

H-GAC Parks & Natural Areas Awards

Summary of 2011 Applications

On the Ground Project - Over \$500 K **Lake Houston Wilderness Park Phase I** **Improvements**

City of Houston

Phase 1 improves access to a nearly 5,000-acre, mostly undeveloped park. Improvements include overnight use facilities such as cabins, tent platforms, camping areas, and restrooms and shower facilities; new infrastructure such as water, wastewater, electrical service, road system, and trails; recreational amenities such as a lake, canoe/kayak launches into Peach and Caney Creeks; and a new park entry. All construction is within a small, active use area to conserve the natural resources of the park. Phase 1 also includes a habitat improvement project that addresses the ecological needs of the property, namely forest thinning to create a more diverse forest of uneven age.

Over \$500K



Mandolin Gardens **Harris County - MUD 230**

Mandolin Gardens Park, an 11 acre oasis in the middle of the community, was designed by Talley Landscape Architects in collaboration with Dannenbaum Engineers. TLA created a design that rejuvenated two connected detention basins, then overlaid park amenities of 2 miles of fully accessible trails, plazas and overlooks. A chemical free, functioning ecosystem has been attained through bio-augmentation of the soils, use of native and naturalized plant materials for erosion control, color, wildlife food and habitat. Rather than discharging treated effluent into the drainage ditch and Cypress Creek, the District is re-routing their reclaimed water for irrigation and filling the lake.

Over \$500K



Market Square Park

City of Houston

A granite band running through the park traces the outline of the original city hall foundation, and plaques on columns document the site's rich history in downtown Houston. A kiosk serves diners under trees or under a trellis over an elevated terrace that doubles as a stage. Lawn surrounded by mature Oaks, dog runs with water features and boulders, fountains and public art, flowers and plantings to attract butterflies, dragonflies and birds, a play sculpture of a dog carved from a hundred year-old Live Oak and a commemorative garden are additional key elements.

Over \$500K



Rosemont Bridge

City of Houston

The Rosemont Bridge spans 780 linear feet of concrete and steel providing connections to nearby neighborhoods and access to Buffalo Bayou while creating a new tree-top view of Houston's downtown skyscrapers. The Bridge gives park users convenient access to Spotts Park, Cleveland Park and Memorial Drive by connecting recently completed hike and bike trails on the north side of Memorial Drive with existing Buffalo Bayou trails systems. The project also includes 10-foot-wide concrete trails that connect adjacent neighborhoods to area parks and greenbelts along the bayou, trees, shrubs, vines, solid sod, and seed installation.

Over \$500K



Memorial Park – Outer Loop

City of Houston

As part of the implementation of the Memorial Park Master Plan approved by Houston City Council in 2004, Memorial Park Conservancy (MPC), in cooperation with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD), has completed Phase 1 of the Outer Loop Trail. This accomplishment was the result of several years of raising funds (almost \$1MM) from individuals and private foundations to pay for the cost of engaging architects and construction contractors. MPC engaged SWA Group for architectural services and D. L. Meacham, L.P. for the construction work. The trail was completed and formally opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 16, 2011 with the Mayor and City Council members.

Over \$500K



On the Ground Project - Under \$500K

Clear Lake Forest Park Living Shoreline

Galveston Bay Foundation

“Living Shorelines” are shoreline management options that provide erosion control benefits while working with nature to enhance shoreline habitats. GBF’s Living Shorelines program recently completed one of its most prominent projects at Clear Lake Forest Park on Mud Lake. Construction began in May 2011, and resulted in 650 feet of low-elevation rock breakwater 30 feet out from the existing hard shoreline. Clean fill was placed between the breakwater and the shoreline to raise elevations to levels that support the establishment of marsh habitat. Native smooth cordgrass was transplanted to the project site in June by community and other local volunteers.

Under \$500K



Edible Arbor Trail **City of Missouri City**

Under \$500K

The Edible Arbor Trail is an innovative project that features several groves of trees that produce fruits and nuts that people can eat. The Edible Arbor Trail is located adjacent to the Missouri City section of Oyster Creek Trail, which runs through the center of Missouri City. Each grove of trees entails 10 trees of like species and an interpretive sign displaying harvest details about the trees and the sponsor logo. The first of three phases (5 groves) was completed in the winter of 2010-2011. Ten more groves are planned for the next two planting seasons, which will spread over 1.25 miles of trail.



“Shopping Cart Graveyard” Project **Bayou Preservation Association**

Under \$500K

In keeping with its mission to protect and restore our waterways, the Bayou Preservation Association (BPA) undertook a major clean-up/removal project the week of February 28, 2011, building on work that had been initiated by Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) in the fall of 2010.



Where the Bering drainage ditch (Bering Ditch) flows into Buffalo Bayou east of Voss Road and north of Woodway Drive, shopping carts gather in a “graveyard” where some have been buried since the mid-1990s or longer. The carts were either tossed or swept into the drainage ditch on the densely populated southwest side of Houston and made their way down to the bayou with storm water runoff, creating visual blight, impeding water flow and presenting a hazard to paddlers who canoe or kayak on Buffalo Bayou. A 26-mile portion of Buffalo Bayou was designated an official state paddling trail by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in 2009.

Policy Tools

Three for Trees City of Missouri City

The Three for Trees promotion was established in 2011, through a partnership between the Missouri City Parks Department and Quail Valley Golf Course, as a means to create a continuous, long-term funding mechanism for tree planting and care in Missouri City. When golfers and enthusiasts purchase three rounds of golf at the Quail Valley Golf Course, the Three for Trees promotion gives them a 20% overall discount and a \$10 donation is made towards tree planting and care. These funds are then split evenly between the two political entities and used exclusively for tree care.

Policy Tools



Three for Trees

Make a donation* of \$10 to tree care and receive a discounted golf rate!

For every Three for Trees package purchased at the Quail Valley Golf Course, \$10 will go towards tree care and planting on Quail Valley Golf Course properties and Missouri City parks. Three for Trees packages are discounted at 20% off!

*Donations are not tax deductible.

Three for Trees Program Code**	Net Payment	Resident
3x Quail	\$30.00	\$24.00
1x Quail (Missouri City)	\$10.00	\$10.00
2x Quail (Missouri City)	\$11.00	\$10.00
3x Quail (Missouri City)	\$13.00	\$12.00

**Major credit cards accepted.

Quail Valley Golf Course
288 W. 83rd St.
MissouriCity.com

MISSOURI CITY
TEXAS

Missouri City Parks & Recreation
288 W. 83rd St.
www.missouricity.org

Comprehensive Streetscape Policy City of Sugar Land

As the City's street network continues to grow, the need to ensure standards for landscaping, lighting, entryways, tree replacement, ROW use, irrigation management, screen walls, signalization, and maintenance becomes more evident. This policy gives guidance to the construction and maintenance of the City's streetscapes as well as partnering with other entities that maintain the City's streetscapes. This streetscape policy will not only help beautify thoroughfares but also reduce the amount of impermeable surfaces associated with certain road projects.

Policy Tools



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Planning

Playbook 2020 - The Strategic Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Baytown *City of Baytown and Halff Associates Inc.*

Playbook 2020 is the 10-year roadmap for the future of Baytown's parks. The plan is extensive and covers every aspect of the system from park facility needs, to trails, to enhancement of the waterfront and the unique Baytown Nature Center. The plan sections symbolically recall a playbook, including "Where We Play Today" (Inventory), "A Whole New Ballgame" (Needs Assessment) and "Keeping Your Eye on the Ball" (Recommendations). All plan elements are specifically targeted to Baytown's needs. The plan incorporates extensive public input, with feedback from almost 1,500 residents, a very high input level. The actualization of the master plan will provide needed additional quality of life amenities to this rapidly growing community.

Planning



Alden Bridge Sports Park- Community Garden/ Veggie Village Garden *The Woodlands Township*

The Woodlands Township's newest Community Garden is located in the Alden Bridge Sports Park, conveniently located off of Highway 242. Fifty-one new raised-bed garden plots were designed and built, along with irrigation lines, soil, an eight-foot high chain link fence, concrete walks and pad access for individuals with disabilities. In addition, an adjacent thirty-six-bed donation garden, called Veggie Village, an arm of Interfaith of The Woodlands, was also designed to create an integrated theme and look. Gardening enhances The Woodlands living experience for many residents and encompasses the "living with nature" ethos of the community.

Planning



Wetland Reforestation Projects
MUD 55 Regional Basin and Overlook at Heritage Park

With increased awareness of the benefits that green space provides, the Board of HC MUD 55 decided to entrust Talley Landscape Architects (TLA) with the conversion of their detention facility into a Regional Park. They embraced a design that reconfigures their 25-acre Regional Detention Facility from a flat-bottom, grass-lined, rectilinear basin into a multi-use Regional Recreation Facility. The new park will include trails, fishing piers, plazas, a labyrinth, bridges, waterfalls, and fountains. The park shall provide improvements that enhance quality of life for the District's residents and educate them on the benefits of a functioning ecosystem.

Planning



Greens Bayou Canoe Launch Park
Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition

The Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition is working with the Houston Parks Board to develop the first canoe launch on Greens Bayou and a nine-mile canoe trail. The launch site will be located at Dwight Street and Greens Bayou Drive. Canoeing and kayaking are popular activities along Houston's bayous, including Greens Bayou, where avid canoers travel a nine-mile stretch from below Brock Park to Greens Bayou Park. The plan also calls for the removal of invasive plants in the area and features an educational component that teaches students and residents about the natural habitat. GBCC has completed the design and fundraising stage for this project.

Planning



Buffalo Bayou Park – Shepherd to Sabine Master Plan

Buffalo Bayou Partnership

As one of Houston’s most visible and popular parks, Buffalo Bayou from Shepherd Drive to the Sabine Street Bridge is an important part of our City’s urban green space system. While lush and green at first glance, the 158-acre park is in fact filled with invasive species, overgrown, vine-infested vegetation and non-native trees.

Buffalo Bayou Partnership has recently created a Master Plan for this area west of downtown in a \$56-million enhancement. Amenities will include natural landscaping, footpaths (in addition to hike and bike trails), trail lighting, water features, pedestrian bridges and public art. The park will be one of Houston’s most transformative green space projects ever. The comprehensive park enhancements are slated to begin in mid-2012 with completion in mid-2015.

Planning



Memorial Park Planned Forestry Conservation & Management Program Demonstration Project

City of Houston

The Memorial Park forest is in serious decline and a forestry management program needs to be implemented to ensure a strong and healthy forest. MPC and HPARD will begin to develop a long term forest management plan by undertaking a relatively small Demonstration Project. This will allow MPC, HPARD and Park users and neighbors, and the general public to observe the process, determine its effectiveness, and make adjustments as needed. Machinery will be used to remove the invasive species in a demonstration area with mulching on site and treatment of cut areas with carefully planned herbicide applications.

Planning



Planning Score



Community Roots Project

City of Missouri City

The Community Roots Project was an experiment in bringing public participation into all aspects of tree planting in neighborhood parks. The idea was hatched by the Forestry Division to improve natural resource stewardship in higher risk Missouri City Parks, by inviting neighborhood residents and park patrons into the inventory, planning, and implementation phases of a tree planting project. Two parks were chosen for this project, and residents were asked to share their vision for trees in the parks, with Parks Department staff, and return to help plant their vision later in the year. Based on the participants' ideas, the City Forester developed a landscape plan that meshed community desires and parks management strategies. The result was tremendous, in January & February 2011, 130 volunteers helped to plant a total of 127 trees in two parks. This was the largest volunteer tree planting in our city's history, and several local civic organizations and area urban foresters helped provide education and support for the volunteers. Participants also received gifts and plants for their home gardens.

Planning



WaterSmart Park

City of League City

This 3-acre park is designed to showcase water conservation and water quality techniques to residents and developers. The components of this park have been designed to lessen stress on city water systems, lower water consumption, recycle existing water and develop trends to filter run off. This park will also be part of water quality research by Texas Sea Grant and Texas AgriLife Extension, part of the Texas A&M University System.

Planning



The City of League City Parks and Cultural Services department is submitting the conceptual design of our WaterSmart Park for the Planning Process category. The City of League City has been awarded a Clean Water Act Section 319(h) grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) through the Non-Profit Source Program and a grant from the Galveston Bay Estuary Program. The WaterSmart Park designs have been approved to be completed by TBG Partners, Inc. and will serve as a model to surrounding communities and developers to provide working techniques for water conservation and natural filtration. Construction is slated for fiscal year 2011.