

Executive Summary - 2012 Corpus Christi Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

Background

The City of Corpus Christi prepared a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan in 2002 and performed a major update in 2006. Additional updates were performed in 2008 and 2010 to realign recreation priorities. This Master Plan will provide guidance to City staff and elected officials for the timeframe of 2012 to 2022.

The 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan reflects current sentiments that residents have about City parks and provides direction regarding:

1. Operations and maintenance cost savings, and
2. The expenditure of future funds to maximize the benefit for Corpus Christi residents.

Key Steps in the Master Planning Process

The master planning process was very interactive, incorporating over 40 meetings with residents, stakeholders, the Master Plan Advisory Committee and City staff. Key steps in the master planning process included:

1. Inventory and assessment of existing parks and recreation facilities
2. Public Engagement
 - Meetings with Master Plan Advisory Committee
 - Community meetings with Residents and stakeholders
 - Web and Telephone surveys
3. Needs Assessment and Prioritization
4. Preliminary Master Plan Preparation
 - Public meetings to present findings and recommendations
5. Master Plan Finalization
6. Master Plan Approvals and Adoption
 - Master Plan Advisory Committee
 - PRAC
 - Planning Commission
 - City Council

Key Findings

Compared to other cities in Texas, Corpus Christi has a high number of park sites per 1,000 population. However, on average, Corpus Christi's parks are significantly smaller in size than other cities. Through the public engagement process, residents expressed their desire for parks that are attractive, well maintained and offer numerous recreation activities that benefit a diverse range of the population.

Based on preferences provided by residents through the telephone and web surveys, as well as through public meetings, the top recreation priorities for CC residents are:

• Walking, Jogging, Bicycling (Trail related activities)	• Music, dance, theater
• Swimming and Water Play	• Canoeing and Kayaking
• Picnicking	• Festivals and special events
• Bird watching and nature study	• Fishing – Saltwater
• Fitness classes and Programs	• Playgrounds and play equipment

Key Recommendations

Based on the results of public engagement and review of the park inventory specific recommendations are provided to realign the organization, maintenance and development of new facilities within the Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department. These include:

1. Create seven Park Planning Areas within the City to help guide future park maintenance and development
2. Reclassify parks and recreation facilities to more accurately reflect current usage and circumstances
3. Create new maintenance levels that correspond to levels of use between parks and within certain parks
4. Reduce the number of small parks and parks that are under utilized
5. Focus new development on larger, "Major Investment Parks", with at least one per Park Planning Area
6. Provide new off road trails and on-street bike lanes to provide connections to major parks and activity centers