

S E R V I C E S O L U T I O N S S U C C E S S



City of El Paso

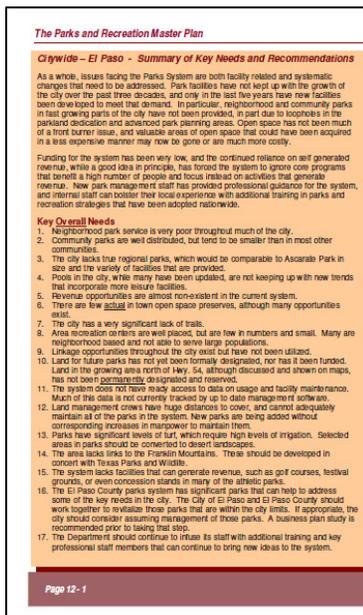
Blue Ribbon Committee on Regional Parks





History

- Half and Associates Master Plan Study 2006
- “Underfunded since inception”
- “Department needs a stable source of operational funding”



Summary of Key Master Recommendations

Key recommendations for the entire planning area are summarized in this chapter to the recommendations for each facility earlier in the document. Recommendations are prioritized based on the findings of the study.

General recommendations that address recreation programming issues are as follows:

I. Summary of Key Operational Land Management

1. Travel time is too high for averaging an hour and fifteen minutes. A redistribution of parks responsibility is warranted to be especially true given the new parks within the next year.
2. The Land Management map power in Planning, Maintenance, and Administration.
 - a. **Planning** - The development of other development services and the planning and coordination needs are for the most other departments and slow to complete. The activities within the parks should be accommodated in two

parkland dedications, and shepherding new development and rehabilitation projects through the Engineering Department and Purchasing in order to get the projects to other jurisdictions around the country assign the park system the initial responsibility and only perform an engineering review (by a P.E.) if it is required by law.

II. Summary of Recreation Programming Findings

1. The Recreation Services Division does not have a systematic method for collecting, tabulating, and analyzing operational and program data that is important to an effective revenue generation system.
2. The Recreation Services department has no automated or manual Recreation Business Management System.
3. Sports league, childcare, and facility rentals and leases exceed the instruction of classes and programs as a source of revenue. It appears that the majority of facility use is for quasi-public or private uses.
4. Attendance data is missing to establish the scale of the services, programs and rentals attendance at facilities.
5. The operating procedures and policies are inconsistent, especially as they relate to hours of operation and staffing, and at their centers. These qualities are particularly true at their centers. These qualities are particularly true at their centers. These qualities are particularly true at their centers.
6. The current staff has some significant skills and abilities to address the challenges and issues in their neighborhoods and at their centers. These qualities are particularly true at their centers. These qualities are particularly true at their centers.

Consideration should be given to the time and cost of developing the employee skills to successfully address the new challenges.

7. The current staff is still 10 to 12 members short from the losses suffered over the previous two budgets. This has major impacts on the department's ability to provide core programs at the Recreation Centers and to ensure consistent hours of operation.

Aquatics

III. Summary of Key Funding Recommendations

1. The Aquatics program and related facilities needs further study. A review of the system and facilities is recommended in the near future.
 1. The Department needs a stable source of operational funding. At this point in time, the funding for maintenance of both parks and facilities is not adequate to maintain the facilities to a sustainable standard. In addition, funding is inadequate to keep the facilities open the expected amount of time. The revenue requirement for programs has effectively eliminated what most communities considered to be public access or core courses.
- Current Requirement 2006-07** (To maintain status quo) cost would be \$36.00 per capita.
Future Requirement 2011-12 Will need a projected operating fund of \$27 million dollars (\$36.00 per capita assuming 700,000)

capital dollars that include create golf courses, design water park, and rentals of reserve the sports program availability; increase per hours; institute a

Key Findings

could be tapped to the Park District system to fund the parks system. Examples include:

- Facilities should be to El Paso, and not to other departments.
- Funding needs to be allocated on an annual basis.
- Funding needs to be provided without

department decisions regarding major system components should be reviewed and approved by the Parks Board.

5. Beginning with the 2006-2007 fiscal year, the department budget should include a capital expenditures line item. This is especially critical given the age of many of the park and building facilities in the city. This is intended to address key maintenance needs in a timely fashion so as to extend the useful lifespan of city assets.
6. This amount should begin at an amount equal to 1% of the total value of the Parks and Recreation system infrastructure. If overall department park and building assets are valued at \$200,000,000, then the annual capital expenditures budget should eventually total \$2,000,000.
7. An immediate policy change for Recreation facilities is recommended, so that recreation centers can offer programs and facilities that provide the most benefit to the citizens of El Paso. The Entrepreneurial system should begin with the 2006-2007 budget year.
8. Land Management staff recommendations should be implemented immediately by adjusting grades and by providing additional staff as recommended in this section.

V. Summary of Key Park and Facility Findings and Recommendations

Recommendations for each of the five major planning areas in the city are shown on the following pages, along with the key issues and priorities for each area. These recommendations should be considered collectively rather than only one at a time. They can be addressed in a different order if the opportunity to resolve a key need arises out of sequence.





History

- Blue Ribbon Committee requested by Council during budget process August 2009
- Committee formed and members recruited October 2009
- First meeting December 2, 2009
- Meeting twice per month





Members

Representative Beto O'Rourke	City of El Paso
Commissioner Ana Perez	El Paso County
Andy Ramirez	YISD
Armando Jimarez	EPISD
Michael Najera	SISD
Armando Rodriguez	CISD
Eileen Karlsruher	Greater El Paso Chamber
Lorraine Wardy	El Paso Hispanic Chamber
Sam Thompson	North Hills N.A.
Charlie Wakeem	Coronado N.A.
Dave Turner	Parks & Recreation Board
Charlie Bombach	Land development
Richard Castro	General public
Bill Sparks	General public
Pat Rainer	General public
Bill Rivera	General public





Committee Charge

The El Paso City Council established the Blue Ribbon Committee to evaluate and provide recommendations to the City Council on forming a regional parks system in El Paso including but not limited to:

- 1) Viability of a regional park system;
- 2) Structure and multiple funding options for a local model, including a dedicated City tax for parks and open space; and
- 3) Obtaining State approval in forming a regional park authority if necessary





National Models

The Blue Ribbon Committee evaluated various regional park system models and organizational structures:

- Combined Departments
 - Maplewood, Clayton and Richmond Heights, MO
 - City & County of Tuscaloosa, City of Northport, AL
- Independent Park Authority
 - Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, MI
 - Prince William County Park Authority, VA
 - Si View (North Bend, WA)





National Models

- Metropolitan Park District
 - Fairfax County, VA
 - Cincinnati, OH
- Non-Profit
 - Sugar House Park (Salt Lake City and County), UT





Discussion Points

- City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Master Plan
 - Presentation by Halff Associates, Jim Carrillo
- City of El Paso Parks and Recreation Department budget
- El Paso County Parks Department budget
 - Tour of Ascarate Park & Sports Park on February 26, 2010
- Boundaries of proposed park system
 - County-wide
- Success indicators
 - Usage (numbers and types: active, passive)
 - Fees & costs that communities can support
 - Cost per acre
 - Revenue sources





Pros & Cons Combined Departments

- Two or more government/taxing entities
 - City, County, School Districts
- Management agreement for joint use
 - Facilities and/or recreation programs

Pros	Cons
No increased tax	Entities may decide not to contribute
Efficiency	Equal funding from each agency
	Management of agreement
	Politics
	Efficiency-paying twice





Pros & Cons Park Authority

- Independent entity
- Ability to levy tax rate via State legislation
- Formed locally through citizen vote
- Park Board appointed or elected at large

Pros	Cons
World-class park system	New tax on taxpayers (decrease from entities?)
Steady funding; sustainable	Length of time to implement legislative process
Autonomy	Shift of costs-no savings
Accountability	





Pros & Cons

Metro Park District

- Entity of local government body (City or County)
- Body appoints Board of Directors
- Body dedicates tax revenue towards district
- Board of Directors develops budget and spending policy

Pros	Cons
Does not require State legislative action	Question of funding-spending City tax in County
Autonomy	Inability to attract additional entities
	Overburden on one entity vs. the other
	Politics of appointments





Pros & Cons Non-Profit

- Board of Trustees appointed by City and County
- Funding provided by City and County general funds
- Typically created for one location/large park

Pros	Cons
Private contributions; fundraising	Can't issue bonds





Recommendation Hybrid Model

- Independent entity
- Begin with City assets only
- Enter into agreements
- Acquire County assets
- Sustainable funding from dedicated tax
- Provides autonomy and accountability





Recommendation

- City Council to add to State Legislative Agenda
 - Request for approval to establish park authority and approval for authority to tax
 - Legislative session begins January 2011
 - If passed, requires State Constitutional Amendment-Nov 2011
 - If passed, local election – May 2012
- Between now and 2012
 - Work with County to incorporate Ascarate and Sportspark into authority
 - City Council direct staff to
 - Begin public input process, community meetings
 - Conduct further financial analysis; fund consultant
 - Build a structure, utilizing master plan as guide





Questions / Comments

