

4

Environmental Scan



Edinburg Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The City currently offers a range of parks providing opportunities for both active and passive recreation, as demonstrated in **Table 4.1, Existing Public Parks** and **Table 4.2, Facility Inventory**. In total, the City owns and maintains 241.4 acres of parks, ranging from mini-parks serving high-density development, to neighborhood parks providing service to a quarter-mile area, and larger-scale community parks serving the needs of the broader community.

Planning and developing a parks and recreation system that will contribute to the livability of Edinburg requires an assessment of the existing city-owned parks and recreation facilities. Given the total acreage, variety of park types, intended uses, and uncertainty regarding performance (e.g. user perception and level of use), it is critical to perform a multi-tiered, comprehensive

Table 4.1, Existing Public Parks

Park	Park Type	Acreage
Memorial Park	Community Park	16.8 acres
South Park	Community Park	15.0 acres
Frontier Park	Neighborhood Park	2.2 acres
Cenizo Park	Neighborhood Park	5.4 acres
West Park	Neighborhood Park	2.1 acres
Citrus Park	Mini-Park	0.9 acres
Apollo Park	Neighborhood Park	2.1 acres
Fountain Park	Neighborhood Park	4.1 acres
Jaycee Park	Neighborhood Park	2.6 acres
Dr. Diaz and Bicentennial Parks	Community Park	18.0 acres
Trevino Park	Neighborhood Park	8.0 acres
Municipal Park	Regional Park	156.0 acres
Freddy Gonzalez Park	Neighborhood Park	8.2 acres
TOTAL		241.4 acres

Source: Lane Kendig, inc.

assessment, which is achieved by:

- ◆ Assessing location, accessibility, condition, safety, aesthetic value, and current usage of the parks and recreation facilities;
- ◆ Comparing the acreage of parks to standards for cities of comparable size; and,
- ◆ Soliciting citizen input.

As part of the planning process, a series of inventory and survey activities were undertaken. A public parks facility inventory was completed to identify the improvements within each municipal park. Park profiles were also developed to characterize each park and underscore key improvements and conditions. Further to assessing the physical park characteristics, a user observation study was conducted, which assessed usage in each park during weekday and weekend use periods. Finally, a questionnaire was distributed

to citizens to determine perceptions and usage patterns of parks and recreation facilities in the community.

The information that was gathered during this comprehensive assessment is presented and discussed in this chapter, with a view to identifying short- and long-term parks and recreation needs for the community. The findings in this chapter support [Chapter Six, Needs Assessment](#) and [Chapter Seven, Implementation](#).

Table 4.2, Facility Inventory

PUBLIC PARKS	Citrus Park	Frontier Park	Cenizo Park	West Park	Apollo Park	Fountain Park	Jaycee Park	Freddy Gonzalez Park	Bicentennial and Dr. Diaz Parks	Memorial Park	South Park	Trevino Park	Municipal Park
Acres	0.9	2.2	5.4	2.1	2.1	4.1	2.6	8.2	14.0	16.8	15.0	8.0	156
Backstop	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Baseball/Softball Field	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	2	0	0	7
- Lighted	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes	n/a	Yes	Yes	n/a	n/a	Yes
- Batting cage	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	n/a	No	No	n/a	n/a	Yes
Basketball Nets	1	1	1	2	1	4	2	0	2	4	4	2	4
- Covered/Indoor	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	n/a	No	No	No	No	No
- Lighting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Barbeque Grill	0	5	3	3	4	1	1	0	17	20	15	2	48
Bench	5	10	0	7	8	13	0	3	4	23	4	0	13
Swing Chair	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Bleachers	0	0	0	0	0	0	Yes	0	Yes	0	0	Yes	Yes
Disc Golf Course	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Exercise Course	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Field house	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1
Fishing pier	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Yes
Football Field	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
- Formal	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	n/a
- Informal/Unmarked	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes	n/a
Garden, flower	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Garbage Bin	1	12	8	9	4	2	2	6	30	21	22	10	94
Gazebo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Jogging Path	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	0	0	Yes	Yes
Monument	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Nature area/wetland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
Open Play Area	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parking Lots, Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	8

Source: Lane Kendig, inc.

Table 4.2, Facility Inventory (continued)

PUBLIC PARKS	Citrus Park	Frontier Park	Cenizo Park	West Park	Apollo Park	Fountain Park	Jaycee Park	Freddy Gonzalez Park	Bicentennial and Dr. Diaz Parks	Memorial Park	South Park	Trevino Park	Municipal Park
Sheltered Picnic Table	0	9	6	3	10	4	4	0	35	61	19	3	66
Unsheltered Picnic Table	0	7	0	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	13	0	0
Jungle Gym	2	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	4	4	3	1	7
Swing set	0	4	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Merry-go-round	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1?	0	0	0	0
Spring-loaded animal	0	2	0	4	4	0	0	0	?	0	0	0	0
Skate Park	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Restrooms, outdoor	0	0	0	0	0	0	No	0	1	1	0	4	11
- Portable	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	No	n/a	Yes	Yes
Security Lighting	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sidewalk, perimeter	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No		Yes			No
Sign	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Soccer Field	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
- Formal	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	No	Yes
- Informal/Unmarked	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes	No
Swimming Pool	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Telephone	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Tennis Court	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
- Lighting	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes	Yes	n/a	n/a
Volleyball Court	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Water Fountain	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1

Source: Lane Kendig, inc.

4.1 PARK PROFILES



Photo Depiction



December 2004

Name: CITRUS PARK

Classification: Mini-Park

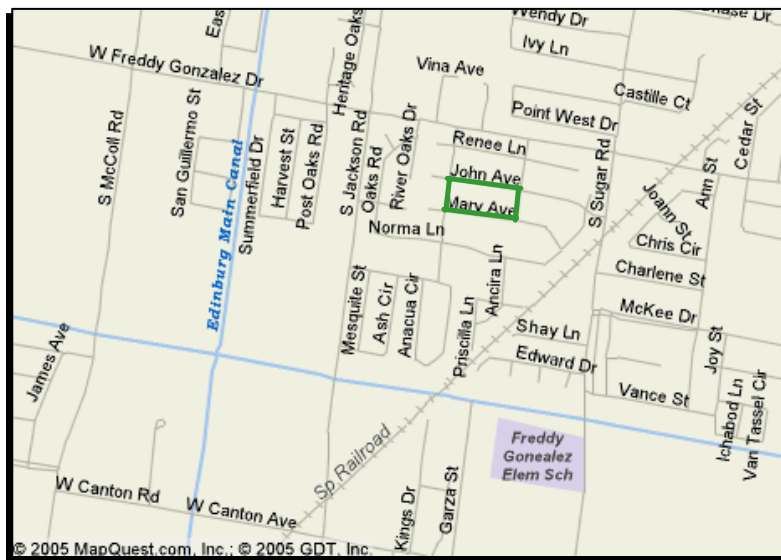
Size: 0.9 acres

Location: The park is bordered by John Avenue to the north, Mary Avenue to the south, Dan Drive to the east, and Anthony Drive to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: Citrus Park is located in a residential area. The park is surrounded by single-family and multi-family residential units.

Improvements: Basketball net and playing surface (1), jungle gym (2), merry go-round (1), garbage bin (1), benches (5), and water fountain (1).

Condition: The park is in very good condition relative to other parks in the City. During the park assessment, Citrus Park received a composite score of 0.89. In terms of improvements, the park could benefit from some additional shrubs and/or trees to provide natural screening from abutting residential uses. As depicted in the photos, safety could be improved with the addition of a fence to provide separation between the park and adjacent parking for the multi-family residential units. Safety could also be enhanced by creating perimeter sidewalks along the two access roads – John Avenue to the north and Mary Avenue to the south. Paved areas around the park, not including pavement around the main play equipment, are in need of minor repair/maintenance.



Name: FRONTIER PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 2.2 acres

Location: The park is located north of Schunior Street, between Sugar Road and Business 281. The park is bounded by Chavez Street to the north, Cooper Street to the south, 3rd Avenue to the east, and 1st Avenue to the West.

Surrounding Land Uses: Adjacent to the site on all four surrounding streets is residential uses. Beyond the immediate vicinity is the University of Texas Pan American to the south, railroad tracks to the east, and the Roadrunners Professional Baseball Park to the west.

Improvements: Basketball net and playing surface (1), jungle gym (1), spring loaded animals (2), swing sets (4) garbage bins (12), benches (10), water fountains (1), sheltered picnic tables (9), unsheltered picnic tables (7), and BBQs (5).

Condition: Frontier Park received a composite score of 1.63 indicating that the park is in relatively poor condition. The improvement needs include replacement of the basketball net and repair of the lighting around the basketball playing surface. To improve safety and aesthetics, plant shrubs/trees should provide natural screening. At present, only one street is fenced and no streets have a natural (i.e. vegetative) barrier. To further improve safety, cross-walks and signs are required at all roads that frame the perimeter of the park. Play equipment is in good condition, but one piece in particular would benefit from replacement and or repair.

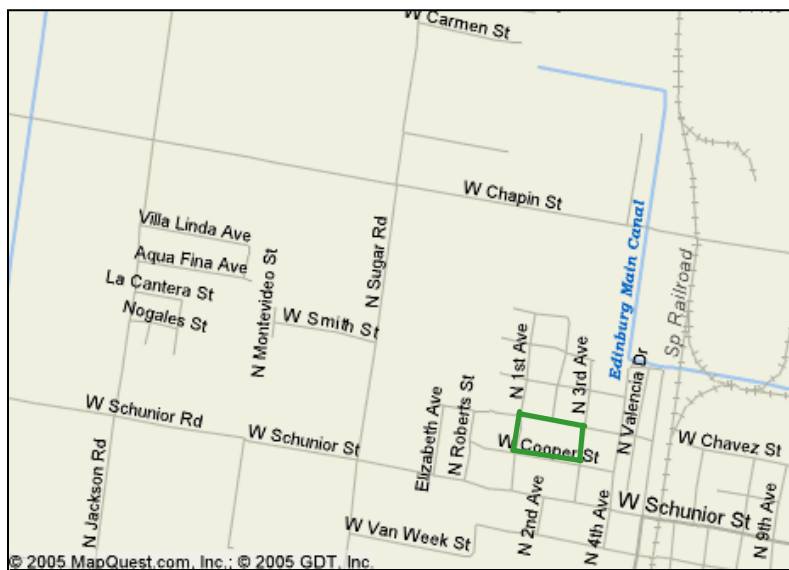


Photo Depiction



December 2004

Photo Depiction



December 2004

Name: CENIZO PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 5.4 acres

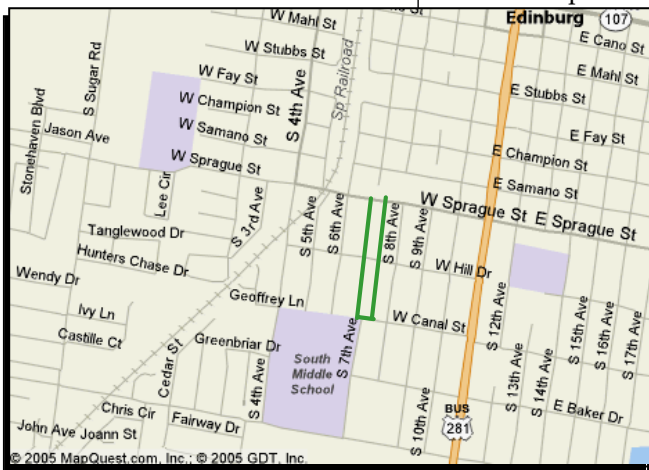
Location: Cenizo Park is bordered by Sprague Street to the north and Canal Drive to the south. The park is intersected by Hill Drive. The north part of the park is bounded by 8th Avenue to the east and 7th Avenue to the west. The south part of the park continues along the same direction from 7th and 8th Avenues, but is not bordered by these streets. Instead, this portion of the park is bordered to the east and west by residential properties with no street frontage.

Surrounding Land Uses: The park is located in a residential area. It is surrounded by single family residential units to the north, south, east, and west. To the southwest of the park lies South Junior High School and its associated playing fields.

Improvements: Basketball net and playing surface (1), garbage bins (8), water fountains (1), sheltered picnic tables (6), trail (1), and BBQs (3).

Condition: During the park assessment, Cenizo Park received a composite score of 1.63. This score indicates that the park is in poor condition and in need of improvements. Turf re-establishment is required south of Hill Street where the grass is dry and requires re-seeding (see photo). The basketball net also requires maintenance. Safety is a significant issue in that there is no crosswalk at Hill Street, which intersects the park. People that are biking, walking, running, and wheeling must cross the street to go from the north end of the park to the south end of the park, and then back again as the trail loops northward. In effect, there are multiple crossing opportunities and no means to provide for park user safety against vehicle traffic. Safety is also of

concern due to the fact that there is no lighting, which is a requisite improvement. Accessibility must also be addressed. A path should be created from Canal Street to the park's trail. The park's fencing should also be replaced/maintained to ensure consistent coverage. At present, it is unclear where public and private property begins and ends.



Name: WEST PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 2.1 acres

Location: West Park is bounded by Stubbs Street to the north, Fay Street to the south, 8th Avenue to the east, and 7th Avenue to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: The park is fully surrounded by residential uses. One block to the east is Business Highway 281, and to the west of the park lies a rail corridor.

Improvements: Basketball nets (2), jungle gym (2), swings (2), spring loaded animals (4), garbage bins (9), benches (7), water fountains (1), sheltered picnic tables (3), unsheltered picnic tables (5), BBQs (3), and backstop (1).

Condition: West Park received a composite assessment score of 1.22, indicating that it is in moderate condition. Improvements required relate to improved safety and accessibility. Cross-walks and more signage are required.

Photo Depiction



December 2004

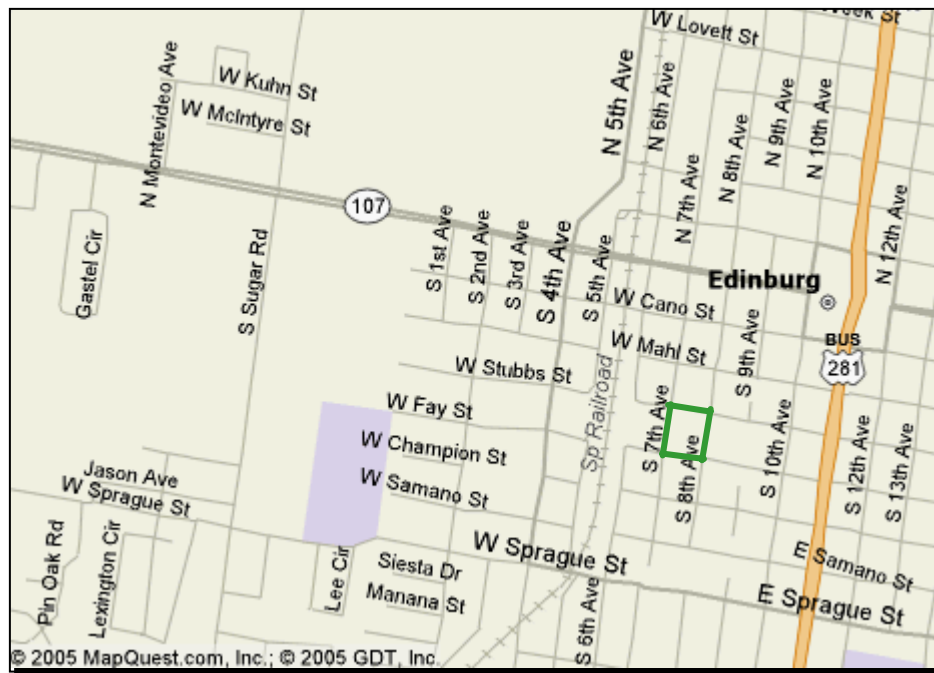


Photo Depiction



January 2005

Name: APOLLO PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

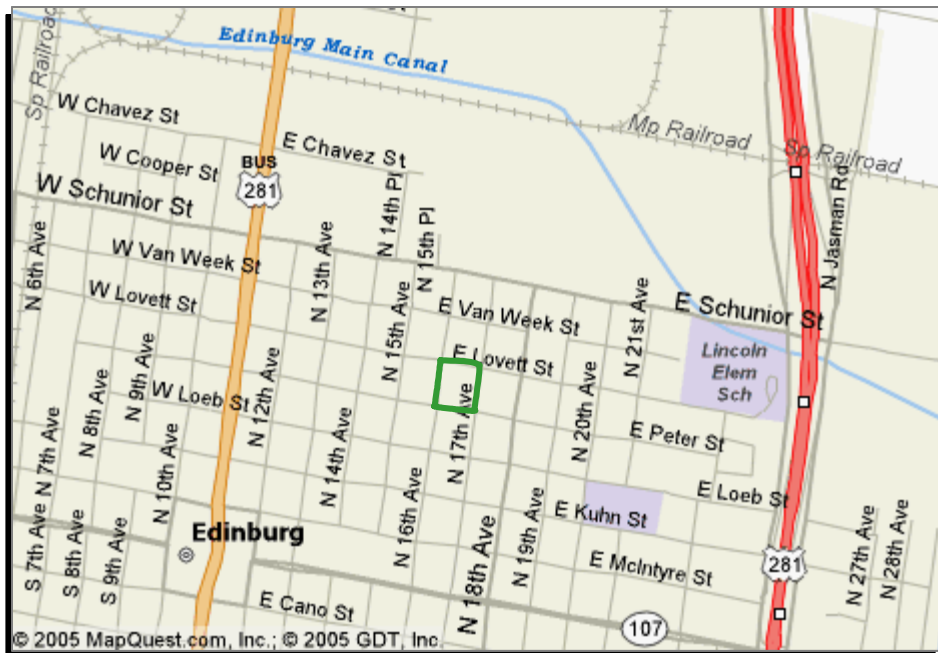
Size: 2.1 acres

Location: The park is bounded by Lovett Street to the north and Peter Street to the south. To the east of the park is 17th Avenue and to the west, 16th Avenue.

Surrounding Uses: Apollo Park is surrounded by single-family residential units. To the north and east of the site is a rail corridor, and further east is Austin School. To the south of the site is Las Palmas Shopping Center and Sam Houston School.

Improvements: Basketball net (10), jungle gym (1), swings (1), spring loaded animals (4), garbage bin (4), benches (8), water fountain (1), sheltered picnic tables (10), BBQs (4), and backstop (1).

Condition: The park received a composite score of 1.80, indicating that it is in poor condition. Playing fields around the backstop require reconditioning (see photo). Crosswalks and street crossing signs are required to improve safety and accessibility.



Name: FOUNTAIN PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 4.1 acres

Location: Fountain Park is bordered by Loeb Street to the north, Kuhn Street to the south, 22nd Avenue to the east, and 21st Avenue to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: The park abuts Austin School. Other surrounding land uses include single-family residential units and the Fountain Center/community police station.

Improvements: Basketball nets (4), jungle gym (1), garbage bins (2), benches (13), water fountain (1), sheltered picnic tables (4), and BBQs (1).

Condition: Fountain Park received a composite score of 1.44. As compared to other parks in the City, Fountain Park is in poor condition. Additional vegetative coverage is required to provide shade over benches that line the perimeter of the park and face the street (see photo). There is no fencing or screening other than that which separates the park from the abutting school. Natural screening would be useful to delineate the park boundaries. Attractive fencing could provide added safety. Crosswalks and signs are also required to improve safety and legibility. The basketball nets and playing surface require additional lighting coverage.

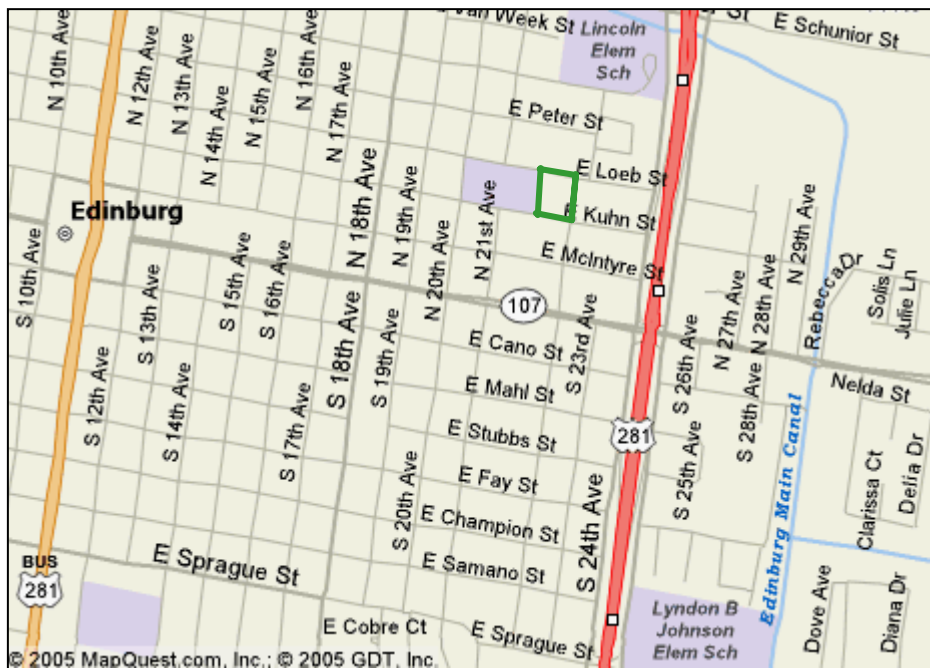


Photo Depiction



December 2004

Apollo Park Photo Depiction



December 2004

Name: JAYCEE PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

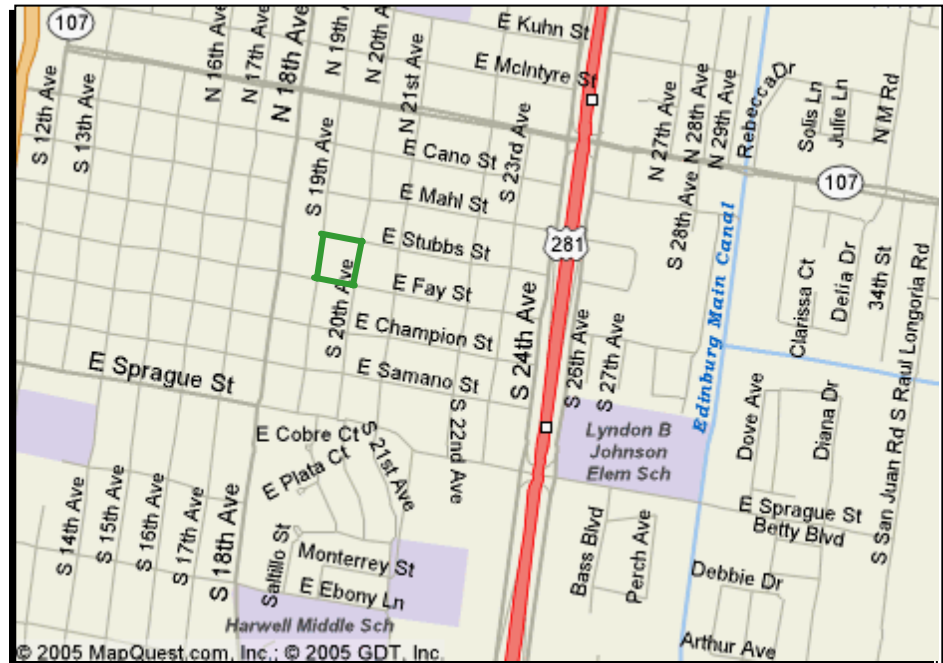
Size: 2.6 acres

Location: The park is bounded by Stubbs Street to the north, Fay Street to the south, 20th Avenue to the east, and 19th Avenue to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: Jaycee Park is surrounded by residential (single family units), open space, and commercial (auto repair shop) land uses.

Improvements: Basketball nets (2), jungle gym, (1), garbage bins (2), water fountains (1), sheltered picnic tables (4), BBQs (1), baseball field (with bleachers and a club house) (1), and recreation center (1).

Conditions: Jaycee Park is in good condition and received a composite score of 1.08. Natural shade through vegetative plantings and benches are required around the jungle gym area to provide a place to rest and shade for children and adults. The sheltered picnic area requires some maintenance to address minor graffiti and surface cracking. The basketball nets need to be replaced. Improved walking surfaces (e.g. sidewalks) are required. While 20th Avenue has appropriate signage to encourage motorists to reduce speed, similar signage is lacking on other perimeter streets. Crosswalks are also needed to increase safety.



Name: FREDDY GONZALEZ PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Size: 8.2 acres

Location: The park is bounded by Baker Drive to the north, Freddy Gonzalez Drive to the south, 18th Avenue to the east, and 17th Avenue to the west. Bike access is provided to the park via a bike lane on 18th Avenue (see photo).

Surrounding Land Uses: Freddy Gonzalez Park is surrounded by single-family residential units to the north, south, and west. Harwell Middle School and abutting baseball fields are to the east of the park.

Improvements: Jungle gym (1), garbage bins (6), benches (3), water fountains (1), gazebo (1), disc golf course (1), nature area/wetland (1) and trail (1).

Conditions: Freddy Gonzalez received a composite score which indicated that it is in good condition (1.00). Turf conditions are particularly poor (i.e. dry and patchy) on the slope along 17th Street. To improve safety, crosswalks, signage, and sidewalks are required. Lighting is also required around the jungle gym to provide safety. Sheltered picnic tables and grills do not exist. The park would benefit from these amenities.

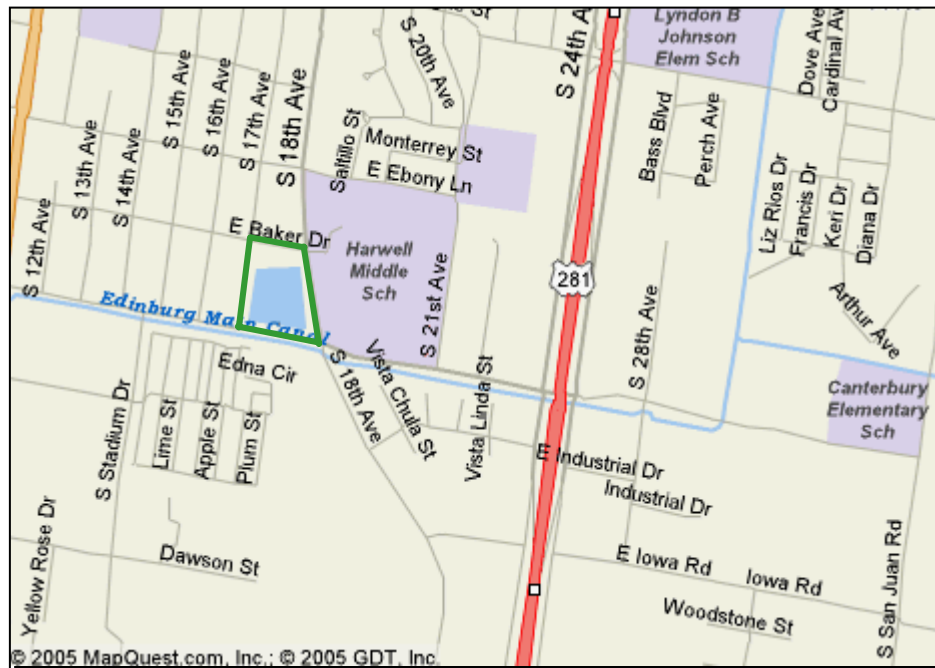


Photo Depiction



December 2004

Photo Depiction



December 2004

Name: DR. DIAZ AND BICENTENNIAL PARKS

Classification: Community Park

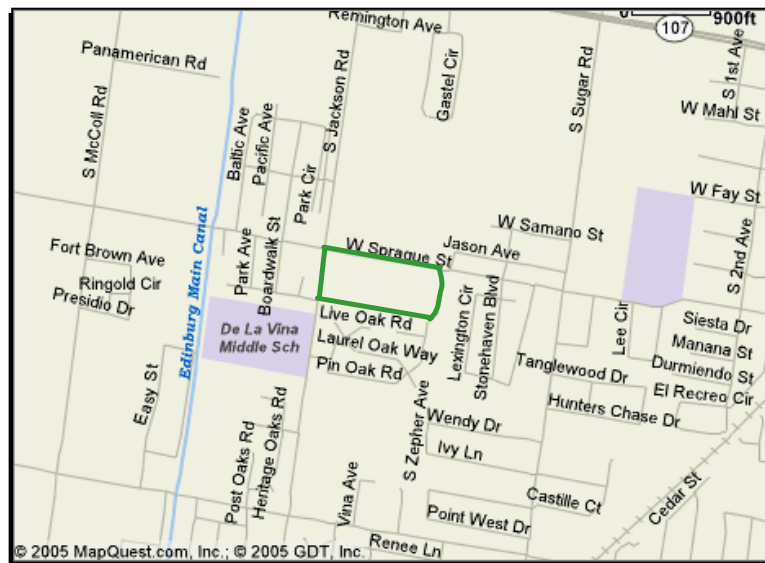
Size: 14 acres

Location: The parks are bounded by Sprague Street to the north, residential units to the south, Pin Oak Road to the east, and Jackson Road to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: The parks are surrounded by single-family residential units to the south, east, and west. Residential units to the south back on to the parks, thereby allowing no road access to this portion of the parks. To the north of the park are open space, residential, and commercial (retail) uses.

Improvements: Basketball nets (2), play equipment (4), garbage bins (30), benches (4), water fountains (1), sheltered picnic tables (35), unsheltered picnic tables (1), BBQs (17), swings (2), exercise circuit (1), baseball fields (with bleachers) (3), trail (1), parking lots (2), and field house (1).

Conditions: The park was assessed to be in good condition, having received a composite score of 1.00. However, improvements are still required, particularly as they relate to accessibility. Handicap parking must be made available at the parking lot on the east side of the park. The other parking lot is in poor condition (e.g. faded paint, crevices, ponding) and needs reconstruction. A drainage/irrigation canal running parallel to Sprague Street acts as a physical barrier to the park, potentially creating a safety hazard. Signage must be added to Sprague Street. Natural screening and/or attractive signage should also be considered for Sprague Street. While Jackson Road is a major street, there are no crosswalks or signs to allow pedestrians to cross safely. Improvements must be made to increase accessibility.



Name: SOUTH PARK

Classification: Community Park

Size: 15 acres

Location: South Park is bounded by Freddy Gonzalez Drive to the north, Palm Drive to the south, Orange to the east, and Business Highway 281 to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: To the north of South Park are single-family residential units, and to the south is a parking lot and hotel. To the east of the park is a mobile home park, baseball field, and scrap yard, and to the west is commercial (retail) use along Business Highway 281.

Improvements: Basketball nets (4), play equipment (1), garbage bins (22), benches (4), water fountains (4), sheltered picnic tables (19), unsheltered picnic tables (13), BBQs (15), volleyball court (1), pools (3), tennis courts (2), and recreation center (1).

Conditions: The park is in poor condition relative to other municipal parks as it received a composite score of 1.83. Sports equipment needs to be maintained and/or replaced. For example, the basketball nets are in poor condition. The tennis court nets consist of chain link fencing and must be replaced. Fencing around the tennis courts is also in poor condition. The courts are not entirely fenced, yet the court abuts a parking lot (see photo). Accessibility is also an issue of concern, particularly along Freddy Gonzalez Drive. Users access the park via a fenced bridge, which goes over a water drainage/irrigation canal. The fencing on the bridge is in disrepair and unsafe.

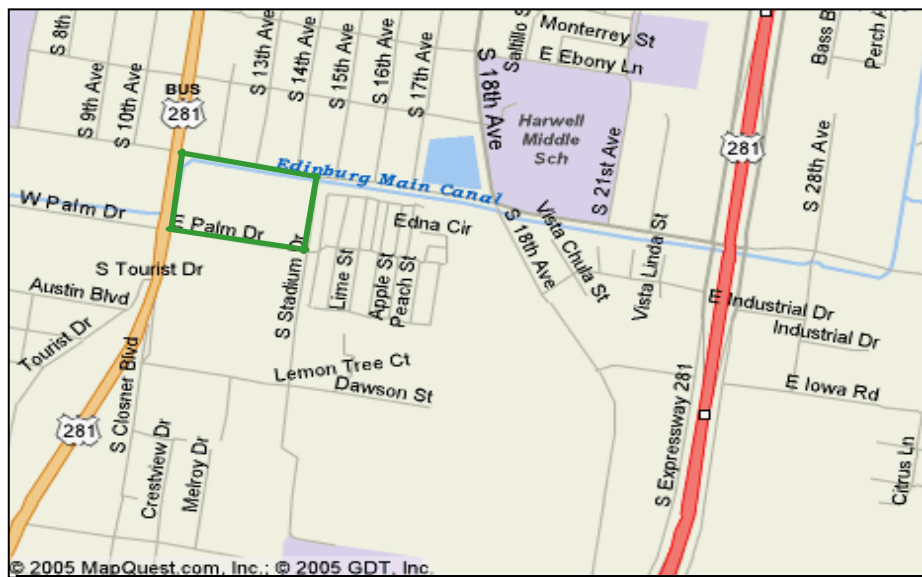


Photo Depiction



December 2004

Photo Depiction



December 2004

Name: TREVINO PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

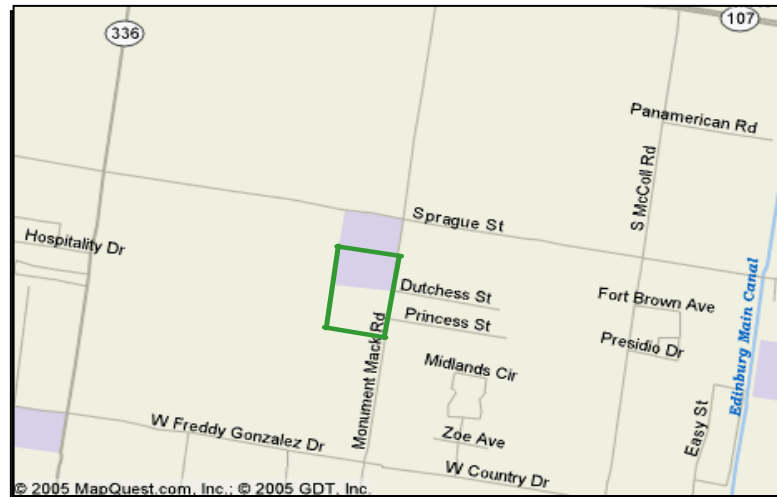
Size: 8.0 acres

Location: Trevino Park is bounded to the north by Norma Trevino School (just south of Sprague Street) and to the south by backlots of residential units on Lula Street. Mon Mack Road lies to the east of the park and no roads exist to the immediate west.

Surrounding Land Uses: To the north, south, and east of the park lies residential development. The school abuts Norma Trevino School, which is located at the north end of the park. To the west lies a utility field/open space.

Improvements: Basketball nets (2), jungle gym (1), garbage bins (10), water fountain (1), sheltered picnic tables (3), BBQs (2), backstop (1), portable toilets (4), football fields (with bleachers) (2), and parking lot (1).

Conditions: The park is in very good condition. During the park assessment, it received a 0.73 composite score. Compared to other parks which are typically dry, the turf is in good condition. However, some re-seeding is required on the playing fields. Crushed stone that is used along the trail is good for natural infiltration, but is not good in terms of accessibility for persons with disabilities. Some paved surfaces are required to provide barrier-free access around the park. Some minor ponding on the south side of the trail suggests some drainage issues. More shelter is required to provide shade to park users. Crosswalks are required along Mon Mack Road to provide safety for pedestrians.



Name: **MEMORIAL PARK**

Classification: Community Park

Size: 16.8 acres

Location: Memorial Park is bound by Sprague Street to the north. No street borders the park to the south. Highway 281 is to the east of the park, and 21st Avenue is located to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: Highway 281 is located to the east of the park. Residential uses (single family residential units) surround the park to the north and west. A school abuts the park to the south.

Improvements: Basketball nets (4), baseball fields (2), jungle gyms (4), garbage bins (21), benches (23), water fountain (1), sheltered picnic tables (61), BBQs (20), tennis courts (1), washrooms (1), swing chairs (2), and parking lot (1).

Conditions: Memorial Park is in good condition. It received a composite score of 1.38. Striping in the parking lot needs to be maintained as it has faded. The tennis court also requires maintenance (see photo). The net needs to be replaced and additional lighting is required around the courts. To improve safety and accessibility, crosswalks and signs are required.

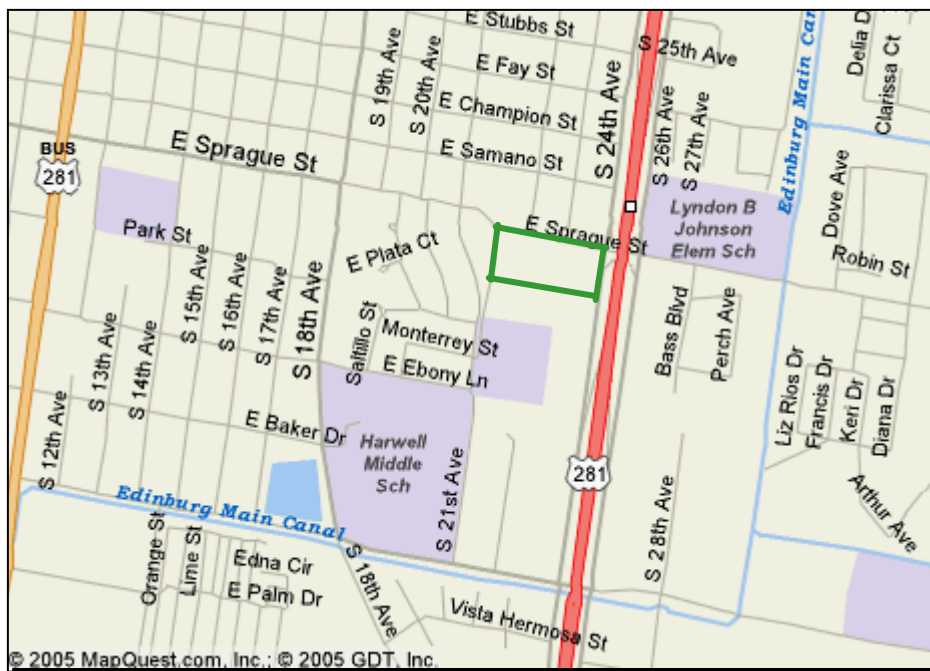


Photo Depiction



December 2004

Photo Depiction



January 2005

Name: MUNICIPAL PARK

Classification: Regional Park

Size: 156.0 acres

Location: Municipal Park is on the eastern edge of the City. It is south of S.H. 107 and north of Freddy Gonzalez Drive. The park is bounded by Doolittle Road to the east, and San Luis Street to the west.

Surrounding Land Uses: To the north of the park lies S.H. 107 and residential uses (single family residential units – detached and attached). Super Splash Water Park, the Las Lagos Golf Course, and residential use (single family residential units) exist to the south. The park abuts the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) to the east, and residential use (single family residential units) to the west.

Improvements: Basketball nets (4), baseball fields (7), backstop (1), batting cage (1), field house (1), soccer fields (3), volleyball court (sand) (1), jungle gyms (7), garbage bins (94), benches (13), water fountain (1), sheltered picnic tables (66), pavilions (2), BBQs (48), washrooms (11), exercise circuit (1), horseback riding trail (1), paved trail (1), gravel trail (1), fishing pier (2), boat launch and boat rental (1), nature area/wetland (3), birding center (1), and parking lot (8).

Conditions: Municipal Park is in the best condition of all the parks in the City, as demonstrated by its composite score of 0.33. Park accessibility could be improved with equal pedestrian and vehicular access opportunities, improved signage (i.e. at the east entrance), and improved maintenance of cross-walks.



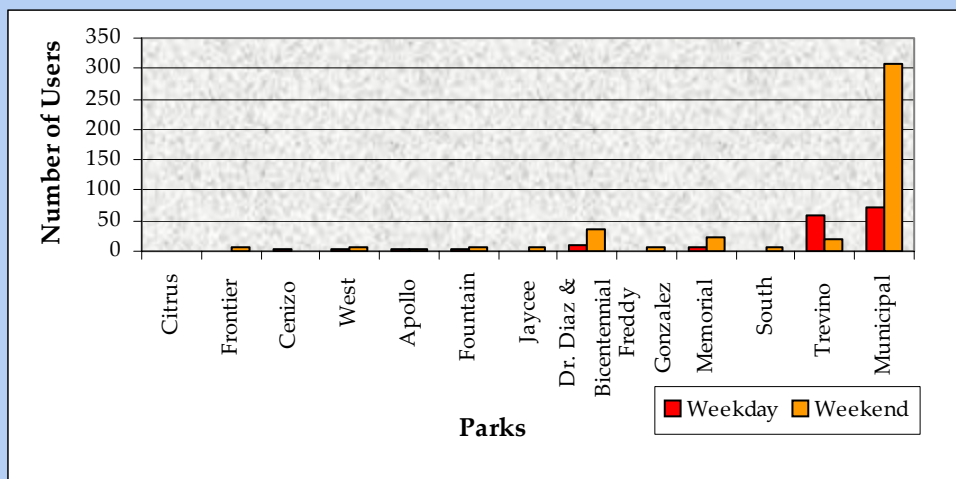
4.2 FINDINGS OF THE USER OBSERVATION STUDY ■ ■ ■

To gain an understanding of the patterns of parks and recreation facilities use, a user observation study was conducted at each park. The observations were made on a weekday and weekend over 15 minute observation periods. In the case of Municipal Park, four 15 minute observations were made in different quadrants of the park, which was required given the large size of the regional park. The observations were conducted mid-day to capture users during peak periods of use.

The highest weekend park use was observed at Municipal Park (307 total users), followed by Dr. Diaz and Bicentennial Parks (36 total users). The lowest weekend park use was observed at Citrus Park, which was not being utilized (zero users). The findings also revealed that the highest weekday park use was observed at Municipal Park (71 total users) and Trevino Park (59 total users). However, the Trevino Park results are misleading in that the observation period coincided with the end of the school day, at which time the park’s parking lot is used as an overflow parking lot for the school. Observation of park user activity revealed that of the 59 total users, only three park users used the park’s facilities (i.e. sheltered picnic tables).

As demonstrated in **Figure 4.1, Park Usage**, the number of park users tended to be higher in each park during weekend versus weekday observations. These findings are to be expected given that weekday commitments for working and school-age persons detracts from their ability to use parks during the week to the same degree they would on weekends. One can also surmise from the user observation study that regional and community parks were more frequented than neighborhood and mini-parks. This is demonstrated by the fact that Municipal Park, Trevino Park, and Dr. Diaz and Bicentennial Parks had the highest user rates during the weekday and weekend observation periods. The exception to this

Figure 4.1, Park Usage



Source: Lane Kendig, inc.

trend was South Park, which had user rates comparable to neighborhood parks. The rationale for higher usage at regional and community parks may lie in the citizens' questionnaire. The second most frequently cited reason for visiting some parks or facilities "almost never" or "never" is lack of activities/facilities. Mini-parks and neighborhood parks have fewer activities and facilities than larger regional and community parks, which appeal to a more diverse user group given the variety of activities and facilities that are available.

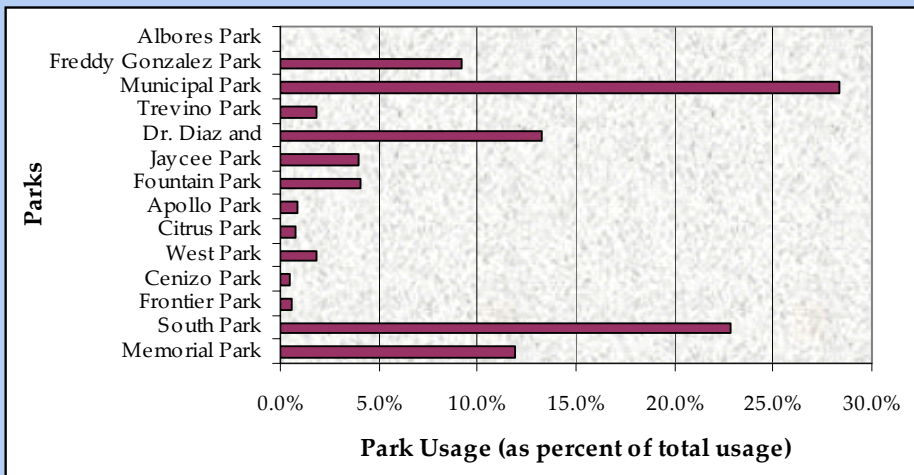
4.3 FINDINGS OF THE CITIZENS' QUESTIONNAIRE ■ ■ ■

A citizens' questionnaire was administered during the Citizens' Congress that was held on December 9, 2004. To improve the response rate, questionnaires were also distributed at the library, Chamber of Commerce, and the community center. The questionnaire was designed to assess usage patterns and local perceptions of the existing parks and recreation system, and identify community needs and desires related to the future of the parks and recreation system. The questionnaire was not intended for statistical validation, but as a tool to get a snapshot of residents' perceptions, activities, and needs/desires.

In terms of general impressions of the overall quality of the parks in Edinburg, 53.8 percent of respondents ranked the parks as average, and 28.4 percent ranked the parks as above average. The remaining 17.8 percent of respondents indicated that they perceived the overall quality of the parks to be poor, below average, or excellent.

More than half of the respondents (60.0 percent) reported that they Edinburg one to three times per week. The second highest response rate was with respondents who indicated that they visit parks within the City four to six times per week (19.4 percent). As illustrated in **Figure 4.2, Park Visits "Most Often"**, Municipal Park was visited most often (28.4 percent), followed by South Park (22.8 percent), and Dr. Diaz

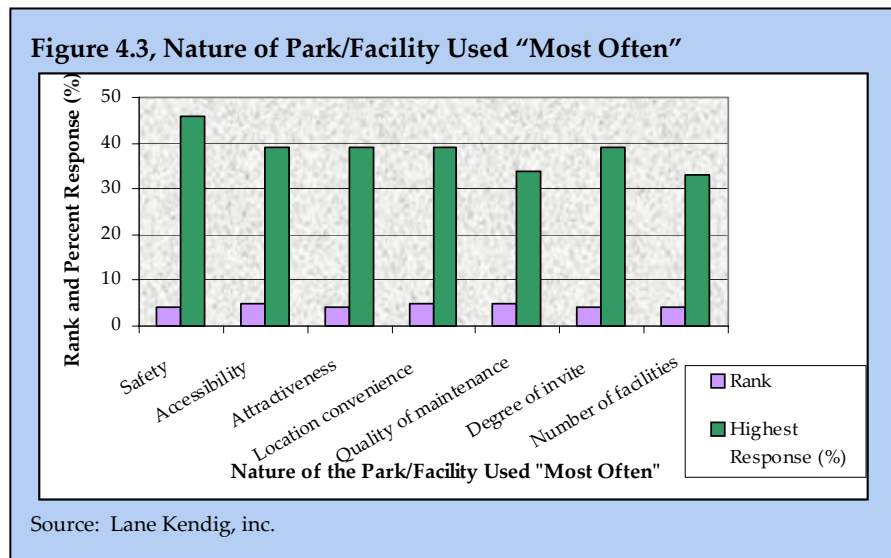
Figure 4.2, Park Visits "Most Often"



Source: Lane Kendig, inc.

and Bicentennial Parks (13.3 percent)¹. When asked the reason why they frequent the park they identified as being visited most often, convenient location was most often cited (24.8 percent), followed by safety (6.3 percent), and prevalence of walking and jogging trails (5.8 percent). The primary reason cited by respondents as to why they visit some parks or facilities almost never or never was inconvenience/location (22.6 percent), followed by lack of things to do/limited facilities/lack of facilities of interest (7.8 percent), and lack of time/work (6.5 percent) and no restrooms/always dirty (6.5 percent).

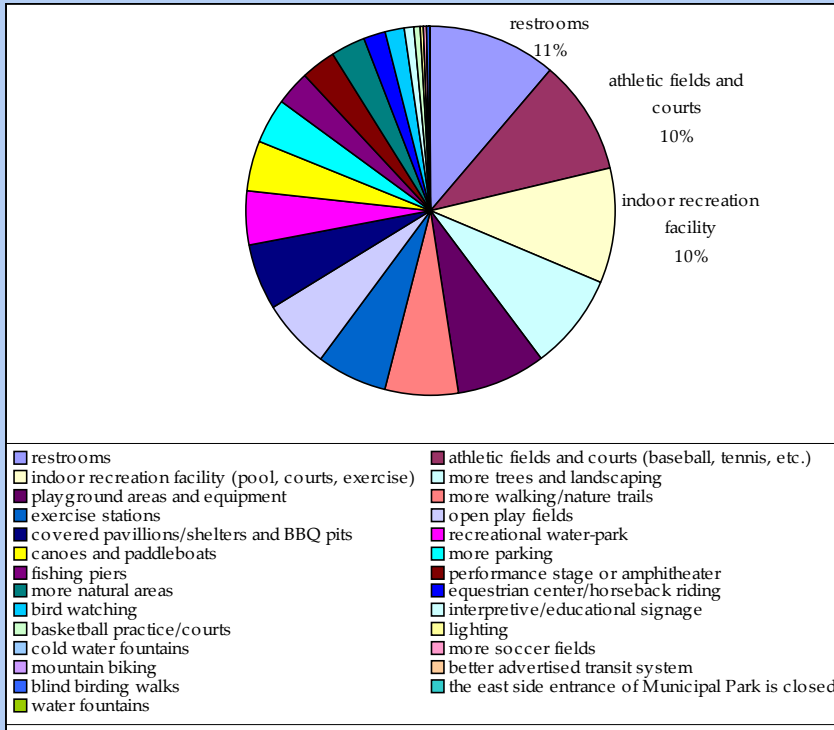
Respondents were also asked to describe the nature of the park or facility identified as most often used based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the least desirable. Different descriptive criteria were used to determine whether attributes such as safety and attractiveness were linked to levels of use. As illustrated in **Figure 4.3, Nature of Park/Facility Used "Most Often"**, the questionnaire findings revealed that the highest percent response in each descriptive category yielded a response of 4 or 5, indicating that high levels of use were not by chance, but rather linked to the attributes of the park or facility.



In further assessing the current parks and recreation system, respondents were asked to identify their needs and desires. Respondents were asked what type of activity they would be most interested in engaging in when visiting a park. The results revealed that 73.7 percent of respondents would be interested in partaking in active recreation activities (e.g. biking, jogging, baseball, softball, soccer, tackle football). When asked to select three facilities

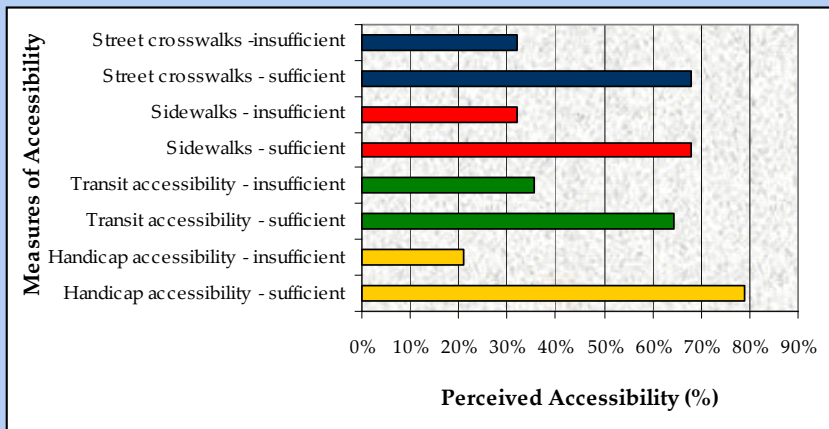
¹ The questionnaire separated Dr. Diaz and Bicentennial Parks. However, since this Plan refers to them together, the results of both parks were combined to give a response rate of 13.3 percent.

Figure 4.4, Parks and Facilities to Enhance Quality



Source: Lane Kendig, inc.

Figure 4.5, Accessibility



Source: Lane Kendig, inc.

that would be used most often, trails (bike, walk, jog) ranked highest (12.9 percent), followed by indoor or covered basketball courts (8.9 percent), and baseball fields (8.5 percent). As illustrated in **Figure 4.4, Parks and Facilities to Enhance Quality**, when asked specifically what types of parks and facilities they would like to see created or improved to enhance the quality of parks and recreation, restrooms (11.4 percent) was cited most often, followed by athletic fields and courts (baseball, tennis, etc.) (9.9 percent), and indoor recreation facility (pool, courts, exercise) (9.9 percent).

Accessibility was measured based on several indicators. As illustrated in **Figure 4.5, Accessibility**. The results of the questionnaire revealed that respondents perceived pedestrian accessibility to be sufficient, with 67.8 percent of respondents indicating that sidewalk accessibility was sufficient, and 68.0 percent of respondents indicating that crosswalk accessibility was sufficient. Similarly, 64.3 percent of respondents indicated that transit accessibility was sufficient. A further 78.9 percent of respondents indicated that handicap accessibility was sufficient².

² It is unknown what percentage of the respondents have a disability. As such, it is difficult to determine whether their perceptions of handicap accessibility being sufficient or insufficient are based on personal experience.

4.4 CONDITION ASSESSMENT ■ ■ ■

The condition of the existing parks and recreation facilities, equipment, and improvements is an important consideration in establishing a parks and recreation system that contributes to livability. It is critical that the condition of the City's existing parks and recreation facilities, equipment, and improvements be addressed prior to acquiring and developing new parks and facilities. In fact, the facilitated discussion groups reported that one of the key future priorities for the City should be maintenance and intensification, or better use of existing parks.

To evaluate the adequacy of the existing parks in terms of condition and overall appearance, a detailed condition assessment was conducted. The assessment included visual observation of the grounds, equipment, facilities, buildings, amenities, and other physical improvements of each municipal park. The following improvements were given a quantitative score based on pre-established criterion: Turf; Irrigation Systems; Plantings and Trees; Drainage; Parking; Sidewalks, Trails and Paths; Basketball Courts and Equipment; Tennis Courts, Fencing and Nets; Park Accessibility; Park Amenities (Benches, Grills, Shelters, etc.); Buildings and Shelters; Fields and Play Areas; Signage; Fencing and Screening; and, Lighting.

As provided in [Appendix B, Park Assessment](#), the scores for each facility or improvement range from zero to four, with zero representing the improvements that are in the best condition. A ranking of four is for those facilities that are in very poor condition and, therefore, require replacement, reconstruction, or refurbishment. The scores of one, two, and three represent varying levels of condition. Where applicable, there is also an indication of improvements that do not exist in some parks.

For each park there was a tabulation of the scores, divided by the total number scored, to derive an overall composite value. This composite score indicates the overall condition of the park and the relative condition of each park in comparison to the other parks within the recreation system. It was determined that the parks and recreation areas and facilities are in moderate condition, as displayed by the tabulations in [Table 4.3, Park Conditions](#). Overall, the greatest improvement needs include turf, park accessibility, playing fields, signage, fencing, natural screening, and lighting.

Table 4.3, Park Conditions

CONDITION CRITERIA	Citrus Park	Frontier Park	Cenizo Park	West Park	Apollo Park	Fountain Park	Jaycee Park	Freddy Gonzalez Park	Bicentennial & Dr. Diaz Parks	Memorial Park	South Park	Trevino Park	Municipal Park
Turf	1	2	2	3	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Plantings and Trees	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Parking	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	2	1	1	0	0
Park Sidewalks, Trails, and Paths	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Basketball Nets and Playing Surfaces	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	n/a	1	2	2	0	0
Tennis Courts, Fencing, and Nets	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	3	n/a	n/a
Park Accessibility	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	3	3
Park Amenities	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Buildings and Shelters	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	0	2	2	1	n/a	0
Playing Fields	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	3	n/a	2	1	0	1	n/a	1	0
Signage	0	n/a	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
Fencing and Natural Screening	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	n/a	1	0	2	0	0
Lighting	0	2	n/a	1	2	2	0	2	0	2	3	0	0
Composite Score	0.89	1.63	1.63	1.22	1.80	1.44	1.08	1.00	1.00	1.38	1.83	0.73	0.33

A brief overview of the findings of the condition survey is as follows:

- ◆ Generally, the turf in the parks is moderately to severely dry. This is largely due to the dry climate of the Lower Rio Grande Valley. In addition, while all parks have irrigation systems, only Municipal Park and Trevino Park have automated systems.
- ◆ Park accessibility is an area for improvement. While some of the parks have sidewalks, striping, and cross-walks, none of them have a full complement of these improvements around their perimeters.
- ◆ The formal playing fields in the parks are largely in good condition. However, Apollo Park and Jaycee Park require more extensive maintenance than other parks that include playing fields.
- ◆ In addition to the aforementioned points regarding park accessibility, park signage also is in need of improvement to increase accessibility and safety. Way-finding is difficult since there are few cases where a park has signage at each entrance indicating its name.
- ◆ Fencing and natural screening require improvement to provide a clear distinction between private and public realms (i.e. Cenizo Park) and to provide improved safety (i.e. South Park) for park users.
- ◆ Based upon the assessment, it was also determined that lighting needs to be improved to ensure safety and to adequately light the areas of activity, such as basketball courts.



Fencing at one of the entrance points to South Park presents a safety concern.