



City of Hutto

Agenda

City Council Work Session
Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 6:00 PM
Executive Conference Room
Hutto City Hall
500 W. Live Oak Street

In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act this meeting agenda is posted for public information, continuously, for at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of the meeting on the bulletin board located on the exterior wall of the City Hall building at 500 West Live Oak, Hutto, Texas. This meeting agenda is also accessible via the Internet at huttotx.gov

1. CALL SESSION TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. OTHER BUSINESS

3.1. Presentation on Athletic Fields Study (Jeff White)

3.2. Discussion and possible action related to Work Session topics

4. ADJOURNMENT

5. CERTIFICATION

I certify that this notice of the April 4, 2024 Hutto City Council meeting was posted on the City of Hutto website and the City Hall bulletin board of the City of Hutto on April 1, 2024 before 5:00 P.M.



Amanda Taylor
Amanda Taylor

The City of Hutto is committed to comply with the Americans Disability Act. The Hutto City Council Chamber is wheelchair accessible. Request for reasonable special accommodations must be made 48 hours prior to the meeting. Please email the City Secretary's office at Angela.Lewis@huttotx.gov or call (512) 759-4839 for assistance.

AGENDA ITEM REPORT

3.1.



To: City Council
Subject: Presentation on Athletic Fields Study (Jeff White)
Meeting: Thursday, April 4, 2024
Department: City Secretary /
Staff Contact:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Athletic Fields Study was approved in the FY 24 budget to assess the current state and future needs of athletic fields within Hutto. The study aimed to gather insights from stakeholders, including sports organizations, school districts, Hutto EDC/CDC, and other external agencies, to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to our athletic fields. The study collected data on field conditions, usage patterns, scheduling challenges, and amenities. The study's findings and recommendations will serve as a valuable guide for future investments and improvements in our athletic fields, ensuring that they remain safe, accessible, and conducive to promoting health, wellness, and community engagement through sports.

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

STAFF REVIEW:

FISCAL NOTES:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Athletic Fields Study Draft



DRAFT 2024

Athletic Fields Study



DRAFT 2024
Athletic Fields Study

City of Hutto Team

Jeffrey White, *Director of Parks and Recreation*

Matt Rector, *City Engineer*

Patricia Davis, *Capital Improvement Engineering Manager*

Patrick Tate, *Parks Superintendent*

Cheryl Dickens, *Recreation Coordinator*

500 W Live Oak Street

Hutto, Texas 78634



MHS Planning & Design Team

Hunter Rush, *Partner & Senior Planner*

Zach Clark, *Planner*

Jonathan Povoski, *Graphic Designer*

12222 Merit Drive, Suite 1560

Dallas, Texas, 75251

Acknowledgements

MHS Planning & Design, LLC would like to thank the **following** leaders and volunteers for their input in the development of this plan. A special thanks to the City Council, City Staff and invested citizens for their participation and input during the planning process.

City Admin and Council

Mike Snyder, Mayor

Peter Gordon, Mayor Pro Tem, Council Place 4

Brian Thompson, Council Place 1

Dan Thornton, Council Place 2

Randal Clark, Council Place 3

Dana Wilcott, Council Place 5

Amberley Kolar, Council Place 6

James R. Earp, City Manager

Matt Wojnowski, Assistant City Manager

David Amsler, Assistant to the City Manager

Stakeholders

Brad Laplante, Director of Hutto ISD Athletics

Todd Corporon, President of Hutto Youth Baseball & Softball Association

Wesley Fetter, Vice President of Hutto Youth Baseball & Softball Association

Chris Antoniou, Chief Operating Officer / Business Operations Sting Soccer

Marcus Coleman, Treasurer of the Hutto Economic Development Center

Brent O'Hara, Youth Sports Director Hutto Family YMCA

Executive Summary

In 2023, the City of Hutto enlisted MHS Planning & Design to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of Hutto's athletic fields to identify deficiencies in youth and adult recreational sporting opportunities. This effort was in line with the 2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which highlighted the need for additional athletic facilities. The assessment extensively analyzed sports fields across the Hutto Parks System, taking stock of inventory, pinpointing improvement prospects, and establishing priorities for recommended upgrades. It is important to note that this assessment offers a broad overview of all City-owned athletic fields, and the recommendations provided are conceptual, based on community needs and requirements. Although this plan involved on-site analysis of the facilities, it did not include detailed site surveys, soil analysis, engineering work, or the formulation of final field design.

The Athletic Fields Study began with site specific inventories for each park, assessing field conditions and amenities such as concession/restroom facilities, bleachers, and trash receptacles. City staff provided details on park usage, size, and environmental data on floodways and floodplains. Interviews with key stakeholders including the Hutto Independent School District (HISD), local sports organizations, the Hutto Economic Development Corporation (HEDC), and the Hutto Family YMCA were conducted for deeper insights into field conditions and potential improvements. This information was utilized to create site specific maps and tables to prioritize necessary enhancements.

This study addresses this by recommending the construction of a new Sports Complex which will provide new baseball and softball game fields. The existing Mager Fields can provide game play for U6, overflow area, and rental opportunities. The plan intends to improve the quality of life for residents with recommendations of repurposing one of the field spaces into new recreational space and updated amenities such as site furniture, shade structures, and multi-purpose trails throughout the parks system. With these improvements, the City of Hutto can continue to provide excellent services to its citizens both now and in the future.

These recommendations have been strategically placed throughout the next ten years to allow for an efficient management of the projects. Areas where grant funding can be applicable have been identified, however it is important to note that other funding opportunities may arise. If so, they should be considered which could end up shifting the implementation schedule around. Overall the recommendations from this plan will ensure the athletic needs of the existing and future community members will be met.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	iii	Recommendations	43
Executive Summary	iv	Develop Sports Complex	44
Background	8	Enhance Riverwalk Park	46
Purpose of the Athletic Fields Study	8	Enhance and Re-utilize Fritz Park	46
Benefits of Outdoor Recreation Space	9	Repurpose Creekside Park	47
Previous Plans	10	General Park Improvements	47
Goals	11	Sports Complex Property- Option A	48
Demographics	12	Sports Complex Property - Option B	49
Recreational Trends in Fields	13	Priorities	50
Field Inventory	16	Cost Estimate	53
Amenity Types	16	Funding Opportunities	55
Parks System	17		
Floodplain	18		
Fritz Park	19		
Creekside Park	21		
Riverwalk Park	23		
Public Engagement	26		
Sports Usage	29		
Needs	35		
Athletic Needs	35		
General Needs	38		

List of Figures

Figure 1.1, Population Growth		
Figure 1.2, Population Pyramid		
Figure 2.1, Parks System Map		
Figure 2.2, City Floodplain Map		
Figure 2.3, Fritz Park Aerial		
Figure 2.4, Fritz Park Flood Map		
Figure 2.5, Creekside Park Aerial		
Figure 2.6, Creekside Park Flood Map		
Figure 2.7, Riverwalk Park Aerial		
Figure 2.8, Riverwalk Park Flood Map		
Figure 3.1, Athletic Fields Programmed Hours		
Figure 3.2, Baseball Fields Inventory		
Figure 3.3, Softball Fields Inventory		
Figure 3.4, 2023 and 2024 Field Arrangement		
Figure 3.5, Potential Game Fields Configuration		
Figure 3.6, Potential Practice Fields Configuration		
Figure 4.1, NRPA Standards		
Figure 4.2, Baseball Needs		
Figure 4.3, Softball Needs		
Figure 4.4, Soccer Field Striping	12	37
Figure 5.1, Sports Tourism Impacts	12	45
Figure 5.2, Sports Complex Property - Option A Aerial	17	48
Figure 5.3, Sports Complex Property - Option A Floodplain	18	48
Figure 5.4, Sports Complex Property - Option B Aerial	19	49
Figure 5.5, Sports Complex Property - Option B Floodplain	20	49
Figure 6.1, Short-term Implementation Schedule	21	52
Figure 6.3, Cost Estimate	22	53
Figure 6.2, Mid/Long-term Implementation Schedule	23	54
	24	
	29	
	30	
	31	
	32	
	33	
	33	
	35	
	36	
	36	



Background



Background

Purpose of the Athletic Fields Study

The Hutto Athletic Fields Study 2024 intends to identify gaps in current and future athletic recreational fields and supporting facilities within the City of Hutto. The population in Hutto has been growing rapidly, and this large population growth is expected to continue over the next several decades. This rapid growth is one of the reasons the City conducted this study. It is crucial for the City to be proactive in the development of athletic spaces to maintain their level of service as the community continues to grow.

The objective of the Athletic Fields Study is to ensure that the growing City meets the demand for youth and adult sports with minimal obstacles. This plan will establish standards for the recommended number of athletic fields per capita and will inform staff of how often the fields should be utilized for best maintenance practices. This will also identify the types of athletic facilities that should be constructed and the time frame when construction should occur, potential funding sources, and general areas for new athletic facilities. This study will assist the City Council, Parks Advisory Board, and City Staff in making decisions about future development and budget allocations.



Benefits of Outdoor Recreation Space

Parks provide countless health and wellbeing, economic, and environmental benefits to a community, and as such it is essential to dedicate, develop and preserve parkland.

Health and Wellbeing:

Parks that are freely accessible welcome individuals of all fitness levels to participate in recreational activities. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 30% of Williamson County adult residents are classified as obese. Parks play a vital role in enhancing community health by offering opportunities for recreation and exercise through amenities such as sport fields, courts, trails, and open lawn areas for leisure. Park spaces positively influence mental health and social connections by providing outdoor gathering spaces where residents can engage with others and enjoy time outdoors.

Economic:

Parks are often thought of as a quality of life amenity, and while they do improve the quality of life for the residents, they also positively impact the economy of the community. Parks act as a social hub for residents and visitors, which encourages engagement in the community. Athletic fields are an effective amenity that municipalities can provide to increase economic activity. Local businesses and restaurants often report an increase in customers when games or events are held at nearby parks. Parks help with reducing city spending, as the planting of trees can protect the environment and reduce costs associated with maintenance and mitigation.

According to the U.S. Forest Service, over the course of 50 years, one tree can reduce air pollution control costs by \$62,000, recycle \$37,500 worth of water, and control \$31,250 worth of soil erosion. Overall, parks play a key role in the economy of a city.

Environmental:

Parks contribute significantly to enhancing and preserving the natural environment. The development of park space can accomplish this by increasing pervious surfaces, planting of native species, and improving shade. This is important as climate change can escalate environment concerns with threats such as flooding and extreme heat. The Trust for Public Land conducted a study and found that areas within a 10-minute walk to a park are as much as 6 degrees cooler than areas outside of this range. Trees and vegetation provide shade, filter stormwater, decrease air pollutants, and offer habitats for local insects, birds, and wildlife. With the ongoing land development, the safeguarding of green spaces becomes imperative for Hutto's environmental preservation.

Previous Plans

Hutto SOAR 2040 Comprehensive Plan (2021)

The City of Hutto conducted a city-wide comprehensive plan in 2021 to help plan and guide the growth of the community for the long-term future. This plan analyzes the overall needs of the community and identified parks and recreation needs. The implementation schedule of the Hutto SOAR 2040 Comprehensive Plan noted the parks system must continue to adapt to meet the needs of the community as Hutto grows.



City of Hutto Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan (2020)

The City of Hutto conducted a comprehensive parks and recreation master plan in 2019 to identify critical recreational gaps in the community and opportunities for improvements. The development of the Master Plan provided the City with the opportunity to collect an inventory of the overall Parks System, engage with the community to determine recreational desires, and create and prioritize recommendations. This Master Plan established guidelines for how Hutto could best develop their Parks System and identified the demand for additional sport fields.



Goals

Establishing a set of goals for this plan was crucial. Three specific goals were outlined, each with their own set of objectives.

Goal #1: Assess Existing Athletic Facilities

Objective 1.1 Inventory existing athletic fields

Objective 1.2 Set standards for facility numbers per population

Objective 1.3 Evaluate athletic field usage

Goal #2: Determine Required Facilities

Objective 2.1 Assess the demand for athletic fields

Objective 2.2 Compare field usage with existing field capacity

Goal #3: Identify Expansion Sites

Objective 3.1 Locate potential areas for development

Objective 3.2 Determine recommended number of fields to construct

These objectives align with the three defined goals for the City's plan to address and fulfill the recreational needs of the current and future population.



Demographics

The City of Hutto is located in Williamson County, which is one of the fastest growing counties in Texas. Hutto is rapidly growing with an increase from 14,698 residents in 2010 to 27,577 residents in 2020, for a growth rate of 88%. Based on building permits issued, the City of Hutto estimates there is a population of 46,000 in 2023.

The community in Hutto primarily consists of young families with children. Approximately one third of all residents are below the age of 19, while just over 5% are above the age of 65. This information is important because recreational needs can largely

be determined by the demographics of the community. The Parks System in a primarily young community serves a different purpose than in a community with an older population. Some of the typical recreational amenities desired in younger communities include elements with more active recreational opportunities such as sports fields and courts, playscapes, open spaces, etc.

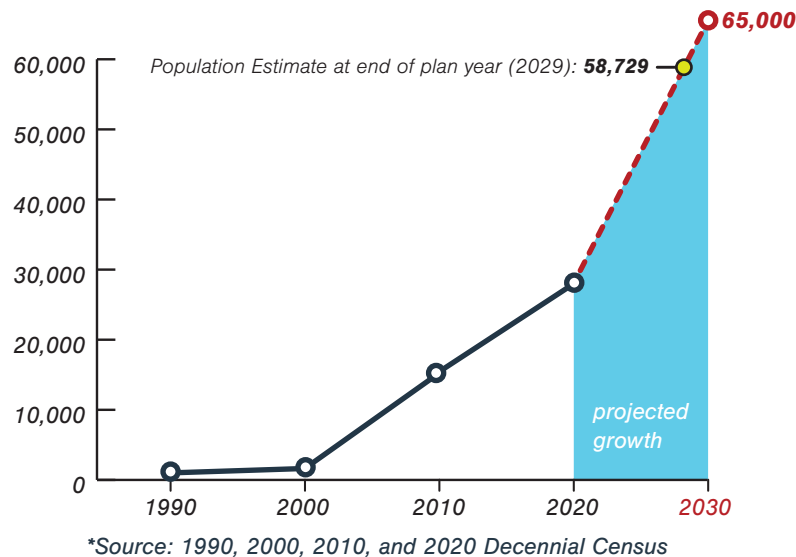


Figure 1.1, Population Growth

65% of Hutto's Population is under the age of 40

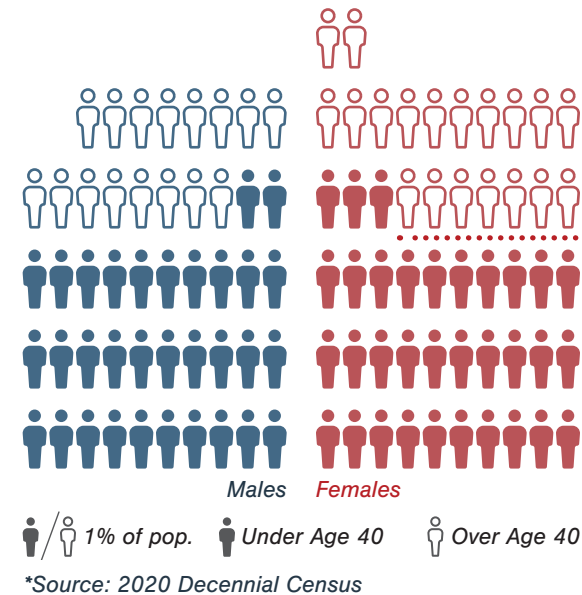


Figure 1.2, Population Pyramid

Recreational Trends in Fields

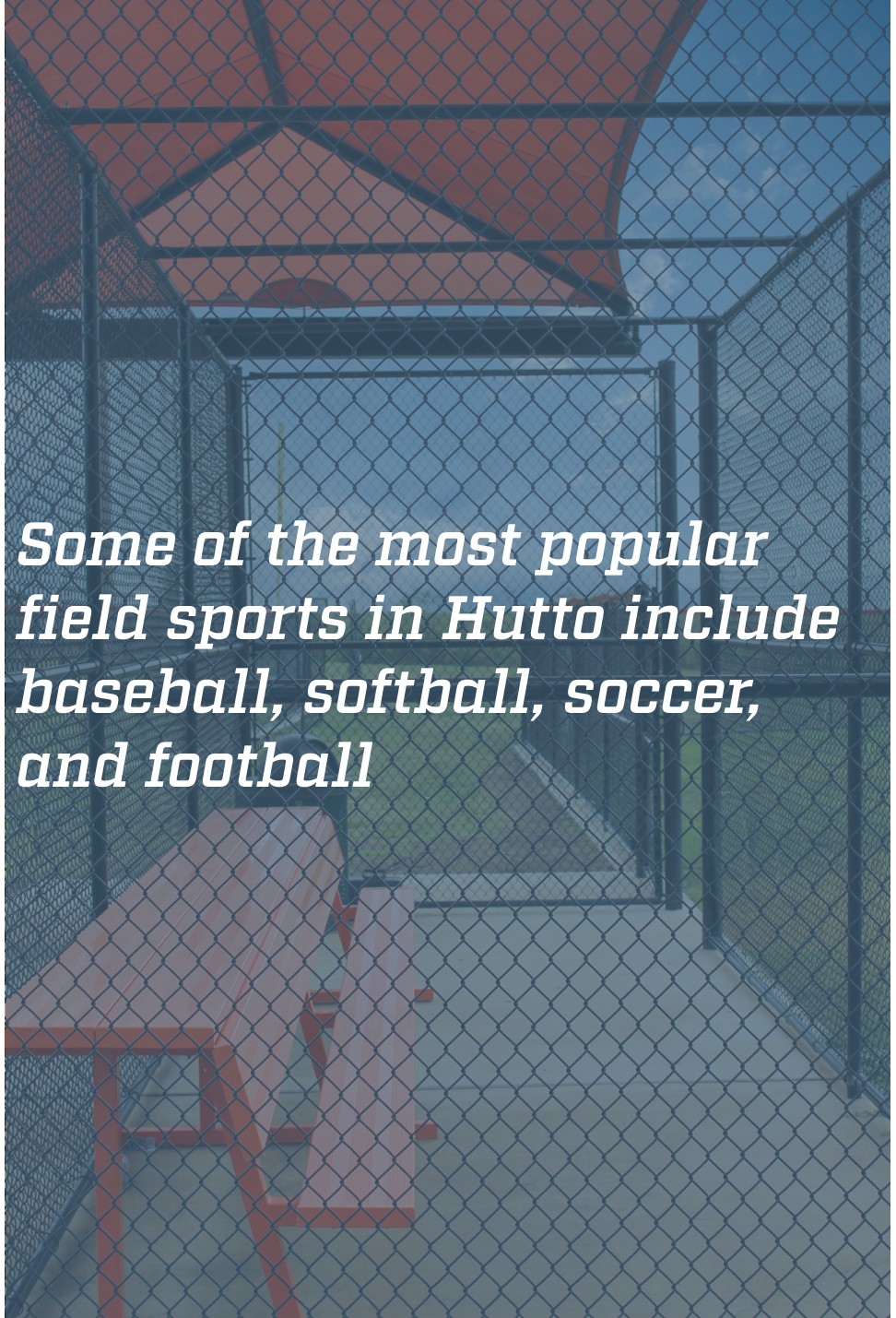
The residents in Hutto participate in a wide variety of recreational activities. Some activities with the highest number of participants include: baseball, softball, soccer and football. The Outdoor Foundation is a non-profit agency that specializes in outdoor recreation and publishes an annual report - the Outdoor Participation Trends Report - which analyzes the national trends of participation in outdoor recreation. The participation data is summarized below:

Baseball:

Baseball is one of the most popular sporting activities throughout the country, with more than 15,000,000 estimated participants nationally. The COVID-19 pandemic temporarily halted the growth of baseball, but the effects of COVID-19 seem short-lived - the current estimate of participants are higher than before the start of the pandemic. Baseball has been growing steadily with a 1.1% average annual growth rate between 2017 – 2021. Hutto baseball organizations are experiencing a similar growth, with an average annual growth rate between 2021 - 2023 of 0.9%. There have been improvements made to the baseball facilities over the past several years that create inviting and safe environments for baseball participation.

Softball:

Softball is categorized by slow-pitch and fast-pitch games. Slow-pitch softball is more popular nationally with more than 6,000,000 estimated participants, while fast-pitch softball is estimated to have more than 2,000,000 participants. In general, the number of



Some of the most popular field sports in Hutto include baseball, softball, soccer, and football

softball participants has been decreasing in recent years. Slow-pitch softball has been decreasing at a quicker rate, with a -4.7% average annual growth rate between 2017 – 2021, whereas fast-pitch has experienced a -2.6% average annual growth rate over the same period. It is important to note that these are national trends and do not necessarily reflect the trends seen in Hutto. The softball organization in Hutto has experienced an increase in participants, with an average annual growth rate of 1.5% between 2021 - 2023.

Football:

Football is broken down into three different categories: flag, tackle, and touch. Flag football is a non-contact form of American football with teams aiming to remove the opponent teams' flag. This is the most popular form of football as it is more accessible and inclusive than tackle and touch. As of 2021 there were an estimated 6,800,000 flag football participants. There are an estimated 5,200,000 tackle football participants as of 2021. It is estimated that there are more than 4,800,000 touch football participants as of 2021. From 2017 – 2021 flag football had an average annual growth rate of 2.3%, tackle football experienced a -0.9% growth rate, and touch football experienced a -3.0% growth rate. The football field at Fritz Park provides opportunities for flag, tackle, and touch football.

Soccer:

Soccer is categorized as an indoor and outdoor sport. Indoor soccer is played over a shorter amount of time than outdoor soccer and has a smaller field and fewer players on the field. There are over 5,400,000 estimated participants of indoor soccer in 2021. Indoor soccer is growing with an average annual growth rate of

1.2% between 2017 – 2021. Outdoor soccer has over 12,500,000 estimated participants as of 2021. The number of participants has been increasing with an average annual growth rate of 1.1% between 2017 – 2021. The soccer organization in Hutto has experienced this same trend, with an average annual growth rate of 1.1% between 2021 - 2023.



HOLMSTROM FIELD
FRITZ PARK

The Hutto Ballfield Association purchased the land for this field from Carl Peterson in October 1963 and it served the city in 1964. It was sold to the city in 1965. It has served as the site of the community ball park for over 50 years. The field is named after Fritz Fritz, a local resident who was a member of the Hutto Ballfield Association.

The Hutto Ballfield Association was founded in 1963. The first members were Fritz Fritz, Carl Peterson and David Peterson. The association has since grown to include many more members. The field is a very popular place for the community to play ball. It is a great place for families to spend time together. The field is also a great place for the community to get together and support their local team.

The Hutto Ballfield Association has a long history of providing a great place for the community to play ball. The field is a great place for families to spend time together. It is a great place for the community to get together and support their local team. The Hutto Ballfield Association is proud to be a part of the community and to provide a great place for everyone to play ball.

Field Inventory

Field Inventory

The City of Hutto provides athletic fields at three of their parks. These fields are utilized by the Parks and Recreation Department, sport affiliate leagues, the Hutto ISD, and the general public when available. Each facility has different maintenance needs based on the sport, field size, location, and frequency of use.

The following pages provide information regarding the baseball, softball, soccer, and football facilities at local parks that are operated by the Hutto Parks and Recreation Department.

Amenity Types

The Hutto Athletic Field Study identified five types of athletic fields:

Baseball Fields: Baseball fields are diamond-shaped facilities, typically with a grass infield and infield mix baselines and pitching mound. The Hutto Parks and Recreation Department provides natural turf at their facilities.

Softball Fields: Softball fields are diamond-shaped facilities, typically consisting of a fully-dirt infield and flat pitching mounds. The Hutto Parks and Recreation Department provides facilities for slow-pitch softball.

Football Fields: Football fields are rectangular surfaces with natural or artificial turf and have marking for yard lines, end zones, boundary lines, and goal posts.

Soccer Fields: Soccer fields are rectangular surfaces with natural or artificial turf and markings along the boundary, penalty area, goal area, midfield line, and center circle. The Hutto Parks and Recreation Department provides soccer fields in various sizes. Organizations utilize movable goal posts and other amenities rather than permanent installations. Field location and size may vary to accommodate changing enrollment demographics, and fields need to rest portions of their area for overall grass maintenance. The City of Hutto designates “no play” areas throughout the season to allow for fields to rest to ensure healthy turf is available.

Practice Fields: The Hutto Parks and Recreation Department provides various athletic practice fields. These facilities provide opportunities for practice for athletics, including baseball, softball, soccer, and football. The practice facilities are typically large open areas that can accommodate a variety of sports; however, some locations do have designated backstops.

Parks System

The City of Hutto has athletic fields at three of their parks. These parks include Fritz Park, Creekside Park, and Riverwalk Park. Fritz Park and Creekside Park are centrally located within the City of Hutto which allows ease of access to the facilities. These two parks provide facilities for baseball, softball, football and soccer. Riverwalk Park is located in the southwestern portion of Hutto and primarily provides opportunities for soccer. These parks can be seen in Figure 2.1, and a more comprehensive analysis of the parks can be found on the following pages.

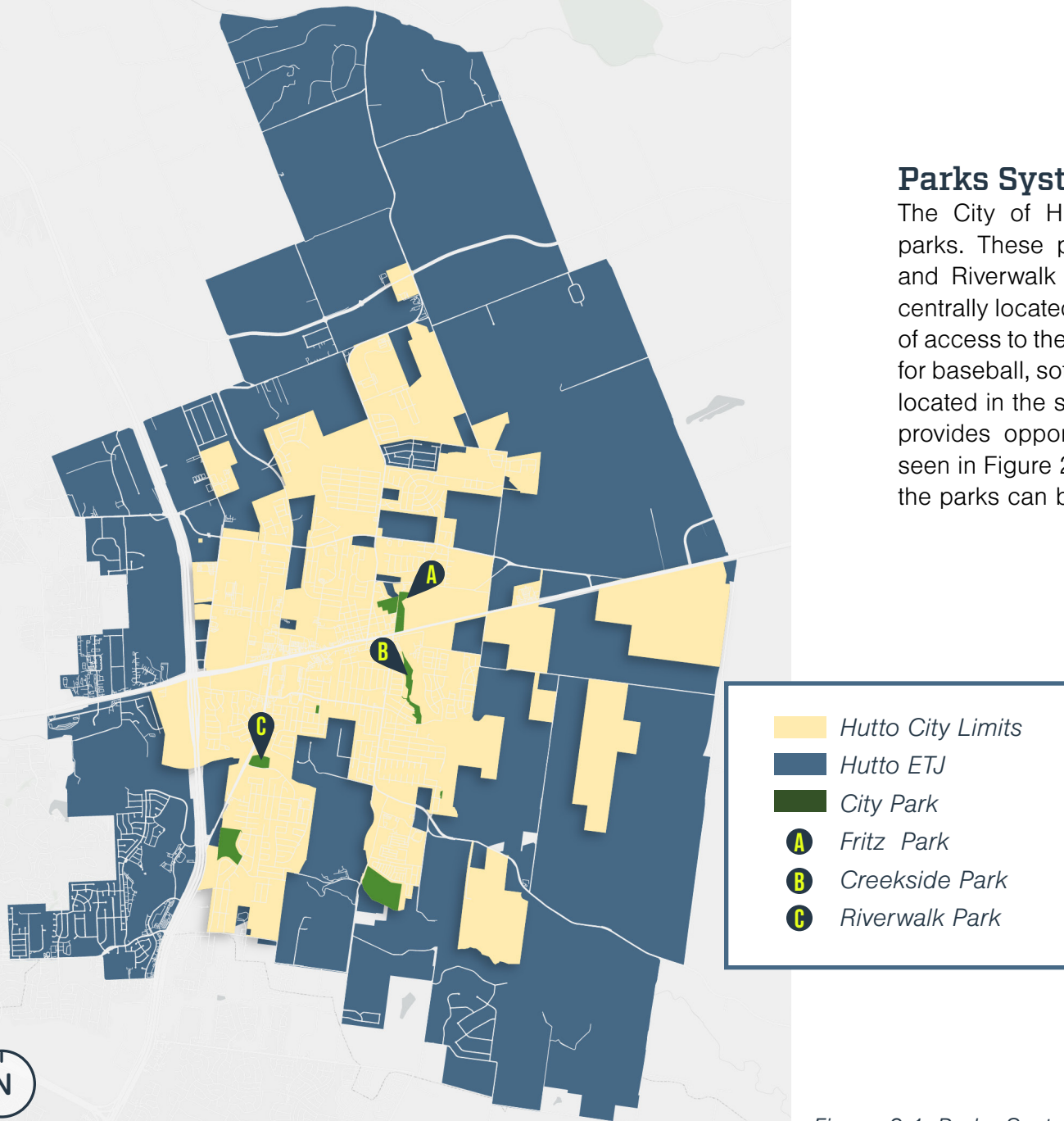
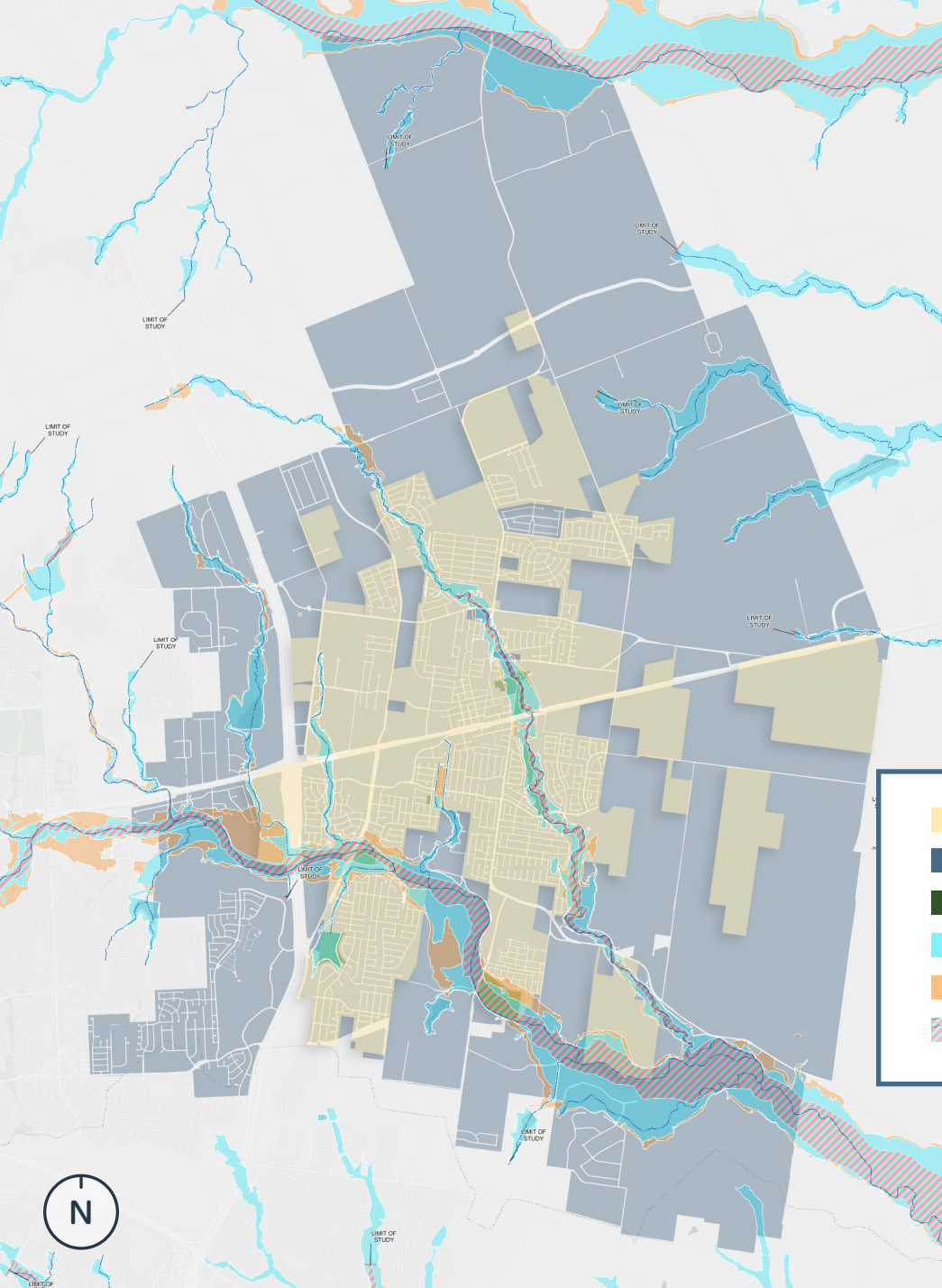


Figure 2.1, Parks System Map



Floodplain

It is crucial to fully understand the characteristics of a site, and specifically the floodplain, to determine if the property will flood. Note: Parks are often located within the floodplain. While this is not inherently an issue, it is important to be aware of the floodplain to ensure that design, construction, and maintenance are all thoroughly considered. A floodplain map for the City of Hutto can be found in Figure 2.2, while individual floodplain maps for each of the parks studied can be found on the following pages.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies flood zones throughout the country. There are several categories of floodplain that FEMA uses, including:

Zone A: an area within the 100-year Floodplain, which means it has a 1% annual chance of flooding. Detailed analyses have not been performed for Zone A property, and no depths or base flood elevations are shown within this zone.

Zone AE: an area within the 100-year Floodplain; base elevations are provided.

Zone X: an area within the 500-year Floodplain, which means it has a 0.2% annual chance of flooding.

Regulatory Floodway: the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height.

**Source: FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer*

Figure 2.2, City Floodplain Map



Fritz Park

33 Acres

Recreational Amenity

- Baseball Fields (Lighted) - 2
 - Holmstrom Field
 - Mager Field - Blue
- Baseball Field (Not-Lighted) - 1
 - Mager Field - Orange *scheduled to be lighted in 2024
- Basketball Field (Lighted) - 1
- Football Field (Lighted) - 1
 - Nguyen Field
- Horseshoe Pits
- Open Lawn Areas for General Play
- Sand Volleyball Court - 1
- Softball Field (Lighted) - 1
 - Mager Field - Red
- Tennis Courts (Lighted) - 2
- Trails

Site Furniture

- Grilling Stations
- Pavilion
- Picnic Tables

Supporting Facilities

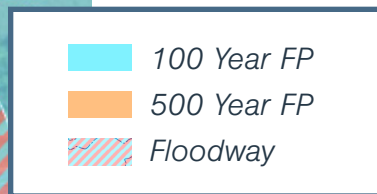
- Concessions - 2
- Parking
- Restroom

Figure 2.3, Fritz Park Aerial



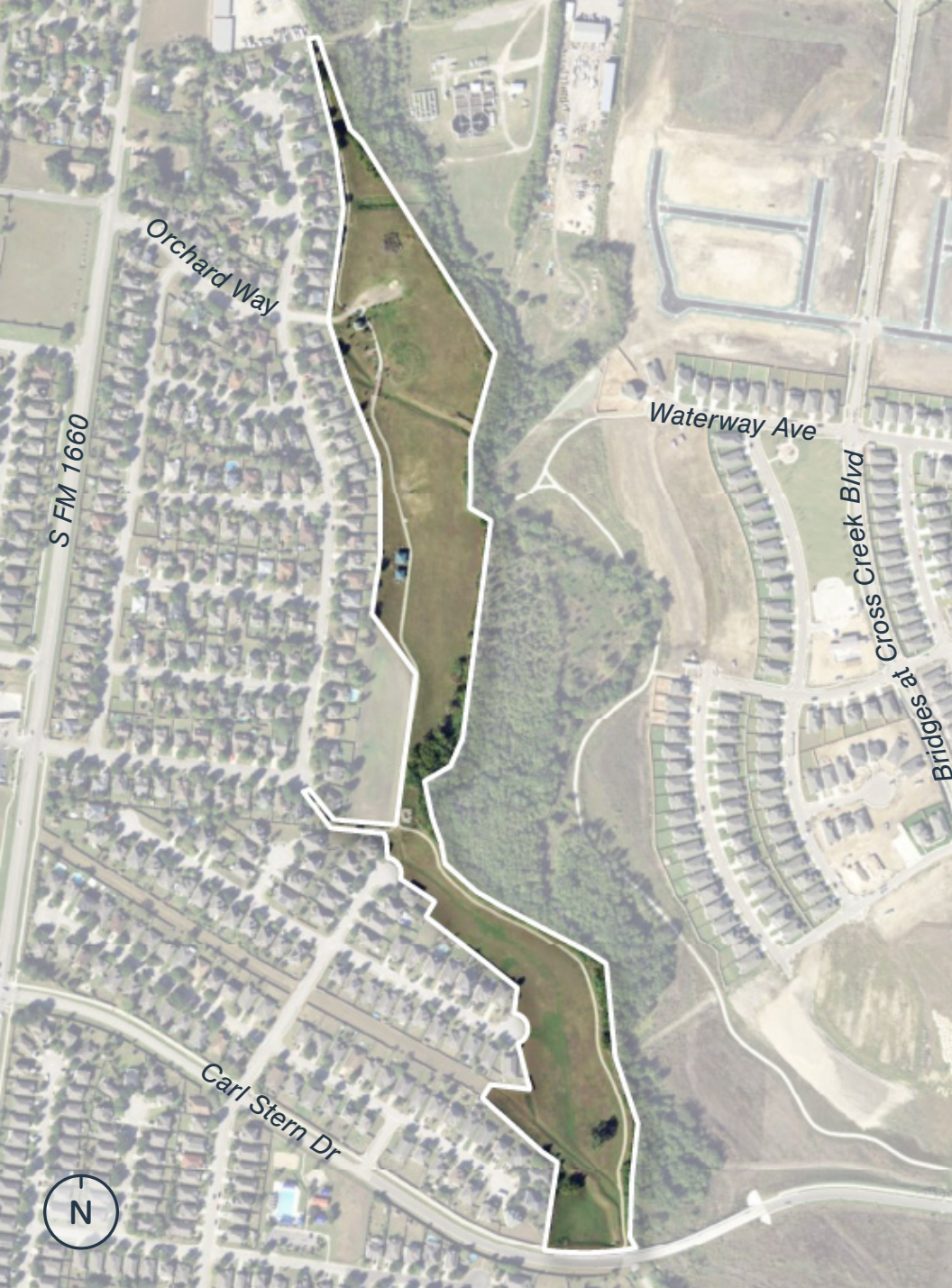
Fritz Park Flood Map

From the site analysis, it was determined that Fritz Park primarily falls within the floodplain. Of the 33 acres at Fritz Park, approximately 25% is within the floodway, 55% is within the 100-year Floodplain, and 7% is within the 500-year Floodplain. This leaves 13% of the property that is outside of the floodway and floodplain. Holstrom Field and the majority of the Mager Fields are located within the 100-year Floodplain. It is important to be aware of the floodplain as future development is limited based on the type and classification of floodplain. It must be noted that the FEMA floodplain has not been updated to reflect Atlas 14 and the 500-year Floodplain is closer to the new 100-year Floodplain.



**Source: FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer*

Figure 2.4, Fritz Park Flood Map



Creekside Park

30 Acres

Recreational Amenity

- Open Lawn Areas for General Play
- Playground
- Practice Fields with Backstops (Not-Lighted) - 3
- Trails

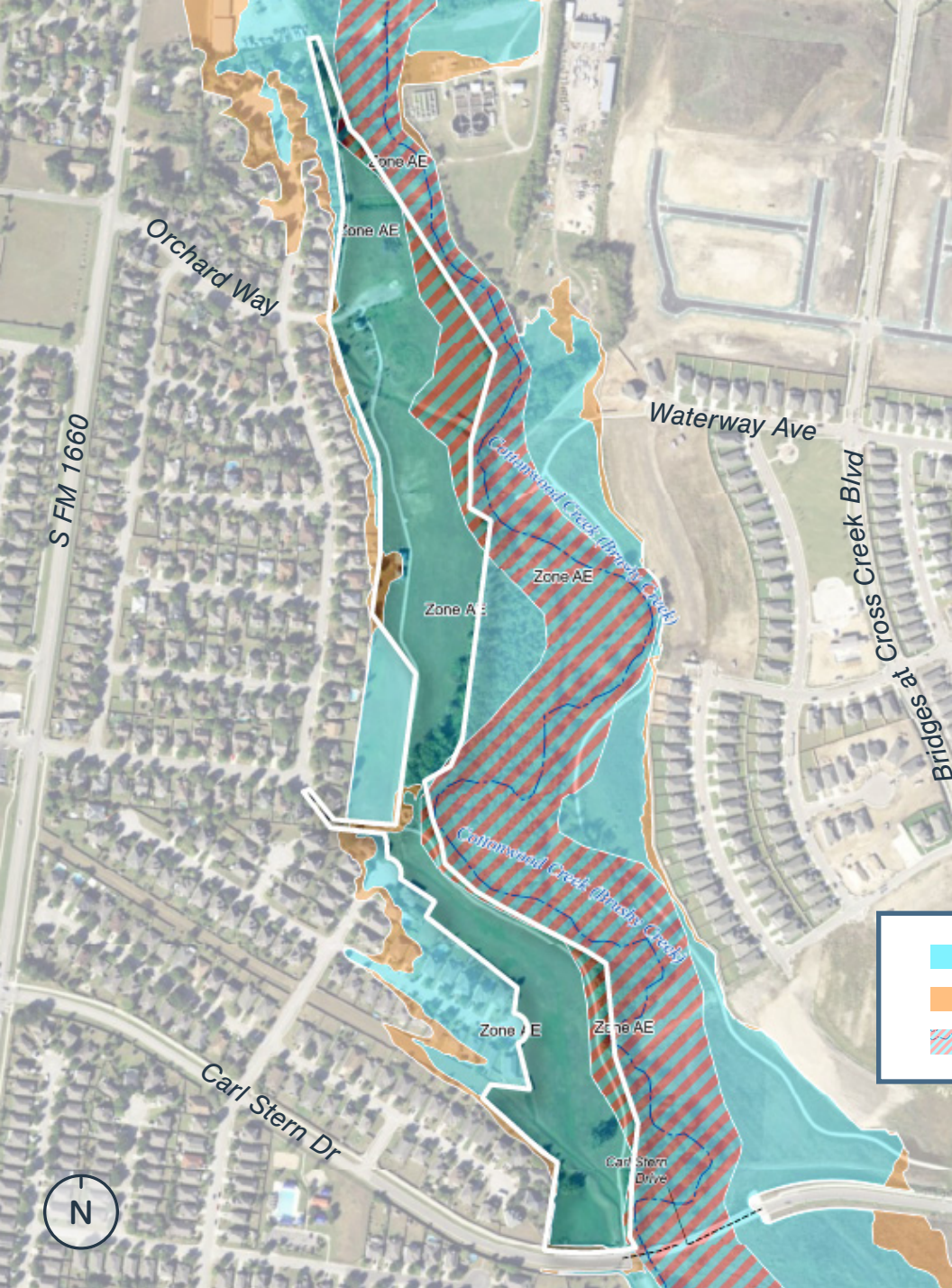
Site Furniture

- Picnic Tables

Supporting Facilities

- Restroom
- Parking (Unpaved)

Figure 2.5, Creekside Park Aerial



Creekside Park Flood Map

From the site analysis, it was determined that Creekside Park is located entirely within the floodplain. Of the 30 acres at Creekside Park, approximately 15% is located within the floodway, 82% is within the 100-year floodplain, and 2% is within the 500-year Floodplain. This results in just 1% of the park to be located outside of the floodway and floodplain. All the practice fields are located within the 100-year floodplain, meaning that there is a 1% chance these fields experience a severe flooding event per year. It is crucial to be aware of the location and type of floodplain as this will impact park usage and how the park may be developed. If fields are flooded, then the sports organizations cannot use them for practice and must go elsewhere. It is important for the City to minimize the construction of permanent structures within the floodplain. It must be noted that the FEMA floodplain has not been updated to reflect Atlas 14 and the 500-year Floodplain is closer to the new 100-year Floodplain.



**Source: FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer*

Figure 2.6, Creekside Park Flood Map



Riverwalk Park

16.8 Acres

Recreational Amenity

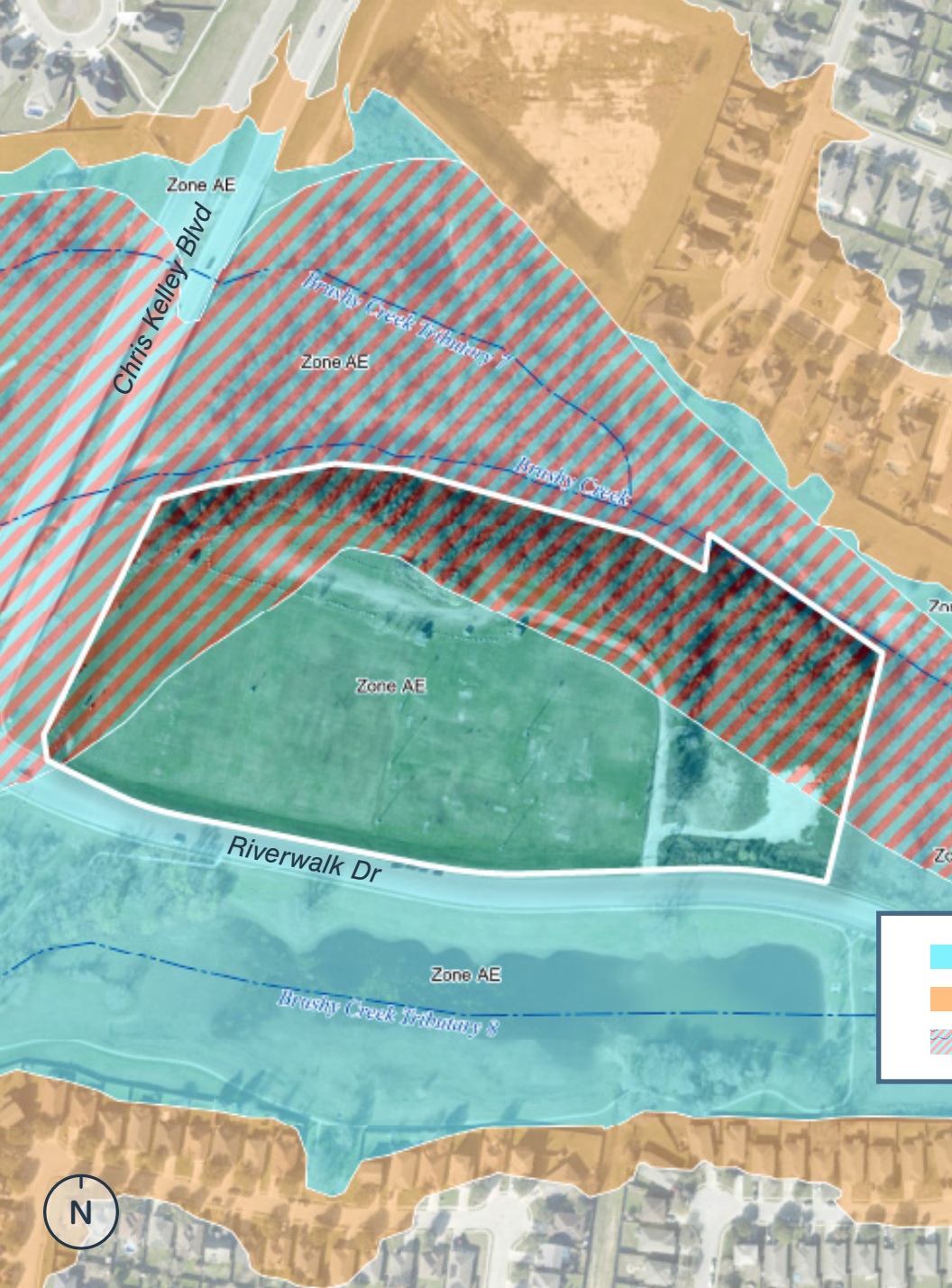
- 6 Soccer Fields* (Lighted)
 - 2 Soccer Fields 75'
 - 1 Soccer Field 200'
 - 1 Soccer Field 225'
 - 1 Soccer Field 300'
 - 1 Soccer Field 310'

Supporting Facilities

- Maintenance Facility
- Parking
- Temporary Restrooms

** Six soccer fields were identified for inventory purposes; however, this is 6.5 acres of open space and the fields can be arranged in various sizes and quantities as needed by the park users.*

Figure 2.7, Riverwalk Park Aerial



Riverwalk Park Flood Map

From the site analysis, it was determined that Riverwalk Park is located entirely within the floodplain. Of the 16.8 acres at Riverwalk Park, approximately 45% of the property is within the floodway while 55% is within the 100-year floodplain. The majority of the soccer fields are within the 100-year floodplain, meaning there is a 1% chance for serious flooding annually. This is important to note as development is limited based on the floodplain location and classification. It must be noted that the FEMA floodplain has not been updated to reflect Atlas 14 and the 500-year Floodplain is closer to the new 100-year Floodplain.

**Source: FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer*

Figure 2.8, Riverwalk Park Flood Map



Public Engagement



Public Engagement

Gathering input from field users and residents is pivotal for the success of any community study. Stakeholder meetings were held with various park users to assess the concerns and preferences of the users. It is important to note that multiple organizations were invited to participate in these stakeholder meetings, however only the following five organizations provided feedback.



Hutto ISD



Hutto Youth Baseball
Softball Association



Sting Soccer



Hutto EDC



Hutto Family YMCA

Hutto Independent School District (HISD)

A stakeholder meeting was held on November 2, 2023, with a representative from the HISD. This representative stated they provide opportunities for 13 varsity sports and do not anticipate any new or unique sport programming in the near future. There has been a significant growth in the number of participants in the athletic opportunities offered, and HISD is in need of additional sporting facilities. It is important to note that the HISD teams primarily play on HISD fields, however certain fields are shared between the ISD and the public or other private organizations. Although HISD athletic facilities are utilized for baseball and softball, there are not enough fields to meet the demand of the organization. A potential partnership between the City and the HISD was discussed for the shared use of facilities, but more information and collaboration will be needed.

The HISD desires several additions and improvements to the athletic facilities including:

- A quadplex for baseball and softball (a facility that provides four baseball / softball fields)
- Practice fields
- Open-spaces

Hutto Youth Baseball and Softball Association [HYBSA]

Representatives from HYBSA gathered to meet with the City for a stakeholder meeting on November 3, 2023 to discuss their current and future needs. HYBSA provides opportunities for the local youth to participate in baseball and softball. HYBSA currently utilizes all four fields for their games at Fritz Park and conduct practices at Creekside Park. Representatives from HYBSA noted they operate at maximum capacity given the number of baseball and softball fields available. The participation numbers have remained consistent throughout the past several years, which was attributed to the limited number of facilities. HYBSA has not been able to expand the size of their leagues without negatively impacting the quality of service. Teams meet three times a week, consisting of two practices and one game. For HYBSA to expand their league they would have to reduce the frequency that teams meet.

HYBSA expressed the desire for the following athletic fields and supporting facilities:

- A fiveplex for baseball and softball (a facility that provides five baseball / softball fields)
- Concession / restrooms
- Lighting with timers
- Parking

Sting Soccer

Representatives from Sting Soccer were involved in the stakeholder process and provided valuable information pertaining to the needs for youth soccer in Hutto. Sting Soccer has experienced an increase in the number of participants and anticipates this to continue over the next several decades. Teams utilize Riverwalk Park for practices Monday-Thursday and games Saturday-Sunday. Although these fields are not typically utilized on Fridays, they are available for rent. To better control the quality of the fields, Sting Soccer has a Council adopted Facility Use Agreement with the City to maintain the existing complex. As these fields are privately maintained, Sting Soccer expressed the need for better security and control of the fields and explored the idea of fencing. Fencing would allow the organization to monitor field usage which impacts the required maintenance. Another element discussed was the grading of the soccer fields. Improper grading can impact the safety of the fields as players can trip and/or roll their ankles. Additionally, this can result in the pooling of water which can result in the fields being unusable. The pooling of water may attract insects such as mosquitoes.

Sting Soccer desires the following improvements:

- Enhanced security
- Improved grading
- Additional fields

Hutto Economic Development Corporation (HEDC)

A stakeholder meeting was held on December 13, 2023, with a representative from the HEDC. The economic impacts of parks was identified earlier in this plan, and as such it was crucial to meet with the HEDC to determine how the City and the HEDC can work together to improve the quality of life for the community while simultaneously stimulating the economy. The representative from the HEDC expressed the need for new athletic facilities, along with supporting amenities to go with these facilities. New athletic fields will help address recreational needs and can boost the economy. Community members using the new facilities will be engaged in the community and will shop and dine locally, which drives sales tax revenue. Supporting amenities include elements such as walking trails, playgrounds, and gathering and picnic areas. These provide passive and/or active recreational opportunities for community members to enjoy and utilize. During the meeting, it was also suggested that neighborhood parks should be dispersed throughout the community and provide similar amenities such as practice areas, multi-purpose sports courts, playgrounds, trails, pavilions, etc.

The representative from the HEDC expressed the desire for:

- Construction of new and unique sport facilities
- Improved access and connection
- Development of supporting facilities

Hutto Family YMCA

The Hutto Family YMCA provides recreational opportunities for people of all ages, and as such it was crucial to hear from representatives. The Hutto Family YMCA utilizes private facilities for their recreation, including the Round Rock YMCA for games and Hutto Middle School for practices. The representative expressed the desire for a multi-use sports facility that could provide recreational opportunities to serve the Hutto community and the Hutto Family YMCA. The development of a new multi-purpose sports facility would allow new partnership opportunities for the City of Hutto.

Sports Usage

To determine current field usage, a playing field carrying capacity analysis was conducted for each sport. The following pages discuss the usage of the sports fields by the community.

As the City provides a limited number of facilities, it is crucial to determine the number of hours the facilities are used each week. The City of Hutto provides:

- 3 baseball fields
- 1 softball field
- 6.5 acres of open space for soccer fields
- 1 football field
- 3 dedicated spaces for practice

Games and practices are typically held in the evenings, and this was used to identify the number of programmed hours available. The City provides 371 hours of programming for baseball and softball participants weekly. The programmed hours for soccer and football are not as standard due to the flexibility in soccer field arrangements and the irregular hours of operation for the football field. Figure 3.1 describes the number of programmed hours used by the local organizations. The programmed hours have been determined based on the following assumptions:

- The City of Hutto provides 53 hours of operation weekly per field for baseball, softball, and soccer organizations. The hours of operation for these facilities are Monday - Friday 5 p.m. - 10 p.m. and Saturday - Sunday from 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

- Although the hours of operation for soccer have been identified above, the weekly programmed hours for soccer have not been noted in Figure 3.1, as the fields can be arranged to provide varying hours of use.
- The football field is rented for private use or club teams, resulting in no set hours of operation.

Figure 3.1, Athletic Fields Programmed Hours

FIELD	WEEKLY PROGRAMMED HOURS
Baseball Fields (Game)	159
Softball Fields (Game)	53
Baseball / Softball Fields (Practice)	159
Football Fields	X
Soccer Fields	X
Total	371

It should also be noted that while these fields are available for these hours, it is not recommended to use each facility to the maximum capacity. The City of Hutto closes fields in January and August each year for maintenance and recovery of the fields. Standards for how frequently each field should be used are identified later in this plan, in the recommendations chapter.

Baseball:

Youth baseball is a popular sport among Hutto's youth. Hutto has one organization that provides an opportunity for the local youth to play baseball - the HYBSA. While the HISD allows students to participate in baseball, they do not offer a youth sports league. HYBSA provided opportunities for 38 teams to participate in baseball in 2023, 20 teams in the Spring and 18 teams in the Fall. On average, each team played one game a week and practiced twice a week. Figure 3.2 displays how HYBSA utilized the baseball fields in the Spring, as the fields were more utilized than in the Fall.

It is important to note the following assumptions were used to create these tables:

All baseball teams play one game per week

All baseball games and practices are 1.5 hours in duration

All games are played at either Mager Field or Holstrom Field

All practices occur at Creekside Park



Figure 3.2, Baseball Fields Inventory

PARK	FIELD NAME	FIELD SIZE	NUMBER FIELDS	TEAMS 2023	HOURS USED	HOURS REMAINING	TEAMS 2029	HOURS USED	HOURS REMAINING
Fritz Park	Mager Field - Orange	85'	1	6	9	44	13	19.5	33.5
Fritz Park	Mager Field - Blue	200'	1	12	18	35	26	39	14
Fritz Park	Mager Field - Red	225'	1	1	1.5	51.5	1	1.5	51.5
Fritz Park	Holstrom Field	315'	1	1	1.5	51.5	1	1.5	51.5
Creekside Park	Practice Fields	-	3	20	60	102	41	123	36

Softball:

Softball is a popular sport among Hutto residents. The Hutto Youth Baseball and Softball Association provides opportunities in the fall and spring for the local youth to participate in softball. This organization utilizes Mager Field - Red for games and hosts practices at the fields at Creekside Park. While the practice fields at Creekside Park provide opportunities for softball teams to practice, these fields are shared with other leagues. Oftentimes, this can result in softball practices having to be relocated as these fields are occupied by other teams. In 2023 HYBSA provided opportunities for 16 teams to participate in softball, and 9 teams participated in the Spring and 7 teams participated in the Fall. Softball teams typically held games once a week and practiced twice a week. The tables to the right displays how the softball organization use the fields. It is important to note the following assumptions were used to create these tables:

Each softball team plays one game per week and practices twice a week

All softball games are played at Mager Field - Red

All softball practices occur at the Creekside Park

All games and practices are 1.5 hours in duration



Figure 3.3, Softball Fields Inventory

PARK	FIELD NAME	FIELD SIZE	NUMBER FIELDS	TEAMS 2023	HOURS USED	HOURS REMAINING	TEAMS 2029	HOURS USED	HOURS REMAINING
Fritz Park	Mager Field - Red	225'	1	9	13.5	39.5	15	22.5	30.5
Creekside Park	Practice Fields	-	3	9	27	132	15	45	114

Soccer:

Riverwalk Park has approximately 6.5 acres of open space available for the community to utilize as soccer fields. This relatively flat and open space area, along with portable goal posts, allows the soccer fields to be arranged in a variety of sizes and layouts to accommodate for the multiple age groups and the number of participants. The demographics of the soccer organization can change each season and this flexibility allows the organization to efficiently meet the needs of the participants.

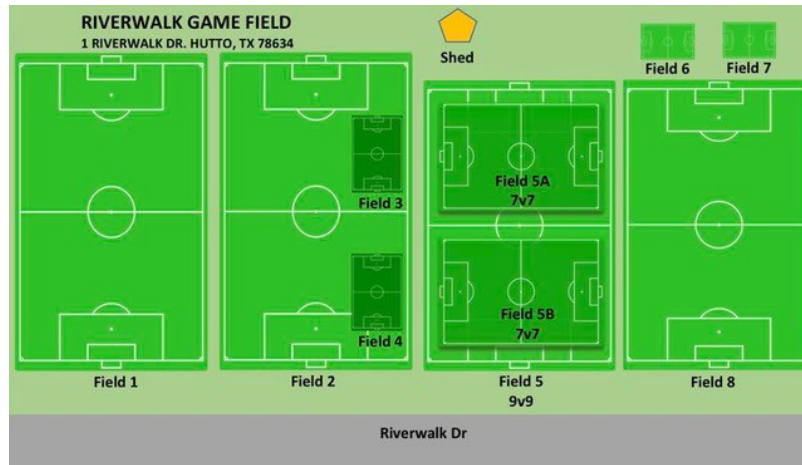
While the soccer fields are intended to be flexible by design, satellite imagery noted the fields were consistently striped with a specific layout. Figure 3.4 notes the field size and quantity of the soccer fields in 2023 and 2024.

Figure 3.4, 2023 and 2024 Field Arrangement

PARK	FIELD SIZE (yards)	NUMBER FIELDS
Riverwalk Park	23 x 33	2
Riverwalk Park	55 x 67	1
Riverwalk Park	55 x 75	1
Riverwalk Park	73 x 100	1
Riverwalk Park	73 x 107	1

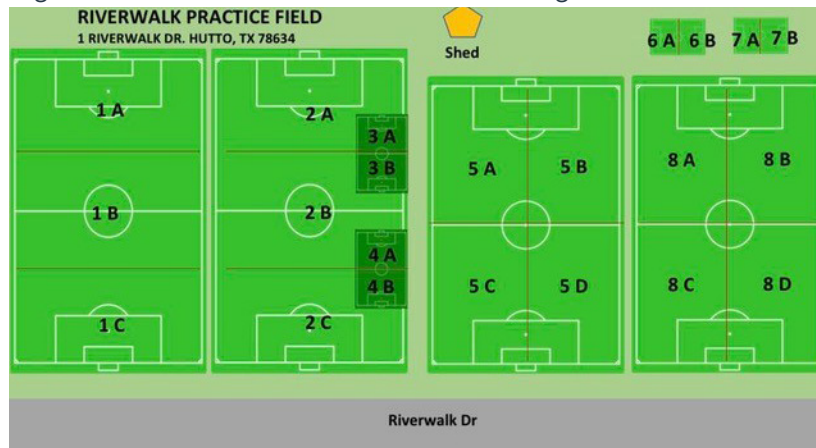


Figure 3.5 Potential Game Fields Configuration



*Source: Sting Soccer

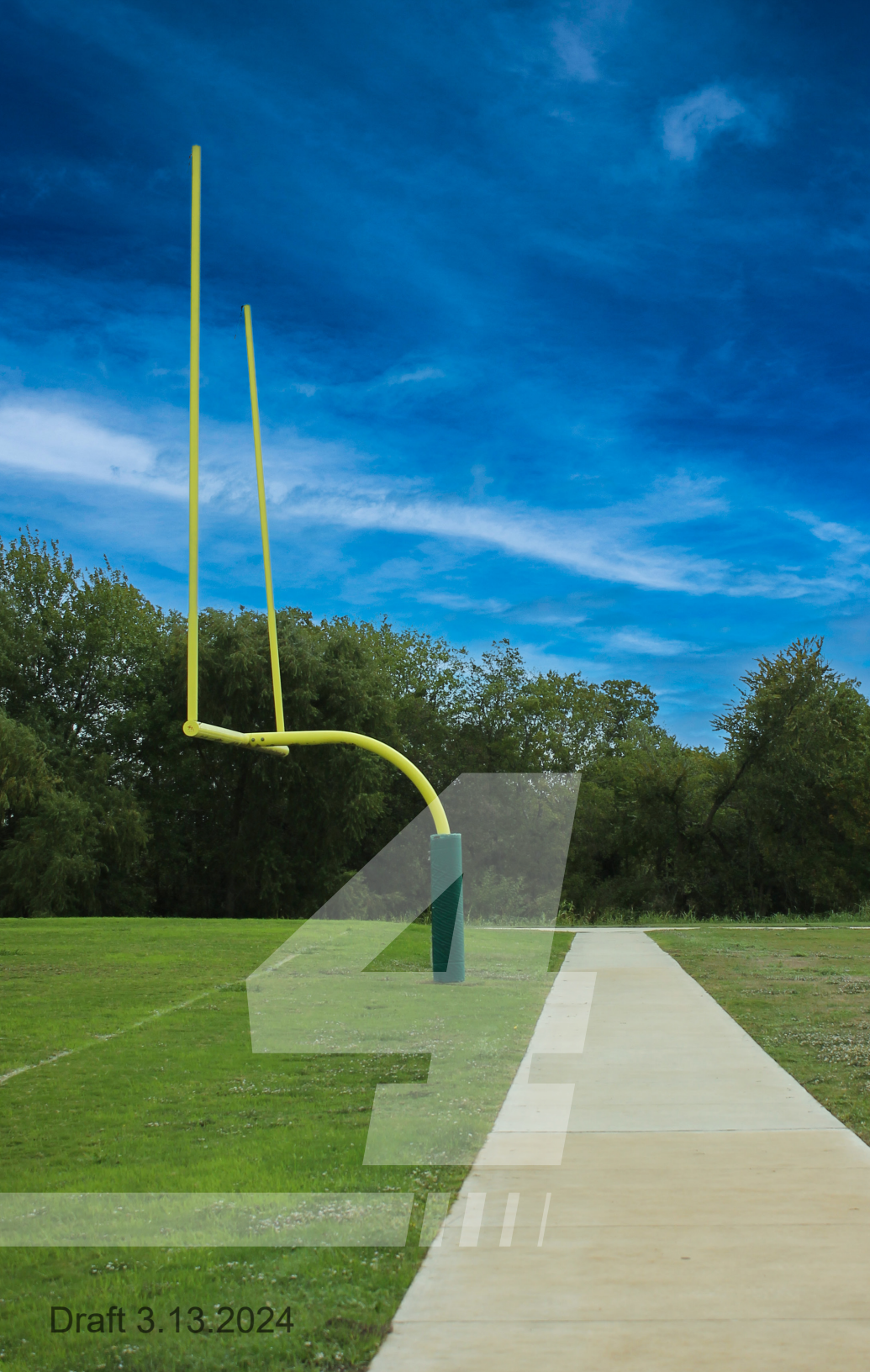
Figure 3.6 Potential Practice Fields Configuration



*Source: Sting Soccer

The City sought input from Sting Soccer to better understand the arrangements of the fields. Sting Soccer noted the fields are arranged based on the intent of use and the demand from the teams. There is variation in the arrangement of practice and game fields as teams can utilize smaller fields for practice. The organization additionally adjusts the configurations of the fields based on the age and number of teams. Figures 3.5 and 3.6 note potential configurations for game and practice fields.

Riverwalk Park serves the intent that it was designed for; flexible space that the organization can configure and rearrange the fields based on the current needs. It was identified that there is a sufficient amount of field space for the community and new field space is not required based on the assessment of the soccer fields along with the information provided by the stakeholder.



Needs Assessment



Needs

Through the inventory and public engagement process, the athletic needs of the community became apparent. While each organization has different specific needs to their organization, the overall consensus is that Hutto needs additional athletic facilities for the current and projected population. This chapter identifies the recreational needs specific to each sports organization, as well as the general needs of the community.

Athletic Needs

A field capacity and usage analysis was conducted to determine the type and amount of athletic facilities that are necessary to support the existing and future Hutto athletics organizations. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has identified

national standards for how many facilities should be constructed based on the population and these standards can be found in Figure 4.1. It is important to note that these are national standards and communities typically have leagues that travel to neighboring communities to ensure there is sufficient field space.

The analysis of specific sports organizations can be found on the following pages. It is important to note that although the number of fields needed to support the community have been identified throughout this chapter, it is not always recommended to develop that number of facilities. There are several factors that must be considered when recommending the construction of additional fields including: the cost of construction, the amount of land required, maintenance costs, staffing, and the efficiency of scheduling sport practices and games.

Figure 4.1, NRPA Standards

SPORT	NRPA STANDARD / POPULATION	HUTTO EXISTING INVENTORY	RECOMMENDED FIELDS 2023	RECOMMENDED FIELDS 2029
Baseball Fields	1/5,000	3	10	12
Baseball / Softball Practice Backstop	1/4,000	3	12	15
Football	1/20,000	1	3	3
Soccer Field	1/4,000	6	12	15
Softball Fields	1/5,000	1	10	12

**Source: 1990 Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, Ashburn, VA National Recreation and Park Association*

Baseball

The local baseball organizations - HISD and HYBSA - have not been able to expand to keep up with the growing population of Hutto, as they are limited in growth based upon the number of facilities available to them. The City currently provides three baseball fields for game play and three dedicated practice areas. With the development of this study, a standard that one baseball field should support eight games per week was established for the best maintenance and overall longevity of the baseball fields. Figure 4.2 illustrates the number of fields necessary to support the existing community as well as the projected population. After comparing the field usage to this recommended standard, it was determined that there is a deficit of baseball fields for the existing

and future community. The City currently needs one 200' field to serve the existing community, and needs to construct one 85' field and three 200' fields to meet the projected needs of the community.

Figure 4.2, Baseball Needs

FIELD SIZE	EXISTING FIELDS 2023	TEAMS 2023	REQUIRED FIELDS 2023	PROJECTED TEAMS 2029	PROJECTED REQUIRED FIELDS 2029
85'	1	4	1	13	2
200'	1	16	2	26	4
315'	1	3	1	4	1

The number of teams (2029) is based upon the 2.13% population growth rate from 2020 - 2029.

Softball

There have been several needs for the local softball organization identified from the development of this study. Overall, there is a need for additional softball facilities to allow additional youth to participate in softball. It was identified that one softball field is needed to meet the current community demand and two softball fields are needed to meet the future needs, and Figure 4.3 illustrates these needs.

HYBSA has largely maintained a consistent number of participants, despite the large increase in the Hutto population. It has been noted throughout this study that organizations are limited in growth due to the number of existing facilities. Fritz Park provides

one dedicated softball field for game play, while Creekside Park provides three practices fields. These facilities are shared by multiple users and it can be challenging to reserve the facilities. HYBSA, as an organization, does not have the sufficient number of fields to support them. The City is in need of one new 200' baseball field, and because of this, the baseball teams utilize the Red Mager Field for games. The softball teams have frequently encountered difficulties when trying to use the facilities and are often required to find additional space to practice, typically being the multi-purpose fields at Fritz Park. This negatively impacts other organizations as the soccer and football space becomes occupied by other organizations.

Figure 4.3, Softball Needs

FIELD SIZE	EXISTING FIELDS 2023	TEAMS 2023	REQUIRED FIELDS 2023	PROJECTED TEAMS 2029	PROJECTED REQUIRED FIELDS 2029
225'	1	7	1	15	2

The number of teams (2029) is based upon a 2.13% growth rate from 2020 - 2029.

Soccer

The City of Hutto provides exceptional opportunities for the community to participate in soccer. Although Riverwalk Park is designed to provide several different layouts and field sizes, for this study, it was determined to utilize a standard six field layout, which can be seen in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4, Soccer Field Striping



*Source: Bing Maps

A standard was identified that one soccer field should support 6 games per week for the best maintenance and longevity of the soccer fields. From this study it was determined that there is not a need for new soccer facilities. Although new soccer fields were not identified as a need, there are several other elements needed by the soccer organization. A permanent restroom facility is needed at Riverwalk Park. There are currently temporary restroom facilities on-site that help alleviate this need; however, there should be a permanent facility constructed. The safety of the fields was explored during the development of this study, and a need for the regrading of the soccer fields was identified. The fields appeared to not be evenly graded in all areas which can adversely impact play. Uneven surfacing can increase the risk of injury as players

are susceptible to tripping or rolling their ankle. Improper grading reduces the efficiency of drainage and can result in the pooling of water. The improper pooling of water can negatively impact the community as this can reduce the amount of opportunities to use the soccer fields. The pooling of water can also become a habitat for insects such as mosquitoes.

Football

The Hutto Youth Football and Cheer Association primarily utilize the HISD facilities for their games and practices. After request for comments, none were provided so the Needs Assessment is based on field observation, city staff comment, and professional opinion. The field, bleachers, press box, bathrooms, concessions, and parking appear to be in good condition.



General Needs

This study primarily focuses on the existing condition and future needs of athletic fields. It is important to consider the areas and amenities outside of the fields themselves when analyzing the recreational needs of the parks. It is crucial that the parks system provides a quality level-of-service for athletic opportunities, however the parks also need to serve multiple users. It is common for family members to utilize the parks system while their grandchildren, children, or siblings are using the athletic fields. General needs were identified through this study that focus on the amenities that are necessary for the operation and overall enjoyment of the park. These needs typically pertain to the supporting facilities that enhance the park users experience, rather than the athletic facilities themselves. Supporting facilities help improve the health and wellbeing of the community by creating opportunities for residents and visitors to use the park. This includes elements such as:

- Multi-purpose trails
- Restrooms and concessions
- Maintenance Facilities
- Site furniture
- Parking
- Lighting

The construction and installation of these amenities create environments where park users can comfortably use the parks. A detailed analysis of these needs can be found on the following pages.

Multi-Purpose Trails

One of the elements that was widely discussed was the need for an enhanced trail system. Parks with athletic fields and trails in close proximity allow families to utilize the park simultaneously for different purposes. For example, while children are participating in athletics, parents and siblings can be exercising on the trails in lieu of sitting on a bench. Multi-purpose trails create environments that encourage residents to be active and engage with nature. It was noted earlier in this study that approximately 30% of Williamson County residents are classified as obese. The construction of trails can help improve the health of the community. The American Journal of Public Health released a study in 2014 that identified people living within less than a mile of new trails were getting an average 45 minutes more of exercise after the trails were constructed. This need is also identified through several other city and county planning documents which express the desire to have a connected and continuous trail system.

New trails should be constructed at a minimum of 8' wide to increase the comfortability of the trails and allow multiple people to use the trails simultaneously.

Trails should provide opportunities for recreation and transportation.

Restroom and Concessions

Restrooms and concession facilities are desired throughout the parks system. All-accessible restrooms are crucial elements for any park. Restrooms can prolong the duration of stay at the park and contribute to the overall enjoyment of the park. There are permanent restroom facilities provided at Fritz Park and Creekside Park, while temporary restrooms are provided at Riverwalk Park. Youth sporting events are typically scheduled for a few hours, and restroom facilities are needed for both players and spectators.

Concessions are not required at every park, however they are typically desired at parks with game fields. Fritz Park currently provides concessions at the Mager Fields and also at Holstrom Field, while there are none at Riverwalk Park. It is important to note that concessions were not an amenity desired at Riverwalk Park, however if new game fields are constructed for sports, this amenity should be constructed. It is also important that the concessions be constructed to adequately serve the park users. Fritz Park provides concessions, however when the Holstrom Field concession was renovated, counter space was not included. The baseball organizations must utilize temporary tables to fully use this facility.

Maintenance Facilities

Maintenance facilities are an important amenity for the operation and maintenance of the parks, despite not directly providing recreational opportunities for the community. Riverwalk Park and Fritz Park have some storage capacity; however they, along with Creekside Park lack a dedicated maintenance facility. As



there are no maintenance facilities here, the Parks Department stores equipment and materials off-site, and manually transports the equipment from one park to another whenever operations and maintenance issues arise. There is a large amount of development occurring in Hutto, and the roads are known to be heavily congested. This negatively impacts the Parks Department and reduces the efficiency of work. Maintenance facilities on-site would allow staff to reduce the hours spent in traffic, and improve the work-flow efficiency. The City should construct maintenance facilities at parks with athletic fields.

Site Furniture and Equipment

The Hutto Parks and Recreation Department does a great job providing the necessary site furniture at existing parks, however there are a few elements that are desired at existing and new parks. Riverwalk Park is intentionally designed to be flexible with the field layout, which can make it challenging to install player seating. The City of Hutto should provide player benches that are movable in design. Movable benches will accommodate the league by providing areas for player rest while continuing to provide the flexibility in field size and location.

It is crucial to have water filling stations and medical equipment at sports fields and throughout the parks system. Dehydration causes many serious effects and contributes to muscle fatigue, which increases the risk for injury. This is not just important for athletes, but for all park users, as dehydration can effect anyone. The American Heart Association conducted a study that noted that sudden cardiac arrest was the most common medical cause of

death among NCAA athletes between 2002 and 2022. Equipment such as AED units can be life-saving if someone experiences sudden cardiac arrest, and this should be provided at all existing and future parks that provide athletic opportunities.

Trash and recycling bins should be provided at all City parks to reduce waste left at game and practice fields.

Parking

The lack of parking was consistently noted as a problem throughout the development of this study. All park facilities should provide sufficient parking that is on an improved surface. Fritz Park has paved parking lots adjacent to the Mager Fields and Holstrom Field, while Creekside and Riverwalk Park have unimproved parking lots. If the City provides an unimproved parking surface, wheel stops should be installed to assist in guiding park users to park in a more efficient manner.

There is a standard of approximately 50 - 60 parking spaces to be provided per sports field. This is necessary as it is common for parents to drive separately to the fields and with the addition of grandparents and other family and friends, an ample amount of parking is required. There needs to be additional parking to account for the transitional period, when one game is ending and another is beginning. It is important to note that this standard varies based upon the field intent. Practice fields do not require the same amount of dedicated parking spaces as tournaments or fields.

Safety needs to be considered when constructing parking lots. If

people are required to cross a street to access the park, then the necessary pedestrian infrastructure should be constructed.

Lighting

Lighting is a crucial element to maximize the amount of play time on each field. Insufficient lighted areas creates unsafe environments where players cannot see the ball or terrain and become more likely to injure themselves. New fields should be developed with lighting. Field lighting provides users the opportunity to utilize the fields longer, which increase the number of teams and athletes that the field capacity can support. Riverwalk Park, Holstrom Field, and two of the three Mager fields have field lighting installed, whereas Creekside Park and Mager Field - Orange lack field lighting. It is important to note that it is scheduled for Mager Field - Orange to receive field lighting in 2024.

Stakeholders expressed the need for an upgraded lighting system that allows individual fields to be lit so organizations do not accidentally disrupt others. The field lighting is currently operated on a single system, and issues arise as teams are required to power the lights off at the end of the day. Teams have been known to accidentally power off the lighting for other fields which negatively impacts other teams through delayed or shortened practices. This negatively impacts teams as they must either delay their game/practice or cut their game/practice short.

In addition to field lighting, spectators and general park users need lighting. Parks in Hutto close at 11 p.m. and insufficient lighting can result in unsafe environments. Providing lighting throughout the

parks system creates more welcoming environments, increases safety, and allows residents the opportunity to exercise outdoors for longer, specifically in the fall and winter when the sun sets early in the evenings.

New lighting should be installed that utilizes best environmental practices. This includes shared lighting using LED/photocell bulbs and incorporating smart technology such as timers and direct access via a smart phone device. The incorporation of LED/photocell bulbs and smart technology will help Hutto become more environmentally and economically sustainable.





Recommendations



Recommendations

The following recommendations are influenced by the needs analysis, including the local youth sport organizations' field use, focus group and stakeholder meetings, city staff, national standards, and the consultants' professional opinion. The following actions should be implemented to ensure the City of Hutto meets the needs of recreational youth players, associations, and citizens. It is suggested that these recommendations be considered for implementation over the next five years. The stakeholders provided valuable insight into the needs to ensure the following recommendations benefit the entire community in the future. The recommendations and locations of proposed future parkland can be found on the following pages.

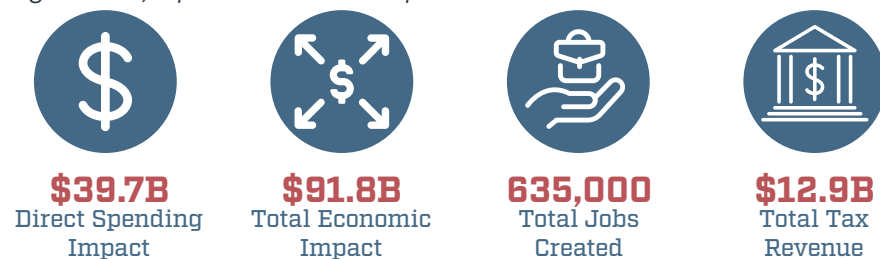
Develop Sports Complex

It is recommended to develop a new sports complex to accommodate the growing population and meet existing and future needs in sports. The construction of the new complex should be located at a new park because Fritz Park, Creekside Park, and Riverwalk Park do not have the necessary room to expand with the addition of new baseball and softball game fields. It is recommended for the Sports Complex to be developed with the following amenities:

- Construct a six-plex.
 - Four baseball fields
 - (2) 100' Fields
 - (2) 200' Fields with 70' bases
 - Two softball fields
 - (2) 300' Fields
- Construct supporting amenities:
 - Multi-purpose trails
 - Restrooms/concession
 - Lighting
 - Maintenance facilities
 - Site furniture and equipment (water filling stations, medical equipment, seating, etc.)
 - Parking
- Hire additional maintenance staff and equipment

By developing a sports complex, the City of Hutto can provide new recreational opportunities and improve the economy. The Sports Events and Tourism Association published the “State of the Industry Report” in 2021, which identified the economic impacts of the sports tourism industry in the United States. According to this report, the sports tourism industry generated \$39.7 billion in direct spending, which generated a total economic impact of \$91.8 billion. This economic impact supported 635,000 total jobs and generated \$12.9 billion in total tax revenues.

Figure 5.1, Sports Tourism Impacts



*Source: Sports Events and Tourism: State of the Industry Report (2021)

People visiting the sports complex, whether residents or visitors, will likely spend money at on-site and off-site establishments including restaurants, shops, and hotels, which will support the local community. In addition to the Sports Complex, it is recommended to expand the trail system. The expansion of the trail system can improve the local economy by providing new opportunities for the community to access local businesses.

Parks can increase the tax revenue for the city. The Trust for Public Land identified in the 2009 report, “Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System”, that people are willing to pay more for a

home that is in close proximity to a park. Additionally, residential and commercial properties that are in close proximity to a park typically experience an increase in value after the park has been developed. This increase in value increases the amount of property tax the City can collect which can be used to maintain existing or develop new parks.

The construction of a Sports Complex and the supporting amenities can increase the health and well-being of the community and reduce medical costs. The construction of baseball and softball fields will create opportunities for the local youth to remain active. This will not only provide recreational opportunities, but will also provide educational opportunities on how to remain healthy. Multi-purpose trails will provide new opportunities for the community to engage in active and passive recreation. Additionally, this will create new opportunities for the community to gather and interact with one another, improving the mental health of the community.

Parks are known to create community-gathering hubs where community members can build and develop social connections with each other. Gathering areas crucial now as a Meta-Gallup study in 2023 identified that approximately 1 in 4 people report feeling lonely. People that experience loneliness can have increased risks for conditions and diseases such as: heart disease and stroke, Type 2 diabetes, depression and anxiety, dementia, death, and more. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has also noted that loneliness costs the US economy an estimated \$406 billion annually. Parks can be utilized to improve the well-being and decrease medical costs in the community.

Riverwalk Park

Based on the needs outlined in this study and from stakeholder input, it is recommended to enhance Riverwalk Park.

- Regrade the existing field surfaces
- Provide additional movable goal posts
- Provide portable player-seating
- Construct supporting amenities:
 - Restrooms
 - Concessions
 - Maintenance facility
 - Improved parking

The enhancement of Riverwalk Park will improve the safety and drainage of the existing soccer fields. In addition, this will create a more welcoming environment with supporting amenities such as restrooms and concessions and improved parking.

Fritz Park

Based on the needs outlined in this study and from stakeholder input, it is recommended to enhance Fritz Park.

- Overflow game fields
- Rental opportunities
- Practice field opportunities
- Upgraded lighting

The development of a new Sports Complex will lessen the strain the Mager Fields have. This will open up new opportunities for the facilities to be rented out, increasing the funding of the Parks Department. These fields can be utilized for overflow games and can serve the future population.

Creekside Park

The development of the Sports Complex and the repurposing of Fritz Park minimize the need for practice facilities at Creekside Park. This provides an opportunity to repurpose Creekside Park. As noted earlier in the plan, it is crucial that the city has community-driven parks to improve the quality of life for all citizens. Creekside Park has an excellent central location to serve Hutto's general population. It is important to note that although it is recommended to repurpose Creekside Park, the City should maintain an open lawn area that will provide flex-space for athletics.

It is recommended to develop Creekside Park with results based upon the latest Parks and Recreation Master Plan. General elements the City could construct at the repurposed park can found in General Park Improvements.

General Park Improvements

While athletic fields serve the specific purpose of facilitating sports games and practices, it is recommended to make improvements to the other areas of each park to benefit all park users. Parks are social hubs, and family members and friends gather to engage and watch athletic events. It is recommended to create spaces that are welcoming, inspirational, and versatile to people of all ages and abilities. An excellent park is one that provides a safe learning environment for youth athletes while also providing opportunities for diverse, civic uses, such as office lunches, exercise classes, book clubs, public art, etc.

The following improvements should be considered at all parks:

- Multi-purpose trails
- Play equipment
- Pavilions
- Restrooms
- Concession
- Fitness stations
- Public art
- Parking
- Lighting
- Maintenance facilities

Sports Complex Property- Option A

Option A consists of utilizing land directly to the east of Fritz Park to develop a Sports Complex. This property is approximately 71 acres and is owned by the HEDC. The Hutto Parks and Recreation Department has the opportunity to work with the HEDC to develop this property into a Sports Complex that will attract residents and visitors to the site and improve the quality of life for community members.

It was determined that this is the most feasible opportunity for a Sports Complex in Hutto. This property is located centrally within the city, and will enhance the recreational opportunities for Fritz Park. There is floodplain along the western boundary of this property, directly adjacent to Fritz Park. Approximately 17 acres are within the 100-year floodplain, 3 acres are within the 500-year floodplain, and 4 acres are within the regulatory floodway. This is an ideal location for the Sports Complex as floodplain land is typically utilized for recreation. This will provide connection from the facilities at Fritz Park to the proposed new facilities.

Figure 5.3, Sports Complex Property - Option A Floodplain



Figure 5.2, Sports Complex Property - Option A Aerial



Sports Complex Property - Option B

Option B consists of utilizing land that the Hutto South Wastewater Treatment Plan is located at. This property is approximately 161 acres and is owned by the City of Hutto, meaning no new land will need to be acquired. It is important to note that this site was identified in the 2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a potential site for a Regional Park.

The property has approximately 35 acres of property within the regulatory floodway, 14 acres within the 100-year floodplain, and 10 acres in the 500-year floodplain. The southern portion

of the property is well suited for the developed of athletic fields. One of the goals of this study was to create recreational space that is accessible and welcoming to all community members, which can be accomplished through the development of supporting facilities. This property can expand the Brushy Creek Trail, and provide new opportunities for walking, running, and biking.

It is important to note that this site could be developed with a Sports Complex, however it is not as feasible as Option A. This site is not as central to the community, and does not tie into other parts of the community as efficiently as in Option A.

Figure 5.5, Sports Complex Property - Option B Floodplain



Figure 5.4, Sports Complex Property - Option B Aerial





Priorities



Priorities

The following implementation schedule presents action items that are based on the needs analysis, keys areas of focus, and recommendations found in previous chapters. The purpose of the implementation schedule is to provide a framework to assist with future planning in the City. This is intended to be a flexible guide for the development of infrastructure and programming over the next seven years. The main goal of the implementation schedule is to provide the necessary municipal support proportionally to each athletics group. While this necessitates multiple project areas, it is recommended that the City secure funding and combine phases when feasible. The City should evaluate and change the order of implementation if necessary or take advantage of any unforeseen opportunities that may arise as long as it fits the priorities of this plan.

Cost projections are included for each project, aiding the City and its partners in budgeting for the future. Various sources of funding at the local, state, and federal levels are available for the development of new sports infrastructure and the revitalization of existing practice and scheduled game facilities throughout the City. It is important to note that not every funding source will apply to every project, and multiple funding sources may be utilized for a project contingent on its scope and magnitude. Further details on additional funding sources can be found later in this chapter.

The recommended action items have been assigned a time frame and projected cost range for implementation. It is recommended the City evaluate their progress to ensure they are completing projects in a timely manner. If the City progresses more quickly or slowly than anticipated, adjustments can be made to the time frames accordingly. In the event of unexpected opportunities, it is advisable for the City to consider modifying the implementation schedule to capitalize on such opportunities.

Figure 6.1, Short-term Implementation Schedule

RECOMMENDED ACTION	COST	FY YEAR
Develop a Sports Complex Center (Refer to Figure 6.2 for total project cost estimate and projections)		
Identify site for the development of a sports complex. Consider strategic partnership or land acquisition through purchase or donation.	At Land Value	2024/2025
Identify and hire a design firm to create a conceptual master plan of the sports complex and develop TPWD grant application.	± \$70,000	2024/2025
Identify and hire a design firm to create engineering construction documents.	\$1,200,000	2025/2026
- Identify and hire a contractor for construction (2) 100' baseball fields (2) 200' baseball fields with 70' bases (2) 300' softball fields - Restroom / concession facility - Playground - Walking trails - Shade structures - Site furniture - Parking - Maintenance facility	\$11,800,000	2025/2026
Fritz Park		
Utilize Mager Fields for games, practices, rental facilities, and overflow tournament.	-	2027
Enhance field lighting	± \$200,000	2027

*Costs are based upon prices from 2024.

Cost Estimate

It is important for the City of Hutto to understand the overall cost of constructing a new athletic complex. An estimated budget will allow both the Parks Department and City Council to make educated decisions regarding the scope and scale of the project. No site specific design has been completed and the numbers provided in Figure 6.2 are merely allowances of what a project of this scope could cost, but it will vary pending the actual design. Potential fees associated with land acquisition and site mitigation have not been included. Cost projections through 2029 have been provided at an annual 5% increase to note the increased cost of the project over time.

Figure 6.2 Cost Estimate

DESCRIPTION	TOTAL COST
(2) Baseball Fields - 100' with LED lighting	\$1,500,000
(2) Baseball Fields - 200' with LED lighting	\$1,600,000
(2) Softball Fields - 300' with LED lighting	\$1,700,000
Restroom / Concession	\$1,000,000
Maintenance Facility	\$250,000
Playground	\$500,000
Concrete Trails	\$350,000
Pavilion	\$200,000
Site furniture	\$150,000
Signage	\$50,000
Parking with Lighting / Pavement	\$1,000,000
Site Improvement Allowance (utilities, dirt work, landscaping, etc.)	\$3,500,000
2025 TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$11,800,000
Contingency (20% of construction)	\$2,400,000
Construction Management (10% of construction)	\$1,200,000
Design (10% of construction)	\$1,200,000
2025 TOTAL CONTINGENCY COST	\$4,800,000
2025 TOTAL COST	\$16,600,000
The projected cost for this project through 2029 can be seen below. This assumes an annual inflation rate of 5% and has been rounded for clarity:	
	2026 \$17,500,000
	2027 \$18,400,000
	2028 \$19,300,000
	2029 \$20,300,000

Figure 6.3, Mid/Long-term Implementation Schedule

RECOMMENDED ACTION	COST	YEAR
Enhance Riverwalk Park		
Identify and hire a design firm to create engineering construction documents.	± \$180,000	2026
- Identify and hire a contractor for construction - Regrade the surface of existing fields - Construct a permanent restroom / concession facility - Expand and improve parking	± \$1,500,000	2026
Repurpose Creekside Park		
Identify and hire a design firm to create a site-specific conceptual master plan for the repurposed park, and develop a TPWD grant application.	± \$50,000	2027
Identify and hire a design firm to create engineering construction documents	± \$500,000	2028
- Identify and hire a contractor for construction - Renovated & expanded restrooms - Playground & open space - Shade structures - Site furniture - Walking trails - Signage - Lighting - Additional parking - Maintenance facility	± \$5,000,000	2028/2029
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	± \$20,500,000	-

Funding Opportunities

The City of Hutto has a variety of funding opportunities available that can assist with the funding of the proposed projects in this plan. Funding sources typically fall within three different categories: Local Partnership Opportunities, Local City Funding, and State or Federal Funding. There may also be additional funding available which is not listed within this plan. It is imperative for the City of Hutto to be proactive in the development of grant applications.

Locally Generated Funds

General Fund - Pay As You Go funds are typically used for smaller projects such as repairs and replacements at existing park facilities.

General Obligation Bonds are issued by the City following an election in which the voters authorize their issuance for specific stated purposes, as well as the necessary tax increases to support them. These bonds pledge the property or ad valorem taxing power of the city. General Obligation Bonds have been utilized previously in Hutto, and in 2018 Hutto residents voted to approve \$50 million for the construction, acquisition, and development of infrastructure for parks and recreational purposes - including athletic fields.

Certificates of Obligation have basically the same effect as general obligation bonds except they do not require an election to authorize them. These certificates are issued on the authorization of the City Council. Repayment is based on the property taxing power of the city, utility system revenues, or a combination of the two.

Park Fee Ordinance fees are typically imposed on developers when they bring new projects into the community. The fees are used to ensure that as more development comes to the City, more park land is acquired, developed, or improved to maintain the current level of service. Each community has a specific ordinance, but typically the city can require the developer to provide land for a park, cash in lieu of the required land, or park development fees. As of the time this plan is adopted, the City of Hutto requires parkland to be dedicated at a minimum size of 15 acres. If parkland is to be dedicated at a smaller size then a fee will be required. The current fee is \$2,300 per dwelling unit developed.

User Fees require the user of a facility to pay a fee for the use of the facility. Fees to be charged can be established to pay for debt service, maintenance, and operation of the Parks System.

Hutto Parks Foundation provides funding opportunities for Hutto parks. This is a non-profit organization and is close to submitting for a 501c3 status.

Private or Corporate Donations from foundations, corporations, and/or private individuals are often used to acquire and develop parks. The City should continuously identify and pursue opportunities to receive such funding for parks. One avenue for receiving donations is through the use of the Texas Parks & Recreation Foundation. This foundation has been developed to help all communities in the State of Texas maximize the benefits of donations of land, property, and money.

Debt Issuance debt issued in the form of a bond to fund day-to-day obligations and capital projects.

State and Federal Funding

Local Parks Non-Urban Outdoor Recreation Grants are intended for communities with a population of less than 500,000 and can be used for the acquisition, development, or the renovation of parks and open spaces. This is a 50/50 matching grant with a ceiling of \$750,000.

Community Outdoor Outreach Program (Co-Op) Grants are primarily used to assist non-profits and local governments for recreational programming geared toward under-served populations. The intent of the funding is to introduce the importance of environmental education and conservation and provide TPWD mission oriented outdoor recreational activities. This grant is a TPWD Sponsored grant with a minimum funding requirement of \$5,000 and a ceiling of \$50,000.

Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants are federally funded and administered by TPWD through the Texas Recreation Park Account. Note: if a city applies for an Outdoor Grant, TPWD may choose to fund a successful project directly through LWCF with no additional or separate application.

National Park Service (NPS Programs) are primarily used for parks and recreational opportunities and consist of LWCF & Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act (UPARR) dollars. The United States Congress appropriates funds to each state.

Perdenales Electric Cooperative Inc. offers grants up to \$5,000 for capital improvements, technology, and equipment related to energy efficiency.

Lower Colorado River Authority provides grant opportunities up to \$50,000 for building, renovating, or purchasing equipment that is available to the community and improves capital asset.

Keep Texas Beautiful offers several grants targeted at improving the environment including improving waterways & water quality, wildlife species protection, and recycling.

Governor's Community Achievement Awards provides funding to communities that have achieved exceptional work through community leadership and coordination, public awareness and outreach, environmental education and youth engagement, beautification and community improvement, litter prevention and cleanup, solid waste management, and litter law and illegal dumping enforcement.

AGENDA ITEM REPORT

3.2.



To: City Council
Subject: Discussion and possible action related to Work Session topics
Meeting: Thursday, April 4, 2024
Department: City Council /
Staff Contact:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

STAFF REVIEW:

FISCAL NOTES:

ATTACHMENTS:

None