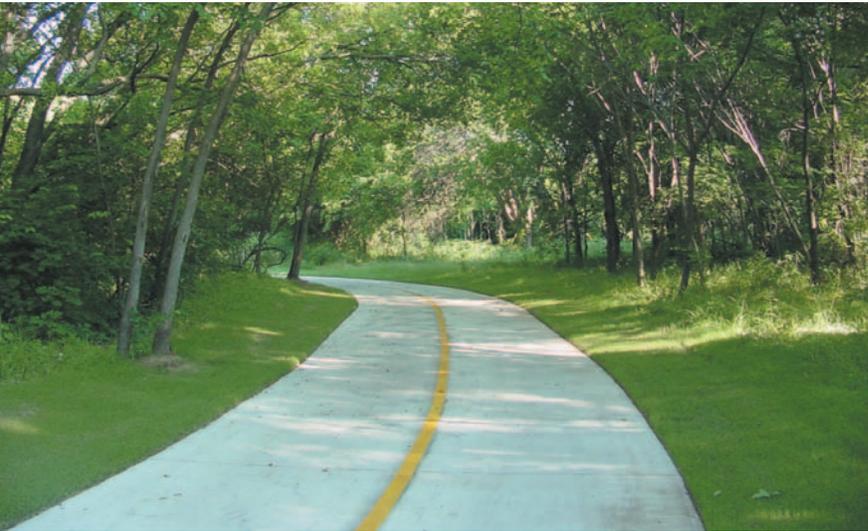


Great Parks:

The Foundation of a Great Community



THE CITY OF ARLINGTON
2004 Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan





THE ARLINGTON PARKS, RECREATION, AND Open Space Master Plan is a key component of the City’s 2025 Vision for the Arlington community. The Parks Plan recommends a vision and an action plan that directly supports the 2025 Vision and Goal Statements as determined by a large and diverse group of Arlington citizens:

Arlington 2025 Vision: “Arlington is a beautiful, clean, safe and fun place widely recognized as the most desirable location in North Texas to live, learn, work and do business. It is a diverse community where residents want to stay, businesses thrive and to which visitors and our children want to return.”

Arlington 2025 Goal Statements:

Arlington, a community...

- of neighborhoods with easy pedestrian access to a system of parks, open spaces, trails and gathering places promoting interactions within and among neighborhoods.
- that wisely uses natural resources to create a healthful place to play, work and live.
- where all people are free to pursue their religion, follow their beliefs and participate in community service.
- with affordable, coordinated and accessible programs and services for children and youth.
- with workforce development and educational systems aligned to support economic development strategies.
- with a quality, highly ranked educational systems at all levels.
- with a clearly established identity.
- with a business friendly environment.
- where Government is committed to excellence, integrity and efficiency and encourages representation of all segments of the population at all levels.
- where health and human services, including transportation and other supportive services, are accessible to all persons.
- with high quality core services and infrastructure provided to all people.
- that preserves its history.
- that celebrates and cultivates arts and culture.
- that plays a key role in a regional transportation network.
- with a strong, diverse and sustainable economy.
- with strong and sustainable neighborhoods.

◀ A young swimmer enjoys Arlington’s newest pool, **Randol Mill Family Aquatic Center**. With multiple interactive water amenities like water cannons, waterfalls and slides, the Randol Mill Family Aquatic Center provides an entirely new aquatic experience for Arlington’s citizens.

Acknowledgements



Arlington City Council

Mayor	Dr. Robert Cluck
District 1	Joe Bruner
District 2	Sheri Capehart
District 3	Wayne Ogle
District 4	Kathryn Wilemon
District 5	Lana Wolf
District 6	Steve McCollum
District 7	Ron Wright
District 8	Gene Patrick

City Manager
Charles R. Kiefer

Park and Recreation Board

Chair	Sue Phillips
Place 1	Alvin Warren
Place 2	Charley Amos
Place 3	Caron Montgomery
Place 4	Jim Maibach
Place 5	Candace Halliburton
Place 6	Laura Capik
Place 7	Joe Way
Place 8	Val Gibson
Place 9	Glenn Troutman
Youth	Jowel Rodríguez

Parks and Recreation Director
Pete Jamieson

Special Thanks To The Arlington Parks Master Plan Committee:

Anne Weydeck (Chair)
Charley Amos
Alvin Warren
Sue Phillips
Ben Pate
Jay Singleton
Debra Freiheit
Daniel Kauth
Dave Breen
Tim Moloney
Stephen Barnes
Sarah Dendy
Caron Montgomery

01 **Foreward**

05 **Great Parks and Exceptional Recreation**
(A message from the Director)

06 **Executive Summary**

11 **Our Vision**
Great Parks: Our Vision for Today and for Tomorrow

13 **The Analysis**
The Master Plan Process

14 Master Plan Goals

15 Major Issues and Opportunities

18 Park and Recreation Needs Assessment

- Arlington Parks: Then and Now
- Our Changing City
- What Our Citizens Think
- Benchmarking Arlington’s Parks
- What’s in Our Parks?
- Needs Assessment Summary
- North Sector
- West Sector
- East Sector
- Central Sector
- Southwest Sector
- Southeast Sector

43 **The Plan**
Strategies for Success

- Community Partnering
- Environmental Leadership
- Taking Care of What We Have
- Employee Satisfaction and Development
- Invest Wisely - New Facility Development

52 Funding Our Future

53 The Big Picture

55 Project Recommendations

- Citywide Projects and Initiatives
- Projects by City Subarea

71 Plan Fulfillment

73 **Conclusion**



▲ **Parks and Recreation Photo Contest
Grand Prize Winner**
Sandra Bitenc, photographer

APPENDIX

(Appendix documents available upon request)

A: Policies and Procedures
Field Management Report - Executive Summary
Programs Master Plan
Linear Park Maintenance Guidelines
Forestry Master Plan

B: Backup Information and Data
Demographic and Population Information

- Arlington 2025 Comprehensive Plan:
Pathways of Change
- Arlington Annual Growth Profile
- Issues and Trends: A Perspective
on the City of Arlington in 2003
- Arlington 2000 Census Data

Citizen Survey Results Summary
Guide to Arlington Parks
Guide to Lake Arlington
Guide to Arlington Parks and
Recreation Facilities
Guide to Arlington Trails
Park Classification System
Unfunded Projects by City Subarea

C: Maps
Linear Park District Maps
Park Fee District Maps



Great Parks and Exceptional Recreation

By Pete Jamieson, *Director of Parks and Recreation*

THE ARLINGTON PARKS AND Recreation Department has a vision of great parks and exceptional recreational opportunities. It is a simple, yet profound message based on the belief that these elements are essential to our quality of life and well-being. In more practical terms, the vision means:

- Developing parks in close proximity to our homes, where families, neighbors and friends can strengthen relationships.
- Providing quality facilities and programs that encourage physical activity, learning, adventure, exploration and social interaction.
- Creating special spaces that provide a “sense of place” and encourage community pride, civic engagement and individual well-being.
- Providing quality open space for team sports, community gatherings and civic celebrations.
- Conserving our natural resources and green spaces that add beauty and value to the surrounding development.
- Preserving environmentally sensitive areas that protect ecosystems and provide for sustainable living.

Of particular importance to the viability of Arlington as a desirable place to live, work and play are the economic benefits of this vision. Great parks are a very real source of economic benefit to the community. Well planned and maintained parks improve the desirability of neighborhoods, enhance property values, provide unique destination points, increase commercial activity, and attract both employers and employees. A 2001 National Association of Realtors survey helps to demonstrate the economic value of parks. The survey revealed that 57 percent of respondents would prefer to purchase a home in close proximity to parks and open space. Similarly, 50 percent would be willing to pay additional ten percent for such amenities.

To reach our vision, we need a plan - a plan that is aggressive, but also recognizes the fiscal realities of our current environment. The plan must be balanced: protecting and maintaining existing assets while anticipating the needs of future generations. We will need to stay focused on the service priorities of our citizens, and on strategies that will leverage the most improvement in these services.

On a final note, the Department’s leadership recognizes that community partnerships are integral and critical to the vision. Success hinges on our ability to grow civic responsibility and leverage community resources. A partnership strategy, above all others, will provide the stewardship necessary for a sustainable and enduring system of great parks.

◀ The Parks and Recreation Department’s preschool programs provide excellent opportunities for exploration and discovery.

Executive Summary

▼ **River Legacy Parks** is located along the banks of the Trinity River in North Arlington. The park features over eight miles of trail along the Trinity River.

THE ARLINGTON PARKS AND Recreation Department is embarking on a new strategic course in helping to redefine Arlington as a desirable community in which to live, work and play. The city, once a pre-eminent address in the region, has lost ground to other affluent suburbs. But Arlington is not a suburb anymore, it is a city, and the strengths that made it such a desirable location in the recent past still exist. From our central location, outstanding public school system and rapidly expanding university to our well known name as the home of Six Flags Over Texas, Ameriquest Field, the Parks Mall and General Motors, this city has the building blocks from which to reposition itself as the “community of choice” in the Metroplex.

Another important building block of a community is its system of parks and public spaces. Most would agree that our current system is good, if not great, and an important reason why they choose to live here. Arlington has invested wisely in its park system over the years, and this has directly contributed to the growth of this community. But the park system, much like the city, is at a turning point.

What Arlington needs and what our citizens want is a community with a “sense of place.” By “sense of place” we mean many things, but primarily we mean that our community embodies a fun, attractive and vibrant atmosphere that is appealing to both residents and visitors, and that encourages new and diverse businesses to locate here.



The development and redevelopment of the city's park system can play a key role in stimulating this effort. However, without implementing strategic policies to focus our limited resources in areas where they will have the greatest impact, the park system could detract from the community's efforts to improve its quality of life and create a sense of place.

There are significant challenges to be met. Park funding opportunities, from general obligation bonds and grants, are not expected to be available at the levels they once were. Suitable land for new parks is rapidly disappearing as the city approaches build-out. New facilities are needed south of I-20 at the same time that the existing park system has reached an age where re-investment is desperately needed.

While these are serious challenges, there are also many opportunities that can help the Department. Arlington citizens have consistently expressed their support for park funding. They have also demonstrated a strong interest in volunteering to improve our parks. The Department's backlog of unfunded maintenance is still at a manageable level if addressed soon. The Department's important role in improving neighborhoods and attracting and retaining businesses is also becoming increasingly apparent to city leaders as they formulate solutions to the community's many challenges.

Devising a long range vision for the park system and identifying potential solutions to our challenges involved a process of information gathering and decision making known as "master planning." The creation of a new Master Plan could not have come at a more important time. This strategic planning process has given the Department an opportunity to reflect and respond to our rapidly changing environment.

The master planning process involved many opportunities for public input including a city-wide telephone survey, public meetings and the involvement of a council-appointed committee. It also involved research related to



The Rock Wall inside **Elzie Odom Recreation Center** provides skill challenge for all age groups.

benchmarking with other communities, setting and applying new park standards, inventorying and analyzing our existing resources, and developing new systemwide goals and objectives.

This effort was undertaken to develop a long-range vision with guidelines and strategies to guide everyday management decisions over the next ten years. The Master Plan helps to define our vision for "great parks and exceptional recreation opportunities," outlining a set of strategies for success that should drive our decision making and annual work planning efforts. These strategies, intended to ensure citizen satisfaction, include:

- Community Partnering
- Environmental Leadership
- Taking Care of What We Have
- Employee Development and Satisfaction
- Invest Wisely - New Facility Development

In our efforts to align the Department with these strategies, the Department is committed

to adhere to the simple yet profound principle of “quality over quantity.”

More specifically, this Plan calls for the Department to:

Explore partnership opportunities to fund special projects. The Department will seek out public and private partners for a regional natorium project, a downtown “central” park, dog parks, skate parks, and public art projects.

Park beautification. There will be increased attention to enhancing the beauty of our parks with unique native landscapes, from entrance areas to walking paths, ponds and flower beds. As a result, our parks will be even better places to escape the busy urban environment.

Invest in our existing parks. There will be increased focus and investment in our existing parks. With an estimated backlog of over \$40 million of needed capital repairs, this is critical if we are to avoid the mistakes of other large park and recreation systems where capital maintenance has spiraled to unmanageable proportions, detracting from the quality of life in their cities.

Emphasize linear park acquisition and development. These parks are settings for popular and easily accessible recreation opportunities, and they preserve critically important floodways and wildlife habitat.

Emphasize neighborhood park acquisition and development. These parks offer convenient recreational venues and they improve Arlington neighborhoods and property values.

Invest in our recreation centers. There will be major capital investments in our recreation centers in order to remake these aging facilities into fun, exciting and safe places that encourage healthy lifestyles and community interaction.

Make strategic land acquisitions. The Plan identifies key park land acquisitions to preserve our remaining natural, cultural and historical resources, securing much needed open space before these properties are lost to development.

Continue our leadership as an athletic and regional tournament provider. There will be strategic investments in both our existing athletic facilities and in the placement of new facilities to enhance Arlington’s reputation as a host for regional tournaments.

Provide exceptional customer service. The Plan places renewed emphasis on customer care and retention by deploying a comprehensive customer service training model. It also supports creation of a new supervisor-level position primarily devoted to customer service issues and customer service training.



Junior Golf Clinics sponsored by the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department are designed to provide Arlington youngsters exposure to the sport of golf.

With these major areas of focus, the Plan also addresses the need to be creative in the development of new and alternative funding sources to help the Department achieve its goals. Even under an assumption that the Parks and Recreation Department will receive additional funding from a bond election in the next few years, the Plan's priority projects are estimated to cost over \$14 million more than projected available funding. Additional funding could include a portion of the available sales tax to address needed capital repairs, creatively encouraging private investment and partnerships, and establishing a "friends of

the parks" advocacy organization, among others.

By recognizing that Arlington is at a turning point in its development and applying the vision, strategies, ideas and priority projects that evolved from the master planning process, the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department can redefine and reposition itself as a leading provider of park and recreation services in the region and the nation. Most importantly, this opportunity, if taken, will greatly enhance the City of Arlington as a strong and vibrant community.

▼ Geese at Cravens Park





Great Parks: Our Vision for Today and for Tomorrow

GREAT PARKS ARE PLACES where people want to be. Well-designed parks, with a strong sense of place, can be integral and enduring parts of the city where diverse groups of people congregate and interact. They are a nucleus of social activity where citizens feel ownership and take great pride in their parks. They add significantly to the overall well-being of the community, improving real estate values and nurturing community identity.

Great parks require one essential ingredient: a community of people who care. For many Arlington residents, the parks and recreation system was an important aspect of their decision to live here. Arlington residents clearly care about their parks. As evidence of this, Arlington's Parks and Recreation Department recently implemented the Park Partners program to involve citizens in volunteer projects within the City's parks. Since the program was instituted in early 2003, 540 individual volunteers have spent over 4,100 hours working on projects to improve and beautify city parks.

While it takes much more than volunteerism to have a successful parks and recreation system, involving citizens in park improvement and upkeep gives people a feeling of ownership. It also provides opportunities for interaction between neighbors, resulting in a "stronger sense of community." This, at its core, is what the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department is all about. As the city continues to grow, both in population and geographically, this mission becomes more important and, at the same time, more difficult to achieve.

Arlington currently faces many challenges. At this point in its history, more than ever

Parks Vision: Arlington is a vibrant city that enjoys a high quality of life through great parks and exceptional recreational opportunities. These services provide a foundation for the physical, social, economic and environmental viability and well-being of the community.

Parks Mission: The mission of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department is to provide quality facilities and services that are responsive to a diverse community and sustained with a focus on partnerships, innovation and environmental leadership.

before, the citizens of Arlington must make important choices about how to re-invigorate their community. From attracting business investment to strengthening neighborhoods, the Parks and Recreation Department has a pivotal role in this effort. Parks enhance neighborhoods. They offer learning opportunities and support child development. They attract regional and national tournaments that improve our local economy, preserve our natural and cultural heritage, enhance personal health and well-being, provide social gathering venues for large community events as well as for small family birthday parties... and they do so much more.

This ten-year Master Plan has been developed for the purpose of providing the Department with a roadmap to ensure that we make the best decisions for the future. As we allocate our limited resources, we must promote the City's health and well-being to the greatest extent possible, and strengthen the partnership between the Department and the people of Arlington. By investing wisely in our parks system, our ultimate goal is to "...provide a foundation for the physical, social, economic and environmental viability and well-being of the community."



The Master Plan Process

INITIAL PLANNING. PARKS AND recreation planning is ongoing in the City of Arlington, but there is a more formal process involved in completing a master plan. A new master planning process is typically initiated when the assumptions made and priorities established in the previous plan need to be revisited. This is usually because of changes - such as a changing economy or shifting demographics - in the City's operating environment. Early in 2002, as the city began to face the realities of build-out in 2025 and a negative fiscal picture, it was apparent to parks planning staff that a new Master Plan was going to be needed in the near future.

Public Input. In March 2002, a Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee was appointed by the City Council to provide direct citizen involvement in the process. This group, comprised of Park Board members, planning sector members, interested citizens and park planning staff met monthly or bi-monthly over a period of approximately 24 months to provide input to the new Master Plan. Additional citizen input for the Plan was gathered in multiple ways.

- A telephone survey of 500 randomly-selected households was conducted.
- Four public workshops were held, with over 130 residents attending.
- A public meeting, attended by over 100 residents, was held to present the draft recommendations and gather feedback.

Master Plan Goals and Performance Objectives. Following these inputs, eight

goals were established. These goals (see p. 14) served to guide the process of setting Plan priorities.

Existing Inventory/Opportunities. A major step in the master plan process was to examine the inventory of existing public parks and specific recreation facilities such as playgrounds, tennis courts and ballfields. This inventory is continuously updated to reflect changes in city parks. Results of the inventory analysis appear in this Plan as charts, maps and tables. (A full inventory of the park system can be found in Appendix B.)

In addition, existing park, recreation and open space opportunities were identified throughout the city. This information - a critical source in establishing citywide and subarea recommendations - is also documented in narrative and graphic form throughout the Plan.

Park and Facility Standards. Standards are crucial to the development of needs and recommendations. Park and recreation facility standards were developed using information collected from a variety of sources, including:

- The National Recreation and Parks Association;
- A survey of municipalities in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex;
- Staff input on service demands and facility usage;
- Other related City plans, guidelines and regulations; and

- An inventory of amenities provided by The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) and school districts (to explore partnering opportunities in areas where there is insufficient park land).

This aspect of the needs assessment was a largely mathematical process of applying the City’s established standards to existing and projected populations. A standards-based needs assessment was developed for the city as a whole and for each of the ten Parks and Recreation Department subareas. Standards were used to highlight any present shortfalls in parks and recreation facilities. These same standards were then projected for future populations of 2014 and 2025, when Arlington is projected to reach build-out.

Needs Assessment and Prioritization. The final assessment and prioritization of needs was not simply a matter of mathematics, however. As noted above, multiple inputs were combined to develop an overall inventory of the city’s parks and recreation needs. Because available resources must also be taken into consideration, it was necessary to prioritize overall needs into a listing of projects that can realistically be accomplished over the next ten years. Prioritization began with the gathering of public input as specified above. This input was then refined based on the knowledge and experience of Department staff into a list that identified the most pressing needs for each city subarea. The subarea project priorities were then combined to yield a total picture of Arlington’s parks and recreation needs.

Parks and Recreation Recommendations and Action Plans. The recommended projects shown in this Plan range in scope from those that are very site specific, with localized impact, to those that affect the entire city. Like the previous master plan, this Plan offers recommendations for neighborhood, linear, community and city parks. It also offers recommendations for some exciting new types of parks, as well as a discussion of existing and potential revenue sources for funding the Plan’s implementation.



Dragonfly poised on branch at F.J. “Red” Kane Park

Master Plan Goals

Based on input from the community and City staff, eight goals were established to guide development of this Master Plan. A later section of this Plan describes how these goals will be fulfilled through the strategies for success and priority projects identified through the planning process.

Goal 1. Ensure that existing parks and recreation facilities are maintained and updated to provide high quality recreational experiences.

Goal 2. Focus acquisition and development efforts in areas of the community where parks and recreation facilities and park acreage are below adopted standards.

Goal 3. Preserve and enhance the city’s valuable and sensitive natural resources.

▼ Frog Slide at **Randol Mill Family Aquatic Center**

Goal 4. Develop collaborative relationships between the city and other public, non-profit, and private organizations to promote a more effective parks and recreation system.

Goal 5. Improve accessibility to parks for all citizens.

Goal 6. Improve the physical appearance of the city as a means to enhance quality of life and stimulate economic development.

Goal 7. Preserve and enhance the city's historical, archaeological, and cultural resources.

Goal 8. Improve park safety and security.

Major Issues and Opportunities

The city's park system is at a critical juncture, having grown rapidly over the last decade to keep up with the fast pace of residential development experienced throughout the 1990's. In 1984, Arlington had 42 parks with 1,500 acres of park land. Today,

the city has 88 parks with over 4,500 acres of park land. As the city nears build-out, however, the frenzy of development has slowed just enough for us to take stock of where we were, where we are now and where we want to go.

One of the key questions in the development of this Master Plan has been weighing new growth versus re-investment... to decide how to allocate our resources? The last such plan, developed in 1997 during the height of the population boom, was appropriately focused on new parks and new facilities to meet the ever-increasing demands of a growing city. Now, however, circumstances have changed and we must ask ourselves:

Should aggressive expansion of the park system continue? If so, how would it be funded? If expansion is needed, should it focus on acquisition of new property or the development of existing park land? Or both?



The Analysis

Should we focus on what we've already built?

Is there a middle ground - one that would provide a balance re-investment in our aging infrastructure with key land acquisition and targeted new development to meet the needs of recently developed parts of the city?

To answer these critical questions and to develop an overall guiding vision for the park system, the department undertook an analysis of the major issues and opportunities facing Arlington and its parks and recreation system. Following is a summary of findings.

Major Issues

- Available funding for the foreseeable future will not be as great as in past years due to the

changing economy of Arlington, limitation on the issuance of capital debt, fewer grant opportunities, and declining park fees resulting from slowing residential development.

- Suitable park land is becoming very difficult to find. When available, the cost for such land is often prohibitively expensive.
- While the city is quickly approaching build-out, a large amount of new growth is still occurring south of I-20, driving the need for new parks and costly facilities such as recreation centers and aquatic facilities.
- In 2003, the Parks and Recreation Department conducted an exhaustive analysis of park assets and identified a backlog of capital maintenance requirements exceeding \$40 million.



▲ Conceptual Plan for Vandergriff Park

► Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) is one of many unique plants to be seen on a walk through **River Legacy Parks**.

Opportunities

- City residents expressed a strong commitment to city parks in the 2002 telephone survey saying that they would overwhelmingly support a parks bond election (79 percent).
- Linear parks, with the multiple benefits they provide to the city, continue to be very popular with citizens. Nature areas and nature trails are also very popular.
- While many parks and recreation departments around the country are experiencing a “crisis” of unfunded infrastructure maintenance, Arlington’s needs in this area are still at a manageable level. If actions are taken now, the Department can address this growing problem.
- The Parks and Recreation Department is in a unique position to provide leadership on environmental issues. From a recreational standpoint, the public continues to press for more nature trails, environmental education programs, and the preservation of open space. From an economic standpoint, parks and recreation departments are large resource consumers, and resource-saving techniques are needed. From water for athletic fields, golf courses, and swimming pools to electricity for recreation centers, athletic field and park lighting, this Department can be a good environmental steward by focusing on resource conservation and saving City funds at the same time.
- The Department can improve its service delivery and cut the costs of that delivery by partnering with the community and involving citizen volunteers in these services.
- With the increasing focus by economists and city leaders on the true economic benefits of quality park and recreation facilities, Arlington’s Parks and Recreation Department has the opportunity to demonstrate its value in dollars and cents at a time when economic development is at the forefront of the community’s agenda.





Arlington Parks - Then and Now

Arlington has traditionally been a city of families, and the city of today is no exception. The 2000 census showed that nearly 70 percent of city households are family households. The 2002 citizen survey of recreation needs provided further confirmation of Arlington's family makeup. This telephone survey of 500 randomly selected Arlington households found that over 80 percent of respondents were between the ages of 25 and 54 with children under the age of 18. The parks, recreation and open space needs of Arlington's families must continue to be a high priority in this Plan.

The growth of Arlington's parks has paralleled the city's growth and changing needs in many ways. Only 20 years ago, in 1984, there were 42 parks with approximately

◀ The Arlington Parks and Recreation Department provides young residents with exposure to beginner sports activities such as T-ball.

1,500 park acres. Starting about that time, Arlington began a two-decade period of explosive population growth. The Parks and Recreation Department responded with an aggressive strategy to acquire and develop park land to keep pace with this growth.

Today, Arlington has over 4,500 acres of park land, comprising 88 separately designated park properties, and parks make up nearly 7.2 percent of Arlington's total land area. Park land acres have increased 32 percent since the 1997-98 Master Plan, and nearly 200 percent over the past twenty years.

What's in our parks has changed, too. Since the earliest days of Arlington's Parks and Recreation Department, there have been basic ballfields and picnic tables throughout the city. But today, park amenities are more numerous and of higher quality. The chart on the following page highlights some areas of particular improvement since the first master plan was published in 1987. Linear parks (and the trails within them), which seem to be particularly appreciated by residents, have grown dramatically. "Spraygrounds" (water playgrounds) did not exist in 1987, but Arlington has two today and more are planned. And the building of the Arlington Tennis Center, a premier full-service tennis facility for leagues and tournaments, is the primary reason that the number of tennis courts and scope of tournament activity has grown so dramatically.

Today, 70 percent of Arlington's parks are at least partially developed. However, the current Master Plan views undeveloped park land differently than in the past. It draws a distinction between land that will ultimately be developed - equipped with amenities such as athletic fields, paved trails and playgrounds - and land that will be left as natural as possible.

Arlington now has four park properties partially or entirely designated as natural areas. These sites do not have typical park amenities, but the public is nonetheless encouraged to come in and enjoy the plants, wildlife and terrain. Even “developed” parks will have areas set aside to be maintained in a natural state, allowing citizens - now and into the future - the opportunity to enjoy the natural heritage of our area. As Arlington approaches build-out, and open space becomes even more scarce, the Parks and Recreation Department will continue this trend of designating park land as natural areas.

Despite the major acquisition and development projects completed since 1980, the Parks and Recreation Department has not achieved its developmental goals, and many areas of the city remain deficient in terms of available recreational opportunities. These deficiencies are particularly acute in the southern part of the city.

As noted previously, Arlington’s population will continue to grow at least until 2025, when projected city population will reach approximately 430,000. The chart on page 24 shows that the City’s goal of 12.89 park acres per 1,000 residents will require ultimate acquisition of more than 1,000 additional acres of park land by 2025. This increase of more than 22 percent over current acreage levels will primarily involve acquiring land for neighborhood and linear parks rather than for larger city and community parks.

Unfortunately, Arlington suffers from a severe scarcity of undeveloped land suitable for parks. The map on the following page shows that there is not much undeveloped land remaining in the city. Of this undeveloped land, only a small percentage is suitable for good park land. As such land becomes more scarce, it also becomes more costly, making future opportunities to add park land to the City’s inventory increasingly difficult. The situation is further complicated by

tensions between revenue shortfalls, pressures for development, and public demands for preservation. These competing demands make it difficult to acquire, develop and maintain a high quality parks system.

■ Parks and Recreation Facilities: 1987 vs. Today

	1987	2004
Linear Park Acres	371	1750
Linear Park Trail Miles	2	24
Playgrounds	24	41
Water Playgrounds	0	2
Recreation Centers/Senior Centers	4	7
Outdoor Basketball Courts	6	18
Tennis Courts	18	49

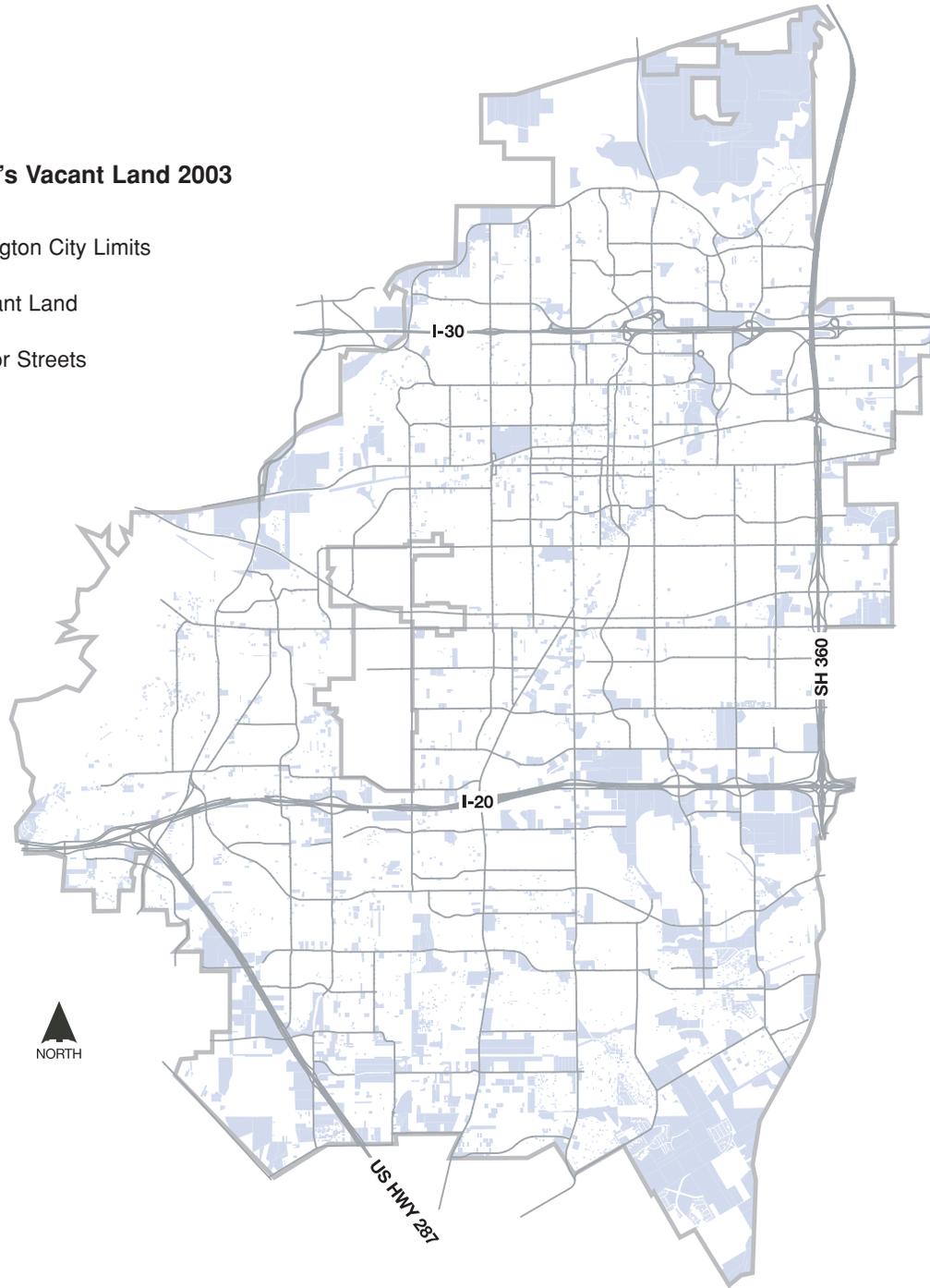
Our Changing City

In the early 1950’s, Arlington was a small, sleepy town midway between Dallas and Fort Worth with less than eight thousand residents. The following decades brought enormous change and growth. During the twenty-year period beginning in 1980, Arlington’s population grew more than 1.5 times faster than the population of Tarrant County and more than twice as fast as that of the State of Texas. Between 1980 and 2000, Arlington’s overall population increased by 108 percent (an average of 5.4 percent per year). The 2000 U. S. Census put Arlington’s population at 332,969, making it the seventh most populated city in the state, and 54th in population nationwide.

Arlington’s explosive growth of the past two decades is not expected to continue, however. The rate of population increase in the city is predicted to slow gradually, and maintain a growth rate of one percent annually through 2025, when Arlington will be home to approximately 430,000 citizens.

■ Arlington's Vacant Land 2003

- Arlington City Limits
- Vacant Land
- Major Streets



A Shift to the South. Another milestone recently achieved was Arlington's expansion to its maximum land area of just under 100 square miles. There are almost no opportunities for annexation or other means to grow Arlington's available land. This means that land suitable for parks and other recreation purposes will become increasingly scarce - and costly - in the coming years.

Although Arlington is approaching build-out, there is still substantial growth in the city, especially in the area south of I-20. Between 1990 and 2000, the population of south Arlington grew at a rate of nearly 62 percent. Growth for this area is expected to remain very high through 2025, when there will be nearly 155,000 citizens living in south Arlington - an increase of 164 percent over 1990.

These projections indicate that pressure will increase dramatically for new parks and capital intensive facilities such as recreation centers and aquatic facilities in the southern area of the city.

Arlington's Changing Demographics. In the early days, Arlington's population was a largely homogenous group of white citizens, and as late as 1980, nearly 90 percent of its population was white. However, the last 20 years have brought significant changes to the ethnic and racial makeup of the city. Arlington of today is diverse and complex. As of 2000, the proportion of whites had shrunk to slightly less than 58 percent. While all non-white groups have enjoyed tremendous growth since 1980, the most dramatic increases have been for Blacks (nearly 900 percent), Hispanics (over 800 percent) and Asian-Pacific Islanders (over 750 percent). As citizens' recreation preferences may be strongly influenced by ethnic, racial and cultural factors, this Plan must attempt to accommodate them.

Arlington, like the U.S. as a whole, is beginning to see an aging of its population. The 2000 census found the age group 65 and above to be the fastest-growing segment in the city, with an increase since 1980 of 186.5 percent. This group's average rate of increase was more than 9 percent per year, nearly twice that of the population as a whole. The unique needs of the senior group (which will become even larger as the "Baby Boomers"

■ Economic Challenges Facing Arlington's Parks

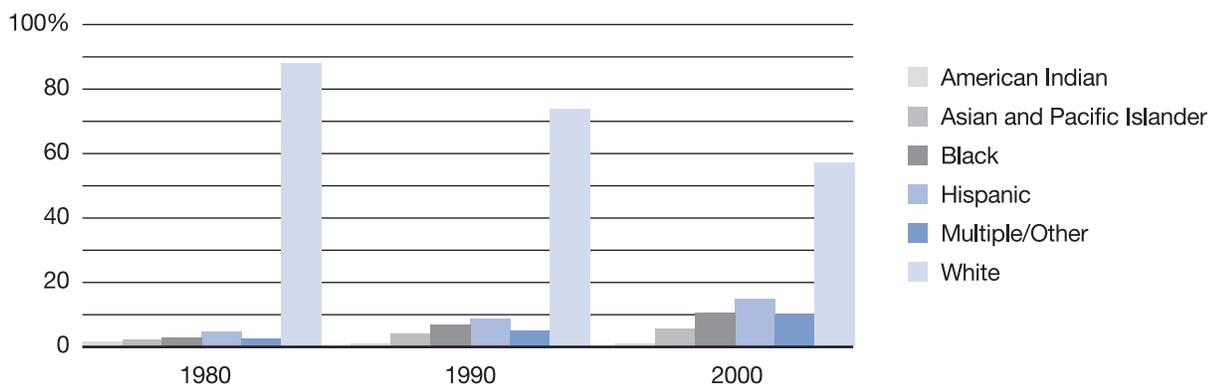
- Changing economy
- Slowing tax base growth
- Decreasing tax revenues
- City limitations on the issuance of debt
- Declining park fees and grant opportunities

become "Golden Agers") must be addressed in this Plan, as must the varying recreation needs of all age groups.

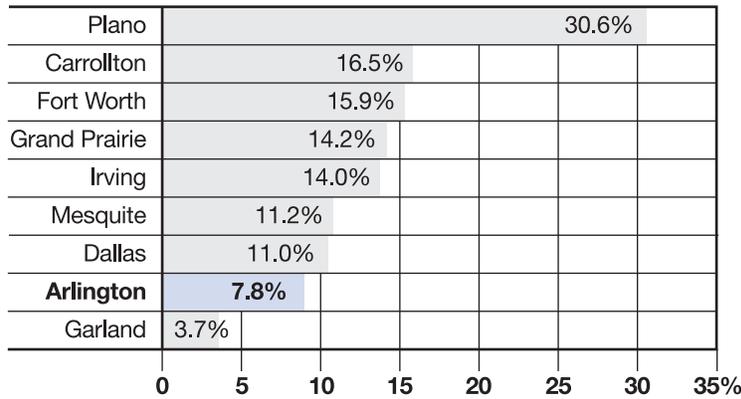
Economic Trends. There are significant economic issues facing Arlington and its parks. The chart above summarizes the major reasons why traditional funding sources to support park and recreation development are expected to be reduced in the coming years.

The chart at the top of page 22 shows that median income in Arlington is up 7.8 percent from 1980 to 2000 (in constant 2000 dollars) to \$47,622. However, the City's rate of increase over this period was second *lowest* of the nine largest cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, with only Garland experiencing lower growth. The number and percentage of families living below the poverty line in the city has *increased* since 1990 as well. Roughly one of every 13 Arlington families lived below the poverty line in 2000, compared with one in 17.5 in 1990. City services and facilities are often the only recreational outlets low income citizens can afford.

■ Percent of Population by Race and Ethnicity, 1980-2000



■ **Change in Median Income* for 9 Largest Metroplex Cities, 1980-2000**



*Inflation adjusted to 2000 dollars

The slowing economy is creating a severe strain on city resources. Between 1990 and 2000, Arlington's population increased by more than 71,000 (27 percent), but total appraised property value increased by less than one percent. Growing population means requirements for more city services, but there are fewer new property tax dollars to pay for them. The City's tax-base problem is compounded by the fact that Arlington's commercial property values have been primarily flat. Thus, nearly all of the FY 2003 increase in assessed valuation is due to very modest increases in residential values. Of the nine largest Metroplex cities, Arlington's per-capita taxable property value is the lowest, per the chart below.

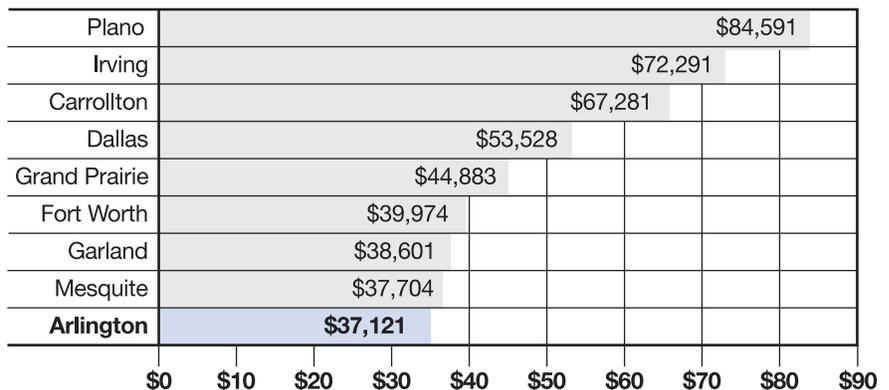
Sales tax revenues have in the past provided a boost to City finances through the high growth period of the 1980s and 90s. At present, Arlington's sales tax revenues are down and they may continue to shrink as residents who used to "Shop Arlington" are taking their business to new shopping destinations in other communities.

A May 2003 report from the City Manager's Office provides an interesting perspective on what Arlington's residents actually pay for City-provided services when compared to residents of other Texas cities. This report states that, *despite shrinking tax revenues, Arlington's citizens pay a smaller percentage of their per capita income for City services than do residents of the other major cities in Texas. Furthermore, the price of these services has steadily declined over the past five years. Today, Arlington residents pay less than two cents of every dollar of per capita income for City services.*

Besides shrinking taxes, some traditional revenue sources for parks are also declining. Participation fees paid by those who use parks and recreation facilities are declining. And because revenues at the State level are also down, there are fewer opportunities for park grants from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

All this means that the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department must exercise restraint, flexibility and creativity in facing the tough choices ahead. During the economic boom times of the 1980s and 1990s, park business strategy focused appropriately on acquiring new parks and building new

■ **Taxable Property Per Capita, 2000**



All Dollars in thousands

facilities to meet the needs of a growing city. Today, the City must do more with less - serve more parks and recreation users even as traditional revenue sources are declining.

What Our Citizens Think

In 2002, an independent research firm conducted a telephone survey of over 500 randomly selected Arlington households to determine citizens' views of parks and recreation facilities and services, and their preferences concerning recreation needs. Overall, Arlington's residents hold very favorable perceptions of park facilities and services. More than four of five survey respondents felt that overall park quality, maintenance and safety were "Good" or "Excellent."

Arlington citizens historically have been willing to support funding for parks, and they continued that trend with the present survey. Seventy-nine percent of those surveyed expressed a strong commitment to City parks by indicating they would be "likely" or "very likely" to support a parks bond election. When asked about the strategy the City should use in spending its parks resources, citizens were most positive about "renovating and improving existing parks and recreation facilities" (51 percent). They were much less likely to favor new park construction (25 percent) or acquisition of new park land (21 percent).

Citizens of Arlington have continued to request more nature trails, environmental education programs and the preservation of open space. The recent survey provides support for these trends. The percentage of citizens surveyed who report they are satisfied with the number of parks in Arlington has declined somewhat since the 1998 Master Plan. Only 78 percent of citizens expressed satisfaction with the number of parks in the present survey, compared with 86 percent in 1998.

When asked their opinions about specific types of parks most needed in the city, citizens endorsed the notion of developing parks that are smaller, close to home and easily reached on foot or by bicycle. They assigned the highest priority to development of linear parks, closely followed by more neighborhood parks. Residents were less likely to favor development of large parks (community and city parks).

Citizens participating in the survey also provided input about the specific types of facilities most needed in their respective areas. The following items were mentioned as "definitely needed" or "possibly needed" by at least two of three respondents, regardless of where they live:

- Trails of all types
- Indoor centers (for recreation, fitness, gymnastics, senior programs)
- Swimming pools (both indoor and outdoor)
- Picnic facilities (shelters, pavilions, tables, grills)
- Children's playgrounds
- Ponds for fishing and wildlife

A more detailed report of citizen survey results appears in Appendix B.

Benchmarking Arlington's Parks

Arlington maintains a detailed inventory of its park land, with properties designated as neighborhood, community, city or linear parks. The table on page 24 shows how much park land the city has in each of these categories, compared to national standards and the standards adopted for this Plan. This table also projects future park land needs as the population grows.

A new park category, natural areas, has been added to the inventory. These sites are designated for minimal development because of their unique environmental

character. They can only be established as such properties are available. Therefore, no standards were set for them, but their acreage is included in the city total.

This analysis shows the additional park acres needed to keep pace with population growth. While acreage for city parks is more than adequate to meet needs through 2014, significantly more community, linear and neighborhood park acres will be required in that time frame.

Nationwide Comparisons. In preparing this Plan, it was important to see how Arlington’s parks and recreation picture compares with that of other cities. For these comparisons, Arlington (with 5.6 people per acre) is considered to be a “low-density” city, as defined by the Urban Land Institute (ULI). Using the ULI’s standards, New York (with 37.3 people per acre) and San Francisco (with 24.6 people per acre) are considered “high-density” cities; Detroit (with 11.3 people per acre) and Minneapolis (with 10.2 people per acre) are considered “medium-density” cities. The table on page 25 compares Arlington to other low-density cities nationwide on three critical measurements: parks and open space

acres per 1,000 residents, parks and open space acres as a percent of city area, and total parks and recreation expenditures per resident.

Of these measures, “parks and open space acres per 1,000 residents” is especially significant as a broad indicator of parks and recreation service to the community. This measure can also be seen as a quality of life indicator for a city. A growing city - even if growth is slow - must continue to acquire park land if it is to keep pace on this measure. Arlington’s current level of 12.85 acres per 1,000 residents is below the national low-density city average of 19.3 acres.

The measure “parks and open space acres as a percent of city area” is also a quality of life indicator. Arlington’s 7.2 percent puts it slightly below the average for low-density cities of 8.2 percent. Arlington’s position on this measure is helped by the fact that the City has some very large city parks.

Arlington compares least favorably with respect to “total and recreation expenditures per resident” (total of operating budget and performance fund), with \$58.77 per resident. This figure is well below the national

■ **Arlington Park Acres Compared to National and Master Plan Standards**

Park Categories	National Standards (acres per 1,000 residents)*	Master Plan Standards (acres per 1,000 residents)*	Required Acreage for 2014 population 400,209	Existing Inventory (Acres)	Deficiency/ Excess
Neighborhood	1-2	1.31	524	382	-142
Community	5-8	3.25	1301	888	-413
City	5-10	3.23	1293	1394	101
Linear	Variable	5.1	2041	1750	-291
Total Park Land	Minimum = 10	12.89	5159	4529	-745
Natural Area	Variable	As available	As available	114	na

average for low-density cities of \$71.00. Of the cities surveyed, only three - Indianapolis, Houston, and Dallas - reported lower total parks and recreation expenditures per resident.

Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex Area Comparisons. Arlington’s park planners then changed the focus of their comparisons to 25 cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The chart on page 26 examining the 25 area cities and their park acres per 1,000 residents shows a result similar to the nationwide comparison - Arlington is somewhat below the average of 15.12 acres per 1,000 residents for area cities on this measure.

Then, on page 27, parks and recreation funding was examined in terms of what Arlington citizens are actually paying per resident for their park system. This comparison involved

the parks and recreation budget from the general fund only, which is based on taxes generated in the city, and not on fees collected for use of parks and recreation facilities. On this measure, Arlington’s parks and recreation funding, at \$39.03 per resident, is well below the DFW area average of \$48.77. Arlington is sixth lowest of the 25 cities surveyed.

These benchmarking data show that Arlington is below the area average in terms of park acreage. As the city continues to grow, it will be necessary to add more acreage to keep pace with population growth.

Funding comparisons, however, portray a more challenging picture for Arlington parks. The current economic downturn is responsible to some extent for low levels of park funding in Arlington as compared to

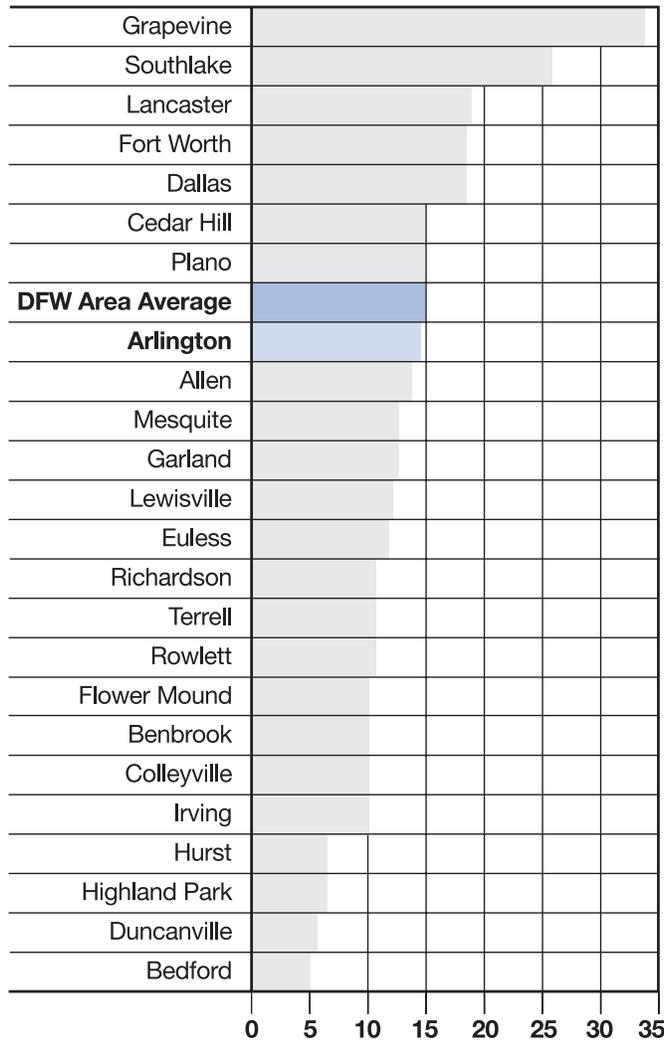
■ **Benchmarking Comparisons for Low-Density Cities Nationwide***

Low-Density Cities	Parks and Open Space	Parks and Open Space	Recreational Amenities			Total Park-Related Expenditures per resident
	Acres per 1,000 residents	Acres as a % of city area	Tennis Courts per 10,000 residents	Recreation Centers per 20,000 residents	Swimming Pools per 100,000 residents	
Indianapolis	17.70	5.7	1.5	0.5	2.5	\$32.00
Houston	12.50	6.3	1.2	0.6	2.5	\$42.00
Dallas	21.30	10.0	2.5	0.8	6.0	\$56.24
Arlington	12.85	7.2	1.4	0.4	2.0	\$58.77
Fort Worth	18.00	6.0	1.7	0.7	1.0	\$61.39
Atlanta	7.80	3.7	3.6	1.9	5.7	\$63.00
National Avg. for low-density cities	19.30	8.2	2.1	1.1	1.0	\$71.00
Phoenix	31.50	13.6	1.0	0.5	2.4	\$69.00
San Diego	30.80	17.4	0.9	0.8	0.9	\$83.00
Kansas City	30.20	6.7	2.4	0.5	4.3	\$92.00
Tampa	10.80	4.4	2.7	1.7	4.5	\$99.00
Denver	11.40	5.8	2.9	1.2	5.2	\$103.00

*Cities listed in ascending order of total parks and recreation expenditures (operating budget plus performance fund) per resident. Sources: For non-Metroplex cities, all data derived from Harnik, P., *Inside City Parks*. Urban Land Institute; Washington, D.C., 2000. For Metroplex cities, data for park acres and park expenditures derived from City of Garland (Texas), 2003 DFW Area Park and Recreation Department Survey. Data on recreation amenities in Metroplex cities from City of Dallas Renaissance Plan and City of Fort Worth Parks and Recreation Department, City of Arlington Park Inventory.

■ **DFW Area Cities Park Acres per 1,000 Residents***

DFW Average = 15.12 acres per 1,000
 Arlington = 12.85 acres per 1,000



*Data courtesy of City of Garland, Texas

other area communities. The Parks and Recreation Department must exercise creativity and explore partnership opportunities to ensure great parks and facilities for city residents.

What's In Our Parks?

The previous discussion about how Arlington needs to continue acquiring park land is only part of the Master Plan story. It's also crucial to consider existing recreational facilities,

determine future needs (both what and where) and develop plans to meet these future needs.

Arlington's park planners first examined the current facilities inventory, a database related to the park land inventory. Planners then developed a set of facilities standards tailored to the city's unique needs. As a starting point, they reviewed national, state and regional facility standards. The next step was to adapt these standards based on current local information about usage trends, locations of existing facilities, city demographics and citizen inputs. Arlington's adopted facility standards and projections for future needs appear in the table on page 28.

The final set of adopted standards, shown in the table on page 28, was used to compare current service levels against future needs. For example, Arlington's adopted standard for soccer fields is one for every 12,000 residents. Based on a projected 2014 population of 400,200 and a current inventory of 27 fields, the City will need an additional six fields by then. The population of the city at build-out in the year 2025 is projected at 430,000, meaning that an additional three fields will be needed between 2014 and 2025. The difference between the present number of soccer fields and what will ultimately be needed is nine new fields.

Note that this table shows citywide needs. The breakdown of facilities needs by subarea appears in a later section of this Plan.

The table shows that Arlington's Parks and Recreation Department has provided well for its citizens in many areas. For example, in the area of trails, the City's current service level of one trail mile per 7,000 residents exceeds external standards of one trail mile per 10,000 residents. The Department plans to continue its aggressive program of expanding linear parks and multi-use trails. Based on this standard there will need to be 20 additional trail miles by the year 2025.

Golf courses, tennis courts and picnic facilities are also presently available to city residents in quantities at or above standards. Though some very costly new facilities are clearly needed by 2025 - three aquatic facilities, one recreation center, a senior center - these projects can be accomplished over a number of years.

At the same time, there are some areas where Arlington must stretch to meet citizen needs. By 2025, 16 new playgrounds will be needed - an increase of 40 percent over current service levels.

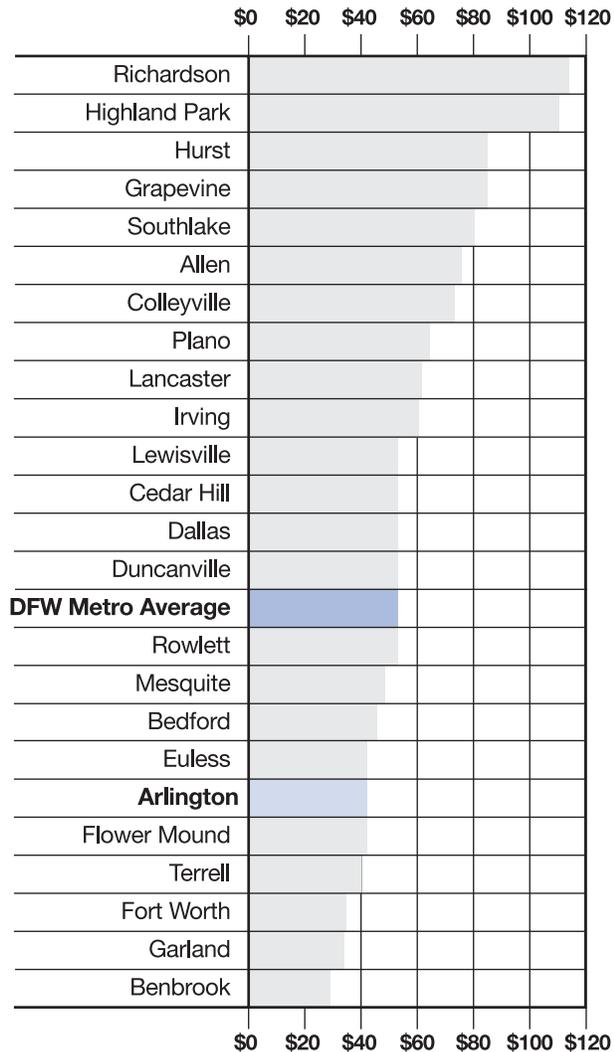
Basketball courts, which have broad appeal to many age groups, are needed to increase by over 50 percent, from 23 to 36. Nine new soccer fields, four new football fields, and 14 new baseball/softball fields are needed - facilities that are maintenance-intensive and typically require amenities such as lighting and irrigation.

It is important for the City and its citizens to be realistic about future needs. This Plan is built on estimates. If Arlington's population grows at a rate different than projections, facility additions will need to be accelerated or decelerated accordingly.

Finally, it is important to remember that these standards represent guidelines for service to parks and recreation users, rather than hard and fast rules. There are creative and flexible ways to meet citizen needs that do not conform to a numbers-driven strategy, and the Department continues to look for these alternatives. For example, Arlington's adopted standard of one aquatic facility for every 50,000 residents represents major aquatic facilities located in community and city parks, such as the Randol Mill Family Aquatic Center. But Arlington citizens have indicated they would prefer to have more interactive aquatic facilities located closer to home. So, this Plan examines the feasibility of offering shallow water play structures and neighborhood park spraygrounds as an alternative to major aquatic facilities. As such facilities

■ Parks and Recreation Tax Supported Funding per Resident* for 25 DFW Area Cities

DFW Average = \$48.77 per resident
 Arlington = \$39.03 per resident



*Data courtesy of City of Garland, Texas

are developed, the City may find that it does not need as many of the larger, more costly facilities.

A summary of recreational facility needs by type follows.

Aquatic facilities are currently needed primarily south of I-20. Many of the City's current

■ Recreation Facilities Inventory & Future Needs

	NRPA or Other Standard = 1 Per:	Arlington Adopted Standard = 1 Per:	Present Inventory	Required for 2014 Population = 400,200	Ten-year Needs (Additional Facilities needed by 2014)	Required for 2025 Population = 430,000	Build Out Needs (Additional Facilities needed by 2025)
Aquatic Facilities	20,000	50,000	6	8	2	9	3
Soccer Fields	10,000	12,000	27	33	6	36	9
Football Fields	20,000	45,000	6	9	3	10	4
Baseball/Softball Fields	5,000 (Youth) 30,000 (Adult)	10,000 50,000	30 8	40 8	10 0	43 9	13 1
Basketball Courts (Indoor and Outdoor)	5,000	12,000	23	33	10	36	13
Tennis Courts	4,800	7,000	49	57	8	61	12
18-Hole Golf Courses	105,000	125,000	3.5	3	0	4	0
Recreation Centers	25,000	70,000	5	6	1	6	1
Senior Centers	117,000	125,000	2	3	1	3	1
Trails (miles)	10,000	7,000	41	57	16	61	20
Playgrounds	4,400	7,500	41	53	12	57	16
Picnic Facilities							
Pavillions	60,000	40,000	7	10	3	11	4
Shelters	10,000	15,000	16	27	11	29	13
Units	1,100	800	420	500	80	538	118

pools are substandard in both size and quality, so renovation and reconstruction is also a priority. The City’s indoor pool will likely require complete reconstruction in the near future if this service is to continue. A realistic long-term view is to have:

- Three family aquatic centers
- Four smaller pools
- One indoor pool
- A number of smaller facilities (such as interactive spraygrounds).

Soccer fields are needed in north Arlington.

Additional **baseball/softball fields** are needed in north and southwest Arlington. More lighted fields are also needed in these areas.

Basketball courts represent a significant deficiency and are needed throughout the city. Recreation centers with full-size gymnasiums are highly desirable for basketball.

The deficiency in **tennis courts** can be corrected by adding courts to the new Webb com-

munity park in southeast Arlington and adding four additional courts to the Tennis Center.

Recreation center services are most deficient in southeast Arlington. In addition, investments are needed in existing centers.

The City’s highest priority for a **senior recreation center** is currently in west or southwest Arlington.

The City has added **trail miles** as the linear parks system has expanded. Nature trails are particularly desirable.

Sixteen additional **playgrounds** will be needed by 2025 to meet city needs. At the same time, older playgrounds in the central and northern parts of the city will require renovation and replacement.

The City has done a good job of providing **picnic facilities**, but citizens want more. These facilities are a priority in every area of Arlington.

This section of the Plan presents a view of Arlington's parks and recreation needs over the next ten years. This needs assessment process takes information collected at a point in time, and uses that information to project future needs. After a thorough analysis of the needs assessment process, including the telephone survey results, public meeting notes, resource opportunity analysis, existing inventory analysis, facility standards assessments and staff input, a series of park and facility priorities were identified for each sec-

tor of the city. The full list of "needs" for each sector took into consideration the Plan's stated Goals (p. 14), the strategic assessment of the community in the Issues and Opportunities section of the Plan (p. 15) and an assessment of the Department's ability to deliver services and programs over the next decade.

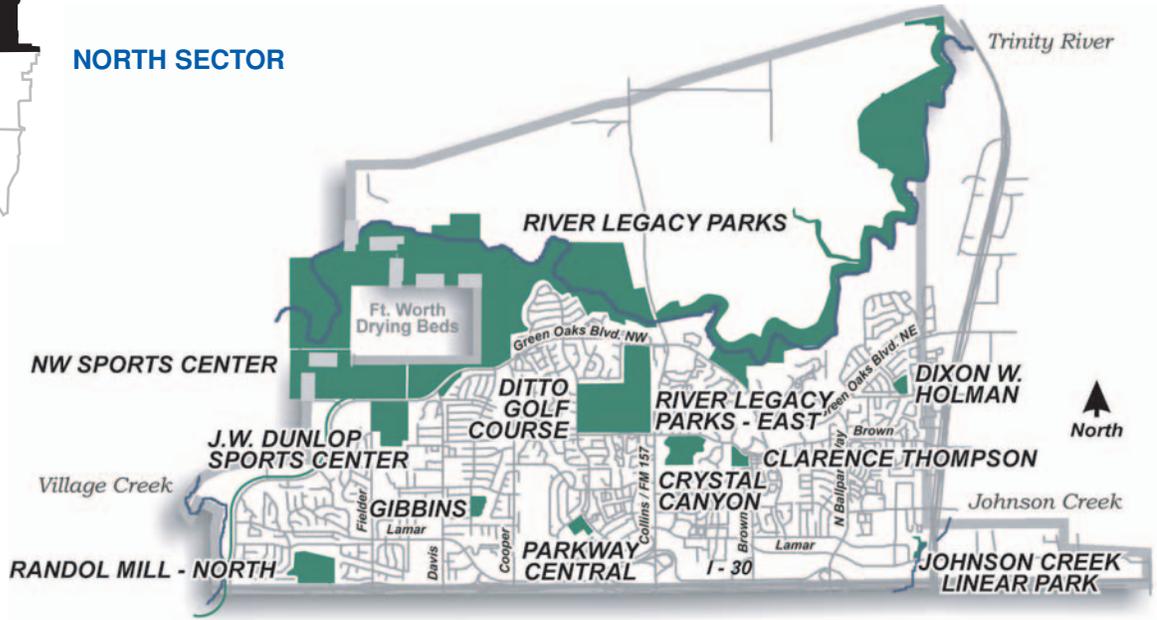
A series of capital maintenance priorities is also shown for each sector. These priorities were taken from the Department's capital maintenance database.

▼ Arlington's **recreation centers** provide pre-school, after-school and summer programs for youth.





NORTH SECTOR



TRINITY WEST AND TRINITY EAST SUBAREAS

COMMUNITY SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS Of citizens surveyed in the North Sector, fewer than one in four (21 percent -- lowest in the city) indicated that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more large parks. They were more positive about smaller parks, with a majority (53 percent for linear parks and 59 percent for neighborhood parks) indicating that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more small, locally accessible parks.

■ Demographic Summary

	2004	2014
Estimated Population	61,571	68,440
Estimated Households	23,235	25,826



30 ▲ Fairway at Ditto Golf Course

At least two out of three persons surveyed in the **North Sector** indicated that the city needs to develop:

- An outdoor swimming pool
- Children’s playgrounds
- Pavilions and picnic sites
- An indoor swimming pool
- Fitness centers with aerobic and weight training equipment

LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

- Vacant, undeveloped land north of the Trinity River, dominated by the Trinity floodplain
- Concentration of multi-family and single family residential development south of the Trinity
- Commercial activity adjacent to I-30, S.H. 360 and Collins Street

MAJOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Neighborhood parks - primarily renovation, some acquisition and new development
- Playground renovations
- Acquisition and preservation of land adjacent to River Legacy Parks including Bird's Fort, Fort Worth Drying Beds, City Landfill and adjacent properties
- Soccer fields
- Youth and adult softball/baseball fields - development and renovation

CAPITAL MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES

- River Legacy Park erosion and roadway/parking
- Playground renovations including Gibbins, Dunlop and Clarence Thompson
- Parkway Central tennis/basketball courts
- Ditto Golf Course infrastructure and clubhouse



▲ J.W. Dunlop Sports Complex Playground and league playing field

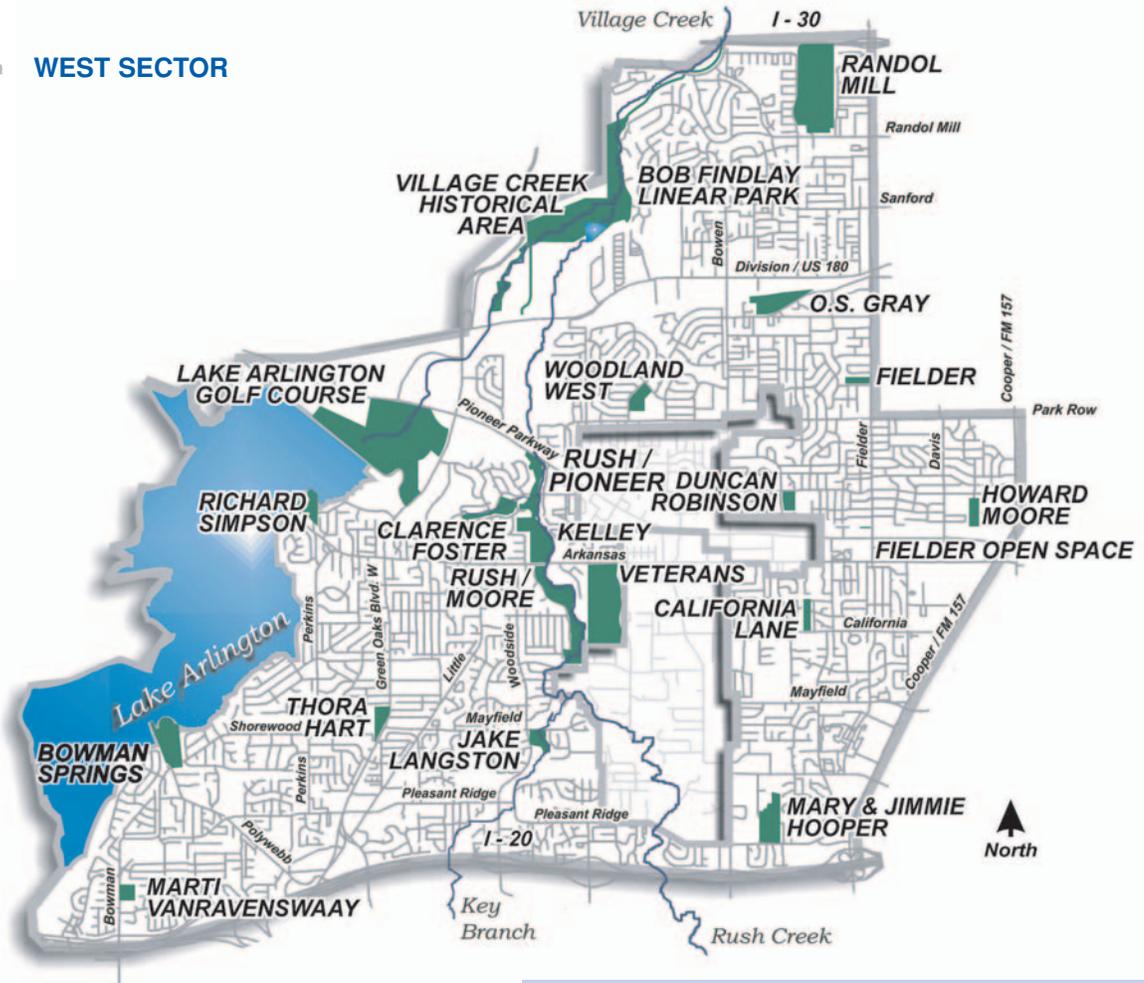
RESOURCE BASED ASSETS

- Trinity River and woodlands
- Fort Worth Drying Beds
- Captain Denton Ambush Site
- Village Creek
- Trinity River wetlands
- Gibbins Cemetery
- Arlington Landfill property
- Bird's Fort
- Tomlin Cemetery





WEST SECTOR



RANDOL MILL, LAKE ARLINGTON, TRI-CITY SUBAREAS

COMMUNITY SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS Less than half (44 percent) of citizens surveyed in the West Sector indicated that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more large parks. They were much more positive about smaller parks, with a majority (69 percent for linear parks and 59 percent for neighborhood parks) indicating that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more small, locally accessible parks.

Demographic Summary

	2004	2014
Estimated Population	84,785	91,847
Estimated Households	31,994	34,523

More than two out of three surveyed in the **West Sector** indicated that the city needs to develop:

- Trails (both nature and hard surface multi-purpose)
- Linear parks
- An indoor swimming pool
- Picnic facilities (pavilions, shelters, tables, grills)
- Facilities for gymnastics, weight training, aerobic equipment, dance, crafts
- Children’s playgrounds

LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

- Established, nearly saturated development with little vacant land
- Primarily single family residential with light commercial uses adjacent to major thoroughfares
- Surrounds cities of Dalworthington Gardens and Pantego

MAJOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Natural area acquisition such as expansion of Village Creek Natural Area and Griffin Woods
- Dottie Lynn Recreation Center gym expansion and improvements
- Linear park acquisition and trail development
- Picnic facilities
- Playgrounds

CAPITAL MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES

- Dottie Lynn Recreation Center
- Playground renovations including Randol Mill, Woodland West, Pirie and George Stevens
- Randol Mill purple baseball field and pedestrian bridges
- Lake Arlington Golf Course infrastructure and course improvements
- Richard Simpson lake house and office
- Bowman Springs Park parking lot

WEST SECTOR

RESOURCE BASED ASSETS

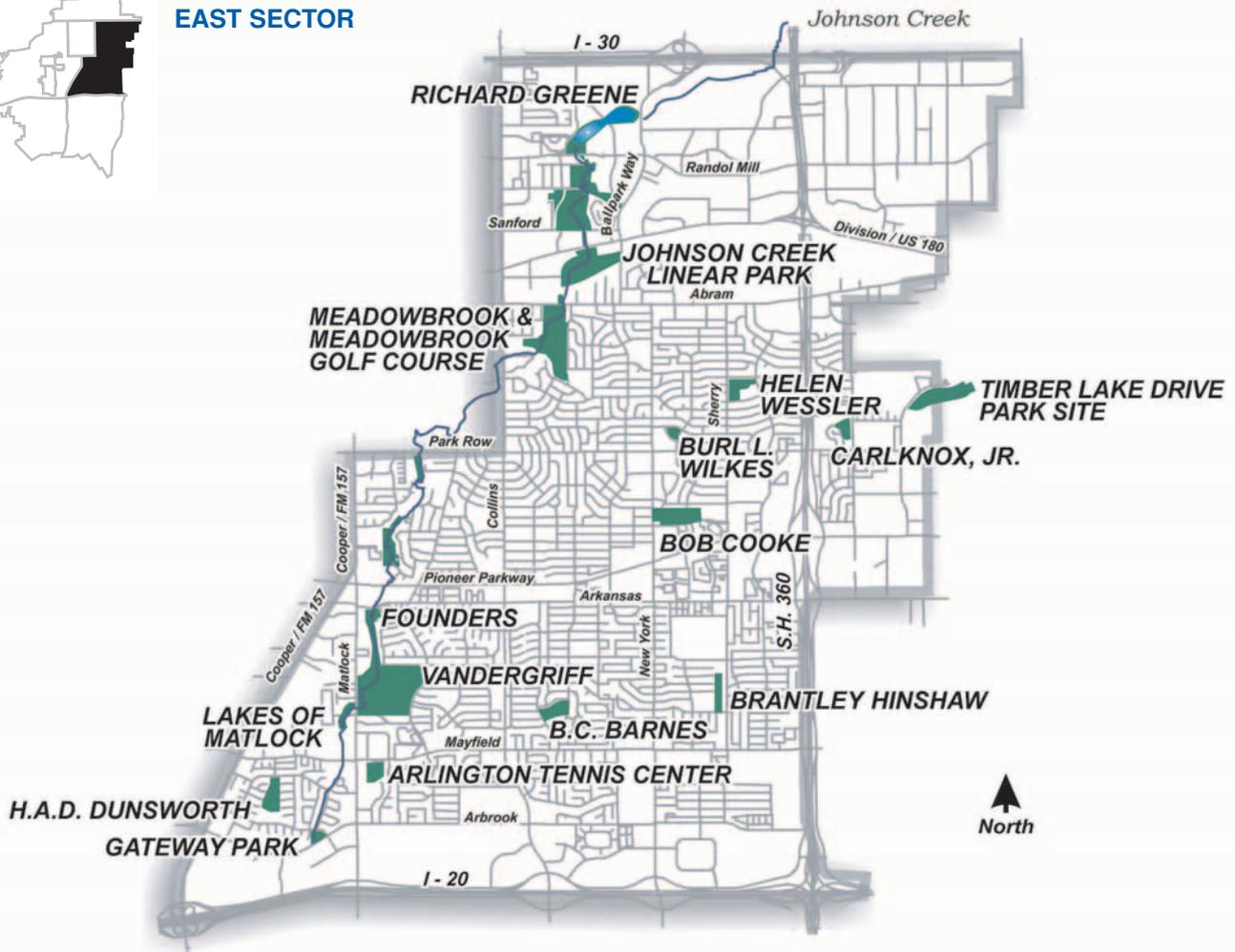
- Village Creek and woodlands
- Rush Creek
- Pioneer Parkway woodlands
- Lake Arlington
- Rush Creek relief channel
- Woods Chapel Baptist Church
- Lake frontage next to Richard Simpson Park
- Battle of Village Creek site
- Union Pacific R.O.W.
- Masonic Temple pasture
- Kee Branch
- Forest Edge connection
- California Trail

▼ **Randol Mill Family Aquatic Center**
under construction in 2001.





EAST SECTOR



SIX FLAGS AND JOHNSON STATION SUBAREAS

COMMUNITY SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS Forty-nine percent of citizens surveyed in the East Sector indicated that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more large parks. East Sector residents were more positive about smaller parks, with a majority (69 percent for linear parks and 65 percent for neighborhood parks) indicating that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more small, locally accessible parks.

RESOURCE BASED ASSETS

- Johnson Creek and woodlands
- Watson Cemetery
- Cottonwood Creek
- Entertainment district
- Johnson Station Cemetery
- Marrow Bone Springs

Demographic Summary

	2004	2014
Estimated Population	78,233	82,604
Estimated Households	29,522	31,171



EAST SECTOR

At least two out of three residents surveyed in the **East Sector** indicated that the city needs to develop the following:

- Nature trails - highest in the city (79 percent)
- Picnic facilities (highest in the city, 82 percent, for pavilions and shelters; 79 percent for tables and grills)
- Children's playgrounds - highest in the city (79 percent)
- Hard surface and soft surface multi-purpose trails
- Facilities for gymnastics, weight training, aerobic equipment, dance, crafts
- Children's playgrounds
- Ponds for fishing and wildlife - highest in the city (76 percent)
- Sand volleyball courts
- Outdoor basketball courts - highest in the city (67 percent)
- Soccer fields - highest in the city (66 percent)
- An indoor swimming pool
- Facilities for gymnastics, aerobics, weight training

▲ To attract more regional and national tournaments, **Arlington Tennis Center** was recently expanded.

MAJOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Neighborhood parks - renovation
- Linear parks - Johnson Creek acquisition and development
- Nature trails
- Informal play and practice fields
- Playgrounds - renovations including Burl Wilkes, Helen Wessler, B.C. Barnes, Dunsworth and Vandergriff
- Picnic facilities
- Outdoor basketball courts
- Soccer fields

CAPITAL MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES

- Vandergriff Park - roadways/parking, playground, pavilion, maintenance compound and restroom facility
- Randol Mill purple baseball field and pedestrian bridges
- Bob Duncan Community Center infrastructure
- Bolden Pool
- Hugh Smith Recreation Center and indoor pool
- Cottonwood/Johnson Creek erosion
- Meadowbrook golf course maintenance facility

► **Gateway Park** contains the headwaters of Johnson Creek.

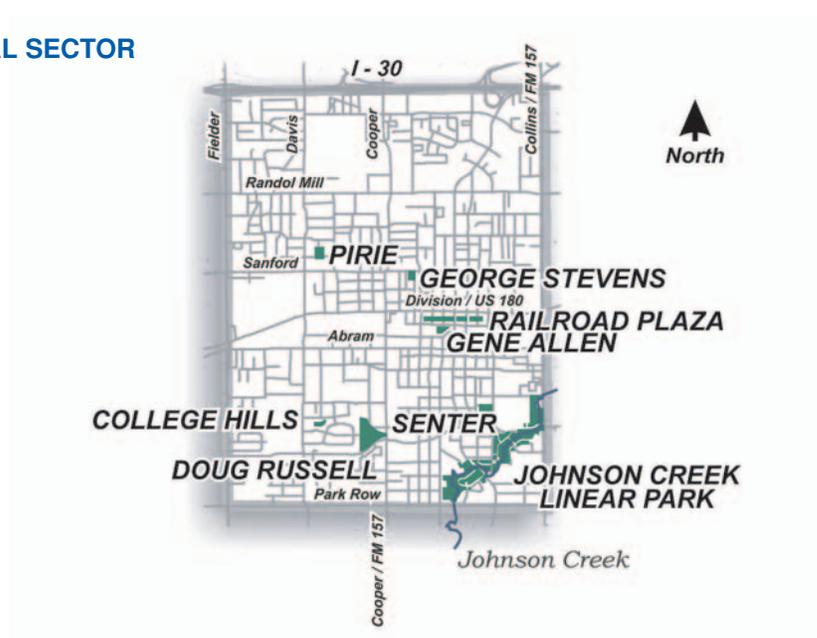
LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

- Contains entertainment district
- Residential areas predominately single family
- Limited multi-family residential and commercial uses adjacent to major thoroughfares
- Mixed uses including commercial, office and multi-family residential adjacent to major thoroughfares
- Commercial and some light industrial uses in the I-20 corridor; industrial and light industrial in 360 corridor





CENTRAL SECTOR



UTA SUBAREA

COMMUNITY SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS This part of the city was identified for special emphasis and attention in this Plan, since it contains three key elements of central Arlington - UTA, Downtown Arlington, and an important segment of Johnson Creek. It was identified after the community survey had been completed. See citizen survey results for East and West Sectors, a composite of which should be reflective of citizen opinions in this sector.



▲ Pirate Ship Playground at **Howard Moore Park**

LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

- Contains Central Business District (Downtown Arlington) and the University of Texas at Arlington
- Remaining area primarily developed as single family residential including student housing
- Limited multi-family residential and commercial uses adjacent to major thoroughfares

■ Demographic Summary

	2004	2014
Estimated Population	37,455	38,772
Estimated Households	14,134	14,631

**MAJOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT
PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- Picnic facilities
- Linear Parks - acquisitions and development of Johnson Creek floodplain
- Playgrounds - renovations including College Hills, Duncan Robinson and Howard Moore
- Neighborhood parks - renovations and development
- Downtown "Central" Park
- Downtown pedestrian improvements with linkages to Johnson Creek and throughout the Center Street corridor
- Railroad Plaza development

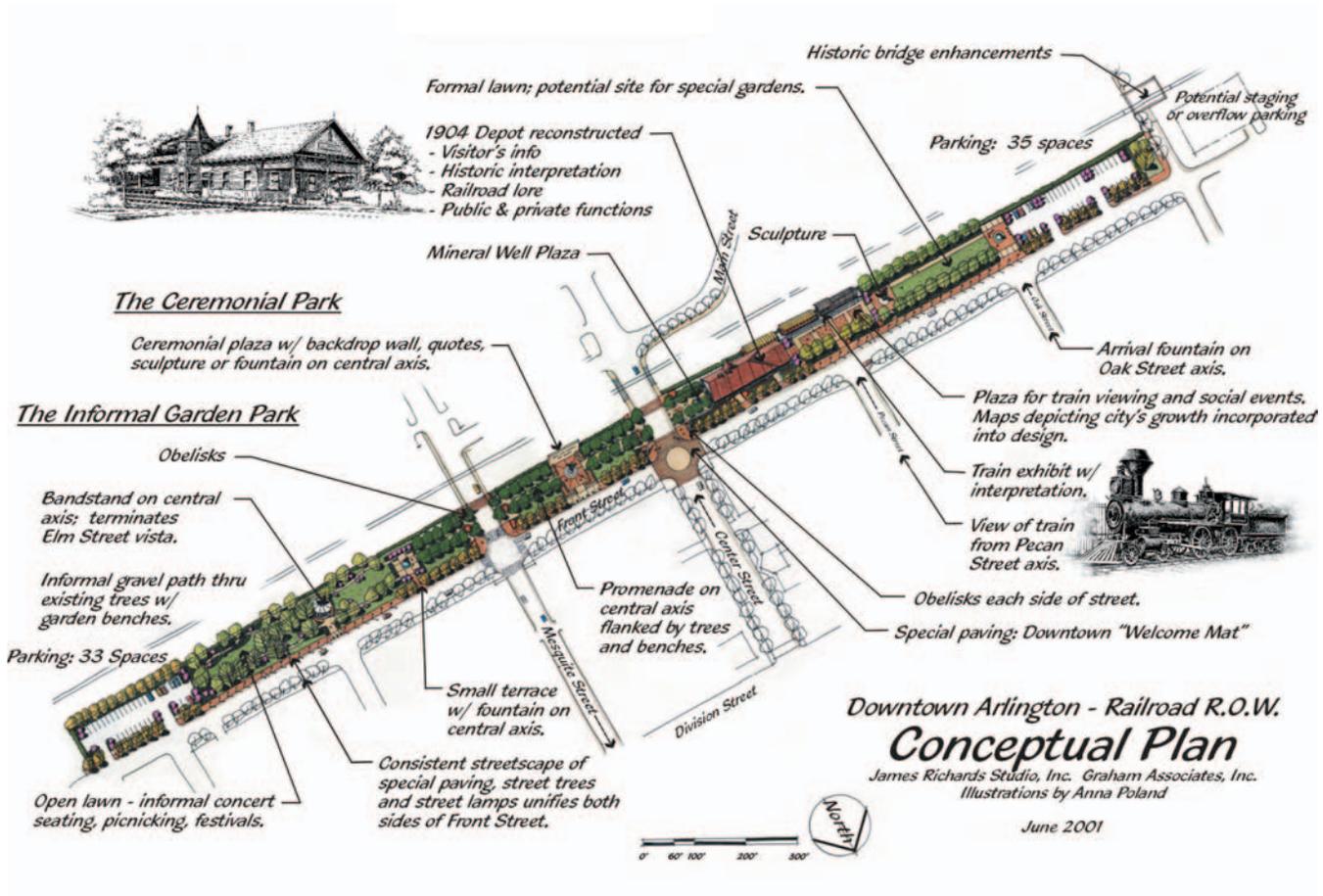
CAPITAL MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES

- Playgrounds - renovations including College Hills and Duncan Robinson
- Fielder Park parking lot
- Howard Moore roadway and pedestrian bridge

RESOURCE BASED ASSETS

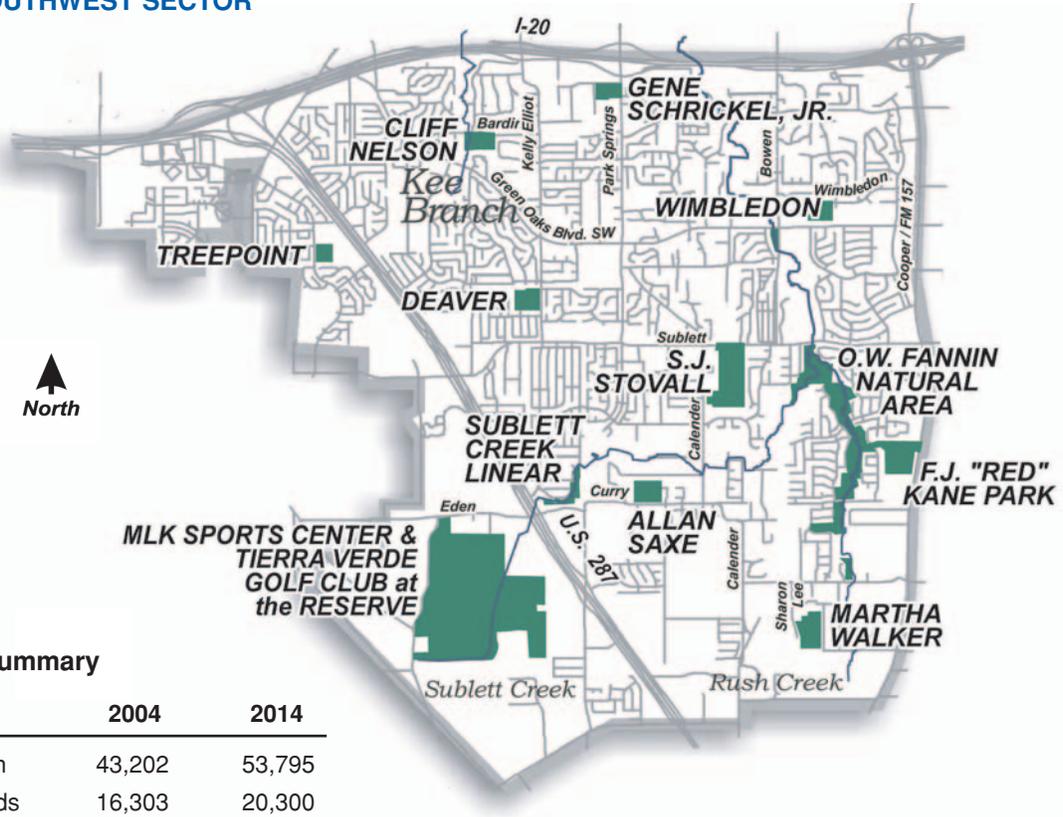
- Johnson Creek
- Tate Johnson Cemetery
- UTA facilities
- Cabins at Knapp Heritage Park
- Union Pacific R.O.W.
- Doug Russell Cemetery

▼ **The Historic Railroad Park**





SOUTHWEST SECTOR



Demographic Summary

	2004	2014
Estimated Population	43,202	53,795
Estimated Households	16,303	20,300

NORTH AND SOUTH RUSH CREEK SUBAREAS

COMMUNITY SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS Nearly three of four residents (70 percent) surveyed in the Southwest Sector indicated that the city “definitely” or “positively” needs more linear parks (72 percent) and large parks (70 percent). City-wide, these were the largest percentages favoring these types of parks. A majority of those surveyed (56 percent) also favored more small, neighborhood parks.

At least two out three persons surveyed in the **Southwest Sector** indicated that the city needs to develop:

- Nature trails
- Hard surface multipurpose trails - highest in the city (75 percent)
- Soft surface trails - second highest in the city (72 percent)
- Picnic facilities (pavilions, shelters, tables, grills)
- An outdoor swimming pool
- Ponds for fishing and wildlife
- Large, open grassy areas - second highest in the city (67 percent)
- An indoor swimming pool - highest in the city (77 percent)
- Facilities with aerobics equipment - highest in the city (80 percent)
- Children’s playgrounds
- Facilities for weight training and gymnastics - second highest in the city (77 percent and 74 percent, respectively)
- Facilities for dance and crafts - tied with Southeast Sector for highest in the city (73 percent and 71 percent, respectively)

MAJOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Outdoor pool
- Community park development - develop second phase of MLK Community Park
- Neighborhood park development - acquisition/development of existing park land
- Informal play/practice areas
- Recreation Center facilities - acquire additional land to expand and improve Cliff Nelson Recreation Center
- Linear Parks - acquisition and development of Rush and Sublett Creek floodplains
- Natural area acquisition and trail development
- Picnic facilities
- Playgrounds
- Senior Center

CAPITAL MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES

- Cliff Nelson Recreation Center
- Deaver Park pond dredging
- Stovall Park trail erosion and drainage

- ▶ **Cliff Nelson Recreation Center (CNRC)** (*entrance shown at top right*) offers an array of amenities to promote fitness for all ages.
CNRC weight room (*lower right*) has aerobic and strength training equipment.
Tai Chi class in **CNRC multi-purpose room** (*below*).

RESOURCE BASED ASSETS

- Sublett Creek and woodlands
- Sublett Creek
- Hawkins Cemetery
- Rush Creek
- Kee Branch

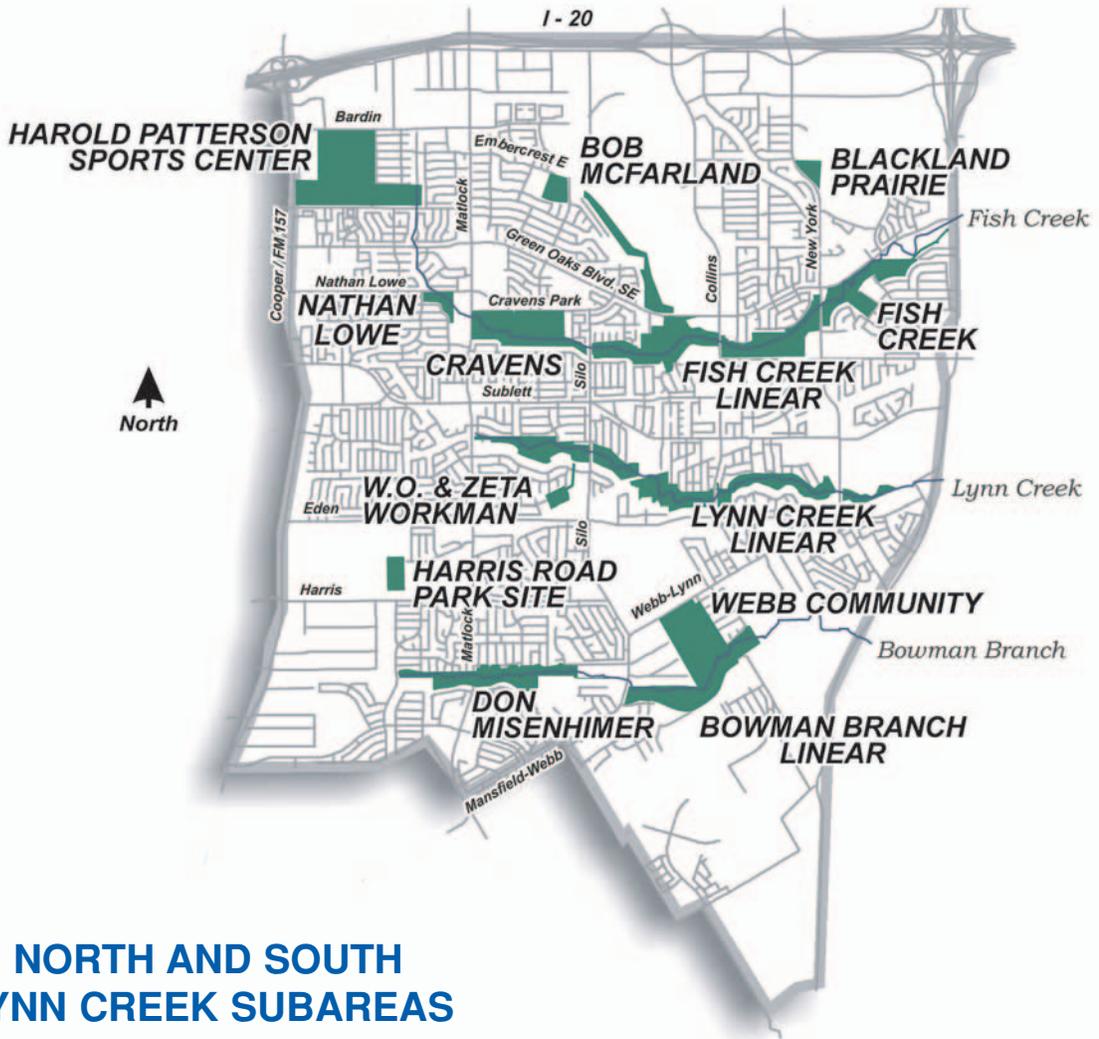
LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

- Predominately single family residential
- Mixed uses, existing and proposed, in the U.S. Highway 287 corridor including multi-family residential, commercial and industrial.
- Increasing commercial activity along I-20 and Green Oaks Boulevard
- Areas south/southwest of U.S. Highway 287 largely undeveloped





SOUTHEAST SECTOR



NORTH AND SOUTH LYNN CREEK SUBAREAS

COMMUNITY SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS Of residents surveyed in the Southeast Sector, nearly two-thirds (62 percent) indicated that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more large parks. They were also positive about smaller parks, with a majority (71 percent for linear parks and 66 percent for neighborhood parks) indicating that the city “definitely” or “possibly” needs more small, locally accessible parks.

■ Demographic Summary

	2004	2014
Estimated Population	47,019	65,112
Estimated Households	17,743	24,571

LAND USE CHARACTERISTICS

- Mostly single family residential
- I-20 corridor developing light industrial and commercial
- Contains Arlington Municipal Airport
- S.H. 360 extension projected for non-residential land uses

RESOURCE BASED ASSETS

- Bowman Branch
- Lynn Creek
- Joe Pool linkages
- Fish Creek
- Tarrant County College (TCC)

At least two out of three residents surveyed in the **Southeast Sector** indicated that the city needs to develop:

- An outdoor swimming pool - highest in the city (86 percent)
- Picnic tables and grills - highest in the city (82 percent)
- Picnic pavilions or shelters - second highest in the city (80 percent)
- Children's playgrounds - tied with East Sector for highest in the city (79 percent)
- Soft surface multipurpose trails - highest in the city (78 percent)
- Other trails (nature - second highest in city at 78 percent, hard surface multipurpose at 66 percent)
- Ponds for fishing and wildlife - second highest in the city (71 percent)
- Large, open grassy areas - highest in the city (74 percent)
- Sand volleyball courts - highest in the city (68 percent)
- Recreation center - highest in the city (89 percent)
- Senior recreation center - highest in the city (74 percent)
- Facilities for weight training - highest in the city (79 percent)
- Facilities with aerobic equipment - second highest in the city (79 percent)
- Facilities for gymnastics - tied with West Sector for highest in the city (75 percent)
- An indoor swimming pool - second highest in the city (75 percent)
- Facilities for dance, crafts - tied with Southwest Sector for highest in the city (73 percent and 71 percent, respectively)
- Indoor basketball and racquetball courts - highest in the city (73 percent and 67 percent, respectively)



▲ **Fish Creek Linear Park** has over four miles of hike-bike trails.

MAJOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Neighborhood parks - acquisition and development
- Community parks - additional development at Webb Community Park
- Linear trail development - within the Lynn Creek and Bowman Branch floodplains
- Recreation center
- Outdoor pool
- Hard and soft surface trails
- Nature trail - develop trail at Blackland Prairie
- Picnic facilities
- Playgrounds
- Pavilions
- Informal play/practice areas

CAPITAL MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES

- Patterson Sports Center - parking lot and soccer field reconstruction
- Cravens Park - Fish Creek trail erosion



Strategies for Success

BASED UPON AN ANALYSIS of the major issues and opportunities facing the city and the Department, the following “strategies for success” were identified and defined as critically important issues to help guide efforts to improve the park system and provide quality recreational programs and services over the next decade. These strategies will direct the development of annual work plans by providing policy direction and/or specific project recommendations:

- Community Partnering
- Environmental Leadership
- Taking Care of What We Have
- Employee Satisfaction and Development
- Invest Wisely - New Facility Development

Community Partnering

Partnering with public, private and non-profit organizations is widely seen as an effective way to provide governmental services that are both efficient and well received by the public. Nowhere is that more true than in parks and recreation.

By involving people in the design and care of their parks and park facilities, parks departments not only improve their services, but also extend their manpower and monetary resources to provide additional services.

The following are policy initiatives and projects where partnerships with public, private and non-profit organizations can greatly enhance Arlington’s park system.

Policies

Partnership Policy. It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to encourage our citizens, civic organizations, neighborhood groups, and businesses to take an active interest in providing volunteer assistance in the improvement of our parks and park facilities.

Park Advertising and Lease Policy. It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to encourage private sector investment/advertising in select parks and park facilities, where there is little or no aesthetic or recreational impact, in order to generate revenues to be directly invested back into those parks and park facilities. Appropriate locations are primarily at athletic facilities. Neighborhood parks and natural areas are examples of locations where this activity would typically not be permitted.

Projects

- Continue and expand the “Park Partners” program to encourage individuals and organizations to undertake park enhancement projects.

◀ Kayakers enjoying a day on **Lake Arlington**. The lake covers approximately 2,250 surface acres. Arlington boaters access the lake by using the **Richard Simpson Park** boat launch or the **Bowman Springs Park** boat launch.



◀ Citizens assist with planting groundcover at **Veterans Park**. The **Park Partners** program provides citizens with volunteer opportunities within the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department.

- Review existing partnerships to ensure that these relationships maximize benefits to the partner and the Department.
 - Continue to seek opportunities to share resources with the YMCA and similar recreation providers without duplicating services.
 - Develop a program to generate interest infundraising for park improvements among non-profit organizations like Rotary, Junior League, Lions Club, Young Men of Arlington, neighborhood associations and other similar civic-minded organizations.
 - Develop funding mechanisms to provide matching dollars to groups that want to fundraise for specific park improvement projects.
 - Work with the private sector to develop public-private joint ventures on or adjacent to parks that improve the recreational experience and, if feasible, provide income to re-invest in the park.
 - Work with interested individuals to help develop a “Friends of the Parks” advocacy organization.
- Develop youth sports agreements to improve the management of sports fields.
 - Establish a Citizen’s Bond Committee for preparation of a 2005 Park Bond proposition.
 - Determine the feasibility of partnering with Tarrant County law enforcement for the utilization of individuals fulfilling community service requirements.
 - Continue and improve the environmental partnership with the River Legacy Foundation.
 - Identify partners through existing and new alliances to develop and host an annual community-wide special event, i.e., Earth-Fest.
 - Research the feasibility of developing regional program facilities such as a natatorium or “sportatorium.”
 - Continue discussions with UTA and TCC to form a partnership for increased utilization of the Arlington Tennis Center.
 - Encourage public/private partnerships to complete desirable but otherwise unfunded projects. Examples include:
 - Dog Park Development - R.U.F.F. (Responsible Unleashed Fun for Fido)
 - Accessible Playground for special needs children
 - Skate Park

Environmental Leadership

The citizens of Arlington and the Parks and Recreation Department will greatly benefit from an emphasis on environmentally friendly policies and initiatives. From cost savings on the reduced use of chemicals and fertilizers to an increased emphasis on the acquisition of Arlington's last remaining environmentally significant properties, everyone benefits.

The Department, like its counterparts throughout the country, is a large resource consumer. In 2003, the Department used over 270 million gallons of water and 9 million kilowatt hours of energy to keep our grass green and our facilities lighted. On top of that, we used 200,000 pounds of fertilizer and 32,000 gallons of fuel. We can do better. A stronger commitment to environmental values and philosophies will translate into a stronger and healthier community and reduced costs for the City.

The Department's goal in undertaking this strategy is resource preservation including reductions in the use of increasingly scarce and costly resources. At the same time, the Department desires to provide both active and passive recreational experiences that engender a sense of pride and stewardship in the community.

The following are policy initiatives and projects that the Department believes are vital to establishing itself as an environmental leader in the community.

Policies

“No Mow” Policy. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to allow park properties designated as Natural Areas, Linear Parks, or Undeveloped to remain in their natural state. Mowing and other vegetative management practices will be limited to areas immediately adjacent to developed portions of these parks such as*

- ▼ Low-water use plantings welcome golfers to the **Tierra Verde Golf Course**.





▲ Large parts of the **River Legacy Parks** are undeveloped to preserve their natural beauty and wildlife habitats.

parking lots, trail edges, public roads and private property.

Chemical Application Policy. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to promote environmentally sensitive vegetation management practices by phasing out the use of hazardous pesticides and reducing overall pesticide use in favor of a more comprehensive and less chemical-dependent approach.*

Resource Conservation. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to promote maintenance practices and new technology that reduce water and electricity use in order to minimize dependence on these important and costly resources.*

Sustainable Design Policy. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to consider and, wherever feasible,*

incorporate sustainable design materials and construction methods, including the use of renewable or recycled materials, in all new projects.

Natural Area Park Classification Policy. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to seek out and acquire Arlington's last remaining significant natural areas and to add a new park classification - Natural Area - to the park system. Prior to this master plan, there were only four park classifications - Neighborhood, Community, City and Linear. This new park classification recognizes the continuing interest in opportunities to experience nature and to relax in*

natural settings that traditional parks generally do not provide. This classification mandates that any park properties designated as Natural Areas shall remain in a natural state with minimal development and for passive-only recreational activities. A description of Arlington's park classification system appears in Appendix B.

Pedestrian and Non-Vehicular Transportation. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to actively promote pedestrian and non-vehicular linkages between parks, neighborhoods, and commercial centers throughout the city. The Department will place a strong emphasis on linear park acquisition and development, continued development of the Veloweb (a regional trail system) and pedestrian improvements to and from commercial centers, schools and neighborhoods.*

Projects

- Continue the acquisition of sensitive floodplain habitats and creeks for linear park development.
- Aggressively pursue the acquisition and preservation of unique properties such as Bird's Fort and the expansion and environmental restoration of unique properties such as the Village Creek Historical Area.
- Classify the following properties as Natural Areas: Blackland Prairie, Randol Mill Woods (area north of I-30), Crystal Canyon, O.W. Fannin, and portions of O.S. Gray and River Legacy Parks. Additional sites are being considered for acquisition.
- Assist in the development and implementation of citywide air quality and energy management plans.
- Implement a program that rewards employees for innovative practices that reduce resource consumption and save money.
- Train staff in environmentally-friendly maintenance practices similar to those used at the MLK Athletic Complex and Tierra Verde Golf Course.
- Continue support for the River Legacy Foundation and the environmental education programs that it annually provides to thousands of school children.
- In partnership with other public and/or private entities such as schools, churches, neighborhood groups and businesses, consider the use of city-owned vacant lots in the more densely developed parts of the City as "community gardens" or lightly developed pocket parks that provide much needed and aesthetically pleasing public open space.

- Develop an internal environmental leadership committee to track the department's success in reducing resource consumption and to consider new and different environmental initiatives to keep the Department at the forefront of environmental leadership.

Taking Care of What We Have

Like most other large cities across the country, Arlington has a significant backlog of unfunded park maintenance projects - from a leaking roof in a golf course clubhouse to creek erosion that threatens to undermine park roads and trails. Keeping up with these projects is so costly that many projects have not been funded in a timely fashion, thereby creating an estimated \$40 million backlog of maintenance projects.

▼ Stairs in Veterans Park xeriscape garden





▲ Roadways in **Vandergriff Park** are showing their age.

While this is a large amount, other communities are facing backlogs in the hundreds of millions. We're not there. Not yet. Addressing this situation now before it becomes a major burden is critical to the success of the Department. The following are policy initiatives and projects that the Department believes are vital to maintaining the quality park system that we currently enjoy.

Policies

Capital Maintenance Funding. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to seek alternative funding sources to meet its capital maintenance requirements. The current backlog of maintenance projects will cost more than \$40 million to execute, yet the annual budget for capital maintenance is only \$439,900. At the present rate, this backlog is growing faster than needed repairs can be made. While additional appropriations of general funds are recommended for this purpose, the City's current fiscal situation makes this increasingly unlikely. The Master Plan recommends specific alternative funding sources to address this issue.*

Performance Fund Policy. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to ensure that the Performance Fund meets the goals of recovering direct program costs and invests in facility improvements.*

Projects

- Develop an asset management database system to track and prioritize capital maintenance needs.
- Explore possibilities for specific alternative funding sources, including:

City Sales Tax. A 1/4 of a cent dedication of sales tax revenues would generate approximately \$9.6 million annually for park improvements. Adopting this course would enable the City to address the current maintenance backlog in a reasonable period of time. It would also fund capital intensive facilities like a natatorium or recreation center.

Public/Private Partnership Projects. Determine appropriate opportunities for complementary private development that would generate funds to invest in the park system. One example includes the opportunity to develop a privately-owned food and beverage retail area adjacent to the Harold Patterson Sports Center.

Facility Surcharge Fees. Implement a facility surcharge fee on high-maintenance facilities like pools, recreation centers and the Tennis Center. These fees would be directly re-invested in the facilities at which they were collected.

Cell Tower Lease Opportunities. Encourage wireless providers to lease space in appropriate locations within parks, and use lease revenues plus up-front payments to make repairs and improvements to the park system.

Park Bond Funds. In the absence of alternative funding for capital maintenance, the Department should focus a larger portion of future park bond funds on renovation projects.

- Develop a capital maintenance plan for each major facility.
- Continue to work closely with field staff and park professionals in other communities to revise park and facility design guidelines with best practices that reduce repair and maintenance costs.

Employee Satisfaction and Development

The Arlington Parks and Recreation Department's success hinges on the performance and satisfaction of our employees. The Department understands the importance of selecting, developing and retaining talented employees. To this end, we are focused on selecting the right people, developing organizational bench strength and improving the work environment.

Our focus on the above will ensure a department that works efficiently, provides quality care and stewardship of our parks and park facilities, and strives to meet the highest levels of citizen satisfaction.

The following are policy initiatives and projects that the Department believes are vital to developing and maintaining a highly satisfied and knowledgeable workforce.

Policies

Customer Service. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to provide our citizens with exceptional customer service.*

Projects

- Continue the successful Parks Leadership And You (PLAY) mentoring program that helps develop awareness and understanding of competencies required for future leadership and management roles.
- Develop a comprehensive training model and deploy staff resources to provide a renewed focus on customer care and retention and to oversee all aspects of customer service training.

- ▼ Parks and Recreation Department employees volunteer at the **Annual Daddy-Daughter Dance.**



- Continue annual workplace assessments.
- Focus on specialized training and skill development such as Situational Leadership, performance planning and review, 5S maintenance practices, employee selection, key competencies for supervisors, and customer service.
- Promote value of and encourage use of employee recognition opportunities.
- Implement enhancements to the hiring process that will help match the skills and interests of employees to their job responsibilities.
- Expand new employee orientation program in order to familiarize staff with department operations.
- Develop succession plans for all levels of management.
- Identify alternative funding resources for training programs.
- Process improvement teams / problem solving training.

Invest Wisely - New Facility Development

Given limited resources, choices that best represent the desires and needs of the community must be made to ensure that major recreation facilities are provided in a fair, equitable and efficient manner.

The following are policies that the Department believes are vital to efficiently providing the community with major park and recreation facilities.

Recreation Centers. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to provide larger, regionally oriented indoor recreation centers in each of the City's six sectors (North, East, West, Central, Southeast, and Southwest). Existing facilities, with the exception of the Elzie Odom Recreation Center, should be renovated and expanded to better accommodate these larger service areas. A new recreation center, built to this larger standard, is currently needed in the southeast sector.*

Aquatic Facilities. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to provide diverse aquatic opportunities throughout the City including a higher-priced aquatic experience (family aquatic centers), a moderately priced aquatic experience (shallow-water play pools) and a free aquatic experience (sprayground facilities).*

The Department plans to provide three of the larger, regionally oriented family aquatic centers (Randol Mill, Stovall and Webb); three smaller, shallow-water pool facilities (Helen Wessler and Howard Moore, and one additional in west or south Arlington); and, up to six sprayground facilities (Brantley Hinshaw, California Lane, Don Misenhimer, and three others in locations to be determined).

Existing facilities in Vandergriff Park and Woodland West Park will be appropriately maintained and kept in service until such time that these facilities are no longer operable and/or require major reconstruction. At such time, these facilities should be taken out of service and replaced with another amenity. For example, Woodland West pool could be replaced with a sprayground and Bolden pool could be replaced with an indoor aquatic center or skate facility.

Athletic Facilities. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to provide two large, regionally oriented, sports centers at the existing Harold Patterson Sports Center and the future North Sports Center on N.W. Green Oaks Blvd.*

Additionally, a majority of Community Parks will provide varying levels of formal athletic fields, with the primary focus on Randol Mill, Dunlop, MLK, Vandergriff and Cravens parks.

Golf Facilities. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to focus future golf capital funding towards improvements at existing courses. The current three 18-hole courses and one nine-hole course are adequate to meet Arlington's population at build-out. These facilities provide affordable opportunities for a wide range of abilities. Re-investing in these facilities, as opposed to constructing additional facilities, will be the focus.*

Tennis Court Facilities. *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department for the Arlington Tennis Center (ATC) to be the main venue for city tennis programs and services. Additional courts and amenities are planned in the third and final phase of construction. Historically, tennis courts have been provided in both community and neighborhood parks. However, because of their significant construction and ongoing maintenance costs, any new courts will be located in community parks and the ATC.*

Existing tennis facilities in neighborhood parks will be appropriately maintained and kept in service until such time that these facilities are no longer operable. At such time, some of these facilities may be taken out of service and replaced with more desirable amenities as determined by neighborhood preferences.

► **Howard Moore Pool** is one of two shallow-water facilities in the Arlington Parks and Recreation system.

Unique/Specialized Facilities *It is the policy of the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department to provide new types of recreation facilities based on citizen interest and support. Two such facilities, dog parks and skate parks, have generated great interest among Arlington citizens and in other municipalities across the state and nationwide. The number and placement of these facilities are proposed as follows:*

Dog Parks. The Department will construct an initial facility for dogs to run off-leash, preferably adjacent to the City's Animal Services facility. Based upon the success of this initial facility, one or two additional facilities will be considered in other parts of the city. Funding for the construction and maintenance of these facilities will be primarily raised through a combination of fundraising activities and dog park user fees.

Skate Parks. With authorized funding and/or community contributions, the Department will construct small, beginner-to-intermediate oriented skate facilities in two or three different parts of the city. If these facilities prove successful, a larger, intermediate-to-advanced facility will be considered in a more central part of the city. This larger facility would likely require a user fee and could be constructed in conjunction with a private partner.

Innovation and community benchmarking will continue as part of the Department's ongoing effort to deliver innovative park and recreation programs and facilities.



Estimated Cost for Priority Projects 2004-2014			\$94,755,000*
<i>Existing Funds by Fund type</i>			
Bonds	\$10,480,000		
Grants	\$3,230,000		
Park Fees	\$3,000,000		
Certificates of Obligation	\$800,000		
Total Existing Funds		\$17,510,000	
<i>Projected Funds by Fund type</i>			
Future Bonds	\$43,000,000		
Future Grants	\$5,000,000		
Future Park Fees	\$12,000,000		
Future Certificates of Obligation	\$3,000,000		
Total Projected Funds		\$63,000,000	
Total Estimated Funding 2004-2014			\$80,510,000
FUNDING SHORTFALL			\$14,245,000

*Does not include an inflation factor

To implement this Master Plan and achieve our vision of great parks and exceptional recreation, there must be adequate funding that the Department can rely upon to provide new services where needed and to keep our existing facilities properly maintained.

The table above outlines both current and projected funds for park and recreation acquisition, development and renovation over the next ten years.

To achieve the goals of this Plan, expected funding will need to be supplemented with other funding sources. This Plan outlines more than \$94 million in priority projects, leaving a need for more than \$14 million in additional funding to achieve our vision. Additional funding will also be needed to address existing and future capital maintenance projects not included in these funding priorities.

With the City's fiscal outlook more uncertain than in years past and with grant programs becoming increasingly competitive, the Department must seek out and maximize

non-traditional funding sources, while encouraging alternative methods of service delivery and park maintenance. Alternative funding sources under consideration include the following:

- Sales tax
- User fee increases
- Tournament fee increases
- Facility surcharge fees (dedicated for capital maintenance)
- Lease arrangements, including cell towers and complementary private development opportunities
- Corporate sponsorships and advertising at appropriate locations such as athletic fields
- Development of a "friends of the park" advocacy organization for fundraising
- Increases to park development fees to keep pace with the rising costs of land and park construction
- Neighborhood park matching funds programs to encourage neighborhood groups to raise funds for improvements to these parks.

Earlier in this Plan, eight goals and five strategies for success were outlined to help guide the Department in establishing priorities and annual work plans. Taken together, these strategies and goals articulate an overarching philosophy aimed at creating a strong sense of place in Arlington's parks. Specifically, this philosophy emphasizes:

- Quality over quantity
- Re-investment
- Leveraging resources
- Responsible stewardship, both fiscal and environmental.

Based upon this general philosophy, the Action Plan identifies specific projects that, taken together, will produce these sought-after results by strategically investing the Department's limited resources. The final section of the Plan, entitled "Project Recommendations," spells out in detail the Department's priority projects and initiatives, both citywide and within specific subareas of the City. First, however, it is important to look at the Plan from a broader perspective to see where and how the Plan allocates future funding. The Plan gives the highest priority to projects that:

- (1) Re-invest in existing parks to address aging infrastructure and ensure that parks are attractive enhancements to the community.
- (2) Emphasize neighborhood park acquisition and development to improve the quality of neighborhoods by making them more accessible and connected to other neighborhoods and commercial centers.

- (3) Emphasize linear park acquisition and development to preserve valuable and sensitive floodplains and open space.
- (4) Involve key park land acquisitions and enhancements that preserve remaining natural, cultural and historical properties before they are lost to development.
- (5) Invest in recreation centers as fun, inviting and safe places that encourage healthy lifestyles and community interaction.
- (6) Improve athletic opportunities and enhance Arlington's reputation as a host for regional tournaments.

The charts on the next page demonstrates how this Plan allocates future funding by park and facility type.



▲ Wildlife abounds in Arlington's large and diverse park system.

► Rainbow waterjets at **Randol Mill Family Aquatic Center**

■ **Citywide Funding by Park and Facility Type**

Neighborhood Parks	22%
Recreation Centers	22%
Linear Parks	21%
Aquatics	8%
Natural Areas/Nature Trails	7%
Golf	6%
Athletics	5%
City Parks	5%
Community Parks	5%

The chart above demonstrates that 65 percent of parks and recreation funding is planned for linear parks, neighborhood parks and recreation centers - the Plan's three highest investment priorities. These services are intended to be accessible venues where citizens can come together for relaxation, healthy lifestyles and family fun. Projects involving natural area acquisition and nature trail development are expected to receive seven percent of total funding, a substantial allocation for this new and increasingly sought-after type of park.

Another useful perspective to ensure an appropriate funding distribution is to compare proposed funding for *new development* vs. *renovation* vs. *acquisition* projects.

■ **Citywide Ten-Year Funding Allocations by Project Type**

Development	55%
Renovation	33%
Acquisition	12%

This breakdown demonstrates the Department's balance of competing demands. The majority of funding is allocated for development of existing park properties, but the proportion set aside for renovation is much greater than the previous master plan, which allocated approximately 20 percent. Acquisition assumes a smaller, yet still important role, as the Department emphasizes bringing properties into the parks and recreation system with unique environmental, historical and cultural significance.



Citywide Projects and Initiatives

In addition to the listing of specific priority projects by planning area, this section identifies major citywide projects and initiatives that are not located within an individual planning area, the location is undetermined, and/or the funding source is unidentified.

Indoor Pool / Natatorium. The Hugh Smith indoor pool was built more than 40 years ago and, given this long lifespan, it is unclear how much longer this facility can operate without reconstruction. While necessary repairs and improvements are made annually, the facility is approaching the end of its useful life. Therefore, we must plan for how we will provide an indoor aquatic facility in the future.

With an estimated cost of \$8 to \$9 million in today's dollars, a natatorium project is unlikely to be funded by the City of Arlington alone. The Department should continue to seek out multiple partners for what could be a regional facility.

Public Art. The Department should encourage private groups to donate public art such as bronze statues for display in public parks and plazas. Current plans by a non-profit group to develop and maintain an area dedicated to public art in Meadowbrook Park should be encouraged in that location and elsewhere. The Department itself should play a role in providing public art as well. Innovative playground designs often involve "sculptures" that are both fun and visually attractive. Moreover, certain cultural or historical locations, for example, can be greatly enhanced by bronze sculptures depicting a historical event and should be considered as a park enhancement.

Park Entrance Beautification. Park entrances and edges are opportunities to enhance the aesthetics in every part of our community. Many more people drive by a park every day

than drive into a park, and a beautiful entrance will add to their enjoyment and appreciation of the park system. Beautifully landscaped park entrances can act both as a statement of quality for the Department as well as attractive enhancements to the greater community.

Downtown Central Park. Every great city has a great downtown and every great downtown has great public open spaces, plazas and/or parks. An important part of revitalizing this community is to develop a central meeting place, whether it is a plaza or a park, that is fun and inviting. This area should not only be programmed as a public space, but invite activity that helps drive new retail and office development.

While the Department has a significant interest and role to play in the development of such a public space, this must be a community effort with funding from many sources, both public and private.

Park Landscaping Emphasis. Traditionally, parks were designed primarily to offer beautiful landscapes where people could get away from the hustle and bustle of city living to rest and relax. Over the years, however, park design began to encompass activity-oriented amenities like play structures, tennis courts, basketball courts and other similar improvements. As this has occurred, the emphasis on parks as places for attractive landscapes became secondary to the popularity of interactive amenities.

Arlington's park system is relatively new by historical standards, with most of its development occurring in the past 20 years. The design of our City's parks has been very amenity-oriented. While the Department has constructed landscape amenities such as ponds and walking trails in natural environments, the focus has been on play amenities rather than landscape enhancements.

Neighborhood parks are our most accessible and visited parks, and are primarily amenity-oriented. The Department will balance this emphasis with a renewed focus on low-maintenance natural landscapes that improve the aesthetic appeal of our parks.

Dog Parks / Skate Parks. Maintaining Arlington's reputation for innovation means identifying park design and recreation trends and determining if they may satisfy an unmet need in this community. Two such trends are dog and skate parks. These facilities are proving very popular in communities across the country and there is every indication that they will be very popular here in Arlington.

The Department should seek out partners to assist in raising funds for the development of these facilities.

Park Accessibility and Vitality. Making our parks and park facilities accessible means looking for opportunities to develop pedestrian connections to schools, neighborhoods and commercial activity centers. It also means planning our parks in conjunction with the adjacent land uses so that our parks are integrated into the community, not apart from it.

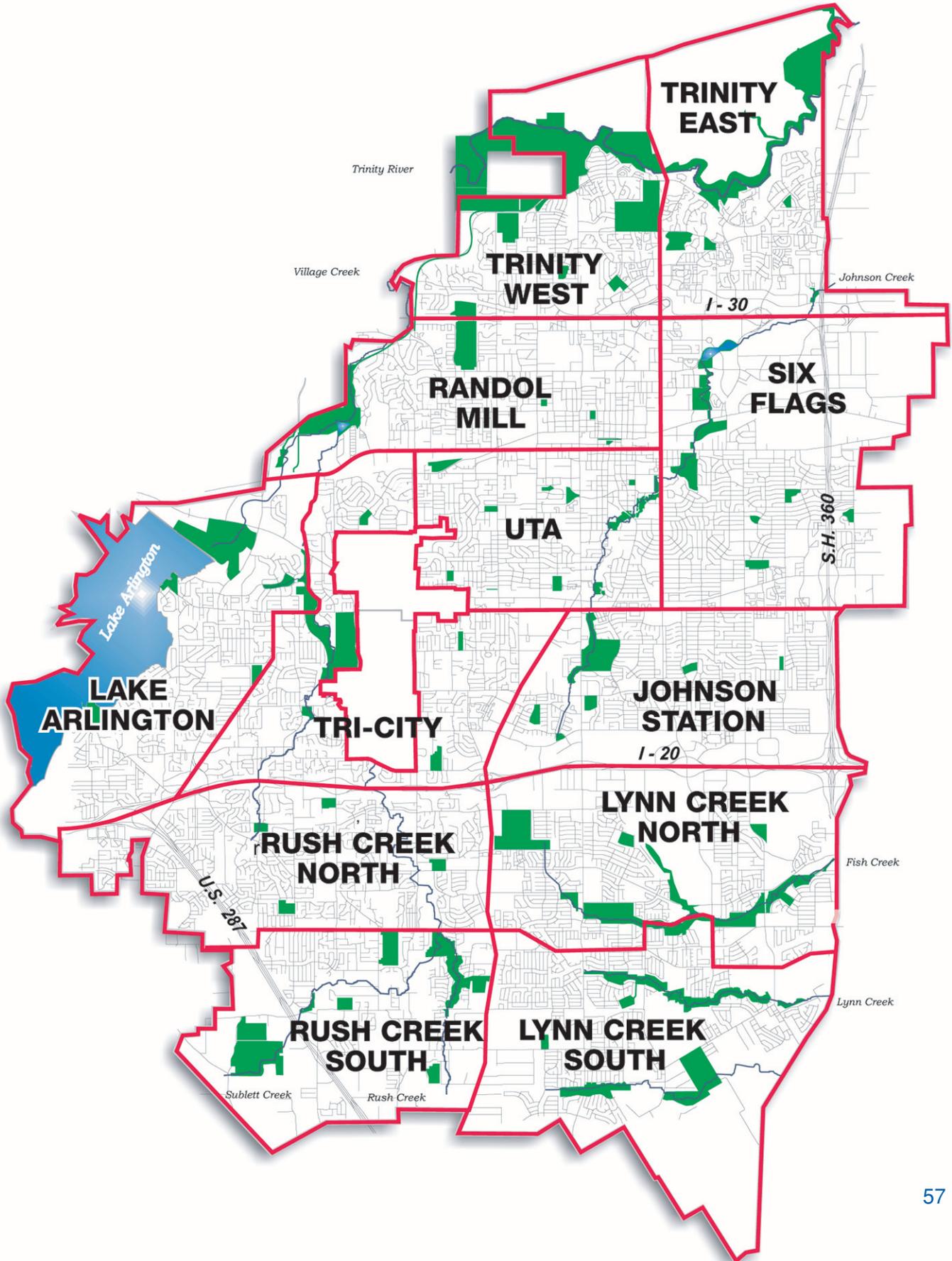
We can create exciting and accessible environments by planning ahead. For example, a family should be able to walk to a park, check out a library book, and have lunch all at the same place.

By pursuing opportunities for collaboration with other departments and the private sector, we can make our parks more accessible while at the same time making them more inviting as fun and family-friendly places.

▼ Pedestrian bridge, **River Legacy Parks**

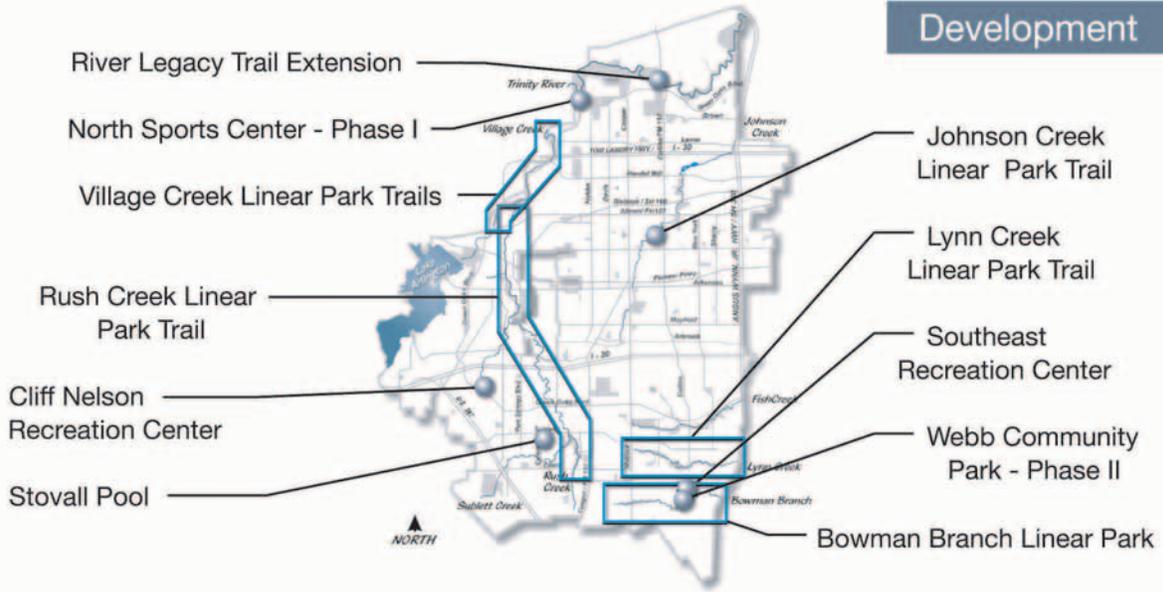


Project Priorities By Subarea

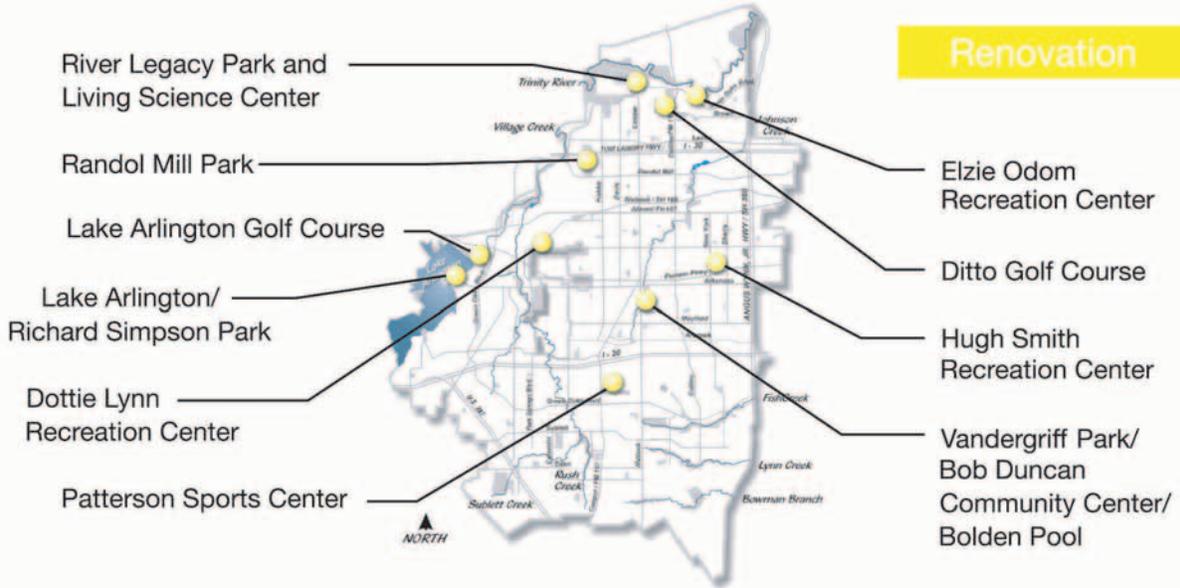


Major Project Priorities - Projects Over \$1 Million

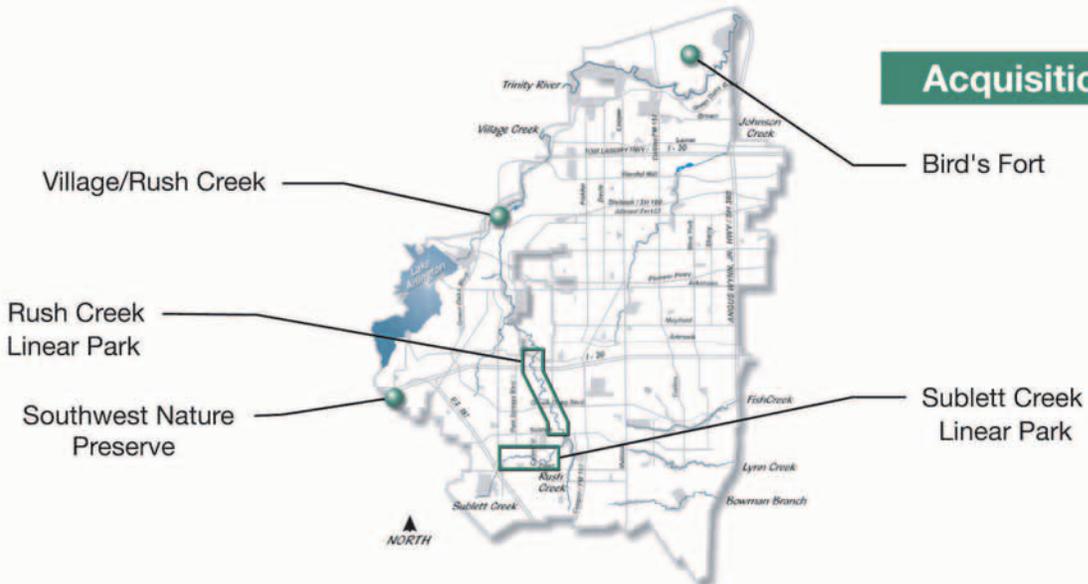
Development



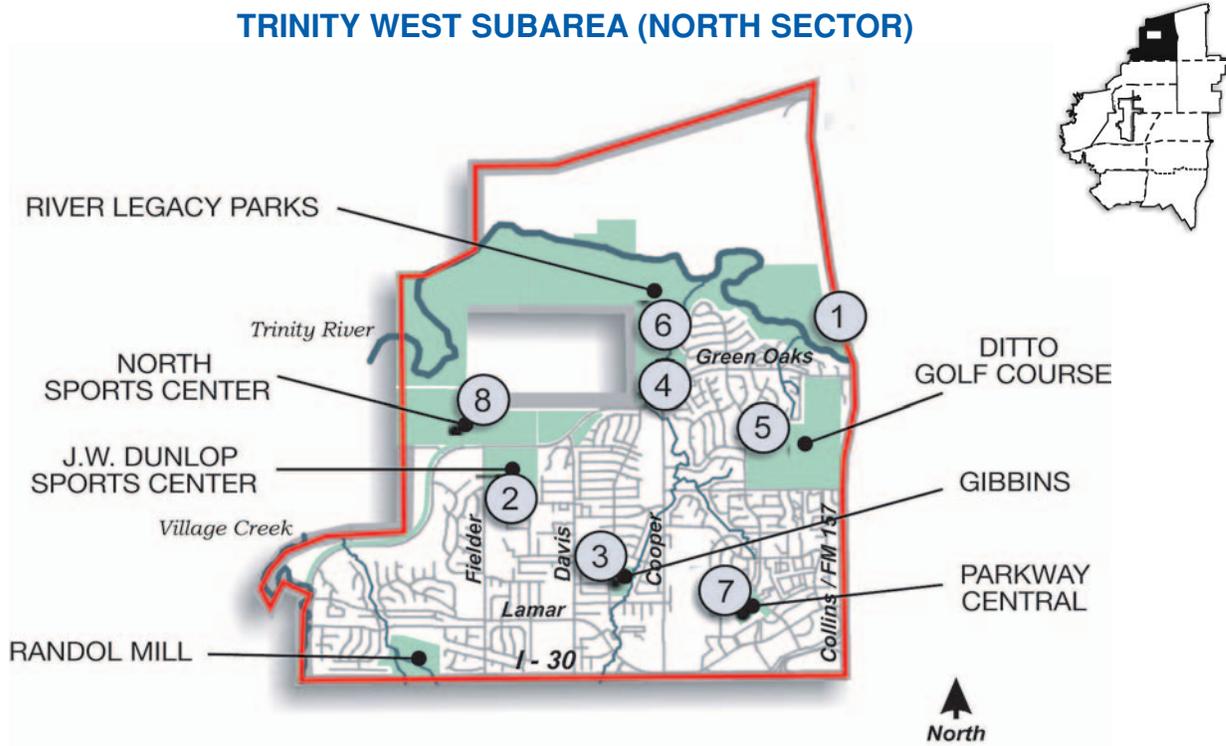
Renovation



Acquisition



TRINITY WEST SUBAREA (NORTH SECTOR)

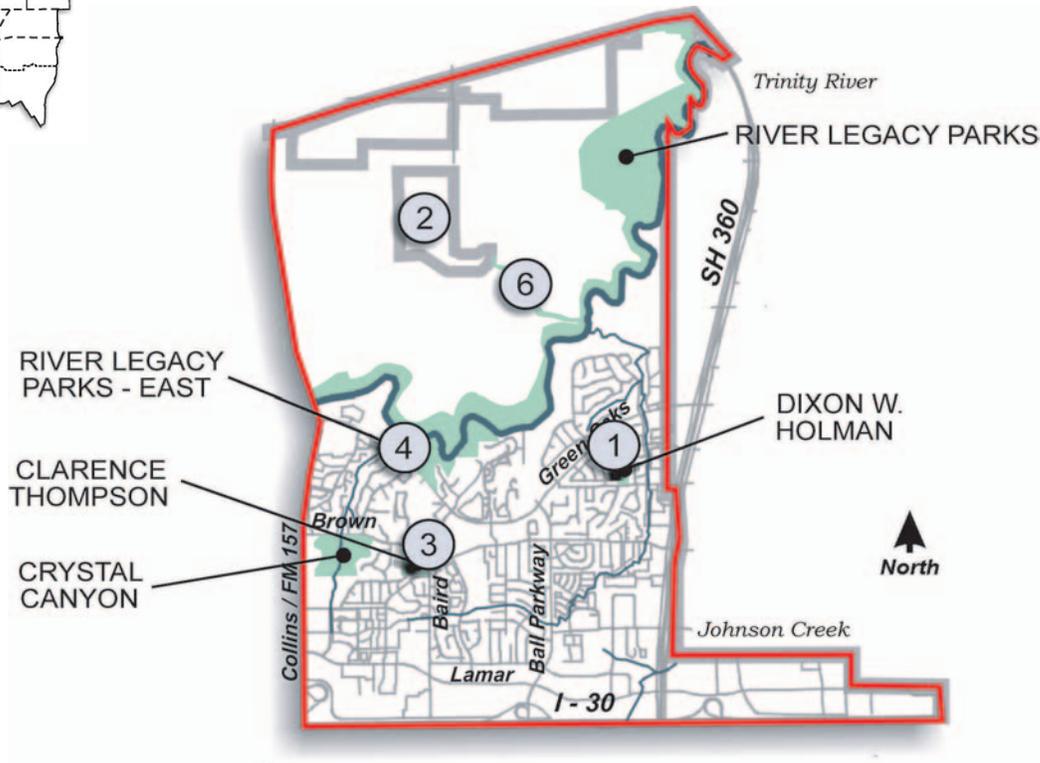


- 1 Project:** River Legacy Trail Extension* (Existing Grant)
Description: Trail Extension, pedestrian bridge over Trinity River, parking lot, entrance off of FM 157.
- 2 Project:** Dunlop Sports Center (Improvements and Renovation*)
Description: Enlarge and light ballfield; construct concession/restroom building, area lighting; renovate playground.
- 3 Project:** Gibbins Park Renovation*
Description: Expand playground; renovate soccer field, walking trail, picnic facilities.
- 4 Project:** RLP Science Center Renovation
Description: Matching funds for grants.
- 5 Project:** Ditto Golf Course Improvements
Description: Reconstruct clubhouse, group pavilion; improve course; renovate parking lot.
- 6 Project:** River Legacy Park Renovations/Restrooms
Description: Roadway and parking renovations, erosion repairs, playground improvements, construction of additional restroom facility.
- 7 Project:** Parkway Central Park Renovation
Description: Reconstruct tennis/basketball courts, playground renovation, walking trail, erosion repair.
- 8 Project:** North Sports Center - Phase 1
Description: Parking Lot, soccer fields, trail connection to River Legacy Parks, small pavilion, related infrastructure.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$5,815,000
Renovation	\$4,350,000
Acquisition	0
Total	\$10,165,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

TRINITY EAST SUBAREA (NORTH SECTOR)

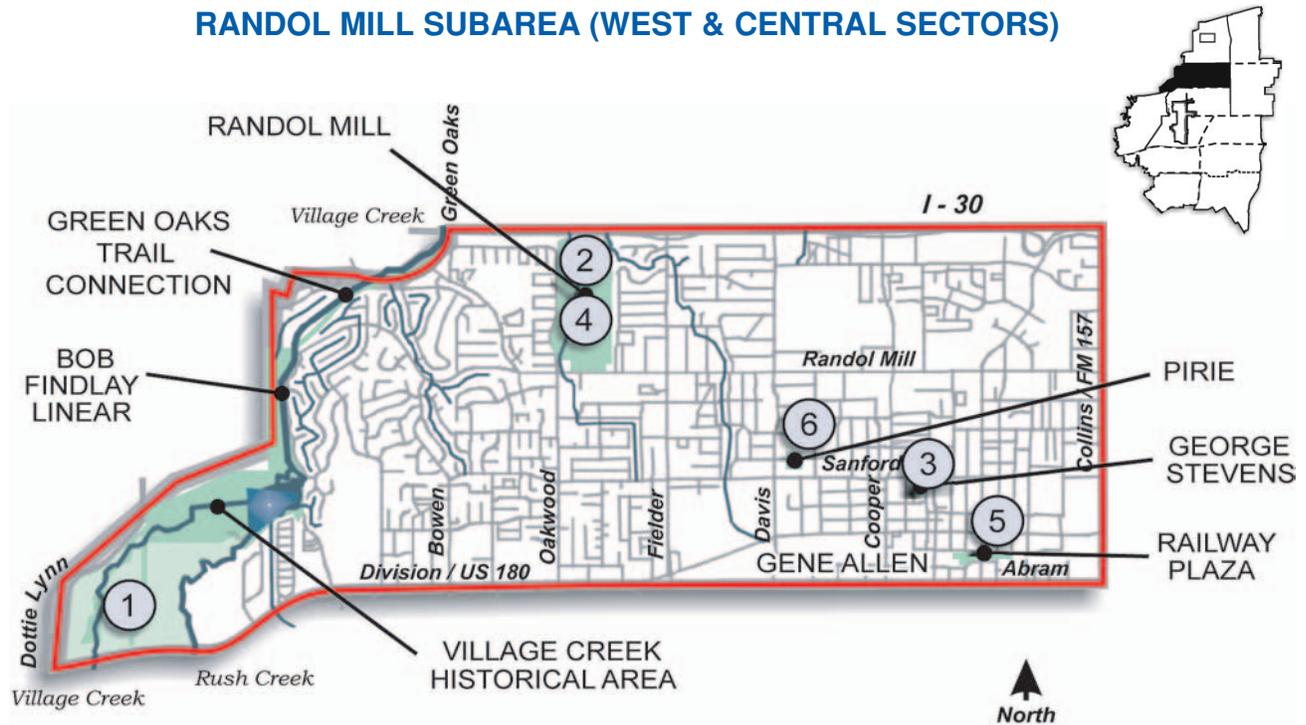


- 1 Project:** Dixon Holman Park - Phase 1*
Description: Playground, walking trail, picnic sites, small pavilion, landscaping.
- 2 Project:** Bird's Fort Acquisition
Description: Land acquisition.
- 3 Project:** Clarence Thompson Park Renovation
Description: Renovate playground, construct sprayground, athletic field improvements, parking lot expansion/renovation, walking trail.
- 4 Project:** Elzie Odom Recreation Center Improvements
Description: Multiple improvements including enlarged weight room, entrance area and rock wall area modifications, soundproofing.
- 5 Project:** Neighborhood Park Acquisition
Description: Land acquisition only (location undetermined).
- 6 Project:** Trail Linkage from Bird's Fort to Trinity Trail
Description: Pedestrian bridge and trail extension connecting Bird's Fort to RLP Trail.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$1,070,000
Renovation	\$2,100,000
Acquisition	\$1,750,000
Total	\$4,920,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

RANDOL MILL SUBAREA (WEST & CENTRAL SECTORS)



1 Project: Village Creek Expansion and Restoration* (Potential Grant)

Description: Provide matching funds for CORPS grant for land acquisition, ecosystem restoration, trails, parking.

2 Project: Randol Mill Field #4 Improvements and trail*

Description: Softball field renovation and lighting; walking trail.

3 Project: George Stevens Park*

Description: Renovate playground, basketball and sand volleyball courts; improve signage and walkways.

4 Project: Randol Mill Renovation

Description: Renovate or reconstruct playground, restroom building, pavilion, pedestrian bridges.

5 Project: Railroad Plaza/Depot

Description: Provide matching funds for the development of this project.

6 Project: Pirie Park Renovation

Description: Playground and parking renovation, small pavilion, landscaping.

7 Project: Neighborhood Park

Description: Acquire land and construct first phase of development (location undetermined).

8 Project: Pocket Park Development

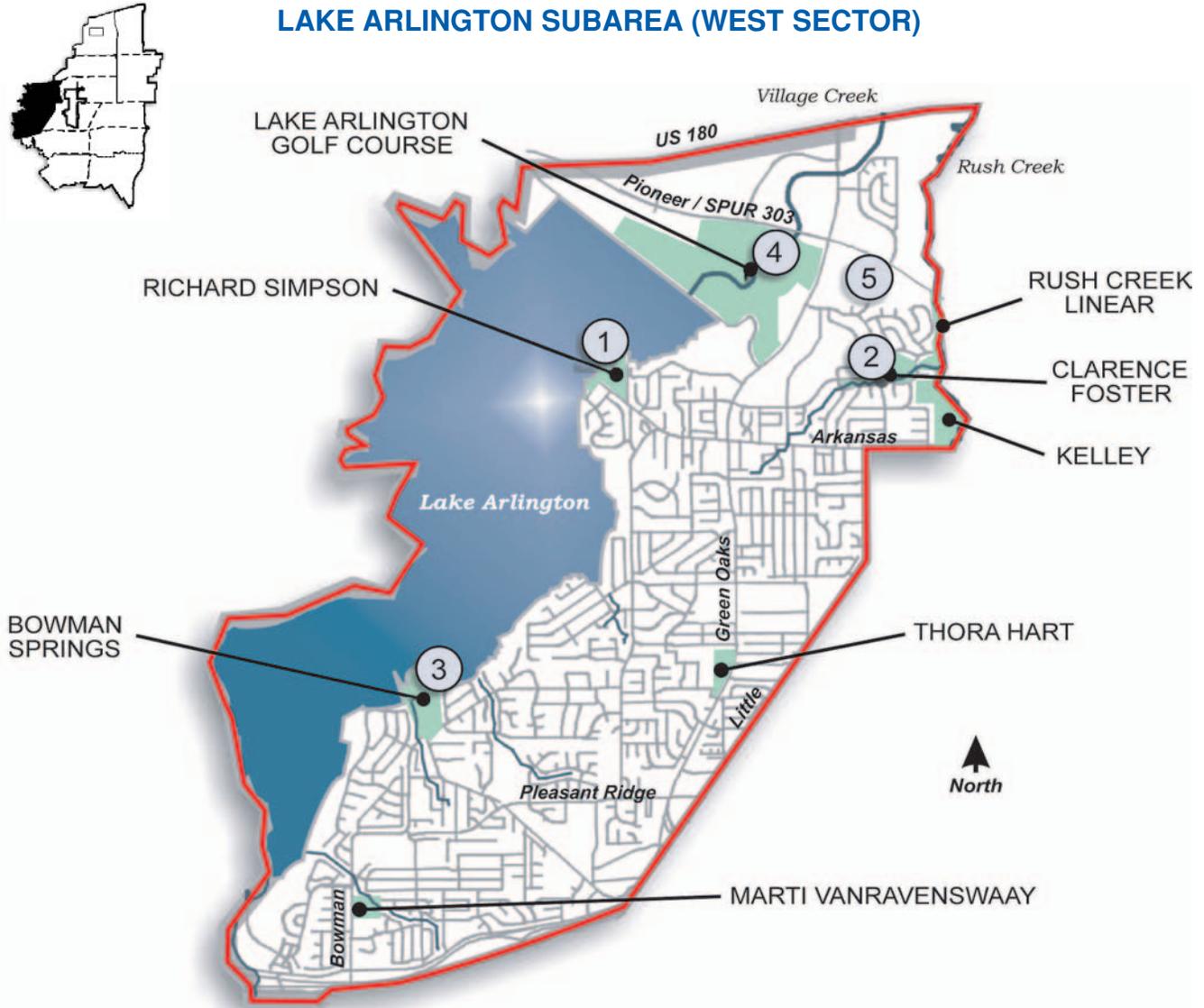
Description: Acquire three to five acre tract; landscaping, benches and small playground (location undetermined).

Total Allocated Funds For:

Development	\$2,150,000
Renovation	\$1,210,000
Acquisition	\$1,350,000
Total	\$4,710,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

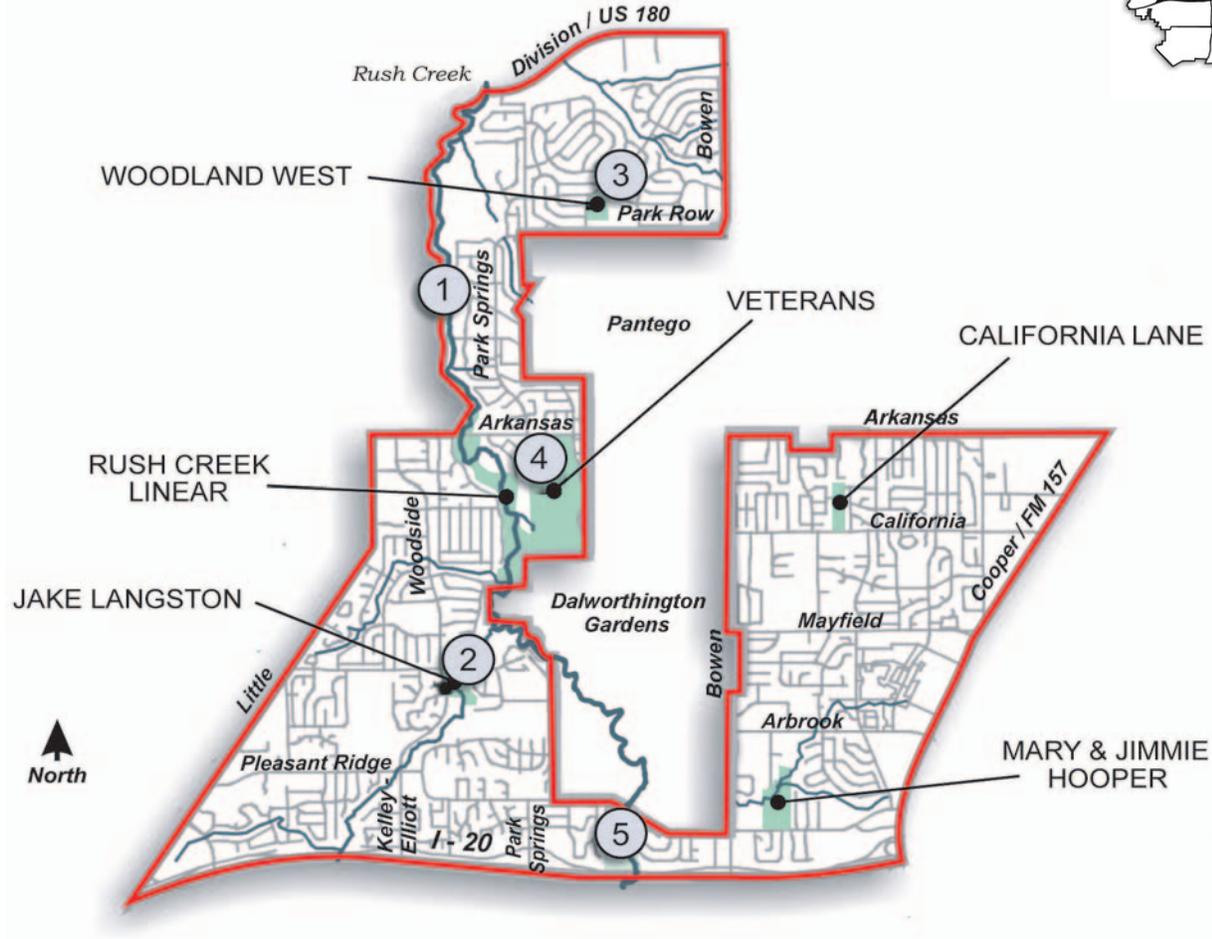
LAKE ARLINGTON SUBAREA (WEST SECTOR)



- 1 Project: Lake Arlington/Richard Simpson Renovation**
Description: Develop site master plan and construct first phase of development.
- 2 Project: Clarence Foster Park Renovation**
Description: Renovate trail, fitness course, and playground; construct small pavilion.
- 3 Project: Bowman Springs Park Improvements/Renovation**
Description: Construct new pavilion, sprayground, walking trail; renovate roadway and parking lot.
- 4 Project: Lake Arlington Golf Course Renovation**
Description: Course improvements, entrance/signage enhancements, cart barn reconstruction.
- 5 Project: Griffin Woods Acquisition**
Description: Land acquisition.
- 6 Project: Neighborhood Park**
Description: Acquire land and construct first phase of development (location undetermined).

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$1,050,000
Renovation	\$4,250,000
Acquisition	\$1,500,000
Total	\$6,800,000

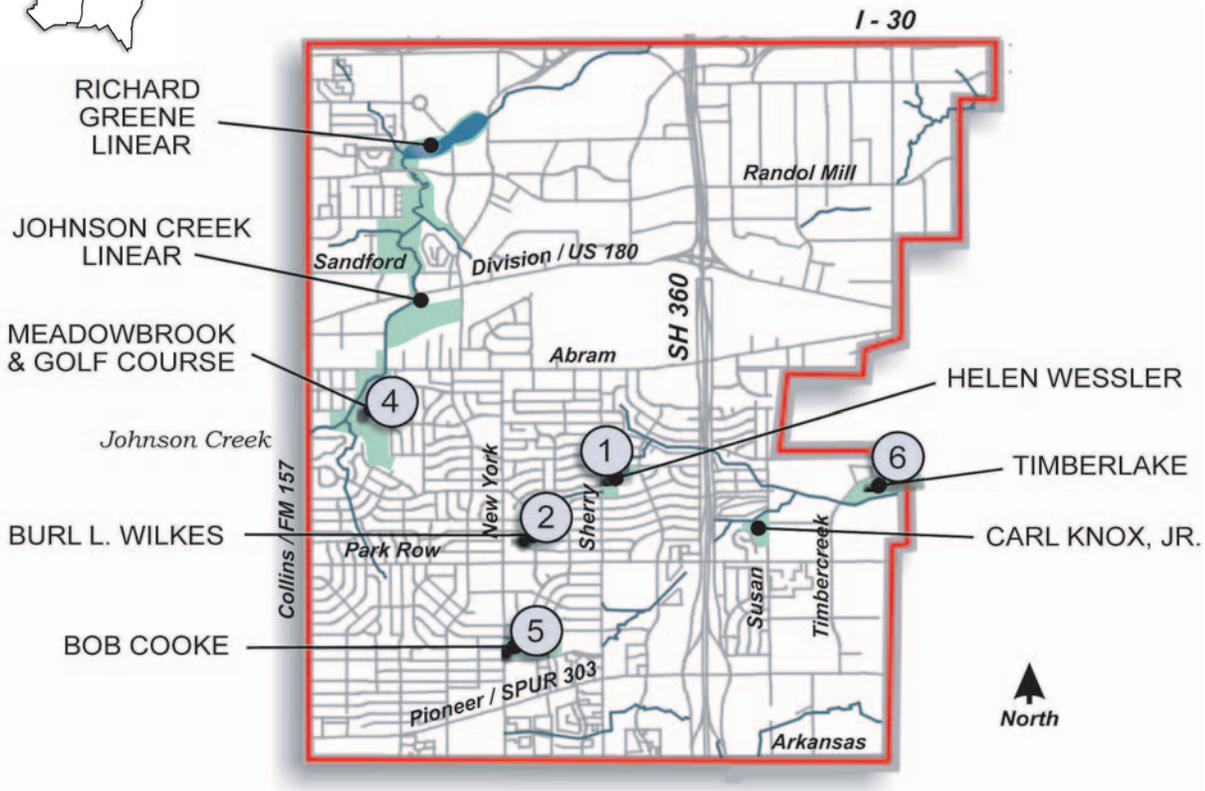
TRI-CITY SUBAREA (WEST SECTOR)



- 1 Project:** Rush Creek Linear Trail - Division to Veteran's Park
Description: Trail Construction.
- 2 Project:** Jake Langston Park - Phase II
Description: Pedestrian bridge and walking trail.
- 3 Project:** Dottie Lynn Recreation Center Expansion
Description: Gym and classroom renovation and expansion.
- 4 Project:** Veterans Park Renovations and Improvements
Description: Various improvements including expanded parking, trails, playground improvements, landscaping.
- 5 Project:** Rush Creek Linear Park - Pleasant Ridge to I-20
Description: Acquisition and trail construction.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$3,225,000
Renovation	\$1,800,000
Acquisition	\$200,000
Total	\$5,225,000

SIX FLAGS SUBAREA (EAST SECTOR)

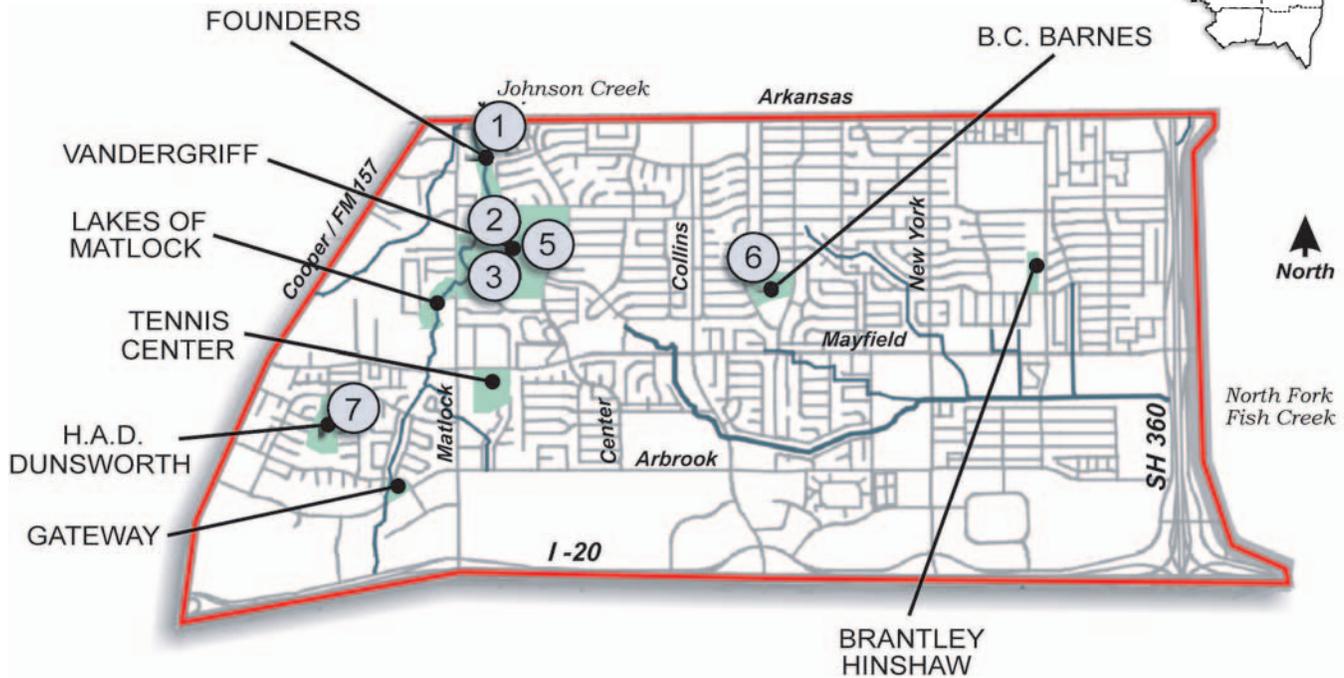


- 1 Project:** Helen Wessler Park Improvements* (Existing Grant)
Description: Creek restoration, playground renovation, additional trail, athletic field improvements.
- 2 Project:** Burl Wilkes Park Renovation*
Description: Playground renovation.
- 3 Project:** Neighborhood Park* (Potential Grant)
Description: Acquire land and construct first phase of development (location undetermined).
- 4 Project:** Meadowbrook Park Improvements*
Description: Construct restroom building and skateboard park facility.
- 5 Project:** Hugh Smith Reconstruction (Potential Grant)
Description: Construct new recreation center.
- 6 Project:** Timberlake Park Improvements
Description: Develop trail, open space, parking.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$1,250,000
Renovation	\$8,025,000
Acquisition	\$500,000
Total	\$9,775,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

JOHNSON STATION SUBAREA (EAST SECTOR)

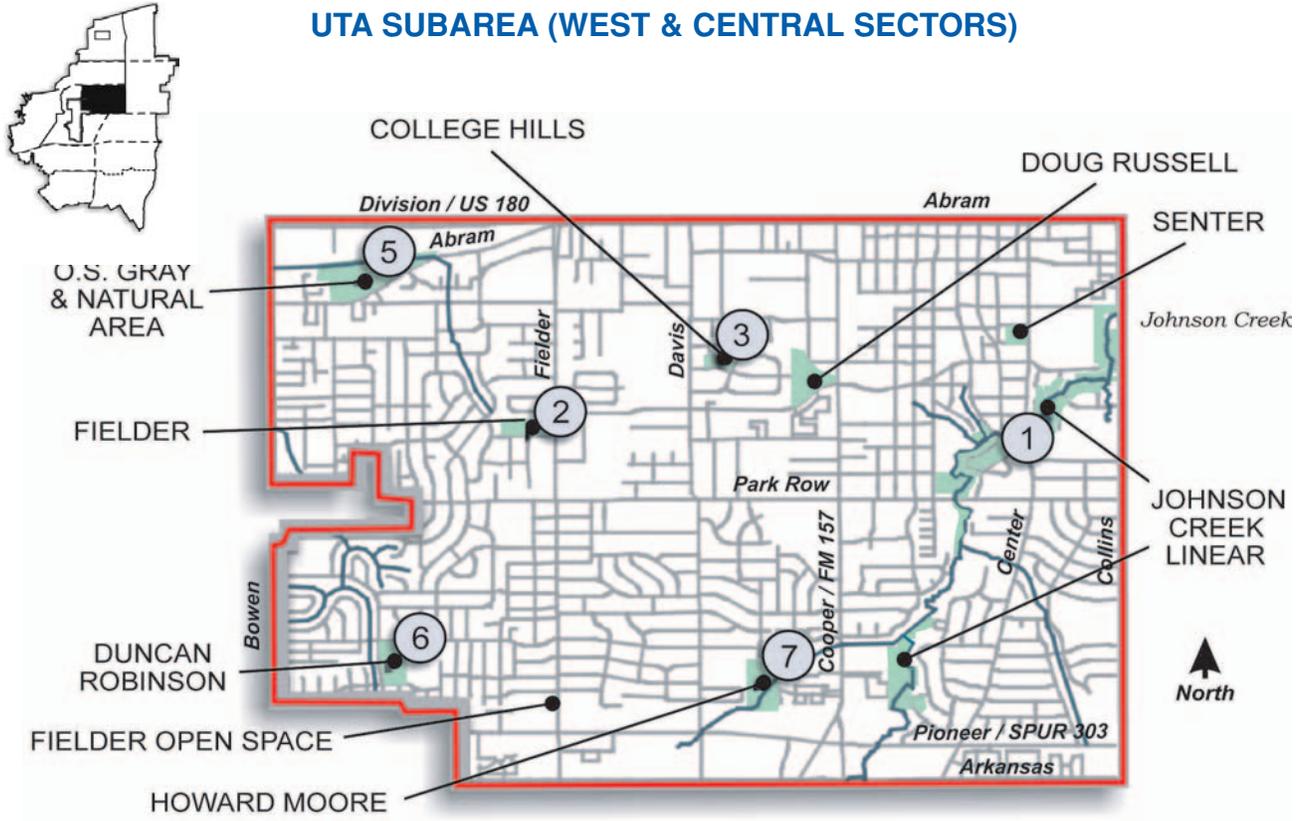


- 1 Project:** Founders Park Trail Renovation*
Description: Reconstruct trail and parking lot.
- 2 Project:** Bolden Pool Renovations
Description: Major renovations and additions including filtration/deck improvements, slide, play equipment.
- 3 Project:** Vandergriff Park Renovations
Description: Road and parking reconstruction, ballfield improvements, concession/restroom construction, additional walking trail, pavilion, lake construction.
- 4 Project:** Neighborhood Park Land Acquisition
Description: Land acquisition only (location undetermined).
- 5 Project:** Bob Duncan Community Center
Description: Interior and exterior renovations.
- 6 Project:** B. C. Barnes Park Renovation
Description: Playground renovation, athletic field improvements, walking trail, landscaping.
- 7 Project:** Dunsworth Park Renovation
Description: Playground renovation, athletic field improvements, walking trail, landscaping.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$1,700,000
Renovation	\$5,400,000
Acquisition	\$750,000
Total	\$7,850,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

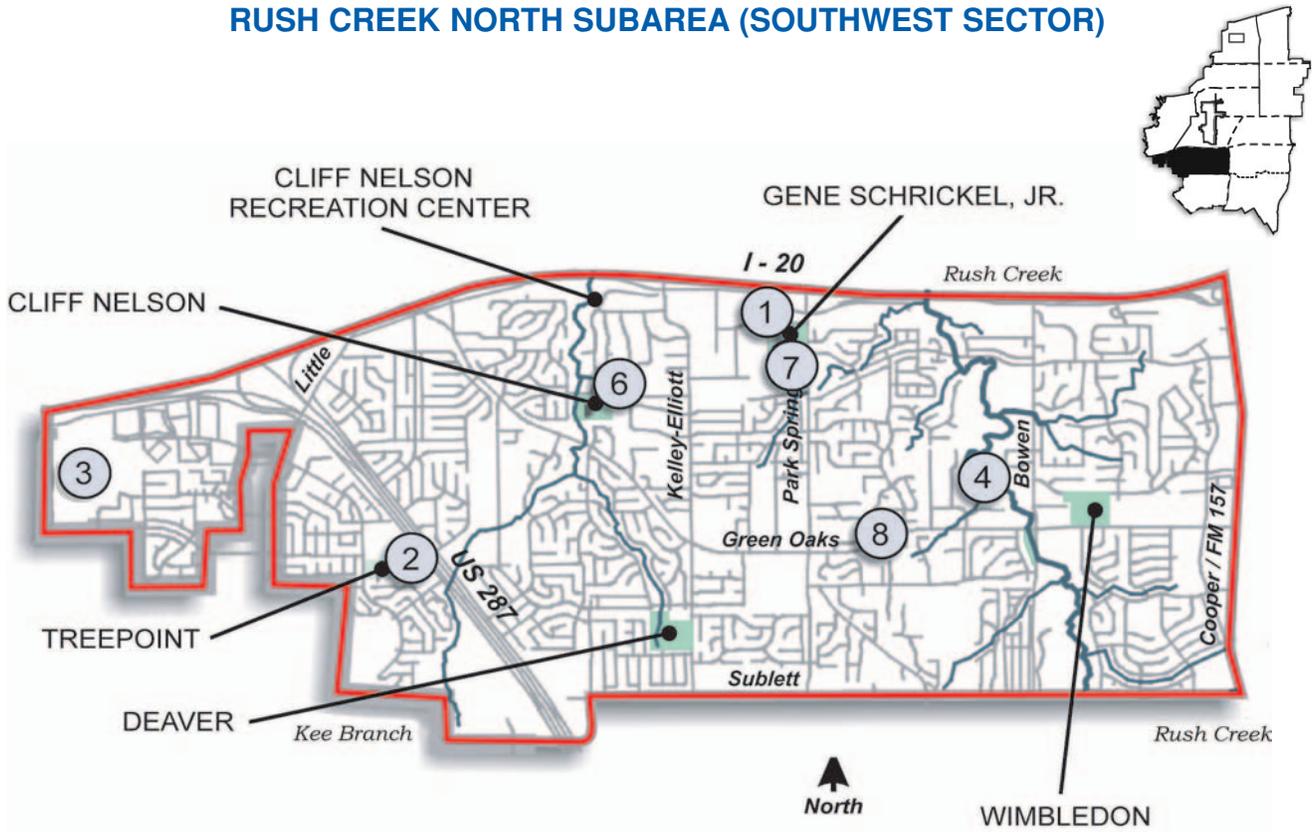
UTA SUBAREA (WEST & CENTRAL SECTORS)



- 1 **Project:** Johnson Creek CORPS Project Park Development* (Grant)
Description: Pavilion, parking lot, picnic sites, trail, pedestrian bridges.
- 2 **Project:** Fielder Park Renovation*
Description: Tennis and basketball court renovation.
- 3 **Project:** College Hills Park Renovation*
Description: Playground renovation.
- 4 **Project:** UTA/Downtown Trail Connection to Johnson Creek
Description: ROW acquisition, pedestrian improvements, trail development (location undetermined).
- 5 **Project:** O.S. Gray Park - Phase 1
Description: Parking, playground, trail, small shelter.
- 6 **Project:** Duncan Robinson Park Renovation
Description: Renovate parking, playground; construct trail, practice field, small shelter.
- 7 **Project:** Howard Moore Park Renovation
Description: Reconstruct roadway, tennis courts, shelter, bridge, playground.
- 8 **Project:** Downtown/Central Park (Potential Grant)
Description: Provide matching funds for a central park/plaza with unique water feature, public art, sitting area, landscaping (location undetermined).

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$3,150,000
Renovation	\$1,050,000
Acquisition	\$500,000
Total	\$4,700,000

RUSH CREEK NORTH SUBAREA (SOUTHWEST SECTOR)

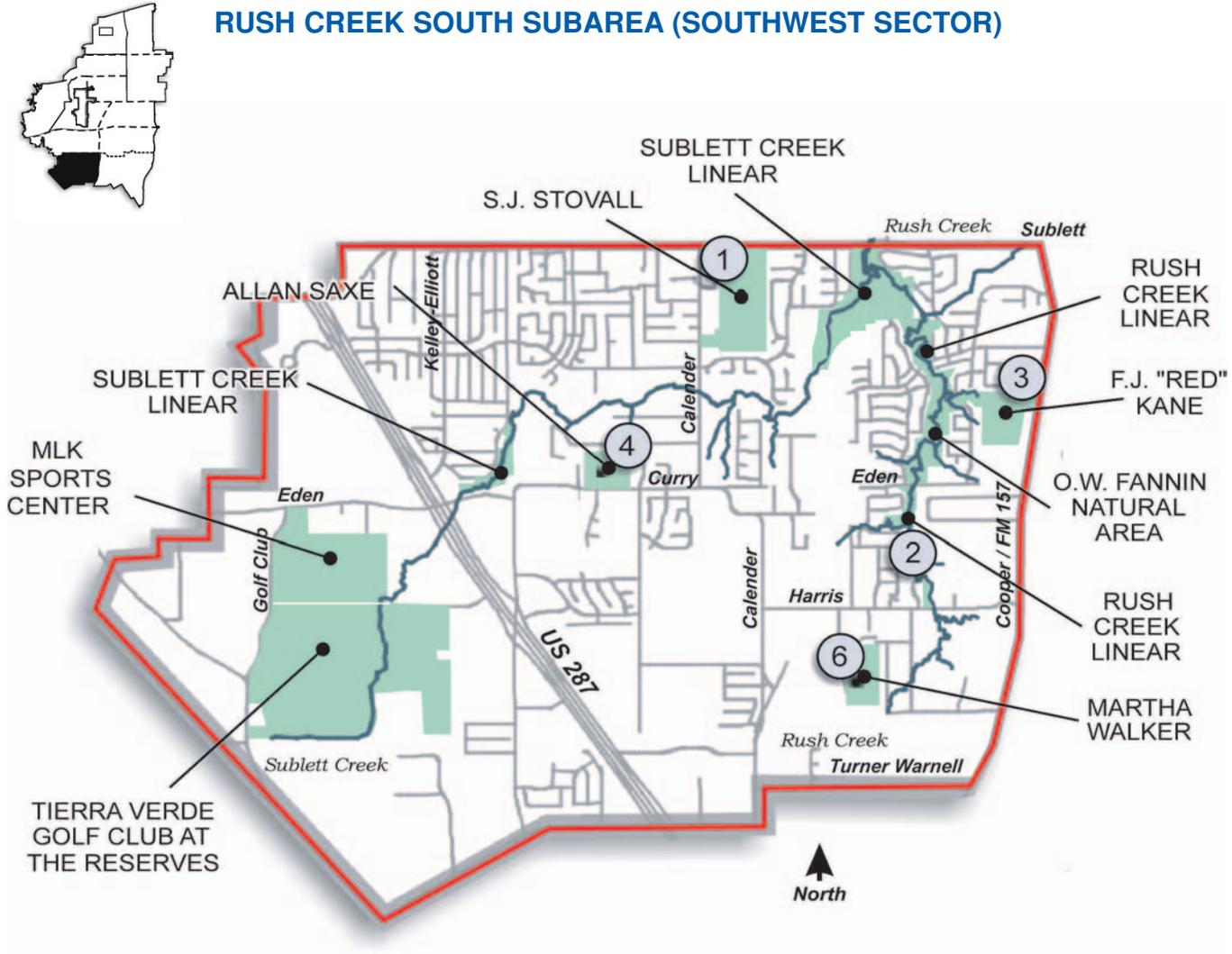


- 1 Project:** Gene Schrickel Jr. Park* (Existing Grant)
Description: Construct first phase of neighborhood park.
- 2 Project:** Treepoint Park Acquisition and Phase I (Potential Grant)
Description: Acquire land and construct first phase of development.
- 3 Project:** Southwest Nature Preserve Acquisition and Development
Description: Acquire 58-acre site and construct nature trail, interpretive signage, parking.
- 4 Project:** Rush Creek Linear Park Acquisition and Development - I-20 to Sublett Road
Description: Land acquisition and trail construction.
- 5 Project:** Neighborhood Park (Potential Grant)
Description: Acquire land and construct first phase of development (location undetermined).
- 6 Project:** Cliff Nelson Recreation Center
Description: Land acquisition and building renovation/expansion.
- 7 Project:** Gene Schrickel Expansion
Description: Land acquisition only.
- 8 Project:** Neighborhood Parks
Description: Construct first phase of development adjacent to Southwest Library.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$7,400,000
Renovation	\$500,000
Acquisition	\$2,650,000
Total	\$10,550,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

RUSH CREEK SOUTH SUBAREA (SOUTHWEST SECTOR)



1 Project: Bad Koenigshofen Pool Development in Stovall Park*

Description: Construct first phase of family aquatic center.

2 Project: Rush Creek/Sublett Creek

Trail - Sublett Road to Harris Road

Description: Trail Construction

3 Project: Red Kane Park - Phase II*

Description: Construct restroom and additional parking.

4 Project: Allan Saxe Park - Phase II*

Description: Construct second phase of development.

5 Project: Neighborhood Park

Description: Land acquisition only (location undetermined).

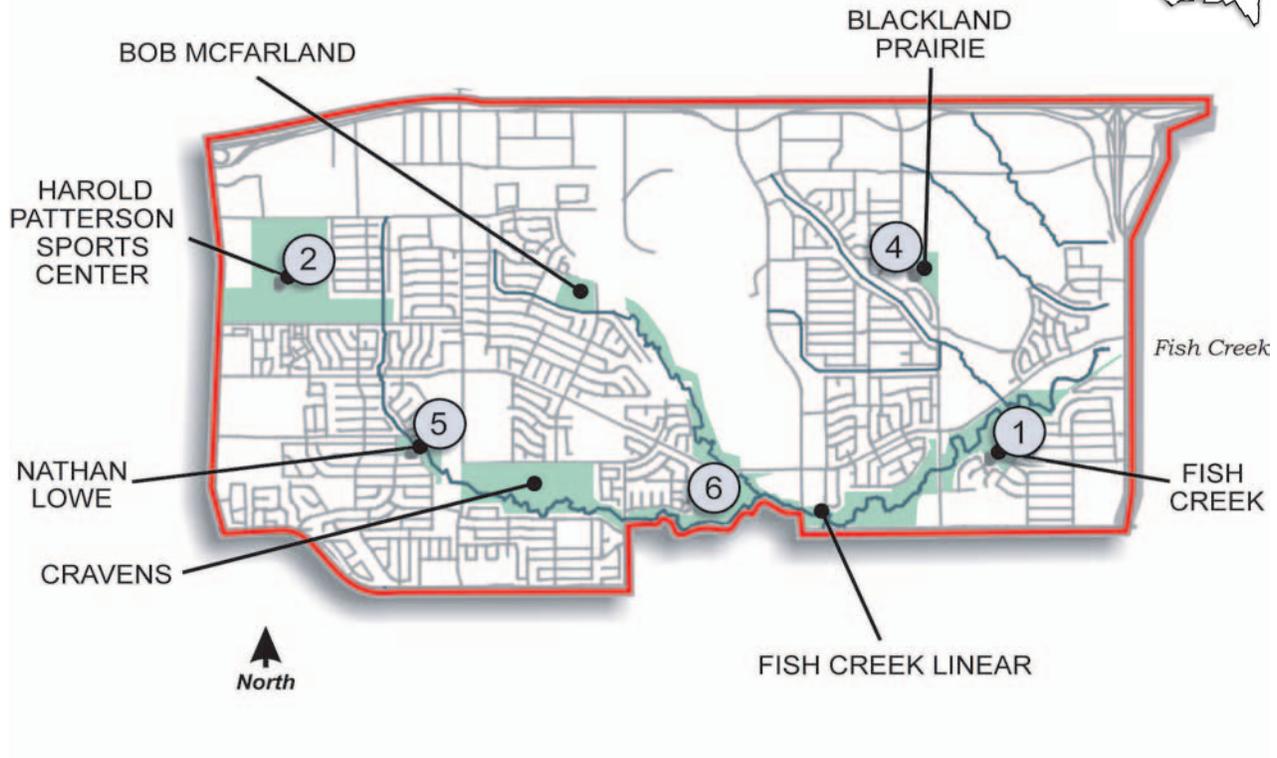
6 Project: Martha Walker Park - Phase I

Description: Construct first phase of neighborhood park.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$6,660,000
Renovation	0
Acquisition	\$1,050,000
Total	\$7,710,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

LYNN CREEK NORTH SUBAREA (SOUTHEAST SECTOR)

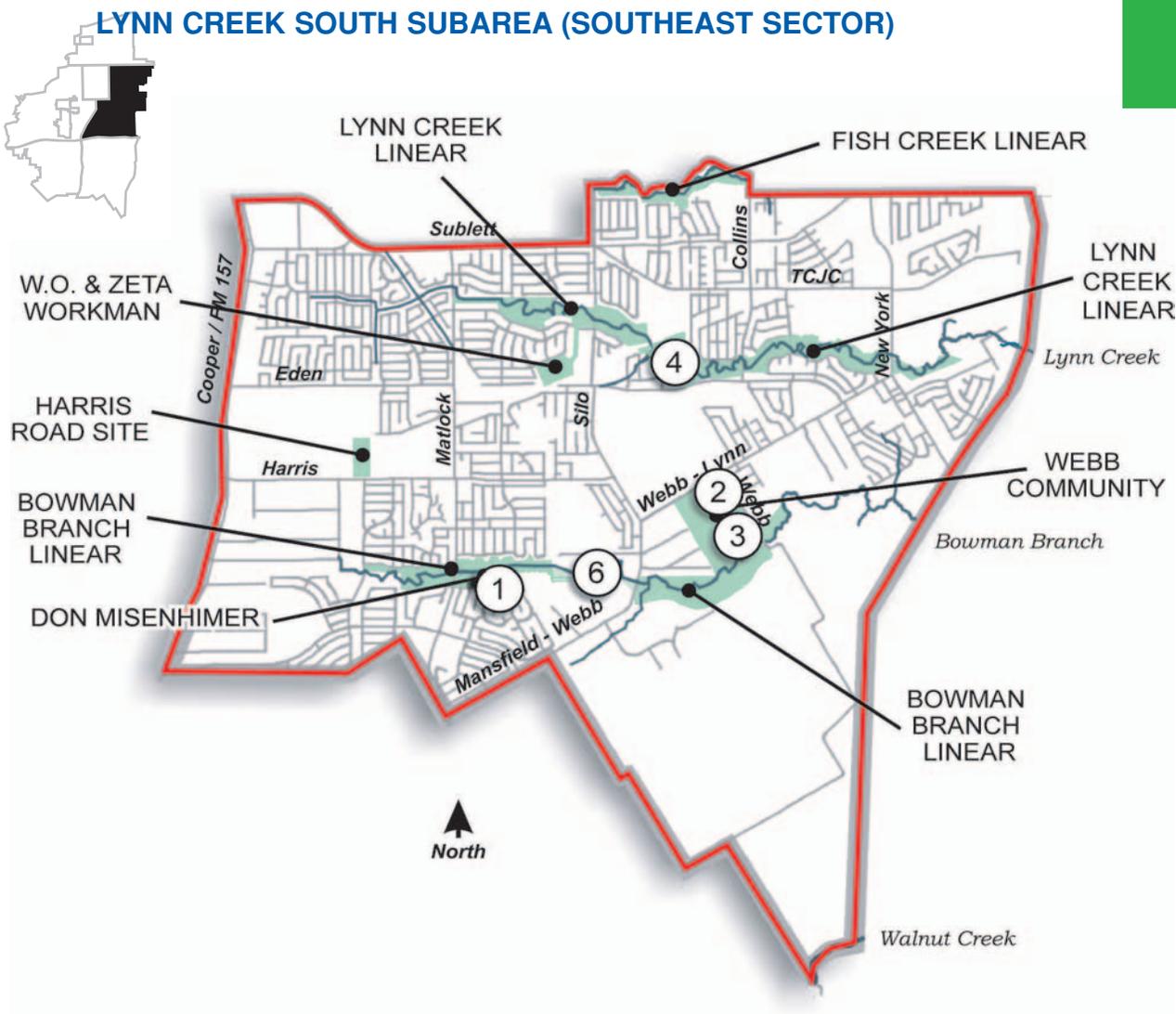


- 1 Project:** Fish Creek Park - Phase I*
Description: Construct first phase of development.
- 2 Project:** Patterson Sports Center Renovations - Phase I
Description: Renovate and update complex to include athletic fields, fencing, lighting, concession/restroom, parking improvements.
- 3 Project:** Neighborhood Park (Potential Grant)
Description: Acquire land and construct first phase of development (location undetermined).
- 4 Project:** Blackland Prairie Improvements
Description: Parking, trail, interpretive signage, fencing.
- 5 Project:** Nathan Lowe Park - Phase I
Description: Construct first phase of development.
- 6 Project:** Fish Creek Linear Park Trail Head and Off-Leash Dog Park
Description: Construct parking, kiosk, trail connection and off-leash dog park adjacent to the Southeast Library.

Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$2,650,000
Renovation	\$2,500,000
Acquisition	\$500,000
Total	\$5,650,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

LYNN CREEK SOUTH SUBAREA (SOUTHEAST SECTOR)



- 1 Project: Don Misenhimer Park***
Description: Construct first phase of neighborhood park.
- 2 Project: Southeast Recreation Center**
Description: Construct approx. 40,000 s.f. recreation center.
- 3 Project: Webb Park - Phase II**
Description: Construct second phase of community park.
- 4 Project: Lynn Creek Trail Development**
Description: Trail construction.
- 5 Project: Neighborhood Park (Potential Grant)**
Description: Acquire land and construct first phase of neighborhood park (location undetermined).
- 6 Project: Bowman Branch Trail - Misenhimer Park to Webb Park**
Description: Land acquisition and trail construction.

■ Total Allocated Funds For:	
Development	\$15,750,000
Renovation	0
Acquisition	\$950,000
Total	\$16,700,000

*Indicates funding is currently authorized.

Plan Fulfillment: Master Plan Goals and Desired Outcomes

As noted earlier, eight goals were established to guide development of the Master Plan and its priorities. For each goal, one or more desired outcomes were also identified to demonstrate linkages between goals and project priorities. These linkages are described below.

Goal 1. Ensure that existing parks and recreation facilities are maintained and updated to provide high quality recreational experiences.

Desired Outcomes:

The Plan recommends a greater share of future park bond funding over the next ten years be used to renovate and update existing parks. This is a strategic shift from previous master plan recommendations.

The Plan recommends that the City actively seek alternative funding sources for capital maintenance and renovation projects.

Goal 2. Focus acquisition and development efforts in areas of the community where parks and recreation facilities and park acreage are below adopted standards.

Desired Outcomes:

The Plan specifies that nearly 45 percent of anticipated funding will be allocated to address new growth needs south of I-20.

Goal 3. Preserve and enhance the City's valuable and sensitive natural resources.

Desired Outcomes:

The Plan adopts a new "Natural Area" park category to signify properties that will be minimally developed, if at all, as places for the protection and enjoyment of the natural environment.

The Plan allocates a substantial proportion of funding for acquisition of natural areas and floodplains for linear parks.

The Plan specifies that high environmental standards will be employed in the development and operations of parks and recreation facilities.

The Plan calls for an added emphasis on developing low-maintenance natural landscapes that improve the visual attractiveness of our parks.

Goal 4. Develop collaborative relationships between the City and other public, non-profit, and private organizations to promote a more effective parks and recreation system.

Desired Outcome:

The Plan specifies that Community Partnering is a strategic goal of the Parks and Recreation Department. It outlines specific policies and examples of projects in which citizens, groups, and private organizations will be encouraged to participate with the Department in developing, improving and maintaining the City's parks and parks facilities.

Goal 5. Improve accessibility to parks for all citizens.

Desired Outcomes:

The Plan emphasizes acquisition and development of neighborhood and linear parks where deficiencies have been identified, to significantly improve park access.

The Plan specifies the development of a trail linkage between Johnson Creek and the UTA/Downtown area.

The Plan describes continued support and development of the Veloweb and other regional trail linkages.

Goal 6. Improve the physical form and appearance of the City as an indicator of quality of life and a stimulus for economic development

Desired Outcomes:

The Plan places a high priority on updating and enhancing the appearance and conditions of existing parks and recreation facilities. Specifically, an initiative to enhance park entrances with unique landscaping and new signage is recommended.

The Plan recommends a strategic shift in funding towards renovating or reconstructing existing parks and park facilities.

The Plan recommends an emphasis on linear and neighborhood park acquisition and development, both of which are considered important to improving Arlington's quality of life.

The Plan emphasizes opportunities for community partnerships to maintain and beautify city parks.

Goal 7. Preserve and enhance city historical, archaeological, and cultural resources

Desired Outcomes:

The Plan places a high priority on preserving properties such as Bird's Fort and the Village Creek Historical Area. The Plan also recognizes additional opportunities to reconstruct or enhance features such as the historic train depot and Marrow Bone Springs.

Goal 8. Improve park safety and security

Desired Outcomes. The Plan recommends how the City can re-invest in the park and recreation system and promote community partnerships to improve community satisfaction with safety-related design and maintenance.

The public will be encouraged to volunteer in parks, and neighborhoods will be encouraged to take greater responsibility for care and maintenance of parks and reducing vandalism.

► Performance by students from **Hugh Smith Recreation Center's Mexican Dance Class**





This Master Plan requires us all to think about the future of Arlington’s parks, recreation and open space in a new way. This new mindset requires careful analysis and planning before we acquire, develop, or renovate parks and recreation resources.

While we may not enjoy some of the past luxuries afforded by rapidly growing population, abundant fiscal resources and plentiful potential park land, exciting opportunities for the development and redevelopment of the park system are plentiful, and this Plan seeks to take advantage of each.

Mark Twain once said, “If you don’t know where you’re going, any old way will get you there.” This Plan is our new roadmap - it is intended to guide our decisions and communicate our priorities. Through it, we know where we are going - to a future where our Great Parks distinguish Arlington as the community of choice for residents and new businesses seeking an attractive and high quality of life location to live and work in the heart of the Metroplex.



City of Arlington
Parks and Recreation Department