

PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS SUBCOMMITTEE

HONOR AWARD

PLANNING CATEGORY

Honor Award

Beltway 8 Regional Park Master Plan, Phase I Design

Harris County Precinct 2
Asakura Robinson Company LLC
Margaret Robinson, ASLA

Budget - \$4,000,000 Construction budget for Phase I
Size: 230 acres

Beltway 8 Regional Master Plan is a joint project led by Harris County Precinct 2 Parks Department and Harris County Flood Control District. More than 50% of the 230-acre park is located within an existing detention basin, allowing dual-use of that facility. An educational theme of “Education in Motion” is featured throughout. The design incorporates sustainable construction methods, materials, energy, and water efficient fixtures and reduces life-cycle maintenance cost of park facilities. The Beltway 8 park plan achieved a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) project process certification through the US Green Building Council.

The Beltway 8 Regional Park project features sports fields (soccer, football, and baseball) and an Xtreme Park: skate park, BMX dirt track, climbing/sliding area, adventure playground, splash park, amphitheater, basketball courts, tennis courts, low-water planting, restrooms/meeting space building, and parking. Preservation and enhancement, including signage, are planned for existing wetlands and forested areas, along with trails.

The park is particularly designed as a safe-haven for teenagers; the “lost population,” who are generally overlooked in parks design.

Award Achieves Regional Excellence by:

- Thorough and complete design;
- Involvement of community, especially teenagers, in the design process;
- Listening to and meeting the needs of the community at large;
- Unique and innovative facility (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification).

For further information on the project, please contact Margaret Robinson, Asakura Robinson, at margaret@asakurarobinson.com or 713-337-5830.

Outstanding Contributions to the Region in Planning

The Woodlands Integrated Forest Management Plan

The Woodlands Community Service Corporation – Parks and Recreation
Matt Taylor

Budget - \$35,000
Size: 27,000 acres

The Woodlands Integrated Forest Management Plan is a comprehensive plan to protect, conserve, and manage our native ecosystem formed through a consortium of 25 stakeholders in The Woodlands community. It combines elements of forestry, wildlife, natural resources conservation, community involvement, and education into a plan, which will perpetuate the forest for years to come. Key elements include an inventory of selected sites (parks, reserved open space reserves, medians, woodlots); prioritization of needs; generation of recommendations; community awareness initiatives, including schools, events, groups and individuals; plus a management plan for Hazard Tree Inventory and Assessment, Insect/Disease Monitoring, Invasive Vines and Chinese Tallow removal, culminating in a mapped-out forest management plan.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Unique plan for preservation of forest canopy;
- Model of forest care applicable to the entire region;
- Integration of elements of forestry, wildlife resources conservation with community involvement.

For additional information on the project, please contact Matt Taylor, The Woodlands Community Service Corporation at rmtaylor@catw-tx.org 281-210-3900.

Brazos River Corridor Master Plan

City of Sugar Land Parks Department
Kimberly Terrel

Budget – Undetermined
Size: 3,600 acres

The Brazos River Corridor Master Plan proposes to develop a linear park along a 9-mile stretch of the Brazos River, which runs through the City of Sugar Land. The project plan proposes to

develop conservation and recreational opportunities on the 3,600-acre floodway adjacent to both sides of the river. Public use includes flood control, recreation, preservation, and enhancement of the natural environment, and trails as alternative forms of transportation. All land was received through donation from the State of Texas or developers in the area.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Unique involvement of developers in land acquisition;
- Multifaceted master plan;
- Dual-use area for flood control and recreation.

For further information on the project, please contact Kimberly Terrell, City of Sugar Land at kterrell@sugarlandtx.gov or 281-275-2882.

Armand Bayou Watershed Greenprint

Trust for Public Land
Linda Shead

Budget: \$91,000
Size: 39,822 acres

The goal of the Armand Bayou Watershed Greenprint is to focus on the use of land conservation to meet community needs in three phases: (1) Watershed Assessment, (2) Stewardship Exchange, and (3) Implementation. The Greenprint demonstrates effective public involvement and innovatively marries community-developed conservation priorities with the use of scientific data in a geographic information system (GIS) database. A third objective of the project was to develop and implement an action plan for accomplishing the land conservation strategies.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Concept is a fabulous integrated process;
- Can be implemented on a region-wide basis;
- Level of community involvement.

For additional information on the project contact Linda Shead, Trust for Public Land, at Linda.shead@tpl.org or 713-266-7200.

PROJECT CATEGORY

Honor Award

Arthur Storey Stormwater Detention Basin and Park

Harris County Flood Control District
Fred Garcia

Budget: \$50 million
Size: 220 acres

The Arthur Storey Stormwater Park Detention Basin serves two valuable purposes: reduces flooding risks and simultaneously serves as a stellar park with state-of-the-art recreational features. It functions as a fun and functional stretch of greenway space in the sprawling suburbia of Harris County. Flood mitigation design features plus trails and ponds at the site complement other natural features, including a "vast grove of trees and wetlands that attract roseate spoonbills, egrets, songbirds, and other migratory waterfowl. The facility was the first of its kind in the county to cement a partnership between the Harris County Flood Control District and Harris County (Precinct 3), and exemplifies "how government partnerships not only protect the public, but improve quality of life" in the region.

Award Achieves Regional Excellence by:

- Changing the way flood control is planned and designed, along with the uses of flood control properties;
- A watershed project that integrates flood control, parks and natural areas;
- Providing essential open space for a population-dense part of the county;
- Exemplary inter-governmental partnership.

For further information on the project, please contact Fred Garcia, Harris County Flood Control District at fred.garcia@hcfcd.org or 713-684-4172.

Honor Award

Sabine-to Bagby Promenade

Buffalo Bayou Partnership
Trudi Smith

Budget: \$15 million
Size: 23 acres

The Sabine-to-Bagby Promenade is a new 23-acre segment of the Buffalo Bayou Walk in downtown Houston. The project was the result of an historic public/private partnership to

revitalize downtown's urban waterfront. It "breathes new life into the already bustling schedule of activities on Buffalo Bayou and will pave the way for community events such as live music events, canoe trips, boat rentals, hikes, and educational family events... it has taken a neglected segment of the bayou and transformed it into an attractive and exciting gateway to downtown Houston."

Award Achieves Regional Excellence by

- Public art extraordinaire;
- John Runnels' boat theme is highly innovative;
- Development of public/private philanthropic support partnership;
- Multi-textured rich solution to urban redevelopment.

For additional information on the project contact Trudi Smith, Buffalo Bayou Partnership, at tsmith@buffalobayou.org or 713-752-0314.

Outstanding Contributions to the Region in Projects

Armand Bayou Nature Center

Armand Bayou Nature Center
Mark Kramer

Budget: \$80,000 per year
Size: 650 acres of a 2000-acre park.

Armand Bayou Nature Center actively manages wetlands tall grass prairie habitat, which provides benefits including storm water detention, run-off purification, wildlife habitats, and recreation. More than 300 acres have been restored to natural prairie. Management techniques include prescribed burning, mowing, removal of invasive species (Chinese tallow trees), reintroduction of important plant species, and monitoring of plants and animals. Volunteers are actively recruited to participate in management, stewardship, and educational activities.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Superior environmental and water quality restoration;
- Model for tall grass prairie reclamation and management;
- Intense volunteer effort encouraged by great use of their time and talents.

For further information, please contact Mark Kramer, Armand Bayou Nature Center at mark@abnc.org or 281-474-2551 ext. 15.

Harris County Precinct 3 Barker Reservoir Trails

Harris County Improvement District #4 (Energy Corridor)

Clark Martinson

Budget: \$650,000

Size: 4.5 miles

The 4.5-mile "Barker Reservoir Trail" connects hike and bike trails in the West Houston and Katy area to the Energy Corridor via the Terry Hershey and George Bush Park shared-use trails. It is paved and runs along the perimeter of the Barker Reservoir Dam. The trail provides a safe off-road connection from the growing subdivisions west of the Energy Corridor to the area's employment centers. Innovative community involvement included participation of a large number of homeowner associations, MUD districts, businesses, fitness and bike clubs, private individuals, corporate sponsors, Houston Parks Board, energy and oil and gas companies, and the US Army Corp of Engineers. It serves as a regional model for planning, consensus building, and execution of parks and natural area projects.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Regional model for planning, consensus building, and execution for linkage of neighborhoods to workplaces with trails in regional parks;
- Community initiative with great involvement of public, private and community partners;
- Most effective cost/benefit project - created a 20-mile network of trails by constructing a strategic 4.5 mile link for \$650,000.

For more information on the project contact Clark Martinson, Energy Corridor, at cmartinson@energycorridor.org or 281-759-3800.

Park People's Greenways Trails Map: Greater Houston-Harris County

The Park People

Diane Schenke

Budget: \$49,000

Size: Geographic area within Harris County

The Park People's Greenways Trails Map identifies every park over 5 acres in the Harris County area, all-off road or "greenway" trails within the county, and all proposed trails slated to begin construction within the next 18 months. The Trails map brings together parks and trails within numerous political subdivisions into one easy-to-use and accessible map. It also suggests future trails to act as connectors between parks.

Over 75,000 copies of the map were distributed in 2006 at HEB and Academy stores. A second printing is due in early 2007, which will include canoe trails.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Very useful tool, "We should have always had this;"
- Well received by the community;
- Brought together diverse groups to share trail information.

For additional information contact Diane Schenke, The Park People at dschenke@parkpeople.org or 713-942-7275.

E. R. and Ann Taylor Park

Clark Condon Associates, Inc
Renette Ticer

Budget: \$500,000
Size: 28 acres

The E.R. and Ann Taylor Park was developed on land containing the homestead of a confederate veteran and a slave who raised six children together, ran a cattle and livestock operation, and found Pierce Junction, one of the first oil and gas fields in Harris County. The Texas Historical Commission has approved the subject marker for the site. The land is home to wildlife and numerous plant species and has three ecosystems - wetland, prairie, and forest. Amenities include nature trails, boardwalks, wildlife viewing areas, a pavilion and parking. It is a passive park, a place of quiet beauty and reflection where visitors enjoy nature and the rich history of the Taylor family.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Preservation of an historical site through conservation of natural areas, which included three ecosystems;
- Excellent use of donated parcel;
- Context-sensitive project design.

For additional information on the project contact Renette Ticer at rticer@clarkcondon.com or 713-871-1414.

Wussow Park and CityView Park

Greater Greenspoint Redevelopment Authority
Chris Lopez

Budget: \$8 million
Size: Wussow Park - 11.4 acres, CityView Park - 3 acres

Wussow and CityView Parks are the redevelopment of land from unusable space - blighted apartment complexes - to a community gathering place, thereby improving the quality of life for residents. Fourteen acres of concrete, asphalt, and building materials, were removed from a densely populated area, thus reducing impervious cover with potentially harmful contaminants. In their place, Wussow Park has sand volleyball courts, playground, sprayground water play area, a baseball/soccer field, hike and bike trail along Greens Bayou, and four pavilions. CityView Park provides a serene setting surrounded by trees and provides a pavilion for community events. More than 200 trees were planted in this neighborhood parks project.

Applicant is recognized for excellence by:

- Creation of park space out of concrete and abandoned buildings
- Providing much needed community open space;
- Catalyst for economic development.

For additional information on the project contact Chris Lopez, Greater Greenspoint Development Authority at clopez@greenspoint.org or 281-874-2148.

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