation staff?



## How effective is the Department in seeking feedback from the community and users on improving its performance?



## Strengths and Weaknesses

The first questions inquired of the participants pertained to their general impressions of the strength and weaknesses of the department. The strengths and weaknesses are listed below and reflect the most mentioned items:

### STRENGTHS

- Family events
- Staff quality and accessibility
- Good quality, multiple parks, well maintained
- Plan for future
- Variety of activities and facilities
- Positive experience
- Consistency of events
- Affordable
- Passionate
- Trails
- Well cared for, aesthetically pleasing
- Senior center
- Up to date – current

### WEAKNESSES

- Lack of:
  - Adult programming
  - Program for individuals with disabilities
  - Amenities at parks
  - Covered play areas
  - Communication of offerings
  - Advertising of programming and facilities
  - Shade trees and woods
  - Adult fitness
  - Sports fields
  - Hiking/biking trails – connectivity and loop
  - Public facilities near or past 288
- Hours not conducive for working public at RCN
- Bond of 2007 should be done
- Distrust in the bond process
- Interdepartmental coordination lacking
- Poor location and appropriate size of baseball fields
- Need a sliding fee scale for families with multiple children
- The outdoor pool
- Lack of security

## Programs and Facilities

### *Programs*

The groups were then asked about additional programs or activities they feel the Department should offer that are currently not available.

#### **ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES**

- Programs for people with disabilities
- Skateboarding
- Cultural events
- Concerts and theater
- Adult programming (evenings)
- Adult tennis programs
- Teen dances
- Theater
- Senior/Teen Intergenerational
- Musical Entertainment
- Arts
- Workshops: archery, drawing/painting How to....
- Youth councils.
- Master Naturalist Program
- Adult tennis league
- Rugby
- Ice hockey
- Ice skating
- Weekend activities @ Knapp
- West side Senior programs
- Ballroom Dance
- First Aid/CPR
- Youth Volleyball
- Evening adult programming
- Cooking classes
- Lacrosse
- Water aerobics for seniors

#### **IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES**

- Larger weight training room at RCN
- More electrical power at parks
- Path lighting
- Art in the parks
- Field improvements
- Ramps, ADA improvements, pool lifts
- Coordinated geocaching
- Trail connectivity to the west
- Increased seating capacity with shade at splash pads
- Rock Wall
- Repurpose the outdoor pool.
- Improve park roads, trails, benches, restrooms
- Lighting parking areas and operate longer
- Security – more frequent patrols
- Add playing field lights
- Larger dog parks
- Increased parking
- Practice fields
- Bigger dog park
- BBQ: More and bigger
- Tennis courts

## **NEW FACILITIES OR AMENITIES**

- Skate parks
- Disc golf
- Baseball fields
- Waterpark (indoor or outdoor)
- Volleyball sand courts
- Basketball indoor facilities
- Rubberized baseball field (Miracle League)
- Ropes course
- Accessible playground (Universally designed)
- Another splash pad on west side
- Exercise stations on trails
- Wildlife observation decks (eagles)
- Rock Climbing wall: in and out
- Amphitheater
- Running trails
- Staff
- Youth hangout place
- Teen game room
- Pool tables
- Air hockey
- Outdoor Park/Hangout
- Skating rink (Food, music)
- Adult sized playground
- Bon-fires
- Adult softball fields
- Multipurpose fields
- Nature Center
- Open space - passive
- Tennis center
- Outdoor activities (birding)
- Archery Range
- Zip Line
- Performing and Fine Arts Center
- Splash pads
- Paddleboats
- More practice fields
- Nature preserves/open space
- Recreation /Community Center on West side
- Shaded play areas for kids - trees and structures
- Equestrian Arena
- Equestrian Trails
- New pool

## Underserved Populations

The next question asked if the respondents were aware of any underserved populations in Pearland not being served by the programs or facilities of PPRD. Several individual responses were received, with the following being mentioned most often:

### UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

- Disabled community
- Skateboarders
- Youth Baseball (4-8)
- Asian culture
- Cricket players (Indian and Pakistani)
- Toddler playgrounds (under 5)
- Teens
- Archery
- Recreational sports (less than varsity level)
- Seniors, especially west side
- Neighborhood parks – Wood Creek, Sleepy Hollow
- Mountain biking

## Stakeholders and Partners

The participants were asked to suggest other entities with which partnerships and alliances may be formed:

### STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

- Youth leagues
- Corporations
- Civic associations
- YMCAs
- Churches
- School Districts (use policies) Pearland and Alvin ISD
- Community College
- Foundations
- City Council
- City Staff
- Economic Development Commission
- Credit Unions
- Commission on the Arts
- Pearland Alliance for Arts and Culture
- Historical Society
- County Commissioners
- Hospitals/Medical
- Developers
- HOAs



## **Financial Considerations**

The discussion in the groups then turned to financial matters, both funding the ongoing operations of the PRCF as well as financing longer-term capital improvements.

Regarding the ongoing financial support of the department, respondents were asked how the department should be funded. There was general agreement that the operations should be funded much as they currently are, which is through a combination of fees and tax subsidy. Where that balance is established is yet to be determined though most, if not all, participants stated that the programs should remain affordable. Only one comment stood out for its specific recommendation and that was: "Salaries should be covered by the County; program, facility covered by fees."

There was support for assisting those without the financial means to participate.

Conversely, a significant number of respondents displayed a lack of trust in the process, pointing to items promised in past bond referendums that have not yet come to fruition.

The only clear consensus was that if there were to be a bond referendum, the projects, locations, costs, etc., need to be planned, defined, and strategically promoted and communicated.

## **Alternative Funding**

Suggestions from the groups pertaining to alternate methods of funding programs and improvements included:

- Non-profit fundraising
- Federal physical fitness grants
- Corporate donations
- Grants
- Individual donations
- Outside support

## Community Values and Issues

Continuing, participants were then asked for their perception of community values and issues as they relate to PPRD and this planning process. Again, comments received from both groups were similar and included:

### COMMUNITY ISSUES AND VALUES

- Staffing the facilities properly
- East vs. West/Old vs. New
- Multicultural evolution
- Traffic
- Should Pearland be a destination location?
- Advertising
- What can the community afford?
- Public Transportation
- Constantly changing – rapid change
- Looking for different things
- Most diverse city in area
- Cultural assets can be emphasized
- Keep facilities top notch. Quality over quantity
- Close to Houston with a hometown feel
- Desire to preserve the small town atmosphere
- City is landlocked. Not much growth area available
- Raising a Family Values - Safe, Entertainment, Education
- Youth Athletics Destination
- Maintain Parks and Rec for locals first

## Priorities

The public processes concluded with the question: “During the next 5-10 years, what are the top priorities for the Parks and Recreation Department?” The replies to this question were consistent and are listed below:

### PRIORITIES

- Communication of the plan
- Acquisition of fields and plan for their use
- Getting the funding
- Sell it to the community. Buy-in
- Renovations geared toward teens
- Budget to maintain what’s been created
- Finish 2007 bond projects – fund the unfunded portion of the 07 bond
- Citizen communication
- Services keeping up with population growth – fields, facilities, programs, etc.
- Preserve open space and natural environments
- Improve what you have first before you add new

## E. Random Invitation Community Survey Summary

The purpose of this study was to gather public feedback on City of Pearland parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services. This survey research effort and subsequent analysis were designed to assist the City of Pearland in the creation of a master plan for existing and possible future enhancements, facilities, and services.

The survey was conducted using three primary methods: 1) a mail-back survey, 2) an online, invitation-only web survey to further encourage response from those residents already within the defined invitation sample, and 3) an open-link online survey for members of the public who were not part of the invitation sample. The analysis herein primarily focuses on responses from the invitation sample. However, open link responses are provided in an appendix to this report.

The primary list source used for the mailing was a third party list purchased from Melissa Data Corp., a leading provider of data with emphasis on U.S., Canadian, and international address and phone verification as well as postal software. Use of the Melissa Data list also includes renters in the sample who are frequently missed in other list sources such as utility billing lists.

A total of 4,000 surveys were mailed to a random sample of Pearland residents in October 2014. The final sample size for this statistically valid survey was 309, resulting in a margin of error of approximately +/- 5.6 percentage points calculated for questions at 50 percent response.<sup>33</sup> The open link survey received an additional 215 responses.

The underlying data were weighted by age to ensure appropriate representation of Pearland residents across different demographic cohorts in the sample. Using the ESRI Demographic and Income Profile, which generates a 2014 population profile using 2010 Census data, the age distribution within the respondent sample was matched to 2014 demographic profile of the City of Pearland.

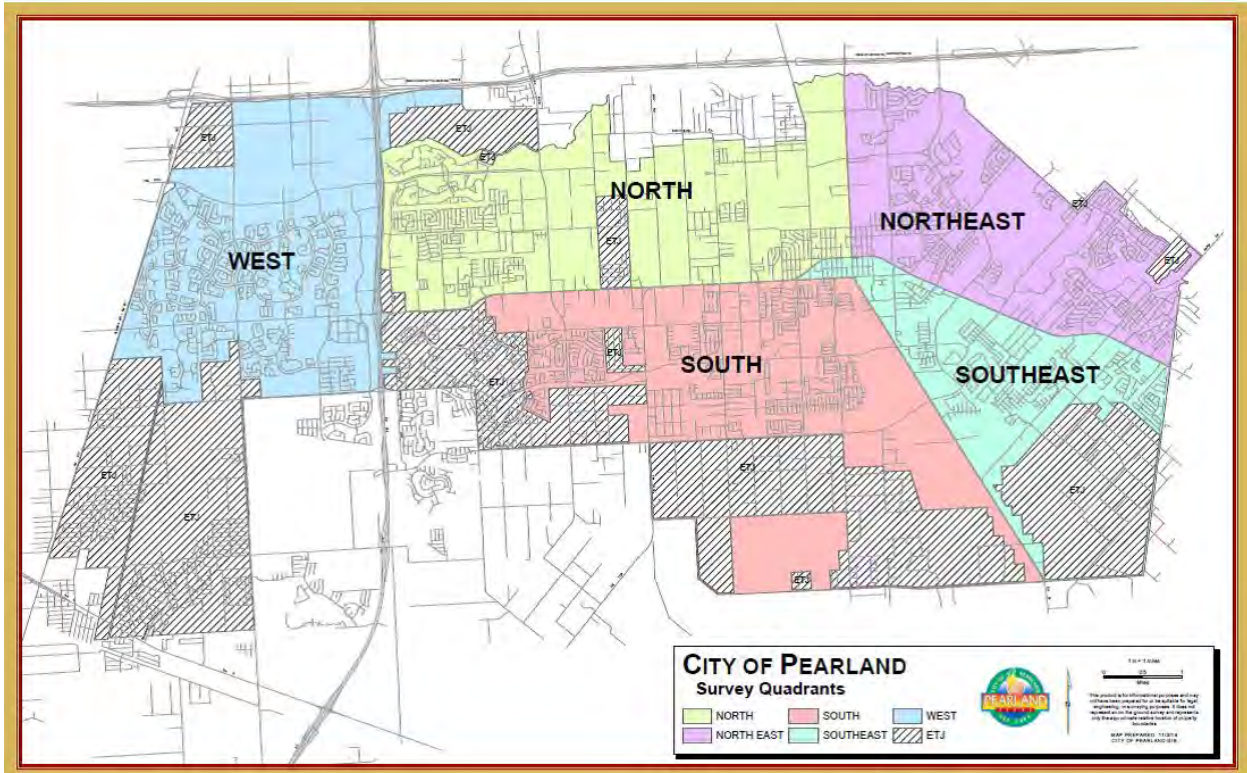
Due to variable response rates by some segments of the population, the underlying results, while weighted to best match the overall demographics of residents, may not be completely representative of some sub-groups of the population, including those in the Latino community.

This section is a brief summary of the survey results and the entire survey results report have been provided as a separate staff level document.

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<sup>33</sup> For the total invitation sample size of 309, margin of error is +/- 5.6 percent calculated for questions at 50% response (if the response for a particular question is "50%"—the standard way to generalize margin of error is to state the larger margin, which occurs for responses at 50%). Note that the margin of error is different for every single question response on the survey depending on the resultant sample sizes, proportion of responses, and number of answer categories for each question. Comparison of differences in the data between various segments, therefore, should take into consideration these factors. As a general comment, it is sometimes more appropriate to focus attention on the general trends and patterns in the data rather than on the individual percentages.

Figure 11: Pearland Survey Quadrant Divisions



## Invitation Survey Demographic Profile

This section of the report discusses the respondent and household demographics of the invitation sample.

Gender. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of invitation sample respondents are female, while 43 percent are male.

Age. Almost a third of invitation respondents are under age 35 (29%). Approximately 46 percent are between the ages of 35 and 54, while 25 percent are 55 years old or older. The average age was 45.3.

Household Profile. The largest share of invitation sample respondents reported living in a household with children (55%), followed distantly by empty-nesters (19%), couples without children (16%), and singles without children (10%). A strong majority indicated that they are in a couple, either with or without children (79%).

Ethnicity/Race. Fifteen percent (15%) of invitation sample respondents consider themselves to be of Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish descent. Roughly three-quarters consider themselves to be white, and 11 percent identified themselves as Asian, Indian, or Pacific Islander. A modest share also identified themselves as Black/African-American (11%).

Household Income. Over half of invitation sample households (55%) reported a household income of over \$100,000 per year, with a majority of those respondents earning between \$100,000 and \$149,999 annually (31%). A third of respondents earn between \$50,000 and \$99,999 per year, while 12 percent earn under \$50,000.

Years in the Pearland Area. On average, invitation sample respondents have lived in the area for 12.4 years. Forty-two percent (42%) of respondents reported having lived in the area for longer than ten years, indicating that many Pearland residents have been in the area for a considerable period of time.

Own or Rent. Almost all respondents indicated that they own their residence (92%).

Zone of Pearland. The largest shares of invitation sample respondents live in the West (30%) and South (30%) quadrants of Pearland, followed by the Southeast (15%), North (13%), and Northeast (11%) (see **Figure 11** above for geographic breakdown).

Voter Registration Status. A majority of invitation sample respondents reported being registered to vote (87%).

## Values and Vision

### **Community Issues**

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of various community issues that parks and recreation services could focus on improving, using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “not at all important” and 5 meaning “very important.”

The following had the most frequently reported “4” or “5” ratings and highest averages:

- Positive activities for youth (with an average rating of 4.6, 93% of respondents provided a rating of 4 or 5)
- Beautification of public areas (4.5 average; 94% rated 4 or 5)
- Connectivity/alternative transportation (4.2 average; 77% rated 4 or 5)
- Enhancing home real estate values (4.1 average; 77% rated 4 or 5)
- Protecting the environment (4.1 average; 77% rated 4 or 5)
- Improving community health (4.0 average; 74% rated 4 or 5)
- Connecting people with nature (4.0 average; 73% rated 4 or 5)

Second tier of community issues includes:

- Attracting and retaining businesses (3.8 average; 67% rated 4 or 5)
- Cultural and historic preservation (3.7 average; 59% rated 4 or 5)

Finally, attracting tourists to the community was evaluated as relatively unimportant, with a higher share of respondents providing a 1 or 2 rating (38%) than a 4 or 5 rating (24%) and a considerably lower average ranking (2.8).

Respondents were asked to select the top three community issues from the same list that Parks and Recreation should focus on improving. This provides the opportunity to see how respondents prioritize various values in relation to one another. Positive activities for youth are the top priority among invitation respondents, with 59 percent of respondents including this issue as one of their top three priorities. Other highly prioritized issues include beautification of public areas (57% of respondents including this category as one of their top three) and enhancing home real estate values (47%). Enhancing home real estate values also had the highest share of respondents indicating this to be the number one community issue (24%) for the Parks and Recreation Department.

## **Importance of and Familiarity with Facilities, Programs, and Services**

### **Importance of Local Recreation Opportunities**

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of the availability of local recreation opportunities to their household on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “not at all important,” and 5 meaning “very important.” Local recreation opportunities are considered very important, with 91 percent of invitation respondents providing a rating of “4” or “5” and an overall average rating of 4.4. Only 2 percent of respondents rated local recreation opportunities at a “1” or “2.”

### **Familiarity with Pearland Parks and Recreation Facilities/Programs/Services**

Invitation sample respondents were also asked to report their familiarity with Pearland Parks and Recreation offerings on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “not at all familiar” and 5 meaning “very familiar.” Familiarity with parks and recreation facilities/services/programs is fairly strong, with an average rating of 3.6 and 63 percent of respondents providing a rating of “4” or “5.”

Respondents rated the importance of specific PPRD facilities and services to their household using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “not at all important” and 5 meaning “very important.”



The following had the most frequently reported “4” or “5” ratings and highest averages:

- Community/neighborhood parks (with an average rating of 4.5, 93% of respondents provided a rating of 4 or 5)
- Overall park facilities and services provided by Pearland Parks and Recreation (4.3 average; 84% rated 4 or 5)
- Trails (4.0 average; 73% rated 4 or 5)
- Recreation Center and Natatorium (3.9 average; 68% rated 4 or 5)
- Recreation and athletic programs (3.9 average; 66% rated 4 or 5)
- Swimming pools/aquatic programs (3.9 average; 67% rated 4 or 5)
- Community events (3.8 average; 64% rated 4 or 5)
- Athletic fields (3.7 average; 60% rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor athletic courts (3.7 average; 60% rated 4 or 5)

Second tier of facilities/services includes:

- Westside Event Center (3.3 average; 46 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Melvin Knapp Senior Center (3.0 average; 39 percent rated 4 or 5)

### **Degree to Which Facilities and Services are Meeting Household Needs**

Using a 5-point scale with 1 meaning “not at all” and 5 meaning “completely,” respondents indicated to what degree their needs were being met by the facilities and services offered in Pearland. The following had at least half of all respondents providing a rating of “4” or “5”:

- Community/neighborhood parks (with an average rating of 3.8, 62% of respondents provided a rating of 4 or 5)
- Overall park facilities and services provided by Pearland Parks and Recreation (3.7 average; 73% rated 4 or 5)
- Recreation Center and Natatorium (3.4 average; 51% rated 4 or 5)
- Recreation and athletic programs (3.3 average; 65% rated 4 or 5)

Several facilities and services had fewer than half of all invitation respondents providing a rating of “4” or “5”:

- Community events (49% rated 4 or 5)
- Swimming pools/aquatic programs (48% rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor athletic courts (46% rated 4 or 5)
- Athletic fields (43% rated 4 or 5)
- Westside Event Center (41% rated 4 or 5)
- Trails (39% rated 4 or 5)
- Melvin Knapp Senior Center (30% rated 4 or 5)

The Melvin Knapp Senior Center also had a higher share of respondents indicating that their needs were unmet (48%) than met (30%). These findings indicate that in some specific areas, respondents have needs that are not fully met by current Pearland facilities and services.

### **Improvements that Would Increase Use of Facilities**

Respondents were asked to select the three most important areas that, if addressed by the City of Pearland, would increase their use of parks and recreation facilities:

- Awareness of programs/communications (62%)
- Pricing/user fees (40%)
- Condition/maintenance of parks or facilities or equipment (25%)

## Future Facilities, Amenities, and Services

From a list of 22 facilities, amenities, and services, both indoor and outdoor, respondents reported the degree of importance for the addition/expansion/improvement of each to their household as well as their top three priorities from the list to add/expand/improve. This section details the findings of these two questions.

### Importance of Additions, Expansions, or Improvements of Facilities

Using a 5-point scale, with 1 meaning “not at all important” and 5 meaning “very important,” respondents rated their needs of each facility and service listed. The following had the most frequently reported “4” or “5” ratings and highest averages:

- Better security (with an average rating of 4.2, 81% of respondents provided a rating of 4 or 5)
- Improve park amenities (4.2 average; 81% rated 4 or 5)
- Shade structures in parks (4.2 average; 81% rated 4 or 5)
- Trail connectivity (3.9 average; 70% rated 4 or 5)
- Playgrounds (3.9 average; 67% rated 4 or 5)
- Running trails (3.8 average; 68% rated 4 or 5)
- Picnic areas/pavilions (3.8 average; 61% rated 4 or 5)
- Nature center/wildlife observation area/open space (3.7 average; 64% rated 4 or 5)
- Bike park (3.7 average; 61% rated 4 or 5)
- Spray park/splash pad (3.6 average; 55% rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor special events venue/amphitheater (3.6 average; 58% rated 4 or 5)
- Multi-purpose/event/performing arts center (3.6 average; 56% rated 4 or 5)

For a few amenities, a higher share of respondents indicated that the item was unimportant (providing a rating of “1” or “2”) rather than important (providing a rating of “4” or “5”). These items include:

- Rock wall (36% unimportant vs. 33% important)
- Skate park (38% unimportant vs. 24% important)
- Disc golf (39% unimportant vs. 23% important)

### Top Priorities for Additions, Expansions, or Improvements of Facilities

Respondents were asked to select their top three priorities for additions, expansions, or improvements of indoor and outdoor facilities in Pearland over the next five to ten years. This provides the opportunity to see how respondents prioritize various values in relation to one another:

- Better security (29%)
- Improving park amenities (27%)
- Shade structures in parks (21%)
- Nature center/wildlife observation area/open space (20%)
- Additional recreation/community center (20%)
- Running trails (19%)
- Trail connectivity (18%)
- Multi-purpose/event/performing arts center (17%)
- Outdoor special events venue/amphitheater (17%)
- Bike park (15%)
- Weight/cardio/fitness space (13%)
- Indoor gymnasium space (12%)
- Playgrounds (11%)
- Dog park (10%)
- Picnic areas/pavilions (10%)
- Spray park/splash pad (10%)

An additional recreation/community center facility also had the highest share of respondents choosing it as their first priority (12%).

The least important priorities were:

- Outdoor athletic courts (7%)
- Outdoor athletic fields (6%)
- Rock wall (4%)
- Skate park (3%)
- Repurposing the outdoor pool at Independence Park (3%)
- Disc golf (1%)

## Communication

Another question asked respondents to indicate the method by which they would prefer to receive information on parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs within the City of Pearland. The most favorable method of communication for invitation sample respondents included:

- Email from the city (65%)
- Internet/website (58%)
- Pearland Parks and Recreation Activity Guide (50%)
- Social networking (31%)
- Local media (30%)

## Survey Comments/Suggestions Regarding Parks and Facilities

A follow-up question on parks and facilities asked respondents to provide comments or suggestions for how the parks and facilities could be improved to better meet the needs of their household and/or the community. Both invitation and open link respondents provided a full range of insightful comments, the full set of which can be viewed in the Survey Report, which has been provided as a separate document, to fully understand community member desires and needs.

## F. Open Link Community Survey Summary

This section of the report discusses the results of the open link sample, with comparisons to the results of the invitation sample. By understanding how the characteristics of these two groups differ, we are in a better position to understand contrasting response patterns for various questions on the survey.

### Open Link Survey Demographic Profile

Gender. Similar to the invitation sample, open link participation also skewed more heavily female (58%).

Age. Open link respondents are more likely to be within the ages of 35 and 54 (60%) than invitation sample respondents (46%). Consistent with these findings, the average age of invitation sample respondents (45.3 years old) was slightly lower than the average age of open link respondents (45.9 years old).

Household Profile. Relative to invitation sample respondents, an even higher proportion of open link respondents reported living in a family household with children (65%), while 14 percent said they are empty nesters. Eighty-five percent (85%) of open link respondents reported being a couple, either with or without children.

Ethnicity/Race. Eleven percent (11%) of open link respondents consider themselves to be of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish descent, slightly less than invitation respondents (15%). Seventy percent (70%) of open link respondents considered themselves to be white, while 12 percent identified themselves as Asian, Indian, or Pacific Islander, and 12 percent identified themselves as Black/African-American.

Household Income. Open link respondents are generally more affluent than invitation respondents, with 42 percent earning \$150,000 or more per year (compared to 24 percent of invitation respondents).

Years in the Pearland Area. On average, invitation sample respondents have lived in the area for slightly longer (12.4 years) than open link respondents (10.2 years). Thirty-six percent (36%) of open link respondents reported having lived in the area for longer than ten years.

Own or Rent. Almost all open link respondents indicated that they own their residence (99%).

Zone of Pearland. Representation from the West quadrant was significantly higher in the open link sample (56% vs. 30% of invitation respondents), while representation from the South was considerably lower relative to the invitation sample (10% vs. 30%).

Voter Registration Status. A majority of open-link respondents reported being registered to vote (86%).

### **Importance of Community Issues**

Open link responses for this question were generally very similar to invitation responses, though many average importance ratings were slightly lower than average invitation sample ratings.

### **Top Three Priorities for Recreational Services**

Similar to invitation respondents, open link respondents also were asked to identify their top three priorities for recreational services:

- Positive activities for youth (69%)
- Beautification of public areas (54%)
- Enhancing home real estate values (44%)
- Connecting people with nature (37%)
- Connectivity/alternative transportation (26%)

Open link respondents were more likely to prioritize connecting people with nature and positive activities for youth, while invitation sample respondents favored protecting the environment to a greater degree.

## **Importance of and Familiarity with Facilities, Programs, and Services**

### **Importance of Local Recreation Opportunities**

Like invitation sample respondents, open link respondents rated the importance of local recreation opportunities very highly. The average rating provided by open link respondents (4.5) was slightly higher than that provided by invitation respondents (4.4).

### **Familiarity with Pearland Parks and Recreation Facilities/Programs/Services**

Familiarity with parks and recreation services is also fairly strong among open link respondents (average rating 3.7), marginally higher than the familiarity reported by invitation sample respondents (average rating 3.6).

### **Importance of Pearland Parks and Recreation Facilities/Services to Household**

Average importance ratings were similar between invitation sample respondents and open link respondents. Open link respondents rated most of the listed PPRD facilities and services slightly higher on average, most notably the Westside Event Center (3.7 average vs. 3.3 average for invitation respondents).

### **Degree to Which Facilities and Services are Meeting Household Needs**

Comparisons between invitation sample responses and open link responses show that average ratings of Pearland facilities and services are comparable overall, though invitation sample respondents provided ratings on average 0.1 point higher than open link respondents, indicating that their needs are met to a slightly greater degree.

### **Improvements that Would Increase Use of Facilities**

Like the invitation respondents, open link respondents also placed the most importance on awareness of programs (56%), but were much more likely than invitation respondents to prioritize additional facilities and amenities (39% vs. 22% of invitation sample respondents). In contrast, invitation sample respondents were more likely to identify personal safety as an area for improvement (22%) than open link respondents were (14%).

### **Importance of Additions, Expansions, or Improvements of Facilities**

Average importance ratings of the indoor and outdoor facilities listed were very similar between invitation sample respondents and open link respondents. Some minor discrepancies are apparent, including outdoor athletic fields (3.3 invitation vs. 3.6 open link) and disc golf (2.7 invitation vs. 2.5 open link).

### **Top Priorities for Additions, Expansions, or Improvements of Facilities**

Notable differences emerge between open link and invitation respondents for the top priorities for additions, expansions, or improvements of facilities. Invitation sample respondents were significantly more likely than open link respondents to prioritize better security, improving park amenities, an additional recreation/community center, a bike park, and a spray park/splash pad. Meanwhile, open link respondents more frequently favored a nature center/wildlife observation area/open space, an outdoor special events venue/amphitheater, and outdoor athletic fields.

## Communication

The most favorable method of communication for both invitation sample and open link respondents was via email from the city (65% and 73% respectively), closely followed by Internet/website (58% and 67%). About half of both invitation and open link respondents indicated that they would like to receive information through the Pearland Parks and Recreation Activity Guide. Smaller shares would prefer to obtain information through social networking (31% invitation, 38% open link) or local media (30% invitation, 19% open link). Open link respondents were more likely to prefer email communication, internet/website communication, and social networking, while invitation respondents showed greater favorability towards local media.

## G. Organizational Analysis

GreenPlay broadly assessed the organizational and management structure and staffing of the PPRD to determine effectiveness and efficiency in meeting current and future departmental responsibilities as related to the community's needs.

The department has recently undertaken a change in the organization in order to best match some of the needs identified below as well as to maximize the available resources. As a CAPRA accredited agency, there is recognition of the need to constantly and consistently examine the department's organizational structure in order to best align its personnel with the mission of the City and the Department. This recent realignment is intended to do just that, and when fully integrated, it is designed to deliver improved service and response to the citizens of Pearland.

Implementation of a structure change, regardless of the magnitude, results in new roles and responsibilities for staff, and there often exists a ramping up to speed for individuals in their new roles. This appears to be the case for the department's new organization, and steps are underway to improve communication and transition to the new structure. Within that structure, there are some areas that can be addressed.

The needs assessment of this master planning process included input from staff interviews, community and key stakeholder engagement, a community survey, and a level of service analysis, along with the consultant's expertise. The process identified a few areas for operational enhancement:

- Internal and external communication can be improved to promote interdepartmental as well as intradepartmental coordination and cooperation.
- Improve the website so it is current, welcoming, and usable for patrons.
- Online registration can be difficult to navigate.
- Better marketing of programs with more diverse and targeted promotions.
- Need vision/direction on purpose and utilization of Recreation Center and Natatorium (RCN).
- Improve partner agency relationships.
- Morale/staff appreciation can be improved limiting staff turnover.
- Continued emphasis on implementation of the recent organization structure changes.



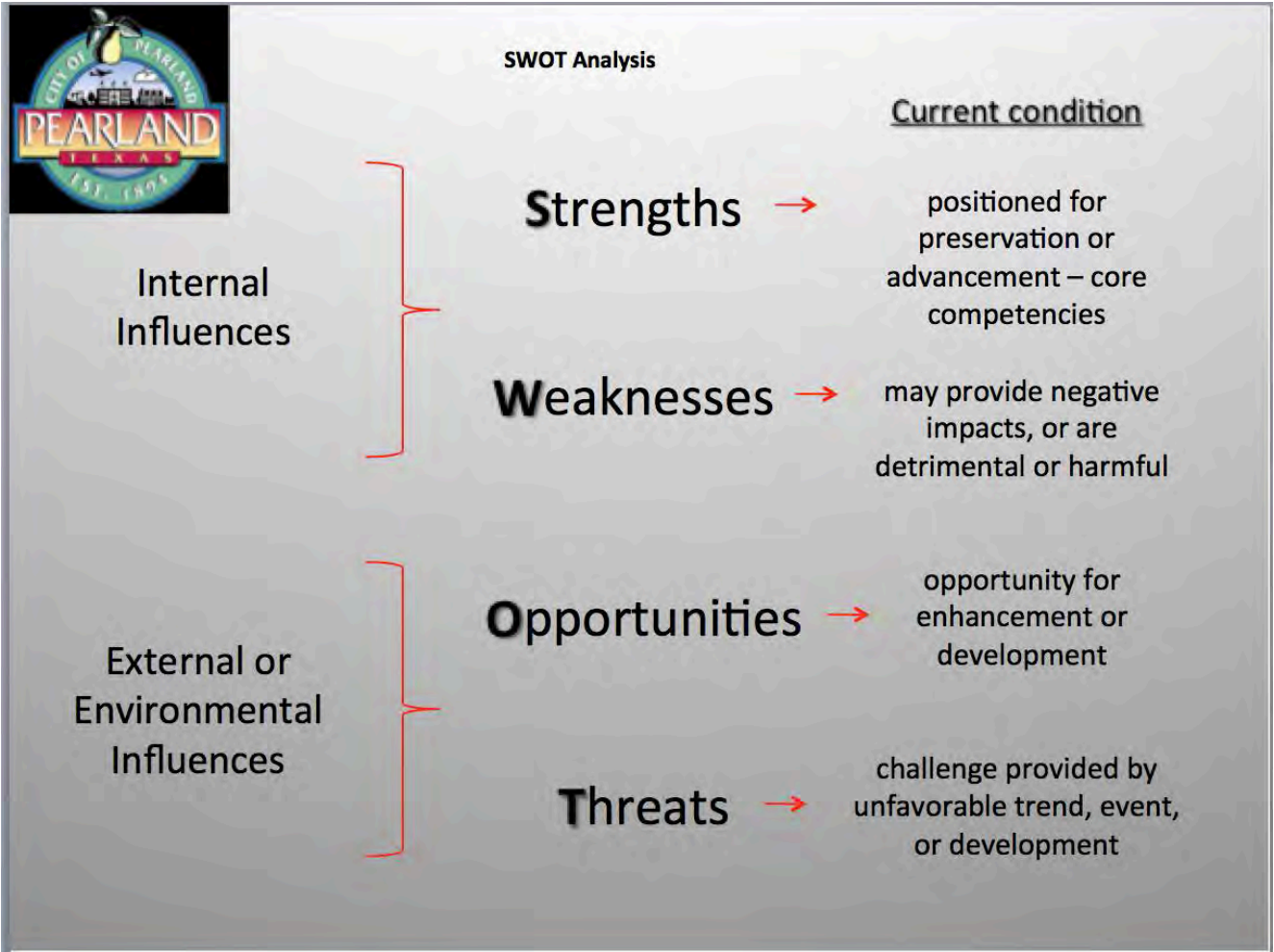
## **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis**

To develop a short and long-term strategy for the future planning of the Pearland Parks and Recreation, Department, a **SWOT Analysis** was conducted. A SWOT Analysis is an effective and realistic way of identifying the market **Strengths** and internal and external **Weaknesses**, and for examining the **Opportunities** and **Threats** faced by the organization. The result of this process helps identify any deficiencies in the organization and is described below, including definitions as well as the department's organizational results.

### **SWOT Analysis Definitions**

**SWOT Analysis:** Appreciative inquiry and analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats. Discussion includes the why and examples.



- **Internal Strengths:** Major strengths of the department that should be capitalized upon. Strengths may include competencies in various areas.
- **Internal Weaknesses:** Major weaknesses of the department that the agency has control over positively impacting, addressing, or changing. Weaknesses include any items that can be harmful, detrimental, and/or cause a negative impact.
- **External Opportunities:** An opportunity is an attractive arena to take action in which the department would enjoy a competitive advantage, would further the agency in meeting its vision or fulfilling its mission, or enhance the development of its services. The agency should watch and plan for these if there is a high probability of occurrence.
- **External Threats:** A challenge posed by an unfavorable trend, event, or development in the environment. In the absence of purposeful action, this threat might lead to the erosion of the department's quality service provision, financial and service sustainability, or its position or credibility. In some instances, this could also be detrimental to the parks and recreation industry. The department should identify and prepare to mitigate all foreseeable threats.



During a meeting with staff, the team brainstormed to identify potential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, ranking them according to the following.

For **strengths and weaknesses**, a consensus was reached on ranking the **performance** and **importance** rating scale for each item.

- **Performance:** rated as major strength, minor strength, neutral (neither major nor minor), minor weakness, or major weakness.
- **Importance:** rated the importance of each item to the success of the Department. Rating is high, medium, or low.
- A **Performance-Importance Matrix** was developed illustrating **Major/High** and **Minor/High** strengths and weaknesses as plotted on the chart (below).

<p><i>Major Strength / High Importance</i></p> <p>Staff/Professional Competence  Vision/Departmental Direction  Public Perception  Natural Resources  CAPRA Accreditation  Diversity of Programming  Economic Strength  City-Department Cooperation  Recreation Center &amp; Natatorium  Major Special Events</p>	<p><i>Major Weakness / High Importance</i></p> <p>Large Debt Service  Lack of Real Property/Park Acreage  Internal Communication  Online Registration  Lack of Developer policies to support P&amp;R  Need Vision/Direction on Purpose and Utilization of RCN  Moral/Staff Appreciation</p> <p>Competition for limited Resources  Web Page  Resident/Non-Resident fees</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; text-orientation: mixed;">I m p o r t a n c e</p>  
<p><i>Minor Strength / Medium Importance</i></p> <p>Facilities  Political Support  Hometown Feel</p> <p>Diverse Revenue Streams</p>	<p><i>Minor Weakness / Medium Importance</i></p> <p>Staff Turnover  Connector Trail System  Shortage of Athletic fields (even with new facilities being built)</p>	
<p><b>Strengths</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Weaknesses</b></span></p>		

For each **opportunity**, a consensus rating for **attractiveness** (high or low) and **success probability** (high or low) was established.

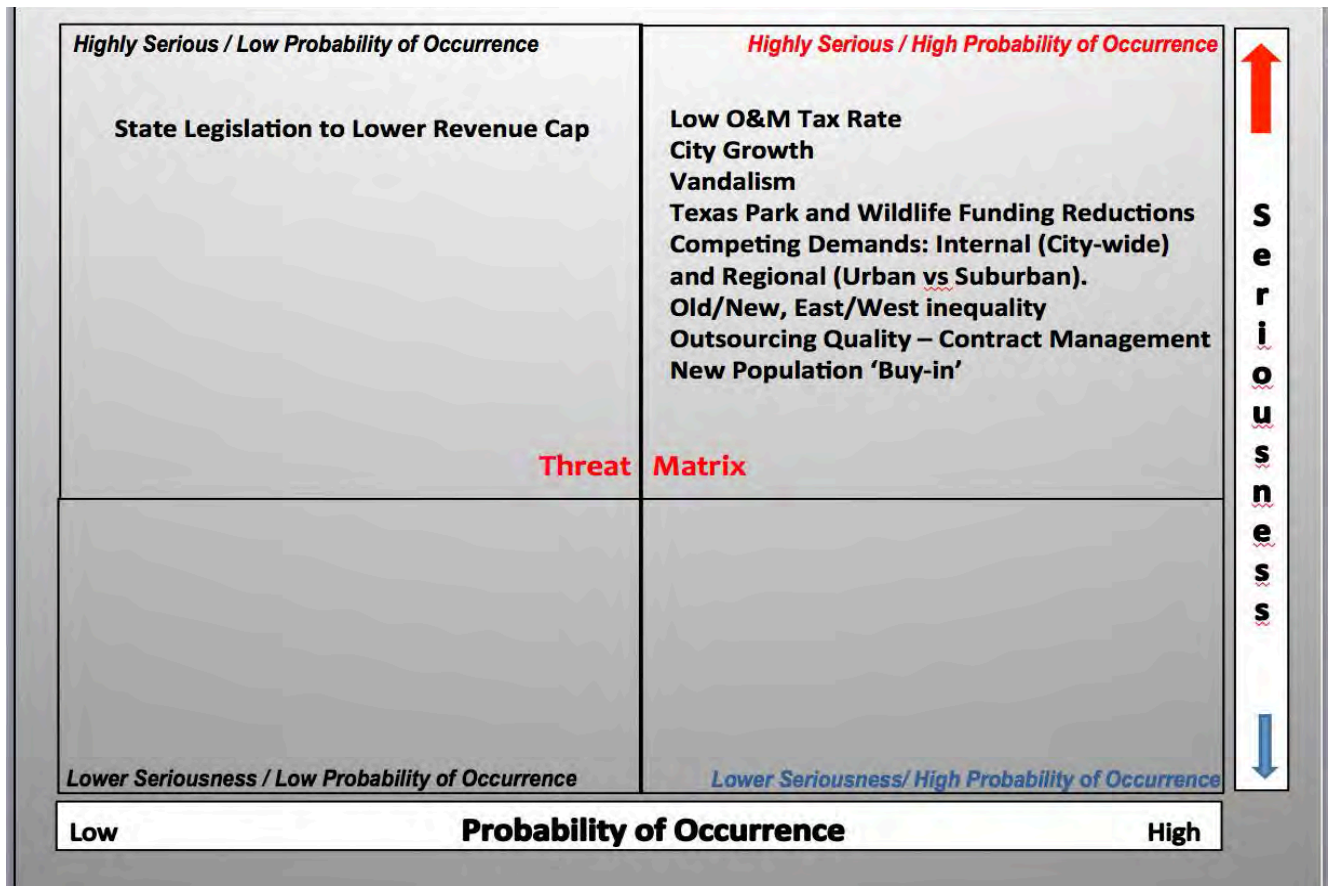
- **Attractiveness** refers to how attractive the opportunity is to the department in furthering its mission, fulfilling its vision, improving its revenue generation, cost recovery, or decreasing expenses. Rating is either **high** or **low**.
- **Success probability** relates to whether the department’s strengths will enable it to be successful in this area. Rating is either **high** or **low**.

The department consensus ratings were then charted for each **opportunity** for **attractiveness** and **success probability** into an **Opportunity Matrix** (below).

For each **threat**, a consensus rating to specify the likelihood that it will happen (**probability of occurrence**) and the **seriousness** of the threat) was established.

- **Probability of occurrence** relates to the likelihood that the threat will happen. Rating is either **high** or **low**.
- **Seriousness** of the threat is rated either **high** or **low**.

The department consensus ratings were then charted for each **threat** for **probability of occurrence** and **seriousness** into a **Threat Matrix** (below).



Many of the items identified in the SWOT Analysis had much discussion, including examples, and identification as to why an element should fall on the charts where it did. The shortened description in the chart does not represent the entire conversation, and therefore, negative conclusions should not be drawn from these charts without a discussion of the total intent.

### Organizational Changes

Recent changes to the organizational structure began in Fiscal Year 2014 and included moving Youth Development personnel to consolidate recreation programs in one division, moving a Building Technician to the Recreation Center and Natatorium position, and adding a Recreation Specialist to the Aquatics division for a total of two Aquatic positions at the RCN.

In Fiscal Year 2015, one vacant Parks Maintenance position has been eliminated, and the Facilities and Custodial Services and Parks Maintenance West/ROW mowing divisions moved to the Department of Public Works. The remaining personnel in the two divisions of Parks Maintenance, West and East, were combined to create one Park Maintenance division to accommodate the new parks.



## Staffing Analysis

GreenPlay broadly assessed the management structure and staffing levels of the department to determine effectiveness and efficiency in meeting current and future departmental responsibilities as related to the community's needs. Many observations were taken into account to determine whether the department had the right mix of staffing in the right places.

The staffing analysis process included the observations and assessments of:

- Community input
- Community satisfaction rates
- Staff focus group
- Individual staff interviews
- Facility tours
- Observations of quality of maintenance
- Full hours of operation
- Professional involvement in Parks and Recreation organizations
- SWOT analysis
- Organizational chart
- Departmental budgets



## Staffing Considerations

After considering all of the organizational observations and staffing assessment, the consultant team has determined that the department has an adequate number of staff to operate its current system with the caveat that strong communication must be maintained with the Public Works Department to promptly and effectively maintain departmental facilities. That said, the department appears to now have the right mix of staff in the right places once the new and reallocated staff are up to full operating efficiency.

To operate more effectively in the future and to implement the Master Plan, the department should consider adding the following duties to existing staff or consider additional staff:

- Grant research and writer responsibilities (staff or contractual).
- Establish a staff liaison to enhance existing partnerships and to seek new partnership opportunities.
- Ensure staffing resource levels can maintain existing and new facilities at or above acceptable standards.

## H. Recreation Programming Analysis

PPRD has an array of recreation programs that seeks to meet the needs of its diverse community. Programming consists of Aquatics, Adaptive Recreation, Athletics, Youth Development, and Senior Programs as well as Special Events and facility rentals, as can be seen in **Table 5**. The programs are provided with varying amounts of City subsidy with revenues covering approximately 60 percent of the programming cost.

Traditionally, the programming of the department has been strong, with 87 percent of focus group attendees rating the program offerings to be good, very good, or excellent. In the most recent program reporting period (Fall 2014), there was noted a 14 percent reduction in program participation. While Aquatics, Athletics, and Adaptive Recreation programs enjoyed some growth, there were reductions in Adult, Early Childhood, and Youth programs. There are multiple reasons for the fewer program participants due to some recent changes in staff reassignments and turnover that affected the programming offerings.

Some courses that were traditionally offered were discontinued due to results of evaluating cost recovery in program offerings with smaller classes, in some cases 3-4 students per course. In implementing the new cost recovery methodology, there is now recognition that the effort to operate these programs is not a good use of the available departmental resources. There was also some unexpected, last minute instructor turn-over. Department staff was unable to find replacement instructors to offer some previously successful programs.

In addition, there was significant staff realignment with many new staff as well as role transitions. During the transition of staff realignment, programming processes were less than efficient. The transferring of job functions created a lapse in the planning and implementation of certain programs. Marketing efforts were also diminished due to a city-wide staffing transition.

Remedial steps have been taken to address the shortcomings and the cost recovery process is resulting in more efficient programming offerings as the department continues to implement the process.



**Table 5: FY 2014 Program Categories with Participation, Expenses, and Revenues**

	PARTICIPATION UNITS	ANNUAL EXPENSES	ANNUAL REVENUES	EXPENSES VS. REVENUES
Events	52,859	\$211,250	\$142,098	(\$69,152)
Drop-In Use	90,367	\$14,950	\$1,203,928	\$1,188,978
Sports/Athletics	Teams	\$110,546	\$149,007	\$38,461
Athletic Field Rentals	Fields	\$433,330	\$12,244	(\$421,086)
Senior Programs	37,023	\$18,442	0	(\$18,442)
Ancillary	912	\$2,076,428	\$157,564	(\$1,918,864)
Aquatics	1,439	\$25,039	\$58,069	\$33,030
Nature/Outdoor Rec	429	\$7,827	\$10,729	\$2,901
Adaptive Recreation	1,088	\$23,825	0	(\$23,825)
Outreach	96	\$3,960	0	(\$3,960)
Programmed Classes	288	\$338,958	\$226,460	(\$112,500)
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>\$6,317,983</b>	<b>3,788,099</b>	<b>(\$2,539,834)</b>

Notes: 1) Athletics registration is by team and not individual.  
 2) Athletic Field Rentals is by field.  
 3) Revenues include program fees, memberships and all rentals.  
 4) Ancillary includes other rentals, gift shops, concessions, etc.  
 5) The Cost Recovery Plan is being implemented in FY15.

## **Additional Programs or Activities**

In the area of programs and activities, the Focus Groups were asked: “What additional programs or activities do you feel the Department should offer that are currently not available?”

Among the most consistent responses received are:

- Programs for people with disabilities
- Cultural events including concerts and theater
- Adult programming (evenings)
- Teen dances
- Senior/Teen Intergenerational
- Musical entertainment
- Weekend activities at Knapp
- West side Senior programs

Survey – Top 5 requested:

- Special events
- Fitness/wellness programs
- Non-sport programs
- Family programs
- Swim and aquatics programming

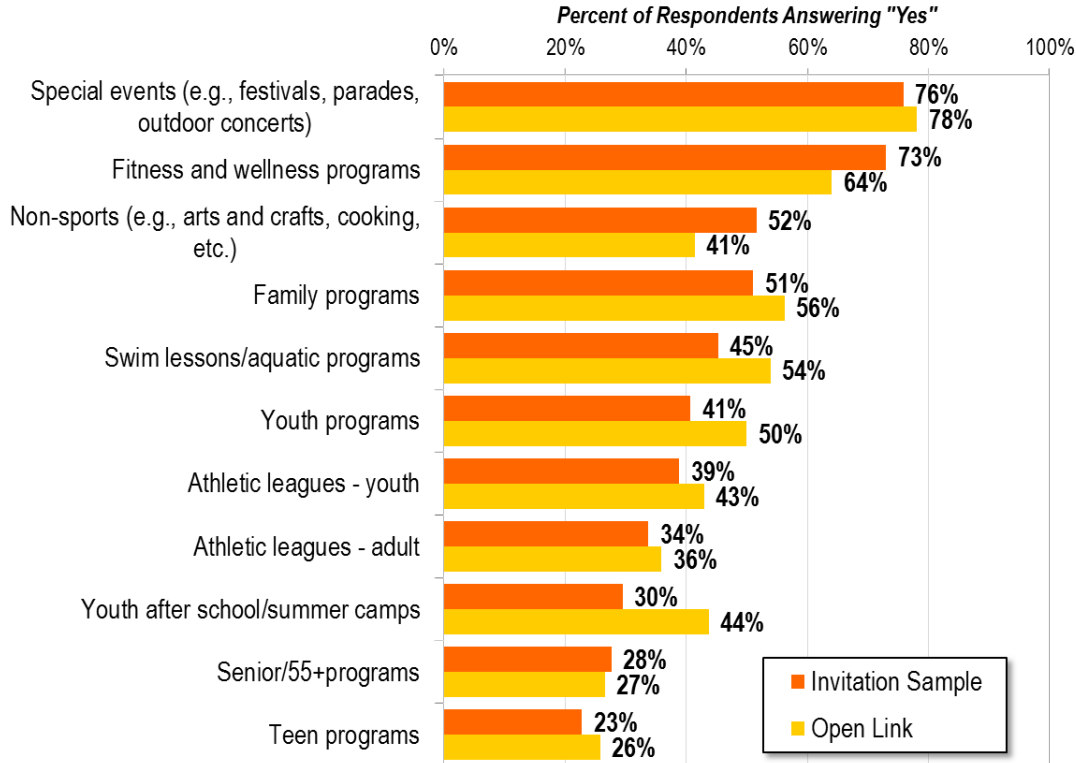
## **Programs, Activities and Special Events**

From a list of 11 programs, activities, and services, survey respondents indicated whether or not their household has a need for each of the programs. If they reported a need, they were asked to evaluate the degree to which the program currently meets the needs of their household. Finally, respondents were asked to list their top three program priorities to be added, expanded, or improved in Pearland. Below are the details of the findings of these three questions.

### **Needs for Programs, Activities, and Special Events**

**Figure 12** illustrates the proportion of respondents indicating that their household has a need for the listed programs. Among invitation respondents, the two most frequently identified needs include special events (76%) and fitness and wellness programs (73%). Around half of invitation sample respondents also reported a need for non-sports programs (52%), family programs (51%), and swim lessons/aquatic programs (45%). Open link respondents similarly cited special events (78%) and fitness and wellness programs (64%) as their top two program needs, followed by family programs (56%) and swim lessons/aquatic programs (54%). Invitation respondents more commonly selected fitness and wellness programs and non-sports programs as household needs, while open link respondents were more likely to have a need for family programs, swim lessons/aquatic programs, youth programs, and youth after school/summer camps, likely due to the higher proportion of family households represented in the open link sample.

**Figure 12: Household Needs for Programs, Activities, and Special Events Invitation Sample vs. Open Link**

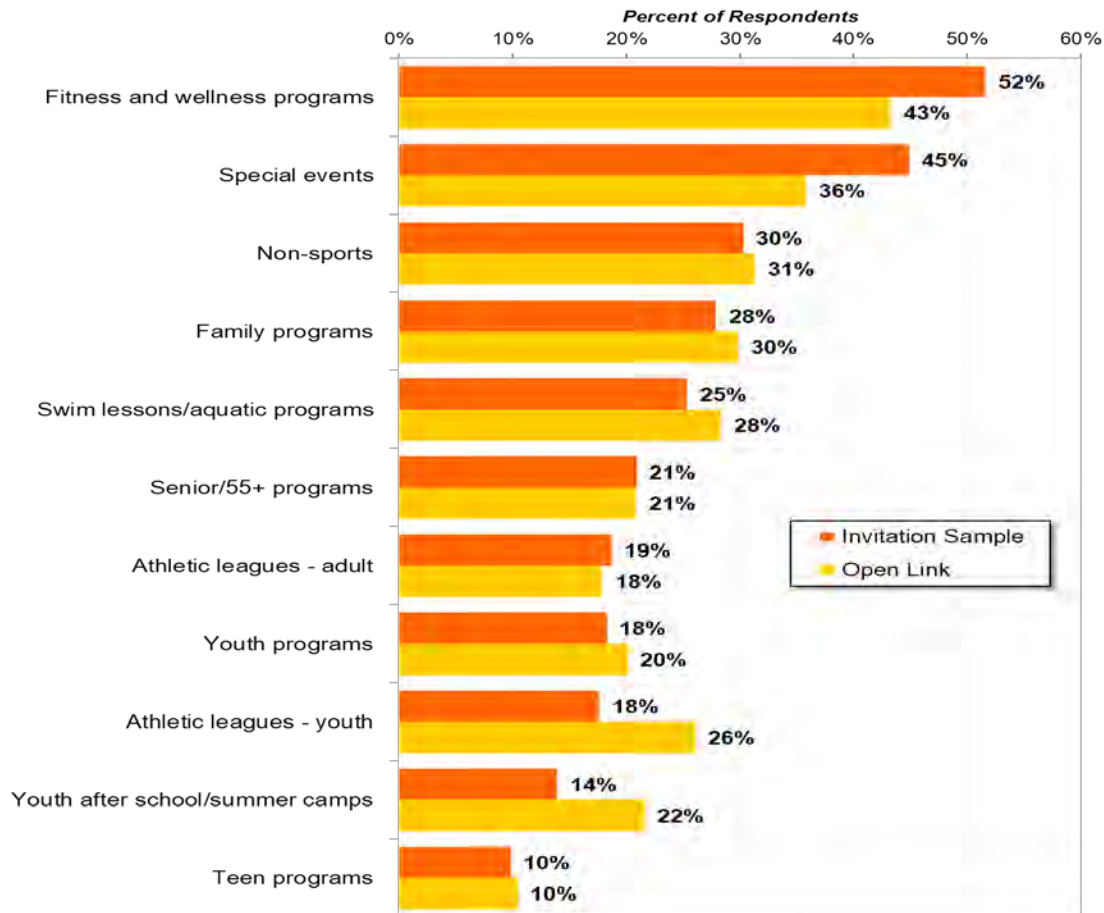


**Top Priorities for Additions, Expansions, or Improvements of Programs, Activities and Special Events**

Respondents were asked to indicate their top three priorities for additions, expansions, or improvements to parks and recreation programs and events.

The combined top three priorities of invitation respondents and open link respondents are compared in **Figure 13** to follow. Top program priorities for open link respondents also include fitness and wellness programs (43%), special events (36%), non-sports programs (31%), and family programs (30%). Open link respondents are more likely to prioritize youth athletic leagues and youth after school summer camps relative to invitation respondents. These prioritizations are likely impacted by the stronger presence of respondents belonging to family households in the open link sample. Conversely, open link respondents are considerably more likely to place importance on fitness and wellness programs and special events.

**Figure 13: Programs, Activities, and Special Events – Top Three Priorities Combined Invitation Sample vs. Open Link**



### Financial Support

The focus groups were asked a question related to the financial support of the department’s programs and facilities. The first question was “How do you believe the Parks and Recreation Department should be financially supported? Should they be self-supported through user fees, completely through taxes, alternative funding, or a combination of each?” All focus group participants were consistent in their response that the support should be a combination of user fees and tax support and alternative funding when available. From these discussions, the survey asked for more specific information listed as follows.

### Opinions Regarding Program and Facility Fees

Over three-quarters of invitation respondents feel that current program fees charged to them by Pearland Parks and Recreation are acceptable (78%). Three percent of respondents indicated they are underpriced, and 20 percent indicated that they were too high. Open link respondents were slightly more likely than invitation respondents to feel that the fees are too high (27%) and proportionally less likely to report that the fees are acceptable (70%). **Figure 14** to follow summarizes these responses.

### **Recreation Center and Natatorium Membership Fees**

Respondents were also prompted to assess the fees charged for the Pearland Recreation Center and Natatorium. Invitation respondents found these fees to be less acceptable than program fees – 42 percent said fees are overpriced, 55 percent said they are acceptable, and four percent feel they are underpriced. Over half of open link respondents also reported that Recreation Center/Natatorium fees are too high (51%), while the other 49 percent feel that the fees are acceptable.

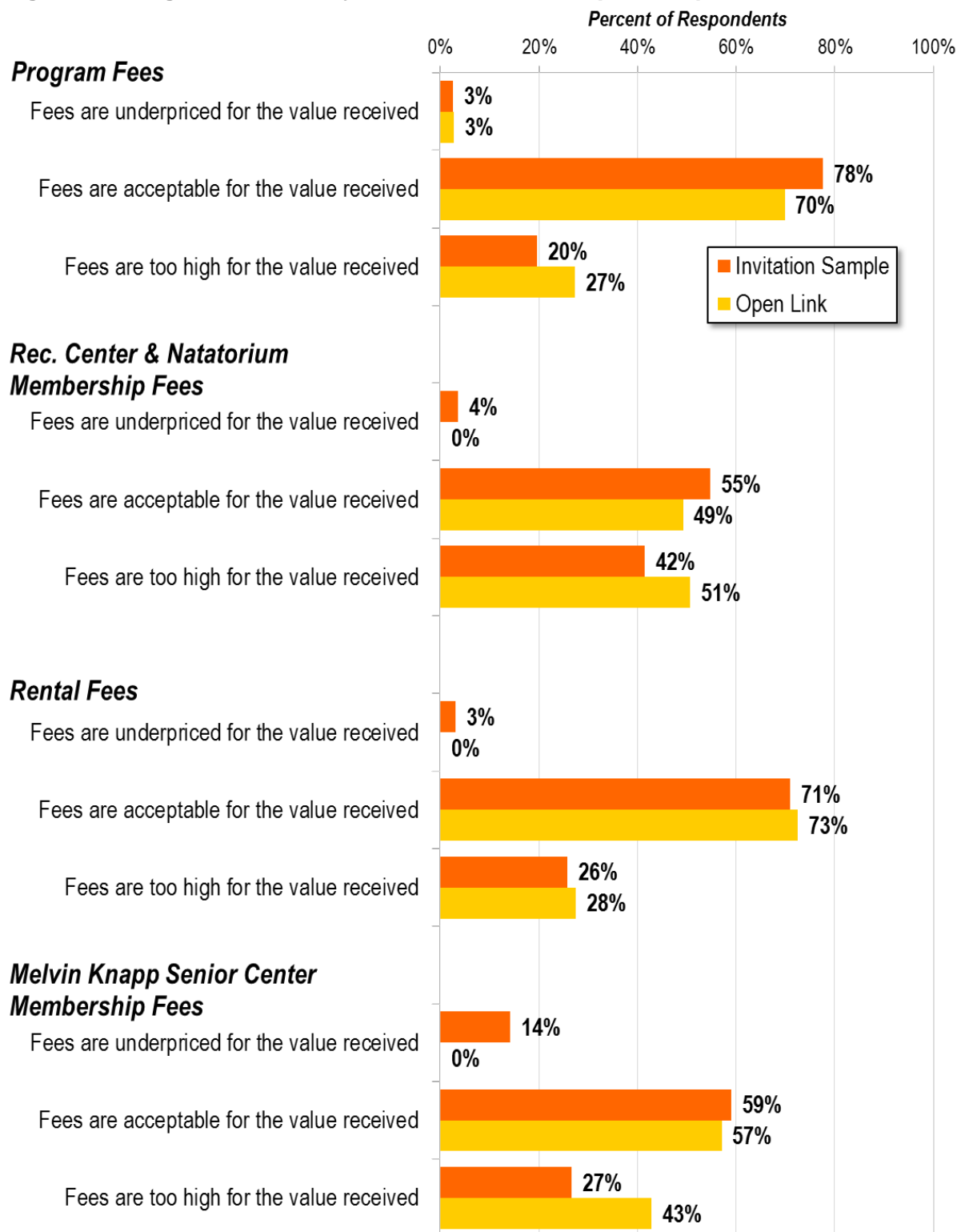
### **Rental Fees**

Among invitation respondents, 71 percent indicated that rental fees are acceptable for their value, while three percent reported these fees are underpriced and 26 percent feel they are overpriced. Open link respondents answered similarly, with 73 percent reporting the fees to be acceptable and 28 percent reporting them to be overpriced.

### **Melvin Knapp Senior Center Membership Fees**

Invitation respondents were considerably less likely to believe that the senior center membership fees are too high (27%) than open link respondents (43%). Fifty-nine percent (59%) of invitation respondents, and 57 percent of open link respondents see these fees as reasonable, while an additional 14 percent of invitation respondents feel that the fees are underpriced for the value received. Resident membership fees are being implemented in FY15.

**Figure 14: Program and Facility Fees - Invitation Sample vs. Open Link**





## IV. What We Have Now – Inventory and Level of Service Analysis

### A. Inventory and Assessment

The purpose of this Level of Service (LOS) analysis is to evaluate how facilities and parks in the City of Pearland serve the community. This analysis may be used as a tool to benchmark current level of service and to direct future planning efforts. Combined with other findings, including survey results, focus group and stakeholder feedback, it also indicates the level of service anticipated by the community.

#### **Asset Inventory**

A detailed inventory of public and semi-public physical assets available for recreational use by the Pearland community was assembled for the Level of Service analysis. This asset inventory was created to serve the City of Pearland in a number of ways. It can be used for a variety of planning and operations tasks, such as asset management and land acquisition, as well as future strategic and master plans. The assets inventory currently includes public parks, recreation areas, and trails managed by the City of Pearland.

Additionally, it was recognized that alternative providers, primarily Homeowners Associations, provide a significant inventory of neighborhood, walk-to recreation opportunities. Due to limitations of time and resources, a selected sampling of alternative providers were included in the full inventory and level of service analysis. Additional alternative providers, including County parks, were located using existing GIS data or aerial photography identification and included for reference, but were not included in the Level of Service analysis. The following is a summary of the overall inventoried sites.

#### **Visited and Assessed**

- 21 City of Pearland Parks
  - 163 Components
- 4 City of Pearland Indoor Facilities
- 26 Alternative Provider Parks
  - 129 Components

#### **Included**

- 49 miles of Trails including City trails and various Alternative Providers

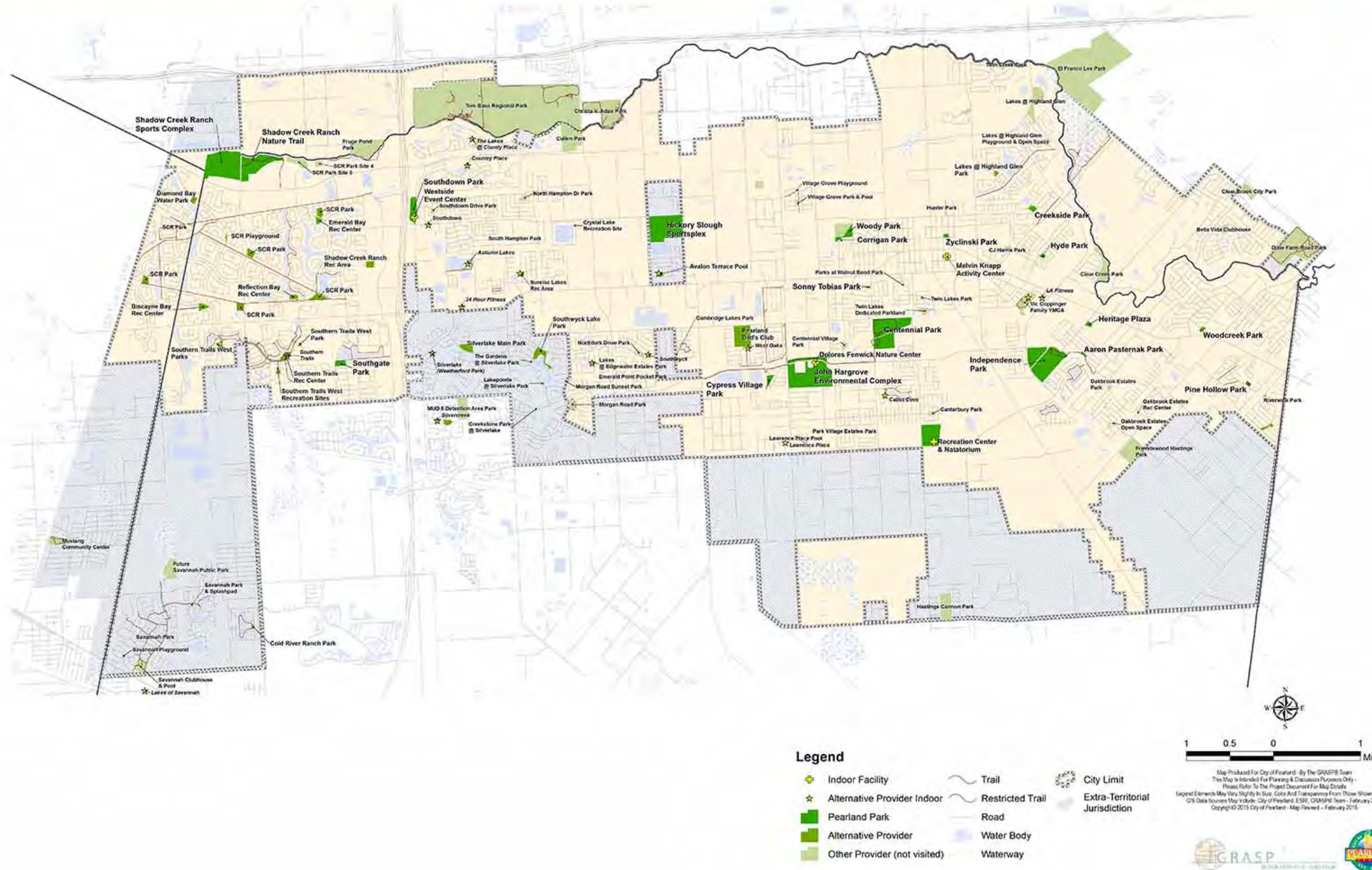
#### **Located**

- 63 Alternative Provider Parks
- 18 Other Indoor Facilities
- 57 Public Schools

**Map A** shows the study area and key locations of properties.

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Pearland, Texas  
**Map A: System Resources**



**Map A:** City of Pearland system map showing all inventory included for GRASP® analysis.



## B. GRASP® Methodology

Level of Service for a community parks and recreation system is indicative of the ability of people to pursue active lifestyles. It can have implications regarding health and wellness, the local economy, and quality of life and tends to reflect community values. It is emblematic of the manner and extent to which people are connected to their communities.

The GRASP® Methodology involves mapping, scoring, demographics, and interpretation of the resulting perspectives to yield a picture of recreational service in a study area. The various efforts undertaken for this study are described below with general findings summarized in the following section.

### Asset Scoring

In planning for the delivery of parks and recreation services, it is useful to think of parks, trails, indoor facilities, and other public spaces as parts of an infrastructure. This infrastructure allows people to exercise, socialize, and maintain a healthy physical, mental, and social wellbeing. The infrastructure is made up of components that support this goal. Components include amenities such as playgrounds, picnic shelters, courts, fields, indoor facilities, and other elements that allow the system to meet recreational needs of a community. A **component** is a feature that people go to a park or recreation center to use, such as a tennis court, which gives users reason to visit and serve as an intended destination. A standardized list of GRASP® components is used to classify each asset in the system. This list of components and definitions can be found in **Appendix B**.

An analytical technique known as **GRASP® (Geo-Referenced Amenities Standard Process)** was used to analyze Level of Service (LOS) provided by assets in the City of Pearland. This proprietary process, used exclusively by GreenPlay and Design Concepts, yields analytical maps and data that may be used to examine access to recreation across the study area. A detailed history and description of GRASP® Methodology may be found in **Appendix B**.

In the inventory of assets, the following information is collected:

- Component type and location
- Evaluation of component functionality
- Evaluation of associated comfort and convenience features at a location
- Evaluation of general design and ambience at a location
- Site photos
- General comments

All components are scored based on condition, size, site capacity, and overall quality as they reflect the expected quality of recreational features as compared with typical facilities in Pearland.

A three tier rating system is used to evaluate these:

- 1 = Below Expectations
- 2 = Meets Expectations
- 3 = Exceeds Expectations

Not all parks are created equal, however. GRASP® level of service analysis takes into account important aspects of user experience often neglected by traditional approaches. For example,

the GRASP® system acknowledges the important differences between these identical playground structures:



The immediate surroundings of a component affect how well it functions, so in addition to scoring components, each park site or indoor facility is given a set of scores to rate its comfort, convenience, and ambient qualities. This includes traits such as the availability of restrooms, drinking water, shade, scenery, etc. These *modifier* values are then attributed to any component at a given location and serve to enhance component and location scores.

A final inventory atlas is provided as a separate staff resource document. This atlas includes maps and corresponding data including scoring and comments for all outdoor locations. Indoor

data and scoring is also included. Below is an example of map and data page from that document.



Pearland Parks and Recreation		GRASP® Atlas				
Initial Inventory Date:		Hyde Park				
Updated:	02/28/2018	Map:	Hyde Park Area			
02/28/2018	02/28/2018	Map:	Hyde Park			
Modified with Scores						
Drinking Fountains	2	Shade	3			
Seating	2	Traffic Connection	3			
3000 Office	2	Park Access	2			
0000 Park Installation	2	Pathway	1			
Security Lighting	3	Seasonal Plantings	1			
0000 Walk	3	Children's Playings	1			
Restrooms	3	Interpretive	3			
Design and Ambiance						
2						
General Comments						
Shelter-Play Area: see address to see						
Components with Scores						
MWID	Component	Quantity	Lights	Neighborhood Score	Community Score	Comments
0014	Interpretive	1	1	2	2	
0010	Play Area	1	1	2	2	
0010	Shelter Group	1	1	2	2	
0011	Playground Loop	1	1	1	1	Shooting range area
0010	Open Park	1	1	2	2	

In addition to the inventory atlas, the dataset can be used to run a variety of reports and queries. For example, summary tables can be produced. The following summary table shows each Pearland park in the inventory, as well as each identified recreation component available. A full list of GRASP® components and their definitions can be found in **Appendix B**.



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Table 6: Inventory Summary Table

LOCATION	PARK TYPE	Approximate GIS Acres	Aqua Feat, Pool	Aqua Feat, Spray	Backstop, Practice	Ballfield	Ballfield Complex	Basketball	Batting Cage	Concessions	Disk Golf	Dog Park	Educational Facility	Event Space	Fitness Course	Loop Walk	MP Field, All Sizes	MP Field Complex	Natural Area	Open Turf	Open Water	Passive Node	Picnic Grounds	Playground, All Sizes	Shelter, All Sizes	Tennis	Tennis Complex	Trailhead	Volleyball	Water Feature
Aaron Pasternak Park	MINI	0.7																		1				1	1					
Canterbury Park	NEIGHBORHOOD	2.1																												
Centennial Park	COMMUNITY	62.7		1		6	1	3		1	1		1			1			1	1	1			1	14	4	1	1		
Cypress Village Park	NEIGHBORHOOD	3.4														1				1				1						
Heritage Plaza	MINI	1.7											1												1					1
Hickory Slough Sportsplex	SPORTS COMPLEX	63.6															6	1							1					
Hyde Park	NEIGHBORHOOD	1.3														1				1				1	1					
Independence Park	COMMUNITY	68.3	1					3				1				2	1		1		1		4	2	4	4	1			
John Hargrove EC	NATURE CENTER	74.3														1					1									
Pine Hollow Park	NEIGHBORHOOD	1.1						0.5								1				1				1	4					
Recreation Center	SPORTS COMPLEX	30.6				2			4	1							2													
Shadow Creek Ranch Nature Trail	LINEAR	41.6											1						1		1	4						1		
Shadow Creek Ranch Sports Complex	SPORTS COMPLEX	73.1				7	1										1								1					
Sonny Tobias Park	MINI	0.4																												
Southdown Park	COMMUNITY	12.1		1	2							1		1	1	1	1					1		1	6				1	
Southgate Park	NEIGHBORHOOD	4.4														1				1				1						
Trail Corridor	TRAIL CORRIDOR	9.1																				2								
Woodcreek Park	NEIGHBORHOOD	1.4																			1			1						
Woody Park	COMMUNITY	5.0														1				1				1	2					
Zyclinski Park	NEIGHBORHOOD	1.2						1					1			1				1				1						
Totals:		458.4	1	2	2	15	2	7.5	4	2	1	2	4	1	1	11	11	1	3	8	5	7	4	12	35	8	2	2	1	1

## Catchment Areas

People use a variety of transit modes to reach a recreation destination: on foot, on a bike, in a car, via public transportation, or utilizing any combination of these or other alternatives. The mode is often determined, at least in part, by the distance to be travelled. The GRASP® system accounts for this by applying more than one **catchment area** distance to examine access to assets.

A catchment area on a map, also called a buffer, is a circle drawn around each component at a specific distance. Any point within this distance reflects the score of that component. This is called a **service area**. These buffers are overlapped and used to calculate a total GRASP® Level of Service score for any given point within the study area that reflects service from all nearby assets. This process yields the data used to create all perspective maps and analytical charts.

The GRASP® methodology typically applies two different catchment area distances to calculate scoring totals, yielding two distinct perspectives used to examine a recreation system:

1. General Access to Recreation
2. Walkable Access to Recreation

General Access analysis applies a primary catchment distance of one mile. This is considered a suitable distance for a bike ride or a short drive in a car. This one-mile catchment is intended to capture recreational users traveling from home or elsewhere to a park or facility by way of bike, bus, or automobile.

Walkable Access analysis uses a smaller catchment distance to capture users within walking distance of recreation facilities. This distance can range from as short as 1/4 mile to as long as one-half mile depending on the study area. For the City of Pearland, a one-half mile catchment buffer was used. This catchment distance used in GRASP® studies represents a fifteen-minute walk for most users.

Academic and professional research is inconclusive on the topic of just how far people are willing to walk for recreation. Some agencies have used one half mile as a walkable distance for studies they have conducted. Other studies in this country and internationally have used one mile or one kilometer (.62 miles) as walkable distances.

## Assumptions

Proximity equates to access. This means that the presence of a recreational facility within a specific distance indicates that facility is accessible from a location. “Accessibility” in this analysis does not refer specifically to ADA accessibility.

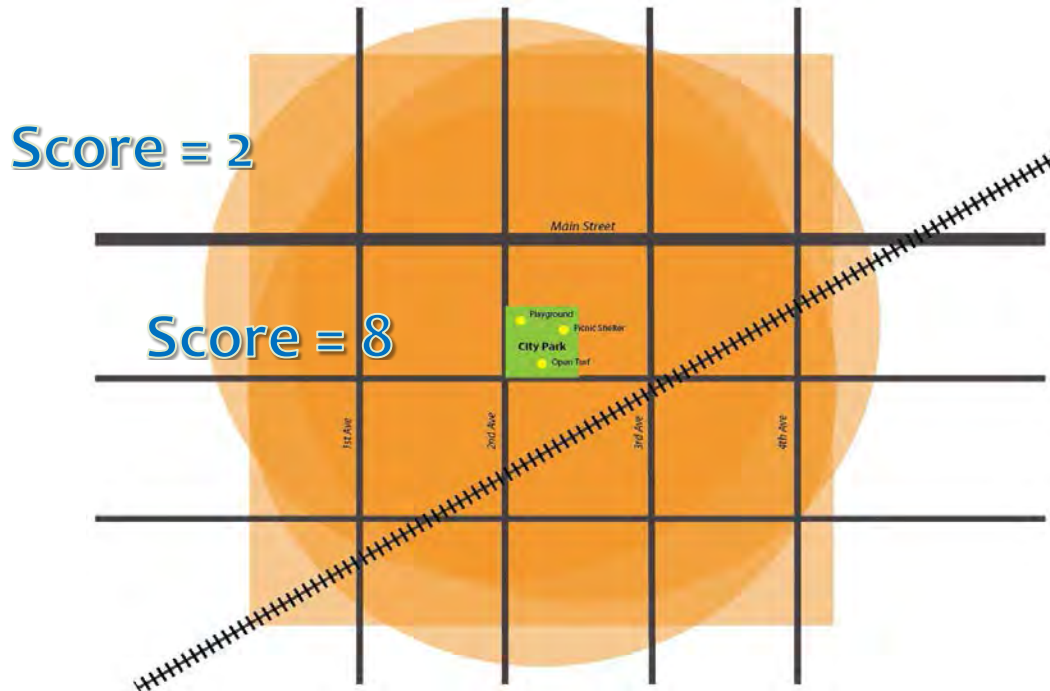
1. General access equates to proximity of 1 mile, a reasonable distance for a drive in a car.
2. Walkable access equates to proximity of one-half mile, a reasonable distance attainable in 15 minutes walking at a leisurely pace.

## C. Level of Service Analysis

Maps and data quantifications produced using the GRASP® methodology are known as **perspectives**. Each perspective is a model of how service is being provided across the study area. The model can be further analyzed to derive statistical information about service in a variety of ways. Maps are utilized along with tables and charts to provide benchmarks a community may use to determine its success in providing services.

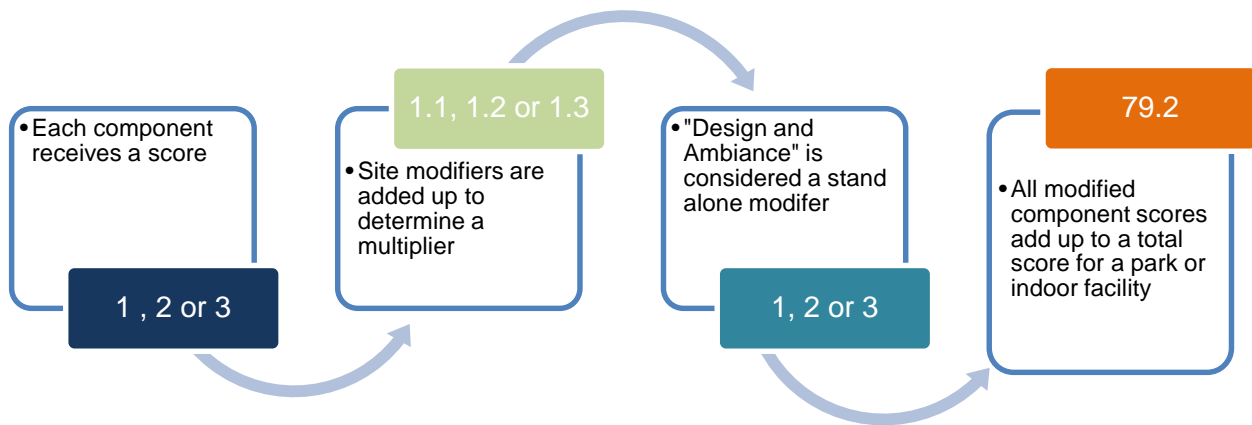
The score of any component is reflected at any point within a catchment area that surrounds it. These areas are overlapped and used to calculate a total GRASP® Level of Service score for any given point within the study area, in this case the City of Pearland. When service areas for multiple components are plotted on a map, a picture emerges that represents the cumulative level of service provided by that set of components in a geographic area. This process yields the data used to create all perspective maps and analytical charts. The graphic below illustrates the process assuming all three components and the park boundary itself, and thus all catchments, are scored a “2.”

**Figure 15: GRASP® Catchment and Scoring Example**



A basic algorithm is used to calculate scoring totals for every park and indoor facility in the inventory and is illustrated in **Figure 16**, below.

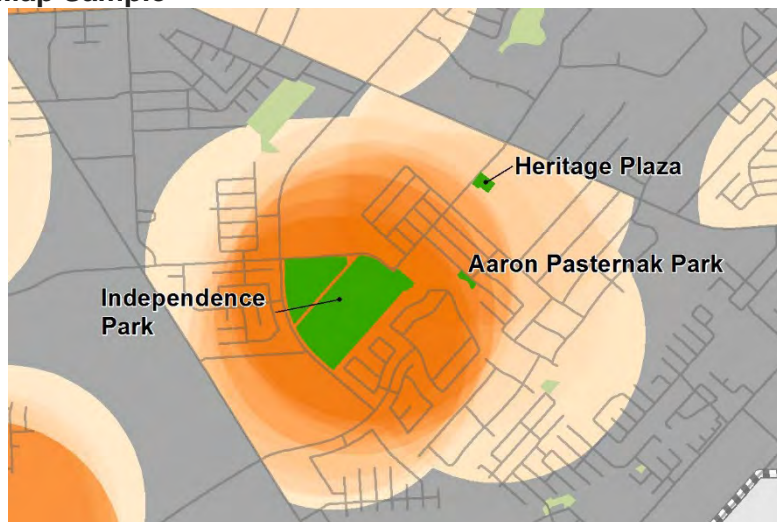
**Figure 16: GRASP® Scoring Calculation**



Perspective maps and charts are produced based on scoring calculations determined by applying the GRASP® process to the City of Pearland inventory. Each facility or asset has been assigned a GRASP® score. Shown on a **heat map**, cumulative GRASP® scoring is represented by darker or lighter shades.

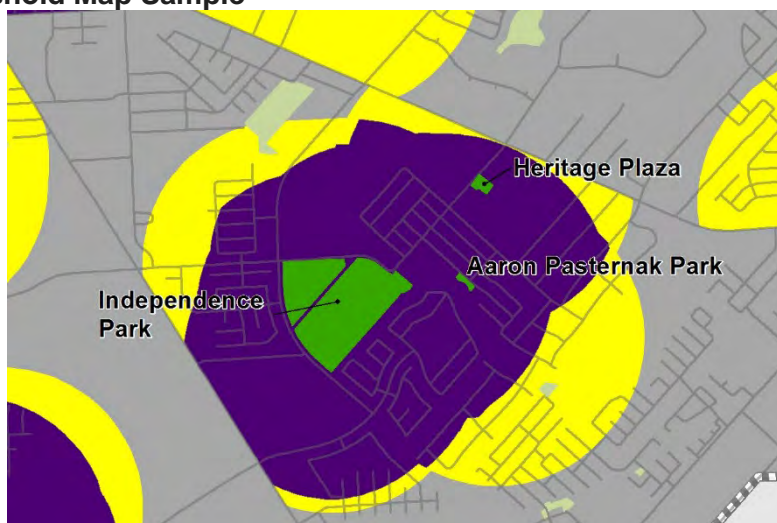
GRASP® recognizes that every agency is unique and should be measured on its own standards. This data can also be used to portray areas that meet or do not meet a minimum standard, represented by different colors. A **threshold map** displays the same data related to a minimum standard GRASP® score called a threshold. A threshold score is normally set by the score of a typical “neighborhood” park within a recreation system but may also be set using a median score, average score, or some other statistical indicator. See **Figures 17 and 18** for illustration.

**Figure 17: Heat Map Sample**



Darker and lighter orange shades on a heat map show areas with higher or lower level of service respectively. Also shown are outdoor locations, indoor locations, and city infrastructure.

**Figure 18: Threshold Map Sample**



Purple, yellow, and grey shades on a threshold map show areas that meet the minimum standard, fall below the minimum standard, or have no level of service respectively.

**Figures 17 and 18** illustrate two common types of perspective maps, the heat map and the threshold map. On a heat map, a darker orange shade results from the overlap of more service areas or areas served by higher quality components. All shades have GRASP® scoring values associated with them such that for any given spot on a perspective map there is a GRASP® Level of Service score that reflects cumulative scoring for nearby assets.

The following sections will discuss the inventory, analysis, and findings from the City of Pearland GRASP® Level of Service Analysis.

## D. GRASP® Analysis

The GRASP® Methodology involves the overlap of mapping, scoring, demographics, and interpretation of the resulting perspectives to yield a picture of recreational service in a study area. Efforts undertaken for the City of Pearland analysis are described in full detail below. Findings and recommendations are summarized in the following section.

### Neighborhood Access to All Recreation

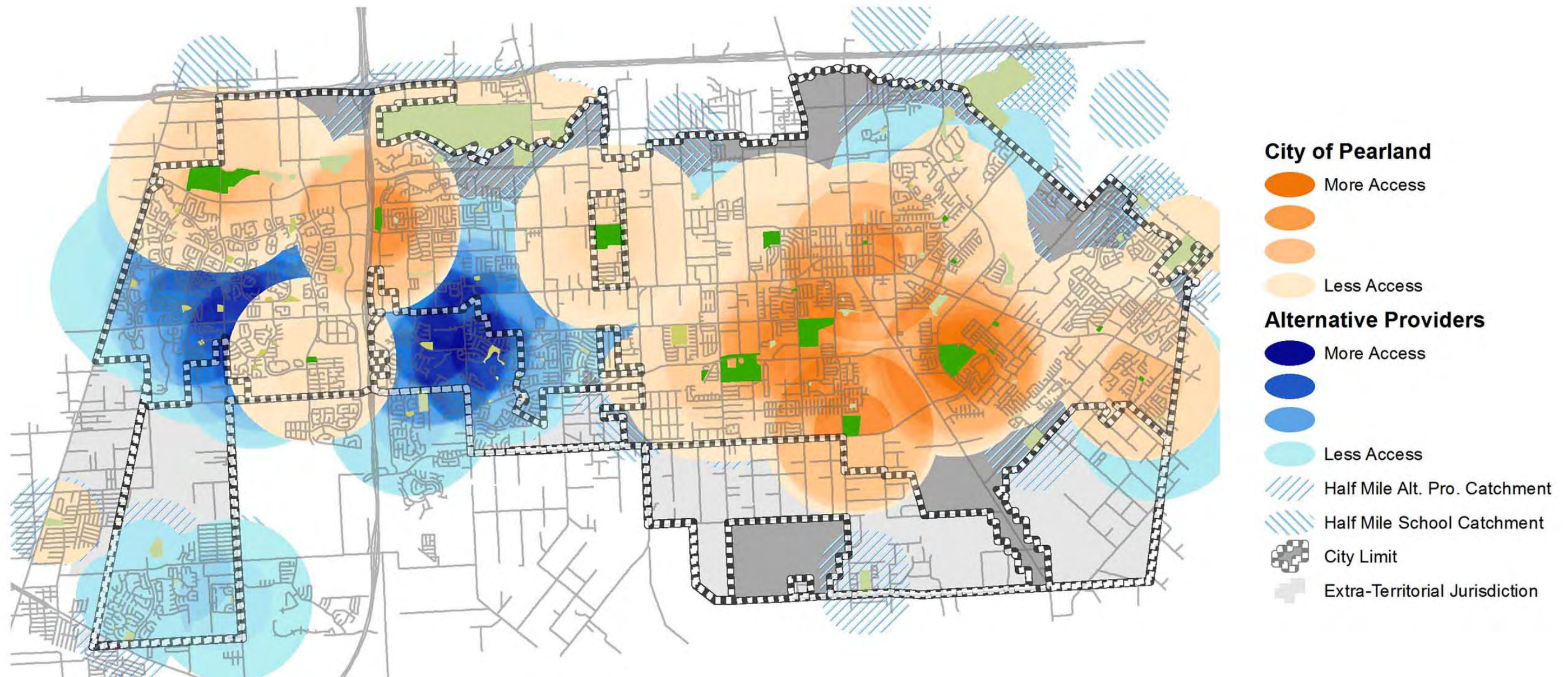
The Composite Level of Service perspective indicates general access to recreation in the City of Pearland by any means of transportation and is represented in the Map Series B: one-mile catchment buffers placed around each component and shaded relative to the component's GRASP® score to service areas. This represents a convenient travel distance by normal means such as driving, or perhaps bicycling.

This perspective also overlays a one-half mile service area representing the distance that a resident can reasonably walk in fifteen minutes. Asset scores are in effect doubled within this distance of a component to reflect the added value of walkable proximity. This doubling of the GRASP® value within a walkable distance of the component serves to place a premium those areas in closer, more walkable proximity to recreation.

Initial analysis is intended to show level of service provided by City of Pearland and Alternative Providers as unique service. Hence, the following two maps (Map B-1 and B-2) represent the level of service provided by City of Pearland in an orange gradient and that service provided by alternative providers in blue gradient. The third map, Map B-3, makes no distinction between providers and therefore represents level of service provided by all providers.

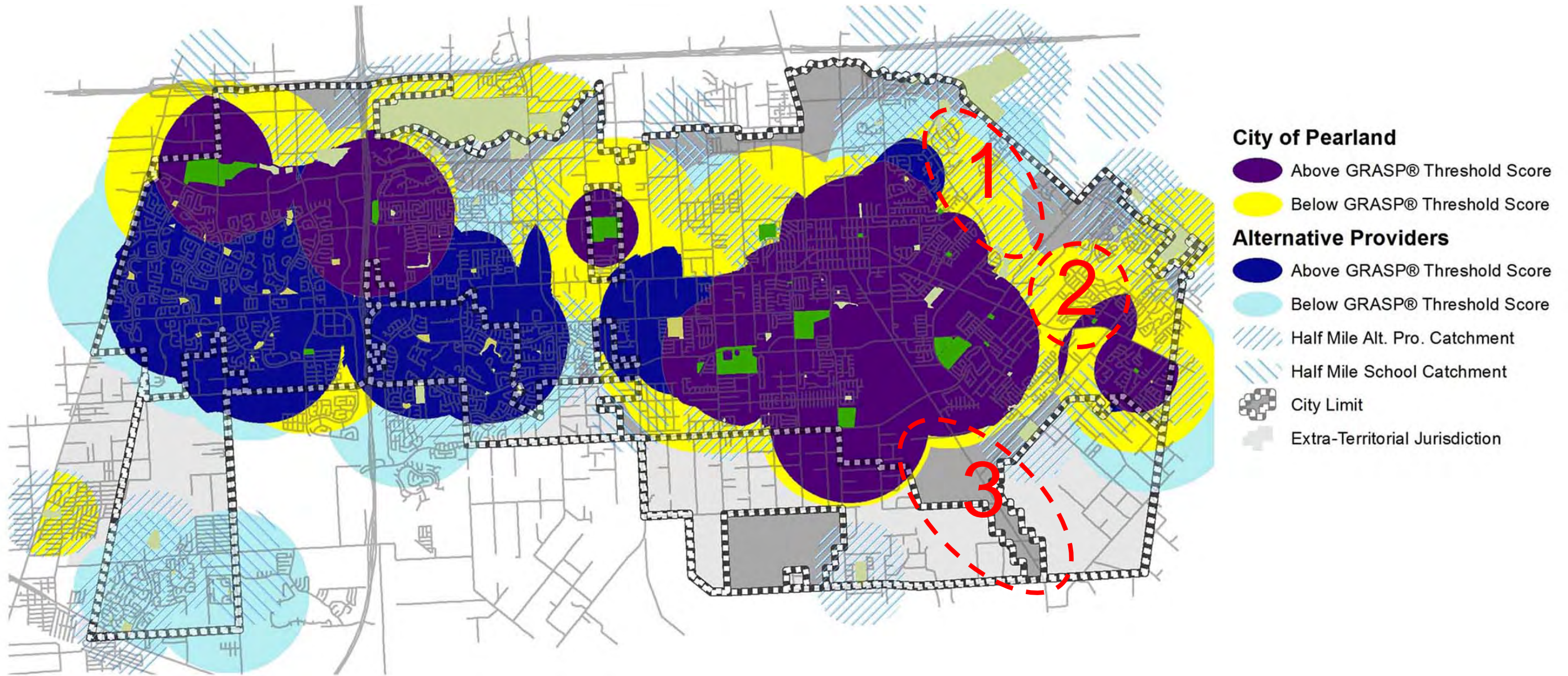
The heat map, shown in **Map B-1** suggests that the study area has good distribution of facilities and good general access to parks and recreation facilities. The threshold map, shown in **Map B-2**, displays GRASP® scoring based on a minimum standard, called a *threshold*. For this study a threshold score of 67.2 has been used which equates to access to a typical neighborhood park and access to a trail.





Map B-1: Neighborhood Access to All Recreation in the City of Pearland is displayed here as a heat map, with service from City facilities shown distinct from those of alternative providers.





**Map B-2:** This threshold map shows Neighborhood Access to recreation in the City of Pearland and those of alternative providers. All access is shown relative to a GRASP® score of 67.2, either above or below, equating to the LOS provided by a typical neighborhood park with access to a trail.

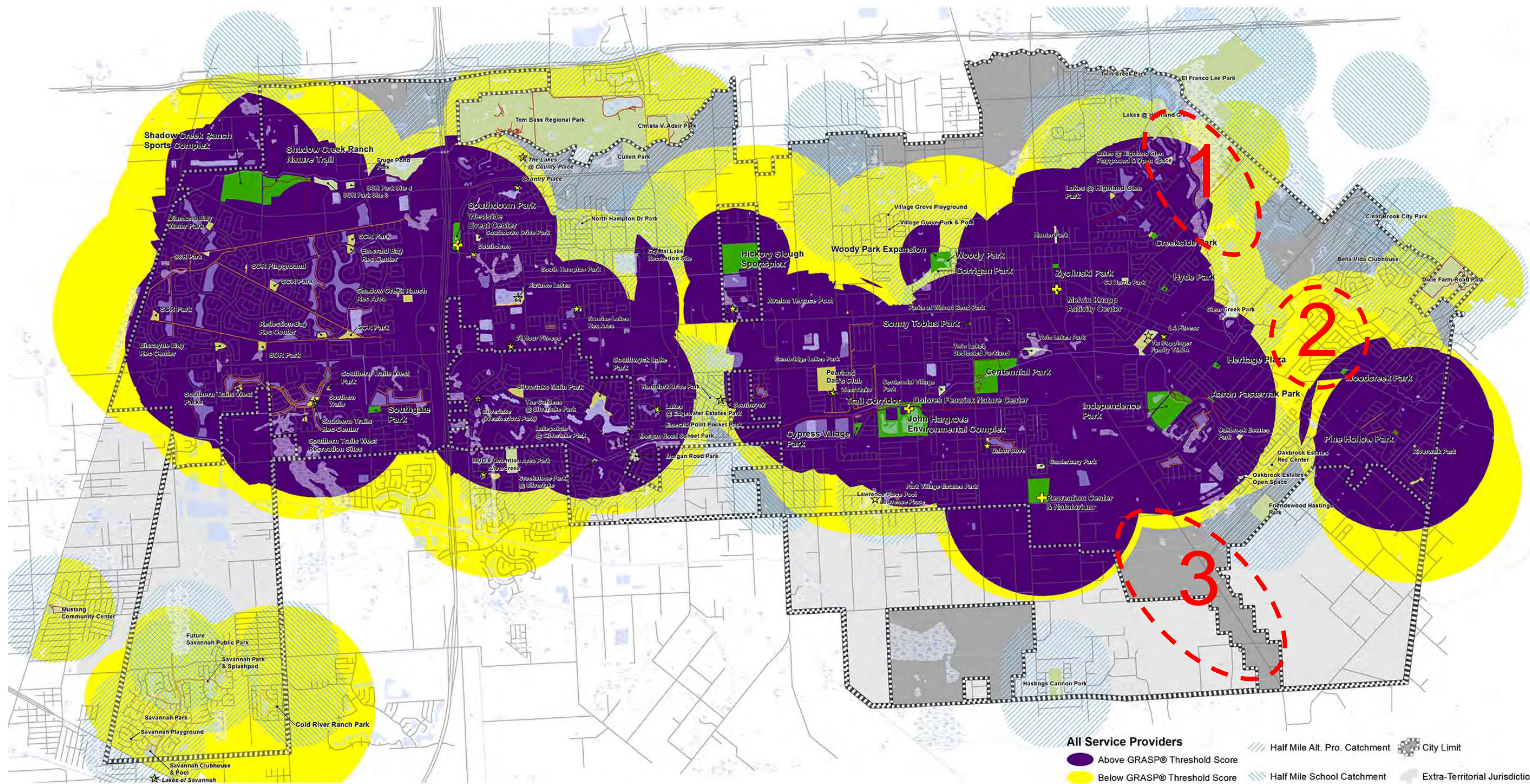
In **Map B-2**, areas displayed in either purple or dark blue can be thought of as having adequate level of service. Areas in yellow indicate that City of Pearland is providing below threshold level of service, while areas in light blue only have access to alternative provider recreation opportunities at or below threshold level. Residents living in areas of dark gray are within the City of Pearland limits but must travel further than one mile to access recreation. Light gray areas are within the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) and are not served by any identified recreation provider within one mile. Hatched areas represent some level of service provided by other providers such as County parks, other Homeowners Association facilities, or Schools, but the actual level of service was not calculated as part of this study.

Three areas have been outlined and labeled on this map as examples. Area 1 shows a below threshold area, yellow, with multiple hatch areas overlaid and a light blue edge. This area should be further investigated for the amount of service provided by other providers. Area 2 shows an area of only yellow with an apparent residential street grid. This type of street network typically indicates neighborhood type development and therefore may be an area of concern in regards to low level of service. Area 3 shows a dark gray area with no hatching. This would indicate any Pearland resident living within this area must travel further than one mile to recreation opportunities.

**Map B-2** does not indicate whether the combined level of service from City of Pearland and Alternative Providers LOS meets the threshold level. **Map B-3** shows this combined analysis. Using the previous three identified areas as reference, the following can be derived: For example, in Area 1, much of the area that was yellow with hatching in **Map B-2** is now purple in **Map B-3**. This indicates that City of Pearland and Alternative Provider facilities are combining to provide adequate level of service in that area and additional level of service is provided by other facilities not included in the analysis. In Area 2, there is little to no change in yellow area from **Map B-2** to **Map B-3**, indicating that level of service is below the standard when considering all providers in an area. Area 3 in **Map B-3** remains gray and does not have any recreational opportunities within one mile travel distance.

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**Map B-3:** This threshold map shows Neighborhood Access to all recreation in the City of Pearland, including those of alternative providers, in the same shade. A minimum standard GRASP® score of 67.2 is again used in this perspective to show service above or below from any provider.



**Further statistics can also be derived from this mapping analysis.**

	Percent of Total with LOS	Average LOS per Acre Served	Avg. LOS Per Acre/ Population per acre	GRASP® Index
<i>City of Pearland</i>	85%	162	48	15

*\*Note: Statistics only calculated for areas within the city limits of Pearland. ETJ not included.*

**Column A:** Shows the percentage of study area that has at least some service (LOS > 0). At 85 percent of the City with access to recreation opportunities within one mile in addition to some complementary service provided by sources not included in this inventory, the general access to recreation opportunities can be thought of as very good in Pearland.

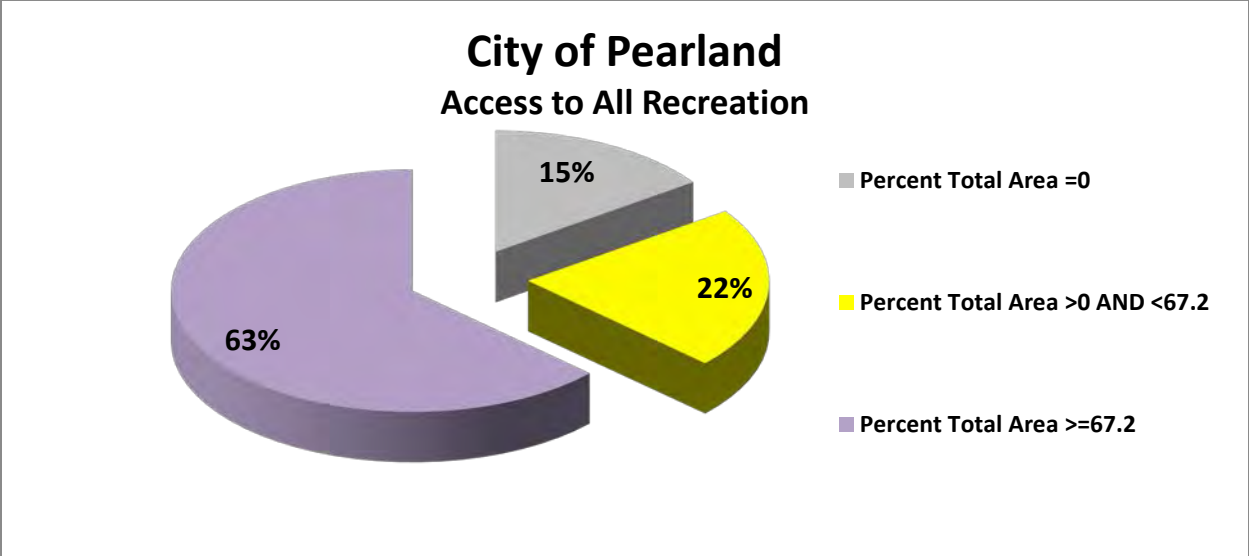
**Column B:** Shows the average numerical value of LOS for the total area. Scores for the entire City ranged from a low of zero (or no service) to a high of 531.9. Considering that a value of 67.2 was used in threshold analysis, an average of 162 for all served acres indicates that where service is provided, that service is relatively high.

**Column C:** Shows the result of dividing the number from the previous column (Average LOS per Acre Served) by the population density of the area.

**Column D:** GRASP® Index, is a simple numerical calculation that involves dividing the total GRASP® value of all of the components in a given area by the population of that area, in thousands. The difference between the GRASP® Index and the previous number is that the GRASP® Index reflects the total value of assets in the area in relation to the number of people the assets serve, while the previous number relates the *density* of service per acre to the *density* of people per acre. The GRASP® Index does not account for service from assets outside the study area, whereas the previous value does.

**Chart 1** shows statistics from an analysis of the values on **Map B-3**, applying a **threshold**, or minimum standard against which to compare service value. Total GRASP® scoring values are shown relative to a threshold value of 67.2. It shows the percentages of the city limits that have no service, fall below this threshold value, or exceed this threshold. While 85 percent of the City has access to recreation, over 60 percent of that land is above threshold. This is another indication that where service is provided, it is at a high level.





**Chart 1: Access to all Recreation**

**Walkable Access to Recreation**

Walkability is a measurement of how user-friendly an area is to people traveling on foot. A walkable environment has benefits with regard to public health, the local economy, and quality of life. Many factors influence walkability and include the presence or absence and quality of footpaths, sidewalks or other pedestrian rights-of-way, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, and safety considerations among others. Perhaps the most significant factors affecting walkability in a study area are barriers.

The Walkable Level of Service perspective models access to recreation by walking or other active transportation mode such as bicycle or skateboard. A one-half mile catchment distance is used exclusively in this analysis. This represents a convenient distance to access recreation and can be achieved by an average person within a fifteen minute walk. Unlike the Neighborhood Access perspective (Map Series B), this analysis does not recognize any service across a **barrier**. One-half mile service areas for all assets are determined and are then limited by each barrier. Scores are adjusted to allow direct comparison to the first perspective (Map Series B) showing General Access to Recreation.

Barriers were determined for the City of Pearland and used to “clip” the service coverage for the walkable level of service perspective analysis. These are typically major streets, waterways, or railroad tracks that restrict pedestrian or bicycle movement and pose a potential risk to public safety. This accounts for these obstacles as deterrents to active transportation that serve to limit access to recreation without using a car.

The walkability heat map in **Map C-1** shows access to recreation in Pearland if walking or other non-motorized travel mode is used to reach facilities. The effect of the barriers is notable in this perspective map. **Map C-2** displays GRASP® scoring based on the same threshold score of 67.2 used in Map Series B.



**Map C-1:** Walkable Access to Recreation in the City of Pearland is displayed here as a heat map, with service from City facilities shown distinct from those of alternative providers.





**Map C-2:** This threshold map shows Walkable Access to recreation in the City of Pearland and those of alternative providers, displayed in a different shade. All access is shown relative to a GRASP® score of 67.2, either above or below, equating to the LOS provided by a typical neighborhood park with access to a trail.

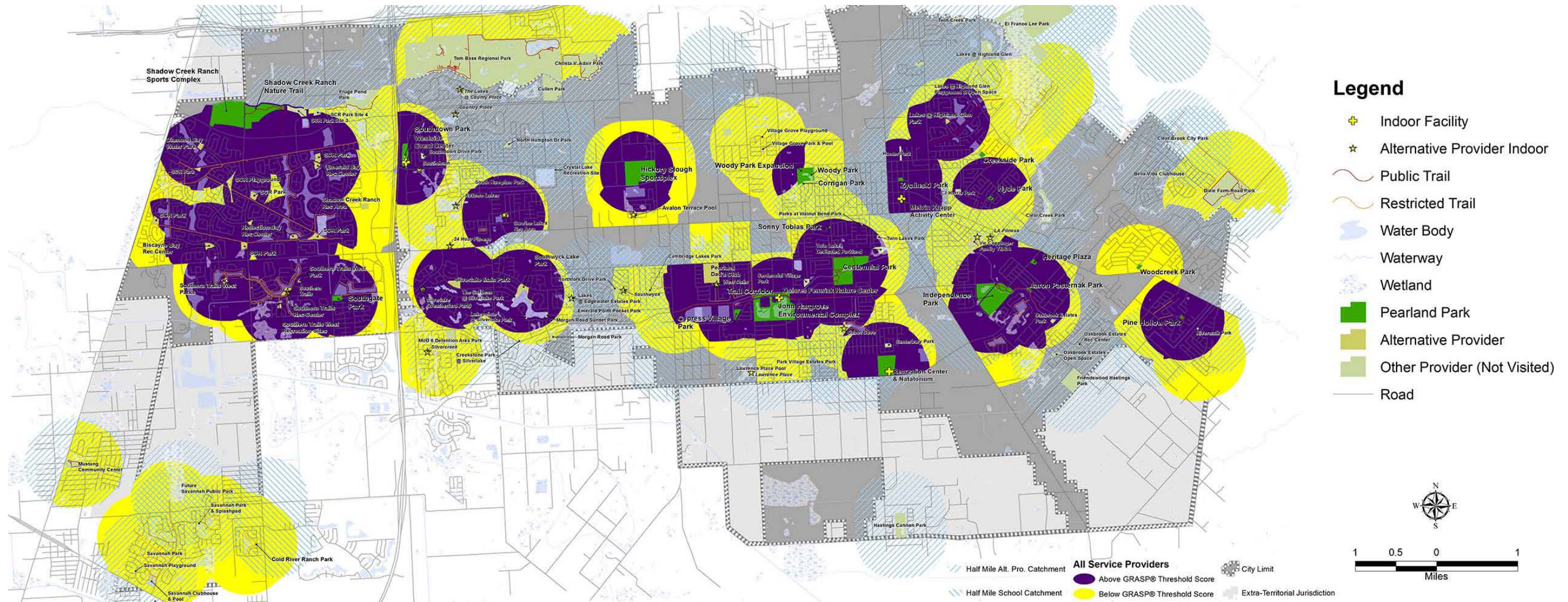
As in Map Series B, **Map C-2** displays areas in either purple or dark blue that can be thought of as having adequate level of service. Areas in yellow indicate that the City of Pearland is providing a level of service that is below the threshold, while areas in light blue only have access to alternative provider recreation opportunities at below threshold level. Residents living in areas of dark gray are within the City of Pearland limits but must walk further than one-half mile to access recreation. Light gray areas are within the ETJ and are not served by any identified recreation provider within one-half mile. Hatched areas represent some level of service provided by other providers such as County parks, other Homeowners Association facilities, or Schools but the actual level of service was not calculated as part of this study.

A significant portion of the City of Pearland relies on alternative providers or school grounds for recreation opportunities within walking distance of home. These areas are indicated by blue shading or blue hatching.

Similar to Map Series B, **Map C-3**, shows the combined analysis with no distinction as to ownership. This map shows significant portions of the city at or above the threshold in walkability but it also reveals a great deal below threshold and with no service. This analysis would indicate that, while overall Pearland may not be a very walk friendly city, there are areas, subdivisions, and neighborhoods that could be considered very walkable.

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**Map C-3:** This threshold map shows Walkable Access to all recreation in the City of Pearland based on all providers shown in the same shade. A minimum standard GRASP® score of 67.2 is again used in this perspective to show service above or below threshold from any provider.



	Percent of Total with LOS	Average LOS per Acre Served	Avg. LOS Per Acre/ Population per acre	GRASP® Index
<i>City of Pearland</i>	57%	105	31	15

### Map C-3 Statistics

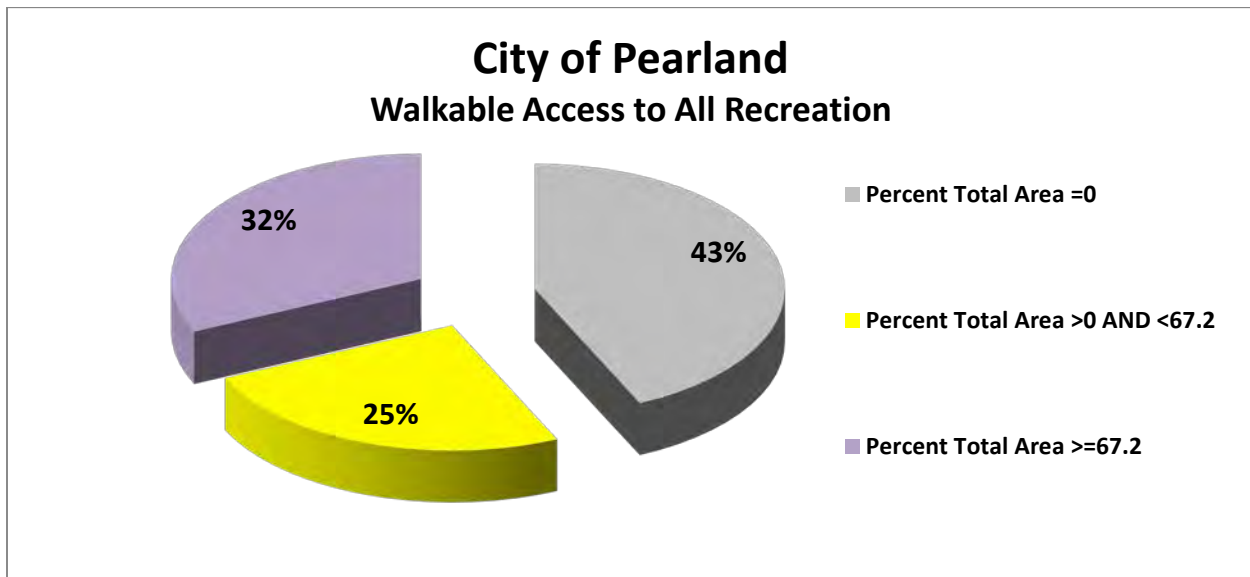
**Column A:** Shows that 57 percent of study area that has at least some service (LOS >0).

**Column B:** Shows the average GRASP® value of LOS for the total area of 105, indicating that where service is provided, it is at a high level.

**Column C:** Shows the results of dividing the number from the previous column (Average LOS per Acre Served) by the population density of the area.

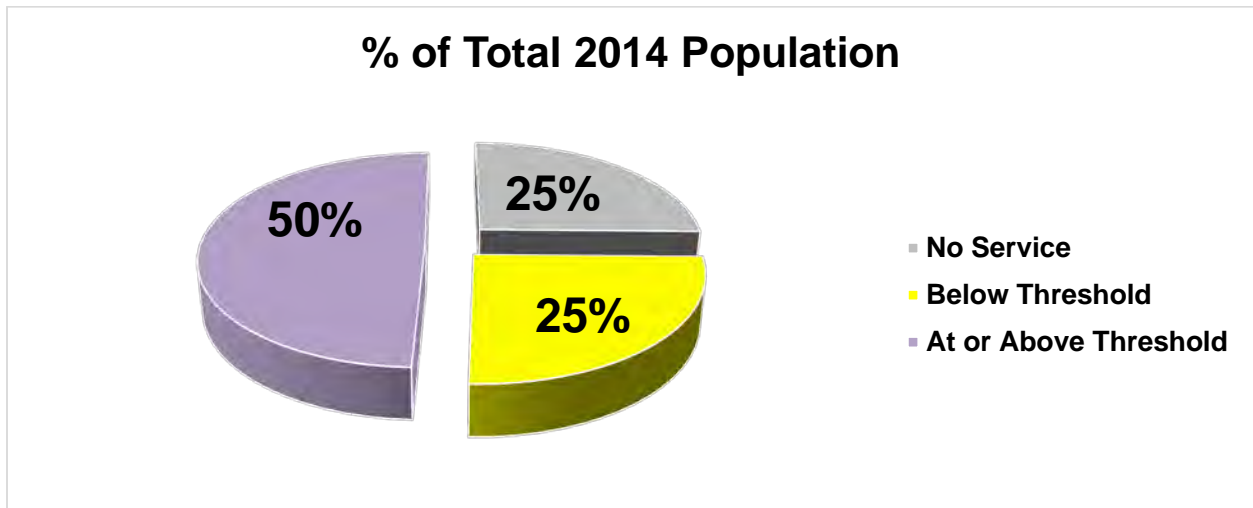
**Column D:** The GRASP® Index, a simple numerical calculation that involves dividing the total GRASP® value of all of the components in a given area by the population of that area in thousands. The difference between the GRASP® Index and the previous number is that the GRASP® Index reflects the total value of assets in the area in relation to the number of people served by them, while the previous number relates the *density* of service per acre to the *density* of people per acre. It also allows service from assets outside the planning area to be accounted for, while the GRASP® Index does not.

**Chart 2** shows statistics from an analysis of the values on Perspective A applying a threshold. Total GRASP® scoring values were bracketed to show where LOS is above or below a threshold value of 67.2. A breakdown of the 57 percent of the City that has walkable access indicates that 32 percent is at or above threshold and 25 percent does not meet the threshold value. Forty-three percent (43%) of the City is without walkable service within one-half mile.



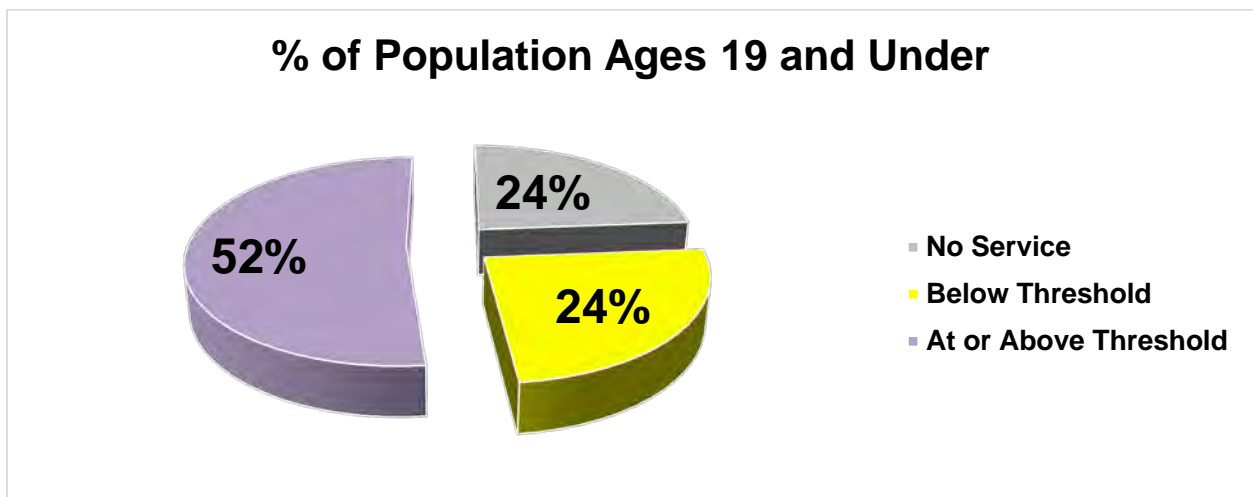
**Chart 2: Walkability of City of Pearland by land area**

When discussing walkability, it is very important to understand the proximity of parks to population centers. While **Chart 2** above refers to the percentage of the City within walking distance of service, it does not tell the whole story. Using additional ESRI software, the percentage of the actual Pearland population can also be determined within the three service levels: at or above threshold, below threshold, and no service. This results of this further analysis are shown in **Chart 3** below, which indicates that nearly 75 percent of the Pearland population has walkable access to recreation with half of the population at or above threshold. This would indicate that parks are generally well placed in relation to population areas.



**Chart 3: Walkability of City of Pearland by Population**

This population analysis can also be broken down further to look at specific portions of the population. One example of this is the following **Chart 4**, which shows that 77 percent of youth (ages 19 and under) live within walking distance of recreation opportunities that were included in this study.



**Chart 4: Youth walkable access to recreation**

## Level of Service Summary Tables

The set of tables below show the statistics from both the Map B-3 (Neighborhood Access) and C-3 (walkable access) in one place for comparison:

**Table 7: Level of Service Summary Table**

### Service Coverage Summary - Percent With Service

	Map B-3	Map C-3
<i>City of Pearland</i>	85%	57%

### LOS. Summary - Avg. LOS Per Acre Served

	Map B-3	Map C-3
<i>City of Pearland</i>	162	105

### LOS Summary - Avg. LOS Per Acre / Population 10-14 Per Acre

	Map B-3	Map C-3
<i>City of Pearland</i>	48	31

### LOS. Summary - GRASP® Indices

	Map B-3	Map C-3
<i>City of Pearland</i>	15	15

## More on Utilizing the GRASP® Perspectives

Different perspectives or analyses can be used to determine levels of service throughout the community as viewed from various angles. These perspectives can show a specific set of components, depict estimated travel time to services, highlight a particular geographic area, or display facilities that accommodate specific programming. It is not necessarily beneficial for all parts of the community to score equally in the analyses. The desired level of service for any particular location will depend on the type of service being analyzed and land use or demographic characteristics of the particular location. Commercial, institutional, and industrial areas might reasonably be expected to have lower levels of service for parks and recreation opportunities than residential areas, for example.

Used in conjunction with other needs assessment tools (such as needs surveys and a public process), GRASP® perspectives can be used to determine if current levels of service are appropriate in a given location. If it is determined that level of service is appropriate, plans can then be developed that provide similar levels of service to new neighborhoods.

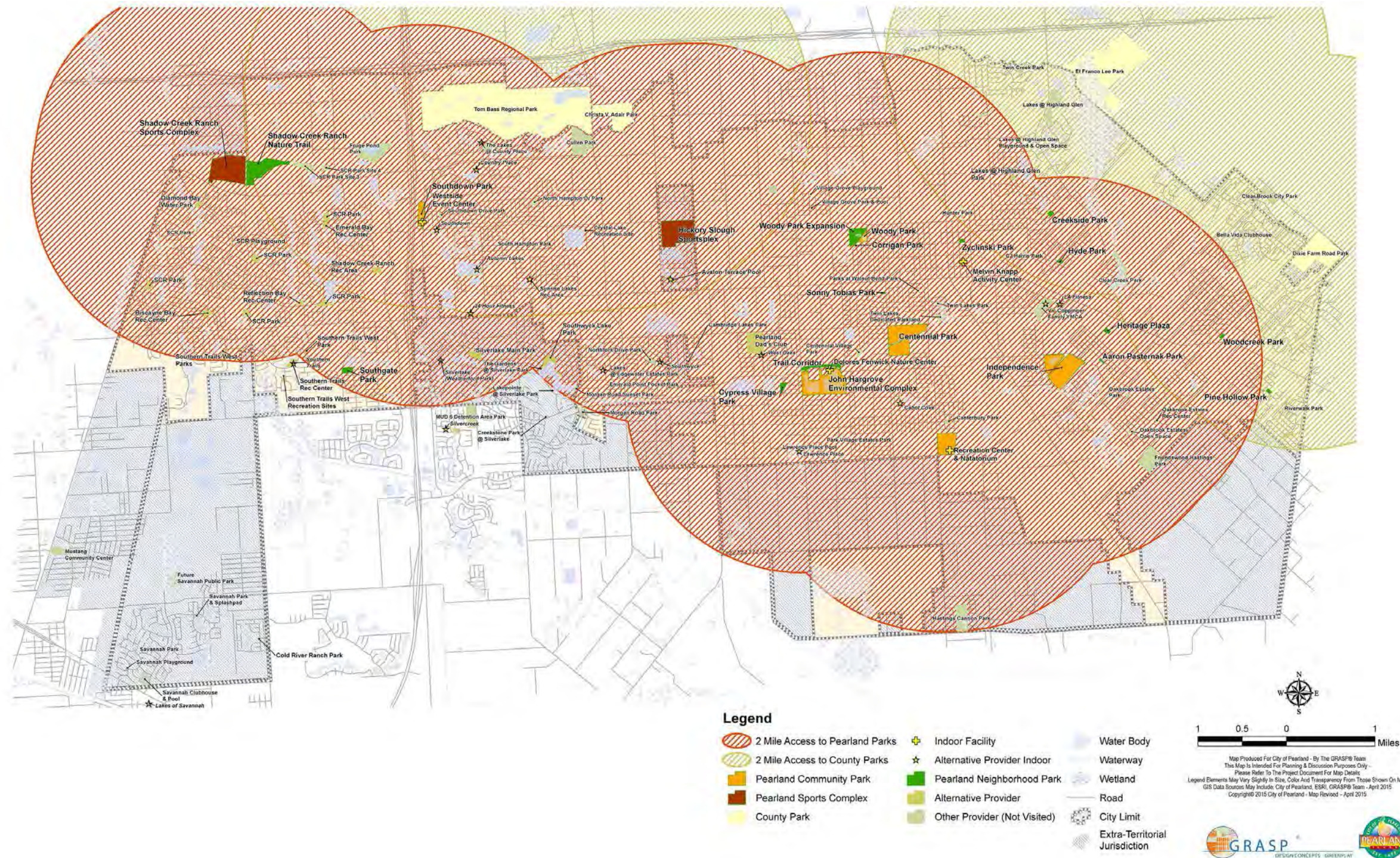
Conversely, if it is determined that different levels of service are desired, new planning can differ from the existing community patterns to provide the desired LOS.

### **Access to Community Based Facilities**

While the previous analysis was based on a neighborhood perspective, it is apparent that one of the main focuses of the Department has been to provide a very high level of service at larger, community-based types of parks. The following map, **Map D**, identifies those facilities within the current system that provide service to a broader range of users and to a larger service area.

Initial analysis indicated that the current distribution of these “Community” based facilities occur on an approximate two mile service area. Using this service area, **Map D** shows nearly complete coverage of the City with Pearland-owned facilities. If one considers the existing County Parks to the north and east, only small segments of the current city limits are outside of the two mile service area. It should be noted that the two new sports based facilities, Shadow Creek Ranch Sports Complex and Hickory Slough Sportsplex, were included in this analysis but provide limited amenities outside of organized sports fields as opposed to other “Community” Parks such as Centennial Park and Independence Park.





**Map D:** This map shows Community Based access to recreation in the City of Pearland.



## Access to Trails

In Pearland, as in many cities across the county, trails are recognized as valuable and desirable components to any recreation system. The following map, **Map E**, shows existing trails in the City of Pearland, as well as planned or proposed trails. Pearland residents have access to a number of different types of trail providers: those trails provided by the City of Pearland, other public providers such as County Parks, and semi-public providers such as Homeowners Associations. Perceived public access may vary greatly based on some of the more restrictive neighborhood trails. While there are a variety of opportunities to access trails across the City, public input from this study indicates that expanded access and additional opportunities are needed.

As a trail system matures, the need emerges to address barriers such as roadways, waterways, and railroad crossings that separate distinct trail networks in order to create a truly connected trail system. A **trail network** is a part of a trail system within which major barrier crossings have been addressed and all trails are connected. Trail networks within a trail system are typically separated from each other by such barriers or by missing trail connections. Signaled crosswalks, pedestrian



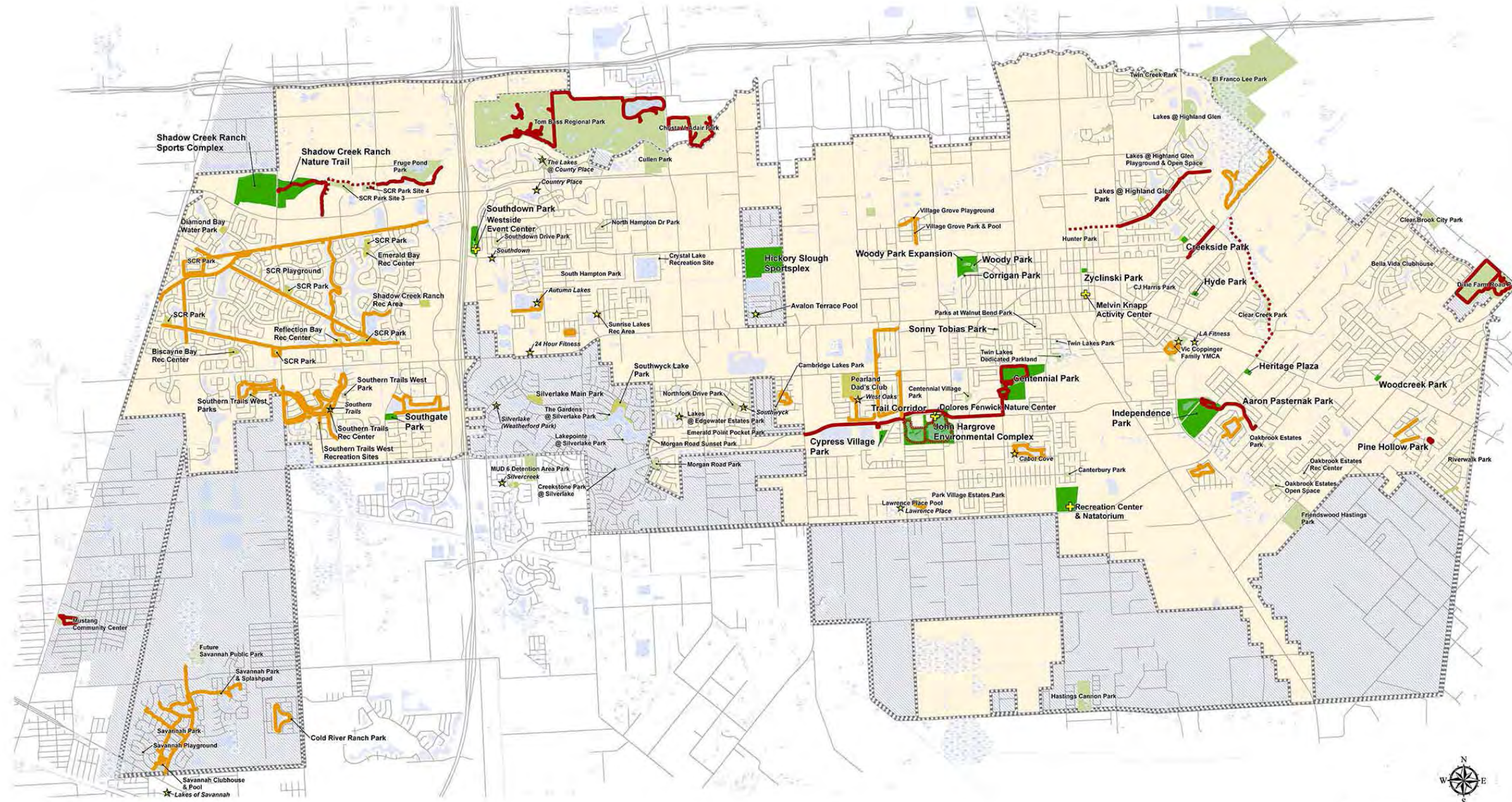
underpasses, and bridges can help users navigate barriers. New trails may be added to link trail networks and improve overall connectivity. Most communities have several trail networks that connect users to common destinations such as schools, shops, restaurants, and civic and religious institutions in addition to parks and recreation facilities. The more integrated these networks, the more connected a community. The example in **Map F** shows different color catchment areas of one-half mile for several such trail networks in the City of Pearland. Using this analysis, 29 different trailsheds or networks have been identified. For reference, a truly connected trail system has very few distinct networks or colors on this type of analysis.

Trails also serve as access to other recreation opportunities. A complete discussion of “Recreational Connectivity” can be found later in this document.



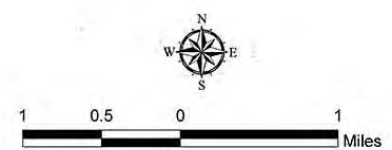
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**Legend**

- |                              |                       |            |                                |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| Indoor Facility              | Existing Public Trail | Water Body | Road                           |
| Alternative Provider Indoor  | Restricted Trail      | Waterway   | City Limit                     |
| Pearland Park                | Planned Public Trail  | Wetland    | Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction |
| Alternative Provider         | Proposed Public Trail |            |                                |
| Other Provider (Not Visited) |                       |            |                                |

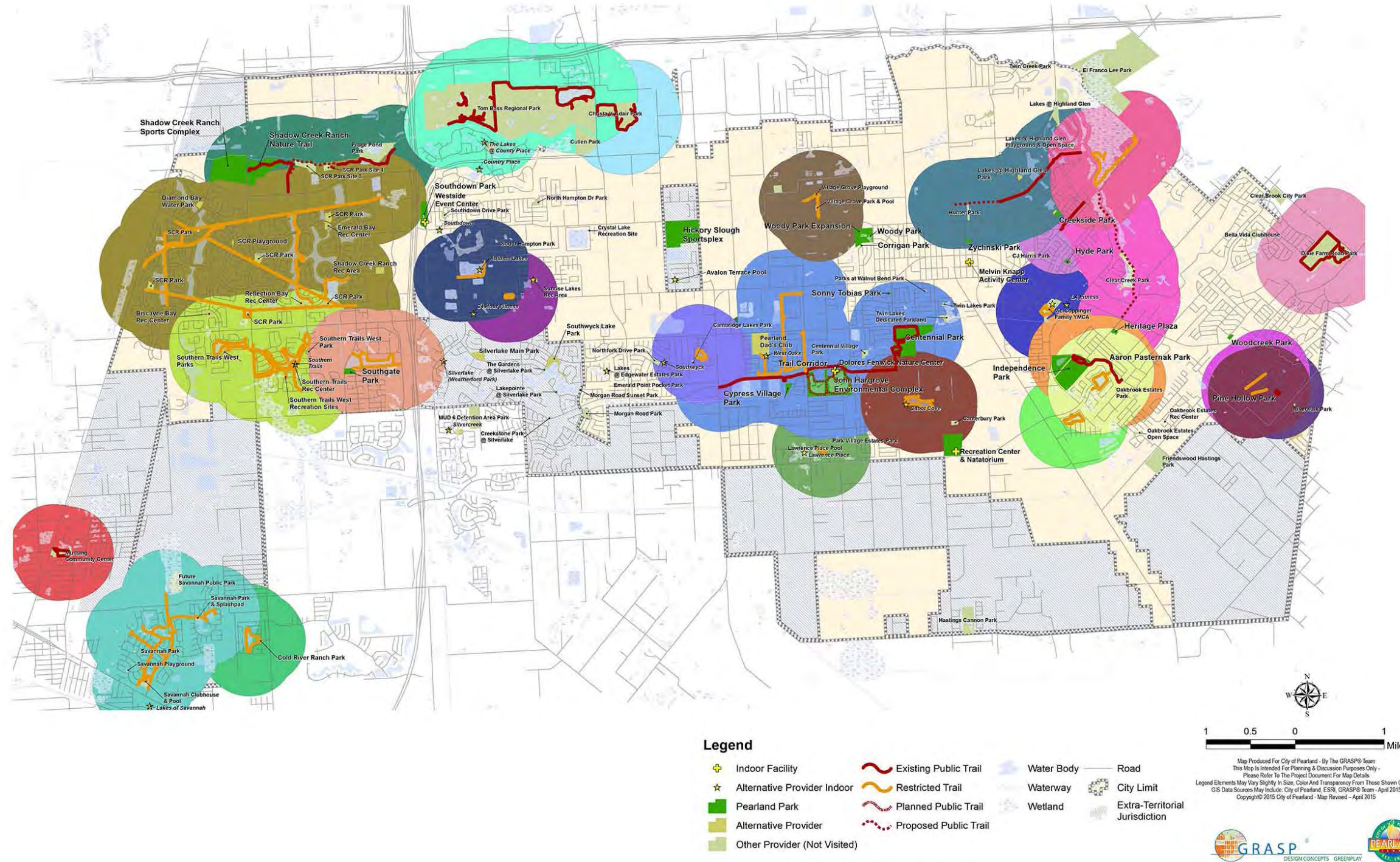


Map Produced For City of Pearland - By The GRASP® Team  
 This Map is Intended For Planning & Discussion Purposes Only -  
 Please Refer To The Project Documents For Map Details  
 Legend Elements May Vary Slightly In Size, Color And Transparency From Those Shown On Map  
 GIS Data Sources May Include: City of Pearland, ESRI, GRASP® Team - April 2015  
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**Map D:** This map shows current, planned and proposed trails in the City of Pearland





**Map F:** The trailshed analysis of the City of Pearland.. A one-half mile catchment area is shown here in a different color for each network, with parks and open space areas shown in green.



### **GRASP® Comparative Data**

The GRASP® Index, or the overall GRASP® value per capita, for the City of Pearland is 15. Because every community is unique, there are no standard or “correct” numbers for this value. However, it is useful to note that the GRASP® Index for the City of Pearland falls within the mid-range. The following table provides comparative data from other communities. For reference, statistics have been included for other communities of similar size in addition to smaller and larger communities across the country. It is notable that the GRASP® Index score for Pearland is similar to that of most other cities listed with population of over 100,000. Other items to note in this table include that Pearland has one of the higher “average number of components per site” and the highest “average score per site” when compared to other cities. These are prime indicators of the focus on “Community” Parks in Pearland vs. other communities with a “Neighborhood” Park focus. The “percentage of area with level of service” is very comparable to other cities of similar size. The GRASP® scoring used for Pearland in this analysis includes all of the data included in the dataset including alternative providers and trails unless otherwise indicated in the table.

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Table 8: GRASP® Comparative Data

STATE	CITY	YEAR	POPULATION	STUDY AREA SIZE (Acres)	# OF SITES (Parks, Facilities, etc.)	TOTAL # OF COMPONENTS	AVG. # COMPONENTS per SITE	TOTAL GRASP® VALUE (Entire System)	GRASP® INDEX	AVG. SCORE/SITE	% of TOTAL AREA w/LOS >0	AVG. LOS PER ACRE SERVED	NUMBER OF COMPONENTS PER POPULATION	AVERAGE LOS/POP DEN PER ACRE	POPULATION DENSITY (per acre)
VT	Essex	2011	28,858	25,230	47	153	3.3	895	31	19.0	72%	11.0	5	10	1.1
ID	Post Falls	2011	29,062	24,928	35	271	7.7	1005	35	28.7	71%	169	9	145	1.2
OR	Oregon City	2006	29,540	5,944	51	215	4.2	NA	NA	NA	86%	45	7	9	5.0
CO	Commerce City	2006	36,049	26,270	90	357	4.0	1047	29.0	11.6	73%	113	10	82	1.4
CA	La Quinta	2006	39,614	22,829	27	143	5.3	611	15	22.6	79%	78.0	4	45	1.7
UT	South Jordan	2006	44,276	14,081	48	172	3.6	1578	36	32.9	44%	29.8	4	9	3.1
CA	Palm Springs	2013	44,468	60,442	16	162	10.1	1149	26	71.8	69%	164.9	4	223	0.7
NM	Farmington	2014	46,815	21,179	98	354	3.6	2204	48	22.5	97%	223	8	101	2.2
OR	Corvallis	2011	54,462	18,006	54	309	5.7	2217	41	41.1	93%	289	6	96	3.0
MO	Liberty	2013	56,041	53,161	39	298	7.6	607	11	15.6	57%	107	5	102	1.1
MA	Brookline	2009	60,000	NA	74	128	1.7	551	9	7.4	NA	NA	2	NA	NA
FL	Winter Haven		100,000	42,191	31	230	7.4	328	3	10.6	37%	175	2	73.8	2.4
<b>TX</b>	<b>Pearland</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>101,900</b>	<b>30,468</b>	<b>21*</b>	<b>164*</b>	<b>7.8*</b>	<b>1556</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>74.1*</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>2*</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>2.9</b>
CO	Fort Collins		130,681	33,388	45	619	13.8	2675	20	59.4	83%	217	5	55.4	3.9
NC	Cary	2011	139,382	35,578	43	562	13.1	2843	20	66.1	97%	221	4	56.4	3.9
IA	Cedar Rapids		143,788	45,987	98	759	7.7	2467	17	25.2	86%	300	5	95.8	3.1
IN	South Bend	2011	164,396	65,387	64	339	5.3	2417	15	37.8	72%	130	2	51.7	2.5
OR	THPRD	2012	224,627	29,097	253	1211	5	6843	30	27	100%	489	5	63	7.7

\* Pearland Parks Only



## Other Types of Analysis

### Capacities Analysis

One of the traditional tools for evaluating service for parks and recreation is the capacity analysis. This analysis compares the total acres and quantity of assets to population. **Table 9** shows the current capacities for all park land and selected components in Pearland. This table can be used in conjunction with other information, such as input from focus groups, staff, and the general public to determine if the current capacities are adequate or not for specific components.

Using this analysis, it is clear that based on projected population growth and current ratio of component to that population, the City of Pearland would need to add 95 acres of park land by 2020 to maintain the current level of service. This could be a single 95 acre park or multiple parks. In addition, the table also shows the need for (3) ballfields, (2) multi-purpose fields, (2) tennis courts, (7) picnic shelters, (2) basketball courts, (1) batting cage, (2) loop walks, and (2) playgrounds for example. These could be part of new parks or added to existing parks.

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Table 9: Capacities LOS for Community Components

Capacities Level of Service for Community Components																						
Pearland, Texas		Draft: March 2015																				
	2013 GIS Acres #	Aqua Feat, Spray	Backstop, Practice	Ballfield	Ballfield Complex	Basketball	Batting Cage	Concessions	Dog Park	Educational Experience	Loop Walk	MP Field, All Sizes	Natural Area	Open Turf	Open Water	Passive Node	Picnic Grounds	Playground, All Sizes	Shelter, All Sizes	Tennis	Tennis Complex	Trailhead
<b>INVENTORY</b>																						
City of Pearland	458.4	2	2	15	2	7.5	4	2	2	4	11	11	3	8	5	7	4	12	35	8	2	2
<b>CURRENT RATIO PER POPULATION</b>																						
<b>CURRENT POPULATION 2013</b>	<b>101,900</b>																					
Current Ratio per 1000 Population	4.50	0.02	0.02	0.15	0.02	0.07	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.11	0.11	0.03	0.08	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.12	0.34	0.08	0.02	0.02
Population per component	222	50,950	50,950	6,793	50,950	13,587	25,475	50,950	50,950	25,475	9,264	9,264	33,967	12,738	20,380	14,557	25,475	8,492	2,911	12,738	50,950	50,950
<b>PROJECTED POPULATION - 2020</b>																						
	<b>123,119</b>																					
<b>Total # needed to maintain current ratio of all existing facilities at projected population</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>Number that should be added to achieve current ratio at projected population</i>	<b>95</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## GRASP® Index for Specific Components

A capacities analysis is based purely on the quantity of assets without regard to quality or functionality. Higher LOS is achieved only by adding assets, regardless of the condition or quality of those assets. In theory, service provided by assets should be based on their quality as well as their quantity. An example will help illustrate.

In the case of Pearland, playgrounds currently score at 67.35 and have a GRASP® Index of 0.7. Based on population projections by the year 2020, Pearland would need to provide an additional 14 points worth of GRASP® scoring through playgrounds to maintain the current level of service per capita. Increases in GRASP® score can occur through upgrades to current components, addition of new components, or a combination of upgrades and additions. For reference, a typical component located in a typical park with typical comfort and convenience modifiers equates to a GRASP® score of 4.8 points.

This is especially useful in communities where the sustainability of the parks and recreation system over time is important. In the past, the focus was on maintaining adequate capacity as population growth occurred. Today, many communities are reaching build-out, while others have seen population growth slow. The focus in such communities has shifted to maintaining current levels of service as components age or become obsolete, or as needs change. The GRASP® Index can be used to track LOS under such conditions over time.

**Table 10** shows the GRASP® Indices for the various components based on the 2013 population.

The authors of this report have developed a tool that incorporates both quantity and quality for any given set of assets into a single indicator called the GRASP® Index. This index is a per capita ratio of the functional score per population in thousands.

The GRASP® Index can move up or down over time as either quantity or quality changes. For example, if all of the playgrounds in a community are allowed to deteriorate over time, but none are added or taken away, the LOS provided by the playgrounds is decreasing.

Similarly, if all of the playgrounds are replaced with new and better ones, but no additional playgrounds are added, the LOS increases even though the per-capita quantity of playgrounds did not change.



**Table 10: GRASP® Community Component Index**

Pearland, Texas				
Projected Community Components GRASP® Index 2020				
	Current Population 2013*	101,900	Projected Population 2020*	123,119
	Total GRASP® Community Score per component type	GRASP® score per 1000 population (GRASP® Index)	Total GRASP® score needed at projected population	Additional GRASP® score needed
Aqua Feat, Spray	15	0.1	18.1	3.1
Ballfield	158.1	1.6	191.0	32.9
Basketball	109.8	1.1	132.7	22.9
Disk Golf	7.2	0.1	8.7	1.5
Dog Park	29.25	0.3	35.3	6.1
Event Space	7.8	0.1	9.4	1.6
Fitness Course	5.2	0.1	6.3	1.1
Loop Walk	69.05	0.7	83.4	14.4
MP Fields	88.6	0.9	107.0	18.4
Open Turf	29.6	0.3	35.8	6.2
Picnic Grounds	31.2	0.3	37.7	6.5
Playgrounds	67.35	0.7	81.4	14.0
Shelters	198.2	1.9	239.5	41.3
Tennis	75.6	0.7	91.3	15.7
Trailhead	7	0.1	8.5	1.5
Volleyball	5.2	0.1	6.3	1.1

## E. Findings

### Summary of Facility Findings

Several general findings were revealed by the City of Pearland GRASP® Analysis. These may be summarized as follows:

#### When it comes to Neighborhood access to park and recreation, Pearland offers:

- A wide variety of well distributed recreational opportunities.
- An overall high level of service if accessed by an automobile.
- A majority of its level of service in large “Community Parks.”
- A high number of components and average score per site when compared to some other communities.
- Some large “pockets” of high level of service.

#### When it comes to walkable level of service:

- “Neighborhood Parks” don’t often score high enough to meet the “threshold” or lack trail access, often needed for a park to reach the threshold mark.
- Several of Pearland’s “Neighborhood” Parks do not offer enough quality components.
- Alternative providers are an important supplement to Pearland’s “Neighborhood” level of service.
- There is heavy reliance on alternative providers for walkable neighborhood level of service in many areas.
- The quality of parks provided by alternative providers vary greatly across the system.
- Demographic analysis shows good distribution of parks where people live, with over 75 percent of 0-19 age group having walkable access to some recreation service.
- There is a need to identify and collect inventory data on the remaining alternative provider parks/facilities.

#### When it comes to “Community” Parks or “Community Based” Facilities:

- The current distribution is approximately a two mile radius.
- Offerings at Shadow Creek Ranch Sports Complex and Hickory Slough Sportsplex are primarily limited to the sports community and may lack other, non-athletic facilities often found in community parks.
- Community Parks with a large variety of components are primarily limited to southeast Pearland.

#### When it comes to Trails and Trail Access:



- A variety of trails are available across the city, but they are not meeting the needs and demands of the community.
- A significant portion of these trails may have limited or restricted access based on locations within subdivisions.
- Trail access is notably absent from some Pearland residential neighborhoods.

#### Based on projected population growth over the next 5-7 years, Pearland needs:

- Additional park land and components added to the system to maintain current level of service.
- To improve or upgrade existing components to system to maintain current level of service.

# Key Issues Triangulation Matrix

## Key Issues Analysis Matrix

2015 Data Source	Qualitative Data						Quantitative Data			Consultant's Analysis and Professional Expertise	
	Planning Documents	Consultant Team	Staff Input	Public Input	Stakeholder Input	Leadership	Community Survey	PPRD Data	Facility Assessment/LOS		
 <p><b>Key Issue - Rating Scale</b>                      a - priority                      b - opportunity to improve                      c - minor or future issue                      blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed</p>										 <p><b>Preliminary Recommendations</b></p>	
<b>Organizational</b>											
Improve marketing and communication of activities	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Increase awareness of programs by continued implementation of Marketing Plan
Ensure social equity											Promote inclusion of all residents at all facilities, services and programs
Update Park Dedication Ordinance											Work with Planning Dept. & developers to review/update Park Dedication Ordinance
Promote public health											Include Public Health to increase marketing of public health & wellness
Include successful Park & Recreation trends in future offerings											Review & track future Parks & Recreation trends for implementation potential
<b>Finance</b>											
Utilize bond referendum for facility improvements	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Complete 2007 bond projects & create bond referendum for new facility improvements
Utilize equitable user fees	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b		Implement Cost Recovery Philosophy
Pursue grant opportunities	a	a	b	b	a	a	a	b	b		Contract with a dedicate grant writer to research & submit grants
Increase local partnerships											Foster partnerships with local entities including the 2 school districts & the Economic Development Chamber
Increase sponsorships											Pursue additional sponsorships for events & scholarships
<b>Programs and Service Delivery</b>											
Increase programming for families	a	a	b	b	a	a	b	b	a		Expand program opportunities for families
Increase fitness/wellness programming	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a		Expand fitness/wellness program opportunities for all ages
Increase non-sports programming for youth	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a		Expand non-sports program opportunities for youth
Increase programming for teens	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a		Expand program opportunities for teens
Increase programming for seniors	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a		Expand program opportunities for seniors
Increase intergenerational programming for teens and seniors	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a		Expand intergenerational programming for teens and seniors to share expertise
Increase adult programming during non-working hours	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a		Expand program opportunities for adults during non-working hours
Increase programs in special needs	b	a	b	a	a	a	b	a	a		Expand programs in wellness/fitness, cultural, special needs, water craft
Increase number of neighborhood & cultural special events											Expand neighborhood & community special event opportunities
<b>Facilities and Amenities</b>											
Maintain and improve existing facilities & amenities	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Continue to implement existing CIP Plan & Master Plan. Develop & implement Recapitalization Program/Asset Management Plan with life cycle replacement
Upgrade outdated amenities that do not function well	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Upgrade or replace low scoring amenities
Expand trails & connectivity	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Expand trails & connect amenities via trails where possible
Increase beautification of public spaces	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Continue to improve beautification opportunities in Parks
Increase level of service in areas of no service or low service	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Work with alternative providers to increase level of service in areas Pearland doesn't have neighborhood parks but level of service is low
Improve shade at amenities in parks	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Add shade opportunities at amenities within parks
Consider programming needs where adding or upgrading components	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a		Add new components at existing parks
Increase ADA accessibility at all facilities	a	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	a		Create and implement an ADA Accessibility Transition Plan
Increase level of service provided by existing neighborhood parks	a	b	a	a	a	a	a	a	b		Add or update components. Potentially create a city grant program to upgrade & maintain existing neighborhood parks
Acquire future park land	a	a	a	b	a	a	b	a	a		Explore Land Acquisition opportunities for a Community Park in the ETJ
Become a Community Park oriented agency with destination parks & amenities											Explore the opportunity for PPRD to become a destination Community Park oriented agency with HOAs & other partners maintaining neighborhood parks
Lack of security lighting at many park amenities											Add security lighting at park amenities where potential undesirable activities may occur
Monitor sports field demands & needs											Monitor sports field usage, capacity, and demands to determine if additional fields are needed
Create sense of identity at individual parks											Add new components or highlight unique features per park

## **Recurring Themes**

- Maintain and improve existing facilities
- Upgrade outdated amenities
- Add trails and increase connectivity
- Increase awareness of programs
- Assess equitable user fees
- Increase programming for families, fitness, wellness, non-sports youth, teens, special events



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# V. Great Things to Come – Recommendations and Action Plans

## A. Recommendations

After analyzing the Findings that resulted from this process, including the Key Issues Matrix, a summary of all research, the qualitative and quantitative data, the GRASP® LOS analyses, and input assembled for this study, a variety of recommendations have emerged to provide guidance in consideration of how to improve parks and recreation opportunities in the City of Pearland. This section describes ways to enhance the level of service and the quality of life through improvement of organizational enhancements, financial improvements, increased programming, and existing sites, future development of new facilities.

### **Organizational:**

- Improve marketing and communication of activities
- Ensure social equity
- Update the Park Dedication Ordinance
- Promote public health
- Include successful Parks and Recreation industry trends in future offerings

### **Financial:**

- Utilize bond referendum for facility improvements
- Utilize equitable user fees
- Pursue grant opportunities
- Increase local partnerships
- Increase sponsorships

### **Programs and Service Delivery:**

- Increase programming for families
- Increase fitness and wellness programming
- Increase non-sports programming for youth
- Increase programming for teens
- Increase programming for seniors
- Increase intergenerational programming for teens and seniors
- Increase adult programming during non-working hours
- Increase programming for special needs
- Increase number of neighborhood and cultural special events

**Existing Facilities:**

- Maintain and improve existing facilities and amenities including upgrades to outdated amenities that do not function well especially in areas of low current service.
- Continue to improve level of service especially at “Neighborhood” Parks through upgrades or additional components.
- Increase beautification of public spaces.
- Improve availability of shade near park amenities.
- Increase ADA accessibility at all facilities.
- Add/improve security lighting at many park amenities.
- Work with neighborhoods to create an individual identity for each neighborhood park.
- Work with alternative providers to increase level of service in areas Pearland doesn’t have neighborhood parks but level of service is low.

**Additional or Future Parks and Amenities**

- Consider programming needs where adding or upgrading components at existing parks.
- Expand trails and connectivity.
- Become a Community Park oriented agency with destination parks and amenities.
- Monitor sports field demands and needs.
- Improve recreational connectivity through neighborhood trail connections and park “spurs.”
- When considering new “Community” Parks look to no service and low service areas as priorities for acquisition of future park land.

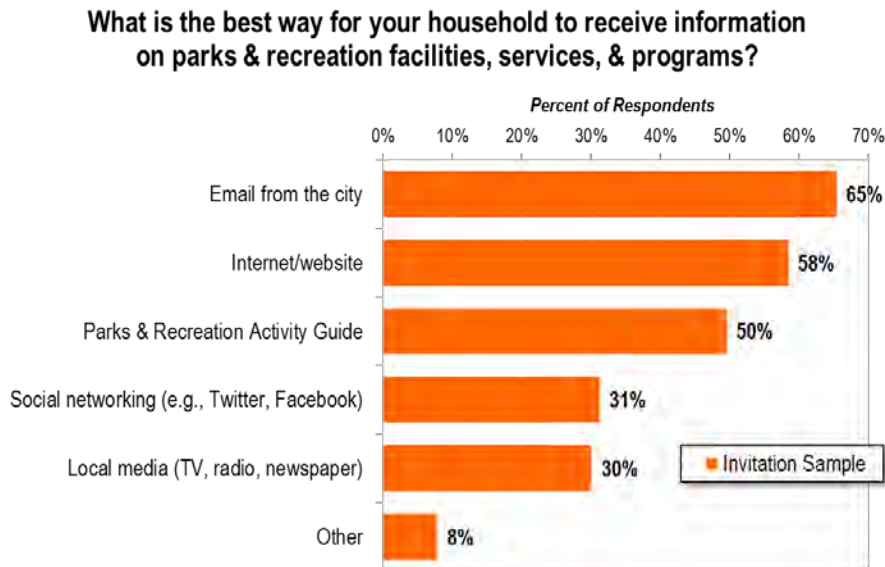
The following section of the report provides a discussion of the recommendations in greater detail.

**Enhance Organizational and Operational Efficiencies****Improve Marketing and Communication of Activities**

The current Pearland Parks and Recreation Marketing Plan needs to be continuously implemented to increase awareness of program offerings and recreational opportunities including all the recommendations in the Master Plan for programs, services, and facility upgrades. The Marketing Plan should be updated every five years to include improved and/or new strategies to communicate with the community.

The marketing and communication of Pearland Park and Recreation activities should be enhanced with a focused effort on adopting open lines of communication and meetings with partners and potential partners. The survey results below show the best ways of communicating with the community.

**Figure 19: Survey Response – Household Communication Tools**



Survey respondents were asked the best way to receive information on parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs. These responses may be used to inform future planning efforts.

### **Ensure Social Equity**

Social equity can be obtained by proactively promoting a policy of inclusion of all residents at all facilities, services, and programs. Implementing a policy of not turning down any potential participants for any activity will ensure social equity throughout the community.

### **Update the Park Dedication Ordinance**

The current Park Dedication Ordinance is located in the *City of Pearland Unified Development Code (UDC) Division 10 – Parks and Open Space 3.2.10.1, Chapter 3, Article 2, Division 10*. The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department and Board need to work with the City Planning Department and local developers to review and update the ordinance. The objective is to develop a win-win situation for the City as well as developers. Residential property value increases if the property is within walking distance of a park and will typically sell more quickly than those that do not have a park in close proximity.

The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department can utilize the Level of Service analysis portion of this Master Plan to help determine the types of amenities and components desirable for each new park location.

Working with the local neighborhoods to finalize park development plans and maintenance issues will ensure that all parties come to consensus prior to finalizing the design and development of the new park.

### **Promote Public Health**

The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department can be a great catalyst for promoting public health in the community by including public health and wellness as a priority in relevant marketing materials.



The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department should consider partnering with public health organizations and/or local medical institutions through a Healthy Communities Initiative ([www.gpred.org/hcrg](http://www.gpred.org/hcrg)) and funding sources.

### **Include Successful Parks and Recreation Trends in Future Offerings**

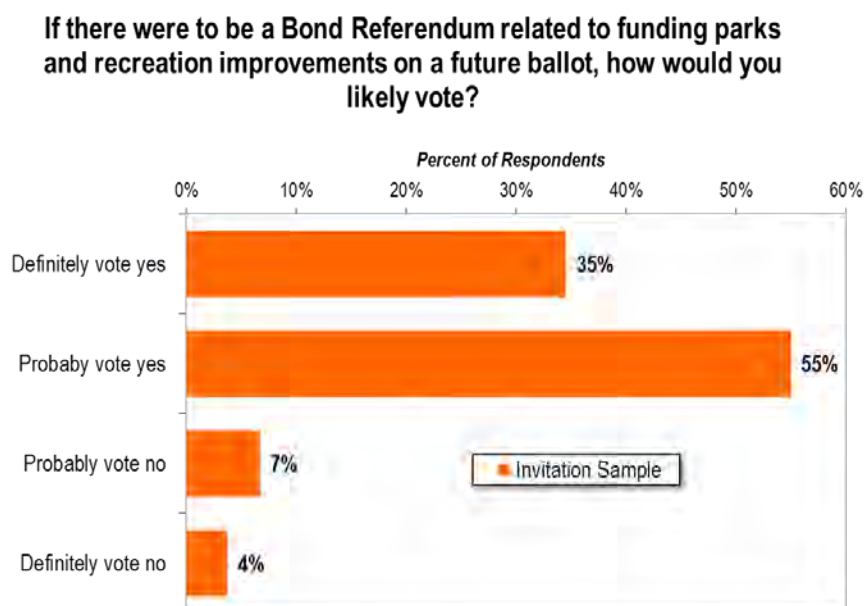
The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department should continuously track and review existing and future industry trends that are successful and can be potentially implemented. There are numerous resources particularly in Parks and Recreation magazines, websites, professional contacts, National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), Texas Recreation and Parks Society, etc., to keep track of what is new, different, and successful within the Park and Recreation industry.

### **Improve Financial Situations**

#### **Consider a Bond Referendum for Facility Improvements**

The community appears willing to utilize a bond referendum to pay for facility improvements and additional facilities recommended in this Master Plan over the next several years. A campaign for community investment may be a successful way of implementing the long term recommendations in the Master Plan. Educating the public as to exactly what they will be asked to pay over a certain period of time for exactly what they will receive is the key to passing a successful bond referendum.

**Figure 20: Survey Response – Bond Referendum**



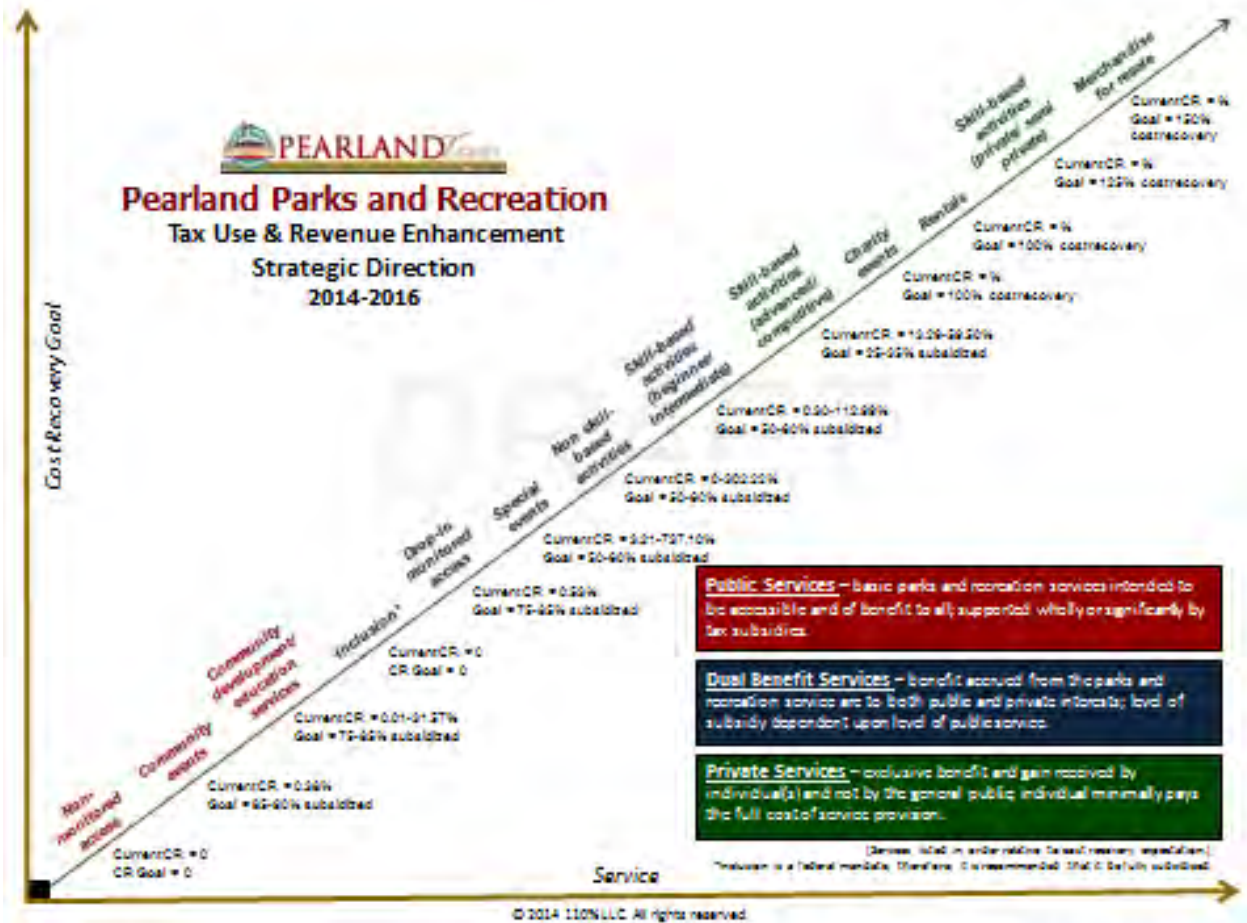
*Survey results as respondents were asked how they would vote on a future bond referendum to fund Pearland Parks and Recreation improvements. These responses may be used to inform future planning efforts.*

### Implement Equitable User Fees

Utilize equitable user fees by implementing the recent cost recovery methodology adopted by the Pearland Parks and Recreation Department and Board. There is a consensus to implement and utilize equitable user fees and assessment fees for Pearland Parks and Recreation activities based on a value received by the participant for the services with a personal benefit.

**Figure 21** below represents a consistent method of pricing Pearland Park and Recreation activities throughout the community.

**Figure 21: Tax Use and Revenue Enhancement Strategic Direction**



*Final Continuum Chart for the Pearland Parks and Recreation Department Tax Use and Revenue Enhancement Strategic Direction.*

### Pursue Grant Opportunities

It would be wise for the Pearland Parks and Recreation Department to pursue any and all grant opportunities at the federal, state, regional, and local levels. There are still numerous grants available to the City of Pearland at all levels to assist in the funding of this Master Plan and continuous operational dollars.

A grant writer position should be added to the Pearland Parks and Recreation staff (or contractual) to create consistent, year-round grant research, writing, submitting, and tracking. This additional position can enhance financial abilities to implement this Master Plan through federal, state, regional, and local grant opportunities. A contractual grant writer may be hired for a percentage of successful grant dollars the department receives due to their efforts.

### **Increase Local Partnerships**

The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department can increase local partnerships by fostering relationships with local entities, other agencies, and alternative recreational service providers, the two school districts and the Economic Development Chamber.

The Pearland Parks and Recreation Department should consider partnering with public health organizations and/or local medical institutions in a Healthy Communities Initiative ([www.gpred.org/hcrg](http://www.gpred.org/hcrg)) and funding sources.

A Sample Partnership Policy can be found in **Appendix C**.

### **Increase Sponsorships**

The Department currently has some sponsorship arrangements for special events and activities. Efforts should continue to build on existing sponsorships as well as pursue local entities to support events and the scholarship fund within the Foundation. Ensure all existing and future sponsorships are accurately portrayed in a signed sponsorship agreement (Sample Sponsorship Policy can be found in **Appendix D**).

### **Increase Programs and Service Delivery**

#### **Explore increasing the number of program opportunities for family, youth, seniors, teens, and special needs**

The public would like to see Pearland Parks and Recreation Department provide additional programs for families, youth, seniors, teenagers, and special needs. Increase programming in special needs by expanding offerings to all types and ages of special needs patrons.

As part of the program review process, continue to monitor participation and demand for programs and adjust to meet the needs of the community in all of these demographic areas of participation. Periodic focus group discussions with these different types of groups will provide good feedback as to their satisfaction as well as new programming opportunities.

Expand program opportunities in fitness, wellness, intergenerational, and non-sports activities. As the City of Pearland updates, improves, or repurposes existing facilities, it should take into consideration the demand for fitness, wellness, intergenerational (teens with seniors), and non-sports programming opportunities for all ages.

During the public input process, teens indicated a satisfaction with the non-official intergenerational activities at the Melvin Knapp Activity Center. These activities include teaching the seniors about technology, and in particular, the use of smart phones. The teens would like to see this program expand to involve the seniors teaching them many of the historical activities that they have heard about but do not know how to do. Examples mentioned by the teens included quilting, canning, cooking (old family recipes), gardening, fishing, woodworking, etc. These activities have been, and can continue officially, between 3:30 and 5:30 pm during the week at the Melvin Knapp Activity Center.

This intergenerational program if successfully implemented can also be the bridge to possibly open the Melvin Knapp Center to teens after 4:00 pm and on weekends. The building has the same amenities that a state of the art teen center would have. This type of repurposing would be a great example of shared use versus new build for maximum usage and capacity.

### **Explore offering more programs at convenient times for citizens**

As popularity in program offerings and activities increases, the Department should continue to look for opportunities to expand adult programs around working hours and commuting citizens' schedules. Increasing adult programming during non-working hours includes offering adult programs in the evenings during the week and on weekends. Commuters need ample time to get home from work, eat, and change clothes before participating in evening programs.



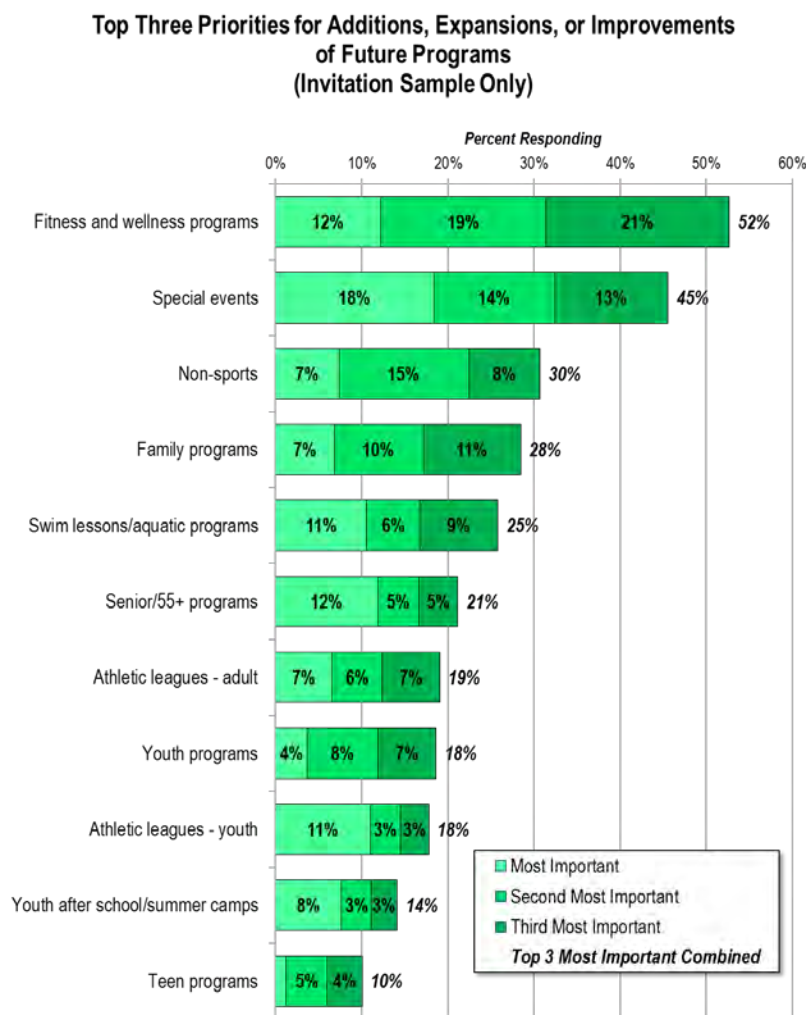
### **Increase the Number of Neighborhood and Cultural Special Events**

The Department can increase the number of smaller special events for neighborhoods and different types of cultural audiences. The distribution and variety of existing facilities provides many opportunities to host neighborhood and cultural special events throughout the community. In addition, strategic use of special events, festivals, and programming may help increase use of some spaces, and therefore, help to promote safer, more secure parks.

Any new events will draw more users and traffic to park facilities thus creating more “eyes on the park” situations and a positive perception of safety in these areas of Pearland. Area merchants, restaurants, and hotels can be potential sponsors and help promote these activities to their patrons.



**Figure 22: Priorities for Future Programs**



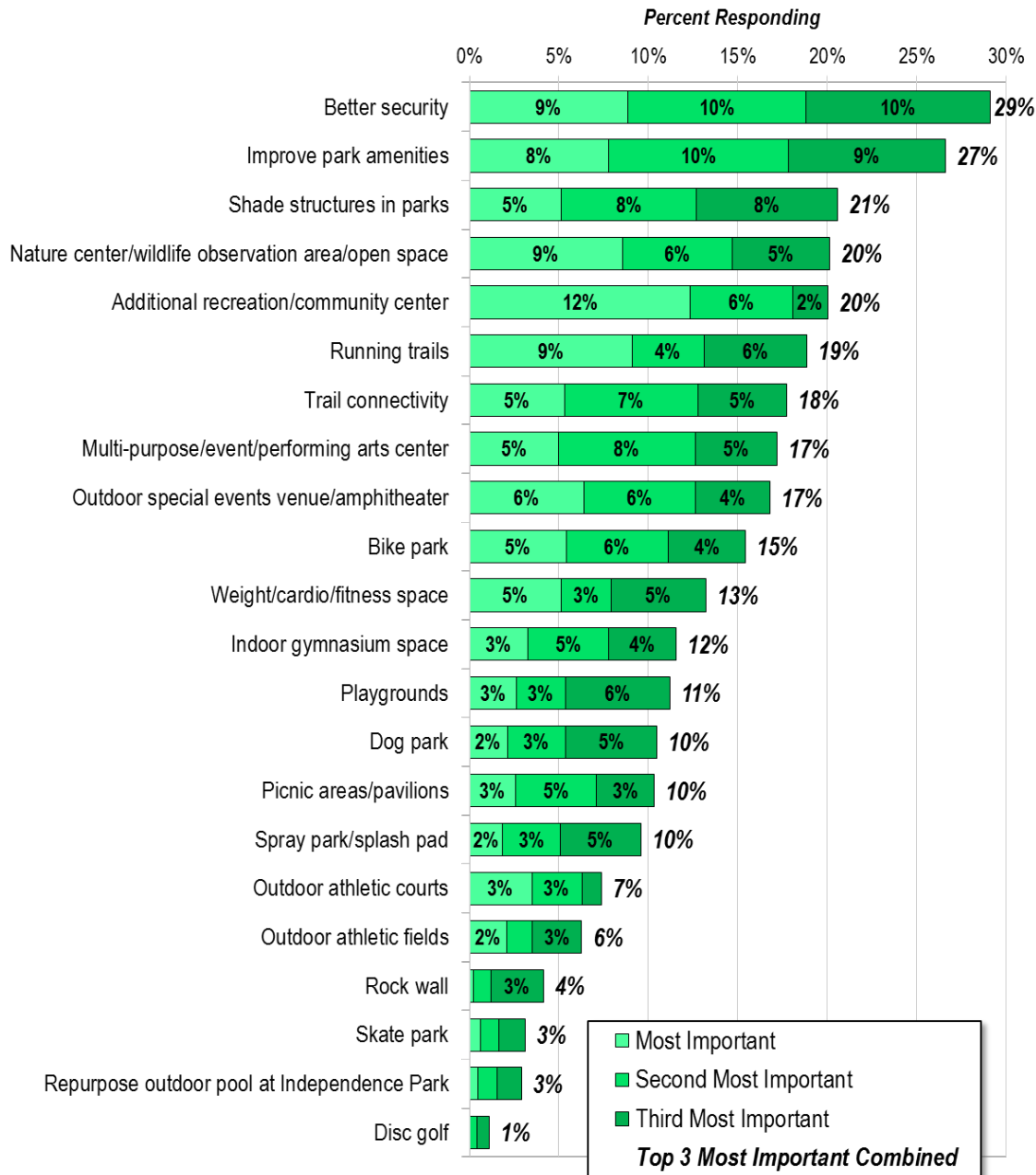
Survey respondents were asked to list first, second, and third priorities for recreation programs in Pearland. These responses may be used to inform future planning efforts.

### Improve Facilities and Amenities

The first section on Level of Service Improvements illustrates a few different options to improve Level of Service in Pearland, informed by the GRASP® Analysis and the statistically valid survey conducted by RRC Associates as part of this recreation assessment. This includes an explanation of strategies that address priorities for additions, expansion, and improvements; high demand components; booster components; and school partnerships. The second section on Recreational Connectivity discusses the value of a recreational trails system and outlines essential concepts as a reference for future trail planning.

**Figure 23: Future Priorities for Facilities**

**Top Three Priorities for Additions, Expansions, or Improvements of Future Facilities (Invitation Sample Only)**



Survey respondents were asked to list first, second, and third priorities for recreation facilities and amenities in Pearland. These responses may be used to inform future planning efforts.

## **Level of Service Improvements**

Findings of GRASP® analysis, along with responses from the statistically-valid community survey, provide some guidance in consideration of how to improve recreation in the City of Pearland. Gap areas, those that either fall below the minimum standard threshold or provide no service, offer good opportunities for improvement. Although land acquisition and large-scale capital investment is sometimes needed, there are alternatives. This section discusses recommendations to enhance level of service through improvement of existing sites, development of new facilities, and potential partnerships.

## **Increasing Safety and Park Security**

Public perception of safety and security issues are often as much about marketing and promotion as it is about police presence and patrols. The City of Pearland can work with local law enforcement, park neighbors, and business owners to continue patrols in areas of concern. The City can also track and publicize the small number of incidents that actually occur. The most effective way to make parks and trails safe is to increase usage and promote positive activities in the parks and on the trails. Additional steps can be taken to improve sight lines, install low level safety lighting, add trail mile markers, add map stations, and potentially install emergency call stations along trails.

The department should monitor reports of vandalism and loitering to pinpoint areas within the park and trail system where negative behavior tends to occur. Based on this information, the department can focus security improvements where the negative types of activities are creating an unsafe perception. In addition, strategic programming efforts can help improve safety in parks. One such approach, *Crime Prevention through Environmental Design* (CPTED, pronounced “sep-ted”) is defined as a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence offender decisions that precede criminal acts by affecting the built, social, and administrative environment. This type of initiative is known by various labels or names worldwide, such as *Designing out Crime* and other acronyms. More information can be found at [www.cpted.net](http://www.cpted.net).

## **Continued Component Assessment and Life Cycle Replacement Plan**

Based on public input, maintaining and improving existing facilities ranked high as goals for the next 5 to 10 years. Developing a method or process for continued assessment of existing facilities is key to monitoring existing resources. The assessment process used for this plan involves scoring of all assets to account for condition and functionality. Those components with low-scores may be addressed one by one and will serve to improve level of service. The department may wish to continue using a similar type of scoring system and asset monitoring or develop a method of its own. Life cycle replacement should also be factored into the yearly assessment and replacement strategy.

## **Maintenance and Updates to GIS Database**

Maintaining and improving existing facilities ranked high with regard to goals for the next 5 to 10 years based on public input. Developing a method or process for continued assessment of existing facilities is key to monitoring existing resources. The assessment process used for this plan involves scoring of all assets to account for condition and functionality. Those components with low scores may be addressed one-by-one and will serve to improve level of service. The department may wish to continue using a similar type of scoring system and asset monitoring, or develop a method of its own. Life cycle replacement should also be factored into the yearly assessment and replacement strategy.

## **Low-Score Components**

The easiest and most obvious way to raise level of service is to improve **low-score components**; those that were scored down during the inventory and assessment because they do not meet expectations. Such improvements can involve repair, refurbishment, or replacement of existing components at a site that are in need of some attention. A full detailed account of each park and its components and modifiers scoring are included in separate staff level documents: "PEARLAND FINAL INVENTORY ATLAS" and "LOW SCORING COMPONENTS."

## **Addressing Low-Scoring Components**

The inventory process for the master plan included rating components throughout the system on their functionality. Components whose functionality fell below expectations were identified and scored with a "one." A list of these can easily be extracted from the inventory dataset. By raising the score of a component the Level of Service in the community is also raised, but deciding how to do this may seem daunting. A strategy for addressing the repair/refurbishment/replacement or re-purposing of low-functioning components should begin with the following steps:

- A. Determine why the component is functioning below expectations. Was it poorly conceived in the first place? Is it something that was not needed to begin with? Is it the wrong size, type, or configuration? Is it poorly placed, or located in a way that conflicts with other uses or detracts from its use? Have the needs changed in a way that the component is now outdated, obsolete, or no longer needed? Has it been damaged? Or, has the maintenance of the component simply been deferred or neglected to the point where it no longer functions as intended?

Another possibility is that the component was scored low because it is not available to the public in a way that meets expectations. For example, a facility might be rated low because it is leased to a private group and access by the general public is limited. This may be a perfectly acceptable situation and appropriately scored. The service is at a lower value due to limited access.

An added example would be when a component is old, outdated, or otherwise dysfunctional, but has historic or sentimental value. This might be an old structure in a park such as a stone barbecue grill, or other artifact that cannot be restored to its original purpose, but which has historic value.

- B. Depending on the answers from the first step, a strategy can be selected for addressing the low-functioning component:
  - If the need for that type of component in its current location still exists, then the component should be repaired or replaced to match its original condition as much as possible. Examples of this would be playgrounds with old, damaged, or outdated equipment or courts with poor surfacing or missing nets.
  - If the need for a specific type of component has changed to the point where the original one is no longer suitable, then it should be replaced with a new one that fits the current needs. For example, if a picnic shelter is too small for the current level of service demanded, it may be replaced with a new, larger one.



- If a component is poorly located, or was poorly designed to start with, consideration should be given to relocating, redesigning, or otherwise modifying it. An example would be an amphitheater next to a street that was once small and quiet but is now loud and busy. The noise from the street makes it undesirable to use the amphitheater for its intended purpose. If there is still a need for this type of facility at this park, then consideration should be given to relocating it or redesigning it to provide screening from traffic and other noise.
- If a component is no longer needed because of changing demands, then it should be adapted or removed. Some inline hockey rinks may fall into this category. If a rink has been allowed to deteriorate because the community has no desire for inline hockey, then maybe it should be repurposed into some other use such as a basketball or tennis court, multi-use play-pad, or perhaps a skate park. It could even become a something unusual, like a trike-track course. Or it could become the surface for a large group picnic shelter. Another possibility might be to install outdoor fitness stations and make it an “outdoor gym.”

The choice of what to put in the rink’s place should be made with input from the community. This could be done with a simple intercept survey, door-hung questionnaire, or by contacting a neighborhood organization. It makes no sense to replace something that the neighborhood no longer needs with something else it doesn’t need.

If no appropriate alternative use for the rink or the space it occupies is identified, it should be removed to avoid a blighted appearance, and the space should be integrated into the rest of the park with landscaping.

- C. It is possible that through ongoing public input, and as needs and trends evolve, new needs will be identified for existing parks. If there is no room in an existing park to meet new needs, the decision may be made to remove or re-purpose an existing component, even if it is quite functional. An example of this could be found in many communities over the past couple of decades. As the popularity of tennis declined and demand for courts dropped off, perfectly good courts were sometimes converted into skate parks or inline rinks. In most cases, this was an interim use, intended to satisfy a short-term need until a decision could be made to either construct a permanent facility or let the passing fad fade. The need for inline rinks now seems to have diminished, while temporary skate parks on tennis courts have been moved to permanent locations of their own and become more elaborate facilities as skateboarding and other wheel sports have grown in popularity and permanence.

Another example of this can be found in the re-purposing by one community of a ball diamond into a dog park. The ball diamond is well-suited for use as a dog park because it is already fenced, and the combination of skinned infield where the dogs enter and natural grass in the outfield where traffic is spread out is ideal.

It is likely that in time this facility will either become a permanent facility designed specifically to meet the needs of people recreating with their dogs, or such a facility will be constructed elsewhere to suit that purpose. Otherwise, it could turn out that dog parks fade in popularity like inline hockey rinks, or are replaced with some other facility that dog owners prefer even more than the current dog park model. Meanwhile, the use of the ball diamond for this purpose is a good interim solution.

Trends to keep an eye on while deciding what to do with low-functioning facilities, or determining how to make existing parks serve the needs of residents as highly as possible, such as:

- Dog parks continue to grow in popularity. This may have something to do with an aging demographic in America, with more empty-nesters transferring the attention they once gave to their children, who are now grown, to their pets. It is also an important form of socializing for people who may have once socialized with other parents in their child's soccer league, and now that the kids are grown they are enjoying the company of other dog owners at the dog park. And for singles, a dog park is a good place to meet people.
- Skateboarding and other wheel sports continue to grow in popularity. Making neighborhood parks skateable and distributing skating features throughout the community provides greater access to this activity for younger people who cannot drive to a larger centralized skate park.
- A desire for locally-grown food and concerns about health, sustainability, and other issues is leading to the development of community food gardens in parks and other public spaces.
- Sprayparks are growing rapidly in popularity, even in cooler climates. A wide and growing selection of products for these is raising the bar on expectations and offering new possibilities for creative facilities.
- New types of playgrounds are emerging, including discovery play, nature play, adventure play, and even inter-generational play. Some of these rely upon movable parts, supervised play areas, and other variations that are different from the standard fixed "post and platform" playgrounds found in the typical park across America.
- As a lower impact alternative to tennis, the sport of Pickleball has gained in popularity, particularly among older Americans. Striping can be added to existing tennis courts, or outdated facilities such as inline hockey rinks may be retrofitted.
- Events in parks, from a neighborhood "movie in the park" to large festivals in regional parks, are growing in popularity as a way to build a sense of community and generate revenues. Providing spaces for these could become a trend.
- Integrating nature into parks by creating natural areas is a trend for a number of reasons. These include a desire to make parks more sustainable and introduce people of all ages to the natural environment. An educational aspect is an important part of these areas.



### **Low-Score Modifiers**

In scoring inventory locations, additional consideration was also given to basic site amenities, called **modifiers**. These are features that support users during their visit such as quality design and ambience, drinking fountains, seating, BBQ grills, security lighting, bike racks, restrooms, shade, access, and parking, among others. These inform overall GRASP® scoring as more and better modifiers serve to boost overall GRASP® values. In an inventory assessment, any modifiers that do not meet expectations are scored down. Such modifiers may be in need of repair, refurbishment, or replacement which would serve to increase the overall scoring of all the components within the park.



Several of the “modifiers” in the assessment process are directly related to the beautification of parks. Increasing scores for “design and ambience” as well as ornamental and seasonal plantings will not only increase the level of service of an individual park and its amenities but also help to “increase beautification of public spaces.” This was identified in the survey as a key priority of the department. These improvements would also help in creating a sense of identity at individual parks throughout the system.

### **“Booster” Components**

Another way to enhance existing assets is through the addition of booster components intended to “boost” the level of service in gap areas by adding new components to existing recreation sites.

Adding components at existing neighborhood parks that scored below threshold is a great way to increase the level of service without acquiring additional land. Adding a shade shelter at an existing playground, for example, not only increases the level of service of the playground but also offers opportunities for a small family picnic or snack while at the park. In addition, adding shade to parks ranked high throughout the public input process of this study. Woody Park has great potential for such additional components, as it has a relatively low level of development based on available land. The addition of booster components at this park would also increase the level of service in low service areas nearby to approach threshold level scoring.

### **ADA Transition Plan and Compliance**

According to the ADA.gov website, “Access to civic life by people with disabilities is a fundamental goal of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To ensure that this goal is met, Title II of the ADA requires State and local governments to make their programs and services accessible to persons with disabilities... One important way to ensure that Title II's requirements are being met in cities of all sizes is through self-evaluation, which is required by the ADA regulations. Self-evaluation enables local governments to pinpoint the facilities, programs and services that must be modified or relocated to ensure that local governments are complying with the ADA.” Transition plans are also required to implement needed changes identified during the self-evaluation process. Ongoing self-evaluation and development of a comprehensive transition plan must be a priority of Pearland Parks and Recreation.

### **HOA Partnerships**

A heavy reliance on alternative providers, particularly Homeowners associations, has been identified and highlights the need for a mechanism to help establish standards for recreation opportunities offered by such providers. A wide variety of types and broad range in quality of amenities was found throughout the City of Pearland. Further, despite being allowed by Texas state law, public access to these privately owned facilities is often perceived to be limited to nearby residents. One option to help with both maintaining reasonable standards and promote full public access is a partnership between the department and individual Homeowners associations. A grant program to help underfunded parks within developments maintain certain standards without burdening the City with a vast inventory of small neighborhood parks could be investigated as an option.

### **School Partnerships**

School partnerships can provide additional options for public recreation. School facilities may supplement parks and other public recreational resources, but their limited availability often makes neighbors less likely to use them. One way to address this issue is to partner with schools to promote use of school facilities by the community.

Environmental cues and on-site community programming can make school facilities more inviting. Site features such as welcome signage or an entry gateway on school grounds can make neighbors feel more welcome. A clear message about school hours and public access can be helpful to those planning a visit. Volunteer adult supervision can encourage use of school playgrounds or other facilities. Organized events or drop-in sessions are also helpful in creating awareness of school grounds as community assets.



Learning Landscapes, a program developed by faculty and students at the University of Colorado at Denver, engages the local community to envision, plan, build, and maintain custom playgrounds at neighborhood schools. The intention is to extend learning opportunities beyond the school walls and into the community. Redeveloped school grounds typically include demonstration gardens, yard games, art, shade features, and outdoor classroom facilities as well as play equipment. Volunteers are put to work in the planning and construction of these new facilities alongside emerging professionals and school personnel. The result is a sense of community investment and ownership in these assets such that they better serve nearby residents.

This program serves to foster stronger ties between schools and neighbors with open lines of communication and a commitment to shared resources. Such a program can have a positive impact on the role that school ground facilities play in neighbors' daily lives, and as such, elevate the level of service for the area.

The Learning Landscapes webpage (<http://www.learninglandscapes.org/>) describes the program in this way:

*Learning Landscapes leads UCD students, elementary schools, and community members in the redesign of schoolyards into fun, multi-use parks designed to reflect the culture of the surrounding community. The Learning Landscapes project helps reconnect communities with neighborhood schools by listening and actively involving the school community throughout the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the Learning Landscape schoolyard. Each school is asked to form a Learning Landscape team to help inform design and programming decisions as well as keep a watchful eye for vandalism and maintenance issues after construction is complete. The Learning Landscapes team recruits students, parents and surrounding community help to build, maintain and improve the Learning Landscape. Each new Learning Landscape has a volunteer build day where the school and community volunteers develop a sense of ownership and civic pride by creating outdoor artwork planting gardens, laying sod, or building play equipment. Site-specific resources are documented and distributed for educators and community members on the outdoor educational elements unique to each Learning Landscape schoolyard. Promoting the programmatic use of the Learning Landscape is critical for the long-term viability and sustainability of these projects.*



Learning Landscape example at Ellis Elementary School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado

### **Additional School Grounds Resources**

An informative summary of public use of school grounds may be found here: <http://publichealthlawcenter.org/topics/healthy-eating/shared-use-school-property>

The Learning Landscapes Initiative is a proven low cost way to foster a greater connection between local residents and neighborhood schools. More information is available at: <http://learninglandscapes.org>.

### **Recreational Connectivity**

Non-motorized access to recreation has become a priority for communities nationwide in recent years. As a result, the importance of trails in a recreation system cannot be overstated. Trails have a positive impact on public health, local economy, quality of life, and the environment. Today in the United States, one-third of the population cannot drive due to a variety of factors such as age, financial limitations, or visual impairment. A well planned trail system creates a viable alternative to getting in the car. Trails are becoming ever more essential infrastructure that defines a community.

Currently, Pearland has several trail corridors and localized trail systems. The Shadow Creek Ranch Nature Trail offers an excellent but limited trail experience in the northwest part of Pearland. A more centrally located trail corridor exists that will connect the new John Hargrove Environmental Complex with Centennial Park. Tom Bass Regional Park and the Shadow Creek Ranch development offer lengthy trail networks within their respective boundaries. However, room still exists for improvement, as trail connections beyond these major trail corridors are still rather limited. The following discussion includes a description several aspects of successful trail systems and recommendations for building trail networks.

### Where to Start?

A **trail** may be loosely defined as a route for pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians, and other active users. Trails can be off-street or on-street, paved or unpaved, dedicated or shared. Ultimately, any trail improves the ability of people to safely reach a destination without use of a motorized vehicle. **Active transportation** refers to getting from place to place under non-motorized power be it on foot, on a bicycle, on a skateboard, on a horse, on a unicycle, on a scooter, etc.

Trails make any mode of active transportation possible, but they are most commonly used for walking and cycling. **Walkability** is a measure of how user-friendly an area is to people traveling on foot. Many factors influence walkability. These include presence or absence and quality of footpaths, sidewalks or other pedestrian rights-of-way, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, building accessibility, and public safety considerations among others. **Bikeability**, similar to walkability, refers to the extent to which a community accommodates bicycle travel. Infrastructure for bicycle use can differ substantially from pedestrian infrastructure.



Often, a bicycle route or lane is integrated with a roadway. As compared to a sidewalk or other off-street trail this type of amenity is often easier and less expensive to build as it is subject to fewer limitations with regard to right-of-way, upfront costs, and private land ownership.

Both walkability and bikeability are important aspects of **recreational connectivity**, the extent to which community recreational resources are physically linked to allow for easy and enjoyable travel between them. As people today are more inclined to integrate recreational opportunities into their daily lives, some aspects of the built environment are more important than they were in the past. This includes infrastructural elements such as trails and crossings. The infrastructure available to get active people to and from destinations is of greater importance than ever before as more and more people prefer a leisurely walk or bike ride to a trip in the car.

**Barriers** are any limitations to free and easy pedestrian and bicycle movement within a community. These are typically major infrastructural features such as roadways, canals, or railroad tracks that impede active transportation and often pose a potential risk to public safety. The need to cross such obstacles serves to limit access to recreation facilities. Barriers may also involve other types of physical impediments such as rivers or topography as well as perceived obstacles like crime risk or a lack of familiarity with an area. People increasingly expect that such barriers will be addressed and that parks, recreation centers, and other community resources be easy to access for a variety of users employing a variety of travel modes.

A **trail system** refers to all trails and associated infrastructure that serve active transportation users in a community. This may include trails of varying scale intended to serve users within a park, throughout a community, or across a region. It may include various types of trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians or other active users.



Building a trail system involves many considerations beyond the control of park and recreation managers. Recreational connectivity in most American communities usually starts with trails, but includes other infrastructural elements such as street/railroad crossings, sidewalk landscaping, lighting, drainage, and services such as public transit options or bike-share and car-share availability. Various other departments and agencies need to be consulted and partnered to address things such as land acquisition, street crossings, and utility maintenance. Vacant lands, utility easements, street right-of-ways, and existing social trails all provide valuable opportunities to fill in gaps in a trail system but can be complicated to navigate. Further, the distinction between a recreational trail and a transportation trail can be hazy. Quality on-street connections such as comfortable bicycle lanes and routes are also critical to establishing good recreational connectivity despite that they are not exclusively used for recreation.

### **Trails Hierarchy**

Trails may be developed at a variety of scales. Many trails serve only park users, while others are of community wide or regional extent. Also, people with a destination in mind tend to take the most direct route while recreationists often enjoy going the long way around. An exemplary trail system will provide multiple opportunities for use of trail segments to access different parts of a community directly or enjoy recreational loops or circuit trails of various sizes. A hierarchy of trails allows users to choose from several options to reach a destination directly or spend time simply enjoying the journey. Three distinct tiers relate to a trail system:

1. Park Trails
2. Community Trails
3. Regional Trails

### ***Park Trails***

A trail system typically starts with within parks. Such interior trail assets, once established, provide a good point of departure to plan new trails outside park boundaries. Trails within parks are assets as valuable as other types of park facilities or amenities such as a playground, a ballfield, or a picnic table. Loop trails within a park are particularly for exercise or recreational use.

### ***Community Trails***

With internal park trails established, the next step is to focus on connecting these park assets to each other and to various places within the community. This involves capitalizing on existing opportunities to create strategic off-street and on-street pedestrian and bicycle links between popular recreation locations. Open space areas are ideal for off-street connections while wide, low-traffic street corridors are good options for creating pedestrian paths and bicycle routes within developed parts of a community. With these critical pedestrian and bicycle arteries established, focus may then shift to developing spurs along these routes to parks, schools, civic, commercial, and religious centers. Strategies to retrofit developed areas to meet the need for safe active transportation routes may be found in the Urban Street Design Guide released the in 2013 by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO, [www.nacto.org](http://www.nacto.org)). This valuable resource provides a full explanation of complete streets based on successful strategies employed in various North American cities.

### ***Regional Trails***

Regional trails typically provide connections to access nearby communities, and often link trail systems together. Development of regional trails usually involves extensive coordination with county offices, private land owners, and/or government entities.



## Trails Typology

In addition to the park, community, regional trail hierarchy already discussed, it is useful to employ a trails typology in planning efforts. A new “trail” may actually involve a variety of infrastructural improvements. A primary consideration is how to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle users traveling along the same route. A basic trail typology of three different types is recommended. Each trail type refers to a distinct strategy for connecting one place to another:

1. **Urban Trail**
2. **Bicycle Lane/Route**
3. **Open Space Trail**

An **urban trail**, an off-street trail wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists, is an ideal solution. This requires a street right-of-way that allows for a fully detached 10-12’ multi-use trail, preferably with landscaping or other physical separation from the roadway. This type of shared-use trail is paved with separate lane designations for pedestrians and bicyclists.

An alternative to this is a **bicycle lane or route**. Along existing roads where space in the right-of-way is limited or a lower cost option is preferred, this alternative involves routing cyclists along a dedicated, on-street bicycle only **lane** with a pedestrian sidewalk along the roadside. If the street cross section is so narrow as to prohibit full time dedicated bicycle lanes, an advisory bicycle lane may be an option. This allows for share used of a low-volume roadway with greater priority afforded to cyclists.

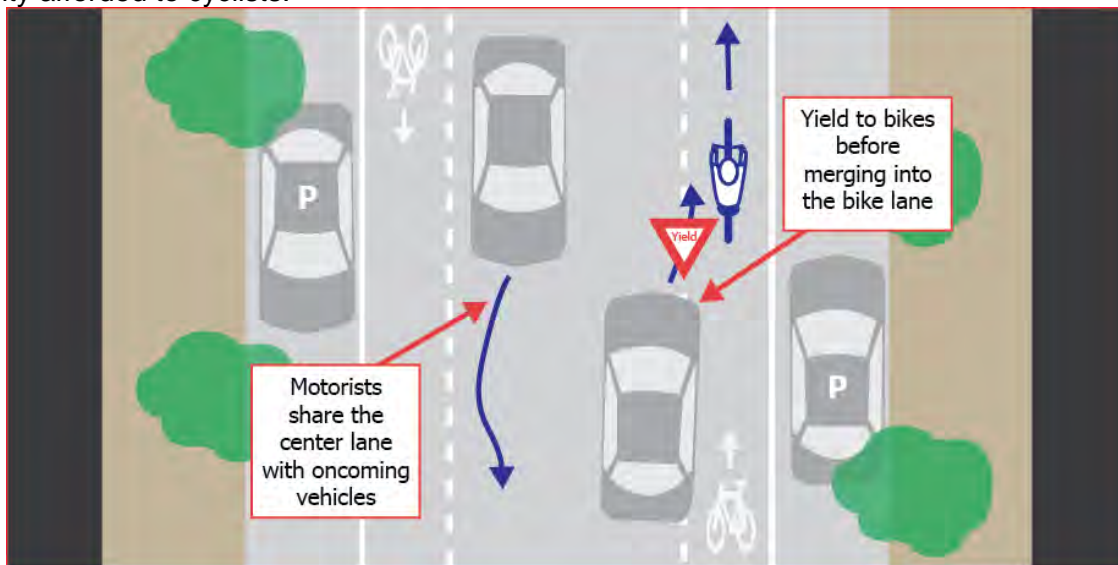


Image courtesy of the City of Minneapolis.

In some instances, a particular street is simply designated as a safe, preferred bicycle **route**, typically with signage but with no actual lane striping. This is a good option for low-speed, low-volume, residential or rural road conditions.

A final trail type, the traditional **open space trail**, provides users with an off-street connection often intended for shared-use by pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrian users. These types of trails typically travel through open space areas or parks, along greenways, or through trail or conservation easements. This is often considered the ideal trail type yet the land dedication needed for an open space trail often makes it impractical or impossible in an established community. For this reason open space trails are usually located on periphery of developed areas.

Three trail types to consider in developing a trail system in an established community. Pedestrian and bicycle users are accommodated in different ways in each trail type. Selection for each is largely driven by the surrounding built environment. Colors apply as follows: **Blue** for urban trails, **Green** for bike lanes/routes (shown here with street sidewalks), and **Red** for open space trail connections through less developed areas.



Urban Trail



Bicycle



Open Space  
Trail

### **Making Connections**

Development of a trails system is all about creating a series of connections. Here is a common sense way to think about the process.

#### ***Connect Stakeholders***

Even the most well-planned, extensive trail system has to start somewhere. Developing a trail system takes time and careful planning. The scope of creating and maintaining such a network is a substantial undertaking that involves many players. This often includes school districts, user groups, county offices, state entities, federal agencies, and/or private land owners among others. Other potential partners can include utility companies, law enforcement, public works departments, and public transit operators as well as parks and recreation colleagues. The types of collaboration necessary to build a trail system are not without their challenges, yet can yield lasting partnerships that benefit the community.

It is important to convince stakeholders that their cooperation is critical to the public good. It may be helpful to remind them of the economic boost that often results from investment in recreational infrastructure like a trail system. Of course, not all players stand to gain from trail development. It is essential that land managers and planners be aware of all possible implications inherent in their efforts.

Here are a few general strategies to use in coordinating planning efforts in establishing a trail system:

- Work with a variety of departments, offices, agencies, and entities to build consensus and create advocates in planning trail future connections.
- Look at existing infrastructure for areas such as utility easements, drainages, and detention ponds that may support a trail and improve connectivity.

- Consider ways in which various stakeholder may share cost burdens.
- For greatest economic impact develop a trail system that clearly links recreation with commercial opportunities.
- Remember that the demand for trails is greater than ever; remind stakeholders that investment of time and resources will yield quality of life dividends and boost the local economy.

### **Connect Places**

Trail development should start with a comprehensive list of destinations to serve as a blueprint for trail planning efforts. These may be parks, schools, civic institutions, commercial areas, neighborhood nodes, or other important local centers. Trails may be prioritized based on the importance of the locations they access within the community. Of course, destinations also often serve as points of origin. Keep this in mind as infrastructure to support users may be more important in some locations than others.

### **Connect Trails**

A trails system is nothing more than an assembly of trail connections that works together in a cohesive manner. It is useful to keep this simple goal in mind. Naturally, the process of building a trail system takes time. Patience is essential. Create connections that allow safe, comfortable routes between places in the community. As the “low hanging fruit” is picked, those trails with more complicated politics or more substantial price tags become focal points. Remember that there may be more than one way to link two trails, and sometimes alternative solutions are perfectly viable. Flexibility and creativity can come in handy.

### **Connect People**

As the Pearland trail system continues to develop, additional resources will be desirable to support users. Signage and wayfinding strategies, trailheads and access points, public trail maps, and smartphone applications can be successful ways to connect people to trails and provide a positive user experience.

#### **Signage and Wayfinding**

Signage and wayfinding strategies are employed to enhance a trail system by promoting ease of use and improved access to recreational resources. An important aspect of effective signage and wayfinding markers is branding. An easily identifiable hierarchy of signage for different types of users assists residents and visitors alike as they navigate between recreation destinations. Further, a strong brand can imply investment and commitment to active transportation which can positively impact community identity and open up new recreation opportunities.

#### **Trailheads and Access Points**

An essential yet often overlooked aspect of a trail system is the need to provide users with access to trails. There are two ways to approach this: with a trailhead, or with an access point. A formal trailhead may include various amenities such as a parking area, bicycle racks, signage, restrooms, drinking water, a trail map, and an information kiosk. A trailhead provides access to trails that typically serve a higher volume of users with parking and a staging area for their visit.

The second approach involves simply providing a trail access point, usually without the variety of amenities found at a trailhead. Trail access points are appropriate in residential areas where users are more likely to walk or ride a bicycle to reach the trail, and serve to eliminate the need for users to pass through private property to reach an off-street trail. New trails and new development should be planned to provide access points as often as possible.

### **Map and App Resources**

By making trail maps available, users may enjoy trails with greater confidence and with a better understanding of distances, access points, amenities, and the system as a whole. Even with a developing trail system a trail map can provide valuable information to users. In addition to showing off-street trails, maps can locate bicycle paths and safe on-street bike routes as well as guide users to those trails suitable to their level of experience and confidence. Maps may also include information about trail ownership, helpful as some trails may exist within easements or even on private land with use agreements.

Another way to provide trail mapping to users is through web based mobile technologies for use on a smartphone or tablet. Maps made available on this type of platform are dynamic, always on hand, and can be easily updated as a trail system evolves. This type of resource requires upfront investment and may be cost prohibitive yet as technologies advance these costs will become more manageable in the future, making web based maps more viable long term planning solution.

### **Public Transportation**

A final consideration in regard to recreational connectivity is public transportation. Though this falls outside the realm of parks and recreation, many recreational users enjoy the convenience that public transit affords. Partnership with the local transit provider is recommended to ensure that future public transit planning decisions may accommodate access to park lands, trails, and common destinations such as schools and recreation centers to best serve the community.

### **Additional Trail/Connectivity Resources**

The National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) recently compiled summaries of current research and best practices on active transportation and safe routes to parks. These and other valuable resources may be found on the NRPA website: <http://www.nrpa.org/research-papers/>

The City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, provides a helpful description of advisory bicycle lanes and additional resources: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles/advisory-bike-lane>.

An informative summary of public use of school grounds may be found here: <http://publichealthlawcenter.org/topics/healthy-eating/shared-use-school-property>

### **Planning for the Future and Keeping up with Growth Projections**

While the majority of the analysis for this study is based on current level of service in regards to the current population, population projections for Pearland indicate significant growth over the next five years. Addressing current system deficiencies in addition to providing parks and recreation services and assets for a growing community is challenging.



### **Community Based Facilities**

As discussed earlier, much of Pearland's Park System is community park, or large park, based. The community based facilities analysis showed generally good coverage if one includes the sports based facilities at Shadow Creek Ranch Sports Complex and Hickory Slough Sportsplex. These facilities, however (at least in Phase I), will offer limited appeal to users outside the sports community. This City should consider additional, non-sports amenities at these facilities if land allows. If adequate space or user conflict prevents additional uses, consideration should be given to add a north-central community based facility and a western based community facility with appeal to a larger group of users. This may require land acquisition and also serve to help meet the projected increase in park acreage based on population projections.

### **Sports Field Demands**

While the impact of the current sports fields at Shadow Creek Ranch Sports Complex and Hickory Slough Sportsplex are difficult to predict, the City should continue to monitor demand, needs and use of sports fields, both diamond and rectangle. Emerging sports such as lacrosse may also add the need for additional fields as program growth or participation numbers increase over the next five years.

## B. Recommendations with Actionable Planning, Cost Estimates and Prioritization

The following Goals, Objectives, and Action Items for the recommendations are drawn from the public input, inventory, level of service analysis, findings feedback, and all the information gathered during the master planning process with a primary focus on maintaining, sustaining, and improving City of Pearland parks, recreation, open space, and trails. All cost estimates are in 2015 figures where applicable. Most costs are dependent on the extent of the enhancements and improvements determined or known at this time.

Timeframe to complete is designated as:

- Short-term (up to 3 years)
- Mid-term (4-6 years)
- Long-term (7-10 years)

### Goal 1: Enhance Organizational and Operational Efficiencies

<b>Objective 1.1:</b> <i>Improve marketing and communication of activities</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>1.1.a</b> Continuously implement the PPRD Marketing Plan to increase awareness of program offerings and recreational opportunities including the Master Plan Programs and Service Delivery recommendations in Goal 3.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>1.1.b</b> Update the PPRD Marketing Plan every five years to include improved and/or new strategies to communicate with the community.	Medium	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>1.1.c</b> Enhance the marketing and communication of PPRD activities by adopting open lines of communication and meetings with current and potential partners.	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 1.2:</b> <i>Ensure social equity</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>1.2.a</b> Implement a policy that PPRD will not turn away any potential participants for any activity regardless of any personal challenges.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>1.2.b</b> Proactively promote a policy of inclusion of all residents at all facilities, services, and programs.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term

<b>Objective 1.3:</b> <i>Update the Park Dedication Ordinance (UDC – Parks and Open Space 3.2.10.1)</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>1.3.a</b> Work with the City of Pearland Planning Department and local developers to review and update the Park Dedication Ordinance to include an improved situation for all involved.	High	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>1.3.b</b> Utilize the Level of Service analysis portion of this Master Plan to help determine the types of amenities and components are desirable for each new park location.	Medium	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>1.3.c</b> Work with local neighborhoods to finalize park development plans and maintenance issues to ensure all parties have meaningful input prior to finalizing the design and development of the new park.	High	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 1.4:</b> <i>Promote Public Health</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>1.4.a</b> Promote public health by including public health and wellness as a priority in relevant marketing materials.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>1.4.b</b> Partner with public health organizations and/or local medical institutions including the Healthy Communities Initiative ( <a href="http://www.gpred.org/hcrg">www.gpred.org/hcrg</a> ) and funding sources.	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 1.5:</b> <i>Include successful Parks and Recreation trends in future program offerings</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>1.5.a</b> Continuously track and review existing and future industry trends that are successful and can be potentially implemented in Pearland.	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term

## Goal 2: Improve Financial Situations

<b>Objective 2.1</b> <i>Consider a bond referendum for facility improvements</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>2.1.a</b> Utilize a bond referendum to pay for the facility improvements and additional facilities recommended in this Master Plan to implement over the next several years.	High	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>2.1.b</b> Educate the public as to exactly what they will be asked to pay and for how long to implement the exact bond referendum projects proposed.	High	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 2.2:</b> <i>Implement equitable user fees</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>2.2.b</b> Implement the recently adopted cost recovery methodology continuum "Tax Use and Revenue Enhancement Strategic Direction."	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 2.3:</b> <i>Pursue grant opportunities</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>2.3.a</b> Continue to research, submit, and track federal, regional, state, and local grants.	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>2.3.b</b> Add a grant research and writer position (staff or contractual).	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 2.4:</b> <i>Increase local partnerships</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>2.4.a</b> Increase local partnerships by fostering relationships with local entities, other agencies, and alternative recreational service providers, the two school districts and the Economic Development Chamber (Sample Partnership Policy <b>Appendix C</b> ).	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>2.4.a</b> Consider partnering with public health organizations and/or local medical institutions in Healthy Communities Initiative ( <a href="http://www.gpred.org/hcrg">www.gpred.org/hcrg</a> ) and funding sources (Sample Partnership Policy <b>Appendix C</b> ).	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term



<b>Objective 2.5:</b> <i>Increase sponsorships</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>2.5.a</b> Build on existing sponsorships as well as pursue local entities to support events and the scholarship fund within the foundation (Sample Sponsorship Policy <b>Appendix D</b> ).	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>2.5.b</b> Ensure all existing and future sponsorships are accurately portrayed in a signed sponsorship agreement (Sample Sponsorship Policy <b>Appendix D</b> ).	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term

### **Goal 3: Increase Programs and Service Delivery**

<b>Objective 3.1:</b> <i>Explore increasing the number of program opportunities for families, youth, seniors, teens, and the special needs population.</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>3.1.a</b> Provide additional programs for families, youth, seniors, teenagers, and those with special needs.	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>3.1.b</b> Increase programming in special needs by expanding offerings to all types and ages of special needs patrons.	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>3.1.c</b> Continue to monitor participation and demand for programs and adjust to meet the needs of the community in all the above mentioned demographic areas of participation.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>3.1.d</b> Conduct periodic focus group discussions with these different types of groups will provide good feedback as to their satisfaction as well as new programming opportunities.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 3.2:</b> <i>Expand program opportunities in fitness, wellness, intergenerational, and non-sports activities</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>3.2.a</b> Consider increasing programs for fitness, wellness, intergenerational (teens with seniors), and non-sports programming opportunities for all ages.	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term

<b>3.2.b</b> Expand the current after school non-official intergenerational activities at the Melvin Knapp Center where teens teach seniors how to use technology and smart phones to include seniors teaching teens the historical type of activities.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>3.2.c</b> Explore the possibility of opening the Melvin Knapp Center to the teens after 4:00 pm and on weekends.	Medium	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 3.3:</b> <i>Explore offering more programs at convenient times for citizens</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>3.3.a</b> Continue to look for opportunities to expand adult programs around working hours and commuting citizens' schedules.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>3.3.b</b> Increase adult programming during non-working hours includes offering adult programs evenings during the week and weekends.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 3.4:</b> <i>Explore offering more programs at convenient times for citizens</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>3.4.a</b> Explore the opportunity to increase the number of smaller special events for neighborhoods and different types of cultural audiences.	High	Mid-Term Long-Term

#### Goal 4: Improve Facilities and Amenities

<b>Objective 4.1</b> <i>Maintain and improve existing facilities</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>4.1.a</b> Develop system wide self-evaluation to identify low scoring assets and amenities. Implement strategy for repair, repurpose, or replacement (see <b>Staff Resource Document</b> for examples of current issues).	High	Ongoing CIP
<b>4.1.b</b> Develop system wide park beatification self-evaluation to identify priority parks in need of attention and set annual budget for improvements. (see <b>Staff Resource Document</b> for examples of current issues).	High	Ongoing CIP
<b>4.1.c</b> Consider adding additional components in parks that currently serve low scoring areas.	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term

<b>4.1.d</b> Work with neighborhood groups and homeowners' associations to create an individual identity for each neighborhood park.	High	Short-Term Mid-Term
<b>4.1.e</b> Work with alternative providers to increase level of service in areas Pearland doesn't have current neighborhood parks but the level of service is low or does not exist.	Medium	Short-Term Mid-Term
<b>4.1.f</b> Consider programming infrastructure needs when adding or improving existing amenities.	Low	Short-Term Mid-Term
<b>Objective 4.2:</b> <i>Expand trails and connectivity</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>4.2.a</b> Using Recreational Connectivity section of this document as a guide, conduct City Wide Trails Master Plan or Multi-Modal Transportation Plan with Recreational Trails Component for further development of trails system.	High	Short-Term Mid-Term
<b>4.2.b</b> Work with HOAs to ensure open access to all residents to trails within subdivisions.	Medium	Short-Term
<b>4.2.c</b> Implement planned trail construction and move proposed trail segments into planning and engineering for accurate cost estimates	High	Short-Term Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>4.2.d</b> Improve recreational connectivity through neighborhood trail connections and park "spurs"	High	Mid-Term Long-Term
<b>Objective 4.3:</b> <i>Ensure ADA accessibility at all facilities</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>4.3.a</b> Complete ADA Self Evaluation assessment and implement transition plan to address deficiencies.	High	Immediate
<b>4.3.c</b> Develop a plan to address aging playground structures and safety surfacing deficiencies.	High	Short-Term
<b>Objective 4.4:</b> <i>Add parks and amenities in areas currently without service or as population expands to new areas</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>4.4.a</b> Promote "Community Park" oriented agency with focus on destination parks and amenities.	Medium	Short-Term

<b>4.4.b</b> When considering new “Community Parks,” look to no service and low service areas as priorities for development of existing lands or land acquisition (see <b>Staff Resource Document</b> for examples of prioritization of proposed parks).	Medium	Short-Term
<b>4.4.c</b> Monitor demands and needs for sports fields.	Low	Ongoing
<b>4.4.d</b> Consider annual grant program to assist neighborhood groups or homeowners associations in providing quality neighborhood recreation opportunities with focus on identified low service or no service areas.	High	Mid-Term
<b>4.4.e</b> Work with planning department to monitor future growth and pursue opportunities to acquire parcels of land of “Community Park” size for future parks.	High	Ongoing

## Goal 5: Improve Safety and Security

<b>Objective 5.1</b> <i>Improve safety perception of parks</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>5.1.a</b> Monitor reports of vandalism and loitering to pinpoint areas within the park and trail system where negative behavior tends to occur.	Low	Short-Term
<b>5.1.b</b> Track and publicize small number of incidents.	Low	Short-Term
<b>5.1.c</b> Increase usage and promote positive activities in the parks and on the trails.	Medium	Short-Term
<b>5.1.d</b> Work with local law enforcement, business owners, and adjacent residents to continue patrols and self-patrol areas of concern.	Medium	Short-Term
<b>5.1.e</b> Improve sight lines, add trail mile markers, add map stations, and potentially install emergency call stations along trails.	High	Short-Term
<b>Objective 5.2:</b> <i>Increase security lighting at many park amenities</i>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff Time Intensity</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
<b>5.2.a</b> Monitor reports of vandalism and loitering. Add security lighting at park amenities where vandalism and loitering occurs.	Low	Short-Term
<b>5.2.b</b> Implement CPTED principles in areas of concern.	Medium	Short-Term