



City of Abilene

Planning and Zoning Commission Agenda

Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission of City of Abilene to be held on May 2, 2023, at 1:30 p.m., at City Hall, 555 Walnut Street, Council Chambers, Abilene, Texas, for the purpose of considering the following agenda items.

CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION

MINUTES

1. **Minutes:** Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on Minutes from the Regular Meeting Held on April 4, 2023

ZONING

Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on the following Zoning Cases:

2. **HOZ-2023-01:** Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on A Request From Third And Pine, LP To Apply Historic Overlay Zoning To Approximately .16 Acres Zoned Central Business (CB). Located At 302 Pine Street. Legal Description Being Lot 11-12, Block 21, Original Town Abilene, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas. **(Mason Teegardin)**
3. **Z-2023-07:** Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on A Request From Coffee Momma LLC To Change Zoning From PDD-128 To General Retail. Located At 701 S. Judge Ely Blvd. Legal Description Being Lot 1, Block 8, East Horizon Section 2, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas. **(Clarissa Ivey)**
4. **Z-2023-11:** Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on A Request From Bridgestone Bandag, LLC To Change Zoning From Light Industrial To Heavy Industrial. Located At 4962 FM 18 Legal Description Being 22.43 Acres Of The Southeast Quarter Of Survey 44 Blind Asylum Lands, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas. **(Clarissa Ivey)**
5. **Z-2023-13:** Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on A Request From Dennis Ray Dunnam II And Mollie Victoria Dunnam To Change Zoning From Agricultural Open (AO) And General Commercial (GC) To General Commercial. Located At 411 ES 11th Street. Legal Description Being Lot 1 And The West Half Of Lot 2 Of The Browne-Hall-Meyer-Fredeck Subdivision Of Lot 1, Block 211 Of The Original Town Of Abilene, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas. **(Adam Holland)**

AGENDA ITEMS

6. **Parks Master Plan:** Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on **(Lesli Andrews)**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Planning & Zoning Commission of the City of Abilene reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed below, as authorized by the noted Texas Government Code Sections:

- 551.071 Consultation with Attorney

ADJOURNMENT

Notice

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Abilene will provide for reasonable accommodations for persons attending meetings. To better serve you, requests should be received forty-eight (48) hours prior to scheduled meetings. Please contact the City Secretary's Office at 325-676-6208. Telecommunication device for the deaf is 325-676-6360.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify the above meeting notice was posted on the bulletin board at the City Hall of the City of Abilene, Texas, on the 28th day of April, 2023, at 3:15 p.m.

Shawna Atkinson, City Secretary



Planning and Zoning Commission MINUTES

The Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Abilene, Texas met in a Regular Meeting on April 4, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. at City Hall, 555 Walnut Street, Council Chambers, Abilene, Texas

Commissioners Present:

Mr. Clint Rosenbaum, Chairman	Rev. Iziar Lankford, Secretary
Mr. Brad Benham, Chairman Pro Tem	Ms. Shawnte' Fleming
Mr. Mitch Barnett	Mr. Kevin Halliburton
Ms. Alex Russell, Sergeant-at-Arms	

Staff Present:

Mr. Michael Rice, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Randy Anderson, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services
Ms. Kelley Messer, First Assistant City Attorney
Ms. Clarissa Ivey, Planner I
Ms. Mason Teegardin, Planner I
Ms. Melissa Farr, Executive Assistant

Others Present:

Mr. Tal Fillingim	Mr. Espen Johansen	Mr. Andy Schonert
Mr. Chris Watola	Mr. Sam Chase	Ms. Diane Cole
Mr. Calvin Donaghey	Ms. Gail Donaghey	

The Planning and Zoning Commission convened in a regular meeting and was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

INVOCATION

Reverend Lankford delivered the invocation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Mr. Rosenbaum opened the public hearing. Seeing no one present and desiring to be heard, the public hearing was closed. Mr. Benham moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, which was held on March 7, 2023. Reverend Lankford seconded the motion.

The motion to **approve** prevailed by the following vote:

AYES: Barnett, Benham, Russell, Halliburton, Lankford, Fleming, Rosenbaum

NAYS: None

PLATS

FP-0422: Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on Waterside at Cedar Creek, Sections 1 and 2

Ms. Clarissa Ivey presented the proposed plats. Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

- City staff must be furnished with a title opinion or title commitment letter issued by a title insurance company confirming ownership of the properties.
- All public improvements must be completed in accordance with approved plans and inspected for acceptance or the public works department must be furnished with a financial guarantee in order to secure the obligations of all public improvements prior to recording.

Mr. Rosenbaum opened the public hearing. Seeing no one present and desiring to be heard, the public hearing was closed.

Ms. Russell made the motion to approve the proposed plats as presented, with conditions. Ms. Fleming seconded the motion. The motion to **approve** prevailed by the following vote:

AYES: Barnett, Benham, Russell, Halliburton, Lankford, Fleming, Rosenbaum

NAYS: None

ZONING

Z-2023-09: Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on a request Rolling Plains EV Stations LLC to change zoning of approximately 826 acres of land from Agricultural Open to Planned Development (PD-181). Located at 5502 Spinks Rd. Legal description being Approximately 285.9 acres out of Section 53 and 54, Block 16, T.&P. RR. Company Surveys, 191.18 acres of Section 55, Block 16, T.&P. RR. Company Surveys, 305.95 Acres of Section 24, W. W. Sills Survey, and Lots 9 and 10, Block 16, Meadow Valley Estates, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas.

Mr. Randal Anderson presented this request. The subject property automatically zoned Agriculture Open Space (AO) when it was annexed in 2022. The purpose of this request is to establish the permanent zoning of the subject property and to develop and implement new

green-based technology to result in a positive impact the general welfare of society by reducing greenhouse gas, developing green energy solutions, and producing green energy.

The applicant was recruited by the Development Corporation of Abilene (DCOA) for green-energy and cryptocurrency production, with an electric substation, charging station, and potential corporate headquarters. The predominant use would be light industrial, with limited heavy industrial uses.

Mr. Rosenbaum opened the public hearing. Mr. Andy Schonert spoke in favor saying this Lancium uses electrolysis in a closed space. The facilities are “clean campuses.” He remarked that working with the community and being a good neighbor is important. His company would welcome open house events and other outreach to share their processes and environment. Currently, the main focus is on the green hydrogen piece.

Mr. Espen Johansen asked for clarification about the Commission asking permission to take another look at this application. An approval with a condition was discussed for this specific meeting. Mr. Johansen reiterated that a detailed concept plan is not currently available. Lancium would partner with someone to assist with the plans, as they do not plan to build ammonium sites on their own.

Discussion among the commissioners centered around American Electric Power (AEP) property being included in this planned development. Concern was expressed about not having written documentation from AEP stating their agreement to the zoning change. Mr. Rice spoke to ensure everyone that AEP is aware of this project.

Commissioners also deliberated about the zoning recommendations and future land use. The applicant was asked about the 200-foot buffer, and why they do not want it all around the property. Mr. Johansen stated there are no concerns of selling the land in the future, as that is not their intent.

Mr. Calvin Donaghey expressed his concern about the volume of potential noise and smells. He did not state opposition, but concern.

Mr. Espen Johansen answered questions about fencing. Lancium does not have plans to fence in the property, but they are building in stages.

Commissioners and Staff discussed the AEP owned property again. There was discomfort since this has not been done before. It was confirmed the AEP property is included in the PDD.

Property owners within a 200-foot radius were notified of this request. There were no (0) responses received in favor, with three (3) in opposition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval with conditions.

Reverend Lankford made the motion to approve this request with conditions. Mr. Barnett seconded the motion. The motion to **approve** prevailed by the following vote:

AYES: Barnett, Russell, Halliburton, Lankford, Fleming, Rosenbaum

NAYS: None

Z-2023-10: Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on a request from Bridgestone Bandag, LLC to change zoning from Agricultural Open to Heavy Industrial. Located at 4678 FM 18 Legal description being 41.8 acres of the southwest quarter of Survey 44 Blind Asylum Lands, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas.

Ms. Clarissa Ivey presented this request. The subject property was annexed in 1986 and automatically zoned Agricultural Open (AO). A non-conforming parking lot exists along portion of the eastern boundary line, its unknown when the parking lot was built, but technically the subject should have been rezoned as industrial to allow it on this site. The applicant now proposes to expand the parking lot further onto the subject site and is requesting rezoning for that purpose.

Mr. Rosenbaum opened the public hearing. Mr. Sam Chase spoke as the representative for Bridgestone.

Property owners within a 200-foot radius were notified of this request. One (1) response was received in favor, with none (0) in opposition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

Mr. Barnett made the motion to approve this request as presented. Ms. Russell seconded the motion. The motion to **approve** prevailed by the following vote:

AYES: Barnett, Russell, Halliburton, Lankford, Fleming, Rosenbaum

NAYS: None

Z-2023-12: Receive a Report, Hold a Discussion and Public Hearing, and Take Action on a request from KPLB LLC to amend the terms of PDD-155. More specifically this request is to change the base zoning of the north three hundred feet of this PD from Neighborhood Office to Neighborhood Retail. Located on the 4600 Block of Antilley Road. Legal description being lots 101 and 102, Block A and Lot 1 Block F, Antilley Road West Addition, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas.

Ms. Mason Teegardin presented this request. In 2016, Planned Development District Number 155 (PDD-155) was approved to allow for certain neighborhood office uses and single-family patio home residential use. The PD describes the northern three hundred feet (300') be governed by the terms and conditions of the Neighborhood Office (NO) zoning, except for

multi-family residential use shall not be allowed. The remainder of the PD is designated to be used as for Patio Home (PH).

The applicant proposes to amend PDD-155 by changing the base zoning of the northern three hundred feet (300') of PDD from Neighborhood Office (NO) to Neighborhood Retail (NR).

Mr. Rosenbaum opened the public hearing. Mr. Tal Fillingim stated the request to allow indoor retail. They request NR to provide more flexibility to prevent his client from having to return in the future with additional applications. He informed that both NO and NR were created for locations such as this. Seeing no one else desiring to be heard, the public hearing was closed.

Ms. Diane Cole was recognized as wanting to speak. Mr. Rosenbaum opened the public hearing again. She expressed her concern about the traffic on Antilley near schools and any distractions for students. Seeing no one else desiring to be heard, the public hearing was closed.

Property owners within a 200-foot radius were notified of this request. Two (2) responses were received in favor with two (2) in opposition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval

Mr. Halliburton made the motion to approve this request as presented. Mr. Barnett seconded the motion. The motion to **approve** prevailed by the following vote:

AYES: Barnett, Halliburton, Lankford, Fleming, Rosenbaum

NAYS: None

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Mr. Rosenbaum adjourned the meeting at 2:42 p.m.

APPROVED

Mr. Clint Rosenbaum, Chairman

HOZ-2023-01

STAFF REPORT



Scheduled Hearing(s)

Planning & Zoning Commission: May 2, 2023

City Council 1st Reading: May 11, 2023

City Council 2nd Reading: May 25, 2023

Applicant

Owners: Third and Pine, LP

Case Manager

Mason Teegardin, Planner

Request

Add Historic Overlay zoning on a property in Original Town Abilene.

Location

302 Pine Street, Lots 11-12, Block 21, Original Town Abilene.

Background

Built in 1932, the Grant Building is a 3-story commercial building in downtown Abilene. It was built by local entrepreneur James M. Radford to accommodate a W.T. Grant Co. store. The building retains significant integrity on the exterior with its original massing, masonry ornament, and original windows on the south elevation. Buff brick forms exterior walls with decorative brickwork and dentillated molding at the cornice of the building. Limestone forms a string course separating the first and second floors of the building. The parapet features a decorative limestone sign panel incised with "GRANT BUILDING"; topped by a cast stone palmette. Limestone also comprises lintels and sills of all windows, as well as bulkheads lining the south elevation storefronts. The brick and stone masonry are in good condition. The building is topped by a flat built up roof with ballast, which is surrounded by a shaped parapet at the east and south elevations, facing Pine and North 3rd Streets, respectively. Non-historic, aluminum-frame windows with tinted glass replace most historic windows in the original historic window openings.

A building permit was issued on 02/01/21 for interior renovations for office spaces, as well as sidewalk replacement. Work was completed on 09/20/22. The building on the subject property is included on the National Register of Historic Places as of December 2020 and is also listed on the Texas Historical Commission register.

Criteria Assessment

According to Section 2.3.4.4(c) Criteria for Designation. Historic Overlay Districts shall be established only if principal districts, conservation districts, areas, sites, structures, buildings, properties, or objects within the boundaries of a proposed zone exhibit any one or more of the following characteristics:

- 1. Possesses significance with respect to history, culture, architecture, archeology, paleontology, or as a natural site with a demonstrable cultural association;**

The subject building is significant at the local level for architecture, as a largely intact example of an early twentieth-century two-part commercial block masonry building.

2. **Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, regional, state, national, or international history;**
3. **Embodies characteristics distinct to a type, period, or method of construction or architecture;**

The Grant Building is locally and nationally significant as it is an intact example of American Movement Commercial Style.

4. **Is associated with the lives of persons significant in local, regional, state, national, or international history;**

James M. Radford built more than forty brick buildings in Abilene, including the Drake Hotel, Grace Hotel, and the subject building. He served as the vice president of the Abilene Cotton Oil Co., and owned several cattle ranches in Texas.

5. **Represents a distinctive and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood or of the city;**
6. **Represents the works of a master designer, architect, builder, or craftsman;**

The Grant Building was designed by prolific local architecture firm Nichol & Campbell. Nichol & Campbell designed numerous buildings in Abilene and surrounding West Texas from the late 1920s to the late 1950s. In addition to the subject building, the firm designed several other buildings in downtown Abilene, including the Waldrop Building (1927), Capital Motor Co. Building (1930), and the Radford Building (1929).

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval**.

Landmarks Commission Recommendation

The Landmarks Commission recommends **approval**.

LOCATION MAP

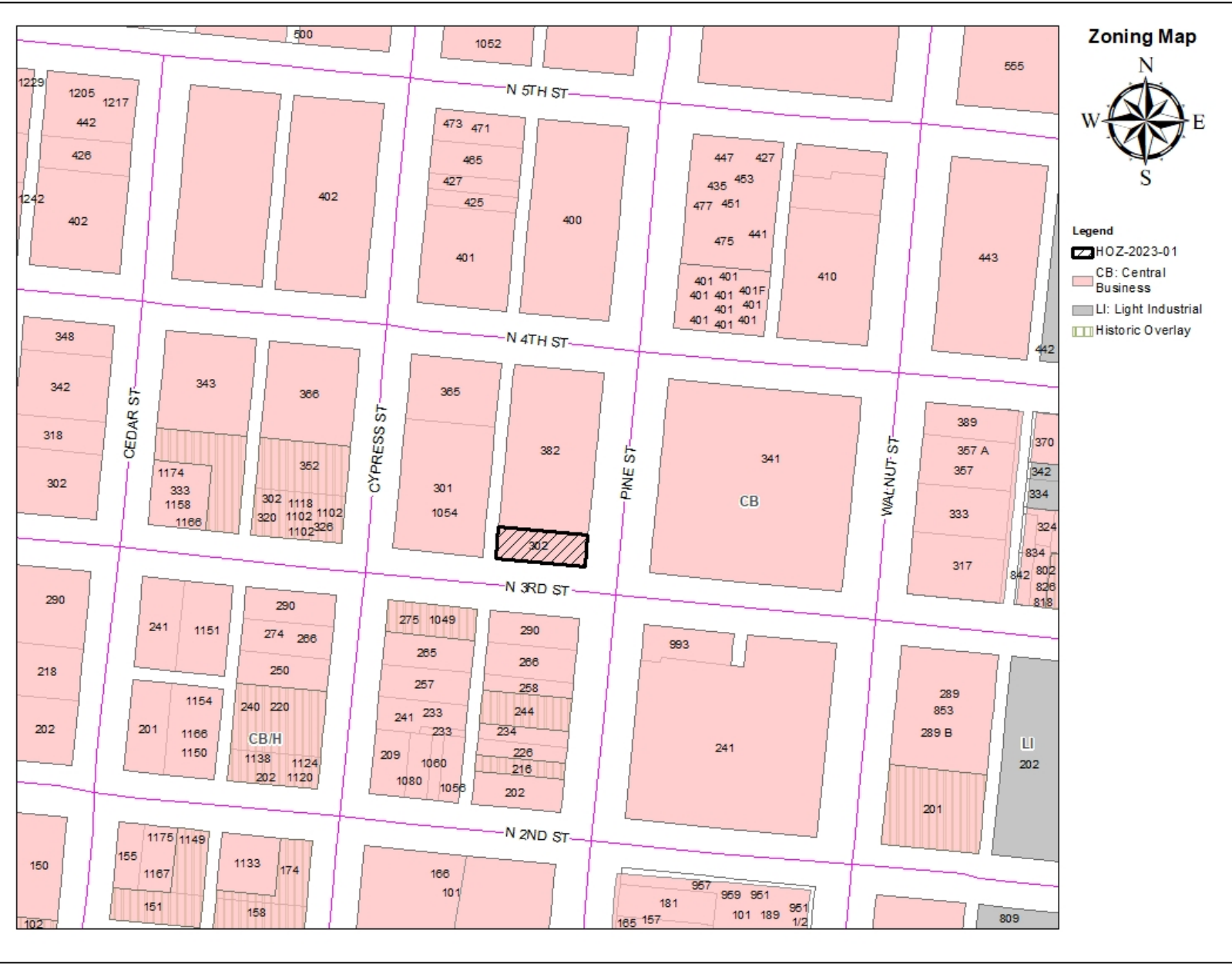


Location Map



- Legend**
- HOZ-2023-01
 - CourierParcels

ZONING MAP



NOTIFICATION

X – Not applicable

O – Opposed

F – In favor

Owner	Property ID	Situs	Response
HENDRICK MEDICAL EXEMPT	1008029	301 CYPRESS ST	
HENDRICK MEDICAL EXEMPT	1008029	1054 N 3RD ST	
STATE NATIONAL BANK	62620	275 CYPRESS ST	
STATE NATIONAL BANK	62620	1049 N 3RD ST	
ABILENE IND SCHOOL DISTRICT	60364	241 PINE ST	
STATE NATIONAL BANK	60502	290 PINE ST	
STATE NATIONAL BANK	62494	265 CYPRESS ST	
STATE NATIONAL BANK	60656	266 PINE ST	
FIRST NATIONAL BANK	76892	382 PINE ST	
STATE NATIONAL BANK	62356	257 CYPRESS ST	
THIRD AND PINE LP	10036	302 PINE ST	
UNITED STATES POSTAL	76760	341 PINE ST	
THIRD AND PINE LP	60220	993 N 3RD ST	
HENDRICK MEDICAL CENTER FOUNDATION	10739	365 CYPRESS ST	
ABILENE MAJESTIC LLC SERIES J	60795	258 PINE ST	



HISTORIC OVERLAY REQUEST

Case:	HOZ-2023-01
Owner:	Third and Pine, LP
Agent:	Tim Graves
Request:	Add Historic Overlay to a lot in Original Town Abilene.
Location:	302 Pine Street
Notification:	0 in Favor, 0 Opposed
Landmarks Commission:	April 25, 2023
Planning & Zoning:	May 2, 2023
City Council Hearing:	May 11, 2023 May, 25, 2023





HOZ-2023-01 LOCATION MAP



Location Map



Legend

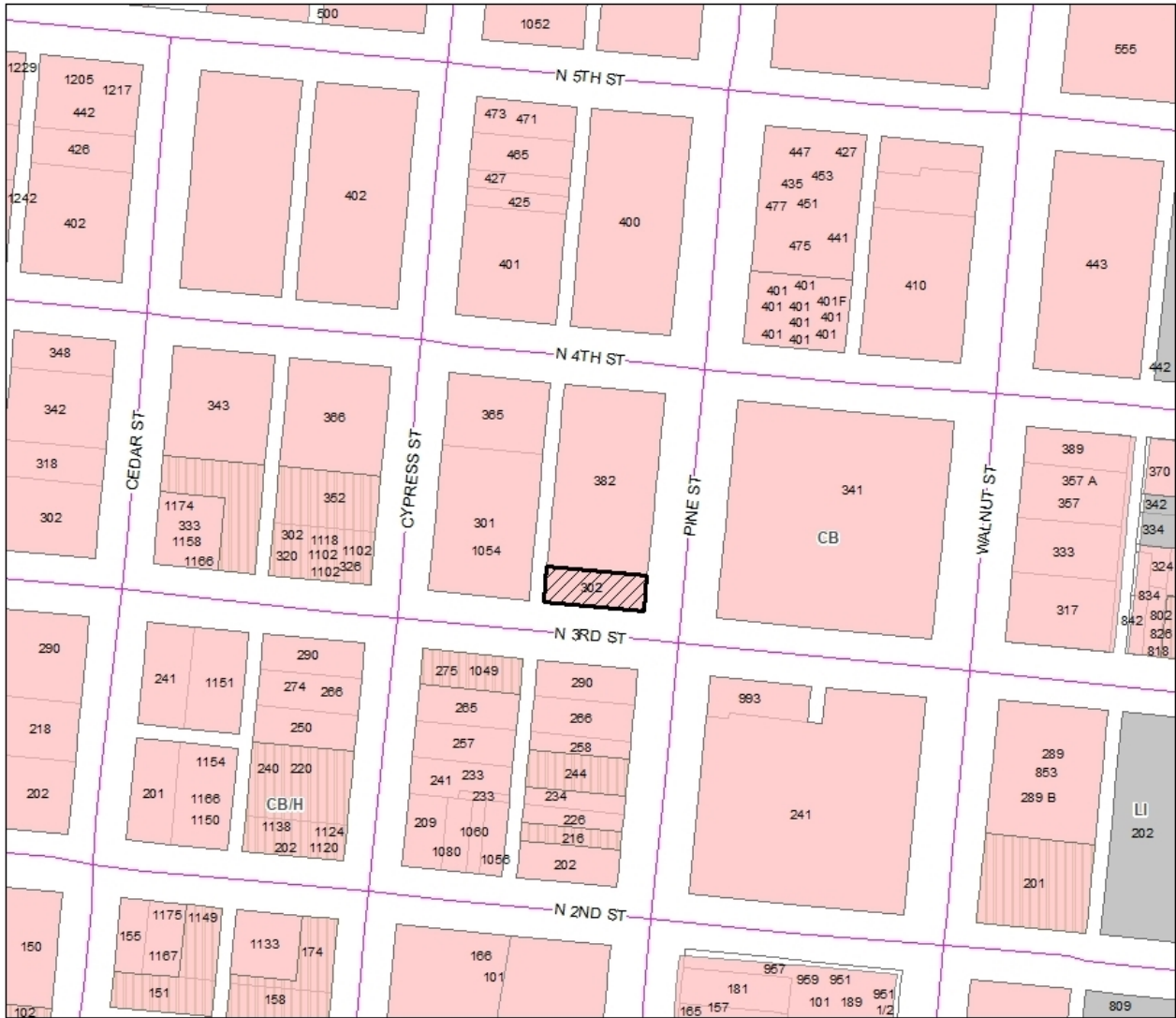
- HOZ-2023-01
- CourierParcels



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HOZ-2023-01 ZONING MAP



Zoning Map



- Legend
- HOZ-2023-01
 - CB: Central Business
 - LI: Light Industrial
 - Historic Overlay



CITY OF
ABILENE
TEXAS



HOZ-2023-01 PHOTOS



CITY OF
ABILENE
TEXAS



HOZ-2023-01 NOTIFICATION AREA MAP



Notification Map



Legend

- Notification Area
- HOZ-2023-01

0- In Favor-



0- Opposed-



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TEXAS



FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consistent with Section 2.3.4.4 of the Land Development Code (Criteria for Designation)
- Consistent with *Comprehensive Plan* and *Future Land Use and Development Plan Map*
- Consistent with Section 1.4.1.4 of Land Development Code (Criteria for Approval)
- Landmarks Commission Recommendation: **Approval**
- Staff Recommendation: **Approval**





Questions?



ZONING CASE Z-2023-07

STAFF REPORT

Scheduled Hearings

Planning & Zoning Commission: May 2, 2023

City Council 1st Reading: May 11, 2023

City Council 2nd Reading: May 25, 2023

Applicant

Owner: Coffee Momma LLC

Agent: CJ Chaney

Case Manager

Clarissa Ivey – Planner

Request

Rezoning of approximately 1.09 acres from Planned Development (PD-128) to General Retail (GR). The applicant intends to use the property for a coffee shop with a drive-through window.

Location

701 S Judge Ely Boulevard in East Horizon Sec 2, Block 8, Lot 1

Background

This property was annexed in 1957 and has remained vacant ever since. In 2009, the property was rezoned from Office (O) to Planned Development (PD-128). The base zoning of that PD was Shopping Center. The purpose of this request is to allow the property to be uses that were originally intended when the PDD district was established.

Zoning, Existing and Proposed Land Use

The remaining pieces of the undeveloped Planned Development (PD-125) zoning district are immediately north and south of the subject site. A Residential-Single Family (RS-6) zoning district is located to the east. Craig Middle School is located to the west in the Office (O) zoning district.

Criteria Assessment

Section 1.4.1.4 of Abilene's Land Development Code states that, in making a determination regarding a requested zoning change, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council may consider the following factors:

- (1) Whether the proposed zoning map amendment implements the policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan, including the land use classification of the property on the Future Land Use and Development Plan Map, as amended.**

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) recommends *Local Community Center uses* for this site. Based on that designation, General Retail (GR) would be an appropriate zoning district to consider at this location.

- (2) Whether the uses permitted by the proposed change in zoning classification and the standards applicable to such uses will be appropriate in the immediate area of the land to be reclassified.**

The proposed GR zoning is consistent with the base zoning of PD-128 and is appropriate for properties fronting on to a major arterial street.

- (3) Whether the proposed change is in accord with any existing or proposed plans for providing public schools, streets, water supply, sanitary sewers, and other public services and utilities to the area.**

This property has adequate utility services available.

- (4) Any other factors, which will substantially affect the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare.**

None known.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval**.

Notification

TABLE 1

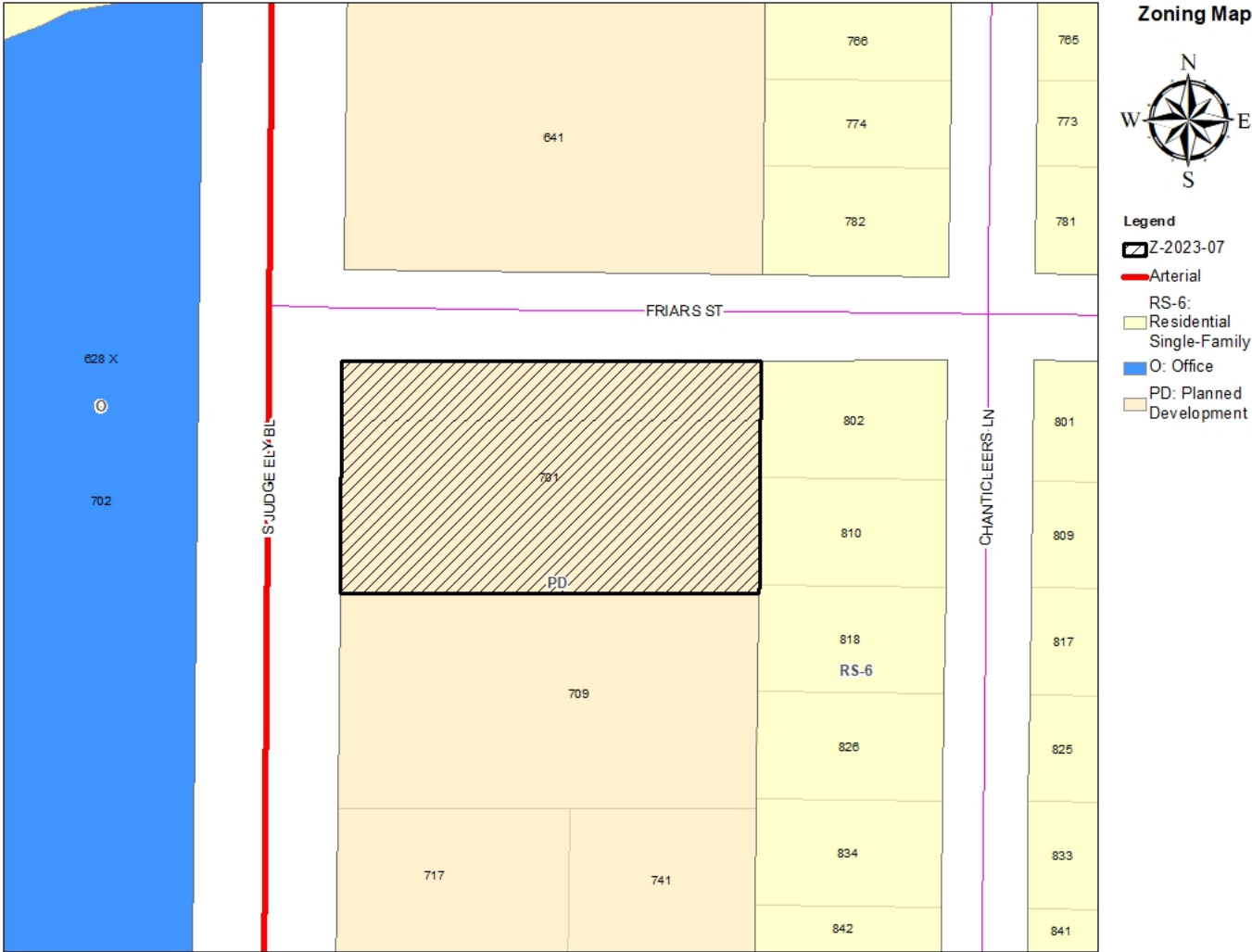
Owner

OWNER	Property ID	Situs	Response
DELEHANTY J E ASSOCIATES	74493	701 S JUDGE ELY BL	
MAURICIO EFREN L &	25979	834 CHANTICLEERS LN	
ABILENE INDEPENDENT	108949	702 S JUDGE ELY BL	
ABILENE INDEPENDENT	108949	628 X S JUDGE ELY BL	
POSEY JILL LYNN	32709	766 CHANTICLEERS LN	F
KOZELSKY SCOTT MICHAEL	32536	774 CHANTICLEERS LN	
WHITE ELLIOTT	107672	741 S JUDGE ELY BL	
PJD4 A TEXAS GENERAL PTRSHP	74376	641 S JUDGE ELY BL	
KIM ANTHONY S & SAYVY	25606	810 CHANTICLEERS LN	
SOLIS ASTA BJORK LF EST	26604	801 CHANTICLEERS LN	
HAYWORTH DOUGLAS	25736	818 CHANTICLEERS LN	
SOJOURNER W C JR	113907	709 S JUDGE ELY BL	
SILVAS DAVID C & THERESA G	32410	782 CHANTICLEERS LN	
GALLARDO ANGELICA M	25852	826 CHANTICLEERS LN	
EMLEY ADAM LAURENCE II & JENNIFER	25466	802 CHANTICLEERS LN	O
BALDWIN CHRISTINA M	26746	809 CHANTICLEERS LN	
DESHAZO FAMILY PTR LTD	74723	717 S JUDGE ELY BL	F
CHILDERS PAUL A	37794	781 CHANTICLEERS LN	
VIVION MATT & DANIELLE	26882	817 CHANTICLEERS LN	

LOCATION MAP



ZONING MAP





REZONE REQUEST

Case: Z-2023-07

Owner: Coffee Momma LLC

Agent: CJ Chaney

Request: Rezone from PDD-128 to GR

Location: 701 S Judge Ely Boulevard

Notification: 2 in Favor, 1 Opposed

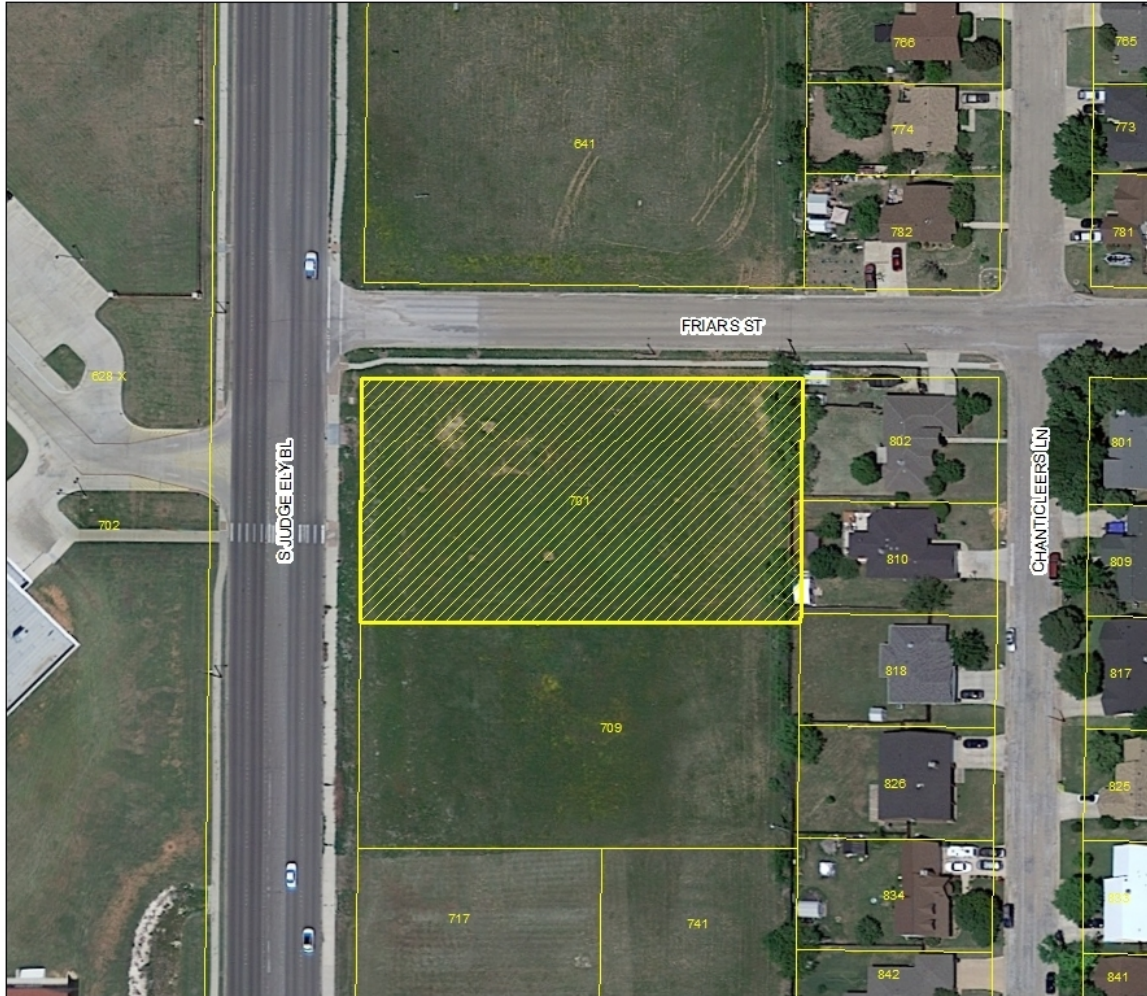
Planning & Zoning: May 2, 2023

City Council Hearing: March 11, 2023
May 25, 2023





Z-2023-07 LOCATION MAP



Aerial Map



Legend

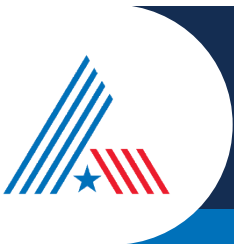
-  Z-2023-07
-  CourierParcels





Z-2023-07 ZONING MAP





Permitted Uses in GR Zoning

RESIDENTIAL USES:

P Bed & Breakfast
P Dwelling – Industrialized Housing Unit
P Dwelling – Institutional
C Dwelling – Multiple-Family
P Dwelling – Single Family Detached
P Hotel/Motel

ACCESSORY AND INCIDENTAL USES:

P Accessory Structure (Also see Division 4 of this article)
P Antenna, Non-Commercial/Amateur
P ATM's, Self-Serve Kiosks, and Similar Facilities
P/C Day Care Operation – Home Based
P Drive-Thru Facility
TP Field Office or Construction Office (temporary)
C Freight Container
P Fuel Sales
P Garage Sales
P Home Occupation
TP Itinerant Business
P Manufacturing (incidental)
TP Mobile Home (temporary security residence)
P Recreation Building, Multipurpose
P Recreation Equipment, Mobile (storage and parking)
P Recycling Collection Point
P Subdivision Sales Office (temporary)
P Swimming Pools, Private (accessory to residential use)
P Tennis Courts, Private (accessory to residential use)
P/SE Wind Energy Conversion Systems

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL USES:

P Civic, Social, and Fraternal Organization
P Cultural Facilities
C Recreation – Outdoors (active)
P Recreation – Outdoors (passive)
P Recreation and Commercial Entertainment - Indoor

GOVERNMENT, HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE USES:

C Ambulance Service
P Fire/Police Station
P Medical/Dental Laboratory
P Post Office
C Social Service Facility

EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS USES:

P Arts School
P Church or Place of Worship
P Day-Care Operation - Center-Based
P Educational and Scientific Research
P School: Public/Private
C Trade/Business School
P University/College

SERVICE

P/C Automobile Wash
C Funeral Home/ Mortuary/Morgue
P Kennel (Without Outdoor Pens)
P Laundry/Dry Cleaning Services & Facilities
P Office (general, professional, financial)
P Personal Services
C Printing, Copying, Reproduction, Publishing
P Repair and Maintenance Services - Automobile/Small Truck (minor)
P Repair and Maintenance Services (indoor)
C Tattoo Parlor
P Veterinary Service (small animals)

TRADE – RETAIL USES

P ATM's, Self-Serve Kiosks, and Similar Facilities
P Fuel Sales
P Liquor Store (Off Premises Consumption) (*Defined under Liquor Store*)
P Liquor Store (On Premises Consumption) (*Defined under Liquor Store*)
P Restaurant, Brew Pub
P Restaurant, Fast Food
P Restaurant, Standard
P Retail Sales/Rental (indoor)
C Retail Sales/Rental (outdoors, non-vehicle)

TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION AND UTILITIES:

C Antenna Tower- Commercial
P Automobile Parking Lot or Structure - Commercial
P Broadcast Studio
P Public Utility Facility

RESOURCE PRODUCTION AND EXTRACTION USES:

P Petroleum or Gas Well
P Urban Garden



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LEGEND

P Permitted as a Right-of-Use (may be subject to compliance with conditions described within Division 3- Requirements Applicable to Specific Land Uses of the Land Development Code)
C Permitted as a Conditional Use Permit, Requiring Approval by City Council
TP Permitted by Temporary Permit Only, Requiring Approval by Board of Adjustment

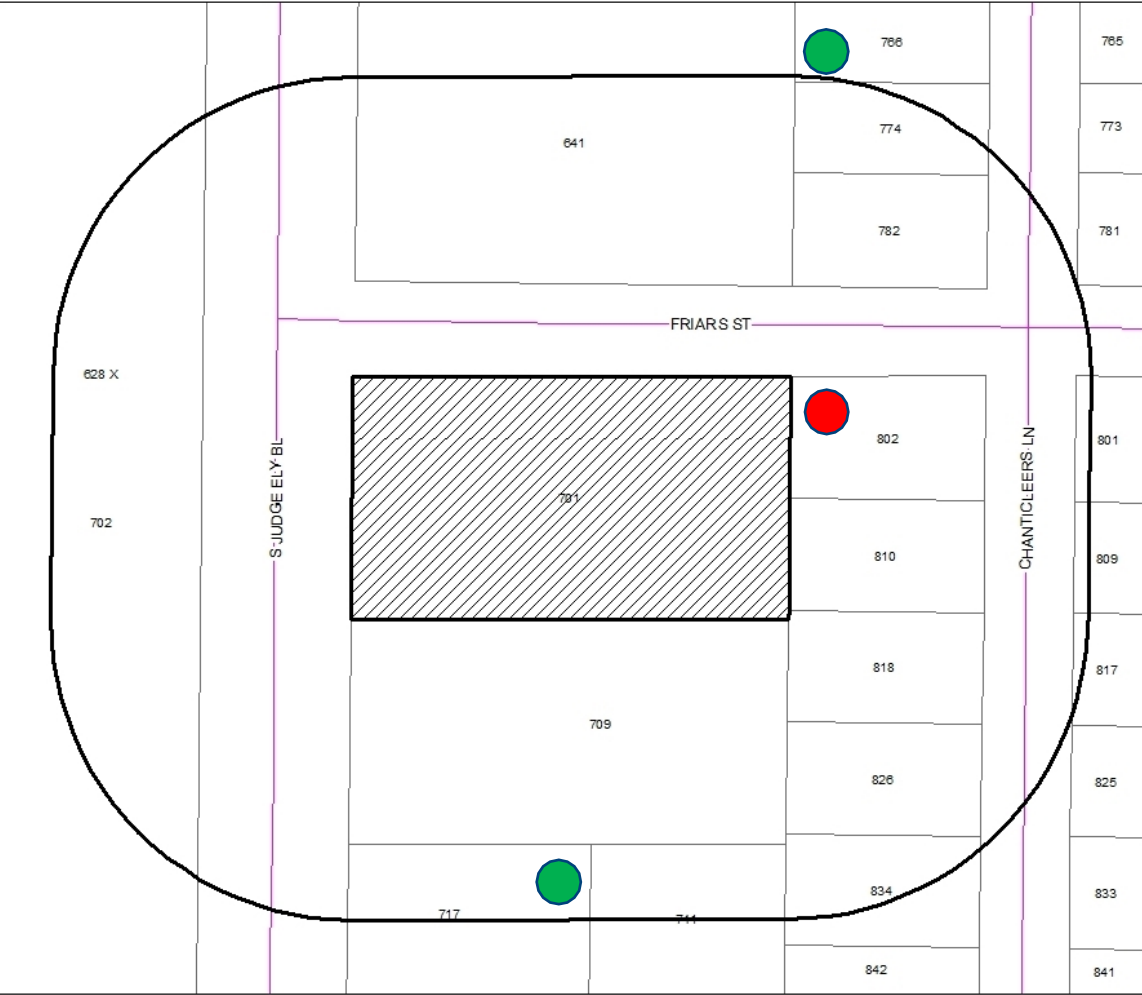


Z-2023-07 VIEWS OF SUBJECT & NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES





Z-2023-07 NOTIFICATION AREA MAP



Notification Map



- Legend
- Z-2023-07
 - Buffer
 - Z-2023-07

- 2- In Favor- ●
- 1- Opposed- ●
- 3.02% Opposed





FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed request for GR rezoning is *consistent* with:

- The *Comprehensive Plan*;
- The base zoning district established in PDD-128;
- Generally accepted planning principals; and
- The Criteria for Approval in the LDC.

Staff Recommendation: **Approval**

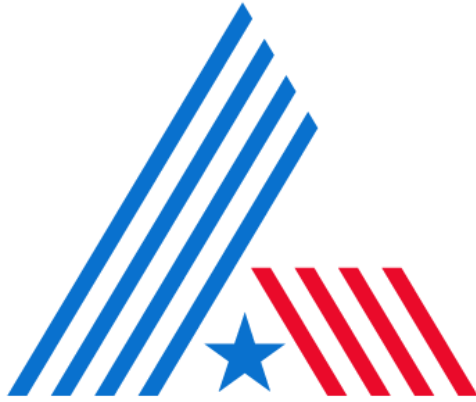




Questions?



2023 Development Application



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

CITY OF ABILENE TEXAS

- Conditional Use Permit
- Planned Development District (PDD)
- PDD Amendment
- Street Name Change
- Thoroughfare Abandonment
- Rezoning
- Easement Release
- Plats
- Petition for Relief
- Board of Adjustments (Variance, Special Exception)
- Other

2023 Development Application

DOCUMENTS & MAPS

Reports, Plans, Ordinances, Maps, and other documents are often available on the City's website (<https://www.abilenetx.gov>) at no charge. Copies of these will be provided at the reproduction cost, currently 10 cents per page for black and white copies and \$1 per page for color copies. In addition, any other actual materials costs will be assessed.

Requests for the creation of maps or other documents not already existing will only be available based on availability of staff and will be billed at a rate of \$25 per hour, plus the cost of reproduction and/or materials.

NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT ZONE INCENTIVE

Projects located within the designated "Neighborhood Empowerment Zone" will have fees waived in accordance with the City's Land Development Code. This does not apply to any portion of a fee that is based on actual costs to the City, such as filing plats, photocopies, notifications, etc.

SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

ONLINE SUBMITTALS FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS ARE PREFERRED

CTRL & CLICK LINK BELOW

https://public.mygov.us/tx_abilene

- Prior to submittal, we strongly recommend setting up and attending a pre-submittal meeting.
- **INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS AND SUBMITTALS WILL BE REJECTED** or will be returned; an application may be deemed incomplete after initial staff review.
- Please refer to the Land Development Code online Part III Appendix A for questions or concerns in respect to site development and development standards.
https://library.municode.com/tx/abilene/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIIIAPANDECO
- Plans for Conditional Use, Special Exceptions, Rezoning, Variance and Planned Development District Amendment shall be on 8.5" x 11" paper with one (1) copy.
- Site plans or conceptual site plans, plats, except Engineering Construction Sets, shall be 24" x 36" and folded, with two (2) hard copies. If applicable, please provide survey plat of property. Plats and Engineering plans shall be GEO Referenced and in DWG format.
- PDF copies can be emailed to planning@abilenetx.gov
- If a case is withdrawn or delayed at the request of the applicant after notifications have been sent and/or public notice has been posted, the applicant will be responsible for the cost of re-notifications and re-posting of notice.
- All other questions may be directed to the following:

Planning and Development Services Department
555 Walnut Street, Suite 100
325.676.6237
planning@abilenetx.gov

FOR DEVELOPMENT FEES CTRL & CLICK LINK BELOW AND CHOOSE "Z"

<https://abilenetx.gov/563/Fee-Schedule>
Fees can be paid online with credit card.

See RECORDING FEES for actual filing costs with Taylor County Clerk's Office. Thoroughfare Abandonment Fee 10% of the calculated land value of the ROW area to be abandoned, based on the average square footage value of adjacent properties, per the most recent official Appraisal District valuation. Minimum fee is \$1,500. *Any portion over the minimum fee is refundable if the abandonment is not approved.*

2023 Development Application

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

The members of the Planning & Zoning Commission (also referred to as the Commission) are appointed by the City Council. In making appointments to the Commission, the City Council shall seek to ensure broad representation and expertise among the membership.

According to Section 1.1.3.3. Powers & Duties, of the City of Abilene Land Development Code (LDC), the Planning and Zoning Commission shall:

1. Make recommendations on a Comprehensive Plan or amendments thereto related to the physical development, growth, improvement, and beautification of the City.
2. Make recommendations on other types of City plans that are related to the physical development, growth, improvement, and beautification of the City, including Neighborhood Plans and Corridor Plans.
3. Recommend to the City Council approval or denial of proposed changes in the zoning districts and/or ordinance.
4. Approve or disapprove the platting or subdividing of land within the corporate limits of the City and within adjacent areas as permitted by law.
5. Recommend to the City Council approval or disapproval of requests for street name changes and street closures within the corporate limits of the City.
6. Submit annually to the City Manager, not less than ninety (90) business days prior to the beginning of the budget year, a list of recommended capital improvements, if any, which in the opinion of the Commission, are necessary or desirable during the forthcoming five (5) year period.
7. Recommend to the City Council approval or disapproval of plans for housing clearance, public housing, and urban redevelopment and renewal projects.
8. Perform such additional duties and exercise such additional powers as may be prescribed by ordinance not inconsistent with the provisions of the City Charter.
9. Advise the City Council on applications and petitions for legislative decisions as authorized by the Land Development Code, such as:
 - a. Petition for amending the Comprehensive Plan;
 - b. Petition for a zoning map amendment, including a petition for creation of an overlay district, Conditional Use Permit (CUP), or Planned Development (PD) district;
 - c. Amendments to the text of the Land Development Code (LDC) as authorized by City Charter; and
 - d. Others as assigned by City Council.

The Planning and Zoning Commission shall finally decide appeals filed in accordance with Article 3 of the Land Development Code (Relief Procedures). Also, the Commission shall finally decide the following petitions for relief:

1. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall finally decide any variance petition on an application for a Preliminary Plat, Final Plat or replat, except when such variance is for relief from a dedication or construction requirement, in which case Section 1.1.4.3 shall apply; and
2. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall initially decide any vested rights petition for any decision for which it is the initial decision-maker.

2023 Development Application

2023 PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

PD APPLICATION DEADLINE	ZONING APPLICATION DEADLINE	PLANNING & ZONING MEETING ***	CITY COUNCIL 1 ST READING	CITY COUNCIL 2 ND READING ***
16-DEC-22	3-JAN-23	7-FEB-23	23-FEB-23	9-MAR-23
13-JAN-23	31-JAN-23	7-MAR-23	23-MAR-23	13-APR-23
10-FEB-23	28-FEB-23	4-APR-23	27-APR-23	11-MAY-23
10-MAR-23	28-MAR-23	2-MAY-23	25-MAY-23	8-JUN-23
14-APR-23	2-MAY-23	6-JUNE-23	22-JUN-23	13-JUL-23
12-MAY-23	31-MAY-23	5-JULY-23	27-JUL-23	10-AUG-23
11-JUN-23	28-JUN-23	1-AUG-23	24-AUG-23	14-SEP-23
14-JUL-23	1-AUG-23	5-SEP-23	28-SEP-23	12-OCT-23
14-AUG-23	31-AUG-23	3-OCT-23	26-OCT-23	2-NOV-23
17-SEP-23	4-OCT-23	7-NOV-23	16-NOV-23	7-DEC-23
13-OCT-23	31-OCT-23	5-DEC-23	21-DEC-23	11-JAN-24
3-NOV-23	28-NOV-23	2-JAN-24	25-JAN-24	8-FEB-24
15-DEC-23	2-JAN-24	6-FEB-24	22-FEB-24	14-MAR-24
15-JAN-24	1-FEB-24	7-MAR-24	28-MAR-24	11-APR-24

***These meetings require public hearings and the applicant or a representative must be present.

2023 BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

APPLICATION DEADLINE	MEETING DATE ***
6-DEC-22	10-JAN-23
10-JAN-23	14-FEB-23
7-FEB-23	14-MAR-23
7-MAR-23	11-APR-23
4-APR-23	9-MAY-23
9-MAY-23	13-JUN-23
6-JUN-23	11-JUL-23
3-JUL-23	8-AUG-23
8-AUG-23	12-SEP-23
5-SEP-23	10-OCT-23
10-OCT-23	14-NOV-23
7-NOV-23	12-DEC-23
5-DEC-23	9-JAN-24
9-JAN-24	13-FEB-24

2023 Development Application

Zoning Application Page 1 of 3

Planning

- ☐ Conditional Use
 ☐ Special Exceptions
 ☒ Rezoning
 ☐ Variance
☐ PDD Amendment
 ☐ Street Name Change
 ☐ Thoroughfare Abandonment
☐ Easement Release

Relief Procedures

- ☐ Petition for Relief
 ☐ Proportionality Appeal
 ☐ Vested Rights Petition
 ☐ Appeal
 Other: _____

Project Name: Ziggi's Coffee
 Address: 701 S. Judge Ely Blvd. Number of Lots: 1 Acreage: 1.09
 Legal Description: East Horizon Sec 2, Block 8, Lot 1, Replat, Cont
 Subdivision Name: _____ Block: _____ Lot: _____
 Current Zoning: PD Proposed Zoning (if applicable): GC

OWNER AND AUTHORIZATION

Owner Name: Coffee Momma LLC
 Address: 19111 Kinzie Street
 City, State, Zip: Northridge, CA, 91324 Fax: _____
 Phone: (406) 599-9033 Email: Erin.Bottomley@ziggiscoffee.com
 Agent Name: CJ Chaney
 Address: c/o 2500 S. Willis St
 City, State, Zip: Abilene, TX 79605 Fax: _____
 Phone: (325) 725-6641 Email: cj@cjchaneyteam.com

I hereby certify that I am the owner of the property and further certify that the information provided on this development application is true and correct. I hereby designate the aforementioned agent to act on my behalf for submittal, processing, representation, and/or presentation of this development application. The designated agent shall be the principal contact person for responding to all requests for information and for resolving all issues of concern relative to this application.

Signature of Owner: Erin Bottomley Date: Jan 24, 2023

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Received: _____	Fee: \$ _____	Receipt No.: _____
Case No.: _____		Reviewed By: _____

2023 Development Application

Zoning Application Page 2 of 3

Existing Zoning

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|------------------------------|
| ☐ AO | Agricultural Open Space | ☐ GR | General Retail |
| ☐ RR | Rural Residential RR-5 & RR-1 | ☐ MU | Medical Use |
| ☐ RS-12 | Residential Single-Family – 12,000 sq. ft lots | ☐ CB | Central Business |
| ☐ RS-8 | Residential Single-Family – 8,000 sq. ft lots | ☐ MX | Mixed Use |
| ☐ RS-6 | Residential Single-Family – 6,000 sq. ft lots | ☐ GC | General Commercial |
| ☐ PH | Single-Family Residential Patio Home | ☐ HC | Heavy Commercial |
| ☐ TH | Residential Townhouse | ☐ LI | Light Industrial |
| ☐ MD | Residential Medium Density | ☐ HI | Heavy Industrial |
| ☐ MH | Manufactured/Mobile Home | ☒ PD | Planned Development District |
| ☐ CU | College & University | ☐ | Empowerment Overlay |
| ☐ NO | Neighborhood Office | | |
| ☐ O | Office | | |
| ☐ NR | Neighborhood Retail | | |

Reason for Zoning Change

Current zoning does not allow for a fast food drive through.

Fees

FOR DEVELOPMENT FEES CTRL & CLICK LINK BELOW AND CHOOSE "Z"

<https://abilenetx.gov/563/Fee-Schedule>

Fees can be paid online with credit card.

2023 Development Application

Zoning Application Page 3 of 3

Zoning Impact Analysis

Please answer these questions in order to assist staff with the processing of your zoning request.

1. Does the proposed zoning map amendment implement the policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan, including the land use classification of the property on the Future Land Use Map?

2. Is the use permitted by the proposed change in the zoning district's classification? Are the standards applicable to such uses appropriate in the immediate area of the land to be reclassified?

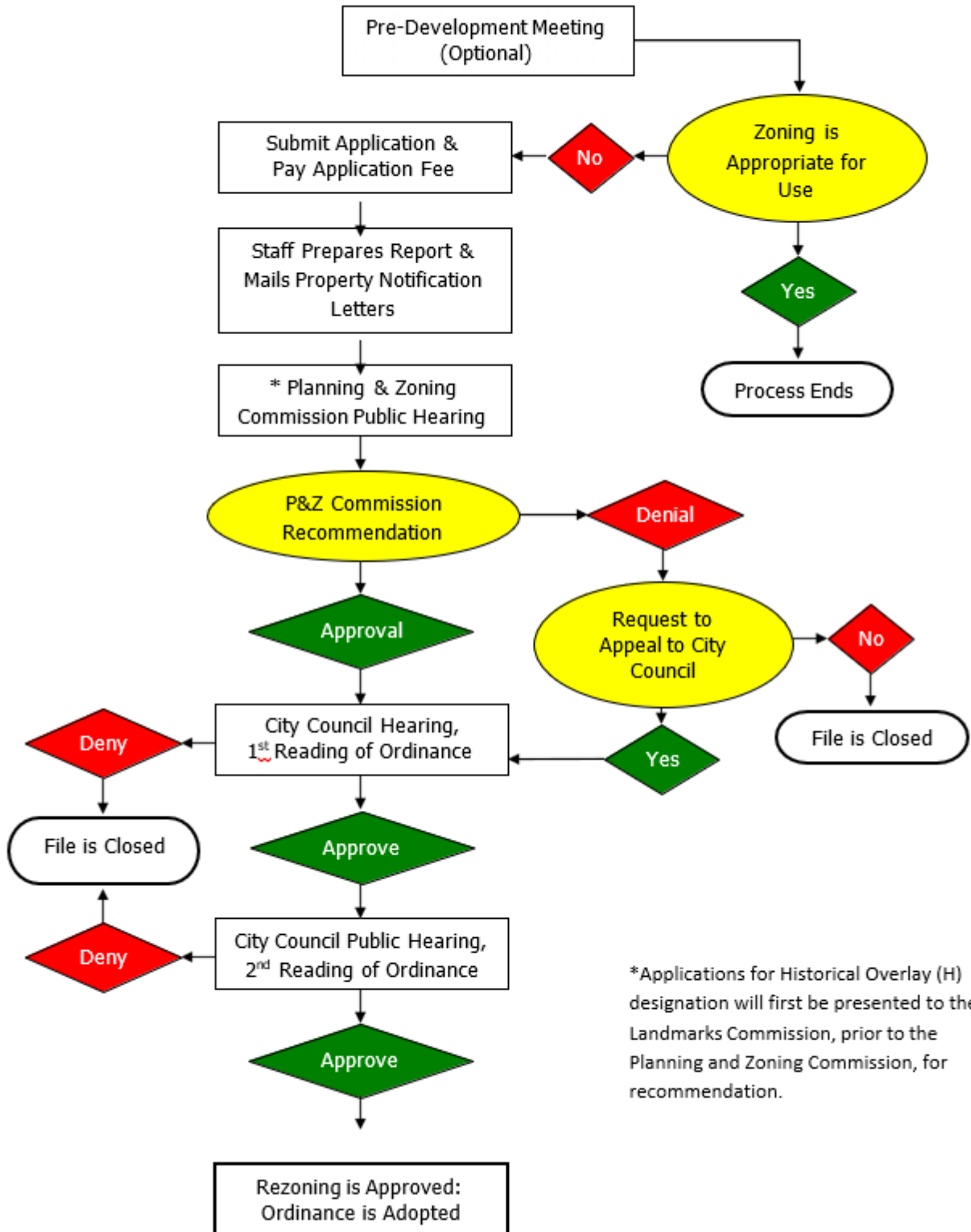
3. Are the proposed changes in agreement with any existing or proposed plans for providing public schools, streets, water supply, sanitary sewers, and other public services and utilities to the area?

4. Are there other factors that will substantially affect the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare?

Other Required Forms - Disclosure of Interest (See Attached)

2023 Development Application

Zoning • Conditional Use • PDD Amendment • Street Name Change • Thoroughfare Abandonment
Flowchart



2023 Development Application

Plats and Other Submittals Page 1 of 1

Submittal

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Preliminary Plat/Replat | ☐ Civil Plans |
| ☐ Final Plat/Replat | ☐ Site Plan/Revised Site Plan |
| ☐ Combination Preliminary & Final Plat* | ☐ Landscape Plan |
| ☐ Amended Plat | ☐ Tree Preservation |
| ☐ Minor Plat/Replat | ☐ Lighting Plan |
| ☐ Development Plat | ☐ Concept Plan |

*Prior approval required

Submittal Type

- ☐ Pre-Submittal: all required documents are present, excluding fees. I understand that the project information presented to the City at this time is not filed, and therefore the City is not required to approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the plan(s)/plat(s) within 30 days by the approval authority. This Pre-Submittal will be changed to a Submittal following the receipt of written notice and payment of fees. I am requesting this of my own volition and not at the request of the City of Abilene.
- ☐ Submittal: all required documents are present including fees. I understand that the project information presented to the City at this time is filed and therefore, the City is required to approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove the plat(s) within 30 days by the approval authority.

Acreage

Round decimals up to the nearest whole number.

1 acre(s)

Fees

FOR DEVELOPMENT FEES CTRL & CLICK LINK BELOW AND CHOOSE "P"

<https://abilenetx.gov/563/Fee-Schedule>

Fees can be paid online with credit card.

The application fee of \$ \$1,500.00, to be paid to the City of Abilene within five (5) days of being accepted.

NOTE: Additional costs may accrue during review by City consultants of any facilities agreement and/or civil construction plans.

Submittals

- Site plans or conceptual site plans, plats, except Engineering Construction Sets, shall be 24" x 36" and folded, with two (2) hard copies. If applicable, please provide survey plat of property. Plats and Engineering plans shall be GEO Referenced and in DWG format.

Other Required Forms - Disclosure of Interest, Owner Authorization (See Attached)

2023 Development Application

Owner Authorization and Representative Designation

Property Description

Subdivision: _____ Total Number of Acres: _____
Zoning Classification(s): _____ Total Number of Lots: _____
Location: _____

Property Owner Information & Authorization

Name/Company: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Project Representation (check one):

- ☐ I will represent the application myself; OR
- ☐ I hereby designate _____ (*name of project representative*) to act in the capacity as my agent for submittal, processing, representation, and/or presentation of this request. The designated agent shall be the principal contact person for responding to all requests for information and for resolving all issues of concern relative to this request.

I hereby certify that I am the property owner of the property and further certify that the information provided on this development application is true and correct. I have selected the above submittal type, representation, and landscape incentive of my own volition and not at the request of the City of Abilene.

Property Owner's Signature: _____ Date: _____

STATE OF: _____

COUNTY OF: _____

BEFORE ME, a Notary Public, on this day personally appeared _____
(*printed property owner's name*) the above signed, who, under oath, stated the following: "I hereby certify that I am the property owner for the purposes of this application; that all information submitted herein is true and correct."

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me, this the _____ day of _____, 20____

NOTARY PUBLIC in and for the State of Texas

Project Representative Information (complete if designated by owner)

☐ Engineer ☐ Purchaser ☐ Tenant ☐ Preparer ☐ Other(*specify*): _____

Name: _____ Company: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____
Zip Code: _____ Number: _____ Email: _____

2023 Development Application

Disclosure of Interest

Disclosure Questions

Every question must be answered. If the question is not applicable, answer with "N/A".

NOTE: If the Project Representative is not the Property Owner, this form must be filled out by **both** the Property Owner and the Project Representative.

A. Do you believe that a City official* or City employee** may have a conflict of interest in the property or application referenced on the reverse side? ☐ Yes ☒ No

B. If so, state the name of each City official or employee of the City of Abilene known by you that may have a conflict of interest in the property or application referenced on reverse side.

N/A

C. State all information upon which you base the belief (use additional paper, if necessary).

N/A

I certify that all information provided is true and correct as of the date of this statement, that I have not knowingly withheld disclosure of any information requested; and that supplemental statements will be promptly submitted to the City of Abilene, Texas, as changes occur.

Name of Certifying Person (*print*): _____

Property Owner ☐ Project Representative ☐

Signature of Certifying Person: _____

*Mayor, City Council members, Planning and Zoning Commission members, and Zoning Board of Adjustment members

**City Manager, City Secretary, City Attorney, and all department heads

2023 Development Application

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

The Board of Adjustment is organized to have all the powers and authority as set forth in the Charter of the City of Abilene, Texas, and as authorized by Chapter 211 of the Texas Local Government Code.

The Board of Adjustment has authority of applications to decide the following types of applications:

1. An application for a Special Exception pursuant to Section 1.4.4.1;
2. An application for a Variance pursuant to Section 1.4.4.2;
3. A sign permit or an interpretation of Sign Regulations related to development within the City limits (refer to Chapter 4, Article 1, Division 3, Section 4.1.3.6 or Chapter 4, Article 2, Division 8, respectively); and
4. An application for a change in the status of a non-conformity pursuant to Section 1.4.4.3.

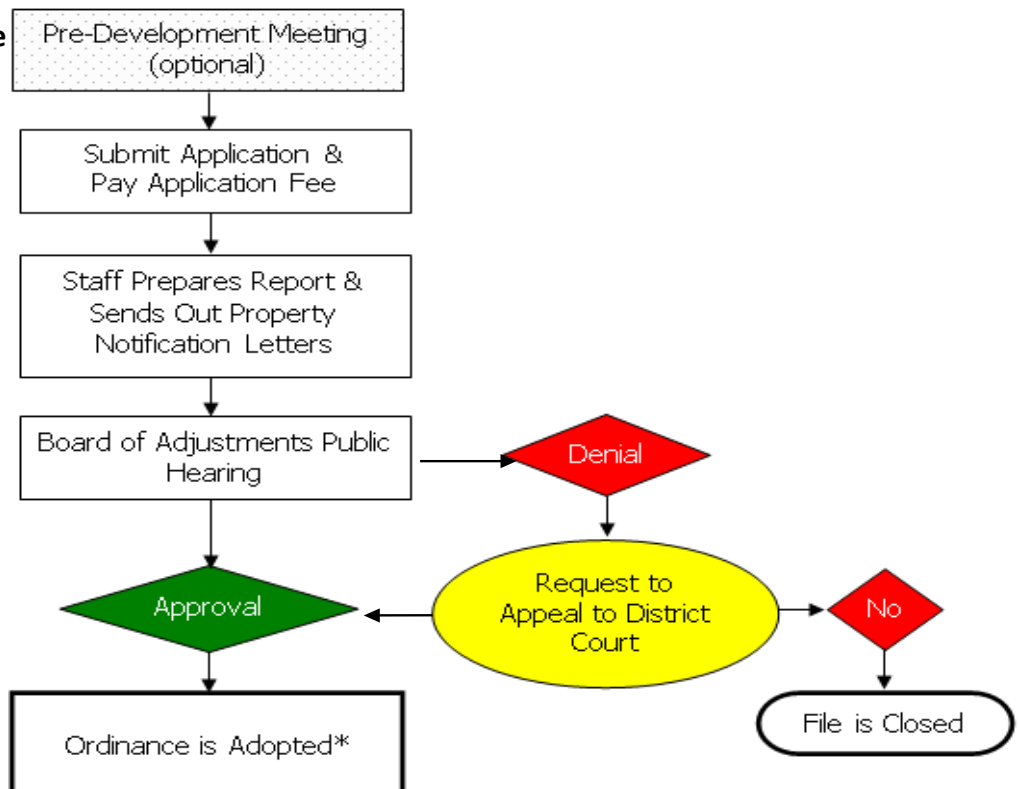
The Board of Adjustment shall finally decide appeals on the following matters of an appeal of any official's interpretation of the requirements of Chapters 2 or 4 of this LDC in which the requirement applies to development within the City limits of Abilene, unless a separate appeals process is otherwise defined within this LDC.

The authority delegated to the Board of Adjustment under this Land Development Code shall not be construed to affect any of the following:

1. Approval of a petition for a zoning map amendment;
2. Approval of a Conditional Use Permit; and
3. Authorization of a use not authorized in the zoning district in which the applicant's property is located, except to the extent necessary to decide a special exception or a petition for a change in status of a non-conformity.

Also, the Board of Adjustment shall not render any decision on an application, appeal or relief petition while a petition for a zoning amendment, application for a Conditional Use Permit, or plat application for the same land is pending and until such petition or application has been finally decided pursuant to procedures in Chapter 1 of the LDC.

Special Exception & Variance Flowchart



*If the request is approved, the owner or agent will have 180 days from the hearing date to obtain a building permit, if one is required.



2023 Development Application

Special Exception & Variance

Please answer these questions in order to assist Staff with the processing of your Special Exception or Variance request. Please use additional sheet(s), if necessary.

1. Fully describe the unique circumstances or peculiarities of the land or improvements in question that do not allow the desired use to conform to the provisions in the Ordinance and the intent.

2. Are there other locations on the property that could accommodate the use while still complying with the Ordinance and, if so, why have you chosen the proposed location?

2023 Development Application

Recommendations

The Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) and the City Council look to the Planning & Development Services staff to make a recommendation for the approval or disapproval of this application. We will make every effort to notify you of our recommendation at least one (1) week in advance of the scheduled meeting of the P&Z Commission. In the case of a rezoning, and when the public interest requires it, we may recommend a rezoning to a Planned Development District (PDD) or a classification other than the classification requested. We will notify you of our decision to propose a PDD as soon as possible after the application is filed to give you time to prepare a site plan.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

The public is entitled to examine this application and participate in the decision-making process. In most cases, we are required to notify all property owners within two hundred feet (200') of the boundaries of your property. To ensure the fullest possible consideration, we may also notify neighborhood groups, organizations or individuals that have a special interest in a particular issue. Except for matters that the Planning & Development Services staff have expressly agreed not to disclose (and provided the law allows us to hold the matter in confidence), then all information that we deem relevant to the review and processing of this application may become public knowledge.

PLEASE READ BEFORE SIGNING

The undersigned has read the above application and hereby certifies that the information contained therein is complete, true and correct; and does hereby request that said application be submitted to the Planning & Zoning Commission at the earliest available meeting.

I understand and acknowledge that it is my responsibility to furnish an accurate and precise legal description of the property, and only the property, that is subject of this application, and that failure to furnish such information prior to the application deadline date will delay the processing of this application. I also understand that the City must notify affected property owners of this application. In the event that I fail to submit in a timely manner any information that the City deems necessary to transmit this application to the Planning & Zoning Commission or City Council, then in lieu of dismissal I hereby request that this application be temporarily withdrawn from further consideration until such information is submitted, and I agree to pay a resubmission fee of \$120 to reimburse the City for the expense of re-notifying affected property owners. I have been informed of the tentative date and time that the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council will hear this application, and I understand that hearings may be continued from time to time at the discretion of the Commission or Council to allow for full consideration or when the public interest requires a continuation.

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____



2023 Development Application

THE STATE OF TEXAS)

)

COUNTY OF TAYLOR)

Know all men by these presents that the undersigned owner of the real property described on the reverse side hereof, has made, constituted and appointed, and by these presents does make, constitute and appoint, my true and lawful attorney, for me in my name, place and stead, to (1) file an application for a zone change, plat, street closure, alley closure, (appeal to the Board of Adjustment) * concerning such property and

(2) appear on my behalf at all necessary meetings of the appropriate board or commission or City Council, as the case may be; and the undersigned further agrees that this power of attorney may be voluntarily revoked only by written revocation filed with the Planning & Development Services Division for the City of Abilene, Texas.

Witness my hand this day of _____, 20____

*(cross out the inapplicable phrase)



2023 Development Application

Owner Authorization and Representative Designation

Property Description

Subdivision: EAST HORIZON SECTION 2 Total Number of Acres: 1.0964
 Zoning Classification(s): PDD Total Number of Lots: 1
 Location: 701 S JUDGE ELY BL

Property Owner Information & Authorization

Name/Company: Delehanty J E Associates
 Address: 845 Malcolm Rd Ste 200
 City: Burlingame State: CA Zip Code: 94010
 Phone: _____ Email: Delehanty@sbcglobal.net

Project Representation (check one):

- ☐ I will represent the application myself; OR
☒ I hereby designate Erin Bottomley, C.J. Chaney (name of project representative) to act in the capacity as my agent for submittal, processing, representation, and/or presentation of this request. The designated agent shall be the principal contact person for responding to all requests for information and for resolving all issues of concern relative to this request.

I hereby certify that I am the property owner of the property and further certify that the information provided on this development application is true and correct. I have selected the above submittal type, representation, and landscape incentive of my own volition and not at the request of the City of Abilene.

Property Owner's Signature: Brian Delehanty Date: 01/26/2023
1/26/2023 10:12:26 PM CST

STATE OF: _____

COUNTY OF: _____

BEFORE ME, a Notary Public, on this day personally appeared _____
 (printed property owner's name) the above signed, who, under oath, stated the following: "I hereby certify that I am the property owner for the purposes of this application; that all information submitted herein is true and correct."

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me, this the _____ day of _____, 20____

NOTARY PUBLIC in and for the State of Texas

Project Representative Information (complete if designated by owner)

☐ Engineer ☐ Purchaser ☐ Tenant ☐ Preparer ☒ Other(specify): Erin - Buyer
CJ - her REALTOR

Name: Erin Bottomley -- C.J. Chaney Company: Coffee Momma LLC -- Coldwell Banker
 Address: 19111 Kinzie St City: Northridge State: TX
 Zip Code: 91324 Number: 1/24/2023 Email: 406-599-9033

planning@abilenetx.gov



COMMERCIAL CONTRACT - UNIMPROVED PROPERTY

USE OF THIS FORM BY PERSONS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®, INC. IS NOT AUTHORIZED.
©Texas Association of REALTORS®, Inc. 2022

1. PARTIES: Seller agrees to sell and convey to Buyer the Property described in Paragraph 2. Buyer agrees to buy the Property from Seller for the sales price stated in Paragraph 3. The parties to this contract are:

Seller: **J E DELEHANTY ASSOCIATES**

Address: **845 MALCOLM RD STE 200, Burlingame, CA 94010-1402**

Phone: _____ E-mail: **delehanty@sbcglobal.net**

Mobile: _____ Fax or Other: _____

Buyer: **Coffee Momma LLC**

Address: **19111 Kinzie Street, Northridge, CA 91324**

Phone: **(406)599-9033** E-mail: **erin.bottomley@ziggiscoffee.com**

Mobile: _____ Fax or Other: _____

2. PROPERTY:

A. "Property" means that real property situated in Taylor County, Texas at 701 S Judge Ely, Abilene, TX 79602 (address) and that is legally described on the attached Exhibit _____ or as follows: **EAST HORIZON SEC 2, BLOCK 8, LOT 1, REPLAT, CONT**

B. Seller will sell and convey the Property together with:

- (1) all rights, privileges, and appurtenances pertaining to the Property, including Seller's right, title, and interest in any minerals, utilities, adjacent streets, alleys, strips, gores, and rights-of-way;
- (2) Seller's interest in all leases, rents, and security deposits for all or part of the Property; and
- (3) Seller's interest in all licenses and permits related to the Property.

(Describe any exceptions, reservations, or restrictions in Paragraph 12 or an addendum.)
(If mineral rights are to be reserved an appropriate addendum should be attached.)

3. SALES PRICE:

A. At or before closing, Buyer will pay the following sales price for the Property:

- | | | |
|---|----|-------------------|
| (1) Cash portion payable by Buyer at closing | \$ | <u>230,000.00</u> |
| (2) Sum of all financing described in Paragraph 4 | \$ | _____ |
| (3) Sales price (sum of 3A(1) and 3A(2)) | \$ | <u>230,000.00</u> |

(TXR-1802) 07-08-22

Initialed for Identification by Seller BD

and Buyer EB

Page 1 of 15

Commercial Contract - Unimproved Property concerning 701 S Judge Ely, Abilene, TX 79602

- C. At closing, Seller will execute and deliver, at Seller's expense, a ☐ general ☒ special warranty deed. The deed must include a vendor's lien if any part of the sales price is financed. The deed must convey good and indefeasible title to the Property and show no exceptions other than those permitted under Paragraph 6 or other provisions of this contract. Seller must convey the Property:
- (1) with no liens, assessments, or other security interests against the Property which will not be satisfied out of the sales price, unless securing loans Buyer assumes;
 - (2) without any assumed loans in default; and
 - (3) with no persons in possession of any part of the Property as lessees, tenants at sufferance, or trespassers except tenants under the written leases assigned to Buyer under this contract.
- D. At closing, Seller, at Seller's expense, will also deliver to Buyer:
- (1) tax statements showing no delinquent taxes on the Property;
 - (2) an assignment of all leases to or on the Property;
 - (3) to the extent assignable, an assignment to Buyer of any licenses and permits related to the Property;
 - (4) evidence that the person executing this contract is legally capable and authorized to bind Seller;
 - (5) an affidavit acceptable to the title company stating that Seller is not a foreign person or, if Seller is a foreign person, a written authorization for the title company to: (i) withhold from Seller's proceeds an amount sufficient to comply with applicable tax law; and (ii) deliver the amount to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) together with appropriate tax forms; and
 - (6) any notices, statements, certificates, affidavits, releases, and other documents required by this contract, the commitment, or law necessary for the closing of the sale and issuance of the title policy, all of which must be completed by Seller as necessary.
- E. At closing, Buyer will:
- (1) pay the sales price in good funds acceptable to the title company;
 - (2) deliver evidence that the person executing this contract is legally capable and authorized to bind Buyer;
 - (3) sign and send to each tenant in a lease for any part of the Property a written statement that:
 - (a) acknowledges Buyer has received and is responsible for the tenant's security deposit; and
 - (b) specifies the exact dollar amount of the security deposit;
 - (4) sign an assumption of all leases then in effect; and
 - (5) execute and deliver any notices, statements, certificates, or other documents required by this contract or law necessary to close the sale.
- F. Unless the parties agree otherwise, the closing documents will be as found in the basic forms in the current edition of the State Bar of Texas Real Estate Forms Manual without any additional clauses.

11. POSSESSION: Seller will deliver possession of the Property to Buyer upon closing and funding of this sale in its present condition with any repairs Seller is obligated to complete under this contract, ordinary wear and tear excepted. Any possession by Buyer before closing or by Seller after closing that is not authorized by a separate written lease agreement is a landlord-tenant at sufferance relationship between the parties.

12. SPECIAL PROVISIONS: The following special provisions apply and will control in the event of a conflict with other provisions of this contract. *(If special provisions are contained in an Addendum, identify the Addendum here and reference the Addendum in Paragraph 22D.)*

Cooperate with buyer for a zoning change. (current PDD had a sunset clause, so a zoning change will have to be done.) Seller agrees to designate Buyer as the agent for the Seller to pursue a zoning change. Seller will sign any rezoning application requested by Buyer. Closing contingent on obtaining a favorable change in zoning to allow the intended use of a drive through coffee shop.

(TXR-1802) 07-08-22

Initialed for Identification by Seller

BD

and Buyer

EB

Page 8 of 15

ZONING CASE Z-2023-11

STAFF REPORT

Scheduled Hearings

Planning & Zoning Commission: May 2, 2023

City Council 1st Reading: May 25, 2023

City Council 2nd Reading: June 8, 2023

Applicant

Owner: Bridgestone Bandag, LLC

Agent: Chris Daniel

Case Manager

Clarissa Ivey – Planner

Request

Rezoning of approximately 22.43 acres from Light Industrial (LI) to Heavy Industrial (HI).

Location

The subject property is located at 4962 FM 18.

Legal description being 22.43 acres of the southwest quarter of Survey 44 Blind Asylum Lands, Abilene, Taylor County, Texas.

Background

The subject property was annexed in 1986 and zoned Light Industrial (LI). The applicant is requesting rezoning to match the zoning of the two adjoining properties that they own in order to facilitate the potential expansion of their facilities.

Zoning, Existing and Proposed Land Use

Light Industrial (LI) zoning is located north of the subject property across the railroad tracks. Heavy Industrial zoning is located to the west and south, with a large track of Agricultural Open (AO) zoning to the south. The Bridgestone Bandag facility immediately west of the subject property is zoned Heavy Industrial (HI).

Criteria Assessment

Section 1.4.1.4 of Abilene's Land Development Code states that, in making a determination regarding a requested zoning change, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council may consider the following factors:

- (1) Whether the proposed zoning map amendment implements the policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan, including the land use classification of the property on the Future Land Use and Development Plan Map, as amended.**

The proposed request is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map.

- (2) **Whether the uses permitted by the proposed change in zoning classification and the standards applicable to such uses will be appropriate in the immediate area of the land to be reclassified.**

The proposed zoning would be appropriate as it would allow the property owner to expand their existing business at 4750 FM 18.

- (3) **Whether the proposed change is in accord with any existing or proposed plans for providing public schools, streets, water supply, sanitary sewers, and other public services and utilities to the area.**

This property has access to all required utilities.

- (4) **Any other factors, which will substantially affect the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare.**

None.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval**.

Notification

Owner

Legend

O – Opposed

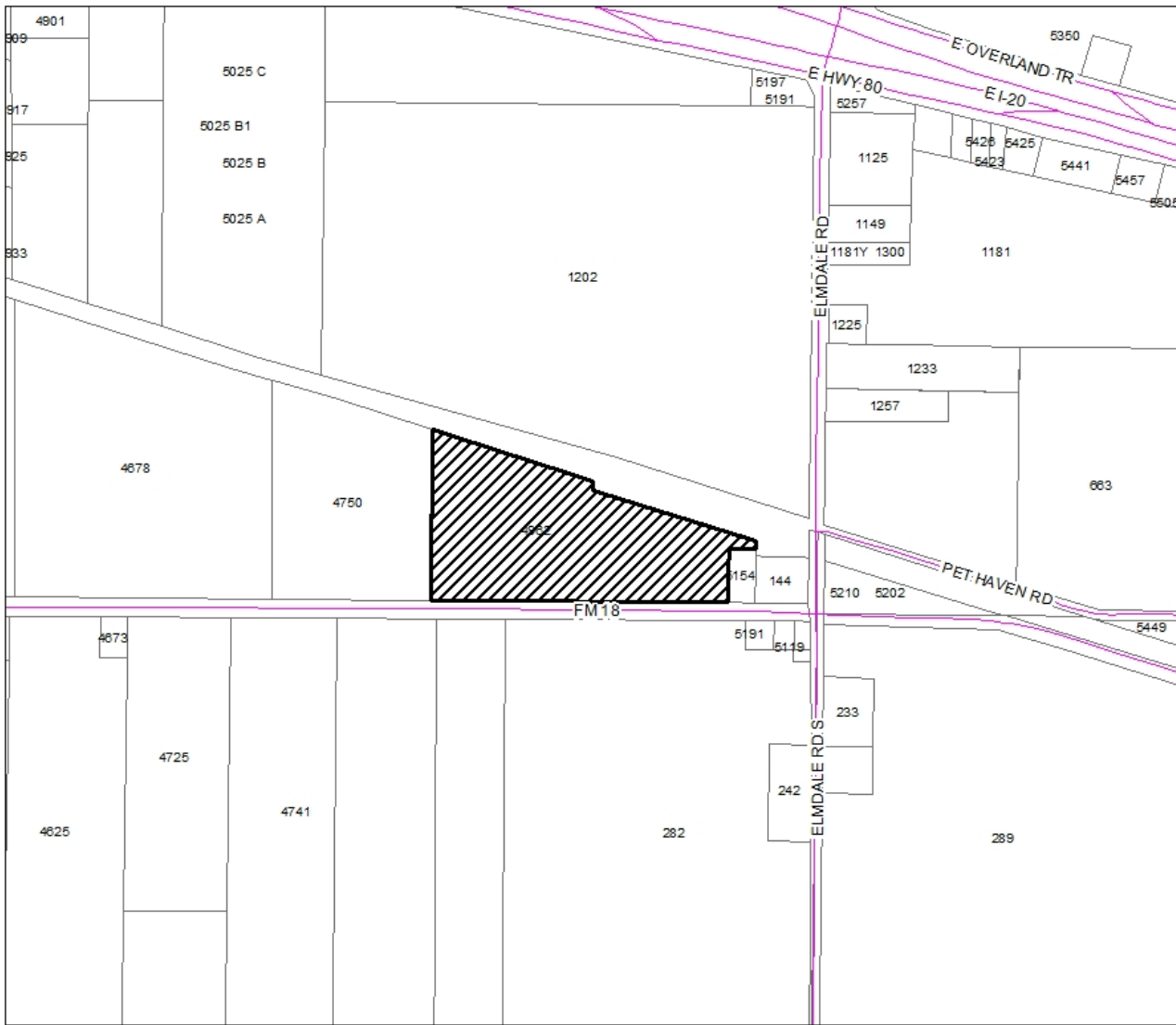
F – In favor

Owner	Property ID	Situs	Response
VREELAND DEREK MATTHEW &	19885	144 ELMDALE RD S	
DEAVER CHAD	20835		
BARNHILL TAYLOR	19376	5154 FM 18	
BANDAG INC	64975	4750 FM 18	
BRIDGESTONE BANDAG LLC	19503	4962 FM 18	
DEAVER DAVID CHAD & CORTNEY	19758	282 ELMDALE RD S	
ANTILLEY MARGARET & MALONE JANE &	18892		
LISTA STEVEN & LISA	19383	5191 FM 18	
BLACKBURN RUTH BROOKS	19752	1202 ELMDALE RD	

Property ID

Owner	Property ID	Situs	Response
ANTILLEY MARGARET & MALONE JANE &	18892		
BARNHILL TAYLOR	19376	5154 FM 18	
LISTA STEVEN & LISA	19383	5191 FM 18	
BRIDGESTONE BANDAG LLC	19503	4962 FM 18	
BLACKBURN RUTH BROOKS	19752	1202 ELMDALE RD	
DEAVER DAVID CHAD & CORTNEY	19758	282 ELMDALE RD S	
VREELAND DEREK MATTHEW &	19885	144 ELMDALE RD S	
DEAVER CHAD	20835		
BANDAG INC	64975	4750 FM 18	

LOCATION MAP



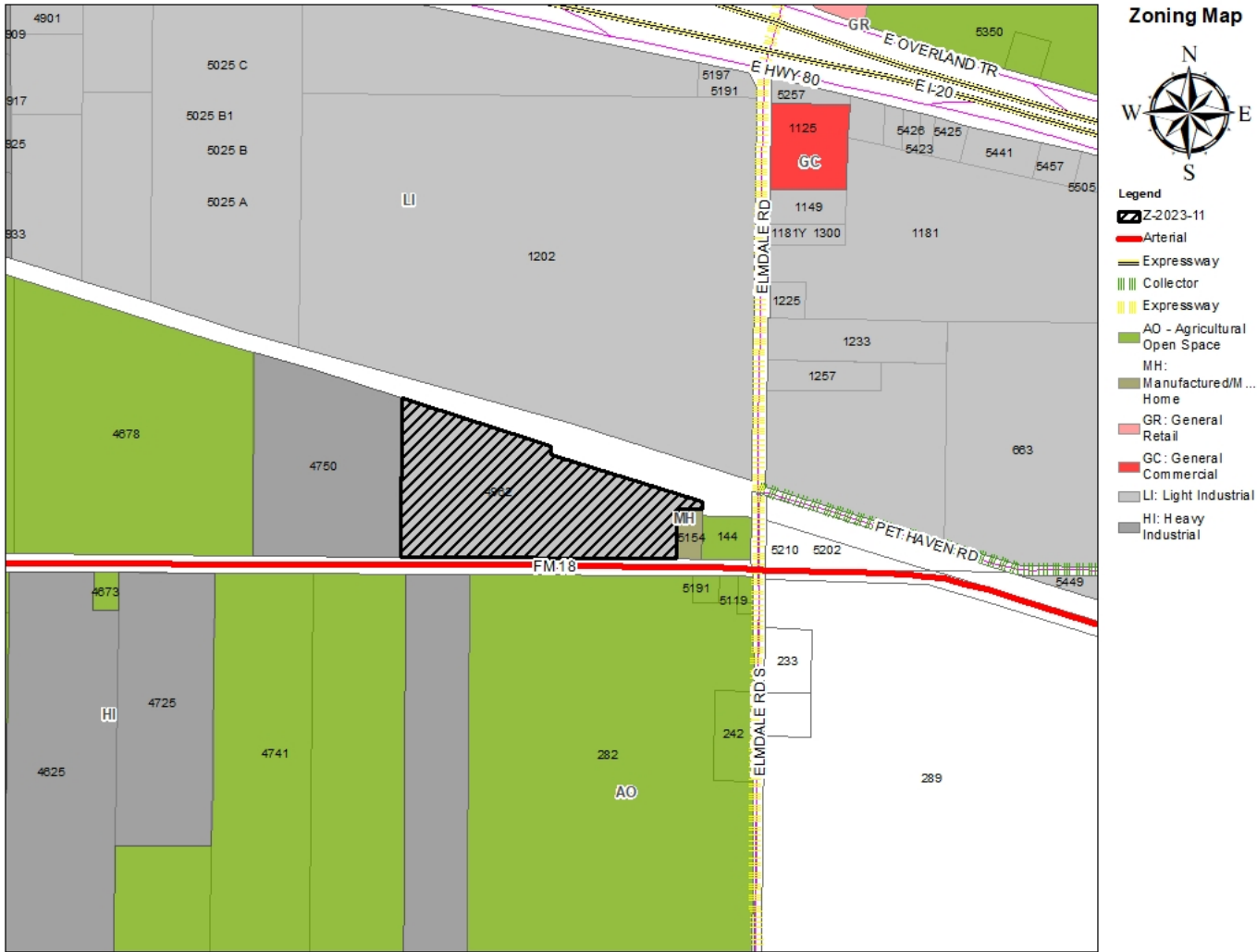
Location Map



Legend

 Z-2023-11

ZONING MAP





REZONE REQUEST

Case: Z-2023-11

Owner: Bridgestone Bandag, LLC

Agent: Chris Daniel

Request: Rezone from LI to HI

Location: 4962 FM 18

Notification: 0 in Favor, 0 Opposed

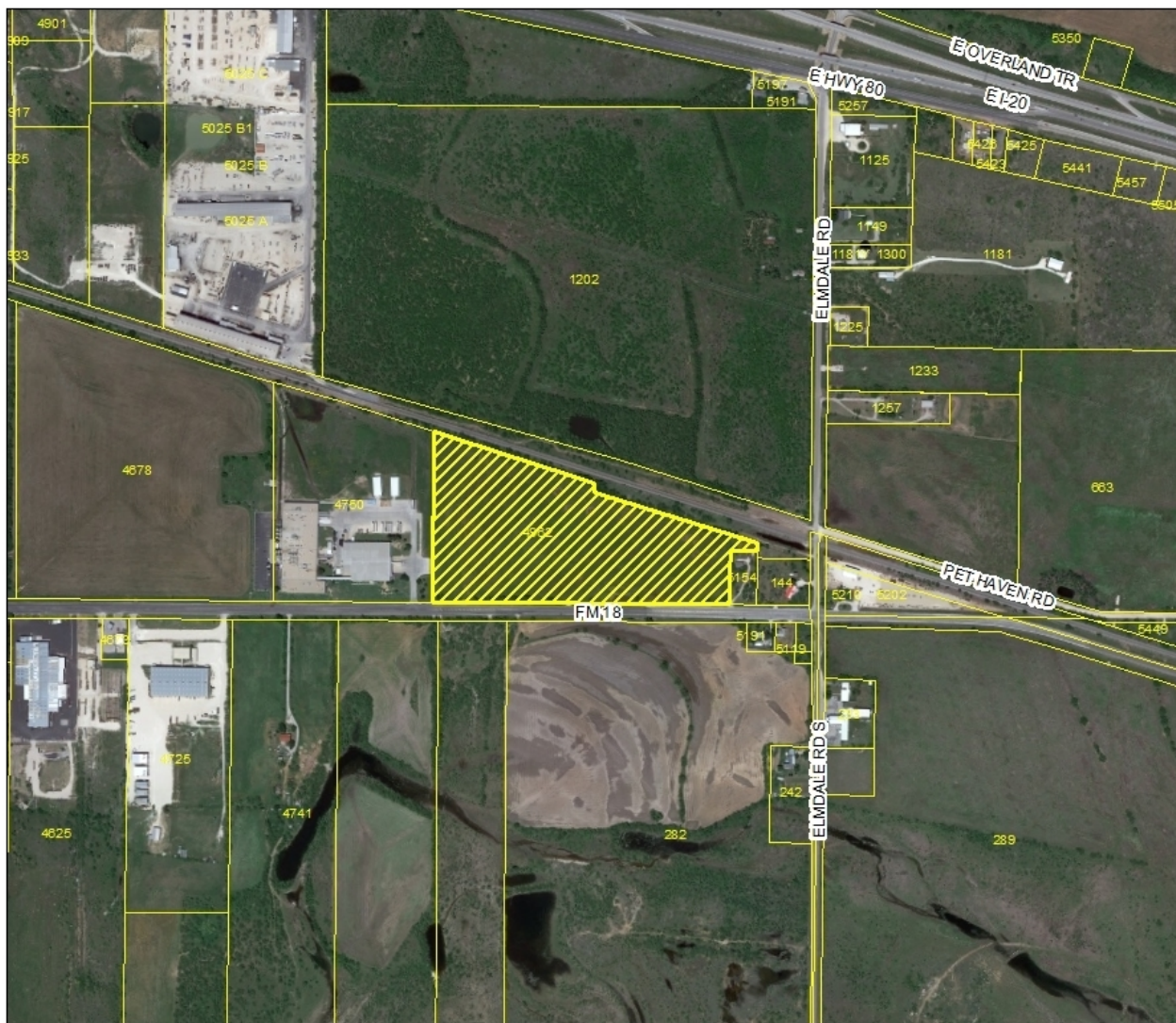
Planning & Zoning: May 2, 2023

City Council Hearing: May 25, 2023
June 8, 2023





Z-2023-11 AERIAL LOCATION MAP



Aerial Map



Legend

- Z-2023-11
- CourierParcels



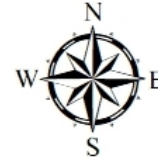
CITY OF
ABILENE
TEXAS



Z-2023-11 ZONING MAP



Zoning Map



Legend

- Z-2023-11
- Arterial
- Expressway
- Collector
- Expressway
- AO - Agricultural Open Space
- MH: Manufactured/Mobile Home
- GR: General Retail
- GC: General Commercial
- LI: Light Industrial
- HI: Heavy Industrial



CITY OF
ABILENE
TEXAS



PERMITTED USES IN LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI) ZONING

ACCESSORY AND INCIDENTAL USES:

- P Accessory Structure (Also see Division 4 of this article)
- P Antenna, Non-Commercial/Amateur
- P ATM's, Self-Serve Kiosks, and Similar Facilities
- P Drive-Through Facility
- TP Field Office or Construction Office (temporary)
- P Freight Container
- P Fuel Sales
- TP Itinerant Business
- P Manufacturing (incidental)
- C Mobile Home (permanent security residence)
- TP Mobile Home (temporary security residence)
- P Mobile Home or Temporary Building (office for sales and service)
- P Recreation Building, Multipurpose
- P Recycling Collection Point
- P/SE Wind Energy Conversion Systems

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL USES:

- P Adult Entertainment Enterprise
- C Cultural Facilities
- P Drive-in Theater
- C Motorized Racing
- P Recreation – Outdoors (passive)

GOVERNMENT, HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE USES:

- P Ambulance Service
- P Correction, Detention, or Penal Facilities
- P Fire/Police Station
- P Homeless/Emergency Shelter
- P Medical/Dental Laboratory
- P Military and Armed Forces Reserve Center
- P Post Office
- C Sanitary Landfill

EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS USES:

- C Cemetery, Crematorium, and Mausoleum
- P Church or Place of Worship
- P Educational and Scientific Research
- P School: Public/Private
- P Trade/Business School

SERVICE

- P/C Automobile Wash
- P Contractor Services
- P Funeral Home/ Mortuary/Morgue
- P Kennel (With Outdoor Pens)
- P Kennel (Without Outdoor Pens)
- P Laundry, Dry Cleaning, Dyeing, and Linen Service (no retail customers)
- P Laundry/Dry Cleaning Services & Facilities
- P Office (general, professional, financial)
- P Printing, Copying, Reproduction, Publishing
- P Recycling Collection and Processing Center
- P Repair and Maintenance Services - Automobile/Small Truck (major)
- P Repair and Maintenance Services - Automobile/Small Truck (minor)
- P Repair and Maintenance Services (indoor)
- P Repair and Maintenance Services (outdoors)
- P Repair and Maintenance Services (truck and other large vehicles)
- P Scales (public)
- P Storage - Self-Service Units
- P Tattoo Parlor
- P Taxidermist
- P Veterinary Service (all size animals)
- P Veterinary Service (small animals)
- P Wrecker/Towing

TRADE – RETAIL USES

- P Aircraft and Accessories
- P ATM's, Self-Serve Kiosks, and Similar Facilities
- P Fuel Sales
- P Head Shop
- P Liquor Store (Off Premises Consumption) *(Defined under Liquor Store)*
- P Liquor Store (On Premises Consumption) *(Defined under Liquor Store)*
- P Retail Sales/Rental (automobile/small truck)
- P Retail Sales/Rental (indoor)
- P Retail Sales/Rental (outdoors, non-vehicle)
- P Retail Sales/Rental (trucks and other large vehicles and equipment)

TRADE – WHOLESALE USES

- P Liquor, Wholesale/Distribution
- C Livestock – Wholesale or Auction
- P Wholesaling and Storage (indoor)
- P Wholesaling and Storage (outdoors)

TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION AND UTILITIES:

- P Airport, Heliport and Flying Field Terminals - Commercial (passenger and freight)
- P Antenna Tower - Commercial
- P Automobile Parking Lot or Structure - Commercial
- P Broadcast Studio
- P Passenger Ground Transportation Terminal
- P Pressure Control Station
- P Public Utility Facility
- P Railroad Switching and Marshaling Yard
- P Utility Generation, Production, Treatment

RESOURCE PRODUCTION AND EXTRACTION USES:

- C Mining
- P Petroleum or Gas Well
- P Liquor
- P Manufacturing (light)
- P Urban Garden

LEGEND

- P Permitted as a Right-of-Use (may be subject to compliance with conditions described within Division 3- Requirements Applicable to Specific Land Uses of the Land Development Code)
- C Permitted as a Conditional Use Permit, Requiring Approval by City Council
- TP Permitted by Temporary Permit Only, Requiring Approval by Board of Adjustment





PERMITTED USES IN HEAVY INDUSTRIAL (HI) ZONING

ACCESSORY AND INCIDENTAL USES:

- P Accessory Structure (Also see Division 4 of this article)
- P Antenna, Non-Commercial/Amateur
- P ATM's, Self-Serve Kiosks, and Similar Facilities
- TP Field Office or Construction Office (temporary)
- P Freight Container
- P Manufacturing (incidental)
- C Mobile Home (permanent security residence)
- TP Mobile Home (temporary security residence)
- P Recreation Building, Multipurpose
- P Recycling Collection Point
- P/SE Wind Energy Conversion Systems

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL USES:

- P Adult Entertainment Enterprise
- C Motorized Racing

GOVERNMENT, HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE USES:

- P Fire/Police Station
- P Homeless/Emergency Shelter
- P Post Office
- P Sanitary Landfill

EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS USES:

- P Church or Place of Worship
- P Educational and Scientific Research
- P School: Public/Private

SERVICE

- P Contractor Services
- P Recycling Collection and Processing Center
- P Scales (public)
- P Wrecker/Towing

TRADE – RETAIL USES

- P Head Shop
- C Scrap and Waste Material

TRADE – WHOLESALE USES

- C Livestock – Wholesale or Auction
- P Wholesaling and Storage (indoor)
- P Wholesaling and Storage (outdoors)

TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION AND UTILITIES:

- P Airport, Heliport and Flying Field Terminals - Commercial (passenger and freight)
- P Antenna Tower - Commercial
- P Automobile Parking Lot or Structure - Commercial
- P Pressure Control Station
- P Public Utility Facility
- P Railroad Switching and Marshaling Yard
- P Utility Generation, Production, Treatment

RESOURCE PRODUCTION AND EXTRACTION USES:

- P Mining
- P Petroleum or Gas Well
- P Liquor
- P Manufacturing (light)
- P Manufacturing (heavy)
- P Urban Garden

LEGEND

- P Permitted as a Right-of-Use (may be subject to compliance with conditions described within Division 3- Requirements Applicable to Specific Land Uses of the Land Development Code)
- C Permitted as a Conditional Use Permit, Requiring Approval by City Council
- TP Permitted by Temporary Permit Only, Requiring Approval by Board of Adjustment





Z-2023-11 VIEWS OF SUBJECT PROPERTY



West Neighboring Property



Subject Property



Subject Property

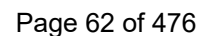
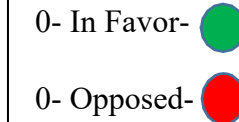


West Neighboring Property



South Neighboring Property







FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed request is consistent with:

- The Comprehensive Plan;
- The surrounding uses and zoning;
- Generally accepted planning principals; and
- The Criteria for Approval in the LDC.

Staff Recommendation: **Approval**





Questions?



ZONING CASE Z-2023-13

STAFF REPORT



Scheduled Hearings

Planning & Zoning Commission: May 2, 2023

City Council 1st Reading: May 25, 2023

City Council 2nd Reading: June 8, 2023

Applicant

Owner: Dennis and Mollie Dunnam

Case Manager

Adam Holland – Planner

Request

Rezoning of approximately 1.5 acres from General Commercial (GC) and Agricultural Open (AO) to GC.

Location

411 East South 11th Street.

Background

The subject property is narrow and divided into two zoning districts. The north portion of the lot, along ES 11th Street, is zoned GC. The remainder of the site is zoned AO. The owner proposes to rezone the entire lot to GC to allow for the full development of this lot for commercial use.

Zoning, Existing and Proposed Land Use

Adjacent properties to the west are fully zoned GC, and are not divided into two zoning districts. Properties to the east have split zoning (GC/AO) matching the zoning of the subject site. South of the site is an elementary school with split zoning in the AO and RS-6 zoning districts. Property to the north is zoned GC. The predominant use along ES 11th Street in this area is commercial, with single-family residences east of the subject site.

Criteria Assessment

Section 1.4.1.4 of Abilene's Land Development Code states that, in making a determination regarding a requested zoning change, the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council may consider the following factors:

- (1) Whether the proposed zoning map amendment implements the policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan, including the land use classification of the property on the Future Land Use and Development Plan Map, as amended.**

The Future Land Use Map recommends low density development for this site. The existing GC zoning is not consistent with that recommendation. The Comprehensive Plan states that

the subject site is also located in a suburban character area and GC uses would be a “complementary zoning district”.

Properties to the immediate west have the same depth from ES 11th Street and are used and zoned commercially. Five lots to the east is a property zoned RS-6 with the same depth from ES 11th Street that is used commercially. The proposed zoning change would match that existing zoning pattern to the west and the use pattern to the west and east. Further, ES 11th Street is an arterial street. All of those considerations result in a suburban character where GC zoning would be appropriate, thereby satisfying the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

Prior to 1990, it was common for cities to split the zoning of properties having a deep long lot depth, such as the subject site. The depth of the zoning split would usually be arbitrary and had no relationship to a platted lot, a deed boundary, or a proposed development plan. The technique frequently resulted in zoning administration issues and was eventually deemed to be arbitrary and capricious and not appropriate. The split zoning of the subject property, and the four lots to the immediate east, appear to have been established in this manner. Current planning practices would be to rezone the entire lot as one district, unless the owner or developer proposed a plat or a development plan to form the basis for split zoning.

(2) Whether the uses permitted by the proposed change in zoning classification and the standards applicable to such uses will be appropriate in the immediate area of the land to be reclassified.

The proposed GC zoning is consistent with the uses surrounding the subject property and with the historic use of the property. The surrounding neighborhood has also historically been commercial uses.

(3) Whether the proposed change is in accord with any existing or proposed plans for providing public schools, streets, water supply, sanitary sewers, and other public services and utilities to the area.

This property has adequate utility service.

(4) Any other factors, which will substantially affect the public health, safety, morals, or general welfare.

None known.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **approval**.

TABLE

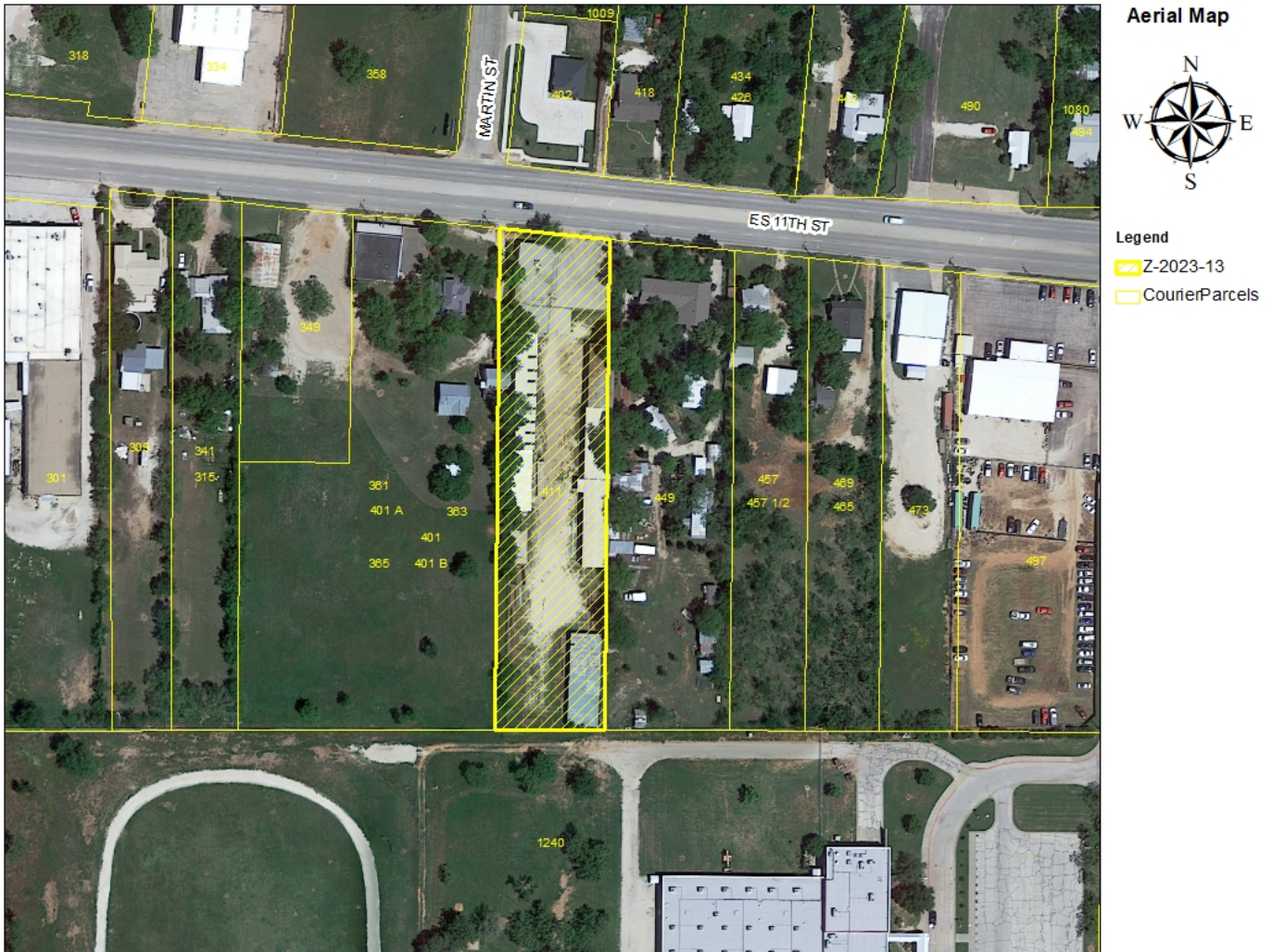
Owner

Owner	Property ID	Situs	Response
ABILENE IND SCHOOL DIST	43463	1240 LAKESIDE DR	
BILLINGS CYNTHIA KAY	41978	449 ES 11TH ST	
CHRISTIAN DORA SUE	45471	418 ES 11TH ST	
CHRISTIAN DORA SUE TRUST	46013	426 ES 11TH ST	
CHRISTIAN DORA SUE TRUST	46013	434 ES 11TH ST	
DUNNAM DENNIS RAY II &	41848	411 ES 11TH ST	
LATOUR VINCENT	45624	402 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	365 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	401 A ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	401 B ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	363 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	361 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	401 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	42222	457 1/2 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	42222	457 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43349	349 ES 11TH ST	
SAR SAM & VONG YOKKIM	45750	358 ES 11TH ST	

Prop ID

Owner	Property ID	Situs	Response
DUNNAM DENNIS RAY II &	41848	411 ES 11TH ST	
BILLINGS CYNTHIA KAY	41978	449 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	42222	457 1/2 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	42222	457 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	365 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	401 A ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	401 B ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	363 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	361 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43228	401 ES 11TH ST	
MC PHAIL MIKE	43349	349 ES 11TH ST	
ABILENE IND SCHOOL DIST	43463	1240 LAKESIDE DR	
CHRISTIAN DORA SUE	45471	418 ES 11TH ST	
LATOUR VINCENT	45624	402 ES 11TH ST	
SAR SAM & VONG YOKKIM	45750	358 ES 11TH ST	
CHRISTIAN DORA SUE TRUST	46013	426 ES 11TH ST	
CHRISTIAN DORA SUE TRUST	46013	434 ES 11TH ST	

LOCATION MAP



ZONING MAP





REZONE REQUEST

Case: Z-2023-13

Owner: Dennis and Mollie Dunnam

Request: Rezone from GC and AO to GC

Location: 411 East South 11th Street

Notification: 0 in Favor, 0 Opposed

Planning & Zoning: May 2, 2023

City Council Hearing: May 25, 2023
June 8, 2023





Z-2023-13 LOCATION MAP



Aerial Map



Legend

-  Z-2023-13
-  CourierParcels



CITY OF
ABILENE
TEXAS



Z-2023-13 ZONING MAP



Zoning Map



Legend

- Z-2023-13
- Arterial
- AO - Agricultural Open Space
- RS-6: Residential Single-Family
- MD: Medium Density Residential
- GC: General Commercial
- HC: Heavy Commercial



CITY OF
ABILENE
TEXAS



Permitted Uses in AO Zoning

RESIDENTIAL USES:

- C Bed & Breakfast
- P Dwelling— Industrialized Housing Unit
- P Dwelling – Single-Family Detached
- C Vacation Travel Trailer Park

ACCESSORY AND INCIDENTAL USES:

- P Accessory Structure (Also see Division 4 of this article)
- P Antenna, Non-Commercial/Amateur
- P Animal Lot
- P/C Day Care Operation – Home-Based*
- P Dwelling – Accessory*
- TP Field Office or Construction Office (temporary)*
- P Freight Container*
- P Garage Sale
- P Home Occupation
- C Mobile Home (permanent security residence)
- C Mobile Home (temporary security residence)
- TP Subdivision Sales Office (temporary)
- P Swimming Pool, Private (accessory to residential use)
- P Tennis Court, Private (accessory to residential use)
- P/SE Wind Energy Conversion Systems*

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL USES:

- p Civic, Social, and Fraternal Organization
- P Fairgrounds/Rodeo
- C Motorized Racing
- C Recreation – Outdoors (active)
- P Recreation – Outdoors (passive)
- P Zoo

GOVERNMENT, HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE USES:

- P Community Home
- C Correction, Detention, or Penal Facilities
- P Fire/Police Station
- C Military and Armed Forces Reserve Center
- C Sanitary Landfill

EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS USES:

- C Cemetery, Crematorium, and Mausoleum
- P Church or Place of Worship
- P School: Public/Private

SERVICE

- C Kennel (with outdoor pens)
- P Kennel (without outdoor pens)
- P Veterinary Service (all size animals)

TRADE – RETAIL USES

- C Liquor Store (on premises consumption) (Defined under Liquor Store)

TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION AND UTILITIES:

- C Airport, Heliport and Flying Field Terminals – Commercial
- C Antenna Tower – Commercial
- P Public Utility Facility
- C Utility Generation, Production, Treatment

RESOURCE PRODUCTION AND EXTRACTION USES:

- P Farming, Ranching & Livestock, Hatchery
- C Mining
- C Petroleum or Gas Well
- P Urban Garden



LEGEND

- P Permitted as a Right-of-Use (may be subject to compliance with conditions described within Division 3- Requirements Applicable to Specific Land Uses of the Land Development Code)
- C Permitted as a Conditional Use Permit, Requiring Approval by City Council
- TP Permitted by Temporary Permit Only, Requiring Approval by Board of Adjustment



Permitted Uses in GC Zoning

RESIDENTIAL USES:

- P Hotel/Motel
- C Vacation Travel Trailer Park

ACCESSORY AND INCIDENTAL USES:

- P Accessory Structure (Also see Division 4 of this article)
- P Antenna, Non-Commercial/Amateur
- P ATM's, Self-Serve Kiosks, and Similar Facilities
- P Drive-Thru Facility
- TP Field Office or Construction Office (temporary)
- C Freight Container
- P Fuel Sales
- TP Itinerant Business
- P Manufacturing (incidental)
- C Mobile Home (permanent security residence)
- TP Mobile Home (temporary security residence)
- C Mobile Home or Temporary Building (office for sales and service)
- P Recycling Collection Point
- C Travel Trailers (accessory to hospitals)
- P/SE Wind Energy Conversion Systems

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL USES:

- P Civic, Social, and Fraternal Organization
- P Cultural Facilities
- P Drive-in Theater
- P Recreation – Outdoors (active)
- P Recreation – Outdoors (passive)
- P Recreation and Commercial Entertainment – Indoor

GOVERNMENT, HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE USES:

- P Ambulance Service
- P Fire/Police Station
- C Homeless/Emergency Shelter
- P Hospital
- P Medical/Dental Laboratory
- P Post Office
- C Rehabilitation Facility
- P Social Service Facility

EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS USES:

- P Arts School
- C Cemetery, Crematorium, and Mausoleum
- P Church or Place of Worship
- P Day-Care Operation - Center-Based
- P Educational and Scientific Research
- P School: Public/Private
- P Trade/Business School
- P University/College

SERVICE

- P/C Automobile Wash
- C Contractor Services
- P Funeral Home/ Mortuary/Morgue
- C Kennel (With Outdoor Pens)
- P Kennel (Without Outdoor Pens)
- P Laundry, Dry Cleaning, Dyeing, and Linen Service (no retail customers)
- P Laundry/Dry Cleaning Services & Facilities
- P Office (general, professional, financial)
- P Personal Services
- P Printing, Copying, Reproduction, Publishing
- C Recycling Collection and Processing Center
- P Repair and Maintenance Services - Automobile/Small Truck (major)
- P Repair and Maintenance Services - Automobile/Small Truck (minor)
- P Repair and Maintenance Services (indoor)
- C Repair and Maintenance Services (outdoors)
- P Storage - Self-Service Units
- P Tattoo Parlor
- P Taxidermist
- P Veterinary Service (small animals)

TRADE – RETAIL USES

- C Aircraft and Accessories
- P ATM's, Self-Serve Kiosks, and Similar Facilities
- P Fuel Sales
- P Liquor Store (Off Premises Consumption) (*Defined under Liquor Store*)
- P Liquor Store (On Premises Consumption) (*Defined under Liquor Store*)
- P Restaurant, Brew Pub
- P Restaurant, Fast Food
- P Restaurant, Standard
- P Retail Sales/Rental (automobile/small truck)
- P Retail Sales/Rental (indoor)
- P Retail Sales/Rental (outdoors, non-vehicle)
- C Retail Sales/Rental (trucks and other large vehicles and equipment)

TRADE – WHOLESALE USES

- C Wholesaling and Storage (indoor)

TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION AND UTILITIES:

- C Antenna Tower - Commercial
- P Automobile Parking Lot or Structure - Commercial
- P Broadcast Studio
- P Passenger Ground Transportation Terminal
- P Pressure Control Station
- P Public Utility Facility

RESOURCE PRODUCTION AND EXTRACTION USES:

- P Petroleum or Gas Well
- P Urban Garden



CITY OF
ABILENE
TEXAS

LEGEND

- P Permitted as a Right-of-Use (may be subject to compliance with conditions described within Division 3- Requirements Applicable to Specific Land Uses of the Land Development Code)
- C Permitted as a Conditional Use Permit, Requiring Approval by City Council
- TP Permitted by Temporary Permit Only, Requiring Approval by Board of Adjustment

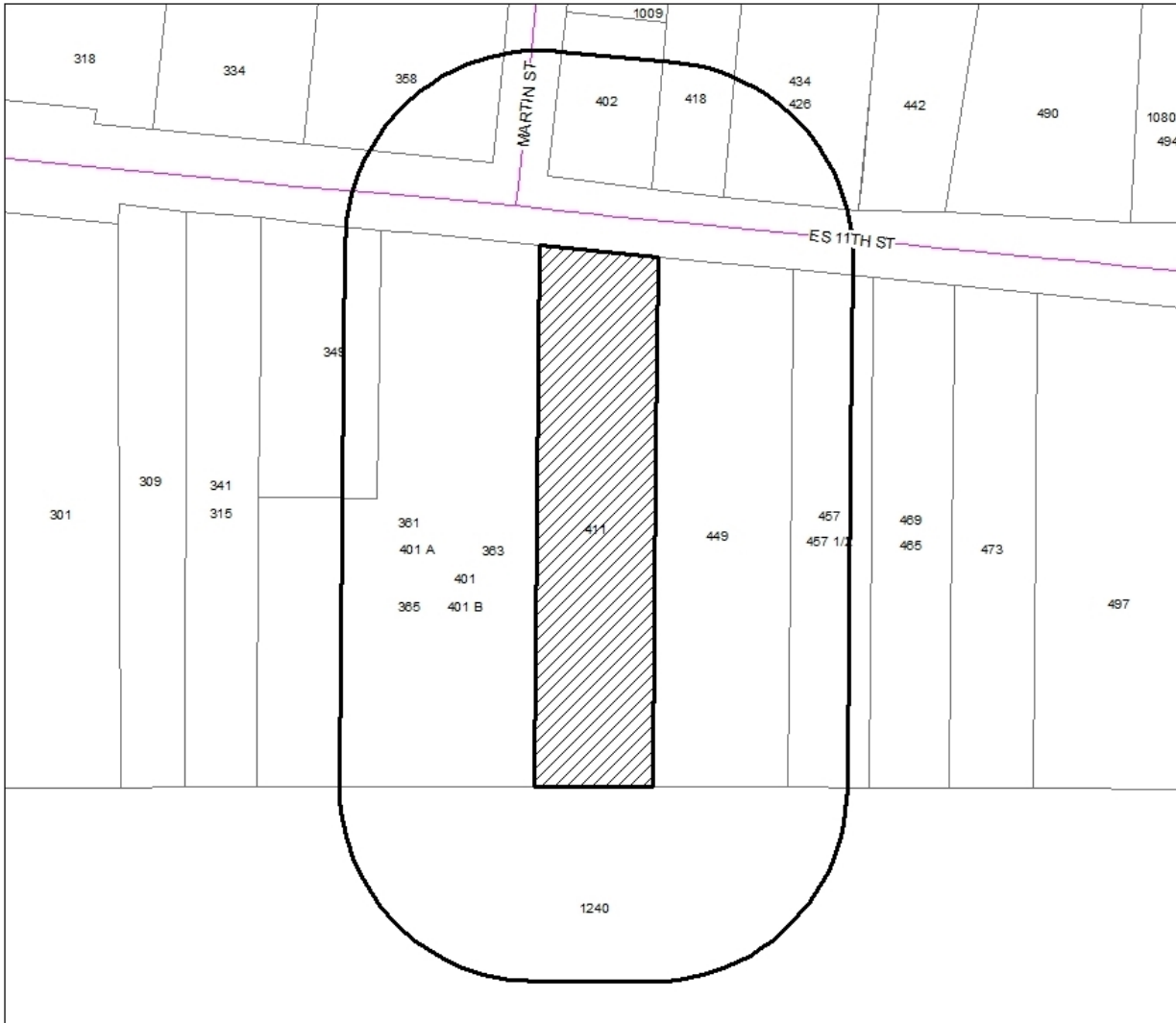


Z-2023-13 VIEWS OF SUBJECT & NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES





Z-2023-13 NOTIFICATION AREA MAP



Notification Map



Legend

- Notification Area
- Z-2023-13

0- In Favor- 
0- Opposed- 
0% Opposed





FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed request for GC rezoning is *consistent* with:

- The *Comprehensive Plan*;
- The surrounding uses and zoning;
- Generally accepted planning principals; and
- The Criteria for Approval in the LDC.

Staff Recommendation: **Approval**





Questions?



ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS, AMENDING THE, "LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE" OF THE ABILENE CITY CODE, BY CHANGING THE ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AFFECTING CERTAIN PROPERTIES; CALLING A PUBLIC HEARING; PROVIDING A PENALTY AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ABILENE, TEXAS:

PART 1: That Chapter 2 (Zoning Regulations) of the Land Development Code of the City of Abilene, is hereby amended by changing the zoning district boundaries as set out in Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part of this ordinance for all purposes.

Commented [WN1]: Changing Zoning/Amending/
Abandoning

PART 2: That any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of this chapter shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00). Each day such violation shall continue or be permitted to continue, shall be deemed a separate offense.

PART 3: That the Planning Director be, and is hereby authorized and directed to change the official Zoning Map of the City of Abilene to correctly reflect the amendments thereto. PASSED ON FIRST READING the 25th day of May, 2023

A notice of the time and place, where and when said ordinance would be given a public hearing and considered for final passage, was published in the *Abilene Reporter-News*, a daily newspaper of general circulation in the City of Abilene, said publication being on the 17th day of April 2023, the same being more than fifteen (15) days prior to a public hearing held in the Council Chamber of the City Hall in Abilene, Texas, at 8:30 a.m. on the 8th day of June 2023, to permit the public to be heard prior to final consideration of this ordinance. Said ordinance, being a penal ordinance, becomes effective ten (10) days after its publication in the newspaper, as provided by Section 19 of the Charter of the City of Abilene.

PASSED ON FINAL READING THIS 8th day of June, 2023.

Commented [WN2]: Second City Council Reading Date

ATTEST:

CITY SECRETARY

MAYOR

APPROVED:

CITY ATTORNEY

EXHIBIT A

Change the zoning classification of the following described land from an Agricultural Open (AO) and General Commercial (GC) district to a GC district.

Location: 411 ES 11th Street

Lot 1 and the West ½ of Lot 2, Browne-Hall-Meyer-Fredeck Subdivision of Lot 1, Block 211 of the Original City of Abilene, Taylor County, Texas, According to Plat recorded in Volume 1, Page 378, Plat Records, Taylor County, Texas ("Property").



END



2023 Parks & Recreation Master Plan

*Planning and Zoning Commission
Abilene, Texas
May 2, 2023*



Purpose of Plan:

- Provide a vision for parks and recreation in Abilene for the next 10 years
- Ensure department offerings and priorities are aligned with community needs
- Address gaps & inequities in service delivery
- Prepare the department to respond to changing needs and trends
- Describe future funding requirements and potential sources
- Strengthen fiscal responsibility, sustainability, and efficiency
- Ensure no duplication of services, improve partnerships

Why Us:



PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- ENVISION PHASE
- PLAN PHASE

Steering Committee Guidance:

PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- ENVISION PHASE
- PLAN PHASE

Small group of key staff, board members, and city officials



Involvement, direction, reviewing materials

4 Meetings
Each **2hrs**

Provide critical knowledge and context for Abilene



Help promote engagement opportunities



Determine community's vision for the future of Parks and Recreation in Abilene



Ensure that plan and recommendations are right for the community





PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- ENVISION PHASE
- PLAN PHASE

Project Process

Evaluate

What the Data Says...

Based on availability of parks & 15 amenities
33% live with **low** or **medium-low service**
19% live with **high** or **medium-high service**

20%

within walking distance to a park

Community uses parks

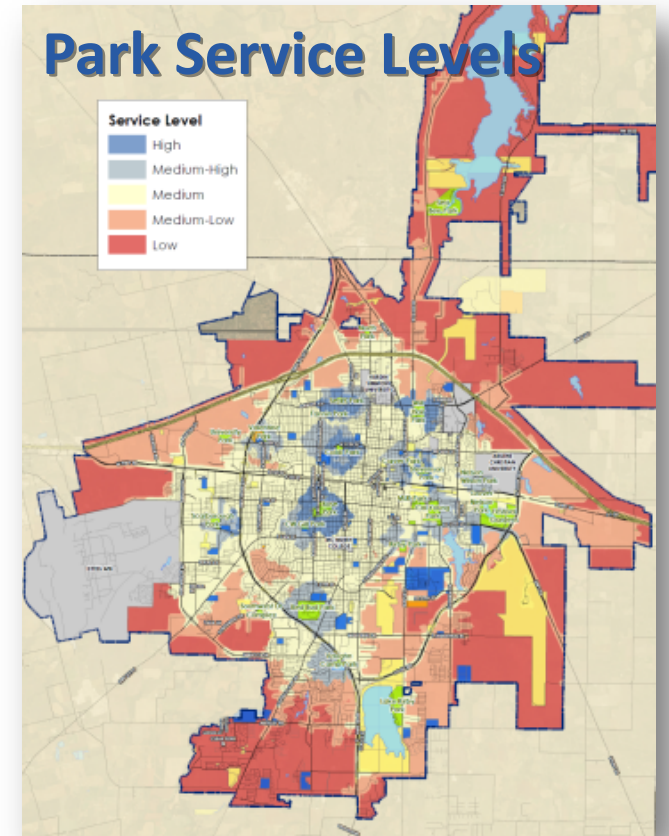
82% of respondents visited parks 6 or more times in the past year,
50% 20 or more

Population growing & aging

More seniors, fewer children



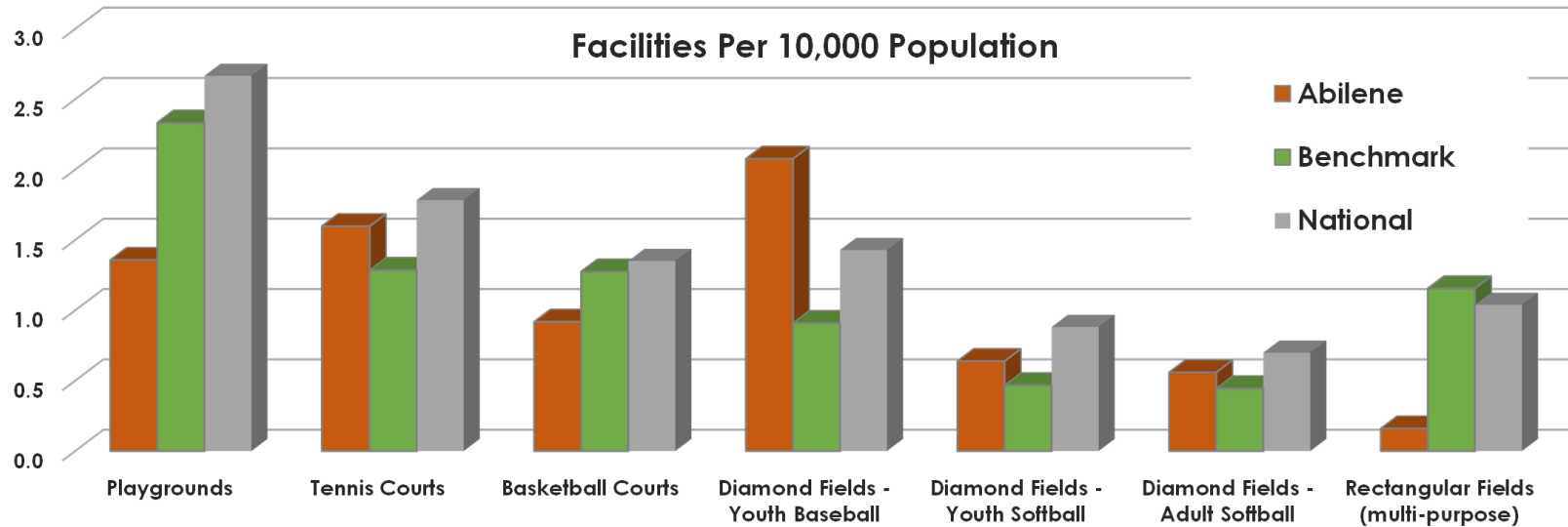
Site assessment determined:
+ **Athletic field upgrades needed**
+ **ADA deficiencies**
+ **Aging infrastructure & equipment**
+ **Land available for improvement**



Evaluate

What the Data Says...

Benchmarking to 46 agencies serving populations between 75,000-200,000 (7 states)



Operating Expenditures per Capita

Lower expenditure per capita (\$59 vs. \$97)

Acreage per 1000 Population

Below the benchmark (9.1 vs. 11.5)

Fewer but Larger Parks



Lower Staffing:
Abilene has less staff than the benchmarks (6.8 vs. 8.6 FTE per 10,000 population)



Low Level of Service:
Lower level of service for all outdoor facilities except diamond fields and tennis courts

Engage

Learning from the Community...

- **999 Web/Handout Surveys**
 - 93% Abilene residents
 - 7% live outside the city
- **Over 20 stakeholder groups** engaged
 - e.g., schools, sports leagues, government, tourism, partners
- **1 Open House Workshop (60+ attendees)**



Community Priorities for Investment...

Engage

Programs



Events & performances



More youth & adult sports leagues and tournaments



Active adult programs



Nature programs

Facilities



Restrooms, shade, and other support amenities



Recreation Centers



Playgrounds



Athletic fields



Pickleball courts

System



Upgrades to existing



Connectivity, accessibility & trails



Natural areas, nature parks, water access

PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- **ENGAGE PHASE**
- ENVISION PHASE
- PLAN PHASE

Envision

Strategic Plan

VALUES



Service



Inclusivity



Innovation

GOALS

Responsible Stewardship

- Modern Facilities
- Energy Efficiency
- Nature Access
- Community Connections

Accessible Spaces

- Plan
- Access
- Wellness

Efficient Management

- Proactive Maintenance
- Staff Investment

Fiscal Responsibility

- Financial Discipline
- Accounting

Effective Communication

- Consistent Branding
- Community Awareness

Successful Partnerships

- Financial Innovation
- Increased Tourism
- Forward Thinking

PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- **ENVISION PHASE**
- PLAN PHASE

LOOKING AHEAD

Mission: *Creating exceptional experiences that build community and enrich lives*

Vision: *Be the gold standard for parks and recreation*

Plan

Operational Recommendations

PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- ENVISION PHASE
- **PLAN PHASE**

- Strive to reach the **new vision for parks and recreation** – try new unique approaches to meeting the community's needs
- **Continuously engage the community** to successfully implement this plan
- Implement the **partnership for a flat field complex** at Grover Nelson Park
- Find **dependable funding sources** – parks foundation, continue seeking grants, etc.
- Continue to address **deferred maintenance**
- Ensure **staffing levels meet the needs** of the park system as it evolves and grows
- **Stay competitive** to potential employees to ensure vacancies can be filled

Plan

Broad Capital Recommendations

- Upgrade and improve **existing parks** and facilities
- Upgrade and modernize **baseball and softball fields**
- Add or renovate **game courts** – especially **pickleball**
- Upgrade/replace **recreation centers**
- Improve/add support features – **restrooms, shade**, seating, drinking fountains, landscaping
- Add/upgrade **playground equipment**
- Add **trails in parks** and **create linkages** throughout the community
- Improve **ADA access**



PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- ENVISION PHASE
- **PLAN PHASE**

Plan

Top 10 Capital Improvements

Existing Park/Facilities

- Playgrounds
- Restrooms
- Shade
- Community/recreation centers
- ADA Access
- Baseball/softball fields
- Paved park trails
- Picnic shelters
- Roads/parking lots (Public Works)
- Signage (wayfinding, entrance, interpretive)



Top 10 Capital Improvements

New Development

- Field complex (soccer, lacrosse, etc.)
- Paved park trails
- Waterfront amenities
- Pickleball courts
- Amphitheater
- Dog parks
- Adventure Cove expansion
- Natural surface trails
- Southwest community park
- Neighborhood parks (additional)



Implement

PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- ENVISION PHASE
- PLAN PHASE
- IMPLEMENTATION

*122 ACTIONS

ACTION PLAN - 2023 Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Legend of Abbreviations/Organizations

Parks = Abilene Parks and Recreation Department

City = City Council, Other City Departments

Partners = Other Organizations (county/state, private/non-profit agencies, schools, grants, etc.)

OP = Park and Recreation Operating Budget

CIP = Capital Improvement Budget

Revenue = Items that Generate Additional Revenue

*Highest priority actions in BOLD

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Timeframe (Years)

0-2

3-5

6-10

Category

Estimated Capital Cost

Agency

Funding Source

Goal 1: Responsible Stewardship

Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities

Objective 1.1 – Modern Facilities: Update park facilities to support and facilitate modern programming opportunities

Strategy 1.1.1: Upgrade baseball/softball diamond fields with new backstops, fencing, dugouts, and spectator areas (Cobb, MLK, Oscar Rose, Red Bud, Scarborough, Arthur)

Strategy 1.1.2: Continue to replace dated playgrounds, including separate age 2-5 equipment or add where unavailable

Strategy 1.1.3: Upgrade/replace recreation centers throughout the city

Strategy 1.1.4: Develop dedicated pickleball courts at Oscar Rose Park, near the existing tennis center and the senior center

Strategy 1.1.5: Add or improve restrooms throughout the parks & include family restrooms at larger parks

Strategy 1.1.6: Incorporate shade features over existing amenities such as playgrounds to facilitate year-round usage

Strategy 1.1.7: Expand the existing Adventure Cove Aquatic Center to include deep water and features for all ages

Strategy 1.1.8: Add security cameras and lighting throughout the parks in locations that have perceived security concerns

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Determine responsibility

Locate funding source and estimated cost to implement

Identify action based on priority and timeframe

Implement

City of Abilene

2023 Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Introduction

This Master Plan is critical to the city's future as it clarifies the department's responsibilities, the community's desires, and the importance of partnerships.

The city has an abundant amount of parkland with significant potential for strategic and responsible development

GOAL 1: RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities

Objectives
Modern Facilities
Energy Efficiency
Nature Access
Community Connections



Mission

Creating exceptional experiences that build community and enrich lives

Vision

Be the gold standard for parks and recreation



Values

Service - Providing exceptional and enriching programs, events, and facilities for the whole community

Inclusivity - Ensuring convenient, welcoming, and affordable community access to parks and facilities

Innovation - Developing modern parks and amenities



GOAL 4: FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably

Objectives
Financial Discipline
Accounting

GOAL 2: ACCESSIBLE SPACES

Maximize accessibility to the parks and recreation system and city facilities to ensure inclusivity for all residents while promoting a healthy community

Objectives
Plan Access Wellness

GOAL 3: EFFICIENT MANAGEMENT

Manage, maintain, and improve facility assets and infrastructure

Objectives
Proactive Maintenance
Staff Investment



How do we get there?

1. Employ innovative + bold strategies to achieve the vision
2. Upgrade + improve existing facilities
3. Continuously engage the community
4. Improve + add support features
5. Add + upgrade playground equipment
6. Upgrade/replace recreation centers
7. Build trails in parks and create citywide linkages
8. Ensure ADA accessibility
9. Continue to partner for a multipurpose field complex
10. Modernize diamond fields and facilities
11. Develop amphitheater/stages to host events
12. Seek partnerships to best deliver parks and recreation services
13. Renovate game courts (e.g. pickleball)
14. Strategically + consistently place signage
15. Establish a parks foundation
16. Maintain appropriate staffing levels



The Abilene community desires:

Improved maintenance

Upgrades & improvements to existing parks/facilities
- ADA access
- Recreation center upgrades
- Shaded playgrounds

Connectivity & trails
- Trails within parks and throughout city
- Mountain biking
- Signage + wayfinding

New spaces & facilities

- Multipurpose rectangular fields
- Water & natural area access

Expanded programming & events
- Youth & adult sports
- Active adult programs (55+)
- Nature education programs
- Ability to host sports tournaments
- Community concerts & festivals

Support amenities
- Restrooms & drinking fountains
- Shade
- Seating



GOAL 5: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Promote, model, and embrace effective communication and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders

Objectives
Consistent Branding
Community Awareness

GOAL 6: SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Leverage partnerships that produce parks and recreational opportunities that are forward thinking and world class

Objectives
Financial Innovation
Increased Tourism
Forward Thinking

PLAN PURPOSE

PLAN PROCESS

- EVALUATE PHASE
- ENGAGE PHASE
- ENVISION PHASE
- PLAN PHASE
- IMPLEMENTATION

*123 ACTIONS

Questions/Comments





PARKS & RECREATION

CITY OF ABILENE TEXAS

2023 ABILENE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

March, 2023

DRAFT



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

2023 Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Abilene, Texas

City Council

Anthony Williams, Mayor
Shane Price, Place 1
Lynn Beard, Place 2

Donna Albus, Place 3
Weldon Hurt, Place 4
Kyle McAlister, Place 5
Travis Craver, Place 6

City Management Team

Robert Hanna, City Manager
Mindy Patterson, Deputy City Manager
Michael Rice, PE, Assistant City Manager

Parks and Recreation Department

Lesli Andrews, Director
Chris Gibson, Assistant Director
Richard Rodgers, Assistant Director
Jesus Coronado, Parks Manager
Ann Hall, Recreation Manager
Bobby Brown, Seniors & Aquatics Manager

Parks & Recreation Board

David Pittman, Chair
Leigh Black
Jeff Goodin

Gary Grubbs
Tony Pallarez
Tanell Blackmon
Robyn Wertheim

Master Plan Steering Committee

David Pittman
Lesli Andrews
Chris Gibson
Gary Grubbs

Richard Rodgers
Jesus Coronado
Bobby Brown
Ann Hall



Consultant Team



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Project No. 22039
March, 2023

Patrick D. Hoagland, ASLA, Principal in Charge
Keith Rodenhauser, AICP, GISP, SITES AP, Project
Manager
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Darrell Douglas, RLA
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DRAFT



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BE THE GOLD STANDARD FOR PARKS AND RECREATION

This bold vision exemplifies the desire for Abilene to be a forward-thinking, world-class city. Reaching this vision will require innovative ideas and trying new approaches. It will require a willingness to do something the city has not tried before, whether that is new facilities, programs, or partnerships. To be the best, the city will need to be a leader in parks and recreation. That means taking risks and building a unique park system that embodies the community's character. It does not mean trying to copy or become like another city. Abilene must become the best version of itself, and only then will the city "be the gold standard for parks and recreation."

THE NEED FOR A PLAN

Located in West Texas, Abilene has an extensive park system and unique features and services that set it apart from the rest of the region. Abilene has seen an increase in population over the past 20 years, and continued growth is expected. To support this growth, the city must continuously evaluate its existing services, including parks and recreation.

The age and quantity of the recreation facilities offered by the city underscore the need for improvement to existing amenities and measured development of parkland to best serve a growing and diversifying population. As the storybook capital of America, Abilene sets the stage for extraordinary recreation experiences for all.

This 2023 *Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan* will be critical to the city's future as it clarifies the department's own responsibilities and needs, as well as what partnerships can be leveraged to best deliver parks, facilities, and recreational choices to the citizens. Meant to instill focus, establish priorities, and inspire action over the next 5 to 10

years, this Master Plan was produced with guidance from an active steering committee appointed by city staff. It is supported by robust data collection, including hours of in-person engagement, and affirms Abilene Parks and Recreation as the community's primary provider of recreation facilities and experiences.



Changing community needs, development goals, and operational feasibility are all reasons enough for producing a future-forward plan. Communities across Texas are continuing to invest in their strained park systems after changing and often increasing demand brought on by COVID-19 pandemic.

At the state level, unprecedented demand from Texans from all walks of life are seeking solace in nature and the outdoors.¹ As civic spaces, parks act as operational hubs for addressing chronic issues like physical inactivity and poor health. Having even a simple connection to nature can relieve stress, improve mental health, and provide opportunities for interpersonal interaction.² Exposure to parks and greenspace can improve physical and mental

¹ Austin American-Statesman, "Opinion: A missed opportunity for enhancing conservation and parks in Texas," <https://www.statesman.com/story/opinion/2021/11/11/opinion-missed-opportunity-enhancing-conservation-and-parks/6355544001/> (Nov. 24, 2021)

² National Recreation and Park Association, "Health and Wellness," <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/health-wellness/>, (March 30, 2022).



health while providing nature-based alternatives for upstream health promotion.³

As the pandemic wanes, the increasing demand for outdoor and recreation spaces has remained high, adding stress to existing parks and outdoor infrastructure across the country. This Master Plan reinforces the role parks and recreation plays in Abilene and is essential for building a strong and vibrant community.⁴

EXISTING CONDITIONS OF PARKS AND RECREATION IN ABILENE

Due to the nature of the existing park system in Abilene, it is necessary to classify the parks according to their functions. A park system should be evaluated as a composite of recreation areas with each meeting a particular public need; the system should provide a combination of smaller neighborhood parks, larger community parks, and special use parks. For all residents, whatever their background, parks help provide a variety of passive and active outdoor recreational opportunities. Proximity to these valuable resources invariably improves community health and wellness, not to mention create more adaptable, robust local economies.⁵

Abilene maintains over 1,100 acres of parkland making up 28 parks with four recreation centers and an aquatic center. In addition to city parks, Abilene residents also have access to various public and private recreation areas both in and near the city.

Demographic and Benchmarking Analysis

A strong, proactive approach to department operations requires knowledge and understanding of community demographics. The findings of this Master Plan (Chapter 2) show that the population has steadily grown over the past 20 years with projected growth into 2030, and diversity of the population has increased. The senior population (age 65+) will continue to be larger than the state but lower than the nation and Taylor and Jones counties.

The analysis of existing conditions includes a benchmark comparison to 46 similar agencies using the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Park Metrics database. The benchmarking analysis shows the city has lower service ratios (per 10,000 population) for nearly all outdoor facilities except for diamond fields and tennis courts. Trails and multipurpose rectangular (flat) fields have the most strain. With over 1,100 acres in the system, Abilene has an exceptional amount of parkland available to meet the many needs of its residents.

Service Area Analysis (Gaps)

Maps were also created to illustrate levels of access to various park categories and facilities. Collectively, a composite service areas map shows the overall level of service for parks and facilities, ranked from high to low, in turn revealing spaces of need and opportunity. Shades of

blue indicate high service levels, while red areas show the areas with the lowest level of service to parks and facilities. As shown in the table, 33% of Abilene residents live within the medium-low to low service areas (see map to right).

Combining the composite service areas with the socially vulnerable areas (provided by the CDC), priority investment areas became clear. The city should give special consideration for park improvements in the areas indicated in this combined map, including additional features in exiting parks or potentially new parks.

Altogether, Abilene has a medium level of service for overall park access. The analysis highlights a need for park investment throughout the central, northern, and the southwest portions of the city.

A CITIZEN DRIVEN PLAN

To make informed decisions moving forward, Abilene needs meaningful public input in addition to robust statistical and performance analysis. Including resident participation in the planning process gives actual park users a means to share their individual needs, perceptions, concerns, and desires for the park system they themselves use. This planning process utilized several methods to connect with the community.

As the city begins to implement this plan, sustained efforts will be necessary to continuously solicit public feedback about development projects; allowing direct participation whenever possible will ensure the community feels heard and has pride in their parks. Engagement efforts should be flexible and creative, utilizing tools like on-site feedback and interactive online platforms, including social media.

The following summary indicates the various ways the public was involved throughout this Master Plan process.

Engagement Summary

1. A public workshop open house held on June 16, 2022 that allowed attendees to learn more about the Master Plan and provide input on three general topics – “Parks and Facilities,” “Trails and Natural Areas,” and “Programs and Special Events”



³ North Carolina Medical Journal. March 2022. Nature-based Pathways to Health Promotion: The Value of Parks and Greenspace.

⁴ Marquis, Bridget. Infrastructure That Does More: Investing in Public Spaces for a Resilient America. Strong Towns. https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2020/11/23/infrastructure-that-does-more-investing-in-public-spaces-for-a-resilient-america?fbclid=IwAR2Aa8OXGjUpGNv3ibIDHC-W40ic9L9QjnXvix_kgF5oCtEoi5vihqJ0bDg (November 24, 2020). Accessed December 4, 2020

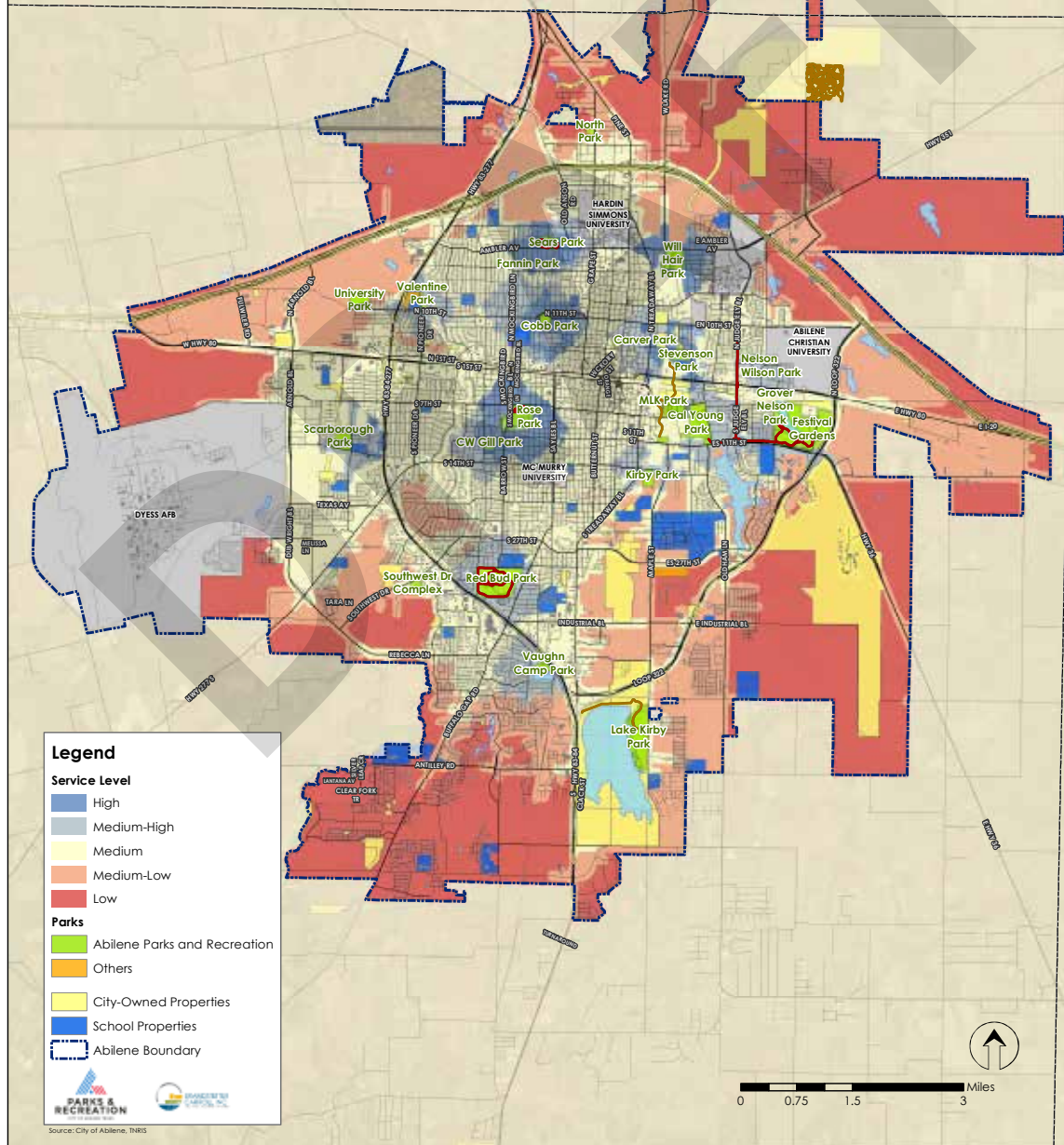
⁵ Berg, Nate. Great Parks Don't Just Have Rec. Space: They Create Jobs. 2021. Fast Company. https://www.fastcompany.com/90624316/great-parks-dont-just-have-rec-space-they-create-jobs?mc_cid=105f89bd93&mc_eid=6c9b6b28d4



Composite Park Service Areas

Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Abilene, Texas

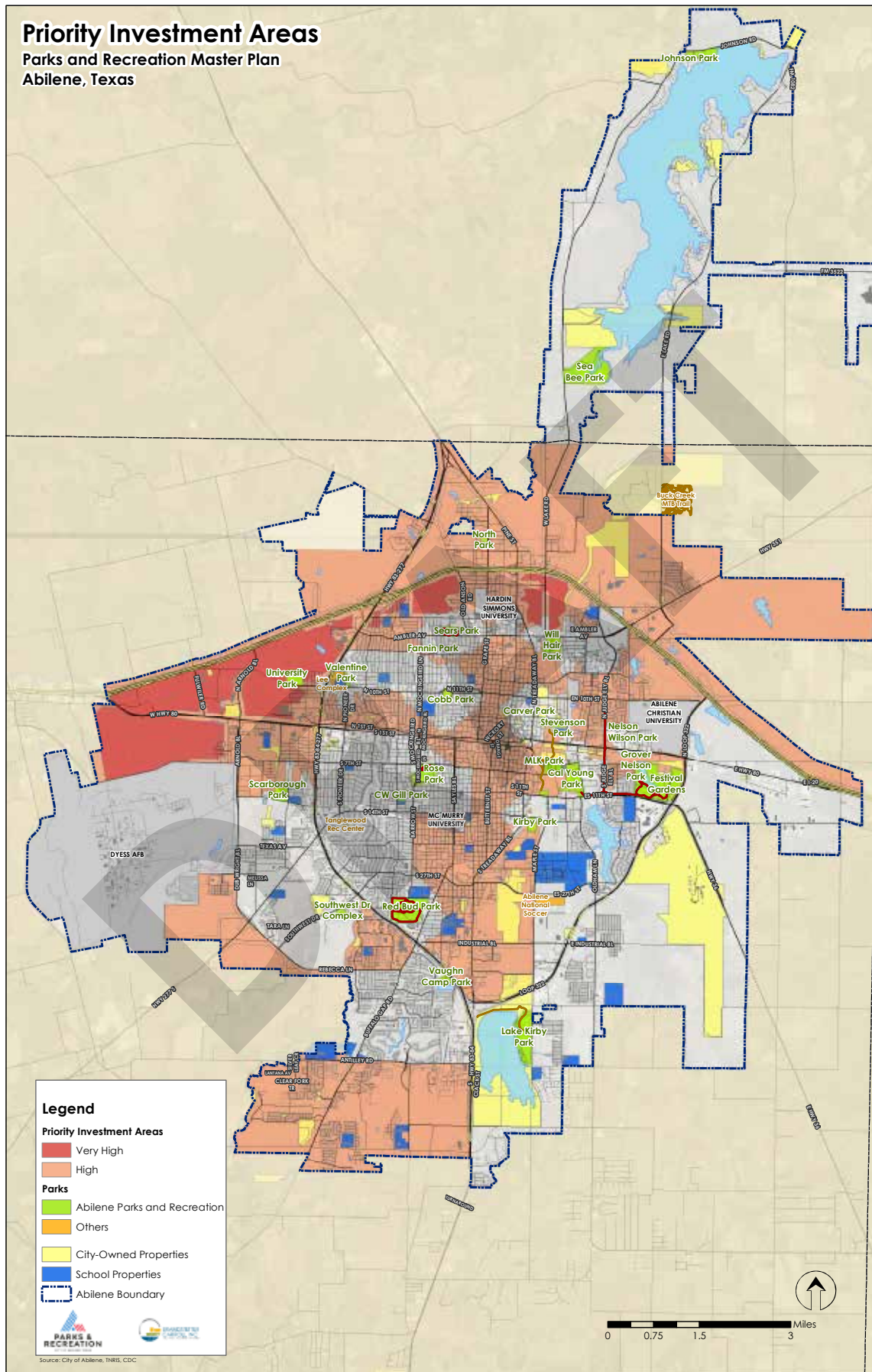
Service Level	Population	Cumulative Population
High	6%	6%
Medium-High	12%	19%
Medium	48%	67%
Medium-Low	15%	82%
Low	18%	100%





Priority Investment Areas

Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Abilene, Texas





2. Meetings with stakeholder groups (June 2022) representing:
 - City officials and staff
 - Sports leagues
 - Development organizations
 - Dyess Air Force Base
 - Colleges and Universities
 - Churches
3. A web survey – available from Spring to Fall of 2022 and powered by Survey Monkey – completed by 999 respondents (87% residents of Abilene, 13% of another area)

WHAT ABILENE RESIDENTS SAID

Information gathered from these public input methods were used to identify the needs of Abilene residents.

Stakeholder Groups



Trails & Connectivity

- Additional trails
- Completing the Cedar Creek Trail
- Natural trails & hiking opportunities
- Public use of Buck Creek Trails



Upgraded Facilities

- Additional site amenities
- ADA accessible facilities
- Improved wayfinding & signage
- Safety improvements at athletic fields
- Shaded playgrounds
- Improved & additional outdoor fitness equipment



New Facilities

- Tournament level facilities
- Additional disc golf courses
- More plaza recreation spaces
- New hockey rink
- Picnic shelters
- Natural areas/parks



Indoor Space

- New/improved recreation centers
- Indoor pool with lap lanes
- Recreation center in south Abilene



Expanded Programming

- Annual community events
- Nature education
- Additional youth camps



Partnerships, Collaboration, & Marketing

- Transportation to parks and facilities
- Collaboration with Universities for recreation space
- Improved coordination with Air Force Base
- Continued community outreach



Operations

- Employee recreation benefits
- Optimize existing parkland
- Identify alternative funding resources
- Improve park maintenance

Survey Results

Visitation

According to the survey, 50% of the respondents visited parks 20 or more times. The most visited parks in the past year included Redbud Park, Grover Nelson Park, and Lake Kirby Park, followed by Oscar Rose Park and Cal Young Park.

Physical Condition & Quality of Programs

Overall, 56% of respondents rated facilities as fair or poor, compared to 44% who see the condition of Abilene's facilities as excellent or good. These results indicate a general desire to see improvement of facilities.

Desire For More Opportunities for Activities

1. Walking & hiking trails – 20%
2. Playing on playgrounds – 10%
3. Playing at splash pads – 9%
4. Swimming – 7%

Consistent with these findings, respondents also indicated a strong desire for revitalizing existing amenities such as playgrounds, recreation centers, diamond fields, senior centers, and large community parks. New facilities desired include nature centers, community gardens, mountain biking trails, indoor swimming pools, and pickleball courts.

And finally, respondents shared their level of support for a range of improvements and potential development covered in the survey. **Ninety-five percent (95%) of respondents indicated support for investing in existing parks and deferred maintenance, and 94% supported development of new/existing underutilized parkland.**



Learning about Activities

Residents prefer to learn about programs and activity offerings via social media, followed by the City of Abilene's website. Parks and Recreation should continue to utilize and increase its social media presence and keep the website current to maintain positive communication.

Engagement Key Findings

Results indicate that generally the Abilene community desires:

- Improved maintenance
- Upgrades and improvements to existing parks and facilities – shelters, recreation centers, ADA access, playgrounds
- Connectivity and trails – paved trails, natural surface trails, mountain biking – inside and outside of parks
- New spaces and facilities – natural areas, pickleball courts, multipurpose rectangular fields, water access
- Expanded programming and events – youth & adult sports, tournaments, hockey, active adult programs, nature education, events/festivals
- Support amenities – restrooms, shaded playgrounds, seating, bottle fillers, signage & wayfinding

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES FOR PARKS AND RECREATION IN ABILENE

Abilene and the steering committee, with support from the planning team, worked to craft a strategic plan. This facet of the document solidifies the daily purpose of the agency, its guiding values, and the long-term view of success.

Vision

Be the gold standard for parks and recreation

Mission

Creating exceptional experiences that build community and enrich lives

Values

Service

Providing exceptional and enriching programs, events, and facilities for the whole community

Inclusivity

Ensuring convenient, welcoming, and affordable community access to parks and facilities

Innovation

Developing modern parks and amenities

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives will guide the operations, improvements, and services in parks and recreation in Abilene over the next 5-10 years.

Goal 1: Responsible Stewardship

Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities

Objective 1.1 – **Modern Facilities:** Update park facilities to support and facilitate modern programming opportunities

Objective 1.2 – **Energy Efficiency:** Implement and establish energy efficient facilities and practices

Objective 1.3 – **Nature Access:** Establish and leverage natural recreational opportunities

Objective 1.4 – **Community Connections:** Utilize spaces and programs to align and connect communities

Goal 2: Accessible Spaces

Maximize accessibility to the parks and recreation system and city facilities to ensure inclusivity for all residents while promoting a healthy community

Objective 2.1 – **Plan:** Develop and implement parks and recreation master plan

Objective 2.2 – **Access:** Ensure that every resident has access to parks and recreational space citywide

Objective 2.3 – **Wellness:** Encourage exploration & growth through diverse physical and educational activities

Goal 3: Efficient Management

Manage, maintain, and improve facility assets and infrastructure

Objective 3.1 – **Proactive Maintenance:** Reduce downtime to city departments with aggressive preventative and deferred maintenance programs

Objective 3.2 – **Staff Investment:** Promote departmental growth through training and licensing

Goal 4: Fiscal Responsibility

Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably

Objective 4.1 – **Financial Discipline:** Maintain sound financial discipline

Objective 4.2 – **Accounting:** Ensure accurate cost accounting



Goal 5: Effective Communication

Promote, model, and embrace effective communication and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders

Objective 5.1 – **Consistent Branding:** Increase brand presence and recognition

Objective 5.2 – **Community Awareness:** Promote public awareness of parks, recreational opportunities, and citywide special events

Goal 6: Successful Partnerships

Leverage partnerships that produce parks and recreational opportunities that are forward thinking and world class

Objective 6.1 – **Financial Innovation:** Explore creative operational and capital strategies

Objective 6.2 – **Increased Tourism:** Improve parks and sports partnerships to increase tourism in Abilene

Objective 6.3 – **Forward Thinking:** Be the “next thing” to stay relevant

SYSTEMWIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

Public input (Chapter 3) and a needs assessment (Chapter 2) together informed the recommendations for improvement outlined in Chapters 5 and 6. The following items are the top priorities determined by the Master Plan process along with regular consultation with the steering committee.

1. Strive to reach the new bold vision for parks and recreation by being innovative, trying new, unique approaches to meeting the community's needs
2. Upgrade and improve existing parks and facilities
 - Address deferred maintenance
3. Continuously engage the community to successfully implement the vision of this plan
4. Improve and add support features throughout the park system (e.g., restrooms, shade, seating, drinking fountains, and landscaping)
5. Add, upgrade, and replace playground equipment throughout the park system
6. Evaluate opportunities to add trails in parks and identify potential trail linkages throughout the community
7. Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the park system
8. Find dependable alternate funding sources
 - Establish a parks foundation
 - Seek philanthropists in the community to support the agency
 - Consider a bond referendum for capital improvements based on public support
 - Dedicate a portion of the American Rescue Plan funds for capital improvements

- Continue seeking grants and look for additional opportunities
9. Implement proposed partnership for multipurpose rectangular (flat) field complex at Grover Nelson Park
 10. Upgrade and modernize baseball and softball fields and corresponding facilities
 11. Develop a large amphitheater and upgrade the small stage at Rose Park to host more community events
 12. Add or renovate game courts, especially pickleball, to meet the community's needs
 13. Upgrade/replace recreation centers throughout the city
 14. Strategically and consistently place signage (entrance, wayfinding, etc.) throughout the park system
 15. Consider staffing needs as parkland is developed and added to the system
 16. Utilize this Master Plan to guide decision making and monitor progress while continuing to engage with the community during the improvement processes
 17. Establish maintenance standards that consider the true cost to deliver services, facility life cycles, and appropriate employee to facility/parkland ratios
 18. Institute an easy-to-understand Cost Recovery and Pricing Plan for all facilities and programs offered by the department that is flexible to change
 19. Add parks in underserved areas

The top 10 improvements for existing and new facilities are listed below:

Existing Park/Facilities

1. ADA access
2. Playgrounds
3. Restrooms
4. Shade
5. Community/recreation centers
6. Baseball/softball fields
7. Paved park trails
8. Picnic shelters
9. Roads/parking lots (Public Works)
10. Signage

New Development

1. Field complex (soccer, lacrosse, etc.)
2. Paved park trails
3. Waterfront amenities
4. Pickleball courts
5. Amphitheater
6. Dog parks
7. Adventure Cove expansion



8. Natural surface trails
9. Southwest community park
10. Neighborhood parks (additional)

ACTION PLAN

The 2023 Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan concludes with an action plan of 122 strategies and recommendations. These action items, which can be found in Chapter 6, detail specific actions for Abilene to take in implementing this long-range master plan. The table below provides a selection of high priority, primarily capital strategies from the action plan.

Action	Timeframe	Estimated Capital Cost
Upgrade baseball/softball diamond fields with new backstops, fencing, dugouts, and spectator areas (Cobb, MLK, Oscar Rose, Red Bud, Scarborough, Arthur Sears)	All	≈\$100k-\$200k per field
Continue to replace dated playgrounds, including separate age 2-5 equipment or add where unavailable	Ongoing	≈\$150k-\$300k each
Incorporate shade features over existing amenities such as playgrounds to facilitate year-round usage	Ongoing	≈\$50k per playground
Ensure accessible walkways to all facilities and seating areas	Ongoing	≈\$65 per LF (6' wide)
Continually evaluate opportunities to develop new parks in underserved areas, especially at land already owned by the city	Ongoing	≈\$500k-\$1m per park
Add concrete paved trail loops at all parks that can accommodate them	Ongoing	≈\$500k-\$1m per mile
Update the city's existing trail plan from the Abilene Parks, Recreation & Senior Facilities Master Plan (2014) and include standards for design, signage, maintenance, prioritization, and costs	Short	≈\$50k-\$75k
Conduct an ADA Accessibility Audit of all facilities, programs, and communications	Short	≈\$25k
Create an Abilene Parks Foundation to raise funds, recruit and organize volunteers, and promote the parks	Short	N/A
Continue to foster the partnership for a new multipurpose field complex at Grover Nelson Park to address the ever-increasing demand for these fields	Short	Partnership
Add a concrete paved trail around Kirby Lake	Short	≈\$9m
Upgrade/replace recreation centers throughout the city	Short-Med	≈\$12.5m-\$15m
Develop dedicated pickleball courts at Oscar Rose Park, near the existing tennis center and the senior center	Short-Med	≈\$400k (8 courts)
Add or improve restrooms throughout the parks & include family restrooms at larger parks	Short-Med	≈\$300k-\$500k each
Add and upgrade picnic shelters at parks to increase overall access to these facilities, make them more inviting, and to facilitate opportunities for outdoor community gatherings	Short-Med	≈\$50k-\$100k each
Improve existing trail surfaces to enhance longevity and ensure proper accessibility (e.g., Oscar Rose); upgrade to concrete	Short-Med	≈\$500k-\$1m per mile
Develop a large amphitheater at a park to host large community-wide events, including concerts and other performances	Short-Med	≈\$400k
Develop a new community park in southwestern Abilene	Med	≈\$6m
Expand the existing Adventure Cove Aquatic Center to include deep water and features for all ages	Long	≈\$5m-\$6m



DRAFT



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1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE NEED FOR A PLAN

The purpose of this 2023 Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to provide an ambitious yet feasible roadmap for the future according to the needs and desires of the people of Abilene. In the spring of 2022, the City of Abilene selected Brandstetter Carroll Inc. (a consulting firm out of Lexington, KY) to lead the process to develop this publicly driven plan. The 2023 *Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan* represents the culmination of the master planning process and will provide guidance for parks, recreation, events, and trails in Abilene for the next 10 years.

This plan is important because it...

- Provides a vision for the future of parks and recreation in Abilene
- Ensures department offerings are aligned with community needs
- Fosters civic engagement and creates a sense of community
- Develops clear priorities based on community needs and desires
- Identifies gaps & inequities in service delivery
- Strengthen fiscal responsibility, sustainability, and efficiency
- Identifies future funding requirements and potential sources
- Increases user participation, satisfaction, revenue, and capital investment
- Ensures that the city keeps up with parks and recreation trends
- Ensures no duplication of service, improves partnerships
- Encourage consideration of resources needed as offerings grow

Parks are part of hyper-local civic infrastructure (so-called “third-spaces”¹) needed now more than ever, where citizens practice the “art of association” and do the work of knitting communities together.²

Abilene, the Storybook Capital of America, is located in west central Texas with a population of approximately 125,000. This population has steadily grown in the past 20 years and is projected to continue through 2030. The demographics of the city are also expected to continue to change with the city becoming older and more diverse.

¹ National Recreation and Park Association, “Health and Wellness,” <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/health-wellness/>, (December, 10 2019).

² Redefining Infrastructure & Public Space. Reimagining the Civic Commons. 2021. <https://medium.com/reimagining-the-civic-commons/redefining-infrastructure-and-public-space-2e311edfde68>



Abilene Parks and Recreation provides more than 1,100 acres of park land and 28 parks, including:

- 2 mini parks
- 6 neighborhood parks
- 12 community parks
- 1 senior center
- 4 recreation centers
- 1 aquatic center (Adventure Cove)

The city has an abundant amount of park land with significant potential for strategic and responsible development.

1.2 THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

This Master Plan acts as a compass for the department and incorporates findings from the four-phase process including:

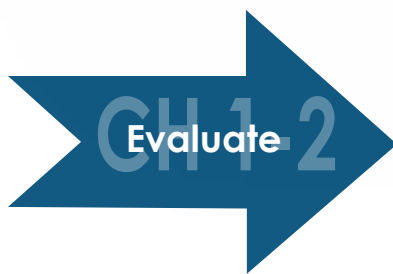
- Evaluating existing facilities and programs
- Analyzing current trends and benchmarking
- Engaging with a steering committee, community stakeholders, staff, and the public (open house, online survey, and stakeholder meetings)
- Visioning sessions
- Reviewing recommendations and strategy prioritization

Figure 1.1: Project Process





1.2.1 How to Read the Master Plan



The **EVALUATE** phase is encompassed in Chapters 1 & 2 and provides a baseline understanding of the existing conditions of Abilene as a whole, facilities and programs available, and the department. The text evaluates the make-up of the population and the levels of service in the community. Additionally, Chapter 2 includes a trends and benchmarking analysis which reveals how Abilene measures up to surrounding communities of similar make up and to national recreation trends. Contents include:

- **Park land and facility inventory & analysis**
- **Program analysis**
- **Benchmark comparisons of similar agencies**
- **Geographic park and facility service area mapping**
- **Trends in parks and recreation**



The **ENGAGE** phase is summarized in Chapter 3 and ultimately leads the discussions throughout the rest of the Master Plan. Identifying what the community desires is essential to determine and prioritize the future of the parks, recreation facilities, and special events/programming.

- **Open house workshop**
- **Web/handout surveys**
- **Stakeholder group meetings**



The **ENVISION** phase is driven by the visioning sessions and meetings with the steering committee and can be found in Chapter 4. Findings from the evaluate and engage phase are reviewed and are used to produce a specific vision, mission, values, goals, and objectives for the department.

- **Steering committee visioning sessions**
- **Needs, standards, & guidelines for parks and recreation**
- **Facility needs analysis & level of service standards**



The **PLAN** phase combines all the information gathered throughout the first three phases of the planning process and formulates operational and capital – both systemwide and individual park related – recommendations to meet the goals for the future of parks and recreation. Chapter 5 discusses these topics at length and helps provide the direction for the department for the next 5-10 years. Chapter 6 presents the action plan that can be used as a checklist for implementation.

- **Capital and operational recommendations**
- **Action plan**

1.3 How to Use THIS PLAN

The action plan is a living document. This plan will act as a guiding document over the next 10 years for future development within the parks, recreation, and special events department that should, at least, be revisited annually to measure progress. The recommendations found in the latter half of the plan include capital lists of improvements that prioritize systemwide, departmental, and individual park enhancements.

Upon acceptance of this plan, the action plan provided in **Chapter 6** will begin to guide and bring to life the needs and desires of the department and the community.



Assign Responsibility

ACTION PLAN - 2023 Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan								
Legend of Abbreviations/Organizations								
Parks = Abilene Parks and Recreation Department				OP = Park and Recreation Operating Budget				
City = City Council, Other City Departments				CIP = Capital Improvement Budget				
Partners = Other Organizations (county/state, private/non-profit agencies, schools, grants, etc.)				Revenue = Items that Generate Additional Revenue				
*Highest priority actions in BOLD								
Goals, Objectives, and Strategies		Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source
		0-2	3-5	6-10				
Goal 1: Responsible Stewardship								
Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities								
Objective 1.1 – Modern Facilities: Update park facilities to support and facilitate modern programming opportunities								
Strategy 1.1.1:	Upgrade baseball/softball diamond fields with new backstops, fencing, dugouts, and spectator areas (Cobb, MLK, Oscar Rose, Red Bud, Scarborough, Arthur Sears)	✓	✓	✓	Capital	~\$100k-\$200k per field	Parks	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 1.1.2:	Continue to replace dated playgrounds, including separate age 2-5 equipment or add where unavailable	Ongoing			Capital	~\$150k-\$300k each	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.1.3:	Upgrade/replace recreation centers throughout the city	✓	✓		Capital	~\$12.5m-\$15m	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.1.4:	Develop dedicated pickleball courts at Oscar Rose Park, near the existing tennis center and the senior center	✓			Capital	~\$400k (8 courts)	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.1.5:	Add or improve restrooms throughout the parks & include family restrooms at larger parks	✓	✓		Capital	~\$300k-\$500k each	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 1.1.6:	Incorporate shade features over existing amenities such as playgrounds to facilitate year-round usage	Ongoing			Capital	~\$50k per playground	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.1.7:	Expand the existing Adventure Cove Aquatic Center to include deep water and features for all ages			✓	Capital	~\$5m-\$6m	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.1.8:	Add security cameras and lighting throughout the parks in locations that have perceived security concerns	✓	✓		Capital	~\$5k each	Parks	CIP

Identify action based on priority and time frame

Estimated Implementation Cost

Locate Funding Type

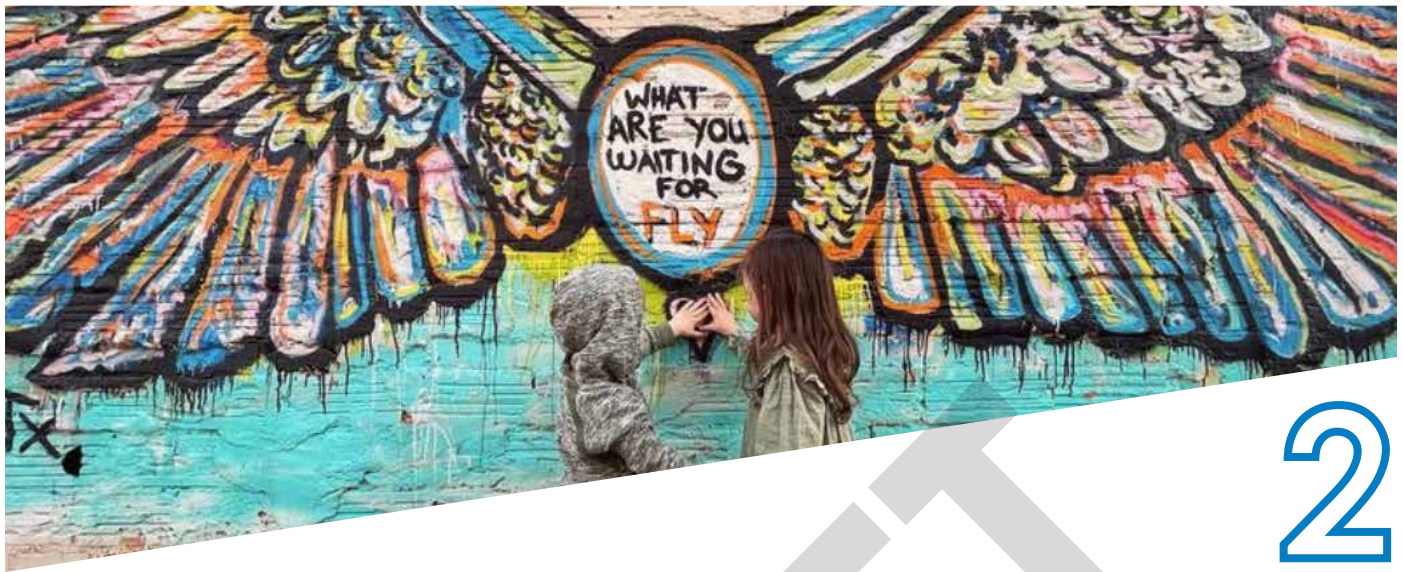
1.4 RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

The City of Abilene first adopted a parks and recreation master plan in 1997 and has updated or replaced it twice since then in 2008 and in 2014, exemplifying the value placed on parks and recreation planning in the community. In response to the previous plans, current conditions of the existing park system, and the demographic shifts seen within the city, the Abilene Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the consultant began the master planning process once again in April of 2022.

This Master Plan supports current community efforts to revitalize the City of Abilene. Listed below are supportive documents which were considered during the planning process.³

- 2014 Parks, Recreation, and Senior Facilities Master Plan
- Kirby Lake Master Plan
- Cedar Creek Waterway (website)
- Grover Nelson Master Plan
- Abilene Indoor Recreation Feasibility Study Presentation
- Neighborhood Empowerment Zone

³ Summaries of previous planning efforts can be found in Appendix G



2

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Community Background & Needs Assessment chapter provides an evaluation of the existing conditions of parks and recreation in Abilene. This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the following:

- Population demographics
- Inventory of existing parks and facilities
- Benchmarking against other agencies
- Service areas of parks and facilities
- Trends in parks and recreation

The ensuing text serves to provide the context needed to understand the existing and potential future needs of the community. The data compiled in this chapter is necessary to understand and interpret the desires of the community which are outlined in Chapter 3.

2.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

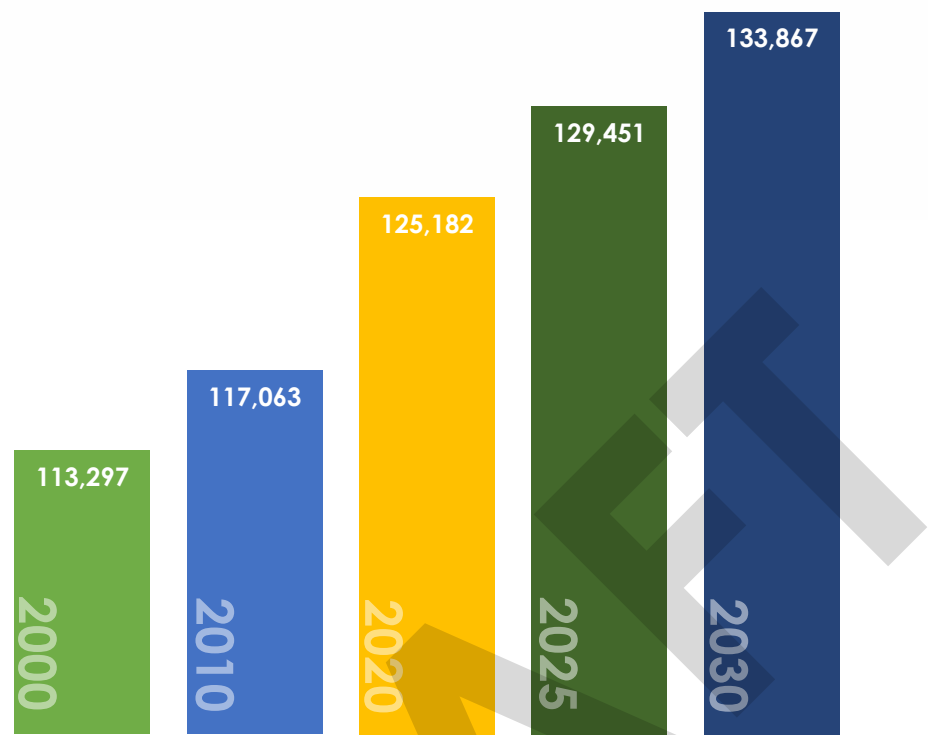
Needs vary between demographic groups, and these needs invariably change over time. Each of the following demographic categories examines specific elements of the population. This exploration of general demographic trends in Abilene helps define current conditions as well as identify potential future needs for parks and recreation service in the community.

2.2.1 Population Change

Figure 2.1 illustrates the population change in Abilene from 2000 to 2030 using data from the US Census Bureau, Esri forecasts, and calculated population estimates (based on the 2010-2020 growth rate). The figure shows how Abilene's population has grown over the past 20 years. By 2030, the city's population is projected to be about 134,000, up from 125,000 in 2020.



Figure 2.1: Population Change in Abilene



2.2.2 Household Size

Table 2.1 shows the number of households in 2021 along with the average household size from 2000 to 2026 for Abilene, Jones County, Taylor County, Texas, and the USA. As evident in the table, Abilene's households declined in size from 2000 to 2010; all geographies except Texas show stable or decreased household size. Projections for 2026 show Abilene's average household size will stay the same in the near future. All geographies have larger household sizes than Abilene.

Table 2.1: Household Size in Abilene

	Households	Average Household Size			
	2021	2000	2010	2021	2026
USA	126,470,675	2.59	2.58	2.58	2.58
Texas	10,615,809	2.74	2.75	2.77	2.77
Jones County	6,261	2.58	2.52	2.52	2.52
Taylor County	54,027	2.54	2.49	2.49	2.49
Abilene	45,624	2.52	2.46	2.46	2.46

Source: US Census Bureau, Esri forecasts

2.2.3 Median Age

Table 2.2 shows the median age for Abilene, Jones and Taylor counties, Texas, and the USA for the years between 2000 and 2021, plus projections for 2026. The median age in Abilene has increased since 2000 and is expected to reach 34.5 by 2026. As of 2021, Abilene has a lower median age than all comparison geographies. Jones County has the highest projected median age. All geographies have already and will continue to experience aging. Abilene will continue to be younger than all other geographies.



Table 2.2: Median Age of Abilene

	2000	2010	2021	2026
USA	35.3	37.1	38.8	39.5
Texas	32.3	33.6	35.3	35.8
Jones County	36.0	39.0	40.2	40.6
Taylor County	32.2	32.9	34.9	35.9
Abilene	31.4	31.8	33.8	34.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri forecasts

2.2.4 Senior Population

Table 2.3 displays the population age 65 and over between the years 2000 and 2026. Abilene's age 65+ population has grown over the last two decades; however, the growth of this population is behind the national trend. Abilene's senior population levels are higher than the state but lower than all other geographies. Both counties and the USA are projected to have senior population above 18% by 2026; Abilene will be slightly behind with just under 17%.

Table 2.3: Population Age 65 and Over

	2000	2010	2021	2026
USA	12.4%	13.0%	17.2%	19.2%
Texas	9.9%	10.4%	13.8%	15.4%
Jones County	14.0%	13.7%	17.5%	19.4%
Taylor County	12.3%	13.2%	16.5%	18.1%
Abilene	11.9%	12.5%	15.4%	16.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri forecasts

2.2.5 Children

Table 2.4 presents percentages of population under age 18 between 2000 and 2021 with projections for 2026. As evident in the table, youth populations of all geographies have decreased as a proportion since 2000. Overall, populations under 18 are projected to decrease by about 3% in Abilene by 2026. Abilene's youth population is comparable to Taylor County and Texas, both of which are also experiencing declines.

Table 2.4: Population Under Age 18

	2000	2010	2021	2026
USA	25.7%	24.0%	21.7%	21.5%
Texas	28.2%	27.3%	24.8%	24.7%
Jones County	17.5%	18.5%	15.9%	16.3%
Taylor County	26.6%	24.5%	22.9%	23.0%
Abilene	25.5%	23.4%	22.2%	22.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri forecasts

2.2.6 Poverty

Table 2.5 shows percentages of the population living below the poverty line at each of the geographic levels. In 2020, poverty in Abilene (15.2%) was above the comparisons but similar to what it was in 2000. Jones County had the lowest level of poverty in 2020 after having the highest rate in 2000. Table 2.6 describes poverty levels for children specifically, and, while the rates are higher than the overall population, the trends are similar. Only Jones County has a lower rate of childhood poverty than overall poverty.



Table 2.5: Population Below Poverty Line

	2000	2020
USA	12.4%	12.8%
Texas	15.4%	14.2%
Jones County	16.8%	11.5%
Taylor County	14.5%	14.6%
Abilene	15.4%	15.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS

Table 2.6: Children Below Poverty Line

	2000	2020
USA	16.1%	17.5%
Texas	20.2%	20.0%
Jones County	22.7%	9.0%
Taylor County	17.6%	17.6%
Abilene	18.6%	18.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS

2.2.7 Income and Educational Attainment

As presented in Table 2.7, the median household income in Abilene (\$52,136 as of 2021) has increased only slightly since 2000 after adjusting for inflation. Taylor County has also seen a similar increase since 2000. Jones County's incomes have increased more significantly since 2000. Though the median household income is expected to increase into 2026, growth in Abilene is lower than the change expected at the national level.

Looking at per capita income, Abilene has the second lowest income levels across all geographies. Abilene's projected income levels for 2026 households is closer to Jones County's while at the per capita level is more similar to Taylor County's. The state and USA are both significantly higher than the counties and Abilene.

Table 2.7: Household Income

	2000	2000 Adjusted	2021	2026
Median Household Income				
USA	\$41,994	\$64,178	\$64,730	\$72,932
Texas	\$39,927	\$66,501	\$63,524	\$70,662
Jones County	\$29,572	\$45,826	\$51,621	\$55,725
Taylor County	\$34,035	\$52,743	\$54,550	\$58,751
Abilene	\$33,007	\$51,150	\$52,136	\$55,504
Per Capita Income				
USA	\$21,587	\$32,991	\$35,106	\$39,378
Texas	\$19,617	\$32,673	\$32,007	\$35,598
Jones County	\$13,656	\$21,162	\$21,298	\$23,685
Taylor County	\$17,176	\$26,617	\$27,481	\$30,518
Abilene	\$16,577	\$25,689	\$24,969	\$27,577

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri forecasts, BLS

Table 2.8 shows change in educational attainment in 2000 and 2021. Much like the comparison geographies, Abilene has experienced an overall increase in higher educational attainment. As of 2021, over 25% Abilene's population age 25 and over has a bachelor's degree or above, compared to 22% in 2000. Jones County has significantly lower education levels than Abilene, while Taylor County, Texas, and the USA all have higher education levels.

Table 2.8: Educational Attainment Age 25 and Over

Educational Attainment (Highest Level)	Abilene		Jones County		Taylor County		Texas		USA	
	2000	2021	2000	2021	2000	2021	2000	2021	2000	2021
No High School Diploma	20.9%	11.5%	35.7%	20.2%	18.8%	9.8%	24.4%	14.9%	19.6%	11.1%
High School/GED	27.4%	32.3%	34.6%	39.2%	28.4%	25.0%	24.8%	25.3%	28.6%	26.9%
Some College, No Degree	24.2%	22.7%	17.5%	23.5%	24.8%	24.0%	22.4%	21.0%	21.0%	19.8%
Associates Degree	5.5%	8.3%	4.0%	4.9%	5.5%	8.7%	5.2%	7.6%	6.3%	8.7%
Bachelors Degree	14.4%	16.2%	5.8%	9.7%	14.9%	17.0%	15.6%	20.3%	15.5%	20.6%
Graduate/Professional/Doctorate Degree	7.6%	8.9%	2.4%	2.8%	7.6%	9.4%	7.6%	11.0%	8.9%	13.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Esri forecasts



2.2.8 Population Diversity

As shown in Table 2.9, Abilene is experiencing a diversification trend. Multiracial populations have seen the greatest percentage of growth compared to any other racial group since 2010, while the Hispanic or Latino population has grown the most in absolute numbers. Although Abilene is still majority white non-Hispanic (56.2% in 2020), the total number of residents in this group declined since 2010. The city's racial composition is clearly shifting, and minority populations will likely continue to grow (despite often being undercounted).

Table 2.9: Population Counts and Percentages by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin

Year	Total Population	White Alone		Black Alone		Asian or Pacific Islander Alone		Other Race Alone		Two or More Races		Hispanic or Latino*	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
2010	117,063	73,016	62.4%	10,638	9.1%	1,959	1.7%	585	0.5%	2,199	1.9%	28,666	24.5%
2020	125,182	70,391	56.2%	12,242	9.8%	2,819	2.3%	884	0.7%	5,212	4.2%	33,634	26.9%
# Change	8,119	-2,625		1,604		860		299		3,013		4,968	
% Change	6.9%	-3.6%		15.1%		43.9%		51.1%		137.0%		17.3%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

*Includes Hispanic or Latino of any race

2.2.9 Conclusion

Like the rest of the country, the population in Abilene is undergoing trends of aging, diversification and increasing education levels, pointing to potential shifts in demand and preferences. These changes will certainly impact parks and recreation services in the community. The department should also consider the financial burden of programming and services on the poorest of the community (and develop creative ways to mitigate these costs). Accordingly, the city will need to consider income levels to ensure cost-effective solutions and accessible opportunities for all populations in the community.

These trends are already working to shape the future of Abilene. Programming, development, and other services will need to take into consideration the changing demographic landscape to ensure inclusive service can be enjoyed by everyone. The direction Abilene chooses for its parks and recreation will determine the availability of opportunities for residents and will help enrich the overall quality of life in the community for years to come.

2.3 INVENTORY OF PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS IN ABILENE

Classification of parks helps to evaluate the overall recreation opportunities available to the public. A park system should be evaluated as a composite of recreation areas that collectively meet public needs. It should provide a combination of smaller neighborhood parks, larger community parks, special use parks, and natural areas, located throughout the community.

The facilities inventory in this chapter identifies each park by its classification and lists the specific facilities it provides. Table 2.10 defines each park category by its typical size and service area, population served, typical features and facilities, and desirable characteristics. Categories and descriptions are adapted to meet the specific needs of the Abilene system from "Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines," by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Residents of Abilene are offered a variety of parks, recreation facilities, and programs. The Park and Recreation Resources Inventory (Table 2.11) provides a summary of all the offerings in Abilene as well as the classification for each property.

The table indicates the location of the property by park type category as defined in Chapter 2. The Existing Parks and Trails map (Figure 2.2) shows the location of each of the parks and recreation areas offered by the City of Abilene. The following text provides a list of these facilities. Photos and amenity lists with conditions assessments for each park can be found in Appendix A.



2.3.1 Neighborhood Parks

A neighborhood park is a small but highly developed park located within a short (10-minute) walking or biking distance of residents with facilities such as game courts, playgrounds, picnic areas/shelters, athletic fields, and walking trails. A mini park is a small neighborhood park, typically located in more densely populated areas where availability of land is limited. Abilene Parks and Recreation oversees eight neighborhood parks, including two mini parks.

Neighborhood parks include:

- C.W. Gill Park
- Carver Park
- Fannin Park
- Kirby Park
- Nelson Wilson Park
- Reyes Flores Park
- Valentine Park
- Vaughn Camp Park



Vaughn Camp Park

2.3.2 Community Parks

Community parks are larger parks that serve multiple neighborhoods and offer a wider variety of facilities. Community parks should be conveniently located (within approximately a 5-minute drive) and easily accessible with facilities intended to occupy visitors for extended periods of time (field or game court complex, disc golf, etc.). Abilene Parks and Recreation offers 12 community parks located across the city.

Community parks include:

- Arthur Sears Park
- Cal Young Park
- Cobb Park
- Grover Nelson Park
- Johnson Park
- Lake Kirby Park & Nature Play Area
- Oscar Rose Park
- Red Bud Park
- Scarborough Park
- Sea Bee Park
- Stevenson Park
- Will Hair Park



Oscar Rose Park



Arthur Sears Park



Grover Nelson Park



2.3.3 Special Use Parks & Facilities

Special use parks are areas designed for specialized or single purpose recreational activities, and can include places such as plazas, single use facilities, sports complexes, and indoor spaces. Abilene oversees four special use parks, five recreation/community centers, and two plaza spaces. Two properties are considered special use but are currently undeveloped or lacking in amenities (University Park and North Park).

Special use parks and facilities include:

- Camp Barkeley
- Cedar Creek Waterway Trail
- Cesar Chavez Recreation Center
- Cobb Park Recreation Center
- Everman Park
- GV Daniels Recreation Center
- Jackson Park
- MLK Park
- Nelson Park Festival Gardens
- North Park
- Oscar Rose Recreation Center
- Oscar Rose Senior Activity Center
- South Park
- Southwest Drive Complex
- University Park
- Vera Hall Minter Park



Oscar Rose Recreation Center



Everman Park



Stafford Complex

2.3.4 Parks by Others

Table 2.12 shows parks and recreation areas that may be available to Abilene residents but are not owned by the Parks and Recreation Department. These properties are located either in the city itself or nearby (see Figure 2.2). They are owned and maintained either by the school system, a nonprofit, a state or local organization, a local university, or a private entity. Each of these spaces contributes to the full spectrum of recreational opportunities available to residents of Abilene. Currently, there is no agreement in place for public use of AISD facilities.

These parks are included in this section to create a full inventory of all recreation amenities available to residents. If major improvements are made in any of these parks, the city and the owners/operators of these spaces should coordinate their efforts to best address the community's needs and to avoid potentially costly and inefficient duplication of services and amenities.



Table 2.11: Parks and Recreation Resource Inventory

PARK NAME	PARK TYPE	Acreage		Athletic Fields						Game Courts			Outdoor Facilities						Trails (Mi)		Passive Recreation			Support			Indoor		Special Feature/Notes			
		Total	Developed	Small Diamond	Large Diamond	Batting Cages	Playfield/Backstop	Small Rectangular	Large Rectangular	Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Pickleball Courts	Playgrounds	Skate Parks	Aquatic Centers	Splash Pads	Fishing/Water Access	Boat Ramp	Disc Golf (Holes)	Paved	Unpaved	Dog Parks	Large Shelters	Medium Shelters	Gazebos/Small Shelters	Restroom Buildings	Concessions		Parking (Marked Spaces)	Community/Recreation Centers	Gymnasiums
Abilene Parks and Recreation																																
Neighborhood Parks																																
C.W. Gill Park	Neighborhood	10.4	10.4				1	1					1										1					8				
Carver Park	Mini	2.1	2.1							1			1										1					59			GV Daniels Recreation/Senior Center	
Fannin Park	Neighborhood	5.8	5.8				3													0.2								33			Mercy Health Care Center	
Kirby Park	Neighborhood	19.0	10.6				2										1						1					48				
Nelson Wilson Park	Mini	0.9	0.9							0.5			1											1		1		0				
Reyes Flores Park	Neighborhood	4.2	4.2				1			1			1											1				6				
Valentine Park	Neighborhood	6.0	5.1							0.5			1													1		0			Formerly Lee Park	
Vaughn Camp Park	Neighborhood	19.5	14.3				2			0.5	1	1	1	1														44				
Subtotal - Neighborhood Parks		67.9	53.4	0	0	0	9	1	0	3.5	1	1	1	6	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.0	0.2	0	1	4	0	2	0	198	0	0	
Community Parks																																
Arthur Sears Park	Community	28.0	28.0	2	1	1				0.5	1		1			1				0.7			1	1	3	2	3	148			Cesar Chavez Recreation Center	
Cal Young Park	Community	72.8	39.1	2		2							1				1		18	0.1				1		1	1	225			Inline hockey rink	
Cobb Park	Community	16.0	16.0	1		1				0.5		1	1						9					2	1	1		46			Cobb Park Recreation Center, Activity Building	
Grover Nelson Park	Community	174.0	109.3		5								3			1	1		1.6				3	2		5	1	735			Abilene Zoo	
Johnson Park	Community/Nature	49.7	27.6									1	1					1		18				2	8	1		46				
Lake Kirby Park & Nature Play Area	Community/Nature	123.3	60.4	6	2	6	13						1					1	1		1.3		1			3	1	427				
Oscar Rose Park	Community	67.1	67.1		2	1			2	0.5	15	1	1	1	1				0.5							2	1	442	1		Adventure Cove, Safety city, Senior Center, Recreation Center, Adaptive Recreation, Abilene Community Theatre	
Red Bud Park	Community	127.1	127.1	6	1	2	20						1			1			2.3							4	1	197			Prairie dog town, YMCA, outdoor fitness	
Scarborough Park	Community	32.1	17.3	2	1		2			0.5		1	1			1			9				1			2	1	160				
Sea Bee Park	Community/Nature	184.2	38.2															1	1				1		2	1		26			Sea Bee Park Lake, RC Plane Area	
Stevenson Park	Community	20.7	17.6				3			2	1		1	1		1								2		2		105				
Will Hair Park	Community	42.8	34.3	5		2				2	2		2	1					18					3		1	2	281				
Subtotal - Community Parks		937.8	582.0	24	12	15	38	0	2	6.0	19	4	3	13	1	1	5	5	2	72	5.0	1.3	0	7	13	14	25	11	2,838	1	0	
Special Use Parks/Facilities																																
Camp Barkeley	Special Use	N/A	N/A																			1						103			Part of Grover Nelson Park	
Cedar Creek Waterway Trail	Special Use	7.2	3.0																	1.3								GR			Connects Stephenson and Kirby Park	
Cesar Chavez Recreation Center	Center	N/A	N/A																									75	1	1	Sears Park	
Cobb Park Recreation Center	Center	N/A	N/A																									53	1	1		
Everman Park	Plaza	1.0	1.0																0.1												Story book statues, water fountain	
GV Daniels Recreation Center	Center	N/A	N/A																									58	1	1	at Carver Park	
Jackson Park	Athletic Facilities	6.7	6.7	2		1	1																		1	1		130				
MLK Park	Athletic Facilities	40.0	18.1		2																					1	1		GR			
Nelson Park Festival Gardens	Special Use Rental	10.5	10.5							1		1		1									1			1		46			Horseshoes, Part of Grover Nelson Park	
North Park	Undeveloped	11.7	11.7																									20				
Oscar Rose Recreation Center	Center	N/A	N/A																									51	1	1		
Oscar Rose Senior Activity Center	Center	N/A	N/A																									201	1			
South Park	Undeveloped	0.9	0.9																									37			Former site of recreation center	
Southwest Drive Complex	Special Use	17.9	14.5				4																					GR				
University Park	Undeveloped	41.0	0.0																									0				
Vera Hall Minter Park	Plaza	0.1	0.1																									0			Urban seating area - large trees, on-street parking	
Subtotal - Special Use Parks		137.1	66.5	2	2	1	5	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0.1	1.3	1	1	0	0	3	2	774	5	4		
Total - Abilene Parks and Recreation		1,142.8	701.8	26	14	16	52	1	2	10.5	20	6	4	20	1	1	5	6	2	72	5.1	2.8	1	9	17	14	30	13	3,810	6	4	



Figure 2.2: Existing Parks and Trails

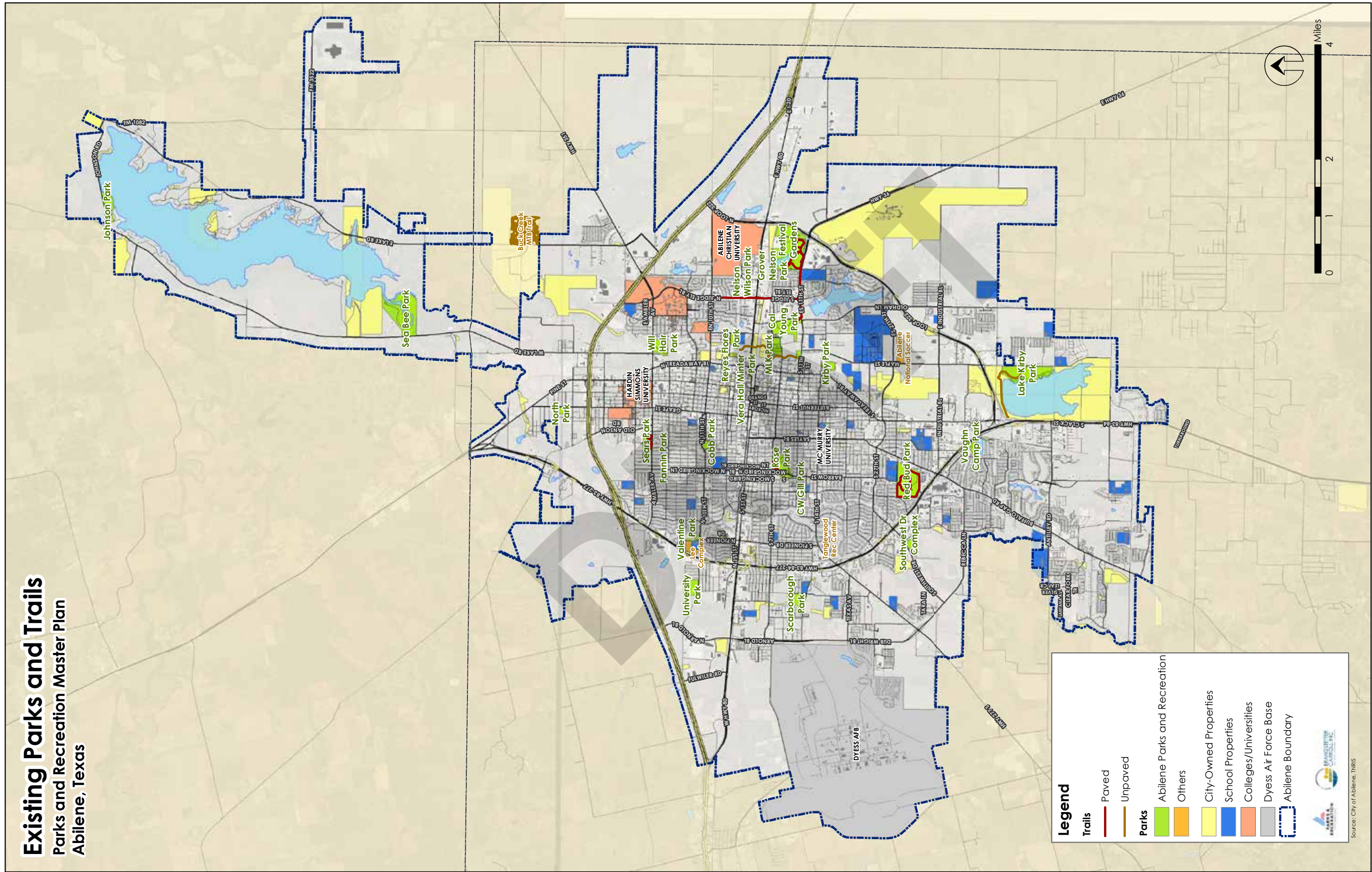




Table 2.12: Parks by Others

Facility Name	Agency	Playgrounds	Basketball Courts	Volleyball Courts	Pickleball Courts	Tennis Courts	Pool (Outdoor)	Pool (Indoor)	Backstops	Diamond Fields	Multipurpose Fields	Picnic Shelters	Clay Shooting	Golf (Holes)	Disc Golf (Hole)	Garden	Fishing	Trails (Miles)
Schools																		
Alcorta Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1				6			2	2								
Austin Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	1						2									
Basetti Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1																
Bonham Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	2						3		1							
Bowie Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	4															
Clack Middle School	Abilene Independent Schools					6			1		2							
Craig Middle School	Abilene Independent Schools					6					2							
Dyess Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	4						3									
Stafford Complex (managed by city)	Abilene Independent Schools										7							
Mann Middle School	Abilene Independent Schools					6				1	2							
Martinez Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1																
Ortiz Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1							7		2							
Purcell Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	4						5									
Stafford Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	1						4									
Thomas Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	1						2									
Ward Elementary School	Abilene Independent Schools	1	2								2		1					
Subtotal - Schools		12	19	0	0	24	0	0	29	3	18	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other Parks and Facilities																		
Abilene Clay Sports	Private												1					
Abilene Country Club	Private				4	15	1	1						36				
Abilene National Soccer Complex	Big Country Soccer										9							
Abilene State Park	Texas Parks and Wildlife						1										1	6.0
Buck Creek Mountain Bike Trail	Abilene Bicycle Club																	13.2
Galaxy Park	Abilene Christian University															1	1	2.0
Maxwell Golf Course	Privately Operated (city owned)													18				
Tanglewood Recreation Center	HOA	1		1			1											
Wildcat Disc Golf	Abilene Christian University														18			
Subtotal - Other Parks and Facilities		1	0	1	4	15	3	1	0	0	9	0	1	54	18	1	2	21.2
Total - Other Parks		13	19	1	4	39	3	1	29	3	27	0	2	54	18	1	2	21.2

2.4 PROGRAMS INVENTORY

Quality recreational programming is an important aspect of a vibrant and healthy community. Programs can be useful for meeting specific needs of different groups in the community – like active adults, young children, families, or teenagers – in a way that is more creatively tailored. In fact, programs can be an essential access-point for users; offerings such as fitness classes, sports leagues, cultural crafts, and camps give residents unique ways to meaningfully interact with parks in their community. When properly managed and promoted, programs are an invaluable tool for strengthening social connectivity and enhancing the livability of a community.



Maraca Making, Cobb Park Recreation Center



As Abilene enters life after the COVID-19 pandemic, programming needs to be flexible in terms of format and scheduling. Virtual classes, self-guided tours, and individual-based challenges can help provide residents with expanded options to engage in recreation whatever their schedule, personal health situation, or abilities may be.

2.4.1 Core Program Guidelines

The core program concept provides direction in the planning, scheduling, and coordination of community-based recreational activities. Involvement of community representatives, parents, participants, and advisory groups in the planning and development of program opportunities is critical for success.

The core program guidelines include six components used as benchmarks for determining the quality of specific activities conducted at each program location. The level of core program offering may vary in activity type, intensity, and scope depending on factors such as size of the facility, equipment availability, and the number of staff required. The discussion below provides a description of the core program components as well as a summary of if and how well Abilene Parks and Recreation is, as of 2020, addressing these components.



Youth Soccer in Abilene

Appendix E provides an expanded description of each broad program category (component six). It includes possible program formats, identifies the primary values served by the activity, and lists specific program examples. The list can be a helpful resource for determining and developing programs in the city of Abilene.

Core Program Components

- The summary below uses the following abbreviations after each bullet point to describe whether Abilene is meeting the core program components:

Y = Yes offered by Abilene Parks and Recreation

L = Limited offerings by Abilene Parks and Recreation

O = Offered by partner organizations in Abilene

N = No, not offered in Abilene

This analysis is based on the cumulative offerings and participation rates over the last five years.

1. Broad Appeal

- Parks and community centers should have broad appeal by conducting activities and special events for people young and old and of varying needs and skill levels. Target groups for programs include:
 - Preschool (Y)
 - Elementary School Age (Y)
 - Teens (Y)
 - Adults (Y)
 - Seniors (Y)
 - Intergenerational (Y)
 - Multiple Ages (Y)
 - Special Needs (Y)

2. Administrative Feasibility

Activities should be administratively feasible, and the following factors should be considered as part of any program development process:

- Facility and Equipment Requirements (Y)
- Safety (Y)



- Cost vs. Benefits (N)
- Specialized Instruction Requirements (Y)

Abilene has not yet completed a detailed analysis of the costs of programs. This type of analysis can determine the cost of each program per participant in terms of dollars and staff time and compare those numbers to program outcomes and revenues. This type of an analysis can be especially useful for evaluating partnerships with partner organizations.

3. Coordination

Program and service offerings should be of a coordinated nature within the community, thus serving to complement rather than duplicate activities already provided elsewhere by other organizations or agencies.

Abilene coordinates with partner organizations to expand recreational services; partner relationships range from regularly scheduled programming to one-time collaborations or providing space. Given input from extensive stakeholder discussions, there is considerable interest to grow and strengthen agency partnerships to build more recreation programs for the community. The following entities are either current or past partners with Parks and Recreation in providing programs and activities to the community (not an exhaustive list):

- Abilene Youth Sports Authority
- Abilene Slow-pitch Softball Association
- Texas Recreation & Park Society
- Texas Amateur Athletic Federation
- Texas Public Pool Council
- Neighborhood Fishing Program

Although some programs are not directly offered through Abilene Parks and Recreation, there are other organizations that utilize existing facilities owned by the city. Opportunities for effective, fair, and prosperous partnership exists with these organizations and future organizations:

- Eastern Little League (Cal Young Baseball Fields)
- Dixie Little League (Jackson Baseball Fields)
- Wylie Little League and Girls Softball (Lake Kirby Baseball & Softball Fields)
- Abilene Slow-pitch Softball Association (Nelson Park Softball Fields)
- Southern Little League (Red Bud Baseball Fields)
- Abilene Fastpitch Softball (Red Bud Softball Fields)
- Abilene Boys & Girls Softball (Scarborough Softball Fields)
- Northern Little League (Sears Baseball Fields)
- Abilene Hockey (Cal Young Park)



Adventure Cove Summer Camp Session 4-5



CALF Festival Summer Camp



Cobb Rec HSU White Horses Summer Camp



4. Settings and Times

Activities should be conducted in a variety of settings and formats, formal and informal. Programs should also be offered at a variety of times to meet the competing schedules of residents. For example, working adults may not be able to participate in programs until the evening or on weekends. Additionally, parents with children may benefit from availability of childcare or children's programs running concurrent to their chosen activity.

Settings and formats include:

- Instructional Classes (Y)
- Progressive Skill Levels (N)
- Drop-In (Y)
- Special Events (Y)
- Special Interest Clubs (Y)
- Leagues and/or Tournaments (Y)
- Outings and Field Trips (Y)
- After School Programs (Y)
- Camps (Y)

Abilene Parks and Recreation offer various classes and events throughout the year and encourage residents to teach classes to the community at their facilities. Parks and Recreation also hosts multiple annual events such as the Fall Festival, the Daddy Daughter Dance, and the Easter Egg Hunt. Other events such as camps, hikes, movies, and marathons occur throughout the year. Abilene Parks and Recreation also host after school programs and summer camps. Often the most difficult group to reach are the teenage and young adult populations. Although a myriad of programs and events are offered throughout the year, Parks and Recreation does not currently offer specific programs for this age group.

5. Constructive Nature

Programs should be constructive in nature and satisfy the creative, cultural, physical, and social desires of the participants.

6. Diverse Range of Activities

A diverse range of activities should be offered and should include a balanced mix of the following broad program categories:

- Athletics (Y)
- Community Events (Y)
- Creative Arts (Y)
- Senior Programs (Y)
- Cultural Performances (Y)
- Education, Life Skills, and Fun (Y)



Rose Summer Camp Session



Sears Camp Session



Sears Splash Pad Summer Camp



- Games (L)
- Green Living/Environmental Education (N)
- Health, Fitness, and Wellness Activities (Y)
- Health and Wellness Education (Y)
- Heritage and History (N)
- Nature/Outdoor Programs (N)
- Performing Arts (Y)
- Volunteer Training & Opportunities (Y)

2.5 BENCHMARKING COMPARISONS

One method for evaluating parks and recreation services offered in a community is to use benchmark comparisons to other communities. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Park Metrics program provides a variety of data for use in benchmarking. The following analysis uses data from 46 agencies located in Texas, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma (serving populations between 75,000 and 200,000) that participated in the Park Metrics program (Table 2.13). Additionally, NRPA provides an annual report¹ which includes national performance benchmarks; these figures are also used in this evaluation process.

Figures for Abilene were calculated based on information provided by the city. Because the data for other park systems was limited to parks and facilities managed by those agencies, only parks and facilities managed by Abilene Parks and Recreation are included in this analysis (other agencies, schools, and private facilities were not included). The figures used in this analysis for Abilene were those from the approved fiscal year 2023 city budget. The figures for the comparison municipalities were the most recent available of those entered for 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022.

The comparisons are organized into the following categories:

- Park land information
- Trail information
- Department functions
- Staffing
- Operating budget
- Capital budget
- Programs
- Facilities



Adventure Cove Summer Camp



Abilene Philharmonic

¹ National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), "2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review Park And Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks," <https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/2022-nrpa-agency-performance-review.pdf> (accessed August 2022).



Table 2.13: Benchmark Agencies

Agency	State	Year	Population	Budget
Allen (City of) Parks and Recreation Department	TX	2020	107,415	\$23,440,299
Avondale Parks and Recreation Department	AZ	2020	87,931	\$3,434,449
Beaumont (City of)	TX	2020	116,825	\$6,058,300
Boulder Parks and Recreation	CO	2021	108,100	\$19,693,130
Broken Arrow (City of) Parks and Recreation Department	OK	2020	113,000	N/A
Brownsville Parks & Recreation	TX	2020	183,677	\$7,967,650
Buckeye (City of) Community Services Department	AZ	2021	100,000	\$5,386,550
Carrollton (City of) Parks & Recreation Dept	TX	2021	139,248	\$11,835,730
Cedar Park PARD	TX	2020	81,043	\$5,468,000
Denton (City of) Parks and Recreation	TX	2021	147,993	\$18,060,921
Fayetteville Parks and Recreation	AR	2021	86,751	\$5,109,222
Flower Mound (Town of)	TX	2020	79,135	\$7,360,049
Fort Collins Parks Department	CO	2022	174,871	\$27,057,203
Frisco (City of)	TX	2019	189,916	\$17,487,793
Goodyear (City of)	AZ	2021	101,662	\$13,781,112
Grand Prairie (City of) Parks, Arts, and Recreation Department	TX	2021	196,100	\$44,994,323
Greeley Parks / Culture, Parks, and Recreation	CO	2021	108,795	\$21,562,353
Highlands Ranch Metro District	CO	2021	103,444	\$14,500,000
Killeen (City of)	TX	2020	151,666	\$8,726,898
Lake Charles (City of) Recreation and Parks	LA	2019	76,000	\$4,500,000
Lakewood (City of) Community Resources	CO	2021	156,798	\$40,126,784
Las Cruces Parks & Recreation Dept.	NM	2022	111,385	N/A
Lawton Parks & Recreation	OK	2020	93,025	N/A
Lewisville Parks & Recreation	TX	2021	111,822	\$9,904,926
Little Rock Parks and Recreation	AR	2021	197,992	\$13,906,279
Longview Parks and Recreation	TX	2021	81,593	\$3,579,823
Loveland Parks and Recreation	CO	2021	76,972	\$19,185,617
Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department	TX	2020	75,597	\$8,800,000
McKinney (City of) Parks, Recreation and Open Space	TX	2019	188,000	\$9,873,175
New Braunfels (City of) Parks and Recreation	TX	2021	101,637	\$10,251,000
Pasadena (City of) Parks & Recreation	TX	2019	153,219	\$10,840,014
Pearland Parks & Recreation	TX	2018	150,000	N/A
Peoria Community Services Department	AZ	2020	171,751	\$22,513,274
Pueblo Parks and Recreation	CO	2021	112,361	\$6,000,000
Roseville (City of) Parks, Recreation & Libraries	AR	2021	146,594	\$37,209,122
Round Rock PARD	TX	2021	124,256	\$13,297,671
South Suburban Parks and Recreation District	CO	2021	157,000	\$44,818,844
SPAR/City of Shreveport	LA	2018	192,036	\$17,814,000
Sugar Land Parks & Recreation Department	TX	2022	118,709	\$4,753,795
Surprise (City of) Community & Recreation	AZ	2021	149,710	\$10,246,766
Temple Parks & Recreation	TX	2019	80,000	\$14,112,351
The Woodlands Parks and Recreation Dept.	TX	2020	118,000	\$30,457,613
Thornton (City of)	CO	2020	146,000	\$25,475,998
Tyler (City of) Parks and Recreation Department	TX	2019	105,729	\$3,663,468
Westminster Parks, Recreation and Libraries	CO	2021	117,832	\$24,886,273
Yuma (City of)	AZ	2019	93,400	\$16,178,821



The following text details the findings of the benchmark analysis. The values presented in these comparisons are based on information reported to Park Metrics by the municipalities and may vary from actual budgets and measurements.

2.5.1 Parkland Information

Table 2.14 shows values for several aspects of parks for the City of Abilene and benchmarks. For instance, the city provides 9.1 acres of parkland per thousand population, below the benchmark (11.5) and national medians (10.4). As a percentage of the entire jurisdiction, which controls for the different land area of the comparison agencies, 1.6% of land in Abilene is city-owned parkland, below the benchmark median (2.3%).

The City of Abilene has a similar percentage of parkland that is developed – 61% compared to the benchmark median of 57%. **The population served per park (4,471) is significantly more than the benchmark (2,571) and the national median (2,323), indicating that Abilene has fewer parks.** It is also important to note that while a large portion of the parkland is considered developed, much of that land is open space or lawn with limited features.

Table 2.14: Parkland Information

PARKLAND INFORMATION	Abilene	Benchmark	National
Acreage of Parkland			
Lower Quartile		664	
Median/Agency Value	1,142.8	1,000	N/A
Upper Quartile		2,526	
Acreage of Parkland per 1,000 Population			
Lower Quartile		6.0	5.1
Median/Agency Value	9.1	11.5	10.4
Upper Quartile		18.0	18.2
Population per Park			
Lower Quartile		1,778	1,301
Median/Agency Value	4,471	2,571	2,323
Upper Quartile		3,795	4,566
Parkland as a Percentage of Jurisdiction			
Lower Quartile		0.1%	
Median/Agency Value	1.6%	2.3%	N/A
Upper Quartile		7.4%	
Percent of Acreage Developed			
Lower Quartile		13%	
Median/Agency Value	61%	57%	N/A
Upper Quartile		81%	

2.5.2 Trail Information

The comparison of total miles of trails managed by the City of Abilene (Table 2.16) shows 7.9 miles of trails, compared to the benchmark median of 32.0 miles. Total trail miles per jurisdiction square mile controls for differences in the physical size of comparative municipalities. Abilene has 0.1 miles of trail per square mile of the city, a third of the benchmark median of 0.3 miles. The trail miles per ten thousand population measurement, which controls for the population differences, shows a value of 0.6 for Abilene, less than a third of the benchmark median (2.1).



2.5.7 Programs

The list of program categories in Table 2.20 provides the percentage of benchmark agencies that offer each type of program and whether or not Abilene Parks and Recreation offers them. The data in Table 2.20 is separated into two types of programs: “activities,” which cover programs intended for all users, and “out-of-school-time activities,” which include programs for specific user groups (children, seniors, etc.).

Table 2.20: Programs

PROGRAMS	Abilene	Benchmark	National
Activities			
Team sports	✓	100%	87%
Social recreation events	✓	97%	88%
Aquatics	✓	97%	70%
Themed special events	✓	92%	90%
Fitness enhancement classes	✓	92%	82%
Health and wellness education	✓	89%	80%
Individual sports	✓	89%	76%
Racquet sports	✓	84%	71%
Natural and cultural history activities		84%	62%
Martial arts		84%	59%
Golf	O	84%	48%
Safety training	✓	78%	72%
Trips and tours		78%	61%
Visual arts		76%	63%
Cultural crafts	L	73%	62%
Performing arts		73%	64%
Running/Cycling		65%	50%
E-Sports	L	19%	12%
Out-of-School Time (OST) Activities			
Summer camp	✓	92%	83%
Specific senior programs	✓	92%	79%
Specific teen programs	O	81%	66%
Programs for people with disabilities	✓	76%	62%
STEM Programs	L	57%	58%
After school programs	✓	54%	55%
Preschool		41%	34%
Before school programs	✓	8%	19%
Full daycare		3%	7%

L = Provided by Abilene Public Library

O = By others at city-owned golf course

Abilene offers programming in most of the top ranked program categories with some notable exceptions. Abilene does not offer natural and cultural history activities or martial arts programs (offered by 84% of benchmark agencies).

Of the OST activities, the department offers several program categories but lacks teen specific programming. Considering 81% of benchmark agencies offer some teen specific programming, it represents an area of OST programming that the city should consider expanding. Also of note, 57% of benchmark comparisons provide STEM programs. While the department does not currently have programs in this category, Abilene Public Library offers some of these programs plus many other programs, such as E-Sports, potentially reducing the need for programs by Parks and Recreation. When considering any new programs, the City of Abilene should continue to seek new and expanded collaborative partnerships to ensure fresh and effective recreation strategies.

2.5.8 Facilities

Table 2.21 provides a comparison of facilities offered and population per facility to evaluate the existing supply. Looking at population served per facility can help identify new facilities that the city may want to add



in the future. This table shows the benchmark median values for a range of facilities – outdoor and indoor, respectively. A lower value indicates a higher level of service.

Abilene has lower levels of service (facility per 10,000 population) for most outdoor facilities with diamond fields and tennis courts as exceptions. Most notably, trails, swimming pool, skate park, and dog park are operating at significantly higher ratios than the benchmarks indicating strain on these facilities. Two outdoor facilities – multipurpose synthetic fields and community gardens – are not offered in Abilene but are included in the table for reference.

For indoor facilities, Abilene has a higher level of service for both recreation centers and senior centers. Both are serving populations lower than the benchmarks and national levels; however, the age and accessibility of these facilities are qualitative factors to consider as the city will need to invest in if it wishes to maintain this level of service.

Figure 2.3 shows active use/athletic facilities per 10,000 population (converted from the numbers in Table 2.21) for playgrounds, game courts, and athletic fields. This figure underscores some of the same findings in Table 2.21, showing how Abilene has a lower level of service for several facilities.

Table 2.21: Facilities Offered and Service Levels

FACILITIES	Abilene		Benchmark		National	
	Offered	Pop. per	% Offered	Pop. per	% Offered	Pop. per
Outdoor						
Playgrounds	✓	6,589	95%	4,285	95%	3,750
Trails	✓	15,846	95%	3,886	81%	N/A
Dog Parks	✓	125,182	92%	83,897	67%	43,586
Tennis Courts	✓	6,259	90%	7,771	78%	5,608
Basketball Courts	✓	10,885	87%	7,842	86%	7,403
Skate Parks	✓	125,182	85%	91,839	39%	53,708
Diamond Fields - Youth Softball	✓	15,648	74%	21,387	62%	11,339
Diamond Fields - Adult Softball	✓	17,883	74%	22,472	54%	14,302
Diamond Fields - Youth Baseball	✓	4,471	69%	10,996	79%	7,000
Rectangular Fields (multipurpose)	✓	62,591	67%	8,653	68%	9,622
Swimming Pools	✓	125,182	59%	67,564	53%	38,000
Community Gardens		N/A	59%	46,700	51%	30,140
Performance Amphitheater	✓	125,182	51%	108,105	36%	68,181
Pickleball Courts	✓	31,296	33%	17,023	18%	14,714
Multipurpose Synthetic Field		N/A	28%	73,000	22%	39,736
Indoor						
Recreation Centers	✓	31,296	95%	54,050	64%	31,239
Senior Centers	✓	31,296	72%	108,105	41%	59,603
Competitive Swimming Pools		N/A	36%	89,822	N/A	N/A
Nature Centers		N/A	41%	112,681	31%	114,696



2.7.1 Playgrounds

Figure 2.6 shows the service areas (10-minute walk and 5-minute drive) for playgrounds in Abilene. The city offers 19 playgrounds at 18 different parks. Walkable access is available in small pockets dispersed throughout the city with the 5-minute drive areas extending to cover most residential areas. Most of the city has some sort of access to a playground; however, a small portion in southwestern Abilene is beyond even the 5-minute drive range.



2.7.2 Basketball Courts (Outdoor)

Figure 2.7 displays service areas for outdoor basketball courts calculated by the same access measures as playgrounds (10-minute walk and 5-minute drive). Abilene offers 10.5 basketball courts in 12 different parks. The map shows existing areas of access to basketball courts are similar to the playground access in Figure 2.6 though encompasses smaller areas. In addition to the small southwestern portion out of the 5-minute driving range, residential areas located near Lake Kirby Park and south of Loop 322 are also beyond these service areas.



2.7.3 Baseball/Softball Diamond Fields

Abilene's diamond ballfield service areas are illustrated in Figure 2.8. Small portions of the city are within a 10-minute walk of a diamond field, while 5-minute drive access extends to most of the city. The same area in the southwestern portion of the city is beyond these service areas.



2.7.4 Aquatic Facilities

Figure 2.9 shows the service area for the city's aquatic center, Adventure Cove located at Rose Park. While only a small portion of the population is within a 10-minute walk, much of the central portion of the city is within a 5-minute drive. The facility is within a 10-minute drive from the majority of the city with the exception of areas toward the edge of the city.



Figure 2.10 shows the service area for the city's five splash pads, located at five community parks. Only small areas of the city are walkable to a splash pad; however, much of the population enjoys a 5-minute drive or less to a splash pad. Almost everyone is within 10-minute drive to a splash pad.

2.7.5 Picnic Shelters

Figure 2.11 depicts service areas for picnic shelters throughout the city, limited to medium and large shelters capable of hosting a gathering. The 5-minute drive service areas are concentrated towards the center of the city with some areas extended east of Lake Kirby Park. Most of the city is located within a 10-minute drive to a shelter.



2.7.6 Recreation Center

Figure 2.12 depicts the service areas for Abilene's four recreation centers. The most densely populated portions of the city are within the 5-minute drive service areas; however, a portion of the southwestern part of the city is outside of even the 10-minute drive areas.

2.7.7 Tennis

Figure 2.13 shows that service areas for tennis courts are much less comprehensive than the previously discussed facilities. Abilene Parks and Recreation currently offers 20 tennis courts, with most of them located at the tennis center at Rose Park. Overall, access is better in the center of the city.



2.7.8 Pickleball

Figure 2.14 shows that service areas for pickleball courts are much less comprehensive than many other facilities as they are only offered in three locations. The northeastern and southwestern portions of the city are within a 5-minute drive to a pickleball court while only small portions are within a 10-minute walk. Pickleball courts are offered at Stevenson Park, Will Hair Park, and Vaughn Camp Park, all of which are shared with tennis.

2.7.9 Disc Golf

Figure 2.15 shows service areas for disc golf. The northern half of the city is within a 5-minute drive of a disc golf course, while most of the rest of the city is within a 10-minute drive. Once again, a pocket on the southwestern portion of the city is beyond a 10-minute drive to a disc golf course.



2.7.10 Trails

Figure 2.16 shows a range of service areas across the city for trails (minimum of 0.5 miles long). Walkable access to trails is focused closer to the center of the city near the larger parks. There are various shorter loop trails offered at nine parks in Abilene with the longest paved trail located at Redbud Park (2.3mi). With the comparatively low level of service for trails plus the desire for additional trails in the community, Abilene Parks and Recreation should continue to develop the trail system and create linkages to existing parks and destinations. The Cedar Creek Trail, proposed to connect between Lake Kirby Park and Sea Bee Park, greatly improve access to trails in Abilene. Additional trails within parks also present opportunities to connect to adjacent neighborhoods, potentially improving access within a 10-minute walk.



2.7.11 Dog Park

As evident in Figure 2.17, the eastern half of the city has much better access to the city's lone dog park, Camp Barkley at Grover Nelson Park. This location is only within a 5-minute drive of a limited number of residents, and the western portion is more than 10-minutes away. Walkability to the dog park is very limited.





Figure 2.5: Neighborhood Park Service Areas

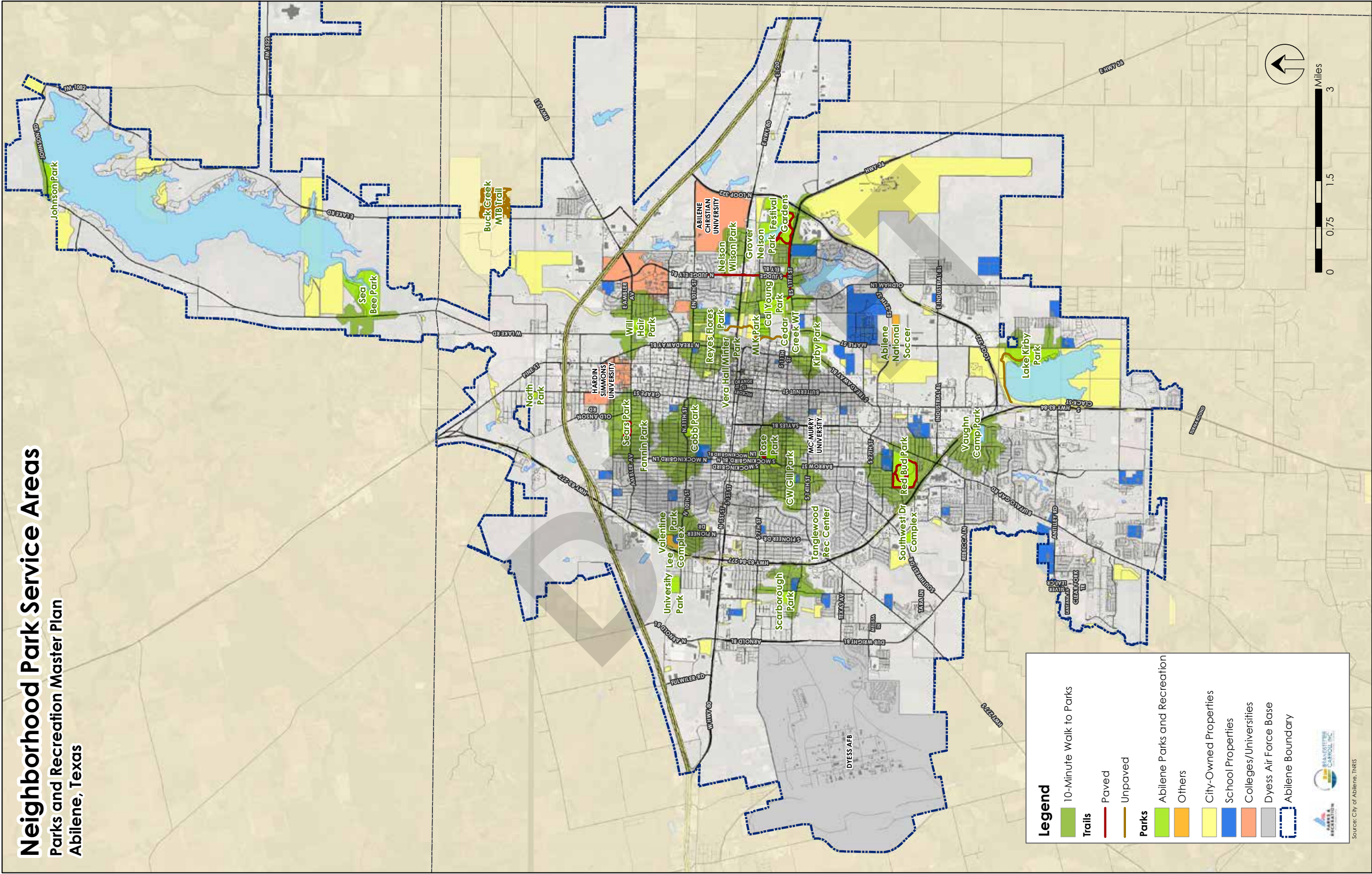




Figure 2.8: Outdoor Basketball Court Service Areas

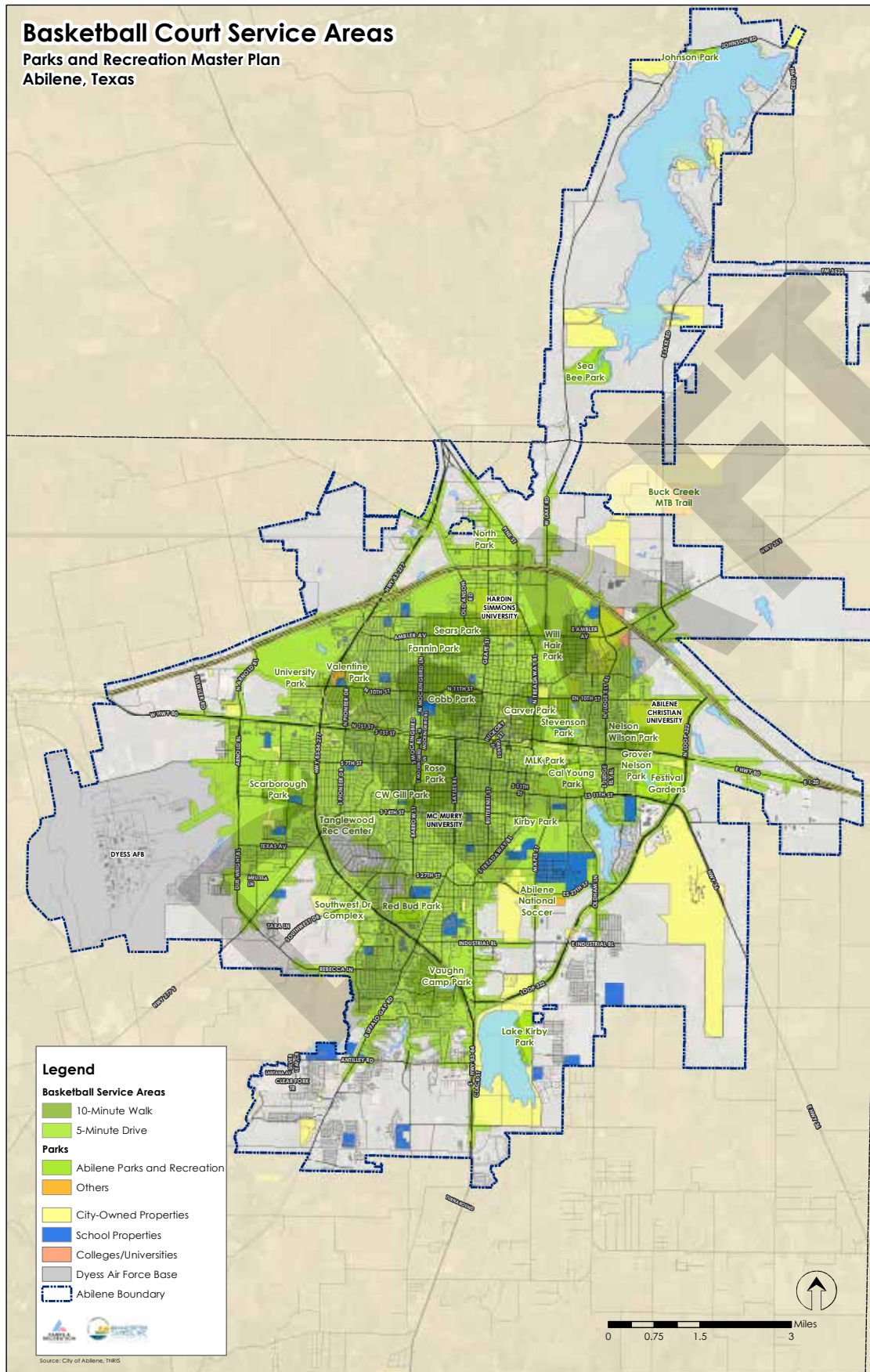




Figure 2.9: Diamond Field Service Areas

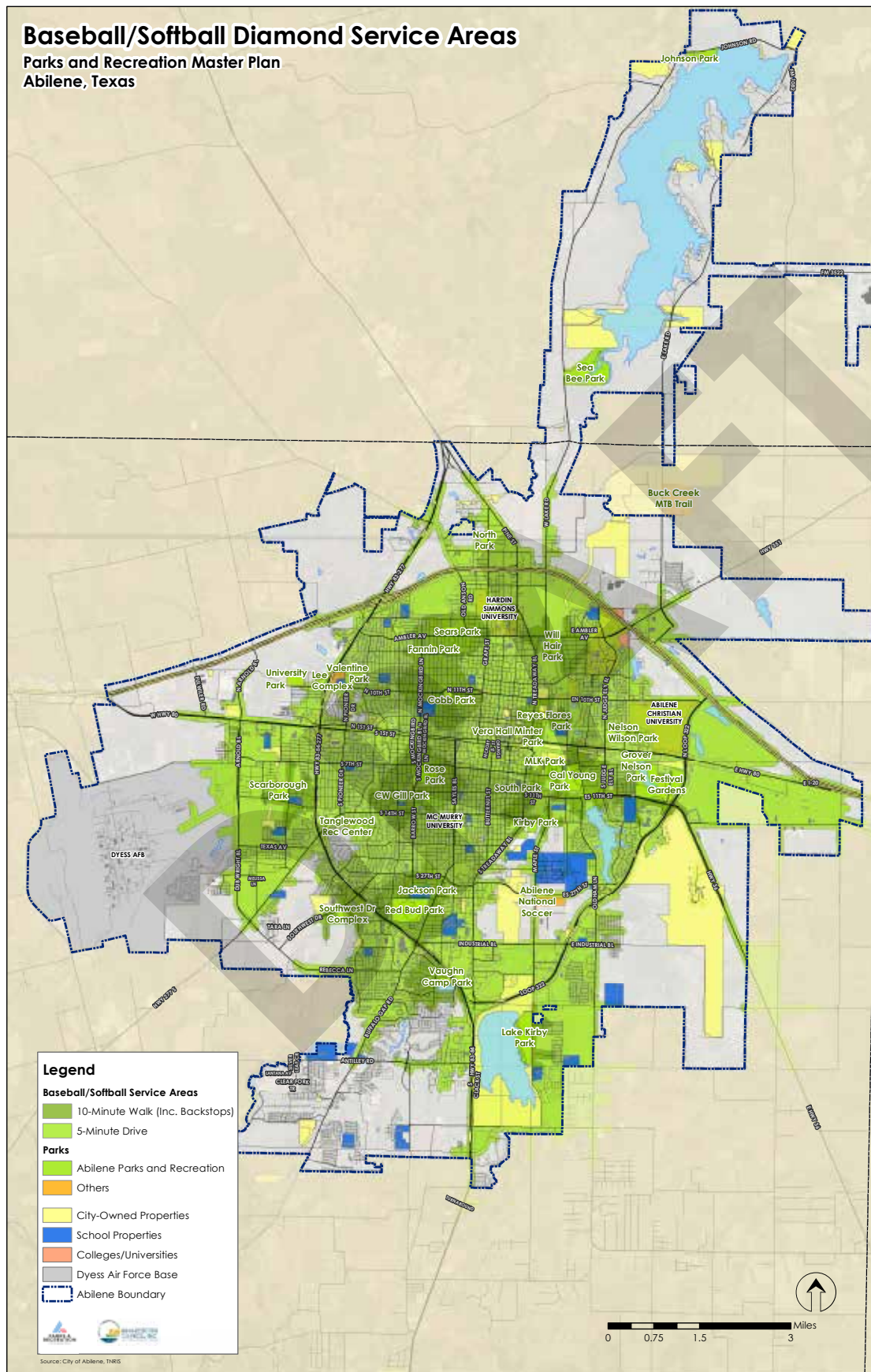




Figure 2.10: Aquatic Facility Service Area

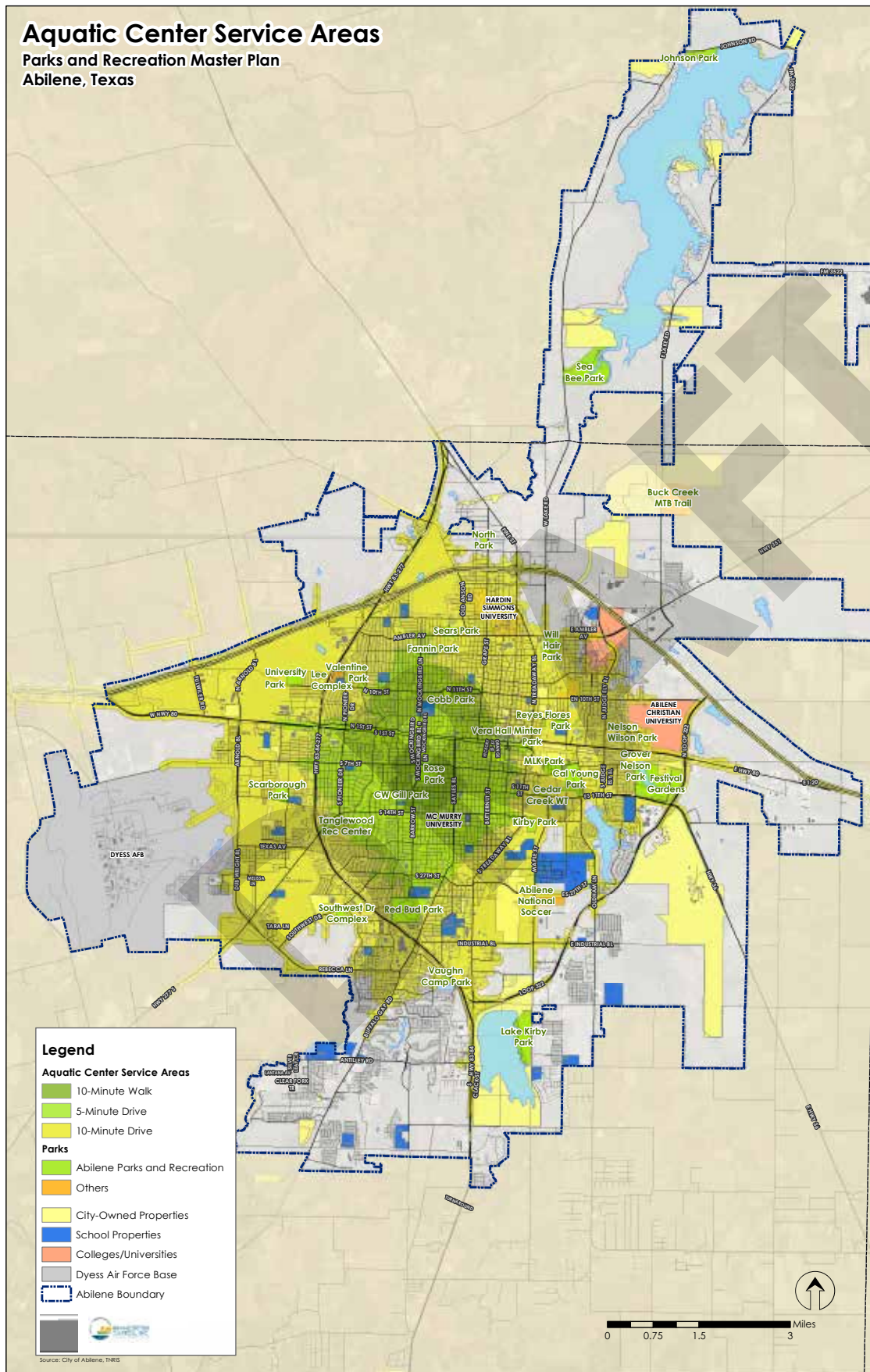




Figure 2.11: Splash Pad Service Area

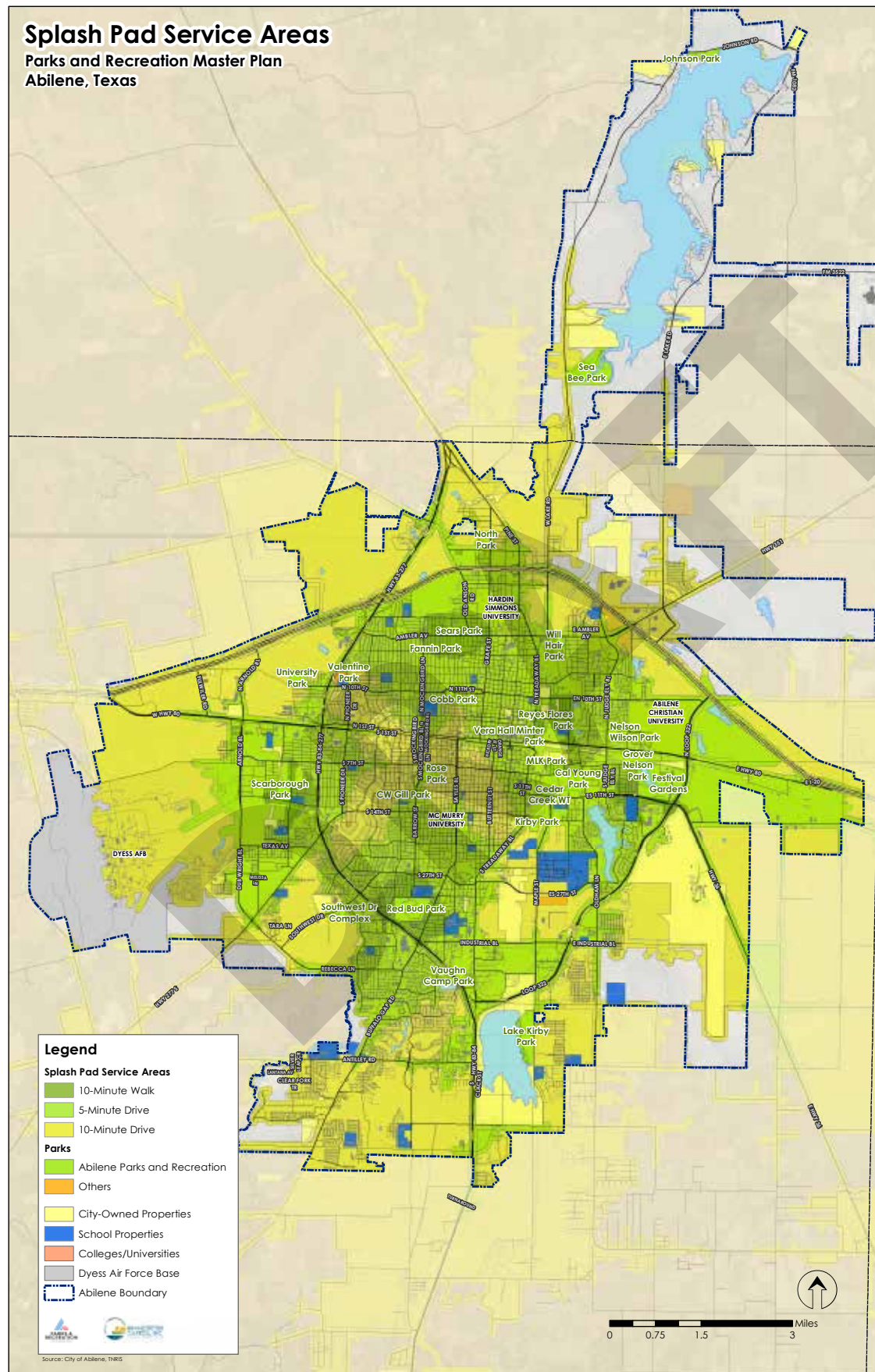




Figure 2.12: Picnic Shelter Service Area

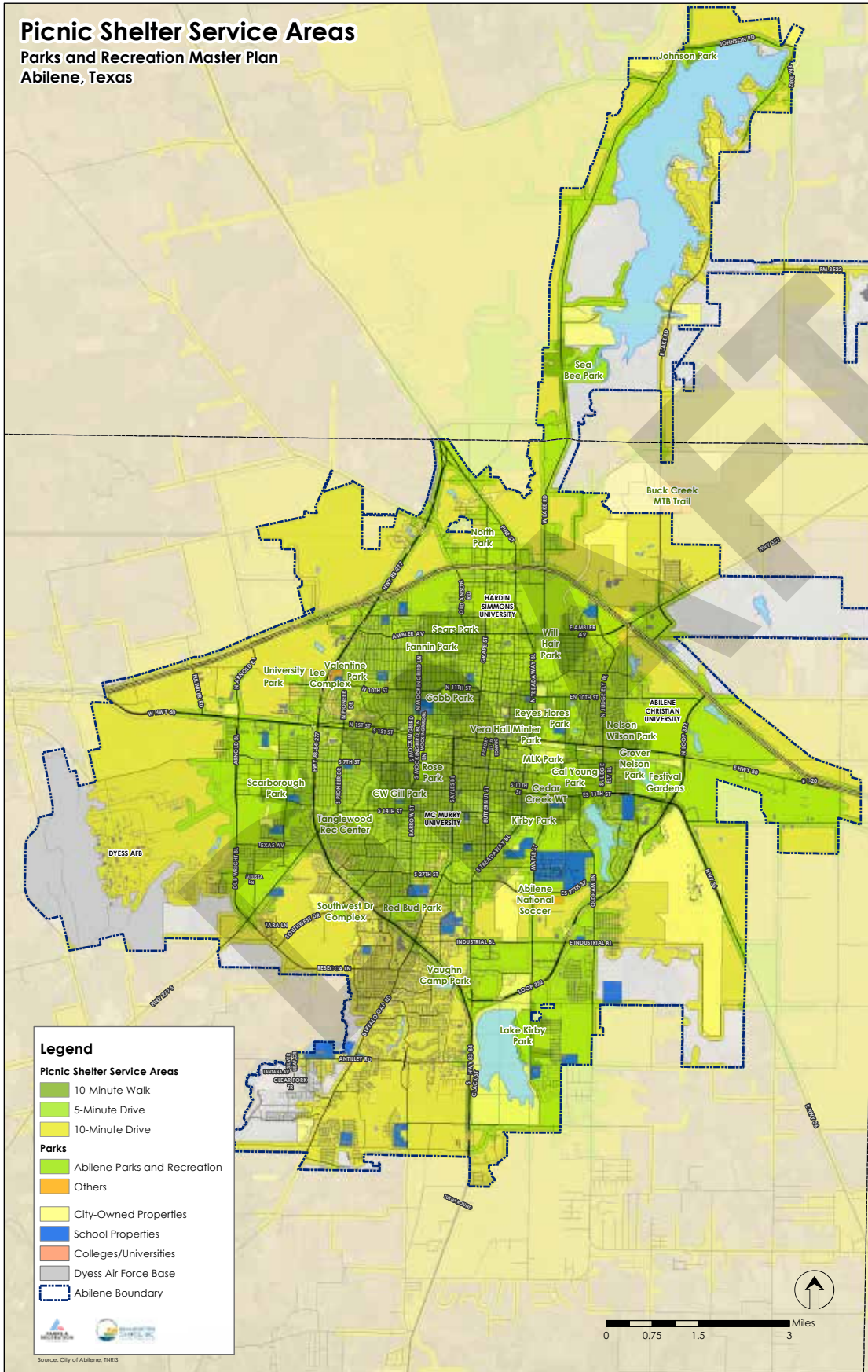




Figure 2.13: Recreation Center Service Area

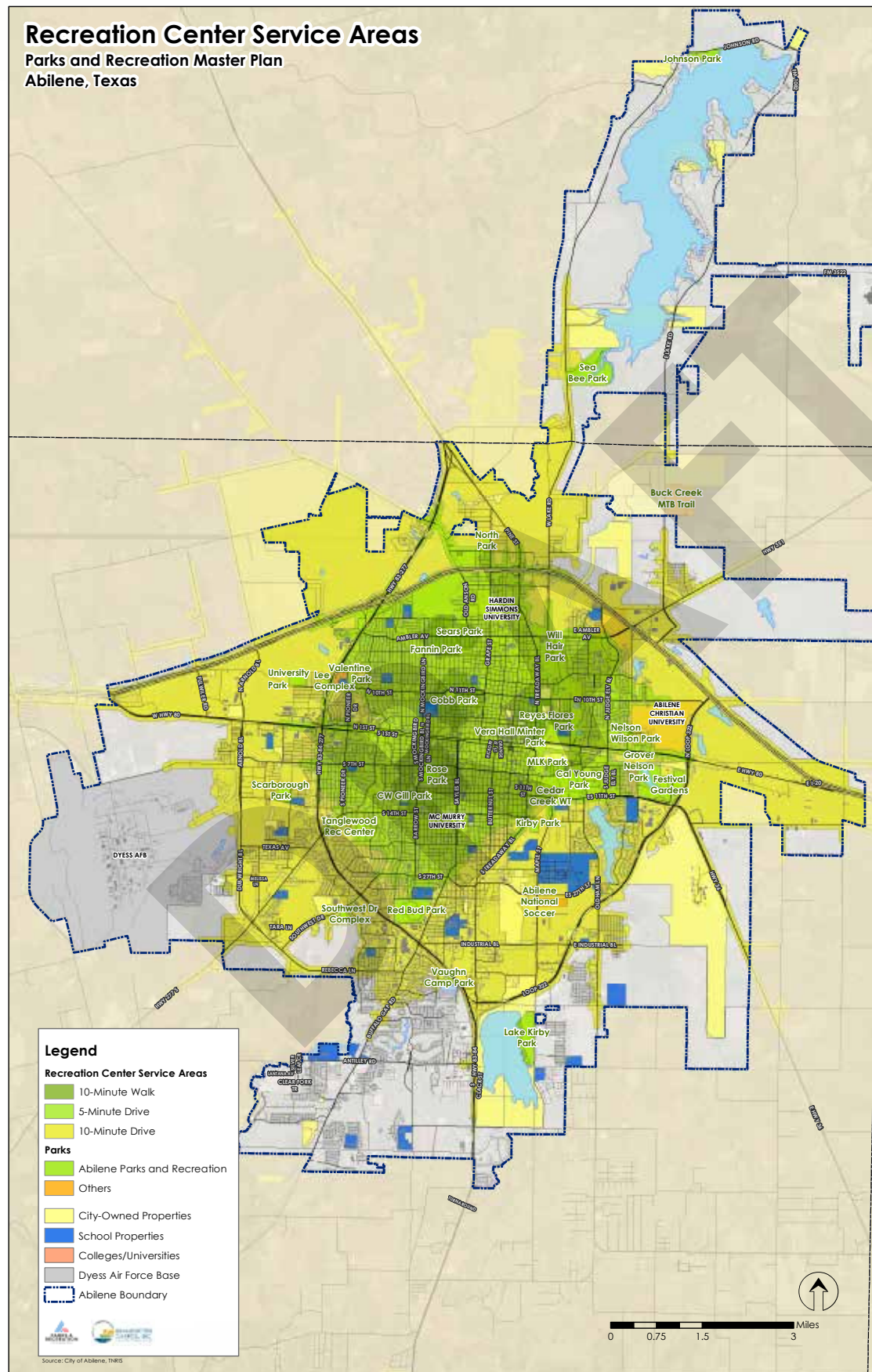




Figure 2.14: Tennis Service Area

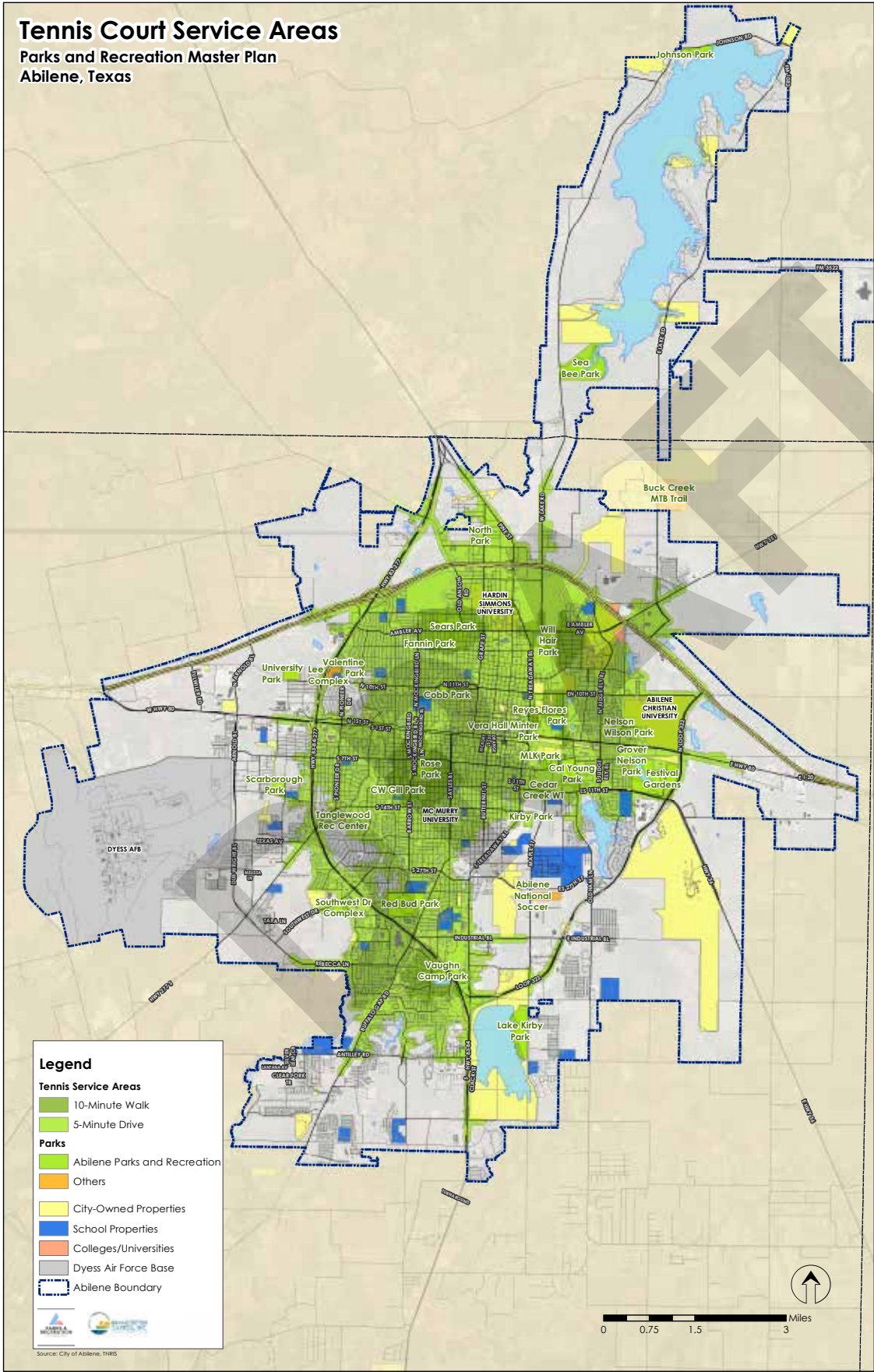




Figure 2.15: Pickleball Service Areas

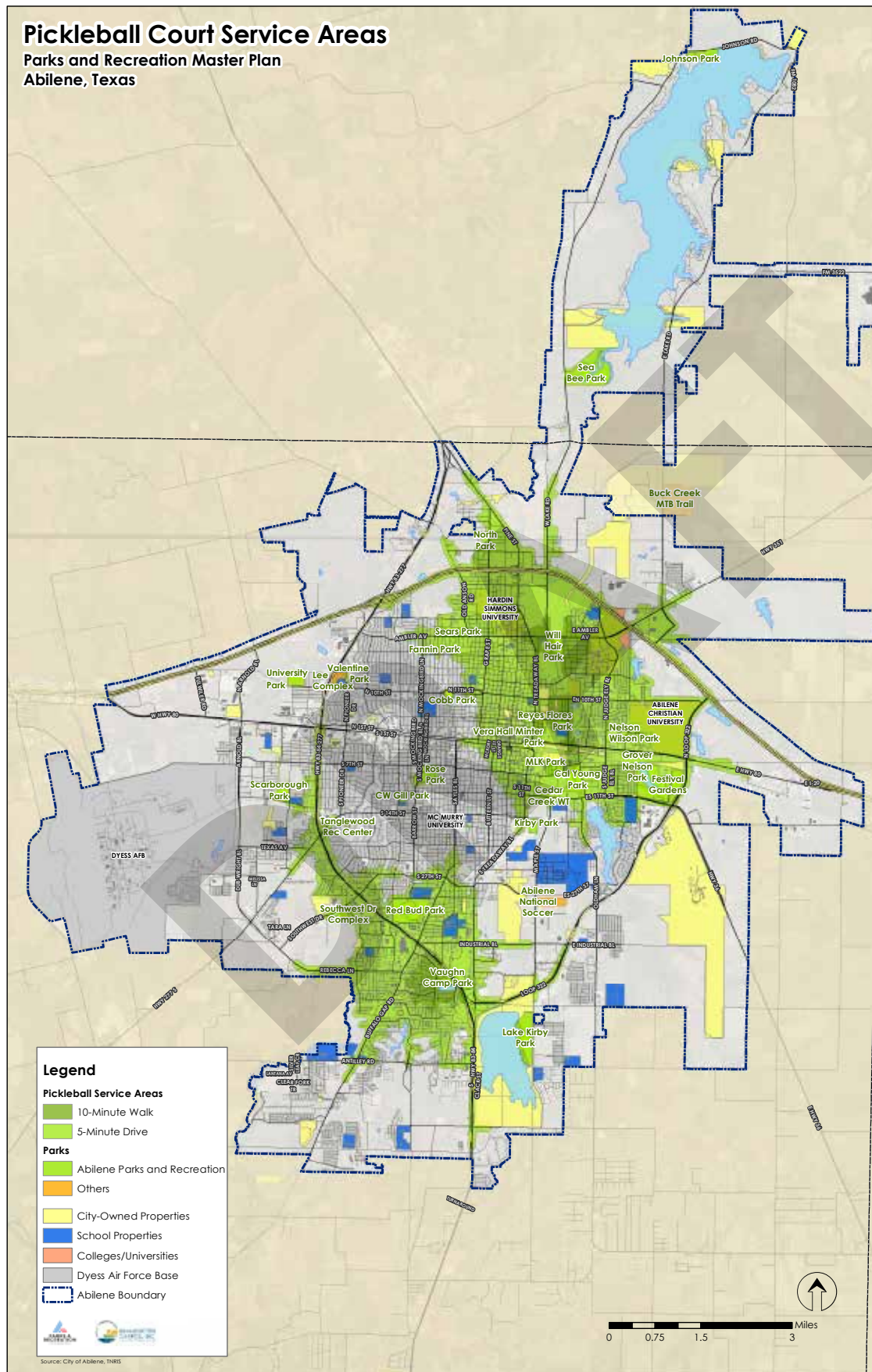




Figure 2.16: Disc Golf Service Areas

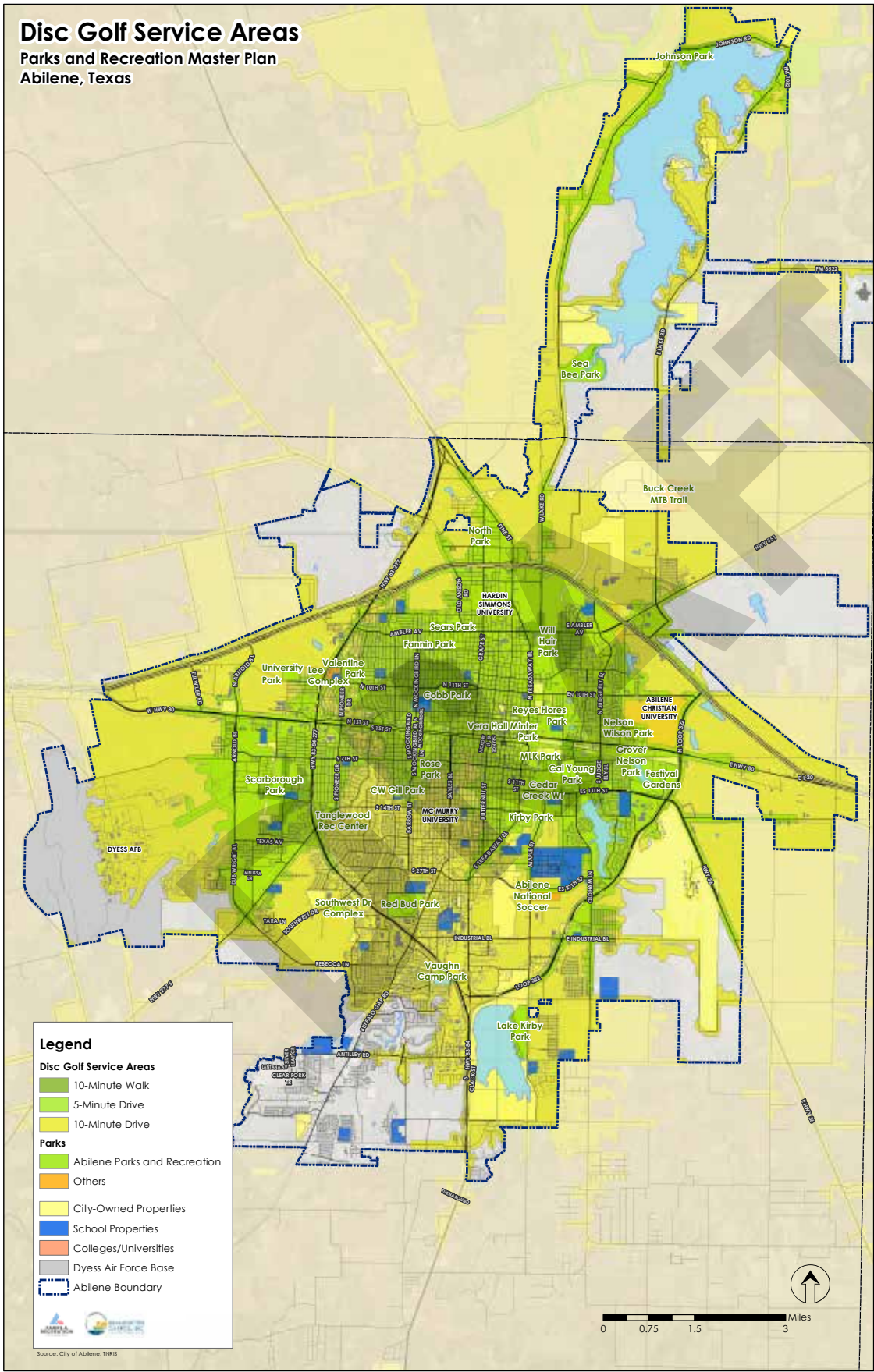




Figure 2.17: Trail Service Areas

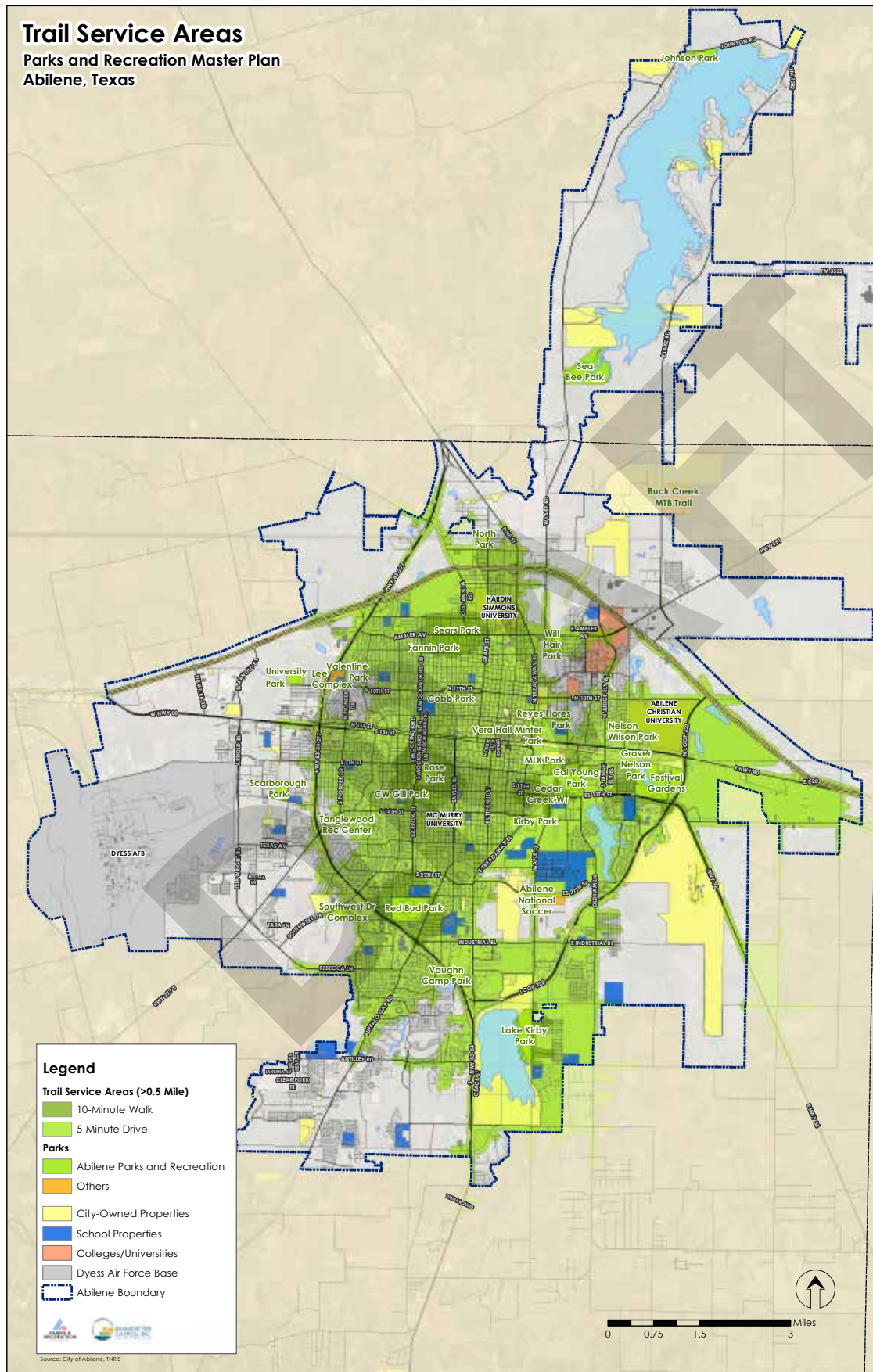
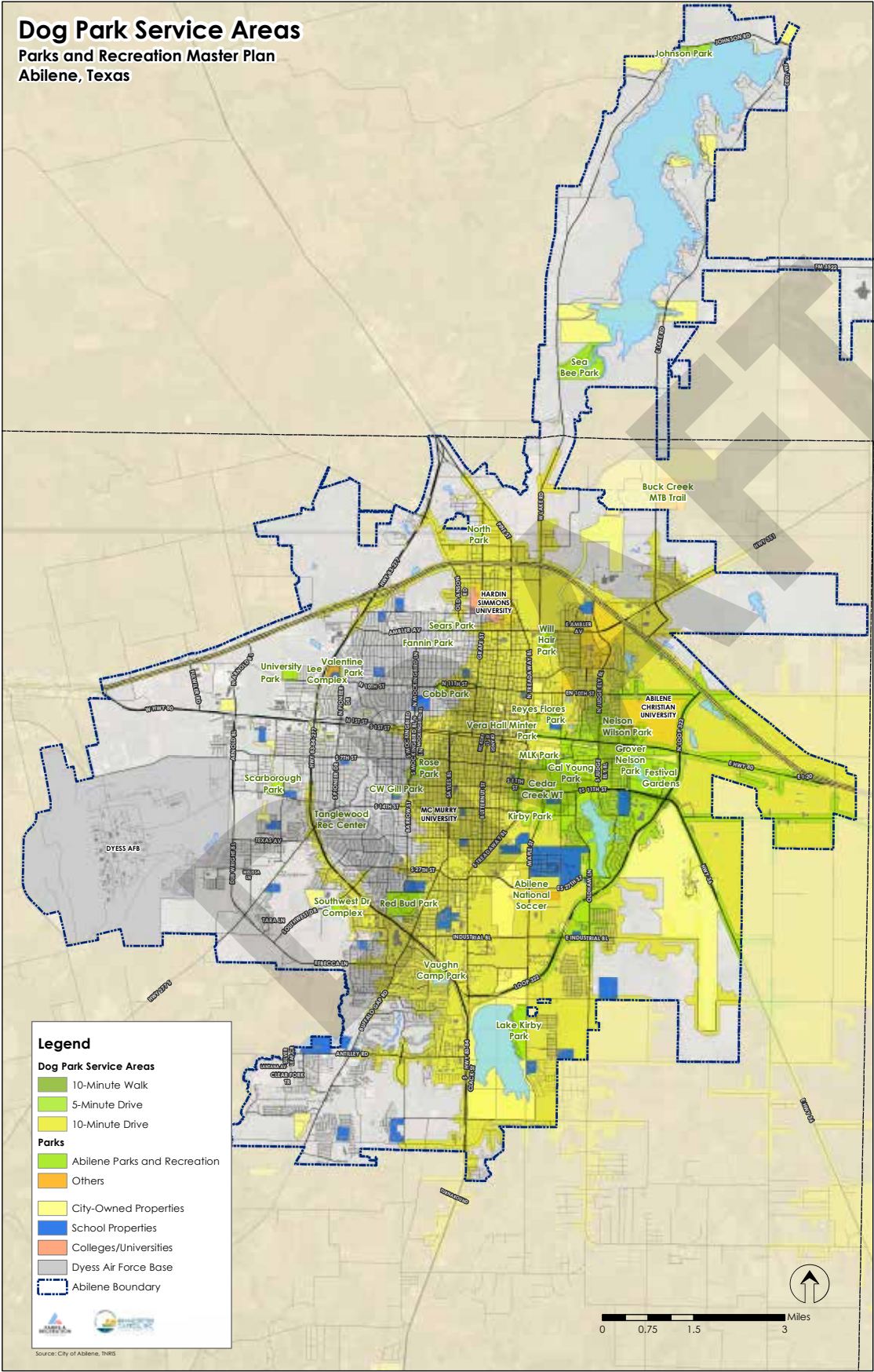




Figure 2.18: Dog Park Service Area





2.8.2 Results

Once the SVI was collected for each census tract in Abilene, the results were divided into five categories which can be seen in Figure 2.19. This map shows areas with higher levels of social vulnerability in red and areas with lower levels in blue; the deepest shades indicate the most and least vulnerable areas. Most of the census tracts within the city's boundaries ranked low to medium-low on the index, while 11 census tracts ranked high or medium-high. Areas with higher vulnerability are concentrated in the northern and western portions of the city. The most vulnerable areas are near Will Hair Park and Hardon Simmons University.

The following parks are located in the high or medium-high areas:

- Carver Park
- Cobb Park
- Everman Park
- Fannin Park
- Reyes Flores Park
- Scarborough Park
- Sears Park
- University Park
- Vera Hall Minter Park
- Will Hair Park (High)

2.8.3 Vulnerable Populations

This section takes a closer look at the portions of the city with the highest levels of vulnerability according to the SVI. This section compares demographics conditions of the areas to the overall conditions in the City of Abilene.

Vulnerable Census Tracts

This analysis is limited to the two most vulnerable categories that are more likely to have needs for social services based on the SVI. Table 2.22 shows a selection of demographic indicators for these areas and the City of Abilene as a whole.

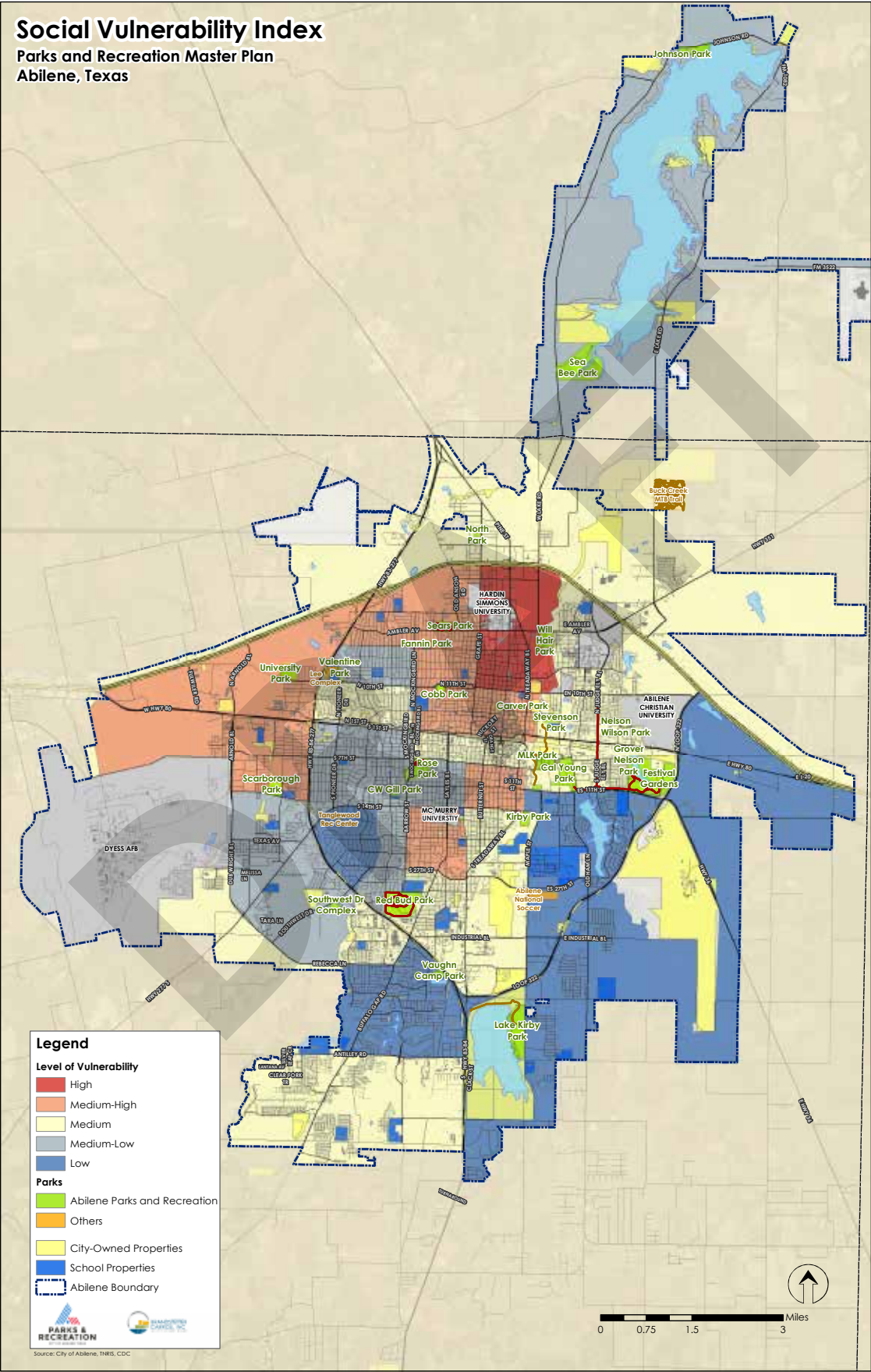
Table 2.22: Demographic Indicators for Vulnerable Areas

Measurement	High	Medium-High	Abilene
Total Population ¹	4,336	27,266	125,182
Households ¹	1,330	9,743	45,624
Median Age ³	24.1	32.3	34.2
Age 65+ ³	11%	13%	16%
Age <18 ³	24%	27%	22%
Single Parent HH (of total HH)	19%	19%	12%
HH below Poverty Line ²	32%	22%	15%
HH w/ Members w/ Disabilities ²	38%	32%	28%
Median Household Income ³	\$31,494	\$41,906	\$56,018
Diversity Index ¹	77.4	81.4	72.3

Source: 1. 2020 US Census, 2. 2020 5-year ACS, 3. Esri 2022 forecasts



Figure 2.19: Social Vulnerability Index





Although few residents live in the “very high” areas, some are present near Valentine Park, North Park, and the undeveloped University Park. Overall, **the map highlights the need for park investment through the center, the north, and the southwest of the city**, areas that currently lack parks or have limited amenities in the parks that are present.

2.10 TRENDS IN PARKS AND RECREATION

The following text analyzes national trends in recreation, including types of activities and their associated facilities. First, a look at participation rates for various activities – using data from the Sport and Fitness Industry Association – then a deeper dive into the latest trends (relevant to Abilene) occurring in programming and facilities across the nation.

There will be different emphasis and considerations particular to Abilene, but also an exploration of overall patterns. Looking through a broader lens can provide insight into the origin and trajectory of more localized preferences. Understanding how trends in fitness, recreation, athletics, and cultural resources reflect in the parks and recreation industry illuminates present conditions and future possibilities in Abilene. Equipped with industry context the Abilene Parks and Recreation Department can better sustain, expand, and realign its existing offerings.

2.10.1 Trends In Recreation Participation

On an annual basis, the Sport and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) conducts a survey of individuals and households throughout the United States to determine participation in a variety of sports and fitness activities. By using a weighting technique, the survey produces results reflective of the total U.S. population age 6 and older; the 2020 sample consisted of 18,000 online interviews of households. The following text examines the findings of this SFIA report and connects relevant data to generate insights about Abilene.

Figure 2.20 shows the difference in participation rates between generations for seven types of sports. The youngest generation (Gen Z) had the highest participation rates for individual sports (e.g., archery, skateboarding, golfing, etc.), team sports (e.g., baseball, ultimate frisbee, soccer, etc.), and outdoor sports (e.g., hiking, trail running, bicycling, etc.). With each generation, participation rates dropped as age increased with the exception of fitness space. The other three generational groups had high participation rates in fitness sports (e.g., barre, weight-training, kettlebells, etc.). The remaining three types of sports (racquet, winter, and water sports) have similar trends, Millennial's and Gen Z representing the highest levels of participation.

Figure 2.20: Participation Rates by Generation

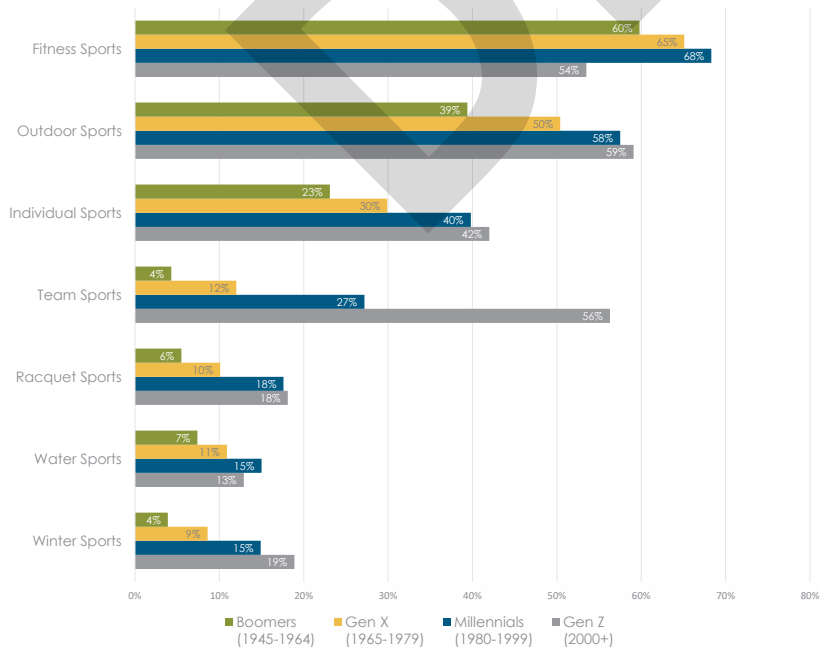
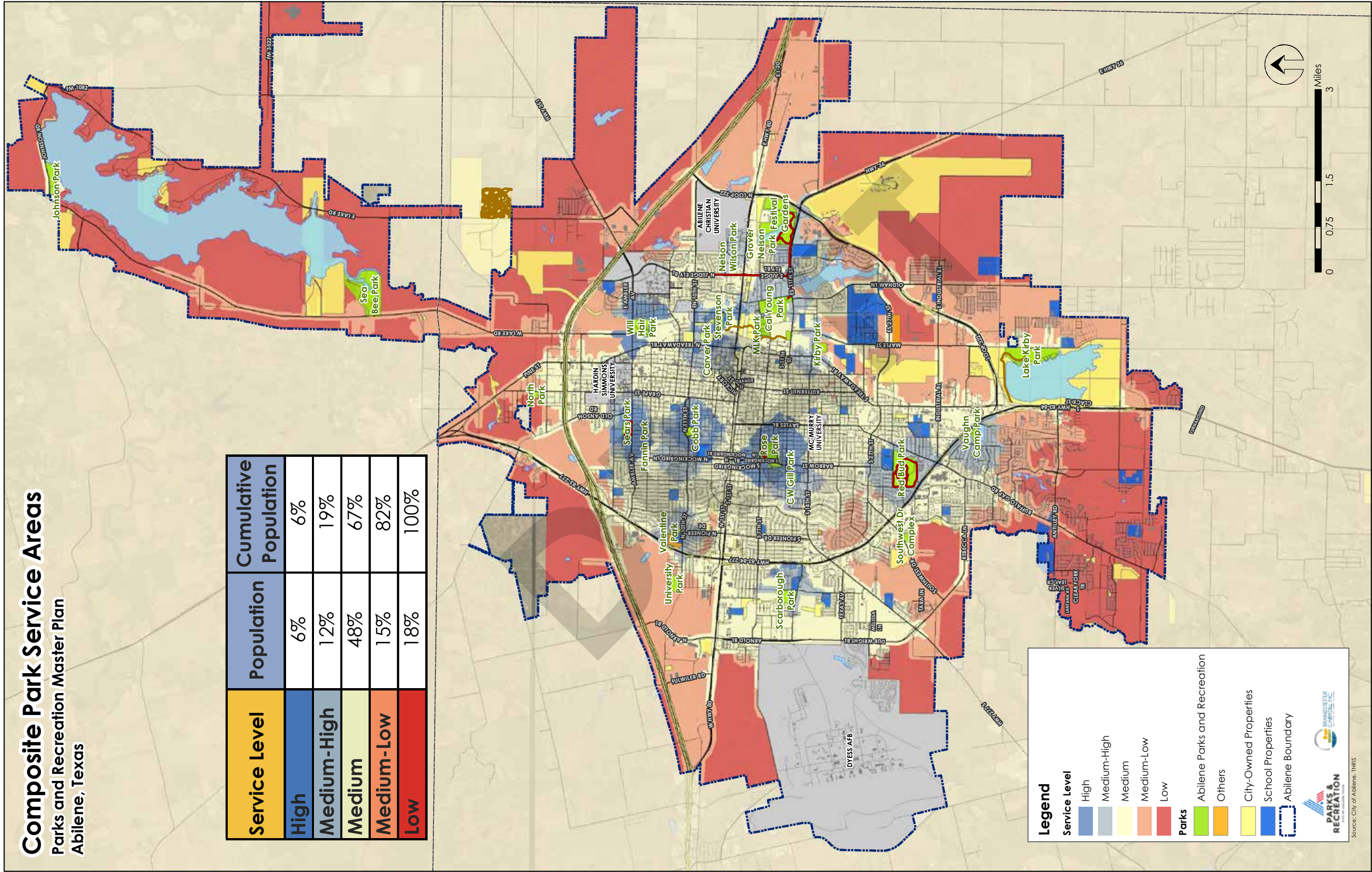
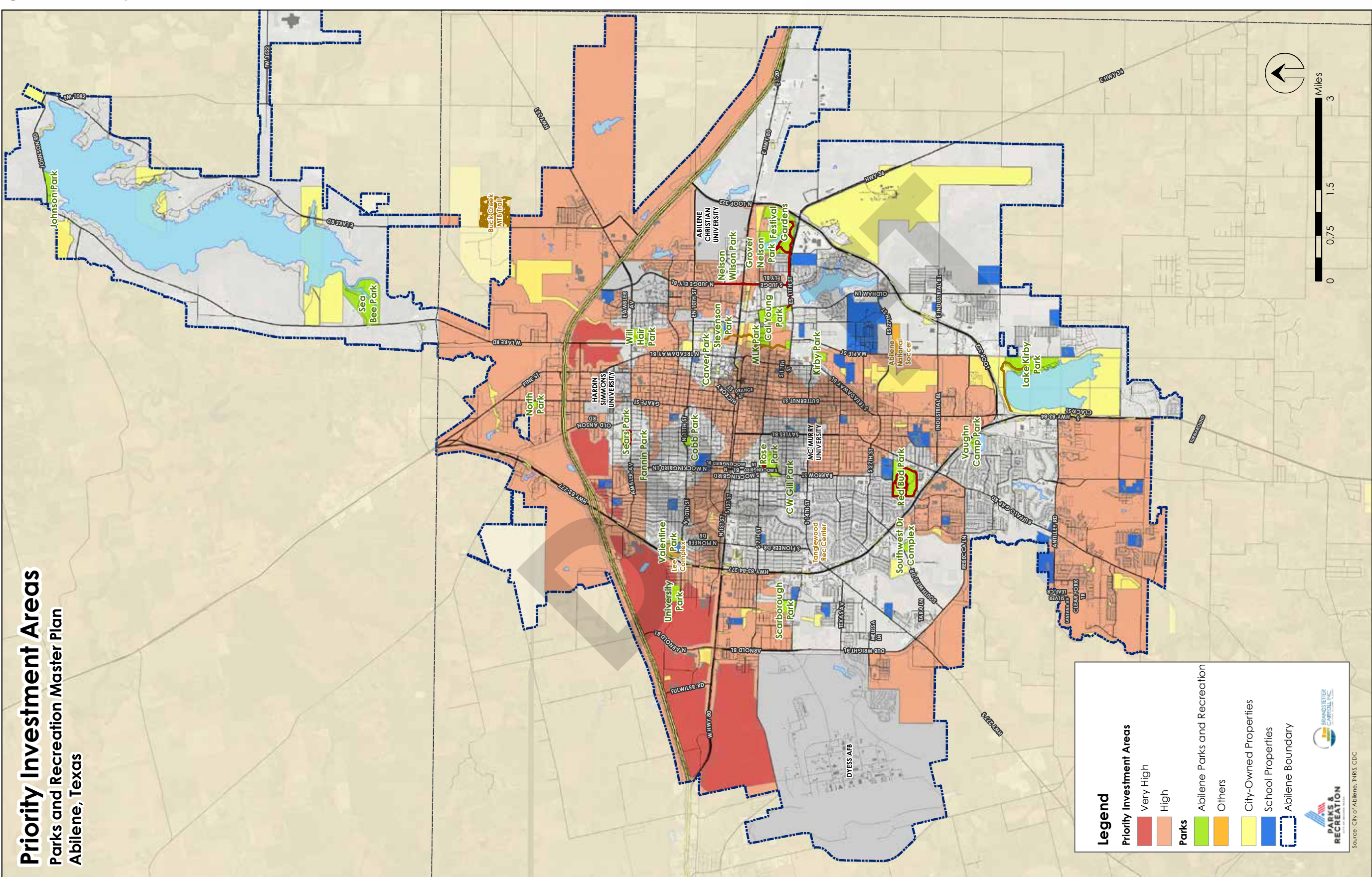




Figure 2.21: Composite Park Service Areas







With growing percentages of Abilene residents in the older two generations, demand for fitness programming is likely to increase into the future. Even though participation diminishes with age, outdoor sports remain popular with all age groups (39% of Boomers take advantage of outdoor fitness activities). Team sports are far more popular with the youngest generation (56% Gen Z and only 4% Boomers).

Table 2.24 displays the 5-year participation rates for 57 different sports and fitness activities. This table also shows the 5-year annual growth rate and highlights which activities show either significant growth or decline in participation rates. The fastest growing sports are highlighted in blue; *pickleball*, *day hiking*, *trail running*, *BMX bicycling*, and *skateboarding* show the fastest rate of growth over the 5-year period.

Walking for fitness, *day hiking*, *free weights (hand weights)*, *running/jogging*, and *treadmill* have the largest number of participants. Walking for fitness has by far the greatest number of participants (over 100 million participants nationally) and hiking is growing over 9% annually even with already high participation (nearly 60 million). Three of the top five activities are oriented around trails (bicycling, ranked six). It is no surprise these facilities are in such high demand; Abilene residents are not unusual in expressing their strong interest in trail-based activities as indicated through previous planning efforts and this plan (see Chapter 3).

Table 2.24: Nationwide 5-Year History of Selected Sports Participation

Sport/Fitness Activity	Category	Participants (in Thousands)						5-Year Average Annual Growth
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Adventure Racing	Individual Sports	2,864	2,999	2,529	2,215	2,143	1,966	-7.0%
Aquatic Exercise	Aerobic Activities	8,226	10,575	10,459	10,518	11,189	10,954	3.7%
Archery	Individual Sports	8,378	7,903	7,769	7,654	7,449	7,249	-2.8%
Badminton	Racquet Sports	7,198	7,354	6,430	6,337	6,095	5,862	-3.9%
Baseball	Team Sports	13,711	14,760	15,642	15,877	15,804	15,731	2.8%
Basketball	Team Sports	23,410	22,343	23,401	24,225	24,917	27,753	3.6%
Bicycling (BMX)	Outdoor Activities	2,690	3,104	3,413	3,439	3,648	3,880	7.7%
Bicycling (Mountain/Non-Paved Surface)	Outdoor Activities	8,316	8,615	8,609	8,690	8,622	8,998	1.6%
Bicycling (Road/Paved Surface)	Outdoor Activities	38,280	38,365	38,866	39,041	39,388	44,471	3.2%
Birdwatching (>¼ Mile from Home)	Outdoor Activities	13,093	11,589	12,296	12,344	12,817	15,228	3.5%
Cardio Tennis	Racquet Sports	1,821	2,125	2,223	2,499	2,501	2,503	6.8%
Cheerleading	Team Sports	3,608	4,029	3,816	3,841	3,752	3,308	-1.4%
Elliptical Motion Trainer	Aerobic Activities	32,321	32,218	32,283	33,238	33,056	27,920	-2.6%
Fishing (Fly)	Outdoor Activities	6,089	6,456	6,791	6,939	7,014	7,753	5.0%
Fishing (Freshwater)	Outdoor Activities	37,682	38,121	38,346	38,998	39,185	42,556	2.5%
Football (Flag)	Team Sports	5,829	6,173	6,551	6,572	6,783	7,001	3.8%
Football (Tackle)	Team Sports	6,222	5,481	5,224	5,157	5,107	5,054	-4.0%
Free Weights (Hand Weights)	Strength	54,716	51,513	5,217	51,291	51,450	53,256	-0.5%
Golf	Individual Sports	24,120	23,815	23,829	24,240	24,271	24,804	0.6%
Gymnastics	Team Sports	4,679	5,381	4,805	4,770	4,699	3,848	-3.2%
High Impact/Intensity & Training	Aerobic Activities	20,464	21,390	21,476	21,611	22,044	22,487	1.9%
Hiking (Day)	Outdoor Activities	37,232	42,128	44,900	47,860	49,697	57,808	9.3%
Ice Hockey	Team Sports	2,546	2,697	2,544	2,447	2,357	2,270	-2.2%
Ice Skating	Individual Sports	10,485	10,315	9,998	9,721	9,460	9,857	-1.2%
Kayaking (Recreational)	Water Sports	9,499	10,017	10,533	11,017	11,382	13,002	6.5%
Kayaking (White Water)	Water Sports	2,518	2,552	2,500	2,562	2,583	2,605	0.7%
Lacrosse	Team Sports	2,094	2,090	2,171	2,098	2,115	1,884	-2.0%
Martial Arts	Individual Sports	5,507	5,745	5,838	5,821	6,068	6,064	2.0%
Mixed Martial Arts for Fitness	Individual Sports	2,612	2,446	2,376	2,365	2,405	2,445	-1.3%
Pickleball	Racquet Sports	2,506	2,815	3,132	3,301	3,460	4,199	11.0%
Pilates Training	Conditioning	8,594	8,893	9,047	9,084	9,243	9,905	2.9%
Racquetball	Racquet Sports	3,883	3,579	3,526	3,480	3,453	3,426	-2.4%
Roller Hockey	Team Sports	1,907	1,929	1,834	1,734	1,616	1,500	-4.6%
Rugby	Team Sports	1,349	1,550	1,621	1,560	1,392	1,242	-1.2%
Running/Jogging	Aerobic Activities	48,496	47,384	50,770	49,459	50,052	50,652	0.9%
Scuba Diving	Water Sports	3,274	3,111	2,874	2,849	2,715	2,588	-4.6%



Table 2.24: Nationwide 5-Year History of Selected Sports Participation (Continued)

Sport/Fitness Activity	Category	Participants (in Thousands)						5-Year Average Annual Growth
		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Skateboarding	Individual Sports	6,436	6,442	6,382	6,500	6,610	8,872	7.4%
Soccer (Outdoor)	Team Sports	12,646	11,932	11,924	11,405	11,913	12,444	-0.2%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	Team Sports	2,460	2,467	2,309	2,303	2,242	1,811	-5.6%
Softball (Slow-Pitch)	Team Sports	7,114	7,690	7,283	7,386	7,071	6,349	-2.1%
Stand Up Paddling	Water Sports	3,020	3,220	3,325	3,453	3,562	3,675	4.0%
Stationary Cycling	Aerobic Activities	35,553	36,118	36,035	36,668	9,930	6,054	-5.0%
Swimming for Fitness	Aerobic Activities	26,319	26,601	27,135	27,575	28,219	25,666	-0.4%
Swimming on a Team	Team Sports	2,892	3,369	3,007	3,045	2,822	2,615	-1.5%
Table Tennis	Racquet Sports	16,565	16,568	16,041	15,592	14,908	16,854	0.5%
Tai Chi	Conditioning	3,651	3,706	3,787	3,761	3,793	3,300	-1.8%
Tennis	Racquet Sports	17,963	18,079	17,683	17,841	17,684	21,642	4.2%
Trail Running	Individual Sports	8,139	8,582	9,149	10,010	10,997	11,854	7.8%
Treadmill	Aerobic Activities	50,398	51,872	52,966	53,737	56,823	49,832	0.0%
Track and Field	Team Sports	4,222	4,116	3,126	2,710	2,290	2,325	-1.0%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	Individual Sports	2,498	2,374	2,162	2,168	2,001	1,846	-5.8%
Ultimate Frisbee	Team Sports	4,409	3,673	3,126	2,710	2,290	2,325	-11.8%
Volleyball (Beach/Sand)	Team Sports	4,785	5,489	4,947	4,770	4,400	4,320	-1.7%
Bodyweight Exercise	Conditioning	22,146	25,110					N/A
Volleyball (Court)	Team Sports	6,423	6,216	6,317	6,317	6,487	5,410	-3.1%
Walking for Fitness	Aerobic Activities	109,829	107,895	110,805	111,001	111,439	114,044	0.8%
Weight/Resistance Machines	Strength	35,310	35,768	36,291	36,372	36,181	30,651	-2.6%
Yoga	Conditioning	25,289	26,268	27,354	28,745	30,456	32,808	5.4%

Legend

	>3% Increase
	1-3% Increase
	Minimal Change
	1-3% Decrease
	>3% Decrease

2.10.2 Aging Communities

Throughout the United States and in Abilene, the median age of the population is increasing along with the number of persons 65 years and older. Census data indicates that the percentage of the Abilene population age 65 and older was 11.9% in 2000 but is expected to increase to reach almost 17% by 2026.

Many senior centers are shifting from a focus on activities like card games to more active programming such as fitness activities and outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, and nature programs.

While the aging population should inspire parks and recreation agencies to invest more in activities, programs, and facilities for older users such as walking trails, fishing areas, community gardens, and cultural and nature education programs, many of these more involved and nature-oriented activities are appealing to all generations.

Existing senior centers in Abilene currently offer a myriad of activities and programming opportunities for seniors. Growth of this population will continue to increase demand for these activities, which is also supported by the input gathered for this plan.



Active Seniors in Parks

Credit: The Conversation (2017)
"Why Communities Should Be Designing Parks for Older Adults"



2.10.3 Universal Access

Many park systems are developing unique facilities designed to go well beyond the minimum requirement for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Park system administrators are uniquely positioned to set the best example for inclusivity – by creating an environment that is totally accessible to persons of all ages and abilities, parks and recreation agencies are changing the landscape not just physically but also culturally and in terms of mental health.



All-access playground at Rose Park

Some simple examples of physical treatments that go beyond the basic ADA requirements: textured edging on trails help to make the facilities more accessible for the visually impaired; fragrant plants and sensory gardens, as well as interactive displays provide a more hands-on approach to education and engagement; including therapeutic textures, ground-level features, and mobility-enhancing elements like ramps or bridges in playground equipment ensures all children – including those who are differently-abled – have space to play.

Universal access extends beyond the physical to include interpretive signage, buildings, and all programs. **Providing barrier-free parks should become an essential part of the process for any park improvement.** Most equipment providers have available options.

The new playground at Rose Park is a great example of an all-access playground and should serve as an example for future playground development. Several other existing playgrounds in the city need improvement or replacement; the city has a real opportunity to prioritize accessibility and universal access for the benefit of the community. In some cases, existing play equipment and sidewalks leading to the amenities are not at the universal access standard need for a fully engaging and participatory experience. At multiple recreation areas, accessible sidewalks and connections from existing ADA parking spaces are unavailable or incomplete. These situations could be remedied as part of parking lot resurfacing which is needed across the system.

2.10.4 Pickleball

Another national trend sweeping the nation is the growing sport of pickleball. No more are the days of pickleball being for the older generation. Even during the engagement process, it is evident Abilene park goers would like to see the development of additional pickleball courts.

Pickleball is a court sport played on a badminton-sized court with the net set to a height of 34 inches at the center. It is played with a perforated plastic ball and composite or wooden paddles about twice the size of ping-pong paddles. It can be played one on one or two on two. Pickleball grew in 2021 to 4.8 million players in the US, according to the 2022 Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Single Sport Report on Pickleball.



Pickleball Tournament

While growth of the sport began with seniors, popularity is growing with all ages. Under age 24 was the fastest growing group from 2020 to 2021 at 21%; growth for ages 55 and under was 10%. Core players (play 8 times or more a year) are more likely to be older, while casual players (1-7 times per year) are more likely to be younger.⁴

⁴ USA Pickleball Association. (2022, August 30). Pickleball fact sheet. USA Pickleball. Retrieved November 1, 2022, from <https://usapickleball.org/about-us/organizational-docs/pickleball-fact-sheet/#::~:~:text=Pickleball%20is%20a%20court%20sport,size%20of%20ping%2Dpong%20paddles.>



While Abilene currently offers four courts at three locations, they are shared tennis courts. The city has no dedicated pickleball courts. While these existing courts are beginning to address this need, they are not currently meeting the needs of the public. Additional courts will likely be needed to satisfy demand as this sport continues to grow.

2.10.5 Technology

The use of technology is becoming increasingly common in parks and recreation. Many park users want to remain connected while visiting parks and expect instant access to information about facilities and programs at those parks. They also want to be able to register for the events and programs they discover on their mobile device. While there may be concerns about distraction, especially in nature-oriented spaces, technology, when applied intentionally, can be a tool to enhance park experiences. Considering the extent to which technology is part of many user experiences across sectors, it is likely going to be an element necessary to keep people, especially youth, engaged.

Potential applications of technology in parks:

- Wi-Fi hotspots – to record the number of connections or searches to create a picture of visitation trends⁵
- Beacon counters – to detect cellphone signals to help determine the number of users in an area⁶
- Device-charging areas
- QR codes – to promote and inform
- Trail counters – to record types of users



Smart Trail Signage, Denison, IA

The department currently maintains an active social media presence, currently using Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Keeping these platforms relevant with varied posts (e.g., video content, informational flyers, community polls, etc.) will be helpful for attracting followers and expanding impact. These posts would, in turn, provide the department with additional means of gathering information on park condition, plant health, visitation levels, and more. Additionally, the city could extend its effort to provide public Wi-Fi into heavily used areas of parks, improving user experiences while also potentially providing information about park and program visitation.

2.10.6 Nature Interaction, Education, and Programming

Geocaching

Geocaching is a technology-based activity that has been growing in popularity since the early 2000s, when GPS technology improved significantly. Participants travel to local parks and open spaces to hunt for objects previously hidden by others using a set of coordinates and a digital GPS device (typically on a smart phone). Once found, participants generally exchange the now-discovered item for a new item, guaranteeing future use of the same geocache.

Geocaches are already present at various locations in Abilene and are hosted by the West Texas Geocaching Association. Several meet and greets are hosted by this association in the West Texas area. **Partnering with this organization to promote geocaching would provide Abilene residents additional opportunities to recreate as well as more**



Geocaching

⁵ National Recreation and Park Association, "Parks Using Technology to Engage and Inspire," <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2017/may/parks-using-technology-to-engage-and-inspire/>. (May 1, 2017)

⁶ Dolesh, R. J. (2019, January). Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2019. Parks & Recreation.



reasons to get outside and visit Abilene's parks.

Environmental Education

There is a need for expanded environmental education and parks and recreation agencies have a considerable role to play. Environmental education centers throughout the country are having great success as communities are seeking out better access to engage with and learn from their natural environment. Potential subjects include natural processes, resource management, and wildlife habitats.

Not only does this outreach promote and encourage greater use and appreciation of local parks in the community, but it also creates opportunity for collaboration between organizations, institutions, and advocacy groups and it helps instill a lasting connection to the natural world.



Environmental Education signage at Lake Kirby

Birdwatching (or Birding)

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service nearly 545 million Americans participate in birdwatching (as of 2016) or about 13% of the population. The most common form of birding is watching birds near one's home; however, 35% of birders, or 16 million people, participate in birding away from the home. Participants in birdwatching tend to be older and more highly educated than the general population.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service report also includes an analysis of the economic impact of birdwatching activities. Birdwatchers direct substantial amounts of dollars into the economy because of trip-related (\$14.9 million) and equipment expenditures (\$26 million). The report finds that the birding industry, including indirect effects resulting from the multiplier effect, generates about \$96 billion annually throughout the United States and supports 782,000 jobs. These expenditures lead to an additional \$16 million in local, state, and federal tax revenue.⁷



Credit: USFWS

Big Country Audubon Society promotes awareness and understanding of birds and other wildlife in their natural habitats in the Abilene and West Texas area. The society posts birding locations and maps which include some of Abilene's city parks (Sea Bee, Will Hair, Nelson, Lake Kirby). **In the engagement for this Master Plan, a recurring need emerged for additional opportunities to connect and interact with nature.** Abilene Parks and Recreation should consider expanding the relationship with the Big Country Audubon Society and others to collaborate and expand birding opportunities. Abilene could potentially partner with the local colleges and universities located in the city to offer and promote nature education programs at city parks.

Environmental Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Many communities utilize parks as examples of best management practices (BMPs) to serve as models for minimizing environmental impacts and maximizing the sustainability of both park sites and operations. Parks and recreation departments are in great positions to lead in the implementation of these practices because they are typically among the largest landowners (if not the largest) in their jurisdictions. To assist in the implementation of these practices,



Prairie dogs and signage at Red Bud Park

⁷ Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis, Addendum to the 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2019.



some park departments establish manuals detailing the BMPs which are generally divided into categories.⁸ Some potential categories include (with examples):

1. Site Selection – which properties to acquire and protect
2. Design – strategies for management of stormwater, water quality, riparian/wetland buffers; use of vegetation; choice of building materials
3. Construction – controlling of pollutants, soil restoration, recycling of construction materials
4. Operation and Maintenance – practices for water conservation, use of organics, weed control, composting, energy use, etc.
5. Programs and Special Events – consider carrying capacity of facility, provide recycling receptacles

Abilene Parks and Recreation manages a large amount of land, much of which is undeveloped and natural. These properties offer opportunities to demonstrate some BMPs at a larger scale, but these practices can be implemented at even the smallest parks. All improvements, even small elements such as rain and butterfly gardens, also provide educational opportunities. The departments prairie dog area in Redbud Park already applies best management practices to protect the habitat of the animals, while attempting to keep them away from other park elements. **The department has additional opportunities to encourage best management practices within existing parks and future park developments and to use them to educate the public and serve as an example for others.**

Nature Play Areas

Many parks and recreation agencies are placing increased emphasis on the availability of nature play areas and programming for children. The Natural Learning Initiative (NLI) and the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) recently released a document titled *Nature Play & Learning Places*, which provides a series of national guidelines for the creation of places for children to interact with nature. The guidelines are meant to support communities in providing opportunities for children to learn about their natural environment and to develop healthy active habits. The guidelines also encourage incorporating natural materials like plants, stones, water, fallen trees, etc. to augment sensory experience and facilitate tactile play. According to the guidelines, a nature play or learning place is:



Natural Play Structure (Silver Falls State Park – Oregon)

“A designated, managed area in an existing or modified outdoor environment where children of all ages and abilities play and learn by engaging with and manipulating diverse natural elements, materials, organisms, and habitats, through sensory, fine motor and gross motor experiences.”⁹

The following are examples of nature play features:

- Natural Play Structures
- Multipurpose Lawns
- Meadows and Woodlands
- Vegetable Gardens
- Natural Aquatics
- Gathering and Performance Structures

Abilene has many natural and aquatic areas and has begun work on developing them into many of the amenities mentioned above. For example, Lake Kirby Park through



Natural play at Lake Kirby Park

⁸ Environmental Best Management Practices Manual. City of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation. 2011.

⁹ Moore, R. (2014). *Nature Play & Learning Places*. Creating and managing places where children engage with nature. Raleigh, NC: Natural Learning Initiative and Reston, VA: National Wildlife Federation. Version 1.6. (pages vii, 5, 7-8, 51, 65, 71-83).



outside funding and partnership received a nature play area and trails in 2018. Abilene also has a significant amount of mowed and maintained land at its parks. Opportunities to turn these areas into natural meadow areas could prove beneficial for park exploration and for maintenance budgets.

2.10.7 Trails and Connectivity

Demand for trails, trail linkages, and pathways that connect parks, open spaces, and other destination sites (like downtown districts) has been growing all over the U.S., including in Abilene. Where surveys have been conducted there is a high level of demand for connectivity. Communities with existing and extensive trail systems express pride and continued desire to build trails between neighborhoods and develop pathways to schools, shopping areas, other community attractions, and neighborhoods. Livable communities where residents report a high quality of life generally have robust trail systems and reliable connectivity that support active, engaged lifestyles.

The expressed need for trails – both for recreational use and for transportation – was conveyed clearly through the public input process. Abilene already has a variety of paved and unpaved trails throughout the park system, as well as considerable support for trail connectivity. The current Cedar Creek Trail plans are a great step towards providing trail connectivity between the existing park system in Abilene.



Proposed Cedar Creek Trail

2.10.8 Bike Facilities

Off-road bicycling activities are growing in popularity, although they still represent a relatively small percentage of all bicycling activities. Modern mountain biking (MTB) originated in the 1970s in California with a group of enthusiasts who modified existing bikes for off-road use. These cyclists organized first downhill races which they called "Repack." This name referred to the need to "repack" the brakes with fresh grease after each race due to the excessive heat from braking during the descent.¹⁰

During the early years of mountain biking, enthusiasts used single-track trails intended for hiking as bikes were not specifically forbidden from using these trails. However, as the sport gained in popularity, bikes have been banned from most hiking trails, and single-track trails designed specifically for mountain bikes have been established.¹¹ More recently, a new style of trail called a "flow trail" has appeared which provides more predictable surfaces, banked turns, and a lack of obstacles. These trails require little peddling and minimal braking that appeal to a wider variety of users, including families. These trails can be designed to allow beginners to bypass more technical trails.¹²

Another trend in off-road bicycle facilities is the pump track. These tracks, which began to appear in the 2000s, are looping tracks that can be ridden continuously without the need to pedal. A user's speed is dependent on "pumping" the terrain transitions of the track. A pump track requires approximately 50' by 50' of space (minimum) and generally



Pump Track at Silver Creek Bike Park, Berea, KY



Buck Creek Bike Trail, Abilene TX

¹⁰ Marin Museum of Bicycling, "Mountain Biking History," <http://mmbhof.org/mtn-bike-hall-of-fame/history/>, (April 8, 2019).

¹¹ Singletracks, "Visiting the Birthplace of Mountain Biking: Marin County, California," <http://www.singletracks.com/blog/mtb-trails/visiting-the-birthplace-of-mountain-biking-marin-county-california/>, (April 8, 2019).

¹² IMBA, "Flow Trails," <https://www.imba.com/model-trails/flow-trails/>, (April 15, 2016).



feature a series of rollers and steeply bermed corners.¹³ Unlike many of the other off-road facilities, pump tracks are usable by both mountain bike and BMX riders.

Abilene does not currently offer a mountain biking system at any of its parks; however, there is a privately operated facility located northeast of the city. Buck Creek Trail is a single-track course with 13.2 miles of trails on city-owned land. Use is restricted to members of the Abilene Bicycling Club, requiring a key to access the property. Abilene State Park, located southwest of the city, also offers natural surface trails that allow bicycles.

2.10.9 Creative Placemaking

The Trust for Public Land is a leading champion of creative placemaking as a strategy for affecting change. Creative placemaking is a collaborative, community-based process that captures the power of art, vibrancy of local heritage, and potential of place to build memorable spaces rooted in culture and local identity. Parks and recreation agencies around the nation offer community connection in physical and social forms; creative-placemaking is just another tool for ensuring successful parks that equitably reflect the people who use them.¹⁴ Many agencies partner with local entities (like other government departments, nonprofits, schools, places of worship, art institutions, and other groups) to put in place opportunities for resident-led installations, programs, and events.



Art Adventure Trail, Abilene TX

Creative-placemaking can take countless forms. It may look like an outdoor sculpture walk at the center of the neighborhood park featuring resident and local artists' work. It might be an annual arts performance downtown that showcases immigrant and refugee cultures in the community. It can also be as low-profile as a pollinator garden including interpretive signage about the plants chosen and why. Whatever it may look like, it is essential that the community be inclusively integrated into every phase: ideation, selection (of artist(s), piece(s), feature(s), etc.), installation, activation, and long-term care.



Creative Placemaking in the Madisonville Neighborhood of Cincinnati (2015)

When parks and recreation agencies prioritize local traditions, cultural identities, and native resources, making sure these are reflected in program and facility offerings, users will be more likely to participate and do their part to sustain the system. A reciprocal relationship forms, where community engages with parks and recreation to the extent that parks and recreation seeks to provide place-based resources.

Abilene could include creative placemaking into any future park improvement by incorporating it into the planning process. It provides an opportunity to make every park unique and to build and connect community around these parks. With clear expectations, fair compensation, and meaningful engagement, the arts community in Abilene has the power to enliven the city's parks and community spaces.

2.10.10 Drones

Since the late 2000s, the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) has increased tremendously. Used for both military and civilian purposes, these devices are having a considerable impact on parks and recreation agencies nationwide. A contentious activity, tensions exist around safety, privacy, and environmental impact, as well as applications (professional and recreational) like habitat and wildlife monitoring, photography, and map-making.

¹³ Adventure Sports Journal, "Pumpin': An Introduction to the World of Pump Tracks," <http://adventuresportsjournal.com/pumpin-an-introduction-to-the-world-of-pump-tracks/>, (April 8, 2019).

¹⁴ Trust for Public Land, Creative Placemaking, <https://www.tpl.org/our-work/creative-placemaking>



Popularity of drones is only growing, but regulations at the federal, state, and local levels have been slow to prevent, mitigate, or manage negative impacts. Many cities have enacted no-fly zones and other restrictions which means UAV-users, licensed or not, have limited available spaces. This has led drone pilots to look to parks and public open space for flying opportunities.

Requiring permits (day or seasonal) and designating fly areas with set times for flying are tactics agencies are using. These measures help legitimize UAV use and maintain safe park spaces; permitting is also a potential revenue opportunity. Since drone use is only increasing, the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) offers useful insight into the future of drone-use in parks:

"Park agencies will face increasing public pressure to look at allowing hobbyist flights and commercial-use drones in parks... By creating stronger guidelines and policies about how to fly drones in parks instead of adopting blanket restrictions, parks can give people an outlet and place to fly recreationally. New programming and events can be planned around drones, bringing in visitors and related businesses that benefit the parks. Keep it focused on safety and respect for all parties. Acceptance will protect the public and park resources and enable an exciting new form of recreation to take place."¹⁵

Unique to Abilene, Sea Bee Park offers a designated flight area for RC planes that can be used as a launch area for drones. The facility is managed by the Abilene RC Society, which users can join for \$30 per year. Rules and regulations are posted at the shelter adjacent to the runway. A windsock, work benches, and landing ramps are also available. These are a bit dated and in need of some repairs and upgrades. Additionally, no signage currently indicates permitted launching of drones or any rules for their use.



RC Runway at Sea Bee Park

2.10.11 Conclusion

Data in this chapter describes a growing, aging, and slowly diversifying population in the City of Abilene. These changes in population composition have and likely will continue to alter the parks and recreation needs of the community. Additionally, the city generally compares favorably to the benchmarks, but there are opportunities to improve services, to meet community demand and regional and national trends.

The inventory and the mapping analysis show higher levels of service in the center of the city, with lower service on the edges of the community, notably near the southwestern boundary, and through a portion of the center of the city. This analysis will help guide the recommendations of both what and where to add facilities in the future. **These service area findings identify potential priority areas for investment for the Abilene Parks and Recreation Department.**

¹⁵ Wootton, Courtney; Bradley, Michael J.; Ray Neal NRPA. Drones in Parks: It's All About Perspective. <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2018/december/drones-in-parks-its-all-about-perspective/>



DRAFT



3

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the processes used and the public input gathered throughout the project and summarizes the following elements:

1. Open house workshop
2. Stakeholder conversations
3. Web survey

The public engagement process is essential for identifying the needs and preferences of Abilene residents. The findings of the public input process are, therefore, integral to the vision for the future and serve as the foundation of the recommendations of this Master Plan.

3.2 OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOP

The city held an open house workshop (public meeting) on June 16, 2022 at the Abilene Convention Center to introduce the project to the public and to solicit feedback from the community regarding the present and future of parks and recreation in Abilene.

Upon arrival, attendees were asked to sign in and were then given a dot to place on a map to indicate where they live. This map (Figure 3.1) shows the distribution of the meeting attendees. The map shows that the attendees were generally well-distributed throughout Abilene and nearby areas.

The meeting invited participants to visit a series of stations in order to provide their input and learn more about the Master Plan. The primary input stations were arranged around the room and provided opportunities for input on three general topics. At each of these stations, participants were asked to share their responses to two questions: "What makes them great now?" and "What would make them better?"

The three input topics were as follows:

- Parks & Facilities
- Trails & Natural Areas
- Programs & Special Events

A final station provided interactive activities, including dollar allocation and dot voting (see Section 3.3). The summaries of comments in the ensuing text provide the number of times a topic was mentioned in parentheses after the item. The full text of comments can be found in Appendix D.



Parks & Facilities

This topic represented built amenities and general recommendations for parks. Athletic fields, indoor facilities, and inline hockey were the subject of the largest number of comments. Attendees also indicated needs for upgrades to existing parks, restroom improvements, and specific park improvements.

What makes them great now?

- Splash pads and Adventure Cove
- Skate park
- Hockey
- Consistent maintenance



What would make them better? – 66 comments and checkmarks/likes (# in parentheses), top items only

- Improve/upgrade existing parks (17)
- Athletic field upgrades (16)
- Indoor pickleball (11)
- Indoor facilities (11)
- Outdoor hockey (10)
- Restroom improvements (9)
- Specific park improvements (9)
- Additional shade features (6)
- Aquatics (5)

Trails & Natural Areas

This station encouraged discussion of trails. Most comments were related to a desire for more trails and better connectivity. Alternatively, many of the comments also concerned the need for better naming signage, wayfinding, and informational signage.

What makes them great now?

- Many great natural areas

What would make them better? – 37 comments and checkmarks/likes (# in parentheses), top items only

- More trails for walking/jogging (25)
- Existing trail improvements (18)
- More natural trails (19)
- More bike trails (10)
- Fishing opportunities along trails (9)
- Additional greenspace/natural areas (7)
- Signage/wayfinding (3)
- Additional shade along trails (3)





3.3 PREFERENCES BOARDS AND DOLLAR VOTING

3.3.1 Preference Boards

Attendees of the open house workshop were given three red dots to place on a board indicating their preferences for park features. The board provided a list of 16 park amenities with pictures. Attendees were also given three green dots for a second board. This board provided a list of 16 program categories also with pictures. These activities asked participants to choose the features and programs most important to them and their households. Children were also invited to participate. Around 60 community members participated in these activities. Results of the top selections are presented in Figures 3.3 and 3.4.

Figure 3.3: Feature Preference Results

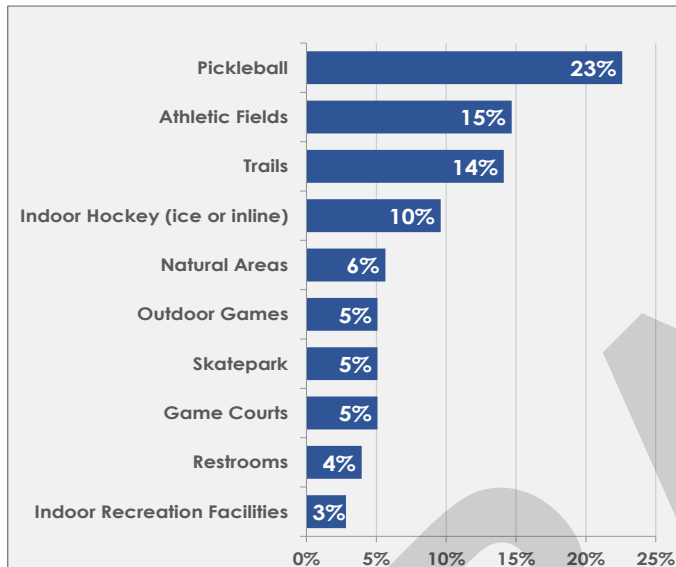
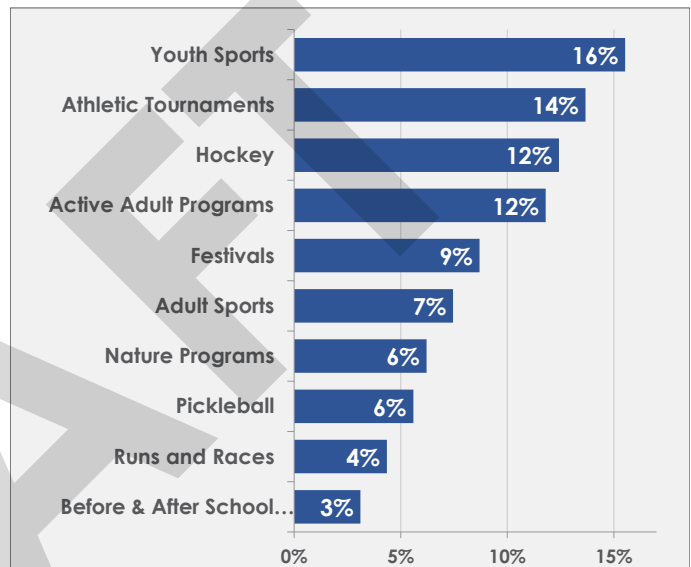


Figure 3.4: Program Preference Results



On the features board (Figure 3.3), pickleball received the largest number of dots (40 dots or 23%), although it did not have its own picture on the board. (People wrote on the dots before adding). Athletic fields were next (26 dots or 15%), followed closely by trails. Indoor hockey was similarly added by users to the indoor facilities picture (by writing on the dots).

On the programs board (Figure 3.4), youth sports received the largest number of dots (25 dots or 16%), followed by athletic tournaments at 14%. Hockey (written on dots) and active adult programs (both at 12%).

3.3.2 Dollar Voting

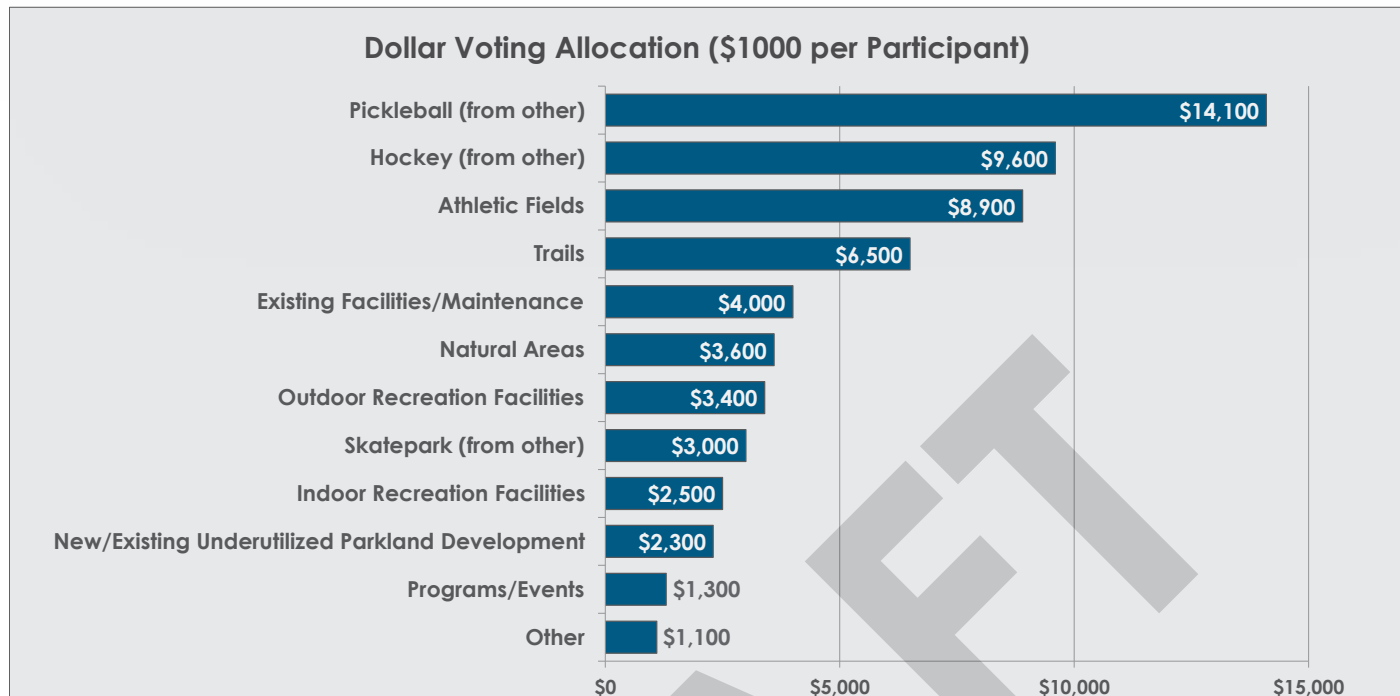
Participants at the open house workshop were given \$1,000 in play money to place into boxes to indicate how they would like Abilene to allocate funds for Parks and Recreation improvements. Figure 3.5 shows the total allocations for each improvement based on the 60 participants. Participants could also place money into a box labeled "other" to request specific amenities or improvements not included in one of the other eight provided categories. Three items made up the bulk of the allocation in the other box and are presented separately in the figure.



The largest allocation was for pickleball (from other box) at \$14,100 or 23% of the total allocation. Hockey (also from other box) was second at \$9,600 or 16%. Of the provided, options the athletic fields received the largest allocation at \$8,900 or 15% of total dollars. Individual comments can be found in Appendix D.



Figure 3.5: Dollar Voting Allocation



3.4 STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

In June 2022, the consultant met with a series of stakeholders to determine their priorities for Parks and Recreation in Abilene. Over 20 stakeholder groups participated in these discussions, contributing their respective visions to this Master Plan. At these meetings, stakeholders were asked a series of questions about Abilene parks, recreation facilities, and programs, that included a discussion of strengths as well as future opportunities. Summaries of the meetings with complete comments are included in Appendix D.

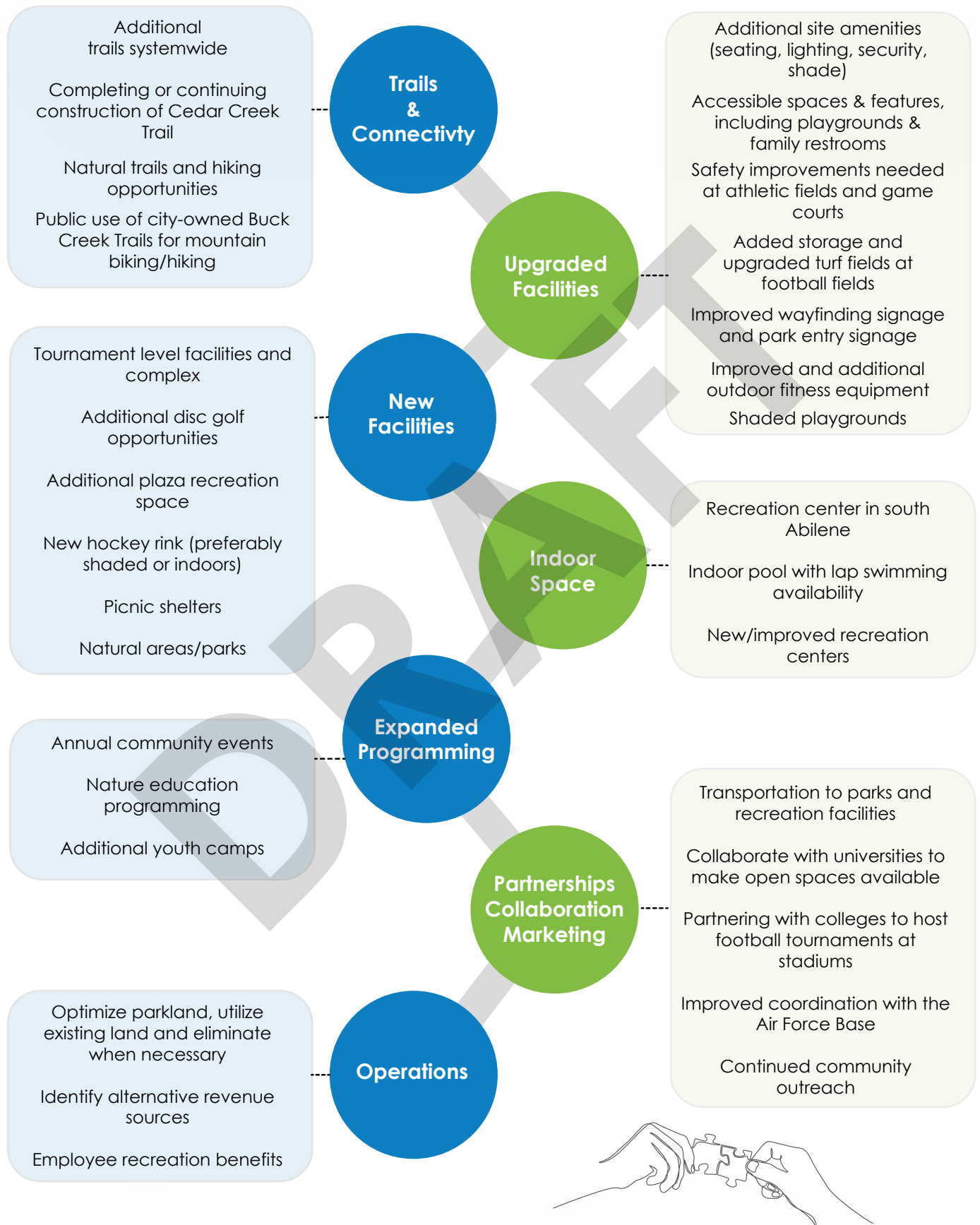
3.4.1 Groups Engaged

The following stakeholder group meetings were held as part of this Master Plan:

- City Council
- City Manager
- Parks and Recreation staff
- City Departments
 - Planning and Development
 - Police
 - Fire
- Economic development partners
 - Develop Abilene (DCOA)
 - Abilene Chamber
 - Abilene Texas Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)
 - Dyess Air Force Base
- Churches
- Sports
 - Abilene Hockey (inline)
 - Cowboys Football and Cheer
 - Abilene Slow Pitch
 - Wylie Softball
- Partners
 - Gyms
 - YMCA
 - Abilene Youth Sports Authority
 - Universities



3.4.2. Stakeholder Broad Recommendations





3.5 PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

The following pages summarize the findings of the online survey. Due to the nature of the survey, the survey results reflect the views of respondents and not necessarily Abilene residents as a whole; online survey respondents are more likely to already be engaged in some way with the city's parks and programs. Of the figures that follow, some show only the top results for a survey question; however, full results can be found in Appendix F.

3.5.1 Web Survey – Overview and Methodology

The survey was conducted in the spring and summer of 2022 and was powered by Survey Monkey with a total of 999 surveys completed. Ninety-three percent (93%) of respondents said they live within the City of Abilene with 7% from outside of the city.

3.5.2 Results – Parks and Recreation Facilities Visited Over the Past Year

Survey respondents were asked to indicate which of the parks offered by Abilene their household visited over the past year. Figure 3.6 shows what percentage of respondents have used each park or facility in the past year.

According to the survey, Redbud Park was by far the most visited park with nearly three quarters indicating use in the past year; Grover Nelson Park was second at 53%. These parks are heavily visited due to the wide variety of amenities offered. Facilities at these parks include trails, a splash pad, playgrounds, fishing opportunities and athletic fields. In general, visitation was correlated with the quantity of amenities offered. Only 3% of respondents did not visit parks in the past year (not shown).

3.5.3 Results – Frequency of Visits to Parks & Recreation Facilities in Abilene

Respondent households who visited Abilene Parks and Recreation facilities during the last year were asked how often they have visited those facilities over that time. The results are presented in Figure 3.7.

According to the survey, households who visited the city's parks and recreation facilities in the last year likely visited many times. **Half of respondents (50%) reported visiting 20 or more times.** Other results were: 17% visited 1-5 times, 18% visited 6-10 times, and 11% visited 11-19 times. Looking at the responses cumulatively, 61% of households visited parks 11 or more times, and 84% visited parks six or more times. These results indicate a high rate of visitation to Abilene parks and facilities.

Figure 3.6: Parks Visited

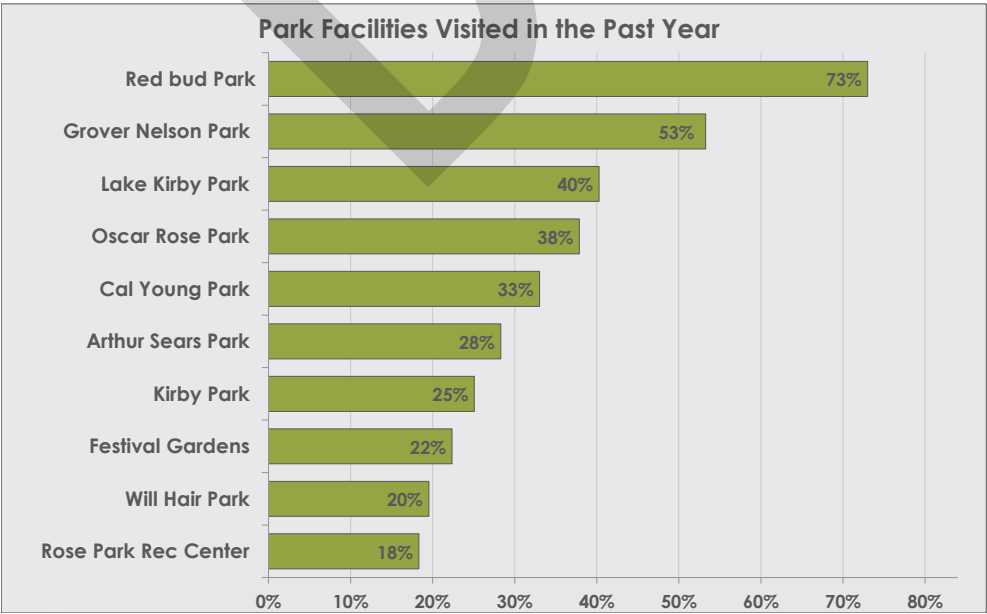
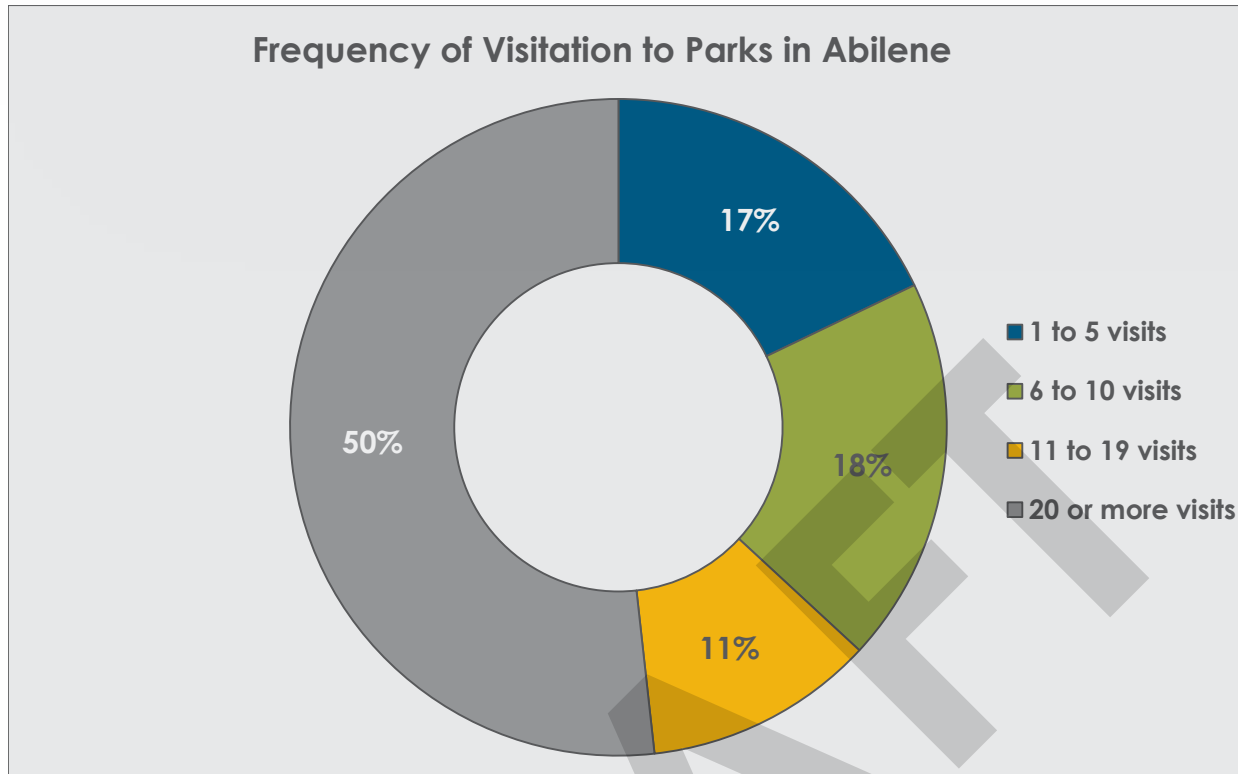




Figure 3.7: Frequency of Visitation



3.5.4 Results – Assessment of Condition of Facilities and Quality of Programs Offered by Abilene

Respondents were asked to rate the physical condition of facilities they visited. Figure 3.8 shows that just under half (45%) of respondents rated the parks as *fair*. Another 41% of respondents rated the condition of facilities as *good*. Only 3% rated the condition of the facilities as *excellent*. Taken altogether, **56% of respondents rated facilities as fair or poor, compared to 44% who see the condition of Abilene's facilities as either excellent or good**. These results support the need for improvement of facilities.

Respondents were also asked to rate the quality of programs offered by Abilene Parks and Recreation. Figure 3.9 shows that 47% rate the programs as either fair or poor. In contrast, 53% rated them good or excellent.

Figure 3.8: Condition of Facilities

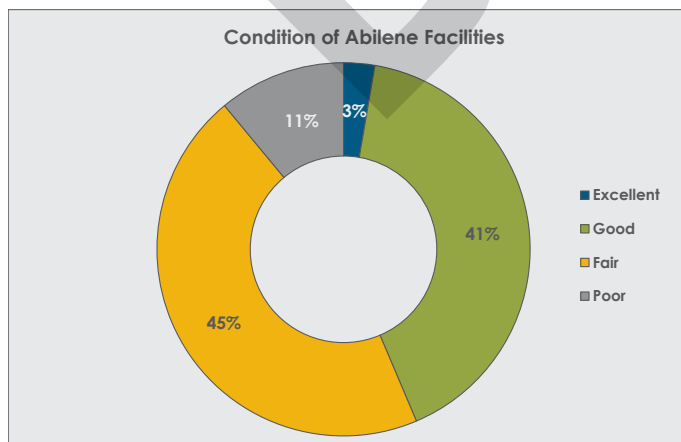
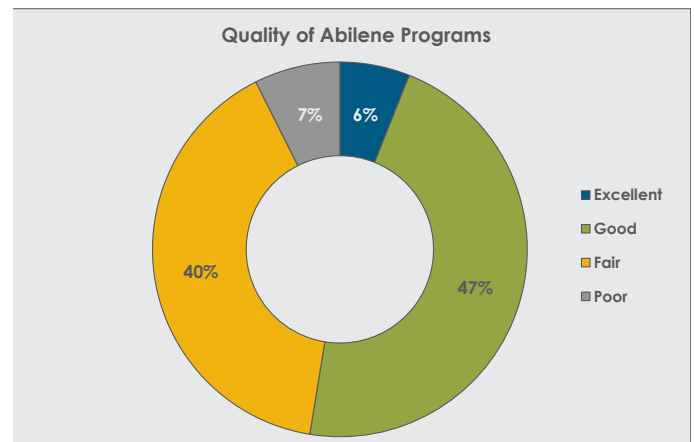


Figure 3.9: Quality of Programs



3.5.5 Results – Activities Enjoyed at Parks or Facilities



Respondent households were asked to report the typical activities enjoyed at Abilene parks and facilities. The top activities are shown in Figure 3.10. **Overall, the most common activities at Abilene parks and recreation facilities were unprogrammed recreation (walking/jogging, playing at playgrounds & splash pads).** The next largest grouping of activities were youth baseball/softball leagues followed by passive recreation such as picnicking, swimming, and fishing.

A follow-up question on the survey asked what activity they would most like more opportunities to do in the future (Figure 3.11). The results correlate with existing activities, but the desire for more walking/hiking/jogging was by far the most chosen activity. Pickleball, notably, was 32nd in the list for current activities but 14th in the list for desires for the future.

3.5.6 Results – Facility Needs (Current Use or Desired Use) in Abilene

Respondents were asked what facilities members of their household currently use or would like to use if available. Figure 3.12 shows those results. Respondents report the highest level of need for walking and hiking trails, playgrounds, splash pads, natural areas/nature parks, and outdoor swimming pools. These results are consistent with the previous findings showing demand for passive activities, playgrounds, and swimming.

After identifying facilities desired, another question asked respondents to choose a preferred action for each facility (limited to those identified in the previous question) – revitalization/upgrades to existing, new development, both, or no investment needed. The results for revitalization/upgrades and new development are shown in Figures 3.13 and 3.14. Respondents who selected “both” are included in both figures.

Figure 3.10: Activities Respondents Currently Enjoy

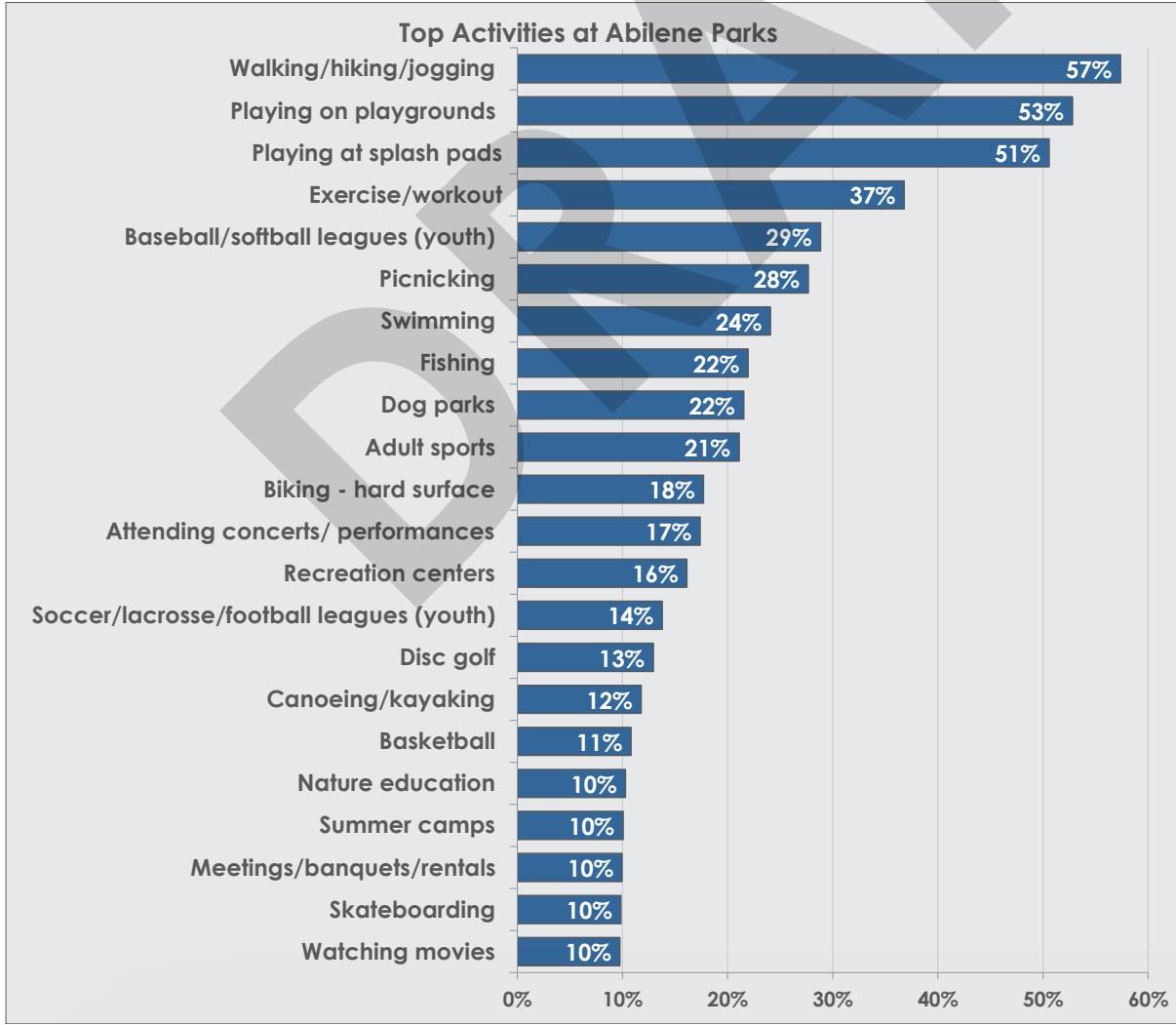




Figure 3.11: Desire for Additional Opportunities

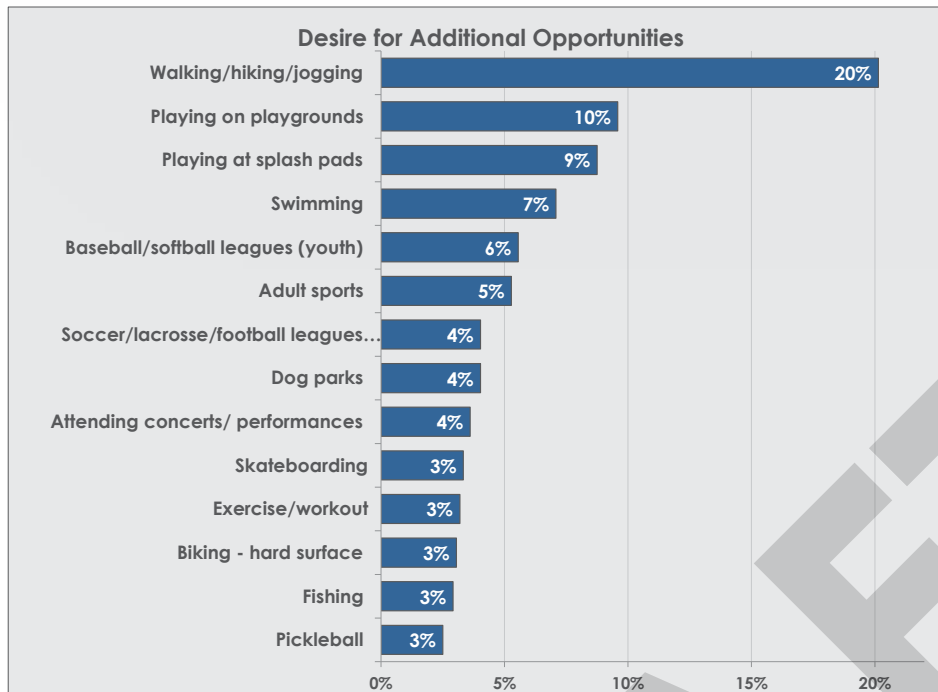
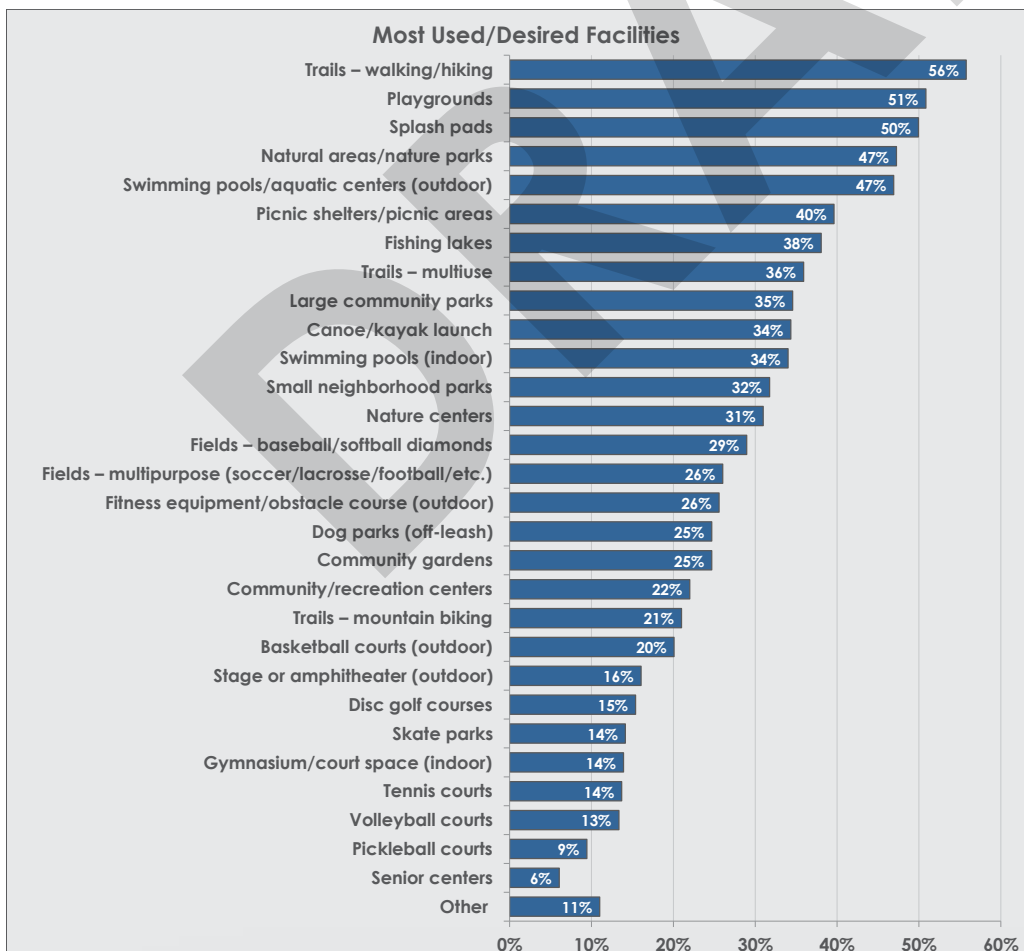


Figure 3.12: Used/Desired Facilities





Types of investment Desired

These results show what respondents would like to see in response to their unmet needs from Figure 3.13. As would be expected, the top items for “revitalization/upgrades” are amenities that Abilene currently offers but may need some improvements. In contrast, the items in the “new development” (Figure 3.14) represent features not currently offered or offerings are limited. These result mirror those from other types of input, stakeholder groups and the open house.

Revitalization/Upgrades to Existing (Top 5)

1. **Playgrounds**
2. **Community/recreation centers**
3. **Fields – Baseball/Softball**
4. **Senior Centers**
5. **Large Community Parks**

New Development of Facilities (Top 5)

1. **Nature Centers**
2. **Community Gardens**
3. **Trails – Mountain Biking**
4. **Indoor Swimming Pools**
5. **Pickleball Courts**

Figure 3.13: Revitalization/Upgrades to Existing Facilities

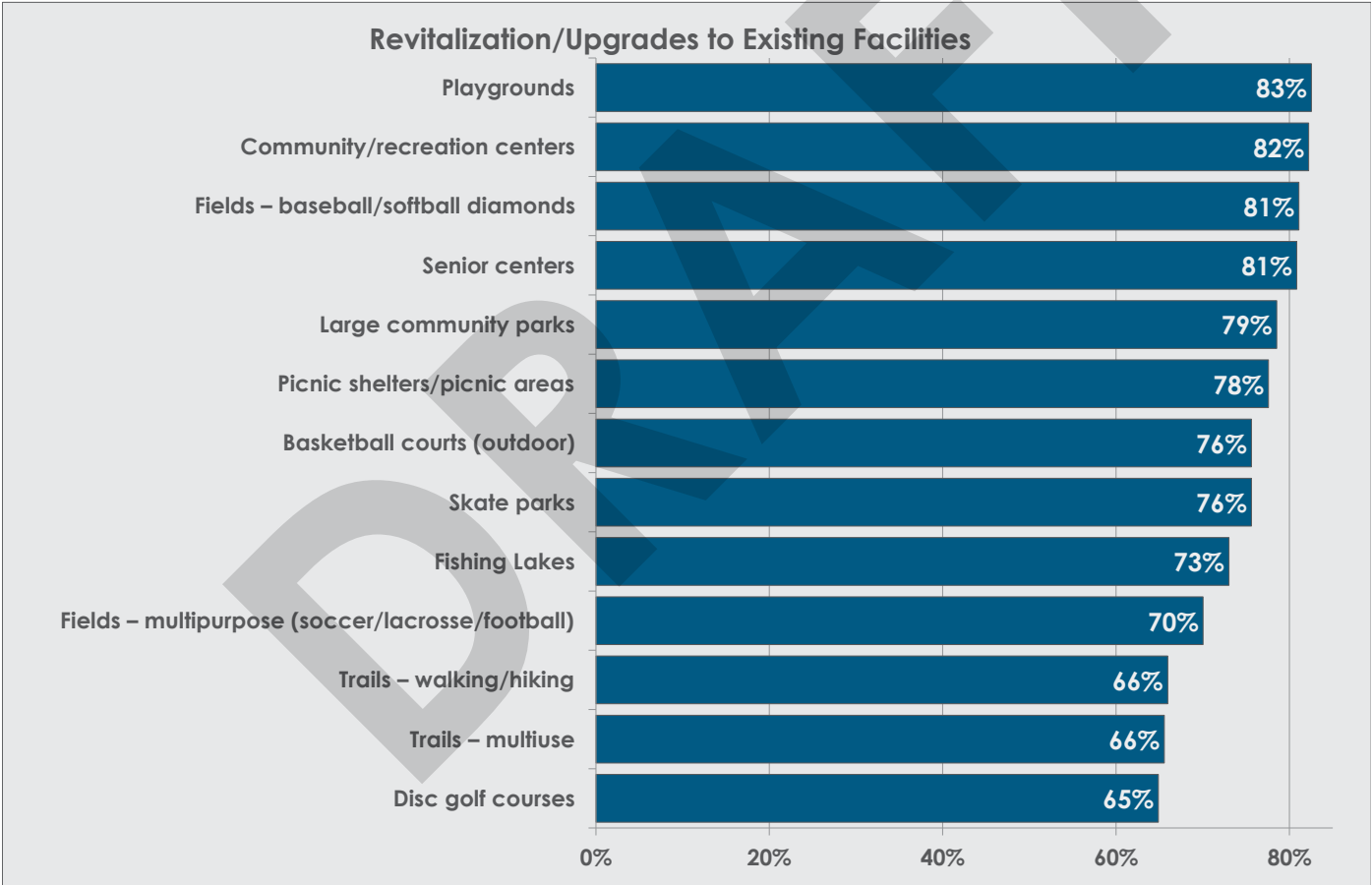
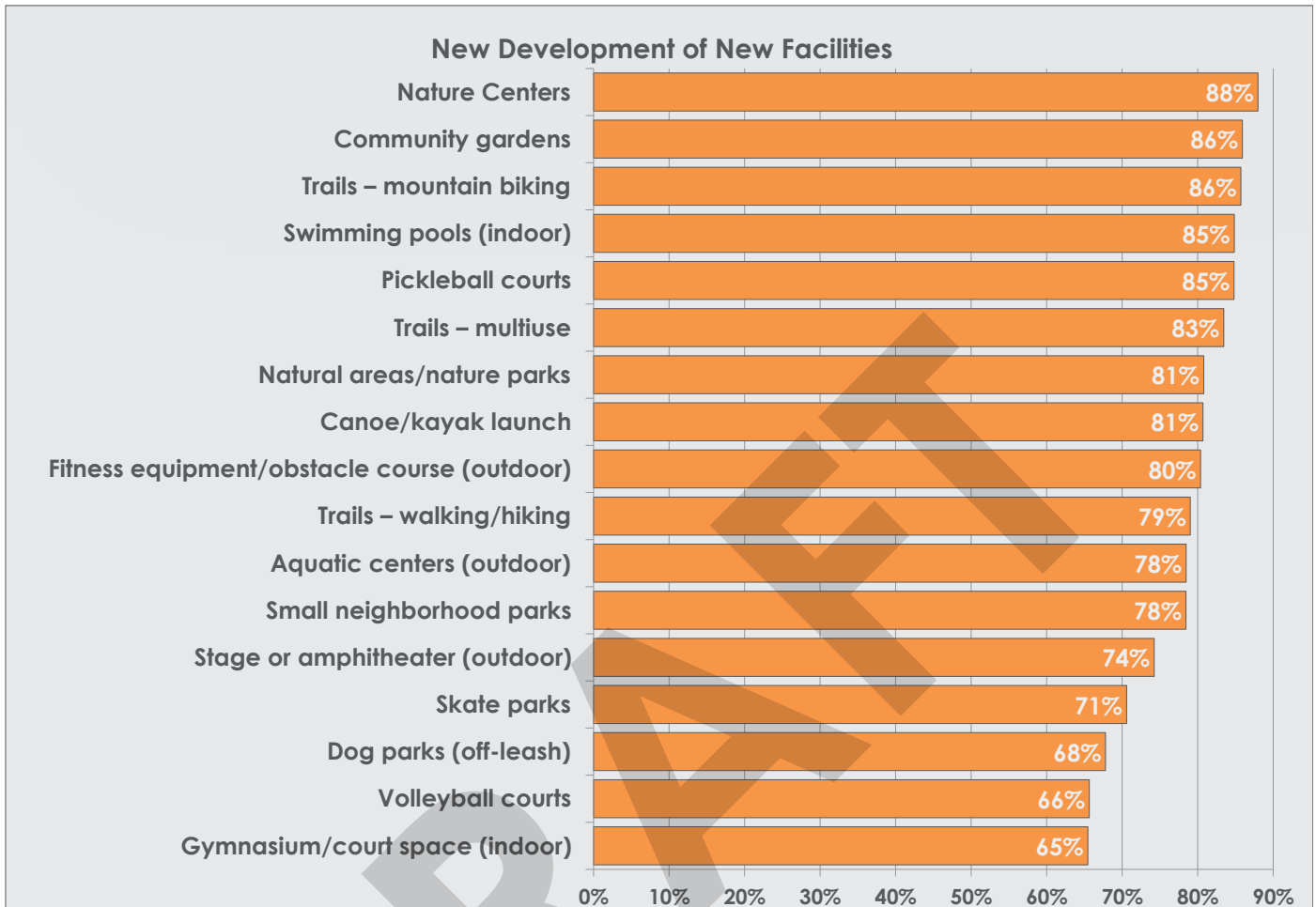




Figure 3.14: New Development of Facilities

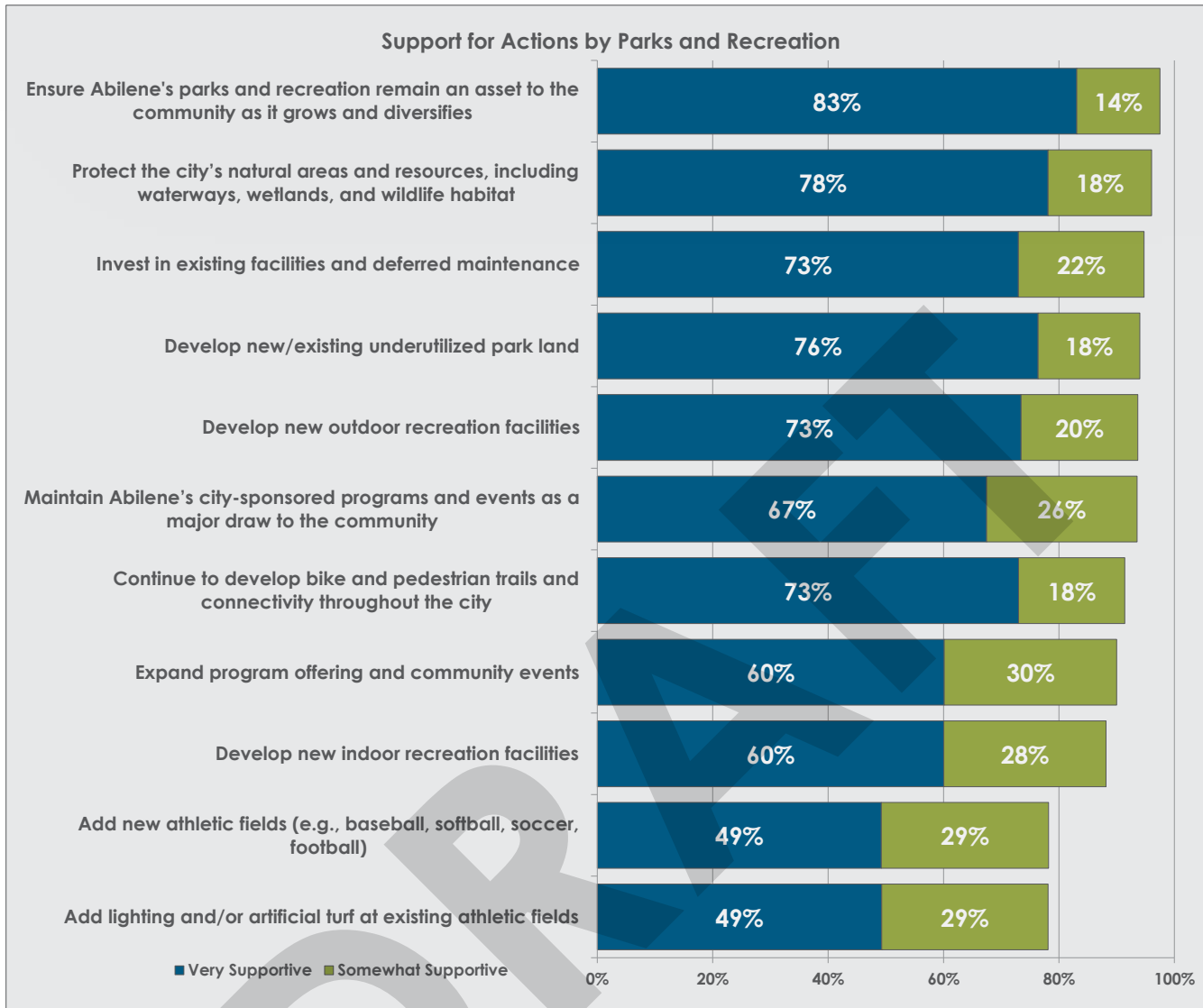


3.5.7. Results – Support for Actions Needed by Abilene

The survey provided a list of action items the city could take to improve the park system (Figure 3.15). Overall, respondents were supportive of all actions provided, as the sum of “very supportive” and “somewhat supportive” was over 70% for every option. Ensuring Abilene’s parks and recreation remain an asset to the community and protecting the city’s natural resources received the most support (83% and 78% very supportive). **But the most notable finding from these results is the high level of support for all actions.** Also notable, the least support was given to adding or improve new athletic fields, although support was still very high (78%).



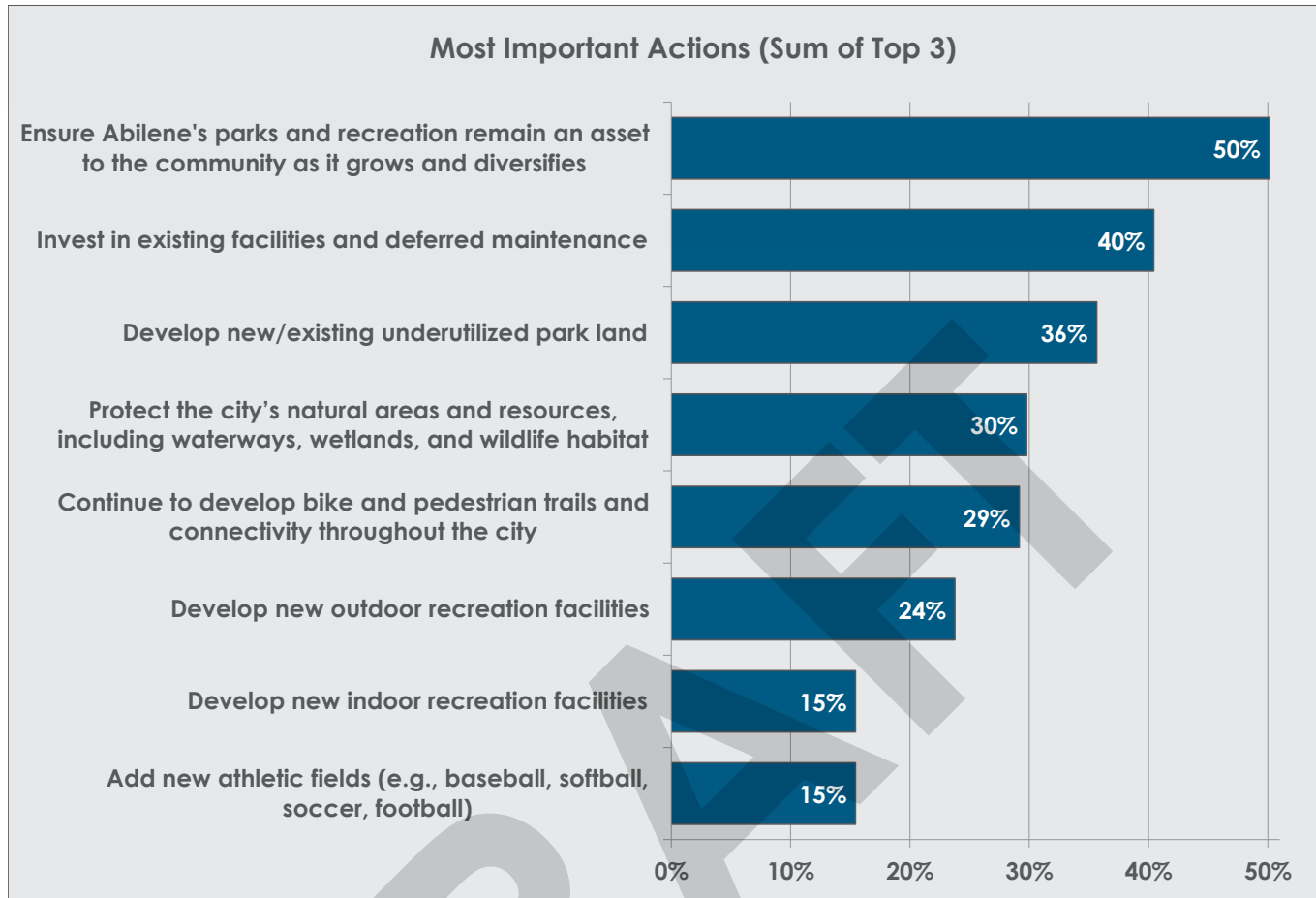
Figure 3.15: Support for Actions by Parks and Recreation



When asked to choose the most important actions (Figure 3.16), the top items were similar to the overall support except that protecting the city's natural areas and resources came in 4th rather than 2nd. **Investing in existing facilities and maintenance and developing new/existing underutilized parkland were ranked second and third, indicating overall support for improving and adding facilities to improve services.**



Figure 3.16: Most Important Actions



3.5.7 Results - Motivation to Utilize Facilities and Programs

Figure 3.17 shows what respondents indicated would motivate them to utilize existing facility and program offerings more often. Over two-thirds (68%) of respondents indicated that the addition of shade would increase their use of the parks, easily the top option. Improvements to existing facilities and better or additional restroom facilities were next with over half of responded choosing these options.

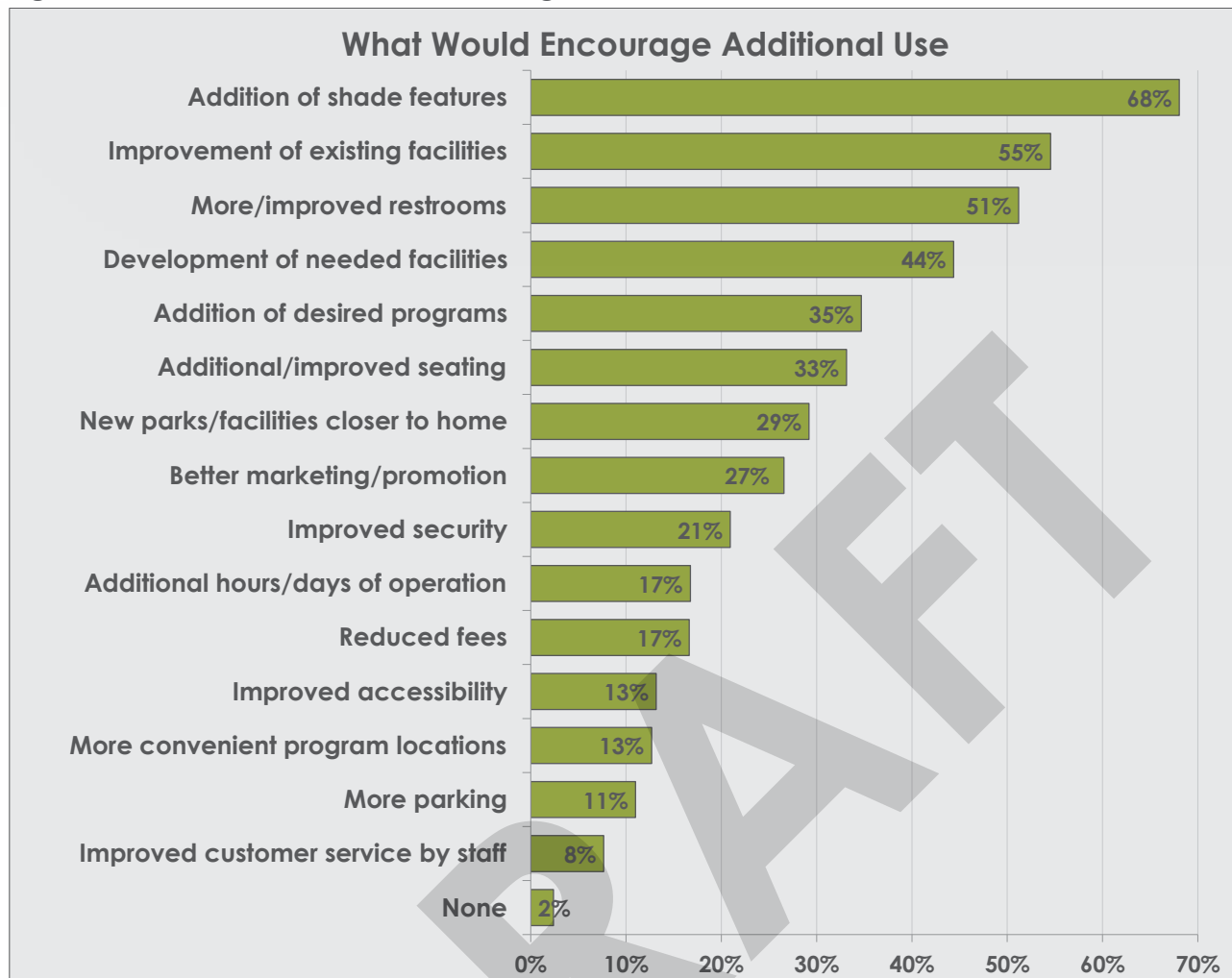
Overall, the results indicate that use would increase if more shade was available and if the desired elements were present in the parks or in better condition. In many of the open-ended sections of the survey, respondents noted the need for shaded playgrounds specifically. The desire for additional restrooms or improved existing restrooms indicates respondents would like to extend their stays at the parks. The site assessments also found that many restrooms needed updates and improvements.

3.5.8 Results – Learning of Offerings

Respondents were also asked to indicate how they prefer to learn about facilities, programs, and events offered by Abilene Parks and Recreation (Figure 3.18). By far, most reported social networking (71%) as their preferred method. The city website was second (49%). **The results indicate that Parks and Recreation should continue to utilize all of these methods with a special focus on social media promotion and keeping the website current.**



Figure 3.17: Motivation to Utilize Offerings More Often



3.5.9 Support for Potential Bond to Fund Improvements

Respondents were asked to indicate potential support for tax or bond to fund park and facility improvements important to their households. The figure (Figure 3.19) below shows almost three-quarters (74%) respondent would support this potential tax or bond (74%), with about a third supporting strongly. Only 10% strongly oppose. **These results indicate that a bond formulated to respond to community desires – as identified in this plan – would have a good chance of approval by Abilene residents.**

3.5.10 Results – Demographics

Figure 3.20 shows the population by age range for the households who responded to the survey and for Abilene as a whole. The largest cohort responding to the survey were those between 35-44 years old, likely with children between 0 and 14 years old. Compared to the overall population of Abilene, younger residents were overrepresented (with the exception of ages 20-24) and older residents were underrepresented in the survey.

Figure 3.21 compares the household income of survey respondents to the actual representation in the City of Abilene. Households with incomes over \$100,000 represented about 32% of respondents, compared to 21% of actual Abilene households. Overall those making over \$50,000 or more were overrepresented while households with incomes below \$50,000 were underrepresented, especially those under \$25,000 which make up 22% of the total households in the city but only 5% of survey respondents. This data emphasizes the need for the city to make additional efforts to engage lower income residents.



Figure 3.18: Preferred Method for Learning

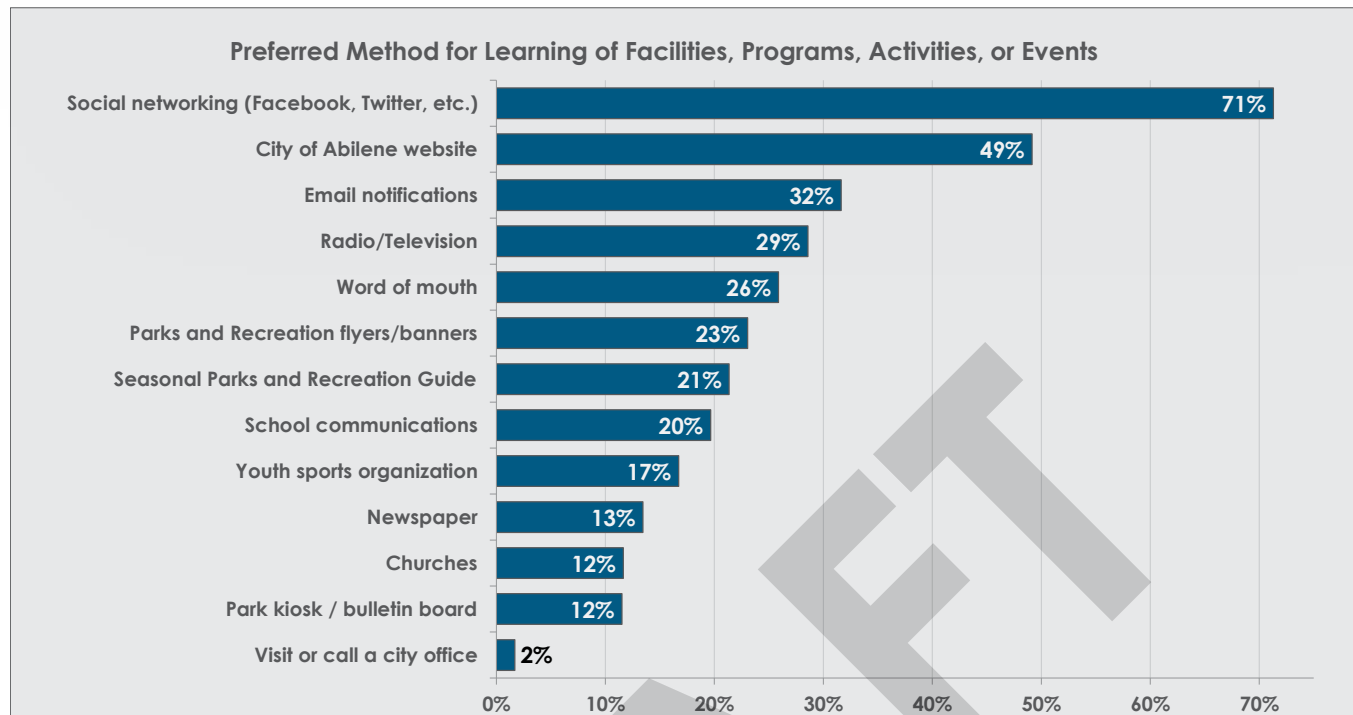


Figure 3.19: Support for Potential Tax or Bond

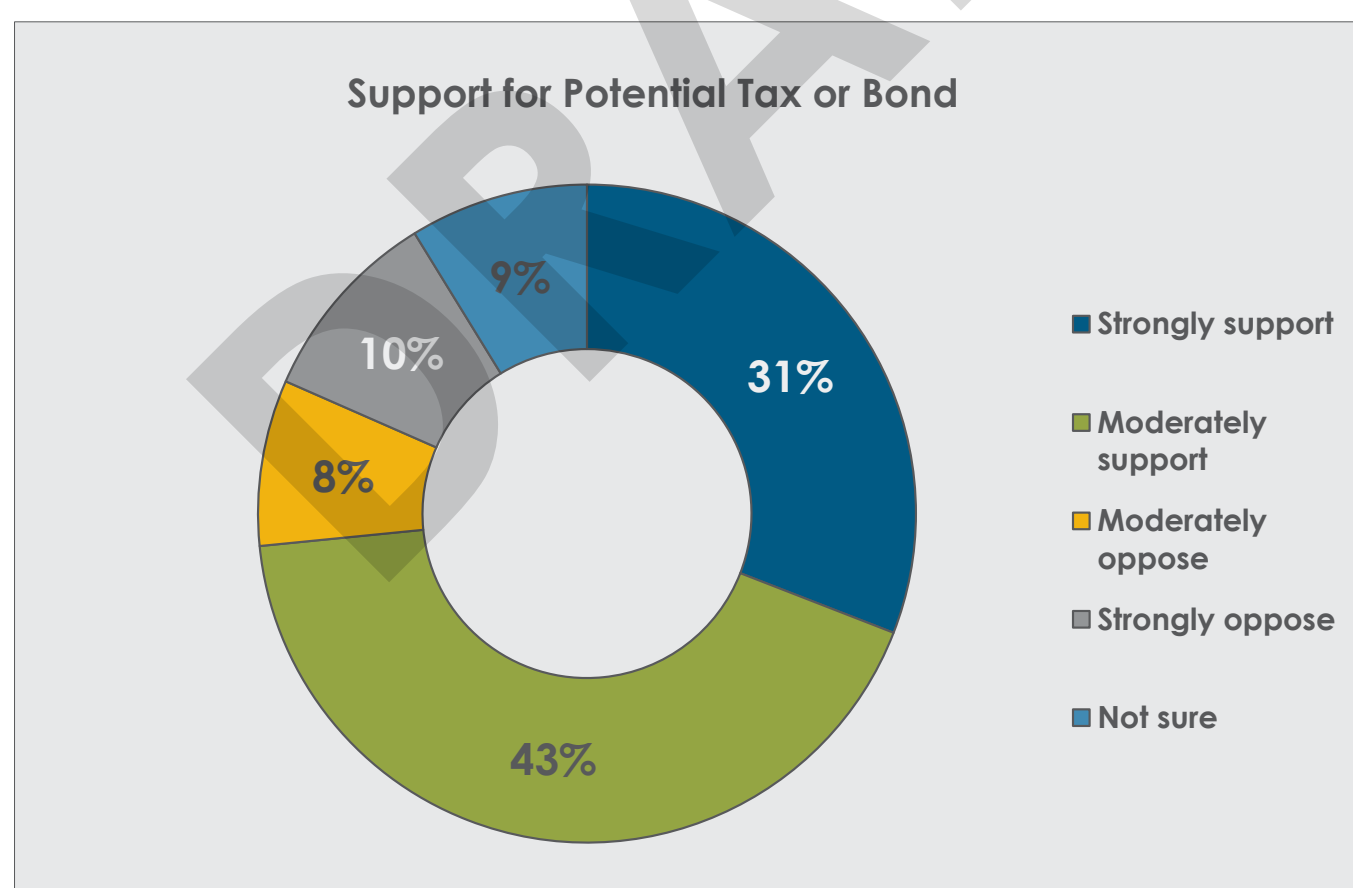




Figure 3.20: Age Demographics Comparison

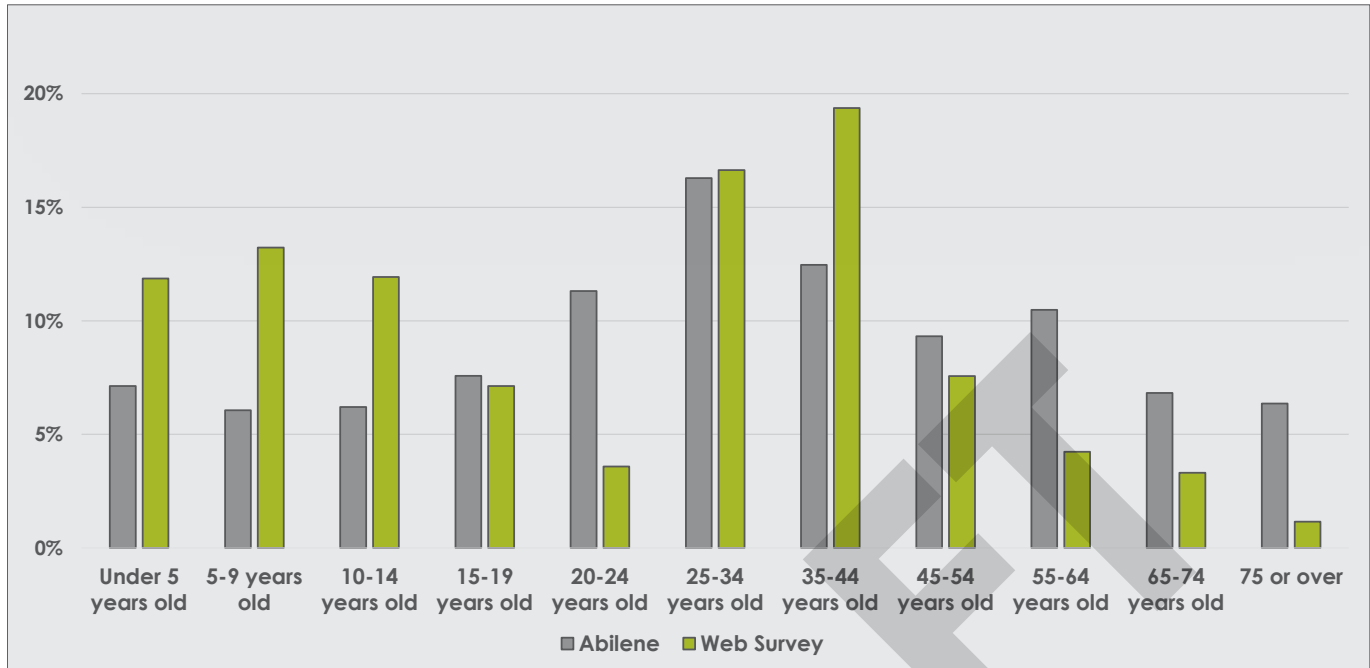
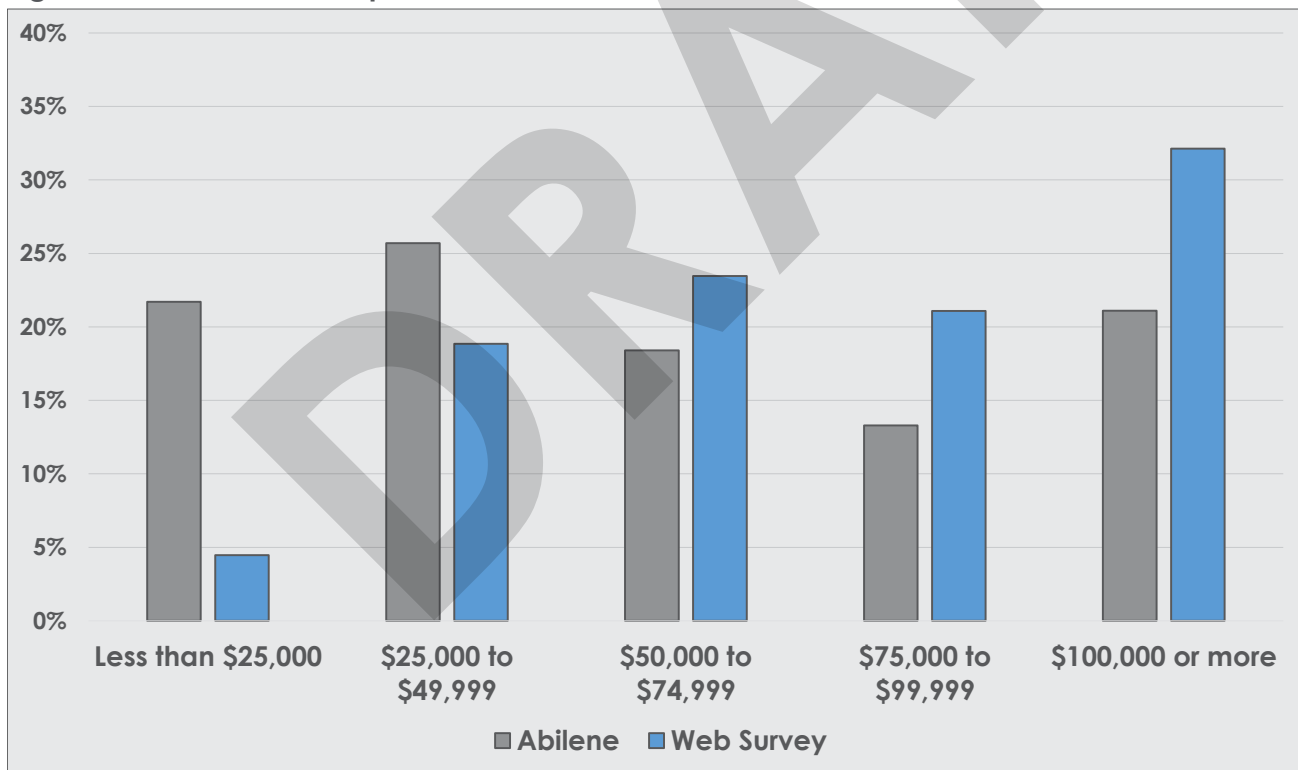


Figure 3.21: Income Comparison



3.6 CONCLUSION

Overall, the public engagement process provided an abundance of information about the needs and desires of Abilene residents. The variety of input methods identified that residents desire:

- Improved maintenance
- Upgrades and improvements to existing parks and facilities



- ADA access across the park system
- Recreation center upgrades
- Diamond field improvements (grading, lighting, fencing, etc.)
- Upgrades to Adventure Cove – features for all ages, deep water
- Upgrades to senior centers and recreation centers
- Upgraded skatepark
- Playground upgrades, including shade
- Improvements or replacement at the existing hockey rink (lighting, boxes, etc.)
- Connectivity and trails
 - New trails for hiking, biking, and walking
 - Additional mountain bike trails
 - Signage and wayfinding
 - Accessibility across the system
- New spaces and facilities
 - More natural areas and access
 - Pickleball courts (shaded)
 - More splash pads
 - Athletic fields/complexes, especially for soccer
 - Nature center
 - Water access (canoe/kayak launches, fishing)
- Expanded programming and events
 - Additional youth sport opportunities
 - Ability to host athletic tournaments
 - Hockey programs
 - Active adult programs
 - Adult sports
 - Additional festivals
 - Nature education programming
- Support amenities
 - Restrooms
 - More shade, especially over playgrounds
 - Signage/wayfinding
 - Seating

The word cloud image below (Figure 3.22) uses font size to show how frequently a word appears in the survey results. While positive or negative value is not applied to a word, the graphic is valuable because it illustrates the elements of parks and recreation in Abilene that are most important to the community. This image is provided in conclusion to reinforce the myriad comments, suggestions, and requests heard during the multifaceted public engagement phase.



4

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The 2023 Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan represents a collective imagination of the future. The strategic planning components in this chapter are intended to provide the city and the Parks and Recreation Department with a clearly defined purpose and path for tackling those action items. The strategic plan articulates a bold new vision, mission, and defining values for parks and recreation.

This chapter also identifies goals and objectives that explain how the vision for parks and recreation will be implemented. The action plan (Chapter 6) uses the goals and objectives outlined in this chapter to organize all of the recommendations – both operational and capital – identified in this Master Plan.

Finally, the chapter includes updated level of service standards and guidelines that are consistent with the vision for the future of parks and recreation in Abilene. These targets help to quantify the future needs of the community and provides measurable outcomes for level of service throughout the city.

4.2 VISION

4.2.1 Purpose of a Vision

A vision describes a unique horizon, an intended outcome. It defines a clear standard of accomplishment and in so doing, helps unify effort. A vision should:

1. Provide clear direction
2. Focus effort
3. Guide long-term action
4. Illustrate the department's purpose
5. Inspire and motivate
6. Visualize an ideal

4.2.2 New Vision for Abilene Parks and Recreation

Fully informed by the values and visioning input generated by the steering committee, and with their support and approval, the following vision statement was crafted for Abilene Parks and Recreation:

Be the gold standard for parks and recreation



4.3 MISSION

4.3.1 Purpose of a Mission

A mission defines the daily work and an enduring purpose. More specifically, a mission should answer questions like what the department does, how, and why it does this. The mission is an action-oriented statement that informs day-to-day action.

Like the vision statement, the mission should be easy to remember and to share with others. It should be the foundation of all departmental decision-making.

4.3.2 Previous Mission for Abilene Parks and Recreation

The Abilene Parks and Recreation Department has established a mission to preserve and manage public parks and recreational facilities and to create recreational, cultural, education and leisure opportunities to benefit and enhance the quality of life in this community.

4.3.3 Proposed Mission for Abilene Parks and Recreation

Building from the previous mission statement, the foundational visioning exercise conducted with the Master Plan Steering Committee, and in consideration of the factors described above – the following is the proposed mission statement for Abilene Parks and Recreation moving forward:

Creating exceptional experiences that build community and enrich lives

4.4 VALUES FOR ABILENE PARKS AND RECREATION

4.4.1 Purpose of Values

An organization's values serve as a "lighthouse" of guiding principles, informed by personal and organizational beliefs. Values are straightforward phrases or words that should:

1. Direct staff conduct
2. Express department ideals
3. Reflect department personality
4. Complement community's aspirations
5. Communicate what is important
6. Ensure quality staff experience
7. Instill positive focus systemwide

4.4.2 Core Values

Core values should be unique to the department and indicative of the attitudes, ambitions, and focus shared by the department and the community. Using insights from the steering committee discussions, and feedback generated through public engagement, the following are offered as foundational values for guiding the future work of the department:

Service – Providing exceptional and enriching programs, events, and facilities for the whole community

Inclusivity – Ensuring convenient, welcoming, and affordable community access to parks and facilities

Innovation – Developing modern parks and amenities



4.5 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

4.5.1 Function of Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives identify areas of strategic priority and provide the broad, overarching organization for departmental actions. Together, goals and objectives:

1. Provide focus for actions and aspirations
2. Shape a designated timeframe for improvements
3. Create direction for investments of time, skills, and resources
4. Clarify what the department will do and not do

Generally, goals describe elements of the vision, defining what is achievable through the daily execution of the mission. Objectives – and therefore specific strategies or recommendations – fit within the scope of each goal.

Goals:

1. Overarching areas of strategic priority
2. Broad descriptions of intent
3. Rooted in outcome, rather than specific activity
4. Longest timeframe (i.e., as long as it takes to accomplish the vision)

Objectives:

1. Frame individual actions
2. More detailed description of what needs to be done
3. Measurable metrics (e.g., “increase,” “reduce,” “consolidate,” “improve,” “distribute,” etc.)
4. Variable timeframes (0-2, 3-5, 6-10 years)

4.5.2 Proposed Goals and Objectives for Abilene Parks and Recreation

The following goals and objectives are intended to help guide improvements, operations, and services in parks and recreation in Abilene over the next 10 years.

Goal 1: Responsible Stewardship

Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities

Objective 1.1 – **Modern Facilities:** Update park facilities to support and facilitate modern programming opportunities

Objective 1.2 – **Energy Efficiency:** Implement and establish energy efficient facilities and practices

Objective 1.3 – **Nature Access:** Establish and leverage natural recreational opportunities

Objective 1.4 – **Community Connections:** Utilize spaces and programs to align and connect communities

Goal 2: Accessible Spaces

Maximize accessibility to the parks and recreation system and city facilities to ensure inclusivity for all residents while promoting a healthy community

Objective 2.1 – **Plan:** Develop and implement parks and recreation master plan

Objective 2.2 – **Access:** Ensure that every resident has access to parks and recreational space citywide



Objective 2.3 – **Wellness:** Encourage exploration & growth through diverse physical and educational activities

Goal 3: Efficient Management

Manage, maintain, and improve facility assets and infrastructure

Objective 3.1 – **Proactive Maintenance:** Reduce downtime to city departments with aggressive preventative and deferred maintenance programs

Objective 3.2 – **Staff Investment:** Promote departmental growth through training and licensing

Goal 4: Fiscal Responsibility

Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably

Objective 4.1 – **Financial Discipline:** Maintain sound financial discipline

Objective 4.2 – **Accounting:** Ensure accurate cost accounting

Goal 5: Effective Communication

Promote, model, and embrace effective communication and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders

Objective 5.1 – **Consistent Branding:** Increase brand presence and recognition

Objective 5.2 – **Community Awareness:** Promote public awareness of parks, recreational opportunities, and citywide special events

Goal 6: Successful Partnerships

Leverage partnerships that produce parks and recreational opportunities that are forward thinking and world class

Objective 6.1 – **Financial Innovation:** Explore creative operational and capital strategies

Objective 6.2 – **Increased Tourism:** Improve parks and sports partnerships to increase tourism in Abilene

Objective 6.3 – **Forward Thinking:** Be the “next thing” to stay relevant

4.6 STRATEGIES

As already mentioned, specific strategies are provided for each of the objectives listed above later in this report. These strategies will be described in detail in Chapter 5 (organized by categories, such as “programming”) as well as listed in the Action Plan (Chapter 6), which also identifies timeframes, responsible parties, and potential funding sources.

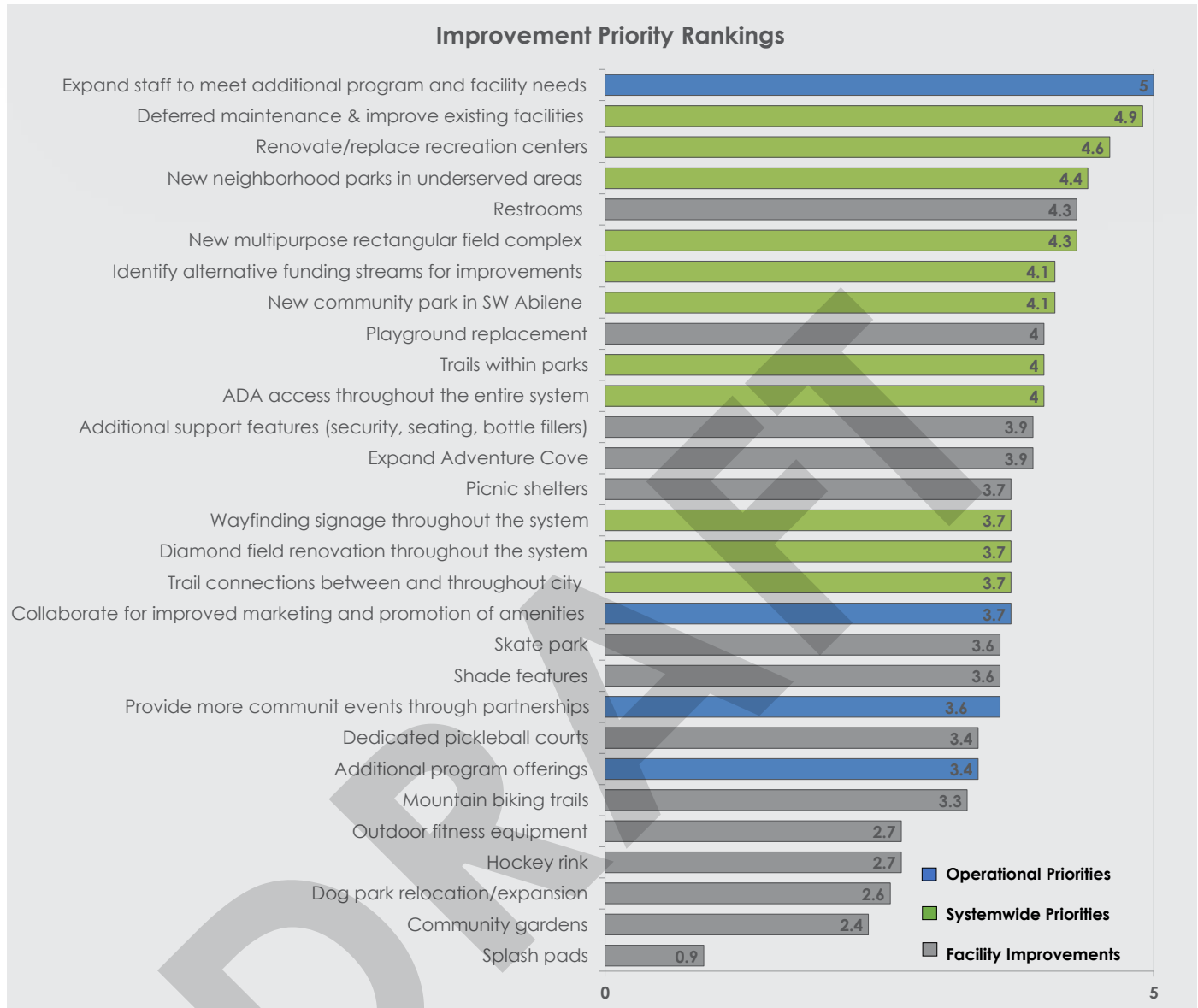
4.7 IMPROVEMENT PRIORITY RATING

At the end of the visioning process, the steering committee reviewed potential solutions and ranked capital and operational recommendations. This exercise helped to verify improvement priorities for this Master Plan. Committee members were asked to rate each of the potential improvement projects through the engagement software Mentimeter on a scale of 0-5 with 5 as high priority and 0 as not a priority.

The priority ranking was used to help rank the importance of improvements but not necessarily the order in which they should be developed. Figure 4.1, located after the Action Plan, identifies the capital improvement rating based on the average of the ranking for each item. These rankings, along with public input and analyses, help guide the process for recommending priorities and the level of service standards in the ensuing sections of this chapter.



Figure 4.1: Improvement Priority Rating



4.8 NEEDS, STANDARDS, AND GUIDELINES FOR PARKLAND AND RECREATION AREAS IN ABILENE

Analysis of the level of service for parks and recreation in Abilene requires various perspectives to tell a complete story. A service level might be described as adequate by one method of measurement but deficient by another. For example, acreage standards (i.e., measurement based on the total number of acres) are useful for determining the level at which the city is providing parkland. However, total acreage alone does not account for where park acres are located and, therefore, which residents have access. Accordingly, it is critical to consider the location of the city's parkland in determining the level of service.

Standards provided in this chapter are meant to be achievable targets (e.g., specific acreage totals and service goals) that can realistically be met over the implementation timeline of this plan. Guidelines are offered to cover more general goals of improvement, acquisition, and maintenance. These standards and guidelines are meant for both developed parkland and total open space in the system. Tailored specifically for Abilene, they are intended to be obtainable but also ambitious enough to inspire Abilene Parks and Recreation in its continuing work of improving the quality of life for residents.



4.8.1 Level of Service Standards for Developed Acres

Parkland is classified as either developed or undeveloped. Developed acres include features such as athletic fields and courts, picnic shelters, playgrounds, and any mowed areas, while undeveloped acres are those in their natural state – including woodlands, prairies, and wetlands – without developed features or routine maintenance. Both types of land usage can have a tremendous positive impact on the human population and the environment but meet different needs.

Chapter 2 describes the different classifications of parks and recreational areas and provides an overview of facilities in Abilene. That inventory; combined with an examination of existing conditions, a thorough analysis of public input, and most importantly, the vision for the future presented above assists with accurately defining the level of service standards (acres per thousand population) by park classification in Abilene.

The chart that follows, Service Level Standards by Park Classification (Table 4.1), offers a breakdown of the needs (or target acres) for each type of park in Abilene. This table includes only properties offered by Abilene Parks and Recreation. These standards focus on developed acres only, because these acres represent improved land with amenities and are, therefore, the best basis for drawing a comparison between available features.

Table 4.1: Service Level Standards for Developed Acreage by Park Classification

Park Classification	Existing Developed Acres	Existing Developed Acres per 1000 Population	Target Acres per 1000 Population	2020 Developed Acres Target	2020 Surplus (+) Deficit (-)	2030 Developed Acres Target	2030 Surplus (+) Deficit (-)
Neighborhood	53.4	0.4	0.5	62.6	-9.2	66.9	-13.5
Community	582.0	4.6	5.0	625.9	-43.9	669.3	-87.4
Special Use Parks	66.5	0.5	0.3	32.5	34.0	34.8	31.7
Total	701.9	5.6	5.8	721.0	-19.2	771.1	-69.2

1. See Chapter 2 for population estimates

2. Does not include parks by others or school grounds

Table 4.1 identifies the current developed park acreage for Abilene (see Chapter 2 for specific offerings). While the population count is projected to increase by roughly 8,500, there is also an ongoing trend of diversification which will likely continue. Existing acreage per 1,000 population indicates that the community parks consist of the most acreage enjoyed by the public while the neighborhood parks have the least. Looking ahead to 2026 and calculating with the same target per population quantities, community and neighborhood park acreage deficits will increase.

Fortunately, some of these deficits, especially for neighborhood parks, can be met through the development of existing parkland and existing city owned property, such as University Park in northwest Abilene. Several existing community parks have underutilized space that could improve this projected deficit. For example, with the growth Abilene is experiencing in the southern portion of the city, additional focused development at Lake Kirby Park would be beneficial for that part of the community.

4.8.2 Guidelines for Open Space

Park systems provide invaluable benefits to public health,¹ economies,² local environment and ecology,³ community social fabric, and overall quality of life.⁴ Beyond the developed park acreage, a park system includes additional undeveloped open space and natural areas. These acres, while often overlooked, have tremendous potential to benefit the community. Undeveloped open space, or even acres that are lightly developed as parks, can positively impact an entire community through improvements to air and water quality, increased biodiversity, wildlife habitat protection, noise reduction, reduction of erosion, and protection of water resources.⁵

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Parks, Trails, and Health Resources. [cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/parks_resources.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/parks_resources.htm)

² WeConservePA. (2012). The Economic Benefits of Land Conservation: A Guide. Pennsylvania Land Trust Association.

³ John L. Crompton (2008). Empirical Evidence of the Contributions of Park and Conservation Lands to Environmental Sustainability: The Key to repositioning the Parks Field. World Leisure Journal, 50(3), 154-172

⁴ John L. Crompton (2008). Empirical Evidence of the Contributions of Leisure Services to Alleviating Social Problems: A Key to Repositioning the Leisure Services Field. World Leisure Journal, 50(4), 243-258.

⁵ F.D.B. (2007). The economic benefits of land conservation. San Francisco, CA: The Trust for Public Land.



Setting acreage targets (aiming for a certain number of parkland acres overall) is one way of achieving a desired level of open space. Target acreage can be a useful way for evaluating the progress of open space acquisition, but effective conservation also requires more intentional acquisitions based on a specific resource and where it is found. In other words, looking at open space acquisitions through a conservation lens, the amount of land preserved depends on aspects of that particular resource not just on the number of acres. Land preservation in general has many benefits, such as increased quality of life for residents and elevated property values. In order for these benefits to be shared equitably (benefits typically are higher the closer the proximity) open space should be looked at from a holistic perspective taking into additional consideration natural resources and distribution. What follows is an examination of the current state of open space in Abilene.

Methods of Measurement

There are two common metrics for measuring the level of service of open space: acres per population and percentage of total area. Both are provided below to serve as guidelines for evaluating and measuring open space available in Abilene. Table 4.2 identifies total acres of parks and open space acreage, both developed and undeveloped, in Abilene.⁶ The table shows targets based on 9.5 acres per 1,000 population and 2% of the total acreage in the city.

These values were chosen because Abilene is below the per 1,000 population median and the median for the overall percentage of the jurisdiction (see benchmarking in Chapter 2). However, public input indicates residents of Abilene desire development of trails, diversified and additional recreation opportunities on existing parkland, and land preservation (especially of natural areas).

Acres per Population

Using the target of 9.5 acres per 1,000 population, Abilene has (as of 2020) an open space deficit of 46.4 acres. Keeping proportional target acreage would mean that by 2030 the city would have an acreage deficit of about 130 acres as this deficit grows with the population. These targets represent roughly what would be required to meet unmet community needs as indicated by the public input.

Percentage of Total City Area

The percentage of total area is not tied to population which means it can potentially represent a more flexible objective that may be adjusted over time. Abilene's 2% target is adjusted based on existing parkland, community engagement, and benchmarking. Both the acreage and the percentage of the total area of the city are moderate increases to allow for some acquisition for smaller neighborhood parks, expansion of existing parkland, and potential new parks in the future.

Table 4.2: Open Space Guidelines

Measurement	Existing Acres	Existing LoS	Target LoS	2020 Target Acres	2020 Surplus/ Deficit	2030 Target Acres	2030 Surplus/ Deficit
Acres per 1000 population	1,142.8	9.1	9.5	1,189.2	-46.4	1,271.7	-128.9
% of Jurisdiction		1.6%	2.0%	1,429.4	-286.6	1,429.4	-286.6

1. See Chapter 2 for population estimates

4.9 FACILITIES NEEDS ANALYSIS AND LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

Like the recommendations for parkland described previously, level of service standards for individual park facilities are useful for determining the quantity of recreation facilities needed in the community, both at present and in the future. These standards emerge through examination of the benchmarking (Chapter 2) and the public input findings (Chapter 3); common industry standards and guidelines are also taken into

⁶ These totals do include some structures, but these features represent a relatively small percentage of the total acreage.



consideration. Table 4.3 details the facilities by type and compares the available supply with the amount needed to meet the targets identified in the table.

4.9.1 Facility Level of Service Rationale

The following text provides the basis for the per population targets for each of the facilities in Table 4.3. Each section breaks down individual elements by describing how the per population target compares to the existing per population supply and makes justifications for any recommended change. As with previous elements in this chapter, the following analysis combines benchmarking data (Chapter 2) with public input (Chapter 4).

Outdoor Recreation Areas

- Playgrounds – Set between existing and benchmark/increase due to demand and current distribution
- Picnic Shelters – Set at increase due to demand and current distribution
- Trails – Set closer to benchmark/increase due to demand, trends, and current distribution
- Skate Parks – Set at current/slightly below benchmark
- Amphitheaters – Set at increase to 2 due to demand
- Dog Parks – Set at increase due to demand and trends
- Community Gardens – Set at increase to 1 due to demand and trends
- Swimming Pools – Set at current (1), below benchmark but expansion of existing facility preferred
- Splash Pads – Set at slight increase due to demand and current distribution

Outdoor Fields & Courts

- Youth Baseball Fields – Set at current, above benchmark
- Youth Softball Fields – Set at increase due to demand
- Multipurpose Fields – Set at increase to benchmark due to demand
- Artificial Turf Fields – Set at benchmark, none currently
- Basketball Courts – Set at benchmark, slight increase, some met by upgrades to full court
- Tennis Courts – Set at current, increase only to keep same level of service
- Pickleball Courts – Set at increase due to trends and growing demand, none currently

Indoor Areas

- Recreation Centers – Set at slight increase to due to demand and current distribution
- Gymnasiums – Set at slight increase to due to demand and current distribution
- Senior Centers – Set at current, slightly below benchmark
- Nature Centers – Set at benchmark (1), none currently

4.9.2 Facility Level of Service Standards

The values in Table 4.3 illustrate potential need for various facilities. The largest current facility deficits (as of 2020) are for multipurpose fields (-12.4), pickleball courts (-8.5), trail miles (-11.4), playgrounds (-3.8), and picnic shelters (-3.8); other facilities with deficits are amphitheaters, basketball courts, dog parks, community gardens, youth softball fields, artificial turf multipurpose fields, and indoor facilities.

While values in Table 4.3 highlight what additional facilities are needed to adequately meet the demand, they do not indicate where in Abilene these new facilities should be located. The recommendations in Chapter 5 consider this information collectively with the service area analysis in Chapter 2.



Table 4.3: Facility Level of Service Standards

Facility	Per Population Target	Existing per Population	Existing Total Supply	2020 Target	2020 Surplus / Deficit	2030 Target	2030 Surplus / Deficit	Benchmark Median
Outdoor Recreation Areas								
Playgrounds	5,500	6,589	19	22.8	-3.8	24.3	-5.3	4,300
Picnic Pavilions/Shelters	4,500	5,216	24	27.8	-3.8	29.7	-5.7	N/A
Trails (miles)	6,500	15,846	7.9	19.3	-11.4	20.6	-12.7	3,900
Skate Parks	125,000	125,182	1	1.0	0.0	1.1	-0.1	91,800
Amphitheaters	60,000	125,182	1	2.1	-1.1	2.2	-1.2	108,100
Dog Parks	60,000	125,182	1	2.1	-1.1	2.2	-1.2	83,900
Community Gardens	125,000	N/A	0	1.0	-1.0	1.1	-1.1	46,700
Swimming Pools	125,000	125,182	1	1.0	0.0	1.1	-0.1	67,600
Splash Pads	20,000	25,036	5	6.3	-1.3	6.7	-1.7	N/A
Outdoor Fields & Courts								
Youth Baseball Fields	4,500	4,471	28	27.8	0.2	29.7	-1.7	11,000
Youth Softball Fields	12,500	15,648	8	10.0	-2.0	10.7	-2.7	21,400
Multipurpose Fields	8,700	62,591	2	14.4	-12.4	15.4	-13.4	8,700
Artificial Turf Multipurpose Fields	73,000	N/A	0	1.7	-1.7	1.8	-1.8	73,000
Basketball Courts	11,000	11,922	10.5	11.4	-0.9	12.2	-1.7	10,900
Tennis Courts	6,200	6,259	20	20.2	-0.2	21.6	-1.6	7,800
Pickleball Courts	10,000	31,296	4	12.5	-8.5	13.4	-9.4	17,000
Indoor Areas								
Recreation Centers	20,000	25,036	5	6.3	-1.3	6.7	-1.7	54,100
Gymnasiums	20,000	25,036	5	6.3	-1.3	6.7	-1.7	N/A
Senior Centers	25,000	31,296	4	5.0	-1.0	5.4	-1.4	108,100
Nature Centers	110,000	N/A	0	1.1	-1.1	1.2	-1.2	112,700

1. See Chapter 2 for population estimates and benchmarking



5

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Abilene's population has been growing steadily for decades, but the park system has not grown at the same rate. Additionally, many of the city's parks and facilities are aging and in need of investment. This Master Plan identifies needs for investment in both new and existing amenities and infrastructure. In order for many of these community desires to be met, the continuation and growth of partnerships with other providers will be critical as Parks and Recreation and even the city overall, cannot meet all of these needs alone.

Families, seniors, youth, and everyone in between will always need ample opportunity to connect socially, to practice healthy habits, and to enjoy all the benefits of time in nature. Parks and recreation agencies across the nation have a critical role to play in a brighter, more equitable future.

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted how and whether users experience parks and recreation. In a time of public health inequity and economic disruption, people everywhere are feeling the effects of having (or not having) access to open space and parks.¹ For nearly three years, the coronavirus pandemic and its economic impacts have blazed through communities, and public parks and open space continue to provide respite, solace, and connection. Parks helped people cope, and they will continue to help communities recover.² These past few years have changed usage patterns and desires for parks, and some of the recommendations in this chapter are a direct result of those changes, while others represent existing trends that were accelerated by the pandemic.

This chapter presents observations and findings gained through the first three phases of the planning process – Evaluate, Engage, and Envision. These recommendations are divided into the following categories:

- Upgrades to Existing Parks and Features
- Outdoor Athletic Fields and Courts
- Trails and Connectivity
- New Park and Facility Development
- Programming

¹ McCormick, Kathleen. Room to Roam: The Pandemic Has Underscored the Need for More Urban Parks; So What Comes Next? Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. <https://www.lincolnst.edu/publications/articles/2020-10-room-roam-pandemic-urban-parks-what-comes-next>. Accessed November 2020.

² A Trust for Public Land Special Report: Parks and the Pandemic. <https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/Parks%20and%20Pandemic%20-%20TPL%20special%20report.pdf>



- Operations and Budget
- Capital Improvements and Estimate Costs

5.2 BECOME THE BEST VERSION OF ABILENE

The new vision for parks and recreation in Abilene is to “be the gold standard for parks and recreation.” This bold statement exemplifies the desire for Abilene to be a forward-thinking, world-class city. Reaching this vision will require innovative ideas and trying new approaches. It will require a willingness to do something the city has not tried before, whether that is new facilities, programs, or partnerships. To be the best, the city will need to be a leader in parks and recreation. That means taking risks and building a unique park system that embodies the community’s character. It does not mean trying to copy or become like another city. Abilene must become the best version of itself, and only then will the city “be the gold standard for parks and recreation.”

5.3 SYSTEMWIDE RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

Systemwide recommendations represent high level, aspirational strategies and are, therefore, more general in nature. However, these actions refer to capital improvements and are essential for the successful implementation of the goals of this master plan and represent ongoing efforts that require annual review and evaluation.

These systemwide recommendations focus on the development of parks and facilities in underserved areas to meet unmet needs throughout the community. This list describes general concepts and overall needs for facilities.

Top recommendations include:

1. Strive to reach the new bold vision for parks and recreation by being innovative, trying new, unique approaches to meeting the community’s needs
2. Upgrade and improve existing parks and facilities
3. Continuously engage the community to successfully implement the vision of this plan
4. Improve and add support features throughout the park system (e.g., restrooms, seating, shade, drinking fountains, and landscaping)
5. Add, upgrade, and replace playground equipment throughout the park system
6. Upgrade/replace recreation centers throughout the city
7. Evaluate opportunities to add trails at parks and identify potential trail linkages throughout the community
8. Ensure ADA accessibility throughout the park system
9. Implement proposed partnership for multipurpose rectangular (flat) field complex at Grover Nelson Park
10. Upgrade and modernize baseball and softball fields and corresponding facilities
11. Develop a large amphitheater and upgrade the small stage at Rose Park to host community events
12. Continue to seek partnerships to meet the growing and diverse community needs
13. Add or renovate game courts, especially pickleball, to meet the community’s needs
14. Strategically and consistently place signage (entrance, wayfinding, etc.) within the park system
15. Establish a parks foundation to raise funds and organize volunteers
16. Ensure the department has the resources (funding and staffing) needed to operate the department as offerings grow



5.4 UPGRADES TO EXISTING PARKS AND FEATURES

5.4.1 Observations and Analysis

Through the public input process, Abilene residents voiced a strong desire for improvements to existing parks. This need was voiced through multiple channels and was a frequent topic at the stakeholder meetings. Additionally, 95% of survey respondents indicated support for investment in existing facilities and deferred maintenance. Regarding conditions, 56% of respondents rated facilities as fair or poor, compared to 44% who indicated excellent or good, and 55% indicated that improved facilities would increase park visitation. It is clear the Abilene community desires better quality parks and improved opportunities for recreation.

The top request for improvement to existing facilities was for playgrounds. The city has recently replaced some playgrounds, but many still need replacement. The new playground at Rose Park is a great example of a fully accessible playground. Additionally, when constructing new playgrounds (or replacing existing), the city should make efforts to ensure variation (e.g., themes and features) to provide unique experiences and a reason for families to visit different parks. The city should also consider incorporating nature play elements into playgrounds.

The other top options for upgrades to existing amenities were community/recreation centers, baseball/softball fields, senior centers, and large community parks which are all heavily used amenities. The site assessments also indicated needs for improvement to these amenities, supporting the survey results. These recommendations are detailed in later sections of this chapter.

Over two thirds of survey respondents (68%) indicated that additional shade in the parks would encourage additional use, and many want improved restrooms (51%). Improved seating and security were also requested. The facility assessments indicated that most drinking fountains were not functional and that many picnic shelters need improvements.

Most Abilene parks have restroom buildings, but many are old and in need of renovation or replacement. Several parks, such as Red Bud, have multiple separate structures that need improvement. It will likely be more efficient, in term of both capital and operation costs, to consolidate and build large more centrally located restroom buildings when replacing the existing structures.

The COVID-19 pandemic put pressure to accelerate transitioning from standard drinking fountains to bottle filler stations, and they need ADA accessibility with paved walkways leading to them. Accessibility deficiencies were noted throughout the park system – by planning staff during park assessments but also by the public during engagement efforts – with many issues stemming from lack of passable sidewalks.

The need for improved and consistent signage throughout the park system was apparent early in the planning process. Some park entrances lack signage, and signage that exists is not consistent. Fortunately, the city has begun replacing entrance signage throughout the system. Wayfinding signage within parks is limited, and wayfinding between parks and across the city is also lacking. Numerous stakeholder groups discussed needs for various types of signage: entrance, wayfinding, interpretive (e.g., educational, historical, etc.), and informative (e.g., bulletins, program opportunities, and development updates).

Abilene Parks and Recreation has not yet implemented many technology-related improvements at parks. The city has room to better utilize technology, such as park related apps and mobile device charging stations. Many of these technological improvements would require Wi-Fi hotspots in Abilene parks, which would help the success of any future app and would also allow the city to collect data about park usage. If implemented, Wi-Fi access should include information indicating its availability.

5.4.2 Recommendations

1. Add support features throughout the park system such as seating/benches, shade structures, trash/recycling receptacles, drinking fountains, and trees & landscaping
 - Include bottle fillers at all new drinking fountains and when existing features are replaced
2. Add or improve restrooms throughout the parks; include family restrooms at larger parks
 - Consider consolidating restroom buildings when replacing structures



3. Pursue and implement an ADA Accessibility Audit of all facilities, programs, and communications
4. Add and upgrade signage – entrance (continue updating/replacing), wayfinding, interpretive, and informative – throughout the park system
5. Develop interpretive and informational signage throughout the park system (will require signage plans) to help visitors understand the natural features and history of Abilene parks while improving awareness of sensitive ecosystems and rare species
6. Add security cameras and lighting throughout parks in locations that have perceived security concerns
7. Continue to replace dated playgrounds, including separate age 2-5 equipment, or add where unavailable
8. Consider themed playground equipment, such as climbing rocks, sensory features, etc., potentially providing for marketing and resident/visitor photo opportunities
9. Incorporate nature play elements as part of playground development and replacement, especially in more passive park areas
10. Add and upgrade picnic shelters at parks to increase overall access to these facilities, as well as make them more inviting, and to facilitate opportunities for outdoor community gatherings
11. Incorporate shade features over existing amenities such as playgrounds to facilitate year-round usage
12. Add Wi-Fi access to parks; promote park hotspots to ensure awareness
13. Upgrade and utilize technology in parks for the benefit of both patrons and staff (see trends discussion in Chapter 2)
14. Explore development of a searchable mobile app to communicate site locations, services, and special events to the public
15. Ensure accessible walkways to all facilities and seating areas

5.5 OUTDOOR ATHLETIC FIELDS AND COURTS

5.5.1 Observations and Analyses

Compared to the benchmarks, Abilene provides a high level of service for baseball/softball diamonds and a much lower service level for multipurpose rectangular fields. The site assessments (see Appendix A) indicate that many of the fields need improvements, and residents indicated desire for upgrades to these facilities through the survey, the stakeholder groups, and the open house.

Abilene has a higher level of service for tennis courts and slightly lower level of basketball courts. Increased needs for these amenities are largely related to the growing population. Currently, pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country. The city does not yet offer any dedicated pickleball courts (all existing are shared with tennis).

As the makeup of the population of Abilene changes, especially as diversification and aging trends continue, needs will shift. When parks are improved, there will likely be opportunities to meet these changing needs. Optimizing multipurpose space at fields and courts will be a useful tool for the city to use in the face of limited resources and space for expansion.

5.5.2 Athletic Fields

Abilene's diamond fields are spread throughout the city meeting regional needs. Many of the fields need improvement, consistent with public input. According to the survey, most residents (78%) support adding new fields as well, with the largest need for multipurpose rectangular or flat fields.

Baseball/Softball Diamonds

As noted previously, many of the fields in Abilene need improvements, especially to the fencing, backstops, and dugouts. Overall, fields should be updated. Although some outside funding was used, users would like the fields to be similar in quality to those at Lake Kirby Park. The ADA accessibility at many fields also needs to



be improved as the fields, dugouts, and spectator seating all need to be accessible by wheelchair. Some of the practice backstops will also need paved walkways. Additionally, new standards require a fence along the upper portion of 5-row or higher bleachers. Many bleachers in Abilene do not meet this requirement.

The complex at Lake Kirby Park has room for expansion which is desired by Wylie Fastpitch Softball and Wylie Little League. The additional fields would accommodate the growing needs for these leagues and potential tournaments, as the current number of softball fields is insufficient for many tournaments. Optimally, the new fields should be able to meet the needs of both baseball and softball leagues.



Lake Kirby Park

Multipurpose Rectangular (Flat) Fields

The city currently has few of these fields with only one full-sized football field at Oscar Rose Park, plus a diamond field that is used for football. Soccer practices take place at the Stafford Complex (managed by Parks and Recreation) behind Stafford Elementary School. Due to the condition of the fields, they are only used for practice and fields by others, such as high school fields, which are used for games.

National trends indicate faster growth of sports that use multipurpose rectangular fields than those using diamond fields, therefore, the need for multipurpose fields will likely continue to grow. Several stakeholders also indicated a desire for artificial turf fields. This type of field can better withstand heavy use, limiting turf damage and reducing the number of rainouts.



Flag Football

Fortunately, the solution to this need is in the works. Through multiple funding solutions, Abilene City Council voted to enter into an agreement with the Abilene Youth Sports Authority (AYSA) to construct a field complex on land adjacent to Grover Nelson Park.³ As part of this agreement, 10 outdoor multipurpose fields dedicated to soccer, football, and other sports will be added to the land east of the Zoo behind the Dodge Jones Youth Sports Center. Ultimately, this complex will provide opportunities for Abilene to host tournaments, another community desire according to the public engagement of this plan.

5.5.3 Game Courts

Basketball

The 10.5 existing basketball courts offer a lower level of service than the benchmarks (one per 10,885 compared to a median of one per 7,842). These facilities are also located close together so additional gaps in service are seen in some portions of the city.

Opportunities to add additional courts may be found at newly developed parks while also expanding the existing half courts to full courts at current parks, especially at larger community parks. Full court upgrades would increase basketball's level of service to the community.



GV Daniels Carver

³ Abilene Reporter News, "Council enters agreement with AYSA to develop outdoor sports fields near Abilene Zoo". <https://www.abilenereporternews.com/story/news/2022/06/23/city-aysa-develop-football-soccer-fields-near-abilene-zoo-abilene-reporter-news-building-demolition/7712993001/> (June 23, 2022)



additional stress on existing or new field spaces. They could also be added at future parks that lack the space for larger fields. These courts are an example of a potential “neighborhood determined/placemaking feature” which should be considered at the individual park planning level and can be lined for multiple sports.

5.5.4 Recommendations

1. Upgrade baseball/softball fields throughout the system
 - Upgrade baseball/softball diamond fields with new backstops, fencing, dugouts, and spectator areas (Cobb, MLK, Oscar Rose, Red Bud, Scarborough, Arthur Sears)
 - Provide accessible spectator areas with shade at all game fields
 - Improve ADA accessibility to fields and dugouts
 - Replace or upgrade bleachers to meet the requirement of a fence along the upper portion when 5-rows or more
 - Expand the complex at Lake Kirby Park to accommodate the growing needs for the leagues and potential tournaments
2. Continue to foster the partnership for a new multipurpose field complex at Grover Nelson Park for soccer, lacrosse, and more – to address the ever-increasing demand for these fields and to potentially attract tournaments
3. Develop dedicated pickleball courts at Oscar Rose Park, near the existing tennis center and the senior center
 - Consider shaded courts to allow for year-round play
4. Renovate or replace the inline hockey rink in partnership with the Abilene Hockey League
5. Renovate or replace the skate park at Oscar Rose Park utilizing user group input
6. Monitor community needs for futsal courts at existing and future parks
7. Ensure ADA accessibility to some practice backstops at each league practice location
8. Consider expanding some half basketball courts to full courts when renovating, especially at larger parks, and add basketball courts at any new neighborhood or community parks

5.6 TRAILS AND CONNECTIVITY

5.6.1 Observations and Analyses

According to the benchmarking in Chapter 2, Abilene has 0.6 miles of trail per 10,000 population, below the median of the benchmark communities (2.1 miles). Throughout the country, trails consistently emerge at the top for desired improvements, even in jurisdictions that have an extensive network of trails. In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic has only emphasized the demand for trails as park usage rates skyrocketed, and trails were one of the best providers of outdoor, physically-distanced activities. Abilene is no different; residents clearly communicated their preference for more trail connectivity, through stakeholder discussions, the open house workshop, and survey responses.

According to the survey results, the highest percentage of Abilene residents (57%) walk, hike, or jog in city parks, and by far desire more opportunities for these activities, compared to other activities in the parks. In addition to ranking as the most used park amenities, they were top desires (all types) for new development. Mountain bike trails ranked the highest in the survey for new development, while multiuse and walking/hiking trails also need improvements to existing facilities as well as any newly developed.

Several parks currently lack trail loops that could support them. In addition to Lake Kirby Park which has a proposed loop, several larger parks, including Cal Young, Cobb, Scarborough, Stevenson, and Will Hair, lack paved trail loops. Some neighborhood parks could also offer shorter trails. These trails, plus connections to adjoining neighborhoods, could improve access to parks within a 10-minute walk. Some of this work has already begun with the completion of trails at Sears Park, Red Bud Park, and Nelson Wilson Park.



The previous park system master plan from 2014, *Abilene Parks, Recreation & Senior Facilities Master Plan*, proposed a series of trails throughout the city, primarily following stream corridors, including floodplains. This document should be updated to include proposed and completed development and to identify potential corridors and linkages between the city's existing and any new parks. The update should also include formalized standards for design, signage, and maintenance (including staffing requirements) to ensure trail experiences are consistent throughout Abilene. The plan should also identify priorities and potential costs.

The need for mountain bike trails in the area is largely unmet, according to the public engagement. However, the Buck Creek Mountain Bike Trails are located just outside of Abilene on city-owned land. These trails are currently privately operated, and gated. Users must pay a membership fee to receive access. The high level of unmet need indicates that Abilene residents are not aware that these trails exist. Optimally, the property would be brought into the park system and marketed with other Parks and Recreation opportunities. Once part of the system, the city could evaluate and address any remaining unmet needs.

Improved access to the existing Buck Creek Mountain Bike Trails would also help address the demand for natural surface trails in Abilene. Existing opportunities are limited with the closest trails at Abilene State Park. Other potential opportunities for natural surface trails can be found within Abilene Parks at MLK/Cal Young and Lake Kirby Park (formalize/promote existing trails).

The effort to establish a trail system coincides with the "10-Minute Walk Campaign" led by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), Trust for Public Land (TPL), and Urban Land Institute – a national movement supported by hundreds of communities across the country to ensure everyone has walkable access to parks and trails.⁴ Trail and connectivity improvements in Abilene will establish safe routes, create alternate means of transportation, increase access to parks and destinations throughout the city, as well as contribute to an overall sense of community cohesion. The city has a long way to go to reach this target, but it presents a potential long-term goal for Abilene.

5.6.2 Recommendations

1. Update the city's existing trail plan from the *Abilene Parks, Recreation & Senior Facilities Master Plan* (2014) to include standards for design, signage, maintenance, prioritization, and costs
 - Incorporate the plans for the Lake Kirby Trail and Cedar Creek Trail (under construction)
 - Consider linkages between parks, schools, and other popular destinations
2. Add concrete paved trail loops at all parks that can accommodate them
 - Include trail connections between parks and adjacent neighborhoods wherever possible
3. Improve existing trail surfaces to enhance longevity and ensure proper accessibility (e.g., Oscar Rose) upgrade to concrete
4. Consider bringing the Buck Creek Mountain Bike Trails into the park system for more efficient management, programming, and improved awareness
5. Evaluate opportunities to add natural surface trails in existing and future parks
6. Consider signing on to the 10-Minute Walk Mission by the TPL and NRPA to show the city's commitment to connectivity and access to parks

5.7 NEW PARK AND FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

5.7.1 Observations and Analyses

Trends indicate a steadily growing population in Abilene that is expected to continue growing at least through 2030. The current population is about 125,000 and is expected to grow by over 8,000 residents over the next 10 years. As population grows, the composition is becoming more diverse. The system has not grown with the population, especially in the southern part of Abilene. Additionally, the needs of residents have changed over time, which is a reason for which this Master Plan was authorized.

⁴ NRPA, TFPL, and ULI's 10-Minute Walk campaign: <https://10minutewalk.org/>



The population age 65 and over has increased as a percentage since 2000 and is expected to reach nearly 17% by 2026. At the same time, the percentage of children (under age 18) has declined slightly. While facilities for children will remain important, demand for senior activities will continue to increase. Demographic changes will likely continue and often lead to changing recreation needs. The needs of specific demographic groups should be addressed during the individual park master planning process.

5.7.2 New and Upgraded Parks

Only about a fifth (19%) of the population lives in areas with “high” or “medium-high” service levels, and a third (33%) live in areas with “low” or “medium-low” service levels (see Composite Park Service Areas map, Figure 2.23 in Chapter 2). These service levels emphasize the need for new parks and facility locations. Most of the need for new parks is limited to smaller neighborhood parks strategically located in underserved areas. A large community park is needed in the southwestern portion of the city, a need identified in the 2014 plan but not yet completed. Figure 5.1 shows the locations of potential new and upgraded parks in Abilene.

This map also highlights the need to evaluate the potential for waterfront amenities along Lake Fort Phantom. The city owns a large amount of land along the edge of the lake, including Seabee and Johnson parks. The full potential of this land has not yet been realized as there is a large demand for water-based activities in the area, such as fishing and boating. Additionally, there are economic development opportunities that could bring investment to the City of Abilene through partnership with private agencies for a marina, campground, restaurant, or other development.

Currently, only about 20% of the population lives within a 10-minute walk from a neighborhood park (or larger). Development of these new parks – including upgrades to undeveloped or underdeveloped parks – will increase the proportion of residents that live within a walkable range of a park. However, a formal agreement with Abilene Independent School District (AISD) to make the elementary school grounds available for public use would have a large (and quick) impact on park access and could address some of the park needs in Figure 5.1. Adding the elementary schools to the park inventory would increase the proportion of the population within a 10-minute walk to 30%.

Any individual park (new or existing) undergoing significant development should have a master plan finalized prior to new development or redevelopment. This will help ensure facilities are accessible, complementary features are located appropriately, and, most importantly, desired features fit on the site. Planning is a critical tool for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of maintenance, making it easier to be proactive, instead of reactive, in the face of challenges and changing circumstances.

Another potential strategy to improve access to parks is to encourage developers to set aside land or even develop parks as part of residential subdivisions. Currently, the land provided by developers is often in floodplains or otherwise not able to support park amenities. In general, the city should consider incentives for providing parks or usable parkland, while not accepting donations that do not have potential for public use.

The city should also consider additional opportunities for plaza spaces downtown. As noted previously, The COVID-19 pandemic emphasized both the need and desire for outdoor gathering spaces. The success of Vera Hall Minter Park shows how these small parks can have a big impact. Future plaza opportunities need not all be owned or operated by Abilene Parks and Recreation, but the city can partner with developers and business owners to increase the availability of these spaces.

New Neighborhood Park Standards

As noted in Chapter 2, neighborhood parks should be minimum of 8 to 10 acres in size (at least 2 acres developed). With the recommendation to develop up to four new neighborhood parks over the next 10 years, Abilene should have a standard list of elements to include in each park. These standards should function as a starting point for engagement with the community but should ensure that all new parks provide a variety of amenities for all users. Partners, including developers, that develop neighborhood parks should be encouraged to follow these standards.



Typical neighborhood park elements include:

1. Playground
2. ½ basketball court (may be swapped for another feature if desired by the community)
3. Gathering area/picnic shelter
4. Walking trail
5. Good circulation – walkways/ADA access
6. Restrooms (small)
7. Landscaping/trees for shade
8. Open grass area/athletic field – practice or pick-up use (if adequate space exists)
9. Unique neighborhood determined feature(s) based on local interest – could be related to sports, environment, arts, etc., should consider placemaking opportunities
10. Parking (if space allows)

New Community Park Standards

Typically, a community park should be larger with features that attract users from all over the community. They should be developed with consideration to a higher volume and extended duration of visitation. Opportunities for adding a community park to Abilene's system exist in the southern portion of the city where the population is growing to meet the community's recreation needs.

The following features are typical of community parks, such as Oscar Rose Park, and should apply to any future park opportunities that arise. Any development undertaken by Abilene should also include an engagement campaign to solicit direct public input from nearby residents as well as others across the city.

Potential elements include:

1. Large all-access playground
2. Game courts (pickleball, basketball, etc.)
3. Central gathering area/nucleus with seating
4. Picnic shelters/gathering and program/event space
5. Walking and/or biking trail
6. Outdoor fitness equipment
7. Good circulation – walkways/ADA access
8. Landscaping
9. Trees
10. Shade at gathering areas, seating areas, playgrounds, etc.
11. Restroom
12. Athletic fields – depending on community needs



Adventure Cove



Sears Splash Pad

5.7.3 Outdoor Aquatics

Abilene's Adventure Cove and myriad of splash pads at various parks provide high levels of service for a much of the city, but a few areas do not have easy access to outdoor aquatic facilities. The most notable areas beyond a 5-minute drive are the southern portion of the city. A smaller area in the northwest, near Valentine Park is also more than 5-minutes from a splash pad or the aquatic center.



Public input indicated desire for more opportunities to use splash pads – ranking third for more opportunities needed. With the high level of service overall for these facilities, the city should focus new development to address gaps in service. The proposed splash pad at Valentine Park would fill a gap in that area. Long-term, another splash pad in the south will likely be needed to provide aquatic access in that portion of the city.

The existing aquatic center at Adventure Cove provides aquatic opportunities for the youngest residents, swimming opportunities are limited for the teenage and adult groups, including the 65+ community. Throughout the engagement process swimming pools, both indoor and outdoor have been topics of discussion. Nearly half (47%) of survey respondents indicated that outdoor pools were the most used or desired recreation facilities, and most would like new development to address unmet needs. The best way to meet these needs would be to expand Adventure Cove to include deep water, an improvement also requested through the stakeholder meetings.

A smaller percentage (34%) of respondents desire indoor pools with 85% of them requesting an indoor swimming pool to be added to the park system. Due to the high cost of both construction and operation of such a facility, the best short-term solution is to continue seeking partnerships with those that already offer indoor pools in Abilene. Potential partnerships could allow for public swim times or programs at local private facilities such as the YMCA, Hardin-Simmons University's Brand Swimming Pool, the Abilene Swim Club, and McMurry University's Phillips Family Center.

5.7.4 Indoor Facilities

The City of Abilene has four recreation centers, plus the adaptive recreation center and four seniors center (most within recreation centers), that provide space for year-round programs and drop-in use. Recreation centers ranked highly for facilities in need of revitalization or upgrades in the survey. In general, residents would like to see all centers upgraded to the quality of Rose Senior Center. In some cases, the existing centers will need to be completely replaced with new structures. Visioning for the G.V. Daniels Recreation Center and Cesar Chavez Recreation Center have already begun and will continue to be evaluated as priority recreation centers for renovations.



Rose Summer Camp

In terms of new facilities, there is demand for a recreation center in southern Abilene. All existing centers are in the northern and central portions of the city. The YMCA offers a center in Rose Bud Park, but it is the furthest south center of any type and does not offer the same programming as the other city recreation centers. To best meet the needs of the southern portion of the city, a new recreation center should be constructed in Lake Kirby Park or the future southwest community park.

5.7.5 Other New Facilities

Outdoor Fitness

Outdoor fitness equipment has become a popular addition to parks for users of all ages (in addition to active adults/seniors). These facilities ranked near the top of the list for new development of facilities as it is currently only located in Red Bud Park. The equipment could be added at relatively low cost at other parks in Abilene to provide even distribution. Small amounts of this equipment can also be incorporated into playground development. Larger groups of equipment provide a potential gathering space and a venue for programs for seniors.



Abilene Runners Club



Disc Golf

Abilene Parks and Recreation already offers disc golf courses at five parks, well ahead of the trend for these amenities. As noted in Chapter 2, disc golf is a fast-growing sport throughout the country, so the city should continue to partner with the Abilene Disc Golf Association for new and upgraded courses in city parks where they do not conflict with other uses.

Outdoor Stages/Amphitheaters

Outdoor stages and amphitheaters can host all types of concerts and events that were repeatedly requested by the community through the various methods of public input. This type of facility will be necessary to meet the growing demand for community events.

Abilene currently offers a small amphitheater at Rose Park, but it needs structural, accessibility, and technological improvements to better accommodate programs and events. This stage is also too small to host larger citywide events.

A larger amphitheater is proposed as part of the Cedar Creek Trail project. A specific location should be selected in partnership with Cedar Creek Waterway Development non-profit based on accessibility and the ability to host large crowds.



Stephenville TX Birdsong Amphitheater

Dog Parks

The city currently only offers one dog park at Grover Nelson Park. This existing location provides good access to those in the eastern half of the city, but the rest of the city is more than a 5-minute drive from the facility. The city should consider constructing regional dog parks for better access. Optimally, one would be located on the east side of the city, potentially at Kirby Park with another on the west side of the city. Optimally, these new dog parks should offer shade for both dogs and owners.



Dog Park

Community Gardens

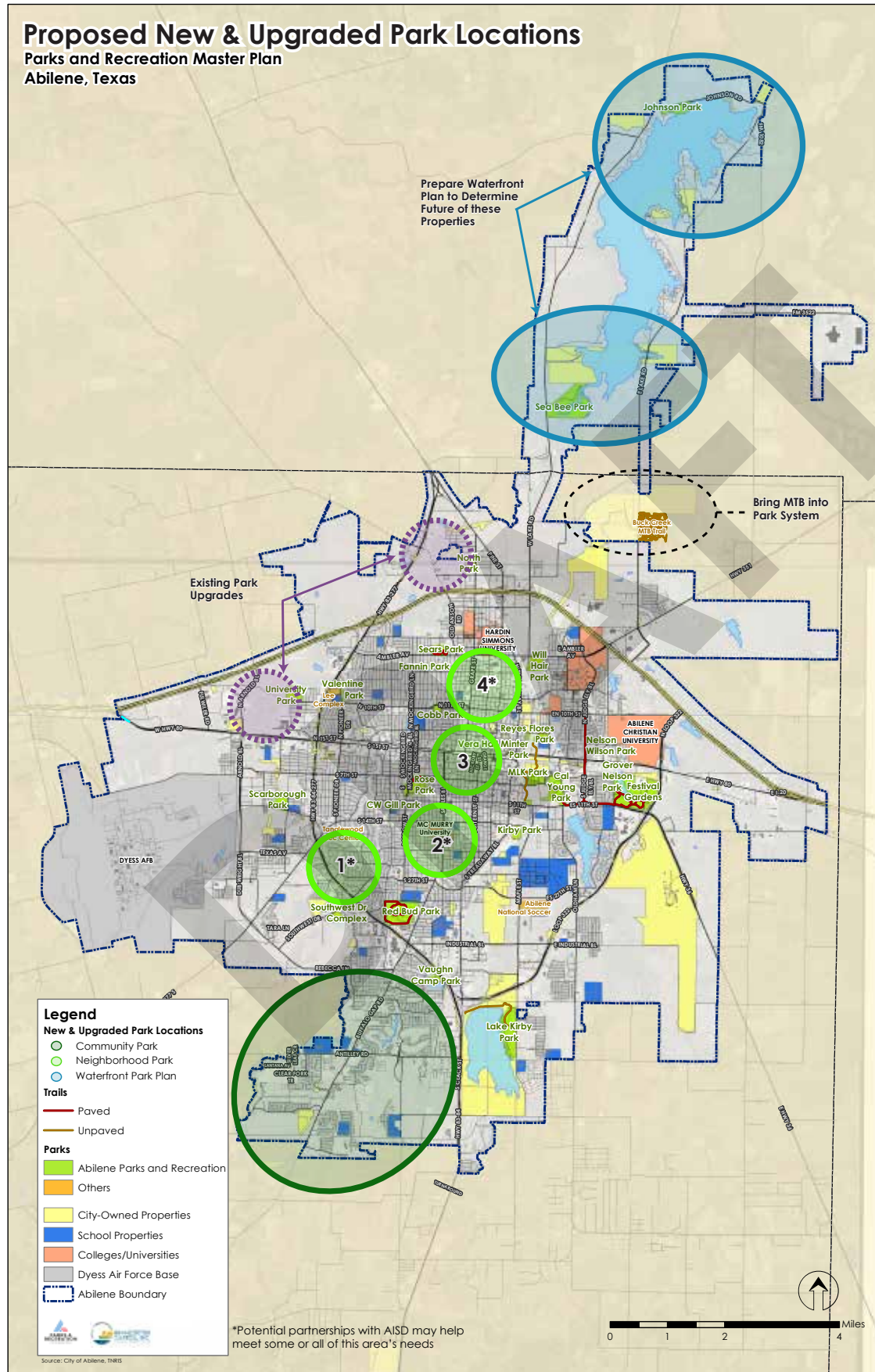
The survey results and steering committee priority ranking indicated a potential need for community gardens in Abilene as the city does not currently offer an area where residents can grow their own food or learn about gardening. According to the survey, 25% of respondents would like to use community gardens, and if available. Even residents with access to yards that could be used for private gardens often prefer community gardens for socialization and assistance in plot preparation. Educational programs are also common at community garden facilities. Opportunities to partner with an interested group should be considered to provide this amenity in one of Abilene's parks.

5.7.6 Recommendations

1. Utilize existing parkland to meet unmet facility needs and to improve access to park features
2. Prepare park master plans for existing parks and any future parks prior to development of facilities to ensure that added features are complementary, desired, and fully accessible
3. Upgrade/replace recreation centers throughout the city
 - Develop a new recreation center in southern Abilene



Figure 5.1: Proposed New & Upgraded Park Locations





4. Consider developing University Park as a neighborhood park to meet a variety of needs and improve access to parks
5. Prepare a master plan to evaluate feasibility of recreational development for the city-owned land near Lake Fort Phantom
6. Seek a formal agreement with Abilene Independent School District (AISD) to make the elementary school grounds and tennis courts available for public use
7. Continually evaluate opportunities to develop new parks in underserved areas, especially at land already owned by the city
8. Include a neighborhood determined feature at each neighborhood park, ensuring development aligns with needs and encouraging a sense of local investment and opportunities for placemaking in parks
9. Consider providing incentives to developers to donate usable parkland or develop parks in new communities
 - Encourage these developers to follow city park design guidelines
10. Seek opportunities for additional downtown plaza spaces for community gathering and outdoor dining, especially through partnerships
11. Expand the existing Adventure Cove Aquatic Center to include deep water and features for all ages
12. Continue to seek partnerships for use of existing indoor pools by others
13. Provide outdoor stages or amphitheatres in Abilene to host more community events, such as concerts and movies, highly desired by residents
 - Upgrade the stage at Oscar Rose Park to better host smaller events
 - Develop a large amphitheater at a park along the Cedar Creek Trail to host large community-wide events, including concerts and other performances
14. Add outdoor fitness equipment at select parks to expand opportunities for improved community health
15. Consider additional dog park locations to meet the growing needs of Abilene households
16. Develop a splash pad in Valentine Park (short-term) and in southern Abilene (long-term) to expand access to aquatic facilities in the city
17. Continue to partner with disc golf group to provide new and expanded opportunities in the city
18. Evaluate the demand for community gardens, find a location for the plots if demand exists, and identify potential partnerships
19. Formulate and post a policy indicating that drones use is permitted only at Sea Bee Park and implement signage at the RC plan area indicating that drones are permitted

5.8 PROGRAMMING

5.8.1 Observations and Analyses

The public input process indicated needs for some additional program offerings in Abilene. If programs are added or expanded, staff will be needed to program and manage the offerings. The ability to address potential growing needs may be limited without additional resources. Additional staff will be needed, or the department will need increased emphasis on the utilization of partners and outside vendors. A combination of both efforts will likely be optimal. In summary, in order to do more, the department needs more people to do the work.

The following programs needs were identified through the public input:

- Concerts & performances



Abilene Philharmonic at the Abilene Zoo



- Fitness & wellness programs
- Senior/active adult programs
- Nature programs
- Adult sports
- Additional youth camps
- Annual community events and festivals
- More pickleball
- Tournaments

Community/Family-Oriented Programming & Events

Overall, Abilene residents expressed a desire for the kind of programs that bring community together and can be enjoyed by all ages. The city currently hosts some of these programs, but residents would like to see more. Abilene Parks and Recreation currently has a small amphitheater at Rose Park. Improvements to this stage, plus the proposed larger amphitheater would allow the city to accommodate more of these community events. Additionally, the existing recreation centers while functioning, could be improved to meet some of these family-oriented programming and event needs.

Additional Abilene-specific events could be hosted in partnership with existing groups like Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau, local restaurants and museums, the Chamber of Commerce, and others would create broad appeal and reach a broad audience base. Events should be contractually owned by the city, and incentivized. If an event is successful and growing, a contract can continue.

Senior/Active Adult Programs

As noted previously, Abilene, like most of the country, has an aging population and a growing percentage of residents over age 65. Given this aging population, it is unsurprising that many residents would like to see more senior programs. Additionally, it is important to note that many citizens who qualify as “seniors” based on age (an arbitrary delineation) do not self-identify as seniors; they will sometimes elect not to participate in senior-targeted programs due to stigma or perception of aged people. Wherever communities advertise programs for “seniors” alone there will often be this problem. Because some of the most active people in fitness and recreation are over the age of 55, it is important to consider branding and marketing some of the more active programs as “active adult programs.”

Nature Programs and Environmental Education

Residents indicated desire for more access to natural areas and nature programs in Abilene. Nearly all survey respondents (96%) indicated support for protecting the city’s natural resources. Natural areas/nature parks were ranked as the fourth most desired amenity, and residents would like to see more of them. A nature center was a top improvement for new development on the survey.

As noted in the trends section of Chapter 2, environmental education cultivates understanding of the benefits of natural habitats and open spaces. Nature education provides opportunities to engage all ages and abilities and provides great potential for intergenerational programming. The school district, the local universities, and nonprofit groups are potential partners for environmental programs, including nature classes and activities. Potential programs (which could involve partnerships with the school districts) include guided hikes, community events, field trips, or classes covering habitat restoration, wildlife identification (e.g., bird watching), invasive species removal, and more.

Any programs would require venues to host them. Some, such as guided hikes, could be held at existing or proposed nature trails in Abilene. Classrooms, indoor or outdoor, are required for some programs. The proposed nature center at Lake Kirby Park could potentially host a wide variety of nature programming opportunities, and the city should continue to partner with interested parties to add this amenity. Outdoor programs could be hosted at the proposed amphitheaters and at one or more of the picnic shelters.



Other Programming Needs

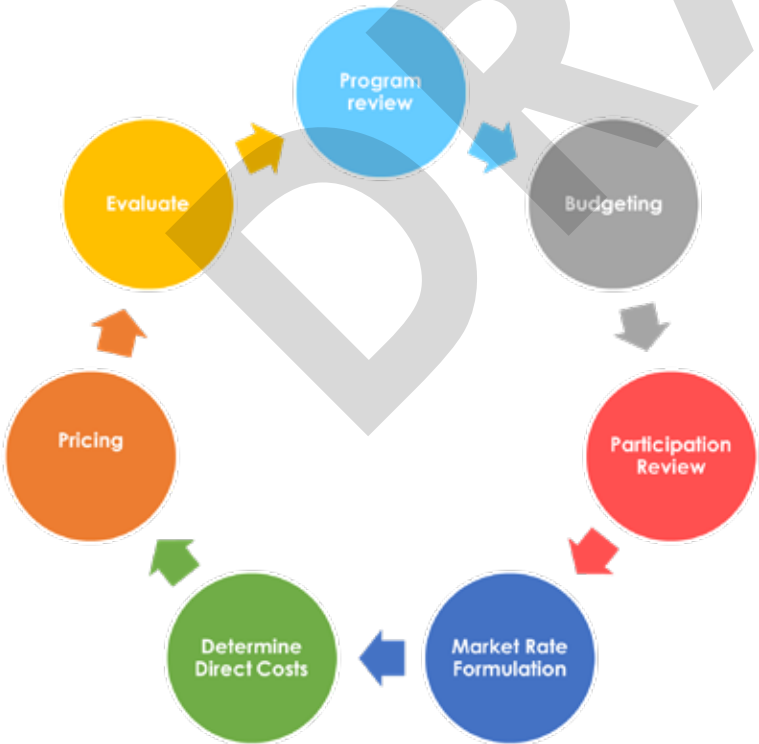
There is some unmet demand for other program categories. Water fitness program and swim lessons are other unmet needs that should be evaluated if Adventure Cove is expanded to include deep water. Finally, there are some needs for teen programs. Esports are growing in popularity, as described in Chapter 2, and serve this hard-to-reach age group. Optimally, an Esports area would be located in a teen room at one or more of the recreation centers.

5.8.2 Annual Implementation Plan for Business Operations

Figure 5.2 illustrates the ongoing evolution of a typical parks and recreation agency's working operations. Each cycle begins with an annual plan and ends with evaluation. Creating an annual plan allows the department to establish goals for both internal operations and external performance (i.e., programming). An annual operations plan is helpful for establishing pricing and costs, as well as defining more specifically the ways in which the agency will benefit the community; a yearly evaluation is critically important to ensure efficiency, appropriateness, and vitality. Hosting a year-end retreat for the department staff is a helpful way to collectively evaluate performance and to identify goals and objectives for the coming year.

Most of the funding for the department's budget comes from General Fund Appropriations. Some programs have fees attached, but fees and charges are inconsistent. While the programs currently or recently offered are generally popular and well-attended, there is a real opportunity to strengthen and refresh programming; doing so would benefit not only the community, but department staff as well. Abilene Parks and Recreation must consider overall operations in their entirety then determine what operations the department should "Stop, Start, or Continue." This is practical strategy for proactively addressing need and challenges and can meaningfully realign services. Considering the condition of facilities, the success of both existing and former program offerings, and how extended the current staff is, Abilene Parks and Recreation will benefit from assessing what strengths and opportunities there are to build stronger programs and more sustainable operations.

Figure 5.2: Ongoing Annual Operation Plan Diagram



The following steps are intended to guide the department in defining the purpose of its programming and the direction the agency would like to take moving forward:



Program Review

Review every program in the department to determine answers to the following:

- What is the purpose of the program or activity?
- What does the program attempt to accomplish?

Using the answers to these questions, set specific goals for each program.

Budgeting

Use budget information to review actual direct costs from the previous year.

- Review part time wages, supplies, instructors' costs, etc.
- Separate the indirect costs of the full-time wages, maintenance costs, or utilities

Participation

Estimate participation based on historic data from previous years.

- Determine minimum number of participants
- Determine maximum number of participants

Determine Market Rate

Use each program's total direct cost to the annual budget, set the market rate price.

Evaluate Direct Costs

Prior to determining pricing, the department should assess direct costs. Establish a cost-recovery percentage by calculating all direct costs for each program.

Pricing

Based on the calculations of direct costs and cost recovery percentages, set price amounts for each program. Establish a market rate, but also calculate a resident discount.

Evaluate

- Reflect on and assess the purpose of each program
- Establish a goal for participation
- Establish a goal for cost recovery

5.8.3 Recommendations

1. Be a mission driven agency; pay close attention to the new mission of Parks and Recreation (Chapter 4)
 - Ensure every action and decision always connects back to the department's mission
2. Establish an annual assessment process to determine if Abilene should stop offering a program, continue offering a program, or start a new program (Annual Implementation Plan for Business Operations)
3. Continuously evaluate the demand for new or expanded programs as indicated by the survey results and other public input
4. Regularly evaluate program times to ensure programs are offered when community members can actually participate
5. Expand existing concert, movie, and live performance program offerings to address unmet community needs
 - Utilize the upgraded and proposed amphitheaters for additional and enhanced program opportunities
6. Establish split revenue percentages for any program partnerships with funding channeled directly to Parks and Recreation



7. Seek opportunities to add Esports programs to attract the hard-to-reach teenage population
8. Make full use of new facilities – amphitheaters, outdoor fitness equipment, picnic shelters, pickleball courts, nature center, etc. – by programming and offering activities anchored around these sites
9. Seek partner with local entities to develop more age 55+ programming and to ensure offerings align with local needs
10. Consider branding and marketing active senior programs together under a unique category, such as “active adults” to increase participation
 - Strategically market these programs with support from partners and related service-providers
11. Continue to respond to the growing demand for pickleball programs and leagues, both indoor and outdoor, especially after the new court complex is developed in Rose Park
12. Monitor nationwide and regional recreation trends regularly, especially concerning growing population groups to best serve the needs of the whole community
13. Explore partnerships with nearby environmental and nature organizations (e.g., USDA in Abilene, Audubon Society Big Country, Rolling Plains Nature School, etc.) to create and promote additional nature-based group outings, participatory activities, and community events
 - Seek partnerships to develop the proposed nature center at Lake Kirby Park
14. Partner with other agencies to organize events and community-engaged activities around trails and bike paths

5.9 OPERATIONS AND BUDGET

5.9.1 Observations and Analyses

The Abilene Parks and Recreation Department should be commended for their efficiency as the scope of their work far exceeds the number of staff responsible to meet all the needs of the community. As a result, the existing staff ensures that the citizens of Abilene enjoy a well-organized and professional parks and recreation department.

On a per population basis, Abilene employs far fewer full-time equivalent (FTE) staff per 10,000 population than the benchmark median. More than half of the 63 full-time staff are related to park maintenance. Most of the part-time staff are seasonal and summer staff or Adventure Cove, which generates about a third of the department's revenue, with the rest coming from program and usage fees.

The total approved operating budget for Parks and Recreation in Abilene for FY 2023 was \$7.4 million with a per capita operating expenditure of \$59, well below the benchmark median of \$97. Proposed facility development would obviously have a large impact on the overall budget of the department, and the city should be prepared for these additional budgetary demands when expanding or developing new facilities.

5.9.2 Pricing Philosophy

Direct & Indirect Costs

As program needs increase, Abilene should determine a clear funding philosophy and funding policies for Parks and Recreation. Some people in Abilene can afford to pay market rate fees, while many cannot. In general, fees should be established for the 80% that can pay the fee instead of the 20% that cannot. The citizens of Abilene want more parks and recreation opportunities and are very likely willing to pay for them. For those that cannot, scholarship programs can and should be established.

Most of the funding for the Parks and Recreation budget comes from General Fund appropriations, and the department currently recovers only 14% of its operating budget. Most programs have fees, and programming overall recovers most of its costs. Similarly, Adventure Cove recovers most of its costs and should do even better if deep water is added. The department needs a formal process for determining how much cost should be recovered for any given offering.



To move forward most efficiently and sustainably, the department needs a complete understanding of the direct and indirect costs. First, the department should conduct an analysis of the expenditures in the annual budget. Once these costs are determined, they should be separated:

- Direct Costs: any expenditures related to the operation of a specific park, program, or facility rental (e.g., instructor fees, materials, staff time directly related to the specific service, etc.)
- Indirect Costs: any expenditures that remain after removing direct costs; usually more general and systemwide (e.g., administrative tasks, facility maintenance, utilities, etc.)

Once the costs are understood and separated into direct and indirect costs, the city should decide how much of each program's cost should be recovered which will vary. Some programs or services could have 100% recovery where all associated costs are recuperated; other services may not have any recovered costs and the service would be free. This process of calculation can be kept reasonably simple by establishing set categories of recovery (i.e., 100%, 75%, 50%, and 0%).

Parks and Recreation needs a defined "pricing philosophy" to guide all of these efforts. While it requires substantial effort at first to develop, proactive action will prevent long-term inefficiencies and shortfalls. Remaining flexible throughout the transition will be essential for the department's success. It will require small changes and incremental action for the department and the public to adjust.

The following are pricing strategies used in other communities. These are presented as possible avenues to pursue or inspiration for an Abilene-specific system.

- Indirect costs are covered by the city, while direct costs are covered by the user at a specified cost recovery rate.
- Classifications are created based on whether the program or service benefits the community, the individual who is taking the program, or a combination of the two.
- Prices are based on the 80% of the public who can pay rather than the 20% of the community who cannot pay; alternate funding sources are used to supplement the costs for the 20%.
- Alternate funding sources are established and relied upon for providing opportunities to underserved members of the community.

5.9.3 Deferred Maintenance

Abilene Parks and Recreation has a significant backlog of deferred maintenance throughout the park system. While the department has worked to address some of this maintenance, the city needs detailed capital maintenance and replacement plan for all facilities. Public input clearly indicated that residents would like to see the parks maintained to a higher level, and this plan is essential to ensuring realization of this desire.

Addressing deferred maintenance will require additional dedicated funding in the capital budget. Of utmost consideration is the high cost of reactive maintenance, rather than proactive action; when maintenance is deferred for too long, the cost increases exponentially each year of delay. It is important that the city prioritize improvements to existing parks and facilities over investment in new development.

As the department currently operates, there is often not enough funding to replace facilities as they reach the end their useful life. All deferred maintenance should be identified and prioritized over a multi-year period and anticipated when features are initially added. Creating a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan for equipment safeguards against costly repairs that might otherwise have been avoided. Plans for eventual replacement must be put in place at the time of purchase.

5.9.4 Park Operations

Moving forward over the next 10 years, the Abilene Parks and Recreation Department needs a strategy of sustainability – not simply environmental, but economic as well. Qualities like consistency, fairness, and flexibility will be crucial to the long-term durability of the department and the services it provides to the entire community. To efficiently operate an extensive and high-quality system like that in Abilene, an appropriate amount of funds for staffing, equipment, and grounds management must be in place.



Park and recreation agencies are increasingly focusing on preservation and restoration of natural resources. Natural areas provide numerous benefits to the health and wellness of a community, including opportunities for all residents. Studies indicate that a connection to nature can relieve stress, improve interpersonal relationships, and improve mental health.⁵ Because they are typically one of the largest landowners in their jurisdictions, park and recreation departments have the opportunity to lead in the implementation of sustainability or best management practices (BMPs), efforts that can double as engagement and educational opportunities.

The primary purpose of a successful maintenance management plan is to identify the proper amount of funding each year to administer the park system while implementing this Master Plan. It is essential the department understands the long-term costs and works closely with the city's budget administrators to alleviate any concerns and prevent budget surprises.

Maintenance Requirements

First, maintenance requirements should be measurable. Each element of park maintenance needs a standard. For example:

- Level 1,2,3,4 or 5 turf – standards set by the department
- Restroom cleaning (e.g., daily, twice daily, etc.) – standards set by the department
- Capital replacement (e.g., roofs, HVAC systems, etc.) requires items to be placed on a list with an “expiration date” based on the general length of time an item lasts in good condition. Costs should be determined and provided to the city's budgetary administration years in advance to ensure the city is prepared for necessary appropriations.
- Painting schedule (e.g., number of years between re-painting, per item) – standards set by the department; painted items should be included on a multi-year list for funding
- Maintenance equipment replacement (e.g., lawn mowers, trucks, irrigation systems, etc.) – standards set by the department in collaboration with the city

Parks and Recreation should decide the level of maintenance service to provide at each park or portion of a park. This decision should be a proactive exercise where funding is put in place in accordance with what level of maintenance service is desired.

1 State of the Art Maintenance

- Park/Land Categories
 - High quality diverse landscapes
 - Urban plazas
 - High visitation parks
 - Athletic game fields
 - Manicured grounds
- Maintenance Standards
 - Mow every 5 days
 - Irrigate
 - Fertilize
 - Aerate
 - <1% weeds
 - Daily inspection

4 Moderately Low-Level Maintenance

- Park/Land Categories
 - Moderate to low level of development and visitation
 - Non-playing field areas in developed parks
- Maintenance Standards
 - Mow every 10 days
 - Fertilize if needed
 - No irrigation
 - Weekly inspection

⁵ National Recreation and Park Association, “Health and Wellness,” <http://www.nrpa.org/About-NRPA/Impacting-Communities/Health-and-Wellness/>, (April 17, 2020)

High Level Maintenance

- Park/Land Categories
 - Well-developed park areas
 - Reasonably high visitation
 - Athletic practice fields
- Maintenance Standards
 - Mow every week
 - Fertilize, aerate regularly
 - <5% weeds
 - Daily inspection

5

High Visitation Natural Areas

- Park/Land Categories
 - Natural areas of high visitation
 - Nature parks
- Maintenance Standards
 - No mowing
 - Annual bush hogging, monthly inspection (prairie/meadow areas)

3

High Level Maintenance

- Park/Land Categories
 - Moderate to low level of development and visitation
 - Non-playing field areas in developed parks
- Maintenance Standards
 - Mow every 10 days
 - Fertilize if needed
 - No irrigation
 - Weekly inspection

6

Minimum Maintenance Level

- Park/Land Categories
 - Undeveloped parks
- Maintenance Standards
 - No mowing
 - Occasional bush hogging, monthly inspection

Staffing Needs

The success of any future development hinges equally on funding and staffing capacity. The department currently employs 32 full-time staff members for park maintenance. The need for operations and programming staff was discussed earlier in this chapter, but maintenance staff also need to be addressed. Additional staff will be needed as more land is added to the system and features are developed, just to maintain the currently level of maintenance, and public input indicated a desire for a higher level of maintenance.

Table 5.1 shows the acreage maintained and managed plus the current number of full-time maintenance staff. The table then shows what would be required to operate additional land at the same level on a per acre basis. (The numbers do not include any additional requirements of specific facilities, such as a new recreation center).

Based only on the additional land recommended to be developed at existing and proposed parks (see Chapter 4), the department would need to add 3.5 full-time employees to provide the same level of service as experienced currently. These numbers indicate that the maintenance staffing requirements at the Abilene Parks and Recreation Department will increase by at least 10% based on proposed improvements in this plan, assuming no increase in the level of maintenance. The table also includes the number of staff needed per acre and by park category when new land is added to the system. To improve service levels, staffing numbers will need to increase even more.



Table 5.1: Staff Requirements to Maintain Desired Improvements at Current Service Levels

Acreage and Existing Staff	
Total Developed Acreage	695.2
Full-Time Maintenance Staff	32
Maintained Acres per FT Staff	21.7
Acreage and Future Staff Needed to Maintain at Current Level	
Proposed Maintained Acreage*	771.1
Needed Full-Time Maintenance Staff	35.5
Full-Time Staff Needed Per New Acre	0.05
Full-Time Staff Needed per New Neighborhood Park	0.3
Full-Time Staff Needed per New Community Park	1.8

*See 2030 target acres in Chapter 4

5.9.5 Training

Staff and the department itself will benefit from continued training for leadership and cultivated growth within their respective fields. For example, the existing and future staff should pursue appropriate certifications for overseeing Parks and Recreation operations, including Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI), and Aquatic Facility Operator Certification (AFO). As needs arise, staff may pursue other relevant certifications. To accommodate staff seeking these credentials, Abilene must identify and allocate funding for professional development opportunities (e.g., conferences, training, memberships, etc.) with consideration to the licensure and requirements for certifications.

5.9.6 CAPRA Accreditation

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides accreditation of park and recreation agencies. The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) administrates the process, which consists of a self-assessment and peer review procedure. The goal of this process is to develop and maintain an agency that is efficient, effective, and professional in its operational system and which delivers quality services. Agencies accredited by these standards have demonstrated not only that they meet national standards of best practice, professional competence, accountability, and community responsiveness. Currently, there are 196 agencies in the United States participating and 22 of which are in Texas.

The Abilene Parks and Recreation Department should pursue CAPRA Accreditation within the next 5 years to show their commitment to providing quality services to the Abilene community. The departments will need to work collectively to complete this process, which needs to be repeated every 5 years to maintain accreditation. The five steps of the accreditation process are provided below.

Accreditation Process (5 Steps)

1. Submit preliminary application and fee
2. Attend CAPRA Accreditation training (online or in person)
3. Prepare self-assessment
4. Host onsite or virtual evaluation by trained CAPRA volunteers
5. Attend official CAPRA hearing in person or virtually at NRPA's Annual Conference

5.9.7 Partnerships

As noted throughout this chapter, collaborative partnerships will continue to play a critical role in the future of parks and recreation in Abilene. Through strategic and transparent partnerships, the department can both reduce costs and generate additional revenue. In stakeholder conversations, the need for partnership and collaboration emerged over and over. Abilene already has several formal partnerships; including sports, schools, and business groups, as well as a widely held positive and responsive reputation in the community.

Looking forward along the 10-year timeline of this Master Plan, many actions will require expanded support



from partner groups to be truly successful. In fact, some new facilities will likely only be possible through partnerships with other organizations to adequately cover both capital and operating costs. Any partnership the department pursues must be mutually beneficial, and terms clearly stated for all parties. The city has an opportunity to establish more consistent lines of communication with existing and potential partner groups such as AISD, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and private recreation providers. Each agency should convey its priorities and objectives, helping clarify services provided to ensure facilities and programs are provided while avoiding inefficient duplication of effort from all entities.

5.9.8 Marketing and Outreach

The community has indicated a desire for continuous, ongoing engagement with Parks and Recreation to make sure public needs are heard and addressed (Chapter 4). Some of the specific park improvements recommended in this plan will require local resident engagement to ascertain whether needs are effectively being met or if adjustments should be made. In the upcoming years of implementing this Master Plan, any major improvement project, whether capital or operational, should incorporate authentic outreach and engagement, as well as follow consistent standards of communication, to ensure transparency. Over a quarter of survey respondents indicated that they would use parks and programs more often if marketing was improved. A strong majority (71%) prefer learning about opportunities through social media with the city website second (49%).

Social media platforms are useful for staying connected but can be a challenge to sustain and update with engaging, interactive content. The department already uses Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube to post updates, images, videos, and more. There is always opportunity to improve this outreach to engage as much of the community as possible. Additionally, promoted postings can reach residents who do not follow the departments accounts. Promoted postings are fairly inexpensive and will allow the department to reach less engaged residents.

5.9.9 Potential Funding Sources

Parks and Recreation projects can be funded in many ways, including maintenance endowment funds, conservation districts, license tags, transient occupancy taxes, income taxes, lease backs, real-estate transfer fees, land dedication and/or park impact fees, and park authorities. Although all options should be considered, the strategies below could have an immediate impact on the operations and capital improvements of Abilene Parks and Recreation.

Forming a Parks Foundation

Establishing an Abilene Parks Foundation, which would operate separately as a 501c3 organization, is an opportunity Abilene should pursue. A foundation enables the city, its programs, and its facilities to receive philanthropic funds. There are philanthropists in Abilene that want to donate to programs and services that add Parks and Recreation value to the city. A foundation must be promoted and actively utilized to fund park improvements. There must be a foundation board to guide efforts, and the members of this board should be intentionally recruited. Funds generated can create opportunities for capital projects, but also for programming. Funding can also be used to support volunteer recruitment and organization, enabling the city to introduce park ambassadors and other engaged members as part of the Abilene's parks and recreation service.

Abilene residents generally believe that program costs are fair. For those in the community who are unable to pay, the department is flexible in allowing them to participate in programs. However, the pricing for programs may still not be affordable for everyone in the community. A parks foundation can solicit donations for any participant that may not be able to pay for offerings, including covering program and user fees.

Park Bucks

The city currently has a program for residents to donate to Parks and Recreation when they pay their water bill. The donations from the "Parks Bucks" program are then used to improve parks and recreation. While this is a great way to raise funds for parks and recreation, it also has limiting factors that may deter or reduce



donations. Currently, residents can choose to donate \$1, \$3, or \$5 each month if they sign-up by mail-in or email. This program would likely generate more dollars if residents could choose to donate more or even a self-selected amount. The program would also likely have more participation if residents could sign-up by selecting a check box when paying their bill online.

Volunteer Power

Park ambassadors provide directions, offer assistance, or remind visitors of park policies. They may also assist with maintenance activities, like litter pickup. The presence of ambassadors often helps visitors feel more comfortable in park spaces. They can also monitor sites to make sure people feel welcome and have good access to features of the park.

Adopt-A-Trail or Adopt-A-Park programs are an additional, more formalized way for volunteers to assist with park maintenance in Abilene. These programs encourage interested residents and groups to become involved in keeping parks clean for their community. These programs give new possibilities for involvement to those residents who have the interest but need a structured opportunity.

Keep Abilene Beautiful already manages an Adopt-A-Spot program. This organization is an obvious partner to utilize for the city's parks and trails. Target areas can be as small as a single facility or as large as an entire park. Park trails or segments of larger trails could also be adapted.

Creating a Scholarship Fund

Around the country, parks and recreation agencies are exploring ways to utilize the patronage of those already paying for recreation services. Abilene Parks and Recreation can explore a couple of options for building a robust scholarship fund:

- Apply an additional \$2.00 charge to the registration fee for all those who pay for programs. Funnel the funds generated into a scholarship fund that can be accessed for those patrons unable to pay
- Add an option to the registration process where those signing up can opt to donate (e.g., \$2.00 or \$5.00) to help those in their community who are unable to pay to participate

Rentals

Many amenities in Abilene are available for rental for relatively modest fees. Many of the improvements recommended in this plan have potential for rental usage and fees, including amphitheatres, picnic shelters, and any indoor space. There is also substantial demand for rental areas adjacent to the splash pads. When any of these amenities are developed, they should be added to the rental inventory, and the fees should be reevaluated to ensure they match what the public is able and willing to pay.

American Rescue Plan

The American Rescue Plan Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President on March 12, 2021. The bill provides direct aid to local governments that can be used for a wide variety of city needs, including potentially parks and recreation improvements. According to the city budget, Abilene has received \$10,727,981 of ARPA funds and will receive another \$10,727,981 in the spring of 2023. If some of this funding is allocated to parks and recreation, it would allow the city to quickly begin to implement the recommendations of the plan.

Grants and Application for Funding

Most are positive, but not all grants are beneficial, some require more work from staff than the grant's potential benefits. Abilene has previously taken advantage of grants for facility development, particularly with Texas Parks and Wildlife.

The City of Abilene should continue to be on the lookout for grants that will enhance the park system. Applying to established foundations is often easier and has a higher acceptance rate. There are sometimes local foundations that are more amenable to giving locally. In all, grants can come from the federal government, state sources, and sometimes local entities. Indianapolis, for example, has received over \$100 million in



foundation grants from the Lilly Endowment over the past 20 years for park related improvements in the city. Example grant sources:

- National Recreation Trails Program (administered by TPW)
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program
- America The Beautiful (U.S. Department of the Interior)
- Conservation Reserve Fund
- Community Forest and Open Space Program (Federal)
- Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant (FEMA)
- Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Grants (USDA)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (Federal)
- Local Parks Grants (TPW)
- AARP Community Challenge

General Funding Sources for Parks, Recreation, and Sports Facility Operations

Below is a general list of ideas that communities have used to supplement costs of operations. Some of these may be more effective in Abilene than others.

- Official drink for Parks and Recreation
- Tournament fees – if an outside vendor makes money, the city should as well
- Scoreboard sponsors
- Parking fees at events
- Field permits when outside groups are using the fields
- Advertising Sales
- Wi-Fi revenue through sponsorship, if a vendor provides the Wi-Fi
- Cell Tower Leases
- Privatization of various park and recreation programs and services
- Sports booster clubs
- Corporate sponsorship in exchange for advertising

Bond Referendum

In a high level of support for the city's parks and recreation services, about three-quarters (74%) of respondents indicated they would favor a potential bond referendum; just 18% would oppose (strongly or moderately) the measure. In light of this incredible support, the city should pursue this measure.

A bond program would enable the city to replace or upgrade aging infrastructure and add new features throughout the system. These funds would also allow the city to add parks in underserved areas while keeping pace with new demand as the population grows. Were the city to move forward with this initiative, the public will need to be provided with tangible specifics about future improvements. It is vital to departmental approval for taxpayers to understand where their dollars will be directed.

5.9.10 Recommendations

Operations and Maintenance

1. Adopt this Master Plan at the level of City Council; ensure commitment of legislative officials and city leaders
2. Utilize this Master Plan to guide decision making – regularly monitor progress
3. Prepare an operations plan which defines maintenance standards for all land in the system



4. Consider maintenance and staffing needs when adding parkland and features to the system
5. Pursue CAPRA Accreditation within the next 5 years
6. Create and continuously update a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan for all equipment
7. Increase budget to improve maintenance levels to improve the overall condition of the park system
8. Implement conservation policies and sustainable practice guidelines for future development and management of park properties
9. Elevate parks by setting examples for Best Management Practices (BMP) like stormwater detention, recycling, etc.
10. Determine maintenance standards that include how many employees are required to maintain one acre of parkland; consider these standards when adding parkland to the system
11. Create and maintain professional and career development strategies for management and supervisory staff
12. Identify and allocate funding for critical staff development opportunities (including conferences, training, memberships, etc.) with consideration to licensure and certification requirements
13. Encourage continued staff training for leadership and continued growth within respective fields
14. Incentivize management level staff to attend professional development programs offered by state, regional, and national training organizations
15. Incentivize and support staff members to pursue Certified Park & Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI), and Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO) certifications
16. Continue to ensure that all new contracts with partners are consistent with existing best practices (see best practices below)
 - Treat all vendors, contractors, and partners in a professional, consistent manner with legal, signed contracts
 - Explore and solidify contracted partnerships with outside vendors and organizations, including private providers, to produce more programming
 - Develop working agreements with all partners (all outside groups using Abilene facilities) including measurable outcomes; review every two years, at minimum
 - Ensure all future contracts benefit Abilene and its residents, in addition to the relevant partnering vendor or contractor
 - Understand all agency costs, both indirect and direct, before entering into agreements; understand how much investment a partner will commit to collaboration
 - Host quarterly or semiannual check-ins with all community partners; host roundtable discussion where all parties share program progress and emerging needs
 - Require a maintenance plan that identifies ongoing funding needs for partnership projects
 - Establish policies for accepting sponsorships and selling naming rights
 - Seek opportunities to install public art in additional parks and develop cultural programming in collaboration with creative, arts-advocacy entities in Abilene
 - Continue open dialog with developers as neighborhoods are planned to ensure coordinated, strategic growth and to promote inclusion of needed park space and facilities

Engagement and Promotion

1. Maintain continuous public engagement throughout the implementation of this plan
2. Engage neighborhood residents during park improvement processes using bulletin boards, monitored social media posts, and other methods
3. Consider expanding the departments social media presence, including the use of paid promotions
4. Expand marketing of programs and facilities through existing and future collaborative relationships to



increase community awareness and participation

5. Collaborate with partners and other service-providers in the city to cross-promote and share information about services

Cost Recovery

1. Increase cost recovery as new features are developed and new programs are added
2. Institute an easy-to-understand Cost Recovery and Pricing Plan for everything that is offered
3. Price services furthest away from the mission at full cost recovery levels
4. Analyze potential costs versus revenue before adding new features
5. Add new facilities to the rental inventory as they are developed
6. Reevaluate rental fees as amenities are updated, replaced, or added to the inventory
7. Identify potential revenue sources at community events, including sponsorships and entry fees
8. Develop a program for recruiting and scheduling volunteer park ambassadors to promote wellbeing and provide assistance at parks, potentially managed by a future parks foundation
 - Continue to partner with Keep Abilene Beautiful for park and trail clean-up

Funding

1. Know the true costs to deliver services (direct and indirect costs)
 - Inform users, partners, and citizens of these costs of services
2. Know the value of assets (excluding land values); know where those assets are in their life cycle
3. Establish and adjust fees for programs according to direct and indirect costs
4. Find dedicated funding sources for Parks and Recreation that can be depended upon annually
5. Seek philanthropists in the community to support the agency's causes
6. Consider allowing residents to donate more than \$5 per month to the Parks Bucks program if they choose to do so and simplify the sign-up process
7. Create an Abilene Parks Foundation to raise funds, recruit and organize volunteers, and promote the parks
8. Continue seeking grants and apply to foundations for project funding that enhances the park system; be sure this is consistent with the mission of Parks and Recreation while also considering associated costs to the city
9. Create additional scholarship funding opportunities, potentially by requesting an optional additional \$2.00 charge during registration
10. Consider utilizing a portion of the American Rescue Plan funds allocated to the City of Abilene for parks and recreation improvements to help implement the recommendations of this plan
11. Consider a bond referendum to provide a funding stream to capital improvements based on robust public support

5.10 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND ESTIMATED COSTS

This section provides recommendations for individual park improvements including proposed new facilities and upgrades to existing parks. These recommendations are presented as a starting point for future discussions with users, neighbors, partners, and the community at large. Before pursuing development, each park site will need a deeper investigation into capacity and precise details like placement, materials used, and maintenance considerations.

The improvements by park are presented in Table 5.2. These improvements should be reevaluated prior to new development and after any follow-up planning studies. All costs in Table 5.2 are estimated in 2022 dollars and will need to be evaluated for potential escalation at the time of development. The master planning process completed before large-scale improvements should include a detail estimate of the costs for the



improvements at each park.

Grant opportunities exist and should be explored for many of these improvements, particularly trail system development, helping to reduce the required contributions by the City of Abilene. Additionally, partnerships, including for fundraising efforts, should be considered as part of any improvement, particularly those with substantial capital costs.

The top 10 improvements for existing and new facilities are listed below:

Existing Park/Facilities

1. ADA access
2. Playgrounds
3. Restrooms
4. Shade
5. Community/recreation centers
6. Baseball/softball fields
7. Paved park trails
8. Picnic shelters
9. Roads/parking lots (Public Works)
10. Signage

New Development

1. Field complex (soccer, lacrosse, etc.)
2. Paved park trails
3. Waterfront amenities
4. Pickleball courts
5. Amphitheater
6. Dog park (relocation/expansion)
7. Adventure Cove expansion
8. Natural surface trails
9. Southwest community park
10. Neighborhood parks (additional)

Table 5.2: Capital Improvements by Park

Park Name	Term	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	Total
Systemwide					
1 ADA accessibility assessment	Short	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,000
2 Consistent signage at all park entrances	Short	In Progress	In Progress	In Progress	In Progress
3 Field complex - multipurpose/flat fields	Short	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership
4 Wayfinding plan & signage for all parks	Short	\$185,000	\$0	\$0	\$185,000
5 Landscaping plan & implementation	Short/Ongoing	\$103,000	\$103,000	\$103,000	\$309,000
6 Drinking fountains/bottle fillers throughout system	Ongoing	\$74,000	\$74,000	\$74,000	\$222,000
7 Roads/parking lot resurfacing (coordinate with PW)	Ongoing	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership
8 Security cameras & lighting throughout system	Ongoing	\$41,000	\$41,000	\$41,000	\$123,000
9 Site furnishing upgrades at all existing parks (trash & recycling receptacles/bike racks/pet waste stations)	Ongoing	\$82,000	\$82,000	\$82,000	\$246,000
10 Wi-Fi hotspots	Ongoing	\$41,000	\$41,000	\$41,000	\$123,000
11 Amphitheater (large) along Cedar Creek Trail	Medium	\$0	\$370,000	\$0	\$370,000
12 Community gardens (location TBD)	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
13 New neighborhood parks	Long	\$0	\$0	\$1,232,000	\$1,232,000
14 Recreation center - south Abilene	Long	\$0	\$0	\$14,000,000	\$14,000,000
15 Southwest community park	Long	\$0	\$0	\$6,160,000	\$6,160,000
16 Splash pad - south Abilene	Long	\$0	\$0	\$739,000	\$739,000
Systemwide Total		\$551,000	\$773,000	\$22,472,000	\$23,796,000
Neighborhood Parks					
C.W. Gill Park					
1 Park master plan	Short	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
3 Shelter replacement	Medium	\$0	\$74,000	\$0	\$74,000
4 Restroom	Medium	\$0	\$493,000	\$0	\$493,000
5 Trail - 10' wide - paved perimeter	Medium	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000
6 Footbridges	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
7 Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$62,000
Project Total		\$30,000	\$929,000	\$62,000	\$1,021,000
Carver Park					
1 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$14,000	\$0	\$0	\$14,000
2 GV Daniels Recreation Center replacement	Short	\$13,961,000	\$0	\$0	\$13,961,000
3 Playground surface repair	Short	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$50,000
Project Total		\$14,025,000	\$0	\$0	\$14,025,000
Fannin Park					
1 Upgrade park or remove from system	Medium	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2 Park master plan	Short	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
3 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Medium	\$0	\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000
4 Basketball court improvements (goals & paint)	Medium	\$0	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000



Table 5.2: Capital Improvements by Park (Continued)

Park Name	Term	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	Total
5 Picnic shelter (medium)	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
6 Trail improvement - resurface (crushed stone) 1,155 LF x 10' wide	Medium	\$0	\$57,000	\$0	\$57,000
7 Backstops - remove	Long	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000
8 Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$62,000
9 Playground replacement	Long	\$0	\$0	\$185,000	\$185,000
Project Total		\$10,000	\$156,000	\$252,000	\$418,000
Kirby Park					
1 Park master plan	Short	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$8,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,000
3 Dog park (potential location)	Short	\$185,000	\$0	\$0	\$185,000
4 Shelter replacement	Short	\$62,000	\$0	\$0	\$62,000
5 Canoe/kayak put-in/take-out, fishing access	Medium	\$0	\$123,000	\$0	\$123,000
6 Trailhead - small shelter & bike repair station	Medium	\$0	\$37,000	\$0	\$37,000
7 Restroom building	Long	\$0	\$0	\$370,000	\$370,000
Project Total		\$265,000	\$160,000	\$370,000	\$795,000
Nelson Wilson Park					
1 Park master plan	Short	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$119,000	\$0	\$0	\$119,000
3 Basketball court - upgrade to full court	Medium	\$0	\$92,000	\$0	\$92,000
4 Trail - perimeter loop	Medium	\$0	\$240,000	\$0	\$240,000
5 Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$62,000
Project Total		\$129,000	\$332,000	\$62,000	\$523,000
Reyes Flores Park					
1 Park master plan	Short	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
3 Basketball court improvements (goals, paint, lights to LED)	Short	\$62,000	\$0	\$0	\$62,000
4 Playground replacement	Short	\$185,000	\$0	\$0	\$185,000
5 Backstop - replace or remove	Medium	\$0	\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000
6 Trail - perimeter loop	Medium	\$0	\$234,000	\$0	\$234,000
7 Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$62,000
Project Total		\$277,000	\$246,000	\$62,000	\$585,000
Valentine Park					
1 Splash pad (approved)	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress
2 Picnic shelter (medium)	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress
3 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$35,000	\$0	\$0	\$35,000
4 Playground replacement	Long	\$0	\$0	\$185,000	\$185,000
Project Total		\$35,000	\$0	\$185,000	\$220,000
Vaughn Camp Park					
1 Playground replacement	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress
2 Park master plan	Short	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
3 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$40,000
4 Backstop - replace or remove	Medium	\$0	\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000
5 Picnic shelter (medium)	Medium	\$0	\$99,000	\$0	\$99,000
6 Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$62,000
Project Total		\$50,000	\$111,000	\$62,000	\$223,000
Community Parks					
Arthur Sears Park					
1 Trail - replacement (complete)	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete
2 Park master plan	Short	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
3 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000
4 Cesar Chavez Recreation Center replacement	Short	\$13,918,000	\$0	\$0	\$13,918,000
5 Courts - basketball/tennis - recoat/restripe	Medium	\$0	\$74,000	\$0	\$74,000
6 Field improvements - paint fencing, bleacher upgrades, covered dugouts at Farm Division	Medium	\$123,000	\$123,000	\$0	\$246,000
7 Playground replacement	Medium	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000
8 Restroom building at playground - renovate/replace	Medium	\$0	\$493,000	\$0	\$493,000
9 Shelter renovation at playground/tennis - roof/tables/paint	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
10 Covered rental areas at splash pad (additional)	Long	\$0	\$74,000	\$0	\$74,000
Project Total		\$14,071,000	\$1,126,000	\$0	\$15,197,000
Cal Young Park					
1 Park master plan (combined w/ MLK)	Short	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$30,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$40,000	\$0	\$0	\$40,000
3 Lake dredging	Short	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
4 Hockey rink - upgrade/replace/expand, potentially cover	Medium	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
5 Picnic shelter near playground	Medium	\$0	\$99,000	\$0	\$99,000
6 Restroom building replacement (near playground)	Medium	\$0	\$493,000	\$0	\$493,000
7 Restroom building replacement (between baseball & hockey)	Medium	\$0	\$370,000	\$0	\$370,000
8 Trail - paved loop w/ linkage to Cedar Creek Trail & MLK Park	Medium	\$0	\$678,000	\$0	\$678,000
9 Field improvements (lower field) - backstop/bleachers replacement	Long	\$0	\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000



Table 5.2: Capital Improvements by Park (Continued)

Park Name	Term	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	Total
10 Fishing pier (ADA)	Long	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$62,000
11 Trails - natural surface (wooded area)	Long	\$0	\$0	\$99,000	\$99,000
Project Total		\$70,000	\$1,640,000	\$411,000	\$2,121,000
Cobb Park					
1 Restroom/shelter building replacement (approved)	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$16,000
3 Shelter at playground	Short	\$74,000	\$0	\$0	\$74,000
4 Cobb Park Recreation Center - renovate or replace	Long	\$15,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$15,000,000
5 Trail - paved loop (concrete)	Long	\$0	\$0	\$296,000	\$296,000
Project Total		\$15,090,000	\$0	\$296,000	\$15,386,000
Grover Nelson Park					
1 Trail - replacement (complete)	Complete	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$8,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,000
3 Fitness area/obstacle course (outdoor)	Medium	\$0	\$99,000	\$0	\$99,000
4 Lake dredging	Medium	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
5 Playground replacement - fully accessible w/ shade	Medium	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
6 Restroom/shelter (C) improvements - renovate/replace	Medium	\$0	\$370,000	\$0	\$370,000
7 Field improvements - replace entire complex w/ restrooms	Long	\$0	\$0	\$3,696,000	\$3,696,000
8 Nelson Park Festival Gardens relocation?	Long	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership
Project Total		\$8,000	\$969,000	\$3,696,000	\$4,673,000
Johnson Park					
1 Waterfront Plan (evaluate potential lake amenities)	Short	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$32,000	\$0	\$0	\$32,000
3 Trail along lake shore w/ ADA access to fishing pier	Short/Medium	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$0	\$320,000
4 Swinging benches along trail	Medium	\$0	\$123,000	\$0	\$123,000
5 Playground expansion - larger & fully accessible, nature play elements & shade	Medium	\$0	\$370,000	\$0	\$370,000
Project Total		\$192,000	\$653,000	\$0	\$845,000
Lake Kirby Park & Nature Play Area					
1 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$56,000	\$0	\$0	\$56,000
2 Field improvements (Fields #5-8) - fencing repair, pavement repair, turf repair	Short	\$986,000	\$0	\$0	\$986,000
3 Parking improvements/expansion	Short	\$862,000	\$0	\$0	\$862,000
4 Trail - paved loop around lake (10k)	Short	\$8,921,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,921,000
5 Swinging benches along trail	Medium	\$0	\$246,000	\$0	\$246,000
6 Field expansion - 2-4 additional fields	Medium	\$0	\$2,464,000	\$0	\$2,464,000
7 Fitness area/obstacle course (outdoor)	Medium	\$0	\$99,000	\$0	\$99,000
8 Shade at playground	Medium	\$0	\$49,000	\$0	\$49,000
9 Trail - nature - formalize/improve	Medium	\$0	\$123,000	\$0	\$123,000
10 Nature center	Long	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership
Project Total		\$10,825,000	\$2,981,000	\$0	\$13,806,000
Oscar Rose Park					
1 Park master plan	Short	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$48,000	\$0	\$0	\$48,000
3 Amphitheater improvements - walks, new shell with roof, drainage, electric power	Short	\$370,000	\$0	\$0	\$370,000
4 Tennis court spectator shade covers - paint frame	Short	\$43,000	\$0	\$0	\$43,000
5 Pickleball courts (8) - south of tennis, remove ballfield	Medium	\$0	\$431,000	\$0	\$431,000
6 Pickleball court shade cover (2)	Medium	\$0	\$74,000	\$0	\$74,000
7 Restroom building (skate park) improvements - renovate	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
8 Skate park renovation	Medium	\$0	\$616,000	\$0	\$616,000
9 Trail - replace/upgrade to 10' concrete	Medium	\$0	\$240,000	\$0	\$240,000
10 Basketball court improvements - replace goal, upgrade to full court	Medium	\$0	\$49,000	\$0	\$49,000
11 Adventure Cove expansion (deep water)	Long	\$0	\$0	\$5,500,000	\$5,500,000
12 Tennis court shade cover (2)	Long	\$0	\$0	\$148,000	\$148,000
Project Total		\$481,000	\$1,472,000	\$5,648,000	\$7,601,000
Red Bud Park					
1 Trail - replacement (complete)	Complete	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress
2 Playground repairs	Short	\$62,000	\$0	\$0	\$62,000
3 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$56,000	\$0	\$0	\$56,000
4 Backstops at practice fields - upgrade/replace	Medium	\$0	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000
5 Covered rental areas at splash pad	Medium	\$0	\$74,000	\$0	\$74,000
6 Field improvements (NE Little League field) - pavement, paint fencing	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
7 Restroom building (playground) - renovate or replace	Medium	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
8 Picnic shelter near playground	Long	\$0	\$0	\$99,000	\$99,000
9 Prairie dog enclosure improvements	Long	\$0	\$0	\$129,000	\$129,000
Project Total		\$118,000	\$886,000	\$228,000	\$1,232,000
Scarborough Park					
1 Park master plan	Short	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$64,000	\$0	\$0	\$64,000
3 Backstops/playfields - remove/replace backstop/fencing/bleachers	Short	\$62,000	\$0	\$0	\$62,000



Table 5.2: Capital Improvements by Park (Continued)

Park Name	Term	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	Total
4 Trail - paved loop	Short	\$800,000	\$0	\$0	\$800,000
5 Field improvements (all 3 fields) - replace backstop/fencing/dugouts	Medium	\$0	\$370,000	\$0	\$370,000
6 Fitness area/obstacle course (outdoor)	Medium	\$0	\$99,000	\$0	\$99,000
7 Picnic shelter - new at playground	Medium	\$0	\$99,000	\$0	\$99,000
8 Picnic shelter improvements - paint, replace tables	Medium	\$0	\$18,000	\$0	\$18,000
9 Basketball court improvements - replace goal, upgrade to full court	Long	\$0	\$0	\$62,000	\$62,000
Project Total		\$946,000	\$586,000	\$62,000	\$1,594,000
Sea Bee Park					
1 Waterfront Plan (evaluate potential lake amenities)	Short	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
3 RC plane shelter - paint/new signage	Short	\$31,000	\$0	\$0	\$31,000
4 Canoe/kayak put-in/take-out (ADA)	Medium	\$0	\$123,000	\$0	\$123,000
5 Fishing pier (ADA)	Medium	\$0	\$37,000	\$0	\$37,000
6 Picnic shelter replacements - small (closer to water)	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
7 Wetland trail/boardwalk	Long	\$0	\$0	\$185,000	\$185,000
Project Total		\$76,000	\$222,000	\$185,000	\$483,000
Stevenson Park					
1 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$4,000	\$0	\$0	\$4,000
2 Trail - paved loop	Short	\$529,000	\$0	\$0	\$529,000
3 Picnic shelter on west side w/ outdoor games	Long	\$0	\$0	\$99,000	\$99,000
Project Total		\$533,000	\$0	\$99,000	\$632,000
Willi Hair Park					
1 Park master plan	Short	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$20,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$24,000	\$0	\$0	\$24,000
3 Restroom building replacement, add sewer	Short	\$493,000	\$0	\$0	\$493,000
4 Trail - paved loop, connect w/ Cedar Creek Trail	Short	\$849,000	\$0	\$0	\$849,000
5 Shelter replacements (2)	Short/Medium	\$99,000	\$99,000	\$0	\$198,000
6 Basketball court improvements - replace goals, paint court & fencing	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
7 Tennis/pickleball court improvements - replace net, paint court & fencing	Medium	\$0	\$62,000	\$0	\$62,000
8 Field improvements (all fields) - replace fencing & bleachers	Medium	\$0	\$493,000	\$0	\$493,000
9 Playground replacement - fully accessible	Medium	\$0	\$370,000	\$0	\$370,000
10 Erosion mitigation	Long	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
11 Fitness area/obstacle course (outdoor)	Long	\$0	\$0	\$99,000	\$99,000
Project Total		\$1,485,000	\$1,086,000	\$99,000	\$2,670,000
Special Use Parks/Facilities					
Cedar Creek Waterway Trail					
1 Trail - Implement Cedar Creek Trail Plan	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress
Project Total		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Everman Park					
1 No improvements at this time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Project Total		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Jackson Park					
1 ADA walkways - 6' wide, access to fields and parking improvements	Short	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$16,000
2 Restroom/concessions building replacement	Medium	\$0	\$493,000	\$0	\$493,000
3 Field improvements (bleachers & backstops)	Medium	\$0	\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000
Project Total		\$16,000	\$693,000	\$0	\$709,000
MLK Park					
1 Park master plan (combined w/ Cal Young)	Short	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Short	\$56,000	\$0	\$0	\$56,000
3 Trails - natural surface	Short	\$49,000	\$0	\$0	\$49,000
4 Field improvements (all fields) - replace fencing/bleachers/dugouts/bleacher pads	Medium	\$0	\$246,000	\$0	\$246,000
5 Disc golf extension (add to Cal Young course)	Long	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership	Partnership
6 Trail - paved w/ connection to Cal Young Park & Cedar Creek Trail	Long	\$0	\$0	\$256,000	\$256,000
Project Total		\$105,000	\$246,000	\$256,000	\$607,000
North Park					
1 Upgrade park or remove from system	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1 Park master plan	Medium	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
2 ADA walkways - 6' wide	Long	\$0	\$0	\$26,000	\$26,000
3 Basketball half court	Long	\$0	\$0	\$35,000	\$35,000
4 Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
5 Open field area	Long	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000
6 Parking lot	Long	\$0	\$0	\$18,000	\$18,000
7 Picnic shelter	Long	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
8 Playground	Long	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
9 Trail - paved perimeter - 8' wide	Long	\$0	\$0	\$114,000	\$114,000
Project Total		\$0	\$30,000	\$448,000	\$478,000
South Park					
1 Upgrade to neighborhood park	Short	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



Table 5.2: Capital Improvements by Park (Continued)

Park Name		Term	0-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	Total
2	Park master plan	Medium	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
3	ADA walkways - 6' wide	Long	\$0	\$0	\$26,000	\$26,000
4	Basketball half court	Long	\$0	\$0	\$35,000	\$35,000
5	Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
6	Picnic shelter	Long	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
7	Playground	Long	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
Project Total			\$0	\$30,000	\$311,000	\$341,000
Southwest Drive Complex						
1	Backstops - replace or remove	Short	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,000
Project Total			\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,000
University Park						
1	Upgrade to neighborhood park	Short	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Park master plan	Medium	\$0	\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
3	ADA walkways - 6' wide	Long	\$0	\$0	\$26,000	\$26,000
4	Basketball half court	Long	\$0	\$0	\$35,000	\$35,000
5	Neighborhood determined/placemaking feature	Long	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
6	Open field area	Long	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000
7	Parking lot	Long	\$0	\$0	\$18,000	\$18,000
8	Picnic shelter	Long	\$0	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000
9	Playground	Long	\$0	\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000
10	Trail - paved perimeter - 8' wide	Long	\$0	\$0	\$194,000	\$194,000
11	Dog park (potential location)	Long	\$0	\$0	\$185,000	\$185,000
Project Total			\$0	\$30,000	\$713,000	\$743,000
Vera Hall Minter Park						
1	No improvements at this time	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Project Total			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL PARKS			\$59,413,000	\$15,327,000	\$35,668,000	\$110,408,000
*Values include 10% contingency and 12% for design, engineering, bidding, construction administration, etc. (except non-construction items)						



ACTION PLAN

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The Action Plan table on the following pages (Table 6.1) provides a detailed list of recommendations for the 2023 *Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. These strategies represent specific actions to take to implement this plan.

6.2 ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

These strategies are listed under the six goals and 16 objectives from the Strategic Plan (Chapter 4). The legend at the top of the table identifies the abbreviations used throughout the table. Checkmarks indicate the timeframe for the completion of each strategy within the time periods of 0-2 years, 3-5 years, or 6-10 years. Some strategies are indicated as "Ongoing" as they apply to all timeframes or represent more general actions that should always be considered. A total count of strategies by timeframe is located at the end of the table in the corresponding columns.

The other columns provide information regarding the implementation of each strategy. "Category" describes the type of action within the following four options: capital (capital improvements); policy (guidelines for the Parks and Recreation department, possibly including legislation); planning (long-term parks outlook, which includes conduction of studies); or operations. The column for "Agency" indicates who is expected to implement the strategy, usually the City of Abilene Parks and Recreation Department, another city department, or partners. "Funding Source" indicates how the strategy should be funded or the type of funds used (operating or capital funds).

Table 6.1: Action Plan

ACTION PLAN - 2023 Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan									
Legend of Abbreviations/Organizations									
Parks = Abilene Parks and Recreation Department		OP = Park and Recreation Operating Budget							
City = City Council, Other City Departments		CIP = Capital Improvement Budget							
Partners = Other Organizations (county/state, private/non-profit agencies, schools, grants, etc.)		Revenue = Items that Generate Additional Revenue							
*Highest priority actions in BOLD									
Goals, Objectives, and Strategies									
Goal 1: Responsible Stewardship									
Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities									
Objective 1.1 – Modern Facilities: Update park facilities to support and facilitate modern programming opportunities									
	Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source		
	0-2	3-5	6-10						
Strategy 1.1.1: Upgrade baseball/softball diamond fields with new backstops, fencing, dugouts, and spectator areas (Cobb, MLK, Oscar Rose, Red Bud, Scarborough, Arthur)									
Strategy 1.1.2: Continue to replace dated playgrounds, including separate age 2-5 equipment or add where unavailable									
Strategy 1.1.3: Upgrade/replace recreation centers throughout the city									
Strategy 1.1.4: Develop dedicated pickleball courts at Oscar Rose Park, near the existing tennis center and the senior center									
Strategy 1.1.5: Add or improve restrooms throughout the parks & include family restrooms at larger parks									
Strategy 1.1.6: Incorporate shade features over existing amenities such as playgrounds to facilitate year-round usage									
Strategy 1.1.7: Expand the existing Adventure Cove Aquatic Center to include deep water and features for all ages									
Strategy 1.1.8: Add security cameras and lighting throughout the parks in locations that have perceived security concerns									
Strategy 1.1.9: Replace or upgrade bleachers to meet the requirement of a fence along the upper portion when 5-rows or more									
Strategy 1.1.10: Add support features throughout the park system (seating, benches, shade, trash/recycling receptacles, trees & landscaping)									
Strategy 1.1.11: Continue to coordinate with Public Works to improve the condition of roads and parking lots throughout the system									
Strategy 1.1.12: Incorporate bottle fillers when new drinking fountains are added									
Strategy 1.1.7: Upgrade and utilize technology in parks for the benefit of both patrons and staff									
Strategy 1.1.8: Expand the complex at Lake Kirby Park to accommodate the growing needs for the leagues and potential tournaments									
Strategy 1.1.9: Renovate or replace the inline hockey rink in partnership with the Abilene Hockey League									

Table 6.1: Action Plan (Continued)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies									
	Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source		
	0-2	3-5	6-10						
Strategy 1.1.10:	Renovate or replace the skate park at Oscar Rose Park utilizing user group input			✓	✓	Capital	≈\$200k- \$500k	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 1.1.11:	Develop a new recreation center in southern Abilene to meet the needs of this growing part of the city					Capital	≈\$14m	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.1.12:	Monitor community needs for futsal courts at existing and future parks			Ongoing		Capital/ Planning	TBD	Parks/ Partners	CIP
Objective 1.2 – Energy Efficiency: Implement and establish energy efficient facilities and practices									
Strategy 1.2.1:	Implement conservation policies and sustainable practice guidelines for future development and management of park properties			Ongoing		Operations / Policy	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 1.2.2:	Continue to upgrade field and court lighting to LEDs			Ongoing		Capital	TBA	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.2.3:	Elevate parks by setting examples for Best Management Practices (BMP) like stormwater detention, recycling, etc.			✓		Operations	N/A	Parks/City/ Partners	OP
Objective 1.3 – Nature Access: Establish and leverage natural recreational opportunities									
Strategy 1.3.1:	Develop informational and interpretive signage throughout the park system to help visitors understand the natural features and history of Abilene parks while improving awareness of sensitive ecosystems and rare species			✓	✓	Capital/ Planning	≈\$10k-\$20k per park	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 1.3.2:	Explore partnerships with nearby environmental and nature organizations to create and promote additional nature-based group outings, participatory activities, and community events			✓		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 1.3.3:	Consider bringing the Buck Creek Mountain Bike Trails into the park system for more efficient management, programming, and improved awareness			✓		Policy	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP/ Partners
Strategy 1.3.4:	Continue to expand access to water with fishing and canoe/kayak access				✓	Capital	≈\$40k-\$100k each	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 1.3.5:	Incorporate nature play elements as part of playground development and replacement, especially in more passive park areas			Ongoing		Capital/ Policy	TBD	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.3.6:	Evaluate opportunities to add natural surface trails in existing and future parks			Ongoing		Capital/ Planning	≈\$20 per LF	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.3.7:	Seek partnerships to develop the proposed nature center at Lake Kirby Park					Capital	Partnership	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Objective 1.4 – Community Connections: Utilize spaces and programs to align and connect communities									
Strategy 1.4.1:	Add and upgrade picnic shelters at parks to increase overall access to these facilities, make them more inviting, and to facilitate opportunities for outdoor community gatherings			✓	✓	Capital/ Planning	≈\$50k-\$100k each	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 1.4.2:	Consider additional dog park locations to meet the growing needs of Abilene households			✓	✓	Capital	≈\$200k each	Parks	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 1.4.3:	Improve existing trail surfaces to enhance longevity and ensure proper accessibility (e.g., Oscar Rose); upgrade to concrete			✓	✓	Capital	≈\$500k-\$1m per mile	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.4.4:	Utilize outdoor stages or amphitheaters in Abilene to host more community events, such as concerts and movies, highly desired by residents			✓	✓	Operations	N/A	Parks	OP/ Partners

Table 6.1: Action Plan (Continued)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies	Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source
	0-2	3-5	6-10				
Strategy 1.4.5: Add Wi-Fi access to parks; promote park hotspots to ensure awareness	✓			Capital	≈\$10k-\$20k per park	Parks	CIP
Strategy 1.4.6: Develop a large amphitheater at a park to host large community-wide events, including concerts and other performances	✓	✓		Capital/Planning	≈\$400k	Parks/Partners	CIP
Strategy 1.4.7: Seek opportunities to add Esports programs to attract the hard-to-reach teenage population	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Goal 2: Accessible Spaces							
Maximize accessibility to the parks and recreation system and city facilities to ensure inclusivity for all residents while promoting a healthy community							
Objective 2.1 – Plan: Develop and implement parks and recreation master plan							
Strategy 2.1.1: Adopt this Master Plan at the level of City Council; ensure commitment of legislative officials and city leaders	✓			Policy	N/A	City	N/A
Strategy 2.1.2: Utilize this Master Plan to guide decision making – regularly monitor progress		Ongoing		Planning	N/A	City/Partners	OP/CIP
Strategy 2.1.3: Use this Master Plan and the list of capital improvements (Table 5.2 of Chapter 5) as a guide for park development over the next 10 years		Ongoing		Capital/Policy	N/A	Parks/City/Partners	CIP
Strategy 2.1.4: Update the city's existing trail plan from the <i>Abilene Parks, Recreation & Senior Facilities Master Plan (2014)</i> and include standards for design, signage, maintenance, prioritization, and costs	✓			Capital/Planning	≈\$50k-\$75k	Parks/City/Partners	CIP/OP
Strategy 2.1.5: Consider signing on to the 10-Minute Walk Mission by the TPL and NRPA to show the city's commitment to connectivity and access to parks	✓			Policy	N/A	City	OP
Strategy 2.1.6: Utilize existing parkland to meet unmet facility needs and to improve access to park features		Ongoing		Planning/Capital	TBD	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.1.7: Prepare park master plans for existing parks and any future parks prior to development of facilities to ensure that added features are complementary, desired, and fully accessible		Ongoing		Planning	≈\$10k-\$30k per park	Parks	CIP
Objective 2.2 – Access: Ensure that every resident has access to parks and recreational space citywide							
Strategy 2.2.1: Conduct an <i>ADA Accessibility Audit of all facilities, programs, and communications</i>	✓			Planning	≈\$25k	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.2: Ensure accessible walkways to all facilities and seating areas		Ongoing		Capital	≈\$65 per LF (6' wide)	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.3: Add a concrete paved trail around Kirby Lake	✓			Capital	≈\$9m	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.4: Include trail connections between parks and adjacent neighborhoods wherever possible		Ongoing		Capital	≈\$500k-\$1m per mile	Parks/City/Partners	CIP/Partners
Strategy 2.2.5: Continually evaluate opportunities to develop new parks in underserved areas, especially at land already owned by the city		Ongoing		Operations	≈\$500k-\$1m per park	Parks/City	OP/CIP
Strategy 2.2.6: Consider shaded pickleball and tennis courts to allow for year-round play		Ongoing		Capital	≈\$30k-\$60k per court	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.7: Ensure ADA accessibility to some practice backstops at each league practice location	✓	✓		Capital	≈\$80 per LF	Parks	CIP

Table 6.1: Action Plan (Continued)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies	Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source
	0-2	3-5	6-10				
Strategy 2.2.8: Consider expanding some half basketball courts to full courts when renovating, especially at larger parks, and add basketball courts at any new neighborhood or community parks	Ongoing			Capital	≈\$65k per court	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.9: Develop a splash pad in Valentine Park (short-term) and in southern Abilene (long-term) to expand access to aquatic facilities in the city	✓		✓	Capital	In progress	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.10: Utilize the park development standards in this plan as a starting point for engagement with the community to ensure that all new parks provide a variety of amenities for all users	Ongoing			Capital/Policy	N/A	Parks/Partners	CIP/Partners
Strategy 2.2.11: Develop a new community park in southwestern Abilene		✓		Capital	≈\$6m	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.12: Consider developing University Park as a neighborhood park to meet a variety of needs and improve access to parks		✓		Capital	≈\$500k-\$1m	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.2.13: Regularly evaluate program times to ensure programs are offered when community members can	Ongoing			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 2.2.14: Include a neighborhood determined feature at each neighborhood park, ensuring development aligns with needs and encouraging a sense of local investment and opportunities for placemaking in parks	✓	✓		Capital	≈\$50k-\$75k each	Parks	CIP
Objective 2.3 – Wellness: Encourage exploration & growth through diverse physical and educational activities							
Strategy 2.3.1: Continuously evaluate the demand for new or expanded programs as indicated by the survey results and other public input	Ongoing			Planning	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 2.3.2: Add concrete paved trail loops at all parks that can accommodate them	Ongoing			Capital	≈\$500k - \$1m per mile	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.3.3: Consider themed playground equipment, such as climbing rocks, sensory features, etc., potentially	Ongoing			Policy/Capital	TBD	Parks	CIP
Strategy 2.3.4: Make full use of new facilities – amphitheaters, outdoor fitness equipment, picnic shelters, pickleball courts, nature center, etc. – by programming and offering activities anchored around these sites	Ongoing			Operations	N/A	Parks/Partners	OP
Strategy 2.3.5: Add outdoor fitness equipment at select parks to expand opportunities for improved community health	✓	✓		Capital	≈\$50k-\$100k per park	Parks	CIP
Goal 3: Efficient Management							
Manage, maintain, and improve facility assets and infrastructure							
Objective 3.1 – Proactive Maintenance: Reduce downtime to city departments with aggressive preventative and deferred maintenance programs							
Strategy 3.1.1: Establish a strategic facility improvement plan	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.1.2: Provide efficient and effective custodial services	Ongoing			Operations	N/A	Parks/City	OP
Strategy 3.1.3: Prepare an operations plan which defines maintenance standards for all land in the system	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.1.4: Consider maintenance and staffing needs when adding parkland and features to the system	Ongoing			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.1.5: Create and continuously update a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan for all equipment	Ongoing			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP

Table 6.1: Action Plan (Continued)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies		Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source
		0-2	3-5	6-10				
Strategy 3.1.6:	Increase budget to improve maintenance levels to improve the overall condition of the park system		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.1.7:	Determine maintenance standards that include how many employees are required to maintain one acre of parkland; consider these standards when adding parkland to the system		Ongoing		Planning/Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Objective 3.2 – Staff Investment: Promote departmental growth through training and licensing								
Strategy 3.2.1:	Pursue CAPRA Accreditation within the next 5 years	✓	✓		Operations / Policy	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.2.2:	Create and maintain professional and career development strategies for management and supervisory staff	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.2.3:	Identify and allocate funding for critical staff development opportunities (including conferences, training, memberships, etc.) with consideration to licensure and certification requirements	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.2.4:	Encourage continued staff training for leadership and continued growth within respective fields		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.2.5:	Incentivize management level staff to attend professional development programs offered by state, regional, and national training organizations		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 3.2.6:	Incentivize and support staff members to pursue Certified Park & Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI), and Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO) certifications		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Goal 4: Fiscal Responsibility								
Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably								
Objective 4.1 – Financial Discipline: Maintain sound financial discipline								
Strategy 4.1.1:	Increase cost recovery as new features are developed and new programs are added		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 4.1.2:	Price services furthest away from the mission at full cost recovery levels		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	Revenue
Strategy 4.1.3:	Add new facilities to the rental inventory as they are developed		Ongoing		Capital	N/A	Parks	Revenue
Strategy 4.1.4:	Reevaluate rental fees as amenities are updated, replaced, or added to the inventory		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	Revenue
Strategy 4.1.5:	Consider a bond referendum to provide a funding stream to capital improvements based on robust public support	✓			Operations / Planning	N/A	Parks/City	Revenue
Strategy 4.1.6:	Ensure the department has the resources (funding and staffing) needed to operate the department as offerings grow		Ongoing		Policy/Operations	N/A	City	OP
Strategy 4.1.7:	Establish an annual assessment process to determine if Abilene should stop offering a program, continue offering a program, or start a new program	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 4.1.8:	Consider allowing residents to donate more than \$5 per month to the Parks Bucks program if they choose	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	Revenue
Strategy 4.1.9:	Improved utilization of staff versus external contractors as a cost savings measure		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP

Table 6.1: Action Plan (Continued)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies	Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source
	0-2	3-5	6-10				
Strategy 4.1.10: Continue to ensure that all new contracts with partners are consistent with existing best practices		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 4.1.11: Consider utilizing a portion of the American Rescue Plan funds allocated to the City of Abilene for parks and recreation improvements to help implement the recommendations of this plan	✓			Policy/ Capital	TBD	Parks/City	CIP
Objective 4.2 – Accounting: Ensure accurate cost accounting							
Strategy 4.2.1: Institute an easy-to-understand Cost Recovery and Pricing Plan for everything that is offered	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 4.2.2: Analyze potential costs versus revenue before adding new features		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 4.2.3: Know the true costs to deliver services (direct and indirect costs) & Inform users, partners, and citizens of these costs of services		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 4.2.4: Establish and adjust fees for programs according to direct and indirect costs		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Goal 5: Effective Communication							
Promote, model, and embrace effective communication and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders							
Objective 5.1 – Consistent Branding: Increase brand presence and recognition							
Strategy 5.1.1: Be a mission driven agency; pay close attention to the new mission of Parks and Recreation and ensure every action and decision always connects back to the department's mission		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 5.1.2: Add and upgrade signage (entrance, wayfinding, interpretive, and informative)	✓	✓		Capital	N/A	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 5.1.3: Consider branding and marketing active senior programs together under a unique category, such as "active adults" to increase participation	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP/ Partners
Strategy 5.1.4: Collaborate with partners and other service-providers in the city to cross-promote and share information about services		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP/ Partners
Strategy 5.1.5: Consider expanding the departments social media presence, including the use of paid promotions	✓			Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP/ Partners
Strategy 5.1.6: Explore development of a searchable mobile app to communicate site locations, services, and special events to the public	✓			Capital	TBD	Parks/ Partners	CIP
Objective 5.2 – Community Awareness: Promote public awareness of parks, recreational opportunities, and citywide special events							
Strategy 5.2.1: Maintain continuous public engagement throughout the implementation of this plan		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP/ Partners
Strategy 5.2.2: Engage neighborhood residents during park improvement processes using bulletin boards, monitored social media posts, and other methods		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP/ Partners
Strategy 5.2.3: Expand marketing of programs and facilities through existing and future collaborative relationships to increase community awareness and participation		Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP/ Partners
Strategy 5.2.4: Formulate and post a policy indicating that drones use is permitted only at Sea Bee Park and implement signage at the RC plan area indicating that drones are permitted	✓			Policy	N/A	Parks	OP

Table 6.1: Action Plan (Continued)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies				Timeframe (Years)		Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source	
				0-2	3-5	6-10				
Goal 6: Successful Partnerships										
Leverage partnerships that produce new parks and facilities that are forward thinking and world class										
Objective 6.1 – Financial Innovation: Explore creative operational and capital strategies										
Strategy 6.1.1: Create an Abilene Parks Foundation to raise funds, recruit and organize volunteers, and promote the parks				✓			Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	Revenue
Strategy 6.1.2: Find dedicated funding sources for Parks and Recreation that can be depended upon annually					Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 6.1.3: Continue seeking grants and apply to foundations for project funding that enhances the park system					Ongoing		Operations / Planning	N/A	Parks/ Partners	Revenue
Strategy 6.1.4: Ensure grant requirements are consistent with the mission of Parks and Recreation while also considering associated costs to the city					Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 6.1.5: Seek a formal agreement with Abilene Independent School District (AISD) to make the elementary school grounds and tennis courts available for public use				✓			Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 6.1.6: Consider providing incentives to developers to donate usable parkland or develop parks in new communities that follow city park design guidelines					Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 6.1.7: Continue to seek partnerships for use of existing indoor pools by others					Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 6.1.8: Establish split revenue percentages for any program partnerships with funding channeled directly to Parks and Recreation					Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 6.1.9: Identify potential revenue sources at community events, including sponsorships and entry fees				✓			Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	Revenue
Strategy 6.1.10: Develop a program for recruiting and scheduling volunteer park ambassadors to promote wellbeing and provide assistance at parks, potentially managed by the future parks foundation				✓			Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	OP
Strategy 6.1.11: Seek philanthropists in the community to support the agency's causes					Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/ Partners	Revenue
Strategy 6.1.12: Create additional scholarship funding opportunities, potentially by requesting an optional additional \$2.00 charge during registration				✓			Operations / Planning	N/A	Parks/ Partners	Revenue
Objective 6.2 – Increased Tourism: Improve parks and sports partnerships to increase tourism in Abilene										
Strategy 6.2.1: Utilize the proposed multipurpose field complex at Grover Nelson Park, and improvements to existing ballfield complexes, to host additional tournaments					Ongoing		Operation	N/A	Parks/City/ Partners	Partners/ Revenue
Strategy 6.2.2: Seek opportunities for additional downtown plaza spaces for community gathering and outdoor dining, especially through partnerships				✓	✓		Capital	TBD	Parks/City/ Partners	CIP/ Partners
Strategy 6.2.3: Partner with other agencies to organize events and community-engaged activities around trails and bike paths				✓			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 6.2.4: Expand existing concert, movie, and live performance program offerings to address unmet community needs				✓			Operations / Capital	N/A	Parks /Partners	OP
Strategy 6.2.5: Continue to partner with disc golf group to provide new and expanded opportunities in the city					Ongoing		Capital/ Planning	Partnership	Parks/ Partners	CIP/ Partners



Table 6.1: Action Plan (Continued)

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies							
	Timeframe (Years)			Category	Estimated Capital Cost	Agency	Funding Source
	0-2	3-5	6-10				
Objective 6.3 – Forward Thinking: Be the "next thing" to stay relevant							
Strategy 6.3.1:	Continue to foster the partnership for a new multipurpose field complex at Grover Nelson Park to address the ever-increasing demand for these fields			Capital	Partnership	Parks/City/Partners	CIP/Partners
Strategy 6.3.2:	✓	Ongoing		Operations	N/A	Parks/Partners	OP
Strategy 6.3.3:	✓			Planning/Capital	TBD	Parks/City/Partners	CIP/OP
Strategy 6.3.4:	Ongoing			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 6.3.5:	Ongoing			Operations	N/A	Parks	OP
Strategy 6.3.6:	Ongoing			Capital/Operations	Partnership	Parks/Partners	Partners
Totals by Timeframe		53	22	7			
Total Number of Strategies = 122							



APPENDIX A - PARK PHOTO INVENTORY

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COMMUNITY PARKS

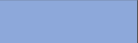
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Legend for Conditions

	Excellent - New/Well Maintained Condition, No Improvements Needed
	Good - Minor Wear, Minimal Improvements Needed
	Fair - Significant Wear/Damage, Needs Repair
	Poor - Needs Replacement

NOTE: Most photos taken in Summer of 2022

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FANNIN PARK

1902 Shelton St

Park Size:

5.8 Acres

Park Classification:

Neighborhood

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	5.8	
Playfield/Backstops	3	
Unpaved Trails (mi)	0.2	
Parking Spaces	33	





NELSON WILSON PARK

1782 San Jacinto Dr

Park Size:

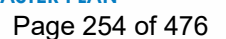
0.9 Acres

Park Classification:

Mini

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	0.9	
Basketball Court	0.5	
Playground	1	
Medium Shelter	1	
Restroom Building	1	







VALENTINE PARK

1317 N Pioneer Dr

Park Size:

6.0 Acres

Park Classification:

Neighborhood

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	5.1	
Basketball Court	0.5	
Playground	1	
Restroom Building	1	





VAUGHN CAMP PARK

4709 Robertson Dr

Park Size:

19.5 Acres

Park Classification:

Neighborhood

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	14.3	
Playfield/Backstops	2	
Basketball Court	0.5	
Tennis/Pickleball Court	1	
Volleyball Court	1	
Playground	1	
Parking Spaces	44	





ARTHUR SEARS PARK (CONTINUED)





CAL YOUNG PARK
 950 T and P Ln
Park Size:
 72.8 Acres
Park Classification:
 Community

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	39.1	
Small Diamond Fields	2	
Batting Cages	2	
Playgrounds	1	
Fishing/Water Access	1	
Disc Golf Holes	18	
Paved Trails (mi)	0.1	
Medium Shelter	1	
Restroom Buildings	2	
Concessions/Restroom Building	1	
Inline Hockey Rink		
Parking Spaces	235	





COBB PARK
 2302 State St
Park Size:
 16.0 Acres
Park Classification:
 Community

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	16.0	
Small Diamond Field	1	
Batting Cages	1	
Basketball Courts	0.5	
Playground	1	
Volleyball Court	1	
Disc Golf Holes	9	
Large Shelter w/restrooms	1	
Medium Shelter	1	
Gazebo	1	
Cobb Park Recreation Center, Activity Building Separate Building		
Parking Spaces	46	





GROVER NELSON PARK
 2070 Zoo Lane
Park Size:
 174.0 Acres
Park Classification:
 Community

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	109.3	
Large Diamond	5	
Playgrounds	3	
Camp Barkley Dog Park	1	
Festival Gardens	1	
Splash Pad	1	
Fishing/Water Access	1	
Paved Trails (mi)	1.6	
Large Shelter	3	
Medium Shelters	2	
Restroom Buildings	5	
Parking Spaces	353	





JOHNSON PARK
 Lake Ft. Phantom Hill
Park Size:
 49.7 Acres
Park Classification:
 Community/Nature

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	27.6	
Volleyball Court	1	
Playground	1	
Fishing Pier	1	
Disc Golf Holes	18	
Medium Shelters	2	
Small Shelters	8	
Restroom Building	1	
Parking Spaces	46	





LAKE KIRBY PARK & NATURE PLAY AREA

5650 Maple St

Park Size:

123.3 Acres

Park Classification:

Community/Nature



Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	60.4	
Small Diamond Fields	6	
Large Diamond Fields	2	
Batting Cages	6	
Playfield/Backstops	13	
Playground/Nature Play	1	
Fishing/Water Access	1	
Boat Ramp	1	
Unpaved Trails	1.3	
Large Shelters	1	
Restroom Buildings	3	
Parking Lots	427	
Parking Lot (Gravel)		





LAKE KIRBY PARK & NATURE PLAY AREA (CONTINUED)





OSCAR ROSE PARK

2601 S 7th Street

Park Size:

67.1 Acres

Park Classification:

Community

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	67.1	
Large Diamond Fields	2	
Small Amphitheater	1	
Batting Cage	1	
Large Rectangular Fields	2	
Basketball Courts	0.5	
Tennis Courts	15	
Volleyball Court	1	
Playground	1	
Skate Park	1	
Adventure Cove Aquatic Center	1	
Paved Trails	0.5	
Restroom Buildings	2	
Rose Senior Center	1	
Rose Recreation Center	1	
Gymnasiums	1	
Concession/Restroom	1	
Parking Spaces	442	





OSCAR ROSE PARK (CONTINUED)





RED BUD PARK
 3125 S 32nd S
Park Size:
 127.1 Acres
Park Classification:
 Community

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	127.1	
Small Diamond Fields	6	
Large Diamond Field	1	
Batting Cages	2	
Playfield/Backstops	20	
Playground	1	
Splash Pad	1	
Prairie Dog Town	1	
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	1	
Paved Trails (mi)	2.3	
Restroom Buildings	4	
Parking Spaces	197	





RED BUD PARK (CONTINUED)





SEA BEE PARK

6525 W Lake Rd

Park Size:

184.2 Acres

Park Classification:

Community/Nature



Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage		
Fishing Access	1	
Boat Ramp	1	
Large Shelter	1	
Small Shelters	2	
RC Plane Area	1	
Restroom Building	1	
Parking Spaces	26	





WILL HAIR PARK
 E. Ambler Ave.
Park Size:
 42.8 Acres
Park Classification:
 Community

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	34.3	
Small Diamond Fields	5	
Batting Cages	2	
Basketball Courts	2	
Tennis Courts	2	
Playground	1	
Disc Golf Holes	18	
Medium Shelters	3	
Restroom Building	1	
Parking Spaces	281	





CEDAR CREEK WATERWAY TRAIL

100 block of, E South 11th St

Park Size:

7.2 Acres

Park Classification:

Special Use

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	3.0	
Concrete Paved Trail (mi)	1.3	In Progress
Parking Lot	Gravel	



EVERMAN PARK

1007-1099 N 1st St

Park Size:

1.0 Acres

Park Classification:

Plaza

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	1.0	
Paved Trails (mi)	0.1	





JACKSON PARK

2650 S 32nd S

Park Size:

6.7 Acres

Park Classification:

Athletic facilities

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	6.7	
Small Diamonds	2	
Batting Cage	1	
Backstop	1	
Concessions/Restroom Building	1	
Parking Spaces	130	





SOUTH PARK

Cherry Street

Park Size:

0.9 Acres

Park Classification:

Undeveloped

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	0.9	
Parking Spaces	37	



SOUTHWEST DRIVE COMPLEX

4300 Southwest Dr

Park Size:

17.9 Acres

Park Classification:

Special Use

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	14.5	
Playfields/Backstops	4	
Parking Lot	Gravel	





UNIVERSITY PARK

Address

Park Size:

41.0 Acres

Park Classification:

Undeveloped

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	0	



VERA HALL MINTER PARK

Address

Park Size:

0.1 Acres

Park Classification:

Plaza

Park Amenities	Quantity	Condition
Developed Acreage	0.1	
Water Curtain	1	





ABILENE INDOOR RECREATION FEASIBILITY STUDY PRESENTATION

The Indoor Recreation Feasibility Study focuses on the recreation centers throughout the City of Abilene and provides guidance for future development based on public input, existing conditions, and facility needs. The study reveals that the existing recreation centers are out of date with code/health and safety requirements and recommendations. The exteriors are in fair condition with some minor repairs needed, ADA accessibility within the centers is overall limited. Energy efficiency and maintenance issues are abundant and the overall design and layouts of the centers is not particularly conducive to recreation. Enhancements and funding sources were recommended through concepts for each center which focus on the previously mentioned issues. Three replacement facilities at GV Daniels, and Chavez are recommended along with a plan for one future facility at Lake Kirby Park.

NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT ZONE

In 2018 a neighborhood empowerment zone was established to encourage private investment in the historic and economically distressed area of the city. Infill development suggested in this zone include rehabilitation and new construction of affordable and market rate housing, increased social services, increased educational opportunities, and safety. In relation to parks and recreation, the GV Daniels Recreation Center and Carver Park are within this empowerment zone. In anticipation of future investment in this area of the city, the GV Daniels Rec. Center as suggested by this updated master plan should experience renovation or total replacement. Upgrades to Carver Park have already begun with the resurfacing of the basketball court and hoop replacement which are currently functioning well. Overall upgrades to the recreation center and Carver Park are recommended in conjunction with the established empowerment zone.

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APPENDIX C - METHODOLOGY

C.3 SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

The spatial distribution of parks throughout Abilene is important because residents are more able and willing to access facilities that are close to their homes. For this analysis, travel times (walking or driving) based on the street network were used to determine service areas for parks by park type and for specific facilities within parks. The size of service areas varies depending on the amenity in question. This analysis used the ArcGIS Online and ArcMap by ESRI for the development of both the spatial data and the maps used in the report.

This process to develop the service area consisted of six steps for each service area distances.

1. Create shapefile with park entrances in ArcMap
2. Upload shapefile with park entrance points to ArcGIS online
3. Select "Perform Analysis" → "Use Proximity" → "Create Drive-Time Areas"
4. Select Walking Time or Driving Time (depending on measurement)
 - Toward facility at 12pm on Saturday
5. Select "Run Analysis"
6. "Export to Shapefile" and download

This process was repeated to generate service areas representing the following travel times:

- 10-minute walk
- 5-minute drive
- 10-minute drive

The shapefile for park entrances was created using the "Park_Rec" and "Road Centerline" shapefiles provided by the City of Abilene, combined with aerial imagery (Google Maps).

Once the service areas were generated, the results were reduced to a single polygon for each site using the "Dissolve" function in ArcGIS. The service area shapefiles were then linked to the inventory table presented in Chapter 2 (Table 2.11) to allow for the selection of the service area of each site by facilities offered.

Once the service area ranges were calculated, the next step in the process was to assign service areas to parks by park type and various recreational facilities. The travel times associated with each park or facility are based on common travel time measurements. For example, a 10-minute walk is a commonly used measurement for the distance a person will travel for a frequently used service. The travel times assigned are based on the use level of the amenity, which corresponds with the length of time a user is likely to spend at the destination. For example, users are likely to be willing to travel a greater distance to use a large community park than a small neighborhood park, because the larger park will likely keep visitors and their families occupied for longer.

The travel time shapefiles for the previous step were used to create a series of service area maps. For each map, the locations of each amenity in question were selected using "Definition Query" from the travel time layers. For example, the Neighborhood Park Service Areas map (Figure 2.4) shows a 10-minute walk to any park (green). In contrast, a 5-minute drive is indicated only for Community Parks in Figure 2.5 (bright green). These areas were turned-on (or the other areas were turned-off) in the corresponding travel time layers within ArcGIS (using "Definition Query") because they contained the specific park feature represented in the map.

The composite service areas map consists of a weighted overlay of each of the park and facility service areas. A single shapefile was created for each of the 15 facilities and two park classifications listed in Table C.1 below with the levels of service (travel times) indicated in the table. Scores were assigned to the travel time from each facility as indicated with a higher score for a shorter travel time. The "Union" function in ArcGIS was used to combine these 17 layers into one composite layer.

Once the scoring for all layers was combined into a single layer, a Field was added to the Attribute Table to



APPENDIX D - PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARIES

CONFERENCE MEMORANDUM
PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY
ABILENE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
ABILENE, TX
PROJECT NO. 22039

BY: Keith E. Rodenhauer, AICP, SITES AP, Brandstetter Carroll Inc.
Patrick Hoagland, ASLA, Brandstetter Carroll Inc.
Samantha Veitch, Planner, Brandstetter Carroll Inc.



June 21, 2022

An open house workshop was held on June 16th, 2022 at the Abilene Convention Center at 5:30PM.

As they entered, participants were given three red and three green dots to vote on their most important features and programs. Participants were also given \$1,000 in play money to vote for improvements that should be made to parks. They were shown to three stations where they could provide input. The following are the responses to the write-in comments at each of the three stations. A (#) indicates how many times a comment was seconded.

Parks and Facilities

1. What makes them great now?

- Splash pads
- Adventure Cove
- Dog Parks/grass is nice/lots of open space/benches
- Nice that we have some pickleball courts now
- consistently maintained, canopies/open space, seating & walking space
- Skate Park: 20+year legacy/peaceful sanctuary for 40+ long term members
- The new renovations – we still need
- Hockey grows young men and women to develop great skills for life
- Skatepark – brings new unique sport to Abilene – puts another great sport/entertainment venue in Abilene
- Hockey

2. What would make them better?

- Athletic Fields/Restroom Updates (8)
- Pickleball Courts – Indoor (10)
- Athletic Fields/Multiple Fields in one location (2)
- Nelson Park Fields Maintenance/Upgrades
- More Walking trails with shade (4)
- Montessori – inspired nature play
- Bigger family size aquatic center (4)
- Continue to upgrade splashpads

1



- More equity in maintaining our parks & providing resources (1)
- More rounds by employees to collect trash – institute fees for baseball/softball teams that do not clean-up (1)
- Athletic field @ Stevenson Park
- Skate Park: Resurface, Repairs, Additions; quarter pipe against the fence, cement area all the way to the existing fence. Crack filling/resurfacing, basic maintenance including trash and bathroom clean ups. Potential rebuild of skatepark by a skatepark focused company (TeamPain, SPA, Evergreen) (1)
- Expansion of skatepark to be inclusive of bikes, roller blades, etc.
- Larger aquatics facility
- Need unique spaces. Currently the spaces aren't creative or innovative. We need engaging spaces for kids that do not look like a traditional park (3)
- Soccer fields (1)
- Outdoor hockey rink for youth & adult (1)
- Need outdoor event spaces for concerts/celebrations like July 4th , etc.
- Need more shaded playgrounds

Trails

1. What makes them great now?
 - I like the amount of natural areas our community does have
 - Great that we have been able to get nature walks
2. What would make them better?
 - Trails/Fishing Access @ Kirby Lake (1)
 - Greenspace/nature (1)
 - Trails around Kirby Lake with bike access (6)
 - Landscaped walking trails w/ shade (2)
 - More open green space
 - More clean ups to include by employees (1)
 - Keep Cedar Creek trail a natural trail (10)
 - Better landscaping at Cedar Creek trail (1)
 - Bike trails
 - Easy to navigate safe places for a mom to visit with kids
 - Would like to expand on current nature walks as well as have walking/biking trails. (1)
 - More educational points along nature trails to teach everyone about what's around them (1)
 - There are concrete "trails" all over town. Cedar Creek Waterway is the ONLY natural trail in the city – otherwise, have to go to state park

Programs

1. What makes them great now?



- City of Abilene have a great and caring staff that want to make a difference
- Hockey

2. What would make them better?

- Will Hair Park softball complex needs update and additional fields. Only complex with only two full size youth softball fields. With the growth on that side of town, it could attract more teams for tournaments and surrounding businesses! (2)
- Pickleball league and host tourneys
- Pickleball education & clinics at courts (1)
- Youth sports, improvement to softball facilities
- Additional fields at Kirby
- Special events w/ potential to attract visitors (2)
- Hockey rink @ Cal young needs improvements due to flood plain, this is problematic (3)
- 5K, 10K, ½ marathon walk runs in Abilene (2)
- Adult Rec leagues (basketball, volleyball, etc.)
- Stage outdoor concerts with all sorts of music at the best park spaces
- Soccer tournaments (need complex)
- Adult sports complex (2)
- Hockey rink cover at Cal Young rink. Resurfacing and updated score board (1)
- Hockey

Dollar Voting

Participants were given \$1,000 in play money to place in boxes with the following categories:

Action (Box Title)	Total
Athletic Fields	\$8,900 15%
Trails	\$6,500 11%
Existing Facilities/Maintenance	\$4,000 7%
Natural Areas	\$3,600 6%
Outdoor Recreation Facilities	\$3,400 6%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	\$2,500 4%
New/Existing Underutilized Parkland Development	\$2,300 4%
Programs/Events	\$1,300 2%
Other	\$27,500 46%
Total	\$60,000



Other

The comments with dollars are listed below.

Other	Total
Pickleball	\$14,100
Hockey	\$9,600
Skatepark	\$3,000
Amphitheater Stevenson	\$600
Kirby Lake Master Plan	\$200
TOTAL	\$27,500

Feature Board

Participants were given three red dots to place on 16 park amenities (represented by pictures). Pickleball and indoor hockey were added to the table due to many participants writing the features on their dots.

Park Features	Total	%
Pickleball	40	23%
Athletic Fields	26	15%
Trails	25	14%
Indoor Hockey (ice or inline)	17	10%
Natural Areas	10	6%
Game Courts	9	5%
Skatepark	9	5%
Outdoor Games	9	5%
Restrooms	7	4%
Indoor Recreation Facilities	5	3%
Event Spaces	4	2%
Playgrounds	3	2%
Aquatics	3	2%
Public Art	3	2%
Picnic Shelters	3	2%
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	2	1%
Dog Parks	1	1%
Disc Golf	1	1%
Total	177	
Participants	59	

Programs Board

Participants were given three green dots to place on 16 programs (represented by pictures). Pickleball and indoor hockey were added to the table due to many participants writing the programs on their dots.



Programs	Total	%
Youth Sports	25	16%
Athletic Tournaments	22	14%
Hockey	20	12%
Active Adult Programs	19	12%
Festivals	14	9%
Adult Sports	12	7%
Nature Programs	10	6%
Pickleball	9	6%
Runs and Races	7	4%
Adaptive Recreation	5	3%
Special Events	5	3%
Movies/Music Concerts	5	3%
Before & After School Programs	5	3%
Cultural & Performing Arts	2	1%
Fitness Classes	1	1%
Swim Lessons	1	1%
Total	161	
Participants	54	

Keith E. Rodenhauser, AICP, SITES AP 6/21/2022

KER/ker

cc: Pat Hoagland
File



DRAFT



**CONFERENCE MEMORANDUM
STAKEHOLDERS MEETING
ABILENE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 22039**

Present: Patrick D. Hoagland, ASLA, BCI
Keith Rodenhauser, Senior Planner, BCI



June 15, 2022

Meeting No. 1: Economic Development – Develop Abilene, Abilene Chamber CVB – 1:30 P.M.

1. Organization Background

- Chamber
 - Tourism
 - CVB
 - Arts and Culture – Council
 - AFB – Military Affairs
 - Abilene Industrial Foundation
 - Abilene Improvement Corporation
 - Young Professionals - 600 members
 - Stronger economy and quality of life
- Dyess
 - 5-6
 - E5, E6
 - Involved downtown
 - Community outreach staff
- DCOA
 - Facilities and open land
 - Make improvements – 800 acres of land
 - Keep Abilene Beautiful board
 - Econ development – primary job creation
 - ½ cent sales tax
 - Quality of life

2. Relationship

- Parent, knowing parks important to quality of life
- People looking for parks, forward thinking
- Parks vital to community, heartbeat of the community
- Parks important to attracting people
- Dream big, just isolated enough

3. Lots of kids on base – Not all (50%) families on base

– ...



- What to do, splash pads big

- Recreation center – a lot to offer

- Rose Senior center, crown jewel
- Citizens take care if proud
- Amazing effort by parks

- Need more shaded areas

- Kirby Lake

- Close to nature
- Trees, water, open space

- Citizens get involved, make things happen

- Need more opportunities for swimming

- At lakes, Kirby and Fort Phantom

- Parks all over, good success

3. Needs

- Opportunities to skate – need access to ice

- People go to Metroplex

- Cedar Creek Waterway, many waiting for it to happen

- People want trails, attracts young people

- Workforce challenge, need to attract

- Water, boat access

- Sports facilities

- Multiple fields in one location
- In one complex for tournaments

- Meet needs for those with disabilities

- Accessible facilities
- Family restrooms, all that need assistance

- Hiking

- Currently nowhere to hike
- Most heard complaint at base
- Natural trails

- Aquatic center, indoor, more accessible, more swimming opportunities, water therapy

- Collaborate for work in business parks with parks

- Recreation opportunities for workers
- Green spaces

- Butterfly gardens

- Public use hiking trails

- Embrace role as hub for region and connection between west Texas and Metroplex

- In between, could host events



- Less expensive than Metroplex
- Natural grass vs turf
- Add recreation components to underutilized spaces, e.g., disc golf
- Some need downtown, some opposition
- Dilapidated building outside of town has potential
- Community gardens downtown
- Economically disadvantage surrounding downtown – need mixed income focus
- 7,000 people work downtown
 - More plaza needed
- Cypress Street – downtown plan in progress
- Public transportation available to parks

4. Vision

- Economic growth
 - New places, spaces
 - More people
 - More tax dollars
- Add more attractive amenities
- More inclusive
 - Equal opportunities
 - Fair and equitable
- Master Plans – this and others coming to fruition
- New industry – new and retained families
 - Hub role
- Labor shed analysis exists
- Thriving downtown
 - Hotels at capacity
 - More businesses
 - More marketable and attractive
- More integration of AFB
- Need transit access to parks
 - Gas costs increasing demand for transit
- Maximize what Abilene has
 - Take advantage of lakes
 - Creeks not dry
 - Don't have to drive 3-7 hours to access amenities



Meeting No. 2: City Manager - 2:30 p.m.

1. Unmet Needs

- Walking trails
- Existing trails get extensive use, including ACU, need more attractions
- Reinventing space
 - Develop spaces that exist
 - What do get rid of?
- Leverage Buck Creek
 - Former landfill
 - Currently used by MTB
- Partner with universities
 - Share space
- Council wants Abilene to be the best version of itself, not a copy of another community, not someone else
- Funding is the biggest challenge
 - Alternative revenue streams

2. Strengths and Weaknesses

- Work as a team, good leadership
- Empower staff to make decisions
- Not enough resources, money

3. Vision

- Success = attractive parks
- Open space
- Higher level of landscaping, Teroscaping
- Gardens could be attractive and draw people in
- Focus on larger parks
- Council wants to see something achievable
 - Can be implemented
 - Targets and timeline
- Alternative revenue sources
- Potential trail around Kirby Lake
- Buck Creek should be available to all
 - Currently kept locked up
- Possible citizen election to increase required funding to parks, must go to voters, wording may be important
- Council is willing to ask the voters
- Increase funding dedicated to parks in city charter



Meeting No. 3: Inline Hockey, Youth Football – Select Only – 3:30 p.m.

1. Describe Organization

- Cowboys Football and Cheer
- Football participants– 320, 85% residents
- Cheer – 4-12, 4-5 year old's play flag, 6-12 year old's play tackle
- Kids play as can
- Do state competition
- Use
 - Brower Nelson, open park
 - Play games at Curly Hayes
 - ✓ Just a handful from outside
- Inline Hockey
 - 80 skaters – only 20 a year ago
 - Rebranding to Abilene Hockey
 - 15 sponsors
 - Community foundation for ball hockey
 - ✓ Ball and sticks, 100 kids
 - ✓ Lots of home schoolers, AFB
 - Youth and adult
 - ✓ Ages 5+, >10, 15 and under, adults
 - Play nearby communities sometimes
 - Rink has lights

2. Unmet Needs

- Safety improvements needed
- Fields need repairs, lots of holes, sticker burrs
- Would like lights at Nelson
- Inline Hockey
 - Weather related
- Have met with Dallas Stars regarding ice rink
 - City builds and they sign lease
- Cancellations because of rain and snow
 - Sometimes floods, needs to be cleaned
- One rink, limits ability to offer
- Would like more options
- Concrete rink, have to change wheels
- Equipment upkeep is expensive
- Would like sport court



- No sun protection, sun in eyes at sunset
- Football needs storage
- Need artificial turf to host tournaments
 - College fields not available, need stadium

2. Vision

- Turf stadium for football tournaments
- Build a rink complex

Meeting No. 4: Stakeholders – 6/16/22 – 8:30, churches

1. Describe Organization

- 750 members, Southern Hills
- Love parks, back up to Red Bud
- Have an event this weekend at splash pad
- Host events at the park
- Use disc golf
- Have family nights and go to parks, 300 participants
 - May convert barn to rec space

2. Like

- Work well with scheduling
- Great availability, variety, large space
- Would like grass but understand conditions
- Splash pads are great, would like some larger

3. Unmet needs

- Up-to-date facilities
- Keep bathrooms clean
- Safety
- Red Bud
 - Lots of land
 - More gathering spaces
 - Rec center
 - Do use the YMCA, but not as much
 - Not available for rentals much
- New program space, indoor community areas
- Better promotion of availability

4. Vision

- Building community, opportunities to gather and connect
- Events
- One time events and programs
- Meet others who wouldn't otherwise meet



- Value what they do
- Nature as well

Meeting No. 5: Planning and Development – 9:30 a.m.

1. Background

- Growth areas to south primarily
- Some recent to the north of 381 – 700 homes possibly more, 800 acres
- Annexed land in north recently
- 75% to south around Kirby Lake
- ETJ is 5 mile buffer, extends with annexation
- No dedication requirements
- Comprehensive Plan is in the works

2. Unmet Needs

- Paved walking trails
- Biking trails; separate paths
- Lack of sidewalks, increasing demand for trails
- Transportation needs
- Connect to existing, park to park
- Safety and security, limited security cameras, Everman only
- Have not historically been bike friendly
- Council has forum on downtown and infill development
- Discussed in February retreat

3. Relationship with Parks and Recreation

- Planning special events primarily
- Facilities maintenance and custodial services

4. Vision

- Parks in neighborhoods, 10-minute walk, safe
- Retention ponds have requirements
- Must meet standards in order to turn over
- May be able to adjust requirements to require useful space or appearance/aesthetics
- Having a place to go and spend the afternoon with a variety of amenities for all
- Strategically placed for economic development
- Possible as buffer between residential and commercial
- Features to draw people outside usable space
- Make stormwater retention a feature
- Opportunities for partnerships, maintenance
- Better coordination with air base
- Trail around Kirby Lake



Meeting No. 6: Police Department and Fire Department – 10:30 a.m.

1. Background and Interaction with Parks

- Calls at parks
- Work special events, security, plan, escorts for parades
- 911 system, property damage, graffiti
- Executive manager meetings
- Some training in parks
- Run safety city
- Cooperation
 - New automated online system for permits
 - Non-park related events managed by police
- Security problems
 - Security cameras, preferably with infrared
 - Open space for visibility
 - Restrooms with less ability to damage, graffiti resistant
 - Not as equipped for barricade designs
 - ✓ Previously contracted, now need to do
 - ✓ Streets should be involved; new, better equipment for barricades

2. Problems

- Everman, Stevenson, Cal Young
- Some problems with people camping on adjacent properties
 - Might need to start ticketing
- Potential to add to contract a fine for camping in wrong locations, tournament director
- May be need for more camping locations
- Kirby Lake
 - Some issues for people
 - Information and wayfinding
 - 4th of July, have to close
 - People set off fireworks
- Clear signage at park entrances
 - Markings to identify
- Buck Creek run by Bike Town, hosts events

3. Fitness Amenities

- Behind Fire Station #3, fitness station
- Fitness
- Building a workout facility, would like outdoor equipment, could have public use
- Walking, biking, running, trail /track, people currently use ACU



4. Vision

- Landscaping/trees
- Connection to downtown, tie community together
- Attractions, amphitheater, currently small one at Rose
- Cedar Creek and Kirby, both have plans
- Science center plan for Kirby Lake
- Put infrastructure in place to attract people and businesses
- Amphitheater

Meeting No. 7: Gyms YMCA Abilene Youth Sports Authority – 11:30 a.m.

1. Background and Relationship with Parks

- Alpha athletics personal training
 - Mostly 30+, focus on classes
 - Community outreach and is a focus
 - People can intermingle, bring people together
- Performance Lab
 - South side
 - Focus on classes, also have a weight room
 - Community atmosphere
 - limited personal training
 - Lots of people to share info with
- YMCA
 - 1,500 members
 - 46 different classes

2. Unmet needs

- Opportunities to get out in nature
- Abilene State Park only option
- Rock climbing, outdoor activities
- Currently have to travel
- Run at Buck Creek, trail hiking
- More locations for hiking/biking needed
- Football on north side
- Need to intermingle sports for kids to meet kids from different parts of city
- Camps to bring kids together from all over, businesses may donate
- YMCA does a different sports over 8 weeks
 - 60 seniors play water volleyball
 - Preparing to start pickleball
 - Special Olympics need more opportunities, need more funding
 - Costs can be a barrier



- Expanded aquatic center
- Limited options for lap swimming, indoor
- Revamp trails needed, lots of cracks
- YMCA uses baseball fields
- Lights needed for safety along trails
- City organized fitness events and opportunities
- Host more competitions, races
- Promote interaction
 - ✓ Cornhole, music, frisbee
 - ✓ Lightly organized, organic gathering
- Security
- Sticker burrs in grass

3. Vision

- More family outings
- People able to bike around city
- More hiking opportunities
- Many recreational opportunities, more outdoors
- People outdoors
- Parks more inviting
- Shade and attractive
- Rentable spaces, at splash pad, etc.
- Infrastructure limitations at Red Bud
- Parks above I-20 needed, may be outside of city limits, new development
- Families downtown
- Marketing and promotion are necessary

Meeting No. 8: Recreation Centers – 1:30 p.m.

1. Facilities used

- Senior citizen pool and bingo
 - Sears
 - GV Daniel's low impact exercise
 - ✓ Also have a bible study and bingo
 - ✓ Help with kids

2. Like

- Give something to do, social aspects
- Senior exercise, 20 or 50 seniors
- Opportunity to be around other people
- Walk around gym
- Like Adventure Cove, very nice



- Kids love splash pads
- Red Bud is best park, large play area, bike trails, walkout areas, splash pad

3. Unmet Needs

- More splash pads
- More amenities at more parks
- Signage, info about what is available
- Update facilities, Sears Rec, GV Daniels, Cobb
- Like new Rose Park building
- Trying to get people back after COVID
 - More things to do could help
- Update playground equipment, CW Gill
- Need more parking in some parks
- Sometime block streets
- Separate equipment for ages 2-5 and 5-12
- Another aquatic center

4. Vision

- People come together
- More changes than past 10 years
- More shade and misters
- Special needs friendly playground equipment
 - Rose Park to be accessible
- Girls night in, had a fun program, more similar events, fun events, not just sports
- Game night with promotion
- More regular fun activities to bring people together
- Amphitheater/stage for music
- Activities to draw people to centers
- People to teach classes
 - Computer use
 - Technology
 - Smart phones
- Slipping at splash pads, slide, safety concerns

Meeting No. 9: Softball and Universities – 3:30 p.m.

1. Background of Organizations

- Abilene slow pitch, Nelson Park, 25 teams - adult
- Wylie Softball, HSU, youth softball, Texas Tech
- Kirby Lake fields
 - 370 spring softball, up from 300
 - HS Tournament in July



- Abilene fast pitch, 205 up as well, Red Bud
- HSU offers camps and church groups use
 - Nearly all facilities used for camps
 - Outdoor pool, swim lessons
 - Fletcher fitness center for all students
 - Not available for public use outside of camps
 - Too small to allow public use

2. Facilities Used

- Texas Tech students use parks
- Camps may expand and offer amenities
- Slow pitch may have field use available on some nights, Nelson park

3. Interaction with Parks and Recreation

- No problems
- Easy to get hold of
- Nelson Park restrooms need to be updated
 - LULAC Tournament – 120 softball teams
 - Restrooms can't keep up – not enough
 - Look for special rate for RV's at campground
- Large tournaments possible but need to use multiple locations
- 8U requires, 9 fields for tournaments
 - 7 in 1 location
 - Have 8 at Kirby and Red Bud, but pitching mound in the way
- Parking an issue at dirt field in Kirby Lake
- Number of tournaments declining
 - Fewer teams, choosing other destinations
- Would like one big complex, challenging
- Don't like temporary fences

4. Unmet Needs

- General maintenance help needed, trash pickup
 - Have to pay to pickup trash
- Nature trails, unique outdoor spaces
- Need more to make Abilene more attractive
- Identity – what represents Abilene parks
- Many Texas Tech students have families
- Places that stand out
- No tournament complex
- People do not know what is available
- Nelson and Kirby Lake are the most unique, used as part of promotion



On the Agenda:

Review Demographics & Benchmarking

Service Areas Mapping

Public Engagement

Strategic Planning Session

Next Steps



2

Project Process



3



Demographics

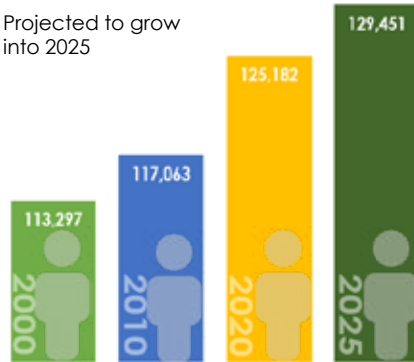
A brief summary...more to come in report!

Comparing the Nation, Texas, Jones County, & Taylor County

Growth

Your population has experienced steady growth since 2000

Projected to grow into 2025



33.8 yrs
Median Age
Younger than comparisons



The Senior population is **Higher** than the state, **lower** than the nation

15% Seniors – growing

22% Under 18 – declining

Median household income and per capita similar to counties but lower than Texas & USA

\$52k vs. \$64k (TX)

Diversity

Majority white non-Hispanic, but decreasing (56%)

Hispanic or Latino (27%)

Multiracial increased most rapidly between 2010 + 2020

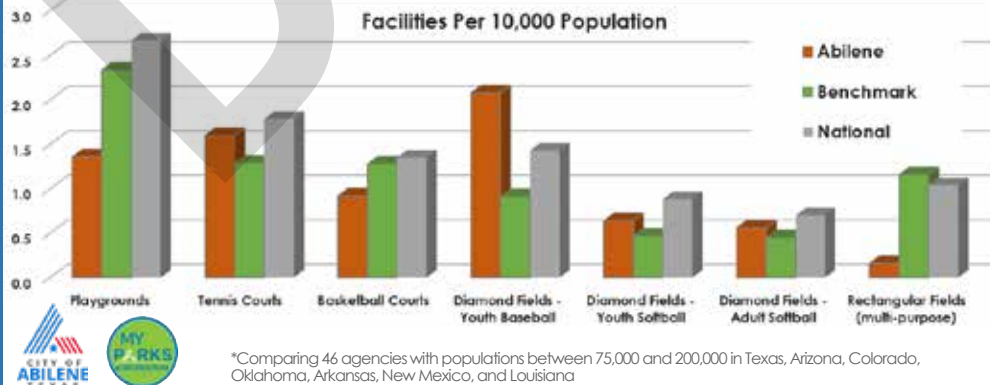
(2% in 2010 to 4% in 2020)



4

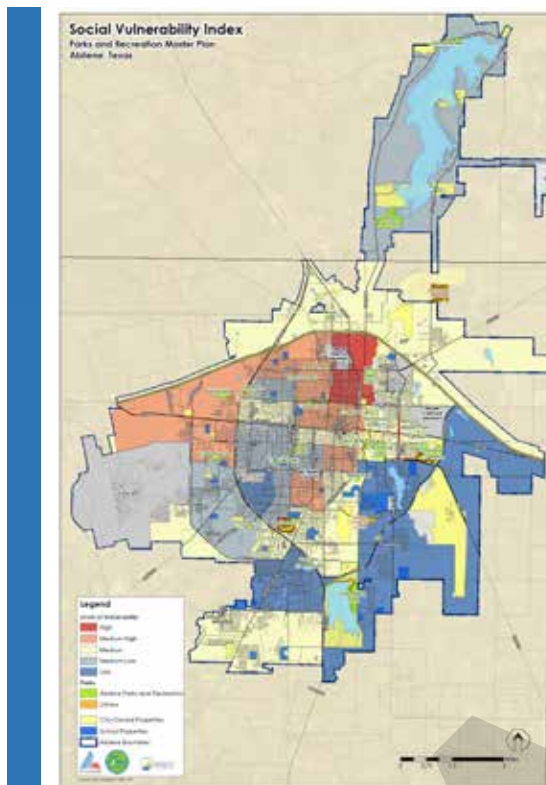
Benchmarking

Category	Abilene	Benchmark	Comparison
Acres per 1,000 population	9.1	11.5	Lower
Parkland as a percentage of city	1.6%	2.3%	Lower
Trail miles per 10,000 population	0.6	2.1	Lower
Trail miles per Jurisdiction Sq. Mi.	0.1	0.3	Lower
Percent of parkland developed	61%	57%	Similar
Operating expenditures per capita	\$75	\$97	Lower
Revenue generated per capita	\$8	\$30	Lower
Cost Recovery	11%	21%	Lower
Capital expenditures per capita	\$22	\$61	Lower



*Comparing 46 agencies with populations between 75,000 and 200,000 in Texas, Arizona, Colorado, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Louisiana

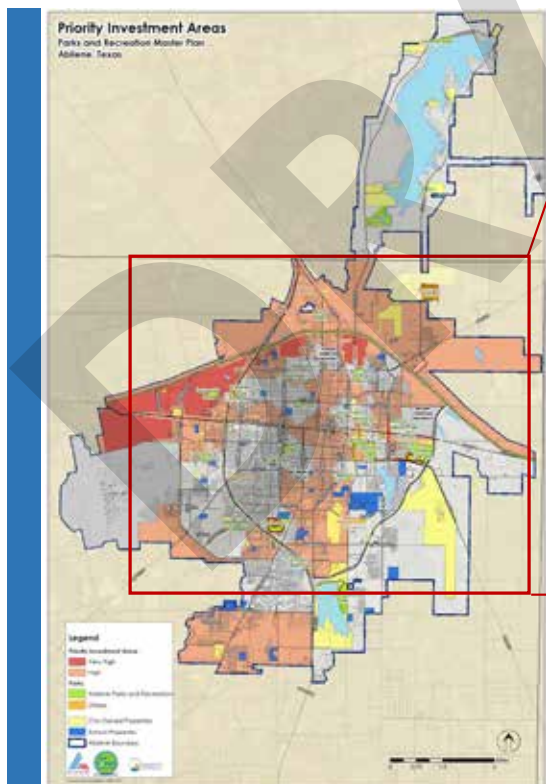
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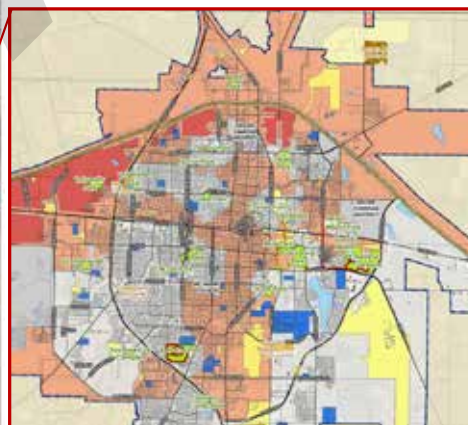
Social Vulnerability Index

Overall Vulnerability	Socioeconomic Status	Below Poverty
		Unemployed
		Income
		No High School Diploma
Household Composition & Disability		Aged 65 or Older
		Aged 17 or Younger
		Civilian with a Disability
		Single-Parent Households
Minority Status & Language		Minority
		Speaks English "Less than Well"
Housing Type & Transportation		Multi-Unit Structures
		Mobile Homes
		Crowding
		No Vehicle
		Group Quarters

*15 factors



Priority Investment Areas



Very High = H/MH SVI & L/ML service

High = Any other area M or above SVI & M or below service

11



Project Process



12

Survey Results

Web and Handout Survey

- 999 Completed
- 93% Abilene Residents
- 7% Outside the city

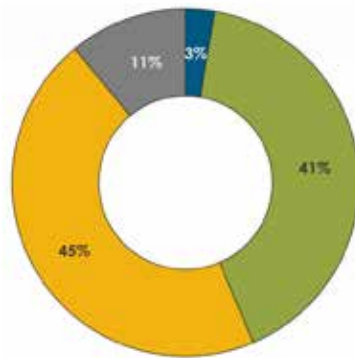


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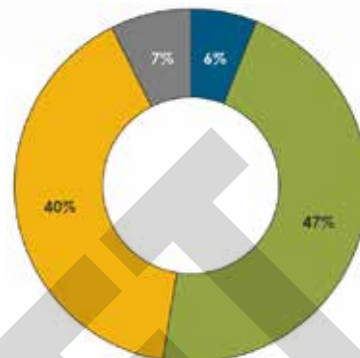


Condition of Parks & Programs

Quality of Abilene Facilities



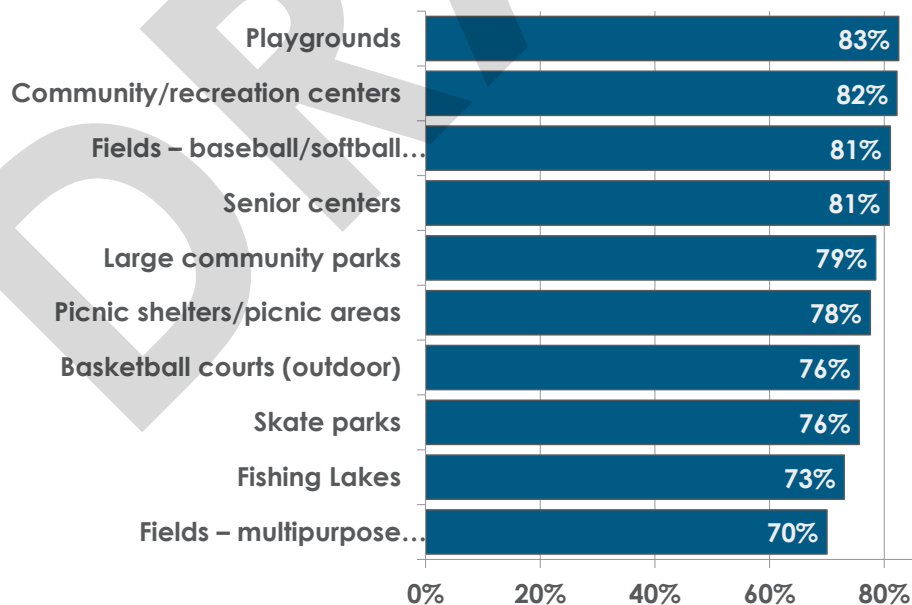
Quality of Abilene Programs



■ Excellent ■ Fair
■ Good ■ Poor

14

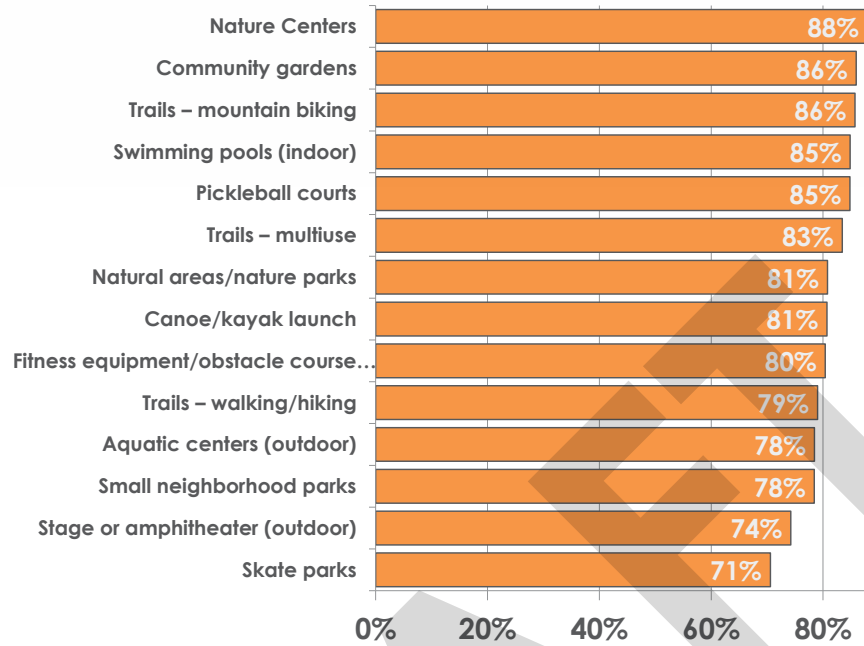
Revitalization/Upgrades to Existing – Top Responses (of those who indicated desire to use)



15

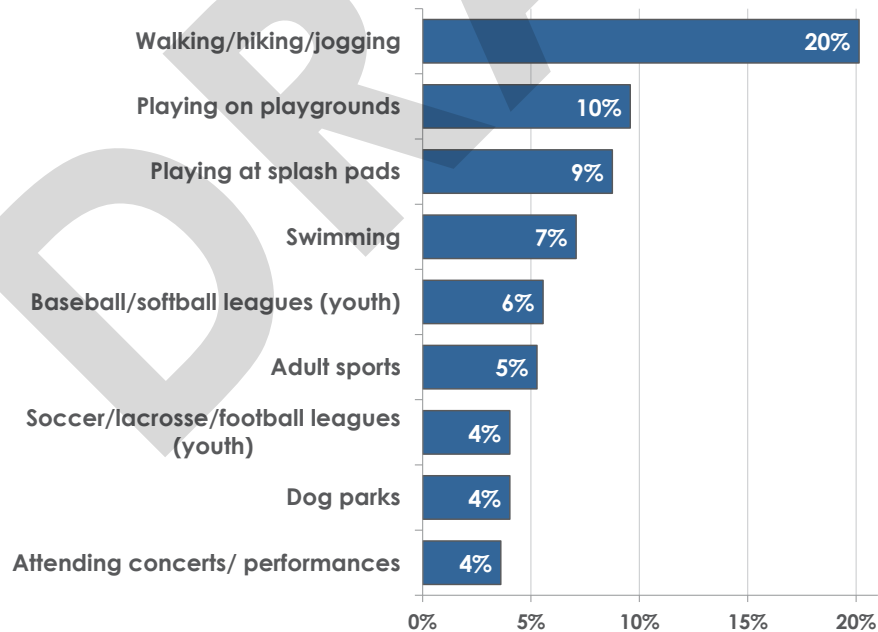


New Development – Top Responses (of those who indicated desire to use)



16

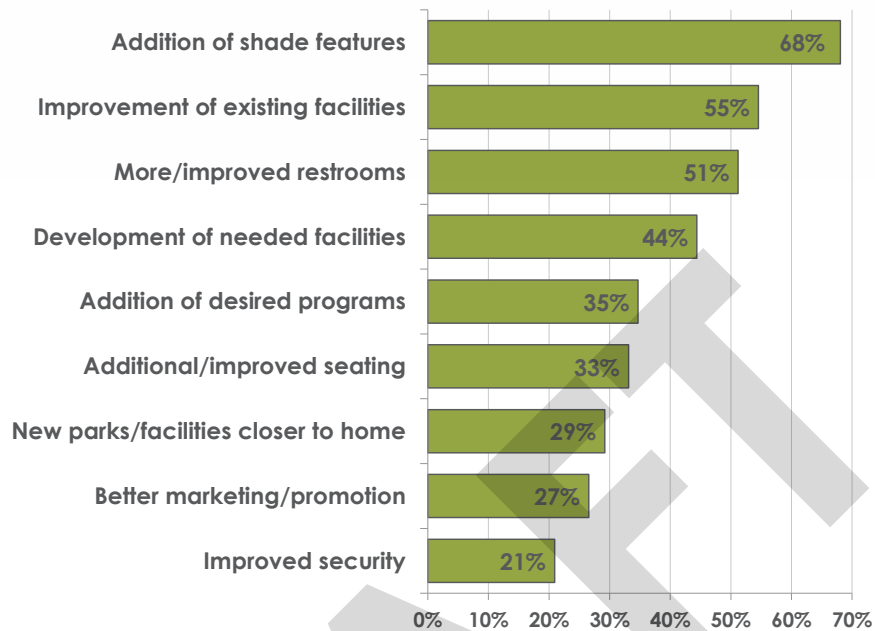
Desire for More Opportunities



17

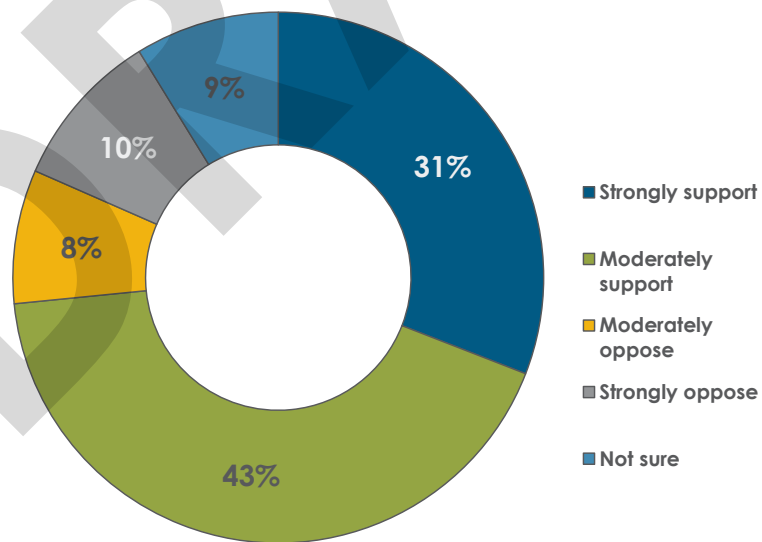


What Would Encourage You to Use Parks? (Top results)



18

Support for Potential Tax or Bond to Fund Improvements



19



Public Workshop/Open House

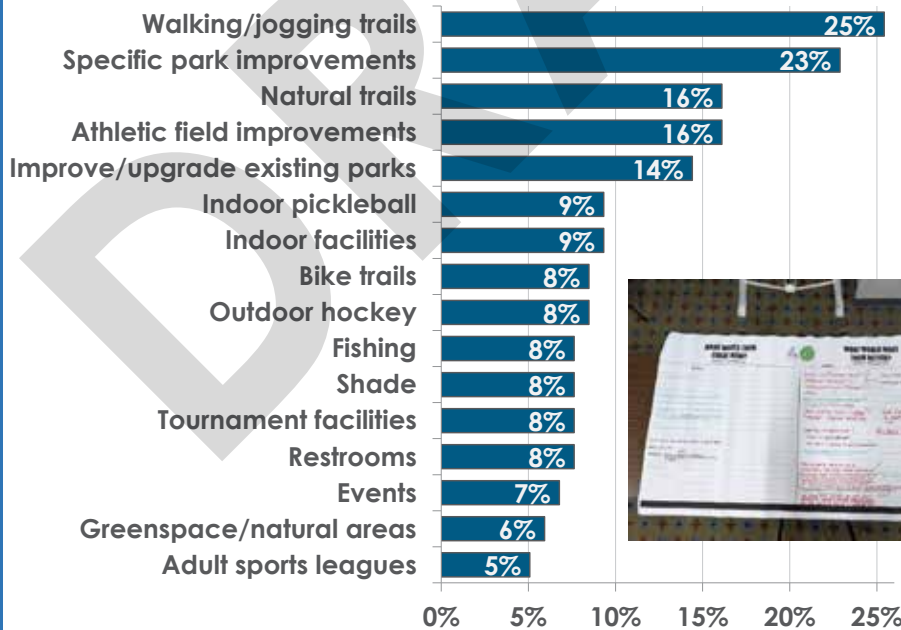


60 Participants
(Approximately)



20

Input Stations – Top Comments



118 comments/checkmarks at 3 stations

21



Dollar Voting

\$1,000 per participant
91 participated

Other: Kirby Lake,
Amphitheater

Programs/
Events

New/Existing
Underutilized
Parkland
Development

Indoor Facilities

Skatepark

Outdoor
Facilities

Natural Areas

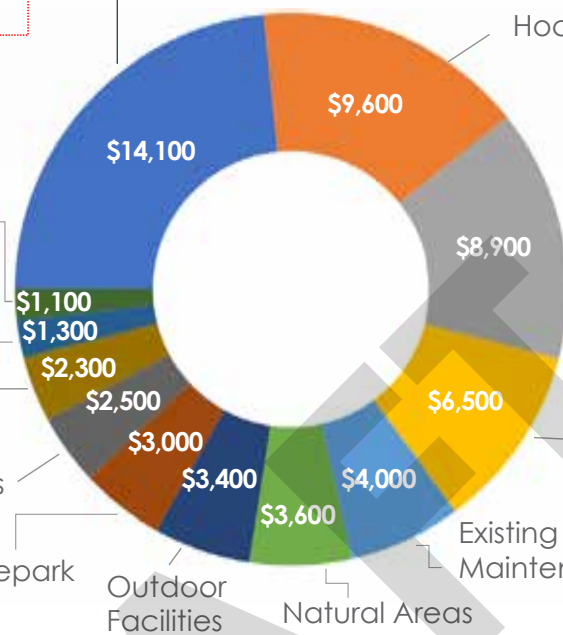
Existing Facilities/
Maintenance

Trails

Athletic
Fields

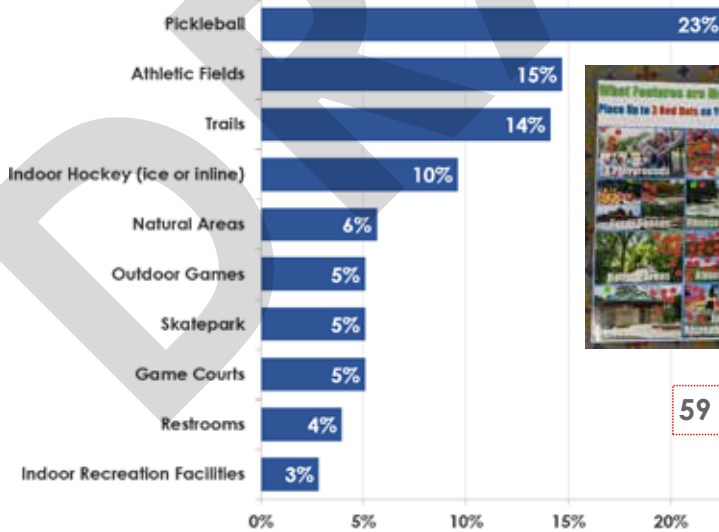
Hockey

Pickleball



22

Most Important Features (Dot Voting)



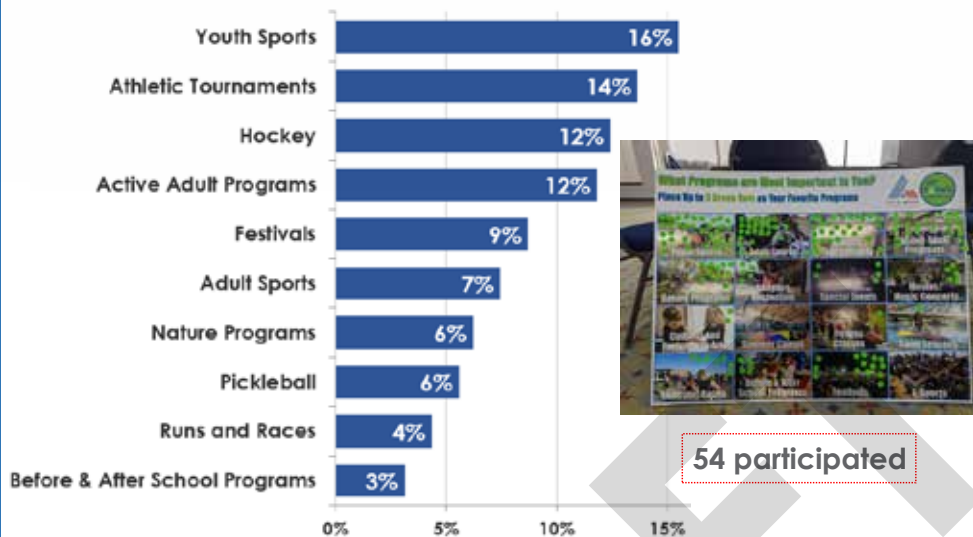
59 participated



23



Most Important Programs (Dot Voting)



24

Stakeholder Groups

New Multiuse Trails – Additional systemwide trails, bike/ped improvements, natural trails & hiking within parks

Upgraded Facilities – Site amenities (seating, lighting, shade, security), accessible spaces, upgraded fields, improved wayfinding/signage, restrooms, aquatic center expansion

New Facilities – Tournament level fields, more disc golf courses, new inline hockey rink, picnic shelters, natural areas, amphitheater, tournament complex

Indoor Space – New/improved recreation centers, indoor pool

Expanded Programming – Annual events, nature education, additional youth camps

Partnerships, Collaboration, Marketing – Transportation to parks/facilities, partner with Buck Creek Trails, collaborate with universities/colleges, continued community outreach, attract people to Abilene

Operations – Employee recreation benefits, optimize parkland/utilize existing land, identify alternative funding resources, improve maintenance

25



Residents Want:

- **Upgrades + improvements to existing parks + facilities –**
Field improvements, maintenance, upgraded skatepark, ADA access, restroom improvements, improved/shaded playgrounds, hockey rink upgrades
- **Connectivity + trails –** New hiking, walking, biking trails, signage + wayfinding, accessibility across the system
- **New facilities –** Shaded pickleball courts, athletic fields/complex, pool/aquatic improvements, venue for nature programs, mountain biking trails, outdoor fitness, amphitheater
- **Expanded programming + events –** Additional youth sports opportunities, athletic tournaments, active adult programs, adult sports, additional festivals/events, nature education programming
- **Support amenities –** Restrooms, additional shade, security, seating



26

Project Process



27



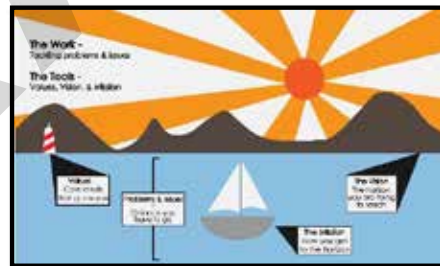
➔ Envision Phase = Evaluate + Engage

★ Process we'll go through together:



What are Core Values?

- **Guidelines** for Action & Belief
 - Direct staff conduct
 - Express city ideals
 - Reflect community's personality
- **Signpost** for the Future
 - Shaped by culture, experience, context
- Straightforward **Phrases or Words**



It's your lighthouse!



Example Core Values:



30

Example Core Values:

Lifelong Recreation
Opportunities
Inclusion
Health and Wellness
Sustainability
Accountability
Collaboration
Customer Service



31



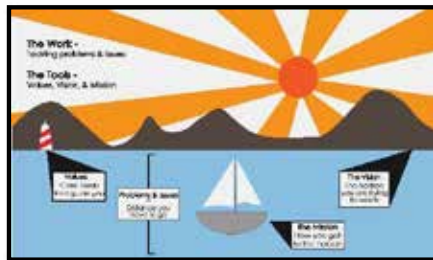
What is a Vision?

- **Describes:**

- **Where** you want to go
- **What** you hope to accomplish

- **Directs** your impact & what you become

- **Stays with you for the long haul...**



It's your horizon! Should be aspirational, compelling, easy to understand.

32

Example Vision Statements:

A connected community where exceptional parks and programs enrich quality of life for all



The Parks and Recreation Department will be an innovative leader in parks and recreation experiences



City of Augusta's Parks and Recreation will create a lifetime of memorable experiences for citizens and visitors.

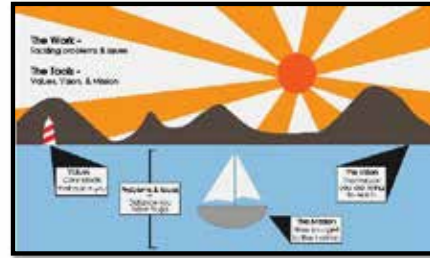


33



What is a Mission?

- Answers 4 questions
 - **What** do you do?
 - **Who** you do it for?
 - **How** you do it?
 - **Why** do you do it?
- One sentence, **simple and concise**
- Should be **easy to remember** and share with others
- Includes **action** words



It's your boat!

34

Mission Statement

Existing Mission Statement:

The Abilene Parks and Recreation Department has established a mission to preserve and manage public parks and recreational facilities and to create recreation, cultural, education and leisure opportunities to benefit and enhance the quality of life in this community.

Example Mission Statements:

Together we connect and enrich our community through exceptional experiences



Build community and enrich life through parks, programs and play



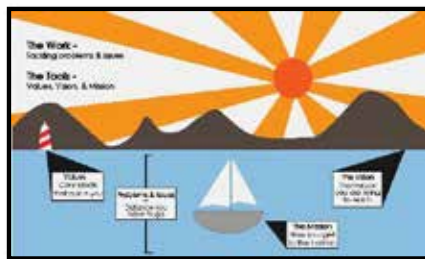
Champion lifelong recreation and serve as responsible stewards of the city's parks, trails, and open spaces.



35



What are Goals & Objectives?



Think of these as your stops along the way.

- **More Specific** description of actions and aspirations
- **Focused** direction for investments of:
 - Time, Talent, & Resources
- Clarifies what you **will** & **will not** do
- Supported by Strategies or **Actions**

36

Goals

Think of goals as **categories** for your intended actions. They should be oriented around the following:



37



Existing Department – Goals

- Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities
- Maximize accessibility to the parks and recreation system and city facilities to ensure inclusivity for all residents while promoting a healthy community
- Manage, maintain, and improve facility assets and infrastructure
- Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably
- Promote, model, and embrace effective communication and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders
- Leverage partnerships that produce parks and recreational opportunities that are forward thinking and world class

38

Example – Goals & Objectives:



39



Example – Goals & Objectives:



40

Example – Goals & Objectives:



41

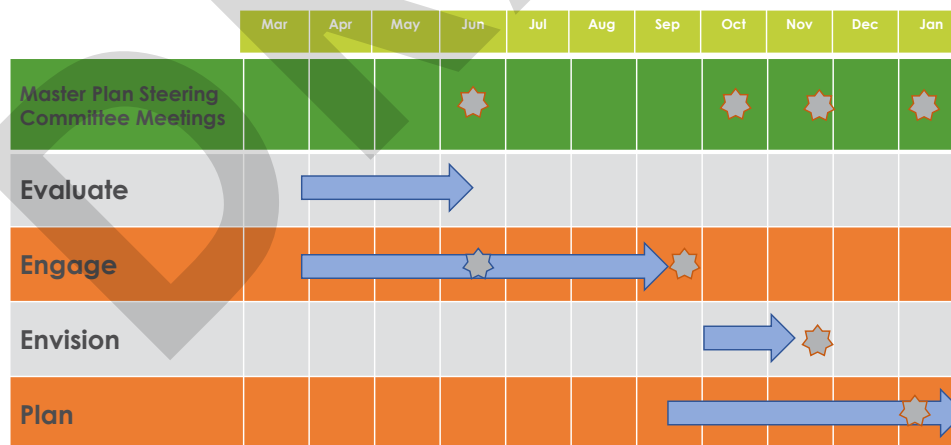


Example of Plan Summary



42

Planning Timeline



43



Questions? Let's Talk!

What's next:

- Draft Strategic Plan & Visioning Meeting #2
- Preliminary Recommendations
- Draft Master Plan
- Final presentation to City Council



44



On the Agenda:

- Review Visioning Results
- Review DRAFT Strategic Plan
- Choose Mission Statement
- Choose Vision Statement
- Goals & Objectives
- Preliminary Recommendations
- Next Steps





Project Process

Mentimeter



Values

Mentimeter

What values should guide Parks and Rec in Abilene?

Mentimeter





DRAFT Values

Mentimeter

Service – Providing exceptional and enriching programs, events, and facilities for the whole community

Inclusivity – Ensuring convenient, welcoming, and affordable community access to parks and facilities

Innovation – Developing modern parks and amenities

5

DRAFT Mission Options

Mentimeter

1. Build community and enrich life through exceptional experiences

2. Enrich lives through exceptional experiences while ensuring responsible stewardship

3. Preserve parks and manage facilities to create recreational opportunities that benefit and enhance quality of life

6



How would you rank these mission statements?

Mentimeter



Mentimeter

DRAFT Vision Options

- 1. Create memorable experiences that last a lifetime**
- 2. Our exceptional services connect the community and instill pride**
- 3. To be the gold standard for parks and recreation in West Texas**

7



How would you rank these vision statements?

Mentimeter



Goals For Future

Mentimeter

Imagine it's the year 2032: how have parks & recreation improved in Abilene?

Mentimeter



8

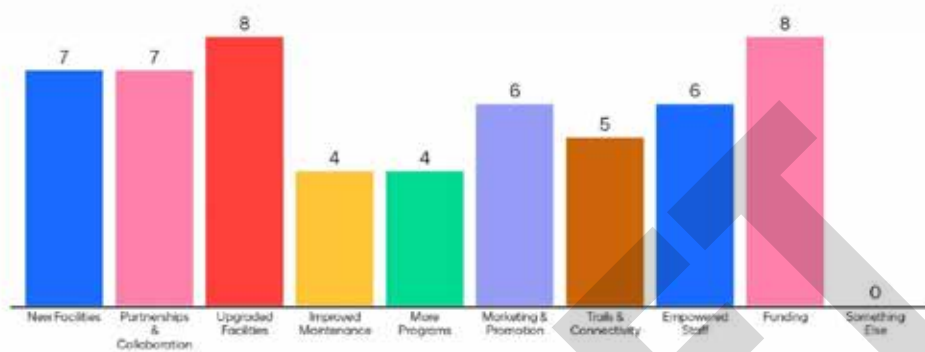


Goals For Future

Mentimeter

What do you need to get to that future?

Mentimeter



9

How Do We Get There?

Mentimeter

Let's get focused: What specific actions are needed? What improvements must be addressed for this plan to be a success?

Mentimeter

Trails	More parks	Community involvement
Alternate (or more digestible) communication to the community that keeps them in the loop	Specific dedicated funding	Grant/proposal writing
Marketing	Council buy in	Community/ Leadership support
Formal Buy in from city (citizens/council)	Nature Centers	
Complete (community, leadership, staff, etc.) buy in, funding must be addressed regularly to keep moving forward		

10



DRAFT Goals & Objectives

Mentimeter

Goal 1: Responsible Stewardship

Preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance natural resources, park land, facilities, and recreational opportunities

- ▶ Objective 1.1 – **Modern Facilities:** Update park facilities to support and facilitate modern programming opportunities
- ▶ Objective 1.2 – **Energy Efficiency:** Implement and establish energy efficient facilities and practices
- ▶ Objective 1.3 – **Nature Access:** Establish and leverage natural recreational opportunities
- ▶ Objective 1.4 – **Community Connections:** Leverage recreational spaces and programs to align and connect communities

11

DRAFT Goals & Objectives

Mentimeter

Goal 2: Accessible Spaces

Maximize accessibility to the Parks and Recreation system and city facilities to ensure inclusivity for all residents while promoting a healthy community

- ▶ Objective 2.1 – **Plan:** Develop and implement the parks and recreation master plan
- ▶ Objective 2.2 – **Access:** Ensure that every resident has access to parks and recreational space citywide
- ▶ Objective 2.3 – **Wellness:** Encourage exploration & growth through diverse physical and educational activities

12



DRAFT Goals & Objectives

Mentimeter

Goal 3: Efficient Management

Manage, maintain, and improve facility assets and infrastructure

► Objective 3.1 – **Proactive Maintenance:** Reduce downtime to city departments with more aggressive preventative and deferred maintenance programs

- **Strategy** – Establish strategic facility improvement plan
- **Strategy** – Provide efficient and effective custodial services

► Objective 3.2 – **Staff Investment:** Promote departmental growth through training and licensing

13

DRAFT Goals & Objectives

Mentimeter

Goal 4: Fiscal Responsibility

Utilize financial resources efficiently and equitably

► Objective 4.1 – **Financial Discipline:** Maintain sound financial discipline

- **Strategy** – Improved utilization of staff versus non-city contractors as a cost savings measure

► Objective 4.2 – **Accounting:** Ensure accurate cost accounting

14



DRAFT Goals & Objectives

Mentimeter

Goal 5: Effective Communication

Promote, model, and embrace effective communication and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders

- ▶ Objective 5.1 – **Consistent Branding:** Increase brand presence and recognition
- ▶ Objective 5.2 – **Community Awareness:** Promote public awareness of parks, recreational opportunities, and citywide special events

15

DRAFT Goals & Objectives

Mentimeter

Goal 6: Successful Partnerships

Leverage partnerships that produce new parks and facilities that are forward thinking and world class

- ▶ Objective 6.1 – **Financial Innovation:** Explore creative operational and capital strategies
 - Strategy – Improve Grant Development
 - Strategy – Establish a Parks Foundation
- ▶ Objective 6.2 – **Increased Tourism:** Improve parks and sports partnerships to increase tourism in Abilene
- ▶ Objective 6.3 – **Forward Thinking:** Be the "next thing" to stay relevant

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Mentimeter

Preliminary Recommendations



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Operational Priorities

Mentimeter

- Expand staff to meet additional program and facility needs – additional offerings will require more staff
- Collaborate for improved marketing and promotion, use of amenities
- Provide more community events (concerts/movies/special events) – city and partnerships
- Add program offerings (fitness & wellness/active adult/nature)

18



How would you rank these operational priorities?

Mentimeter



Systemwide Priorities

Mentimeter

- Address deferred maintenance/improve existing facilities
- Improve ADA access throughout system
- Renovate/replace recreation centers, add in south
- Continue to develop and connect trails
 - Implement Cedar Creek Waterway Trail plan
 - Improve connectivity between parks (including adjoining) and neighborhoods
- Improve/expand trails within parks
 - Kirby Lake trail
 - Replace/add within smaller parks

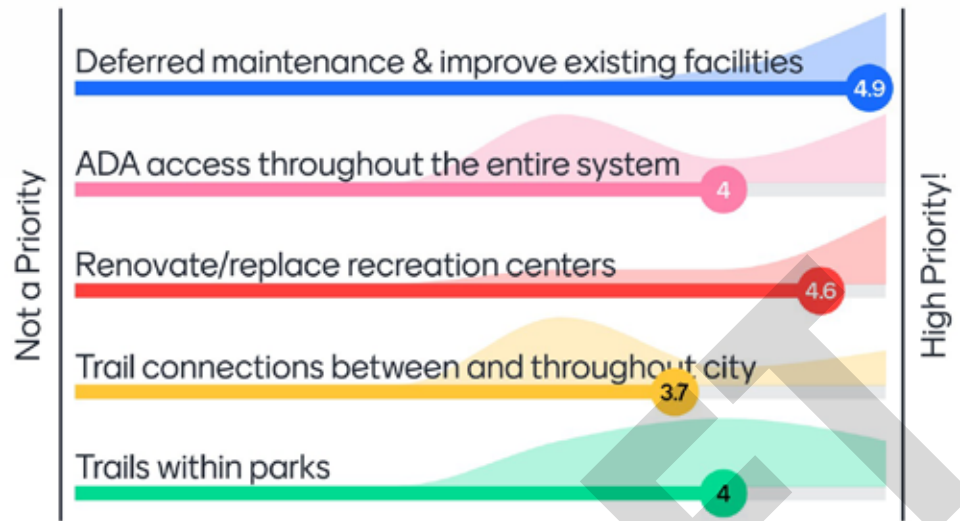


19



How would you rank these systemwide priorities?

Mentimeter



Systemwide Priorities

Mentimeter

- New community park in southwest Abilene (city owned land?)
- Add new neighborhood parks – in underserved areas (potentially using city owned land where available)
- Diamond fields – renovate throughout, expand Kirby Lake
- Multipurpose rectangular/flat field complex – soccer/lacrosse/football etc. (partnership)
- Find alternative funding streams – grants, donations, partnerships, possible tax for capital improvements, park foundation
- Wayfinding/signage – throughout system

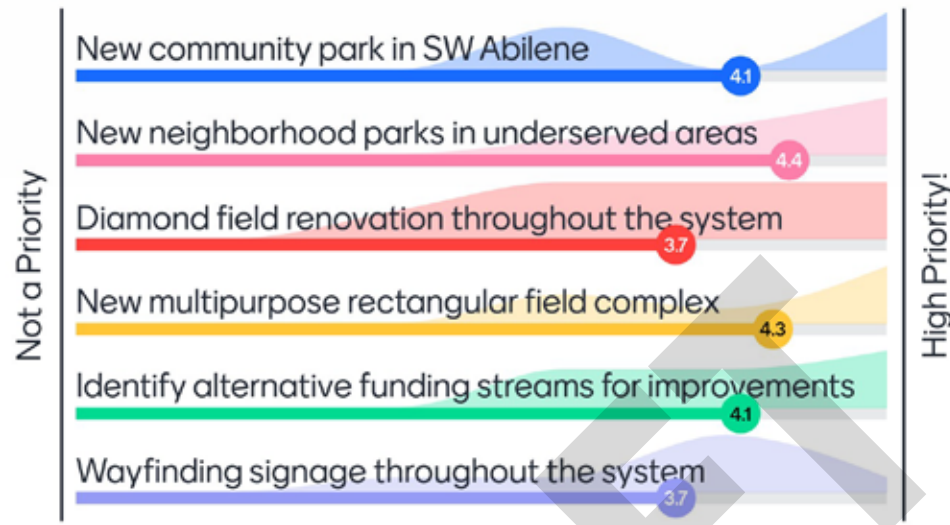


20



How would you rank these systemwide priorities?

Mentimeter



Facility Improvements

Mentimeter

- Restrooms (update/improve)
- Shade throughout system
- Adventure Cove – expand aquatic center
- Splash pads – improve/add
- Dog park – relocate and improve
- Playground replacement/upgrades – unique, engaging features
- Pickleball – fast growing, need dedicated courts (Rose Park?)

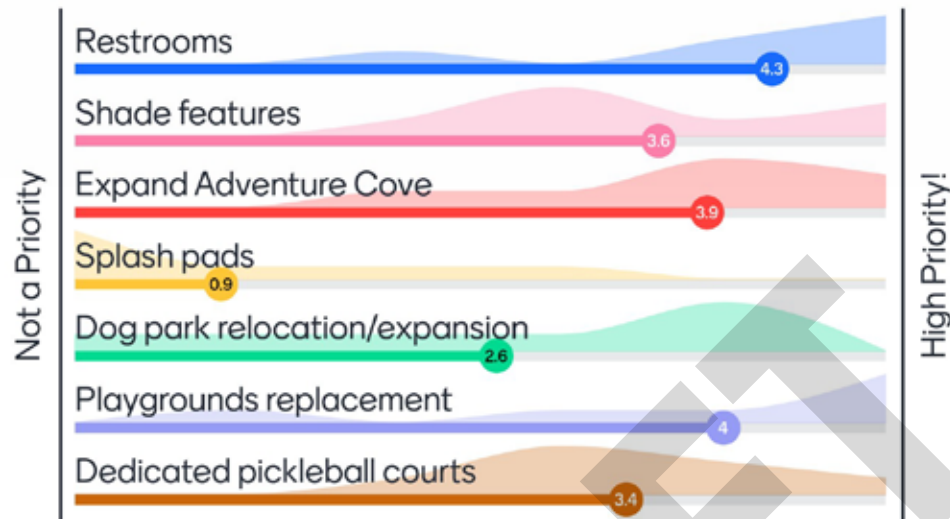


21



How would you rank these facility improvements?

Mentimeter



Facility Improvements

Mentimeter

- Hockey rink – renovate/replace
- Skatepark – update/improve
- Mountain bike trails – bring Buck Creek into system
- Community gardens
- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Picnic shelters – update/improve
- Support features – security, seating, bottle fillers/drinking fountains
- Other

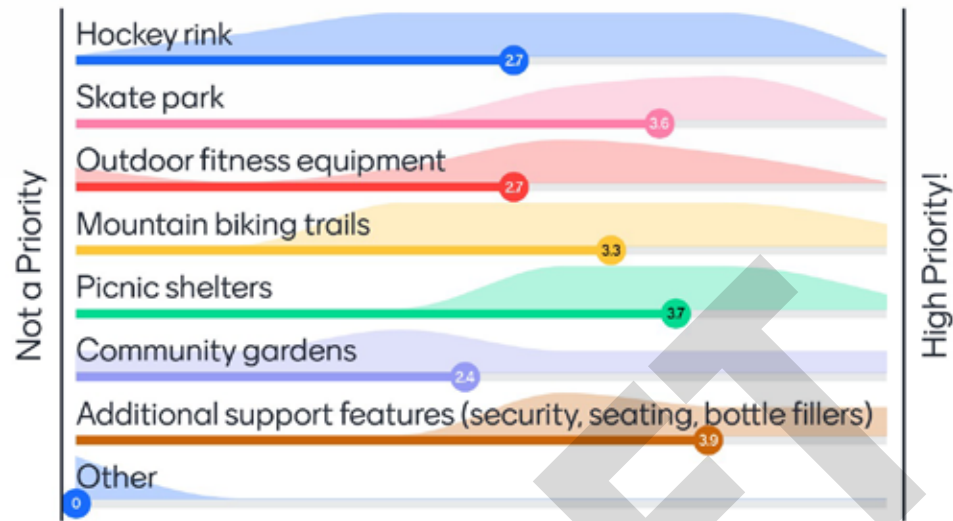


22



How would you rank these facility improvements?

Mentimeter



Mentimeter



Final Steps

- ▶ Finalize Strategic Plan
- ▶ Finalize **Recommendations**
- ▶ Determine **Individual Park Recommendations**
 - ▶ Identify **Capital Costs**
- ▶ Action Plan & Draft Report
- ▶ **Final Meeting to Review Draft Report**
- ▶ Present to City Council



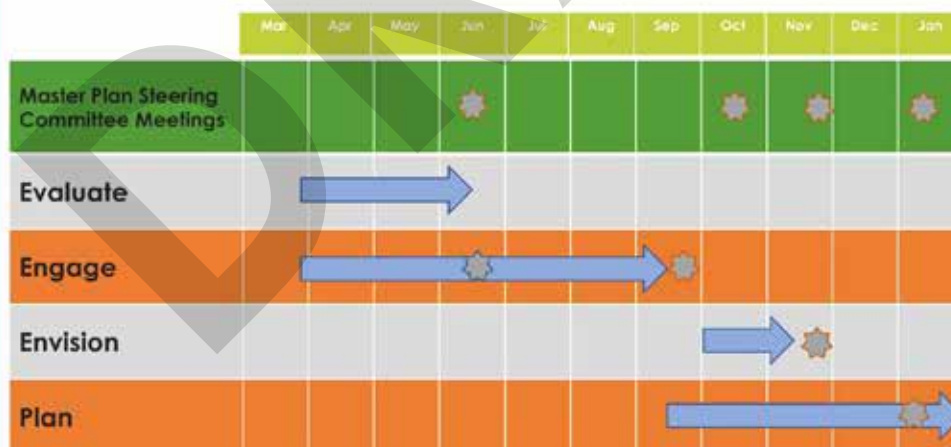
Mentimeter

24

Planning Timeline



Mentimeter



25



Mentimeter



Questions? Let's Talk!

What's next:

- Finalize Strategic Plan
- More Detailed Recommendations
- Draft Master Plan
- Final presentation to City Council



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DRAFT



**CONFERENCE MEMORANDUM
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #3
ABILENE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PROJECT NO. 22039**

ATTENDING: David Pitman, Park Board Chair
Lesli Andrews
Chris Gibson
Richard Rodgers
Jesus Coronado
Bobby Brown
Ann Hall

BY: Patrick Hoagland, Brandstetter Carroll Inc.
Keith Rodenhauser, Brandstetter Carroll Inc.



November 30, 2022

BCI made a presentation of the draft Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives. Discussions were held and the updated draft results are attached.

Preliminary Recommendations

Following this discussion, preliminary recommendations were presented and rated by the Committee. The following items were discussed:

A. Operational Recommendations

1. The recommendations for expanded staff should be revised to right-size the staff level based on the facilities and programs offered. This should also not be the first item presented. Stress that facilities and programs should be evaluated to ensure they are right for the community. Need to evaluate what they offer. Begin the conversation with an explanation that the community desires parks maintained at a higher level.

B. Systemwide Priorities

1. Remove the word "Waterway" from the Cedar Creek Trail Plan

C. Facilities

1. Add a splash pad at Valentine Park (formerly Lee Park)
2. Dog Park – Want positive activities at Kirby Park. Not Cal Young Park as there is an animal shelter to be developed in this area. Possibly in University Park, but much of it is on the flood plain.
3. Community Garden – Has not worked well in the past.
4. Need to dredge the ponds at Nelson Park and Cal Young Lake.

Next Steps

1. The next Park Board meeting is January 17 at 8:30 am. Info is needed by 1/10. The Draft Plan should be presented then with a motion to forward it to Council for approval.
2. Council presentation would be February 9. Information needs to be to Council by 1/31. Council meeting is at 8:30 am.
3. Another option is to present to Park Board on 2/14 and Council on 2/23.

If you should disagree with any information contained herein, please kindly notify our office in writing within 10 days of receipt of this memorandum.



DRAFT



APPENDIX E - CORE PROGRAM COMPONENTS

CORE PROGRAM CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

E.1 ATHLETICS

Definition: Leisure activities which focus on skill development and athletic enjoyment.

1. Audience:

- Team
- Individuals
- All ages

2. Formats:

- Seasonal
- Rec League
- Competitive
- Participant & Spectator
- Progressive levels of skill development

3. Athletic activities provide the opportunity to:

- Enjoy physical activity and have fun
- Develop and maintain an effective level of physical fitness
- Utilize a positive outlet for aggressive behavior
- Provide an opportunity to feel connected to and participate with a group (socialization).
- Participate in healthy competition
- Develop sportsmanship and character

4. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Badminton | ▪ Fencing | ▪ Ice hockey |
| ▪ Baseball | ▪ Flag football | ▪ Skating |
| ▪ Basketball | ▪ Golf | ▪ Soccer |
| ▪ Bocce | ▪ Lacrosse | ▪ Softball |
| ▪ Bowling | ▪ Martial arts | ▪ Swim team |
| ▪ Cricket | ▪ Pickleball | ▪ Tennis |
| ▪ Cycling | ▪ Racquet ball | ▪ Ultimate frisbee |
| ▪ Equestrian programs | ▪ Roller hockey | ▪ Volleyball |
| | | ▪ Evolving and new sports |

E.2 HEALTH, FITNESS, AND WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

Definition: Leisure activities which focus on body movement oriented in direction of fitness, skill development, and physical enjoyment.

1. Audience:

- Individuals
- Groups
- Seniors (e.g., Silver Sneakers)



- Youth
- All ages

2. Formats:

- Seasonal
- Participant & spectator
- Progressive levels of skill development

3. Activities provide the opportunity to:

- Have fun
- Develop and maintain an effective level of physical fitness
- Utilize a positive outlet for aggressive behavior
- Provide an opportunity to feel connected to and participate with a group (socialization)
- Compete
- Develop sportsmanship and character

4. Topics include (not limited to):

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ■ Aerobics | ■ Walking clubs | ■ Cardio hikes |
| ■ Cycling | ■ Therapeutic horseback riding | ■ 5/10k runs |
| ■ Fitness activities | ■ Movement fitness | ■ Snowshoeing |
| ■ Boot camp | ■ Yoga | ■ Water aerobics and exercise |
| ■ Barre | ■ Paddling | ■ Swimming |
| ■ Cross country skiing | ■ Walking | ■ Weight lifting |

E.3 HEALTH AND WELLNESS EDUCATION

Definition: These programs go beyond the traditional view of recreation and promote the individual's optimal well being physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually.

1. Format:

- Testing/screening
- Instructional workshops and classes
- Speakers
- Community forums
- Partnerships/programs with other agencies

2. Health, Wellness and Educational Programs provide opportunities to:

- Extend and continue the learning process
- Create public awareness and understanding
- Allow the individual to feel connected to his/her community
- Enhance self-esteem

3. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Stress management | ■ Healthcare assistance (e.G. Signing up for medicare) |
| ■ Cessation programs (e.G., Quitting smoking & substance abuse support) | ■ Personal training |
| ■ Nutrition & weight control | ■ Diabetes support |
| ■ Vision screening | ■ Arthritis therapy |
| | ■ Heart health activities |



E.4 CREATIVE ARTS

Definition: Activities that result in the creation of something tangible. The process usually involves artistic expression or effort of the imagination:

1. Format:

- Progressive skill development
- Individual and/or group projects
- Exhibits, shows, displays
- Classes and workshops

2. Creative Arts provide the opportunity to:

- Express creativity
- Work with hands
- Develop fine motor skills
- Enhance the appreciation for the arts
- Give personal satisfaction and pride in accomplishment

3. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- Ceramics/Glass
 - Glazing & staining
 - Greenware
 - Hand building
 - Raku
 - Stained glass
 - Wheel (throwing)
- Crafts
 - Copper foil art
 - Paper making
 - Decoupage
 - Papier mache
 - Enameling
 - Plaster crafts
 - Jewelry making
 - Plastic crafts
 - Mobiles
 - Print making
 - Book-binding
 - Mosaics
 - Silk screening
 - Paper crafts
 - Wood working
- Drawing/Painting-Calligraphy
 - Pastels
 - Cartooning
 - Pen & ink
 - Charcoal
 - Sketching
 - Mixed media
 - Water colors
 - Oil
 - Preschool drawing
- Fabric
 - Batik
 - Needle point
 - Crochet
 - Quilting
 - Knitting
 - Sewing



- Photography
 - Composition
 - Pinhole cameras
 - Using 35mm cameras
 - Digital workshops
- Sculpture
 - Casting
 - Plaster
 - Clay
 - Soft (fabric)
 - Mobiles
 - Wire
 - Paper
- Weaving
 - Basketry
 - Dyeing
 - On or off the loom
 - Spinning

E.5 PERFORMING ARTS

Definition: Activities that allow the participant to use their own self as the medium of expression. The process of "doing" is important whether or not an audience is involved.

1. Formats:

- Progressive skill level development
- Classes and workshops
- Knowledge-sharing
- Special events
- Neighborhood projects

2. Performing and Creative Arts provide the opportunity to:

- Discover themselves as a person, by being creatively involved in learning new skills, exploring and expressing talents
- Create their own entertainment
- Enjoy artistic expression at all ages
- Develop and enrich cultural appreciation

3. Types of Activities:

- Dance
 - Ballet
 - Ballroom dance
 - Clogging
 - Creative movement
 - Folk dance
 - Jazz dance
 - Modern dance
 - Square dance
 - Tap dance
 - Line dancing
- Drama
 - Acting
 - Backstage crafts & set-making
 - Games, charades, stunts, and skits
 - Pantomime and improvisation
 - Poetry readings
 - Puppetry
 - Storytelling
 - Theater groups



- Music
 - Choral groups
 - Guitar
 - Piano
 - Rhythm instruments (bells, triangles, blocks, drums)
 - Recorder
 - Singing
 - Talent/variety shows
 - Special needs music program
 - Music fundamentals

E.6 CONCERTS AND PERFORMANCES

Definition: Activities in which the person is a spectator of a cultural performance.

1. Formats:

- Progressive skill level development
- Special events
- Concerts, live shows, screenings, etc.

2. Cultural Performances provide the opportunity to:

- Provide the participant with the opportunity to discover and appreciate various forms of performing arts
- Serves to develop and enrich cultural appreciation

3. Types of Activities:

- Ballet
- Musical performances
- Concerts, recitals
- Theater - plays
- Musicals
- Talent shows

E.7 EDUCATION, LIFE SKILLS, AND FUN

Definition: Programs that offer fun and educational activities which can be enjoyed for a lifetime.

1. Audience:

- Individuals
- Families
- Group
- All ages or specific age range

2. Format:

- Instructional workshop or class
- Speaker/presenters
- Travel program itinerary

3. Education and Life Skills Programs provide opportunities to:

- Enhance a skill
- Improve safety and awareness
- Learn
- Explore
- Socialize



4. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- Informational referrals
- Parenting skills
- CPR & first aid
- G.E.D. Programs
- Tutoring
- Summer camp
- Personal safety
- Baby sitting classes
- Computer skills
- How-to classes
- Tax assistance
- Social meetings
- Financial literacy training and assistance
- Introductory classes or activities
- Group outings/travel
- Scout programs
- Aquatics
 - Swim lessons
 - Red cross courses
 - Scuba

E.8 COMMUNITY AND ANNUAL EVENTS

Definition: Activities that bring the community together to celebrate holidays, seasons, traditions, local makers, etc. May overlap with Cultural Performances.

1. Formats:

- Large gatherings in parks or along parade routes
- Admission fee – may or may not charge

2. Events provide opportunities to:

- Gather with community to celebrate holidays, events and traditions
- Meet neighbors
- Build a sense of unity and shared experience

3. Types of Activities:

- Festivals
- Parades
- Fairs
- Concerts
- Cultural celebrations
- July 4th fireworks
- Holiday events
- Seasonal events
- Social activities
- Movies
- Markets (art, crafts, etc.)

E.9 GAMES

Definition: Activities oriented around play and governed by specific rules; intended to provide challenges, diversion and enjoyment.

1. Audience:

- Groups
- Individuals
- Youth
- Seniors
- Families
- All ages



2. Formats:

- Active or semi-active group games
- Social games, mixers, ice breakers
- Mental games, quizzes, puzzles, paper & pencil games
- Table and equipment games
- Quiet games

3. Games provide the opportunity to:

- Develop ability to cooperate effectively with others
- Learn to accept and abide by the rules of the game
- Accept victory and/or defeat in good spirit
- Learn perseverance
- Develop good sportsmanship and consideration for the rights of others
- Learn to take turns and to accept boundary limits (either in a physical sense, or in terms of personal behavior)

4. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- Air hockey
- Billiards
- Board & table games
- Cards
- Checkers
- Chess
- Dominoes
- Cornhole
- Horse shoes
- Low organized games (lead-up, relays, tag, dodge ball)
- Magic stunts & tricks
- Table tennis
- Shuffleboard
- Skittles
- Word games
- World wide games
- Fooseball

E.10 NATURE/OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

Definition: Activities that are best conducted outdoors and that have, in some way, a direct relationship with nature or place the participant in direct contact with the elements.

1. Audience

- Individuals
- Groups
- All ages

2. Format:

- Classes/workshops
- Teambuilding
- Program partnerships with other agencies
- Role playing
- Field trips
- Sensory awareness activities



- School activities
- Summer camp

3. Outdoor education activities provide the opportunity to:

- Develop an awareness and appreciation of our natural resources
- Develop skills for adaptation to vocational or leisure pursuits

4. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ▪ Bird feeding & watching | ▪ Archery |
| ▪ Sledding | ▪ Paddling (canoe and kayak) |
| ▪ Orienteering | ▪ Hiking |
| ▪ Canoeing | ▪ Fishing / fishing derby |
| ▪ Kayaking | ▪ Geocaching |
| ▪ Nature play | ▪ Pet shows |
| ▪ Camping | ▪ Repelling/climbing |
| ▪ Glamping (glamour camping) | ▪ Survival skills |

E.11 GREEN LIVING/ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Definition: Programs and activities that inform and help individuals or groups minimize their impact on the environment in order to provide for a sustainable future.

1. Audience:

- Family
- Individuals
- School groups
- All ages

2. Formats:

- Seasonal events
- Summer camps
- Hands-on activities
- Group hikes
- Field trips

3. Activities provide the opportunity to:

- Learn methods to minimize our footprint on the environment
- Participate with others toward a goal of a more sustainable future
- Learn methods which can be practiced at home and in parks at a larger scale

4. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ▪ Land/wildlife conservation | ▪ Earth day celebrations |
| ▪ Recycling | ▪ Butterfly gardens |
| ▪ Gardening | ▪ Backyard conservation workshops |
| ▪ Rain barrel making | ▪ Composting how-to and support |
| ▪ Small footprint spring cleaning | ▪ Invasive species removal |
| ▪ Landscaping with native plants | ▪ Weather, climate observation |



E.12 HERITAGE AND HISTORY

Definition: Programs that offer educational opportunities to interpret the heritage and history of a community, location, environment, or culture.

1. Audience:

- Families
- School groups
- Individuals
- Tourists

2. Format:

- Instructional workshops and classes
- Speaker presentations
- Reenactments
- Interpretive events

3. Heritage and History Programs provide opportunities to:

- Understand and celebrate local natural and cultural history
- Enjoy nature, heritage, and culture as a family or group
- Feel connected to the environment and local history

4. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- Heritage walks
- Maple sugaring
- Heritage farming methods
- Native American studies
- Storytelling
- Military reenactments
- Live-action museums

E.13 VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Definition: Because parks and recreation department staff cannot possibly perform all of the tasks needed to accomplish their mission, volunteers are necessary. Through programs that coordinate, educate, and supervise volunteers the work of the department can be carried out in an efficient, effective, and communal manner.

1. Audience:

- Individuals
- Families
- Group
- Partners

2. Volunteer Training Programs provide opportunities to:

- Participate toward the overall goals of the department
- Assist in tasks that are beyond the staff limitations of the agency (help to accomplish tasks in a timely and efficient manner)
- Be an integral part of an organization protecting the environment and supporting facilities and programs offered
- Gain experience using a wide array of skills
- Share interests with people of all ages
- Improve overall quality of life through community connectedness
- Receive professional training on a variety of topics
- Learn about the natural world



- Foster friendships
- Interact with park visitors
- Exercise in the great outdoors
- Be creative

3. Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- Orientations
- Park cleanups
- Educational session leader training
- Nature center hosts
- Naturalist training
- Invasive species removal
- Adopt a park/trail
- Trail patrol and maintenance
- Sustainable trail building
- Conservation orientation

E.14 ADAPTIVE & THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

Definition: Programs and activities for those with disabilities or special needs to improve quality of life and facilitate participation.

Audience:

- Individuals
- Family
- All ages

Formats:

XActivities provide the opportunity to:

- Improve physical and cognitive abilities
- Increase confidence and self-esteem
- Foster greater involvement in the community
- Strengthen interpersonal skills and relationships
- Encourage a greater sense of accomplishment
- Realize the benefits of a healthy leisure lifestyle

Types of Activities Include (not limited to):

- Adaptive fitness classes
- Adaptive water skiing
- Camping trips
- Ceramics
- Community excursions for all ages
- Cooking
- Crafts
- Cycling
- Hiking
- Instructional sports
- League sports
- Martial arts & safety
- Music
- Sensory programs
- Social & theme dances
- Social events
- Special Olympics
- Swim exercise/open swim
- Swim lessons
- Teen events
- Theater
- Walking
- Wheelchair basketball
- Wheelchair rugby
- Wheelchair tennis
- Yoga

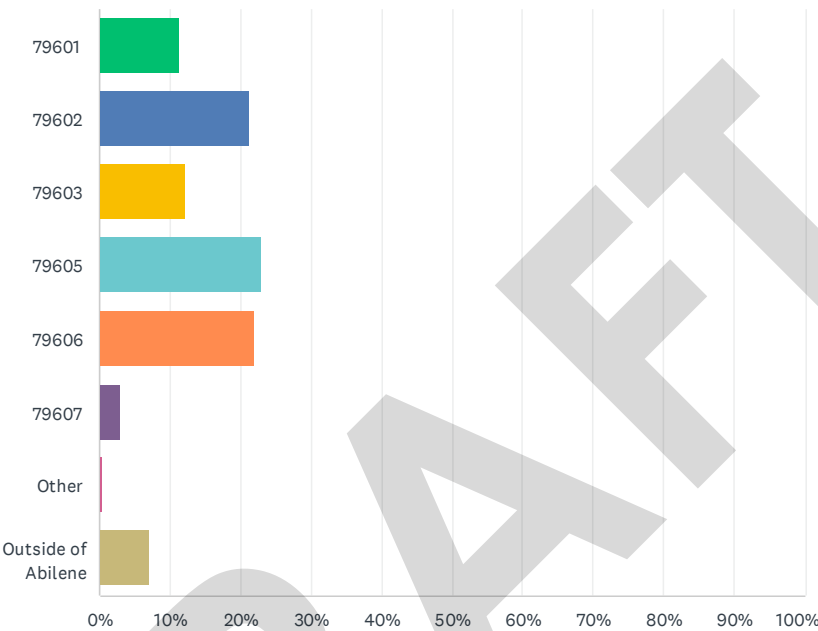


APPENDIX F - SURVEY REPORT

Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q1 Where do you live in Abilene? Please select your zip code.

Answered: 999 Skipped: 0



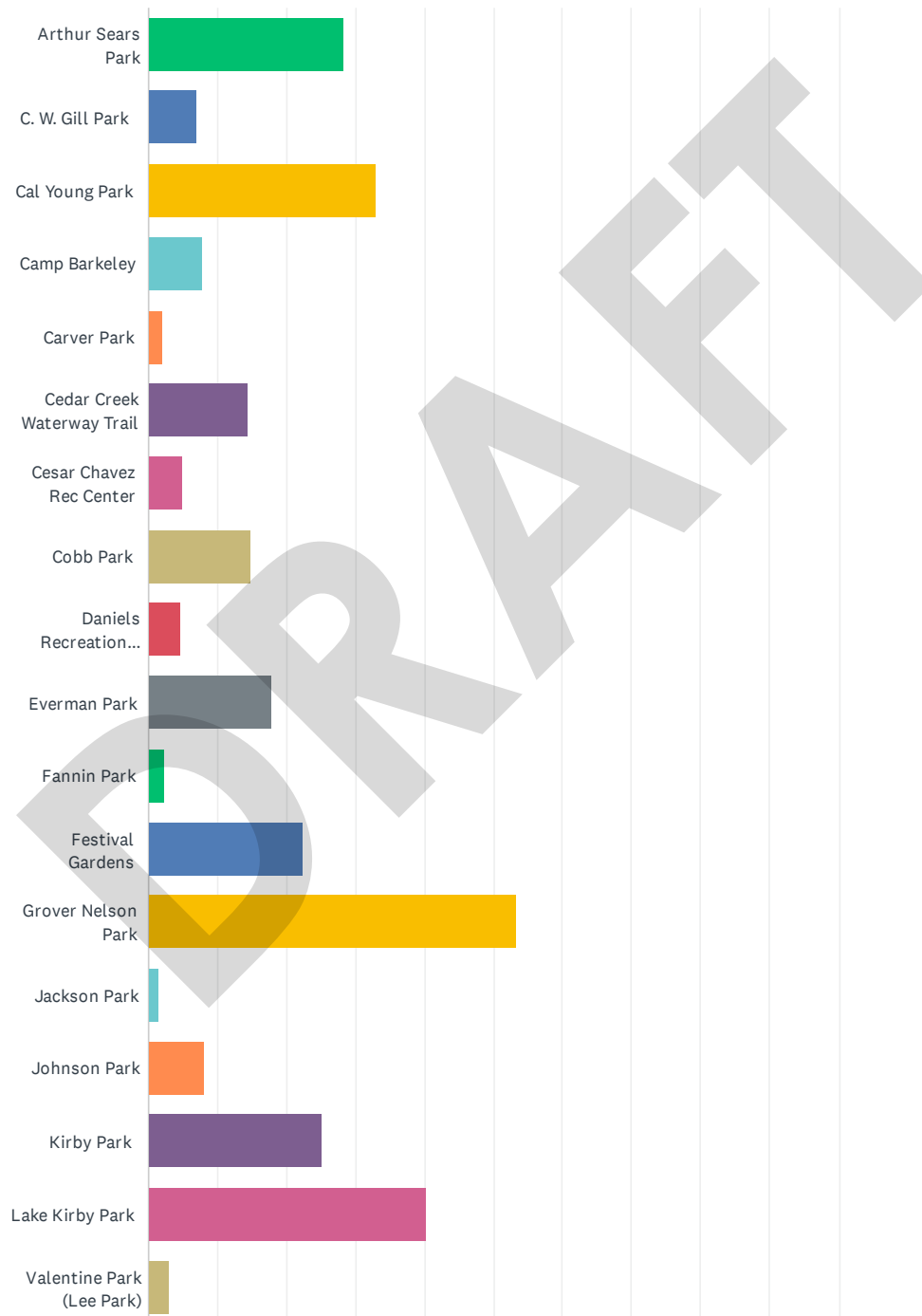
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
79601	11.21% 112
79602	21.42% 214
79603	12.21% 122
79605	22.92% 229
79606	21.92% 219
79607	2.90% 29
Other	0.40% 4
Outside of Abilene	7.01% 70
TOTAL	999



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q2 Please CHECK ALL parks and facilities in Abilene that you or your household members visited in the PAST YEAR.

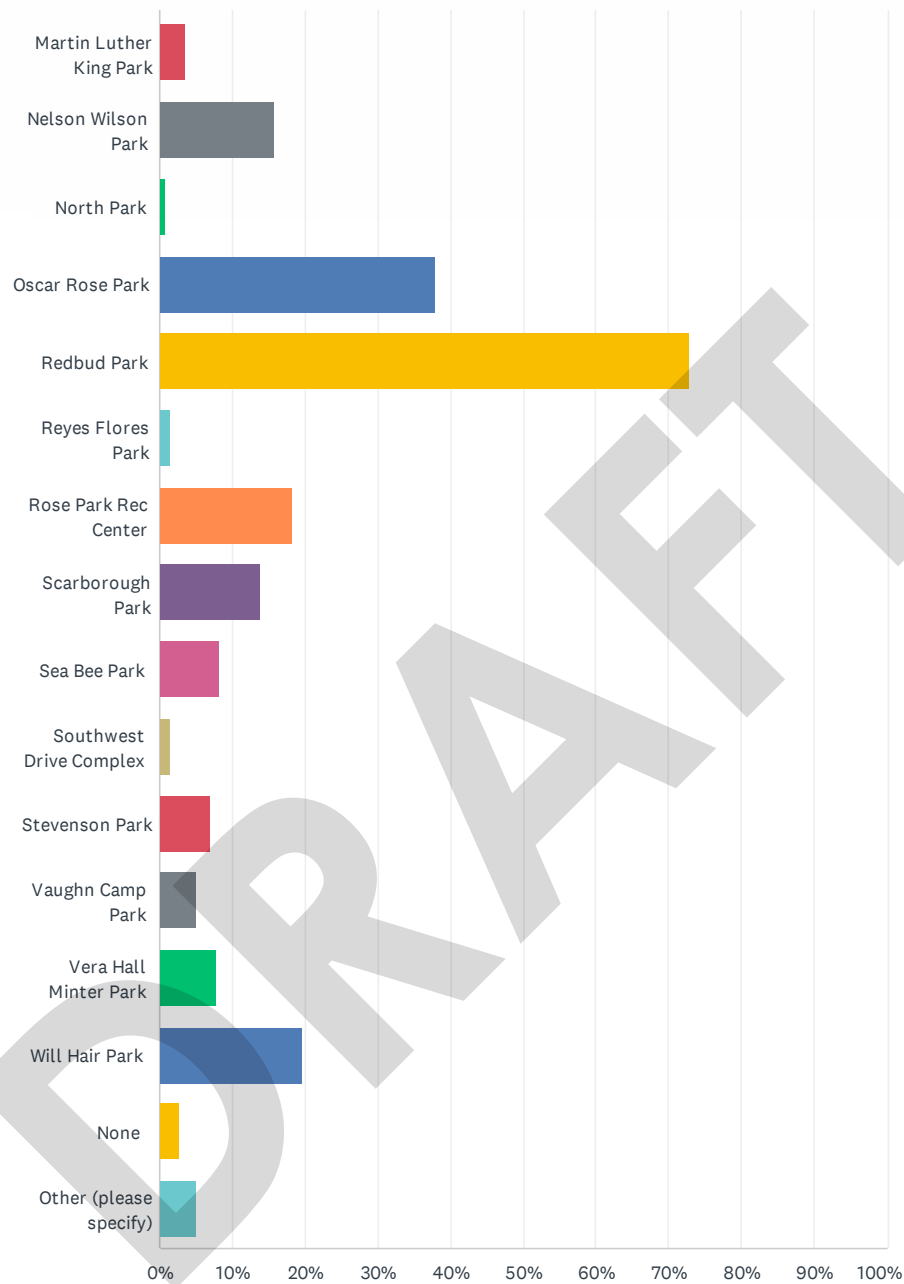
Answered: 993 Skipped: 6



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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Arthur Sears Park	28.30%	281
C. W. Gill Park	7.05%	70
Cal Young Park	33.03%	328
Camp Barkeley	7.85%	78
Carver Park	2.22%	22
Cedar Creek Waterway Trail	14.60%	145
Cesar Chavez Rec Center	4.83%	48
Cobb Park	14.90%	148
Daniels Recreation Center	4.63%	46
Everman Park	17.82%	177
Fannin Park	2.32%	23
Festival Gardens	22.36%	222
Grover Nelson Park	53.27%	529
Jackson Park	1.51%	15
Johnson Park	8.06%	80
Kirby Park	25.08%	249
Lake Kirby Park	40.28%	400
Valentine Park (Lee Park)	2.92%	29
Martin Luther King Park	3.52%	35
Nelson Wilson Park	15.71%	156
North Park	0.81%	8
Oscar Rose Park	37.87%	376
Redbud Park	73.01%	725
Reyes Flores Park	1.41%	14
Rose Park Rec Center	18.33%	182
Scarborough Park	13.90%	138
Sea Bee Park	8.36%	83
Southwest Drive Complex	1.51%	15
Stevenson Park	6.95%	69
Vaughn Camp Park	5.14%	51
Vera Hall Minter Park	7.85%	78
Will Hair Park	19.54%	194



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

None	2.82%	28
Other (please specify)	5.14%	51
Total Respondents: 993		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Abilene Hockey	8/6/2022 12:28 AM
2	We went to a number but we're new to town so I forget names	8/4/2022 10:50 AM
3	Purcell playground	7/20/2022 11:43 PM
4	Adventure Cove	7/18/2022 1:23 PM
5	Softball/baseball fields at Nelson park	7/17/2022 7:43 PM
6	Skate park	7/12/2022 3:22 PM
7	Rose Park Skate Park	7/12/2022 1:35 AM
8	Ft. Phantom lake, prairie dog park	7/11/2022 8:58 PM
9	Adamson-Spalding Storybook Garden	7/11/2022 12:36 PM
10	Rose Park Tennis. Center specifically	7/11/2022 10:49 AM
11	Adventure Cove	7/10/2022 9:01 PM
12	Lee park	7/10/2022 5:22 PM
13	GIVE SOME DAMN MONEY TO MAXWELL GOLF COURSE!	7/10/2022 9:22 AM
14	Cobb Park Rec Center	6/30/2022 12:41 AM
15	We play softball all the time at Kirby.	6/29/2022 10:56 PM
16	Abilene Swim Club	6/29/2022 3:50 PM
17	ACU walking path	6/29/2022 3:15 PM
18	Abilene state park	6/29/2022 8:43 AM
19	Lee	6/29/2022 12:21 AM
20	Adventure Cove	6/28/2022 11:08 PM
21	Fort Imagination / Abilene Zoo	6/28/2022 10:54 PM
22	GV Daniels Rec Center	6/28/2022 9:43 PM
23	Any park that has a waterway near it.	6/28/2022 8:18 PM
24	Adventure cove	6/28/2022 7:34 PM
25	State Park	6/28/2022 6:27 PM
26	Zoo	6/27/2022 9:23 AM
27	Abilene Hockey	6/26/2022 9:53 PM
28	The one by the zoo forgot its name	6/23/2022 4:45 PM
29	Phantom Hill, Anson North Lake	6/23/2022 2:30 PM
30	Several but I don't know their names	6/23/2022 1:48 PM
31	Abilene State Park	6/23/2022 12:59 PM
32	Unknown	6/23/2022 10:45 AM
33	Cobb Recreation Center	6/23/2022 9:34 AM
34	Abilene State Park, Zoo	6/22/2022 6:19 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

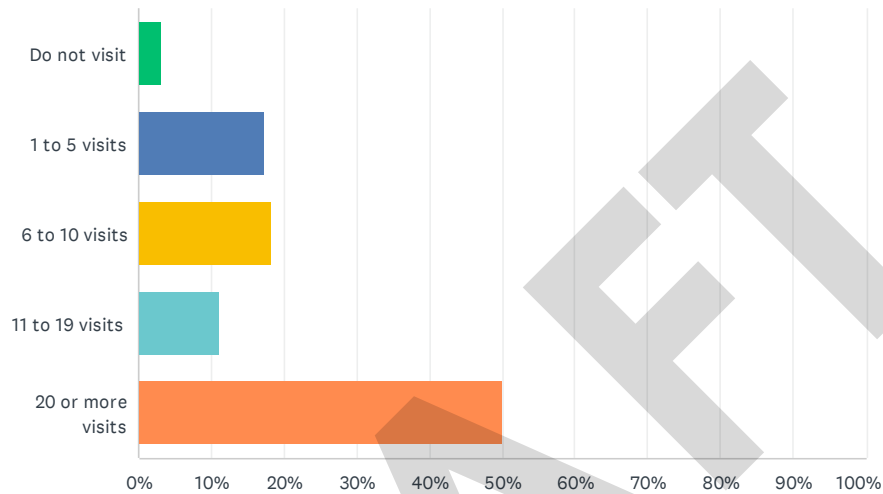
35	Rose Park Gym	6/21/2022 3:13 PM
36	Adventure Cove	6/21/2022 12:00 PM
37	Abilene Hockey Rink	6/18/2022 5:55 PM
38	Hockey at cal young	6/17/2022 2:01 PM
39	Roller hockey	6/17/2022 1:27 PM
40	Lee Complex	6/16/2022 9:58 PM
41	Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 9:57 PM
42	Hockey rink. We need a new one	6/16/2022 9:40 PM
43	Abilene Hockey	6/16/2022 8:05 PM
44	Adventure Cove	6/16/2022 8:05 PM
45	Abilene hockey	6/16/2022 7:54 PM
46	Lee complex	6/16/2022 7:48 PM
47	Adventure Cove	6/16/2022 6:49 PM
48	Hockey rink at cal young	6/16/2022 12:15 PM
49	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:29 PM
50	Abilene Hockey Rink	6/15/2022 6:19 PM
51	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:11 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q3 How often do you or members of your household visit parks, recreation centers, and recreation facilities offered by the City of Abilene in a year?

Answered: 999 Skipped: 0



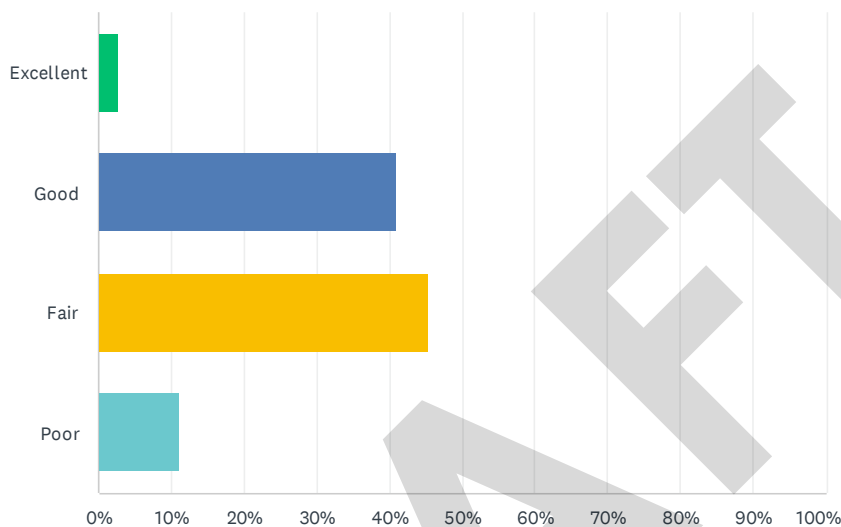
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Do not visit	3.10%	31
1 to 5 visits	17.32%	173
6 to 10 visits	18.42%	184
11 to 19 visits	11.01%	110
20 or more visits	50.15%	501
TOTAL		999



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q4 How would you rate the physical condition of the outdoor parks and recreation facilities you have visited in Abilene?

Answered: 963 Skipped: 36



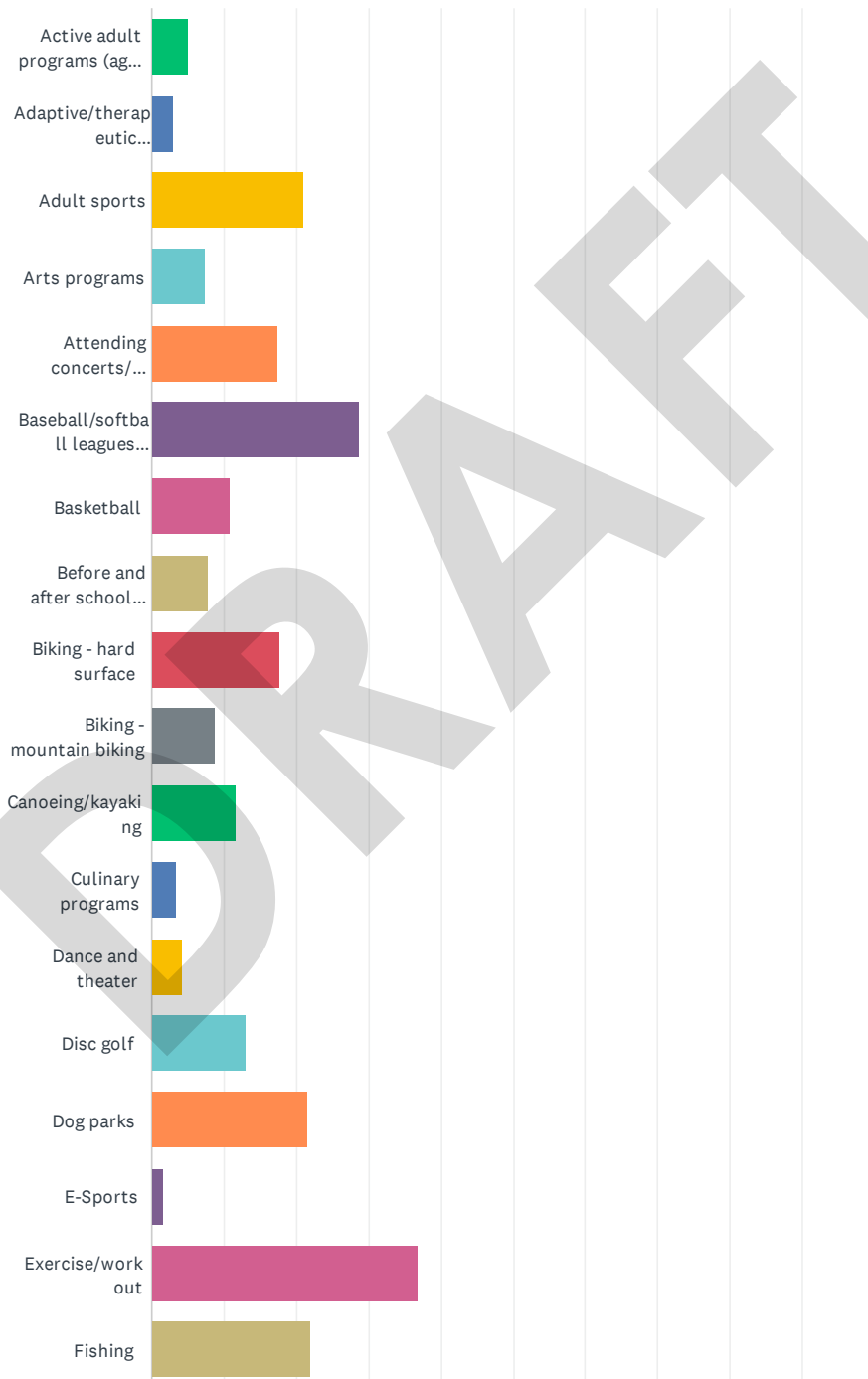
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	2.70%	26
Good	40.91%	394
Fair	45.38%	437
Poor	11.01%	106
TOTAL		963



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q5 Please check ALL ACTIVITIES you or your household members typically enjoy at parks or facilities in Abilene in a year.

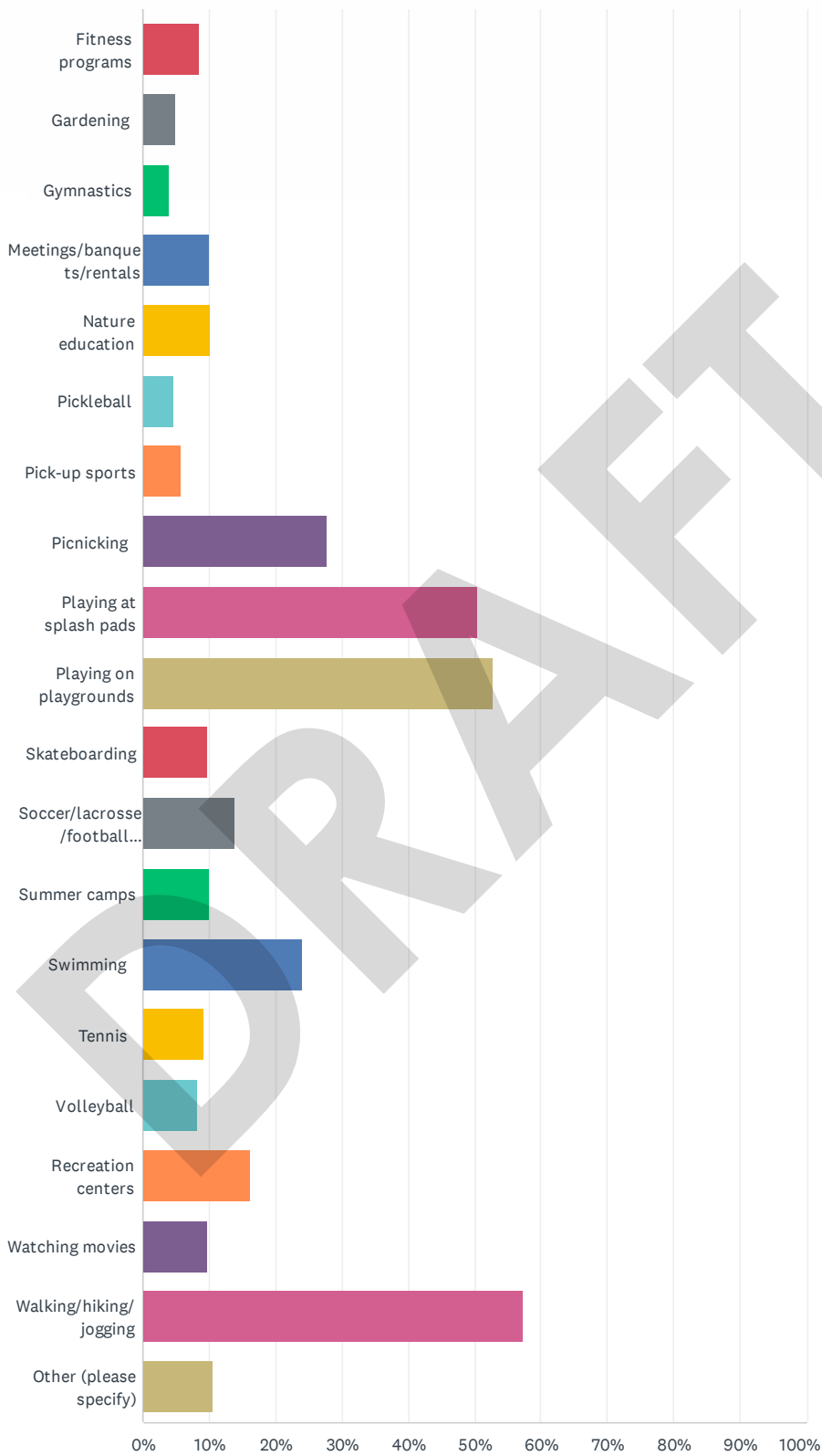
Answered: 943 Skipped: 56



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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey



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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Tennis	9.12%	86
Volleyball	8.27%	78
Recreation centers	16.12%	152
Watching movies	9.76%	92
Walking/hiking/jogging	57.37%	541
Other (please specify)	10.71%	101
Total Respondents: 943		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Abilene Hockey	8/6/2022 12:29 AM
2	I just kinda vibe, dude	7/25/2022 6:26 PM
3	Camp Barkeley south of town? Lots of firearms training, preparedness courses, and spiritual training/worship	7/21/2022 4:54 PM
4	Playground	7/21/2022 9:07 AM
5	Dog walks	7/20/2022 10:29 AM
6	I was a visitor to lead kids in the after school programs for prevention education and recreational games.	7/18/2022 2:17 PM
7	Political rallies & events	7/18/2022 8:01 AM
8	Softball at Nelson park	7/17/2022 7:44 PM
9	roller skating	7/17/2022 7:14 PM
10	Swim lessons	7/16/2022 1:29 AM
11	Walking my dog on walking path	7/15/2022 10:25 AM
12	Community events like Dia de Los Niños	7/14/2022 2:00 PM
13	civic events	7/12/2022 12:43 PM
14	none	7/12/2022 10:19 AM
15	I would check canoe/kayak but didnt know we had that.	7/11/2022 9:50 PM
16	None	7/11/2022 2:38 PM
17	Our soccer team uses Rose Park for practice 2X a week	7/10/2022 9:04 PM
18	Birding	7/10/2022 11:57 AM
19	I think, in my opinion that our neighborhood needs a swimming pool that anybody could go to. There is a pool in our neighborhood but you have to pay close to \$400.00 for a membership. That's not fair to the low income people in our neighborhood.	7/10/2022 9:47 AM
20	water aerobics	7/10/2022 9:26 AM
21	FIX THE DAMN GOLF COURSE!	7/10/2022 9:23 AM
22	Pick up trash	7/10/2022 8:01 AM
23	skateboarding	7/9/2022 11:40 PM
24	Adult slow pitch softball	7/1/2022 7:00 PM
25	Rollerskating	7/1/2022 9:09 AM
26	Softball	6/29/2022 7:21 PM
27	inline hockey	6/29/2022 4:35 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

28	H	6/29/2022 4:25 PM
29	Slowpitch softball	6/29/2022 1:27 PM
30	Running in Parks	6/28/2022 10:55 PM
31	Splash pad	6/28/2022 10:22 PM
32	Siftball	6/28/2022 9:32 PM
33	Softball	6/28/2022 9:02 PM
34	Practices for above sports	6/28/2022 5:51 PM
35	Bird watching, nature photography	6/28/2022 5:50 PM
36	Abilene Hockey	6/26/2022 9:54 PM
37	Mother Daughter city event	6/24/2022 7:58 PM
38	Fishing	6/24/2022 9:44 AM
39	Dual sport/trail riding motorcycles	6/23/2022 3:41 PM
40	hiking	6/23/2022 3:32 PM
41	more Disc Golf	6/23/2022 9:05 AM
42	I am in a wheelchair, and would like to be able to roll in a nature related environment. Like the new trail area just off of south 11th.	6/22/2022 5:57 PM
43	Boating (power boat)	6/21/2022 11:02 PM
44	Football	6/21/2022 3:49 PM
45	Pickleball at Rose park gym	6/21/2022 2:54 PM
46	Water Park	6/21/2022 12:00 PM
47	Hockey	6/20/2022 11:50 PM
48	hockey	6/20/2022 9:52 AM
49	inline hockey	6/20/2022 9:48 AM
50	softball (adult)	6/20/2022 9:39 AM
51	Running	6/20/2022 9:32 AM
52	Hockey	6/20/2022 9:31 AM
53	Other	6/20/2022 8:25 AM
54	Hockey	6/20/2022 8:20 AM
55	Hockey	6/18/2022 5:56 PM
56	Playing hockey at cal young park	6/17/2022 4:19 PM
57	Roller hockey	6/17/2022 3:14 PM
58	Little League Hockey	6/17/2022 1:44 PM
59	Hockey	6/17/2022 1:29 PM
60	Trails	6/17/2022 10:00 AM
61	Abilene Hockey	6/17/2022 8:17 AM
62	Abilene Hockey	6/16/2022 10:50 PM
63	Hockey	6/16/2022 9:58 PM
64	Hockey	6/16/2022 9:41 PM
65	Hockey	6/16/2022 9:26 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

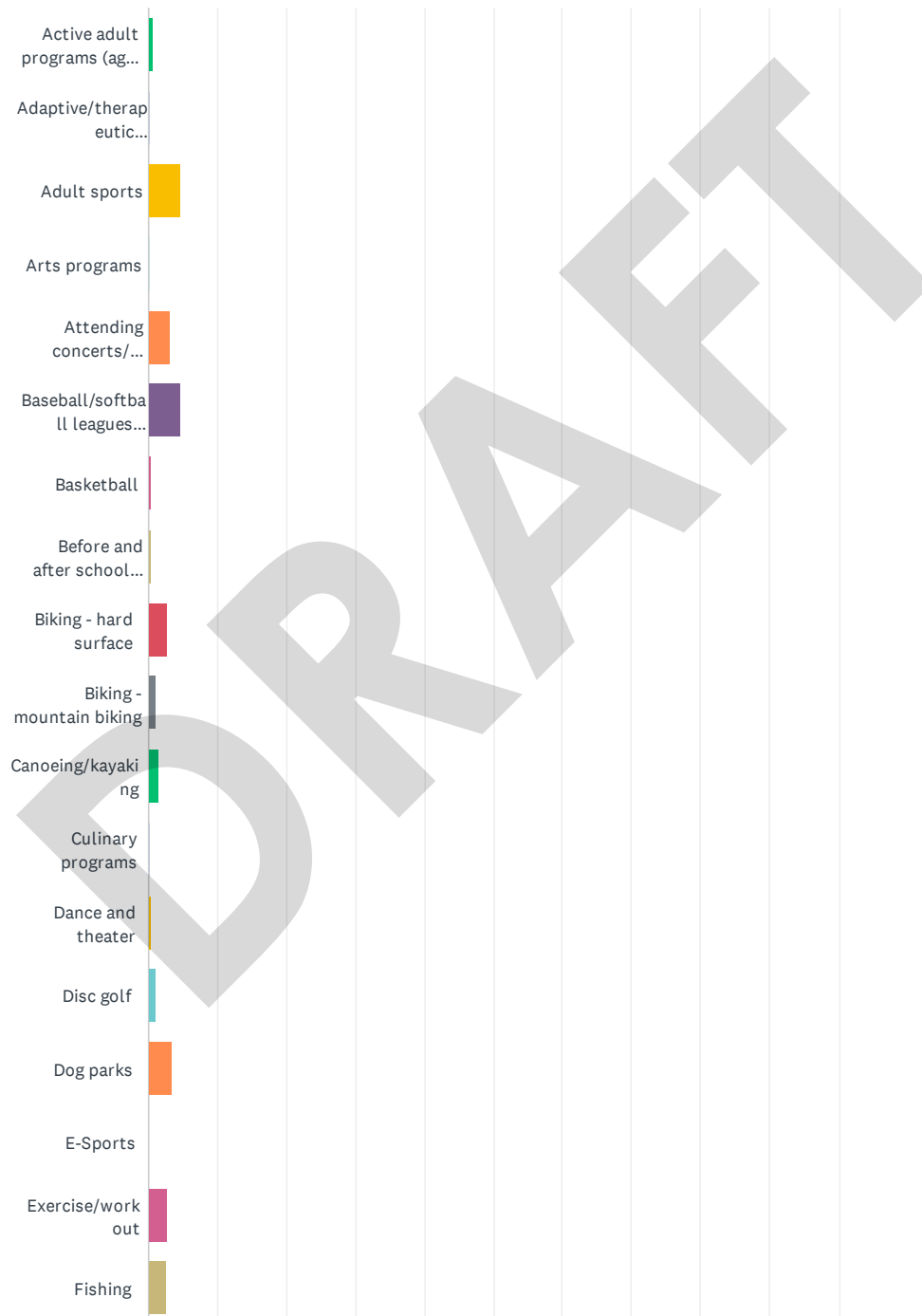
66	Hockey	6/16/2022 8:11 PM
67	In-line hockey	6/16/2022 8:08 PM
68	Hockey	6/16/2022 8:06 PM
69	Abilene hockey	6/16/2022 7:55 PM
70	Hockey	6/16/2022 7:50 PM
71	Hockey	6/16/2022 7:43 PM
72	Hockey	6/16/2022 7:03 PM
73	Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 3:29 PM
74	Hockey	6/16/2022 2:58 PM
75	Football	6/16/2022 2:56 PM
76	Hockey	6/16/2022 2:19 PM
77	Hockey	6/16/2022 2:07 PM
78	Hockey	6/16/2022 2:01 PM
79	Roller Hockey	6/16/2022 1:09 PM
80	Hockey	6/16/2022 1:08 PM
81	Hockey	6/16/2022 1:06 PM
82	Hockey	6/16/2022 12:23 PM
83	Inline Hockey	6/16/2022 10:59 AM
84	Hockey	6/16/2022 10:49 AM
85	Hockey	6/16/2022 1:23 AM
86	Just football and cheer practice	6/15/2022 10:12 PM
87	Hockey	6/15/2022 9:59 PM
88	Roller hockey	6/15/2022 6:48 PM
89	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:48 PM
90	Hockey at cal young	6/15/2022 6:45 PM
91	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:32 PM
92	Hockey, youth hockey	6/15/2022 6:24 PM
93	Abilene Hockey League	6/15/2022 6:20 PM
94	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:12 PM
95	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:06 PM
96	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:05 PM
97	Roller hockey	6/15/2022 6:04 PM
98	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:02 PM
99	Hockey at Cal Young Park. Which the rink need repairs and upgrades.	6/15/2022 6:02 PM
100	Hockey. We've been here for 20 years how is this not on the list?	6/15/2022 5:41 PM
101	Hockey at cal young park	6/15/2022 5:40 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q6 Which activity from the previous question would you most like to find more opportunities to do in the future?

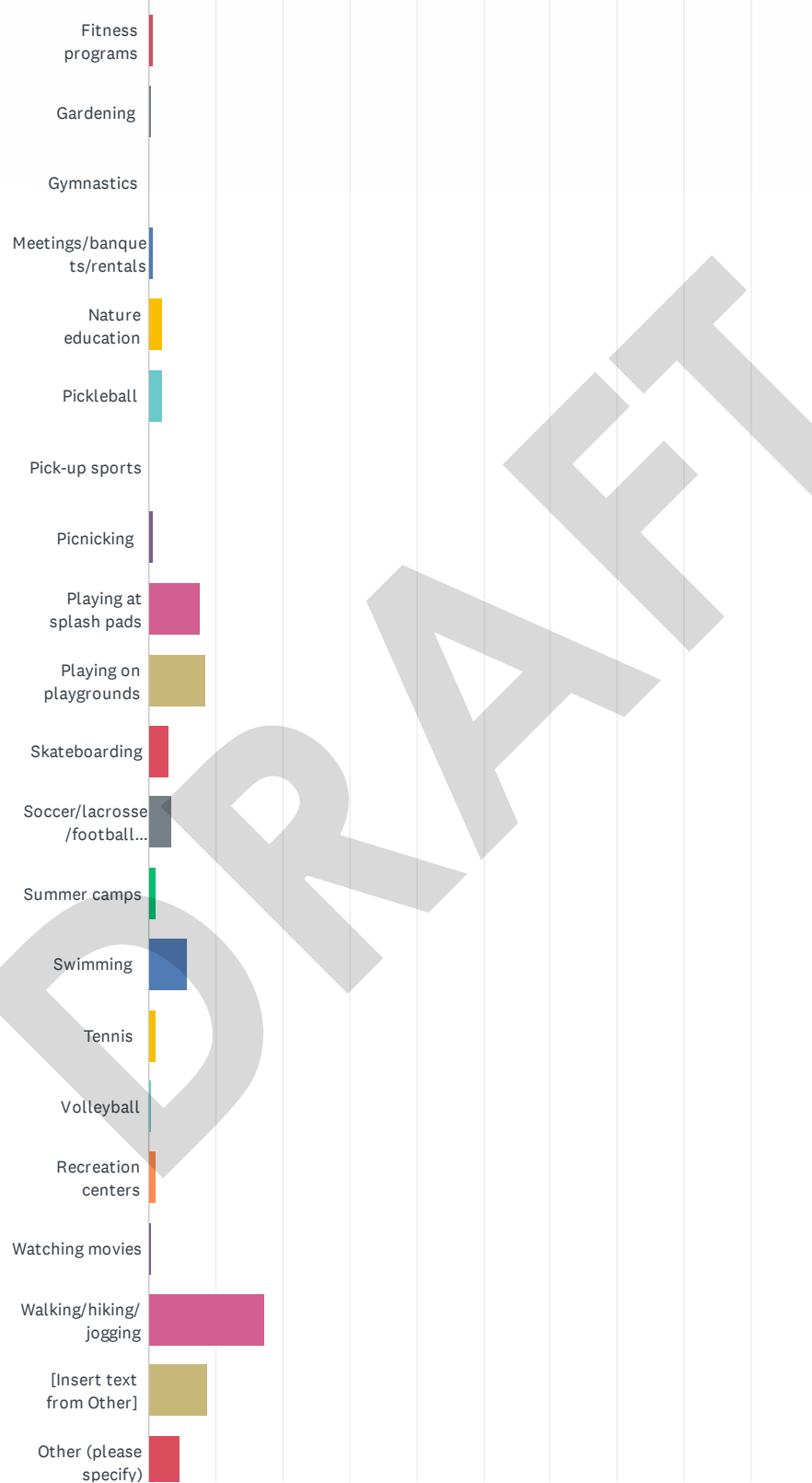
Answered: 813 Skipped: 186



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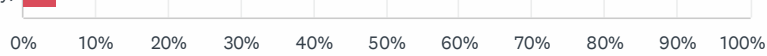


Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey



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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Active adult programs (age 50+)	0.74%	6
Adaptive/therapeutic recreation	0.25%	2
Adult sports	4.67%	38
Arts programs	0.25%	2
Attending concerts/ performances	3.20%	26
Baseball/softball leagues (youth)	4.80%	39
Basketball	0.37%	3
Before and after school programs	0.37%	3
Biking - hard surface	2.71%	22
Biking - mountain biking	1.11%	9
Canoeing/kayaking	1.48%	12
Culinary programs	0.12%	1
Dance and theater	0.49%	4
Disc golf	1.11%	9
Dog parks	3.44%	28
E-Sports	0.00%	0
Exercise/work out	2.71%	22
Fishing	2.58%	21
Fitness programs	0.74%	6
Gardening	0.37%	3
Gymnastics	0.00%	0
Meetings/banquets/rentals	0.74%	6
Nature education	2.09%	17
Pickleball	2.09%	17
Pick-up sports	0.00%	0
Picnicking	0.62%	5
Playing at splash pads	7.75%	63
Playing on playgrounds	8.49%	69
Skateboarding	2.95%	24
Soccer/lacrosse/football leagues (youth)	3.44%	28
Summer camps	0.98%	8
Swimming	5.66%	46



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Tennis	1.11%	9
Volleyball	0.37%	3
Recreation centers	1.11%	9
Watching movies	0.37%	3
Walking/hiking/jogging	17.22%	140
[Insert text from Other]	8.73%	71
Other (please specify)	4.80%	39
TOTAL		813

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Park events would be cool	8/1/2022 2:13 PM
2	Free activities for older children.	7/27/2022 2:01 PM
3	concerts	7/23/2022 11:08 PM
4	More options of games to play at the parks	7/18/2022 2:34 PM
5	Bigger water park off I20	7/18/2022 12:35 AM
6	Indoor play place for children	7/17/2022 9:53 PM
7	More swimming options.	7/17/2022 9:11 PM
8	Walking hiking swimming	7/17/2022 7:11 PM
9	Biking (trails) and bigger water park	7/17/2022 6:23 PM
10	swimming. You don't have any public swimming pools besides Adventure Cove which you can't swim laps in. Would be good to have an indoor pool. Also some trails with shade.	7/13/2022 2:42 PM
11	Swimming	7/11/2022 6:20 PM
12	Indoor/outdoor Water Parks	7/11/2022 4:01 PM
13	Special Events	7/11/2022 3:59 PM
14	Cedar Creek	7/11/2022 3:28 PM
15	Swimming for adults	7/11/2022 3:28 PM
16	Swimming!! We need a pool!!	7/10/2022 9:12 PM
17	The city needs another dog park, red bud park has fields that are very seldom used that would be great to convert to that use.	7/1/2022 6:03 PM
18	Biking/walking trails or sidewalks	6/30/2022 8:48 AM
19	Handball	6/29/2022 5:24 PM
20	Water park swimming	6/29/2022 3:53 PM
21	Exercise/workout	6/29/2022 4:26 AM
22	Well kept playgrounds adaptive playgrounds actual hiking and bikes trails	6/28/2022 10:13 PM
23	Softball	6/28/2022 9:34 PM
24	YOUTH SOCCER	6/28/2022 8:16 PM
25	Biking	6/28/2022 8:09 PM
26	A park near us	6/28/2022 6:35 PM
27	Mens sports	6/28/2022 5:54 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

28	Swimming pools!	6/28/2022 5:51 PM
29	Pickleball	6/27/2022 2:59 AM
30	biking / trails	6/23/2022 11:21 AM
31	Hiking	6/23/2022 8:53 AM
32	Off-Road park	6/23/2022 8:38 AM
33	I want more opportunities to do the things I DID NOT check, so I will actually do them.	6/21/2022 12:02 PM
34	Hockey	6/19/2022 2:15 PM
35	Hockey	6/17/2022 1:35 PM
36	Hockey rink	6/17/2022 1:33 PM
37	Hockey	6/17/2022 12:13 AM
38	Lit up volleyball courts	6/16/2022 7:59 PM
39	Racquetball	6/16/2022 9:29 AM

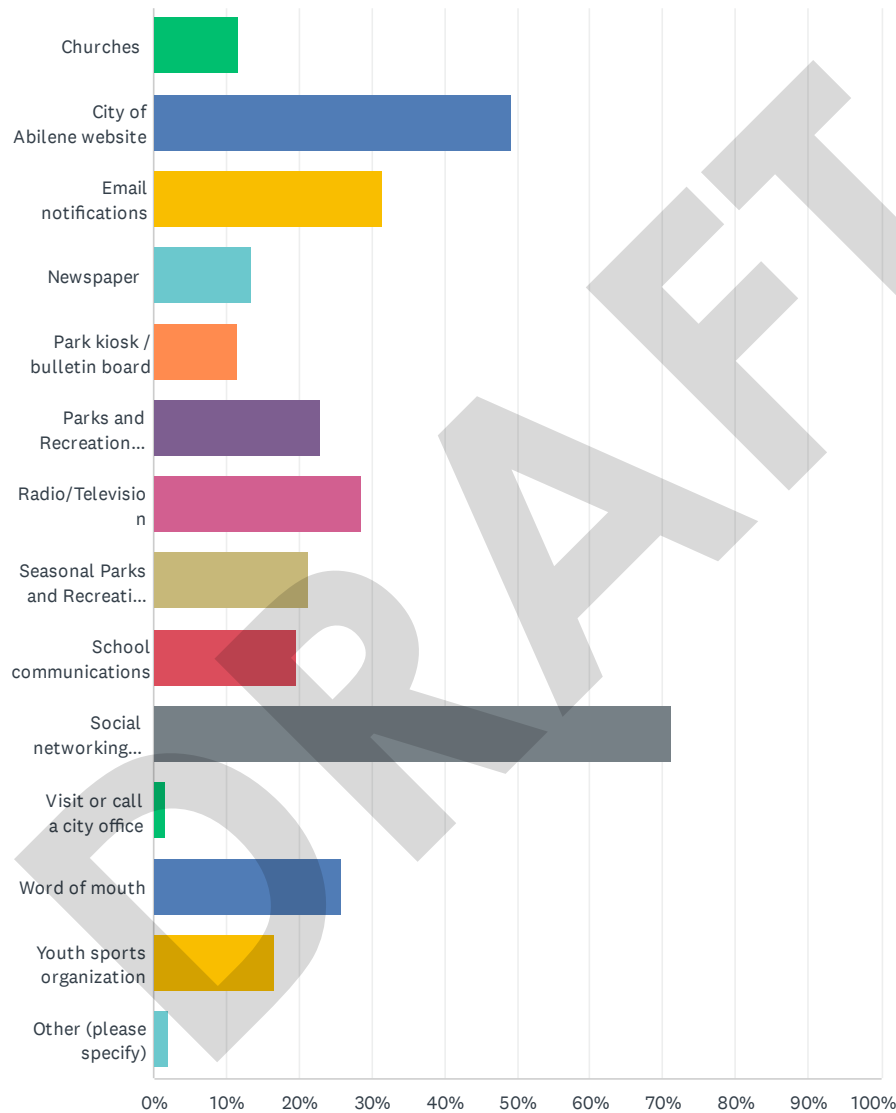
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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q7 Please select ways you prefer to learn about facilities, programs, activities, or events.

Answered: 885 Skipped: 114





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

19

Direct mail

6/16/2022 11:59 AM

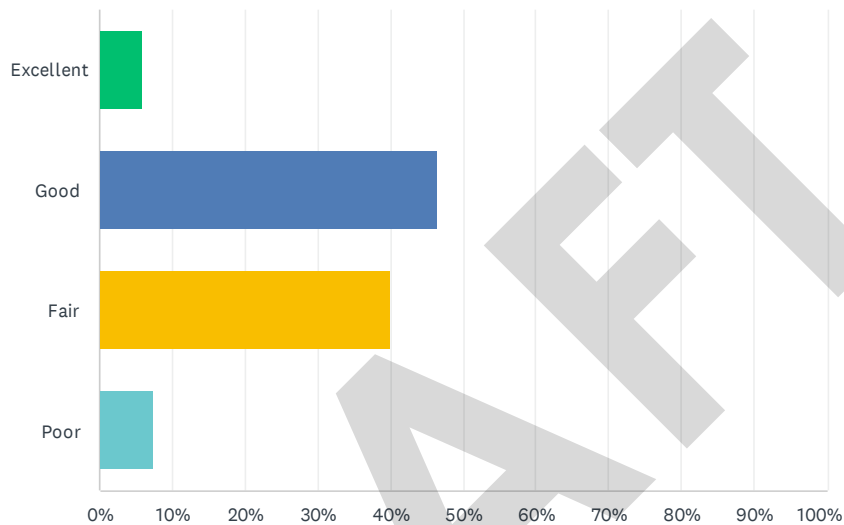
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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q8 If you use programs, how would you rate the quality of recreation programs offered by the City of Abilene you or members of your household used over the past year?

Answered: 662 Skipped: 337



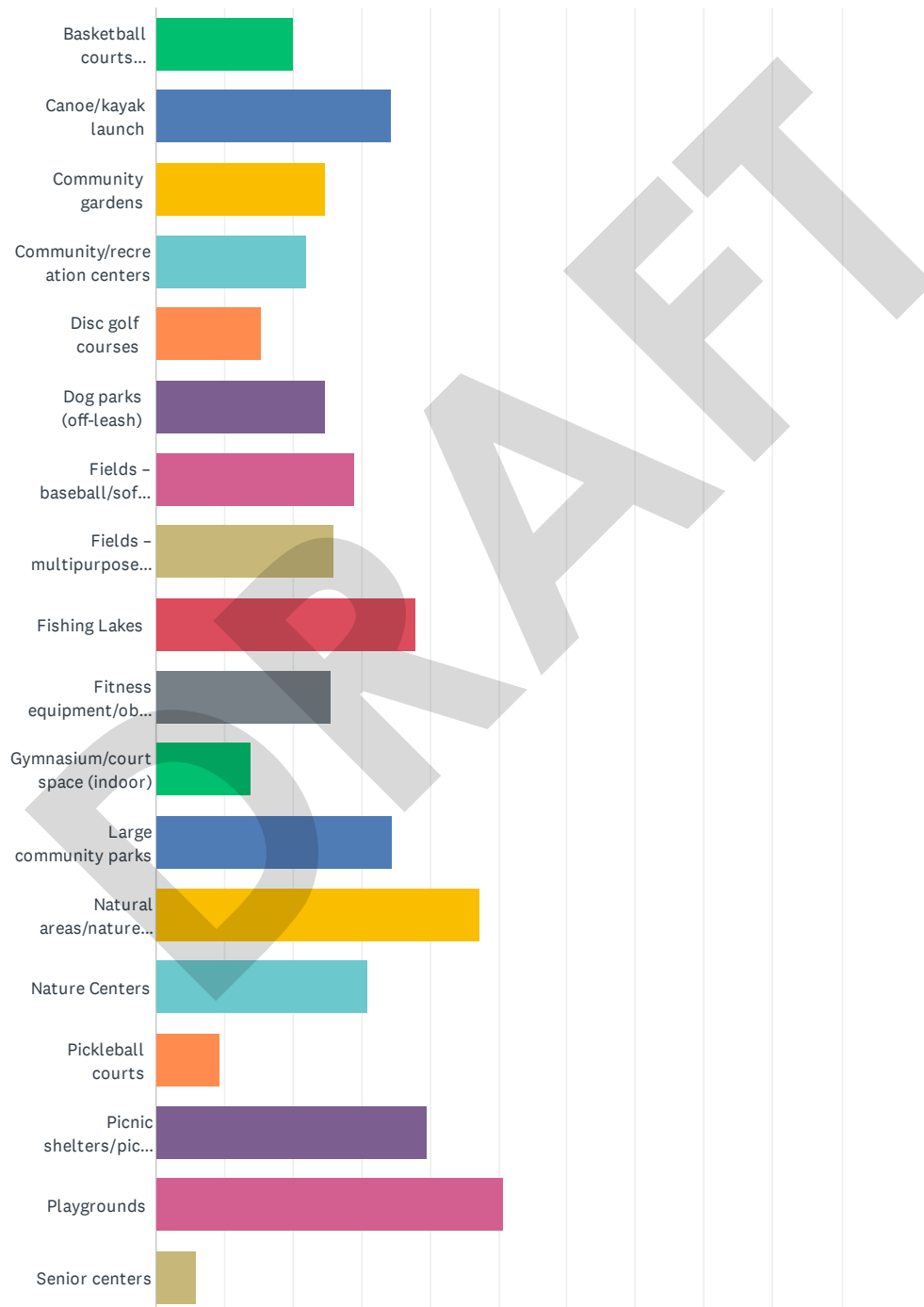
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	6.04%	40
Good	46.53%	308
Fair	40.03%	265
Poor	7.40%	49
TOTAL		662



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q9 Please identify ALL FACILITIES you or your household members currently use or would like to use if available.

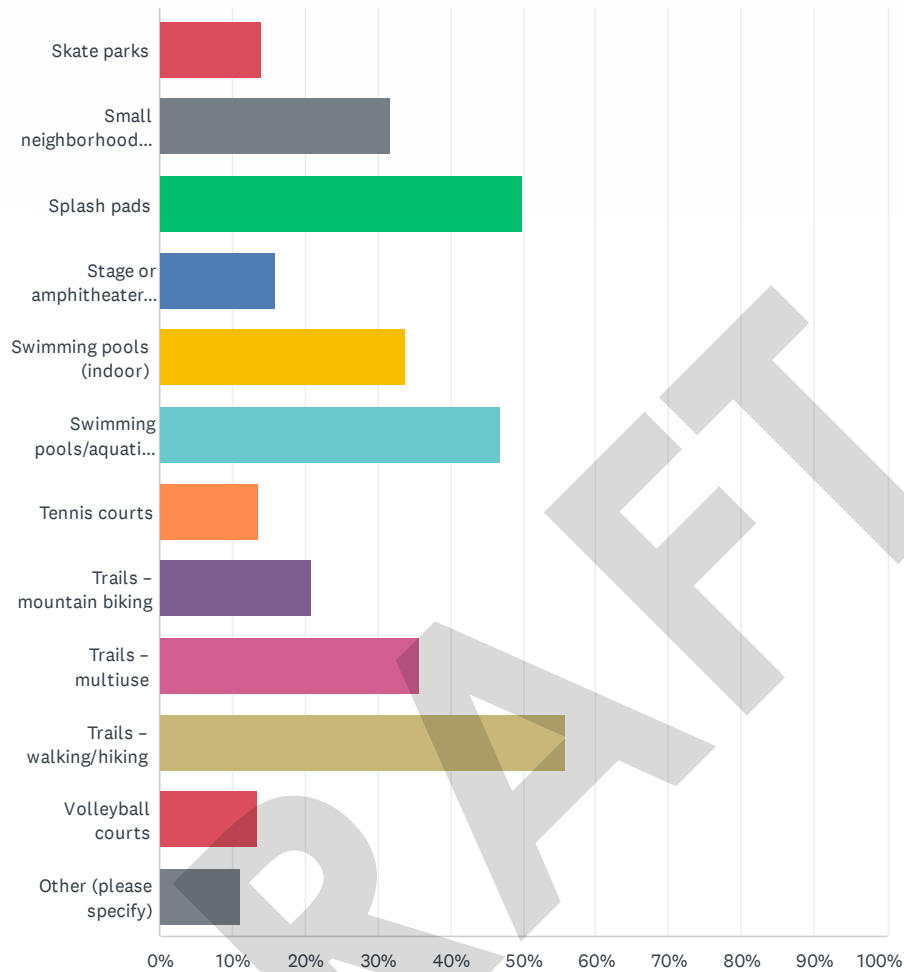
Answered: 891 Skipped: 108



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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Basketball courts (outdoor)		20.09%	179
Canoe/kayak launch		34.34%	306
Community gardens		24.69%	220
Community/recreation centers		22.00%	196
Disc golf courses		15.38%	137
Dog parks (off-leash)		24.69%	220
Fields – baseball/softball diamonds		28.96%	258
Fields – multipurpose (soccer/lacrosse/football/etc.)		26.04%	232
Fishing Lakes		38.05%	339
Fitness equipment/obstacle course (outdoor)		25.59%	228
Gymnasium/court space (indoor)		13.92%	124
Large community parks		34.57%	308
Natural areas/nature parks		47.25%	421
Nature Centers		30.98%	276
Pickleball courts		9.43%	84
Picnic shelters/picnic areas		39.62%	353
Playgrounds		50.84%	453
Senior centers		6.06%	54
Skate parks		14.14%	126
Small neighborhood parks		31.76%	283
Splash pads		49.94%	445
Stage or amphitheater (outdoor)		16.05%	143
Swimming pools (indoor)		34.01%	303
Swimming pools/aquatic centers (outdoor)		46.91%	418
Tennis courts		13.69%	122
Trails – mountain biking		20.99%	187
Trails – multiuse		35.91%	320
Trails – walking/hiking		55.78%	497
Volleyball courts		13.36%	119
Other (please specify)		11.00%	98
Total Respondents: 891			

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

1	Abilene Hockey	8/6/2022 12:31 AM
2	Outdoor community soccer field with walls and lights	7/21/2022 11:04 AM
3	Expand adventure cove especially lazy river	7/20/2022 7:59 AM
4	Adaptive playground equipment for special needs!!!	7/19/2022 10:37 AM
5	Baseball and softball fields	7/16/2022 9:38 PM
6	I	7/15/2022 5:34 PM
7	one wall outdoor handball courts	7/12/2022 6:29 PM
8	We need anything. Abilene is boring	7/12/2022 3:24 PM
9	none	7/12/2022 10:20 AM
10	Expanding the skate park to having a plaza area for roller skating	7/12/2022 1:39 AM
11	Community gardens	7/12/2022 12:45 AM
12	A descent park in the far south side of Abilene.	7/11/2022 4:01 PM
13	Cedar Creek	7/11/2022 3:28 PM
14	None	7/11/2022 2:38 PM
15	COVERED tennis courts	7/11/2022 10:54 AM
16	Soccer fields complex - imagine the revenue tournaments would bring in - we take our money weekly to other area towns due to the lack of facilities in Abilene	7/10/2022 9:10 PM
17	Campsite	7/10/2022 8:09 PM
18	racquetball courts	7/10/2022 2:10 PM
19	MAXWELL GOLF COURSE	7/10/2022 9:29 AM
20	skateparks	7/9/2022 11:41 PM
21	Outdoor skating rink. Pump track. Trails that are in better condition.	7/1/2022 9:14 AM
22	Hockey	6/30/2022 9:54 PM
23	Repair the amphitheater Please	6/30/2022 12:45 AM
24	We don't have sidewalks in Abilene, legit anywhere similar to redbud where I can safely walk my dog or go for a run.	6/29/2022 11:32 PM
25	Trees	6/29/2022 4:51 PM
26	ice hockey rink	6/29/2022 4:36 PM
27	We need all these	6/28/2022 10:13 PM
28	Softball	6/28/2022 9:03 PM
29	Turf fields for softball for youth	6/28/2022 8:44 PM
30	Better hockey facilities	6/26/2022 9:56 PM
31	Fix up the skate park and more natural areas/trails/parks	6/23/2022 1:52 PM
32	Tennis courts are very good at the schools, walking trails are poor	6/23/2022 9:47 AM
33	Off-Road park	6/23/2022 8:38 AM
34	Paved bike trails	6/22/2022 5:30 PM
35	Sandbox areas	6/22/2022 11:07 AM
36	Climbing wall/tower	6/21/2022 10:09 PM
37	Soccer field	6/21/2022 5:28 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

38	Hockey	6/20/2022 11:52 PM
39	hockey	6/20/2022 9:53 AM
40	inline hockey	6/20/2022 9:49 AM
41	Running paths	6/20/2022 9:34 AM
42	Indoor Hockey	6/20/2022 9:33 AM
43	Hockey	6/20/2022 8:21 AM
44	Covered hockey rink	6/18/2022 5:57 PM
45	Hockey	6/17/2022 4:38 PM
46	Hockey rink	6/17/2022 4:21 PM
47	Roller hockey	6/17/2022 3:15 PM
48	Hockey	6/17/2022 1:45 PM
49	Hockey	6/17/2022 1:35 PM
50	Hockey skating rink	6/17/2022 1:33 PM
51	Hockey rink	6/17/2022 1:23 PM
52	Hockey rink	6/17/2022 1:08 PM
53	Facility bathrooms	6/17/2022 9:00 AM
54	Hockey	6/17/2022 12:13 AM
55	Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 10:51 PM
56	Hockey	6/16/2022 10:08 PM
57	Hockey rink	6/16/2022 9:59 PM
58	Hockey	6/16/2022 9:42 PM
59	Hockey rink	6/16/2022 9:27 PM
60	Hockey	6/16/2022 8:12 PM
61	In-line skating rink	6/16/2022 8:09 PM
62	Hockey	6/16/2022 8:08 PM
63	Hockey rink improvements would be nice.	6/16/2022 8:06 PM
64	Hockey skat rink	6/16/2022 7:59 PM
65	Hockey rinks	6/16/2022 7:51 PM
66	Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 7:44 PM
67	Hockey rink	6/16/2022 7:04 PM
68	Hockey	6/16/2022 7:04 PM
69	New youth hockey rink	6/16/2022 7:04 PM
70	Zip line	6/16/2022 6:50 PM
71	Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 3:31 PM
72	Workout	6/16/2022 2:57 PM
73	Hockey rink	6/16/2022 2:09 PM
74	Hockey rink	6/16/2022 2:03 PM
75	Hcokey	6/16/2022 1:09 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

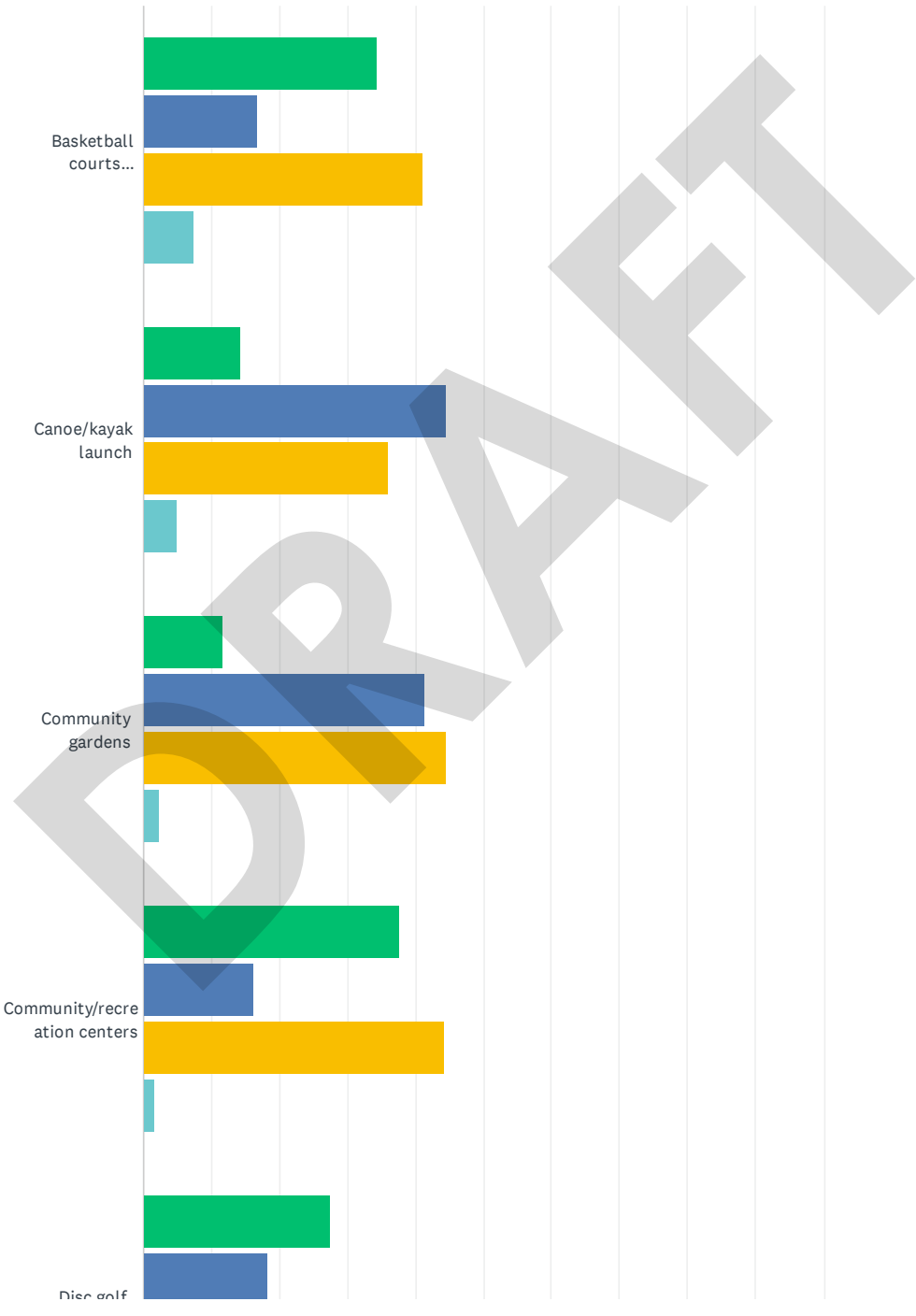
76	Hockey	6/16/2022 1:07 PM
77	Aquatics Center	6/16/2022 11:59 AM
78	Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 10:59 AM
79	Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 10:49 AM
80	Racquetball	6/16/2022 9:29 AM
81	Hockey	6/15/2022 11:08 PM
82	Na	6/15/2022 10:12 PM
83	Hockey	6/15/2022 10:11 PM
84	Topgolf, Go-kart racing, Indoor skydiving	6/15/2022 7:12 PM
85	Roller hockey	6/15/2022 6:50 PM
86	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:49 PM
87	More running trails	6/15/2022 6:48 PM
88	Outdoor hockey rink	6/15/2022 6:46 PM
89	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:32 PM
90	Ice hockey rink, inline hockey rink, covered or indoor hockey rink	6/15/2022 6:25 PM
91	Hockey Rink	6/15/2022 6:22 PM
92	Hockey rink	6/15/2022 6:13 PM
93	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:08 PM
94	Hockey rink	6/15/2022 6:05 PM
95	Hockey rink	6/15/2022 6:05 PM
96	Hockey rink	6/15/2022 6:03 PM
97	Hockey Rink	6/15/2022 5:43 PM
98	Cal young hockey rink	6/15/2022 5:41 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

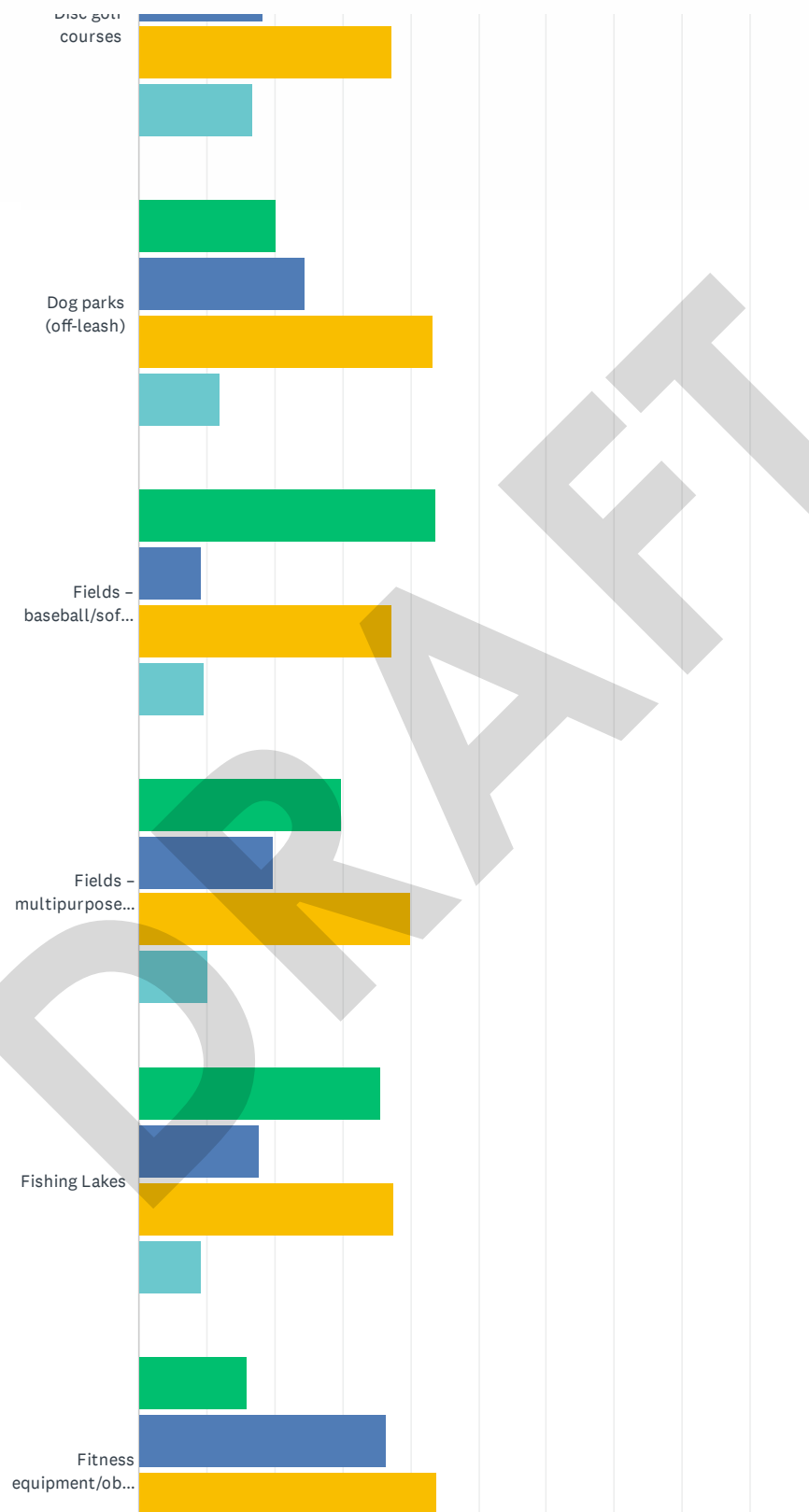
Q10 For these facilities, what kind of investment would you like to see in Abilene?

Answered: 834 Skipped: 165





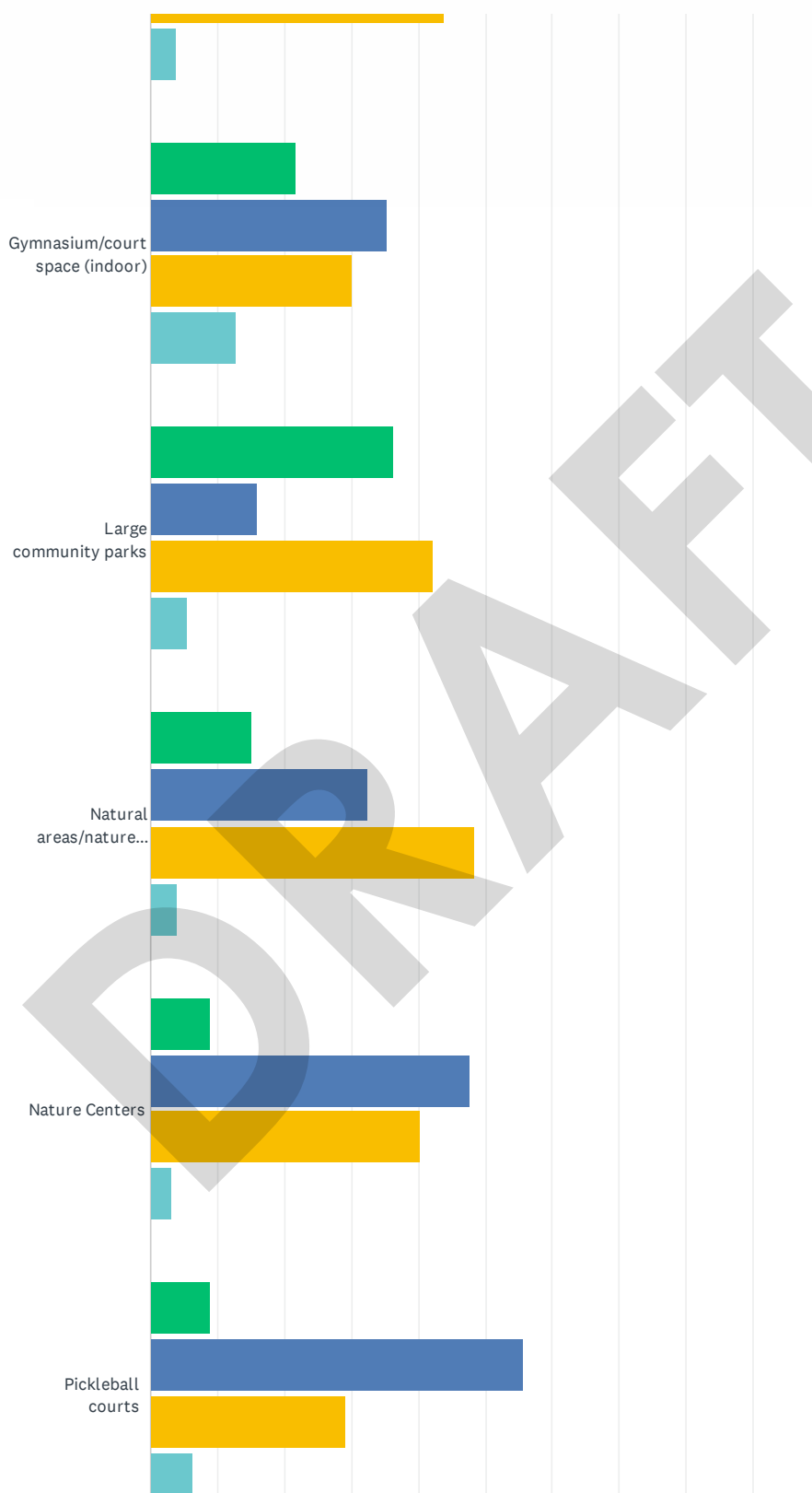
Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey



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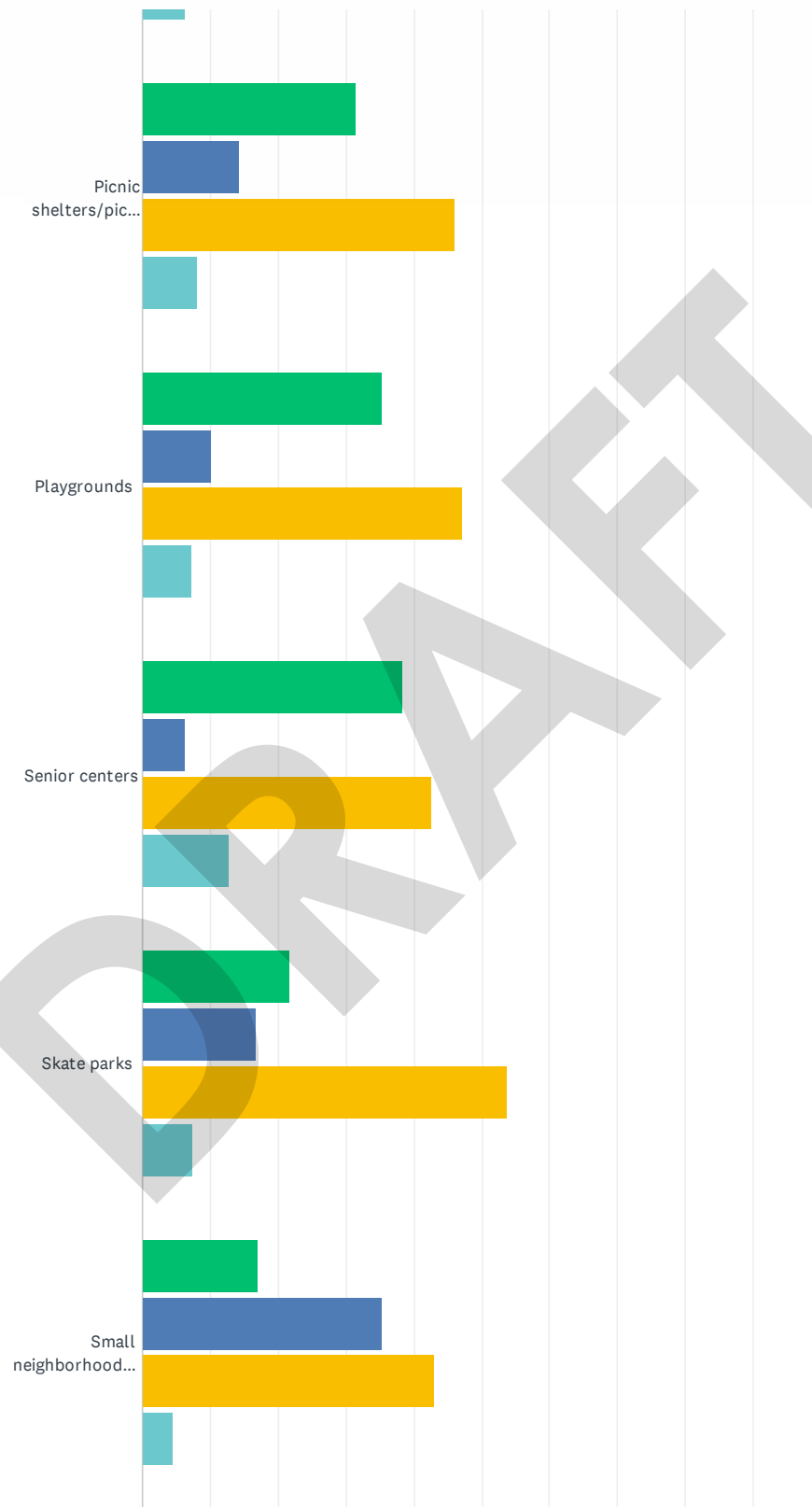
Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey



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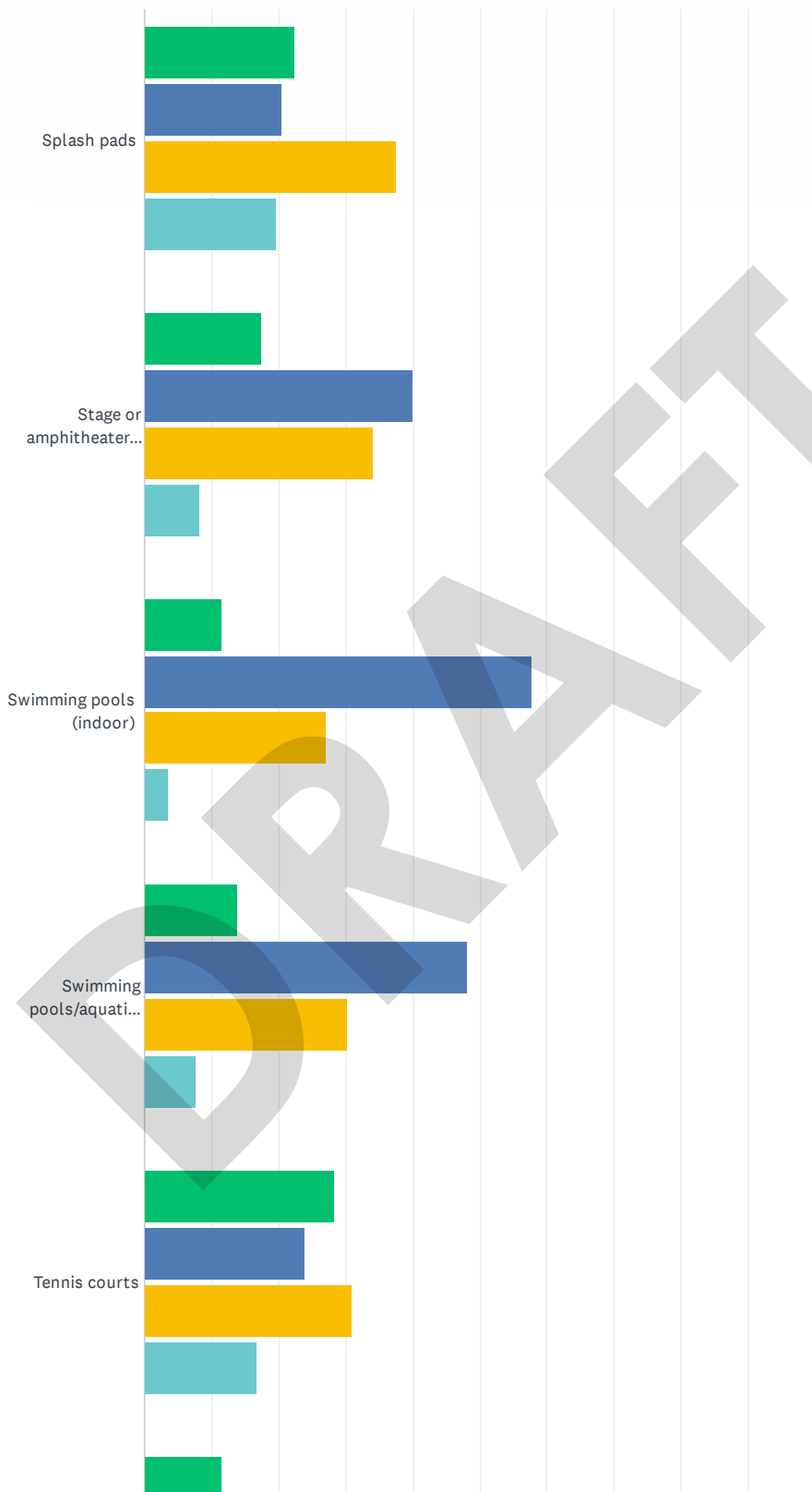
Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey



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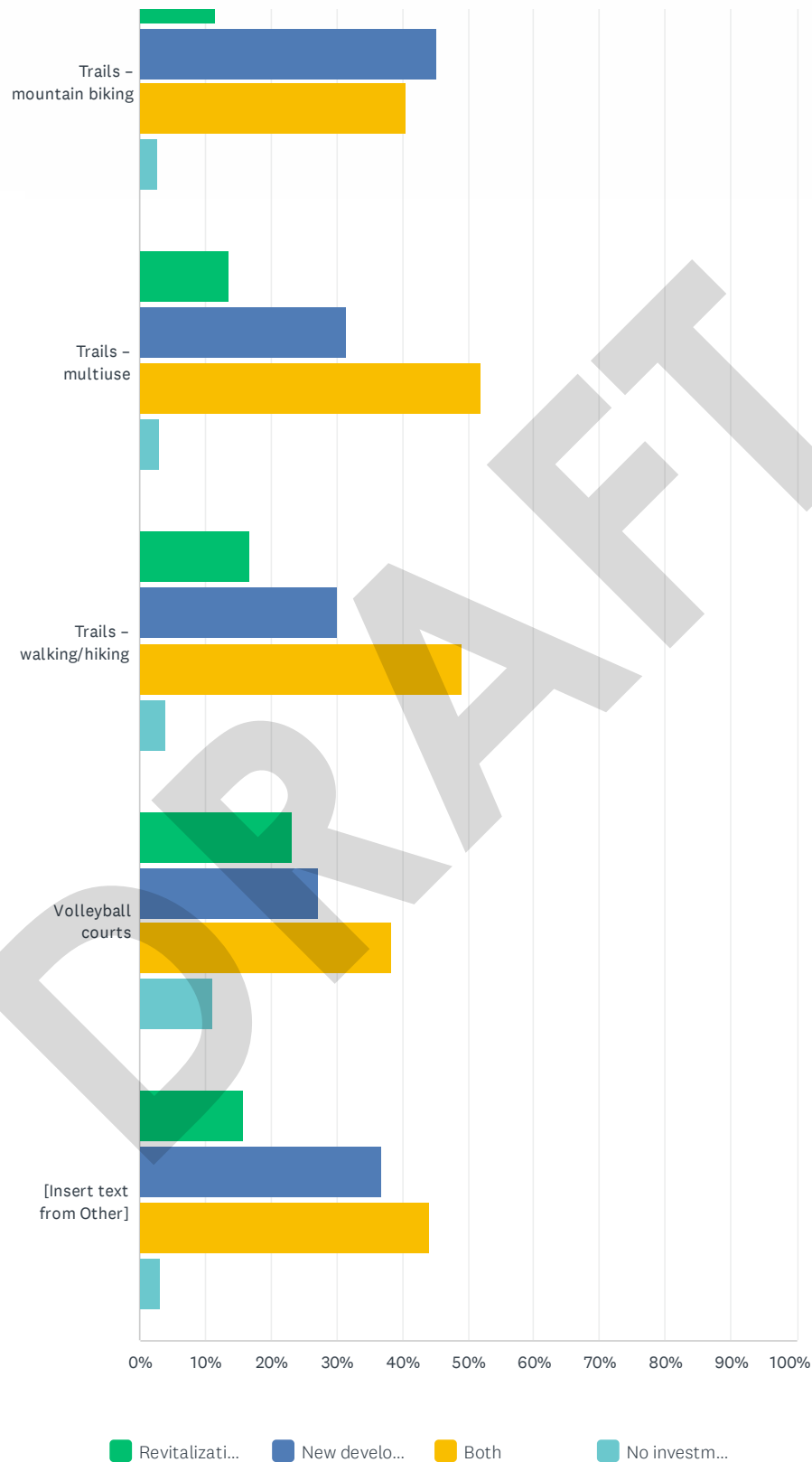
Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey



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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

	REVITALIZATION/UPGRADES TO EXISTING	NEW DEVELOPMENT	BOTH	NO INVESTMENT NEEDED	TOTAL
Basketball courts (outdoor)	34.38% 55	16.88% 27	41.25% 66	7.50% 12	160
Canoe/kayak launch	14.39% 41	44.56% 127	36.14% 103	4.91% 14	285
Community gardens	11.65% 24	41.26% 85	44.66% 92	2.43% 5	206
Community/recreation centers	37.78% 68	16.11% 29	44.44% 80	1.67% 3	180
Disc golf courses	27.48% 36	18.32% 24	37.40% 49	16.79% 22	131
Dog parks (off-leash)	20.19% 42	24.52% 51	43.27% 90	12.02% 25	208
Fields – baseball/softball diamonds	43.70% 104	9.24% 22	37.39% 89	9.66% 23	238
Fields – multipurpose (soccer/lacrosse/football/etc.)	29.95% 65	19.82% 43	40.09% 87	10.14% 22	217
Fishing Lakes	35.56% 112	17.78% 56	37.46% 118	9.21% 29	315
Fitness equipment/obstacle course (outdoor)	15.89% 34	36.45% 78	43.93% 94	3.74% 8	214
Gymnasium/court space (indoor)	21.82% 24	35.45% 39	30.00% 33	12.73% 14	110
Large community parks	36.33% 105	15.92% 46	42.21% 122	5.54% 16	289
Natural areas/nature parks	15.15% 60	32.32% 128	48.48% 192	4.04% 16	396
Nature Centers	8.91% 23	47.67% 123	40.31% 104	3.10% 8	258
Pickleball courts	8.86% 7	55.70% 44	29.11% 23	6.33% 5	79
Picnic shelters/picnic areas	31.52% 104	14.24% 47	46.06% 152	8.18% 27	330
Playgrounds	35.41% 148	10.29% 43	47.13% 197	7.18% 30	418
Senior centers	38.30% 18	6.38% 3	42.55% 20	12.77% 6	47
Skate parks	21.85% 26	16.81% 20	53.78% 64	7.56% 9	119
Small neighborhood parks	17.10% 46	35.32% 95	43.12% 116	4.46% 12	269
Splash pads	22.33% 92	20.39% 84	37.62% 155	19.66% 81	412
Stage or amphitheater (outdoor)	17.42% 23	40.15% 53	34.09% 45	8.33% 11	132
Swimming pools (indoor)	11.55%	57.76%	27.08%	3.61%	



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

	32	160	75	10	277
Swimming pools/aquatic centers (outdoor)	13.85% 54	48.21% 188	30.26% 118	7.69% 30	390
Tennis courts	28.32% 32	23.89% 27	30.97% 35	16.81% 19	113
Trails – mountain biking	11.43% 20	45.14% 79	40.57% 71	2.86% 5	175
Trails – multiuse	13.58% 41	31.46% 95	51.99% 157	2.98% 9	302
Trails – walking/hiking	16.92% 79	29.98% 140	49.04% 229	4.07% 19	467
Volleyball courts	23.23% 23	27.27% 27	38.38% 38	11.11% 11	99
[Insert text from Other]	15.79% 15	36.84% 35	44.21% 42	3.16% 3	95

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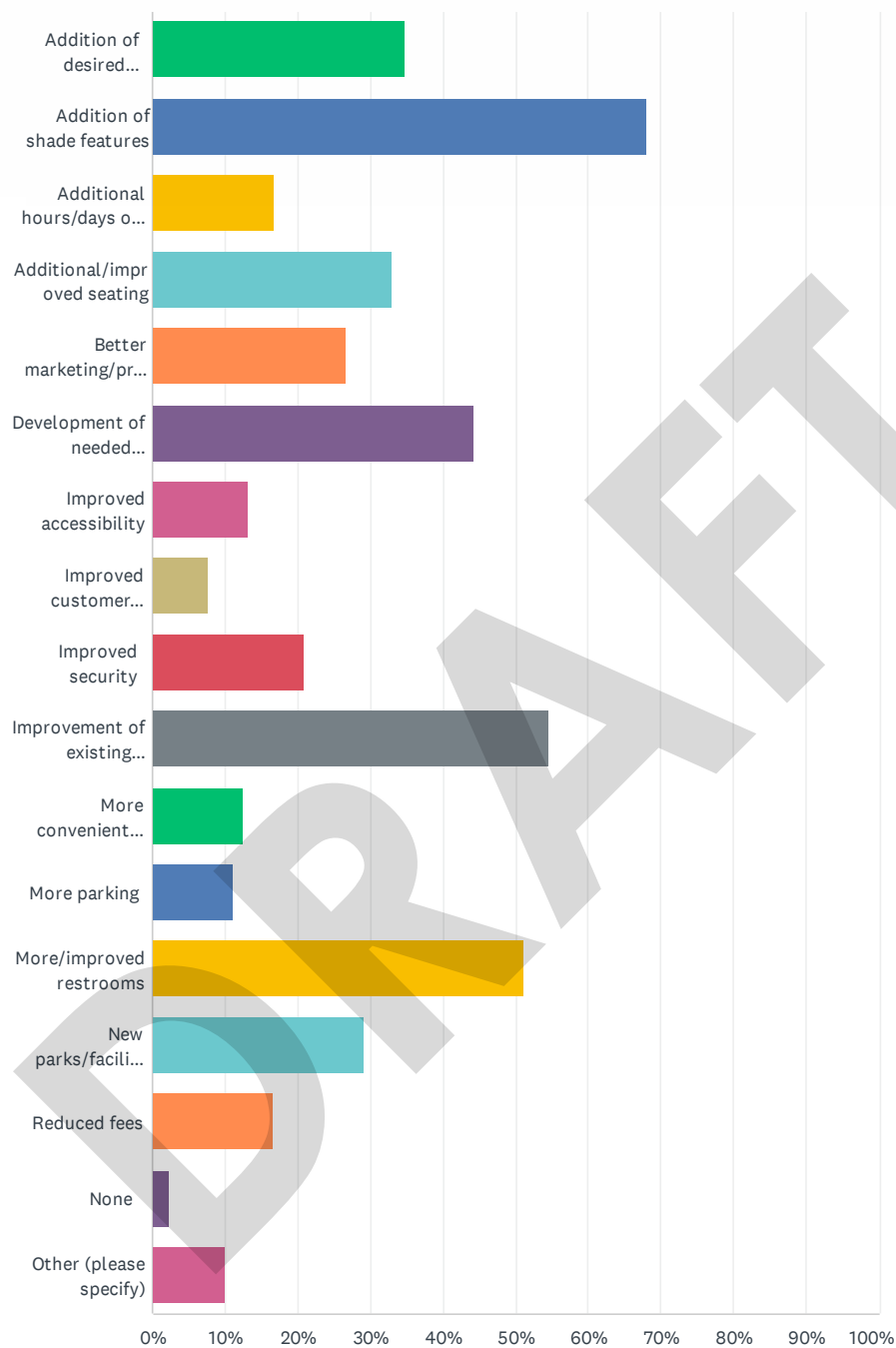


Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q11 What would encourage you and your household members to take better advantage of offerings by Abilene Parks and Recreation?

Answered: 836 Skipped: 163

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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Addition of desired programs	34.69%	290
Addition of shade features	68.06%	569
Additional hours/days of operation	16.75%	140
Additional/improved seating	33.13%	277
Better marketing/promotion	26.56%	222
Development of needed facilities	44.38%	371
Improved accessibility	13.16%	110
Improved customer service by staff	7.66%	64
Improved security	20.93%	175
Improvement of existing facilities	54.55%	456
More convenient program locations	12.68%	106
More parking	11.00%	92
More/improved restrooms	51.20%	428
New parks/facilities closer to home	29.19%	244
Reduced fees	16.63%	139
None	2.39%	20
Other (please specify)	10.05%	84
Total Respondents: 836		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Repairing current trails (Redbud & Grover Nelson) that are crumbling	7/24/2022 3:10 PM
2	Lakes are especially lacking	7/21/2022 4:58 PM
3	CLEANER BATHROOMS	7/21/2022 9:11 AM
4	Indoor tennis courts	7/20/2022 3:33 PM
5	Seperate swimming areas for larger kids and more policing and age restrictions at splash pads	7/18/2022 11:34 PM
6	More opportunities on the far south side of Abilene	7/18/2022 9:05 PM
7	Better maintenance and cleanliness of existing parks; too much trash and weeds. Need additional and better landscaping.	7/18/2022 5:06 PM
8	water fountains that work, trash cans	7/18/2022 3:56 PM
9	More landscaping (flowers, gardens, etc).	7/18/2022 2:20 PM
10	better skate park surfaces	7/17/2022 7:18 PM
11	Care of grass to tend to stickers that prevent dogs from walking on grass.	7/17/2022 6:41 PM
12	Less restrictions at Adventure Cove and lower prices	7/17/2022 12:06 AM
13	Shaded playgrounds	7/14/2022 3:15 PM
14	Splash pads for older kids 11+ keeps our younger kids safe and not being knocked down	7/14/2022 2:23 PM
15	More frequent trash pick up. We seem to spend the first 30 mins just picking up trash.	7/13/2022 7:50 AM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

16	Fix cracks at skatepark. Smooth out the concrete. It's rough.	7/13/2022 1:27 AM
17	one wall handball courts	7/12/2022 7:01 PM
18	Expansion of skate park	7/12/2022 2:45 PM
19	upkeep with no NEW costs	7/12/2022 1:01 AM
20	Improve everything and give people shade also more fun	7/11/2022 2:40 PM
21	Sidewalk/easier access	7/11/2022 1:18 PM
22	Heat stroke and skin cancer are serious health risks for regular users	7/11/2022 11:00 AM
23	If we had a pool we would be there every day	7/10/2022 9:15 PM
24	Less heat!	7/10/2022 9:03 PM
25	More disability and adaptive friendly	7/10/2022 7:57 PM
26	Redbud park has huge drop offs and have seen several little kids almost get badly hurt	7/10/2022 7:28 PM
27	The skatepark is in dire need of concrete repair work.	7/10/2022 5:54 PM
28	New!! Bigger and better skatepark built by a professional skatepark contractor/company. Not built or designed by the city and or its inexperienced city workers with zero knowledge of skateparks/skateboarding	7/10/2022 5:24 PM
29	Hard surface to ride scooters	7/10/2022 5:19 PM
30	Need more parks and splash pads in far south Abilene	7/10/2022 4:31 PM
31	Compared to sister Cities we do not have the quality and upkeep of Tennis Courts and the number of players has decreased.	7/10/2022 2:44 PM
32	Cleanliness	7/10/2022 12:07 PM
33	Attend city council meetings	7/10/2022 9:29 AM
34	Adult pool	7/6/2022 12:36 AM
35	plant more trees, build more waterways	7/5/2022 10:10 AM
36	Better handicap parking.	7/2/2022 6:07 PM
37	Outdoor concrete games, big family water park	7/2/2022 1:28 PM
38	Further south of town	7/1/2022 9:38 PM
39	New fields!!	7/1/2022 7:05 PM
40	More over night camping at Fort Phantom with picnic areas	6/30/2022 12:00 AM
41	Handball court	6/29/2022 5:27 PM
42	Disability accessible!!!!!!	6/29/2022 5:17 PM
43	Public RV camping sites (for a few, of course)	6/29/2022 5:03 PM
44	Food trucks	6/29/2022 4:53 PM
45	Bathrooms!!!!!! Without the heater on during the summer !	6/29/2022 10:42 AM
46	Offering senior citizen pricing for entrance to water activities	6/29/2022 7:23 AM
47	Turf softball fields	6/29/2022 7:10 AM
48	If Lee Park was up to date like the other parks I feel we'd go way more. Comfortable picnic tables, more playground equipment... maybe a splash pad eventually. We love that park as it's closer to our home. We spent so much time there.	6/29/2022 12:26 AM
49	Hiking/Biking/Parks South Side	6/28/2022 11:01 PM
50	Pitchers mounds at Kirby are unsafe and dangerous	6/28/2022 10:26 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

51	A real playground at Nelson Wilson	6/28/2022 9:41 PM
52	Development and security of walking/ hiking /running/ biking path along Cedar Creek from ACU area to south 11th and also all the way around Lake Kirby.	6/28/2022 8:51 PM
53	Newer/safer playground facilities for young kids, natural features, something like DreamPark in Fort Worth	6/28/2022 8:02 PM
54	Better landscaping	6/28/2022 5:56 PM
55	Clean up the trash	6/28/2022 5:53 PM
56	Develop trails, bike paths and green space/linear parks	6/26/2022 4:38 PM
57	more re-stocking of fish, replenishing low water levels.	6/23/2022 2:36 PM
58	More walking and bike trails.	6/23/2022 12:00 PM
59	Indoor soccer fields	6/23/2022 8:34 AM
60	Mosquito and fly spray	6/22/2022 9:28 PM
61	Paved bike trails	6/22/2022 5:34 PM
62	Revitalization of restrooms	6/22/2022 4:34 PM
63	More lamps	6/21/2022 5:31 PM
64	Lighting, trails, modern architecture, landscaping	6/21/2022 4:04 PM
65	Indoor and outdoor Pickleball courts	6/21/2022 3:23 PM
66	Kirby Lake trail	6/21/2022 3:00 PM
67	Better fields for us to practice on for youth football we have huge ants, and we should not have to pay \$25 per player to the city for children to play that's just more money out the parents pockets and that money does nothing to help youth football	6/21/2022 12:37 PM
68	indoor hockey rink	6/20/2022 9:54 AM
69	inline hockey	6/20/2022 9:50 AM
70	Covering over hockey rink	6/17/2022 1:11 PM
71	Trails	6/17/2022 10:07 AM
72	More Softball Fields @ Kirby since Baseball is getting more	6/17/2022 9:03 AM
73	Hockey	6/17/2022 12:08 AM
74	less litter	6/16/2022 10:19 PM
75	Please build trails !!!	6/16/2022 9:42 PM
76	Connecting trails	6/16/2022 9:29 PM
77	Good soccer fields	6/16/2022 8:12 PM
78	Decent soccer fields for practice/games	6/16/2022 8:11 PM
79	Upgrade hockey	6/16/2022 7:06 PM
80	swimming	6/16/2022 2:49 PM
81	Better football fields for our kids to play on	6/15/2022 9:52 PM
82	Locker rooms, concession stands	6/15/2022 6:25 PM
83	A cover over the hockey rink a new surface upgraded boards and concession stand	6/15/2022 6:05 PM
84	Updates facility with bathrooms, concessions, seating for teams and spectators	6/15/2022 5:44 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

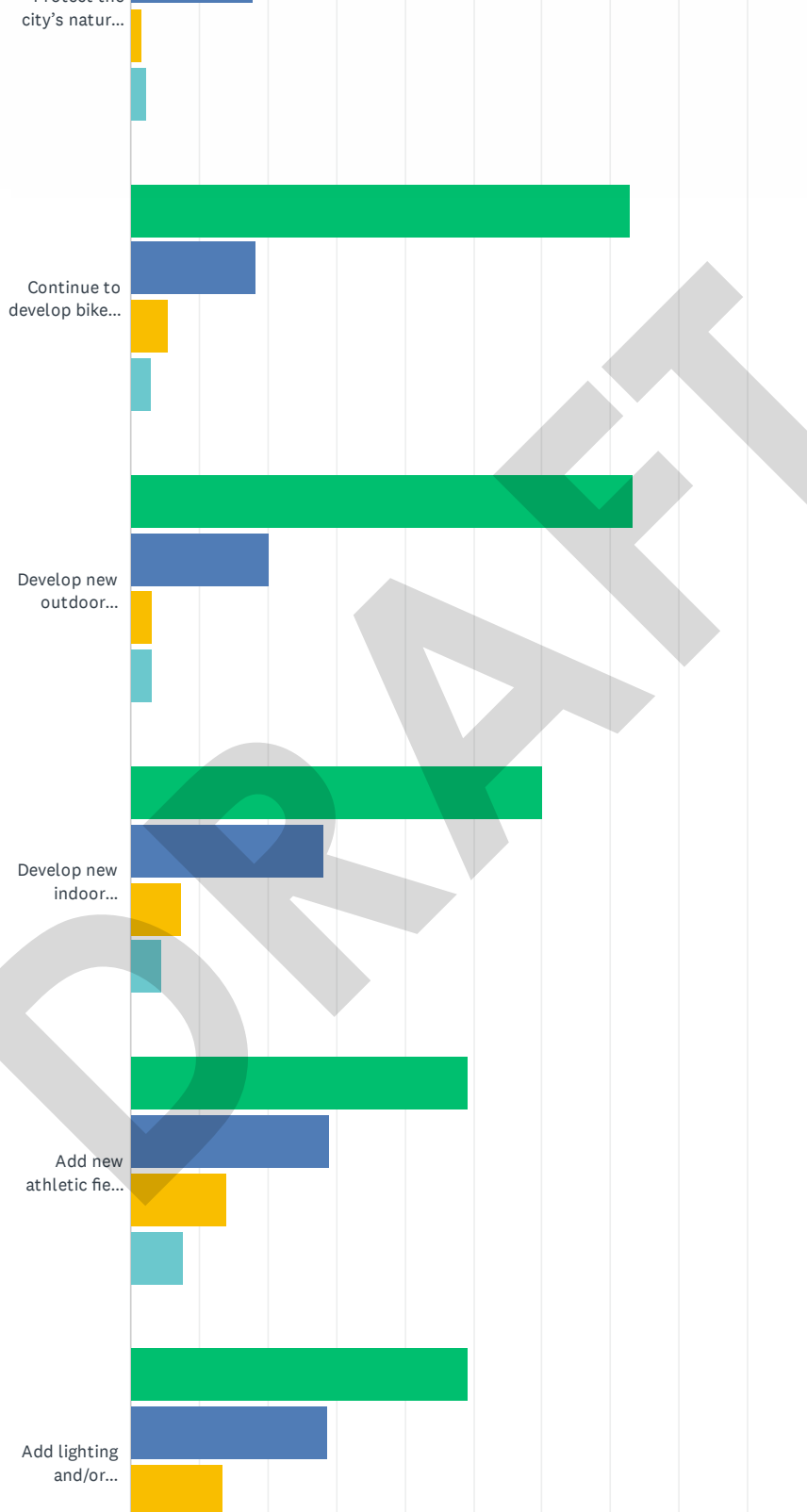
Q12 Please indicate how supportive you are of actions the City of Abilene could take to improve Parks and Recreation offerings?

Answered: 841 Skipped: 158



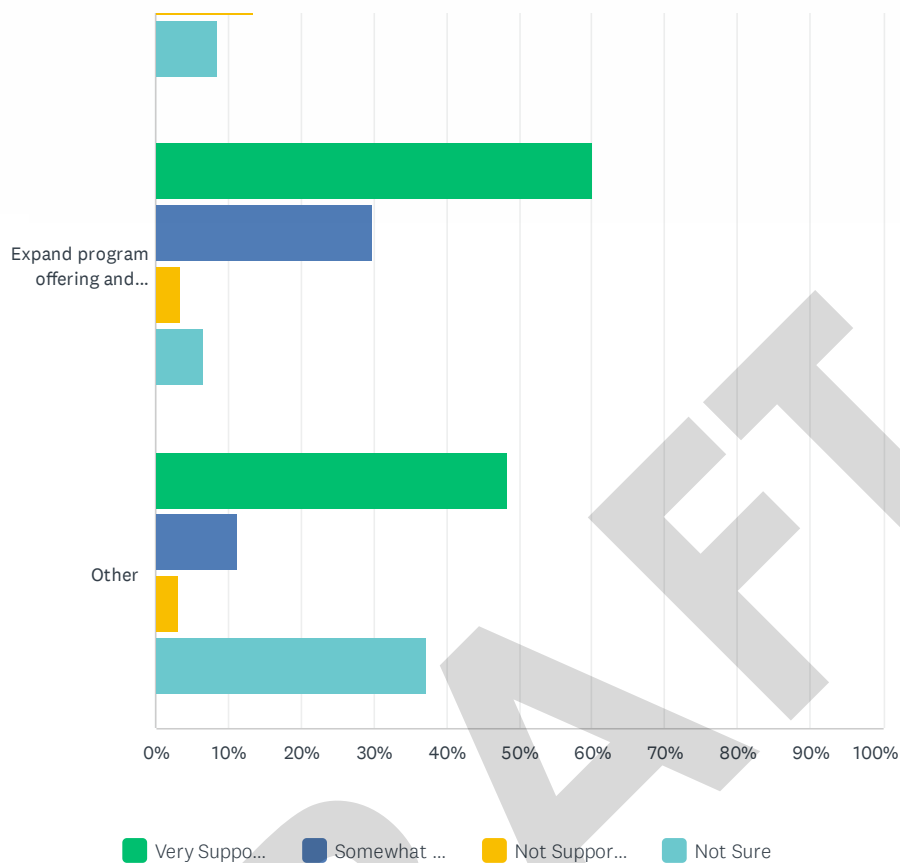


Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

	VERY SUPPORTIVE	SOMEWHAT SUPPORTIVE	NOT SUPPORTIVE	NOT SURE	TOTAL
Ensure Abilene's parks and recreation remain an asset to the community as it grows and diversifies	83.08% 697	14.42% 121	0.83% 7	1.67% 14	839
Maintain Abilene's city-sponsored programs and events as a major draw to the community	67.46% 564	26.08% 218	2.51% 21	3.95% 33	836
Invest in existing facilities and deferred maintenance	72.97% 610	21.77% 182	1.79% 15	3.47% 29	836
Develop new/existing underutilized park land	76.38% 637	17.63% 147	3.36% 28	2.64% 22	834
Protect the city's natural areas and resources, including waterways, wetlands, and wildlife habitat	78.11% 653	17.94% 150	1.67% 14	2.27% 19	836
Continue to develop bike and pedestrian trails and connectivity throughout the city	73.00% 611	18.40% 154	5.62% 47	2.99% 25	837
Develop new outdoor recreation facilities	73.44% 614	20.22% 169	3.23% 27	3.11% 26	836
Develop new indoor recreation facilities	60.05% 502	28.11% 235	7.42% 62	4.43% 37	836
Add new athletic fields (e.g., baseball, softball, soccer, football)	49.22% 411	28.98% 242	14.13% 118	7.66% 64	835
Add lighting and/or artificial turf at existing athletic fields	49.28% 412	28.83% 241	13.40% 112	8.49% 71	836
Expand program offering and community events	60.12% 499	29.88% 248	3.49% 29	6.51% 54	830
Other	48.31% 171	11.30% 40	3.11% 11	37.29% 132	354

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	We went for a summer program to the Daniels Rec center and it was in such poor shape and in such a horrible area my kids were so uncomfortable that we cancelled our summer program. That place needs a gut	8/4/2022 10:58 AM
2	Would love indoor tennis court options.	7/20/2022 3:33 PM
3	Provide more landscaping.	7/18/2022 5:06 PM
4	Add Soccer Fields at Redbud Park	7/18/2022 4:58 PM
5	BIKES NATURE AND GARDENS	7/18/2022 7:26 AM
6	More options for swimming.	7/17/2022 9:12 PM
7	Updating redoing softball fields at Nelson park.	7/17/2022 7:52 PM
8	better surfaces at the skate park	7/17/2022 7:18 PM
9	The fee the city of Abilene is currently charging little leagues is needs to be re-evaluated. Most of the little league field maintenance is conducted by the little league volunteers, not city staff. Travel ball teams also use the fields to practice and are not charged a fee and use the fields to contribute to wear and tear and lightings, etc. Consistency in fees should be applied to all using fields and using all city fields (baseball, football, soccer, etc.) Restroom facilities across parks and fields need to be evaluated and upgraded.	7/17/2022 6:01 PM
10	Improve walking paths	7/15/2022 8:23 PM
11	It would be great to have indoor activity spaces that are open to the public without memberships/fees. It is so hot here, my family hasn't been able to exercise as much this summer and would utilize indoor facilities. Getting existing playgrounds and equipment	7/14/2022 2:08 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

completely functional/safe is a great first step before putting money elsewhere, but I would love also to see nature centers and citywide connected walking trails.

12	Adding canopies over playground equipment	7/14/2022 10:32 AM
13	swimming pool in Southside of Abilene please	7/13/2022 2:47 PM
14	Create community gardens	7/13/2022 8:32 AM
15	We'd be interested in supporting an INDOOR natatorium: Olympic pool/ fitness faculty	7/13/2022 7:50 AM
16	Please add more bike lanes in abilene and sidewalks for pedestrians	7/12/2022 2:45 PM
17	Better care of Skate Park at Oscar Rose	7/12/2022 1:33 PM
18	sensible spending too upgrade existing facilities and add facilities which are limited in number of locations	7/12/2022 1:06 PM
19	Expand existing skatepark.	7/12/2022 1:12 AM
20	Do not need to parks or sport fields or buildings...just keep what we have in good shape	7/12/2022 1:01 AM
21	Bring back the skate park and/or create an even better one	7/11/2022 9:11 PM
22	Have more skatepark Events	7/11/2022 6:31 PM
23	Clean up the creaks, they are poorly maintained around the city. Water and trails are essential for citizens and draw guests to a city. Abilene is stuck in mentality of building too poorly and not spending adequately to maintain. The image of the city is poor when our guests come to visit. ACU seems to be the only descent place our guests enjoy, but there's not much there.	7/11/2022 4:07 PM
24	SHADE, TREES, AWNINGS, ETC	7/11/2022 1:00 PM
25	Add soft ground to splash pads. Cement is too dangerous. We need an affordable city pool.	7/11/2022 12:06 PM
26	Covered tennis courts for players who cannot afford to join country clubs but need protection from the sun	7/11/2022 11:00 AM
27	Would be very supportive of building a natatorium for the areas 3 schools, could also be beneficial in hosting area swim meets and bringing in revenue through tourism.	7/11/2022 10:54 AM
28	NEW SKATEPARK FACILITY!!!	7/10/2022 5:24 PM
29	We need more bike lanes... badly.	7/10/2022 2:52 PM
30	Covered and additional tennis courts, better upkeep and enhance the landscape at Rose Park Tennis Center (it is pitiful)	7/10/2022 2:44 PM
31	Complete Kirby hiking trail	7/10/2022 12:07 PM
32	New irrigation for Maxwell golf course	7/10/2022 9:29 AM
33	Just maintain and improve what you have. If you can't maintain what you have, you have no business building new capacity	7/10/2022 8:38 AM
34	build a real swimming pool at the city "water park".	7/10/2022 7:44 AM
35	Redo Nelson fields	7/1/2022 7:05 PM
36	Rails to Trails	7/1/2022 6:24 PM
37	South side Off leash dog park with shade	7/1/2022 6:12 PM
38	Lights and restrooms at existing boat ramps at lake	6/30/2022 8:45 AM
39	More Community outreach in lower income community	6/30/2022 12:48 AM
40	Camping area at our lakes.	6/30/2022 12:00 AM
41	More stuff for disabled people! Children and adults!	6/29/2022 5:17 PM
42	Add an ice rink...youth ice hockey is an excellent sport.	6/29/2022 4:38 PM
43	New places to fish inside the city instead of the lakes and a couple creeks. Also cool biking	6/29/2022 3:12 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

	trails inside the city that run and connect throughout the whole city.	
44	Add Parks/Rec on South Side	6/28/2022 11:01 PM
45	We need what Clyde is building we could benefit, we travel every weekend to Melissa Texas and hundreds of teams go to a 4 field facility to play and they make so much money hosting the tournaments the gate fees and snack bar it's amazing	6/28/2022 10:16 PM
46	New soccer complex and upgrade the smaller fields back stop and fencing at Wylie Little League	6/28/2022 8:21 PM
47	Create new park by Hamilton Hill	6/28/2022 6:53 PM
48	Develop soccer fields for existing BCSA league rental use in centralized location	6/28/2022 5:55 PM
49	Development of aquatic programs for our youth and adults in the community	6/28/2022 5:52 PM
50	Develop new outdoor lighted pickleball courts & additional indoor pickleball days & times	6/28/2022 9:09 AM
51	Continued partnership with AYSA	6/24/2022 7:42 PM
52	It would be so great to have a place DEDICATED to walkers and hikers. It is nerve-rattling to nearly be run over by a silent bicyclist who comes up behind us quickly!	6/24/2022 10:46 AM
53	EXTREME SUPPORT for pedestrian trail connectivity	6/23/2022 4:48 PM
54	Make Kirby Lake usable for water activities. Swimming, canoeing	6/23/2022 12:00 PM
55	Very supportive of more water attractions judging by the 100+ degree weather we have in the summer.	6/23/2022 10:11 AM
56	Sidewalks, there aren't many safe ways to walk near the road. You either have to walk on the side of the road(traffic hazard) or in the grass(snakes/uneven grass) next to the road.	6/23/2022 9:22 AM
57	Provide more covered picnic areas and shade tents over playgrounds.	6/22/2022 10:52 PM
58	Create running track 1/4 mile or 1 mile track for outdoor lighted running	6/22/2022 6:57 PM
59	Plant trees for shade next to paths	6/21/2022 5:30 PM
60	Football Fields for the youth football teams	6/21/2022 3:54 PM
61	Pickleball courts	6/21/2022 3:00 PM
62	Abilene hockey league (formerly key city hockey) has been forgotten, lost, throw to the way side when it comes to sports in abilene. Our kids have played for years, this is their favorite sport. Yet, the other sports leagues get anything and everything they ask for. We haven't asked for much. Our kids deserve the chance to build their skills also.	6/20/2022 11:57 PM
63	inline hockey	6/20/2022 9:50 AM
64	cover outdoor hockey rink	6/20/2022 9:36 AM
65	Hockey	6/20/2022 8:22 AM
66	Upgrading hockey arena	6/18/2022 6:00 PM
67	Hockey Rink	6/17/2022 5:58 PM
68	Safe walking/fitness trails	6/17/2022 10:07 AM
69	nicer bathrooms and concessions	6/17/2022 9:03 AM
70	More walking/running trails!	6/17/2022 8:21 AM
71	Hockey rink	6/17/2022 12:08 AM
72	Invest in Hockey	6/16/2022 10:15 PM
73	Soccer fields	6/16/2022 8:14 PM
74	I'm very supportive of renovating the existing hockey rink and/or building a new one. It needs shade, locker rooms, more seating, better marketing and support from the city	6/16/2022 8:14 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

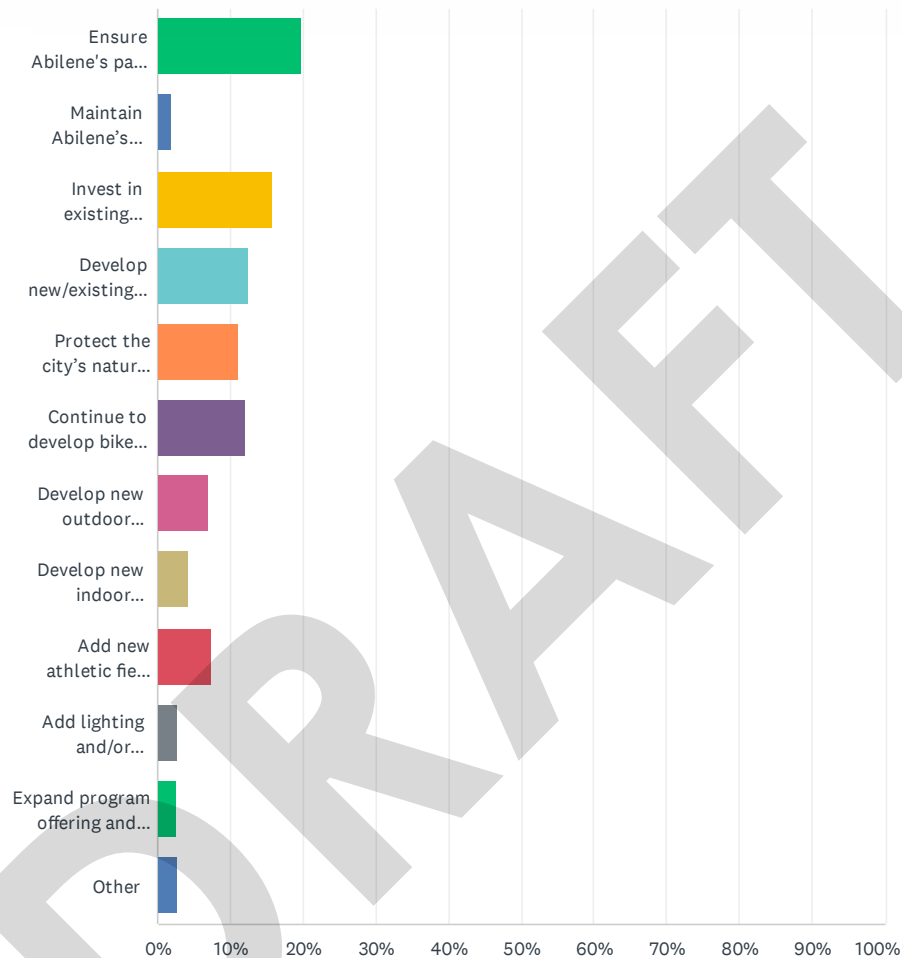
75	Soccer fields	6/16/2022 8:12 PM
76	Add an ice hockey rink	6/16/2022 8:11 PM
77	Improve hockey facilities	6/16/2022 8:09 PM
78	Improve the Cal Young Hockey Rink	6/16/2022 7:46 PM
79	New youth hockey rink	6/16/2022 7:06 PM
80	More softball fields	6/16/2022 5:55 PM
81	Improved adult softball fields for the higher premium	6/16/2022 5:51 PM
82	New turf football field and seating	6/16/2022 3:00 PM
83	We play football and the fields are horrible. We have had kids get hurt due to the way the fields are	6/16/2022 2:53 PM
84	Swimming	6/16/2022 2:49 PM
85	Hockey rink	6/16/2022 2:11 PM
86	New hockey rink!	6/16/2022 2:06 PM
87	Aquatics center	6/16/2022 12:01 PM
88	Hockey Rink has been here for 20 years and is not even mentioned on the list. This seems a little insulting to those of us who have played here and done repairs and maintenance ourselves for the past 2 decades. It would be nice if the city remembered we were here at least.	6/16/2022 11:02 AM
89	Hockey needs to be on this list. The fact is has been a league for over 20 years and is not even on this list shows how much attention the league and rink has been given over the past two decades.	6/16/2022 10:52 AM
90	New hockey rink	6/16/2022 1:27 AM
91	Adult baseballs leagues	6/15/2022 7:27 PM
92	Abilene Hockey improvement	6/15/2022 6:57 PM
93	Hockey	6/15/2022 6:36 PM
94	Anything needed the Abilene Cowboys would help with	6/15/2022 6:36 PM
95	Build a new hockey rink, ours is deteriorating at a rapid rate.	6/15/2022 6:25 PM
96	Hockey Rink Improvements - better shade for seating and player areas; updated rink; new scoreboard; restrooms; locker rooms; updated parking lot; concession stand	6/15/2022 6:14 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q13 Which actions are most important? FIRST CHOICE

Answered: 816 Skipped: 183





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

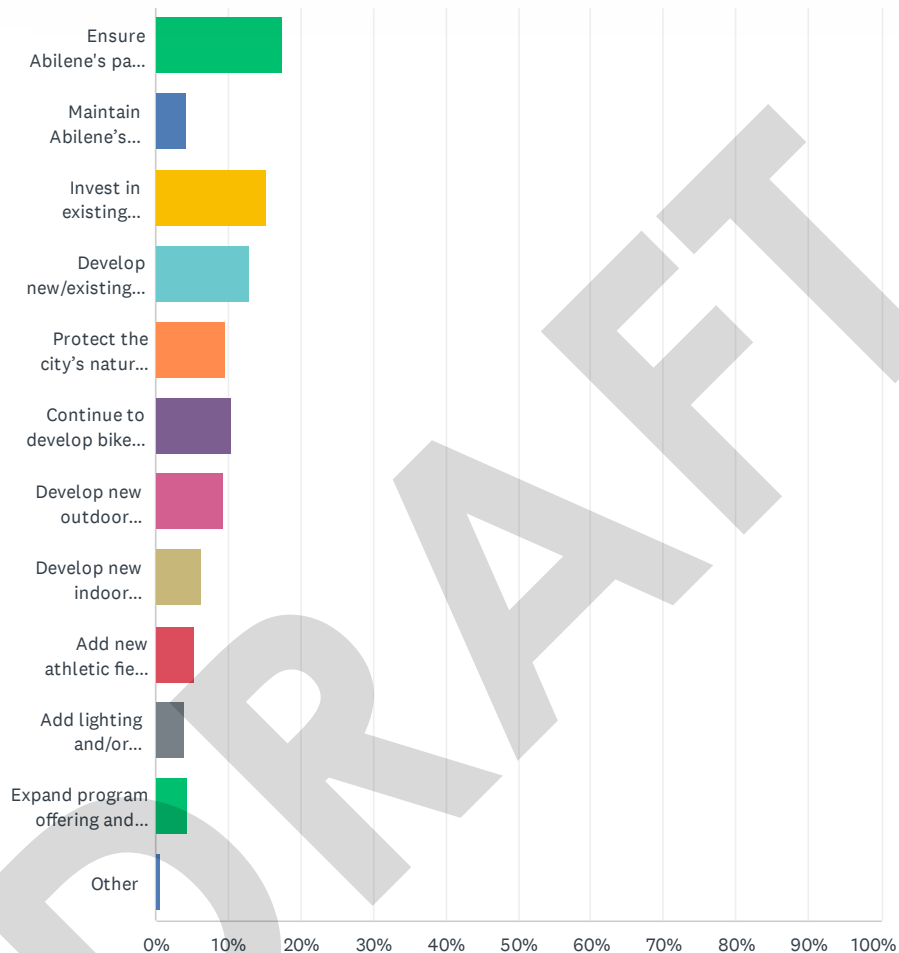
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ensure Abilene's parks and recreation remain an asset to the community as it grows and diversifies	19.85%	162
Maintain Abilene's city-sponsored programs and events as a major draw to the community	1.84%	15
Invest in existing facilities and deferred maintenance	15.69%	128
Develop new/existing underutilized park land	12.62%	103
Protect the city's natural areas and resources, including waterways, wetlands, and wildlife habitat	11.15%	91
Continue to develop bike and pedestrian trails and connectivity throughout the city	12.13%	99
Develop new outdoor recreation facilities	6.99%	57
Develop new indoor recreation facilities	4.29%	35
Add new athletic fields (e.g., baseball, softball, soccer, football)	7.48%	61
Add lighting and/or artificial turf at existing athletic fields	2.70%	22
Expand program offering and community events	2.57%	21
Other	2.70%	22
TOTAL		816



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q14 Which actions are most important? SECOND CHOICE

Answered: 797 Skipped: 202



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

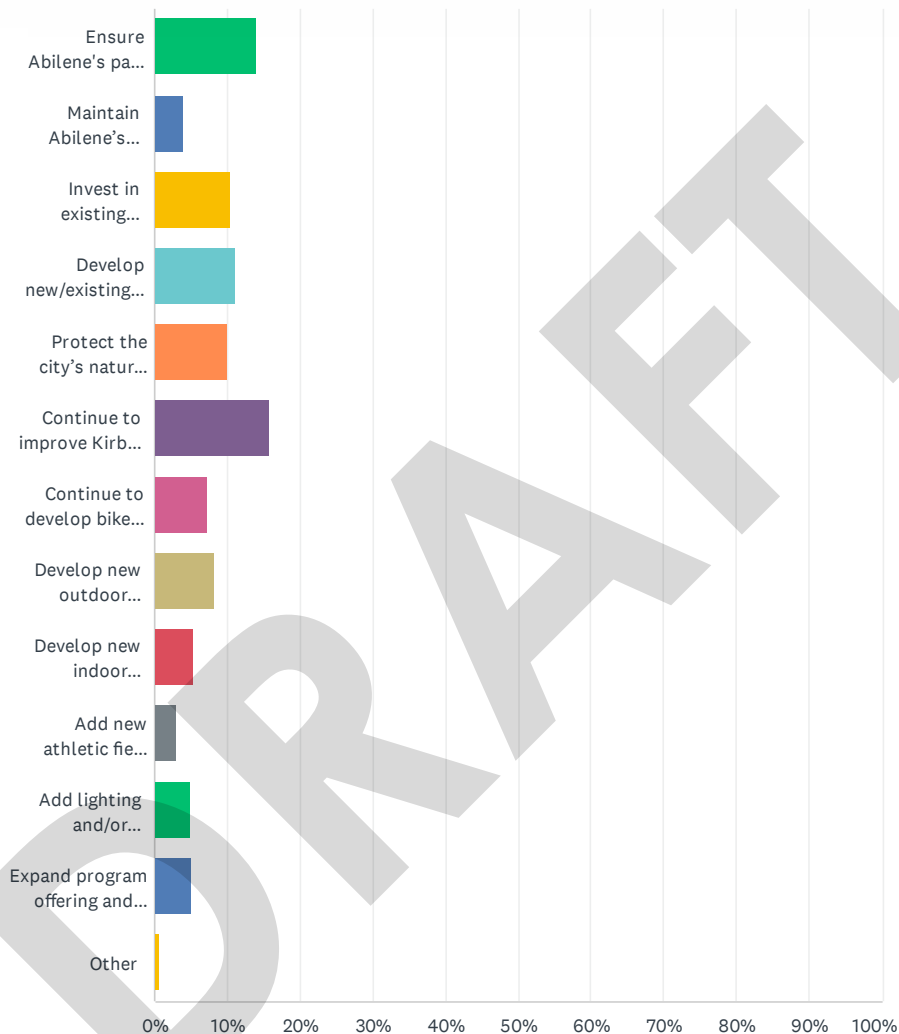
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ensure Abilene's parks and recreation remain an asset to the community as it grows and diversifies	17.44%	139
Maintain Abilene's city-sponsored programs and events as a major draw to the community	4.27%	34
Invest in existing facilities and deferred maintenance	15.31%	122
Develop new/existing underutilized park land	12.92%	103
Protect the city's natural areas and resources, including waterways, wetlands, and wildlife habitat	9.54%	76
Continue to develop bike and pedestrian trails and connectivity throughout the city	10.54%	84
Develop new outdoor recreation facilities	9.28%	74
Develop new indoor recreation facilities	6.40%	51
Add new athletic fields (e.g., baseball, softball, soccer, football)	5.27%	42
Add lighting and/or artificial turf at existing athletic fields	4.02%	32
Expand program offering and community events	4.39%	35
Other	0.63%	5
TOTAL		797



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q15 Which actions are most important? THIRD CHOICE

Answered: 763 Skipped: 236





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ensure Abilene's parks and recreation remain an asset to the community as it grows and diversifies	14.15%	108
Maintain Abilene's city-sponsored programs and events as a major draw to the community	4.06%	31
Invest in existing facilities and deferred maintenance	10.48%	80
Develop new/existing underutilized park land	11.14%	85
Protect the city's natural areas and resources, including waterways, wetlands, and wildlife habitat	9.96%	76
Continue to improve Kirby Lake according to the 2018 Master Plan	15.86%	121
Continue to develop bike and pedestrian trails and connectivity throughout the city	7.21%	55
Develop new outdoor recreation facilities	8.26%	63
Develop new indoor recreation facilities	5.24%	40
Add new athletic fields (e.g., baseball, softball, soccer, football)	3.01%	23
Add lighting and/or artificial turf at existing athletic fields	4.85%	37
Expand program offering and community events	5.11%	39
Other	0.66%	5
TOTAL		763

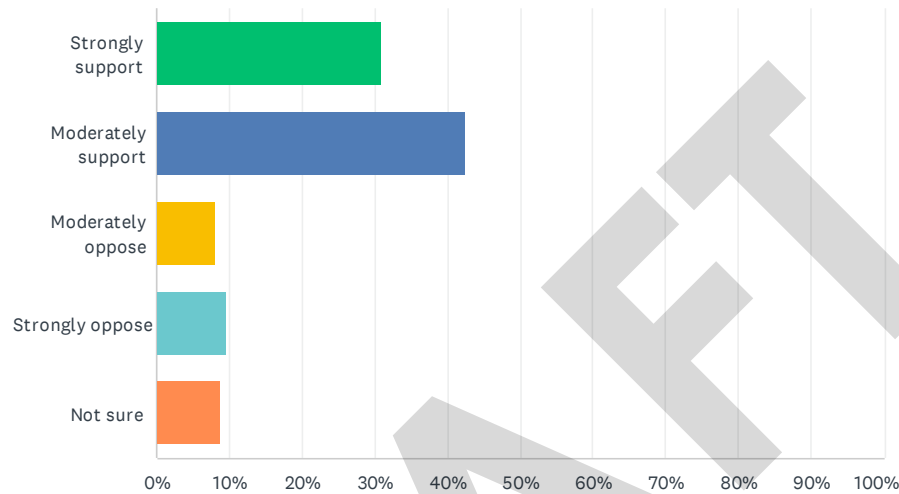
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Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q16 Would you support an additional tax or bond to fund park and facility improvements that are important to your household?

Answered: 809 Skipped: 190



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly support	30.90%	250
Moderately support	42.52%	344
Moderately oppose	8.16%	66
Strongly oppose	9.64%	78
Not sure	8.78%	71
TOTAL		809



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q17 Counting yourself, how many people in your household are of the following ages?

Answered: 806 Skipped: 193





Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

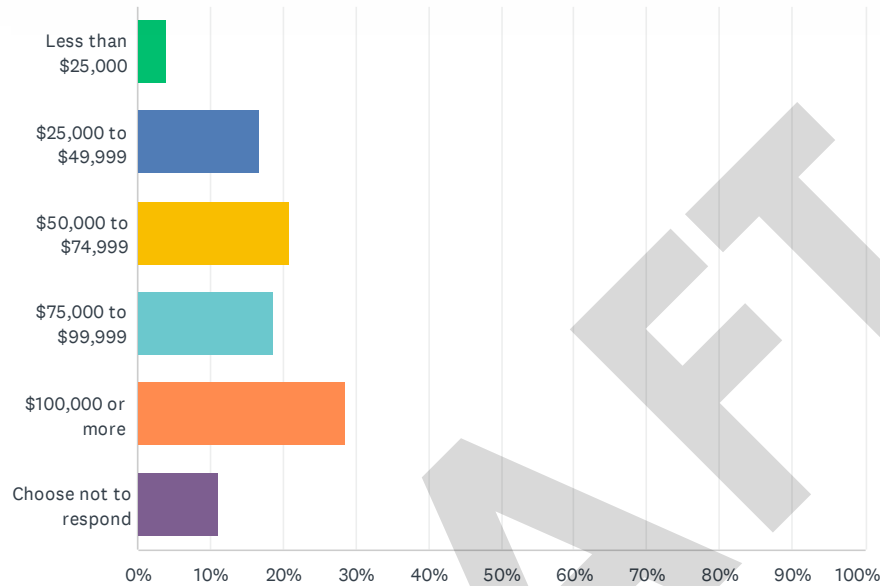
Household members							
	0	1	2	3	4	MORE THAN 4	TOTAL
Under 5 years old	32.97% 122	44.86% 166	18.11% 67	3.24% 12	0.81% 3	0.00% 0	370
5-9 years old	24.54% 93	53.30% 202	17.68% 67	4.22% 16	0.26% 1	0.00% 0	379
10-14 years old	23.67% 80	52.07% 176	21.60% 73	2.37% 8	0.30% 1	0.00% 0	338
15-19 years old	38.15% 95	44.18% 110	13.25% 33	4.42% 11	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	249
20-24 years old	56.76% 105	30.81% 57	11.35% 21	1.08% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	185
25-34 years old	20.10% 78	36.60% 142	41.24% 160	1.55% 6	0.52% 2	0.00% 0	388
35-44 years old	13.19% 55	37.65% 157	48.92% 204	0.24% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	417
45-54 years old	37.45% 88	31.06% 73	31.06% 73	0.43% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	235
55-64 years old	51.16% 88	25.58% 44	23.26% 40	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	172
65-74 years old	58.06% 90	21.29% 33	20.65% 32	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	155
75 or over	80.99% 98	9.92% 12	9.09% 11	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	121



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q18 What is your annual household income?

Answered: 806 Skipped: 193



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than \$25,000	3.97%	32
\$25,000 to \$49,999	16.75%	135
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.84%	168
\$75,000 to \$99,999	18.73%	151
\$100,000 or more	28.54%	230
Choose not to respond	11.17%	90
TOTAL		806



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q20 What recommendations would you like for the city to consider in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan?

Answered: 445 Skipped: 554

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Abilene Hockey needs an indoor rink for the children	8/6/2022 12:38 AM
2	Invest into the community road	8/5/2022 5:09 PM
3	I know it's been a dry year but nice green parks are big draws for outdoor play/picnics etc. I would love to see our existing facilities upgraded - Adventure Cove, splash pads, the Daniels rec center. The programs sounded so amazing but when the facility is gross you won't send your kids.	8/4/2022 11:01 AM
4	Park development in the south part of the city west of US 83/84.	7/31/2022 1:14 AM
5	Better bike trails throughout the city	7/29/2022 11:34 AM
6	swimmable water	7/25/2022 6:39 PM
7	Repair crumbling paved walking trails. Creating longer distance paved walking/multi use trails.	7/24/2022 3:13 PM
8	These are WANTS (by some) -- not NEEDS for all. NO MORE BONDS. You're already taxing us to death.	7/23/2022 7:11 PM
9	Growing/Helping the youth athletic programs already in place	7/22/2022 10:40 AM
10	Lakes are lacking in enjoyable amenities and aesthetics. Trails, trails, and more trails! I don't believe parks are a current asset.	7/21/2022 5:02 PM
11	Would love to see a community soccer field like Beacon Field in Lansing, MI. Link here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmlVxOAvRxM We also have a lot of basketball courts. What about adding some soccer goals under ground? That's what the Over Under Initiative does. Link here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ckSptPslGU	7/21/2022 11:21 AM
12	Our playgrounds are sad and run down. More lighting for walking. The skatepark looks terrible and needs revitalization and expansion. Lakes are gross.	7/21/2022 10:01 AM
13	Enhancing the parks that currently exist. Updating facilities with nicer trails and nature walks. We live close to will hair park and it just feels run down and a little sketchy to go by myself with my one year old. Would love to see a change with safety being alone in a park.	7/21/2022 9:23 AM
14	Make sure the bathrooms stay clean for those that utilize the parks	7/21/2022 9:14 AM
15	Indoor swimming pools and after school programs until you 5pm when I get off work	7/21/2022 12:36 AM
16	More/better promotion	7/20/2022 11:52 PM
17	I had heard that there were plans to create trails and a river walk in Abilene. Would love to see that happen	7/20/2022 10:16 PM
18	Another adventure cove type thing or more big splash pads.	7/20/2022 7:44 PM
19	Indoor tennis courts for summer. My son and his friends play tennis and Abilene is a great tennis town, but they can't play in summer without an expensive Country Club membership because there are no indoor courts and it's too hot to play tennis when it's 110 outside all summer.	7/20/2022 3:36 PM
20	A water park similar to hurricane harbor that is also for adults and not just children.	7/20/2022 3:24 PM
21	more neighborhood playgrounds, walking trails, improve walking trails that currently exist	7/20/2022 10:47 AM
22	Outdoor green space downtown, turf field, games for families, areas for food carts to park.	7/20/2022 8:19 AM
23	Improvement at Kirby Lake. Hiking, biking trails. Extra security to curb the unnecessary	7/19/2022 10:49 PM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

	activities and trashing.	
24	Safe walking/bike trails that's integrated with nature is a big thing for me.	7/19/2022 10:46 PM
25	More trails for walkers/joggers/bicyclists, more outdoor workout equipment, access to kayaking	7/19/2022 4:35 PM
26	Adaptive equipment for special needs at all park playgrounds!	7/19/2022 10:42 AM
27	Northside folks feel somewhat ignored. The growth in the Heritage Parks and Beltway North area is very encouraging and I hope you will consider adding Parks & Rec options to this area! Let's show people who drive down the I-20 corridor that Abilene has nice things to offer!	7/19/2022 10:15 AM
28	Soccer fields would be a real draw, allowing Abilene to host regional tournaments providing additional sports tourism and hotel/motel tax.	7/19/2022 10:14 AM
29	This city has great splash pads but needs more public swimming venues for its size. A lot of abilene is growing to the south of the city and there are not a lot of places to be able to take my kids to play in the heat.	7/19/2022 8:08 AM
30	Desperately need a larger water park and more water related facilities for older kids. Age restrictions placed on splash pads with some policing	7/18/2022 11:36 PM
31	The south side of Abilene (Wylie area) is largely forgotten when it comes to accessible splash pad and water areas. Kirby lake park needs a splash pad for the largest growing area in Abilene.	7/18/2022 9:09 PM
32	Adding Soccer Fields at Redbud Park	7/18/2022 4:59 PM
33	Stop wasting money on cedar creek trail. all that money could of been used at Kirby to develop a very nice facility with a developed trail all the way around for walking, biking, skating, fishing etc. I understand some of it belongs to the water department but its all Abilene city government. It cant be that hard. Then we actually have something that can be used and a starting point for the pet project cedar creek trail.	7/18/2022 4:02 PM
34	I would love to see more grants and funding for native habitat protection and growth. Keep Abilene Beautiful needs to take some tips from other cities in the state, and start being more proactive in local conservation and habitat education.	7/18/2022 3:37 PM
35	New skate park	7/18/2022 2:50 PM
36	More splash pads around city.	7/18/2022 2:43 PM
37	I just really would love more to look at! Native plants, gardening, etc. I know it's difficult to maintain in this area but I think that would be such a great addition.	7/18/2022 2:23 PM
38	Updating the current park locations we have and utilizing the space.	7/18/2022 2:16 PM
39	Clean and working bathroom facilities is a MUST. There are parks that my children and myself do not use because of the lack of clean or working restrooms. More splash pads with slides and shaded seating. The few that we do have are too crowded.	7/18/2022 1:38 PM
40	Think about the safety of our kiddos and improve there field for athletes	7/18/2022 12:29 PM
41	- The Redbud/Southern baseball field concession stand area needs a cover to protect people standing in line from foul balls that land in that area. - The Redbud/Southern Major baseball field needs new bullpens to complement last years fence project. It still has a lot of the old oil field pipes for fencing. - The Redbud/Southern Junior field needs new dugouts and bullpens. Several sections of the dugout and ballfield fencing is rusted out. The additional \$20 fee the city charges parents for there kids to play is totally inappropriate. It would be one thing if you had city workers at the fields cutting the grass and lining the field and picking up trash and them keep up with them to have a nice complex but instead you are charging people money just to receive money whenever you have no upkeep what so ever!! The people who try and keep to complex nice are volunteers of the southern Little League and that is completely wrong of Abilene to take advantage of the living people	7/18/2022 12:07 PM
42	newer equipment, cleaner and useable restrooms, regular trash pickup, and better bike/walk trails.	7/18/2022 10:01 AM
43	Continue to protect wildlife areas while growing clean access to families to enjoy the outdoors at state and city parks, adequate shade for playgrounds, outdoor education fairs, and hiking	7/18/2022 9:56 AM



Abilene Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey

and biking trails. Just enhance the opportunities for people to get off their phone and out in nature. Thank you for sending this out. Hopefully you get good feedback.

44	my daughter has been attending there since she was 6. I believe that in order to have the same kids return the higher up has to stop switching the staff that have been at certain centers for so long. More things should be added to these parks and recreation centers so it won't get boring to the kids.	7/18/2022 9:40 AM
45	We don't need anymore baseball fields. They are an eyesore and use precious resources. I would love a place to bike without behind terrified of getting hit by a \$80k ford truck.	7/18/2022 7:28 AM
46	Expand adventure cove	7/18/2022 12:46 AM
47	A bigger water park! Updates to the softball fields. A splash pad at Cobb park would be nice!	7/18/2022 12:44 AM
48	I think the biggest benefit would be creating more spaces for families and small groups to be able to meet, sit and enjoy the park with shade. Also, creating a cleaner and safer environment at all parks. One thought would be creating a special division within the police department of officers that focus on parks, especially during peak use times/evenings or events at the parks. It would also be a good way for the police department to connect with some of the communicate that may not always have a great connection. Also, bring some more art into the parks like it has been done downtown. Maybe creating themes for some of the parks and using that to inspire the art work as well as what is offered at the park such as the playground equipment, workout station, etc. to reflect the theme. An example could be a space themed park with the playground have a rocket as the center focus and a work out path that the elements have that space theme. I don't know if this already exists or not, but creating or building up an adopt-a-park program like the state does with road ways. Have local groups adopt a park or sections of a park and they perform trash pick ups and possible small maintenance projects like painting. This would be a great way to get some of the college groups involved with the parks and community. Another thought for programming would be parting with some groups in town and sponsor and hold an Abilene Wide Olympic Games. Basic idea would be spread the events across different parks in Abilene with different activities that teams could enter for a chance to win prizes and then host a bring ceremony at the end of the week long event at a big family and community park at one of the parks! Also, I know downtown we have the store book characters. What about branch that out to the parks or create something similar to San Angelo where they have sheep and you try to find them all. So maybe each park has a special thing you look for and if you find every item at all the parks you get a small prize? I can't remember if this already happens or not, but maybe partner with the Drive In and/or the Paramount and have a movie in the park night every once in a while?	7/18/2022 12:15 AM
49	Please provide us with options for swimming, Arlington Texas has some amazing family friendly swimming pools.	7/17/2022 9:14 PM
50	Expanding Adventure cove or making another outdoor swimming facility that is much larger for our growing community. A new one on the south side and maybe one on the north side.	7/17/2022 9:12 PM
51	A splash pad and park developed closer to Beltway /Buffalo Gap	7/17/2022 8:42 PM
52	Nelson park softball fields need work. This would bring in a lot of money if we had someone decent fields and complex. Adult, youth, softball baseball, kick ball.	7/17/2022 7:54 PM
53	More basketball courts in the original downtown area, and repairing of skate parks (non smooth surface is extremely dangerous)	7/17/2022 7:28 PM
54	smoother surfaces at the skate park, contact the skaters personally so we can help make a safe and functional skate park!	7/17/2022 7:19 PM
55	The dog park has poor shading for both owners and dogs. It would be great to have some more shade and even a possible water feature and/or an agility course for dog training and/or more benches. Many owners bring their own chairs because the benches are full. The park continues to grow vegetation that cause stickers to get on dogs. Many regular visitors to the park will try to maintain stickers as well clean the park. Staff do not come out to maintain. For this park to be the only dog park in the city it would be expected that it would offer more to the public.	7/17/2022 7:12 PM
56	Dedicated dog parks for small and large dogs.	7/17/2022 7:06 PM
57	More green space is certainly needed.	7/17/2022 6:32 PM



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58	Public pools and bigger water park. Splash pads and Adventure Cove is too crowded	7/17/2022 6:27 PM
59	Improved bathrooms	7/17/2022 6:02 PM
60	More walking and biking trails, please! The Cedar creek waterway is a good start but could be so much better!	7/17/2022 8:36 AM
61	We need more swimming pools available at a reasonable price, more nature trails and maintaining the existing playgrounds to ensure all equipment is operational and safe.	7/17/2022 12:11 AM
62	- The Redbud/Southern baseball field concession stand area needs a cover to protect people standing in line from foul balls that land in that area. - The Redbud/Southern Major baseball field needs new bullpens to complement last years fence project. It still has a lot of the old oil field pipes for fencing. - The Redbud/Southern Junior field needs new dugouts and bullpens. Several sections of the dugout and ballfield fencing is rusted out.	7/16/2022 8:22 PM
63	Improve walking paths at Redbud. Increased security at night to prevent vandalism!	7/15/2022 8:27 PM
64	Lee Park needs walking trail with lighting and possibly benches. Also Lee needs splash pad.	7/15/2022 5:42 PM
65	Consider property acquisition along west side of Catclaw Drive near Elm Creek, can tie in to Southwest Dr complex, beautification would be well received. Also complete Cedar Creek Waterway plan.	7/15/2022 4:04 PM
66	Shade through tree planting or covers for more play grounds. Having side walks on Oldham lane for bicyclists, walkers and joggers.	7/15/2022 1:32 PM
67	Shaded playgrounds	7/15/2022 8:42 AM
68	Adding more trees and gardens to parks. Adding something like artificial turf to playgrounds so there are less splinters from wood chips. More adaptive equipment for special needs families at playgrounds. Splash pad features for smaller kids and special needs kids. Shade over playground equipment.	7/14/2022 10:28 PM
69	Offer more classes and shaded areas for hot days	7/14/2022 9:11 PM
70	Stop wasting so much money!	7/14/2022 7:30 PM
71	More accessible parks for disabled children and coverings for the playground equipment.	7/14/2022 3:37 PM
72	More shade, Safer parks, more maintained parks, more toddler friendly activities and more adult friendly activities.	7/14/2022 3:34 PM
73	Please add shaded areas and build more smaller neighborhood parks.	7/14/2022 3:17 PM
74	Need a park and splash pad far south on Buffalo Gap and 707. More seating and shade at all splash pads, specifically where adults can see their children better. More adult seating at Kirby lake playground sandbox. Love the nature items (old stumps, sand, balance beams) used at Kirby lake! Would love to see more playground that aren't just hot plastic or metal. Plant more climbing friendly trees. You can't see your children at Fort imagination, so we won't go there. A dock with a ladder or some way to encourage swimming in the interior or tittle Luther lake? Improved bathroom at Kirby playground. It's just gross. Better to pee outside in the grass than go inside that bathroom.	7/14/2022 3:00 PM
75	More shade over playgrounds !!	7/14/2022 2:57 PM
76	It would be nice for playgrounds to be covered	7/14/2022 2:41 PM
77	For our family and friends, shade and seating would be excellent for immediate action.	7/14/2022 2:27 PM
78	I am a huge fan of community parks and spaces. It would be great to see our existing parks maintained and fully functional. Indoor recreation space (that dont require memberships or fees) and community centers (where citizens could reserve or rent space for activities/events) would be nice. More walking trails city wide would be awesome, especially if they're accessible. Speaking of, more accessible sidewalks and playgrounds would also be nice. As taxes are so high here already, it's difficult to say adding taxes to do this would be a good thing, though the money has to come from somewhere, so bigger picture maybe the city needs to utilize existing fund sources better to accommodate the parks and recreation needs.	7/14/2022 2:13 PM
79	Lots more seating and shading over outdoor parks	7/14/2022 2:11 PM



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80	Adding canopies above the playgrounds will give more access to our kids. When the playgrounds get as scorching hot as they get, the playground equipment otherwise just sits there unused. And the playgrounds themselves are excellent, but our children cant use them in the summer! By the time the sun goes down enough to cool them down, the park is closed.	7/14/2022 10:38 AM
81	Biking trails	7/14/2022 10:31 AM
82	Better access to outdoor spaces with better security in the evenings.	7/14/2022 10:27 AM
83	Wishing more has been done with the Cedar Creek Walkway, ready for more development on it...	7/13/2022 7:04 PM
84	swimming pool	7/13/2022 2:49 PM
85	Maintain Oscar rose skatepark and develop a southside skatepark	7/13/2022 10:43 AM
86	More outdoor swimming. For people that don't have memberships anywhere, there is only one place to swim, and that's at Adventure Cove and that's it. Another location would be nice, Abilene has grown so much to only have one place to swim in town. The state park is also close so I can't even make the drive there to go swim.	7/13/2022 8:41 AM
87	Development of community gardens Development of disability inclusive playgrounds with shade	7/13/2022 8:35 AM
88	Protection of our natural landscape, wildlife, and wetlands.	7/13/2022 8:32 AM
89	More hiking trails	7/13/2022 8:30 AM
90	I would love to see more advertisements for youth sports programs. I have had to search for programs and missed deadlines in the past due to no/poor advertisement.	7/13/2022 7:57 AM
91	Fix concrete at skatepark pls. Graffiti is ok. Thanks.	7/13/2022 1:29 AM
92	Adding one-wall handball courts as improvments are made. It would be and easy and economical feature and there would be Abilenians who would promote this sport.	7/12/2022 7:05 PM
93	A nice water park that adults can enjoy as well as the kids	7/12/2022 6:21 PM
94	Adding more bike trails and pedestrian trails , expanding the skate park	7/12/2022 3:01 PM
95	The skate park is a big place of my childhood and my family's we need to improve the cracks some people can ride properly	7/12/2022 1:29 PM
96	Incorporate less wasted expense on architecture designs and focus on getting the best bang for your buck. Abilene could have so much more if they had a sensible group making designs and plans.	7/12/2022 1:11 PM
97	Keep moving forward	7/12/2022 11:24 AM
98	More nature-focused areas, like at Will Hair, Kirby, and cedar creek. CLEAN BATHROOMS AT ALL FACILITIES (y'all need to like.. pressure wash the sears splash pad bathroom, she nasty). I'm excited to be able to give input and I'm sending this survey to all my park loving friends	7/12/2022 7:45 AM
99	The 180 Skate Park event was so much fun and was different - keep thinking outside the box with community events, your people in Abilene need and support them!	7/12/2022 1:46 AM
100	Development of the open field area behind the 800 block of presidio drive (79605) into a nice walking/hiking trail or into a swimming area/swim park for this side of town.	7/12/2022 1:16 AM
101	no new fees or taxes....we already pay a street fee and we can see that either that is not being used or being used slowly.	7/12/2022 1:03 AM
102	Community garden; where we volunteer to take care of the garden, donate food grown to local food pantry and learn about the plants that are native to our area	7/12/2022 12:53 AM
103	Keep working on that Cedar Creek Parkway!!!!	7/11/2022 11:10 PM
104	Need an actual city pool beside the so called water park. Need MAJOR improvements and PATROL and better roads at Kirby....that place is very NASTY!! More walking trails that are well lit!!!	7/11/2022 9:32 PM



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105	The need to reopen the skate park and/or create a new space for those in need of an area similar.	7/11/2022 9:16 PM
106	Plz do something with the skate park to improve it	7/11/2022 8:06 PM
107	Plant new trees.	7/11/2022 7:56 PM
108	Build a second skate park at either Nelson Wilson, Sears, Cobb or Redbud location. Improve the walking trail at Cobb make a walking/jog trail at Nelson Wilson.	7/11/2022 6:13 PM
109	More shade and benches at playgrounds, more covered picnic areas for birthday parties, etc., major improvements to restrooms -- they are super gross, more walking/nature trails, more pool options besides the very pricey Adventure Cove. Albany's pool is so nice.	7/11/2022 6:09 PM
110	Stop dreaming small. We have so many small communities in the area that would support the endeavors. We lose the opportunities to Lubbock, DFW, and Midland. Abilene has the reputation and mentality of being behind by 20 years. The SODA should not be the only priority for the city that is extremely family oriented. Finding places to drink beer is not the overall sentiment for many citizens. Grand Prairie, for example is a city that has taken risks when it was behind many other surrounding cities. We need a massive indoor/outdoor hybrid water park. These splash pads and The Cove are good, but that's dreaming small. Also, make sure that all citizens pay and not only businesses and middle class. We should all be vested in our city.	7/11/2022 4:15 PM
111	Expansion of community events, upgrading or building new recreational and park facilities	7/11/2022 4:05 PM
112	Add more covered seating and attractions to discovery cove.	7/11/2022 3:53 PM
113	An adult pool. More pools in general for everyone. Improved/new, lake and creek camp/grilling areas. Maybe consider watersport rentals such as boats, jet skis, and such on existing surrounding lakes.	7/11/2022 3:49 PM
114	Your player fees associated with adult softball leagues has killed all softball Programs in Abilene! Your associated fees have made it to cost over \$700 a season for a team to play. In no way shape or form has this promoted what should be the purpose of the parks and recreation department. There are many leagues and facilities across the big country and West Texas and Eastern New Mexico that run successful softball leagues and have nicer facilities than Nelson Park and only charge \$375 a season with no contract fee or player fee with as many if not more games. It would be interesting to see which sports complexes have the highest electricity bill.... Instead of charging player fees you should incorporate the water and electricity into the league lease agreement and let the league workout the additional costs with sponsorship or fees of their own. Facility upkeep at Nelson is pathetic. There's been few upgrades or repairs over the last 8 years that I've played there. No scoreboard is operational. This is the only acceptable facility for adult softball in the area and it is a 3 out of 10. Your master plan of 2014 says you should build a "tournament style" baseball and softball facility and you've done nothing of the sort and have since let the City of Clyde get the upper hand with a ground breaking \$14M facility that will take a lot of activities from the City of Abilene .	7/11/2022 3:38 PM
115	Cedar Creek!	7/11/2022 3:33 PM
116	We need more in door activity and more lights on the parks at night.	7/11/2022 2:43 PM
117	To have the city council make it their top goal to care about what the residents of this "city" want and take steps forward to accomplish that goal, and For the city council to stop only caring about themselves.	7/11/2022 1:14 PM
118	The park restrooms are horrendous or non-existent.	7/11/2022 1:13 PM
119	SHADE, and Drinking water access.	7/11/2022 1:02 PM
120	While the Splash Pads are a great draw, there needs to be a City pool, either at a Rec Center, or a free-standing something. One anyone can pay to enter, that's not also \$25 like Adventure Cove. Adventure Cove does not have an actual pool that people can swim in, or a deep end with diving boards. And, I don't want to spend \$325 to be a member of the Abilene Swim Club to swim for only 3 months, or join the YMCA. Something like the City of Lubbock Swimming Pools for example.	7/11/2022 12:48 PM
121	If this is going to take years, like most things do, improve the sidewalk/trail at redbud before people start falling.	7/11/2022 12:47 PM



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122	An affordable city pool. Make splash pads safer (cement ground causes injuries almost every time we go, especially where slides hit ground)	7/11/2022 12:08 PM
123	Consider the entire community of Abilene, not just focusing entirely down town. Consider ALL small businesses that would likely participate in community events if notified.	7/11/2022 11:19 AM
124	I am a middle class, full-time employee who achieves work/life balance by playing tennis 2-3 times weekly with friends all year. My priority would be covered courts (plural), so we could play in any weather conditions and reduce the risk of skin cancer.	7/11/2022 11:07 AM
125	Adding shade to playgrounds would be one of the most important to us.	7/11/2022 10:59 AM
126	Bigger multipurpose facilities for baseball, soccer, softball. Also consider building a natatorium. Is there room for this to be added on to the land around Adventure Cove?	7/11/2022 10:57 AM
127	Nature Center, naturalist led hikes, children's nature programs	7/11/2022 10:21 AM
128	Focus more on ensuring current parks and programs have the appropriate funding for needed maintenance and updates than on new projects.	7/11/2022 10:12 AM
129	Development of new parks and nature trails would be an added bonus to the city	7/11/2022 10:09 AM
130	Creative ways to raise and use current funds to work with vs increasing taxes.	7/11/2022 10:05 AM
131	From my kids: More imagination play to the park (themed playground), more merry go rounds, public swimming pool with lifeguards, big kid playground equipment (ages 8+)	7/11/2022 9:27 AM
132	Handicap accessibility	7/11/2022 8:41 AM
133	None	7/11/2022 8:10 AM
134	more and improved existing bicycle and walking paths	7/10/2022 9:48 PM
135	MORE BIKE PATHS	7/10/2022 9:47 PM
136	A Soccer complex	7/10/2022 9:25 PM
137	Putting fences around playgrounds for children who likes to run off	7/10/2022 9:24 PM
138	More benches close to the playground at the park by Kirby lake.	7/10/2022 9:20 PM
139	We need a swimming pool. I love Adventure Cove but there is no where for kids to go free swim in or cannon ball. Especially with the state park being closed. I think teenagers specifically would benefit from a good city pool.	7/10/2022 9:18 PM
140	Abilene should attract an amusement park, maybe in conjunction with the zoo to drive up tourism. Also all support that the city can give to the zoo is important.	7/10/2022 8:58 PM
141	Keep them clean and secured, keep creeps and destructive teens out of children parks	7/10/2022 8:57 PM
142	Indoor rock climbing, please! Also I'd love access to a public lap swim pool (charge \$ of course - but not necessarily a contracted membership like the Y). These would both be such a huge benefit to our town!!	7/10/2022 8:16 PM
143	Shade features/keep programs going.	7/10/2022 8:13 PM
144	Better accessible and adaptive to all disabilities to include activities, camps and buildings.	7/10/2022 8:00 PM
145	More wisely use the money we are already paying.	7/10/2022 7:20 PM
146	New skatepark	7/10/2022 7:01 PM
147	Please add water fountains for dogs to existing parks or a swimming area at red bud	7/10/2022 6:28 PM
148	The skate park at Oscar Rose Park has been maintained primarily by the skateboarders who use it daily for several years. It would be more than worthwhile to perform repairs to existing infrastructure and make improvements to the skate park.	7/10/2022 6:20 PM
149	Provide more small parks in residential areas so those who lack transportation have a place to play ball without having to go to some huge sports complex designed to draw tourists. Provide indoor adult only heated pools in residential areas easily accessible to fixed income seniors. YMCA is too expensive with limited adult free swim time. Not every want to join a group. Offer	7/10/2022 6:13 PM



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small neighborhood parks for children to play close to home. Not everyone is interested in playing organized sports.

150	The skatepark needs to be resurfaced and the concrete is failing in several areas.	7/10/2022 5:56 PM
151	A New Bigger and Better skatepark/skate plaza facility!!!	7/10/2022 5:27 PM
152	We need more bike paths for bikes And scooters	7/10/2022 5:23 PM
153	More parks in far South Abilene	7/10/2022 4:35 PM
154	Emphasize neighborhoods, not massive central facilities.	7/10/2022 3:53 PM
155	Having the park's swings slides and other equipment cleaned on a regular basis. Due to people and animals relieving themselves on playground equipment and then we have to leave with granddaughters. Cobb Park in particular.	7/10/2022 3:48 PM
156	More access to bike lanes and bike commuting needs. Gas is crazy expensive and there needs to be support for alternative means of getting around Abilene.	7/10/2022 2:56 PM
157	Include Tennis Courts and perhaps a Pickle Ball Facility like the one Lubbock currently has a proposal out to construct. San Antonio and Austin also have these built around courtyards with food vendors. I don't play Pickleball but it is a up and coming trend.	7/10/2022 2:48 PM
158	At Rose Park Tennis center, add an outdoor Racquetball Court.	7/10/2022 2:14 PM
159	I'd like to buy Vaughn Camp Park, how much?	7/10/2022 12:57 PM
160	Complete the hiking and bicycle trail and keep the park protected and free of trash.	7/10/2022 12:14 PM
161	Loop Lake Kirby with a trail.	7/10/2022 11:59 AM
162	Repair walking surfaces in parks. Have bicycle lanes that are separate from walking paths.	7/10/2022 11:28 AM
163	Build more swimming pools for the low income people that can't afford adventure cove and memberships to the pool on Corsicana.	7/10/2022 9:54 AM
164	Upgrade Maxwell golf course	7/10/2022 9:32 AM
165	Just consider the fact that skateboarding is now an Olympic sport. The fact that our children could one day be able to support their family solely based off of doing something they love. The fact that skateboarding isn't only an art form but could be a means to provide, should open the opportunity for more growth in our community. A major reason the skateboarding community is so dull in Abilene, is because of the reputation that rose park carries. I would STRONGLY recommend that the new park should be one that is paid for. A daily fee at entry, just like at the water park, would ensure that people are there to skate, not hang around and cause problems.	7/10/2022 9:25 AM
166	Having fewer well maintained, top-tier facilities speaks louder for us in promoting greater usage and community growth than a whole lot of worn down facilities. Our parks are currently not top-tier. We would likely see great use of our parks if they were in better shape. When it's time for growth, we need to ensure that the opportunities are spread throughout all parts of the city. No part of the community should take a backseat. We also need more a couple more dog parks. Walking trails/paths at the parks need to be replaced and more trees need to be planted, especially around walking paths/trails.	7/10/2022 8:46 AM
167	Trails, trails, and more trails. Get Cedar Creek Waterway done, we need that trail.	7/10/2022 8:20 AM
168	New parks, maybe sell a few smaller run down parks....	7/10/2022 8:06 AM
169	ADD A FULL SIZE SWIMMING POOL TO THE EXISTING WATER PARK. THE WATER PARK IS TOO SMALL AND THE HOURS NEED TO BE EXTENDED.	7/10/2022 7:46 AM
170	Re surface the skayepark, expand it. Add shade, repair cracks and craters.	7/9/2022 11:45 PM
171	SIDEWALKS AND MORE PARK BEAUTIFICATION	7/8/2022 4:38 PM
172	Abilene taxes are mismanaged. Improve the management of these already high taxes to improve facilities and offerings. Sidewalks should take priority over statues....	7/8/2022 4:11 PM
173	Adult only pool	7/6/2022 12:37 AM



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174	Interconnected trails that link the parks together	7/5/2022 4:27 PM
175	More trees, more shade, more lakes, streams, water ways	7/5/2022 10:12 AM
176	Community involvement in design.	7/2/2022 6:10 PM
177	Outdoor concrete games (ping pong/foosball), family size water park, amphitheater with diverse music concerts, downtown park playground or downtown turf multipurpose area.	7/2/2022 1:41 PM
178	FIX THE STREETS AND FUND POLICE	7/1/2022 7:12 PM
179	To build up Nelson park like they had originally planned! There is no need for more FOOTBALL fields!	7/1/2022 7:08 PM
180	Rails to Trails	7/1/2022 6:26 PM
181	Speed up development of cedar creek trail, Kirby lake trail, and any more walking/hiking areas. Adding shade where possible so that people can still get outside during the extreme summer months	7/1/2022 6:18 PM
182	We would like to see the cedar creek walkway develop and additional dog parks around Abilene with some shade features. We don't think that the walkways need to be concreted if more natural options could be utilized, like wood chips.	7/1/2022 6:09 PM
183	Make the parks more skate friendly. Skating is huge! That includes skateboarding, rollerskating, rollerblading, scooters, etc. Upgrades to the skatepark. Its rough and there's too many dangerous cracks and holes. Trails need a huge improvement. The condition they're in is extremely poor. Also please consider looking into a pump track.	7/1/2022 9:34 AM
184	Aquatics facility	7/1/2022 4:51 AM
185	Renovation of bathrooms at city parks and improvement to city athletic fields and not like the new Stevenson bathroom where it was just fixed to look new but was the same frame and water and sewer pipes a complete tear down and re build	6/30/2022 4:28 PM
186	Not a tax but some kind of small fee when people use a building or something	6/30/2022 4:01 PM
187	Update softball fields at Nelson park. Keep adult sports alive the fields are poorly maintained	6/30/2022 2:13 PM
188	Sidewalks for kids and adults to safely walk and bike on. Better grass fields (flat, better lighting, no/less animal holes for them to trip on and get hurt, more shade (trees/umbrellas) for parents to watch under, turf or better kept grass) for all the sports (soccer, football, baseball,etc) that get played outside all year round.	6/30/2022 8:59 AM
189	If you decide to rebuild the Animal Services Building, please build in Kirby Park and not in Nelson Park area. More shaded areas with seating, well maintained walking trails, new disk golf areas, well lit areas since most parks are open until 12 am.	6/30/2022 1:02 AM
190	I would like to see more down in the fishing and bringing our lakes up to code with camping areas throughout Fort Phantom and eve Kirby Lake. Then work on our adult softball with more support to given to them to bring in more money to the city. Support them as as they support our children in our community.	6/30/2022 12:05 AM
191	Better softball fields at Nelson, working scoreboards. Lights. Cheaper league prices to bring more teams in from out of town	6/29/2022 11:44 PM
192	Pedestrians continue to get hit. The reason for this is because we have rattle snakes AND no side walks, therefore people understandably walk in the streets, and people can't see them - understandably, because we have zero site/street lighting. We NEED sidewalks. Look at any other city, they all have side walks. This will improve traffic, improve safety, improve transportation issues, allow people to exercise outside safely without having to drive to a park to do so, or run loops around their neighborhood and connect the city in more ways. You don't know if a newly funded park will be used, but you will solve an existing problem with sidewalks.	6/29/2022 11:42 PM
193	Update Grover Nelson Park softball fields for adult league	6/29/2022 11:12 PM
194	Upgrade Grover Nelson softball fields with turf	6/29/2022 11:04 PM
195	Open things on the south side of Abilene. Many of us are driving a distance for a park or athletic park. Add more trails and sidewalks for children to ride bikes etc instead of the streets.	6/29/2022 10:58 PM



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We need more skate parks and soccer fields. Maybe even some community pools. There's also not a lot of swim instructors and it would be great for a swim school of some sort.

196	Turf on the fields to cut down on dust blowing and to make the areas nicer.	6/29/2022 10:01 PM
197	Build indoor fields to use so we can expand adults sports like softball, if you can't use turf fields similar to midlands fields. Increase days of play	6/29/2022 7:39 PM
198	Nelson softball fields - make registration costs more affordable to draw in more players and teams. The teams now are declining because it's too expensive to play when we have kids playing youth sports as well.	6/29/2022 6:42 PM
199	To turf the fields at Nelson park and Redbud park.	6/29/2022 6:38 PM
200	Turf athletic fields	6/29/2022 6:09 PM
201	Neighborhood parks and walkability is important especially the poorer areas of town. Starting in the underserved areas first to allow them walking access to jobs and allow family recreation is important. I realize that we have mixed populations and mixed opinions but I challenge those who don't see the value in neighborhood parks and walk ability to look at towns that do and how impactful they have been. Hoboken, NY has yet to see one pediatrician casualty even considering the large mass of population that resides there. Economically I can see the challenges but I ask why can't more in depth considerations at more adaptable ideas that mirror our towns income and size. I think Covid really brought a larger appreciation especially for parents that might not have utilized facilities as heavily. Also bring in experts in this arena and even other countries with limited funding. I don't mind paying but did once have a situation where 5\$ increase was a dire situation.... So some families and the equivalence they pay is much harder to do. Maybe looking at a sliding scale for these fees and exceptions for fixed incomes? If people to don't want to serve others maybe Abilene isn't the place for them? We are growing regardless...	6/29/2022 5:31 PM
202	Put a handball court at Sears Park a walking trailer at Scarborough and another Pavillion at Scarborough	6/29/2022 5:30 PM
203	Shade, water fountains, activities for disabled, more things to do for adults, more rest stops/benches/restrooms for elderly	6/29/2022 5:20 PM
204	The parks are beautiful but there are no hiking trails that we know of in town. If there are hiking trails, we are unaware of them.	6/29/2022 5:06 PM
205	I'm passionate about running and disc golf, so those are my main focuses. I think existing running paths (Red Bud in particular) could use some maintenance. And, I love what the ADGA has done in collaboration with the city for improving disc golf parks. I'd like to see that continue.	6/29/2022 4:20 PM
206	Improved security on existing recreation facilities, including parks and lakes.	6/29/2022 4:08 PM
207	Not really a recomendation. Would love to have a waterpark for adults as well as children.	6/29/2022 4:00 PM
208	Lower the fees for adult sports, especially those at Nelson for slow pitch softball.	6/29/2022 3:21 PM
209	I would like the city to consider including sidewalks and bike trails/lanes in future city planning and park planning initiatives.	6/29/2022 3:17 PM
210	The revitalization of the dried out creeks within the city. They would make cool fishing and trail walking spots! It's so sad seeing the dead creeks within the city.	6/29/2022 3:17 PM
211	Keep adult slow pitch softball alive....	6/29/2022 2:43 PM
212	Create more beautiful green space(most parks are really unattractive) , update paths and and add shaded areas to walking	6/29/2022 2:33 PM
213	Cut the fees for adult softball. Our leagues are lower in numbers due to the fees that are assessed to play. Update our facilities, fix the lights, fix the parks in general. Nobody wants to play at our park, unless it's Lulac, because of the cost of everything. We have asked for assistance before from the city and it falls on deaf ears. Adult slowpitch can bring a lot of money to the city from hotel stays to local eats. Do better City of Abilene, do better.	6/29/2022 2:18 PM
214	Nelson park new fields turf for youth baseball/softball and adult softball. Adult softball with hood fields brings tons of money to the area in hotel, shopping and eating out.	6/29/2022 1:40 PM



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215	Keep slowpitch softball for adults around the area and promote the existing programs without raising the cost more	6/29/2022 1:34 PM
216	Update softball fields at Nelson park for Adult slow pitch	6/29/2022 1:33 PM
217	Better bathroom facilities, signs to stay off the grass, parking for softball at will hair park - people park on the grass of the disc golf park because there is a short supply of parking for their loved one's events	6/29/2022 10:46 AM
218	more natural hiking areas, more trees.	6/29/2022 8:47 AM
219	Repave the walking/ running outdoor track at Sears Park	6/29/2022 8:13 AM
220	Offer reduced senior citizen rate for city activities	6/29/2022 7:24 AM
221	Turf softball fields. Too much money is spent on dirt every year and to help maintain the dirt when all it does is blow away with our crazy winds here. Turf filled we play on in other places are so much nicer and better for the girls. The wind blowing the dirt just keeps things messy and is very frustrating for those playing, and all of those who are spectating	6/29/2022 7:14 AM
222	A new sports complex that brings all sports and kids events together	6/29/2022 5:27 AM
223	Need a plan to improve maintenance, add more shade, and add modern public water fountains	6/29/2022 5:02 AM
224	Add an exercise area at sears like the one at red bud park. Also fix the walking trail. A new playground for sears park. Seems to be that red bud has the best of everything just because of the area	6/29/2022 4:43 AM
225	Adding a special needs sensory room for disabled children who attend recreational centers after school.	6/29/2022 4:04 AM
226	Please complete the Ceder Creek walkway!!	6/29/2022 1:13 AM
227	Build an aquatic center	6/29/2022 12:45 AM
228	Expanding the Lee Park and giving it the revamp it needs. Better picnic tables, more playground equipment. Maybe even a splash pad. There is enough land there to make one.	6/29/2022 12:29 AM
229	Bigger splash pads more activity for adult water parks stuff to have fun where we don't have to go out of town	6/29/2022 12:24 AM
230	Splash pad at Kirby	6/29/2022 12:03 AM
231	Safety of how people use surrounding areas since there is not a Kirby park bike or running path - a lot of dangerous running & biking on rural country roads which could be avoided if there was a trail without cars available for exercise	6/28/2022 11:29 PM
232	We have great parks that need consistent care. Our land is God created, God given..let's utilize and take care of it as best as we can.	6/28/2022 11:16 PM
233	Include South Side of town in future development of parks & rec to include those who pay city taxes on the South Side/Wylie area.	6/28/2022 11:04 PM
234	Upgrading current parks needs to be first priority. If we don't maintain the ones we have makes no sense to add to them or create new parks. Track at Redbud is in bad shape. Desperately needs some attention. Some areas of the track are becoming trip/fall hazards. Splash pad at Redbud needs to be larger or add a second one right next to it and more parking added. Also more covered seating and picnic tables. Need to have someone who knows what they are doing when it comes to planting trees. Lots of trees planted at Redbud in late April or early May. Wrong time of year to plant trees as a result pretty much all of the pine trees they planted are dead. Waste of tax dollars. If planted in the fall like they are supposed to be would have had a much better chance of survival. We need a nice large park downtown. The lot where the city tore down the hotel on Pine would be a great spot. Would need to buy land where tire places are and close street between to make it large enough. Would be a great place to have an outdoor stage for concerts and plays. Also a walking/jogging trail for those who live and/or work downtown.	6/28/2022 11:00 PM
235	more shade in parks consider turf or a cleaner/safer ground cover for outdoor parks. updated equipment in outdoor parks. see examples from DFW/Houston areas increased security for outdoor parks	6/28/2022 10:37 PM



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236	Clean up the softball and baseball field.	6/28/2022 10:27 PM
237	To actually follow through with it	6/28/2022 10:18 PM
238	More city swimming pools with slides	6/28/2022 10:17 PM
239	It would be lovely for Will Hair to get a bit of a facelift as that area of town is growing/changing.	6/28/2022 10:01 PM
240	Slides and swings at Nelson Wilson	6/28/2022 9:43 PM
241	New girls softball complex	6/28/2022 9:32 PM
242	Softball and baseball complex to be able to host large tournaments. Will bring thousands to abilene as it is a central location in west texas.	6/28/2022 9:21 PM
243	I'm very excited to see the plan develop, and very happy that the program leaders are seeking community input through this survey! Abilene is awesome and offers more than we realize. Any opportunity to learn more about the current and upcoming offerings the Parks and Rec Programs is welcomed!	6/28/2022 9:19 PM
244	Invest in Kirby	6/28/2022 9:17 PM
245	More free park gatherings. Not fancy. Just community fun	6/28/2022 9:13 PM
246	Please update the trails. The walking trails in many of the parks have so many cracks and holes it is very dangerous	6/28/2022 9:12 PM
247	Add on to Adventure Cove, deep end, diving board/s, soft pad obstacle course. Continue to develop Cedar Waterway. Update ALL restroom facilities at all parks Update Splashpads	6/28/2022 9:07 PM
248	Mountain bike trails or skills park	6/28/2022 9:01 PM
249	Complete a trail all the way around Lake Kirby. Address security along Cedar Creek trail, which is currently one of the hidden treasures of our city, but unfortunately I am always warned not to hike there due to the dangerous homeless population near the Martin Luther King area.	6/28/2022 8:56 PM
250	Updated turf fields at Lake Kirby and modify the two tee ball and weeball fields to making them more suited for that age as well as adding additional restroom facilities near those fields. Even modifying that entire complex to 2-4 quad complex would benefit our City and bring in additional revenue due to hosting larger tournaments- other cities have done similar quads and have had large success	6/28/2022 8:56 PM
251	Sports field complex similar to San Angelo or larger cities to host large scale tournaments	6/28/2022 8:36 PM
252	Revitalize all the parks and add shade.	6/28/2022 8:36 PM
253	Additional outdoor swimming pools for lap swimming	6/28/2022 8:26 PM
254	Make Abilene a hub for youth sports. Improve or develop a youth baseball/softball complex and soccer complex.	6/28/2022 8:23 PM
255	Biking trails	6/28/2022 8:15 PM
256	I would very much like to see a tax for the parks department. I am unsure however, it seems out water tax for our roads have gone nowhere. The road have increasingly gotten worse.	6/28/2022 8:14 PM
257	Please make an affordable public pool!!!	6/28/2022 8:12 PM
258	Public swimming pools Nature park Improved bathrooms at existing parks	6/28/2022 8:07 PM
259	Advertising and activities for adults.	6/28/2022 7:52 PM
260	Something for older teens to enjoy. Adventure cove is much too small and geared towards younger kids.	6/28/2022 7:51 PM
261	NEW Softball/baseball facility	6/28/2022 7:39 PM
262	More parks on the southwest side of town and more dog parks around town	6/28/2022 6:55 PM
263	There is no parks in the Wylie west area off Buffalo gap road. In existing neighborhoods there is land that hasn't been built on that could be used for community play parks or community sports fields.	6/28/2022 6:42 PM



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264	A far Southside rec center. Southside dog park. More shade trees, seating and agility at dog parks	6/28/2022 6:31 PM
265	Another aquatic park would be great. One of the things I miss from living in other cities is the biking/walking paths. Even the lack of sidewalks in Abilene is discouraging.	6/28/2022 6:17 PM
266	Many families do not utilize Adventure Cove because of abhorrent customer service. These families are traveling to nearby cities for public pools, joining swim clubs, and using the State Park when available. A focus group to study how better to serve patrons would be beneficial to ongoing success and growth.	6/28/2022 6:11 PM
267	Walking trails at Kirby, Seabee, and Cedar Creek	6/28/2022 6:10 PM
268	Remove \$20 city fee from everyone that registers to play a sport and use Abilene facilities	6/28/2022 6:03 PM
269	Work with a respected and local landscape architect group. Masterscapes for example	6/28/2022 6:00 PM
270	Soccer fields that could be used by existing BCSA league for practices and games for regular season without crazy high fees to use.	6/28/2022 5:58 PM
271	Indoor aquatic facilities for youth and adults. Many programs can be established so the community can establish year round programs in which can establish educational and functional programs.	6/28/2022 5:56 PM
272	Neighborhood parks and pools	6/28/2022 5:54 PM
273	More for toddler play/ and a play area where kids with disabilities can play as well	6/28/2022 5:52 PM
274	Connect/complete the green belt/creek trail from the north to the south of town.	6/28/2022 2:35 PM
275	4 dedicated outdoor lighted pickleball courts at Oscar Rose Park & partner with the Dodge-Jones Center to schedule dedicated pickleball days & times to enhance and build excitement for area pickleball play. Then hold a sanctioned tournament and start something big with pickleball in Abilene.	6/28/2022 9:46 AM
276	Add more swimming area to existing pool, with more monthly time being open	6/28/2022 6:14 AM
277	Make lake kirby and beautiful fun lake to go to with family and friends, also allow bbqs and alcohol at the parks	6/27/2022 3:55 PM
278	Park or facility for children with special needs	6/27/2022 2:49 PM
279	Just shadier parks with more comfortable seating areas. More toddler areas at the parks, too.	6/27/2022 12:33 PM
280	I recently visited Phantom Hill lake area. There was a lot of trash and bathrooms were very dirty. Consider pressure washing outside of facilities a couple of times per year.	6/27/2022 10:32 AM
281	Building an indoor lap pool (membership-based)	6/27/2022 9:43 AM
282	Coordinate with both the city of abilene community and the military community to put together a regularly-occurring trash pick up cycle. Secure full support to implement a complete recycling resource and culture. The loose trash in our natural areas is the greatest obstacle and discourages people from treating these areas with the respect they deserve. The wildlife in these potentially protected habitats need to return for all to appreciate.	6/27/2022 9:08 AM
283	More indoor pickleball facilities	6/27/2022 3:08 AM
284	Making Hockey an up and coming sport in Abilene with a better facility.	6/26/2022 10:01 PM
285	The cedar Creek waterway seems to be the only project that sees attention and even that trail is littered with trash and feels unsafe to walk alone	6/26/2022 4:40 PM
286	Additional LARGE playground areas, such as the one at Red Bud Park throughout the city. Even Red Bud Park has some issues on the playground area that need maintenacen. Also, the remodeling of existing splash pads, as well as creating newer and larger splash pads with slides and additional things for kids to play with.	6/25/2022 10:26 AM
287	Better transportation for children using after school and summer programs.	6/24/2022 8:08 PM
288	Upgrade in all facilities. Upkeep in all facilities. More staff. Better security and safety measures at rec centers. Build an actual pool adults can enjoy.	6/24/2022 7:47 PM



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289	Adding paved tee pads to Scarborough and Cobb park disc golf course. Building additional courses at other parks. Adding a "pump track" to the skatepark so younger kids have a safe and fun place to ride. A street plaza skate area would be great also!	6/24/2022 7:14 PM
290	More and improved running trails!!!	6/24/2022 5:46 PM
291	Get cleaner lakes for kayak/canoe/paddleboards Get more land for biking	6/24/2022 2:37 PM
292	Dedicated walking/hiking ONLY trails where bikes aren't permitted. More public group hikes like the Mayor's hike, planned a little earlier in summer and a little later in winter to take advantage of better temps. Increased shade at the dog parks. Making Abilene a place that's great for both kids and senior citizens. Investing in Abilene's parks and wild spaces ARE INVESTMENTS WE MAKE IN OURSELVES.	6/24/2022 10:54 AM
293	Be more transparent in your financial standing with the community, don't just rely on social media and word of mouth to spread the word on your plans and where they money is coming from and going to. Have a constant presence in communication. The only time most people hear about anything you are doing is during votes or after plan is already in progress.	6/24/2022 9:58 AM
294	Abilene is not very pedestrian friendly. I am training long distance running and it is difficult to find areas to participate where trails are longer than 2.0 miles, without having to navigate running on streets or through neighborhoods. I would like to see more areas where I can train without having to cross busy intersections on foot.	6/23/2022 4:50 PM
295	More shade is needed at the parks	6/23/2022 4:12 PM
296	Unused secluded areas that does not affect the preservations of natural life and wetlands should be used to develop a new park for small off-road vehicles.	6/23/2022 3:49 PM
297	Improve sidewalk connectivity to allow for safe outdoor exercise and accessibility (particularly Wiley/south side are). Walkscore.com is proof enough that this is a major issue. When examining the Taylor county increase in obesity and chronic diseases, it is evident that lack of accessibility prevents outdoor physical activity, particularly recreational and alternative transportation. Safety while walking and/or biking is a major public concern. Recommend sternly reviewing waivers allowing businesses to bypass sidewalk installation and add in ensuring they connect to surrounding existing sidewalks, improving connectivity and accessibility.	6/23/2022 2:58 PM
298	Lighten our taxes, more youth involvement activities, and improve lakes and streams.	6/23/2022 2:41 PM
299	Better maintenance of current and future Parks and Recreation plans. Cleaner facilities and more indoor opportunities for times of inclement weather. More and better maintained sports fields to reduce injuries and reduce field lack of field space for teams to use/practice on.	6/23/2022 2:06 PM
300	Continue developing trail systems throughout the city of Abilene, offering all citizens more choices in how to get around and connect with nature.	6/23/2022 1:08 PM
301	Clean up the Lake Kirby area and make it awesome! Every time I am there other people are there. No matter what day of the week or time of day. It could be a real gem for a large number of Abilene residents with some funding and some innovative minds behind it. A NICE trailway for walking/biking around the whole lake would be my starting point, maybe with some lookout points that lead to the water throughout. If money were no option, I would personally dredge/deepen the lake, clean it up and allow swimming there or set up a nice little beach area. Additionally, if there are any heavily treed areas that the city owns, shady hiking/biking trails anywhere would be a great addition to our most of the year sunny and hot city. Also, any additional shore fishing opportunities would be great!	6/23/2022 1:06 PM
302	Well maintained walking trails with better security are needed. Mature trees and water features would be desired. Kirby lake could be nice but the paved trail is incomplete, no close parking, littered with alcohol, fireworks, and even condoms. It does not feel safe at dusk because of the type of litter around and lack of lighting and security patrols. There is no online presence when searching for pickleball or other recreation activities, if its offered I don't know about it. Many people use search engines and type Abilene + the thing there are searching for or look at maps and and hope it links to a current webpage. Facebook is an annoying way to find information about parks and recreation and many events in Abilene simply use Facebook and call it done. Abilene has a great community very willing to explore new or revitalized areas, the new restaurants in downtown are always packed and show this. A botanical garden or nature paths with rental bikes like bigger cities have would be very appreciated.	6/23/2022 12:34 PM



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303	Building park and splashpad location in or near Wylie	6/23/2022 12:23 PM
304	Make Kirby Lake a place where people can go to have fun on the water.	6/23/2022 12:02 PM
305	Please find some way to maintain the Lake Kirby trails and continue to build there. People have destroyed any security measures you've put up on the north trail around that lake. If people aren't suppose to drive in areas, then put up signs stating it. Not sure how to stop or minimize your vandalism issues, but perhaps putting a locked gate at the entrance to lake or something and having an employee open and lock each day, but then there's always the back side access to the lake and park, costs more money I know, but I know nothing good happens at that lake after 10 PM.	6/23/2022 10:44 AM
306	Please more water accessible areas. There are times when the parks can get pretty dirty with trash or the equipment is a little older and needs to be updated.	6/23/2022 10:13 AM
307	Nature Center at Kirby Lake, hiking trails, canoeing dock. Nature-based classes for families and kids. Competition-level fields for soccer & baseball to bring in tourism. Natatorium with swim team for kids of all ages and lap swim times for adults. Large amphitheater for movies. Camping opportunities, more fishing and fishing tournaments for kids.	6/23/2022 10:11 AM
308	An emphasis on biking, running, and walking trails. Biking and running is very limited given the relative lack of sidewalks, which causes a dangerous predicament when I am forced to exercise on the road berm. Not all drivers are considerate of the increased safety required when a biker is on the side of the road. More dedicated biking paths would lead to increased safety of bikers and better health for the community.	6/23/2022 10:03 AM
309	Please, please, please work Kirby Park. That area is blowing up, and there is only a very small park there on one of Abilene's very few lakes. So much potential there!	6/23/2022 10:02 AM
310	I believe Cedar Creek waterway Trail has the most potential. I go running there at least 3 times a week. I believe with a little money thrown at it, a proper parking lot at the entrance with some well maintained bathrooms, and regular grooming of a dirt trail and bush maintenance it can be a popular spot. Abilene is very weak when it comes to parks and people staying active like I've seen in cities like Austin. This trail can help. The second recommendation is to make a safe bike route around the cities perimeter. Wichita Falls has a great loop I have biked that is smooth, safe, and independent from any roads. Abilene could greatly benefit from this!	6/23/2022 9:56 AM
311	The necessity of city childcare programs during post-COVID era.	6/23/2022 9:50 AM
312	A network of connected trails for cycling/running in addition to improving the overall bike infrastructure of the city	6/23/2022 9:30 AM
313	Repave the broken walking paths, construct sources of shade, and can we do anything about ants at local parks?	6/23/2022 9:28 AM
314	An indoor softplay area for younger kids. Could have a coffee shop or something as well for parents while the kids play. Or turn it into a community center where there is wifi to give a space for studying.	6/23/2022 9:16 AM
315	The city is flat so take advantage of this to create a broad, well-connected network of mixed-use paths and trails to interlink neighborhoods and shopping centers and promote/encourage walking and biking. Incorporate features to promote good storm water drainage such as bioswales and permeable pavements.	6/23/2022 9:00 AM
316	Add new and update hiking trails.	6/23/2022 8:57 AM
317	Add an Off-Road park	6/23/2022 8:42 AM
318	More trees, and clean/add additional waterways.	6/23/2022 7:59 AM
319	1. Upkeep what you already have 2. Operate within the budget allocated by City of Abilene and Private Donations. If private donations are not part of the plan, see about adding that capacity.	6/23/2022 7:02 AM
320	Make sure ALL parks and recreation facilities are updated and maintained properly.	6/23/2022 6:34 AM
321	Stock the lakes and ponds with fish.	6/22/2022 10:57 PM
322	Please incorporate an outdoor running track that is well lit.	6/22/2022 6:58 PM
323	Make sure the parks are safe for the kids	6/22/2022 6:30 PM



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324	Even though Kirby Lake park is further away from the majority of Abilene population, it still attracts many people. Many people go there for the baseball games, the lake, and for their kids to play. Investing in Kirby lake park with nature trails, a splash pad, sidewalks for nearby neighborhoods, and more play area would be beneficial for growing community over there.	6/22/2022 6:06 PM
325	Make it so you can visit all parts of the city without needing to cross or travel these busy roads.	6/22/2022 5:38 PM
326	The last bond election ended up raising our taxes for road street improvement and there has been very little improved but your still pulling taxes out of me.	6/22/2022 5:34 PM
327	Neighborhood parks	6/22/2022 5:33 PM
328	I would like to see a playground/running trail park developed over in the Hampton Hills neighborhood next to Dyess AFB.	6/22/2022 5:33 PM
329	Put a city park within the Wylie area.	6/22/2022 5:29 PM
330	Add a lazy river around a park	6/22/2022 4:38 PM
331	Putting new restrooms at a proper area	6/22/2022 4:38 PM
332	More swimming pools. And make the splash pad at nelson park less boring. More like the one at redbud. Also get rid of the wood chips at the playgrounds. They cut the kids when they fall and they stick in their shoes. Bring back the sand!	6/22/2022 11:18 AM
333	Update local senior centers first. There's some that the roof leaks when it rains.	6/22/2022 11:04 AM
334	na	6/22/2022 8:40 AM
335	I wish there was a climbing facility in Abilene.	6/21/2022 10:17 PM
336	Pickleball courts	6/21/2022 7:13 PM
337	Trail system at Kirby Park	6/21/2022 5:37 PM
338	The paths in the parks have no natural shade, large areas of red bud park are open grass that is not used because there is no means to escape the sun. Please plant oak and maple trees to provide shade to the parks.	6/21/2022 5:33 PM
339	Develop the cedar creek waterway, add architectural structure, lighting, landscaping, develop a lake near downtown.	6/21/2022 4:07 PM
340	New pickleball courts. This is the fastest growing sport in the US for all age groups. It's very social and can be an effective tool to build community relationships.	6/21/2022 4:04 PM
341	Build new football fields with artificial turf for the youth football teams	6/21/2022 3:56 PM
342	I would like to see more summer concerts outdoors. We moved here from Amarillo and really miss the evening concerts. Also Pickleball is an up-and-coming sport. We need good outdoor and indoor facilities.	6/21/2022 3:51 PM
343	continued investment in existing facilities. I personally don't think it makes much sense to develop new recreational areas when we have an abundant amount in place that just needs to be revitalized.	6/21/2022 3:46 PM
344	Pickleball	6/21/2022 3:38 PM
345	Indoor and outdoor Pickleball courts	6/21/2022 3:27 PM
346	Indoor & outdoor pickle ball courts	6/21/2022 3:15 PM
347	Pickleball facilities and more splash pads	6/21/2022 3:07 PM
348	Development of a Kirby Lake trail and nature park	6/21/2022 3:02 PM
349	Additional outdoor Pickleball courts.	6/21/2022 2:52 PM
350	Somewhere better for the Abilene Cowboys to practice at that won't get torn up by mosquitoes and ants, fill the pot holes, make Curly Hayes with more sitting, better field, with better grass with no potholes over all redo the field or completely redo it as the youth need something to look forward to instead of being on the streets	6/21/2022 12:42 PM



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351	Nature center, greenway, and Montessori-style nature play area like this: https://www.nashville.gov/departments/parks/nature-centers-and-natural-areas/shelby-bottoms-nature-center/shelby-bottoms-park It would be so amazing to have something like The Gathering Place in Tulsa: https://www.gatheringplace.org/	6/21/2022 12:06 PM
352	Outdoor pickleball courts at Rose Park	6/21/2022 11:38 AM
353	Abilene Hockey and our kids deserve to be able to thrive like every other sport. I hope the city will consider and agree to the upgrades, changes, maintenance, and/or possible new additions requests that the board has been asking for. Hockey has been neglected long enough in the Key City. #abilenehockey	6/21/2022 12:03 AM
354	ice skating/ice hockey rink, indoor hockey rink, covered hockey rink	6/20/2022 9:55 AM
355	Please invest in our outdoor hockey rink at Cal Young Park and develop a sport court covered or indoor facility	6/20/2022 9:51 AM
356	Abilene P+R is about to be outdone by City of Clyde & the building of a \$14 million Facility. 2014 Masterplan recommends new tournament style baseball/softball facility, where has this gone? City's "Contract Fees" are killing programs! why not add "electrical billing" to leagues lease agreement. ie. Wylie LL field lights on at 10:45 on a Wednesday night. only fields in town that you see this so why is it that other leagues pay part of their electric bill.	6/20/2022 9:44 AM
357	Cover the outdoor hockey rink at Cal Young Park. Bring a Dr Pepper Star Center Ice Rink Here	6/20/2022 9:37 AM
358	Hockey developments - coverings, fans, lights for the outdoor rink. Indoor Rink would be amazing!! more nature education when at parks and hiking trails	6/20/2022 9:25 AM
359	Indoor Hockey Rink, Ice Hockey, Covered Hockey Rink	6/20/2022 8:23 AM
360	Would like to see the path at Lake Kirby extended around the lake, keeping pedestrians/runners/walkers off the roads. Would also like to see the pathway at Nelson & Redbud parks maintained. Seems they get pretty narrow in some places, likely to be a fall hazard.	6/19/2022 8:42 PM
361	Mist sprayers and more covering for shade at playground equipment	6/19/2022 4:19 PM
362	Create more dedicated indoor and outdoor pickleball courts and schedule classes to introduce the sport.	6/18/2022 9:50 PM
363	More shade please!!	6/18/2022 6:01 PM
364	Jogging and biking trails. Updated soccer complex	6/18/2022 4:32 PM
365	Establish facility with at least 4 dedicated pickleball courts. I play both tennis and pickleball but would not be opposed to changing 2 tennis courts at Rose Park into 4 pickleball courts. And enlarge the pro shop to include merchandise for both tennis and pickleball, i.e., paddles, balls, shoes.	6/18/2022 11:25 AM
366	Would like to see the city invest in a dedicated pickleball facility that would house indoor and outdoor lighted courts. As well as renaming senior centers (wording is so outdated) for examples...Aging well center which encompasses all ages. (Rose Park Aging Well Center). Also, it would be nice to have active programs in the evening and on weekends available to folks who still work and good, clean working equipment.	6/17/2022 6:57 PM
367	Outdoor roller hockey rink	6/17/2022 6:00 PM
368	Develop NATURAL trails - NO CONCRETE!!! Maintain what we have - Redbud & Nelson "tracks" are in terrible condition. New or remodel the restroom at Kirby Lake (it's disgusting and unsafe)	6/17/2022 4:27 PM
369	Shade cover for existing hockey rink and seating for guests at the rink at cal young park Indoor hockey rink availability Funding for cooling fans, sunscreen, bug spray Cleaner/nicer bathrooms at parks	6/17/2022 4:26 PM
370	To add an indoor or outdoor Hockey area. To continue the preservation of the already existing parks. To add or develop existing bike and walkways. To keep the baseball fields.	6/17/2022 1:49 PM
371	Nicer , better maintained restrooms	6/17/2022 1:45 PM
372	Improvement of the Hockey Facilities!!!!	6/17/2022 1:39 PM



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373	Our kids love hockey and I would love to see the city support the building of an indoor hockey facility.	6/17/2022 1:39 PM
374	Add covering to the hockey rink at cal young park	6/17/2022 1:25 PM
375	Provide covering over the hockey rink at Cal Young park	6/17/2022 1:13 PM
376	N/A	6/17/2022 11:45 AM
377	Heavy investment in trees. The trees need to be planted and oriented as a wind break. The wind here is relentless, and on top of providing shade, they can be planted strategically in an east/west orientation to help break up that hot south wind or the cold north wind. It will also help with shade. The dog park needs a lot more trees and park benches or just places to sit in general.	6/17/2022 9:51 AM
378	2 new softball fields with turf @ Kirby, bathroom at tball fields @ Kirby Softball. updated bathrooms @ Kirby. out door batting cages @ kirby softball too.	6/17/2022 9:07 AM
379	Develop trails around Kirby lake	6/17/2022 8:43 AM
380	This is the least friendly walking city I've ever lived in. I would love to see walking/bike paths connecting the city. I've given up my bike since moving here 8 years ago. I don't feel safe riding in traffic. I would love to be able to bike to grocery stores, parks, etc.	6/17/2022 8:26 AM
381	Add a trail to Scarborough Park, we have a lot of retirees in this neighborhood who would walk more if there was a local trail.	6/17/2022 3:44 AM
382	Add a soccer complex	6/17/2022 12:47 AM
383	Hockey arena	6/17/2022 12:16 AM
384	Hockey rink!!!	6/17/2022 12:10 AM
385	Hockey rink has not had improvements in nearly 20 years. Dyess Air Force base and over 100 locals utilize the rink on a consistent basis.	6/16/2022 10:55 PM
386	We need a waterfront and more shade because it is so hot. The "lakes" are gross and full of trash [REDACTED] The parks need to be connected with paths and trails.	6/16/2022 10:22 PM
387	Add hockey rink	6/16/2022 10:10 PM
388	Multi-use trails is my #1 recommendation. The city of Abilene is severely lacking in trails for hiking, biking, jogging, and walking. Highlight the beauty of Abilene with its natural settings and trails for all to enjoy. Trails connected or near bodies of water to stay cool during our hot summer days would be such a welcomed addition and draw for visitors to our city.	6/16/2022 10:09 PM
389	To develop a roof to help hockey players play in inclement weather	6/16/2022 10:05 PM
390	Build trails!!! multiuse and biking around Kirby lake and finish the cedar creek waterway trail. Anything that allows us to get outside in nature hiking running biking for more than a mile or two.	6/16/2022 9:49 PM
391	Please improve hockey facility at Cal Young park. It could grow a solid league and attract potential hosting tournaments	6/16/2022 9:31 PM
392	Recreational soccer fields/complex	6/16/2022 9:30 PM
393	Soccer fields It is a disgrace that every city around us has better. I grew up here playing at Lee complex. Way better than anything they've had since.	6/16/2022 9:20 PM
394	New soccer fields that either have turf or highly maintained grass that is free of lumps, bumps and weeds so our soccer/ football/ lacrosse teams can build their strength and love for the game without injury due to under managed fields (Lee park). We have a huge investment with select/ travel teams of all kinds that lack the proper fields for training to their full potential.	6/16/2022 8:40 PM
395	The city needs soccer fields that are maintained. They would bring revenue into Abilene by hosting tournaments.	6/16/2022 8:33 PM
396	We are in desperate needs of soccer fields. Having good soccer fields to play on would allow tournaments to be held which in turn would create revenue for the city and local businesses. A	6/16/2022 8:18 PM



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large number of our youth have a passion for the game and currently have to travel to Dallas to play on decent fields. Invest in our kids!

397	Add some soccer fields, there are none. Softball/baseball fields are everywhere. We need some fields.	6/16/2022 8:17 PM
398	Hockey rink	6/16/2022 8:16 PM
399	Abilene needs decent soccer fields. There are many families who have kids and adults who play soccer, and the facilities here are not good. The fields are poorly maintained, which make it difficult to practice and play. If Abilene would invest in quality fields, it would put the city in a position to host tournaments that would bring in business to our town. There are families in Abilene who choose to travel to DFW or Lubbock for better soccer opportunities. Better facilities could keep more of those families investing locally!	6/16/2022 8:16 PM
400	A shelter covering that will keep both players and fans out the blistering heat/cold. Running water for a functional concession stand that is applicable in selling hot/cold goods. Safer and better conditions on the asphalt to keep players equipments less breaking and tearing. A larger utility room/storage to house equipment league needs. Affordable League fees thats more accessible for families that have multiple kids playing in multiple Rec sport teams throughout the city or even on one Rec league. A well functioning scoreboard that fans are able to read and see, as its all part of coming to a game.	6/16/2022 8:14 PM
401	Add an ice hockey rink	6/16/2022 8:12 PM
402	Hockey rink improvements	6/16/2022 8:11 PM
403	We desperately need soccer fields, the maple complex was a disaster and Big Country is a poorly run entity and has destroyed soccer in Abilene. New program needs to run rec soccer that can then feed into academy and select soccer. We need well maintained fields for it to be successful, not just fields that are left to be covered in weeds, burs and ants within a few years.	6/16/2022 8:00 PM
404	New soccer fields. It's not fair that baseball and football get all the nice fields and soccer teams get bounced around and doesn't get nice complexes	6/16/2022 7:53 PM
405	Improve our hockey facility	6/16/2022 7:47 PM
406	My main priorities would be increasing walkability within Abilene as well as community gardens.	6/16/2022 7:25 PM
407	New youth hockey rink	6/16/2022 7:08 PM
408	New hockey rink that is covered	6/16/2022 7:07 PM
409	Improve the hockey rink.	6/16/2022 7:07 PM
410	New turf fields at Kirby. Better parking at kirby	6/16/2022 5:56 PM
411	Larger city water park or fields for adult sports like those in Mansfield, the field of dreams	6/16/2022 5:53 PM
412	Build a new covered hockey rink for my grandchildren to have a better experience like i did growing up in the north.	6/16/2022 3:34 PM
413	Football fields turf or a complex	6/16/2022 3:03 PM
414	Workout stations and appropriate seating lighting and football turf	6/16/2022 3:02 PM
415	Updating sports fields that are safe and made to practice on	6/16/2022 2:55 PM
416	Public Swimming options!!! More shaded areas!	6/16/2022 2:51 PM
417	Either make curly Hayes field better with more seating and turf field or make a whole new field!	6/16/2022 2:50 PM
418	Resurface outdoor hockey rink, cover hockey rink, storage needs updated, concessions	6/16/2022 2:14 PM
419	New hockey rink	6/16/2022 2:07 PM
420	Fix the walking trails especially at Nelson park that area could be so much better	6/16/2022 12:09 PM
421	We need a year round aquatics center with extended hours to offer healthy recreation. We need something better than a splash pad or the lazy river. A center would offer therapy	6/16/2022 12:04 PM



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	opportunities. Educational opportunities. Increased health and happiness for our community and families	
422	Add more events for residents.	6/16/2022 9:36 AM
423	I'd like the city to consider the outdoor covered hockey rink. I think it could be a very good center for open skating but also highly improve the competition in the hockey leagues.	6/16/2022 1:29 AM
424	None	6/16/2022 12:04 AM
425	Develop new disc golf courses, volleyball courses, baseball and football fields, better grills, clean the water, better ramps and picnic tables at lake phantom, and Kirby. cleaner water at Kirby and Phantom as well	6/15/2022 11:45 PM
426	Na	6/15/2022 10:14 PM
427	Improve or develop new hockey field	6/15/2022 10:05 PM
428	Better football fields and stands to host our of town teams	6/15/2022 9:54 PM
429	Update hockey rink	6/15/2022 9:13 PM
430	Replace hockey rink	6/15/2022 8:53 PM
431	Replace the hockey rinks as well	6/15/2022 7:45 PM
432	Covering for outdoor hockey rink. Players would greatly benefit from having the protection from the sun while skating in full gear during our hot days.	6/15/2022 7:08 PM
433	Abilene Hockey improvement	6/15/2022 6:59 PM
434	Developing a better and additional outdoor roller hockey rinks to the parks	6/15/2022 6:50 PM
435	A turf field one that could host a state championship game.	6/15/2022 6:39 PM
436	Upgrading current hockey facilities.	6/15/2022 6:38 PM
437	A new Hockey facility as ours is deteriorating at a rapid rate. With the heat and wind it makes playing very difficult and not enjoyable. The current surface destroys wheels which are not cheap, destroys sticks which are also not cheap, and destroys equipment in general. Please consider.	6/15/2022 6:30 PM
438	Ice hockey rink/ice skating rink, indoor roller hockey rink, covered hockey rink, youth hockey in schools, expanded adult hockey programs	6/15/2022 6:30 PM
439	Abilene Hockey - this program has grown so much and is continuing to grow w/ different age levels. Please consider making improvements to the current rink and adding pieces that are a definite need. The rink, scoreboard, and seating need improvements. There are no restrooms or concession. It would be awesome to have locker rooms for the players and shade for seating and the rink from weather. Thank you.	6/15/2022 6:21 PM
440	Shaded overhead protection for the online hockey rink and for the bleachers. Updated rink and accessories and restrooms.	6/15/2022 6:16 PM
441	Improvements to the Cal Young hockey rink	6/15/2022 6:08 PM
442	Simplicity. Just an open space with mature where children can touch and feel their surroundings. I want children to have opportunity to create something with nothing but their imagination. Playgrounds are fun but we NEED open space and nature.	6/15/2022 6:05 PM
443	Build a two rink covered inline hockey facility to accommodate the growth of hockey to this area going forward.	6/15/2022 5:49 PM
444	Updating or building a new hockey rink with more emphasis on growing sports options in the city	6/15/2022 5:46 PM
445	More development south of town. Lake Kirby Area	6/15/2022 5:37 PM



APPENDIX G - HISTORY OF ABILENE PARKS AND RECREATION

History of Abilene Parks and Recreation

Original authored date of December 2, 2020

Alyssa Hartley



Revised 4/1/2022

Arthur Sears Park

The land for Arthur Sears Park was donated by the wife of Mr. Arthur Sears in remembrance of her late husband. The property was donated on June 16, 1949. Mr. Sears was a long-time rancher and banker. He dreamed of creating a park, in the 1920s, next to an exclusive housing addition of his known as “the Sears Addition”, located on the northwest side of Abilene. Since these homes were outside of the city limits, there were no housing regulations that needed to be followed as well as no available sewer service. Mr. Sears made a request to the City of Abilene to develop a park. He offered five to seven acres of land to help the development process. At the time, the city turned down his offer and due to the catastrophe of the Great Depression, his dream never became a reality during his lifetime. However, years later, Parks Board member Mr. Grover Nelson reached out to Mrs. Sears about donating land to establish a park in that area. Mrs. Sears then presented the city with eight lots of land on the west side of Catclaw Creek on June 15, 1947 (Garcia, 1984).

In April 1949, a joint acquisition of land took place between the Parks Board and the School Board. This was prior to the 1957 division of jurisdictions, thus there was no separation between City and school governments, allowing for joint school/park sites. There were three different requests made by the Parks Board and the School Board when presenting to the City Council. One location was on the northwest side of Abilene, another between 12th and 13th Street on Catclaw Creek on the southwest side of town, and another location on the southeast side of Abilene. The Council approved of all three locations, as well as additional land being added to the Sears Addition, becoming the first major joint utilization project of school and park facilities (Garcia, 1984).

A few months later on June 16, 1949, the City purchased more land from Mrs. Sears to create another school/park site. Due to the unused land Mrs. Sears donated previously to the City to be used as a park, the City agreed to give back the deed to Mrs. Sears. After the exchange of land with Mrs. Sears, the new plot of land was retained and renamed to “Arthur Sears Park” (Garcia, 1984).

The School Board had originally planned to develop a school located on the Sears Addition, but later changed it to an alternative location. The School Board's location for the school shifted from the Sears Addition area to another area on the northwest side of town, and that school became Fannin Elementary School. This relocation left the land in the Sears Addition empty, thus the School Board offered to Mrs. Sears if she would like to repurchase the land. Mrs. Sears agreed for the Parks Board to purchase the land, but the Parks and Public Recreation Board never bought the land from the School Board. However, years later at the end of 1964 the School Board offered Abilene's Parks Department the title to the 23.4 acres at Sears Park in exchange for property next to the school Administration Building on 802 N. Mockingbird. Upon receiving the title, the Parks Department obtained full ownership of the Sears Park land, as it had been owned by the School Board and Parks Board jointly. About a decade later in 1975, Mr. H. C. Toombs donated a lot to the City that helped Sears Park grow on the west side. Mr. Toombs made another donation on March 6, 1984 which included two residential lots on Ambler Avenue



and Kirkwood Street (Garcia, 1984). In 1994, lots 16, 17, and 18 of Block 18 in Arthur Sears Park Addition were offered by Joy Investments in exchange for tax and penalty relief from the City of Abilene (Community Services, 2020).

Two ballfields were established at Sears Park in the mid-1950s providing the community with fun, recreational sports opportunities (Rodgers, 2020). In 1962, the American Pony League came to an agreement with the Parks and Public Recreation Board to construct a suitable baseball diamond in Arthur Sears Park within 24 months to replace an existing ballfield. This ballfield was to be located on the northwest side of the park next to Catclaw Creek and is now known as Rodriguez field (Community Services, 2020; Rodgers, 2020). The Pony League discontinued in the early 1980s, but many leagues have played there and continue to play there today, including the Abilene Northern Little League. Two additional ballfields were added around the 2010s, with one field being built on the southeast side of the park in 2007. This resulted in Sears Park having a total of three baseball/softball fields (Rodgers, 2020).

Construction of the new Sears Park Recreation Center began August 11, 1965 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1965). An allowance of \$150,000 was granted by the city to build the recreation center, but that grant money was originally meant to build two recreation centers. However, instead of limiting \$75,000 to Sears Recreation, the City of Abilene decided only one additional recreation center was needed during that time. Sears Recreation Center held an open house from 2-5pm on February 27, 1966. The facility offered an open-air covered basketball court and gymnasium, areas for arts and crafts, games, and even a library (Abilene Reporter News, 1966). The library contained over 1,000 books staffed by a part-time librarian and served as a branch location for the Abilene Public Library (Parks and Recreation Department, 1968). The center officially opened in March of 1966 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1966).

Sears Recreation Center continually offered many recreational activities, such as basketball, racquetball, volleyball, ping pong, pool, and gymnastics. Gymnastics was introduced to the center in 1978, incorporating equipment such as parallel bars, balance beams, and a trampoline in a section of the center. However, controversy between the City, the Sears Recreation Center Advisory Committee, and the community surrounding Sears Park arose in the late 1990s. As the gymnastics program grew more popular, a request was made to demolish some of the racquetball courts to expand more opportunities for gymnastics. The Sears Park Recreation Center Advisory Committee shared their frustrations that the gymnastics program at Sears Park didn't promote participation for the Sears Park Community children. They believed the park was meant for low to moderate income families and the privatization of the gymnastics program would exclude these opportunities and possibly degrade the self worth and self esteem of the community children. Also, an advertisement was paid in the Abilene Reporter Newspaper on Sunday, December 15, 1996 about the frustrations of a private business operating out of a public recreation center (Adams, 1996).

Arthur Sears Park introduced a playground for the community in the late 1960s, taking bids from local businesses in 1965. The playground offered a radar tower climber, a merry-go-round, and most memorable, a rocket climber. This playground was known as a space age



playground, a popular spot for kids to play. Though the space age playground and the moon rocket climbing feature are no longer at Arthur Sears Park, the playground there is still loved by many with its slides, swings, and other features (Community Services, 2020).

A part of Abilene's history, that included Sears Park, took place in October of 1969. Mexican-American students from different Abilene schools, including Mann Middle School, Abilene High School, and Franklin Middle School, participated in a school walk out in protest for equality. Abilene's Chicano walkout had approximately 300 students participate. These students walked out of their schools to congregate at Sears Park. The walkout lasted 11 days, the longest walkout in the country during the Civil Rights Movement. During those 11 days, the students met at Sears Park Recreation Center where church members from the local Catholic church met to teach them (Ibarra, 2019; Soto, 2019).

Arthur Sears Park is 18.6 acres in size, including the baseball fields while excluding the creek (Rodgers, 2020). In all, the park is roughly 28 acres (Garcia, 1984). Arthur Sears Park offers a lot of amenities to the community, such as a walking trail, a recreation center, a playground, a pavilion, ballfields, and more. A basketball court and tennis court were introduced in 1994 and Sears Splash Pad was built and opened in 2018. The splash pad offers 18 different types of water features for kids of all ages, including two water slides and a large dump bucket.

On August 17th, 2020 a request was submitted to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to change the name of Arthur Sears Park to Cesar Chavez Park. After community input and further discussion, the Parks and Recreation Board passed a motion on September 21st, 2021 to retain the name of Arthur Sears Park for the park proper, yet change the name of the recreation center located at Arthur Sears Park to Cesar Chavez Recreation Center.

Bowie Park

The 4.5 acre park was acquired on September 25, 1949 from Radford Estates. It is located at S 20th and Jeanette Street. This acquisition was a joint partnership between the Parks Board and the School Board intended as a joint acquisition for both park and school land (Community Services, 2020).

On April 11, 1950, the School Board and Parks Board bought lots 26 through 29 in Block C of the Hale Subdivision for \$600. The School Board paid \$400, while the Parks Board paid \$200. A couple months later, on September 12, the School Board asked for another 100 x 200 feet out of the northwest corner of the block for a new building. The Parks Board agreed, as long as the School Board also purchased six lots in the area that were not yet owned by either board. The School Board then bought lots 30, 31, 48, 49, 62, and 53 from Block C in the Hale Addition (Additional Notes, 2020).

The park eventually received the name Bowie Park, as it was close to Bowie Elementary School. The park included play equipment, a baseball backstop, and concrete picnic units, as well as a playground that was added in 1988. The installed playground was the second to be



funded by the proceeds from the Parks Voluntary Contribution Program (Parks Bucks) which brought in \$33,000 in donations for that year alone. The portion from the program's donations totaled \$13,000 that helped fund Bowie Park playground and another \$4,000 was donated by the Bowie PTA. The park was dedicated on October 19, 1988 (Community Services, 2020; Parks and Recreation Department, 1988). Bowie Park's playground was designed by Community Services Department staff, along with the involvement of the Bowie PTA and school administration (Community Services, 2020).

Though Bowie Park was originally a joint acquisition between the School Board and Parks Board, the School Board acquired the entire park back in 2014. Bowie Park was traded with Abilene Independent School District for Fannin Park, located on 1902 Shelton Street (Andrews, 2020; Rodgers, 2020).

Cal Young Park

Cal Young Park was originally known as Lytle Creek Park when it was donated in February of 1961. The Parks Board of the City of Abilene negotiated with West Texas Utilities Company to lease out 72.8 acres of land along Lytle Creek, South 11th, and T & P Lane to develop a public park (Community Services, 2020). Ten years later, the name changed from Lytle Creek Park to Cal Young Park in July of 1971. It was a unanimous vote among the Parks and Recreation Board, honoring former West Texas Utilities President and former Parks and Recreation Board member Cal Young. In the 1960s, Mr. Young and the power company gave the acreage to the city to help develop a park for the community. An agreement between W.T.U. and the city to lease out the land for 99 years was established. Mr. Cal Young's involvement was instrumental in the city acquiring the land by Lytle Creek. Renaming the park was a gesture of thanks to Mr. Young and W. T. U. (Parks and Recreation Department, 1971). The land along Lytle Creek was officially given to the city on February 22, 1979 from West Texas Utilities Company. The company gave the land at Cal Young Park to the city in exchange for 66.8 acres of city-owned land east of Nelson Park (Garcia, 1984).

As the years went on, more amenities were added to Cal Young Park. In 1981, the Parks and Recreation Department added a little league field and picnic pavilion area (Parks and Recreation Department, 1981). Two softball fields were added and completed in 1988. Additional land was donated by Abilene Slowpitch Softball Association in March of 1989. (Community Services, 2020; Parks and Recreation Department, 1988). A playground was added to Cal Young Park in 1990. The funds for the construction were provided from the Parks Voluntary Contribution Program (Parks and Recreation Department, 1990). In the year of 2015, Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP) Abilene Lake Fort Phantom Kayak Rentals entered into an agreement with the City of Abilene to rent out kayaks at Cal Young Park. This didn't last long, as SUP Abilene relocated to Fort Phantom Lake once water levels returned to normal from a multi year drought season (Community Services, 2020; Rodgers, 2020). Cal Young Park is utilized by many today, being a popular spot in town for people to go fishing. Along with the ballfields, there's a hockey rink and a disc golf course for people to play games and enjoy the outdoors.



Carver Park

During the 1940s the City of Abilene maintained three municipal parks; Cobb, Kirby, and Fair Park. A new park was acquired on February 24, 1943. The Parks and Recreation Board purchased land from Elizabeth Hughes for \$750. The land made up 21 lots on the west side of the railroad. A few months later on April 23, the land was officially designated as a park. Citizens from the Abilene black community gathered at local churches and other public areas to discuss a name for the park. On May 8, 1945 the name “George Washington Carver Park” was chosen. Various amenities were provided to Carver Park by the Abilene community, such as a playground contribution from the American Association of University Women of Abilene and a tennis court funded by \$1,000 in donations from various black citizens in Abilene, along with other improvements (Community Services, 2020).

However, the original location of George Washington Carver Park did not exist where it does today on the corner of Treadaway and North 8th Street. The original location of Carver Park was in a predominantly Hispanic area located on six lots across the street. This school was on the 800 block of Magnolia Street, which is now known as Treadaway Boulevard (Rodgers, 2020). Also, today’s GV Daniels Recreation Center was the original location of the Hispanic school in the 1940’s. Those original six lots of land were acquired by the city on July 28, 1922, purchased from Henry A. & Lillie A. Jones for \$1800. Another two lots of land directly next to the first six lots were bought from L. D. & Ellen L. Kennedy and Letcher D. & Grace Graham King on August 27, 1929. Kennedy’s lot was purchased for \$400, while King’s lot was purchased for \$450. A few days later, two other lots were acquired from L. M. & Nellie Hammond on August 30, 1929 for the sum of \$1000.

On August 5, 1949, the City Commission proposed to have the school system acquire Carver Park to be used as a new location for a Hispanic school campus. The agreement with the old Americanization school shared that their original property could be used for the Parks and Public Recreation Board, specifically to give the black community an equal, if not better, park for social and recreational needs.

The Parks and Public Recreation Board converted the Americanization school ground into a playground and the school building into a recreation and community facility. This 1.66 acre park was renamed George Washington Carver Park, located on North 8th Street. The Carver Recreation Center was completed on November 1, 1966.

A historical marker was dedicated to Carver Park on February 26, 1984 to recognize the history of black education in Abilene. Prior to the Hispanic school being established at Carver Park, it was the original location of the Abilene Colored School, opening in 1923 and accredited in 1938.

In 1988, a petition was created by the citizens of Abilene requesting to change the name of George Washington Carver Recreation Center to GV Daniels Recreation Center, in honor of Mrs. Genevieve Rogers Daniels. She lived from June 16, 1931 to December 19, 1987, a



resident in Abilene from 1943 to 1987. She was heavily involved with the community and dedicated to bettering the lives of “at risk young black teenagers of Abilene”. She worked at Carver Recreation Center for 20 years and passed away while she was the coordinator at the center (Brown, 2020). The petition for the name change had 298 signatures. On February 2, 1988, the recreation center’s name changed from George Washington Carver Recreation Center to GV Daniels Recreation Center (Community Services, 2020).

In 1980, Community Services expanded the senior citizen facilities by 2,150 sq. ft. The outdoor multi-purpose court was resurfaced in 1980 and was eventually repainted in 2017, in addition to adding another basketball goal. Carver Park’s playground was renovated in both 1990 and 2011. On October 23, 1998, the Community Development Department and the Community Services Department agreed to start G.V. Daniels Gymnasium construction project, using funds from the 1997/1998 and 1998/1999 fiscal years. Also, in addition to the gymnasium, a multi-purpose activity room was added to aid in senior citizen and recreation programs. This construction proposal was presented by Mike Hall, the Director of Community Services Department, on April 6, 1998. (Community Services, 2020)

Cobb Park

Cobb Park was one of the first five municipally owned parks in Abilene (History of Abilene Parks, 1969). The park was donated by Mr. H. H. Cobb and Mrs. Susie M. Cobb of Fort Worth on June 17, 1919. Mayor Dallas Scarborough encouraged Mr. and Mrs. Cobb to donate their six lots on the northwest side of Abilene to develop a public park (History of Abilene Parks, 1969). On Saturday, August 16, 1919, the City Commissioner finalized the contract to begin developing the north half of the post office block for park usage, along with the lots donated by Mr. and Mrs. Cobb. The park was intended to be used to host outdoor sports, picnic and swimming parties, public speaking events, and social gatherings - a place Abilenians needed at the time in that part of town (Abilene Parks, 1919). Though the park was donated in 1919, lack of funds prevented the park from growth and development. However in the 1950s, a covered pavilion and band stand were placed in the park. After these additions, this 14 acre park became a favorite of family gatherings in the Abilene area (Garcia, 1984).

Cobb Park continued to grow with the establishment of Cobb Recreation Center. The plans for development took place in 1959, officially opening in 1961. Eventually a party house was built in 1962 at Cobb Park, called Cobb Park Party House, but now is known as the Cobb Park Activity Building. A few years later in 1967, a parks bond was proposed to Abilenians to feature details to help improve paving, landscaping, park equipment, and other park features. This \$685,000 bond proposal included Cobb Park renovations, such as beautification projects, adding a playground area, picnic tables, benches, and additional park equipment (Armistead, 1967). Cobb Park Playground opened in December 1969. The park’s most recent renovation was to the playground which was completed in 2012 (Community Services, 2020).



C. W. Gill Park

C. W. Gill Park was originally known as Crockett Park, since it was next to Crockett Elementary School. It was also sometimes referred to as the Willis Street Park, since the park was right off of Willis Street and South 12th. This shared school and park site was previously purchased from the Kaveny family on April 21, 1949. The ten acres were bought for \$11,000, with the Parks Board paying \$3,000 (Garcia, 1984). A couple years later, Mr. and Mrs. Claude W. Gill, founders of the Abilene Savings Association, contributed a donation to extend the park land at Crockett Park. This donation took place on August 26, 1952. Mr. Gill requested to remain anonymous and not publicize their donation. This request was upheld by the city until November 5, 1968, when the name was officially changed to C. W. Gill Park to honor and remember Mr. Gill (Garcia, 1984).

Claude W. Gill was born in Big Spring and was a son of a Texas and Pacific Railroad worker. His family moved from Big Spring to Colorado City when Claude was five. In 1899 at the age of fourteen Mr. Gill left school to work at Radford Wholesale Grocery Company as their shipping clerk. Mr. J. M. Radford, the owner of the store, was so impressed with Gill's work that he offered him a position at the Abilene location, but Gill refused to leave his hometown. However, Radford asked again in 1909 and this time Gill accepted the position. He continued to climb the ladder at the company until he stepped down from the company as vice president in 1921. In 1922, at the age of 37, Gill started a building and loan business called Abilene Savings and Loan, which eventually grew to be one of Abilene's largest lenders. He was very dedicated to serving Abilene, helping economically and serving as a city commissioner during World War I. He was also appointed State Finance Commissioner by Governor Coke Stevenson (Moore, 2014).

When people met to have the park's name officially change from Crockett Park to C. W. Gill Park, Parks Board member Bob Hanna spoke highly of C. W. Gill. He gave a plaque of remembrance to Mrs. C. W. Gill, sharing how Mr. Gill was an outstanding citizen. Though the Gill's had originally requested to remain anonymous about the donation, Hanna mentioned that many parks were named after Abilenians. Thus, the park was named after Mrs. Gill's late husband to honor him. Mrs. Gill along with other family members at the ceremony were very pleased with the name change, along with receiving the plaque of recognition (Parks and Recreation Department, 1969). A playground was added to Gill Park in 1989 with its most recent renovation completed in 2016 (Community Services, 2020; Parks and Recreation Department, 1989).

Everman Park

Everman Park is the oldest park in Abilene. The history of Everman Park can be traced back to the beginning of Abilene, Texas. In 1871, Texas & Pacific (T&P) Railway was granted permission by Congress to build the first railroad to span across West Texas. Since the Civil War had ended, the construction project of a southern transcontinental railroad started again, intending to build a railroad from Marshall, Texas to San Diego, California. However, due to a



financial panic in 1873, Texas & Pacific Railway was unable to complete the construction. The railroad did run from Marshall, Texas to Texarkana after its completion in 1876, spanning a total of 444 miles (Werner, 2010).

The start to Abilene, Texas was connected with the Texas & Pacific Railway. Taylor County was created in 1878, with Buffalo Gap as the county seat. Ranchers and land speculators met with Texas & Pacific Railway businessmen to discuss where the railroad could pass through West Texas. The northeast corner of Taylor County was ultimately determined to be the location for the railway passing. The railway company came to the area in January of 1881 calling Abilene the “Future Great City of West Texas”. On March 15, 1881, several hundred people gathered in Abilene in hopes to buy land that was being auctioned off. Within 2 days, over 300 lots were sold, officially establishing the West Texas town of Abilene (Downs, 2010).

What we know as Everman Park today was one of the original lots that founded Abilene. It was originally known as T&P Lawn, as it included the passenger depot for the railway when the train rolled into town. Whenever the train arrived in Abilene, people would congregate on T&P Lawn. Cowboys would entertain passengers with their horsemanship skills and showcase other antics (Garcia, 1984). Various people traveled the Texas & Pacific Railway, including Lily Langtry in 1885, retired president Theodore Roosevelt in 1911, as well as Charles Lindbergh, Clara Barton, Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, and Greer Garson (Garcia, 1984; Moore, 2014). This small, roughly one acre park was known as T&P Lawn for a couple of decades, until Abilene City Commissioners changed the name on March 26, 1914. The park was named after an assistant general manager of the Texas and Pacific Depot, John Wesley Everman. John Wesley Everman was born in 1861, a native to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. When he was 16 John traveled to South America to work in a Venezuelan silver mine. When he eventually ventured back to the United States he took up a job in the railroad industry. He was employed with the Great Northern Railroad before taking a job with Texas & Pacific Railway, where he worked for over twenty years. The Abilene City Commissioners decided in unison to name the park after John Wesley Everman for his work and dedication (White, 2018). However, even with the name change and park dedication, the name “Everman Park” didn’t catch on with the Abilene residents, many still referring to the park as “T-P Lawn”, typically spelled as “Tee Pee”. As the years went by, the moniker of Everman had practically been forgotten by everyone, although a couple newspaper articles would refer to the park as “Everyman Park” (White, 2018).

The park was eventually recognized once again as Everman Park after renovations in the 1990s. There were beautification projects to the park hosted by Abilene locals, such as adding trees, flower bushes, and a water fountain in 1994. Additional sculptures were added in the following years, such as in 1996 when the Childhood's Great Adventure sculpture was installed and dedicated to childhood author William Joyce. In the years 2012-2013, six Dr. Seuss sculptures were added, including Cat in the Hat, the Lorax, Horton the elephant, Yertle the Turtle, and Sam I Am. The Man on the Moon Sculpture was unveiled in 2014, also honoring the author William Joyce. Everman Park has received awards and dedications, such as in 1968 the Texas & Pacific Railway dedicated a historical marker to honor the role in the city's



development. In 2015, the state of Texas designated Abilene as the Storybook Capital of Texas to commemorate the Everman Park Sculptures, and then in 2018 Everman Park received the Lone Star Legacy Award from Texas Recreation and Park Society (Garcia, 1984; White, 2018). Everman Park is a popular downtown tourist attraction for Abilene, whether visiting downtown events throughout the year, the popular Children's Arts and Literacy Festival (CALF Festival), or just photography sessions for graduations, weddings or portraits.

Fannin Park

Fannin Park was acquired by the City of Abilene in 2014. This was through a trade with Abilene Independent School District, where Bowie Park was traded for Fannin Park located at 1902 Shelton Street (Andrews, 2020; Rodgers, 2020). This park makes up 5.81 acres, typically used for team practices as it has a lot of open land. The park is next to Fannin Elementary School, which closed its doors in 2013 (Fannin Elementary School, 2020).

Grover Nelson Park

Grover Nelson Park was the original location of the old Municipal Airport, acquired by the City of Abilene through condemnation proceedings in 1942. The airport was originally Kinsolving Field and Mayor Thomas Hayden encouraged and convinced Abilenians to purchase the area in 1928 to provide aviation opportunities to Abilene (Alvarez, 2020). In 1931, well-known aviator Amelia Earhart crash-landed in Abilene, near the old Municipal Airport which is now Loop 322 (Garner, 2017). Aside from Earhart's surprise appearance in Abilene, the airport was also used by the military. Due to the increase of air traffic, eventually the old Municipal Airport became inadequate (Garcia, 1984). In 1955, Mr. Grover Nelson presented an idea to the Parks Board to develop a public park in the location of the old airport and he even mentioned that the new location for the Abilene Zoo could be at this park as well. However, Mr. Nelson faced some difficulties when trying to pitch the idea of a new park, as some people believed the park to be "too far from the city" (Garcia, 1984).

Grover Nelson's dedication paid off, because on June 29, 1956, the City Commission dedicated the land west of the flight line to be used as park land. This area brought in a softball field complex, a man-made lake in 1964, and became the new zoo location in 1966 (Community Services, 2020; Garcia, 1984). The Airport Park was renamed to Grover Nelson Park on November 3, 1959, honoring Mr. Nelson for helping develop the park and his many years of service and passion for Abilene's parks and recreation. Since 1928, Grover Nelson was a businessman in Abilene, but he also served in many other ways. For example, in 1939 Mayor Will Hair appointed Nelson to an unexpired term on the City Commission, serving as the head for the Parks and Finances Committee. Once he retired from the City Commission, Nelson became a member of the Parks and Public Recreation Board in 1943, and was elected as chairman on May 11, 1948. He served on the Board for 15 years. Mr. Nelson was a part of many other civic endeavors including Taylor County Commissioner for Precinct 1 (Garcia, 1984).



Construction of the new zoo began on March 29, 1965 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1965). A bond election took place in February of 1964 to help generate funds to build the new zoo, along with donations from individuals and interested organized groups. This raised \$250,000 to develop a zoo at Nelson Park (Parks and Recreation Department, 1964). In the first few years of the zoo's opening at Nelson Park, the zoo had Mondays free of charge to guests, while the admission for every other day of the week was \$0.25 for 16 and older, \$0.10 for those under 16, and free for those under 2 years (Parks and Recreation Department, 1968). As of September 30, 1968, there were 146 specimens of mammals, 114 specimens of birds, and 38 specimens of reptiles (Parks and Recreation Department, 1968).

Fantasyland Playground at Nelson Park was constructed in 1969, between two picnic shelters on the west side of the park. The overall theme of the playground was animals in nature, including familiar stories like "Jack and the Beanstalk", "The Reluctant Dragon", "Wizard of Oz", and more. The ribbon cutting took place on May 4, 1969 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1969). The playground remained for two decades until it was replaced with new equipment in 1997 (Rodgers, 2020).

The City of Abilene applied for a grant through the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in 1972 to help improve this 174 acre park. This includes lighting at one of the ballfields, paved spectator area, bleachers for the ballfields, site improvement, and landscaping. This grant was approved by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the resolution was adopted on August 10, 1972 (Community Services, 2020). Also, in 1989, a 1.6 mile jogging trail was added to the park, giving the community a place to take walks or run around the park (Community Services, 2020). Paddle boats were a fun amenity added in 1988 at Nelson Pond, provided by Paddleboat Fun. These paddle boats remained until the late 90s. However, in 2017, the Abilene Zoo brought back that amenity with their swan paddle boats that can be rented while visiting the zoo (Community Services, 2020; DeLaGarza, 2020).

Additional amenities added to Grover Nelson Park were a Splash Pad and Fort Imagination. Abilene's first splash pad was built at Nelson Park in 2012, holding its grand opening on September 27. The splash pad offered multiple water features, such as various water sprayers and bubblers. It was given an update in 2019, providing new and improved water features for families to enjoy (Community Services, 2020). The playground area called "Fort Imagination" was led by the Junior League of Abilene and built in 2004 (Gibson, 2020; Rodgers, 2020). Many private donations were given to help construct this playground, however the playground had to be partially reconstructed in 2007 due to vandalism that burned a portion of the structure (Gibson, 2020; Rodgers, 2020). Since then, many families have enjoyed going to this playground to swing on the swings, climb the monkey bars, and use their imaginations as they play on the playground.

Festival Gardens

Festival Gardens was originally a small amusement park area adjacent to the Abilene Zoo. The amusement park was called "Nelson Park Rides" and it opened in the late spring of 1967 (Zelisko, 2016). It included concessions, mechanical rides, and a train ride that ran a mile



and a half around the zoo and Nelson Park Pond. This amusement park started out with 16 rides, including a carousel, a ferris wheel, and a small roller coaster called the “mouse ride” (Zelisko, 2016). Nelson Park Rides was in partnership with the Abilene Zoological Society (Community Services, 2020). In 1973, the amusement park constructed a swimming pool as well as adding a mini golf course. The park’s name changed to “Zoo World” in 1974, but sadly, the park closed in 1978 due to poor attendance (Zelisko, 2016). Though Zoo World couldn’t follow through with its reopening plans, the idea to erect Festival Gardens in the same location as Zoo World took place. The plans for development occurred in 1987 and was a team effort between the City of Abilene and the Rotary Clubs of Abilene (Parks and Recreation Department, 1987). Festival Gardens then opened a couple years later in the early 1990s (Community Services, 2020).

Camp Barkeley

A dog park was placed in Nelson Park in 2010. The funds for the park were raised by Abilene citizens, along with some assistance from the City of Abilene. This park provides two dog parks, one for smaller dogs (30 pounds and lighter) and one for larger dogs (30 pounds and over). It’s a popular site for dog owners and their canines to run around in a safe fenced area (Community Services, 2020; Rodgers, 2020).

Jackson Park

In November 1964, the Parks Board collaborated with Abilene ISD to attain the title of roughly 7 acres of school-owned property near Jackson Elementary School. On March 2 1965, the City of Abilene entered into an agreement with AISD to provide funding of \$20,000 to construct eight tennis courts at both Mann Middle School and Madison Middle School in exchange for the land near Jackson Elementary (Garcia, 1984). This 6.8 acre park has two ballfields, one known as Jackson Major Field and the other as Jackson Farm Field. These fields are used frequently by baseball teams, including leagues such as the Dixie Baseball League (Community Services, 2020).

Johnson Park

In 1931, a project to develop Fort Phantom Hill Dam was suggested to help create an additional water source. However, due to the Great Depression, construction was delayed (Shilcutt, Coffey, & Frazier, 2000). The construction officially took place in June of 1937, finishing 16 months later in October of 1938 (Ricci, 2020). On October 7, 1955 the City Commission set aside three areas of land around Lake Fort Phantom to be used later for public park and recreation purposes, one of them located on the northwest side of Fort Phantom (Garcia, 1984).

In September of 1957, the Abilene Chamber of Commerce and the City of Abilene partnered together to create the event “Build a Park in a Day”. This involved a lot of the Abilene



park was dedicated, Mr. Kirby stated he hoped the park would bring pleasure to Abilene citizens. Mr. Kirby was a veteran attorney who also served as Abilene mayor from 1906-1919, one of the longest serving mayors in Abilene along with Norm Archibald from 2004-2017. E. N. The Kirby's were very invested in their community and well-known for giving oranges to the county staff every year during Christmas. Their home in Abilene was close to ten acres of their land the Kirby's would use to entertain friends and family, which was the start to Kirby Park (Moore, 2014). In 1941, Kirby Park was leased to World War II veterans to provide a dance pavilion, amusement, and recreational activities for the soldiers (Garcia, 1984). The park was very popular to Abilenians in Abilene's early years. Between the 1930s and 1960s, Kirby Park was a well-known gathering place for families (Rodgers, 2020).

In 2013, the Cedar Creek Waterway Development group were unhappy to hear that the City of Abilene could potentially sell Kirby Park to a private buyer. The nonprofit group intended for Kirby Park to be part of the development of Cedar Creek Trail, a hiking trail that would start from Kirby Lake and end at Lake Fort Phantom. Though the City debated about selling the park, the transaction ended up not taking place (Garza, 2013). The 19.5 acre park is still around today, located off of South 14th Street offering a basketball court, benches, and a pavilion.

Lake Kirby Park & Nature Area

The construction of Lake Kirby took place due to a drought that hit Lake Abilene in 1927 and the construction was funded by a \$600,000 bond (Shilcutt, Coffey, & Frazier, 2000). The Lake was annexed by the City of Abilene in the 1930s and was used to provide drinking water. However, the quality of the water was no longer good by the 1940s. Thus, the lake is currently being used for irrigation at the three local golf courses. When Lake Kirby is full, it holds approximately 7,600 acre feet of water and is located in the Lake Fort Phantom watershed (Moore, 1992).

The City of Abilene planned to develop a park along the east shore of Lake Kirby in the 1990s, as Abilene continued to expand south. At that time there was already a ballfield and an asphalt parking lot in place, along with three existing oil wells in the area. However, many of the locals still went to Lake Kirby to fish which was evident from the dirt roads running along the shoreline (Moore, 1992). The proposed project was split into three phases; phase one included road preparation, a concrete boat ramp, lighting, fishing piers, picnic and restroom facilities. phase two included ballfield development, and phase three was dedicated to south end development, such as establishing foot trails and observation decks (Community Services, 2020).

Lake Kirby Park continued to grow, adding more ballfields in the mid-90s to cater to baseball and softball leagues (Rodgers, 2020). In 2006, a playground area and pavilion were built. In 2018 a nature park area was created and dedicated within the park. A boardwalk winds through trees at the park. Signage is available to encourage visitors to learn more about nature and wildlife (Greve, 2018). This vision was a group project from local residents, known as Friends of Kirby Lake, a group associated with West Texas Science Center (Abilene Reporter



News, 2020). In 2020 a dinosaur sand pit was installed for children to dig up a life size replica of a mosasaur skeleton and additional signage was added to help identify wildflowers, insects, and even share the history of the area (Abilene Reporter News, 2020). Lake Kirby Nature Park has grown popular in recent years, whether it's exploring the boardwalk, celebrating events at the pavilion and playground, or fishing for catfish at Lake Kirby itself.

Lee Park

The Parks and Public Recreation Board sought to acquire land adjacent to schools due to the prime locations for school children and families. On August 11, 1961, AISD sold 6.02 acres to the Parks and Public Recreation Board near Lee Elementary School to be used as a park. The Park was named "Robert E. Lee Park" in February of 1962, eventually shortened to Lee Park (Garcia, 1984). Lee Park has a playground area, a basketball court, picnic areas, and restrooms. The playground had its most recent renovation in 2007 (Community Services, 2020).

As sports like soccer, football, baseball, and softball continued to grow in popularity in Abilene, Abilene Independent School District and the City of Abilene worked together to help provide facilities for leagues and games. A study group was formed and they proposed a multi-purpose field would be most beneficial. Also, the City of Abilene and AISD believed that creating a joint acquisition for this facility would help Abilenians save money in tax dollars. The study group decided on a location, picking property next to Lee Elementary School, as it was the most economical site (Community Services, 2020).

In September of 1982, seven athletic fields were developed by the City of Abilene Parks Department to be used for soccer or football games (Parks and Recreation Department, 1982). This specific area was then named Lee Athletic Complex. The formal dedication of the complex occurred on September 30, 1982 (Community Services, 2020). When Lee Athletic Complex was first built, there were a lot of mixed reactions from Abilenians about the new complex. However, today the athletic complex is heavily used for football and soccer games.

Nelson Wilson Park

Nelson Wilson Park was acquired through a Community Development Block grant. This grant helped the City gain three new parks, North Park, South Park, and Nelson Wilson Park. Nelson Wilson Park was acquired by the city on April 4, 1978. It was formerly known as Pasadena Heights Park. The name changed to honor Mr. Nelson Wilson, a well-known black community leader who played an instrumental role in bringing the park to Pasadena Heights (Garcia, 1984).

Nelson Wilson and his wife Ozella moved to Abilene in 1955, as Nelson had "always heard it was a good place to live" (Moore, 2014). For 22 years Wilson worked as a porter and janitor at the Texas Department of Public Safety, retiring in 1977. However, his retirement didn't last long, as he then worked at a law office for 14 years. Nelson Wilson was heavily involved in Abilene, such as in 1959 he participated in Boy Scouts of America and led Troop 264 until he



Fair Park brought a lot of enjoyment to Abilenians. Before there was Shotwell Stadium off of North Highway 36, football games took place at what is now Curly Hayes Football Field. A horse racing track was also located at Fair Park, which was eventually converted into a car racing track. Polo teams played games at the park and radio listeners tuned in live when KRBC hosted weekly performances out of the Round Building on Saturday nights. Other events that took place were wrestling matches at the Fair Park City Auditorium, as well as a performance by Elvis Presley when he visited Abilene on October 11, 1955 (Moore, 2014; Rodgers, 2020).

Between 1914 and 1917, the West Texas Fair Association continued to develop buildings and make refinements to the race track, along with other gradual improvements to the fairgrounds at Fair Park (Garcia, 1984). Some of the first buildings that were built in Fair Park were the poultry building to showcase different types of birds. The agriculture and manufacturing exhibit hall was built in 1925. In this exhibit hall visitors could come and explore different merchandise that were being sold, whether it was from local hardware businesses, consulting with a taxidermist, or admiring the agricultural success of people throughout the Big Country (Moore, 2014). The women's building was built for the West Texas Fair Association to have a location for women to showcase various items, whether it was sewing machines, pianos, or cutlery (Moore, 2014). Other buildings on the west side of the park were used for stock animals, as well as a round building to showcase the animals, known as the Sears Arena. Some of these original buildings are still standing today in the park, but have been transformed for other uses over the years. The exhibition building was converted into the Rose Recreation Center to host athletic leagues, after school programs, or camps for kids between the ages of 6-13. The women's building eventually became the Senior Citizens Center in 1974, opening in the month of May, which is considered to be older Americans month. In 2001, the Senior Citizens Center moved across the street to a new facility, the Rose Park Senior Activity Center, and the original Center was transformed into the Adaptive Recreation Services. A majority of the stock buildings during the fair years were demolished, but a few still stand, being used to store City of Abilene Parks Department vehicles and equipment.

In the summer of 1917, Fair Park was used as a military training ground to prepare young men for World War I. Governor James E. Ferguson requested for Texans to volunteer their services to help defend their country. 130 Abilenians stepped up and created Company I of the 7th Texas Infantry. For six weeks, these men camped at Fair Park for training, eventually transferring to Camp Bowie in Fort Worth after training finished on September 1st. These men joined the 142nd Infantry in the 36th Division, which saw action in France from October 8-28 of 1918, and mustered out of service in 1919 (Moore, 2014).

D. H. Jeffries was a major contributor to the West Texas Fair in its early years, trying to make continuous improvements every year. One of his additions he brought to the West Texas Fair was the new and exciting concept of automobile racing, where he altered the horse race track to also accommodate racing cars. This new racetrack was named the West Texas Fair Speedway. Many spectators came to fill the stands to watch competitors from across the country race their automobiles at 100 miles per hour. The Speedway drew in such large crowds during racing days. In 1926, Abilene's population was about 24,000, however when it came to



the 4th of July race in 1926 at the West Texas Fair Speedway, there was an attendance of 12,000 spectators. Sadly, the Speedway had to close its doors in the 1930s, falling victim to the Great Depression as people weren't able to afford tickets to attend races (Moore, 2014).

The West Texas Fair Association struggled to stay afloat in later years due to World War I, high costs at the time, and the Great Depression that followed in the 1930's. The fair was held on and off since the start of 1914, not hosted from 1918 to 1921 due to World War I, 1931 to 1937 due to the Great Depression, and 1941 to 1944 due to World War II (Taylor County Expo Center, n.d.). Due to the association's financial difficulties, the City of Abilene acquired the title to the fairgrounds and land adjacent to the fairgrounds from 1914 to 1937. In 1936, the 42nd District Court proceedings resulted in the West Texas Fair Association declaring bankruptcy, resulting in the City of Abilene purchasing all of the Fair's buildings at the park for \$6,250. The West Texas Fair Association's contract with the City related to using Fair Park for the annual fairgrounds expired in 1942. The Parks and Public Recreation Board, developed in December of 1940, granted temporary agreements to use the park for the fair on a year to year basis (Garcia, 1984).

As the years went on, the fair buildings deteriorated due to a lack of maintenance and supervision. On July 25, 1947, the City Commission adopted a five-year contract to have exclusive control over the fair buildings to make improvements and prevent further deterioration. After the five years were up, the City Commission would grant back control to the Parks and Public Recreation Board. However, on November 13, 1951, the City Commission cancelled the contract and all the buildings, fences, and grandstand, formerly the property of the West Texas Fair Association and not needed for any City parks and recreation purposes, were turned over to the Fair Association for removal. A few years later in October of 1955, the Fair Association, owner of the M & M playground, and the Abilene Public School Athletic Department were asked to leave Fair Park. The West Texas Fair Association then moved to their current location at Taylor County Expo Center, which is on the opposite side of North Highway 36, across the street from Grover Nelson Park.

Fair Park was a major attraction to the City of Abilene from the start of the 1900's to the 1940's. Since the acquisition of the park, the City has aggregated additional facilities and amenities, such as Abilene's first zoo, a swimming pool, tennis courts, ball fields, Safety City, Abilene's first children's playground, the Sears Arena Pavilion, Eagle Field, and M & M Amusement Park and pony rides. The small zoo in Fair Park was founded in 1922, mostly consisting of outdoor enclosures for the animals, with the exception of the monkey house which was an enclosed building. The first animal to join the zoo was a racoon named Toby, donated by George Fry of Abilene (Moore, 2014). Other animals that could be found at this small zoo were a baboon, a doe, an eagle, two albino prairie dogs, two bears, two pheasants, a lion, and most famously known, Charlie the chimpanzee. As of October 3, 1964, there were over 350 animals at the zoo in Fair Park (Parks and Recreation Department, 1964). The monkey house building is still in the park to this day, but was renovated to an Activity Building in 1967. The Fair Park Zoo shut its doors in 1964 and relocated to the Nelson Park Zoo, soon opening its gates to the public in 1966.



In 1914, The American Natatorium Association donated a swimming pool to Fair Park, however it was filled and replaced by the Fair Park City Auditorium, opening its doors on May 30, 1927. The auditorium was open for a few decades, later torn down in 1976. A wading pool was built near the playground area in Fair Park, courtesy of the Abilene Kiwanis Club. However, all that is in memory of that pool now is a sand volleyball court in its place (Moore, 2014). Another pool facility was built in Fair Park off of South 9th Street between 1974 and 1975, but eventually that pool was closed and demolished for a future aquatic center. The pool was closed in August of 2016, and the new Adventure Cove aquatic center was opened on June 15, 2017. This aquatic center features various amenities, including two water slides, a lazy river, a zero-depth beach entry, and a concession stand called Castaway Cafe. An additional water slide was added in 2019, along with additional shading.

Abilene's first children's playground was located in Fair Park, aggregating donations from the City of Abilene and Taylor County. They both donated \$300 to the Abilene, Taylor County Playground association to create a children's playground for Abilene residents. The playground opened on Flag Day, June 14, 1935, with Mrs. Dallas Scarborough giving the dedication (Garcia, 1984). In 1957 an agreement was made between the Park and Public Recreation Board and Key City Kiwanis Club to develop a "Kiddie Play Park", providing a minimum of five rides open to the general public. In 1958 a miniature train track was added to "Kiddyland Park" in Fair Park, eventually extending the track further in 1963. Opened October 3, 1967, Frontierland came to Rose Park. Providing a wild west theme, it included equipment such as a corral, Bucking Broncos, a Prairie Schooner, a cannon, Cactus Climbers, a stagecoach, a Frontier Outpost, a Pull-A-Round, a Cannon climber, a steam engine climber, teepees, a pioneer wagon, a rock-n-roll, and a saddle mate swing (Parks and Recreation Department, 1968).

The Sears Arena Pavilion in Fair Park was presented on December 30, 1938 by Sears, Roebuck & Co. to promote livestock and agriculture. Once the West Texas Fair moved to a new location in 1955, the Sears Arena Pavilion was converted into a play house. KRBC would host live music each Saturday night at 8pm known as the "Hillbilly Circus" and you could either tune in to the radio or watch in person (Moore, 2014). After its years showcasing live country music on the weekends, it eventually became a Children's Theater on October 29, 1967 (Garcia, 1984). The Children's Theater open house had about 300 people in attendance. Its first production was "Little Red Riding Hood", which was well received by both kids and adults (Parks and Recreation Department, 1968). The conversion of the pavilion to a theater was sponsored by Abilene Community Theater, Junior League of Abilene, and Abilene Parks and Recreation Board. Ever since the Children's Theater was created, the City of Abilene and Parks and Recreation Board has leased the theater to Abilene Community Theater. They still provide regular performances decades later, entertaining Abilenians with fun and engaging shows throughout the year.

Currently known as Curly Hayes Field, Eagle Field was built in 1932 after Abilene High anticipated large crowds to attend their football games after winning state in 1931. The



construction process cost \$15,000. The stands cost \$2,500 and were purchased from Texas Christian University (TCU) who was looking to sell their stands since they had just built a new stadium. However, when it came to Abilene High's first game of the 1932 season, Abilene watched in disappointment as they lost to the Sweetwater Mustangs 20 to 0. However, in 1953, Chuck Moser started coaching for the Abilene High Eagles, bringing 49 straight victories to the school, along with 3 state championships between 1954-1957 (Campbell, 2017; Moore, 2014).

In November of 1941, an agreement was made between the Park and Public Recreation Board of the City of Abilene, the West Texas Fair Association, and the Sportsman's Club for outdoor recreation. The Board granted the Sportsman's Club privilege to use some of the grounds of Fair Park for athletic games such as baseball and softball for annual amateur leagues. In October of 1959, the "Pony League Grads" baseball league entered into an agreement with the City of Abilene to use a parcel of land located on the southwest corner of Fair Park for a baseball field. This league was responsible for the construction of the baseball diamond and fence. Improvements were to be made by the league until their five year lease with the City was complete. Within that 5 year lease, the city agreed to maintain, water, and mow the grass. This same field was eventually renamed T-Bone Winters Field in the 1960s, after Jesse Franklin "T-Bone" Winters. Winters first arrived in Abilene in 1916 to attend Hardin-Simmons University to play college baseball. He earned the nickname "T-Bone" when he explained to his teammates one day that a "plain steak" wasn't a match for a "fireball pitcher" like himself - he needed an oversized T-Bone instead. Thus came the nickname "T-Bone". In 1919 he eventually caught the attention of the New York Giants manager John McGraw. Winters played for the New York Giants from 1919-1920, then later signed with the Philadelphia Phillies from 1921 to 1923. After his years in baseball, he became a businessman in Abilene. He was mayor of Abilene from 1957-1959 (History in Plain Sight; Jesse Winters).

In April of 1959, Abilene Independent School District requested the City of Abilene to construct additional tennis courts in Fair Park for recreational purposes. The agreement led the Parks and Public Recreation Board to add an additional four courts to the already four existing tennis courts in Fair Park. A few years later in 1962, the Abilene Tennis Club and the Parks and Public Recreation Board agreed to operate a Tennis Pro-Shop. In April 13, 1967, the Abilene City Council approved the development of a Tennis Center. Over the next few decades, additional tennis courts were added, currently Rose Park Tennis Center operates 15 courts as of 2020 (Community Services, 2020).

On July 23, 1968, Abilene paid tribute to former Parks and Recreation Board chairman Oscar Rose by changing the name from Fair Park to Oscar Rose Park. While Rose was chairman, Abilene's park acreage grew to number five in all of Texas and was seventh in capital improvements. Rose was very involved with the Abilene community. He arrived in Abilene in 1924 as a carpenter, went into the construction business for himself with Rose Construction Co. and built many well-known buildings such as Abilene Country Club, First Baptist Church, and other higher education buildings for Abilene. He helped serve on the planning and zoning for the West Texas Fair, along with being on the boards of the YMCA, Chamber of Commerce, and Girls Home (Armistead, 1968). Not only did former chairman Oscar Rose have an influence on



the park, former parks board member Grover Nelson helped the park grow in acreage. On February 14, 1984, Grover Nelson donated 20 acres of land adjacent to Oscar Rose Park to be used as a public park. Grover Nelson was a City Commissioner for Abilene from 1939 to 1943, and a part of the Parks and Recreation Board from 1943 to 1957.

To teach children about traffic safety, the City Council approved a traffic safety teaching facility on July 13, 1978. Given the name "Safety City", it resides on the northeast side of Oscar Rose Park, where the old Fair Park Auditorium used to be. Safety City is under management of the Police Department. They teach 3rd graders the importance of traffic safety and fire safety. They provide fun educational programs for students for 27 surrounding counties and have 73 different elementary schools visit Safety City annually (Hartley, 2020).

Oscar Rose Park received the Lone Star Legacy Award from Texas Recreation and Parks Society in 2013. TRAPS recognized Oscar Rose Park for its rich history and importance to Abilene one year prior to its 100th birthday.

Redbud Park

Mrs. Percy Ruth Jones from the Dodge Jones Foundation was responsible for adding another park to the Abilene parks system in the 1960s. On July 11, 1967, Mrs. Jones donated 127 acres of land off of South 32nd and Barrow Street to develop another park. The park was then named after her favorite tree - the Redbud. Mrs. Jones was a prominent woman in Abilene, helping improve the park systems in Abilene. Not only did she help donate land for Redbud Park, but she donated \$50,000 for the construction of a swimming pool at Stevenson Park. This pool was the first municipally owned swimming pool at the time (Garcia, 1984).

Little League Field began its construction in 1970, after two spokesmen of the Southern Little League (Stan Brown and Orville Jones) presented to the Parks and Recreation Board a request for a ballfield park in Redbud Park. This particular league was made up of 250 boys between the ages of 8-12. The board approved the request (Parks and Recreation Department, 1970). In 1976, a four field baseball/softball complex was developed with the help of a federal grant (Redbud Park Development, 1990). One amenity that was added was a one mile jogging trail constructed with Federal Revenue Sharing, as well as exercise stations along the jogging trail provided by a grant from Wells Fargo Company. The playground was donated by the Junior League of Abilene in 1978 and the Redbud Prairie Dog Town was established in 1988 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1988; Redbud Park Development, 1990). In 1984, the Dodge Jones Foundation acquired back 4.00 acres of land from Redbud Park, and in 1985 leased it out to the YMCA for 99 years. In 1991, the Dodge Jones Foundation abandoned 2.97 acres of land so it could be leased to the YMCA until 2084 (Community Services, 2020).

In 1984 the Parks Master Plan identified areas to help Redbud Park become a district park so it could serve a large population. Other amenities and facilities were offered to the public through bond proposals, but both bond proposals were unsuccessful. However in 1988, an anonymous local donor came forward to fund the park's full development, accomplishing the task in three phases (Redbud Park Development, 1990). In 1989 the Parks Division



implemented a 3-year Park Development Project for Redbud Park to improve the jogging trail, irrigation system, lighting, and a paved “patio” adjacent to the prairie dog area (Parks and Recreation Department, 1989). In Phase I, the jogging trail was extended a quarter mile, the lighting for the trail was donated by West Texas Utilities and 150 trees were planted at Redbud Park. Phase II provided restrooms, additional trails and lighting, further irrigation, a paved patio for the prairie dog area, parking, trees and grass planting. Phase III included the final completion of irrigation, renovation of the playground, more trees, grass, benches, and drinking fountains (Redbud Park Development, 1990).

As Redbud Park continued to develop, the park’s playground received renovations in 1993 and 2013 (Community Services, 2020). A few Redbud trees were planted at Redbud Park in honor of Mrs. Percy Jones, as that was her favorite tree (Rodgers, 2020). The park also acquired a splash pad in 2018, hosting its grand opening on July 20, 2018. The 2,852 square foot splash pad has 18 water features, including two slides and a large dumping bucket. The splash pad is located on the south side of the park. The Redbud Splash Pad has shaded benches, a picnic table, a water fountain and restroom facilities for visitors. The splash pad was funded for construction by voters in a 2015 bond election (Community Services, 2020).

Reyes Flores Park

The park that we know today as Reyes Flores Park was the original location for George Washington Carver Park in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The first section of land for the park was bought on February 24, 1943, with additional contributors donating land (Community Services, 2020). However, in 1949, the City Commission made changes to move George Washington Carver Park to a new location where the old Americanization (Hispanic) school was located. At that time it was located on the 800 block of Magnolia Street, however the street is now known as Treadaway Boulevard (Community Services, 2020; Garcia, 1984).

With the switch of George Washington Carver Park and the old Americanization School, the school was relocated to the old Carver Park area in August of 1949. The park area was then renamed to “Houston Park” on December 21, 1949 to match the name change of the Americanization School which changed to “Houston School” (Garcia, 1984).

The park changed its name once more to “Reyes Flores Park” in July 1977, honoring the second Abilenian who died in Vietnam (October 1965). This park was a favorite spot for Reyes Flores to visit when he was a child. The name change for the park was prompted by the League of Latin American Citizens (Garcia, 1984).

On April 8, 1980, a petition was put together by people in the community to ask for renovations to the park. There were 77 signatures on the petition. The citizens asked for lighting installation at the basketball courts, restrooms, and improvements to the baseball field (Community Services, 2020). In 1982, a playground was added to Reyes Flores Park. The playground had its most recent renovation in 2003 (Community Services, 2020). The park today



not only offers a playground area, a basketball court, a ballfield, but it also has a pavilion and picnic tables.

Scarborough Park

The City of Abilene purchased land at Little Elm Creek and Hartford Drive from Mr. W. S. Wagley to develop a park on the west side of town, since at the time there were no parks in that area. The 32.12 acres of land was purchased on May 28, 1956 and the park was named “Hartford Park”. However, the name changed to “Dallas Scarborough Park” to honor the former mayor and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Dallas Scarborough. Dallas Scarborough was mayor of Abilene from 1919 to 1923. He was the first mayor to acquire land for a park. He persuaded one of his law clients from Fort Worth, H. H. Cobb, to donate acreage in central Abilene, which is now known as Cobb Park. Also, during his time as mayor, he bought more land to grow the size of Fair Park (Community Services, 2020).

Mr. and Mrs. Scarborough were influential leaders in Abilene. Mr. Scarborough’s leadership as mayor brought positive growth in Abilene Parks, even appointing a City parks advisory committee and being one of the first board members for the State Parks Board. Dallas Scarborough was also a lawyer and civil servant to Callahan County, but moved to Abilene in 1905. He played football and baseball at the University of Texas, and he even had the chance to play with the Cleveland Americans baseball team, but turned them down. Mr. Scarborough stuck with sports after college by being the first football coach at Simmons College. Another fun fact about Dallas Scarborough is that his great-grandfather witnessed Corwallis’ troops surrendering to Washington in 1781, and Mr. Scarborough wore that as a badge of honor (Moore, 2014).

Dallas Scarborough’s wife Laura Jewel Scarborough helped a lot with Abilene Parks, being called the “mother” of the Parks Board by Mr. Grover Nelson. She had a massive role in the creation of the Parks and Public Recreation Board. She served on the board for 15 years from 1941-1956. Mrs. Scarborough was even president of the board for four years, along with serving as vice president, secretary, and historian. She wore other hats as well, such as being an active member of the American Association of University of Women and the Playground Association in the 1930s, groups that helped promote Abilene recreation. From previous interviews with Mr. Grover Nelson and Mrs. Glenna Frame, both spoke highly of Mrs. Scarborough, sharing that she was the most influential person in developing the Abilene Parks system. Mrs. Glenna Frame even stated that Mrs. Scarborough was given a certificate by the National Recreation Association and was called the “Mother of Recreation in Abilene” (Garcia, 1984).

In 1959, a few years after Scarborough Park came to be, Western Little League made a request to the City of Abilene to construct a baseball field and operate their league for 8-12 year old boys. This field was then placed on the Northeast corner of Scarborough Park, once the city entered into a contract and lease agreement with Western Little League. Another little league field was added in 1980 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1980). The league eventually added an additional 4 acre tract north of Scarborough Park on July 9, 1990 to construct an



additional baseball field. Less than a decade later, the Western Little League gave that land to the City of Abilene in 1999 to add to Scarborough Park, along with making necessary improvements for the ball fields.

A playground was added to the park in 1990 and renovated in 2008. After an approved parks bond in 2015, an aquatic splash pad was added to Scarborough Park in 2016. Grand opening day was August 18. This 3,000 square foot aquatic playground offers 20 interactive spray features, shaded areas, picnic tables, and restrooms. The splash pad recycles 90% of the water and recaptures, treats, and recirculates it (Proposition 7, 2019).

SeaBee Park

In the early decades of the 20th century, Cal Young Park and Will Hair Park were important park sites, as they were the only parks that had bodies of water to go fishing. However, that changed in 1928 when the City of Abilene dedicated 8,000 acres of city-owned land to construct a reservoir. Lake Fort Phantom has been Abilene's primary water source since its construction. Lake Fort Phantom takes up only one-third of the city-owned land, while the rest of the acreage is available for use other than water storage. Three areas were dedicated for future park development. This was decided on October 7, 1955, setting aside the City Sewer Farm, 1,200 acres adjacent to the Lake. It wasn't until May 4, 1961 that the City Commission decided on these three parks: a park northwest of the lake called Johnson Park, an unnamed park northeast of the lake, and another unnamed park southwest of Fort Phantom (Garcia, 1984).

The Southwest Fort Phantom Lake Park was dedicated on April 27, 1962, but was later changed to "SeaBee Park" on December 14, 1962. The name was changed to recognize the hard work done by the Abilene Navy Seabee reservists who helped develop Johnson Park in 1956. They completed a survey, a topographical map, laid a road to the lakefront, and built a boat and fishing dock as a part of their training (Garcia, 1984).

SeaBee Park offers unique amenities, such as a mobile airplane runway and camping. Camping was approved in 1981 allowing visitors to set up tents in the park for a period of time not to exceed 48 hours. Camping is only allowed at two parks in the City of Abilene; SeaBee Park and Johnson Park respectively (Community Services, 2020).

South Park

Through a Community Development Block grant, the City of Abilene was able to add three new parks to the area, including South Park. South Park was located near Locust Elementary School, which started hosting City of Abilene summer programs in the 1940's (Garcia, 1984). The land for South Park officially became the city's on September 28, 1978 (Community Services, 2020).



With the city acquiring the park land, a recreation center was built on that site encompassing 99% of the park area (Garcia, 1984). South Park Recreation Center had its grand opening on June 19, 1979 and officially opened for recreational activities the following day. South Park was located on the corner of South 10th and Cherry. The building was constructed by architect Woodlief Brown and DLS Contractors. The 11,500 square foot facility offered two craft rooms, a game room, a large activity room, a kitchen and a gym (Parks and Recreation Department, 1979). It also furnished a gymnasium and operated as a senior citizens center (Parks and Recreation Department, 1980).

South Park Recreation Center eventually changed its name to Cesar Chavez Recreation Center, honoring American civil rights activist Cesar Chavez. However, Cesar Chavez Recreation Center had to close its doors to the public on August 18, 2014 due to foundation issues. James Childers, the director of Community Services, shared with KTXS news that the costs for renovation were too costly to put into an old facility. The renovations were going to cost more than \$500,000, which was going to go towards expanding restrooms and repairing severe foundation problems. Children in the after school programs were offered the opportunity to transfer to programs at another city recreation center. Seniors who attended the senior programs were given the opportunity to participate at different centers as well. Staff were relocated to new locations in the City of Abilene facilities (Cramer, 2014).

Cesar Chavez Recreation Center had to be demolished in July of 2021. Future plans for South Park are still undetermined at this time.

Stevenson Park

On November 9, 1948, Mrs. Scarborough requested the City take into consideration creating another park for the black community, since the original location for Carver Park turned into the location for a Hispanic school. The Parks and Public Recreation Board agreed and then shared the same request to the City Commission. The motion carried that day and on March 25, 1949, Ellouise and McAllister Stevenson donated 14.3 acres of land to the City of Abilene to create a public park. The Stevensons then sold 1.18 acres of land to the City on July 14, 1950 for \$10, along with another purchase by the City from the couple on March 21, 1951. This sale cost \$1,600 and increased the park's total size to 20.7 acres (Community Services, 2020; Garcia, 1984).

A couple years later on July 28, 1953, an issue regarding Cedar Creek at Stevenson Park was brought to the attention of the Parks and Public Recreation Board. The city manager, Mr. Austin P. Hancock, informed the Board of changing the channel of Cedar Creek at the park. This was a necessity to construct an all-weather bridge over the creek at North 7th Street. This improvement would decrease flooding into the black residential area from the creek overflow. Thus, the following guidelines were created for the City Commission to follow: (1) The City should bring all utilities to the property line of a new park area; (2) The City should refund the actual expenditure of developing Stevenson Park; (3) The City should agree to furnish the additional money to purchase another park site for the black citizenry (Garcia, 1984). The outlines were approved by the City Commission, along with Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson who signed



agreements for the projects at the park's creek to take place. The Stevensons released the park restriction for the land and deeded the City 8 additional lots for the new creek channel. The City paid the Stevensons \$980 for the land, giving them back the deeds to the portion of land which lies north of EN 7th Street between Stevenson Drive and Cedar Creek (Garcia, 1984).

The Parks Board requested the City Commission to purchase land from the Radford Estates property from the money received from the old Stevenson Park property, along with the City Commission paying the difference. The City eventually followed through with this request, buying property without condemnation proceedings from City Homes, Inc., turning over the land to the Parks Department in March of 1954. This park was officially named "Stevenson Park" on April 13, 1954 after its beneficiaries Ellouise C. and J. McAllister Stevenson (Garcia, 1984).

The Parks and Recreation Department started plans for developing a tennis court on February 11, 1947. On March 18, 1982, permission was granted by the Director of Community Services, Mike Hall, to start taking bids for construction of a multi-purpose court at Stevenson Park (Community Services, 2020). In addition to the multi-purpose court, a playground was installed at Stevenson Park in 1982 (Community Services, 2020).

On January 27, 1977, Abilene Independent School District entered into an agreement with the City of Abilene Parks and Recreation Department to use portions of the Woodson School building on 342 Cockerell Drive as a recreation center for the community (Community Services, 2020). Woodson Recreation Center was used for athletic programs, summer camps for Abilene youth, and Special Populations. The center furnished a gymnasium, weight room, large game room, stage area, crafts room, and a classroom (Parks and Recreation Department, 1980). However, attendance declined at Woodson between 1980 and 1986 along with the rise of multiple maintenance issues. Woodson Recreation Center eventually closed its doors in the 1990s.

A swimming pool was constructed at Stevenson Park in 1955. A \$50,000 donation was given to the City by the Dodge Jones Foundation to help construct the pool. The pool was originally built for the black community, even though the pool was available for all Abilene citizens. The accessibility and neighborhood's image were factors of low usage. However, over time it started attracting Mexican-Americans and whites. By 1973 there were 15-20 whites and 30 Mexican-Americans attending every day with an average of 175-200 people coming to the pool each day. The pool offered adult swim classes, family night, and dancing and swimming for teens on Friday evenings (Brazzle, 1973). Stevenson pool was open to the public until 2014. In 2016 the pool was replaced with Stevenson Splash Pad. The Splash Pad was approved for construction through a bond election in 2015 (Andrews, 2020; Rodgers, 2020).

Unnamed Parks at Lake Fort Phantom

There are three plots of land the City of Abilene owns around Lake Fort Phantom. The plots are located on the Northeast side, Southeast side, and East side. The East side of land at Lake Fort Phantom was previously owned by the Abilene Chamber of Commerce and then by



Dyess AFB, known as the Dyess Recreation Area. In a parks board meeting on June 1, 1965, it was mentioned by Bill Weems, superintendent of the department, that the Parks and Recreation Department could take over maintenance and development in the area. The City of Abilene Parks and Recreation Department acquired the 52 acres of land from the Dyess Recreation area at Lake Fort Phantom on June 10, 1965 (Community Services, 2020; Parks and Recreation Department, 1965). This land specifically includes lots 176-184 and 184 - AF and 185 at Fort Phantom Hill (Additional Notes, 2020). Even though the land was transferred to the City of Abilene, the land has not been used for recreational purposes. There is currently no access to the lots, as they're full of mesquites and prickly pear (McClure, 2020).

Vaughn-Camp Park

Abilene parks were continually growing in the 1940s and 1950s. This growth included parks development on the southside of Abilene. Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Camp and Mrs. Ora E. Vaughn donated land between Abilene and Buffalo Gap on June 12, 1958. Their combined donation totaled 12.15 acres of land. The City of Abilene purchased an additional 6.36 acres of land to add to the park. The City bought 4.36 acres from Mrs. Vaughn for \$5,000 as well as 2 acres for \$3,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Camp. The gift from the Camps and Mrs. Vaughn was in connection with a growing real estate subdivision known as Buffalo Gap Road Estates. The land purchased by the City was planned to be used near a new high school, which is now known as Cooper High School. The park's name officially became "Vaughn-Camp Park" on June 25, 1958 to honor the park donors (Garcia, 1984).

The park was well known to fishermen due to a large stock tank close to the park. Even though the tank was on private property, the landowner allowed the public to fish at the lake. On April 17, 1963, the Parks and Recreation Board unanimously voted to grant West Texas Utilities Company an easement across the southwest corner of Vaughn-Camp Park. The formal offer took place on June 27, 1978 to exchange property with the City of Abilene. WTU agreed to exchange ownership of the 72.8 acres of land at Cal Young Park for 20 acres of land at Vaughn-Camp Park (Community Services, 2020).

Abilene Realtors Association helped to make improvements to Vaughn-Camp Park in the 1980s (Community Services, 2020). The associations' donations helped construct a new playground in 1986, providing recreation opportunities for the community in the area (Parks and Recreation Department, 1986). On November 9, 1984, a small donation was made to the City of Abilene by United Financial Corporation, successor to Abilene Investment Company. They donated a 30-foot strip of land adjacent to the park which was originally left for road purposes but never opened (Community Services, 2020). On January 23, 1991, the City of Abilene sold 0.426 acres of land at Vaughn-Camp Park to the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation to help develop U.S. Highway 83/84 (Community Services, 2020; Solis, 1990).

Vaughn-Camp Park put in a new playground area in 2001 to replace the original playground set. A few other amenities can be found at the park as well. There are picnic tables,



a tennis court and basketball court, as well as a sand volleyball court (Community Services, 2020).

Vera Hall Minter Park

The land for Vera Hall Minter Park was donated by Mr. Will D. Minter to honor his wife Vera Hall Minter, one of Abilene's cultural and civic leaders at the time. She had a major part in the Abilene community, mostly recognized for being heavily involved with the construction of the Abilene Public Library. This first Abilene Public Library was built on the corner of Cedar Street and North 2nd. She served on the library's board for 10 years and was chairman from 1956 to 1960. Among her many other hats, Mrs. Minter was also an advisory chairman for the Abilene Philharmonic, a vice president of the Abilene Museum of Fine Arts, president of the Cotillion Club, the West Texas Girl Scout Council, the Junior League, the Sunshine Nursery, and the Abilene Panhellenic Association. The location of Minter Park was originally the site of Fulwiler Livery Stable in Abilene's early days, prior to becoming the location for the Queen Theater designed by David S. Castle. The Queen Theatre showcased movies from 1916-1966, but was torn down in 1974. In 1976 Minter Park replaced the theatre. This "mini park" was leased to the City on a 99-year basis by the Kiwanis Club of Abilene Foundation, Inc., at which time the Kiwanis Club agreed to garner citizens help to fund the construction of the park while the City of Abilene maintained it. The club was able to collect over \$35,000 in donations from 3,000-4,000 Abilenians over a 3-year period. The 55 feet by 100 feet park was officially established and dedicated on April 4, 1976. Architect James Tittle designed the park, including a 34-foot wide by 16 feet long waterfall. Roughly 125 people gathered to attend the dedication ceremony. Though Vera Hall Minter was unable to see the beautiful downtown park, as she passed away in 1961, her name continued to live on in the city of Abilene. (Bruce, 1976; Garcia, 1984; Memorial to Mrs. Minter to be dedicated today, 1976; Rankin Jr., 1976).

Proposals for renovations to Vera Hall Minter Park began in July 2018, when the waterfall collapsed. The construction of the park started in January of 2020. Donations were given by various donors, including three anonymous donors, the TIRZ (Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone) Board, and a grant from Texas Commission on the Arts. The ribbon cutting took place Thursday, July 7, 2020 at 1:30pm with roughly 50 people in attendance. The ribbon cutting happened to fall on Vera Hall Minter's birthday, which would have been her 111th. Gary Grubbs, previous President of the Parks Board, Mayor Anthony Williams, and Bill Minter, son of Vera Hall Minter, spoke at the ribbon cutting. At the time of its opening, the permanent outdoor water curtain was the largest in the United States, reaching 33 feet in length by 14 feet tall. Along with the water curtain, Minter Parks renovations included a small stage, limestone bubblers, limestone seats, and a limestone backdrop. (Andrews, 2020; Rodgers, 2020).

Will Hair Park

Before the acquisition of Stevenson Park, Carver Park, and Reyes Flores Park, the black and latin citizens in Abilene requested a public park on the northeast side of Abilene in 1941. This 34.49 acre tract of land was dedicated as a park on April 2, 1943; it was a request of the



newly created Abilene Parks and Public Recreation Board to the City Commission. The City Commission granted the request, calling the new park “Northeast Abilene Park” or “Ambler Street Park”. The name changed to “Will Hair Park” on November 26, 1946 to recognize Mayor Will Hair, an Abilene mayor who served from 1937 to 1947 (Garcia, 1984).

Will Hair obtained his law degree in 1890 from the University of Texas. He graduated as valedictorian and was class president during his time at university. Hair moved to Abilene in 1927 after practicing law in Temple, Texas. In 1937 Will Hair became mayor of Abilene. Due to the Great Depression, the city was dangerously close to defaulting on municipal bonds. Hair rallied 40 of Abilene’s civic leaders and convinced them to support a 25% increase in property valuations for 2 years to help cover the indebtedness (Moore, 2014). Through this and his negotiated maturity rates with bond holders, the financial crisis was averted.

The location of Will Hair Park holds historical significance, as its location was formerly the Hashknife Ranch. The Hashknife Ranch was developed in 1875 by J. R. Coutts and John N. Simpson to care for their longhorn cattle. This ranch was the location where local ranchers discussed with T&P Railroad officials about developing a new town called “Abilene”. C. W. Merchant suggested the name, as Abilene was a cattle town in Kansas (Downs, 2010; Garcia, 1984). A historical marker can be found on the southeast corner of the park in remembrance of their discussion to establish Abilene (Garcia, 1984). Additional historic facts related to Will Hair Park is it was the first location of a septic system in the early 1900s, and in 1939, Abilene’s Apache professional baseball club used the park site (Garcia, 1984).

Ballfields at Will Hair Park were built in the late 1960s and early 70s. An additional Little League field was built in Will Hair Park in 1980, along with another softball field being added in 1986 (Community Services, 2020; Parks and Recreation Department, 1980). One of the ballfields at Will Hair Park was also named after Don Graven, a person who was instrumental in improving and maintaining the major baseball field at Will Hair Park (Rodgers, 2020). There’s also a statue in front of the field in honor of a boy who played in the league, Brody Bret Bourland. He was born in 1993 but tragically died in a car wreck in 2005. The statue was dedicated in loving memory of him, sharing his name and the phrase “For the love of the game”.

A playground at Will Hair was installed in 1988. It was the first park to be funded by the Parks Voluntary Contribution Program proceeds that exceeded \$33,000 that year. The playground had its official dedication on August 24, 1988 (Community Services, 2020; Parks and Recreation Department, 1988). Will Hair Park offers amenities such as baseball and softball fields, a playground area, pavilions, and disc golf.

Boards, Services, and Divisions

Parks and Recreation Board

The first organized recreation activity planned by the City of Abilene was in June of 1935 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1982). Mrs. Scarborough, representing the American



Association of University Women, assembled the Taylor County Recreation Association. This association met with City staff and City Council in regards to needing a recreation program for youth in Abilene. This program was about to acquire \$900 for their summer program in 1935, getting \$300 from the City, \$300 from the County, and \$300 from contributors like the Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Exchange Club, and American Legion. The program was to include activities such as jacks, marble contests, and mumblety-peg (Parks and Recreation Board, 1986).

By 1936 the Playground Association requested the City of Abilene to create a year-round recreation program. This required structure and a budget, therefore by 1940 Mrs. Scarborough authored a charter amendment that officially created the Parks and Public Recreation Board on December 10, 1940. The first board consisted of 10 members on a five year term, five men and five women. The first meeting took place in January 1941. The names of the first ten board members are as follows: W. M. Dowell, Mrs. Harry Tom King, Paul McCarty, John B. Ray, Homer Scott, Fred W. Schroeder, Mrs. Morgan Jones, Mrs. John Dressen, Mrs. Dallas Scarborough, and Mrs. Duncan Frame (Community Services, 2020). The boards' responsibilities encompassed supervision, management, and control over the parks and recreation programs, along with expending the City Commission funds that were approved and adopted at the time. The 1911 charter budget required the City budget to allocate 7% for parks and recreation use. By 1945 Mrs. Scarborough was able to meet that allotment, which was \$3,000. This first budget was expended to buy much needed parks maintenance equipment, along with hiring a parks superintendent (Parks and Recreation Board, 1986).

In the 1940s, a few different things took place within the parks board. In 1941, the board began discussing plans for a new zoo location. A firm from Kansas City, Missouri was hired to review the city parks and its needs to develop a master plan. In 1946, the City adopted a City Manager form of government for the next charter amendment and AISD established itself as a separate entity. Incorporated within these changes, the Parks and Public Recreation Board required a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote from the board to purchase or sell public park land (Parks and Recreation Board, 1986).

Within the first 20 years of the Parks and Public Recreation Board creation, the City of Abilene acquired fifteen additional parks to the three previously owned municipal parks. Also, Abilene's first bond election made massive improvements to the parks with its \$450,000 bond in 1954. Additional bonds were passed in 1959, 1961, 1964, and 1967, totalling \$2,235,000 (Parks and Recreation Board, 1986).

Other changes that came to the board happened after the next charter amendment in 1962. The name "Parks and Public Recreation Board" was changed to "Parks and Recreation Board", its budget diminished from 7% to 2%, and a board member's term lasted 3 years instead of 5 years. Another change removed the Board's governing and spending authority, however the $\frac{2}{3}$ vote remained for the board to purchase or sell park land (Parks and Recreation Board, 1986).



Mrs. Scarborough had a major influence on the establishment of Abilene's current park system. The National Recreation Association acknowledged her as the Mother of Recreation in Abilene in 1961. She passed away at the age of 81 in 1968. The Abilene Reporter News published the following comments: "Mrs. Scarborough was a woman for whom citizenship was not a passive interest. Not one to be content with a status quo, she coaxed into existence many of the institutions now basic to Abilene community life. Not one to shy off controversy, she prodded Abilenians, even if they were reluctant, to actions on many fronts. Her accomplishments included: organization of the YWCA, Taylor County Welfare Board, Taylor County Red Cross Chapter, Abilene Genealogy Society, Taylor County Equal Suffrage Association (later evolved to League of Women Voters), and authored the original charter to establish the parks and public recreation board" (Community Services, 2020).

Around the 1950s, the Parks and Recreation Board agreed to start naming Abilene parks after prominent citizens of Abilene, such as renaming Hartford Park after Mayor Dallas Scarborough and Airport Park after Parks Board member Grover Nelson (Garcia, 1984).

In the early 1980's Federal Funds became more scarce, so other funding measures were employed by the City of Abilene Parks and Recreation Department. Joint efforts were made with different organizations and agencies to help fund development projects, including the list below (Community Services, 2020):

- Lee Athletic Complex (AISD, City)
- Physical Fitness Trails (Wells Fargo, City)
- M&P Beautification (Private Funds, City)
- Boys Club (AISD, Boys Club, City)
- Safety City (Jaycees, Private, City)
- Madison Athletic Complex (AISD, City)
- Numerous Playgrounds (Voluntary Parks Contribution Program)
- Golf Course Improvements (City Lease with Private Operator)

Abilene received major recognition through awards in 1985, 1986, and 1989. The Department received an Outstanding Achievement and Excellence in Programming Award by the Texas Municipal Parks and Recreation Association Award, "The Member City Award of Excellence" by the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation, "Texas Urban Forestry Award" for the M&P project, and the "Texas Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Parks and Recreation Programming" by the Texas Recreation and Parks Society (TRAPS) for Abilene's outstanding job in parks and recreation programming (Community Services, 2020; Parks and Recreation Department, 1989).

Parks and Recreation Board celebrated its 50th anniversary on January 21, 1991 at the Abilene Civic Center recognizing all the parks and recreation board members of past to present (Community Services, 2020).

As of 2020, the City of Abilene Parks and Recreation Board consists of 7 members. The Parks and Recreation Department still functions on a budget of 2%. The Parks and Recreation



Board assists the Parks and Recreation Department in creating an annual budget to submit to the city manager and council. If the City wishes to purchase a new park, it must first be approved by four of the seven board members from the parks and recreation board (City of Abilene, Texas Charter, 2006).

Adaptive Recreation Services

Developed in 1971, Adaptive Recreation Services was originally called Special Populations. Special Populations was created to cater to individuals of Abilene that were mentally and/or physically handicapped, providing recreational and social needs. In the summers of 1971 through 1974, two part-time summer staff members helped carry out active and leisure activities three hours a day, five days a week (Parks and Recreation Department, 1988). By 1975, the West Texas Rehabilitation Center and other community agencies including the City of Abilene applied for and received a two year grant for Developmental Disabilities. This allowed the City of Abilene to hire a full-time trained staff person to coordinate year-round events for Special Populations (Parks and Recreation Department, 1988). The services were provided at all six recreation centers at the time, hosting classes such as ceramics, bowling, special olympics, swimming, arts & crafts, disco dance, and volleyball. Transportation was also provided for participants (Parks and Recreation Department, 1980; Parks and Recreation Department, 1988).

By 1979 the City of Abilene funded the Special Populations Program from the City's general fund. A central location for the participants was also established at Woodson Recreation Center (Parks and Recreation Department, 1988). Eventually the name "Special Populations" was changed to "Adaptive Recreation Services". In March of 2001, the Rose Park Senior Activity Center was built, allowing seniors to move from one building in Rose Park to the new center. The old senior building then became the new central location for Adaptive Recreation, having full-time and part-time staff there to provide games, crafts, and daily lunches (Hall, 2020; Whisenhunt, 2020). As of the beginning of 2020, there were 185 registered attendees averaging approximately 105 attendees daily (Hall, 2020). The City of Abilene provided meals for about 13 years. United Way of Abilene helped fund the meals for approximately 8 to 10 of those years. (Whisenhunt, 2020).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Abilene had to close their doors to Adaptive Recreation Services on March 18, 2020 (Hollingsworth, 2020). They had hoped to reopen their doors again May 1, 2020, but as of November 2020 the services are still not offered (Hall, 2020). Though the City of Abilene would like to continue to offer these services, it is being discussed that Adaptive Recreation may not be able to reopen at all due to needed repairs at the Adaptive Recreation building, budget cuts from the City of Abilene, and possible lack of funding from organizations (Hall, 2020).



Golf Division

Abilene's oldest golf course was established in the summer of 1921, where Will Ownby "Pops" Maxwell helped clear land at the Abilene Country Club with a dozen workers (Moore, 2014). Maxwell would then become the club manager and head groundskeeper for the golf course. In 1929 Mr. Maxwell moved to a new 154 acre Abilene golf course north of the Country Club to maintain it. This nine-hole course contoured around Button Willow Creek, and it soon became an eighteen-hole course in 1941 (Moore, 2014).

The Maxwell Municipal Golf Course was acquired by the City of Abilene on June 23, 1948. The golf course is 128.27 acres and is located four blocks east of South Treadaway and South 32nd Street (Parks and Recreation Department, 1972). An additional 110 acres were added to the golf course in 1973 for future expansion. The golf course was then named after W. O. Maxwell by the City Council to honor the man who helped start Abilene's first golf course. (Parks and Recreation Department, 1976).

Once the City acquired the golf course, all personnel were City employees. The City was responsible for all expenses and collected all the revenue. However, in the early 1980s the City was losing revenue through the golf course, expecting to lose \$73,000 for the 1985 fiscal year. Therefore in 1985 after the City entered into an agreement with the firm of American Golf, Inc. On March 4, 1985 American Golf, Inc. agreed to a 20 year contract to take over the management and operations of Maxwell Golf Course from the City of Abilene (Parks and Recreation Department, 1985). However, in 2004 the American Golf, Inc. indicated that they were no longer able to be the course operator. The City of Abilene submitted a request for proposals, receiving one proposal in response. The West Texas Golf Systems, Inc. (WTGS) submitted a 10-year proposal to the City, which was accepted (Community Services, 2020). The WTGS renewed and extended their contract with the City in 2014 with the new contract ending in 2024 (Richardson, 2020).

Senior Services Division

The Senior Services Division first began as a nutrition program for the elderly on February 1, 1974 with the goal of providing nutritious meals to those 60 and above that had lower incomes (Parks and Recreation Department, 1976). The City of Abilene was one of the first cities to contract Senior Services through a municipality in the state of Texas, being number 17 in the state (Reese, 1984). Under the Older Americans Act, it was a requirement for the program to serve a minimum of 100 seniors to operate. Within a matter of a couple of days, that number was reached in Abilene (Reese, 1984). Food was prepared at Rose Recreation, then distributed to the other recreation centers such as Cobb, Sears, Carver, and South Park, along with delivering food to sites such as Buffalo Gap Center, Clyde Center, and Tye Center (Parks and Recreation Department, 1977). The newly developed senior services program gave elders of the community opportunities to get out of their homes, meet with other seniors, learn new hobbies, and get a warm meal (Baldrige, 1974).



The Adaptive Recreation building in Rose Park was formerly the Senior Services building when Senior Services first started operating in 1974 (Whisenhunt, 2020). This building served seniors for a couple decades, however in 2001 a new building was built in Rose Park specifically dedicated to senior programs. The Rose Park Senior Activity Center offered daily meals Monday through Friday, billiards, a fitness gym, arts & crafts, dancing, movie days, bingo, and more. Since the opening of the new building in 2001, the Senior Services Division has served over 2 million meals to elders in the community and surrounding areas (Whisenhunt, 2020).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, senior services had to shut its doors to the public on March 18, 2020, both at the Rose Park Senior Activity Center and the remaining recreation centers. However, the senior services at Rose Park provided meals through their drive thru at the center, serving roughly 400 meals daily (Sartor, 2020; Whisenhunt, 2020). They not only provided meals for those passing through, but they have fun activities such as bingo cards that seniors can play daily. They also have themed days and play music (Sartor, 2020).

Abilene Municipal Cemetery

The Abilene Municipal Cemetery has five burial grounds: City, Masonic, Cedar Hill, Cedar Hill Flat, and Independent Order of Oddfellows (IOOF), or Oddfellows for short. The Cemetery was founded in 1881 with the Masonic section, a couple months after the founding of Abilene. The oldest documented grave is of Florence Phillips who was buried in the Masonic section in 1881. Notable burials at Abilene Municipal Cemetery are the following: Mary Houston Morrow, an Abilene postmistress and daughter of General Sam Houston, C. W. Merchant who donated land for the burial ground to help establish Abilene, and Dr. W. H. Butler, an African American Physician. The oldest recorded burial at the cemetery is of Oliver Bailey, occurred in 1882 (Community Services, 2020).

The deed that established the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) was verified in August 1906. Prominent Abilenians are buried here, such as businessmen James Radford and H. O. Wooten, and Jewel Scarborough, an active woman suffragist. The next section purchased by the City of Abilene was the 20-acre Cedar Hill Cemetery in 1920. The Cedar Hill Cemetery Association bought the area from Abilene in 1923, but the City took over the care of it in 1934. The City of Abilene also acquired the maintenance of The Masonic and IOOF cemeteries in 1928. Names such as Abilene founder K. K. Legett and railroad legend Morgan Jones are interred here, along with many veterans from major American and International wars and conflicts. The City then bought another tract of land which became Cedar Hill Flat. Its first recorded burial was in 1969 (Community Services, 2020). More than 26,000 people are believed to be buried at the Abilene Municipal Cemetery.

Voluntary Contribution Program (Parks Bucks)

In 1987, the Parks Voluntary Contribution Program (Parks Bucks) was created to allow Abilene citizens to make park and recreation contributions through Abilene's water billing



system. This innovative program was incredibly successful once it was initiated. Within 8 months, 2,000 individuals started contributing, raising \$17,990 by January of 1988 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1987). The first park project the money funded was a playground at Will Hair Park, in August of 1988. The second park that benefited from the Voluntary Contribution Program was Bowie Park, getting a playground in October of 1988 (Parks and Recreation Department, 1988). As of October 2020, the Voluntary Contribution Program has raised more than \$841,780 for Abilene's Parks and Recreation System (Community Services, 2020).

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