



DRAFT

CHAPTER 6

PARKS, RECREATION, & OPEN SPACE

Parks, recreation, and open space opportunities are important, not only to enhance quality of life and neighborhood vitality, but also to preserve natural resources and provide alternative transportation links between our neighborhoods and growth centers. The City of Fort Worth recognizes these benefits and strives to increase these opportunities.

Park and recreational opportunities are primarily offered through the Park & Recreation Department, whose mission is “to enrich the lives of our citizens through the stewardship of our resources and the responsive provision of quality recreational opportunities and community services.” Additionally, the City of Fort Worth has developed an interdepartmental Open Space Conservation Program to identify and preserve high-quality natural areas for future generations.

The Fort Worth Park & Recreation Department (PARD) manages special park attractions including three golf complexes, the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge, Log Cabin village, and the Botanic Garden. The City also offers an athletics program, sports facilities and league events; community centers with fitness equipment, activities and classes; pools and aquatics programs; and a full forestry program.

EXISTING PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES

291

PARKS

12,337

ACRES OF
PARKLAND

600

SQ. FT. PARKLAND
PER PERSON

EXISTING PARK FACILITIES & PROGRAMS



11

SPECIAL USE
PARKS



11

ATHLETIC FIELD
COMPLEXES



110

BASEBALL &
SOFTBALL FIELDS



7

GREENBELTS



124

SOCCER FIELDS



62

TENNIS COURTS



105

BASKETBALL
COURTS



208

PLAYGROUNDS



3

POOLS



3

GOLF COURSE
COMPLEXES



4

DOG PARKS



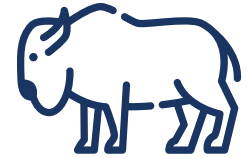
210

MILES OF HIKE &
BIKE TRAILS



21

COMMUNITY
CENTERS (In Total)



8

CONSERVANCY
PARKS

OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Land stewardship, nature education, and outdoor exploration can be found within the City of Fort Worth's public open space lands. Open spaces are woodlands, native prairies, shorelines, and waterways set aside for environmental, recreational, and aesthetic purposes in urban environments. Open spaces benefit the community through opportunities for active lifestyles, access to nature, improved air and water quality, and increased property values. More information on open space ecosystems as natural habitat for endangered and threatened species can be found in Chapter 18, Environmental Quality.

20

HIGH-PRIORITY
NATURAL AREAS
TO BE IDENTIFIED

50

ACRES OF
NATURAL OPEN
SPACE ACQUIRED
IN 2020

3,621

ACRES OF PARKLAND
PRESERVED WITHIN THE
FORT WORTH NATURE
CENTER & REFUGE

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

PARK MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is a document based on the historic legacy of the natural and developed resources of the park system, and the needs and desires of the citizens of Fort Worth. The plan establishes priorities, standards, and statements of direction for the future based on a detailed needs assessment and potential resources. The purpose of the plan is to provide a framework for future renovations, development, and expansions or reductions in the Fort Worth park, recreation, and open space system.

The Park & Recreation Department (PARD) employs a systems approach to create the framework for park master planning. This approach includes the effective use of citizen input and needs-assessment tools, adherence to the City's overall vision for community enhancement, and identification of corresponding goals, objectives, and strategies. The comprehensive nature of this approach addresses the planning and development priorities of the Fort Worth park system as identified by the citizens of Fort Worth, the Park Advisory Board, and the Fort Worth City Council and City staff.

Goals and objectives based on public input are ratified by the Park Advisory Board and integrated as part of an update to the Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan. The identified priorities serve as a guide for decisions made in producing and updating the park master plan. This master plan is a living document that provides a road map for the next 10 years, to help ensure Fort Worth remains one of Texas' premiere park systems. The plan is updated regularly through a needs assessment and public input process. The master plan was ratified in January 2015 and was updated in 2020.



The graph to the left highlights factors affecting plan recommendations, priorities, and scheduling.

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.



Families and friends gather at Magnolia Green pocket park.



Community parks are constructed for structured athletic activities.



Trails are an important feature of many city parks.

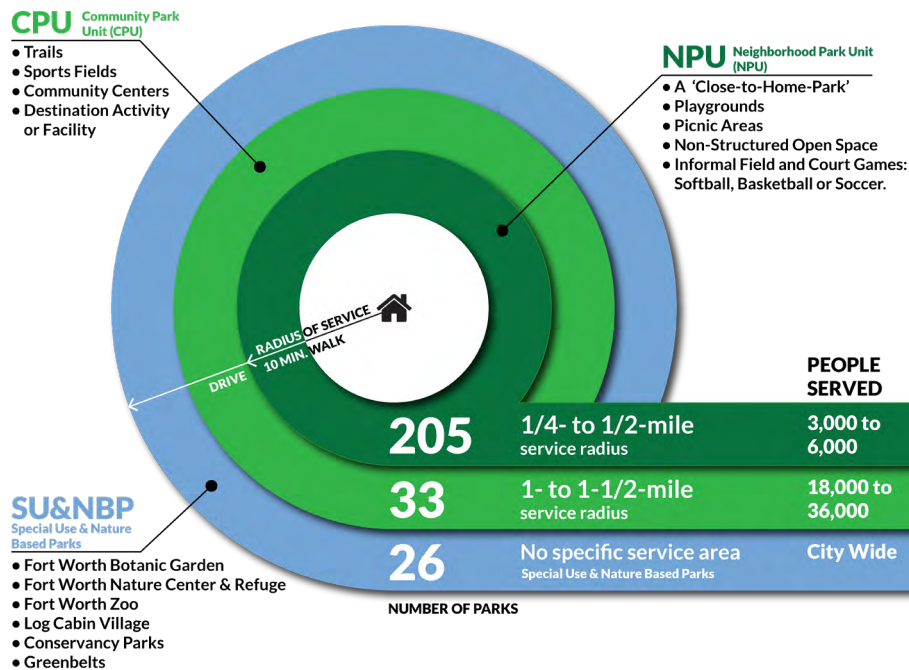
PARK PLANNING UNITS

Fort Worth is divided into five **Park Planning Districts (PPDs)** with each PPD containing smaller planning units.

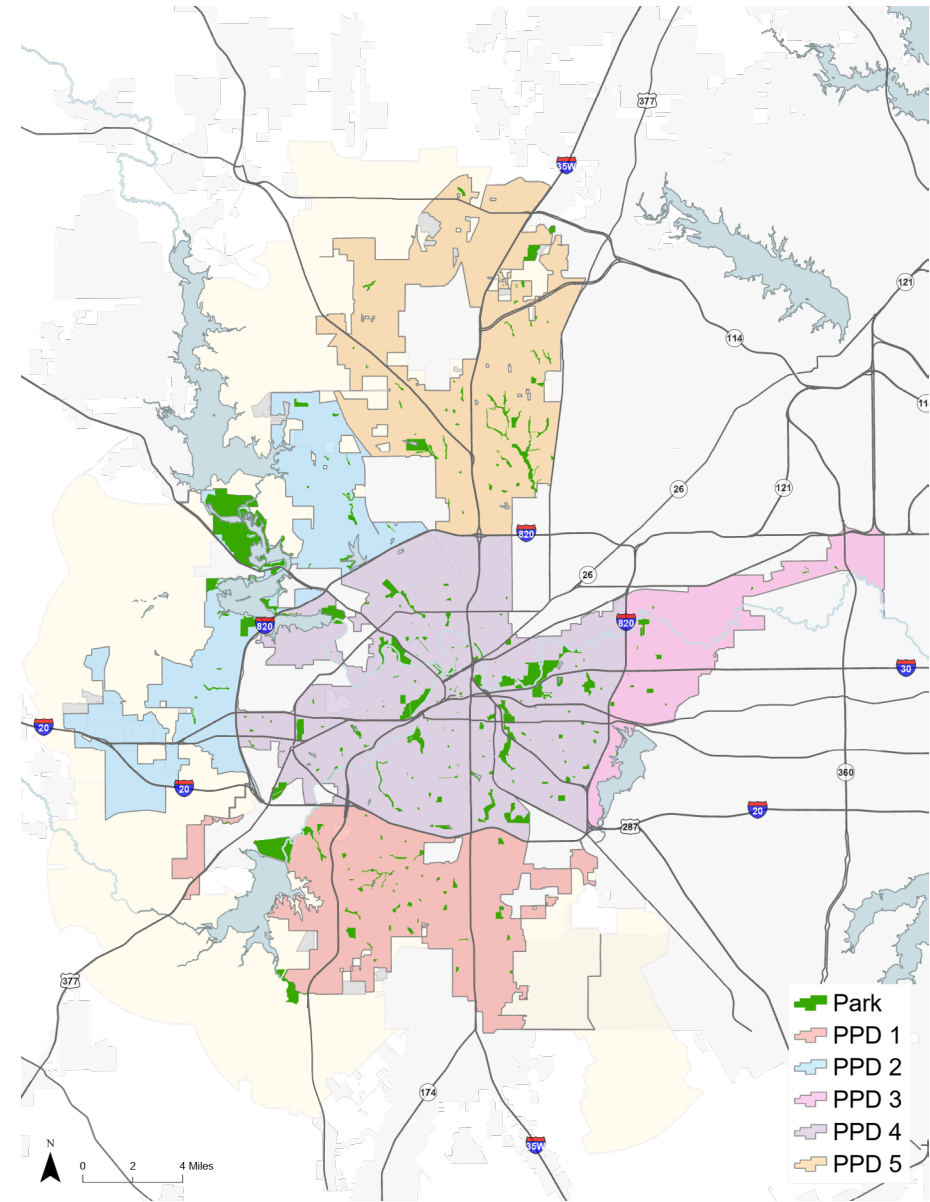
A **Neighborhood Park Unit (NPU)** has a service radius of approximately 1/4 to 1/2 mile and is designed to serve approximately 3,000 people, up to a maximum of 6,000 people. As the population changes, the NPU geography will morph to keep the population served under 6,000 people. Neighborhood park units (NPUs) are used for tracking funding, fees, and vacant land, so that park development can occur in the NPU geography where fees were collected.

A **Community Park Unit (CPU)** has a service radius of approximately 1 to 1½ miles to serve approximately 18,000 - 36,000 people.

Special Use & Nature Based Parks are unique and are not regulated by a service radius, or a population within a geography. The park size varies according to the specific site and use.



PARK PLANNING DISTRICTS



Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY PARK DEDICATION POLICY

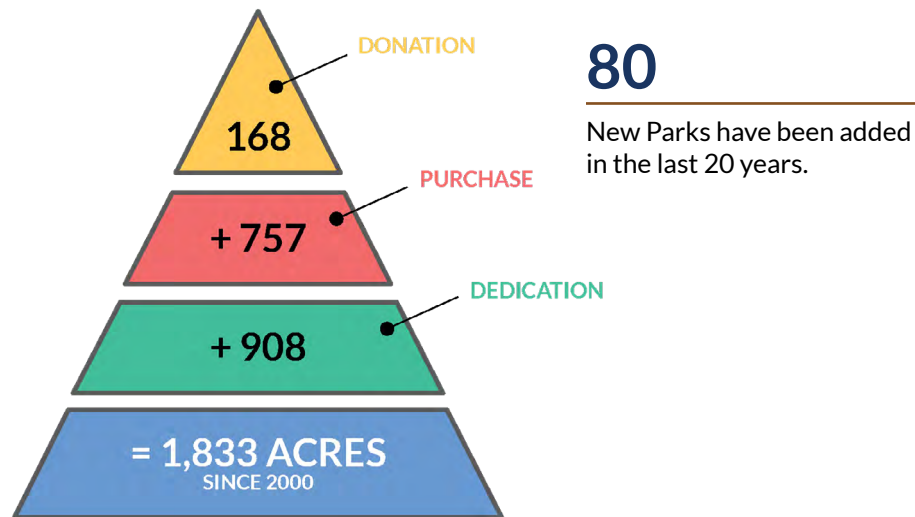
The City's principal tool for obtaining parkland is by land dedication, typically during the land subdivision process. Private land donations and joint-use agreements are additional means of obtaining parkland. PARD also reviews City-owned surplus property for potential parkland acquisitions before it is auctioned to the public.

The land dedication policy requires dedication of parkland at the set rate (shown below) for neighborhood and community parks, while a flat fee is collected in the Central City district (PPD 4).

- **Neighborhood Parks:** 3.25 acres per 1,000 population (or fee in-lieu-of dedication for less than 5 acres)
- **Community Parks:** 3.75 acres per 1,000 population (or fee in-lieu of dedication if less than 30 acres is proposed)

Level of service (LOS) is the term used address the ratio of parkland to population (3.25/1,000 for neighborhood parkland). Neighborhoods and communities are either "Served" or "Underserved" based on this standard.

SOURCES OF PARKLAND ACQUIRED, 2000 TO 2020



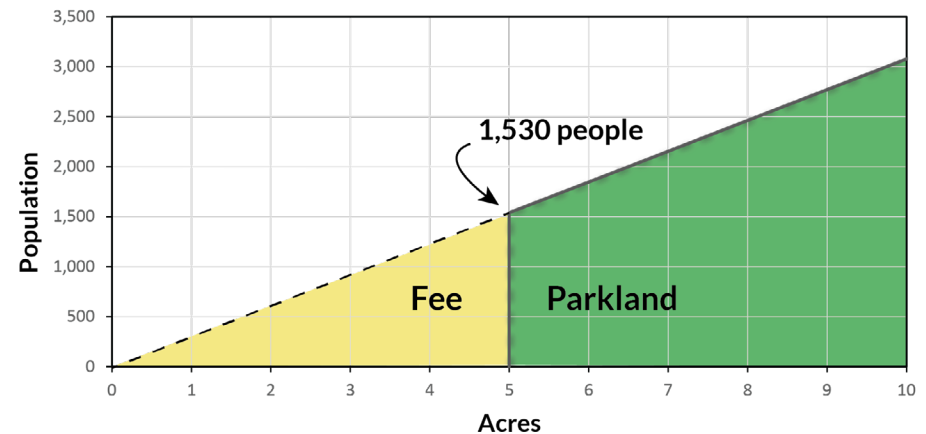
Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

A proactive park acquisition strategy with park dedication requirements for residential development, coupled with land purchase and set asides, serves to protect our natural resources and to provide land for recreation activities for future generations. However, parkland dedication alone may not provide new facilities where population density is currently increasing. These areas will become underserved when smaller developments are able to provide a fee in place of providing park acreage.

A fee may be paid in place of the provision of parkland when the parkland dedication would be less than five acres. This results in a growing population, underserved by nearby parkland and with Citywide parkland acreage growing more slowly when new developments are below a threshold population. For example, parkland for new developments with 360 or more single-family homes are required by Policy to provide land for parks within the neighborhood (NPU or CPU), while parkland might not be provided (a fee would be paid) within new developments below 360 single-family homes. This threshold occurs at 1,530 persons, as illustrated in the chart Fee or Parkland.

THRESHOLD POINT FOR FEE-IN-LIEU OR PARKLAND

Parkland dedication is required at a threshold size of 360 single-family residences constructed. Fee-in-lieu is an option under the threshold point.

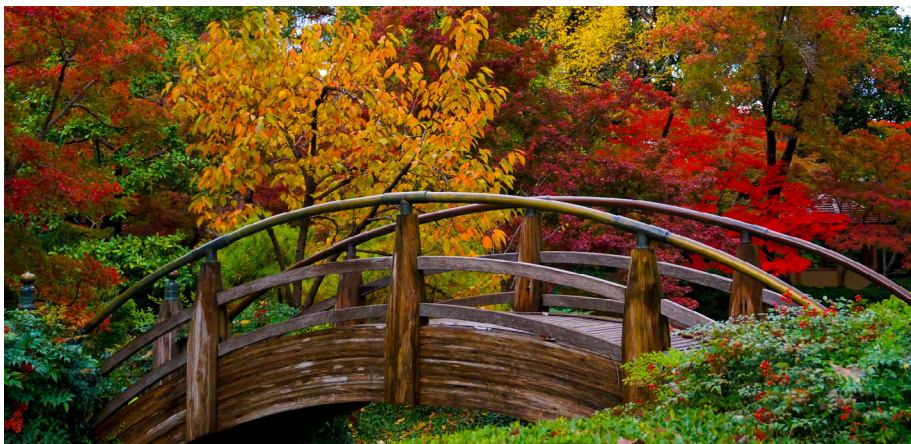


PARK ATTRACTIONS

Fort Worth's parks are attractions for both residents and visitors alike. Many of the City's premier park attractions, such as the Zoo, Botanic Garden, Nature Center and Refuge, and Log Cabin Village are important to the Fort Worth economy. In the 2019 Needs Assessment Survey, the majority of park users responded that they had taken out-of-town visitors to the Fort Worth Zoo, Botanic Garden, and the Water Garden. As the Fort Worth economy continues to diversify and surrounding markets remain highly competitive, the value of the City's premier park facilities may be an important factor in business relocation decisions.

BOTANIC GARDEN

Through the years, many organizations and individuals have assisted with substantial improvements and additions to the Botanic Garden, including the Fort Worth Garden Club and the Fort Worth Botanical Society. To improve the user experience, in 2020, the City entered into an agreement with Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) for management of the Botanic Garden. The Botanic Garden Master Plan identifies a long-range vision, determines future uses and activities, and projects grounds and facilities improvements for the Botanic Garden.



Arched bridge in the Japanese Garden, Fort Worth Botanic Garden.

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

NATURE CENTER AND REFUGE

The Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge (FWNC&R) is a natural area of forests, prairies, and wetlands and provides education to residents about the preservation and protection of Fort Worth's natural areas. The 3,621-acre refuge includes over 20 miles of hiking trails and is the largest city-owned nature center in the United States. The FWNC&R is home to many native habitats to discover on a self-guided or staff-guided hike. Staff members offer many programs throughout the year providing opportunities for our visitors to learn about our natural world, through field experiences, outreach to schools or groups, community wide events, and holiday and summer programs.



Top Left: The boat launch attracts outdoor sports enthusiasts to the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge.

Top Right: The bison.

Bottom: Lotus Pond at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge boardwalk.

PARK ATTRACTIONS

The Fort Worth Zoo, Botanic Garden and the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge each represent types of Special Use or Nature Base Parks. The Zoo, Botanic Garden and Nature Center and Refuge have a combined total of annual visitors that exceeds 1.5 million. These three facilities have active support groups that ensure that funding and volunteers are provided to service the needs of the users of these facilities.

FORT WORTH ZOO

The Fort Worth Zoo is *USA Today's* 2020, No. 1 zoo in North America. It has more visitors than any other educational institution in the City. The Zoo's attendance has been approximately 1 million each year since 1991, when the Fort Worth Zoological Association assumed management of the Zoo. Today it is a nationally ranked, world-renowned institution of conservation, education and entertainment, which houses more than 7,000 native and exotic animals. The Zoo is currently undergoing a \$100 million privately funded renovation as part of the master plan, A Wilder Vision.



Left: Giraffes at the Fort Worth Zoo.



Right: A dramatically blue macaw wows visitors at the Fort Worth Zoo.

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

LOG CABIN VILLAGE AND VAN ZANDT COTTAGE

Log Cabin Village is a living history museum dedicated to the preservation of 19th century frontier lifeways. The off-site Van Zandt Cottage is believed to be the oldest home in Fort Worth, still on its original foundation. It is significant as one of the first examples of historic preservation in the City.



Log Cabin Village actors bring historic frontier peoples to life for the next generation.

FORT WORTH WATER GARDENS

Designed by Phillip Johnson, the Water Gardens is an architectural and engineering marvel to be enjoyed any time of the year.



The Water Gardens, near the Fort Worth Convention Center.

RECREATION FACILITIES

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN | PARKS, RECREATION, & OPEN SPACE

INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUNDS

In the belief that all residents should be able to enjoy themselves in outdoor activities, the City of Fort Worth provides active recreation for all ages, abilities, and for wide ranging interests.

Fort Worth Dream Park—Dedicated in 2019, is a 57,000 square-foot playground where kids of all abilities can share adventures together.

All Ages Playground—This age-friendly playground at Forest Park is specifically designed for seniors, to improve their mobility by “playing outside” while engaging in low-impact exercise.

Patricia LeBlanc Park playground received national attention for being the first playground in the United States to implement “universal” design methodology, providing access for the mobility-impaired and encouraging side-by-side play for children with and without disabilities. The original playground was replaced with an updated universal playground in 2015.



Dream Park.

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

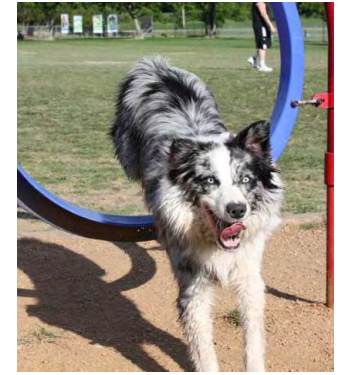
DOG PARKS

Off-leash dog parks continue to be a popular facility. Current facilities are at Gateway Park (Fort Woof Dog Park), North Z Boaz Dog Park (Z Bonz Dog Park), First Flight Park, and Calhoun Park (Calhound Dog Park). The increase in demand for dog parks reflects nationwide household demographics indicating that more households have dogs (43 million) than children (38 million). Dog park design is evolving to meet growing demand.



Left: Z Bonz Dog Park at River Park.

Right: A dog jump through hoops at the doggie playground.



SKATE PARKS

Skate parks are a relatively new facility type with the demand increasing. Much has changed with regard to overall demand and skate park construction techniques. Chisholm Trail Community Park, North Z. Boaz Park, Northwest Community Park, and Gateway Park have been identified for skate facilities of various sizes.



Skate Park

RECREATION FACILITIES

ATHLETICS

The Athletics Division of the Park & Recreation Department provides athletic opportunities for youth and adults through direct program offerings and the administration of athletic facility rentals to local, regional, and national athletic organizations.

The athletics division oversees the operations and maintenance of Haws Athletic Center, 82 sports fields, and McLeland Tennis Center. There are 65 Level 1 and 17 Level 2 soccer and baseball/softball fields throughout the city. Level 1 fields accommodate competitive games through leagues and tournaments, which are programmed by the Park & Recreation Department, as well as outside providers through rental agreements. Level 2 fields typically accommodate team practices and lower-level recreation play.

Sports directly provided by the division include pickle ball, basketball, volleyball, flag football, soccer, and softball, as well as the Fort Worth Classic softball tournament and the Fort Worth Cup soccer tournament. City facilities also host kickball, rugby, cricket, and ultimate Frisbee as facilitated by the division.

The City of Fort Worth offers a variety youth and adult recreational sports leagues for residents to join a team. Basketball, baseball, softball, tee-ball, and volleyball leagues are available for youth players. Adult sports leagues are offered for basketball, flag football, softball, and volleyball.



Gateway Park

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

POOLS AND AQUATICS

Fort Worth's aquatics facilities provide water safety and drowning prevention programs while also giving Fort Worth families a way to beat the summer heat. The City operates a spray ground and two pools: Sycamore Spray Ground, Forest Park Pool, and Marine Park Pool & Aquatic Center. Swim lessons for school-aged children is offered at Forest Park Pool and Marine Park Aquatic Center. The City-Wide Aquatic Facilities Master Plan provides a comprehensive look at facility types and potential amenities.



Marine Park Pool

FISHING

Greenbriar Lake offers great fishing year-round without leaving the city limits. Texas Parks & Wildlife stocks the lake with channel catfish, bluegill sunfish, green sunfish and largemouth bass — as well as rainbow trout in winter months — to create an urban fishery and family recreational fishing experience. Catch and release fishing is popular across the City of Fort Worth in several parks with water-bodies, including Trinity River Park.



Fishing the Trinity River

GOLF

The Golf Division of the Park & Recreation Department provides enjoyable, safe, and accessible golf programs through three municipally owned golf course complexes: Pecan Valley, Meadowbrook, and Rockwood Park.

Pecan Valley Golf Course is a 36-hole facility located in the southwest part of the city with a fully equipped pro shop, snack shop, and driving range. An expansive outdoor pavilion is also available to handle large tournaments and corporate outings.

Meadowbrook Golf Course is an 18-hole facility located in the east side of the city. It has a fully equipped pro shop and features a full snack bar and indoor hitting bays.

Rockwood Park Golf Course is an 18-hole facility with a driving range, pro shop, snack shop, 9-hole Foot Golf course, and a 6-hole practice course. Rockwood Park has the distinction of serving as the host site to The First Tee of Fort Worth and the Ben Hogan Learning Center. The 18-hole course has received an extensive renovation and reopened in June 2017.



Rockwood Park Golf Course

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

FORESTRY

Urban forestry is the management of tree populations in urban settings for the purpose of improving the environment and providing aesthetic benefits. As stewards of the city's green infrastructure, the Forestry Section administers the plan review and permitting process for any planting, pruning, or removal of trees from municipal property and enforces the city's Urban Forestry Ordinance, which protects trees and works to achieve the city's goal of 30 percent canopy cover.

The Forestry Section operates the 71-acre municipal tree farm, where trees are grown from seeds and acorns harvested from the best trees in the city. Crews offer citizen forestry training, volunteer opportunities and grants to provide trees to Fort Worth communities. When they are ready, the trees grown at the tree farm are transplanted to parks and public spaces throughout the city and maintained by the Forestry Section.

Additionally, the Forestry Section operates the Hazard Abatement program, caring for more than 250,000 trees in street rights-of-way and countless other trees in parks and other municipal property. Special events across the city such as the Arbor Day celebration, a tree giveaway booth at Mayfest, tree planting projects, and a variety of outreach events are hosted by the Forestry Section annually.



Veterans Memorial Park Grove

COMMUNITY CENTERS

Community centers offer multiple functions to the community, each within a 1½ to 3-mile radius service area. Fourteen community centers are operated by the Park & Recreation Department, seven are operated by the Neighborhood Services Department, and one is a partnership with the YMCA (North Park Y).

Community centers provide a variety of recreational, educational, social, and cultural programs.

- Recreation programs include sports programs and leagues, plus individual recreation opportunities such as weight training, swimming lessons, Zumba, and senior citizen programs.
- Cultural and social programs include concerts, performance poetry, dance, homework assistance, literacy programs, nutrition services, and health programs.
- Meeting spaces serve homeowners' associations, neighborhood advisory councils, youth organizations, and special event rentals. Some serve as emergency shelters and designated safe havens for children.

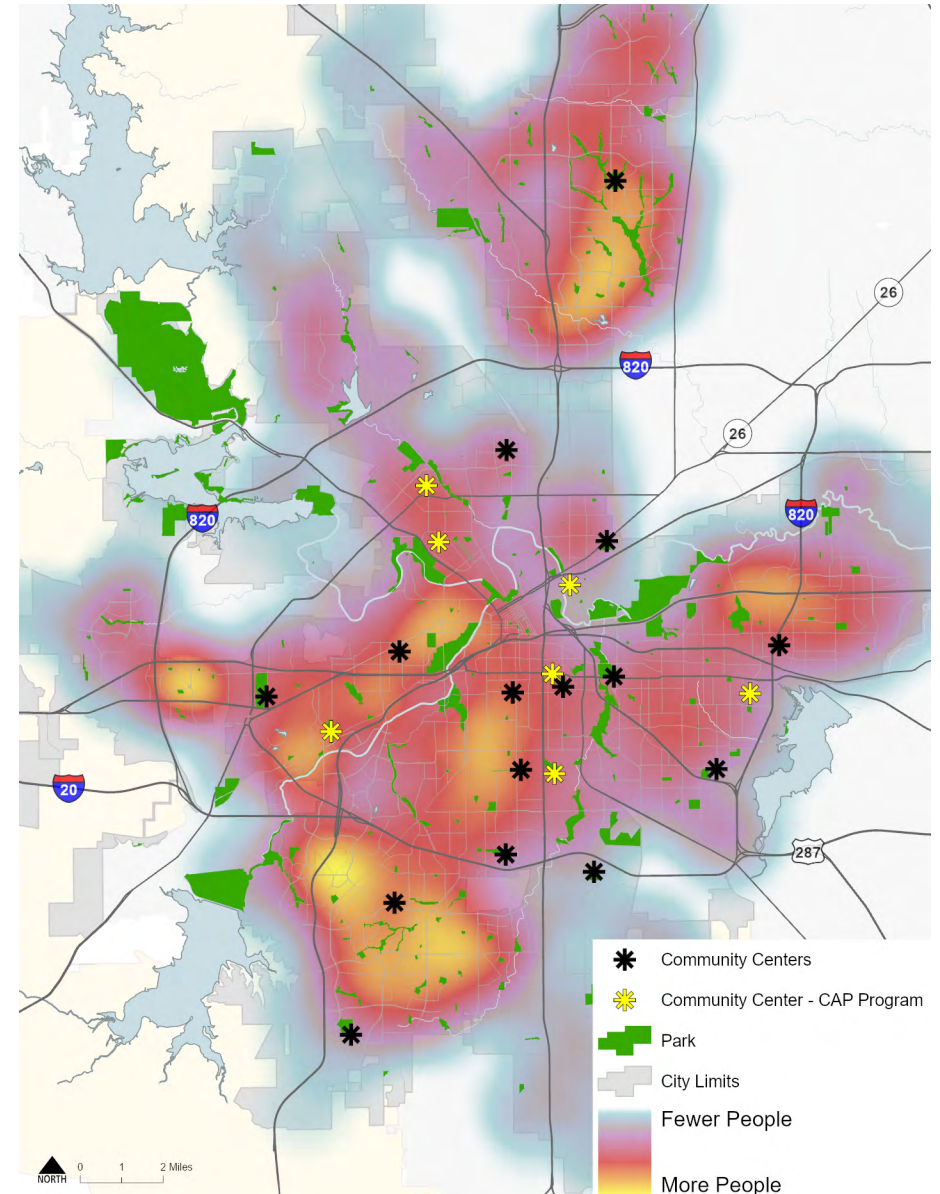
The Neighborhood Services Department offers Community Action Partners (CAP) programs to provide comprehensive services to economically disadvantaged individuals, families, and the elderly. The programs include a variety of job skills and employment assistance programs, educational workshops and life skills programs, and financial assistance for utility bills.



Como
Community
Center.

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

COMMUNITY CENTERS AND POPULATION DENSITY



TRAILS IN CITY PARKS

Trails and greenways create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible places to cycle, walk, hike, and jog. Trails help people of all ages incorporate exercise into their daily routines by connecting them with places they want or need to go. Fort Worth has numerous trail networks and neighborhood trails that provide accessible recreation opportunities at a number of City parks.

Trails identified in the Active Transportation Plan within the floodplain of the Trinity River and its tributaries will continue to be provided as green infrastructure, through partnerships with the Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) and multiple City departments.

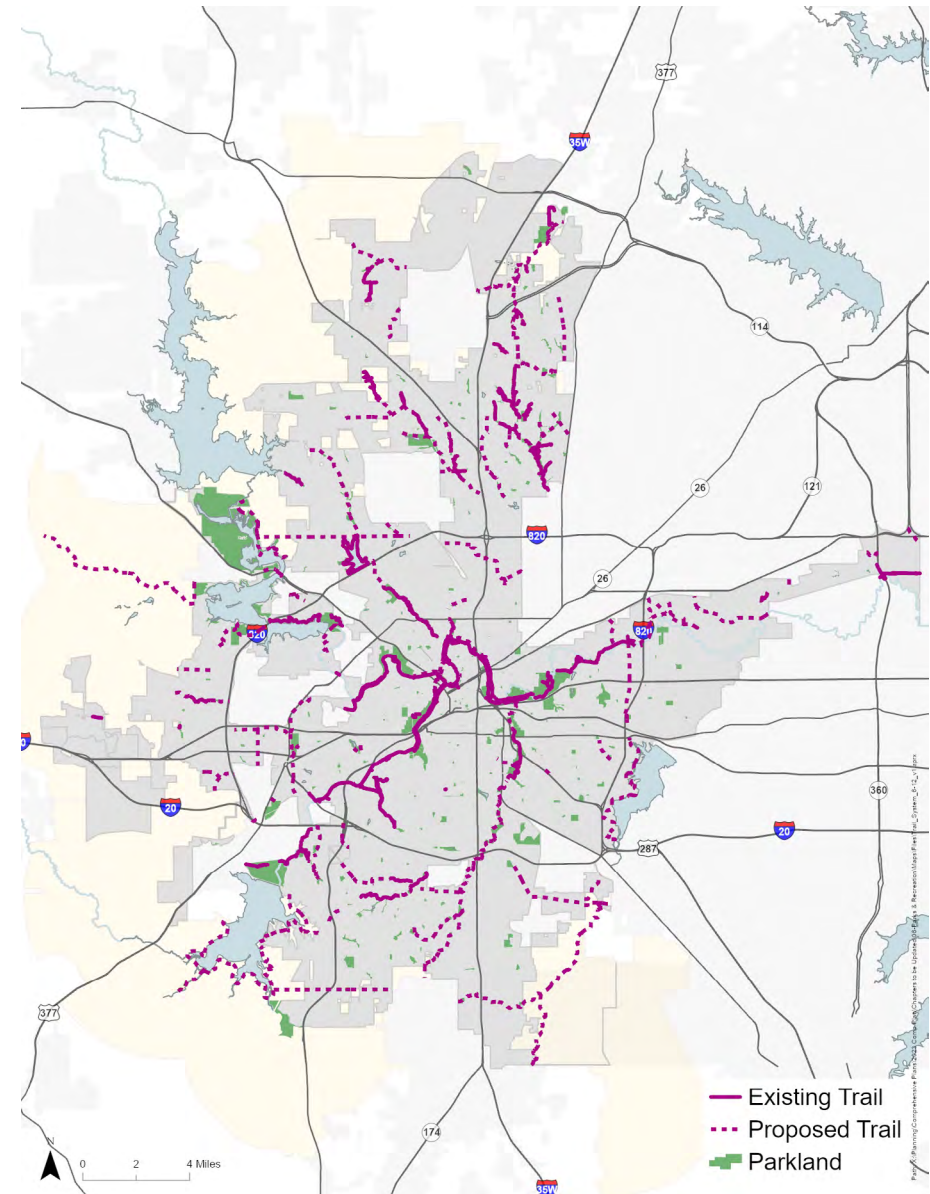
TRINITY RIVER TRAILS

Over 100 miles of surfaced trails exist along the Trinity River, Marine Creek, Mary's Creek, and Sycamore Creek. Surfaces are provided for biking, walking, in-line skating, and horseback riding. Trails along the Trinity River corridor and its tributaries provide a natural means of linking the City's recreation sites and open space, as well as linking neighborhoods to centers of activity.

CONFLUENCE: THE TRINITY RIVER STRATEGIC MASTER PLAN

In partnership with Streams & Valleys and Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD), the City has created a plan to enhance the Trinity River. The Park & Recreation Department (PARD) provides a recreation-focused perspective to the Trinity River system, which ensures that new recreation opportunities are available along the river, and that these amenities are enhanced and maintained. PARD functions as the maintainer and operator of river-based recreation facilities, educational programmer, designer and developer of park spaces along the river, and local project funder. PARD will play a key role in implementing Confluence as a content leader on the Technical Committee, and by monitoring and implementing projects within its jurisdiction. PARD will also help identify funding sources (with local capital allocations and grants) and will advocate for Trinity River recreational projects to be included in local bond programs.

TRAIL SYSTEM



Source: City of Fort Worth, Planning & Data Analytics Department, 2021.

OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The City of Fort Worth developed the interdepartmental Open Space Conservation Program in 2019 to identify and protect high-quality natural areas for future generations. These spaces will not be developed and will remain in a natural state. Promoting sustainable and compatible development along the Trinity River, Lake Arlington, and prairie areas is essential to preserving Fort Worth's great natural assets.

As the city grows, these open spaces will help protect the environment and provide recreational opportunities to residents and visitors that support economic development and enhance the livability and desirability of Fort Worth. Landowners and developers can also donate land or utilize conservation easements to protect parcels from development. Preserving the floodplain as open space allows for natural filtration of surface runoff before it reaches waterways, and also protects structures from flooding.

Early in the development of the Open Space Conservation Program, residents brought to the attention of the city a parcel of land for sale at an iconic landmark, Broadcast Hill, adjacent to Tandy Hills Nature Area. This parcel was home to the first television station in Texas, WBAP-TV, Fort Worth. WBAP was owned by Amon G. Carter Sr. It is a unique property with remnant Fort Worth Prairie habitat and boasts a scenic view of downtown. Through a joint effort between the Friends of Tandy Hills Natural Area, private residents, and the City of Fort Worth, Broadcast Hill became the first open space acquired under the Open Space Conservation Program in June of 2020.



Nature scenes from Broadcast Hill.

Source: City of Fort Worth, Park & Recreation Department, 2021.

OPEN SPACE PRIORITIZATION MODEL

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is developing a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based prioritization model to assist the City in identifying priority areas for conservation. The criteria in the model is weighted for importance based on stakeholder input and public feedback, and is entered into the GIS as data layers. When all of the layers are combined, the highest priority areas for natural area protection will be identified. This effort will help the City to identify the 20 most high-priority natural areas suitable for acquisition or conservation.

The City of Fort Worth will conduct three stakeholder meetings and three public meetings between 2020 and 2021 to gather insight on how the model can best represent the priorities of Fort Worth residents and interest groups and to obtain feedback on the Open Space Conservation Program.

SEVEN FOCUS AREAS ARE PRIORITIZED FOR THE OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM



Outdoor Recreation



Community Health



Equitable Access



Flood Control



Economic Development



Ecosystem Preservation



Stream, River, and Lake Health

GOALS & OBJECTIVES - PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

- 1 Restore and maintain the viability of the park, recreation, and open space system by investing and re-investing in existing facilities.**
 - Establish priorities to replace or renovate existing playgrounds on a 20-year cycle.
 - Renovate or replace segments of existing trails which have exceeded their useful life or are deteriorated beyond repair.
 - Determine the need for first-phase development of reserve parks acquired through the Neighborhood and Community Park Dedication Policy.
 - Strategically reinvest in the current and developing park system, to protect the existing infrastructure and to plan and develop new parks and facilities.
- 2 Improve the variety of park, recreation, and open space opportunities available to the community.**
 - Provide new park facilities where service levels fall below standards consistent with the priorities established in the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.
 - Focus should occur on priorities established to ensure that the highest rated facilities and amenities are addressed in a prudent and proactive manner.
 - Integrate visions from plans outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan.
 - Monitor emerging trends in park and recreation facilities development both locally and nationally.
- 3 Expand recreational opportunities in the floodplains of the trinity river and its tributaries.**
 - Continue cooperative efforts with Streams and Valleys, Inc., the Tarrant Regional Water District, Tarrant County and the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and partner municipalities.
 - Understand the boundaries of public open space managed by the Tarrant Regional Water District and investigate the opportunities for inclusion in City-wide open space.
- 4 Provide new parkland and facilities to meet park, recreation, and open space needs when developing areas of the city.**
 - Increase neighborhood and community park acreage from 5.9 acres per 1,000 persons to 6.25 acres per 1,000 persons by 2025, concentrating on under-served areas throughout the city.
 - Conduct an assessment of the current trail system, and identify areas for connectivity and expansion.
- 5 Preserve and enhance the city's natural, historical, and cultural developed resources.**
 - Implement current park master plans that address the preservation and restoration of natural open spaces: Northwest Community Park, Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge, Tandy Hills and Stratford Park Natural Areas, and Overton and Foster Parks.
 - Implement current park master plans that address the preservation and restoration of historic and cultural landscapes including the following park facilities: Log Cabin Village, Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Rockwood Golf Course, Heritage Plaza, the Fort Worth Zoo and Lake Worth.
- 6 Build and enhance community partnerships to deliver quality services and facilities.**
 - Seek partnerships for cooperative facility use and development with Independent School Districts, other governmental entities and non-profit agencies serving the City of Fort Worth to expand recreational programs and community services opportunities.
 - Continue to work with the Independent School Districts to avoid duplication of park and recreational facilities; and utilize shared facility agreements for park sites, athletic facilities, educational facilities and services, and transportation.
 - Reaffirm existing partnerships for cooperative facility use and development with Independent School Districts, other governmental entities and non-profit agencies serving the City of Fort Worth.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES - OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

1 Identify, then acquire or protect, the 20 most high-priority natural areas in Fort Worth.

- Work with Streams & Valleys, Inc., the North Central Texas Council of Governments, Tarrant Regional Water District, the Park & Recreation Department, stakeholder partners, and the Trust for Public Land to identify and consider priority areas for conservation.
- Review City-owned vacant lands for inclusion in the Program prior to sale.
- Prioritize open space for acquisition according to the program criteria: Recreation — Community Health — Flood Control — Equitable Access to Natural Space — Economic Development — Ecosystem Preservation — Stream, River, and Lake Health.
- Promote the Mayor and City Council's strategic goals.

PARK & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

POLICIES

- Work with local, state, and federal organizations to provide coordinated community services and a City park system that is effectively managed and conserves and protects City resources.
- Develop attractive and secure park, recreation, open space, and community service facilities that are accessible to all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, income, sexual orientation, or physical ability.
- Actively promote citizen involvement in determining park, recreation, and open space needs and desires of the community.
- Provide parkland in areas of the City that are currently deficient.
- Seek the means to develop and support a system of urban parks and open space that link neighborhoods to growth centers, as well as other park, recreation, and community facilities.
- Pursue implementation of the *Confluence: The Trinity River Strategic Master Plan* in cooperation with Streams and Valleys, Inc., the Tarrant Regional Water District, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
- Seek grants and other non-City funding resources for riparian buffer conservation, park development, including bike trail linkages and other projects.
- Pursue implementation of the *Park, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan*, and *The 2020 Update*.
- Pursue implementation of the *Fort Worth Aquatics Master Plan*.

STRATEGIES

- Recognize the importance of urban parks and plazas to the success of central city redevelopment efforts, and to the creation of attractive and vibrant transit-oriented development areas, and support development of urban parks and plazas in these areas.
- Support implementation of the park, trail, and open space recommendations of the Lake Worth Vision Plan.
- Annually review services which may be handled by other agencies or groups without adversely affecting service levels.
- Improve and enhance the role Fort Worth's significant park facilities play in tourism and educational opportunities.
- Continue partnership with Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD), Trinity River Authority (TRA), and the Trinity River Vision Authority.
- The Park & Recreation Department will continue to partner with Tarrant Regional Water District (TRWD) and work with the City's Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW) to implement trail construction that respects goals of the whole city and the Active Transportation Plan.
- The Park & Recreation Department will continue to work with the Open Space Conservation Program to jointly look at land for park or conservation uses utilizing the established parameters for land acquisition or preservation.

OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PROGRAM

STRATEGIES

- Prioritize open space in an objective way that serves the community in the most impactful way.
- Protect riparian corridors as natural buffers to reduce erosion, filter pollutants and provide stormwater conveyance and storage.
- Preserve endangered and threatened natural ecosystems, as well as the habitats of endangered and threatened species.
- Create and enhance trail connectivity to provide recreation opportunities, especially trails identified in the Active Transportation Plan.
- Collaborate with partners and pursue appropriate grant opportunities to leverage open space funding.
- Encourage sustainable development and help maintain an attractive and livable city.
- Provide access to natural areas and recreation in underserved communities.
- Collaborate with other city departments to acquire open space that achieves multiple objectives
- Preserve mature trees to help the air filtering process and to reduce the ambient outdoor temperature in summertime.
- Consult the adopted Lake Worth Vision Plan and Greenprint for guidance on high priority areas for land acquisition and conservation around Lake Worth.
- In accordance with the Lake Arlington Master Plan, support land acquisition and conservation along the Fort Worth side of Lake Arlington to establish a publicly accessible shoreline
- Encourage the preservation of publicly accessible natural landscape by retaining trees, natural drainage ways, and unique vistas.
- Promote the clustering of new residential development or construction of high density residential development by preserving publicly accessible open space such as: floodplains, riparian buffers, steep slopes, wooded areas, prairies, special habitat areas, and unique views.
- Protect land needed for natural stormwater conveyance and detention, riparian buffer protection, and linear greenways with hike & bike trail alignments.
- Support the expansion of a regional public hike & bike trail system through open space acquisition.
- Promote a connected system of pathways within floodplains, riparian buffers, and other open space corridors.
- Support innovative development projects that showcase low-impact development practices, conserve riparian buffers, and extend greenway networks with hike/bike trails.
- Encourage the use of conservation easements to protect high priority natural areas.