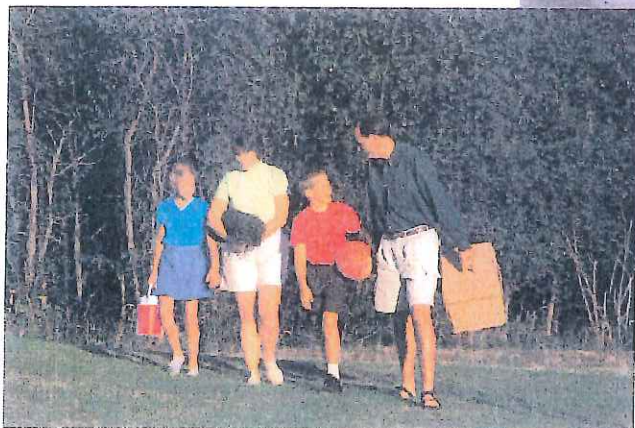
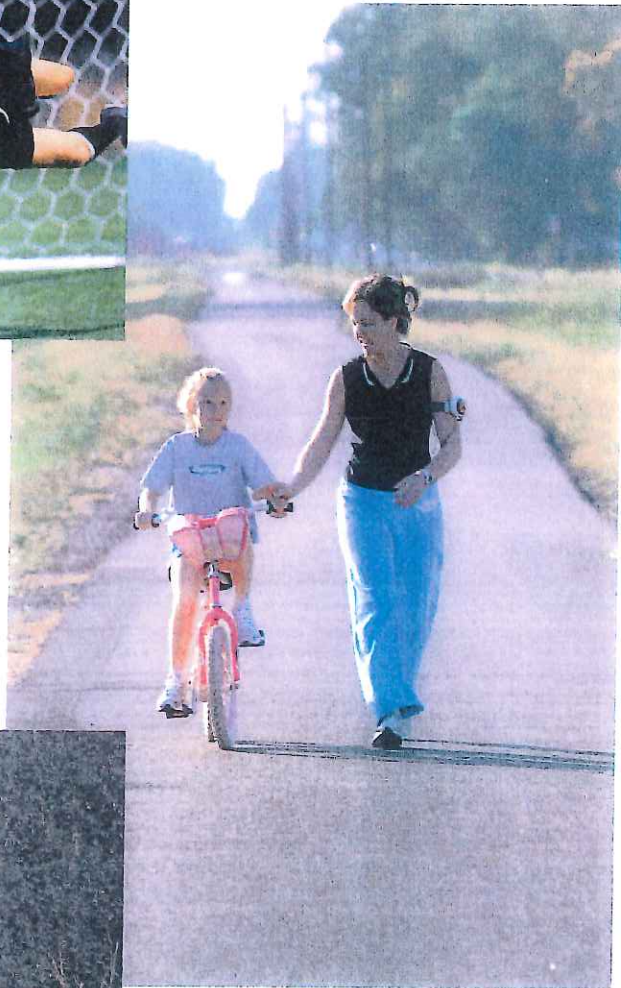


City of Wharton Parks Master Plan 2006 - 2015



Prepared by:
Wharton Park Planning Committee and
Lower Colorado River Authority

Approved by the Wharton City Council February 27, 2006 by Resolution 2006-22

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APPENDIX ‘A’ – Individual Park Inventories

APPENDIX ‘B’ – Park Survey Results

This Parks Master Plan was an effort of the City of Wharton Park Planning Committee with technical assistance and plan preparation by the LCRA Resource, Planning and Development Department, Community Services. LCRA provides this service as part of LCRA’s enabling legislation to assist communities with economic development and to ensure the protection and constructive use of the area’s natural resources.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Wharton was named after the brothers John and William Wharton, leaders in the struggle for Texas Independence. In 1846, a plantation community settled in the area by some of Stephen F. Austin's original colonists. The City was built along the Colorado River and now lies at the crossroads of U.S. Highway 59 and State Highway 60, about 45 miles from the Gulf of Mexico and 57 miles southwest of Houston. Wharton is now home to nearly 10,000 residents, the Wharton County seat, and Wharton County Junior College.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In the spring of 2004, the City of Wharton asked Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) to assist the City of Wharton with the development of a parks, recreation and open space master plan. That spring, the Wharton Park Planning Committee developed and mailed out a public parks and recreation survey. The results were compiled to complete a full set of data needed to assess current conditions and develop the master plan. The planning process closely followed the outline of this report:

1. Gather data, including –
 - Parkland and facilities inventory – parks and schools
 - Special events held in Wharton
 - Wharton historical information
 - Demographics
 - Other parks/recreation providers in the region
 - Other recreation and tourism plans for Wharton
 - City maps and orthographic aerial photographs
 - Parks and recreation public survey
2. Assess needs – study of the compiled public survey results (demand), area resources, existing and potential parks, recreation, and tourism market
3. Identify parks, recreation, open space, and tourism issues, goals and objectives
4. Create standards for recreation facilities in Wharton
5. Develop planning concepts for the City park system, envisioning the next 10 years
6. Finalize prioritization of park needs
7. Revise and approve master plan
8. Produce, print, and present final plan

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population - City of Wharton	9,237
Hispanic population	2,871
Black population	2,473
Median household income	\$ 26,704
High school graduates	669 / 24.9%
Bachelor's degree	487 / 18.1%
Population below poverty line	1,989 / 22%
2002 unemployment	354 / 5%

**Source: US Census Bureau*

There was a 12.69 percent increase in Wharton's population from 1990 to 2000 while the states population grew by 22.8 percent. The county's population growth rate was 3.08 percent. The Texas State Data Center population estimate for the City in January 2004 was 9,405.

Based on population projections from the Texas Water Development Board, in 2010, Wharton will have a population of 11,148 in 2010, the growth rate of 9.77 percent. In 2020, the population of Wharton is projected to be 12,131, with the growth rate of 8.81 percent. By the year 2030, Wharton's population is projected to grow by 8.71 percent to reach 13,188.

PARK AND RECREATION LANDS AND FACILITIES

CITY OF WHARTON

A full facilities inventory of each park in Wharton appears in Appendix A. The current City-operated park properties include:

- Croom Park 1
- Croom Park 2
- Guadalupe Park
- Harris Park
- Jefferson Park
- Mayfair Park
- Pleasure Park
- Riverfront Park



WHARTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

WISD provides additional recreation facilities, some of which are available to the public after school hours. WISD schools are:

- Minnie Mae Hopper Elementary School
- C.G. Sivells Elementary School
- C.W. Dawson Elementary School
- Wharton Junior High School
- Wharton High School

WHARTON COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE

WCJC has several high-quality athletic facilities contributing to the recreation opportunities in Wharton.

The total number of amenities for publicly accessible parks and recreation facilities in Wharton is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Total amenities in Wharton

Amenity	City parks	WISD	WCJC
Baseball/softball fields	7	1	1
Basketball courts	7	2	1
Football fields		4	
Tennis courts		6	6
Playground equipment			
Playscapes	3	4	
Swing sets	8	6	
Slides	7	2	
See-saws	4		
Jungle-gyms	5		
Monkey bars	3	1	
Merry-go rounds	2		
Picnic tables	55		
Barbeque grills	10		
Rest rooms	3		
Volleyball courts	2		
Trails	1		
Tracks		1	
Rodeo arenas			1
Swimming pools		1	
Canoe launches	1		
Fishing piers	1		
Benches	6		

Pavilions	5		
Bleachers	4		

FESTIVALS AND OTHER EVENTS

The City of Wharton hosts a wide range of festivals and events through out the year. The events take place at various venues.

- Shanghai Days
- Juneteenth Celebration
- Wharton County Freedom Fest
- Fiesta Hispano Americana
- Wharton Chamber of Commerce Lighted Holiday Parade
- Hidden Gardens Tour
- MLK Day Parade

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

DEMAND-BASED ASSESSMENT – PARKS SURVEY

In summer 2004, the Parks Committee sent out a survey to assess the parks and recreation needs of the community. A total of 170 surveys were returned. A complete report on the survey results is included in the Appendix B. Respondents were asked to reply to several different questions regarding parks and recreation in Wharton.

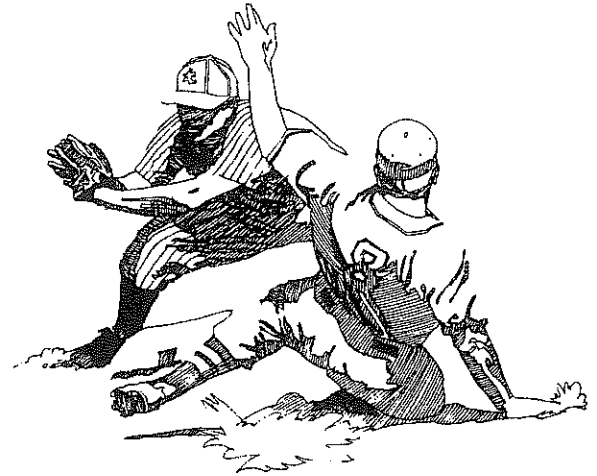


Table 2 summarizes the responses to identify park and recreation elements deemed to be the most needed:

Table 2- Amenities Identified as More Needed

Survey Rank	Amenity
1	Improved rest rooms in existing parks
2	Improved park lighting
3	Playscapes / improved playground facilities
4	Improved picnic areas
5	Covered swimming pool
6	Picnic pavilions
7	Senior citizens center
8	Farmer's market
9	Baseball / softball fields
10	Swimming pool improvements
11	Trails (walking, jogging, biking)
12	Water park
13	Indoor recreation facility
14	Camping / RV site development
15	Non-motorized boating (canoe/kayak)
16	Nature park and interpretation
17	Volleyball courts
18	Miniature golf
19	Skate park
20	Ornamental / butterfly gardens
21	Sports tournament facilities
22	Amphitheater
23	Covered basketball courts
24	Soccer fields
25	Tennis

Respondents were asked to name the leisure and recreational activities in which they participated. These are shown in the following table:

Table 3 – Top Participation Activities

Survey Rank	Activity
1	Walking / hiking / jogging
2	Playing with the kids / Playground
3	Golf
4	Swimming
5	Baseball
6	Softball
7	Picnicking
8	Basketball
9	Tennis
10	Biking
11	Fishing
12	Volleyball
13	Soccer
14	Boating
15	Visiting nature parks
16	Football / flag football

Table 4– Most Important Parks and Recreation Issues

Survey Rank	Issue
1	Improving / redeveloping current parks
2	Regional park development (having facilities to draw from +50 mile radius)
3	Cleaning up the river
4	Access to the river
5	Developing new parks
6	Indoor recreation
7	Outdoor recreation-based tourism
8	Parking at our existing parks

Table 5– City Spending Priorities

Survey Rank	Spending Priority
1	Flood control / Drainage improvements
2	Police
3	Beautification / Keeping City clean
4	Housing
5	Fire protection
6	Roads
7	Utilities (water/sewer) improvements
8	Parks, recreation, and open space

RESOURCE-BASED NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The resource-based needs assessment examines the assets and resources already in the area for open space, parks and recreation facilities, and defines how they could be used. A significant potential recreation resource in Wharton is the Colorado River. The City currently owns one park, River Front Park, and two other properties along the river, the Wharton Fire Department training field and the waste water treatment plant. Caney Creek and Baughman Slough also pass through the City, and together cause more flood damage than the Colorado River. A system of channels has been built to drain the creeks; more are being planned to improve the drainage system capacity. Flood control levees are also being planned for the City. Properties along these drainage features have potential for future trail development.

The City owns a section of abandoned Sante Fe Railroad right-of-way. The right-of-way connects three parks and the Wharton Junior High School.

STANDARDS-BASED NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The standards-based approach to needs assessment uses community specific standards to determine resources needed to meet the requirements of a given population. Prior to developing the concepts for the park system, the planning team established the preliminary Facility Development Standards. These standards represent the projected needs of Wharton for the next 10 years, based on knowledge of existing needs, past experience, population projections, and comparisons to other Texas community trends. The preliminary standards were used to craft the initial plan concepts. Then the concepts were finalized to create a unified long-term plan, and the final standards were then extracted from the master plan concept. Applying the standards to the current inventory demonstrates a deficit in the categories of park amenities, as in the Table 6.

Table 6– Facility Standards

Facility Type	Current Number	Facility Standard	Current Facility Deficit
Baseball / softball fields	9	13	- 4
Basketball courts	8	10	- 2
Football field	0	1	- 1
Tennis courts	6	6	0
Playscapes / playground facilities	3	10	- 8
Picnic tables	37	67	- 30
Rest rooms in existing parks	3	5	- 2
Volleyball courts	2	2	0
Trails for walking, jogging, biking*	1.4	6.7	- 5.3
Non-motorized boating (access)	0	1	- 1
Motorized boating (access)	0	1	- 1
Picnic pavilions	5	10	- 5
Nature park (and interpretation)	0	1	- 1
Miniature golf	0	1	- 1
Skate park	0	1	- 1
Ornamental and butterfly gardens	0	1	- 1
Sports tournament facilities	0	2	- 2
Amphitheater	0	1	- 1
Soccer fields	0	5	- 5

* Actual length of pathways will be determined by a separate master plan, currently under development by the City.

WISD recreation amenities are included in the ‘Current Number’ of facilities listed above. However, by National Recreation and Park Association City planning standards, school (and college) facilities are counted as one facility for every two provided by the school. This is because school facilities cannot be fully open to the public at all times.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Parks Planning Committee set the following goals for Wharton Parks Recreation and Open Space development:

- Improve existing parks to meet anticipated future park and recreation needs of Wharton residents.
- Provide facilities easily accessible from any part of the community.
- Develop a system of connected pathways between parks, businesses, schools, and residential areas, to make Wharton a more ‘walkable’ community.
- Promote sports and special events (such as tournaments, art and crafts festivals, and concerts).
- Update this plan every five years to reflect change.
- Promote business and tourism growth through quality park and open space development.

Objectives to meet these goals include:

- Complete development of the Sante Fe Trail and develop other trail connections throughout Wharton.
- Develop playground resources which are safe and secure, but challenging.
- Provide new and renovated rest rooms in all parks.
- Install safety lighting in all parks.
- Develop facilities to accommodate special events and sports tournaments.

MASTER PLAN CONCEPTS

The City of Wharton's existing park properties are well distributed throughout the City for basic recreation needs. This promotes future recreation development based on geographic needs and allows residents access to recreation and open space without facing significant barriers. Though basic recreation facilities are well distributed, the two community parks in Wharton are located on the southernmost part of the City. The master plan calls for future development to focus on three major areas:

- Improving existing parks
- Developing three new parks
- Linking the parks with trails or pathways

The master plan graphic is shown on the following page.

IMPROVING EXISTING PARKS

A primary aim for improvements will be on safety for users (especially children), basic recreation needs, and security of the facilities. Many of the park improvements in this plan were identified in individual park site plans in 1998. Most of the parks currently have scattered play equipment with no resilient safety surfacing. If the current equipment is to be retained, it should all be consolidated in a single area with safe surface material. The surface material should meet standards established by the American Society for Testing and Materials.








Additions and improvements are shown for each of the parks below.



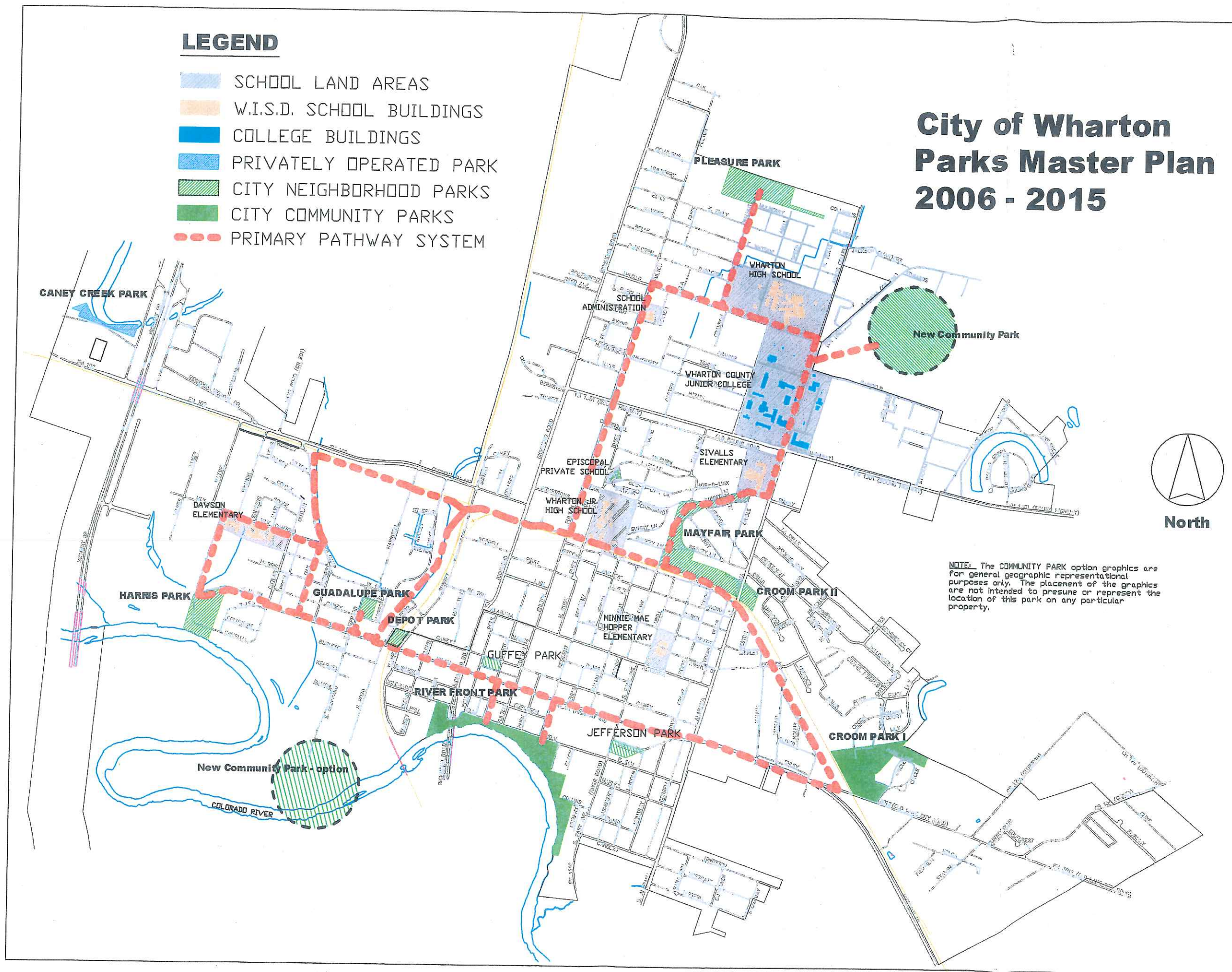
CROOM PARK 1

- Convert softball field to Little League field
- Add another Little League field
- Group shelters
- Concession stand
- Chain link fencing
- Replace existing play equipment with new playscape
- Tot lot
- Connect to City-wide park pathways system
- Parking

LEGEND

-  SCHOOL LAND AREAS
-  W.I.S.D. SCHOOL BUILDINGS
-  COLLEGE BUILDINGS
-  PRIVATELY OPERATED PARK
-  CITY NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS
-  CITY COMMUNITY PARKS
-  PRIMARY PATHWAY SYSTEM

**City of Wharton
Parks Master Plan
2006 - 2015**



NOTE: The COMMUNITY PARK option graphics are for general geographic representational purposes only. The placement of the graphics are not intended to presume or represent the location of this park on any particular property.

CROOM PARK 2

- Replace existing play equipment with new playscape
- Picnic tables
- Group shelter
- Parking
- Tot lot
- Connect to City-wide park pathways system
- Chain link fencing

GUADALUPE PARK

This property is open to the public by a short-term lease to the and focus will be on maintaining the open space.

HARRIS PARK

- Improve park lighting
- Connect to Dawson Elementary School trail
- Connect park trail to City-wide trail system
- Picnic tables
- Parking
- Replace existing play equipment with new playscape
- Chain link fencing
- Landscaping

This property is leased to the City from Wharton Independent School District. A request has been made recently to extend the lease.

JEFFERSON PARK

The Wharton Park Planning Committee proposes allowing this property to be put to another use. Possible proceeds for conversion of use could go to investment in other parks and recreation facilities.

PLEASURE PARK

- Softball field (unlighted)
- Picnic tables
- Parking
- New tot lot including consolidated existing play equipment
- Connect to City-wide park pathways system
- Chain link fencing
- Landscaping

MAYFAIR PARK

- Restroom
- Picnic tables
- Playscape
- Ornamental garden
- Connect to City-wide park pathways system
- Improved ball field fencing
- Football practice field
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Utility improvements

RIVERFRONT PARK

- Amphitheater
- Park lighting
- Electrical outlets for vendors
- Additional large group [multi-purpose] pavilion
- Connect to City-wide park pathways system

NEW PARKLAND

Three new parks and a boat ramp are being planned for Wharton:

DEPOT PARK

The Southern Pacific Railroad Depot is currently undergoing a historic architectural restoration. This park will be developed on the south end of the depot property, and include the following features:

- Pathways
- Benches
- Decorative ‘hardscape’
- Connection to the City-wide pathways system
- Landscaping
- Lighting

PROPOSED 30 ACRE PARK –NORTH

A conceptual master plan was developed for this potential park in 1998. The particular property is currently unavailable, but the general site plan concept is the same, for where ever the park might be built.

- Softball complex (4 fields)
- Soccer fields (5)
- Playscape
- Rest room/concession building
- Covered multi-purpose sport court/pavilion
- Connection to the City-wide pathways system
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Utilities

The City should consider the following important factors when selecting a property for this park:

- Balance of ‘community’ parkland distribution for the north part of Wharton. The south part of Wharton already has the only two community parks in the City: Riverfront Park and Croom Park I.
- A riverfront property option would make the park more attractive as a regional attraction.
- Availability and cost of property options.
- A ‘community’ park can influence residential and commercial development growth in the area of development. A ‘regional’ park will have even more influence.

BOAT RAMP

The 25 year agreement between the City of Wharton, Wharton County, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to maintain the boat ramp on Pecan Valley Drive has expired. The Wharton Parks Planning Committee has voted to recommend to the City Council that the maintenance agreement not be renewed due to the inadequate conditions of the boat ramp and its location. The Parks Planning Committee also voted to recommend that the City should conduct a study of property along the Colorado River within the City limits to determine an appropriate location for a new boat ramp.

CANEY CREEK PARK

The Caney Creek Conservation Foundation signed a lease with the City of Wharton in October 2005, for a 4.7 acre tract of land along Caney Creek. This project is part of an effort by the foundation to preserve, restore, protect, and enhance the natural, cultural, and commercial resources of the Caney Creek watershed. The Caney Creek Conservation Foundation will operate and maintain the property and facility development. Potential amenities could include:

- Pavilion
- Fishing Pier

- Benches
- Bird viewing platforms or blinds
- Kiosk
- Nesting boxes
- Interpretive signs

The immediate objectives of the foundation before any development occurs include: acquire an inventory of species of the area, obtain an environmental assessment, and conduct a feasibility study of the foundation's remaining master plan objectives.

PATHWAY CONNECTIONS

Future recreation development aims to make Wharton a more 'walkable' community. Along with this master plan, the City is also working to complete a master plan for development of sidewalks throughout the City. Objectives to complete this concept in regard to parks and recreation include:

- The **Central Wharton Loop** using the following connections:
 - Completion of the Sante Fe Trail (described below) to,
 - Union Pacific right of way to,
 - Milam Street right of way;
 - Includes connection to Railroad Depot Museum, downtown, River Front Park, Croom Park 1, Croom Park 2, Mayfair Park and Wharton Junior High School. The connection across Alabama Road at Croom Park 2 would be along, and near the bottom of the expanded drainage ditch under Alabama Road.
- The **North Wharton Loop** using the following connections:
 - Trail through Mayfield Park to,
 - North Alabama Road to,
 - Tiger Avenue/West Ahldag Avenue to,
 - Fulton Street where it connects back to the Sante Fe Trail, and
 - Connection to Walnut Street from West Ahldag Avenue to Pleasure Park.
- The **West Wharton Loop** may actually be a double loop, using the following connections:
 - Abandoned Sante Fe railroad to,
 - North Spanish Camp Road to,
 - Union Pacific r.o.w. to,
 - Milam Street (west) to,
 - Harris Park Trail to,
 - MLK Boulevard, and
 - Sheppard Street to connect Guadalupe Park.
- Pathway connections within neighborhoods to parks, to schools and to the college.
- Pathway connections from primary business areas to parks.



In 2004, a plan was completed to develop a trail along the abandoned Sante Fe railroad from South Alabama Road to North Fulton Street. The plan includes shade arbors, a decorative fountain, landscaping and connections to the Wharton Junior High School Track, Mayfair Park, and Croom Park 2. Future development of the abandoned railway right-of-way will include a connection from Croom Park 2 to Croom Park 1. Concept plans have already been developed and approved for construction along this right-of-way section between the two parks. The right-of-way will accommodate a new drainage ditch, the trail and a future road connection between State Highway 60 to South Alabama Road.

PRIORITIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this plan considers the following factors to determine facility priorities and project phasing:

- rank of recreation elements in response to the parks survey,
- recreation elements of high need which will also benefit the community desires for increased tourism, enhanced City image, and quality business growth in Wharton,
- other recreation needs identified during the planning process,
- the master plan concepts for integrated development.

PRIORITIZATION

The table shows the final park facilities prioritization.

Table 9– Amenity Priorities

Priority	Amenity
1	Playscapes / Improved playground facilities
2	Amphitheater
3	Park lighting and electrical connections
4	Baseball / Softball field improvements and additions
5	Basketball courts (covered) / Multi-use pavilion
6	Trails
7	Picnic areas
8	Nature park and interpretation
9	Soccer fields
10	Football / Flag football
11	Non-motorized boating
12	Ornamental and butterfly gardens
13	Tennis
14	Group shelter
15	Boating (motorized)

IMPLEMENTATION

This plan proposes the development be done in two major phases.

PHASE I (0-5 YEARS) – DEVELOPMENT

1) Facility improvements to existing parks:

- A. Complete basic facility improvements to Croom Park 1, Croom Park 2, Guadalupe Park, Harris Park, Pleasure Park and Mayfair Park (as detailed above) including:
 - New playscapes or consolidated play equipment in one area with safety surfacing
 - Improved park lighting

- Ball field fencing
- Parking improvements
- Picnicking facilities
- Perimeter fencing
- Landscaping
- Utilities

- B. Croom Park 2 ball field improvements:
- Convert softball field to Little League field
 - Add another Little League field
 - Add concession stand

C. Complete Riverfront Park development as shown in Master Plan Concepts

2) Create Depot Park as the depot restoration project progresses.

3) Develop the pathway connections:

- A. Central Wharton Loop
- B. North Wharton Loop
- C. West Wharton Loop

PHASE II (6-10 YEARS) – DEVELOPMENT

1) Sports Complex Development – Create the 30-acre parks as shown in Master Plan Concepts.

2) Complete final pieces of other park site plans:

- A. Group shelter in Croom Park 1
- B. Group shelter in Croom Park 2
- C. Football field and rest room in Mayfair Park

3) Boat Ramp Development

APPENDIX A: INDIVIDUAL PARK INVENTORIES

CROOM PARK 1

Location: Park Drive
Area: 7.00 acres

AMENITIES	INVENTORY	CONDITION
Baseball / Softball fields	4	
Basketball courts	1	Concrete; not covered
Goals	2	Approximately 15 years old; fair condition
Playground Equipment		
Swing sets	4	Approximately 30 years old; fair condition, needs reconditioning
Slides	2	Approximately 30 years old; fair condition, needs reconditioning
See-saws	2	Approximately 4 years old; excellent condition
Jungle gyms	3	Approximately 30 years old; fair condition, needs reconditioning
Monkey bars	2	Approximately 30 years old; poor condition, cannot be repaired
Play apparatus	1	Approximately 30 years old; poor condition, cannot be repaired
Picnic tables	6	Approximately 10 years old; fair condition
Barbeque grills	3	Approximately 15 years old; fair condition
Benches	4	Part of pavilion; fair condition
Pavilions	1	Aluminum, Good condition
	1	Wood, Poor condition

CROOM PARK 2

Location: Alabama Road

Area: 2.00 acres

AMENITIES	INVENTORY	CONDITION
Basketball courts	2	
Goals	4	Approximately 20 years old; poor condition
Playground equipment		
Swing sets	2	Approximately 25 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
Slides	1	Approximately 25 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
See saws	1	Good condition, approx. 4 years old
Merry-go-round	1	Good condition, approx. 4 years old
Play apparatus	1	Approximately 15 years old; poor condition, cannot be repaired
Picnic tables	2	Approximately 20 years old; poor condition
Barbeque grills	2	Approximately 4 years old; good condition

GUADALUPE PARK

Location: Caney Street

Area: 3.00 acres

AMENITIES	INVENTORY	CONDITION
Basketball courts	1	
Goals	0	Accidentally torn down
Playground equipment		
Swing sets	1	Approximately 20 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
Slides	1	Approximately 20 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
Monkey bars	1	Approximately 20 years old; poor condition, cannot be repaired

HARRIS PARK

Location: Columbine Street

Area: 10.00 acres

AMENITIES	INVENTORY	CONDITION
Baseball/Softball fields	1	Poor condition, fence and lights need repairs or replacement
Basketball courts	1	Concrete
Goals	2	Approximately 20 years old; in poor condition
Playground equipment		
Swing sets	1	Approximately 20 years old; in poor condition; needs conditioning
Slides	1	Approximately 20 years old; in fair condition; needs conditioning
See saws	1	Approximately 4 years old; good condition
Jungle gym	1	Approximately 20 years old; fair condition; needs conditioning
Picnic tables		
Concrete	7	Approximately 25 years old; poor condition
Rubber-coated	8	4 years old; good condition
Barbeque grills	2	Approximately 15 years old; poor condition
Pavilions	1	Approximately 4 years old; metal; good condition
Rest rooms	1	Approximately 9 years old; fair condition, separate men's and women's areas

MAYFAIR PARK

Location: Breezy Lane

Area: 20.00 acres

AMENITIES	INVENTORY	CONDITION
Baseball / Softball fields	1	Poor condition, fence needs repairs/ replacement
Picnic tables	1	Approximately 5 years old; wood, fair condition

PLEASURE PARK

Location: Walnut Street

Area: 10.00 acres

AMENITIES	INVENTORY	CONDITION
Baseball fields	1	New outfield fence, lighting & backstop fence
Playground equipment		
Swings	2	Approximately 25 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
Slides	2	Approximately 25 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
Merry-go-round	1	Approximately 25 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
Jungle-gym	1	Approximately 20 years old; fair condition, needs conditioning
Picnic tables	5	Approximately 25 years old; wood and steel; poor condition, needs conditioning
Barbeque grills	3	Approximately 5 years old; good condition
Bleachers	4 sets	Approximately 15 years old; good condition
Rest rooms	1	Approximately 9 years old; fair condition, separate men's and women's areas

RIVERFRONT PARK

Location: East Elm Street

Area: 20.00 acres

AMENITIES	INVENTORY	CONDITION
Basketball courts	2	Concrete
Goals	4	Good condition, new
Volleyball courts	2	Approximately 14 years old; sand, poor condition; needs new wood frame and equipment
Playground equipment		
Play apparatus	1	Approximately 14 years old; poor condition, cannot be repaired
Trails	1	Approximately 14 years old; entire length of park, poor condition
Canoe launch	1	Approximately 14 years old; poor condition, washed out
Fishing piers	1	Approximately 14 years old; fair condition, unlevel
Picnic tables		
Rubber-coated	16	Approximately 5 years old; good condition
Concrete	10	Approximately 10 years old; good condition
Benches	2	Approximately 14 years old; fair condition
Pavilions	3	Approximately 14 years old; wood, fair condition
Rest rooms	1	Approximately 14 years old; fair condition, vandalized, separate men's and women's areas

APPENDIX B: PARK SURVEY RESULTS

PARKS SURVEY QUESTIONS 2 - 4

160 SURVEYS

Question 2 - How old are you?

12 or below	13 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 50	51 - 65	66 or above	No Response
0	0	9	61	47	39	4

Question 3 - How many family members in your household utilize parks and what are the age groups?

5 or below	6 - 12	13 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 50	51 - 65	66 or above	No Response
40	54	39	34	53	51	30	30

**** Boys and Girls Club has 400 six to 12 year olds and 100 13 to 20 year olds use parks - not noted above**

***** the totals consist of the number of users listed on survey. If a "check" was only provided, the "check" consisted of "one" user.**

Question 4 - How would you rate the quality of the current park system? And why?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	No Response
(Poor)	2	7	4	5	6	7	8	9	(Excellent)	21
20	2	7	7	59	11	14	11	1	7	7

Wharton Parks Master Plan

Question #5 -- In the space below please indicate the top five recreation activities/facilities you participate in/use, and rank each from 1 to 5, with "1" representing the most participation, and "5" the least participation.

	1	2	3	4	5
Walking / hiking / jogging	18	15	8	6	3
Baseball	13	6	4	3	1
Playing with the kids / Playground	13	10	9	5	2
Golf	12	4	10	4	8
Swimming	11	8	6	3	1
Softball	11	10	2	3	
Picnicking	6	3	2	2	2
Basketball	4	3	3	3	1
Fishing	3	3	2	3	2
Biking	2	3	5	4	
Soccer	2	3	2	1	1
Boating	2		1	1	1
Community sports programs	1	1			
Family parties at the parks	1	2			
Senior activities	1		1		
Car racing	1				
Gardening	1			1	
Gymnastics	1				
Motorcycle riding	1				
Movies	1				1
Reading	1				1
Exercising (with equipment)		1	1		1
Grilling / Barbequing		1			
Camping/RV		2			
Football/Flag football		2			2
Tennis		3	4	7	1
Volleyball		6	3	3	1
Badminton			3		
Beach			1		
Bowling			1		
Question #5 (continued)	1	2	3	4	5
Dominoes / Cards / Chess			1		

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Question #6 -- Rate each of the following parks and recreation (and tourism) issues from 1 to 5, with "1" representing the most important facility, and "5" representing the least important issue.

	1	2	3	4	5	N/R
Improving/redeveloping current parks	70	29	15	3	9	36
Regional park development (having facilities to draw people from +50 mile radius)	60	22	20	15	14	31
Cleaning up the river	51	26	20	10	20	35
Access to the river	41	31	21	13	25	31
Indoor recreation	38	17	32	17	12	46
Developing new parks	32	19	22	15	26	48
Outdoor recreation-based tourism	29	20	32	17	14	50
Parking at our existing parks	22	21	30	15	19	55
Other issues added:	17	3			3	139
Boat ramps	2					
Camping facilities	2					
Clean rest rooms a tables	2					
Covered swimming pool	2				1	
Drive-in movie theater	1					
Jogging trails	2					
Park lighting		2				
Pistol Range	1					
RV Parks / Camping	3					
Swimming year round					1	
Tennis	1					
Water fountains/ pools for play	1					

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Question #7 --- Please rank the priority need for spending by the City of Wharton ("1" being the most important, and "9" the least important).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	N/R
Flood / Drainage improvements	74	11	19	13	12		3	2	1	27
Police	52	29	15	14	18	5	1	4	1	23
Beautification/Keeping City clean	38	13	19	13	16	12	11	14	2	24
Housing	38	7	14	8	10	12	10	18	5	40
Fire protection	33	33	23	9	10	8	10	2	2	32
Roads	27	34	13	10	16	15	10	2	2	33
Utilities improvements (water/sewer)	21	15	14	20	13	7	13	15	8	36
Parks, recreation, and open space	17	20	19	10	14	22	16	6	3	35
Other comments added:	12	1	2	3	2	1	2	8	8	131
Animal control	1									
Area lake			1							
Better parking at the Little League field									1	
Boat Ramp	1									
Downtown development (No antiques)	1									
EMS	1									
Enclosed pool							1			
Flea market	1									
Hiking / Biking	1									
Improve tax base				1						
Keep ditches clean	1									
Master parks plan	1						1			
More fire plugs									1	
Movie theatres	1									
New development / Infrastructure				1						
New school to replace Dawson		1								
Police protection in parks	1									
Sidewalks	1									
Street lighting			1							
Timely trash pick-up						1				
Trim trees in right of ways	1									

Question #8 -- Do you have any land you wish to donate for a City Park? (Yes/No)

All respondents checked "no"

Comment - If had land on river, would donate it for boat ramp

Comment - City needs to utilize currently owned park areas

Question #9 -- Other comments (including other access to the river, and comments / ideas about particular parks, or potential tracts of land, which may be available for donation or purchase for public recreation).

--Hike/Bike trail along Santa Fe Railroad right-of-way
--Keep river banks in parks cleaned
--Beautify downtown areas and main roads (landscaping)
--Get rid of "hay meadows" in town -- limit to 2 ft. tall
--Add to existing parks; do not build new parks
--Outdoor stages for entertainment
--Working water fountains in parks
--Better lighting and equipment in all parks
--Low-water dam
--River walk with shopping, eating, and walking
--Empty land south of Boling Hwy and west of the baseball stadium would make a great sports complex
--Need good boat ramp downtown; piers, docks, rails need to be repaired at Riverfront
--Use river to attract tourism
--Create a "challenge course" by river
--Create a "hands-on museum children's museum"
--Have the college/HS biology department form a habitat on the river (like in San Marcos)
--Build a heated pool for the elderly
--Create a facility (like the Boys and Girls Club) for teens
--Private exercise facility for senior citizens
--Park location near to Hwy. 59 to attract more people
--Spraying fountains for kids to play in - drain back to City utilities
--Create area for children to fish and boat
--Support for softball league - open Harris Park- West End swimming pool
-- Lighting for river front park - clean it up
-- Convert railroad tracks to hike/bike/jogging trail

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-- River access for canoeing from one side of Wharton to other side of town - short trips
Question #9 (continued)
-- A drive-in movie theater (for college kids and adults) would attract tourism
-- Need more shaded areas, benches, and bench swings at parks
-- Develop the old railroad areas
-- River fishing would be nice
-- Family-oriented facilities other than a park or pool. No where for families to go
-- Improve and increase funding for police equipment
-- New softball complex to replace Pleasure Park
-- Clean banks of river for better scenery instead of weeds and trash trees
-- Need electricity at Riverfront Park
-- Broken and unsafe park equipment
-- RV park located along river
-- 1106 FM 1299 would make a great RV campground park for river access
-- Need more playground equipment and fountain for kids to play in the parks
-- Larger pavilions with electricity and kitchens for rental
-- Need a low-water dam
-- Year-round pool facilities
-- More softball parks
-- Birding agenda activities and information
-- Clean up fishing pier at Riverfront Park
-- Enforce anti-litter laws in parks
-- Larger playgrounds with covered areas
-- Need water fountains at parks and around town
-- Need more small covered pavilions and tables (10-20 people)
-- Need safer playground equipment
-- Pavilion-style sports complex
-- Clean up the parks better, cut weeds, and pick up trash
-- A kid's waterfall would be good

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Question #10 -- Rate each of the following recreational facilities from 1 to 5, with "1" representing the highly needed facilities, and "5" representing the least needed facilities within the City of Wharton. Leave the space blank if you don't think the facility is needed.

	1	2	3	4	5	N/R
Restrooms in existing parks	63	28	15	5	10	41
Park lighting	63	22	8	11	12	46
Covered swimming pool	49	19	9	12	25	48
Playscapes / Improved playground facilities	47	22	15	6	8	64
Picnic areas	42	27	18	12	6	57
Picnic pavilions	42	23	19	10	9	59
Farmer's market	39	23	27	7	15	51
Senior citizens center	38	25	20	8	15	56
Baseball / Softball fields	36	23	14	10	14	65
Swimming pool improvements	34	21	14	9	11	73
Water park	33	18	11	8	16	76
Camping/RV site development	31	15	23	10	23	60
Trails for walking, jogging, biking	29	28	17	6	8	74
Indoor recreation facility	29	22	25	10	15	61
Nature park and interpretation	28	14	22	13	19	66
Sports tournament facilities:	26	10	10	4	8	104
Softball	9	1				
Baseball	4	1				
Soccer	4					
Flag football	2					
Basketball	1	1				
Bowling alley	1					
Fishing Tournaments	1					
Multi-sport park		2				
Tennis		1		1		
Ping-pong			1			
Volleyball				1		
Amphitheater	23	13	12	6	33	75
Basketball courts (covered)	23	12	19	10	26	72
New swimming pool	23	11	6	7	38	77
Miniature golf	22	19	20	16	23	62

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Question #10 (continued)	1	2	3	4	5	N/R
Golf course development	22	7	13	14	24	82
Skate park	19	20	14	18	26	65
Food concessions	19	12	14	11	25	81
Ornamental and butterfly gardens	18	21	23	8	23	69
Non-motorized boating (canoe/kayak)	17	34	24	6	19	62
Soccer fields	17	20	16	19	20	70
Motorized boating	16	9	18	8	29	82
Volleyball courts	15	29	17	18	11	72
Tennis	11	26	25	12	12	76
Basketball courts (not covered)	10	15	18	13	25	81
Frisbee golf	7	6	11	9	42	87
Other:	10	1			1	150
Swimming pool (covered)	1					
Covered pool and gym for senior citizens	1					
Drive-in movie theater	1					
Handicapped accessible playground equipment	1					
Improve Dawson Elementary school	1					
Kid's water activities	1					
More street lights	1					
River activities	1					
RV parks (private enterprise)	1					
Protection bars on culverts in Mayfair Park		1				
Music concerts					1	